

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



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Mike Chizy
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Mark Gravison
Jennifer Hager
Mark Kellogg
Barry McLean
Scott Paul
Donna Rossio
Joyce Smith

Consultants



Birchwood Design Group, LLC

Arthur Eddy, ASLA, LEED AP
Kris Bradner, RLA



Brown Walker Planners, Inc.

Juliet T.H. Walker, AICP
Sue Brown, LA

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TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

The Town of Sutton under the leadership of the Master Plan Committee has undertaken the process of creating a town-wide Master Plan for the next 20 years. This report is the culmination of monthly committee meetings, a public charette, a town presentation and a town-wide survey that was distributed to all Sutton households. This plan should guide the town’s planning efforts over the next 20 years, serve as a resource for decision-making processes that is sensitive to the thoughts and visions of the people that reside there. This document will be a living resource that will be reviewed annually to help the town evaluate progress on meeting the plan’s recommendations and develop new goals and objectives for each ensuing year.

Why a Master Plan

A Master Plan is a policy guide and a framework for future land use and development. It includes assessments of existing resources and issues, projections of future conditions and needs, and consideration of community goals and desires. In other words, a Master Plan describes what the community is like today and what direction it should go in the future. The Master Plan’s purpose is to enable municipal officials to better manage change, and to inform residents and businesses about the community’s characteristics, trends and policies.

The Master Plan can play an important role in the ongoing work of Town staff and local agencies. As a statement of long-range goals and policies, the Master Plan provides a consistent point of reference for evaluating and prioritizing potential actions. In addition, the data and analysis contained in the Plan can be used for documentation in funding applications as well as for monitoring change over time. In order to ensure that the Master Plan continues to provide these positive impacts, all Town departments should be charged with periodically reviewing the Plan in relation to their areas of responsibility, reporting on progress in meeting Master Plan goals, and advising the Planning Board as to ways in which the Master Plan should be amended to respond to changing conditions.

The Master Plan should be closely integrated with other municipal planning documents, including the Town’s Open Space and Recreation Plan, Capital Plan, and Wastewater Management Plan. The Master Plan should serve as a guide for the Town in planning for investments, acquisitions, and provision of services.

Since the Master Plan focuses on the Town’s physical development, the zoning ordinance and other land use regulations are essential tools for implementing the Plan’s recommendations. Under Massachusetts law, it is

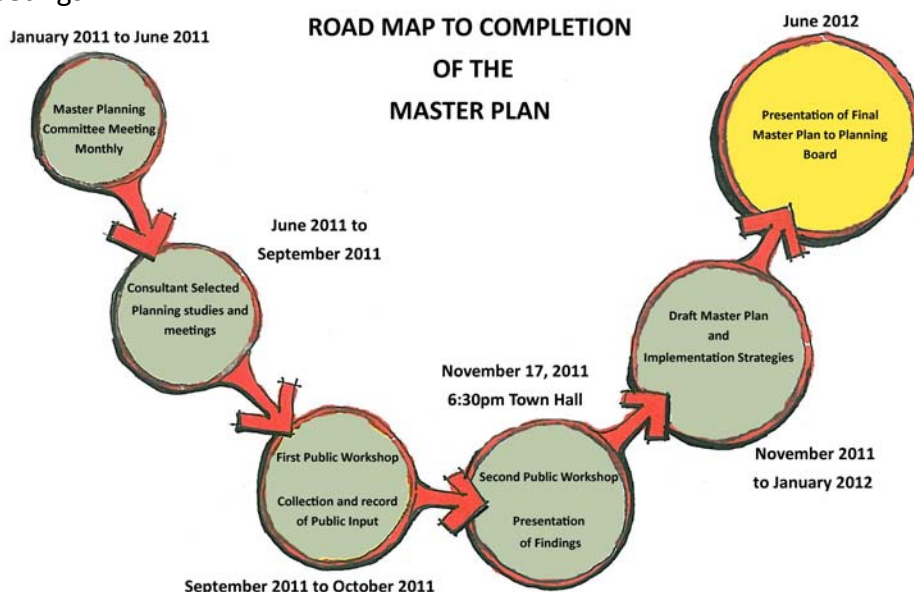
the responsibility of the Planning Board to adopt and amend the Master Plan, but the Board of Selectmen recommends approval of funds for municipal activities. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board to work together to ensure that policies and actions are not in conflict.

Sutton's Master Plan Development

The Master Plan was prepared by the Master Plan Committee with consulting assistance from Birchwood Design Group and Brown Walker Planners. The planning process began in January 2011 and included data collection and analysis, inventory of resources, production of maps, development of a town-wide vision, creation of an implementation program, and concluded in July 2012 with Planning Board approval of the Master Plan.

Committee meetings were held nearly monthly throughout the process and were attended regularly by the committee members and consultants. The committee is made up of Sutton residents, business owners as well as representatives of the Town's Planning Board and Departments. There was a Master Plan charette held in October 2011, a follow-up presentation in November of 2011 and a town-wide survey was distributed to every household in Sutton along with the 2012 town census. The charette empowered the citizens with a voice to discuss town issues that the Master Plan could address and help craft a vision of the town's future. An update of the Plan's progress was presented at the follow up meeting. Both meetings were televised on the local cable access channel. The survey was distributed to each household to ensure that every citizen could provide input even if one was unable to attend the public meetings. Manual as well as online digital responses were received. Many citizen's suggested ideas and concerns that helped create a more comprehensive Plan.

The Master Plan Committee thanks everyone who attended meetings, reviewed documents, and provided data, input, assistance and support. Appendix A and B summarizes the discussions and presentations of the two public meetings.



A Bit About Sutton's History

Nipmuc Indians inhabited the Sutton area and perhaps their first official alliance with the English was with surveyors, William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley. In 1681 a deed was signed between the Indians and the two surveyors that conveyed 2,000 acres in 1685. In 1712 this acreage became known as the “Manchaug Farms” and in 1722 parcels were sold to Richard Waters and Samuel Rich that included the entire village of West Sutton, the Town Farm, most of the Whittier Farm and a large area further south. However, the land was not located in an incorporated township. In 1723 both the Waters and Rich farms were annexed to Oxford until Waters Farm in 1726 and the Rich Farm in 1728 were annexed to Sutton.



On May 15, 1704 Governor Joseph Dudley granted an eight square mile tract to ten proprietors in Boston to form the Town of Sutton. This tract was part of much larger holdings that were transferred by the Native American, Wampus, to English owners in 1679. In 1716 three families settled here. By the following year, thirty families had settled in the new town. A spot at the intersection of two existing Native trails, now Boston Road and Singletary Avenue, was selected by proprietors as the site for a future town meeting house, training field, and burial ground. In 1719 the first meeting-house was built.

The area at the intersection of Boston and Uxbridge Roads that is the present Town Common was first known as a “training field”. Between 1714 and 1719 the Sutton Proprietors laid out thirty-acre home lots for proprietors and forty-acre lots for settlers.

After 1714, town boundaries changed several times. Parts of Sutton were annexed to the towns of Westborough, Upton, Grafton, Ward (Auburn), Uxbridge and Northbridge. The largest change came in 1813 when Sutton’s north parish was incorporated as a separate town of Millbury. The present town boundaries were established in 1907.

Sutton proprietors originally set aside 200 acres located immediately east of the training field for the benefit of the town’s schools. Town records show that in 1725 the town voted to sell some of the school land to raise money for school expenses. The earliest schools were kept in private homes and in 1730 it was voted to keep school in four districts of the town. Several school buildings were built in Sutton between 1775 and 1830. In 1831 thirteen districts were established with schools built in each one.

According to Peter Whitney’s 1793 history of Worcester County, Sutton was both the second most wealthy and second largest town in Worcester County. Whitney reported that in 1793 the town had three fulling mills, six sawmills, ten gristmills, seven triphammers, five scythe, hoe and ax shops, one paper mill, one oil mill, and six potash works. Comb-making and card-making were also begun during this period. Larger scale industry was soon to take its place in Sutton and the Industrial Revolution began to take hold along its waterways. By the mid-1820’s, three textile mills were operating here. Transportation improved during the early years of the 19th century, encouraging the town’s industry and trade. Central Turnpike, an improved east-west route through the central section of town, opened in 1826.

In 1828 the opening of the Blackstone Canal through the Sutton village of Wilkinsonville facilitated the transportation of local raw materials and manufactured goods to and from Worcester and Providence, and beyond, especially during the early years of the 19th century. Sutton’s earlier success in agriculture was further augmented by the increase in market farming that was promoted by the growth of industry and improved transportation in the region. It was during this time of prosperity that many of the historic houses that survive today in Sutton were built.

The Town of Sutton has historically been a mostly rural and a typical New England town that features unique mill and farming villages and scenic expanses in between. As we look toward the future, what do we see? We hope to see much of the same open space beauty but also a vibrant community full of jobs and services. The Master Plan is the central planning document that will help guide community growth while protecting its varied assets. It is imperative that this Plan remain active with goals and strategies that can be met based on timelines and responsible parties. It will be important to publically review this document and the changes the plan has guided on an annual basis at a Selectman's Meeting or Spring Town Meeting.

A vision statement is a declaration of desire and intent written in the present tense. It is a clear description of a desired outcome that inspires, energizes and helps us create a mental picture of our goals. In the context of a Master Plan the goals are the results that we expect after taking the actions outlined in the plan, perhaps looking to the future five to ten years away. The purpose of the vision statement is to open our eyes to what is possible. It is our inspiration, the framework for all our strategic planning.

Participants in the master planning process in Sutton, Massachusetts looked to the Town's history, its current conditions and its future potential. Over a year of committee meetings and public outreach we developed the following vision statement which represents a shared vision for Sutton.

"The Town of Sutton appreciates its open space, cultural and natural assets, its village centers, its sense of community and distinct rural feel. Sutton's open space, vistas, agricultural land, forests, lakes, ponds, historic structures, places and their ultimate protection are one of the most important aspects to the community.

The Town, through this master planning effort, will foster economic growth encouraging local services, job creation and increased tax base that is in balance with the Town's rural character. The strength of the town lies in its past and future planning efforts, and its ability to challenge itself to make organized thoughtful decisions regarding its future.

Ultimately, the Town of Sutton will thrive on its unique balance of growth and rural character that has attracted generations of families. This sustainability will be a model that visitors remember."

There were several key issues brought forth during this public process. They are highlighted below based on the categories set forth in this Master Plan.

Land Use Statement

The citizen's of Sutton indicated that there is a need for zoning changes to satisfy the needs of the Town including the following: resource protection; infrastructure expansion; development for economic growth and village centers; various housing needs.

Housing Statement

During the master planning process there were in-depth discussions regarding the development of housing in Sutton. Many resident's felt strongly about not changing how housing is developed in Sutton while others felt that there are unmet housing needs for the aging population as well as young families. Issues surrounding what "affordable housing" really means and how the town can control the outcome were important points of discussion.

Economic Development Statement

The citizen's of the town are most concerned about the balance between creating jobs for themselves and for their children while at the same time protecting the land assets that they appreciate so much.

Community Services

Residents expressed the desire to make sure public facilities are adequately maintained and that the Town pursues improved Police, DPW and Library facilities. Additionally there was a general desire for more programs and services.

Transportation Statement

Not surprisingly, over 83% of residents honed in on the need for a grade separated interchange at Route 146 and Boston Road as the primary transportation and circulation concern. Additionally, the incomplete Blackstone River Bikeway, substandard bridges and inadequate sidewalks were also expressed needs.

Natural & Cultural Resources Statement

Protecting and highlighting the towns cultural and natural resources was the theme of survey responses. There was also a notable lack of knowledge about the towns natural and cultural resources.

Open Space Statement

Maintenance and continued development of existing facilities were primary desires expressed in the process. Again , a lack of knowledge about open space and recreation locations and programs was noticeable.

The following priorities consistently surfaced through workshop discussions and survey results. They are detailed in the goals and objectives pages for each topic as well as highlighted in Section 9.0 Implementation Matrix. These strategies are defined as Priority 1 to be reviewed, designed and implemented in the first five years (2013-2018).

Land Use Statement

The master plan concludes that lands that are critical to Sutton’s character should be identified and a plan should be put in place to preserve and/or improve them. The town can make zoning improvements and/or implement polices to guide development that meets the town’s vision for the future.

Housing Statement

A variety of housing that serves different needs will foster a diverse population and create long term viability of Sutton. The town can decide to be proactive in this arena by informing it’s residents of the benefits of a diversified housing stock. The town can also develop specific design standards, review procedures and document future plans for new housing units.

Economic Development Statement

Developing supportive infrastructure is seen as a key strategy for encouraging economic development where it is most desirable.

Community Services

The Plan recommends creating brochures about town services and programs and distributing them and posting them to the Towns website. Additionally, the Plan recommends the design process begin for Police, DPW and Library facilities with an eye to obtaining any available grants to help with the funding.

