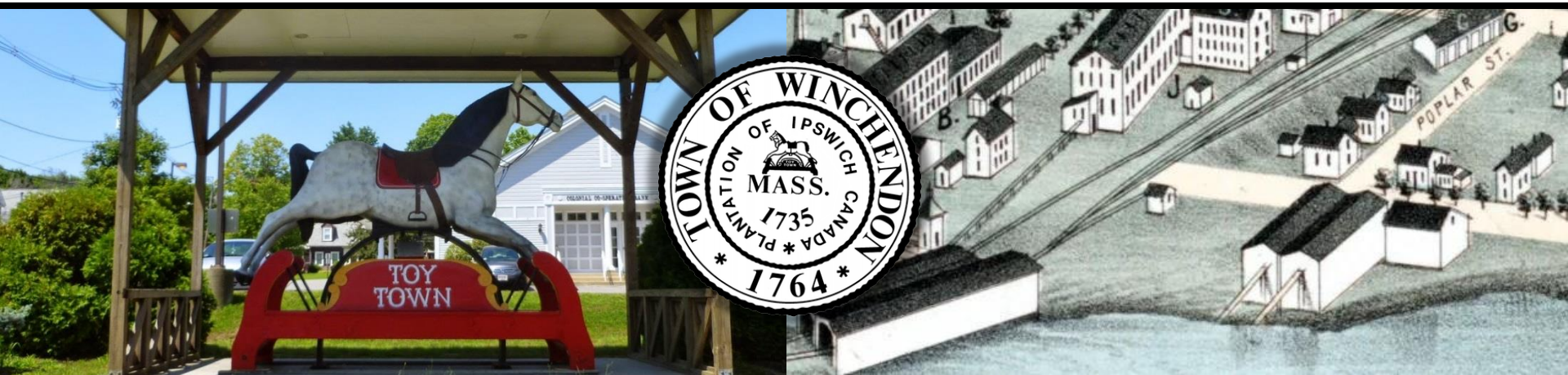


COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

Town of Winchendon, MA

December 2020



Our Plan

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Why Plan?

A Master Plan guides a community’s growth and development over a period of one to two decades. It establishes the community’s vision and sets priorities, policies, and actions to best achieve that vision. The Master Plan forms the basis of the town’s local zoning and development regulations, and it informs decision makers, such as town boards and staff, as well as residents and businesses, about these goals and measures. The Master Plan can also help secure grant funds to support projects and services that are important to Winchendon.

Why Plan Now?

Circumstances and trends have changed since the last master plan was adopted in 2001. Subsequent revisions in 2005 and 2007 updated the plan with notes on the progress, but did not make substantive changes to the plan’s core goals and assumptions.

The 2001 plan predicted population growth from 9,611 to 28,000, but as of 2017, Winchendon’s population was not even half that large, at only 10,738. The plan also did not predict the prevalence of food insecurity, trends toward an older population and an increase in growth of female, single head of household with children under 5 and thus did not provide guidance on increased services and establishing programs for all vulnerable populations.

With much of the data and assumptions out of date, and many of prescribed actions no longer relevant to Winchendon’s existing conditions and challenges, the Planning Board set out to update the Master Plan.





Vision

Winchendon will be a town that embraces its enduring heritage of craftsmanship, entrepreneurial spirit, civic engagement and sense of community - abundant in culture, recreational opportunities, and natural beauty...a place where all are proud to call home.

Key Challenges We Face

- Engaging all citizens/stakeholders
- Improving quality of life
- Growing in a way that honors the past
- Addressing aging and blighted infrastructure
- Developing & supporting a sustainable local economy
- Attracting and retaining families and youth

Making It Happen

Achieving our community's vision and addressing these challenges requires the active implementation of the strategies set forth in the plan. The implementation of all the chapters of this Master Plan outline the priorities, strategies, actors, and timing for getting things done. This is a living document and adjustments to the plan will be necessary to meet the ever changing needs of the community.

Public participation is **KEY** in the town realizing the goals that will ultimately bring the vision to life and sustain it well into the future. Contact the Town Manager's office if you have an interest in playing your part to bring the vision to life.

Timing

The timing for the completion of strategies is broken down by the following timeframes:

Baseline- fundamental tasks that establish the operating environment for the plan

Short Term - Actions that have low risk and/or certain reward, 0 – 2 years

Medium Term - Projects that take longer to achieve, need ongoing planning, or may require significant financial investment, 1-5 years

Long Term – Projects that require sustained, multiparty effort and significant financial investment, 2-10 years

Our Town

Our Land

The Town of Winchendon encompasses 44 square miles. In the 19th century, Winchendon began to grow as a manufacturing town that relied on water power for mills beginning with the damming of Lake Monomac. Development began to cluster in small villages within the Town's borders, each surrounding a mill. At the peak of its industrial prosperity, Winchendon was home to the internationally-renowned Converse Toy Company giving the Town its nickname, "Toy Town." It was also during this era that Winchendon's town center moved from the Old Centre vicinity to its present location.

Mill villages, forests, and farm fields still comprise the prevailing pattern of development in Winchendon. However, the town has experienced sprawling suburban residential development. In recent years, efforts have been made to better develop and protect lands through smart growth, state and private acquisitions and development restrictions.

Our People

As of the most recent American Community Survey (2013-2017) estimates, the Town of Winchendon is home to 10,738 residents. The town's population continues to grow at a faster rate than both Worcester County and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In recent decades, the town's population has been aging steadily. In 1990, the median age in Winchendon was 31.0 years old; the average age has shifted by more than 10 years to 41.3 years old.

There are an estimated 3,889 households in Winchendon, with an average household size of 2.69 persons. Approximately 30.2% of households include children under the age of 18, of which 7.1% are female single head of household, and 40.7% of households have at least one resident over the age of 60.





Our Economy

According to the most recent American Community Survey (2013–2017), the median household income is \$64,539 in Winchendon, placing it between the state (\$74,167) and nation median household income levels (\$57,652).

The top five largest employing industries in town are educational services (20.5% of total employees), manufacturing (11.1%), health care & social assistance (10.4%), retail trade (10.2%), and accommodation & food services (9.6%).

While the town has experienced sprawling suburban residential development, there are many vacant properties in the business areas that have been left unkempt. Winchendon contains several large tracts of state-owned open space, including the Lake Dennison Recreational Area and part of Otter River State Forest, which are open to the public for camping, fishing, and other outdoor recreation. There are town owned recreational opportunities where one can enjoy the scenic resources throughout Winchendon such as the North Central Pathway and the Winchendon Community Park. These places attract people from surrounding communities that aid in supporting the local economy.

Our Process

The Winchendon Planning Board appointed a Master Plan Committee. Members brought with them perspectives shaped by a wide variety of professional and volunteer experience and were able to speak as experts about the strengths and weaknesses of our town. The Committee sought to generate excitement and enthusiasm, provide timely and useful information, and promote broad and diverse public involvement by utilizing surveys, interviews, public meetings, and workshops in an attempt to reach out to people representing all sectors of Winchendon's population.

Each plan chapter in Volume 1 includes a summary of the topic and a discussion of the goals and strategies for implementation. Volume 2 contains supporting data and source information. The topical chapters are:

- Land Use
- Open Space and Recreation
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Transportation
- Services and Facilities
- Community Health & Wellbeing
- Communication & Engagement
- Implementation

Land Use

Background

72% of Winchendon's land area is still undeveloped open space and forest. Of this undeveloped land, a relatively small amount is permanently protected from development, like Otter State Forest and the Lake Dennison Recreational Area. This leaves a lot of land open for potential development in the future.

The majority of Winchendon's growth in the past ten years has been single-family residential homes and medium to large scale solar arrays. Only a small portion of the town's land is zoned for commercial or industrial use.

When making decisions about future land use, town officials must balance the need for a commercial tax base large enough to support infrastructure for Winchendon's residential areas with the need to protect Winchendon from development that its citizens don't find desirable. If Winchendon's commercial and industrial sectors do not grow and increase their contribution to the local tax base, it will fall on the homeowners to fund a larger percentage of the Town's annual budget. The right mix of commercial and appropriate development can help ease the tax burden on local homeowners while creating jobs and expanding Winchendon's economy. Decisions and planning should follow Smart Growth principles – which consider open space, historic preservation, and housing – in future planning.

This chapter draws heavily upon the Open Space and Recreation Plan(OSRP) completed for the Town of Winchendon in October 2015 by Tighe & Bond. Goals and Strategies drawn from the OSRP are cross-referenced as applicable.

Land Use Goals

LU 1: Identify areas in town suitable for expanded or new commercial, industrial or solar development and encourage compact, mixed-use development in downtown Winchendon.

LU 2: Encourage green living

LU 3: Preserve wildlife and plant habitats and natural resources, and protect environmentally sensitive areas (OSRP Goal #3)

LU 4: Encourage agricultural use

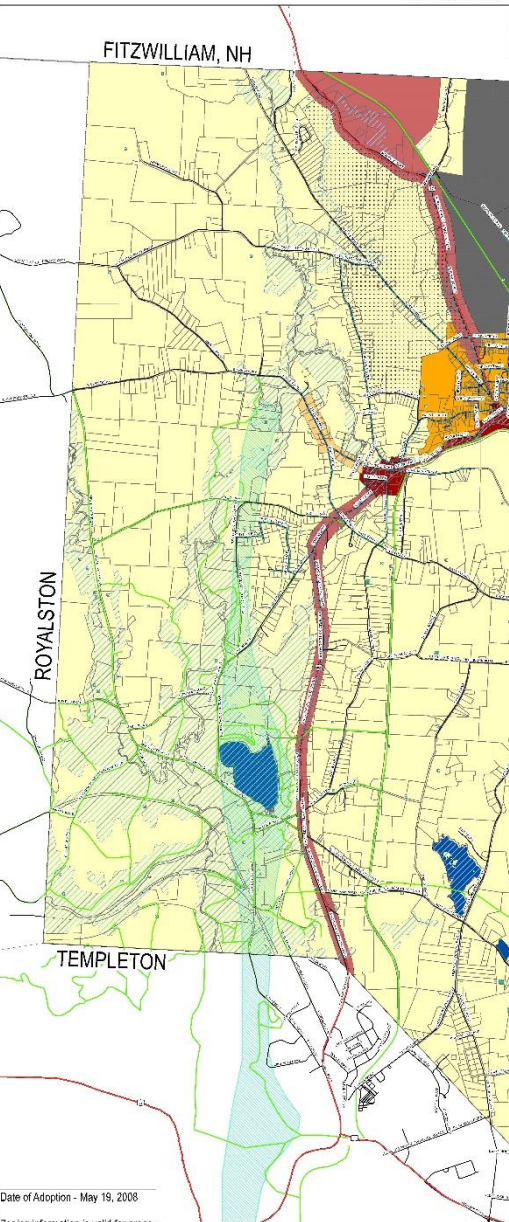
LU 5: Enhance efforts for the acquisition, protection and maintenance of open space and recreation lands (OSRP Goal #7)





Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
<p>LU 1: Identify areas in town suitable for expanded or new commercial, industrial or solar development and encourage compact, mixed-use development in downtown Winchendon.</p>	<p>Strategy LU 1.1: Hold a public meeting where boards, committees, departments and the public get together to brainstorm ideas</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
	<p>Strategy LU 1.2: Be proactive about preserving historic structures</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>Strategy LU 1.3: Enforce the existing zoning while supporting the Planned Development zone’s goal of walkable, mixed-use development</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>Strategy LU 1.4: Propose updated zoning bylaws and regulations which include increasing development density by supporting infill, smaller lot sizes and allowing more than one building per parcel</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>LU 2: Encourage green living</p>	<p>Strategy LU 2.1: Continue pursuing competitive grants under the town’s Green Community designation</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>Strategy LU 2.2: Promote awareness among town residents about everyday sustainability practices</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
<p>LU 3: Preserve wildlife and plant habitats and natural resources, and protect environmentally sensitive areas (OSRP Goal #3)</p>	<p>Strategy LU 3.1: Consider partnerships with conservation organizations such as Mass Audubon, North County Land Trust & Mt. Grace</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>Strategy LU 3.2: Consider participation in the State Community Preservation Act (CPA) program. The CPA allows municipalities to raise money through a tax surcharge, with state matching funds. Funds can only be used for open space, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>Strategy LU 3.3: Identify and prioritize currently undeveloped focus areas and parcels for protection based on size, connectivity to existing protected lands, and bio-diversity (OSRP Obj. #1)</p>	<p>Baseline</p>

