

AGENDA

Lexington Planning Board

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

Held fully remote through Zoom link available here:

<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/377/Access-Virtual-Meetings>

6:00 PM

Board Administration

- 1. LexingtonNEXT Comprehensive Plan Final Review – Consideration of Plan Adoption**

Staff Reports

- 1. Staff Updates**

Adjourn



Meeting broadcast by LexMedia

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

LEXINGTON PLANNING BOARD

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

LexingtonNEXT Comprehensive Plan Final Review – Consideration of Plan Adoption

PRESENTER:

Staff, CPAC Co-Chairs, Planning
Board Discussion

ITEM NUMBER:

SUMMARY:

LexingtonNEXT Comprehensive Plan – Final Draft Review

The Planning Board will review a final Draft of the Comprehensive Plan. In 2018, Lexington began the process of updating the 2002-2003 Comprehensive Plan. A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range planning document used as a guide for future decision making. The Planning Board established a 12-member Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) to spearhead this community planning effort. From 2018-2021, the CPAC, working with staff and Consultants, held several events, stakeholder interviews, public forums, and public meetings to gather input from the community. The information received was used to create the Plan's background and recommendations into a first draft of the Comprehensive Plan in late 2021.

In spring 2022, the CPAC forwarded the second draft of the Plan (Volume I) to the Planning Board, which was reviewed by the Planning Board and the community over a series of meetings this past summer. Comments received on the spring-summer drafts have been considered and incorporated into this Final Draft. The Planning Board will consider adoption of the Comprehensive Plan "The Plan - Volume I".

The complete Comprehensive Plan, history, and more information can be found on the Town's website here: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/816/Draft-Comprehensive-Plan>

SUGGESTED MOTION:

Staff will be asking the Board to adopt the final Plan (Volume I). The Board may consider making further revisions at the meeting.

Move to adopt the LexingtonNEXT the Comprehensive Plan (Volume I) as revised through September 28, 2022 including any revisions made this evening and a final editing and formatting check.

FOLLOW-UP:

DATE AND APPROXIMATE TIME ON AGENDA:

9/28/2022

ATTACHMENTS:

Description		Type
<input type="checkbox"/>	Summary of Changes	Cover Memo
<input type="checkbox"/>	Final Draft LexingtonNEXT	Exhibit



Town of Lexington

PLANNING BOARD

1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Lexington, MA 02420

Tel (781) 698-4560

planning@lexingtonma.gov

www.lexingtonma.gov/planning

Robert D. Peters, Chair
Michael Schanbacher, Vice Chair
Melanie Thompson, Clerk
Robert Creech, Member
Charles Hornig, Member
Michael Leon, Associate Member

Memorandum

To: Planning Board Members

From: Abby McCabe, Planning Director

Date: September 22, 2022

Re: Summary of Plan Changes for Volume I (The Plan) – Changes since summer drafts

On September 14, 2022, an updated Draft of the Comprehensive Plan was published on the Town's website and provided to Planning Board members for your review on Wednesday, September 28.

Staff and the Co-Chairs of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee will present the updated Plan to the Planning Board. The most up-to-date Draft Comprehensive Plan and previous drafts, can be found on the Town's website: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/816/Draft-Comprehensive-Plan>

Below is a summary highlighting the major changes since the drafts were reviewed at the Planning Board meetings between June – August. A copy of the revised goals with the track changes on in "redlined" is shown in the right column for reference purposes but does not highlight formatting changes.

General changes:

- Letters added to potential actions for ease of referencing
- Vision for Lexington group was added as potential partner in strategies (Diversity, Economic Vitality)
- Final editing check

Introduction/Plan Foundation and Executive Summary –

- Added explanation that the "Lexington Voices" sections contain quotes throughout the plan that represent opinions of individuals that participated in the planning process
- Executive Summary – expanded on housing section on page 3 and revised the section on race and equity on page 4

Goal 1: Diversity

- Updated the introductory narrative significantly to improve the tone

- Added a note under Goal 1 at the start of the implementation plan (p. 17) that diversity, equity, and inclusion lens was used throughout the plan as a key theme and actions may be more expansive in other sections.
- Added Vision for Lexington Committee as a partner for Strategy 1.5.3 (Improving community & town engagement)
- Added new actions in 1.2.7 for surveying
- Added new action in 1.4.3 for public bidders to disclose stats on project teams

Goal 2: Housing

- Updated the introduction narrative, referenced sources, and added clarity to the subsidized housing inventory and below market housing figures and the actual number of affordable units after confirmation with the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Director.
- Removed the word “family” and used “household”, replaced the term “affordable” with “subsidized” which refers to housing with price restrictions
- Removed use of the word “attainable”
- Re-worded the objectives to be more clear and concise
- Added in the Town Meeting Resolution on System Racism
- Actions in 2.1.1 were removed that were redundant to the first action about mixed use
- Action in 2.1.4 about developing design guidelines was moved to strategy 2.1.2 about missing middle housing
- Removed strategy 2.1.4 about revising zoning and subdivision regulations to be compatible with existing neighborhoods and merged actions into other strategies
- Added action to amend the special permit residential development bylaw to be more consistent with the town’s housing goals to strategy 2.1.7
- Merged actions in 2.2.3 about funding sources for affordable housing
- Added action to develop a list of properties for acquisition for subsidized housing added to strategy 2.2.5
- Separated objective 2.4 and 2.5 to preserve homes that contribute to the diversity of housing options and preserve existing affordable housing units requested by the Housing Partnership Board
- Re-arranged some actions under different objectives that were more fitting than initial locations
- Merged some strategies where there was overlap
- Added new strategy 2.2.8. about updating the Special permit residential developments, which has been underway for a number of years. The current SPRD has produced housing not consistent with Goal 2.
- The action to require affordable units in perpetuity was added as an action in strategy 2.2.26 and expanded to include making the units at Katahdin Woods permanent affordable in strategy 2.2.6
- Added new strategy 2.3.2 for housing for older persons
- Separate strategy for intergeneration development removed captured in missing middle older persons strategies and 2.4.1

- Strategy 2.4.1 was relocated to a new objective 2.5 in strategy 2.5.1

Goal 3: Economic Vitality

- Added description about the visitor's center in the narrative
- Stronger and more concise language added
- Relocated some actions pertaining to the full town to 3.4 from strategy 3.1.1 which was for commercial manufacturing only
- Relocated strategy 3.4.4. for streamlining permitting from Objective 3.2 to 3.4 because it applies to all businesses and not just ones in the Center.
- In strategy 3.4.4 removed action to support pop up shops because it's already included in strategy 3.2 above
- Relocated action about modernizing neighborhood business districts under strategy related to improving commercial districts from the strategy about developing zoning
- Added the Tourism Committee and Vision for Lexington to several strategies

Goal 4: Sustainability & Resiliency

- Changed Object 4.1 to be "Become a net-zero emissions community" and removed the earlier reference to within 25 years
- Removed the references to large shade trees and tree policy actions and relocated them to Goal 5 Open Space & Natural Resources
- Added new actions in strategy 4.3.2

Goal 5: Open Space and Natural Resources

- Consolidated and merged some strategies together
- Vision for Lexington added as a partner to various strategies
- Added some background on the tree bylaw, the tree committee, and the stormwater management in the introductory text.
- Added background on balancing need for affordable housing and open space in last paragraph on page 5-7 to explain that the priorities should focus on need with reference to goal 2 that explains more about our clear need for more housing to reduce the cost of housing.
- Updated the objective 5.2 to be "protect open spaces in balance with other town needs such as housing" removed the word 'affordable'

Goal 6: Historical Resources:

- Added more in the introduction about Neighborhood Conservation Districts
- Added more in the introduction about Lexington's history and whose history has not been told by adding more on demographics, which is the basis for Strategy 6.3.4 to Increase awareness of Native Americans, Black Americans, Asian Americans, and women in the history
- Added new potential action under 6.3.4 to analyze this history
- Relocated strategy about preserving Lexington's oldest buildings to Objective 6.1

- Added new potential actions related to Conservation Restrictions and Archaeological surveys on private properties for Strategy 6.1.7 to Explore options for protecting historic landscape features, such as stone walls, scenic roads, and heritage trees.
- Added new potential action to evaluate the existing boundaries for the Historic Districts under Strategy 6.1.8 to identify options for preserving Lexington's very oldest historic buildings and landscape features.

Goal 7: Transportation:

- Added definition for micro-mobility on page 7-5 under biking and in footnote 12 on page 7-17
- Added in Bicycle Advisory Committee and Transportation Advisory Committee's changes
- Many strategies were re-arranged to be under more appropriate objectives

Goal 8: Recreation and Community Gathering:

- Action related to a gym at the community center from the Public Facilities section was relocated to goal 8
- Added new Strategy 8.1.5 for playing fields at Old Harrington School which was relocated from public facilities goal 9
- Removed some references to the dog park in the introduction because it was over-represented in the introduction
- Moved strategy related to improving the Town Center to first strategy under objective 8.2

Goal 9 Public Facilities:

- Strategy 9.1.3 to Develop a timeline and re-affirm commitment for creating playing fields on the property of the Old Harrington School was moved to the Recreation and Community Gathering goal 8.
- New strategy 9.3.3 for Environmental Services (trash, recycling services) was added to Object 9.3 "Maintain and replace Town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand."
- New strategy 9.3.4 to Identify private infrastructure needs and ways to address these (power, communication, gas) was added to Objective 9.3 "Maintain and replace Town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand."
- All of Objective 9.5 Continue to support on-going efforts to improve town-wide communication and to encourage broader participation in decision-making.
- Strategies 9.5.1 – 9.5.3 relocated to the Diversity Inclusion section.

Goal 10 Land Use

- Added more about planning first and zoning analysis, separated, changed order or strategies

Implementation

- Shortened, removed commitments to specific reviews timeframes

September 2022



VOLUME I: THE PLAN

TOWN OF LEXINGTON: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LEXINGTON NEXT



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Richard Canale, former Member
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Town Staff

Carol Kowalski, Assistant Town Manager for Development
Amanda Loomis, former Planning Director
Molly Belanger, Town Planner
Abby McCabe, Planning Director
Sheila Page, Assistant Planning Director

Consultant Team

Daphne Politis, Community Circle
Martha Lyon, Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC

Alison LeFlore, Stantec for mapping
Sarabrent McCoy, Stantec for mapping

Also a special thank you to all who participated: residents, business and property owners, Town staff, and other stakeholders. Your participation enriched the process and resulted in more relevant and meaningful recommendations.

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DRAFT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Comprehensive Plan, referred to as LexingtonNext, serves as a policy document and foundation for local government direction on land use, physical development, and related areas, including impacts and consequences for climate change, diversity, and equity. It provides a tool for planners and local officials to address community priorities in land use planning and investment. A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range plan typically updated every 10-15 years.

The Comprehensive Plan (Plan) process provides an opportunity to:

- take stock;
- reflect on past accomplishments;
- identify changes in community demographics, the environment, expectations, and attitudes;
- identify shared values;
- articulate a vision for the future; and
- define new goals for achieving that vision.

LexingtonNext is based on significant public outreach and reflects the town's shared community values and goals. It conveys to existing and potential future residents, business owners, and others, the community Lexington is and wants to be and helps the Town prepare for change, bounce back from unforeseen challenges, and cherish what we treasure. It is a clear roadmap for those who would like to make improvements and it bolsters the confidence of grant funders and investors by increasing certainty and predictability.

The Plan covers the following topic areas or goals:

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Housing
- Economic Vitality
- Sustainability and Resiliency
- Open Space and Natural Resources
- Historic Resources
- Recreation and Community Gathering
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Land Use

Although planning practice for Comprehensive Plans has expanded over time to include areas such as Public Health and Wellness, Governance, Arts and Culture, and Technology and Innovation, this Plan is deliberately focused on the physical environment. This decision is in keeping with state law, community input, and reflects the strength of Lexington's municipal bodies, community organizations, and institutions in addressing Town needs.

LexingtonNext is organized in three volumes:

- Vol I: The Plan
- Vol II: Inventory and Assessment of Existing Resources
- Vol III: Documentation of Public Input

Outreach and Participation

LexingtonNext is the result of extensive public engagement. In addition to an active Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) and a Project Website, multiple engagement techniques were used to educate and engage the community and to identify issues and opportunities. Information was gathered through more than seventeen events, surveys, social pinpoint, forums, and over 60 interviews with community leaders and staff.

Input from other relevant forums in Lexington was reviewed as were other planning documents, the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, and resources from other organizations in town.

Key Issues and Priorities

Based on the data gathered, residents identified the following priorities for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Maintaining and respecting Lexington's sense of "place" as a community with significant historical and natural resources, excellent public schools, and robust town services;
- Supporting the vitality of the Town Center and Lexington's smaller commercial areas through a vibrant mix of businesses;
- Increasing transportation options;
- Evaluating opportunities for mixed residential and business uses in commercial areas; and
- Diversifying housing options in terms of both cost and type of housing.

Public Events to gather input on priorities

2018

- Kick-off event
- 3 World Cafés

2019

- Discovery Day
- Workshop
- Historic Resources and Preservation Existing Conditions Trends Presentation
- Economic Development Existing Conditions Trends Presentation
- Transportation Existing Conditions Trends Presentation
- Housing Existing Conditions Trends Presentation
- Demographics Existing Conditions Trends Presentation

2020

- February Open Space, Recreation, and Natural Resources Public Forum

2021

- Re-Discovery Day
- June Public Forum (virtual)
- September Housing Public Forum (virtual)
- October Economic Vitality Forum(virtual)
- Social Pinpoint Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews

2022

- Planning Board and Public Review of Draft Implementation and Goals (Summer)

August, 2022

In addition to these priorities there is a strong emphasis in all elements and goals to advance racial and social equity and promote environmental sustainability.

Context Shifts in Lexington

Notable Changes since the 2003 Comprehensive Plan

- Significant investment in Town-owned facilities
- Major redevelopment of existing housing stock
- Significant increase in:
 - Asian population
 - Aging population
 - Young children
 - Median income
- Hiring of:
 - Public Information Officer/Director of Communications
 - Sustainability and Resilience Officer
 - Chief Equity Officer
- Creation of:
 - Human Rights Committee
 - Commission on Disability
- Enhanced sustainability goals
- Town Meeting commitment to view all plans through an equity lens

Housing

Lexington has seen home prices rise by an astronomical amount, with median home prices more than tripling between 2009 and 2019 to well over a million dollars. Median income is the sixth highest in Massachusetts while older residents on limited incomes are struggling to remain in town. The community expressed increasing concern that the lack of socio-economic diversity among residents' stifles diversity on other fronts. Only 5.5% of Lexington's housing units are restricted to below market rate prices, creating years-long wait lists for housing for lower income individuals and families. Lexington's zoning does not match its housing needs because housing types such as multi-family dwellings are prohibited or severely limited.

National changes

Since the last Lexington Comprehensive Plan (2003), the community's top concerns have not significantly shifted, only grown more acute. This urgency arose in large part from significant national crises that occurred during the course of development of LexingtonNext:

- The global COVID 19 pandemic
- Increased attention to institutional racism

August, 2022

- The undeniable climate crisis of global warming

Each of these events have impacted what we heard and have become cross-cutting themes throughout the Plan.

COVID 19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic influenced community priorities in many ways and highlighted:

- An increased appreciation for open spaces, recreational facilities, trails, parks, and the Bikeway;
- A need to address increased demand for non-traditional working spaces including home offices and shared workspaces;
- The need for emergency preparedness, specifically for town facilities and services; and
- Concern for the health of local businesses and dining establishments, and a need to find creative ways to attract patrons back to in-person shopping and dining.

Race

Many residents expressed concern about the lack of racial diversity in Lexington and the lack of community support for people that are not white or are part of historically marginalized groups. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and other Black Americans at the hands of police officers in major US cities were at the forefront of the news during development of LexingtonNext. Black Americans, other racial groups, immigrants, persons with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) persons experienced these traumas and, along with their allies, advocated for equality and equity. As a result, a wider audience began talking about systemic racism and how to be more inclusive. The racially motivated attacks on Black Americans and Asian Americans during the pandemic further highlighted the need to address racial inequities across our local community at an institutional level. A Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a basis for decision making regarding a community's long-term physical development — equity impacts should be considered in all municipal and land-use related decision making. It is critical to analyze who benefits and who does not benefit from municipal decision making. While inclusivity was always considered in Plan development, the events of 2020 made clear the need for a separate element that became Goal 1, Diversity and Inclusion. Lexington's history of exclusion with high housing costs, one-family housing, and lack of public transportation have contributed to Lexington's current lack of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.

Climate Crisis

In 2021, Lexington took bold action to address the climate crisis:

- The Annual Town Meeting adopted an innovative bylaw regulating fossil fuel infrastructure.

A Special Town Meeting amended the zoning bylaw to make it easier to build solar energy systems.

From the June 15, 2021 LexingtonNext virtual forum poll and chat comments:

"We need to develop tools to understand why some diverse communities such as the black community are not choosing Lexington and work on addressing those issues."

"The national racial reckoning has been interesting. Conversations have been front and center and prompted me to read and listen much more. I hope organizations like towns like ours take this movement forward with bold policies."

"The diversity is quite wide by ethnicity, other than perhaps black/Latinx, but the big problem is economic inequality."

"Encourage people to get to know their neighbors, and to actively meet and get to know people of different backgrounds/skin color."

"Understand that we all do better when we all do better and its corollaries: I do better when you do better."

"Concerned about the lack of discussion on DEI for future Lexington."

"The Town may want to look at its budget through a DEI lens."

"...everything we do needs to be looked at with an equity and climate change impact lens!"

"I suggest broadening what we mean by "racial reckoning" and being inclusive of all kinds of social justice."

"...we need to figure out how to equalize things a bit better."

Vision and Goals

Vision Statement

The Town of Lexington prides itself on being a vibrant community where residents place a high value on learning at all ages. Lexington's historic buildings and landscapes, many open spaces and trails, excellent schools, high quality public facilities and services, and proximity to Boston make it an attractive place to live, work, and play. Lexington is committed to maintaining and expanding social and civic connections for current residents, people that work in Lexington, future residents, and people visiting.

This Comprehensive Plan Update envisions a town that fosters a sense of belonging for all. By actively engaging in dialogue to balance issues related to housing, access and transportation, climate change, economic vitality, open spaces, natural resources, and more, we strive to create a community that:

- provides an environment that enables a diverse population of people to live, work, and thrive;
- encourages a flourishing business community that contributes to the town's financial stability and offers excellent local employment opportunities;
- cultivates a wide range of exceptional recreational, cultural, educational, and social opportunities that support creativity and innovation;
- sustains our natural resources and fosters an ecologically balanced community;
- offers a variety of safe, accessible, and sustainable mobility options; and
- model stewardship and sustainability of the town's financial, human, information, and physical assets.

Goals and Objectives

The substance of the plan seeks to realize this vision through the following goals and objectives. As with any Comprehensive Plan, the goals of LexingtonNext are synthesized from:

- 1) public and stakeholder input,
- 2) consideration of the inventory and assessment of existing conditions and data collected, and
- 3) professional best practices, methods, and solutions from other jurisdictions, the planning profession, and other relevant disciplines (e.g., community development corporations).

GOAL 1.0: To promote the **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, and INCLUSION** of people visiting, living, and working in Lexington

- + Objective 1.1. Remove barriers to living in Lexington
- + Objective 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town
- + Objective 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities
- + Objective 1.4. Attract people of diverse backgrounds to work in town
- + Objective 1.5 Improve town-wide communication and encourage broader participation in decision-making

GOAL 2.0: To promote a wide range of **HOUSING** options that respond to the needs of households,

regardless of income and life stage

- + Objective 2.1. Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout town
- + Objective 2.2. Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing
- + Objective 2.3. Encourage housing for older persons
- + Objective 2.4. Protect the exterior of existing historically or architecturally significant homes
- + Objective 2.5. Preserve homes that contribute to the diversity of housing options
- + Objective 2.6. Increase the efficiency of housing efforts
- + Objective 2.7. Enable flexible use of housing to adapt to changing working and living arrangements
- + Objective 2.8. Make new and existing housing environmentally sustainable
- + Objective 2.9. Affirmatively further fair housing

GOAL 3.0: To promote a **VITAL ECONOMY**, including a variety of small and large businesses that contribute to the tax base and provide goods and services to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors

- + Objective 3.1. Encourage private redevelopment in large commercial areas, making them more exciting
- + Objective 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”
- + Objective 3.3. Create a walkable, bikeable, and aesthetically pleasing East Lexington commercial area
- + Objective 3.4. Retain and support existing businesses and evaluate opportunities for commercial growth in strategic locations.
- + Objective 3.5. Develop sustainable tourism practices to support the independent businesses, arts, cultural and historic organizations, and characteristics of the town’s commercial areas
- + Objective 3.6. Support “talent driven economic development”

GOAL 4.0: To enhance quality of life, health, and safety by implementing practices and policies that enhance **SUSTAINABILITY** and **RESILIENCY** in our community

- + Objective 4.1. Become a net-zero emissions community
- + Objective 4.2. Improve the resiliency of town-owned assets and infrastructure
- + Objective 4.3. Reduce transportation emissions by improving sustainable transportation options and reducing single occupancy vehicle trips

GOAL 5.0: To protect **OPEN SPACES** and **NATURAL RESOURCES** and to enhance their connections

- + Objective 5.1. Conserve natural resources
- + Objective 5.2. Protect open spaces in balance with other town needs such as housing
- + Objective 5.3. Connect open spaces
- + Objective 5.4. Incorporate natural resource and open space protection measures into the town's sustainability and resiliency goals

GOAL 6.0: To protect, preserve, and promote awareness and appreciation of Lexington's **HISTORIC** and **CULTURAL RESOURCES** from throughout its history

- + Objective 6.1. Protect historic buildings and structures from demolition and decay
- + Objective 6.2. Plan and prioritize historic preservation policies and funding
- + Objective 6.3. Increase public awareness of Lexington's important historic resources

GOAL 7.0: To make **TRAVELING** into, out of, and within Lexington safe, pleasant, and efficient with sustainable and equitable mobility options for all ages and abilities

- + Objective 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life
- + Objective 7.2. Expand options for walking, biking, and micro-mobility
- + Objective 7.3. Improve parking strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals
- + Objective 7.4. Expand transit options
- + Objective 7.5. Adopt land use policies that advance the town's transportation goals
- + Objective 7.6. Increase public awareness and community pride in use of alternative modes of travel

GOAL 8.0 To improve and expand facilities for **RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING** to support holistic wellbeing, a sense of belonging, enhanced community connections, fun, and to build community through social engagement

- + Objective 8.1. Improve and expand recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of the town
- + Objective 8.2. Maintain, expand, and promote opportunities for both formal and informal community gathering spaces
- + Objective 8.3. Consider all residents when planning improvements or additions to public and community spaces

GOAL 9.0: To provide well maintained, updated, inclusive, and sustainable **PUBLIC FACILITIES** to serve and meet community needs.

- + Objective 9.1. Maintain and improve educational facilities to create up to date environments for all students, faculty, and staff
- + Objective 9.2. Ensure that town-owned buildings support programmatic needs and effectively meet the changing needs of the town
- + Objective 9.3. Maintain and replace town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand
- + Objective 9.4. Address sustainability and climate impacts in renovation of existing and new facilities

GOAL 10: To support and advance Goals 1-9 through wise LAND USE PLANNING.

- + Objective 10.1. Meet municipal land use needs
- + Objective 10.2. Meet other land use needs

The Plan Structure

The chapters in Volume I outline each of the goals in more detail. They include:

- A brief summary of existing conditions highlighting key issues (for a full inventory of existing conditions see Vol. II);
- A summary of community input;
- An overview of related Town of Lexington Goals and Objectives from other Municipal Organizations and Committees; and
- An implementation table that identifies Potential Actions, Responsible Parties, partners, and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and help to achieve the goal.

The Plan is not a legal document and is aspirational. Under each goal, recommendations and action items for achieving the goal are listed in the order of the time frame in which they might be implemented, based on complexity of implementation and requirements for coordination with other recommendations and actions. The order does not imply priority.

Implementation

Implementing a plan means focusing on the vision and goals expressed within it and following through on its objectives and strategies. It is an on-going, long-term process requiring significant effort and the cooperation of multiple parties, including many volunteers.

Critical to achieving the goals of the Plan is engagement from the Town regarding the goals and objectives, continued reference to the Plan, and regular evaluation of progress.

The Plan is intended to be a “living” document. Opportunities will arise that align with the Plan’s goals but were not foreseen when it was completed. The Implementation section of the plan expresses the steps to realize the goals from today’s vantage point.



SECTION 1: PLAN FOUNDATION- SETTING THE STAGE

OVERVIEW

The following introductory section includes:

- Comprehensive Plan Purpose
- Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
- Planning Process
- Lexington Voices (Public Process)
- Community Priorities
- Vision
- Comprehensive Plan Goals
- Key Cross-cutting Underlying Themes
- Guiding Principles
- Inventory and Assessment of Existing Resources
- Potential COVID Impacts (short and long term)

The Lexington's Comprehensive Plan is presented in three volumes:

Volume I: The Plan

Volume II: Inventory and Assessment of Existing Resources

Volume III: Public Engagement Documentation of Lexington Voices

This section is the Introduction to Volume I.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of a municipal comprehensive plan is multi-pronged. A Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity for the community to take stock of existing resources, their condition, and the degree to which they are meeting the community's needs. It also presents an opportunity to identify common values, articulate a shared vision of a desired future, and create a roadmap for fulfilling the vision. This helps to build community consensus. Having a plan also communicates the town's priorities and what it considers to be

This comprehensive plan is intended to guide decisions and actions over the next twenty years. In effect, it is the town's "To Do List" for the next generation. While recommended actions are to be led by town government, partnership with local businesses, non-profits, and others is essential.

desirable to residents and business owners, future residents, and potential investors. Having a completed and updated comprehensive plan also makes a municipality eligible and more competitive for a number of grant programs.

Lexington's previous comprehensive plan was completed in 2003. The state recommends updating the plan every ten years. Once adopted, the Comprehensive Plan will provide a basis for decision making regarding physical development for Lexington.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At the start of the effort, the town appointed a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC), a twelve-person, citizen-based entity to oversee the planning process. Members represented each of the nine voting precincts; several members also held seats on other Town boards and committees or served as members of Lexington's Town Meeting.

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) met 34 times over a five-year period.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process began in 2018 and continued through 2022. During this time several interruptions occurred which delayed its completion, including changes in leadership, the involvement of several consultants, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The planning process had three main components:

- A **public engagement process**, engaging the community in a conversation to identify shared values, desires, and concerns



to generate a vision and related set of goals and objectives forming the foundation of the plan

- An **inventory and assessment of the town's resources** in order to understand existing conditions and future needs

- An **implementation plan** organized around the goals and objectives, identifying strategies and potential actions to achieve the goals and shared vision.

LEXINGTON VOICES (PUBLIC PROCESS)

A wide range of stakeholders took part in the public process, including residents, business owners, and town staff. Opportunities for input included three World Café forums¹, three additional forums, a social media platform, and an on-line survey. Flyers, e-mail blasts, social media, newspaper and newsletter announcements, and postings on the town website, all affixed with a specially designed “LexingtonNEXT” logo, alerted the public to these opportunities. The values, desires, and concerns collected from these events and activities shaped a vision and set of goals, forming the basis upon which the comprehensive plan is built.

The process began with a series of public forums in a format referred to as World Café.² Three such forums, held in the fall of 2018, solicited input from the more than 120 participants. Detailed notes recorded the conversations; these were analyzed according to topics and summarized in the pages that follow.

Key concerns included a need for affordable and less expensive housing and housing appropriate and affordable to older adults; a desire for alternative modes of transportation, specifically walking and biking infrastructure; a need to diversify commercial activity and the importance of Lexington Center; a lack of racial, ethnic, and socio-

¹ World Café forums are designed to support small group discussions among participants with the intention of identifying values, desires, concerns, potential disagreements, etc.

economic diversity; strong support for the schools; support for open space, recreational, and natural resources; and support for Town efforts to address climate change and sustainability.

Community conversations started in 2018 and resumed in 2021. Intervening events increased awareness and subsequent prioritization of specific issues. These include the COVID-19 pandemic; the murder of George Floyd, which further highlighted the urgent need to emphasize equity planning; and severe weather events, showing the need for sustainability and climate change resilience.

The “Lexington Voices” sections contain a series of quotes or statements throughout the plan. These represent opinions recorded during outreach efforts and do not reflect an overall consensus of the community. They represent:

- What was heard most frequently during the public process;
- Ideas that reflect key themes of the community conversation;
- A unique idea that is in the spirit of key themes of the community conversation; and
- Alternative points of view.



LEXINGTON NEXT FALL 2018 PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENTS

Lexington Next is our Comprehensive Plan update. It will lay out a vision for the town's future by codifying the goals for land use and guiding the work of town bodies. In all areas of the plan, we will be guided by these principles:

- Livable Community
- Accessible and Connected Community
- Harmony with Nature
- Healthy and Socially Responsible Community
- Vital and Resilient Economy
- Good Governance



WHAT IS A WORLD CAFÉ?

Fun, interactive meetings designed build connections between participants and facilitate productive conversations in small groups. In rotating groups of 4-3, we asked people to discuss a series of questions about values, wants, needs, concerns, and tensions. Three meetings were held:

- September 25th at Cary Memorial Hall
- October 23rd at Estabrook Elementary
- November 27th at the Lexington Community Center

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

We talked with more than 120 people between three World Cafés about roughly 60 topics facing Lexington. To help digest these conversations, we've organized categories and picked out some highlights. The graphic recordings and detailed notes from these meetings can be found on the plan website.

LAND USE (50 COMMENTS)

- 50% mentioned zoning regulations, with most identifying them as a concern and a priority.

HOUSING (169 COMMENTS)

- 56% referenced creating and maintaining affordable housing options, including 22% specifically about affordability for seniors.

TRANSPORTATION (203 COMMENTS)

- Across a wide variety of issues, 20% talked about bike infrastructure, 17% about traffic, and 14% about walkability.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VITALITY (137 COMMENTS)

- Across a wide variety of comments, 31% referenced the importance of the Town Center and 26% on the need for diversity in commercial development.

DEMOGRAPHICS (105 COMMENTS)

- Most conversations centered around ethnic (45%) and economic diversity (33%), both as areas of concern, with some positive progress identified regarding ethnic diversity.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS (163 COMMENTS)

- 45% mentioned public schools, focusing on value and the need to plan for the future. Town facilities of all types are highly valued.

CULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES (112 COMMENTS)

- 70% of comments dealt with 'traditional' resources—open space, conservation areas, parks, and recreation facilities. Residents also consider climate change resilience and sustainability a core component of the Town's work.

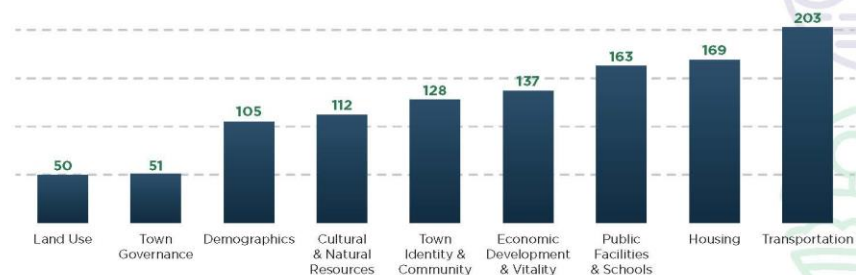
TOWN IDENTITY & COMMUNITY (128 COMMENTS)

- Residents highly value the sense of community, history, and civic participation in Lexington, with 75% of comments valuing, seeing progress in, and prioritizing these items.

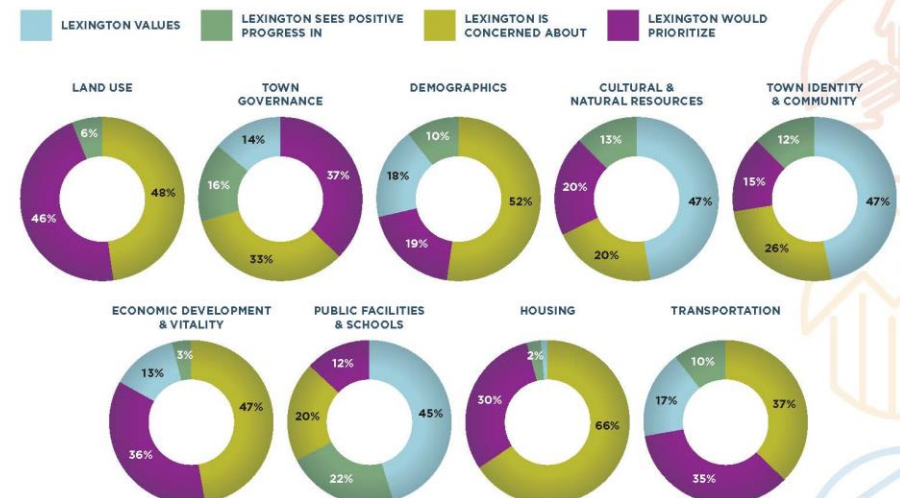


LEXINGTON NEXT FALL 2018 PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENTS

NUMBER OF COMMENTS PER CATEGORY



TOPICS BY THE NUMBERS



LEARN MORE, TAKE A SURVEY, AND FIND OUT ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS AT LEXINGTONMA.GOV/LEXINGTONNEXT

After the World Café community conversations, additional public forums were held to dig deeper into desires and concerns and update the vision and goals. These forums confirmed that residents continue to hold the same values and concerns with a stronger sense of urgency or priority; these include a greater interest in:

- diversity, equity and inclusion
- housing options, including less expensive housing
- sustainability and climate change resilience
- the economic vitality of commercial districts

The comprehensive plan reflects these focus areas in a number of ways, including using guiding principles to formulate and evaluate recommendations and articulating the community's priorities through intentionally worded goal statements. Additional public forums were organized around the housing and economic vitality elements in order to gather input on these specific issues and concerns.

"Everything we do needs to be looked at with an equity lens."
(public forum participant)

The murder of George Floyd in 2020 resulted in a national outcry, heard throughout Lexington with vigils, demonstrations, and Black Lives Matter signs on many lawns. In subsequent community conversations there was a strong call to action for more racial diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in how the town operates as well as who lives, works, and visits Lexington. Participants in the public forums repeatedly identified DEI as a priority.

"Sustainability and net zero are urgent goals for our survival."
(public forum participant)

Climate change has made its presence felt through more frequent severe weather events, resulting in increased discussion at public

forums. Residents expect the town to take action to become a more a sustainable town.

"We need to be nimble in addressing future emergencies in the future including other public health crises and climate change."
(public forum participant)

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has been transformative in a number of ways, emphasizing racial inequities as well as ways in which the environment plays a role in an individual's and community's health and wellbeing. Participants in comprehensive plan forums reported an increase in their appreciation of the town's natural resources, open spaces, parks, and trails as they provided a respite to the pandemic's limitations. They also called for making permanent the outdoor dining provisions they experienced during the pandemic. Additionally, they discussed the importance of public health and using lessons learned from addressing the pandemic, applying these to climate change resilience.

“There can be no socio-economic diversity when there are fewer and fewer homes affordable to low- and moderate- income levels.”
(public forum participant)

Concerns regarding housing continued to be expressed throughout the process. The median price of a home continues to rise and is significantly above the State average. Residents also observe the approximately 100 houses torn down every year replaced with much larger homes and express concern regarding the lack of housing for low- and moderate-income persons as well as for older adults wishing to down-size.

“What is missing are business options (need for clothing stores, bakeries, high end restaurants, gyms, pubs, beer gardens, food trucks, breakfast options, etc.); more diverse restaurants, shops, artistic spaces, green space, outdoor activities like ice skating or farmers markets; additional seating areas with tables for people of all ages to gather (benches, tables, parklets, outdoor restaurant seating with later hours); cohesive storefronts; a lack of historic markers and activities; a LexShe statue; and upstairs residences...”
(public forum participant)

A forum on economic vitality was held to focus the conversation on the various commercial corridors in Lexington. Participants were particularly focused on Lexington Center and East Lexington and were very engaged in brainstorming ways in which the various commercial districts can be made more vibrant; these included improving the pedestrian and biking experience, ensuring that small businesses can be retained, improving aesthetics including signage and façade improvements, adding more outdoor dining, improving connections to the bike path, and promoting more cultural activities and public art. Many participants enthusiastically supported the idea of housing on

PUBLIC PROCESS

Input from the following public forums organized for the purpose of developing the Comprehensive Plan were used to form the basis of the Plan’s foundation:

- Comprehensive Plan **Kick-off Event** (June 4, 2018)
 - SWOT Analysis
- Lexington **World Café** (September – November 2018)
 - September 25, 2018
 - October 23, 2018
 - November 27, 2018
- **Stakeholder Interviews**: Spring 2021
- Comprehensive Plan **Public Forum**: June 2021
- Comprehensive Plan **Housing Forum**: September 21, 2021
- **Re-discovery Day**: October 18, 2021
- Comprehensive Plan Attractive and Vibrant **Commercial Districts Forum**: October 26, 2021
- **Social Pinpoint**: ongoing online platform
- **CPAC Review** of first Draft Volume I: December 2021 - March 2022

Input was also reviewed from the following forums:

- Q&A from **League of Women Voters** presentation (3/5/2021)
- Lexington **20/20 Vision**
 - Themes, Goals, and Recommended Actions (January 2008 Version)
 - Atwater, Laurie, Vision 2020, “How’s Your Vision,” Lexington Colonial Times, May/June 2020

upper stories above commercial uses in the town's commercial districts.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Public engagement activities held in a variety of forums over the course of five years identified the community's shared values. These remained stable over this time period with some issues becoming more urgent. A June 2021 forum confirmed the community's key priorities; these included:

- Commitment to sustainability
- Desire to increase diversity of people living, working, and visiting Lexington
- Need for affordable housing
- Desire for more vibrant commercial districts
- Desire to reduce dependence on the automobile
- Desire to protect and connect open spaces
- Call to maintain and expand recreational facilities and increase opportunities for community gathering
- Call to maintain and update public facilities

Representative Responses at the Housing Forum

A town-wide forum was held in September 2021 with a focus on housing. Participants responded by expressing support for:

- additional affordable housing, designed with sensitivity to visual character
- dwelling units located in upper stories above commercial uses in commercial districts
- accessory dwelling units

- co-housing
- housing that is more affordable to town staff
- increased density along bus routes
- slowing the demolition of existing small and moderately- sized dwelling units

Representative Responses at the Vibrant Commercial Districts Forum

A town-wide forum was held in October 2021 with a focus on economic vitality. Participants responded by expressing support for:

- dwelling units located in upper stories above commercial uses in commercial districts

Lexington residents' comments on the future of Lexington, World Cafe, Fall, 2018

PUBLIC PROCESS CONTINUED

A second draft of the complete Volume I was reviewed over a series of meetings by the public, various stakeholder groups including boards and committees, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and the Planning Board during summer 2022. Each meeting was **public forum style** to review specific goals of the Plan.

- **June 1, 2022** – Public Facilities, Transportation and Circulation, Recreation and Community Gathering
- **June 29, 2022** – Sustainability and Resiliency, Open Space and Natural Resources, Historic Resources
- **July 13, 2022** – Economic Vitality, Housing
- **August 3, 2022** – Diversity and Inclusion, Introduction, Executive Summary
- **August 17, 2022** – Land Use

- diverse retail shops, services, and restaurant offerings
- improved aesthetics and amenities
- public art and cultural activities
- pedestrian and bicycle access, community gathering spaces, seating areas, and outdoor dining
- a user-friendly experience with access to information kiosks, signage for public restrooms, water fountains, etc.
- an active nightlife
- culturally, ethnically, and linguistically relevant spaces and places
- establishing a cultural district
- more welcoming commercial districts through gateway and multi-lingual signage
- public art, street performers, pop up shops, festivals, and events
- photo opportunities for tourists
- tax incentives for small local businesses
- green space, parklets, and attractive landscaping

If you could do one thing to improve Lexington, what would it be?

Participants in the June 15, 2021 forum said:

- *More support for our most vulnerable; more education for each other about our vulnerabilities*
- *The town may want to look at its budget through a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion lens.*
- *I hope organizations in towns like ours take this racial reckoning movement forward with bold policies.*
- *Everything we do needs to be looked at with an equity and climate change impact lens!*
- *I don't see Lexington (municipal side) doing much on LGBTQIA+ issues, with a couple of exceptions.*
- *Sustainability and net zero are urgent goals for our survival.*

WHAT DO RESIDENTS VALUE ABOUT LEXINGTON?

Comments collected from participants in public forums

Features

Schools, Library, Community Center, Cary Memorial Building
 Diversity of houses of worship
 Bike path
 Local farms
 Conservation land
 Community Pool, Hayden Skating Facility
 Pine Meadow Golf Course
 Farmers' Market, Lexington Farm/CSA
 Center Playground
 Neighborhood Pools
 Town Reservoir
 ACROSS Lexington trails
 Movie Theater, Lexington Symphony
 New Visitor Center

Culture

Common values, commitment to sustainability and diversity
 Progressive attitude, liberal community
 Small town feel, friendly community
 Growing diversity (especially with regard to Asian population)
 Education focus
 General trust of government, professional town staff
 Culture of volunteerism, civic engagement
 Cultural diversity
 Appreciation of history, colonial look
 Discovery Day
 Summer music concerts
 Access to MBTA

- *Being more inclusive of all kinds of social justice.*
- *Better biking infrastructure*
- *More multi-family housing*
- *Public space for music festivals*
- *Ensure accessibility to long Comprehensive Plan documents (language translations).*
- *Option to limit seniors' property tax to 10% of income.*
- *Increase opportunities for community building.*
- *Lexington has always been a town with upper middle-class population, but there seems to be an increasing driving divide between those with wealth and those without the ability to live and work here. It was mentioned earlier, fire fighters, teachers, cooks, mail carriers, grocery store baggers, how do they feel like part of this community, rather than solely here to serve the wealthy?*
- *We should lead in sustainability and reaching net zero.*

VISION

A vision statement describes the kind of community stakeholders would like to live, work, and play in. It is a broad-brush image of what a community values and sees as a desirable future and is used to guide decision-making in the future. The following vision for Lexington is based on significant public input throughout the five-year planning process.

The Town of Lexington prides itself on being a vibrant community where residents place a high value on learning at all ages. Lexington's historic buildings and landscapes, many open spaces and trails, excellent schools, high quality public facilities and services, and proximity to Boston make it an attractive place to live, work, and play.

Lexington is committed to maintaining and expanding social and civic connections for all.

This Comprehensive Plan Update envisions a town that fosters a sense of belonging for all. By actively engaging in dialogue to balance issues related to housing, access and transportation, climate change, economic vitality, open space, natural resources, and more, we strive to create a community that:

- provides an environment that enables a diverse population of people to live, work, and thrive;
- encourages a flourishing business community that contributes to the town's financial stability and offers excellent local employment opportunities;
- cultivates a wide range of exceptional recreational, cultural, educational, and social opportunities that support creativity and innovation;
- sustains our natural resources and fosters an ecologically balanced community;
- offers a variety of safe, accessible, and sustainable mobility options; and
- models stewardship and sustainability of the town's financial, human, information, and physical assets.

IMAGINE a Lexington that....

... is a community where all people living, working, and visiting feel they belong. A Lexington that is mutually open to learning and **engaging all people** and that makes a concerted effort to be **inclusive** and to better reflect and communicate with cultural competence. Lexington is a town where all policies, projects, and plans are evaluated for their impact on structural racism.

... **mitigates the impacts of climate change** and plans for a sustainable future by reaching Net Zero Emissions, encouraging building with green materials, increasing recycling, fuel efficiency, and non-automobile travel options, greening the housing stock, increasing its resilience to heat and storm water, and standing out as a leader in constructing environmentally-friendly public facilities. All plans and projects are evaluated as to their impact on the environment and climate change.

... **offers a wide range of housing options**, including subsidized and other options available to individuals with a wide range of incomes, supporting the ability of families of diverse backgrounds to enjoy the town's assets while increasing the **socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity** of the town's population. A range of housing types is preserved and created, including those appropriately designed and located for **older adults** wishing to **downsize** in community as well as for younger adults wishing to settle in town.

... lives up to its **reputation for educational excellence**, placing a high value on learning for all ages. There is a **new High School**, expanded programming at **Cary Memorial Library** and the **Community Center**, and many **opportunities for lifelong learning**. The town's schools are well maintained and support state-of-the-art learning modalities and pedagogy including for those with Special Needs and those needing English Language Learning.

... acknowledges and respects the **town's history**, the interwoven fabric of historic and natural resources and other features that contribute to Lexington's uniqueness. Historic resources, including

buildings of note from a variety of epochs and other aspects of the built environment are preserved and promoted.

... Protects and connects its **open spaces and conservation areas**. Residents enjoy a number of passive recreation activities. A well-maintained **Minuteman Bike Path** and an **extensive ACROSS Lexington trail network** offers connections to historic and natural resources as well as other places in Town.

... adopts streamlined permitting processes so that **economic development** continues to bolster the tax base, provide opportunities for local employment, and more retail shops, services, and restaurants for residents and visitors to enjoy. The tax burden is shared with **commercial development** helping to pay for desired improvements and services. The Town provides opportunities for local employment and enterprise to foster new businesses, large and small. The Hartwell Avenue, South Lexington, and Forbes Road commercial areas provide employment and amenities and easily compete with surrounding municipalities for biotech and other companies.

...increases the vibrancy of commercial districts and corridors that create a **continuum of centers of economic activity**, provide **neighborhood-oriented goods and services**, and are located in various places in Town. **East Lexington** is redeveloped; is aesthetically pleasing, pleasant, and safe for pedestrians and bicyclists; and meets the needs of nearby residents. **Small businesses** are supported by requiring lower tax rates of them. The Town's history is leveraged to create a **booming tourist economy** that supports local businesses.

... offers residents and visitors a **vibrant Town Center** with diverse shops for goods and services meeting the needs of both residents and

tourists and a variety of eating establishments that cater to a range of tastes. The Center pulses with activity; a large number of people live in the Center and it has become a “foodie” **destination** that capitalizes on its multi-cultural population. **Cultural events** are coordinated with restaurants so that residents may enjoy a full and satisfying **night out**. All this takes place in a safe and pleasant environment oriented to **walkers** and those on **bicycles**. Parking is managed well and parking fees help pay for maintenance, improvements and beautification.

...provides extensive, safe and pleasant **walking and biking connections and robust transportation options** to all areas of town and beyond. There are increasingly **fewer trips made by single occupancy vehicles** reflecting an increased interest in caring for the environment and the health and wellness of residents. **Traffic congestion is reduced** and safety is increased by enforcing speed limits.

... provides **municipal facilities and services** that fulfill the needs of **all age groups**. **Older adults** are able to access a wide range of services including food, transportation, socializing, health, and wellness for a range of ability levels. **Teens** are supported in their need to feel independent by providing them with space to socialize and ways of getting around Town that do not require driving a car.

... provides residents with a variety of opportunities for organized as well as spontaneous **community gathering** and interaction in **both indoor and outdoor spaces**. These include a **Town Center** that is a destination for both residents and visitors, made vibrant with diverse retail shops, services, and restaurants and well-maintained walking and biking infrastructure; a **Community Center** with a wide range of

offerings; and **Cary Memorial Building** providing a venue for entertainment. Intercultural and intergenerational activities provide opportunities for interaction and enrichment.

... continually evaluates and improves the **town's governance and improves, increases, and enhances communication** with residents by using virtual platforms to support civic engagement, an improved website, multi-lingual communication, and actively recruits volunteers of diverse backgrounds.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS

This Comprehensive Plan is organized around the following goals:

GOAL 1: To promote the **diversity, equity, and inclusion** of people visiting, living, and working in Lexington.

GOAL 2: To promote a wide range of **housing** options that respond to the needs of households, regardless of income and life stage.

GOAL 3: To promote a **vital economy**, including a variety of small and large businesses that contribute to the tax base and provide services to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors.

GOAL 4: To enhance quality of life, health, and safety by implementing practices and policies that enhance **sustainability and resiliency** in our community.

GOAL 5: To protect **open spaces and natural resources** and to enhance their connections.

GOAL 6: To protect, preserve, and promote awareness and appreciation of Lexington's **historic and cultural resources** from throughout its history.

GOAL 7: To make **traveling** into, out of, and within Lexington safe, pleasant, and efficient with sustainable and equitable mobility options for all ages and abilities.

GOAL 8: To improve and expand facilities for **recreation and community gathering** to support holistic wellbeing, a sense of belonging, enhanced community connections, fun, and to build community through social engagement.

GOAL 9: To provide well-maintained, updated, inclusive, and sustainable **public facilities** to serve and meet community needs.

GOAL 10: To support and advance Goals 1-9 with wise **land use planning**.

KEY CROSS-CUTTING UNDERLYING THEMES:

Important to the plan's foundation are three cross-cutting underlying themes. These themes emerged as priorities in the community conversation and that came up in discussions of multiple goals and objectives. They are applied to each of the plan's goals. Two of these — 'Diversity and Inclusion' and 'Sustainability and Resilience' —are also separate goals for which implementation steps are identified and proposed.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI)

The murder of George Floyd led to a widespread and urgent need to address racial inequalities at an institutional level for local, state, and federal governments. While the lack of racial and socio-economic diversity in Lexington was a part of the community conversation in

"Diversity refers to the fact that there are many different kinds of people with different life experiences. It is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical value systems, national origin, political or other ideological beliefs and immigration status, where one grew up, where they went to school, and what one's parents did for a living. The term diversity does not just acknowledge the existence of differences but implies a respect and appreciation of these differences." (Lexington Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee)

"Equity" refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality. Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and adjust imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures." (National Association of Colleges and Employers)

"Inclusion is an organizational effort and practice in which different groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted, welcomed, and equally treated. These differences could be self-evident, such as national origin, age, race and ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, marital status and socioeconomic status or they could be more inherent, such as educational background, training, sector experience, organizational tenure, even personality, such as introverts and extroverts. Inclusion is a sense of belonging. Inclusive cultures make people feel respected and valued for who they are as an individual or group." (Global Diversity Practice)

2018 when the planning process for this plan began, and for generations of people facing discrimination, following George Floyd's murder it gained an increased sense of urgency with groups not previously involved in meaningful equity work.

The town's existing diversity was discussed in public forums as being highly valued, but many attendees also voiced a desire to better express and celebrate it. The comprehensive plan's recommendation to increase the diversity of those living and working in Lexington, as well as of those visiting, is consistent with a resolution made at Town Meeting. The town has made efforts to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, hired a Chief Equity Officer, and conducted DEI training for town staff. To make inclusion meaningful people must be given voice and power to make decisions that affect their lives. Also, communication and messaging need to be inclusive (e.g. multi-lingual, accessible to person with disabilities, racial groups, etc.) and future residents that have been historically excluded. This comprehensive plan calls for the town to increase these efforts and to review all projects, plans, regulations, policies, and practices through a DEI lens.

SUSTAINABILITY

The 2003 Comprehensive Plan made frequent reference to the Town's desire to be more sustainable. Since then, the devastating impacts of climate change have become increasingly evident. In response, residents have asked the town to take additional actions to mitigate these impacts. As a result, the town hired a Sustainability and Resilience Officer, developed sustainability goals, and has worked towards using renewable energy for Lexington's municipal buildings. This comprehensive plan calls for a continuation of these efforts. In

recognition of more frequent and more severe storms becoming a reality, the plan sets forth additional actions to achieve sustainability and climate change resilience in a timely manner.

The Sustainable Lexington Committee developed a Sustainable Action Plan. *"The goal of the Sustainable Action Plan is to improve the ongoing quality of life and desirability of living and working in Lexington by addressing long-term sustainability and economic viability while responding to the impacts of climate change. Sustainable initiatives to date have demonstrated the ability to deliver millions of dollars in savings, revenue and other benefits to the Town while substantially reducing Lexington's greenhouse gas emissions. This plan provides a structured approach to identify, prioritize, and implement future opportunities for similar actions."*

From ***Sustainable Lexington Action Plan***, 2018



From ***Sustainable Lexington Action Plan***, 2018

In 2013, Town Meeting adopted a resolution stating that the Town will “(a) consider climate change in all appropriate decisions and planning processes; (b) take action to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate; (c) reduce greenhouse gas emissions; (d) develop and implement a comprehensive climate action plan; all with the goal of making Lexington a truly sustainable community.”

To address the challenges of climate change, this plan considers two major dimensions of the challenge: **mitigation** (reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause climate change) and **adaptation** (ensuring the resilience of the town to the effects of climate change, including plans and infrastructure needed to secure the property, health, and safety of its residents).

The town also developed a **Renewable Future Plan** in 2018 and has set an aspirational goal of making Lexington a Net Zero Emissions community in 25 years: one that has eliminated on-site greenhouse gas emissions by increasing its reliance on renewable energy sources for vehicles, heating, and electricity. This comprehensive plan supports efforts taken thus far, continues the recommendations made by existing plans, and calls for additional measures moving forward.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Center for Disease Control has long recognized the relationship between planning, health, and wellness, especially when defining health as a state that goes beyond the mere absence of disease. The comprehensive plan supports the health and wellness of those living, working, and visiting Lexington by promoting active living, that is, by

Connections between planning, the environment, health, and wellness include:

- Providing safe and pleasant walking, biking, and public transit options
- Healthy buildings (e.g. air quality, etc.)
- Access to healthy food (e.g. farmers market, etc.)
- Opportunities for community gathering, promoting feelings of belonging, and building social capital (reducing feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation)
- Access to nature and recreational facilities
- Subsidized housing that allows people money in their budget to pay for other living expenses and live a balanced life
- Measures to protect against the impacts of climate change
- Health equity (including equitable access to health care and healthy environments)
- Equitable community engagement (including language access)

providing opportunities for incorporating physical activity into the routines of daily life as well as for sport and recreation.

