

Designing Dedham



Town of Dedham Master Plan

Designing Dedham 2035

February 2024



Designing Dedham



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Designing Dedham



Town of Dedham
Master Plan





Chapter 1: Introduction

The Master Plan introduction provides a basic foundation of information for the document including defining the background and context of master planning in Dedham, summarizing the extensive community-based process to develop the Master Plan, providing data and characteristics that define Dedham today, summarizing themes of community feedback and input, and summarizing the context of recently completed planning documents that relate to the Master Plan. This introduction sets the stage for the Vision for Dedham's future articulated in the next chapter and the following chapters that provide specific goals and strategies to advance that vision in eight interconnected topics of the Master Plan.

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is defined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) Chapter 41 Section 81D. It provides that the Town Planning Board shall make a Master Plan of the Town, and from time to time may extend or perfect that plan. The statute establishes the topics to be included in a Master Plan and provides that it should be “designed to provide a basis for decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.”

The Town of Dedham has further defined Master Plan processes through its Town Bylaws. Chapter 65 “Master Plan” in the Bylaw states that the Planning Board shall review, revise and update the Master Plan on an interim basis at least once every five years and undertake a comprehensive review of the Master Plan and prepare revisions and updates at least once every 10 years.

Dedham has developed Master Plans in 1996 and 2009. After adoption of the 2009 Master Plan, a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) was formed and met regularly to monitor and support implementation of the plan. In 2017, the MPIC published a “Master Plan Update” to summarize Dedham’s progress in implementing the 2009 Master Plan and focus attention on outstanding and emerging issues.

The Master Plan is comprehensive in that it applies to the entirety of the Town of Dedham. The full town is seen on the map on the following page which depicts the neighborhood geography that is referenced throughout the plan.

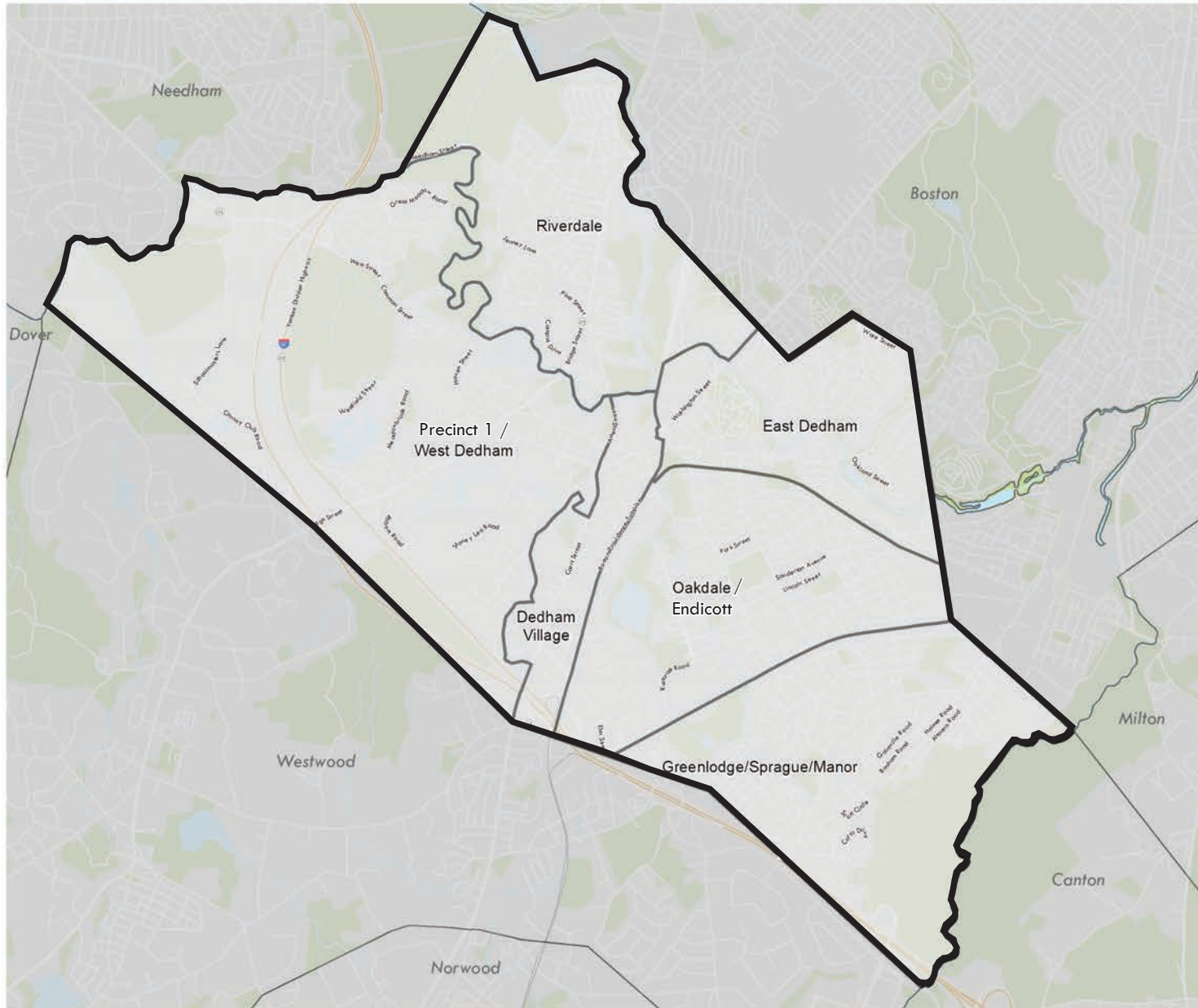
The Master Plan, including its goals and strategies, is broken into eight topics. In this document one topic is covered in each chapter. The eight topics include:

-  **Land Use and Zoning**
-  **Economic Development**
-  **Housing**
-  **Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources**
-  **Transportation**
-  **Community Facilities and Services**
-  **Governance**
-  **Public Health and Livability**

The Master Plan preparation process took about two years, and is summarized on the pages following the Town map. Overall characteristics of the Town and a summary of community feedback are also provided in this introduction.

Designing Dedham 2035

Introduction



Neighborhoods

- Neighborhoods
- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham

Note: The distinct neighborhood boundaries shown on the map are defined to align with United States Census Block Groups. The Block Group boundaries are derived from population density. Using these boundaries supports the use of United States Census data in the Master Plan.

0 0.225 0.45 0.9 Miles

Data Sources:
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

February 2020

Over 2,500 total participants

Master Plan Process

The community-centered Master Plan process occurred over about a 2-year period primarily in 2020 and 2021. The process involved several distinct phases of engagement in which the type of outreach varied in order to match with the specific needs to support the creation and refinement of Master Plan content. The engagement adapted near the beginning of the process to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in most meetings occurring virtually via Zoom.

Legend

- Master Plan Committee meetings
- Planning Board presentations
- Community Workshop/Survey
- Interviews
- ▲ Focus groups

Outreach Working Group meetings

In addition to the Master Plan Committee, an Outreach Working Group helped get the word out about the Master Plan process with physical posters, yard signs, and flyers, social media posts, email, and personal invitations to events and opportunities to engage.

Bus Tours of the Town

The Master Plan Committee members and the consultant team took a bus tours to see and discuss the Town.

Master Plan Committee meetings

The Master Plan Committee met throughout the two-year process to guide the approach, discuss Master Plan topics, review feedback, and provide insights that shaped the Master Plan content. **The volunteer committee met 23 times in support of the Master Plan.**

Planning Board presentations

The Master Plan was discussed at Planning Board meetings throughout the process to provide progress updates on outreach and content. The Master Plan was also introduced at other board and committee meetings.

Visioning Workshop - April 2020

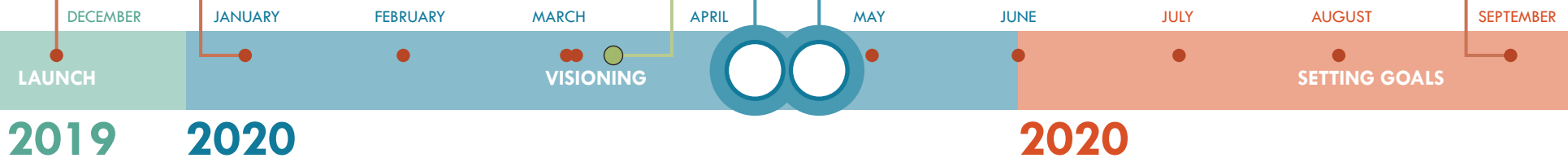
Over 300 Dedham residents joined a Saturday virtual visioning workshop to kick-off the Dedham Master Plan and to help define the foundation for a vision and goals.

Initial Community Survey

The visioning workshop was complemented with an online survey that also defined a strong foundation for a community vision. **The survey was open for over a month and received over 1,100 responses.**

Topic Community Survey

A second community survey provided more detailed insights on the Master Plan topics and goals. **The survey was open for over a month and received over 750 responses.**



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DD2035 Poster Campaign

A series of posters placed strategically throughout Dedham invited residents to think about the future of Dedham and engage in the Master Plan process.



Email Newsletter

Email updates were sent to residents throughout the process to share information, invite feedback, and maintain communication. **The emails were sent to over 500 residents who opted-in to project emails.**

Designing Dedham 2035 website

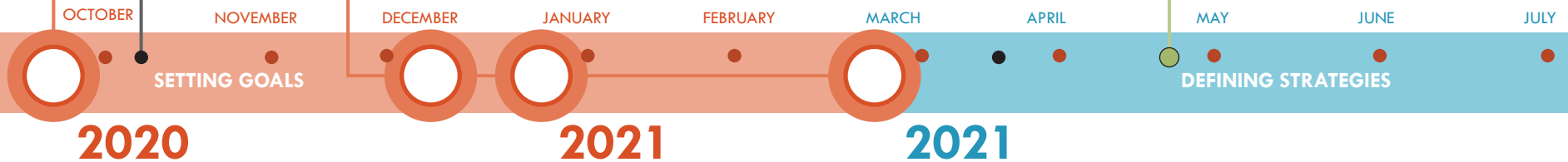
All meeting presentations, recordings, draft content, and progress has been shared and regularly updated on the project website: www.DesigningDedham2030.org

Topic Open Houses

Three virtual open houses were hosted to share and discuss draft goals for each Master Plan topic. In December 2020, Economy and Transportation were discussed. In January 2021, Housing, Public Health, and Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources were discussed. In March 2021, Governance and Community Facilities and Services were discussed. **The three open houses were attended by over 300 residents.**

Planning Board presentations

The Master Plan's draft goals were presented to the Planning Board to provide a progress update on the process and content. The draft goals were also shared at other board and committee meetings.



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Inclusive Interviews

Based on demographic surveys of participants throughout the Master Plan process and events, the racial composition of participants underrepresented residents of color when compared to the overall demographics of the Town. In order to expand the inclusiveness of this process, a series of individual interviews with residents of color were performed. The individuals for the interviews were identified through networking with Dedham residents of color and houses of worship with members of color. The feedback from these interviews was integrated with feedback on topic goals and strategies.

Topic Strategy Open House

In October 2021, a virtual open house was hosted to share and discuss draft topic strategies. Across three break-out sessions participants were able to choose the topics for which they gave feedback. **Over 50 residents attended.**

Master Plan Office Hours

In October 2021, two virtual office hours sessions were provided to the community to drop-in and ask questions or discuss Master Plan feedback with the project team.

Focus Group Meetings

(7) Focus Group Meetings with Town and stakeholder leadership were held to review draft goals and strategies to gather additional feedback on each topic including Town department heads, members of Town boards, committees, commissions, and groups, and residents.

Community Celebration

A hybrid event hosted at the Middle School and on Zoom celebrates the release of the draft Master Plan materials and opens a comment period on the draft plan materials.

Online Survey and Comment Period

A final online survey is open to the community during a 45-day comment period that invites comments and questions on the draft Master Plan content.



Dedham Day 2021

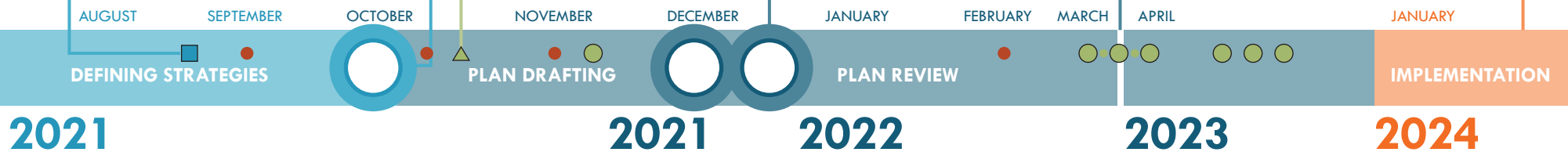
The Master Plan Committee shared draft content with attendees at Dedham Day and were pleased to engage with residents in-person.

Master Plan Implementation

A Master Plan Implementation Committee is recommended to carry forward plan recommendations.

Planning Board Review

The Planning Board hosted public review meetings to finalize and adopt the plan.



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Introduction

Master Plan Committee

The Town of Dedham, under the direction of the Select Board and Planning Board, selected a seventeen member Master Plan Committee to provide input and guidance throughout the Master Plan process. The Planning Board and Select Board interviewed applicants for the committee. All applicants were so well qualified and represented such a diverse cross section of the Town that the Boards accepted all applicants to be as inclusive as possible. As such, the Committee consists of representatives from various stakeholders including boards, committees, public entities and the general public including the Planning Board, Select Board, School Committee, Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation, Active Transportation Working Group, and Transportation Advisory Committee. The Committee was structured to advise the Planning Board on the development of the Master Plan, and to facilitate and encourage public participation in the planning process.

Community Engagement by the Numbers

Overall, based on meeting attendance and survey responses, it is estimated that the Master Plan process had **over 2,500 participants** throughout the two-year process including all events and engagement opportunities.

The Master Plan process overlapped with the COVID-19 pandemic. The global pandemic started impacting in-person gatherings in March of 2020 just as the Master Plan process was getting underway. In response to the pandemic, the two-year Master Plan process was largely held virtually offering new and accessible ways to engage. Due to these unique circumstances, it is reasonable to consider the 2,500+ unique participants

as households. Often in meetings, multiple members of a household could be seen connecting through the same computer. If comparing to Dedham households, **about 25% of the 10,035 households** have participated in this process. Near the end of the process, in-person meetings were beginning again and the final Community Forum in December 2021 was held as a hybrid event with both in-person and virtual attendees. All Planning Board review meetings to finalize the plan were held in person.

Community Priorities

The Initial Community Survey was the first outreach platform for the 2-year long process to gather feedback to begin to develop content for the Designing Dedham Master Plan. The survey consisted of 19 questions and was available online from March to May 2020. The survey was promoted widely through the Town website, Planning Department Facebook page, direct outreach and engagement by the Master Plan Committee and Outreach Working Group, and promoted at a Town-wide Virtual Visioning Workshop held online on April 4th, 2020. The survey received **1,138 responses** from community members (4.5% of the Town's population). This represents the largest response to this type of planning survey in the history of the Town of Dedham and places it among the highest responses for similar surveys in the greater Boston region.

The survey was divided into eight main sections of questions – “Community Goals”, “Important for the Future”, “Town's Assets”, “Town's Challenges”, “Specific Place-based Challenges and Opportunities”, “Master Plan Topics”, “Shared Community Vision”, and “About You”. The Initial Community Survey Results were used

to frame community member values and priorities for the Town. Highlights from the results are summarized below. It is important to note that some variation and nuance occurs from answer to answer in the survey.

The survey asked, **what features are most important for the future of Dedham?** The top two most important responses were 1) quality schools and educational opportunities and 2) preserved open space, parks, and natural assets. The survey asked, **what originally attracted you to live in Dedham?** The two most frequent responses were 1) proximity to Boston and 2) being born and raised in Dedham. Proximity to Boston and convenient access to highways and commuter rail were selected as the **greatest assets** of the Town of Dedham. Traffic congestion and an inability to get around along with rising cost of living and housing were selected as the **greatest challenges** for the Town of Dedham.

The survey asked, **what is most important to address in the Master Plan?** The top five topics included:

- 1) investing in the schools and education (58%),
- 2) addressing traffic congestion (46%),
- 3) managing Town finances and spending (46.0%),
- 4) improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists (41%), and
- 5) strengthening diverse, walkable, and connected neighborhoods (36%).

Additional results from the Initial Community Survey and the Topic Area Survey are presented in the following chapters, particularly in framing “A Vision for Dedham” with core priorities and the specific community priorities highlighted in each of the topic chapters.

Dedham Today

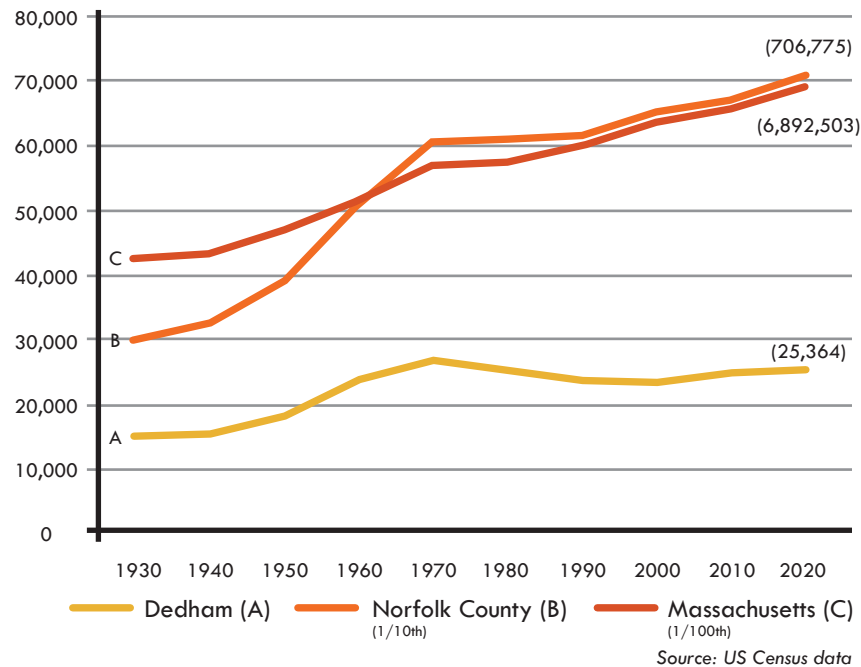
In preparing a plan for the future with a time horizon of ten years, it is important to understand the characteristics of the Town today. In each topic chapter, a detailed analysis is provided of Dedham’s current characteristics in that topic. In this section, a general overview of Dedham is provided.

Dedham is a town in Norfolk County located immediately southwest of Boston. In addition to Boston, its immediate neighboring municipalities include Needham, Westwood, and Canton. It is the county seat of Norfolk County and includes several County buildings including courthouse, prison, and other facilities. The Town is geographically divided into distinct neighborhoods including Dedham Village/Dedham Square, East Dedham, Greenlodge, Sprague and Manor, Oakdale, Riverdale, and Precinct 1/West Dedham. The population of Dedham has been growing but has not returned to its peak, reached in the 1970s. The US Census data for Dedham in 1970 showed a total population of 26,938. The population growth has been relatively slow. Over the same period the household size has been steadily shrinking. As households reduce in size, with less people per house, the Town population will require more housing units to house the same overall number of people. Similar to the Greater Boston region, housing costs have continued to increase in Dedham. The Town’s attractive neighborhoods, quality schools, walkable amenities and local services, and convenient proximity to Boston are desirable features of the Town.

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Introduction

Population Growth Comparison



The line chart above compares population growth in Dedham to Norfolk County and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Both the County and Commonwealth have been adjusted for scale to be more easily compared, the population counts in the County are higher by 10x and the Commonwealth higher by 100x. The insight of the comparison is in the slope of the lines. The Dedham line is much flatter, indicated slower growth than both the County and Commonwealth.

Demographic data

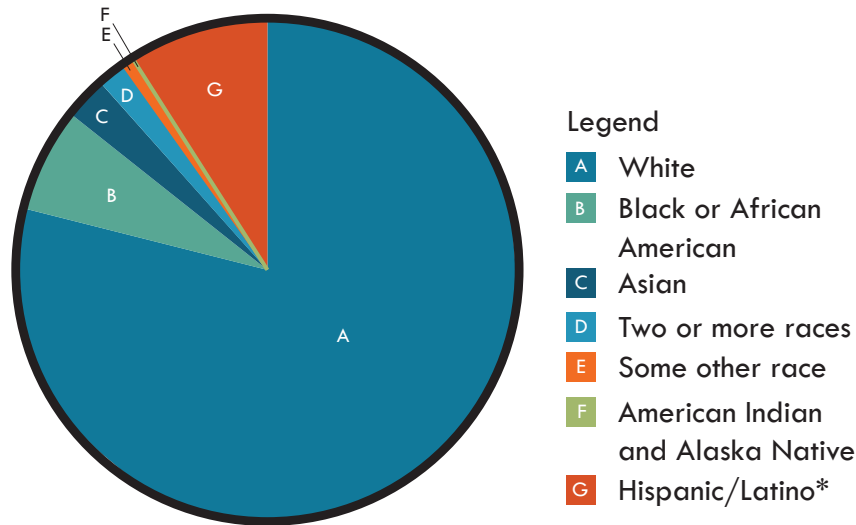
The total population of the Town of Dedham is 25,308 according to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The American Community Survey (ACS) is a demographics survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. ACS data is based on a sample of the population and reported in 1-year and 5-year estimates. 5-year estimates are less current than 1-year estimates, but offer increased statistical reliability for smaller geographic areas such as Dedham. The total population has been growing, up 8% from the year 2000. The population is projected to continue growing with a population of 26,709 projected for 2030 based on the most recent population projections from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) socio-economic projections for 2020 Regional Transportation Plans.

In terms of racial composition, the Town's population is predominantly White with 21,258 residents or about 84%. The next largest racial category is Black or African American with 1,923 residents or about 8%. This is followed by Asian with 683 residents or about 3%, Two or More Races with 1,139 residents (5%), and Some Other Race with 405 residents (2%). The ethnicity of the Town is predominantly Non-Hispanic with 23,308 residents or about 92% and Hispanic or Latino with 1,999 residents or about 8%. All of these statistics and categories are based on the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The Town is growing more diverse with the data showing about a 12% increase in racial diversity since the year 2000. The following page shows the race and ethnicity data combined in a pie chart.

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Race and Ethnicity of Dedham residents

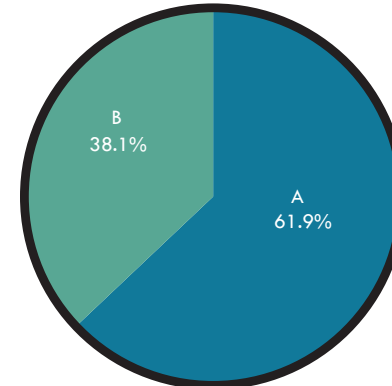


*Hispanic/Latino includes respondents of any race. Other categories are non-Hispanic.

According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey, the Town of Dedham has a current total of 10,458 households. Family households represent the majority with a total of 61.9% with Nonfamily households totaling 38.1%. A nonfamily household consists of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals. One and two-person households are the largest share of the number of household members with 3,178 (30.4%) 1-person households, 3,602 (34.4%) 2-person households, 1,618 (15.5%) 3-person households, and 2,060 (19.7%) 4-or-more-person households.

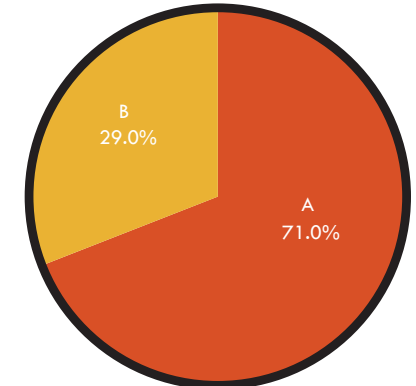
Housing tenure shows a majority of ownership units in the Town with 71.0% owner-occupied housing units and 29.0% renter-occupied housing units. A disparity in the vacancy rate is evident when examined by tenure with the owner vacancy rate only at 0.4% and the renter vacancy rate at 8.7%.

Household Types
(10,458 total households)



A Family household
B Nonfamily household

Household Tenure



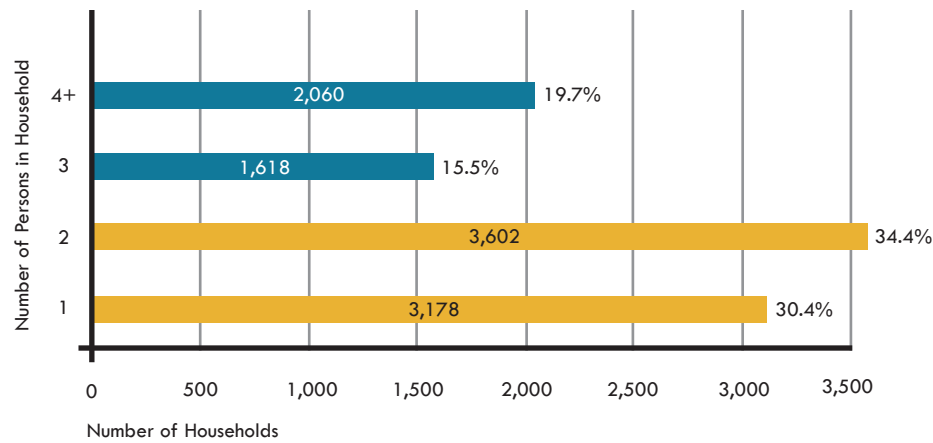
A Owner-occupied housing
B Renter-occupied housing

The average household size in the Town of Dedham is smaller at 2.34 persons per household, compared to 2.53 (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) or 2.58 (Norfolk County). Again, a disparity in average household size is evident when examined by tenure with average owner-occupied household size at 2.46 and average renter occupied household size at 2.06.

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Size of Dedham Households



According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the Town has a considerable youth population with 20% of Dedham’s total population being 0-19 years old and 27% of Dedham’s households having one or more people under 18 years. Total Dedham school enrollment (2022-2023) was 2,555. Of that school population, 692 low-income students were enrolled (2022-2023) according to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

20% of Dedham’s total population is between 0 and 19 years old

The Town also has a considerable senior population with 34.3% of the households including people 65 years and over with a population of 3,588. 32% of those households are seniors living alone, a population of 1,152. The proportion of older residents in Dedham is growing (2019 Housing Study). 28% of the residents are 60-years of age or older, this population has seen a 30% increase from 2000 to 2019 and is projected to continue to increase.

28% of Dedham’s total population is 60 years or older

In Massachusetts the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs identifies Environmental Justice (EJ) population areas based on U.S. Census data. Environmental Justice is the idea that there should be equal protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to decision-making processes regardless of race, national origin, or income. Four criteria are used to determine EJ areas:

1. The annual median household income is 65 percent or less of the statewide annual median household income;
2. Minorities make up 40 percent or more of the population;
3. 25 percent or more of households identify as speaking English less than “very well;”
4. Minorities make up 25 percent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 percent of the statewide annual median household income.

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Introduction

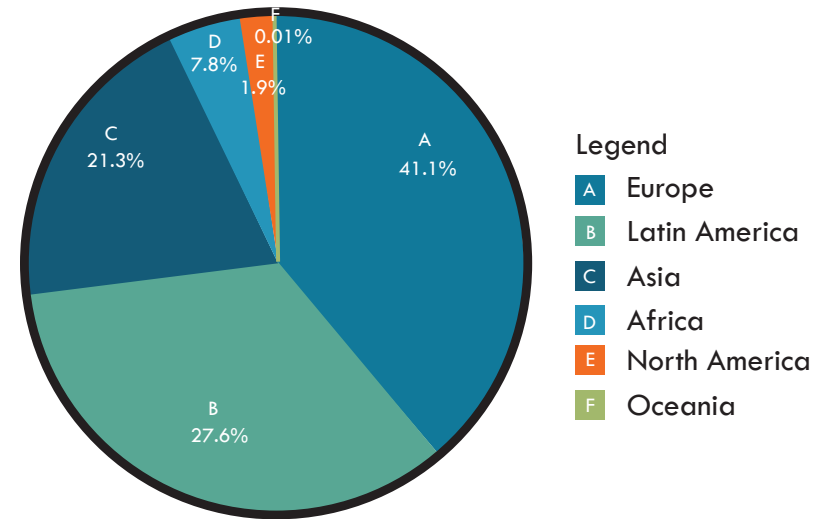
Currently, Dedham has (5) block groups that are identified as Environmental Justice areas based on the “minority” criteria where racial minority groups make up 40 percent or more of the population. The 5 areas include Block Group 4, Census Tract 4024 and Block Group 1, Census Tract 4024 both on Providence Highway. Block Group 3, Census Tract 4021.02; Block Group 1, Census Tract 4021.02; Block Group 2, Census Tract 4021.02; and Block Group 1, Census Tract 4022 all in the area of East Dedham.

According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, in Dedham, 2,691 residents are identified as living with a disability. This represents about 11% of the total population that has a disability. The population with hearing difficulty is identified as 941 residents or 3.7%. The population with vision difficulty is identified as 282 residents or 1.1%. The population with ambulatory difficulty is identified as 1,148 residents or 4.5%. The population with cognitive difficulty is identified as 852 or 3.4%.

According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Dedham has a foreign-born population of 3,500 or 13.8%, which is a good indicator of the immigrant community. The largest foreign-born population (including both categories of naturalized U.S. citizen and not a U.S. Citizen) is from Europe (1,439). Latin America (965 people) is the second largest world region of birth. This is followed by Asia (746), Africa (275), Northern America (69), and Oceania (6).

The most recent ACS data shows no American Indian and Alaska Native alone residents. Other information resources on Native

Foreign-born population region of birth
(3,500 Dedham residents)



populations, including current or historic activities within the borders of Dedham are not currently known. According to the Native Land and territories map, Dedham resides in Pauquunaukit (Wampanoag) ancestral territory.

According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the population of residents that speak only English in Dedham is 19,311 residents or 76.3%. These residents do not speak another language. The number of residents that identify as speaking English less than “very well” is 1,417 residents or 5.6%.

76% of Dedham’s residents speak only English

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Introduction

2020 United States Census data

Mandated by the United States Constitution, the Census occurs every ten years and counts every person living in the United States, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status. Census data is used to define state legislative districts and determine state representation in the United States House of Representatives, calculate how federal funding is allocated to states, and develop vital information to help understand local communities. Unfortunately, the release of detailed decennial Census data has been delayed.

The most current data sources have been used for each demographic figure. In most cases that is the 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates prepared by the United States Census.

The data that is available from the 2020 Census does compare closely to the data used in the Master Plan. For example, the total population for Dedham according to the 2020 US Census data is 25,364 compared to 25,308 according to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. A difference of less than 0.5%.

Finally, the total population change for Dedham from the 2010 US Census to the 2020 US Census is an additional 635 residents, or +2.6%. The total housing unit change from the 2010 US Census to the 2020 US Census is an additional 268 units or +2.6%. The total housing units for the 2020 US Census is 10,459.

Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) updated the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) with decennial Census data at the end of June 2023. EOHLC lists Dedham's 2020 Census year round housing units as 10,412. It lists Dedham's total development units as 1,170. It lists Dedham's SHI units as 1,125. The SHI is used to measure a municipality's stock of low or moderate housing pursuant to Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 40B. The percent calculated for Dedham's compliance with the SHI requirement is 10.80%. In order to comply a City or Town must have a calculated percent greater than 10%. When not in compliance a municipality is subject to Chapter 40B housing development proposals that can supersede local zoning control.

COVID-19 Pandemic

This planning process occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic was disruptive to the process of community engagement for this plan, but adaptations were made throughout the process to engage virtually and adjust as the context of the pandemic evolved. The longer term changes that will persist years after the pandemic remain relatively unknown. In most cases, data regarding more permanent changes due to the pandemic must still be collected and analyzed. Lasting disruption appears to be occurring to change patterns of commuting, in office working, and household spending patterns.

Socioeconomic data

The Town of Dedham has high levels of educational attainment with 94.7% of the population 25 years and older having attained high school graduate or higher (2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates). 55.3% of the population 25 years or older having attained a bachelor's degree or higher. 25.2% of the population 25 years or older having attained a graduate or professional degree. According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates the unemployment rate in Dedham was 2.6%. This figure was lower than the broader unemployment rate in Massachusetts in 2023 which was about 3.5% depending on the month.

The percentage of persons in poverty is 4.6% according to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Comparing poverty rate by Race and Ethnicity in Dedham, the White population has 4.7% of persons in poverty, the Black or African American population has 6.0%, the Asian population has 2.5%, the Hispanic or Latino population has 2.6%, and Some Other Race has 4.3% of persons in poverty. "Some Other Race" includes all other responses not included in another race category.

5% of Dedham's residents are considered persons in poverty

In total, about 594 households in Dedham are in poverty. Comparing family and non-family households shows variations with 456 (12.4%) non-family households in poverty and 138

(2.3%) family households in poverty. Geographically, residents in the East Dedham and Riverdale neighborhoods have lower household incomes compared to Oakdale/Endicott residents earning higher incomes according to the 2019 Dedham Housing Study.

Beyond living in poverty, many households struggle to keep pace with monthly bills. The cost of living is heavily influenced by the cost of housing and housing costs often represent the largest portion of a households' monthly bills. According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 3,598 (34.4%) of households in Dedham are cost burdened spending 30 percent or more of their income on housing (rent or mortgage). A disparity between owner and renter households is evident with 2,066 (27.8%) owner households that are cost burdened, compared to 1,532 (50.5%) renter households that are cost burdened.

Transportation data

The transportation access and assets of the Town provide connection to economic opportunities. According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, there are 10,348 commuters (74.5%) in Dedham who drive to work. Of those commuters, 9,528 (68.6%) of the driving commuters drive alone to work.

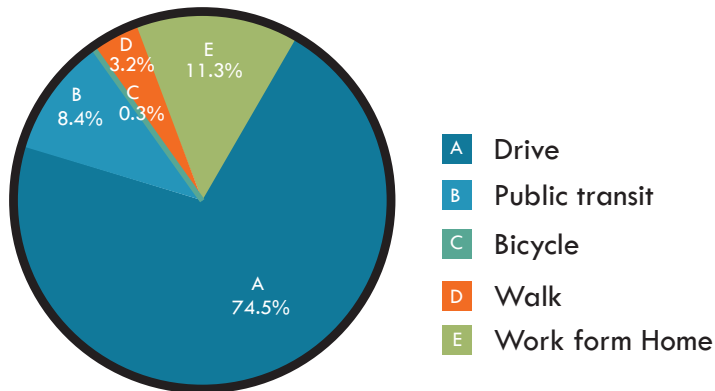
75% of Dedham's commuters drive to work

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There are 1,166 commuters (8.4%) in Dedham who take public transportation to work; either commuter rail or bus transit. There are 41 commuters (0.3%) that bicycle to work. There are 444 commuters (3.2%) that walk to work. There are 1,527 residents (11.3%) that work from home. The remaining commuters take a taxi, motorcycle or other means of transportation to work.

Commuting types
(13,890 Dedham commuters)



The mean travel time to work for workers age 16 years or older is 32.3 minutes (2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates). This is aligned with average mean travel times of neighboring communities.

Given the number of commuters who drive, it is unsurprising that 95.8% of households in Dedham have at least 1 vehicle. Additionally, 48.4% of households in Dedham have 2 vehicles,

4% of Dedham's households have no vehicles

28.3% of households in Dedham have 3 vehicles. (2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates) Significantly, of the 19,024 people who work in Dedham, nearly 93% live outside of Dedham. The largest group of those outside commuters come from Boston (16.8%). No other municipality has a share of outside commuters of more than 5.8% that are part of the Dedham workforce according to Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) OnTheMap tool. 8,497 employees in Dedham travel less than 10 miles to their jobs, 6,871 travel 10 to 24 miles, 2,717 travel 25 to 50 miles and 939 travel greater than 50 miles according to LEHD OnTheMap.

The pedestrian and bicyclist transportation infrastructure in Dedham is not as comprehensive as the roadway infrastructure. Major roadways/streets in Dedham include Route 128/I-95 with three exits serving Dedham, Providence Highway, Route 1A, and Route 109. Key local streets include Common Street, High Street, Ames Street, East Street, Cedar Street and Minton Street. Vehicular traffic volumes on state-maintained roadways range from over 160,000 vehicles per day on Route 128, 34,000 vehicles per day on Providence Highway, and 17,000 vehicles per day on Route 1A. Town-maintained streets have lower vehicular volumes (MassDOT). Another indication of the reliance on vehicular transportation is the number of commercial parking



Designing Dedham 2035

Introduction

spaces in the economic centers of activity. In the areas adjacent to the Providence Highway (Dedham Mall, Dedham Square, Providence Highway South, Legacy Place, and Stergis Way), approximately 10,000 commercial parking spaces exist.

In addition to the roadway system, Dedham is served by transit with MBTA bus routes and two commuter rail stops on the Franklin Line including Dedham Corporate Center and Endicott. Dedham Corporate Center is one of the busier stations on the line, averaging over 1,400 weekday boardings and alightings in 2018. In comparison, Endicott averaged approximately 530 boardings/alightings in 2018. (CTPS Commuter Rail Counts).

The pedestrian and bicycle networks in Dedham provide some support for local travel with 58% of the Town's roadways with sidewalks on at least one side. However, the Town has very few bicycle facilities (MassDOT Municipal Dashboard). Providence Highway, which has over 34,000 vehicles per day, has few signalized pedestrian crossings and is a barrier to safe and convenient pedestrian access in the community. (MassDOT Municipal Dashboard).

Previous Planning Efforts

The Town of Dedham has undertaken recent planning studies that should be viewed as companion documents to the Town's Master Plan. The recent planning efforts have been reviewed as part of the Master Plan process. Relevant findings, data, and recommendations have been incorporated into the Master Plan. Generally, the companion planning documents go deeper into the topic upon which they are focused than the Master Plan. The list

below highlights the most relevant previous planning efforts and companion documents in chronological order:

- School Facilities Master Plan (2020)
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020)
- Parks and Fields Master Plan (2020)
- Mixed-Use Development Impact Study (2020)
- Climate Action & Resiliency Plan (2020)
- Providence Highway: Create a Better Corridor (2020)
- Housing Study (2019)
- Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)
- Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (2018)
- Dedham Corporate Station: Creating a Connected Neighborhood (2017)
- East Dedham Village Charrette Strategic Action Plan (2017)
- Master Plan Implementation Update (2017)
- Enhancing Creative East Dedham (2014)
- Dedham Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan (2013)

Master Plan Implementation

The Master Plan is only effective as a process and as a plan, if it continues to guide actions in the Town. These actions will take a wide variety of supporters, leaders, and residents to ensure that the vision, goals, and strategies described in this process are implemented and made part of the reality of Dedham's future. The Master Plan covers a wide range of topics and includes more goals, strategies, and actions than can be taken on at the same time. The Master Plan is intended to guide implementation activity over the next ten year period. The following tables with actions for each topic strategy is intended to assist in the transition from concluding the plan to beginning its implementation.

Master Plan Transition to Implementation

The draft Master Plan was available during a 45-day comment period in December of 2020 and January 2021. All comments received during the public comment period were reviewed and considered for integration into the plan. Once the plan was finalized with these comments, the Master Plan Committee held a formal vote to endorse the Master Plan. The endorsed and nearly final draft Master Plan was then submitted to the Planning Board for review and adoption. The Planning Board held nine (9) public Planning Board meetings to review the draft Designing Dedham 2035 Master Plan. The review meetings were held on 2/1/22, 3/24/22, 5/11/22, 6/9/22, 7/11/22, 10/26/22, 11/1/22, 1/31/23, and 3/29/23. Over 300 revisions were suggested in those discussions. The revisions were incorporated into an updated draft Designing Dedham 2035 Master Plan document.

Each chapter was presented back to the Planning Board with the previous version, a tracked changes version, and an updated version. To complete the process of review updated chapters were reviewed with the Planning Board at meetings in September, October, and November of 2023. Upon adoption, the Master Plan will be circulated to the Select Board and other Town Boards and Committees to share the results of this process. Upon adoption, the Master Plan would also be presented at Town Meeting with a request to form and fund a Master Plan Implementation Committee.

It is appropriate to view the implementation tables as more of a "living" document that will be one of the instruments of implementation. It is intended to provide a meaningful guide into the next phase of this work. A phase that will hopefully be led by a Master Plan Implementation Committee.

Master Plan Implementation Committee

The most effective model for implementation of a Master Plan is through the formation of a Master Plan Implementation Committee. While many others will be involved in the implementation, no existing staff, board, or committee could fully take responsibility for advancing all Master Plan actions.

The Town of Dedham formed a Master Plan Implementation Committee at the conclusion of the 2009 Master Plan and this Committee helped to steward and track progress of implementation efforts. This stewardship culminated in the 2017

Master Plan Update that provided a full assessment of progress against the previous Master Plan's goals and strategies.

Other towns have used this model for a Master Plan Implementation Committee that was formed by vote at Town Meeting authorizing the Select Board and Planning Board to appoint the Committee. Some Committees report to the Planning Board and Select Board at least twice annually and to Town Meeting at least annually. The reporting includes implementation steps accomplished within the past year, anticipated steps to be accomplished within the next two years, and resources, including Town Meeting appropriations or other actions, necessary to complete those steps. Other Master Plan Implementation Committees have a set term and exist for ten years and such term may be extended by vote of Town Meeting.

Implementation Contents

Each chapter of the Master Plan ends with an implementation table. The tables add specific actions, responsibilities (either lead or support roles), timeframe, and potential resources. These tables should be a useful guide in defining the next steps and priorities flowing from this Master Plan process. The implementation actions consider how best to advance strategies and goals that have been built-up and supported through extensive conversation with the community and Master Plan Committee. The suggested actions come from a few primary sources including previous Committee topic discussions, community discussion of the strategies, focus group discussions, individual interviews, community feedback on strategies and actions, and our MAPC planning staff expertise. The implementation tables are not trying to introduce new ideas at this level, but describe how to move forward with the ideas that have been well-vetted through the Master Plan process.

The plan is aspirational and wide-ranging with implementation activity to occur over the next 10 years. Priorities will need to be set among the implementation actions. Initial priorities have been selected based on the feedback received during the Master Plan process and comments and prioritization feedback received during the comment period for the draft plan document. All of the actions are not possible with the existing resources of the Town. Several actions provide recommendations to help expand the resources and capacity of the Town to perform these actions. In other cases decisions will need to be made about how to prioritize the resources that are available. In addition to listing the actions, the implementation tables list responsibility, both lead and support for the action, the timeframe and the potential resources. A description of each of elements on the following implementation pages is provided below.

Goal

The topic goals are used as headings among the implementation tables to help keep track of the overall goal and the strategies and actions that flow from that goal.

Strategy

Individual topic strategies are included in the first column of the table. The strategies are the same as listed in each topic chapter.

Potential Action

The column with the heading Action is the implementation action associated with the strategy. The action is intended to be a recommended step to begin making progress on the goal and strategy. Each strategy has at least one action. The columns to the right of Action describe additional aspects of the action and define recommended responsibility, timeframe and potential resources for the action.

Potential Responsibility Lead

The Responsibility Lead column lists the party that is potentially best positioned to undertake this work. Likely, the Master Plan Implementation Committee would need to partner with each of these responsible parties to discuss the recommended action and its support for a particular strategy and goal. Based on availability, level of interest, and resources available, the party with the lead responsibility may then undertake the action or series of actions that are recommended or delegate that responsibility as may be appropriate. In most cases, all responsible parties are not listed. For example, Town Meeting is not listed since they are not likely to be leading an effort, but may ultimately be responsible for voting to adopt a recommended change.

Potential Responsibility Support

In some cases, in addition to a lead responsibility there is a supporting responsibility that identifies an additional party that should be involved in the recommended action or that may be able to provide supporting information or expertise. The party with supporting responsibility should be involved in the action or series of actions that are recommended, but would not be leading the effort.

Potential Timeframe

Four categories of timeframe are used to define and prioritize the actions of the master plan. In some cases, the actions are a continuation of an effort that may be underway or require continuous attention and action. The timeframe for these actions is described as “continuous and ongoing.” The three other timeframe categories are a near-term (1 to 3 years from the conclusion of the Master Plan), mid-term (4 to 6 years from the conclusion of the Master Plan), and long-term (7 to 9 years from the conclusion of

the Master Plan). The timeframes are intended to describe when the action should be initiated. An action may take longer to be completed than the described timeframe.

Potential Resources

For some actions, there are potential resources that could be used to support the recommendation. The resources may include potential funding sources, particularly external funding sources that may be available to the Town for a particular activity. The resources also include additional reference or guidance documents that are provided through links to websites.

List of Potential Responsible Parties (alphabetically)

Active Transportation Working Group
Board of Health
Building Department
Building, Planning & Construction Committee
Capital Expenditures Committee
Civic Pride Committee
Commission on Disability
Conservation Commission
Conservation Department
Council on Aging
Cultural Council
Dedham Housing Authority
Dedham Museum & Archive*
Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness (DOSA)
Dedham Police Department

Dedham Public Schools

List of Potential Responsible Parties

(alphabetically, continued from previous page)

Dedham Youth Commission
Design Review Advisory Board
Director of Procurement
Engineering Department
Facilities and Maintenance Department
Finance Department
Finance & Warrant Committee
Financial Policies Study Committee
Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department
Health Department
Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission
Human Resources Department
Human Rights Commission
Library Department
Livable Dedham*
Open Space & Recreation Committee (OSRC)
Parks & Recreation Committee

Parks and Recreation Department
Planning Board
Planning & Zoning Department
Public Health Department
Public Works (DPW) Department
School Building Rehabilitation Committee
School Committee
School Department
Select Board
Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC)
Taxation Aid Committee
Treasurer/Collector
Town Clerk
Town Manager
Transportation Advisory Committee
Veterans Services
Zoning Board of Appeals

*Non-profit group independent of the Town



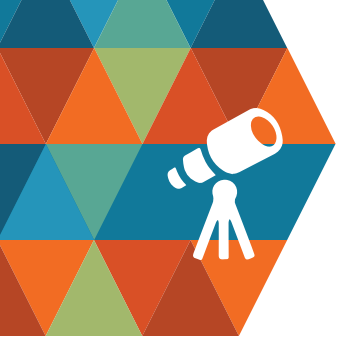
Chapter 2:

A Vision for Dedham

Introduction

The vision is the core of the Master Plan. It frames the values and priorities at the center of all other recommendations. The goals and strategies of the Master Plan are intended to bring the shared vision for Dedham into reality over the next ten years.

In this Chapter, an introduction frames the relationship of the vision to the Master Plan content. A narrative highlights the history of Dedham and how the Town's legacies are carried forward to the present. The vision statement is composed both of a narrative and bulleted commitments. This is followed by core priorities that have been defined by the community and recurring themes that emerged across conversations throughout the Master Plan process.



Designing Dedham 2035 A Vision for Dedham

Introduction

Dedham’s Master Plan addresses the current needs and priorities of the Town for the next 10 years based on a robust community engagement process with input from all of Dedham’s neighborhoods and engagement with thousands of residents. This is a result of Dedham’s commitment to long-range planning; in 2007, Town Meeting voted to engage in a comprehensive master planning process every ten years.

The process is an important way to have the residents of the Town speak to each other, reflect on where the Town is today, and to define new ideas and ambitions for the future. The Designing Dedham Master Plan Committee drafted this Vision Statement to reflect the overarching values and priorities that have been shared by community members through surveys, meetings, and workshops over the course of this two-year process. The Vision Statement has been written, reviewed, and edited, to ensure it is representative of the broad diversity of Dedham’s community and inclusive of the ideas and ambitions that have been articulated by hundreds of residents.

As can be seen in the diagram to the right, the Vision Statement is at the center of the Master Plan content. All other themes and topics flow from and relate back to this core element of the Vision Statement.





Dedham Yesterday and Today

Dedham is a vibrant community with diverse residential neighborhoods, thriving and convenient commercial and neighborhood centers, rich and well-managed natural and historic assets, and a strong record of fiscal responsibility and financial management. Dedham acknowledges that the history of this place and its land predate the history of the Town and recognizes the Massachusetts and Wampanoag People on whose ancestral lands the Town of Dedham resides. The positive beginning marked by Dedham's incorporation in 1636 also marks a painful era and an ending for many diverse indigenous peoples.

Since its incorporation, Dedham has embraced forward-thinking, ambitious, and innovative efforts such as creating the country's first human-made canal, the Mother Brook, attracting industry, mills, and a diverse ethnic population. The Town took early steps to advance education, opportunity, and equity for its residents by establishing the nation's first tax-supported and free public school. The historic Dedham court case (*Baker v. Fales*, 1821) was a major court case defining the separation of church and state following the split of the First Church and Parish and the Allin Congregational Church. Dedham was home to abolitionist activity and Dedham supported the defense of human dignity and freedom through the organization of civil war regiments, including the historic 54th Regiment at Camp Meigs.

The Town has proactively and responsibly planned for Town facilities and amenities, such as the care and stewardship of the historic Endicott Estate and the grassroots support and partnership to reuse the Avery School as the Mother Brook Arts and Community Center.

Throughout its history the Town has faced challenges and the two years during which this Master Plan was prepared have been a challenging time. The global spread of COVID-19 has both ended and upended lives. In the same two years, a nationwide reckoning with continued racial and social injustices has strengthened awareness that all communities need to reexamine practices, conventions, and regulations that serve to exclude groups of people from full participation in opportunities, institutions, and resources.

This difficult context highlights the importance of planning for a future with more risks, while defining new ways of engaging in civic and civil discourse, and confirms the importance of a shared plan for the future that integrates land use, economic development, housing, natural, cultural, and historic resources, transportation, community facilities and services, governance, and public health.



A Vision for Dedham Tomorrow

As Dedham looks to 2035, the Town is poised to continue its great heritage of bold leadership while at the same time ensuring that such leadership is in service of and with the participation of all of its residents. Dedham has the opportunity to advance its legacies of environmental, social, and fiscal sustainability while recognizing that inclusivity and respect are fundamental for the success of the community and the individuals who live here. The Town recognizes that all residents, much like the Master Plan topics, are interconnected and that it is important to remain engaged in the process of drawing the threads of community together so that all residents may enjoy a high quality of life with livable and walkable neighborhoods that embrace inclusion and equity, supported by aligned and effective policies. Dedham is committed to this vision by:



Designing Dedham 2035 Vision Statement

- Creating a community where residents of all backgrounds and ages can thrive and be healthy;
- Strengthening and connecting the compact and walkable places of each neighborhood to build vibrancy and unity across the Town;
- Increasing access to quality housing, transportation choices, recreation and open space, governance, and economic opportunity for all;
- Managing growth strategically to invest in and support local businesses, neighborhoods, vibrant business districts, thriving employment centers, and active transit hubs;
- Creating more opportunities to safely walk or bike to destinations, services, amenities, and resources within each neighborhood and across the Town, while reducing traffic and congestion;
- Committing to strong, quality and equitable education as a public good and empowering learning opportunities for people of all ages, needs, and interests;
- Strengthening inclusive self-governance that benefits from nurturing broad civic engagement across neighborhoods and ethnic backgrounds by creating more opportunities for all residents to be heard, to participate, and to be invested in decisions for the future;
- Celebrating the diversity of ethnicity, culture, and nationalities found in Dedham and supporting groups that have been marginalized through its history;
- Supporting stewardship of historic, cultural and natural assets to provide high quality shared amenities and to enhance livability and sustainability;
- Planning for future needs and challenges, including regional and climate-related, in order to plan accordingly, maintain fiscal responsibility and longterm sustainability, and equip the Town's workforce to manage change while providing transparent and resident-centered public services;
- Balancing the above commitments with an understanding that they are all interconnected.



Designing Dedham 2035 Core Priorities

Core priorities for the Master Plan were identified by the Dedham community through the Initial Community Survey and Virtual Visioning Workshop. The online and in-meeting survey asked two important questions related to the Vision Statement.

The first question was about the magnitude of change residents feel is necessary to move Dedham toward their ideal vision for the Town. This question asked “How close is Dedham to the vision you imagine for the Town?” The most frequent response was “the Town needs some minor improvements” with 47% of the responses. The second most frequent response was “the Town needs some major improvements” with 42% of the responses. The next most frequent response was “the Town is far from my ideal vision” with 6% of the responses. The least frequent response was “the Town is close to my ideal vision” with 5% of the responses. This shows a broad recognition that improvements are needed and that it is valuable to establish a vision and work toward it.

The second important question was about the core priorities that residents have for the Town. This question asked “what set of words would best describe your top goals for the Town of Dedham?” **The three most frequent responses for most important were “fiscally responsible,” “sustainable,” and “inclusive.”** These responses resonated throughout feedback and conversations throughout the Master Plan process. They are integrated into the Vision Statement and form the foundation for many of the goals and strategies.

Fiscally Responsible

Dedham has strong financial health and residents see this as a core priority and value. Dedham consistently taxes below its levy capacity. It has productive commercial properties that shift over 30% of the local tax burden away from residents. It does not rely heavily on State Aid to finance infrastructure or services, accounting for only 8.7% of all revenues in the most recently audited fiscal year. The Town has a AAA rating by Standard and Poor’s which translates to favorable borrowing rates. The Town has a history of a publicly well-funded pension and benefits program for its municipal workforce. All of these attributes indicate strong financial health and Dedham residents highlight a continuation of this fiscal responsibility into the future as a core priority.

Fiscal responsibility does not equate to not spending money or investing in capital projects, staff, or services, but rather ensuring those investments are sensible and effective. For example, all facilities, particularly aging assets, require regular renewal and investment to avoid a backlog of deferred maintenance and related facilities issues. It is fiscally responsible to proactively maintain those facilities to avoid potentially larger and more urgent expenditures if issues remain unaddressed. The Master Plan elevates fiscal responsibility in all topics with a particular focus in the topics of Community Facilities and Services and Governance.



Designing Dedham 2035 Core Priorities



Sustainable

In 2020, Dedham completed the Sustainable Dedham Climate Action and Resiliency Plan. In that plan, the decades of sustainability activity in Dedham are highlighted. Dedham’s Sustainability Advisory Committee was formed in 2008 to advance the Town’s commitment to addressing the impacts of pollution and climate change. In 2018, the Town joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, working with other municipalities to advance climate change resiliency and mitigation efforts. Also in 2018, the Town participated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning and Grant Program to assess the Town’s vulnerability to climate change. In 2019, the Town was awarded an MVP Action Grant to develop the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan.

The environmental sustainability of the community has clearly been a priority in Dedham. Sustainability also includes economic and social responsibilities. Economic sustainability is well-aligned with the first core priority of fiscally responsible. Social sustainability appears to require more attention and prioritization to elevate the needs of the community including the needs for expanded social programming, affordable housing, and livable communities. Elevating these aspects of sustainability are integrated throughout many of the Master Plan topics and connect to the third core priority of inclusive.



Inclusive

Relative to the other two core priorities, it could be observed that inclusive is a newer core priority for the Town, but one where recent progress has been made. The Dedham Human Rights Commission was created by a vote of Town Meeting in November of 2017. It ensures that all residents of the Town enjoy equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy life in the Town. Also in 2017, Dedham Public Schools introduced an Equity and Inclusion Task Force, to improve efforts to welcome all members of the Dedham community. One of the outcomes of this effort was the hiring of a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer for Dedham Public Schools in 2020.

New Town investments such as the playground at the Early Childhood Education Center are universally accessible and more inclusive. While not a Town entity, the Dedham Museum & Archive has reflected this core priority by highlighting Black history in Dedham and Dedham’s Indigenous histories through programming and exhibits. The “I am Dedham” monthly Dedham TV series spotlights the diversity of the community by sharing stories and experiences in Dedham. Residents have also joined together to form advocacy groups to build community and take on inclusive projects, such as honoring William B. Gould in East Dedham. The Master Plan builds on this momentum by defining goals and strategies that would expand inclusion through many of the Master Plan topics.



Designing Dedham 2035 Cross-cutting Themes

In addition to the core priorities that have been elevated by the community and integrated in the Vision Statement and throughout the Master Plan content, four cross-cutting themes have been identified. The cross-cutting themes were identified as the goals and strategies for each topic began to take shape based on feedback and discussion with the community primarily through the topic workshops. Dedham resident quotes highlighted from these conversations are shared below. The cross-cutting themes include inclusion and equity, walking and biking, livability and quality of life, and aligned and effective policies.

Inclusion and equity are integrated into 12 of the 48 total goals across 7 out of 8 topics of the Master Plan. Walking and biking is integrated into 7 of the 48 total goals across 6 out of 8 topics. Livability and quality of life are integrated into 12 of the 48 total goals across 6 out of 8 topics. Aligned and effective policies are integrated into 17 of the 48 total goals across all the topics.

Cross-cutting themes are highlighted in the plan with the icons that follow with a discussion of the themes on the following pages. Quotes from residents that representative of many comments heard throughout the process are included below.





Designing Dedham 2035

Cross-cutting Themes



Inclusion and equity

In the context of a municipal master plan, equity is setting the circumstances for all residents to have access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. This includes growing up safe and healthy, receiving a quality education, getting a good job, enjoying a high quality of life, and aging comfortably. This statement is adapted from MAPC’s work in supporting an equitable Greater Boston region.

A more formal definition of equity is found in the MAPC’s State of Equity Policy Agenda. It describes Equity as the condition of fair and just inclusion into a society. Equity will exist when those who have been most marginalized have equal access to opportunities, power, participation and resources and all have avenues to safe, healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives. Advancing equity requires identifying and interrogating systems of privilege and oppression that may be invisible to some, but that have contributed to an uneven distribution of benefits and burdens over multiple generations. The Town will be stronger when all residents feel included and supported to attain their full potential.

For example, in the Public Health and Livability Chapter, residents with existing medical conditions, or without support or resources (i.e. a lack of access to air conditioning or health care services), including older adults, lower income populations, and young children, typically face the greatest climate change related health risks and therefore may need more resources dedicated to their future health and climate mitigation than others.



Safe movement

The COVID-19 pandemic has given many people a renewed connection to their local neighborhood, surrounding parks, and amenities as many stayed closer to home throughout the day. This pandemic disruption has highlighted and broadened a need for improved conditions for walking and biking in Dedham’s neighborhoods and across the Town. Getting around is a part of daily life and safe and attractive options for walking and biking encourage more people to choose not to drive for certain trips. In addition to walking and biking, traffic congestion has been frequently raised as a concern and a theme in many discussions. These issues are closely connected.

A reduction of local vehicular trips, that could be replaced by walking or biking, would help to reduce traffic congestion. The pandemic has disrupted commuting patterns and resulted in peak travel times which are less predictable and occurring outside of typical commuting times. Pass through traffic and traffic driven by navigation technology are pushing congestion to streets which previously did not see this type of traffic volume.

Improved infrastructure for safe and attractive movement will improve travel for all. Encouraging a shift to walking and biking is particularly beneficial because it also has environmental (reduced pollution), economic (reduction of lost time in traffic), and health (more physical activity) benefits. Master Plan goals and strategies define approaches to addressing this theme of safe movement for all forms of travel throughout Town.



Designing Dedham 2035 Cross-cutting Themes



Livability and quality of life

AARP defines a livable community as one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence, allow residents to remain in their homes and communities as they age, and foster residents’ engagement in the community’s civic, economic, and social life.

Another concept of livability and quality of life is promoted by 80 Cities and that is simply that whether you’re 8 years old or 80 years old, your city or town should work for everyone. If everything from parks, sidewalks, housing, and transportation works well for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, then it will be great for all people.

Planning plays a key role in engaging community members in developing a vision for the future, setting the conditions for what and where changes will occur, and ultimately enhancing livability and quality of life. All the features of the physical environment should positively contribute to the daily lives of residents. A variety of active and passive recreation opportunities should be available nearby. Getting around should be safe and convenient. Shops and services should be available and accessible. Housing should be available to support residents’ needs. Many of the Master Plan goals and strategies are intended to positively impact livability and quality of life either directly or indirectly.



Aligned and effective policies

Across all topics discussed in the Master Plan, residents would eventually say something like the “goals and ideas are great, but we need to make sure something happens.” All topics of the Master Plan have at least one goal and set of strategies that defines aligning policies with the Master Plan and thereby improving their effectiveness in assisting the Town toward the shared community vision.

These goals and strategies take a few forms. In the Land Use and Zoning Chapter the recommendations focus on modifications to the Town’s Zoning Bylaw and development approval processes. In the Transportation and Connectivity chapter the recommendations focus on staff support for transportation projects and advancing from planning to implementation. In the Governance Chapter the recommendations focus on the resident experience with local services, transparency, and representation among decision-makers to move toward aligned and effective policies. Each of the Master Plan chapters provide a focus on this type of alignment because it was raised so frequently as a concern and opportunity for improvement.



Chapter 3:

Land Use and Zoning

Introduction

The land use and growth patterns in Dedham have been influenced by the historic and economic evolution of the Town, the natural features that have always been present, and the supporting infrastructure that has been developed. The historic and economic evolution of the Town was closely connected to the rivers including settlement patterns along the Charles River, human-made canals connecting to the Neponset River, and mills on these waterways. The early mills and mill housing resulted in a pattern of walkable neighborhoods and historic squares. Later, improvements in rail connectivity contributed to the growth of Dedham and Dedham Square including the first commuter rail service in the Boston area opening in 1839. Later improvements in vehicular infrastructure, such as the completion of Route 128, led to the growth of Providence Highway and greater access to Boston. Today, these foundational features are strengths of the Town and leave patterns of historic and walkable squares and neighborhood centers, access to transit, access to the highway, and extensive natural resources and water access.

The land use and zoning chapter examines this historic evolution of the use of land and growth patterns of the Town and the present pressures on land in the Town. The chapter provides an overview of the present zoning regulations and highlights areas where zoning could be improved to better guide future investment and growth in Dedham. The land use and zoning chapter looks to the future of Dedham and the need to proactively guide growth and development to align with the community's vision.

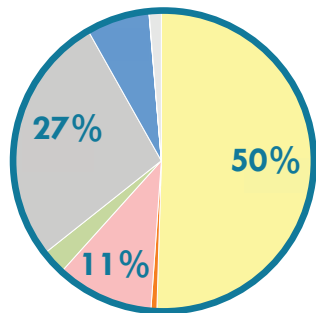
Summary

Strengthen and connect the compact and walkable places in Dedham and leverage each investment to improve livability.

Themes Highlights

- The town’s transit, walkable neighborhoods, water and wastewater infrastructure, and natural assets provide a strong foundation for livability in Dedham.
- The town is predominantly comprised of residential uses and opportunities for future growth and redevelopment remain.
- Residents have expressed the need to update the current Zoning Bylaw to better align regulations with the community’s vision for the town.

Proportion of land use in Dedham



- Legend:
- Residential (50%)
 - Mixed use (1%)
 - Commercial/industrial (11%)
 - Private land/open space (3%)
 - Public land/open space (27%)
 - Institutional (7%)
 - Unknown/not classified (1%)

Source: MassGIS

Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Proactively plan for future growth and leverage transformative investment opportunities to improve quality of life and livability for all residents.
- Strengthen the neighborhoods and places where walking, biking, connecting to transit, and driving is safe and attractive.
- Align regulations and approval processes with the town’s vision to optimize shared benefits and reduce impacts of new development and redevelopment.

Proportion of zoning districts in Dedham

Zoning District	Gross area (estimated acres)	% of town area
Single Residence A (SRA)	2,413	35%
Single Residence B (SRB)	2,271	34%
General Residence (GR)	915	13%
Senior Campus (SC)	152	2%
Limited Manufacturing (LMA)	382	6%
Limited Manufacturing Type B (LMB)	36	0.5%
Research, Development & Office (RDO)	401	5%
General Business (GB)	29	0.4%
Highway Business (HB)	155	3%
Central Business (CB)	37	1%
Local Business (LB)	32	0.5%

Source: MassGIS, Town of Dedham Zoning

Companion and related plans and studies

- Mixed-Use Development Impact Study (2020)
- Climate Action & Resiliency Plan (2020)
- Providence Highway: Create a Better Corridor (2020)
- Housing Study (2019)
- Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)
- Dedham Corporate Station: Creating a Connected Neighborhood (2017)
- East Dedham Village Strategic Action Plan (2017)
- Enhancing Creative East Dedham (2014)



Defining land use and zoning terms

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

A second small dwelling on the same property (or attached to) a regular single-family house.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

A measurement of the density of development on a property by comparing a building's floor area in relation to the size of the property where the building is located. Typically, FAR is calculated by dividing the gross floor area of a building by the total land area of the property.

Historic Districts

Dedham is home to three local historic districts. The three districts have been recognized for their historic and architectural significance and include: Franklin Square-Court Street District, Connecticut Corner District, and Federal Hill District. Additional development regulations and review are required within these districts. The Court Street-Franklin Square and Connecticut Corner Historic Districts are within the boundaries of the Dedham Village National Register Historic District established in 2006.

Lot Coverage Ratio

Lot coverage ratio is the area of the footprints of the building(s) and structure(s) on a lot divided by the area of the lot, expressed either by a decimal number or a percentage. Lot coverage is a characteristic that measures the intensity of use of a property.

Mixed-use Development

A type of development in which a mix of uses is present. The mix of uses may include residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or other uses. The uses are typically integrated into a single building with uses stacked vertically, floor-by-floor or integrated on a larger property with multiple buildings integrating a number of complementary uses on the property.

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Overlay Zone

A zoning district applied over one or more previously established zoning districts. It establishes additional, or stricter standards, or incentives, and criteria for properties beyond those established by the underlying zoning district.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Transit oriented development is land use and zoning policy that encourages growth to occur near existing transit (typically rail, but can include bus) stations. This type of development seeks to bring an increased density of people, uses, activities, amenities, and jobs together near transit to reduce the need to vehicular trips for daily commuting and to leverage infrastructure investments.

Underlying Zone

The basic zoning definition applicable to a property. Every property in the Town is located with a specific underlying zone. The Town of Dedham has eleven underlying zones. Four of the underlying zones are residential and seven are non-residential.

Zoning Bylaws

Land use in Dedham is regulated through zoning. The Building Department is responsible for enforcement of building codes and other codes. They work in cooperation with the Planning & Zoning office and the Planning Board and others to enforce zoning regulations.



Land Use and Zoning In Dedham Today

Land use and zoning themes from data and previous plans

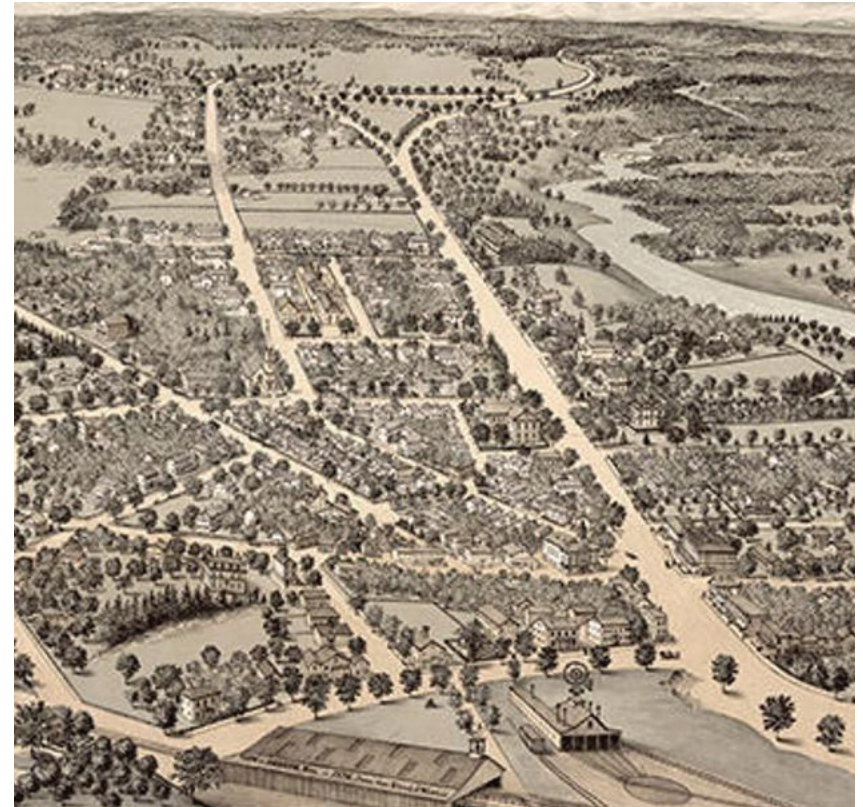
LU1 Multiple transit options and points of access define patterns

Rail lines have shaped Dedham's settlement patterns and Dedham benefits today from two commuter rail stops on the Franklin Line, Endicott and Dedham Corporate. Nearby Readville and the Route 128 Station also provide convenient transit access and although in neighboring municipalities, they are near enough to influence land use in Dedham. Land use patterns have historically responded to these access points and future land use improvements should strengthen orientation to transit and convenient access by all modes of travel.

The transportation infrastructure in and around the Town has been a major organizing feature of the Town's settlement patterns. In 1793 Dedham became the county seat for Norfolk County and in 1803, the Norfolk and Bristol Turnpike, then the Hartford and Dedham Turnpike was built offering stagecoach service to Boston, Providence, and Hartford. Rail service was extended to the Town in the 1830's. The Boston and Providence Railroad included Dedham on a route that connected the Town to the main line at Readville. This infrastructure changed the natural landscape of Dedham with embankments, cuts, fill, bridges and crossing through the countryside.

An early birdseye view map of Dedham shows some of these early transportation features and settlement patterns. In the map, the Dedham Square area with Dedham Station toward the bottom of the image about where the Keystone parking lot is today on Eastern Avenue. The courthouse can be seen up High Street.

Birdseye view of historic Dedham Square in 1876



Source: Library of Congress



LU2 Strong historic squares and neighborhood centers

The historic settlement patterns of the Town remain largely intact and are defined by mixed-use centers of activity. The centers are compact areas that include a variety of uses, and that provide convenient and walkable access to shops and services from many of the Town’s neighborhoods. These include the significant historic squares of Dedham Square and East Dedham Square and smaller neighborhood centers of Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, Sprague Street, and Bussey Street. These mixed-use nodes should be preserved and strengthened as a central feature of enhanced livability and quality of life in Dedham. These areas are distinct from the surrounding residential neighborhoods and typically defined with distinct zoning in the Town’s Bylaw. These zoning districts include the Central Business districts, the Local Business districts. This historic development pattern is a major asset and provides a compact and walkable environment that is desirable and attractive today.

Dedham’s neighborhoods are also an important organizational feature of the Town. Each neighborhood has a unique history and contributions to the Town. In recent studies, the neighborhoods have been correlated with the US Census Tracts and Block Groups, which are geographic units based on population distribution. The neighborhoods include East Dedham, Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor, Oakdale/Endicott, Riverdale, Dedham Village/Square, and Precinct 1/West Dedham.

Dedham Neighborhood Characteristics

Neighborhood	Land area (acres)	Population	Housing units	Housing density (units/acre)
East Dedham	670	4,891	2,188	3.3
Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor	1,242	5,863	2,171	1.7
Oakdale	1,032	6,077	2,511	2.4
Riverdale	1,064	3,634	1,560	1.5
Dedham Village/Square	315	1,233	590	1.9
Precinct 1/West Dedham	2,472	3,031	1,171	0.5

Source: MassGIS, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

LU3 Central commercial corridor and convenient auto access

A critical component of the transportation infrastructure to have a major impact on the settlement patterns of Dedham was the construction of Route 128 between 1947 and 1956, considered the first circumferential highway built around a U.S. city. Improved automobile and truck access brought a wave of new businesses and residents and lead to a boom in new home construction in Dedham. The demand for land reduced the remaining agricultural areas and most developable parcels were developed by the 1980s.

Convenient vehicular access is noted by many residents as a major asset of the Town and for some households is the reason they live in Dedham. The Town has three direct exits from Route 128/

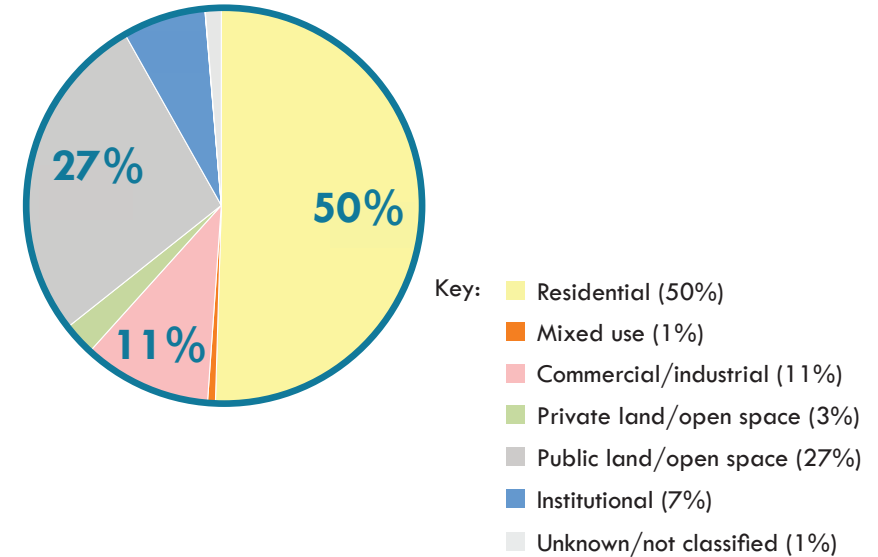


Interstate 95 allowing easy access to the surrounding region. The vehicular convenience provided by the Providence Highway crossing the center of the Town attracts auto-oriented retail, commercial, and hospitality uses.

LU4 Predominantly residential use across the Town

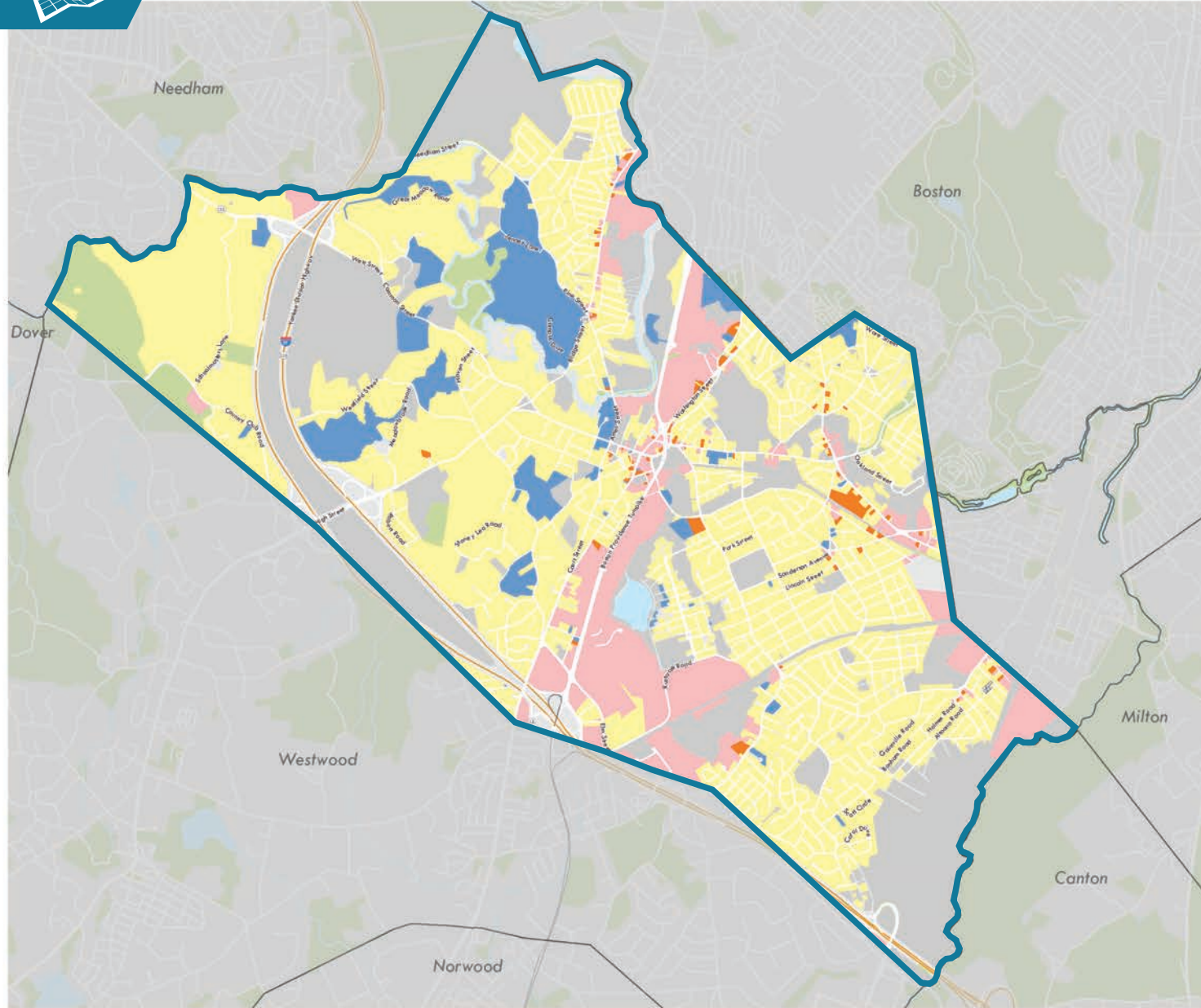
Although Dedham has a diverse mix of land uses across the Town, residential uses are the predominant proportion of uses. Residential uses are the largest land use by both the number of parcels and total land area in the Town representing. By total land area, residential uses account for about 50% of all uses and land in Dedham. Public land and open space are the second largest land use with about 27% of the total land area in Dedham. Much of the public land and open space is located within a residential zoning district (Single Residence A, Single Residence B, or General Residence). The total land area of the Town that falls within one of the residential zoning districts is even greater than the percent of residential uses at about 82% all land zoned in Dedham. After public land and open space, commercial and industrial uses are the next largest land use with about 11% of total land area. Institutional land is about 7% of the total land area. Private land and open space is about 3% of the total land area. Mixed use is about 1% of the total land area and an additional 1% of the land area is either unknown or not classified. The pie chart shows the land uses in Dedham with the predominant residential uses.

Comparison of Land Uses



Source: MassGIS

A land use map of Dedham on the following page shows the geographic distribution of the uses. The commercial and industrial areas are concentrated near the Providence Highway and transit stops. The mixed-use areas are found near the historic squares and neighborhood centers. The residential areas occupy most land between these other features. Private schools and health care campuses show up under institutional uses and the unclassified areas are likely to be state- or federally-owned areas near the interstate highway or rivers.



Land Use Dedham, MA

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial/Industrial
- Open Space
- Public
- Institutional
- Tax Exempt Other
- Unknown
- Rivers and Streams
- Water



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
February 2020



LU5 Extensive natural resources and river access

The Town's history is closely connected to the Charles River, Neponset River and the ingenuity of Mother Brook and Long Ditch. They have always been an integral part of the Town's history and economy. The Charles River and Neponset River form portions of the Town's borders and first supported agriculture in the community. The ingenuity of early Dedham residents harnessed the power of the rivers to provide power for mills. In 1639, Mother Brook was dug by hand to connect the Charles and Neponset Rivers and provided power for mills and factories. In

A historic mill on Mother Brook



Source: Wikimedia Commons, contributor Brianca

1652, the 4,000 foot Long Ditch was completed to channel water for Charles River flood control and preservation of the riverbank meadows. Dwight's Brook, or the Little River, connected Wigwam Pond with the Charles River.

These waterways and water bodies are key features that have organized the Town from the beginning and are the central features of the open space and conservation areas of the Town today. These natural assets should continue to be treasured features that are the center point of conservation and recreational access. Other natural resources such as Wilson Mountain and Wigwam Pond are frequently mentioned by residents for the most widely used natural asset and asset with the most unmet potential respectively.

LU6 Zoning regulations in need of updates and improvements

All land in the Town of Dedham, and any city or town, is located within a zoning district. Zoning is a local land use control and part of the Town's Bylaws. Zoning was first established in Dedham in 1940, prior to the Commonwealth's Zoning Enabling Act of 1954. Dedham's Zoning divides the Town into zoning districts and each district is associated with characteristics that regulate the use of the land. The Town has established 12 zoning districts. There are four residential zoning districts and eight nonresidential zoning districts. One of the zoning districts is no longer in use so does not show up on the map. These are underlying zoning districts. Every parcel of land in the Town is in one or more underlying



zoning district. The Town also has eight overlay districts that impose additional regulations on land use for a specific purpose. These include Adult Use Overlay, Aquifer Protection Overlay, Arts Overlay, Flood Plain District, Historic Preservation Overlay, Medical Marijuana Overlay, Wireless Communications Services Overlay, and the Providence Highway Development District Overlay.

A zoning map for the Town of Dedham follows in this chapter with the extents of the 12 underlying zoning districts and 5 overlay districts. For the underlying zoning districts there are four types of residential districts – Single Residence A, Single Residence B, General Residence, and Senior Campus. These represent a majority of the land in Dedham. The seven types of nonresidential zoning districts include Central Business, General Business, Highway Business, Local Business, Limiting Manufacturing A, Limiting Manufacturing B, and Research Development and Office. The Town has also created six overlay districts in the Town that provide additional regulations for specific areas. These include the Arts Overlay, Medical Marijuana Overlay, Wireless Overlay, Historic Preservation Overlay, Adult Use Overlay, and Aquifer Protection Overlay.

The need to comprehensively update the zoning bylaw has been highlighted in the previous planning efforts. The Planning Board continues to lead efforts to update and improve zoning. Residents have mentioned zoning issues around tear-downs of neighborhood homes, regulations around accessory dwelling units, the planned residential development regulations, and reconsidering the types of future development for the Providence Highway corridor.

LU7 Continued need for data and transparent processes of communication

Recent processes relating to land use and development including the analysis of the impacts of mixed-use development, consideration of the rail trail connection, recent development projects and review processes, and studying the re-use of the Police Headquarters property in Dedham Square all point to the need for gathering and providing data to inform transparent processes of communication and decision-making. Connecting data and decisions to long-term goals and priorities for the Town can add an effective layer of guidance.

Neighborhood meeting for Dedham Town Green



Source: Town of Dedham



Land Use and Zoning themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to land use and zoning and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.)

While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the land use and zoning themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

LU1 Manage new growth

45% of survey participants expressed that managing growth in an appropriate and sustainable manner is most important. This placed it as the most important challenge facing the Town of Dedham in terms of land use. A particular interest in reducing the negative impacts of development and focusing on the public benefit was expressed in survey responses.

LU2 Improve existing use patterns

Many survey participants provided comments on the importance of improving what is already developed to make better and more efficient use of the land, with a particular focus on areas that are already developed for commercial uses. Participants expressed the need to update zoning bylaws to better reflect a long term plan for the Town.

LU3 Focus on natural assets

Directly related to the first two community priorities, many participants highlight the need to preserve and maintain the Town’s natural assets, to create additional open space where it is needed, and to expand access to natural resources such as Wigwam Pond and Mother Brook.

