



FAIRHAVEN 2040

Town of Fairhaven Master Plan



Public Meeting

June 13 2017



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Agenda

- **Welcome and Introductions**
- **Master Plan Progress to Date**
- **Presentation:**
 - Review Draft Vision Statement, Goals, and Recommendations
- **Breakout Group Discussion:**
 - Our Vision Statement: Where do we want to be in 20 years?
 - Our Goals: What do we want to achieve in 20 years?
 - Implementation Strategies: How can we get there?
- **Report Back/Adjourn**
- **Exit Dot-Voting Exercise:** Which actions/recommendations should be prioritized?



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Master Plan Progress to Date

- Existing Conditions Analyses completed
- Stakeholder interviews and questionnaires conducted
- Extensive Public Engagement Activities:
 - First Public Meeting held in April 2017
 - Online public opinion survey received 141 responses
 - “I Wish Fairhaven...” comment boards at schools

~ THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION! ~



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Community Assets – *what we heard!*

History

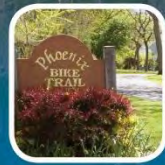
Renewable-Energy
Farmland
Safe-Neighborhood
Sense-of-Community
Small-Businesses
Environment
Diversity
Culture
Snorkeling
Students
Sustainability
Bountiful
Trees

Waterfront



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Community Issues – *what we heard!*

Economic Development
Climate Change
Government Transparency
Loss of Open Space
Empty Commercial Space
Convolutioned Speedway on bridge
Resources Lack of Technology
Waterfront Access
Overspending
Aging Population
Civic Engagement
Lack of Rental Homes
Visionless



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Purpose of Today's Meeting

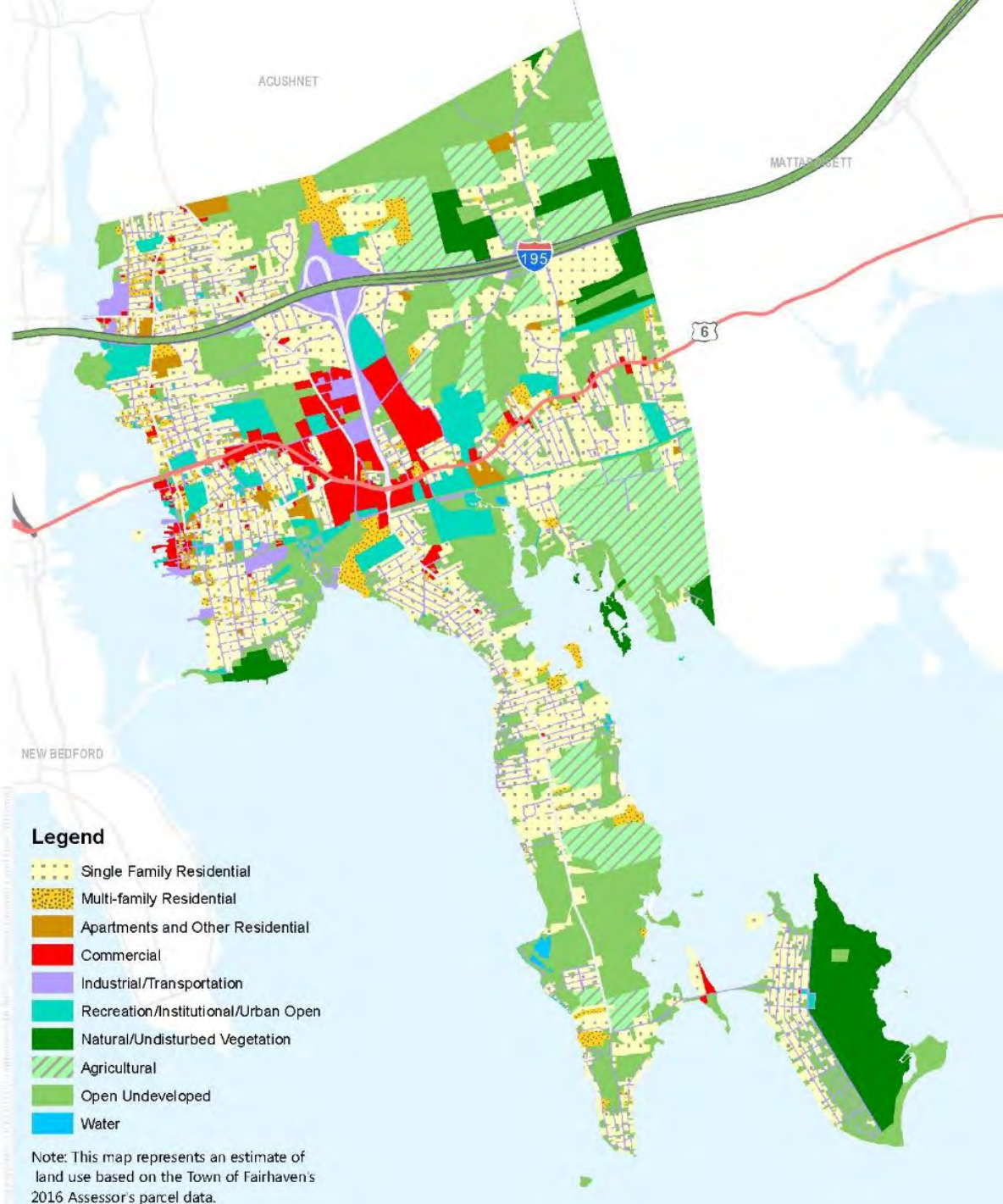
- Review and refine Master Plan Vision Statement, Goals, and Recommendations
- Prioritize Goals and Recommendations to inform the development of the Implementation Program

DRAFT

Vision, Goals, and Recommendations



A Town of many places... many characteristics





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Fairhaven 2040 Vision Statement

By 2040, Fairhaven will be regionally known as a **rural coastal community** where its **unique history and built and natural characteristics are preserved and celebrated**. The Town's sense of community will be enhanced by **well-balanced land uses** where **strategic infill development** rejuvenates existing residential neighborhoods, regional and local commercial nodes, and industrial areas while **valuable farm lands, open spaces, natural habitats, and coastlines are protected**.

The Town supports its residents of all ages, abilities and income levels with a **variety of housing choices** and provides **quality employment opportunities, education, recreation, and other town services** to those living, working, and visiting here. The Town will **stand on a strong financial footing** while making **essential investments to improve the quality, capacity, and sustainability of its facilities and services**.



