

Town of Stoughton Massachusetts
Comprehensive Master Plan

Phase II: Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan

April 2015



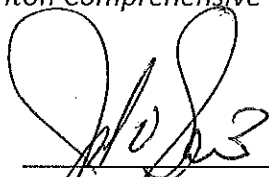
Prepared by Brown Walker Planners, Inc. and
Howard/Stein-Hudson, Inc.

Stoughton Master Plan

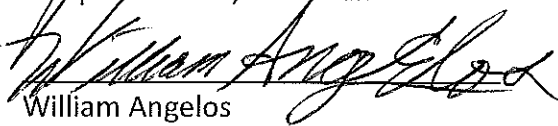
Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan

Master Plan Committee Approval and Acceptance

The Stoughton Master Plan Committee has voted unanimously to approve and accept
Stoughton Comprehensive Master Plan Phase II: Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan
dated April 2015.



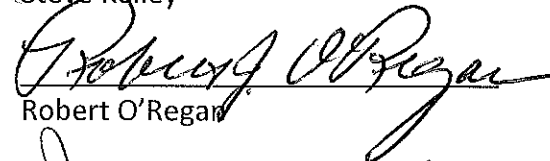
Joseph Scardino, Chairman



William Angelos

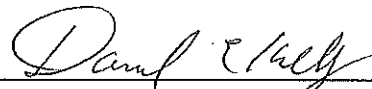


Steve Kelley

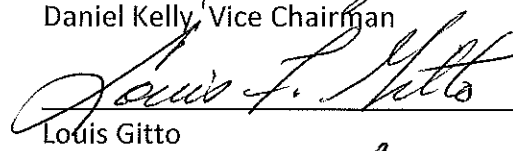


Robert O'Regan

June 11, 2015
Date



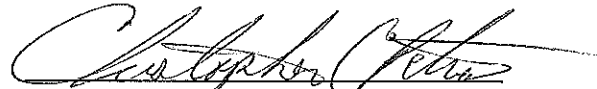
Daniel Kelly, Vice Chairman



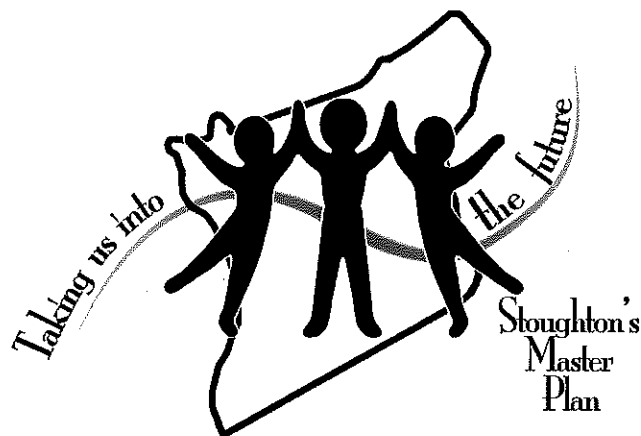
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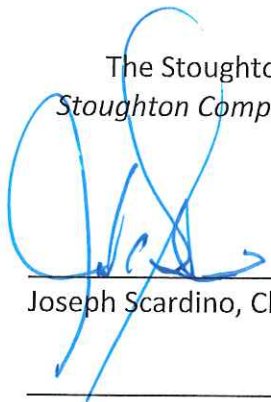


Stoughton Master Plan

Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan

Planning Board Approval and Acceptance

The Stoughton Planning Board has voted unanimously to approve and accept
*Stoughton Comprehensive Master Plan Phase II: Assessment, Recommendations and
Implementation Plan* dated April 2015.



Joseph Scardino, Chairman

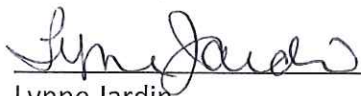
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Date



Acknowledgements

The Stoughton Master Plan Committee Plan extends its gratitude to each individual who gave time and energy to participate in the planning process and create the Stoughton Master Plan. This Plan is the direct result of your contributions.

Whether you...

- contributed to the logo contest
- took part in student visioning sessions
- attended public forums
- participated in the Visual Preference Survey
- viewed community television broadcasts
- participated in focus group meetings
- took the community survey
- stayed informed through the web site
- toured town center
- discussed ideas with others

Your sentiments and ideas have made a difference!

We extend special thanks to each individual and organization that helped us announce planning events and meetings.

- Ahavath Torah Congregation
- Old Colony YMCA
- Snyder's Stoughton
- Stoughton Chamber of Commerce
- Stoughton Clergy Association
- Stoughton Council on Aging/Youth Commission
- Stoughton Department of Public Works
- Stoughton Farmer's Market
- Stoughton Public Library
- Stoughton Media Access Corporation
- Stoughton Patch
- Stoughton Schools
- And all individuals who forwarded announcements through their own email lists.

We especially thank Stoughton Media Access Corporation for recording and broadcasting the public forums, and inviting the MPC to update the community through six community forum broadcasts.

We also thank the director and staff of the Stoughton Council on Aging and Youth Commission for hosting numerous meetings and forums. Thank you for providing the facility and for helping with set up and cleaning up.

We are grateful for your participation and are confident that through our collective continued efforts we will achieve our community goals.

Master Plan Committee

Joe Scardino, Chairman, Planning Board

Robert O'Regan, Board of Selectmen

Lou Gitto, Redevelopment Authority

Bill Angelos, Planning Board

Staff support: Noreen O'Toole, Town Planner

Dan Kelly, Vice Chairman, Conservation Commission

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Chris Petrie, Chamber of Commerce

Steve Kelley, Town Center Business Representative

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Introduction

What is a Master Plan?

The General Laws of Massachusetts (chapter 41, Section 81D) state that a Master Plan “shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term development of the municipality”. The law requires an interactive public process to determine community values and goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals. The law also prescribes the elements which make up a Master Plan.

- Goals and policies statement (referred to as Vision and Goals)
- Land Use (referred to as Land Use and Growth Management)
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Public Services and Facilities
- Circulation (referred to as Transportation and Circulation)
- Implementation Program

Responsibility for creating a Master Plan lies with a town’s Planning Board.

Why do we need a Master Plan?

Creating a Master Plan prompts a community to define the direction it wants to move in and identify the actions it must take to get there. By implementing the Master Plan’s recommendations, a community becomes proactive, working towards its goals and objectives, rather than being reactive and responding to potential unwanted outcomes.

A community’s Master Plan:

- Engages community members in a dialogue about values, managing assets and guiding change;
- Serves as the basis for the town’s zoning and land use regulations;
- Serves as a reference for a town’s elected officials, staff, boards and committees to make clear, fair, and consistent decisions; and
- Strengthens funding requests to state and federal agencies by showing the requests support planned community initiatives.

A Master Plan is not intended to be a static document, but rather should be a flexible guideline for policies that adapt to changes in the community.

How we developed our Plan.

This document, Phase II: Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan, along with the Economic Development Plan and the Phase I: Vision and Existing Conditions Report, make up the Town of Stoughton Comprehensive Master Plan.

- The Phase I Report prepared by the Master Plan Committee (MPC) with planning assistance from Brown Walker Planners and BETA Group synthesizes current available data and the ideas from hundreds of planning participants to document existing conditions, identify key issues that the town is facing, and develop a community vision.
- This Phase II Plan prepared by the MPC with assistance from Brown Walker Planners and Howard/Stein-Hudson provides an assessment of existing conditions, identifies community goals and sets forth a series of strategies and actions the town should take in the short and long term to reach its goals.
- The Economic Development Plan prepared separately by McCabe Enterprises and Paul Lukez Architecture serves as the Economic Development element of the Master Plan.

A cornerstone of the Master Plan was the open and inclusive public process that brought hundreds of community residents and stakeholders together to discuss current challenges and opportunities and identify viable options for affecting change.

The Phase II master planning process began in the fall of 2013, following the approval and acceptance of the Phase I Report. Public engagement was a cornerstone of the Plan's development and included a Town Center walking tour in October, seven focus group meetings in January and February, a Visual Preference Survey © in February and March, a public forum in March, and a final public forum in June. Outreach efforts included newspaper announcements, local blogs, targeted e-mail blasts by the Master Plan Committee and numerous partners, Community Forum broadcasts on local access television, letters to Town Meeting Representatives and local boards and committees, flyers posted and distributed at Town Hall and by partnering organizations, and flashing highway signs for the VPS and public forums. (See Appendix for Event and Meeting Summaries, and Acknowledgements for partnering departments and organizations)



Some Participants of the Master Planning Process

Plan Overview

Introduction describes what a Master Plan is, why it is needed and how this Plan was developed.

Community Vision is a statement that describes the desired future for Stoughton. It was developed by the community in Phase I, and is included within this document as a reminder about what is at the foundation of the recommendations.

Executive Summary briefly describes the master planning process and key findings of the Master Plan Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan. The focus of the Executive Summary is on priority actions.

Assessment and Recommendations provides an overview of the subject, discusses primary issues and challenges and sets out a series of goals and recommended strategies. Each of the following elements is included.

- Land Use and Growth Management
- Housing
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Energy and Sustainability

Implementation identifies how the Master Plan's recommendations can be successfully carried out. It includes a matrix of the entire Plan's goals, objectives and strategies, identifying responsible parties, anticipated time frames, and potential funding sources.

Appendix includes benchmarks that can be used to track community changes, and a list of potential funding sources, financing methods and other resources to help with implementation of recommended actions.

Appendix II is a stand-alone document that summaries the public engagement events and meetings of the Phase II Master Plan process.

Community Vision

A vision statement is a declaration of desire and intent written in the present tense.

Stoughton's shared community vision comes from the hearts and minds of the hundreds of community members who took part in visioning activities of the Master Planning process. The vision is a reflection of our community's common values and intentions. It is the picture we have painted of our town's future. The vision inspires us and keeps us focused on the actions we need to take to achieve it.

How our Community Vision was developed is described more thoroughly in the Phase I Plan. Our Community Vision is included here, as a reminder that this is the foundation for the recommendations that follow throughout this Plan.

The people of Stoughton have made a clear choice to embrace the challenges and opportunities ahead, to honor our town's past, to actively steward our resources, to respect and harness the power of our citizens and to trust in ourselves to guide change and create the future we desire.

Our shared community vision will take us into the future where:

Stoughton is widely recognized as an inclusive, vibrant and resilient community offering an exceptional quality of life to its residents, businesses and visitors.

Stoughton provides public services, facilities and infrastructure that assure a clean, healthy, safe and vital community. Our investments respond directly to community needs and are balanced with our fiscal and operational capacity.

We are proud of our school system that boasts state-of-the art facilities, a strong curriculum, exceptional educators, and students who achieve at the highest academic levels. Through a strong partnership between the school system and the community, we set high standards that enable all students to achieve success.

Town Center is the municipal, social and cultural heart of Stoughton. Anchored by restored and repurposed historic buildings and served by beautiful public gathering spaces, accessible sidewalks, safe streets, and convenient parking, Town Center is active with a mix of residential, commercial/retail and government buildings.

Stoughton's transportation system is more about people and less about automobiles. Our demand for safety along with efficiency has resulted in greater use of public transportation, an extensive network of sidewalks, trails and bike lanes and reconfigured and managed streets that better serve drivers, riders and walkers.

Stoughton's landscape contributes to our suburban character with a mosaic of healthy natural systems that includes open fields, ponds, wetlands, waterways, forests and street trees. We honor our natural heritage by protecting, preserving and celebrating it. We provide exceptional stewardship and abundant

opportunities for residents and visitors to access, explore and enjoy nature within our town.

Stoughton's history adds to the richness of our town's character. Throughout town, historic buildings and landscapes are preserved to provide space for municipal, cultural, recreational and educational programs as well as for housing, offices, shops and restaurants. The stories of Stoughton's past are highlighted in our town's traditions and celebrations.

Stoughton's attractive and active business corridors and centers provide an array of activity centers, services, jobs and tax revenues. Through proactive planning and commitment to sensitive and sustainable economic development, the town is well positioned to maintain diversity and balance for decades to come.

Neighborhoods are distinct yet unified with varying housing styles, lot sizes and settlement patterns that serve a diversity of residents. They are connected by pathways and open space systems, schools and town activities, and events that bring people of all neighborhoods together.

Above all, Stoughton's sense of community is our town's defining quality. It is seen in our participation on boards and committees, in our support for youth activities, our commitment to our seniors, our attendance along parade routes, at community concerts, at chamber meetings, farmers markets, and at school graduations.

We are dedicated to our town and its continued success.

Executive Summary

This Phase II Assessment, Recommendations and Implementation Plan is the final product of a two and a half year planning and public engagement process designed to produce a community driven and supported Comprehensive Master Plan. Continuing the framework for extensive civic dialogue established in Phase I, Phase II garnered resident and stakeholder input through a Town Center tour, multiple focus group meetings, an on-line Visual Preference Survey and two town-wide public forums. Community input helped tailor the project team's approach to assessing existing conditions and identified, refined and prioritized a series of recommendations for guiding the town's land use and development decisions over the next decade.

Assessments and Recommendations

The assessment undertaken for each Master Plan element, revealed the challenges the town faces and the opportunities it has for addressing them. Clear goals and recommendations emerged from this examination of existing conditions.

Land Use and Growth Management provides an approach to future growth management that organizes future public facility and infrastructure investments according to a framework based on conservation and growth areas that produces compatible and complete neighborhoods, village centers, and corridors. The goals and strategies offer an opportunity to effectuate sustainable development, protect important natural and cultural attributes, reinforce and enhance desired settlement patterns, and guide future growth and development as appropriate. A particular focus is Stoughton Town Center which is the historic, cultural and civic center of the community.

Housing outlines goals and strategies that support a mix of distinctive neighborhoods; use Transit Oriented Design to increase housing and vitality in Town Center; appeal to millennials, young families, seniors, and high income households who will help sustain Stoughton's revitalization; and meet the needs of limited income households within inclusive and integrated neighborhoods.

Transportation and Circulation identifies opportunities for creating a safe and efficient transportation system that enhances the aesthetic quality of the community, respects and reflects its historic character and natural resources, and recognizes the needs of local businesses, residents, and through traffic. Goals and strategies focus on Complete Street design standards, transit based development opportunities, pedestrian safety and walkability improvements, circulation and connectivity improvements, access management, and parking.

Community Facilities and Services considers the town's current and future capacity to manage facilities and services vital to the health, safety and quality of life in Stoughton. Goals and strategies center on proactive and strategic

management and maintenance, and capital improvements to support community revitalization. Improving the physical condition of schools is a priority.

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resource goals and strategies outline options for systematically preparing for preservation opportunities, identifying steps to improve resource management including the town's ponds, and principal conservation lands, and laying out a foundation for supporting public/private initiatives to preserve and reuse key historic buildings and landscapes.

Open Space and Recreation offers actions that look to balance the town's desire for improved open space and recreation facilities and programs with the town's capacity to provide and manage them. The focus is on building capacity through partnerships and strategic and effective management to create and improve bike and pedestrian paths, sports fields and a vibrant and integrated open space network.

Energy goals and strategies focus on reducing the amount of energy used to operate municipal facilities and provide municipal services; attaining green community designation; and supporting energy awareness in the private sector. Goals and strategies to support **sustainability** are found throughout the Master Plan.

Priority Actions

Priority Actions are those actions that the town will take within the first six to nine months following adoption of the Comprehensive Master Plan. These actions will build capacity and create the framework for successful implementation of many of the Plan's recommendations over the next decade.

Create a framework for implementation.

- Adopt a town policy that requires planning documents, budgets, and land use regulations to conform to the Master Plan.
- Develop a six-month work plan for priority goals identifying scheduled actions, required financial, physical and human resources, and responsible parties and partners.
- Activate the Implementation Committee (IC). Establish a mission statement and work plan for facilitating actions, and monitoring and reporting on progress. Expand the Committee as necessary.
- Assess and take steps to secure funding sources for priority projects.

Prioritize Town Center development.

- Adopt Expedited Permitting Bylaw for Town Center (and use as a test for other priority areas).

- Complete Transportation Study and begin implementation of priority recommendations.
- Assess the cost and benefits of various Town Center revitalization options including Urban Renewal, Community Development Corporation, Business Improvement District and identify specific redevelopment opportunities and related tools for implementation.
- Work with Town Center businesses, property owners and others to establish a cooperative public /private partnership for revitalization.
- Create a Town Center business inventory, directory map, and website with links to local businesses.

Assure Town Center development meets community needs.

- Appoint and empower a municipal Technical Review Committee (TRC) responsible for advance review of potential development projects.
- Adopt policy to use Peer Review Consultants (paid for by developer) for projects with potential for significant community impact.
- Review and improve zoning regulations, infrastructure design standards, economic development programs, and design guidelines for Town Center.

Keep the community involved.

- Develop and implement a public outreach campaign; consider developing subcommittee of IC to be responsible.
- Produce monthly updates and share via town web site, SMAC, Penny Saver, on line news sources, flyers, and other sources.
- Maintain Community Bulletin Boards on line and in public places such as in business windows, the library, public parks, Senior/Youth Center, and schools.
- Work with high school teachers to engage students in documenting and evaluating process and progress.
- Fill and expand Board and Committee positions to engage more residents.
- Maintain a volunteer database categorized by area of interest, experience, or expertise.

Create schools that are an integral part of the community.

- Begin planning a support campaign for school improvements. Involve town governance, community members, business members, and other advocates.
- Work with community and schools to develop the scope for Education Master Plan and commit to fund the Plan. The Education Master Plan will help the

school meet its criteria for gaining state funds and can identify ways schools can be integrated into the community.

- Expand programs that bring community members into schools/and school staff and students into community.

Make small changes with demonstration projects.

- Install pedestrian activated, solar powered flashing beacon at the crosswalk in Town Center at the intersection of Washington and Wyman Street.
- Eliminate left turns into and out of Wyman Street at intersection with Washington Street and monitor to determine effectiveness.
- Establish a Town Center Improvement Campaign
 - Install, plant and maintain window boxes and other planters.
 - Replace and maintain street trees along streets in Town Center district.
 - Make landscaping improvements to Town Center parks and open spaces.
- Install and maintain banners, benches, bike racks, water fountains and other amenities to improve the pedestrian environment.
- Organize neighborhood clean ups.
 - Coordinate with garden centers, landscape oriented businesses, civic groups, youth organizations, corporate volunteers and others.
 - Provide town services for events including trash pick up of yard waste, extended compost / recycle center hours, arbor services for trees along street right-of-ways.
- Install and maintain quality street trees along a selected business corridor or gateway.
 - Assure they are planted within an environment that will support full growth (good soil, ample soil and canopy space, appropriate setback from vehicles)
 - Establish as first annual street tree planting event.
 - Consider seeking sponsors.

Carrying out the Plan

The Town of Stoughton has completed an extensive, open and inclusive public planning process to develop a community driven and supported Master Plan. The Plan's recommendations offer the components for a strategic long term Work Plan that will bring about positive and dramatic changes. By working together; across departments

and boards, through public private partnerships, with regional and state assistance, and with continued community involvement, the Town of Stoughton will fulfill its vision of a town that is welcoming, vibrant, safe, and sustainable.

Maintaining public involvement will be central to the successful implementation of the Plan. Each of the ideas listed under Priority Actions, Keep the Community Involved (page - 3 -) should be continued throughout implementation. As a first step in continuing and increasing citizen support and assistance, the Town of Stoughton should prominently post and maintain the Master Plan on its website. In addition the town should post separately, by sections, the Plan's recommended actions and the town's progress on completing (or modifying) each. Establishing a prominent dedicated site on the Town's Web Page, and regularly updating it with progress reports, provides citizens and other stakeholders an on-going opportunity to keep connected to the Master Plan Implementation process in a structured and understandable fashion.

Assessment and Recommendations

The assessment and recommendations are organized as follows:

Land Use and Growth Management - page 1

Housing – page 37

Transportation – page 51

Public Facilities and Services – page 85

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources – page 101

Open Space and Recreation – page 117

Energy and Sustainability – page 131

The Implementation Plan includes a set of implementation strategies and pulls together all of the Plan's recommendations in a matrix organized by element beginning on page 151.

Land Use and Growth Management

Overview

A Sustainable Approach

The Land Use and Growth Management Element of the Master Plan describes how to make the transition from a community that is largely divided into separate and single use districts, resulting in the vast majority of residents having to rely heavily on the automobile to get to and from home, work, shopping, schools and recreation. The alternative approach to future growth management is to organize future public facility and infrastructure investments according to a framework based on conservation and growth areas that produces compatible and complete neighborhoods, village centers, and corridors. The result would be that more residents will be within a short walk, bike ride or car trip to neighborhood business districts, schools, and recreation areas. In taking this approach to growth management, the Land Use section takes into consideration the following factors:

- Where future development is likely to occur;
- Areas with potential for redevelopment and/or revitalization;
- Areas of incompatible uses and/or densities;
- Future need of various land use transects and place types; and
- Necessary changes to current regulations in managing future growth.

Land Use Transects and Strategic Growth Management

This section of the Master Plan provides an assessment of past and present development patterns and trends, and general guidance for managing future growth in Stoughton. In order to provide more context-based regulations and policies that lead to desired land uses and development characteristics, Stoughton has been broken down into 15 **Land Use Transects** including the following:

- Stoughton Town Center (1)
- Town Center Neighborhoods (2)
- Washington Street Corridor – North (3)
- Washington Street Corridor – South (4)
- North Stoughton Business Park and District (5)
- Park Street Business District (6)
- Island Street Business District (7)
- Sharon Street Business District (8)
- Chemung Hill Neighborhoods (9)
- Central Street Gateway Neighborhoods (10)
- Sumner Street Neighborhoods (11)
- Glen Echo Pond Neighborhoods (12)
- Pearl Street Neighborhoods (13)

- Knollsbrook PUD (14)
- Ames Long Pond Rural District (15)

Land Use Transects are a systematic approach to land use planning which break down a given area into natural and human sectors according to the existing and desired future sustainable development patterns. The transects are used as the foundation for planning, growth and conservation strategies, capital improvements, land use regulations, policies, and incentives.

The designation of these locally recognized areas is based on common physical and human characteristics such as common development patterns, property dimensions, land and building uses, topographic features and natural attributes, public facilities and zoning regulations that generally reflect these areas as they are today.

The land use transects are grouped into five **Place Types** which reflect the most common patterns of development in the community, and the impacts that each development pattern has on mobility and the pedestrian environment. Place Types in Stoughton include:

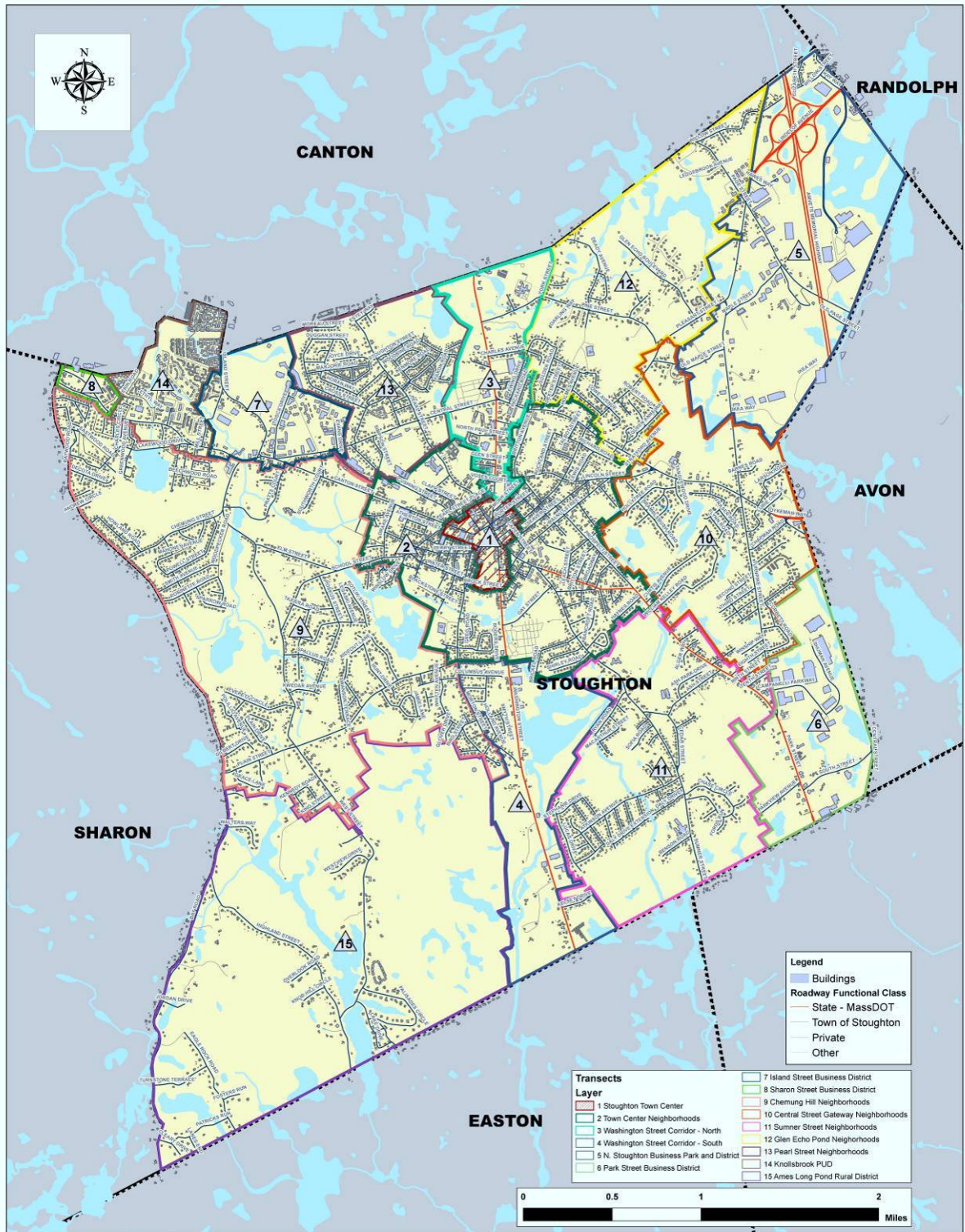
- Town Center
- Neighborhoods
- Commercial Corridors
- Commercial/Industrial Parks
- Commercial Nodes/Neighborhood Business Districts (NBD).

Growth management strategies are put forward for each Place Type taking into account the following planning objectives:

- Balancing community concerns of property rights, economic opportunities, neighborhood preservation, access to public facilities and open space, and land stewardship;
- Guiding appropriate types and forms of development to appropriate areas to fulfill desired economic, residential and civic opportunities;
- Managing the impacts of growth on municipal infrastructure, schools, public safety, cultural and natural resources, and the overall quality of life; and
- Reconciling existing land use regulation and policies with the desirable characteristics of each Place Type and future sustainable development goals.

This strategic planning process provides Stoughton with the best opportunity to effectuate sustainable development, protect important natural and cultural attributes, reinforce and enhance desired settlement patterns, and guide future growth and development as appropriate. A particular focus is Stoughton Town Center which is the historic, cultural and civic center of the community.

Figure 1: Transects Map



Stoughton Land Use Transects and Place Types										
Land Use Transect	Place Type	Total Acres (land parcels)	# of Parcels	Total Building Area (SF)	Avg. Lot Size	% of Town- Wide Land Area	% of Town- wide Building SF	Rental Living Units (avg)	Year Built (avg)	Total Assessed Value (avg)
1. Stoughton Town Center	Town Center	80	234	6,850	2.9	0.76%	6.19%	2.8	1940	\$ 312,020
2. Town Center Neighborhoods	Neighborhood	954	2,171	3,423	.44	9.05%	3.09%	1.5	1944	\$ 229,283
3. Washington Street Corridor – North	Commercial Corridor	321	424	4,835	.76	3.05%	4.37%	2	1958	\$ 360,685
4. Washington Street Corridor – South	Commercial Corridor	509	308	4,641	.61	4.83%	4.19%	1.3	1956	\$ 213,985
5. N. Stoughton Business Park and District	Commercial/Industrial Park	992	289	20,935	3.4	9.41%	18.92%	3.4	1971	\$ 938,828
6. Park Street Business District	Commercial/Industrial Park	429	110	31,155	3.9	4.07%	28.15%	3.1	1955	\$ 655,187
7. Island Street Business District	Commercial/Industrial Park	266	189	11,400	1.4	2.52%	10.30%	2.8	1967	\$ 399,897
8. Sharon Street Business District	Commercial Node/ Neighborhood Bus. District (NBD)	36	56	5,699	.64	0.34%	5.15%	0	1960	\$ 365,454
9. Chemung Hill Neighborhoods	Neighborhood	1,791	2,004	3,230	.89	16.99%	2.92%	1	1965	\$ 251,765
10. Central Street Gateway Neighborhoods	Neighborhood	765	867	3,539	.88	7.26%	3.20%	1.1	1970	\$ 267,912
11. Sumner Street Neighborhoods	Neighborhood	961	956	3,782	1.0	9.12%	3.42%	1.2	1964	\$ 245,556
12. Glen Echo Pond Neighborhoods	Neighborhood	815	952	3,360	.85	7.73%	3.04%	1.2	1971	\$ 246,248
13. Pearl Street Neighborhoods	Neighborhood	448	790	3,021	.56	4.25%	2.73%	1.1	1951	\$ 339,847
14. Knollsbrook PUD	Neighborhood	217	1,215	2,244	1.8	2.06%	2.03%	1.3	1975	\$ 204,733
15. Ames Long Pond Rural District	Neighborhood	1,955	619	2,558	3.15	18.55%	2.31%	0.6	1980	\$ 248,880

Sustainable Land Use Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Benchmarks

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for Land Use and Growth Management. This index identifies measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress in improving growth management in Stoughton.

Issues and Challenges

Town Center - There was near consensus during the public visioning process that Town Center poses Stoughton's greatest challenge and, in its current state, is a liability to the town rather than an asset. While there are a few beautiful historic buildings, a limited number of well-designed and maintained businesses, and a recently improved streetscape, these elements alone are not enough to overcome the negative aspects of the Center. The more pervasive characteristics are the deteriorated properties, vacant and unattractive store fronts, undeveloped lots, and unappealing signs and public spaces. Town Center's problems are compounded further when these physical characteristics are coupled with traffic congestion, a lack of convenient parking and a limited variety of retail businesses and activity and entertainment venues.

While local citizens are concerned over deteriorating conditions, they are also highly supportive and enthusiastic about revitalizing Town Center to take advantage of its transportation choices, compact form, historic architecture and public services. Town Center can and should be much more than a confluence of streets and a collection of businesses. It should be a distinctive and vibrant neighborhood and a civic gathering area the entire community is drawn to and enjoys.

- **Commercial Corridors** - The Washington Street corridor (Route 138) north of Town Center is dominated by strip centers, gas stations, isolated stores and restaurants, and some apartment buildings. There are also pockets of strip development on the Washington Street corridor south of downtown to the town line. These corridors capture local customers and residents because of their convenient location, but do not entice visitors or commuters to spend much time there. However, introducing mixed use infill development (commercial and residential) at strategic locations in a traditional, walkable form may transform these strip areas into more economically viable and attractive gateway creating a more positive impression of the community. Some of the key issues and opportunities to be addressed along Stoughton's commercial corridors include:
 - Long and undefined corridor segments as opposed to commercial nodes.
 - Excessive curb cuts and lack of internal connectivity.
 - Lack of streetscape including trees, sidewalks, and other pedestrian amenities.
 - Poor site design and uses due to lack of development standards.

- Opportunities to create an identity, develop gateways, mix compatible uses, and increase density to maximize efficiency of infrastructure.

Commercial/Industrial Parks – Stoughton contains several commercial and industrial business parks including the following land use transects: Park Street Business District (including Campanelli Park), Island Street Business District, Sharon Street Business District, and North Stoughton Business Park. As is common with suburban business parks, these districts are typically located at the edges of town and laid out on wide streets (often dead-end), with large lots and buildings, and limited uses. They are also isolated from surrounding neighborhoods and mostly lacking in employee amenities such as sidewalks, trails, open spaces, or convenience shops, restaurants or services. Those business parks that are closer to Route 24 and the regional traffic flow (such as the North Stoughton Business Park and District) appear to be more successful than more remote parks, some of which is due to their flexibility in adapting to economic trends and opportunities (such as big box stores and mixed use). Other common issues:

- Excessive traffic impacts and lack of appropriate infrastructure in some business parks.
- Lack of design standards needed to ensure quality development and protect property values.
- Lack of connectivity to surrounding areas.
- Absence of development regulations that call allow for more flexible building types and uses to meet current economic demands.
- Need for increased density and higher value development that will maximize infrastructure efficiencies within existing areas.

The 2012 Old Colony Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) indicates that a build out analysis conducted by the state for all municipalities in the region determined that there is much more land zoned for business and industry than can ever be developed. As the regional economy gradually changes from product-based to idea-based, a new form of business environment is taking shape. The office parks of the 1980's and 1990's on large lots with physical isolation from other uses, are being transformed into mixed-use corporate campuses, live-work spaces, and flexible warehouse spaces where small companies can share support services and grow in place. In addition to traditional local trades and industries, Stoughton must find ways to attract the growing workforce in creative and technological sectors as a means to diversify and establishing a sustainable local economy. Training the new generation of workers is also an important component of the local economic development program, and could significantly boost the tool and die trade in Stoughton.

Commercial Nodes/Neighborhood Business Districts - Presently, there are several scattered and undefined commercial nodes that generally follow the General Business (GB) zoning districts around Stoughton. These small areas are typically located on primary corridors (such as Central Street, Pleasant Street, and Park Street) and provide some conveniences to surrounding neighborhoods. These activity areas should continue to evolve into more well defined and connected neighborhood centers providing

residents with new and convenient shopping and services option. The scale, use, and intensity will depend on the size of the area served. These centers can reduce traffic (and congestion) on primary corridors and fill voids in neighborhood gathering places. Key issues to be addressed in each activity center include methods of connecting to surrounding neighborhoods, parking, and types of commercial and civic uses that best fit the area needs, as well as buffering commercial and residential uses where necessary.

Neighborhoods - Stoughton contains several district neighborhoods as shown on the Land Use Transect Map and Table including Chemung Hill Neighborhoods, Central Street Gateway Neighborhoods, Sumner Street Neighborhoods, Glen Echo Pond Neighborhoods, Pearl Street Neighborhoods, Knollsbrook Neighborhood, and Ames Long Pond Rural District. These areas can be generally categorized as traditional neighborhoods and conventional suburban neighborhoods. However, they all have distinct features and characteristic. For example, Pearl Street and a portion of Chemung Hill near the Sharon Street business district have similar characteristics to traditional Town Center neighborhoods, while portions of Glen Echo have similar rural qualities as the Ames Long Pond neighborhood.

Traditional neighborhoods, such as the Town Center Neighborhoods, have a discernible block pattern, shorter and narrower rectilinear streets, sidewalks and planting strips with mature street trees, and clear edges. This settlement pattern provides for a positive pedestrian environment, and a distinct identity within the community. ***Conventional neighborhoods***, such as Sumner Street and parts of Chemung Hill, have more suburban type development patterns. Common attributes include wider streets and right-of-ways, a more curvilinear street pattern, fewer street trees and sidewalks, more dead end streets and cul-de-sacs, less street connectivity, less intensity (wider and larger lots), and deeper house setbacks with bigger front yards. Typical streets limit connections between neighboring areas resulting in increased travel distances and congestion. Uses are almost exclusively single family residential with homes of a consistent shape and size on lots of a half acre or greater. Some of the key issues and opportunities include:

- A mix of housing styles, price and development patterns to accommodate a more diverse market.
- “Complete Streets” to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Access and integration of passive and active open space, schools, neighborhood oriented businesses, transit, and other community facilities.
- Internal connectivity and external separation from employment centers, shopping districts and transit services.
- Incompatible abutting uses (e.g. industry in North Stoughton)
- Limited public utilities in some areas (e.g. lack of sewer in central areas around ponds).

Community Vision for Land Use

As evidenced during the public visioning sessions in 2012, the majority of Stoughton citizens understand that growth will inevitably occur in the future. Planning for this growth will result in better neighborhoods, a stronger local economy, more civic attributes, greater sustainability, and a better quality of life for current and future residents. The community strongly supports the idea of strategic areas to focus growth within walkable activity centers, while protecting existing residential neighborhoods.

Stoughton's community vision statement (in part below) shows the desire of local residents to improve their quality of life through sustainable growth and revitalization.

- ***Town Center** is the municipal, social and cultural heart of Stoughton. Anchored by restored and repurposed historic buildings and served by beautiful public gathering spaces, accessible sidewalks, safe streets and convenient parking, Town Center is active with a mix of residential, commercial/retail and government buildings.*
- *Stoughton's **landscape** contributes to our suburban character with a mosaic of healthy natural systems that includes open fields, ponds, wetlands, waterways, forests and street trees. We honor our natural heritage by protecting, preserving and celebrating it. We provide exceptional stewardship and abundant opportunities for residents and visitors to access, explore and enjoy nature within our town.*
- *Stoughton's **history** adds to the richness of our town's character. Throughout town historic buildings and landscapes are preserved to provide space for municipal, cultural, recreational and educational programs as well as for housing, offices, shops and restaurants.*
- *Stoughton's attractive and active **business corridors and centers** provide an array of activity centers, services, jobs and tax revenues.*
- ***Neighborhoods** are distinct yet unified with varying housing styles, lot sizes and settlement patterns that serve a diversity of residents. They are connected by pathways and open space systems, schools and town activities, and events that bring people of all neighborhoods together.*

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Goals and Strategies

Goal 1:

Adopt a Sustainable Growth and Redevelopment Strategy



Future Growth Scenarios

Dispersed Development Growth Trend

The current growth scenario trend contemplates how the town would build out if the dispersed pattern of residential and commercial development were to continue in Stoughton. New growth would continue to appear as single-use, low density development that is generally isolated or not well-connected. Common

characteristics of this scenario include: greenfield development and loss of open space; outward expansion of public utilities to service low density developments, and continued transportation investments to address capacity and safety issues arising from rural roads that were not intended to accommodate significant growth.

This scenario continues to use low-density, single-use development patterns to meet future demand, which means more open space may become new residential neighborhoods or strip development. The current trend development scenario follows the Town's existing zoning bylaws and subdivision ordinance.

Centers, Neighborhoods and Corridors Growth Scenario

This alternative growth scenario contemplates how the town would build out if new growth were focused into more compact, walkable neighborhoods with nearby opportunities to live, work, shop, learn, and play. Development in the centers and the primary corridors between them would vary in scale, use, and intensity, ranging from Stoughton Town Center to neighborhood centers. By revising land use regulations and policies to direct new development and redevelopment to these designated areas, there can be more focus on tools for preserving remaining open space, recreation or resource areas such as through Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, partnerships with local or regional land trusts, development mitigation or other conservation tools. Common characteristics of this scenario include: walkable activity centers, greater land preservation, a better variety of development types, new civic gathering areas, and more legitimate daily travel options such as walking, bicycling, and bus transit in addition to personal vehicles.

The primary focus of this scenario is revitalization of Town Center, older neighborhoods, and underperforming business districts. Existing low-density residential neighborhoods would remain untouched in the alternative development scenario. Strip commercial development would be encouraged to transform into a more mixed use and walkable environment over time as owners and managers reinvest in their property.

This scenario introduces the concept of mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods and activity centers to Stoughton, which should capture a significant amount of growth through reuse, redevelopment and reinvestment in targeted areas supported by revised zoning and economic and community development incentive programs. This scenario should also be coupled with open space conservation programs and expansion of passive/active recreational uses.

There are advantages of the Centers, Neighborhoods and Corridors growth scenario. In terms of economic development, more compact land use provides increased opportunities for growth in commercial and industrial sectors maximizing tax base potential and increasing the number of local jobs. Likewise, focusing on redevelopment, reuse and revitalization consumes less land and improves efficiency of public facilities and services while providing a greater balance of development and open space. When all factors are combined, this growth scenario better meets the town's vision of the future by providing opportunities for:

- Lower residential property taxes through broader opportunities for commercial mixed use.
- Shorter commutes.
- More local job opportunities by diversifying building types to accommodate large and small operations in a wide range of business sectors.
- Preserved rural atmosphere.
- Better quality of life.

Potential Strategies and Sustainable Growth Toolbox

Improve the “public realm” as a framework for private investment in all land use transects.

Adopt Context-Based Street Design Standards - The town should adopt new street design standards to integrate streetscape treatments and intermodal accommodations (i.e. pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit) based on the context in which they are constructed. Standards in the subdivision regulations provide few options to choose from and required right-of-ways may be unnecessarily wide and out of context in many areas. A “Complete Street” hierarchy would provide context-based design standards for streets that are scaled to the village and neighborhood settings and facilitate different forms of transportation movement. New Complete Street design standards should also be considered when redesigning existing streets and should be integrated into the town's capital improvement program.

Streetscape Enhancements - A consistent scheme of streetscape enhancements specifically designed to balance vehicle mobility with pedestrian safety and enjoyment contributes to the overall success of any center, node, corridor, or neighborhood. Future street redesign projects should include streetscape improvements that include a combination of well-placed elements such as:

- Curb extensions with accent material and other traffic calming techniques.
- Consistent crosswalk design and treatments.
- Street trees with variable species and planting patterns.
- Boulevards, pedestrian refuges and planting strips where appropriate.
- Bus shelters and pullouts along major corridors where appropriate.
- Street furnishings such as benches, planters, pedestrian level lighting, informational kiosks, and trash receptacles (with a particular emphasis in the Town Center and commercial corridors).
- Gateway treatments and directional signage.

Plant, Replace and Maintain Trees – Street trees typically live 10 to 15 years on average. As trees need to be replaced in the Town Center, commercial corridors, business parks, and neighborhood streets, alternative species should be planted to provide greater variety and protection against substantial losses caused by diseases prone to certain species. Additionally, new and replacement street trees should be carefully located so as not to block doorways, storefront windows, and signs in Town Center and commercial districts. Deciduous trees are strongly encouraged over conifers to provide shade along sidewalks and in parking lots, and to maintain storefront visibility. (Exceptions are made where screening is necessary). Existing street trees that are low branching should be pruned up to eight feet above the sidewalk to enhance visibility for walkers as well as drivers. The Town of Stoughton should consider becoming a Tree City USA community, as it once was.

Improve Accessibility – Future street and sidewalk improvements should continue to address access deficiencies as a priority. The town should continue to upgrade pedestrian crosswalks using a model template which is consistent in materials, treatment and equipment, conveying to drivers as well as pedestrians to slow down and be aware. ADA compliant access from the sidewalks to private buildings should also be addressed in public streetscape improvements as well as private site plan reviews.

Adopt Design Standards to Create Usable Open Space, Community Facilities and Civic Amenities - Town Center as well as neighborhoods should include a variety of spaces used for different types of public gatherings and active/passive recreational uses. The town should assess municipally owned parcels for these opportunities. Such amenities tend to improve vitality and property values, and should be integrated into the fabric of Town Center and neighborhoods and be within a comfortable walking distance of visitors and residents. Open spaces may include small parks, greens, playgrounds, picnic areas, athletic fields, community garden plots, trails, and other passive and active use

spaces. These open spaces should be highly programmed with neighborhood and community events and activities. Elementary schools and other public community facilities should also be within a safe and comfortable walking distance of neighborhood residents. The town should focus on areas where there are insufficient open space and community facilities and consider future opportunities to provide neighborhoods with additional amenities.

Improving the “Visitability” of Stoughton.