Regular physical activity has been found to reduce the risk for developing a number of diseases (e.g. heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure), to prevent mental illness (e.g. depression and anxiety), and to reduce the risk of dying prematurely. The overall aesthetics, perceived safety, and convenience of the pedestrian environment plays a role in encouraging and supporting walking on a regular basis.³

³ CDC, Healthy Places

This comprehensive plan also promotes the health and wellness of those living, working, and visiting Lexington by promoting opportunities for community gathering, access to nature and recreation, affordable housing, climate change adaptation, and equitable community engagement practices.

COVID-19 emphasized the impact that living conditions have on the spread of infectious disease. The ability to isolate sick individuals depends in part on the size of the home; and access to the outdoors meant that the disease can be better contained as compared to higher density, urban settings. This made Lexington an even more desirable community in which to live as it offers both of these amenities. However, Lexington's home prices and lack of subsidized and more moderate housing options have made it increasingly difficult for low- and moderate-income individuals to live in town.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In addition to the key cross-cutting themes, a series of guiding principles were used to both develop and evaluate the plan's recommendations. *The following guiding principles are based on the American Planning Association's Sustainable Places Initiative and were adapted and adopted by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee.*

An Accessible and Connected community ...

- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, accessible, and sustainable mobility options.
- Plans, designs, and maintains effective transportation networks.
- Supports strong regional multimodal connections.
- Provides open access to information, encourages innovation, enhances communication, and promotes community engagement.

A Livable Community...

- Promotes and sustains a safe, clean, and attractive place to live, work, and play.
- Facilitates housing options to accommodate a diverse community.
- Provides safe and well-maintained public infrastructure, and provides adequate and appropriate regulation of public and private development resources.
- Encourages sustainable development supported by reliable and affordable town services.
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability for all members of the community.

A Healthy and Socially Responsible community...

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, and social opportunities.
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members and actively partners with others to improve the welfare of those in need.
- Fosters inclusion and embraces diversity.
- Enhances multi-generational community enrichment and community engagement.

A Community with a Vital and Resilient Economy...

- Supports an environment for creativity and innovation.
- Promotes a qualified and diverse workforce that meets employers' needs and supports broad-based economic diversity.
- Fosters regional and public and private collaboration with institutions that contribute to the town's economic sustainability.
- Invests in infrastructure and amenities that attract, sustain, and retain diverse businesses.

A Community in Harmony with Nature...

- Supports and sustains natural resources.
- Conserves energy.
- Promotes and regulates an ecologically balanced community.

A Community with Good Governance...

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the town's financial, human, information, and physical assets.
- Supports strategic decision-making with timely, reliable, and accurate data and analysis.
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality customer service in all business.
- Supports, develops, and enhances relationships between the town and community and regional partners.
- Provides assurance of regulatory and policy compliance.

A Community Committed to Equity... Provides support to all to participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING RESOURCES

An inventory and assessment of the town's existing resources was compiled. Information for the inventory chapters was drawn from "trend reports" prepared early in the process by town staff, as well as from existing reports and plans, census data, and interviews with key stakeholders. These included a wide range of reports focusing on specific aspects of the Town, such as the 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan, school enrollment projections, the 2018 Sustainable Action Plan, and many others. For a complete list of the documents

used to prepare this Comprehensive Plan see **APPENDIX B**. The conclusion of each chapter identifies key issues, opportunities, challenges, and priorities to be considered in Plan recommendations. Volume II of the Plan contains the inventory chapters in full as well as two-page summaries of each of the comprehensive plan elements.

The comprehensive plan was developed based on the shared values, concerns, and desires expressed by community participants in the public process, informed by key findings from the inventory and assessment of existing resources conducted by reviewing relevant documents as well as by interviewing town staff and other stakeholders. The plan recommendations proposing strategies to address these findings, including:

- More than half (60%) of residents moved to Lexington since the year 2000. These newcomers have contributed to a large increase in the **racial diversity** of residents through a significant increase in the number identifying as Chinese or South Asian. Black and Latino/a/x residents remain under-represented.
- The number of **older adults** has increased; this trend is expected to continue. There are few affordable and moderately priced dwelling units suitable for this population.
- **Student enrollment projections** should be carefully monitored. Plans for a new high school are already underway.
- Lexington has one of the highest **median household incomes** in Massachusetts at \$185,686 per year in 2020.

- **Housing types** lack variety; moderately-priced housing is being lost; there is also a need for housing for older adults, new households, disabled individuals, lower income families, and town staff.
 - In 2019, the median price of a home was nearly \$900,000 and median gross monthly rent was \$2,475. The average home price in Lexington tripled in the two-decade period between 1997 and 2016; by the end of 2021, the average home price had reached \$1.5 million.
 - Approximately 100 houses are torn down every year in Lexington, replaced with homes that are much larger than those they replace.
- The town is almost built out for housing as currently zoned. However, appropriate areas could be rezoned to increase density and height limits, to **allow more housing**. The state's MBTA Communities Initiative⁴ provides an opportunity for Lexington to provide more multi-family dwellings located along bus routes.
- There has been a 20% increase in the number of **businesses** in Lexington since 2007.
 - Lexington has over 30 **biotech companies** and continues to attract more, making it a hub for such activity. Office and

laboratory space in Lexington is significantly less expensive than in Cambridge, making the town a desirable location for life science entities.

- There are **commercial districts** of various sizes located throughout the town; some are underutilized, outdated, or reaching the end of their life cycle. Many are auto-oriented and not visually appealing.
- Lexington has a **split tax rate**, charging commercial property at a higher rate than residential property⁵. The **relatively high tax rate** has been identified both by local businesses and the Economic Development Office as being an obstacle to Lexington's economic vitality. Providing tax relief would help to promote opportunity and equity, especially to small businesses.
- **Lexington's Town Center** is valued by many, however, it lacks vitality due to a number of factors including vacant storefronts; ground floor uses that do not generate much foot traffic; a lack of nightlife; a lack of variety in retail shops, services, and restaurants; businesses not well matched for the town's demographics; constraints posed by sign and other regulations; high rents; competition from newer commercial areas nearby; and on-line shopping.

⁴ The **MBTA Communities Initiative** enacted in Jan. 2021 requires that an MBTA community have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-choice-initiative>

⁵ Commercial properties in Lexington account for 9% of the total assessed value but contribute 17% towards the total tax revenue generated due to this split tax rate.

- The McKinsey report for Massachusetts⁶ estimates that one-third of the workforce will not return to work in downtown Boston post-pandemic⁷. They will likely work three days per week remotely depending on the company. Lexington residents that commuted to downtown Boston will presumably be amongst this “**working from home**” population and will likely change travel patterns coming into, out of, and around town. These individuals may also increase the demand for local goods and services.
- While the town has many **historic resources** that are both a source of pride as well as of revenue (because they attract tourists),⁸ not all these structures and landscapes are adequately protected.
- Existing town regulations, notably the Demolition Delay Bylaw, do not adequately address the threat of loss of historic buildings.
- Lexington’s location makes it easily accessible by car —the most frequently used mode of travel is the single occupancy vehicle. There other ways to travel in and around the town, including transit options, however first mile/last mile

connections⁹ are lacking, reducing ridership. Walking and biking have become increasingly popular and infrastructure for them is continually improved and expanded.

- The **Minuteman Bikeway** is a significant part of the town’s identity and is enjoyed by commuters, visitors, and those just going for a stroll or bike ride. Users of the bikeway represent a potential market for commercial establishments.
- The town owns and maintains hundreds of acres devoted to **recreation** uses, with the two largest sites, the Center Recreation Complex and Pine Meadows Golf Club together comprising over 140 acres. Privately-owned sites account for another 200 acres.
- Competition for these facilities and programs is high, and limited funding and staff levels place additional constraints on limited resources.
- Since the 2003 comprehensive plan, many capital investments have been made to update **public facilities** and to use more sustainable energy sources. Remaining significant investments

⁶ <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/themes/the-future-of-ma-and-postpandemic-business-priorities>

⁷ <https://nerej.com/the-retail-landscape-ever-adapting-by-carol-todreas>

⁸ Numerous **tourist** attractions draw 120,000 visitors per year resulting in \$1.3 million generated by the hotel and meals taxes annually.

⁹ **First Mile/Last Mile** refers to the distance to and from transit, that is, the distance a transit user needs to travel from a transit stop to their destination

or vice versa. Transit stops are most often located in high traffic locations, leaving many people to walk or drive the first or last leg of their trip. Improving access to and from transit for a larger number of people has as its goal to lead to higher transit ridership. See:

<https://www.remix.com/blog/solving-the-first-and-last-mile-problem>

include (all are underway and are at different phases in the process):

- A new or renovated High School
- A new Police Station
- A new or expanded East Lexington Fire Station
- Retrofitting remaining facilities with renewable energy sources and ensuring full accessibility
- The mid- to long-term factors driving changes in services and facilities in Lexington include:
 - Climate change (flooding, drought, snow/ice)
 - Energy (reducing reliance on natural gas; pursuing renewable energy sources)
 - Increasing population density and traffic congestion
 - Local public transportation
 - Parking (electric vehicle charging stations, etc.)
 - Increased commercial development and mixed-use development (housing on upper stories above commercial uses)

POTENTIAL COVID-19 IMPACTS (SHORT AND LONG TERM)

The COVID-19 pandemic upended lives and plans around the globe. It devastated individuals, families, communities, and the planet as a whole. It also presented Lexington with an opportunity to review and revise our priorities as well as to try out new ways of doing things. This in turn encouraged us to reimagine town centers, reallocating paved space from the automobile to pedestrians, bicyclists, and outdoor diners, and redefining work by employing “Work From Home” and hybrid policies. Some of these new experiences have

become very popular and there is significant support for incorporating them into a post-pandemic world.

The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted this Comprehensive Planning process. It also affected some of its recommendations. Impacts of the pandemic considered in making Comprehensive Plan recommendations include:

- increased interest in and use of open spaces, trails, and recreational facilities
- added heat to an already hot housing market, excluding more people from being able to afford housing in Lexington
- significant support for virtual and remote public meetings
- new habits of on-line shopping and food delivery making attracting patrons to retail shops and indoor dining a significant challenge
- hesitancy to use public transportation for fear of being infected
- significant support for outdoor dining
- an increased need to support the “Work From Home” population

The following are responses to questions posed to participants at the Public Forum on June 15, 2021.

What changed in terms of your priorities for the Town as a result of COVID-19?

- *One positive change of priorities of COVID-19 has been that people recognize the need to move away from peak time only transit to more all-day transit to better serve an array of needs, including essential workers who do not necessarily work 9-5. Seeing more people outdoors has also been a positive trend.*

- *COVID-19 laid bare the social injustices. What we do here impacts others, for example in terms of sustainability and waste management: We need to increase awareness that the incinerator in North Andover used for our waste is located near environmental justice populations¹⁰ in Lawrence.*

What can/should Lexington do to be more nimble in addressing emergencies and thus be more prepared in the future?

- *I think we need to find ways to do more community building. With some people driving into their garages and entering homes, some folks can go long stretches without ever seeing their neighbors. We also have many busy people in this community. But finding ways to build community, from getting more people out walking and biking (so they can see and be seen by neighbors), having block parties, and encouraging people to get to know their neighbors, will build networks so people can better look after each other, especially our most vulnerable.*
- *More support for our most vulnerable; more education for each other about our vulnerabilities*
- *We need to make sure that our seniors and people of lower income have access to insulation and air conditioning.*
- *We need to consider local emissions and public health effects.*
- *Examine the needs of all of our vulnerable populations and the impacts on the mental health of LGBT+, disabled, special needs.*
- *Climate change doesn't have an end point; we need to be prepared to deal with technology needs and obtain funding to address issues related to climate change.*

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

An implementation plan is a compilation of the potential steps needed to successfully complete implementation activities, in other words, “HOW” to achieve the goals and objectives that describe the desired future. The implementation plan is built around the comprehensive plan goals and objectives, with strategies and action steps defined as ways to achieve the goals and objectives. Additional information, such as existing resources, lead parties, and partners, are provided to further assist with implementation.

The implementation plan that follows is the heart of the comprehensive plan and provides suggested strategies and actions to achieve the goals and objectives. The implementation plan provides a roadmap for future actions and decision-making.

The goals are the organizing structure for the implementation plan and provide guideposts for the recommendations. The objectives further articulate and make specific the intention of each goal in order to identify strategies to achieve these. The potential actions then provide some guidance as to potential steps to take as a way of fulfilling the strategy's intent. Each potential action must be reconsidered in light of current needs and planned through a community process before implementation. The overall vision should continually be kept in mind as it is the overall direction towards which the community desires to move.

The recommendations were developed with input from residents, Town officials, and the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

¹⁰ <https://www.mass.gov/environmental-justice>

(CPAC), with assistance from professional planning consultants, considering the assessment of existing conditions and current best practices. Additionally, relevant Lexington Select Board goals¹¹ and Lexington Planning Board Work Plan¹² items have been incorporated into broader goals and objectives. The recommendations represent ways of achieving goals and objectives developed based on stakeholder input. The plan invites a broad range of stakeholders to help implement the strategies so that the community's values can be actualized.

In addition to these documents, the 2003 Comprehensive Plan was reviewed to identify what had been implemented since its completion and what had changed. Some of the 2003 recommendations are still relevant and are repeated in this plan. Conditions may be riper for taking them forward at this time. Due to significant changes since 2003, a number of new initiatives are proposed to address changes to the town's demographics, environment, and attitudes. Shifts in the community's priorities are also reflected in the Plan's recommendations.

For a complete accounting of what has been implemented from the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, see **APPENDIX A**.

An introduction to the Implementation Plan provides a frame for the material that follows. Each goal is presented by way of introducing the goal, how it relates to the town's existing resources, and what stakeholders were concerned about, appreciated, felt was missing, or what they would like to see in a desired future. At first it may seem like the Plan is many pages long, but a quick peek will reveal that it is

mostly comprised of Implementation Tables populated with Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Potential Actions.

¹¹ Select Board Goals: January 2020- December 2021 (Approved February 3, 2020)

¹² Planning Board Work Plan, 2021-2022

GOAL 1: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

To promote the diversity, equity, and inclusion of people visiting, living, and working in Lexington.



*Chinese Dragons at the Patriot's Day Parade, 2019,
Lexington, MA. PC: Lexington Minuteman*

只蜂酿不成蜜一颗米熬不成粥 [一只蜂酿不成蜜一颗米熬不成粥] - Chinese Proverb:

“One bee cannot produce honey; one grain of rice cannot produce a meal (It needs joint effort to achieve anything worthwhile).”

-

Introduction

This section describes who lives in Lexington and what needs they have. This is important in deciding how to guide policy and decisions about the built environment, which is the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan.

Throughout the planning process, residents emphasized their desire for a diverse and inclusive community — one that invites, supports, and celebrates people of all identities and circumstances. This plan addresses race, ethnicity, national origin, language, faith, age, financial circumstances, education abilities, gender, gender, and sexual orientation.

References to race (white, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander) or ethnicity (Latino/a/x) are based solely on self-identification, following U. S. Census practice.

For many years, individuals and groups have worked to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in Lexington. In recent years, concerns about DEI, especially racism and racial equity, have gained greater visibility, both locally and nationally. As a result of community-based advocacy, Lexington's town government has begun to act on these concerns. For example:

- Town Meeting voted for a system racism resolution in 2020 a full inclusion resolution in 2021.

- In 2020, the Select Board embarked on a DEI initiative, which especially focused on racial equity. This led to:
 - Engaging [All Aces, Inc.](#) for a six-month racial equity project to hold listening sessions, hold trainings, and offer recommendations.
 - Creating a Strategic Equity Advisory Team (SEAT), previously called the Citizen Advisory Council (CAC), to provide input on DEI issues and initiatives.

Lexington's Systemic Racism Resolution, Town Meeting 2020 (Article 8))

"A system of advantages which gives privilege and power to one racialized group over another, intentional or not. (Article 8)

That the town:

1. consider racial and other equity impacts in all decisions and planning processes in order to work toward dismantling systemic racism and white privilege;
2. take action to integrate racial equity tools and concepts into routine operations and policy-making;
3. build capacity to collect, interpret and act on data related to inequities, particularly those related to health, housing, education, policing, representation, and economic and environmental justice; and
4. develop and implement a comprehensive racial equity plan with public input, to include staff training, hiring practices, and public education; all with the goal of making Lexington a truly equitable community."

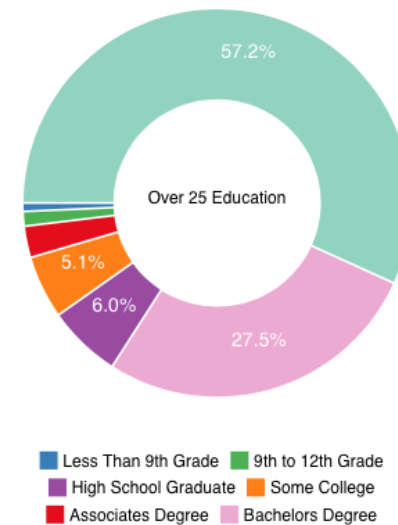
- Joining [Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#) (GARE) and the [National League of Cities](#) (NLC), which offer racial equity resources.
- Engaging the legal firm Anderson & Kreiger to review [Lexington Police Department policies](#) and make recommendations for improvement to minimize bias.
- In 2020, Town meeting voted to fund a new Chief Equity Officer position. The Town Manager hired Lexington's first Chief Equity Officer in 2021.
- Engaging the services of Town Counsel to begin work of reviewing all town policies. The starting point of this work was a review of the [Police Department policies](#) **Introducing the staff of the Police Department** through [short video clips](#) that explain their work with the community and the services and functions of the Department.

In 2021, Town Meeting adopted a **Full Inclusion Resolution** under Article 30. "The Town resolves to:

- fully consider disability rights in all decisions and planning processes in order to work toward full inclusion;
- integrate concepts of inclusion, equity, accommodations and universal design into routine operations and policy-making;
- build capacity to collect, interpret and act on data related to social injustice issues involving persons with disabilities, particularly pertaining to issues related to health, housing, physical and programmatic accessibility, education, technology, policing, representation, and economic and environmental justice; and
- develop and implement a comprehensive inclusion plan with public input, to include staff training, hiring practices, and public education; all with the goal of making Lexington a truly equitable community for all."

OVERVIEW OF LEXINGTON'S POPULATION

As of 2019, Lexington had 34,454 residents with a median age of 45.7 years old. The overall population is projected to increase by 2% by 2025 with the median age increasing to 48.9 years old. Lexington demographics are described in the sections below. A summary appears in the callout on the next page.



Source: U.S. Census 2019 ACS 5-Year Survey

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.

- Audre Lorde (an American writer, feminist, womanist, librarian, and civil rights activist)



Dancers at 2019 Lexington High School's Diwali celebration
CreditPC: Wicked Lexington

Household Size and Income

Household size is the number of people living in a housing unit. According to the U.S. Census, household size is somewhat higher in Lexington (2.73 persons) than in Massachusetts as a whole (2.5 persons). U. S. Census data tells us that a large majority of

Number of Households and Persons per Household

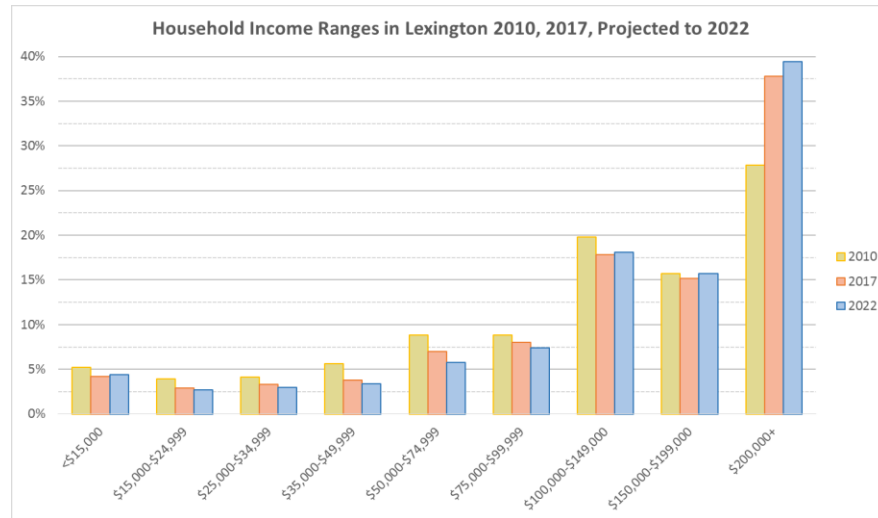
Year	2010	2019
# of households	11,392	11,757
# of persons/household	2.65	2.73

Source: U.S. Census

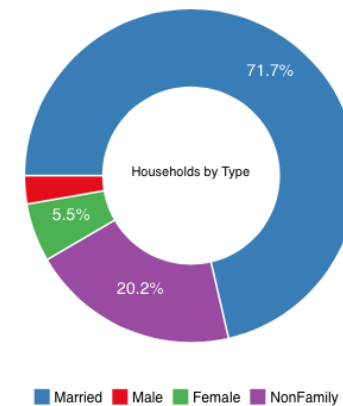
Lexington Demographic Trends

- **Household size and income:** The average household size is slightly higher than Massachusetts as a whole. The average income is high and rising. The cost of housing and taxes play a major role in who can live town.
 - **Length of residence:** Lexington has many newer residents. A majority moved to town in the past 20 years.
 - **Age:** Lexington's population is aging. About 30% of residents will be older adults (60+) by 2030.
 - **Education:** Lexington residents are highly educated; about 85% of us have a college degree.
 - **Race, ethnicity, national origin, and language:** Lexington is becoming more diverse.
 - About 64% of us are white, 30% are of Asian (especially Chinese and South Asian), 1% are Black, 2% are Latino/a/x, 3% one or more race, and less than 1% are Native American or Pacific Islander. The latter three groups are underrepresented in Lexington.
 - 43 languages are spoken in the homes of our school-aged children.
 - **Gender:** The percent of residents identifying as transgender or gender nonbinary is increasing.
 - **Sexual Orientation:** The percent of residents identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or asexual is also increasing.
- Abilities:** The percent of residents with disabilities is probably stable, but awareness of this population is growing.

households are families. Some are composed of unrelated people living together, and fewer are composed of single men or women; we do not know the number of households composed of people of nonbinary gender identities (see section on Gender).



Lexington's average household income is rising and higher than that of nearby communities and 54% higher than Massachusetts as a whole. Our socioeconomic diversity is declining. Anecdotally, people (including long-time residents) are leaving Lexington due to high housing costs and taxes.



- What this means about our needs:*** In general, a household should not spend more than 30% of its income on housing costs if they are to comfortably afford the rest of life's expenses. Given that the median single-family home value in Lexington is \$1.5 million as of September 2021 (nearly double that of the region)¹, most people with low or moderate incomes cannot afford to live in here. Very little housing is available to people of low- or moderate- incomes exists. This is an obstacle to our goal of inclusivity.

¹ Source: ACS 5-Year Table (2019)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The majority of Lexington's residents are relative newcomers. This may imply a need for more deliberate outreach and intentional community building.

Most households are headed by a married couple, many with children. Not many younger adults live in town.

The demand for housing continues to rise, as does the average income of residents, resulting in higher housing prices. The cost of housing, as well the tax burden, plays a major role in determining who can live in town.

The two largest racial groups in Lexington are white and Asian, with a large majority of Asian residents being Chinese or South Asian. Notably underrepresented are Black and Latino/a/x residents.

The increasing diversity of residents' backgrounds increases the need for cultural and linguistic relevance in the Town's messaging.

Town Meeting has committed to consider systemic racism in all decisions and planning processes.

LEXINGTON VOICES

"There should be more diversity at higher levels of Town government."
(June 15 Public Forum participant)

"There should be signage in more languages."
(June 15 Public Forum participant)

"Hold job fairs for Lexington businesses that focus on recruiting a diverse workforce." (June 15 Public Forum participant)

"Increase cultural education and cultural exchange events. Promote sharing of cultural heritage." (June 15 Public Forum participant)

"Maintain small housing stock, discourage small home teardowns and encourage co-housing developments." (June 15 Public Forum participant)

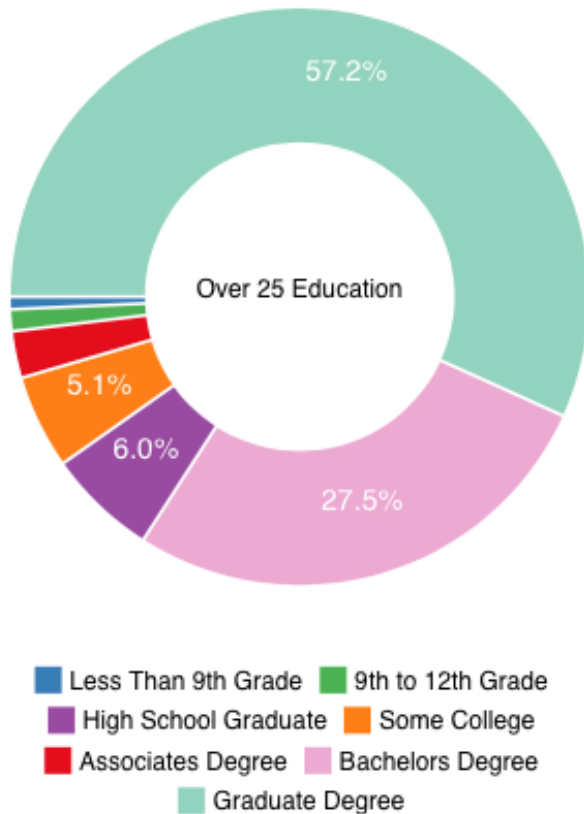
"Seek input from teens regarding their needs and create more spaces for them to perform and gather and be heard. Increase bike infrastructure and encourage teens to deliver with cargo bike to elderly residents."
(June 15 Public Forum participant)

"Test sidewalks with wheelchairs to measure accessibility."
(June 15 Public Forum participant)

"Messaging and forms and applications from the town are often gendered and do not invite non-binary responses." (Stakeholder Interview)

Education

Lexington's residents are highly educated; the majority (85%) of the population have a college degree (compared to 25% of the State); of these individuals, more than half hold a graduate degree.



Race, Ethnicity, National Origin, and Language

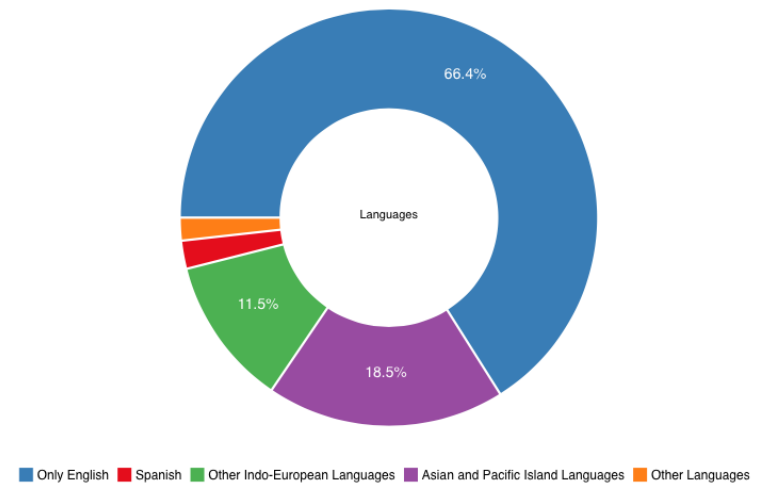
Lexington's population is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, and language. This is mainly true in terms of the growing size and diversity of our Asian population. Because of this, the 2019 Greater Boston Housing Report Card identified Lexington as a community with higher proportions of non-white population than the region.

On the other hand, Black, Latino/a/x, and Native

American/Pacific Islander people continue to be underrepresented in our community (with each being less than 2% of our population).

- 63.8% **White residents**
 - 30.1% **Asian Residents**
 - 2.1% **Latino/a/x**
 - 1.3% **Black or African American**
- Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Tables

1970 Census counted 2% of Lexington's residents identifying as Asian. By 1990, Lexington's Asian population increased to 6.5%. According to



2019 U.S. Census data, Asians made up approximately one-third (30.1%) of Lexington's population.

Lexington's Asian population has grown, so has the proportion of Lexington residents born in other countries. This has increased from 16.5% in 2000 to 27.3% in 2017. A majority of these residents were born in China or India.

Likewise, the percent of residents who speak a language other than English at home has also grown. According to Lexington Public Schools, 43 languages are spoken in the homes of our school-aged children. The most common of these are Asian languages, especially English and Mandarin. Use of Indo-European languages other than English increased from less than a tenth (6.5%) in the year 2000 to almost a fifth (19.5%) in 2017, while use of Asian and Pacific Islander languages increased from less than a tenth (7.4%) to a little less than a fifth (16.6%) during that same time period.² The majority of residents speaking languages other than English at home are aged 65 and over.

Participation on Town Boards and Committees. Historically, Asian residents were underrepresented in town government. The Vision for Lexington Committee found that residents identifying as Asian represented about 20% of the Lexington's population, but held about 2% of the positions on town boards and committees. This increased to 3% in 2013. However, residents of Asian ancestry held more than 13% of PTA/PTO positions; about half reported that only English is spoken at home, indicating that cultural and linguistic barriers to participation might persist. Lexington cultural groups have worked hard to increase

representation, with some success.

As a result of the town's participation in the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunities (METCO) Program, the percentage of Black and Latino/a/x individuals in Lexington's schools is higher than in the overall population. For the 2021-2022 academic year Lexington has a total of 230 enrolled METCO students (98 elementary school students, 70 middle school students and 62 high school students).³

METCO Program

The METCO Program (Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunities) was founded in 1966 as "a voluntary integration program that provides a suburban public-school education for African-American, Hispanic, and Asian students from Boston." The Lexington Public Schools have participated in the program since 1968. The program has as its stated goal to "provide Lexington students and staff an opportunity to interact with many minority students and to benefit from a culturally diverse learning environment." It also gives urban students an opportunity to benefit from Lexington's schools.

For the 2021-2022 academic year Lexington has a total of 230 enrolled METCO students (98 elementary school students, 70 middle school students and 62 high school students).

² ACS and World Population review

³ <https://sites.google.com/lexingtonma.org/lexingtonmetco/home>

Lexington has developed a reputation of not being welcoming to Black families. The town could be more intentional about expanding housing opportunities to families participating in the METCO program.

The town could be more intentional about expanding housing opportunities to families participating in the METCO program.

Gender and gender identity

Modern concepts of sex and gender are confusing to many people. In this plan, we use the term “sex” to refer to the sex (male, female, or intersex) assigned to a person at birth—or sometimes later, in the case of intersex.⁴ We use the term “gender” to refer to one’s internal identity (man/boy, woman/girl, nonbinary, and many others).⁵ This term also encompasses whether one’s gender aligns with the sex assigned at birth (cisgender) or differs from sex assigned at birth (transgender).

LexPride, a private nonprofit organization, was established in 1996 in order to foster and promote a welcoming and safe community for all.

⁴ Intersex refers to people who were born with or developed chromosomes, anatomical features, or hormones that do not appear strictly male or female. This encompasses a wide range of situations. For example: having elements of both male and female reproductive anatomy, any of many chromosome configurations other than XX or XY, higher-than-typical levels of certain hormones, and a wide range of physical appearances. These are natural variations that occur in many species, including humans.

LexPride’s mission is “to develop community and advance full equality for LGBTQIA+ people and their families and allies in Lexington. The organization works with town staff, schools, and the business community organizing programs in various locations.

Unfortunately, most national, state, and local surveys and other data sources do not distinguish between sex and gender – nor do they collect data on identities other than male/female. Therefore, data for Lexington includes only people identifying as male or female, and not as intersex, nonbinary, etc.

In recent years, Lexington Public Schools has included questions about gender identity in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) that is administers biannually to middle school and high school students. In the 2021 survey of middle school and high school students a number identified as something other than male or female. These percentages have been growing, likely because more school-age students have language for these identities than in previous generations. Previously, without sources such as the internet, many people did not understand the meaning of their internal gender conflicts. In addition, many people transgender and nonbinary identities died from homicide or suicide (due to violence and rejection) or HIV/AIDS.

⁵ Nonbinary encompasses a wide array of gender identities. For example, some people do not associate with any gender (agender), some identify as both man and woman (bigender), some identify as man, woman, or other to varying degrees at different times (genderfluid), and so on. Many culturally-defined gender identities exist as well. For example, many Native Americans recognize Two Spirit people as having both male/female or more fluid gender identities. Some cultures recognize three, five, or more genders.

What this means about our needs: Like everyone else, people with transgender or nonbinary identities need acceptance, inclusion, and representation. This includes representation in public art and history, in the language we use (to ensure we are inclusive), and in town and community boards, committees, and groups. We also need facilities that meet our needs. For example, all municipal buildings and other public venues need to provide all-gender restrooms, locker rooms, and the like in order to be accessible to people who have nonbinary gender identities.

Among cisgender residents, women continue to be underrepresented in public art and history – and sometimes in the amount of gendered restrooms and locker rooms.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation encompasses a wide range of identities, such as asexual, heterosexual, bisexual, gay/lesbian, pansexual, and many others. Historically, national, state, and local surveys and other data sources did not collect data on sexual orientation. Some now do, though often not consistently. As a result, there is not reliable data on sexual orientation for Lexington adults.

In recent years, Lexington Public Schools has been collecting data on sexual orientation in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) that it administers to middle school and high school students. In the 2021 survey of middle school and high school students many identified as something other than heterosexual.

As with gender identity, historically many people did not understand the meaning of their romantic or sexual attractions—or felt they were

wrong. In addition, many people with gay/lesbian or other identities died from homicide or suicide (due to violence and rejection).

What this means about our needs: Like everyone else, people of all sexual orientations need acceptance, inclusion, and representation. This includes representation in public art and history, in the language we use (to ensure we are inclusive), and in town and community boards, committees, and groups.

Age of Residents

LEXINGTON'S POPULATION IS AGING

The median age of Lexington residents is expected to increase will increase from 43.7 years in 2000 to 48.9 years by 2025. About 30% of the Lexington population will be over 60 years of age by 2030.



Senior Services organize events for Lexington's older adults.

Stakeholders participating in the Community Conversation regarding the Comprehensive Plan identified a number of needs specific to this older demographic. These include:

- The financial limitations encountered by older adults on a fixed income in paying property taxes, maintenance, and utility costs
- Transparency of information regarding existing resources, especially to those for whom English is not a first language or with limited computer literacy
- Senior isolation and limited opportunities and places for socializing and recreating, specifically places and events that foster inter-generational interaction
- Access to appropriately sized and located affordable housing, designed for downsizing

SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE SLIGHTLY

By 2030, Lexington is projected to have 5,196 residents 5-19 years old (UMASS Donahue Institute), representing 14.6 of the town's overall projected population of 35,670. Many residents report moving to Lexington for the public schools, which enjoy an excellent reputation. Because the majority (90%) of school-aged children attend Lexington's public schools, enrollment projections provide fairly accurate estimates of this age group. Current student enrollment projections suggest that both elementary and middle school enrollments will remain stable, at least in the short term. High school

enrollments are projected to peak in 2024-2025 at around 2,500 students.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Older Adults. Consistent with nationwide trends, Lexington's population is aging. The town must address the specific needs of this demographic (including programming, socializing, health and wellness, transportation, and appropriately designed and located housing, including assisted living).

School-aged children. Facilities and services oriented to children and youth will continue to be a priority for the town. This includes keeping the schools well maintained, offering relevant programming at the Community Center, and providing a range of recreational facilities and opportunities for teens to gather.



Income Diversity

Housing Costs. As most of us know all too well, COVID-19 has impacted our lives in many ways. These impacts affect our built environment needs as well—particularly in the areas of housing and schools.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, suburbs have become attractive due to access to outdoor space, larger housing size to accommodate home offices, and additional space for families. As a result, real estate prices have increased significantly in suburbs across the country. Lexington, with its good schools, open spaces, bicycle paths, and well-connected trail system, has become more desirable than ever. This further limits the ability of people with lower incomes to live in Lexington.

As a rule of thumb, a household should not spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs if they are to comfortably afford the rest of life's expenses. Given that the median single-family home value in Lexington is \$889,700 (nearly double the regional average of \$497,965)⁶, it follows that those with low or moderate incomes cannot afford to live in Lexington. This poses an obstacle to meeting the town's stated goal of increasing the socio-economic diversity of its residents.



The median single-family home selling price in Lexington increased to \$1.5 million as of September of 2021 (average over the previous 12 months). There is very little housing attainable available to people of low- or moderate- incomes.

⁶ Source: ACS 5-Year Table (2019)

RELEVANT “VISION FOR LEXINGTON” PROJECT:

Exploring Issues of Social Diversity

Primary objective: To look at status and trends in Lexington demographics relating to age, race, ethnicity, income, ability, educational background, length of residency, and other characteristics.

Methods:

- Identify and integrate existing data from different sources to make some realistic projections about Lexington's future demographics.
- Conduct community survey to gather supplemental information.

Findings: Working group created to scope out issues and develop a potential agenda for future focus.



Lexington Public Schools’ Strategic Plan has as its first core value:
“We all belong.”

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How do we support the increasing number of older adults to aging in the community?
- How can we preserve existing and create new housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households?
- How can Town communication be more inclusive?
- How can the Town be more supportive to support LGBTQIA+ individuals?
- How can we broaden the participation of residents of all backgrounds and ages in Town governance and decision making?
- What can the town do to support teenagers?
- Is the Town as accessible to individuals of all abilities as it can be?
- How can we ensure a more diverse employee and Town staff workforce?
- How do we attract and support more diverse visitors and /patrons?
- How do we support minority and women-owned businesses?

LEXINGTON VOICES

A large number of participants at **World Café forums** expressed a desire for more ethnic, racial, cultural, and religious diversity. Additionally, Participants also expressed concern regarding the lack of economic diversity.

A majority of participants at the World Café forums mentioned “cross cultural exchange” as being valued.

“Racial tension is increasing in the Town schools; drug use and other stress-related issues are crossing all cultural groups.” (World Café participant)

“How do we keep people in Town?” (World Café participant)

“Concerned about the stress level at Lexington High School and the fact that seniors are getting priced out of Town.” (World Café participant)

“Lexington is an aging community with no retirement community and nowhere to downsize.” (CPAC member)

From **SWOT Analysis @ LexingtonNEXT “Kick-off Event”**:

“We need more information regarding how long people stay in town. Are they just getting kids through school and leaving?”

Participants at the forum identified a number of needs including:

- *“Need smaller, more affordable housing if we are to promote socio-economic diversity”*
- *“Utter lack of African-Americans makes Lexington a less desirable place”*
- *“Lexington used to have economic diversity; today it has racial and ethnic diversity that but lacks economic diversity”*

from **Vision 20/20**:

- *“Inclusion of the growing group of residents with diverse backgrounds is critical to the future stability and cohesion of the Lexington community.”*
- *“Participation in Town Meeting and PTA/PTOs among Asians has increased significantly in recent years.”*
- *“Do you have Indian or Chinese friends that you socialize with? This is a new phase of the diversity project – cultural inclusion.”*
- *The question has to do with the nature of the exchanges, and the nature of the social intercourse. And to that extent, groups do still stick very much to themselves.”*
- *“We need to focus on building shared community value and identity, anticipating challenges, and evolving to meet the needs of the residents.”*

RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Select Board Goals (2020-2021):

- Review residential zoning for ways to create new housing opportunities and protect the diversity of the existing housing stock
 - Research what zoning alternatives other communities have used to broaden housing diversity
- Work with the Planning Office, Community Preservation Committee, Housing Partnership, LexHAB, Housing Authority and others to review existing affordable housing stock, identify needed improvements and develop a plan to fund these.
 - Develop a Working Group of these Committees to identify opportunities
- Create expanded opportunities for resident participation.
 - Attract 15% new participation on Town Committees
 - Information regarding all vacancies on Town Committees should be widely advertised including emailed to all who attended the Citizen's Academy
- Create and communicate a plan for broadening diversity of town staff.
 - Continue to measure and evaluate degree of diversity of staff demographics
 - Information regarding employment opportunities will be widely advertised including in media oriented to people of color
- Explore ways in which LexHAB could be transformed in the future

RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Planning Board Work Plan Items (2021-2022)

- 1.H. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Review and update the Zoning Bylaw and Map to comply with Housing Choice Bill requirements
- I.Z. Zoning Bylaw: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Permitting- amend the zoning bylaw to address any equity and permitting issues



GOAL 1: DIVERISTY AND INCLUSION

To promote the diversity, equity, and inclusion of people visiting, living, and working in Lexington

Objective 1.1. Remove barriers to living in Lexington

Objective 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town

Objective 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities

Objective 1.4. Attract people of diverse backgrounds to work in town

Objective 1.5 Improve town-wide communication and encourage broader participation in decision-making

The following implementation table identifies action steps, responsible parties, potential partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.



GOAL 1: TO PROMOTE DIVERISTY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

NOTE: The objectives, strategies, and potential actions of this entire Plan were developed through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens and are thus relevant to this Goal. Those that are especially relevant may be provided in more detail in other areas of the plan and may only be briefly referred to here and readers are directed to other section so this Plan.

Objective 1.1. Remove barriers to living in Lexington					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.1.1. Revise town rules, regulations, and practices to remove barriers to inclusion	a. Review bylaws, rules, regulations, policies, and practices ⁷ to ensure equity and remove unintended consequences. SEE END NOTE #1 b. Amend zoning to provide more types of housing (See also Housing Goal 2).	2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion <i>zoning bylaw change</i> See Endnote #3 <i>Massachusetts</i> Department of Housing and Community Development Equity Tool Kit ⁸ See Endnote #4		Leads: All Departments Partners: Planning Board Chief Equity Officer (CEO) Strategic Equity Advisory Team (SEAT) Human Rights Committee Cultural and identity groups	Ongoing: Continue to Support

⁷ Continue to advocate for an “Equity-In-All-Policies Approach:” https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/download_pdf/Planning-for-Equity-Policy-Guide-rev.pdf

⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/equity-toolkit/download>

Objective 1.1. Remove barriers to living in Lexington					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.1.2 Increase awareness of barriers to providing opportunities for a greater diversity of people to live in town	<p>a. Provide outreach, education and training in Fair Housing and other forms of discrimination not addressed by the law See Endnote #5 and Goal 2 Housing</p> <p>b. Promote Lexington housing options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide realtors with ready-to-use information about housing options • Work with the Planning Office, Community Preservation Committee, Housing Partnership, LexHAB, Housing Authority, and others to identify and fund needed improvements to housing units • Include METCO families in local preference for affordable housing lotteries <p>c. Increase awareness about the connection between affordable housing and diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect research on connection between affordable housing and diversity of population and create an online resource on the town's web page⁹ • Collect stories from persons looking for affordable housing in Lexington and post videos to increase awareness, promote understanding 	<p>Fair Housing act</p> <p>Missing Middle Housing</p>		<p>Leads: Planning Office</p> <p>Partners: School Department Chief Equity Officer Realtors LexHAB Community Preservation Committee Housing Authority Human Rights Committee MetroWest Fair Housing RHSO Council on Aging Commission on Disability</p>	<p>Sustained effort: Initiate new action step and sustain over time</p>

⁹ Example of discussion of connection between affordable housing and diversity of population:
<https://www.governing.com/community/a-recipe-for-achieving-real-housing-affordability>

Objective 1.1. Remove barriers to living in Lexington					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	of the issue, and raise support for addressing inadequate housing options ¹⁰			Public Information Officer Cultural and identity groups	

¹⁰ Example: See “Stories of the Can’t Wait List: A collection of powerful stories by real people experiencing hardships and dwindling hopes from years spent on Cambridge Housing Authority waiting lists to secure a home in one of the most in-demand and expensive real estate markets in the country.” Cambridge, MA:

<https://cambridge-housing.org/cantwait/>


Also see: “A New Way of Listening”: <https://portal.realtalkforchange.org>

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.2.1. Develop amenities that serve diverse populations	<p>a. Revisit developing a crematory at Westview Cemetery (see also Goal 9 Public Facilities)</p> <p>b. Recruit and support a greater variety of ethnic groceries, restaurants, retail stores, and personal services in Lexington commercial districts</p> <p>c. Allocate space in a public facility for use by different cultural or religious communities for worship or other community gathering, creating a place for cultural exchange</p> <p>d. Encourage use of universal design in all amenities</p> <p>e. Require Lexington town staff and encourage local businesses and community organizations to learn about diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural exchange</p> <p>f. Consider the specific needs of women in the built environment, public services, and the provision of amenities</p> <p>See Endnote #6</p>	<p>Cultural and identity groups</p> <p>See Endnote #18</p>		<p>Leads:</p> <p>Town Manager</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>Partners:</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>Council on Aging</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Retailers Association</p> <p>Cultural and identity groups</p>	<p>Ongoing:</p> <p>Continue to support</p>

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.2.2. Add multilingual and gender inclusive signage in public places	<p>a. Install a system of multilingual and gender inclusive signage in town-owned facilities including the schools, library, Community Center and recreational facilities, Town Center, Minuteman Bikeway, and other frequently visited locations See Endnote #7</p> <p>b. Encourage businesses to provide multilingual and gender inclusive signage</p> <p>c. Engage residents in branding and naming commercial districts and invite diverse symbols and toponyms (place-names)</p>			<p>Leads: Select Board</p> <p>Town Manager</p> <p>Partners: Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Strategic Equity Advisory Team</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Retailers Association</p> <p>Cultural and identity groups</p>	<p>#2: Intermediate (Years 5-10)</p>

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.2.3. Make town communication and messaging more inclusive	a. Add Language Access Coordination to the work of the Public Information Office SEE ENDNOTE #8 b. Provide multi-lingual and inclusive messaging. Ensure all messaging is gender- and ability-inclusive c. Translate summaries of key town documents, into languages commonly spoken in Lexington homes d. Ensure that all town applications and forms include non-binary gender options c. Provide translation and interpretation services d. Ensure that town communication is accessible to persons with disabilities including sight and hearing impairments	Multilingual residents and staff of Lexington LexPride		Leads: Select Board Town Manager Chief Equity Officer Partners: Public Information Officer Commission on Disability	Sustained effort: Initiate new action and sustain over time

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a *sense of belonging* and *promote interaction* among residents, visitors, and people working in town

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.2.4. Develop opportunities for people to connect	<p>a. Encourage cultural exchange events and activities</p> <p>b. Invite and encourage installations in prominent locations that represent the various identities of people living in Lexington, especially recently arrived communities. This could include temporary or permanent installations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public art, including murals • Banners • Monuments <p>c. Develop a “<i>Human Library</i>” based on the Danish model where people can “borrow a person instead of a book” and have a conversation to promote a better understanding of commonalities and appreciation of differences See Endnote #9</p> <p>d. Hold focus groups or survey residents regarding what would make Lexington a more diverse and inclusive community</p>	<p>Cultural and identity groups See Endnote #18</p>		<p>Leads: Select Board Town Manager</p> <p>Partners: Land Use, Health, and Development Department</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Affinity and Cultural and identity groups</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library staff</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Monuments and Memorials Committee</p>	<p>Sustained effort: Initiate new action and sustain over time</p> 

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.2.5. Require diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all for town staff and board/committee members on a regular basis	<p>a. Provide regular diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competence training for all town staff and board/committee members, with ongoing funding. See Endnote #10</p> <p>b. Conduct staff training to ensure that community engagement is conducted in ways that are welcoming to all residents</p> <p>c. Reach out to volunteer translators and interpreters.</p>	Chief Equity Officer		<p>Leads: Select Board Town Manager</p> <p>Partners: Chief Equity Officer Human Resources Department</p>	<p>Ongoing: Continue to support</p>
1.2.6. Create signage and monuments that record and promote the role of people of all identities in the town's history	<p>a. Drawing on the LexSeeHer model, organize events and design sculpture, monuments, and other types of public art, including both temporary and permanent markers, to honor the participation of people of diverse backgrounds and identities in the history of Lexington:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Historical Society to conduct research that focuses on identifying the contributions of people of all identities in the town's history • Hold design competitions involving the Town's youth to create installations 	LexSeeHer ¹³ Historical Society		<p>Leads: Select Board Town Manager</p> <p>Partners: LexSeeHer Historical Society Chief Equity Officer</p>	<p>Sustained effort: Initiate new action and sustain over time</p>

¹³ LexSeeHer is an effort to honor women's contributions throughout Lexington's history through sculpture: <https://www.lexseeher.com>

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>b. Support LexSeeHer¹¹ efforts to honor the efforts and perspectives of women in Lexington's history See Endnote #11</p> <p>c. Honor the Black and Native American Minutemen who fought in the Revolutionary War ¹² See Endnote #12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a central location such as the Battle Green or Grain Mill Alley for a monument <p>d. Make Land Acknowledgements when opening public events and meetings as a way of respecting the first peoples of the land, using consistent language across all forums See Endnote #13</p> <p>e. Support the Historical Society in its research about slavery and enslaved peoples who lived in Lexington</p> <p>f. Celebrate the role the Ellen Stone Building played in the anti-slavery movement</p>			<p>Affinity and cultural groups</p> <p>Association of Black Citizens of Lexington</p> <p>Monuments and Memorials Committee</p>	

¹¹ **LexSeeHer** is an effort to honor women's contributions throughout Lexington's history through sculpture: <https://www.lexseeher.com>

¹² "Black Soldiers Were Essential to the Battles of Lexington in 1775:" afri <https://newsone.com/2003439/black-soldiers-like-lemuel-haynes-were-essential-to-battles-of-lexington-and-concord-in-1775/>

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Foster a sense of belonging and promote interaction among residents, visitors, and people working in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.2.7. Ensure that all residents have equitable access to public facilities and services	<p>a. Provide information both online and in non-computer-based ways as well as in languages commonly spoken in Lexington homes</p> <p>b. Ensure that all public facilities have gender-neutral restrooms, locker rooms, and other such facilities</p> <p>c. Install and update signage and signals accessible to people with hearing or sight impairments</p> <p>d. Expand opportunities for anonymous data collection such as surveys</p> <p>e. Cross reference state and national data sets to learn what LGBTQIA/LGBTQ+ populations in Lexington may be experiencing</p> <p>f. Highlight the limitations of data in public reports, such as data not including LGBTQIA+ people LGBTQAI+</p>	<p>Town website</p> <p>Community bulletin boards</p> <p>Affinity groups</p> <p>See Endnote #18</p> <p>Architectural Access Board</p> <p>American with Disabilities Act</p>		<p>Leads: Town Manager</p> <p>Partners: Public Information Officer</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p>	<p>Ongoing: Continue to support</p>

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.1. Develop options and incentives for the production and adaptation of housing accessible to all persons (See Also Goal 2 Housing)	<p>a. Provide zoning incentives for small-scale, housing developments</p> <p>b. Require some amount of housing to be produced using universal design principles or to meet Architectural Access Board standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide developers and home-owners with a guidebook to create accessible dwelling units <p>c. Evaluate and potentially revise current zoning and regulations to allow new age-sensitive options, such as cooperative housing for multiple generations and other inter-generational living options</p> <p>d. Review responses of seniors participating in a survey as reported in <i>Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019</i> See Endnote #14</p> <p>e. Explore additional and or expanded property relief programs</p> <p>f. Consider grant programs that support older adults in making home modifications</p> <p>g. Consider ways (financial and practical) of providing support to older adults for the maintenance of their property</p>	<i>Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019</i>		<p>Leads: Human Services Planning Board</p> <p>Partners: Council on Aging Chief Equity Officer Land Use, Health & Dev. Commission on Disability</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.2. Review and update resources provided to Lexington's older adults	<p>a. Identify the strengths and challenges of aging in Lexington</p> <p>b. Reach out to older adults with strategies directed at those who do not have internet at home or do not speak English at home and/or have been rejected by their families</p> <p>c. Review the findings from the <i>Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019</i>¹⁴ <i>See Endnote #14</i></p> <p>d. Add any desirable features from the Beacon Hill Village concept to existing partnerships with community-based organizations, local businesses, and residents to help to stabilize neighborhoods for all residents, and to specifically support older adults to age in place See Endnote #15</p>	<p><i>Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019</i></p> <p>Meals on Wheels</p> <p>Nutritional Counseling</p>		<p>Leads: Human Services</p> <p>Partners: Council on Aging Recreation and Community Programs Cary Memorial Library Chief Equity Officer</p>	Ongoing: Continue to support

¹⁴ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/861/Lexington-Age-Friendly-Report-Summary-PDF?bidId=>

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	Seek AARP designation as an Age-friendly Community ¹⁵ See Endnote #16	<i>Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging¹⁶</i> <i>American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Network of Age-friendly communities</i>			

¹⁵ <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.umb.edu/demographyofaging>

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.3. Increase opportunities for socializing and reduce the isolation of older adults	<p>a. Explore opportunities for co-creating programming oriented to older adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey older adults to align programming with their desires Work with cultural and affinity groups to ensure that programming is culturally and linguistically relevant to residents of diverse backgrounds Work with LexPride to ensure that programming is safe and appealing to older LGBTQIA+ adults <p>b. Collaborate with students at Lexington Public Schools for multigenerational activities</p> <p>c. Create a rating system for the town's trail system indicating level of difficulty, proximity to benches and rest rooms, etc. to increase the comfort level of older adults</p> <p>d. Offer multilingual historical tours</p>	<p><i>Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019</i></p> <p><i>Older Wiser Lifelong Learners¹⁷</i></p> <p><i>Senior-Friendly Businesses¹⁸</i></p> <p><i>Minuteman Cane Award</i></p> <p><i>Lex Café Senior Meals at Community Center¹⁹</i></p>		<p>Leads: Human Services</p> <p>Partners:</p> <p>Council on Aging</p> <p>Recreation and Community Programs Department</p> <p>School Department</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p>	<p>Ongoing: Continue to support; some new action steps</p>

¹⁷ <https://friendsofthecoa.org/current-courses.asp>

¹⁸ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/362/Senior-Friendly-Businesses>

¹⁹ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/357/Lex-Cafe-Senior-Meals>

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.4. Reduce teens' dependence on travel by automobile	a. Expand public transit options b. Make walking and biking safer and more pleasant c. Expand incentives to public school students to take the bus, carpool, walk, or bike to school d. Develop a teen-targeted "Getting Around Lexington without a Car" campaign, encouraging the Lexington Youth Council to brand and lead it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make non-car travel "cool" • Focus on increasing youth ridership on Lexpress 	Minuteman Bikeway Safe Routes to School program Lexpress School buses ACROSS Lexington trail system	Safe Routes to School grants	Leads: School Department Partners: Human Services Department Chief Equity Officer Lexington Youth Council	#1: IMMEDIATE: (Years 1-5)

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.5. Develop Teen and Youth Programming	a. Expand existing programs geared to teens at the Hayden Recreation Center, Community Center, and Cary Memorial Library	<p><i>Forum for Youth Network Listing, 2015²⁰</i></p> <p>Hayden Recreation Center</p> <p>Community Center</p>		<p>Leads: Human Services</p> <p>Partners: Public Facilities Department</p> <p>School Department</p> <p>Youth Council</p> <p>Recreation Department</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library</p> <p>Community Center</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p>	#2: Intermediate (5-10 years)

²⁰ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1941/Forum-for-Youth-Network-PDF?bidId=>

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.6. Involve youth in planning their spaces, programs, and activities	<p>a. Work with the Youth Council and the Cary Memorial Library Youth Advisory Board to solicit input when making decisions that affect spaces, programs, and events oriented to youth</p> <p>b. Review results of youth surveys (including YRBS)²¹ to promote health and wellness amongst Lexington's youth, including both middle and high school students</p>	<p><i>Forum for Youth Network Listing, 2015</i></p> <p>Youth Council</p> <p>Youth Advisory Board (Cary Memorial Library)</p>		<p>Leads: Human Services Department</p> <p>Partners: Youth Council</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library Youth Advisory Board</p> <p>School Department</p> <p>Land Use, Health, and Development Department</p> <p>Recreation Department</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing: Continue to support</p>

²¹ Lexington High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The survey focuses on the major risk behaviors that threaten the health and safety of young people and are anonymous.