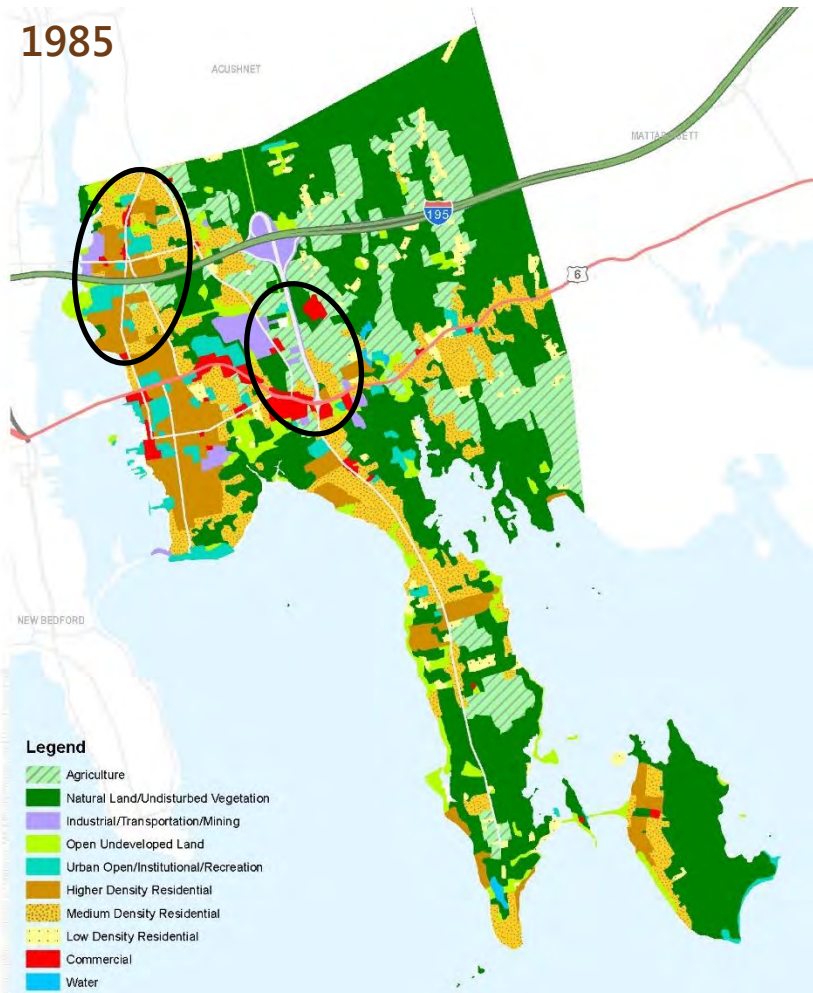
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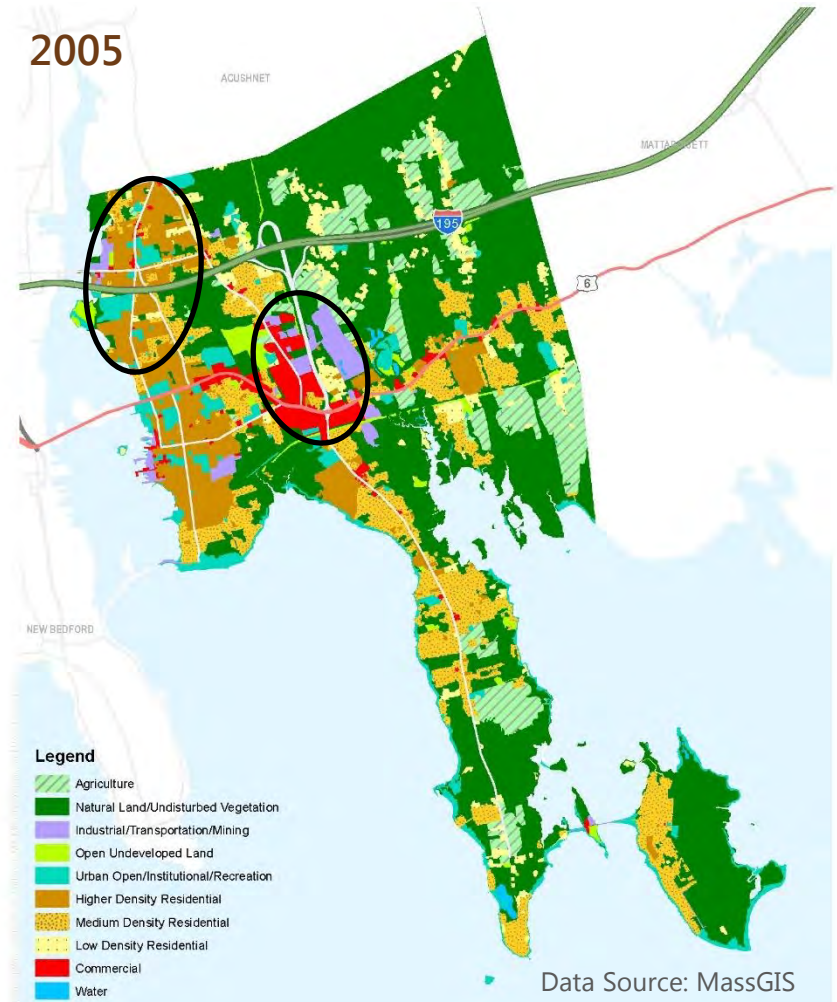


Land Use

1985



2005





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Goals and Recommendations – Land Use

Goal 1: Balance growth and preservation.

Recommendations:

1. Preserve rural characteristics by protecting open spaces and supporting remaining working farms through continuous community preservation efforts, particularly partnerships with the Buzzards Bay Coalition.
2. Encourage infill commercial and residential development in existing, established areas where water and sewer services are provided.
3. Differentiate industrial zones and business zones to encourage business and commercial developments in appropriate locations within the community.



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Goals and Recommendations – Land Use

Goal 2: Encourage strategic redevelopment in the Route 6 commercial area.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a detailed Route 6 commercial area revitalization plan to guide redevelopment. The plan should incorporate analysis of appropriate types of redevelopments, scale/dimension/design of such developments, as well as potential zoning changes and infrastructure and services needed to support these redevelopments.
2. Consider creating Route 6 mixed-use overlay zoning district to stimulate mixed use commercial and residential redevelopment.



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Goals and Recommendations – Land Use

Goal 3: Promote neighborhood commercial nodes and small local businesses.