Transportation Statement

Goals include continuing to work with officials to pursue a grade separated interchange at Route 146 and Boston Road. Pursing installation of sidewalks around the school complex, completing the Blackstone River Bikeway, and repair of our substandard bridges are also priorities.

Natural & Cultural Resources Statement

Completing nomination for the Villages of Manchaug and Wilkinsonville to the National Register of Historic Places is a major goal of the Plan. Educating residents and visitors through the creation of brochures that are distributed and also posted to the towns website are additional desires.

Open Space Statement

Continued improvements to existing facilities like Marion’s Camp and a plan for long term maintenance are top goals. Additionally, highlighting the Towns assets through brochures and online resources is planned.

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



2.0 LAND USE



LAND USE INTRODUCTION 2.1

Land use in the broadest sense describes how land is occupied or utilized. Since the mid-20th century, the type, design, and location of development, as well as particular uses have been governed by zoning. These regulations, together with the enforcement processes that are in place, are the Town's tools for identifying incompatible land uses, guiding development, preserving town character, and protecting public health and welfare.

Land Uses

Land Use Category	# of Parcels	# of Acres	% of Town
Residential	4,046	12,725	63.0%
Commercial (ie: Tony's Pizza)	115	950	4.7%
Industrial (ie: Carquest, Aggregate Industries)	100	997	4.9%
Agriculture	88	1,726	8.5%
Other (including open space and municipal)	333	3,804	18.8%

Land use patterns in Sutton are reflective of its early history as an agricultural and industrial community. There exists a generous amount of open land and several small village centers. The town's more recent history includes the growth of Route 146 as the major north-south roadway through Sutton. It has led to the development of the town's commercial corridor along its length in the north, and supported office and industrial uses at its edges in the south. While steady residential growth has reduced the amount of undisturbed or undeveloped land in Sutton, large tracts of forested land and open space help the town retain its rural character.

Today, the predominant land use type in Sutton is *single family* residential, at 35% of the Town's acreage. About 8.5% of the Town is in active agricultural use.

Zoning

District	Key	Acres
Residential-Rural	R-1	19,961
Residential-Suburban	R-2	128
Village	V	329
Business-Highway	B-2	462
Industrial	I	417
Office and Light Industrial	OLI	481
TOTAL		21,778

Over 90% of Sutton is zoned for residential development within its R-1 district. This rural residential district is reserved primarily for single-family residential uses, agricultural and open land uses, and community facilities and educational uses. A limited variety of retail, trade and service uses such as eateries, funeral homes, antique shops and nursing homes are allowed by special permit. General requirements for buildings in the district include a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet (just under two acres) and 250 feet of road frontage.

The Residential-Suburban (R-2) district covering small areas in Wilkinsonville and along Whitins Pond expands residential uses to include multi-family and decreases lot size to a minimum of 20,000 square feet (less than half an acre) if serviced by public water and sewer; a minimum of 40,000 square feet with water or sewer; and 60,000 square feet if developed without town water and sewer. Minimum road frontage required per lot is between 135 to 175 feet.

Less than 8% (1,690 acres) of land in Sutton is zoned to allow commercial development including village, business, office or industrial development.

Village (V) district zoning maintains the historic mix of land uses in the center of Manchaug and in a portion of Wilkinsonville. This district allows the same residential uses as R-2 and also allows office, retail, trade and service uses. The minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet and only 100 feet of road frontage is required.

The three commercial zoning districts in Sutton do not allow residential uses with the exception of Continuing Care Retirement Communities. Therefore the only location for mixed use development **that includes residential units** is in Manchaug and part of Wilkinsonville. Agricultural and open land uses, as well as community facilities and institutional uses are allowed throughout all districts, with special requirements or restrictions on a few uses in these categories.

The Business Highway District (B-2) includes lands along Route 146 from Central Turnpike north to the Millbury line and allows mostly office and commercial uses with exceptions that include antique shops, automobile sales, processing and contractor yards. The minimum lot requirement in B-2 is 40,000 square feet and the minimum frontage requirement is 200 feet.

Sutton's Industrial (I) district includes portions of Wilkinsonville primarily to the west of Buttonwood Avenue and along Route 122A, and a short stretch along Route 146 and fronting and bordered by Harback and Dudley Roads. Minimum lot size and frontage are the same as the B-2 district. Commercial uses that cater to the general public including retail stores, restaurants, theatres and others are not allowed in the Industrial district. Principal uses today include a number of Sutton's key employers including Aggregate Industries, Mayfield Plastics, Polyvinyl Films, and J& G Foods.

The Office-Light Industrial (OI) district includes lands along route 146 south of Purgatory Road in South Sutton. This district requires a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet and 200 feet of frontage. This district allows small scale industrial/manufacturing business and some retail. It does not allow most vehicular and automotive based businesses with the exception of trucking services and warehousing.

Overlay Districts

In addition to its six zoning districts, Sutton has four overlay districts that lay out additional or alternative requirements for lands within these districts. The districts are intended to protect groundwater resources, guide development within floodplains, and allow development of wireless communication facilities in the most appropriate areas. Recently, the town adopted the Route 146 Overlay District Bylaw, to facilitate the long-term economic growth of the Route 146 Corridor by coordinating development among five neighboring communities. The District promotes high quality development that preserves the scenic, natural, and cultural resources of the Blackstone Valley. The Bylaw sets forth design standards for all lands zoned I, B-2, and OI with frontage on Route 146.

Special Regulations

The Town's Zoning Bylaw includes a number of special regulations that seek to further guide and regulate housing and commercial development to help preserve open space, ensure compatibility with the Town's rural and historic character and encourage the creative and efficient use of land. Special regulations are included for condominium development, Open Space Residential Development, and Planned Business Development among others.

Water and Sewer

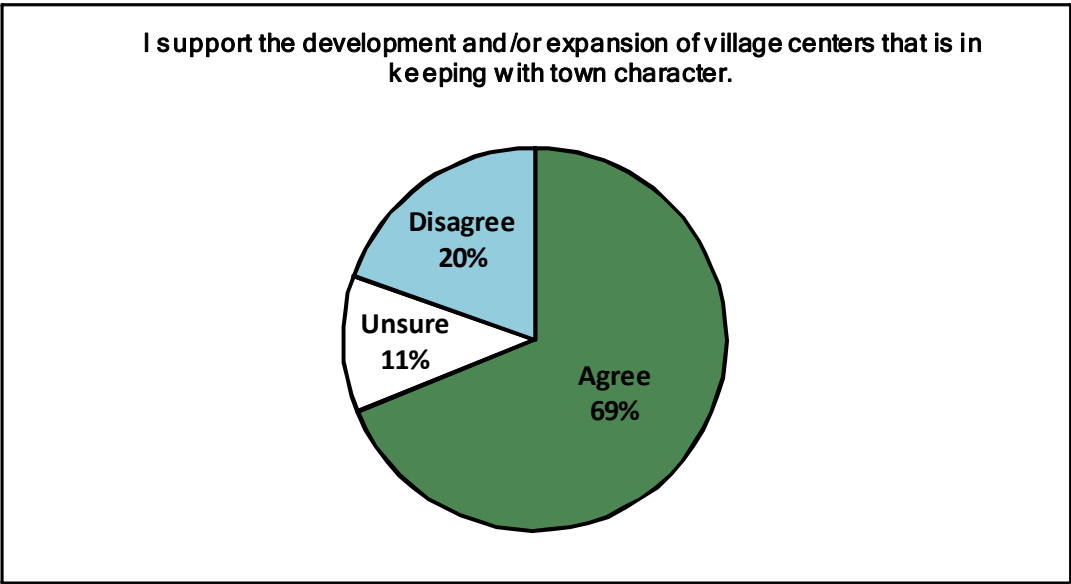
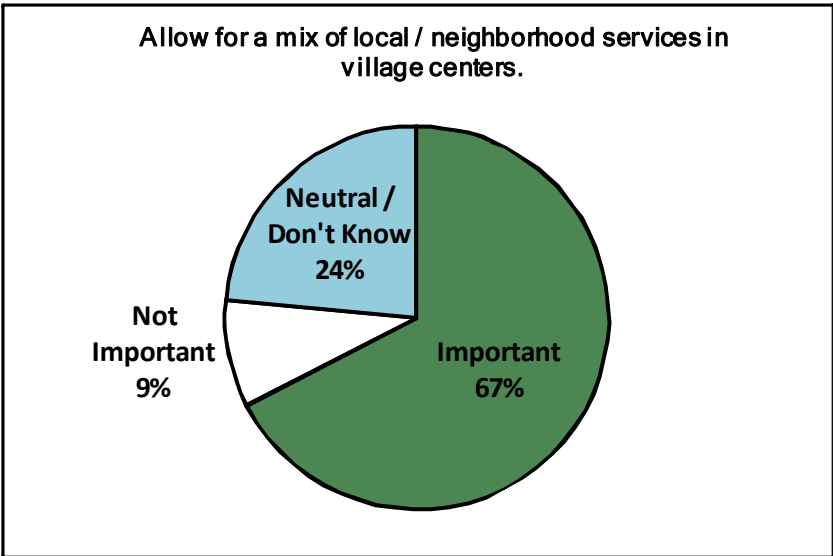
The availability of public water and sewer is a primary consideration for the establishment of new businesses and / or the expansion of existing businesses. Public water is provided in parts of Wilkinsonville and Manchaug and adjacent to Route 146 in South Sutton by three different private water districts; Whitinsville Water District, Manchaug Water District and Wilkinsonville Water District. Sewer service in Manchaug is provided by the Town of Sutton. Sewer service north of Central Turnpike is provided by a connection through the Town of Millbury to the Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Abatement District (UBWPAD).

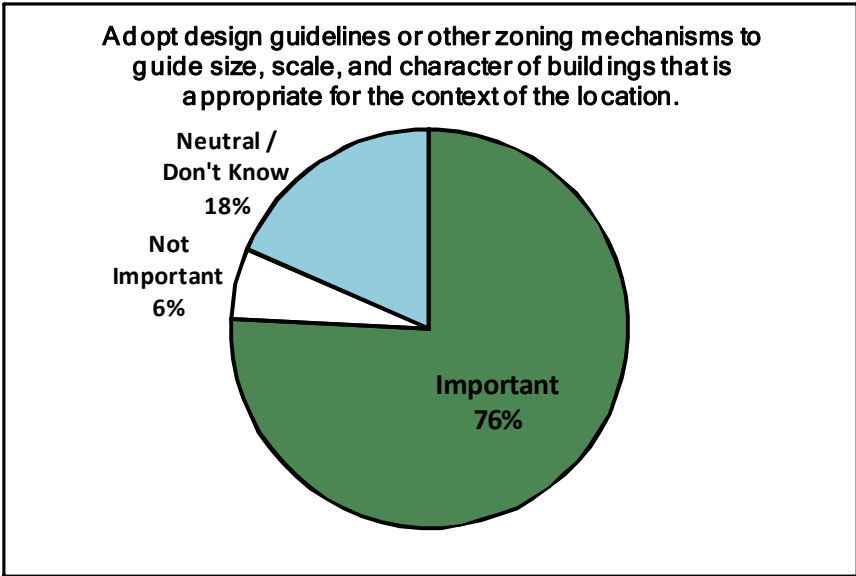
Public water and sewer is limited by line location in the Business- Highway and Industrial zoning districts along Route 146 north of Central Turnpike.

2012 Community Survey

Responses to the 2012 Community Survey help to highlight community opinions on some key land use issues including development in village centers, preservation of the Town’s rural character, and commercial development.

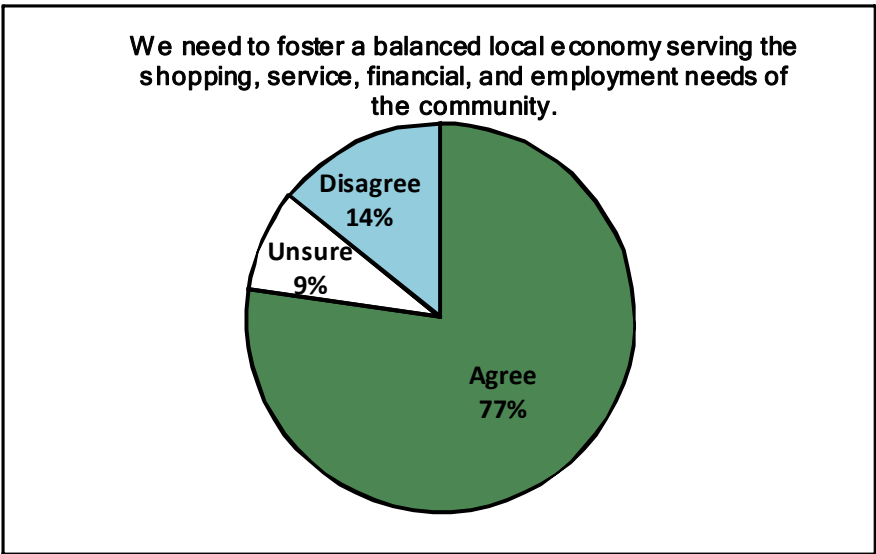
Over two thirds of survey respondents support guided development in village centers if it contributes to the town’s existing character and if it provides local or neighborhood services. Three quarter of respondents agree that adopting design guidelines and other land use regulations are important strategies to assure such development is appropriate.