Install Gateway Treatments and Wayfinding System – Few gateway and wayfinding features are evident along the major corridors in Stoughton. The primary purpose of installing gateway features is to give the traveler a sense of arrival and let them know that the community takes pride in itself. Gateway features can also be a traffic-calming device, informing motorists that they are approaching a heavily populated area or activity center. As the town installs complete streets and streetscape enhancements, grant funding should also be sought for the installation of unique monuments, welcome signs and other gateway features at the town line on major corridors, at the entrance to Town Center, and business parks, as well as in neighborhoods to welcome people as they enter the area, provide a good first impression, and to demonstrate Stoughton’s unique character and settlement patterns.

Effective wayfinding can be an important tool for increasing customer sales and visitor satisfaction. In Town Center, travelers should be directed to public parking areas, commuter rail, shops and services, recreation areas and civic buildings, and other points of interest. Attractive, coordinated, visible signage that is unique to Stoughton should be installed over time as other unattractive and unnecessary signage is removed. Directional signage should also be coordinated with informational kiosks, business directories, landmark signs, street banners, and other wayfinding system elements.

Encourage compact development and mixed use.

Compact Development - Compact development is an effective method to conserve land with agricultural, wildlife habitat, or scenic/aesthetic value. While it may not be the preference of all citizens, compact development on open or underutilized properties may be the most sustainable method of growth and as higher densities and mixed uses tend to require less public service, yield higher tax revenues per acre, and afford the opportunity to conserve lands in strategic areas. However, consideration must be given to local market preferences and the recognition that there is no “one size fits all” solution.

Mixed Uses - Commercial centers, corridors and neighborhoods should include a mix of commercial (retail, restaurants, and offices), residential, recreational, and civic uses where appropriate. This mix should be well-balanced, incorporating both vertical and horizontal mixed-use in strategic locations. An example of vertical mixed use is a multiple story building that contains commercial activity on the first floor and residential above. Horizontal mixed use occurs in buildings with different uses located next to each other. An ideal mix would allow residents to meet all of their daily needs within a short

walking distance. When this occurs, the number of automobile trips per household is substantially reduced. This mix of uses is optimized when commercial establishments have residential dwelling units above to help promote active streets.

Goal 2:

Revitalize Town Center



Primary Objective

Stoughton Town Center can be an attractive destination for residents and visitors alike. Its historic and traditional New England village development patterns remain largely intact today. This has resulted in most buildings lining the sidewalk which supports walkability. However, traffic congestion, parking constraints, limited open spaces for gatherings, the blighted condition of several

buildings, and competing local and regional commercial interests have resulted in a far more limited mix of commercial, entertainment and civic uses than once drew residents from around the community on a regular basis.

Revitalizing Town Center is a high priority in Stoughton and primary objectives include: creating a unique identity and brand; improving walkability, connectivity and access; developing a more uniform streetscape that ties the Center together and supports business activity; enhancing public amenities and opportunities for civic gatherings; and balancing the town's approach to transportation (vehicles, bus transit, commuter rail, pedestrians, and bicyclists). Both the Town of Stoughton and the Stoughton Redevelopment Authority (SRA) are focused on revitalization of the Center, including SRA's initiative to prepare an Urban Renewal Plan for the area.

Guiding Principles for Stoughton Town Center Revitalization

- Focus on **improving the quality of the Town Center experience** for commuters, visitors and residents alike.
- Explore ways that the town can **attract new businesses** by providing incentives for entrepreneurs and start-up companies that demonstrate market potential in creating a regional draw as well as serving local customers.
- Take proactive steps to **retain and attract new entrepreneurs** to fill empty storefronts and build a “critical mass” that will position the Center to take advantage of the economy as it improves.
- Explore options to **work with property owners** particularly in the square who have not been actively involved in promotion of business development.
- Recruit and **entice successful retailers from within the region** and entrepreneurs to open stores that will bring interest and enliven the Center.
- Encourage **more residential and mixed use redevelopment** to eliminate vacant and underutilized properties that create a perception of blight.
- Integrate **more open space, recreational amenities and civic gathering areas** to connect Town Center and surrounding neighborhoods and create a draw to the district.
- Use the internet and social media to **get the word out** about Town Center on all cultural resources, shops, services and restaurants, civic events, and other reasons to visit.

Potential Strategies

Foster public/private cooperation and commitment to revitalizing Town Center.

The public/private cooperative effort is based on the understanding that there is a heightened degree of relationship and interdependence in traditional villages such as Stoughton Town Center between building envelopes and the “public realm” that includes streets, parking areas, and open space. Particular attention to the pedestrian environment including civic gathering spaces, walkability and street activation is critical to support desired private investment and mix of business types.

Public/private cooperation in the revitalization of Town Center must involve a broad range of municipal departments, boards and committees. On the private side, property owners, residents, business owners, potential developers, and local business organizations must all be committed to the revitalization process and to working with the town toward this common goal.

Preserve and enhance traditional settlement patterns and design characteristics of Town Center.

Stoughton Town Center contains traditional and historic settlement and design characteristics as identified below:

- Tight settlement patterns.
- Building functional and architectural compatibility.
- Moderate block sizes that are at a comfortable pedestrian scale.

- Street Wall/Street Enclosure (the ratio of building height to street width) that provides a comfortable pedestrian environment.
- Strong terminal vistas (such as at both ends of the downtown core).

Current downtown design guidelines should be revised and expanded to address these key design characteristics which are considered baseline vitality indicators as the town moves forward with revitalization initiatives. Future reuse, rehabilitation, redevelopment and infill development should respect and enhance these key characteristics. The town must also consider the uses currently allowed in Town Center, and whether or not they contribute to a positive mixed-use and walkable environment or are the uses more auto-oriented and could they be better accommodated in other commercial districts.

Placemaking: Stoughton Town Center, MA
Street Design Characteristics and Indicators

2 Street Width & Enclosure Variations: South Washington Street



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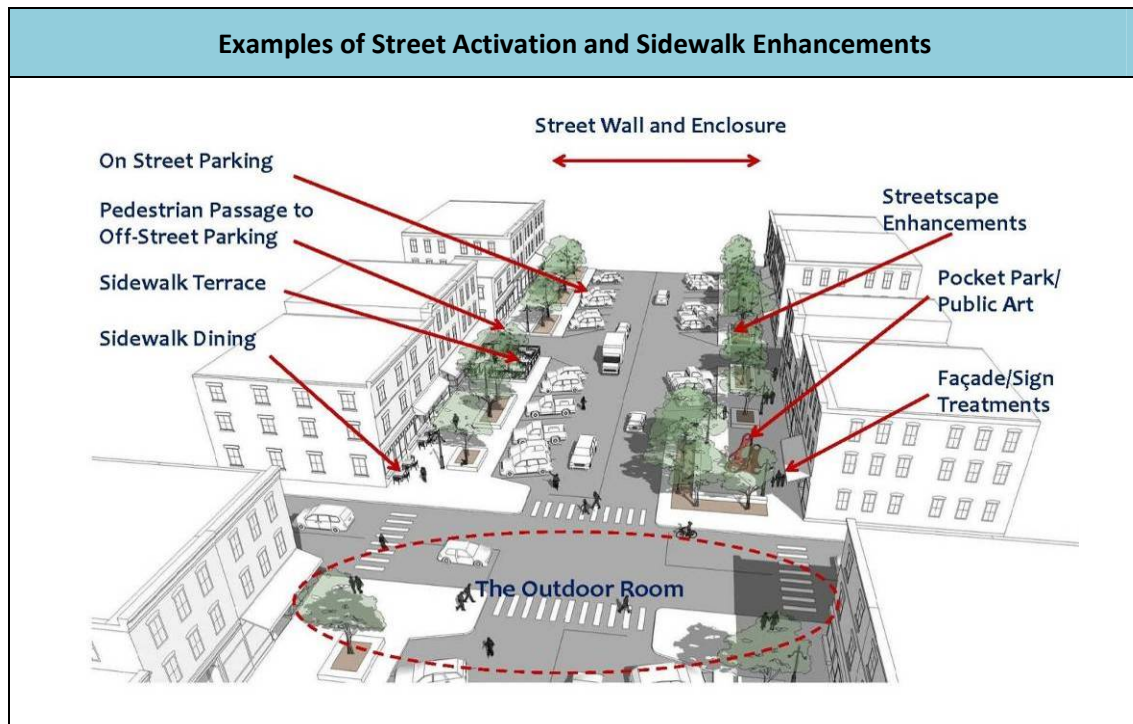
Improve the pedestrian environment through “Street Activation”.

There are many formal and informal ways to bring streets to life. “Street Activation” or improving the “outdoor room” can be defined as a series of methods used to create interesting and interactive environments for people. Some key factors include the following:

- Active uses of private frontages between the buildings and the sidewalks (civic gathering areas, outdoor dining, store displays, etc.).

- Active uses of public frontages between the private frontage and the curb (banner, benches, lighting, and other sidewalk furnishings and streetscape treatments).
- Shopfronts that are interesting and engaging to the pedestrian including various façade, sign and window treatments.

There are many other older commercial buildings in Stoughton Town Center with traditional building facades that were designed to maximize exposure and interest to potential customers predominately on foot when the majority of these buildings were constructed. As the automobile became the predominate form of transportation and access, many facades were altered, large ground signs installed, and parking added lessening the pedestrian experience.



Examples of Street Activation and Sidewalk Enhancements		
		
<i>Street Trees Pruned Up Bridgewater, MA</i>	<i>Seating and Bike Racks, Portsmouth, NH</i>	<i>Outdoor Seating on Narrow Sidewalk Winter Park, FL</i>

As Town Center is revitalized, storefront facades, signs, and other design elements should be renovated to once again maximize pedestrian interest. Some of the key building design elements that are important to the revitalization process are the following:

Building Articulation and Encroachments – To enhance traditional village centers, new buildings as well as existing buildings that are renovated should be well articulated and include a degree of architectural detail. Building elements and encroachments that interact with people along the sidewalk give a three-dimensional texture to the street and improve the pedestrian environment. Some examples include terraces, porches, stoops, forecourts, galleries, arcades, bay windows and balconies.

Shopfront Width, Openings and Fenestration – To enhance the pedestrian experience, ground floors should include storefront components with limited widths (20 to 40 feet typically), taller floor-ceiling plates, and higher percentages of openings and fenestration.

Window Displays and Decorations – In addition to a higher degree of glazing (clear windows) at street level, window displays and decorations (including flower boxes) should be high quality and engaging to the pedestrian. Currently, there are some storefront uses where the openings have been reduced or where curtains are drawn creating blank walls and black holes in the pedestrian environment.

Building Signage – Very few businesses in Town Center have projecting signs (also referred to as blade, bracket or hanging signs). These are the most effective method of informing pedestrians and drivers about businesses because they can be seen from a distance by pedestrians along the sidewalk and drivers along the street. Wall signs are also important but are not as visible as projecting signs in a traditional center because they can't be seen until an observer is in front of or across from the storefront, and they compete more with other visual elements such as street trees and street lights. The

best combination of signage for Town Center is a combination of high quality and moderately sized wall signs, projecting signs, and window signs.

Other temporary, low-cost or incremental treatments to improve vitality (sometimes referred to as **Tactical Urbanism**) also have applications in Stoughton's Town Center (as well as commercial corridors and neighborhood business districts). Some common techniques include PARKing Lots, PARKlets, pop-up stores, vendors courts, food trucks, chair bombing and others.

Enhance streetscape and walkability in Town Center.

Continue to Make Streetscape Improvements - A consistent scheme of streetscape enhancements specifically designed to balance vehicle mobility with pedestrian safety and enjoyment contributes to the overall success of any downtown environment. There are several areas in Town Center where streetscape improvement can provide more depth to the core area (the square) along Washington Street by expanding pedestrian connectivity to side streets, and creating a more attractive setting for future redevelopment and investment. Future phases of streetscape improvements should consider a combination of well-placed elements such as the following:

- Reconsider the center boulevard along Washington Street in the square. This area could possibly be reconfigured to expand the width of sidewalks, planting areas, and curb extension which may better serve businesses and private investment.
- Pedestrian-level lighting extending out of the square into the surrounding commercial and residential areas.
- Curb extensions with accent material approaching the square to calm traffic and create a sense of arrival.
- Crosswalks meeting ADA requirements and with consistent treatments and materials.
- Street trees with variable species and distribution patterns to enclose the street and provide shade on the sidewalk.
- Additional bus shelters and pull outs where appropriate.
- Street furnishings such as benches, planters, window boxes, informational kiosks, and trash receptacles.
- Gateway treatments and directional signage.

Other streetscape enhancements in Stoughton Town Center should include more visible crosswalk and traffic-calming treatments, and improved pedestrian access to parking areas.

Create a Murals Program - Attractively designed murals can help create a positive symbol for Town Center and serve as a reminder to residents and customers of significant cultural characteristics, historical events, and fun facts about Stoughton.

Murals should be placed in visible locations that are currently unattractive (such as blank building walls, abutments, alleys, or parking areas). Local artists and students could be recruited to participate in a mural program.

Examples of Wayfinding Signs, Informational Kiosks, and Murals		
		
Newburyport, MA	Saratoga Springs, NY	Falmouth, MA
		
Amherst, MA.	Englewood, FL	
		
Example murals and street art, Clematis Street, West Palm Beach, Florida		

Install Information Kiosks - Strategically located informational kiosks should be placed in Town Center. The kiosks can be both stand-alone structures and wall-mounted units and should contain a business directory map, points of public interest, and information on upcoming events and activities in Stoughton. The kiosk should also contain marketing materials explaining and illustrating local history, architecture, and culture. Potential locations may include Town Hall, the public library, train station, Faxon Memorial Park, in public parking lots, and at both ends of the square.

Expand and enhance community gathering areas in Town Center.

Open spaces and community gathering areas are an essential attribute of vibrant town centers. They should serve surrounding neighborhoods as well as draw other residents and visitors to Stoughton Town Center for entertainment, recreational and civic activities. Existing and future open spaces, parks, and trails should also support private businesses and property investment opportunities in Town Center. Some possible improvements in Stoughton Town Center include:

Faxon Memorial Park - Make landscape enhancements to Faxon Memorial Park and program it for regular civic events and activities to draw more people to Town Center. This may include the installation of playground equipment and an amphitheater to provide more utilization for surrounding neighborhoods and the community. Hold regular civic events to activate the space.

- *Potential Future Town Common* - The town should work with the First Parish Universalist Church to determine if the town-owned parking area in front of the former IOOF/Pacheco Hardware Store and the church yard could be jointly reorganized into a larger common in the heart of Stoughton Town Center. The primary issues to be considered would be the shared use of parking and open space, as well as future programming (such as weddings, festivals, and markets). This enlarged and centrally located open space would create a very attractive framework for revitalization in the square. The town should also work with the U.S. Postal Service to determine if civic open space may also be shaped out of the property between Porter Street and Wyman Street.
- *Create a Food Vendor Court as a Business Incubator* – Possibly coupled with the Farmers Market should be the **“Taste of Stoughton” Vendors Court** featuring food carts from existing local restaurants and other food vendors that may consider a permanent location in Town Center. This is a great opportunity to introduce existing and new restaurants to local customers and visitors. The town should work with local property and businesses owners to take the following steps:
 - Identify location(s) for vendors court;
 - Price food carts that could be rented to proprietors;
 - Coordinate with existing restaurants and give them the first opportunities;
 - Recruit vendors including potential future restaurateurs; and
 - Coordinate advertising with local businesses and organizations.

• **Other Potential Open Space Initiatives:**

- Expand the Farmers Market;
- Program the space in front of the Stoughton Public Library as well as the former library (now Stoughton Historical Society) for outdoor seating and small civic gatherings;
- Construct a multi-purpose trail that connects Town Center with local neighborhoods and possibly surrounding communities; and
- Expand existing and plan new community events and activities in Town Center.
- Consider zoning incentives for creation of more open space such as height and density bonuses.
- Consider adding width to sidewalk in front of Malcolm Parson's block to accommodate trees, benches, seating areas and other pedestrian amenities.

Placemaking: Stoughton Town Center, MA
Civic Space Design Characteristics and Indicators

6 Civic Open Spaces Within a 5 Minute Walk of Town Center



5 Halloran Park



6 Meads Meadow

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Create a Parking Management Program to addresses customer as well as employee needs.

The public and private parking system (and the perception of adequate parking) is critical to the vitality of Stoughton Town Center. Through the community engagement process, several parking issues in the Center were identified such as the strategic

expansion of public parking, connection of public and private parking areas, management of public and private spaces to facilitate a higher turnover of spaces primarily intended for customer use, and designation of longer-term remote spaces for local employees. Some of the specific considerations for future parking enhancements include the following:

- Carry out a parking management plan.
- Evaluate parking time limits.
- Consider establishing a Public Parking Fund
- Evaluate the feasibility and benefits of structured parking in the long-term.
- Improve aesthetic lighting and landscaping on off-street parking lots.

(See the Transportation Section for more detailed parking strategies for Town Center).

Work toward the revitalization, re-use and redevelopment of targeted sites in Town Center.

Private development and investment in Town Center is the primary ingredient of successful revitalization and the underlying objective of the Economic Development Section. While the town cannot require redevelopment by existing property owners, there are a number of key sites that are important in the process and where redevelopment may be facilitated through additional economic incentives. The Stoughton Redevelopment Authority has appropriated funds for the preparation of an Urban Renewal Plan which may boost the process of revitalization and redevelopment. Some targeted sites and preferred future uses are described below:

- Repurpose and rehabilitate the Stoughton Train Station Depot Building.
- Rehabilitate the State Theatre.
- Redevelop the Malcolm and Parsons Block.
- Renovate the former IOOF/Pacheco Hardware Store.
- Redevelop the Post Office site (retain customer services but relocate distribution facilities) for public space, mixed use and public parking.
- Encourage more housing and mixed use development around the train station (Transit Oriented Development).
- Infill existing development with shops and restaurants and ground level and upper floor office and residential uses.
- Focus on strategic reuse, rehabilitation, and redevelopment along Wyman Street corridor.

Create incentives for revitalization and reinvestment.

Create a Facade and Sign Improvement Program - The town should create and promote a **Town Center Sign & Façade Improvement Program** as a key economic incentive for property and business owners to renovate the exterior of their buildings, and improve

the overall visual appeal of the Center as a place to visit, shop and work. This should be a matching grant program and property owners should be eligible to receive a rebate equal to 50% of the actual cost of improvements. Eligible improvements under the Sign and Façade Improvement Program should include the following:

- Removal of elements which cover architectural details.
- Replacement of original architectural details.
- New storefront construction within an existing building.
- Window replacement and window framing visible from the street.
- Removal of barriers to those with physical disabilities (e.g. steps) and construction of new exterior access.
- New wall, blade and window signs and awnings.
- Cleaning, repainting, repointing, or residing of buildings.
- Exterior lighting, planting, landscaping and furnishings when part of an overall façade renovation project.

The town should use and possibly supplement the **Stoughton Center Design Review Guidelines** to specifically address façade improvements, ensure high quality workmanship, and appropriate design and installation. Issues to be addressed by the design standards for building renovations, storefront improvements and in-fill building construction should include:

- Comparable building heights.
- Proportion of architectural elements.
- Rhythm of masses and voids on building façades.
- Shapes of roofs and windows.
- Human scale of building and street elements.
- Directional dominance of horizontal versus vertical features.
- Details – color, texture, materials, paving.
- Light fixtures.
- Compatible signage and awnings.
- Site design and its relation to the neighborhood.

The town should form a temporary committee to prepare grant applications, design standards, and application material for a new façade and sign program.

Initiate and Strategically Utilize a Dedicated Supplemental Town Center Wine and Malt Licenses Program - A Supplemental Liquor License program, approved by the 2014 Annual Town Meeting is being sought through special state legislation. This can be a very effective economic development tool in creating a cluster of restaurants in strategic sites in Town Center. Creating a cluster of restaurants in the square could expand local customer draw and expand the market area. Applicants would be reviewed under a set of guidelines adopted by the town to ensure quality. The stated purpose of such regulations would be to enhance the dining experience of individuals patronizing local restaurants and to foster the economic revitalization of Town Center.

In selecting applicants, the town should place considerable emphasis on achieving the following objectives:

- Occupy former vacant space.
- Bring or maintain a high quality restaurant to the Center that provides fine food and service with quality atmosphere.
- Strengthen the commercial tax base.
- Improve the variety of restaurants.
- Improve the physical appearance of the Center.

Promote and Facilitate Outdoor Dining - Sidewalk activity such as seating and dining can add significant vitality to Town Center and should be allowed and promoted. This is a low cost method for restaurants to expand business while creating a more vibrant and engaging pedestrian environment.

Consider developing an Urban Renewal District for Town Center - The Urban Renewal Program (M.G.L. Chapter 121B) allows municipalities to revitalize substandard, decadent or blighted open areas for residential, commercial, industrial, business, governmental, recreational, educational, hospital, or other purposes. The town should evaluate potential benefits of establishing an Urban Renewal Plan as a potential method to redevelop deteriorated areas by providing the economic environment needed to attract and support private investment. The town should utilize DHCD's Division of Community Services technical assistance in evaluating the potential for urban renewal in Stoughton Town Center.

Revise zoning regulations in the Central Business District to align with the future vision of Stoughton Town Center.

For traditional and historic central business districts like Stoughton Town Center the following key regulatory indicators and economic benchmarks are compared to existing requirements:

- Zoning district boundaries that reflect desired uses and development patterns.
- Provisions for a broad variety and mix of uses.
- Provisions for desired density, placement, and vertical definition of buildings and uses.
- Design guidelines and standards that complement and preserve the architectural characteristics and development patterns desired for the district.
- Flexible parking standards that recognize that distribution, balance (on/off street and public/private) and sharing are more important than on-site spaces.
- Regulations that allow for an interesting pedestrian environment and street activation (such as signage, sidewalk displays, and outdoor dining).

The town recently adopted the Stoughton Mixed Use Overlay District bylaw (SMUOD) and the Planning Board working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) created the Stoughton Center Design Review Guidelines. However, more basic

and “by right” standards should be considered in the Central Business District (CBD) zone to provide for improved opportunities for business development, property redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and high quality aesthetic enhancement in the Town Center area. Some possible amendments include the following:

- Consider adopting a maximum front yard setback or a build-to-zone (BTZ) in the CBD to ensure that new buildings retain the street enclosure and enhance the pedestrian environment. Front setbacks should be limited and uses specifically identified so that they serve as extensions to the sidewalk (such as with dining terraces, forecourts).
- Consider requiring a parking placement requirement in the CBD to ensure that parking is located to the side or rear of the building, is screened from the street, and has appropriate pedestrian access. Provide additional parking reduction incentives where the use is within reasonable proximity of public parking, adjacent lots are connected internally and where curb cuts are shared or limited.
- Consider requiring bicycle racks in the CBD and installing them in public parking lots.
- Consider amending the landscaping requirements to focus more on streetscape improvements along the frontage such as a landscaped strip, sidewalk extension and pedestrian activity areas (i.e. forecourts, dining terraces, and sidewalk seating), and new street trees within the public right-of-way where needed.
- Consider Frontage Zones and Ground Floor Limitations to ensure that storefronts in key areas (such as the square) targeted to retail and restaurant uses have the opportunity to cluster, while other commercial and residential uses are predominately located on side streets and upper floors (i.e. back office and other non-active commercial uses that are not intended for public visitation).
- Consider allowing more vertical and horizontal mixed uses (commercial and residential) by right with performance standards.
- Consider limiting the size of retail stores to 10,000 square feet by right and over 10,000 square feet by special permit with specific performance standards to ensure compatibility with smaller stores that typically occupy the downtown area.

Enhance commuter rail service and facilities.

The proposed at grade, electrified, dual track system, and station relocation proposed in the state’s South Coast Rail Plan (See Transportation) will have negative impacts on the Town Center revitalization process. The town is opposed to the plan and is working with the state to consider alternative configurations that would place the track below grade to improve vehicle as well as pedestrian access, circulation, and safety. In terms of the future station location, the town is more favorable to the option of placing a combined depressed rail platform and parking garage on Rose Street at the present location of the Stoughton Police Station and municipal parking lot. This new facility

could support business development in the Town Center as well as transit oriented development (TOD) on surrounding properties. Ultimately, the town supports improving commuter rail service in Stoughton and will continue to work with MBTA and various state departments to enhance facilities and service. However, several additional factors must be considered in preparing final plans for expanded rail service including community and economic development goals for Town Center, traffic congestion, pedestrian comfort and safety, and aesthetic appeal.

Consider other possible Town Center initiatives and actions.

Based on input from the public visioning workshop and the Town Center Focus Group other unrealized opportunities and potential ideas for redevelopment and revitalization include the following

- Create an arts district and encourage eclectic shops and restaurants.
- Develop a pedestrian and automobile friendly circulation system by reconfiguring streets and ensuring a continuous circuit of safe and accessible sidewalks.
- Develop gathering places to accommodate chance meetings and town-wide celebrations.
- Establish a more visible police presence to discourage jay walking.
- Encourage more considerate driving behaviors.
- Increase and improve active retail businesses as ground floor uses.
- Limit non-active store fronts.
- Support housing and offices on upper floors.
- Assess customer needs with tools such as questionnaires and surveys.
- Assure that the design and maintenance of buildings, infrastructure, and landscapes create a cohesive and attractive center.
- Develop working groups to provide greater opportunities for networking and collaborating

Goal 3:

Improve Highway Business Corridors

• **Primary Objective**

The primary objective for all business districts but particularly on commercial corridors such as Route 138 is to combine public realm improvements with private reinvestment opportunities to create a sense of place focused on key intersections (commercial nodes) and segments with the best potential to fulfill local resident and commuter needs. Other primary objectives include:

- Develop business corridors and centers that are attractive and portray a positive image.
- Broaden Stoughton's tax base with high value commercial property.
- Attract and retain businesses and industry that provide valuable employment opportunities without compromising the town's character.
- Create a culture of support and cooperation between the government and business community.

Potential Strategies

Carry out strip development retrofit initiatives for the Washington Street corridor.

Revise Policies and Regulations to Prevent Further Sprawl and Improve Existing Commercial Corridors - The most effective method of reversing the impacts of sprawl is more intensive use of buildings and sites already in place. Building on or near existing infrastructure allows Stoughton to avoid investment in costly water and sewer extensions, which themselves can lead to more sprawl. Private development typically occurs in piecemeal fashion as sites become available and as market pressures and financing dictate. The public sector can make the Washington Street corridor more attractive through streetscape improvements as well as higher density mixed use zoning in strategic areas such as at key intersections which will lead to reinvestment and eventual transformation.

Focus on Site Plan Review - Physically changing the appearance and functionality of the Washington Street Corridor (Route 138) is critical to its future vitality and economic contribution to the town. Implementing streetscape improvements coupled with high quality development, a broader mix of uses, and utilizing excess parking areas with infill buildings closer to the street are some of the methods that can be used for retrofitting strip development. Internal circulation, shared parking, and internal connections to the public sidewalk also change the environment in favor of a more balanced and complete street for pedestrians and bicycles as well as vehicles.

Create Commercial Nodes at Key Intersections – Intersections should be the focus of higher density development serving adjacent segments of the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. Intersection treatments and signal improvements should provide safe and attractive pedestrian crossings and streetscape improvements. Regulations should allow infill development to define the street with buildings that frame the street and improve the pedestrian environment. New civic plazas and greens should be added to emphasize the importance of the location.

Access Management, Connectivity and Block Definition – Shared access and internal connections should be encouraged where feasible and required where necessary to ensure public safety. Connections to adjacent streets are also favorable as it disperses traffic and may provide congestion relief on Washington Street. A new block system should be strategically integrated over time radiating from key intersections and commercial nodes. This physical connection between buildings and street network

serves not only vehicular traffic but also provides safe access for pedestrians and cyclists from adjacent residential and commercial areas.

Since the Washington Street (Route 138) corridor links Stoughton and the region via Route 139, Route 27, and Route 24, it serves as the “catch-all” for most daily needs. It has the potential to contribute significantly more to the economic stability of Stoughton. Its continued redevelopment and street improvements will likely be phased incrementally over an extended period of time.

Goal 4:

Improve Commercial/Industrial Parks and Neighborhood Business Districts

Primary Objectives

Today many companies are seeking to locate in communities that have multi-modal transportation systems, broad housing options, are culturally appealing and have access to open spaces. This is because a growing number of employees want more than just a suburban lifestyle and are seeking to work in vibrant communities with active lifestyles and cultural resources. To take advantage of this shift in culture and mindset, Stoughton should promote the creation of high quality built environments through smarter land use regulations and development incentives, and then rigorously tailor a marketing message to feature this aspect of the town. Investments in business place-making will pay off and should be considered an important part of the town’s economic development program.

Potential Strategies

Create more flex space in existing industrial parks.

The revitalization of older existing industrial parks such as Park Street (Campanelli Parkway), Island Street, Technology Center Drive and Turnpike Street will have significant and ongoing economic impacts on Stoughton. These areas, and the legacy they represent, can be the building blocks for a new economic development strategy. By focusing attention and policies that provide more flex space in these areas (to encourage a broader mix of building types, scale and uses), the town is directing resources to those areas that need them most. Resuscitating some of the large sites and underutilized buildings in these industrial parks must be a priority if Stoughton is going to maximize the infrastructure investment already made by the town to serve these industrial parks and preserve other undeveloped areas.

Carry out a “Place-Based” Business Development Program.

Commercial and industrial uses can be developed in a format that is friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists, and minimizes car trips by allowing for a mix of uses in close

proximity. Most uses, even light industrial activities, are compatible and can be located close together. In unique cases where smells or extreme noise are an issue, the conventional approach of separating uses is appropriate. Making Stoughton's business parks and industrial areas more inviting to pedestrians and workers will increase interest in new investment and business development. This strategy should be targeted to vacant, obsolete and underutilized properties.

Promote the growth of neighborhood activity centers.

The town should encourage the gradual development of unique neighborhood activity centers in strategic locations along primary corridors. These evolving centers, where appropriate, may include a mix of uses and activities located close together, providing people with new options for places to live, work, shop, learn and participate in civic life. New walkable neighborhood centers and commons should vary in scale, use, and intensity based on area served. They should fill voids in Stoughton's hierarchy of Town Center, commercial corridors and neighborhoods, and should further advance the economic vitality and sustainability of the town, while also promoting social interaction and community building. Some possible locations for neighborhood activity centers include:

- Washington Street at Central Street
- Washington Street at Plain Street (and south)
- Washington Street at Atkinson Avenue (and south)
- Park Street at Prospect Street
- Park Street at Turnpike Street
- Central Street at West Street
- Central Street at Pleasant Street
- Central Street at Pearl Street
- Central Street at Chapman Road or Turnpike Street
- Sumner Street at Reginald Cole Drive (Goddard Hospital)
- Pleasant Street at Lincoln Street
- Canton Street at Simpson Street

Provide for business incubation.

Local start-ups and new businesses form the foundation of a community in the sense that they generate both financial and social capital. Local businesses also serve as a morale booster that help bolster the local economy and create the entrepreneurial spirit and buzz that attracts other creative types. The process of encouraging new business development can be spurred by the provision of incubator space. Incubator space can be a simple modular structure that is moveable or it can be permanent. For a business

incubator to be successful, it needs to be reasonably priced to facilitate the start-up phase, with the understanding that the business will eventually move into a larger space once it is more established and its business begins to grow. The town should identify suitable locations for business incubators in underutilized or vacant lots and buildings and work with property and business owners to establish the facilities for start-up businesses. Small incubators could be established in Town Center while larger ones could be formed in various industrial parks around Stoughton. Trackside Plaza is an example of a successful incubator.

Develop craft businesses.

There is a growing trend among the creative class to seek out local coffee roasters, brew pubs, health and beauty products, and other craft businesses that offer high quality and locally produced products. Stoughton should seek out the kind of entrepreneurs looking for space in up-and-coming places and provide them with incentives for setting up their home base in Stoughton. These kinds of businesses would provide locals with a more diverse set of opportunities to patronize and support local businesses. Craft business development should be targeted for Town Center and Neighborhood Business Districts.

Provide for artisan industrial space and live/work units.

Stoughton has an opportunity to integrate a variety of creative building types into the community increasing opportunities to attract different kinds of business people to town. Artisan industrial space is designed to accommodate a workshop and living quarters within one building, similar to a live/work unit, where one mortgage covers both uses. This allows creative entrepreneurs the means to affordably engage in small scale artistic and light industrial pursuits. These buildings can also be used for artist studios and creative knowledge workers. Artisan industrial space can be set up with ground floor workshops facing onto streets, with large doors that can expose the passerby to the work happening inside. The process of encouraging new business development can be spurred by incentives for low cost incubator space as well as more permanent artisan industrial space, where land values are lower than those in the rest of town. These building types are suitable in all business districts. Felios, an artist collaborative on Route 27, is one example of this type of space.

Encourage co-working and shared office spaces.

This business development format involves a shared working environment, such as an office, where workers share a physical space but conduct business activities independently. Unlike a typical office environment where workers are employed by the same organization, different types of business operators are attracted to co-working spaces such as work-at-home professionals, independent contractors, or people who travel frequently. These shared facilities may also provide for the social gathering of people who are working independently but who share interests and enjoy the synergy

from working with like-minded people in the same space. Some co-working and shared offices include meeting rooms, secretarial services, and copy services. This business format is suitable for Town Center, Neighborhood Business Districts and older industrial parks.

Other industrial and business park support initiatives.

- Support the strong local tool and die industry that requires skilled labor by encouraging a regional training program.
- Support opportunities to create smaller lots and flexible business enterprise spaces on Camponelli Drive by extending the sewer line to the business park.
- Support the multiple construction yard operations on Page Street as an important local industry sector. Consider opportunities for improved landscaping, reduced environmental impacts, and shared parking, circulation, services, and other amenities important to this sector.

Goal 5:

Protect and Enhance Neighborhoods

Primary Objectives

Stoughton neighborhoods should strive to have well-defined edges and civic amenities within a comfortable walking distance such as schools and community centers, park and



playgrounds, community gardens, and other amenities depending on their location and context in the community. Pedestrian connections should be prevalent throughout the neighborhoods and for some transit should be available within a comfortable walking distance. Neighborhoods should be connected by open

spaces and multipurpose pathways where possible which may also provide linkages to other places within town and beyond. Neighborhood streets should be as narrow as possible (to reduce speed and allow for “complete streets”) and include informal on-street parking, planting strips with ample shade trees and sidewalks. There may exist or be opportunities to create small nodes of activity within walking distance of nearby residents, while also continuing to strengthen and improve linkages to the existing civic and commercial centers. The primary objective is to develop and maintain neighborhoods with distinct identities, equitable services and facilities, and broad opportunities for existing and future residents.

Potential Strategies

Emphasize housing choice and diversity.

The town should continue to allow for a range of alternative housing choices to enable a diversity of people at all stages of life including young adults, families, retirees, seniors, and people of different income levels. A range of housing opportunities should be available including cottage courts, dignified multifamily housing (ownership and rental), senior and graduated care, co-operative housing, and live-work units, as well as single family homes in traditional village neighborhoods, conventional subdivisions, estate subdivisions, and rural residential settings. A more diversified housing strategy will promote more livable community where new and long-time residents can age in place with a range of lifecycle housing options.

Make complete neighborhoods.

Within each of Stoughton's neighborhoods, consideration should be given to providing more "complete" neighborhoods while enhancing their unique character and composition. Complete neighborhoods provide for a limited mix of uses and diversified housing types in strategic locations. Ideally, they are within a five minute walk to centers of activity such as schools, open spaces and other community amenities. Other more subtle methods may be considered to complete neighborhoods such as corner stores and live-work units at designated intersections, granny flats, accessory apartments, cottage courts, co-operative housing and others. An interconnected network of streets and sidewalks that promotes walking and cycling and minimizes traffic pressure on existing streets is another method for completing neighborhoods.

Include neighborhood schools, parks and open spaces.

Stoughton possesses a number of larger recreation areas. However, there are many smaller neighborhood open spaces that can serve as gathering places. The town should consider finding locations for parks within an easy walk of most homes to better serve the needs of local families and help attract new families to the town. To start with, the town should consider municipally-owned parcels that may be suitable for neighborhood activities. The overall objectives for adding new or renovating existing open spaces and increasing land dedicated to civic activity in each neighborhood should include the following:

- Well integrated active and passive open spaces connect to neighborhood centers and principal corridors.
- Public and civic buildings providing venues for local government services, entertainment, cultural and historical events, recreation, etc.
- Highly programmed civic spaces and buildings to draw residents and provide convenience and accessibility to specific neighborhoods as appropriate.

- Increase opportunities for chance encounters and organized meetings between community members.

Continue to enhance walkability in each neighborhood.

The term “walkability” describes an environment where there is true balance between many modes of transportation. Most specifically, it describes an environment in which people feel comfortable walking and where they are engaged by their surroundings. Promoting more walking and biking should be a high priority in Stoughton’s neighborhoods. The following walkability factors and indicators should be applied to each neighborhood and inform future decisions regarding public realm improvements.

- Narrow streets, curb radii and curb cuts.
- Well placed pedestrian crossings and traffic calming devices to enhance safety and the quality of the pedestrian experience.
- Attractive streetscapes with sidewalks on both sides and planting strip of adequate size to support large shade trees.

Goal 6:

Protect and Enhance Stoughton’s Green Character and Sense of Place



Primary Objectives

Stoughton’s physical characteristics reflect both the traditional New England pattern of village centers and rural landscape as well as the more recent patterns of suburbanization and strip development more common over the past fifty years. It is a primary objective of the town to protect

and enhance Stoughton’s rural characteristics through the following: maintenance of existing public spaces and facilities; appropriate design, density and scale of development and redevelopment, protection of the natural environment; and preservation of significant historic and cultural resources.

Potential Strategies

Conserve and maintain land and resources.

Input from participants during the public visioning process supports land conservation and stewardship including both permanently and partially protected open spaces in concert with revitalization of existing centers, neighborhoods and commercial corridors. The Master Plan promotes the preservation and management of Stoughton’s natural environment, including ponds, wetlands, woods, trails, agricultural lands, tree canopy,

and the services they provide. The town will strive to create an interconnected network of green space that conserves critical natural areas, provides recreational linkages to neighborhoods, protects water quality and quantity, and contributes to the identity and sense of place within the community. As part of this holistic system, the town will integrate sustainable stormwater practices that reduce runoff, improve water quality, and contribute to the beauty of the public realm. The town will consider the following methods of land conservation and open space protection and maintenance:

- Map and evaluate municipally-own land and tax-title properties on a regular basis for suitable conservation and open space uses such as pocket parks, playgrounds, recreation fields, tot lots, community gardens, public nurseries, and other related uses.
- Design open spaces for active and passive community use and properly maintain them.
- Seek grant funding and utilize CPA funding for conservation land acquisition and open space enhancements.

Promote conservation subdivisions in rural and suburban areas of town.

In contrast with conventional suburban subdivisions, which divide up land into large lots leaving fragments of leftover open space, conservation subdivisions are a more sustainable development method that can help preserve larger areas of greater significance. With this development pattern, homes are built closer together on a development site, thus leaving more land untouched. Instead of having a large, underutilized private lot, homeowners benefit from living near large areas of preserved open space that can be improved with shared amenities such as a trail system. Roads in the conservation subdivision are built to promote walkability and slow traffic movement, rather than to conventional standards that require oversized streets with an excess of stormwater infrastructure.

Embrace green community building.

Green community building is the practice of creating more sustainable places through a series of adjustments to human environments and lifestyles, drawing on focused and efficient land uses and consuming fewer resources. Green community building has many applications in Stoughton to enhance both the built environment and open spaces. The following “tool box” should be considered as part of the revitalization and reinvestment process.

Support Local Food Production – There is a long tradition of growing vegetables, fruits, herbs, and (possibly) meat for families, friends and customers in New England. This can bring residents together as well as address sustainability issues such as open space conservation, self-sufficiency, improved nutrition, recreation, exercise, and saving on food expenses. Stoughton would benefit in many ways from making a commitment to

an equitable, healthy, and sustainable food supply through small scale urban and suburban agriculture. In doing so, the town can strengthen its local food system which was traditionally an integral part of the community. Some techniques applicable throughout the community include the following:

- Community Gardens - A private, not for profit, or public common area used by a group of households to grow and harvest food crops or non-food crops for personal or group consumption or donation. Community Gardens are being formed in numerous urban and rural communities around the state. A Community garden was supported for a limited time at the Capen Reynolds Farm and may be considered there again in the future. The community garden at the Senior/Youth Center is a popular activity space from spring through fall.
- Schoolyard Gardens - Schoolyard gardens can be used as a tool to integrate classroom curriculum with an outdoor hands-on experience, environmental education, culinary arts, and nutrition.
- Yard Gardens - These are appropriate for use on residential lots for household use by the residents.
- Container Gardens - These gardens utilize containers to hold the planting medium and include window boxes, balcony, and roof gardens. They can be used to provide household produce needs in more urban areas where space is limited.
- Edible Landscapes - This refers to the utilization of plants and landscaping that produce edible food in settings that conventionally have been limited to ornamental or nonfood producing plants. Edible landscapes are not a farm or garden per se, and unlike the farms and gardens described above, are not limited to use on private lots.
- Park Gardens - Plantings on public property, including parks, present great opportunities for flower and vegetable gardening, as well as the planting of fruit trees. They also create more direct connection to public spaces and result in a higher degree of civic gatherings.

Design Green Streets - Green streets are thoroughfares that capture, temporarily store, and treat road runoff at its source by incorporating vegetated water catchment and filtration devices in the form of small rain gardens and bioretention systems. Components such as flow-through planters and other sustainable stormwater solutions allow stormwater from the street to enter planters through cuts in the curb where the plant material removes impurities and allows water to naturally infiltrate or be stored elsewhere. Water-loving plants and those that are able to remove the impurities while thriving so close to traffic and in more urban environments are used in green street design, adding beauty and function. Additional infiltration can be achieved through the use of pervious paving materials for sidewalks and streets.

Create Infiltration Parks – This form of bio-retention allows rain water to be temporarily captured and stored for a short time, cleaning stormwater runoff before infiltration. The

town should think of public parks and open spaces as part of the stormwater system. Surrounding areas can be graded so that the rain water flows towards the parks. Creating a gradual and imperceptible depression allows water to collect in the park and stay there long enough to infiltrate without giving the appearance of a stormwater facility.

Allow Pervious Parking Lots - Conventional paved surfaces, including streets, sidewalks, and particularly parking lots, typically utilize asphalt, concrete, or tar surfaces that are entirely impervious. The result is more rapid, heated and polluted stormwater reaching watercourses. There have been many recent innovations in materials and pervious pavement systems that allow water to infiltrate large- and small-scale paved surfaces. In New England, pervious surfaces face the challenge of frost and clogging from salt and sand. However, different materials and applications continue to be tested successfully. Coupled with pervious paving, infiltration planters with shade trees should be applied in surface parking lots to further enhance the area's ability to manage and treat stormwater.

Plant More Shade Trees - The broad use of street trees planted around Stoughton is a simple and beautiful solution to reducing heating and cooling needs for centers, corridors and neighborhoods. When planted on the south and west sides of buildings, shade trees drop their leaves during the cooler fall season allowing warming sunlight to reach sidewalks and buildings. Additionally, they create a lush canopy in the warmer months providing shade to keep the sidewalk and adjacent buildings cool. This provides, a low tech, low cost solution to reduce energy needs. The town should consider the following methods of expanding shade trees:

- Re-establishing its relationship with National Grid to support more street tree plantings.
- Consider establishing a public nursery to provide a ready stock of street trees.
- Start a "Welcome to Stoughton" street tree planting program for new residents.
- Require new subdivisions to include street trees at the front edge of residential lots.

Housing

Overview

By providing housing choices for all life stages, social and economic conditions, and lifestyle choices, a community invites a mix of residents that helps create community vitality by supporting businesses, schools, churches, social organizations, neighborhoods, and municipal government.