Recommendations:

1. Adopt effective zoning to remedy non-conforming historic uses for small neighborhood businesses.
2. Review and update zoning to allow more flexibilities that support small business development, such as home-based business, residential commercial mixed use, etc.

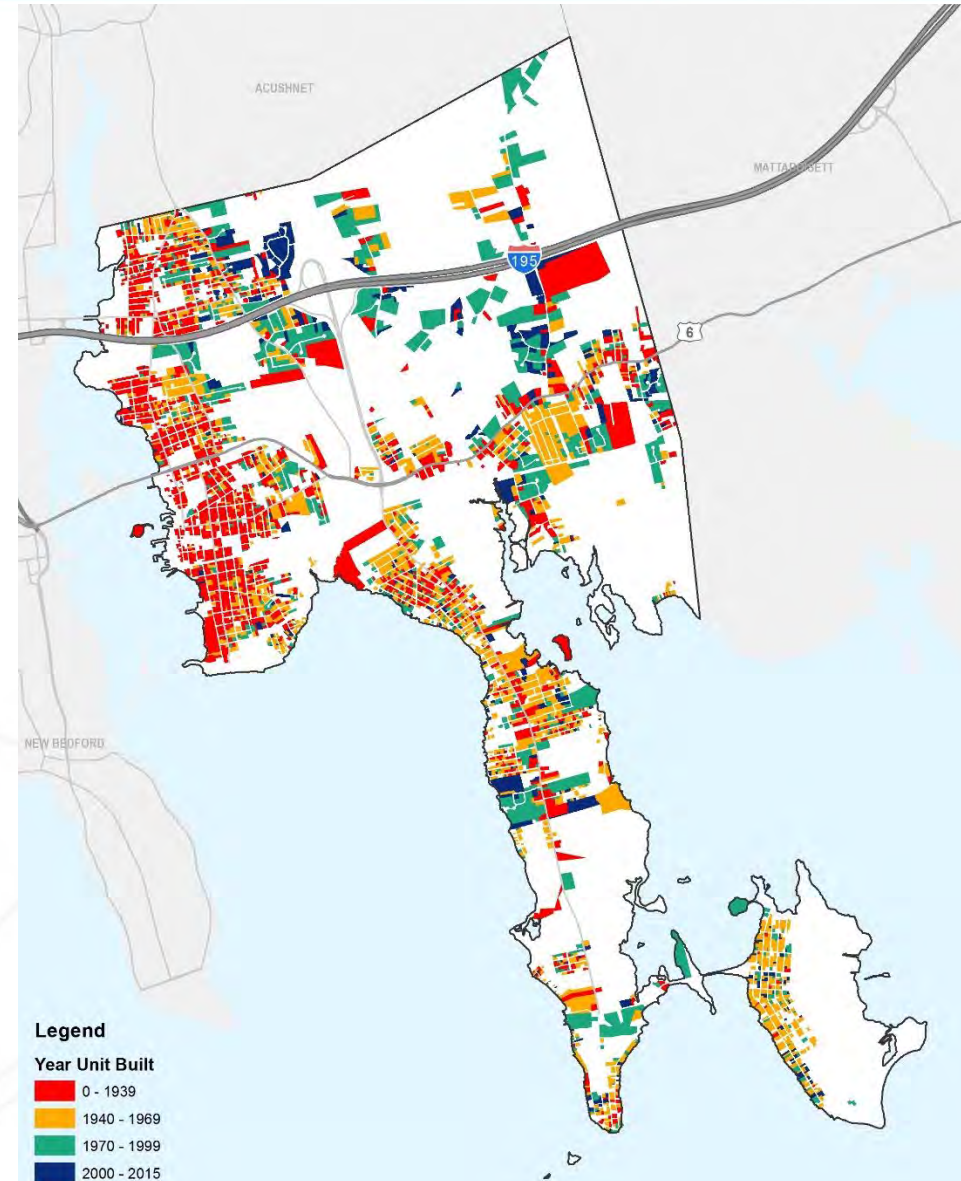


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Housing





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Goals and Recommendations – Housing

Goal 1: Keep future residential development in or near existing residential areas to maintain the village character.

Recommendations:

1. Encourage infill residential developments in existing residential neighborhoods that reflect the historic and cultural characters of various neighborhoods.
2. Explore possibilities of housing conversion of existing municipal and/or commercial buildings and housing rehabilitation of blighted properties.



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Goals and Recommendations – Housing

Goal 2: Maintain and encourage a variety of housing that is affordable to non-elderly individuals and families of all income levels.

Recommendations:

1. Identify potential sites, possibility through municipal land assemblage or public/private partnership, for non-elderly affordable rental housing developments utilizing the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.
2. Consider adopting an inclusionary zoning bylaw to require affordable housing in any residential development that requires a special permit.
3. Provide more flexibility and incentive in the Accessory Dwelling Unit bylaw to encourage the creation of market rate or affordable rental units that support moderate to low income residents.
4. Consider allowing mixed-use residential and commercial developments in established service and employment centers as a means to expand market-rate housing stock.



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Goals and Recommendations – Housing

Goal 3: Continue providing affordable and age-appropriate housing options for senior populations in the community.

Recommendations:

1. Pursue affordable housing programs and funding at the identified two-acre site off of Main Street adjacent to Oxford Terrace Apartments.
2. Provide more flexibility and incentive in the Accessory Dwelling Unit bylaw to encourage the creation of smaller housing units that supports downsizing seniors to age in place.
3. Explore zoning tools, such as performance zoning and density bonuses, to encourage development of age-appropriate market-rate ownership units designed to serve the needs of an elderly population, e.g. attached or detached condominium units with first floor bedroom/bathroom suits, accessible grades, attached garages, and maintenance support, etc.