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Support people of all ages and abilities					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.3.7. Support persons of all abilities	<p>a. Ensure that all public facilities are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state law</p> <p>b. Implement the improvements outlined in the 2017 Recreation Facilities and ADA Compliance Study of recreational facilities and playgrounds</p> <p>c. Adapt some of the town's trails to allow motorized handicap access</p> <p>d. Provide information regarding access to those with disabilities</p> <p>e. Create a directory of public facilities in which persons with disabilities can determine which features and which disabilities are supported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the Senior-friendly Business Directory and more widely promote accessibility features 	<p>Recreation Facilities and ADA Compliance Study (2017)</p> <p>Capital Improvement Plan / Prioritization of ADA improvements (2018)</p> <p>Senior-Friendly Businesses²²</p>		<p>Leads: Dept. of Public Works</p> <p>Department of Public Facilities</p> <p>Partners:</p> <p>Recreation Department</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Council on Aging</p> <p>Land Use, Health, and Development Department</p> <p>Area businesses</p>	<p>Ongoing: Continue to support</p>

²² <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/362/Senior-Friendly-Businesses>

OBJECTIVE 1.4. Attract people of diverse backgrounds to work in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.4.1. Recruit individuals from a variety of backgrounds to work in Town Departments	<p>a. Develop deliberate recruitment and hiring practices to attract diverse staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend job fairs and use alternative recruitment software and practices to identify diverse candidates Publish job opportunities in a variety of locations that are oriented to people of specific races/ethnicities, abilities, ages, gender and sexual identities, etc. <p>b. Implement recommendations from the Forum on Reimagining Public Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Task Force to Reimagine Public Safety in Lexington²³ Recruit Public Safety staff that is multi-lingual and multi-racial Review how other communities have approached this issue <p>c. Understand how union regulations may influence hiring practices and contract negotiations</p> <p>d. Map out different hiring processes and ensure that Chief Equity Officer reviews job descriptions before they are published</p>	<p>Forum on Reimagining Public Safety (May 6, 2021)</p> <p>Together We Rise <i>“Reimagining Public Safety Resources”</i></p> <p>Amplify Latinx (MA)</p> <p>Black Economic Council of MA (BECMA)</p> <p>MA Asian American Commission (AAC)</p> <p>National Association of Asian American Professionals (Boston)</p> <p>Lexington Working Group for Recruiting and Hiring</p>		<p>Leads:</p> <p>Town Manager</p> <p>Assistant Town Manager</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>Partners:</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Town Department Heads</p> <p>Lexington Working Group for Recruiting and Hiring</p> <p>Affinity and cultural groups Strategic Equity Advisory Team</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²³ See similar efforts in other towns such as Brookline: https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/23619/Task-Force-Final-Report-22621_1P

OBJECTIVE 1.4. Attract people of diverse backgrounds to work in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	e. Implement the town's Diversity Hiring Policy ²⁴ f. Use a "local preference" housing policy ²⁵ to allow potential new hires to live in town				
1.4.2 Create a culture of inclusion among Town officials and staff	a. Survey residents and town staff as to their experiences and ideas regarding making Lexington a more inclusive workplace b. Train those in positions to hire and promote the value of a diverse workforce c. Conduct a Management Analysis and assess workplace benefits and adjust to create a more flexible and inclusive workplace including flexible schedules and work from home policies d. Assess workplace facilities to ensure that all employees are supported. Some examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private and comfortable breastfeeding spaces (consider providing modular breastfeeding pods) • Gender-neutral restroom and other facilities in all municipal buildings 			Leads: Town Manager Assistant Town Manager Select Board Public Information Officer Partners: Chief Equity Officer Cultural and affinity groups Strategic Equity Advisory Team	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²⁴ Town-sponsored DEI staff training has included Hiring for Diversity training (overview of best practices in hiring for Senior Managers), Layers of Belonging, Stories of Intersectionality (training for managers on intersectionality and belonging), and Best Practices for Developing and Retaining a Neurodiverse Workforce (based on expertise pulled from recruitment and management experience at a technology company where over 75% of the employees' report being on the autism spectrum).

²⁵ The State allows cities and towns to set aside up to 70 percent of affordable units in a housing development for members of local preference groups; this can include persons working for the town. The remaining units are available to any income-eligible applicants. It should be noted that municipalities are reviewing their local preference policies and reducing the percentage because in many instances it has resulted in limiting housing opportunities for people of color.


OBJECTIVE 1.4. Attract people of diverse backgrounds to work in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.4.3. Expand equitable procurement practices	<p>a. Set goals for procurement of goods and services from minority and women-owned businesses</p> <p>b. Set or increase goals in Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the percentage of subcontracts set aside for minority- and women-owned businesses and have it count in the selection process by including it in the rating of bids (See Massport Model)</p> <p>c. Require public bidders to disclose their statistics on race, ethnicity, and gender to diversity project teams working on public projects</p>	<p>Amplify Latinx (MA)</p> <p>Black Economic Council of MA (BECMA)</p> <p>MA Asian American Commission (AAC)</p> <p>National Association of Asian American Professionals (Boston)</p> <p>Massport procurement model</p> <p>Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office</p>		<p>Leads:</p> <p>Town Manager</p> <p>Assistant Town Manager</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>Partners:</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)


OBJECTIVE 1.4. Attract people of diverse backgrounds to work in town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.4.4. Encourage minority-owned enterprises to set up shop in Lexington	<p>a. Recruit minority-owned business owners by using alternative recruitment software and practices to identify diverse candidates</p> <p>b. Invite businesses that provide food and other products and services that are oriented to cultural, racial, and ethnic groups represented in town</p> <p>c. Provide “incubator space” such as a retail pop up for small businesses owned by women and people of color²⁶</p>	<p>Vacant commercial space</p> <p>Minority-owned Lexington businesses²⁷</p> <p>Amplify Latinx (MA)</p> <p>Black Economic Council of MA (BECMA)</p> <p>MA Asian American Commission (AAC)</p> <p>National Association of Asian American Professionals (Boston)</p>		<p>Leads: Land Use, Health, and Development Department</p> <p>Partners: Landlords</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Retailers Association</p> <p>Strategic Equity Advisory Team</p>	Sustained effort: Initiate new action steps and sustain over time

²⁶ My People’s Market, Portland, OR.: <https://www.mypeoplesmarket.com>

²⁷ U.S. Census (2012)

OBJECTIVE 1.4. Attract people of **diverse backgrounds** to work in town

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
1.4.5. Encourage businesses to cater to the needs and preferences of cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious groups living in Lexington	<p>a. Conduct a survey of organized affinity groups asking them what they would like to see in local businesses that is currently missing, sharing the findings with local businesses to encourage them to provide relevant goods and services</p> <p>b. Promote the benefits of broadening businesses offerings to appeal to diverse residents See Endnote #17</p> <p>c. Help businesses develop relevant marketing strategies including providing multi-lingual signage that announces these offerings</p>	<p>Affinity groups See Endnote #18</p> <p>Area businesses</p>		<p>Leads: Economic Development Office</p> <p>Partners: Cultural and affinity groups Area businesses Chief Equity Officer Public Information Officer Chamber of Commerce Retailers Association Strategic Equity Advisory Team</p>	<p>Sustained effort: Initiate new action steps and sustain over time</p> 

OBJECTIVE 1.5. Improve town-wide communication and encourage broader participation in decision-making					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
1.5.1. Review decision-making processes to ensure meaningful public engagement	a. Review the design process for all town-owned public facilities to broaden public input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and recruit a broad range of residents for appointment to the Permanent Building Committee b. Review the process for allocation of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, including stakeholders advocating for Open Space, Recreation, Affordable Housing, and Historic Preservation c. Reach out in culturally competent ways to include residents of varied backgrounds in decision-making			Leads: Select Board	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5) 
				Partners: Permanent Building Committee Community Preservation Committee Chief Equity Officer	
1.5.2. Recruit and encourage a broad range of residents to	a. Increase awareness of the Citizens Academy b. Recruit members of under-represented cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious affinity groups	<i>Citizens Academy</i> ²⁸ Cultural and affinity groups		Leads: Select Board Partners: Communications Director	Sustained effort: Initiate new action step(s) and sustain over time

²⁸ Lexington's **Citizen Academy program** is designed to expose residents to the various town departments so they can gain a better understanding of how municipal government works. Through presentations, discussions, and visits to town departments, participants have the opportunity to hear from various Directors and Managers and learn about the operations of town programs and services:

OBJECTIVE 1.5. Improve town-wide communication and encourage broader participation in decision-making

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
volunteer to be on Town Boards, Committees, and Commissions	<p>c. Clearly define roles and time commitments in order to recruit younger volunteers</p> <p>d. Clearly define the role of volunteers in town government and clearly explain rules and regulations so as to increase the comfort level of potential volunteers</p> <p>e. Provide regular and repeated training to volunteers</p> <p>f. Upgrade all public meeting facilities to facilitate equitable in-person and remote or virtual participation by board members and the public</p>	<p>Citizen Training Planning Collaborative (CTPC) training programs</p>		<p>Affinity groups</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Youth Council</p>	

<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/town-manager/citizens-academy>

OBJECTIVE 1.5. Improve town-wide communication and encourage broader participation in decision-making					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
1.5.3. Improve communication with and engagement of town residents	<p>a. Implement the recommendations of the Enhancing Communication in Lexington (ECiL) subcommittee of the Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee, including²⁹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a town-wide Communication Plan and update the plan regularly as town priorities change • Implement a shared communication structure for town and school communications • Implement actions to increase enrollment on electronic communications platforms maintained by the town • Identify and incorporate non-Internet centered communication platforms for residents who choose not to use social media or electronic mail • Make the town website the launching point through which residents can find information they are seeking about town related issues, improving its search capability <p>b. Set up town government booths at town events to provide information and solicit feedback</p>	<i>Best Practices for Municipal Communication, Enhancing Communication in Lexington (ECiL)</i>		<p>Leads:</p> <p>Communications Director</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>Partners:</p> <p>CPAC</p> <p>Communications Advisory Committee</p> <p>Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</p> <p>Vision for Lexington Committee</p>	Ongoing: Continue to support

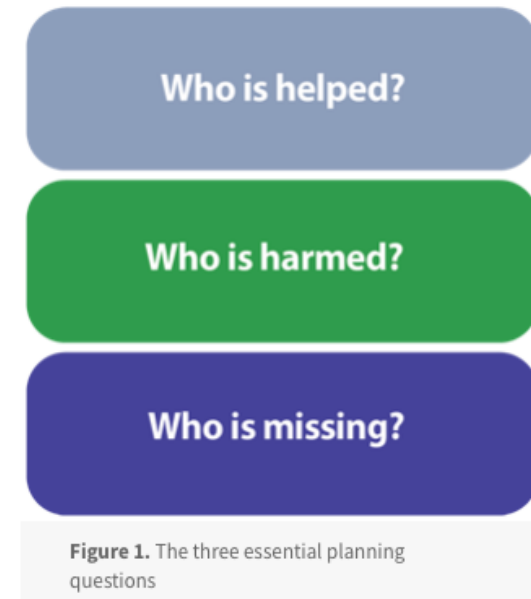
²⁹ Best Practices for Municipal Communications, A Report to the Town of Lexington MA Select Board, by the Enhancing Communication in Lexington (ECiL) subcommittee of The Lexington 20/20 Vision Committee, 4 August 2020

OBJECTIVE 1.5. Improve town-wide communication and encourage broader participation in decision-making					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
	c. Provide opportunities for virtual participation post-pandemic				

ENDNOTES:

Endnote #1. Equitable planning in the most basic and fundamental way defines why a particular policy, program, practice, or project exists and/or is being proposed and as the American Planning Association suggests, to ask the “Three Essential Questions”³⁰:

- Asking who is helped — identifying the readily apparent users or beneficiaries of a planning proposal — commences the essential question-asking process.
- Purposefully asking who is harmed by a planning idea — directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally — forces a proactive assessment of its potential negative impacts on real people.
 - **Financially harmed.** Will someone's livelihood be affected by an incompatible land-use decision, or will an infrastructure proposal negatively impact someone's property?
 - **Physically harmed.** Will someone suffer from unsafe or unhealthy physical or environmental conditions caused by the outcomes of a planning proposal?
 - **Culturally harmed.** Will someone's ties to the built environment such as important buildings, sites, or landmarks, be negatively impacted?
 - **Psychologically harmed.** Will someone's state of mind be impacted, such as having one's home demolished against one's will? Or will someone be subjected to potentially overwhelming new sensory inputs (e.g., blinking lights, loud noises) caused by changes in land uses?
 - **Harmed by neglect.** Will groups containing many loud voices be harmed by being ignored? Will people with quieter voices suffer by not being loud enough?
- Use a framework to help identify who is missing from the table. People who:
 - Are interested in the subject matter
 - Live in the greater area
 - Have different abilities and needs



³⁰ <https://www.planning.org/pas/memo/110/three-essential-questions-for-better-planning/>

- Are diverse in a variety of ways
- Live in communities that are underrepresented or are otherwise disproportionately left out of the conversation

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) An increasing number of municipalities are using HIA tools to evaluate their policies and programs. There are many examples from Europe and Canada and some in the U.S. A Health Impact Assessment tool provides a framework to assess the health impacts of a proposed project, program or policy through the social determinants of health that include DEI considerations.

According to the World Health Organization, health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. A healthy community³¹ is one that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments. Such communities help people to support one another in aspects of daily life and to develop to their fullest potential. Healthy places are those designed and built to improve the quality of life for all people who live, work, worship, learn, and play within their borders. They also provide easy access and connectivity to other communities – places where every person is free to make choices amid a variety of healthy, available, accessible, and affordable options.” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)³²

Endnote Endnote #3. Diversity Equity, and Inclusion Zoning Bylaw change, Fall 2021

Town Meeting amended the Zoning Bylaw in 2021 to incorporate a variety of changes in response to the Systemic Racism Resolution adopted under Article 8 of Special Town Meeting 2020-2 and the Full Inclusion Resolution adopted under Article 30 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Specifically, it:

- Required that the Zoning Bylaw be interpreted and applied to forbid discriminatory effects;
- Permitted structures enabling access for disabled persons anywhere on a lot;
- required consideration of racial, disability, and other equity impacts and removed consideration of criteria which encouraged discrimination;
- Replaced the definition of “family” with a definition of “household” that does not exclude groups of unrelated disabled persons; and
- Permitted more than one resident (such as a couple) in a rooming unit.

Endnote #4. MAThe Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Equity Tool Kit³³ suggests that a set of operating principles be adopted to ensure that all Town Departments center on relevant or critical stakeholder groups rather than their own interests. “Borrowing from our friends at Forward Cities and the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, users are expected to “A.B.I.D.E. by Anti-Racist Principles.” These unifying concepts will be briefly explained. The acronym A.B.I.D.E. is an abbreviation of Access, Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, and

³¹ As described by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Healthy People 2010 report

³² National Center for Environmental Health, Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/>

³³ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/equity-toolkit/download>

Equity. It expands upon the popular D.E.I. acronym to recognize the importance of creating a culture of access in consideration of individuals with disabilities and others with lower socioeconomic statuses. It also acknowledges the need for inspiring a sense of belonging for all internal and external stakeholders.”

The equity toolkit is organized into a series of actions and steps that are separated into four phases: Define, Clarify, Engage, And Measure. Together they reflect a process for embedding equity and inclusion into transformational community-based economic development work. Each action is suggestive and provides an overview before introducing high-level steps and resources for consideration for practice. These provide a framework for collaborative action-planning.

- **Endnote** , gender identity,, a.³⁴ Or they are not covered by anti-discrimination laws/policies, or they fear ridicule or other harassment. A landlord is enthusiastic about renting to someone until they meet in person and recognize that the person is transgender or gender nonbinary.

Endnote #6. Gender Mainstreaming³⁵ Increasingly, evidence suggests that men and women have different wants and needs when it comes to built environments, public services, and amenities, and that planning interventions may not meet all those differing needs, especially those of women. Many European countries have begun to pay attention to these differences and to develop ways of addressing them, as this historically excluded group comprises half of the population. “When women are not well supported, communities are not well supported.”

Endnote #7. Multilingual signage. There are many considerations for creating multilingual signage to ensure that it doesn't contribute to signage clutter and is accessible and user-friendly. Some of these include:

- Use color coding or other way of distinguishing between languages for ease of reading (with consideration given to color blind individuals)
- Multilingual signage can also be used on gateway signage welcoming people into Lexington as well as on wayfinding signage.
- Make use of icons or pictographs where relevant using internationally recognized symbols (use ISO Catalogue³⁶)

³⁴ <https://www.zillow.com/blog/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-fair-housing-act-227310/?msclkid=6b65dfe0b11d179ada17be0650406eb5&semQue=Fair%20Housing&1299623001623956kwd-81226588754007:loc-19081226500240765>

³⁵ https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/download_pdf/PASMEMO-2019-11-12-rev.pdf

³⁶ **International Organization for Standards:**

https://webstore.ansi.org/Standards/PCC/ISOCatalog?msclkid=25f0ed6dc41d15cbbc118c8b298e9d32&utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Cam%20paigh%20%231&utm_term=ISO%20Catalog&utm_content=ISO-20K

- Include braille.

Endnote #8. Language Access Coordinator: A Language Access Coordinator is responsible for collaborating with all Town Departments to ensure that individuals of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or who require accessibility services are provided meaningful opportunities to be informed of and participate in town business, services and decision-making. An example Job Description (from City of Malden) can be found here:

<https://www.cityofmalden.org/Jobs.aspx?UniqueId=100&From=All&CommunityJobs=False&JobID=Executive-Office-Language-Access-Coord-155>.

This could be expanded to include use of inclusive language (across gender, disabilities, age, race/ethnicity, etc.).

Endnote #9. Human Library³⁷: In Copenhagen, Demark there is a library where one can “borrow a human for an hour” to explore various topics, get to know someone who is seemingly different from you and to help to promote an understanding of the commonality of the human condition as well as an appreciation of the differences. People register as with a title, one they are willing to share, such as “unemployed,” “refugee,” “Greek,” “transgender,” etc. The idea is that through increased exposure and face-to-face interaction, people start to come closer to not “judging a book by its cover.”

“It is basically a safe place where people can read a person and not judge it just like any book we read. Sixteen years after the first event, the human library has now spread in over 70 countries with South Africa, Sudan and Chile coming up in next years. It is a great way to make communities and reclusive groups of people communicate with each other and try to live in harmony.³⁸”

Endnote #10. Cultural Competence: Cultural competence is about our will and actions to **build understanding between people, to be respectful and open to different cultural perspectives, and strengthen cultural security and work towards equality in opportunity**. Relationship building is fundamental to cultural competence and is based on the foundations of understanding each other’s expectations and attitudes, and subsequently building on the strength of each other’s knowledge, using a wide range of community members and resources to build on their understandings.

Endnote #11. LexSeeHer³⁹: LexSeeHer is a dedicated group of volunteers in Lexington, who seek to establish the first monument that will depict real women in the Birthplace of American Liberty. The monument will convey the important economic, social, and political impact women have had

³⁷ <https://wonderfulengineering.com/check-out-this-library-in-denmark-where-you-borrow-people-instead-of-books/>

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ <https://www.lexseeher.com>

over more than three centuries. It will also raise questions about what “liberty” and “freedom” have meant to women from the 18th century to the present.

LexSeeHer advisor and public-school educator Celeste Freeman summed up her reaction to Meredith Bergmann’s concept [for a sculpture to honor women] this way: *“This musical line from Lin Manuel’s Hamilton has been reverberating in my mind when I think of how gates and gatekeepers are often used to keep people out both physically from spaces as well as the pages of what we think of as of known history. One of the exciting aspects of this project is that this gate is actually an invitation—an opening to everyone to visually see a more expansive view of what we think of as settled history. When I think of the role of generations of unsung women like my grandmothers who serve as both guardians and gatekeepers of history, I can’t think of a more meaningful and symbolic way to capture how our founding mothers have shaped our nation. I see it as a portal to the past, present, and future.”*

Endnote #12. Black and Native American Soldiers in Revolutionary War: A significant number of African American and Native Americans participated in the Revolutionary War. They are not currently honored in a public way as White men are.

“About 1,700 African American and American Indian men have been identified in this study as being among the nearly 68,000 soldiers Massachusetts supplied to the army during the Revolution.¹ General Artemus Ward, George Washington’s predecessor as Commander-in-Chief, issued the first general order of the Continental Army in the spring of 1775. That order required that a descriptive return, including “complexion,” be made of all men in the army.² Although it was not always followed to the letter, the order has made the task of identifying minority participants in the Revolution less difficult. The Massachusetts Minutemen who were organized as a result of the Committee of Safety’s October action responded quickly to the Lexington Alarm on April 19, 1775.³ Among them was Prince Estabrook, an African American from Lexington, who was wounded in that first battle of the Revolution⁴⁰.”

Endnote #13. Land Acknowledgements. Land Acknowledgements, that is, acknowledging that the land we stand on once belonged to Native Americans, are increasingly being made in order to “un-erase” history. In some instances they are very concise, for example: I want to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of [nation names].” In other instances they may include more intention and detail. In crafting a Land Acknowledgement it may be helpful to consider the following questions⁴¹:

- Why are we doing this Land Acknowledgement?
- How does this Land Acknowledgement relate to the event or meeting?

⁴⁰ <https://www.massar.org/2013/06/30/african-americans-of-massachusetts-in-the-revolution/>

⁴¹ <https://medium.com/wa-health-care-authority-connect/land-acknowledgements-a-way-to-respect-the-first-peoples-of-the-land-6c0285da3b0c>

- What is the history of this territory? How has the history affected the health and well-being of the native people today?
- What can we do in our own work to help people heal from that past — and to learn how not to inflict new wounds today?

Additionally, it is desirable to include Native people in the crafting of the Land Acknowledgment, if possible.

Resource map: This tool allows you to look up the tribes whose land your meeting or event is held. Borders were more fluid and based on seasonal uses and historical understandings: <https://native-land.ca/>

Endnote #14. Needs Assessment of Lexington's Older Adults

The responses to survey as reported in *Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019*⁴²:

Housing preferences in Lexington if need to move:

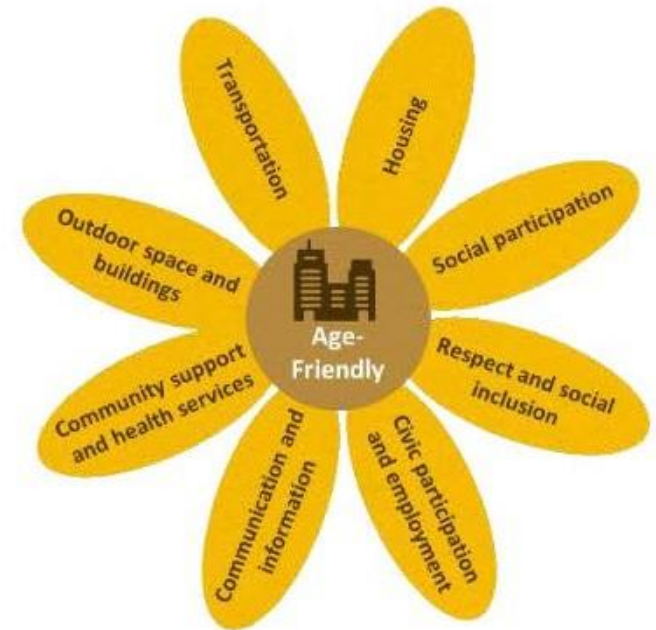
- ▶ **Age 50-59:** 53% marked single-family home
- ▶ **Age 60-79:** About 30% chose each of these—senior independent living, single-family, or apartment/ condominium/townhouse
- ▶ **Age 80+:** 54% marked senior independent living community

Additionally, respondents mentioned that the cost of living is a concern, especially with respect to housing and property taxes.

Home maintenance and home modifications were also cited as concerns.

The report identifies eight domains of an age-friendly community:

- Housing
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Social Participation
- Communication and Information
- Transportation
- Community and Health Services



Graphics Source: Adapted from WHO by S. Harris (Design for Aging Committee, BSA)

⁴² https://www.lexingtonma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif7101/f/uploads/lexington_age_friendly_report_summary_0.pdf

- Civic Participation and Employment
- Respect and Social Inclusion

Some relevant responses to the Needs Assessment survey include concerns with:

Transportation

- Limited evening / weekend transportation and limited public transportation options
- Challenge of fixed routes (can't walk to Lexpress)
- Too much cross town traffic
- Difficult to live in Lexington if can't drive
- Parking availability/accessibility
- Sidewalk maintenance/lighting on trails / crosswalks timing

Outdoor spaces and Buildings

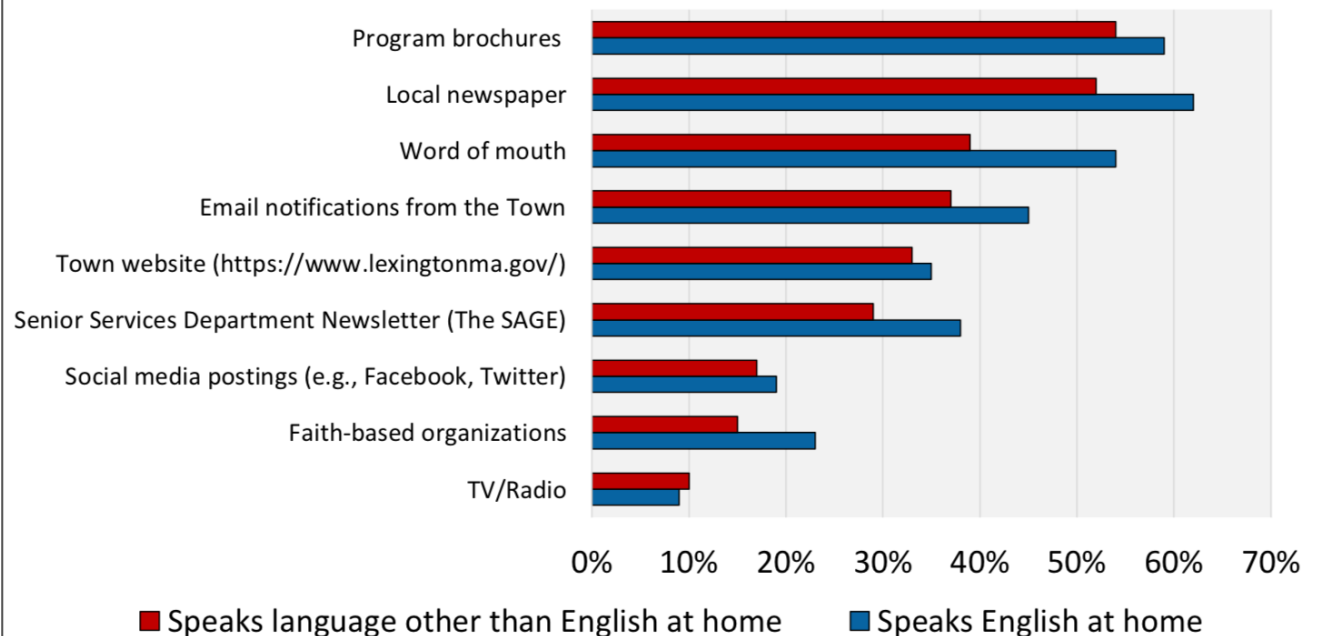
- Lack of dedicated space for seniors
- Convenience of public rest rooms

Communication

- 11% of those 80+ do not have Internet access at home.
- Important to consider are the number of older adults for whom English is not a first language. When asked if they or someone in their family need help accessing social services, health services or other municipal **services 50% of those who don't speak English at home said they do not.**
- When asked "How do you currently obtain information about programs, activities and services in your community?" they responded as indicated in the chart above.

For guidance for planning communities for healthy aging see American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) (multiple documents) and Healthy Community Design Toolkit by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the Massachusetts Partnership for Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

"How do you currently obtain information about programs, activities, and services in your community?"



Prevention.⁴³

AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit⁴⁴

Endnote #15. Beacon Hill Village⁴⁵ is a member-driven organization in downtown Boston created to support aging in place by providing support, information, and stimulation to age well and safely. It is one of the first of its kind in the country, and the first in the State, and provides essential services such as transportation and grocery delivery, referrals to service providers, and educational, cultural and social activities. The concept has been adapted by more than 300 other communities across the U.S. and seven overseas. The organization has the following goals:

- Live Healthy (Exercise / Wellness)
- Connect and Engage (Social Events / Affinity Groups)
- Stay Independent (Resources / Information / Support)
- Expand Your Knowledge (Lectures / Discussion)
- Experience Culture (Art / Music / Theater)
- Explore Your World (Excursions / Outings)

Endnote #16. American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) designation as an Age-Friendly Community.⁴⁶ An Age-Friendly Community is livable for people of all ages with “walkable streets, housing and transportation options, access to key services and opportunities for residents at all life stages to participate in community activities.” Membership in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities means that “a community’s elected leadership has made a commitment to actively work with residents and local advocates to make their town, city, county or state an age-friendly place to live...”

“The common thread among the enrolled communities and states is the belief that the places where we live are more livable, and better able to support people of all ages, when local leaders commit to improving the quality of life for the very young, the very old, and everyone in between.

AARP engages with elected officials, partner organizations and local leaders to guide communities through the age-friendly network’s assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation processes.

People of all ages benefit from the adoption of policies and programs that make neighborhoods walkable, feature transportation options, enable access to key services, provide opportunities to participate in community activities, and support housing that’s affordable and adaptable.

Well-designed, age-friendly communities foster economic growth and make for happier, healthier residents of all ages.”

- AARP Age-Friendly Designation

⁴³ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/the-healthy-community-design-toolkit-leveraging-positive-change-0/download>

⁴⁴ <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit-download/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.beaconhillvillage.org>

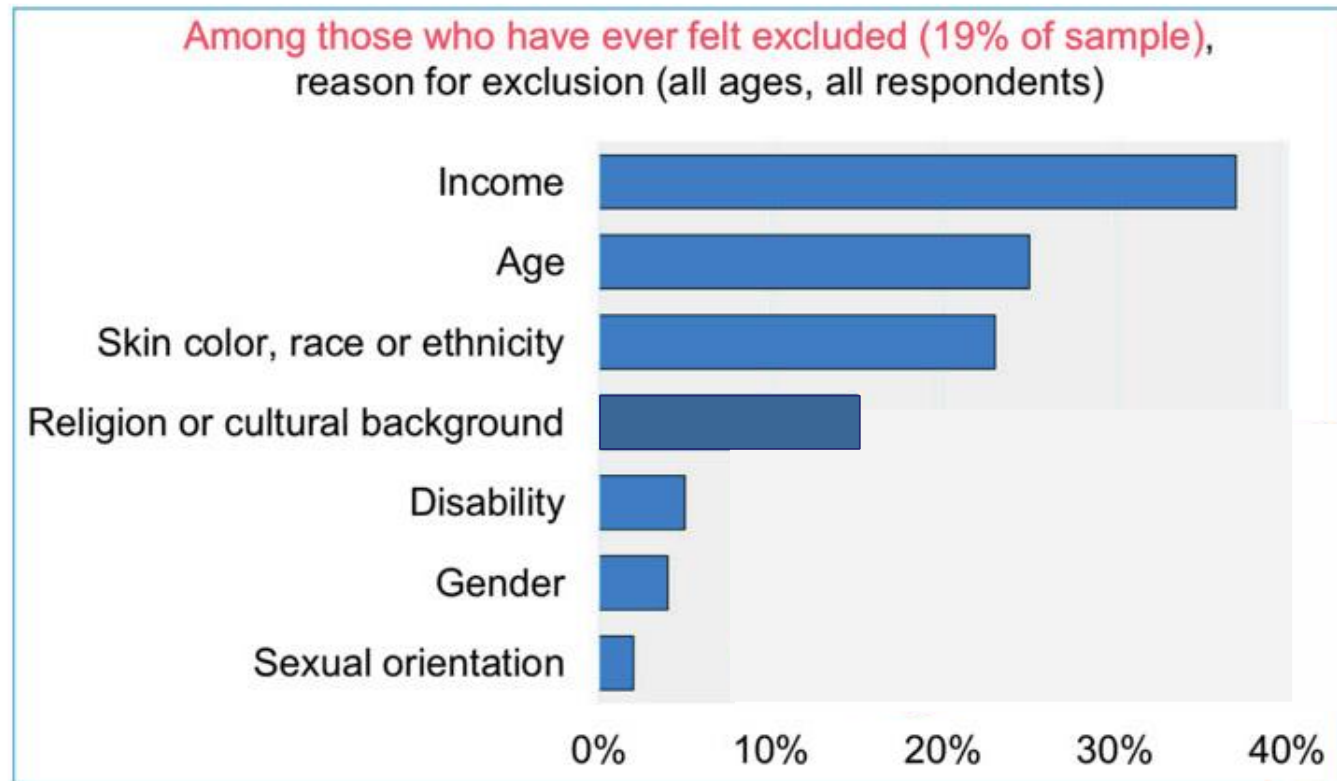
⁴⁶ <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>

Endnote #17. The Benefits of Inclusion and diversity in marketing campaigns⁴⁷:

- You reach more people: Ensuring you display diversity and include different demographics in your marketing campaigns helps your brand reach more types of people. This increases your potential customer pool.
- You get closer to your audience: These days it's all about those engagement numbers and fostering a community within your brand. By conducting market research and communicating directly with customers, you can form a deeper relationship with your audience and build better brand trust and loyalty.
- Grows respect and brand recognition: People will respect a brand that offers diverse and inclusive marketing and genuinely reflects their audience. When you as a marketer understand and speak the language of your customer, you earn their trust and even their respect.
- Boosts your bottom line: Reaching a wider audience + having brand respect + understanding your customer = a better bottom line. People are more likely to want to purchase from a brand when they see diversity in their campaigns.

⁴⁷ <https://stackla.com/resources/blog/diversity-and-inclusion-in-marketing/>

According to a survey conducted of Lexington residents in 2019, respondents said they felt they had been excluded for the following reasons:⁴⁸



⁴⁸ *Lexington For All Ages: A Community Needs Assessment Report, 2019:* <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/861/Lexington-Age-Friendly-Report-Summary-PDF?bidId=>

Endnote #18. Some of Lexington's Affinity Groups

The town's residents have created a large number of organizations based on affinity group; these include:

- Chinese Americans of Lexington (CALex)
- Chinese American Association of Lexington (CAAL)
- Indian Americans of Lexington
- Indian Family Activities Association
- Korean-American Organization of Lexington (KOLex)
- Japanese Support Group of Lexington (JPLLex)
- Association of Black Citizens of Lexington (ABCL)
- Brazilian American Cultural Association
- Bangladeshi Americans of Lexington
- LexSeeHer
- Commission on Disability
- Lextinas
- LexPride

Additionally, there are organizations both within the town government and outside it that promote cultural diversity and support residents of all ages and abilities; these include:

- New Legacy Cultural Center
- Lexington English Learner Parent Advisory Council
- Lexington Neighbors and Newcomers Club
- LexRAP (non-profit refugee assistance)
- Citizen's Academy
- Lexington Interfaith Clergy Association
- Lexington Youth Counseling Connection
- Lexington Council on Aging
- Community Center
- Cary Memorial Library

GOAL 2: HOUSING

To promote a wide range of housing options that respond to the needs of households, regardless of the income and life stage



"I think you travel to search and you come back home to find yourself there."

~ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The Battle Green Apartments on Worthen Road are part of Lexington's rental housing market.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan, housing has emerged as one of the top areas of concern. Proximity to Route 2 and I-95, providing connections to jobs in Boston and Cambridge, as well as an excellent school system and town services, have made Lexington a sought-after place to settle and raise children. Single-household housing has been and remains the dominant housing type; nearly 90% of the residentially zoned land is reserved for this use. Lexington has one of the highest median household incomes in Massachusetts at \$185,686, and also has one of the highest median home values in the state¹. As of September 2021, the median selling price of a home in Lexington over the previous twelve months was \$1.5 million. Lexington has diverse architecture in some neighborhoods, but diversity of sizes and prices is diminishing rapidly.

Goal #2 addresses Lexington's need to provide a range of housing options to enable more diversity in age, income, physical ability, race, religion, and ethnicity. A wider range of housing options will support young families, older adults, recent immigrants, persons of color, persons with disabilities, single individuals, and households with low, moderate, and higher incomes². The strategies in this section aim to produce an array of housing types; to preserve older, smaller, historic homes; to site homes in and around commercial areas and on transit lines; and to align home construction with the town's desire to become resilient, sustainable, accessible, and more welcoming. A

¹ U.S. Census Lexington, Town, Middlesex County, MA
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lexingtontownmiddlesexcountymassachusetts,MA/PST045221>

major theme of this section is to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, as detailed in Goal 1, through local housing policies.

A well-balanced supply of housing is important to the quality of life in Lexington because it helps:

- Broaden the ethnic, racial, income, and age diversity within the town's population
- Better serve non-traditional households and those with special needs
- Reduce the town's carbon footprint by offsetting the consumption needs of larger homes with the lower needs of smaller homes
- Enliven the town's commercial areas by mixing residences and businesses

² State and federal Fair Housing Law prohibits housing discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, receipt of public assistance (including Section 8), genetic information, and military status. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/overview-of-fair-housing-law>

LEXINGTON VOICES

Q&A from a **League of Women Voters** presentation on March 5, 2021:

- *“How can Lexington encourage residential, mixed-use, multi-family housing in commercial areas such as Lexington Center, Bedford Street, Mass. Ave., and Marrett Road which have bus routes, etc.?”*
- *To construct new housing units, like the Avalons, in regions more remote from T routes, something like Lexpress should be considered as a serious long-term service...maybe its own additional route”*
- *“Do ‘local preference policies’ serve to preserve the racial composition of a community because those not already residing in town are excluded from such a practice (i.e. making it harder for Black and Latino families to move to Lexington?)”*
- *“What about encouraging people to rent out rooms to boarders as a way to help seniors to stay in their homes?”*
- *“Would it be possible to divide a huge house into two or three or four smaller independent units?”*



Over the years, property owners and developers have replaced older, smaller homes with much larger structures.

OVERVIEW OF LEXINGTON’S HOUSING RESOURCES

HISTORICAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Lexington’s housing has reflected its many faces over the years: as a farming community, industrial center, and upscale suburb. Lexington grew significantly following World War II. In 1940 the town had 2,688 dwelling units and a population of 13,187; by 1970 the number of units had grown to 8,869 with the population reaching 31,886. By the 1990s, the town was largely built out and addition of new homes on vacant land slowed dramatically. Attempts to encourage desirable patterns in new infill development through zoning mechanisms such as cluster development have had limited success.

Property owners have increasingly turned to tearing down older houses and replacing them with larger ones. In the last ten years, the town issued a total of 821 permits for new homes; 75% of these permits were replacing an existing home. The gross floor area of new homes has increased by an average of 258% from 2,476 square feet to 6,378 square feet.

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

Participants in June 15, 2021 Public Forum
were asked how the town could achieve the following:

Provide a range of housing options: *Support co-housing*

- *Provide incentives for developers to create less expensive and smaller dwelling units*
- *Allow for smaller lots, more multi-family and multi-use buildings, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and townhomes by-right*
- *Allow large-scale housing at Hartwell and along bus routes*

Increase the supply of housing for older adults and first-time home buyers:

- *Protect the inventory of single-story homes from being torn down*
- *Increase and encourage multi-unit housing*
- *Increase single floor and accessible housing*
- *Provide incentives for older persons to stay in their present homes*
- *Encourage the building and use of ADUs*

Preserve the existing stock of modest homes by:

- *Allowing “granny houses” to be built behind or next to existing homes*

“There are so many creative, beautiful ways to create denser housing and a variety of housing options besides single-family homes”

EXISTING HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Lexington retains a wide variety of housing from its history, including farmhouses, factory worker housing, country homes for the well-off, and inexpensive starter homes. These homes are built in a variety of popular architectural styles, notably including Mid-Century Modern style homes from the 20th century. Single-household detached houses make up 77% of total dwelling units. Over 75% of all housing has three or more bedrooms. The median price of homes sold in 2021 was \$1.5 million.

EXISTING HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Households comprised of three or more people represent 50% of all households in town. Two-person households account for 31% of households, and 19% of households consist of single persons living alone.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Lexington has one of the highest median household incomes in Massachusetts, estimated in 2019 to be \$186,201 per year. This amount falls short of the \$281,500 annual household income required to purchase a home at the 2021 median price of \$1.5 million. As a result, 23% of homeowners are “housing cost burdened,” meaning they spend more than 30% of their monthly gross income on housing. 31% of renters fall into the same category³. Many of Lexington’s residents are living in housing they cannot afford. According to 2018

³ MHP Center for Housing Data “Data Town”; U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016-2020 5-year estimates.

HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data for Lexington's low-income residents:

75% of low-income households are cost burdened
67% of low-income renters are cost burdened
83% of low-income owners are cost burdened

Although 11% of the town's housing units are on the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Subsidized Housing Inventory, many of these are market-rate rental units in subsidized housing developments. Only 5.5% (663 total dwellings) are available at below-market prices as many of the units counted on the inventory are actually market-rate because market-rate units are added to the SHI in some developments where more than 24% of the units are affordable. The income restricted units on the SHI are limited to households earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AM). The income restricted units on the SHI are limited to households earning less than 80% of the Area Median income (AMI) and subsidized refers to housing that has price and income restrictions.

SUMMARY POINTS

- While a small amount of vacant land remains available for the construction of new homes, smaller homes are increasingly being torn down to make way for larger ones. Larger homes may increase the amount of impervious surface which can impact stormwater runoff to the surrounding land., placing added stresses on the environment.

- Persons aged 65 and up make up approximately 19% of Lexington's population; by 2030, this number is expected to reach 27%. The town does not have an adequate supply of housing to accommodate this demographic; demand for subsidized housing by persons aged 65 and older is high as indicated by long waiting lists and wait times of more than four years for Federal and state senior housing.
- 23% of Lexington's homeowners and 31% of renters are cost-burdened by housing, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.
- Lexington's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) is slightly above the state's minimum threshold of 10%, but only 5.5% of the housing units are available at below-market prices.
- Homes affordable to lower income renters and for individuals over age 65 have years-long wait lists.
- Lexington's zoning doesn't match its housing needs. Current zoning restricts or prohibits all types of housing other than large single-household homes. Where alternative housing is permitted, it is subject to multiple levels of discretionary review, imposing significant costs. This is especially challenging for non-profit subsidized housing developers.



2019 home demolition on Bedford Street.

Many Lexington residents who commuted to jobs in Boston, Cambridge, and along the I-95 corridor before the onset of COVID-19 have been working from home; some may continue to do so once the pandemic has abated. This may result in a desire for larger homes. Increased demand for larger homes with access to private and public outdoor space may put further pressure on Lexington's housing prices, as well as public infrastructure including water, storm drainage, and waste water.



Mid-Century Modern homes are found in several neighborhoods.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

How can the town provide more **diverse types of owned and rental housing** for a broader range of household income levels?

How can Lexington expand its supply of **subsidized housing**?

How can **housing desired by older adults**, including accessory dwelling units and one-floor apartments, be developed?

What types of incentives can encourage property owners and developers **to preserve smaller homes**?

What regional measures can be taken to increase the housing supply?

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(participants in September 21, 2021 LexingtonNext Public Forum on Housing)

When asked “who has difficulty finding housing in Lexington?” respondents listed:

- *Young people and older people;*
- *New young families and families without double incomes; first-time homebuyers*
- *People with mobility challenges and other disabilities*
- *People with low to medium incomes*
- *People of color and LGBTQIA+*

When asked “what types of housing are missing in Lexington?” respondents noted:

- *Everything except large houses*
- *Housing for immigrants (costs and living arrangements)*
- *Small apartment buildings; studio and one-bedroom apartments*
- *Small capes*
- *Townhouses*
- *Smaller cottage-style clustered housing*

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(participants in September 2021 online survey)

When asked...

- *to identify the most significant challenges of staying in Lexington, 44% of respondents chose the limited supply of single-family housing*
- *to identify the top three areas in need of improvement in Lexington, 75% chose availability of housing*
- *to identify the type of new residential development they would most like to see, 68% chose townhomes, 64% chose senior independent living facilities, and 60% chose mixed-use (commercial and residential)*

(attendees at the October 2021 Re-Discovery Day event)

Expressed interest in the development of:

- *affordable housing, including housing for public employees such as teachers, senior housing*
- *diverse housing types*
- *multi-family housing along heavily traveled streets*
- *sustainable housing, including net zero homes with clean heat*

RELATED TOWN OF LEXINGTON GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Select Board Goals:

- Review residential zoning for ways to create new housing opportunities and protect the diversity character of the existing housing stock
 - Research what zoning alternatives other communities have used to broaden housing diversity
- Work with the Planning Department, Community Preservation Committee, Housing Partnership Board, LexHAB, Housing Authority and others to review existing affordable housing stock, identify needed improvements and providing funding
- Explore ways in which LexHAB could be transformed in the future

LEXINGTON'S SYSTEMIC RACISM RESOLUTION

Town Meeting 2020 (Article 8)

"A system of advantages which gives privilege and power to one racialized group over another, intentional or not.

That the town:

1. consider racial and other equity impacts in all decisions and planning processes in order to work toward dismantling systemic racism and white privilege;
2. take action to integrate racial equity tools and concepts into routine operations and policy-making;
3. build capacity to collect, interpret and act on data related to inequities, particularly those related to health, housing, education, policing, representation, and economic and environmental justice; and
4. develop and implement a comprehensive racial equity plan with public input, to include staff training, hiring practices, and public education; all with the goal of making Lexington a truly equitable community."

RELATED TOWN OF LEXINGTON GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Planning Board Work Items:

- 1.H: Review and update the Zoning Bylaw and Map to comply with recent Housing Choice legislation
- 2.H: Review and amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow for alternatives to single-family housing
- 5H: Under the direction of the SPRD Ad-hoc Committee, amend the existing SPRD Bylaw
- 6H: Expand options for multifamily housing in eligible locations as permitted by Housing Choice legislation
- 7H: Allow mixed use development in eligible locations as permitted by Housing Choice legislation
- 8H: Allow increased housing in Lexington Center
- 9H: Require inclusionary housing in new residential developments

Abbreviations:

OSRD – Open Space Residential Development (Lexington)

SPRD – Special Permit Residential Development (Lexington)

Housing Choice legislation is also referred to as the MBTA Communities legislation or bill (State legislation)

CPA – Community Preservation Act

GOAL 2: HOUSING

To promote a wide range of housing options that respond to the needs of households, regardless of income and life stage

Objective 2.1. Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town

Objective 2.2. Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing

Objective 2.3. Encourage housing for older persons

Objective 2.4. Protect the exterior of existing historically or architecturally significant homes

Objective 2.5. Preserve homes that contribute to the diversity of housing options

Objective 2.6. Increase the effectiveness of housing efforts

Objective 2.7. Enable flexible use of housing to adapt to changing working and living arrangements

Objective 2.8. Make new and existing housing environmentally sustainable

Objective 2.9. Affirmatively further fair housing

The Implementation Table on the pages that follow identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.

GOAL 2: HOUSING

Objective 2.1 Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.1.1. Expand housing options in non-residential districts	a. Permit upper-story housing or commercial uses with a housing component in commercial districts while maintaining a strong commercial tax base	Existing zoning districts, including Lexington Center, East Lexington, and Hartwell Avenue Zoning Bylaw		LEAD: Planning Board PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department Commercial and industrial property owners Human Services Department Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer Human Rights Committee Housing Partnership Board	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.1 Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.1.2. Allow missing middle⁴ housing types in residential neighborhoods	a. Allow missing middle housing types such as accessory dwelling units and multi-family homes in residential districts b. Reduce parking minimums c. Allow creation of multiple dwelling units within existing large homes d. Adopt design guidelines to meld new development into existing neighborhoods			LEAD: Planning Board PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department Human Services Department Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer Human Rights Committee Housing Partnership Board LexHAB Historical Commission	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁴ **Missing Middle Housing** is a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. For more information, see: <https://missingmiddlehousing.com/>

Objective 2.1 Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.1.3. Expand options for transit-oriented development (TOD)⁵	<p>a. Meet the requirements of the MBTA Communities legislation for by-right multi-family development (for size, capacity and density)⁶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform and energize residents about Lexington’s responsibility for our fair share of the region’s housing needs along with the benefits and advantages of embracing the MBTA Communities multi-family housing law <p>b. Adopt overlay zoning such as Chapter 40R Smart Growth Districts⁷ to permit transit-oriented housing</p>	<p>MBTA bus connections to Lexington</p> <p>MBTA Communities legislation (MGL c. 40A s. 3A)</p> <p>Massachusetts Housing Partnership Complete Neighborhoods Initiative⁸</p> <p>Smart Growth Overlay Districts (MGL c. 40R)</p> <p>Citizen Housing Planning Association</p>		<p>LEAD: Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Human Services Department</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer</p> <p>Human Rights Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁵ **Transit Oriented Development** is compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development centered around high-quality transportation systems. For more information, see: <http://tod.org/>

⁶ To comply with the MBTA Communities legislation provisions in M.G.L. c. 40A section 3, Lexington must provide zoning that permits a minimum of 1,231 dwelling units in districts with a gross density of at least 15 dwelling units per acre. See: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities#how-mbta-communities-can-comply-in-2022->

⁷ The **Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District Act chapter 40R** (the Act), encourages communities to create dense residential or mixed-use smart growth zoning districts, including a high percentage of affordable housing units, to be located near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development such as existing city and town centers, and in other highly suitable locations. See: <https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlevii/chapter40r>

⁸ The **Complete Neighborhoods Initiative** was created to complement the MBTA Communities legislation, by providing technical assistance to interested cities and towns. For more information, see: <https://www.mhp.net/community/complete-neighborhoods-initiative>

Objective 2.1 Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Housing Partnership Board LexHAB	
2.1.4. Update lot frontage and area requirements and provisions for nonconforming lots⁹ to permit desirable housing	<p>a. Reduce minimum lot frontage and area requirements to match historical development patterns</p> <p>b. Allow housing, meeting Town goals on nonconforming lots without going through the Comprehensive Permit, Special Permit, or Variance process</p>	Zoning Bylaw		<p>LEAD: Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Human Services Department</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer</p> <p>Human Rights Committee,</p> <p>Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>LexHAB</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁹ **Nonconforming lots** are those that don't conform to current zoning requirements. Some were undersized when minimum lot sizes were established upon the adoption of the zoning bylaw. Under State law, nonconforming lots were not intended to allow as much building as a "conforming" lot, that is, a lot that is large enough to meet the zoning bylaw.