Stoughton has a range of housing styles, sizes, and ages, set in a variety of neighborhoods: from urban to suburban, and from mature to emerging. The cost of housing in Stoughton is also varied, and based on recent data the median housing purchase price is lower than the median of the state, the county and the majority of the town's neighboring communities. This can be a draw for potential homeowners seeking less expensive housing. Recent increases in the purchase price for housing in Stoughton (purchase price increases that are greater than state increases on average) may indicate that home buyers have confidence that their investment in housing here is secure.¹

Median rental costs increased considerably from around \$700 in 2000 to nearly \$1,100 in 2010. Municipal policies and actions should encourage new and redevelopment that maintains and expands housing choices to sustain a balanced and vibrant community.



Multi-Family, Age Restricted Housing

This housing element outlines current key issues and challenges pertaining to housing in Stoughton. The Goals and Strategies respond to the Community Vision and offer the potential to support a mix of distinctive neighborhoods; to use Transit Oriented Design to increase housing and vitality in Town Center; to appeal to millennials, young families, seniors, and high income households who will help sustain Stoughton's revitalization; and to meet the needs of limited income households within inclusive and integrated neighborhoods.



Single Family Neighborhood

¹ *Greater Boston's top spots to live, In these 13 communities in Eastern Massachusetts, the real estate market is sizzling.* by Elizabeth Gehrman, Boston Globe, May 5, 2013

Sustainable Housing Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Benchmarks

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for housing. The index identifies a number of measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress in providing a range of housing options to meet the needs of Stoughton's residents.

Issues and Challenges

Stoughton residents have voiced their desire to retain and improve their existing suburban neighborhoods. By allowing sensitive infill, conversion of large single family homes, and accessory apartments, additional households can be accommodated with limited change to neighborhood character. Neighborhoods can be improved with new parks and open spaces, and trails and sidewalks that connect housing within neighborhoods and connect neighborhoods to each other.

The town's desire for high end market rate housing to help ensure balance and stability will require the town to offer a quality of life that meets homeowners' needs and expectations. Successful schools, a vibrant and walkable downtown, parks and open spaces, recreational opportunities, neighborhood security, and convenient access to employment, entertainment and culture are principal elements that will support high end housing.

Housing that meets the needs of seniors also continues to be a priority as the population ages. Pricing, size, maintenance needs, accessibility, access to services and transit, and availability of housing within existing neighborhoods are all issues that will determine where Stoughton's seniors will reside.

Respondents to a community survey indicated limited support for more apartments with 72% responding that more apartments were not needed; respondents were split on the need for more affordable housing. Just over half felt that not much more (32%), some more (12%) or a lot more (7%) affordable housing was needed. Seventy-nine percent of respondents however showed support for senior housing; not much more (34%), some more (38%) or much more (8%).

While these survey results provide valuable insight into the community's belief's about the type of housing needed, it should be noted that only 2.6% of survey respondents lived in a home with five or more units and only one quarter of respondents had an annual income less than \$75,000, less than 10% with an income under \$50,000. In comparison 22% of Stoughton's population lives in multi-family housing, and the median household income is less than \$70,000.

Stoughton's Housing Production Plan (2009), developed specifically to assess unmet housing need indicates that low income housing demand far exceeds supply and there is a growing gap between what median-income households (qualified for affordable housing) can afford and median home costs. The Plan also notes that demand will likely

grow for smaller households and senior housing suggesting the need for small, easy to maintain housing close to services and transit.

Resident concern about large scale apartment complexes speaks to the need to create housing that is context sensitive. Creating residential units within existing structures, such as historic industrial and institutional buildings is a strategy that allows communities to meet housing and preservation goals without changing the physical character of an established neighborhood. Revitalizing business centers and corridors with mixed-use developments that include residential housing on upper floors allows communities to meet housing and economic development goals together. In particular housing in close proximity to transit, services, retail and restaurants helps meet the need of seniors and others with limited transportation options, and the growing number of householders who prefer an urban environment.

Community Vision for Housing

Stoughton's community vision statement (in part below) emphasizes the value that is placed on supporting a diverse community through appropriate housing.

Stoughton is widely recognized as an inclusive, vibrant and resilient community, offering an exceptional quality of life to its residents, businesses and visitors.

Neighborhoods are distinct yet unified with varying housing styles, lot sizes and settlement patterns that serve a diversity of residents.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1:

Provide a variety of housing to meet the needs of Stoughton's existing and future residents.



Primary Objective

To support a mix of housing available at a range of price points in order to strengthen and build neighborhoods. The mix will provide housing for seniors, families, and singles; attract new householders; and help the town maintain at least 10% of its year-round housing stock as affordable.

Potential Strategies

Support a mix of housing types at a range of price points.

Stoughton is looking specifically to increase housing options for seniors, for those seeking urban housing and for limited income and higher income households.

Adopt policies, bylaws and plans to support Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

Transit Oriented Development, is an approach to development that focuses land uses within a short distance (one-quarter mile). Typically, TOD is characterized by:

- A mix of uses
- Moderate to high density
- Pedestrian orientation/connectivity
- Transportation choices
- Reduced parking
- High quality design

TODs use landscaping, street furniture, street lighting, and other urban design features that encourage pedestrian activity to integrate the transit station area into the surrounding community. An essential ingredient of any successful TOD is connectivity between street networks and adjoining uses.

- Create a transit area plan that recommends infrastructure, and utility improvements, the mix of land uses, incentives, redevelopment strategies, and a phasing plan.
- Create transit area design guidelines to address the design of parking, pedestrian furniture, signage, street lighting, sidewalk, and ground level building façades.

Consider revisions to current zoning to increase housing units within existing buildings.

Maintaining and enhancing neighborhood character while meeting housing needs is a primary consideration for the town. Revision to Stoughton's zoning bylaws to allow greater housing density within existing residential and accessory buildings could facilitate the creation of housing throughout town that is consistent with neighborhood character. Smaller residential units developed through the addition of accessory units and conversions from single to multi-family could provide realistic housing options for seniors, as well as singles and small families. Accessory units and conversions also provide homeowners who no longer need the full space, the potential for income and relief from high home costs. The town should consider revisions to zoning to allow:

- Accessory units
- Accessory building conversions
- Conversion from single to multi-family
- Conversion from business/industrial to residential

As neighborhood density increases, there may be a corresponding need to increase open space, sidewalks, and other amenities that contribute to a high quality environment and quality of life.

Identify town-owned properties suitable for the provision of housing and work with selected developer to create housing desired. The town should take a proactive approach to developing the types of housing it wants by identifying municipal properties that could be offered at reduced or no-cost as an incentive for desired residential development. Properties could also be used for open space to support housing. Soliciting Expressions of Interest in town-owned properties would allow the town to test feasibility and identify potential developers.

The solicitation might be used for example to help the town understand:

- What types of housing might best suit the parcel
- What potential income mixes are feasible
- What might be the optimal number of units
- What benefits might be provided
- What subsidies might be available

Following evaluation of the responses, the town might choose to engage one or more developers in further conversation and or might follow up by issuing a Request for Proposals.

Maintain at least 10% of year-round housing inventory as affordable.

Maintaining ten percent of the town's housing as affordable to low- and moderate-income households provides viable housing options to residents earning up to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and affectively limits the town's exposure to comprehensive permits that do not meet local needs and criteria as defined by planning documents, and zoning regulations. The following strategies will help the town meet its affordable housing goals.

Maintain an up-to-date Housing Production Plan and support its recommended strategies. A Housing Production Plan (HPP) is a proactive strategy for planning and developing affordable housing. It identifies the housing needs of a community and the strategies it will use to make progress in facilitating the preservation and development of affordable housing. Should the town fall below the 10% threshold of Chapter 40B (Affordable Housing Act) an approved HPP along with steady progress in producing affordable housing on an annual basis will give the town more control over comprehensive permit applications for a specified period of time.

Adopt an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw. Without provisions for the production of affordable housing, during times of growth in the real estate market, Stoughton could see a reduction in its diversity of housing and slip below the ten percent affordable

housing mandate.² Inclusionary zoning can be used by municipalities to ensure that adequate affordable housing is included in the normal course of real estate development. Inclusionary zoning requires a portion of housing units in certain housing developments to be reserved as affordable to low- to moderate-income households. When correctly designed, the inclusion of affordable units along with market rate units in a residential or mixed-use project has been proven to add diversity and social value without compromising the quality or the market appeal of development. The bylaw may also allow for the provision of affordable units off-site. For example a developer could satisfy the affordable unit requirement by buying, upgrading and reselling other properties with affordability restrictions, or by paying into an Affordable Housing Trust (see below).

Identify and implement strategies necessary to preserve expiring affordable units.

Affordability in some privately owned, mixed-income developments is governed by use restrictions that allow owners to sell or rent at market rates after a given number of years, or retirement of debt. Stoughton has a number of expiring units (including 105 units within Stoughton Presidential Courts) that if lost could reduce the percent of affordable units in Stoughton to less than 10%, and put the town at risk for undesirable 40B developments. The town must prioritize preserving existing affordable units, over developing new units.

Chapter 40T, an Act to Preserve Publicly Assisted Affordable Housing (2009), provides procedures that owners of expiring affordable units must take including sending notices to tenants, state agencies and the local community starting two years in advance of expiration, right of first refusal and tenant protections. Stoughton must track these notices and take required actions to preserve affordability restrictions.

Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC), a public-private, community development finance institution has created a database of information about the state's 110 privately developed affordable-housing projects. The organization, which provides technical assistance, predevelopment lending, and consulting services, facilitates communication and partnerships among those seeking to preserve affordable housing.

Provide financial assistance to help families secure and maintain affordable housing.

The town should identify and assess funding programs to assist low and moderate income renters and homeowners secure and maintain appropriate housing. Programs to consider include:

- Down Payment and Closing Cost assistance
- Housing Rehabilitation
- Heating System Replacement
- Weatherization

² Communities with less than 10% of year round housing stock available as affordable to low- and moderate-income households are vulnerable to development under a Comprehensive Permit (40B) which diminishes local control.

Assess the need to increase capacity of housing advocates.

There is not a local housing advocate that has the capacity to sustain the strategic efforts necessary to help create and maintain affordable housing in Stoughton. The Stoughton Housing Authority is a state agency overseen by a local board of directors, charged with managing affordable housing properties. The Community Preservation Committee is a municipal appointed committee, whose role is to study the town's community preservation needs, possibilities and resources and to make recommendations to Town Meeting for funding affordable housing, historic preservation, open space and recreation projects with Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funds. While both the SHA and the CPC are advocates for affordable housing, neither has the staff, funding, nor mandate to comprehensively address affordable housing. A local or regional organization may be needed to keep housing issues in the forefront of planning. Establishing a municipal affordable housing trust and fund³ signals a community's readiness to proactively address its housing needs.

Consider Creating a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust and Housing Trust Fund. The Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act (MAHTFA), MGL c44 s55C establishes regulations for creating and administering a Municipal Housing Trust Fund. A local housing trust can support and initiate land use, planning and fiscal policies and actions that ensure the development and preservation of housing available to households across a broad range of incomes. The MAHTFA allows municipalities to collect funds for affordable housing, segregate them out of the general municipal budget into a trust fund and use the funds for local initiatives to create and preserve affordable housing. Examples of what a local trust fund can do include:

- Provide financial support for the construction of affordable homes by developers (non-profit or for-profit);
- Rehabilitate existing homes to convert to affordable housing;
- Increase affordability in new housing development projects;
- Develop surplus municipal land or buildings, preserve properties faced with expiring affordability restrictions
- Create programs to assist low- and moderate –income homebuyers;
- Create programs to help low- and moderate-income families make health and safety repairs;
- Educate and advocate to further affordable housing initiatives.

If a Housing Trust is not desired, assess the need for creating a Housing Partnership or Committee. While this type of appointed committee does not have the legal authorities granted to the Affordable Housing Trust, a Housing Partnership or Committee can advocate for housing of various types, assist in the review of development projects and help to address other housing related needs in the community.

³ Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act , MGL c44 s55C establishes regulations for creating a Municipal Housing Trust Fund

Appoint the Housing Trust or other housing advocate to serve on municipal development review team. Working closely with housing advocates as housing is being developed or improved will help assure that opportunities for creating and preserving affordable housing are being thoroughly considered by the developer and the municipality. Whenever a new or redevelopment project includes residential units, the Housing Trust should be part of the municipal Development Review Team from its first meeting forward.

Affirmatively further Fair Housing by promoting housing opportunity for the classes of persons protected under the Fair Housing Act. Essential elements of the town's efforts to meet its affirmative fair housing obligation are to create and/or enhance affordable, quality housing that is integrated with market rate housing throughout town; remove barriers to creating housing for families; and advocate for housing for persons with disabilities. Design characteristics for more accessible housing include ground floor units or elevator access and ADA compliance. Proximity to transit is also an important characteristic.

Goal 2:

Support housing as a cornerstone for Town Center revitalization.



Primary Objectives

The primary objective is to encourage a range of housing styles and prices within multi-use developments to create an active and vibrant Town Center.

Repurposed Historic Fire Station

Potential Strategies

Review and revise Town Center zoning.

Zoning will control the type of housing allowed in Town Center. It also controls the approval process, an important consideration for developers who prefer predictable processes within a limited time frame. Density, use, dimensions, public open space, circulation, parking, design guidelines, incentives and review regulation should all work together to allow and encourage housing production that meets the communities goals and is practical for developers

Adjust Parking Space Requirements. – Parking requirements in Town Center should be reduced to reflect Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles (discussed further in

Land Use, page #). Reduced parking requirements align with goals to minimize automobile dependence in Town Center.

Consider Incentive Zoning to Promote Desired Development. Incentive Zoning provides municipalities an opportunity to negotiate with developers to bring about desired development characteristics. Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed a zoning ordinance's limitations in exchange for fulfilling conditions specified in the ordinance. For example height or density may be exceeded in exchange for, affordable housing units, public open spaces or plazas, or sustainable design elements.

Allow Mixed-Use by Right. Allowing mixed-use by right lets developers know this type of development is preferred and reduces the need for special permitting which generally adds cost and time to a development project.

Identify and assess funding opportunities for housing development and redevelopment.

There are multiple funding sources available for housing development and redevelopment, and downtown revitalization. The town should seek technical assistance and/or work with developers knowledgeable about funding choices to identify the most viable and effective opportunities based on project goals and characteristics. Funding sources include:

- Commercial Area Transit Node Housing Program (CATNHP)
- Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)
- Housing Stabilization Fund (HSF)
- Local Initiative Program (LIP)
- Mass Housing Trust Fund

Identify and promote historic structures appropriate for residential development.

Historic structures, including mill buildings and factories in and near Town Center may offer opportunities for historic preservation along with residential development, furthering two community goals. To promote the redevelopment of historic structures for housing and mixed use, the town must work with the property owners to determine interest, assess feasibility and create supportive regulations. A municipal data-base of historic structures, along with site and building information, zoning and code requirements, incentives, and potential funding sources would help match potential historic development opportunities with qualified developers.



Beautiful Brick Building in Town Center

Create public spaces that build community identity and spirit.

Walkable-mixed use communities require public space networks for circulation, socialization, and recreation. Sidewalks, trails, plazas, parks, playgrounds, gardens and other public spaces provide residents, workers, and visitors opportunities for planned and chance meetings, activities that build personal relationships and community bonds. The redevelopment of Town Center must integrate quality public spaces throughout downtown and connect to neighborhoods, schools, and the greater open space network beyond.

Goal 3:

Support the maintenance, improvement and creation of distinctive neighborhoods that are interconnected with physical and social infrastructure.



Distinctive Neighborhood Home

Primary Objectives

A primary objective is to encourage sensitive infill and redevelopment to preserve and enhance neighborhood character, balancing areas of higher residential density with rural and suburban density. Another is to assure all neighborhoods are served with a connective network of sidewalks, trails, parks and open spaces.

Potential Strategies

Consider developing neighborhood plans.

Preserving, enhancing and building a community of distinctive neighborhoods may best be fostered by creating a series of neighborhood plans. The Plans are neighborhood driven requiring an active citizen group and a broad base of support to collectively identify goals and strategies for preservation and change. Preliminary steps the town would take include:

- Assessing municipal capacity to support planning efforts
- Assessing neighborhood interest
- Developing a planning framework

Massachusetts municipalities that have employed this neighborhood building strategy include Lowell, Brookline, Nantucket, Cambridge and Springfield.

Assess the benefits of a Demolition Delay Bylaw

A Demolition Delay Bylaw is an effective tool to help protect significant historic resources by requiring the town and developer to work together to investigate alternatives to demolition. The process includes a determination of significance by the Historic Commission, a public hearing to determine if the building should be preserved, and a consideration of alternatives. Following the delay (typically 6 – 18 months) the property may be demolished if an agreement to save the building is not made. The delay allows the town to identify and mobilize funding sources to assist with preservation efforts. Alternatives might include the purchase and removal of the building, saving or replication of architectural details, or redevelopment of part or all of the structure.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Cluster Residential Development (CRD) Bylaw and revise as needed.

The general purpose of the town's Cluster Residential Development Bylaw is to encourage the development of housing in a manner that has a reduced impact on the environment and provides for the permanent protection of open space. Stoughton's CRD Bylaw is limited in its use, due to excessive lot size requirements, lack of flexibility in site development, and lack of a requirement or incentives to develop under the bylaw. The town should consider revising or replacing the CRD with a bylaw that will more effectively meet its land protection goals. The town should consider the model bylaw provided in the Mass Smart Growth Tool Kit and Natural Resource Protection Zoning, the state's newest model for protective zoning called Open Space Design. Open Space Design adopted by Shutesbury, Brewster, Wendell and New Salem is "as of right" zoning that calculates development rights based on area rather than road frontage.

Require development projects to include sidewalks and other public amenities consistent with neighborhood needs.

Each development and redevelopment project provides the town with an opportunity to expand and improve its public infrastructure including streetscape and open space elements such as sidewalks, lighting, street trees, parks and plazas. The town should adopt a policy supported by a clear and consistent planning process that guides the development of public improvements by private developments. Town-wide plans that identify desired streetscapes, bicycle and pedestrian ways and open space and recreational amenities are important for the success of this strategy as they help assure that improvements are consistent and responsive to local needs and are part of a comprehensive plan.



Examples of Downtown Public Spaces

Evaluate and revise Site and Design Standards for non-residential uses within or abutting residential districts.

Commercial and industrial projects are vital for a balanced and sustainable community. Site and design standards that address building massing, articulation and materials, parking, set backs, landscaping, fencing, lighting, signage, and impervious surfaces, among other characteristics will help assure they are good neighbors.

Identify opportunities for converting areas along and adjacent to business corridors into new mixed-use neighborhoods.

The town's business corridors including Washington Street, Central Street, Park Street and others provide opportunities for the strategic development of new mixed-use neighborhoods of varying densities and character. Revising zoning to allow density based on availability of public infrastructure and services including public water and sewer, transportation choices, and schools and services will encourage residential development where it will be best supported. This phased strategy is more thoroughly defined in Land Use.



Example of Mixed Use Corridor Development

Enforce local bylaws that preserve neighborhood quality and safety.

There are a number of existing bylaws established to preserve neighborhood quality and safety that are not being consistently enforced. Reasons may include lack of capacity and/or clarity regarding responsible parties, political resistance, and outdated bylaws. Examples of non-enforced or inconsistently enforced bylaws include those that regulate home businesses, site standards, signs, parking and vehicle/equipment storage. To address the enforcement issues the town should:

- Identify areas of non-compliance affecting neighborhood quality and safety;
- Revise or eliminate outdated bylaws;
- Mandate compliance of existing bylaws;
- Identify responsible parties; and
- Create clear course of action for enforcement of every bylaw.

Transportation and Circulation

Overview

The objective of a local transportation system is to provide access to employment, shopping, recreation, and community facilities in a safe, efficient manner. When a transportation system operates well, it supports the community's quality of life, economy, and public and environmental health. Attractive and safe streets can bring life to a community by supporting commerce, communication, and services, allowing both goods and customers to travel in and out of town. When congestion impedes mobility, roadways can interfere with commerce and erode the community's quality of life.

Stoughton's transportation network is extensive and generally well connected to local and regional transportation facilities. However, the network experiences considerable strain in certain areas and at certain times. This is particularly obvious in Stoughton Center - a confluence of major traffic routes, fixed route bus and commuter transit, pedestrian activity, and the civic and cultural center of town. Many residents believe that the worst traffic problems occur along Washington Street through Town Center during weekday rush hours and Saturday morning through mid-day.

Much of Stoughton's traffic congestion results from peak period commuting traffic, i.e., residents of Stoughton and the surrounding towns driving to and from work. School drop-off traffic also creates much congestion at certain times and locations. Although the concept of transportation goes far beyond automobiles, the conversation invariably comes back to traffic, congestion, and cars. When asked about key issues in Stoughton today, residents participating in community meetings and interviews for the master plan process almost always cited traffic, circulation, and parking in Town Center.

The Transportation and Circulation element of the Master Plan identifies general principles, goals, specific actions and other initiatives to create a safe and efficient transportation system that enhances the aesthetic quality of the community, respects and reflects its historic character and natural resources, and recognizes the needs of local businesses, residents, and thru traffic. Major transportation issues affecting the community's existing and future quality of life and capacity to accommodate new development will be considered. The Goals and Strategies include the potential for "Complete Street" design standards, transit based development opportunities, pedestrian safety and walkability improvements, circulation and connectivity improvements, access management, and parking.

Sustainable Transportation and Circulation Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Sustainable Transportation and Circulation Indicators

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for transportation and circulation. This index identifies measurable characteristics, or benchmarks, that can be used for assessing progress in improving the transportation system in Stoughton. Some key sustainable transportation indicators from the table are highlighted below:

- There are 123 miles of roadway miles in Stoughton with an estimated 218 residents per mile. This indicates a fairly compact community (upper 20% statewide). Generally, as more people utilize each mile of roadway, the cost of maintenance per capita decreases.
- The average daily vehicle miles per household is 59.6 which is relatively low compared to the subregion⁴ average of 68.6. This benchmark generally indicates a shorter commuting time and better access to public transit than surrounding communities.
- Stoughton workers with a commuting time of less than 15 minutes is 26% compared to 22% in the subregion.

Transportation and Circulation Issues and Challenges

During the community visioning process, congestion and pedestrian safety were identified as the most important issues by participants. In fact, traffic was identified as Stoughton's second greatest challenge, next to revitalization of Town Center. However, traffic is a critical issue for Town Center as well and many participants were concerned that congestion was having a negative impact on business retention and development.

Nearly half of community visioning participants were concerned about traffic and safety in their own neighborhood. The number of accidents involving pedestrians and cyclist is of particular concern. Several intersections and roadway segments have been identified as problematic in terms of congestion and safety.

Stoughton Community Vision Plan/Key Transportation and Circulation Issues:

Identifying strategies that can ease traffic congestion and increase pedestrian safety are primary transportation goals the community supports. We want to maximize the effectiveness and convenience of our public transportation system and create transportation options that provide mobility and access to all community members.

⁴ Subregion includes Bridgewater, Canton, East Bridgewater, Easton, Foxborough, Milton, Norwood, Randolph, Sharon, Walpole, and West Bridgewater.

Collectively, community visioning participants, town officials, and the Master Plan Committee believe that a holistic approach to transportation and circulation management is needed to create sustainable improvement. Several suggestions for improvements have been put forward such as addressing school busing and pick-up and drop-off, enforcing jaywalking and parking laws, upgrading sidewalks, adjusting travel patterns and coordinating signal times among others.

As the planning process transitioned from existing conditions analysis and community visioning, a Transportation Focus Group was assembled to take on the transportation challenges, formulate solutions and ask the difficult questions:

- Does Stoughton provide adequate facilities for all modes of transportation (i.e. personal vehicles, commercial trucks, bus transit, commuter rail, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.)?
- Where can “Complete Streets” be provided to improve access to all forms of transportation?
- What are the key corridors and intersections where pedestrian safety improvements and traffic calming applications are needed?
- What are the major congested intersections that need to be addressed?
- How can the town maximize the benefits of commuter rail to improve downtown vitality (i.e. transit oriented development, mixed use, more residents/customers in Town Center)?
- Is parking supply and distribution adequate to support existing and future development in Town Center?
- Are there improvements to major highway commercial corridors that can be made to reduce impacts of sprawl?
- Are there changes to land use regulations and design standards to improve transportation and parking to support future land uses?

Community Vision for Transportation and Circulation

Stoughton’s community vision statement (in part below) shows the desire for a transportation network that is safe, attractive and multimodal and that will lead to a more vibrant and sustainable community.

“Stoughton’s **transportation** system is more about people and less about automobiles. Our demand for safety along with efficiency has resulted in greater use of public transportation, an extensive network of sidewalks, trails and bike lanes and reconfigured and managed streets that better serve drivers, riders and walkers.”

Goals and Strategies

Collectively, the following transportation and circulation goals will improve mobility, reduce congestion, and provide greater travel mode choice for residents in future years.

Goal 1:

Manage traffic throughout Stoughton to minimize congestion and maximize safety.

Primary Objective

To address existing congestion and safety issues throughout Stoughton including all forms of motorized and non-motorized transportation as well as the interaction between various modes of travel.

Potential Strategies

Balance street capacity improvements with pedestrian safety.

Town officials should resist overdesigning streets and widening entire segments when not necessary to meet capacity demands. Instead, the town should focus on improving connections within the street system to disperse traffic, a “Complete Streets” policy to encourage other modes of travel, and building more walkable neighborhoods and business districts that capture trips before they reach the major street network. While a limited amount of widening may be necessary (especially near major intersections) to accommodate expected traffic volumes, the policy of the town should be to keep travel lanes to a minimum number and width to provide better opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Make traffic and safety improvements at key intersections and segments throughout town.

Washington Street Corridor Segments and Intersections - The Washington Street (State Route 138) corridor and crosswalks are a critical concern for Stoughton. The corridor has a typical 32-foot curb-to-curb width (16-foot travel lane and 4-foot shoulder), a continuous left-turn center lane over large areas, intermittent sidewalks, no bike lanes, multiple curb cuts and wide open access (no curbing and full pavement to the street) on numerous lots, limited internal connections, little or no public streetscape treatments (i.e. street trees), and limited private landscaping treatments. While MassDOT has jurisdiction over the Rt. 138 corridor except for the segment between Lincoln Street (north) and Brock Street (south) that goes through Town Center, the town could affect positive change through site plan review, working with the state to affect streetscape and pedestrian enhancements, or possibly taking jurisdiction over a larger segment of the Rt. 138 corridor.

- **Washington Street/Central Street intersection** - The condition of crosswalks at this intersection is a particular safety concern that needs to be addressed. This location is #16 on the Top 200 High-Crash Locations list for the state. These crosswalks do not meet current ADA standards, and there are no tactical strips on the pedestrian ramps. A pedestrian fatality recently occurred near the intersection of Washington Street and Lincoln Street. The intersection was upgraded about 10 years ago to address safety concerns and studies are currently underway to again look at further improvements.
- **Washington Street (Rt. 138)/York Street Intersection** – Improvements at this intersection should include widening of all approaches, separate northbound and southbound turning lanes from York Street onto Washington Street, a future traffic signal and sidewalks along both sides of the street. Steep grades on both the northbound and southbound approaches are also an issue that should be considered. . An alternative approach would be to relocate the intersection to the south by running York Street parallel to Route 138 and utilizing the access road to the transformer station and adjacent to AA Will. This location is at the top of the hill where vehicle speeds are reduced.

Central Street Corridor Segments and Intersections - Central Street is a primary east-west corridor in the northern half of town, and the most highly traveled route in Stoughton. There are several problem intersections that need to be upgraded along the corridor. Potential short and long-term recommendations for traffic and safety improvements along the corridor follow:

- **Western Segment and Intersections** - The Central Street corridor intersections with West Street, Island Street, Central Court, Canton Street (State Route 27), and Tosca Drive are a primary focus of the town for safety improvements. Poor geometry and sight distance are critical issues along this segment. There was a pedestrian fatality recently near the intersection of West Street across from the Hansen School, which is on the northwest corner of the intersection. As part of a future residential development which will access Central Street from Tosca Drive, \$50,000 in funding will be provided to the town for improvements on this segment as well as signalizing of the intersection of Central Street/West Street and better channelization at the intersection of Central Street/Island Street. A preliminary improvement plan of the Central Street/West Street/Island Street area includes the following:
 - Signalization at West Street; realignment of intersection to improve sight distance; curblin reduction, pedestrian refuge and other pedestrian safety improvements at intersection; new crosswalk treatments across Central Street at intersection and in front of Hansen School; left-turn lanes in both eastbound and westbound directions;

- Island Street realignment with slip lanes, islands, and eastbound left-turn lane onto Island Street (no crosswalk shown at this intersection); and
- Sidewalks on both side sides of Central Street between West Street and Island Street; and on the south side to Central Court.

The West Street corridor segment between **West Street and Di Castro Lane** is also a priority area for safety improvements.

- **Central Street/Pearl Street Intersection** – Improvements should include a consistent cross section and sidewalks on both sides of the street at the intersection.
- **Central Street/Pleasant Street (Rt. 139) Intersection** – This is a highly congested intersection. A left-turn lane is needed in the eastbound direction from Central Street onto Pleasant Street. The Pleasant Street intersection may also be widened to accommodate trucks.
- **Central Street/Turnpike Street Intersection** – This is a skewed intersection with sight line concerns. The intersection is signalized but the timing should be reviewed.

Bay Road Intersections - Bay Road along the southwest town border with Sharon is a designated Scenic Road. There are several residential streets on both the Stoughton and Sharon sides that intersect with Bay Road that have poor sight lines including Boulder Lane where a bad crash occurred in 2013. Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC) recently conducted a Road Safety Audit on this corridor to identify safety issues and outline recommended improvements.

Island Street Corridor - Island Street is a major north-south commuter corridor and creates significant congestion in the segment during peak hours. The town should consider the future possibility of a one-way loop with Island Street in the northbound direction from Central Street and Mill Street in the southbound direction to Central Street. This would eliminate heavy turning movements onto Island Street from Central Street and eliminate a significant issue in this critical segment. Mill Street is hilly with some sharp curves so improvements would need to be made in order to increase capacity and improve safety.

Other Key Intersections – The following intersections have been identified as high priorities for safety improvements:

- **Pleasant Street (Rt. 139)/Lincoln Street Intersection** – Traffic improvements should be considered.
- **Pleasant Street (Rt. 139)/Turnpike Street** – The signal timing and crosswalk should be reviewed at this intersection.

- **Wyman Street/Summer Street/Morton Street Intersection** – Skewed and poor sight lines creates confusion and pose safety concerns. This may be a good candidate for a roundabout.
- **Canton Street (Rt. 27)/Summer Street/School Street Intersection** – Skewed and poor sight lines create confusion and pose safety concerns. This may be a good candidate for a roundabout.

Improve connectivity throughout town.

Unless there are topographic or ecological constraints prohibiting it, streets in Stoughton should be connected to another street where practical. By avoiding past precedents of constructing dead ends (i.e. residential cul-du-sacs), an interconnected network of thoroughfares can be improved. The thoroughfare network provides a multitude of routing alternatives to and from all destinations in a neighborhood, providing the best method of dispersing traffic and limiting congestion. Having a thoroughfare network with a high degree of connectivity also enables individual streets to become narrower, which slows traffic and increases vehicular and pedestrian safety. High connectivity also allows emergency service vehicles many options to get to the site of an emergency call. Connectivity standards in Stoughton should not be limited to automobiles. Encouraging a network of connected sidewalks, paths, and passages makes walking more convenient and enjoyable and increases pedestrian access throughout the community. Finally, by increasing the number of routes through the community, pedestrians are provided more interesting walking and jogging alternatives to access a variety of neighborhoods and destinations, and more opportunity for social interaction.

Goal 2:

Create a pedestrian and cyclist circulation system that provides safe and convenient access to schools, the library, shopping, activity centers, and neighborhoods.

Primary Objective:

The Town of Stoughton should provide a safe, convenient, continuous, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing transportation system that promotes bicycling and walking as legitimate alternatives to the automobile for trips less than one mile in length. Specific recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle facilities in town are summarized below:

Potential Strategies:

Slowing traffic, narrowing streets to reduce pedestrian crossing distance, adding on-street parking, and including better signage, crosswalks, and signal phasing for pedestrians will make streets within or leading to Town Center, business corridors, and neighborhoods more safe and walkable.

Continue to extend and enhance “walkability” throughout Stoughton.

The term “walkability” describes an environment where there is true balance between many modes of transportation. Most specifically, it describes an environment in which people feel comfortable walking and where they are engaged by their surroundings. In Stoughton, where promoting more walking and biking is a high priority, the following walkability factors and indicators below should inform future decisions regarding public realm improvements as well as infill development and rehabilitation of existing buildings.

- Access management – the number and width of curb cuts.
- Well placed pedestrian crossings and traffic calming devices to enhance safety and the quality of the pedestrian experience.
- Uniformity of crosswalk treatments such as a continental striping pattern, thermoplastic pavement markings, and consistent signage on main arterials and numbered routes that increase driver awareness of the presence of pedestrians.
- Attractive streetscapes with a broad combination of street trees, landscaping and furnishings that are highly functional and well maintained.
- Attractive and diverse building elements such as blade signs, wall signs, window signs, and awnings that are in scale with the building.
- Attractive and intuitive pedestrian level wayfinding systems.



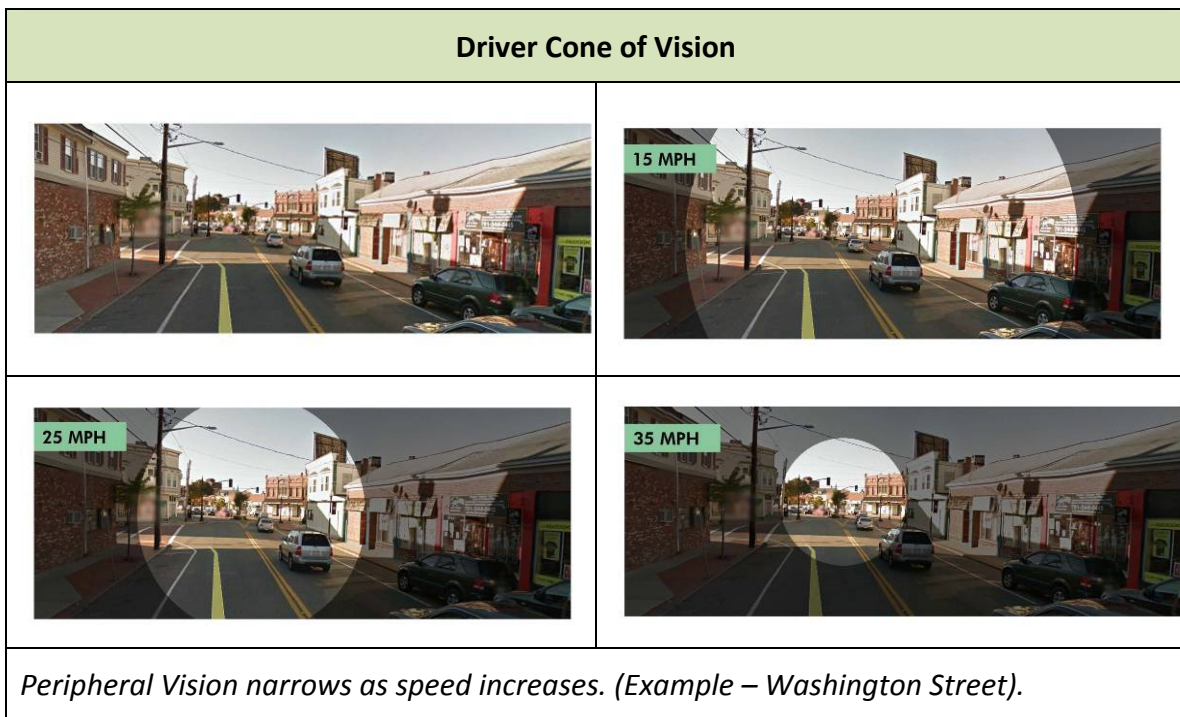
The walkability factors and indicators can be translated into three measurable objectives: Distance, Destination, and Design. When each of these objectives is sufficiently addressed, people are more likely to walk.

Distance - The average pedestrian is willing to walk up to one quarter of a mile (1,320 feet) or roughly a five minute walk to their destination. This ¼ mile walk is referred to as the “pedestrian shed”. For most people, distances requiring more than a five minute walk will typically be made in a car rather than by walking. Therefore, the proximity and distribution of public and private parking in relation to destination shops, restaurants, employers, and civic gathering areas is critical to the long term viability of Stoughton’s business districts, particularly Town Center. Additionally, the proximity and accessibility (i.e. sidewalks and pathways) to the same destinations by residents in the surrounding neighborhoods is important as well.

Destination - People will tend to walk more if there are popular places to go. Meaningful destinations include civic gathering and public meeting spaces, schools, and business districts where there is a critical mass of shops, restaurants and essential services where daily or weekly needs can be met. Stoughton has Town Center and a few neighborhood and commercial centers but none currently where residents can find all that they may want and need. While presently distressed, Stoughton Town Center is viewed as the “heart and soul” of the community. Traffic congestion, vacancies, and deteriorated buildings are all a source of concern in the community. Its revitalization is of the highest priority with the goal being a major destination for local residents and visitors alike.



Design - An interesting and engaging streetscape (streets and sidewalks) are critical for a walkable environment. Pedestrian safety and comfort is also directly related to roadway width. Several studies have demonstrated that traffic speeds increase in proportion to lane width, regardless of the posted speed limit. As the road widens the driver tends to go faster and peripheral vision narrows. They may not see pedestrians as readily on the sidewalks and in the crosswalks. The series of diagrams below illustrate how the driver's cone of vision narrows with increasing speed on a typical downtown corridor. In addition to pedestrian safety, driver's traveling at higher speeds may not see storefronts, signs and displays which can have negative economic impacts on a business district.



Narrow travel lanes, street trees, and on-street parking all serve as effective psychological cues, helping to slow automobiles and, in turn, enhance pedestrian comfort.

Upgrade sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks.

In general, the treatment of sidewalks, crosswalks, and ADA compliant handicapped ramps including signage and pavement markings are inconsistent throughout the town. The town should adopt standardized treatments for crosswalks and signage, considering best practices such as:

- Continental markings and signage both at and in advance of crosswalks along arterial roadways in congested or high speed traffic areas.
- Solar pedestrian activated rectangular rapid flashing beacons (this is new and highly effective technology for use at pedestrian crosswalks in highly congested and higher speed roadway segments).



The Carmanah® solar powered rectangular rapid flashing beacon is pedestrian activated and may be a good demonstration project in Town Center at the intersection of Washington Street and Wyman Street.

In addition to the road segments identified above, the following locations are priorities for improving the pedestrian network:

- Evaluate the need for improved street lighting at all pedestrian crosswalks in Town Center.
- Improve sidewalks and pedestrian facilities at all crosswalks on Washington Street from Plain Street to the Stop and Shop driveway.
- Improve the crosswalk in Porter Street in front of the Post Office.
- Improve pedestrian facilities at the intersection of Canton Street and School Street.
- Improve pedestrian facilities at the intersection of Pearl Street from the Canton town line to Central Street.
- Complete sidewalks on Central Street from Evans Drive to the Canton town line.
- Create ADA compliant sidewalks in front of the senior housing on Central Street.

Expand and enhance bicycle facilities throughout Stoughton.

The recommended bicycle network for Stoughton will rely on designated bicycle routes on local streets and off-street, shared-use trails. Wayfinding signage and pavement markings should be used throughout the proposed system to clearly designate bicycle routes and reinforce the presence of bicyclists in the travel realm. In terms of on-street bicycle routes, the following corridors have been proposed and included in the OCPC Regional Transportation Plan:

- Washington Street/Route 138 (entire corridor in Stoughton)
- Turnpike Street/Lindelof Avenue (entire corridor in Stoughton)
- Canton Street/Park Street/Route 27 (entire corridor in Stoughton)
- Bay Road from Canton town line to Plain Street
- Plain Street from Sharon town line to Washington Street
- Central Street from Canton town line (Cobb's Corner) to Pleasant Street (and possibly extending to Turnpike Street and the Avon town line)
- Pleasant Street from Central Street to Washington Street (Route 139)
- Prospect Street from Pleasant Street to Park Street
- Grove Street and Lincoln Street between Washington Street and Pleasant Street
- Morton Street between Plain Street and Town Center
- Sumner Street from Park Street to Brockton city line

Off-street portions of the network should be designed to work with inter-mixed pedestrian activity. Funding for building the network should be sought from grants such as MassDOT Safe Routes to School Program or Transportation Enhancement Funds that are expected to increase significantly over the next five years with MassDOT's recent enactment of its "Complete Streets Policy."

Install Bicycle Lanes Where Appropriate - A bicycle lane is a portion of the roadway that has been dedicated for the exclusive use of bicycles. Bike lanes are typically five feet wide and located on the outside edge of the travel lane, moving in the same direction as vehicular traffic. In village centers, they are typically between the travel lane and on-street parking lane. They can be either one-way or two-way and can be on one or both sides of a street. Studies have shown that a simple white line is effective in channelizing both motorists and bicyclists. Existing streets in Stoughton with wide travel lanes and shoulders may be re-stripped to include bike lanes.



Install Sharrows Where Appropriate - A sharrow refers to the condition where cars and cyclists share the travel lane. Sharrows are typically marked by a bicycle symbol with chevron, making it clear to drivers that the travel lanes is a shared space. Unlike a bike lane, a sharrow does not require additional lane width, which keeps vehicular speeds in check. Sharrows are a good solution for streets that are too narrow for conventional bike lanes. They also have the benefit of being relatively inexpensive to install.



Expand Off-Road Bike Trails – The town should explore opportunities to create a network of off-road bike and multi-purpose trails. There may be potential for existing trails to be upgraded and new trails to be established on conservation lands in Stoughton, and along old railroad right-of-ways and segments attached to the South Coast Rail extension in outlying areas. Bike trails should connect to Town Center, neighborhoods, and business parks where possible.

Provide Bike Parking and Storage – If more cyclists are going to travel to or in Stoughton they must have safe and convenient places to store their bicycles at a trip's end. A simple and user-friendly “u-shaped” bicycle rack (or locally-designed options) that provide a high level of function should be provided. Racks should be placed around Town Center and other business districts at key destinations, including larger employers, popular stores, larger clusters of businesses, and civic buildings such as Town Hall, the Public Library, schools and parks. A public/private partnership could be created between local non-profits and the town to fund and install secure, covered bike storage in proximity to key destinations. Permanent, secure bike storage should also be available for those who access work via commuter rail and for use during civic events. Secure storage could be something as simple as a covered bike locker or a more elaborate bike station that includes a repair station, showers, lockers, changing rooms, rentals, and even small cafe space.



Provide End-of-Trip Facilities - Easily identifiable bike shops, repair stations, cafes, and other businesses that cater to the needs of hungry and thirsty bikers will do much to build the town's reputation as a bike-friendly destination. These kinds of highly functional end-of-trip facilities, combined with incentivized programs and other “soft” improvements, will continue to build on Stoughton's bikeability.

Goal 3:

Improve mobility for all transportation modes and users, both motorized and non-motorized.

Primary Objective

The Town of Stoughton is looking to provide a safe, reliable transportation system that balances all modes of transportation, including walking, biking, public transportation, commercial vehicles, and personal automobiles. Land use and infrastructure must be supportive of each other in order for this to occur. Creating a strong relationship between development and the “Public Realm” is critical and can be accomplished by promoting “Complete Streets” that emphasize the quality and character of both. Emphasis should be placed on both destination-based as well as recreational trips, promoting active living for all ages, with special attention given to the mobility of children and seniors. Investment in the transportation system should favor multi-modal travel solutions, especially in walkable activity centers and along the corridors that link them such as Town Center and Washington Street. Capital improvements and town policies targeted to vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit users must be consistent with this goal.