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
LU 3: Preserve wildlife and plant habitats and natural resources, and protect environmentally sensitive areas (OSRP Goal #3) <i>Cont.</i>	Strategy LU 3.4: Promote and institute land management practices to protect rare species and encourage an abundance of plant and animal populations (OSRP Obj. #2)	Short-term
	Strategy LU 3.5: Educate the community to increase awareness of the value of the town's natural resources (OSRP Obj. #3)	Short-term
LU 4: Encourage agricultural use (OSRP Goal #3)	Strategy LU 4.1: Update the inventory of prime agricultural areas and work with a local land trust to preserve important farmlands (OSRP Obj. #1, Action 3)	Short-term
	Strategy LU 4.2: Support expansion of agricultural uses/ opportunities	Baseline
	Strategy LU 4.3: Support efforts to create and promote "agritourism" and a "buy-local" campaign, as support for farmers' markets (OSRP Obj. #1, Action #4)	Short-term
	Strategy LU 4.4: Encourage environmentally responsible, sustainable agricultural-related operations in town (OSRP, Obj. #1, Action #5)	Baseline
LU 5: Enhance efforts for the acquisition, protection and maintenance of open space and recreation lands (OSRP Goal #7)	Strategy LU 5.1: Prioritize acquisition needs (OSRP Obj. #1)	Short-term
	Strategy LU 5.2: Identify key parcels for future acquisition to preserve quality and historic resources (OSRP Goal #4, Obj. #2)	Medium-term
	Strategy LU 5.3: Develop long-range maintenance and funding programs (OSRP Obj. #2)	Medium-term



Date of Adoption - May 18, 2008

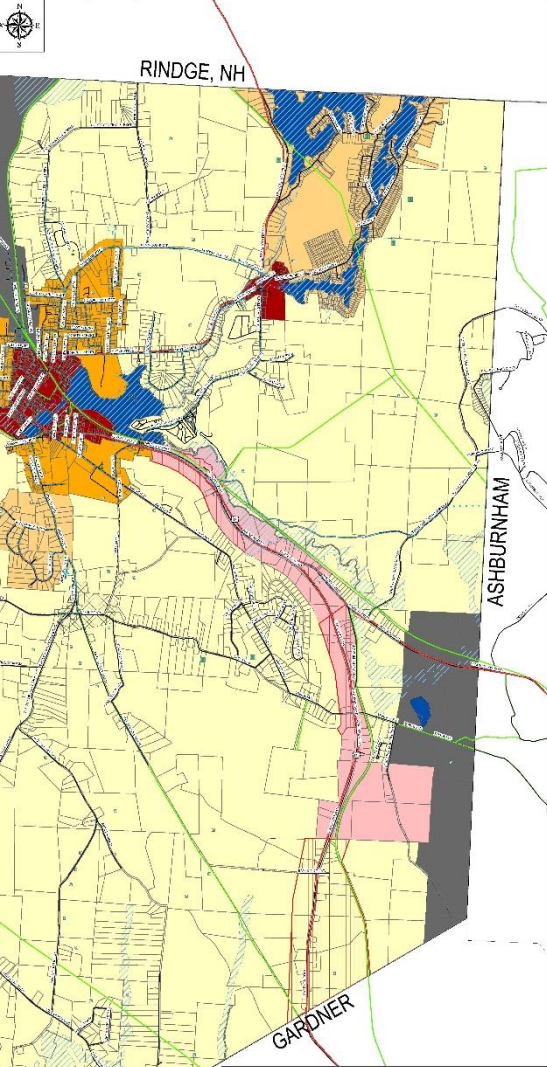
Zoning information is valid for areas within the Town of Winchendon only.

DATA SOURCES: Aerials, GIS, the Town of Winchendon GIS & GIS/CADD DEPARTMENT. This is not a scale drawing. It is a map of the town of Winchendon, NH. It is not intended to be used for any purpose other than to show the location of the town of Winchendon, NH.

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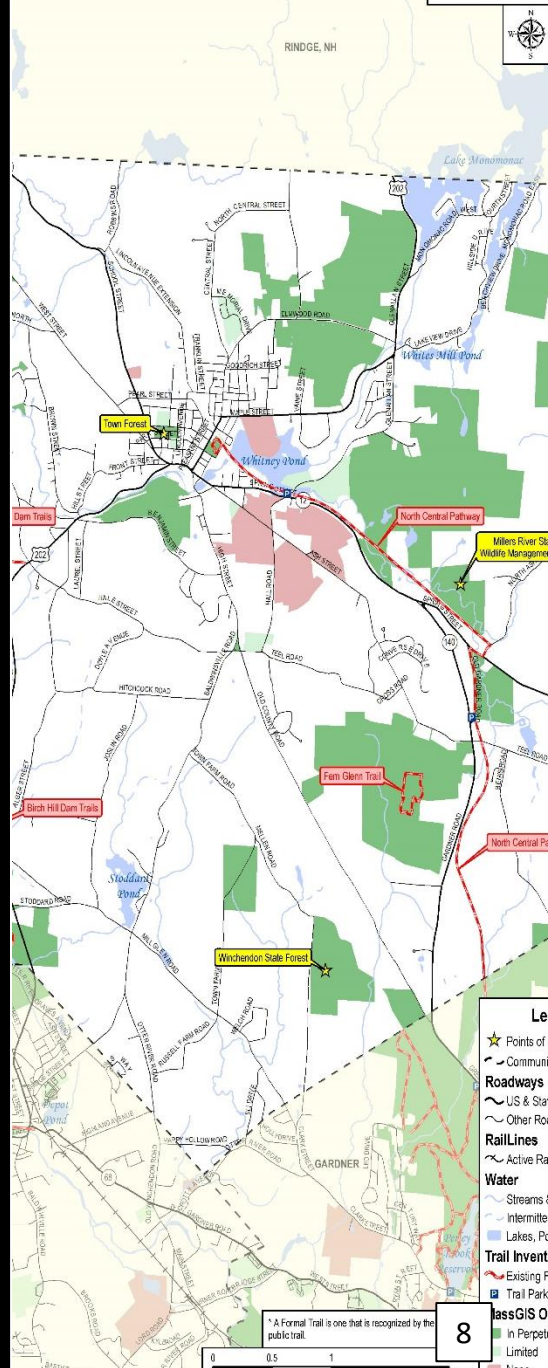
on Zoning Map



- Legend**
- Sewer Lines
 - Water Lines
 - Highways
 - Roads and Streets**
 - Maintained, Paved
 - Maintained, Gravel
 - Not Town Maintained
 - Trail Inventory
 - Schools
 - Certified Vernal Pool
 - Potential Vernal Pool
 - ▭ Parcels
 - ▭ Winchendon Boundary
 - ▭ State Boundary
- Zoning District**
- C1- Large Scale Commercial
 - C2- Neighborhood Commercial
 - Planned Development
 - Industrial
 - Pond
 - R60- Rural Residential
 - R40- Suburban Residential
 - R10- Neighborhood Residential
- Zoning Overlays**
- Floodplain
 - Golf Residential
 - Gateway Overlay
 - Historic
 - Aquifer



Winchendon Formal Trail



- Legend**
- ★ Points of Interest
 - Community
 - Roadways
 - US & State
 - Other Roadways
 - RailLines
 - Active Rail
 - Water**
 - Streams
 - Intermittent
 - Lakes, Ponds
 - Trail Inventory
 - Existing Path
 - Trail Park
- Trail Inventory**
- In Perpetuity
 - Limited
 - None

* A Formal Trail is one that is recognized by the public trail



Open Space

Background

Winchendon's current patterns of open space and development reflect the historical periods of agriculture and industrial production based on forestry resources, industrial decline, and suburbanization. These historic waves of development were shaped by a landscape rich in water and forestry resources. Now Winchendon's scenic rural landscape and relative affordability is attracting housing development to serve people who work in the greater Worcester and Boston areas and solar array construction due to the availability of large tracts of land.

With more residents and less available open land, there will be increased demand for recreation facilities, and conserved land will be needed to maintain Winchendon's traditional access to forests, lakes, streams, and open spaces. Townspeople have noted the lack of public access to the River and the ponds in Town. The lack of public access to undeveloped lands will grow even more acute as the Town becomes more suburban.

Like Winchendon's neighbors, there is a growing population of seniors and teens are a group of special concern; they need choices for healthy activities in addition to organized sports.

This chapter draws heavily upon the Open Space and Recreation Plan(OSRP) completed for the Town of Winchendon in October 2015 by Tighe & Bond. Goals and Strategies drawn from the OSRP are cross-referenced as applicable.

Open Space Goals

OS 1: Continue to protect the quality and quantity of water resources (OSRP Goal #1)

OS 2: Develop a linked system of open space and recreation facilities (OSRP Goal #5)

OS 3: Improve and expand the scope of recreational facilities and programs for all Winchendon residents and use recreation as a catalyst for economic development/arts (OSRP Goal #6)

OS 4: Enhance the recreational potential of the town's water resources (OSRP Goal #2)

OS 5: Preserve open space throughout the town which protects and enhances the visual quality and historic character of the town (OSRP Goal #4)



Welcome to
Winchendon
Community
Park

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
OS 1: Continue to protect the quality and quantity of water resources (OSRP Goal #1)	Strategy OS 1.1: Continue to improve existing water quality of lakes and ponds through such strategies as upgrading or replacing failed septic systems, expansion of the sewer system, and incorporating this objective into municipal and regional plans (OSRP Obj #1-2)	Baseline
	Strategy OS 1.2: Continue to protect the quality and quantity of wetland resources by continuing to improve enforcement of regulations that pertain to wetlands (OSRP Obj #2)	Short-term
	Strategy OS 1.3: Protect current and future drinking water supplies (OSRP Obj #3)	Baseline
OS 2: Develop a linked system of open space and recreation facilities (OSRP Goal #5)	Strategy OS 2.1: Expand North Central Pathway and Town trails (OSRP Obj. #2 & 4)	Long-term
	Strategy OS 2.2: Identify areas for trail and open space linkages, including connecting routes to NH and other communities (OSRP Obj. #1)	Medium-term
	Strategy OS 2.3: Educate the community in regard to the availability, location and appropriate use of natural resource areas (OSRP Obj #3)	Short-term
OS 3: Improve and expand the scope of recreational facilities and programs for all Winchendon residents and use recreation as a catalyst for economic development/arts (OSRP Goal #6)	Strategy OS 3.1: Develop a network of neighborhood and school playgrounds and walking routes (OSRP Obj. #2)	Baseline
	Strategy OS 3.2: Continue to expand the availability of athletic fields and other facilities, including a fitness course, while keeping maintenance within budget (OSRP Obj. #3)	Baseline
	Strategy OS 3.3: Continue to reassess needs of all residents for activities and resources, and develop specific programs to meet those needs (OSRP Obj. #4)	Baseline
	Strategy OS 3.4: Publicize existing recreational resources and events. (OSRP Obj. #5) Include using digital media and applications to reach a wide audience	Short-term
OS 4: Enhance the recreational potential of the town's water resources (OSRP Goal #2)	Strategy OS 4.1: Provide recreational access to water bodies in town (ex., Lake Monomonac, Whitney Pond and Millers River) (OSRP Obj. #1)	Medium-term
	Strategy OS 4.2: Clean up Whitney Pond and pursue efforts to develop recreational opportunities at the Pond (OSRP Obj. #2)	Medium-term
OS 5: Preserve open space throughout the town which protects and enhances the visual quality and historic character of the town (OSRP Goal #4)	Strategy OS 5.1: Identify necessary maintenance and site improvements as appropriate and enhance the visual quality of existing town open space, such as Town Commons or Militia Training Field (OSRP Obj. #1)	Long-term
	Strategy OS 5.2: Seek to acquire properties to improve downtown open space and recreational opportunities, such as pocket parks and highly visible locations for public concerts and movies (OSRP Goal #6, Obj. #1)	Long-term

Economic Development

Background

Winchendon is a wealthy community in terms of its natural, cultural, and historic resources and its location in central New England. Despite these bountiful resources, Winchendon has many economic challenges in its present and near future including declines in manufacturing and local employment opportunities, low incomes, and a competitive business environment in nearby tax-free New Hampshire.