LU4 Improve walkability

In nearly all master plan topics, the need for improved pedestrian access and safety has been highlighted by participants. The land use patterns are directly related to walkability with the need to have a mix of uses and destinations within a compact area to encourage walking for daily errands. Participants state that the Town should not be so car-centered and that better access for people walking and biking should be considered in all growth and improvements



Land Use and Zoning In Dedham Today

Additional context and data

Land Use Change

Land use patterns of a municipality are constantly evolving as parcels change ownership and shift uses. Dedham is no exception to this constant and incremental change. The table that follows shows the land use changes that have occurred through past decades as reported in the 2009 Master Plan, compared to the land use break-down today. Zoning regulates the use and pattern of uses in the town and is oriented toward future changes and the evolution of land use in the town.

It is difficult to make a perfect comparison to the previous calculations, but in general you can observe a growth of land devoted to residential uses, a shrinking of land devoted to agriculture and open land. Institutional, commercial, and industrial uses have also increased. The transportation network and open water resources have remained relatively constant. Some of the broader dynamics influencing evolving land use have been discussed in the other Master Plan topics. They include population growth in the town. After peaking in the 1970s the population of the town shrank, but has been on the rise and is projected to continue this growth. Simultaneously household size is shrinking and projected to continue to shrink. More people with less people per house results in continued demand for more housing and more variation in housing types. The population is aging with the median age projected to increase.

Evolving land uses in Dedham

Land Use Change	Year (acres in use)			
	1971 (acres)	1985	1999	2020 (trend)
Use				
Agricultural Uses	86.1	65.0	62.1	▼
Forested Land	1,930.7	1,865.5	1,764.7	▼
Mining	7.9	7.9	7.9	▼
Open Land	177.2	64.7	85.8	▼
Recreation	182.8	168.6	190.4	▲
Multi-Family	28.9	37.0	40.7	▲
Small Lot Residential	660.4	666.0	666.0	▲
Moderate Lot Residential	1,340.5	1,356.2	1,379.5	▲
Larger Lot Residential	522.7	541.3	572.1	▲
Commercial	157.8	191.5	204.7	▲
Industrial	212.6	356.1	399.0	▲
Public or Institutional Land (Tax exempt)	258.8	272.3	230.9	▲
Transportation (Right-of-Way)	328.2	325.3	316.8	unchanged
Waste Disposal	23.0	0.0	0.0	▼
Non-Forested Wetlands (Open land)	693.0	693.0	690.5	▼
Open Water	222.5	222.5	221.8	unchanged
Total	6,832.9	6,823.9	6,823.9	unchanged

Source: MassGIS



Residential Uses

The primary land use in the town is residential. The residential uses are distributed among distinct residential neighborhoods that vary in terms of the density of the housing units and population. While the predominant type of housing developed has been the single-family home, multifamily and mixed-use development has increased in the past decade.

Commercial Uses

Commercial uses are clustered near the center of the town and include commercial uses in the primary historic centers of Dedham Square and East Dedham Square and large-scale commercial development along Providence Highway that bisects the town from north to south near its center. The land devoted to commercial uses has remained relatively constant, but the intensity of the use of that land has been increasing over time.

Industrial Uses

Warehouses, office parks, and light industrial uses are concentrated on the east side of the town with primary concentrations in the southeast of the town.

Institutional Uses

Institutional uses include several private educational institutions, health care facilities, and specialized facilities for institutions of higher education. Some of these institutional uses represent significant land holdings and acreage in the town. Most of these substantial land holdings and institutional uses are located in Precinct 1/West Dedham.

Public Uses

Many of the public uses are clustered near the historic centers of Dedham. The primary concentration of public uses is in and around Dedham Square with some uses in East Dedham. School facilities are distributed throughout the neighborhoods. Public parks and open spaces are distributed throughout the Town. Refer to the Community Facilities and Services chapter for more information regarding Town-owned public uses. Other public uses are Commonwealth owned property, such as rail corridors and MBTA land.

Future Land Use Change

Estimating the future potential for land use change and its scale is a difficult endeavor. There are a few approaches to projecting and anticipating that change. One is a build-out analysis, and another is through growth projections. A build-out analysis examines the land that is vacant and available for development and projects the potential amount of new development that could occur based on current zoning or other constraints. The growth projections look at the demographic and migration patterns of a region and anticipate how much of that change will be allocated to the Town of Dedham. The growth projections could then be connected to the geography of the town and directed to specific locations through regulations and incentives. Neither approach is perfect but offer insights into the type of growth and change Dedham may see over the next 10 years.



Vacant Land

The future potential for new development occurs primarily in two distinct ways. The first type of development is through new development that occurs on land that was not previously developed. Several sources of parcel level data are available that categorize and inventory the use of land in the town and include categorization for parcels which are currently vacant and undeveloped, but developable. The vacant land may be privately or publicly owned. A town-wide inventory of vacant land was performed most recently for the 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan. This analysis identified the current inventory of private undeveloped land. The Town's Assessor's data can also be queried for an inventory of parcels that are currently classified as vacant land.

Redevelopment

The second type of development is through redevelopment that occurs on land that was previously developed. In the Greater Boston region, redevelopment is predominant form of future land use change since most developable land has seen a building investment in the past. Since redevelopment is a process of investing in a property where development has already occurred, the process typically results in additional development density to build more value on the land than was there previously. When the value of the land becomes greater than the value of the existing built asset, redevelopment becomes more likely. Redevelopment is sometimes even more difficult to project than new development because it introduces a few more variables such as the operation of current uses, the value of those uses including businesses, and the financial circumstances of the current building and its ownership.

Many of the same parcels identified in the Open Space and Recreation plan were identified in the 2019 Dedham Housing Study as well. This Housing Study also reviewed the redevelopment potential of parcels by analyzing parcels that were more than two times the minimum residential lot size and parcels that have a low assessed value of the building compared to the assessed value of the land of the property.

Growth Projections

Cycles of development, redevelopment, and real estate investment create a consistent state of incremental change and evolution in Dedham. These changes are occurring parcel by parcel Town-wide. Several data sources are available to generally track these changes. The sources include Assessor's Data, GIS parcel data, and open space inventories. According to analysis in Dedham's 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan, approximately 38 acres of land have been developed since 2010. According to Dedham's Assessor's data, approximately 102 acres of land have been developed since 2010 (comparing 2023 and 2010 Assessor's Data. This specific figure is difficult to verify and so the total acreage should be considered in that general range with a margin of error. The development that has occurred on this acreage has primarily included single family homes. It should be noted that data showing reductions in developable private property does not specify if properties were actually developed or are considered protected from future development by means such as conservation deed restrictions or restrictions on future use.



Potentially Developable Land

Land that has not previously been developed and that is privately owned is a potential development opportunity. This type of property can more directly impact the visual character of a neighborhood often changing from a wooded property to a home lot. The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified 218 acres of private and unprotected vacant land. An alternative data source, the Town's Assessing data, identifies 312 acres of private and unprotected vacant land. The inventory from both sources is likely to contain errors, most likely the mis-categorization of individual parcels and may also include recently developed parcels that have not yet been recategorized in the database. The most accurate analysis of private and unprotected vacant land would include a parcel by parcel verification of the current conditions and characteristics of the land. This land is found in nearly all zoning districts and all neighborhoods across Dedham.

In addition to private and unprotected vacant land, there are also public (unprotected) lands including 32 acres of vacant land owned by the Town identified in the 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan that has not been assigned to a management entity. Of the 45 properties identified, only five are greater than an acre. Most of the properties such as 14 Shaw Lane (6.58 acres) and 171 Bussey Street (6.09 acres) are wetlands and undevelopable. Major institutional property holdings also present a potential for future change. The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified 457.75 acres of land held by institutions. One example is the Common Street property of Northeastern University which is about a 20-acre property.

Another area of change may be under the category of Private Recreation Properties. The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified 139 acres of this type of land use. One example is the McGolf Driving Range which is about a 26-acre property. However, each of these categories of properties require an additional process to shift the property from the current use to a development opportunity. More specific conditions of each parcel that may impact development have not been analyzed including confirming the current status, the presence of wetlands, property topography, or other environmental constraints.

In order to proactively plan for potential future development and conservation opportunities, additional parcel based research and analysis is recommended to confirm the inventory of remaining privately owned vacant land in the Town. Once the location of these opportunities is confirmed, a review of the zoning for these properties can be performed to confirm that the potential development opportunities are aligned with the community's goals for the remaining land in a particular district.

Population Projections

The most recent regional socio-economic projections were prepared for 2020 Regional Transportation Plans. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) led an effort to update population, household, and employment projections for Massachusetts working with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The projections incorporate



Dedham Projections

Projections	Year	
	2030	2040
Population	26,709	27,593
Households	11,029	11,587
Employment	15,280	15,413

birth, death, and migration rates, as well as housing growth into the population change projections and employment trends and changes to the labor force in the employment projections.

The population projections for Dedham show a 2030 population of 26,709 residents and a 2040 population of 27,593 residents. Converted to households the projections show a 2030 household count of 11,029 and a 2040 household count of 11,587. The employment projections for Dedham show a 2030 employment count of 15,280 and a 2040 employment count of 15,413.

The 2020 US Census population data for Dedham shows a 2020 population of 25,364. Therefore the projected population growth over the next 10 years is 1,345 residents or about 555 households. The population growth over the previous 10 years was 635.

The 2020 US Census housing unit data for Dedham shows a 2020 housing unit count of 10,459. The housing unit growth over the previous 10 years was 268 units. To accommodate the projected number of households over the next 10 years the housing unit growth will need to be about twice as much as the preceding 10 year period.

Compared to the potentially developable land, building new single family housing units on the remaining available land may not accommodate the projected population growth. Falling short of housing demand continues to place upward pressure on housing costs. Any zoning district with undeveloped vacant land that could be a new development opportunity should be reviewed in order to explore the most appropriate and effective type of housing that could accommodate housing demand while integrating conservation and other community land use goals. A review of the characteristics of the current Zoning Bylaw is provided on the following pages.

Zoning Review

The most comprehensive and effective tool the town has to positively shape and guide growth and change is the Town's Zoning Bylaw. The Zoning Bylaw provides the regulations for all property in the town and determines what can be developed and the characteristics of that development. The purpose of the Zoning Bylaw is stated as to "promote the general welfare of the Town of Dedham, to protect the health and safety of its inhabitants, to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the town, to preserve the cultural, historical and agricultural heritage of the community, to increase the amenities of the town, and to reduce the hazard from fire by regulating the location and use of buildings and the open space around them."

The Zoning Bylaw is a critical tool in the implementation of the Master Plan and provides a direct link between the vision, goals,



strategies and priorities expressed by the community through this planning process and the tangible results of investments that will occur. Aligning the Zoning with the priorities of the Master Plan is a high priority and a recurring theme from the community to have aligned and effective policies. This section summarizes the current components of the Zoning Bylaw and summarizes changes that have been recently recommended to the zoning that are consistent with the Master Plan. The town has established 12

Dedham's Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Gross area (estimated acres)	Percent of town area
Residential Districts		
Single Residence A (SRA)	2,413	35%
Single Residence B (SRB)	2,271	34%
General Residence (GR)	915	13%
Senior Campus (SC)	152	2%
Subtotal	5,751	84%
Nonresidential Districts		
Limited Manufacturing (LMA)	382	6%
Limited Manufacturing Type B (LMB)	36	0.5%
Research, Development & Office (RDO)	401	5%
General Business (GB)	29	0.4%
Highway Business (HB)	155	3%
Central Business (CB)	37	1%
Local Business (LB)	32	0.5%
Subtotal	1,072	16%

Source: Town of Dedham Zoning Map, MassGIS

underlying zoning districts. There are 4 residential districts and 7 nonresidential districts.

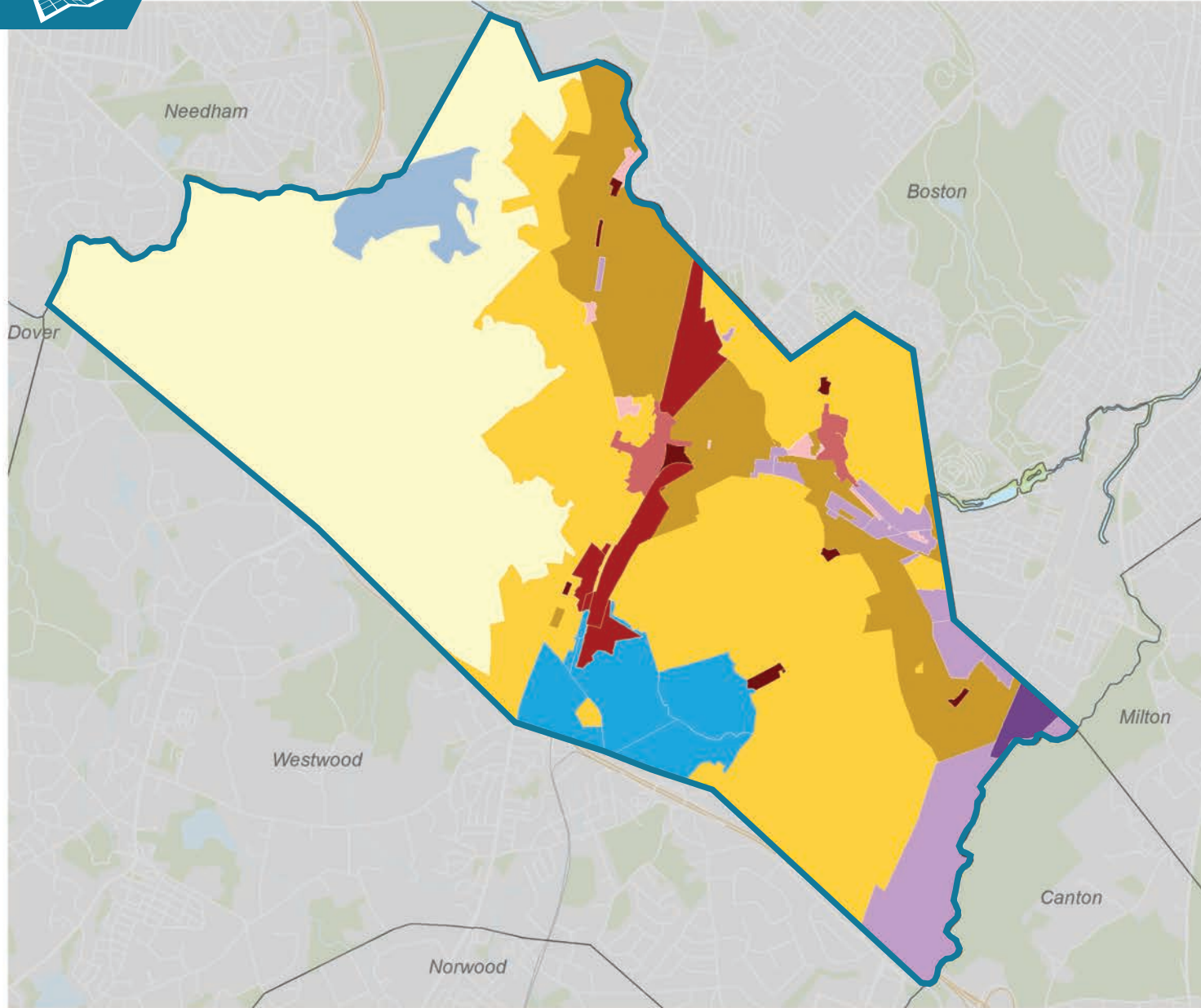
The figures in the table are estimates only, the zoning map does not show the zoning boundaries overlapping with rights-of-way or water bodies, so each district area would be less if accounting for these geographies. The overall proportions of the zoning districts reflect the zoning map as shown on the following page.

Residential Zoning Districts

Most of land in Dedham (about 84%) is within a residential zoning district. There are four primary underlying residential zoning districts, including Single Residence A, Single Residence B, General Residence, and Senior Campus. There are also other residential regulations, such as Planned Residential Development, that are summarized below.

Single Residence A (SRA)

The SRA district includes lower-density areas intended to provide a semi-rural setting for single family dwellings and may also accommodate uses that require large parcels of land such as assisted living residences and public and institutional uses. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet. About 35% of the land in Dedham is located within the SRA district. The majority of the district is located in Precinct 1/West Dedham, with additional areas in the neighborhoods of Riverdale and Dedham Village/Dedham Square.



Zoning Map

Dedham, MA

Zoning Districts

- Central Business
- General Business
- General Residence
- Highway Business
- Local Business
- Limited Manufacturing
- Limited Manufacturing Type B
- Research Development & Office
- Senior Campus
- Single Residence A
- Single Residence B

Overlay Districts

- Arts
- Medical Marijuana
- Wireless
- Historic Preservation
- Adult Use
- Historic District



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
February 2020



Single Residence B (SRB)

The SRB district includes medium density areas served by municipal utilities that are intended for single-family homes, subsidiary apartments, some assisted living residences, and public uses. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 12,500 square feet. About 34% of the land in Dedham is located within the SRB district. The district occurs in all of Dedham's neighborhoods.

General Residence (GR)

The GR district includes higher density areas intended for one- or two-family dwellings, assisted living residences, and apartments or row houses. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet for single family homes and 11,000 square feet for non-single family homes. About 13% of the land in Dedham is located within the GR district. Large portions of Dedham Village/Dedham Square, Oakdale, East Dedham, and Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor are within the GR District.

Senior Campus (SC)

The SC district is intended to promote the well-planned development of large parcels of land to serve the housing and health care needs of senior citizens, serve the educational needs of children, and foster intergenerational relationships. It must be located in the SRA and contain at least 4 acres. About 2% of the land in Dedham is located within the SC district. The SC district is located entirely within Precinct 1/West Dedham.

Other Residential Regulations

In addition to the primary underlying residential zoning districts. The following regulations provide additional options for residential development in Dedham.

Planned Residential Development Standards

Planned Residential Development is intended to be a well-defined area of higher development density than other residential developments. It is intended to accommodate dwelling units for small households in a variety of dwelling types, all in a planned setting. The provisions allow residential density of up to 1.5 times the base density allowed in applicable zoning district.

Multifamily Residential Complex

Multifamily Residential Complex permits the conversion of existing buildings to multi-family houses on lots with a minimum of 6 acres in the SRA district and 100,000 square feet (2.30 acres) in the SRB district. The requirements limit density to the base minimum number of units for a subdivision per the underlying zoning, or 6 units in SRA and 24 units in SRB.

Mixed Use Developments

The purpose of Mixed Use Developments is to encourage a mixture of complementary land uses to create economic and social vitality and to address housing needs, develop mixed-use areas and buildings which are safe, comfortable and attractive to pedestrians, provide flexibility in siting and design of new developments and redevelopments, and to encourage efficient



land use by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land needed for surface parking. Mixed Use Development is permitted in the CB, LB, RDO, HB, and GB districts. The maximum number and type of allowable residential dwelling units shall be determined by the Planning Board as part of the Special Permit and site plan review process. All Mixed-Use Developments shall provide at least one parking space per dwelling unit, except those within one half mile of a commuter rail station. Additional parking shall be provided for nonresidential uses.

Assisted Living Facilities

Assisted Living Facilities are permitted by special permit in the SRA, SRB, and GR zoning districts on lots with a minimum area of 4 acres. Density is limited to a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet per unit, up to maximum of 115 units.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

An ADU is permitted by special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals in SRA and SRB zoning districts. To be eligible, a lot must have at least 10% greater land area than required by the appropriate zoning district. The provisions require an ADU to be between 350 to 1,000 square feet or 33% of total building size and have an occupancy restriction of no more than two persons. Note that this occupancy restriction may raise fair housing concerns as discriminatory to families with children. The zoning provisions also limit an ADU to existing buildings so that newly constructed single-families could not include an ADU. The special permit is not transferable if the property is sold.

Conversion to Two Family Dwellings

SRA and SRB allow conversions of single-family to two family houses on lots that have an area of at least 50% higher than the minimum lot size for a single-family house in the applicable zoning district.

Group Housing

Permits more than one house on a tract of land is at least 3 acres if authorized by the Board of Appeals where a row house or an apartment house are permitted.

Home Occupations

The use of a room or rooms in a dwelling as an office, studio, or workroom by a resident on the premises under certain conditions.

Inclusionary Zoning

At Fall Town Meeting 2020, the town passed zoning amendment Article 25 to add an affordable housing requirement for any mixed-use or age-restricted development project with 10 or more units. All such projects require the inclusion of 15% of their units for rent to moderate income households at 80% of the area median income (AMI) or payments in lieu of providing on-site affordable housing units where it would be unfeasible.

Nonresidential Zoning Districts

The land not zoned residential is within one of the following non-residential zoning districts in Dedham. About 16% of land in Dedham falls into this category. There are seven primary underlying non-residential zoning districts, including Central



Business, Local Business, General Business, Highway Business, Limited Manufacturing, Limited Manufacturing B, and Research Development & Office. One non-residential zone remains listed in the bylaw, but is unused, it is Administrative and Professional.

Central Business (CB)

The CB district was established in order to recognize the special character of the downtown area of Dedham Square and encourages a higher density of small-scale businesses, as well as municipal, institutional, residential, and mixed-use developments. More recently, Town Meeting changed the zoning of the East Dedham commercial area to CB district as part of the efforts to revitalize East Dedham. It was created based on recommendations from the 1996 Master Plan. About 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the CB district.

Local Business (LB)

The LB District, designed for low-density development, accommodates small establishments that service nearby neighborhoods. The neighborhoods of Riverdale, Dedham Village/Dedham Square, East Dedham, Oakdale, and Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor all have LB Districts. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 12,500 square feet. Less than 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the LB district.

General Business (GB)

The GB District is intended for similar retail and service establishments but offers greater dimensional flexibility with no minimum requirements for lot frontage, lot area, lot width, or yard

setbacks. Less than 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the GB district.

Highway Business (HB)

The HB District was created to recognize the retail uses along Providence Highway and provides for commercial activities that may require large land areas for retail and service facilities related to highway travel. It was created based on recommendations from the 1996 Master Plan. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 3% of the land in Dedham is located within the HB district.

Limited Manufacturing (LMA)

The LMA and LMB districts establish requirements for industrial and related uses and are intended to include those uses which serve the immediate needs of the LMA and LMB occupants. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 6% of the land in Dedham is located within the LMA district.

Limited Manufacturing Type B (LMB)

The LMA and LMB districts establish requirements for industrial and related uses and are intended to include those uses which serve the immediate needs of the LMA and LMB occupants. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 1% of the land in Dedham is located within the LMB district.

Research Development & Office (RDO)

The RDO District provides areas for employment centers for high technology industries and business development. This District



is designed to encourage park-like groupings of buildings and facilities with and has requirements to protect against encroachment and any impacts of commercial uses on residential areas. The zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 1 acre. About 5% of the land in Dedham is located within the RDO district.

Other Nonresidential Regulations

In addition to the primary underlying nonresidential zoning districts. The following regulations provide additional options for nonresidential development in Dedham.

Major Nonresidential Project (MNP)

A special permit requirement for all developments with at least 25,000 square feet of gross floor area to review significant impacts on traffic, municipal and public services and utilities, environmental quality, community economics, and community values in the town.

Planned Commercial Development

A Planned Commercial Development is a special permit option for land in the LMA, LMB, HB, GB, CB, or RDO Districts that provides flexibility for commercial or mixed-use development. The standards require that the development include the creation, maintenance, and preservation of natural or landscaped open space, and protection of wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.

Overlay Districts

The town has also established eight overlay districts that impose additional regulations beyond the underlying zoning.

Flood Plain Overlay District (FPOD)

The purpose of the FPOD is primarily to preserve and maintain the ground water table to protect the public health and safety of persons and property against the hazards of flood or ground water inundation, for the protection of the community against the cost which may be incurred when unsuitable development occurs in these areas. About 19% of the total land area of Dedham is within the FPOD, which is defined by the 100-year base flood elevations shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Norfolk County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and further defined by the Norfolk County Flood Insurance Study report dated July 17, 2012. The largest portion of the FPOD is located in the Riverdale neighborhood.

Aquifer Protection Overlay District (APOD)

The purpose of the APOD is to protect the town's water resources by preserving and maintaining the quality and volume of existing and potential groundwater supply and groundwater recharge areas within the town. About 14% of the total land area of Dedham is within the APOD. The largest portion of the APOD is in the Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor neighborhood. The provisions of this district include a maximum 25% impervious surface lot coverage and connection to the public sewer system (with some exceptions for single-family properties).



Wireless Communications Services Overlay District (WC)

The WC is intended to accommodate the necessary infrastructure for wireless communications services while protecting residents from the impacts associated with such facilities. The WC District includes all land owned by the Town excluding the Town Forest, land owned by the State, land within the RDO and LMB Districts, and portions of the LMA District.

Adult Uses Overlay District (AUOD)

The AUOD was established to accommodate adult uses within the Town of Dedham, as described by the Town's Zoning By-Laws. Adult uses may be permitted in the AUOD upon the granting of a Special Permit by the Board of Appeals. Adult uses are only allowed in the Town's AUOD.

Medical Marijuana (MMOD)

The MMOD provides for the location and placement of registered marijuana dispensaries in locations determined suitable for lawful medical marijuana facilities and to minimize adverse impacts by regulating the siting, design, placement, security, and removal of medical marijuana dispensaries.

Arts Overlay District (AOD)

The AOD was established to encourage the development, preservation, and enhancement of arts-related uses in East Dedham. The district shall preserve and enhance the area as a center for a variety of retail, business services, housing, and office uses, and promote strong pedestrian character and pedestrian scale throughout the district.

Historic Preservation Overlay District (HPOD)

The purpose of the HPOD is to encourage the preservation and continued use of buildings and structures of historic and architectural significance including adaptive re-use. It applies to properties with buildings or structures that were constructed prior to 1900 on a lot with a minimum of 20,000 square feet and minimum 12,000 square feet building or structure. About 0.3% of the total land area of Dedham is within the HPOD, all of which is in the Precinct 1 /West Dedham neighborhood.

Providence Highway Development District (PHDD)

The PHDD was established by Town Meeting in May 2019 with the hope of leveraging the economic strength of the Providence Highway corridor into public infrastructure projects that can address the corridor's shortcomings. In Massachusetts, municipalities can create such districts and invest a portion of new growth--future property tax revenue generated by new private development--into public infrastructure within the district.

Administrative and Procedures

Zoning and Permitting processes are administered by Permit Granting and Special Permit Granting authorities in Dedham. Depending on the type of approval required these authorities include the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health, the Building Commissioner, the Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Select Board, Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, the Design Review Advisory Board, and others. A few of these administrative bodies and terms are defined below.



Planning Board

The Planning Board is a five-member elected board that studies and plans for the needs of the Town in relation to land use and zoning for current and future real estate development. The Planning Board is responsible for Site Plan Review.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Board of Appeals is a five-member board that hears and decides applications for Special Permits, variances, appeals, and comprehensive permits.

Special Permits

Dedham's Zoning Bylaw provides several special permit options for certain types of commercial and residential development. These options establish standards regarding landscaping, parking, access, signage, aesthetics and other planning details that are appropriate for the specific type of development.

Site Plan Review

Dedham has adopted a site plan review process, which requires a review of projects meeting specific criteria such as size or number of parking spaces. Site plan review requires review of structures and uses that may have significant impacts on traffic, municipal, and public services and utilities, environmental quality, community economics, and community values in the Town.

Design Review Advisory Board

The Design Review Advisory Board is a five-member board responsible for reviewing new construction, additions, and exterior

alterations in the CB, GB, HB, LB, LMA, LMB, and RDO Districts, any project subject to site plan review, and any Major Nonresidential Project. The Board reviews the visual character of the proposed projects and provides an advisory report to the Planning Board to be considered in the permitting and approval process.

Recent Zoning Recommendations

Several recent studies highlighted specific zoning recommendations that are consistent with the goals and strategies of the Master Plan. Summaries of recommendations from these studies follow, but the Master Plan does not necessarily endorse or recommend them as Master Plan directives. Master Plan recommendations are clearly delineated in each Master Plan chapter. The recent studies include the 2019 Dedham Housing Study, the 2019 Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), the 2019 Dedham Mixed-Use Development Impact Study, and the 2020 Sustainable Dedham Climate Action & Resiliency Plan. The summary list below shows the specific zoning recommendations from each of these studies. In addition to these recommendations, each neighborhood, and non-residential district should be subject to a district planning study that would be consistent with the goals and strategies of the Master Plan, but provide a more detailed community vision and evaluation of the current zoning. This would be the most effective way to identify needed zoning modifications and build the support in the community for passing the modifications.



Dedham Housing Study (2019)

The Housing Study provides zoning recommendations that have an impact on the creation of housing and housing options in Dedham and include:

- Revisiting and reducing minimum lot sizes to reflect the existing neighborhood character and to address the frequency of nonconforming lots. The study identified 62% of the residential parcels in Dedham are below the minimum lot sizes required by zoning.
- Removing barriers for Accessory Dwelling Units that include expanding beyond the SRA and SRB zoning districts, permitted them by right, reducing the minimum lots size on which they are allowed, allow the accessory dwelling permit to carry forward past sale of the property, and allow the use of outbuildings (carriage houses, garages, etc.).
- Reducing the minimum lot size required for multifamily houses in SRA and SRB districts.
- Expanding the Historic Preservation Overlay District (HPOD) to other appropriate areas of the community.
- Allowing multifamily or mixed-use developments by-right in appropriate locations under defined circumstances. Currently, under certain circumstances allowances are made for conversion of single-family houses to two-family as well as multifamily and mixed-use developments, but only by Special Permit.
- Allowing greater density of residential units permitted as mixed-use developments.

Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)

The Goals and Objectives of the recently completed Open Space and Recreation Plan highlight several items that pertain to zoning and permitting processes, including:

- Practice low environmental impact land management techniques including adopting a town-wide policy to reduce water consumption and protect water resources incorporating Best Management Practices and Low Impact Development design standards.
- Promote sustainability initiatives including adopting environmental and energy performance standards for new development that incorporate the latest model building energy codes and standards (International Energy Conservation Code of the International Code Council and Standard 90.1 of the American Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers), encouraging existing large commercial developments to incorporate “green” improvements to their buildings, developing an Environmental Checklist to assist with Development Review, and developing and promoting conservation of water and energy resources.
- Guide and regulate private development to preserve open areas and protect environmentally sensitive areas including reviewing the Town’s Aquifer Protection regulations to ensure effectiveness, particularly during and after new development.
- Encourage site design techniques that limit point and non-point source pollution to water resources including completing changes to the Stormwater Management regulations to match the local bylaw changes made in 2016 and making changes



in the Stormwater bylaw and regulations to conform with MS4 permit rules.

- Collaborate with private landowners to allow responsible public access to private lands or facilities.
- Encourage private land conservation measures including considering adoption of Open Space Design subdivision regulations and working with landowners to set aside portions of their properties as permanent open space, considering a Scenic Road Bylaw and designating a network of scenic roads, and creating a Demolition Delay Bylaw for historic properties.

Dedham Mixed-Use Development Impact Study (2019)

The impact analysis of recent mixed-use development did not recommend overall changes to the mixed-use zoning and permitting process but did recommend specific amendments to the “Mixed Use Developments” section where consistent waivers have been requested by developers. For example, Section 5.2.2.2 Lot Interior Landscaping has been a consistent waiver request. In terms of the permitting process, the study recommends strengthening the role of the Design Review Advisory Board.

Sustainable Dedham Climate Action & Resiliency Plan (2020)

The Climate Action and Resiliency Plan offers recommended actions that relate to zoning and permitting. In general, the recommendation is to review and update Dedham’s Zoning Bylaws to proactively enable increased density, diversity

of housing types, and transit-oriented development. More specifically, it is recommended this would include:

- Incentivizing high-density development near transit hubs
- Requiring new development to create/provide access for non-motorized transportation and public transit
- Ensuring zoning and permitting provisions are compatible with sustainability and resiliency goals
- Introducing sustainability guidelines/requirements in site plan applications.

Mixed-use Development in Dedham Square



Source: zillow.com



Land Use and Zoning Goals and Strategies

Summary: Strengthen and connect the compact and walkable places in Dedham and leverage each investment to improve livability in the Town.

NOTE: Master Plan strategies are recommendations that will depend on follow-up activity from Boards and Committees to carry forward. No Board or Committee is obligated to carry this work forward. For example, it is up to the Planning Board to decide how best to implement the many goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan that relate to planning..

LU1 Goal 1: Align Town regulations, boards, and approval processes with the Master Plan vision and cross-cutting themes to implement the Town's priorities.

Comprehensively review Town bylaws to identify potential areas of inconsistency with the Town's vision and goals. Develop proposed corrections and system of procedures to modify bylaws with appropriate solutions.

Strategy 1.1: Continue to strengthen and update the Dedham Zoning Bylaw so that it is closely aligned with the type of growth that would be most beneficial to the neighborhood it is located using the Master Plan to guide updates to the Dedham Zoning Bylaw.

Strategy 1.2: Integrate principles and best practices of sustainable development into Dedham's development regulations and approval processes including new requirements for sustainable and resilient building practices as per Dedham's Climate Action & Resiliency Plan.

Strategy 1.3: Review Town regulations and approval processes to identify and remove barriers to inclusion and equity for future development and investments. For example, review past zoning

variances to identify any patterns with a particular focus on any requests that may impact affordability of housing units. Then adapt regulations or approvals processes to integrate findings.

Strategy 1.4: Continue to review Town regulations and approval processes to identify appropriate data and requirements to assess municipal fiscal impact of development projects. For example, in 2020 the Town studied the impact of Mixed-Use Development in Dedham based on the Planning Board's recent mixed-use zoning updates determining mixed-use development was financially beneficial to the Town.

Strategy 1.5: Strengthen coordination and communication between development review and permit granting authorities. Align boards and departments to instill Town priorities into the regulations. Cultivate a collaboration and learning culture for Town boards and committees involved in the development process.

Strategy 1.6: Promote public understanding of the zoning bylaws, development processes, and relevant Town boards.



LU2 Goal 2: Advance preservation of natural and historic assets and elevate them as integral Town features with improved access and amenities.

The conservation, preservation and access goals for natural and historic assets should be integrated into the overall land use regulations, incentives, and policies for Town properties and assets. All tools available to support these efforts should be explored and considered by the Town.

Strategy 2.1: Explore new incentives and regulations to advance preservation and conservation of private assets and to balance private investment with public access and amenities.

Strategy 2.2: Leverage Town-owned assets and properties to advance preservation and offer welcoming and inclusive amenities. For example, the Dedham Town Green project on the site of the former Police Station in Dedham Square is advancing the construction of a signature Town Green when the Police Station relocates to the new Public Safety Building. This Town-owned asset has been carefully considered through a public process and will result in a new welcoming and inclusive amenity for use by all residents of Dedham at the center of the Town.

Strategy 2.3: Pilot and prioritize improved access and amenities at Town-owned natural and historic assets. Expand access and amenity beyond Town-owned assets including all Town natural water features.

Strategy 2.4: Strengthen use of preservation and conservation tools available to the Town. Support these efforts with consistent budgeting and strengthen Town resources such as reconsidering the Community Preservation Act (CPA).



LU3 Goal 3: Direct and manage growth more proactively in existing economic activity centers with specific plans for each area and neighborhood.

Focus investment and growth activity in areas which have been previously developed to strengthen the patterns of use, economic vitality, and access and circulation patterns. Strengthen each district with investments aligned with the community vision for that district.

Strategy 3.1: Undertake district planning processes for each area to define the specific vision and needed changes with the community. Define and designate the areas of study. Perform a community-based process and data-driven study to support recommendations. Check recommendations against goals and strategies of the Master Plan. Document the results of this process and define changes to the zoning bylaw that would be consistent with each study performed.

Strategy 3.2: Modify zoning so that each neighborhood has regulations, requirements, and incentives specific to the needs of the area. Approach the revisions through an equity lens so that each area is contributing to the unmet needs of the Town.

Strategy 3.3: Leverage Town-owned properties to catalyze the desired changes defined through district planning processes. Explore potential public private partnerships and long-term

land leases to proactively advance priorities. In this strategy Town-owned property refers to any land with or without an existing building facility that does not have a restriction on it for conservation, open space, recreation, or other uses. In some circumstances a Town-owned property is well-located to contribute to resolving a community need. This strategy suggest retaining flexibility and creativity for how Town assets could be used most optimally in the future.

Strategy 3.4: Develop additional data sources and tools to identify land use patterns and trends in the Town. For example, track vacancies and trends in vacancies (location, type, size) or analyze the zoning variances granted to explore patterns that may indicate necessary zoning changes or refinements to project approval processes.

Strategy 3.5: Proactively identify future infrastructure needs associated with growth and development to support future growth and respond to climate change, require analysis to support projection of future needs by developers through development review.



LU4

Goal 4: Strengthen compact neighborhoods and local business districts to enhance livability, walkability, and reduce traffic congestion.

Target new development and investment in locations that would benefit from added vitality and density of uses. Provide support and programs to strengthen local business districts such as district management and small business assistance to support neighborhood centers along with sidewalk, bicycle, and transportation infrastructure improvements to improve safe circulation from surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategy 4.1: Encourage development in locations where walkable, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and bicycle-oriented investment can reduce dependence on the automobile, reduce parking, increase density, and contribute more to pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

Strategy 4.2: Identify opportunities to add density in locations that would support local business districts, local amenities, and pedestrian and bicycle connections. This may include mixed-use development, townhouses, multifamily housing, or accessory dwelling units, all in locations consistent with the vision and needs of specific neighborhoods or districts.

Strategy 4.3: Proactively invest in community amenities, housing, and uses that support all life stages and that contribute to livability for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. For example, invest in housing types that support aging in place; create a network of parks that are within a 10-minute walk of any resident in Town, and add activities and amenities that will attract people of all ages.

Strategy 4.4: Support small businesses and economic development processes by encouraging investment and with analyses, data, and community input. For example, perform a market analysis to help identify needs for nonresidential ground floor uses, or help small businesses to align goods and services with the needs of the surrounding residents.

Strategy 4.5: Develop a plan to address roadway safety, traffic, and congestion issues in the neighborhoods that are created or amplified by GPS and app-based navigation (e.g. Google Maps, Waze, or others).



LU5 Goal 5: Focus growth and improvements strategically to support safe and convenient non-vehicular connections.

Locations with commuter rail and bus access should be strengthened with transit-oriented development that builds up the activity, density, and walkability of places with transit as a central asset. Encourage the evolution of land use patterns to support safe and convenient access with or without a car to reduce the population dependent on the car to reduce congestion. A network of paths that connect across the Town to destinations, transit access, activity centers, and natural assets would be a transformative infrastructure investment for the Town.

Strategy 5.1: Leverage development projects to improve the characteristics of the surrounding public realm for pedestrians and bicyclists (provide generous and continuous sidewalks, provide streets with bike lanes, orient buildings to the street, conceal parking areas, and reduce curb cuts).

Strategy 5.2: Improve roadway configuration, regulation, and enforcement to equitably allocate infrastructure for all modes of transportation. Increase the likelihood that walking and biking feel safe and accepted, by reducing impediments such as vehicles parking on sidewalks.

Strategy 5.3: Increase the public and private investments in non-vehicular infrastructure to improve and support multimodal access, create continuous connections for bicycle routes to transit and other destinations, add strategic and convenient locations for bicycle storage and shelter, provide benches, lighting, and trash receptacles to support walking, and leverage Town-owned land to add more walking paths in strategic locations.

Strategy 5.4: Explore complementary transportation options that may be supported by the Town including a shuttle, bike share, or other options to reduce dependence on the automobile.

Strategy 5.5: Advance public outreach efforts to influence travel choices and local transportation behavior to help residents rethink how they travel in Town.



LU6 Goal 6: Leverage private development investments to advance the Master Plan vision, uphold equal access, and optimize shared benefits while reducing impacts.

As part of bylaw review and modifications, regulations, standards and guidelines should be adopted to better match private investments with Town needs and priorities that have been articulated. This may include guidelines for connecting properties to improve access and walkability, providing access to an adjacent natural resource, providing a modest outdoor space where a need has been identified, or providing an amenity or improvement to the neighborhood where the development is located.

Strategy 6.1: Fiscal responsibility and sustainability of private development are important priorities for the Town. Any impacts identified should be mitigated and updates to surrounding infrastructure and amenities should be integrated with the development project. For example, develop consistent guidelines for evaluating impact of a project and calculated the related mitigation for impacts to environment, infrastructure, school enrollment, traffic, Town services, or others.

Strategy 6.2: Public and private partnerships should be explored to address future challenges that may be facing the Town including supporting aging in the community and investing in new amenities such as an intergenerational community center.

Strategy 6.3: Establish future desired vision and improvements in each neighborhood, local business district, and economic activity center and communicate these needs with the development community and offer incentives to align development projects with the vision.

Strategy 6.4: Refine the review and approvals processes to define more clearly what is required of development in the Town. The requirements may vary based on location and scale of the project, but would consistently mitigate impacts and support community amenities.



Land Use and Zoning Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for land use and zoning.

LUZ1 Initiate local business district and neighborhood plan studies to inform zoning updates.

This action would set the stage for updating zoning regulations and design guidelines specific to each neighborhood center, similar to past efforts in Dedham Square and East Dedham. The community-based studies would define a more specific district vision for Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, and East and Sprague Street areas, among others. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department and Planning Board. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC.

LUZ2 Initiate a Site Plan Review and Special Permit requirement study.

This action would set the stage for updating standards and requirements associated with development review including the potential to require additional data and analysis to review development impact and additional requirements for mitigation and community benefits clearly defined in the Zoning Bylaw. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department and Planning Board in close coordination with the Zoning Board of Appeals, Engineering Department, and Building Commissioner. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include Community Compact funds.

LUZ1

Goal 1: Align town regulations, boards, and approval processes with the Master Plan vision and cross-cutting themes to implement the Town's priorities.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ1.1: Continue to strengthen and update the Dedham Zoning Bylaw so that it is closely aligned with the type of growth that would be most beneficial to the neighborhood it is located using the Master Plan to guide updates to the Dedham Zoning Bylaw.	1. Initiate district level planning studies for Local Business Districts and surrounding neighborhoods to define a community vision and specific zoning modifications.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	2. Explore the need for a residential zoning district study in portions or all of SRA and SRB districts to set a vision and proactively plan for future development and conservation where the largest opportunities of vacant land exist in the Town.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
LUZ1.2: Integrate principles and best practices of sustainable development into Dedham's development regulations and approval processes including new requirements for sustainable and resilient building practices as per Dedham's Climate Action & Resiliency Plan.	1. Provide incentives such as expedited permitting for improvements that increase energy efficiency (cool or green roof), renewable energy (solar photovoltaic), or energy management and storage (battery storage systems).	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Dedham's Climate Action & Resiliency Plan (2020), MAPC Net Zero Playbook
	2. As part of new development review and approval, require greenhouse gas emissions modeling, setting benchmarks for operational emissions, and annual reporting to track compliance.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building and Code Enforcement	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



Priority

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ1.3: Review Town regulations and approval processes to identify and remove barriers to inclusion and equity for future development and investments.	1. Create a inventory that tracks permit applications with project types, time of approval process, variances requested, and issues noted during the process. Use this data to identify recurring patterns and define actions to remove barriers.	Building Department, Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Design Review Advisory Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
LUZ1.4: Continue to review Town regulations and approval processes to identify appropriate data and requirements to assess municipal fiscal impact of development projects.	1. Initiate a Site Plan Review and Special Permit study to update standards and requirements for development projects, such as requiring additional data and analysis, or defining potential community benefits and development mitigation.	Planning & Zoning Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Engineering Department, Building Department, Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds
LUZ1.5: Strengthen coordination and communication between development review and permit granting authorities. Align boards and departments to instill Town priorities into the regulations. Cultivate a collaboration and learning culture for Town boards and committees involved in the development process.	1. Establish a yearly meeting between the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Design Review Advisory Board and others to identify overall goals and priorities.	Planning Board	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Design Review Advisory Board, Building Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Establish shared resources that would be helpful for all boards and committees.				
	3. Define town-wide shared priorities, such as increasing walkability as a public health and safety priority. Align review and approvals to streamline implementation of town walkability investments and improvements.	Planning Board, Public Works (DPW) Department, Engineering Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Design Review Advisory Board, Building Department, Police Department, Fire Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ1.6: Promote public understanding of the zoning bylaws, development processes, and relevant town boards.	1. Create a summary of local zoning, development, and approval processes that can be distributed to residents including a Frequently Asked Questions section based on frequently heard questions at Planning Board and ZBA meetings.	Planning & Zoning Department		Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	

LUZ2 Goal 2: Advance preservation of natural and historic assets and elevate them as integral town features with improved access and amenities.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ2.1: Explore new incentives and regulations to advance preservation and conservation of private assets and to balance private investment with public access and amenities.	1. Explore adding a Demolition Delay bylaw to protect buildings by providing a waiting period when demolition is proposed. During this period, alternatives to demolition of the historic structure are to be explored.	Historic District Commission	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Preservation Massachusetts resources on Demolition Delay are available at: https://www.preservationmass.org
LUZ2.2: Leverage Town-owned assets and properties to advance preservation and offer welcoming and inclusive amenities.	1. Analyze the preservation and reuse of town-owned assets as part of the analysis and evaluation of options when a change of use or facility renewal need occurs.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Select Board, Planning Board	Ongoing and continuous	Previous or current Town processes as examples, such as the Dedham Police Station Reuse Study in Dedham Square as facilitated by the Dedham Square Planning Committee: https://www.dedham-ma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/16836/637751691578730000
LUZ2.3: Pilot and prioritize improved access and amenities at Town-owned natural and historic assets. Expand access and amenity beyond Town-owned assets including all Town natural water features.	1. Identify locations where additional paths, signage, or accessibility improvements could expand access to town amenities. 2. Prioritize the list of improvements. 3. Dedicate an annual portion of the capital improvement budget to these improvements.	Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Department	Parks & Recreation Commission, Open Space & Recreation Committee, Conservation Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program or Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ2.4: Strengthen use of preservation and conservation tools available to the Town. Support these efforts with consistent budgeting and strengthen town resources such as reconsidering passing Community Preservation Act (CPA).	1. Explore current community interest in the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Past efforts have failed to gain enough support to proceed to a Town-wide vote.	Town Manager	Select Board and Town Departments, Boards, and Committees	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	The Community Preservation Coalition provides overview flyers, background information, facts and figures about CPA, at: https://www.communitypreservation.org/about Additional information is available from the Commonwealth at: https://www.mass.gov/lists/community-preservation-act-cpa-payments-decile-reports-and-other-information

LUZ3 **Goal 3: Direct and manage growth more proactively in existing economic activity centers with specific plans for each area and neighborhood.**

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ3.1: Undertake district planning processes for each area to define the specific vision and needed changes with the community. Document the results of this process and define changes to the zoning bylaw that would be consistent with each study performed.	1. Provide general parameters for each area based on feedback from the master plan process. For example, transform Providence Highway into the next town neighborhood, add housing, and create new natural connections, “Dedham’s Emerald Necklace”, with the Charles River and Wigwam Pond.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC



Priority

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ3.2: Modify zoning so that each neighborhood has regulations, requirements, and incentives specific to the needs of the area. Approach the revisions through an equity lens so that each area is contributing to the unmet Town needs.	1. Initiate local business district and neighborhood plan studies to inform zoning updates similar to past efforts in Dedham Square and East Dedham for Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, and East and Sprague Street areas among others.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board, Human Rights Commission	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	2. Follow up district plan studies with recommended zoning modifications that will be proposed to Town Meeting following these community-based processes.				
LUZ3.3: Leverage Town-owned properties to catalyze the desired changes defined through district planning processes. Explore potential public private partnerships and long-term land leases to proactively advance priorities.	1. Identify town-owned property that could be used for these purposes. Identify the goals for a specific property and the types of options that could occur to advance the community's vision. This type of process could be similar to the process modeled by the Dedham Square Planning Committee for the Police Station property in Dedham Square.	Planning & Zoning Department	Facilities and Maintenance Department, Select Board	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	
LUZ3.4: Develop additional data sources and tools to identify land use patterns and trends in the town. For example, track vacancies and trends in vacancies (location, type, size).	1. Define the locations and types of data to be gathered and tracked annually to better understand the health and evolution of specific districts in the town. For example, track the number of vacant storefronts on Providence Highway. Create an easily replicated method to gather needed data across defined locations in the town. This information will provide a data dashboard to help identify trends and inform actions.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Collect and analyze data every one or two years, including how many variances or landscape waivers by zoning district or project type? Or, how many new Limited Manufacturing uses in a LM district? Or how many new mixed use projects?
LUZ3.5: Proactively identify future infrastructure needs to support future growth and respond to climate change, require analysis to support projection of future needs by developers through development review.	1. Prioritize potential impacts of climate change, for example, the areas along the Charles River projected to flood during a 10-year storm in 2070.	Capital Expenditures Committee	Sustainability Advisory Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Dedham Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, available at: https://www.dedham-ma.gov/government/town-management/sustainability-advisory-committee/climate-action-resiliency-plan
	2. Begin incremental investment and changes to prepare for these climate impacts.				



LUZ4 Goal 4: Strengthen compact neighborhoods and local business districts to enhance livability, walkability, and reduce traffic congestion.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ4.1: Encourage development in locations where walkable, mixed-use, transit-oriented, and bicycle-oriented investment can reduce dependence on the automobile, reduce parking, increase density, and contribute more to pedestrian and bicycle amenities.	1. Integrate transit-oriented, walkable, and bikable improvements into local district planning efforts and define zoning modifications to strengthen these characteristics.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board, Active Transportation Working Group	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Commonwealth Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), transit-oriented development resources
LUZ4.2: Identify opportunities to add density in locations that would support local business districts, local amenities, and pedestrian and bicycle connections. This may include mixed-use development, townhouses, multifamily housing, or accessory dwelling units, all in locations consistent with the vision and needs of specific neighborhoods or districts.	1. Initiate local business district and neighborhood plan studies to inform zoning updates similar to past efforts in Dedham Square and East Dedham for Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, and East and Sprague Street areas among others.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	2. Integrate compliance with the MBTA Community Requirements that are currently being defined by the Department of Housing and Community Development.				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ4.3: Proactively invest in community amenities, housing, and uses that support all life stages and that contribute to livability for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. For example, invest in housing types that support aging in place.	1. Based on the Park Need Map in the Public Health Chapter, identify new locations, particularly current town-owned property, for pocket parks or other outdoor amenities that could expand the number of residents within a 10-minute walk of a park.	Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Department, Department of Public Works, Town Manager, Planning Board	Parks & Recreation Commission, Open Space & Recreation Committee, Conservation Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program or Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program
	2. Once identified, develop a planning, design, and construction process for each new amenity, prioritize them based on need, and fund work in priority order.				
LUZ4.4: Support small businesses and economic development processes by encouraging investment and with analyses, data, and community input. For example, perform a market analysis to help identify needs for nonresidential ground floor uses.	1. Perform a market analysis or retail gap analysis to help identify needs for nonresidential ground floor uses in local business districts.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Potential grant resources through the Commonwealth's Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program at: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/regional-economic-development-organization-grant-program Or through MassDevelopment, at: https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/financing/grants/
	2. Help small businesses to align goods and services with the needs of the surrounding residents as identified through the retail gap analysis.				
LUZ4.5: Develop a plan to address roadway safety, traffic, and congestion issues in the neighborhoods that are created or amplified by GPS and app-based navigation (e.g. Google Maps, Waze, or others).	1. Request from app-based navigation companies, survey residents, and/or collect data to identify which alternative routes are being promoted during high congestion periods to then study the impacts on those streets.	Engineering Department, Department of Public Works	Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Identify safety improvements or other interventions which could improve the safety of streets that are receiving an increase in the volume of traffic.	Engineering Department, Department of Public Works	Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



LUZ5 Goal 5: Focus growth and improvements strategically to support safe and convenient non-vehicular connections.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ5.1: Leverage development projects to improve the characteristics of the surrounding public realm for pedestrians and bicyclists (provide generous and continuous sidewalks, provide streets with bike lanes, orient buildings to street, conceal parking areas, and reduce curb cuts).	1. Initiate a Site Plan Review and Special Permit requirement study to update standards and requirements associated with development review to require additional data and analysis to review impact and additional requirements for mitigation and community benefits.	Planning Board, Planning & Zoning Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Department, Design Review Advisory Board, Building Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Based on this study results, modify the Site Plan Review and Special Permit requirements to clearly define and communicate the expectations for improvements to the abutting public realm conditions.				
LUZ5.2: Improve roadway configuration, regulation, and enforcement to equitably allocate infrastructure for all modes of transportation. Increase the likelihood that walking and biking feel safe and accepted, by reducing impediments such as vehicles parking on sidewalks.	1. When changes occur on a private way, use the opportunity to explore converting the street to a town road with residents of the private way.	Engineering Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Commonwealth Complete Streets Funding Program, available at: https://www.mass.gov/complete-streets-funding-program
	2. Use street and sidewalk design to discourage unwanted behaviors, such as using granite curbs and bollards as part of streetscape investments in locations where vehicles park on sidewalks.	Engineering Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Commonwealth Complete Streets Funding Program, available at: https://www.mass.gov/complete-streets-funding-program
	3. Increase enforcement of vehicles parked on sidewalks with warnings and tickets. Associate this activity with a public information campaign about walking, pedestrian safety, and traffic congestion.	Dedham Police Department	Engineering Department, Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ5.3: Increase the public and private investments in non-vehicular infrastructure to improve and support multimodal access, create continuous connections for bicycle routes to transit and other destinations, add strategic and convenient locations for bicycle storage and shelter, provide benches, lighting, and trash receptacles to support walking, and leverage town-owned land to add more walking paths in strategic locations.	1. Devote a greater proportion of transportation improvement budget and funding to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and improvements.	Engineering Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Set targets for the miles of new sidewalks and bike lanes added each year. Track, communicate, and celebrate progress each year.	Engineering Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee, Select Board, Town Manager	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
LUZ5.4: Explore complementary transportation options that may be supported by the Town including a shuttle, bike share, or other options to reduce dependence on the automobile.	1. Partner with MAPC to discuss dockless bike share operators in the region to bring Dedham among the communities participating in these programs.	Engineering Department	Planning & Zoning Department, Sustainability Advisory Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	MAPC research on dockless bike use in the region is available at: https://www.mapc.org/planning101/crunching-the-numbers-on-dockless-bike-share-in-greater-boston/
LUZ5.5: Advance public outreach efforts to influence travel choices and local transportation behavior to help residents rethink how they travel in Town.	1. Place information on flyers and agendas for Town events and meetings suggesting alternatives to driving with directions to the venue on foot, by bike, or transit. Include a note about the personal benefits of driving less including health and exercise, reducing carbon footprint, and reducing traffic and congestion.	Town Manager	All Departments, Boards, Commissions, and Committees, Council on Aging	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Promote safe walking and biking through public communication of the rules, norms, and laws for pedestrians and bicyclists..	Dedham Police Department	Engineering Department, Council on Aging	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



LUZ6 Goal 6: Leverage private development investments to advance the Master Plan vision, uphold equal access, and optimize shared benefits while reducing impacts.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ6.1: Fiscal responsibility and sustainability of private development are important priorities for the Town. Any impacts identified should be mitigated and updates to surrounding infrastructure and amenities should be integrated with the development project.	1. Develop a consistent, data-driven approach to assessing a proposed project’s impact and then requiring mitigation of those impacts. The first step would be to define what impacts will be analyzed and defining the consistent data and formulas to be used in defining potential impacts.	Planning Board, Planning & Zoning Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Design Review Advisory Board, Building Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
LUZ6.2: Public and private partnerships should be explored to address future challenges that may be facing the Town including supporting aging in the community and investing in new amenities such as an intergenerational community center.	1. Define a list of current municipal needs for capital investments, facilities, or other amenities and look for opportunities to connect these needs with a private project either through a complementary development program or complementary development location.	Town Manager	Planning Board, Select Board, Capital Expenditures Committee, Facilities & Maintenance Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
LUZ6.3: Establish future desired vision and improvements in each neighborhood, local business district, and economic activity center and communicate these needs with the development community and offer incentives to align development projects with the vision.	1. Initiate local business district and neighborhood plan studies to inform zoning updates similar to past efforts in Dedham Square and East Dedham for Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, and East and Sprague Street areas among others.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	2. Use these studies to frame goals for development projects that may be proposed in the district. Share the planning document with property owners and development teams who may invest in the district.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
LUZ6.4: Refine the review and approvals processes to define more clearly what is required of development in the Town. The requirements may vary based on location and scale of the project, but would consistently mitigate impacts and support community amenities.	1. Initiate a Site Plan Review and Special Permit study to update standards and requirements for development projects, such as requiring additional data and analysis, or defining potential community benefits and development mitigation. 2. Develop guidelines for development in specific zoning districts to help guide property owners.	Planning Board, Planning & Zoning Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Design Review Advisory Board, Building Department, Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Chapter 4:

Economic Development

Introduction

Dedham has a strong local economy that has a broad commercial and employment base. The central features of local economic activity include the Providence Highway retail corridor, office buildings and hotels, historic Dedham Square, and light industrial districts which provides access to a variety of goods and services through many well-recognized national chain retailers and local businesses. The Providence Highway corridor is home to Legacy Place and other shopping plazas. Complementing these more intense concentrations of economic activity are historic squares and local business districts that add local shops, restaurants, and small businesses to the variety of economic activity.

The economic development chapter explores the patterns of economic activity and employment in the Town and provides goals and recommendations to strengthen and support local conditions for strong employment and continued investment for the benefit of Dedham's residents, employment population, and properties.



Summary

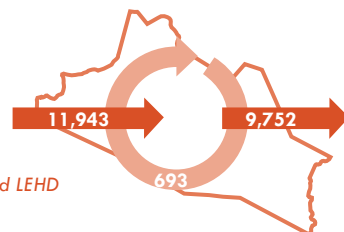
Invest in and support local businesses to provide opportunities for residents as entrepreneurs and employees, and to provide convenient access to services.



Themes Highlights

- Dedham has a diverse mix of retail, commercial, and light industrial areas that support a range of enterprises from small local, to larger regional, and national businesses.
- Economic activity is focused on the auto-oriented Providence Highway corridor, historic squares, light industrial areas, and local business districts.
- The range of enterprises supports a variety of employment. More employees commute into Dedham to work than employees who commute out of Dedham to work. Many employees do not earn enough to also live in Dedham.

The number of employees commuting into Dedham (left), working from home (center), and commuting out of Dedham (right)



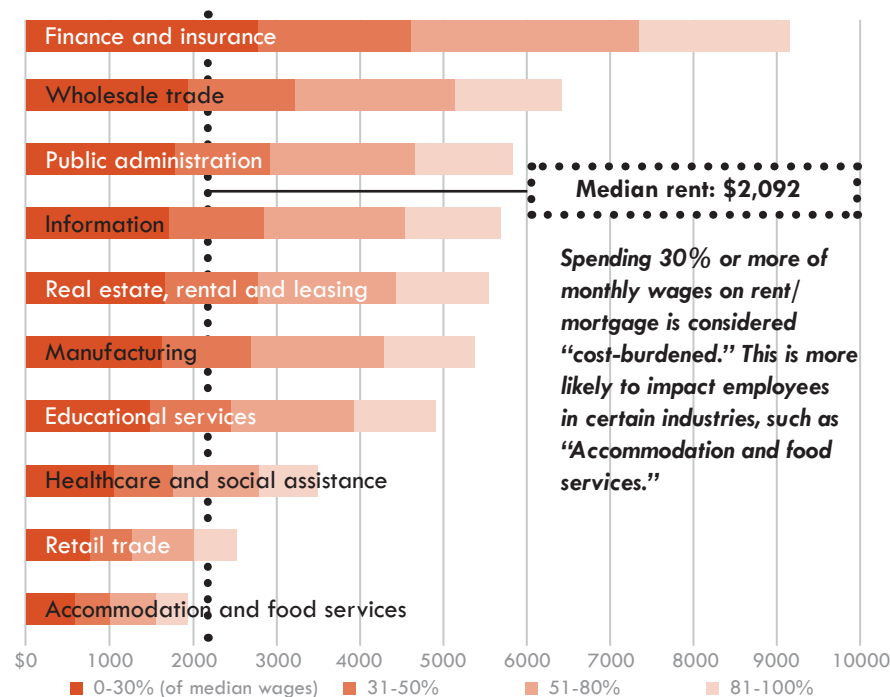
Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2020)



Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Encourage transformative investment in the Providence Highway Corridor to create stronger economic opportunities.
- Invest in local small businesses to support smaller scale economic activity and availability of shops, restaurants, and services in walkable local business districts.

Monthly Median Industry Wages and Rent



Source: MAPC Rental Database, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) ES-202

Companion and related plans and studies

- Mixed Use Development Study (2020)
- Providence Highway: Create a Better Corridor (2020)
- Dedham Corporate Station: Creating a Connected Neighborhood (2017)
- East Dedham Village Charrette Strategic Action Plan (2017)
- Enhancing Creative East Dedham (2014)



Defining economic development terms

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, also called the COVID-19 Stimulus Package or American Rescue Plan, Pub L. No. 117-2, is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill passed by Congress and signed into law in 2021. The intent of ARPA is to speed up the country's recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recession. The Commonwealth received \$5.3 billion in federal money. These funds are flowing into programs as determined by the Governor and Legislature. Some of the funds flow directly to municipalities. Most of the funds must be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

Business Improvement District (BID)

Special assessment districts in which property owners vote to initiate, manage, and finance supplemental services or enhancements above and beyond the baseline of services already provided by the local municipal government.

Creative Economy

The segment of the economy that is focused on creative industries including audiovisual products, design, new media, performing arts, publishing and visual arts. It is a transformative sector of the economy in terms of income generation, job creation, earnings, and has a strong connection to supporting vibrant mixed-use districts. Past planning efforts and policies have defined the Creative Economy as an important feature of East Dedham.

District Improvement Financing (DIF)

A locally-enacted tool that enables a municipality to identify and capture incremental tax revenues from new private investment in a specific area and direct them toward public improvement and economic development projects. A DIF has been established in Dedham for the northern portion of Providence Highway.

Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD)

This Cabinet level agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides labor force and unemployment data for the Commonwealth as part of its mission which includes, in part, to develop a pipeline of skilled workers for current, emerging and future employers.

Median Household Income

The median household income divides income distribution into two equal parts, one half of the families earning more and half earning less. The median household income in Dedham is \$100,757 (in 2019 dollars) according to the U.S. Census 2015-2019 American Community Survey.

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.



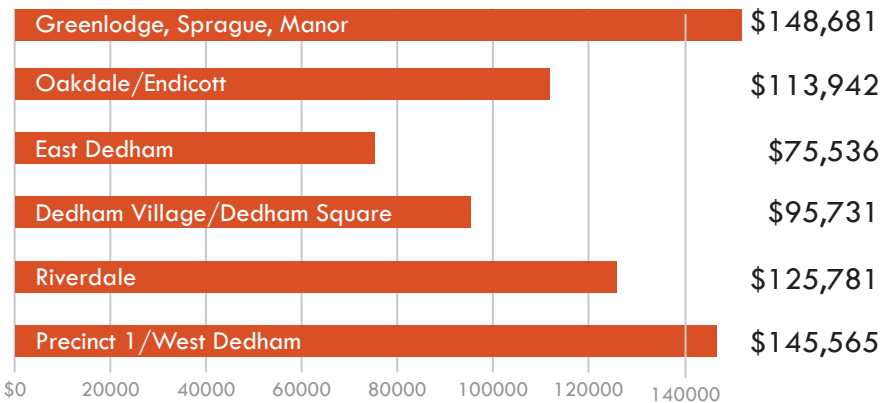
Economic development In Dedham Today

Economic Development themes from data and previous plans

ED1 Disparities in income and poverty levels

The median household income in Dedham of \$118,877 is higher than the Massachusetts median household income of \$96,505 (2022). However, higher income households are not evenly distributed throughout the Town. For example, East Dedham and Dedham Village/Dedham Square are below this benchmark. Disparities between family and non-family households, where an individual lives alone or with unrelated housemates, is also evident. The median income for families is \$170,962 and the median income for non-family households is \$62,481 (2022).

Median Household Income by Census Tract (approximates neighborhoods)

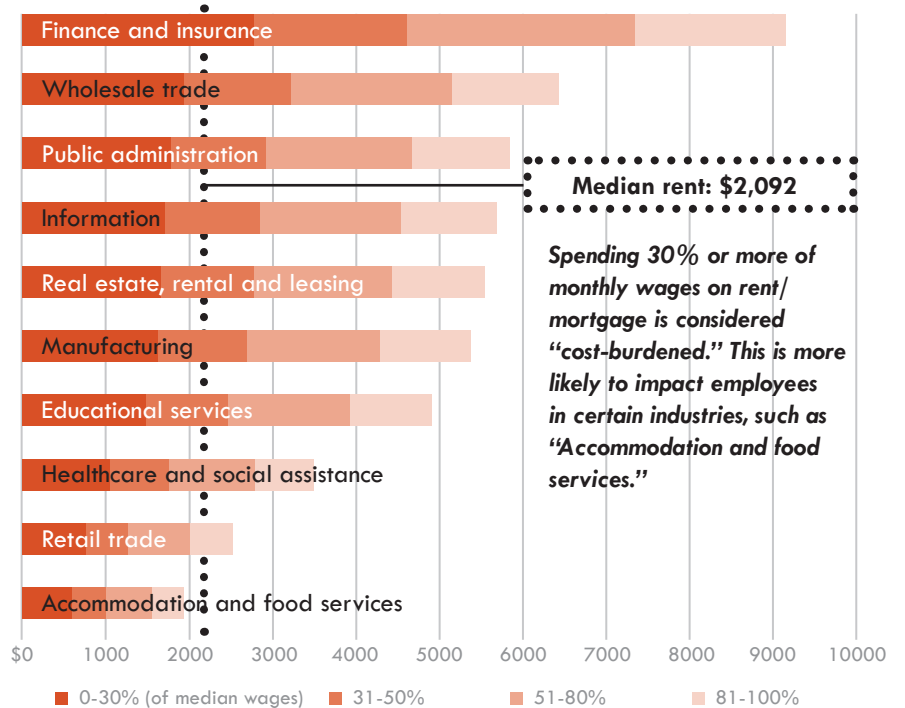


Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2017-2021

ED2 Employees cannot afford to live where they work

Dedham has a strong employment base, yet employees in nearly all of Dedham's top industries would be cost burdened, meaning they are spending more than a third of their household income on housing, when comparing median wages to median rent. Employees in several industries, particularly Retail Trade, Health

Monthly Median Industry Wages and Rent



Source: MAPC Rental Database, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) ES-202



Care, and Social Assistance, would be severely cost burdened, meaning they are spending more than half of their household income on housing. Individuals employed in the Accommodation and Food Services industries are effectively priced out of Dedham. Teachers are in the category of Educational Services and public employees are included in Public Administration, each would have difficulty paying median rent at entry level wages.

While the overall housing stock in Dedham offers a variety of housing unit types, there appears to be a mismatch between the size of the housing units (number of bedrooms in a home) and the size of households (number of people living in a home). This mismatch could place a cost burden on households so they have less discretionary spending to support the local economy. Particularly, if seniors cannot downsize because of a lack of smaller housing options, they may move elsewhere. At the same time, if single-family and multi-bedroom housing units aren't available on the market, many families looking in Dedham could settle elsewhere. Providing appropriate housing choices for seniors, families, and everyone in between is essential to supporting the workforce and customer base of local businesses. Furthermore, a higher concentration of housing may be needed in areas of Town where the majority of retail exists. Better aligning the proximity of local businesses with multifamily and mixed-use housing options can improve walkability, reduce travel times, and offer these businesses a reliable customer base.

ED3 Strong and diverse retail base, but difficult to access

Providence Highway provides convenient and diverse retail options for Dedham residents. However, the sheer volume of vehicular travel, high speeds, the lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and unsignalized entries and exits generate hotspots for accidents. Additionally, Legacy Place is a local destination for residents across the region with its successful “lifestyle center” model. No direct or on-site bus service currently exists resulting in most visitors arriving by car at this destination.

A busy evening at Legacy Place



Source: Legacy Place, WS Development



Large gaps in transit, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure within Dedham hinder connectivity between housing, recreation, and priority development areas. Dedham is a relatively car-dependent city, with walk, bike, and transit scores reflecting the inability of residents to reliably travel by each of these modes. Furthermore, several of the priority development areas have medical, retail, and other daily needs for the most vulnerable populations who may not be able to drive (for example, households without automobiles, persons under 16 years of age, seniors, and persons with disabilities). Many of Dedham's economic activity areas are located adjacent to the Town's major

High traffic volume on Providence Highway



Source: MAPC

thoroughfare, Providence Highway, or in locations that are best accessed by vehicle. These patterns are both resulting from and contributing to residents and visitors almost exclusively relying on vehicles. Another indication of the predominant mode of travel is the number of commercial parking spaces at the Dedham Mall, Dedham Square, Providence Highway South, Legacy Place, and Stergis Way, totaling about 10,000 parking spaces, more than sufficient to meet demand.

ED4 Industrial areas are a unique advantage

The areas surrounding East Dedham Square, Milton Street, and the Readville are the three primary locations of Dedham's industrial base. Together businesses in these locations employ more than 1,200 people. These businesses are supported by the unique advantages of a close proximity to Boston, access to Providence Highway, Route 128, and Interstate 95, and the benefit of transit access, and the resulting ability to attract a more diverse employee base. Industrial space is facing many pressures by competing land uses and the impacts of e-commerce.

Throughout the Boston region competing land uses have reduced the amount of industrial space that is available and is driving vacancy rates lower and industrial rents higher. Even when industrial space has been retained, the demand for logistics and delivery warehouses to support e-commerce in the region has grown dramatically. According to a MAPC research



report “Hidden and in Plain Sight: Impacts of E-Commerce in Massachusetts”, e-commerce now makes up about 14% of all retail sales in the country and has contributed to a 42% increase in warehouse rents in Greater Boston alone over the last two years.

These trends are likely to continue and will place more pressure on industrial areas in the coming years. Retaining these industrial areas will allow the Town to benefit from these trends and attract additional industrial uses and to these areas which will be in shorter supply and higher demand.

Light industrial uses in Dedham



Source: Loopnet.com

ED5 High tax rate may be a barrier

Dedham’s tax rate is among the highest of surrounding municipalities. The split rate residential tax rate in 2024 was \$12.50 and the commercial rate was \$25.88 per \$1,000 value. The residential rate was among the highest of its immediate surrounding municipalities and the commercial rate was the highest. This high commercial tax rate creates a potential burden on small businesses and economic development competitiveness for the Town. However, tradeoffs related to changing tax rates are complicated. For example, lowering the commercial tax rate may require raising the residential rate to retain a level tax base. This type of change could impact housing affordability.

Comparing municipal tax rates

Municipality	Residential Rate			Commercial Rate		
	2020	2022	2024	2020	2022	2024
Newton	\$10.44	\$10.52	\$9.76	\$19.92	\$19.95	\$18.33
Boston	\$10.56	\$10.88	\$10.90	\$24.92	\$24.98	\$25.27
Norwood	\$11.15	\$10.75	\$10.47	\$24.82	\$24.00	\$23.92
Canton	\$12.23	\$11.35	\$9.97	\$25.42	\$24.18	\$20.80
Needham	\$12.49	\$13.37	\$12.52	\$24.55	\$26.43	\$24.57
Dover	\$12.84	\$12.42	\$10.96	\$12.84	\$12.42	\$10.96
Milton	\$13.12	\$12.47	\$10.92	\$20.10	\$19.12	\$17.94
Dedham	\$13.72	\$13.35	\$12.50	\$28.70	\$27.93	\$25.88
Westwood	\$14.51	\$14.83	\$12.81	\$28.22	\$28.99	\$24.68
Stoughton	\$14.89	\$14.41	\$12.73	\$25.59	\$24.20	\$21.29

Source: MA Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services (DLS)



Economic development Community Priorities

Economic Development themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to economic development and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.)

While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the economic development themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

ED1 **Redevelop industrial areas**

Survey participants believe that East Dedham Square has great potential to build on its industrial legacy, bounty of natural resources, and a great walkable community feel and focus there should continue to address lacking infrastructure and diversity of retail options. The Readville area received a similar mixed response, with its greatest assets being confluence of rail infrastructure and access along with the potential for redevelopment.

ED2 **Strengthen retail areas**

Survey participants believe that Dedham Square has the potential to continue to sustain small businesses given its historic and vibrant context. Providence Highway elicited similar optimism for sustaining its vast retail and service options, but in a more vehicle-oriented context.

ED3 **Maintain a sustainable commercial tax base**

Survey participants responded that maintaining a sustainable commercial tax base is the most important challenge facing the Town of Dedham. The next most important challenges included access to good jobs and improving areas of commerce, services and amenities.

ED4 **Increase small businesses and wages**

Survey participants responded that increasing small local businesses was the most important economic development activity, followed by increasing wages for employees. These priorities could be coupled with the top centers of economic activity where respondents would like to see changes including Providence Highway, East Dedham Square, Readville, Bridge Street, and Dedham Square.



Economic development In Dedham Today

Additional context and data

Economic activity areas

An analysis of the economic data in the Town including metrics such as total employees and total revenue indicates that distinct areas exist in the Town with concentrated economic activity. These economic activity areas have clusters of major employers or single employers that include the largest number of employees in the Town and combine to include over 50% of the employment and revenue generated within the Town.

Concentrations of employment in Dedham

Area	Employment (number of employees)
Providence Highway South	2,056
Dedham Square	1,536
Providence Highway North/Dedham Mall	1,471
Legacy Place	1,230
Readville industrial area	626
Dedham Corporate Center	592
Milton industrial corridor	446
Norfolk Prison	347
East Dedham Square	189

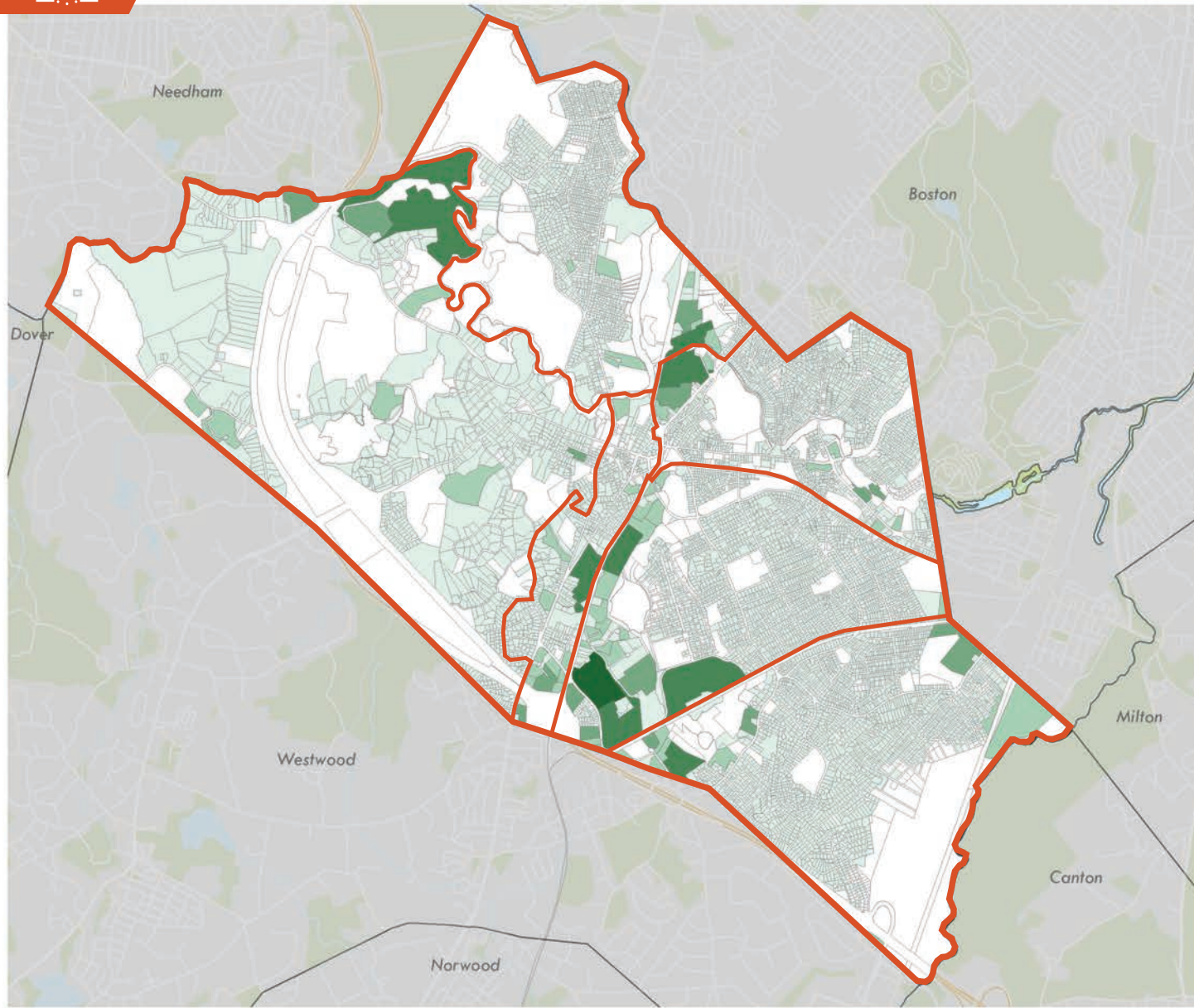
Source: Infogroup USA

The areas of economic activity account for about 50% of revenue and employees in Town. Employment density is strongly concentrated around Providence Highway South and Legacy Place. However, business establishment density is more concentrated on Providence Highway South and Dedham Square. The remainder of revenue and employees in the Town are dispersed in local business districts outside of these major employment centers.

These economic activity areas are highlighted on the following page with a map that highlights the tax revenue generated from these locations. The other area highlighted on the tax revenue map that is not listed as an economic activity area is the NewBridge on the Charles area. Following the tax revenue map with the economic activity areas is a map showing the clusters of the largest employers in Dedham as they compare to these highlighted economic activity areas. Other major employers are identified that fall outside of one of the economic activity areas and include public and private schools, and clusters of businesses on Rustcraft Road and Allied Drive.

Industries in Dedham

The two largest industries in Dedham by both number of employees and number of establishments are Health Care and Social Assistance (3,451 employees) and Retail (3,448 employees). These two industries have much lower average weekly wages compared to the highest earners in Dedham. Healthcare and Social Assistance employees earn an average of



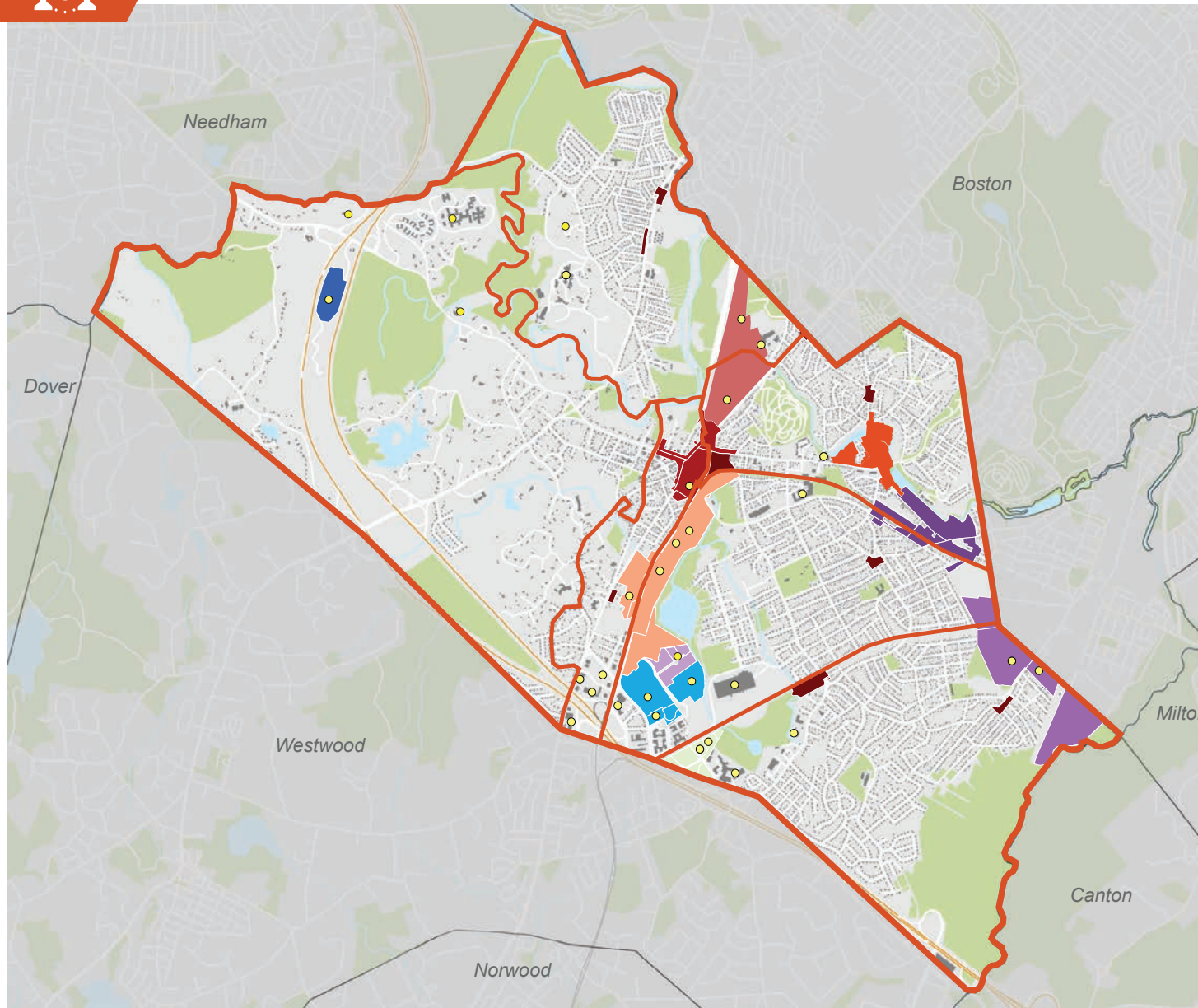
Economic Development Tax Revenue

Tax Revenue by Parcel

- \$10.98 - \$55,253.24
- \$55,253.25 - \$184,942.80
- \$184,942.81 - \$409,965.15
- \$409,965.16 - \$1,326,143.77
- \$1,326,143.78 - \$2,544,292.31
- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
February 2020

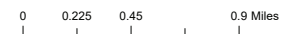


Economic Development

Biggest Employers (100 or more employees)

- Alimed Inc
- Amazon Distribution Center
- American Red Cross
- Animal Rescue League
- Atrius Health
- Best Buy
- BJ's Wholesale Club
- Costco
- Dedham Health & Athletic Complex
- Dedham High School
- Dedham Institution for Savings
- Dedham Savings Bank
- Dedham Town Administrator
- Fox Twenty Five WFXT TV
- General Dynamics
- Hilton-Boston/Dedham
- Holiday Inn-Boston/Dedham
- Lowe's Home Improvement
- NewBridge on the Charles
- Noble & Greenough School
- Norfolk County Offices
- Showcase Cinemas De Lux
- Star Market
- Super Stop & Shop
- The Linden
- Whole Foods

Areas shaded with a blue, red, orange or purple color indicate economic activity centers



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

February 2020

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Dedham's mix of industries and establishments

Industry	Number of Establishments (2018)
Health Care and Social Assistance	174
Retail Trade	154
Professional and Technical Services	131
Manufacturing	103
Accommodation and Food Services	77
Finance and Insurance	59
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	34
Wholesale Trade	33
Public Administration	26
Educational Services	24
Information	23

Source: EOLWD, 2020

\$869 per week and retail employees earn an average of \$626 per week. The highest paid employees in Dedham work in Utilities with an average of \$3,679 per week and Finance and Insurance with an average of \$2,290 per week.