Potential Strategies

Adopt Complete Streets policy, design standards and capital improvement programs.

If realistic and practical choices are to be provided in Stoughton for alternatives to driving, (such as bicycling, walking, and using public transit), policies, standards and capital improvement programs must address the possibility and desire for multimodal transportation offered through “Complete Streets”. While driving will always be the primary means of transportation in Stoughton, other transportation modes can be improved particularly with improved access between business districts and neighborhoods.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across streets in the community. Complete streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They improve access to public transit and make it safe for children to walk to and from school.

Complete Streets are not just multi-modal but incorporate context-sensitive solutions to the areas they provide access to. Therefore street design elements and standards for a town center compared to a neighborhood are quite different. Complete Streets provide a supportive public realm for business development and property investment. Some of the key design elements of Complete Streets that have applications to different transects in Stoughton include the following:

- Vehicle lanes that provide needed capacity but are narrow enough to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety.
- Small curb radii to shorten pedestrian crossings and slow vehicle turning speeds.
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street to maximize pedestrian access and walkability.
- On-street parking to provide convenient access to businesses and calm traffic.
- Crosswalks that are consistent in design and strategically located to match pedestrian desire lines and maximize safety.
- Pedestrian refuges for wider intersections and crosswalks to enhance safety.
- Planting strips with street trees to calm traffic, shade and protect the pedestrian, and improve aesthetics.
- Bike lanes or sharrows to facilitate higher bicycle use and improve safety.
- Street lighting for pedestrian comfort and safety.
- Bus and commuter rail shelters to provide comfort and safety to users.

The Board of Selectmen should adopt a “Complete Streets” policy which is context sensitive and considers all transportation projects as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation choices for all users, and is coordinated with all departments, agencies and jurisdictions. For example, where the removal of a sidewalk may not be advantageous under local and regional jurisdiction, it may be positive with respect to EPA stormwater management regulations and low impact development (LID) standards. These potential conflicts will need to be considered.



Example Complete Street in village center and neighborhood application with combination of travel lanes, parking lanes, bike lanes, sidewalks, planting strips, and crosswalks with curb extensions. (Image by Dodson & Flinker Associates, LTD)

In terms of implementation, the Board of Selectmen should consider the following actions:

- Request that appropriate department, boards and committees review, revise and develop as needed, appropriate planning documents (master plan, open space and recreation, housing, economic development), zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, site plan review, design guidelines, and other programs to make sure they incorporate Complete Street design principles and design standards.
- Re-evaluate capital improvement projects prioritization to encourage implementation of Complete Streets implementation.
- Train pertinent town staff and officials regarding the principles and best practices of Complete Street design.
- Seek appropriate funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies and standards.

Enhance commuter rail service and facilities.

The South Coast Rail project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOT). The project proposes to restore passenger rail transportation from South Station in Boston to the cities of Fall River and New Bedford along an existing rail freight corridor. The Stoughton route from Boston to Taunton includes the construction /reconstruction of five stations; one in Stoughton. The Plan proposes an

electrified dual track system (where one line exists today) and relocation of the station south of its current location between Porter Street and Wyman Street to south of Wyman Street to Brock Street. The town is opposed to this plan, as proposed, as the increase in train trips with at grade crossings through Town Center will be significant and pose a threat to public safety.

EXAMPLES OF BELOW GRADE RAIL SYSTEMS



Depressed rail lines including platform, station and street overpass. Lower images are of the commuter station in Natick, MA

The town has requested a mitigation plan from MassDOT that has the rail lines depressed below grade to improve access and circulation. The town supports improving commuter rail service in Stoughton and will continue to work with MBTA and various state departments to enhance facilities and service, however, several factors must be considered including the following:

- Expanded rail service should not increase the number or frequency of crossing as grade;
- Traffic congestion combined with reduced access and circulation will become increasingly problematic unless the track is depressed through Town Center;
- Electrification poses safety and aesthetic concerns that must be resolved to the town's satisfaction;
- The additional train trips will increase noise (horn and velocity) and air pollution (hybrid diesel fuel);
- The station location and expansion of service must be consistent with the town's revitalization and economic development goals;
- Rail service expansion must maintain opportunities for Transit Oriented Development (TOD);
- Parking capacity and management must be able to accommodate expanded rail service.

Improve bus transit facilities.

The town and Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT) should work together to improve transit service and facilities in Stoughton. A priority is to improve bus stops in key locations, including South Coast Rail locations, with dedicated bus pull-outs, benches, lighting and shelters where appropriate.

Goal 4:

Improve the vitality of our Town Center through transportation, streetscape and parking enhancements.

Primary Objective

The Town of Stoughton should improve vitality in Town Center through a combination of physical improvements, management programs, and street activation techniques that improve traffic distribution, enhances access by pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit, and reduces pressure on available parking. Effectively dispersing through traffic and commuter traffic is also a prime objective.

Potential Strategies

Address Traffic Congestion in Town Center.

Town Center faces significant congestion. Several alternative circulation scenarios have been drawn up including bypasses and one-way loop systems. The town has retained a consultant to develop a traffic circulation improvement plan that will evaluate the feasibility, costs, and potential positive and negative impacts of the previous circulation plans including: the Adams, Howard and Greeley Plan (1959); Metcalf & Eddy Plan (1970); and TAMS Alternative C Plan (1975); as well as other circulation scenarios and recommend a traffic plan for the town to adopt. The study should be complete and a recommendation made by December 2014.

Ultimately, the circulation improvement plan should achieve the following:

- Efficiently disperse and distribute local traffic and through traffic;
- Provide balance in the modes of transportation by accommodating personal vehicles, delivery vehicles, bus transit, pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Improve access management and connectivity;
- Provide convenient access to public and private parking areas
- Maintain and enhance exposure and visibility of local businesses;
- Address intersection safety issues for all modes of transportation; and
- Control vehicle speed to enhance visibility and pedestrian safety.

The town should consider the circulation improvement plan as a strategic public infrastructure investment that will lead to business expansion and reinvestment in private property.

Implement streetscape improvements in Town Center to improve the pedestrian environment and as a tool for generating economic development and private investments.

Good street design promotes community livability and vitality by emphasizing local travel needs and creating a safe, inviting space for community activity. In Stoughton Town Center, it is important that future streetscape enhancements provide a foundation for reinvestment and business development.

Future streetscape enhancements should focus on basic design elements such as:

- Sidewalk design and activity;
- Street furniture including ornamental streetlights in commercial/retail corridors;

- Plantings such as street trees that shade the sidewalk, flowering plant pots hung on light poles, and private landscaping such as flower boxes in front of stores;
- Wayfinding signs, gateway treatments, and business directories;
- Burying overhead utility poles (or relocating to the rear of buildings);
- A thorough maintenance program.

These can be further enhanced by “Street Activation” tools such as outdoor dining, displays and projecting signs which contribute to walkability and a vibrant streetscape.

EXAMPLES OF STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS



Sidewalk Planter, Batavia NY



Sidewalk Seating Area, Hyannis, MA



Furniture and Flowers, Gloucester, MA



Street Trees Pruned Up, Bridgewater, MA



Seating and Bike Racks, Portsmouth, NH

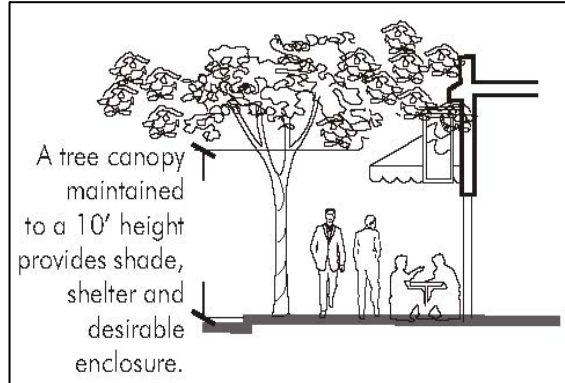


Outdoor Seating on Narrow Sidewalk, Winter Park, FL

Streetscape improvements can also provide more depth to the business districts by expanding pedestrian connectivity to parallel and side streets, and creating a more attractive setting for future business development and investment. Collectively, these elements should create an environment that is not only attractive, but can slow traffic and encourage walking, bicycling and use of bus transit.

Through the community engagement process and on-site observations the following additional streetscape enhancements are recommended:

Install New Street Trees and Maintain Existing Trees– New trees should be planted in Town Center and along Washington Street to provide shade and enclosure resulting in a more attractive and safe pedestrian environment. Street trees should be carefully located so as not to block doorway, window, and sign visibility. They may be best situated where buildings are joined together at a common wall or where parking is located in front of the building.



Maintenance of existing trees may involve irrigation and cleaning of tree grates. Pruning is also an important consideration. Street trees should be pruned to a level of ten feet so that they do not create obstacles for pedestrians or screen the view of business signs, windows and doorways. An advisory committee should be responsible for selecting and planting replacement and new street trees as necessary.

Pedestrian Level Lighting - The attractive ornamental street lights in Town Center should be further extended up Washington Street and into surrounding neighborhoods to create safer and more attractive pedestrian access, and improve connectivity to surrounding areas. Additionally, for aesthetic impact, an active program for hanging and watering flower pots on the posts should be implemented with a private/public partnership to provide and maintain plantings from May to October.

Install More Traffic Calming Treatments - Curb extensions (or bulb-outs) are short sections of the street, usually at intersections, where pavement has been narrowed by extending the sidewalk into the on-street parking lanes. This reduces the width of the street that a pedestrian must cross, making crossing times shorter, easier, and safer. It also puts pedestrians in a place of greater visibility so that they can see traffic more easily and motorists can see them. Pedestrian refuge islands placed in the center of the road between travel lanes provide a safe waiting place for pedestrians in congested traffic areas. An additional benefit of curb extensions and pedestrian refuge islands is that the street is narrowed so vehicles tend to slow down. These traffic-calming treatments, together with crosswalks, are also designed to enhance appearance through pavement treatments and landscaping.

EXAMPLES OF PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND TRAFFIC-CALMING TREATMENTS



Curb Extension with Brick Apron and Street Tree



Narrow Lanes with Landscaped Center Island/Pedestrian Refuge



Crosswalk and Pedestrian Refuge

Install Information Kiosks - Strategically located informational kiosks should be placed in Town Center. The kiosks can be both stand-alone structures and wall-mounted units and should contain a business directory map, points of public interest, and information on upcoming events and activities in Stoughton. The kiosk should also contain marketing materials explaining and illustrating local history, architecture, and culture. A new slogan and logo should be incorporated into the kiosk design. Potential locations may include Town Hall, along Washington Street, Faxon Memorial Park, the Public Library, MBTA station, and public parking lots.

EXAMPLES OF WAYFINDING SIGNS, INFORMATIONAL KIOSKS & BUSINESS DIRECTORIES



Newburyport, MA



Saratoga Springs, NY



Falmouth, MA

Install Gateway Treatments and Wayfinding Signage - Attractive entrances or “gateways” into Town Center are critical to making a good impression on residents, visitors, and commuters (all potential customers). Gateway treatments also function as traffic-calming devices, providing a message to travelers to slow down as they approach the center. Attractive planters and coordinated directional and welcome signs should be installed to enhance aesthetic value at key entrances.

While there is some directional signage in Town Center, it is not as visible and intuitive as it should be to effectively indicate to motorists that public parking is available in off-street lots around the district. New directional signage should be considered that is coordinated and uniform in design. It should be strategically located and visible at entry points to Town Center and lead visitors to public parking lots as well as other points of interest such as the commuter rail station, Town Hall, Public Library, Post Office, local businesses, and others.

EXAMPLES OF DOWNTOWN GATEWAY TREATMENTS AND WAYFINDING SIGNAGE



Kissimmee, FL



Niagara On The Lake, Ontario CAN



Batavia, NY



Coordinated Wayfinding System, Englewood, FL



Pole Mounted Amherst, MA

Manage and enhance parking supply and distribution in Town Center.

The amount, distribution, and availability of public and private parking (and the perception of adequate parking) is critical to the vitality of Stoughton Town Center. In this traditional downtown district, the historic building pattern should be preserved with as much public on-street and off-street parking as possible for general use by local businesses, services, civic/institutional uses, and residents. Key parking issues for the Town Center are the strategic expansion of public parking, connection of public and private parking areas, wayfinding signage, management of public and private spaces to facilitate a higher turnover of spaces primarily intended for customer use, and designation of longer-term remote spaces for local employees and commuters. Some of the specific considerations for future parking enhancements include the following:

Evaluate Parking Enforcement – Business and property owners benefit by consistent parking enforcement in the downtown area to ensure that the limited number of spaces, including the use of short and long-term spaces, are most effectively utilized. The general goal is to encourage more employees to park in the public off-street lots. Consistent enforcement is also necessary to maximize the efficiency of public parking.

Evaluate Time Limits – The timing of on-street and off-street parking limits should be evaluated with direct input from Town Center property owners, residents, business owners, and employees. Currently, Washington Street parking spaces are not metered and have short time limits. Metered parking is one way to enforce time limits and ensure better turnover of short and long-term spaces. Meter revenues are also typically used to support parking enforcement and to improve/expand public parking in the downtown area. However, local businesses are often against meters as they may be perceived as driving customers away. One intermediate approach would be to allow the 15-30 minutes of parking for free before the meter begins to count the time. This can be a much appreciated convenience for both merchant and customer while continuing to improve the turnover of short-term parking spaces.

Establish a Sticker Permit Program – The sticker permit program is intended to encourage Town Center residents and employees to park in more remote locations away from the core area along Washington Street where customer parking is critical to business success. The town should consider promoting a sticker program with the goal of providing incentives for employees to park further off the primary streets.

Parking Placement and Access - In Town Center, parking should be placed to the side or rear of the primary building throughout the district to maximize walkability and connection between pedestrians and storefronts. Access to parking areas should be attractive and well lit.

Improve Lighting and Landscaping – Many public and private parking lots have little or no landscaping or lighting. The advantage to providing trees is that they create shade for parkers and enhance the image of downtown for customers. Lighting provides an additional sense of security. The trade-off would be that installing landscaping and

lighting will require the reuse of a certain number of parking spaces and ongoing maintenance.

EXAMPLES OF PARKING LOT TREATMENTS	
	
<i>Private Parking Lot Landscaping, Pinehills, MA</i>	<i>Rear Access from Parking Lot, Amherst, MA</i>
	
<i>Shade Trees in Parking Lot</i>	<i>Solar Panel Shade Parking Lot and includes Car Charging Station</i>

Improve Parking Lot Connectivity – On-site observations indicate that private parking efficiency could be improved in several places in Town Center. The town should consider incentives for private property owners to coordinate and provide internal connection where possible which could result in the creation of additional parking spaces and reduction in curb-cuts.

Allow and Encourage Shared Parking – One of the keys to success for mixed-use districts is the ability for parking spaces to be shared among different users at different times. Not only does this promote the efficient use of the land, it supports the type of active pedestrian district that is critical to supporting vital mixed-use centers. Shared parking

accommodations can be accomplished through zoning regulations and formal agreements, but need to be planned and managed.

Formalized parking agreements allow participants to rationalize and improve shared parking opportunities including access for cars or pedestrians that create more efficient use, layouts and access. Participants can be any combination of private property owners, institutions, or the municipality. The ability for parking spaces to be utilized by different users (residential, civic and commercial) at different peak times is a key to success for mixed-use districts such as Town Center and possibly Washington Street corridor in the future. Shared parking accommodations can be accomplished through zoning regulations and formal agreements, but need to be planned and managed.

Facilitate Access Easements and Agreements between Owners – Pedestrian circulation through and around Town Center is critically important in order to support the businesses, civic, and institutional uses. Desire lines often pass across non-public land. Communities and property owners can establish access easements and other forms of legal agreements that ensure that property rights are protected but allow for pedestrian passageways and associated improvements.

Consider Establishing a Public Parking Fund - The zoning bylaw should allow for payment in lieu of parking in the Central Business District. While not currently in place in Stoughton, the town should consider forming a public parking fund. It is suggested that the fund be defined broadly so that the town can use collected fees for any capital investment that adds new parking spaces, reconfigures lots to improve the utilization of existing spaces, closes or consolidates curb cuts, improves the management of supply or demand for parking spaces, adds new or improved pedestrian paths or amenities, provides bicycle parking or public transit facilities, or encourages other measures that shorten perceived walking distances in Town Center. A Public Parking Fund would be one of many techniques that can be employed to finance public parking structures and lots. Direct expenditures and bonding using parking revenues or tax increment resources are other common methods.

Consider Long-Term Strategic Parking Expansion – There are certain locations in Town Center where a shortage of parking is apparent. In these locations, the town would have to work with private property owners to assemble enough additional space to expand public parking. This may involve the acquisition or lease of private property, and demolition and relocation of certain buildings. In the long-term, the town should consider structured parking in a strategic and central location, possibly in coordination with a mixed use development that may occur as commuter rail service and facilities are improved. An evaluation of opportunities for structured parking (decks and garages) should consider parking utilization, potential locations, design and costs. In general, the per space cost of constructing a new parking garage and deck are significantly greater than surface parking.

Carry Out a Parking Management Plan - Effective parking management might be best advanced through a formalized plan involving the town, MBTA, and Town Center business and property owners. The purpose of this plan would be to formalize cooperative strategies to carry out physical improvements, improve signage and access, maximize efficiency through shared uses, and make appropriate policy changes regarding managing and enforcing the parking supply. In Stoughton, on-street parking enforcement requires the commitment and cooperation of the Police Department. Another option is to create a **Town Center Parking Management Authority** to formally organize shared interests in the supply and management of parking. The authority would be in a position to explore many methods to improve parking access, signage, shared use, and supply. They would report regularly to the town regarding the results of their efforts including several of the above recommendations.

Goal 5:

Improve the vitality of our Commercial Corridors and Business Parks through transportation, streetscape and parking enhancements.

Primary Objective

The Town of Stoughton should improve the vitality of commercial corridors and business parks through a combination of streetscape enhancements, intermodal access, safety improvements, internal circulation, and parking placement standards.

Potential Strategies

Implement streetscape improvements along the Washington Street corridor to improve the pedestrian environment and as a tool for generating economic development and private investments.

Along the Washington Street corridor, it is important that future streetscape enhancements provide a foundation for reinvestment and business development. Improvements should focus on basic design elements such as:

- Sidewalk design and connectivity to adjacent businesses;
- Pedestrian and overhead ornamental streetlights;
- Street trees that shade the sidewalk and landscaped buffers where applicable;
- Private landscaping in parking lots and adjacent to buildings
- Wayfinding signs and gateway treatments;
- Burying overhead utility poles (or relocating to the rear of buildings);

- A thorough and proactive maintenance program.

These can be further enhanced by “Street Activation” tools such as outdoor dining, displays and projecting signs which contribute to walkability and a vibrant streetscape.

Establish an Access Management Program.

Access management involves a set of strategies to improve the safety and efficiency of traffic by reducing congestion and conflict points, while simultaneously preserving community character and safety through land use planning and site design. An effective local access management program in Stoughton can play an important role in reducing accidents, preserving roadway capacity, and avoiding or minimizing costly roadway improvements to correct safety and congestion problems. The traveling public, including pedestrians and bicyclists, benefits from safer and more efficient travel.

Key access management tools include:

- Provide connections between adjacent properties (known as "cross access");
- Limit driveway openings, including standards for the number, width and spacing of driveway;
- Adopt corner clearance standards;
- Provide for appropriate intersection spacing and traffic signal spacing;
- Install center medians and other means of restricting turning movements at specific locations;
- Encourage shared parking between adjacent businesses, centralized public parking, and side and rear parking (versus parking between roadway and building); and
- Provide convenient internal circulation and external connections for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Site-specific access management improvements should have a particular focus along the Washington Street corridor where the retail and restaurant establishments are located. This should involve reducing both the number and widths of curb cuts, sharing access, and making internal connections where feasible. Many of these businesses may benefit from increased economic vitality along a well-managed corridor because of safer access to and from their establishments.

Adopt Parking Placement and Site Design standards to enhance the pedestrian environment and provide infill development opportunities on commercial corridors and in business parks.

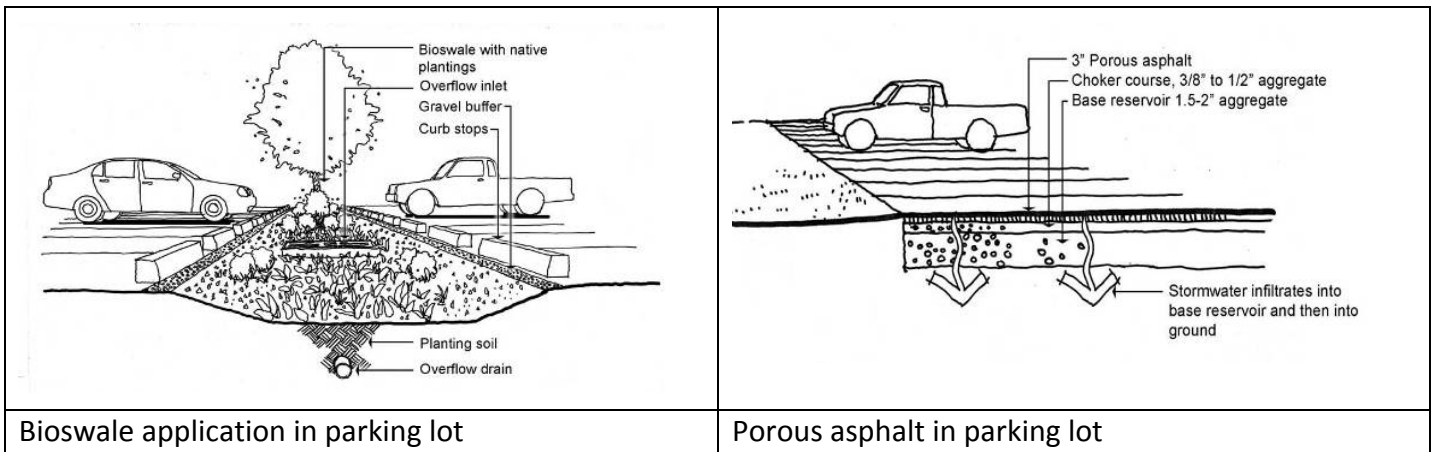
Parking placement and access are key contributors to the pedestrian environment and walkability. A higher number of curb cuts over the sidewalk and the separation of the

sidewalk and buildings by parking lots in the front yard significantly diminish the walking experience and visibility of storefronts by pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers. Parking along the Washington Street corridor is predominately in front of the building with several locations having multiple and wide curb cuts. However, there are areas where shared access to parking facilities as well as internal access and connectivity between parking areas can be improved. Additionally, there are opportunities to improve access between the public sidewalks and the parking area such as by pedestrian alleys and internal sidewalks.

GENERAL SITE ACCESS, PARKING AND CONNECTIVITY STANDARDS	
<p>General Design Standards - The building should be brought forward as close to the street as possible, with parking and other services tucked around the side and back. This helps to define the identity of the street and gives the business maximum public exposure.</p>	
<p>The parking lot areas should be designed in regular, rectangular shapes. Irregular wedge shaped parking areas created by following angled property lines should be discouraged. Only create as much paved area as absolutely necessary.</p>	
A.	The primary building entry should always be placed at the front of the building and be clearly identifiable from the street. In this example, an entry vestibule is created which provides access from the sidewalk and side and rear parking area simultaneously.
B.	Parking should be placed at the side or rear of the lot and screened from view whenever possible. Where possible, break the parking areas up into groups of no more than 20 spaces per area (35 for large development projects) separated by landscaping areas.
C.	Place as much of the building width at the front of the lot as possible to maximize front façade exposure to the traveling public. The front façade should be kept parallel to the street.
D.	To reinforce the “street-edge”, align with adjacent buildings which are also close to the front setback line. Landscaping can also be used to reinforce this line.
E.	Whenever possible, attempt to link with adjacent parking lots or provide shared parking areas which can serve neighboring buildings simultaneously. This provides a secondary means of access to the site and can ease congestion on the main road.
F.	Provide sidewalks for the full width of the property with a direct link to the primary building entry.
G.	Loading docks, service areas and trash facilities should be located at the rear of the building and not visible from the street. Fences, walls or landscaping can be used to shield them from view.
H.	Incorporate any existing, older trees into new site plan development whenever possible to reduce waste and utilize good shade trees.
I.	Minimize the amount of curb-cuts by having a single driveway in and out of the property from the main road whenever possible. Secondary access points from side roads are encouraged. Curb cuts should only be as wide as necessary to accommodate needed lanes. Curb radiuses should be kept to a minimum.
J.	Landscaped islands and other green space should be consolidated into useful areas, and not just narrow strips of grass or plantings.

Adopt Standards for Sustainable Streets and Parking Areas

Green Streets - Green streets are thoroughfares that capture, temporarily store, and treat road runoff at its source by incorporating vegetated water catchment and filtration devices in the form of small rain gardens and bioretention systems. Components such as flow-through planters and other sustainable stormwater solutions allow stormwater from the street to enter planters through cuts in the curb where the plant material removes impurities and allows water to naturally infiltrate or be stored elsewhere. Water-loving plants and those that are able to remove the impurities while thriving so close to traffic and in more urban environments are used in green street design, adding beauty and function. Additional infiltration can be achieved through the use of pervious paving materials for sidewalks and streets. It may be possible for Stoughton to retrofit some business district and neighborhood streets over time to accommodate these kinds of bioretention systems. The town may also consider requiring these systems for new projects in certain business and industrial districts.



Goal 6:

Develop local capacity to address transportation and circulation needs on an ongoing basis.

Primary Objective

To have and support a lead group with diverse transportation interest and expertise to assist in educating the community, building consensus, and implementing transportation projects.

Potential Strategies

Guide project review and implementation through the Transportation Task Force.

To guide traffic and circulation improvements toward implementation, the Phase I Plan recommended the town create a transportation management committee responsible for developing a priority list of roadway, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements to reduce traffic congestion and improve walkability and pedestrian safety. The town has since created the Stoughton Transportation Task Force (STTF). Although only recently organized, it is well versed in all transportation issues and opportunities presented in the Master Plan, and is well positioned to advance such traffic improvements subject to the support of the Town Manager, Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting. One of the first tasks undertaken by the STTF was to create a priority list of intersection improvements to address traffic controls, jurisdiction, type, Loss of Service (LOS), operational capabilities, and other attributes and constraints.

Secondly, the Task Force obtained funds at the 2013 Town Meeting to retain a consulting engineering firm to provide on-call traffic engineering services to address traffic safety and intersection improvements at many of the locations identified in this chapter. Further, the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen recently issued an RFP for a traffic consultant to address Town Center traffic congestion.

Seek Funding Resources for Transportation Improvements.

There are two projects on the most recent Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Stoughton including the following:

Washington Street & Central Street Intersection Improvements (#607403) – This project is in preliminary design phase and will address safety, congestion and lack of multi-modal accommodations. Improvements being considered include traffic signal retiming, exclusive left turn lanes from Central Street, continuous sidewalks, restriping of travel lanes to provide bike accommodations, and a center median for access management and pedestrian refuge. Construction is projected to start in 2019 for \$2.75 million.

Reconstruction of Turnpike Road (#607214) - This project is in preliminary design phase and will address road settlement problems to the segment from Pleasant Street for a distance of about 1,000 feet north. Construction is projected to start in 2018 for \$12 million.

There are other key programs that could assist Stoughton with funding for Complete Streets. The **2014-2018 Transportation Bond Bill** includes \$130 million for Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities including Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and crosswalk signals. It also includes \$2.2 billion for South Coast Rail. Current planning at the state level for **“Active Streets and Healthy Communities”** is funded at \$10 million for five years. “Opt In” grants for communities are likely to be very competitive.

Another program recently initiated by MassDOT is for improving signage along high crash curves. This may be a useful program for segments of Bay Road and other road

corridors in Stoughton with poor site lines. If approved, MassDOT will provide the town with signs and posts for installation.

Other potential resource and funding programs to consider include: Mass. Safe Routes to School (Stoughton is an active participant); YMCA National PHC program; YMCA PHC Lessons Learned program; Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) programs; and the Old Colony Planning Council (funding for transportation planning and analysis).

The town should consider retaining a grant writing consultant to assist in capturing funds that will be allocated on a competitive basis.

Public Facilities and Services

Overview

The Town of Stoughton offers a range of public services to meet community needs including governance and planning, public safety, education, recreation, health and social services, water and sewer services, waste management, natural resource protection, and public roads, infrastructure and facilities management. The capacity to offer these services relies on adequate physical and human resources and is largely dependent on the town's financial health.

Generally Stoughton residents understand the connection between high quality public facilities and services and the town's ability to become a more vibrant and sustainable community. In response to a public survey, residents noted they are generally satisfied with public services and facilities, with the exception being the physical condition of school facilities and past planning services.

Sustainable Facilities and Services Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Benchmarks

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for public facilities and services. The index identifies a number of measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress in providing up-to-date facilities and services to meet local needs.

Issues and Challenges

While there are a number of town characteristics that the residents of Stoughton are not satisfied with, including Town Center, traffic, parking, arts and culture, and walkability/bikeability they are, in general, satisfied with the provision of services provided by the town with the exception of prior town planning and are generally satisfied with public facilities with the exception of schools, sidewalks and trails, and the recycling center. Department heads are less satisfied with the current state of facilities and identified a number of issues related to facilities and staffing they feel need to be addressed to effectively provide needed services.

Schools - Residents have mixed opinions about Stoughton's public schools. Some noted the positive aspects including the specific programs and teachers, while others have pointed to the school system's low performance rankings and the poor physical condition of the schools as areas for improvement. Universally, citizens agree that the public school system should be a priority for the town. In addition to the importance of education at a personal level, a strong school system is seen as a key to maintaining and growing a strong residential base and local economy.

Priorities for improving the school system include continuing the strategic updating or replacing of the school's buildings starting with the High School, updating all schools with new technology, continuing the culture of openness, transparency and collaboration between community members, town leaders, and school administrators and staff, and celebrating and promoting the school's successes.

Public Safety - The town's fire and police departments are highly effective and well respected. Both departments however, are challenged by facility shortcomings.

A 2010 Facilities Master Plan found several major systems of Fire Station One to be in fair to poor condition and recommends the town undertake a feasibility study to evaluate the investment value of the Freeman Street facility to determine if further investment is appropriate or if a new, replacement station outside the town center is a wiser choice. The department feels strongly that moving the station out of its present location in Town Center would improve fleet management and efficiency as well as decrease impacts to traffic and pedestrian circulation and safety.

Based on discussions with Deputy Police Chief, Robert Devine, the police station, located in Town Center has a number of structural and program deficiencies including lack of technology and training infrastructure, inadequate office space, and on-going heating and air conditioning issues. The department also has limited capacity to deal with quality of life issues and traffic control and enforcement due to the increasing number of calls primarily related to drug use and trafficking. The 2013 Annual Town Meeting authorized a study to consider consolidating public safety departments within a central facility. The study is assessing sites and developing concept designs for a facility that will house fire, police and the Visiting Nurses program.

Priorities for the department include upgrading facilities and infrastructure, assessing and responding to staffing needs that will improve community policing, and continuing to work toward state accreditation.

Library - The Stoughton Public Library has embarked on a building expansion project to better meet existing and projected community needs. Improvements will increase space for inventory and programs, advance technology, and bring the building into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The project was granted approval at Town Meeting in 2011, based on the understanding that state funds will pay half of project costs. The project is now eighth on the state's funding list and the library is continuing its efforts to raise the required matching funds.

Some community members have offered that the library should reassess its expansion options and consider building a new library that is integrated with, though not connected to the new High School. Any substantive change to the library proposal would require the library to resubmit its application for funding to the state and lose its place in the funding cue, a risk some see as problematic.

Senior/Youth Center - The combined and Youth Center is well used for programs that serve seniors and youth as well as for a number of community meetings ranging from small groups to large forums. While the Center generally meets existing needs of the

senior population, the growth of this age group is anticipated to place additional demands on the Center's limited space. The opportunity to increase programming to meet needs, including intergenerational programs for seniors and youth, is restricted by space limitations. The Center is more challenged to serve the needs of Stoughton's youth, which could be better served with outdoor space and indoor space for active uses. The town should begin now to identify expansion opportunities for inside and outside programming, and consider options for combined and separate facilities.

DPW - The Department of Public Works operates primarily out of the DPW garage, built around 1950 and renovated in 2009, that houses administrative offices and equipment bays. The Department is responsible for the provision of public water and sewer, sanitation, stormwater management, town roads and sidewalks, forestry and parks, and increasingly for facility maintenance. The Department's principal challenges revolve around lack of personnel, in particular to support water, sewer and stormwater installation and maintenance, parks and forestry, and building maintenance services. This plan focuses on opportunities to maximize efficiencies in order to balance the cost of services with available funding.

In addition to the Public Works facilities on Central Street, the Stoughton Water Works pumping station also located on Central Street is a significant historical structure that continues to serve as a pumping station, though most of the building is vacant or used for storage. This distinctive brick building was designated an American Water Landmark in 1987 by the American Water Works Association. A plan for adaptive re-use of this building is recommended.

Town Hall - Stoughton Town Hall has gone through a number of recent renovations to increase building performance and access. While improvements have helped maintain the building and its systems, and create more functional offices and meeting rooms, there remains a need for additional space for offices, storage and meetings and for consideration of security. This plan recommends the town undertake a program needs assessment to identify appropriate properties to serve these needs in the future. While the need for changes at Town Hall is not as pressing as that of new and improved schools and public safety facilities it should be considered in long term planning as the town weighs options for re-use of town owned buildings and properties.

Lucius Clapp Memorial - The Lucius Clapp Memorial building home to the Stoughton Historical and Musical Societies should be assessed on an annual basis to identify needed maintenance and improvements. Improved accessibility has been identified as a current need.

Armory Building - The former Armory building currently serves as a town storage facility due to its many challenges and steadily deteriorating condition. The Stoughton Facilities Master Plan completed in 2010 noted that most major systems were observed to be in fair to poor condition and recommended the town evaluate and identify potential future uses before making a significant investment to repair and replace necessary systems. A preliminary cost estimate for repairs without change to building layout was about 1.5 million dollars. The Armory site is restricted to municipal use under the terms

of the sales agreement between the town and the state. 2014 Town Meeting approved funds for a study to consider uses for the former Armory building.

Community Vision for Public Services and Facilities

Stoughton's community vision statement (in part below) indicates the importance of aligning municipal needs and capabilities to maintain responsive and effective services and facilities in support of health, education, safety and prosperity.

Stoughton provides public services, facilities and infrastructure that assure a clean, healthy, safe and vital community. Our investments respond directly to community needs and are balanced with our fiscal and operational capacity.

We are proud of our school system that boasts state-of-the-art facilities, a strong curriculum, exceptional educators, and students who achieve at the highest academic levels. Through a strong partnership between the school system and the community, we set high standards that enable all students to achieve success.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1:

Provide exceptional educational opportunities for students and residents of all ages in up-to-date and well maintained facilities.

Primary Objective

The primary objective is to deliver an exceptional educational experience to all students.

Potential Strategies

Continue to improve school buildings and grounds.

Maintaining the physical condition of schools and grounds is paramount to providing sound educational opportunities. The town's top priority for school facilities is the replacement of the High School followed by the systematic update or replacement of other schools. In addition the community must support and fund the continued implementation of improvements outlined in the school's capital improvement plan and assure that routine maintenance is a high priority to extend each buildings useful life.

Secure professional assistance to develop an Educational Master Plan

The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has invited the Stoughton Public Schools to seek eligibility for funding for the renovation of the existing or construction of a new Stoughton High School. The MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement competitive program. The MSBA's Board of Directors approves grants based on need and urgency as expressed by the Town, and validated by the MSBA. As part of the process to secure MSBA approval the school is required to fund and complete a Feasibility Study. The school should seek professional assistance to develop a comprehensive educational master plan to address performance, community goals and facility needs. The Plan must clearly illustrate urgency and need in a manner that will compete successfully with other projects being considered. A Comprehensive Educational Master Plan, in addition to strengthening the schools funding application, will engage the community in an intensive planning process with the potential to build understanding and relationships, and increase communication and cooperation.

Continue to evaluate and improve policies and processes to maintain and enhance a positive learning environment.

Massachusetts' public schools are required to continually monitor and assess performance through annual reviews, and to create plans that address deficiencies and improvement goals. Stoughton schools have a number of plans that are developed regularly (some annually) that guide their policies, operations and growth with goals and benchmarks. Key plans guiding school operations and growth today include the 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan, The 2013 - 2016 Triennial District Improvement Plan, and individual School Improvement Plans. In addition to following the recommendations in these plans, community members in collaboration with school officials have identified the following focus areas to support a positive learning environment.

- Innovation in instruction to engage and motivate students.
- Attention to student's individual needs, working collaboratively with student households and assessing progress to make sure interventions work.
- Information and assistance to students that seek an alternative educational path (SE Regional, Norfolk Agricultural).
- Collaborative assessment of curriculum and delivery of services involving students.
- K-12: enrichment (gifted and talented) programs that are strong, challenging, and innovative.
- Competitive programs such as chess, debate, robotics, technology, literacy and athletics.
- Post secondary education courses within the HS curriculum.
- Outstanding educators and administrators.
- Teacher interns that bring enthusiasm and cutting edge teaching ideas into the classrooms.

- Lifelong learning through continuing educational programming.

Goal 2:

Assure transparency of fiscal and operational activities.

Primary Objective

The objective of the following strategies is to enable a trusting partnership between schools, town government and community members through effective communication and collaboration.

Potential Strategies

Facilitate the community's understanding of school budgets.

The residents of Stoughton should understand school budgets and how they relate to facilities and services. Similar to communities throughout the commonwealth, Stoughton expends over half of its municipal budget on education for the development and upkeep of buildings, and the provision of services supported by nearly seven hundred part and full time employees. To further understanding of school budgets the schools should maintain communications with the general public through on-going community outreach. The schools must continue to expand communication platforms to reach people where they get their news. Public meetings, while one important aspect of outreach, must be supported by other forms of communication. Schools must continue its efforts to collaborate with town leaders, departments, boards and committees to work together to address perceptions/ misperceptions, challenges and opportunities.

Goal 3:

Increase community participation in advancing educational and community goals.

Primary Objective

The objective is to work together to set and meet goals that support education and build community.

Potential Strategies

Identify education and community goals and outline strategies for reaching them.

Schools are responsible for more than advancing the education of school age students. Schools are integral to the function and success of the towns they serve. The full range of community stakeholders should be engaged in an open and inclusive public process that helps them collectively identify education and community goals. The focus should be on sharing the responsibilities for creating facilities and a culture that meet education and community needs. A comprehensive education master planning effort that addresses community goals, alongside education goals should be considered.

Promote the Stoughton school system to existing and potential student households.

Stoughton residents and potential residents should have a good understanding of the school's strengths as well as any improvement plans for addressing shortcomings. To help foster understanding the school should make facilities and policies accessible. Ideas offered from the community through this process include:

- Offer school tours to bring stakeholders into the schools.
- Solicit public input for curriculum and policy review.
- Showcase student and teacher activities and successes in communications and at public events.
- Work with realtors to develop introductory packets on schools to distribute to potential home buyers.

Strengthen school-community connections.

Community members throughout the planning process shared an interest in creating stronger connections between the community and schools through on-going collaborations that bring community members into the schools and students and teachers out into the community. Schools should invite residents, business owners and town staff into schools to share experiences, teach, offer shadowing and mentoring, and assist in enrichment programs. And businesses, non-profits and municipal government should invite school employees and students to help support the community. For example students and teachers could help with community events, present to municipal boards, committees or constituent groups, conduct studies and surveys for non-profits or businesses, and hold fundraising or awareness raising events at local businesses.

Goal 4:

Assure that public safety facilities, equipment, and staffing enable prompt, professional responses to the community's needs.

Primary Objectives

The primary objectives of these recommendations are to provide facilities that are energy efficient and cost effective, provide personnel with appropriate tools and training, and match services to community needs and goals.

Potential Strategies

Continue an annual facility, fleet and equipment assessment

Police and Fire Departments should undertake a formal annual assessment of needs to drive Strategic and Capital Plans. Assessments should be based on department performance and community trends and projections. Assessments should include an internal evaluation as well as opportunities for public input. Existing needs include the following.

New or Improved Public Safety Building(s) The town is currently evaluating police and fire facility needs and is assessing the cost and benefits of a combined public safety building through the Public Safety Feasibility Study. It will be important for the town to support the study's recommendations with policies and funding.

Fleet Safety A strategic vehicle replacement plan is needed to plan for an adequate supply of vehicles for intended purposes. The town should also assess the benefit that may be provided by a dedicated fleet mechanic for municipal vehicles. A dedicated mechanic would be responsible for on-going vehicle inspection and repair, potentially expanding vehicle life expectancy.

Updated Technology Technology is vital to effective public safety and requires on-going updates to remain current and integrated in a regional, state and federal system. Stoughton must invest in technology hardware, software and personnel training to enhance communications, modeling and forecasting, and data control to allow safety personnel to effectively respond to community needs.

Additional Ambulance The town should assess the need for an additional ambulance to meet existing need.

Animal Control Facilities Animal control facilities are limited at its current site. Existing needs include an expanded office and animal holding cells and paddocks. A site should be identified to serve these needs.

Continue to review department staffing levels annually.

A formal staffing assessment should also be instituted and should compare staffing to population, trends and unmet needs. As with the facility, fleet and equipment assessment, the staffing assessment should also include opportunities for public input. It is the Police Departments view that Stoughton police officers today have limited time available to attend to quality of life issues and traffic control due to time spent on drug related issues, including breaking and entry, and theft. Critical positions community members want to see continued include the liaison officer for Council on Aging and School Resource Officer.

Support Police Department accreditation.

The Stoughton Police Department has achieved State Accreditation, a recognition that only 45 departments in the state have obtained to date. The accreditation program is a voluntary, self-initiated evaluation process by which police agencies strive to meet and maintain standards established by the profession. The town supports accreditation with required policies and funding for facility and equipment upgrades, as well as professional development.

Assess benefits and cost of joining regional dispatch service.

Shared service offer communities an opportunity to improve the delivery of services by centralizing processes and sharing resources between two or more municipal agencies. When the capacity of the regional dispatch service is developed (now includes Holbrook, Abington and Sharon), Stoughton should assess the feasibility of joining the service.

Increase fire prevention efforts.

The Stoughton Fire Department would like to increase initiatives focused on fire prevention. Through effective plan review along with building inspections on a regular basis there may be an opportunity to discover hazardous conditions and prevent losses. Educational outreach efforts also play an important role in fire prevention and personal safety in other emergency situations.

Goal 5:

Sustain a level of public service to ensure a clean, healthy and safe environment.

Primary Objective

The primary objective is to create and maintain an environment that supports a high quality of life.

Potential Strategies

Create and implement strategic and capital plans.

Town Departments responsible for facilities (Library, COA/SYC, DPW, Parks and Recreation) and Cedar Hill Golf Club must each develop a five-year strategic and capital plan that is included in the town-wide capital plan. (Same as Schools, Fire and Police) Through comprehensive planning, departments will be able to more accurately forecast needs. Department budgets should reflect needs as outlined in the strategic and capital plans and should be available for public review to increase the community's understanding of budget requests

Town Hall Identify existing and projected space needs for departments in Town Hall including administrative and program space as well as public meeting space and evaluate the capacity of Town Hall to meet those needs. Identify options outside Town Hall as necessary. Preliminary needs to currently assess include

- Recreation Department office, program, and storage space
- Economic Development office
- Security

Develop and implement a Facilities Maintenance and Improvement Plan for all municipal buildings.