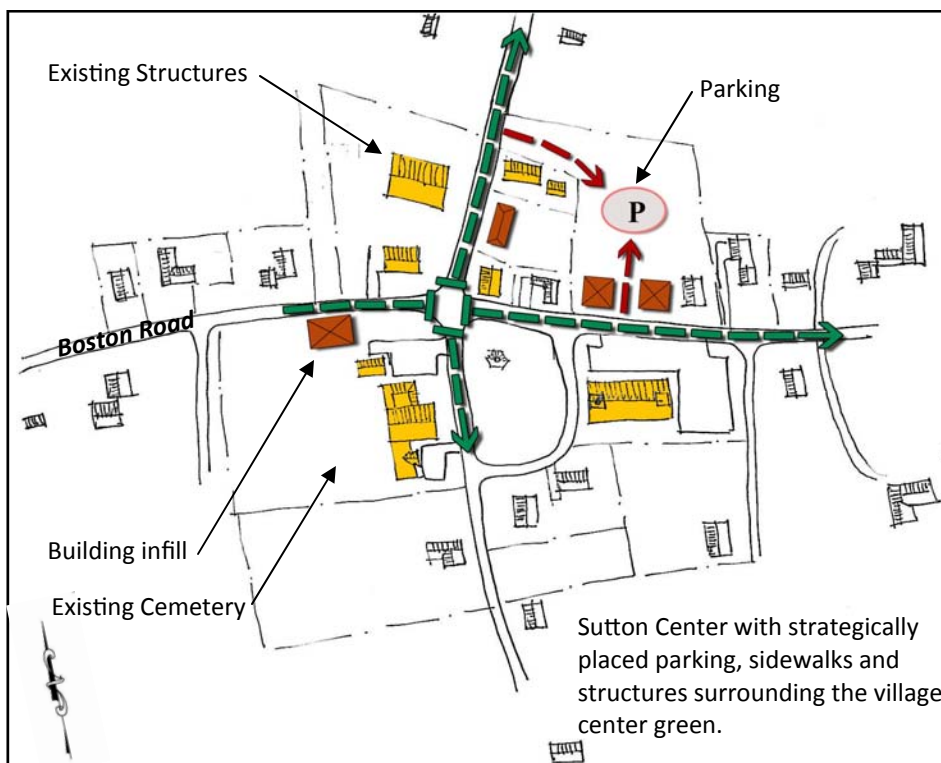
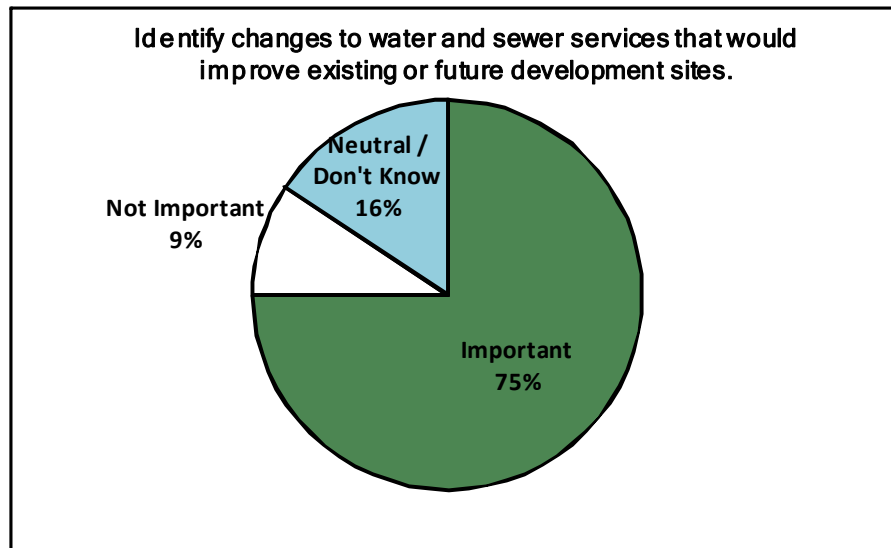
Sutton’s historic and rural character is highly valued by its citizens. Survey results indicate that the elements that most contribute to historic and rural characters are the town’s water resources (lakes, ponds, and waterways), farmland, undisturbed natural areas, and historic structures. Nearly 90% agree the town needs to maintain its open spaces, and natural and cultural resources.

While the community is strongly committed to preserving its sense of place, it also recognizes the need to strengthen its economy and fiscal position by enhancing its commercial and industrial areas. Commercial needs identified as desirable by over half of all respondents include eateries (76%), services that serve the daily needs of residents (69%), “green” businesses (63%) and grocery stores (61%).



LAND USE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 2.2

Seventy five percent of respondents think identifying opportunities to improve water and sewer capacity is an important strategy for strengthening the town's economy.



The sketch above illustrates how infill that meets design guidelines and village center zoning can strengthen a village center, create jobs, and economic development.

Goal LU-1: Maintain the rural and historic character of the various neighborhoods and areas within Sutton.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Preserve the sense of place of Sutton's villages and neighborhoods.*
- ◆ *Maintain a balance of open space within Sutton.*
- ◆ *Protect the town's natural resources.*



Strategies:

- LU-1.1: Identify lands that are critical to Sutton's character and evaluate options for preserving or improving them.
- LU-1.2: Evaluate the benefits of developing a Neighborhood Conservation Bylaw¹ that could help preserve the sense of place of various neighborhoods based on neighborhood values and goals.
- LU-1.3 Consider the value of a Low Impact Development Bylaw² with incentives to control the adverse effects of increased post-development storm water runoff and non-point source pollution associated with new development and redevelopment.
-

Goal LU-2: Support the development and/or expansion of village centers that is in keeping with the Town's character.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Promote economic development and sustainability within the village centers.*
- ◆ *Support local residents' desires to maintain historic aesthetic.*
- ◆ *Allow for potential walkable village center.*



Strategies:

- LU-2.1: Establish zoning for village centers that will allow a mix of small village-scale businesses.
- LU-2.2: Adopt design guidelines or other regulations (e.g. neighborhood conservation bylaw) to guide size, scale and character of buildings and development within designated village centers.
- LU-2.3: Develop a pedestrian and cyclist circulation plan for village centers that identify opportunities and priorities for infrastructure to support connectivity between sites.

Goal: LU-3: Optimize the potential of the town's commercial areas.

Objectives:

- ***Increase diversity of businesses to meet resident needs.***
- ***Create the needed density of businesses to support required infrastructure.***
- ***Improve the physical appeal of the business corridor.***



Strategies:

- LU-3.1: Plan, prioritize and implement public infrastructure improvements (water, sewer, sidewalks, streetscapes, lighting, parks) to encourage and support desired development.
- LU-3.2: Carry out corridor study for Route 146 to identify opportunities for innovative forms of development to promote economic growth and housing.
- LU-3.3: Work with existing land owners to determine feasibility of land to support economic development and attract potential developers.
- LU-3.4: Evaluate and revise as needed existing sign and site design regulations to assure they support desired standards of development.

¹ A Neighborhood Conservation Bylaw is a land use tool that is used to maintain the scale and character of established neighborhoods. The language of the bylaw, generally developed in concert with neighborhood residents, determines the strength or flexibility of the regulations or guidelines.

² Low Impact Development is a land development technique that combines innovative site design with advanced stormwater treatment to maintain the pre-existing hydrologic system of a site and mitigate impacts of stormwater pollution.

ZONING MAP HERE

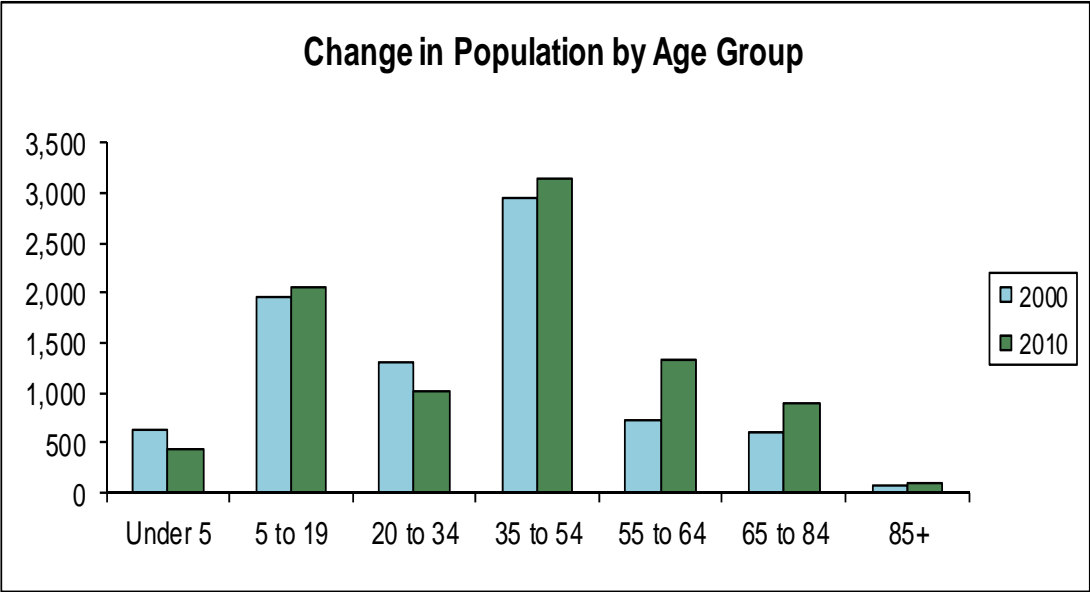
TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



3.0 HOUSING

The decisions that Sutton makes about housing have potential to impact many aspects of the community. As the principal land use, housing makes a considerable contribution to the character of the town. In addition, the availability and affordability of housing directly affects the town’s tax base as well as who lives here. Housing also supports the town’s commercial sector. Adequate and appropriate housing can support community businesses by providing a local workforce.

Sutton’s population based on the 2010 US Census is 8,963 an increase of 8.64% or 713 residents since 2000¹. A breakdown of this number by age group shows that the number of children under 5 and young adults (20 – 34 years) decreased while residents in all age groups over 35 increased. The age with the most dramatic increase was for those residents between the ages of 55 and 64 (82% or 600 residents). Overall, these trends reflect regional and state-wide trends that show an aging population. The median age was 36.5 in 2000 and 42.6 in 2010.



The number of housing units increased 20% between 2000 and 2010, more than double the rate of population growth.

Consider that:

- ◆ About 38% of Sutton households include children under the age of 18.
- ◆ More than one in five households include a residents 65 years of age or older.
- ◆ Nearly 17% of households are occupied by a single resident.

¹ The town census indicated a population of 9,685

In comparison consider that²:

- ◆ Nearly 80% of Sutton’s homes have three or more bedrooms.
- ◆ Nearly 20% of Sutton’s homes have two bedrooms.
- ◆ Less than 1% of Sutton’s homes have only one bedroom.
- ◆ More than two thirds of Sutton’s homes have seven or more rooms.
- ◆ Just over 10% of Sutton’s homes are renter occupied versus owner occupied.
- ◆ Less than 5% of Sutton’s homes are in structures with more than two units.

Total Housing Units as illustrated in the chart below:

1 bedroom	30
2 bedroom	640
3 bedroom	1,600
4 bedroom	815
5 or more bedrooms	124



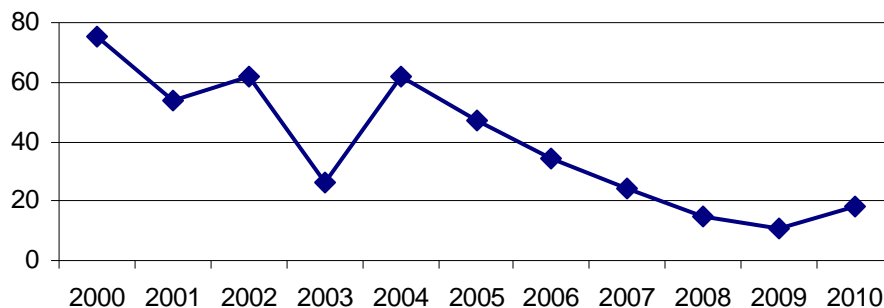
The increase in population and the changing demographics of Sutton’s residents and households may help indicate what types of housing are needed now and may be needed in the future as these trends continue. The increase in the 35 to 54 age group likely indicates a population that is still working and has older children (if any). Those over 55 may be seeking to downsize as children leave home. And the rising senior population may indicate fixed income households in need of smaller and more affordable housing options.

The town should also ask if the availability of housing affects the ability of certain populations to become residents. Is the price and affordability of housing contributing to the declining population of young adults and young children in Sutton? Will the growing population of aging residents continue to find suitable housing options in town?