Dedham is home to 1,103 establishments representing a range of different industries (Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), 2020). The three largest industries are Health Care and Social Assistance (174 establishments), Retail Trade (154) and Professional and Technical Services (131). These diverse industries support a wide range of employment opportunities for a total of 17,861 employees in Dedham prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which includes both residents who

work in Dedham as well as those who travel from outside of Dedham to work (EOLWD ES-202). In 2020, monthly employment numbers averaged 15,500, about 2,000 fewer (EOLWD, 2020). The industries of Healthcare and Social Assistance (3,451), Retail Trade (3,448) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (2,002) employ the most individuals overall. The industries that employ the most Dedham residents include Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance (4,103), Professional, Scientific and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services (1,729) and Finance and insurance, and Real Estate and Rental Leasings (ACS 2017 5-year estimate).

There is a total of 1,377 people who both work and live in Dedham, 12,798 people who live in Dedham but work outside of Dedham and 17,647 people who work in Dedham but live outside of Dedham (LEHD On the Map). The average weekly wage for an employee of a business in Dedham is \$1,037 (EOLWD ES-202). The highest paid wages are Utilities (\$3,679), Finance and Insurance (\$2,290) and Professional and Technical Services (\$2,204).

An individual employed in all of Dedham's top industries except for the Finance and Insurance industry is cost burdened when renting the median priced one-bedroom home in Town. Employees in several industries, particularly Retail Trade and Health Care and Social Assistance are severely cost burdened. Individuals employed in the Accommodation and Food Services industries are effectively priced out of Town. The difficulty for individuals to both live and work in Dedham, demonstrated by this analysis, likely contributes to high percentage of Dedham employees



who are not Dedham residents and the associated higher commuting traffic in and out of Town. Those that must commute for employment face higher day to day travel costs and greater constraints on their time. This pressure could cause individuals currently working in Dedham to seek employment elsewhere, particularly if they are not currently residents of the Town.

Largest employers in Dedham

The employer data is pulled from InfoGroup USA (2016) and does not reflect past 2016. We filtered for employers who have 100 or more employees. We would require updated information on the Amazon Distribution Center and the Papa Gino's bankruptcy to bring this chart into better alignment with beginning of the year in 2020.

Access to jobs and services

Large gaps in transit, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure within Dedham impact connectivity between housing, recreation, and economic activity areas. Dedham is a relatively car-dependent city, with walk, bike, and transit scores reflecting the inability of residents to reliably travel by each of these modes. Furthermore, several of the priority development areas have medical, retail, and other daily needs for the most vulnerable populations who may not be able to drive (for example, households without automobiles, persons under 16 years of age, seniors, and persons with disabilities). Many of Dedham's economic activity areas are located adjacent to the Town's major thoroughfare, Providence Highway, or in locations that are best accessed by vehicle. These patterns are both resulting from and contributing

Largest employers

Company name	Number of employees	Revenue estimate	Average weekly wages for industry in Dedham
Legacy Place (65 businesses)	1,230	Not available	\$482
Norfolk County Offices	347	Not available	\$1,457
American Red Cross	300	Not available	\$869
Security 990 Washington Street	275	\$100-500 million	\$1,382
Noble and Greenough School	250	\$20-50 million	\$482
Dedham Savings Bank	211	\$50-100 million	\$2,290
Alimed Inc.	200	\$50-100 million	\$1,338
Fox Twenty-Five WFXT TV	200	\$50-100 million	\$1,420

Source: InfoGroup USA

to residents and visitors almost exclusively relying on vehicles. On Providence Highway particularly, and near the areas of economic activity generally, the sheer volume of vehicular travel, high speeds, the lack of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and unsignalized points of entry and exit generate hotspots for accidents. Another indication of the predominant mode of travel is the number of commercial parking spaces at the Dedham Mall, Dedham Square, Providence Highway South, Legacy Place, and



Stergis Way, totaling about 10,000 parking spaces, more than sufficient to meet demand.

Market conditions

The market conditions for the Town of Dedham include an evaluation of real estate indicators such as price per square foot for commercial and industrial buildings – this includes recent construction and previously existing space based on recent CoStar data. CoStar is a provider of information and analytics for the commercial property industry across the United States. CoStar places Dedham within the Route 1 South geography and describes it as home to an older demographic in a mostly suburban setting with employment opportunities that are attracting a fair share of millennials. A summary of the general characteristics of each major submarket in Dedham is provided in the table below.

The comparison of the overall scale of these submarkets is

Submarket characteristics

Submarket	Total area (gross square feet, SF)	Total buildings (number)	Average market rent (per SF, 2020)	Vacancy rate (2020)
Industrial	998,000	41	\$10.36	8.8%
Office	1,600,000	68	\$22.55	7.3%
Retail	2,500,000	124	\$28.04	1.9%
Multi-family Residential	755 (units)	12	\$2.53	4.4%

Source: CoStar

interesting. The retail area and number of buildings is far larger than the office and industrial areas in Dedham. Compared to nearby communities of Canton and Norwood, Dedham has more retail space than Canton which has 928,000 square feet (SF) and about the same amount as Norwood. Dedham has far less industrial space than both Canton which has 5.9M SF and Norwood which has 4.1M SF. Dedham is closer to the amount of office space, but still below when compared to Canton which has 3M SF, and Norwood which has 2.6M SF.

Industrial Submarket

Dedham is part of the Providence Highway South Submarket that includes the towns of Canton, Dedham, Norwood, Stoughton, and Westwood. The industrial activity is supported by the convergence of Providence Highway, Route 128, and Interstate 95. In Dedham, the primary industrial areas include Milton industrial, Readville, and Stergis Way which has been transitioning toward housing and commercial uses. The average industrial rents and vacancy rates vary by industrial area in Dedham. Among those areas, average rents are highest in Stergis Way and vacancy rates are lowest there as well. For the past 10 years, average industrial rents have been increasing across Dedham industrial areas with about a 40% increase over that timeframe. The average market rent per square foot across the Boston Metro Market for industrial is higher at \$11.76.

Office Submarket

The submarket Dedham is a part of typically attracts a variety of administrative and back-office uses in the manufacturing,



financial, and data processing industries. Many of the largest users own their space with leasing typically driven by smaller, local firms. In Dedham, the primary office areas include Dedham Square, Legacy Place, Dedham Corporate Center, an area of Elm Street and an area of Eastbrook Road. The average office rents and vacancy rates vary by office area in Dedham. Among those areas, average rents are highest in Dedham Corporate Center. The vacancy rates are also the highest in Dedham Corporate Center. For the past 10 years, average office rents have been increasing across all Dedham office areas with about a 20% increase over that timeframe. Office vacancies were lower in 2020 than they had been in 2010. The average market rent per square foot across the Boston Metro Market for office is substantially higher at \$40.95. Office space in Dedham is comparatively very affordable.

Outdoor dining in Dedham Square



Source: Town of Dedham

Retail Submarket

In Dedham, the three primary retail areas include Providence Highway North/Dedham Mall, Providence Highway South, and Legacy Place. The average retail rents and vacancy rates vary by retail area in Dedham. Among those areas, average rents are highest at Legacy Place and vacancy rates are lowest there as well. For the past 10 years, average retail rents have been increasing across Dedham retail areas with about a 30% increase over that timeframe. Retail vacancies were lower in 2020 than they had been in 2010. The average market rent per square foot across the Boston Metro Market for retail is lower at \$25.35.

Multi-family Residential Submarket

In the submarket Dedham is a part of households typically choose to own rather than rent, but those who do rent pay significantly less for quality product than they might compared to urban areas. Rents for 4-Star and 5-Star properties are 20% less than the metropolitan average. In Dedham, the three multi-family residential areas include Dedham Square, Legacy Place, and south of Legacy Place. Dedham Square includes 103 units, Legacy Place includes 48 units that are under construction. South of Legacy Place includes 585 units. For the past 10 years, average multi-family rents have been increasing with about a 30% increase over that timeframe. The occupancy rate in that timeframe has remained relatively steady between 94% to 98%. The average market rent per square foot across the Boston Metro Market for multi-family is substantially higher at \$11.76.

Compared to nearby communities of Canton and Norwood, Dedham has less multi-family unit inventory by unit count and percent of total units. According to U.S. Census data, Dedham has



3,086 (30%) multi-family units (2 or more units), compared to 3,344 (35%) in Canton and 6,220 (47%) in Norwood. Compared to nearby communities of Westwood, Needham, and Milton, Dedham has more multi-family unit inventory by unit count and percent of total units. Westwood has 987 (18%) multi-family units. Needham has 1,795 (16%) multi-family units. Milton has 1,938 (21%) multi-family units.¹

Housing affordability

While the overall housing stock in Dedham offers a variety of housing unit types, there appears to be a mismatch between the size of the housing units (number of bedrooms in a home) and the size of households (number of people living in a home). This mismatch is observed in every neighborhood and has implications for nearby economic activity areas. In neighborhoods where single-person households are mismatched with larger houses, this mismatch could place a cost burden on households so they have less discretionary spending to support the local economy. Particularly, if seniors cannot downsize because of a lack of smaller housing options, they may move elsewhere. At the same time, if single-family and multi-bedroom housing units aren't available on the market, many families looking in Dedham could settle elsewhere. Providing appropriate housing choices for seniors, families, and everyone in between is essential to supporting the workforce and customer base of local businesses. Furthermore, a higher concentration of housing may be needed in areas of Town where the majority of retail exists. Better aligning the proximity of local businesses with multifamily and mixed-use housing options can improve walkability, reduce trips times, and offer these businesses a reliable customer base.

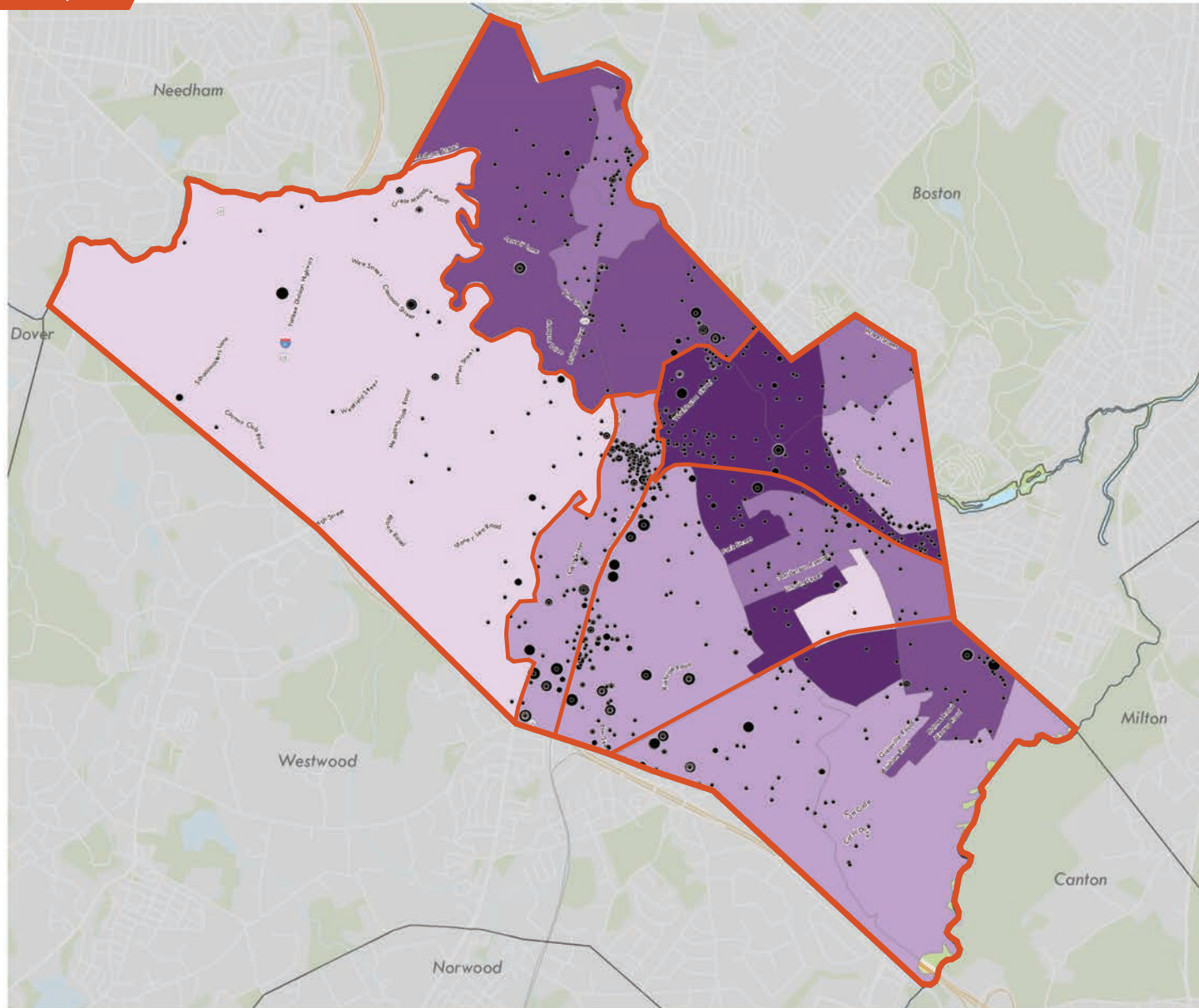
¹ Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census

The Planning Board conducted an assessment of Mixed-Use Developments in 2020, which yielded the report “Impact of Mixed-Use Development Study.” A recommendation by the study for the Town was to adopt an inclusionary housing zoning bylaw that would require a certain amount of affordable housing units for Mixed-Use Developments to address housing affordability in the Town. As a result, the Planning Board submitted an inclusionary bylaw to Town Meeting in Fall 2020, which was approved.

Unemployment

As previously discussed, housing affordability is directly related to employment opportunities and compensation. Periods of unemployment can lead to housing instability. While the unemployment data on the following map is pre-COVID-19 pandemic, the relative differences in unemployment rates by neighborhood are more important to point out and are more likely to persist through future unemployment changes. East Dedham shows the largest area with the highest unemployment rate. Oakdale/Endicott and Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor also show areas with elevated unemployment with some areas also showing the highest rates. Riverdale shows the next consistently elevated rates. Unemployment rates in Dedham Village/Dedham Square are modest and rates in Precinct 1/West Dedham are low.

The other data feature of the map is the businesses shown with number of employees. It is interesting to see the clusters of large employee businesses do not correspond with the low unemployment rates. An observation that is consistent with the fact that most Dedham residents are employed outside of the Town. Most of the employees for those Dedham businesses are commuting in to Dedham to work in those positions.



Economic Development Unemployment

Businesses by Number of Employees

- 0 - 14
- 15 - 42
- 43 - 80
- 81 - 150
- 151 - 347

Unemployment Rate

- 0% - 1.2%
- 1.3% - 2.6%
- 2.7% - 3.5%
- 3.6% - 4.2%
- 4.3% - 13.2%

- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

February 2020



Economic development Goals and Strategies

Summary: Invest in and support local businesses to provide opportunities for residents as entrepreneurs and employees, and to provide convenient access to services they need.

NOTE: It is up to the Planning Board to decide to implement the goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan.

ED1 **Goal 1: Invest in neighborhood business districts with a focus on creating an environment for more independently owned businesses and improving pedestrian access.**

It is important to both strengthen centers of employment and economic activity in Dedham and increase small business density and job growth in local business districts. Investing in local economic development at neighborhood centers could also provide an opportunity to increase infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle use in a town that has heavy reliance on vehicles, advance previous recommendations, such as the East Dedham Square Arts Overlay District, and support local business districts in neighborhoods such as Riverdale.

Strategy 1.1: Review the zoning and regulations in each neighborhood business district to ensure alignment with the goals for each district and to encourage equitable public and private investments balanced with historic preservation.

Strategy 1.2: Leverage Town investments to support neighborhood business districts including public realm, placemaking, sidewalk, and streetscape improvements and using Town-owned property effectively to support the goals of the district.

Strategy 1.3: Host Town-organized events and programming series to activate districts. Work closely with local organizations that promote art and culture, such as Mother Brook Arts and Community Center in East Dedham.

Strategy 1.4: Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to develop a brand identity for districts to attract new visitors, residents, and businesses.

Strategy 1.5: Establish a wayfinding strategy program, an effective signage program that will help visitors and residents navigate district amenities and landmarks, to connect neighborhood business districts to pedestrian infrastructure and surrounding natural resources like Wigwam Pond and the Charles River.

Strategy 1.6: Expand the capacity of businesses and create stronger connections to the public realm beyond storefronts through the increased use and activation of outdoor spaces such as through outdoor dining or displays.



ED2 Goal 2: Strengthen support for small businesses that focuses on improving current systems and building additional capacity.

There are opportunities to build sustainable commercial revenues by strengthening small businesses within Dedham. Central commercial districts, like Dedham Square and East Dedham Square, need small businesses to thrive if they are going to continue to be community destinations. Small business support should evolve to help small businesses continue to thrive in Dedham and may include enhanced technical assistance, establishing a chamber of commerce, and the offering the opportunity for municipal support through locally-sourced procurements.

Strategy 2.1: Work with local community partners and business owners to undertake a detailed small business district assessment to better understand the specific conditions and challenges unique to the different areas of Dedham.

Strategy 2.2: Increase support for small business owners and future entrepreneurs in Dedham to navigate the regulatory environment or pursue grants or other funding sources and support through partnerships with community, business organizations, nonprofits, or related efforts of Town staff.

Strategy 2.3: Identify a dedicated funding source for staffing, grants for future positions related to small business support.

Strategy 2.4: Define Dedham economic activity areas' competitive advantages and develop strategic marketing materials accordingly.

Dedham Bike, a Town of Dedham small business



Source: Town of Dedham



ED3

Goal 3: Focus transformative growth and future redevelopment on the Providence Highway corridor including enhanced pedestrian and bicycle circulation and connections.

The Providence Highway corridor should continue to strengthen its retail base to provide job opportunities and convenient access to retail and services for Dedham residents. Improving transit, walking and biking access, and connections to the corridor would improve economic development, access to employment, help to address congestion, and could provide the platform for renewed and transformative investment in this critical economic corridor.

Strategy 3.1: Undertake a community and property owner visioning process to articulate the desired vision for future land use and development patterns to complement the vision for the street infrastructure. Incorporate results from the roadway redesign process and integrate any land that may be recovered from the redesigned roadway network.

Strategy 3.2: Conduct an analysis to review characteristics of corridor parcels including ownership, use, building to land value ratio, year built, and tenant information to better understand each parcels potential for change.

Strategy 3.3: Conduct a market demand analysis to evaluate trends in industrial/commercial real estate in the study area and market subregion along with an assessment of current key indicators to create a baseline understanding of the market position of the study area.

Strategy 3.4: Conduct a suitability analysis of relevant parcels for redevelopment on the Providence Highway corridor to create more compact walkable places.

Strategy 3.5: Use the strategies under Goal 5, to define public and private infrastructure and development needs to add specific details to the previously established District Improvement Financing (DIF) as supported through a vote previously by the Planning Board.



ED4

Goal 4: Improve the ability for people who work in Dedham to live in Dedham by encouraging affordable housing, improving living wages, and attracting better paying employment opportunities.

People who choose to work in Dedham should be able to afford living in Dedham. Expanding the range and quality of job opportunities available in Dedham can help meet this goal, particularly in continuing to strengthen its retail and industrial base. Addressing the current gap between wages and housing costs is critical to addressing housing affordability. Building out a strong workforce development program to improve Dedham residents' employment opportunities is as important as continuing to invest in affordable housing options.

Strategy 4.1: Integrate housing and economic development planning strategies to guide future housing production that is affordable to those who work in Dedham but are currently priced out of the community in industries like Accommodation and Food Services and attractive to those who may seek to live in Dedham but are currently commuting into the Town for work everyday.

Strategy 4.2: Establish an economic development committee dedicated to stewardship of workforce, with a particular focus on industries that may need to train new employees to replace many approaching retirement, and investment opportunities in Dedham as well as regional opportunities and partnerships.

Strategy 4.3: Encourage continued partnerships between the Blue Hills Regional Technical School and other workforce development partners in the area to facilitate internship opportunities in local industries.

Strategy 4.4: Convene a working group composed of private sector, workforce development, and economic development stakeholders to evaluate current industry strengths and challenges as well as regional opportunities and partnerships for employment.

Strategy 4.5: Incentivize the investment in growing industries such as biotech, medical research, and clean energy, among others.

Strategy 4.6: Partner with property owners and developers to address current challenges to attracting businesses and investment.



ED5

Goal 5: Retain a strategic balance and mix of uses across the Town to respond to future economic trends in industrial or other uses and align growth and changes with the community's vision.

Throughout the region, areas of flexible commercial and industrial use are shrinking due to encroachment by other types of development. These are important areas in Dedham in which to retain flexibility to respond to future opportunities. Currently, there is a competitive industrial base in Dedham that could benefit from increased investment. Not only could the industrial sector provide more job opportunities for Dedham, it could spur growth with its close proximity to the Boston border and in locations near transit access. Exploring land use opportunities that promote industrial business development could be an option to retain these important economic development opportunities for the future.

Strategy 5.1: Create a baseline assessment of industrial and commercial land use areas in the Town today and define an approach or policy to these areas to retain future flexibility by reducing loss and encroachment by other uses.

Strategy 5.2: Leverage historic preservation to retain a mix and scale of the types of spaces that will support local small businesses. Connect these types of spaces to support for the creative economy and local entrepreneurship.

Strategy 5.3: Leverage workforce development programs currently underway and refocus on industrial job opportunities.

Strategy 5.4: Establish “district” liaisons for specific economic development activity areas including industrial areas like Milton Industrial Corridor, Readville Industrial Area. Liaisons will be involved in future areas of planning work including site location, workforce development and beyond to make sure there is a collective voice that reflects stakeholders.

Strategy 5.5: Form an “on-call” Committee of Town leaders, Town Manager, Finance Committee, Planning & Zoning Department who can react quickly to incoming economic development funding, such as through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), to quickly and strategically allocate to Town needs and priorities.



Economic development Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for economic development.

ED1 Establish regulations and standards to allow and encourage outdoor dining and retail beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

This action would set the stage for the continuation of an economic development program that is well liked and successful. Local regulations may be required to carry the outdoor seating and display areas forward along with standards for making the investments more permanent with compliance for longevity, maintenance, accessibility, and design. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department in close coordination with the Public Health Department. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include example regulations and standards that have been developed by other

cities and towns in Greater Boston including the City of Boston and the City of Salem.

ED2 Undertake a small business assessment to guide support needed in different areas of Dedham.

This action would set the stage for working with local community partners and business owners to strengthen support for small businesses. A detailed small business district assessment including clusters of small businesses across Dedham could identify the specific needs for each district. Once the needs are better understood, the supportive activity may include strengthening existing partners, such as Dedham Square Circle, or working collaboratively to support new partners such as a Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement District, additional business associations, or non-profit groups. The most relevant support activity would be dependent on the needs of specific business areas. The lead responsibility would be the Planning & Zoning Department. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process.

ED3 Continue and complete a community and property owner visioning and district planning process for the Providence Highway corridor.



This action would articulate the desired vision for the future land use and development patterns of the Providence Highway corridor, complement the recent roadway improvement planning, contribute tangible next steps for the District Improvement Financing established for the area, and set the stage for zoning changes to align with the community vision.

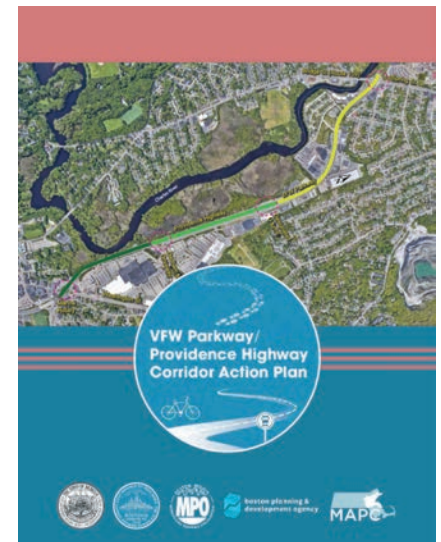
The Providence Highway corridor was almost completely developed by the mid-1980s. The corridor was originally developed under limited manufacturing zoning. The Highway Business (HB) zoning district was created based on recommendations of the 1996 Master Plan. It recognized the retail and commercial uses along Providence Highway and that require large land areas and an orientation to highway travel. This approach could be updated based on the community vision that is articulated and with the intent of creating more compact nodes that are walkable while also providing convenient vehicular access.

To date, the Planning Board in conjunction with the Planning and Zoning Department conducted a community visioning study in 2021 that produced the “VFW Parkway/Providence Highway Corridor Action Plan.” The scope of work involved the section of Providence Highway between the Marine Corp. Rotary to the Spring Street/Bridge Street/VFW Parkway. The community process involved over 300 participants across two community meetings and over 1,300 online survey participants. The plan produced preliminary plans to increase safety for all users, enhance walking and biking accommodations, and provide more efficient traffic operations and reduced congestion.

In 2021, the Planning Board in conjunction with the Planning

and Zoning Department, building on the “VFW Parkway/ Providence Highway Corridor Action Plan” conducted a process to develop a vision and preliminary plans for passive and active recreation opportunities for the lands adjacent to the VFW/ Providence Highway Corridor between the Spring Street/VFW/ Bridge Street intersection to the north and Marine Rotary to the south. The resultant plan entitled “VFW Parkway/Providence Highway Recreation Access Study” developed preliminary plans for pedestrian access and connections from the VFW Parkway/Providence Highway corridor to the Charles River, and surrounding areas through a network of trails, bridges, canoe/ kayak launches and river overlooks. Access to the water’s edge will follow the area’s natural topography to mitigate disturbance and provide sensitivity to natural habitats and ecosystems within the wetland and upland areas.

VFW Parkway/Providence Highway Corridor Action Plan



Source: MAPC

ED1

Goal 1: Invest in neighborhood business districts with a focus on creating an environment for more independently owned businesses and improving pedestrian access.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED1.1: Review the zoning regulations in each neighborhood business district to ensure alignment with the goals for each district.	1. Initiate local business district and neighborhood plan studies to inform zoning updates similar to past efforts in Dedham Square and East Dedham for Oakdale Square, Bridge Street, and East and Sprague Street areas among others.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
ED1.2: Leverage Town investments to support neighborhood business districts including public realm, placemaking, sidewalk, and streetscape improvements and using Town-owned property to support goals.	1. Define a package of modest public realm investments to improve local business districts (new street lights, street trees, improved curb ramp, crosswalk, new bench, or other needed amenities).	Engineering Department	Public Works Department, Planning & Zoning Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Commonwealth Complete Streets Funding Program, available at: https://www.mass.gov/complete-streets-funding-program
	2. Define a implementation and investment schedule with a year dedicated to modest public realm improvements in a different local business district.	Engineering Department	Capital Expenditures Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
ED1.3: Host Town-organized events and programming series to activate districts. Work closely with local organizations that promote art and culture, such as Mother Brook Arts and Community Center in East Dedham.	1. Inventory the current catalogue of annual events in the Town (Dedham Day, Flag Day Parade, James Joyce Ramble, etc.).	Town Manager (Director of Communications)	Planning & Zoning Department, Civic Pride Committee, Library	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. With the inventory of events, identify gaps in the calendar where a new event could be hosted. Discuss potential event ideas with local business districts and neighborhoods to match a community-based event idea.		Planning & Zoning Department, Town Manager, Human Rights Commission, Civic Pride Committee, Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	3. Add events that may be missing from annual calendars to be more inclusive, partner with community groups of color for new events.				
	4. Pilot event and establish an annual tradition.				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED1.4: Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to develop a brand identity for districts to attract new visitors, residents, and businesses.	1. Define a local business district Task Force with allied partners and stakeholders for each business district to discuss what type of strategy would be most helpful, including detailing the assets and ambitions of the district.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
ED1.5: Establish a wayfinding strategy program, an effective signage program that will help visitors and residents navigate district amenities and landmarks, to connect neighborhood business districts to pedestrian infrastructure and surrounding natural resources like Wigwam Pond and the Charles River.	1. Continue the wayfinding project focused on parking and traffic in Dedham Square.	Planning & Zoning Department	Conservation Department, Parks and Recreation Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) Grant Program, information available at: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi
	2. Prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a wayfinding consultant to expand wayfinding in the town that defines the types of assets that will be a part of the directional signage, the design elements of the sign program, and the number and potential locations of signs.	Planning & Zoning Department		Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
ED1.6: Expand the capacity of businesses and create stronger connections to the public realm beyond storefronts through the increased use and activation of outdoor spaces such as through outdoor dining or displays.	1. Establish regulations and standards to allow and encourage outdoor dining and retail beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.	Select Board, Health Department, Building Department	Town Manager, Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Establish public realm design guidelines that allow for businesses to expand capacity with outdoor dining and retail, as seasons allow.	Planning & Zoning Department	Engineering Department, Public Works Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	

Priority



ED2 Goal 2: Strengthen support for small businesses that focuses on improving current systems and building additional capacity.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>ED2.1: Work with local community partners and business owners to undertake a detailed small business district assessment to better understand the specific conditions and challenges unique to the different areas of Dedham.</p>	<p>1. Undertake a small business assessment and survey to guide support needed in different areas of Dedham.</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department</p>		<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	
	<p>2. Based on the results of the assessment, develop formal organizations of business and/or property owners to have a collective voice of stakeholders present in economic development activity areas. This activity could complement or strengthen existing partners such as Dedham Square Circle or create new entities where needed. Organizations could take the form of a Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement District, Business Association, or nonprofit groups.</p>				
<p>ED2.2: Increase support for small business owners and future entrepreneurs in Dedham to navigate the regulatory environment or pursue grants or other funding sources and support through partnerships with community, business organizations, nonprofits, or related efforts of Town staff.</p>	<p>1. Based on the results of the small business assessment, provide workshops or one-on-one assistance to small businesses to receive support to build capacity.</p> <p>A. One on one assistance allows a business owner to receive support at a convenient time and in the context of their business.</p> <p>B. Workshops serve as a point of entry for many business owners and could represent a starting point for more comprehensive assistance.</p> <p>2. Prioritize support for businesses of color, particularly identifying and supporting access to capital and training opportunities.</p> <p>3. Based on the results of the assessment, provide referrals to partner organizations to expand partnerships such as non-profit or private entities, banks, realtors, and other organizations.</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department</p>	<p>Community, business organizations, nonprofits</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>	<p>Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network information available at: https://www.msbdc.org/</p> <p>Collect data on Dedham small businesses including contact information, type of business (retail, service, restaurant, etc) and track trends and changes over time through review every year or every two years.</p>



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED2.2 (continued)	If small businesses identify permitting or regulatory hurdles, the liaison could work with them to assist with approvals or identify items that may be streamlined or simplified in the permitting process.	Planning & Zoning Department		Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
ED2.3: Identify a dedicated funding source for staffing, grants for future positions related to small business support.	1. Develop a database of state, federal, private, and non-profit resources for small business relief programs including the many new programs related to COVID-19 pandemic relief.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Small Business Relief information is available here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-resources-and-guidance-for-businesses
ED2.4: Define Dedham economic activity areas' competitive advantages and develop strategic marketing materials accordingly.	1. Define a local business district Task Force with allied partners and stakeholders for each business district to discuss what type of strategy would be most helpful, including detailing the assets and ambitions of the district.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	

ED3 Goal 3: Focus transformative growth and future redevelopment on the Providence Highway corridor including enhanced pedestrian and bicycle circulation and connections

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
Priority ED3.1: Undertake a community and property owner visioning process to articulate the desired vision for future land use and development patterns to complement the vision for the street infrastructure.	1. Continue and complete a community and property owner visioning and district planning process for the Providence Highway corridor.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grants from MassDevelopment's Site Readiness Program Or, technical assistance from MAPC's District Local Technical Assistance, or other programs, information available at: https://www.mapc.org/about-mapc/funding-opportunities/



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED3.2: Conduct an analysis to review characteristics of corridor parcels including ownership, use, building to land value ratio, year built, and tenant information to better understand each parcels potential for change.	1. Based on the susceptibility to change analysis, parcels identified as “change likely – near term” and “change likely – long term” should be investigated further with a redevelopment vision that includes conceptual massing diagrams for redevelopment.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grants from MassDevelopment’s Site Readiness Program, or technical assistance from MAPC’s District Local Technical Assistance.
ED3.3: Conduct a market demand analysis to evaluate trends in industrial/commercial real estate in the study area and market subregion along with an assessment of current key indicators to create a baseline understanding of the market position of the study area.	1. Conduct a market demand analysis for properties in the Providence Highway corridor to better understand the future opportunities for investment and vitality.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grants from MassDevelopment’s Site Readiness Program, or technical assistance from MAPC’s District Local Technical Assistance.
	2. Use the analysis to inform zoning modifications including the table of uses, dimensional regulations, and parking requirements.	Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grants from MassDevelopment’s Site Readiness Program, or technical assistance from MAPC’s District Local Technical Assistance.
ED3.4: Conduct a suitability analysis of relevant parcels for redevelopment on the Providence Highway corridor to create more compact walkable places.	1. Undertake this analysis as part of the action defined in ED5.1 above to initiate a community and property owner visioning and district planning process for the Providence Highway corridor.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grants from MassDevelopment’s Site Readiness Program, or technical assistance from MAPC’s District Local Technical Assistance.
	2. Use the analysis to inform zoning modifications including the table of uses, dimensional regulations, and parking requirements.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grants from MassDevelopment’s Site Readiness Program, or technical assistance from MAPC’s District Local Technical Assistance.



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED3.5: Use the strategies under Goal 5, to define public and private infrastructure and development needs to add specific details to the previously established District Improvement Financing (DIF) as supported through a vote previously by the Planning Board.	1. The District Improvement Financing (DIF) district has been approved and is awaiting further definition and details which should be a result of the planning process defined in ED5.1, ED5.2, and ED5.3 above.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	MassDevelopment technical assistance and resources regarding DIF, information at: https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/technical-assistance/district-improvement-financing

ED4 Goal 4: Improve the ability for people who work in Dedham to live in Dedham by encouraging affordable housing, improving living wages, and attracting better paying employment opportunities.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED4.1: Integrate housing and economic development planning strategies to guide future housing production that is affordable to those who work in Dedham.	1. Integrate increased density mixed-use redevelopment into local business district and neighborhood plan studies as part of zoning updates to help address long-term housing affordability.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED4.2: Establish an economic development committee dedicated to stewardship of workforce, with a particular focus on industries that may need to train new employees to replace many approaching retirement, and investment opportunities in Dedham as well as regional opportunities and partnerships.	1. Define the mission and scope of the committee, work with the Select Board to formally enable the committee, prepare a call for committee members with representatives from a diverse set of stakeholders and local business districts.	Planning & Zoning Department	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Neighboring municipalities have this type of committee and may offer models for implementation, including Norwood: http://www.norwoodma.gov/government/committees_boards/economic_development_committee/index.php Canton: https://www.town.canton.ma.us/347/Economic-Development-Committee And, Natick: https://www.natickma.gov/484/Economic-Development-Committee
ED4.3: Encourage continued partnerships between the Blue Hills Regional Technical School and other workforce development partners in the area to facilitate internship opportunities in local industries.	1. Plug into a Local Team Leader meeting for the School to Careers program administered by Blue Hills Regional Technical School to learn if additional support or connections could benefit Dedham High School or Dedham businesses.	Planning & Zoning Department	Dedham Public Schools, Library	Continuous and ongoing	
ED4.4: Convene a working group composed of private sector, workforce development, and economic development stakeholders to evaluate current industry strengths and challenges as well as regional opportunities and partnerships for employment.	1. Use the economic development committee outlined in ED3.2 Action 1 above to organize a working group that could meet twice a year to discuss strengths and challenges and how the town can be of assistance.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED4.5: Incentivize the investment into growing industries such as biotech, medical research, and clean energy, among others.	1. Review Research Development and Office (RDO) and Limited Manufacturing zoning districts to identify any barriers to these uses.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	2. Explore an expedited permitting process for desired uses.			Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
ED4.6: Partner with property owners and developers to address current challenges to attracting businesses and investment.	1. Use the economic development committee outlined in ED3.2 Action 1 above to organize a working group that could meet twice a year to discuss strengths and challenges and how the town can be of assistance.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	

ED5 Goal 5: Retain a strategic balance and mix of uses across the Town to respond to future economic trends in industrial or other uses and align growth and changes with the community’s vision.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED5.1: Create a baseline assessment of industrial and commercial land use areas in the Town today and define an approach or policy to these areas to retain future flexibility by reducing loss and encroachment by other uses.	1. Inventory current and future industrial land based on type of activity and size.	Planning & Zoning Department	GIS Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Recent research and trends, including MAPC’s Hidden and In Plain Sight: Impacts of E-Commerce in Massachusetts, available at: https://www.mapc.org/news/study-online-shopping-causing-major-uptick-in-pollution-traffic-industrial-rents-in-greater-boston/
	2. Inventory by activity to take into account the demographics (POC, population with language barriers, population without high school diplomas) of those trained in the industry.				
	3. Inventory by size to preserve or strengthen industries that already exist.				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED5.1 (continued)	4. Track changes and trends in the town’s tax base and use this data to inform industrial and commercial zoning and policies. Update zoning and allowed uses to reflect current real estate market and use classifications.	Planning & Zoning Department		Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
ED5.2: Leverage historic preservation to retain a mix and scale of the types of spaces that will support local small businesses. Connect these types of spaces to support for the creative economy and local entrepreneurship.	1. Prioritize assistance for filling vacant spaces in historic structures and connect local businesses to available spaces that may be appropriate to their operations.	Planning & Zoning Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	It may not be applicable in all areas, but the Massachusetts Vacant Storefronts Program may provide helpful information: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-vacant-storefronts-program-mvsp
ED5.3: Leverage workforce development programs currently underway and refocus on industrial job opportunities.	1. Connect with the largest employers in Dedham and encourage them to participate in the MassHire Metro South/West Career Centers Virtual Career Fairs.	Planning & Zoning Department		Continuous and ongoing	
ED5.4: Establish “district” liaisons for specific economic development activity areas including industrial areas like Milton Industrial Corridor, Readville Industrial Area. Liaisons will be involved in future areas of planning work including site location, workforce development and beyond to make sure there is a collective voice that reflects stakeholders.	1. Use the economic development committee outlined in ED3.2 Action 1 above to identify district liaisons that are, ideally, also involved in the committee and can serve as a representative and ambassador to specific economic development activity areas in Dedham.	Planning & Zoning Department	Human Rights Commission, Housing Authority, Council on Aging	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
ED5.5: Form an “on-call” Committee of town leaders, Town Manager, Finance Committee, Planning & Zoning, who can react quickly to incoming funding, such as through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), to quickly and strategically allocate to Town needs and priorities.	1. The “on call” Committee of town leaders could also engage with the economic development committee outlined in ED3.2 Action 1 above to discuss town needs and priorities.	Planning & Zoning Department	Town Manager, Finance Committee, Capital Expenditures Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Chapter 5: **Housing**

Introduction

The demographic trends in Dedham include an aging population and decreasing household size. Accordingly, the housing stock of the Town must be proactively guided to meet the shifting needs of the population, to respond to the housing market, and to address affordability. A more diverse range of housing options can better respond to a greater range of housing needs and offer a wider range of affordable housing options. Market forces and current policies will narrow the range of people who can afford to live in Dedham.

An expanded range of housing options may allow more residents, such as teachers, janitors, firefighters, and others, to find the housing they need in Dedham for different life stages and ranges of income. In guiding housing production in Dedham, equity of access must also be addressed. Throughout the region, a history of housing discrimination, exclusionary zoning, and systemic inequities have left a legacy of unequal housing opportunities and a crisis of affordability.

The Master Plan topic of housing examines the characteristics of housing in Dedham today, and outlines plans, policies, and regulations that could guide housing production to better meet Dedham's needs.



Summary

Make Dedham a place where more people can afford to live with more housing options to meet the needs of long-time, new, and aspiring residents.

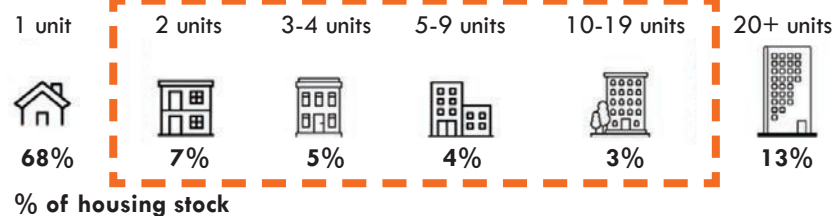


Themes Highlights

- Housing is ranked as one of the greatest challenges facing residents today in a survey of over 1,200 resident responses.
- The current Zoning Bylaw is perpetuating some of the current housing issues and could be modified to better address diversifying housing stock, addressing affordability and equity.
- A mismatch exists between the characteristics of the current population and the characteristics of the current housing stock.

Lack of housing types in the middle (2-19 units)

Type of housing unit



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2017-2021

Companion and related plans and studies

- Mixed Use Development Study (2020)
- Dedham Housing Study (2019)
- Dedham Corporate Station: Creating a Connected Neighborhood (2017)



Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Support the creation and preservation of affordable housing for a range of incomes including deed-restricted, subsidized, and market-based units throughout Dedham.
- Promote equitable development that includes all incomes, races, ethnicities, family sizes, and life stages to support fair housing and racial equity.
- Improve zoning to better align with the improvement, preservation, and diversification of the Town's housing stock while requiring linked community benefits and mitigation of community impacts.

10,963

Total housing units

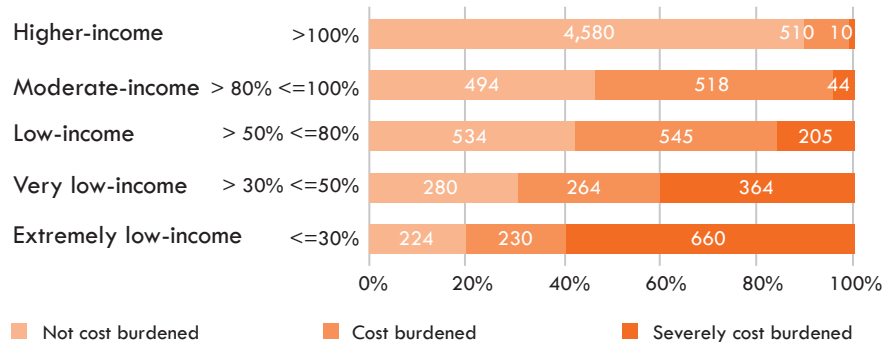
71%

Owner-occupied

29%

Renter-occupied

Dedham income ranges and population burdened by rent



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2017-2021



Defining housing terms

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)

Recipients of federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are required to affirmatively further the policies and purposes of the Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968).

Area Median Income (AMI)

The Area Median Income (AMI) is the midpoint of a region's income distribution - half of the families in a region earn more and half earn less. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines and calculates different levels of AMI based on geographic areas to determine housing affordability requirements locally. Dedham is within the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro Fair Market Rent (FMR) Area. Eligibility for Affordable Housing is based on AMI and varies by household size. For example, 80% AMI, the typical threshold for most Affordable Housing, is \$96,250 for a four-person household.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, also called the COVID-19 Stimulus Package or American Rescue Plan, was a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill to provide emergency grants, lending, and investment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cost Burden

A household is considered cost burdened when it spends more than 30% of its gross income on housing and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, medical care, and transportation. When a household spends more than 50% of its gross income on housing, it is considered severely cost burdened. Cost burdened households have greater difficulty covering the costs of other necessities such as food, healthcare, and transportation. They also have less discretionary income to contribute to the local economy. Households experiencing housing-related cost burden are more vulnerable to the financial impacts of unexpected events, whether personal, such as job loss or illness, or society-wide, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Deed-restricted Affordable Housing

Deed-restricted Affordable Housing, often spelled with a capital "A" and "H", is legally required to cost no more than 30% of a household's income and be made available to income-eligible households only. HUD defines income-eligible households as households earning 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less (see the definition above).

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP)

A no interest loan program offered by the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to modify the homes of adults and children with disabilities to make needed adaptations or modifications to homes to help residents remain in their homes and live more independently.

M.G.L. Chapter 40B "Comprehensive Permit"

By state statute Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 40B, cities and towns are encouraged to provide 10% of their total year-round housing units as deed-restricted Affordable Housing. If a municipality is not at or above the 10% threshold, a developer can use a special Comprehensive Permit Process to build developments with Affordable Housing, as an alternative to local zoning regulations. Municipalities seeking to encourage more Affordable Housing development can also choose to use 40B regulations to facilitate development through the Local Initiative Program, which offers state technical assistance to support the development process.

M.G.L. Chapter 40R "Smart Growth Overlay District"

M.G.L. Chapter 40R, § 1-14, provides for smart growth overlay districts with increased densities for residential development and multifamily housing by right (subject to site plan review). At least 25% of the units in a Chapter 40R district must be affordable to low- or moderate-income people. Municipalities that adopt a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD) can receive \$10,000 to \$600,000 in state funding, as well as \$3,000 for every new housing unit created in the district. Communities can also receive state assistance to write 40R zoning and adopt design standards to further guide development.

Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)

Housing that tends to be affordable (30% of household income) or less expensive due to size, age, or other characteristics. NOAH is not protected by deed restrictions or other mechanisms. These homes may become unaffordable at any time, depending on investment, the market, and other factors.

Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

In Massachusetts, the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) is maintained by the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and used to measure each municipality's supply of Affordable Housing for the purposes of Chapter 40B. The SHI includes all housing developed under Chapter 40B, including both Affordable Housing and market-rate units in rental developments, and other deed-restricted Affordable Housing, such as public housing, project-based vouchers, federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects, and many others.



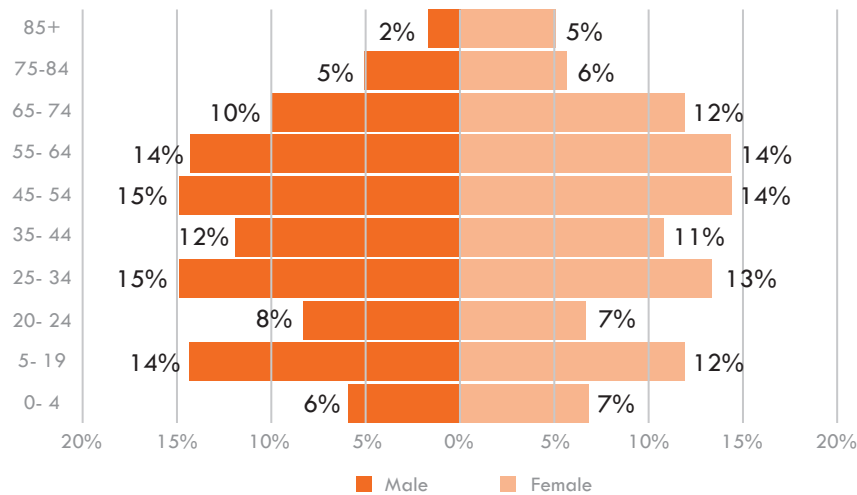
Housing In Dedham today

Housing themes from data and previous plans

HI Improve alignment of housing and population characteristics

Although the proportion has been decreasing, single family homes remain the largest portion of housing supply in Dedham representing more than two thirds (68%) of the homes. Homes in multi-family residential buildings of 20 or more units make up the next largest portion of the housing supply. As the Dedham

Dedham population pyramid (showing age and gender)



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimate, 2017-2021

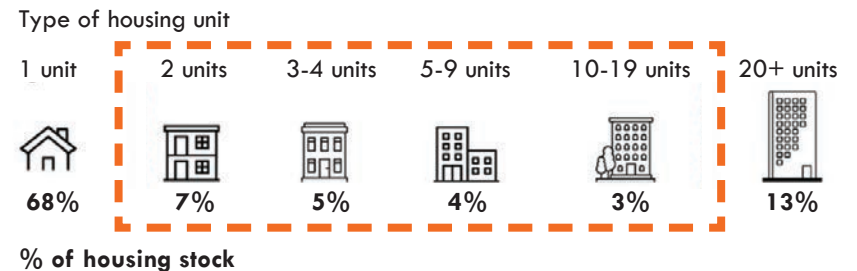
population pyramid figure below shows, there is a wide range of age of Dedham residents, but there is not the same variety in the types of homes available in Town that could support all stages of life represented by those age ranges.

There are a total of 10,246 housing units in Dedham. As stated, the majority of the housing units are single-family homes. The majority of housing units are also owner-occupied, as opposed to renter-occupied. A larger variety of housing types would provide residents with more options and increase affordability. The types of housing units that would strengthen this variety include duplexes, triplexes, and other smaller multi-family buildings. These housing options are needed by younger and older Dedham residents alike, such as those aspiring to purchase their first home or those that need to downsize into a smaller home. This type of

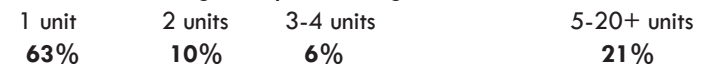
Housing Units in Dedham



Dedham's homeownership rate compares favorably to the statewide homeownership rate of 62% (U.S. Census, ACS 2018-2022)



Dedham's housing unit percentages are similar to statewide units:



Source: U.S. Census, ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2017-2021; MassGIS, Assessor's data, 2023



housing is sometimes referred to as the “missing middle.” They include housing types that are larger than a single-family home, but that are smaller than typical multi-family and mixed-use building. The missing middle housing types provide options that are relatively affordable because they make more efficient use of the limited land available, and their smaller scale makes them typically more affordable to construct.

The need to improve the alignment between the population and housing stock is also evident across Dedham’s neighborhoods. In four out of six neighborhoods, there are fewer one-bedroom

Comparison of housing stock by number of bedrooms with household size

Neighborhood	% of housing stock by bedroom count	% of household size
Precinct 1/ West Dedham	12% one-bedrooms	51% one-person households
	17% four-bedrooms	30% four-person households
Riverdale	15% one-bedrooms	37% one-person households
Oakdale/Endicott	28% one-bedrooms	38% one-person households
Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor	1% one-bedrooms	21% one-person households
Dedham (overall)	10% two-bedrooms	47% two-person households

Source: Dedham Housing Study, 2019

housing units than single-person households. In Dedham Village and Precinct 1/West Dedham, there are fewer two-bedroom and four-bedroom housing units compared to the number of two-person and four-person households. While this is not a perfect way to match individual housing needs, it provides an indication of how the housing needs may compare with the housing stock and where the housing options may be falling short.

H2 Dedham needs more as of right housing options

The current zoning regulations in Dedham make it difficult to create a variety of housing options to better meet the needs of current and prospective residents. As examples, 62% of all parcels in Town are below the minimum lot size and therefore considered nonconforming parcels, and the majority of potential land with larger scale development opportunity is zoned Single Residence A with a nearly 1-acre minimum required lot area. The map on the following page shows the distribution of nonconforming lot sizes in blue.

By defining some lots as nonconforming, the zoning regulations may make home conversions, accessory dwelling units, home improvements, and redevelopment more difficult by requiring additional board review and approval to make any of these changes. Seeking approval for these changes can be particularly discouraging for a typical homeowner who is not usually accustomed to the development review process and may have



Nonconforming Lots (Map Source: Dedham Housing Study, 2019)



Town of Dedham: Housing Study

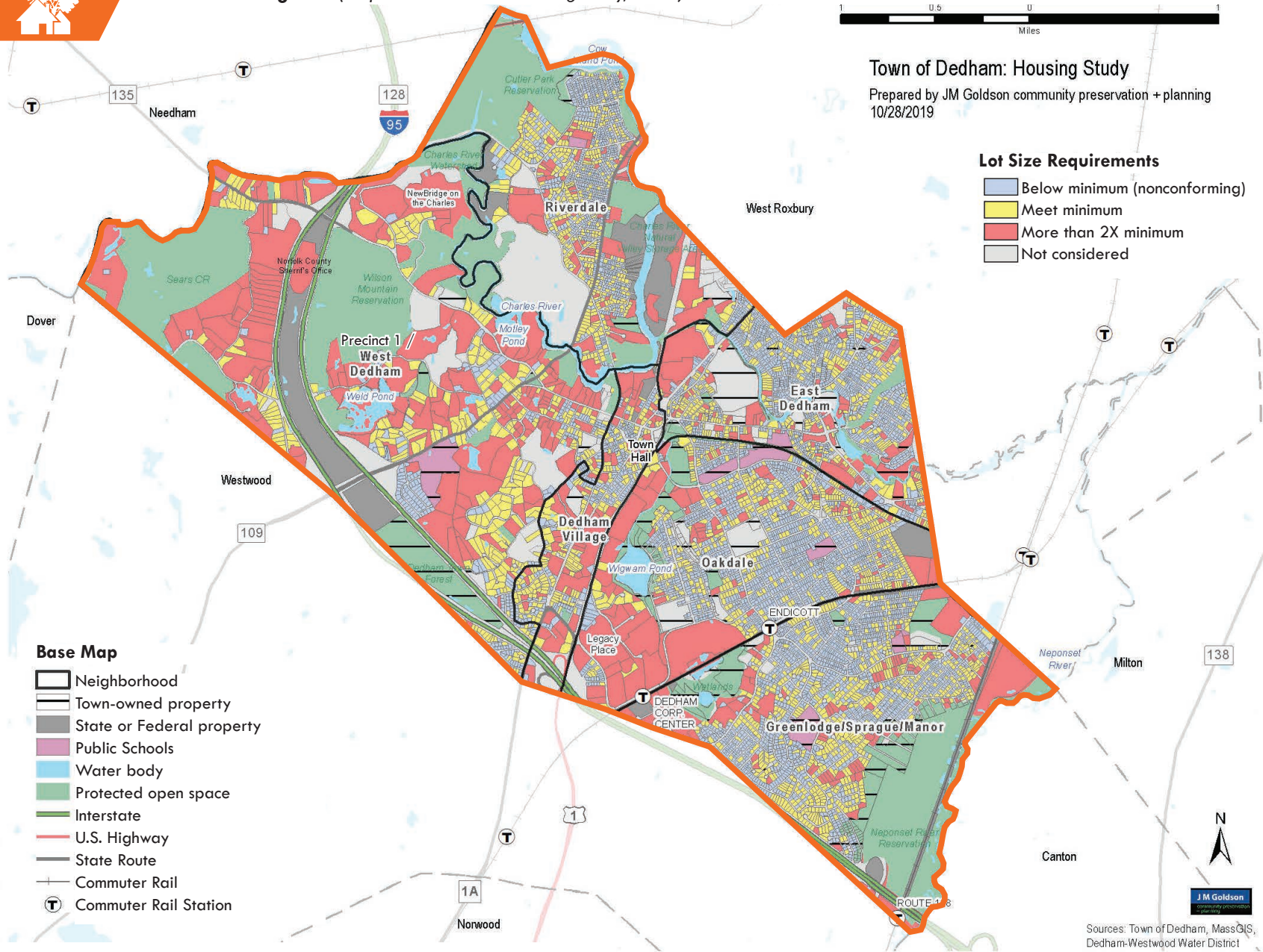
Prepared by JM Goldson community preservation + planning
10/28/2019

Lot Size Requirements

- Below minimum (nonconforming)
- Meet minimum
- More than 2X minimum
- Not considered

Base Map

- Neighborhood
- Town-owned property
- State or Federal property
- Public Schools
- Water body
- Protected open space
- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Route
- Commuter Rail
- Commuter Rail Station



Sources: Town of Dedham, MassGIS, Dedham-Westwood Water District



limited resources to devote to such an effort, including the time needed, to engage in these processes to attain project approval.

In order to expand the housing options and diversify the housing stock, the housing opportunities that are determined to be desirable for a specific neighborhood should be clearly defined in the zoning regulations with a streamlined and efficient approval process that is resident-friendly and encourages investment in housing. Any changes to zoning would require additional discussion with the community, meetings with the Planning Board, public hearings, and Town Meeting approval.

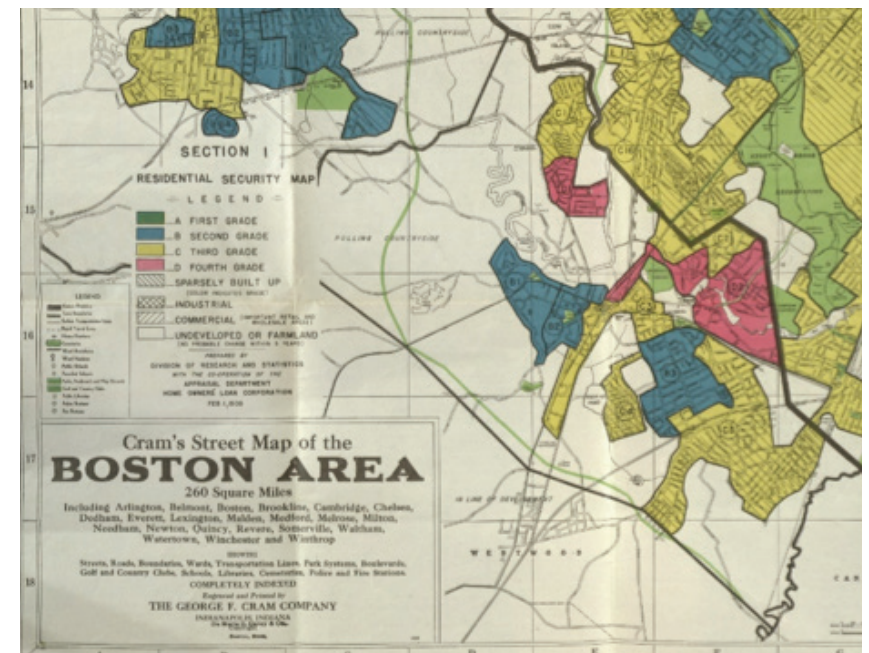
H3 Impacted by discrimination

Dedham has been impacted by a history of racial discrimination in housing. Historic systems of discrimination in the Greater Boston Region and nationwide have contributed to disparities in wealth and access to opportunities that often fall along racial lines. One example of a systemic pattern that disproportionately impacted people of color was discriminatory lending practices by banks. It was a practice that began in the 1930s, and is commonly referred to as redlining. For decades, many banks depended on a color-coded map system to determine lending practices. The color-coded, Residential Security Maps, depicted cities and towns with grades shaded on different areas. Areas shaded in green, and labeled A, were considered “First Grade” and indicated an area thought to be favorable for lending. Areas shaded in red, and labeled D, were considered “Fourth Grade” and indicated an area thought to be unfavorable for lending.

According to these maps, banks denied mortgages to people

in portions of communities shaded in red areas. Such a map showing how Dedham was also subject to these practices is below. The people and areas targeted for these loan denials and disinvestment were disproportionately residents of color living in urban areas. This systemic failure was once supported by the Federal government and although the policies have ended, the patterns they have created persist. Redlining was prohibited by the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Zoning laws established across the country, starting between 1930 and 1950 have continued

A portion of a historic “redlining” map from 1938 depicting areas of Dedham deemed less favorable for lending by banks at the time



Source: leventhalmap.org



many of these patterns by limiting the scale and type of housing production.

These policies made it disproportionately difficult for generations of residents of color to buy homes in the suburbs or in neighborhoods with greater resources and access to jobs, services, and amenities. This occurred in roughly the same time period of so-called “White flight,” when White residents moved away from areas becoming more racially or socioeconomically diverse, typically from the city to the suburbs. The legacy of these policies and actions is evident today through cities and towns that remain racially segregated.

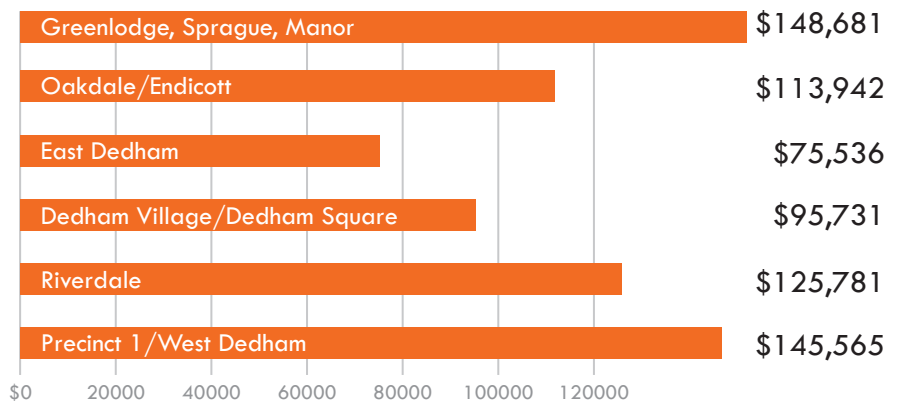
For most households, a home is their single most valuable asset and homeownership is a path to wealth creation. Making it more difficult for households of color to become homeowners has contributed to racial disparities in the creation of wealth. The *Color of Wealth in Boston* was a 2015 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. It found the median net worth for White households in Greater Boston was \$250,000. For Black households the same measure of median net worth was \$8. Owning a home significantly increases net worth, particularly as the equity in the home grows with rising home values and decreasing mortgage balances over time.

As seen in the historic redlining map on the previous page, in Dedham, a significant portion of East Dedham, as well as some parts of Riverdale, were redlined. While not solely the result of redlining, a similar pattern of disparities can be found in areas that were subject to it. A disparity can be found in the life expectancy data in previously redlined areas, with lower life expectancies in East Dedham and Riverdale compared to

other Dedham neighborhoods. The disparity is also present in a comparison of the median income levels across neighborhoods in Dedham. The neighborhoods historically subjected to redlining have the lowest and second-lowest median income among all Dedham neighborhoods today. In Dedham, the high percentage of single-family homes (68%), owner-occupied housing (69%), and White residents (84%) also reflect this legacy and its continuation through zoning.

The 2022 Greater Boston Housing Report Card prepared by The Boston Foundation shows that homeownership in Dedham is potentially becoming more racially diverse compared to its neighbors. In 2020, the percent of home loans to Black and Latino buyers in Dedham was 12.1%. This compares favorably for reducing historic racial inequities to Norwood (8.6%), Canton (8.0%), Milton (7.4%), Westwood (4.6%), and Needham (2.2%).¹

Median Household Income by Census Tract (approximates neighborhoods)



¹ Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data, collected by UMass Donahue Institute, 2020



H4 Housing affordability is the issue

Similar to most communities in the Greater Boston region, housing prices in Dedham are high and continue to increase, while the needs of all households are not being met by the housing market. This is due to high rent, and large down payments that prevent many from renting or owning a home in Dedham. As an example, a typical 20% downpayment for the median-priced single-family home would be \$104,040 or \$76,040 for a condo in Dedham.

Relative to this amount of downpayment, typical wages for many jobs in Dedham would not support this level of investment. Individuals employed in all but one of the top ten industries in Dedham would be cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing, when renting the median one-bedroom apartment at \$2,092 per month. The figure to the right shows this relationship between typical housing costs and earnings in Dedham.

Typical Housing Costs in Dedham

Single-family
\$520,000

Median price

Downpayment

\$104,000
(20%)

\$52,000
(10%)

Condominium
\$380,000

Median price

Downpayment

\$76,000
(20%)

\$38,000
(10%)

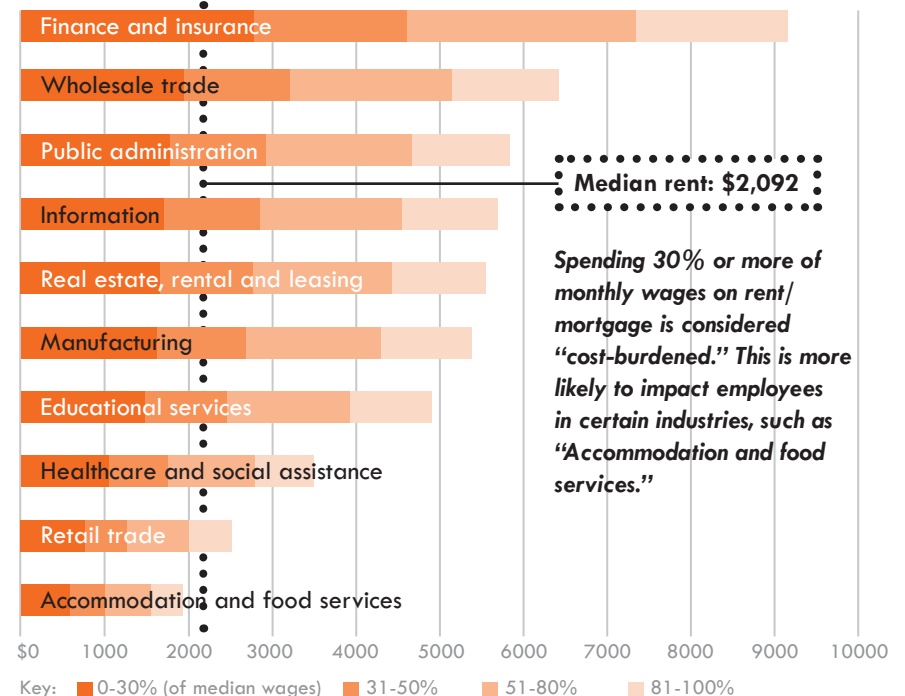
Rental
\$1,546

Median rental cost
Based on MLS Data provided
by local realtors

\$2,092

Median cost of a one-
bedroom apartment
Based on online rental listing from
Craigslist and Padmapper

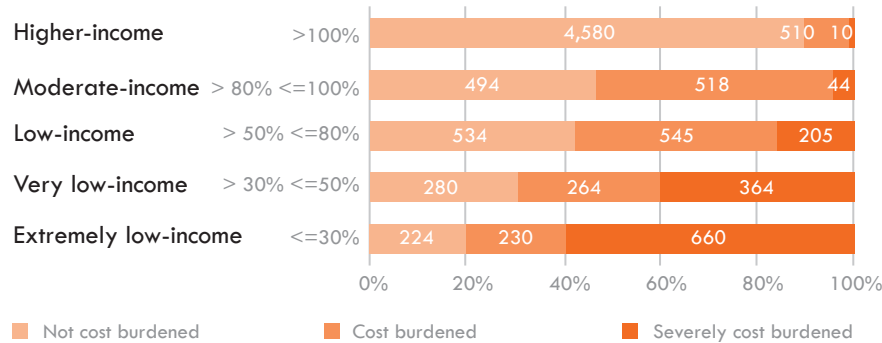
Monthly Median Industry Wages and Rent



This type of financial burden also causes the household to have less discretionary income to support the local economy. Additionally, when owning or renting, costs for insurance, energy, taxes, water, sewer, and maintenance must also be considered. The households most vulnerable to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the threat of eviction or foreclosure are those who are lower-income and cost burdened or severely cost



Income and cost burden of rent



Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2011-2015

burdened. There are 2,268 of these households in Dedham as can be seen in the following figure.

There are 3,410 households that are eligible for Affordable Housing in Dedham. The number of affordable housing units in the Town are tracked by the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The SHI shows a count of 1,104 housing units in Dedham which are deed-restricted Affordable Housing units. Comparing this figure to the households in need of Affordable Housing illustrates the need for additional units in Dedham. Only 1 Affordable Housing unit is available for every 3 households that are eligible to live in a deed-restricted Affordable Housing unit.

A lack of affordable housing impacts most households in Dedham. Addressing housing affordability is in the long-term self-interest of most homeowners to stabilize home values and residential taxes, to create opportunities for downsizing while remaining in Dedham, and to attract the employees of businesses and services that enhance the quality of life in Dedham. To address housing affordability in the Town, the Planning Board submitted an

inclusionary housing zoning bylaw to Town Meeting in Fall 2020 to require a certain amount of affordable housing units for Mixed-Used Developments. Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved the inclusionary housing zoning bylaw. In addition, the Planning Board submitted a new multi-family housing overlay district to Town Meeting in Spring 2023 that would allow multi-family by right in an area centered around the MBTA Dedham Corporate Commuter Rail Station. Town Meeting also overwhelmingly approved the zoning bylaw amendment.

1 for every 3

Affordable housing unit available for every eligible household



Dedham Housing Authority, Veterans Road



Source: The Blue Book Building & Construction Network



Housing Community Priorities

Housing themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to housing and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.)

While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the housing themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

H1 Housing is a critical challenge

In an overall survey covering all Master Plan topics, the majority of participants ranked housing as the second greatest challenge facing Dedham (32% ranked #2, 564 total votes) behind traffic congestion (32% ranked #1, 604 total votes). Most notably, only 1% of respondents ranked access to jobs as the greatest challenge for the Town. This public input and corresponding data show the need for an economic development related housing strategy that will need to address the high cost of housing in Dedham to reduce cost burden, provide workforce housing, increase spending power to support local businesses, and attract new households to support Dedham’s future and vibrancy.

H2 Housing available is not matching everyone’s needs

Public input supports the findings that there is a mismatch between Dedham’s housing and its households. 75% of the survey participants said affordability was important (41%) or the most important (34%) housing challenge for the Town. Additionally, 59% said there was a mismatch between the type of housing and the needs of the population, and 49% said there isn’t enough variety of housing types in Town. All these perceptions by the community are reinforced by the data presented in this chapter. The housing crisis is about housing affordability with additional production of naturally-occurring and subsidized housing needed.

H3 Staying in homes for long term

57% of the survey participants said their future housing goal was to remain in their current home for as long as possible. This individual goal causes ripple effects across the local housing market by reducing the turnover of homes. This goal is also directly related to the availability of other types of homes and affordable homes to move into. It is undesirable to leave your current home if it will be difficult to find somewhere new to live that meets your current needs. This goal may also present a challenge for the large number of non-conforming properties that may face greater difficulty making changes to their property, such as modifying their home to facilitate aging in place. 86% of participants support increasing the variety of amenities and uses that can be accessed by walking with (39%) considering it important and (47%) the most important zoning challenge.



Housing In Dedham today

Additional context and data Population characteristics

Dedham's total population according to the 2020 U.S. Census data is 25,364. An increase of 635 residents from the previous decade, or an increase of 2.6%. The most recent Census estimate showed a total population of 25,377. A figure that is very close to the 2020 Census data and the figure that was used in the 2019 Dedham Housing Study. The average household size in Dedham is 2.43, which is slightly lower than the state average of 2.53 and the county average of 2.58.

Dedham's population is aging. According to the most recent Census estimate, 28% of Dedham's residents are 60 years of age or older. The population of residents 60 years of age or older increased by more than 30% from 2000 to 2017 and is projected to continue to increase.

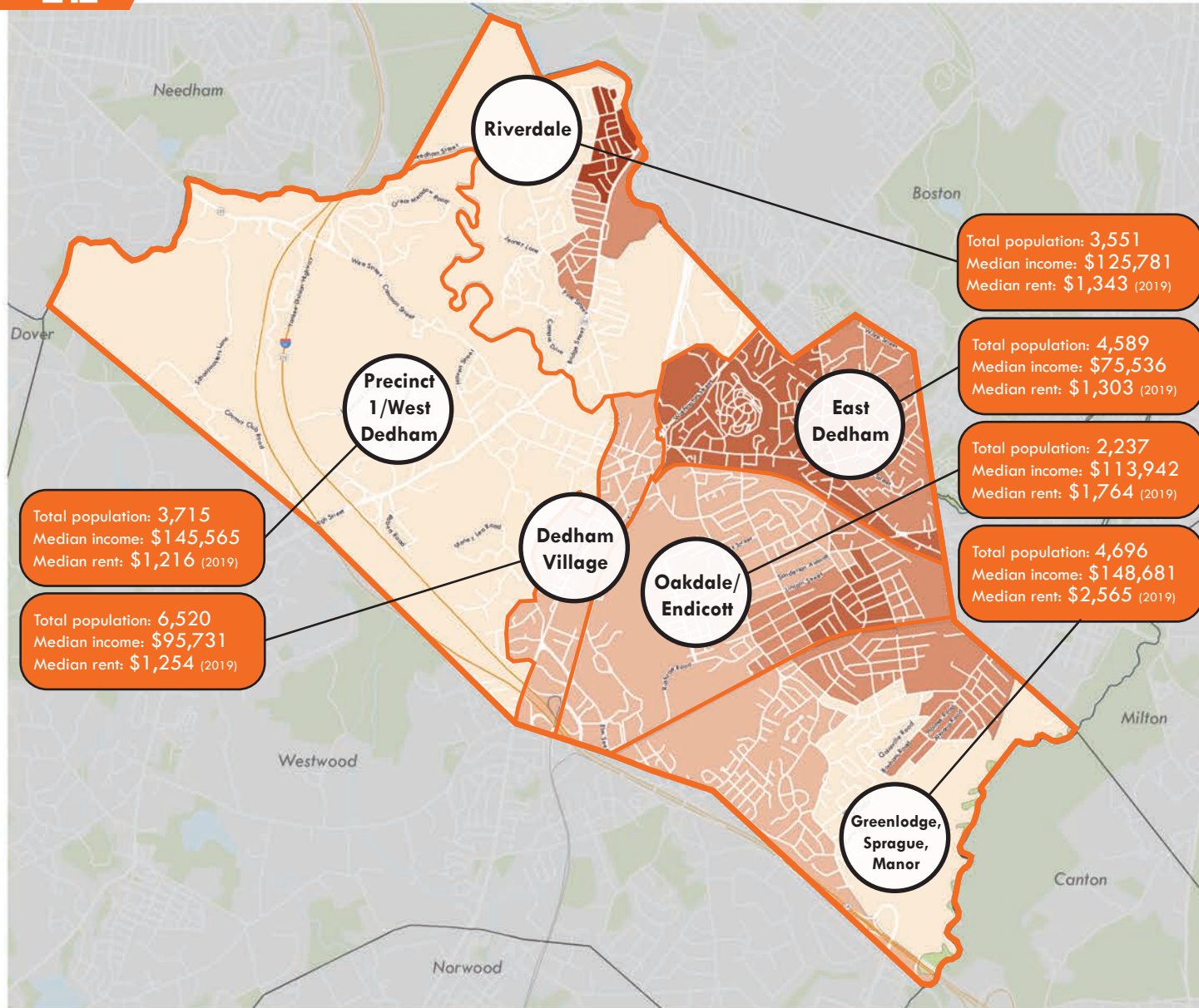
Dedham's population is becoming more diverse. While most of the population identifies as White (84%), the proportion of population that identifies with another race and ethnicity has been growing. 7% of the population identifies as Black or African American. 3% identifies as Asian. 2% identifies as some other race and 2% identifies as two or more races. 9% of the population of any race identifies as Hispanic or Latino. The diversity of residents increased by about 12% from 2000 to 2017 and is projected to continue to increase.

Dedham's median household income is estimated at \$108,047 according to the 2017-2021 ACS estimates. This is about \$15,000 less than the Area Median Income (AMI) for a household size of 2. 63% of Dedham's households are family households. Of these households, 44% have school-aged children and 44% include at least one person age 60 or older. Of non-family households, about 91% live alone.

A recently constructed two-family home in Dedham



Source: Coldwell Banker Homes



Housing Housing Density

- Households per acre
- 1.0 or less
 - 1.1 to 2.3
 - 2.4 to 3.4
 - 3.5 to 4.6
 - 4.7 or more
 - Rivers and Streams
 - Water
 - Open Space
 - Dedham

0 0.225 0.45 0.9 Miles

Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

February 2020



Historic Housing Patterns

Dedham's settlement patterns and housing stock remain connected to the history of the Town. The close connection of the origins of the Town's settlement to the water power connected to the rivers are preserved in the historic mill buildings and structures on the Mother Brook and the surrounding historic neighborhoods which began as mill worker housing. This building and housing stock retains a strong sense of place and dense and walkable development patterns which contribute to the livability of the Town today. These patterns are also valuable characteristics in housing market today.

Neighborhood characteristics

The overall demographic and housing patterns described in Dedham above vary by neighborhood. For the purposes of the 2019 Housing Study and the Master Plan, Dedham has been defined by six neighborhoods including Dedham Village/Dedham Square, East Dedham, Greenlodge/Sprague/Manor, Oakdale/Endicott, Riverdale, and Precinct 1/West Dedham.

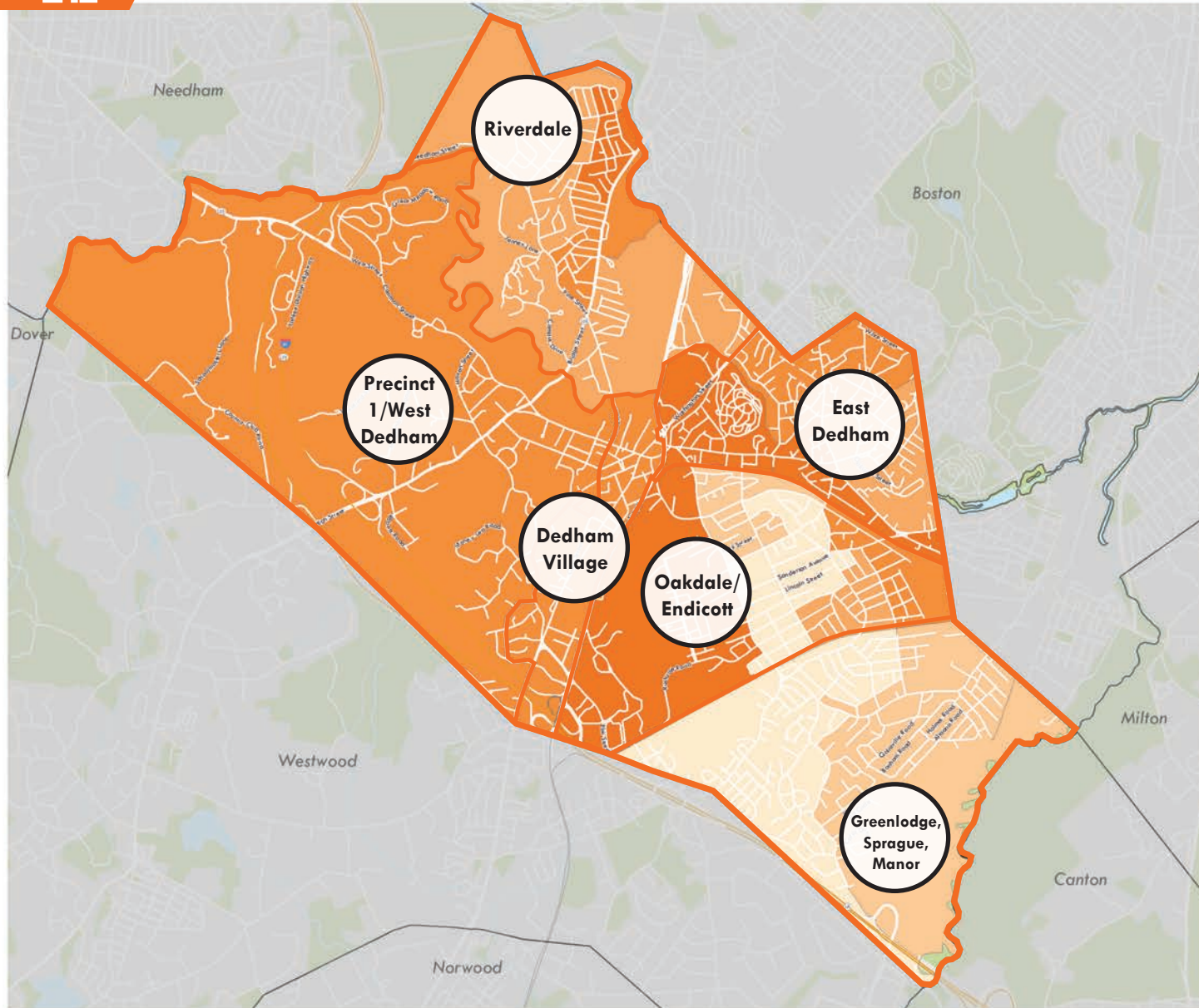
The largest neighborhood by population is Dedham Village/Dedham Square with about 25% of the Town's total population with 6,520 residents. The median age by neighborhood is highest in Precinct 1/West Dedham at 56 years of age. The percent of residents of color is greatest in East Dedham with 27% of the population.

Housing tenure

Of the total housing units in Dedham, 96% are occupied as either owner-occupied (69%) or renter-occupied (31%). The owner vacancy rate is 0.7%. This is an indication of a very competitive housing market where a 2% vacancy rate is considered a healthy average. The rental vacancy rate is 5.9%, which is more closely comparable to the 5.5% that is considered a healthy average. From 2000 to 2017, the Town has seen a 3% decrease in owner-occupied units and a 3% increase in renter-occupied units.

Affordability

According to the 2019 Housing Study, the median sales price in Dedham is \$512,500. The median sales price of a single-family home is \$520,200 and \$380,000 for a condominium. From 2010-2017, there was a 28% increase in median sales price, based on the cost of a single-family home adjusted for inflation. Over the same time period, there was a 40% increase in median sales price, based on the cost of a condominium adjusted for inflation. Median rent is \$1,546 and has seen a 33% increase in median gross rent adjusted for inflation from 2000-2017. This is more expensive than the median rent in Norfolk County of \$1,450 and the Commonwealth of \$1,173.



Housing Housing Tenure

Percent of Renter Occupied Households

- 0% - 5.2%
- 5.3% - 12.2%
- 12.3% - 19.9%
- 20% - 43.1%
- 43.2% - 60.4%

- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
February 2020



Housing Goals and Strategies

Capacity Building Steps for Housing Implementation

Through the efforts of the Planning Board, Master Plan Committee, data analysis, and community input, Dedham has established six main goals to better meet housing needs, as described above. This following section details many implementation strategies that work towards accomplishing these goals. Several of these strategies will require the Town to expand its capacity to administer and facilitate housing efforts. The steps the Town should take to build this capacity are described and symbolized by icons. The icons are referenced in strategies that require capacity building. The Town should focus on capacity building first, but should also implement other housing strategies as opportunities arise.



1 Shared Housing Service Office (SHSO)

Consider establishing a new SHSO with nearby communities to expand the capacity and resources available to address housing needs in Dedham. Currently, no staff member is dedicated to housing needs in Dedham. Sharing a housing staff member based on the Town's varying demand for housing administration is a cost-effective alternative to hiring a full-time housing planner. A full-time Town staff member should coordinate with SHSO staff. Refer to the Critical next steps for additional information.



3 Housing Coalition

Convene and establish a coalition of residents, Affordable Housing developers, economic development corporations (CDCs), mission-based lenders, and other housing stakeholders, or organizations to work collaboratively towards meeting Dedham's housing needs. The coalition could be positioned as an advisory group to help the town strategize around specific housing issues or potential housing opportunities.



2 Affordable Housing Trust (AHT)

The Planning Board submitted to Town Meeting in 2021 to establish an Affordable Housing Trust (AHT), which Town Meeting voted to approve. The AHT is a distinct fund established by the Town to support preservation and production of affordable housing. Also, explore and establish consistent funding source(s) for the AHT to support the implementation of the Town's affordable housing goals and strategies.