On-going and systematic maintenance, repair and capital improvements are required to keep Stoughton's municipal buildings operating at the highest level possible. A Town-Wide Facilities Maintenance and Improvement Plan would outline regularly scheduled maintenance, routine repairs and capital improvement projects, along with estimated costs. It would forecast personnel, equipment and supply needs and prioritize projects based on need. By sharing equipment, supplies, personnel and services, the town may be able to maximize efficiencies and save costs on scheduled maintenance, and routine and capital improvements. To support the Facilities Maintenance and Improvement Plan the town will need to fund maintenance personnel, equipment and supplies to handle work load. A collaborative (or consolidated) building maintenance department (schools and town) should be considered.

Strengthen the capacity of municipal departments.

Departments should continue to find ways to enhance service and increase efficiency. Monthly department head meetings have been an effective tool for sharing ideas and information and increasing opportunities for cooperation and collaboration. Attendance at these meetings should be mandatory. All staff, board and committee members should be encouraged to increase skills and expand networking opportunities by attending training and networking workshops and conferences. These opportunities should be publicized during monthly meetings, and announced to boards and committees. Attendance should be supported and recognized. Departments must also be supported with upgrades and enhancements to technology and other resources, including training.

Consider strengthening solid waste disposal and recycling policies and by-laws.

The Department of Public Works has a minimum staff of twelve full time year round employees dedicated to sanitation. The DPW collects residential trash five days a week and through a contract with SEMass disposes of it in Rochester. Recyclable materials are collected curbside twice a month and large household appliances and metal items must be called into DPW for pick up. Increasing the town's recycling rates could decrease waste collection and disposal costs. However, without offering incentives for households to recycle, the likelihood of significant change is limited. The town should assess opportunities and options to reduce costs and the impacts of waste removal. A number of ideas have been suggested.

- Consider mandatory recycling.
- Increase days/hours recycling center is open.
- Consider placing collection bins for recyclable materials in appropriate (well-used) public places
- Promote composting.
- Work with schools to develop educational campaign on reducing waste and increasing recycling.
- Consider contracting with a waste reduction consulting firm to determine optimum resource recovery techniques that would be cost effective for the town.
- Consider pay as you throw or similar programs.

Provide more opportunities for recreation and socialization.

Public Spaces The quality of life that is offered by a community is highly impacted by opportunities for residents, members of the workforce, and visitors to engage in social and recreational activities. The infrastructure to support these activities is in large part supplied by the town in the form of public spaces including a safe and pleasant walking and biking environment, public plazas and parks where people can gather outside, and public destinations such as the library. The town should identify opportunities to expand public spaces including trails, sidewalks and outdoor play and socialization

spaces. These public spaces should be designed employing defensible design principles that include controlled access points, low fences, natural surveillance, high maintenance standards, social amenities, and lighting.

Intergenerational Programming It is important that we create a community for all ages and reverse the trend of age segregated activities and spaces. We lose our understanding of others with inadequate contact. Intergenerational programs, defined as activities that increase cooperation, interaction or exchange between any two generations can help build understanding and reduce stereotypes. By creating space and programs where multiple generations come together the town may help :

- Elders remain a vital part of the community;
- Strengthen sense of community and social responsibility;
- Foster positive attitudes and regard for people of differing beliefs and cultures; and
- Promote culture, heritage and history.

Support the library expansion project.

The Stoughton Public Library is an important anchor in Town Center and is heavily used by patrons from the town and the region and is experiencing increases in computer use, program attendance, patron visits and items borrowed. The library has embarked on a building expansion program with goals to expand capacity, improve energy efficiency and ensure accessibility. It is raising funds through a capital campaign to help secure State Funding. The town should continue to support the library expansion project.

Improve roadside maintenance.

Roadsides are prominent features within the town and project an image to the residents, visitors and the thousands of commuters who pass through the town every day. It is important that these highly visible areas are designed and maintained to reflect a positive image. Strategies for improving design and maintenance of roadsides include:

- Use local volunteer groups or state correctional teams to assist in clean up efforts. Coordinate efforts with MassDOT for roads under their jurisdiction.
- Develop a holistic approach to signage to improve sign design and appearance, reduce the overall number of signs, and require maintenance.
- Assess and revise the town's Street Tree Plan
 - Plant street and shade trees within road right-of-ways and other public spaces.
 - Consider a planting policy that allows the town to plant street trees along streets on private property with the permission of the land-owner. The land-owner must agree to care for the tree and remove only with approval of town tree warden. Consider incentives such as an annual tax credit.

- Re-establish agreement with National Grid that provided the town with replacement trees for any trees lost or degraded by National Grid work.
- Re-establish Tree City USA designation.

Increase partnerships that focus on improving quality of life.

Strengthen the town's capacity to address quality of life issues including the provision of parks and open spaces, recreational and social activities, walkability and others through increased public involvement and public/private partnerships. Committees, boards and agencies should identify and prioritize issues to address and create a process for engaging a diversity of stakeholders to increase cross-functional collaboration.

Raise public awareness of opportunities to participate in improving quality of life in Stoughton by:

- Strengthening outreach to fill committee vacancies. (open house events, letters to editor, stories on web, in newspaper or on TV, engage youth);
- Creating a culture of "doing" and rewarding "doers" and
- Identifying and tracking quality of life benchmarks and publishing/announcing progress.

Goal 6:

Provide drinking water, wastewater and stormwater collection systems adequate to serve the community's current and projected needs and to protect the town's natural resources.

Primary Objective

It is critical that the town manage its water resources in a cost effective and sustainable manner to assure an adequate supply of drinking water, to provide for the safe collection and treatment of wastewater, and to reduce the negative impacts of stormwater.

Potential Strategies

Continue the assessment and protection of McNamara and Dykeman wells.

While the town's drinking water supply resources meet existing demand, the town should continue to assess the capacity and water quality of the McNamara and Dykeman Wells to meet potential future needs. The town should also continue to protect the resources through restricted use and best management practices.

Continue to implement recommendations of Water Systems Master Plan.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for the on-going maintenance of and capital improvements to the Stoughton Water System, guided by the 2006, 20-year Water System Master Plan. The town should continue to support needed maintenance and upgrades as outlined by the Plan.

Create a Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plan.

In 2005, Stoughton hired Weston & Sampson to produce a Priority Evaluation Report which outlined a ten-year plan for investigating and rehabilitating the sanitary sewer system. Implementation of the Plan's recommendations has resulted in substantial improvements to the system and the elimination of over 819,000 gallons of inflow and infiltration (unintended wastewater) a day reducing the unwanted flow by one third. With the ten year plan in the final year of implementation, the town should consider the benefits and costs of creating a full Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plan that will assess the capacity of the existing systems and the projected needs of the town and develop a strategic and comprehensive approach to sewer and stormwater management. The Plan would update inflow and infiltration analysis to continue improvements focused on reducing flows to treatment facilities. It will also identify and recommend options for developing green infrastructure to reduce dependence on traditional built systems of drains and pipes and outline funding options consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan.

Support new sewer connections in strategic locations.

Expanding the town's sanitary sewer system in strategic locations will help to reduce incidences of failed septic systems and support development in identified opportunity areas. The Department of Engineering working with the Department of Health, the Conservation Commission, Planning and Economic Development, and the Department of Public Works should map priority areas that should be assessed for sewer expansion. Expansion plans must identify costs and funding options and should include comparison of cost and benefits with and without expansion.

In addition to expansion in areas not currently served, the town should also continue to fund, promote and implement the grant program to help reduce hook up costs to homeowners connecting to the existing system. Increased promotion of the program may increase awareness and use.

Adopt Low Impact Development (LID) policies/regulations.

LID is an approach to land development (or re-development) that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible, thereby reducing the impact of built areas and promoting the natural movement of water within an ecosystem or

watershed. Adopting LID policies and/or bylaws will help limit sedimentation and other development impacts that are threatening the health of the town's ponds and wetlands.

The town should review and update local regulations to include Low Impact Development (LID) principles. It should also develop and seek approval for a LID Bylaw that requires all new and redevelopment to follow LID standards to the greatest extent possible to reduce stormwater's negative impacts on the wastewater system and the environment and to reduce the amount of infrastructure needed to capture, transport and treat stormwater.

Increase municipal capacity to manage stormwater.

Municipal stormwater management has evolved over time from an urban flood control function, to a water and resource management function, to an environmental protection and regulatory function. All three functions now co-exist as responsibilities of local government. This evolution has forced changes in how stormwater systems are planned, designed, constructed, operated, and financed.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of detention basins and water bodies impacted by stormwater runoff, but is limited in its ability to meet this responsibility due to lack of funding and staffing. The town should identify opportunities to increase funding to address stormwater management.

A Stormwater Management Master Plan (see above: Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plan) would outline opportunities for funding stormwater management based on the benefits the wastewater program would provide. Potential funding sources include service fees, general revenue appropriations; plan review, development inspection, and special assessments; bonding for capital improvements; in-lieu of construction fees; capitalization recovery fees; impact fees; developer extension/latecomer fees; and federal and state funding opportunities such as grants, loans and cooperative programs.⁵

⁵ Guidance for Municipal Stormwater Funding, National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies, 2006

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources

Overview

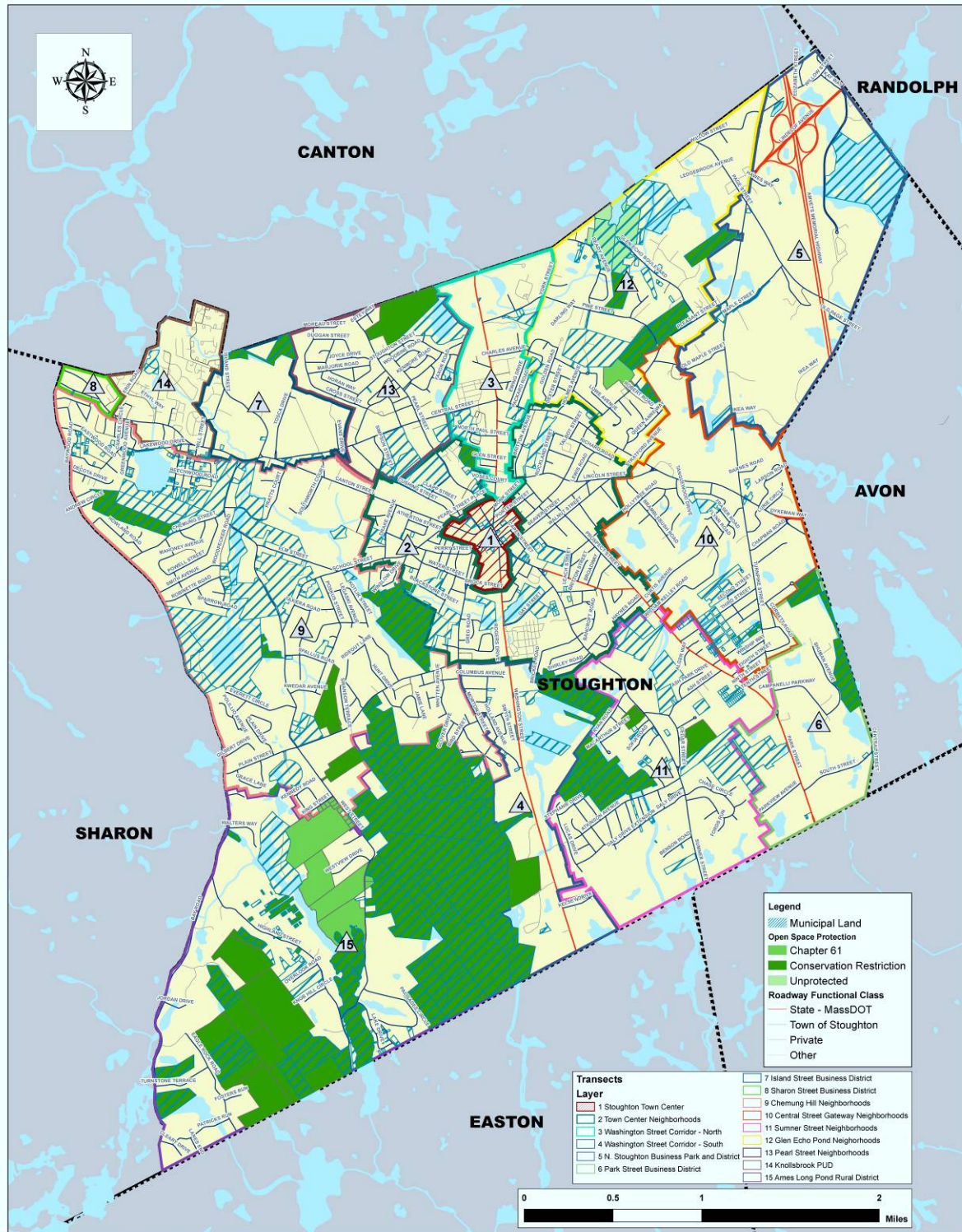
Stoughton's natural, historic and cultural resources are valuable elements of a healthy, interesting, and sustainable community. Preserving natural resources helps to maintain and enhance the quality of the town's water and air, impacts living conditions by moderating temperatures and the effect of winds, helps ensure the continuation of plant, animal, and insect species, and provides opportunities for active and passive outdoor activities. Historic and cultural buildings and places offer a richness of architecture and a diversity of landscapes in addition to telling the story of the town and its residents through the years. The preservation of natural, historic and cultural resources have a measurable impact on community character and sense of place. It is critical that the stewardship of these valuable resources reflect their importance.

Nature

Nearly one fifth of the town's land is permanently protected, preserving around 2,000 acres of natural resources including wetlands, water bodies and forests. Protected lands throughout town are valuable for both their natural resources and for partially defining the neighborhoods where they are located.

Neighborhoods with considerably large tracts of forest or wetlands include Glen Echo Pond Neighborhoods in North Stoughton (transect 12) containing over 120 acres of protected lands including the Capen Reynolds Farm and Fredericks Estate, the newly acquired Glen Echo lands, and Dogwood Estates. The Sumner Street Neighborhoods (transect 11) include a portion of Cedar Swamp an expansive protected wetland and lands adjoining the Cedar Hill Golf Club. The Chemung Hill Neighborhood (transect 9) has patches of protected resources including those within Chemung Hill Conservation Area and Woods Pond. This area also has a considerable amount of undeveloped private land that is difficult to build on due to the abundance of wetlands. Washington Street Corridor South (transect 4) includes Cedar Swamp and part of the Bird Street Conservation Area. Wetlands and the railroad limit development potential of large undeveloped parcels within this area as well. The Ames Long Pond area (transect 15) in the southwest quarter of town enjoys over 900 acres of protected land including the Bird Street Conservation Area, the Ames Rifle and Gun Club, and the Stoughton Rod and Gun Club. This area is also home to important unprotected lands including the MacNamara Farms and other lands known as Memorial Lands in 2007 OSRP.

Figure 2: Protected Lands and Open Space



History and Culture

State and local organizations including the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), Department of Conservation and Recreation, Stoughton Historical Commission and Stoughton Historical Society have identified over one hundred historic resources within Stoughton's borders. These resources include prehistoric and industrial archeological sites, agrarian landscapes, 18th through 20th century houses, and institutional and municipal buildings. Many highlight Stoughton's early agricultural roots, its industry and economy. In addition to sites and buildings, resources include documents and artifacts. Only a small number of Stoughton's historic and cultural resources have some layer of protection and fewer still are actively managed to preserve their historic integrity. Of all of Stoughton's historic buildings only the Lucius Clapp Memorial Library and the Stoughton Train Station Depot Building are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Town-owned historic properties that are actively managed and used include the Lucius Clapp Memorial Library, home to the Stoughton Historical and Musical Societies, Town Hall, and the Capen-Reynolds Farm. The Stoughton Water Works building is minimally used by the Department of Public Works and may offer opportunities for adaptive re-use in the future.

The Train Station Depot and the State Theatre have been identified by planning participants as important contributors to Town Center revitalization. The Stoughton Redevelopment Authority is in negotiations to purchase the Stoughton Train Station Depot building and is working to determine a feasible and appropriate use that will preserve the building and serve a community need. The State Theatre is privately held by a local non-profit organization that is actively working to preserve and activate it as an arts and entertainment venue. While the revitalization of a number of historic buildings is a positive step, the town should remain aware that the majority of historic resources within Stoughton are privately owned and without benefit of any protections against change.

A larger number and percent of Stoughton's documented historic sites and buildings are within Town Center and nearby neighborhoods. Smaller clusters are in the Central Street Gateway Neighborhoods around Ames Long Pond, the Chemung Hill Neighborhood and the Park Street Business District

Sustainable Natural, Historic and Cultural Resource Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Benchmarks

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for natural, historic and cultural resources. The index identifies a number of measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress in protecting and promoting the town's natural, historic and cultural resources.

Issues and Challenges

The citizens of Stoughton place a high value on their natural, historic and cultural resources and want to see them preserved and enhanced to the extent feasible. The town, through its Open Space and Recreation Plan has identified lands of conservation interest, and has begun to develop strategies to preserve them through acquisition, conservation restrictions, limited development agreements, or other means. Preservation efforts should focus on lands that abut existing protected parcels, develop or strengthen wildlife corridors, protect sensitive resources and maintain existing agricultural landscapes.

Management of existing lands has been identified as a top priority for natural resource protection. Ponds and wetlands are prevalent land marks in areas of town, are valuable habitats and provide opportunities for a variety of recreational activities. They also face considerable challenges primarily due to increasing sedimentation and excessive vegetation. Together these two issues are threatening the long term health of the ponds and their viability as important habitat and recreational amenities. The town has implemented and should strengthen its program to manage and control aquatic vegetative species. In addition the town should strengthen its land use development regulations to minimize the impacts of land disruption including stormwater runoff and sedimentation.

The town's open and forest lands must also be actively managed. Issues that need to be addressed include the spread of invasive species, illegal ATV use and dumping. Land Use and Management Plans for the town's principal conservation lands and open spaces should be developed and their recommendations funded. The Capen Reynolds Farm and Glen Echo are two such lands with planning efforts underway. Volunteers can play a critical role in resource protection and management and should be an integral part of the town's strategies to advance resource protection and preservation goals.

Both town and non-governmental groups are currently working to preserve and reuse key historic buildings, a strong indicator of the importance of these resources. The town must continue to strengthen municipal capacity to support public private initiatives,

increase awareness, engage more stakeholders, and put in place policies and regulations that will support on-going preservation efforts.

Community Vision for Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources

Stoughton's community vision statement (in part below) highlights its vision for the town's natural, historic and cultural resources.

*Stoughton's landscape contributes to our suburban character with a mosaic of healthy **natural** systems that include open fields, ponds, wetlands, waterways, forests and street trees. We honor our natural heritage by protecting, preserving and celebrating it. We provide exceptional stewardship and abundant opportunities for residents and visitors to access, explore and enjoy nature within our town.*

*Stoughton's history adds to the richness of our town's character. Throughout town, **historic** buildings and landscapes are preserved to provide space for municipal, **cultural**, recreational and educational programs as well as for homes, offices, shops and restaurants. The stories of Stoughton's past are highlighted in our town's traditions and celebrations.*

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1:

Protect the town's ecosystems that contribute to species biodiversity, water quality, and suburban character.



Ames Long Pond

Primary Objective

The primary objective of this goal is to expand and connect protected land parcels to assure they continue to function and provide the benefits of healthy ecosystems.

Potential Strategies

Maintain an up-to-date inventory of lands of interest.

Maintaining an up to date inventory of lands of interest for resource protection allows the town to track and respond to preservation opportunities. It should include a resource assessment identifying the sites key resources or reasons for protection including expansion of existing parcels, connection of corridors, preservation of agricultural and grasslands, preservation and enhancement of tree canopy, and water resource protection. It should identify potential protection strategies, identifying partners and potential funding sources. The inventory should also include ownership information and record the history of contacts with the land owner along with outcomes and recommended future actions. Options for protection might include acquisition, conservations restrictions, or limited development agreements.

Principal lands to be protected that are identified in the town's most recent approved Open Space and Recreation Plan (2007) include:

- *Memorial Lands, 93 Acres – in the area of Bird Street Conservation Area (20 non-contiguous parcels, mostly vacant pastures)*
- *Brittons Pond, 86 Acres in the area of Woods Pond (11 acres, one farm mostly vacant, wetlands and water bodies)*
- *Ames Long Pond East, 110 Acres near Town Beach (3 parcels, some Chapter 61 A lands, open fields, wetlands and forest)*
- *Benson Road/Goddard Property, 178 Acres near Easton Border in Sumner Street Neighborhoods (Open wetlands and forest)*
- *Lipsky/Combined Jewish Philanthropy property on Canton Street*
- *Cedar Swamp*

Consider Natural Resource Protection Zoning.

Natural Resource Protection Zoning (NRPZ) is a protective local zoning regime designed for areas of high natural resource value where the public interest in retention of those resources is predominant. NRPZ is designed to be the easiest subdivision development option, offered by right; a key difference between NRPZ and the town's Cluster Development Bylaw which is subject to a special permit. The NRPZ may offer bonus dwelling units if the proponent agrees to provide certain public benefits such as additional open space, or public access. Shutesbury, Brewster, Wendell, and New Salem have adopted these bylaws. The state's new model for protective zoning is called Open Space Design.

Address sedimentation Issues.

The town's ponds, in particular Ames, Dennison/Farrington, Harris and Muddy ponds, require active management to reduce the effects of sedimentation from natural processes and more excessively from development.

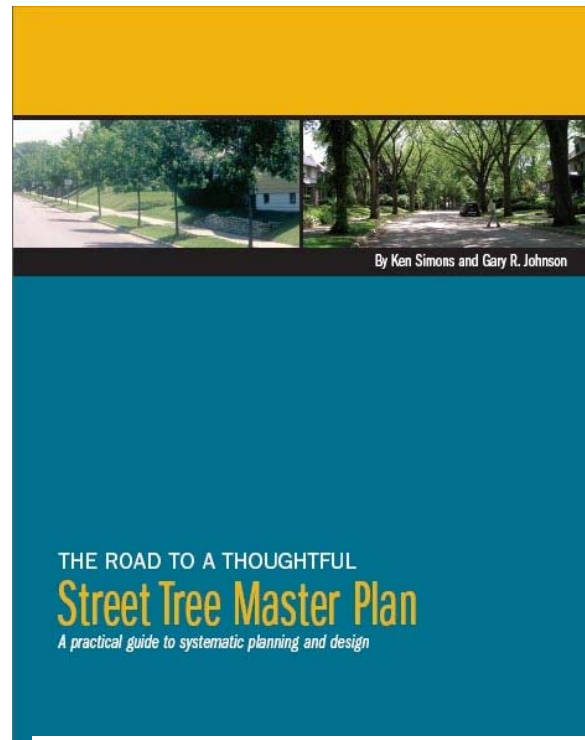
Dredging: The town should assess the cost and benefits of dredging to determine the short and long term effects on water quality and other related resources. DEP approval would be required

Low Impact Development (LID) Policies and Regulations: LID is an approach to land development (or re-development) that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible, thereby reducing the impact of built areas and promoting the natural movement of water within an ecosystem or watershed. Adopting LID policies and/or regulations will help limit sedimentation and other development impacts that are threatening the health of the town's ponds and wetlands.

Prioritize acquisition and protections of shorelines: The town should look to prioritize the protection of shorelines through acquisition, deed restrictions, or other methods to prevent development that impacts the water resources.

Create and implement a town-wide Street Tree Master Plan.

Street trees or the lack of street trees have a tremendous impact on the character of our roadways and neighborhoods. In addition to being a visual amenity, in urban settings these trees are depended on to provide shelter, mitigate the effects of wind, rain and snow, help clean the air, and reduce the effects of stormwater. The town should assess and revise the town's Street Tree Plan. The new Plan should prioritize gateway and commercial corridors where their impact will be most powerful and assess opportunities for planting native trees along scenic roads and within neighborhoods. The Plan should recommend appropriate policies and regulations that will support tree health, identify potential funding sources and an implementation team, and outline a work plan that can be updated as the Plan is implemented.



"The Road to a Thoughtful Street Tree Master Plan," authored by Ken Simons and Gary Johnson.

Create and implement stewardship plans.

Managing conservation areas and water protection lands to assure they remain healthy and vital resources for the community requires the proper tools and funding. A Stewardship or Land Management Plan is a cost effective tool intended to provide a baseline inventory and assessment of the sites resource documented by maps and pictures, goals and challenges, management recommendations and priorities with funding estimates and phasing strategies. The town should consider funding Stewardship Plans for key conservation areas and water protection lands.

For any town-owned land with a Conservation Restriction, the town should require a Conservation Restriction Steward Plan, and annual monitoring. The holder of the Conservation Restriction is responsible for assuring the resource is protected.

Assure adequate development review.

Review and revise Zoning Bylaw including Site Plan Review and Subdivision Rules and Regulations to ensure that regulations call for review of development proposals in or adjacent to sensitive areas by appropriate staff and/or professional consultants. The review should focus on development impacts and outline opportunities to eliminate, reduce or mitigate them.

Goal 2:

Preserve and activate buildings and landscapes that help tell Stoughton's history and promote understanding of its culture.



Stoughton Train Station Depot Building

Primary Objectives

This goal's primary objectives are to honor and promote the town's past and maintain the richness of community character that historic and cultural resources provide.

Potential Strategies

Establish a town policy to support the adaptive re-use of significant historic properties.

The town should lead efforts to raise awareness of the unique opportunities that can come from repurposing significant historic properties throughout the town. The efforts should include anchoring Town Center revitalization with the preservation and repurposing of historic buildings through public private partnerships, actively seeking preservation and redevelopment opportunities for town-owned historic properties, and supporting the preservation and re-use of historic industrial and commercial buildings.

Capen Reynolds Farm and Glen Echo are key town open spaces with historic significance. It is important to manage these sites to honor their history while providing for current social and recreational needs.

Update and expand the town's Historic Resources Survey.

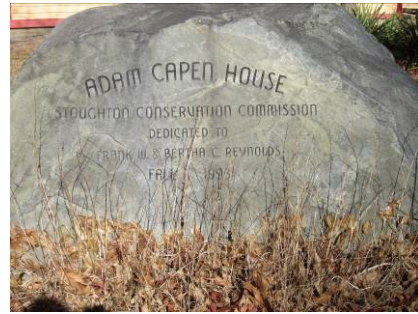
A Historic Resource Survey should be updated with the assistance of a professional consultant. The survey will provide in-depth analysis of the town's surviving historic resources and identify properties suitable for historic register, historic districts, and historic preservation restrictions. The survey will serve as a master list for the Planning Board in determining what development proposals require Historic Commission review, and if adopted trigger action under the Demolition Delay Bylaw.

Adopt a Demolition Delay Bylaw.

A Demolition Delay Bylaw is an effective tool to help protect significant historic resources by requiring the town and developer to work together to investigate alternatives to demolition. The process includes a determination of significance by the Historic Commission, a public hearing to determine if the building should be preserved, and a consideration of alternatives. Following the delay (typically 6 – 18 months) the property may be demolished if an agreement to save the building is not made. The delay allows the town to identify and mobilize funding sources to assist with preservation efforts. Alternatives might include the purchase and removal of the building, saving or replication of architectural details, or redevelopment of part or all of the structure.

Create and implement re-use plans for municipally owned historic properties.

The Train Station Depot Building (Stoughton Redevelopment Authority), Capen Reynolds Farm and Glen Echo have re-use plans underway. The town also owns Stoughton Water Works and the Armory, both of which are un- or under used. The Freeman Street Fire Station may also be available for repurposing within a short time frame. The town should conduct feasibility studies and a public process to determine appropriate re-use options for these buildings and or sites.



Capen Reynolds Farm

Seek to secure Historic Preservation Restrictions for important historic buildings not permanently protected.

Many of Stoughton's historic buildings are without protection from demolition and/or development. The town should work with state and local preservation advocates to secure Preservation Restrictions for buildings important to the town's history and character.

A Preservation Restriction (PR) is a voluntary legal agreement that provides assurance that an historic or cultural property's intrinsic values will be preserved through subsequent ownership by restricting the demolition or alteration of its significant historic features. A Preservation Restriction is filed at the Registry of Deeds and runs with the land. It usually focuses on exterior architectural features, but can also address significant interior spaces. Though a Preservation Restriction does not necessarily require public access, it may include provisions for annual open houses or similar public events if deemed appropriate. An important part of the Preservation Restriction is the Baseline Documentation which illustrates the property's historic significance and existing conditions through architectural drawings, photographs, historical records, and reports.

The Community Preservation Act specifically calls for perpetual Preservation Restrictions, established under Chapter 184 of Mass General Laws, whenever CPA funds are used to purchase a real property interest.⁶

Create zoning that supports the practical re-use of historic buildings.

Historic buildings throughout Stoughton offer the potential for adaptive re-use. Many are within residential zones which may restrict uses such as multi-family housing, retail, restaurants, and other commercial uses. To allow flexibility in the re-use of these resources, the town should review its Zoning Bylaws to assure that reasonable re-use options are allowed.

⁶ Community Preservation Coalition, Placing Preservation Restrictions on Historic Resources, Article sourced from the Cape Cod Commission Round Table Fact Sheet, Oct 31, 2006

Stabilize and interpret archeological resources.

Archeological resources throughout Stoughton include a variety of early 19th century industrial remains, a quarry, and stone walls among others; some within town conservation lands. The town should look to stabilize and interpret archaeological resources on town-owned sites, and raise awareness of their significance.

Create and implement management plans for burial grounds and cemeteries.

Burial grounds and cemeteries are important historical and municipal resources that contribute to a town's historical character, sense of place, and its open space network. While they are sites of personal significance, they also can be iconic landscapes, places of natural beauty, and sites for community remembrance ceremonies. Developing Management Plans for burial grounds and cemeteries highlights their importance and guide maintenance and improvement projects of headstones, fences, circulations systems and landscapes. Plans should also consider ways for expanding the useful life of the sites in light of changing burial traditions.

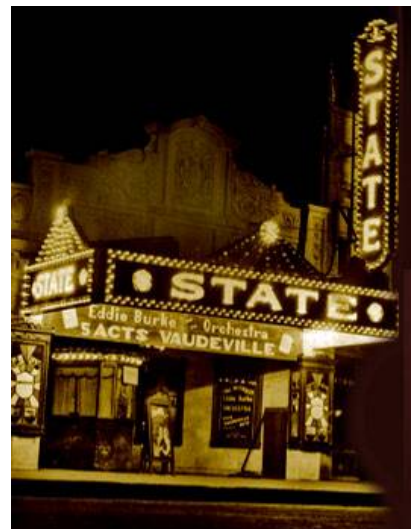


Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

Support private preservation initiatives.

Town-owned historic resources represent only a small percent of the community's historic and cultural resources, leaving responsibility for most in the hands of private land owners. Public private partnerships and municipal support of initiatives that preserve and promote the town's history and culture must be fostered.

The Non-Profit Friends of State Theatre are working to bring the historic theatre in Town Center back to life.





Rendering of the revitalized State Theatre by: Paul Lukez Architecture



The Stoughton Housing Authority is working to create affordable age-restricted housing while rehabilitating historic Swan Tavern. Community Preservation Act funding is helping to make the project possible.

Goal 3:

Strengthen community character and sense of place through local events and initiatives that promote Stoughton's history and culture.



Primary Objective

Local events and initiatives bring residents together to create a sense of community, and to build social capital. This is central to sustaining a vibrant and livable community.

Stoughton Farmer's Market

Potential Strategies

Make history visible.

Stoughton's history, captured in its architecture and landscapes can go unnoticed by the casual observer (most of the general public) if it is not pointed out. There are many ways however, to tell the story of previous generations that make the town more interesting and unique.

Building Plaques: Placing plaques on historic buildings that simply give a date and/or name and position is an effective, moderately priced strategy to identify long-standing homes and businesses. Sound record keeping, a defined maintenance plan, and communications and coordination with building owners to secure support and cooperation are essential.

Interpretive Panels: There is an opportunity to provide more information on Interpretive Panels in town-owned properties and buildings. Work with professionals to determine the message and means of communication, appropriate materials and installation standards.

Interpretive Trails A series of interpretive signs and on trail markers along a trail can help engage trail users with information about the site's history or the environment. Work with professionals to determine the message and means of communication, appropriate materials and installation standards.

Historic Images in Public Buildings Images of the town's settlement and development should be displayed in public buildings including Town Hall, schools, the Library and others. Images could also be loaned to businesses for display.

Support the Stoughton Farmer's Market.

The town should continue to support the Stoughton Farmers Market which brings community members together, while celebrating the town's agrarian culture, highlighting healthy foods, and supporting the local economy. Municipal assistance could include things such as signage, parking, electricity and water, garbage collection, announcements, website links, safety audits, and public transportation options.

Provide land and support for community gardens.

Community gardens provide multiple benefits to its gardeners including fresh food, recreation and socialization. These outdoor spaces are particularly relevant to households without adequate outdoor space for private gardens, such as neighborhoods with multi-family housing. Gardens can be developed on a number of town-owned sites, and can range in size to fit the neighborhood demand. The town should look to work with interested neighborhood groups to determine demand, assess potential sites and develop policies for use.

Activate public spaces with art and entertainment.

Having a particular community identity, especially in terms of what our towns look like, is becoming even more important in a world where everyplace tends to look like everyplace else. Places with strong public art expressions break the trend of blandness and sameness, and give communities a stronger sense of place and identity.⁷

Stoughton, like other towns, aspires to be a place where people want to live and want to visit. Two key steps to support art and entertainment include identifying town-owned public spaces that can be used to display and promote art and entertainment and working with developers, including the state, to include art as an integral part of buildings, infrastructure, and landscapes.

⁷ Americans for the Arts, Green Paper, http://blog.artsusa.org/artsblog/wp-content/uploads/greenpapers/documents/PublicArtNetwork_GreenPaper.pdf



Examples of Public Art Installations

Increase awareness of and improve condition and visibility of Stoughton's squares.

Stoughton's squares provide a unique opportunity for enhancing "sense of place". While they may have become commonplace over the years, they could be redeveloped into a series of distinctive neighborhood markers. The town, working with a partnership organization, should seek funding to create a plan for revitalization and on-going maintenance of these sites in line with the community's vision for distinctive neighborhoods.

Host and support a greater number of community celebrations and events.

Community celebrations and events, including the town's cultural festivals, bring community members together and can also bring in visitors that help support the local economy. The town should continue to support and expand opportunities for celebrations that highlight the town's culture and history as well as those that celebrate current initiatives, efforts, and accomplishments. Actions should include developing a yearly event guide, posting events on the community web page, and establishing an event review committee to help guide events through required approvals and permitting and assure coordination with town support efforts.

Assess the feasibility for positioning the arts to help in the revitalization of Town Center.

A number of conversations during the community visioning process offered the idea of developing a more vibrant Town Center through the arts. Participants noted opportunities to activate and improve vacant and unused buildings, to build an invested residential community, to draw people into the downtown for shows and performances, and to support local businesses by both visitors and residents. Focusing on the arts as a redevelopment strategy must begin with a comprehensive assessment of the costs and

benefits. The strategy could include marketing to attract arts businesses, supporting arts venues, and creating live work space to serve artists and artisans.

Open Space and Recreation

Overview

Access to recreation and leisure activities is a primary characteristic of a livable community and should be supported by municipal policies, regulations and initiatives. By creating and improving recreation programs and access to places for physical activity and social interaction including parks, recreational facilities, bicycle paths, walking trails, and sidewalks, we are promoting health and strengthening social capital. Open space and recreation must be viewed as a necessary investment in the future viability and sustainability of Stoughton.

The Town of Stoughton has approximately two thousand acres of permanently protected open space offering resource protection, providing opportunities for passive or informal recreational, and helping to define community character. The town also provides over two hundred acres of public recreational lands including parks, playgrounds, sport courts and fields, a beach and a golf course. Sports and recreational programs are provided by the Stoughton Department of Recreation, Stoughton Schools, and through private organizations such as the Stoughton Youth Athletic Club (STOYAC), and Stoughton Youth Baseball, Soccer and Lacrosse, Flag Football and Babe Ruth Baseball. The Stoughton YMCA and for-profit fitness oriented businesses also provide a wide range of opportunities for fitness and recreation to Stoughton residents.



Bradley M Lessa Memorial Playground



Halloran Park

Sustainable Open Space and Recreation Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Benchmarks

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for open space and recreation. The index identifies a number of measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress in preserving and managing open space and providing access to recreation programs and facilities.

Issues and Challenges

The level of satisfaction with the town's open space, parks and recreational opportunities, is varied. The Stoughton Community Survey indicated that most participants rated satisfaction of these facilities and services between somewhat satisfied and somewhat dissatisfied; with only a small percent indicating they were very dissatisfied, and three times as many indicating they were very satisfied. The highest level of satisfaction was with youth activities that includes both town and league offerings.

In comparison, when survey participants were asked to identify what type of open space and recreational development they wanted to see more of in Stoughton, 84% indicated they would like to see some or much more development to serve active recreational activities (playing courts and fields, trails, skating rinks) and 74% supported some or much more development for passive recreation (benches, picnic areas, common areas).

Focus Group discussion participants felt that the town should expand its inventory of open space and recreation lands, expand recreation programs and improve the conditions of existing facilities. They also offered that more work should be done to increase the public's awareness of town properties and programs and improve access. Bike and pedestrian paths, bike racks, more and improved parking, better trails marking and maintenance, and better communication strategies including trail maps and information on the town's web site were some of the strategies discussed. During public forums and focus group meetings, the need for expanded programs for teens and pre-teens was discussed. The importance of bike and pedestrian trails throughout town was seen as an important recreational amenity for all age groups.

Challenges the town faces in providing open space and recreational resources include limited funding and limited capacity of existing staff and volunteers. To identify and secure additional funding resources the town should look within and beyond its own budget. Grants, partnerships, fee programs, increased efficiencies, and developer contributions should all be considered. The town must also look to increase the number of volunteers engaged in helping to provide recreational programs, and in monitoring, maintaining and programming parks.

Community Vision for Open Space and Recreation

Stoughton's community vision statement (in part below) highlights its vision for open space and recreation.

Stoughton provides public services, facilities and infrastructure that assure a clean, healthy, safe and vital community. Our investments respond directly to community needs and are balanced with our fiscal and operational capacity.

Our neighborhoods are connected by pathways and open space systems, schools and town activities, and events that bring people of all neighborhoods together. Stoughton's sense of community is seen in our support of youth activities, our commitment to our seniors, our attendance along parade routes, at community concerts, at chamber meetings, farmers markets, and at school graduations.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1:

Develop and maintain a framework for effective planning and management of the town's open space and recreational resources.



Primary Objective

To effectively plan and manage the town's resources the town must take a proactive approach by strengthening its departments, boards and committees, securing appropriate planning and management tools and resources, and working cooperatively with each other and the community.

Bird Street Conservation Area

Potential Strategies

Maintain an up-to-date Open Space and Recreation Plan.

The town's Open Space and Recreation Plan is the principal planning document for open space and recreational resources and should be updated and approved by the state on a regular basis for the town to maintain eligibility for funding through state grants. The town should also assure that all other municipal planning documents integrate and are supportive of the Plan's goals and strategies. An appointed Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation or Action Committee should be charged with tracking actions

taken on the Plan's recommendations and reporting progress on an annual basis. Many communities have appointed OSRP Implementation Committees including Littleton, West Boylston, Lancaster, Foxborough, Northfield and Conway to name just a few.

Increase knowledge and capacity of staff, boards and committees.

Education: Town staff, board and committee members should be supported with skills training and other information sharing initiatives and events. Conferences, workshops, and other training and information sharing opportunities help keep participants up to date on current trends and initiatives, including opportunities for funding and partnerships. Municipal support of educational and networking events can include distributing information directly to staff, board and committee members about the opportunities, covering training and conference costs, providing town vehicles or subsidizing travel costs, and communicating attendance.

Coordination and Communication: Establishing protocols for inter-department/board/committee coordination and communication for example to track information for potential acquisitions, preservation and operational strategies will increase efficiency and capacity.

- Information on easements, permit submittals, wetland delineations, conservation restrictions, property ownership, recreational use and utilities should all be maintained in a single database. Identify an individual responsible for developing data sharing protocols for the different community departments and integrating the information into the database. Beyond being able to readily inventory open space and recreational lands, this database would streamline several other municipal functions such as development permitting, utility maintenance, comprehensive planning, and providing general information to residents. (2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan)
- Work closely with the Community Preservation Committee to identify projects suitable for CPA funding. The CPC should be considered a principal partner in securing and developing open space and recreational properties. That partnership will be strongest when involvement from idea inception to completion is maintained. Look for opportunities to integrate open space and recreation with the CPC's other priorities, housing and historic preservation, to meet multiple needs.

Work to increase the number and diversity of participants engaged in open space and recreation planning and management.

The Master Planning process has identified open space and recreational resources and activities as key contributors to the quality of life in Stoughton. The opportunity and responsibility for planning and management should be shared by a large and diverse group of residents that is representative of Stoughton's entire population. Expanding

the number and diversity of boards, committees and other volunteer groups will help assure that open space and recreational resources and programs are meeting the needs of all residents. It may be necessary to increase staff or staff hours to coordinate the activities of the various groups, as direction and oversight will help assure effectiveness and efficiency. The volunteer hours leveraged should be considered, tracked and celebrated.

- Actively recruit board and committee members through a variety of outreach platforms to reach potential candidates not typically engaged. Include youth directly or indirectly as advisors, monitors, and outreach specialists.
- Establish and support friends and/or volunteer groups for the purpose of on-going assessments, improvement, and stewardship of facilities and programs. Park adoptions, maintenance squads, park event planners are all ideas for engaging more stakeholders.
- Identify opportunities for developing partnerships with neighboring towns to collectively meet area needs.

Goal 2:

Meet the growing recreational needs of Stoughton residents with well maintained and managed facilities and programs.



Field Sports Continue to Grow

Primary Objective

The town must secure and maintain open space and recreational facilities adequate to support desired programs. These facilities include sports fields and courts, trails, water access sites, and parks and playgrounds. Additionally, linking these sites whenever possible to each other and to neighborhoods is desired.

Potential Strategies

Develop a short and long range maintenance and improvement plan for existing facilities.

Maintaining and improving existing facilities is the town's top priority. Departments with responsibilities for open space and recreation must identify develop an inventory of improvements, repairs and equipment needs on an annual basis and establish a priority list for inclusion in a ten year maintenance and capital improvement plan. Itemized budget requests that outline maintenance and operational needs and support a comprehensive capital plan are important in helping build community understanding and support. When the annual budget is not able to support needs, the town must take a proactive approach to identify additional funding sources. Grants, paid programming, maintenance agreements, facility user fees and other options should be considered.

Maintenance Standards

Public parks and open spaces are part of the town's public face and have a significant impact on its image. Exceptional maintenance requires proper funding for a dedicated staff and training, tools and equipment, and a commitment to high standards. Some elements of park maintenance identified as needing improvement include:

- Waste collection;
- Options for pet waste;
- Policy for reporting and removing graffiti and dumped material;
- Vegetation management: and
- Trail conditions.

Accessibility The town's Open Space and Recreation Plan includes a self assessment of the accessibility of parks and open spaces. It notes deficiencies in access for persons with disabilities and identifies actions the town can take to improve access. Suggested improvements typically include accessible parking, accessible paths, reducing barriers such as steps and excessive slopes, and amenities such as accessible picnic tables, play structures, and water fountains. Annual improvements to increase accessibility for people with special needs should be included in maintenance and capital plans.

Assess capacity of existing town properties to meet recreational needs.