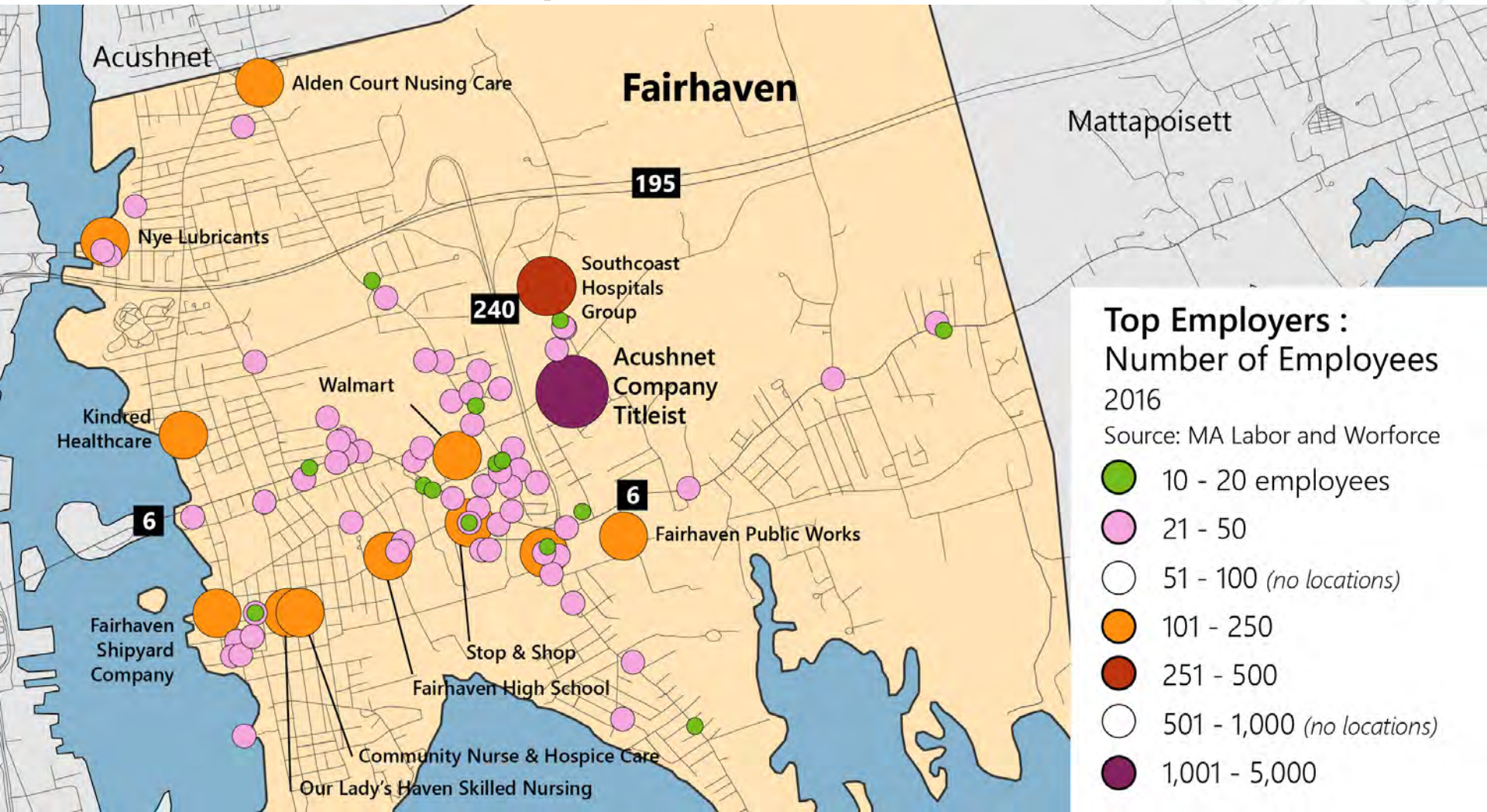


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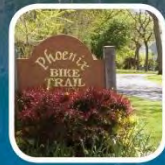
Economic Development





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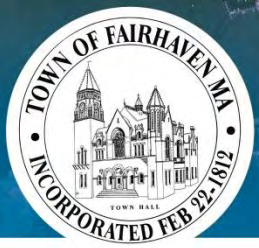


Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 1: Preserve the commercial viability of the working waterfront and seek balance with neighboring land uses, while simultaneously exploring opportunities to make the waterfront more accessible to the community.

Recommendations:

1. Hire a planning firm specializing in waterfronts to create a redevelopment plan for the working waterfront that would preserve key commercial zones, improve vehicular circulation, emphasis pedestrian access, and create a better tourist/public realm experience along the waterfront.
2. Evaluate streets along the working waterfront for a possible conversion to one-way to improve traffic movements and reduce conflicts.



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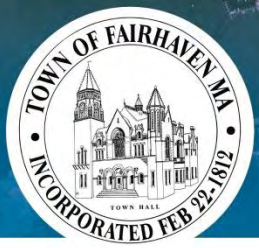


Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 1: Preserve the commercial viability of the working waterfront and seek balance with neighboring land uses, while simultaneously exploring opportunities to make the waterfront more accessible to the community.

Recommendations: (cont'd)

3. Track and to the extent possible integrate with the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan being performed in 2017 on behalf of the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission.
4. Explore the needs of infrastructure upgrades to support the long-term viability of the working waterfront in light of the foreseeable sea level rise, in concert with the recommendation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan effort.



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Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 2: Maintain healthy commercial occupancies along Route 6 and in other commercial nodes and retain service related jobs wherever possible.

Recommendations:

1. Work with major commercial property owners to determine potential large-scale vacancies before they occur to initiate early strategic discussions for maintaining occupancies or redeveloping the site.
2. Work with large employers such as Acushnet and Southcoast Medical Center to identify strategies for retaining/growing employment base and meeting future space needs.
3. Consider introduction of tax credit/tax abatement programs for job creation.



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Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 3: Encourage mixed-use projects on key redevelopment parcels in support of a live, work, play environment.

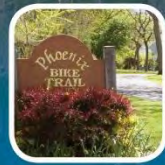
Recommendations:

1. Consider a joint town/property study to engage a real estate advisory firm to create a redevelopment strategy for a key commercial property with an unhealthy level of vacancy.
2. Explore town related functions occupying spaces in vacant commercial buildings whenever appropriate.
3. Promote mixed-use development through land use, zoning, and development incentives.



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Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 3: Encourage mixed-use projects on key redevelopment parcels in support of a live, work, play environment.

Recommendations: (cont'd)

4. Develop a detailed revitalization plan to guide redevelopment of commercial nodes in town. The plan should incorporate analysis of appropriate types of redevelopments, scale/dimension/design of such developments, as well as potential zoning changes and infrastructure and services needed to support these redevelopments.
5. Consider creating a Route 6 mixed-use overlay zoning district to stimulate mixed use commercial and residential redevelopment. Making provisions for mid- to high-density residential will be important.



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Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 4: Revise business regulations and enhanced programs to continue to support the incubation and growth of small businesses.

Recommendations:

1. Plan and potentially fund a small-scale, low-cost business incubator to be housed in vacant commercial space along Route 6.
2. Adopt effective permitting procedures for small neighborhood businesses.
3. Review and update zoning to allow more flexibilities that support small business development, such as home-based business, residential commercial mixed use, etc.
4. Revisit signage ordinance to allow for more flexibility for businesses.