Rising to meet these challenges will require that all of Winchendon's citizens get involved in the business and life of the Town. Economic development planning should seek to build on what Winchendon already has – its natural and scenic resources, potential for a recreation-based economy, and links to a region with education and cultural resources.

Recreation and tourism can act as catalysts for commercial, economic, and community development. In addition, Winchendon's position as a right-to-farm community creates an avenue for a Food based economy that can be an expansion of agriculture. Agriculture includes not only farms but also added-value products, local food based restaurants, and pushes thinking beyond the notion of agriculture as exclusively "farms."

Winchendon's overall goal is to develop an environmentally-sound economy that provides a wide range of economic opportunities and employment for all of its residents.

Economic Development Goals

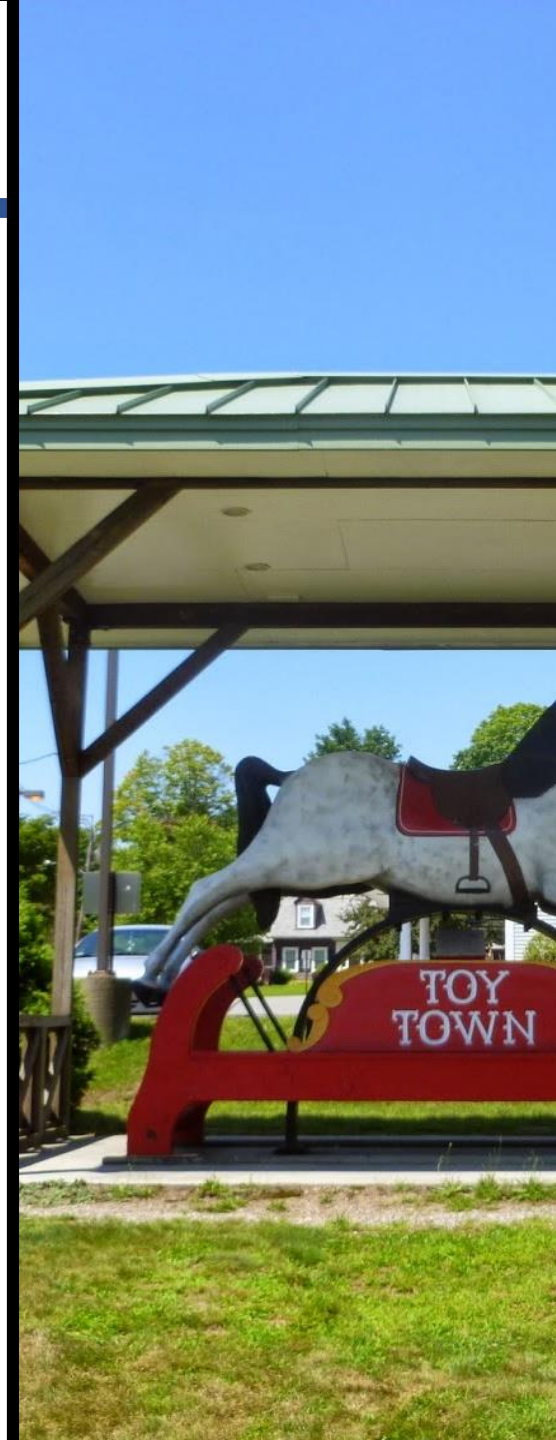
ED 1: Ensure regular, ongoing, and effective communication between current and prospective businesses and Town governmental offices

ED 2: Rebuild downtown Winchendon as a business center and rebrand it in the image of a vital New England small town

ED 3: Use recreation and agriculture as new industries and a catalyst for economic development

ED 4: Increase the value potential of Winchendon's people; its labor force, business owners, and prospective entrepreneurs of all ages.

ED 5: Develop/Redevelop Winchendon's economic infrastructure





<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<p>ED 1: Ensure regular, ongoing, and effective communication between current and prospective businesses and Town governmental offices</p>	<p>Strategy ED 1.1: Establish an Economic Development Committee to track and understand the Town’s economic needs and opportunities, help implement the Master Plan Economic Development goals and expand the tax base</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 1.2: Solicit information from existing business owners regarding their level of satisfaction with Winchendon as the location for their operations to help determine future business needs in the community and plan ahead for necessary changes or improvements</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 1.3: Encourage establishment of a local business association to give local businesspeople voice in the community</p>	Medium-term
	<p>Strategy ED 1.4: Improve and strengthen the Town’s Business Development website and business support services</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 1.5: Ensure that permitting processes are transparent, prompt, reasonable, and consistent and consider assembling a comprehensive development permitting guidebook</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 1.6: Adopt Massachusetts Chapter 43D allowing for expedited permitting on pre-approved parcels</p>	Short-term
<p>ED 2: Rebuild downtown Winchendon as a business center and rebrand it in the image of a vital New England small town</p>	<p>Strategy ED 2.1: Establish identity to begin branding and place-making efforts in the downtown and signify its status as a distinct place and destination</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 2.2: Evaluate options to address the high cost of rents in downtown</p>	Long-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.3: Promote smart growth and connectivity within the Town and coordinate circulation to find ways to get both residents and travelers into the downtown, rather than passing through</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 2.4: Consider adopting design guidelines for development in areas with characteristics worthy of preservation</p>	Medium-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.5: Promote traffic safety and signage in the downtown area. Pursue funding for a traffic safety study through the MRPC’s Unified Planning Work Program. Consider simple methods of enhancing the downtown streetscape, such as landscaping and way finding signage and information kiosks for visitors</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.6: Improve prominent blighted downtown properties and those in gateway locations</p>	Baseline

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
<p>ED 2: Rebuild and Rebrand downtown Winchendon as a business center and image of a vital New England small town <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>Strategy ED 2.7: Attract residents and visitors to local town, school and non-profit events and research how other communities have used local events to support their town’s economic development</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 2.8: Utilize existing committees to work towards implementing the UMass Downtown Winchendon Revitalization Strategy 2014 and the Urban Land Institute’s 2004 report, “Opportunity Abounds”</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.9: Prepare a retail market study to determine the demand for various types of retail business, and determine if this demand is being met</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.10: Hold town, school and non-profit events in the downtown to draw people in and increase the visibility of attractions and increase marketing of events, amenities, and businesses for Winchendon</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 2.11: Organize stakeholders into task forces or other groups to concentrate efforts into a particular cause or project</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.12: Increase coordination between local businesses to increase business retention and support businesses</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 2.13: Work towards increasing business diversity</p>	Baseline
<p>ED 3: Use recreation and agriculture as new industries and a catalyst for economic development</p>	<p>Strategy ED 3.1: Explore recreation and agriculture as a catalyst for economic development in towns similar to Winchendon.</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 3.2: Identify retail targets and properties for business development</p>	Medium-term
	<p>Strategy ED 3.3: Expand efforts to develop and promote recreational opportunities in Winchendon</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 3.4: Promote Winchendon’s existing natural, cultural, and historic resources and link efforts with Regional partners</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy ED 3.5: Leverage and build on initiatives such as HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Winchendon to build a sustainable food system in Winchendon and our region</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy ED 3.6: Gather information from other communities who are building a food based economy and adapt for Winchendon</p>	Short-term
<p>Strategy ED 3.7: Strengthen our Agricultural Commission; evaluate expanding its mission as a Food Council</p>	Short-term	





Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
ED 4: Increase the value potential of Winchendon's people; its labor force, business owners, and prospective entrepreneurs of all ages.	Strategy ED 4.1: Align education, vocational training and support services with opportunities available in the region and with the employment and business opportunities that Winchendon wants to attract.	Baseline
	Strategy ED 4.2: Encourage and support transportation links to education, training, and job opportunities.	Baseline
	Strategy ED 4.3: Encourage and support the entrepreneurial potential of our craftspeople, artists and artisans. Build a strong network of business support services and programs	Baseline
ED 5: Develop / Redevelop Winchendon's economic infrastructure	Strategy ED 5.1: Redevelop underutilized sites where infrastructure already exists. Investment and reuse of existing buildings will promote sustainable principles while capturing the character of the community	Baseline
	Strategy ED 5.2: Work to secure funding for brownfield remediation and redevelopment via the new Economic Development Committee	Baseline
	Strategy ED 5.3: Identify new areas for business development and consider expanding infrastructure to promote new economic development	Long-term
	Strategy ED 5.4: Conduct a review of Winchendon's current zoning bylaws to determine their adequacy for accommodating desired land use and development.	Medium-term
	Strategy ED 5.5: Aggressively seek funding for road and infrastructure improvements. Town officials should seek federal and state funding for infrastructure improvements and continually press the MRPC for regular funding of local projects	Baseline
	Strategy ED 5.6: Explore regionalization of services and marketing with neighboring towns.	Baseline
	Strategy ED 5.7: Consider policies to encourage green development in commercial, industrial, and residential buildings and operations	Baseline
	Strategy ED 5.8: Pursue the installation of reliable high-speed Internet to all businesses, home businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices, and other public places	Short-te

Housing

Background

In the last decade, housing unit growth in Winchendon has significantly outstripped population growth. Despite this, Winchendon still has not reached the minimum number of affordable housing units required by Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws.

As Winchendon's population demographics have shifted over the past few years, the number of family-oriented households in the Town has begun to decrease. Households are also becoming smaller, which corresponds to the rise in Winchendon's senior population. The increase in the population of older citizens will mean the need for housing that can accommodate people with physical disabilities and long-term healthcare needs. Housing affordability also becomes a factor for people living on a fixed income.

Winchendon is also faced with a large amount of aging housing stock. 45% of Winchendon's existing housing stock is over 50 years old, and 31% was built before World War II. Many of these older units may be in need of rehabilitation.

Providing affordable housing to all Winchendon residents may require a broad variety of housing types to meet local needs.

Housing Goals

HO 1: Strive to achieve compliance with Chapter 40B, the affordable housing inventory

HO 2: Allow for a wider variety of housing opportunities

HO 3: Rehabilitate Winchendon's existing aging housing stock, and preserve older historic homes

HO 4: Create neighborhoods that are connected to downtown Winchendon by a variety of transportation options





<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<p>HO 1: Strive to achieve compliance with Chapter 40B</p>	<p>Strategy HO 1.1: Create a Housing Production Plan (HPP). HPPs give communities that are not yet in compliance with Chapter 40B the opportunity to show that they are making progress in constructing affordable housing. An HPP would also help the Town determine the projected housing needs of its current and future population</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy HO 1.2: Continue to partner with housing organizations to build more affordable housing</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy HO 1.3: Research avenues to address high vacancy rates</p>	Medium-term
<p>HO 2: Allow for a wider variety of housing opportunities</p>	<p>Strategy HO 2.1: Encourage more apartments above businesses downtown and on Central Street.</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy HO 2.2: Find ways to promote the use of the Open Space Residential Development (Cluster Development) Bylaw in new residential subdivisions, grouping proposed residential properties closer together, allowing the rest of the land to be used as communal open space</p>	Medium-term
	<p>Strategy HO 2.3: Encourage development of tenant-run organizations in multi-family housing complexes</p>	Medium-term
	<p>Strategy HO 2.4: Explore creation of 55+ housing options</p>	Medium-Term
<p>HO 3: Rehabilitate existing aging housing stock, and preserve older historic homes</p>	<p>Strategy HO 3.1: Continue to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for housing rehabilitation</p>	Baseline
<p>HO 4: Create neighborhoods that are connected to downtown Winchendon by a variety of transportation options</p>	<p>Strategy HO 4.1: Improve sidewalks and walkability</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy HO 4.2: Promote the Safe Routes to School program to create safe, walkable infrastructure in residential neighborhoods, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails, and to educate children and parents about the benefits of walking or bicycling to and from school</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy HO 4.3: Create more walking and biking trails</p>	Baseline

Historic and Cultural Resources

Background

Historic and cultural preservation involves the entire Town of Winchendon. There are culturally and historically important structures and sites throughout the Town. Additionally, there are numerous events, celebrations, and organizations that add to Winchendon's cultural heritage. These resources enrich and enhance the community, build civic pride, and help define Winchendon's identity.