Objective 2.1 Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.1.5. Limit the size of homes on smaller lots	<p>a. Research, identify, and study communities that have adopted strategies to manage the impact of large homes on established neighborhoods</p> <p>b. Further limit the gross floor area of homes on smaller lots, including nonconforming lots</p>	Zoning Bylaw		<p>LEAD: Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Human Services Department</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer</p> <p>Human Rights Committee,</p> <p>Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>LexHAB</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
2.1.6. Allow housing development on municipal properties	<p>a. Implement a process to develop housing, meeting the town's housing goals, such as subsidized housing, on underutilized municipal properties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify municipal properties that could support housing 			<p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Partners: Planning Board Select Board Housing Partnership Board</p>	

Objective 2.1 Produce a range of housing types in a variety of locations throughout the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.1.7. Encourage small-scale housing developments that meet the Town's housing goals	<p>a. Amend the Special Permit Residential Development provision of the Zoning Bylaw to encourage development consistent with the town's housing goals through dimensional flexibility (e.g., setbacks, area, frontage), additional housing types, and by-right zoning</p> <p>b. Consult with developers and private market participants to understand realistic requirements for scale and density and to determine potentially suitable locations</p>	Zoning Bylaw (including SPRD and OSRD provisions)		<p>LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Planning Board Council on Aging Special Permit Residential Development ad-hoc Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.2.1. Assess the subsidized housing needs of the Town	<p>a. Prepare a Housing Needs Assessment for Lexington, which examines demographic and economic data, housing inventory and tenure, local policies and regulations, the availability of and adequacy of services, area and local stakeholder input and recommends strategies to meet goals for missing housing types</p> <p>b. Assess the inventory of town-owned properties for their capacity to accommodate construction of subsidized housing</p> <p>c. Develop and implement a Housing Production Plan for subsidized housing consistent with Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD's) Chapter 40B regulations (Year 4 or 5)</p>	<p>Metropolitan Area Planning Council's 2014 <i>Housing Production Plan for Lexington</i></p> <p>WestMetro HOME Consortium</p> <p>1996 Open Space Land Acquisition list</p>		<p>LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Planning Board</p> <p>Conservation Commission</p> <p>Regional Housing Service Organization (RHSO)</p> <p>LexHAB</p> <p>Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>Human Services Department</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer,</p> <p>Human Rights Committee</p> <p>Recreation Department</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.2.2. Establish an affordable housing trust and a community housing development corporation¹⁰	<p>a. Adopt the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44, s. 55C and a local bylaw to establish an Affordable Housing Trust¹¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an action plan for the affordable housing trust that identifies priorities and steps to help achieve goals Enable the affordable housing trust to provide rental and first-time home-buyer assistance <p>b. Support the incorporation of an independent nonprofit housing development corporation</p> <p>c. Study communities that work with both an affordable housing trust and established local non-profit partners to understand the division of roles and responsibilities, and opportunities for collaboration</p>	<p>M.G.L. c. 44, s. 55C</p> <p>Massachusetts Housing Partnership's <i>Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Guidebook¹²</i></p> <p>Massachusetts Housing Partnership's training for affordable housing trust members</p> <p>Housing trusts in other Massachusetts communities: Sudbury, Stow, Carlisle</p>	Community Preservation Act	<p>LEAD: Affordable Housing Trust Study Committee</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>LexHAB</p> <p>Regional Housing Service Office (RHSO)</p> <p>Human Services Department</p> <p>Community Preservation Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹⁰ Establishment of a municipal affordable housing trust and a housing development corporation are expected results from the Affordable Housing Trust Study Committee. For more information about establishing housing trusts, see: <https://www.housingtoolbox.org/local-tools/creating-a-housing-trust-fund>

¹¹ M.G.L. c. 44, S. 55C permit a city or town to establish a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund, for the purpose of providing for the creation and preservation of affordable housing for the benefit of low- and moderate-income households and for the funding of community housing. For more information, see: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter44/Section55C>

¹² https://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/municipal_affordable_housing_trust_guidebook.pdf

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Capital Expenditures Committee	
2.2.3. Develop new funding sources for subsidized housing beyond Community Preservation Act resources	<p>a. Approve a “home rule” petition to the Legislature to allow transfer fees on very expensive homes¹³, for example as advanced by the Local Option for Housing Affordability Coalition¹⁴</p> <p>b. Direct all or part of Lexington’s short-term rental tax revenue, and any other special revenue funds, to the Affordable Housing Trust, once established, for the production of subsidized housing¹⁵</p> <p>c. Continue to pursue the two special acts of the legislature authorized by Town Meeting in 2020 and 2021 for a linkage fee on teardowns and a commercial development surcharge to support subsidized housing (H3891 and H4314) or other development surcharges and impact fees on commercial and market-rate residential developments</p>		<p>Real estate transfer fees</p> <p>Short-term rental fees</p> <p>Development surcharges</p> <p>Impact fees</p> <p>Linkage fees</p>	<p>LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>LexHAB</p> <p>Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO)</p> <p>WestMetro HOME Consortium</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹³ Somerville was the first municipality in Massachusetts to submit such a petition to the Legislature. See: <https://www.somervillecdc.org/news/what-is-a-home-rule-petition/>

¹⁴ <https://www.realestatetransferfee.org/>

¹⁵ Lexington’s short-term rental tax was adopted at a Special Town Meeting in 2020.

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.2.4. Support builders using Federal and state subsidies, partnerships with regional financial institutions, and related mechanisms	a. Commit local resources to projects for which applicants have applied or are applying for Federal and state subsidized housing funds ¹⁶	Federal and state housing development financial assistance programs	Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (Federal) ¹⁷ HOME Investment Partnership Program (Federal) ¹⁸ Local Initiative Program (State) ¹⁹ Affordable Housing Trust Fund (State) ²⁰ Regional financial institutions	LEAD: Planning Office PARTNER:	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹⁶ Investing local funds can (and usually does) increase a project's competitiveness for state housing subsidies and affordable housing programs offered by financial institutions and private foundations.

¹⁷ The **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC)** is a federally authorized program for non-profit and for-profit developers to promote the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing. For more information, see: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/low-income-housing-tax-credit-lihtc>.

¹⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/home-investment-partnerships-program-home>

¹⁹ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/local-initiative-program>

²⁰ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/affordable-housing-trust-fund-ahtf>

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
			MacArthur and other private foundations Community Preservation Act		
2.2.5. Develop new strategies for acquiring and developing subsidized housing	<p>a. Adopt the policy presented by the Housing Partnership Board's Land Acquisition Proposal Subcommittee in February 2022 to review all town real property acquisition opportunities for subsidized housing along with other uses from the beginning of discussions until a final decision is made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a policy to guide decisions on use of acquired land, based on measurable criteria and need <p>b. Develop a list of properties for acquisition for subsidized housing and other municipal uses, modeled after the 1996 Open Space Land Acquisition list</p> <p>c. Use tools such as a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) to identify property owners or developers who would be willing to work with the town on a subsidized or mixed-income development plan in exchange for town support (e.g., zoning changes, financial contributions, etc.)</p> <p>d. Develop a policy that requires the town to set aside portions of open space acquisitions for construction of affordable housing, provided the land is developable; unless the open space value is determined to be so high based on specific</p>	<p>Inventory of potential open space acquisitions</p> <p><i>Open Space and Recreation Plan</i> (2017)</p>	Community Preservation Act	<p>LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Conservation Commission</p> <p>Open Space Acquisition Committee</p> <p>LexHAB</p> <p>Housing Partnership Board</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>measurable criteria, i.e. for flood control, rare or endangered species habitat, a strategic connection or trail link, as to outweigh the need for affordable housing. The weighted criteria should be based on need²¹.</p> <p>e. Construct subsidized housing on the former Leary property on Vine Street</p>				
2.2.6. Adopt housing policies that foster the development of subsidized housing	<p>a. Develop an <i>inclusionary zoning</i> policy that requires developers of new market-rate housing to provide housing for lower-income residents²²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate residents about inclusionary zoning to build public support Establish expectations for developers Set a policy that subsidized housing shall be indistinguishable from market-rate housing, dispersed throughout development projects, equitable, and affordable in perpetuity Add perpetual inclusionary zoning requirement in all special permit residential developments 	Zoning Bylaw		<p>LEAD: Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Town Counsel LexHAB</p> <p>Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>Developers</p>	<p>#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)</p>

²¹ As described in the narrative, only 663 (5.5%) housing units in Lexington are on the affordable housing subsidized inventory and the number of units has not increased since 2011.

²² ***Inclusionary zoning*** is a planning tool intended to ensure economic diversity and inclusivity in the housing market. Inclusionary zoning policies can include both mandatory requirements or voluntary incentives for the inclusion of affordable, deed-restricted housing units in new or renovated developments. For more information, see: <https://www.planetizen.com/definition/inclusionary-zoning>

Objective 2.2 Increase and preserve the supply of subsidized housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	b. Make the subsidized housing units at Katahdin Woods permanently affordable				
2.2.7. Address barriers to subsidized housing, especially for nonprofit developers	<p>a. Adopt guidelines for permit review boards, committees, and commissions to streamline the permitting for developing or rehabilitating subsidized housing</p> <p>b. Dedicate Town funds to offset the cost of preparing professional plans (e.g., civil engineering, stormwater, etc.) and the cost for professionals to make presentations to boards and committees hearings for permit approval for non-profit subsidized housing developers</p> <p>c. Waive permit application fees for review of nonprofit subsidized housing developments</p> <p>d. Provide financial support and incentives to create subsidized housing</p>		CPA; Town Budget; private, state and federal grants	<p>Planning Board</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.3. Encourage housing for older persons.					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.3.1. Create accessible housing	<p>a. Hold a panel presentation open to the public with architects, landscape architects, and disability policy professionals experienced with universal design, educating the community about the benefits of universal design</p> <p>b. Adopt site plan review standards to encourage or require universal design in new developments, consistent with Architectural Access Board regulations, using Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design²³ and inclusive design principles of the Institute for Human Centered Design²⁴ as guides</p>	<p>Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design</p> <p>Institute for Human Centered Design</p> <p>Architectural Access Board</p> <p>State Building Code</p>		<p>LEAD: Committee on Disability</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health, and Development Department</p> <p>MAPC Building Office Planning Board</p> <p>Council on Aging</p>	<p>#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)</p> <p>and</p> <p>ON-GOING (Continue to Support)</p>

²³ https://www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index.htm

²⁴ <https://humancentereddesign.org/>

Objective 2.4 Protect the exterior of existing historically or architecturally significant homes					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.4.1. Establish additional Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs)²⁵	<p>a. Establish additional Neighborhood Conservation Districts as a tool to guide integration of new housing into neighborhoods with a distinct architectural character</p> <p>b. Provide public education about NCDs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their purposes • How they are created • How they can be used as flexible tools for development/redevelopment <p>c. Work with neighborhoods interested in preserving unique styles</p>	<p>NCD Bylaw</p> <p>Existing NCDs in Lexington</p>		<p>LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNERS: Neighborhood Conservation District Commissions</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

Objective 2.5 Preserve homes that contribute to the diversity of housing options					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.5.1. Create incentives to preserve smaller homes	<p>a. Consult with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)</p>	<p>Zoning Bylaw</p> <p>Demolition Delay Bylaw</p>		<p>LEAD: Building Office Historical Commission</p> <p>Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²⁵ **Neighborhood Conservation Districts** (Chapter 78, Section 78-3, Town of Lexington Zoning Bylaw). Adopted in 2016 through a vote of Town Meeting, this Bylaw recognizes that “Lexington contains unique and distinctive neighborhoods and areas which contribute significantly to the overall character and identity of the town and which are worthy of preservation and protection. The town aims to preserve, protect, and enhance these neighborhoods through the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts.”

	and other jurisdictions to identify communities that have imposed workable incentives to discourage demolition of smaller dwellings or expansion of smaller dwelling units			Land Use, Health, and Development Department PARTNERS: Massachusetts Housing Partnership Historical Commission DHCD MAPC	
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Objective 2.6 Increase the effectiveness of housing efforts					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.6.1 Update housing policy responsibilities	<p>a. Expand the charge of the Housing Partnership Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess housing policy options and incentives from surrounding communities Relay information about housing policy to relevant town departments, boards, and committees Advocate for housing in Lexington through policy, funding, public education, negotiating with developers, staffing, and advising elected officials <p>b. Hold a housing policy “roundtable” regularly, involving all of the town’s housing players, e.g., the Housing Partnership Board, Housing Authority, LexHAB, Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO), any future Affordable Housing Trust, and Town staff</p>	Housing Partnership Board Charter		<p>LEADS: Select Board</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>Lexington Housing Authority</p> <p>LexHAB</p> <p>Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO)</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.6 Increase the effectiveness of housing efforts					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	c. Exchange ideas and concerns with low-income housing advocates from the neighboring communities			Human Services Department Council on Aging Commission on Disability Human Rights Committee Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer	
2.6.2. Support Town housing efforts	<p>a. Create the housing officer/housing planner position proposed by the Housing Partnership Board and Town staff to provide staff resources to assist with housing advocacy and administration</p> <p>b. Evaluate the effectiveness of existing housing programs, including an assessment of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing housing administration practices, staffing, and organization how well existing housing policy and zoning and other regulations address racial and disability equity, and how well the U.S., state and local housing policy is communicated to the public <p>c. Upgrade technology and tools required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> model future housing facilitate the permit application process convey information to the public 	²⁶ Massachusetts Housing Partnership Citizen Housing Planning Association Consulting Planners of Massachusetts		<p>LEAD: Planning Board Housing Partnership Board Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer Committee on Disability Housing Officer/Housing</p>	<p>#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)</p> <p>and</p> <p>ONGOING (Continue to Support)</p>

²⁶ The Edward J. Collins Center, based at UMass Boston, provides consulting services of this type. See: <https://www.umb.edu/cpm>

Objective 2.6 Increase the effectiveness of housing efforts					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Planner (proposed new position)	

Objective 2.7 Enable flexible use of housing to adapt to changing working and living arrangements					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.7.1 Support the creation of alternative housing models	<p>a. Remove barriers to construction and use of congregate housing, single-room-occupancy housing, co-housing, and related models in the Zoning Bylaw (including the Congregate Living Facility provision), regulations, and permitting process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with organizations that develop and manage congregate housing, single-room-occupancy housing, co-housing, and related models to understand opportunities and challenges²⁷ Identify potential locations for congregate housing, co-housing, and single-room occupancies (SRO) within the town 	<p>Executive Office of Elder Affairs</p> <p>CoHoUS</p> <p>Precedents in surrounding communities (e.g. Acton)</p>		<p>LEADS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Housing Partnership Board</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5 - 10)
2.7.2. Support the creation of accessory dwelling units	<p>a. Remove barriers to construction and use of accessory dwelling units from the Zoning Bylaw (including the Accessory Apartments provisions), regulations, and permitting process</p>	Zoning Bylaw		<p>LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Planning Board Zoning Board of Appeals</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5 - 10)

²⁷ Currently, as many as sixteen co-housing communities exist in Massachusetts; the first was established in Cambridge in 1973. For more information about these communities, as well as guidance about creating co-housing, see CoHoUS: <https://www.cohousing.org/create-cohousing/create-it/>. For information on congregate housing in Massachusetts, contact the Executive Office of Elder Affairs: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/congregate-housing-eligibility>.

Objective 2.7 Enable flexible use of housing to adapt to changing working and living arrangements					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.7.3. Support the creation of “live/work” spaces (properties that combine residential and non-residential uses)	a. Remove barriers to creation and use of live/work spaces from the Zoning Bylaw (including the Home Occupations provision), regulations, and permitting process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential locations for live/work spaces within the town 	Zoning Bylaw		LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Planning Board	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5 - 10)

Objective 2.8 Make new and existing housing environmentally sustainable					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.8.1. Encourage healthy, resilient, energy-efficient housing	<p>a. Adopt the new Municipal Opt-in Specialized Stretch Energy Code</p> <p>b. Establish incentives for developers of new buildings to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce impervious surfaces • incorporate electric space and water heating systems, including air-source and geothermal heat pumps • incorporate renewable energy generation and storage systems • incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure • Incorporate sustainable design principles to keep operating costs down for residents and contribute to meeting the town’s net zero goals <p>c. Advocate for legislation or the energy code to phase out use of fossil fuels in new housing and major renovations²⁸</p> <p>d. Inventory existing housing with on-site fossil fuel use, and create incentives to retrofit them to phase out on-site fossil fuel use, increase efficiency, and improve air quality</p>	<p><i>Sustainability Action Plan</i></p> <p><i>Getting to Net Zero Plan</i></p> <p>American Institute of Architects (AIA)</p> <p>American Planning Association (APA)</p> <p>Rocky Mountain Institute</p>		<p>LEADS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS: Planning Board</p> <p>Sustainable Lexington Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²⁸ In December of 2021, New York became the largest city in the country to agree to phase out fossil fuels in all new building construction after the city council passed a bill that bans those buildings from hooking up to gas. A climate change bill passed in July 2022 allowing 10 Massachusetts community to pilot a ban on fossil fuel for new construction (H. 5060) <https://www.mma.org/legislature-passes-climate-and-clean-energy-bill/>

Objective 2.8 Make new and existing housing environmentally sustainable					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	e. Encourage housing owners to take advantage of available state-funded programs to help with electrification and resiliency. f. Eliminate fossil fuel use in subsidized housing				
2.8.2. Mitigate environmental disturbances	a. Adopt land clearing and grading regulations, avoiding conflicts with subdivision regulations and other bylaws or requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discourage major regrading of land Discourage removal of mature trees Enhance stormwater runoff mitigation b. Update bylaws to encourage Low Impact Development (LID) ²⁹	<i>Sustainability Action Plan</i> <i>Getting to Net Zero Plan</i> Mass. Audubon <i>Bylaw Review for LID and Climate-Smart, Nature-Based Solutions</i> ³⁰		LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Sustainable Lexington Committee Conservation Commission Engineering Division	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 2.9 Affirmatively further fair housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
2.9.1 Provide training in Fair Housing³¹	a. Create an annual program (in April, National Fair Housing Month) with training for public officials (including members of the Select Board, Planning Board, and School Committee), real estate agents, housing managers, and the general public about Fair Housing laws, impediments, and effective ways to counter housing discrimination	Housing Partnership Board Land Use, Health and Development Department HOME Consortium		LEAD: Human Rights Committee Metro West Fair Housing Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) PARTNERS: Human Services Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
2.9.2. Eliminate policies or practices contrary to fair housing	a. Reduce or eliminate “local preference” policies for access to subsidized housing that give preference to local residents while excluding non-residents b. Create a policy that subsidized housing is indistinguishable on the exterior from market rate housing and protective of the privacy of the residents c. Review zoning and policies for discriminatory effects, including exclusion of children	Planning Board Rules & Regulations Select Board Planning Board Housing Partnership Board General Bylaws Zoning Bylaw		LEAD: Planning Board Land Use, Health, and Development Department Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) PARTNERS: Local real estate professionals	#2: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 - 5)

³¹ The **Fair Housing Act**, also known as the Civil Rights Act of 1968, was passed in order to address housing discrimination, including the attempted segregation of neighborhoods. While the Act has resulted in protecting many individuals and families from housing discrimination based on race, religion, sex, color, familial status, national origin, disability and other factors, discrimination still occurs. More on the Fair Housing Act: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/fair-housing-act-1>

Objective 2.9 Affirmatively further fair housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Local residential landlords Chief Equity Officer	
2.9.3. Ensure that new housing policies are consistent with the town's diversity, equity and inclusion, and anti-discrimination goals	a. Perform an equity audit of housing and development policies and practices	American Planning Association Metropolitan Area Planning Council		LEADS: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer Human Rights Committee Commission on Disability Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Select Board	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
2.9.4. Provide homebuyer resources and technical assistance	a. Promote and provide first-time homebuyer resources and technical assistance to under-represented groups b. Establish a program to provide financial assistance, such as down payment and mortgage assistance, to under-represented groups		State programs	LEADS: Chief Equity Officer Land Use, Health, and Development Department	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5 - 10)

ENDNOTES

1. **Accessory Dwelling Units** can provide many benefits, as described in the American Association of Retired Persons’ guide to Accessory Dwelling Units, *The ABCs of ADUs*. Some of these include:

1. Providing homeowners with more options:
 - ~ Downsizing while staying on your property and live in the ADU
 - ~ Housing a caretaker on your property
 - ~ Housing your children or parents
 - ~ Gaining an extra source of income by renting out an ADU
2. Providing less-expensive housing choices:
 - ~ Costing less than a new single-family home on a separate lot, thus providing options for low- and moderate-income residents
 - ~ Helping seniors stay in their community and “age in place” by renting out their ADU or downsizing the living in it themselves
 - ~ Providing smaller housing options to meet the growing needs of empty nesters, smaller families, and young adults
 - ~ Helping make it easier for people who work in town to live in town, including teachers, firefighters, and nurses (to name a few)
3. Having a low impact on the environment and neighborhood:
 - ~ No development of open space
 - ~ No large, new construction projects
 - ~ No new infrastructure needed
 - ~ Gentle density designed and maintained by homeowners
 - ~ More compact, infill development promotes more walkable, car-lite neighborhoods

For more information, see: <http://www.aarp.org/ADUs>

GOAL 3: ECONOMIC VITALITY

To promote a vital economy, including a variety of small and large businesses that contribute to the tax base and provide goods and services to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors



Lexington Center

“The economy is the start and end of everything.”

- David Cameron (British politician)

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, residents have affirmed their desire for a vital economy. They emphasized the need for a balanced set of goods and services, especially in Lexington Center, but also for improving the look and feel of East Lexington as well as smaller commercial areas located throughout the town. Many expressed a desire for more opportunities to gather both indoors and

Attractive and vibrant commercial districts:

- Contribute to the quality of life of visitors, merchants, and residents
- Provide jobs
- Create a sense of community and increase pride
- Contribute to the town's tax base
- Foster social connections between people
- Are convenient and help save energy
- Take advantage of existing infrastructure
- Encourage people to get outside and move around
- Enhance the visual appeal of the town

¹ *Third places* is a term coined by sociologist [Ray Oldenburg](#) and refers to places where people spend time between **home** ('first' place) and **work** ('second' place).

outdoors in commercial settings. Some talked about the need to expand the tax base by increasing economic activity while others discussed the need to better support the increasing work-from-home population.

This section focuses on increasing economic vitality, achieved through programs and policies that guide economic activity. Economic vitality can improve a community in a number of ways, including supporting the creation, retention and expansion of jobs; developing a stable tax base, and providing goods and services for residents and visitors to the community. A vital economy also provides places in which a community can gather, such as coffee shops and restaurants. Economic vitality is intrinsically linked to housing and transportation. A robust transportation network and housing to support jobs and development are critical to achieve economic vitality.



*Battle Road Bike Mural
Lexington, MA*

Third places¹ are places that build community, where people from different backgrounds can come together. “Who feels welcome and who does not – in both publicly- and privately-held third places – has implications not just for individual health and well-being, but for the

ability of communities and democracy to thrive...it also impacts the success of the third places themselves, including stores and retail environments ...”

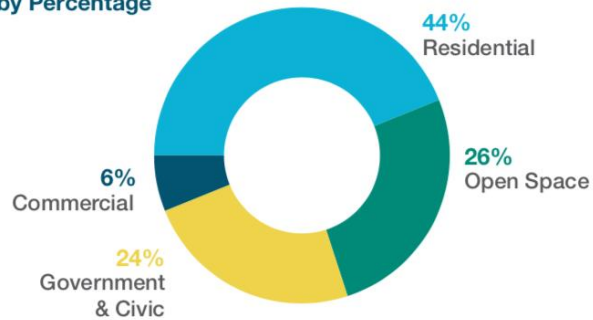
Urban Land Institute

OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN LEXINGTON

Lexington is home to:

- 1,454 businesses (a 20% increase since 2007)
- 22,757 employees
- 120,000 annual visitors

Land Use by Percentage



- 31 operating life science entities
- \$1.3 million generated annually by the hotel and meals tax (prior to pandemic)

Only 6% of Lexington is zoned for commercial use. This is relatively small compared to surrounding towns; however, Concord, at 2.4%, has less land zoned commercial than Lexington.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- The relatively high tax rate has been identified both by local businesses and the Economic Development Office as an obstacle to economic vitality and the establishment of minority- and women-owned businesses. Lexington depends on tax revenue to provide desired services, but the split tax rate falls especially hard on small business tenants. Tax law does not permit the town to provide tax relief to small entrepreneurs.
- Steep rents in the Cambridge life sciences sector present an opportunity for Lexington to augment its existing lab cluster.
- The Hartwell Avenue Area is Lexington's largest commercial district with over 17 million square feet of land area. Recent zoning changes promote additional development for job creation and more density allowed by-right through a site plan review process.
- Tourists, area employees, and Minuteman Bikeway users represent potential patrons to support area businesses.
- The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on area businesses. Hotel and meal-tax revenues were down 75% and 50% respectively in the spring of 2020. Area businesses have formed partnerships to help withstand the impacts of the pandemic. These can be built upon for future collaboration and resilience.

Lexington has a split tax rate, charging commercial property at a higher rate than residential property. Commercial properties in Lexington account for 9% of the total assessed value but contribute 17% towards the total tax revenue generated due to this split tax rate.

Lexington has over 45 biotech companies and continues to attract more, making it a biotech hub. These businesses are primarily located near Hartwell Avenue and in South Lexington. Office and lab space in Lexington is significantly less expensive than in Cambridge, making the town a desirable location for life science entities.



The new Visitors Center

The Lexington Visitors Center welcomes approximately 120,000 visitors from around the world annually. Lexington-Concord ranks as the fourth most visited destination in the state. The new Visitor Center provides an attractive first impression and provides information and gathering space. Guided group walking tours of the Battle Green Inn and historic homes are provided as well as a town-wide tour known as the Liberty Ride Trolley.

KEY COMMERCIAL AREAS

The **SOUTH LEXINGTON AREA** is home to a cluster of life science companies, including, Novo Nordisk, Kiniksa, Frequency Therapeutics, and Takeda. With direct access to Route 2, this area provides convenient access to Cambridge and Boston as well as neighboring communities.

The **HARTWELL AVENUE AREA (HARTWELL INNOVATION PARK)** is one of the leading defence and life science clusters in the Greater Boston area. Adjacent to Hanscom Air Force Base and MIT Lincoln Labs, this commercial area is home to 46 parcels housing over 107 businesses.

LEXINGTON CENTER

The town center is an important economic hub for both residents and visitors to the town. **At Re-Discovery Day (2021), one-third of participants identified Lexington Center as their favorite place in town.** The Center has experienced a reduction in foot traffic and sales as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges include high rents and difficulty attracting employees due to limited public transportation. At three World Café community conversations held in the fall of 2018, “economic vitality” and the “lack of economic diversity of residents” were tied as the third most cited issues participants were “concerned about.”

According to a recent study of Lexington Center:²

- There are approximately 250 commercial units, including retail sales, restaurants, service providers, and other entities

² FinePoint Assoc., 2019

- More than half of the establishments (59%) provide services
- Most of the establishments are small (less than 1,500 sf)

LEXINGTON VOICES

“Allow short term rentals in the Center” (public forum participant, June 15, 2021)

Business owners participating in a survey conducted by FinePoint Associates (2019) suggested the following strategies to improve vibrancy:

- *Hosting community events in the Center (festivals, concerts, etc.) (79%)*
- *Creating pop-up spaces for start-ups and short-term businesses (67%)*
- *An increased focus on arts and culture in the Center (65%)*
- *A Vendor cart program for Depot Square (64%)*
- *Improved Directional and Wayfinding signage (63%)*
- *Encouraging bikeway- facing business entrances (58%)*
- *Improved access between the Minuteman Bikeway and the Center (56%)*



Lexington's walkable town center

A **vibrant town center** can offer multiple benefits to residents including increasing social capital and strengthening a sense of community.

EAST LEXINGTON AREA

The East Lexington Area, located along Massachusetts Avenue near the Arlington border, contains a diverse mix of over 50 mostly small businesses including restaurants, retail sales, farming, and other commercial enterprises³. Many of the retail and restaurant spaces are located in older, strip mall style buildings, some of which will soon reach the end of their lifecycle and will likely be redeveloped. This presents an opportunity to upgrade the environment, particularly the pedestrian amenities. The area is characterized by:

- most commercial activity located on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue
- auto-oriented businesses with multiple curb cuts
- few or no pedestrian-oriented signs
- buildings set back from the street with surface parking in front
- approximately 76,000 SF of first-floor commercial space
- approximately 38 commercial units with a first-floor presence

As of April 2021, there were seven (7) vacant commercial units comprising 18% of all first-floor units.

According to the 2021 Rapid Recovery Plan prepared by Fine Point Associates, the customer base from the bikeway could be stronger. *“The “Bikeway User Market Segment,” including commuters, recreational cyclists, walkers, joggers, etc., appears to be largely untapped despite the very close proximity.”*

FinePoint Associates
[Local Rapid Recovery Plan](#), 2021



Strip-mall development in East Lexington

Patrons of small businesses in East Lexington expressed much appreciation for the commercial establishments and their relationships with small business owners. The same patrons acknowledge that the physical environment is not inviting.

LEXINGTON VOICES

- *“Introduce European-style produce markets in neighborhoods like Marrett Square.”* (Public forum participant, June 15, 2021)
- *“Allow mixed use development with housing above stores.”* (Public forum participant, June 15, 2021)

³ Lexington Economic Development Office, ESRI Community Analyst

LEXINGTON VOICES

“Utilize the bike path to promote retail and shopping and add outdoor retail spaces close to the bike path” (public forum participant, June 15, 2021)

A recent survey conducted by FinePoint Associates (2021) as part of the Rapid Recovery Plan found that **East Lexington business owners:**

- were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with the *condition of public spaces, streets, and sidewalks*
- cited *sign regulations [permitting process and restrictions]* as an obstacle (by more than one-third of the respondents)

More than one-half of the East Lexington businesses rated the following as “important” or “very important”:

- *More outdoor dining and selling (88%)*
- *Marketing strategies for the district (76%)*
- *Creation of a district management entity (66%)*
- *More cultural events (63%)*
- *Zoning or other regulatory changes (63%)*
- *Recruitment programs to attract businesses (50%)*
- *Improvements to streetscape and sidewalks (50%)*

SMALLER COMMERCIAL AREAS

In addition to these larger areas there are several smaller commercial areas. Many are older strip-mall developments with office and personal service uses; others contain single-use buildings. These areas tend to lack an identity and there is often no common agreement regarding their place-name.



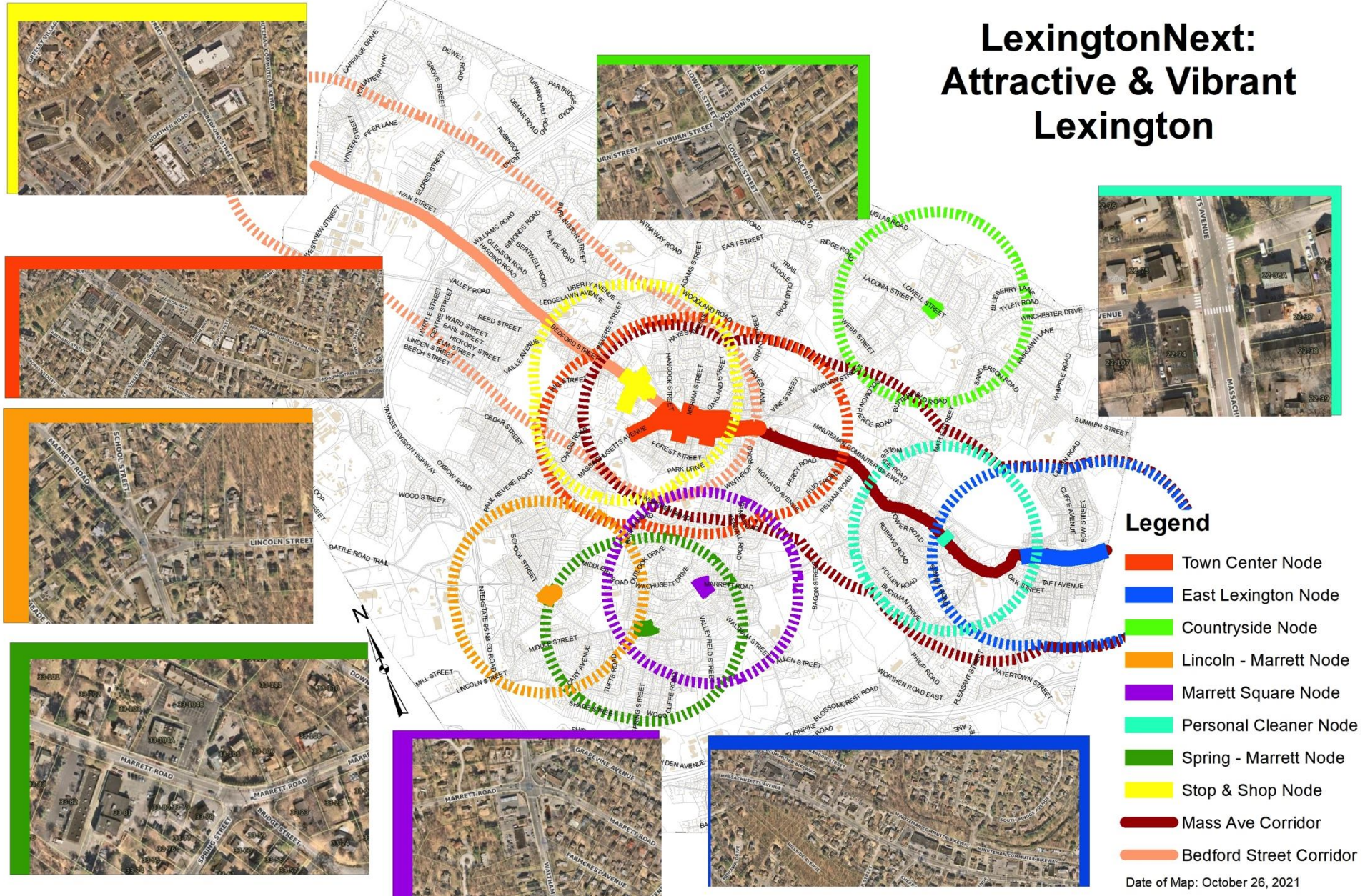
Marrett Square

This category includes commercial areas near:

- Waltham Street and Marrett Road (Marrett Square)
- Lowell Street and Woburn Street (Countryside)
- Massachusetts Avenue and Independence Avenue
- Bedford Street and Worthen Road (Stop & Shop node)
- Marrett Road and Spring Street
- Forbes Road and Marrett Road (including Cranberry Hill)
- Bedford Street Corridor (from Reed Street to North Hancock Street)
- Marrett Road and Lincoln Street
- Waltham Street and Concord Avenue
- Waltham Street at the Waltham city line

- Residents, area employees, tourists, and bikeway users are vital to Lexington's commercial districts. Each group requires

LexingtonNext: Attractive & Vibrant Lexington



LEXINGTON VOICES

26% commented on the need for diversity in commercial development.

A number of participants in the World Café forums indicated they are concerned about the town's tax rates and overrides.

"Diversifying the tax base requires more commercial properties; taxpayers don't want development but want services." (World Café participant)

From **SWOT Analysis @ LexingtonNEXT "Kickoff Event:"**

- *"Supporting work from home population may help to attract younger residents."*
- *"We need more business diversity in the Center; many existing businesses cater to older people and tourists"*
- *"The Hartwell vision looks like an excellent opportunity to grow the commercial tax base and provide greater retail, entertainment, transportation, etc."*
- *"Create/attract open working spaces for people working from home or working from Starbucks"*
- *"Use our place in history to provide foot traffic to local businesses and tax revenue through visitors-based economy"*

From **Vision 20/20:**

- More than half (53.9 %) of respondents to the 2017 20/20 survey indicated that expanding the commercial tax base was "extremely" or "very" important to them



Artist rendering of Greatland Realty Partners Revolution Labs, 1050 Waltham Street, Lexington MA (Q3 2022 estimated delivery)

Lexington has become one of the region's biotech hubs with more than 45 biotech companies currently with a Lexington address and counting.



Vision for Hartwell Avenue's future with amenities for employees and residents (David Gamble, Gamble Associates)

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

At a public forum on Attractive and Vibrant Commercial Districts (October 26, 2021), participants responded to the following question:

If you could do one thing to improve Lexington’s commercial districts...”:

- *Create a sense of identity and connectivity with improved signage (wayfinding and directory signs), attractive façades, upkept buildings, and modernization while preserving historic presence.*
- *Allow for mixed-use buildings and apartments near businesses to allow people to walk to work or errands.*
- *Provide more restaurants, food trucks, diners, bed and breakfasts, pubs, and nightlife options for all (high end options, family friendly options, places for teens, etc.)*
- *Encourage "placemaking" and "3rd spaces" by adding more outdoor seating with tables, public art, trees, flower plantings, and green space.*
- *Encourage a range of local businesses for clothing, hardware, kids’ toys, art galleries, shops for tourists, fish markets, cheese and fruit stores, etc.)*
- *Incorporate more pedestrian and bicycle friendly design into streets and strengthen pedestrian and bike connections between commercial nodes.*

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How do we attract and keep the right mix of businesses?
- How do we support vibrancy with urban design resulting in an appealing “look and feel”?
- How do we enhance and activate commercial districts?
- How do we promote tourism as part of economic development?
- How do we get people to break the on-line shopping and delivery habits they developed during the pandemic and attract them to patronize the town’s commercial districts?
- How do we promote equitable opportunities for small businesses as well as large commercial establishments?
- What should we do to encourage area residents, area employees, visitors, and users of the Minuteman Bikeway to increase their patronage of Lexington’s commercial districts?

**RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON
GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Select Board Goals (2020-2021)

- Redesign the business resource guide to provide a more detailed explanation of the permitting process
 - Support the Development Review Team (DRT) in its efforts to promote the “one-stop” shop for all pre-permitting review to ensure more streamlined process
 - Support the Economic Development Director in their role as permit “concierge” coordinating the business permitting process
- Work with business and property owners to develop creative and integrated solutions
 - Continue meetings with both small local businesses and larger, corporate businesses and meet on a regular basis
 - Understand businesses’ unique needs with regard to post-pandemic re-opening and what they need (e.g. continue permitting for outdoor dining, outdoor pick up services, etc.

- Research feasibility and benefits of a Small Business Tax Exemption Program (see Brookline)
- Plan for an increase in visitors for the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington in 2025
- Engage in a community conversation to define what attractive and vibrant would look like for Lexington
 - Hold at least one facilitated community conversation to define “attractive” and “vibrant” and incorporate into the final Comprehensive Plan report
 - Consider these issues in all commercial areas (not just the Center)
- Support the Semiquincentennial Commission (Lex250) and the informal group formed to communicate and coordinate the activities for the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington
 - Coordinate and collaborate with surrounding communities and the State

RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Planning Board Work Plan Items (2021-2022)

- 2.BD. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Review boundaries and intensity in the Center Business District
- 3.BD. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Review boundaries, uses and intensity along Mass. Ave. in East Lexington
- 5.BD. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Review boundaries, uses and intensity in Small Commercial Districts
- 7.BD. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Bring forward portions of the 2021 Hartwell Innovation Park flexible zoning to apply to other major commercial districts
- 1.H. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Review and update the Zoning Bylaw and Map to comply with Housing Choice Bill requirements
- 7.H. Zoning Bylaw: Allow Mixed Use Development in eligible locations as permitted by Housing Choice legislation
- 8.H. Zoning Bylaw and Map: Allow increased housing in Center Business District (Lexington Center)
- I.Z. Zoning Bylaw: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Permitting- amend the zoning bylaw to address equity and permitting issues
- 5.Z. Zoning Bylaw: Review and update the Table of Uses to bring it up to date
- 6.Z. Zoning Bylaw: Review commercial signs provisions
- 7.Z. Zoning Bylaw: Update commercial parking requirements to meet current practices such as open floor plans and changing work environments

GOAL 3: ECONOMIC VITALITY

To promote a vital economy, including a variety of small and large businesses that contribute to the tax base and provide goods and services to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors.



The Hartwell Avenue Area has significant potential for redevelopment

Objective 3.1. Encourage private redevelopment in **large commercial areas**, making them more exciting

Objective 3.2. Improve **Lexington Center** so that it becomes more of a “destination”

Objective 3.3. Create a walkable, bikeable, and aesthetically pleasing **East Lexington** commercial area

Objective 3.4. Retain and support **existing businesses** and evaluate opportunities for **commercial growth** in strategic locations

Objective 3.5. Develop sustainable **tourism** practices to support the independent businesses, arts, cultural and historic organizations, and characteristics of the town’s commercial areas

Objective 3.6. Support “**talent-driven economic development**”

The following Implementation Table identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goals

GOAL 3.0: ECONOMIC VITALITY

OBJECTIVE 3.1. Encourage private redevelopment in large commercial areas , making them more exciting					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.1.1. Foster attractive large commercial areas	<p>a. Make the Rev shuttle self-sustaining through financial support from employers</p> <p>b. Install directional and wayfinding signage</p> <p>c. Attract complementary and compatible uses attractive to private investment</p> <p>d. Require property owners to provide amenities to connect parcels; attractive, vibrant meeting and seating places near sidewalks; pedestrian amenities; bikeway connections; outdoor plazas; and other amenities that serve employees on a daily basis</p> <p>e. Upgrade infrastructure that promotes walkability including sidewalks, crosswalks, signage, and lighting</p> <p>f. Support alternative modes of transportation by providing bicycle racks, charging stations, ride-sharing drop off locations, etc.</p> <p>g. Hold Business Roundtables with local businesses to identify and create amenities that attract customers and promote sustainability goals</p>	<p>Zoning Bylaw Local Business</p> <p>MA DHCD Branding Tool Kit</p> <p>MA DHCD District Management Tools</p>		<p>Planning Office</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNERS: Property and business owners</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
3.1.2. Encourage new development	<p>a. Extend the more flexible CM District zoning strategy to other commercial areas</p>	Zoning Bylaw		<p>LEAD(S): Planning Board</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)


OBJECTIVE 3.1. Encourage private redevelopment in large commercial areas, making them more exciting					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
and redevelopment in large commercial areas				PARTNER(S): Planning Office	

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.2.1. Revitalize Lexington Center	<p>a. Update Lexington Center’s allowed uses, parking requirements, and signage regulations to facilitate private investment while maintaining the commercial tax base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage housing on upper stories above retail stores Increase the maximum permitted height Reduce parking requirements which prevent desired businesses from leasing space in Lexington Center <p>b. Retain, attract, and recruit a range of retail businesses and restaurants</p>	<p><i>Lexington Center: Analysis of Economic Conditions and Recommendations</i>⁴</p> <p>Zoning Bylaw</p>	<p>ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act) grant program</p> <p>DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development) MDI (Mass. Downtown Initiative)⁵</p>	<p>LEAD(S): Planning Office</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNER(S):</p> <p>Planning Board</p> <p>Lexington Center Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁴ Lexington Center Analysis of Economic Conditions and Recommendations, prepared by FinePoint Associates:

<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/607/Center-Retail-Strategy-Report-2019-PDF>

⁵ MA Community One Stop for Growth: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/community-one-stop-for-growth>

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>c. Invest in the public domain, including street furniture, open space amenities, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and public gathering spaces (indoor and outdoor)</p> <p>d. Establish a Business Improvement District or other public/private partnership to fund beautification projects SEE END NOTE #1</p>			<p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Historic Districts Commission</p>	
3.2.2. Coordinate efforts of stakeholders	<p>a. “Cross-pollinate” and populate the calendar of events co-hosted by multiple partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of events and broaden the types of events in various indoor and outdoor locations in the Center <p>b. Leverage historic and cultural assets to attract a broader range of tourists, including younger and more diverse visitors</p> <p>c. Use technology to connect assets, sites, events, app-based mobile walking tours, and programs as well as telling of stories throughout the town’s history (e.g. QR codes, listening cubes, etc.)</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Tourism Committee</p> <p>Historic Districts Commission</p> <p>Historical Commission</p> <p>Lexington Center Committee</p> <p>Design Advisory Committee</p> <p>Town Celebrations Committee</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library</p> <p>Arts and Crafts Society</p> <p>Lexington retailers</p>		<p>LEAD(S): Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Tourism Committee</p> <p>Historic Districts Commission</p> <p>Historical Commission</p> <p>Historical Society</p> <p>Lexington Center Committee</p> <p>Design Advisory Committee</p>	<p>ONGOING: Continue to support</p> 

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
		Lexington Historical Society		Town Celebrations Committee Cary Memorial Library Vision for Lexington Committee	
3.2.3. Encourage visitors to explore Lexington Center, retail stores, and restaurants	<p>a. Maintain a directory of retail stores and restaurants (on-line, hard copy, and streetscape signs)</p> <p>b. Connect retail stores and restaurants with historic sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage business owners to offer discount coupons in visitor promotional materials Provide information regarding shopping and dining in Lexington at the Visitors Center <p>c. Expand the shared parking program and employee permit program⁶ to encourage distant and alternative parking locations</p> <p>d. Improve pedestrian connections between parking, the Minuteman Bikeway, and retail</p>	<p>MA DHCD Tourism & Hospitality Toolkit⁷ SEE END NOTES</p> <p>120,000 visitors annually (pre-COVID-19 pandemic)</p> <p>Visitors Center</p> <p>Battle Green and guides</p> <p>Liberty Ride Trolley Tour</p> <p>Historic houses</p> <p>Old Burying Ground</p>		<p>LEAD(S): Economic Development Office</p> <p>Tourism Committee</p> <p>Planning Office</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Lexington Center Committee</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁶ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/367/Parking-in-Lexington-Center>

⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/hospitality-tourism-toolkit/download>

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	stores to address the perception of a lack of parking in the Center	Lexington Depot Lexington Center Parking Locations and Rates ⁸ Historical Society Historic homes and sites		Masonic Museum and Library Arts and Crafts Society Historical Society	
3.2.4. Change policies that deter desired businesses	a. Replace the Special Permit process for desired uses with a site plan review process ⁹ b. Streamline sign permitting for businesses in the Battle Green District (Lexington Center), including adjusting HDC guidelines for the Battle Green Historic Districts c. Revise Zoning Bylaw regulations that inhibit the development of restaurants, nightlife, and arts and performance uses that would activate the Center during the evening d. Work with landlords to provide temporary pop-up spaces to foster new business ideas	Policies and practices in comparable communities Lexington Center Parking Locations and Rates ¹⁰ Zoning Bylaw and Map Sign Regulations Parking Regulations		LEAD(S): Economic Development Office Select Board Planning Office Planning Board PARTNER(S): Lexington Center Committee	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁸ Parking in Lexington Center: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/parking>

⁹Fast food service uses (establishments primarily providing food from a counter and with no table service) require a special permit in the Center which has been problematic for prospective businesses. Counter service, recently popular, could be promoted more easily if allowed by-right. A survey of residents conducted for a study of the Center in 2019 identified the following key themes desired by respondents (these should be compared to uses allowed by right as opposed to Special Permit and make appropriate changes.