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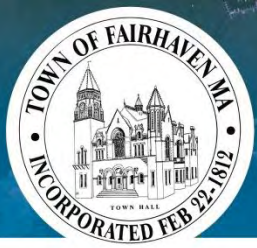


Goals and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal 5: Collaborate with New Bedford and other nearby towns on issues of workforce training/regional economic development to elevate the profile of South Coast.

Recommendations:

1. Consider engagement of a market/branding firm to develop a targeted campaign for the South Coast.
2. Partner with New Bedford to develop a joint economic development strategy for the Harbor.
3. Join regional effort to support the South Coast Rail extension.
4. Explore future economic development opportunities in and around the harbors as catalyzed by the upcoming replacement of the Fairhaven-New Bedford bridge.

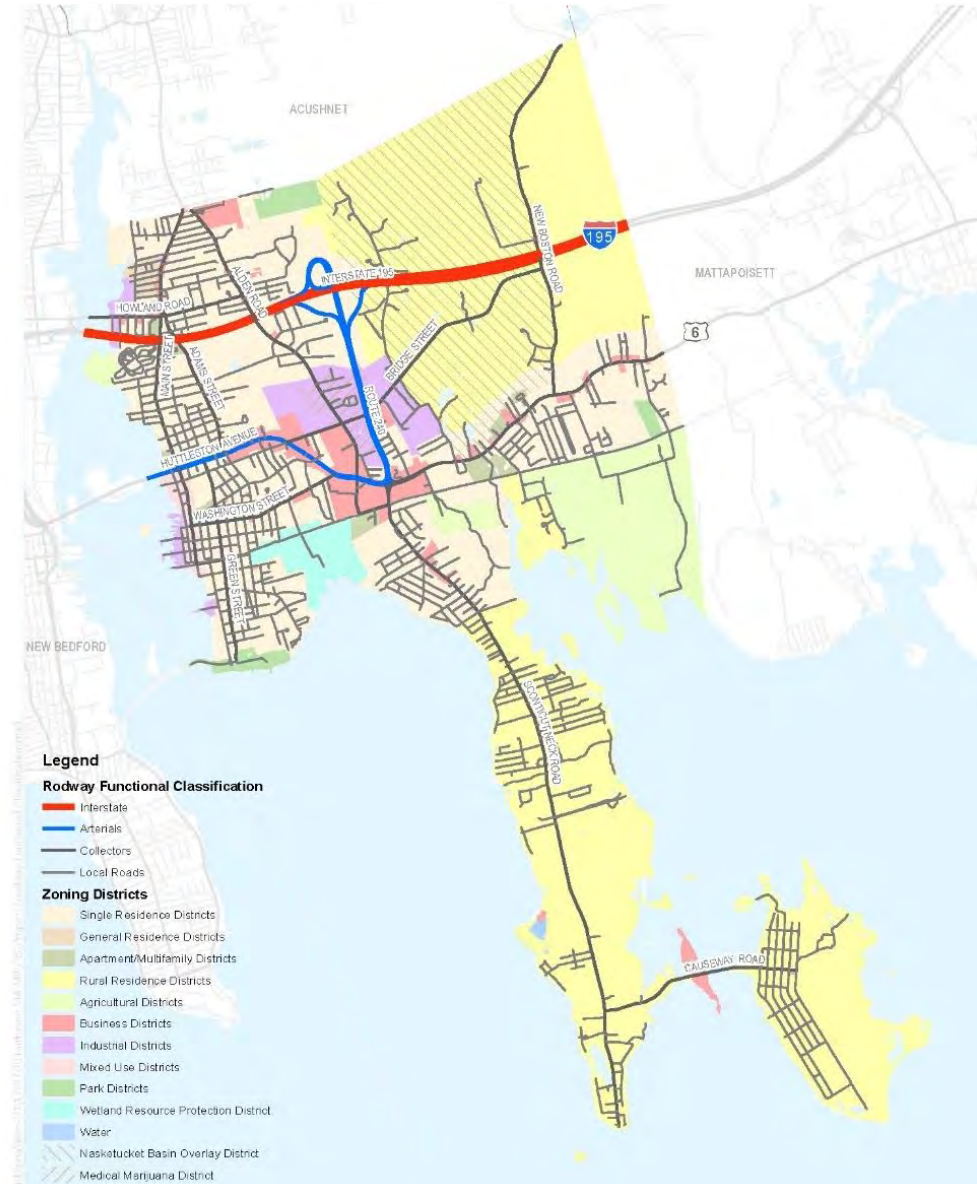


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Transportation





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Goals and Recommendations – Transportation

Goal 1: Become a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community by expanding existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a Town-wide Complete Streets Policy and apply for MassDOT Complete Streets grants
2. Focus new sidewalk construction in areas with missing segments and around attractions (e.g. Downtown, Schools and the Bike Path).
3. Use signage and pavement markings to define a Town-wide on-street bicycle network.
4. Work with MassDOT and the City of New Bedford to provide a safe bicycle connection to the proposed New Bedford Transportation Center.
5. Educate the community on bike rules and safety, including “Safe Routes to Schools” and other use of bike facilities.



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Goals and Recommendations – Transportation

Goal 2: Increase the use of public transit by Town residents and employees.

Recommendations:

1. Join regional efforts to support the South Coast Rail extension.
2. Educate residents on available existing and future public transit services (post schedules in public places, including public school, Town Hall and the library).
3. Work with the SRTA, neighboring communities and local businesses to enhance the existing local shuttle service.
4. Work with SRTA to add support facilities (benches, shelters, parking, etc.) at existing SRTA bus stops.
5. Work to expand door-to-door service for disabled and aging residents.



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Goals and Recommendations – Transportation

Goal 3: Improve Town-wide traffic flow and safety.

Recommendations:

1. Work with MassDOT to advance safety improvements at HSIP-eligible locations, particularly the intersection of Route 6 and Bridge Street.
2. Evaluate streets surrounding the Downtown and waterfront for possible conversion to one-way to improve traffic movements and on-street parking.
3. Improve wayfinding signage through-out the Town.
4. Work with the police department to develop a strategic traffic enforcement plan.
5. Address safety issues related to heavy truck traffics in North Fairhaven near the quarry.



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Goals and Recommendations – Transportation

Goal 4: Improve maintenance of Town-wide transportation system.