Winchendon has a rich history of industry and invention. Of course, Winchendon is most well-known as "Toy Town," the former home of the world's largest toy factory, but during the 1800s, Winchendon was also known for multiple industrial innovations, like the first wood thickness planer, which was marketed until the 1950s. Although the industrial age and Winchendon's place in it are things of the past, this creative spirit can still be leveraged as an important part of Winchendon's identity.

Winchendon has a wealth of historic and cultural resources of various types, from historic homes to outdoor recreational spaces. Many towns and cities in New England have used their historical and cultural resources to help boost their economies and create a unique brand or

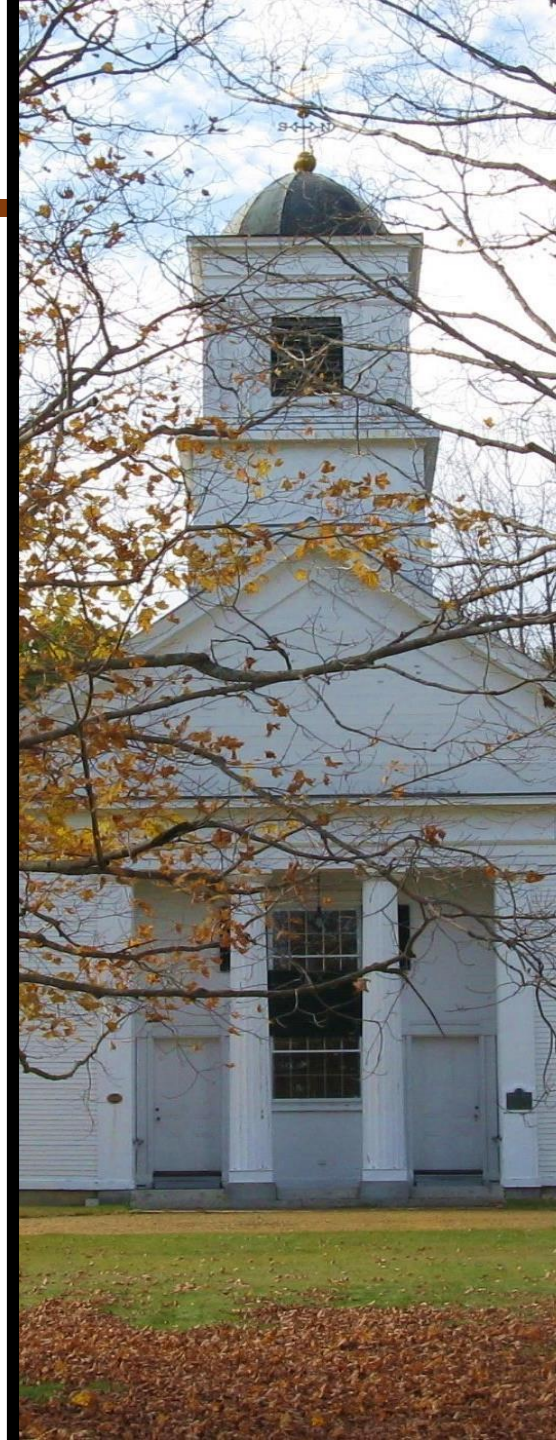
identity for their community. Awareness of these available resources is crucial in crafting policy and land use patterns that support and enhance protection and preservation.

Maintaining, restoring, and reusing historic properties can preserve neighborhood character, protect the tax base by maintaining value, and attract businesses that are looking for communities with a high quality of life and a sense of pride, character, and cultural richness. Equally as important as preserving historic sites is preserving traditions through annual celebrations and events that attract Winchendon residents and visitors.

Historic and Cultural Resources Goals

HC 1: Preserve Winchendon's existing historic and cultural assets

HC 2: Promote Winchendon existing historic and cultural assets





Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
HC 1: Preserve Winchendon’s existing historic and cultural assets	Strategy HC 1.1: Reexamine the Winchendon Reconnaissance Report	Short-term
	Strategy HC 1.2: Implement preservation restrictions on historic properties to protect historic structures from being demolished or excessively altered	Baseline
	Strategy HC 1.3: Find ways to prevent “demolition by neglect” – lack of investment in old buildings until they become so dilapidated that any kind of restoration is no longer feasible	Baseline
	Strategy HC 1.4: Expand efforts to identify, preserve and develop town owned assets as places that reflect our Town’s cultural heritage and that can contribute to the cultural or economic identity that is embodied in this master plan. Assets such as, Old Murdock/Senior Center, Ingleside/Winchendon Community Park, Beal’s Memorial Library, Town Hall, GAR Park. Those assets should be leveraged for maximum utility.	Short-term
	Strategy HC 1.5: Educate owners of historic properties about the importance of voluntarily maintaining structures against decay, deterioration, and structural damage to avoid possible loss of historic resources	Medium-term
HC 2: Promote Winchendon’s cultural heritage and existing historic and cultural assets	Strategy HC 2.1: Encourage the Winchendon Historical Commission/Historic District to build online presence, and partner with Winchendon public schools to find students interested in assisting with research, cataloguing, and perhaps even grant writing	Medium-term
	Strategy HC 2.2: Promote Winchendon’s industrial heritage through modern-day events that focus on invention and creativity	Baseline
	Strategy HC 2.3: Use historic buildings and churches for cultural and civic events	Baseline
	Strategy HC 2.4: Encourage Winchendon Historical Commission members to seek out training in modern preservation tools that are available to them and to the Town	Short-term

Transportation and Circulation

Background

The average travel time to work for Winchendon's residents is 36.5 minutes, which is significantly higher than the Massachusetts average of 28 minutes. Between 1990 and 2000, mean travel time increased by 33.5%, and has continued to increase since then. Part of this trend can likely be attributed to Winchendon's relatively low real estate prices and scenic beauty, which attract homebuyers who are willing to travel longer distances to work in exchange for a home in a relatively undeveloped landscape.

Three major roadways connect Winchendon to the surrounding region and provide access to major metropolitan areas in New England. U.S. Route 202 runs north-to-south and connects Winchendon to Concord, New Hampshire's state capital. South of Winchendon, Route 202 provides access to Route 2, which is the region's major east-west link. Route 12 also runs north-to-south and connects Winchendon to Worcester, Fitchburg, and Leominster. Route 140 is another roadway that connects Winchendon to major regional population centers like Gardner, as well as connecting to Route 2. These major roadways provide Winchendon with connectivity to the rest of the Montachusett Region and a readily available supply of potential tourist traffic.

This heavy traffic flow also creates challenges for central Winchendon. Winchendon's downtown is located right on top of several of major intersections and it has been difficult to safely accommodate vehicle through-traffic. The Central Street corridor is scheduled to be completely reconstructed in 2021 which will create a pedestrian-friendly town center where people can linger, socialize, and shop.

Transportation and Circulation Goals

TR 1: Continue to make Winchendon's commercial centers welcoming to multiple forms of non-automobile transportation

TR 2: Improve traffic safety in downtown Winchendon

TR 3: Expand the regional trail network

TR 4: Improve maintenance and repair of transportation infrastructure





<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<p>TR 1: Make Winchendon’s commercial centers welcoming to multiple forms of transportation</p>	<p>Strategy TR 1.1: Create a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan that will help identify major roadway travel routes, safety issues, signage, crosswalk and sidewalk needs, pavement marking needs</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
	<p>Strategy TR 1.2: Make neighborhoods, especially downtown, more pedestrian-friendly through construction and rehabilitation of sidewalks</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>TR 2: Improve traffic safety in downtown Winchendon</p>	<p>Strategy TR 2.1: Analyze available traffic crash data from at least the past three years, focusing initially on areas with high crash rates</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>Strategy TR 2.2: Implement traffic calming measures in downtown Winchendon per the 2014 Revitalization Strategy document</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
	<p>Strategy TR 2.3: Schedule free traffic counts with the MRPC to monitor traffic patterns over time and anticipate future improvements</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
<p>TR 3: Expand the regional trail network</p>	<p>Strategy TR 3.1: Use existing information to complete a Trail Master Plan to inventory existing trails and open space and to create a Town-wide vision for expansion, management and funding, and acquisition of new properties</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
	<p>Strategy TR 3.2: Continue to work with neighboring communities and regional entities to establish a regional trail network linking Winchendon to various recreational opportunities outside its borders</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
<p>TR 4: Improve maintenance and repair of transportation infrastructure</p>	<p>Strategy TR 4.1: Encourage the State to further investigate the condition of key bridges in the Town, and to make these bridges a funding priority</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
	<p>Strategy TR 4.2: Conduct and maintain an inventory of culverts and identify a mechanism to clean, repair, and update structures as needed</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
	<p>Strategy TR 4.3: Continue to seek funding for infrastructure projects on Local Jurisdiction Federal Aid eligible roads through the MMPO TIP process, work with the MRPC and Mass DOT on projects and funding opportunities</p>	<p>Baseline</p>

Services and Facilities

Background

This chapter of the Master Plan presents a general overview of Winchendon's town government, municipal facilities and services. All identified goals and strategies are intended to support the town's aim of providing excellent, cost-effective, accessible services and programs that reflect the values and diversity of our community.

As the population ages, more investment may be required to deal with the health, housing, social, and transportation needs of seniors. Public education is offered by the town alone, meaning that the operational and budgetary burden is not being shared as if Winchendon school system were to be part of a regional school district with other communities. Moreover, many users choose to send their kids to schools outside of Winchendon. Citizens want continued high-quality services, but they also do not want to increase their taxes further.

To deal with these challenges above – as well as better prepare for a changing future – the town must decide how to shift its services, adopt new technologies and resources, seek collaboration where possible, and manage its budget in a responsible way.

Services and Facilities Goals

SF 1: Identify and invest in tools to improve Town & School services, facilities and programs, seek collaboration between the various departments, boards, committees and community services where possible

SF 2: Seek and utilize regional resources and services where available

SF 3: Ensure Winchendon's services and facilities are accessible for all

SF 4: Continue efforts to coordinate town, school and community services including use of digital tools and new technologies

SF 5: Improve the capacity and knowledge-base of all current and future Board and Committee members

SF 6: Continue energy conservation and climate change measures under the Green Communities and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness programs.