NOTE: It is up to the Planning Board to decide to implement the goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan.

Summary: Advance progress on making Dedham a place where more people can afford to live which would give long-time, new, and aspiring residents equal access to opportunities.

HI Goal 1: Support the creation and preservation of affordable housing for a range of incomes including deed-restricted, subsidized, and market-based units throughout Dedham.

Facilitate the development of housing that households can afford in the marketplace through flexible regulations and incentives that increase the potential for housing production.



Strategy 1.1: Update the Dedham Zoning Bylaw to allow for and provide flexibility to build small and “missing middle” housing types that are more likely to be affordable in the marketplace due to their size or layout, explore modifications such as reducing the minimum lot size for large lot residential districts.

Strategy 1.2: Leverage publicly owned land (excluding parks and protected open space) for deed-restricted Affordable Housing Development. This land should be provided at little or no cost to, the Dedham Housing Authority (DHA), economic development corporations, groups interested in forming a community land trust (CLT) or other non-profit organizations to ensure housing built on this land will be affordable in perpetuity.



Strategy 1.3: Build upon the recent adoption of inclusionary zoning (IZ) requirements developed by the Planning Board in November 2020 and expand their applicability from rental

mixed-use and age-restricted housing development to a Town-wide policy that includes both rental and owner-occupied housing developments.



Strategy 1.4: Supplement a portion of incoming deed-restricted Affordable Housing that’s being developed in Dedham, so these housing units are available for low to extremely-low-income households. For example, if an Affordable Housing Trust is established as put forth by the Planning Board in 2021, it could subsidize units as funding is available.

Strategy 1.5: Establish residential property acquisition program that removes housing from the speculative marketplace and places a deed-restriction on these housing units to ensure they are affordable in perpetuity. This type of activity could be undertaken by the Affordable Housing Trust, Dedham Housing Authority, or other housing partnerships.

Strategy 1.6: Ensure the preservation of all existing deed-restricted Affordable Housing in Dedham by monitoring these housing units before they expire.



H2

Goal 2: Provide policy and program support for vulnerable households that may be at risk of eviction, foreclosure, or other housing insecurities.

A vulnerable household is defined as in need of special care, support or protection due to risk of abuse or neglect and may include households with children, the elderly, disabilities, language barriers, or other characteristics that may contribute to falling into poverty. Housing insecurity can have wide ranging and lasting negative impacts and is a difficult situation for residents to face without support. Policies and programs that may help address housing insecurity would benefit Dedham residents and strengthen their ability to contribute positively to the community.

Strategy 2.1: Explore establishing a local emergency rental and mortgage assistance program with the goal of assisting cost-burdened households to pay for rent, mortgage, and/or utility costs. Funding should be flexible and easy for the Town to access as needs arise and should be distributed through the suggested Affordable Housing Trust (AHT).

Strategy 2.2: Use federal funding to add supportive housing services to existing or incoming Affordable Housing. Supportive services can be offered as an option for tenants who face physical or emotional health issues, financial stress, or need

assistance for their family. Support staff can also play a role as an intermediary between the tenant, legal counsel, and the landlord to help resolve issues.

Strategy 2.3: Refer households at risk of being displaced to resources that support tenants such as tenant associations, legal counsel, and advocacy organizations. Assign a staff person to assist community members with housing issues. Partner with school, library, and church programs to expand awareness and connect with populations who may benefit from these resources.



H3

Goal 3: Stabilize housing and related costs for households on fixed incomes, including seniors and veterans.

In addition to the general affordability of housing, the costs associated with homeownership and living in the Town of Dedham continue to increase and place an additional burden on households living on fixed incomes. Every cost increase places pressure on household budgets, even for households that own a home and have no mortgage. These increasing costs include property taxes, utilities (water, heat, electricity), and the other aspects of a household budget (health and wellness, daily travel, food, and clothing). Many goals and strategies within the Master Plan address long term impacts on these costs such as increasing housing supply, maintaining municipal fiscal responsibility, and expanding the commercial tax base, among others. While these approaches will positively impact future household budgets, they are less likely to help in the short term. The following strategies will have an impact in the nearer term to stabilize housing and related costs.

Strategy 3.1: Explore alternative property tax structures or exemptions to provide additional relief to targeted households with lower and fixed incomes. For example, explore a mean-tested real estate tax exemption to provide targeted property tax relief so residents can continue to afford to live in Dedham.

Strategy 3.2: Support aging in place by offering a property tax reduction to income-eligible senior homeowners and promote existing state programs that support aging in place. Reduce barriers and incentivize construction of Accessory Dwelling Units

so that family members may offer their seniors additional options for aging in community.

Strategy 3.3: Pursue increased transit options and availability, such as the Council on Aging's shuttle system to reduce the need for vehicle ownership, which can be a substantial household budget cost.

Strategy 3.4: Expand promotion of programs serving seniors and veterans in need of assistance. The Council on Aging is a resource for seniors to connect to programs such as the Massachusetts Senior Circuit Break Tax Credit, Fuel and Food Assistance, and Emergency/Supportive Senior Housing programs. Veterans Services provide financial assistance for qualifying veterans and their dependents. The Town of Dedham's Senior Citizen and Veterans tax work-off programs provide a property tax credit in exchange for volunteer hours.

Strategy 3.5: Connect residents with programs that offer relief on utilities and home improvements that will reduce the cost of utilities. For example, utilities provide discount rate programs for eligible customers. Utility programs, such as MassSave, provide home energy assessments and energy efficiency improvements which lower utility costs at no or low cost to homeowners.

Strategy 3.6: Support residents with financial literacy, retirement planning, tax, and educational resources, such as AARP Tax Service or organizations such as NeighborWorks.



H4

Goal 4: Promote equitable development that includes all incomes, races, ethnicities, family sizes, and life stages to support fair housing and racial equity.

Equitable development provides housing opportunities for all household types and demographics of the Town. Income-eligible housing is typically reserved for households earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) which is \$80,300 for a 3-person household in Dedham. In addition to income, cultural background, family size, and life stage may all impact the type of housing that is most needed.



Strategy 4.1: Establish a non-discriminatory tenant-screening program that can be used as a tool by local landlords to review applicants in a manner that does not discriminate.



Strategy 4.2: Leverage and elevate existing race-conscious local first-time homebuyer programs that provide down payment and private mortgage assistance to income-eligible first-time homebuyers.

Strategy 4.3: Continue to encourage diverse representation on Dedham's boards related to housing policy and project approvals by encouraging people of color that may be interested in serving on these boards.

Strategy 4.4: Promote training opportunities provided by the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) and other programs and pay for any costs associated with board member participation. Training should also focus on fair housing laws and how to uphold them in planning review processes. See the governance section for more ways to increase diversity of Town boards and committees.



H5

Goal 5: Leverage mixed-use and multifamily residential development for areas that would benefit from redevelopment and investment including existing retail centers and near transit stops.

Encourage mixed-use redevelopment in areas of Dedham where housing can support retail and other economic activity, as well as benefit from convenient access to transit. Most homes near Dedham's business districts and areas of economic importance are single-family. With fewer multifamily housing options in these areas and fewer housing units overall, there is less foot traffic and spending power to support local businesses. Additionally, only 4% of Dedham residents walk to work, less than 1% bike, and 11% use public transit despite the Town's two commuter rail stations and other transit systems. Closer proximity of housing to transit could increase transit use and decrease congestion.

Strategy 5.1: Evaluate new state Housing Choice (Section 3A) legislation requiring by-right multifamily zoning near train stations. The Town has completed zoning modifications to be compliant with Section 3A.

Strategy 5.2: Encourage mixed-use and multifamily development in centers of economic activity with a large retail footprint, particularly if persistent vacancies are present as defined in the

Economic Development Chapter. This type of housing would be particularly impactful in transforming areas of the Providence Highway Corridor to be more pedestrian friendly.

Strategy 5.3: Evaluate adopting a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD) to facilitate mixed-use development and Affordable Housing development in centers of economic activity or near transit. 40R is a state tool to permit this type of housing in areas that meet state criteria for smart growth. If a SGOD is adopted, the state will provide Dedham with funding to support capital improvements in this area. This funding can be used to upgrade deteriorating sidewalks, make new bike and pedestrian connections, expand sewer and water capacity, and to undertake similar upgrades.

Strategy 5.4: Explore diverse housing options as part of mixed-use development pre-development conversations and review. Diverse housing options may include more affordable micro-housing units, intergenerational housing, cooperative housing models, or other options.



H6

Goal 6: Promote strategic community engagement to reduce misconceptions about housing and build support for the actions needed to address local housing needs.

Provide opportunities to share information and facilitate community discussion to help reduce housing misconceptions, particularly surrounding affordable housing. Expand awareness for housing needs in the community, and build support for the actions required to address those needs.

Strategy 6.1: Facilitate community engagement events to explore meeting local housing needs. Provide residents and groups such as Livable Dedham with data and information they can use to advocate for action to address housing needs. Work with other housing advocate organizations to engage around housing needs in the community.

Strategy 6.2: Review the merits of the Community Preservation Act (CPA). CPA efforts have failed in Dedham in the past, but it is an important potential funding source for housing and other needs. In FY2022, the first round CPA state match is projected at 32.3%. 188 municipalities in the Commonwealth have adopted CPA locally.

Strategy 6.3: Consider a marketing consultant to create a marketing campaign that includes public service announcement videos and other engaging content to describe housing issues in Dedham and solutions that require public support preceding strategic moments, such as Town Meeting vote on zoning changes. The campaign should advance a new set of housing terms that better describe various forms of affordable and mixed-income housing and alleviate misconceptions about this housing. New housing terms should emphasize the importance of housing in supporting the Town's culture, economy, and other assets. Examples of new housing terms could include "need-based housing and workforce housing." This outreach could communicate the income levels that qualify for affordable housing as discussed in this chapter. The income levels of 80% AMI are typical of teachers, public servants, and other essential service providers and talent that the Town is trying to attract.



H7 Goal 7: Improve zoning to better align with the preservation, improvement, and diversification of the Town's housing stock while requiring linked community benefits and mitigation of community impacts.

Align zoning with the priorities of the community to maximize the positive outcomes for development investments that include new housing throughout the Town.

Strategy 7.1: Engage in a public process to explore updating zoning regulations to align with current lot conditions and reduce the number of non-conforming residential lots and to expand production of a diverse housing stock.

Strategy 7.2: Engage in a public process to explore modifying the Town's planned unit development/residential cluster and open space bylaws to better match the goals of the Town to leverage the development to increase community benefits and reduce impacts.

Strategy 7.3: Engage in a public process to assess Town-wide support for considering a ballot question to assess Town-wide support for accessory dwelling units. With a better understanding of support, evaluate possible updates to the bylaw that encourage ADU development through more flexible requirements coupled with design guidelines that ensure ADU development aligns with the context and community preferences. The Town

secured grant funding in Fall 2023 from the Commonwealth to begin a community process for reviewing the current ADU and single to two-family conversion zoning regulations.

Strategy 7.4: The Town should evaluate areas where form-based code or hybrid zoning with a greater emphasis on building form may help to increase understanding of potential residential development and build support for housing density in appropriate locations.

Strategy 7.5: Create a list of community benefits that board members can request and negotiate when developments are reviewed, such as the construction of sidewalks, provision of open space, or other benefits that are proportional to the development being proposed. Define the community benefits and thresholds for compliance clearly as part of future zoning modifications.

Strategy 7.6: Reduce minimum parking requirements or offer a fee-in-lieu option to pay for public parking to reduce housing development costs, avoid negative impacts, and generate funding for shared public parking.



Housing Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps to make progress on the top priorities that have been identified for housing.

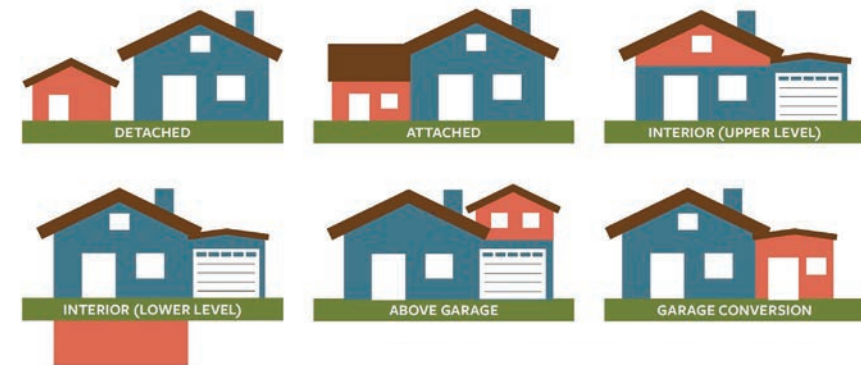
H1 Explore the creation of a Shared Housing Service Office to coordinate housing implementation.

This action would build on the Capacity Building Steps for Housing Implementation outlined prior to the goals and strategies. This first step would allow the other housing actions to have a dedicated and responsible party and to focus on the implementation of housing goals and strategies. The lead responsibility would initially be the Planning Department in coordination with the Select Board and Town Manager to get the new shared office initiated. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include funding resources that may be available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

H2 Advance zoning modification conversations related to housing.

This action would focus on the residential zoning districts of the Town to explore where, how, and what housing types to encourage to be developed in the Town. The lead responsibility would be the Town’s Planning Department in close coordination with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. The timeframe for this action would be mid-term, to occur within 4 to 6 years of the conclusion of the master plan process. Potential resources include the base zoning and spatial analysis of the 2019 Dedham Housing Study.

Examples of an Accessory Dwelling Unit





H3 Promote resources to support senior homeowners to age in place.

This action would produce and distribute outreach materials promoting state programs, such as home modification loans and financial assistance, through pamphlets, newsletters, or utility bills, to inform seniors about these programs. A guide for navigating the approval process could also be produced to help navigate the steps needed to construct these improvements. The lead responsibility would be the housing staff member or Shared Housing Service Office in close coordination with the Planning Department. The timeframe for this action would be mid-term, to occur within 4 to 6 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include the Commonwealth's Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP). The Home Modification Loan Program provides no interest loans to modify the homes of adults and children with disabilities. The program website is available at <https://www.mass.gov/home-modification-loan-program-hmlp>

Accessibility modifications



Source: Community Teamwork



Housing Implementation

Capacity Building Steps for Housing Implementation

The implementation actions to support the housing goals and strategies would be supported by first building the capacity for housing-related activity and services in the Town. The following four actions would expand capacity to administer and facilitate housing actions. The first steps the Town should undertake to build this capacity are described below. The results of these capacity buildings steps then support the actions in the housing implementation tables. For example, a new housing staff member or shared housing service staff could be the lead or supporting responsibility for actions defined in the tables.



1 Shared Housing Service Office (SHSO)

Consider establishing a new SHSO with nearby communities to expand the capacity and resources available to address housing needs in Dedham. Currently, no staff member is dedicated to housing needs in Dedham. Sharing a housing staff member based on the Town's varying demand for housing administration is a cost-effective alternative to hiring a full-time housing planner. A full-time Town staff member should coordinate with SHSO staff. Refer to the Critical next steps for additional information.



3 Housing Coalition

Convene and establish a coalition of residents, Housing Authority representatives, Planning Board members, Select Board members, Affordable Housing developers, community development corporations (CDCs), mission-based lenders, and other housing stakeholders, or organizations to work collaboratively towards meeting Dedham's housing needs. The coalition shall be an advisory group to help the town strategize around specific housing issues or potential housing opportunities.



2 Affordable Housing Trust (AHT)

Town Meeting voted to establish an Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) in 2021, a distinct fund established by the town to support preservation and production of affordable housing. Also establish consistent funding source(s), including renewed exploration of the Community Preservation Act (CPA), for the trust to support the implementation of the Town's housing goals and strategies.



H1 Goal 1: Support the creation and preservation of affordable housing for a range of incomes including deed-restricted, subsidized, and market-based units throughout Dedham.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>H1.1: Update the Dedham Zoning Bylaw to allow for and provide flexibility to build small and “missing middle” housing types that are more likely to be affordable in the marketplace due to their size or layout.</p>	<p>1. Advance zoning modification conversations related to housing.</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board</p>	<p>Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>	<p>Resources include the base zoning and spatial analysis of the 2019 Dedham Housing Study. Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC</p>
	<p>A. Townhouses, cottage housing/cluster development, small multifamily, and mixed-use housing should be permitted and incentivized near centers of economic activity (see Economic Development Chapter) to increase local spending power and provide additional housing options.</p>				
	<p>B. The majority of the town is currently zoned single-family, each neighborhood should explore zoning modifications that respond to residents’ needs, such as exploring two and three-family homes as well as single-family home conversions and accessory dwelling units. Many of these housing types create downsizing options to support seniors as well as first-time home buying options for aspiring homeowners. These housing types are typically appropriate for lower density residential areas, but zoning modifications should be coupled with design guidelines to minimize the impact on the built environment.</p>				
	<p>C. Analyze processes and procedures of the Dedham Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to evaluate ways to improve the efficiency of the Town’s permitting process to reduce permitting timelines specifically for small and missing middle housing types. The Town should also consider offering a special expedited permitting process with specific criteria to incentivize the development of desired housing types.</p>				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>H1.2: Leverage publicly owned land (excluding parks and protected open space) for deed-restricted Affordable Housing Development. This land should be provided at little or no cost to, the Dedham Housing Authority (DHA), community development corporations, groups interested in forming a community land trust (CLT) or other non-profit organizations to ensure housing built on this land will be affordable in perpetuity.</p>	<p>1. Identify suitable publicly-owned sites for Affordable Housing development.</p>	<p>Dedham Housing Authority, Planning & Zoning Department</p>	<p>Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	<p>MA Department of Housing and Community Development Income Guidelines</p>
	<p>2. Discuss future housing challenges and goals of the DHA and consider deeding the DHA public land for new Affordable Housing development. Additionally, evaluate opportunities to leverage DHA land for redevelopment that will replace and upgrade existing public housing units and provide additional Affordable Housing housing to a range of different income levels. Affordable Housing units managed by the DHA should be highly energy efficient to keep utility costs and the DHA's expenses low, and to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>Dedham Housing Authority</p>	<p>Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>	
	<p>3. Use the resources provided by the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network to expand upon ways to support the establishment of a CLT in Dedham.</p>				
<p>H1.3: Build upon the recent adoption of inclusionary zoning (IZ) requirements developed by the Planning Board in November 2020 and expand their applicability from rental mixed-use and age-restricted housing development to a Town-wide policy that includes both rental and owner-occupied housing developments.</p>	<p>1. Evaluate how well the IZ requirements are working and make adjustments to this policy as needed. In this evaluation the Town should consider whether developers are working in the districts where these requirements are in place, whether developers are utilizing the density bonus incentive, and whether other incentives are needed to balance development costs.</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board</p>	<p>Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>	<p>Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities, municipalities will be required to comply in order to be eligible for Massworks grants: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities</p>
	<p>2. Expand opportunities for housing development that yields a greater number of Affordable Housing units through inclusionary zoning, the Town should adopt zoning changes that allow multifamily housing development at a variety of scales.</p>				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H1.3 (continued)	3. Expand the IZ policy town-wide and also apply it to owner-occupied housing developments, the Town should study development finance implications and local housing market conditions, possibly with the assistance of a consultant. During this process, the Town should interview and engage with local developers to inform updates to the policy.	Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Commonwealth of Massachusetts Inclusionary Zoning information
	4. Partner with community groups that support housing initiatives such as Livable Dedham and hold community-engagement events to inform the public about the purpose and function of inclusionary zoning. Messaging should focus on the need to include incentives in an IZ policy to balance project costs and the acknowledgment that IZ is a good tool to meet housing needs but will not meet them all.	Livable Dedham	Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board, Dedham Housing Authority, Human Rights Commission	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
H1.4: Supplement a portion of incoming deed-restricted Affordable Housing that's being developed in Dedham, so these housing units are available for low to extremely-low-income households.	1. Before an Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) is established and funds are allocated to the trust, the Town should focus on using state and federal funds made available in response to the pandemic to supplement Affordable Housing development. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has provided significant funding that could be leveraged to increase the affordability of new Affordable Housing in Town. Affordable Housing created by mission-based developers and through the Town's inclusionary zoning policy should be considered for supplemental funding.	Town Manager	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding
	2. Once an AHT is established, the trust should make strategic decisions about how to use these funds and gather public input on the use of these funds.				



Priority

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H1.5: Establish residential property acquisition program that removes housing from the speculative marketplace and places a deed-restriction on these housing units to ensure they are affordable in perpetuity.	<p>1. Assign a staff member or utilize the suggested Shared Housing Service Office (capacity building step) to coordinate housing implementation.</p> <p>2. The coalition should pool their funds and leverage external funding to acquire residential properties that are currently affordable in the marketplace due to size, age, or condition and place deed-restrictions on these properties, so they are affordable in perpetuity. Several residential buildings will need to be renovated or redeveloped. State and federal funds can support these needs.</p>	Select Board, Town Manager	Planning Board	Near Term (1 to 3 years)	Funding resources that may be available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
H1.6: Ensure the preservation of all existing deed-restricted Affordable Housing in Dedham by monitoring these housing units before they expire.	1. Utilize an SHSO staff member to monitor Affordable Housing units and train Town and DHA staff. The SHSO staff member should coordinate with the subsidizing agencies for these respective housing units to ensure those that have expiring deed-restrictions have their affordability renewed. State funding may also be needed to ensure these housing units remain affordable.	Dedham Housing Authority	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office, Affordable Housing Trust	Near Term (1 to 3 years)	This digital tool is compiling all deed-restricted housing units in Massachusetts https://www.housingnavigatorma.org/



H2 Goal 2: Provide policy and program support for vulnerable households that may be at risk of eviction, foreclosure, or other housing insecurities.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H2.1: Explore establishing a local emergency rental and mortgage assistance program with the goal of assisting cost-burdened households to pay for rent, mortgage, and/or utility costs.	1. Explore establishing a local emergency rental and mortgage assistance program.	Town Manager, Select Board	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Commonwealth of Massachusetts emergency housing payment information
H2.2: Use federal funding to add supportive housing services to existing or incoming Affordable Housing. Supportive services can be offered as an option for tenants who face physical or emotional health issues, financial stress, or need assistance for their family. Support staff can also play a role as an intermediary between the tenant, legal counsel, and the landlord to help resolve issues.	1. Explore establishing local supportive housing services and begin with a survey to Dedham Housing Authority residents to determine the housing services to match greatest needs.	Dedham Housing Authority	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H2.3: Refer households at risk of being displaced to resources that support tenants such as tenant associations, legal counsel, and advocacy organizations.	1. Gather a list of resources that can be shared to households in need. Partner with schools, library, and churches to distribute to the populations who may benefit from these resources.	Dedham Housing Authority	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office, Library, School Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Commonwealth of Massachusetts Tenant Rights information: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/tenant-rights Dedham Library resource page: https://dedham-ma.libguides.com/communityresources/housing

H3 Goal 3: Stabilize housing and related costs for households on fixed incomes, including seniors and veterans.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H3.1: Explore alternative property tax structures or exemptions to provide additional relief to targeted households with lower and fixed incomes. For example, explore a mean-tested real estate tax exemption to provide targeted property tax relief so residents can continue to be able to afford to live in Dedham.	1. Gather details and data from other municipalities to better understand alternative approaches to real estate taxes and exemptions. 2. Define a time-limited committee to explore and evaluate options with the charge to make a recommendation to the Select Board. A Town Meeting vote to enable a home-rule petition to be approved by state legislature would likely be required.	Select Board	Finance & Warrant Committee, Taxation Aid Committee, Financial Policies Study Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Municipalities with an alternative model, such as Concord, Hopkinton, and Mendon



Priority

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H3.2: Support aging in place by offering a property tax reduction to income-eligible senior homeowners and promote existing state programs that support aging in place. Reduce barriers and incentivize construction of Accessory Dwelling Units so that family members may offer their seniors additional options for aging in community.	1. Promote resources to support senior homeowners to age in place including producing and distributing materials to promote state programs such as home modification loans and financial assistance via pamphlets, newsletters, utility bills, public access television and other platforms to inform seniors about these programs.	Council on Aging	Taxation Aid Committee, Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office, Livable Dedham	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Commonwealth's Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP). The program website is available at https://www.mass.gov/home-modification-loan-program-hmlp
	2. Set tax reduction eligibility requirements for low-income and cost burdened senior homeowners.				
	3. Partner with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) to facilitate an inter-generational living workshop to promote these programs and to evaluate other ways to support aging residents in Dedham.	Council on Aging	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office, Building Department, Livable Dedham	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
H3.3: Pursue increased transit options and availability, such as the Council on Aging's shuttle system to reduce the need for vehicle ownership, which can be a substantial household budget cost.	1. Survey residents who use transit and the Council on Aging shuttle system to better understand what routes and destinations would help reduce the need for vehicle ownership.	Council on Aging	Active Transportation Working Group	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Pilot test routes or services to respond to resident needs.	Council on Aging	Active Transportation Working Group	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H3.4: Expand promotion of programs serving seniors and veterans in need of assistance. The Council on Aging is a resource for seniors to connect to programs such as the Massachusetts Senior Circuit Break Tax Credit, Fuel and Food Assistance, and Emergency/Supportive Senior Housing programs. Veterans Services provide financial assistance for qualifying veterans and their dependents.	1. Publicize Council on Aging and Veterans Services programs through real estate tax bills, utility bills, or other communication that is received by every household in Dedham.	Town Manager	Council on Aging, Veterans Services, Treasurer/Collector	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Cross coordinate requests for assistance to encourage follow-up and outreach when a resident communicates a need for assistance. Proactively reach out to the resident to connect them to the programs and services that are already available and may offer assistance.	Council on Aging, Veterans Services, Dedham Housing Authority, Livable Dedham	Affordable Housing Trust	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
H3.5: Connect residents with programs that offer relief on utilities and home improvements that will reduce the cost of utilities. For example, utilities provide discount rate programs for eligible customers. Utility programs, such as MassSave, provide home energy assessments and energy efficiency improvements which lower utility costs at no or low cost to homeowners.	1. Publicize MassSave, or other utility savings programs through real estate tax bills, utility bills, or other communication that is received by every household in Dedham.	Town Manager	Treasurer/Collector	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Provide a liaison role that would help guide senior residents through the processes required (sign-up, applications, forms, etc.) to participate in these programs.	Town Manager	Council on Aging, Veterans Services, Dedham Housing Authority, Livable Dedham	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H3.6: Support residents with financial literacy, retirement planning, tax, and educational resources, such as AARP Tax Service or organizations such as Neighbor Works.	1. Define a regular series of community programs that rotate through a variety of topics to help residents be as prepared for the future as possible.	Council on Aging	Veterans Services, Dedham Housing Authority, Affordable Housing Trust, Livable Dedham	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	

H4 Goal 4: Promote equitable development that includes all incomes, races, ethnicities, family sizes, and life stages to support fair housing and racial equity.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H4.1: Establish a non-discriminatory tenant-screening program that can be used as a tool by local landlords to review applicants in a manner that does not discriminate.	<p>1. Assign Town or SHSO staff to administer this program.</p> <p>2. Coordinate with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) to enforce fair housing. In 2018, the Fair housing Center of Greater Boston was closed after HUD funding constraints and now Greater Boston lacks a standalone fair housing organization. Dedham should monitor efforts to re-establish a regional fair housing office and how it may support this effort.</p>	Town Manager	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Department of Housing and Community Development Fair Housing and Civil Rights information: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/dh-cd-fair-housing-and-civil-rights-information



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H4.2: Leverage and elevate existing race-conscious local first-time homebuyer programs that provide down payment and private mortgage assistance to income-eligible first-time homebuyers.	1. Catalogue existing programs such as the Commonwealth’s First Time Home Buyer programs and lending institutions such as Dedham Savings’ First Time Homebuyer program, and promote these resources.	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Dedham Housing Authority, Livable Dedham, Human Rights Commission	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Commonwealth of Massachusetts homeownership resources
H4.3: Continue to encourage diverse representation on Dedham’s boards related to housing policy and project approvals by encouraging people of color that may be interested in serving on these boards.	1. Draft the first Town Representation Report. The first step is to set up a system to gather the necessary data in a way that is anonymous and can be efficiently replicated and repeated annually. Once demographic data is collected, the representation of Town Meeting, Town boards and committees can be compared to the population of the Town. After that, deliberate goals and efforts can be established as necessary.	Town Manager	Town Clerk	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward
H4.4: Promote training opportunities provided by the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) and other programs and pay for any costs associated with board member participation.	1. Send potential training resources along to staff, board members, and others eligible for this policy.	Town Manager		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC)



H5 Goal 5: Leverage mixed-use and multifamily residential development for areas that would benefit from redevelopment and investment including existing retail centers and near transit stops.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H5.1: Evaluate new state Housing Choice (Section 3A) legislation requiring by-right multifamily zoning near train stations. The Town has processes underway.	1. Dedham's Planning Board has completed changes to be compliant with Section 3A.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities guidelines: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities
	2. Approval of changes by the Attorney General and final review by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.				
H5.2: Encourage mixed-use and multifamily development in centers of economic activity with a large retail footprint, particularly if persistent vacancies are present as defined in the Economic Development Chapter. This type of housing would be particularly impactful in transforming areas of the Providence Highway Corridor to be more pedestrian friendly.	1. Meet with property owners in these areas to better understand current challenges and future goals.	Economic Development Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Refer to MAPC's retrofitting suburbia study for recommendations and suggestions for redeveloping strip malls and auto-oriented areas.
	2. Work with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) or another organization or consultant to facilitate a design charrette to reimagine these spaces.	Economic Development Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Program, Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	3. Update local zoning regulations to better facilitate this development.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
	4. Strip malls and other auto-oriented areas may not be desirable places to live and will need to be enhanced with access to public transit, pedestrian infrastructure, and open space. District Increment Financing (DIF) funds should be used to make these improvements. The Town could also apply for MassWorks funding or other state grants to finance infrastructure upgrades.	Economic Development Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	MassDevelopment technical assistance and resources regarding DIF, information at: https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/technical-assistance/district-improvement-financing



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H5.3: Evaluate adopting a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD) to facilitate mixed-use development and Affordable Housing development in centers of economic activity or near transit.	1. Consider a 40R district among the options during local district planning efforts. For example, a 40R Smart Growth district may provide benefits to the town if aligned with the vision for the Providence Highway retail corridor if introducing a mixed-use residential redevelopment approach to future investments.	Planning & Zoning Department	Economic Development Department, Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
H5.4: Explore diverse housing options as part of mixed-use development pre-development conversations and review. Diverse housing options may include more affordable micro-housing units, intergenerational housing, cooperative housing models, or other options.	1. Develop a standard list of questions or suggestions that can be provided to a potential development proponent at pre-development meetings to encourage exploration of all possibilities which may align with the Town's goals while fitting with the approach to the potential development.	Planning & Zoning Department	Economic Development Department, Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



H6 Goal 6: Promote strategic community engagement to reduce misconceptions about housing and build support for the actions needed to address local housing needs.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H6.1: Facilitate community engagement events to explore meeting local housing needs. Work with housing advocate organizations to engage around housing needs in the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene an initial meeting of allied housing organizations and stakeholders to discuss issues, share data, and communicate next steps. 2. Based on the initial meeting determine appropriate follow-up actions and steps, including the timing of follow-up meetings or community events designed to support conversations around housing needs. 	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Planning & Zoning Department, Economic Development Department, Dedham Housing Authority, Livable Dedham	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
H6.2: Review the merits of the Community Preservation Act (CPA). CPA efforts have failed in Dedham in the past, but it is an important potential funding source for housing and other needs.	1. Convene a meeting of potential advocates for the Community Preservation Act which may include open space, historic preservation, and housing advocates. Discuss with this group if support, resources, and capacity are available to begin broader discussion and advocacy for CPA in Dedham.	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Planning Board, Conservation Department, Dedham Housing Authority, Livable Dedham, Dedham Museum & Archive, Historic District Commission, Historical Commission	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
H6.3: Consider a marketing consultant to create a marketing campaign that includes public service announcement videos and other engaging content to describe housing issues in Dedham and solutions.	1. Prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a marketing consultant or work with an intern or temporary staff to provide public education and outreach assistance around local housing issues.	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Dedham Housing Authority, Livable Dedham	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC



H7 Goal 7: Improve zoning to better align with the preservation, improvement, and diversification of the Town's housing stock while requiring linked community benefits and mitigation of community impacts.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H7.1: Engage in a public process to explore updating zoning regulations to align with current lot conditions and reduce the number of non-conforming residential lots and to expand production of a diverse housing stock.	1. Use the analysis and recommendations included in the 2019 Dedham Housing Study and further GIS analysis of the Town's residential parcels to change minimum lot size, setbacks, and other dimensional requirements that bring the zoning into alignment with current land use conditions.	Planning & Zoning Department, Building Department, Zoning Board of Appeals	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Dedham Housing Study information available at: https://www.dedham-ma.gov/departments/planning-zoning/studies-reports/housing-study-2019
	2. Establish new regulations that allow owners of non-conforming properties to make improvements or additions to their site without needing zoning relief. Criteria should encourage making site improvements while also providing adequate protections to abutting property owners.	Planning & Zoning Department, Building Department	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
H7.2: Engage in a public process to explore modifying the Town's planned unit development/residential cluster and open space bylaws to better match the goals of the Town to leverage the development to increase community benefits and reduce impacts.	1. Initiate a study to review and analyze the Planned Residential Development (PRD).	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
H7.3: Consider a ballot question to assess Town-wide support for accessory dwelling units.	1. The Town should work with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to evaluate possible updates to the bylaw that encourage ADU development through more flexible requirements, such as allowing use as rentals, coupled with design guidelines that ensure ADU development aligns with the context.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Livable Dedham	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Commonwealth of Massachusetts Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) information MAPC Living Little Study: http://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Living-Little-Report.pdf



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
H7.4: The Town should evaluate areas where form-based code or hybrid zoning with a greater emphasis on building form may help to increase understanding of potential residential development and build support for housing density in appropriate locations.	1. Consider form-based code or hybrid zoning among the options during local district planning efforts.	Planning & Zoning Department	Economic Development Department, Planning Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Community Compact funds or District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) from MAPC
H7.5: Create a list of community benefits that board members can request and negotiate for when developments are reviewed, such as the construction of sidewalks, provision of open space, or other benefits that are proportional to the development being proposed. Define the community benefits and thresholds for compliance clearly as part of future zoning modifications.	1. Utilize community benefits and other resources to better connect existing and new housing (particularly Affordable Housing) to public transit with enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections. For example, Affordable Housing residents near the Dedham Corporate Center Commuter Rail Station cannot access this station easily due to fencing and other physical constraints. Community benefits and strategic contributions by the Town should ensure new development provides access to resources and amenities and creates a welcoming environment for all. Similarly, additional requirements for the amount of outdoor amenity/green space provided per dwelling unit could also be defined.	Planning & Zoning Department, Building, and Code Enforcement Department, Zoning Board of Appeals	Potential (new) Housing staff member or Shared Housing Services Office	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
H7.6: Reduce minimum parking requirements or offer a fee-in-lieu option to pay for public parking to reduce housing development costs, avoid negative impacts, and generate funding for shared public parking.	1. Use data, such as night-time parking counts to determine how much existing development is over-parked.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	MAPC Perfect Fit Parking Study: https://perfect-fitparking.mapc.org/
	2. Based on parking utilization data collected, reduce required parking amounts in the Dedham Zoning Bylaw.	Planning & Zoning Department	Planning Board	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	MAPC Perfect Fit Parking Study: https://perfect-fitparking.mapc.org/



Chapter 6:

Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources

Introduction

As with many communities in the Greater Boston region, population growth and real estate market dynamics place pressure on the natural, cultural, and historic resources in Dedham. Each of these resources provides a critical foundation for the quality of life in Dedham and offer cherished amenities for residents. Dedham is home to a rich history, boasts robust cultural resources, and features a wealth of natural and recreational resources.

Natural, cultural, and historic resources are closely related, and for that reason are combined into one topic. One of the common characteristics of these categories is the value that the Town places in its natural, cultural, and historic resources and strives to preserve the assets within each of these categories for future generations.

Another reason to combine these categories is that the Town completed an Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2019. Much of the more detailed information regarding natural assets, wildlife habitats, open space needs, among other data have not been duplicated in the Master Plan, but defer to this companion planning document.

The Master Plan topic summarizes the Natural, Cultural, and Historic resources in Dedham today, and outlines plans, policies, and regulations that guide their stewardship to better meet Dedham's needs.



Summary

To protect and enhance these features and resources and make them an integral part of the town’s strengthened livability.



Themes Highlights

- Dedham has a strong foundation for arts and culture with active institutions and organizations supporting a variety of programming and the Town has been leveraging arts and culture activity to support economic development.
- The historic resource designations, districts, and protections preserved are currently concentrated in and around Dedham Village/Dedham Square.
- Extensive natural resources are distributed throughout the Town and many resources have been successfully conserved and managed throughout Dedham’s history.

76% of Dedham residents are within a **10-minute walk to a park.**

Source: Trust for Public Land, ParkScore



Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Expand documentation and protection of resources and tools to support this stewardship
- Identify additional funding and capacity to support natural, cultural, and historic resources and activity
- Connect residents to resources through daily routines that help to enhance livability and quality of life in Dedham
- Integrate preservation arts and culture as a local engine to improve economic development and quality of life

Features and resources in Dedham

Type	Quantity	Amount
Natural Resources		
Town-owned Parks and Recreation properties	16	96 acres
Conservation Commission properties	9	271 acres
School properties recreation facilities	9	94 acres
County, State, and Federal properties	11	880 acres
Cultural Resources		
Cultural institutions and organizations	14+	not applicable
Arts Overlay District	1	unconfirmed
Historic Resources		
Local Historic Districts	3	140 lots
National Register of Historic Places	1	342 lots
National Historic Landmarks/Individual Listing	6	not applicable

Source: Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2019

Companion and related plans and studies

- Sustainable Dedham Climate and Resilience Action Plan (2020)
- Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019)



Defining natural, cultural, historic resources terms

Community Preservation Act (CPA)

A Massachusetts law passed in 2000 that allows municipalities to conduct a referendum to add a small surcharge on local property taxes. Local funds are combined with a statewide match from the Community Preservation Trust Fund. Funds are to be used to build and rehabilitate parks, playgrounds, and recreational fields, protect open space, support local affordable housing, and preserve historic buildings and resources.

Creative Economy

The many industry sectors that center on providing creative services and the economic activity and employment opportunities created by these interrelated sectors.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

A demolition delay bylaw is a preservation tool to assist communities in their efforts to preserve significant historic buildings and structures. A Demolition Delay Bylaw provides communities with the opportunity to work with property owners to find an alternative to demolition by mandating a delay in demolition, when proposed by the property owner. During the delay period, a community can encourage an owner to preserve their building or seek a buyer who would retain the structure. The bylaw also creates a public review process for proposed demolitions of historic structures.

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Local Historic District

A historic district designated by the Town of Dedham. In a designated district properties cannot be demolished under normal circumstances and all exterior changes that are visible from a public way must be reviewed by the Historic District Commission.

Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)

A Townwide plan focused on the future of a municipality's conservation and recreation resources. The plan is informed by a thorough public participation process and reflect the needs of community members. Plans are reviewed and approved by the Commonwealth. When an OSRP is approved, the municipality becomes eligible for Division of Conservation Services grant programs for up to seven years.

Preservation Restriction

A voluntary legal agreement attached to the deed of a property that protects a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource.

Watersheds

A topographically delineated area that is drained by a stream system; that is, the total land area above some point on a stream or river that drains past that point. Also referred to as drainage basins or river basins, watersheds are hydrological units of reference that can encompass a variety of physical and biological features and may cross political boundaries.



Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources In Dedham Today

Natural, Cultural, Historic themes from data and previous plans

NCH1 Substantial planning efforts recently completed

Recently completed open space and recreation planning documents are coordinated with this comprehensive plan, including Dedham's Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019), the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2018), and Mother Brook Canal Cultural and Architectural Study (2020).

NCH2 Diverse and high quality resources that are well distributed

Dedham's natural resources play a critical role in supporting the environmental health and social vitality of the community. Dedham has many distinct landscape features that contribute to its character ranging from manicured institutional greens, recreational fields, and golf courses to meadows, wetlands, and river habitats. Perhaps one of the most striking and prevalent landscape features of the Town are its waterways – the Charles and Neponset Rivers, Mother Brook, and Long Ditch. Wilson Mountain is also a dominant feature of the landscape, providing scenic views of the Town from its peak as well as long range views of forested hillsides, surrounding lowlands, and the Boston skyline.

NCH3 Wide range of programs

Dedham residents are passionate about the diverse recreation opportunities available to them – both organized and informal – including hiking, team sports, cycling, paddling along the waterways, visiting neighborhood playgrounds, and passive nature appreciation.

NCH4 Rich and well recognized history

Along with its rich history, Dedham is fortunate to have a variety of noteworthy sites and an extensive collection of well-preserved buildings of architectural and cultural significance. There are over 400 resources that have been recognized locally or by the state as historically significant including resources that have been listed as National Register properties, National Historic Landmarks, and contributing elements to the National Register Historic District. The Town also has four individually listed properties in the National Register of Historic Places, including the Ames School, the Endicott Estate, the Fairbanks House, and the Norfolk County Courthouse. In addition, the Town has three local historic districts: the Connecticut Corner Historic District, the Federal Hill Historic District, and the Franklin Square-Court Street Historic District.

NCH5 Strong historic stewardship

The Dedham Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission (HDC) is responsible for historic preservation, contextual compliance, and regulatory design review within designated local Historic Districts. The Town has enabled a Design Review Advisory Board (DRAB) as part of permitting and review processes. Seven historic resources are protected by preservation restrictions.



NCH6 Recognition of cultural resources and creative economy

Dedham has a number of cultural institutions that act as a foundation for the Town’s growing arts and culture scene. These include the Dedham Cultural Council, the Mother Brook Arts and Community Center, the Dedham Community Theatre, the Dedham Community House, and the Dedham Museum & Archive. Clusters of arts and culture activity, restaurants, creative retail, and events that are located within a walkable area function as naturally occurring cultural districts, the two most notable are Dedham Square and East Dedham Square. The East Dedham Arts Overlay District (AOD) was established to help spur investment and enhancement of arts-related uses.

NCH7 Navigating funding challenges

All of the Town’s success and progress has occurred with the backdrop of a typically underfunded set of priorities. Funding for the maintenance or expansion of existing parks or for the acquisition of land for new parks has difficulty meeting the needs and demands of the resources and programs of the Town. Additionally, absent adoption of the Community Preservation Act, there are limited state and local funds available for historic preservation or arts and culture activity.

Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources Community Priorities

Natural, Cultural, Historic themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to natural, cultural, historic resources and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.)

While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the natural, cultural, historic resources themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

NCH1 Poor overall connectivity and access to Town’s resources

Survey participants expressed that investments in sidewalks, bicycle lanes, multi-use paths, and trails are needed to increase connectivity between neighborhoods, parks and open space, and historic and cultural resources and that resources should feel accessible and welcoming to all.



NCH2 Underrepresented narratives

Dedham has a rich and interesting history and a diverse and vibrant community today, but that many aspects of the Dedham's historic narratives and heritage, particularly of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) have been overlooked and deserve better recognition. For example, the Town has recently recognized William B. Gould, a former enslaved African American Civil War veteran, with a statue at Gould Park at 34 Milton Street in East Dedham. The park was also renamed in his honor.

NCH3 Communicate the value of arts and culture in economic terms

Dedham's Arts Overlay District (AOD) and Creative Industries are an important element of the Town's economy and can be leveraged for additional economic growth. Survey participants believe that East Dedham Square, in particular, has great potential to build on its industrial legacy, bounty of natural resources, and growing arts and cultural assets.

NCH4 Foster a stronger sense of community and inclusivity

Survey participants stated that they would like to see a stronger sense of community and neighborliness. Several survey comments were submitted around the importance of transforming Dedham to be an inclusive community with representative leadership that serves and welcomes residents of all race and ethnicities.

Additional context and data

Natural Resources

Located immediately south of Boston, Dedham retains remnants of its agricultural and mill town heritage. The construction of Providence Highway and Route 128 increased accessibility to other areas of the region and spurred development, but Dedham was able to retain much of its natural beauty and open space due to significant private institutional holdings and conservation land in State Parks within the Town.

Landscape Character

Dedham has many distinct landscape features that contribute to the character of the Town. Wilson Mountain is a dominant landscape feature, providing scenic views of the Town from its peak as well as long range views of forested hillsides, surrounding lowlands, and the Boston skyline. Open landscapes also define the character of Dedham, ranging from manicured institutional greens, recreational fields, and golf courses to meadows, wetlands, and riparian habitats. These open landscapes provide a counterpoint to both the forested and built environments giving a sense of rhythm and relief. At a smaller scale, some features that are characteristic of the Town as a whole – rocky ledges, forested uplands, and remnants of pasture land marked by stone walls – punctuate the broader landscape and allow Dedham to maintain its unique suburban, bucolic identity despite its growth.



One of the most striking and prevalent of landscape features are Dedham's waterways – the Charles and Neponset Rivers, Mother Brook, and Long Ditch – which shaped historic and economic development of the Town and continue to provide natural, recreational, and economic benefits to residents today. The waterways also link Dedham to other communities in eastern Massachusetts.

Watersheds

Dedham lies within the Boston Harbor Watershed and is part of two sub-watersheds, the Charles River Watershed and the Neponset River Watershed. The Charles River Watershed drains an area of 308 square miles and includes portions of thirty-five cities and towns. The Neponset River Watershed covers roughly 130 square miles including parts of fourteen cities and towns. Both the Charles and the Neponset have active watershed associations which have been working for more than 50 years to improve water quality and to protect and promote the natural areas along these rivers. The Charles is fortunate to be guarded by one of the first and most active watershed protection organizations in the nation, the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA). Like the Charles, the water quality of the Neponset has improved over the years in large part due to the vigilant stewardship efforts of Neponset River Watershed Association (NepRWA).

Surface Water

Dedham's history and development have evolved around its waterways. Both the Charles and Neponset Rivers have provided a means of transportation and a source of power for mills and factories. The Charles River is one of the most significant rivers

in Eastern Massachusetts and a dominant feature in Dedham. The river's industrialization decreased the river's natural flow and increased water pollution. As a result, fish populations, once numerous, were depleted. Other natural ecosystems related to the river suffered as well, resulting in decreased biodiversity and advancing invasive species. The Town has been transformed historically through advancements in technology, from water power with rivers and canals, to railroads efficiently connecting the Town, to Route 128 changing commuting patterns, and to the next technologies defining transformations not yet contemplated.

The portion of the Charles River flowing through Dedham is generally flat and is bordered by wetlands that provide areas of natural flood storage. In the 1650s, the Town dug a 4000-foot-long canal, known as Long Ditch, to allow the meadow to drain in the spring. Long Ditch, which also provides a convenient short cut for paddlers, runs roughly parallel to the Needham border, cutting across the Riverdale neighborhood peninsula at its northern edge.

Much of the land along the Charles River in Dedham is owned by the Federal Government, the State and the Town, and includes parks and conservation areas. One of the larger state parks on the Charles is Cutler Park Reservation, a 700-acre tract of open water, wet meadow, and forested wetlands located in Dedham, Needham, Newton, and Boston. Approximately 190 acres of Cutler Park is in Dedham, and the Town owns a 5.8-acre parcel in the Riverdale neighborhood that is contiguous with Cutler Park. Canoeing and kayaking on the Charles River are popular activities, particularly along the Upper Charles River where there are safe and easy access points.



The Neponset River flows from its headwaters in Foxborough through the southern part of Dedham on its way to Dorchester Bay and forms the eastern boundary between Dedham and Canton. The entire length of the River in Dedham is located within the Fowl Meadow and Ponkapoag Area of Critical Environmental Concern. A majority of this land is owned by DCR and is protected open space.

Mother Brook, which originates from an inlet in the Charles River, is a one mile long man-made canal dug by the Town in 1639 to divert a portion of the flow of the Charles to the Neponset. The canal, believed to be the first industrial canal in the country, converted the historic East Brook, a small Neponset River tributary, into a major source of power for mills in Dedham. The industrialization of Mother Brook, including the installation of dams and the increased development along its shores and within its watershed, created a polluted and diminished waterway. However, today Mother Brook is not only at the center of the East Dedham neighborhood, but is seen as a critical resource in that neighborhood's revitalization. The Mother Brook Community Group, leading the revitalization initiative, is supported by both

Mother Brook



Source: MAPC

the Town and DCR, which manages Mother Brook for flood control.

Several other small brooks, streams, lakes, and ponds dot the landscape in Dedham. Wigwam Pond and Little Wigwam Pond in the southern part of town are surrounded by town-owned land under the care and management of the Conservation Commission. Weld Pond is east of Route 128 near Wilson Mountain and is surrounded by land owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the Dedham Land Trust, and private residential properties. Wight Pond is surrounded by privately owned land.

Wetlands

Wetlands are important natural features that have several functions, including flood protection, water filtration, erosion prevention, and provision of natural habitat to wildlife. Wetlands can also be unique passive recreational areas. Dedham contains more than 1,200 acres of wetlands accounting for nearly 18% of its total area. A large portion of Dedham's wetlands surround the Charles River, including the river itself, its banks, floodplain, and its extended watershed including Cutler Park, an extensive area between Common Street and Pine Street, and another large area between Bridge Street and Providence Highway. Much of this acreage is federally owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Another large wetland area in Dedham is Fowl Meadow, which is the largest contiguous wetland area in the Neponset River Basin and one of the most significant wetland areas in the metropolitan Boston region. Other wetland areas include the banks of Mother Brook, Rock Meadow Brook and Lowder Brook, and the areas around Dedham's many ponds, including Wigwam, Little Wigwam, Weld, and Rodman Ponds.



Flood Hazard Areas

The land adjacent to streams, lakes, or rivers that is likely to flood during a storm event is known as the floodplain. Floodplains are categorized according to the average frequency of flooding and are stated in percent or converted to yearly probability. A floodplain with a one percent chance of flooding each year is therefore likely to be flooded once every 100 years and is referred to as the 100-year floodplain. Similarly, the 500-year floodplain has a 0.2 percent chance of being flooded in any year.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified areas in Dedham that are predicted to be most prone to flooding. These areas are delineated on the town's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which were most recently updated in 2017, as the 100-year and 500-year floodplain. These areas closely correspond to the Town's waterways and wetlands. Dedham's Flood Plain Overlay District (FPOD) regulates development in all flood hazard areas and filling or building in these areas is prohibited to preserve the flood-mitigating effects of these vital resources. The only permitted uses in this district are recreation, agriculture, and structures that do not impede the flow of flood waters. Additionally, all work within the FPOD requires a Special Permit issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Vegetation

Dedham is vegetated with a variety of plant species commonly found on well-drained upland soils throughout southeastern Massachusetts. Forested land in Dedham includes large areas such as the Town Forest and Wilson Mountain Reservation as well as

many smaller areas scattered throughout the Town. Most of the forested land is west of Providence Highway near Interstate 95/Route 128. In the eastern part of the Town, ribbons of wooded banks and vegetated wetlands flank the Town's waterways, including land adjacent to Mother Brook, the Neponset River and surrounding Wigwam and Little Wigwam Ponds. The Dedham Town Forest consists of approximately 77 acres of land, mostly located between the northbound and southbound lanes of Interstate 95. Wilson Mountain Reservation, managed by the DCR, contains about 210 acres of forest and wetlands with linkage opportunities to adjoining open space areas.

In addition to its forests, Dedham's street trees are an important natural resource and play a significant role in defining the town's visual character. Dedham is one of eighty-nine municipalities throughout the Commonwealth designated as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Rare Plant Species

The table on the following page lists the plants recorded in Dedham that are on the list of Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species maintained by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP).

Fisheries and Wildlife

Dedham's woods, fields, lakes, and rivers host many common and some rare species of birds, fish, and other wildlife. The most commonly seen mammals are squirrels, chipmunks, and raccoons. Approximately 450 species of birds are found seasonally in Massachusetts. Dedham's rivers, wetlands and riparian areas provide excellent habitat for waterfowl. Raptors such as hawks,



Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern Plants

Species Name	Common Name	State Status	Last Observed in Dedham
<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>	Purple milkweed	Endangered	Historic
<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>	Linear-leaved milkweed	Threatened	1884
<i>Betula nigra</i>	River birch	Watch	2019
<i>Eleocharis ovata</i>	Ovate spikeweed	Endangered	1878
<i>Gentiana andrewsii</i>	Andrews' bottle gentian	Endangered	1911
<i>Houstonia longifolia</i>	Long-leaved bluet	Endangered	1897
<i>Nabalus serpentarius</i>	Lion's-foot	Endangered	1901
<i>Ophioglossum pusillum</i>	Adder's-tongue fern	Threatened	1884
<i>Potamogeton vaseyi</i>	Vasey's pondweed	Endangered	1881
<i>Rhododendron maximum</i>	Great laurel	Threatened	1900
<i>Scirpus longyi</i>	Long's bulrush	Threatened	2002
<i>Senna hebecarpa</i>	Wild senna	Endangered	1885
<i>Viola brittoniana</i>	Coast violet	Threatened	2018*
<i>Viola pectinata</i>	Pectinate-leaved violet	Threatened	2018*

*Personal observation by Dedham resident S. Radner

falcons, and osprey nest in the openings of power line corridors. Songbirds are found in forested areas, tree-lined residential neighborhoods and on the edges of woodland habitats. As water

quality in Dedham's rivers and ponds has improved over the years, so has the habitat for fish and shellfish. Several amphibian and reptile species have also been observed in Dedham, in part due to increased efforts to survey and certify vernal pools.

Vernal Pools

A number of potential vernal pools have been identified in Dedham, and two have been certified by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, one at Whitcomb Woods and one at Wilson Mountain. Dedham's strict wetlands bylaws presume that any potential vernal pool is a vernal pool unless proven otherwise.

Vernal pools are unique wetland habitats that serve as important breeding grounds and are home to a number of amphibians and invertebrate animals. Also known as ephemeral pools, autumnal pools, and temporary woodland ponds, these natural sites fill with water in the fall or winter due to rain and rising groundwater. They stay ponded through the spring and into summer, but tend to dry completely by the middle or end of the summer. This occasional drying prevents fish from permanently populating the pools, allowing amphibians and invertebrate species to reproduce without being targeted by fish predators. Certified vernal pools can usually be protected from development and are afforded protection under a number of state regulations.

Rare Animal Species

According to information provided by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), there are two threatened and two special concern animal species which have been recorded in Dedham. None of these species is listed on



the Federal Endangered Species list; instead the focus is on the protection of habitat for state listed species.

According to NHESP, one of the most important areas for rare species in Dedham is Fowl Meadow in the Neponset River Reservation. This area is listed as both a Priority Site of Rare Species Habitat and an Estimated Habitat of Rare Wildlife by NHESP. It is also part of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). A portion of the Charles River Watershed in Cutler Park in northwest Dedham is also identified as priority habitat for rare species. Rare wildlife observed in Dedham is listed in the following table.

Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern Wildlife

Species Name	Common Name	State Status	Last Observed in Dedham
Circus cyaneus	Northern Harrier	Threatened	1867, 2016
Botaurus lentiginosus	American Bittern	Endangered	2017
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Threatened	2022
Falco peregrinus	Peregrine Falcon	Threatened	2017
Parula americana	Northern Parula	Threatened	2017
Dendroica striata	Blackpoll Warbler	SC	2016
Cicindela duodecimguttata	Twelve-spotted Tiger beetle	SC	1908
Neurocordulia absoleta	Umber Shadow-dragon	SC	2007
Emydoidea blandingii	Blanding's Turtle	Threatened	1993

Wildlife Migration Corridors

Wildlife corridors are areas of contiguous tracts of land that provide habitat suitable to accommodate wildlife migration patterns. Major wildlife corridors in Dedham follow the rivers. In addition, stream channels, wetland systems and lake shores throughout Town also provide smaller pockets of wildlife habitat. The Charles River wetlands are breeding grounds for many duck species, blue heron, and other birds. Bald eagles have been observed frequently in recent years and are nesting in nearby towns near the Charles and Neponset Rivers.

Environmental Challenges

Dedham’s environmental challenges are mainly related to water quality and non-point source pollution. Non-point source pollution originates from diffused or widespread sources and enters surface water and groundwater through stormwater runoff. The most effective means of controlling non-point source pollution is through thoughtful land management and includes tools such as Low Impact Development and Smart Growth strategies and bylaws, protective zoning, and best management practices such as stormwater management, construction, septic operations and road maintenance.

In 2015, water samples from Mother Brook showed elevated levels of E. coli bacteria with sources such as human and animal waste (i.e. dogs), as has been the case for many years. Oils and particulates also runoff from roadways. The Town, in partnership with NepRWA, received a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to clean up the polluted stormwater entering Mother Brook. Since early spring 2017, the DPW has installed a series of bioretention areas on Colburn



Street, Sawmill Lane, and Avery Street. These bioretention structures, also known as rain gardens, include bioretention cells and a subsurface infiltration system, and use soil and plants to filter and treat polluted runoff before it enters the watershed.

Although some pollution still makes its way into the Charles and Neponset Rivers, the water quality in both rivers has improved over the years. CRWA and NepRWA continue to monitor water quality along the Charles and Neponset Rivers and Mother Brook. The Charles River continues to have a phosphorous pollution problem with sources such as fertilizers and lawn treatments. Recent accomplishments and initiatives of the watershed associations include continued water quality monitoring, visual shoreline surveys, expanded federal and State regulations, and ecological restoration.

In 2017, in anticipation of new federal stormwater discharge requirements initially set to take effect on July 1, 2017 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System/MS4), the Conservation Commission began reviewing its stormwater management rules to better align Town Bylaws with the MS4's wider range of requirements. After some delays at the federal level, the MS4 permit was issued on July 1, 2018. The Conservation Commission updated the Town's stormwater regulations for better consistency with federal regulations and approved the new regulations on November 15, 2018.

Scenic Resources

Dedham has a wealth of landscapes that retain their natural and scenic qualities. The town's rivers, brooks, ponds and lakes provide some of the community's most picturesque vistas, along with its wooded parcels and open space. The following places have

been identified in the town's 2019 OSRP as some of Dedham's treasured scenic resources:

- Dedham Common
- Little Common
- Wilson Mountain
- Mother Brook
- Long Ditch

One of the major features that contribute to Dedham's character is its scenic roadways. Many of them date to Dedham's early history and represent historic transportation routes established more than 300 years ago. Particularly in the western sections of Dedham, these roads maintain such characteristics as narrow pavement, winding patterns, adjoining stone walls, and mature trees and vegetation.

Open Space and Recreation

Open space protects wetlands, wildlife habitat and vistas, and provides for outdoor recreation and gathering places. In Dedham, institutional open space plays a prominent role in defining the town's visual character from the campus of Noble and Greenough School to the grounds of the Endicott Estate. Dedham's public parks also benefit neighborhood residents of all ages, but particularly the town's children, whether they participate in organized sports or gather for informal play.

Open space in Dedham is owned by federal, state and local government agencies and has varying levels of protection. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owns 278 acres of riparian corridor along the Charles River for flood control purposes. In addition, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) owns 626 acres in five parks in Dedham: Riverside Park, Cutler



Park, Stimson Wildlife Sanctuary, Neponset River Reservation, and Wilson Mountain. The Dedham Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over 271 acres of town owned land, mainly wetlands or riparian tracts, while the Parks and Recreation Department and Dedham Public Schools manage another 150 acres of land with active recreation facilities.

In 2019, Dedham updated its Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) which sets forth a seven-year framework for the preservation, maintenance, and improvement of open space and recreation areas in the town. Additionally, Dedham’s first Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) was developed concurrently with its OSRP update. The following summarizes key points from both plans.

Town Conservation Land

The Dedham Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over 271.38 acres of land. Public access is permitted on Town-owned conservation land and signs have been installed to mark many of these properties. While some of the Town’s conservation land is well suited for hiking, fishing, and wildlife viewing, access to some properties is difficult due to environmental conditions (e.g. wetlands, dense vegetation) and the lack of public access points. The following table provides a list of land under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission.

Dedham Town Forest

The Town Forest, Dedham’s largest holding of open conservation land, consists of nearly 77 acres of land located between the north and southbound lanes of Interstate 95. The Dedham Town Forest has been an underutilized resource, in part due to its

Conservation Commission Properties

Location	Acreage
Dedham Town Forest	76.49
Fowl Meadow (Neponset River Reservation)	68.68
Wigwam Pond	57.59
Little Wigwam Pond	51.98
Court Street (along Lowder Brook)	5.80
Westfield Street at Meadowbrook Road (near MIT Endicott House)	6.00
Stoney Lea Road	2.19
Beech Street	1.60
Mother Brook Waterfront	1.06

unusual location, and, until recently, the absence of marked trails. Although the Town Forest does not have a designated parking area, visitors can park on nearby roads and walk a short distance along a sidewalk to gain access through a gate on Washington Street. The Town Forest is a unique resource with varied natural features and potential for an expanded network of trails.

Town Parks and Recreation Land and Facilities

The Dedham Parks and Recreation Commission has jurisdiction over 96.11 acres of land, including athletic fields, playgrounds, recreation areas, facilities, undeveloped land, town commons, and several small open spaces and parks that serve as visually appealing breaks from developed areas and sites for small



community gatherings and events. Two undeveloped properties currently under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Commission have potential for recreation use: the former Town Landfill located at 15 Lower East Street (off Washington Street) and the former Striar property/Manor Fields, located at 408 Sprague Street. The following table lists Town-owned Parks and Recreation land.

Dolan Recreation Center

The Dolan Recreation Center was acquired by the Town in 2006 and is a valuable resource for Dedham residents. The building contains offices for the Parks and Recreation Department, a gymnasium, and a dance studio that is used for various recreation programs. Outdoor amenities include the Town Dog Park, community gardening plots, one turf baseball/softball field, a boat launch allowing access to the Charles River, and a nature trail.

Dedham Water Trail

The Dedham Water Trail is a 7.2-mile trail along the Charles River in Dedham that connects many conservation areas and parks, passing through Motley Pond and Cow Island Pond then making a loop by way of the Long Ditch in Cutler Park. There are five public boat launches along the Water Trail and many significant historic and ecological sites that are marked with signage. The Dedham Water Trail was designated a National Recreational Trail by the United States Department of the Interior in July 2014. National Recreational Trails are part of a national system of trails and greenways on water and over land combining nature, wildlife, outdoor activity, and history.

Town-owned Parks and Recreation Properties

Name	Location	Acreage
Manor Fields	Sprague Street	25.72
Barnes Memorial Park, Mary Ann Lewis Playground	Eastern Avenue	14.89
Gonzalez Field	High Street, Eastern Avenue, East Street	6.30
Fairbanks Park	Rustcraft Road	14.10
Dolan Recreation Center/ Sugrue Field	Common Street	11.40
Former Landfill	Lower East Street	7.68
Condon Park	Bussey Street	7.37
Paul Park (Greg M. Riley Playground)	Cedar Street	2.93
Dedham Common	High Street, Bridge Street, Common Street	2.04
Mother Brook Park	Milton Street	1.32
Churchill Park	Churchill Place	0.92
Triangle Park	Hyde Park Street	0.91
Oakdale Common	River Street	0.46
Trenton Road Playground	Trenton Road	0.25
Mill Pond Park	Colburn Street, Bussey Street	0.20
Hartnett Square	Milton Street	0.09

Source: Town of Dedham Tax ID/Parcel data layer

Public School Property

The School Department has jurisdiction over 94.37 acres of land, which includes buildings, fields, playgrounds, recreation facilities and paved areas. Although there are many fields and playgrounds on school property, the land is not permanently



protected as open space under Article 97. The School Department has discretion over use of the land and may need to make use of the surrounding open space for school expansion. In the future, if any schools are closed, sold, or leased, the Town should attempt to preserve the open space and recreation facilities. The following table provides a list of the public schools in Dedham and the recreation facilities on each property.

Dedham Public School Properties

Location	Recreation Facilities	Acreage
Dedham High School	1 turf field (football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey); track, 1 basketball/volleyball (indoor)	11.39
Dedham Middle School	1 baseball/softball, 1 basketball/volleyball (indoor)	8.61
Early Childhood Education Center	2 playgrounds	29.20
Capen School	2 baseball/softball, playground, 1 basketball	5.28
Avery School	2 playgrounds, 1 basketball	5.60
Greenlodge School	2 baseball/softball, 1 playground	16.74
Oakdale School	2 baseball/softball, ½ court basketball, 1 playground	6.90
Riverdale School	1 baseball/softball, 1 soccer, 1 basketball, playground	6.11
Mucciaccio Pool	1 soccer, 3 tennis courts, indoor swimming pool	4.55

Source: Town of Dedham Tax ID/Parcel data layer

State, County and Federal Land

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Norfolk County, and the United States Federal Government own more than 880 acres

of vacant land in Dedham (listed in Table 5.13). Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) manages 626.53 acres of State land in Dedham, including parks with land and facilities suitable for active recreation, conservation land, and flood control land along Mother Brook. MassDOT manages 107.21 acres of vacant land along the median strip of I-95. Norfolk County owns 27.90 acres of land in Dedham, most of which is developed with County offices, District and Superior Courts, the Registry of Deeds, parking lots, and the Norfolk County Correctional Center. The County owns 6.7 acres of undeveloped wetlands in Dedham Village. The US Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over 126.42 acres of flood control land along the Charles River. The following table lists County, State, and Federal Land in Dedham.

County, State, and Federal Properties

Name	Management	Acreage
Fowl Meadow	DCR	205.69
Wilson Mountain Reservation	DCR	198.43
Cutler Park Reservation	DCR	184.31
Stimson Wildlife Sanctuary	DCR	17.50
Mother Brook Flood Control	DCR	13.67
Whitcomb Woods	DCR	12.10
Riverside Park (Marie-Louise Kehoe Park)	DCR	8.35
Old Town Boat House	DCR	0.14
MassDOT land	MassDOT	107.21
Norfolk County wetlands	Norfolk County	6.70
Charles River Flood Control	US Army Corps of Engineers	126.42

Source: Town of Dedham Tax ID/Parcel data layer



Abandoned Rail Corridor

From 1835 until approximately 1967, the Boston and Providence Railroad and later, the MBTA, operated a train line from Readville Station to the train station that once existed where the Keystone Parking Lot is currently located in Dedham Square. In 1999, the Town acquired the abandoned rail corridor from the MBTA. The 1.3-mile linear parcel measures approximately 10 acres and is under the jurisdiction of the Select Board and the School Department. The 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) recommended the corridor be converted to a multi-use linear park. If improved, the linear park would provide an ADA compliant path that connects three schools and offers a safe pedestrian and bicycle route between several Dedham neighborhoods and Dedham Square. The potential Rail Trail project was divisive in the Town with very strong support and opposition. Questions of land jurisdiction, abutter concerns (safety/privacy), and cost/benefit analysis are some of the challenges that need to be resolved. In 2020 a non-binding Town-wide ballot question asked whether voters were in favor of the design and construction of the “Dedham Heritage Rail Trail” from East Street to the Boston/Readville line, at no cost to the taxpayer. The results showed 3,260 voters not in favor and 3,011 voters in favor.

Open Space and Recreation Needs

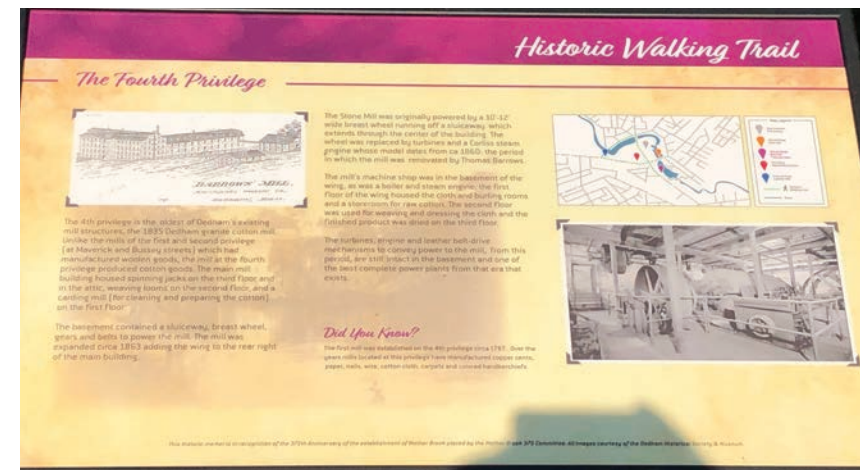
The residents of Dedham value their open space resources and appreciate the environmental and recreational benefits that they provide to the community. Preservation, connectivity, and access have all been expressed as top priorities among Dedham residents. Based on information gathered during the OSRP and Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) planning process

Dedham residents would like more opportunities for informal, or unstructured outdoor recreation. While resources for team sports continue to be a priority in Dedham, many individuals want to be outdoors at times that work with their own schedules. Several common themes were present throughout these planning processes:

- Access to water resources
- Trail networks, access, connectivity
- Nature appreciation and education
- Park amenities for all visitors
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Improved communication and access to information

Residents also expressed that the Town lacks a comprehensive plan for identifying and prioritizing land for protection and a dedicated funding source for land management and acquisition. Adopting the Community Preservation Act (CPA) would provide a

Interpretive signage



Source: MAPC



means to acquire open space (as well as fund affordable housing and historic preservation). The CPA was previously brought to Town Meeting in 2017 and rejected with about a 60/40 vote.

Cultural Resources

A cultural resource is something that contributes or adds value to a community's identity, culture, heritage, traditions, knowledge, and creativity. They can include organizations, institutions, and important historic sites as well as special events, creative enterprises and public art. Cultural resources can be tangible assets such as public buildings and facilities (e.g., museums, libraries, parks) or creative spaces (e.g., performance venues, theaters, studios and art galleries). They can also be intangible and temporal things such as annual events, shared cultural stories, or cultural landmarks that no longer exist. Dedham has a diverse inventory of cultural resources. Collectively these assets enhance the quality of life for residents and help define the town's unique character and sense of place.

Cultural Institutions and Organizations

Dedham has a variety of institutions and organizations that work to support arts and culture in the town. Public and private Institutions like the Dedham Public Library, Dedham Public Schools, and the Dedham Museum & Archive provide educational, recreational, and cultural programming for youth and residents. Religious institutions also play a key role in celebrating cultural identities and creating and celebrating various forms of cultural expression. The Dedham Cultural Council has partnered with several organizations and artists to fund artistic and cultural

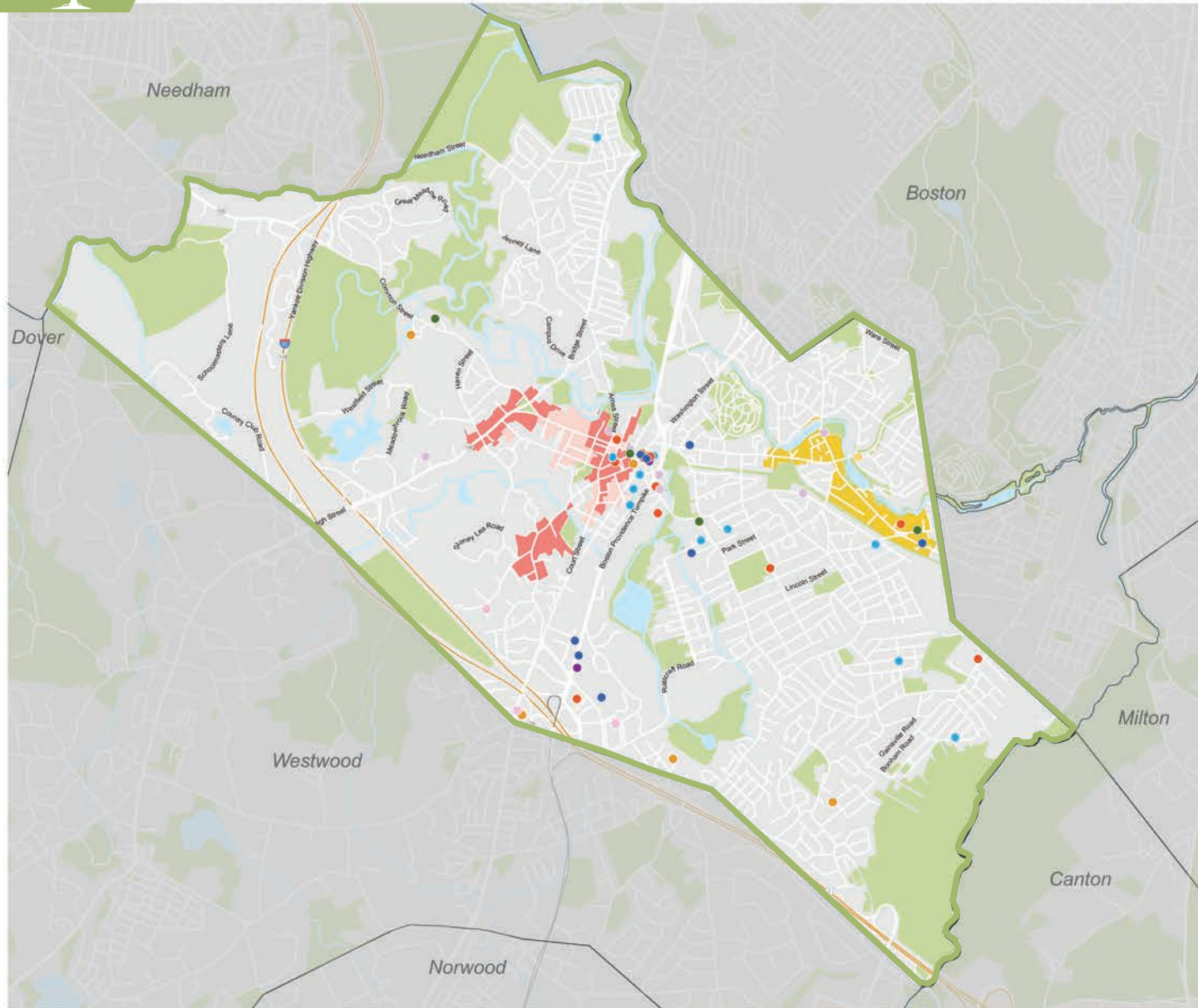
activities in the town. The Dedham Civic Pride Committee is an important partner in fostering and promoting civic pride and improving the overall physical and aesthetic appearance of Dedham.

In addition, organizations such as the Dedham Human Rights Commission (HRC) have formed to welcome, support and celebrate Dedham's growing and diverse population. The HRC produces the monthly DedhamTV series "I Am Dedham" and hosts the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration and the town's LGBTQIA Pride Celebration. Some of the most significant cultural institutions and organizations are summarized below.

Dedham Public Schools (DPS)

It is important to note that the Dedham Public Schools play a key role in shaping the culture of the town and in providing a range of activities and programs that support the rich cultural diversity in Dedham. The schools provide critical cultural, historic, and arts education throughout the various grade levels. In addition, townwide schools such as the High School serve as a strong connection point for Dedham youth from different neighborhoods, whose interactions might have been more limited given that education at earlier levels is provided through neighborhood schools.

Public schools, and Dedham High School in particular, host several community events and other public gatherings, and provide a space for residents to connect and engage. The Dedham Youth Commission offices are currently housed at Dedham High School. The Youth Commission is committed to providing educational, socioemotional, recreational and health programs and services to



Cultural Resources

- Arts Overlay District
- Local Historic District
- National Register Historic District
- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Dedham Open Space
- Dedham

Creative Industry Group Type

- Architecture and Design
- Art-related Retail
- Arts and Architectural Manufacturing
- Culture and Preservation
- Marketing
- Media
- Music Recording
- Printing
- Publishing
- Visual Arts, Music and Other Performing Arts
- Wholesale Art Stores



Data Sources:
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
 December 2020

Document Path: K:\GIS\Land Use\Planning Projects by Municipality\Dedham\Dedham Master Plan 2035\Final_Cultural and Historic Resources\Cultural Resources Map (Zoom Export).indd



the town's youth. The seven- member commission establishes and directs youth services policy and programming. Youth Commission offerings include direct counseling services for youth and their families, as well as various programs that provide employment opportunities, community service projects, and a variety of activities provided together with the Dedham Public Schools. Unfortunately, Dedham does not have a dedicated facility for youth to socialize and congregate. A multi-generational community center that supports social gatherings, recreational opportunities, and engaging activities for youth and adults has been highlighted by community members as a potentially great addition to Dedham's cultural resources.

Dedham Public Library

The Dedham Public Library is one of the Town's oldest and most valued institutions. The roots of the library date back to 1794 with establishment of the First Parish Church's Social Library. In 1854 the Dedham Library Association was founded, and the present Dedham Public Library was chartered in 1871.

Today, the Dedham Public Library System consists of two branches, the Main Library located at 43 Church Street, and the Endicott Branch which is located at 257 Mount Vernon Street on the edge of the Endicott Estate. The mission of the library is "to provide free and equitable access to information while valuing and fostering learning and creative human potential in a safe, fun, and collaborative environment." The Dedham Public Library is currently developing a strategic plan that will guide physical and programming changes for the next five years and serve as a blueprint for its future.

Museums

Dedham has two museums, the Dedham Museum & Archive's 612 High Street and the Fairbanks House at 511 East Street. The Dedham Museum & Archive operates the Dedham Museum & Archive (1888), a brick Romanesque Revival building designed by architect Edwin J. Lewis with distinctive arches, church-like buttresses, a large Palladian window and slate roof. The Museum contains a lecture/display hall on the first floor and an extensive archive on the basement level. The Archive includes genealogical records, town records, maps, photographs, glass plate negatives, family histories, maps and other local ephemera. The Museum houses a collection of furnishings and artifacts ranging from pre-Columbian stone tools and the 1652 Metcalf great chair (the oldest dated American-made chair) to an extensive collection of

Dedham Museum & Archive



¹ Dedham Master Plan, 2009

Source: dedhammuseum.org



Dedham and Chelsea pottery. The museum also includes rotating exhibits, decorative arts associated with Dedham, including a silver collection by local Arts and Crafts silversmith Katherine Pratt, furniture, and works by local artists such as Alvin Fisher and Lillian and Phillip Hale.¹

The Fairbanks House Museum is maintained and operated as a house museum, exhibiting the furnishings collected by eight generations of the Fairbanks family as well as the home's significance as the oldest standing timber frame house in North America. The Fairbanks House (1637) is an exceptionally well-preserved example of a "First Period" building. Although the home was added onto over time, many of the hallmark characteristics of First Period architecture (1625-1725) are still

The Historic Fairbanks House



Source: Wikimedia Commons, contributor Magicpiano

¹ Dedham Master Plan, 2009

evident, including medieval building features such as a steeply-pitched roofline and lean-to additions, a prominent central chimney, and an asymmetrical fenestration pattern. The property is still owned by the Fairbanks family, which opens the house for public tours on a seasonal basis.¹

Churches and Religious Buildings

Many of Dedham's historic churches are still used for religious purposes and continue to play a key role in the community today. Several religious institutions in town serve as community gathering centers and open their facilities to religious programs and non-profit groups.

Dedham's religious buildings represent the various architectural styles associated with ecclesiastical design over the past several centuries. Traditional wood meetinghouse style churches, grand stone Gothic Revival churches, and modest Revival style neighborhood churches are all represented in Dedham. As with other historic resources in Dedham, many of the churches have not been documented within the town's cultural resource inventory.

The two meeting house style wood-frame churches in Dedham Village contribute significantly to the Village's quintessential New England village appeal. The Greek Revival Allin Congregational Church (1819) at 683 High Street, with its flush-board façade, tall palladian window, pilastered corners, and steeple with octagonal cupola, and The First Church (1762, 1820) at 670 High Street with its pedimented gables, pilasters and steeple, serve as neighborhood landmarks. The Gothic Revival St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1859) at 59 Court Street and St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel/Brick Chapel (1875) at 76 Church Street stand in stark contrast to the earlier churches in the village, with their



roughcut stone facades, steeply pitched roofs, pointed arch lancet windows, and buttresses.

Neighborhood churches such as the Church of Good Shepherd (1876) at 60 Cedar Street in Oakdale Village represent the conversion of Dedham’s rural farmland into residential areas. This stucco and half-timbered Gothic Revival Church was constructed to serve residents of the Oakdale/Endicott neighborhood. St. Mary’s Church and the adjoining buildings reflect the historic settlement patterns and the Irish immigrant population that worked in the mills of East Dedham.

Dedham Human Rights Commission

The Dedham Human Rights Commission works to ensure that residents of the Town enjoy equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy life in the Town regardless of their race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, marital, family or military status, socio-economic status, ex-offender status, or disability. Created by a vote of Town Meeting in November 2017, the Commission supports the human rights of groups, organizations, and individuals against discrimination in housing, employment, education, public accommodations, town services, insurance, banking, credit and health care.

Dedham Cultural Council

The Dedham Cultural Council (DCC) is Dedham’s Local Cultural Council (LCC), a municipal entity that distributes arts and cultural funding provided by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) to local artists and organizations according to state guidelines and local criteria. State guidelines (MGL Ch. 10, S. 58) require

that LCC funds only be used to support programs in the arts, humanities, and sciences in Massachusetts. This definition includes the study, pursuit, performance, exhibition, and appreciation of cultural activities in the broadest sense. They must provide a public benefit by contributing to the cultural vitality of the community as a whole rather than benefiting an individual, and they must be non-discriminatory. Grants can support artistic projects and activities, including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies, lectures, workshops, or performances. The Dedham Cultural Council provides funding through reimbursement rather than direct grants in which approved applicants receive funding upfront. Funding provided as a reimbursement means that applicants must expend their own money, and if approved for a grant, they submit paperwork for reimbursement.¹

Mother Brook Arts and Community Center (MBACC)

The mission of the MBACC is to build a vibrant and sustainable center that enriches the Dedham community and stimulates the revitalization and growth of the Mother Brook neighborhoods through the arts. MBACC is a non-profit organization created to act as a catalyst for revitalization, enrichment, and economic development for the neighborhood, Town, and region as an arts and cultural destination. The MBACC is housed in the former Avery School building located at 123 High Street. The facility features indoor and outdoor community gathering space; leased studio space for artists, a ceramics studio; and a fully equipped silver-smithing studio. The MBACC also provides an arts education program and regularly scheduled performances and events that serve all segments of Dedham’s population.

¹ <https://massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/dedham/>



Dedham Community House (DCH)

The Dedham Community Association, better known as the Dedham Community House (DCH), is located at 671 High Street. DCH was founded in 1922 when Charles J. Kimball and a group of civic-minded citizens purchased an estate originally built by Judge Samuel Haven at the corner of Ames and High Streets. The purpose in forming this charitable, nonprofit association was twofold: to preserve the historic mansion built in the Bulfinch design in 1795, and to provide a recreational center for the people of Dedham and the vicinity.