See pages 30-32: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/607/Center-Retail-Strategy-Report-2019-PDF?bidid=>

¹⁰ Parking in Lexington Center: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/parking>

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Economic Development Advisory Committee Chief Equity Officer	
3.2.5. Improve the streetscape	<p>a. Complete the <i>Grain Mill Alley bicycle node</i> behind the Bank of America:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a final landscape design that addresses the three sections of the alley: the intersection at the Bikeway, the area between the two buildings, and the public right of way at Massachusetts Avenue Install temporary street furniture, objects, and lighting to gauge use before and after the installation and inform the final recommendation Work with the property owners at 1761 and 1775 Massachusetts Avenue to develop a concept design and make a final recommendation to the Select Board 	<p><i>Center Streetscape Improvements Project</i>¹²</p> <p><i>Plans for Grain Mill Alley bicycle node</i>¹³</p> <p><i>Go Outdoors Installations</i>¹⁴</p> <p>MA DHCD Sign Façade Toolkit¹⁵</p> <p>SEE END NOTES</p>		<p>LEAD(S): Economic Development Office Public Works Department</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Lexington Center Committee Grain Mill Alley Steering Committee</p>	ONGOING: Continue to support

¹² <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/236/Center-Streetscape>

¹³ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/758/Grain-Mill-Alley-Steering-Committee>

¹⁴ In 2021, **Go Out Doors – Neighbors** projects were installed or planned in a number of surrounding communities besides Lexington and including Concord and Arlington (as well as several others): <https://artoutdl.wordpress.com/2021/11/19/artists-add-new-life-to-familiar-forms-go-out-doors-arlington-2021-november-notes-and-quotes/>

¹⁵ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/sign-facade-toolkit/download>

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Improve Lexington Center so that it becomes more of a “destination”					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>b. Promote temporary and permanent public art installations throughout Lexington Center</p> <p>c. Promote the Battle Road Scenic Byway attractions as amenities</p> <p>d. Adopt a Vacant Store Bylaw¹¹ to preserve public safety and prevent blight</p> <p>e. Redesign the Depot parking lot, considering mixed development of housing and retail stores in this location</p> <p>f. Increase safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in and around Lexington Center</p>			<p>Bicycle Advisory Committee</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Arts and Crafts Society</p>	

¹¹ Example Vacant Store Bylaw: Arlington, MA: <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/planning-community-development/economic-development/commercial-property-information>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.3. Create a walkable, bikeable, and aesthetically pleasing East Lexington commercial area					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.3.1. Create an East Lexington Area Plan	<p>a. Develop a revitalization and marketing plan for the East Lexington commercial area, involving significant engagement of area businesses and residents</p> <p>b. Update the Zoning Bylaw and Map, evaluating boundaries, uses, and intensity along Massachusetts Avenue in East Lexington (<i>Planning Board Work Plan 3.BD</i>)</p> <p>c. Develop Design Guidelines to guide redevelopment to create a cohesive and walkable area</p> <p>d. Revise parking and sign regulations to increase pedestrian orientation and improve aesthetics SEE END NOTE #3</p> <p>e. Create a bicycle node to activate the commercial area SEE END NOTE #4</p>	<p>MBTA Communities Legislation¹⁶</p> <p>MA DHCD Branding Toolkit¹⁷ SEE END NOTES</p> <p>MA DHCD District Management Toolkit¹⁸ SEE END NOTES</p> <p>Business Toolkit¹⁹</p>		<p>LEAD(S): Planning Office</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>Planning Board</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Property and business owners</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹⁶ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/housing-choice-legislation>

¹⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/branding-toolkit/download>

¹⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/district-management-toolkit/download>

¹⁹ Business Toolkit: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2744/Business-Toolkit-2022-PDF?bidId=>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.3. Create a walkable, bikeable, and aesthetically pleasing East Lexington commercial area					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	f. Create a Business Improvement District (BID) SEE END NOTE #1				
3.3.2. Implement the Local Rapid Recovery Plan recommendations for East Lexington SEE END NOTE #1	a. Create a “Store- Back of Business Improvement Program” to improve business orientation to the Bikeway (façade treatments, outdoor seating, etc.) b. Revise the sign bylaw and outdoor display regulations to encourage a variety of high-quality sign types and promote lively, attractive outdoor merchandise displays c. Improve the streetscape by adding sidewalks and street furniture and installing additional bicycle and pedestrian amenities d. Activate Bow Street Park by installing amenities (to complement nearby food businesses and accommodate events) and developing programming e. Install wayfinding signage and elements to encourage Bikeway users to patronize the area	Local Rapid Recovery Plan (LRRP)²⁰	<i>American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)</i> funding	LEAD(S): Economic Development Office Planning Office PARTNER(S): Property and business owners and residents Economic Development Advisory Committee LRRP partners (Arlington and Bedford)	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²⁰ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/766/East-Lexington-Local-Rapid-Recovery-Report-PDF>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.3. Create a walkable, bikeable, and aesthetically pleasing East Lexington commercial area					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	f. Implement a Bicycle and Pedestrian-Friendly Business District (BFBD) campaign g. Allow food trucks or small food carts along the Bikeway				

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Retain and support existing businesses and evaluate opportunities for commercial growth in strategic locations					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.4.1. Improve small commercial areas	<p>a. Identify marketing strategies and involve residents in selecting toponyms SEE END NOTE #2</p> <p>b. Target and recruit neighborhood-oriented retail and businesses that support residents within walking distance</p> <p>c. Revise zoning to increase commercial activity, supporting vitality and variety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow mixed commercial and residential use, including in locations permitted by the Housing Choice legislation²¹ (<i>Planning Board Work Plan 7.H</i>) Require public gathering amenities Review boundaries, uses, and intensity Update use controls to employ contemporary categories <p>d. Encourage landlords to improve façades</p>	<p>MBTA Communities Legislation²³</p> <p>MA DHCD Branding Toolkit²⁴ SEE END NOTES</p> <p>Business Toolkit²⁵</p> <p>MA DHCD District Management Toolkit²⁶ SEE END NOTES</p> <p>MassEcon²⁷</p> <p>Middlesex 3 Coalition²⁸</p>	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	<p>LEAD(S): Planning Office</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Commercial district property and business owners</p> <p>Public Works</p> <p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p>	#2: IINTERMEDIATE (Years 5 – 10)

²¹ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities>

²³ The **Housing Choice Initiative** enacted in Jan. 2021 requires that an MBTA community shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-choice-initiative>

²⁴ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/branding-toolkit/download>

²⁵ Business Toolkit: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2744/Business-Toolkit-2022-PDF?bidId=>

²⁶ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/district-management-toolkit/download>

²⁷ <https://massecon.com>

²⁸ <https://middlesex3.com>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Retain and support existing businesses and evaluate opportunities for commercial growth in strategic locations					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	e. Improve safety through infrastructure improvements Recruit, support, and attract minority- and women-owned businesses into Lexington f. Work with the Legislature to ease the disproportionate tax burden on small businesses g. Adopt the recommendations of the December 2019 retail strategies report ²² h. Encourage and attract amenities that meet the varied needs and preferences of residents			Vision for Lexington Committee MA DOR Planning Board Hanscom Air Force Base MIT Lincoln Laboratory Lexington business owners	

²² Lexington Center: Analysis of Economic Conditions and Recommendations <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/607/Center-Retail-Strategy-Report-2019-PDF>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Retain and support existing businesses and evaluate opportunities for commercial growth in strategic locations					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.4.2. Retain existing businesses	<p>a. Conduct exit interviews of businesses that leave Lexington to understand their reasons</p> <p>b. Survey existing businesses, asking what more the town could do to support them. Review previous input and feedback provided by businesses</p> <p>c. Expand the Business Visitation Program</p> <p>d. Expand “shop local” programs such as <i>Step Up Lexington</i> to encourage residents to support local establishments</p> <p>e. Work with cultural groups to find how local businesses might better meet their needs and share this information with area businesses</p> <p>f. Create a small business portal, building on the Resource Guide for Business, to provide information for small businesses, especially technical assistance and funding sources</p> <p>g. Create incentives for smart redevelopment without pricing out valued small or independent businesses, for example by requiring that retail spaces be leased up before residential units in</p>	<p><i>Local Business Profiles</i>²⁹</p> <p><i>Step Up Lexington Program</i></p> <p>Resource Guide for Businesses³⁰</p> <p>Business Toolkit³¹</p>	ARPA Local Business Recovery Grant Program	<p>LEAD(S): Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Land Use and Development Department</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p> <p>Local affinity groups</p>	ONGOING: Continue to support

²⁹ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/886/Local-Business-Profiles-PDF?bidId=>


³⁰ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1809/A-Resource-Guide-for-Businesses-PDF?bidId=>

³¹ Business Toolkit: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2744/Business-Toolkit-2022-PDF?bidId=>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Retain and support existing businesses and evaluate opportunities for commercial growth in strategic locations					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>mixed use developments are leased and occupied, or by requiring that retail spaces be designed and built out small enough for independent, small business owners, not just for large chain establishments</p> <p>h. Offer incentives to retain small businesses</p>				

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Retain and support existing businesses and evaluate opportunities for commercial growth in strategic locations					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.4.3. Streamline the permitting process	<p>a. Survey property and business owners regarding their permitting experience and solicit ideas for improvements</p> <p>b. Promote the March 2022 Business Resource Guide to explain the permitting process</p> <p>c. Provide a permit “concierge” to coordinate the business permitting process</p> <p>d. Automate the permitting process and keep up-to-date with digital technologies</p> <p>e. Promote the outdoor dining provisions developed during the COVID-19 pandemic., ensuring that sidewalks continue to be accessible for all</p>	<p>Business Resource Guide³²</p> <p>Business Toolkit³³</p> <p>MA Department of Housing and Community Development Outdoor Dining Toolkit (2021)³⁴</p> <p>SEE END NOTES</p>		<p>LEAD(S): Planning Office</p> <p>Economic Development Office Building Department</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Planning Board Lexington Center Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Historic Districts Commission</p>	<p>ONGOING: Continue to support</p> 

³² Business Resource Guide: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1809/A-Resource-Guide-for-Businesses-PDF?bidId=>

³³ Business Toolkit: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2744/Business-Toolkit-2022-PDF?bidId=>

³⁴ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/outdoor-dining-retail-toolkit/download>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.5. Develop sustainable tourism practices to support the independent businesses, art, cultural and historic organizations, and characteristics of the town's commercial areas					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.5.1. Improve wayfinding	a. Develop a wayfinding plan that includes a consistent and attractive system of signage and other navigation cues SEE END NOTE #3 b. Develop a branding theme to apply throughout the town, including creating unique gateways into town c. Apply wayfinding and gateway signage to the Minuteman Bikeway d. Consider multi-lingual signage and signage accessible to persons with disabilities	Parking and directional and other signage Historic markers DHCD Wayfinding Toolkit SEE END NOTES		LEAD(S): Land Use and Development Department PARTNER(S): Public Works Department Lexington Center Committee Bicycle Advisory Committee Tourism Committee Vision for Lexington Committee	IMMEDIATE: (Years 1-5)
3.5.2. Advance on-line outreach efforts	a. Update web-based resources to incorporate multi-lingual messaging accessible to persons with disabilities b. Promote a comprehensive tourism strategy incorporating on-line marketing c. Improve two-way communication between residents and municipal officials	Vision for Lexington Committee initiative to improve communication Town website MA DHCD E-Commerce Toolkit³⁵ SEE END NOTES		LEAD(S): PARTNER(S): Communications Advisory Committee Tourism Committee	ONGOING: Continue to support

³⁵ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/e-commerce-technologies-for-retail-toolkit/download>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.5. Develop sustainable tourism practices to support the independent businesses, art, cultural and historic organizations, and characteristics of the town's commercial areas					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Vision for Lexington Committee	
3.5.3. Celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington in 2025	<p>a. Support Semiquincentennial Commission (Lex250) efforts to plan for the events</p> <p>b. Coordinate the town's events with other nearby communities, state, regional and federal events</p> <p>c. Identify funding needs and potential funding sources</p> <p>d. Identify opportunities for individuals or organizations to participate in celebrations with a commitment to diversity, inclusiveness, and opportunity at all levels Invite temporary and permanent art installations from local artists</p> <p>e. Address transportation-related issues (could also be an opportunity to pilot public transit options)</p> <p>f. Develop a marketing and communications plan (and use as an opportunity to connect cultural assets to local retail and restaurants)</p>	<p>Civic Community groups</p> <p>Local museums</p> <p>Local businesses</p> <p>Public schools</p> <p>Music and arts community</p> <p>Reenactment community</p> <p>MA DHCD Tourism and Hospitality Toolkit³⁷</p>	<p>Commemorative Memorabilia</p> <p>Public/Private Partnerships</p> <p>Gifts and Grants (private, State and/or Federal)</p>	<p>LEAD(S): Semiquincentennial Commission (Lex250)</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>Town Manager's Office</p> <p>Historical Society</p> <p>Tourism Committee</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p> <p>Economic Development Office</p> <p>Town Celebrations Committee</p>	ONGOING: Continue to support

³⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/hospitality-tourism-toolkit/download>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.5. Develop sustainable tourism practices to support the independent businesses, art, cultural and historic organizations, and characteristics of the town's commercial areas					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>g. Identify, plan for, and mitigate potential impacts of an increase in visitors as a result of the events</p> <p>h. Find ways to involve youth in the planning for the events</p> <p>i. Celebrate underrepresented heroes and sheroes³⁶, including Black and female participants in the town's history</p>			<p>Transportation Advisory Committee</p> <p>Chief Equity Officer</p> <p>Public Works</p> <p>Fire and Police Departments</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p> <p>School Department</p> <p>Vision for Lexington Committee</p>	

³⁶ Sheroe: A woman admired or idealized for her courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities; a heroine.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX


OBJECTIVE 3.5. Develop sustainable tourism practices to support the independent businesses, art, cultural and historic organizations, and characteristics of the town's commercial areas					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.5.4. Leverage cultural assets	<p>a. Promote the “<i>Battle Green Scenic Byway</i>” and “<i>All American Road</i>” designations</p> <p>b. Complete the <i>Cultural District Designation</i> application process SEE END NOTE #4</p> <p>c. Develop strategies to align resources including tracking data that measure the impact of the cultural district in terms of the district's specific goals</p> <p>d. Establish a regional “Destination Marketing” entity for Lexington, Concord, Lincoln, and the Minuteman National Historic Park</p>	<p><i>Battle Green Scenic Byway</i> designation³⁸</p> <p><i>All American Road</i> designation³⁹</p> <p>Historic buildings, landscapes, and stories</p> <p>Cultural District application process to Mass Cultural Council (currently underway)</p> <p><i>MA DHCD Tourism and Hospitality Toolkit</i>⁴⁰</p> <p>Area businesses</p>	State grants available if designation is granted	<p>LEAD(S): Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Tourism Committee</p> <p>Monuments and Memorials Committee</p> <p>Historic Districts Commission</p> <p>Historical Commission</p> <p>Arts and Crafts Society</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p>	ONGOING: Continue to support

³⁸ <https://battleroadbyway.org/place/lexington-battle-green/>

³⁹ <https://locallexingtonnews.com/battle-highway-byway-is-known-as-all-american-highway-by-the-federal-freeway-administration-within-the-metropolis-of-lexington/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/hospitality-tourism-toolkit/download>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.6. Support “talent driven” economic development					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.6.1. Align economic development planning with regional market trends	a. Attract businesses that match the skills of working age residents, creating local jobs for residents b. Establish a retail incubator space to provide a supportive environment for new business start-ups	<i>Lexington Economic Development Summary Report, 2021</i> ⁴¹ Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) ⁴² Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) <i>MetroCommon 2050: Regional Long-range Plan</i> ⁴³ <i>Life Sciences Outlook, Lexington</i> ⁴⁴		LEAD(S): Economic Development Office Planning Office PARTNER(S): Economic Development Advisory Committee	ONGOING: Continue to support 

⁴¹ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4962/Economic-Development-Summary-Report-FY-2021?bidId=>

⁴² MAGIC consists of planning and select board representatives from the following 13 communities: Acton, Bedford, Bolton, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Hudson, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Stow, and Sudbury. See: <https://www.mapc.org/get-involved/subregions/magic/>

⁴³ <https://www.mapc.org/get-involved/metrocommon-2050/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/885/Life-Science-Outlook-2020-PDF?bidId=>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.6. Support “talent driven” economic development					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.6.2. Connect local businesses with area educational institutions	<p>a. Support and encourage partnerships between local businesses and the Minuteman High School and Lexington High School to provide early job training through internships for students</p> <p>b. Invite local businesses to visit schools to give presentations describing their businesses, their goals, the job opportunities and skills necessary to attain employment in these positions, perhaps all at once</p> <p>c. Create a Collaborative Workspace⁴⁵ that provides training to individuals with educational or digital skill deficit due to English language barriers or limited access to technology, open to students, teachers, tutors, town staff and area employees</p>	<p>Lexington High School</p> <p>Minuteman Vocational Technical High School</p> <p>Area colleges and universities</p>	Area corporations and institutions	<p>LEAD(S): Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Lexington High School</p> <p>Minuteman Vocational Technical HS</p> <p>Area businesses</p> <p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁴⁵ Example Collaborative Workspace and training program: New Bedford, MA: <https://www.heraldnews.com/story/news/local/ojournal/2021/12/16/discovery-language-academy-open-state-art-collaborative-workspace-hub/8926457002/>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

OBJECTIVE 3.6. Support “talent driven” economic development					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
3.6.3. Support residents working from home	<p>a. Support Lexington residents who do not want to work in a formal office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow co-work facilities as of right in specified locations Develop a co-work space, possibly through a public/private partnership <p>b. Update the home occupation zoning provisions to remove obstacles to working from home⁴⁶</p> <p>c. Provide incubator space for residents wanting to scale up an existing business or to test new ideas in a space that is economically accessible and does not require a long-term commitment</p>	<p>Cary Memorial Library meeting spaces</p> <p>Community Center</p> <p>Area coffee shops</p> <p>Home occupation provision in zoning by-law</p>		<p>LEAD(S): Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNER(S): Co-work space services (WeWork, etc.)</p> <p>Cary Memorial Library</p> <p>Transportation Services</p> <p>Area businesses</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

END NOTES

⁴⁶ Home Occupation, Major is defined in the Lexington Zoning Bylaw as having no more than one nonresident employee and no more than 10 business-related visitors per day.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

END NOTE 1. Business Improvement Districts (BID)

A Business Improvement District is a public/private partnership that coordinates and funds improvements to a commercial district. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)⁴⁷ are “special assessment districts in which property owners vote to initiate, manage and finance supplemental services or enhancements above and beyond the baseline of services already provided by their local city or town governments. A special assessment, or common area fee, is levied only on property within the district. The assessments are collected and expended within the district for a range of services and/or programs, including:

- Marketing and public relations
- Improving the downtown marketplace or city/town center
- Capital improvements
- Public safety enhancements
- Special events

A BID creates a stable local management structure that provides a sustainable funding source for the revitalization and long-term maintenance of downtowns and city/town centers. The goal of a BID is to improve a specific commercial area by attracting customers, clients, shoppers and other businesses.”

Communities are authorized to establish BIDs under M.G.L. Chapter 40O. A BID must be a contiguous geographic area in which at least 75% of the land is zoned or used for commercial, retail, industrial, or mixed uses. A BID is established through a local petition and public hearing process. The petition must be signed by the owners of at least 60% of the real property and at least 51% of the assessed valuation of the real property within the proposed BID. The petition must also include delineation of the BID boundaries, a proposed improvement plan, budget and assessment or fee structure.

These Toolkits are referred to throughout this section on Economic Vitality: The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development has developed a series of Toolkits to help commercial districts recover from the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. These are:

- [Branding Toolkit](#)
- [District Management Toolkit](#)
- [E-Commerce-Technologies for Retail Toolkit](#)
- [Equity Toolkit](#)
- [Hospitality Tourism Toolkit](#)
- [Marketing Toolkit](#)
- [Outdoor Dining Retail Toolkit](#)
- [Pop-up Vacant Storefront Activation Toolkit](#)
- [Sign Façade Toolkit](#)
- [Wayfinding Toolkit](#)

⁴⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/business-improvement-districts-bid>

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There are several examples of BIDs in Massachusetts and nearby states. Each one develops a little differently and focuses on the specifics of the commercial district it is formed to maintain and improve. Each Business Improvement District is authorized to perform a wide variety of management, administrative, marketing, and economic development activities, including⁴⁸:

- District Management - management entity with staff
- Maintenance - street cleaning, snow removal, litter and graffiti removal, washing sidewalks, tourist guides
- Promotion and Marketing - identification of market niche, special events, brochures, advertising, newsletters
- Business Services - business recruitment and retention, sign and façade programs
- Capital Improvements - streetscape improvements, management of parking garage, maintaining parking shelters, historic preservation

Hudson is a good local model. See: <https://www.townofhudson.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf3281/f/uploads/hudson-brochure-fnl.pdf>.

END NOTE 2. RAPID RECOVERY PLAN (RRP) Recommended Actions and Projects by Finepoint Associates (2021)⁴⁹

The Plan recommends using the Minuteman Bikeway to help revitalize three commercial districts located along its spine (East Lexington, Arlington Center, and Bedford).

Public Realm	Connect the Bikeway to the Districts via "designated access way" improvements, especially at Bow Street, Park Ave, and Depot Park to the Narrow Gauge Trail. [All 3 Districts]
	Install additional bike and pedestrian amenities in the Districts. [All 3 Districts]
	Activate Bow Street Park by installing amenities (to complement nearby food businesses and accommodate events) and developing programming. [East Lexington]
	Activate Veteran's Memorial Park with additional amenities and programming to serve as a social gathering/event space and complementary outdoor dining area. [Bedford Center]

⁴⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/business-improvement-districts-bid>

⁴⁹ https://www.lexingtonma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf7101/f/pages/lexington_arlington_bedford_rrp_public_002.pdf

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

	Engage with the MBTA to explore ways to revitalize the Bus Depot and activate the underutilized rental space. [Arlington Heights]
	Create/formalize a public “at-grade” Bikeway entrance at Park Ave. [Arlington Heights]
	LOCAL RAPID RECOVERY PLAN (LRRP) Recommended Actions/Projects by Finepoint Associates (continued from previous page)
	Implement sidewalk zones to edit existing streetscape and add new elements. [East Lexington and Arlington Heights]
Private Realm	Create a Store-Back (business back) Improvement Program to improve business orientation to the Bikeway (façade treatments, outdoor seating, etc.). [All 3 Districts]
Revenue/Sales	Design and install wayfinding signage and elements to encourage Bikeway users to patronize the Business Districts. [All 3 Districts]
	Develop additional cultural events/programming; start with a "Bike-Themed Week" with a coordinated schedule of events in each of the Business Districts. [All 3 Districts]
	Implement a Bike & Pedestrian-Friendly Business District (BFBD) campaign. [All 3 Districts]
Admin Capacity	Revise outdoor display regulations to promote lively, attractive outdoor merchandise displays and spill-out elements. [Bedford Center and Arlington Heights]
	Revise the sign bylaw and outdoor display regulations to encourage a variety of high-quality sign types and promote lively, attractive outdoor merchandise displays. [East Lexington]
Culture/ Arts	Create a mural program (especially for public locations and businesses adjacent to the Bikeway. [All 3 Districts]
	Create a Cultural District Art Walk along the Narrow Gauge Trail that would include a series of temporary art installations. [Bedford Center]

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

END NOTE 3. Parking and Signage.

The design of some commercial districts is specifically designed to attract and accommodate vehicular traffic, as opposed to patrons traveling on foot or on bicycle. Commercial districts oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists incorporate such features as locating parking behind or to the side of buildings (as opposed to in front of them), screening parking with landscaping, paved pedestrian spaces within larger parking lots, bicycle racks, water recharging stations, public restrooms, attractive blade signage that is placed perpendicular to a building's façade, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, few curb cuts, and connected retail and restaurant areas. Additionally, benches, attractive street lights, trash and recycling bins, and other street furniture can add to a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment.

END NOTE 4. Bicycle Node

A Bike Node is focused on creating an attractive and safe environment specifically oriented to bicyclists. This would include safe travel by bicycle, adequate bike racks, water refilling stations, wayfinding signage from areas traveled by bicycle, on-street bike lanes to indicate direction, safety, and a directory of uses. When setting up the conditions for creating a bike node, the following factors should also be considered: bicycling incentives; the needs and preferences of women, children, and older adults; and issues of equity and social justice. See also discussion in Transportation section Goal 7.

Bicycle nodes are especially popular in the Netherlands where there are approximately 8900 cycle nodes⁵⁰: each individual node has a number between 1 and 99 and is clearly signposted along bicycle paths. Perhaps some inspiration can be taken from these: "These signs at these junction nodes show the name of the network and the cycle route and display directional arrows at and between the various junction nodes that denote how to proceed to nearby nodes. Using this system, cyclists can either follow an existing route or devise one of their own by simply making a list of the nodes they wish to explore."

⁵⁰ <https://dtvcapacitybuilding.com/blog/a-node-network-that-connects-bicycle-routes-throughout-the-netherlands-and-belgium/>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

END NOTE 5. Civic branding: ““If you think about it, [municipalities] are products,” Wobser adds. “People have the opportunity to choose where they invest, shop and buy homes. Branding helps you honestly look at yourself and determine why they should come to you...In other words, they have to own a clear vision for who they are today and where they’re headed to attract new audiences and investment...You can’t expect to grow by staying rooted in the past.”

https://guidestudio.com/the-connection-between-civic-branding-and-economic-development/?vgo_ee=e6GllcnD7lmlpm%2BDIEOoa%2FSOqgvDk9UGSleZXq6nWyc%3D

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development emphasizes the importance of branding and has released a How to Manual: “The importance of brand has become increasingly relevant to the growth of cities and towns. In the era of views and clicks, brand perception is determined in seconds. As we grow past the pandemic, these places need to adapt a marketing mindset to attract new families and instill confidence in their residents. Fresh visual branding for municipalities shows an investment in the future of a place people call home.”

“Branding is a visioning exercise that captures the spirit of a community and reimagines a visual identity for the future in an authentic way. It’s important to root the process in positioning statements that the city/ town residents would agree with and develop visual qualities off those principles.

Authentic brands establish trust with residents who can see the relationship between the visual identity, tone of voice/copywriting and positioning statements. Residents and visitors alike will build positive experiences with a place if their first impression is built on a foundation of trust. This toolkit will lay out the fundamentals of brand in the context of municipalities to help design and maintain them.⁵¹”

END NOTE 6. Wayfinding is spatial problem-solving. It is knowing where you are and how to get to where you would like to go. It also provides information regarding your potential destinations. Wayfinding is done through clear and consistent signage, directories of area businesses, public art, and other thematic environmental features. Wayfinding elements may be different for pedestrians than they are for automobile drivers.

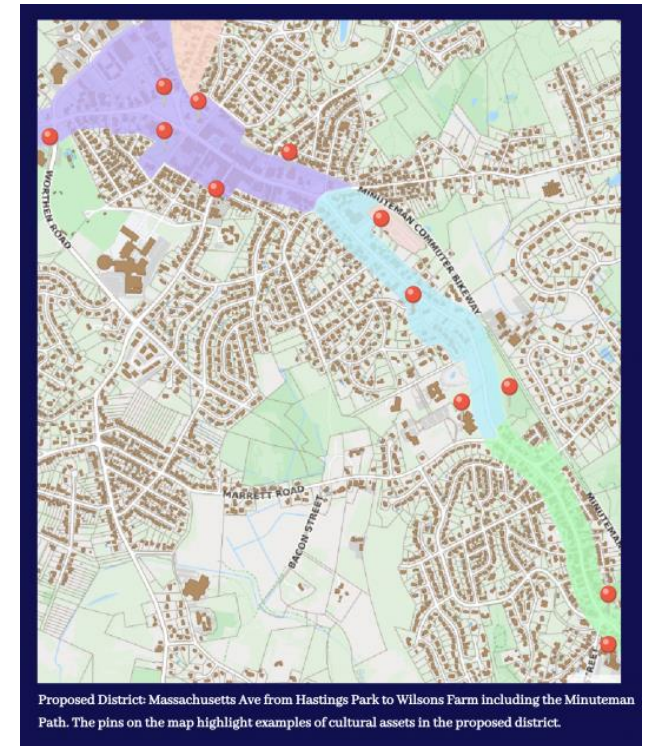
⁵¹ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/branding-toolkit/download>

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

END NOTE 7. Cultural District Designation. A cultural district is a specific area that has a density of cultural facilities, activities, and assets. It is a walkable, compact area that is easy for visitors and residents to recognize. The goals of a cultural district designated by the Mass Cultural Council⁵² are as follows:

- Attract artists and cultural enterprises
- Encourage business and job development
- Establish the district as a tourist designation
- Preserve and reuse historic buildings
- Enhance property values
- Foster local cultural development

The Cultural District Designation reinforces Lexington⁵³ as a tourist destination and helps to attract artists and cultural enterprises. This will help to foster local cultural development and drive economic growth. The designation also provides access to the Massachusetts Cultural Council grants and other State and Federal grants to help support cultural efforts in the Community.



Lexington's proposed Cultural District is on Massachusetts Avenue from Hastings Park to Wilson Farm, including the Minuteman Bikeway

⁵² <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/application-process/>

⁵³ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/economic-development/pages/cultural-district-designation-effort>

GOAL 4: SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

To enhance quality of life, health, and safety by implementing practices and policies that enhance sustainability and resiliency in our community



*A Canada goose and her chick rest
at the edge of the Old Reservoir.*

“Avoiding climate breakdown will require cathedral thinking. We must lay the foundation while we may not know exactly how to build the ceiling.”

- Greta Thunberg
*(No One is too Small to Make a
Difference)*

INTRODUCTION

“What is the use of a house if you haven’t got a tolerable planet to put it on?”

~ Henry David Thoreau

Sustainability and resiliency have been on the minds of Lexington residents for over a decade, during which time boards, committees, and staff launched several efforts to reduce fossil-fuel dependence and prepare for natural disasters. Significant among these efforts were: receiving designation as a Green Community; pledging, through a vote of Town Meeting, to make Lexington a sustainable community; joining the US Compact of Mayors; and committing to reduce and mitigate climate change per the Paris Climate Accord. Lexington has set an example for cities and towns across Massachusetts of how to achieve sustainability and resiliency at the municipal level.

Goal #4 affirms the Town’s 2018 *Sustainable Action Plan*¹ goals. In 2018, the **Sustainable Lexington Committee** developed a framework for implementing the long-term goal of *“ensuring a prosperous, healthy, and productive community; improving the desirability of living and working in Lexington; and improving the Town’s resilience to the effects of climate change while reducing greenhouse gas and other fossil fuel emissions.”* The plan outlined two strategies for accomplishing this goal:

¹ 2018 *Town of Lexington Sustainable Action Plan*:
<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1636/Sustainable-Action-Plan-PDF>

Sustainability and resiliency contribute to the quality of life in Lexington by helping to:

- Contribute to global climate change mitigation efforts
- Ensure that the town has the capacity to recover quickly and withstand disasters and other challenges
- Ensure that the air is clean
- Reduce the potential for flooding and keep the town cooler
- Maintain the plant, insect, and animal species that are native to New England
- Reduce energy costs over the long term, for both the town and private property owners



Lexington’s transfer station

- **Mitigation** (reducing greenhouse gasses), with the goal of making Lexington a Net Zero Emissions Community² within 25 years (by 2043). A **Net Zero Emissions Task Force** was established to develop this mitigation plan.
- **Adaptation** (increasing resiliency in the wake of natural disasters), with the goal of being capable of providing essential services for ten days following an extreme weather event. Services include those that respond to and assist with power outages, flooding, missed school days, and business closures. The Select Board oversees and is responsible for implementation of this strategy with assistance from the Town’s Sustainability and Resilience Officer and the Sustainable Lexington Committee.

The plan specifies many programs that will take years to complete, including transitioning public and private buildings to net zero emissions; increasing use of electric cars; and reducing food waste. To complete the plan, all of Lexington – civic leaders, Town staff, business owners, and residents – will need to participate.

²A Net Zero Emissions Community maximizes all energy efficiency opportunities to reduce energy consumption while utilizing renewable energy to meet remaining energy needs.

LEXINGTON VOICES REGARDING RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

At the 2018 **World Cafe forums**, a large number of participants identified climate change mitigation as a critical issue in discussions regarding the future and consider resilience a core component of the Town’s work.

“Apply sustainability principles and consider impacts to the environment in all planning efforts”

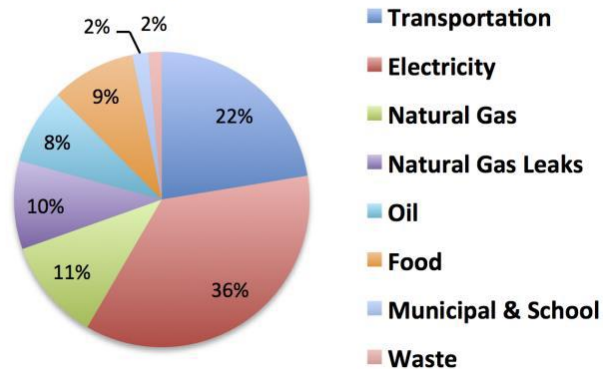
“Provide incentives for residents and business to make sustainability improvements”

We need shelter in the neighborhoods (including the downtown) for tornadoes, floods and other unexpected weather events”

From SWOT Analysis @ **LexingtonNEXT “Kickoff Event:”**

- *“One of the Town’s strengths is Lexington’s plan to have all buildings on sustainable energy in 20 years”*
- *“All new buildings should use green building materials”*
- *“There is a need to enforce site sensitive planning for homes, e.g. steep hills with rocky ledge”*
- *“There is a need for regulations to protect more green space”*

LEXINGTON'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

Lexington CO₂e Emissions

Lexington's carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (Town of Lexington Sustainable Action Plan)

In 2018, the Town's carbon dioxide equivalent emissions were on par with the national average in most sectors, with the majority deriving from electricity (36%) and Transportation (22%). Combustion of natural gas, natural gas leaks, heating oil, and food together accounted for 38% of emissions. Other statistics from 2018 provide more detail:

³ The United States Environmental Protection Agency states that carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the primary greenhouse gas emitted through human activities, accounting for about 80 percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2018 from human activities. Carbon dioxide is naturally present in the atmosphere as part of the Earth's carbon cycle (the natural circulation of carbon among the atmosphere, oceans, soil, plants, and animals). Human

- On average, Lexington households produced 11 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, higher than the national average of 7.5 tons³, due to the higher proportion of large houses.
- Lexington transportation emissions fell below the national average due to the relatively low number of annual miles traveled per vehicle (9,400) and the high percentage of hybrid or electric vehicles (7%).

LEXINGTON'S EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH RESILIENCY AND BECOME MORE SUSTAINABLE

In 2010, Lexington was one of the first Massachusetts municipalities designated as a Green Community. Since then, the Town has received more than \$745,000 in grants from the State for energy efficient lighting upgrades and projects. Other achievements include:

- adopting the **Stretch Energy Code**, providing enforceable minimum energy efficiency requirements for new construction and existing buildings (2011);
- pledging, through a vote of Town Meeting, to make Lexington a truly sustainable community by (1) considering climate change in all appropriate decisions and planning processes; (2) take action to prepare for the impact of a changing climate; (3) reducing

activities are altering the carbon cycle—both by adding more CO₂ to the atmosphere, and by influencing the ability of natural sinks, like forests and soils, to remove and store CO₂ from the atmosphere. While CO₂ emissions come from a variety of natural sources, human-related emissions are responsible for the increase that has occurred in the atmosphere since the industrial revolution.

greenhouse gas emissions; and (4) developing and implementing a climate action plan (2013);

- installing 3.3 megawatts (MW) of solar panels on the Town’s municipal rooftops and landfill, generating 45% of Lexington’s municipal electricity demand (2014 and 2017);
- installing 2.7 MW of rooftop or carport solar panels at seven of the Town’s public schools (Bowman Elementary School, Bridge Elementary School, Clarke Middle School, Diamond Middle School, Harrington Elementary School, Hasting Elementary School, and Lexington Children’s Place) (2022);
- planning to install 34.6 kW of solar panels on the rooftop of the new Fire Headquarters (expected November 2022)
- purchasing 100% renewable power for Town buildings;
- with the Town of Bedford, engaging in the **Solarize Lexington-Bedford** program, installing 1.1 MW of solar panels on 164 Lexington homes (2015);
- implementing a **Community Choice electricity aggregation program**, providing 10,000 customers with 100% renewable energy at low cost (2017);
- winning the **Leading by Example** award from the State for outstanding energy and sustainability efforts in 2017;
- adopting an **Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy** and **Sustainable Site Design Standards** pertaining to all Town-

funded building projects to ensure that design and construction of both renovated and new buildings meet LEED Silver standards (2019) and protect mature trees;



- becoming the first Massachusetts town to join the **US Compact of Mayors** in making a commitment to actions required to reduce or mitigate climate change consistent with the Paris Climate Accord. By joining this effort, Lexington pledged to establish an emissions baseline; conduct a climate vulnerability analysis; set emissions targets; and take actions towards achieving these targets. The town also committed to adopting a climate action plan, as described below.

GETTING TO NET ZERO EMISSIONS ROADMAP AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An outgrowth of the Sustainable Action Plan, this 2018 report provides a detailed approach to achieving net zero emissions through actions including:

- switching to renewable and zero-emission electricity at grid-scale;
- switching fuel sources and upgrading energy efficiency through building-scale retrofits;
- improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings; and



- adopting a net zero emissions new construction policy (see the **Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy**, discussed above).

POTENTIAL SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY EFFORTS

As of the writing of this plan, COVID-19 has persisted for over two years and has resulted in shortages in labor, compromised supplies of goods and services, and inflated the costs of basic necessities such as food, gasoline, and energy for lighting, heating, cooling and cooking. The devastating effects of this natural disaster affirm the need for Lexington to lessen its reliance on fossil fuels, produce more food locally, protect its open spaces, and preserve its shade trees.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Lexington is among the leaders state-wide in committing to reduce carbon emissions, and has received multiple recognitions for this effort.
- Through the efforts of the Sustainable Lexington Committee and Getting to Net Zero Task Force, the Town has a clear and detailed plan for achieving net zero emissions and increasing resiliency. Implementation of the plan is in full swing.
- All members of the community, including civic leaders, Town staff, private property owners, developers, business owners, and residents will need to play a role in making Lexington sustainable and more resilient.

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(Participants in June 15, 2021 Public Forum)

“Increase renewable energy by offering incentives to property owner to install air-source heat pumps instead of gas and oil furnaces”

“Don’t cut down trees to install solar panels”

“Offer composting as a town-sponsored curbside service, offering services at reasonable cost”

“Promote more composting of food waste”

“Make it easier and more affordable to collectively use non-carbon energy sources”

“Offer information on how to get a car charger installed”

“Add solar panels to parking lots and other impervious surfaces”

“Create an organization to offer advice and support to residents and businesses that want to use solar energy or and to achieve other sustainability goals”

“Invest in Safe Routes to School and Complete Streets programs to making biking and walking safer.”

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(Participants in October 18, 2021 Re-Discovery Day)

Participants would like...

- *More investment in saving trees and more planting of trees*
- *Use of native plants in all new public and private planting*
- *Reduced emissions; zero emissions by 2040*
- *Clean heat, no fossil fuel burning*
- *Eco-friendly commute via public transit to Boston*
- *No-idling zones*

RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Select Board Goals:

- Implement the *Sustainability Action and Getting to Net Zero Emissions Plans*
 - Develop a roadmap for implementation; identify priorities and costs
- Town Meeting commitment to consider potential impacts on climate change in all decisions and planning processes

10: Town-wide sustainable construction program

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What are the best ways to encourage property-owners and developers to install renewable sources for heating and cooling?
- Should the town provide more electric vehicle charging stations? If so, where?
- If the town offered curbside pick-up of compost, would more residents participate in composting of food waste?
- What is the best way to balance and optimize the benefits of retaining mature shade trees and while maximizing solar energy production?



A mature shade tree grows at the Town Hall complex. Protection of shade trees for cooling should be balanced with the need to thin tree canopies when solar panels are installed on roofs.

GOAL 4: SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

To enhance quality of life, health, and safety by implementing practices and policies that enhance sustainability and resiliency in our community

Objective 4.1. Become a net-zero emissions community

Objective 4.2. Improve the resiliency of town-owned assets and infrastructure

Objective 4.3. Reduce transportation emissions by improving sustainable transportation options and reducing single occupancy vehicle trips

The Implementation Table on the pages that follow identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.



Lexington has placed medallions at catch basins that connect to surface waters to prevent dumping

GOAL 4: SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Objective 4.1. Become a net-zero emissions community					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
4.1.1. Implement recommendations from the 2018 Sustainable Action Plan and Getting to Net Zero Emissions Roadmap	<p>a. Update targets for home energy audits, air sealing projects, and high efficiency HVAC system upgrades</p> <p>b. Update guidelines for the design and performance of municipal buildings, with regard to health, energy efficiency, on-site renewable energy production and resilience</p> <p>c. Develop a water conservation plan</p> <p>d. Update the stormwater bylaw and regulations, including consideration of requirements for green infrastructure⁴ such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioswales • Cisterns and rain barrels • Drywells and infiltration trenches • Rain gardens and bioretention 	<p>2018 Sustainable Action Plan</p> <p>2018 Getting to Net Zero Emissions Roadmap</p> <p>Massachusetts 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap⁵</p>	<p>MassDEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP)⁶</p> <p>MassDEP Gap Energy Program⁷</p>	<p>LEAD: Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS: Sustainable Lexington Committee</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Building Department</p> <p>Natural Gas suppliers</p>	ON-GOING (Continue to Support)

⁴ For more information about and examples of green infrastructure techniques, see: <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/what-green-infrastructure>

⁵ The Massachusetts 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap, a report of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, was commissioned to identify cost-effective and equitable strategies to ensure Massachusetts achieves net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. For more information, see: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/ma-2050-decarbonization-roadmap>

⁶ The **Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP)**, overseen by MassDEP, supports local recycling, composting/organics, reuse, source reduction, program development, and enforcement activities that increase diversion and reduce disposal. For additional information: <https://www.mass.gov/recycling-waste-grants-loans>

⁷ MassDEP's **Gap Energy Program** offers grants designed to fill the last "gap" in project financing, enabling and encouraging facilities to use energy utility incentives as well as funding from other sources to install selected energy efficiency and clean energy generation projects.

Objective 4.1. Become a net-zero emissions community					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeable paving • Tree canopy <p>e. Transition to higher efficiency and alternative-energy vehicles and convert municipal vehicles to low emissions fuels</p> <p>f. Create a program to test electric lawn care equipment</p> <p>g. Partner with National Grid in monitoring, assessing, and reducing gas leaks</p> <p>h. Encourage composting and implement curbside pick-up for composting</p>				
4.1.2. Develop and implement a Climate Action Plan	<p>a. Complete the Climate Action Plan, an extensive and community driven process to lay out a roadmap for Lexington’s Climate actions for the next five years</p> <p>b. Develop local incentives for residential property owners to convert to electric heat</p> <p>c. Increase local generation and use of solar energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address current barriers such as historic districts and natural resource areas • Encourage replacement with pollinator species when vegetation is removed to make way for solar panels 	<p>2018 Net Zero Action Plan</p> <p>Massachusetts 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap⁹</p>		<p>LEAD: Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS: Sustainable Lexington Committee</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Building Department</p>	ON-GOING (Continue to Support)

Objective 4.1. Become a net-zero emissions community					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize solar energy generation on developed areas such as buildings and parking lots (municipal and privately owned) <p>d. Provide additional electric charging stations in the Town Center</p> <p>e. Reinstitute “Pay-As-You-Throw” to reduce trash⁸</p> <p>f. Encourage plantings of native species and those proven to be more resilient to climate change</p> <p>g. Ban planting or maintenance of invasive plants</p>				
4.1.3 Educate Lexington residents and business- owners about sustainable practices	<p>a. Distribute information about energy conservation and ways of reducing negative impacts on the environment</p> <p>b. Engage local artists in promoting approaches to addressing climate-change (SEE ENDNOTE #1)</p> <p>c. Encourage building owners (both residences and businesses) to engage in energy audits to increase efficiency</p> <p>d. Educate property owners as to the advantages of electric heating, including long-term cost savings and available rebates</p>		Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP)	<p>LEAD: Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNER: Sustainable Lexington Committee Conservation Commission Public Works Department</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁸ Reinstitution of this policy would require a change in the town’s CharterTown Bylaws.

Objective 4.2. Improve the resiliency of town-owned assets and infrastructure					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
4.2.1. Develop resiliency plans and vulnerability assessments	<p>a. Develop an inventory of vulnerable assets and infrastructure, mapped in relationship to updated flood zones</p> <p>b. Engage in the Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness effort (COSTEP MA) to improve response and recovery for and safeguard the collections of the town’s cultural institutions.¹⁰</p> <p>c. Identify properties at risk of flooding and create incentives for owners to proactively mitigate risk, for example by installing infiltration systems</p>	2018 Sustainability Action Plan	EOEEA Municipality Vulnerability Preparedness Program (planning and action grants)	<p>LEAD: Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNER: Sustainable Lexington Committee</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p> <p>Environmental Services Department</p> <p>Conservation Office</p> <p>Recreation and Community Programs Department</p> <p>Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)</p> <p>Boston Office of Emergency Management (Boston OEM)</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹⁰ COSTEP MA: <https://mbic.state.ma.us/costepma/>

Objective 4.2. Improve the resiliency of town-owned assets and infrastructure					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
4.2.2. Implement recommendations from the 2019 Community Resilience Building Workshop¹¹	<p>a. Highest priority recommendations to improve management of stormwater:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory and upgrade culverts and bridges • Conduct a condition assessment and study the feasibility of removal of the Turning Mill Pond Dam • Develop an urban forest master plan to help address micro-flooding and related drainage issues • Increase maintenance of catch basins, conveyances, and detention ponds • Develop incentives for disconnecting and removing impervious surfaces • Develop green infrastructure solutions around stormwater management • Re-evaluate the town's procurement process for stormwater work • Develop and implement designs for storm-hardening at vulnerable pump stations • Assess flood resiliency and stream stabilization opportunities town-wide • Review and revise town regulations pertaining to stormwater management and compliance in order to increase resiliency <p>b. Highest priority recommendations pertaining to communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify vulnerable populations and foster an improved communications network for reaching all residents 	2019 Community Resilience Building Workshop Report		<p>LEAD: Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS: Emergency Management</p> <p>Engineering Department</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Sustainable Lexington Committee</p> <p>Public Information Officer</p> <p>Language Access Coordinator</p>	<p>IMMEDIATE (Years 1 - 5)</p> <p>and</p> <p>ON-GOING (Continue to Support)</p>

¹¹ 2019 Community Resilience Building Workshop: <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/07/11/Lexington%20Report.pdf>. Note that the table includes the highest priority recommendations only; moderate and lower priority items can be found in the workshop report.

Objective 4.2. Improve the resiliency of town-owned assets and infrastructure					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish neighbor-to-neighbor support systems to minimize reliance on town services Upgrade the town's radio systems Install a Road Weather Information System in collaboration with neighboring communities Implement the FirstNet system, giving priority cellular access to first responders <p>c. Other high priority recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a climate-driven town-wide business improvement plan to help the business community become more resilient Conduct a traffic study of choke points that are likely to cause problems during hazard events Investigate opportunities to establish a macro grid that supports emergency response operations Evaluate opportunities to bury overhead utility lines in high-hazard areas Prepare an energy assurance plan to prepare for the effects of future energy supply disruption, including use of renewable power supplies. <p>d. Evaluate options for increasing resilience with micro grids and electricity storage</p> <p>e. Leverage funding for geo grids.</p>				

Objective 4.3. Reduce transportation emissions by improving sustainable transportation options and reducing single occupancy vehicle trips					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
4.3.1. Increase public transit options and passenger miles traveled	a. Work with adjacent communities to expand transit share options b. Consider publicly accessible shuttle services in Parking and Transportation Demand Plans for new developments c. Shift to low- or no emission transit vehicles	Lexpress		LEADS: Human Services - Transportation Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: MBTA Commission on Disability	IMMEDIATE (Years 1 - 5)
4.3.2. Advocate for Transportation Improvement Districts at the state level¹²	a. Advocate for state and federal legislation that will accelerate and provide funds for transportation electrification b. Adopt state opt-in programs requiring transportation electrification			LEAD: Planning Board Sustainable Lexington Committee PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department	IMMEDIATE (Years 1 - 5)
4.3.3. Enhance safety of walking and bicycling and	a. Increase walking and bicycling through road, streetscape and bicycle trail improvements and extensions	ACROSS Lexington Minuteman Commuter Bikeway	MassDOT Complete Streets Program	LEADS: Land Use, Health and Development Department	IMMEDIATE (Years 1 - 5)

¹² **Transportation Improvement Districts** (TIDs) provide the transportation improvements needed to support land development in locations identified as appropriate for development in local Comprehensive Plans. Currently, TIDs are not permitted in Massachusetts.

Objective 4.3. Reduce transportation emissions by improving sustainable transportation options and reducing single occupancy vehicle trips

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
increase micromobility options¹³	a. Increase micromobility (also known as micro transit) connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider joining WMRTA Catch Connect¹⁴ 	Bike lane system MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (WMRTA)		Human Services – Transportation PARTNERS: Bicycle Advisory Committee Transportation Advisory Committee Transportation Safety Working Group	
4.3.4 Increase access to goods and services via non-vehicular means	a. Identify areas for expanded commercial uses where demand for goods and services exceed supply and that are serviced by public transportation, pedestrian, and bicycle networks b. Encourage the incorporation of commercial activities in new buildings proposed for high	ACROSS Lexington Minuteman Commuter Bikeway Lexpress MBTA Community Housing requirement ¹⁵		LEADS: Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Commercial district property	INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

¹³ The Federal Highway Administration broadly defines “micromobility” as any small, low-speed, human- or electric-powered transportation device, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles, electric scooters (e-scooters), and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances. For additional definitions, refer to the Federal Highway Administration’s website: <https://highways.dot.gov/public-roads/spring-2021/micromobility-travel-mode-innovation>

¹⁴ **WMRTA Catch Connect** is a micro transit initiative to provide curb-to-curb ride service that helps solve first-mile and last-mile service gaps, feeding the existing transportation infrastructure. It is seen as a way to reduce greenhouse gases. At the time of the development of this plan, Catch Connect serviced Wellesley, Framingham and Natick. For mor information, see: <https://mwrt.com/catch>

¹⁵ Enacted as part of the economic development bill in January 2021, Section 3A of M.G.L. c. 40A (the Zoning Act) requires that an MBTA community shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute. This bill is also

Objective 4.3. Reduce transportation emissions by improving sustainable transportation options and reducing single occupancy vehicle trips					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	density residential areas and areas serviced by pedestrian networks or public transit service c. Encourage the development of housing within existing commercial areas			and business owners Economic Development Advisory Committee Transportation Advisory Committee Bicycle Advisory Committee	

ENDNOTE

1. **Cool it with Art.** The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has developed a guide for local governments, community-based organizations, and artists interested in working together to promote creative approaches to address climate-driven extreme heat impacts and to promote healthy, climate resilient communities. For more information, see: <https://www.mapc.org/planning101/mapc-releases-cool-it-with-art/>

known as the Housing Choice Legislation, Chapter 358 of the Acts of 2020. For more information, see: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities>

GOAL 5: OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

To protect open spaces and natural resources and to enhance their connections



Parker Meadow, located just outside Lexington Center, consists of 17 acres with access from the Minuteman Bikeway.

“I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in.”

~ John Muir
(From the *Unpublished Journals of John Muir*)

INTRODUCTION

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”

~ Rachel Carson
A Sense of Wonder

The rounded hills, broad valleys, and winding brooks and streams that make up Lexington’s natural landscape have drawn humans for centuries. First Peoples relied on the friendly terrain for ease in hunting and gathering, and for trails between the nearby rivers. European settlers cleared the land for farming. While modern development covers much of Lexington today, the natural landscape continues to fuel residents’ overall high quality of life. Lexington’s commitment to conserving land and protecting natural resources will help ensure the health and well-being of future generations.

The town’s open spaces and natural resources face several challenges. The 1,403 acres of town-owned conservation land require ongoing management, maintenance, and stewardship. These tasks are undertaken by Conservation Division staff at the direction of the Conservation Commission, with volunteers supporting maintenance activities and trail development. Many of Lexington’s open space parcels are disconnected, hampering the ability of wildlife to travel safely across the land.

Open spaces and natural resources contribute to the quality of life in Lexington by providing:

- Places to explore, hike, snowshoe, bird-watch, and trail-run, watch the sunrise and sunset, or take a break and enjoy some fresh air
- Habitat for wildlife and preservation of biodiversity
- Historic and cultural value
- Cooling shade from the canopies of mature deciduous trees
- Protection of water resources, water quality, erosion control, and flood storage
- Reduction of air pollution
- Capture and storage of atmospheric carbon
- Soil for growing vegetables for sharing at the table with family and friends



The privately-owned Wilson Farm, located on Pleasant Street, covers 33 acres, making up three-quarters of actively farmed land remaining in Lexington.

Goal #5 addresses Lexington’s desire to better maintain existing open spaces; to provide more connections between these open spaces and neighborhoods; and to balance preservation of open space with other needs such as housing. The goal also focuses on natural resource protection as a means of safeguarding the town from the detrimental effects of climate change.

OVERVIEW OF LEXINGTON’S OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A DIVERSITY OF OPEN SPACES

Lexington has over 3,405 acres of open space lands owned by both public and private entities, including passive and active recreation areas in addition to conservation land.¹ The town owns a total of 2,065 acres of open space, or 19.4% of the total area.² Dunback Meadow (159.17 acres) is the largest town-owned open space area and serves as one of the town’s prime bird-watching locations. The Minute Man National Historical Park (100.12 acres in Lexington) is owned by the Federal government. Other open space is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, City of Cambridge, and Town of Arlington. Privately-owned open spaces total 639.83 acres, including golf courses, private recreation facilities, and farm lands.

¹ Source: **2015 Lexington Open Space & Recreation Plan**. 2,764.94 acres are publicly-owned; 639.83 are privately-owned (total: 3,405.77). Open space lands include recreation areas, playgrounds, school playing fields, agricultural lands, as well as conservation lands.

LEXINGTON VOICES REGARDING OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

At the 2018 **World Cafe** forums...

- a majority of participants reported the town’s open spaces and conservation areas as being “valued,” and at the same time expressed concern about them.
- one participant noted that, *“the connection to the Minute Man National Park is important.”*

From SWOT Analysis @ **LexingtonNEXT “Kickoff Event:”**

- *“There is need to balance density and open/natural space”*
- *“There is a need to mitigate the impacts of large houses being built on natural resources, including ground water, animal habitat, etc.”*
- *“We need to promote a green town with trees and public green spaces”*

² 1,403 of the total 2,065 acres of open space are classified as conservation lands.



Locke Pond, located near Lexington's highest point (Whipple Hill) is one of the few surface water bodies in the town.

DISTINCTIVE NATURAL RESOURCES

Lexington's landform consists of rounded hills interspersed with flat-bottomed valleys, ranging in elevation from 374 feet above sea level (Whipple Hill) to 100 feet (Tophet Swamp). Soils across Lexington are largely favorable to building construction, with over two-thirds of the town containing sandy, gravelly, or other well-drained soils. As a "headwaters community," Lexington contributes to three watersheds:

³ The US Environmental Protection Agency defines a wellhead protection area as "the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or wellfield, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such water well or wellfield."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- A need exists for stronger stormwater management regulations to balance environmental protection with development.
- Demand for use of outdoor spaces surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, placing greater strain on the town's conservation areas, and increasing the need for greater trail maintenance, forest management, and other outreach and educational stewardship measures.
- An opportunity exists to address climate change mitigation through future land conservation.

each of the town's twenty brooks and streams feeds the Shawsheen, Mystic, or Charles River watersheds. The town contains over 3,200 acres of wellhead protection area subject to state regulations to safeguard the water supply for neighboring Burlington.³ Additionally, the City of Cambridge owns and maintains land in south Lexington containing portions of the Hobbs Brook Reservoir to protect the quality of the City's drinking supply⁴.

⁴ City of Cambridge, Water Department

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Water/watershedmanagementdivision/sourcewaterinfrastructureandproperties/Properties>

LEXINGTON VOICES

(Participants in June 15, 2021 Public Forum)

Protect and connect open spaces and natural resources by:

- *Improving walking and bicycling amenities:*
 - Promoting walking tours for ACROSS Lexington routes
 - Connecting more walking and biking trails together and to open space
 - Adding more bike lanes to streets and improving crosswalks
 - Encouraging bike rental businesses on the bike path
 - Expanding the existing smartphone app for trails and open spaces
 - Expanding awareness of trails and continuing to encourage biking and walking as travel modes for students
 - Promoting off-road biking
- *Encouraging further acquisition of open space*
- *Planting more trees to help lower carbon emissions and educating the community on the importance of trees*
- *Promoting volunteer Conservation Steward positions to youth organizations (Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc.) to engage them in trail maintenance*
- *Encouraging Recreation Department-organized activities to use open spaces*
- *Promoting better stewardship of private lands between conservation areas so the latter are not isolated patches of nature*



The purchase of the Busa Farm by the town preserved farmland and allowed creation of six affordable housing units. The projects are known as LexFarm and Farm View

RELATED TOWN OF LEXINGTON GOALS & OBJECTIVES

2021-2023 Planning Board Work Plan Item:

- 3.H: Amend the Zoning Bylaw to add a new Open Space Residential District (OSRD) Bylaw as an alternative to conventional subdivision and Special Permit Residential Development (SPRD)

Develop and adopt design guidelines and regulations to facilitate sustainable site layouts, quality building designs, and preservation of open space.

Agriculture, once the dominant economic activity in Lexington is nearly extinct. Agriculture, once the dominant economic activity in Lexington, is nearly extinct.

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(from interviews with town Staff, Board/Committee Members, Community Leaders, May-June 2021)

“There is a need to establish a policy that balances the installation of solar panels with the removal of mature shade trees”

“The impact of dogs on wildlife is not good”

“The purchase of the Busa Farm for use by LexFarm (for agriculture) and LexHAB (for affordable housing) balances the town’s need for more affordable housing with its desire to conserve open space”

(participants in September 2021 online survey)

When asked...

- *to identify the locations in Lexington that they value or enjoy, 82.14% chose open spaces and conservation lands; the same percentage of respondents chose the Minute Man Commuter Bikeway and other trail networks*
- *what would attract participants back to Lexington if they moved away, one-third chose proximity to parks and open space*

Fourteen species of conservation concern (endangered, threatened or of special concern), including birds, amphibians, reptiles, crustaceans, and vascular plants, have been identified in the town by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP). According to NHESP, Lexington has one Core Habitat and one Critical Natural Landscape,⁵ both located at the western end of town in the vicinity of Katahdin Woods and Fiske Hill.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

What is the best way to balance environmental protection and development?

Should the town invest more in professional staff to provide stewardship of conservation areas, rather than relying heavily on volunteers?

How can community-based conservation projects be designed to address climate change mitigation?

Can creative land protection projects be invented through partnerships between the town, entities such as LexHAB, and private developers?

How can a system of trails, designed to provide universal access, be funded to connect neighborhoods with highly-valued open spaces?

⁵ Core Habitats are specific areas necessary to promote the long-term persistence of rare species; Critical Natural Landscapes are intact landscapes

that are better able to support ecological processes and disturbance regimes, and a wide array of species and habitats (NHESP).

Lexington's open spaces see many users on a daily basis. Because of this, Lexington needs to invest in land management and maintenance, including parking area and trail maintenance, forest management, land use rules education, and other stewardship measures to preserve and protect the town's existing open space.

Trees play an important role in the community and make major contributions to the region. Mature trees and a robust shade canopy are critical to creating public spaces that people can enjoy by providing shade and helping the environment by reducing the impacts of climate change. Lexington has an active Tree Committee that was established in 2001 when Town Meeting adopted a Tree Bylaw [See End Note 2]. The intent of the Tree Bylaw is to promote the planting of trees and protect existing mature trees on public and private land with regulations related to tree removal.

Stormwater is the water that flows over the ground following rain or snow. Precipitation in vegetated areas is absorbed into the ground from the surface over time but stormwater on impervious surfaces such as roads, driveways, and patios flow rapidly into a storm drain and eventually into a stream or wetland. In the process, pollutants from manmade impervious surfaces can contaminate streams, wetland resource areas, wildlife habitats, and drinking water supplies. Managing stormwater and implementing best management practices to reduce runoff and remove pollutants is critical to protecting our community's health and maintaining a healthy ecosystem. In 1977, Town Meeting adopted a Wetland Protection Bylaw (Chapter 130), followed, in 2008, by a Stormwater Management Bylaw (Chapter 114). Projects that involve land disturbance of one acre or more, new dwellings on vacant lot, alteration in or near wetland resource areas,

and specific projects before the Planning Board are required to meet Wetland or Stormwater Bylaws and Regulations. Projects not subject to these standards may have local stormwater impacts.

Individuals can have a significant impact on our natural resources. Planting native plants, substituting native groundcovers for lawns, reducing invasive species, using fewer chemicals, installing rain gardens, and planting and caring for trees all have a beneficial impact on the natural resources of the town, including its climate resilience and biodiversity.