SF 7: Identify the town resources needed for the implementation of this plan





<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<p>SF 1: Identify and invest in tools to improve Town & School services, facilities and programs, seek collaboration between the various departments, boards, committees and community services where possible</p>	<p>Strategy SF 1.1: Create quarterly meetings of all municipal boards, commissions and committees to be hosted by the Board of Selectmen, to help boards coordinate activities, reduce duplicative efforts, and promote a team-oriented approach to governance</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy SF 1.2: Continue to hold regular department head meetings to discuss resources, budgeting, personnel and other issues</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy SF 1.3: All boards and staff involved with permitting of land development should have regular meetings to discuss planning and development issues in the town</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy SF 1.4: Prepare an updated organizational flow chart that depicts all municipal departments, boards, commissions, committees and ad-hoc committees and outlines which entity established them and which entity they report to. Include the School Department</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy SF 1.5: Evaluate incorporating in house Geographic Information System (GIS) capabilities for multi-departmental use</p>	Short-term
<p>SF 2: Seek and utilize regional resources and services</p>	<p>Strategy SF 2.1: Pursue regionalization opportunities to increase local government capacity and collaborate with nearby communities</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy SF 2.2: Expand Information Technology (IT) capabilities</p>	Short-term
<p>SF 3: Ensure Winchendon's services and facilities are accessible all</p>	<p>Strategy SF 3.1: Increase interaction between Beal's Memorial Library and Old Murdock Senior Center</p>	Medium-term
	<p>Strategy SF 3.2: Create a plan for the Senior Center to meet increased demand for services that includes staffing and equipment</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy SF 3.3: Create a capital plan for the repair and maintenance of the Old Murdock Senior Center building</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy SF 3.4: Assure continuing compliance with existing Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and Public Right of Way (PROW) plans</p>	Baseline

Goal	Strategy	Timeframe
SF 4: Continue efforts to coordinate town, school and community services	Strategy SF 4.1: Promote meetings, events and new information through coordinated use of the town website, as well as town and departmental social media platforms	Baseline
	Strategy SF 4.2: Improve two-way communication between citizens and government and create opportunities for citizens to provide feedback	Short-term
	Strategy SF 4.3: Evaluate broadcasting or publishing quarterly “State of the Town” updates or conduct “Ask the Town Manager/School Superintendent” type of forum	Short-term
SF 5: Improve the capacity and knowledge-base of all current and future Board and Committee members	Strategy SF 5.1: Each board and committee in Winchendon’s Town Government should evaluate their purpose, strategies, options to expand participation	Short-term
	Strategy SF 5.2 Prepare a handbook that details their policies and procedures. Offer board-sponsored training session to inform new members and promote active participation. Further, each entity should identify ongoing training opportunities for all members	Medium-term
SF 6: Continue energy conservation and climate change measures under the Green Communities and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) programs.	Strategy SF 6.1: Winchendon should continue exploring conservation measures and strategies for its municipal structures, as well as continue to apply for future competitive grant funds through the Green Communities program	Baseline
	Strategy SF 6.2: Winchendon should continue planning for climate change resiliency and explore funding for the rehabilitation of municipal structures such as town owned dams as outlined in the Winchendon Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Plan.	Baseline
SF 7: Identify the town resources needed for the implementation of this plan	Strategy SF 7.1: Establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee	Short-term





Community Health & Well-being

Background-

Winchendon's most important asset is its people and the quality of life that they can have, build and enjoy in Winchendon. The health and wellbeing of community members are determined by a variety of factors:

- availability of resources to meet daily needs
- access to social and economic opportunities
- quality of our schools and job training
- nature of social interactions and relationships
- transportation options
- availability of opportunities for recreation
- accessible built environment
- access to emergency/health services
- environments free of toxins

Our community must respond to a changing environment. Traditional options for routine grocery and retail items no longer exist, the housing stock is aging, limited employment opportunities and local medical care options provide for residents' needs, but only for people who have the means to travel and pay.

On the positive side, there are assets that can be built on. Vacant space is available downtown to fill the need for grocery and retail. The growing agricultural community can provide fresh healthy food if a distribution system is established and there is increased awareness and support to address housing and transportation needs.

Health & Well-being Goals

HW 1: Coordinate with community resources, groups, nonprofits and businesses (including farmers/growers) to address the issues of food insecurity and food access

HW 2: Improve transportation options for all residents and particularly for those who require reliable access to food, medical care, work or school/education

HW 3: Continue to pursue all means to improve the condition and assortment of housing options

HW 4: Promote opportunities for improved connections among Winchendon residents to know and support each other within and across demographics

HW 5: Ensure that all residents, across demographics, are aware of all programs and services available that can make a difference in their quality of life

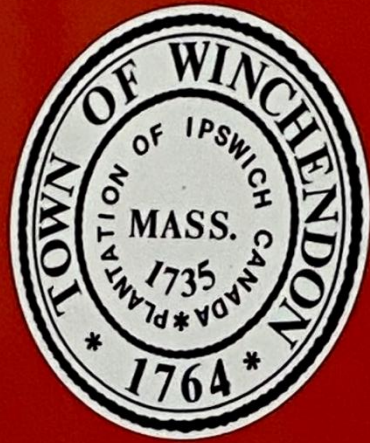




<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<p>HW 1: Coordinate with community resources, groups, nonprofits and businesses (including farmers/growers) to address the issues of food insecurity and food access</p>	<p>Strategy HW 1.1: Continue to build awareness of initiatives underway with updates on what is happening, how to get involved, and how this advances health & well-being for all in Winchendon</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy HW 1.2: Ensure effective communication and coordination across initiatives to build an environmentally and economically sustainable food system for Winchendon</p>	Short-term
<p>HW 2: Improve transportation options for all residents and particularly for those who require reliable access to food, medical care, work or school/education</p>	<p>Strategy HW 2.1: Research options that communities similar to Winchendon have used to meet transportation needs; identify what makes sense for Winchendon</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy HW 2.2: Evaluate and work to improve the effectiveness of existing transportation options, i.e. MART, CAC, Senior Center, Ride Share, etc.</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy HW 2.3: Work with our state and federal representatives to bring identified resources to Winchendon</p>	Medium-term
<p>HW 3: Continue to pursue all means to improve the condition and assortment of housing options</p>	<p>Strategy HW 3.1: Coordinate with existing and planned Housing related strategies to build awareness of opportunities, needs and options; to build advocacy for these initiatives; and to stay current on these priorities</p>	Baseline
	<p>Strategy HW 3.2: Research housing options that have been effective in other communities</p>	Short-term
<p>HW 4: Promote opportunities for improved connections among Winchendon residents to know and support each other within and across demographics</p>	<p>Strategy HW 4.1: Identify all the opportunities embodied in this master plan to build or strengthen connections. Engage community members in building and implementing a plan to activate priority opportunities</p>	Short-term
	<p>Strategy HW 4.2: Research effective options that have been used to engage and include people across demographics</p>	Short-term

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
HW 4: Promote opportunities for improved connections among Winchendon residents to know and support each other within and across demographics <i>(continued...)</i>	Strategy HW 4.3: Consider an ongoing communications/branding plan of working, building, creating, learning, and playing together and promote the benefits of such	Short-term
	Strategy HW 4.4: Identify opportunities and strategies with existing organizations, civic and social groups, the schools, etc. to broaden and build connections	Short-term
	Strategy HW 4.5: Determine how to best integrate this goal and strategies with the MassUp HEAL Winchendon three-year grant initiative	Short-term
HW 5: Ensure that all residents, across demographics, are aware of all programs and services available that can make a difference in their quality of life	Strategy HW 5.1: Research workable options that have been used by other communities or regions to provide accurate, timely and accessible information to residents	Short-term
	Strategy HW 5.2: Establish a committee or task force to coordinate the development, promotion and updating of this resource.	Short-term





PLEASE
MAINTAIN
SOIL



Communication & Engagement

Background

Citizen participation is key to ensuring that the Master Plan creates the community that it envisions. Unfortunately, we have recently lost most of the traditional ways for keeping people up to date in what is happening in Winchendon. The loss of the printed Courier has been particularly hard.

At the same time, important new communication channels have opened. The cable community access channel makes it easier for citizens (with cable) to stay informed. Cellphones and social media provide untapped potential for better two-way communications between and among citizens and town officials. Most recently, the pandemic has caused everyone to think differently about how and what to communicate and has surfaced new ways of communicating via Zoom meetings and webinars.

The implementation of the Master Plan calls for our town officials to recognize that times have changed. By embracing the changes and making them work for us, we can create even greater community engagement, coordinate existing efforts and foster a more cohesive community.

Communication & Engagement Goals

CE 1: Adopt new methods for keeping the community aware of and involved in in Town government using technology where appropriate

CE 2: Adopt new methods to improve communication across town departments and boards using technology where appropriate

CE 3: Make broadband available and affordable to all town residents

CE 4: Increase the level of citizen participation in Town government





<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<p>CE 1: Adopt new methods for keeping the community aware of and involved in in Town government using technology where appropriate</p>	<p>CE 1.1: Expand the role of the Communications Committee to include the development of guidelines for communications with residents across all forms of media</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>CE 1.2: Conduct a complete update or overhaul of the Town of Winchendon website</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>CE 1.3: Create and maintain a list of all Winchendon government social media accounts and ensure links to those accounts are readily available on the Town website</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>CE 1.4: Continue citizen participation in meetings via appropriate communication platforms post-COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>CE 1.5: Consider methods to push official Town news to relevant media outlets</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>CE 1.6: Partner with the Winchendon School District, Council on Aging, and other official and community groups to share Town information with their stakeholders</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>CE 1.7: Consider a "live news" feed on the Town website, similar to the one maintained on the Winchendon Public Schools site</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>CE 2: Adopt new methods to improve communication across town departments and boards using technology where appropriate</p>	<p>CE 2.1: Dedicate a section of the Town website targeted at easing cross-board communications</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
	<p>CE 2.2: Charge departments and boards with identifying when collaboration is required to achieve a result and train them to post and seek such notices</p>	<p>Baseline</p>
	<p>CE 2.3: Work with other municipalities to understand best practices already in place, and lobby with them for desired changes in laws and regulations if appropriate.</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
	<p>CE 2.4: Work with our elected state officials to ensure that meetings can continue to be held via Zoom post-pandemic, making changes to laws and regulations if required.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>



Citizen Action Center

- [Agendas, Minutes & Past Meeting Videos](#)
- [Watch Meetings Live](#)
- [Assessor's Database](#)
- [Receive Notifications](#)
- [Forms & Documents](#)
- [Beals Library](#)
- [Online Payments](#)
- [Trash & Recycling](#)
- [Useful Links](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Bid Notices](#)
- [Job Opportunities](#)
- [Local Codes & Ordinances](#)
- [Town Manager Budgets](#)
- [Winchendon Housing](#)

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
CE 3: Make broadband available and affordable to all town residents	CE 3.1: Identify currently available broadband options for town residents and business	Short-term
	CE 3.2: Pursue options with current or other providers to expand and improve access to broadband service	Baseline
	CE 3.3: Provide internet outside public buildings	Short-term
	CE 3.4 Explore creation of additional internet service in underserved areas	Medium-term
	CE 3.5: Engage with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute to qualify Winchendon for expanded broadband programs	Medium-term
	CE 3.6: Seek support of elected state officials to ensure Winchendon is not left behind in broadband expansion	Medium-term
CE 4: Increase the level of citizen participation in Town government	CE 4.1: Encourage participation in local elections and town meetings via all town controlled social media	Baseline
	CE 4.2: Simplify public access to live online meetings	Short-term
	CE 4.3: Ensure key meetings are archived for public viewing	Baseline
	CE 4.4: Provide boards, commissions and committees with tools to improve citizen engagement in their efforts, through collaboration with Mass UP HEAL Winchendon as appropriate	Medium-term
	CE 4.5: Expand outreach efforts to entice volunteers to join boards, commissions and committees using social media outlets and cable.	Baseline
	CE 4.6: Provide simplified descriptions of responsibilities and estimates of time commitments when soliciting for board, commission and committee members	Short-term



Committees Business Development Fall Fest Sc

Town News Covid-19 Related News Calendar



Dog licenses due now-\$20 for all unlicensed dogs »

This is a friendly reminder: the 2020 COVID-19, we have extended the



National Grid Power Outage

We hope everyone is safe and well. As a result of the storm, there is widespread



Cooling Center at the Clark

It's hot out there! A cooling center is located at 155 Central Street, from

Identity, Race, & Me: Community Discussion

Identity, Race, & Me: Community Discussion Group



Implementation

The Master Plan describes the will of the people of Winchendon based on extensive public participation in the Plan's development over several years. All town boards, commissions, committees, staff and citizens should use this Plan to guide their work in creating the future we all seek. Achieving our community's vision requires the active implementation of the strategies set forth in each of the plan chapters. Our citizens hold their elected, appointed and paid representatives, as well as *themselves* accountable for the successful implementation of the plan.