Recommendations:

1. Prepare a sidewalk inventory and construction/maintenance plan.
2. Prepare a Town-wide pavement management plan.
3. Work to upgrade existing pedestrian facilities to conform to current ADA/AAB standards.
4. Work with MassDOT to upgrade existing traffic signals along Route 6 and Route 240.
5. Upgrade existing pavement markings and signage Town-wide.



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Public Facilities and Services





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Goals and Recommendations — Public Facilities and Services

Goal 1: Develop plans and funding to rebuild, expand, or replace key public facilities, and the staff needed to support the Town operations.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a Facilities Master Plan for all Town buildings that identifies near, mid, and long term improvements (and costs), so that the Town will have a comprehensive inventory of the required maintenance and capital improvements needed for its public facilities.
2. Develop a plan to implement the recommendations identified in the Facilities Master Plan.
3. Assess the need to add staff and enhance necessary staff trainings to departments to address anticipated growth and implement the recommendations included in the 2040 Master Plan so that the town can deliver its services effectively.



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Goals and Recommendations — Public Facilities and Services

Goal 2: Ensure public safety officials have the facilities to handle today's needs as well as projected future needs of the community.

Recommendations:

1. Prioritize the relocation and expansion of the Police and Fire Department to address community safety needs.
2. Allocate appropriate funds in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan to support necessary upgrades and improvements to the Police and Fire Department.
3. Continue to invest in training and professional development for Fairhaven's Police and Fire Department staff.



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Goals and Recommendations — Public Facilities and Services

Goal 3: Enhance senior services in Fairhaven.

Recommendations:

1. Explore feasibility of expanding the current Senior Center to meet the space needs for programs serving the Town's senior population.
2. Evaluate and enhance transportation services offered to seniors and residents with disabilities.
3. Provide additional recreation opportunities geared toward seniors through the Recreation Department.
4. Encourage collaboration among the COA, Recreation Department and Fairhaven Public Schools to promote inter-generational activities.



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Goals and Recommendations – Public Facilities and Services

Goal 4: Develop plans for key infrastructure elements that need improvement.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to fund annual improvements to roadways and seek opportunities to obtain state funding for long-term transportation enhancements as identified in the Transportation chapter.
2. Prepare an updated master plan for the Water Department to forecast future needs for investments in pump stations, wells, and the delivery of water to the Town.
3. Invest in an Automatic Reader System for water meters in Town to improve the Town's ability to collect meter reading data and billing procedures.



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Goals and Recommendations – Public Facilities and Services

Goal 4: Develop plans for key infrastructure elements that need improvement.

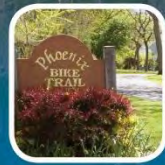
Recommendations: (cont'd)

4. Prepare a long-term plan for the use of the Sludge Digester System to ascertain the cost benefit of the continued use of this facility, considering new MS4 permitting requirements.
5. Prepare a long-term plan for the Sewage Treatment Plant to ascertain the cost benefit of the continued use of this facility, considering new MS4 permitting requirements.
6. Invest in education programs and materials that provide residents and business owners information about solid waste and recycling programs to improve the town's participation rate in these programs.



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Goals and Recommendations – Public Facilities and Services

Goal 5: Continue to take advantage of opportunities for sustainable energy within the Town's facilities and services.

Recommendations:

1. Undertake an energy audit of municipal buildings and develop a plan to implement recommendations
2. Undertake a vehicle fleet assessment to ascertain opportunities to right size vehicles and increase fuel efficiency (See Sustainability goals for Green Fleets)
3. Incorporate cost-effective Green Infrastructure strategies into all municipal projects for storm water management, drainage.
4. Seek ways to increase recycling and reduce solid waste disposal.
5. Educate Town residents about storm water issues and proper management.



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Goals and Recommendations — Public Facilities and Services

Goal 6: Invest in the Town's schools to provide state -of -the-art educational facilities.

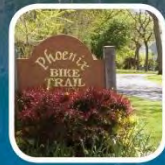
Recommendations:

1. Work closely with the School Department of identify capital improvements that are needed to support the schools, such as window and exterior renovations to the High School, dedicated internet service, and other improvements needed to maintain and enhance the Town's schools



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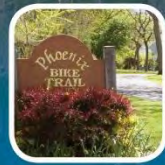
Open Space, Recreation, and Natural Resources





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Goals and Recommendations — Open Space & Natural Resources

Goal 1: Preserve our farmland and working agricultural landscapes.

Recommendations:

1. Acquire specific critically located parcels of land to prevent development in inappropriate (e.g., coastal) areas in Fairhaven.
2. Encourage continued participation and enrollment in farmland and forestry preservation programs under MGL 61, 61A and 61B, and in the state's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR).
3. Preserve important agricultural soils/working agricultural landscapes in conjunction with state and local food systems security planning.
4. Work with the Agricultural Commission to develop an up-to-date Plan of Work that integrates appropriate conservation and open space goals and objectives.



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Goals and Recommendations — Open Space & Natural Resources

Goal 2: Increase awareness and stewardship of our conservation, open space, and recreational assets.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a web-based map of conservation, recreation, and open space assets as part of an Open Space and Recreation web page.
2. Prepare information, including directional and on-site narrative and graphic signage and brochures, highlighting conservation and recreation areas, and encouraging stewardship and appropriate use.
3. Establish a permanent Open Space Committee to work with other boards and commissions to help promote the Open Space and Recreation Plan.



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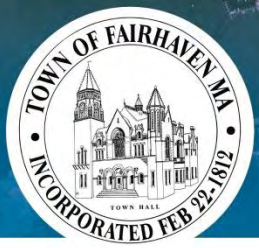


Goals and Recommendations — Open Space & Natural Resources

Goal 3: Set aside more land for conservation, open space, and water supply protection.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to work with the Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Committee to protect the resources of the Mattapoissett River aquifer.
2. Revise and update the provisions of the Water Protection Overlay Zoning District in the Nasketucket River Watershed.
3. Encourage responsible and continuous land use management and planning within all water and marine related resource areas.



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Goals and Recommendations — Open Space & Natural Resources

Goal 4: Provide quality life-long recreational opportunities for all citizens regardless of age or ability.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to develop recreational and athletic facilities, including multi-purpose fields, pathways, and play areas, particularly in underserved parts of town.
2. Meet ADA required accessibility standards for access to all town-owned conservation, recreation, and athletic facilities, per the ADA Transition Plan.
3. Improve access and facilities at the Town Beach on West Island.
4. Continue to work to develop bicycle connections from the existing Phoenix path to other parts of town and to existing regional pathways.
5. Work with the Wellness Committee to plan and develop the recommended Fitness Trail.