Lexington has acquired and protected former agricultural parcels over the years as conservation land. Lexington also has two community gardens. In 2009, Lexington acquired the Busa Farm, leased a majority of the land to Lexington Community Farm (LexFarm), and dedicated 0.5 acres for six affordable housing residences. Lexington residents enjoy the open space, trails, and local farms. When land is available for development it is natural for community members to gravitate towards supporting shared open spaces but this must be balanced with meeting other urgent needs such as housing. As further detailed in Goal 2, as a result of the region's housing shortage, there is a dire need to construct new housing. Lexington has one of the highest home prices in the state due to the limited supply and this need should be prioritized.

GOAL 5: OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

To protect open spaces and natural resources and to enhance their connections

Objective 5.1. Conserve natural resources

Objective 5.2. Protect open spaces in balance with other town needs such as housing

Objective 5.3. Connect open spaces

Objective 5.4. Incorporate natural resource and open space protection measures into the town's sustainability and resiliency goals

The Implementation Table on the pages that follow identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.



*A rock outcrop on Whipple Hill supports native plant species including *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (bearberry). A popular hiking and bird-watching spot, the conservation area is surrounded by residential neighborhoods and abutted on the east side by the historic Wright-Locke Farm in Winchester.*

GOAL 5: OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Objective 5.1. Conserve natural resources					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
5.1.1. Protect plant and wildlife habitat	<p>a. Implement a prioritized invasive plant species management project across all types of habitat</p> <p>b. Extend volunteer participation initiatives such as “Day of Service” in which Lexington residents work to improve shared open spaces</p> <p>c. Implement strategies to minimize damage from threats to native species</p> <p>d. Enhance wildlife habitat through active management and restoration efforts</p> <p>e. Expand the Conservation Stewardship program to involve youth in trail maintenance</p> <p>d. Support native species restoration projects through the Conservation Native Plant Nursery</p> <p>f. Establish zoning regulations and economic incentives to motivate developers to design homes that reduce the number of trees lost and encourage retention of green spaces that can serve as environmental corridors and water preservation</p> <p>g. Add habitat preservation performance standards to the Zoning Bylaw, Planning Board Regulations, and Lexington’s Wetland Protection Code</p> <p>h. Develop a policy for landscape and protected habitat areas for all new construction including municipal projects</p>	<p>Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Threatened and Endangered Species; Species of Special Concern</p> <p>BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape</p> <p><i>Living Waters: Guiding the Protection of Freshwater Biodiversity in MA, EEA/DFW/NHESP</i></p> <p><i>Conservation Assessment and Prioritization System (CAPS) Statewide Massachusetts Assessment, UMass Amherst, Landscape Ecology Program</i></p> <p>DCR Forest Health Program</p> <p><i>Mapping and Prioritizing Parcels for Resilience (MAPPR), MassAudubon</i></p>	<p>Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services Grant Programs/ LAND Grants (SEE ENDNOTE #1)</p> <p>Community Preservation Act</p> <p>Lexington Nature Trust</p>	<p>LEADS:</p> <p>Conservation Commission</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Recreation Dept./Recreation Committee</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p> <p>Conservation Stewards</p> <p>Citizens for Lexington Conservation (CLC)</p> <p>Community Preservation Committee</p> <p>Sustainable Lexington Committee</p> <p>Tree Committee</p> <p>DPW</p> <p>Public Facilities</p>	<p>#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)</p> <p>and</p> <p>ON-GOING (continue to support)</p>

Objective 5.1. Conserve natural resources					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
		3,400 acres of open land owned by public and private entities 2015 <i>Open Space and Recreation Plan</i> ⁶		EEA Division of Conservation Services (DCS) MA Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) Minute Man National Historical Park	
5.1.2. Institute a land management program to protect wetlands, streams, ponds, and key upland buffer areas	<p>a. Communicate the regulations and performance standards imposed on land development by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and Lexington’s Wetland Protection Code to developers and property owners</p> <p>b. Create educational opportunities for private owners to gain knowledge of local land management protection efforts.</p> <p>c. Prepare comprehensive Land Management and Forest Stewardship Plans for town-owned open space parcels</p> <p>d. Add more professional staff for conservation land management</p>	<p>Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act</p> <p>Lexington’s Wetland Protection Code</p>		<p>LEADS: Conservation Commission</p> <p>Conservation Staff</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Conservation Stewards</p> <p>Citizens for Lexington Conservation (CLC)</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁶ An update to the 2015 plan was in process at the time the Comprehensive Plan was under development.

Objective 5.1. Conserve natural resources					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Sustainable Lexington Committee	

Objective 5.2. Protect open spaces in balance with other town needs such as housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
5.2.1. Protect additional open spaces	a. Acquire or protect undeveloped land not suitable for other Town needs such as housing ⁷ b. Educate parcel owners about preservation programs for open space protection c. Acquire or protect land identified as priority or core habitat of rare species, wetland, or critical natural landscape	2015 <i>Open Space and Recreation Plan</i> Existing list of priority parcels 2020 Community Needs Assessment M.G.L. Chapter 61B	Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services Grant Programs Community Preservation Act	LEADS: Land Acquisition Committee Conservation Commission Recreation Dept./Recreation Committee Assessors PARTNER: Select Board	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
5.2.2. Protect remaining farmland	a. Encourage agricultural use of undeveloped land with prime farmland soils b. Educate landowners about preservation programs for farmland protection c. Encourage use of remaining farmland for Community Supported Agriculture or community gardens Form an Agricultural Commission to oversee action on this strategy	Former farms now protected as conservation land LexFarm 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan M.G.L. Chapter 61A Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR)	Community Preservation Act	LEAD: Land Use, Health and Development Department Assessors PARTNER: LexFarm	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁷ The Land Acquisition Subcommittee of the Conservation Commission has reviewed the 1996 list and is making revisions.

Objective 5.2. Protect open spaces in balance with other town needs such as housing					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
		American Farmland Trust Massachusetts Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program Existing farms ⁸			

⁸ The Wilson Farm, located at 10 Pleasant Street, is currently zoned for single-family residential development (RS).

Objective 5.3. Connect open spaces					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
5.3.1. Connect open spaces, parks, and conservation areas	a. Identify and map potential connections, including greenways and sidewalks b. Increase access to open spaces, park, and conservation areas by developing trails, expanding ACROSS Lexington connections, and placing signage that complies with ADA guidelines c. Create wildlife corridors to connect open spaces d. Work with private landowners to provide connections between open spaces e. Require walking paths in new residential and commercial developments that abut conservation lands or which support pedestrian school routes	Existing municipal, state and Federally-owned open spaces Existing ACROSS Lexington trail system	Community Preservation Act Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services Grant Programs	LEAD: Greenways Corridor Committee PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department Conservation Staff Conservation Stewards Planning Staff Planning Board Conservation Commission Recreation Dept. Human Services - Transportation DPW Public Facilities Bicycle Advisory Committee	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5) and ON-GOING (Continue to Support)

Objective 5.3. Connect open spaces					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Committee on Disability	
5.3.2. Partner with Federal and state agencies and adjacent towns to create a regional open space system	<p>a. Partner with neighboring towns to create a regional open space system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile a complete inventory of open spaces within the ten-community area • Identify locations and possible greenway links • Identify tools for collaborative land conservation efforts • Promote and publicize the regional system <p>b. Form a ten-town consortium dedicated to conserving and protecting shared or abutting conservation areas and maintaining those areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize clean-up and maintenance crews • Develop trail maps • Develop educational programs (workshops, lectures, school curricula) centered on the natural resources of the shared or abutting parcels • Develop a website to provide information about the areas to residents and visitors 	<p>Open spaces in Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Burlington, Concord, Lincoln, Waltham, Winchester, and Woburn</p> <p>Shawsheen, Mystic and Charles River Watershed Associations</p> <p>Arlington's Great Meadows</p> <p>Cambridge Reservoir</p> <p>Arlington Reservoir</p> <p>Burlington Land-Locked Forest</p> <p>Conservation Commissions and volunteers in the towns of Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Burlington, Concord, Lincoln, Waltham, Woburn and Winchester</p>	<p>DCR Grant Programs</p> <p>Community Preservation Act</p>	<p>LEAD: Greenways Corridor Committee</p> <p>PARTNER: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Conservation Stewards</p> <p>PARTNERS: Conservation Stewards</p> <p>Citizens for Lexington Conservation (CLC)</p> <p>Friends of Great Meadows</p> <p>Conservation Commissions and volunteers in the towns of Arlington, Bedford, Belmont,</p>	<p>#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)</p>

Objective 5.3. Connect open spaces					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
		<p>Department of Conservation and Recreation Beaver Brook North Reservation</p> <p>Minuteman National Historic Park</p>		<p>Burlington, Concord, Waltham, and Winchester</p> <p>National Park Service (NPS)</p> <p>Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)</p> <p>Conservation Network Organization, [such as Massachusetts Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals (MSMCP)]</p> <p>Friends of the Burlington Landlocked Forest</p> <p>Vision for Lexington Bedford Old Reservoir</p>	

Objective 5.4 Incorporate natural resource and open space protection measures into the town's sustainability and resiliency goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
5.4.1. Reduce stormwater runoff from new development	a. Amend wetland regulation performance standards to align with current national and state standards b. Require construction and disturbance stormwater review for more types of projects c. Promote infiltration and other best management practices that reduce peak runoff rates and volumes	Stormwater General Bylaw and Stormwater Regulations		LEAD: Planning Staff Conservation Staff Engineering Staff PARTNERS: Sustainable Lexington Committee Land Use, Health and Development Department DPW Conservation Commission	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
5.4.2. Reduce the number of mature trees being cut down	a. Monitor and assess the impact and benefit of 2021 Annual Town Meeting articles 32, 33 and 34 (SEE ENDNOTE #2) b. Amend the existing Tree Bylaw to better align shade tree protection with the town's sustainability and resiliency goals c. Encourage property owners to save large shade trees on private property d. Develop an educational program for homeowners about the value of trees to discourage cutting and to promote tree planting	Existing Tree Bylaw Lexington Wetland Protection Code regulation performance standards		LEAD: Tree Committee and Tree Warden PARTNERS: Planning Board Land Use, Health and Development Department Conservation Commission	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 5.4 Incorporate natural resource and open space protection measures into the town's sustainability and resiliency goals

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	e. Protect town-owned mature trees from environmental threats including vines and other plants.				

ENDNOTES

#1. Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services Grant Programs. As of the writing of this plan, the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services provides grants to cities and towns in eight categories, four of which pertain to natural resource conservation and open space protection:

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund**, for acquisitions of land for conservation or recreation purposes, building a new park, renovating an existing park, or doing trail work
- **Conservation Partnership** (for non-profit entities), for acquisitions of conservation land by non-profit entities (such as a land trust)
- **Landscape Partnership** (for collaboration efforts with other towns and/or the Federal government), for protection of large blocks of conservation land; open to local, state, and Federal government agencies and non-profit groups to work together to protect at least 500 acres of land
- **Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity**, for acquisitions of land that will be used for conservation and passive recreation purposes
- **PARC (Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities)**, for acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes.

Detailed information about each of the grant programs is available online: <https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services/tasks>

#2. Town of Lexington General Bylaws Chapter 120 Trees is referred to as the Town's Tree Bylaw. **Article 32** requires that an individual (other than the town) requesting the removal of a public shade tree pay for an appraisal of the value of the shade tree before it is removed and to pay the appraised amount into the Tree Fund; **Article 33** requires property owners doing major construction or demolition to submit detailed information on tree removal; **Article 34** requires replacement of protected trees and increases the mitigation for removal of protected trees.

GOAL 6: HISTORIC RESOURCES

To protect, preserve, and promote awareness and appreciation of Lexington's historic and cultural resources from throughout its history



“[A]ll buildings and designed spaces were initially built to solve problems, and many were built to solve social problems. Today, whatever their condition, these properties invite us to consider, value, and take responsibility for honoring their original purposes as we shape the communities in which we live.”

~ Roseanne Haggerty
(Housing and Community Development Leader)

The Buckman Tavern, built in 1710, is one of Lexington's oldest extant historic resources and a prominent tourist destination.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Comprehensive Planning process, residents of Lexington cited the value of the town's historic resources in contributing to the richness of life in the town. From Native American trail routes, to Revolutionary skirmish sites, to 17th century farm walls, to Mid-20th Century Modernist homes, Lexington's history lives through its buildings, objects, structures, and sites. These resources draw large numbers of visitors each year who shop at local businesses and dine in local restaurants and help fuel the Lexington economy.

Equaling this appreciation is residents' concern over the preservation of these resources, evidenced by comments voiced during public forums, in surveys, and at the Re-Discovery Day event. Historic homes, many dating to the early 1900s, have been demolished to make way for much larger ones, an action that not only erases pieces of history, but also alters the physical character of historic neighborhoods. The town's existing preservation tools, including the Demolition of Buildings Bylaw, have failed to prevent these alterations and losses.

Goal #6 focuses on bolstering the town's efforts to preserve, expand appreciation for, and more broadly interpret historic resources, for the benefit of today's Lexington residents and visitors, as well as those in the generations to come.

Historic resources contribute to the quality of life in Lexington by:

- Increasing opportunities for community gathering, including town-wide celebrations
- Teaching youth about the history of their community
- Attracting visitors interested in history
- Fueling the local economy through dollars expended by visitors
- Creating appeal and appreciation for the Town's history
- Providing opportunities for Lexington to partner with neighboring towns to promote regional heritage tourism

We need to be far more articulate about why historic places matter.

~Daniel Bluestone, Director, Preservation Studies Program, Boston University

OVERVIEW OF LEXINGTON'S HISTORIC RESOURCES AND PAST PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION EFFORTS

A LONG HUMAN HISTORY

Lexington's human history dates to well before the 1600s, when Native Massachusetts tribe members hunted and gathered in upland areas above the Mystic, Concord and Charles rivers. Several trails routed through the area connected the rivers, with a main route following the alignment of today's Massachusetts Avenue.

The first Europeans to settle the area migrated from Cambridge, established grazing lands, and cultivated farms. By 1691, the parish at Cambridge Farms (Lexington) was set off from Cambridge and, in 1713, incorporated as the Town of Lexington. Lexington played a prominent role in the Revolutionary War. Three of the town's oldest landscapes: the Old Burying Ground (1690), Lexington Common, and remnants of the trail used by Revolutionary War soldiers are associated with the Battle of Lexington (1775).

Starting in the 1800s, Lexington became a center of industry, including production of clothing. Transportation improvements, including the Lexington and West Cambridge Railroad (1846) and the Lexington Street Railway (1897), spurred the town's transformation from an agricultural and industrial center to a residential suburb.

Residential development continued throughout the 20th century, with the largest expansion in the decades following World War II. Construction of the present Route 2 (1933) and Route 128 (1950) provided efficient means for commuters to reach downtown Boston

as well as the Route 128 commercial corridor. In the mid-1900s Lexington became a leader in the development of Mid-Century Modern neighborhoods with homes built in the International style. Six Moon Hill is known as the first Modernist neighborhood in America.



A residence in Six Moon Hill, America's first Mid-Century Modern neighborhood, exemplifies this 1950s-1960s style of architecture

Today, Lexington retains hundreds of buildings, landscapes and other historic features dating to each period in its history. Recent demand for larger houses has resulted in the demolition of many smaller homes, some of which added to the Town's historic character, and replacement with larger structures. The town's extant historic resources, including houses, taverns, civic and religious structures, and historic landscapes, tell the story of Lexington's development from a small rural farming community to a modern 21st century suburb.

Lexington's racial and ethnic composition has changed over the last couple of decades with an increase in Asian population (currently at 30%), but remains largely white (63%). Only 1.3% (440 people) of Lexington residents identify as Black or African American while 4% of residents identify as two or more races. 1.9% identify as Hispanic or Latino. (See the Demographics Section in Volume II.) The historical experiences and perspectives of these groups, such as enslaved persons, have not been accurately portrayed or fully represented in existing historic resources. To understand the current racial make up of Lexington, its full history should be analyzed through a racial lens. The local and state government policies such as education, zoning, decision-making powers, tax policies, and housing policies have had a lasting impact on Lexington's current demographics.

PAST EFFORTS TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT HISTORIC RESOURCES

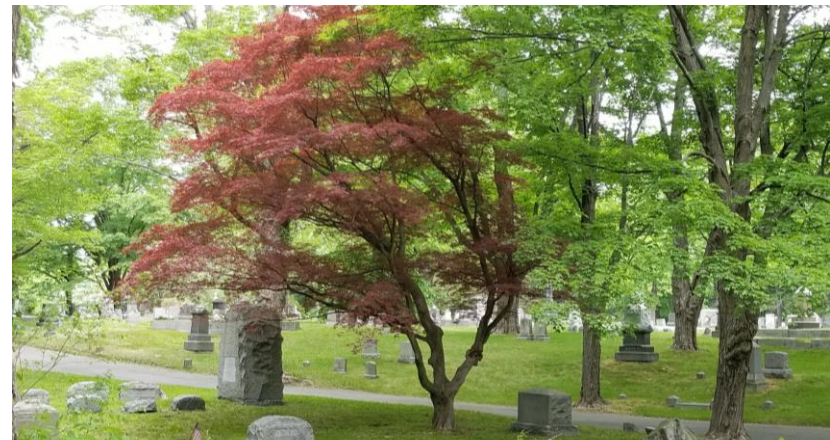
Through the efforts of Lexington's Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission, the town has protected a significant number of its historic buildings from demolition or alteration. This has been accomplished by **acquiring properties**, maintaining the **Cultural Resources Inventory**, establishing **four historic districts**, adopting **Demolition of Buildings** and **Neighborhood Conservation Districts** bylaws, listing properties and districts on the **National Register of Historic Places**, and designating three **National Historic Landmarks**.

The Demolition of Buildings Bylaw applies to buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places or Lexington's Cultural Resources Inventory which have been determined to be significant in terms of style, method of construction, or association with an architect,

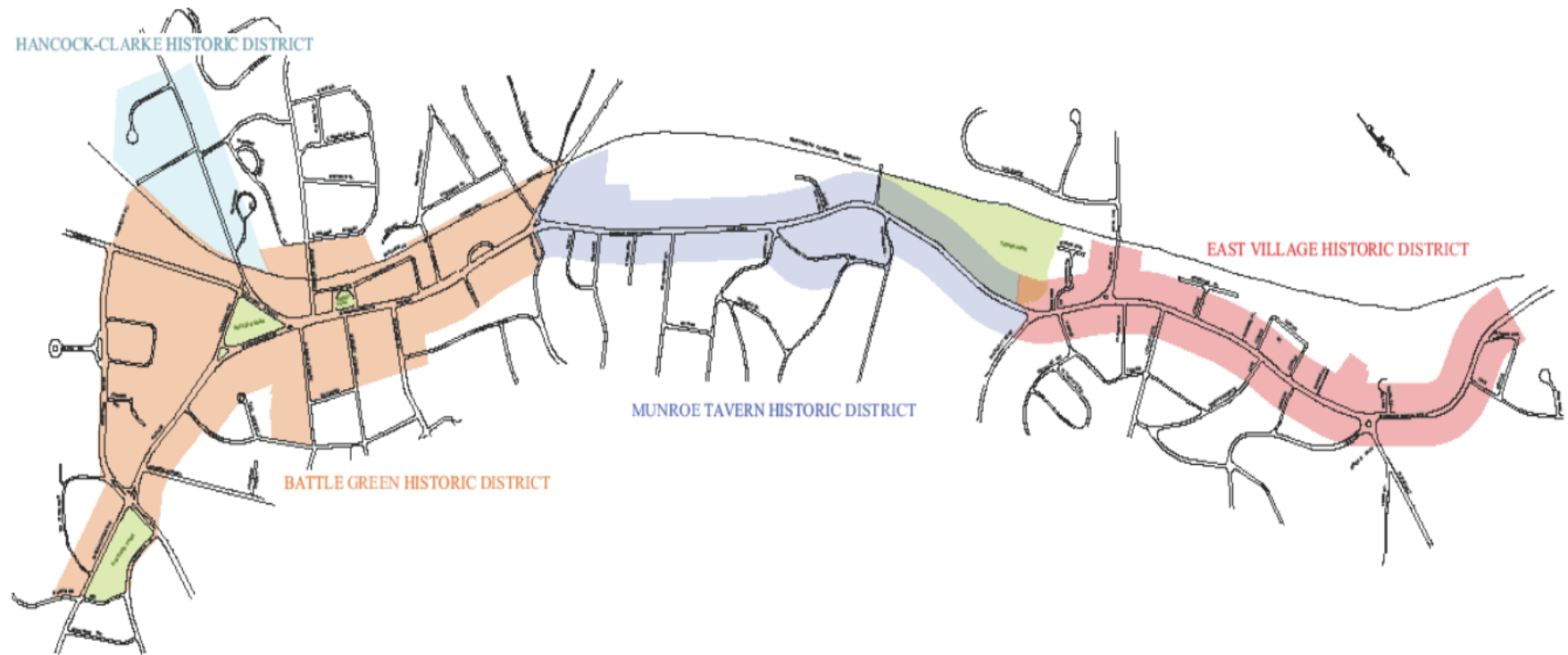
person, or event. It delays their demolition to permit efforts to preserve or relocate these buildings.

Adoption of the **Community Preservation Act** by Town Meeting in 2006 has resulted in significant funding for preservation activities in the town. To date, over \$33,800,000 (40% of the total CPA budget) has been spent on historic preservation projects.

In 2016, Town Meeting adopted a bylaw allowing the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts to preserve and protect a neighborhood's distinctive physical character. In 2018, Town Meeting formally adopted the designation for the Pierce-Lockwood and Turning Mill Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Once a specific Neighborhood Conservation District is established any new construction, demolition, or alteration must first receive review and compatibility approval from the neighborhood's Commission.



The Munroe Cemetery, established in 1831, is one of Lexington's extant historic landscapes dating to the early industrial period.



Lexington's four Local Historic Districts extend along Massachusetts Avenue in a contiguous arrangement. The Munroe Tavern District, located in the middle, is the largest, containing 250 properties. (Source: Lexington Historic Districts Commission Guidelines)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Existing town regulations, notably the Demolition of Buildings Bylaw, do not completely prevent the loss of historic buildings.
- Vacant town-owned buildings are languishing and require a significant public investment to make the buildings accessible and safe for public use.
- Lexington has not completed a town-wide comprehensive preservation plan to establish overall preservation needs, set priorities, and identify tools for addressing these needs.

The **Lexington Historical Society**, a private, non-profit organization, owns or manages several of the town's prominent historic sites that draw large numbers of visitors each year. These include the Hancock-Clarke House (1737), Munroe Tavern (1735), and the Lexington Depot (1846, society headquarters), as well as the Buckman Tavern (1710) under a long-term lease from the town.



POTENTIAL SHORT-TERM AND/OR LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON HISTORIC RESOURCES

- The initial stay-at-home restrictions posed by COVID-19 may have resulted in stronger connections between Lexington residents and the town, including its historic and cultural resources.

LEXINGTON VOICES REGARDING HISTORIC RESOURCES

A majority of participants at the 2018 **World Cafe forums** mentioned history and town identity as being “valued.”

- Seventy-five percent of comments indicated value in the areas of community, history, and civic participation.
- The same percentage of comments indicated that progress had been made in these areas.

Participants in **Comprehensive Plan community conversations** identified “Historic character” of the town as one of three highly valued features.

“Unique, small historic features should also be protected as they aid in preserving the overall character of the town... The rush to make modern and improve shows a real disregard for the small, intimate features that make Lexington unique.”

- Susan Bennett, Former Executive Director,
Lexington Historical Society

- Capacity limits posed on historical, arts and cultural organizations during the pandemic may have long-term financial impacts on these organizations.
- Increased use of historic landscapes due to limits on indoor gathering may require additional funds for maintenance and renovation, adding pressure to already stretched town budgets.

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(Participants in the June 15, 2021 Public Forum)

“Demolition Delay should be increased to two years, instead of the current one year.”

“Walking tours and virtual tours of historic buildings should be organized.”

“It is important to promote the preservation of Mid-Century Modern homes, since they are not explicitly protected and may be easily torn down.”

“Important historic buildings should be protected through actions of the Select Board.”

“The Ellen Stone Building is perhaps, one of the most important historic buildings in town.”



The Munroe Center for the Arts, built in 1904 as a public school, now serves as a cultural hub. Retrofits are needed to make the building fully accessible.



The civic complex, constructed in 1927 with additions in 1957 and 1970, houses the town offices, the police station, and the Cary Memorial Hall performance space.

RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON GOALS & OBJECTIVES

2020-2021 Select Board Goal:

- Support the Semiquincentennial Commission (Lex250) and the informal groups formed to communicate and coordinate the activities for the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington
 - Coordinate and collaborate with surrounding communities and the State



A commemorative stone, embedded in a stone wall along Grant Street marks the onset of the American Revolutionary War, begun in Lexington in 1775.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

How can we save the unique, small historic features such as stone walls or historic signage, that contribute to the historic quality of the town that are being lost?

How can we retain and repurpose vacant town-owned historic buildings?

What is the best way to significantly reduce the frequency of demolition of historic buildings to make way for new construction? Would a longer demolition delay period be more effective?

How can the town better enlighten residents about the historic and architectural significance of their homes?

Would Lexington benefit from a town-wide, comprehensive preservation plan to help establish overall preservation needs, establish priorities, and identify tools for addressing those needs?

How can the town establish a balance between widening of roads with protection of historic shade trees and stone walls?

GOAL 6: HISTORIC RESOURCES

To protect, preserve, and promote awareness and appreciation of Lexington's historic and cultural resources from throughout its history

Objective 6.1. Protect historic buildings and structures from demolition and decay

Objective 6.2. Plan and prioritize historic preservation policies and funding

Objective 6.3. Increase public awareness of Lexington's important historic resources

The Implementation Table on the pages that follow, identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.



The Battle of Lexington monument (1799), located on the Battle Green, draws visitors throughout the year.

GOAL 6: HISTORIC RESOURCES

Objective 6.1. Protect historic buildings and structures from demolition and decay					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
6.1.1. Strengthen the Demolition of Buildings Bylaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Extend the demolition delay period (SEE ENDNOTE #1) b. Establish a “Tear Down Fee”, allocating the revenue to town-wide historic preservation efforts c. Implement a “deconstruction” policy that requires dismantling of buildings and reusing or recycling components rather than disposing of them. (SEE ENDNOTE #2) 	Existing Demolition of Buildings Bylaw		LEADS: Historical Commission PARTNERS: Land Use, Health & Development Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1-5)
6.1.2. Promote voluntary preservation restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expand public awareness of voluntary preservation restrictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place information about restrictions, including definitions, advantages and disadvantages, and the process for creating preservation restrictions on the town website • Conduct public forums aimed at disseminating information about preservation restrictions b. Establish incentives for voluntary preservation restrictions c. Establish a framework for holding, monitoring and enforcing preservation restrictions 	Massachusetts Historical Commission standard preservation restriction language		LEADS: Historical Commission PARTNERS: Massachusetts Historical Commission	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

	d. Develop a standard form of preservation restriction to be used as a template for future restrictions				
6.1.3. Reuse vacant or underutilized town-owned historic buildings	<p>a. Develop a timeline for the protection and reuse of vacant town-owned buildings</p> <p>b. Make historic town-owned buildings accessible to enable reuse (SEE ENDNOTE #3)</p> <p>c. Dispose of town-owned buildings which cannot be reused by the Town subject to preservation restrictions</p>	<p>Hosmer House</p> <p>Ellen Stone Building</p> <p>Wright Farm Barn</p> <p>National Park Service Preservation Services Division</p> <p>National Endowment for the Arts, Office for Accessibility</p> <p>Whole Building Design Guide</p>	Community Preservation Act	<p>LEAD: Select Board</p> <p>PARTNER: Historical Commission</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1-5)
6.1.4. Promote reuse of historic buildings	<p>a. List eligible buildings on the State or National Historic Registers</p> <p>b. Promote existing programs for reuse such as the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program for income-producing properties (SEE ENDNOTE #4)</p> <p>c. Sponsor a low-interest loan program for preservation of privately-owned properties</p>	<p>Cultural Resources Inventory</p> <p>Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program</p>		<p>LEAD: Historical Commission</p> <p>PARTNER: Land Use, Health & Development Department</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
6.1.5. Adopt additional Neighborhood	a. Develop informative material about creating Neighborhood Conservation Districts (SEE ENDNOTE #5)	Existing Neighborhood Conservation Districts (Turning Mill, Pierce-Lockwood)		LEAD: Historical Commission	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

Conservation Districts				PARTNER: Planning Board	
6.1.6. Establish incentives to preserve historic buildings and their settings	b. Establish bylaw incentives to preserve historic buildings and settings	Existing Zoning Bylaw Existing General Bylaws 'Great Estate' Bylaws (adopted by other municipalities) (SEE ENDNOTE #6) Open Space Residential Development bylaw		LEAD: Historical Commission PARTNER: Land Use, Health & Development Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1-5)
6.1.7. Protect historic landscape features	a. Identify historic stone walls, mature heritage trees, scenic roads, and other historic landscape features b. Adopt bylaws regulating scenic vistas and views and the historic landscape along roads c. Promote Conservation Restrictions to property owners d. Adopt a bylaw to protect archaeological resources on private property	Battle Road Scenic Byway Cultural Resources Inventory (SEE ENDNOTE #7) 2015 <i>Open Space & Recreation Plan</i> Distinctive Trees of Lexington project M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 15C "The Scenic Roads Act" M.G.L. Chapter 9, Section 27C M.G.L. Chapter 266, Section 94		LEAD: Historical Commission PARTNER: Land Use, Health & Development Department Conservation Stewards Tree Committee	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

		M.G.L. Chapter 42, Sections 10-11			
6.1.8. Preserve Lexington's oldest historic buildings and landscape features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify and map the oldest buildings (late 1600s to late 1700s) b. Expand existing Historic Districts or create new historic districts in appropriate locations 	<p>Cultural Resources Inventory</p> <p>National Register of Historic Places</p> <p>Local Historic District Designation (SEE ENDNOTE #8)</p>		<p>LEAD: Historical Commission</p> <p>Historic Districts Commission</p> <p>PARTNER: Private home-owners</p>	<p>#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1-5)</p>

Objective 6.2. Plan and prioritize historic preservation policies and funding					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
6.2.1. Develop and adopt a Municipal Preservation Plan	<p>a. Engage with a professional preservation planner to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a public engagement process • Inventory existing conditions • Assess existing preservation tools • Make recommendations for additional tools, including policies and bylaw amendments <p>b. Create a staff position to oversee historic preservation efforts in Lexington, including implementation of the town-wide preservation plan</p>	<p>Municipal preservation plans prepared by other Massachusetts communities</p> <p>Massachusetts Historical Commission workshops</p>	<p>Community Preservation Act</p> <p>Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grants</p>	<p>LEAD: Historical Commission</p> <p>PARTNER: Land Use, Health & Development Department</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
6.2.2. Update and expand the Cultural Resources Inventory (SEE ENDNOTE #7)	<p>a. Update the older, incomplete inventory forms, particularly the “B Forms” for buildings, to include outbuildings, historic structures, historic landscape features, and historic or prehistoric archeological features</p> <p>b. Clarify the criteria for inclusion of structures on the Cultural Resources Inventory</p> <p>c. Create inventory forms for the town’s historic landscapes, structures, and way-finding signs</p>	Cultural Resources Inventory	<p>Community Preservation Act</p> <p>Massachusetts Historical Commission</p>	<p>LEAD: Historical Commission</p> <p>PARTNER: Land Use, Health & Development Department</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

Objective 6.3. Increase public awareness of Lexington's important historic resources					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
6.3.1. Promote Lexington's Mid-Century Modern architecture (SEE ENDNOTE #10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consolidate and highlight information on the town's website about the Mid-Century Modern architectural movement in Lexington: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an interactive map locating the Mid-Century Modern neighborhoods • Organize tours of Mid-Century Modern neighborhoods and homes • Define the Mid-Century Modern architectural movement, the physical and social impacts of the movement, and Lexington's leadership role in the movement • Provide information about the architects who contributed to this movement in Lexington <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the importance of preserving Lexington's collection of Mid-Century Modern buildings a. Join and participate in national organizations dedicated to preservation of and education about the Mid-Century Modern style 	National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form Foundation for Modern Architecture ¹ Mid-Century Modern Preservation Society ²	Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities (Mass Humanities)	LEADS: Historical Commission PARTNERS: Land Use, Health & Development Department Neighborhood Districts Commissions Lexington Historical Society	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
6.3.2. Educate property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Offer seminars and workshops to realtors, developers, and homeowners to provide information about homes' historical significance and appeal 	Cultural Resources Inventory Assessor's database		LEADS: Historical Commission	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1-5)

¹ <https://modernarchitecture.org/>

² <https://midcentury.org/>

Objective 6.3. Increase public awareness of Lexington's important historic resources

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
owners and realtors about the significance of historic homes	<p>thereby preventing loss of important features.</p> <p>b. Update the Assessor's database and online mapping tools to link to the Cultural Resources Inventory forms that describe the historical significance of a property</p>			<p>PARTNERS: IT/GIS Department</p> <p>Realtors' Associations</p>	
6.3.3. Partner with the Lexington Historical Society to promote heritage tourism and economic development	<p>a. Restore historic markers</p> <p>b. Establish walking tours of historic buildings and landscapes</p> <p>c. Develop and distribute interpretive materials about historic buildings and landscapes</p> <p>d. Introduce the use of sign language (ASL) in interpretation programs at historic sites to broaden the audience base</p>	<p>Existing historic markers</p> <p>Existing walking tour information</p> <p>Cultural Resources Inventory</p>	Community Preservation Act	<p>LEADS: Historical Commission</p> <p>PARTNERS: Lexington Historical Society</p> <p>Land Use, Health & Development Department</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Visitor Center</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
6.3.4. Increase awareness of Native Americans, Black Americans,	<p>a. Document the history of Native American, Black American, Asian American, and women's influence in the development of the town</p> <p>b. Analyze development patterns such as where Black, Native American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian American, and</p>	<p>Massachusetts Tribe</p> <p>Associated Black Citizens of Lexington</p> <p>Lexington Chapter of the Daughters of the</p>	<p>Mass Humanities</p> <p>Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)</p>	<p>LEADS: Association of Black Citizens in Lexington (ABCL)</p> <p>Historical Commission</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

Objective 6.3. Increase public awareness of Lexington's important historic resources					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
Asian Americans, women, and others in the history of Lexington	<p>immigrant groups lived, property assessments, residential security maps, and zoning history to understand the impact of government policies</p> <p>c. Interpret this history through public programs and physical markers such as memorials, signage, murals, banners, and public art</p> <p>d. Develop a prominent venue or educational program that teaches Lexington's history of enslavement, abolitionism, and appropriation of lands of indigenous people.</p>	<p>American Revolution (DAR)</p> <p>LexSeeHer³</p>	<p>Residential Security Maps of Boston</p> <p>"Redlining Maps"</p>	<p>Lexington Historical Society</p> <p>Planning Staff</p> <p>PARTNERS: Affinity Groups (SEE ENDNOTE #9)</p> <p>Monuments and Memorials Committee</p> <p>Stone Building Feasibility Reuse Committee</p> <p>LexSeeHer Steering Committee</p>	
6.3.5. Document and interpret the stories and traditions of newcomers to Lexington (SEE ENDNOTE #11)	<p>a. Create temporary and permanent installations in prominent locations representing the various cultures, races, and religions, of people living in Lexington, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public art, including murals Banners Monuments <p>b. Develop an oral history program documenting the spoken stories of</p>	Affinity Groups	Mass Humanities	<p>LEADS: Historical Commission</p> <p>Lexington Historical Society</p> <p>PARTNERS: Affinity Groups</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

³ LexSeeHer is an effort to honor women's contributions throughout Lexington's history through sculpture: <https://www.lexseeher.com>

Objective 6.3. Increase public awareness of Lexington's important historic resources					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	newcomers from outside the United States, archived at the Cary Memorial Library			Cary Memorial Library	

ENDNOTES

- Historic.** Lexington's Demolition Delay Bylaw is designed to protect architecturally and historically significant buildings from Demolition. The Bylaw applies to historic buildings that may be associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past, or with the lives of people who were important in the past, or have significant architectural history, landscape history, or engineering achievements, and may have the potential to yield information through archeological investigation about our past. The Bylaw applies to buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places or on the Town's Cultural Resources Survey the "Inventory" available here: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3919/Comprehensive-List--Updated-152022-PDF?bidId=>
- Deconstruction.** According to the National Association of Homebuilders, deconstruction is the selective dismantling or removal of materials from before or instead of demolition, and requiring that a certain percentage of construction waste be recycled. See: <https://www.huduser.gov/Publications/PDF/decon.pdf>
- Accessibility and Historic Buildings.** For more information about approaches to making historic buildings more accessible and in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, see the following:
 - National Park Service Technical Services Division, Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Buildings Accessible: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/32-accessibility.htm>
 - National Endowment for the Arts Office for Accessibility: <https://www.arts.gov/impact/accessibility>
 - Whole Building Design Guide: <https://www.wbdg.org/design-objectives/historic-preservation/provide-accessibility-historic-buildings>

4. **The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program.** This nationwide program encourages private sector investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings. It creates jobs and is one of the nation's most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs. The National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service administer the program in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices; in Massachusetts this program, known as the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, is administered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. For additional information, see: [Tax Incentives—Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service \(nps.gov\)](https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm) or <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm>
5. **Neighborhood Conservation Districts (Chapter 78, Section 78-3, Town of Lexington General Bylaw).** Adopted in 2016 through a vote of Town Meeting, this amendment to the Lexington Zoning Bylaw recognizes that “Lexington contains unique and distinctive neighborhoods and areas which contribute significantly to the overall character and identity of the town and which are worthy of preservation and protection. The town aims to preserve, protect, and enhance these neighborhoods through the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts.”
6. **Great Estates Bylaw.** Several municipalities in Massachusetts have adopted a Great Estates Bylaw to encourage appropriate development or preservation of large estate properties and to prevent the subdivision of the property into single family homes. Development may still occur, but without such a law, open space may be lost and historic houses on the property are sometimes demolished. Great Estate Bylaws can provide an alternative to the demolition and/or subdivision of the property by allowing nonresidential uses such as offices, hotels, conference centers and multi-family buildings in single family residential zones. For additional information, refer to websites of the Town of Ipswich and Town of Milton (both towns have adopted such bylaws).
7. **Inventory Forms.** Inventory Forms are the Commonwealth of Massachusetts-prescribed documents that describe the historical and architectural significance of designated properties. The forms are uploaded onto a web-based cultural resource inventory, MACRIS, maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, as well as onto the Lexington Historical Commission’s page of the town’s website. Each type of resource (e.g. area, building, structure, object, burial ground, landscape, etc.) is designated with a letter, for example “B-Form” for buildings).
8. **M. G. L. Chapter 40C, Section 3: Establishment of historic districts.** “A city or town may, by ordinance or by-law adopted by two-thirds vote of the city council in a city or by a two-thirds vote of a town meeting in a town, establish historic districts.
9. Lexington’s residents have created several organizations based on **affinity groups**. These include:
 - Chinese Americans of Lexington (CALex)
 - Chinese American Association of Lexington (CAAL)
 - Indian Americans of Lexington
 - Indian Family Activities Association
 - Korean-American Organization of Lexington (KOLex)
 - Japanese Support Group of Lexington (JPLLex)
 - Associated Black Citizens of Lexington (ABCL)

- Lextinas
- LexPride

10. Lexington's Mid Century Modern Neighborhoods. Lexington is noted for its historically and architecturally significant mid-century modern residential developments, among the highest concentrations in the US. Noted pioneering modernist architects Walter Pierce, Danforth Compton, Carl Koch, Walter Gropius, Hugh Stubbins and others designed (and raised families in) these nine neighborhoods and individual homes for the young professional families of the mid 1950s to late 1960s. Features of these developments included common land, wooded settings—many retaining historic stone walls, site-sensitive design bringing the outdoors in through large-paned windows, neighborhood swimming pools, low-cost, pre-fabricated components, and interiors and development site designs for family life. The Peacock Farm design was typically 1,800 square feet, and marketed at \$20,000 in 1955, \$191,500 in today's dollars. The existing neighborhoods are:

- 1. Middle Ridge/Turning Mill:** Includes about 150 homes built between 1956 and 1963 by "Techbuilt" (Carl Koch designs) and "Peacock Farm" homes (A.I.A.-award-winning homes designed by Walter Pierce and Danforth Compton), as well as a few "Raised Ranches, Split Levels, or Chalets"
 - 2. Five Fields:** Fifty-nine homes designed by The Architects Collaborative ("TAC") of Cambridge. ([Norman Fletcher](#), [Louis McMillen](#), [Robert McMillan](#), and [Ben Thompson](#), John Harkness and Walter Gropius) as a planned community that face the remains of the five original farm fields divided by stone walls.
 - 3. Six Moon Hill:** Begun in 1948 by The Architects Collaborative as an "experiment in community living" (Form A, Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey by Nancy S. Seasholes). TAC arrived at the name from the discovery of six 1920s Moon cars left behind by the previous landowner.
 - 4. Peacock Farm:** Built between 1951 and 1960, Peacock Farm is a development of 65 homes, most designed by architects Danforth Compton and Walter Pierce, featuring the award-winning split-level design now known as the Peacock Farm House, as well as a "Techbuilt" home and earlier custom-built homes. Walter Pierce was commissioned to design an attractive house for young professionals with three bedrooms, 1 and a half bathrooms and a fireplace.
 - 5. The Glen at Countryside:** One of Lexington's five "Peacock Farm" enclaves, this development of twenty-six homes was built 1960-1966.
 - 6. The Grove:** Forty "Peacock Farm" houses constructed 1960-1965, all were originally about 1,800 square feet. From the Form A: Lexington has approximately nine recognized developments of Contemporary style houses ... including The Grove. Such a concentration of contemporary houses is rare in the state and these developments constitute some of Lexington's most significant architectural resources.
 - 7. Rumford Road:** Eleven "Peacock Farm" split-level homes built 1957-1959, several of which appear unaltered from their original design.
 - 8. Upper Turning Mill:** Forty-seven homes constructed 1957-1961 of mostly "Peacock Farm home designs, which had won the first prize in the national A.I.A. "Homes for Better Living" design contest.
 - 9. Pleasant Brook:** Adjacent to Peacock Farm. Developed 1967-1979 of a later, improved "Peacock Farm" design of 1,975 square feet with poured concrete basements. Pleasant Brook also includes two "Deck House" designs.
- 11.** The historical and cultural traditions associated with Native Americans and Black Americans, as well as with newcomers to Lexington are often embedded in activities and stories, rather than buildings and other structures. Approaches to preserving these traditions must accordingly align.

GOAL 7: TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

To make traveling into, out of, and within Lexington safe, pleasant, and efficient with sustainable and equitable mobility options for all ages and abilities



Minuteman Bikeway

“Home is everything you can walk to.”

Stargirl, Jerry Spinelli (American author)

INTRODUCTION

Participants in the Comprehensive planning process expressed significant interest in expanding options for traveling into, out of, and around Lexington so that dependence on the automobile is reduced. Reasons included concern regarding the impact of automobile emissions on the environment, traffic congestion, a desire to incorporate fitness into everyday life, as well as a recognition that getting out of one's car provides opportunities for spontaneous encounters with neighbors and fellow Lexingtonians.

Promoting healthy living is a growing priority for many communities. It has been demonstrated that people living in communities that provide safe and pleasant walking and biking facilities are generally healthier than those in communities without these. Additionally, a lack of public transportation often amplifies the isolation of senior citizens and residents with disabilities and increases the dependency of youth on "rides" from their parents. Expanding public transit options is also important to reduce car dependence and provide affordable options for residents, workers, and visitors. Poor transit connections also create inequitable access to jobs, recreation, retail, and other destinations. **(SEE ENDNOTE #1).**

Lexington provides a variety of walking, biking, and transit opportunities for its residents. However, as residents' expectations regarding these options increase, effort will be needed to meet them.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

- 84 miles of sidewalks
- 46 miles of ACROSS Lexington trails
- 132 miles of Town-owned roads, 43 miles of state-owned roads, 4 miles of Federal roads, and 16 miles of private roads
- Minuteman Bikeway connecting Lexington to Bedford, Arlington, Cambridge (including Alewife Station), and Somerville
- Bike lanes on 5 miles of roadway
- MBTA buses to Alewife Station (currently #62, #76, and #62/76) and one stop of #78 to Harvard Square in East Lexington)
- Lexpress Buses, connecting with LRTA #14 in Burlington and MBTA #77 at Arlington Heights Busway
- REV and AWF Alewife shuttles run by the 128 Business Council
- Liberty Ride Trolley Tour (seasonal)
- An array of Demand-Response Services for older adults (60+) and those under the age of 60 with a disability (paratransit, PT-1, Lex-Connect Senior Taxi, volunteer driving programs)
- Private services such as Uber, Lyft, taxi and livery

OVERVIEW OF VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Lexington is easily accessible from major highways, including I-95/Route 128 and Route 2, allowing easy access for commuters going both to and from town. With significant employment opportunities, tourist attractions and proximity to Boston, Lexington is a trip destination, trip originator, and a drive-through community.

The dominant mode of transportation is private vehicles.

- State Route 128 (also known as I-95) and State Route 2, with three interchanges each, serve Lexington and are managed by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT).
- More than half (55%,) of Lexington households own two cars. However, there has been an increase in ride sharing reflected in the Drive Alone mode share (number of people driving a car alone) declining from 80% in 2003 to 72% in 2017(U.S. Census).
- According to 2017 Census Data, 21,768 workers commuted to Lexington, which increases the daytime population by 7,000 people. This is a 17% increase over 2012.
- The vast majority (89%) of working Lexington residents do so outside the community. The number of people working from home has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is likely to continue to some extent post-pandemic.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Lexington has a well-connected transportation network, both regionally and locally.
- Lexington's stated goals regarding environmental sustainability are difficult to achieve without supporting safe and reliable alternatives to Single Occupancy Vehicle rides.
- Lexington has multiple transit options, but is lacking in first mile/last mile connections and weeknight/weekend access to public transit.
- While the dominant mode of transportation is a private car, biking, transit, and working from home as primary commute modes have increased since 2009 (U.S. Census).
- Managing parking in Lexington Center requires multiple strategies to meet the business, merchant, customer, visitor, and resident needs that may at times be competing as described in the [Center Parking and Implementation Plan](#).

- The average travel time to work for Lexington residents is approximately 30 minutes (U.S. Census).
- Lexington has a traffic calming policy to influence “driver behavior through educational and design” and in 2017 implemented a speed limit of 25 miles per hour in thickly-settled and business districts unless otherwise posted.
- Participation in private ride sharing programs since the 2003 Comprehensive Plan has increased with the introduction of additional companies such as Uber and Lyft.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

In addition to automobiles, Lexington is served by a number of transit options, including MBTA and Lexpress buses, private shuttles, tourist trolleys (seasonal), and Demand-Response Services for older adults and disabled individuals.

- Bus routes have very limited bus shelters and related amenities (lighting, signage, etc.) Specifically, there are two Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) bus routes and only one bus shelter and three Lexpress bus routes with only one bus shelter.

Almost all (95%) residents responding to a survey felt that public transportation is essential. (Tri-Town Efficiency and Regional Transit Study: Lexington, Bedford and Burlington, Four Square ITP, Jan. 2019)

¹ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1023/Center-Parking-Management-and-Implementation-Plan-PDF>

- While Lexpress is cherished, funding it to keep up with demand is a challenge.
-



Riders board a Lexpress bus For more information see: www.lexpress.us

PARKING

Parking in Lexington has been studied for many years. Improving parking strategies across Lexington will be important so that we balance our economic development goals with our transportation and sustainability goals.

- The **Center Parking Management Plan**¹ (Nelson Nygaard, 2014) identified parking challenges in the Town Center.²

² <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/994/1-15-2014-Lexington-Center-Parking-Management-Plan-Public-Meeting-PDF>

According to the study, there are approximately 3,300 parking spaces in Lexington Center. Of these, 60% are off-street and 40% are on-street. Most of the recommendations from this Plan have been implemented.

- Weekday lunch hours are the busiest times for on-street and off-street parking in Lexington Center.

WALKING AND BIKING

WALKING

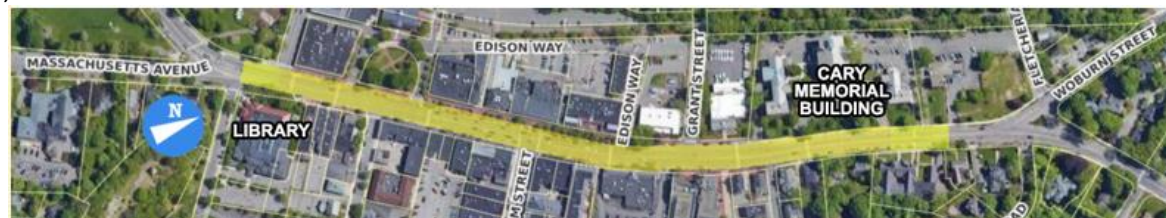
The degree of walkability varies across the Town.

- Funding for a Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan was approved in 2022.
- Vision Zero, a plan to make streets safe for everyone by reducing injuries and fatalities, is underway in 2022.
- Lexington has a robust sidewalk maintenance program that is typically funded between \$700,000 and \$825,000 annually.
- A Sidewalk Prioritization Tool and Map is used to guide decisions regarding maintenance priorities.
- A Resident Sidewalk Request Program, which responds to those advocating for sidewalks in particular locations, is currently programmed through 2026.
- Lexington has a pedestrian crash cluster spanning the length of the Town Center, mostly on Massachusetts Avenue, with 26 accidents taking place between the years 2008 and 2019. Four of these accidents resulted in severe or fatal injuries.

- The Center Streetscape Project currently under construction includes pedestrian amenities such as improved and accessible sidewalks, bump outs to reduce crossing distance, additional bicycle racks, new lighting, planting, and benches.
- The town's traffic calming policy increases pedestrian safety.
- Various parts of the town are connected by a continuously expanding system of trails called ACROSS Lexington. It is much loved and well used.
- Lexington Center has recently been designated a safety zone, with the speed limit reduced to 20 mph.
- Walking is essential to those using transit. Safe infrastructure is critical for seniors, people with disabilities, and people with strollers.

BICYCLING

Lexington has an active bicycle community; the League of American Bicyclists awarded the Bronze Designation to the town in 2014 and 2018. Electric bicycles, scooters, and other forms of small lightweight devices providing transportation options have gained in popularity over the last few years. These modes are known as micro-mobility.



The Center Streetscape Project includes streets and sidewalks along Mass. Ave. from Clarke St. (next to the Library) to the Police Station Driveway.

The Minuteman Bikeway is central to Lexington's identity and is enjoyed on a regular basis by many of the town's residents, in addition to being an important transportation trail for bicycle commuters traveling to and from Lexington, Arlington, Cambridge, Boston and beyond. The Friends of Lexington Bikeways/Bike Lexington plow snow from the bikeway, increasing safety during the winter months.

Existing bicycle services and infrastructure include the following:

- Minuteman Bikeway - 5.3 miles within Lexington; runs between Bedford Depot and Alewife MBTA Station, with extensions to many other towns
- Bicycle lanes on 5 miles of roadway
- "Sharrows³" on 15.5 miles of roadway
- Paved shared-use paths - 3 miles
- 23 bicycle racks in the Center, with the potential to add more through the Center Streetscape Plan
- Accessible public restrooms at the Visitor Center (adjacent to the Bikeway)
- Bicycle racks at each public school

³ Sharrows are markings for shared car/bike lanes

- A range of bicycle education classes provided for people of all ages
- The Safe Routes to School program
- Bicycle racks on Lexpress, MBTA, and 128 Business Council buses

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Walkable communities are critical for a number of reasons including protecting the environment by not burning fossil fuels, reducing traffic congestion, and supporting health and fitness.
- The Minuteman Bikeway remains central to Lexington's identity. There is support for more bicycle lane opportunities.
- DPW has marked bicycle lanes for approximately 3% of Lexington's roads and has worked to incorporate bicycle facilities. Implementing bicycle facilities and infrastructure is challenging in Lexington's narrower streets.



Bicycle parking in Lexington Center



POTENTIAL SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19

One of the elements most disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic has been transportation. The information provided in this plan is based on pre-pandemic data. It is expected that most of the trends will resume post-pandemic.

It is possible that due to the experience of the pandemic, many employers will continue Work from Home policies or hybrid options. This may increase local traffic if those working from home patronize local businesses during the workday. It is difficult at this time to predict what the impacts might be, although traffic has been steadily approaching pre-pandemic levels.

LEXINGTON VOICES

"Increase traffic calming measures." (Public Forum participant)

"We need more options for getting out of the car." (Public Forum participant)



Marrett Square intersection

COMPLETE STREETS

Lexington approved a **Complete Streets policy** in 2016⁴.

“Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists—making your town a better place to live. A Complete Street ... is designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.”

Smart Growth America, What Are Complete Streets?⁵

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Can the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan make walking and biking in Lexington safer and more pleasant?
- What can be done to increase public transit opportunities, especially during evening hours and weekends?
- What can be done to encourage people living and working in Lexington to use modes of transport other than single occupancy vehicles?
- Are pedestrian amenities accessible to people of all abilities throughout the Town?
- How will we manage parking in Lexington?
- How can the Minuteman Bikeway improve the experience of users and better connect to adjacent commercial establishments, meeting economic vitality goals?
- How can we encourage school children to walk, bike, take buses (school or transit), or carpool to school?
- How can we reduce automobile traffic and make driving safer?