Today, the Board of Directors and staff of the Dedham Community House are dedicated to promoting educational, recreational and civic interests to enhance the lives of all residents of Dedham and neighboring towns through innovative programs,

Dedham Community House



Source: Wikimedia Commons, contributor Briancua

community leadership and the preservation of its historic campus. In fulfillment of this mission, DCH operates a highly regarded preschool, a popular summer camp, summer pool, a variety of enriching classes for all ages, and several special seasonal events. DCH supports other local community groups in a variety of ways including donated or discounted meeting and event space, and by hosting networking events for local nonprofit organizations. DCH's programming serves people of all ages, from all income levels, and from all neighborhoods of Dedham.¹

Dedham Community Theatre (DCT)

The DCT is an independent cinema founded in 1927. This cultural gem is an essential part of the downtown scene, located at 580 High Street in the heart of historic Dedham Square. The DCT represents an important cultural resource in Dedham, providing an opportunity for recreation and leisure. DCT's mission is "to bring the community together for quality art-house films, events, music, and comedy."² Although the majority of the offerings are national screenings, the theater also hosts events and offers independent movie screenings.

Cultural Districts

Clusters of arts and culture activity, restaurants, creative retail, and events that are located within a walkable area function as naturally occurring cultural districts. In addition, the Massachusetts Cultural Council has a Cultural Districts program through which districts can undertake a process to achieve state designation as cultural districts. This designation usually is accompanied by small matching grants to support coordination of activities and basic

¹ <https://www.dchma.org/about-us>

² <https://dedhamcommunitytheatre.com/about>



district branding and signage. Dedham does not have any state-designated cultural districts. However, the town has established a 95-acre Arts Overlay District (AOD) along the Mother Brook in East Dedham.

Arts Overlay District (AOD)

The AOD was established to encourage the development, preservation and enhancement of a vibrant, mixed-use environment that allows and enables arts-related uses. The 2014 East Dedham Arts Overlay Report prepared by Northeastern University outlines several strategies for investing in East Dedham. The overarching community vision for the district follows:

“East Dedham will be a vibrant, mixed-use environment that promotes creative-economy development. At its economic center, East Dedham Village will be the thriving and attractive core of the East Dedham community, with an appropriate mix of retail, commercial, dining, and unique local amenities that cater to its diverse population. Flowing through the community, the Mother Brook recreational area will take center stage by harnessing its natural and historical identity to energize and activate a creative environment with waterfront walking trails, recreation, and art festivals.”¹

With the **Mother Brook Arts and Community Center** in place, the Town of Dedham sees it as the potential anchor and incubator to build a more robust creative economic engine, with traditional and new economy workers employed side-by-side in a vital, walkable, amenity rich mixed-use environment that creative workers not only prefer, but often require.

¹ Enhancing Creative East Dedham Strategies for Implementing the East Dedham Village Charrette, 2014

Public Art and Public Space Activation

Art enhances Dedham’s identity as a community that values diverse creative expression. It builds a sense of civic pride and enriches the quality of life. Public art fulfills these purposes in myriad ways, by improving residents’ experience of public spaces through harmonious design, by preserving and showcasing vistas, by introducing surprising elements into otherwise ordinary spaces, and by engaging residents with insightful interpretations of the community’s cultural aspirations and history. Public art not only has benefits as a cultural product but also enhances economic development and a sense of place.

The **Dedham Civic Pride Committee** promotes civic pride and works to preserve and beautify public spaces in Dedham. Their activities include beautification efforts in public parks and streets, landscaping and light infrastructure improvements along roadways as well as public art projects.

In September 2021, the Dedham Civic Pride, the Dedham Library Innovation Team, and local artists joined together to organize a two-phase public art project. Phase 1 of the **Dedham Public Art Project** involves painting thirteen cement barriers along High Street in Dedham Square that have been placed to allow for outdoor dining. The goal of the public art project is to enliven the outdoor dining experience in Dedham Square, celebrate the vibrancy of Dedham, and welcome and invite visitors to explore the downtown. All paint and supplies for the project were provided by donations from local organizations, businesses, and volunteers. Phase 2 of the project will take place in Spring 2022; the project team hopes to collaborate with local young artists from the community to paint all of the remaining town barriers.¹

The Dedham Civic Pride Committee launched a **Utility Box**



Painting Project in 2017 to bring more art to the streets of Dedham. Three utility boxes in East Dedham received a face lift with the designs of three talented artists. The project was funded by Dedham Cultural Council through a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

The Dedham Library Innovation Team (DLIT) and Dedham High School serve as stewards of the **Dedham Little Free Libraries Project**. The Little Library program was launched in 2014 and serves to build pride-of-place among Dedham residents, to activate public spaces, and to beautify the public realm. Dedham’s individually decorated mini lending libraries were built by Dedham High School students and designed and painted by both students and community artists. Twelve individual little libraries are installed throughout town and enable readers of all ages and backgrounds to access books in their neighborhoods.

Mother Brook Waterfront

In East Dedham there is a semi-contiguous network of open space along the banks of the Mother Brook running from Mill Pond Park on Colburn Street, through the woods behind Condon Park to the area behind Delapa Plaza (270 Bussey Street). There is an existing trail connecting Condon Park to Delapa Plaza. However, trail maintenance and improved signage is needed. A narrow trail continues along Oakland Street toward the Stone Mill Condominiums and Dedham Housing Authority property.

Improving and maintaining the walking trails along Mother Brook is an important element of the mission of the **Mother Brook Community Group** (MBCG), formed in 2008 “to bring together the residents and business owners who are interested in promoting

a vital and thriving community among the neighborhoods connected by historic Mother Brook.” In July 2014, the Town held a grand opening of Mill Pond Park after many groups and individuals joined together to remove invasive Japanese knotweed, install an accessible walkway and fishing/viewing platform, and commission Dedham’s first permanent public art installation, a steel largemouth bass created by Dedham sculptor Gints Grinsbergs.²

The MBCG understands that Mother Brook, which served as the basis of the Town’s economy for three centuries, is a cultural and historic landmark that is a focal point of the East Dedham community. In Spring 2018, Town Meeting approved funds to build trails and parks along Mother Brook and place historical markers along these trails. This project will help to connect the community and preserve the unique cultural heritage represented by Mother Brook.³

In Fall 2018, the Town approved funds for a study to survey and document cultural and architectural resources along the Mother Brook Corridor. Dedham’s Mother Brook corridor includes a significant collection of surviving historic mill buildings, industrial infrastructure, residences (including company-built housing), municipal properties, and commercial buildings that form the core of the East Dedham neighborhood. The overall goal of the study was to identify districts, properties and sites eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Special Events

Dedham’s arts and cultural resources also include a series of celebrations, festivals, and special events throughout the year,

¹ <https://www.dedham-ma.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/5916/1016>

²⁻³ Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2019



most notably, Dedham Day, the Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting, the Flag Day Parade, Juneteenth, and other ephemeral occurrences.

Dedham Day

Hosted by the **Friends of Dedham Recreation** and the **Friends of the Dedham Pool**, Dedham Day is a time when residents gather to celebrate community pride, participate in games and have a chance to win money through a unique game called a “cow plop.” Community members also have an opportunity to learn about town organizations, government committees and vendors throughout the area at information tables. Dedham Day is held every September at John Barnes Memorial Park and features a barbecue, games, rides, crafts, shows, music and more. This family fun event is an old and beloved Dedham tradition

Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting

The annual Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting is held on the first

Dedham Day, 2021



Source: Town of Dedham

Friday in December in Dedham Square. Each year merchants extend store hours and offer special discounts and promotions as well as complimentary refreshments, free goodies, and raffles. This event is fun for all ages and features the ceremonial lighting of the town’s Christmas tree, street performers, roving carolers, costumed characters and live entertainment.

Flag Day Parade

Held each year on June 14th, the Flag Day Parade is an annual parade organized by the **Parks and Recreation Department** to celebrate Flag Day. This event began in 1967 and quickly became a Dedham tradition.

Dedham Farmer’s Market

Organized by the **Dedham Square Circle**, the Dedham Farmer’s Market is held on the First Church Green in Dedham Square on Wednesdays from late spring through October.

Endicott Estate Events

In addition to serving as a historic public facility, the Endicott Estate is also a venue for several community events throughout the year. The **Arts at Endicott Summer Concert Series** hosted by the **Dedham Junior Women’s Club**, the **James Joyce Ramble 10K road race**, and the **Bay State Antique Auto Club Car Show** are all popular events that are held on the grounds of the Endicott Estate.



Creative Economy

The Creative Economy, as defined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, includes "...without limitation the many interlocking industry sectors that center on providing creative services such as advertising, architecture or creating and promoting intellectual property products such as arts, film, computer games, multimedia, and design." With more than 60 establishments Dedham's Creative Economy is growing and can serve as a catalyst for continued economic growth.

In Dedham, core creative industries include Visual Arts, Music, and other Performing Arts, including photography studios, schools of dance, and other artists; Architecture and Design, primarily graphic, architectural services, and interior design; Media; Printing; Art-related Retail; Motion picture and teleproduction, including Dedham Community Theatre, Showcase Cinemas De Lux, and a few local production, video processing firms; Marketing; Publishing; Culture, Preservation; and Wholesale art stores.

The two largest clusters are located near Dedham Square and around Legacy Place. Smaller clusters are also dispersed throughout the Oakdale/Endicott and East Dedham neighborhoods. Dedham Square and the East Dedham neighborhood are also home to cultural events and important historic resources and cultural facilities. Given East Dedham's history as a manufacturing center of textiles and pottery, along with the unique natural and inspirational amenity of the Mother Brook, East Dedham has the potential to develop a robust, active and permanent creative community. Strengthening these centers of activity and the connections between them can help nurture East Dedham's burgeoning creative economy.

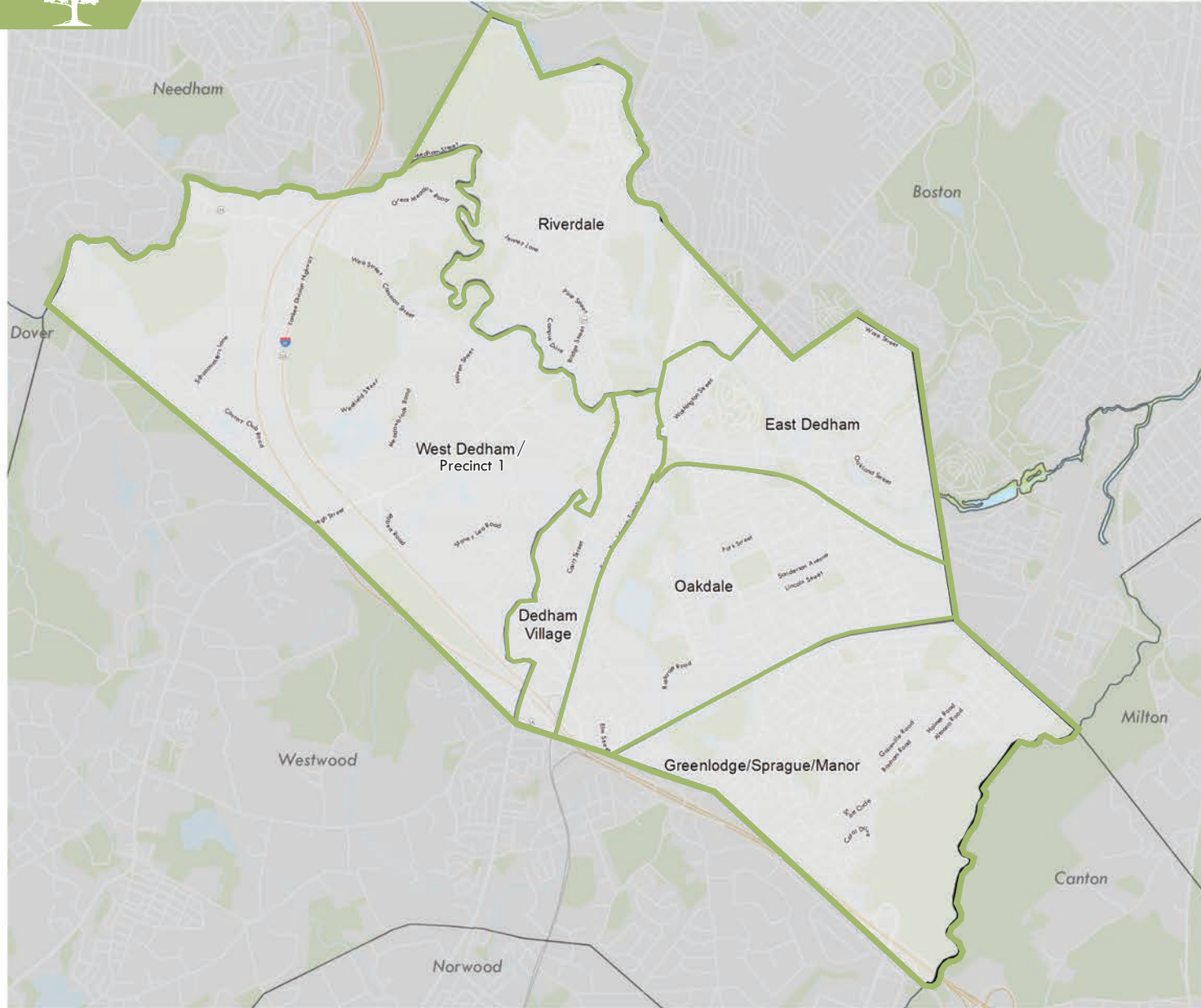
Historic Resources

Dedham's Historic Neighborhoods

Historically, Dedham developed as a series of distinct neighborhoods. Many of the neighborhoods are defined not only by natural features and man-made boundaries, but also by their unique development patterns and the architectural styles of their buildings. As defined in the Master Plan, Dedham's neighborhoods include East Dedham, Dedham Village/Dedham Square, Riverdale, Oakdale/Endicott, Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor, and Precinct 1/West Dedham. Neighborhoods are not static and continue to evolve and change. Today, Dedham's neighborhoods present particular challenges for historic resource protection, and they may require individualized preservation strategies in order to protect their special historic features.¹

East Dedham initially developed as a mill village, dating back to the first dredging of the Mother Brook canal in the seventeenth century. Early enterprises included grist, saw and fulling mills, while later factories specialized in textiles, paper, lumber, carriages and pottery. This industrial village continued to prosper over the next century with mills, workers' housing and associated commercial, social and religious buildings constructed for the influx of immigrant workers drawn to work in the mills. However, most of industrial activity in East Dedham eventually declined and the neighborhood lost its industrial identity. Today, sections of East Dedham still contain remnants of its industrial heritage in surviving mill buildings, modest nineteenth century workers' cottages and multi-family dwellings, and immigrant-associated establishments such as churches and social clubs.² Other clues to the area's

¹⁻² Dedham Master Plan, 2009



Neighborhoods

- Neighborhoods
- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham



Data Sources:
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
 February 2020



industrial past can be seen in local street names, such as Pottery Lane, and views of Mother Brook.¹

Upland from the Charles River is another village that developed during the seventeenth century, Dedham Village. Early Post Road and rail service access into Dedham Square helped to solidify this area as a local and regional destination. Development here differed significantly from the architecture of the mill village, both functionally and stylistically. The designation of Dedham as the Norfolk County Seat in 1793 accelerated the transformation of this once rural farming community to a prosperous civic and commercial center, and ultimately to the suburban center that exists today. Dedham Village/Dedham Square retains much of its historic character with a well-preserved and diverse collection of architectural styles, including grand single-family residences.² Today, Dedham Square in particular is facing strong development pressure.

Other areas of Dedham, including the neighborhoods of Greenlodge, Oakdale/Endicott, and Riverdale, remained primarily agricultural until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The mid-century arrival of train service triggered demand for housing, and family farms were subdivided to make way for new homes. By 1870, the first large-scale residential development was underway in Endicott Station and would continue for the rest of the century. The Oakdale/Endicott neighborhood was under construction by 1876. Oakdale included a small commercial node known as Oakdale Square. Endicott is within a portion of Oakdale from the southern boundary of the area to Mount Vernon Street from Whiting Avenue to Grant Avenue. The neighborhood of Greenlodge was developed by the

¹⁻⁴ Dedham Master Plan, 2009

mid-twentieth century, with its distinct topography, large irregular lots and 1950s housing stock of capes, split-levels and ranch-style homes.³

The Precinct 1/West Dedham neighborhood has the lowest density of development in town due, in part, to its topography. The area has many steep slopes, granite outcroppings, wetlands and woodlands. Today, it contains some of Dedham's most significant remaining open space and natural habitats along streams, ponds, and wetlands. The scenic beauty of this area attracted wealthy businessmen to the "country," and they constructed impressive estates during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴

Stewardship Organizations

Dedham has two primary entities dedicated to historic preservation in the town, the Dedham Museum & Archive (DM&A), a private non-profit organization and the Dedham Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission (HDC), a municipal board. In addition to the DM&A and HDC, another private non-profit organization, the Dedham Village Preservation Association (DVPA), works closely with the Town to preserve and enhance the unique charm of the Dedham Village historic district. Other groups, such as Fairbanks Family in America, a member-based non-profit organization, and the Dedham Community Association focus on the preservation of specific sites. Town boards such as the Planning Board and Conservation Commission also participate in the stewardship of Dedham's historic resources.

Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission

Founded in 1975, the Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission (HDC) is comprised of Dedham resident volunteers appointed and approved by the Select Board. The Commission



is composed of persons with professional expertise in law, architecture, history, historic preservation, conservation, local real estate, and finance. The HDC is the official agent of municipal government responsible for historic preservation, contextual compliance, and regulatory design review within Dedham's designated local Historic Districts. In its capacity as the town's Historical Commission, the HDC is also responsible for identifying and evaluating historic properties throughout the town as a whole. The Commission operates without a municipal budget and does not have paid town staff or an office at Town Hall.

Dedham Museum & Archive

The Dedham Museum & Archive, a nonprofit educational institution and museum, was founded in 1859 by citizens who sought to preserve the Town's history. The Society owns and operates the Dedham Museum & Archives at 612 High Street and is supported by membership dues and private donations. The Society also provides educational programming for the community through a lecture series, exhibits, tours and school programs, as well as a historic house plaque program and house tours. In addition, the Society maintains an extensive research archive.

National Register of Historic Places Listings

Applying for National Register of Historic Places designation is the most common approach for having the historic significance of a property, structure, or object recognized. Listing on the National Register is not accompanied by any regulations or restrictions on use or redevelopment of the property. The benefits of being listed in the National Register are formal recognition of

a property's historic significance to the community, state, and/or nation; eligibility for some federal tax-incentives for rehabilitation for owners of income-producing properties; limited protection for the property from federal or state actions; and eligibility for matching state grants for restoration of properties owned by private nonprofit organizations and municipalities, when such grants are available.

Resources Designated as Historically Significant

Several properties in Dedham have been designated as historically significant. Both The Fairbanks House (designated October 9, 1960) and the Norfolk County Courthouse (designated November 28, 1972) are recognized as National Historic Landmarks. National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States.

Dedham also has one historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Dedham Village Historic District, which received designation in 2006. The Dedham Village Historic District encompasses 55 acres and includes 342 properties, five of which are protected by historic preservation restrictions. The district is roughly bounded by Village Avenue and High, Court, Washington, School, and Chestnut Streets. In addition to the Dedham Village Historic District, the town also has four properties individually listed in the National Register, and a fifth group of properties pursuing a National Register Listing. Additional information on these individual listings is provided below:



- **Ames Schoolhouse** - This Colonial Revival structure at 450 Washington Street was built in 1897. It was renovated in 1937 by the Works Progress Administration. In 2014, the Town repurchased the Ames Schoolhouse to be used for the new Town Hall and Senior Center.
- **Endicott Estate** - The Endicott Estate was built in 1904 by Henry Endicott, founder of the Endicott Johnson Shoe Company. Henry's daughter Katherine bequeathed the Estate to the Town after her death in 1967. The Endicott Estate is owned by the Town and is used for functions and informal recreation.
- **Fairbanks House** - This house is located at the corner of East Street and Eastern Avenue. It is the oldest house in Dedham (circa 1636) and has been recognized by the Department of the Interior as the oldest wooden frame house in the United States. The property is owned by The Fairbanks Family Association and offers tours to the public.
- **Norfolk County Courthouse** - The Courthouse, which is located at 650 High Street within the District Court complex, was built in 1827 and was the location of the historic Sacco-Vanzetti Trial in 1921.
- **Mother Brook** - The oldest man-made canal in North America and the first canal constructed in the U.S. with efforts under way to have it listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Local Historic Districts

Dedham has three designated local historic districts with a combined total of approximately 140 properties. Dedham's

local historic districts have some overlap with the larger Dedham Village National Register District. However, the National Register district is significantly larger and inclusive of more historic resources. The three local historic districts include:

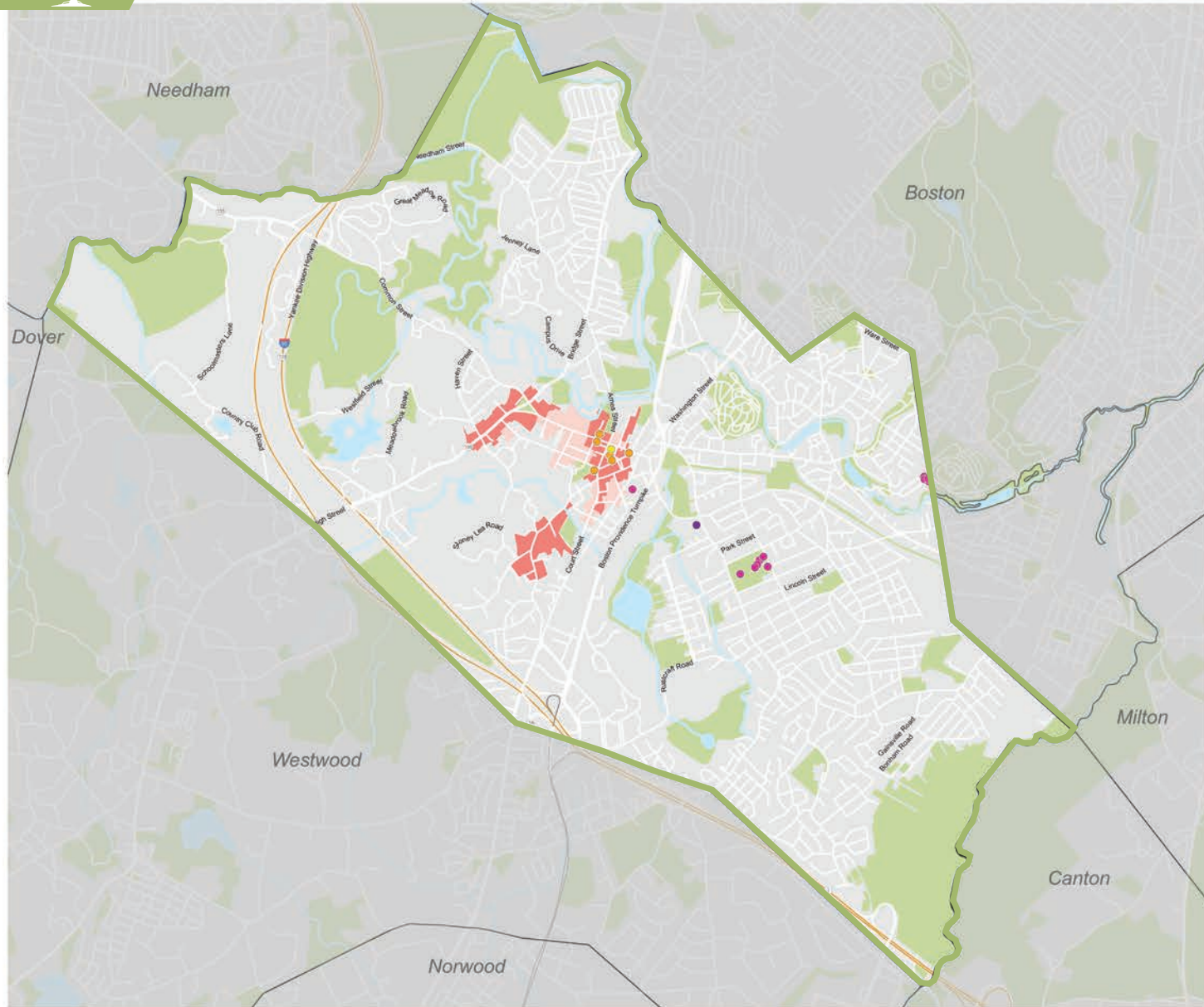
- **The Connecticut Corner Historic District** is located along High Street, from Lowder Street to the far edge of Dedham Common, and it includes thirty-four properties.
- **The Franklin Square-Court Street Historic District** includes eighty-seven properties along parts of High and Court Streets, Old River Place, Village Avenue, Church Street, School Street, Norfolk Street, and Franklin Square. In 2006, the Town approved to expand the Franklin Square-Court Street Historic District to include the Old Village Cemetery.
- In 2008, Town Meeting unanimously voted to create the **Federal Hill Historic District**. This District includes nineteen properties ranging from the late seventeenth century (ca. 1690) to a reproduction Cape built in 1986.

Properties within these districts cannot be demolished under normal circumstances and all exterior changes that are visible from a public way must be reviewed by the HDC.¹ In January of 2005, the HDC issued Standards and Instructions for Homeowners, followed by General Principles, Goals, and Guidelines for New Construction in August 2013.

Inventoried Historic Resources

Identifying a community's historic resources through a cultural resource inventory forms the basis of historic preservation planning at the local level. The majority of Dedham's historic resource inventory dates from the mid-1970s (although several

¹ Establishing Local Historic Districts." Massachusetts Historical Commission, June 2003, reprinted 2007.





forms were completed more recently). To date, approximately 648 properties have been inventoried and recorded on the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), which aggregates all historic inventories submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Resources identified in the inventory date from 1636 to 1980 and include 368 buildings, 13 objects, 34 structures, 22 areas, and 2 burial grounds. The inventory forms do not include secondary features such as outbuildings, stone walls, and landscape elements. In general, Dedham's inventory is not comprehensive, it does not include all types of resources or resources found throughout the town. Perhaps most significant in terms of the town's preservation planning capacity, Dedham's completed survey forms have minimal information about each resource's architectural, historical, and contextual significance.

The 2006-2010 Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan noted that Dedham has a very outdated inventory.¹ For communities with old inventories or little or no inventory work in place, the state plan recommends that the local historical commission develop formal survey plans in order to establish the objectives, scope, phasing, and budgeting of local comprehensive survey efforts. Survey plans may be stand-alone documents, or may be included as part of a municipal preservation plan, Master Plan, or comprehensive plan.²

Previous historic resource inventory efforts have concentrated primarily on documenting the historic residential and institutional buildings in Dedham Village, where most of the town's

preservation planning efforts have also focused. While efforts to document other resources in town have been limited, this does not mean that Dedham has no historical resources outside of Dedham Village.

Historic Buildings

Dedham has an impressive and well-preserved collection of historic buildings representing more than three hundred years of development, from the arrival of English settlers in the seventeenth century through Dedham's evolution as a suburb in the mid-twentieth century. These historic buildings represent many of the architectural styles popular during the past 350 years and are rendered on a variety of building forms, including residential, commercial, religious, institutional, industrial and governmental building types. This built environment contributes to Dedham's visual character and provides a tangible link to the town's history.

The Dedham Museum & Archive's publication, *Building Dedham: Celebrating 350 Years of History*, provides a comprehensive overview of Dedham's historic buildings, including a historic narrative on Dedham's development, composite of architectural styles, building types represented in the town, and photographs and descriptions of notable individual buildings.

While most of Dedham's historic buildings are privately owned, several are held in public and non-profit ownership, including local educational institutions. Today, the town maintains ownership of several older structures, including the Public Library and the Endicott Estate, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and several neighborhood schools and fire stations. These older structures can present challenges for a municipality as it

¹ Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan 2006-2010 (September 2006), 8-3

² Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan 2018-2022 (July 2018), 3-6



struggles to balance competing demands for local revenue with rising maintenance costs for aging buildings. Determining ways to provide regular, historically sensitive maintenance is critical to ensure each building's long-term viability and historic significance. Deferred maintenance only leads to higher costs in the future and the potential for an irreplaceable loss of a community's heritage. The following section represents a collection of some of Dedham's more well-documented resources.

The **Norfolk County Courthouse** was one of the first county structures built in Dedham Village. Originally constructed in 1827 and designed by Boston architect Solomon Willard, this imposing Greek Revival style granite building has a Doric-columned portico along the High Street façade. Other county buildings include the **Norfolk County Registry of Deeds** (1902) at 649 High Street, an impressive limestone structure designed in the Neoclassical style by Peabody and Stearns, and the **Norfolk District Court** (1938) also constructed in limestone in the Art Deco style by the architectural firm of Cram and Ferguson. The **Post Office** (1934) at 611 High Street, constructed in the Colonial Revival style as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project during the Great Depression is another prominent civic structure in Dedham. Today these government buildings continue to be used in their original civic capacity.

Located a block away from Dedham Square, the **Norfolk County Jail** (1851) at 47 Village Avenue is nestled within a residential neighborhood. The Jail was abandoned in 1993 and the structures remained vacant for several years. In the late 1990s, the Jail, the attached Sheriff's residence and the carriage house were renovated and converted to residential condominiums.¹

¹⁻² Dedham Master Plan, 2009

The **Dedham Institution for Savings Building** at 601-603 High Street was constructed in 1892 and designed by the Boston firm of Hartwell & Richardson in the Romanesque Revival style, with a high-pitched roof, steep dormers, arched doorways and terracotta details, all common elements of the style.²

Historic civic buildings under the care and custody of the town represent a variety of building types and uses including a public library, a fire station, school buildings, and a public works facility. Located throughout Dedham, these structures are in various states of preservation and include the **Dedham Public Library** (1888) at 43 Church Street, **Oakdale School** (1902) at 147 Cedar St, **Bridge Street Pumping Station** (1881) at 536 Bridge Street, and Ames Building at 450 Washington Street, which now houses the **Town Hall and the Senior Center**.

The historic single-family homes of Dedham Village and the late nineteenth and early twentieth century neighborhoods of Oakdale, and Greenlodge are generally well-preserved and contribute significantly to the character of their respective neighborhoods. Workers' housing in East Dedham, including single-family, duplex, and multi-family dwellings along High, Milton, Colburn, Maverick, and Bussey Streets, still exist today and represent the area's industrial heritage.

The **Endicott Estate** (1904) was designed by Boston architect Henry Bailey Alden. Built for shoe manufacturer Henry Bradford Endicott, a founder of Endicott-Johnson Shoe Corporation in New York, this elegant two-and-one-half story Colonial Revival style residence is articulated with corner pilasters, an elaborate cornice, a palladian window, prominent corbeled chimneys and a Doric columned porte-cochere representative of high-style Colonial Revival detailing. In 1955, the Endicott Estate was donated to the town and it is now used for community functions.



The **Endicott House** (1931) on Westfield and Haven Streets was originally the estate of Brigadier General Stephen Minot Weld, who built an imposing mansion on twenty-five acres of rocky hilltop in the late nineteenth century. J. Wendell Endicott purchased the estate in 1931 and maintained the gardens and grounds but razed the Weld mansion, replacing it with a French manor style mansion designed by prominent New York architect Charles Platt. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) acquired the property in 1955 and maintains the estate for alumni functions.¹

The **Albert Nickerson House** or “The Castle” (1888) at 507 Bridge Street is a large Romanesque style structure designed by the Boston firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge for the president of the Arlington Woolen Mills and director of the Atchinson, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. It is the only residential example of this style in Dedham. The building has a richly colored stone façade, distinctive towers, recessed porches, arched entry, and steeply pitched roof, and it is maintained within the 158-acre campus of the Noble and Greenough School.²

The **Haven House** on the corner of Ames and High Streets is a Federal Style mansion attributed to Charles Bulfinch. The building is now owned by the Dedham Community House (DCH), founded in 1922 as a charitable, non-profit association. The DCH originally acquired the property for use as a community center and has preserved the Haven House as a function facility. Today, the DCH property includes two other older buildings, the “Stone House” and the “cottage” on Bullard Street within its eight-acre campus along the Charles River. This property is located within the Franklin Square Local Historic District.³

¹⁻³ Dedham Master Plan, 2009

Historic Structures

One of Dedham’s most significant historic structures is the **Dedham Powder House**. Located on Ames Street near the Charles River, the Dedham Powder House was constructed in 1766 by Captain Fuller as a powder magazine for the Revolutionary War. It is a small, one-story brick structure with a distinctive concave hipped roof nestled on a wooded parcel above the Charles River. While the historic structure is owned by the Town, the land on which it is located, almost one acre overlooking the Charles River, is owned by the Dedham Museum & Archive. The site has deteriorated over the years due to lack of maintenance; however, the DHSM has expressed interest in restoring the property, which has importance as a scenic, historic, and natural resource. Another historic structure is the **Stone Mill** complex in East Dedham. A series of 19th century mill structures that have been preserved and converted to residential uses in 1987 and located on a mill pond along Mother Brook. The **East Dedham Fire Station** is also in East Dedham. It was built in 1855, it is the oldest wooden fire station in Massachusetts, and is possibly the oldest wood-framed fire station still in use in the country.

Stone Walls

Dry laid stone walls once served as property boundaries for agricultural fields. Today, these walls testify to the historic development pattern of land ownership and agricultural use, and provide physical evidence of Dedham’s agrarian heritage. Stone walls in Dedham can be found within now-forested land, along its scenic roadways, and bordering the perimeter of its remaining open space. The physical nature of these structures belies their inherent fragility; deferred maintenance and natural erosion cause many dry-laid stone walls to deteriorate. Dedham does not have an inventory of its stone walls, but some notable examples can be seen along Lowder Street, one of the town’s picturesque rural roadways.



Perhaps even more notable is Dedham’s collection of mortared stone walls, which define the historic estates in Precinct 1/West Dedham and serve as property boundaries for the historic homes in Dedham Village and other historic neighborhoods. These tall, masonry walls, some with arched openings and elaborate entrance details, provide the boundary definition for educational institutions such as MIT’s Endicott House and the Noble and Greenough School. As with the town’s dry laid stone walls, the mortared walls are located in close proximity to the pavement of adjoining roads and contribute significantly to the scenic character of these roadways.

Historic Monuments and Memorials

In addition to historic structures and stone walls, Dedham is home to several prominent historic monuments, plaques and markers documenting the community’s historic events. Most of the objects listed in the inventory are located within Dedham Village. They include the **Marine Memorial War Monument** (1957) on Washington Street; the **Dedham War Memorial** (1963) in front of Town Building on Bryant and Washington Streets; the **Pillar**

Dedham War Memorial



Source: Town of Dedham

of Liberty (1766) on Court and High Streets; the **Fisher Ames Marker and Suffolk Resolves Marker** (both ca. 1905) on High Street; and the **French Encampment Plaque** (1926) on Court and Marsh Streets.

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries

The town maintains two public cemeteries, **Old Village Cemetery** and **Brookdale Cemetery**, as well as a **small burial ground at the former site of the Dedham Temporary Home for Women and Children**. Over time the grounds of this historic cemetery have deteriorated, and several gravestones and paths are in need of restoration. The Dedham Village Preservation Association (DVPA), a nonprofit organization, is currently working with the Town and the DPW to implement a restoration plan for the site and establish a perpetual care fund to cover future maintenance. As mentioned earlier, the Old Village Cemetery is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of more than 30 stops on a self-guided walking tour of Historic Dedham Village created by the Dedham Museum & Archive.¹

Archaeological Sites

Dedham has not conducted a town-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify Native American or historic archaeological resources within its boundaries. The land upon which Dedham is located has a history that extends far beyond that of its English settlers. The area now known as Dedham is part of the ancestral territory of the Massachusetts people. In 1620 Chickataubut, Sachem of the Neponset Band of the Massachusetts, controlled territory encompassing the Boston peninsula and present-day suburbs to the south and southwest, as well as the southeast coast and adjacent inland territories.²

¹ Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2019

² The Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag, Our History – Chickataubut, <http://massachusettstribe.org/chickataubut>



Chickatabut's winter inland seat and the winter home of his people was at Massawachusett, (the place of many great hills) and from where the Massachusetts people took their name at what is now called the Blue Hills and included what is now present-day Dedham.¹ In fact, the body of water, now known as Wigwam Pond, adjoined a piece of land previously known as Wigwam Plain which acted as a homesite for the local Neponset (Massachusetts Nation) population before and after English settlement.²

Wigwam Pond, formerly known as Mirror Lake, is a water body made up of 23 acres that is located to the right of Providence Highway, heading northbound. Currently, the pond is the home to beavers, birds and a variety of fish. However, due to the pond's location, there is limited access for people to enjoy its natural resources. In 2015, the Commonwealth appropriated \$100,000 to the Town to hire a consultant to assist in the design of public access for walking, paddling, biking, and fishing in and around Wigwam Pond. The Town is seeking to undertake a Wigwam Pond Public Access Plan to create a vision and implementation for improved access to Wigwam Pond. In 2022, the Town appointed a Committee as part of the Wigwam Pond Access & Recreation Plan process. In Fall 2023, a final plan for future recreation use of Wigwam Pond was submitted to the Planning Board for adoption after a successful one-year community process.

While Dedham has not conducted a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey, the Town has completed site-specific archaeological studies. In May 2017, in recognition

¹ The Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag, Our History – Chickatabut, <http://massachusettstribe.org/chickatabut>

² Worthington, Erastus. The History of Dedham: From the Beginning of Its Settlement, in September 1635, to May 1827. Dedham, MA: Dutton and Wentworth, 1827., 121. <https://www.dedhammuseum.org/learn/dedham-history/>

Wigwam Pond



Source: Town of Dedham

of the 375th anniversary of the construction of the Mother Brook Canal, Town Meeting allocated \$15,000 for a study to survey and document cultural and architectural resources along the Mother Brook Corridor. Dedham's Mother Brook corridor includes a significant collection of surviving historic mill buildings, industrial infrastructure, residences (including company-built housing), municipal properties, and commercial buildings that form the core of the East Dedham neighborhood. The overall goal of the study was to identify districts, properties and sites eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Significant archaeological sites identified in Dedham will be included in the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth. This confidential inventory contains sensitive information and is not a public record as required under Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 9, Section 26A (1). All archaeological site information should be kept in a secure location with restricted access.



Historic Preservation Planning in Dedham

Historic preservation planning is a strategy for documenting the history of a community as a tool for prioritizing preservation efforts. It establishes a baseline of historic preservation efforts, allows a community to develop a set of shared preservation priorities, identifies gaps in historic inventories, and informs the work of municipal preservation entities such as Historical Commissions and Local Historic District Commissions. A strong plan links the work of municipal historic preservation to the goals and priorities of the Massachusetts Historic Commission. Dedham does not currently have a Municipal Preservation Plan nor a municipal preservation planner on staff.

Regulatory Tools for Historic Preservation

Municipalities can also adopt regulatory tools to support historic preservation. These tools include the use of preservation restrictions on use or structural alterations of properties that are attached to deeds, demolition delay ordinances, and local historic district commissions. They can also include land use and zoning regulations that incentivize the preservation of historic densities, setbacks, and historic design elements through form-based codes or design standards. Dedham has several effective programs in place which assist in the preservation of historic properties. These programs are described briefly below.

Preservation Restrictions

A voluntary legal agreement attached to the deed of a property that protects a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource. It is one of the strongest preservation tools available. It provides assurance that a historic or culturally significant property's intrinsic values will be preserved through subsequent

ownership by restricting the demolition or alteration of its significant historic feature(s).

Dedham has six properties protected by historic preservation restrictions under MGL Ch. 184, S. 31-33. With the exception of the Fairbanks House, all of the preservation restrictions listed below run in perpetuity, with no expiration date. The following properties have preservation restrictions:

- Allin Congregational Church (restriction enacted 11/5/01)
- Dedham Museum & Archive (restriction enacted 2/8/02)
- Dedham Public Library (restriction enacted 3/21/02)
- Fairbanks House (restriction enacted 4/6/98 – expired on November 17, 2015)
- First Church Meetinghouse (restriction enacted 5/4/98)
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church (restriction enacted 8/20/97)
- 18 Norfolk Street (restriction enacted 1/26/99)

Local Historic Districts

The designation of a Local Historic District (LHD) provides a regulatory review process for all changes to exterior architectural features visible from a public way.¹ LHDs can protect the appearance of historic properties and encourage new construction to be designed in a way that is compatible with existing buildings in the district. Dedham has created three local historic districts under MGL Ch. 40C that have been described above including the Connecticut Corner, the Franklin Square-Court Street, and the Federal Hill Historic Districts.

In addition to preservation restrictions and local historic districts there are other preservation related tools that Dedham could consider in its resource protection efforts. These programs are described briefly below.

¹ Establishing Local Historic Districts." Massachusetts Historical Commission, June 2003, reprinted 2007.



Demolition Delay Bylaw

A Demolition Delay Bylaw provides communities with the opportunity to work with property owners to find an alternative to demolition. During the delay period, a community can encourage an owner to preserve their building or seek a buyer who would retain the structure. The bylaw also creates a public review process for proposed demolitions of historic structures. This ensures that important historic landmarks are not destroyed without community awareness and the ability to seek an alternative.

Demolition delay bylaws can be designed to meet local needs. A community determines which properties are subject to the bylaw and the specific term of the delay period. Applicable properties can include those over a certain age (e.g., all buildings more than fifty years old) or those built prior to a certain date (e.g., buildings built prior to 1930). Delay periods also vary by community. While most communities in Massachusetts have adopted bylaws that impose a six-month delay, many have extended the delay period to twelve months and even eighteen months after determining that six months is not adequate for finding alternatives to demolition.

Scenic Road Bylaw

Stone walls and tree-lined streets are part of what is commonly considered community character. The Scenic Roads Act is one tool which the Town could use to preserve community character. The Act (MGL Ch. 40, S. 15C) affords a certain level of protection to local roads which have officially been designated as scenic roads. The purpose of the statute is to provide an opportunity for the Planning Board to review the cutting or removal of trees or the alteration of stone walls within the road right-of-way of a designated scenic road.

Currently, there are no designated scenic roads in Dedham; however, Dedham's 1996 and 2009 Master Plans both made recommendations that the Town consider designating the following network of major streets as scenic roads. Some sections of these streets would not be eligible for designation as scenic roads because they are numbered state routes; these sections are described for each of the previously identified streets:

- Needham Street/Pine Street/Ames Street
- Common Street/West Street (West Street - State Route 135 not eligible)
- Haven Street/Lowder Street
- Highland Street
- High Street/Mill Lane (from Dedham Common through Dedham Square to Mother Brook)
- Dedham Boulevard (not officially eligible because it is owned by the DCR)
- Washington Street/Court Street
- Walnut Street
- Oakdale Avenue/Cedar Street
- East Street
- Sprague Street

Community Preservation Act (CPA)

The CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space, housing, and historic preservation through a surcharge on the annual tax levy on real property (from 1% to 3%) and a contribution from the State (currently an 11% match that should increase in future years based on recently passed legislation). To date, 188 municipalities in the Commonwealth have adopted CPA and receive a State match from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund. If adopted the town could use CPA funds for historic preservation planning efforts and the rehabilitation of important historic landscapes and buildings.



Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources Goals and Strategies

NOTE: It is up to the Planning Board to decide to implement the goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan.

Summary: To protect and enhance these features and resources and make them an integral part of the Town's strengthened livability.

NCH1 Goal 1: Protect, enhance, and expand Dedham's natural, cultural, and historic resources in a way that honors the past, responds to the present, and plans for the future.

The strength of Dedham's existing protected resources are a testament to a strong legacy of stewardship. Current assets should continue to be cared for while integrating new assets through the documentation of resources, responding to evolving needs of the community, and expanding historic narratives. Manage Dedham's natural, cultural, and historic resources in a holistic manner.

Strategy 1.1: Maintain and update an inventory of places, traditions, landscapes, and buildings that tell the full story of Dedham's history and that responds to transformative social change working with partners such as the Dedham Museum & Archive.

Strategy 1.2: Expand, document, and promote Dedham's diverse history through use of oral histories, storytelling, photographs, archival data, walking tours, creative placemaking, and public art

working with partners such as the Dedham Museum & Archive.

Strategy 1.3: Support the stewardship and adaptive reuse of historic structures, existing buildings, and Town properties for community and cultural uses.

Strategy 1.4: Establish new partnerships and expand existing partnerships with local and regional organizations, non-profits, businesses, and community groups to align and integrate existing and future initiatives, projects, and resources focused on natural, cultural, and historical resources.

Strategy 1.5: Promote, protect, and preserve the current Historic Districts and develop plans and strategies for potentially recognizing additional districts, sites, and places.



NCH2 Goal 2: Implement the recommendations of the Town’s recently completed Open Space and Recreation Plan and Climate Action and Resiliency Plan.

The following Master Plan strategies are intended to assist in implementation of the natural, cultural, and historic resource recommendations of these complementary plans. The Master Plan is not intended to duplicate or negate the recommendations of these plans.

Strategy 2.1: Leverage Master Plan implementation to identify synergies and priorities with needed open space and climate actions and define specific assistance needed.

Strategy 2.2: Identify the resources that may be needed to assist in implementation of recently completed plans including Town staff and capacity, funding or other resources, training needs, or other support.

Strategy 2.3: Bring together relevant boards and committees to share the recommendations and suggested implementation activities of these plans to build a common understanding and to plan for coordination.

Strategy 2.4: Prepare a list of recommended implementation activities and projects that are supported and ready for implementation that can be advanced as funding sources become available.

Strategy 2.5: Leverage development review processes to integrate climate resilience, sustainability, and conservation and access to open space.

Strategy 2.6: Advance sustainability and resilience in the Town through planting programs to address heat islands, creating pollinator gardens, and increasing water conservation, among other approaches.



NCH3 Goal 3: Support and expand resources, programs, and events that are welcoming and inclusive for all members of the Dedham Community.

All resources should feel welcoming and inclusive for any member of the Dedham community. Both physical assets and programs should be designed to serve a diverse community and enable residents to participate in and take advantage of all that Dedham has to offer. This sense of welcoming may need to evolve to meet the needs of longstanding and new Dedham residents alike to offer access to meaningful and inclusive cultural experiences and amenities.

Strategy 3.1: Develop a framework or process to help Town departments and community organizations systematically integrate equity into community planning decisions and processes. This could include gathering data to determine where resources and efforts are most needed and track progress for meeting those needs over time.

Strategy 3.2: Expand education and communication around resources, programs, and events that are available to help improve quality of life for Dedham residents.

Strategy 3.3: Improve the engagement and representation of all Dedham residents, particularly groups that are currently underrepresented, in neighborhood groups and Town processes.

Strategy 3.4: Strengthen cultural and arts education in Dedham schools, and through other Town facilities and programs, and create opportunities for residents to engage in historic and cultural projects and events.

Strategy 3.5: Promote and encourage use of the Dedham Public Library system, the Mother Brook Arts and Community Center, schools, parks, and other community anchors and cultural institutions that provide opportunities for life-long learning.

Strategy 3.6: Work with residents to develop a Town-wide cultural asset mapping project that identifies the places and resources important to Dedham's cultural identity and creativity. Cultural asset mapping is a method of collecting and synthesizing information including inventorying both tangible and intangible assets in the form of people, places, associations, organizations, or traditions. This recognizing, counting, and tracking of cultural components can help communities define and advance cultural goals.

Strategy 3.7: Work to encourage hosting arts and cultural programs and events in public spaces and underutilized spaces in Town facilities.



NCH4 Goal 4: Encourage routine and regular use of cultural, historic, and natural resources to enhance livability and quality of life for residents and integrate these special places into daily life.

Utilize parks, recreation, open space, trails, greenways, and waterways to promote health and exercise, connect residents, and increase social interaction. Bring historic and cultural resources into daily life with more relevance and accessibility for residents and visitors.

Strategy 4.1: Improve equitable access to resources that improve quality of life by first identifying gaps and then solutions to connecting residents to existing amenities or planning for new amenities in strategic locations, including natural, cultural, and historic amenities, health care, education, parks, recreation, nutritious food, and the arts.

Strategy 4.2: Design safe and welcoming public spaces that facilitate social connections, enhance cultural identity, and provide gathering and educational spaces for the community.

Strategy 4.3: Provide spaces and promote events that facilitate and support cross-generational interaction among seniors, adults, and youth.

Strategy 4.4: Develop an approach to promotion of resources and programming that is specific to a neighborhood and the nearby resources so that the most relevant and local information gets to nearby residents.

Strategy 4.5: Improve consistent signage at each resource that increases visibility and access to the property including consistent regulatory signage at parks, for example “drug and alcohol free zone” signs.

Strategy 4.6: Increase spaces and programs that support all-weather year-round access to resources with shelters.



NCH5 Goal 5: Improve connectivity and access to natural, cultural, and historic resources with a safe and equitable multimodal network that serves all users.

Create an equitable and connected multimodal network that improves non-vehicular access for residents of all ages and abilities to parks and open space, and historic, cultural and community resources and services.

Strategy 5.1: Increase the percentage of households, both new and existing, within a safe, 10-minute walk, bike, or transit trip of a natural, cultural, or historic resource.

Strategy 5.2: Build and maintain pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure acceptable to the community and integrated with natural and cultural resources that allows for residents of all abilities to access community resources.

Strategy 5.3: Identify and prioritize closing gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to provide critical connections to amenities. Filling these gaps should be high priority investments for the Town.

Strategy 5.4: Increase and improve access to resources that already exist, such as the Dedham Town Forest, Lowder Street Conservation property, and Wigwam Pond.

Strategy 5.5: Leverage development review processes to expand access to nearby natural, cultural, and historic resources through investments in multimodal infrastructure, improvement of surrounding roadway design, granting of easements, conservation restrictions, or other approaches.



NCH6 Goal 6: Identify funding sources and develop additional capacity (people, knowledge, technology, infrastructure, etc.) to manage and enhance Dedham’s natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Resources supporting the needs of natural, cultural, and historic resources are always in high demand. It would benefit all of the goals, strategies, and complementary plan recommendations to expand the resources available to advance this work.

Strategy 6.1: Seek out and seize opportunities to leverage funding to support Master Plan goals related to natural, cultural, and historic resources. For example, the Community Preservation Act (CPA) could augment financial resources for not only historic preservation and open space and recreation, but also affordable housing.

Strategy 6.2: Organize periodic meetings of all stakeholders of natural, cultural, and historic resources to make connections and leverage the interrelationships between ongoing efforts.

Strategy 6.3: Create a framework of support, such as neighborhood toolkit, with guides, resources, and tips to help build the capacity of neighborhood organizations and associations.

Strategy 6.4: Develop a marketing strategy to publicize the benefits of federal and state historic tax credit programs and how they work.

Strategy 6.5: Explore technology that can support resident connections to natural, cultural and historic resources that may include an app with amenities, events, and safest routes to resources, augmented reality to highlight historic narratives, or other tools to enhance resources.



NCH7 Goal 7: Integrate arts, culture, and preservation as a local engine to improve economic development, quality of life, attract investment, and job creation.

Communicate and promote the value and economic impact of arts and culture with support for the creative economy, public realm art installations, and programs to connect local artists and businesses.

Strategy 7.1: Leverage Dedham’s existing Arts Overlay District (AOD) and increase galleries, art and performance space, and cultural facilities.

Strategy 7.2: Support artistic, cultural assets, historic assets and placemaking activities to help promote tourism and local spending by visitors to the Town.

Strategy 7.3: Grow public-private partnerships and create incentives or tools to support creative businesses, job creation, and local artists. For example, encourage the development of additional creative and cultural districts.

Strategy 7.4: Identify location and policies that could be used to encourage artist housing in the Town. Provide development incentives through zoning or other tools to encourage the creation and preservation of artist housing.

Strategy 7.5: Support preservation of historic buildings that often provide small spaces well-suited to local businesses, creative enterprises, and artists.



Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for natural, cultural, and historic resources.

NCH1 Establish new partnerships and expand existing partnerships with local and regional organizations, non-profits, businesses, and community groups to align and integrate initiatives, and projects focused on natural, cultural, historical resources.

Identifying ways to increase coordination and resource sharing between organizations will help make a larger impact in the community and ensure that Dedham's resources are protected and well maintained for future generations. A convening of these stakeholders to begin regular coordination and check-in could be facilitated by the Town. The lead responsibility would be the Select Board in close coordination with the Town Manager. This will be a continuous and ongoing action item.

NCH2 Add capacity to implement recommendations identified in the Town's recently completed planning efforts.

This action would begin with adding capacity for implementation including giving more authority and a budget to the Open Space Committee and providing Town staff (or staff shared with another municipality) to support preservation, open space, and arts and culture activity. The lead responsibility would be the Select Board and Town Manager in close coordination with the Planning Department, Parks and Recreation, Historic District Commission, and others. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Sustainable Dedham Climate Action & Resiliency Plan, the Dedham Public Schools Master Plan, the Dedham Museum & Archive Strategic Plan, and the Dedham Public Library Strategic Plan.



NCH1 **Goal 1: Protect, enhance, and expand Dedham’s natural, cultural, and historic resources in a way that honors the past, responds to the present, and plans for the future.**

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH1.1: Maintain and update an inventory of places, traditions, landscapes, and buildings that tell the full story of Dedham’s history and that responds to transformative social change working with partners such as the Dedham Museum & Archive.	1. Create public inventory and then post to the community to crowdsource additional assets to potentially expand the understanding and inventory of resources.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission, Planning & Zoning Department	Library, Dedham Museum & Archive, Dedham Cultural Council, Civic Pride Committee, Human Rights Commission	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Mass Cultural Council grants
	2. Maintain the list as new resources become historic with the passing of time, track local resources that may be threatened.				
NCH1.2: Expand, document, and promote Dedham’s diverse history through use of oral histories, storytelling, photographs, archival data, walking tours, creative placemaking, and public art working with partners such as the Dedham Museum & Archive	1. Create an inventory of historic narratives and then post to the community to crowdsource additional narratives to potentially expand the understanding and inventory of narratives.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission, Planning & Zoning Department	Library, Dedham Museum & Archive, Dedham Cultural Council, Civic Pride Committee, Human Rights Commission, Council on Aging	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Mass Cultural Council grants
	2. Highlight these elements and historic narratives through the features of neighborhood business districts, economic activity centers, and elements of public realm improvements.				
	3. Consider hiring an archivist to assist in the cataloging and preserving of historic documents and objects and digitization efforts.	Library		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Dedham is part of the Digital Commonwealth providing access to resources and digitized documents



Priority

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH1.3: Support the stewardship and adaptive reuse of historic structures, existing buildings, and Town properties for community and cultural uses.	1. Through the inventory of resources and identification of threatened resources, identify priority properties for the exploration of reuse alternatives.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission	Dedham Museum & Archive	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund, information available at: https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcmppf/mppfidx.htm
	2. Work with property owners to explore options for preservation.				
NCH1.4: Establish new partnerships and expand existing partnerships with local and regional organizations, non-profits, businesses, and community groups to align and integrate existing and future initiatives, projects, and resources focused on natural, cultural, and historical resources.	1. Inventory existing and potential partners and invite these partners to a meeting to explore shared goals and complementary activity.	Select Board	Town Manager	Continuous and ongoing	
	2. Explore hiring a part-time or full-time historic preservation planner to the town staff in order to support town historic and preservation needs.			Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	3. Define a Town staff member to be a liaison to community groups helping to coordinate and organize efforts and make connections to across the Town.			Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH1.5: Promote, protect, and preserve the current Historic Districts and develop plans and strategies for potentially recognizing additional districts, sites, and places.	1. Identify potential additional districts, sites, and places to designate.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission	Dedham Museum & Archive	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Explore passing a Scenic Roads Bylaw and the streets that would benefit from this designation.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission	Conservation Department, Dedham Museum & Archive	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



NCH2 Goal 2: Implement the recommendations of the Town’s recently completed Open Space and Recreation Plan and Climate Action and Resiliency Plan.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources	
<p>Priority</p> <p>NCH2.1: Leverage Master Plan implementation to identify synergies and priorities with needed open space and climate actions and define specific assistance needed.</p>	1. Add capacity to implement recommendations identified in the Town’s recently completed planning efforts including giving more authority and a budget to the Open Space Committee and providing Town staff to support preservation, open space, and arts and culture activity.	Select Board and Town Manager	Planning & Zoning Department, Parks and Recreation, Historic District Commission, Sustainability Advisory Committee, and others	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Sustainable Dedham Climate Action & Resiliency Plan, the Dedham Public Schools Master Plan, the Dedham Museum & Archive Strategic Plan, and the Dedham Public Library Strategic Plan.	
	<p>NCH2.2: Identify the resources that may be needed to assist in implementation of recently completed plans including Town staff and capacity, funding or other resources, training needs, or other support.</p>	1. Reconsider the adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to augment financial resources for not only historic preservation and open space and recreation but also affordable housing.	Town Manager	Select Board and Town Department, Boards, and Committees	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	The Community Preservation Coalition provides overview flyers, background information, facts and figures about CPA, at: https://www.communitypreservation.org/about Additional information is available from the Commonwealth at: https://www.mass.gov/lists/community-preservation-act
		2. Pursue external funding and grant sources, such as those the Town is now qualified for with an approved Open Space and Recreation Plan.	Open Space & Recreation Committee	Town Manager	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Grant programs offered by the Division of Conservation Services information available at: https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services
	3. Integrate capital planning and needs for open spaces and climate change investments in the Town’s capital plan.	Capital Expenditures Committee	Finance Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)		



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH2.3: Bring together relevant boards and committees to share the recommendations and suggested implementation activities of these plans to build a common understanding and to plan for coordination.	1. After the formation of the Master Plan Implementation Committee, convene a meeting or series of meetings with relevant boards and committees to build common understanding and support for implementation activities of the Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, and Climate Action Plan.	Master Plan Implementation Committee	Boards and Committees	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH2.4: Prepare a list of recommended implementation activities and projects that are supported and ready for implementation that can be advanced as funding sources become available.	1. Create a list of “shovel-ready” projects that will be particularly useful as Federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act continue to be allocated to programs and municipalities.	Town Manager	Select Board, Engineering Department, Planning & Zoning Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH2.5: Leverage development review processes to integrate climate resilience, sustainability, and conservation and access to open space.	1. Initiate a Site Plan Review and Special Permit study to update standards and requirements for development projects, such as requiring additional data and analysis, or defining potential community benefits and development mitigation.	Planning Board, Planning & Zoning Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Design Review Advisory Board, Building and Code Enforcement Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH2.6: Advance sustainability and resilience in the Town through planting programs to address heat islands, creating pollinator gardens, and increasing water conservation, among other approaches.	1. Initiate a pilot program to identify and pursue these efforts, such as a Street Tree Planting program that prioritizes heat island locations.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Conservation Department, Sustainability Advisory Committee, Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



NCH3 Goal 3: Support and expand, resources, programs, and events that are welcoming and inclusive for all members of the Dedham Community.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH3.1: Develop a framework or process to help Town departments and community organizations systematically integrate equity into community planning decisions and processes.	1. Engage an external program or provider to help evaluate current practices and provide recommendations to integrate equity. Programs are available in the region and listed under potential resources.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward
NCH3.2: Expand education and communication around resources, programs, and events that are available to help improve quality of life for Dedham residents.	1. Develop neighborhood resource and amenity guides that could help connect residents to resources and amenities within a short walk. Offer these guides in multiple languages.	Open Space & Recreation Committee	Conservation Department, Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Grant programs offered by the Division of Conservation Services information available at: https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services
NCH3.3: Improve the engagement and representation of all Dedham residents, particularly groups that are currently underrepresented, in neighborhood groups and Town processes.	1. Prepare an Annual Town Representation Report that can be easily created with updated data and trends that compare to updated Town demographic data each year.	Town Manager	Select Board, Human Rights Commission	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward
	2. Consider hosting a townwide event or have residents participate in outside events for Race Amity day to advance cross-racial and cross-cultural friendships that impact the public discourse on race.	Human Rights Commission	Cultural Council	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	National Center for Race Amity, information available at https://raceamity.org/



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH3.4: Strengthen cultural and arts education in Dedham schools, and through other Town facilities and programs, and create opportunities for residents to engage in historic and cultural projects and events.	1. Continue and expand programs with partner organizations to build an understanding and pride for local history and the diversity and significance of stories of Dedham’s past residents and events.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission, Planning & Zoning Department	Library, Dedham Historical Society & Museum, Dedham Cultural Council, Civic Pride Committee, Human Rights Commission	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Mass Cultural Council grants
NCH3.5: Promote and encourage use of the Dedham Public Library system, the Mother Brook Arts and Community Center, schools, parks, and other community anchors and cultural institutions that provide opportunities for life-long learning.	1. Highlight these assets and the events they host on the Town’s website. 2. Develop neighborhood resource and amenity guides, including these assets, that could help connect residents to resources and amenities within a short walk. Offer these guides in multiple languages.	Planning & Zoning Department	Library Department, Mother Brook Arts and Community Center, Dedham Public Schools, Parks and Recreation Department, Dedham Museum & Archive	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
NCH3.6: Work with residents to develop a Town-wide cultural asset mapping project that identifies the places and resources important to Dedham’s cultural identity and creativity.	1. Create an online mapping portal where Dedham residents can add entries to crowd source a town-wide mapping of a diverse set of assets and places of significance. 2. Compare these responses to the assets that are previously documented and define a process for documenting new suggestions.	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission, Planning & Zoning Department	Dedham Museum & Archive, Dedham Cultural Council, Civic Pride Committee, Human Rights Commission	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Mass Cultural Council grants
NCH3.7: Work to encourage hosting arts and cultural programs and events in public spaces and underutilized spaces in Town facilities.	1. Create a Public Art program that integrates historic and cultural narratives into Dedham’s municipal facilities and public spaces.	Dedham Cultural Council	Library, Dedham Museum & Archive, Civic Pride Committee, Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission, Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Participate in Making it Public, a free training by Forecast Public Art designed to equip administrators to strengthen local capacity to support, create, and promote public art. At the conclusion of the training, participants will have the tools needed to create their own Call for Temporary Public Art and be eligible for a \$10,000 grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts.



NCH4 Goal 4: Encourage routine and regular use of cultural, historic, and natural resources to enhance livability and quality of life for residents and integrate these special places into daily life.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH4.1: Improve equitable access to resources that improve quality of life by first identifying gaps and then solutions to connecting residents to existing amenities or planning for new amenities in strategic locations, including natural, cultural, and historic amenities, health care, education, parks, recreation, nutritious food, and the arts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start by designing a anonymous data collection survey that automatically pops-up after accessing the Town-website and/or through outreach with the Dedham Public Schools. The very brief survey would include demographic information (race, age, sex) and neighborhood along with a list of town services accessed or used by the individual with check boxes. 2. Analyze and use this anonymous survey data to promote underused services to specific demographics or neighborhoods. 3. Define additional tools to increase awareness and access to amenities. 	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH4.2: Design safe and welcoming public spaces that facilitate social connections, enhance cultural identity, and provide gathering and educational spaces for the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the next public space investment that can be used to model future improvements, such as the conversion of the old Police Station to a new Town Common in Dedham Square. 2. Continue these types of investments in improved or new public spaces distributed throughout the town. 	Planning & Zoning Department	Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works (DPW) Department, Council on Aging, Dedham Cultural Council	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH4.3: Provide spaces and promote events that facilitate and support cross-generational interaction among seniors, adults, and youth.	1. Begin with a focus on the new Senior Center at the Ames Building to expand utilization of the facility and support more cross-generational programming using the Generations United Sharing our Space toolkit. Partner with others such as New Bridge on the Charles for intergenerational opportunities.	Council on Aging	Library, Dedham Youth Commission, Facilities & Maintenance Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts Health Aging Collaborative, Toolkit for Intergenerational Programming, information at: https://mahealthyagingcollaborative.org/toolkit-for-intergenerational-programming-in-senior-housing-released-by-ltss-center-umass-boston/



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH4.4: Develop an approach to promotion of resources and programming that is specific to a neighborhood and the nearby resources so that the most relevant and local information gets to nearby residents.	1. Develop neighborhood resource and amenity guides, including these assets, that could help connect residents to resources and amenities within a short walk.	Parks and Recreation Department, Planning & Zoning Department	Parks & Recreation Commission, Town Manager (Public Information Officer)	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
NCH4.5: Improve consistent signage at each resource that increases visibility and access to the property including consistent regulatory signage at parks, for example “drug and alcohol free zone” signs.	1. Develop a consistent townwide wayfinding and signage program that defines the sign types for town resources (name, information, directional, regulatory).	Planning & Zoning Department	Conservation Department, Parks and Recreation Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) Grant Program, information available at: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi
	2. Incrementally deploy sign investments where need is the greatest based on the current system of signs and use of the asset.				
NCH4.6: Increase spaces and programs that support all-weather year-round access to resources with shelters.	1. Designate several parks to receive all-season investments with new investments (covered shelter with outdoor heater) and/or new services (snow removal on paths) to promote health and year-round outdoor social interaction.	Parks and Recreation Department	Parks & Recreation Commission, Dedham Public Schools, Open Space and Recreation Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Grant programs offered by the Division of Conservation Services information available at: https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services
	2. Promote the new resources for all-season use by the community. Expand the pilot program if all-season use increases for the designated parks.				



NCH5 Goal 5: Improve connectivity and access to natural, cultural, and historic resources with a safe and equitable multimodal network that serves all users.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH5.1: Increase the percentage of households, both new and existing, within a safe, 10-minute walk, bike, or transit trip of a natural, cultural, or historic resource.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the Park Needs Assessment to identify locations where additional open space resources should be created. Use this data in context with the existing network of streets, sidewalks, crosswalks, and points of access. 2. Compare these locations with an inventory of current town-owned property to see if any opportunities exist to develop a new amenity with an existing town property. 3. Define and budget for new amenities. 	Parks and Recreation Department	Parks & Recreation Commission, Open Space & Recreation Committee, Conservation Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program or Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program
NCH5.2: Build and maintain pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure acceptable to the community and integrated with natural and cultural resources that allows for residents of all abilities to access community resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use town-owned land and resources to lead by example with the types of paths, connections, and bicycle amenities that are desired. 2. Use updated development review requirements to integrate similar improvements into the next generation of development projects. 	Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Department	Parks & Recreation Commission, Open Space & Recreation Committee, Conservation Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program or Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program
NCH5.3: Identify and prioritize closing gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to provide critical connections to amenities. Filling these gaps should be high priority investments for the Town.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the open space and recreation resources that are not connected to the Town's network of sidewalks and bike lanes. 2. Define the most direct route to connect these resources to the Town's network of sidewalks and bike lanes and prioritize these investments. 3. Add these new sidewalk and bike lanes to the annual tracking of additional miles of each and the increase in percentages of streets with sidewalks. 	Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department, Town Manager	Parks & Recreation Commission, Open Space & Recreation Committee, Conservation Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program or Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH5.4: Increase and improve access to resources that already exist, such as the Dedham Town Forest, Lowder Street Conservation property, and Wigwam Pond.	<p>1. For each resource define improvements that would strengthen access, such as a parking area, path to a nearby street, improved signage, or others.</p> <p>2. Implement improvements incrementally, prioritizing resources that currently have little to no access. Begin with modest investments that would improve access quickly and build on them over time.</p>	Open Space & Recreation Committee, Planning & Zoning Department	Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department, Parks & Recreation Commission, Conservation Department, Commission on Disability	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	<p>Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program or Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Program</p> <p>MassDOT Complete Street portal: https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/completestreets</p>
NCH5.5: Leverage development review processes to expand access to nearby natural, cultural, and historic resources through investments in multimodal infrastructure, improvement of surrounding roadway design, granting of easements, conservation restrictions, or other approaches.	1. As part of the review and refinement of Town development approval processes, integrate requirements for private properties near natural, cultural, and historic resources define the contributions to these that is expected and develop and communicate guidelines. For example, a property adjacent to a natural features such as a river or pond, could be required to provide public access to the feature through the design and layout of the site.	Planning Board, Planning & Zoning Department	Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Design Review Advisory Board, Building and Code Enforcement Department, Commission on Disability	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



NCH6 Goal 6: Identify funding sources and develop additional capacity (people, knowledge, technology, infrastructure, etc.) to manage and enhance Dedham’s natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH6.1: Seek out and seize opportunities to leverage funding to support Master Plan goals related to natural, cultural, and historic resources. For example, reconsider adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to augment financial resources for not only historic preservation and open space and recreation, but also affordable housing.	1. Reconsider the adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to augment financial resources for not only historic preservation and open space and recreation but also affordable housing.	Select Board	Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission, Conservation Department, Open Space and Recreation Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	The Community Preservation Coalition provides overview flyers, background information, facts and figures about CPA, at: https://www.communitypreservation.org/about
NCH6.2: Organize periodic meetings of all stakeholders of natural, cultural, and historic resources to make connections and leverage ongoing efforts.	1. Convene a meeting of all stakeholders and in that meeting set the frequency (such as every 6 months) and date of the next meeting. Identify follow up between individual stakeholders for items discussed that may need to be addressed collaboratively.	Open Space & Recreation Committee, Parks and Recreation Department	Conservation Department, Parks & Recreation Commission, Dedham Cultural Council, Library	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH6.3: Create a framework of support, such as neighborhood toolkit, with guides, resources, and tips to help build the capacity of neighborhood organizations and associations.	1. Gather information and provide a guide to encourage the organization of neighborhood groups, “Friends of” nonprofits, or other community organizations to help expand the capacity and stewardship of resources. 2. Support active volunteers in the establishment of new groups.	Town Manager (Director of Communications)	Planning & Zoning, Open Space and Recreation Committee, Livable Dedham, Dedham Public Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH6.4: Develop a marketing strategy to publicize the benefits of federal and state historic tax credit programs and how they work.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote that properties listed on the National Register, located within historic districts, or can be listed on the National Register are eligible for federal and state historic tax credits. When a property owner of an eligible property is considering investment share information regarding federal and state historic tax credits. Consider expansion of historic districts to expand eligibility for historic tax credits. 	Historic District Commission	Dedham Historical Society & Museum, Planning & Zoning Department, Building Department	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund, information available at: https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcmppf/mppfdx.htm
NCH6.5: Explore technology that can support resident connections to natural, cultural and historic resources that may include an app with amenities, events, and safest routes to resources, augmented reality to highlight historic narratives, or other tools to enhance resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> As part of a consistent wayfinding and signage program, consider technology options such as a QR code as part of the sign design. The QR code could provide an easy way for visitors to connect to additional information, maps, historic photos, rules, or features, about the resource the user is visiting. 	Planning & Zoning Department	Conservation Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Dedham Museum & Archive, Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Public Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) Grant Program, information available at: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi

NCH7 Goal 7: Integrate arts, culture, and preservation as a local engine to improve economic development, quality of life, attract investment, and job creation.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH7.1: Leverage Dedham’s existing Arts Overlay District (AOD) and increase galleries, art and performance space, and cultural facilities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the AOD with a one page summary. Explore additional programs to support artists such as an artist housing program with an artist certification or a vacant storefront program that matches artists or galleries to the spaces temporarily. 	Planning & Zoning Department	Dedham Cultural Council	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
NCH7.2: Support artistic, cultural assets, historic assets and placemaking activities to help promote tourism and local spending by visitors to the Town.	1. Add a priority to the Dedham Cultural Council's granting of funds to align with the Arts Overlay District and activities in and around the Mother Brook Arts and Community Center.	Dedham Cultural Council	Planning & Zoning Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
NCH7.3: Grow public-private partnerships and create incentives or tools to support creative businesses, job creation, and local artists. For example, encourage the development of additional creative and cultural districts.	1. Encourage the development of additional creative and cultural districts.	Dedham Cultural Council	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
NCH7.4: Identify location and policies that could be used to encourage artist housing in the Town. Provide development incentives through zoning or other tools to encourage the creation and preservation of artist housing.	1. In the Arts Overlay District, consider adding language to define affordable housing for Dedham artists and incentives to encourage including this type of housing in future development in the district.	Planning & Zoning Department		Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
NCH7.5: Support preservation of historic buildings that often provide small spaces well-suited to local businesses, creative enterprises, and artists.	1. Facilitate and host a matching forum where property owners can list small ground floor spaces that are vacant and local businesses and creative enterprises can list space needs to help make mutually beneficial connections.	Planning & Zoning Department		Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



Chapter 7:

Transportation and Connectivity

Introduction

The core of Dedham's transportation system is its road network with 110 miles of streets and roadways, over two-thirds of which are Town controlled. While infrastructure for active transportation modes is lacking in many areas, community members have expressed strong interest in creating a town that allows for better and safer walking, biking and rolling routes between destinations. Complimentary to active transportation improvements, the MBTA bus and rail transit options have opportunities to serve more people commuting in and out of Boston, as Dedham is a significant connector into the city for many people in the region.

A successful transportation network plans for the efficient, enjoyable, and safe movement of people and goods and provides multiple options for people to get where they want to go. Transportation affects land use and development as well as the environment, including air quality, noise, and water quality. The existing transportation network also affects the health and safety of all users, particularly those without access to an automobile who use transit, walking, and cycling to connect to their daily needs. As such, an equitable, well-designed and functional transportation network can have positive impacts on economic development and quality of life for the entire community.

Summary

Make Dedham safe and reliable for any form of travel.

Themes Highlights

- Traffic volume and congestion have been increasing in Dedham between 2014 and 2019 according to MassDOT data.
- Additional investments in sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure are needed to decrease traffic congestion and increase safety.

42% of Dedham's streets do not have a sidewalk on at least one side.

Source: MassDOT GIS Municipal Dashboard

- Ridesharing has grown more quickly in Dedham than the statewide averages according to the MA Department of Public Utilities.

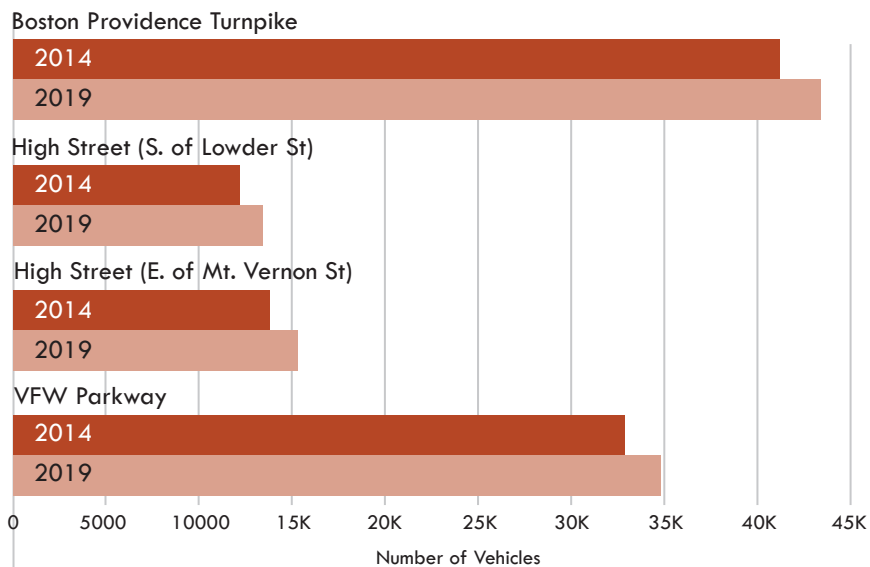
8.25 Rideshare trips per resident in 2018 (total of 204,000 trips)

Source: Mass.gov TNC, MA Department of Public Utilities

Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Make travel in Dedham safe and reliable in any form, with a focus on improving the ability to walk or bike to desired destinations.
- Reduce safety risks for all roadway users and address locations where crashes are clustered.
- Improve support, communication, and coordination around implementation of transportation improvements.

Comparison of Select Traffic Counts



Source: Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) traffic volume data

Companion and related plans and studies

- Providence Highway Corridor Study (2021)
- Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (2018)
- Dedham Corporate Station: Creating a Connected Neighborhood (2017)
- Dedham and Westwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan (2013)



Defining transportation terms

Active Transportation Working Group

A Select Board approved Town group to allow for a broader and sustained focus on the many active modes of transportation to advance mobility in Dedham.

Cut-through Traffic

Traffic that passes through a residential neighborhood that has neither an origin nor destination point in that neighborhood. Given Dedham's location bordering Boston, cut-through traffic is common for commuters driving to and from Boston.

Complete Streets

Streets that are designed and operated for everyone. Streets that prioritize safety, comfort, and accessible options for all modes of travel including walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles, anticipating the needs of all ages and abilities.

Environmental Justice Population

In Massachusetts, a neighborhood is defined as an Environmental Justice population if any of the following are true:

- The annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income;
- Minorities comprise 40% or more of the population;
- 25% or more of households lack English language proficiency; or
- Minorities comprise 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income.

Source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Functional classification of roads

The process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of traffic service in order to help plan appropriate design components for each type of roadway facility.

Level of service (LOS)

A concept and measure defined in the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) and other resources that relates the quality of traffic service of a roadway or intersection to a given flow rate. Six levels are defined (A, B, C, D, E, and F) with A denoting the best quality of service and F denoting the worst.

Modes of travel

The variety of ways to move people or goods from one location to another including walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles, among others.

Rolling Infrastructure or Rolling Environment

In transportation planning, rolling includes human-powered movement on wheels beyond bicycles including strollers, scooters, skateboards, etc.

“TMA” (Transportation Management Association)

Non-profit membership organizations comprised of employers, developers, and property managers collaborating to address transportation, air quality, and commuter issues in a defined geographic area.

“TNC” (Transportation Network Company)

The general phrase used to refer to specific technology companies that provide a platform for sharing rides such as Uber and Lyft.

Transportation Advisory Committee

A Town committee that reports to the Select Board and is responsible for reviewing Traffic Calming Request Forms to determine if they are eligible for potential traffic calming measures as based on the requirements set forth in the adopted Traffic Calming Policy.



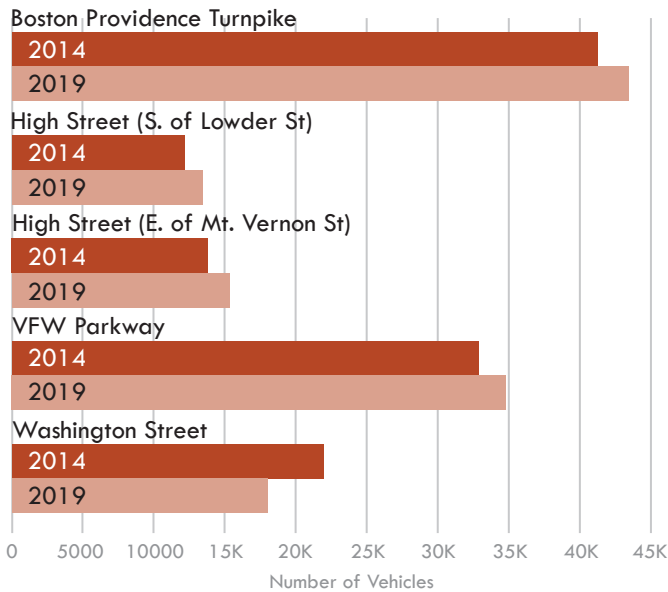
Transportation and Connectivity In Dedham today

Transportation themes from data and previous plans

T1 Increase in traffic volume and congestion over the last five years

According to MassDOT data, most streets in Dedham saw a 5% to 11% increase in average daily traffic between 2014 and 2019. The one exception was Washington Street near Dedham Square,

Comparison of Select Traffic Counts



Source: MassDOT traffic volume data

which saw a 17% reduction in traffic over the last five years. An increase in traffic affects most Dedham residents, as 80% of employed Dedham residents drove to work pre-pandemic. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted patterns, 11% of employed residents took transit to work, 5% worked from home, 4% walked biked, or took some other mode of travel. This represents an opportunity to increase the availability, reliability, and safety of transit and micro-mobility (for example e-bike) options in Dedham in order to address the increasing traffic volume and congestion on Dedham’s street network. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changed commuting patterns in and around Dedham and caused traffic volumes to decrease by 50-60% statewide in the spring of 2020. Many typical nine-to-five commuters began working from home, schools pivoted to remote learning, and many other resources closed. Overall, traffic was down in Norfolk County by 9% from pre-pandemic levels. According to some estimates, as of the end of the summer of 2021, traffic is close to returning to 2019 volumes.

In 2019, MassDOT completed a traffic congestion study of major corridors serving the Boston region, including Interstate 95 and Boston-Providence Highway in Dedham. Most of the morning congestion on I-95 occurs between 7:00 am and 9:00 am. Congestion on Boston-Providence Highway also begins at 7:00 am but extends an extra hour until 10:00 am. During this time the roads have segments that are highly congested (greater than two times free flow) as well as congested (one and a half times to two times free flow). In its analysis of traffic congestion in the region, MassDOT found that the Longwood-Dedham corridor (connecting Route 128 to Longwood Medical area) had a travel time of

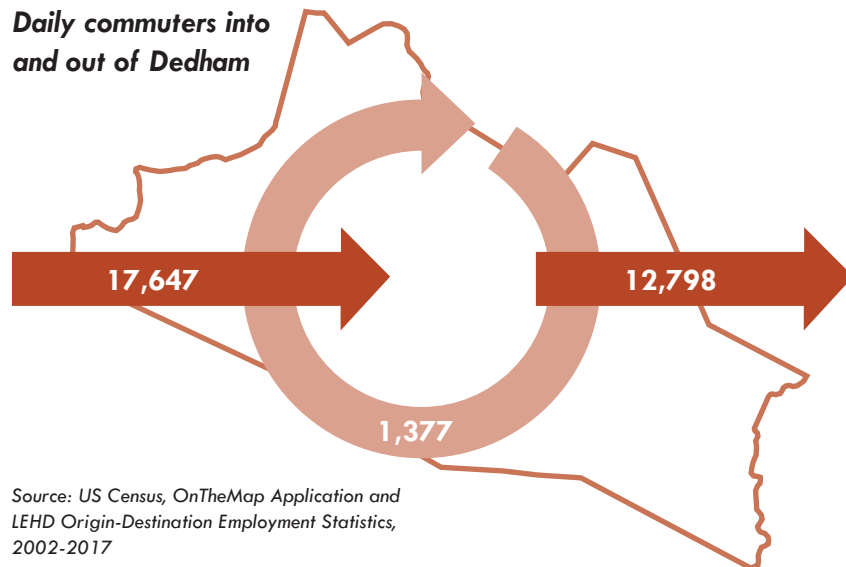


31-32 minutes, but with 1 in 10 days averaging 41 minutes. The Longwood-Dedham 10-mile corridor, was considered generally reliable compared to other major regional commuting corridors.

T2 More people commute into Dedham than out of it every day

Over 17,000 workers commute into Dedham during the workday, compared to approximately 13,000 workers that commute out of Dedham. The transportation connections both in and out of Dedham that facilitate these commutes, especially in high employment areas, are crucial to evaluate for improvements to support resident access and economic development.

Daily commuters into and out of Dedham



Source: US Census, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2002-2017

For the 13,000 workers leaving Dedham, Boston is the largest employment destination with 31% of Dedham workers headed there, followed by 9% who work in Dedham. Newton, Cambridge, and Needham round out the top five workplace destinations for employed Dedham residents. Over 47% of Dedham commuters work in other locations distributed throughout the greater Boston region.

In Dedham, there are employment clusters near Legacy Place, Dedham Mall, Dedham Corporate Center, and Readville. As of 2017, there were nineteen thousand jobs in the Town. On a typical workday, about 4,800 more workers would commute into Dedham from other locations, compared to those commuting out of Dedham to work elsewhere. The largest share of workers commuting into Dedham live in Boston (17%).