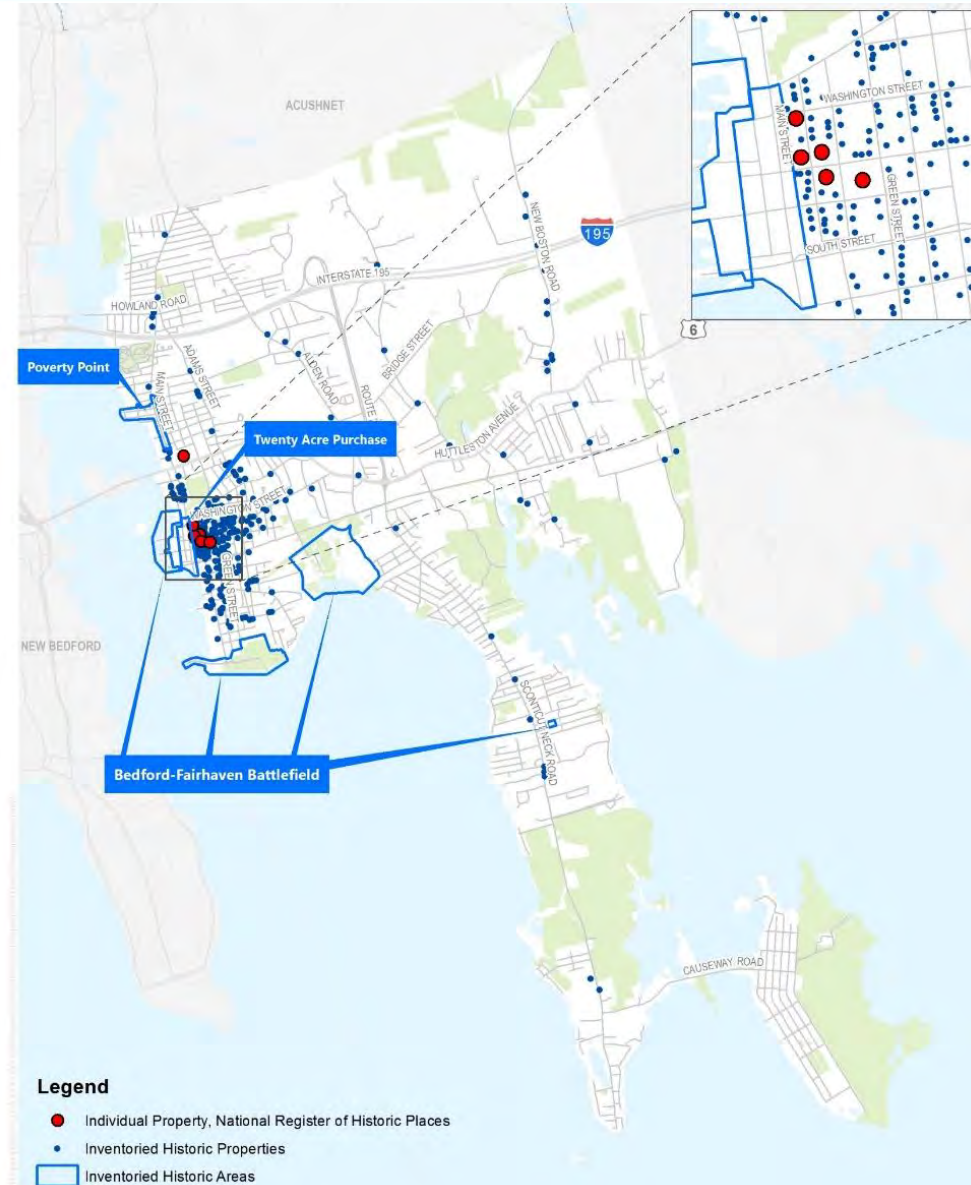


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Historic and Cultural Resources





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Goals and Recommendations — Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal 1: Enact a Demolition Review Bylaw.

Recommendations:

1. Two introductory public meetings over the next year, cosponsored by the FHC and the Planning Board, to introduce the topic and initiate community discussions.
2. Draft bylaw components based on input from the public meetings.
3. Finalize bylaw based on public input and bring to the Town Meeting. Revisit bylaw components based on objections as necessary.
4. Produce reference booklet that provides relevant information regarding the bylaw for property owners, realtors, and community members.
5. Institute communications program to inform and assist property owners subject to bylaw, and ensure that the demolition review program is maintained in a responsible way.



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Goals and Recommendations — Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal 2: Expand Understanding of Historic Resources in the Town.

Recommendations:

1. Complete historic resource inventories of two neighborhood subdivisions or landscapes (farmsteads, culturally-significant open space, etc.) over the next five years.
2. Expand use of 20th century history in heritage programming.
3. Utilize historic development to guide planning and zoning efforts for mixed-use development.
4. Consider establishment of neighborhood conservation districts or local historic districts.



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Goals and Recommendations — Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal 3: Establish local historic district(s).

Recommendations:

1. Create local historic district study committee, under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40C, General Laws.
2. Utilize historic resource inventory form (see Goal 2) to determine the historic significance of the local historic district and approximate boundaries. Potential local historic district area include the town center, and the Poverty Point neighborhood.
3. Initiate public opinion surveys and to gauge public interest. Use newspaper articles, newsletters, local access TV stations, and other forums to share potential benefits and property owners concerns, and address any misunderstandings.



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Goals and Recommendations — Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal 3: Establish local historic district(s).

Recommendations: (cont'd)

4. Produce preliminary study report including proposed local historic district methodology, significance, boundary justification, recommendations for bylaw, map, property index, historic resources inventory form(s), and photographs. Submit preliminary study report to MHC for review.
5. Hold public hearing on proposed district.
6. Produce final report based on comments received and bring to town meeting. When passed, notify Attorney General, record map at Registry of Deeds, and notify MHC.



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Goals and Recommendations — Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal 4: Link Historic Preservation with Economic Development.

Recommendations:

1. Prepare/sponsor National Register nominations for threatened buildings and areas.
2. Advertise National Register status to realtors and developers, encouraging the use of tax credits and highlighting successful historic tax credit rehabilitation at Oxford School.