⁴<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/597/Complete-Streets-Policy-PDF>

⁵<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/publications/what-are-complete-streets/>

LEXINGTON VOICES

A majority of participants at the **World Café forums** expressed a desire to prioritize walking and bicycle improvements. They also expressed concerns regarding traffic and congestion. 20% talked about bicycle infrastructure, 17% about traffic, and 14% about walkability. Some participants expressed an interest in additional public transportation options.

- *“Develop an overall plan for pedestrian and bicycle improvements”* (World Café participant)
- *“Children cannot walk/bike to school safely”* (World Café participant)

95% of the respondents to a **Tri-town Study Survey** indicated they felt that public transportation was “essential.”

Resident concerns regarding circulation include the following:

- *More protected bike infrastructure and bike parking*
- *Better bike safety education in schools*
- *More weekend public transit service*
- *Better bus stops*
- *Pedestrian safety in Lexington Center*
- *Better lighting for crosswalks*

LexingtonNEXT “Kickoff event” participants identified a wide range of needs including:

- *Safer crosswalks*
- *Covered bus stops*
- *Sidewalks shaded by trees and accessible by the disabled*
- *Late night and weekend transit service*
- *More options to access Alewife Station*
- *More information regarding alternatives to car travel*
- *Enforcement of speed limits*
- *Understanding of how driverless cars will impact traffic and transportation*
- *Better connections with neighboring Towns*
- *Measurement of cut-through traffic*
- *More public transportation for youth and older adults*
- *To keep studying the relationship between development and traffic patterns*

**RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON
GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Select Board Goals (2020-2021):

- Develop effective transportation solutions:
 - Continue to work with neighboring communities to identify opportunities to cooperate and develop a broader use of the Town's transportation services (Regionalization Action Plan)
 - Identify opportunities to provide first mile/last mile to/from transit
 - Work with the MBTA on potential new bus routes (MBTA Bus Network Redesign: <https://www.mbta.com/projects/bus-network-redesign>)
 - Identify potential locations for a protected bike lane trial
 - Revise schedule and fees to help increase Lexpress ridership post-pandemic (www.lexpress.us)

**RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON
GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Planning Board Work Plan Items (2021-2022)

- 1.H. Review and update Zoning Bylaw and Zoning Map to comply with recent Housing Choice legislation (MBTA community requirements)
- 1.T. Develop 25% Design to meet MassDOT requirements for Hartwell/Bedford Corridor Improvement Project for inclusion on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP): construction funding anticipated 2030-2034
- 2.T. Update existing TMO-1 Transportation Demand Mitigation Plan: Hartwell Area

GOAL 7: TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

To make traveling into, out of, and within Lexington safe, pleasant, and efficient with sustainable and equitable mobility options for all ages and abilities.



Automobile traffic at Marrett Square

Objective 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life

Objective 7.2. Expand options for walking, biking, and micro-mobility

Objective 7.3. Improve parking strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals

Objective 7.4. Expand transit options

Objective 7.5. Adopt land use policies that advance the town's transportation goals

Objective 7.6. Increase public awareness and community pride in use of alternative modes of travel

The following Implementation Table identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.

GOAL 7: TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.1.1. Decrease automobile travel during peak periods and single-occupancy vehicle trips	a. Work with area employers to achieve Transportation Demand Management (TDM) ⁶ goals SEE ENDNOTE #2 b. Encourage employers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide shuttles to Alewife or other transit hubs and share them with other area employers encourage employees to work from home at times allow for flexible work schedules provide bicycle amenities including showers and indoor bicycle parking facilities encourage ride sharing, carpooling, and use of public transit discourage driving c. Pursue the Regionalization Action Plan and Tri Town Efficiency and Regional Transit Study d. Establish additional Transportation Management Overlay Districts	Regionalization Action Plan (with 128 Business Council) ⁷ Tri-Town Efficiency and Regional Transit Study: Lexington, Bedford and Burlington, Four Square ITP, Jan. 2019 128 Business Council support services for promoting non-single-occupancy vehicle travel Transportation Management Overlay District plans (Zoning Bylaw and Regulations)	Regionalization Action Plan funded by MassDOT Employer Traffic Demand Management (TDM) Commitments Private partnerships MBTA Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP) New regional partners	LEADS: Human Services - Transportation Division Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Planning Board School Department Area employers 128 Business Council Middlesex 3 Coalition	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁶ Transportation Demand Management is the application of strategies and policies to reduce travel demand or to redistribute this demand in space or time.

⁷ <https://128bc.org/>

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Promote walking, bicycling, carpooling, and bus travel (school or transit) to and from schools f. Work with GPS applications like Waze to reduce cut-through traffic g. Develop a Transportation Demand Management program for Lexington town staff h. Develop Transportation Management Overlay District Plans for the TMO-2 (Forbes Road) and TMO-3 (South Lexington) districts [SEE ENDNOTE #2] i. Update Transportation Demand Management policies to incorporate recommendations from 2021 Nelson Nygaard Study 		Suburban Bus Grant Program	Transportation Advisory Committee Bicycle Advisory Committee Sustainable Lexington Committee	
7.1.2. Deploy traffic calming techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Deploy safe and appropriate roadway modifications such as curb bump outs, road diets, and speed tables. b. Deploy radar feedback signs in high-speed locations c. Enhance enforcement of speed limits and crosswalk regulations 	Traffic Calming Policy ⁸ Existing speed feedback signs	MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program Federal Highway Administration Chapter 90 funding	LEADS: Transportation Safety Group PARTNERS: DPW Land Use, Health and Development Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁸ Lexington has adopted a traffic calming policy to “influence driver behavior through education and design.”

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Install additional speed limit signage e. Conduct Safety Audits at high crash locations and make appropriate interventions to increase safety (such as traffic calming or intersection redesign) f. Advocate at state level to allow electronic speed tickets g. Develop and Implement the Vision Zero Plan to identify improvements to eliminate traffic fatalities and injuries on roads. 		Tax levy	Human Services - Transportation Division Police Department Engineering Department Transportation Advisory Committee School Department	

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.1.3. Maintain roads	a. Monitor public roadway conditions and prioritize and implement repairs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patching roadways • repairing potholes • roadway sweeping • painting of street lines and crosswalks • drainage systems, brooks, and catch basins b. Create a maintenance strategy for unaccepted roads	Spring Repairs Program Street Sweeping Program	Chapter 90 funding Tax Levy	LEADS: Public Works Department PARTNERS: Engineering Department	

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Improve traffic management policies to increase safety and enhance quality of life					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.1.4. Implement curb management strategies⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a Curb Management Plan¹⁰ b. Use signage to better define loading zones and pickup/drop-off zones for taxis and ride hailing services c. Minimize the number of curb cuts, including using curb cuts from adjacent facilities, to promote safe and walkable streets d. Develop program for snow and ice clearing at key pedestrian and bus locations 	<i>Zoning Bylaw¹¹</i>		LEADS: Land Use, Health and Development Department Public Works Department Planning Board PARTNERS: Economic Development Office Transportation Safety Group	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

⁹ **Curb Management** seeks to inventory, optimize, allocate, and manage the curb space to maximize mobility, safety, and access for the wide variety of curb demands. ITE <https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/topics/complete-streets/curbside-management-resources/>

¹⁰ **A Curb Management Plan** balances public and private sector needs: <https://www.planning.org/planning/2022/winter/create-a-curb-management-framework-in-7-steps/>

¹¹ The Zoning Bylaw limits the number of driveways to two per lot street line.

OBJECTIVE 7.2. Expand options for walking, biking, and micro-mobility¹²

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.2.1. Develop and implement a town-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan	<p>a. Document existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure including sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes, paths, bicycle racks, water refilling stations, benches, and public restrooms.</p> <p>b. Develop a prioritized plan to expand and improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The plan should identify how and where to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build new sidewalks • Rebuild aging sidewalks • Expand bicycle parking • Provide E-bike charging • Construct bicycle lanes, with protection where possible • Prioritize locations to connect • Widen the Minuteman Bikeway where possible • Expand paved connections to and from the Minuteman Bikeway <p>c. Follow the “Steps to Silver” recommendations for becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community SEE ENDNOTE #3</p>	<p><i>Complete Streets Policy</i></p> <p>Steps to Silver Bicycle Friendly Community</p> <p><i>Outstanding Safe Routes Leadership Award 2012</i></p> <p><i>League of American Bicyclists for Bicycle Friendly Community Bronze Award (2014 & 2018)</i></p> <p>Local Rapid Recovery Plan for Minuteman Bikeway in East Lexington (2020)</p> <p>Sidewalk Request Program</p> <p>DPW Sidewalk Study (2014)</p>	<p>2022 Annual Town Meeting funding</p> <p><i>Sidewalk Maintenance Program</i> (\$700,000 – \$825,000 annual appropriation)</p> <p>MassDOT Complete Streets funding</p> <p>MassDOT Safe Routes to School funding</p> <p>MassDOT Safe Streets</p> <p>MassTrails grant program</p>	<p>LEADS:</p> <p>Transportation Safety Group</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Human Services - Transportation Division</p> <p>Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p> <p>Bicycle Advisory Committee</p> <p>Transportation Advisory Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹² **Micro-mobility** refers to a range of small lightweight devices operating at speeds typically below 15 mph and suitable for trips up to 6 miles in good weather. Micro-mobility modes can be shared on privately-owned devices that are human-powered or electric. ITDP: <https://www.itdp.org/multimedia/defining-micromobility/>

OBJECTIVE 7.2. Expand options for walking, biking, and micro-mobility¹²

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>d. Increase funding for the sidewalk management and maintenance program</p> <p>e. Conduct walking audits throughout the Town¹³.</p> <p>f. Create and maintain safe and direct Town-approved walking paths and shortcuts to schools</p>	<p><i>Transportation Safety Group (TSG) Sidewalk Prioritization Tool¹⁴</i></p> <p><i>Safe Routes to School AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit</i></p> <p><i>Massachusetts Pedestrian Transportation Plan</i></p> <p><i>Massachusetts Bicycle Transportation Plan</i></p>		<p>Engineering Department</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Council on Aging</p> <p>Sustainable Lexington Committee</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Planning Board</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p> <p>Tourism Committee</p>	

¹³ A **walk audit** is a simple activity in which an individual or a team observes and evaluates the walkability of a location to document how and if pedestrians can safely travel along a street, navigate an intersection and get from point A to B, C and so on (AARP has a Tool Kit).

¹⁴ A sidewalk priority map was developed by the TSG to guide decisions regarding spending on sidewalk improvements and expansion (considers proximity to schools, MBTA access, proximity to retail, hospitals, sidewalk conditions and hazards).

OBJECTIVE 7.2. Expand options for walking, biking, and micro-mobility ¹²					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Friends of Lexington Bikeway Safe Routes to School Program group	

OBJECTIVE 7.2. Expand options for walking, biking, and micro-mobility¹²

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.2.2. Plan for new and emerging technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Plan for new mobility options, such as autonomous land and air vehicles¹⁵ b. Coordinate with adjacent towns to regulate use of micro-mobility devices¹² on roads, sidewalks, and the Minuteman Bikeway c. Plan for package delivery by drones d. Make walking, biking, and micromobility more viable for the first mile/last mile transportation¹⁶ 			Transportation Safety Group Land Use, Health and Development Department Human Services - Transportation Division Public Works Department	

¹⁵ Including autonomous air vehicles or air taxis. “In September, Los Angeles developed a [framework](#) for the implementation of advanced air mobility (AAM), also referred to as urban air mobility (UAM). They outlined seven principles to guide the creation of a policy road map ...and inform policy-making efforts...: safety, sustainability, equity of access, low noise, multimodal connectivity, local workforce development, and purpose-driven data sharing.” See: <https://www.planning.org/planning/2021/winter/flying-taxis-are-on-the-horizon/>.

In Lexington, the presence of Hanscom Air Base may complicate the future implementation of such technologies.

¹⁶ The “First Mile/Last Mile” is the symbolic distance between a commuter’s transit stop and his or her home. Most people in the United States claim to be “comfortable” walking less than ¼ mile: <https://somethingaboutorange.com/first-mile-last-mile-problem/>.

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Improve parking strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.3.1. Implement regional strategies to lessen parking demand for new commercial development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Coordinating with surrounding towns, develop Regional Transportation Demand Management¹⁷ strategies to reduce single occupancy vehicle usage b. Coordinating with surrounding towns, develop a Regional Transportation Services Plan 	<p>Transportation Management Overlay District plans</p> <p>Transportation Management Associations</p> <p><i>Regionalization Action Plan (with 128 Business Council)¹⁸</i></p>		<p>LEADS: Human Services - Transportation Division</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Boston MPO</p> <p>MAPC</p> <p>Regional Coordination Council</p> <p>Transportation Management Associations (TMA)</p>	ON-GOING: Continue to support

¹⁷ **Transportation Demand Management** or TDM refers to policies and strategies that aim to reduce travel demand, particularly single occupant vehicles, or to redistribute that demand to off-peak times.

¹⁸ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b30ad87fac9940978859e738c88dff5>

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Improve parking strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.3.2. Reduce required parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Align parking ratios¹⁹ with local economy and availability of transit options b. Encourage sharing parking spaces between uses with demands at different times of the day or week, such as houses of worship and schools c. Limit parking in new development 	<p>Zoning Bylaw</p> <p><i>The High Cost of Free Parking²⁰</i></p>		<p>LEADS: Planning Board</p> <p>Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Parking Management Group</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

¹⁹ “**Parking ratio**” is a ratio calculated by comparing the number of automobile parking spaces at a project to the gross leasable area (GLA) of a building. This ratio is usually expressed in number of spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross leasable space. It varies by property use, with labor-intensive operations needing higher parking ratios. For example, a building with a GLA of 800,000 sf would have 800 spaces expressed as 8 spaces/1,000 sf. NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association:

<https://www.naiop.org/Education-and-Career/Industry-Terms-and-Definitions>

²⁰ Shoup, Donald, *The High Cost of Free Parking*, A Planners Press Book, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2017.

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Improve **parking** strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.3.3. Improve parking management in Lexington Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implement any remaining recommendations from the <i>Lexington Center Parking Management Plan</i> to meet the study's goals b. Balance employee, resident, customer, and visitor parking c. Improve directional signage to parking lots d. Eliminate minimum parking requirements e. Encourage employers to provide incentives to employees to use alternative modes of transportation f. Provide additional bicycle parking 	<p><i>Lexington Center Parking Management Plan</i>²¹</p> <p><i>Perfect Fit Parking Initiative (Metropolitan Area Planning Council)</i>²²</p>		<p>LEADS: Transportation Advisory Group</p> <p>Economic Development</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Human Services - Transportation Division</p> <p>Lexington Center Retailers</p>	#1: ON-GOING (SUSTAINED EFFORT)

²¹ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/994/1-15-2014-Lexington-Center-Parking-Management-Plan-Public-Meeting-PDF>

²² <https://perfectfitparking.mapc.org/assets/documents/Perfect%20Fit%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Improve parking strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.3.4. Develop Shared Streets projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reassign paved spaces previously dedicated to the car to other uses in appropriate locations b. Encourage local businesses to make outdoor seating and dining options more attractive and permanent c. Ensure accessibility to all by incorporating Universal Design techniques²³ 	<p><i>Outdoor Dining Retail Toolkit</i>²⁴</p> <p><i>Traffic Calming Policy</i>²⁵</p>	<p>MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Funding</p>	<p>LEADS: Economic Development Office</p> <p>PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>Parking Management Group</p> <p>Lexington Retailers</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²³ Universal Design is more inclusive than the minimum accessibility requirements because it designs an environment to be accessible, understood, and of use to as many people as possible: <https://universaldesign.ie/what-is-universal-design/definition-and-overview/definition-and-overview.html>

²⁴ Outdoor Dining/Retail Community Toolkit: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/outdoor-dining-retail-toolkit/download>

²⁵ Town of Lexington Traffic Calming Policy: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/598/Traffic-Calming-Policy-PDF?bidId=>

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Improve parking strategies to achieve transportation and economic development goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Human Services - Transportation Division	
7.3.5. Create vibrant complete street corridor along Bedford Street and Hartwell Avenue	a. Design plans and construct the Bedford Hartwell Complete Streets Reconstruction Project b. Improve accessibility, incorporating universal design techniques	25% Design plans	Federal highway funds Transportation mitigation funds Tax levy	Planning Office Engineering Office Human Services – Transportation Division	INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

OBJECTIVE 7.4. Expand transit options					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.4.1. Increase travel by transit	<p>a. Regionalize current demand-response services²⁶ SEE ENDNOTE #4</p> <p>b. Require developers of large commercial and housing projects to contribute to publicly accessible shuttle services and to incentivize use of public transit</p> <p>c. Partner with the MBTA to provide evening and weekend service SEE ENDNOTE #5</p> <p>d. Install bus shelters at bus stops and along bus/shuttle routes in high impact locations, based on a standard design with input from the Historic District Commission and Commission on Disabilities. Consider lighting, signage, and other amenities. SEE ENDNOTE #6</p> <p>e. Clear snow at bus stops and paths leading to bus stops in a timely manner</p> <p>f. Integrate transportation resources for students and adults</p>	<p>Regionalization Action Plan²⁷</p> <p>Tri-Town Efficiency and Regional Transit Study: Lexington, Bedford and Burlington, Four Square ITP, Jan. 2019</p> <p>Lexpress</p> <p>MBTA buses</p> <p>Alewife shuttles</p> <p>TDM 1998</p> <p>TDM Recommendations 201`</p>	<p>Regionalization Plan Grant</p> <p>Community Transit Grant Funding (FTA Section 5310)</p> <p>MBTA Suburban Bus Grant Program</p> <p>Public/private partnerships</p> <p>TDM mitigation funds</p> <p>TMOD Fees</p>	<p>LEADS: Human Services - Transportation Division</p> <p>Transportation Advisory Committee</p> <p>Public Works Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: MBTA</p> <p>128 Business Council</p> <p>Commission on Disabilities</p>	<p>ON-GOING: Continue to support</p>

²⁶ “Demand response” is any non-fixed route system of transporting individuals that requires advanced scheduling by the customer, including services provided by public entities, nonprofits, and private providers. US DOT <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/access/charter-bus-service/demand-response-service-explained>

²⁷ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b30ad87fac9940978859e738c88dffb5>

OBJECTIVE 7.4. Expand transit options					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	g. Enhance Lexpress and community transit options h. Promote MBTA and Lexpress ride programs i. Enhance wheelchair access and incorporate universal design in transportation	TDM Recommendations 2022		Transportation Advisory Committee Lexpress School Department	

OBJECTIVE 7.5. Adopt land use policies that advance the town's transportation goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.5.1. Encourage use of transportation modes other than single occupancy vehicles	a. Require developers to install or upgrade sidewalks adjacent to their developments and ensure that curb cuts are accessible b. Require additional bicycle parking spaces with specified minimum design standards in new developments	Existing Zoning, Parking and other policies Transportation Demand Management Policy ²⁸ Development Memorandums of Understanding	TDM Mitigation Funds TMOD Fees	LEADS: Planning Board Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Parking Management Group	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

²⁸ Transportation Demand Management Policy, adopted in 1998: <https://www.lexingtonmma.org/uploads/Main/LexingtonTDMPolicy.pdf>

OBJECTIVE 7.5. Adopt land use policies that advance the town's transportation goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Human Services - Transportation Division Commission on Disability Bicycle Advisory Committee	
7.5.2. Encourage mixed-use development	a. Create "15-minute clinics" and other small local services uses such as groceries, childcare, and restaurants, in neighborhood commercial districts where most daily necessities can be accessed within a short walk			LEADS: Planning Board PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department Human Services - Transportation Division Select Board	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

OBJECTIVE 7.5. Adopt land use policies that advance the town's transportation goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.5.3. Increase housing along transit corridors	a. Promote Transit-oriented development ²⁹ b. Meet the requirement for MBTA Communities to provide transit-oriented multifamily housing	Housing Choice Initiative also known as "MBTA Communities" (Chapter 358 of the Acts of 2021) ³⁰		LEADS: Planning Board PARTNERS: Land Use, Health and Development Department Human Services - Transportation Division Select Board	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
7.5.4. Develop an Electric Vehicle Action Plan³¹	a. Transition municipal and private vehicles to electric by providing public charging opportunities, upgrading infrastructure at key locations, and promoting and communicating charging locations to encourage wide-spread use	2021 Fleet Electrification Policy		LEADS: Sustainability & Resilience Officer PARTNERS: Human Services – Transportation Division	#2: ONGOING Continue to support

²⁹ **Transit-oriented development**, or TOD, includes a mix of commercial, residential, office and entertainment centered around or located near a transit station. Dense, walkable, mixed-use development near transit attracts people and adds to vibrant, connected communities. US DOT <https://www.transit.dot.gov/TOD>

³⁰ The **Housing Choice Initiative** enacted in Jan. 2021 requires that an MBTA community shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-choice-initiative>

³¹ See Example Electrical Vehicle Action Plan, Nags Head, NC: <https://nagsheadnc.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/4036?fileID=6313>

OBJECTIVE 7.5. Adopt land use policies that advance the town's transportation goals					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Land Use, Health, and Development Department	

OBJECTIVE 7.6. Increase public awareness and community pride in use of alternative modes of travel					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
7.6.1. Promote community pride around a shift away from cars	a. Organize events to promote alternate modes of transportation b. Provide information regarding trails and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in a centralized and accessible place with multi-lingual messaging c. Install signage communicating the distance between highly frequented locations, including	Bike Walk'n Bus Options: Getting Around Without A Car ³² <i>Safe Routes to School</i> ³³ <i>ACROSS Lexington</i>	Robert Wood Johnson grant funding Safe Routes to School funding opportunities	LEADS: Human Services - Transportation Division PARTNERS: Bicycle Advisory Committee	ON-GOING: Continue to support

³² Bike Walk'n Bus Options: Getting Around Without A Car: www.lexbikewalkbus.org

³³ Safe Routes to School programs aim to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school and encourage more walking and biking where safety is not a barrier. Safe Routes <https://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

OBJECTIVE 7.6. Increase public awareness and community pride in use of alternative modes of travel					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
	<p>how much time it takes to walk or bicycle, how many calories it would burn, and average number of steps.</p> <p>d. Expand existing transportation education programs run by the Transportation Division</p> <p>e. Work with schools to reduce automobile use and promote walking, bicycling, and shared transit options such as busing and carpooling</p> <p>f. Incorporate <i>Safe Routes to School</i> into the public school curriculum</p> <p>g. Promote the Battle Road Scenic Byway and Historic Lexington Trolley Tours</p>	<p><i>Minuteman Bikeway</i></p> <p><i>Local Bike Shops</i></p> <p><i>The Cycle Loft</i></p> <p><i>Lexpress</i></p> <p><i>MBTA buses</i></p> <p><i>REV and AWF Shuttles</i></p>	TNC and TDM Funds	<p>Planning Board</p> <p>Public Health</p> <p>Council on Aging</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>School Department</p> <p>Public Information Officer</p> <p>Cultural affinity groups³⁴</p> <p>Friends of the Lexington Bikeways/Bike Lexington</p>	

³⁴ Lexington has a significant number of cultural affinity groups that represent the residents of various cultural, ethnic, racial and linguistic backgrounds.

OBJECTIVE 7.6. Increase public awareness and community pride in use of alternative modes of travel					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Greenways Corridor Committee	
7.6.3. Improve wayfinding	<p>a. Install wayfinding signage directed to bicyclists and pedestrians</p> <p>b. Ensure that the wayfinding system is accessible to those with visual impairments</p> <p>c. Improve wayfinding on the Minuteman Bikeway, connecting to East Lexington's commercial establishments to attract patrons traveling by bicycle or foot</p> <p>d. Use branded bicycle racks throughout town to emphasize that Lexington is a bicycle-friendly community</p> <p>e. Install wayfinding directional signage for out of town visitors near Hartwell Avenue, the Battle Road Scenic Byway, and the Minuteman Bikeway</p>	<i>Local Rapid Recovery Plan for Minuteman Bikeway in East Lexington</i>	<p>American Recovery Plan Act funding</p> <p>Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Downtown Initiative (MDI) program</p> <p>Safe Routes to Schools program</p>	<p>LEADS: Land Use, Health and Development Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Homan Services - Transportation Division</p> <p>School Department</p> <p>East Lexington commercial establishments</p> <p>Tourism Committee</p> <p>Bicycle Advisory Committee</p> <p>Friends of the Bikeway</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

OBJECTIVE 7.6. Increase public awareness and community pride in use of alternative modes of travel					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Commission on Disabilities	

ENDNOTES

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES³⁵

Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Complete Streets Funding Program
State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

Safe Routes to School: Infrastructure Funding Program

Safe Routes to School: Signs and Lines Grant Program

MassDOT Shared Streets & Spaces Program Funding

Community Mitigation Fund Transportation Planning and Transportation Construction Grants

Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) MassTrails Grants

Executive Office of Housing and Community Development Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)

Other State Managed Local Aid Programs

Chapter 90

Community Compact
Community Preservation Act Funding

MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places

³⁵ For more information regarding these funding sources, see:

<https://walkboston.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Funding-Opportunities-for-Mobility-Improvements.pdf?8621dc&8621dc>

Private Funding Opportunities
AARP Community Challenge Grant

Local Funding Strategies
Municipal Budgeting Strategies

ENDNOTE #1. Transportation Equity:

“Transportation planning decisions have significant equity impacts; they affect the allocation of valuable public resources and impact people’s quality of life and economic opportunities. It is therefore important to incorporate equity analysis into transportation planning. However, this can be challenging; a decision may seem equitable when evaluated one way, but not if evaluated another.”³⁶

Transportation equity analysis is multifaceted. The following are the four main types to consider³⁷:

- c. **Horizontal equity** (also called **fairness** or **equality**) requires that people with similar needs and abilities be treated similarly; for example, they receive similar shares of benefits and bear similar costs. It implies that people should generally “get what they pay for and pay for what they get,” and so should minimize or compensate for external costs.
- d. **Vertical equity with regard to need and ability** considers how transportation systems serve people with disabilities and other special mobility needs. This justifies multimodal planning and universal design practices to accommodate diverse users.
- e. **Vertical equity with regard to income** considers how transportation systems affect lower-income people. Policies that favor lower-income people are called *progressive* and those that harm them are called *regressive*. This justifies policies that improve affordable modes, subsidies for low-income users, and more affordable housing in high-accessibility areas.
- f. **Social justice** considers how transportation systems serve disadvantaged and underserved groups and address structural injustices such as racism and sexism.

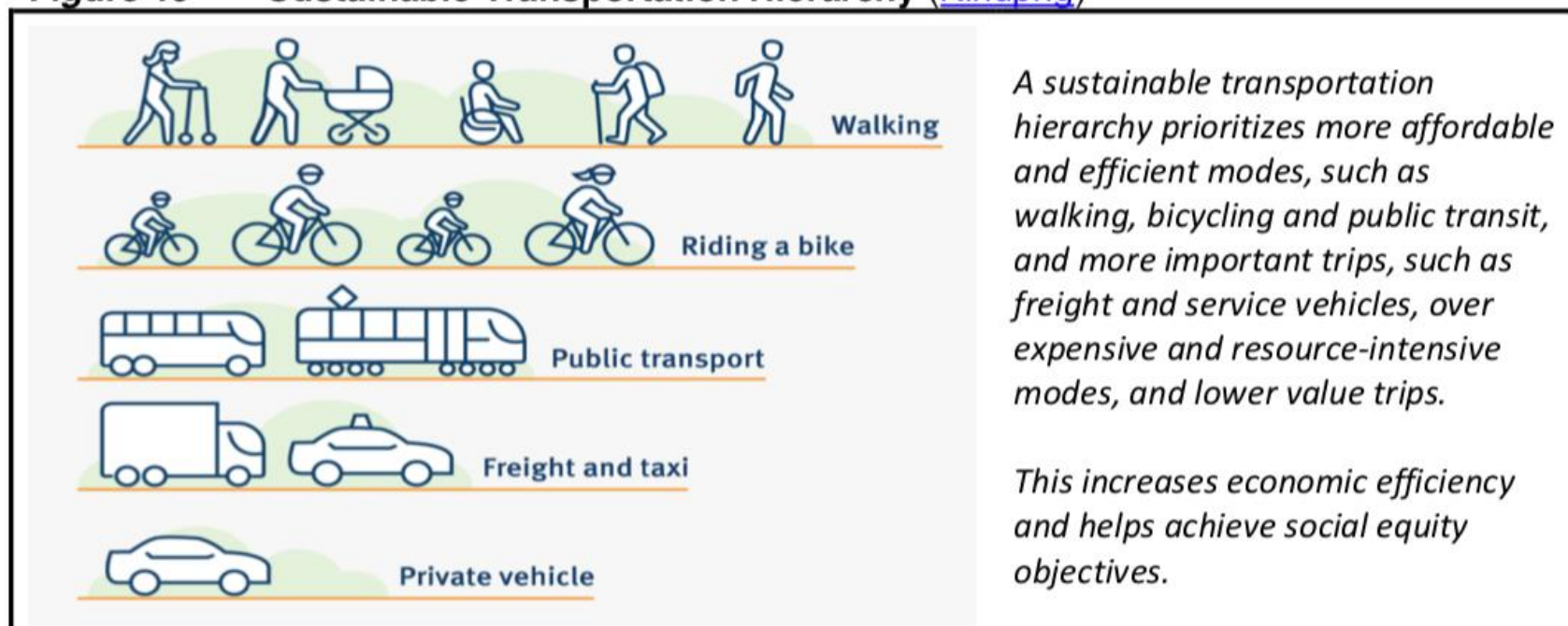
“Inclusivity can be evaluated by establishing standards, targets or rights which define the minimum quality of transportation for disadvantaged travelers or the mode they use. Inclusivity can also be evaluated by comparing disparities in mobility and accessibility

³⁶ Evaluating Transportation Equity by Todd Litman: <https://www.ite.org/pub/?id=2D9E2E71-ADEF-2D27-2C52-3B3941A7953D>

³⁷ Ibid.

between advantaged and disadvantaged groups, such as differences in the number of services and jobs that can be reached within a given time by factors such as physical ability, income, age, and gender³⁸.”

Figure 19 Sustainable Transportation Hierarchy ([Kindpng](#))



From: Todd Litman, “Evaluating Transportation Equity: Guidance for Incorporating Distributional Impacts in Transport Planning,” Victoria Transport Policy Institute, April 1, 2022, p. 57. <https://vtpi.org/equity.pdf>

³⁸ Evaluating Transportation Equity, Guidance for Incorporating Distributional Impacts in Transportation Planning, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, April 1, 2022. <https://www.vtpi.org/equity.pdf>

ENDNOTE #2. Key Goals of Transportation Demand Management Strategies:³⁹

“Fundamentally, Transportation Demand Management is about more than just managing the way people get around; it’s about the overall health and wellness of communities. As such, the field has evolved to include a number of specific objectives, all of which are supported by the use of better methods of transportation. Examples of major TDM objectives include:”

- Reducing traffic congestion
- Conserving energy and reducing emissions
- Improving community health and fitness levels
- Achieving equity
- Boosting urban livability
- Solving parking problems
- Enhancing community safety
- Helping commuters based in rural areas
- Making alternative transportation more affordable

Various methods can be used to achieve these objectives. TDM-friendly policy decisions and legislation are essential, but elements like incentives for using sustainable transportation, disincentives for driving, education and information accessibility are also important.”

The Planning Board adopted a TDM Policy⁴⁰ in 1997. The TDM Policy focuses on meeting Lexington’s transportation needs by a variety of measures that affect the demand for, and use of, various modes of travel rather than changes in the supply of transportation facilities, such as the construction of roadways and multi-level off-street parking facilities. The Policy seeks to reduce the use of automobiles, particularly single occupancy vehicles, in order to:

- Permit vehicular traffic on Lexington streets to move in an efficient manner without excessive delay or congestion;
- Reduce motor vehicle and pedestrian accidents on the town's streets;
- Permit emergency vehicles to reach homes and businesses with a minimum of delay;
- Reduce the awareness of and impact from vehicular traffic on a predominantly residential town;

³⁹ <https://rideamigos.com/transportation-demand-management-tdm>

⁴⁰ Metropolitan Area Planning Council, “*Transportation Demand Management Case Studies and Regulations*,” (July 2015), page 24.
<https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/a5eaed49-f453-4bc1-91ef-d82cdf608351>

- Promote safe and convenient routes for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Promote cleaner air and reduce automotive exhaust emissions caused by vehicles standing and idling for an excessive time; and
- Maintain a balance between the traffic generating capacity of businesses and residential development in the town and the traffic carrying capacity of streets and intersections.

The TDM Policy also seeks to:

- Assure adequate opportunities for mobility for all Lexington residents, workers and visitors; and
- Expand the Town's inventory of data about transportation needs and transportation utilization.

The TDM Policy seeks to aid Lexington businesses and other establishments to:

- Reduce the cost of operations for Lexington companies and establishments caused by delays in vehicular traffic;
- Expand the pool of potential employees who can reach places of work in Lexington more easily and economically;
- Employ a more efficient and satisfied work force less concerned at the work place by the frustrations of transportation, particularly commuting;
- Permit potential customers and clients to reach places of business in Lexington more easily and economically; and
- Provide transportation services more effectively in collaboration with other businesses and with the Town.

The provisions in the TDM Policy are voluntarily offered by the developer and are not required.

Transportation Management Overlay District (TMOD)⁴¹. In 2009, Lexington approved an increase in the amount of development allowed for the Hartwell Avenue Corridor. Realizing that increased development would have an impact on the overall transportation network in this corridor, the Town adopted a Transportation Management Overlay District (TMOD) that would link the transportation impacts of development to mitigation measures. There are currently three TMODs in Town: TMO-1 (Hartwell Area), TMO-2 (Forbes Road), and TMO-3 (South Lexington). Each TMO has a specific set of regulations and fee structures. A District Transportation Mitigation Plan includes the following components:

- Cost projections for transportation infrastructure improvements required to address the impacts generated by the anticipated development in the TMOD;
- Required transportation mitigation fees;

⁴¹ Metropolitan Area Planning Council, *“Transportation Demand Management Case Studies and Regulations,”* (July 2015), page 23.

<https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/a5eae49-f453-4bc1-91ef-d82cdf608351>

- Parking and TDM techniques reasonably calculated to reduce the number of vehicle trips generated by developments in the TMOD and to ensure the long term stability of the transportation system; and
- A plan to encourage voluntary participation in TDM programs by those not required to participate.

Presently, only the Hartwell Area TMO has a Mitigation Plan. This plan calls for a mitigation fee of \$5.00 per square foot of increased net floor area. The transportation fees collected from new development in the TMOD are put into an account used to pay for the design of and improvements to the transportation network to further the goals of the plan. In addition, developers must create a Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Plan. A PTDM plan addresses specific demand management techniques to reduce single occupant vehicle trips (for example, membership in a Transportation Management Association) and parking. Developers submit annual reports to the Town including information on employee/patron mode split, the results of the PTDM measures, and goal attainment.

ENDNOTE #3. Bike Friendly Community

Silver Steps to Becoming A Bicycle Friendly Community:⁴²

- High speed roads with bicycle facilities
- Total bicycle network mileage to total road network mileage
- Bicycle education in schools
- Share of transportation budget spent on bicycling

⁴² <https://www.bikeleague.org/content/building-blocks-bicycle-friendly-communities>

LEXINGTON, MA

TOTAL POPULATION
3248

POPULATION DENSITY
1980

TOTAL AREA (sq. miles)
1.64

OF LOCAL BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES
1

OF LOCAL BICYCLE FRIENDLY UNIVERSITIES
N/A

BUILDING BLOCKS OF A BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

	Average Silver	Lexington
High Speed Roads with Bike Facilities	37%	16%
Total Bicycle Network Mileage to Total Road Network Mileage	45%	36%
Bicycle Education in Schools	GOOD	ACCEPTABLE
Share of Transportation Budget Spent on Bicycling	12%	UNKNOWN
Bike Month and Bike to Work Events	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Active Bicycle Advocacy Group	YES	YES
Active Bicycle Advisory Committee	MEETS EVERY TWO MONTHS	MEETS AT LEAST MONTHLY
Bicycle-Friendly Laws & Ordinances	SOME	AVERAGE
Bike Plan is Current and is Being Implemented	YES	UNDER DEVELOPMENT
Bike Program Staff to Population	1 PER 100K	1 PER 12K

CATEGORY SCORES

ENGINEERING <i>Bicycle network and connectivity</i>	4.6 / 10
EDUCATION <i>Motorist awareness and bicycling skills</i>	3.8 / 10
ENCOURAGEMENT <i>Mainstreaming bicycling culture</i>	4.1 / 10
ENFORCEMENT <i>Promoting safety and protecting bicyclists' rights</i>	4.1 / 10
EVALUATION & PLANNING <i>Setting targets and having a plan</i>	2.8 / 10

KEY FACTORS

	Average Silver	Lexington
RIDERSHIP <i>Percentage of Commuters who bike</i>	2.6%	1.17%
SAFETY MEASURES CRASHES <i>Crashes per 10k bicycle commuters</i>	523	904
SAFETY MEASURES FATALITIES <i>Fatalities per 10k bicycle commuters</i>	5.8	0

» Continue to expand and improve the bikeway network, particularly on higher speed and higher traffic roads through protected bike lanes and/or separated shared use paths. Local survey comments indicated that many bicyclists in the community find Lexington's major roads, particularly Massachusetts Avenue, to be a significant barrier to bicycling.

» Continue to increase the amount of high quality, APBP-compliant bicycle parking throughout Lexington.

» Improve and expand the Safe Routes to School program in all schools. In particular, middle and high school education could be improved as older students learn to drive and share the road.

» Expand bicycle education opportunities for adults, including bicyclists and motorists. Increase the number of active League Cycling Instructors in the area of offering bike education to youth and adults.

» Work with law enforcement to ensure that enforcement activities

are targeted at motorist infractions most likely to lead to crashes and injuries among bicyclists. Continue efforts to improve data-driven road safety improvements and Vision Zero activities.

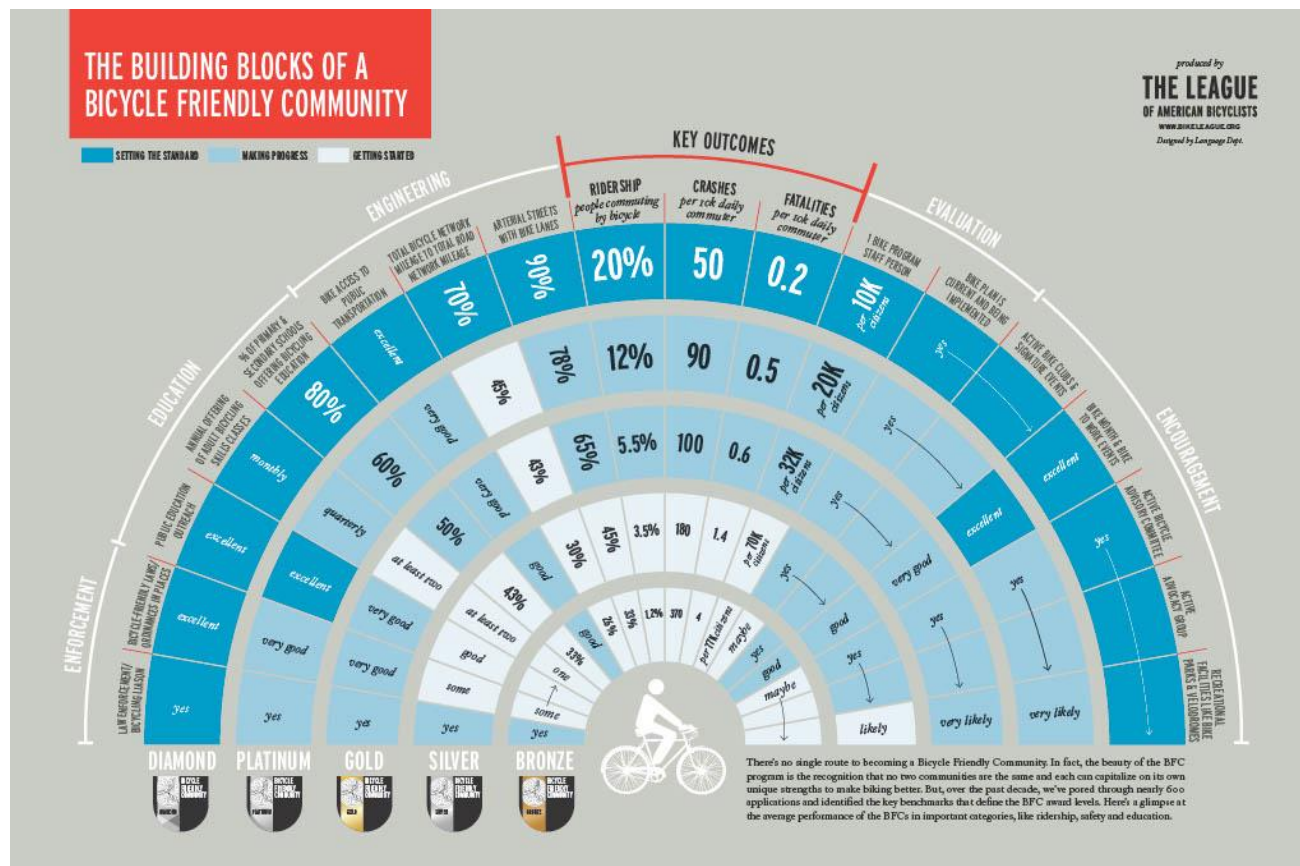
» Your application indicated that Lexington is currently creating a bicycle master plan. This is a great step to improving conditions for bicycling and institutionalizing processes for continual improvement. Your bike plan should build upon the 2015 Lexington Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2016 Complete Streets Policy to create a safe, comfortable, and connected bicycle network. Partner with Lexington's new Diversity Task Force to ensure that the comprehensive planning process addresses all Lexington residents equitably and includes a strong public input component. Dedicated staff and budget for bicycling improvements will also be critical to the success of the plan.

» Continue to develop a bicycle count program that utilizes several methods of data collection, including automated bicycle counters and mobile counters to provide before/after data related to a changes in the bicycle network.

LEARN MORE » WWW.BIKELEAGUE.ORG/COMMUNITIES
SUPPORTED BY AND LEAGUE MEMBERS

- Bike month and bike to work events
- Active bicycle advocacy group
- Active bicycle advisory committee
- Bicycle friendly laws and ordinances
- Bike planning is current and is being implemented
- Bike program staff to population

Also see: [Guide to the Bicycle Friendly Community Report Card.](#)



From: "Becoming A bicycle friendly community:" <https://www.bikeleague.org/community>

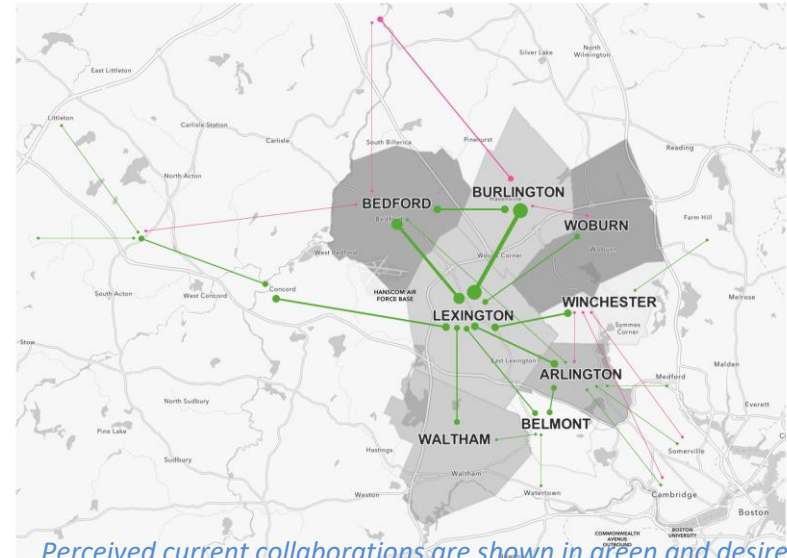
ENDNOTE #4. Regional Efforts

Lexington's Transportation Services Division is currently working with adjacent communities and the 128 Business Council to expand transit options through a Regionalization Plan Grant. The **Regionalization Action Plan**⁴³, also referred to as the Mobility Management Project, is aimed at improving inter-town connectivity particularly for seniors and people with disabilities, but with the understanding that improvements to the regional public transportation system will result in helping all populations. The project area was narrowed down to Lexington, Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Burlington, Waltham, Winchester, and Woburn - although other communities and locations are part of the discussion.

The 128 Business Council asked stakeholders within the project area to fill out a survey. Among other topics, survey participants were asked about current and desired inter-community collaborations.

Additionally, a **Tri-Town Study**⁴⁴ (for the towns of Lexington, Bedford and Burlington) conducted in 2019 found "a diverse transit market with a need for a variety of service types to support the demand for travel within the study area and to connect the study area to neighboring communities. Key findings include the following:

- The transit potential index finds the highest concentrations of people and jobs in the town center of Lexington, the I-95 corridor in Burlington, and the southern edge of Bedford. This aligns with the locations of the major employers in the study area.
- The transit need index shows the highest need for transit as being located north of I-95 at the Woburn border in Burlington, the southern edge of Bedford (particularly just east of Hanscom AFB), and the town center of Lexington.



Perceived current collaborations are shown in green and desired future collaborations are shown in pink. Line weight reflects answer frequency — a thicker line weight indicates more references to that relationship. (The gray tone of the municipality has no specific meaning.) From the Regionalization Action Plan.

⁴³ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b30ad87fac9940978859e738c88dff5>

⁴⁴ Tri-Town Efficiency and Regional Transit Study: Lexington, Bedford and Burlington, Four Square ITP, Jan. 2019

- The services index points to the town centers of Lexington and Bedford, as well as the I-95 corridor in Burlington, as places that require high levels of transit access.
- The travel patterns in the study area show a high need for travel options to the I-95 corridor in Burlington where the Burlington Mall and Lahey Clinic are located, the VA Hospital and Middlesex Community College area in Bedford, and the Route 4 corridor in Lexington, including the town center. Since there is an overlap in these areas between major employers with traditional working hours and non-work destinations, all-day transit access is important.

ENDNOTE #5. MBTA Bus Network Redesign.⁴⁵ The MBTA is planning to make changes that “address route design, frequency of service, hours of service, and coverage area.” The specific changes include the following:

- More high-frequency corridors
- More mid-day, evening, and weekend service
- Better access to key destinations
- New bus routes (rolling out in 2022)

Also see the report on **Impacts of Bus Stop Improvements**⁴⁶: “The analysis shows that the improved bus stops are associated with a statistically significant increase in overall ridership and a decrease in paratransit demand, compared to the control group stops. These outcomes are important for transit service providers as they seek to increase overall ridership and reduce costs associated with providing paratransit service.”

ENDNOTE #6. Universal access to transit.

Ensuring universal access to transit refers to measures that result in improving accessibility for all users particularly physically, economically, and socially disadvantaged people beyond what may be legally required. These include a wide range of improvements including the ease with which people with impairments can access bus stops. Universal access considers the needs of wheelchair users, and other people with mobility constraints including older persons, women, children, and those with hearing or sight impairments. In addition to physical access such as accessible sidewalks, curb cuts, and tactile guideways, universal access includes safe and well-lit bus stops, easy payment systems, and, if relevant, payment systems that are related to income, thus ensuring affordability. Imp wheelchair access demand transportation in town.

⁴⁵ MBTA Bus Network Redesign: <https://www.mbta.com/projects/bus-network-redesign>

⁴⁶ Impacts of Bus Stop Improvements, Report No. UT-18.04, Prepared for the Utah Department of Transportation, Research Division. Submitted by University of Utah Department of City and Metropolitan Planning, March 2018.

GOAL 8: RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING

To improve and expand facilities for recreation and community gathering to support holistic wellbeing, a sense of belonging, enhanced community connections, fun, and to build community through social engagement



“People tend to sit most where there are places to sit”

~ William Whyte

(from *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*)

Benches and chairs, arranged in clusters at the perimeter of Depot Square, provide intimate settings for outdoor gatherings in the heart of Lexington.

INTRODUCTION

Lexington residents place a high value on the town's many recreation facilities and places to gather, get to know one another, and have fun. Surveys, completed as part of the Comprehensive Plan, reported that nearly one-third of respondents considered recreation opportunities to be one of Lexington's three greatest strengths, and over three-quarters of respondents viewed the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway as a highly valued amenity. Lexington's ballfields, golf courses, pools, and tennis courts, as well as informal gathering "nodes" add to the town's appeal.

Maintenance of these public facilities requires financial support. In addition to expecting continued upkeep of these facilities, residents would like to see more and different types of facilities built to accommodate shifting community needs, including the special needs of older and disabled adults. Residents also desire more places to congregate and socialize, indoors and outside, in both public and privately-owned settings.

The Cary Memorial Library building was reconstructed in 2004 and is a lively hub that provides opportunities for lifelong learning, programming for all ages, and space for homework, meetings, and community gathering. Cary Library provides more than a million items to library users and hosts nearly a half million visitors each year. It is one of the busiest libraries in Massachusetts.

Goal #8 focuses on Lexington's need to maintain its existing recreation facilities while adding new facilities to accommodate the town's shifting demographics and greater accessibility needs. It also identifies ways the town can expand recreation programming and

Recreation and community gathering resources contribute to the quality of life in Lexington by providing:

- places for residents and visitors of all ages and levels of ability to engage in activity and thereby improve fitness levels
- opportunities for social interaction and ways to reduce loneliness and isolation
- opportunities for walking, biking, skateboarding, and other non-motorized means of getting around, thereby reducing vehicular traffic congestion and emissions
- opportunities for cross-cultural exchange



The Lexington Skateboard Park, located on the grounds of Center Recreation Complex, is a popular spot for teens to meet and recreate.

community gathering opportunities by partnering with private and other non-town-owned entities.

Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far. ~ Thomas Jefferson, 1785

OVERVIEW OF LEXINGTON'S RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING RESOURCES

The Town of Lexington owns and maintains hundreds of acres devoted to recreational uses, with the two largest sites, the Center Recreation Complex and Pine Meadows Golf Club together comprising over 140 acres. Privately-owned recreation sites, including the Hayden Recreation Centre and three private golf facilities, account for another 160 acres. Play areas and swimming pools are present in many neighborhoods. Many residents also use the Town's conservation areas for passive recreation, such as walking or bird watching.

The town has made a strong commitment to developing, maintaining and expanding its recreation amenities by operating facilities and offering programs for baseball, softball, football, soccer, track and field events, field hockey, ultimate frisbee, tennis, pickleball, skateboarding, basketball, swimming, diving, and golf.

The 17-mile Rick Abrams Memorial Trails Network (ACROSS Lexington) and Minuteman Commuter Bikeway provide off-road options for hiking, walking and biking through town.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan was updated in 2015 and included a seven-year action plan, much of which has been implemented. The town has allocated funding to update the plan in

LEXINGTON VOICES REGARDING RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING

At the 2018 **World Cafe** forums...

- a majority of participants mentioned “social capital and sense of community” as being “valued.” Seventy percent of comments dealt with open space, conservation areas, parks, and recreational facilities.
- additionally valued were “civic participation” and “cross-cultural exchange.”
- participants identified a need for a dedicated teen space.
- participants noted:
 - ~ *“There is no place to stop and talk”*
 - ~ *“Downtown needs improvements; banks and real estate offices do not build community.”*
 - ~ *“Build community, connect people to the town, beyond just the schools.”*

From SWOT Analysis @ **LexingtonNEXT “Kickoff Event:”**

- *“We need a dog park. Lexington is very dog-friendly with no place for our dogs to meet and play together in town.”*



Lincoln Park photograph taken from Worthen Road. ACROSS Lexington Trail Network consists of over 17 miles of trails with multiple entry points including this connection at Worthen Road.

2022. Since its adoption by the Town in 2006, the Community Preservation Act has provided a total of approximately \$83,000,000, with 22.6% of this funding (\$18,756,266) supporting open space and recreation-related projects.

Use of recreation facilities adjacent to schools during school days limits non-school use to nights and weekends. Competition for recreation facilities and programs is high. Limited funding and staffing levels place additional constraints on these limited resources.

¹ **The Town of Lexington's Conservation Commission's regulations pertaining to leashing of dogs:**

<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/182/Conservation>

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- While Lexington maintains a significant amount of recreational land and provides many programs to residents, demand for facility use and programs exceeds supply, as noted in the 2020 Community Needs Assessment and 2022 Athletic Feasibility Study.
- Demographic changes in Lexington require that recreation programs and facilities be evaluated on regular basis, determining the degree to which they are meeting specific age-related, cultural, and other needs.
- To meet the growing demand for, and shifting uses of, recreational facilities and programs, the town will need to develop a long-term financial plan, drawing on multiple sources of support.

Lexington currently does not maintain a dog park. Dog-owners frequent the town athletic fields and conservation lands, such as Willard's Woods, to exercise their pets. Many owners do not obey the town's leash bylaw and other regulations on these lands.¹

POTENTIAL SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING RESOURCES

Demand for use of outdoor venues, including parks, open spaces, and recreation areas, increased during the pandemic as they provided a reprieve from the isolation of home. This resulted in more people finding out about these venues, as well as an increase in participation in activities and programs. Lexington will need to invest in trail maintenance, forest clean up, and other stewardship measures to

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

What is the best way to stay current with the recreation and community gathering needs of Lexington's changing demographics?

How can the town make better use of its school recreation facilities when schools are not in session?

What additional recreation facilities and related amenities, such as public restrooms, are needed most?

preserve and protect existing open spaces and recreation areas.