Properties owned and or managed by the Conservation Commission, Water Department, Schools and other departments that are not currently developed for recreation may have the present or future capacity to help meet the town's active or passive recreational needs. For example resource protection lands may also be suitable for the development of walking trails or other low impact recreation facilities while school facilities



may be able to help meet court and field needs through flexible scheduling or redeveloping sites to maximize utility and efficiency. Departments should work together to assess present and future capacity of existing lands and facilities as a first step to address recreational needs.

Glen Echo and Capen Reynolds Create master plans for Glen Echo and Capen Reynolds through open and inclusive public processes to determine the most appropriate uses for the site balancing resource protection, recreational, and neighborhood needs. Consider working with Landscape Architect Graduate Students (e.g. UMass Amherst) who annually seek like projects. Plans should identify appropriate programs, recommend facility improvements and outline long term maintenance needs.

Identify specific new recreational facilities that are needed.

As sports programs grow and evolve, adequate facilities to satisfy demand are often lacking. For example with the growing popularity of lacrosse competing for field space with soccer, field hockey and football, the supply of fields may suddenly become inadequate to meet demand. The town should appoint a task force to assess field capacity and make recommendations to the Recreation Department for improving current facilities and or adding new facilities as needed.

- Include town staff, board and committee members, and representatives of the various youth and adult sports leagues;
- Identify, assess and prioritize locations for additional fields if needed;
- Identify potential partnerships and funding sources; and
- Evaluate operations (scheduling, use fee structure, use agreements).

A report by the task force should outline the assessment process and findings and include recommendations for next steps.

Seek protection of identified priority properties.

The town's Open Space and Recreation Plan, updated every seven years, provides a comprehensive assessment of open space and recreation needs and should identify priority properties for acquisition or other protection strategies. The Plan's priority parcels should be actively pursued on a regular basis. The town should develop a potential protection strategy for each parcel listed that identifies type of protection preferred, potential partners and funding sources. Other properties may unexpectedly provide opportunities not previously considered and should be considered in light of identified needs.

Request the inclusion of public open space and or recreation areas in any major redevelopment project where practical and needed.

New and redevelopment projects in Stoughton offer the town an opportunity to expand its open space and recreational resources if these resources are relevant to the proposed development. For example, residential developments should include open space and recreational resource areas at least large enough to serve the households being developed. These resources can be accepted by the town as public parks, or can be held by a housing association or other legal entity if general public use is not desired. Open space and recreational amenities can range from plazas and pocket parks in more urban areas to trails, greens, gardens or playgrounds in less densely settled neighborhoods. Whenever possible look to connect new facilities with sidewalks, bike lanes, or trails to neighborhoods and other facilities in the open space and recreation network.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Cluster Residential Development (CRD) Bylaw and revise as needed.

The general purpose of the town's Cluster Residential Development Bylaw is to encourage the development of housing in a manner that has a reduced impact on the environment and provides for the permanent protection of open space. Stoughton's CRD Bylaw is limited in its use, due to excessive lot size requirements, lack of flexibility in site development, and lack of a requirement or incentives to develop under the bylaw. The town should consider revising or replacing the CRD with a bylaw that will more effectively meet its land protection goals.

Evaluate and expand recreational programs.

While there is general satisfaction with recreational programming and sports activities for youth, planning participants noted less satisfaction with opportunities for pre-teens, teens, and adults including seniors. The town should continue to evaluate the level of satisfaction with recreational programs for all ages and respond with appropriate programming. Consider working with an appointed task force that includes a range of ages including teens and seniors to identify needs and develop program options that could be tested for viability. Adapt parks to support new programming.

Improve and expand the town's pedestrian and bicycle network.

Trails, paths, bike lanes, and sidewalks provide recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and have been identified as a priority transportation and recreation initiative.

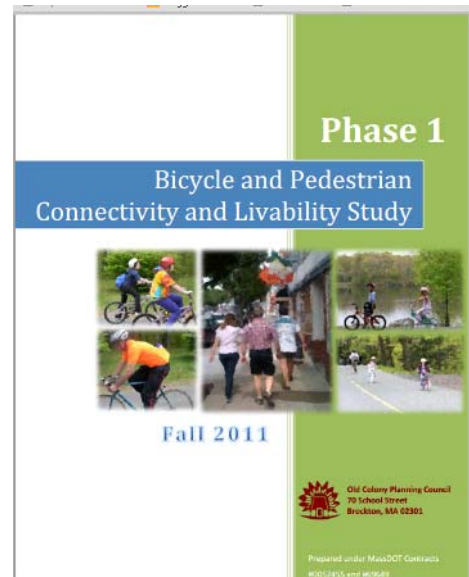
Maintenance and Improvement Plan The town should adopt a strategic maintenance and improvement plan that considers the complete roadside and off-road network and prioritizes maintenance and improvement projects including:

- Vegetation control

- Surfacing
- Trail heads
- Parking areas
- Connections
- Signs
- Benches
- Art and other amenities

Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan Support the work of the town's Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force and OCPC to develop a regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan. Assure the work is coordinated with and influence by Stoughton's Transportation Task Force, the Town Center Transportation Study, and the update to the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan. Implement the Plan's recommendations.

*Phase I Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan,
Old Colony Planning Council*



Adopt a policing and patrolling strategy for conservation and recreation lands.

Unauthorized ATV use, dumping, public drinking, and graffiti are issues affecting the security and condition of some of Stoughton's resource protection and recreational areas. Increasing the level of policing and patrolling is a strategy that can deter these and other illegal activities. Volunteers can augment police patrols by regularly monitoring and reporting on activities and conditions. Increasing use of the lands through active programming also tends to reduce unwanted activities.

Increase awareness and access to existing open spaces.

Conservation and recreational areas should be well promoted and easy to access. There are a number of low cost strategies for increasing awareness and access. Many can be led or assisted by volunteer groups.

- Signed entrance areas with adequate parking, regulations and use guidelines;
- Mapped and marked trails;
- On-line information; and
- Walking groups, nature observance, scavenger hunts and other programs.



Park and Trail Signs

Provide equitable access to open space and recreational facilities throughout town.

All neighborhoods should have convenient access to open space and recreational opportunities preferably within walking and biking distance. Benefits include reducing vehicle trips, and increasing activity levels, home values and quality of life. The town, through its Open Space and Recreation Plan, should identify neighborhoods that are underserved with parks and open spaces and identify potential opportunities to address those needs. Strategies might include adding pocket parks or playgrounds, linking neighborhoods with existing open spaces by on or off-road trails, or increasing access or activities at existing facilities including resource protection sites.

Increase the health of and improve access to the town's ponds.

The town's ponds are seen as valuable resources providing habitat, contributing to the town's rural image and providing opportunities for water based activities. The health and accessibility of the resources, however, are lacking. The town must continue to assess and address the threats to the health of ponds and other water resources.

- Remove invasive species;

- Control sedimentation; and
- Monitor water quality as needed.

Citizens also want to see more opportunities to access its ponds. The town's capital and improvement plans should include water related facilities where access and use will not interfere with water quality improvement initiatives. Improvements should include launch sites with appropriate facilities including parking, trails, overlooks, and improved facilities at Ames Pond Recreation Area.



Ames Pond



Town Beach at Ames Pond

Goal 3:

Develop parks to create community cohesion and build social capital.



Primary Objective

The town is committed to creating a vibrant and integrated park network that brings community together. Well designed and programmed parks help create a “sense of place” and expand “sense of community”.

Activated Public Space

Potential Strategies

Develop design principles for parks and open spaces.

Engage the public in creating design principles for new and improved parks to assure designs consider, for example, community events, public safety (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design or CPTDE strategies), ease of maintenance, connectivity, accessibility and/or other principles that may come from the public process. Activation strategies should also be considered. Parks are most successful when they have elements that invite people in on a regular basis. Seating and other amenities that encourage interaction among users will help build relationships important to social capital. Food and drink vendors can be effective and require appropriate support infrastructure and town policy.

Create a park network that helps define and serve Town Center

The town should develop a Town Center public space plan that collectively considers all parks, plazas, open spaces, and sidewalks as a coordinated park system.

Town Center Green A desired element for Town Center is a distinctive central public gathering place that will support a variety of personal and municipal activities. It should be easily accessible so it is a part of everyday circulation patterns, relating to businesses and sidewalks. It should offer an abundance of seating that invites visitors to linger for lunch or conversation, lighting that makes the space inviting and safe during evenings, and spaces designed for both intimate and larger group gatherings.

Faxon Park Faxon Park is within easy walking distance to Town Center and should be designed along with the streetscape to better connect it to the Center and support a greater variety of uses. Park design should consider the need for significant public gatherings, neighborhood preferences and historic design and uses.

Washington Street triangle The Washington Street triangle is little more than a green island today, but has the potential to be an attractive and active pocket park that is part of the public park system in Town Center. Redesigned, this park can help lead pedestrians from Town Center to businesses along North Washington Street. It can also serve nearby residents.

Improve the town's Memorial Squares.

The town's collection of memorial squares is a valuable component of its open space network. A strategy for redeveloping the squares is found in Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources.

Assure that municipal policies, guidelines and regulations support desired park uses.

The town's policies, bylaws and licensing regulations must support the uses desired in parks and other public places. Review policies, guidelines, and regulations that control signs, outside sales including food vendors, outside dining, noise, lighting and other elements of desired park uses and revise as needed. Create a permitting process and fee structure as appropriate for park use that is easy to understand and follow.



Community Celebration Space

Energy and Sustainability

Overview

Stoughton's municipal leaders, supported by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)⁸ and local volunteers are committed to addressing issues of energy consumption and sustainability. Throughout the master planning process sustainability was a common thread running through conversations about land use, economic development, housing, public facilities, resource protection and quality of life. Planning participants generally recognized their fiscal responsibility to build and maintain energy efficient public facilities. The schools, police station and fire station were noted as needing facility upgrades to bring this about. Moreover, the type of community that planning participants described as desirable (with a strong town center, complete neighborhoods and business nodes, walkable neighborhoods, a multi-modal transportation system and an extensive open space network) is an inherently more sustainable community than the Stoughton of today.

Energy

As the world's population increases and its resources are consumed to meet growing demands for food, shelter and non-essentials alike, the need for wiser management of our natural resources becomes more and more apparent. We are now using our natural resources at a rate faster than our planet can produce them and some of the most in demand resources are those that create energy, the very product needed to produce and distribute nearly every other product consumed. How can each community do its part to reduce our consumption of energy?

The objectives of energy efficiency and conservation are to maximize the output from energy used and reduce consumption, thereby reducing energy costs and negative environmental impacts. These objectives in Stoughton can be achieved in part by:

- Increasing efficiencies in buildings, utilities and services
- Reducing solid waste through recycling and composting
- Managing stormwater at its source
- Reducing fuel consumption by Increasing the use of alternative transportation modes
- Protecting natural resources including water and tree canopy
- Adopting new habits (e.g. driving less, buying local, growing food)
- Supporting sustainable development practices

⁸ The Metropolitan Area Planning Council is a planning organization encompassing 101 cities and towns in the Boston Metropolitan Area

Sustainability

Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.⁹

In other words, sustainability is the ability to provide for our present needs without having a negative impact on the ability of future generations to provide for theirs.

Sustainable development embraces the concept of providing for our physical, social and economic needs while preserving adequate natural, social and economic resources for future generations. A proactive approach to land and resource management is needed to create a sustainable community and assure that development does not consume resources out of balance with the benefits it provides.

Sustainability at a private level includes personal actions to use the resources around us wisely, from buying and preparing fresh locally grown foods (or even growing our own food) to making minor repairs to things around the house rather than throwing them out to learning how to do these things that make us more self sufficient. This learning can come from friends, organizations, or government education efforts. Celebrating craftsmanship and self reliance can be a great motivator to achieve sustainability.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidance to the town for achieving energy efficiency and conservation, and to show how applying the principals of sustainable growth and development, Stoughton can become the type of town the community desires.

⁹ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Website:
<http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/basicinfo.htm>

Energy and Sustainability Benchmarks, Issues and Challenges

Benchmarks

Appendix 1 contains the Stoughton Community Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals Table for energy and sustainability. The index identifies measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress in achieving energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption. Sustainability benchmarks for all other Master Plan elements are found in the indices for each chapter, and so are not repeated here.

Issues and Challenges

The Town of Stoughton has taken a number of key steps to reduce energy consumption and increase sustainability. Steps range from conducting studies, to making capital improvements to building components and infrastructure, to updating regulations, and increasing community awareness. Each represents a move toward more prudent use of resources and increased community resilience.

Energy

School Lighting Project The town completed a lighting retrofit project in all eight school buildings in 2009, reducing lighting costs by about 5%.

Stoughton Energy and Sustainability Committee In 2009 the town created the Stoughton Energy and Sustainability Committee (SESC) to focus attention on the town's energy needs and opportunities. The Committee advises the town's Board of Selectmen on issues pertaining to energy consumption, greenhouse gas monitoring, solid waste generation (recycling and waste reduction), water consumption, and waste water generation. The Committee is also committed to helping Stoughton residents by sharing information on how to reduce environmental impacts in their own homes and daily lives.

The Committee has five goals that characterize its mission:

1. The reduction of fossil fuel energy use in Stoughton.
2. The quantification of energy and resource use via a town-wide greenhouse gas inventory. (The Baseline Report was completed in May 2011.)
3. The distribution of information to town agencies and residents about sustainability, climate change, energy and resource conservation.
4. The production of cost savings for the town and residents through resource conservation and improved energy efficiency.
5. Increasing recycling participation rates in the Town of Stoughton.

National Grid Whole Building Assessment (WBA) The 2010 WBA program assessed Stoughton High School, Town Hall and Fire Station #1 and provided a list of recommended energy efficiency measures.

Town-Wide Facilities Master Plan The 2010, Facilities Master Plan evaluated all municipal buildings and outlined a schedule of prioritized repairs and replacements that could improve municipal energy efficiency and increase energy cost savings. The plan also highlighted the need for town-wide energy planning and coordination.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Baseline Study In 2011, the SESC completed the Stoughton Greenhouse Gas Emissions¹⁰ Baseline Study to serve as a benchmarking and planning assistance tool. The report provides information on the town's energy consumption, makes recommendations for reducing resource consumption, and identifies the most effective next steps for the Committee to take to help the town become more sustainable. This plan is available at the Energy & Sustainability Committee page of the town web site.

Local Energy Action Plan In 2013 the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) working with town staff and the SESC produced the Stoughton Local Energy Action Plan (LEAP). The LEAP outlines how energy is used in Stoughton's public, residential and commercial/industrial sectors, and recommends a list of short and long term energy goals, strategies and actions. Broadly, the goals are:

- Establish and pursue municipal energy reduction goals to guide energy reduction efforts.
- Utilize the energy tracking capabilities of the currently in-place MassEnergyInsights energy data management system.
- Consider working with a professional Energy Services Company (ESCO) to provide energy management services through a performance contract. Compensation for the ESCO and often a project's financing, are directly linked to the amount of energy that is actually saved.
- Explore opportunities to use Utility Incentives for Municipal Retrofits for new and existing facilities and equipment through MassSave.
- Establish and pursue renewable energy goals.

Next Step Living MOU On the recommendation of the MAPC and the Energy & Sustainability Committee, in February 2013 the Town of Stoughton Board of Selectmen signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Next Step Living' a whole-home energy solutions company, aimed at assisting home-owners with increasing energy efficiency. The partnership directs resources to outreach and home energy audits to determine opportunities for energy savings. After the first year operating under the MOU, Next Step Living has performed 276 home energy audits (4% of eligible

¹⁰ A greenhouse gas is any gaseous compound in the atmosphere that is capable of absorbing infrared radiation, thereby trapping and holding heat in the atmosphere. The most common greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide (CO₂), but others, such as refrigerants and methane, also have strong heat-trapping characteristics. By increasing the heat in the atmosphere, greenhouse gases are responsible for the greenhouse effect, which ultimately leads to global warming.

households in Stoughton), resulting in among other things 64 weatherization projects and four solar system installations along with other efficiency upgrades including light bulbs and thermostats.

Green Community Designation The Green Communities designation and grant program helps municipalities meet the five criteria required to become a Green Community, in turn qualifying them for grants that finance additional energy efficiency and renewable energy projects at the local level. To date the program has designated 123 Massachusetts municipalities and expended over \$30 million in grants. The Town of Stoughton is looking to meet the following criteria to be designated a Green Community.

1. Provide as-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable/alternative energy generation, research & development, or manufacturing facilities.
2. Adopt an expedited application and permit process for as-of-right energy facilities.
3. Establish an energy use baseline and develop a plan to reduce energy use by twenty percent (20%) within five (5) years. (Baseline Report completed in 2011)
4. Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles.
5. Set requirements to minimize life-cycle energy costs for new construction; one way to meet these requirements is to adopt the new Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) Stretch Code. (Adopted by 2014 Town Meeting)

The ESC has worked with the Town Planner to prepare a Solar Overlay District zone designed to comply with Green Community Criteria 1 & 2 which 2014 Town Meeting approved. A draft fuel-efficient vehicle policy has been developed and is anticipated to be submitted to the BOS and School Committee for approval in mid-2014.

Current and on-going challenges for energy efficiency and conservation include consumption practices, inefficient buildings and systems, and lack of understanding or a sense of urgency. Following is a list of key challenges and opportunities identified by municipal studies to date.

Inefficient Municipal Buildings

While Stoughton's schools have the highest energy consumption overall, the comparison of energy used per square foot shows that the Police Station and Fire Station #1 have high energy use coupled with low efficiency, and that the Lucius Clapp Memorial building (former Library) and the shared Council on Aging and Youth Commission building also have low efficiency.

Reports have identified, and the town is working to address a number of energy efficiency improvement opportunities for municipal buildings including window unit replacements, thermostat upgrades, boiler replacements, air sealing/weatherization, occupancy sensors, vending machine controls, and computer power management.

Street Lighting Stoughton's street lighting accounts for nearly 8% of the town's non-building energy usage. Upgrading streetlights with LEDs purchased

through MAPC's Bulk Purchasing program could yield significant energy and cost savings.

Wastewater Wastewater generation in Stoughton in 2009 was 1,571 million gallons, 89% of which was treated by the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) at Deer Island in Boston Harbor. Most of the flow going to Deer Island (61%) was from ground water infiltration or storm inflow, water not intended to be in the wastewater system. Stoughton's Annual Sewer Program in its tenth year has substantially reduced system inefficiencies as the chart below indicates.

Table 1: Inflow/Infiltration Savings¹¹

Program Year	Removable I/I (gpd)	Estimated Annual Savings	Rehabilitation Status
1&2	246,000	\$152,500	Completed 2007
3&4	116,000	\$71,900	Completed 2009
5	166,000	\$102,900	Completed 2011
6&7	206,000	\$127,700	Completed 2013
8	37,000	\$22,900	Scheduled Summer/Fall 2014
9&10	48,000	\$29,800	Scheduled Summer/Fall 2014
Total	819,000	\$507,700	

MWRA's Annual I/I Reduction Report for Fiscal Year 2013 reports that Stoughton Annual Average Daily Flow is 2.28 million gallons per day (MGD), with estimated I/I of .78 MGD. This 34% I/I rate represents a nearly 50% reduction from the 2009 rate of 61%.

Solid Waste The Stoughton DPW collected 8,612 tons of solid waste for disposal in 2011, representing roughly 2,100 pounds per household¹² and collected 3,441 tons of recycling representing a diversion or recycling rate of 28%. This recycling rate represents a slight increase over the 2008 rate of 26%, a figure well below the average of its neighbors at nearly 34%. Reducing solid waste, through increased recycling and other means, will lower municipal energy use and expenses.

Transportation Energy consumption for transportation in the United States accounts for about 28% of total energy use.¹³

Maximizing the efficiency of municipal vehicles, supporting electric vehicles, and improving and expanding the town's walking and bicycling environment to reduce vehicle use are ways to help the town be more energy efficient. The Planning Board

¹¹ Weston and Sampson, Draft Years 9 & 10 Sewer Report, Feb 2014

¹² DPW does not collect from multi-family units, which represent about 20% of Stoughton's housing units.

¹³ U.S. Energy Information Administration, www.eia.gov

now requires electric charging stations in development projects where a significant amount of parking is provided.

Consider:

- In Stoughton 20% of the municipality's overall energy is used for municipal vehicles.
- As an example of lack of walkability or a culture of car dependence: all 416 students attending the West School live within one mile of the school. Only 62 (15%) walk or ride a bike to school.
- Citizens changing their personal and commuting habits continue to be key opportunities for reducing private energy costs and environmental impacts.
- The average number of miles driven per day per household in Stoughton is 59.6 miles.
- Nearly 90% of all commuting workers use their own personal vehicle and 82% of those commuters drive alone.

Residential and Commercial Buildings Nearly 40% of total U.S. energy consumption in 2012 was consumed in residential and commercial buildings.¹⁴ Assuming a similar statistic for Stoughton indicates that increasing the energy efficiency of private homes and businesses could have a profound impact on the town's overall energy use. The state in partnership with utilities such as National Grid and Columbia Gas offers free energy assessments, as well as rebates and incentives for the installation of energy efficient components, systems and appliances. The LEAP recommends the town create an outreach campaign to increase access to information about programs available to home and business owners in an effort to increase participation. One aspect of this goal has been initiated by the signing of the February 2013 Memorandum of Understanding with Next Step Living and the efforts undertaken by NSL and the ESC as described previously.

The Planning Board, as part of its Site Plan Approval, reviews plans with energy conservation in mind. To that end, the Planning Board requires LED lighting for all exterior fixtures.

Sustainability

The town has made efforts to address the goal of sustainability, most notable through zoning regulations to promote the efficient use of land, through the purchase of and protection of its open spaces and natural resources, and through the creation of affordable housing and the provision of social services to help meet basic physical and social needs. Public and private organizations, often in partnership with the town are

¹⁴ U.S. Energy Information Administration, www.eia.gov

also contributing to the town's sustainability with initiatives such as Stoughton Farmer's Market and Healthy Communities.

Zoning Elements of Stoughton's zoning by-law have been intentionally designed to promote the efficient use of land. Their intent is to reduce development's impact on the environment, preserve open space, encourage more dense development where infrastructure is in place to support it, and provide for a mix of compatible uses arranged, scaled and designed to create walkable neighborhoods and centers. Cluster Residential Development and the Stoughton Center Mixed-Use Overlay District (SCMUOD) are two key zoning regulations focused on encouraging more sustainable development.

Cluster Residential Development (CRD) allows for the division of land for single family homes on sites smaller than allowed in exchange for 20% of the land set aside for recreation or preservation. CRD requires a special permit and a minimum development site of 30 acres, allows only single family units, and offers no incentive for exceeding land conservation goals. This regulation should be reviewed and revised to increase effectiveness of land preservation and efficiency and to increase its attraction to potential developers.

The Stoughton Center Mixed-Use Overlay District was adopted in 2010 to promote more sustainable development in Town Center by allowing an increase in density and a mix of uses, by requiring the provision of affordable housing, public spaces and parking, and by adhering to design standards. Development under SCMUOD regulations requires a Special Permit. The town should evaluate the effectiveness of the SCMUOD to accomplish its goals and make adjustments as needed and evaluate municipal capacity to effectively review proposals and oversee the resulting development. Consider the allowance of strategically placed mixed-use, higher density, and pedestrian-oriented and transit oriented development by right and through an efficient review process as an added incentive for private investment in quality development.

To assure more sustainable development patterns the town must strategically support development in districts that already possess the necessary infrastructure to accommodate economic growth. Infill, redevelopment, including adding upper floors to single floor buildings and repurposing existing upper floors in downtown buildings are key strategies for increasing density and limiting sprawl. More compact development, along with a more diverse mix of uses and an improved walking environment increases opportunities for area workers and residents to walk to stores, restaurants, and entertainment thereby helping to reduce car trips. The walking environment can be improved with wide sidewalks, street facing building entrances, windows along street facades, awnings, signs, planters and other signs of activity. Look to close gaps along the street wall that discourage pedestrian activity, such as unlit, littered, vacant or poorly maintained properties.

Redevelopment Several key redevelopment initiatives underway in Stoughton, are prime examples of sustainable redevelopment.

- Repurposing of the Stoughton Train Station Depot Building under the direction of the Stoughton Redevelopment Authority hopes to bring a new restaurant to Town Center while preserving an historic town landmark.
- The local non-profit, Friends of State Theatre are working to revitalize this Town Center anchor to preserve a piece of history while at the same time, creating a multi-use entertainment venue.
- The Stoughton Housing Authority in partnership with a local developer is looking to redevelop the historic Swan Tavern for affordable senior housing and a house museum and meeting rooms.

The town is opposed to the South Coast Rail electrified dual track option as proposed and requires that the rail lines be depressed below grade to protect the town citizens, allow appropriate downtown development, and improve access and circulation. However; the town supports improving commuter rail service in Stoughton and will continue to work with MBTA and various state departments to achieve the town goals while also enhancing facilities and service.

Resource Protection Expansion of the town's open space holdings will help protect remaining natural resources and contribute to the physical and social health of the community. These lands help protect important water resources, preserve the town's trees which filter pollutants, slow runoff, moderate air temperatures, and provide valuable habitat to preserve species diversity. The lands also provide areas for residents and others to be in and enjoy nature and to pursue recreational and social activities that can improve personal health and increase a sense of community. How these holdings are managed and developed are important considerations.

Housing A sustainable community provides housing options that support a diversity of households and housing types. Stoughton's housing stock is diverse and generally more affordable than many surrounding communities. Currently housing in Stoughton represents a real value to new home buyers. To hold on to this advantage, the town must continue to assess the needs of existing and desired homeowners and support the range of housing that will meet those needs. In addition to continuing to meet the need for affordable housing for low and moderate income households, the community recognizes the need to create more housing for seniors, commuters, and high income households to assure balance and diversity.

Services Social services and schools also play a primary role in developing and maintaining sustainable communities. The town must continue to support its social service departments and schools and continue its partnerships with

area businesses, non-profits and advocacy organizations, supporting initiatives such as OASIS, Healthy Communities, and the Stoughton Farmer's Market.

Challenges to sustainability in Stoughton and most suburban communities are grounded in the history of automobile oriented planning efforts promoting dispersed development and single purpose districts (i.e. residential subdivisions, commercial strips, and industrial parks). The results are lack of walkable environments and connectivity between neighborhoods and services, continued reliance on the private automobile, and reduction in the quantity and quality of the town's natural features. Inefficient and ineffective use of land in Stoughton threatens the town's potential for becoming a sustainable community. An alternative approach (as outlined in Land Use) is to organize future public facility and infrastructure investments according to a framework based on conservation and growth areas that produces compatible and complete neighborhoods, village centers, and corridors, while protecting natural resources.

Community Vision for Energy and Sustainability

Stoughton's Community Vision speaks of resiliency, balancing municipal investments with fiscal and operational capacity, restored and repurposed buildings, a vital Town Center, an efficient transportation system, sensitive and sustainable economic development, healthy natural systems, housing diversity, an interconnected open space and trail system, and community participation in creating a high quality of life.

Goals and Strategies

Strategies to support a sustainable community are found throughout each section of the Master Plan. Following are goals and strategies specific to the town's use and conservation of energy.

Goal 1:

Assure that public facilities, equipment and operations are energy efficient and cost effective.

Primary Objective

The town is looking to reduce the amount of energy used to operate municipal facilities and provide municipal services and increase the use of renewable energies.

Potential Strategies

Build municipal capacity and leadership to support energy related policies and initiatives.

Include staff appointments to the SESC and assure effective communications between the SESC and all departments, boards and committees to further opportunities for collaborations to achieve energy reduction and conservation goals.

Track municipal energy consumption and set goals.

Use the existing capabilities of the MassEnergyInsights program to track energy consumption and set goals. This data tracking system has been set up and is supported by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). Stoughton's utilities provide usage data directly into MassEnergyInsights for use by the town in understanding the municipality's energy use allowing the town to track and determine ways to decrease energy use. Stoughton can use the data to set goals, and assign responsibilities to specific individuals to develop plans, measure and report progress to the community on an annual basis.

Consider hiring a part-time energy manager.

The town should consider hiring a part-time energy manager who would be able to focus on understanding, managing and reducing the cost of municipal energy use. There may be an opportunity to share the position with a nearby town or towns.

Review and update Local Energy Action Plan annually.

The Stoughton Local Energy Action Plan (LEAP) is intended to be a living document that can be continually updated and supplemented. The town should hold an annual meeting with local clean energy stakeholders to evaluate progress, update goals, identify any new goals and implementation projects for the next year and appoint responsible parties for leading implementation efforts.

Consider working with a professional Energy Services Company (ESCO) to provide energy management services through a performance contract.

An ESCO energy performance contract can be an effective tool for financing energy efficiency improvements and modernizing municipal buildings and facilities. Since performance contracts are paid by energy cost savings, the town must assess its potential for energy efficiency to assure adequate funds would be available to support the contract.

Follow through with identified improvements in Facilities Plan and LEAP.

Continue to make upgrades to municipal facilities that have been identified in municipal planning documents. The highest energy reductions will come from upgrades to buildings that are the most inefficient and have the highest consumption.

- Retrofit pump stations; and
- Retrofit street lights.

Reduce solid waste, increase recycling.

The town must continue its efforts to reduce solid waste and increase recycling. The town should evaluate costs and the potential benefits of mandatory recycling, increased hours for the town's recycling center, composting initiatives, and other waste reduction strategies.

Area towns with the highest recycling rates (Foxborough and Milton) both have pay-as-you-throw programs. In communities with pay-as-you-throw programs (also known as unit pricing or variable-rate pricing), residents are charged for the collection of municipal solid waste—ordinary household trash—based on the amount they throw away. This treats trash services like other utility services creating a direct economic incentive to recycle more and to generate less waste.

Reduce wastewater.

Collecting and treating wastewater requires a significant amount of energy and can represent a significant portion of municipal operating budgets. Wastewater includes sewage, inflow (rainwater or surface water flow) and infiltration (groundwater entering through defects in system). In 2009 Stoughton's wastewater consisted of 61% inflow and infiltration, flows not intended for the system. Those have been reduced significantly through the Town-Wide Sewer Investigation and Rehabilitation Program now in its tenth year. This aggressive program to reduce Inflow and Infiltration has resulted in reductions. The town's goal is to continue the program with monitoring and improvement projects to maintain an inflow and infiltration rate below 25%.

Explore additional financing mechanisms and energy saving opportunities.

The town should assess utility incentives for municipal retrofits on an on-going basis, identifying appropriate incentives for prioritized projects. If Stoughton becomes a Green Community, additional grant opportunities are available for municipal energy conservation (energy cost reduction) efforts.

Establish, pursue and support renewable energy goals.

Replacing non-renewable energy sources with renewable energy sources will help reduce the community's carbon footprint – a measure of the town's environmental impact, measured in units of carbon dioxide. The town should look to establish and pursue municipal renewable energy goals, and support private renewable energy with zoning and design guidelines that don't unreasonably restrict the installation of solar panels and other renewable energy infrastructure.

Goal 2:

Attain Green Community designation and pursue available funding.

Primary Objective

- By attaining Green Community designation, the town will become eligible for grants that finance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and accrue the cost savings that will result from the implementation of these items.
- Five criteria must be met to be designated a Green Community.
 - Establish an energy use baseline and develop a plan to reduce energy use by twenty percent (20%) within five years. (Baseline Report completed in 2011)
 - Provide as-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable/alternative energy generation, research & development, or manufacturing facilities.
 - Adopt an expedited application and permit process for as-of-right energy facilities.
 - Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles.
 - Set requirements to minimize life-cycle energy costs for new construction; one way to meet these requirements is to adopt the new Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) Stretch Code. (Adopted by 2014 Town Meeting)

Goal 3:

Assist in the reduction of energy use in the private sector.

Primary Objective

The town can assist in raising awareness of residents and businesses of importance of reducing energy consumption in their homes and businesses and about the challenges and opportunities that exist for greater energy efficiencies.

Potential Strategies

Support the creation and implementation of an outreach campaign aimed at increasing awareness and changing energy consumption habits.

Partner with energy service vendors, utilities, local agencies and other stakeholders to design and implement an outreach campaign to promote participation in MassSave and distribute information on the benefit, incentives, rebates, and other financial opportunities for energy efficiency upgrades, and solar development. One aspect of this goal has been initiated by the signing of the February 2013 Memorandum of Understanding with Next Step Living and the efforts undertaken by NSL and the ESC as described previously.

Ensure compliance of current energy code.

Non-enforcement of the energy code results in lost energy efficiencies for homeowners. The town's building officials must fully understand the current energy code and enforce it. Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and Board of Buildings Regulations and Standards (BBRS) code trainings should be mandatory for officials and additional trainings should be encouraged for officials and contractors.

Implementation

Overview

The Stoughton Planning Board has the authority and the responsibility to create and update the town's Master Plan to provide guidance on development, preservation and management of the town's land and resources. In 2011 the Planning Board and Redevelopment Authority proposed the Board of Selectmen endorsed the development of a Master Plan Committee (MPC) to guide master planning efforts. In 2012, Town Meeting approved funding and the MPC began a two and a half year process that engaged hundreds of residents, staff and local and regional stakeholders in the creation of a master plan that is based on the community's shared vision. With adoption of the Master Plan, the community must now focus on the next phase of the process – implementation. The opportunity for Stoughton to attain its vision lies in the successful implementation of the strategies the town has identified to address a wide range of issues.

This section of the Master Plan outlines practices that will help the town build on the momentum that has been created during the planning process and create a framework to:

- Require concurrence of planning, policies and regulations with the Plan;
- Assure integration of recommendations with management, capital and strategic plans;
- Increase the town's capacity to undertake recommended actions;
- Monitor and report on progress in implementing recommendations;
- Evaluate results of actions;
- Sustain and build interest and enthusiasm; and
- Update the Plan.

Issues and Challenges

The Town of Stoughton is faced with the challenge of shaping a sustainable future. It has prepared for this challenge with insight and patience; looking to its residents to define the community values and characteristics it desires for the future, and affirming those values and characteristics with an open and inclusive public process that has resulted in a work plan that is strategic and comprehensive. The work plan includes short-term, long-term and demonstration actions. Some actions will require no or limited fiscal resources while other actions will require considerable capital investments or on-going operational funding. The plan also includes actions that can be entirely administered with existing staff, board and committee volunteers as well

as actions that will require the town to expand its pool of human resources and technical expertise.

To implement most or all of the Plan's recommendations will require consistent leadership by the Board of Selectmen and the commitment to collaborate by multiple town departments, boards and committees. Many recommended actions are interrelated and will help advance multiple goals. Building partnerships and establishing effective communication among departments, boards, committees, and the public will help assure coordination of efforts and boost efficiency. While responsibility for implementation of the Master Plan's recommendations will be shared by town leaders, departments, board and committee members, a single committee should be charged with monitoring, evaluating and reporting on implementation.

The funding necessary to complete the full set of Master Plan recommendations is considerable and may be daunting to consider at first. It is critical to approach implementation with the understanding that financial resources will come from a variety of sources, and not only the town's operational and capital budget. A beginning step of any recommendation requiring the commitment of substantial funding is to determine and assess potential sources. State and federal programs are primary funding sources for a variety of efforts including resource protection, housing development and capital improvements that help meet local, state and federal goals. Private enterprises may provide funding for public amenities that have a direct relationship to a development and the town must work to leverage municipal funding through public-private partnerships. Some funding may also come from bonds, taxes or fees for services. Steps the town can take to strengthen funding opportunities include increasing grant writing capacity, developing a negotiating team, and developing a strong and creative economic development team to foster relationships, and manage projects.

Goal & Strategies

Use the Stoughton Master Plan to guide decisions on land use and the management of public facilities, services and resources.

Potential Strategies

Require concurrence with the Master Plan.

Require that town policies, strategic plans, zoning, regulations, guidelines, budgets and review decisions are in line with the vision and goals of the Master Plan. Departments, boards and committees that craft municipal policies, plans, regulations, guidelines, and budgets will assure that they are aligned with the Master Plan and will reference Master

Plan recommendations. All review and permitting authorities will make decisions in support of Master Plan's goals and will document concurrence in decisions rendered.

Plans and studies currently or soon to be undertaken that will require concurrence include:

- Public Safety Facility Feasibility Study;
- Capen Reynolds Farm Use and Development Plan;
- Glen Echo Open Space and Recreation Development Plan;
- Town Center Traffic Plan;
- Housing Production Plan;
- Open Space and Recreation Plan;
- High School Feasibility Study / Education Master Plan; and
- Urban Renewal Plan.

Prepare department budgets to coincide with the goals of the Master Plan. Each municipal department will include funding for Master Plan recommendations in its annual budget request. These requests will be clearly identified as supporting the Master Plan and will outline how the funds may be leveraged by grants or other funding sources. The request will also note if the action or initiative advances multiple goals, beyond those of priority to the requesting department, and if the action or initiative is expected to produce any revenues.

Update capital plans to effectuate the Master Plan. Five-year capital plans will be updated on a regular basis to include expenditures for implementing Master Plan recommendations. The capital plan will outline projected needs, funding estimates and sources, leverage potential, income potential, and time frame for completion.

Develop municipal capacity to implement Master Plan recommendations.

Develop an organizational and operational framework to facilitate implementation.

Town leaders and staff will begin by working together to create a short term work plan that will identify priority initiatives, taking into consideration available funds, personnel and goals for early tangible and visible results. The plan will outline responsibilities, a meeting schedule and communication process. Recommendations may require more staff, improved technical proficiency of staff and volunteers, or technical assistance. It may also require new or expanded committees and partnerships. The framework for implementation should be evaluated and revised as second and then successive work plans are developed.

Appoint an Implementation Committee. The Master Plan Implementation Committee (IC) will facilitate and monitor the implementation process without changing the responsibilities or accountability of identified lead departments, boards or committees.

The IC will lobby for the implementation of the Plan's recommendations, assist in coordinating efforts, and report regularly to Town Meeting representatives, Boards and Committees and annually to Town Meeting on the town's progress toward implementation. IC reports will include the cost, status and outcome of initiatives undertaken, including how the initiative helps the town move toward its shared vision. The report will also outline steps not yet taken, identify next priorities, and identify emerging issues, trends, and potential opportunities.

Increase the number of people involved. Department staff and committees will work to involve more people in implementing the Plan's recommendations. Implementation partners might include existing civic or social organizations, businesses, existing or new neighborhood groups, institutions or individuals. Partners should have a clear understanding of their role in the implementation process and how the initiative will help bring about the community vision.

Establish and sustain public outreach. Keeping residents and other stakeholders informed about the Master Plan and its goals and initiatives is important for developing understanding and support. A variety of outreach platforms should be used including the town's web site, SMAC, newspapers, school bulletins, institutional outreach, mailings and social media. The Library will maintain several copies of the Master Plan, and annual IC Master Plan Reports for public use.

Develop the fiscal capacity to implement Master Plan recommendations.

Identify and secure funds to implement recommendations. As priority projects are identified responsible parties must assess potential funding opportunities. The town may want to consider the benefits of hiring or contracting a grant writer/administrator or procuring technical assistance to develop or evaluate other funding options. Responsible parties will report findings and recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

Distribute and publicize the Plan.

The Planning Board will distribute the approved Master Plan to all departments, boards and committees. The Plan will be posted on the town web site in chapters to facilitate distribution, downloading and copying. Copies of the Plan will be available for review at Town Hall and the Library. The Planning Board and town departments involved with potential developers will direct them to the Plan as an initial step in their information seeking or application process.

Update the Plan

The Master Plan will be updated through an open and inclusive public process within ten years or sooner if changing conditions or issues warrant a reevaluation of the

community vision or goals. The update will be supported by the history of this Plan's implementation as will be documented by the IC's annual reports.

Implementation Matrix

The following matrix provides a numbered list of recommendations for each of the Master Plan elements. The matrix identifies responsible parties, with the lead party shown in bold type, estimated time frame, and estimated cost along with potential funding sources for some recommendations with moderate to high costs.

Responsible Parties and Partners Key

BAT	Brockton Area Transit Authority	HC	Historical Commission
BOH	Board of Health	HS	Historical Society
BOS	Board of Selectmen	MAPC	Metropolitan Area Planning Council
BC	Building Commissioner & Zoning Officer	OCPC	Old Colony Planning Council
LBO	Local Business Organizations (chamber, downtown association, or others)	OSC	Open Space Committee
COS	Council on Aging	PB	Planning Board
ConCom	Conservation Commission	PD	Police Department
CFPC	Capital & Financial Planning Committee	PHA	Public Health Association (Visiting Nurses)
COD	Commission of Disabilities	Pln	Planning Office
CPC	Community Preservation Committee	RA	Redevelopment Authority
CC	Cultural Council	RD	Recreation Department
CD	Commission on Disabilities	RPO	Resource Protection Organizations
CRC	Capen Reynolds Committee	SC	School Committee
DPW	Department of Public Works	SD	School Department
Eng	Engineering Department	SCRAC	South Coast Rail Advisory Committee
EC	Events Committee	TM	Town Manager
EDO	Economic Development Office	TTF	Transportation Task Force
ESC	Energy and Sustainability Committee	TMR	Town Meeting Representatives
FC	Finance Committee	YC	Youth Commission
FD	Fire Department	YSO	Youth Sports Organization
FHC	Fair Housing Committee	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeal
GEC	Glen Echo Committee	ZCO	Zoning Code Officer
HA	Housing Authority		

Time Frame

Immediate – complete implementation within six months

Near Term – complete implementation between six months and two years

Medium Term – Substantial progress between two to five years or as opportunity arises

Long Term – Begin implementation b five to ten years, or as opportunity arises

On-going – Continue to implement or implement based on opportunity

Cost

Low No more than \$50,000

Actions estimated to require minimal funding, including policies, staff research, organizational and administrative changes, and low cost planning initiatives

Moderate \$50,000 to \$250,000

Actions estimated to require one time capital or on-going operating costs that may be supported by grants or other financial subsidies including planning initiatives, engineering and design services, and small infrastructure or improvement projects

High More than \$250,000

Actions estimated to require significant capital investments that may be supported by grants or other financial subsidies including land acquisitions, infrastructure and facility improvements or development.

Funding

Potential funding sources include budget, bonds, grants, technical assistance programs, private investment, fees and other subsidies. (See Appendix for list of potential funding sources, financing methods and other resources.)

Implementation

Goal

- I-1 Use the Stoughton Master Plan to guide decisions on land use and the management of public facilities, services and resources.