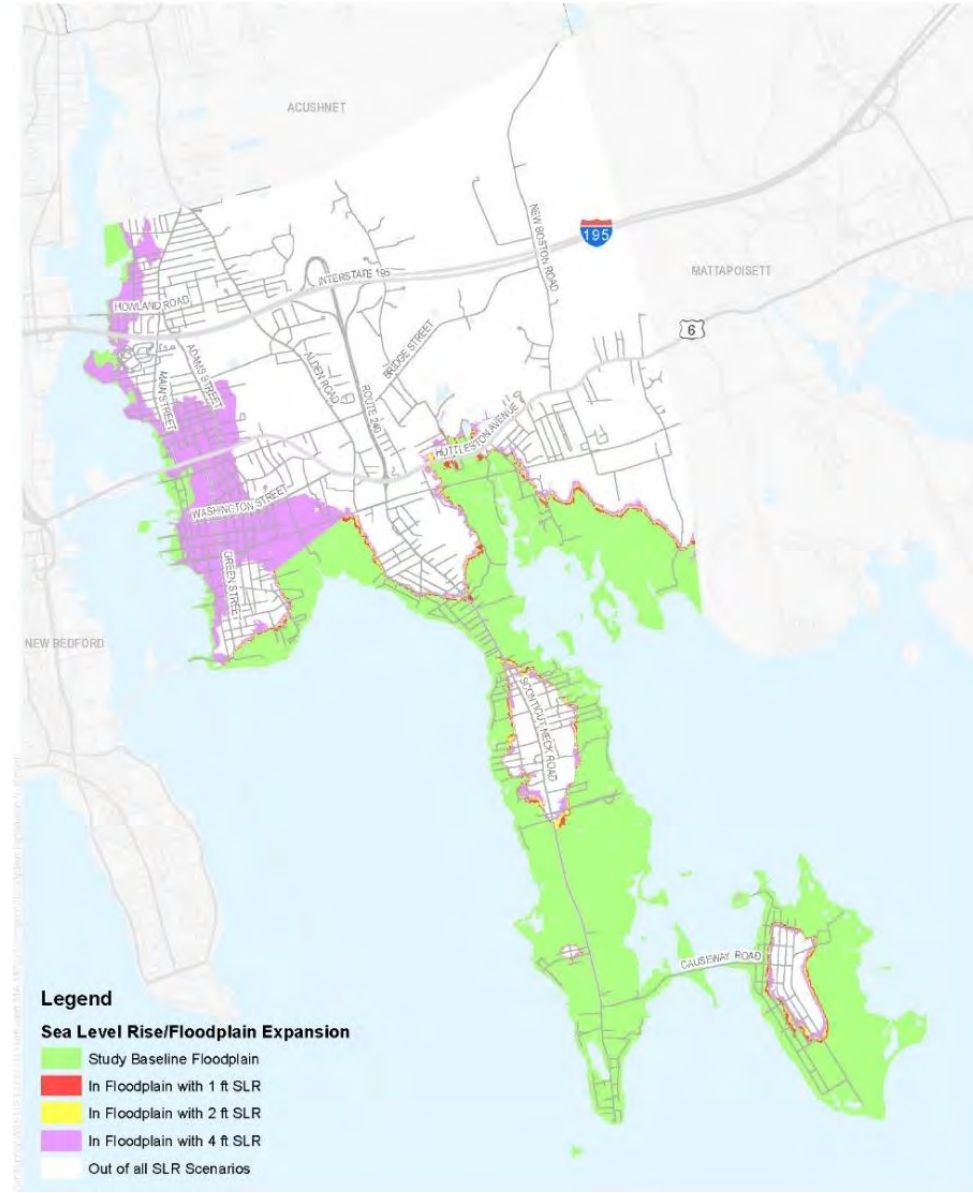


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Sustainability





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Goals and Recommendations - Sustainability

Goal 1: Establish systems for assessing, tracking, and reporting on the Town's sustainability performance.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct an energy baseline assessment for municipal operations and community-wide.
2. Complete a local government operations greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory.
3. Complete a community scale GHG inventory.
4. Develop, procure, or utilize a data management system that tracks, at a minimum, municipal operations energy and water consumption, costs, and associated GHG emissions.



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Goals and Recommendations - Sustainability

Goal 2: Lead by example through continuous improvement of the energy efficiency of government operations and promotion of community energy efficiency programs.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct energy audits at Town facilities and develop a plan for implementation of Energy Conservation Measures.
2. Develop a Green Fleet plan and vehicle replacement schedule.
3. Provide information to the community about free and discounted energy audits, appliance rebates, and other energy improvement programs available to residents and businesses.



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Goals and Recommendations - Sustainability

Goal 3: Enhance Fairhaven's resiliency to the likely impacts of a changing climate.

Recommendations:

1. Invest in infrastructure improvements that will protect the Town from the impacts of sea level rise, storm surge, and other flooding events, as well as extreme heat.
2. Update the Town's stormwater regulations to emphasize low-impact development, green infrastructure, and incorporation of future precipitation/flooding projections.
3. Incorporate future climate conditions into emergency response and evacuation plans.
4. Establish neighborhood networks of residents and businesses that are educated on sustainability and climate change resiliency and able to communicate effectively, especially to vulnerable citizens, during periods of emergency.



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Goals and Recommendations - Sustainability

Goal 4: Position Fairhaven to leverage state, regional, and national resources for sustainability and resiliency.

Recommendations:

1. Evaluate current Green Community designation requirements and establish a clear plan for the Town to pursue designation and associated funding.
2. Adopt the STAR Community Rating System as a framework for making Fairhaven a more sustainable and resilient community.



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Goals and Recommendations - Sustainability

Goal 5: Adopt land use, zoning, and building code policies that support healthy, sustainable development.

Recommendations:

1. Promote mixed-use development through land use, zoning, and development incentives.
2. Adopt green building standards or incentives for development over an established size threshold.
3. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy.
4. Require that affordable housing be built to sustainable standards (such as LEED or Enterprise Green Communities) to ensure that such housing stock is healthy and affordable.

Breakout Group Discussions





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Town of Fairhaven Master Plan



Review and Refine Goals & Recommendations

- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Economic Development
- ☐ Historic and Cultural Resources
- ☐ Open Space and Natural
- ☐ Public Services and Facilities
- ☐ Transportation and Circulation
- ☐ Sustainability and Resiliency

Next Steps





FAIRHAVEN 2040

Town of Fairhaven Master Plan



Next Steps

- Finalize Master Plan Vision, Goals, and Recommendations based on public input

Take the online survey to review draft Goals and Recommendations again and provide more feedback!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Fairhaven2040Goals>

- Develop Implementation Program
- Third Public Meeting in Summer/Fall to review and prioritize the Implementation Program
- Final Plan