² Based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

According to the US Census there were 3,394 housing units in Sutton in 2010, up from 2,811 in 2000. The greatest growth occurred during the first half of the century with an average of 48 permits issued a year between 2000 and 2007. That average fell to less than 20 a year for the remainder of the decade.

Annual Building Permits For Single Family Homes 2000 to 2010



During the same ten year span the median sale price of a single family home rose 37% climbing to \$330,000 by 2010. The median sale price of a condominium was \$232,450.

Discussions of housing in Sutton focus on the need to create a variety of housing that meets the needs of a greater diversity of households with a particular emphasis on housing that is affordable to those on limited incomes – singles, young families, and seniors. Discussions also center on the potential for 40B developments (see below) that residents see as threatening to the town’s rural and historic character. Continued discussions, education, inquiry and study are needed to help the town reach consensus on how best to influence housing development.

Affordable Housing

Generally, affordable housing is any housing for which total costs (rent or mortgage plus utilities) are no more than 30% of a household's annual income. For many state and federal housing programs, the phrase "affordable housing" means total housing costs that are affordable (costing no more than 30% of income) for a family earning at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI). Currently in the Worcester Metro Region, 80% of AMI for a family-of-four is \$64,200.

In order for a household to be eligible to rent or purchase a restricted unit (affordable housing) the household’s income can not exceed 80% of the area median income adjusted for household size. Over 19% of Sutton’s households have an annual income of \$60,000 or less which would make them eligible for affordable housing under the Commonwealth’s Chapter 40B statute.

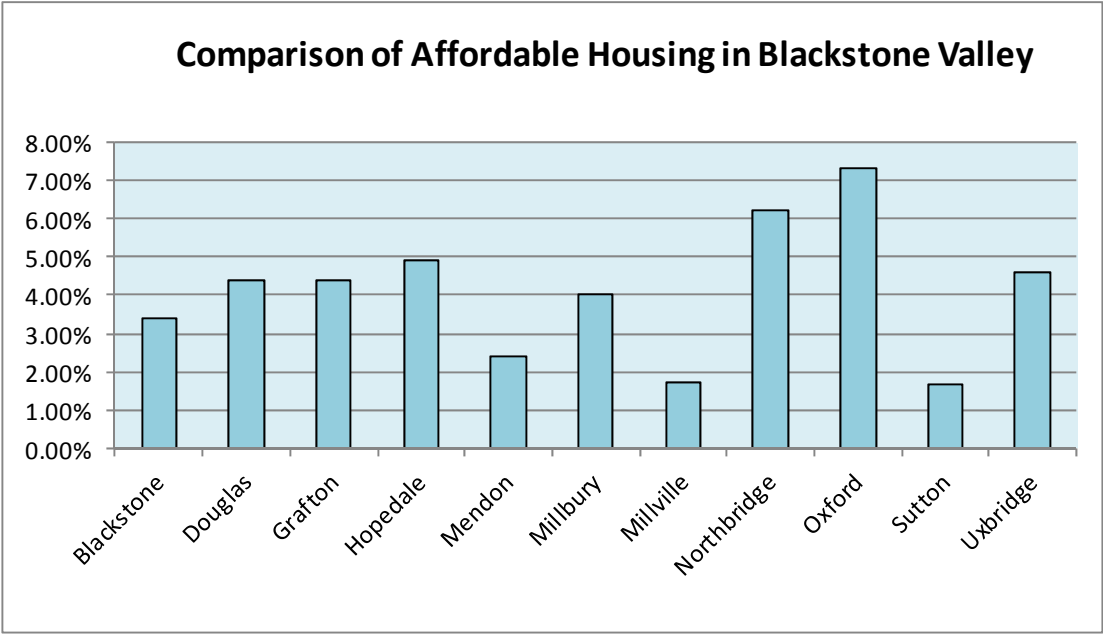
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts encourages communities to set aside 10% of its total year-round housing stock to meet the housing needs of low and moderate income residents (affordable housing). If a municipality in Massachusetts has less than 10% of its year-round housing set-aside for low- and moderate-income residents, it is considered not to be meeting the regional and local need for affordable housing. Not meeting this affordability standard makes the town susceptible to a state override of local zoning for creation of affordable housing through the Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Process.

Overrides to zoning can include, for example, multi-family housing in areas designated for only single family housing, residential development in non-residential zoning districts, smaller lot sizes, greater height, or reduced setbacks.

In order to be counted as "affordable" units toward the 10% mandated by Chapter 40B housing statute and be listed on the municipality’s Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) the units have to be built utilizing state/ federal subsidies or be developed through a Local Initiative Program³ and must be deed-restricted to remain affordable for a certain time period (5 years for rental and 15 years for owner-occupied units).

There are 55 housing units in Sutton on the State’s Affordable Housing Inventory, representing 1.65% of Sutton’s housing stock. In a statewide comparison, Sutton is in the bottom 20% of communities on the provision of affordable housing. The figure below compares the percent of affordable housing in Sutton to neighboring communities in the Blackstone Valley.

³ Local Initiative Program (LIP) is a state housing program that allows communities to develop affordable housing without federal or state subsidies. Housing must meet state criteria.

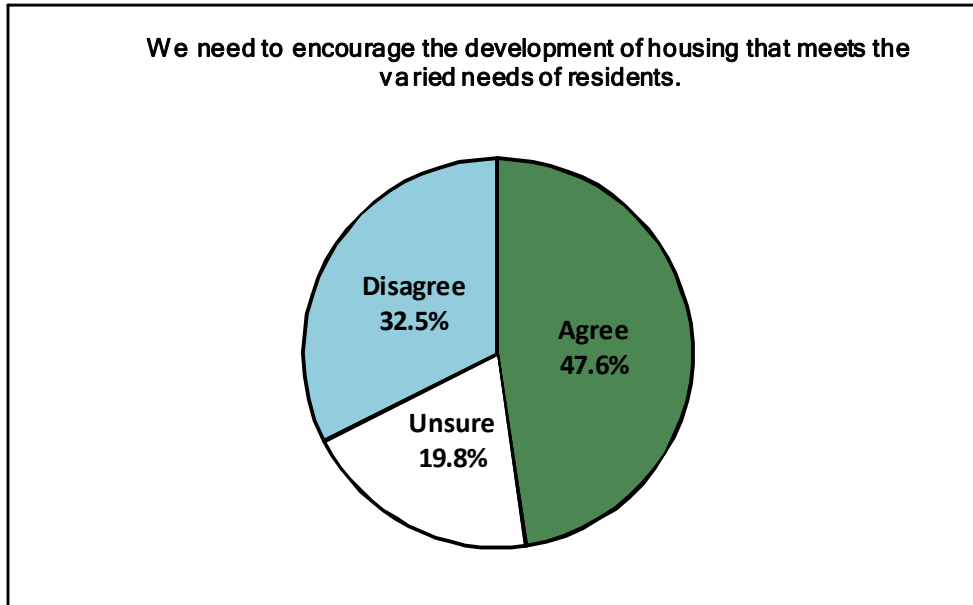


Affordable housing can take many forms including single family residences, town houses and condominiums, multi-family rental units, age restricted housing, and non-traditional housing such as co-housing. Strategies should focus on encouraging the form of development that meets the financial, physical and social needs of householders while at the same time contribute to the sense of community that Sutton values so highly.

Local Initiative Projects (LIP) is a state housing program that allows communities to develop affordable housing without federal or state subsidies so long as that housing meets certain state criteria. LIPs offer communities an opportunity to work with developers to create affordable housing that is consistent with local zoning regulations and design guidelines. The state provides substantial technical assistance to communities developing Local Initiative Projects.

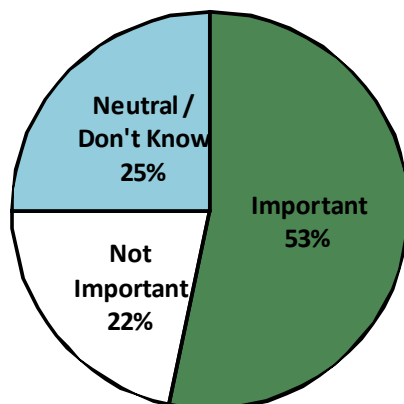
2012 Community Survey

The 2012 Community Survey indicates that there is not consensus on the issue of housing in Sutton. Less than half of survey respondents feel the town needs to encourage the development of housing that meets the varied needs of residents. It appears, from responses to open questions that much of the disagreement centers on the issue of “affordable housing”: how it looks and who it serves.



Slightly more than half of respondents however, feel that the Town should develop a Housing Production Plan to identify ways to increase affordable housing and meet the state’s affordable housing goals. Survey results also seem to indicate that residents need more information about affordable housing as one out of four respondents indicated that they did not know if they would support the development of a Housing Production Plan. See figure on the following page.

Complete a Housing Planned Production Plan (state approved plan that identifies ways to increase affordable housing and meet state housing goals).

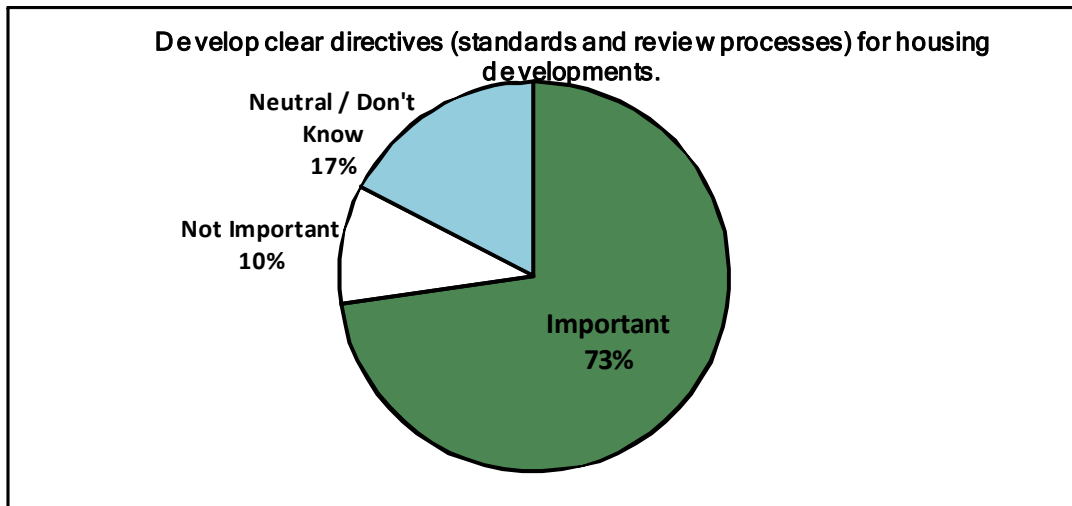


Sutton residents also do not overwhelmingly support a particular type of housing. The figure below shows the percent of survey respondents that wanted to see more or less of the housing types identified.

	More	Less
Over-55 (age-restricted) housing	46.3%	14.8%
Small Single-family residential (1 to 2 bedroom)	41.7%	8.6%
Assisted living	37.5%	14.6%
Affordable housing	34.1%	23.1%
Large single-family residential (3+ bedrooms)	25.3%	17.2%
Other (please specify below)	20.0%	12.5%
Multi-Family dwellings / condominiums	17.5%	42.0%
Rental units	16.3%	35.2%
Accessory apartments	14.9%	30.3%

HOUSING SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 3.2

Survey respondents do however agree about the need to develop housing that is in harmony with the town's rural and historic character. Nearly three quarters of respondents support developing standards and review processes for housing developments.



Goal H-1: Encourage the development of housing that meets the varied needs of residents.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Provide support for a variety of housing types.*
- ◆ *Promote housing that is compatible with community character and context.*
- ◆ *Integrate affordable housing throughout the community.*
- ◆ *Move toward meeting the state's required 10% Affordable Housing goal.*

Strategies:

- H-1.1: Develop standards and review procedures for the development of housing units requiring special permits.
- H-1.2: Complete a Housing Production Plan.
- H-1.3: Identify opportunities for Local Initiative Projects to increase affordable housing and housing diversity.
- H-1.4: Consider adopting an Inclusionary Housing Bylaw¹.
- H-1.5: Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing accessory apartment zoning regulations to increase housing diversity and better utilize existing housing stock. Revise as needed.
- H-1.6: Develop a public outreach program to share information about benefits and styles of multi-family and affordable housing.



¹ An Inclusionary Housing Bylaw is a land use regulation that requires the provision of Affordable Housing units (or a payment in lieu of) if the development creates units in excess of the bylaw's threshold number.

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN

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4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INTRODUCTION 4.1

The Town recognizes that economic development is vital to the future success of the community. Appropriate economic development creates jobs across a range of skill and wage levels, provides goods and services for the community and region, improves municipal tax revenue, contributes to the public realm, and helps to define a community's character.