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	Cost/Funding
I-1	Use the Stoughton Master Plan to guide decisions on land use and the management of public facilities, services and resources.			
I-1.1	Require concurrence with the Master Plan.			
I-1.1.a	Require that town policies, strategic plans, zoning, regulations, guidelines, budgets and review decisions support the vision and goals of the Master Plan.	All	Immediate	Low
I-1.1.b	Prepare department budgets to coincide with the Master Plan.	Town Departments	On-going	Low
I-1.1.c	Update capital plans to effectuate the Master Plan.	CPFC, TM	On-going	Low
I-1.2	Develop municipal capacity to implement Master Plan recommendations.			
I-1.2.a	<p>Develop an organizational and operational framework to facilitate implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a short term work Plan that outlines responsibilities, meeting schedule and communication process. ○ Secure needed professional or technical assistance. ○ Evaluate and revise framework as needed. 	BOS, TM, PB, IC	Immediate	Low
I-1.2.b	Appoint an Implementation Committee with clear directive of responsibilities.	PB	Immediate	Low

I-1.2.c	Increase the number of people involved.	IC, All	On-going	Low
I-1.2.c	Establish and sustain public outreach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inform stakeholders of initiatives. ○ Build understanding and support for initiatives and funding requests. ○ Build stakeholder base. 	IC	Immediate and On-going	Low
I-1.3	Develop the fiscal capacity to implement Master Plan recommendations.			
	Identify and secure funds to implement recommendations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess need to hire or contract grant writer/administrator or other technical assistance. 	All EDO	On-going	Low
I-1.4	Distribute and publicize the Plan.			
I-1.4.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distribute to all departments, boards and committees. ○ Post on the town web site in chapters to facilitate distribution, downloading and copying. ○ Provide copies for review at Town Hall, Library and School Administration Office. 	IC	Immediate	Low
I-1.4.b	Direct potential developers to the Plan as an initial step in their information seeking or application process.	PB, Pln, ZBA, BOH, TM, Eng, EDO	On-going	Low
I-1.5	Update the Plan.	PB	Medium to Long Term	Moderate

Land Use and Growth Management

Goals

- L-1 Adopt a Sustainable Growth and Redevelopment Strategy
- L-2 Revitalize Town Center
- L-3 Improve Highway Business Corridors
- L-4 Improve Commercial/Industrial Parks and Neighborhood Business Districts
- L-5 Protect and Enhance Neighborhoods
- L-6 Protect and Enhance Stoughton's Green Character and Sense of Place

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Timeframe	Cost/ Funding
L-1	Adopt a Sustainable Growth and Redevelopment Strategy.			
L-1.1	<i>Improve the “public realm” as a framework for private investment in all land use transects.</i>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adopt Context-Based Street Design Standards and Complete Street policies ○ Adopt Design Standards to Create Usable Open Space, Community Facilities and Civic Amenities 	TTF, BOS, Eng, DPW, Pln, PB	Near Term	Low
L-1.2	<i>Improving the “visitability” of Stoughton.</i>			
	Install Gateway Treatments and Wayfinding System on main corridors leading into Stoughton, Town Center and other local centers in combination with Complete Street improvements, streetscape enhancements and removal of unattractive and unnecessary signage.	TTF, BOS, Eng, DPW, Pln, PB	Near-Term	Moderate
L-1.3	<i>Encourage compact development and mixed use.</i>			
	Revise land use regulations, policies and incentives to allow for and encourage compact development and mixed use to serve neighborhoods and employment centers.	Pln, EDO, PB, BOS, TMR	Near-Term	Low

L-2	Revitalize Town Center			
L-2.1	<i>Foster public/private cooperation and commitment to revitalizing Town Center.</i>			
	Establish a public/private cooperative partnership to work on revitalization involving a broad range of municipal departments, boards and committees, property owners, residents, business owners, and potential developers.	RA, Pln, TM, EDO, PB, BOS, LBO	Immediate	Low
L-2.2	<i>Preserve and enhance traditional settlement patterns and design characteristics of Town Center.</i>			
	Revise downtown design guidelines to address key traditional design characteristics in the center which are considered baseline vitality indicators and contribute to a positive mixed use and walkable environment.	RA, Pln, TM, EDO, PB, BOS, LBO	Immediate	Low
L-2.3	<i>Improve the pedestrian environment through “Street Activation”.</i>			
	<p>Permit, encourage and incentivize “Street Activation” techniques such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Active uses of private frontages between the buildings and the sidewalks (civic gathering areas, outdoor dining, store displays, etc.). ○ Active uses of public frontages between the private frontage and the curb (banner, benches, lighting, and other sidewalk furnishings and streetscape treatments). ○ Shop front treatments to engage pedestrians including various façade, sign and window treatments. 	RA, Pln, TM, EDO, PB, BOS, LBO	Immediate	Low
L-2.4	<i>Enhance streetscape and walkability in Town Center.</i>			
L-2.4.a	<p>Continue to Make Streetscape Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reconsider the center boulevard along Washington Street in the square. 	RA, Pln, TM, EDO, PB, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Moderate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extend pedestrian-level lighting beyond the square ○ Add curb extensions with accent material approaching the square to calm traffic ○ Plant more street trees with variable species and distribution patterns ○ Provide additional bus shelters and pull outs where appropriate ○ Install street furnishings such as benches, planters, window boxes, informational kiosks, and trash receptacles. ○ Install gateway treatments and directional signage. 			
L-2.4.b	Create a Murals Program	CC, RA, Pln, TM, EDO, BOS	Near Term	Low
L-2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expand and enhance community gathering areas in Town Center.</i> 			
L-2.5.a	Faxon Memorial Park – Work with community to make landscape enhancements and program for regular civic events and activities to draw more people to Town Center.	CC,HS, RA, Pln, EDO, BOS, LBO, Veterans	Near Term	Low
L-2.5.b	<p>Potential Future Town Common - work with the First Parish Universalist Church to determine potential for joining and reorganizing town and church owned properties between Freeman and Pleasant Streets.</p> <p>Also work with U.S. Postal Service to determine feasibility of public space between Porter and Wyman Streets.</p>	CC,HS, RA, Pln, EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-2.5.c	Create a Food Vendor Court as a Business Incubator.	CC, Pln, EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-2.6	<i>Create a parking management program to address customer as well as employee needs (See T-4.3).</i>			

L-2.7	<i>Work toward the revitalization, re-use and redevelopment of targeted sites In Town Center.</i>			
	Targeted sites in the Town Center include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Repurpose and rehabilitate the Stoughton Train Station Depot Building. ○ Rehabilitate the State Theatre. ○ Redevelop the Malcolm and Parsons Block for mixed use. ○ Renovate the former IOOF/Pacheco Hardware Store. ○ Redevelop the Post Office site (retain customer services but relocate distribution facilities) for mixed use and public parking. ○ Encourage more housing and mixed use development around a new train station (Transit Oriented Development). ○ Infill existing development with shops and restaurants and ground level and upper floor office and residential uses. ○ Focus on strategic reuse, rehabilitation, and redevelopment along Wyman Street corridor. 	CC,HS, RA, Pln, EDO, BOS, LBO , SCRAC	On-going	Moderate
L-2.8	<i>Create incentives for revitalization and reinvestment.</i>			
L-2.8.a	Create a Town Center Facade and Sign Improvement Program	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-2.8.b	Initiate and Strategically Utilize a Dedicated Supplemental Town Center Wine and Malt Licenses Program	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-2.8.c	Allow and Promote and Facilitate Outdoor Dining	Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-2.8.d	Prepare the Urban Renewal Plan and District for Town Center	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Immediate	Moderate

L-2.9	<i>Revise zoning regulations in the Central Business District to align with the future vision of Stoughton Town Center.</i>			
	Revise CBD base zoning requirements, Stoughton Mixed Use Overlay District bylaw (SMUOD) and Stoughton Center Design Review Guidelines. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zoning district boundaries that reflect desired uses and development patterns. ○ Broad variety and mix of uses. ○ Provisions for desired density, placement, and vertical definition of buildings and uses. ○ Design guidelines and standards that complement and preserve the architectural characteristics and development patterns. ○ Flexible parking standards. ○ Street activation (such as signage, sidewalk displays, and outdoor dining). ○ Built-to-zones (BTZ). ○ Ground floor limitations for active commercial uses. 	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, HC, LBO, SCRAC	Near Term	Low
L-2.10	<i>Enhance commuter rail service and facilities (See T-3.2).</i>			
L-3	Improve highway business corridors			
L-3.1	<i>Carry out strip development retrofit initiatives for the Washington Street corridor.</i>			
	Revise Policies and Regulations to Prevent Further Sprawl and Improve Existing Commercial Corridors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access Management, Connectivity and Block Definition ○ Site Plan Review Requirements ○ Create Commercial Nodes at Key Intersections 	TTF, Pln, PB EDO, BOS	Near Term	Low

L-4	Improve commercial/industrial parks and neighborhood business districts			
L-4.1	<i>Create more flex space in existing industrial parks</i>			
	Facilitate the renovation of older industrial parks such as Park Street (Campanelli Parkway), Island Street, Technology Center Drive and Turnpike Street to allow for smaller start-up companies to utilize smaller spaces where they can grow in place.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-4.2	<i>Carry out a “Place-Based” business development program.</i>			
	Allow and encourage auxiliary services and amenities in and near office and industrial parks to encourage walking and biking, and minimizes car trips. This may include sidewalks, trails, restaurants, convenience stores, pharmacies, daycare and other amenities that provide daily needs in close proximity to places of work.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-4.3	<i>Promote the growth of neighborhood activity centers.</i>			
	<p>Enable through zoning and other land use policies and regulations neighborhood activity centers where appropriate including a mix of uses and activities located close together, providing people with new options for places to live, work, shop, learn and participate in civic life. Some possible locations for neighborhood activity centers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Washington Street at Central Street ○ Washington Street at Plain Street (and south) ○ Washington Street at Atkinson Avenue (and south) ○ Park Street at Prospect Street ○ Park Street at Turnpike Street ○ Central Street at West Street ○ Central Street at Pleasant Street ○ Central Street at Pearl Street 	Pln, PB, EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Central Street at Chapman Road or Turnpike Street ○ Sumner Street at Reginald Cole Drive (Goddard Hospital) ○ Pleasant Street at Lincoln Street ○ Canton Street at Simpson Street 			
L-4.4	<i>Provide for business incubation.</i>			
	<p>Support local start-ups and entrepreneurship as an economic foundation for community building and generator of both financial and social capital.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide simple, modular and flexible incubator space that is reasonably priced. ○ Identify suitable locations for business incubators in underutilized or vacant lots and buildings and work with property and business owners to establish the facilities for start-up businesses. <p>Small incubators could be established in Town Center while larger ones could be formed in various industrial parks around Stoughton.</p>	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	Near Term	Low
L-4.5	<i>Develop craft businesses.</i>			
	<p>Seek out entrepreneurs looking for space and provide incentives for setting up small and home base businesses. Craft business development should be targeted for Town Center and Neighborhood Business Districts.</p>	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	On-going	Low
L-4.6	<i>Provide for artisan industrial space and live/work units.</i>			
L-4.6.a	<p>Develop zoning and regulations to allow artisan industrial space designed to accommodate a workshop and living quarters within one building where one mortgage covers both uses.</p>	Pln, PB, EDO	Near Term	Low

L-4.6.b	Encourage artisan business development with incentives such as low cost incubator space as well as more permanent artisan industrial space.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	On-going	Low
L-4.7	<i>Encourage co-working and shared office spaces.</i>			
	Facilitate the creation of co-working spaces to attract a broad range of business operators. Co-working and shared offices may include meeting rooms, secretarial services, and copy services. This business format is suitable for Town Center, Neighborhood Business Districts and older industrial parks.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	On-going	Low
L-4.8	<i>Other industrial and business park support initiatives.</i>			
L-4.8.a	Support the strong local tool and die industry that requires skilled labor by encouraging a regional training program.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	On-going	Low
L-4.8.b	Support opportunities to create smaller lots and flexible business enterprise spaces on Camponelli Drive by extending the sewer line to the business park.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	On-going	Low
L-4.8.c	Support the multiple construction yard operations on Page Street as an important local industry sector.	RA, Pln, PB EDO, BOS, LBO	On-going	Low
L-5	Protect and enhance neighborhoods			
L-5.1	<i>Emphasize housing choice and diversity.</i>			
	Allow through zoning and housing policies a greater range of alternative housing choices to enable a diversity of people at all stages of life. (See H – 1)	FHC, HA, Pln, PB, BOS	On-going	Low
L-5.2	<i>Make complete neighborhoods.</i>			
L-5.2.a	Create zoning that allows for a limited mix of uses and diversified range of housing types, ideally, within a five minute walk to centers of activity such as schools,	FHC, HA, Pln, PB, BOS	Near Term	Low

	recreational areas, corner stores, and other regular necessities and community attributes.			
L-5.2.b	Work to create an interconnected network of streets that promotes walking and cycling and minimizes traffic pressure.	BOS, DPW, Pln, Eng, TTF	On-going	Moderate
L-6	Protect and enhance Stoughton's green character and sense of place			
L-6.1	<i>Conserve land and resources.</i>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and evaluate municipally-owned land and tax-title properties on a regular basis for suitable conservation and open space uses such as pocket parks, playgrounds, recreation fields, tot lots, community gardens, public nurseries, and other related uses. (See OSR-2.2 and OSR 2.3) Design open spaces for active community use and properly maintain them. Seek grant funding and utilize CPA funding for conservation land acquisition and open space enhancements. 	ConCom, CPC, ESC, OSC, RD, RPO, Pln, PB, BOS	On-going	Low
L-6.2	<i>Promote conservation subdivisions in rural and suburban areas of town.</i>			
	Encourage and incentivize conservation subdivisions which preserve larger areas of greater significance by building homes closer together on a development site, thus leaving more land open and available to recreation and conservation purposes. (See H-3.3)	ConCom, CPC, ESC, OSC, RD, RPO, Pln, PB, BOS	On-going	Low
L-6.3	<i>Embrace green community building.</i>			
L-6.3.a	Support local food production through the promotion and expansion of community gardens, schoolyard gardens, yard gardens, container gardens, edible landscapes, park gardens and seed libraries.	ConCom, CPC, CC, ESC, OSC, RD, RPO, Pln, PB, BOS	On-going	Low

L-6.3.b	Support green infrastructure such as infiltration parks, pervious parking lots, and shade trees.	ConCom, CPC, ESC, OSC, RD, RPO, PIn, PB, BOS	On-going	Low to moderate
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Housing

Goals

- H-1: Provide a variety of housing to meet the needs of Stoughton's existing and future residents.
- H-2: Support housing as a cornerstone for Town Center revitalization.
- H-3: Support the maintenance, improvement and creation of distinctive neighborhoods that are interconnected with physical and social infrastructure.

ID	Goals/Objectives/Actions	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	Cost/Funding
H-1	Provide a variety of housing to meet the needs of Stoughton's existing and future residents.			
H-1.1	Support a mix of housing types at a range of price points.			
H-1.1.a	Adopt policies, bylaws and plans to support Transit Oriented Development (TOD).	BOS, Pln, PB, RA, ED	Immediate	Low
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a transit area plan that recommends infrastructure, and utility improvements, the mix of land uses, incentives, redevelopment strategies, and a phasing plan. 	Pln, ED, PB, RA, Eng, BOS	Near Term	Moderate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create transit area design guidelines to address the design of parking, pedestrian furniture, signage, street lighting, sidewalk, and ground level building façades. 	Pln, ED, PB, RA	Near Term	Moderate
H-1.1.b	Adopt revisions to current zoning to increase housing units within existing buildings. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accessory units ○ Accessory building conversions ○ Conversion from single to multi-family ○ Conversion from business/industrial 	Pln, PB, BOS, ZBA, TMR	Near Term	Low

	to residential As needed increase open space, sidewalks, and other amenities to support additional density.			
H-1.1.c	Identify town-owned properties suitable for the provision of housing and work with selected developer to create housing desired. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identify properties.○ Solicit Expressions of Interest.○ Work with selected developer.	Pln, BOS, CFPC	Medium Term	Low
H-1.2	Maintain at least 10% of year-round housing inventory as affordable.			
H-1.2.a	Maintain an up-to-date Housing Production Plan and support its recommended strategies.	BOS, PB, Pln, HA, FHC, TM	On-Going	Low
H-1.2.b	Adopt an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw.	BOS, Pln, PB, HA, TMR	Near Term	Low
H-1.2.c	Identify and implement strategies necessary to preserve expiring affordable units.	BOS, Pln, CPA, HA	Immediate	Low CEDAC
H-1.2.d	Provide financial assistance to help families secure and maintain affordable housing. Programs to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Down Payment and Closing Cost assistance○ Housing Rehabilitation○ Heating System Replacement○ Weatherization	Pln, CPA, HA, FHC	Medium Term	Moderate
H-1.3	Assess the need to increase capacity of housing advocates.			
H-1.3.a	Consider Creating a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust and Housing Trust Fund.	BOS, HA, FHC, MAPC. TM	Near Term	Moderate

H-1.3.b	Appoint the Housing Trust or other housing advocate to serve on municipal development review team.	PB	Immediate	Low
H-1.3.c	<p>Affirmatively further Fair Housing by promoting housing opportunity for the classes of persons protected under the Fair Housing Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integrate affordable housing with market rate housing. ○ Remove barriers to creating housing for large families. ○ Advocate for housing for persons with disabilities. 	FHC, HA, PB, Pln	On-Going	Low
H-2	Support housing as a cornerstone for Town Center revitalization.			
H-2.1	Review and revise Town Center zoning.			
H-2.1.a	Adjust parking space requirements.	Pln, PB	Near Term	Low
H-2.1.b	Consider Incentive Zoning to promote desired development.	Pln, PB, RA	Near Term	Low
H-2.1.c	Allow mixed-use by right.	Pln, PB	Near Term	Low
H-2.2	Identify and assess funding opportunities for housing development/redevelopment.			
	<p>Seek technical assistance and/or work with developers knowledgeable about funding choices to identify the most viable and effective opportunities based on project goals and characteristics. Funding sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commercial Area Transit Node Housing Program (CATNHP) ○ Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) ○ Housing Stabilization Fund (HSF) ○ Local Initiative Program (LIP) 	Pln, ED	Near Term	Low

	○ Mass Housing Trust Fund			
H-2.3	Identify and promote historic structures appropriate for residential development.			
H-2.3.a	Work with the property owners to determine interest, assess feasibility and create supportive regulations.	HC, Pln, PB	Medium Term	Low
H-2.3.b	Develop a municipal data-base of historic structures, along with site and building information, zoning and code requirements, incentives, and potential funding sources to help match potential historic development opportunities with qualified developers.	HC, Pln, ED	Near Term	Low
H-2.4	Create public spaces that build community identity and spirit.			
H-2.4.a	Work with developers to provide public space as part of new and redevelopments.	PB, OSC, RD, RA, ED, Pln	On-going	Low
H-2.4.b	Improve town owned spaces to meet community needs. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ utilities to support programs ○ seating, lighting, shelter, areas for play and other amenities to improve comfort, safety and social interaction ○ trees and plants 	RD, OSC, DPW, Eng	On-going	Moderate, CPC,
H-2.4.c	Assess and revise use and permitting regulations to assure they support desired programs within the town's public spaces.	Pln, PB,HD, BOS, BOH, BC	Near Term	Low
H-3	Support the maintenance, improvement and creation of distinctive neighborhoods that are interconnected with physical and social infrastructure.			
H-3.1	Consider developing neighborhood plans.			
	Create and implement a model for neighborhood planning.	Pln, PB, BOS	Medium Term	Low

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess municipal capacity to support planning efforts and increase as needed. ○ Assess neighborhood interest. ○ Run the model planning process. ○ Assess, revise and continue development of neighborhood plans as requested. 			
H-3.2	Assess the benefits of a Demolition Delay Bylaw			
	<p>Study model and other Demolition Delay Bylaws and determine their potential for assisting in the preservation of historic structures suitable for existing or re-use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If bylaw is considered appropriate, create and run a public information initiative to inform residents of bylaw's intent and process. ○ If TM support is feasible, draft bylaw and request adoption. 	HC, PB, Pln	Medium Term	Low
H-3.3	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Cluster Residential Development (CRD) Bylaw and revise as needed.			
H-3.3.a	Evaluate the quality of housing and open space created using existing CRD and determine if it is meeting its goals.	Pln, PB, ConCom, OSC	Medium Term	Low

H-3.3b	<p>Study model and other Open Space Residential bylaws including the state's newest model: Open Space Design and determine their potential for improving the quality of housing developments and open space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a new bylaw is desired, create and run a public information initiative to inform residents of bylaw's intent and process. ○ If TM support is feasible, draft bylaw and request adoption. 	Pln, PB, ConCom, OSC	Medium Term	Low
H-3.4	Require development projects to include sidewalks and other public amenities consistent with neighborhood needs.			
H-3.4a	Adopt a policy for guiding the development of public improvements by private development.	BOS, PB, Pln, ED	Immediate	Low
H-3.4.b	Create regulations such as Incentive Zoning; guidelines including public space design guidelines and complete street standards; and neighborhood plans that support the creation of public amenities by private development.	Pln, PB, ED, DPW, RD, OSC, RA, TTF	Immediate	Low to Moderate collectively
H-3.4.c	<p>Establish a development review team and process that identifies appropriate public improvements to be provided by development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look to town-wide and neighborhood plans to identify desired improvements. ○ Where no plan exists, engage neighborhood residents in determining desired improvements. ○ Seek to establish public private partnerships for long term care and management. 	PB, RA	Immediate	Low

H-3.5	Evaluate and revise site and design standards for non-residential uses within or abutting residential districts.			
	Evaluate existing site and design standards to determine if they are producing quality developments and offering adequate protection to nearby residential uses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If changes to standards are needed, create and run a public information initiative to inform residents of bylaw's intent and process. ○ If TM support is feasible, draft bylaw and request adoption. 	Pln, PB, ED	Near Term	Low
H-3.6	Identify opportunities for converting areas along and adjacent to business corridors into new mixed-use neighborhoods.			
	Create a strategic plan for each of Stoughton's business corridors to identify opportunities for new mixed use neighborhoods. Revise zoning as needed to allow desired development as outlined in strategic plan. (See Land-Use: L-4.3)	Pln, PB, EDO, RA, TTF, Eng, CPFC, BOS	Medium Term	Low to Moderate collectively
H-3.7	Enforce local bylaws that preserve neighborhood quality and safety.			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify areas of non-compliance affecting neighborhood quality and safety. ○ Revise or eliminate outdated bylaws. ○ Mandate compliance of existing bylaws. ○ Identify responsible parties. ○ Create a clear course of action for enforcement of every bylaw. 	BOS, PD, FD, BC, ZCO	Near Term	Low

Transportation and Circulation

Goals

- T-1 Manage traffic throughout Stoughton to minimize congestion and maximize safety.
- T-2 Create a pedestrian and cyclist circulation system that provides safe and convenient access to schools, the library, shopping, activity centers, and neighborhoods.
- T-3 Improve mobility for all transportation modes and users, both motorized and non-motorized.
- T-4 Improve the vitality of our Town Center through transportation, streetscape and parking enhancements.
- T-5 Improve the vitality of our Commercial Corridors and Business Parks through transportation, streetscape and parking enhancements.
- T-6 Develop local capacity to address transportation and circulation needs on an ongoing basis.

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Timeframe	Cost/Funding
T-1	Manage traffic throughout Stoughton to minimize congestion and maximize safety.			
T-1.1	<i>Balance street capacity improvements with pedestrian safety.</i>			
	Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy to encourage all modes of travel, and more walkable neighborhoods and business districts.	TTF, BOS, PB	Immediate	Low
T-1.2	<i>Make traffic and safety improvements at key intersections and segments throughout town.</i>			
T-1.2.a	Washington Street Corridor Segments and Intersections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington Street/Central Street intersection Washington Street (Rt. 138)/York Street Intersection 	TTF, BOS	Near Term	Moderate

T-1.2.b	<p>Central Street Corridor Segments and Intersections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Segment and Intersections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signalization at West Street Island Street realignment Sidewalks on Central Street between West Street and Island Street; and on the south side to Central Court. The West Street corridor segment between West Street and Di Castro Lane is also a priority area for safety improvements. Central Street/Pearl Street Intersection Central Street/Pleasant Street (Rt. 139) Intersection Central Street/Turnpike Street Intersection 	TTF, BOS	Medium Term	High
T-1.2.c	<p>Bay Road Intersections – Address poor site lines for several residential street intersections on both the Stoughton and Sharon side by following OCPC outline for improvements.</p>	TTF, BOS	Near Term	Low
T-1.2.d	<p>Island Street Corridor – Conduct an evaluation of a one-way loop with Island Street in the northbound direction from Central Street and Mill Street in the southbound direction to Central Street to address heavy turning movements onto Island Street from Central Street.</p>	TTF, BOS	Near Term	Low
T-1.2.e	<p>Make safety improvements to other Key Intersections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleasant Street (Rt. 139)/Lincoln Street Intersection 	TTF, BOS, SD	Medium Term	Moderate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pleasant Street (Rt. 139)/Turnpike Street ○ Wyman Street/Summer Street/Morton Street Intersection ○ Canton Street (Rt. 27)/Summer Street/School Street 			
T-1.3	<i>Improve connectivity throughout town.</i>			
	Improve connections within the local street network to disperse traffic and limit congestion by revising policies to prevent unnecessary dead ends (i.e. residential cul-du-sacs) and providing for future connections (i.e. roadway easements) between adjoining neighborhoods.	TTF, BOS	Immediate	Low
T-2	Create a pedestrian and cyclist circulation system that provides safe and convenient access to schools, the library, shopping, activity centers, and neighborhoods.			
T-2.1	<i>Continue to extend and enhance “walkability” throughout Stoughton.</i>			
	Adopt new policies promoting walking and biking as a high priority that address the following walkability factors and indicators. These policies should inform future decisions regarding capital investments as well as new development and rehabilitation of existing buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access management ○ Well placed pedestrian crossings and traffic calming devices ○ Uniformity of crosswalk markings ○ Attractive ○ Attractive and diverse building elements ○ Attractive and intuitive pedestrian level wayfinding systems. 	TTF, BOS, SD	Immediate	Low
T-2.2	<i>Upgrade sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks</i>			
T-2.2.a	Adopt policy for standardized treatments for crosswalks, considering best practices such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continental markings and signage 	TTF, BOS, RA, Schools	Near Term	Low

	<p>both at and in advance of crosswalks, along arterial roadways in congested or high speed traffic areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solar pedestrian activated rectangular rapid flashing beacons where there is high pedestrian activity. ○ Evaluate the need for improved street lighting at all pedestrian crosswalks in Town Center. 			
T-2.2.b	<p>Improve sidewalks and pedestrian facilities at all crosswalks in high pedestrian areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On Washington Street from Plain Street to the Stop and Shop driveway. ○ At the crosswalk in Porter Street in front of the Post Office. ○ At the intersection of Canton Street and School Street. ○ At the intersection of Pearl Street from the Canton town line to Central Street. ○ Complete sidewalks on Central Street from Evans Drive to the Canton town line. ○ ADA compliant sidewalks in front of the senior housing on Central Street. 	TTF, BOS, RA, Schools	Near Term	Moderate
T-2.3	<i>Expand and enhance bicycle facilities throughout Stoughton</i>			
T-2.3.a	<p>The recommended bicycle network for Stoughton will rely on designated bicycle routes on local streets and off-street, shared-use trails. Make pavement marking and signage improvements for on-street bicycle routes on the following corridors consistent with OCPC Regional Transportation Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Washington Street/Route 138 (entire corridor in Stoughton) ○ Turnpike Street/Lindelof Avenue (entire corridor in Stoughton) ○ Canton Street/Park Street/Route 27 	TTF, BOS, OCPC, MAPC	On-going	Moderate

	(entire corridor in Stoughton) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bay Road from Canton town line to Plain Street ○ Plain Street from Sharon town line to Washington Street ○ Central Street from Sharon town line to Pleasant Street ○ Pleasant Street from Central Street to Washington Street (Route 139) ○ Prospect Street from Pleasant Street to Park Street ○ Grove Street and Lincoln Street between Washington Street and Pleasant Street ○ Morton Street between Plain Street and Town Center ○ Sumner Street from Park Street to Brockton city line 			
T-2.3.b	Expand Off-Road Bike Trails	TTF, BOS, OCPC, MAPC	Long Term	High
T-2.3.c	Install other bicycle facilities where appropriate including bike parking and storage and end-of-trip amenities.	TTF, BOS, OCPC, MAPC	On-going	Low
T-3	Improve mobility for all transportation modes and users, both motorized and non-motorized.			
<i>T-3.1</i>	<i>Adopt Complete Streets policy, design standards and capital improvement programs.</i>			
	Consider the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review, revise and develop as needed, appropriate planning policies, zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, site plan review, design guidelines, and incentive programs that incorporate Complete Street design principles and design standards. ○ Re-evaluate capital improvement projects prioritization Complete Streets implementation. ○ Train staff and officials regarding the principles and best practices of 	TTF, BOS, ED, DPW, PB, RA	On-going	Low

	<p>Complete Street design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seek appropriate funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies and standards. 			
T-3.2	<i>Enhance commuter rail service and facilities</i>			
	<p>Continue to work with MassDOT on a mitigation plan which strongly recommends that the rail lines be depressed below grade to improve access and circulation. Several factors must be considered in preparing final plans for expanded rail service including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expanded passenger and rail service will result in significantly more gate closings and crossings at each crossing throughout town; ○ Traffic congestion combined with reduced access and circulation will become increasingly problematic unless the dual rail system is depressed through Town Center; ○ Electrification poses safety and aesthetic concerns that must be adequately addressed; ○ The additional train trips will increase noise (horn and velocity) and air pollution (hybrid diesel fuel); ○ The station location and expansion of service must be consistent with the town's revitalization and economic development goals; ○ Rail service expansion must maintain opportunities for Transit Oriented Development (TOD); ○ Parking capacity and management must be able to accommodate expanded rail service 	<p>TTF, TM, BOS, EDO, ED, PD, DPW, PB, RA, LBO, TMR</p>	On-going	High
T-3.3	<i>Improve bus transit facilities.</i>			
	Work with Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT) to improve transit	<p>TTF, BOS, EDO, RA,</p>	Near Term	Low

	service and facilities in key locations with dedicated bus pull-outs, benches, lighting and shelters where appropriate.	BAT		
T-4	Improve the vitality of our Town Center through transportation, streetscape and parking enhancements.			
T-4.1	<i>Address traffic congestion in Town Center.</i>			
	<p>Carry out a traffic improvement plan that achieves the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Efficiently disperse and distribute local traffic and through traffic; ○ Provide balance in the modes of transportation by accommodating personal vehicles, delivery vehicles, bus transit, pedestrians and bicyclists; ○ Improve access management and connectivity; ○ Provide convenient access to public and private parking areas; ○ Maintain and enhance exposure and visibility of local businesses; ○ Address intersection safety issues for all modes of transportation; and ○ Control vehicle speed to enhance visibility and pedestrian safety. 	TTF, BOS, RA, ED, DPW	Immediate	Moderate
T-4.2	<i>Implement streetscape improvements in Town Center to improve the pedestrian environment and as a tool for generating economic development and private investments</i>			
	<p>Carry out a streetscape improvement plan that includes the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sidewalk designed for outdoor activity ○ Street furniture including ornamental streetlights in commercial/retail corridors ○ Plantings such as street trees that shade the sidewalk, flowering plant pots hung on light poles, and private landscaping such as flower boxes in 	TTF, BOS, EDO, RA, DPW, EDO	Medium Term	High

	front of stores ○ Wayfinding signs, gateway treatments, and business directories ○ Burying overhead utility poles (or relocating to the rear of buildings) ○ A thorough maintenance program			
T-4.3	<i>Manage and enhance parking supply and distribution in Town Center.</i>			
	Develop and carry out a Parking Management Plan and evaluate and implement the following parking enhancements as appropriate: ○ Evaluate Parking Enforcement ○ Evaluate Time Limits ○ Establish a Sticker Permit Program ○ Improve Lighting and Landscaping ○ Improve Parking Lot Connectivity ○ Allow and Encourage Shared Parking ○ Facilitate Access Easements and Agreements between Owners ○ Consider Establishing a Public Parking Fund ○ Consider Long-Term Strategic Parking Expansion	TTF, BOS, EDO, RA, DPW, Police	Near Term	Medium
T-5	Improve the vitality of our Commercial Corridors and Business Parks through transportation, streetscape and parking enhancements.			
T-5.1	<i>Implement streetscape improvements along the Washington Street Corridor to improve the pedestrian environment and as a tool for generating economic development and private investments.</i>			
	Prepare a streetscape plan and install the following elements as appropriate: ○ Sidewalk improvements and connections to adjacent businesses ○ Pedestrian level and overhead ornamental streetlights ○ Street trees that shade the sidewalk ○ Wayfinding signs and gateway treatments ○ Burying overhead utility poles (or relocating to the rear of buildings) ○ Install center medians and other	TTF, BOS, EDO, RA, DPW, EDO	Medium Term	High

	<p>means of restricting turning movements at specific locations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage private landscaping in parking lots and adjacent to buildings 			
T-5.2	<i>Establish an Access Management Program.</i>			
	<p>Adopt policies and regulations that address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connectivity between adjacent properties (known as "cross access") ○ Limit driveway openings, including standards for the number, width and spacing of driveway; ○ Adopt corner clearance standards ○ Provide for appropriate intersection spacing and traffic signal spacing ○ Encourage shared parking between adjacent businesses, centralized public parking, and side and rear parking (versus parking between roadway and building) ○ Provide convenient internal circulation and external connections for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. 	TTF, BOS, EDO, RA, DPW, EDO	Short Term	Low
T-5.3	<i>Adopt Parking Placement and Site Design Standards to enhance the pedestrian environment and provide infill development opportunities on commercial corridors and in business parks.</i>			
	<p>Parking placement policies and standards should address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary building entry should be placed at the front of the building. ○ Parking should be placed at the side or rear of the lot and screened from view whenever possible ○ Reinforce the "street-edge" by aligning adjacent buildings close to the front lot line. Landscaping can also be used to reinforce this line ○ Link adjacent parking lots or provide shared parking areas ○ Provide sidewalks for the full width 	TTF, BOS, EDO, PB, Pln, RA, DPW,	Immediate	Low

	<p>of the property frontage with a direct link to the primary building entry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Loading docks, service areas and trash facilities should be located at the rear of the building and not visible from the street ○ Incorporate any existing, older trees into new site plan development whenever possible to reduce waste and utilize good shade trees. ○ Landscaped islands and other green space should be consolidated into useful areas, and not just narrow strips of grass or plantings where appropriate 			
T-5.4	<i>Adopt standards for sustainable streets and parking areas</i>			
	<p>Adopt policies and standards that address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capture, temporarily store, and treat road runoff at its source by incorporating vegetated water catchment and filtration devices in the form of small rain gardens and bioretention systems. ○ Components such as flow-through planters and other sustainable stormwater solutions ○ Previous pavers and underground stormwater detention and treatment systems, and dual purpose surface systems stormwater and recreation) 	TTF, BOS, DPW, EDO, PB, Eng	Immediate	Low
T-6	<i>Develop local capacity to address transportation and circulation needs on an ongoing basis</i>			
T-6.1	<i>Guide project review and implementation through the Transportation Task Force.</i>			
	<p>To guide traffic and circulation improvements toward implementation, create a priority list of intersection improvements – traffic controls, Federal Aid, jurisdiction, type, LOS, operational capabilities, and other attributes and constraints.</p>	TTF, BOS, DPW, EDO	Immediate	Low

T-6.2	<i>Seek funding resources for transportation improvements.</i>			
	Consider retaining a grant writing consultant to assist in capturing funds that will be allocated on a competitive basis.	TTF, EDO, RA	TM, BOS, On-going	Low

Public Facilities and Services

Goals

- PFS-1 Provide exceptional educational opportunities for students and residents of all ages in up-to-date and well maintained facilities.
- PFS-2 Assure transparency of fiscal and operational activities.
- PFS-3 Increase community participation in advancing educational and community goals.
- PFS-4 Assure that public safety facilities, equipment, and staffing enable prompt, professional responses to the community's needs.
- PFS-5 Sustain a level of public service to ensure a clean, healthy and safe environment.
- PFS-6 Provide drinking water, wastewater and stormwater collection systems adequate to serve the community's current and projected needs and to protect the town's natural resources.

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	Cost/Funding
PFS-1	Provide exceptional educational opportunities for students and residents of all ages in up-to-date and well maintained facilities.			
PFS-1.1	Continue to support the improvement of school buildings and grounds.	SC, SD	On-going	High
PFS-1.2	Secure professional assistance to develop an Educational Master Plan.	SC, SD	Immediate	Moderate
PFS-1.3	Continue to evaluate and improve policies and processes to maintain and enhance a positive learning environment.			
PFS-1.3.a	Follow recommendations of Plans guiding school operations and growth including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan ○ 2013 - 2016 Triennial District Improvement Plan ○ Individual School Improvement Plans. 	SD	On-going	Low to High Collectively
PFS-1.3.b	Continue working with community	SC, SD	On-going	Low to

	<p>members to assess performance and identify opportunities. Actions identified by MP focus groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Innovation in instruction to engage and motivate students. ○ Attention to student's individual needs, working collaboratively with student households and assessing progress to make sure interventions work. ○ Information and assistance to students that seek an alternative educational path (SE Regional, Norfolk Agricultural). ○ Collaborative assessment of curriculum and delivery of services involving students. ○ K-12: enrichment (gifted and talented) programs that are strong, challenging, and innovative. ○ Competitive programs such as chess, debate, robotics, technology, literacy and athletics. ○ Post secondary education courses within the HS curriculum. ○ Recognition for outstanding educators and administrators. ○ Acknowledgement for teacher interns that bring enthusiasm and cutting edge teaching ideas into the classrooms. ○ Lifelong learning through continuing educational programming. 			Moderate Collectively
PFS-2	Assure transparency of fiscal and operational activities.			
PFS-2.1	Facilitate the community's understanding of school budgets.			
H-2.1.a	Maintain communications with the general public through on-going	SC, SD	On-going	Low

	community outreach, continuing to expand communication platforms to reach people where they get their news.			
H-2.1.b	Continue collaborations involving schools and town leaders, staff, boards and committees to work together to address perceptions/ misperceptions, challenges and opportunities.	SC, SD, TM	On-going	Low
PFS-3	Increase community participation in advancing educational and community goals.			
PFS-3.1	Identify education and community goals and outline strategies for reaching them. (Use Education Master Plan process)	SC, SD, BOS	Immediate	Low to Moderate
PFS-3.2	Promote the Stoughton school system to existing and potential student households.			
	<p>Ideas offered by Master Plan Focus Group members include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Offer school tours to bring stakeholders into the schools ○ Solicit public input for curriculum and policy review. ○ Showcase student and teacher activities and successes in communications and at public events. ○ Work with realtors to develop introductory packets on schools to distribute to potential home buyers. 	SC, SD, BOS	Near Term and On-going	Low
PFS-3.3	Strengthen school-community connections.			
	<p>Ideas offered by Master Plan Focus Group members include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invite residents, business owners and town staff into schools to share experiences, teach, offer shadowing and mentoring, and assist in 	SD, BOS, All	Near Term and On-going	Low

	<p>enrichment programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invite school employees and students to help support the community. E.g. help with community events, present to municipal boards, committees or constituent groups, conduct studies and surveys for non-profits or businesses, and hold events at local businesses. 			
PFS-4	Assure that public safety facilities, equipment, and staffing enable prompt, professional responses to the community's needs.			
PFS-4.1	Continue an annual facility, fleet and equipment assessment and act on findings.	FD, PD, PWD	On-going	Low to High collectively
PFS-4.1.a	Support recommendations of Public Safety Building Study (2014).	FD, PD, BOS, CFPC	Medium Term	High
PFS-4.1.b	Craft and implement a strategic Vehicle Replacement Plan.	FD, PD	Near	Low to Moderate collectively
PFS-4.1.c	Assess cost and benefits of hiring/contracting with a dedicated fleet mechanic for on-going fleet inspection and repair.	FD, PD, BOS, TM	Near Term	Low to Moderate
PFS-4.1.d	Invest in technology hardware, software and personnel training to enhance communications, modeling and forecasting, and data control.	FD, PD	Near Term	Low to Moderate collectively
PFS-4.1.e	Assess the need for an additional ambulance and act on findings.	FD	Near Term	Low to Moderate
PFS-4.1.f	Identify potential sites to update and expand office and animal holding cells for Animal Control Office.	PD	Medium Term	Moderate
PFS-4.2.	Continue to review department staffing levels annually and act on findings.	FD, PD, BOS	On-going	Moderate

PFS-4.3	Support Police Department accreditation with policies and funding.	BOS, PD	On-going	Low to High collectively
PFS-4.4	Assess benefits and cost of joining regional dispatch service and act on findings.	FD, PD, BOS	Medium-Term	Low to Moderate
PFS-4.5	Increase fire prevention efforts.			
PFS-4.5.a	Increase focus on effective plan reviews.	FD, PB	Immediate	Low
PFS-4.5.b	Create policy and staff department to undertake regular building inspections.	FD, BC	Near Term	
PFS-4.5.c	Increase outreach efforts regarding personal safety and fire and accident prevention.	FD	Near Term	Low
PFS-5	Sustain a level of public service to ensure a clean, healthy and safe environment.			
PFS-5.1	Create and implement department strategic and capital plans.	ConCom, COA, DPW, RD, L, YC,	Near Term	Low to High collectively
PFS-5.2	Develop and implement a facilities maintenance and improvement plan for all municipal buildings.	CPFC, TM, DPW, SD	Near Term	Moderate to High collectively
PFS-5.3	Strengthen the capacity of municipal departments.			
PFS-5.3.a	Require attendance at monthly Department Head Meetings.	TM	Immediate	Low
PFS-5.3.b	Encourage and support staff attendance at training and networking events pertinent to their jobs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Announce opportunities during monthly meetings, and through mailings to boards and committees. ○ Recognize attendance at meetings and through public outreach (e.g. web page, SMAC, newspaper announcements) 	TM, BOS	Immediate	Low

PFS-5.4	Consider strengthening solid waste disposal and recycling policies and by-laws.			
	Assess opportunities and options to reduce costs and the impacts of waste removal. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mandatory recycling. ○ Increased days/hours for recycling center. ○ Placing collection bins for recyclable materials in appropriate (well-used) public places. ○ Promoting composting. ○ Working with schools to develop educational campaign on reducing waste and increasing recycling. ○ Contracting with a waste reduction consulting firm to determine optimum resource recovery techniques that would be cost effective for the town. ○ Consider pay as you throw or similar programs. 	DPW, ESC, SD,	Near-Term	Low
PFS-5.5	Provide more opportunities for recreation and socialization.			
PFS-5.5.a	Identify opportunities to expand public spaces including trails, sidewalks and outdoor play and socialization spaces. (See Open Space and Recreation)	OSC, Pln, RD, ConCom, TTF, YC, LYO, RPO	Medium Term	Moderate to High
PFS-5.5.b	Identify and implement intergenerational programs whenever practical.	COA, SD, YC, RD, L	Near Term	Low
PFS-5.6	Support the Library expansion project.	L, All	On-going	High
PFS-5.7	Improve roadside maintenance.			
PFS-5.7.a	Identify and implement high standards for roadside design and maintenance.	DPW, TTF	Immediate	Low to Moderate

PFS-5.7.b	Use local volunteer groups or state correctional teams to assist in clean up efforts. Coordinate efforts with MassDOT for roads under their jurisdiction.	DPW	Immediate	Low
PFS-5.7.c	Develop a holistic approach to signage to improve sign design and appearance, reduce the overall number of signs, and require maintenance. Include strategy to assure enforcement and compliance.	Pln, PB, DPW, TTF, PD, FD	Near Term	Low
PFS-5.7.d	Assess and revise the town's Street Tree Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant street and shade trees within road right-of-ways and other public spaces. Consider a planting policy that allows the town to plant street trees along streets on private property with the permission of the land-owner. Consider incentives such as an annual tax credit for land-owners to plant trees along roadsides on private property. 	DPW, ConCom, TTF, LOB,	Near Term	Low to Moderate collectively
PFS-5.7.e	Re-establish agreement with National Grid that provided the town with replacement trees for any trees lost or degraded by National Grid work.	DPW	Near Term	Low
PFS-5.7.f	Re-establish Tree City USA designation.	DPW	Medium Term	Low
PFS-5.8	Increase partnerships that focus on improving quality of life.	BOS, COA, ConCom, CC, DPW, HA, FHC, LBO, OSC, RD, RPO,	Near Term	Low

		SD, TTF, YC,		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthen outreach to fill committee vacancies. ○ Creating a culture of rewarding facilitators and consensus builders. ○ Identifying and tracking quality of life benchmarks and publishing/announcing progress. 			
PFS-6	Provide drinking water, wastewater and stormwater collection systems adequate to serve the community's current and projected needs and to protect the town's natural resources.			
PFS-6.1	Continue the assessment and protection of McNamara and Dykeman wells.	DPW, Eng, Pln	On-going	Low
PFS-6.2	Continue to implement recommendations of Water Systems Master Plan.	DPW, Eng	On-going	Low to Moderate
PFS-6.3	Create a Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plan that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess system demand and capacity. ○ Update inflow and infiltration analysis. ○ Recommend system improvements ○ Identify and recommend options for developing green infrastructure 	DPW, Eng	Near Term	Moderate
PFS-6.4	Support new sewer connections in strategic locations.			
PFS-6.4.a	Map and assess priority areas for sewer expansion and act on findings.	Eng, DPW, BOH, ConCom	Near Term	Low to High
PFS-6.4.b	Continue to fund, promote and implement the grant program to help reduce system hook up costs to homeowners.	BOH	On-going	Moderate

PFS-6.5	Adopt Low Impact Development (LID) policies/regulations.			
PFS-6.5.a	Review and update local regulations to include Low Impact Development (LID) principles.	Pln, ConCom, DPW, Eng, PB	Near Term	Low
PFS-6.5.b	Develop and seek approval for a LID Bylaw that requires all new and redevelopment to follow LID standards to the greatest extent possible	PB, Pln, ConCom, DPW, Eng	Near Term	Low
PFS-6.6	Increase municipal capacity to manage stormwater.			
	Identify opportunities to increase funding to address stormwater management.	DPW, ESC, Pln	Near Term	Low

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources

Goals

- NHCR 1 Protect the town's ecosystems that contribute to species biodiversity, water quality, and suburban character.
- NHCR 2 Preserve and activate buildings and landscapes that help tell Stoughton's history and promote understanding of its culture.
- NHCR-3 Strengthen community character and sense of place through local events and initiatives that promote Stoughton's history and culture.