T3 More sidewalks and crosswalks are needed

58% of Dedham's streets have a sidewalk on at least one side. If the walking infrastructure is expanded and enhanced, many local trips that are currently most likely to be taken by car could be made by walking, reducing overall traffic and congestion in Dedham. In the Master Plan community surveys, Dedham residents prioritized improved infrastructure for walking. Walk Score is a private company that provides a public access walkability index that assigns a numerical walkability score to any address in the United States. Walk Score rates Dedham as "car dependent," but notes that Dedham Square, East Dedham, and Oakdale/Endicott are most walkable. Many streets don't have sidewalks because they are privately owned and the Town does not have control over them. About 25% of Dedham's streets are privately owned. The Town has recently established a process to make private streets public.



Providence Highway is a major barrier to pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in Dedham. There are only five signalized locations to cross the highway within the Town limits. None of these crosswalks are built to current standards for accessibility and pedestrian safety. Some of the signalized crossings are separated by one to two miles. As noted in the crash data highlighted later in this chapter, many of the recent crashes, including crashes for pedestrians and cyclists, have occurred along the Providence Highway. Pedestrian safety incidents are not isolated to Providence Highway. For example, Bridge Street (Route 109) has recently seen two pedestrians hit by vehicles.

42%

of Dedham's streets do not have a sidewalk on at least one side.



T4 Lack of bike infrastructure

According to MassDOT's Non-motorized Database System, the number of people using bikes as a primary or occasional form of transportation has been steadily increasing in the state over the last few years. Although there are bike racks available in the business centers, on-street bike lanes and off-street paths are lacking. Increasing safe and enjoyable bike infrastructure will allow more people to travel by bike rather than car, decreasing traffic and congestion in Dedham. Since 2017, there have been 27 reported vehicular collisions with pedestrians or cyclists, all of which have been in locations without bike infrastructure.

Dedham has limited dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and 58% of the streets have a sidewalk on at least one side. There are almost no bicycle facilities, and few trails.

T5 Ridership on the Franklin Line commuter rail has increased

Dedham is served by two Commuter Rail stations, Dedham Corporate Center and Endicott. Both stations saw increases in ridership between 2012 and 2018, with the total number of boardings doubling in 2018 compared to 2012. The Dedham Corporate Center has seen a 97 percent increase in commuter rail ridership. While these ridership increases have not continued through the COVID-19 pandemic, ridership is expected to increase as more people return to in-person work, and traffic congestion gets worse heading into Boston, particularly during peak morning and evening commute times. As traffic increases in the Boston region, more people rely on the commuter rail for daily transportation.

T6 MBTA Route 34/34E bus is a main connector, but it is unreliable

Route 34/34E is the most important connector for Dedham as it serves the largest geography, has the highest ridership, and has the best service in Dedham. It connects key nodes along Washington Street and maintains a frequency of 20-30 minutes in each direction during most weekdays. The 34/34E averages nearly 6,500 riders per day (pre-pandemic), accounting for 11% of the entire bus route. Even though the Route 34/34E bus is highly important for network connectivity, it has poor on-time performance.



In December 2019, the MBTA made changes to Route 34/34E through their Better Bus Project. Service to the Dedham Mall, which used to be served by Route 34E was replaced by Route 34. Route 34 will make 2 stops (At Home and Stop & Shop) at Dedham Mall during the mall's hours of operation. This change allowed the MBTA to provide earlier, later, and more frequent service to Dedham Mall while reducing travel times for Route 34E riders traveling past the mall. The most popular stop to get off the bus on this route is at the most northern end at Forest Hills Station. Boardings are fairly steady throughout the route, with more boardings towards the northern end of the route in Roslindale.

17 Ridesharing is growing quickly and could signal unmet needs

In 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities began collecting basic trip-level information about rides taken using transportation network companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft. That year alone, nearly 150,000 trips originating in Dedham were taken using these ridehailing services, which equates to approximately 6 trips per resident. Compared to other municipalities statewide, Dedham ranked 25th in highest origin-based rides per capita, behind inner core communities such as Cambridge, Boston, and Somerville, and college towns such as Wellesley and Amherst. However, from 2017 to 2018, the number of TNC trips increased by 36% to just over 204,000, or an average of 8.25 trips per resident. In the same time period, the total number of trips statewide increased just 24%. In other

words, ridesharing in Dedham is growing more quickly than in other municipalities, leading to an increase in traffic congestion on Dedham's roads.

In 2019, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft, provided over 262,000 rides that started in Dedham. Of those, nearly twenty three percent were within Dedham. The average TNC ride distance was 6.7 miles, a distance that could be traveled by bike or public transit if those modes were more convenient. While the number of rides has decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, a return to pre-pandemic patterns should be anticipated as more in-person activity resumes.

8.25

Rideshare trips per resident in 2018 (total of 204,000 trips)



Residential street in Dedham



Source: MAPC



Transportation and Connectivity Community Priorities

Transportation themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to transportation and connectivity and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.) While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the transportation and connectivity themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

T1 Proximity to Boston is an asset

Dedham’s location in the Greater Boston region is seen by many residents as a key asset. Particularly, as a suburb of Boston, many people who live in Dedham find the proximity to Boston to be useful for many reasons, such as commuting to work or convenient access to other amenities and resources. Approximately one third of Dedham residents commute to Boston for work, meaning that reliable and frequent roadway and transit connections to the city are essential. The value of this proximity is reduced when moving around is made more difficult due to congestion or lacking infrastructure.

T2 Traffic congestion remains a main challenge

The greatest challenge identified in the community survey and one of the most frequently repeated and important topics to address in the Master Plan was traffic congestion. Dedham is car-centric with 80 percent of residents driving to work. Even with reduced commuting traffic in 2020 due to COVID-19, residents noted that traffic congestion remains a challenge. Presently, driving is the easiest way to get around. By funding and building new infrastructure such as bus improvements, more bike lanes and sidewalks, Dedham can reduce its reliance on cars and help to reduce congestion on the roadways.

T3 Pedestrian and bike safety remains a challenge

Strengthening safe walking and biking in the Town was identified as the number one transportation challenge facing Dedham through the community survey. Since 2017, there have been 27 reported vehicular collisions with pedestrians or cyclists. Of those, 60 percent involved were pedestrians and 40 percent involved were cyclists. Half of the pedestrian crashes were in areas without sidewalks, and all bike crashes were in areas without bike infrastructure.

T4 Improved sidewalks would best meet travel needs

Improved sidewalks were identified as the transportation improvement that would best serve respondent’s needs with walkability selected as the top priority in the community survey.



Transportation and Connectivity In Dedham today

Additional context and data

Vehicle ownership

As of 2014, Dedham residents own approximately 1.76 vehicles per household, and the average household drives about 46 miles per day. These figures are on par with statewide averages and reflect the most attractive mobility options available within the Town. The relative lack of public transit coverage and opportunities to walk and bike to destinations safely can help explain the low rate of households with no vehicles (<10%), and the tendency for most households to rely on 1 to 2 vehicles.

1.76

vehicles per household



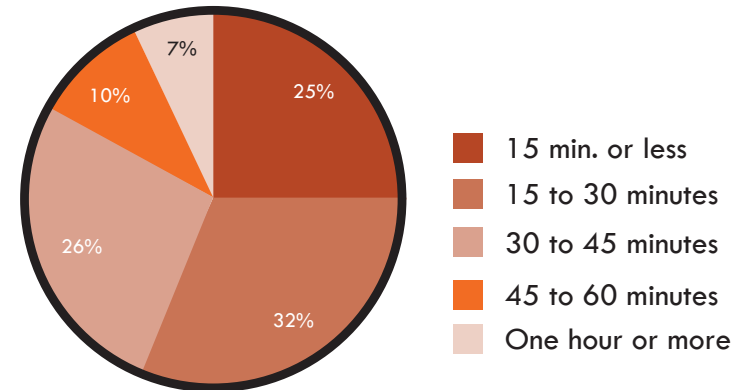
Journey to work data

Since 1990, average commute times for workers living in Dedham have continued to increase. About 48% of Dedham residents live within a 30-minute commute from their job, which is similar to other municipalities in the Greater Boston region which include about 49% of residents who live within a 30-minute commuter of their job. However, this is significantly less than the statewide average 55% of the residents living within a 30-minute commute from their job. Also noteworthy is that more Dedham residents

have commute times shorter than 60 minutes at approximately 90% as compared to the Greater Boston region and Massachusetts municipalities, at 86% and 88% respectively.

In 2000, 25% of Dedham residents had a commute of 15 minutes or less, 32% experienced a 15 to 30 minute commute, 26% spent 30 to 45 minutes commuting, 10% commuted for 45 to 60 minutes, and 7% of residents commuted for an hour or more per trip. The average commute for Dedham residents was 26 minutes, which has increased since 2000. The 2009 Dedham Master Plan notes that the percent of residents commuting longer than 45 minutes increased by 30% from 1990 to 2000, which indicates that commutes for Dedham residents have been increasing over the last 20-25 years.

Commuter times



Over time, Dedham has experienced nominal gains in mode shift towards public transit and working from home. Currently, commuters from Dedham opt to drive more frequently than their counterparts across other municipalities in the Greater Boston region, but about on par with statewide rates. Similar relative proportions hold for public transit ridership, with about the same



percent of Dedham commuters opting for a train or bus commute as compared to other Massachusetts commuters, but represent a smaller percentage when compared to commuters in other municipalities in the Greater Boston region.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dedham had a relatively high percentage of commuters who worked from home, when compared to the Greater Boston region. A September 2021 Census Household Pulse Survey found that around 35% of Massachusetts workers are currently telecommuting/working from home. A June 2021 survey for the Neponset Valley Route 1/1A Corridor Study found that over 50% of respondents who work and/or live in Dedham stated they are currently working part time or full time from home. While this survey had a high level of respondents who were in the technical fields (i.e., white-collared workers), these recent surveys do suggest that many Dedham residents have been and continue to be working from home during the pandemic.

Existing Transportation Networks

Roads and Streets

Roadways and streets provide critical connectivity in Dedham, particularly along east-west routes that connect with the Providence Turnpike (Route 1) and Washington Street, which are the main north-south roadways. The main east-west corridor consists of West Street, Common Street, and High Street. Town-maintained streets also provide important connections within Dedham, particularly to schools, areas of employment, and neighborhood centers.

Functional Classification of Roadways

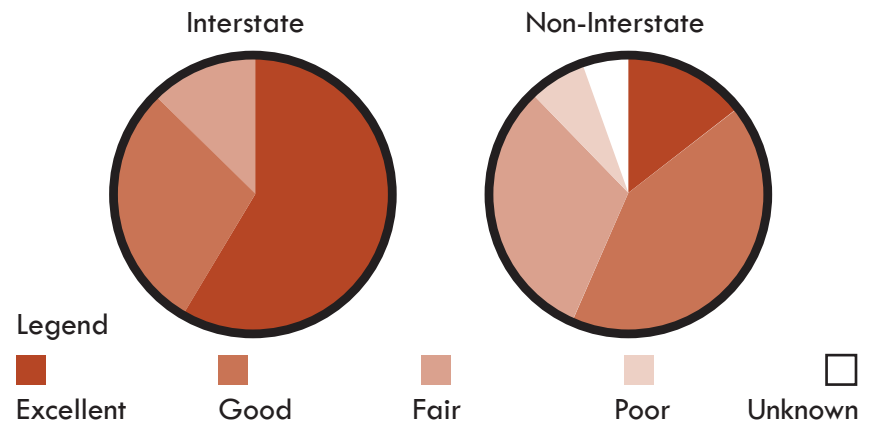
Dedham has 110 miles of streets and roadways within its Town limits including three state-maintained facilities – Providence Highway, State Route 109, and State Route 128 (I-95), consisting of just over 11 miles. Over three-quarters of the street network is Town-controlled (approximately 75 miles), with a vast majority of those classified as local streets. Private ways/drives account for approximately 27 miles of roadway. The map on the following pages show the roadway functional classifications in Dedham and the location of private ways/drives in Dedham. Private ways/drives are not eligible for sidewalk investments and improvements unless residents choose to do so and then bring the street up to Town standards. The Town does not control private ways/drives.

Pavement Management

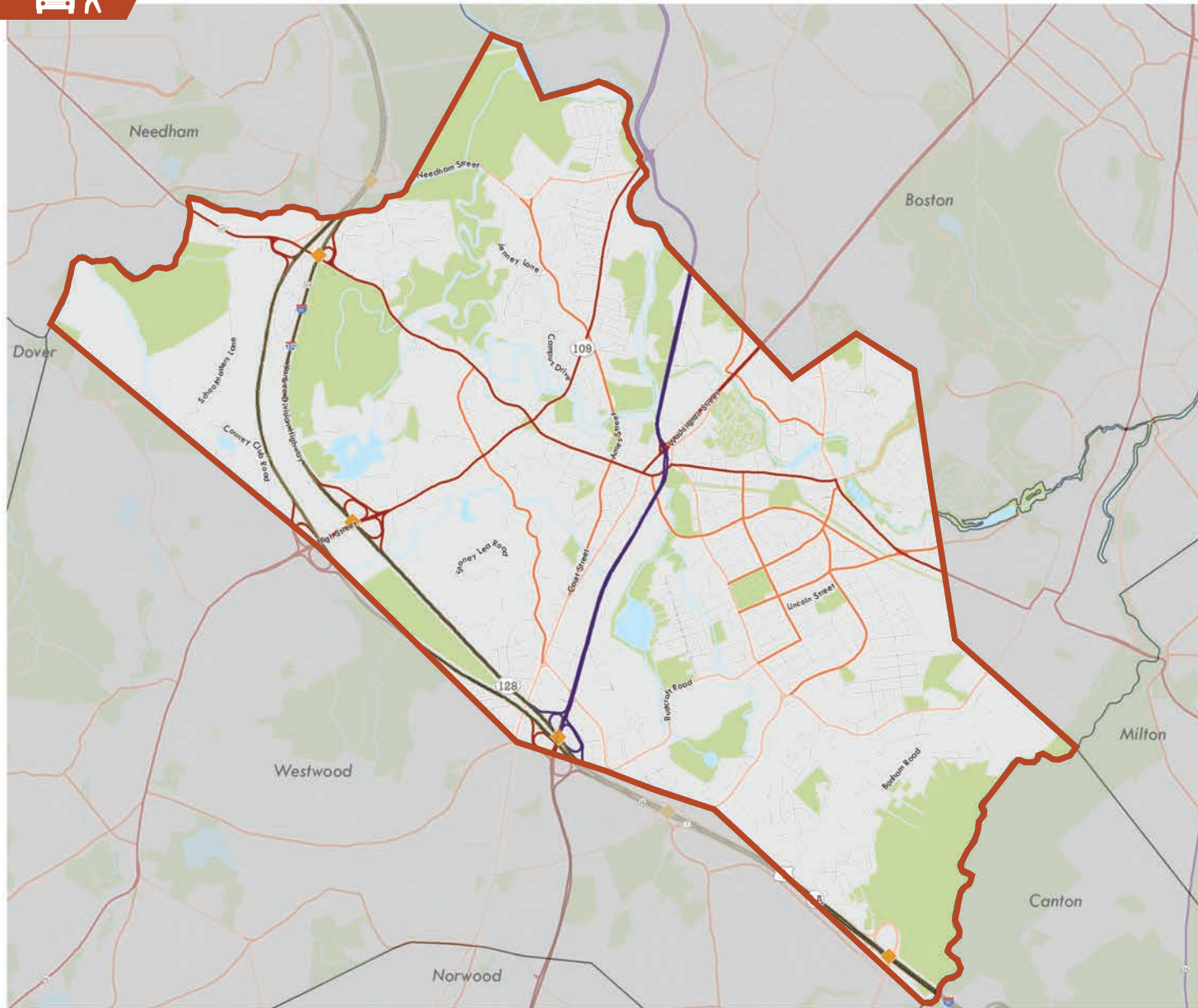
According to MassDOT, more than half of the interstate and non-interstate streets and roadways in Dedham are in “excellent” or “good” condition, with some in “fair” or “poor” condition. Areas with “poor” condition are primarily along Route 109, West Street underneath Interstate 95, and the Boston Providence Highway.

MassDOT Pavement Conditions

Pavement Serviceability Index (PSI)



Source: MassDOT Municipal Dashboard

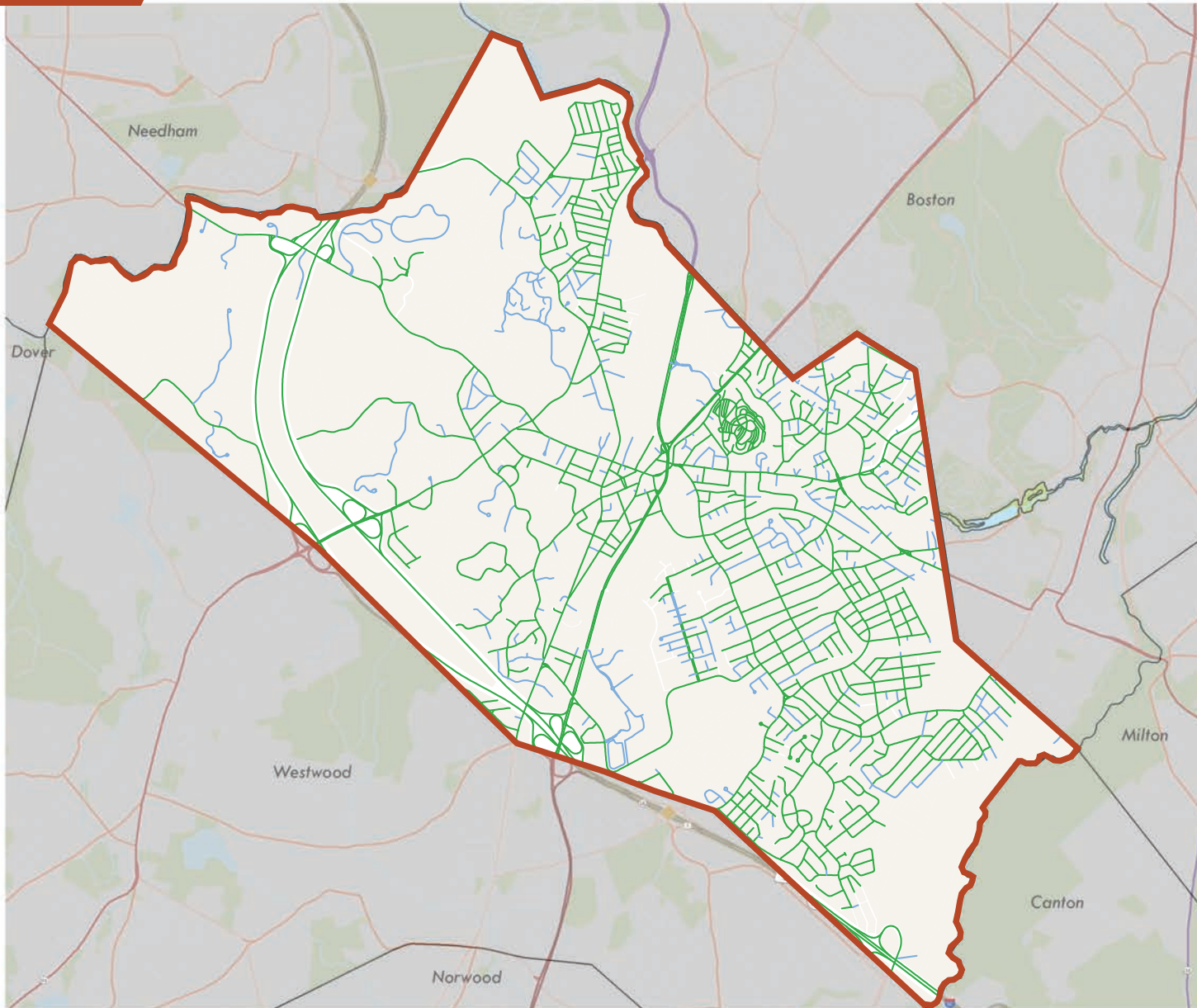


Transportation Roadway Functional Classifications

- ◆ Highway Exit Locations
- Roadway Functional Classification**
- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Urban principal arterial
- Urban collector
- Urban minor arterial



Data Sources:
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
 March 2020



Transportation Public and Private Right of Ways

Right of Way (ROW)

- Public - 82.99 miles
- Private - 28.09 miles

Prepared by the Dedham Engineering
Department GIS Division



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
March 2020



Between 2016 and 2018, MassDOT repaired 6 potholes, mostly along Boston Providence Highway and Route 1A. As seen in the comparison figure below, the overall condition of interstate roadways is better than non-interstate roadways.

Traffic Safety

In Dedham, the number of total crashes decreased from 2015 to 2018. In 2019, crashes increased, only to decrease again in 2020 with fewer people traveling due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Norfolk County, the total number of crashes fluctuated from 2015 to 2019, with a sharp decrease in 2020. While Dedham experienced a 12% decrease from 2015 to 2019, Norfolk County saw only a 4% decrease over the same time period. During the COVID-19 pandemic, both Dedham and Norfolk County saw significant decreases in crashes, partially due to a decrease in vehicles on the roads.

While the overall number of crashes has decreased, the crashes that remain occur in clusters in Dedham. The data show that there are clusters of crashes along the more heavily traveled corridors including Boston-Providence Highway, Route 109, Washington Street, and High Street. There are significant crash clusters of 10 or more crashes on the southern end of Washington Street and Boston-Providence Highway, as well as the intersection of Whiting Avenue and Walnut Street. A significant amount of crashes occur

12%

Decrease in vehicle crashes
from 2015 to 2019



in the identified Environmental Justice areas of Dedham. Street treatments should be prioritized in these locations to reduce or eliminate crashes and increase street safety.

The three most recent years of crash data categorized by severity (fatalities, injuries, property damage only, or unknown) are shown on the map on the following page. These include vehicle-to-vehicle crashes as well as pedestrian-to-vehicle and bicycle-to-vehicle crashes. Given the number of crashes over the last three years, this study also looked at the areas that MassDOT mapped as crash clusters and those crashes that involved pedestrians and cyclists. Crash clusters are critical to understanding locations where crashes are more likely to occur. People walking, biking, and rolling are the most vulnerable users of the Town's transportation network and should be prioritized for safety and accessibility in the Town's transportation improvements.

The map on the following page shows the pedestrian and bicyclist crashes overlapped with environmental justice areas. The majority of crashes occur in areas where minority demographic groups comprise 40% or more of the population, as measured by 2020 census data. This has negative implications for active and sustainable transportation for Dedham's communities of color, including increased crash rates, reduced safety, and reduced transportation options.

The locations with the most frequent bike and pedestrian crashes occur in the areas around Boston-Providence Highway/Washington Street, and Needham Street/Route 109. These areas border or overlap with environmental justice areas in Dedham, and therefore should be a top priority for the Town to address. These pedestrian and bicycle crash areas are in neighborhoods with a higher concentration of zero or one vehicle households relative to the Town averages indicating an increased dependence on non-vehicular modes of transportation.



Transportation Crash data (foreground), Zero to One Vehicle Households (background)

MassDOT Crash Data for Non Motorists

(2019, 2020, 2021)

- ▲ Pedestrian
- Pedacyclist
- Other

Households with 0-1 vehicles

- 30%
- 30.1% - 31.5%
- 31.6% - 35.3%
- 35.4% - 38.1%
- 38.2% - 51.5%

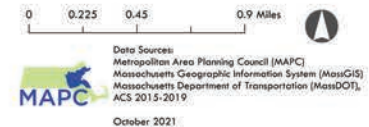
Major Roads

Environmental Justice
Block Groups

Vehicular Crashes, Dedham and Norfolk County

Year	Town of Dedham	Norfolk County
2015	552	14,581
2016	497	15,027
2017	471	15,014
2018	419	14,142
2019	487	14,070
2020	319	8,707
2021	402	12,715
2022	439	13,411

Source: Mass.gov Impact



Source: MassDOT, MAPC, <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>



Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Data

Since 2017, there have been 27 reported vehicular collisions with pedestrians or cyclists. 60% of these crashes involved pedestrians and 40% involved cyclists. About half of pedestrian crashes happened in locations without sidewalk infrastructure and the entirety of Dedham's cyclist crashes were located in areas without bike lanes. 85% of these collisions resulted in fatal or non-fatal injuries to the pedestrian or cyclist involved, whereas 30% of motorist-motorist crashes in Dedham over the same time period resulted in fatal or non-fatal injuries. Cyclists and pedestrians involved in accidents are nearly three times more vulnerable to bodily harm than motorists in Dedham. Despite there being 50x more reported vehicular collisions than those involving pedestrians and cyclists from 2017 to 2019, Dedham experienced two pedestrian fatalities but only one motorist death. The Town should use this data to further expand pedestrian and cyclist safety infrastructure.

One third of accidents occurred within the Dedham Square area, reflecting the multimodal nature of the commercial area; when there are more pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles mixing in a shared space, accidents are more likely to occur. All these accidents happened during normal business hours (8AM to 9PM), though two occurred after sunset when visibility may have been an issue. Though the Square is equipped with the most pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure comparatively, upgrades to signalization, lighting, and the installation of bike lanes may help to reduce the frequency and severity of collisions.

Other clusters of pedestrian and cyclist crashes can be found along busier, connector roads including Bridge Street (3 pedestrian crashes), Washington Street (2 cyclist crashes and 1

“other”), East Street (2 pedestrian crashes and 1 cyclist), and Milton Street (1 pedestrian and 1 cyclist crash). Over the last three years, the Town's two pedestrian fatalities occurred on a 0.2 mile stretch of Bridge Street/Route 109, in the dark. Though there are sidewalks along the road, the pedestrian crossings are not signalized or lit. Because this is a high speed, high traffic roadway that abuts residential and commercial uses and contains a significant crash cluster, pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure upgrades should be prioritized.

Traffic Congestion

As experienced and highlighted by Dedham residents, and participants in the Designing Dedham 2035 process, the Town faces high levels of vehicular traffic and congestion. Because traffic congestion is both local and regional in nature, addressing the impacts can be difficult. Solutions to traffic are not always straightforward. For example, adding lanes to roadways often results in more traffic through a phenomenon called induced demand.

Addressing traffic impacts has been made more complicated as traffic patterns have shifted with the COVID-19 pandemic. According to MassDOT data on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in Dedham, 2021 VMT along I-95 and Providence Highway is lower compared to 2017; whereas urban minor arterials like Needham and East Streets and urban collector streets including Pine and Highland Streets experienced higher VMT in 2021 compared to pre-pandemic volumes. These figures suggest that, as more people work from home and continue pandemic-based adjusted travel patterns, some traffic has shifted from major highways to local roadways.

Over the long term, land use patterns are an important generator of traffic and congestion. If residents can only complete daily trips by driving, traffic and congestion will only continue to



increase. If residents have the option to conveniently complete daily trips by walking, biking, or taking public/mass transit then congestion can be reduced.

In the short term, identifying the most congested roadways and intersections can be used to inventory and assess choke points where traffic volumes regularly exceed capacity and create backups. Modifications to the infrastructure at these identified roadways and intersections should be explored to ease congestion during these peak periods of demand. Because a good deal of traffic is regional in nature, addressing it should be via regional efforts. Improving and increasing sustainable modes of transportation that connect people to the regional destinations they want to go can decrease the volume of car traffic. The Town can support regional plans to increase the MBTA bus and commuter rail options, as well as regional safety efforts on MassDOT roads such as Providence Highway and Route 109/High Street. Continued and sustained investments in infrastructure for walking, biking, and public/mass transit can help to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads. Encouraging flexible work times and carpooling can also reduce peak-period congestion.

Cut-through Traffic

Due in part to its adjacency to Route 128/I-95 (four exits located within the Town), the City of Boston, and Providence Highway, Dedham is subject to significant regional vehicular cut-through traffic. For example, when the highway is congested, some drivers may get off at a Dedham exit and travel through the Town to get to another destination. This general pattern is compounded by app-based navigation. Additionally, app-based navigation can direct vehicles to less congested routes that in some locations

can push regional traffic onto neighborhood streets that were not designed for higher traffic volumes or speeds. This pattern can create traffic safety issues. Locally, the Town can undertake efforts to address the impacts of vehicular cut-through traffic, including:

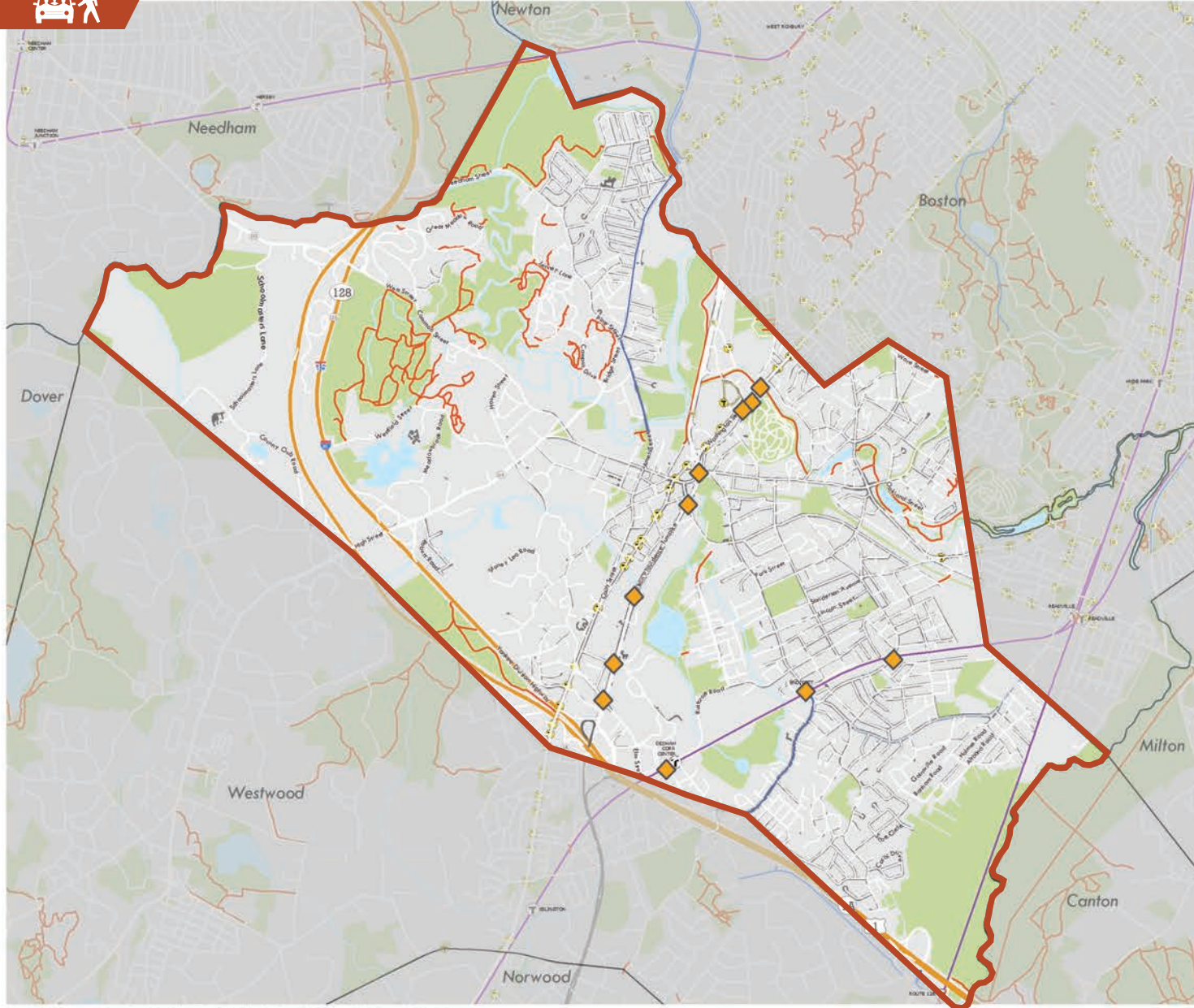
- Partner with app-based corporations to request data to analyze and explore cut-through locations;
- Exploring infrastructure, regulation, and enforcement changes to impacted roadways to reduce speeding;
- Limit certain traffic movements at specific times of the day to discourage cut-through traffic;
- Make streets safer for all, similar to Boston's Neighborhood Slow Streets initiative to calm traffic on residential streets;
- Inquire with app-based corporations to remove specific residential street segments from navigation options, particularly if the street segments are private roads.

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC reports to the Select Board and is responsible for reviewing Traffic Calming Request Forms to determine if they are eligible for potential traffic calming measures as based upon the requirements set forth in the adopted Traffic Calming Policy. Residents may bring traffic issues to the Committee. Most requests are approved for a traffic study.

Freight

From a review of the 2018 Massachusetts Freight Plan, the I-95 corridor, which runs along the southern and western borders of Dedham, is one of the major National Highway Freight Network corridors in the Boston region. Although no bottlenecks for freight were identified in Dedham, a bottleneck was identified just south of Dedham at the I-95 and I-93 intersection in Canton.



Transportation Infrastructure

- Bike Lane, Existing
- Marked Shared-Lane, Existing
- Shared-Use Path, Existing
- Walking Trails
- MBTA Bus Stops
- MBTA Bus Routes
- MBTA Commuter Rail Station
- MBTA Commuter Rail Line
- Sidewalks
- Major Roads**
- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Route
- Non-numbered route
- Key Pedestrian Crossing



Data Sources:
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
 March 2020



There are no critical urban or rural freight corridors in Dedham. However, Dedham has industrial warehouse areas along Sprague Street as well as some areas along Rustcraft Road and along Meadow Road which may contribute to local freight traffic or localized trucking routes.

Current Transportation Improvement Projects

The Town, in partnership with adjacent municipalities and state agencies including MassDOT, has planned for recent transportation improvements.

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

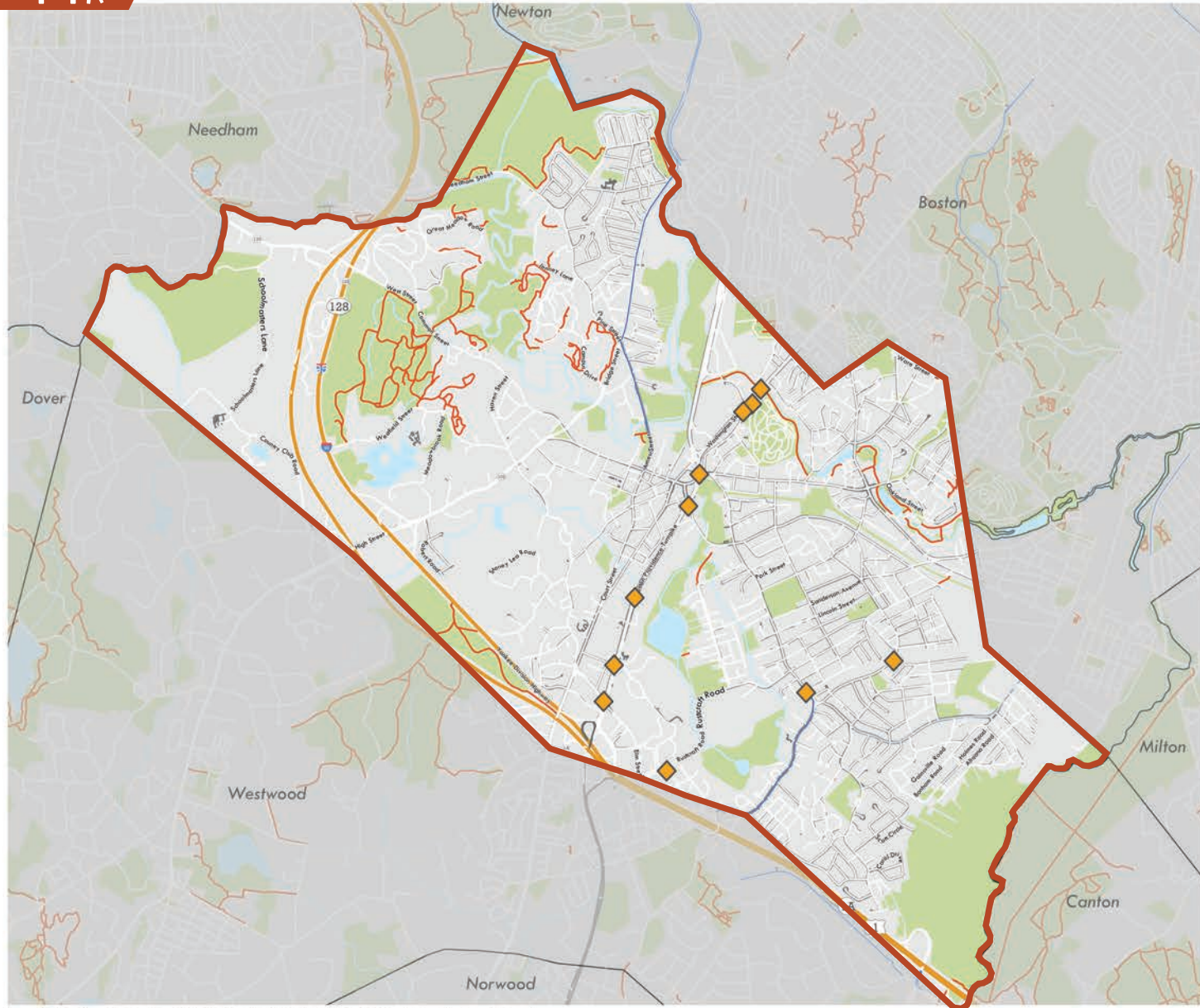
- (2021) Pedestrian improvements along Elm Street and Rustcraft Road Corridors (\$2,706,712)
 - Improvements along the Elm Street and Rustcraft Road corridor will primarily consist of the installation of new curbing, sidewalks, and ramps on both sides of the corridor. This area will also require drainage improvements to modify stormwater management from sheet flow to catch basins, which is necessary with the installation of new curbs and sidewalks. Minor roadway widening is anticipated to achieve a minimum roadway width to accommodate a five-foot bicycle lane. An off-road area for drop off and pick up at the Dedham Corporate Center Station on the MBTA commuter rail has already been constructed by the Town of Dedham. (Source: <https://www.ctps.org/data/pdf/plans/TIP/FFYs-2021-2025-TIP.pdf>)

- (2023) Pedestrian improvements along Bussey Street, including superstructure replacement, D-05-010, Bussey Street over Mother Brook (\$5,355,932)
 - Improvements along the Bussey Street corridor will include resetting and setting the curb and reconstructing ADA-compliant sidewalks and ramps on both sides of the roadway. Some area of pavement reconstruction may be necessary to obtain the necessary curb reveal. Minor geometric improvements are expected at the intersection with Colburn Street and Clisby Avenue to make them more pedestrian friendly, current conditions include expansive pavement width. Shared bicycle accommodations are planned. (Source: <https://www.ctps.org/data/pdf/plans/TIP/FFYs-2021-2025-TIP.pdf>)

MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grants

- September 2020 - Dedham received \$285,915 to construct 1,550 feet of new sidewalk, ADA-compliant wheelchair ramps, new road striping and signage, and crosswalks along the south side of Cedar Street, providing new and safer connections to residential neighborhoods.
- February 2021 - Dedham received \$40,000 to reinstall three temporary, ADA-compliant outdoor seating locations in Dedham Square, including safety barriers, through the removal of existing on-street parking. This is a reinstatement of facilities successfully piloted in 2020.

There are no major Dedham infrastructure projects planned in the Boston MPO's Destination 2040 long-range transportation plan.



Transportation Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure

- Bike Lane, Existing
- Marked Shared-Lane, Existing
- Shared-Use Path, Existing
- Walking Trails
- Sidewalks
- Major Roads**
- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Route
- Non-numbered route
- Key Pedestrian Crossing



Data Sources:
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

October 2021



Public Transit

Bus

Four MBTA bus routes service the Town of Dedham including the 33, 34/34E, 35 and 52. Dedham had a local bus that was eliminated in 2018 due to low ridership. The local bus route was a loop that connected various trip generators such as Endicott Square, Dedham Square, Dedham Mall, Oakdale Square and East Dedham Square.

Commuter Rail

Dedham is served by two stations in Zone 2 on the Franklin Line: Dedham Corporate Center and Endicott. As of 2018, Dedham Corporate Center had 8 morning peak inbound trains and 4 mid-day inbound trains, with 5 outbound mid-day trains and 6 evening peak outbound trains, as well as inbound and outbound evening service. Dedham Corporate Center also has a 500 space park and ride lot, with a fee of \$2 daily. According to the MBTA's website, the station also has bike parking. Endicott is a walk-up station with a ramp for accessibility, limited parking for Dedham residents, limited bike parking, and has fewer trains.

Transportation Management Association (TMA) and Employee Shuttles

Dedham is a member of the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association (TMA). There are no TMA shuttles operating in Dedham, and no known private shuttles operating in Dedham.

Paratransit and Senior Transportation

Dedham is within the MBTA The Ride service area that provides curb to curb transportation for persons with disabilities. The Town's

Council on Aging also operates two handicap-accessible vans and offers Dedham seniors (55 and over) and disabled residents curbside transportation to local medical appointments, local grocery shopping, local errands, and local food pantry. Veterans and their family members can get rides to medical appointments through Norfolk County's Retired Senior Volunteer Program.

School Transportation

The Town also provides school bus transportation to students per the Commonwealth's pupil transportation requirements. Students who live within two miles of school must pay a fee in order to use the school bus service.

Walking and Cycling

LandLine Greenway Network

The LandLine Regional Greenway Network is being developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the regional planning agency, in partnership with each of the Greater Boston region's 101 communities. The greenway corridors identified as part of this regional network are planned to be prioritized for active transportation use and are separate from vehicular traffic to the greatest extent feasible, or traffic calmed to allow for sharing the road among different types of users. Corridors identified as part of the existing and future LandLine network are ideally shared-use paths, or separated bicycle lanes and sidewalks clearly separated from vehicular traffic. However, limited right of way may not allow complete separation, and, the corridors also include sharing lower traffic streets, and implementing traffic calming measures to prioritize walking and cycling.

Today, Dedham has minimal trail coverage. Dedham's single paved path is located near the Readville Commuter Rail Station, stretching approximately 0.5 miles from Sprague Street west until Ernest Avenue. In June 2020, Dedham residents voted to



reject an advisory referendum regarding a proposed 1.3 mile shared use path called the Dedham Heritage Rail Trail between Atkins Street to East Street. There are several natural surface footways in the western portion of Dedham, near the Wilson Mountain Reservation and Charles River Watershed. However, these footways have poor connectivity to the existing sidewalk infrastructure.

Sidewalks

Dedham is partially and unevenly served by sidewalk infrastructure. The western quadrant of the Town, beginning at the intersection of Bridge and Ames Street, has little to no sidewalk coverage. The southwestern portion of the Town is also underserved. Although a majority (58%) of Dedham's streets have a sidewalk on at least one side, these are largely located in the Town's central and eastern residential neighborhoods. In general, year-round walkability could be improved with more consistent snow removal policies and procedures for sidewalks. The Facilities & Maintenance Department maintains and oversees sidewalk snow removal at all municipal and school buildings.

Dedham Square, the Town's most walkable district, has nearly complete sidewalk coverage, including minor streets abutting the commercial area. Pedestrian infrastructure within the Square includes signalized, visually distinct red brick street crossings, street furniture such as benches, bike racks, and plants, and light fixtures. These amenities encourage visitors to park in one location and walk to nearby shops, chaining trips as a pedestrian, and spending more time in the public realm. The Town's second most walkable district, East Dedham Square, is similarly served by sidewalks and on-street parking, however, the streets lack pedestrian or cyclist-friendly street furnishings and amenities.

As previously noted in this chapter, Dedham has over 27 miles of privately owned roadways. These private roadways are in a variety of conditions, and some, if not most, do not provide any sidewalk infrastructure. To address the issues of Dedham's private roadways, Town Meeting in 2014 authorized the Select Board to establish a new policy for abutters to change their roadway from private to public (<https://www.dedham-ma.gov/departments/engineering/private-ways>). Since the adoption, a number of private roadways have been accepted by Town Meeting to be public roadways.

Bicycle Facilities

Dedham has been improving its bike infrastructure. As previously discussed, there is one incomplete trail running from Readville Station to East Street that accommodates cyclists. There are two on-road facilities: one stretching from the northern Dedham border along Bridge Street and down Ames Street until terminating at High Street, and the second from the East and Cedar Street rotary to Route 128. About 9,600 linear feet of bike lanes have been installed on Rustcraft Road as part of the Transportation Improvement Project (TIP). Very few bike racks have been installed throughout the Town, further reflecting the lack of cyclist-oriented connectivity. Similarly, Dedham is not served by any bikeshare system.

Additional bicycle infrastructure investments are planned with about 8,000 linear feet of bike lanes to be installed on East Street in 2025 with repaving work. About 13,200 linear feet of bike lanes to be installed on East Street in 2023 and about 3,200 linear feet of bike lanes will be installed on Eastern Avenue as part of Complete Streets implementation. About 1,000 linear feet of shared use path will be installed on Whiting Avenue in 2025 as part of a Safe Streets to School Grant.



Local Access Score and WalkScore

MAPC developed an online mapping tool called Local Access Score (localaccess.mapc.org) to help communities prioritize sidewalk and bike route improvements. The tool looks at the utility or usefulness for a given segment of street or road for active transportation, and provides a quantitative estimate of current or potential roadway utility. The tool provides an active transportation network utility score for the roadway segment to indicate how useful that segment is for connecting residents with local schools, shops, restaurants, parks and transit stations. The Local Access Score is calculated using travel demand software that uses input data on population and destinations to estimate the number of trips households are likely to make in a given day, the likely destinations of those trips, and the most direct routes connecting households to their destinations. The dataset contains a separate score for four different types of destinations (school, shops and restaurants, transit stations, and parks) and two different modes (walking and biking), for a total of eight basic scores. These scores are combined and weighted to produce walking and biking scores as well as an overall composite score.¹ In other words, the more utility a segment has in terms of population, potential destinations, and connectivity, the higher the overall score.

Streets with the highest composite scores in Dedham include Washington Street, High Street, East Street, and Eastern Avenue. Portions of Providence Highway, particularly near Legacy Place, also score highly. While many of these streets have sidewalks, some segments are narrow or have worn crosswalks and do not meet the Commonwealth's complete street standards.

¹ See "About the Data", <http://localaccess.mapc.org/>

² <https://masscompletestreets.com/>

Complete Streets Program

Complete streets are those that provide safe and accessible options for all travel modes – walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles – for people of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets can improve safety by reducing the severity and number of crashes, and support health benefits by promoting walking, running, and cycling, and improve the livability of neighborhoods. The MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program was created to reward municipalities that demonstrate a commitment to embedding Complete Streets in local policies and practices. The program provides funding for technical assistance and construction. Dedham adopted a complete streets policy in 2017, and a prioritization plan in 2018. Communities that have a policy and prioritization plan are eligible for technical assistance and funding for projects through MassDOT's Complete Streets program.²

Safe Routes to School

The Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, a program under MassDOT, works to increase safe biking and walking among elementary and middle school students throughout the state. The program exists in approximately 65% of Massachusetts schools. SRTS utilizes the six E's to implement its program including Education, Encouragement, Engagement, Evaluation, Engineering, and Equity. The program can provide technical assistance with important school planning measures like arrival and dismissal plans, walk and bike audits, and developing safe walking and biking routes for students.

In Dedham, five schools were partnered with SRTS in 2021. The schools partnering with SRTS include Avery Elementary School, Dedham Middle School, Greenlodge Elementary School, Oakdale Elementary School, and Riverdale Elementary School. SRTS programs at these schools could improve arrival and dismissal traffic, as well as increase the physical activity of students before and after school.



Ridehailing/Transportation Network Company (TNC) Trips

Growth in ridehailing trips is contributing to the increase in vehicles on Dedham's roadways leading to more congestion, wear and tear on streets, and double parking to pick-up and drop-off passengers. However, Massachusetts assesses a fee for each transportation network company (TNC) trip taken within the state, distributing a portion of the revenue raised to the trip's municipality of origin. In this way, an increase in TNC trips also results in a nominal increase in funding for transportation-related maintenance and improvement projects. Dedham received \$35,380 from TNC trips taken in 2017 and 2018, which the Town used to improve Town-operated bus service. If TNC ridership continues an upward trajectory and the State legislature passes more aggressive fee structures and data reporting requirements, Dedham could see an increase in funds to improve active transportation infrastructure. The Town may also consider using pick-up and drop-off data to designate TNC loading zones in commercial areas to reduce the impacts of double parking.

In 2020, Dedham along with municipalities throughout the state saw a significant decrease in TNC usage due to fewer trips being taken due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Dedham saw a decrease of 54% in TNC usage, which was less impacted than other municipalities statewide which saw an average decrease of 62%. Although this is a significant decrease, the rideshare numbers still speak to the important role that ridehailing plays in the local transportation network and the pre-pandemic patterns would be expected to return in the future.

VFW Parkway/Providence Highway Study

The Town of Dedham and the City of Boston launched transportation action plan for the area between the intersection of Bridge Street, Spring Street, and VFW Parkway in Boston and the Marine Rotary at Washington Street in Dedham in December 2020. The final plan was published in December 2021. The corridor action plan evaluates the needs of all types of travelers, as well as those who live and work on the roadway. The plan includes short- and long-term recommendations for improving safe access to shops, schools, nearby neighborhoods, transit, and recreational areas—including the Charles River and Mother Brook.

Parking

Dedham is a vehicle-oriented Town with transit service (two MBTA Commuter Rail stops and multiple MBTA bus route options) and pedestrian or bike infrastructure. This points to the importance of parking as a component of convenient circulation in the Town. In general, there is a large parking supply near destinations of interest, such as employment, commercial, and recreational centers. The Town provides a public parking lot consisting of 137 off street parking spaces in Dedham Square to serve the business district. Residents have expressed concern about parking and parking management in Dedham Square. At the Dedham Mall, Dedham Square, Providence Highway South, Legacy Place, and Stergis Way, there are about 10,000 total commercial parking spaces. Each of the ten centers of economic activity defined in the Economic Development chapter has sufficient parking supply available. In areas where parking is underutilized, such as Dedham Mall, Providence Highway South, and Legacy Place, these spaces could be temporarily or permanently repurposed. Examples for creative reuse include reallocating space for: farmer's markets or craft fairs, green space, or TNC pick-up and drop-off zones.



Transportation and Connectivity Goals and Strategies

NOTE: Master Plan strategies are recommendations that will depend on follow-up activity from Boards and Committees to carry forward. No Board or Committee is obligated to carry this work forward. For example, it is up to the Planning Board to decide how best to implement the many goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan that relate to planning..

Summary: Make Dedham safe and reliable for any form of travel with a priority to improve walking or biking anywhere you want to go.

TI Goal 1: Prioritize walking, rolling, and biking infrastructure improvements with a focus on neighborhood business districts, schools, and access to transit in order to decrease traffic congestion and increase healthy, sustainable modes of transportation.

Both walking and biking are desirable forms of transportation for Dedham residents, yet safe infrastructure doesn't exist throughout the Town. Building out a network of connected walking and biking routes would be beneficial to increasing physical activity and decreasing traffic congestion by providing a safe, convenient and attractive alternative to driving for some trips.

Strategy 1.1: Improve the experience for walking, biking, and rolling (for example, wheelchairs) by upgrading curb and sidewalk conditions and improving regulations (for example, requiring property owners to be responsible for snow removal on the sidewalk(s) adjacent to their property or ending parking on neighborhood sidewalks).

Strategy 1.2: Reinvigorate Dedham's Safe Routes to School program to strengthen safe walking, biking, and rolling (strollers, roller blades, etc.) for students and decrease vehicular congestion around schools.

Strategy 1.3: Review the 2014 Bike and Pedestrian plan for Dedham and evaluate roadway and streets for pedestrian and bicycle improvements including pilot projects to test new ideas.

Strategy 1.4: Integrate bike and pedestrian improvements with upcoming and planned infrastructure and maintenance projects such as adding bike racks at all parks and public buildings to allow more people to bike to destinations within town rather than drive.



T2 Goal 2: Optimize streets, parking, and transportation infrastructure to create more vibrant, people-centered, and flexible spaces.

In Dedham's business districts, parking availability is seen as a challenge at peak times. Some parking management strategies, such as implementing parking meters and adopting dynamic pricing, can help to increase turnover of spaces during high demand times and increase parking availability. In areas with excess and unused parking, Dedham could designate transportation network company (TNC) such as Uber and Lyft pick up/drop off areas and delivery areas, or programs to convert strategic locations to other uses, such as outdoor dining, additional green space, or amenities.

Strategy 2.1: Evaluate parking uses and requirements throughout the Town to determine if a portion of the space could be used in a more vibrant, flexible way.

Strategy 2.2: Consider repurposing street space in economic centers (squares and neighborhood centers) to be flexible for various purposes.

Strategy 2.3: Identify locations where vehicular infrastructure could be reduced to provide more space for non-vehicular travel, including reducing lane widths, removing travel lanes, etc.

Curbside outdoor dining in Dedham



Source: Town of Dedham



T3 Goal 3: Reduce risk of traffic related injuries and fatalities and increase safety and convenience for all types of travel.

Crashes are clustered in many areas of Dedham, and there are multiple clusters in Dedham's environmental justice areas. An environmental justice area is an area in which the annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income, or minorities comprise 40% or more of the population, or 25% or more of households lack English language proficiency, or minorities comprise 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income. The Town should focus its initial street safety efforts on these focused areas, and create a proactive policy and procedures to improve other unsafe areas in its street network.

Strategy 3.1: For upcoming repaving and/or reconstruction projects, design for reduced speed using elements such as reducing travel lane width, reducing travel lanes, adding speed humps, signage, reducing streets to one-way travel to make space for sidewalks and bike lanes, and other traffic management design items, which will discourage cut-through traffic and increase safety on the roads.

Strategy 3.2: Create a safer environment for all by planning

multimodal streets that support active transportation and decrease the Town's reliance on vehicles by adding crosswalks, flashing beacons, improved street lighting.

Strategy 3.3: Continually review traffic crash data and other data to determine the top areas where safety improvements and additional traffic enforcement are needed.

A crosswalk on Cedar Street



Source: MAPC



T4 Goal 4: Improve safe, comfortable access to existing transit stops, improve local conditions for reliability, and advocate for an increase in frequency of rail and bus service to encourage mode shift away from vehicles and towards more sustainable modes of transportation.

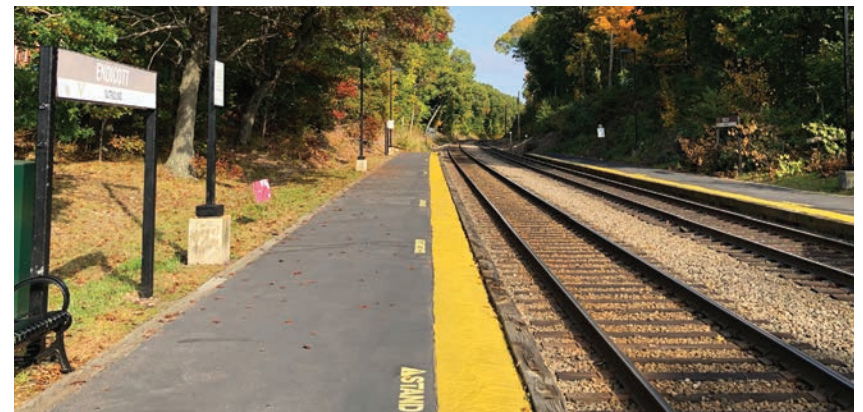
Enhance transit with local interventions such as improved first and last mile connections, micro-transit options, and transit-oriented development. Ridership at the Dedham Corporate Center commuter rail stop nearly doubled between 2012 and 2018. The 34/34E bus route has significant opportunities for improvements, such as dedicated bus lanes and queue jumps, that would make it more reliable for daily users. Although current transit ridership is down due to COVID-19, Dedham should plan for long-term improvements to ensure bus and rail service is not negatively impacted once daily traffic increases and more regular commuting patterns resume.

Strategy 4.1: Evaluate walking and biking conditions to and from transit stops that could be enhanced/improved to reduce the need to drive and park at key stops.

Strategy 4.2: Improve transit efficiency with local interventions, such as dedicated bus lanes through congested areas to make transit faster and more reliable, encouraging people to choose transit over driving.

Strategy 4.3: Engage surrounding towns to determine if a coordinated senior/disabled transportation service, and/or a flexible, on-demand microtransit service pilot could be implemented. *Note:* a Town-wide fixed-route shuttle was discontinued at Town Meeting a few years ago.

Endicott commuter rail platform



Source: MAPC



T5

Goal 5: Plan for electric and autonomous vehicles, as well as other potential future transportation technologies.

The future of transportation will be different than it is now. Over the next 10 years changes in the vehicle fleet are likely to impact infrastructure needs. Particularly, increased use of electric and autonomous vehicles will require responding with appropriate infrastructure and policies. The Town should take advantage of electric vehicle incentives at the state level and be flexible in parking requirements and design to support electric vehicle adoption, including adoption in the Town's fleet of vehicles. Electric vehicles will need designated spaces with charging capabilities. Autonomous vehicles may not need as much parking and may require additional designated curb-side pick-up and drop-off areas.

Strategy 5.1: Develop more electric vehicle infrastructure in Dedham, both for public parking spaces and private spaces that are part of new development. At 2023 Town Meeting, the Town's Zoning Bylaw was amended by a Planning Board article to define Electric Vehicle Charging Stations as accessory uses. In the future, requiring electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of new development could be considered.

Strategy 5.2: Rethink parking minimums (potentially switch to parking maximums) to address future uses of autonomous vehicles.

Strategy 5.3: Plan for potential new micro-mobility options such as bikeshare, e-bikes, mopeds, and other non-automobile possibilities to increase the options residents and visitors have to get around Dedham without increasing traffic congestion.

Shared lane marking on Sprague Street



Source: MAPC



T6

Goal 6: Expand the tools for transportation implementation including regional coordination, collaboration with Transportation Management Associations, and temporary pilot improvements to decrease local and regional traffic congestion.

Currently, there is not a Dedham staff position that is responsible for transportation, including grant pursuit, coordination with neighboring municipalities, and coordination with the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association (TMA). All transportation projects should be viewed as an opportunity to implement Town transportation goals, including current Department of Public Works (DPW) plans, roadway repaving plans, and other upcoming transportation projects. To address capacity challenges, the Planning Director could work with existing transportation committees to identify funding opportunities and upcoming projects to incorporate transportation improvements.

Strategy 6.1: Coordinate with transportation planning in neighboring communities, and Neponset Valley TMA to increase options for regional transportation beyond driving.

Strategy 6.2: Prioritize pilot and temporary/quick build projects to test new ideas, and involve the public in project evaluation. For example, pilot quick fix solutions (painting the curb, artwork on the sidewalk, additional parking enforcement, etc.) that would reduce the likelihood of cars parking on neighborhood sidewalks, gather data on what works, and expand the application of effective solutions.

Strategy 6.3: Price parking appropriately to better manage parking in high demand areas and increase parking enforcement in these areas.

Strategy 6.4: Continuously evaluate new forms of data such as TNC, Census, Smartphone-based travel data, etc. to understand changing travel needs post-COVID-19 Pandemic. For example, explore use of crowd-sourced cell phone data to learn more about cut through traffic patterns.



17 Goal 7: Define clear responsibilities for Dedham's transportation committees and Town staff and involve diverse perspectives of the public to inform decision-making.

In order to leverage the transportation efforts that are undertaken on behalf of the Town, the committees and Town staff should clearly communicate ongoing activities with the broader community and define responsibilities for advancing the transportation goals.

Strategy 7.1: Define a specific process for establishing, evaluating and implementing projects with a public-facing dashboard showing project objectives and details. Create a workplan if necessary.

Strategy 7.2: Disseminate information about Dedham's transportation committees, Transportation Advisory Committee and Active Transportation Working Group (including how to find info and how to join) to the general public through various sources. Also share outreach information with the general public to educate and inform about important laws and regulations for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle uses in the public realm.

Strategy 7.3: Determine how to ensure that the membership on the committees and the decisions that are being made are reflective of Town demographics and address concerns of the most vulnerable residents.

Dedham Town Hall



Source: MAPC



Transportation and connectivity Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for transportation and connectivity.

T1 Identify weak, missing, or unsafe areas in the pedestrian network that need improvement, especially first/last mile connections and crossings for Providence Highway. Prioritize adding elements such as wide shoulders, shared-use paths, roadside paths, or traffic calming to these gaps.

This action would set the stage for regular and systemic improvements to the transportation infrastructure prioritizing the most critical connections first to build-out the network of walkable places in Dedham. The lead responsibility would be the Town of Dedham Planning Department in close coordination with the Town of Dedham Engineering Department and the Transportation Advisory Committee. Dedham residents would be involved in and

guide this process. The timeframe for this action would be mid-term, to occur within 4 to 6 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include the 2014 Dedham Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan at <https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Dedham-Westwood-Network-Plan-April2014.pdf>. The MAPC Local Access Score website at <https://localaccess.mapc.org/> which includes tools that can help prioritize routes. The MAPC Trail Implementation Toolkit at <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/trail-implementation-toolkit/> and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability.

T2 Review the Town maintenance plan to ensure that sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike infrastructure are properly maintained after installation.

This action would bring considerations for sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike infrastructure to the same level as the roadway surfaces that are serving cars. The lead responsibility would be the Town of Dedham Engineering Department. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential external resources include several street design guides including Smart Growth America Complete Streets resources at <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources>. The MassDOT Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability at <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/09/17/>

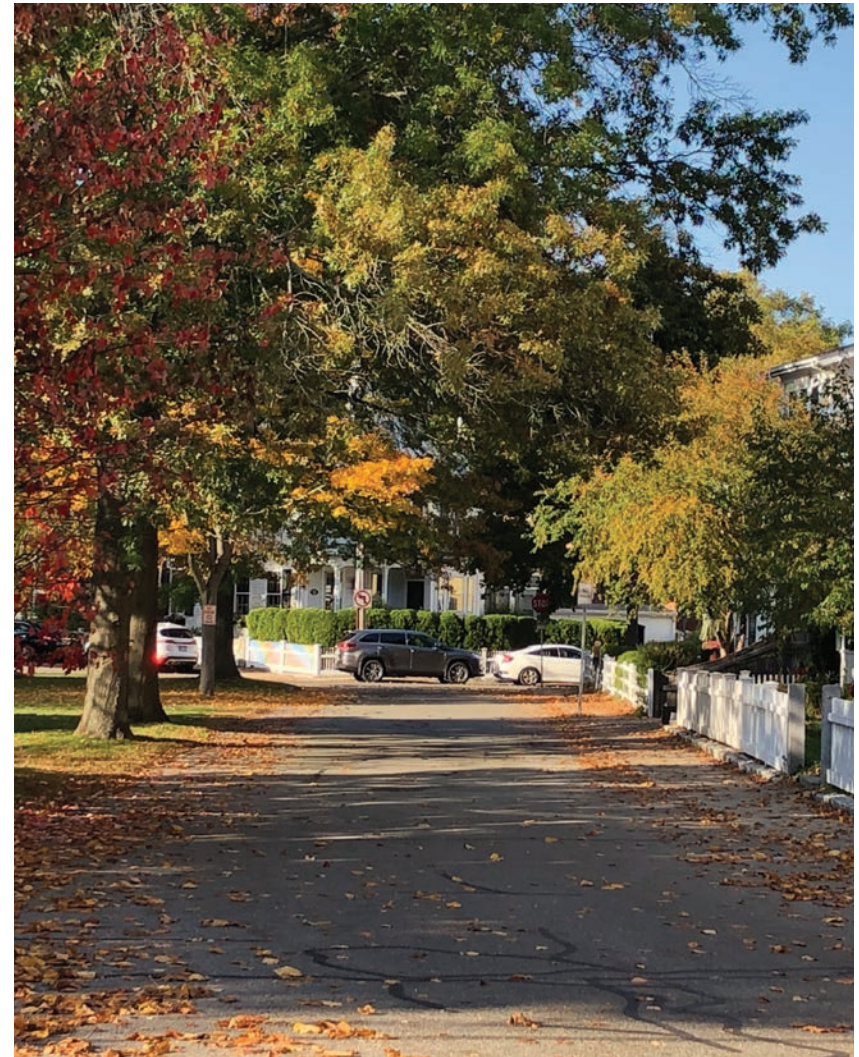


MunicipalResourcesGuideForWalkability_2018-08-24.pdf. And, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Global Street Design Guide, at <https://nacto.org/publication/global-street-design-guide>.

T3 Increase use of creating temporary, flexible changes first through temporary paint, signage and flex posts to evaluate different safety strategies to slow vehicular traffic and better separate pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic.

This action would expedite implementation efforts by testing solutions to improve safety regardless of the availability of funding for more permanent investments. The low-cost temporary solutions would further define the appropriate solutions and allow additional data to be collected. The lead responsibility would be the Town of Dedham Department of Public Works in close coordination with the Town of Dedham Planning Department, Engineering Department, and the Transportation Advisory Committee. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include case studies of similar improvements at <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources> and MAPC Shared Streets: <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/shared-streets>.

Franklin Square



Source: MAPC

T1 Goal 1: Prioritize walking, rolling, and biking infrastructure improvements with a focus on neighborhood business districts, schools, and access to transit in order to decrease traffic congestion and increase healthy, sustainable modes of transportation.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
T1.1: Improve the experience for walking, biking, and rolling by upgrading curb and sidewalk conditions and improving regulations.	1. Implement slow streets on neighborhood streets, especially areas where children, seniors, and people with disabilities live.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	1. Smart Growth America Complete Streets resources: https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/ 2. MassDOT Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability: https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/09/17/MunicipalResourcesGuide-ForWalkability_2018-08-24.pdf 3. NACTO Global Street Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/global-street-design-guide/
	2. Use human-scale materials on streets that facilitate walking and biking, such as street trees, landscaping, low lighting, benches, public art, etc.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department, Council on Aging, Active Transportation Working Group	Ongoing	
	3. Incorporate supporting infrastructure elements such as secure and accessible bike parking/storage, wayfinding, public bathrooms, places to rest, etc.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department, Council on Aging, Active Transportation Working Group	Ongoing	
	4. Utilize ADA guidance to enhance the experience for people with disabilities, seniors, parents with young children, etc.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department	Ongoing	
T1.2: Reinvigorate Dedham's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to strengthen safe walking, biking, and rolling for students and decrease vehicle congestion around schools.	1. Work with MassDOT's SRTS coordinator to identify areas of improvement, such as arrival/dismissal plans, walking/biking routes, walking school buses, etc.	Dedham Public Schools		Near-term (1 to 3 years)/ Ongoing	
	2. Incorporate SRTS infrastructure into future ped/bike and street improvements, especially those within a two-mile radius of Dedham's schools.	Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department	Dedham Public Schools	Near-term (1 to 3 years) and Mid-term	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources	
<p>Priority</p> <p>T1.3: Review the 2014 Bike and Pedestrian plan for Dedham and evaluate roadway and streets for pedestrian and bicycle improvements including pilot projects to test new ideas.</p>	<p>1. Review the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian plan for Dedham, completed by MAPC, to determine current relevance and potential projects, especially those that connect to The Charles River and Mother Brook.</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department, Engineering Department</p>	<p>Active Transportation Working Group</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	<p>1. 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan: https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Dedham-Westwood-Network-Plan-April2014.pdf</p> <p>2. MAPC Local Access Score website (https://localaccess.mapc.org/) includes tools that can help prioritize routes.</p> <p>3. MAPC Trail Implementation Toolkit: https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/trail-implementation-toolkit/</p> <p>4. MAPC Trail Implementation Toolkit; MassDOT Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability</p>	
	<p>2. Update the 2014 Bike/Ped map showing new key nodes such as schools, economic centers, new housing/developments, grocery stores, places of worship, natural areas, etc. that need connectivity as identified in the Master Plan. New paths or improvements to existing sidewalks that help connect to these key nodes should be given priority.</p>	<p>GIS Department, Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>		
	<p>3. Identify weak, missing, or unsafe areas in the network that need improvement, especially first/last mile connections, crossings for Providence Highway. Prioritize adding elements such as wide shoulders, shared-use paths, roadside paths, or traffic calming to these gaps.</p>	<p>Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department, Active Transportation Working Group</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>		<p>See Strategy T1.2 above.</p>
	<p>4. Continue to refine the Complete Streets plan to ensure that residents and visitors have a range of safe, comfortable, and enjoyable transportation options.</p>	<p>Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department, Town Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Smart Growth American Benefits of Complete Streets Tool: https://benefits.completestreets.org/</p>
<p>Priority</p> <p>T1.4: Integrate bike and pedestrian improvements with upcoming and planned infrastructure and maintenance projects.</p>	<p>1. Review the Town maintenance plan to ensure that sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike infrastructure are properly maintained after installation.</p>	<p>Engineering Department</p>	<p>Public Works (DPW) Department</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	<p>See Strategy T1.3 above</p>	
	<p>2. Review upcoming resurfacing/restriping projects and determine if the project area can be redistributed to better accommodate walking, biking, and rolling.</p>	<p>Engineering Department</p>	<p>Public Works (DPW) Department</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>		
	<p>3. Support walkability improvements across all town boards, commissions, and committees as a public health, public safety, and environmental improvement.</p>	<p>Public Works (DPW) Department, Engineering Department</p>	<p>Boards, Commissions, Committees</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>		



T2 Goal 2: Optimize streets, parking, and transportation infrastructure to create vibrant, people-centered, and flexible spaces.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
T2.1: Evaluate parking uses and requirements throughout the Town to determine if a portion of the space could be used in a more vibrant, flexible way.	1. Conduct parking studies in key business districts, like Dedham Square and Providence Highway, that measures existing parking resources, as well as typical parking needs and turnover.	Planning & Zoning Department	Economic Development Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	MAPC Perfect Fit Parking resources: https://perfectfitparking.mapc.org/
	2. Revise the zoning code to evaluate parking minimums, including unbundling parking with multiunit buildings, parking maximums.	Planning & Zoning Department		Long-term (7 to 9 years)	
T2.2: Consider repurposing street space in economic centers (squares and neighborhood centers) to be flexible for various purposes.	1. Use temporary items like flex posts, paint and planters to reconfigure space based on need, such as a public event like an open street or farmer's market.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	1. NACTO: Streets for Rapid Response and Recovery: https://nacto.org/program/covid19/?mc_cid=dca71f07e7&mc_eid=c-60f3a701b 2. Tactical Urbanism Guide: http://tacticalurbanismguide.com/ 3. Smart Growth America's Arts and Transportation for Rapid Response: https://smartgrowthamerica.org/artist-led-projects-to-address-pandemic-related-transportation-challenges/
	2. Provide facilities such as bike racks or secure storage, wayfinding, seating, and dedicated pick-up drop-off areas, also consider interactive amenities.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department, Active Transportation Working Group, Livable Dedham, Commission on Disability	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
T2.3: Identify locations where vehicular infrastructure could be reduced to provide more space for non-vehicular travel, including reducing lane widths, removing travel lanes, etc.	1. Identify areas of concern, such as environmental justice areas, neighborhoods with low or no vehicle ownership, and areas around schools as part of 2014 Bike/Ped Plan update.	Planning & Zoning Department	Active Transportation Working Group	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	See 2014 Bike/Ped Plan, plus any updates
	2. Modify roadway infrastructure to reduce parking on sidewalks including adding curbs, reducing two way travel to one way to provide adequate space for parking on both sides, improved signage, and use of bollards.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



T3 Goal 3: Reduce risk of traffic related injuries and fatalities and increase safety and convenience for all types of travel.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
Priority T3.1: For upcoming repaving and/or reconstruction projects, design for reduced speed using elements such as reducing travel lane width, reducing travel lanes, adding speed humps, signage, reducing streets to one-way travel to make space for sidewalks and bike lanes, and other traffic management design items.	1. Support staff training about tactical urbanism techniques. Consider creating temporary, flexible changes first through temporary paint, signage and flex posts to evaluate different safety strategies to slow vehicular traffic and better separate ped, bike and vehicular traffic.	Engineering Department	Public Works (DPW) Department, Active Transportation Working Group, Town Manager	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	1. Pedestrian and Bicycle safety audit resources: https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/resources/resources_details.cfm?id=5085 2. Case studies of similar improvements: https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/ 3. MAPC Shared Streets: https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/shared-streets/ Can be done as part of the Complete Street planning and prioritization, updates to 2014 bike/ped plan, and Road Safety Audits
	2. Review crash and other data to determine if a Road Safety Audit should be done prior to any implementation.			Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	3. Evaluate where there may be excess pavement that encourages speeding, and determine how those areas can be redesigned to encourage slower driving speeds with sidewalk and crosswalk extensions, better lighting, public art, greenery, street trees, etc.			Ongoing	
T3.2: Create a safer environment for all by planning multimodal streets that support active transportation and decrease the Town's reliance on vehicles by adding crosswalks, flashing beacons, improved street lighting.	1. Implement bus priority lanes and other BRT elements on major routes, such as Washington Street that connects Dedham to Boston to increase the reliability and speed of buses.	Engineering Department	Planning & Zoning Department, MBTA	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	1. MAPC "Get it Rolling" guidebook on bus improvements: https://www.mapc.org/planning101/mapc-releases-get-it-rolling-workbook-on-bus-improvements/ 2. NACTO Transit Street Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/
	2. Implement separated bike/micro-mobility lanes that align with the 2014 bike/ped plan.	Engineering Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	3. Consider adding regulation to require property owners shovel all abutting sidewalks.	Select Board	Snow Committee, Active Transportation Working	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	4. Add equipment and procedures to maintain sidewalks year round, such as clearing snow from sidewalks with a focus on critical walking connections. For example, Providence Highway corridor sidewalks.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Town Manager	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
T3.3: Continually review traffic crash data and other data to determine the top areas for needed safety and enforcement improvements.	1. Conduct annual road safety audits as outlined by MassDOT's Complete Streets Guidelines and FHWA's Safety Audit Guidelines.	Engineering Department	Public Works (DPW) Department	Ongoing	1. MassDOT Road Safety Audit guidelines: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/road-safety-audits
	2. Collect data from the community to identify dangerous locations that should be improved.	Engineering Department	Public Works (DPW) Department	Ongoing	2. Pedestrian and Bicycle safety audit resources: https://www.pedbikeinfo.org/resources/resources_details.cfm?id=5085



T4 Goal 4: Improve safe, comfortable access to existing transit stops, improve local conditions for reliability, and advocate for an increase in frequency of rail and bus service to encourage mode shift away from vehicles and towards sustainable transportation.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
T4.1: Evaluate walking and biking conditions to and from transit stops that could be enhanced/improved to reduce the need to drive and park at key stops.	1. Enhance supporting infrastructure items such as lighting, benches, green space, signage, public art, etc.	Public Works (DPW) Department	MBTA, CTPS, Planning & Zoning Department, Active Transportation Working Group, Dedham Cultural Council	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	1. MassDOT Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability: https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/09/17/MunicipalResourcesGuide-ForWalkability_2018-08-24.pdf 2. NACTO Transit Street Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/ 3. CTPS Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program: https://www.ctps.org/ctta
	2. Increase secure bike parking/storage at transit stops.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
T4.2: Improve transit efficiency with local interventions.	1. Work with the MBTA on the Bus Network Re-design process to improve efficiency, which could include bus stop consolidation.	Planning & Zoning Department	Active Transportation Working Group	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	See actions listed below with Actions 2 and 3. 1. See transit resources T.2.2 2. MBTA Bus Network Redesign: https://www.mbta.com/projects/bus-network-redesign 3. Commuter Rail Communities Coalition: https://www.t4ma.org/commuter_rail
	2. Implement bus priority lanes and other BRT elements on major routes, such as Washington Street that connects Dedham to Boston.	See T2.2			
	3. Work with the Commuter Rail Communities Coalition to advocate for greater rail frequency, as described in Rail Vision.	Town Manager	Active Transportation Working Group	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
T4.3: Engage surrounding towns to determine if a coordinated senior/disabled transportation service, and/or a flexible, on-demand microtransit service pilot could be implemented.	1. Consider contracting with a local taxi or ride-share company to help fill gaps in service and address unmet needs of vulnerable residents.	Council on Aging	Active Transportation Working Group	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	1. Massmobility human service agencies and community transportation resources: https://www.mass.gov/human-service-agencies-and-community-transportation 2. CTPS Community Shuttle guidebook: https://www.ctps.org/operating-a-shuttle-guidebook
	2. Evaluate whether to create expanded on-demand van service to connect people who are most vulnerable to daily needs.	Council on Aging	Planning & Zoning Department	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	



T5 Goal 5: Plan for electric and autonomous vehicles, as well as other potential future transportation technologies.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
T5.1: Develop more electric vehicle infrastructure in Dedham, both for public parking spaces and private spaces that are part of new development.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify key areas for charging stations, including multiunit buildings, places of employment, town center, places of worship, and grocery stores, and prioritize equitable distribution of stations. 2. Modify the zoning code to include adding electric vehicle infrastructure in new development and redevelopment projects in Dedham. 	Public Works (DPW) Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)/ Long-term	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guide for planning charging stations: https://drivethru.gsa.gov/Training/Charging%20Station%20Training%20-%20Planning.pdf 2. PVPC EV Charing Station Plan/Guide: http://www.pvpc.org/projects/ev-charging-station-planguide
T5.2: Rethink parking minimums (potentially switch to parking maximums) to address future uses of autonomous vehicles.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the zoning code to evaluate parking minimums including unbundling parking with multiunit buildings. 	Planning & Zoning Department		Long-term (7 to 9 years)	See parking resources in T3.1
T5.3: Plan for potential new micro-mobility options such as bikeshare, e-bikes, mopeds, and other non-automobile possibilities to increase the options residents and visitors have to get around Dedham without increasing traffic congestion.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider how these resources will be equitably distributed and the cost to the user for renting/using/buying these services. 2. Evaluate new and emerging practices for incorporating these new modes into streets (both for travel and storage). 	Planning & Zoning Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Sustainability Advisory Committee	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	T4America: https://playbook.t4america.org/equity/
		Planning & Zoning Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Sustainability Advisory Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	TDP's Maximizing Micromobility: https://www.itdp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/05_ITDP_MaximizingMicromobility.pdf



T6 Goal 6: Expand the tools for transportation implementation including regional coordination, collaboration with Transportation Management Associations, and temporary pilot improvements to decrease local and regional traffic congestion.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
T6.1: Coordinate with transportation planning in neighboring communities, and Neponset Valley TMA.	1. Continue working with Neponset Valley Suburban Mobility Working Group, other TRIC municipalities on potential pilot programs.	Planning & Zoning Department, Engineering Department	Council on Aging	Ongoing and continuous	
T6.2: Prioritize pilot and temporary/quick build projects to test new ideas, and involve the public in project evaluation.	1. When evaluating implementation of projects meeting goals 1 through 5, consider places where less-expensive, temporary pilots can be implemented and evaluated.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Ongoing and continuous	See resources under Strategy T3.2
T6.3: Price parking appropriately to better manage parking in high demand areas and increase parking enforcement in these areas.	1. Implement parking meters and dynamic parking pricing to better manage parking.	Planning & Zoning Department	Public Works (DPW) Department, Town Manager, Dedham Square Circle	Ongoing and continuous	FHW Active Parking Management: https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/atdm/approaches/apm.htm
T6.4: Continuously evaluate new forms of data such as TNC, Census, Smartphone-based travel data, etc. to understand changing travel needs post-COVID-19 Pandemic.	<p>1. Work with municipalities and regional partners to evaluate new regional travel patterns both within Dedham and to other frequent regional destinations.</p> <p>2. Explore use of crowd-sourced cell phone data to learn more about cut through traffic patterns and propose solutions based on the data.</p>	Planning & Zoning Department, Public Works (DPW)	CTPS, MAPC, MassDOT	Long-term (7 to 9 years)	



T7 Goal 7: Define clear responsibilities for Dedham’s transportation committees and Town staff and involve diverse perspectives of the public to inform decision-making.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
T7.1: Define a specific process for establishing, evaluating and implementing projects with a public-facing dashboard showing project objectives and details. Create a workplan if necessary.	1. Determine short-term, medium-term, and long-term projects, and develop a strategy for getting easy/quick fixes completed in a short time period.	Master Plan Implementation Committee	Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Evaluate whether to hire a dedicated full-time transportation planner.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
T7.2: Disseminate information about Dedham’s transportation committees (including how to find info and how to join) to the general public through various sources.	1. Revise Dedham’s webpage to better inform the public on the activities and purposes of the various committees, including how to join or participate.	Town Manager (Director of Communications)	Engineering, Public Works (DPW), Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Evaluate and implement a variety of strategies for engaging with the public including social media posts/campaigns, the newspaper, community events, partnering with local organizations, and pilot projects.			Ongoing and continuous	Smart Growth America’s Improving Public Engagement: https://smartgrowthamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Improving-public-engagement_FINAL.pdf
T7.3: Determine how to ensure that the membership on the committees and the decisions that are being made are reflective of Town demographics and address concerns of the most vulnerable residents.	1. Prioritize membership for car-free, transit-dependent, lower-income residents who may be most impacted by decisions made by this group or the Town.	Town Manager	Active Transportation Working Group, Transportation Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Chapter 8:

Community Facilities and Services

Introduction

A community facility is any Town-owned asset that has a public purpose and that supports community services, such as school facilities or public safety facilities. Community facilities also include non-building facilities such as parks, playgrounds, and cemeteries. Well-designed and well-maintained community facilities contribute to Dedham's quality of life and enhance the attractiveness of the Town as a place to live, work, and do business. Community facilities make it possible for municipal employees and volunteers to provide services for the public good.

Community services include municipal services and utilities such as public safety, public health, education, recreation, public water, sewer, and partner organization and contracted services such as solid waste and recycling or street maintenance. Dedham's ability to provide sufficient facilities and services depends on effective capital planning, a commitment to implementation, sound asset management policies, and the availability of revenue for local government operations.

The community facilities and services chapter of the Master Plan takes stock of Dedham's facility resources and helps to guide decisions relevant to the management of public buildings, services, and infrastructure in order to meet present and future needs of the community.

 **Summary**

To improve the transparency of decision-making and policies and to more proactively prepare facilities and services to meet future needs and challenges.

 **Themes Highlights**

- Dedham has entered a new era of substantial investment in community facilities, highlighted by the construction of the Early Childhood Education Center, renovation of the Ames Building for Town Hall and the Senior Center, construction of a new Public Safety Building, a proposed new Town Green, and hiring of a facilities director.
- Dedham Public Schools are a primary feature of the Town’s community facilities and a source of community pride. The Town operates 7 school buildings with an enrollment over 2,500 total students.

8

Public buildings that the Town currently manages and owns (excluding schools)



 **Goal/Strategy Highlights**

- Improve the capital planning processes to project and better anticipate future needs including funding and financing needs.
- Improve transparency and communication with residents regarding capital projects and asset management.
- Strengthen sustainability and resiliency in public facilities and infrastructure.
- Expand Town services to advance equity and support residents and their families.