Sutton's location offers businesses a number of advantages. It is near the junction of Interstate 90 and Route 146 providing easy highway access. It is less than an hour to Boston (a direct ride along the Mass Pike) and less than a half an hour south to Providence or north to Worcester (146). The I-495 technology belt is just minutes away. Route 146 is a No Access highway south of Cold Spring Brook so no new curb cuts can be granted along this five-mile section of roadway. Rail access is a potential advantage with commuter trains providing service in Worcester and neighboring Grafton as well as freight service located in town.

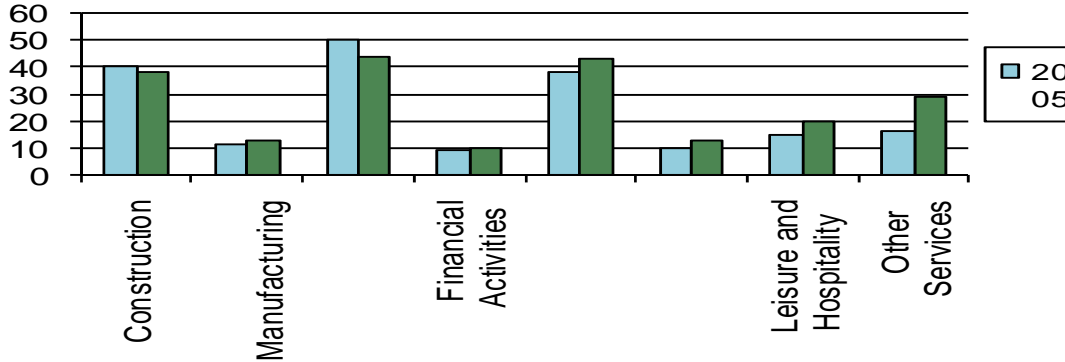
Currently less than 8% of Sutton's land is zoned for business, office and industrial uses primarily along the Route 146 Corridor but also within the small villages of Manchaug and Wilkinsonville. These and other lands support a number of commercial enterprises like those below. A few of these large employers have over 250 employees .

<i>Atlas Box & Crating Co, Inc.</i>	<i>Pleasant Valley Country Club</i>
<i>BWP Distributors Inc</i>	<i>J & G Foods Inc</i>
<i>Blackstone National Golf Club</i>	<i>Nu-England Service Company</i>
<i>Mayfield Plastics Inc</i>	<i>Renaud Electric & Communications Inc</i>
<i>Polyvinyl Films Inc</i>	

In total Sutton supports over 200 commercial enterprises providing a diversity of employment opportunities. Roughly two thirds of all Sutton jobs are in the service producing domain (trade, transportation, communication, finance, insurance, real estate, and such professional activities as health care, advertising, accounting, and personal services).

	2005	2010
Construction	40	38
Manufacturing	11	13
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	50	44
Financial Activities	9	10
Professional and Business Services	38	43
Education and Health Services	10	13
Leisure and Hospitality	15	20
Other Services	16	29
	189	210

Change in Industries 2005 - 2010



Sutton has positioned itself to take advantage of potential economic growth by taking a regional approach to economic development.

To facilitate business development as part of the Blackstone Valley Economic Target Area (ETA)¹, the Town has established several Economic Opportunity Areas (EOA) enabling the Town to participate in the state's Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP). EDIP is a tax incentive program designed to foster full-time job creation and stimulate business growth. Participating companies may receive state and local tax incentives in exchange for full-time job creation, manufacturing job retention, and private investment commitments².

The Town is also part of the Blackstone Valley Economic Development Commission (seeking state designation as a non-profit, 501 C-3) committed to sound economic growth throughout the Blackstone Valley. The Commission is focused on increasing regional cooperation to leverage opportunities for growth. The Committee, in cooperation with the Central Mass Regional Planning Council, is in the process of mapping the existing roads, water/sewer lines and other infrastructure of the region in order to examine how cooperation between communities might work for the common good³.

The lack of public water and sewer along Route 146 north of Central Turnpike is seen as a primary deterrent to further economic development in Sutton.

2012 Community Survey

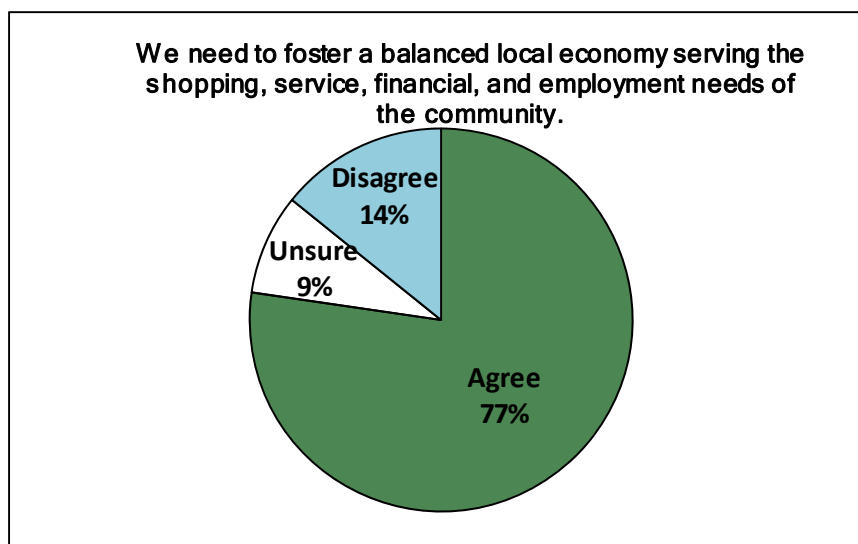
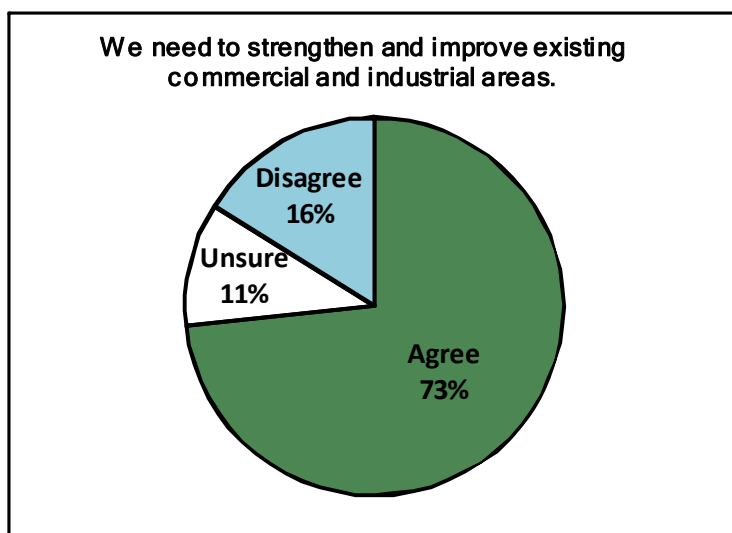
Town residents are strongly supportive of improving existing commercial and industrial areas and of creating a more balanced local economy that provides residents with goods and services, employment opportunities and a more diversified tax base.

¹ State designated areas that meet one of eleven statutory criteria for economic need.

² <http://massecon.com/business-resources/incentives#EDIP>

³ <http://www.blackstonedaily.com/EDC.htm>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 4.2



Survey respondents in particular focused on the need to bring in businesses that would improve their access to goods and services including eateries, services that serve the daily needs of residents, and grocery stores. There is also strong support for “green” businesses.

Strategies that were supported by a majority of survey respondents included identifying changes to water and sewer services that would improve existing or future development sites (75%) and working with owners of existing underutilized commercial properties to ensure future development is mutually beneficial.

Goal ED-1: Strengthen and improve existing commercial and industrial areas

Objectives:

- ◆ *Fosters a balanced local economy.*
- ◆ *Promotes employment opportunities for Sutton residents.*



Strategies:

- ED-1.1: Identify changes to water and sewer services that would improve existing or future development sites.
- ED-1.2: Work with owners of existing underutilized commercial properties to ensure mutually beneficial future redevelopment.
- ED-1.3: Evaluate potential benefits and limitations of expanding or changing commercial and industrial districts and regulations to accommodate targeted uses.
- ED-1.4: Designate locations for innovative development opportunities and support with appropriate regulations.
- ED-1.5: Create a network of strong partnerships at the local, regional and state levels with planning, development and support organizations.



INSERT WATER SYSTEM
MAP

INSERT SEWER SYSTEM
MAP

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



5.0 COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES INTRODUCTION 5.1

The physical structures and variety of services administered from these facilities provide a support framework for residents of the community. Future planning needs to consider the condition of facilities and the types of services that are available through these facilities. A regular schedule of maintenance and upgrades and a consistent review of services is essential to make sure our facilities and services continue to truly serve our residents going forward, while keeping down costs as much as possible. Finally, as a Green Community there is a responsibility to include solar panels and/or other green energy components and energy conservation measures on all existing and future municipal facilities.

Structures:

School Complex – This unique single campus of approximately 260,000 s.f in four different educational areas, was constructed from 1949 through 1999. The Town of Sutton is currently building a new Middle/High School designed to address long term capacity projections. The new Middle School is scheduled to open in the spring of 2013 and the new High School in the summer of 2014.

Municipal Complex- Municipal administrative offices in addition to the center fire station and police station are part of this structure. Constructed in 1981. The main Town Hall contains 14,531 s.f., including the fire department at 2,424 s.f., the police department at 3,234 s.f. and the library at 3,100 s.f. Numerous Code violations exist within the police complex that need to be rectified for the safety of the officers, prisoners and the general public in addition to the efficient operation of the department. The Municipal Complex lacks an adequate HVAC system. While efficient boilers have recently been installed, dated duct and circulation systems and no formal means of cooling, cause great inefficiencies in the building. The Library needs additional space as it is so small that there are issues meeting State standards for purchase of new materials because there is limited space to store new materials. Additionally, space at the Town Hall must be utilized for many programs and the programs are limited as a result of scheduling within this building.

Highway Department-Built in 1950 this 8,424 s.f. building is lacking in just about every way from electrical to roof and obviously in meeting the space needs for a community that has aged 60 years! Add to the basic shortcomings the fact that salt and sand storage is currently not on Town property, and the need for relocation and upgrade of this facility is no longer an option.

Wilkinson Fire Station- This station was originally built in 1946 but underwent renovation in 2007. At 3,760 s.f., the building adequately serves its role as station #3.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES INTRODUCTION 5.1

Manchaug Fire Station- In 2003 the Town undertook construction of a new station #2 in Manchaug to replace the one stall fire station along Main Street constructed with the original textile mills in the 1860s. The recently constructed 6,268 s.f. station has adequate amenities and should serve this region of Town for some years to come.

Sutton Senior Center- Built primarily through a State DHCD grant in 1998, this 5,253 s.f. structure has been such a welcome addition to the area that space needs have already exceeded capacity and more space is needed! The facility also hosts a new 400 s.f. food pantry. There are some issues with heating that need to be addressed, but more space is the overarching concern into the future.

South Sutton Sewer Plant- In 2005 the Town constructed a 110,000 gpd wastewater treatment plant. This facility consists of two buildings: the offices/lab and the process building. The combined 4,220 s.f. are adequate for foreseeable future needs. When the Town reaches 80% capacity on the existing fields, the expansion pits will need to be utilized to expend capacity to 185,000 gpd and pump and processing upgrades may also be necessary.

Other Wastewater Treatment Facilities: The Blackstone Pumping Station currently transports all wastewater from sewered areas north of Central Turnpike to the Town of Millbury. The 10" gravity line from Route 122A into the station and the 8" force main leaving the station and going to Millbury are well over fifty years old and made of asbestos containing materials. There has already been one break in these lines. They will need to be replaced in the near future to maintain service for existing users and to be able to handle flows from future projects. Additionally, as more flow comes on line, this station may also have to be upgraded to handle the flow.

Sutton Transfer station-The 1,400 s.f. of structures located at the Sutton transfer station provide for efficient processing of both solid household waste and recyclables from households town-wide.

Services:

Education: The Sutton School Department provides educational services through a single school complex located at Boston and Putnam Hill Roads. The Simonian Center for Early Learning, Elementary School, Middle and High Schools each currently house approximately 400 students. The Simonian Center has grades pre-school to grade 2, Elementary grades 3 to 5, Middle School grades 6 to 8 and High School grades 9 to 12. Educational services include academics, physical education, art, music, team sports, theatrical productions as well as before and after school programs.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES INTRODUCTION 5.1

Elder Services: The Sutton Senior Center provides the following services for the 60 plus population, Monday thru Friday 8am to 3pm:

Legal Advice	Financial Concerns
Caregiver Support	Mental Health Concerns
Medication Concerns,	Medical Insurance Options
Food Stamp Assistance	Grief and Loss Counseling
Substance Abuse	Home Safety
Stress Relief	Social Concerns,
Meals on Wheels	Lunch (\$2.00 donation)
Social Programming	Transportation
Health and Wellness Clinics	Exercise Programs
Health and Nutrition Advice and Counseling	

Household Waste and Recycling: The Town currently operates a transfer station for household solid waste and recyclables. Utilizing a pay as you throw program, residents purchase Town garbage bags, and other than a nominal membership fee, this is their only cost for using the station. Most recycling is cost free with small fees to cover the expenses of disposing of items like white goods and tires. Currently all household solid waste is trucked off site for incineration and recyclables are transferred to Blackstone to be sold as part of a regional cooperative.