This section organizes the strategies into baseline, short-term, medium-term, and long-term categories, and assigns the execution of each strategy to one or more Board, Commissions, or Committees ("Lead and Contributors"), including Staff where appropriate. -A listing of those Board, Commissions, or Committees that have been assigned as Lead and/or Contributors is included for reference. Most of these groups are comprised of citizen volunteers (not elected) and need additional members. The implementation of this plan will include active recruitment and training of citizens to these groups (Strategy SF 5.1, 5.2). A list of all Town Departments is included. An updated organizational chart that includes the school department is part of this plan. (Strategy SF 1.4)

How will we accomplish these ambitious goals? Many strategies just require time, effort and skills of our citizen volunteers and paid town staff (as prioritized). Town funds are already allocated for some of these strategies. Major expenses will require voting for town funds or require fundraising through grants, collaboration and other sources.

A Master Plan of this scope and detail requires project management and oversight. A Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) will be established by the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and charged with overseeing the execution of this Plan (Strategy SF 7.1). The MPIC will work with the Responsible Lead to set up milestones for each assigned strategy and will report directly to the BOS. Additionally, Leads will report their progress directly to the BOS at periodic meetings (Strategy SF 1.1) and recommend refinements to the plan.



Boards, Commissions & Committees

Agricultural Commission (AC) to support and promote agriculture in the town of Winchendon.
7 members, 5 Alt. TM appointed

Audit Committee (ADC) shall review the audit plan with independent auditors and meet with independent auditors to discuss the audit and the annual financial reports.
5 members, 1 BOS, 1 FINCOM, 1 SC, 2 Community members

Board of Health(BOH) protect the health of the public and Winchendon residents by promoting a healthy community.
5 members, Elected

Board of Selectmen (BOS) are deemed to be the chief executive office in the Town and shall serve as the chief policy making agency.
5 members, Elected

Capital Planning Committee (CPC) considers requests for major equipment purchases and other capital projects and makes recommendations to the Town Manager and the town meeting.

7 members, 1 BOS, 1 SC, 1 FC, 1 PB, Moderator appointed

Communications Committee: (COM) The charge of the committee is to assist in expanding local access programming and the communications with the residents of the community.

7 members, BOS appointed

Conservation Commission (CONSCOM) responsible for the local administration and enforcement of the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act, the local Wetlands Protection Bylaw and lead Environmental Conservation initiatives.

5 members, BOS appointed

Council on Aging (COA) provides information and referral as well as support counseling regarding aging issues. - .7-11 members, BOS appointed

Cultural Council (CC) supports community-based projects in the arts, humanities and sciences.
19 members, BOS appointed

Finance Committee (FINCOM) investigates the financial affairs of the town; the methods in which the town business is conducted and the general conduct of town affairs for which town funds have been paid by the town treasury.

7 members, Town Moderator appointed

Historical Commission/Historic District (HC) is charged with the preservation, protection and development of the historical or archeological assets of the town.
5 members, BOS appointed

Winchendon Housing Authority (WHA) shall assess housing needs and provide programs to make affordable housing for families and elderly of low income.

5 members, 4 Elected, 1 State appointed

Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) determine the mission of the library and set the policies that govern the library
6 members, BOS appointed

Planning Board (PB) is responsible for land planning, Zoning Bylaws and Zoning Map; regulates land development according to the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Winchendon Zoning Bylaw, the Subdivision Rules and Regulations and the Site Plan Rules and Regulations.

5 members, 1 Alt. BOS appointed

Recreation Commission (RC) The primary function of the Commission is to expand and enhance the recreation opportunities for the residents of Winchendon
7 members, (includes 2 student) BOS appointed

School Committee (SC) is to enlighten, motivate and educate and provide a safe environment that promotes an appreciation of diversity and preparedness for the future.

5 members, Elected

Toy Town Community Partnership (TTCP) initiates projects that enhance the quality of life and the economic vitality of Winchendon.
9 Members, 2 Alt., TM appointed

Winchendon Community Park Infrastructure Committee (WCPIIC)

Maintain and enhance, with partners, the grounds of the park, including the trails and athletic fields. Maintain, where possible, the current and future structures located within the Winchendon Community Park.

5-7 members, TM appointed

Winchendon Community Park Programming Committee (WCPPC)

Actively encourage the use of the park to include: Building awareness of the park, Organizing programs, events, and activities, Engaging volunteers and partnering with local organizations, Coordinating with the Town Manager on policies and approvals regarding the usage of Town property, Identifying and securing financial and other support for the property.

5 members, TM appointed

Winchendon Redevelopment Authority (WRA) to create and maintain an economic and residential base that will attract new opportunities.

5 members, 4 TM appointed, 1 State appointed

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) hear all appeals or consider any matters referred to it under local regulations, acts as Special Permit Granting Authority, SPGA.

5 members, 3 Alt., BOS appointed



Town Departments

The Town Manager serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the community responsible for the day-to-day administration of the town's business and oversight of all municipal departments.

Accounting Department - provides accounting services to the Town and the School Systems. Among its major functions are the control of all receipts and disbursements of the Town. Other major departmental activities include the maintenance of the general ledger for all town and school funds and payroll for all town and school employees. In addition the department is responsible for account analysis and reconciliation, certification of availability of funds and ongoing financial monitoring of all contracts entered into by the town. Department Head: Joanne Goguen, Town Accountant

Animal Control - responsible for enforcing ordinances relating to the control, impoundment, and disposition of animals. Department Head: David Walsh, Police Chief

Beals Memorial Library - provides a free and open environment where all may gather for education, culture and information. The library seeks to inspire and encourage literacy, growth and lifelong learning. Department Head: Manual King, Library Director

Board of Assessors - is responsible for maintaining all appraised values for property tax purposes at current market levels as of each January 1. Annual preparation of the tax rolls and tax rate setting are primary services. To this end, deed, building permit and field review information is collected. Sales, property characteristic, ownership, legal description and mapping files are created for valuation development and public information purposes. The Board of Assessors also administers statutory agricultural, charitable and property tax exemption programs as well as property tax and motor vehicle abatement services. Staffed by RRG Group, Harald M. Scheid, Regional Tax Assessor

Building Department issues permits and schedules inspections for all building, plumbing, gas fitting, and wiring projects in the Town of Winchendon. The Building Department also upholds and enforces the Town's zoning by-laws, and is available to meet with citizens, architects, builders, realtors and others interested in building projects. Department Head: Geoff Newton, Building Inspector, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Collector/Treasurer's Office - is responsible for the efficient and timely billing and collection of all monies due the Town including: Real Estate Tax Excise, Motor Vehicle Tax, Personal Property Tax and Water Bill Payments as well as is responsible for the receipt of all Town monies and investments, all Tax Titles accounts, the administration of Town Meeting authorized debt, and the timely payment of all bills and payrolls of the Town. Department Head: Donna Spellman, Collector/Treasurer

Council on Aging - is to enrich the lives of the community senior population by providing educational programs, recreational activities, referral and social services assistance and to advocate for our seniors while educating the community of the needs of its elderly. Department Head, Shiela Bettro, Director Council on Aging

Emergency Management - management of the resources and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies (preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery). The aim is to reduce the harmful effects of all hazards, including disasters. EMS Director, James Abare

Fire/EMS Department - protects life and property through emergency response and non-emergency assistance, and to promote public safety through inspection, enforcement, and education. Department Head, Thomas Smith, Fire Chief





Health Department – enforces regulations and conducts inspections to accomplish the goal of maintaining, protecting and improving the health, safety and well-being of the people of Winchendon. Department Head: James Abare, Health Agent

Planning and Development - serves as the town's chief planning and development office. The department provides staff to the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Winchendon Redevelopment Authority, and the Toy Town Community Partnership; assists businesses and developers with financial and regulatory issues; prepares and updates municipal planning documents and administers assorted development activities. The Department leads the administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other grant programs. Department Head: Tracy Murphy, Director of Planning & Development

Police Department - maintains public order and safety, enforces the law, and prevention, detection, and investigation of criminal activities. Department Head: David Walsh, Police Chief

Public Works Department - The Public Works / Utilities Department is responsible for maintenance of streets and alleys, sidewalks, storm water and drainage ways, and traffic signage and signal control, provides internal support for the towns vehicle maintenance and facility maintenance needs. The department is made up of several divisions including highway, water/sewer, fleet maintenance, cemeteries and parks, solid waste transfer station, and the wastewater treatment plant. Department Head: Albert Gallant, Public Works Director

Registrar of Voters- are responsible for **maintaining an accurate voter list** and supervising all town, state and federal elections in a non-partisan and fair manner. Department Head: Wendy Stevens, Town Clerk

School Department - to ensure each student possesses the skills, knowledge and habits necessary to persevere and realize their unique potential to become contributing members of society. Department Head: Joan Landers, School Superintendent

Town Clerk - oversees all aspects of elections, voter registration, absentee balloting, early voting, certifies nomination papers and initiative petitions. The office maintains the voter list, street, school, and jury listings, records all vital records and sends information to the state. The Clerk assists with genealogical research through birth and death records of the town, recording & certifying all official actions of the Town. Town meeting, elections, Planning & Zoning Board decisions, administers the oath of office to all elected and appointed board and committee members and provides them with the States Open Meeting and Conflict of Interest laws, posting meetings of all government bodies, submitting bylaws and zoning amendments to the AG for approval, issuing marriage licenses, dog licenses, business certificates, burial permits and responds to inquiries from the general public. Department Head: Wendy Stevens, Town Clerk

Town Manager – The Town Manager, with the Board of Selectmen provides executive leadership for the Town of Winchendon. Together, provide an annual balanced operating government budget, pursue collaborative processes, ethical, and professional procedures to insure that Town resources are directed to providing the best services possible to protect public safety, public assets and a special quality of life in Winchendon. Department Head: Keith Hickey, Town Manager

Veteran' Services - Assists each veteran and their dependents through state and federal benefits and fulfills the obligations associated with the Veterans Bill of Rights, MGL ch 115 and 108 CMR (Code of Massachusetts Regulations). Department Head: Scott Gauthier, Veteran's Agent

Baseline Efforts – The fundamental tasks that establish the operating environment for the plan

Lead underlined

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy LU 1.2: Be proactive about preserving historic structures	<u>HC</u>
Strategy LU 1.3: Enforce the existing zoning while supporting the Planned Development zone's goal of walkable, mixed-use development.	PB, ZBA, <u>Zoning Enforcement</u>
Strategy LU 2.1: Continue pursuing competitive grants under the town's Green Communities designation	<u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy LU 2.2: Promote awareness among town residents about everyday sustainability practices	<u>CONSCOM</u>
Strategy LU 3.3: Identify and prioritize currently undeveloped focus areas and parcels for protection based on size, connectivity to existing protected lands, and bio-diversity (OSRP Obj. #1)	<u>CONSCOM</u>
Strategy LU 4.2: Support expansion of agricultural uses/ opportunities	<u>AC</u>
Strategy LU 4.4: Encourage environmentally responsible, sustainable agricultural-related operations in town (OSRP, Obj. #1, Action #5)	<u>AC</u>
Strategy OS 1.1: Continue to improve existing water quality of lakes and ponds through such strategies as upgrading or replacing failed septic systems, expansion of the sewer system, and incorporating this objective into municipal and regional plans (OSRP Obj. #1-2)	<u>BOH</u> , Town Manager, DPW, Planning & Development
Strategy OS 1.3: Protect current and future drinking water supplies (OSRP Obj. #3)	BOH, <u>CONSCOM</u> ,DPW
Strategy OS 3.1: Develop a network of neighborhood and school playgrounds and walking routes (OSRP Obj. #2)	<u>PC</u> ,SC
Strategy OS 3.2: Continue to expand the availability of athletic fields and other facilities, including a fitness course, while keeping maintenance within budget (OSRP Obj. #3)	BOS, <u>PC</u>
Strategy OS 3.3: Continue to reassess needs of all residents for activities and resources, and develop specific programs to meet those needs (OSRP Obj. #4)	BOS, <u>PC</u>
Strategy ED 1.4: Improve and strengthen the Town's Business Development website and business support services	TTCP,WRA, <u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 1.5: Ensure that permitting processes are transparent, prompt, reasonable, and consistent and consider assembling a comprehensive development permitting guidebook	<u>Town Manger</u> , Land Use, Planning and Development
Strategy ED 2.1: Establish identity to begin branding and place-making efforts in the downtown and signify its status as a distinct place and destination	<u>BOS</u>
Strategy ED 2.3: Promote smart growth and connectivity within the Town and coordinate circulation to find ways to get both residents and travelers into the downtown, rather than passing through	TTCP,WRA Town Manger, <u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 2.6: Improve prominent blighted downtown properties and those in gateway locations	TTCP, <u>WRA</u> , Planning & Development