Dedham Public Schools Facilities

Name	Year Built	Grades	Enrollment (students)
Early Childhood Education Center	2019	Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten	307 (2022-23)
Avery Elementary School	2012	1-5	297 (2022-23)
Riverdale Elementary School	1920	1-5	174 (2022-23)
Oakdale Elementary School	1902	1-5	245 (2022-23)
Greenlodge Elementary School	1955	1-5	277 (2022-23)
Dedham Middle School	2006	6-8	540 (2022-23)
Dedham High School	1969	9-12	715 (2022-23)

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Companion and related plans and studies

- School Facilities Master Plan (2020)
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020)
- Parks and Fields Master Plan (2020)
- Climate Action and Resilience Plan (2020)



Defining community facilities and services terms

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

A five-year plan to guide improvements to the Town's buildings, equipment, infrastructure, and vehicle replacement.

Dedham-Westwood Water District (DWWD)

A public water service available in Dedham and operated under the joint-governance of the municipalities of Dedham and Westwood.

Full time equivalent (FTE)

A unit to measure employed persons that makes them comparable although they may work a different number of hours per week. One unit FTE is equal to a full time employee. For example, if a part-time worker works half time, they would be counted as 0.5 FTE.

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)

A public authority in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that provides wholesale drinking water and sewage services to certain municipalities and industrial users primarily in the Greater Boston region. In December 2005, the DWWD was granted membership in the MWRA allowing it to purchase supplemental water when needed to ensure public health and safety during times of peak water demand.

Pavement Management Program (PMP)

An annual condition assessment that is performed of all public roadways and sidewalks in Dedham to inform infrastructure investments.

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.



Community Facilities and Services In Dedham Today

Community Facilities themes from data and previous plans

CFS1 Proactively maintaining and managing Town-owned facilities

Each of the Town's community facilities are maintained on a regular basis to protect the public's investment in them and provide dependable and equitable service delivery to all residents, including those in future generations. The Town has a facilities director that is responsible for overseeing the maintenance of all Town and school properties. The hiring of a facilities director in 2011 was an outcome of the previous Town Master Plan. The Town facilities include new and recently renovated buildings such as the Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) and the Ames Building (new Town Hall). However, some of the community facilities have not been recently renovated, such as the Dunn Public Works Facility which was built in the 1960s, or the Dolan Recreation Center acquired by the Town in 2006.

All facilities, particularly aging assets, require regular investment to avoid a backlog of deferred maintenance and related facilities issues. Facility improvements and investments should be consistent with the sustainability and resilience goals and actions identified in the Town's Climate Action Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Town should continue to set the facility investment priorities and set up the next round of projects.

CFS2 Importance of public education and schools

In 1645, the Town of Dedham authorized the first taxpayer-funded, free public school in the United States. The history of the schools is closely linked to the history of the Town. Dedham prides itself on investing considerable resources in its public education system. The Dedham Public Schools remain a central feature of the community and the Town's community facilities and services. The Town continues to operate its own school system, with approximately 2,555 students enrolled during the 2022-2023 school year. According to the most recent data available from the Massachusetts Department of Education, in-district expenditures per pupil were \$22,790 in 2021.

The Dedham Public School District (DPS) includes seven school facilities. With the exception of the new ECEC, Dedham Middle School and Avery Elementary School, all Dedham Public School buildings are more than half a century old and have not undergone major renovations or reconstruction in the past 30 years. Dedham Public Schools recently completed a Long Term Facilities Master Plan. One of the priorities identified in that plan is improving the facility at Oakdale Elementary School. As a result of this planning, the Town is exploring options for the replacement of the Oakdale Elementary School.



CFS3 Capital improvement plan identifies the need for continued repairs

The Town maintains a Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to guide improvements to the Town's buildings, equipment, infrastructure, and vehicle replacement. All departmental capital funding requests are annually submitted to the Finance and Warrant Committee for review ahead of Town Meeting. In the Fall of 2016, the Town completed a Facility Condition Assessment for all school and Town owned buildings and developed a Preventive Maintenance program that could be integrated into the Town's work order system. The assessment identified \$10,228,775 in deficiency repairs that need to be addressed over the next 20 years. The Town incorporates these recommendations for repairs into the CIP based on needs that have risen to the highest priority during the past year.

CFS4 Recent facility investments

Over the past decade, the Town of Dedham has made significant investments in its public facilities and infrastructure, including the Avery School, renovations to the Ames Building, construction of the Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC), and most recently, the construction of a new consolidated public safety building. During the Summer 2020 Town Meeting, the Facilities Department was approved to move forward with \$1,283,000 for the following four capital projects during FY21 - replacement of the pool HVAC, replacement of the Dolan Center roof, the DPW generator

receiver and feeders, and the DPW fire alarm system.

Additional funding is frequently required in order to support facility investments. The Town has a AAA Bond Rating that supports lower interest borrowing and a special fund for capital improvements, known as the Robin Reyes Special Purpose Stabilization Fund. Some Master Plan survey participants expressed that a new high school and a multi-generational community center would be great new additions to the Town's current community facilities assets.

Avery Elementary School



Source: Warnerlarsen.com



Community Facilities and Services Community Priorities

Community Facilities themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to community facilities and services and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.) While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the community facilities and services themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

CFS1 Increase energy efficiency and sustainability

Survey participants indicated that the Town should prioritize investments in public facilities that support and implement sustainability, energy efficiency, and environmental stewardship in its capital improvement planning. The Town’s 2018 Greenhouse Gas Inventory revealed that buildings make up approximately 60 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions, both for municipal and community-wide operations. This makes energy use in municipal buildings a critical and impactful area to address climate change locally. School facilities have seen recent improvements to replace all lighting to LED through the use of matching state grants.

CFS2 Prioritize renovation and repair

Preventative maintenance, repair, and improvement of existing Town facilities was the second highest priority of survey respondents as a priority for community facilities and services. Several survey participants expressed that in some cases, renovating, refurbishing, and reusing existing public facilities (including parks and open space) may be more feasible, sustainable, and fiscally responsible than building new facilities. This type of approach should be considered in the capital improvement planning for community facilities.

CFS3 Improve transparency and communication for capital projects

A major theme from open-ended survey responses was the participants’ desire for the town to improve communication based on the experience of recently completed capital improvement projects. Some respondents expressed that the Town could publish and promote information describing the process used to develop the capital improvement plan or provide the public with clear instructions for how to get involved in the project selection process. Transparency would help to enable the public to engage in the process and understand the difficult choices involved when allocating scarce resources for competing capital improvements. Prioritization of projects must occur annually to align the projected needs with the available budget and the community would benefit from clear information on how this prioritization is occurring. This transparency is helps to build public support for investments in community facilities and public infrastructure.



Community Facilities and Services In Dedham Today

Additional context and data

Town Management

The day-to-day operations, policy direction, and decisions in Dedham are led by the Town Manager and Select Board in support of a legislative body composed of 273 elected Town Meeting members from the Town's seven precincts. Dedham's Select Board is a five-member elected board that is the chief executive board of the Town. The Select Board formulates policy directives and guidelines for many of the Town's departments, oversees licensing, and makes appointments to Town offices, boards, and committees.

The Town Manager, who is appointed by the Select Board, is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town and is responsible for the day-to-day management of Town operations. In addition, the Town Manager prepares a proposed annual operating budget and capital budget and submits them to the Select Board and Finance & Warrant Committee, which reviews all spending requests and makes recommendations to Town Meeting. The Town Moderator presides over Town Meeting and regulates the procedures at all Town Meetings. The moderator is also responsible for appointing the Finance and Warrant Committee, and other committees that are authorized by Town Meeting.

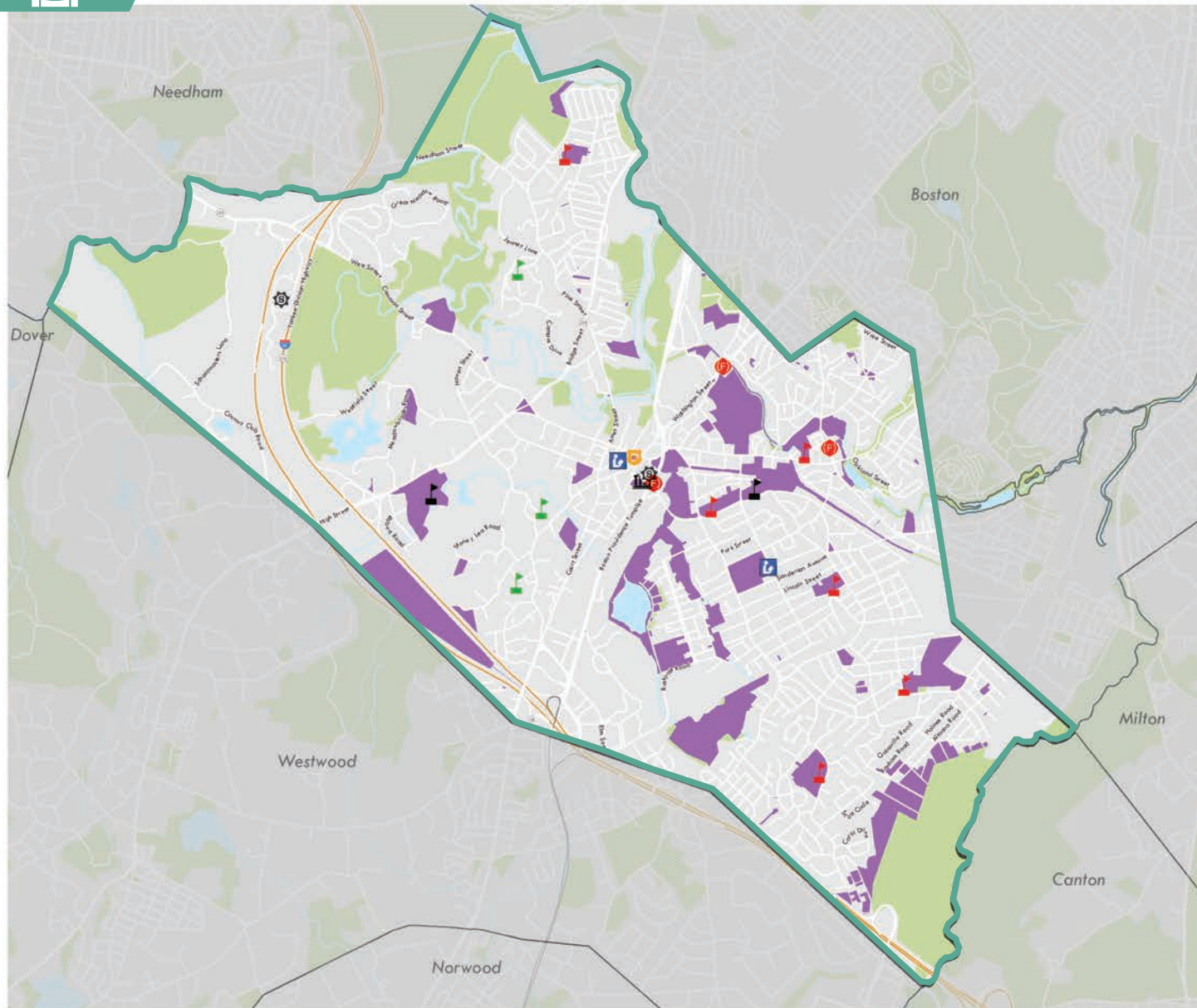
Dedham's Town Clerk is an elected position which operates by powers delegated through both state law and the Town Charter.

With general responsibility as the official keeper of record, the Dedham Town Clerk organizes and oversees the election process, conducts the annual Town census, records and certifies all official actions of the Town, records and preserves vital statistics, administers the oath of offices, issues various licenses, certifications, and permits, and submits bylaws adopted by Town Meeting to the Attorney General for approval.

Each of these leadership roles set the policy and financial context for community facilities and services in Dedham. A wide variety of additional boards, departments, committees, and commissions support the more specific needs of individual facilities and services provided by the Town of Dedham. The Town department with the most holistic view of all of these needs, facilities and services is the Facilities & Maintenance Department. For additional information regarding the overall structure of boards and departments, please refer to the Governance chapter of the Master Plan.

Community Facilities

A community facility is any Town-owned asset that provides for a public purpose and supports community services. The community facilities of Dedham are summarized below with public buildings, public education and school facilities, other public facilities, and infrastructure. The map on the following page also shows the location of these facilities and municipally owned land in Dedham. The community facilities are mostly clustered near the center of the Town and east of the center of Town.



Community Services & Facilities

- Public Library
- Local Police
- County Sheriff
- Fire Stations
- Town Halls
- Schools**
 - Collaborative
 - Private
 - Public
- Municipally Owned Land
- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham



Data Sources:
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS)
 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
 February 2020



Public Buildings

The Town of Dedham currently owns and manages eight public buildings (excluding public schools) as well as some accessory structures throughout the Town. Most Town departments operate out of the Ames Building at 450 Washington Street. However, a number of departments operate out of different facilities. The major structures include the following buildings with a brief summary and photograph.



Source: Town of Dedham

Ames Building (Town Hall)

The Ames Building is a four-story, 53,000 square foot Colonial Revival structure located at 450 Washington Street. This impressive civic structure was constructed in 1897 as a school and opened to Dedham Public Schools students the following year. Today, the recently renovated building houses Town Hall offices and the new senior center.

The Ames Building is named after Dedham native Fisher Ames (1758-1808), a skilled politician and orator who served in the first four federal Congresses and was a leader of the New England Federalists. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

In 1984, The Town sold the building, and it was used as an office building for several decades. In 2014, the Town repurchased the building with plans to renovate the structure and Town Hall offices moved into Ames in July 2020.

Public Safety Building



Source: Town of Dedham



Construction of a combined Public Safety Building commenced in December 2020 on the site of the former Town Hall at 26 Bryant Street. The new 84,000 square foot building houses the staff and equipment of Fire, Police, and Dispatch departments. It replaces two older Town buildings: the Police Station built in 1962 at 600 High Street and the Central Fire Station built in 1952 at 436 Washington Street. The new \$55 million public safety building was completed in 2023.

East Dedham Fire Stations

The East Dedham Fire Station, on Bussey Street, is a 6,000 square foot building that is over 100 years old. The historic structure



Source: Town of Dedham

is in need of updates. The station has two vehicle bays and accommodates approximately three to four personnel at a time.

Town Green

As part of relocation of the Police Station, the Dedham Square Planning Committee was created to determine the best reuse options for the Central Police Station site at 600 High Street. The Committee analyzed variations on three scenarios including to sell the parcel for private development, keep the parcel and all or some of its buildings for Town use, or keep the parcel and demolish the building. The Committee unanimously voted to endorse that the Central Police Station lot be reused as a public



Source: Town of Dedham



park or space. A proposed design from this process is shown on the previous page, highlighting the proposed new central civic feature in Dedham Square.

Dunn Public Works Facility

The Dunn Public Works Facility on River Street, a one-story structure built in 1967, houses the Department of Public Works and the Engineering Department. The site also accommodates the Recreation Department Garage and the Town's salt shed, which was replaced in 2004. This 13,800 square foot building lacks adequate space for storage and functions. The departments are also divided within the building, further inhibiting efficient operations.

Recreation Department Garage

The Recreation Department Garage is located behind the Dunn Public Works Facility Building on River Street. The building houses the Recreation Department's vehicles and also provides a modest amount of office space.

Dolan Recreation Center

The Dolan Recreation Center is located on Common Street on an 11.5-acre site that abuts the Charles River. The building was acquired by the Town in 2006 and contains offices for the Parks and Recreation Department, a gymnasium, and a dance studio that is used for a variety of recreation programs. Outdoor amenities include the Town Dog Park, community gardening plots, one turf baseball/softball field, a boat launch allowing access

to the Charles River, and a nature trail. The Dolan Center is used for community events and the boat launch is used by L.L. Bean for outdoor programs, among other uses. The building needs to be rehabilitated. The ceiling is scheduled for replacement. Due to the condition of the building, the Parks Department has recently temporarily relocated to the former Capen School building on Sprague Street.

Brookdale Cemetery Maintenance Building

The Brookdale Cemetery Maintenance Building is located on the site of the 50 acre Brookdale Cemetery, which is also owned and operated by the Town. The one-story, 1,500 square foot building was built in 1960 and provides office space and vehicle storage for both cemetery maintenance and ancillary DPW operations such as snow removal.

Dedham Main Library

Dedham's Main Library is an impressive Romanesque building with a pink granite and sandstone exterior. It was designed by Boston architects Van Brunt & Howe and built in 1886. Situated on Church Street, the library is well placed within the Dedham Square area. In 1951, the building received a substantial addition and is now approximately 13,000 square feet in total area. The library, together with the Endicott Branch Library, houses the Town's 130,020 holdings.¹

¹ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Library Statistics, <https://mbcl.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/library-statistics/index.php>



Source: digitalcommonwealth.org

Endicott Branch Library

The Endicott Branch Library is located on the site of the Endicott Estate and is accessed from Mount Vernon Street. Built in 1920, the stucco building once functioned as an outbuilding for the Endicott Estate. The Endicott Branch was added in 1969 and shares the Town's library holdings.

Endicott Estate

The Endicott Estate is situated on an 18 acre site along East Street in Dedham and is noted for its architectural and scenic beauty. The main building was built in 1905, with its three accessory structures, a garage, greenhouse, and what is now the Endicott Library, constructed shortly thereafter. The building houses a number of the Town's cultural programs and functions as an



Source: endicottestate.com

additional meeting place for municipal staff and their visitors. The Estate is also rented for private events, which provides an additional source of revenue to the Town.

Public Education and School Facilities

Dedham operates a K-12 public school system which includes the Thomas J. Curran Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC), four elementary schools including Avery, Greenlodge, Riverdale, and Oakdale/Endicott, the Dedham Middle School, and the Dedham High School. In addition, the Town owns the Capen School building which formerly served as the Early Childhood Education Center. The main floor of the Capen building is currently leased and used as an educational facility for the Blue Hills Adult Education Program.



The mission of Dedham Public Schools (DPS), in partnership with the community, is to promote excellence in learning, self-discipline, and motivation. The district is governed by the Dedham School Committee, a board of seven elected members, and managed by the Superintendent, who is appointed by the School Committee. Dedham prides itself on investing considerable resources in its public education system. In fiscal year 2020, DPS had an appropriated budget of \$47.14 million and employed 509 full-time employees (FTE).

According to the most recent data available from the Massachusetts Department of Education, 2,567 students were enrolled in Dedham Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school year. Of these, approximately (13%) were students in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, (38%) were students in first through fifth grades, (22%) in sixth through eighth grades, and (27%) in ninth through twelfth grades. The table on the following



Source: dedhamk12.ma.us

page summarizes Dedham's public-school buildings and their associated recreational facilities that support this enrollment population.

In addition to Dedham's own public schools, students in grades 9-12 also have the option of attending the Blue Hills Regional Technical School, located in Canton. The regional school district for Blue Hills consists of nine member towns, including Dedham. Blue Hills offers secondary education and vocational programs for residents within the nine member towns.

Each year the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) develops a report for Dedham Public Schools. The report includes historical enrollment data as well as projected enrollments for the next ten years. The 2019 NESDEC report shows a surge in both pre-k and kindergarten enrollment. The District's enrollment forecast also projects a steady increase in the elementary student population over the next five years.

The greatest issues facing Dedham's schools relate to aging facilities and their functional obsolescence. With the exception of the new Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC), Avery School, and the Middle School, all Dedham Public School buildings are at least a half-century old and were not designed to accommodate current educational space demands.

The School Building Rehabilitation Committee (SBRC) is a seven-member appointed committee that oversees and supervises the design, construction, reconstruction, major alteration, renovation,



enlargement, major maintenance, demolition, and removal of Dedham Public Schools’ buildings. During 2019 and early 2020, the Dedham School Committee and SBRC held numerous community meetings to explain Dedham’s elementary school rehabilitation needs and to listen to community feedback and help develop ideas and priorities. Both groups are currently working with the community for replacement of the Oakdale Elementary School and possibly the Greenlodge Elementary School.

In 2020, SMMA, an architecture and engineering consultant, updated Dedham Public Schools’ Long-Term Facilities Master Plan, which identifies next steps for improving, renovating, or replacing

school facilities. The plan provides recommendations for the Greenlodge, Oakdale and Riverdale Elementary Schools, as well as Dedham High School, all of which have not undergone major renovations or reconstruction in the past 30 years or more.

The three elementary school buildings were reviewed for their ability to serve contemporary and next generation learning into the future. The following building issues were identified as the most impactful to teaching and learning: occupant comfort, health and safety, and adequacy of building systems. The review of the three schools based on these issues and characteristics led to the recommendation that all three buildings need to be addressed as capital projects for comprehensive renovations or replacement.¹

Dedham Public School Facilities

School	Year Built	Address	Neighborhood	Grades	Enrollment (students)	Recreation Facilities
Early Childhood Education Center	2019	1100 High Street	Precinct 1/West Dedham	Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten	274	Playground
Avery Elementary School	2012	336 High Street	East Dedham	1-5	280	Playground
Riverdale Elementary School	1920	143 Needham Street	Riverdale	1-5	170	Playground, soccer and baseball field, basketball court
Oakdale Elementary School	1902	147 Cedar Street	Oakdale	1-5	247	Playground, baseball fields
Greenlodge Elementary School	1955	191 Greenlodge Street	Greenlodge, Sprague, Manor	1-5	236	Playground, baseball fields
Dedham Middle School	2006	70 Whiting Avenue	East Dedham and Oakdale	6-8	659	Baseball field, multi-purpose fields
Dedham High School	1959	140 Whiting Avenue	East Dedham and Oakdale	9-12	690	Football field, track, multi-purpose fields

Source: Dedham Public Schools Facilities Master Plan, 2020



Oakdale Elementary School was identified as the priority and the school with the greatest need in the Facilities Master Plan, followed by Riverdale and Greenlodge. Dedham High School was identified as the facility in the best condition based on SMMA's assessment of the four schools.

The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) partners with Massachusetts communities to support the design and construction of educationally appropriate, flexible, sustainable and cost-effective public school facilities. The Oakdale Elementary School is currently one of only fifteen projects invited to participate in MSBA's grant program to fund elementary school renovation/construction costs. After successfully completing the MSBA's "Eligibility Period" requirements, Dedham now enters the "Feasibility Study" phase, which will examine Dedham's elementary educational needs, school construction guidelines and requirements of the MSBA.

The School Committee and SBRC were approved funds at Fall 2021 Town Meeting for a feasibility study. Moving beyond the feasibility study stage to design and construction funding will require a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion vote.

Though maintaining Dedham's public schools as effective places of education is and will remain an ongoing challenge, Dedham has addressed and continues to work on some of its most pressing capital school building needs. Over the past eight years, DPS has studied each of the schools in the district, both for building condition and educational functionality. The studies were in-depth

¹ Dedham Public Schools Facilities Master Plan, 2020

² Dedham Public Schools Facilities Master Plan, 2020

and have led to improvements in the school system including design and implementation of the new Thomas J. Curran Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC).² The ECEC at 1100 High Street opened in February 2019. The new 51,000 square foot facility serves pre-k and kindergarten students in Dedham.



Source: Town of Dedham

Other Public Facilities

Town Cemeteries

Dedham has three Town-owned cemeteries. They include the Old Village Cemetery, Brookdale Cemetery, and the Chickering Home Burial Ground.

Established in 1678, the Old Village Cemetery located on Village Avenue is the oldest cemetery in Dedham. The four acre site has more than one thousand gravestones and vaults that bear the names of individuals and families who were prominent in the



Dedham Public Schools - Building Issues and Characteristics

School	Year Built	Additions	Issues/Deficiencies
Oakdale Elementary School	1902	1951, 1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical classrooms in the original building are significantly undersized, most others undersized • No cafeteria (meals in classrooms) • Undersized gym and library/media center • Numerous issues with building conditions that impede teaching and learning: lighting, temperature, ventilation, acoustics • Issues related to safe and secure learning environments • Need for additional Special Education spaces • Lack of handicapped access to significant parts of the building and other accessibility issues • Lack of automatic fire protection system • Obsolete mechanical heating and ventilation system, no air conditioning • Inadequate electrical systems
Riverdale Elementary School	1920	1930, 1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical classrooms in the original building are significantly undersized, most are undersized
Greenlodge Elementary School	1955	1961, 1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom sizes generally meet MSBA Guidelines with exceptions • No cafeteria (meals in classrooms) • Undersized gym • Numerous issues with building conditions that impede teaching and learning: lighting, temperature, ventilation, acoustics • Issues related to safe and secure learning environments • Need for additional Special Education spaces • Limited handicapped access to significant parts of the building and numerous other issues of accessibility • Obsolete mechanical heating and ventilation system, no air conditioning • Inadequate electrical systems • Obsolete plumbing systems • Window replacement needed
Dedham High School	1959	1967, 1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical classrooms are undersized • Public spaces are oversized

Source: Dedham Public Schools Facilities Master Plan (2020)



Town's history. The earliest marker is that of Hanna Dyar, who died on December 15, 1678.¹ The Old Village Cemetery is also part of the Dedham Village Historic District.

The Brookdale Cemetery on Brookdale Avenue was established in 1878 and designed in a style typical of the rural landscape movement. The 47 acre cemetery with approximately two miles of meandering paths and hilly terrain includes Victorian-era monuments as well as more contemporary gravestones. The eastern edge of Brookdale Cemetery follows the historic Mother Brook for more than a third of a mile. While not as old as the Old Village Cemetery, many prominent figures from Dedham's history are buried at this site. An annual ceremony honoring Dedham's Veterans takes place at Brookdale Cemetery on Memorial Day.

In 1864, Hannah Balch Chickering founded the Dedham Temporary Home for Women and Children, a shelter devoted to women who had been discharged from prison. The Chickering Home burial ground is a small parcel which serves as a memorial to those who died at the Home.

Name	Location	Size (acres)
Old Village Cemetery	30 Village Avenue	4.10
Brookdale Cemetery	Brookdale Avenue/ Demetra Terrace	47.41
Chickering Home Burial Ground	38 Pond Farm Road	0.07

¹ Town of Dedham, OSRP, 2019

² www.dedham-ma.gov/departments/engineering/gis/gis-maps-applications/by-department/cemetery

Dedham's Engineering Department and DPW have created online viewers of the Old Village Cemetery and Brookdale Cemetery.² All three of these Town-owned facilities are maintained by the Dedham Department of Public Works.

Recreational Facilities

In addition to the recreational facilities provided by the Town's public school grounds, Dedham also provides a number of other facilities that offer passive and active recreational opportunities. Parks and recreation facilities actively managed by the Department of Public Works are listed with a summary of general facility characteristics on the next page. Other natural assets and conservation areas are important features in the Town and contribute to the amenity and quality of life in the community. These assets include conservation areas and other properties that do not include recreational facilities. Please refer to the table on the following page and the Town's 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan for more detailed information about Dedham's parks, open space and recreation facilities.

Infrastructure

Water and Sewer

Dedham's sewer system is managed and maintained by the Department of Public Works. The Town's ninety miles of sewer serves approximately 95% of Dedham's businesses and households; the remaining 5% rely on private septic systems. The Dedham-Westwood Water District (DWWD) provides water



Town Parks and Recreation Facilities

Name	Location	Description/Amenities	Size (acres)
Barnes Memorial Park, Mary Ann Lewis Playground	Eastern Avenue	3 softball/baseball, 1 soccer, playground, concession, restrooms, lighting, benches	14.89
Churchill Park	Churchill Place	1 baseball/softball, 1 basketball/ pickleball court, playground	0.92
Condon Park	Bussey Street	1 baseball/softball, 1 soccer, playground	7.37
Dedham Town Common	High Street, Bridge Street, Common Street	The Town Common is a two-acre open space at the intersection of Bridge and Common Streets. With mature trees and open lawn, the area maintains the aesthetic of a tradition New England town common.	2.04
Dolan Recreation Center/ Sugrue Field	Common Street	1 baseball/softball, dog park, boat launch, nature trails, community garden	11.40
Fairbanks Park	Rustcraft Road	3 baseball/softball, 1 soccer, restrooms, concession	14.10
Gonzalez Field	High Street, Eastern Avenue, East Street	1 synthetic turf field, ¼ mile walking path, lighting, benches, improved hand-capped access	6.30
Hartnett Square	Milton Street	Triangular landscaped lot with benches	0.09
Manor Fields (Striar Property)	Sprague Street	Vacant	25.72
Mill Pond Park	Colburn Street, Bussey Street	Passive recreation, benches, public art, water access	0.20
Mother Brook Park	Milton Street	Passive recreation, undeveloped	1.32
Mucciaccio Pool, Pool Field, Tennis Courts	High Street	1 soccer, 3 tennis courts, indoor swimming pool	4.55
Oakdale Square/Common	River Street	Oakdale Square is a half-acre neighborhood park with benches and walkways for passive recreational activity.	0.46
Paul Park (Greg M. Riley Playground)	Cedar Street	1 baseball/softball, 1 basketball/pickleball court, playground	2.93
Trenton Road Playground	Trenton Road	Playground equipment	0.24
Triangle Park	Hyde Park Street	Grassy lot with rain garden	0.91



service to Dedham and operates under the joint governance of Dedham and Westwood. The DWWD supplies over 13,000 service connections to approximately 40,000 people in the two neighboring Towns. Groundwater is pumped from 17 wells (6 in Westwood and 11 in Dedham) and treated at two filtration plants to remove iron and manganese. On an average day, the DWWD pumps approximately 4.25 million gallons of water.¹

In December of 2005, the DWWD was granted membership in the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), allowing it to purchase supplemental water when needed to ensure public health and safety during peak water use periods. The contractual allowance for purchase is 73 million gallons per year (220,000 gallons per day) which Dedham has accessed only twice since the agreement was initiated in 2005.

In 2017, the DWWD began construction on an \$8 million upgrade of the Bridge Street Treatment Plant. Recent DWWD updates include a water main replacement project in 2016 (Beacon, Fairfield, and Riverview Streets) and the MWRA Southern Extra High Redundancy and Storage project, which was completed in 2019. The DWWD makes regular capital improvements to the system, replacing water mains, services, meters, fire hydrants, pumps, motors and filtration equipment in order to provide high quality drinking water and fire protection to Dedham and Westwood residents and businesses.²

¹ Town of Dedham, OSRP, 2019

² www.dwwd.org/history

Roadways and Sidewalks

The Department of Public Works maintains approximately 110 miles of streets and roadways throughout Dedham. In the past decade, the Town has completed approximately \$25.5 million worth of repairs and maintenance to approximately 76 miles of roads and 23 miles of sidewalks. During this time Dedham's pavement condition index has risen from 70 to 81. The pavement condition index (PCI) is an index between 1 and 100 indicating the general pavement condition of roadways only, with 100 representing perfect condition. 100-85 is considered good. 85-70 is considered satisfactory. 70-55 is considered fair. As a point of comparison, the Town of Needham's goal is to maintain its roadway network at an average PCI rating of 75. A recent survey of roadway conditions in Newton found an average PCI of 62.5.



Source: Patch.com



Each year, the Department of Public Works and the Engineering Department work together to develop the Town's annual Pavement Management Program (PMP). The PMP involves a condition assessment of all public roadways and sidewalks in Dedham. The Town recently began working with a new consultant to develop a more comprehensive PMP program that will allow the Town to prioritize its rehab efforts on existing roadway assets including roads, sidewalks and access ramps based upon their condition and their compliance with the American Disability Acts (ADA).

Additionally, the Town, in partnership with adjacent municipalities and state agencies, including MassDOT, currently has several transportation improvement projects underway. Please refer to the Transportation and Connectivity chapter of the Master Plan for more detailed information on Dedham's recent transportation improvements.

Capital Improvement Planning

As detailed in the community facility descriptions, Dedham has made significant investments in its capital assets over the past several years. The Town anticipates, organizes, and prioritizes these investments through a Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is used to guide all capital improvements to the Town's buildings, and also equipment, infrastructure, and vehicle replacement. All departmental capital funding requests are submitted to the Finance & Warrant Committee for review ahead of Town Meeting. The Town has taken recent steps to anticipate future investment needs. In the Fall of 2016, the Town completed a Facility Condition Assessment for all school and Town-owned

buildings and developed a Preventive Maintenance program that could be integrated into the Town's work order system. The Facility Condition Assessment identified \$10,228,775 in deficiency repairs that need to be addressed over the next 20 years and is making progress on this work.

Sources of Funding for Capital Expenditures

Management of Dedham's facilities and infrastructure has made strides since the 2009 Master Plan. At the time when the previous Master Plan was written, the Town was deferring needed capital improvements due to budgetary constraints and the lack of a pragmatic method to fund various projects on an ongoing basis. The Town also did not have a facilities director on its staff. Since then, the Town has been more proactive in funding capital improvements but exploring additional funding sources is an ever-present need.

Dedham's public facilities needs do not have to be supported solely by the Town budget. Where possible, the Town should identify and seek alternative funding strategies for capital improvements. External funding and financing sources, namely grants and low interest loans, are available to fund a variety of facilities needs, although they may be competitive and require time and effort to pursue. Changes to Town policies that would optimize the ability to pursue external funds should be prioritized. Dedham's current approach to financing public facilities improvements include:

- **General Obligation Bonds** are issued for purposes and payable over periods as specified by law, as authorized by



a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting. They are required to be payable in equal or declining principal payments. State law permits a Town to authorize debt up to 5% of its equalized valuation. Payments on the bonds are made within the Town's operating budget; debt payments for bonds issued on a Debt Exclusion are made from taxes levied for that purpose.

- **Debt Exclusion** allows the Town to raise additional taxes to pay for the debt incurred for a particular project. The amount of the payment is added to the tax levy for the life of the debt. Debt exclusion requires a two-thirds majority vote at Town Meeting and, once placed on the ballot by the Select Board, a majority of the voters.
- **Free Cash** is the net unrestricted balances of funds from operations of the previous year as a result of revenues collected in excess of estimates and unspent amounts from budgeted line items. The amount is certified by the Department of Revenue and available for appropriation by Town Meeting.
- **Stabilization Fund** is designed to accumulate funds as a general reserve, for capital or for other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose by a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting. The Town has a general stabilization fund (for a reserve), a mitigation stabilization fund (for payments from developers) and a major capital facilities stabilization fund.
- **Robin Reyes Major Capital Facilities Stabilization Fund** is to be used solely for the major renovation of existing buildings, the construction of new buildings, or purchasing an existing building that meets the Town's needs.
- **Overlay Reserve (Allowance for Abatements)/Overlay Surplus** is an account established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and to offset the amount of uncollected taxes. Any balance in the account in excess of the amount remaining to be collected or abated can be transferred into an Overlay Surplus account by the Assessors and may be appropriated by Town Meeting for any lawful purpose.
- **Operating Budget** can be used to fund capital expenditures within the regular operating budget. To accomplish this, other budget items would have to be reduced or increases in revenues allocated to a capital budget funding source.
- **Other Available Funds** include prior special article appropriation balances, receipts reserved for appropriation, FEMA/MEMA reimbursements, insurance proceeds and other items authorized by law to be specifically used to fund appropriations.
- **General Proposition 2 1/2 Override** enables residents to vote to increase the tax levy beyond the current limit and if approved, the increase is included in the budget for all future years.
- **Capital Outlay Expenditure Exclusion** is a temporary increase in the tax levy to fund a capital item. Exclusions require a two thirds vote of the Select Board and a majority of the voters. The exclusion is added only during the year when the project is funded.



Community Services

While community facilities provide physical space for local government services, actual service delivery depends on people including municipal staff and volunteers. Community services include municipal services and utilities such as public safety, public health, housing, recreation, public water, sewer, and partner organization and contracted services such as solid waste and recycling or street maintenance. A summary of community services in Dedham is provided below and on the following pages.

Finance and Information Technology Services

The Town's financial operations are directed by the Finance Department. Located on the second floor of the Ames Building, the Finance Department includes Accounting, Treasurer/Collector and Information Technology Services. The Town Accountant maintains all financial records for the Town and processes payroll and accounts payable for all Town departments and Dedham Public Schools. The Treasurer/Collector collects all monies due to the Town including real estate, personal property and motor vehicle excise taxes. Additionally, this office oversees receipt, short-term investment, and disbursement of all Town funds.

The Finance Department works closely with the Finance & Warrant Committee, a separate body with nine members appointed by the Town Moderator, who make recommendations on all financial matters to Town meeting and work with the Capital Expenditures Committee.

The Town's Capital Expenditures Committee performs an annual review and makes recommendations on the Town's five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the five-member committee also allocates funds for Town projects and studies.

Information Technology Services maintains an integrated network of systems and information that connects all Town departments and supports the various offices with connectivity, data availability, security, and insight into relevant technologies.

Public Safety

In FY2021, approximately 10% of Dedham's general fund expenditures were allocated to public safety. Of this, approximately half (5%) funded the Police Department, and the remaining half (5%) went to the Fire Department.

The mission of the Dedham Police Department is to protect and serve the citizens of Dedham through collaboration, preventative programs and the judicious enforcement of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the bylaws of the Town of Dedham. Dedham's police department has a total of 61 full time equivalent (FTE) employees and is organized into the following eight divisions: Animal Control, Bike Patrol Division, Communications Division, Detective Division, Honor Guard Unit, Metro LEC Team, Patrol Division, and Traffic Division.

Dedham's Fire Department, in addition to protecting personal and public property from the threat of fire, also provides Emergency



Medical Services and has an increasing role in hazardous materials handling. In FY2021, the Fire Department employed a total of 67 FTE employees, including the fire chief, five deputy chiefs, five captains, eight lieutenants, and forty-eight firefighters.

Building Inspection

The Building Department provides building, electrical, plumbing, and gas inspectional services and administers the State Building Code and enforces the Town's Zoning Bylaw. Headed by the Building Commissioner, the Building Department employs a total of 6 FTE employees.

Public Works

The Dedham Department of Public Works (DPW) consists of six divisions including Administration, Highway, Sewer, Forestry, Cemetery, and Fleet Maintenance. The department has a combined total of 23 FTE employees. Collectively, these employees handle numerous requests and are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Town's major infrastructure which includes streets, sidewalks, sewer lines, traffic signals, street lighting, pump stations, signs, and catch basins. The department also handles solid waste disposal, recycling, and beautification projects and maintains the Town's public shade trees and cemeteries. The DPW works together with various departments of the Town government to accomplish these maintenance goals. Dedham's sewer infrastructure is maintained by the Town DPW, but the MWRA provides sewage collection and disposal services. While in some communities the DPW is also responsible for the

public water supply, in Dedham's case the Dedham-Westwood Water District performs this function.

Department of Infrastructure Engineering

While the DPW maintains the Town's infrastructure, the Department of Infrastructure Engineering is charged with the general responsibility of the engineering, construction, development, and oversight of improvement, reconstruction, and repair of Dedham's infrastructure, including without limitation, roads, bridges, drains, and sewers.

This department is headed by the Director of Engineering (who serves the statutory role of Town Engineer) and is staffed by an Infrastructure Engineer, a Project Engineer and supported by the administrative staff of the DPW. Additionally, the department provides technical support to residents and other entities on the installation and development of roads, sewers, drains, and buildings, and is available for technical review of subdivisions and site plans. The Engineering Department functioned as part of the DPW until 2005 when it was made its own department and was renamed the Department of Infrastructure Engineering. The department shares the Dunn Public Works Facility, located at 55 River Street, with the Department of Public Works.

Facilities & Maintenance Department

Located on the fourth floor of the Ames Building, the Facilities & Maintenance Department maintains and oversees repairs to all municipal and school buildings, including landscaping and sidewalk snow removal. The department also monitors



energy usage and compliance with building codes and other regulatory requirements. In addition, the Facilities & Maintenance Department is also charged with developing and maintaining the annual Town-wide capital improvement program (CIP) which guides investment decisions for Town projects, and purchases. The facilities director works with department heads to maintain and upgrade buildings, supervises construction projects, prioritizes maintenance needs, and works with architects and engineers on project design.

Planning, Land Use, and Zoning

Dedham's planning, development review, and permitting services are carried out by the Planning Board, the Planning & Zoning Department, Conservation Department, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Planning Board is a five-member elected board charged with both long-range planning duties, such as updating the Master Plan, and more immediate implementation responsibilities such as permitting, subdivision, site plan, and special permit review, and proposing and commenting on amendments to the zoning bylaw.

Located on the second floor of the Ames Building, the Planning & Zoning Department works with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to administer the Town's Zoning Bylaw which guides and regulates how residential, commercial, and industrial land can be developed and used in Dedham. The Department is overseen by the Planning Director and staffed by a Senior Planner, Economic Development Planner, and an Office Manager.

The Department provides administrative and technical support on the design and permitting of residential and commercial projects and collaborates with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and neighboring communities to address regional planning issues.

The Zoning Board of Appeals hears petitions for variances, some special permits where required by zoning, or persons appealing the decisions of the Building Commissioner or Planning Board. In Dedham, the Zoning Board of Appeals has seven members, five voting and two non-voting members, that are appointed by the Select Board.

The Conservation Department, which is also located on the second floor of the Ames Building, is staffed by a Conservation Agent and Assistant Conservation Agent. In collaboration with the Conservation Commission, the Department plays a crucial role in protecting Dedham's natural resources and provides guidance about environmental regulations, wetland resources, invasive species, and stormwater management.

The Conservation Commission is comprised of seven members appointed by the Select Board. It is charged with administering the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Town of Dedham Wetlands and Stormwater bylaws, and issuing relevant permits. In addition to its permitting role, the Conservation Commission also inventories and plans for open space resources in Dedham.

In addition to these staffed positions and boards, there are several other volunteer groups that provide services in the area of planning and development for Dedham. The Design Review



Advisory Board (DRAB) consists of five members, appointed by the Select Board. This group performs professional design review to maintain and improve the visual quality and overall character of Dedham. The Historic Districts Commission/Historical Commission (HDC) is the official government agent responsible for historic preservation within the Town's designated historic districts. The HDC consists of seven members, appointed by the Select Board.

Additionally, the Open Space & Recreation Committee (OSRC) conducts continuous review and oversight of Dedham's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The OSRC is also charged with updating the OSRP's Seven-Year Action Plan for open space preservation and recreational needs. The seven member OSRC consists of two members at-large appointed by the Select Board and the Planning Board, an engineer appointed by the Select Board and the Planning Board, and a member or designee from the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission and Select Board. These groups function entirely on volunteer efforts and provide important services to Town departments and residents.

Culture and Recreation

The Dedham Public Library is one of the Town's oldest and most valued institutions. The roots of the library date back to 1794 with establishment of the First Parish Church's Social Library. In 1854 the Dedham Library Association was founded, and the

present Dedham Public Library was chartered in 1871. In 1886, the main branch library's current home was built, a distinctive structure designed by architects Van Brunt and Howe, on a site close to Dedham Square.

Today, the Dedham Public Library System consists of two branches, the Main Library located at 43 Church Street, and the Endicott Branch which is located at 257 Mount Vernon Street on the edge of the Endicott Estate. As of 2018, the library had 130,020 total holdings and circulated a total of 194,006 materials to library patrons.¹ The library employs 20 FTE personnel, including a Library Director, full-time and part-time librarians, library assistants, library pages, and custodians. The library is funded both from the Town's operating budget and the



Source: patch.com



Friends of the Dedham Public Library, a non-profit organization that conducts fundraising to provide a flexible financing source for the library. Trustees of the Dedham Public Library, a five member, elected board, provides guidance for the Dedham Library by adopting goals, policies, plans, and budgets.

The library is further supported by the Dedham Library Innovation Team (DLIT) and the Friends of the Dedham Public Library. DLIT is a nonprofit organization committed to creating collaborative, positive partnerships between the Town's libraries, schools, public officials, businesses, and residents in order to support the strategic vision and development of a best-in-class, vibrant public library system. The Friends of the Dedham Public Library is a non-profit organization working to support the Dedham Public Library staff, programs, and events in serving the community.

In addition, the DLIT and Dedham High School serve as stewards of the Dedham Little Free Libraries Project. The Little Library program was launched in 2014 and serves to build pride-of-place among Dedham residents, to activate public spaces, and to beautify the public realm. Dedham's individually decorated mini lending libraries were built by Dedham High School students and designed and painted by both students and community artists. Twelve individual little libraries are installed throughout Town and enable readers of all ages and backgrounds to access books in their neighborhoods.

The Endicott Estate is another important landmark and cultural resource in Dedham. The Endicott Estate was built in 1904 by

Henry Endicott, founder of the Endicott Johnson Shoe Company. Henry's daughter Katherine bequeathed the Estate to the Town after her death in 1967.² The Endicott Estate is owned by the Town and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

At times, the Estate is used by local officials as an alternative site for important administrative meetings. Its grounds host the Dedham Community Greenhouse, and the building is frequently rented for private functions. The Endicott Estate is overseen by a five-member commission which guides the care, upkeep, and overall management of the building and grounds.

Dedham's Civic Pride Committee is important for the upkeep and celebration of the Town's appearance and community. The Civic Pride Committee consists of twenty volunteer members, appointed by the Town Manager. Their activities include beautification efforts in public parks and streets, landscaping and light infrastructure improvements along roadways, and improving the appearance of Dedham Square. Their activities are financed in part by the Friends of Dedham Civic Pride, a nonprofit which serves as a fundraising arm for the committee. The group also receives funds from the Town's annual operating budget.

The Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide variety of recreational programming for Dedham residents and maintains Town parks and recreational facilities. Management responsibility for Dedham's open space and recreation resources is shared by several departments, in partnership with several appointed elected Boards, Committees, and Commissions.

¹ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Library Statistics, <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/library-statistics/index.php>

² Town of Dedham, OSRP, 2019



Source: dedhamcivicpride.org

The Parks and Recreation Department is overseen by the five-member, elected Parks and Recreation Commission. A Parks and Recreation Director administers all recreation programs and oversees the Parks Department employees. The Director is supported by an Assistant Director and an administrative assistant.

For both organizational and budgetary purposes, Parks and Recreation functions as two departments: the Parks Department, which is concerned with the maintenance and upkeep of parks and recreational facilities, and the Recreation Department, which oversees and provides recreational programs for Dedham. The Town's parks and recreational facilities are maintained by a full-

time foreman, three full time laborers and seasonal labor during the summer months.

Health and Human Services

The Town of Dedham strives to provide effective health and human services to enhance livability and quality of life for all residents. "Human services" refers to public health and social services for any population with unique, age-based, or other special needs. Dedham's Human Services includes Town departments and several professional and volunteer commissions, boards, councils, and committees.

Health Department

Located on the third floor of the Ames Building, the Health Department enforces state and local health and sanitary regulations and issues a wide range of permits. The Department also conducts inspections of residential and commercial structures, food establishments, camps, pools, dumpsters, and Title V regulations. Directed by a three-member, elected Board of Health, the Health Department is staffed by a Health Director, Assistant Health Director, Health Inspector, Program Director and Public Health Nurse. Most of the direct human services in this department are provided by programs run by the Public Health Nurse, such as immunization and blood pressure clinics, school programs, and home visits. The Department also works with the Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness (DOSA), which works to educate and involve the community in preventing and addressing substance abuse.



Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness

The mission of the Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness (DOSA) is to reduce and prevent youth (and adult) substance use by increasing community collaboration and by utilizing evidence-based prevention strategies. DOSA is led by a nine-member coalition who works with the Health Department to provide the community with access to resources and services.

Dedham Housing Authority

Dedham Housing Authority (DHA) provides housing assistance to residents through State and Federal programs such as Low Rent Public Housing and the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8). These programs are income based and the eligibility guidelines are set by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The DHA is led by a five-member board, one of which is appointed by the State, as required by law.

Council on Aging

The Dedham Council on Aging (COA) is responsible for providing direct services to Dedham's senior population and also identifying other available community resources to assist this population. The new Ames Senior Center, located on the first floor of the recently renovated Ames Building, serves as the headquarters for COA. The Senior Center, which opened in October of 2021, provides programs, services, and leisure activities that promote the independence, safety, and well-being of residents 55 and over.

Staffed by the Director, Assistant Director, Outreach Coordinator, and Program Coordinator, the Council on Aging provides transportation services, a meals-on-wheels service, and one-on-one assistance for a variety of needs such as applying for health insurance, disability, and other benefits. The work of COA is further supported by the Council on Aging Board, which consists of 7-15 members. Four members represent the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Board of Health, the Police Department, and Dedham Public Schools. Additional members are appointed by the Town Manager.

Youth Commission

The Dedham Youth Commission is committed to providing educational, socio-emotional, recreational and health programs



Source: Town of Dedham



and services to the Town's youth. The seven member commission establishes and directs youth services policy and programming, which is then carried out by a Youth Commission Director, Youth Counselor, Youth Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and is supported by a five member Youth Commission Board.

Youth Commission offerings include direct counseling services for youth and their families, as well as various programs that provide employment opportunities, community service projects, and a variety of activities provided together with the Dedham Public Schools. The Youth Commission offices are currently housed at Dedham High School. Unfortunately, Dedham does not have a dedicated facility for youth to hang out and congregate. A multi-generational community center that supports social gatherings, recreational opportunities, and engaging activities for youth and adults would be a great addition to Dedham's resources.

Veterans Services

Dedham's Veterans Services Department is located on the third floor of the Ames Building. Programs and services offered through the Veterans Services Department include financial and medical assistance, dependents and survivor benefits, and application of disability and compensation claims. The Department is headed by a Veteran's Agent who is responsible for assisting veterans and their dependents in all State and Federal benefits opportunities pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) Chapter 115.

Commission on Disability

The Commission on Disability is a nine-member, volunteer group which advocates for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities within the Dedham community. The members are appointed by the Town Manager and MGL Chapter 40: Section 8J mandates that the majority of Commissioners have a disability or have a family member with a disability. The Commission provides information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to Town facilities, services, and programs.

Human Rights Commission

The mission of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) is to ensure that residents of Dedham enjoy equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy life in the Town regardless of their race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, marital, family or military status, socio-economic status, ex-offender status, or disability. The HRC was created by a vote of Town Meeting in November 2017 and consists of 13 members who are appointed by the Select Board. The Commission supports the human rights of groups, organizations, and individuals against discrimination in housing, employment, education, public accommodations, Town services, insurance, banking, credit, and health care.



Community Facilities and Services Goals and Strategies

NOTE: Master Plan strategies are recommendations that will depend on follow-up activity from Boards and Committees to carry forward. No Board or Committee is obligated to carry this work forward. For example, it is up to the Planning Board to decide how best to implement the many goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan that relate to planning..

CFS1 Goal 1: Improve capital planning and investment processes to anticipate future funding and financing needs and communicate transparently to residents.

Benchmarks and priorities that can be established in advance and agreed upon would be useful in guiding capital investments and asset management anticipating that funds will need to be allocated amongst competing projects in a fair, equitable, and transparent manner.

Strategy 1.1: Define benchmarks/level of service standards for Town facilities, services, and infrastructure based on comparable communities.

Strategy 1.2: Develop, adopt, and use a priority setting framework to guide capital investment and asset management.

Strategy 1.3: Create a capital improvement plan with a process for sustainably funding future projects to avoid overrides and piecemeal planning.

Summary: To improve the transparency of decision-making and policies and to more proactively prepare facilities and services to meet future needs and challenges.

Strategy 1.4: Improve community awareness of key revenue and budget issues.

Strategy 1.5: Implement the goals and recommendations outlined in the 2020 Dedham Public Schools Master Plan.

Strategy 1.6: Prioritize capital improvements consistent with the other goals within this section and the Master Plan more generally.

Strategy 1.7: Identify private parcels in strategic locations relative to the provision of Town facilities and services and a process to consider acquisition options if identified properties become available.



CFS2 Goal 2: Improve the transparency of Town asset management decisions with clear policies to guide maintenance, upgrades, and disposition processes and decisions.

Service needs and demand for municipal buildings change over time, often leaving municipalities with obsolete or unused properties in their assets inventory. These properties can present maintenance challenges, opportunities for upgrades or changes of use, or opportunities to raise funds for other capital improvements to meet a determined public benefit through a disposition process. Dedham should establish policies to guide the identification and disposition of surplus municipal property, land or buildings, including tax-title properties.

Strategy 2.1: Develop asset management policies.

Strategy 2.2: Incorporate community values and goals in decisions on location, design, and operation of facilities.

Strategy 2.3: Build the capacity of underrepresented citizens, including communities of color, and provide resources to increase their involvement in decision making and Town processes.

Strategy 2.4: Provide proactive communication and transparency about Town policies, processes, and plans.

Strategy 2.5: Improve equitable access to Town resources and meetings through proactive and transparent communications, easy-to-access information, and materials translated in languages most commonly spoken in Dedham so that underrepresented people can be included in decision making.



CFS3 Goal 3: Strengthen Dedham public facilities, services, infrastructure, and assets to better respond to future needs and risks using best available data to advance sustainability, resilience, innovation, livability, and equity.

The Town should ensure that capital improvements (such as municipal buildings, transportation, stormwater systems, park improvements, etc.) incorporate design standards that support the environment, reduce energy use, mitigate climate change impacts, and strengthen resiliency consistent with the goals and actions identified in the Climate Action Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan. Additionally, capital improvements should prioritize improving livability and equity for residents.

Strategy 3.1: Use a data driven approach to identify and better understand disparities between Dedham’s diverse population and assess the equity impacts of public programs and projects.

Strategy 3.2: Consider maintenance, replacement, rehabilitation or reuse of existing facilities to meet community needs before planning for major investments in new facilities.

Strategy 3.3: Expand services and programs that will help reduce the community’s environmental impact such as improving access to recycling and composting programs, and expand awareness of proper disposal of hazardous household materials and chemicals.

Strategy 3.4: Prioritize infrastructure and capital improvements that support the goals of the Town’s recently completed Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, including strategies to reduce municipal greenhouse gas emissions, increase municipal renewable resources, ensure new construction meets net zero energy building standards and universal design standards, and convert Dedham’s vehicle fleet to electric or hybrid, where possible.

Strategy 3.5: When designing new public facilities, they shall be oriented towards and accessible by transit and non-motorized modes of travel and improve connections to existing public facilities.

Strategy 3.6: Ensure that municipal facilities and public spaces enhance Dedham’s historic character and provide cultural enrichment.



CFS4

Goal 4: Proactively assess funding needs and dedicate staff to pursue external funding, grants, and resources.

Dedham’s public facilities needs do not have to be supported solely by the Town budget. Where possible, the Town should identify and seek alternative funding strategies for capital improvements. The Town hired a Procurement Director in 2022 to better coordinate with Town Departments seeking and securing grant funding. External funding and financing sources, namely grants and low interest loans, are available to fund a variety of facilities needs, although they may be competitive and require time and effort to pursue. Changes to Town policies that would optimize the ability to pursue external funds should be prioritized.

Strategy 4.1: Explore new and long-term funding tools to enable increased investments in capital improvement projects and services.

Strategy 4.2: Encourage public-private partnerships to finance infrastructure and public facilities which fulfill mutual interests of the public and private sectors.

Strategy 4.3: Explore joint-use partnerships with private entities to pay for some or all of the costs of capital improvements or new facilities that provide a public benefit and/or support a specific Town or community function.



CFS5

Goal 5: Expand Town services to support residents and their families and strengthen the relationships between residents.

The Town should ensure that all residents have the access, support, and ability to participate in the full range of Town services provided, and regularly review the services provided to adapt to the evolving needs of the community. Procedures for this type of assessment should be established. Currently, among the services provided in the Town and surrounding area, social services for families in need appear to be lacking. New Town services or facilities such as teen programming or a youth center could help address such a service need.

Strategy 5.1: Continue to strengthen trust and communication between the Town services and the community by providing diverse and inclusive opportunities for all residents to participate in planning and Town government. The Town recently selected residents to serve on committees to guide work at Wigwam Pond and Bridge Street. Both selection processes involved extensive advertising for volunteer positions, included transparent and inclusive processes, and resulted in a diverse cross-section of the Town serving on each committee.

Strategy 5.2: Encourage businesses to work with local workforce training and education organizations to connect Dedham residents and workers to high quality jobs at a range of skill levels.

Strategy 5.3: Optimize the use of community facilities to support community services and needs regardless of who may be the most regular user of the facility. Support flexibility and openness for how Town resources can be used to respond to needs.

Strategy 5.4: Increase coordination and resource sharing between organizations and service providers with a focus on ensuring that all children and families who could benefit from social, emotional, and academic enrichment are aware of resources and programs offered in Dedham. These organizations could include Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Public Library, the Dedham Youth Commission, and others.

Strategy 5.5: Explore the potential for partnerships with neighboring municipalities to expand town services or to explore the regionalization of services or resources that could be efficiently shared.



Community Facilities and Services Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for community facilities and services.

CFS1 Define measurable benchmarks and standards for facilities.

A significant factor in determining the need for and priorities among capital improvements is the level of service (LOS). The LOS is an indicator of the extent or degree of service provided by a facility. Dedham should define benchmarks/level of service standards for facilities and infrastructure based on comparable communities. The Town should then use these adopted standards as well as population and household projections to identify needs for additional community facilities and services and determine the means and timing for providing needed additional facilities and resources. The time horizon for this projection and the planning for needed capital expenditures should expand from the current standard of 5 years to 10 years. The lead responsibility would be the Town of Dedham Facilities Department in close coordination

with the DPW and Engineering Department. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include those provide by the Massachusetts Municipal Association to guide municipal facilities professionals and collaboration with nearby municipalities who may be facing many of the same issues and could collaborate to define solutions. Establishing a regular roundtable meeting of nearby facilities directors could provide a venue for this type of sharing and support.

CFS2 Pilot improved transparency and communication with a current project.

Improve the transparency of Town asset management decisions with clear policies to guide maintenance, upgrades, and disposition processes and decisions. This action includes improving communication and dialogue with the community and ensuring that residents are provided with accessible, educational, and actionable information. Enhanced engagement will allow the community to have a good understanding of who is responsible for making decisions, and how their feedback is taken into account. The pilot project for this effort could be the ongoing work studying and now implementing the reuse of the former Central Police Station in Dedham Square. A data- and community-driven planning process has been undertaken and as the process shifts to specific asset management decisions particular care and effort should be placed on improving the transparency of the



process going forward. The lead responsibility would be the Select Board in close coordination with the Dedham Square Planning Committee, Planning Department, Building, Planning and Construction Committee, the Capital Expenditure Committee, the Finance and Warrant Committee and the Mitigation Funds Committee. The types of efforts used to enhance transparency (number of community meetings, types of meetings, availability of materials, etc.) should be documented and built upon to improve these practices with each subsequent process. This will be a continuous and ongoing action item.

CFS4 Define gaps in services and resources for Dedham children and families.

Increase coordination and resource sharing between organizations and service providers with a focus on ensuring that all children and families who could benefit from social, emotional, and academic enrichment are aware of resources and programs offered in Dedham. Commission a study that identifies gaps in Dedham's publicly funded services and resources, including home and community-based services. This action would help organizations, service providers, and the Town better understand potential disparities in how services are accessed by Dedham's diverse population and assess how current services are meeting the needs of the community, and what needs are potentially going unmet. The lead responsibility would be the Dedham Health

Department in close coordination with the Board of Health, Human Rights Commission, Youth Commission, Council on Aging, and Commission on Disability. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process.



CFS1 **Goal 1: Improve capital planning and investment processes to anticipate future funding and financing needs and communicate transparently to residents.**

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>CFS1.1: Define benchmarks/level of service standards for town facilities, services, and infrastructure based on comparable communities.</p>	1. Define measurable benchmarks and standards for facilities.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	DPW and Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Potential resources include those provide by the Massachusetts Municipal Association to guide municipal facilities professionals and collaboration with nearby municipalities who may be facing many of the same issues and could collaborate to define solutions. Establishing a regular roundtable meeting of nearby facilities directors could provide a venue for this type of sharing and support.
	2. Use the adopted benchmarks/levels of service as well as population and household projections to identify needs for additional public facilities and services and determine the means and timing for providing needed additional facilities and resources.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Capital Expenditures Committee, Finance Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
<p>CFS1.2: Develop, adopt, and use a priority setting framework to guide capital investment and asset management.</p>	1. Convene a working group that would define the framework. The priority setting framework should include a set of guiding questions, needs assessment criteria, and equity considerations.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Capital Expenditures Committee, Finance Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Engage the community to gather feedback on a draft priority setting framework.				
	3. Adopt and use priority setting framework.				
<p>CFS1.3: Create a capital improvement plan with a process for sustainably funding future projects to avoid overrides and piecemeal planning.</p>	1. Create a capital improvement plan that projects detailed capital needs over a 5-year period and general capital needs over a 10-year period.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Capital Expenditures Committee, Finance Department, School Building Rehabilitation Committee, School Committee, Town Manager, Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS1.4: Improve community awareness of key revenue and budget issues.	1. Create a fact sheet, infographic or resource page that can be available to residents that outlines and briefly summarizes the Town's Existing Funding Sources.	Finance Department, Finance and Warrant Committee	Capital Expenditures Committee, Facilities & Maintenance Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
CFS1.5: Implement the goals and recommendations outlined in the 2020 Dedham Public Schools Master Plan.	1. Advance the Feasibility Study process through the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the Oakdale Elementary School under the Core (Capital) Program.	School Building Rehabilitation Committee	School Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
CFS1.6: Prioritize capital improvements consistent with the other goals within this section and the Master Plan more generally.	1. Establish prioritization matrix with the following ranking criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct existing public facility and services deficiencies or replace facilities that are obsolete • Improves equitable access to public facilities and services • Addresses a public health or safety concern • Reduces greenhouse gas emissions or supports the adaptation to climate change • Contributes to economic viability and the quality of life of Dedham residents • Anticipate future demand and municipal trends 	Capital Expenditures Committee	Facilities & Maintenance Department, Finance Department, Finance and Warrant Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
CFS1.7: Identify private parcels in strategic locations relative to the provision of Town facilities and services and a process to consider acquisition options if identified properties become available.	1. Survey departments with facilities to better understand the need for potential expansion to adjacent parcels.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Town Manager and Town Departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Align with the analysis to increase the number of parks within a 10-minute walk of residents if a targeted area has no current town-owned land, a private land acquisition may be the only option.	Parks and Recreation Department	Parks & Recreation Commission, Conservation Department, Open Space and Recreation Committee	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Grant programs offered by the Division of Conservation Services information available at: https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services



CFS2 **Goal 2: Improve the transparency of Town asset management decisions with clear policies to guide maintenance, upgrades, and disposition processes and decisions.**

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>CFS2.1: Develop asset management policies.</p>	<p>1. Pilot improved transparency and communication with a current project.</p>	<p>Select Board</p>	<p>Planning & Zoning Department, Building, Planning and Construction Committee, Capital Expenditures Committee, Finance and Warrant Committee, Mitigation Funds Committee</p>	<p>Continuous and ongoing</p>	
<p>CFS2.2: Incorporate community values and goals in decisions on location, design, and operation of facilities.</p>	<p>1. Develop a listing of town facilities with current or upcoming needs and investments. Ensure that the Town’s policies, and processes are clear and transparent, and that residents have a good understanding of who is responsible for making decisions, and how community input is taken into account.</p>	<p>Select Board</p>	<p>Town Manager and Town Departments</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	
<p>CFS2.3: Build the capacity of underrepresented citizens, including communities of color, and provide resources to increase their involvement in decision making and Town processes.</p>	<p>1. Develop simple guides and flow charts for decision making and town processes. Make these resources available to residents to inform them of the important moments for feedback and involvement.</p> <p>2. Translate these materials into multiple languages.</p>	<p>Town Manager, Select Board</p>	<p>Town Departments, Human Rights Commission, Town Clerk</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS2.4: Provide proactive communication and transparency about Town policies, processes, plans.	1. Continually experiment with new techniques for community engagement and new channels of communication.	Town Manager (Director of Communications), Select Board	Town Departments	Continuous and ongoing	
CFS2.5: Improve equitable access to Town resources and meetings through proactive and transparent communications, easy-to-access information, and materials translated in languages most commonly spoken in Dedham so that under-represented people can be included in decision making.	1. Create a consistent resident feedback invitation that can be integrated into a variety of processes and meeting. Define a consistent format and information to be included in each resident feedback invitation, such as the topic, what type of feedback is most useful at that moment, how the feedback will be used, and if additional opportunities for feedback will occur, and what the timeline is for the specific issue or item that is inviting feedback.	Town Manager (Director of Communications), Select Board, Town Clerk	Town Departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	

CFS3 **Goal 3: Strengthen Dedham public facilities, services, infrastructure, and assets to better respond to future needs and risks using best available data to advance sustainability, resilience, innovation, livability, and equity.**

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS3.1: Use a data driven approach to identify and better understand disparities between Dedham’s diverse population and assess the equity impacts of public programs and projects.	1. Design an anonymous data collection survey that automatically pops-up after accessing the Town-website. The very brief survey would include demographic information (race, age, sex) and neighborhood along with a list of town services accessed or used by the individual with check boxes.	Town Manager (Director of Communications), Select Board	Town Departments, Human Rights Commission	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS3.1 (continued)	2. Analyze and use this anonymous survey data to promote underused services to specific demographics or neighborhoods.	Town Manager, Select Board	Town Departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
CFS3.2: Consider maintenance, replacement, rehabilitation or reuse of existing facilities to meet community needs before planning for major investments in new facilities.	1. Analyze the preservation and reuse of town-owned assets as part of the analysis and evaluation of options when a change of use or facility renewal need occurs.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Capital Expenditures Committee, Finance Department, School Building Rehabilitation Committee, School Committee	Continuous and ongoing	
CFS3.3: Expand services and programs that will help reduce the community's environmental impact such as improving access to recycling and composting programs, and expand awareness of proper disposal of hazardous household materials and chemicals.	1. Expand outreach and promotion for the programs that already exist with information in multiple languages to encourage participation in programs such as composting.	Town Manager, Select Board	Public Works (DPW) Department, Sustainability Advisory Committee, Dedham Public Schools, Library	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Add resources and facilities to support waste management better locally, such as yard waste collection, bulk item collection to streamline services and reduce costs. Undertake a location assessment and feasibility study for such a facility.	Public Works (DPW) Department	Town Manager, Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
CFS3.4: Prioritize infrastructure and capital improvements that support the goals of the Town's recently completed Climate Action and Resiliency Plan.	1. Including strategies to reduce municipal greenhouse gas emissions, increase municipal renewable resources, ensure new construction meets net zero energy building standards and universal design standards, and convert Dedham's vehicle fleet to electric or hybrid, where possible.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Sustainability Advisory Committee, Public Works (DPW) Department, Building Department, Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board, Building, Planning, Construction Cmt.	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Commonwealth energy efficiency practices, information available at: https://www.mass.gov/energy-efficiency-measures-for-municipalities



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS3.5: When designing new public facilities, they shall be oriented towards and accessible by transit and non-motorized modes of travel and improve connections to existing public facilities.	1. Use new public facilities investments to model the types of connections to the public realm that are desired for all new projects including walking and biking paths, generous landscaping, bicycle parking, etc.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Sustainability Advisory Committee, Public Works (DPW) Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
CFS3.6: Ensure that municipal facilities and public spaces enhance Dedham's historic character and provide cultural enrichment.	1. Create a Public Art program that integrates historic and cultural narratives into Dedham's municipal facilities and public spaces.	Dedham Cultural Council	Dedham Historical Society & Museum, Civic Pride Committee, Historic Districts Commission/ Historical Commission, Cultural Council	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Massachusetts municipalities are invited to participate in Making it Public, a free training by Forecast Public Art designed to equip administrators to strengthen local capacity to support, create, and promote public art. At the conclusion of the training, participants will have the tools needed to create their own Call for Temporary Public Art and will be eligible to receive a \$10,000 grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts.

CFS4 **Goal 4: Proactively assess funding needs and dedicate staff to pursue external funding, grants, and resources.**

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS4.1: Explore new and long-term funding tools to enable increased investments in capital improvement projects and services.	1. Explore external grant and funding sources with the newly hired grants administrator. Explore needs of neighboring municipalities to determine if any shared pursuit of funding is warranted.	Select Board and Town Manager	Director of Procurement	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS4.2: Encourage public-private partnerships to finance infrastructure and public facilities which fulfill mutual interests of the public and private sectors.	1. Identify potential partnership opportunities and circulate to departments, boards and commissions involved in project review, so that potential partnerships can be identified as private investments are defined.	Town Manager	Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board, Economic Development, Conservation Commission, Building and Code Enforcement Department, Zoning Board of Appeals	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
CFS4.4: Explore joint-use partnerships with private entities to pay for some or all of the costs of capital improvements or new facilities that provide a public benefit and/or support a specific Town or community function.	1. Identify local community needs that may be able to be integrated into the development program of a private investment as part of the community benefits defined through an evaluation of Site Plan Review and Special Permit requirements. For example, creating a publicly accessible and reservable community meeting room (if one is needed in a particular location), that is a part of a private mixed-use development.	Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Board	Economic Development, Conservation Department, Building and Code Enforcement Department, Zoning Board of Appeals	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



CFS5 Goal 5: Expand Town services to support residents and their families and strengthen the relationships between residents.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
CFS5.1: Continue to strengthen trust and communication between the Town services and the community by providing diverse and inclusive opportunities for all residents to participate in planning and Town government.	1. Consider occasionally operating a “mobile Town Hall” where several staff members from key departments are present in a visible location that varies throughout the town to bring the services to the residents and engage with members of the community.	Town Manager (Public Information Officer)	Select Board, Town Moderator, Town Clerk	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
CFS5.2: Encourage businesses to work with local workforce training and education organizations to connect Dedham residents and workers to high quality jobs at a range of skill levels.	1. Plug into a Local Team Leader meeting for the School to Careers program administered by Blue Hills Regional Technical School to explore if additional support or connections could benefit Dedham High School or Dedham businesses.	Economic Development Department	Dedham Public Schools	Continuous and ongoing	
CFS5.3: Optimize the use of community facilities to support community services and needs regardless of who may be the most regular user of the facility. Support flexibility and openness for how Town resources can be used to respond to needs.	1. Document facility utilization of key community facilities and identify patterns of use where additional community activity could be supported by the facility. 2. Once identified, circulate the facilities and open time periods to committees, boards, departments, and community organizations to match needs with underused facilities.	Facilities & Maintenance Department	Capital Expenditures Committee, Finance Department, School Building Rehabilitation Committee, School Committee, Council on Aging, Parks and Recreation Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>CFS5.4: Increase coordination and resource sharing between organizations and service providers with a focus on ensuring that all children and families who could benefit from social, emotional, and academic enrichment are aware of resources and programs offered in Dedham. These organizations could include Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Public Library, the Dedham Youth Commission, and others.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define gaps in services and resources for Dedham children and families. 2. Promote resources and programs offered in Dedham directly to families that may not be aware of them. Partner with Dedham Public Schools and Dedham Public Library to engage households. 	<p>Dedham Health Department</p>	<p>Board of Health, Human Rights Commission, Youth Commission, Council on Aging, Commission on Disability, Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Public Library, Dedham Youth Commission</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	
<p>CFS5.5: Explore the potential for partnerships with neighboring municipalities to expand town services or to explore the regionalization of services or resources that could be efficiently shared.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Align service contract terms with other municipalities to bid for service collectively and achieve savings and economies of scale for services such as elevator maintenance, culvert cleaning, or other contracted services. 	<p>Town Manager</p>	<p>Select Board, Town Departments, Public Works (DPW) Department, Facilities & Maintenance Department, Fire Department, Police Department</p>	<p>Mid-term (4 to 6 years)</p>	<p>A resource document is available titled "Massachusetts Shared Services Manual: A Toolkit of Regionalization Best Practices for City and Town Officials" available at http://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2013-shared-permit-manual-web.pdf</p>



Chapter 9: **Governance**

Introduction

Dedham has a rich history, and its governance system has been rooted in civic engagement and participation since its inception. First incorporated in 1636, Dedham established the Town Meeting form of government early, with the first Town Meeting held in August of 1636. Throughout Dedham's history the system of local government and the process of making public decisions has remained fairly consistent. Throughout this history, Dedham has taken many steps to formalize and professionalize its public services. In the early years of the Town, Dedham residents created a Board of Selectmen, now the Select Board, to carry out the general business of the Town. The first Town Manager was appointed in 2014. The Town currently employs roughly 325 employees across 22 departments and their work is complemented through dedicated resident volunteers on local boards, committees, and commissions.

The Governance topic of the Master Plan aims to outline the ways in which Dedham's local decision-making systems, citizen volunteers, and professional staff can be more effective, transparent, and accountable in the services they provide, and ensure that information and civic engagement is accessible to all of Dedham's residents. The chapter also provides an overview of the Town's financial health and position to meet upcoming needs. In many ways, the topic of governance sets the foundation for the implementation activities of the Master Plan which are the topic of the next chapter.



Summary

To improve Dedham’s municipal connection with its residents and to improve the resident experience with municipal services.



Themes Highlights

- The Town of Dedham is managed well with strong financial health and an engaged citizenry.
- Dedham’s residents are seeking improved communication, transparent processes, and more resident-focused services from the Town government.
- The strong record of engagement has many benefits, such as proactive review of the Town’s Charter, and proactive planning through the local bylaw requiring an update to the Town’s Master Plan every 10 years, but it also has created a hierarchy of boards, committees, and commissions that can be difficult to navigate and coordinate.



Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Center residents in the delivery of Town services and provide the support and technology to keep services up-to-date.
- Proactively support and continue to pursue more equitable representation for all decision-making and leadership roles in local government including Town and school staff, as well as boards, committees, and commissions.
- Continue to advance Town workforce planning to cultivate and attract talented staff that can provide services that are responsive to shifting needs.

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Active Boards, Committees, and Commissions



Companion and related plans and studies

- Town Charter Review Committee Report (2021)
- The Diversity Deficit: Municipal Employees in Metro Boston (2020)



Defining governance terms

Annual Budget

A comprehensive summary of expected expenses for all Town Departments and efforts in the upcoming or ongoing 'Fiscal Year'. The Annual Budget is approved by Town Meeting in the Spring and can be amended at Town Meeting in the Fall. Local Tax Rates are calculated and set so all Town financial obligations outlined in the Annual Budget are met. The Town of Dedham operates using a fiscal year that starts on July 1st and ends on June 30th.

Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC)

A collaboration of citizens, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies dedicated to providing essential and advanced training to citizen and professional planners involved in municipal planning and land use in Massachusetts offering webinars, on demand training, and an annual conference.

Home Rule

Effective in 1967, Article 89 of the Massachusetts Constitution, also known as the Home Rule Amendment and a state statute known as the Home Rule Procedures Act enabled self governance for Massachusetts municipalities. The Home Rule Procedures Act states its purpose as to "grant and confirm to the people of every city and town the right of self-governance in local matters." The right of self-governance is classified in three ways:

- **Home Rule Charter Authority** - the authority of a municipality to adopt a charter without obtaining state legislative approval. Some municipalities do operate with non-home rule charters, such as special act charters.
- **General Home Rule Authority** - the authority of a municipality to exercise power locally with exceptions such as regulating elections, levying, assessing and collecting taxes, borrowing money or pledging credit, disposing of park land, governing civil relationships, and defining and providing punishment of a felony.
- **Home Rule Petition Authority** - the authority of the municipality to petition the state for legislation affecting only their locality. This is

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

designed to empower the state legislature to authorize a municipality to act, but puts the decision-making power in the hands of the state. The municipality must file a home rule petition asking for the special legislation from the state. It is special because legislation cannot otherwise apply to only one municipality. It is a common practice.

Source: *Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston*

Town Board/Town Committee

A Town Board or Committee is a public body comprised of elected, appointed, or volunteer residents who have authority to create Town policy or conduct regular Town business for the specific task in which they oversee. Many Town Board and Committees derive their authority from the Town Charter and Massachusetts General Laws, while others are delegated authority from an existing Board or Committee.

Town Code

The main document that founded and governs the operations of the Town, and consists of the founding Town Charter and Zoning Bylaw. New policies that amend the Code are passed at Town Meeting.

- **Town Charter** - a legal document that establishes a municipality and the framework for local government setting forth the guiding principles for governance.
- **Zoning Bylaws** - the laws and regulations that oversee the use of property in the Town of Dedham.

Town Meeting

Town meeting is a form of direct democracy in which residents come together to legislate policy and budgets for a local government of a municipality. Town Meeting can be representative or open. Representative Town Meeting involves voting by residents to select town meeting members, whereas Open Town Meeting is open to all residents. Dedham has a Representative Town Meeting. The event of Town Meeting brings together the eligible voting members to make decisions to direct the local government.



Governance In Dedham Today

Governance themes from data and previous plans

G1 Strong financial health

Dedham has one of the strongest financial positions of municipalities within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The strength remains despite the many recent stressors caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has caused major stress on state and municipal finances throughout Massachusetts. The Town's financial health provides the ability to borrow money at a low interest rate, a strong financial tax base, and an untapped property tax levy. In Massachusetts through Proposition 2 ½, local governments are restricted from raising taxes more than 2.5% of total taxable property and assets in the municipality. While some municipalities are up against this cap, restricting their ability to account for rapidly rising expenses, Dedham consistently taxes below its levy capacity. Another positive attribute of Dedham is its large commercial base, which shifts over 30% of the local tax burden away from its residents.

This financial health has reduced the number of financial stressors that some neighboring municipalities may be experiencing. Dedham does not rely heavily on State Aid to finance its infrastructure or services. State Aid accounts for only 8.7% of all revenues from the most recently audited fiscal year. This low percentage insulates the Town from the uncertainty of State

revenues, budgeting, and aid allocations. Dedham's ability to tax below its levy capacity, large commercial tax base, and low reliance on State Aid positions the Town with a very strong foundation for any unexpected financial challenges.

Another key indicator of a Town's fiscal health is the independent Credit Rating given to the Town by credit rating agencies. Both Standard and Poor's and Moody's evaluate private companies, securities, and government entities on their fiscal strength to predict their ability to pay their debt obligations, to signal how risky it is to loan money to that entity. While Dedham was not ranked by Moody's, it received the strongest possible score (AAA) by Standard and Poor's. According to Standard & Poor's February 2023 credit report, the Town's high credit rating is attributed to "... Dedham's very strong economy and budgetary reserves and flexibility." This strong rating instills confidence for investors to purchase the Town's capital bonds at a very low rate. Thus, Dedham is in a strong position to meet upcoming capital needs as it can reasonably borrow funds without a high burden on taxpayers. Even with the availability of low interest bonds, Dedham has been able to use free cash for many of its recent capital projects. Dedham also has a history of fully funded pension and benefits contributions for its municipal workforce.

G2 Improving communication with residents

Improving communications with residents has been a priority for the Town of Dedham for over a decade. In Dedham's previous Master Plan process conducted in 2009, two of the five governance recommendations were intended to improve the



Town's communication with residents. Since that time, Dedham has taken creative strides to effectively communicate with residents. Dedham departments manage multiple Facebook and Twitter accounts, Board and Commission meetings are broadcast on DedhamTV, and the central Town social media accounts are active daily. As of this current fiscal year, the Town has hired a full-time Director of Communications, who is responsible for keeping residents informed and keeping posted information fresh. This is a major step to identify the right tools to improve communication with residents.

The Town has also adopted a few tech tools to improve the way in which information is collected and displayed to residents. Dedham currently posts all its line-item budgets to OpenFinance, which is an interactive software that allows residents to explore salaries, purchases, capital, and other expenses for all Town departments. Dedham residents also have access to CGIS Citizen request, which is a system where users can report issues with Town properties and roads. If used properly, this ticketing system and work order system would provide a high level of service to residents. However, there is room for improvement as these tools are not widely known and are underutilized by residents. Additional resident engagement and technology tools should be explored and implemented to effectively communicate with residents in intuitive and convenient ways.

G3 High participation rates in Town Meeting

Dedham is one of 33 Massachusetts municipalities that use a Representative Town Meeting as its primary legislative body. Town Meeting members are elected through local elections to represent one of seven precincts across Dedham to 3 year terms. Town Meeting typically occurs in the Spring and Fall, and as needed for Special Town Meetings. A good indicator of local government's functionality, is the attendance and participation of its legislative body. Dedham's requires a quorum of 170 voting Town Meeting members out of a total of 273 in order to conduct business. In recent history, Town Meetings have been very



Source: Town of Dedham



well attended and Dedham has not needed to reschedule Town Meeting due to a lack of quorum. This enables Town business to be carried out and services to continue as expected.

G4 Proactive charter revisitation

The Town of Dedham's governing document is its Charter, first established in 1974 through the Home Rule Procedures Act outlined in Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 43B. Often in local government, the Town Charter is rarely revisited and outdated process or procedures can become an impediment to new practices or efficiencies. In Dedham the Town Charter and Town Bylaws are proactively revisited. Defined in the Charter, the Select Board possess the authority to appoint a committee to revisit the Town Charter (in years ending in '0') and the Town Bylaws (in years ending in '5').

Based on this appointment, Dedham's Charter Advisory Committee reviews the Town Charter as appointed, about every five years to ensure that local offices are effectively positioned to be successful and that residents are governed in their preferred system. The periodic assessment of the municipality's structure and charter is important to adapt with changing times and needs. Dedham's Charter is a foundational governing document that impacts all residents. A proactive approach to re-examine how it functions helps Dedham prepare for the future.

The most recent revision of the Charter began with the first Charter Advisory Committee meeting on October 30th, 2019. The Committee conducted a survey and held several rounds of deliberation which culminated in a list of recommended changes outlined in the Preliminary Charter Report. This Committee is typically given 10 months to gather information from residents, collect data, and complete a report on the actions deemed in the Town's best interest. However, due to the unforeseen circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee developed alternative methods to solicit feedback and gather the proper information. For the recommendations to be implemented, the report will need to be reviewed and approved by the Town Select Board, Town Meeting, and the Massachusetts Legislature.

These regular deliberations and recommendations are essential for good governance. Too often local government operates with an antiquated process or procedure because the Town Charter is outdated and out of touch with current needs and practices. Town Charters can also be difficult to revise. Having an established body periodically revisit and recommend Charter changes provides the Town a pathway to progress and enables residents to evaluate the status quo.



G5 Many layers of Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Dedham relies heavily on the input from its elected, appointed, and volunteer Boards and Committees. The Boards and Committees are staffed by residents of Dedham. There are currently 32 active Boards and Committees, each with their own mission and goals, and many coordinate with professional staff to assist carrying out directives. This, combined with Town Meeting, provides many opportunities for Dedham residents to become involved in the governance of the Town and contribute to the community.

Each Board and Committee plays a role in defining the overall direction of policies and practices shaping Dedham. But with this number of decision-making bodies, it can be difficult for some residents to understand how to get involved, or where to direct specific issues or feedback. The Boards and Committees are often overlooked when residents need assistance or need to voice their concerns or experiences. Some residents in the Master Plan process voiced their frustration with how some Boards and Committees operate, and how difficult it can be to find information about their recent efforts.

Dedham government services benefit greatly from this relationship with Board and Committee representatives. With how essential Boards and Committees are for the operation and direction of the Town, it is important to attract residents to these important volunteer positions. Some departments and grassroots groups



Source: pbs.twimg.com

have worked to demystify the process of getting involved. Efforts should continue to attract participation from the full breadth of diversity found in Dedham's residents in an effort to reflect the overall population of the Town through its volunteer leaders. All of this points to the importance of providing the Board and Committee members with the framework and support needed to be as effective as possible in their roles.

On the following page is a diagram showing the Boards and Committees organized by the general area of responsibility. The areas of responsibility are Town Management, Health and Human Services, Finance, Land Use and Zoning, Community, Education, Open Space and Recreation, and Town Properties. The Boards and Committees in the diagram are also color coded to indicate whether the members are elected, appointed, or volunteer. The page that follows the diagram list the number of seats and the means of appointment for each Board, Committee, or Commission.