Life Safety and Protection: The Sutton Police, Fire and Highway Departments provide a full range of services related to life safety and protection. From plowing the roads to responding to fire calls, to investigating crime within the community, all three departments are available 24/7. In addition to their daily duties these departments also participate in programs such as School SAFE Training, Citizen Police Academies, Senior Safety Programs, RAD Child Self Defense, Seat Belt and Car Seat Program, etc.

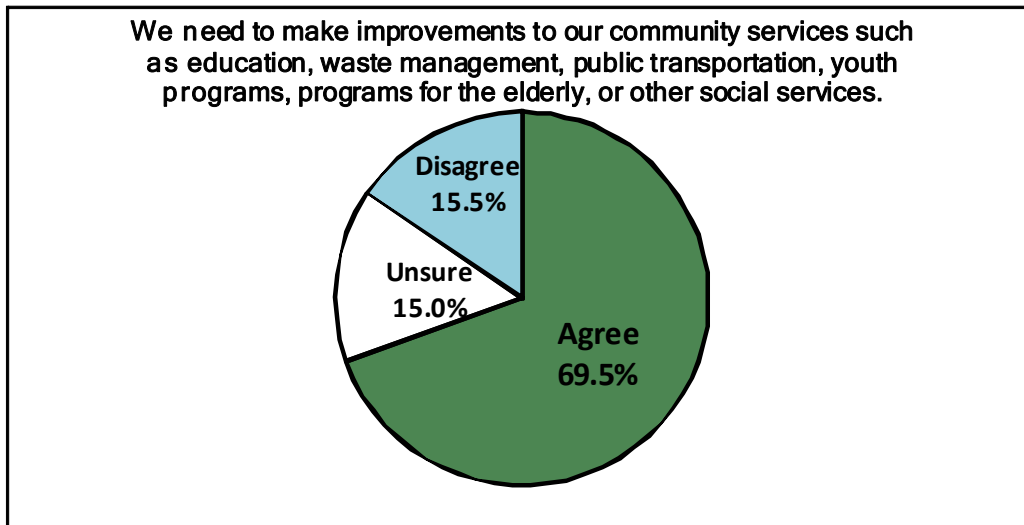
Municipal Services: Tax valuation and collection, veterans services and local cable access programming, dog licensing, voting, public health, economic development, residential and commercial building oversight, zoning administration, recreation, wetland protection, open space and park planning and protection. An ever expanding range of duties and services and performed and provided through the municipal complex Monday through Friday.

Library: The library facility offers the core service of lending books and other multimedia items within the area community. Additionally, the library provides internet access, genealogy assistance, study space, and a wide variety of programs for all ages.

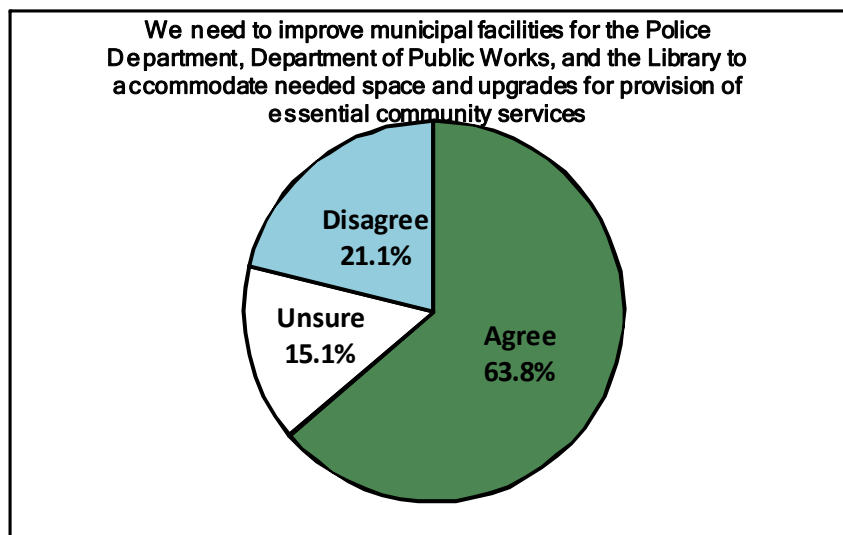
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 5.2

2012 Community Survey

Nearly 70% of respondents to the 2012 survey agreed that we need to make improvements to our community services, and an equally large percentage of residents stated we need to do a better job of informing residents about community services and programs.



Written comments suggest that informing residents is the bigger problem as there were few comments suggesting what services are actually needed other than curb side trash pickup. Over 60% agreed we need to improve several of our municipal facilities.



COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES 5.3

Goal CSF-1: Do a better job of informing residents about community services and programs.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Ensure that residents get the most for their tax dollar.*

Strategies:

- CSF-1.1: Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel regarding community services and programs.
- CSF-1.2 Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel regarding open space access, and recreational uses and amenities open for public use.
- CSF-1.3 Consider creating a welcome package for new residents.



Goal CSF-2: Make improvements to our community services such as education, waste management, public transportation, youth programs, programs for the elderly, or other social services.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Provide community services that serve a broad range the residents and their varying needs.*

Strategies:

- CSF-2.1: Create short follow up survey to mail out with Town Census asking for specific requests and ideas for services and/or programs.



COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES 5.3

Goal CSF-3: Improve municipal facilities for Police Department, Department of Public Works, and the Library to accommodate needed space and upgrades for provision of essential community services.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Ensure that municipal buildings are up to code and adequate to provide residents, visitors and business with the services they need.*



Strategies:

- CSF-3.1: Pursue Massachusetts 2013 Library Design Grant.
- CSF-3.2: Conduct evaluation of all Town facilities and pursue grant opportunities to fund at least a portion of improvements to municipal facilities.
- CSF-3.3: Commence design process for a new Police Department facility.
- CSF-3.4: Commence design process for a new Department of Public Works facility.
- CSF-3.5: Formulate maintenance plan and funding strategy to prolong life of structures and facilities.



Goal CSF-4: Seek opportunities to expand the Town's conservation efforts and develop a strategic approach to green energy production.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Ensure that municipal facilities serve as a model for green energy technology.*



Strategies:

- CSF-4.1: Include solar and/or other energy conservation measures and green technologies on all renovated or new construction

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



6.0 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

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TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION INTRODUCTION 6.1

Our system of roadways, how people utilize them and their condition is key to the safety of those utilizing the system. It can affect many other aspects of the community. Business and residential building locations, for one, are largely driven by ease and quality of access.

Sutton has 125 miles of roadways comprised of: 14.5 miles of state roads, 100 miles of local public roadways and 10.5 miles of private ways. Nineteen of the Town's public roadways have been designated as Scenic Roadways due to the presence of significant shade trees and/or stone walls along their length.

Sutton's major east-west roadway is Central Turnpike serving as a connection between Route 395 and Route 146. This is currently a locally controlled roadway.

Route 146 is Sutton's major north-south corridor. It is classified as a Principal Arterial Highway and handles nearly 35,000 daily vehicle trips. What many people don't know, is that from just south of Cold Spring Brook which crosses under Route 146 2,300 feet south of Boston Road, the highway is "No Access". This means no new curb cuts can be made directly into the highway. While this helps traffic flow and maintenance, it hinders economic development along the remaining five miles of highway in Sutton. The Town also hosts the State "M" Route, a little known state roadway that begins on West Main Street in Millbury just past Beech Street, continues down Singletary Avenue in Sutton, turning right onto Boston Road, then left onto Putnam Hill Road and running south on Main Street in Manchaug and through to Douglas where it ends on Manchaug Street. While many believe Route 122A in Wilkinsonville is a State roadway as it carries a State route number, it is actually under local care and control.

Sutton's 100 miles of public roadway are cared for at the direction of the DPW Director and staff. The department utilizes a multi-year plan funded mainly through Chapter 90 funds. The program centers around a policy of preventative maintenance targeted at dealing with relatively minor infrastructure issues before they become expensive repair or replacement issues and/or cause potential threat to health and safety. Another key consideration of the Highway Superintendent is balancing the desire for adequate roads with the desire to maintain the rural character of Sutton that so many value.

Private Roads have been a bone of contention over the years in many New England towns. Prior to 2007, there was no public policy in Sutton regarding the care and maintenance of private roadways. In 2007 the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen established a minimum standard for width, height clearance and general condition necessary for the Town to continue winter maintenance only of private roads that had been previously maintained. Of the approximately 40 private ways, 14 had been cared for by the Town and in 2007 that number was reduced to eight.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION INTRODUCTION 6.1

Prior to the 1970's, Route 146 existed as a roadway that varied randomly from two lanes to four lanes. This arrangement resulted in numerous head on accidents. Throughout the 1970's and 80's the roadway was reconstructed from a two-lane road to a four-lane, median separated principal arterial highway. Incrementally, local roadway connections were closed off or changed. As usage increased, a light was installed at Boston Road. In 1998 the direct connection of the roadway with the MassPike was completed. Traffic counts jumped and safe and efficient flow at the Boston Road intersection continued to steadily decline. This location is the site of a plethora of traffic incidents annually. Changes in light timing and numerous minor adjustments to geometry have failed to alleviate what can be a backup of more than a mile during the morning and evening commuting hours.



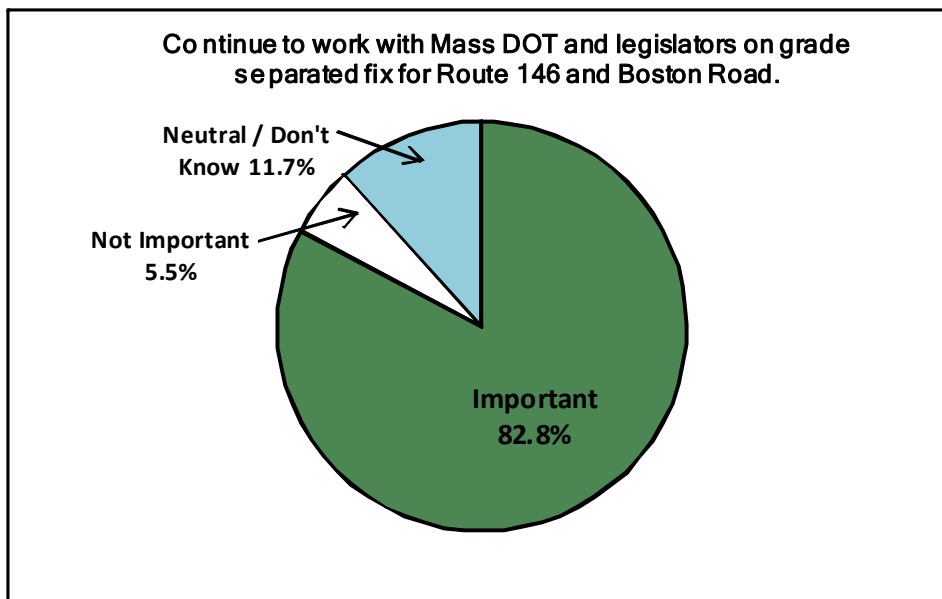
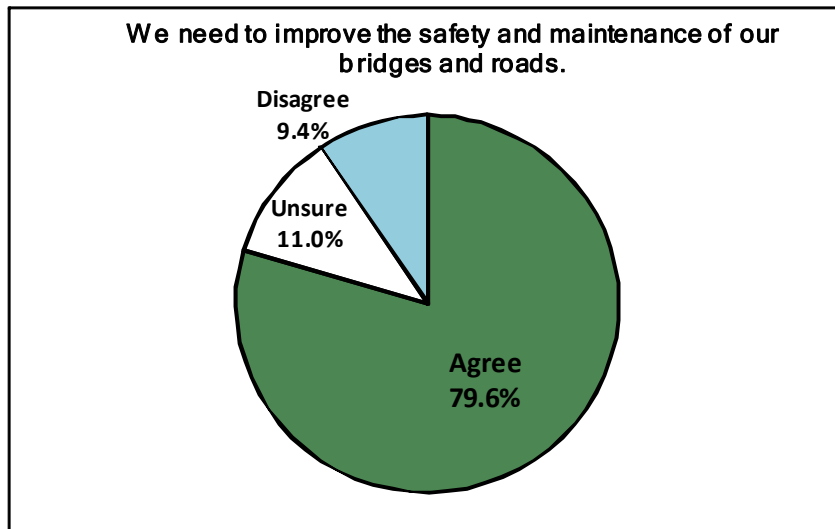
Bridges are another component of our roadway infrastructure that often fall to the bottom of the maintenance list due to the complicated and high ticket maintenance issues. Several bridges have elements that are at a critical point, rated a 4 of 10, or “poor” on the National Bridge Inspection Standard (NBIS) scale.