Baseline Efforts

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy ED 2.7: Attract residents and visitors to local town, school and non-profit events and research how other communities have used local events to support their town's economic development	AC,CC, PC, SC,TTCP,WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 2.10: Hold town, school and non-profit events in the downtown to draw people in and increase the visibility of attractions and increase marketing of events, amenities, and businesses for Winchendon	AC,CC, PC, SC,TTCP,WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development,</u>
Strategy ED 2.13: Work towards increasing business diversity	AC,CC, PC,TTCP,WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 3.3: Expand efforts to develop and promote recreational opportunities in Winchendon	AC,CC, <u>PC</u> ,TTCP,WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 3.4: Promote Winchendon's existing natural, cultural, and historic resources and link efforts with Regional partners	AC,CC,HC, PC,TTCP,WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 4.1: Align education, vocational training and support services with opportunities available in the region and with the employment and business opportunities that Winchendon wants to attract	TTCP, WRA, <u>SC</u> <u>Town Manager,</u>
Strategy ED 4.2: Encourage and support transportation links to education, training, and job opportunities	BOS, WRA, <u>Town Manager, DPW, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 4.3: Encourage and support the entrepreneurial potential of our craftspeople, artists and artisans. Build a strong network of business support services and programs	<u>CC</u> , WHA, WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 5.1: Redevelop underutilized sites where infrastructure already exists. Investment and reuse of existing buildings will promote sustainable principles while capturing the character of the community	WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 5.2: Work to secure funding for brownfield remediation and redevelopment via the new Economic Development Committee	WRA, <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 5.5: Aggressively seek funding for road and infrastructure improvements. Town officials should seek federal and state funding for infrastructure improvements and continually press the MRPC for regular funding of local projects	<u>Town Manager, DPW, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy ED 5.6: Explore regionalization of services and marketing with neighboring towns	<u>BOS</u> , <u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy ED 5.7: Consider policies to encourage green development in commercial, industrial, and residential buildings and operations	PB, <u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy HO 1.2: Continue to partner with housing organizations to build more affordable housing	<u>WHA,WRA</u> , <u>Town Manager, Planning & Development</u>

Baseline Efforts

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy HO 2.1: Encourage more apartments above businesses downtown and on Central Street	WHA, WRA, <u>Town Manager</u> , Planning & Development
Strategy HO 3.1: Continue to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for housing rehabilitation	<u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy HO 4.3: Create more walking and biking trails	<u>PC</u>
Strategy HC 1.2: Implement preservation restrictions on historic properties to protect historic structures from being demolished or excessively altered	<u>HC</u>
Strategy HC 1.3: Find ways to prevent “demolition by neglect” – lack of investment in old buildings until they become so dilapidated that any kind of restoration is no longer feasible	<u>HC</u>
Strategy HC 2.2: Promote Winchendon’s industrial heritage through modern-day events that focus on invention and creativity	<u>CC</u> , HC, TTCP, WRA Planning & Development
Strategy HC 2.3: Use historic buildings and churches for cultural and civic events	AC, <u>CC</u> ,HC,TTCP,WRA
Strategy TR 2.3: Schedule free traffic counts with the MRPC to monitor traffic patterns over time and anticipate future improvements	<u>DPW</u>
Strategy TR 3.2: Continue to work with neighboring communities and regional entities to establish a regional trail network linking Winchendon to various recreational opportunities outside its borders	<u>PC</u> ,TTCP,WRA
Strategy TR 4.3: Continue to seek funding for infrastructure projects on Local Jurisdiction Federal Aid eligible roads through the MMPO TIP process, work with the MRPC and Mass DOT on projects and funding opportunities	PB, Town Manager, <u>DPW</u> , Planning & Development
Strategy SF 1.2: Continue to hold regular department head meetings to discuss resources, budgeting, personnel and other issues	Town Manager
Strategy SF 1.3: All boards and staff involved with permitting of land development should have regular meetings to discuss planning and development issues in the town	<u>Town Manager</u> , Land Use, Planning & Development
Strategy SF 2.1: Pursue regionalization opportunities to increase local government capacity and collaborate with nearby communities	BOS, <u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy SF 3.2: Create a plan for the Senior Center to meet increased demand for services that includes staffing and equipment	COA, <u>COA Director</u>
Strategy SF 4.1: Promote meetings, events and new information through coordinated use of the town website, as well as town and departmental social media platforms	Town Manager, <u>COM</u>
Strategy SF 6.1: Winchendon should continue exploring conservation measures and strategies for its municipal structures, as well as continue to apply for future competitive grant funds through the Green Communities program	<u>Town Manager</u> , Planning & Development
Strategy SF 6.2: Winchendon should continue planning for climate change resiliency and explore funding for the rehabilitation of municipal structures such as town owned dams as outlined in the Winchendon Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan.	FINCOM, CPC, <u>Town Manager</u> , DPW, Planning & Development

Baseline Efforts

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Lead, Contributors</u>
Strategy HW 1.1: Continue to build awareness of initiatives underway with updates on what is happening, how to get involved, and how this advances health & well-being for all in Winchendon	<u>COM</u> , Town Manager
Strategy HW 3.1: Coordinate with existing and planned Housing related strategies to build awareness of opportunities, needs and options; to build advocacy for these initiatives; and to stay current on these priorities	<u>WHA</u> , <u>WRA</u> , Town Manager, Planning & Development
Strategy CE 1.4: Continue citizen participation in meetings via appropriate communication platforms post-COVID-19 pandemic	BOS, Town Manager, <u>COM</u> , <u>IT</u>
Strategy CE 1.5: Consider methods to push official Town news to relevant media outlets	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 1.6: Partner with the Winchendon School District, Council on Aging, and other official and community groups to share Town information with their stakeholders	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 2.2: Charge departments and boards with identifying when collaboration is required to achieve a result and train them to post and seek such notices	Town Manager
Strategy CE 3.2: Pursue options with current or other providers to expand and improve access to broadband service	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 4.1: Encourage voter participation in local elections via all town controlled social media	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 4.3: Ensure key meetings are archived for public viewing	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 4.5: Expand outreach efforts to entice volunteers to join boards, commissions and committees using social media outlets and cable	<u>COM</u>

Actions that have low risk and/or certain reward, 0 – 2 years - **Short Term**

Strategy LU 3.1: Consider partnerships with conservation organizations such as Mass Audubon, North County Land Trust & Mt. Grace.	<u>CONSCOM</u>
Strategy LU 3.2: Consider participation in the State Community Preservation Act (CPA) program. The CPA allows municipalities to raise money through a tax surcharge, with state matching funds. Funds can only be used for open space, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation	<u>BOS</u> , <u>CONSCOM</u> , <u>HC</u> , <u>PB</u> , <u>PC</u> , <u>WCPC</u> , <u>WHA</u> ,
Strategy LU 3.4: Promote and institute land management practices to protect rare species and encourage an abundance of plant and animal populations (OSRP Obj. #2)	<u>CONSCOM</u>
Strategy LU 3.5: Educate the community to increase awareness of the value of the town's natural resources (OSRP Obj. #3)	<u>CONSCOM</u>
Strategy LU 4.1: Strategy LU 4.1: Update the inventory prime agricultural areas and work with a local land trust to preserve important farmlands (OSRP Obj. #1, Action 3)	<u>AC</u>

Short Term -

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy LU 4.3: Support efforts to create and promote “agritourism” and a “buy-local” campaign, as support for farmers’ markets (OSRP Obj. #1, Action #4)	AC
Strategy LU 5.1: Prioritize acquisition needs (OSRP Obj. #1)	AC, CONSCOM, PC,
Strategy HO 4.1: Strategy TR 1.2: Improve sidewalks and walkability. Make neighborhoods, especially downtown, more pedestrian-friendly through construction and rehabilitation of sidewalks	DPW
Strategy OS 1.2: Continue to protect the quality and quantity of wetland resources by continuing to improve enforcement of regulations that pertain to wetlands (OSRP Obj. #2)	CONSCOM
Strategy OS 2.3: Educate the community in regard to the availability, location and appropriate use of natural resource areas (OSRP Obj #3)	CONSCOM
Strategy OS 3.4: Publicize existing recreational resources and events. (OSRP Obj. #5) Include using digital media and applications to reach a wide audience	CONSCOM, CPC, PC, Town Manager
Strategy ED 1.1: Establish an Economic Development Committee to track and understand the Town’s economic needs and opportunities, help implement the Master Plan Economic Development goals and expand the tax base	BOS, WRA, Town Manager
Strategy ED 1.2: Solicit information from existing business owners regarding their level of satisfaction with Winchendon as the location for their operations to help determine future business needs in the community and plan ahead for necessary changes or improvements	TTCP, WRA, Town Manger, Planning & Development
Strategy ED 1.6: Adopt Massachusetts Chapter 43D allowing for expedited permitting on pre-approved parcels	PB, WRA
Strategy ED 2.5: Promote traffic safety and signage in the downtown area. Pursue funding for a traffic safety study through the MRPC’s Unified Planning Work Program. Consider simple methods of enhancing downtown streetscape, such as landscaping and way finding signage and information kiosks for visitors	WRA, DPW, Planning & Development
Strategy ED 2.8: Utilize existing committees to work towards implementing the UMass Downtown Winchendon Revitalization Strategy 2014 and the Urban Land Institute’s 2004 report, “Opportunity Abounds”	WRA, Town Manager, Planning & Development,
Strategy ED 2.9: Prepare a retail market study to determine the demand for various types of retail business, and determine if this demand is being met locally	WRA, Planning & Development
Strategy ED 2.11: Organize stakeholders into task forces or other groups to concentrate efforts into a particular cause or project	BOS, Town Manager
Strategy ED 2.12: Increase coordination between local businesses to increase business retention and support businesses	TTCP, WRA, Town Manager, Planning & Development
Strategy ED 3.1: Explore recreation and agriculture as a catalyst for economic development in towns similar to Winchendon	AG, TTCP, WRA, Town Manager, Planning & Development
Strategy ED 3.5: Leverage and build on initiatives such as HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Winchendon to build a sustainable food system in Winchendon and our region	AC, BOS, Town Manager
Strategy ED 3.6: Gather information from other communities who are building a food based economy and adapt for Winchendon	TTCP, WRA, Town Manager, Planning & Development