LEXINGTON VOICES

(Participants in June 15, 2021 Public Forum)

Expand recreational opportunities by:

- *Creating a mountain bike trail that is kid-friendly*
- *Using school classrooms/school buildings for after school childcare and recreation programs*
- *Adding more playgrounds and fitness trails*
- *Adding a bicycle "pump track"*

Expand community gathering opportunities by:

- *Increasing cultural events, promoting sharing of the history and heritage of different cultures*
- *Increasing neighborhood events to build a sense of community*
- *Promoting and encouraging block parties to build neighborhood connections*
- *Creating places for teens to gather, perform, and be heard*
- *Promoting beer gardens*
- *Adding lounge chairs, umbrellas, and WiFi to the town pool*
- *Offering guided rides/walks across Lexington*
- *Making use of the Ellen Stone Building*
- *Promoting pick-up of trash on paths and sidewalks through a carry-in/carry-out policy*

ADDITIONAL LEXINGTON VOICES

(from interviews with town Staff, Board/Committee Members, and
Community Leaders, May-June
2021)

*“One of the greatest successes in the town is the development of
the ACROSS Lexington trail network”*

*“The Recreation Department lost over \$1.0 million in 2020 because
of the curtailment of programming as a result of COVID; but on the
positive side, the department developed thousands more
advocates”*

(participants in a September 2021 online survey)

When asked...

- *to identify Lexington’s top three strengths, 28.57% of
respondents chose recreational opportunities as one of the top
three*
- *to identify the locations in Lexington that they value or enjoy,
over 80% chose the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway and 20%
of participants chose the track/pool/tennis courts/skatepark*
- *what would attract participants back to Lexington if they
moved away, one-third chose proximity to parks and open
space*



*In addition to providing seating, Depot Square contains a pedestrian
network connecting Massachusetts Avenue to retail businesses and
offices on the square.*

GOAL 8: RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING

To improve and expand facilities for recreation and community gathering to support holistic wellbeing, a sense of belonging, enhanced community connections, and fun, and to build community through social engagement

Objective 8.1. Improve and expand recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of the town.

Objective 8.2. Maintain, expand, and promote opportunities for both formal and informal community gathering spaces.

Objective 8.3. Consider all residents when planning improvements or additions to public and community spaces.

The Implementation Table on the pages that follow identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.



The Center Recreation Complex covers 56.46 acres and provides multiple fields, a track, courts, a skatepark, a playground, restrooms, and a swimming complex.

GOAL 8: RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING

Objective 8.1. Improve and expand recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
8.1.1. Implement the recreation goals and recommendations identified in current planning documents	a. Implement the remaining recommendations from the 2020 Community Needs Assessment b. Implement the remaining recommendations of the 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) c. Complete an updated OSRP for the next seven years	2020 Community Needs Assessment² 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan³ 2017 ADA Recreation Facilities Study	Community Preservation Act Recreation Fees	LEAD: Conservation Office Recreation and Community Programs Department PARTNERS: Recreation Committee Conservation Commission	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
8.1.2. Evaluate existing town-owned facilities and open spaces for new or expanded uses	a. Identify existing indoor and outdoor facilities with the potential to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> incorporate new uses expand existing uses incorporate multi-use spaces 	2022 Athletic Fields Feasibility Study⁴		LEADS: Recreation and Community Programs Department Public Facilities Department PARTNERS: School Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

² 2020 Community Needs Assessment: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1513>

³ 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan: https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4331/lexington_osrp_update_2015_final_report_01-14-16 As of the writing of this Comprehensive Plan, the 2022 update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan was in process.

⁴ The 2022 Athletic Fields Feasibility Study was in process during this plan's development.

Objective 8.1. Improve and expand recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Public Works Department Recreation Committee	
8.1.3. Explore opportunities for expanded partnerships using non-town-owned fields and facilities for town recreation uses	a. Develop partnership plans with identified partners, including draft Memoranda of Agreement to be tailored to each partnership b. Explore additional access opportunities such as walking paths over private land	Hayden Recreation Centre Lexington Christian Academy Lexington Golf Club Stone Meadow Golf		LEAD: Recreation Committee PARTNERS: Recreation and Community Programs Department Non-town-owned recreation facilities	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
8.1.4. Provide for specific recreational uses identified as high need	c. Expand the Community Center to include a gymnasium d. Provide appropriate fields for community cricket	<i>2022 Community Needs Assessment</i> <i>2017 Recreation and ADA Compliance Study</i> <i>2022 Athletic Fields Feasibility Study</i>		LEAD: Recreation and Community Programs Department PARTNERS: Public Works Department Public Facilities Department Commission on Disabilities	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 8.1. Improve and expand recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Affinity Groups (SEE ENDNOTE #1 for a list of organizations)	
8.1.5. Create a dedicated dog park	a. Explore dog park feasibility and options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research the physical requirements of dog parks Research dog parks in other communities Identify possible locations for a dog park on existing town-owned land Prepare a feasibility study that includes design elements and a projected cost Engage public in assessment of support for a dog park 	Lexington dog owners Other municipalities with dedicated dog parks	Community Preservation Act	LEAD: Public Works Department PARTNERS: Recreation and Community Programs Department	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
8.1.6. Create playing fields on the Old Harrington School property (if the LPS Central Administration is relocated)	a. Develop a list of potential recreational uses b. Engage Town Departments, Committees, Commissions and Boards in discussions regarding potential re-use(s)	Former Harrington School building		LEADS: School Department Select Board PARTNERS: Recreation Committee	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 8.1. Improve and expand recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of the town					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Phasing
				Public Facilities Department Permanent Building Committee	

Objective 8.2. Maintain, expand, and promote opportunities for both formal and informal community gathering spaces					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
8.2.1 Make improvements to the Town Center	a. Explore opportunities for creative placemaking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand cultural events and activities in the Town Center Explore public/private partnerships for development of shared work and live/work spaces for artists in the Town Center Enlist the creative community in visioning and planning for improvements to the Town Center b. Create engaging public spaces	Existing Town Center buildings, green spaces, and streetscape Existing community-wide events Metropolitan Area Planning Council's Arts and Planning Toolkit (SEE ENDNOTE #2)	Commonwealth Places Program (MassDevelopment) (SEE ENDNOTE #3) Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development) (SEE ENDNOTE #4)	LEAD: Lexington Center Committee PARTNERS: Department of Public Works Land Use, Health and Development Department Grain Mill Alley Steering Committee Lexington Council for the Arts Vision for Lexington	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
8.2.2. Leverage new and existing private development for public gathering spaces	a. Develop incentives for developers and business-owners to include public gathering spaces, both interior and exterior, in private developments including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large meeting rooms Interior atria Outdoor plazas Courtyards Pocket parks Outdoor seating Water-refilling stations 	Planning Board Regulations Zoning Bylaw		LEAD: Planning Office Economic Development Office PARTNERS: Planning Board Tourism Committee	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)


Objective 8.2. Maintain, expand, and promote opportunities for both formal and informal community gathering spaces					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Implement linkage fees⁵ for public gathering spaces c. Require gathering spaces in housing developments 			Recreation and Community Programs Department Lexington Center Committee	
8.2.3 Establish partnerships with organizations that own or manage private gathering spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Negotiate partnerships through Memoranda of Agreement or similar means to permit hosting town-sponsored events and programs in identified private gathering spaces 			LEAD: Economic Development Department PARTNERS: Affinity Groups	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

⁵ A linkage fee is a fee charged by a local government on real estate developments to raise funds to help pay for the additional needs of the community that result from the additional development. Traditionally linkage fees have been established to create affordable housing in association with the development of market-rate housing. In this case the fees would apply to public gathering spaces.

Objective 8.3. Consider all residents when planning improvements or additions to public and community spaces.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
8.3.1. Implement the diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility requirements and recommendations of existing studies and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implement the recommendations of the 2017 Recreation and ADA Compliance Study b. Incorporate universal design techniques into public facilities such as gender-neutral bathrooms, changing and nursing areas, and textured surfaces for vision impaired. 	<p>2020 Community Needs Assessment</p> <p>2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan</p> <p>2017 Recreation and ADA Compliance Study</p>	<p>Recreation Enterprise Fund</p> <p>Community Preservation Act</p>	<p>LEADS: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer</p> <p>Commission on Disability</p> <p>Recreation and Community Programs Department</p> <p>PARTNERS: Recreation Committee</p> <p>Affinity Groups</p> <p>Public Facilities Department</p> <p>Human Services – Senior Services</p> <p>Council on Aging</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
8.3.2. Forge connections with local civic and cultural organizations to expand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify organizations involved in multi-cultural and special needs programming, such as the Lexington Community Farm (LexFarm) and Munroe Center for the Arts, identifying program expansion opportunities 	<p>Special Needs Arts Programs, Inc.</p> <p>LexFarm</p> <p>Munroe Center for the Arts</p>	<p>Lexington Arts Council</p> <p>Massachusetts Cultural Council</p>	<p>LEADS: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS: Arts and cultural organizations</p>	SUSTAINED EFFORT (Initiate new action and sustain over time)

Objective 8.3. Consider all residents when planning improvements or additions to public and community spaces.					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
programming and cross-cultural exchanges		Ellen Stone Building Affinity Groups		Affinity Groups Lexington Center Committee	
8.3.3. Ensure that facilities are appealing as well as linguistically and culturally appropriate to persons of varied backgrounds	a. Use multilingual means of communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage • Program descriptions (e-mail, flyers, etc.) b. Survey residents as to language preferences			LEADS: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer PARTNERS: Public Facilities Department Human Services Department Affinity Groups	SUSTAINED EFFORT (Initiate new action and sustain over time)
8.3.4. Provide appropriate facilities and services for all ages	a. Develop a teen playground that could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swing sets that will accommodate teens and swing that hold more than one person; lounge-like features; hammocks • Elements that cater to all gender groups b. Provide an outdoor fitness park designed for older adults that could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stationary and recumbent bicycles 	Lexington Community Center Programs Age Friendly Initiative	Community Preservation Act	LEADS: Human Services Department Recreation and Community Programs Department PARTNERS: Lexington Community Center	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

Objective 8.3. Consider all residents when planning improvements or additions to public and community spaces.					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> side-by-side striders face-to-face leg presses and hand-eye dexterity games walking paths with ramps, steps and arches bocce, ping pong or horseshoes shaded seating areas Areas for stretching, yoga, meditation 			Council on Aging Lexington Youth Council	
8.3.5. Develop an easy-to-use system to locate and reserve public gathering spaces	a. Develop a comprehensive inventory of existing public gathering spaces b. Upgrade the existing reservation system to make it easier to make reservations, considering the diversity of ages, languages, technical ability, and special needs	Town website		LEAD: Public Facilities Department PARTNERS: Information Technology Department Public Information Officer Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer Human Services Department Commission on Disability	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5) 

ENDNOTES

#1: The town's residents have created several organizations based on an **affinity group**. These include:

- Chinese Americans of Lexington (CALex)
- Chinese American Association of Lexington (CAAL)
- Indian Americans of Lexington
- Indian Family Activities Association
- Korean-American Organization of Lexington (KOLex)
- Japanese Support Group of Lexington (JPLLex)
- Associated Black Citizens of Lexington (ABCL)
- Lextinas
- LexPride

#2: The Metropolitan Area Planning Council's **Arts and Planning Toolkit** suggests several forms of creative placemaking, including: (1) activation of a town center through a schedule of cultural programming in public and private spaces; (2) revitalization of a commercial corridor through public/private investments to secure affordable work space and live/work space; and (3) development of a neighborhood plan using a community engagement process led in partnership with artists and arts organizations. For more information, see: <https://artsandplanning.mapc.org/creative-placemaking/>

#3: Commonwealth Places Program: A program of the Massachusetts Development Corporation (MassDevelopment), Commonwealth Places encourages placemaking in downtown and neighborhood commercial districts. For more information, see: <https://massdevelopment.com/commonwealthplaces>

#4: Massachusetts Downtown Initiative: A program of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED), this initiative aims to make downtown revitalization an integral part of community development by preserving and enhancing downtown character; promoting downtown assets; keeping downtown safe, and other strategies. For more information see: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi>

GOAL 9: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

To provide well-maintained, updated, inclusive and sustainable public facilities to serve and meet community needs.



“Our public spaces are as profound as we allow them to be.” - Candy Chang

Cary Memorial Building: This is where Town Meeting is held as well as being a popular venue for concerts and other performances.

INTRODUCTION

A town is in many ways characterized by the public facilities and services that it provides. The type and condition of a town's facilities and services send a message to current and potential future residents as to what is considered important as well as how and where the town comes together as a community.

The Lexington Public Schools are consistently listed as one of the top reasons people live in Lexington according to recent surveys and community sentiment. Many of the public buildings such as the Town Office Building, Cary Memorial Library, and Cary Memorial Hall, as well as many of the town's celebrated recreational facilities are important places for the community to gather. The types of public services a municipality provides also express a town's priorities (e.g. support for families with children, older adults, etc.) and where it would like development to occur (e.g. by providing water and sewer service). A more complete inventory of municipal building and community spaces can be found in Volume II.

Shifts in demographics may indicate a need to shift resources to meet the needs of specific groups of residents. The town has undergone notable demographic changes over the last 20 years; the most significant of these include a large segment of the population that is over 65 years old and a large and increasing number of residents of Asian descent.

Maintaining public facilities and sustaining public services at a reasonable cost are key planning and fiscal objectives for any

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Significant **capital expenditures** in the near future include:
 - Renovation or construction of a new Lexington High School
 - Reconstruction of the Police Station
 - The East Lexington Fire Station needs repairs and updates
- Transitioning to **100% zero emissions** by 2035 is an important town goal and will take significant effort and expense.
- The increase in **demand for programming for all ages** will impact the Community Center and the Cary Library as both organizations seek to respond to the demand while still providing spaces for community-driven activities.
- As the **number of older adults is expected to increase** in the future, there will most likely be a need to increase the services and programs available for this demographic.
- New commercial development could place pressure on town infrastructure, including the **water supply and sewage collection**.
- Town infrastructure, specifically **storm water management**, will need to be evaluated as incidents of flooding increase due to increased hardscape and additional large storm events due to climate change.

municipality. Facilities planning and long-range fiscal management can help to meet this objective.

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

The **Department of Public Facilities (DPF)**, created as a new department in 2007, is responsible for the coordination and care of all Town-owned buildings inclusive of those under the control of the Select Board, Town Manager, Library Trustees and the School Committee and the pool complex.

DPF staff coordinate custodial care and cleaning, maintenance, repairs, landscaping and pedestrian snow removal (school buildings only), and capital improvements. In addition, the Department manages energy consumption and environmental conditions (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) for 25 public buildings.

The DPF manages twenty-five (25) facilities for the Town, comprised of fourteen (14) town buildings and eleven (11) school buildings. These facilities total approximately 1.3 million square feet of space and nearly one million square feet of roofing.

Recreation facilities are maintained in a variety of ways. The Swimming Pool and Reservoir Bathhouse are cleaned by DPF, the outdoor facility (pool operations, beach, etc.) are maintained by Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Recreation Department pays for any preventative maintenance and repair work. The seasonal public restrooms (Recreation Complex (Center Rec) and Lincoln Park) are cleaned by DPF. Center Rec is maintained and paid for by the Recreation Department and Lincoln Park is operated through DPF.

The Pine Meadows Golf Course Clubhouse is maintained by the Recreation Department on call contractors and the management company. The course itself is contracted to a management company paid for by the Recreation Department. See Goal 8 for more information.

Best practices for managing municipal facilities and services

follow the following principles:

- Facilities management is a way to proactively identify facility needs and to balance the demands of growth and use with the financial resources of the community.
- All municipalities must invest in preventive maintenance, repair and updating of their facilities to reduce energy use and meet current needs.
- As municipalities experience changes, for example, in population, investment in public facilities and services must be balanced with changing needs and financial resources.
- Climate adaptation and emergency preparedness have become increasingly important for a municipality to plan for and invest in hazard mitigation.

Parks and Playgrounds are maintained by a combination of Recreation and DPW. DPW performs the seasonal maintenance to the athletic fields, trash removal, etc. DPF maintain all school property playgrounds.

The mid- to long-term factors that are likely to drive demand for services and facilities in Lexington include:

- Climate Change (flooding, drought, snow/ice)
- Energy (reducing reliance on natural gas; pursuing renewable energy sources)
- Increasing population density and diversity
- Traffic Congestion and Local Public Transportation
- Parking (EV charging stations, bike racks, etc.)
- Encouraging commercial and mixed-use development

These factors will diminish the importance of some existing facilities (natural gas infrastructure), and enhance the need for new types of facilities (for example, municipal solar and battery storage, electric vehicle charging stations). Additionally, as more facilities are converted to electric, the electrical systems will likely need upgrades as well.

The renovation or construction of a new Lexington High School will dominate capital budget capacity and discussions for the next ten years, on the order of several hundred million dollars. This, and the cost increases and delays in the reconstruction of the Police Station, as well as needed renovation of the East Lexington Fire Station, will be the key capital expenditures the Town will need to contend with.

Recently renovated or constructed public facilities include:

- New Visitor's Center, Town Center
- Cary Memorial Building
- Two new replacement elementary schools and renovations/additions at all other elementary and at both of the middle schools; new Lexington Pre-School
- New Fire Station
- Community Center

T

FUTURE CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Future capital expenditures include:

- new High School
- new Police Station
- renovation of the East Lexington Fire Station
- renovation and expansion of the Westview Cemetery facilities
- retrofitting public facilities to 100% zero emissions
- ensuring that all public facilities, including recreational areas and playgrounds, are ADA compliant

According to Moody's Investors Service:

The Town of Lexington (Aaa) has a strong financial position with well-funded operating and capital reserves that will provide operational flexibility. A large and growing tax base, a well-funded pension, and manageable debt levels further support these. Debt will remain elevated over the next few years as the town completes a number of capital projects related to education, public safety, and various other public infrastructure projects.

Credit strengths

- Multiple years of surpluses leading to a healthy reserve position
- Sizeable and wealthy tax base with continuing development and strong property values
- Strong and experienced management team
- History of voter support for Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusions

Credit challenges

Large capital needs and rising education costs due to a growing population and increasing enrollment

from: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1413/Moodys-Credit-Rating-Report-PDF?bidId=>

The following are some key facilities that will need capital funding over the next decade or so.

SCHOOLS

Lexington takes pride in its excellent school system and many families report moving to the town for this reason. Historically, there has been strong support for the upgrade and maintenance of the town's school facilities.

Enrollment is one of the key drivers in school planning and also a factor in facilities. Lexington is projected to have 5,196 residents 5-19 years old (UMASS Donahue Institute). A large majority of school-aged children (just under 90%) attend Lexington's public schools. Shorter-term student enrollment projects updated in 2021 suggest a continued decline among the elementary population and a potential slight decrease in the middle school population over the next three years. The updated enrollment forecast for Lexington High School suggests enrollment will continue at current levels and will remain above capacity for core spaces, with enrollments around 2,275 for the next three years. For more information, community members can view the [LPS Annual Review of student Enrollment & Projections](#).

Reflecting the community's commitment to public education, all six elementary schools and the two middle schools have been replaced, expanded, or refurbished recently to help alleviate overcrowding and address aging facilities. A new stand-alone pre-school, the Lexington Children's Place, was completed in 2019. Lexington High School has reached the end of its lifecycle and the design no longer meets modern educational needs. LPS submitted a Statement of Interest

(SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), and was invited into the Eligibility Period by the MSBA effective June 1, 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in 2020, resulted in a decrease in income and sales taxes and lottery sales. One percent of the 6.25% state sales tax is earmarked for school construction funds through MSBA, to which Lexington has received an invitation to participate in the Eligibility Period.

The former Harrington School is currently used as the Lexington Public Schools Central Administration offices; however, the space is inadequate for staff and the current operations.

The Town Office Building serves as the main administration building for town offices housing many departments such as the Town Manager's Office, Select Board Office, Town Clerk, Finance, Land Use, Health and Development, Treasurer's, and many municipal services. The Town Office Building has multiple meeting spaces commonly used for public meetings and the building was last renovated in 2011 to make accessibility improvements. The Parker Room and Select Board Meeting Rooms are frequently used for public meetings with access to live filming. The Select Board meeting room has capacity to hold 55 people seated or 72 without seating. Since the COVID-19 pandemic,

boards and committees have implemented fully remote participation options for boards and the public on a temporary basis. For more information about [Lexington High School](#)



LPS facilities, including the current LPS Master Facilities Plan, community members can visit the website [here](#).

COMMUNITY SPACES

The Community Center and Cary Memorial Library enjoy a great deal of usage by the community. The two-year period of the COVID-19 pandemic was the only exception to this as the facilities had to close to ensure the health of residents and staff. An increase in demand for space and programming for all ages is expected as residents continue to express a strong desire for such facilities and experiences.

The popularity of the Community Center results in spaces that are often fully booked and occupied and has led to concerns regarding the adequacy of the amount and type of space. It is expected that this issue will arise again post-pandemic.

The Library had begun to offer innovative programming including events that involve food, drink and dance bringing cultural groups



Lexington Community Center

together. The Library also has plans to refine its collections to respond to the community's expressed desires to expand the World Language offerings (currently in fifteen

languages). Additionally, there are plans to update and make improvements to the Children's Room, the busiest room in the building.

PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The current **Police Station** has a number of deficiencies that impede the efficient and appropriate provision of services. Lexington residents voted at Town Meeting and at the ballot in spring 2022 to appropriate funds to construct a new Police Headquarters planned for the same location. Construction is expected to begin in 2022 with completion anticipated for early 2024.

In May of 2021, a *Together We Rise* event was organized by a community group to discuss Reimagining Public Safety in Lexington. Participants discussed ways of restructuring public safety in terms of three components: armed police, unarmed police, and the role of mental health professionals. The emphasis was on reducing the role of police in situations that are non-criminal and non-violent. The forum also discussed ways of making policing more equitable and accessible by recruiting multi-lingual Chiefs and officers among other strategies. See section on Goal 1: Diversity for additional discussion of this issue.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

According to the Lexington Fire Chief, the East Lexington fire station is very busy and active and calls to this firehouse have increased significantly since completion of the previous Comprehensive Plan. In fact, calls for service now surpass those received by the Fire



The East Lexington Fire Station, located at 1006 Mass. Ave. was built in 1951 and needs updating and renovation

Department Headquarters. Additionally, the site is seen as too small to accommodate a modern station. The chief foresees the need to identify a new site to accommodate the necessary equipment while maintaining industry standard response times to properties in East and South Lexington.

CEMETERIES

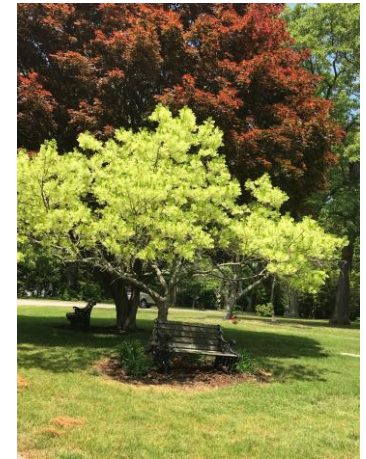
The town's Department of Public Works owns and maintains Westview Cemetery, Munroe Cemetery, the Old Burying Ground, and Robbins Cemetery. The only active public cemetery in Lexington is the Westview Cemetery.

¹ Summarized in slide deck prepared for Special Town Meeting, Nov. 2021, Article 7, Westview Cemetery Building Construction

WESTVIEW CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE BUILDING

A feasibility study of the Westview Cemetery was completed in 2016. The study included documentation and analysis of the existing 2,300 square foot building and site conditions, programming, and conceptual options for expansion or renovation in place, and explored the option of a new building in the undeveloped areas of the cemetery. The study¹ identified the following:

- The existing facility is utilitarian in design and does not comfortably accommodate bereaved family members.
- The existing facility is undersized, outdated and in poor condition; has insufficient storage and maintenance space; and has the maintenance yard in plain sight in the center of the cemetery.
- Funding for the new cemetery building has been approved (Special Town Meeting 2021).



Westview Cemetery

Additionally, a Committee formed in 2018 evaluated the feasibility of constructing a crematory at Westview Cemetery. The Committee's recommendation at the time was to prepare for the future possibility of such a facility, but not to proceed at that time. An increase in the number of residents preferring cremation to burial have increased advocating for this cultural preference and emerging trend.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Lexington provides its residents with a wide array of municipal services; some key services are described below.

SENIOR SERVICES

Programs oriented to older adults are held at the Community Center. The Council on Aging, also located in the Community Center, provides referral and other support services. Important considerations regarding this demographic include the fact that the number of older adults living in Lexington is increasing, people are living longer, and the expectations of aging baby boomers differ from those of the previous generation.

- The median age of those living in Lexington has increased by 11.4 % from age 43.7 in 2000 to a projected age of 48.7 by 2022.
- By 2030, Lexington is projected to have 9,726 residents 65-85 years old (UMASS Donahue Institute).
- Approximately one-third (30%) of the Lexington population will be **older adults**, over-taking the size of the school age children population by 2030.

YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Youth and Family Services Department operates out of the Community Center and provides a wide range of services including crisis intervention, mental health referral services, intergenerational programming, etc.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Public Health was

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Older Adults. Consistent with nationwide trends, Lexington's population is aging. This may necessitate that the Town assess the specific needs of this demographic (these include programming, socializing, health and wellness, transportation and appropriately designed and located housing, including assisted living) to meet the needs of this growing demographic.

School-aged children. Facilities and services oriented to children and youth will continue to be a priority for the Town. This includes keeping the schools well maintained, offering relevant programming at the Community Center, providing a range of recreational facilities and opportunities for teens to gather, etc.

As the youth of Lexington is increasingly multi-cultural, the services provided by the Department of Youth and Family Services may need to adapt to a range of linguistic and cultural needs.

responsible for public health inspections, food safety, septic system failure, house code complaints, etc. As a result of the pandemic, the Department's charge shifted to include providing information regarding safety and vaccine distribution.

WATER AND SEWAGE

WATER

The Town of Lexington belongs to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and purchases approximately two billion gallons of water annually. Additional life-science development could place pressure on the **water supply**.

SEWAGE

The town pays the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) to treat and dispose of the town's sewage. **Infiltration and inflow issues** are continually being addressed. Flushable products are not truly flushable and these, in addition to fats, oils and grease (FOG), according to the town's Engineer, are causing clogging and failures of the Town's pumps and pumping stations, negatively impacting sewage capacity.

GROUNDWATER

Stormwater complaints to the town's Engineering and Building divisions are high, with several calls received per day by residents affected by drainage from adjacent new residential construction. Residential construction has had a significant impact on **flooding**.



POTENTIAL SHORT-TERM AND/OR LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The isolation resulting from adhering to safety considerations of the pandemic will most likely mean that there is a pent-up need for community gathering which may be experienced as an increase in

demand for programming at Cary Memorial Library, the Community Center, and outdoor recreation.

The schools will also be impacted as learning has undergone a number of changes that may or may not be integrated more permanently into the delivery of education.

It is likely that the Office of Public Health will have an expanded role moving into the future that will include taking preventive measures and providing public information to help prevent and mitigate infectious disease.

Some municipal Departments of Public Health are considering expanding their role to include more emergency preparedness related to pandemics and climate change.

Additionally, the town has learned from its response to this emergency and as a result will strengthen emergency response and management systems, including communication with residents. Virtual public meetings held due to health concerns during the pandemic have been very well received. Residents have expressed a desire for these to continue post-pandemic due to the convenience and to improve communication to town residents from local government and from residents to government officials.

from VISION FOR LEXINGTON –**FUTURE PROJECT: Town-Wide Communication**

The 20/20 Vision Committee is currently undertaking a project to improve town-wide communication. The Enhancing Communication in Lexington (ECiL) sub-committee made several recommendations in a report titled: Best Practices for Municipal Communications; the top recommendations include:

- Develop a town-wide communication plan and update the plan regularly as town priorities change
- Implement a shared communication structure for town and school communications
- Implement actions to increase enrollment on electronic communications platforms maintained by the town
- Identify and incorporate non-internet centered communication platforms for residents who choose not to use social media or listservs
- Increase the usefulness of the town website by improving the search function capability
- Update the systems for reporting potholes, streetlights out, missed trash pickups, etc.
- Enable a method for town committees to more easily be notified at attempts to contact the committee

Town-Wide Survey

The 20/20 Vision Committee is in the process of analyzing responses to a recent survey to help identify what residents' value and are concerned about.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How do we pay for retrofitting public facilities to reach the net –zero emission goals we have set for the Town?
- How will Lexington fund the recommendations of the 20-Year Capital Facilities Plan and pending investments for new/renovated facilities?
- How do we support the increasing number of older adults to age in community?
- How can the Community Center expand programming without increasing its building size?
- How can the Cary Memorial Library attract patrons back after the pandemic and increase its programming once previous levels of demand return?
- How can the Health Department's role be expanded to be more directly involved in emergency preparedness, including pandemics and impacts of climate change?
- How can the town prepare for high volume users of water, especially life science research and manufacturing?
- What can be done to address flooding caused by increased construction?
- As the Lexington's demographics become more diverse, how does the town respect all people's cultural, and religious, and funerary practices?

LEXINGTON VOICES

45% of participants at the **World Café forums** mentioned public schools, focusing on their value and the need to plan for the future. They identified the following Town facilities as being most valued:

- Public schools
- Community Center
- Town Library
- Cary Hall (music & arts)
- Space for teens
- Senior center & programming

Participants in the World Café forums expressed concern about a space for teens.

Participants also mentioned town governance, planning, budgeting and public safety in their discussions regarding the future of the town. They noted positive progress in terms of “civic participation”:

- *“We have more needs than resources so need to strike a balance between the two”* (World Café participant)
- *“Have everybody present at the table, not just whites”* (World Café participant)
- *“Are there people that speak languages other than English staffing town services to reflect the diversity of the population?”* (World Café participant)
- *Need to balance children’s needs versus needs of older adults”* (World Café participants)

From **SWOT Analysis @ LexingtonNEXT “Kickoff Event”**:

- *People move here for the good schools and the fact that they help to maintain property values. We need to maintain the excellent school system.”*
- *“The Town’s commitment to Special Education is amongst its strengths”*

from **Vision 20/20**:

- *“Citizens have continually expressed through 20/20 surveys that they want better communication from the Town.”*

MORE LEXINGTON VOICES

“Engage former students of Lexington High School in feedback process.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Implement “pay as you throw” to reduce trash.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Improve flood management.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Consider a program to start putting utility lines underground.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Encourage ongoing public input, encourage staff empowerment to share ideas, encourage staff training.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Create a better town website that is accessible and has helpful search tools.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Maintain some form of hybrid engagement processes - in person events, Zoom, etc.” (June 15 public forum participant)

“Communication has improved since I moved to town, but much of it requires you to pass through the Town Center to learn anything.” (June 15 public forum participant.)

“The quality of the education system (Grades K-12)” was selected by the number one response to the question “What are the top three strengths Lexington has to offer?” Social Pinpoint Survey (September, 2021).

“Cary Memorial Library” was the response from a number of participants responded to the question: “Where do you go to run into people?” (Attractive and Vibrant Commercial Districts public forum)

**RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON
GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Select Board Goals (2020-2021):

- Develop a Capital Master Plan that encompasses all capital items (including infrastructure, buildings, etc.) and incorporates the schools master plan
 - Develop a full cost report to inform the budget
 - Draft a Comprehensive Debt Management Plan in the form of guidelines
- Provide quality infrastructure, amenities and municipal services
- Review the charges of all Town Committees, modify and update as appropriate to reflect Board priorities
 - Determine ongoing necessity of Committee and/or determine whether an updated charge is necessary
- Define role of Board Liaison to various Committees and establish protocols for the Board Liaisons
- Offer training programs to Boards through the Citizen Planning Collaborative and/or other programs
- Work with Public Information Officer to develop two-way communication tools, both on-line and non-online options to improve communication between residents and Town Departments

**RELEVANT TOWN OF LEXINGTON
GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

- Promote town-wide fiscal stewardship
 - Limit the rate of property tax increase
 - Develop easy to understand informational pieces to communicate on town finances and taxes with residents
 - Wait for decision on home rule petition to allow the Town to set the timing and interest rate for the deferred taxes for the residential tax deferral
 - Create a Residential Exemption Study Committee to explore age-based exemption

Planning Board Work Plan Items (2021-2022)

9.BD. Zoning Bylaw: Sustainable Design for Hartwell Avenue. Restrict fossil fuel use in CM District.

1.O Town-wide sustainable construction program.

GOAL 9: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

To provide well-maintained, updated, inclusive, and sustainable public facilities to serve and meet community needs.



Samuel Hadley Public Services Building

Objective 9.1. Maintain and improve educational facilities to create up to date environments for all students, faculty, and staff.

Objective 9.2. Ensure that town-owned buildings support programmatic needs and effectively meet the changing needs of the Town.

Objective 9.3. Maintain and replace town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand.

Objective 9.4. Address sustainability and climate impacts in renovation of existing and new facilities.

The following Implementation Table identifies Action Steps, Responsible Parties, Potential Partners and other factors to support the implementation of each of the objectives and to help attain the goal.

GOAL 9: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**OBJECTIVE 9.1. Maintain and improve educational facilities** to create up to date environments for all students, faculty, and staff.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.1.1. Implement plans for the new high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Move forward with the Lexington High School Improvement Plan including the new building proposal b. Engage current and former Lexington High School students in the process c. Connect with other towns on their experience with recent high school redevelopments 	<p><i>Lexington High School Improvement Plan 2018-2019²</i></p> <p><i>Statement of Interest (SOI) to Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA)</i></p> <p><i>MSBA Statement of Lexington's eligibility</i></p>	Ballot Vote for Debt Exclusion and Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)	<p>LEADS:</p> <p>School Department</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
				<p>PARTNERS:</p> <p>School Committee</p> <p>Department of Public Facilities</p> <p>Permanent Building Committee</p>	

² <https://www.lexingtonma.org/lhs/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2019/06/SIP-2018-2019.pdf>

OBJECTIVE 9.1. Maintain and improve educational facilities to create up to date environments for all students, faculty, and staff.					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.1.2. Relocate the School Department Central Administration Office	a. Develop a space program that supports School Department Central Administration space needs b. Identify a new location for the School Department Central Administration Office and conduct a feasibility study			LEADS: School Department Select Board PARTNERS: School Committee Permanent Building Committee	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

OBJECTIVE 9.1. Maintain and improve educational facilities to create up to date environments for all students, faculty, and staff.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.1.3. Update the Lexington Facilities Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Address the facility needs of the elementary and middle schools, with a particular focus on the Bowman and Bridge Elementary Schools b. Monitor school enrollment projections c. Promote the use of school buildings and grounds by the community at large during after school hours 	<i>Lexington Facilities</i> <i>Master Plan</i>		LEADS: Select Board Department of Public Facilities PARTNERS: School Committee Permanent Building Committee	ON-GOING: Continue to support

OBJECTIVE 9.2. Ensure that **Town-owned buildings support programmatic needs and effectively meet the changing needs** of the Town.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.2.1. Prioritize town-owned building repair, renovation and rebuilding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Focus on town-owned buildings identified in the 20-Year Facilities Condition Assessment as being most in need b. Focus on the Police Station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move forward on existing replacement plan including moving Department to swing space in Town-owned building during construction • Evaluate using a Re-Imagined Public Safety Lens c. Focus on the East Lexington Fire Station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for renovations by developing a space program, plan, budget, etc. • If necessary, identify a new site & allocate cost • Among improvements address the need to accommodate female fire fighters d. Support the Munroe Center for the Arts in their efforts to repair and make accessible the town-owned building that the town leases to the Center e. Maintain a Preventive Maintenance Plan and a Deferred Maintenance Schedule for all town facilities SEE END NOTES 1 and 2 	<p>20-Year Facilities Condition Assessment (VHB)</p> <p>5-Year Capital Facilities Plan</p> <p><i>Plan for New Police Headquarters Building</i></p> <p><i>Carriage House</i></p>		<p>LEADS: Department of Public Facilities</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p> <p>Permanent Building Committee</p> <p>Police Department</p> <p>Fire Department</p> <p>Capital Expenditures Committee</p>	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

OBJECTIVE 9.2. Ensure that **Town-owned buildings support programmatic needs and effectively meet the changing needs** of the Town.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.2.2. Reuse or dispose of vacant or underutilized town buildings and properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Outline a process for how to prioritize re-use of buildings and sites b. Identify buildings for possible sale or other disposition c. Work with the Muzzey Condominium Board on reuse of former Senior Center d. Support efforts of the Ellen Stone Building Ad Hoc Reuse Committee to develop a use that addresses the use restrictions and provides revenue for preserving and maintaining this historic asset 	<p>Vacant or underutilized Town-owned buildings, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosmer House • Ellen Stone Building • Former Senior Center in Muzzey Condominiums • Wright Farm Barn • Animal Shelter 		<p>LEADS: Department of Public Facilities</p> <p>PARTNERS: Cary Library Board of Trustees</p> <p>Permanent Building Committee</p> <p>Stone Building Reuse Committee</p> <p>Muzzey Condominium Board</p>	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)

OBJECTIVE 9.2. Ensure that **Town-owned buildings support programmatic needs and effectively meet the changing needs** of the Town.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.2.3 Build a crematory in Lexington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revisit request on the part of some residents to build a crematory to accommodate religious and cultural funerary practices that prefer cremation to burial b. Survey residents for their willingness to borrow for a capital project for a future crematory 	Lexington's study of 40 Communities and their crematories (May 2019)		LEADS: Department of Public Facilities Superintendent of Public Grounds of Westview Cemetery PARTNERS: Cultural Groups that prefer cremation	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5-10)
9.2.4. Support facilities and programs that meet the multiple and diverse needs of residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase availability of public restrooms that are accessible and gender neutral, especially in Lexington Center b. Support the Library in its efforts to increase innovation programming, renovate the Children's Room and expand multi-lingual materials c. Provide residents expanded access to recreational facilities owned by other entities in Lexington through formal agreements 	Community Center Cary Memorial Library Recreational Facilities <i>Age-Friendly Community Report</i>		LEADS: Select Board PARTNERS: Community Center Cary Memorial Library Senior Services Recreation and Community Programs	#2: INTERMEDIATE (Years 5 -10)

OBJECTIVE 9.2. Ensure that **Town-owned buildings support programmatic needs and effectively meet the changing needs** of the Town.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
	d. Make facilities and services more culturally and linguistically accessible			Youth and Family Services Recreation Committee Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Youth Commission	

OBJECTIVE 9.3. Maintain and replace Town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.3.1. Assess the impact of new development on existing facilities and services.	a. Conduct professional peer reviews of impact assessments conducted by developers to confirm impacts of large developments b. Model potential increase in water and sewer demand if and when life sciences development reaches maximum build out potential c. Address flooding impacts of residential construction	M.G.L. Chapter 44, § 53G (Peer Review Funds)		LEADS: Planning Board	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
				PARTNERS: Engineering Building Commissioner Water and Sewer Developers	

OBJECTIVE 9.3. Maintain and replace Town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.3.2. Identify public infrastructure needs and ways to address these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Address impacts from flushable products and fats, oils and grease on the sewage collection system b. Address existing water distribution bottlenecks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long range fiscal management efforts Stabilization funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency State Revolving Fund for Water Infrastructure Federal PROTECT Program for Transportation projects MassDOT Federal Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEADS: Public Works PARTNERS: Water and Sewer Engineering 	ON-GOING: Continue to support

OBJECTIVE 9.3. Maintain and replace Town infrastructure and upgrade systems to meet demand.					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.3.3. Environmental services (trash, recycling, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review the practice of exporting trash to environmental justice communities, changing to a more equitable practice. b. Revisit the “Pay As You Throw” policy/practice 				
9.3.4. Identify private infrastructure needs and ways to address these (power, communication, gas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate the ability of the power distribution system to support expansion of distributed generation and electric vehicle charging c. Remove double utility poles d. Revise Stormwater Bylaw to amend disturbance threshold requiring stormwater permit 				

OBJECTIVE 9.4. Address sustainability and climate impacts in renovation of existing and new facilities.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.4.1. Become “net zero” in energy consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintain the Town’s “Green Communities” status³ b. Support the Lexington Sustainable Action Plan c. Implement the Net Zero Action Plan d. Identify ways to fund the conversion of public facilities to all electric SEE END NOTE #3 e. Develop programs to help residents insulate their homes 	<p><i>Green Communities Municipal Best Practices</i>⁴</p> <p><i>Green Communities Tools for Cities and Towns</i>⁵</p> <p><i>Lexington Sustainable Action Plan</i></p> <p><i>Lexington Net Zero Action Plan</i></p>	Green Communities Grant programs	<p>LEADS:</p> <p>Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>Select Board</p> <p>PARTNERS:</p> <p>Public Works</p> <p>Environmental Services</p> <p>Planning Department</p> <p>Sustainable Lexington Committee</p>	SUSTAINED EFFORT: Initiate a new action step(s) and sustain over time

³ “Green Communities” designation provides support to towns seeking clean energy solutions to reduce costs and strengthen local economy:

<https://www.mass.gov/green-communities-designation-grant-program>

⁴ Examples of how our municipalities have saved energy, reduced GHG emissions, affected behavioral changes, and promoted clean energy:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/municipal-best-practices>

⁵ On-line resources to help improve energy initiatives: <https://www.mass.gov/tools-for-cities-and-towns>

OBJECTIVE 9.4. Address **sustainability and climate impacts** in renovation of existing and new facilities.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.4.2. Use sustainable and environmentally friendly products and materials in construction and maintenance	a. Implement the Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy SEE END NOTE #1	<i>Lexington's Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy</i>		LEADS: Dept. of Public Facilities Permanent Building Committee PARTNERS: Sustainability and Resilience Officer Environmental Services Sustainable Lexington Committee	ON-GOING: Continue to support

OBJECTIVE 9.4. Address **sustainability and climate impacts** in renovation of existing and new facilities.

Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner(s)	Priority
9.4.3. Improve resilience of stormwater management facilities considering climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify vulnerable facilities. b. Implement recommendations in the 2019 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness study and conduct annual reporting c. Develop outreach material with recommendations for best management practices for homeowners d. Develop map of areas prone to flooding to assist with stormwater permit reviews 	<i>Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Study.</i>	<p>Massachusetts Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) planning grant program</p> <p>FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) grant program</p>	<p>LEADS: Public Works Sustainability and Resilience Officer</p> <p>PARTNERS: Engineering Sustainable Lexington Committee</p>	SUSTAINED EFFORT: Initiate new action step(s) and sustain over time

ENDNOTES

END NOTE 1. Preventive Maintenance Program⁶: There are two types of maintenance strategies employed by companies that rely on equipment – reactive maintenance and preventive maintenance. Reactive maintenance goes by the “if it isn’t broke, don’t fix it” motto, a strategy that can sometimes save money short term but often ends up costing even more in the long run. Preventive maintenance, on the other hand, is a carefully designed maintenance program (often using Computerized Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS) software) where maintenance tasks are performed routinely in order to avoid larger, costly fixes down the line. Benefits include:

- Cost Savings in the Long Run
- Improved Safety
- Increased Equipment Efficiency
- Decreased Equipment Downtime
- Improved Reliability
- Conservation of Assets
- Lengthen Useful Life of Equipment

The Lexington Public Facilities Department completed a **20-year Facilities Capital Plan** for presentation to the Select Board in 2021 for town and school facility needs. An updated Plan was presented in May of 2022. The Facilities Director and a Facilities Master Planning Committee intend to also develop a Master Plan for town and school buildings.

END NOTE 2. Deferred Maintenance Schedule⁷: When there is a lack of funding and maintenance must be deferred to a future budget cycle. If it is unavoidable, then maintenance processes and projects should be tracked and prioritized. This is included in the **20-Year Capital Facilities Plan**.

⁶ <https://www.micromain.com/importance-of-preventive-maintenance/#:~:text=Why%20Preventive%20Maintenance%20Is%20So%20Important%201%20Cost,Improved%20Reliability.%20...%206%20Conservation%20of%20Assets.%20>

⁷ <https://www.fiixsoftware.com/deferred-maintenance/>

END NOTE 3. Cost of converting public facilities to all electric.

According to Mike Cronin, Director of the Department of Public Facilities:⁸

1. Budgeting for the cost to convert to all- electric for public facilities has cost impacts beyond the equipment replacement, e.g. replacing the oil-fired water heater for showers and hand wash sinks for the swimming pool facility in-kind would be \$31,000. To replace the water heater with an all-electric system will be \$100,000-\$150,000 in part because it requires the purchase and installation of a new transformer from Eversource, at the Town's expense. Electrical services within the facility would also have to be upgraded including installation of a new transformer.
2. The Cary Library needs basement renovations for the Children's Room. Replacing all electric HVAC will leave much of the capacity of the chiller, a \$1 million investment made 3 years ago, unnecessary, despite the "sunk cost" of that investment.

END NOTE 4. Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy⁹**Purpose of Policy**

- To maximize the health and well-being of building occupants and the public at large
- To ensure the town will design and construct its buildings to meet programmatic requirements while enabling operations to achieve the highest reasonably attainable and economically viable performance standards for health, energy and resilience.
- To guide the overall project delivery of a town facility from a scope, schedule and cost standpoint while maximizing sustainability objectives.
- To evaluate and select optimal designs which (1) address the building's intended programmatic use and which (2) minimize and mitigate the negative impacts of development, construction and building operations on the natural environment.
- To maximize onsite renewable energy production given each building's respective site and site use, while minimizing energy use and operational costs of town buildings.
- To provide resilient and maintainable buildings.

⁸ written comments to this section of the Comprehensive Plan.

⁹ <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1638/Integrated-Building-Design-and-Construction-Policy-PDF?bidId=>

GOAL 10: LAND USE

To support and advance Goals 1-9 of through wise Land Use Planning.

The Town's ability to meet future needs for public facilities, public safety, emergency response, schools, and other vital public needs will require using Town-owned land in new ways and securing strategically located private land. Further, maintaining and improving Lexington's fiscal resilience, economy, housing opportunities, and mobility for current and future residents, employees, customers, and visitors will depend on future zoning and land use decisions and strategies.

As described in Volume 1 and Volume II, the majority of land in Lexington is zoned exclusively for residential use, seven times the amount zoned for commercial use. Few large privately owned parcels remain undeveloped. Today's zoning bylaw conflicts with the land use needs expressed by the public through this Comprehensive Plan process.

Lexington has been fortunate to take advantage of unplanned, unforeseen opportunities to acquire properties to meet community needs. Two examples are the 2014 property purchase from the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library that allowed the Town to relocate and expand the Recreation and Community Programs and Human Services Departments from the former Muzzey Junior High School, and the purchase of 173 Bedford Street from Liberty Mutual that provided temporary swing space for the Fire Department and Police Department during construction of their new facilities. The Town was lucky to be able to react to these two private real estate opportunities. The intent of this section is to proactively plan for land opportunities that become available and to guide future development through acquisition and zoning changes to meet Lexington's goals. This land use evaluation process should be conscientious and prioritize equity.

GOAL 10: LAND USE

Objective 10.1. Meet municipal land use needs					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partners	Phasing
10.1.1. Assess and meet municipal land needs	a. Inventory and map Town-owned land and facilities b. Project Town Departments' future land and facility needs c. Identify privately-owned sites that could meet future Town needs	Capital Facilities Plan		LEADS: Planning Board Land Use, Health and Development Department Public Facilities Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

	d. Acquire land or facilities through purchase or exchange to meet critical needs			PARTNERS: Town Manager School Superintendent	
10.1.2. Relocate Town services and facilities to meet the goals of this Comprehensive Plan	a. Examine alternative locations for important Town facilities to meet transportation, economic vitality, housing, sustainability, and other goals, identifying the costs and benefits of these alternatives b. Partner with private landowners to jointly meet both Town and private goals			LEADS: Planning Board Land Use, Health and Development Department PARTNERS: Facilities Director Town Manager School Superintendent	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)
Objective 10.2 Meet other land use needs					
Strategies	Potential Actions	Existing Resources	Funding	Lead & Partner	Phasing
10.2.1. Update zoning districts and regulations to meet the goals of this Comprehensive Plan and future land use needs	a. Compare existing land uses and conditions with those prescribed by zoning b. Adopt zoning amendments to align prescribed uses in zoning with the Comprehensive Plan's goals, including permitting multi-family housing	Zoning Bylaw and Official Zoning Map Section 3A of M.G.L. c. 40A		LEADS: Planning Board Land Use, Health and Development Department	#1: IMMEDIATE (Years 1 – 5)

DRAFT

IMPLEMENTATION



IMPLEMENTING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Implementation of a Comprehensive Plan is a long-term process requiring significant effort from many entities. This Comprehensive Plan includes suggested timeframes for implementing each strategy, to be used as a guide to set priorities. Implementation will depend on many factors such as timing, resources, the workload of specific groups, many of which consist of volunteers, and the capacity of the lead partner. A Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a “living document” that is formally updated at least every 10-15 years.

PLAN COMPONENTS

The implementation plan is organized around goals, identified in the adjacent shaded box. Each goal comprises a series of objectives, or major efforts needed to meet that goal. To fulfill each objective, the table lists a set of strategies and potential actions which illustrate how the town could achieve the objectives and goals.

The plan identifies over 150 strategies. For each of these, a **Lead** and **Partners** are noted. Lead persons or entities are tasked with directing the strategies, with the assistance of partners, who will initiate the action steps. While the table suggests potential leads and partners, these persons or entities may change or expand over time. For some strategies, an entirely new planning process will be needed to define roles and responsibilities of the leads and partners.

Some strategies call for additional studies to understand the actions that would best achieve the goals and objectives. Many strategies will require discussion and approval at Town Meeting, especially changes to Lexington’s General or Zoning Bylaws.

Implementation

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS

GOAL 1: To promote the DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION of people visiting, living, and working in Lexington

GOAL 2: To promote a wide range of HOUSING options that respond to the needs of households, regardless of income and life stage

GOAL 3: To promote a VITAL ECONOMY, including a variety of small and large businesses that contribute to the tax base and provide goods and services to meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors

GOAL 4: To enhance quality of life, health, and safety by implementing practices and policies that enhance SUSTAINABILITY and RESILIENCY in our community

GOAL 5: To protect OPEN SPACES and NATURAL RESOURCES and to enhance their connections

GOAL 6: To protect, preserve, and promote awareness and appreciation of Lexington’s HISTORIC and CULTURAL RESOURCES from throughout its history

GOAL 7: To make TRAVELING into, out of, and within Lexington safe, pleasant, and efficient with sustainable and equitable mobility options for all ages and abilities

GOAL 8: To improve and expand facilities for RECREATION AND COMMUNITY GATHERING to support holistic wellbeing, a sense of belonging, enhanced community connections, fun, and to build community through social engagement

GOAL 9: To provide well-maintained, updated, inclusive and sustainable PUBLIC FACILITIES to serve and meet community needs

GOAL 10: To support and advance goals 1-9 through wise LAND USE PLANNING

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

IMPLEMENTATION LEAD

Planning staff and the Planning Board should oversee implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Their charge is to:

- (1) oversee implementation of the strategies and action steps, receiving updates from other departments and committees on progress;
- (2) incorporate appropriate actions into their own work plans;
- (3) keep the comprehensive plan up to date; and
- (4) provide an annual “State of the Comprehensive Plan” report within the Planning Board’s Annual Report.

INCREASING CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

There are many strategies and potential actions listed in the implementation plan. It may be necessary to increase the town’s capacity to implement the recommended actions to achieve the plan’s goals and objectives. Capacity can be increased in a number of ways, including:

- Hiring additional staff;
- Hiring contractors for specific projects;
- Recruiting additional volunteers;
- Creating new task forces or committees to oversee specific efforts;
- Increasing inter-departmental cooperation; and

- Regional cooperation on such topics as transportation planning, electricity aggregation, household hazardous waste collection, and climate change adaptation.

SEEK FUNDING

Many of the recommended strategies will require additional funding. Additional funding sources should be explored, including American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Potential sources are listed in the Implementation Tables whenever possible.

KEY TO THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TABLES

The following is a key to the notation used in the Implementation Plan tables. The Implementation Plan is organized around the identified goals with accompanying objectives, with separate columns provided for:

- **Strategies** – avenues for achieving the goals and objectives, cross-referenced to other related strategies through the tables (designated by *SEE ALSO*)
- **Potential Actions** - steps for carrying out the strategies
- **Existing Resources** – a list of relevant organizations and other resources to support the strategy
- **Funding** – possible sources of funding for the strategy

- **Lead** – the town department, board, committee, or other entity considered most appropriate for taking the lead with the strategy
- **Partners** – entities or individuals to serve as partners in carrying out the strategy and associated actions
- **Phasing** -
 - #1= Immediate (1 to 5 years)
 - #2 = Intermediate (5 to 10 years)
 - #3 = Future/Re-evaluate in 10 years (10 to 20 years)
 - Ongoing (continue and support action already in progress)
 - Sustained Effort (initiate new action step and sustain over time)
- **Guiding Principles** – a brief description of how the strategy fulfills the Comprehensive Plan’s guiding principles
- **Planning Board Work Plan Item** – where applicable, the item number identified in the Planning Board’s current work plan
- **Ripe Apple** – an action step that is “low-hanging fruit” – with a relatively low cost, low level of effort, and desirable impacts. By undertaking these immediately, the town will foster a belief in the planning process and will provide momentum for implementing other actions identified in the plan. Acting on recommendations quickly and visibly builds credibility for the Comprehensive Plan and also pays tribute to the individuals who committed time and thought to the planning process.



END NOTES. End Notes are provided after each section. These provide information more extensive than can be given in a footnote.

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

LEXINGTON PLANNING BOARD

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Staff Updates

PRESENTER:

**ITEM
NUMBER:**

SUMMARY:

Staff Updates

Board member Updates

Upcoming meetings – Wednesdays: 10/12/22, 10/19/22

SUGGESTED MOTION:

FOLLOW-UP:

DATE AND APPROXIMATE TIME ON AGENDA:

9/28/2022