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	Cost/Funding
NHCR-1	Protect the town's ecosystems that contribute to species biodiversity, water quality, and suburban character.			
NHCR-1.1	Maintain an up-to-date inventory of lands of interest. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resource assessment ○ Protection strategies, partners and funding sources ○ Ownership information, history of contact 	ConCom, DPW, OSC	On-going	Low
NHCR-1.2	Consider natural resource protection zoning. (See OSR-2.6.b)	Pln, ConCom	Near Term	Low
NHCR-1.3	Address sedimentation issues.			
NHCR-1.3.a	Assess the cost and benefits of dredging to determine the short and long term effects on water quality and other related resources.	ConCom, DPW	Near Term	Moderate
NHCR-1.3.b	Adopt Low Impact Development (LID) Policies/Regulations. (see OSR-6.5)	Pln, ConCom, PB	Near Term	Low
NHCR-1.3.c	Prioritize the protection of shorelines through acquisition, deed restrictions, or other methods to prevent development that impacts the water resources.	ConCom, Pln, PB	On-going	Moderate

NHCR-1.4	Create and implement a town-wide Street Tree Master Plan. (See PFS-5.7.d)	DPW, ConCom, PB, Pln, Eng, TTF		
NHCR-1.5	Actively steward conservation lands.			
NHCR-1.5.a	Create and Implement Stewardship Plans for key conservation areas and water protection lands.	ConCom, DPW	Medium Term	Low to Moderate collectively
NHCR-1.5.b	For any town-owned land with a Conservation Restriction (CR), require a CR Steward Plan, and annual monitoring.	ConCom	Medium Term	Low
NHCR-1.6	Review and revise Zoning Bylaw including Site Plan Review and Subdivision Rules and Regulations to ensure that regulations call for review of development proposals in or adjacent to sensitive areas by appropriate staff and/or professional consultants.	Pln, PB, ConCom	Near Term	Low
NHCR-2	Preserve and activate buildings and landscapes that help tell Stoughton's history and promote understanding of its culture.			
NHCR-2.1	Establish a town policy to support the adaptive re-use of significant historic properties.	BOS, PB, HC, HS, CPA	Immediate	Low
NHCR-2.2	Update and expand Historic Resources Survey.	HC, HS, CPA	Near Term	Low
NHCR-2.3	Adopt a Demolition Delay Bylaw	PB, HS, HC, Pln, CPA	Medium Term	Low
NHCR-2.4	Create and implement re-use plans for municipally owned historic properties.			
	Conduct feasibilities studies and a public process to determine appropriate re-use options for buildings and/or sites including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Train Station Depot 	BOS, RA, CRF, GEF, Pln, DPW, FD, CPA	Immediate to Long Term	Low to Medium collectively

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capen Reynolds Farm ○ Glen Echo ○ Armory Building ○ Waterworks Building (in time) ○ Freeman Street Fire Station ○ Other municipal buildings that may change use. 			
NHCR-2.5	Work with state and local preservation advocates to secure Preservation Restrictions for buildings important to the town's history and character.	HC, HS, BOS, RA, CPA	Medium Term	Moderate
NHCR-2.6	Create zoning that supports the practical re-use of historic buildings.	Pln, PB, RA, HC, HS	Near Term	Low
NHCR-2.7	Stabilize and interpret archaeological resources on town-owned sites, and raise awareness of their significance.	HC, HS, CPA, ComCom, GEF, CRF, RPO	Medium Term	Low to Moderate
NHCR-2.8	Create and Implement Management Plans for Burial Grounds and Cemeteries. Plans should guide maintenance and improvement projects and consider ways to expand the useful life of the sites in light of changing burial traditions.	HC, HS, CC, DPW	Long Term	Moderate
NHCR-2.9	Support private preservation initiatives.	BOS, CPC, PB, Pln, RA,	On-going	Low to Moderate collectively
NHCR-3	Strengthen community character and sense of place through local events and initiatives that promote Stoughton's history and culture.			
NHCR-3.1	Make history visible.			
NHCR-3.1.a	Establish and implement a building plaque program to identify historic buildings.	HC, HS	Medium Term	Low

NHCR-3.1.b	<p>Work with professionals in a public process to develop and install interpretive panels at historic and cultural sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify sites. ○ Determine the message and means of communication. ○ Specify materials, installation and maintenance standards. 	HC, HS, GEF, CRF, RD, ConCom, DPW	Long Term	Low to Moderate
NHCR-3.1.c	<p>Work with professionals in a public process to create interpretive trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify sites. ○ Determine the message and means of communication. ○ Specify materials, installation and maintenance standards. 	HC, HS, GEF, CRF, RD, ConCom, DPW, CD	Long Term	Low to Moderate
NHCR-3.1.d	Display historic images in public buildings.	HC, HS, CC, SD, BOS, TM	Near Term	Low
NHCR-3.2	Continue to support the Stoughton Farmers Market.			
	<p>Municipal assistance could include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ signage ○ parking ○ electricity and water ○ garbage collection ○ promotion ○ safety audits ○ public transportation options 	BOS, DPW, PD, TM, COA, YC, SD, TTF, BC, CD	On-going	Low
NHCR-3.3	Work with interested resident groups to determine demand for community gardens, assess potential sites and develop policies for use.	OSC, CC, Pln	Long Term	Low
NHCR-3.4	Activate public spaces with art and entertainment.			

NHCR-3.4.a	Identify town-owned public spaces that can be used to display and promote art and entertainment and work through a public process to determine and implement program.	BOS, CC, OSC, ConCom, COA, RD, SD YC	Medium Term	Low
NHCR-3.4.b	Work with developers, including the state, to include art as an integral part of buildings, infrastructure, and landscapes.	BOS, PB, CC DPW, ED, RA	On-going	Low
NHCR-3.5	Increase awareness of and improve condition and visibility of Stoughton's squares. (See OSR-3.3)	BOS, DPW, HC, HS, CC, OSC, Pln	Long Term	Low to Moderate collectively
NHCR-3.6	Host and support a greater number of community celebrations and events.			
	Actions might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing a yearly event guide ○ Posting events on the community web page ○ Establishing an event review committee to help guide events through required approvals and permitting and assure coordination with town support efforts. 	CC, BOS, HS, HC, EC	Medium Term	Low
NHCR-3.7	Assess the feasibility for positioning the arts to help in the revitalization of Town Center.	BOS, CC, RA, Pln	Near Term	Low

Open Space and Recreation

Goals

- OSR-1 Develop and maintain a framework for effective planning and management of the town's open space and recreational resources.
- OSR-2 Meet the growing recreational needs of Stoughton residents with well maintained and managed facilities and programs.
- OSR-3 Develop parks to create community cohesion and build social capital.

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	Cost/Funding
OSR-1	Develop and maintain a framework for effective planning and management of the town's open space and recreational resources.			
OSR-1.1	Maintain an up-to-date Open Space and Recreation Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assure consistency between MP and OSRP and other town planning documents. Appoint an OSRP Implementation Committee 	ConCom, RD, OSC	On-Going	Low
ORS-1.2	Increase knowledge and capacity of staff, boards and committees.			
OSR-1.2.a	Support educational and networking opportunities for staff, board and committee members. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributing class, workshop and conference data Subsidizing costs (fees, travel) Publicly recognizing attendance/ education/ training 	TM, BOS	Immediate and On-Going	Low
OSR-1.2.b	Establish protocols for inter-department/ board/committee coordination and communication. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a shared database 	TM, Town Departments and Boards	Immediate	Low

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate regularly with CPC as principal funding source for open space and recreation, affordable housing, and preservation 			
OSR-1.3	Work to increase the number and diversity of participants engaged in open space and recreation planning and management.			
OSR-1.3.a	Actively recruit potential volunteers through a variety of outreach efforts.	BOS, ConCom, RD, OSC	Near Term	Low
OSR-1.3.b	Establish and support friends and/or volunteer groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and assess facilities and programs. Assist with maintenance and/or improvement projects. Plan events. Consider appointing a volunteer coordinator charged with recruiting, training, and managing volunteers.	ConCom, RD, OSC, BOS	Near Term	Low
OSR-1.3.c	Identify opportunities for developing partnerships with neighboring towns to collectively meet area needs.	ConCom, RD, OSC	Medium Term	Low
OSR-2	Meet the growing recreational needs of Stoughton residents with well maintained and managed facilities and programs.			
OSR-2.1	Develop a short and long range maintenance and improvement plan for existing facilities.	DPW, ConCom, RD	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.1.a	Establish high maintenance standards and support with adequate personnel, equipment and training. Elements of park maintenance identified as needing improvement include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> waste collection 	DPW, ConCom, RD	Near Term	Low to Moderate collectively

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ options for pet waste ○ policy for reporting and removing graffiti and dumped material ○ vegetation management ○ trail conditions 			
OSR-2.1.b	Make annual improvements to increase accessibility to municipal parks and open spaces.	ConCom, RD, DPW, CD, CPC	On-going	Low to moderate collectively
OSR-2.1.c	Identify additional funding sources including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grants ○ Program and facility fees ○ Maintenance agreements ○ Public private partnerships 	ConCom, RD	On-going	Low
OSR-2.2	Assess capacity of existing town properties to meet recreational needs.			
OSR-2.2.a	Evaluate lands held for resource protection to determine suitability for recreation purposes and change policies and practices as needed.	ConCom, RD, OSC, DPW, CPC	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.2.b	Evaluate school lands and facilities to determine if they could help meet recreational needs and change policies and practices as needed.	SC, RD, OSC	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.2.c	Create a master plan for Glen Echo to determine the most appropriate uses for the site balancing resource protection, recreational, and neighborhood needs.	GEF, ConCom, RD, OSC, CC, HC, HS, CPC	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.2.d	Create a master plan for Capen Reynolds to determine the most appropriate uses for the site balancing resource protection, recreational, and neighborhood needs.	CRF, ConCom, RD, OSC, CC, HC, HS, CPC	Near Term	Low

OSR-2-3	Identify specific new recreational facilities that are needed.			
	<p>Appoint a task force to assess field capacity and make recommendations to the Recreation Department for improving and or adding fields.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include town staff, board and committee members, and representatives of the various youth and adult sports leagues. ○ Identify, assess and prioritize locations for additional fields if needed. ○ Identify potential partnerships and funding sources. ○ Evaluate operations (scheduling, use fee structure, use agreements). 	BOS, RD, SD, YSO	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.4	Seek protection of identified priority properties.			
	<p>Maintain a list of properties of interest for open space and recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep a file for each property that includes property data and history of actions taken to seek protection. ○ Develop a potential protection strategy for each parcel listed including: type of protection preferred, potential partners and potential funding sources. ○ Review and update list annually. 	ConCom, RD, OSC, RPO, SYO	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.5	Request the inclusion of public open space and or recreation areas in any major redevelopment project where practical and needed.	PB, ConCom, RD, OSC, Pln, TTS	On-going	Low
OSR-2.6	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Cluster Residential Development (CRD) Bylaw			

	and revise as needed. (Same as H-3.3)			
OSR-2.6.a	Review existing CRD and document quantity and quality of OS preserved. Consider using a summer intern to identify, map, and collect data including size, condition, access, ownership, and use.	Pln, PB, ConCom,	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.6.b	Study model and other Open Space Residential bylaws including the state's newest model: Open Space Design and determine their potential for improving the quality of housing developments and open space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a new bylaw is desired, create and run a public information initiative to inform residents of bylaw's intent and process. ○ If TM support is feasible, draft bylaw and request adoption. 	Pln, PB ConCom	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.7	Evaluate and expand recreational programs.			
OSR-2.7.a	Consider appointing a task force that includes a range of ages including teens and seniors to assess satisfaction levels, identify needs and develop program options that could be tested for viability.	BOS, RD, SYC, COA, YSO	Medium Term	Low
OSR-2.7.b	Adapt parks and open spaces to support new programming.	Eng, RD, SYC, DPW, COA, ConCom, CPC	Medium to Long Term	Low to Moderate
OSR-2.8	Improve and expand the town's pedestrian and bicycle network.			
OSR-2.8.a	Adopt a strategic maintenance and improvement plan that considers the complete roadside and off-road network and prioritizes maintenance and improvement projects including:	DPW, TTF, ConCom, OSC	Near Term	Low to Moderate Collectively

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o vegetation control o surfacing o trail heads o parking areas o connections o signs o benches o art and other amenities 			
OSR-2.8.b	<p>Support the work of the town's Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force and OCPC to develop a regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Coordinate with Stoughton's Transportation Task Force, Town Center Transportation Study, OSRP. o Implement recommendations. 	BOS, DPW, TTF	On-going	Low to Moderate collectively
OSR-2.9	Adopt a policing and patrolling strategy for open space and recreation lands.	BOS, PD, ConCom, RD,	Immediate	Low
OSR-2.10	Increase awareness and access to existing open spaces.			
OSR-2.10.a	Install identification signs and use guidelines at each municipal open space.	ConCom, RD, OSC, , DPW	Immediate	Low
OSR-2.10.b	Develop trail marking and mapping standards for municipal lands and implement on applicable properties.	ConCom, OSC, DPW, GEF, CRF	Near Term	Low
OSR-2.10.c	<p>Maintain an on-line information site for municipal lands. Include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Hours of operation o Rules or policies o Maps, including trails and other features 	ConCom, RD, OSC, DPW	Immediate	Low

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Programs ○ Volunteer opportunities ○ Contact data for reporting issues or more information 			
OSR-2.10.d	<p>Identify and implement park programs based on community interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ walking or fitness programs ○ guided nature hikes ○ scavenger hunts ○ outdoor art programs 	RD, ConCom, COA, SYC, YSO, CC, RPO	Medium Term	Low
OSR-2.11	Provide equitable access to open space and recreational facilities throughout town.			
	<p>Identify neighborhoods that are underserved with parks and open spaces and address needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Add pocket parks and playgrounds. ○ Develop on or off-road trails to link neighborhoods with nearby open spaces. ○ Increase access or activities at existing facilities including resource protection sites, schools and other municipal lands. 	Pln, RD, ConCom, OSC, SD, DPW, TTF, GEF, CRF, CPC	Long Term	Moderate
OSR-2-12	Increase the health of and improve access to the town's ponds.			
OSR-2.12.a	<p>Continue to assess and address the threats to the health of ponds and other water resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remove invasive species. ○ Reduce sedimentation (see NHCR-1.3) ○ Monitor water quality and implement best management 	ConCom, DPW	On-going	Low to Moderate collectively

	policies and practices to improve quality.			
OSR-2-12.b	Identify areas appropriate for boat launch sites, waterside trails, and overlooks. Implement improvements incrementally based on evaluation of use patterns.	ConCom, OSC, RD, DPW, PD, FD	Long Term	Low to Moderate collectively
OSR-2.12.c	Improve facilities and maintenance at Ames Pond Recreation Area to meet local needs.	RD, DPW, PD, FD, CPC	Medium Term	Low to Moderate collectively
OSR-3	Develop parks to create community cohesion and build social capital.			
OSR-3.1	Develop design principles for parks and open spaces. Assure principles consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o community events o public safety (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design or CPTDE strategies) o ease of maintenance o connectivity o accessibility o other principles identified by the community 	Pln, DPW, ConCom, RD, OSC, PD, FD, YC, COA, BOH	Near Term	Low
OSR-3.2	Create a park network that helps define and serve Town Center			
OSR-3.2.a	Create a park in Town Center that can be a significant central gathering space and sets a design standard for future public space in Town Center.	BOS, RA, Pln, RD, OSC, YC, COA, COD, CPA	Near Term	Moderate to High
OSR-3.2.b	Work with residents to redesign, develop and program Faxon Park as a part of a Town Center park system.	HS, RA, Pln, EDO, BOS, LBO, Veterans, CPA	Near Term	Moderate
OSR-3.2.c	Work with residents to redesign,	BOS, RA, Pln,	Near Term	Moderate

	develop and program Washington Street triangle as a part of a Town Center park system.	LBO, COA, YC, CPA		
OSR-3.2.d	Link parks with great sidewalks and streetscape elements,	BOS, RA, DPW, Pln, TTF	Near Term	Moderate
OSR-3.3	Improve the town's memorial squares. (same as NHCR-3.5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the public in a planning process to strategically upgrade and maintain memorial squares. Consider neighborhood character and needs. 	BOS, Pln, DPW, HC, HS, CPA	Long Term	Moderate collectively
OSR-3.4	Assure that municipal policies, guidelines and regulations support desired park uses.			
OSR-3.4.a	Review policies, guidelines, and regulations that control signs, outside sales including food vendors, outside dining, noise, lighting and other elements of desired park uses and revise as needed to support park use.	BOS, RD, SYC, COA, Pln, DPW	Near Term	Low
OSR-3.4.b	Create a permitting process and fee structure as appropriate for park use that is easy to understand and follow.	BOS, RD, YC, YSO	Near Term	Low

Energy and Sustainability

Goals

- ES 1 Assure that public facilities, equipment and operations are energy efficient and cost effective.
- ES 2 Attain Green Community designation and pursue available funding.
- ES 3 Assist in the reduction of energy use in the private sector.

ID	Goal/Strategy	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	Cost/Funding
ES-1	Assure that public facilities, equipment and operations are energy efficient and cost effective.			
ES-1.1	Build municipal capacity and leadership to support energy related policies and initiatives.			
ES-1.1.a	Appoint staff to the SESC.	TM, BOS, ESC	Immediately	Low
ES-1.1.b	Assure effective communications between the SESC and all departments, boards and committees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include SESC member on Municipal Technical Review Committee. 	BOS, ESC, Town Departments, Boards and Committees	On-going	Low
ES-1.2	Track municipal energy consumption and set goals.			
	Use MassEnergyInsights program to track energy consumption and set goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assign town staff to enter data not supplied by utilities ○ Assign responsibilities to specific individuals to develop plans, and measure and report progress to the community on an annual basis. 	ESC, TM	On-going	Low
ES-1.3	Consider hiring a part-time energy manager.			

	Assess the benefits and costs of hiring a part time energy manager. Consider shared services with other communities.	ESC, BOS, TM	Medium-Term	Low
ES-1.4	Review and update Local Energy Action Plan annually.	ESC	On-going	Low
ES-1.5	Consider working with a Professional Energy Services Company (ESCO) to provide energy management services through a performance contract.	BOS, ESC, TM	Medium-Term	Low
ES-1.6	Follow through with identified improvements in facilities plan and LEAP.			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to make upgrades to municipal facilities. ○ Retrofit pump stations ○ Retrofit street lights 	CFPC, DPW, BC, SD, BOS, TM	On-going	Moderate to high collectively
ES-1.7	Reduce solid waste, increase recycling.			
ES-1.7.a	Evaluate costs and the potential benefits of mandatory recycling and act on findings.	ESC, DPW, BOS	Medium Term	Low
ES-1.7.b	Assess cost and benefits of increasing hours of operation for recycling center and act on findings.	ESC, DPW	Near Term	Low
ES-1.7.c	Study the cost and benefits of composting initiatives and act on findings.	ESC, DPW, SD, LBO	Long-Term	Low
ES-1.8	Reduce wastewater.			
	Continue the Town-Wide Sewer Investigation and Rehabilitation Program.	DPW	On-going	Moderate to high collectively
ES-1.9	Explore additional financing mechanisms and energy saving opportunities.			
	Assess utility incentives for municipal retrofits and identify appropriate	ESC, DPW	Near Term	Low

	incentives for prioritized projects. If Stoughton becomes a Green Community, additional grant opportunities are available for municipal energy conservation (energy cost reduction) efforts.			
ES-1.10	Establish, pursue and support renewable energy goals.			
	Establish and pursue municipal renewable energy goals, and support private renewable energy with zoning and design guidelines that don't unreasonably restrict the installation of solar panels and other renewable energy infrastructure.	BOS, ESC, TM, SD, DPW, CFPC, Pln, PB	Near Term	Low
ES-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attain Green Community designation and pursue available funding. 			
	<p>Meet Green Community Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an energy use baseline and develop a plan to reduce energy use by twenty percent (20%) within five years. (Baseline Report completed in 2011) Provide as-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable/alternative energy generation, research & development, or manufacturing facilities Adopt an expedited application and permit process for as-of-right energy facilities. Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles. Adopt the new Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) Stretch Code. 	BOS, SESC, BC, Pln, PB, Eng	Near Term	Low

ES-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the reduction of energy use in the private sector. 			
ES-3.1	Create and implement an outreach campaign aimed at increasing awareness and changing energy consumption habits.			
	Partner with energy service vendors, utilities, local agencies and other stakeholders to design and implement an outreach campaign to promote participation in MassSave and distribute information on the benefit, incentives, rebates, and other financial opportunities for energy efficiency upgrades, and solar development.	ESC	Long Term	Low
ES-3.2	Ensure compliance of current energy code.			
	<p>Require municipal officials to attend Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and Board of Buildings Regulations and Standards (BBRS) Code trainings.</p> <p>Encourage additional trainings for officials, contractors and architects.</p>	BC, BOS, TM	Near Term	Low

Appendix

Sustainability Benchmarks

- Land Use
- Housing
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Energy

Potential Funding Programs, Financing Methods and Other Resources

Sustainability Benchmarks

The following tables identify measurable characteristics, or benchmarks that can be used for assessing progress.

Land Use

Stoughton Land Use Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals			
Indicator	Current Benchmark		5-Year Goal
	Acres	% of Total Land Area	
Land Use in FY2013 (acres and %)	10,535.38	100%	
Agricultural	190	1.8%	Preserve Current Amount
Commercial	579	5.5%	NA
Industrial	516	4.9%	NA
Mixed Use	169	1.6%	Increase
Public Services	2,781	26.4%	Increase recreational uses
Other Public or Non-Profit Uses	306	2.9%	NA
Residential Use	4,351	41.3%	NA
Recreational Uses	Included in Public Facilities and Services		
Developable and Potentially Developable Land in Stoughton (Classified by Assessors Office)	730	6.9%	NA
Protected Lands (acres)	2,167	20.6%	Increase
Federal Land	0	0	NA
Private Conservation Land	1,765	16.8%	NA
State Land	0	0	NA
Town Conservation Land	2,000	19.0%	NA
Active Recreation Land	224	2.1%	NA
Agricultural Land in Chapter 61	120	1.1%	Increase
<i>Source: Stoughton Assessors Office</i>			

Housing

Stoughton Housing Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals			
Indicator	Current Benchmark	5 year Goal	Description and Notes
Total Year-Round Housing Units (2010)	10,787	NA	Census , MAPC projects 3.7% growth rate through 2020
Average Assessed Value of Homes Single Family (SF) and Condo (C)	SF - \$274,550 C \$173,269	NA	Assessor
Median Sales Price of a Single Family Home - 2011	\$243,750	NA	The Warren Group Estimate Comparison Communities \$317,605 , State \$286,000, Norfolk County \$367,150
Estimated Median monthly rental housing cost 2012	\$1,111	NA	2008-2012 ACS Area community comparison \$1,174
New Housing Units, 2000 – 2010 % Increase	299 2.9%	NA	Census, Area community comparison (avg) 529, 2.9% increase
Average Annual Residential Building Permits Issues Over Past 5 years	15 bldgs 96 units	NA	Census CGI building permits survey Area community comparison: 20 bldgs, 49 units
% of Owner Occupied Household (2010)	75%	NA	Census, Area community comparison: 82.7%
Percent of Housing Stock Affordable (Meeting 40B requirements)	11.05%	Remain above 10%	State Requires 10% of Total Housing Stock as Affordable (40B) Units. Area community comparison: 6.6%
Permitted Accessory Dwelling Units, 2004-2013	UND	Increase	
% of HH with mortgage with housing costs > 30% of AHI	45%	Reduce	Census, Area community comparison: 39%
% of renter HH with housing costs > 30% of AHI	62%	Decrease	A maximum of 30-35% of Household Income used for home costs is a typical standards used to measure affordability. Census, Area community comparison: 48%
Residential Units within SCMUOD	UND	Increase	Need to document.
Residential Density – units per acre within SCMUOD	UND	Increase	Need to document.
Vacant housing units	492/ 4.6%	Decrease	Census, Area community comparison: 3.5%
CPC funds used to support Affordable Housing	Total UND An Avg UND	NA	CPC
Ratio of funds leveraged by CPC funds for Affordable Housing	UND	NA	CPC
Affordable Housing units created, preserved or improved using CPC funds	Year to date	Increase	CPC

Public Facilities and Services

Stoughton Public Facilities and Services Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals			
Indicator	Current Benchmark	5 year Goal	Description and Notes
Police Calls (2011)	23,189	Reduce	Department Records
Fire Department Incidents (2011)	5,491	Decrease	Department Records
Fire Apparatus Response Time – Avg/Longest (in minutes)	3.57mins/8:00 mins	Decrease	Department Records
Ambulance Response Time – Avg/Longest (in minutes)	3.58 mins/8:00 mins	Decrease	Department Records
Average Water Use per Connection	216 gal/day	Decrease	Town Records
Public Water Ratio Feet of Distribution Pipe to Accounts	89:1	Decrease	Town Records
Public Sewer Ratio Feet of Collection Pipe to Accounts	85:1	Decrease	Town Records
Municipal Recycle Rate (2008)	26%	Increase	Comparison Communities Avg – 33.75% Source - DEP
Library – Patron Visits (2013)	189.396	Increase	20% increase over 5 years
Elders Served by COA (2011)	Over 19,000	Increase	2011 Annual Report - # of participants signed into programs offered by COA and partners
Youth Served by SYC	UNK	Document and Assess	# of participants in programs offered by SYC
Graduate plans for post secondary education or military enrollment	89%	Increase	Massachusetts Department of Education
% of Stoughton Students attending Stoughton Public Schools	89%	Increase	Superintendent of Schools

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources

Stoughton Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals			
Indicator	Current Benchmark	5-Year Goal	Sources and Descriptions
Percentage of Total Town Land Base in Protected Open Space	19.0%	Increase	Open Space and Recreation Plan.; State comparison 24%
% Tree Canopy/ acres of forest	1400 acres ~14%	Increase	OSRP 2007; State comparison ~60%
Agricultural and grasslands	200 acres	No loss	OSRP 2007
Number of Property/Stewardship Management Plans	0	25% of significant Conservation Lands	Conservation Commission
Number of community events focused on land management/promotion	UND	Increase	Conservation Commission
Major corridors (#) with Street Tree Plan	0	2	
Buildings Listings on the National Register of Historic Register	2	Increase	National Register of Historic Places, (NPS) Dept. of the Interior; Comparison Community Avg - 5.5
Number of Historic Preservation Restrictions	UND	Document Increase	
Number of Individual buildings/areas/burial grounds/objects on the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System	109	Increase	MACRIS, Range 26 – 1887, One town with fewer than Stoughton Comparison Community Avg - 462
Estimated number of annual public Art/Culture Events	UND	Document Increase	

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Open Space and Recreation

Stoughton Open Space and Recreation Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals			
Indicator	Current Benchmark	Stoughton 5-Year Goal	Sources and Descriptions
Percentage of Total Town Land Base in Protected Open Space	19.0%	Increase	OSRP 2007; MA SCORP 2006; State comparison 24%
Lands Dedicated to Passive Recreation/Resource Protection	2,000 acres	Increase	Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2007
Lands Dedicated to Active Recreation	224 acres	Increase	Town Records
Miles of trails	UND	Increase	
Miles of sidewalks	UND	Increase	
Number and % of households within 1/2 mile of Open Space and Recreation Lands	UND	Increase	
Recreation Department Annual Organized Sports Participants	600	Increase	Town Records
Annual visitors to Town Beach	4000	Increase	Town Records
CPC funds used to support Open Space and Recreation Projects	UND	'NA	CPC
Ratio of funds leveraged by CPC funds for Open Space and Recreation Projects	UND	'NA	CPC
Number of projects completed with CPA funding	UND	'NA	
% of town youth involved in sports leagues and recreational programs	UND	Increase	

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Energy

Stoughton Energy Sustainability Indicators, Benchmarks & Goals			
Indicator	Benchmark	5-Year Goal	Sources and Descriptions
Municipal Energy Use	2009 GHG Benchmark Report	Reduce by 20%	As measured by Mass Energy Insight software
% of Municipal vehicles considered energy efficient	UNK	Implement fuel efficient vehicle policy (Green Com Criterion 4)	Diesel, hybrid, others?
% or number of households with upgrades through Next Step Living	276/4% 1 st year	5% of households / year (381)	Memorandum of Understanding with Next Step Living
Solid Waste per household	2.100 lb/yr	Reduce	Estimate based on total waste disposed and number of households served
Recycling Rate	28%	Increase	2011 rate
Wastewater - efficiency of system	UNK	Increase	Considering how to measure
Water – efficiency of system	UNK	Increase	Considering how to measure

Potential Funding Programs, Financing Methods and Other Resources.

Program	Acronym	Description
Affordable Housing Trust Fund (DHCD)	AHTF	The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) provides resources to create or preserve affordable housing for households whose incomes are not more than 110% of median income. Funds are available for rental, home ownership and mixed-use projects as well as housing for the disabled and homeless, but may be applied only to the affordable units. AHTF funds are used primarily to support private housing projects that provide for the acquisition, construction or preservation of affordable housing. MassHousing and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) jointly administer AHTF.
Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Technical Assistance	BBSC	Technical assistance is delivered by EPA staff and EPA-hired consultant teams. Each technical assistance project in a community will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public engagement through a one- to two-day workshop. • Direct consultation with relevant decision-makers. • A memo outlining specific steps the community could take to implement the ideas generated during the site visit. EPA selects communities from responses to Requests for Letters of Interest that are issued roughly once a year
Brownfields Redevelopment Fund	BRF	Provides low interest loans for site assessment and clean up to public and private parties.
Brownfields Redevelopment Access to Capital Program	BRAC	Administered by the Business Development Corporation of New England. Offer low-cost, often state-subsidized, environmental insurance to help mitigate risk associated with brownfields redevelopment.
Brownfields Tax Credit Program		Administered by Mass DOR. Offers a tax credit for the costs incurred to remediate contaminated property owned or leased for business purposes and located in an EDA Tax credits may be used against state tax liabilities, or transferred or sold to third parties.
Chapter 90 – Local Aid	C-90	Supplies funding for maintaining, repairing, improving and constructing town and county ways and bridges which qualify under the State Aid Highway Guidelines adopted by the Public Works Commission. Can include bike and pedestrian improvements.

State Revolving Fund	CWSRF	The Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (the Trust) in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) provides cities and towns of the Commonwealth with low interest loans for water infrastructure projects . The Clean Water SRF provides loans for a wide variety of projects. The primary recipients of Clean Water loans have been combined sewer overflow, wastewater treatment and wastewater collection projects. Although other projects such as drainage improvements, landfill closures, brownfields remediation, renewable energy projects, and other non-point source projects are eligible for funding . Drinking Water projects typically involve construction and, or, rehabilitation of drinking water treatment plants, replacement of aging water mains and the construction of drinking water storage facilities. ☐
Commercial Area Transit Node Program (DHCD)	CATNHP	CATNHP is a state funded bond program available to municipalities, non-profit and for-profit sponsors to support rental housing production or rehabilitation. It funds housing projects, of 24 units or less, within neighborhood commercial areas and in proximity to public transit nodes. Not less than 51% of the units assisted by the program must benefit persons earning not more than 80% of the area median income.
Community Development Block Grant *For eligible communities.	CDBG	A federally funded, competitive grant program designed to help small cities and towns meet a broad range of community development needs. Assistance is provided for housing, community, and economic development projects that assist low and moderate-income residents, or by revitalizing areas of slum or blight. Eligible CDBG projects include but are not limited to housing rehabilitation or development, micro-enterprise or other business assistance, infrastructure, community/public facilities, public social services, planning, removal of architectural barriers to allow access by persons with disabilities, and downtown or area revitalization.
Community Preservation Act Funds	CPA	Supports acquisition, creation and improvement of resources within the areas of open space, recreation, housing, and historic preservation. Funds must be used for properties purchased with CPA grants.
Conservation Partnership Program	CPP	The Conservation Partnership Grants provide funding to assist non-public, not-for-profit corporations in acquiring interests in lands suitable for conservation or recreation purposes.

Cultural Facilities Fund	CFF	Grants are available to: Nonprofit 501(c)3 organizations primarily engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences. Include Capital Grants for acquisition, design, construction and rehabilitation, Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants and Systems Replacements Grants.
District Improvement Financing	DIF	<p>Locally driven program, should be approved by the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC). The municipality must define the district and document a development program describing, among other issues, how the DIF will encourage increased residential, commercial and industrial activity within that district. It must also detail the project improvements, financing plans and community benefits. After the local public hearings and approvals, the municipality must submit an application to the EACC for final approval prior to implementing the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ The municipal investment is designed to stimulate private investment which in turn increases the taxable value of property and generates the incremental taxes. ∞ The DIF flexibility empowers municipalities to forward public purpose while assisting their private partners in accomplishing their goals. ∞ All cities and towns are eligible to utilize this financing alternative without qualifying as open-blighted, decadent, substandard, or economically impaired. ∞ Financing terms are negotiable and can be tailored to suit the situation. ∞ No new taxes are levied, and the DIF does not reduce or redirect current property tax revenues.
Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program	DWS	Provides funds to assist public water systems and municipal water departments in protecting and conserving the quality and quantity of public drinking water supply sources in the Commonwealth. It is a reimbursement program.
Endangered Species Conservation Fund	ESCF	Provides grants to states and territories to participate in a wide array of voluntary conservation projects for candidate, proposed, and listed species for species and habitat conservation actions on non-federal lands.
Environment Education Grant	EE	This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques, and that will serve as models that can be replicated in a variety of settings.

Economic Development Fund	EDF	<p>Finances projects and programs that create and/or retain jobs, improve the local and/or regional tax base, or otherwise enhance the quality of life in the community. EDF gives priority assistance for physical improvements in support of job creating/retention. Historically, EDF has funded a range of economic and community development projects. Currently, program funding is more limited and the following categories of assistance will be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ Mixed Use Development and Adaptive Reuse of Buildings ∞ Public and Other Improvements Supporting Mixed Use Development ∞ Assistance to Non-Profit Development Organizations ∞ Planning Projects Supporting Economic Development
Expedited Permitting – 43D	43D	<p>Tool to promote targeted economic and housing development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ Provides a transparent and efficient process for municipal permitting ∞ Guarantees local permitting decisions on priority development sites within 180 days ∞ Increases visibility of your community and target development site(s) <p>Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ May be zoned for commercial, industrial development, residential or mixed use purposes ∞ Must be eligible for the development or redevelopment of a building of at least 50,000 square feet of gross floor area (may include existing structures and contiguous buildings) ∞ Sites must be approved by the local governing authority ∞ Must be approved by the state Interagency Permitting Board
Forest Stewardship Planning Grant	FSPG	<p>This program seeks to encourage landowners to practice long-term guardianship through the development of a management plan for their woodlands. The program is designed to improve wildlife habitat and forest aesthetics, to protect soil and water resources, and to increase the potential for high-quality wood products. Grants are awarded to landowners and municipalities for the preparation of 10-year Forest Stewardship management plans.</p>
Housing Stabilization Fund	HSF	<p>Assists in the production and preservation of affordable housing. May be used for acquisition, construction and/or rehabilitation.</p>
Infrastructure Investment Incentive Program	I-Cubed	<p>Will finance significant new public infrastructure improvements necessary to support major new private development. Financed with bonds issued by MassDevelopment.</p>

Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity grants	LAND	Assists municipal conservation commissions in acquiring land for natural resource and passive outdoor recreation purposes. Lands acquired may include wildlife, habitat, trails, unique natural, historic or cultural resources, water resources, forest, and farm land. Compatible passive outdoor recreational uses such as hiking, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, bird observation and the like are encouraged. Access by the general public is required.
Landscape Partnership Program	LPP	Seeks to preserve large, unfragmented, high-value conservation landscapes including working forests and farms, expand state-municipal-private partnerships, increase leveraging of state dollars, enhance stewardship of conservation land, and provide public recreation opportunities. The program offers competitive grants to municipalities, non-profit organizations, and EEA agencies acting cooperatively to permanently protect a minimum of 500 acres of land.
Land and Water Conservation Fund	LWF	Provides up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition, development and renovation of park, recreation or conservation areas. DCS administers the state side Land & Water Conservation Fund program in Massachusetts. Access by the general public is required.
Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program	LIHTC	A federally authorized program that assists in the production and preservation of affordable rental housing for low-income families and individuals. The program supports a broad range of activities including acquisition, new construction, and rehabilitation of existing rental properties consistent with an annual Qualified Allocation Plan. Projects must have a minimum of 8 tax credit-assisted units. The minimum term of affordability is thirty years. All units receiving tax credit assistance must have 20% or more households earning no more than 50% of area median income or 40% or more households earning no more than 60% of the area median income. In addition, ten percent of the total units must be reserved for persons or families earning less than 30% of area median income.
Massachusetts Environmental Trust	MET	One of the state's largest sources of funding for water quality initiatives. It funds nonprofit organizations, municipalities, scientists and educational institutions. MET grants support projects that: improve water quality or quantity, conserve aquatic habitat and species, reduce runoff pollution, mitigate the effects of climate change on water resources, promote human health as it relates to water resources, and/or other efforts consistent with the Trust's mission.

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Massachusetts Downtown Initiative	MDI	DHCD's Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) offers a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns. Funds (max \$10,000) are to be used exclusively for technical assistance in the form of consultant services to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Improvement Districts (BID): • Design: • Creative Economy: • Economics of Downtown: • Housing: • Parking: • Way finding/Branding (Streetscape Improvements):
Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program	MassEVIP	The Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (MassEVIP) administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) that provides incentives to eligible entities for the acquisition of electric vehicles (EVs) and the installation of Level 2 dual-head charging stations.
MassWorks Infrastructure Program	MassWorks	The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides funding to support economic development and job creation and retention, housing development at density of at least 4 units to the acre (both market and affordable units) and transportation improvements to enhancing safety in small, rural communities. It is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and Executive Office for Administration & Finance.
Nonpoint Source Grant Program	NSGP – Fed 319	Grants to prevent, control and abate nonpoint source pollution through implementation of structural and nonstructural best management practices.
Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities	PARC	Funds for acquiring or developing park and recreation land (formerly the Urban Self Help Program)
Peer to Peer Technical Assistance Program	PPTAP	DHCD awards small grants to CDBG non-entitlement communities to hire Peer Consultants for short-term problem solving or technical assistance projects that support local community development activities. (up to \$1,000) The Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Program is funded with Massachusetts CDBG technical assistance funds.
Recreational Trails	RT	Funds 80% of project costs for a variety of trail protection, construction, education and stewardship projects. Administered by DCR.
Rivers and Harbors Grant Program	RH	Matching grants from DCR to municipalities for design and construction to address problems on coastal and inland waterways, lakes, and great ponds.

Riverways Program	RW	The Department of Fish and Game provides technical assistance to support healthy rivers.
Smart Growth Zoning Act Chapter 40R	40R	<p>Encourages communities to create dense residential or mixed-use smart growth zoning districts, including a high percentage of affordable housing units, to be located near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development such as existing city and town centers, and in other highly suitable locations.</p> <p>Projects must be developable under the community's smart growth zoning adopted under Chapter 40R, either as-of-right or through a limited plan review process akin to site plan review.</p> <p>Upon state review and approval of a local overlay district, communities become eligible for payments from a Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund, as well as other financial incentives.</p>
State Revolving Fund Loan Program (Clean Water and Drinking Water)	SRF	Provides subsidized loans to assist municipalities and water and wastewater districts in the implementation of capital projects that protect, enhance or mitigate water quality and public health.
Surface Transportation Program	STP	The Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel, as well as for projects on any public road (except local roads and rural minor collectors), pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals. Fifty percent of a State's STP funds are to be distributed to areas based on population (suballocated), with the remainder to be used in any area of the State. Bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational trails are eligible projects.
Tax Increment Financing	TIF	<p>Tax Increment Financing allows municipalities to provide flexible targeted incentives to stimulate job-creating development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiated Agreement between business and host municipality; • 5 year minimum, 20 year maximum or anything in between; • Business pays full tax rate on the "base value"; • Exemption from property taxation on all or part of the increased value accrued as a result of development (the "increment"); • Percentage of exemption may range from 5% to 100%; • Personal property tax exemption for both existing and new property; • M.G.L. 40 § 59 governs all TIF Agreements.

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Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing	UCH-TIF	Administer by DHCD. Provides real estate exemptions on all or part of the increased value (the "Increment") of improved real estate. Development must be primarily residential. Tax increment financing may be combined with grants and loans from local, state and federal development programs.
Urban Renewal Program	UR	The Urban Renewal Program is a statutory program that allows municipalities - through their urban renewal agencies - to revitalize substandard, decadent or blighted open areas for residential, commercial, industrial, business, governmental, recreational, educational, hospital or other purposes. Urban renewal projects help municipalities redevelop deteriorated areas by providing the economic environment needed to attract and support private investment. The Department of Community Services helps communities establish and strengthen urban renewal agencies and provides technical assistance in the development and implementation of urban renewal plans. In order to approve a proposed Urban Renewal Plan, DHCD must determine that: without public involvement, the project/site would not be developed; the project will promote desired private investment; the plan for financing the project is sound; the project area is a decadent, substandard or blighted open area; the Urban Renewal Plan is complete; and the Urban Renewal Plan includes an approved Relocation Plan.
Water Conservation Grant	WCG	To assist public water systems and municipalities in addressing drinking water losses through water conservation education and outreach programs, water audits, leak detection surveys, water conservation retrofit rebate programs and new water rates.
Wetlands and River Restoration and Revitalization Priority Projects	WRRR	Support sustainable river and wetland restoration projects that restore natural processes, remove ecosystem stressors, increase the resilience of the ecosystem, support river and wetland habitat, and promote passage of fish and wildlife through dam and other barrier removal. Administered by DFG.