Short Term

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy ED 3.7: Strengthen our Agricultural Commission; evaluate expanding its mission as a Food Council	AC, Town Manager
Strategy ED 5.8: Pursue the installation of reliable high-speed Internet to all businesses, home businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices, and other public places	COM, Town Manager, IT
Strategy HO 1.1: Create a Housing Production Plan (HPP). HPPs give communities that are not yet in compliance with Chapter 40B the opportunity to show that they are making progress in constructing affordable housing. An HPP would also help the Town determine the projected housing needs of its current and future population	PB, WHA
Strategy HO 4.2: Promote the Safe Routes to School program to create safe, walkable infrastructure in residential neighborhoods, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails, and to educate children and parents about the benefits of walking or bicycling to and from school	SC, Planning & Development
Strategy HC 1.1: Reexamine the Winchendon Reconnaissance Report.	HC, Town Manager, Planning & Development
Strategy HC 1.4: Continue/expand efforts to identify, preserve and develop town owned assets as places that reflect our Town’s cultural heritage and that can contribute to the cultural and economic identity that is embodied in this master plan. Assets such as, Old Murdock/Senior Center, Ingleside/Winchendon Community Park, Beal’s Memorial Library, Town Hall, GAR Park.	CC, HC, PC, WCPC
Strategy HC 2.4: Encourage Winchendon Historical Commission members to seek out training in modern preservation tools that are available to them and to the Town	HC
Strategy TR 2.1: Analyze available traffic crash data from at least the past three years, focusing initially on areas with high crash rates	DPW, Town Manager
Strategy SF 1.1: Create quarterly meetings of all municipal boards, commissions and committees to be hosted by the Board of Selectmen, to help boards coordinate activities, reduce duplicative efforts, and promote a team-oriented approach to governance	BOS, Town Manager
Strategy SF 1.4: Prepare an updated organizational flow chart that depicts all municipal departments, boards, commissions, committees and ad-hoc committees and outlines which entity established them and which entity they report to, include the School Department	BOS, Town Manager
Strategy SF 1.5: Evaluate incorporating in house Geographic Information System (GIS) capabilities for multi-departmental use	IT Department
Strategy SF 2.2: Expand Information Technology (IT) capabilities	Town Manager, IT Department
Strategy SF 4.2: Improve two-way communication between citizens and government and create opportunities for citizens to provide feedback	BOS, COM, Town Manager
Strategy SF 4.3: Evaluate broadcasting or publishing quarterly “State of the Town” updates or conduct “Ask the Town Manager/School Superintendent” type of forum	COM
Strategy SF 5.1: Each board and committee in Winchendon’s Town Government should evaluate their purpose, strategies, options to expand participation	BOS, Town Manager
Strategy SF 7.1: Establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee	BOS, PB
Strategy HW 1.2: Ensure effective communication and coordination across initiatives to build an environmentally and economically sustainable food system for Winchendon	AC, BOS, TTCP, WRA, Town Manager, Planning & Development

Short Term -

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy HW 2.1: Research options that communities similar to Winchendon have used to meet transportation needs; identify what makes sense for Winchendon	DPW, Town Manager, <u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy HW 2.2: Evaluate and work to improve the effectiveness of existing transportation options, i.e. MART, CAC, Senior Center, Ride Share, etc.	DPW, Town Manager, <u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy HW 3.2: Research housing options that have been effective in other communities	<u>WHA, WRA, Planning & Development</u>
Strategy HW 4.1: Identify all the opportunities embodied in this master plan to build or strengthen connections. Engage community members in building and implementing a plan to activate priority opportunities	<u>BOS</u>
Strategy HW 4.2: Research effective options that have been used to engage and include people across demographics	<u>COM</u>
Strategy HW 4.3: Consider an ongoing communications/branding plan of working, building, creating, learning, and playing together and promote the benefits of such	<u>BOS, COM, Town Manager</u>
Strategy HW 4.4: Identify opportunities and strategies with existing organizations, civic and social groups, the schools, etc. to broaden and build connections	<u>BOS</u>
Strategy HW 4.5: Determine how to best integrate this goal and strategies with the MassUp HEAL Winchendon three-year grant initiative	<u>Planning & Development</u>
Strategy HW 5.1: Research workable options that have been used by other communities or regions to provide accurate, timely and accessible information to residents	<u>COM</u>
Strategy HW 5.2: Establish a committee or task force to coordinate the development, promotion and updating of this resource	<u>BOS, PB</u>
Strategy CE 1.1: Expand the role of the Communications Committee to include communications with residents across all forms of media	<u>BOS, Town Manager</u>
Strategy CE 1.2: Conduct a complete update or overhaul of the Town of Winchendon website	Town Manager, <u>COM, IT</u>
Strategy CE 1.3: Create and maintain a list of all Winchendon government social media accounts and ensure links to those accounts are readily available on the Town website	Town Manager, <u>COM, IT</u>
Strategy CE 2.1: Dedicate a section of the Town website targeted at easing cross-board communications	Town Manager, <u>COM, IT</u>
Strategy CE 2.4: Work with our elected state officials to ensure that meetings can continue to be held via Zoom post-pandemic, making changes to laws and regulations if required	<u>BOS, Town Manager</u>
Strategy CE 3.1: Identify currently available broadband options for town residents and business	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 3.3: Provide internet outside public buildings	<u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy CE 4.2: Simplify public access to live online meetings	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 4.6: Provide simplified descriptions of responsibilities and estimates of time commitments when soliciting for board, commission and committee members	<u>Town Manager</u>

Projects that take longer to achieve, need ongoing planning, or may require significant investment, 1-5 years - **Medium Term**

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy LU 1.1: Hold a public meeting where boards, committees, departments and the public get together to brainstorm ideas	BOS, Town Manager
Strategy LU 1.4: Strategy ED 5.4, Propose updated zoning bylaws and regulations which include increasing development density by supporting infill, small lot sizes and allowing more than one building per parcel	PB
Strategy LU 5.2: Identify key parcels for future acquisition to preserve quality and historic resources (OSRP Goal #4, Obj. #2)	CONSCOM, HC
Strategy LU 5.3: Develop long-range maintenance and funding programs (OSRP Obj. #2)	CONSCOM, Town Manager
Strategy OS 2.2: Identify areas for trail and open space linkages, including connecting routes to NH and other communities (OSRP Obj. #1)	CONSCOM, PB, PC
Strategy OS 4.1: Provide recreational access to water bodies in town (ex., Lake Monomonac, Whitney Pond and Millers River) (OSRP Obj.#1)	BOS, PC, TTCP, WRA
Strategy OS 4.2: Clean up Whitney Pond and pursue efforts to develop recreational opportunities at the Pond (OSRP Obj. #2)	FINCOM, CPC, CONSCOM Town Manager
Strategy ED 1.3 Encourage establishment of a local business association to give local businesspeople voice in the community	TTCP, WRA, Planning & Development
Strategy ED 2.4: Consider adopting design guidelines for development in areas with characteristics worthy of preservation	HC, PB
Strategy ED 3.2: Identify retail targets and properties for business development.	AC,PC, TTCP,WCPC,WRA,TM
Strategy ED 5.4: Conduct a review of Winchendon’s current zoning bylaws to determine their adequacy for accommodating desired land use and development	PB, Planning & Development
Strategy HO 1.3: Research avenues to address high vacancy rates	WHA, WRA, TM, Planning & Development
Strategy HO 2.2: Find ways to promote the use of the Open Space Residential Development (Cluster Development) Bylaw in new residential subdivisions, grouping proposed residential properties closer together, allowing the rest of the land to be used as communal open space	CONSCOM, PB
Strategy HO 2.3: Encourage development of tenant-run organizations in multi-family housing complexes.	WHA
Strategy HO 2.4: Explore creation of 55+ housing	WHA, Planning & Development
Strategy HC 1.5: Educate owners of historic properties about the importance of voluntarily maintaining structures against decay, deterioration, and structural damage to avoid possible loss of historic resources	HC
Strategy HC 2.1: Encourage the Winchendon History and Cultural Center to work to increase its online presence, and perhaps partner with Winchendon public schools to find students interested in assisting with research, cataloguing, and perhaps even grant writing	HC

Medium Term -

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
Strategy TR 1.1: Create a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan that will help identify major roadway travel routes, safety issues, signage, crosswalk and sidewalk needs, pavement marking needs	Town Manager, <u>DPW</u> , Planning & Development
Strategy TR 2.2: Implement traffic calming measures in downtown Winchendon per the 2014 Revitalization Strategy document	<u>DPW</u>
Strategy TR 3.1: Use existing (MRPC) information to complete a Trail Master Plan to inventory existing trails and open space and to create a Town-wide vision for expansion, management and funding, and acquisition of new properties	CONSCOM, <u>PC</u> , <u>PB</u> , <u>WCP</u> , Planning & Development
Strategy TR 4.1: Encourage the State to further investigate the condition of key bridges in the Town, and to make these bridges a funding priority	<u>DPW</u>
Strategy TR 4.2: Conduct and maintain an inventory of culverts and identify a mechanism to clean, repair, and update structures as needed	<u>DPW</u>
Strategy SF 3.1: Increase interaction between Beal's Memorial Library and Old Murdock Senior Center	<u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy SF 3.2: Create a capital plan for the Old Murdock Senior Center to meet increased growing demand for senior services (including staffing, equipment, and facility improvement)	CPC, <u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy SF 5.2 Prepare a handbook that details their policies and procedures. Offer board-sponsored training session to inform new members and promote active participation. Further, each entity should identify ongoing training opportunities for all members	<u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy HW 2.3: Work with our state and federal representatives to bring identified resources to Winchendon	<u>Town Manger</u>
Strategy CE 1.7: Consider a "live news" feed on the Town website, similar to the one maintained on the Winchendon Public Schools site	COM, <u>IT</u> , <u>Town Manager</u> ,
Strategy CE 3.4: Explore creation of additional internet service in underserved areas	<u>COM</u>
Strategy CE 3.5: Engage with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute to qualify Winchendon for expanded broadband programs	<u>COM</u> , <u>IT</u>
Strategy CE 3.6: Seek support of elected state officials to ensure Winchendon is not left behind in broadband expansion	<u>Town Manager</u>
Strategy CE 4.4: Provide boards, commissions and committees with tools to improve citizen engagement in their efforts, through collaboration with Mass UP HEAL Winchendon as appropriate	<u>Town Manager</u>

Projects that require sustained, multiparty effort and significant investment, 2-10 years – **Long Term**

Strategy	Lead, Contributors
<p>Strategy OS 2.1: Expand North Central Pathway and Town trails (OSRP Obj. #2 & 4)</p>	<p>CONSCOM, <u>PC</u>, TTCP, WCPC, WRA, Planning & Development</p>
<p>Strategy OS 5.1: Identify necessary maintenance and site improvements as appropriate and enhance the visual quality of existing town open space, such as Town Commons or Militia Training Field (OSRP Obj. #1)</p>	<p><u>PC</u></p>
<p>Strategy OS 5.2: Seek to acquire properties to improve downtown open space and recreational opportunities, such as pocket parks and highly visible locations for public concerts and movies (OSRP Goal #6, Obj. #1)</p>	<p><u>PC</u></p>
<p>Strategy ED 2.2: Evaluate options to address the high cost of rents in downtown</p>	<p><u>Town Manager</u>, Planning & Development</p>
<p>Strategy ED 5.3: Identify new areas for business development and consider expanding existing infrastructure to promote new economic development</p>	<p><u>PB</u>, WRA, <u>Town Manager</u>, Planning & Development</p>
<p>Strategy CE 2.3: Work with other municipalities to understand best practices already in place, and lobby with them for desired changes in laws and regulations if appropriate</p>	<p>BOS, <u>Town Manager</u></p>



View from Winchendon Community Park
Source: Photo courtesy of Jane LaPointe



North Central Pathway
Source: Google Image

Acknowledgements

Master Plan Committee

This document would not have come to fruition without the hard work, dedication and perseverance of all former and current Master Plan Committee Members.

1. Jane LaPointe
2. Greg Vine
3. Arthur Amenta
4. Elaine Mroz
5. Jill Sackett
6. Penny Maliska
7. Doneen Durling
8. Corey Bohan
9. Mary Harrington
10. Lionel Cloutier
11. David Whitaker
12. Brian Dickens
13. James Halloran

Contributor

Marc Dorwart

Planning Board

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1. Guy Corbosiero (Chair)
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