Lastly, our sidewalk system is lacking in many areas. Generally located in Sutton Center, Wilkinsonville Center, and Manchaug Center, most existing sidewalks are in need of at least some repair. Residents regularly inquire about extensions to the existing system of sidewalks. Sidewalks are required in all new subdivisions. However, if there are only a few lots proposed and no sidewalks to connect into, this requirement is typically waived.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 6.2

2012 Community Survey

Nearly 80% of residents felt the safety and maintenance of our bridges and roads could be improved. Not surprisingly, improving traffic flow and safety at high traffic and congested areas came in a close second (76.5%). Almost 83% of residents felt pursuing a grade separated interchange at Route 146 and Boston Road was an issue that needs resolution.



Not as many residents felt strongly about the need for alternate forms of transportation (52.2%). However, there was significant support (62%) to finish the Blackstone River Bikeway.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES 6.3

Goal TC-1: Improve the safety and maintenance of our bridges and roads.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Ensure a safe roadway system that is viewed as an asset to residents, visitors and business.*

Strategies:



TC-1.1: Make repairs/replace the Depot Street and Blackstone Street Bridges.

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Goal TC-2: Improve traffic flow and safety at high traffic and congestion areas.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Ensure a safe and efficient roadway system that is viewed as an asset to residents, visitors and business.*

Strategies:

TC-2.1: Continue to work with MassDOT and legislators on grade separated interchange for Route 146 and Boston Road.

TC-2.2: Pursue installation of sidewalks around the school complex to provide safe routes to school for those living within a mile.

TC-2.3: Pursue installation/repair and/or expansion of sidewalks within village centers.

TC-2.4: Renovate Manchaug Road bridge as recommended by Manchaug Master Plan.



TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES 6.3

Goal TC-3: Provide other forms of transportation opportunities such as bikeways, trains, buses, etc.

Objectives:

- ♦ *Develop all possible forms of transportation to lessen congestion on roadways, help reduce fossil fuel demands, and to utilize these alternate forms of transportation as a business and tourism marketing component.*



Strategies:

- TC-3.1: Actively work with Federal and State officials and legislators to finish the Blackstone River Bikeway.
- TC-3.2: Develop bike trails within Town.
- TC-3.3: Facilitate use of railroad spur.

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



7.0 NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES INTRODUCTION 7.1

Cultural resources are defined as the collective evidence of past activities and the accomplishments of people. Buildings, objects, features, locations, and structures with scientific, historic, and cultural value are all examples of cultural resources. Cultural resources are finite and non-renewable resources that once destroyed cannot be returned to their original state. Cultural resources include prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, historic standing structures, bridges, cemeteries, and monuments, among others.

Natural resources occur within environments that exist relatively undisturbed by mankind, in a natural form. Natural resources are derived from our surroundings. Many of them are essential for our survival while others are used for satisfying our wants

We enjoy a wealth of natural resources that include:

- ◆ Blackstone River and Mumford River
- ◆ Lakes and Ponds
- ◆ Watersheds
- ◆ Significant woodlands
- ◆ Open fields
- ◆ Wetland meadows, marshes and swamps

Sutton possesses significant unique cultural resources that include:

- ◆ Water's Farm
- ◆ Manchaug and Wilkinsonville VillageS
- ◆ Sutton Center and West Sutton National Historic Districts
- ◆ Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor
- ◆ Numerous historic remnants and remains
- ◆ Numerous cemeteries

Green Energy

The Town of Sutton has effectively positioned itself to take advantage of the Commonwealth's focus on green (renewable) energy as a means to a cleaner energy future, reduced dependency on foreign oil, and increased economic opportunity.

In 2008 the Massachusetts Senate passed An Act Relative to Green Communities (Massachusetts Green Communities Act: S.B. 2768) that seeks to expand investment in energy efficiency measures that will reduce electricity demand and deliver energy savings to residents and businesses. The Act creates the **Green Communities Program** to provide up to \$10 million/year (statewide) to help municipalities promote energy efficiency and produce renewable and alternative energy facilities. To be designated a Green Community communities must adopt:

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES INTRODUCTION 7.1

- ◆ As-of-right siting for renewable or alternative energy generating, manufacturing or R&D facilities in designated locations
 - ⇒ Zoning District and Regulations for Solar Photovoltaic Facilities
 - ⇒ Expedited permitting process for approving such facilities within one year of the filing of an application;
- ◆ Energy use baseline and a program to reduce energy use by 20% within 5 years;
- ◆ Policy to purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles; and
- ◆ Policy to minimize lifecycle energy and water costs for all new commercial, industrial and large-residential construction.
 - ⇒ Stretch Energy Code

Sutton met these obligations and was designated a Green Community in 2011, one of just 86 in the Commonwealth to date. As a result the Town was awarded \$143,000 to fund energy conservation measures including installation of a heat recovery system at the Municipal Complex and energy efficient parking lot lighting; energy audits of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Sutton Senior Center and Fire Stations and funds toward implementation of measures identified; and a hydro feasibility study of the Stevens and Manchaug Dams.

A hydro study is also underway and energy audits are complete which evaluate which work items give us biggest kilowatt savings. Air exchange is being designed. LED/Induction lights are being reconsidered vs. other audit items to make sure they give the town the biggest savings. If this is not adequate savings, this funding will be re-programmed to better saving items.

Sutton was also recently selected as one of seventeen communities to participate in the 2012 “Solarize Mass program. Through Solarize Mass, the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC)¹ will provide education and marketing support and rebates to help selected communities implement a community-wide solar PV program for small-scale solar projects. MassCEC will provide technical support and host free educational meetings in the pilot communities to educate people about the benefits of installing solar and to drive interest in implementing the technology. MassCEC will also issue Request for Proposals (RFP) from solar integrators for bulk purchasing business models in which solar installation costs are based on a tiered structure that provide lower costs with increased capacity of solar installed within the community.

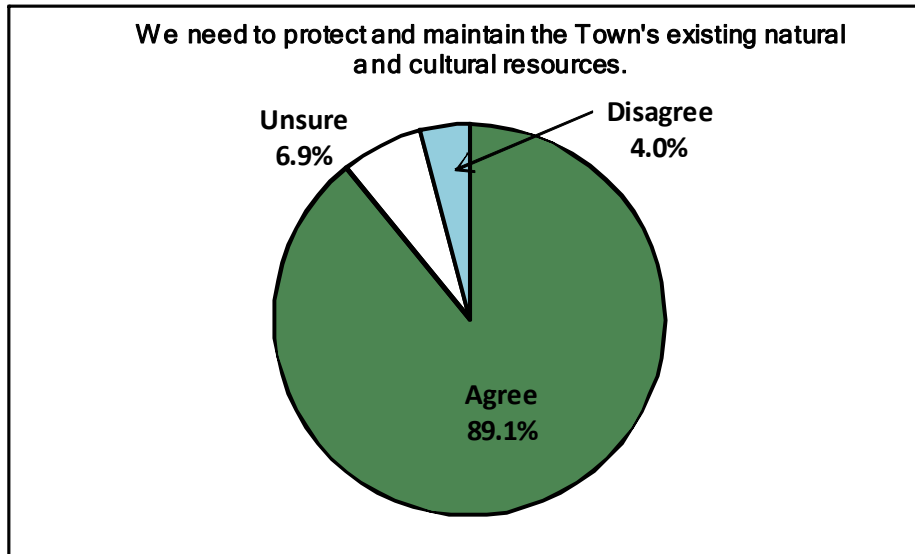
Sutton continues to seek opportunities to expand the Town’s conservation efforts and develop a strategic approach to green energy production. The Town’s goal is to require solar or green energy technologies to be implemented with every public building project going forward.

¹ MassCEC is a state agency dedicated to the advancement of clean energy technologies, companies and projects in the Commonwealth that help create high-quality jobs and long-term economic growth. MassCEC holds and manages the state's Renewable Energy Trust Fund.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 7.2

2012 Community Survey

A resounding 89% of respondents agreed that we need to protect and maintain the Town's existing natural and cultural resources. Many indicated that these resources lakes, ponds , waterways (50.1%), active farms (48.5%), and undisturbed natural areas (47.8%) contribute the most to what they value about the physical aspects of the Town, and were what people noted were essential ingredients that make the Town special.



Nearly 70% of residents also felt that we should consider the potential for our cultural and natural resources to act as revenue generators. Many communities highlight their historic assets and their natural resources to help attract visitors to the area.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES 7.3

Goal NCR-1: Protect and maintain the Town’s existing natural and cultural resources.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Provide a well maintained system of natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment of residents and visitors that will continue to help make Sutton a well-rounded and desirable community to live and work within.*



Strategies:

- NCR-1.1: Complete the process to place Wilkinsonville and Manchaug Villages on the State and National Register of Historic Places.
- NCR-1.2: Create opportunities to inform citizens and particularly students about the history and cultural aspects of Sutton.
- NCR-1.3: Formulate a maintenance plan and establish funding mechanism to ensure longevity of municipally owned assets.
- NCR-1.4: Promote awareness of Water’s Farm as a unique Town-owned resource, both natural and cultural.
- NCR-1.4: Explore renovation and reuse of the historic Methodist Meeting House (Beehive) adjacent to Sutton Center Store.



Goal NCR-2: Consider the potential for natural and cultural resources to act as revenue generators for the Town.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Utilize natural and cultural resources as a marketing asset to attract residents, visitors, and business but also to help grow funding to maintain these assets.*



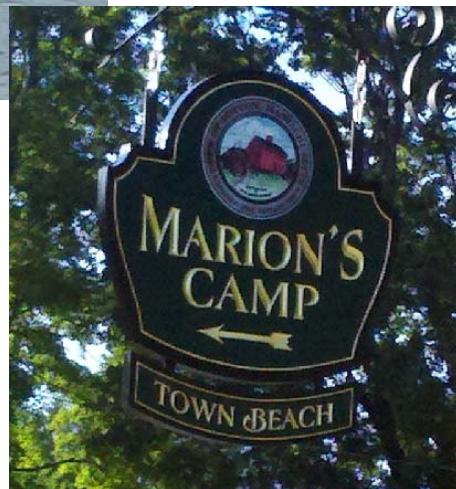
Strategies:

- NCR – 2.1: Update the Town’s self-guided tour booklets for historic areas and post information online and on local access channel.
- NCR-2.2: Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel regarding the public use of natural and cultural resources.

INSERT WATER RESOURCES
MAP

INSERT HISTORIC AND SCENIC RE-
SOURCES MAP

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



8.0 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION INTRODUCTION 8.1

Open Space assets are those that provide open vistas for both viewing and use. Recreational assets provide an opportunity for passive and/or active recreation. Open Space and Recreational lands generally include both public and private lands that are open to the public or provide some benefit to the public in terms of their existence. For example while you may not be able to actively use the farm next to you, its existence has various forms of value to the community as a whole.

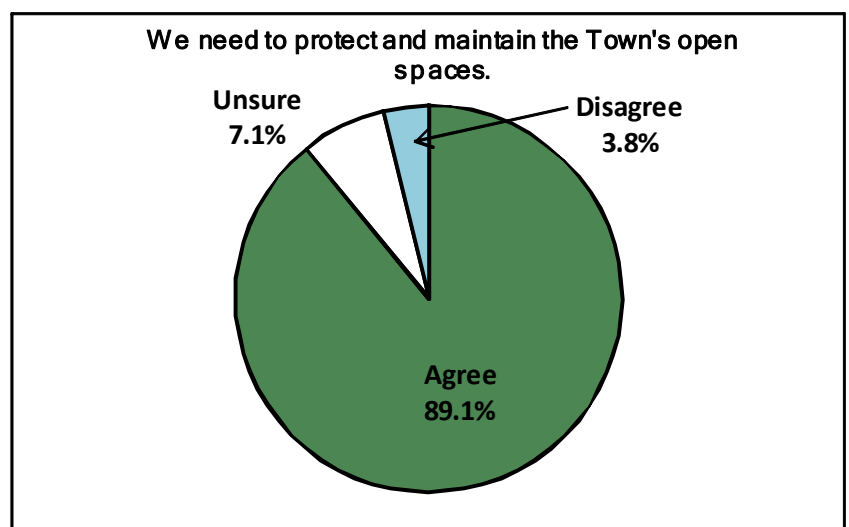
- ◆ Town – 500+ acres including Shaw Farm, Marion’s Camp, Steven’s Pond, the school complex and various smaller pieces of land town-wide
- ◆ State - 2,200+ acres including Sutton State Forest, Purgatory State Forest, the Fisheries and Wildlife Stockwell Pond Management Area and others.
- ◆ Water Districts - 1,100+ acres
- ◆ Metacomet Land Trust – 110+ acres
- ◆ Permanent private restrictions – 120+ acres.
- ◆ Golf courses - 400+ acres,
- ◆ Soccer Clubs – 25+ acres
- ◆ YMCA Camp Blanchard - 33 acres
- ◆ Chapter 61 A-C – 3,700+ acres

The Town also contains the Blackstone and Mumford Rivers which have small riverside parks and 6 lakes and ponds. Lake Singletary and Manchaug Pond have public access points.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 8.2

2012 Community Survey

Open spaces are clearly every bit as important to residents as our cultural and natural resources. Over 89% of respondents stated Sutton’s open space should be protected and maintained and over 81% were in favor of promoting them for potential economic benefit.



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES 8.3

Goal OSR-1: Protect and maintain the Town's Open Spaces.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Provide a well maintained system of open space for the enjoyment of residents and visitors that will continue to help make Sutton a well-rounded and desirable community to live and work within.*



Strategies:

- OSR-1.1: Evaluate opportunities to work with private landowners of farm, forestry and outdoor recreation and (Chapter 61A-C holdings) to consider possible Town acquisition or other land protection options.
- OSR-1.2: Identify required maintenance of each facility and establish funding strategy.



Goal OSR-2: Promote, maintain, and maximize the potential economic benefit of open space and recreation resources.

Objectives:

- ◆ *Utilize open space and recreation as a marketing asset to attract residents, visitors, and business but also to help grow funding to maintain these assets.*



Strategies:

- OSR-2.1: Complete the implementation of the Marion's Camp Master Plan recommendations in coordination with Lake Singletary Lake Association.
- OSR-2.2: Pursue completion of the Shaw Farm Master Plan.
- OSR-2.3: Create brochure and post information online detailing park and recreation location and contacts.
- ORS 2.4: Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel with information on public recreational access including waterways and state and local parks.

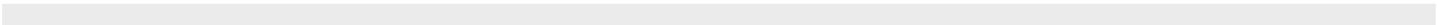
INSERT OPEN SPACE MAP

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN



9.0 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

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IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

LANDUSE	NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal LU-1: Maintain the rural and historic character of the various neighborhoods and areas within Sutton.				
LU-1.1 Identify lands that are critical to Sutton's character and evaluate options for preserving improving them.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/ Board of Selectmen
LU-1.2 Evaluate the benefits of developing a Neighborhood Conservation Bylaw that could help preserve the sense of place of various neighborhoods based on neighborhood values and goals.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission, Planning Department
LU-1.3 Consider the value of a Low Impact Development Bylaw with incentives to control the adverse effects of increased post-development storm water runoff and non-point source pollution associated with new development and redevelopment.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission, Planning Department
Goal LU-2: Support the development and/or expansion of village centers that is in keeping with the Town's character.				
LU-2.1 Establish zoning for village centers that will allow a mix of small village-scale businesses.		2	2019-2025	Planning Department, Planning Board
LU-2.2 Adopt design guidelines or other regulations (e.g. neighborhood conservation bylaw) to guide size, scale and character of buildings and development within designated village centers.		2	2019-2025	Planning Department, Planning Board
LU-2.3 Develop a pedestrian and cyclist circulation plan for village centers that identify opportunities and priorities for infrastructure to support connectivity between sites.		2	2019-2025	Highway Department
Goal LU-3: Optimize the potential of the town's commercial areas				
LU-3.1 Plan, prioritize and implement public infrastructure improvements (water, sewer, sidewalks, streetscapes, lighting, parks) to encourage and support desired development.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/ Board of Selectmen
LU-3.2 Carry out corridor study for Route 146 to identify opportunities for innovative forms of development to promote economic growth and housing.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/ Board of Selectmen
LU-3.3 Work with existing land owners to determine feasibility of land to support economic development and attract potential developers.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/ Board of Selectmen
LU-3.4 Evaluate and revise as needed existing sign and site design regulations to assure they support desired standards of development.		ongoing	ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board

HOUSING	NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal H-1: Encourage the development of housing that meets the varied needs of the residents.				
H-1.1 <i>Develop design standards and review procedures for the development of housing units requiring special permits.</i>		1	2013-2018	Planning Department, Planning Board
H-1.2 Complete a Housing Production Plan.		2	2019-2025	Town Administrator/ Board of Selectmen
H-1.3 Identify opportunities for Local Initiative Projects to increase affordable housing and housing diversity.		2	2019-2025	Town Administrator/ Board of Selectmen
H-1.4 Consider adopting an Inclusionary Housing Bylaw.		3	2026-2032	Planning Department, Planning Board
H-1.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing accessory apartment zoning regulations to increase housing diversity and better utilize existing housing stock. Revise as needed.		1	2013-2018	Planning Department, Planning Board
H-1.6 Develop a public outreach program to share information about benefits and styles of multi-family and affordable housing.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator w/ Planning Department

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal ED-1: Strengthen and improve existing commercial and industrial areas				
ED-1.1 Identify changes to water and sewer services that would improve existing or future development sites.		1	2013-2018	Sewer Department w/ Others
ED-1.2 Work with owners of existing underutilized commercial properties to ensure mutually beneficial future redevelopment.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Planning Department
ED-1.3 Evaluate potential benefits and limitations of expanding or changing commercial and industrial districts and regulations to accommodate targeted uses.		2	2019-2025	Planning Board
ED-1.4 Designate locations for innovative development opportunities and support with appropriate regulations.		1	2013-2018	Planning Department/Planning Board
ED-1.5 Create a network of strong partnerships at the local, regional and state levels with planning, development and support organizations.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Planning Department

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES		NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal CSF-1: Do a better job of informing residents about community services and programs.					
CSF-1.1 Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel regarding community services and programs.			1	2013-2018	Town Clerk/Town Administrator
CSF-1.2 Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel regarding open space access, and recreational uses and amenities open for public use.			1	2013-2018	Town Clerk/Town Administrator
CSF-1.3 Consider creating a welcome package for new residents.			1	2013-2018	Town Clerk/Town Administrator
Goal CSF-2: Make improvements to our community services such as education, waste management, public transportation, youth programs, programs for the elderly, or other social services.					
CSF-2.1 Create short follow up survey to mail out with Town Census asking for specific requests and ideas for services and/or programs.			2	2019-2025	Town Administrator/ School Department/Council on Aging/and others
Goal CSF-3: Improve municipal facilities forth Police Department, Department of Public Works, and the Library to accommodate needed space and upgrades for provision of essential community services.					
CSF-3.1 Pursue Massachusetts 2013 Library Design Grant.			1	2013-2018	Library Staff
CSF-3.2 Conduct evaluation of all Town facilities and pursue grant opportunities to fund at least a portion of improvements to municipal facilities.			1	2013-2018	Town Administrator
CSF-3.3 Commence design process for a new Police Department facility.			1	2013-2018	Police Department
CSF-3.4 Commence design process for a new Department of Public Works facility.			1	2013-2018	Highway Department
CSF-3.5 Formulate maintenance plan and funding strategy to prolong life of structures and facilities			1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Highway Department
Goal CSF-4: Seek opportunities to expand the Town's conservation efforts and develop a strategic approach to green energy production.					
CSF-4.1 Include solar and/or other energy conservation measures and green technologies on all renovated or new construction municipal facilities.			2	2019-2025	Town Administrator

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION		NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal TC-1: Improve the safety and maintenance of our bridges and roads.					
TC-1.1 Make repairs/replace the Depot Street and Blackstone Street Bridges.			2	2019-2025	Highway Department/Town Administrator
Goal TC-2: Improve traffic flow and safety at high traffic and congestion areas.					
TC-2.1 Continue to work with MassDOT and legislators on grade separated interchange for Route 146 and Boston Road.			1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Board of Selectmen and others
TC-2.2 Pursue installation of sidewalks around the school complex to provide safe routes to school for those living within a mile.			1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Board of Selectmen and others
TC-2.3 Pursue installation/repair and/or expansion of sidewalks within village centers.			3	2026-2032	Highway Department
TC-2.4 Renovate Manchaug Road bridge as recommended by Manchaug Master Plan.			2	2019-2025	Town Administrator/Highway Department
Goal TC-3: Provide other forms of transportation opportunities such as bikeways, trains, buses, etc.					
TC-3.1 Actively work with Federal and State officials and legislators to finish the Blackstone River Bikeway.			1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Planning Department
TC-3.2 Develop bike trails within Town.			3	2026-2032	Town Administrator/Recreation Commission
TC-3.3 Facilitate use of railroad spur			2	2019-2025	Town Administrator w/ Others

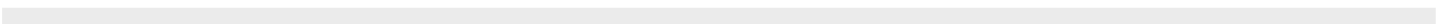
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES	NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal NCR-1: Protect and maintain the Town's existing natural and cultural resources.				
NCR-1.1 Complete the process to place Wilkinsonville and Manchaug Villages on the State and National Register of Historic Places.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission
NCR-1.2 Create opportunities to inform citizens and particularly students about the history and cultural aspects of Sutton.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission/Town Administrator
NCR-1.3 Formulate maintenance plan and establish funding mechanism to ensure longevity of municipally owned assets.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission/Town Administrator
NCR-1.4 Promote awareness of Water's Farm as a unique Town-owned resource, both natural and cultural.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission/Town Administrator
NCR-1.5 Explore renovation and reuse of the historic Methodist Meeting House (Beehive) adjacent to Sutton Center Store.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission/Town Administrator
Goal NCR-2: Consider the potential for natural and cultural resources to act as revenue generators for the Town.				
NCR-2.1 Update the Town's self-guided tour booklets for historic areas and post information online and on local access channel.		2	2019-2025	Historic Commission
NCR-2.2: Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel regarding the public use of natural and cultural resources.		1	2013-2018	Historic Commission/Staff
NCR-2.3: Explore the use of wind, solar, and water resources for green energy.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Planning Department

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION	NOTES	PRIORITY	TIME TABLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Goal OSR-1: Protect and maintain the Town's Open Spaces.				
OSR-1.1.1 Evaluate opportunities to work with private landowners of farm, forestry and outdoor recreation and (Chapter 61A-C holdings) to consider possible Town acquisition or other land protection options.		3	2026-2032	Town Administrator
OSR-1.1.2 Identify required maintenance of each facility and establish funding strategies.		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator/Recreation Commission
Goal OSR-2: Promote, maintain, and maximize the potential economic benefit of open space and recreation resources.				
<i>OSR-2.1 Complete the implementation of the Marion's Camp Master Plan recommendations in coordination with Lake Singletary Lake Association.</i>		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator w/others
<i>OSR-2.2 Pursue completion of the Shaw Farm Master Plan.</i>		1	2013-2018	Town Administrator w/ others
OSR-2.3 Create a brochure and post information online detailing park and recreation location and contacts.		1	2013-2018	Recreation Commission/Staff
OSR-2.4 Create a brochure and post information online and on local access channel with information on public recreational access including waterways and state and local parks.		1	2013-2018	Recreation Commission/Staff

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN

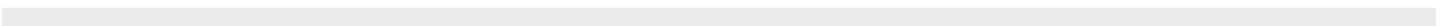
10.0 APPENDICES

- A. Public Workshop**
- B. Public Presentation**
- C. Town Survey**



TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN

A. PUBLIC WORKSHOP



First Public Workshop—October 22, 2011

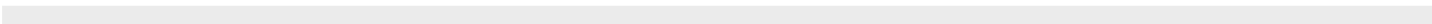
The first public workshop for Sutton’s Master Plan was held on Saturday, October 22, 2011 at Sutton Memorial High School. The workshop was a half day event and invitations were sent to every Sutton household. The program included introductory remarks with a presentation of the Master Plan Committee’s work to date. Also presented was how the workshop would empower the citizens with a voice to discuss town issues that the Master Plan could address . The input gathered would assist the committee in crafting a vision of the town’s future. Lastly, the timeframe for the draft and final Master Plan was presented to the group. The presentation portions of the workshop was televised on the local cable access channel.

The attendees dispersed into smaller groups averaging five to eight people each with a moderator at each table. A list of questions for each Master Plan topic was given to each group to help facilitate discussions. The consultant group gathered information from each group and summarized some of the highlights of the workshop at the end of the morning.

Comments from the workshop are shown on the following pages.

TOWN OF SUTTON MASTER PLAN

B. PUBLIC PRESENTATION



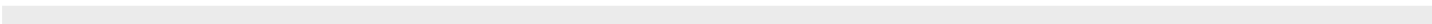
Public Presentation—November 17, 2011

An update of the Master Plan’s progress was presented at the Town Hall on Thursday evening, November 17, 2011. The presentation was televised on the local cable access channel. The progress included a formal summary of citizen’s input during the workshop, committee work done to date and future schedule for the draft and final Master Plan.

The following pages reflect the power point presentation given at the meeting.

TOWN OF SUTTON
MASTER PLAN

C. TOWN SURVEY



Town Survey—January-February 2012

The town decided to prepare and distribute a town-wide survey. The survey was distributed to each household to ensure that every citizen could provide input even if one was unable to attend the public meetings. Manual as well as online digital responses were received. Many citizen’s suggested ideas and concerns that helped create a more comprehensive Plan.

The following pages reflect the survey summary results.