Dedham's Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Town Management	Health and Human Services	Finance	Land Use and Zoning	Community	Education
Select Board	Board of Health	Finance and Warrant Committee	Planning Board	Cultural Council	School Committee
	Dedham Housing Authority	Board of Assessors	Conservation Commission	Civic Pride Committee	
Bylaw Review Committee	Coalition for Alcohol and Drug Awareness	Commissioners of Trust Funds	Design Review Advisory Board	East Dedham Revitalization Committee	Board of Library Trustees
Sustainability Advisory Committee	Commission on Disability	Capital Expenditures Committee	Historic Districts Commission	Public Service Recognition Committee	Youth Commission
Charter Review Committee	Council on Aging Board		Zoning Board of Appeals	Open Space and Recreation	Town Properties
Transportation Advisory Committee	Human Rights Commission			Parks and Recreation Commission	Building, Planning, and Construction Committee
Active Transportation Working Group				Open Space and Recreation Committee	Endicott Estate Commission
					School Building Rehabilitation Committee

Legend

Elected
Appointed
Volunteer



Boards, Committees, Commissions	Seats	Means of Appointment
Active Transportation Working Group	5 members 3 Ad Hoc	Appointed
Board Of Assessors	3	Elected
Board of Health	3	Elected
Board of Library Trustees	5	Elected
Building, Planning & Construction Committee	7	Appointed
Bylaw Review Committee	5	Appointed
Capital Expenditures Committee	5	Appointed
Cable Advisory Committee	5	Appointed
Charter Advisory Committee	7	Appointed
Civic Pride Committee	More than 7 (Currently 20)	Appointed
Coalition for Drug & Alcohol Awareness	9	Volunteer
Commission on Disability	9	Appointed
Commissioners of Trust Funds	5	Elected
Conservation Commission	7	Appointed
Council on Aging Board	7 to 15 (Currently 9)	Appointed
Cultural Council	Up to 22 (Currently 18)	Appointed
Design Review Advisory Board	5	Appointed

Boards, Committees, Commissions	Seats	Means of Appointment
Endicott Estate Commission	5	Appointed
Finance & Warrant Committee	9	Appointed
Historic Districts Commission / Historical Commission	7	Appointed
Dedham Housing Authority	5	Elected
Human Rights Commission	13	Appointed
Open Space & Recreation Committee	7	Appointed
Parks & Recreation Commission	5	Elected
Planning Board	5	Elected
Public Service Recognition Committee	7	Appointed
School Building Rehabilitation Committee	7	Appointed
School Committee	7	Elected
Select Board	5	Elected
Sustainability Advisory Committee	7	Appointed
Town Meeting	273	Elected
Transportation Advisory Committee	9	Appointed
Youth Commission	5	Appointed
Zoning Board of Appeals	5	Appointed



Governance themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to governance and are summarized here. (See “Chapter 1: Introduction” for a full explanation of the community engagement process.)

While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the governance themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

G1 Local tax rate concerns

Local tax rates and municipal finance ranked among the most critical challenges for Dedham residents. Of those surveyed, two-thirds ranked local tax rates and municipal finance in their top 3 challenges facing Dedham. Overall one of the top three goals expressed by residents is for the Town to be “fiscally responsible.”

93% of survey takers listed ‘efficient public services and facilities’ as important or most important. Standard & Poor’s highlighted Dedham’s “Good financial policies and practices” in its February 2023 credit report. This signals that the Town needs to do a better job informing residents of their successes. The average resident may not be aware of the strong financial position, and

the Town needs to improve how this information is presented to residents. Dedham consistently taxes below its levy capacity, stewards a large commercial tax base, and maintains low reliance on State Aid.

G2 Diversity of staff and representatives

Residents surveyed voiced concerns about the demographics of Town staff and representatives on local Boards and Commissions and how they may not be reflective of the diversity of Dedham. Additional data should be collected to better understand the diversity of staff and board and committee members.

One of most prominent themes of Dedham residents throughout all outlets of engagement was the concern of diversity in Town representatives and staff. The Town contracted in Spring 2023 with UMass Boston through a state grant to identify practices that contribute to equity and inclusion, as well as barriers that challenge recruitment and opportunities for the Town’s workforce and boards, committees, and commissions. While the data to evaluate this diversity is not readily available, many residents are concerned that the Town’s minority populations are underrepresented. Many residents are open to creative ideas to bring a broader resident base in Town decision making.

G3 Dated and infrequent communication

Many residents shared their frustrations with finding updated information on current local issues. Many residents want to stay informed, but don’t feel that they are able to access information



in convenient or familiar ways or that the information they do find is outdated.

Despite the progress recently made in Town communications, there is room for improvement. Many residents have expressed frustration with the current Town website. Despite going through a revision within the last 5 years, the Dedham Town website can be difficult to navigate and information isn't easy to find. The search function does not provide much assistance. Many pages have stale information and much of the information isn't manageable. The Director of Communication is currently working on a revision of the website.

Residents also reported trouble understanding how Town government works and this information gap makes it challenging to understand Town decisions. The government documents that are available, don't provide adequate context or explain Town business in ways that will build understanding and engagement.

G4 Boards and commission coordination

Residents were very vocal that the Town's Boards and Commissions operate in their own silos and suggested they could operate more effectively with greater collaboration. Boards and Commissions should work together to collectively plan and address Dedham's largest challenges.

One of Dedham's biggest assets is its Boards and Committees. When these decision-making bodies are effective, Dedham has many residents involved in addressing a whole range of community issues. However, through this process residents have

voiced many concerns on the efficacy and accountability of the Board and Committees. Some Dedham residents feel that Boards and Committees are siloed and operate in their own space, without knowledge of the others that may be working on similar topics. In 2023, the Select Board organized two Town Summits so boards and committees could report to each other about their current activities

Residents would also like to see annual summaries of goals and activities to keep Boards and Committees accountable. Residents also want an easier way to keep tabs on what is happening, without having to pore through minutes that are inconsistently posted. If there are interesting projects or issues, residents should be aware, and the current system doesn't allow residents to stay engaged in an easy and convenient way.



Source: Town of Dedham, photo by Maureen Sargent



Governance In Dedham today

Additional context and data

Town Charter and Bylaws

The Town Charter is a legal document that establishes a municipality and the framework for local government setting forth the guiding principles for governance. The charter defines the municipality's organization, the responsibilities of its officials, many of its powers, and its relationship to its constituents. The charter typically establishes whether a municipality is a city or a town, a classification that defines the organization of local governance and the relationship between the municipality and the state. Town by-laws, for example, require the approval of the state Attorney General, whereas city ordinances do not. (Source: *Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston, a research and policy center housed at the Harvard Kennedy School at Harvard University*).

The Charter and Bylaws define Dedham's form of government as a Town and delegate authority and power to all of Dedham's institutions, departments, entities, boards, and commissions. Through a Home Rule Petition, outlined in the Home Rule Procedures Act (MGL Chapter 43B), Dedham's first Charter was adopted in 1974. The Town's Charter Review Committee assesses the Town Charter every five years.

The Town is led by resident volunteers that comprise Town Meeting members and Select Board members who make decisions on behalf of the Town as citizen volunteers.

Town Meeting

Dedham has a rich history, and its governance system has been rooted in civic engagement and participation since its inception. First incorporated in 1636, Dedham established the Town Meeting form of government early, with the first Town Meeting held in August of 1636. Throughout Dedham's history the system of local government and the process of making public decisions has remained fairly consistent. Town Meeting is a form of direct democracy in which residents come together to legislate policy and budgets for a local government of a municipality.

Dedham is one of 33 Massachusetts municipalities that have a Representative Town Meeting form of government, which means each participant in Town Meeting is elected and serves a 3-year term. The Town is comprised of seven districts (also known as 'precincts') and 39 representatives are elected from each, totaling 273 representatives. The event of Town Meeting brings together the eligible voting members to make decisions to direct the local government. Town Meeting meets twice a year (and under special circumstances) to deliberate and decide on many important Town issues, many of which have direct budgetary implications. The Town Meeting agenda, known as the Warrant, is prepared and supported by the Town Manager and approved by the Finance and Warrant Committee before individual items are presented to Town Meeting.

Select Board

The Select Board is the head of the Town's executive branch. In the early years of the Town, Dedham residents created a Board



of Selectmen, now the Select Board, to carry out the general business of the Town. The Select Board is an elected body responsible for policy directives and establishing guidelines for Town departments and professional staff. The Select Board acts as the Licensing Authority of the Town and all local licensing laws and regulations fall under their purview. The Select Board appoints individuals to regional representative posts and many of the Town's Boards and Commissions, including the Zoning Board of Appeals, Charter Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Cultural Council, Historical District Commission. The Select Board is also responsible for appointing the Town Manager.

Town Manager

Throughout its history, Dedham has taken many steps to formalize and professionalize its public services. The first Town Manager was appointed in 2014. The Town Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Dedham and is responsible for the day-to-day oversight and operations of almost all of Dedham's government offices and departments (excluding Education, Parks and Recreation, and the Library). The Town Manager is responsible for all facilities maintenance, collective bargaining agreements, insurance, and carrying out all Town appropriations. The Town Manager is also responsible for preparing the Select Board and Town Meeting Agenda.

Town Boards and Committees

Dedham relies heavily on volunteer Boards and Committees. These are unpaid posts comprised of Dedham residents who work to solve Town's issues. Town Boards and Committees are filled by either election, appointment, or are purely voluntary and the

term of each representative varies depending on the position. Each Board and Committee fulfills a specific role, and many Town departments collaborate closely with a Board or Committee.

Town Departments and Staff

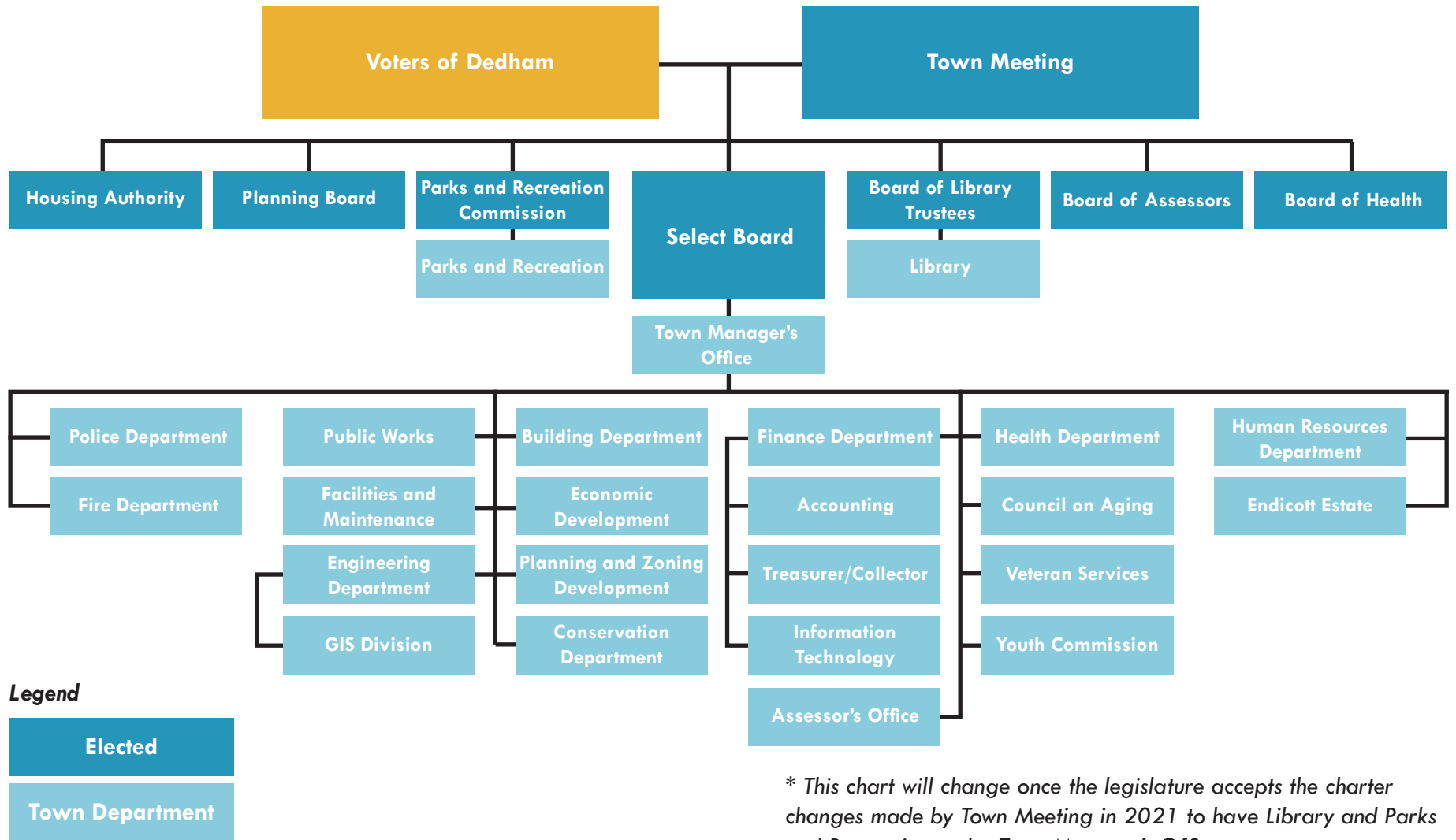
The Town's staff are organized in Departments. Several of the Town Departments are organized under Town Meeting and include the Select Board, Dedham Housing Authority, Planning Board, Parks and Recreation Commission, Board of Library Trustees, Board of Assessors, and Board of Health. The majority of the Town Departments are organized under the Town Manager's office. The organization of Town Departments is shown in the diagram on the following page. The Town currently employs roughly 325 employees across 22 departments.

Town Workforce Demographics

In 2020, MAPC completed a workforce demographic study in the Greater Boston Region titled "The Diversity Deficit: Municipal Employees in Metro Boston." The study, including municipalities roughly within I-495, found that city and town employees are, as a whole, both older and Whiter than the region's labor force, as well as its population. It found that while Black workers are relatively well-represented among the municipal workforce overall, workers of Latino or Asian backgrounds – the region's fastest-growing racial and ethnic groups – are frequently underrepresented across occupations. While the study did not provide data specific to Dedham, it is the best available data and points to the need for more data locally. The study may also provide insights into the type of data that should be collected locally to assess workforce demographics.



Organizational Chart of Dedham's Boards and Departments*



* This chart will change once the legislature accepts the charter changes made by Town Meeting in 2021 to have Library and Parks and Recreation under Town Manager's Office.



Governance Goals and Strategies

Summary: To improve Dedham's municipal connection with its residents and to improve the resident experience with municipal services.

NOTE: Master Plan strategies are recommendations that will depend on follow-up activity from Boards and Committees to carry forward. No Board or Committee is obligated to carry this work forward. For example, it is up to the Planning Board to decide how best to implement the many goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan that relate to planning..

G1 Goal 1: Establish a comprehensive approach to centering residents in services and communications to improve transparency and effectiveness of Town government.

Strategy 1.1: Rebuild Dedham-ma.gov to be more useful for residents and become a more central resource for all Town Departments. Ensure the website has a useful search function, intuitive navigation, a comprehensive meeting calendar, is maintained effectively (internally), and is accessible in various languages and on multiple devices. Establish consistent standards and expectations for posting department materials and information.

Strategy 1.2: Coordinate phone and email requests to the Town to create a single point of entry for all requests coming into the Town. Requests can be directed to the appropriate person or department. Such a system would help prioritize solving issues or directing residents to the right resource in the least number of steps. A central system can also be used to identify gaps in services and be used for future planning and budgeting.

Strategy 1.3: Set annual, monthly, and weekly Departmental Standards for resident outreach and contact. Ensure that each department is accessible and in touch with the public and their needs, while ensuring residents can stay informed on recent

projects without barriers. Train for effective resident engagement.

Strategy 1.4: Undergo an external audit of documents, communication systems, programs and policies to identify opportunities to improve communication and resident-friendly services. Revise all resident-facing municipal documents, like the annual budget, to be resident-friendly and to better explain the services available to residents.

Strategy 1.5: Engage staff to create an annual Citizens Academy, akin to the Dedham Police Academy, to give residents an opportunity to learn about each municipal department. Use this training program to help get more residents involved.

Strategy 1.6: Use existing communication channels, such as the Town Talk newsletter, to highlight a department or Board each month to help educate the public and invite involvement.

Strategy 1.7: Keep online participation options and hybrid board and committee meetings available to encourage more public participation.



G2 Goal 2: Maintain municipal fiscal responsibility and respond to local tax rate concerns.

Local tax rates and municipal finance ranked among the most critical challenges for Dedham residents. Of course no one action results in municipal fiscal responsibility and reducing or maintaining local tax rates for residents is difficult. A few short and long term strategies may help to retain its strong financial position and to be a responsible steward of local taxes. As discussed, Dedham consistently taxes below its levy capacity, stewards a large commercial tax base, and maintains low reliance on State Aid.

Strategy 2.1: Retain, diversify, and strategically expand the non-residential tax base and leverage that base to help diversify taxable income such as through the hotel and motel rooms tax, and the local meals tax. Other uses, not yet approved in Dedham, could be considered to further diversify local taxes. For example, explore whether allowing cannabis uses and short-term rental uses in the town would provide significant net income to help the town's budget. Maximize tax revenue through these non-residential sources.

Strategy 2.2: Prioritize the renovation, repair, and re-use of Town facilities where such a scenario is possible. Town facilities and resources should be maximized for efficient use. Pursue

a Town-wide facility master plan to plan future use of all the Town's buildings and structures efficiently and effectively. Explore opportunities for underutilized Town properties to be sources of revenue for the Town.

Strategy 2.3: Provide more external communication regarding financial data and policies. Examples such as utilizing financial indicators to communicate the fiscal health of Dedham can provide real-time effective communication.

Strategy 2.4: Explore opportunities to share staff, equipment, or services with neighboring municipalities to collaborate and reduce costs.

Strategy 2.5: Develop a process to routinely assess services provided by the town to determine if any improvements in efficiency, updates, or discontinuation of underutilized services would provide a more economical delivery of services in response to resident needs. Assessments of town services should also include review of all local receipts and fee structures to ensure cost for goods and services are current. Continually reference municipal best practices for guidance and improvements.



G3 Goal 3: Support investment in information technology to modernize the municipal workplace and resident experiences with municipal services.

Municipally focused technology tools are available that can improve the level of service that Dedham is able to provide to residents. Funding to improve Information Technology (IT) staff and Fiber infrastructure would support the expansion and integration of new technology tools to remain up-to-date, cost effective, and competitive with municipal service offerings.

Strategy 3.1: Separate the Information Technology function from the Finance Department and elevate into a separate department. Combine all IT department needs into a central IT budget. Separate IT capital investment into a separate Capital Improvement Plan that focuses on Dedham's future IT needs. *This strategy will be fully accomplished starting with the FY23 budget.*

Strategy 3.2: Continue to hire full-time IT Department staff to manage all day-to day municipal IT tasks and management of long-term needs and assets. Utilize IT staff to support website management, data collection, communications, cyber security and defense against ransomware, and other enhanced offerings and functions. *This strategy will be fully accomplished starting with the FY23 budget.*

Strategy 3.3: Focus on modernizing key municipal functions with close interdepartmental communication and coordinated processes, including online intake and initiation, full-service municipal software, and up-to-date cyber security practices.

Strategy 3.4: Adequately train Town Staff on new technology as it is implemented to ensure it is used effectively. Offer training to residents on all tech tools and offerings.

Strategy 3.5: Identify and address local equity issues for access to technology and internet services, the so-called digital divide.



Source: wickedlocal.com



G4

Goal 4: Ensure Dedham's representation among boards, committees, and Town Meeting members reflects the social and racial demographics of the Town.

By gathering and analyzing local data the composition of boards, committees, and Town Meeting members can be compared to the demographics of the Town. Using this data as a foundation, transparently identify if any gaps exist and explore if barriers to participation exist for any underrepresented groups within Dedham's population. Explore where additional resources may be needed to attract diverse applicants or candidates. This would allow the Town to set deliberate diversity goals, review progress annually, and identify specific policies or practices that may be obstacles to meeting the goals.

Strategy 4.1: Keep online participation options and hybrid board and committee meetings available to encourage more public participation. If possible allow voting members of certain boards and committees to participate remotely. Ensure residents can easily access all hybrid meetings and a single protocol is followed when facilitating meetings. Schedule meetings at days and times accessible to the greatest number of residents.

Strategy 4.2: Create and implement a process to gather data on the demographics of boards, committees, and Town Meeting representatives including gender, race, age, and other information.

Strategy 4.3: Summarize this data in an annual Town Representation Report (Boards and Committees) that compares demographics to Dedham's population. Assign this responsibility to the Town Manager's office to clearly identify areas for improvement, set goals annually, and review progress.

Strategy 4.4: Establish training, recruitment, and engagement practices to increase the diversity of Board and Committee representation (when appropriate) based on the findings of the data gathered on the social and racial demographics of the Town Representation Report including cultivating a culture of inclusion to retain racially diverse talent, and efforts to identify and reduce barriers for non-White residents to participate in local government.



G5 Goal 5: Define expectations, goals, and development opportunities for boards and committees, and encourage increased collaboration and coordination between boards.

Deliberately defined expectations, communication and coordination processes, and required annual goals would enable Dedham's Boards and Commissions to more effectively operate and track accomplishments. A defined hierarchy and relationship to other Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Groups would improve effectiveness, communication, and transparency, while reducing redundancy. Residents may also be able to better direct feedback and participate in decision-making processes with these clear definitions.

Strategy 5.1: Create a formal hierarchy for all Boards and Committees. Group each Board/Committee by function and structure them with direct oversight from other Boards/Committees, centered on the Dedham Select Board.

Strategy 5.2: Recommend as a best practice that each Board/Committee draft an annual report that outlines the previous Fiscal Year's efforts, and evaluates and establishes clear goals and steps to achieve the goals. Recommend as a best practice that each Board/Committee have an annual reorganization of officers.

Strategy 5.3: Establish board and committee collaboration goals for those that may benefit from regularly scheduled joint meetings or other means of communication and coordination, return to goals annually and check for compliance and accountability.

Strategy 5.4: Establish a formal system to encourage and support training for Board, Commission, and Committee (elected and appointed), and Town Meeting members through resources such as the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC). Provide annual/bi-annual training to support members on such topics as Roberts Rules of Order, creating efficient agendas, and meeting facilitation through the town or outside groups.



G6 Goal 6: Advance workforce planning, talent management, and aligned representation for Town employees as core values of the Town.

The average age of the municipal public sector workforce is closer to retirement as compared to the general private sector workforce. Without active recruitment and career planning, municipal government may not have the human capital needed to fulfill its obligations to the community. Over the next ten years, Dedham has an opportunity to reinvent the way it does business and the level of service it provides. It will need a renewed supply of competent employees engaged through active workforce planning, ongoing talent development, and mentorship programs to meet projected workforce challenges, and to attract outstanding candidates that reflect the demographics of the community when positions turn over.

Strategy 6.1: Create and implement a process to gather data on the social and racial demographics of Town employees.

Strategy 6.2: Summarize this data in an annual Workforce Demographic Report (Town Hall, Police, Fire) that compares demographics to Dedham's population. Assign this responsibility to the Town Manager's office to clearly identify areas for improvement, set goals annually, and review progress.

Strategy 6.3: Gather data on Town workforce demographics with the Workforce Demographic Report. If necessary, seek to diversify hires to align staff demographics with the Town demographics. Streamline and refine hiring processes and improve outreach to find a broader audience of job seekers.

Strategy 6.4: Integrate best practices such as blinded review of resumes and initial candidates. Reevaluate job requirements and create more internship opportunities at the associate, undergraduate, and graduate level.

Strategy 6.5: Embrace change and foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Enable staff to put together service improvement recommendations and the cost/benefits for each department. Support staff training opportunities aligned with service improvement recommendations.

Strategy 6.6: Encourage professional development opportunities for department heads and junior staff. Implement standard talent development practices including performance reviews, continuing education, etc.



G7 Goal 7: Improve monitoring of residents' economic, social, and health needs to define and respond with appropriate social services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for municipal and social services that respond to the economic, social, and health needs of the Town's residents. The framework, tools, and coordination required to provide responsive services to meet resident needs should be built upon to better prepare for the future.

Strategy 7.1: Create a structure to oversee all Dedham Social Services. Create a relationship with existing services including the Council on Aging, Veterans' Services, Dedham Housing Authority, Libraries, and Dedham Youth Commission. Add capacity for broader Community Health work as discussed in the Public Health Chapter.

Strategy 7.2: Build a strong relationship with the Public Health Department to collaborate on intergenerational programming, address economic contributors to resident health and improve civic engagement.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, contributor Brianca



Governance Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for governance.

G1 Conduct a Communications Audit.

To understand exactly how to improve communications with residents, Dedham must conduct a thorough communications audit. Once all communications channels are accounted for, Dedham should evaluate the effectiveness of each of these channels and how they can be improved. For communication resources that can track usage, like the Town website or social media platforms, staff should evaluate how often these channels are utilized and organize a plan to improve access to all residents. Residents should play a large role in this audit and subsequent improvement plan. Dedham staff should create a targeted community survey and smaller focus groups to understand how residents prefer to be reached. The lead responsibility would be the Town Manager's Office in close coordination with the Select Board. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process.

G2 Centralize the Information Technology Budget.

One of the first steps to creating a professional Information Technology (IT) Department is to understand what Dedham currently spends on IT. Many departments have internal IT costs or hire independent contractors for services that can be shifted under the authority of the new IT Department. Once all IT expenses are centralized, Dedham can evaluate its current IT assets, operations, and security. Then, incoming IT staff can begin to develop strategic short and long term recommendations to improve Dedham's IT capacity. The lead responsibility would be the Information Technology staff in close coordination with the Town Manager's Office. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. *This will be fully accomplished starting with the FY23 budget.*

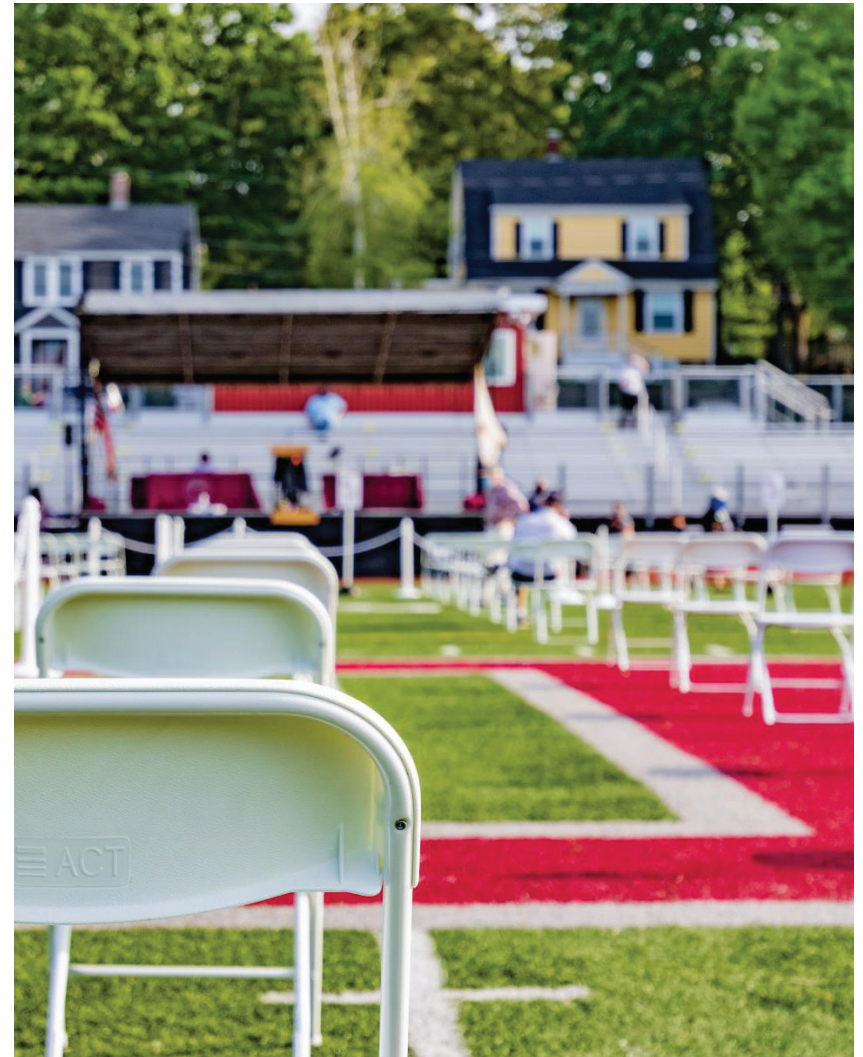
G3 Draft a Town Representation Report and Workforce Demographic Report.

In order to make progress on Dedham's diversity and inclusion goals, the Town Manager's Office should begin the process of drafting the Town Representation Report and Workforce Demographic Report. The first step is to set up a system to gather the necessary data in a way that is anonymous and can be efficiently replicated and repeated annually. Once demographic data is collected, the representation of Town Meeting, Town



boards and committees, and workforce can be compared to the population of the Town. After that, deliberate goals and efforts can be established as necessary. The lead responsibility would be the Town Manager's Office in partnership with the Town Clerk's Office. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include racial equity programs, such as the Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) Program piloted in 2020.

The REMAP program is a partnership between the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward with local municipalities. The program is designed to help municipalities tackle structural and institutional racism transparently and effectively through municipal hiring, decision-making, and funding allocation. The pilot year of the program included Bedford, Framingham, Lynn, Natick, Revere, and Stoughton. The year-long effort will result in racial equity action plans for each municipality. The REMAP team plans to report on learnings and progress at the end of the pilot to inform others working to advance racial equity through municipal action. This approach could be used as a model for Dedham to approach this work in a way that is deemed most appropriate for the Town and that reflects Dedham's needs.



Source: Town of Dedham

G1 Goal 1: Establish a comprehensive approach to centering residents in services and communications to improve transparency and effectiveness of Town government.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G1.1: Rebuild Dedham-ma.gov to be more useful for residents and become a more central resource for all Town Departments. Establish consistent standards and expectations for posting department materials and information.	1. Define consistent protocols and procedures for uploading information and updates for all departments.	Town Manager (Public Information Officer)	Information Technology staff	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Work with IT staff to add website features such as a useful search function, intuitive navigation, and translation available into multiple languages.	Town Manager (Public Information Officer)	Information Technology staff	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
G1.2: Coordinate phone and email requests to the Town to create a single point of entry for all requests coming into the Town. Requests can be directed to the appropriate person or department. A central system can also be used to identify gaps in services and be used for future planning and budgeting.	1. Explore a 'Dedham 311' phone line and email that can act as a central intake for all questions or municipal business. Discuss the development of such systems with municipalities that have created them (Everett, Boston, Newton, and others).	Town Manager	Select Board	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Appoint a staff member to respond to unaddressed issues.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	3. Create a mechanism for residents to give feedback when they have suggestions or receive inadequate service.				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G1.3: Set annual, monthly, and weekly Departmental Standards for resident outreach and contact. Ensure that each department is accessible and in touch with the public and their needs, while ensuring residents can stay informed on recent projects without barriers. Train for effective resident engagement.	1. Define uniform standards and expectations for timeframes to respond to a resident request. Provide training and/or resources to support staff to meet the standards.	Town Manager	Select Board, All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Provide a system of support for referring requests to the relevant recipient.				
	3. Develop a central intake, issue/request, and response system to track open issues.				
G1.4: Undergo an external audit of documents, communication systems, programs and policies to identify opportunities to improve communication and resident-friendly services. Revise all resident-facing municipal documents, like the annual budget, to be resident friendly and to better explain the services available to residents.	1. Conduct a communications audit to understand exactly how to improve communications with residents. Inventory all communications channels and evaluate the effectiveness of each of these channels and how they can be improved.	Town Manager (Public Information Officer)	Select Board, All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	<p>MAPC Community Engagement Strategy Chart: https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CE-Strategy-Chart_1.3.18.pdf</p> <p>MAPC “Doing Engagement from Home: A Toolbox for Municipal Staff”: https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Virtual-Engagement-Toolbox_Final.pdf</p> <p>MAPC Community Engagement Recipe Book: https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/RECIPEBOOKFINAL8.16.17FINAL.pdf</p>

Priority



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G1.5: Engage staff to create an annual Citizens Academy, akin to the Dedham Police Academy, to give residents an opportunity to learn about each municipal department. Use this training program to help get more residents involved.	1. Partner with the Police Department to design a learning module that can be inserted into the Dedham’s Police Academy for the Select Board, Planning Board, Town Manager, or Facilities Director. Use this module to gauge interest and refine content.	Town Manager, Dedham Police Department	Select Board, Town Departments	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Alternatively or additionally, offer a single educational session that provides the basics on some Town governance functions with staff and members of those departments. Offer these sessions annually with a different focus each year.	Town Manager, Dedham Police Department	Select Board, Town Departments	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
G1.6: Use existing communication channels, such as the Town Talk newsletter, to highlight a department or Board each month to help educate the public and invite involvement.	1. Use Town Talk newsletter to highlight a different department and /or Board each month to help educate the public about how government works.	Town Manager (Public Information Officer)	All Town departments	Continuous and ongoing	
G1.7: Keep online participation options including hybrid board and committee meetings available to encourage more public participation.	1. Identify and procure the technology needed to provide hybrid meetings (webcam, microphone, laptops, etc.). 2. As meetings return to in-person, continue with online broadcasting of meeting and refine setup and technology based on needs and feedback. It is recommended to not shift to in-person only and introduce hybrid meetings later, but to transition to hybrid meetings.	Town Manager (Public Information Officer), Information Technology staff	All Town departments, boards, and committees	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	MAPC Hybrid engagement information, available at: https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/hybrid-engagement/



G2 Goal 2: Maintain municipal fiscal responsibility and respond to local tax rate concerns.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G2.1: Retain, diversify, and strategically expand the non-residential tax base and leverage that base to help diversify taxable income such as through the hotel and motel rooms tax, and the local meals tax. Other uses, not yet approved in Dedham, could be considered to further diversify local taxes. Maximize tax revenue through these nonresidential sources.	1. Dedham has a 6.0% rooms tax rate for hotel and motel occupancy in the town. Dedham has not enabled other local tax options, such as a short-term rental community impact fee rate. 28 municipalities have a 3.0% short-term rental community impact fee enabled.	Select Board	Town Manager, Finance Department, Planning and Zoning Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. For example, explore allowing cannabis uses in the town, including exploring the potential impacts and fiscal benefits of nearby municipalities that have allowed cannabis uses. The local marijuana tax rate is 3.0%, compared to 0.75% for the local meals tax. 189 municipalities have a marijuana tax enabled.				
G2.2: Prioritize the renovation, repair, and re-use of Town facilities where such a scenario is possible. Town facilities and resources should be maximized for efficient use. Pursue a Town-wide facility master plan to plan future use of all the Town's buildings and structures efficiently and effectively. Explore opportunities for underutilized Town properties to be sources of revenue for the Town.	1. In assessing capital needs and investments for future facilities, increase the weighting or priority given to options that re-use existing assets or facilities.	Town Manager, Facilities and Maintenance Department	Select Board, All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Apply the prioritization of re-use and repair to building and facility assets and fleet and equipment management and investments.				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G2.3: Provide more external communication regarding financial data and policies. Examples such as utilizing financial indicators to communicate the fiscal health of Dedham can provide real-time effective communication.	1. Explore options to make financial data and policies more publicly visible.	Finance Committee	Town Manager's Office	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	MAPC Technical Assistance, EOHLC One-Stop Grant
	2. Create easily maintained dashboards or other publicly accessible website or newsletter features that highlight trends in town financial data.				
G2.4: Explore opportunities to share staff, equipment, or services with neighboring municipalities to collaborate and reduce costs.	1. Identify an inventory of potential shared services opportunities across all departments	Town Manager, Facilities and Maintenance Department	Select Board, All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Massachusetts Shared Services Manual: A Toolkit of Regionalization Best Practices for City and Town Officials (http://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2013-shared-permit-manual-web.pdf) MAPC Collective Purchasing Programs and Services (https://www.mapc.org/public-works-collective-purchasing-program/)
	2. Prioritize the inventory on upcoming needs and communicate with potential partners in surrounding municipalities				
	3. Once shared needs and partners are identified, pilot a joint procurement and resource sharing process				
G2.5: Develop a process to routinely assess services provided by the town to determine if any improvements in efficiency, updates, or discontinuation of underutilized services would provide a more economical delivery of services in response to resident needs. Continually reference municipal best practices for guidance and improvements.	1. Inventory primary public-facing services by department	Town Manager	Select Board, All Town departments	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Identify metrics to build an understanding of frequency of use and level of impact of public-facing services				
	3. Identify current services that warrant reconsideration in the approach or delivery of the services based on evaluation with identified metrics.				



G3 Goal 3: Support investment in information technology to modernize the municipal workplace and resident experiences with municipal services.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>G3.1: Separate the Information Technology function from the Finance Department and elevate into a separate department. Combine all IT department needs into a central IT budget. Separate IT capital investment into a separate Capital Improvement Plan that focuses on Dedham’s future IT needs.</p>	1. Centralize the Information Technology (IT) budget to support the creation of a professional IT Department.	Town Manager	Information Technology Staff	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	<i>This strategy was fully accomplished starting with the FY23 budget.</i>
	<p>G3.2: Continue to hire full-time IT Department staff to manage all day-to day municipal IT tasks and management of long-term needs and assets. Utilize IT staff to support website management, data collection, communications, cyber security and defense against ransomware, and other enhanced offerings and functions.</p>	<p>1. Define all tasks and responsibilities currently dispersed across departments that can centralized under an IT Department.</p> <p>2. Reduce redundancies or inefficiencies that may exist with a centralized IT Department, shift any single department IT staff to a more central and generalized role to support all IT needs consistently across the Town.</p>	Town Manager	Information Technology Staff	Near-term (1 to 3 years)



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G3.3: Focus on modernizing key municipal functions with close inter-departmental communication and coordinated processes, including on-line intake and initiation, full-service municipal software, and up-to-date cyber security practices.	1. Explore municipal software solutions that can increase efficiency for municipal functions and offer an improved resident experience, prepare a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for providers.	Town Manager	Information Technology Staff	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Employ RFQ responses to identify municipal functions that could transition to a software solution and prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) from those providers for those services.				
	3. Define Town populations are areas with inadequate infrastructure where they may be a “digital divide” in the community as more services shift to online delivery.				
	4. Define solutions to address “digital divide” issues and equity of digital access issues that have been identified.				
G3.4: Adequately train Town Staff on new technology as it is implemented to ensure it is used effectively. Offer training to residents on all tech tools and offerings.	1. Include appropriate training for staff and residents in the Request for Proposals referenced in G2.3 above.	Town Manager	Information Technology Staff, Council on Aging, Dedham Public Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. If municipal services are transitioned to new processes, provide a transition period where both old and new processes are available for use by the public. Offer public information sessions about the changes and instructions for how to use the new processes.				
G3.5: Identify and address local equity issues for access to technology and internet services, the so-called digital divide.	1. Pursue funding or support for a digital equity plan	Information Technology Staff	Town Manager, Council on Aging, Dedham Public Library, Veteran’s Services, Housing Authority	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Massachusetts Broadband Institute’s Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program https://broadband.masstech.org/municipal
	2. Inventory and map the locations of households with no internet access (data available from U.S. Census.				
	3. Develop strategic recommendations to improve internet access for locations with the most impacted population.				



G4 Goal 4: Ensure Dedham’s representation among boards, committees, and Town Meeting members reflects the social and racial demographics of the town.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G4.1: Keep online participation options and hybrid board and committee meetings available to encourage more public participation. If possible (past April 2022), allow voting members of certain boards and committees to participate remotely.	1. Prepare a Home Rule petition to the Legislature to continue with hybrid board and committee meetings in order to encourage diverse and representative participation on Town Boards and Committees. Ensure residents can easily access all hybrid meetings and a single protocol is followed when facilitating meetings.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
Priority G4.2: Create and implement a process to gather data on the demographics of boards, committees, and Town Meeting representatives including gender, race, age, and other information.	1. Draft the first Town Representation Report. The first step is to set up a system to gather the necessary data in a way that is anonymous and can be efficiently replicated and repeated annually. Once demographic data is collected, the representation of Town Meeting, Town boards and committees can be compared to the population of the Town. After that, deliberate goals and efforts can be established as necessary.	Town Manager	Select Board, Town Clerk	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G4.3: Summarize this data in an annual Town Representation Report (Boards and Committees) that compares demographics to Dedham's population. Assign this responsibility to the Town Manager's office to clearly identify areas for improvement, set goals annually, and review progress.	1. Prepare a Town Representation Report that can be easily created with updated data and trends that compare to updated Town demographic data each year.	Town Manager	Select Board, Town Clerk	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward
G4.4: Establish training, recruitment, and engagement practices to increase the diversity of Board and Committee representation (when appropriate) based on the findings of the data gathered on the social and racial demographics of the Town Representation Report including cultivating a culture of inclusion to retain racially diverse talent, and efforts to identify and reduce barriers for non-White residents to participate in local government.	1. Prioritize a board or committee identified in the Town Representation Report to pilot recruitment and engagement practices. Use this process to identify outreach and recruitment practices and track which efforts are most successful. For example, networking to recruit interested residents, or posting and mailing flyers to specific neighborhoods, hosting information sessions in specific neighborhoods, or other recruitment.	Town Manager	Select Board, Town Clerk	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward
	2. Provide simple materials that define the processes and procedures for becoming a Town Meeting member, or a board or committee member include requirements and responsibilities for the role. Have these materials translated.	Town Manager	Town Clerk, Town Manager (Director of Communications)	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	3. If there is an issue about race or inclusion that happens in Town, an official statement should be made in a timely and responsive manner.	Town Manager	Select Board	Continuous and ongoing	
	4. Host a Town Hall Open House hosted by Town Staff to make it accessible for people who feel they don't have access to this space or the staff. Give residents information about resources, how to do things in the Town, and how to be involved.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



G5 Goal 5: Define expectations, goals, and development opportunities for boards and committees, and encourage increased collaboration and coordination between boards.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G5.1: Create a formal hierarchy for all Boards and Committees. Group each Board/Committee by function and structure them with direct oversight from other Boards/Committees, centered on the Dedham Select Board.	1. Define proposed hierarchy, centered on the Dedham Select Board, and circulate to boards and committees for review and discussion.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
G5.2: Recommend as a best practice that each Board/Committee draft an annual report that outlines the previous Fiscal Year's efforts, and evaluates and establishes clear goals and steps to achieve the goals. Recommend as a best practice that each Board/Committee have an annual reorganization of officers.	1. Pilot this annual report and procedures at the Select Board to provide a model and template for other boards to follow. Share the template and model with other boards.	Select Board	Town Manager, Town Clerk, Library (interested in participating in Pilot)	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Library Board - self evaluation template: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DXVcDGTbf-FrTeCMp80hKRRRj8snrdwvm/view?usp=sharing
	2. Establish and model a code of conduct, beginning with the Select Board and expanding to all boards and committees. Current members would establish the code of conduct and once established, incoming members would sign-on to the code of conduct.				



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G5.3: Establish board and committee collaboration goals for those that may benefit from regularly scheduled joint meetings or other means of communication and coordination, return to goals annually and check for compliance and accountability.	1. Based on the formal hierarchy for all Boards and Committees, define board and committee collaboration goals and define a regular joint meeting schedule to strengthen coordination and communication.	Town Manager	All Boards and Committees	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Based on effectiveness and need of the joint meetings, increase or decrease the frequency to provide the right balance and utility.	Town Manager	All Boards and Committees	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
G5.4: Establish a formal system to encourage and support training for Board, Commission, and Committee (elected and appointed), and Town Meeting members through resources such as the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC). Provide annual/bi-annual training to support members on such topics as Roberts Rules of Order, creating efficient agendas, and meeting facilitation.	1. Set aside a modest budget to fund board and committee member training and promote the use of training resources.	Supporting Departments	Town Manager	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Citizen Planner Training Collaborative, Planner Training for Massachusetts, information available at: https://masscptc.org/
	2. Track and promote training opportunities for board and committee members.				
	3. Develop a continuing education request and approval processes. Gather a catalogue of continuing education resources, conferences, and services for board and committee members.				
	4. Provide a survey or process to intake board and committee member questions or training requests.				
	5. Provide a training session to address frequently raised requests, on such topics as Roberts Rules of Order, creating efficient agendas, and meeting facilitation.				



G6 Goal 6: Advance workforce planning, talent management, and aligned representation for Town employees as core values of the Town.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G6.1: Create and implement a process to gather data on the social and racial demographics of Town employees.	1. Prepare an anonymous survey that would create a baseline demographic understanding of the Town's workforce.	Town Manager	Select Board	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
Priority G6.2: Summarize this data in an annual Workforce Demographic Report (Town Hall, Police, Fire) that compares demographics to Dedham's population. Assign this responsibility to the Town Manager's office to clearly identify areas for improvement, set goals annually, and review progress.	1. Draft the first Town Workforce demographic report. The first step is to set up a system to gather the necessary data in a way that is anonymous and can be efficiently replicated and repeated annually. Once demographic data is collected, the representation of Town staff, Dedham Public Schools teachers and administrators, Public Safety staff, and Town workforce generally can be compared to the population of the Town. After that, deliberate goals and efforts can be established as necessary.	Town Manager	Select Board, Town Clerk, Human Resources Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) program with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)/Race Forward
G6.3: Gather data on Town workforce demographics with the Workforce Demographic Report. If necessary, seek to diversify hires to align staff demographics with the Town demographics. Streamline and refine hiring processes and improve outreach to find a broader audience of job seekers.	1. Compare Town demographic data with Town workforce demographics.	Town Manager	Select Board, Town Clerk, Human Resources Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. If needed, set targets for improving representation in Town workforce.			Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Evaluate the costs and benefits of remaining a Civil Service community, with a particular focus on hiring and recruitment processes.	Town Manager	Dedham Police Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
G6.4: Integrate best practices such as blinded review of resumes and initial candidates. Reevaluate job requirements and create more internship opportunities at the associate, undergraduate, and graduate level.	1. Establish procedures for all departments to follow.	Human Resources Department	Town Manager, Select Board, all Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
G6.5: Embrace change and foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Enable staff to put together service improvement recommendations and the cost/benefits for each department. Support staff training opportunities aligned with service improvement recommendations.	1. Enable staff to put together service improvement recommendations and the cost/benefits for each department.	Town Manager	All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	2. Support staff training opportunities aligned with service improvement recommendations.	Human Resources Department	All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	3. Set aside a modest amount of departmental funding for staff training and promote the use of staff training resources.	Town Manager	All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	4. Streamline continuing education request and approval processes. Gather a catalogue of continuing education resources, conferences, and services for town staff.	Human Resources Department	All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
G6.6: Encourage professional development opportunities for department heads and junior staff. Implement standard talent development practices including performance reviews, continuing education, etc.	1. Define a town-wide baseline of annual staff procedures, such as performance reviews with professional development goals, mentoring programs, and opportunities to pursue continuing education.	Human Resources Department	Town Manager, All Town departments	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



G7 Goal 7: Improve monitoring of resident’s economic, social, and health needs to define and respond with appropriate social services.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Responsibility Lead	Responsibility Support	Timeframe	Potential Resources
G7.1: Create a structure to oversee all Dedham Social Services. Create a relationship with existing services including the Council on Aging, Veterans’ Services, Housing Authority, Libraries, and Dedham Youth Commission. Add capacity for broader Community Health work as discussed in the Public Health Chapter.	1. Initiate regular meetings with all relevant parties to collaborate on connecting Dedham residents to Dedham social services and develop regular annual shared workplans to advance collaboration.	Health Department	Council on Aging, Veterans’ Services, Housing Authority, Libraries, and Dedham Youth Commission, Library	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
G7.2: Build a strong relationship with the Public Health Department to collaborate on intergenerational programing, address economic contributors to resident health and improve civic engagement.	1. Partner and collaborate with existing stakeholders to develop intergenerational programing and support.	Health Department	Council on Aging, Livable Dedham, Dedham Youth Commission, Dedham Public Schools, Library	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Chapter 10:

Public Health and Livability

Introduction

Population health is shaped by a community’s collective exposure to healthy and unhealthy environments – it is shaped in homes, in schools, in the natural and built environment, and at places of employment. Healthy communities are “places where all individuals have access to healthy built, social, economic, and natural environments that give them the opportunity to live to their fullest potential, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, income, age, abilities, or other socially defined circumstances.”¹

Given this relationship of neighborhoods to individual health, the Public Health and Livability chapter provides a framework for understanding how community conditions affect the health of Dedham’s residents. This Public Health and Livability chapter uses a health equity lens to explore how certain populations in Town may experience disproportionate impact due to factors such as geography, ethnicity, income, age, or other characteristics. The Public Health chapter describes current health conditions and behaviors and assesses risks and opportunities presented within Dedham’s built, social, and natural environment and proposes how to achieve improved health outcomes through community design strategies and services.

Public Health and Livability has a close connection to all of the other Master Plan topics.

¹ City of Seattle, “Racial Equity Toolkit to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues”



Summary

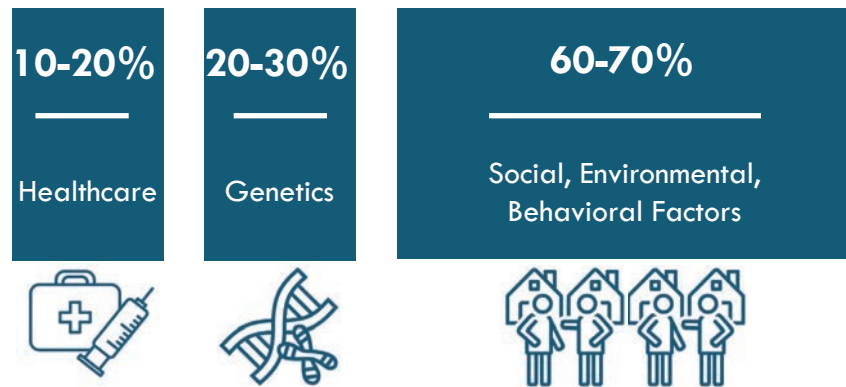
Ensure equitable access to health resources and information so all residents can achieve their greatest health potential.



Themes Highlights

- The COVID-19 pandemic tested local health resources and revealed the importance of public health services and planning.
- Disparate needs and health impacts are evident among an aging population, youth mental health and substance use risks, and environmental justice populations.

Factors determining long-term health outcomes



Source: American Action Forum "Understanding the Social Determinants of Health," Bipartisan Policy Center, National Academy of Medicine

Companion and related plans and studies

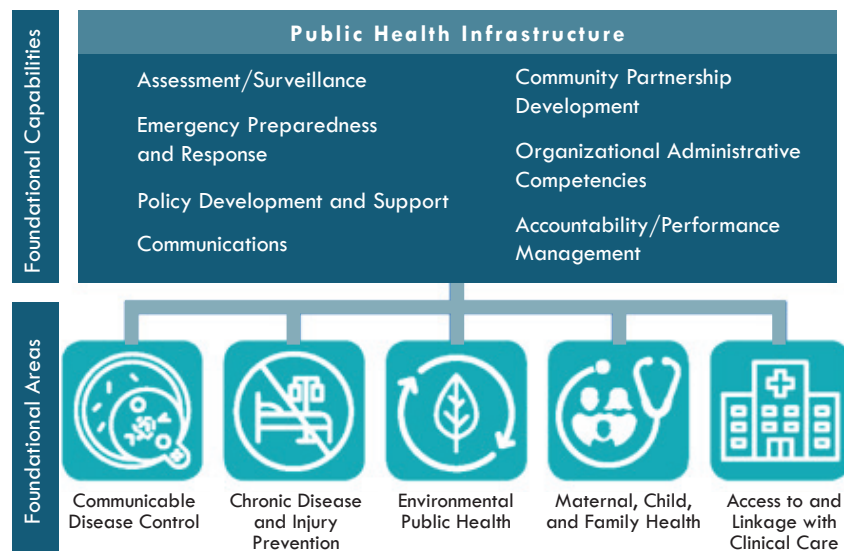
- MA COVID-19 Community Impact Survey (2020)
- Needham Beth Israel Lahey Health Community Health Needs Assessment (2019)
- New England Baptist Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment (2019)



Goal/Strategy Highlights

- Invest in Dedham's Health Department to fund core services, build capacity, and advance toward more holistic health interventions.
- Reduce exposures to harm and mitigate harmful behaviors to support the physical, mental and emotional wellness of residents.
- Foster community connectedness and inclusive civic and social engagement to support equitable physical and mental health.
- Support daily physical activity.

Foundational Public Health Service (FPHS) model



Source: Adapted from Public Health National Center for Innovations



Defining public health and livability terms

Built Environment

The human-made environment including buildings, streets, sidewalks, open spaces, infrastructure, and other components that provides spaces for people to live, work, and play, among other activities.

Chief Health Strategist

A leader of a multi-sector (government, non-profit, private, and community) approach to focus community resources on improving specific health outcomes. Part of a community multi-collaborative health approach, a Community Chief Health Strategist is an engaged change leader (or group of leaders) who builds community coalitions that investigate and take action to make meaningful progress on a community health issue. This can be a position shared by the leaders of multiple community health organizations.

Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA)

A local health assessment that identifies key health needs and issues through systematic, comprehensive data collection and analysis. *Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

COVID-19

Coronavirus disease 2019 is an illness caused by a virus. This virus is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. It is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. *Source: National Institutes of Health U.S. National Library for Medicine.*

Environmental Justice Population

In Massachusetts, a neighborhood is defined as an Environmental Justice population if any of the following are true:

- The annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income;
- Minorities comprise 40% or more of the population;
- 25% or more of households lack English language proficiency; or

NOTE: Definitions may differ from official Zoning definitions, for official definitions refer to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

- Minorities comprise 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income.

Source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts>

Public Health 3.0

A term used to describe a new era of enhanced and broadened public health practice that goes beyond traditional public health department functions and programs. At its core is the notion that local communities will lead in taking public health to the next level and ensuring its continued success. Five broad recommendations define the conditions to transform into the Public Health 3.0 model, and include:

- Public Health leaders should embrace a role as Chief Health Strategist
- Public health departments should collaborate in structured, multi-sector (government, non-profit, private, and community) partnerships
- Public Health Accreditation Board criteria and process should be enhanced
- Timely, reliable, granular, and actionable data should be made accessible and clear metrics developed to guide initiatives
- Funding for public health should be enhanced and substantially modified

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2017/17_0017.htm

Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)

The conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes and risks. In other words, how and where people live impacts their physical and mental well-being. They are typically grouped into five domains: Economic Stability, Education Access and Quality, Health Care Access and Quality, Neighborhood and Built Environment, and Social and Community Context. *Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.*



Public Health and Livability In Dedham today

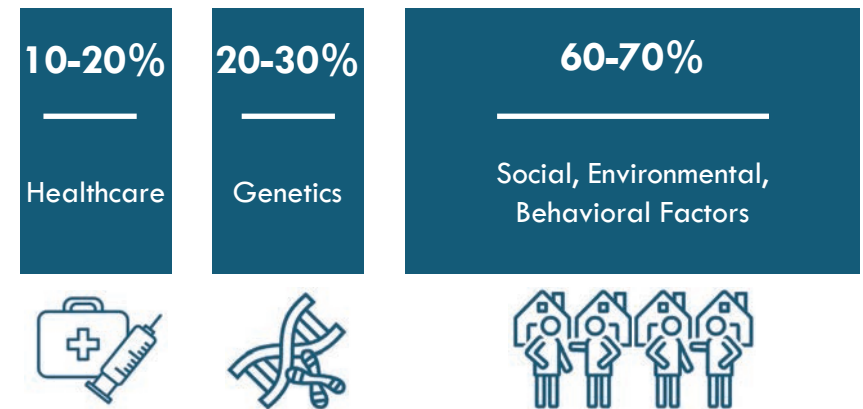
Background: Planning decisions impact health outcomes

This chapter begins with context for why public health is important and why it is a part of Dedham’s Master Plan. The health of Dedham’s community depends on a strong and stable foundation. Every topic in this Master Plan contributes to that foundation and supports community health. Factors such as steady employment, quality education, and safe and affordable housing form the base of a functioning and healthy society. Connecting health and planning provides an impetus to improve the supporting environments and opportunities for healthy living.

The built environment and context of neighborhoods impact individual health and well-being, the influence of these external factors on health is collectively referred to as the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH). Planning decisions influencing social, environmental, and behavioral factors within communities account for a large proportion of long-term health outcomes alongside healthcare and genetics.

The leading chronic diseases in the United States illustrate the relationship between health and planning. Chronic diseases such as obesity and diabetes are illnesses that are the result of behaviors, choices, and influences stemming directly or indirectly from a community’s surrounding environment. The COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted the importance of public health and preparing for future emergencies. Future conditions will include the impacts of climate change. Extreme weather events have the

Factors determining long-term health outcomes



Source: American Action Forum “Understanding the Social Determinants of Health,” Bipartisan Policy Center, National Academy of Medicine

potential to disrupt ecological and physical systems, creating greater risk to public health, including heat-related illnesses, air pollution-related impacts on cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, increased rates of allergic and communicable diseases, and flooding risks.² All these health risks are likely to fall most heavily on the most vulnerable members of the community, including residents that may be low-income, disabled, young, elderly, or residents of color.

² Health and Places Initiative. Climate Change, Health, and Place: Research Brief.



Achieving Physical Health and Mental Health Equity at Every Level

Transforming the conditions in which people are
BORN, GROW, LIVE, WORK and AGE
for optimal health, mental health & well-being.



Source: *Let's Get Healthy California, Social Determinants of Health*



Public health themes from data and previous plans

PH1 Local public health capacity

The Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) tool provides an outline for public health services that should be present in any jurisdiction. FPHS include two areas: foundational areas (i.e. specific activities and services) and foundational capabilities (i.e. skills). A scan and an assessment were conducted by BME Strategies, a public health consulting firm, to evaluate Dedham's FPHS readiness. Although it is clear that certain capabilities and services are being offered by the Health Department, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed deficiencies in public health services across the Commonwealth. In response, the MA Department of Public Health has revamped its Office of Local and Regional Health and is encouraging regional public health partnerships. Dedham is a member of the Norfolk County 8 (NC-8) which received shared services grants to support public health services.

PH2 Aging population

The older adult population, residents aged 60 years or older, is projected to grow by more than 60% by 2030. Housing affordability and options, walkability, and community programming are the biggest factors impacting the ability to age in place. The current zoning may also limit opportunities to support aging in place by defining many current residential lots as nonconforming. This may increase the difficulty in adapting a

home to meet changing needs because additional board review will be required. Seeking approval for these changes can be particularly discouraging for older residential property owners that may not be accustomed to the permitting process and may have limited resources to hire attorneys.

PH3 Youth population priorities

In the Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital (BIDH) Needham and New England Baptist Hospital (NEBH) community health needs assessments (CHNA), youth were explicitly identified as a priority population. The CHNAs identified that the most common health issues youth are facing include:

- Mental health: 22% of Dedham High School students report experiencing depressive symptoms in the last 12 months and 16% seriously considered suicide in the last 12 months;
- Substance Use: 54% of Dedham High School students report alcohol use and 31% report e-cigarette use; and

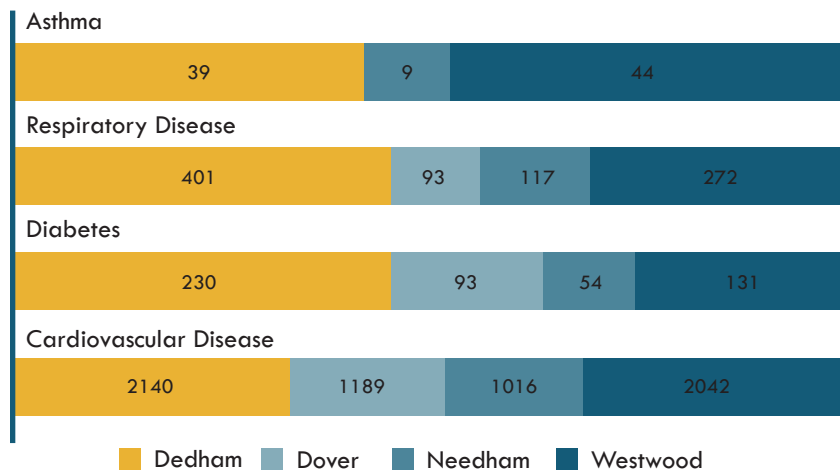
PH4 Rates of chronic diseases

Dedham is within the primary service area of three major health systems: BIDH Needham, NEBH, and Norwood Hospital (NH). Data from each hospital's most recent CHNA indicates Dedham residents experience moderate to higher rates of chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease, and asthma, when compared to regional and state levels. The following table compares chronic disease rates in Dedham and neighboring municipalities.



PH5 Shared health priorities

Comparison of Chronic Disease Rates (per 100,000) (Inpatient hospital data, 2018)



Across all three of the most recent CHNAs, the top five most common community health priorities were:

- 1) Social determinants of health (SDoH),
- 2) Mental health,
- 3) Substance use,
- 4) Chronic and complex conditions, and
- 5) Access to care.

Social determinants of health (SDoH) became a prominent theme

and priority across all three community health needs assessments (CHNAs). The assessments revealed determinants such as poverty, employment opportunities, housing, violence, transportation, racial segregation, social support, and community integration disproportionately impact older adults, low-income individuals or families, racial/ethnic minorities, non-English speakers, and those with disabilities or with chronic and complex health conditions.

PH6 Environmental justice concerns

Environmental justice is based on the principle that all individuals have a right to be protected from environmental pollutants and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthy environment. It also recognizes that specific racial and economic groups have disproportionately lived in areas where there are greater exposures to environmental hazards. For example, portions of the environmental justice block groups in Dedham are adjacent to high volume roadways such as Providence Highway and Route 128. Overall, 12.3% of Dedham residents live within about 650 feet of a high-traffic road (defined as a road with more than 25,000 vehicles per day). This is higher than the State average of 8.1%. Residents who live near high-traffic roads are exposed to vehicular exhaust and other emissions that can increase the risk of heart disease, respiratory disease, and neurological conditions.



Public Health and Livability Community Priorities

Public health themes from community feedback

As part of the Master Plan process, including community surveys, community open houses, and other opportunities for public conversation, themes and priorities heard from the community were identified related to public health and livability and are summarized here. (See Chapter 1 for a full explanation of the community engagement process.) While the themes and priorities heard from the community are reflected in the public health and livability themes earlier in this chapter, these items deserve additional recognition and in some cases repetition due to the frequency they were mentioned by the community.

PH1 **The built environment is an important health concern**

Survey participants indicated that the current built environment (the pattern of uses, buildings, roads infrastructure, and natural features) is a barrier for them to engage in health promoting activities. Walking and biking infrastructure that allow for residents to safely travel and access recreational areas and green space for exercise were rated as some of the top health concerns for residents. In addition to how the current built environment is a barrier, residents also specified that it is the most important factor to them for creating a livable Dedham. A livable Dedham for most residents meant creating compact

neighborhoods in which they have convenient access to live, work, and play.

PH2 **Planning for future pandemics**

Survey participants also placed high importance on preparation for and control of pandemics and other multifaceted emergencies. This implies the need for building and supporting a strong local municipal public health system that allows for staff to work in a coordinated and effective manner. This community priority also highlights one of the important aspects of the context of this planning process. The process occurred through the COVID-19 pandemic and has raised awareness of this risk and the need for proactive planning to prepare for the future. A future pandemic, or other risks associated with climate change for example, may require adaptation and resilience to address and reduce impacts to Dedham residents.

PH3 **Racial equity and inclusivity**

A major theme that arose from comments in the open-ended survey questions highlighted the importance of continuing to support becoming a more inclusive community that serves and welcomes the diversity of residents from all races, ethnicities, and ages. A focus on racial equity and inclusion is important to public health as the exposure to public health risks is not equitably distributed across the population. Exposure to health risks are elevated for Environmental Justice populations. The more equitable and inclusive communication and representation that can occur, the more likely it is that effective solutions will be identified to address the needs of underrepresented populations of the Town.



Public Health and Livability In Dedham today

Additional context and data

Community Health Systems

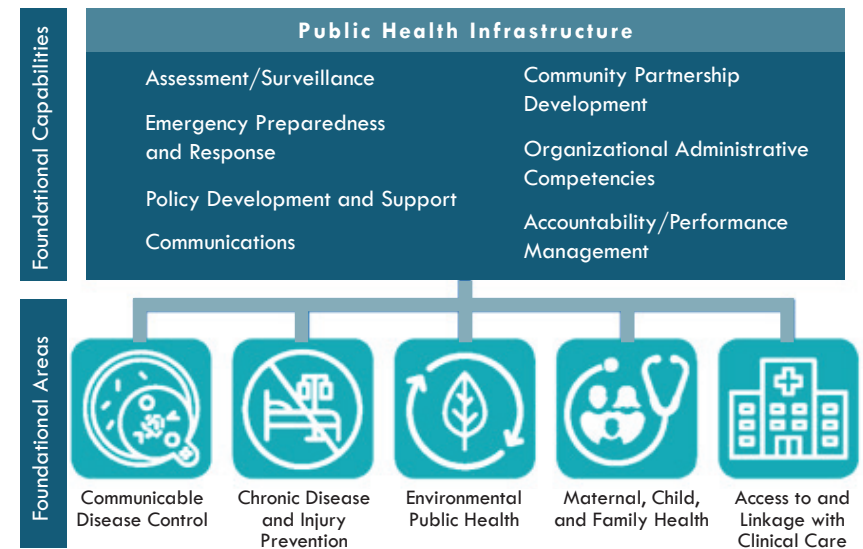
Municipal departments and staff such as health directors, health agents, public health nurses, councils on aging, commissions on disability, schools, public safety, and recreation departments all fulfill important roles in protecting and promoting health and wellness in the community. Outside of the municipal setting and in the private sector, health care systems, hospitals, community-based clinicians, and long-term services and supports respond to acute health issues (e.g. heart attacks), promote disease prevention efforts and seek to intervene in behavioral health issues (e.g. substance use).

Dedham Health Department, Board of Health, and Health Initiatives

Dedham is served by a three-member Board of Health and a Health Department which includes a Health Director, Assistant Health Director, Public Health Nurse, Health Inspector, and a Program Director for the Drug Free Communities Grant. The activities performed by the Department and Board promote and encourage active living and safe behaviors and provide essential services that address the needs across all ages and abilities. The Health Department promotes programs that support health and wellness among residents, they lead and collaborate on efforts to protect the community from emerging threats, respond to emergencies, and reduce the spread of infectious diseases.

An approach for understanding local health work is the Foundational Public Health Service (FPHS) model. This model provides a framework and represents a minimum package of public health services that should be present within any community. The FPHS includes two areas: foundational capabilities and foundational areas. Foundational capabilities are cross-cutting skills and capacities needed to support basic public health protections and other programs and activities that are key to ensuring the community’s health and achieving equitable health outcomes. Foundational areas are basic public health, topic-specific programs that are aimed at improving the health of the community.¹ These two areas are illustrated below.

Foundational Public Health Service (FPHS) model



Source: Adapted from Public Health National Center for Innovations

¹ Public Health National Center for Innovation, FPHS Fact Sheet, November 2018



Through the external scan by BME Strategies, Dedham’s Foundational Public Health Service (FPHS) capabilities and areas were assessed. The Dedham Public Health Department demonstrates many of the FPHS capabilities through their direct services as well as through partnerships with multiple municipal departments, community-based organizations, and local and regional agencies. The table to the right provides examples of how the Dedham Health Department demonstrates its capabilities. However, the current municipal public health infrastructure faces capacity and funding challenges. One approach to resolve these challenges is regional public health partnerships. Dedham is a member of the Norfolk County 8 (NC-8) which has received a Public Health Excellence grant to hire shared positions for an epidemiologist, community resource specialist, and regional inspector.

The foundational areas are inclusive of a vast set of activities vital to sustaining healthy indoor and outdoor environments to which residents are regularly exposed. The Dedham Health Department and the Board of Health address the foundational areas through their work to implement Massachusetts General Laws and local bylaws and regulations as well as through collaborative work with other municipal departments, community-based organizations, and regional coalitions. To the right, are examples of how the Health Department meets the foundational areas, across several health and environmental elements.

Dedham Public Health Department Foundational Capabilities

Capability	Example of Work
Assessment and Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disease monitoring and reporting in collaboration with State Public Health Agency (MPDH) and the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiological Network (MAVEN) Bi-annual Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness (DOSA) Parent Survey
All Hazards Preparedness/Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Reserve Corps: Norfolk County 8 Emergency warming and cooling centers
Policy Development/Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tobacco and medical marijuana regulations FDA Food Retail Food Standards Program
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vector-borne disease communications: aerial spraying, confirmed cases COVID-19 confirmed case communications
Community Partnership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional collaboration with Norfolk County 8 Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurses
Organizational Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private water supplies/geo-thermal wells Program planning, public communications, and health analysis and assessment

Dedham Public Health Department Foundational Areas

Area	Example of Work
Communicable Disease Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Nile Virus: aerial spraying COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing
Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tobacco/vaping and marijuana control Substance use prevention
Environmental Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restaurant and home inspections Pool testing Title 5 Septic inspections
Maternal, Child, and Family Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School based vaccination programs Summer camp inspections
Access and Linkages with Clinical Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 vaccine clinics Flu vaccine clinics Blood pressure clinics



Context and Challenges

The pandemic exposed staffing and resource challenges in most Massachusetts Local Health Departments as a result of underinvestment and changing risks to community health. As the Dedham Health Department returns to the delivery of traditional services critical to protecting the public's health renewed investment should be made. Many of these services were deprioritized during the height of the pandemic. Investments into local public health can support and strengthen continued pandemic response activities, future emergency response efforts, and bolster essential core public health services in Dedham (i.e., inspections, health promotion, immunizations).

Local public health plays an important role with multiple local planning functions, from advisory to regulatory. A challenge to executing this role effectively is a shortage of funding and adequate resources to maintain foundational public health services in collaboration with other boards and departments.

Health Care Systems

As highlighted in the Public Health Themes, there are several area hospitals that serve Dedham residents, including Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital (BID) Needham, Beth Israel Lahey Health (BIL), New England Baptist Hospital (NEB), BIL Urgent Care Dedham, Dedham Medical (Atrius Health), ConvenientMD Urgent Care, Faulkner Hospital (MGB), and Norwood Hospital. Most health care systems produce a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years for communities located within their

primary service area. Following the assessment, hospitals use the data to develop a community health improvement plan, which can be used to justify how and where resources should be allocated to best meet community needs.¹

For the majority of the hospitals that serve Dedham residents, their most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was conducted in 2019 (Norwood Hospital conducted their CHNA in 2018). Each assessment process was guided by the feedback of an advisory committee comprised of representatives from hospital leadership, local health and human services organizations, municipal health departments, youth community centers, senior centers, schools, and public safety. Specifically, Dedham was represented by its Food Pantry, Council on Aging, and Livable Dedham (a community group focused on making Dedham age-friendly) for the BID Needham advisory committee. Representatives were selected by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from BID Needham. The common shared health priorities from these assessments were highlighted in the Public Health Themes and will be discussed in more detail in the shared health priorities section.

Health Care Access

Dedham Public Schools, the Council on Aging, the Dedham Health Department, and other public health systems are important points of access to non-emergency medical care. Some of these referral points are informal (i.e., word of mouth) but some, such as Dedham's Youth Services Counselor and the Public

¹ The Attorney General has set four statewide priorities for strategies: Chronic Disease with a Focus on Cancer, Heart Disease and Diabetes, Housing Stability/Homelessness, Mental Illness and Mental Health Substance Use Disorders.



Health Nurse are part of a local system set up to help residents overcome barriers to care. The Youth Services Counselor is an important resource for families and youth and provide services such as individual or family counseling or refer families to additional treatment options. The Public Health Nurse and Health Department can provide important immunizations for residents such as COVID-19 and flu vaccines. The Council on Aging provides transportation services for Dedham's older adults and helps connect them to local medical appointments.

Although there are key players in providing or helping facilitate access to health care, there are still barriers to accessing timely and appropriate care. Key interviews, focus groups, and a community health survey found that some leading barriers to good health include the high cost of health care, transportation, lack of providers (e.g., behavioral health, primary health), and stigma preventing people from seeking certain services.¹

As a result of COVID-19 care for routine and acute needs was delayed, which has further exacerbated existing health inequities. Survey results from the 2020 COVID Community Impact Survey (CCIS) reveal that people were delaying emergency, routine, and mental health care due to limited health care capacity. Delay in urgent and routine care is 1.5x to 2x as high among certain subgroups (i.e., low-income, people who identify as non-binary, gender queer, transgender, people with disabilities). These subgroups already faced many health care barriers such as cost, transportation, English proficiency, and discrimination.² The chart on the following page shows several comparisons between

¹ Beth Israel Deaconess Needham Community Health Needs Assessment, 2019

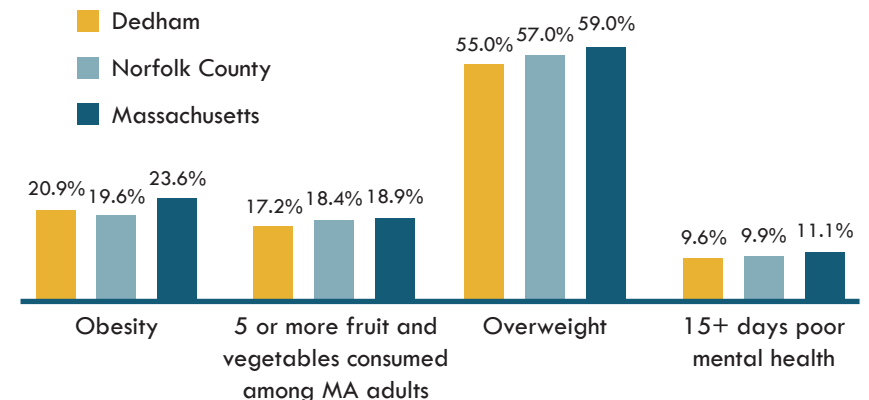
² MADPH COVID-19 Community Impact Survey: Healthcare Access and Delays, June 8, 2021

subgroups that have delayed medical care. The chart clusters comparisons between an impacted subgroup and a less impacted subgroup for reference.

Health Status Snapshot

The small area estimates presented in the figure below are from the state's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), which shows percentage of the population who are obese, overweight, have unhealthy eating habits, and suffer from mental health issues. Only about 17% of Dedham residents reported eating the recommended daily levels of fruits and vegetables and the proportion of adults that are overweight or obese

Health Conditions and Behaviors (Percent of residents age 18 years or older)



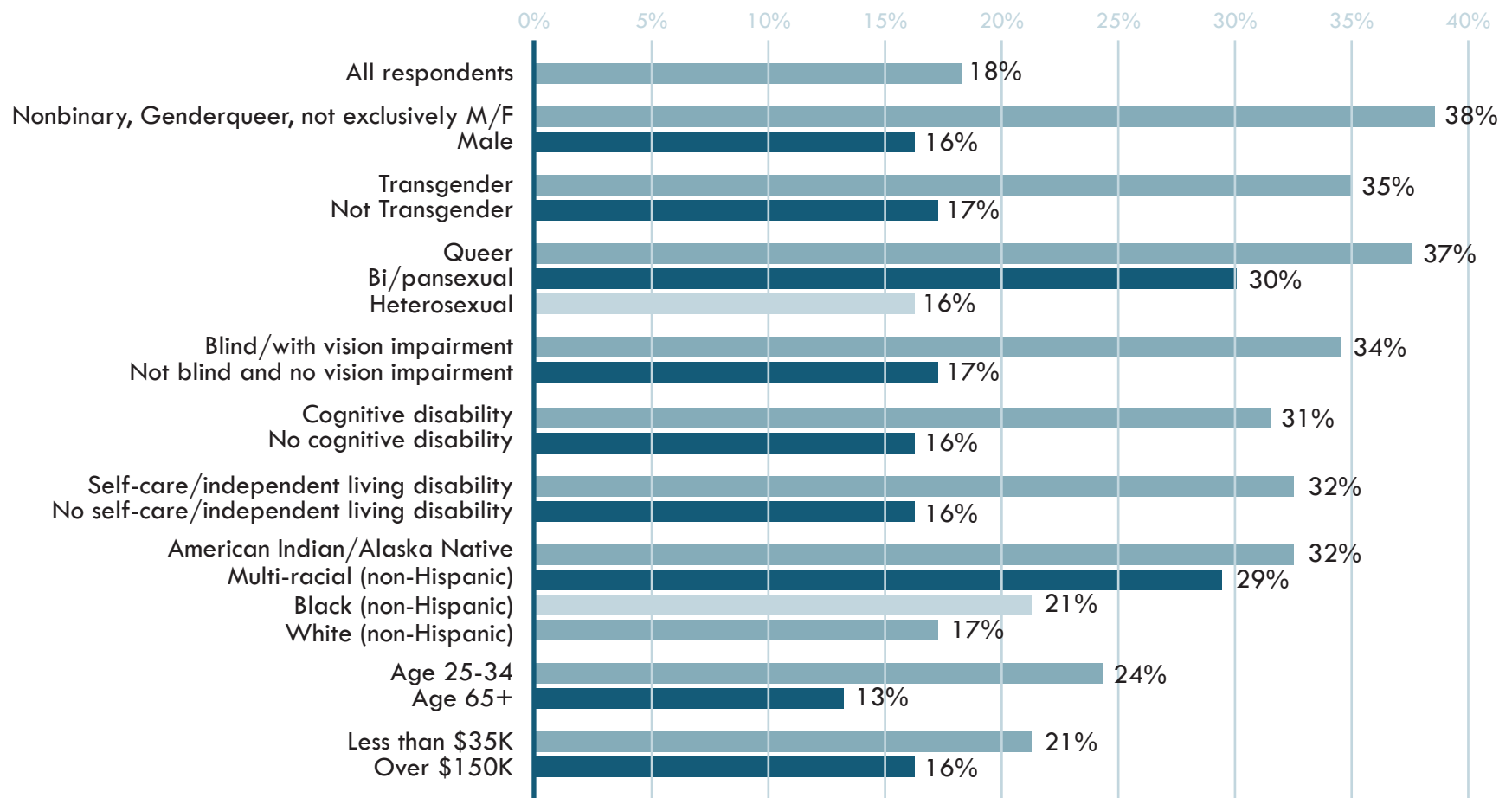
³ IOM (Institute of Medicine) 2012. Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation. Washington DC: The National Academies Press.



Massachusetts subpopulations experiencing the highest rates of delayed medical care

Since July 1, 2020

(Among respondents who said they have needed care since July 1, 2020. Overall, about 80% of respondents have needed care.)





remain relatively high. Both short- and long-term effects of being overweight or obese are associated with increases in an individual's risk for other chronic disease.³

The recent CHNAs from BIDH Needham, BILH New England Baptist, and Norwood Hospital provide an in depth look at the health of Dedham residents as well as the environments, behaviors and systems that promote or harm health. Based on inpatient discharge data from BIDH Needham, Dedham residents experience higher rates of asthma, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and diabetes when compared to the other three municipalities (Dover, Needham and Westwood) within BIDH Needham's primary service area.

Top Shared Health Concerns

The most recent CHNAs from BIDH Needham, BILH New England Baptist, and Norwood Hospital included community health priorities, priority population, and proposed improvement strategies that have applicability in the master planning process. The table on the following page includes the primary service areas for each hospital (i.e., municipalities they serve), prioritized community health issues along with an example goal, and the priority population identified as part of the CHNA. As highlighted previously, across all three of the hospital's most recent CHNAs, the top five community health priorities are:

- 1) Social determinants of health (SDoH),
- 2) Mental health,

- 3) Substance use,
- 4) Chronic and complex conditions, and,
- 5) Access to care.

Health over the Lifespan: Age Specific Health

A critical aspect of community health is examining the health of the population throughout the life course. Data specific to youth and older adults are included here. The purpose is to provide a spotlight on populations that are more susceptible to changes that can either promote or provide lifelong health and wellness.

Youth

Childhood and youth are critical periods for physical, social, and emotional development and a time when external factors such as exposure to significant adverse events (e.g., housing instability, trauma) or exposure to pollutants can adversely affect development. Similarly, engagement in prosocial and healthy behaviors can serve as protective factors that improve health outcomes and prevent illness.

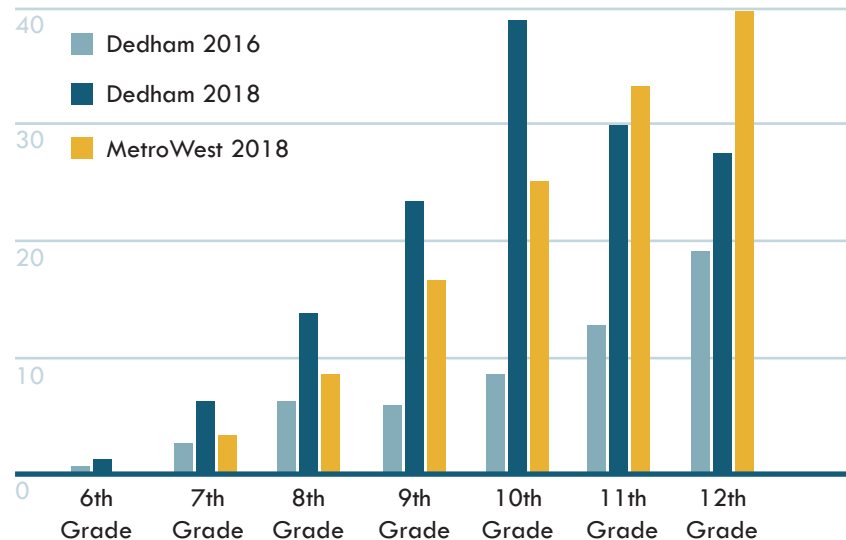
The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey is a regional initiative of the MetroWest Health Foundation. Data from the survey, which is administered on a biannual basis, is meant to help monitor trends, identify emergent adolescent health issues and to mobilize and empower schools and communities to make data-informed decisions. Recent survey data for Dedham suggests that mental



health, vaping, substance use, and obesity are all areas of concern for youth.

Survey data from 2016 and 2018 indicates that middle and high school students are using substances such as marijuana, alcohol, and vaping products. Utilization of alcohol and marijuana either remained the same or saw a slight decrease across all grades between 2016 and 2018. However, vaping or electronic cigarette use saw significant increase in reported utilization across middle and high school students within Dedham as well as across the MetroWest Region.¹

Youth Electronic Cigarette Use



¹ MetroWest Health Foundation Adolescent Health Survey, 2016, 2018

Mental health data indicate that reported stress among students gradually increases throughout high school, nearly doubling from 9th to 12th grade. Common sources of stress include issues related to school, social pressures, and physical and emotional health. Within the student population, females are nearly 2 times more likely as males to report increased levels of stress.²

In 2018, the percentage of Dedham middle school students reporting that life is “very” stressful within the past 30 days (21%) and students experiencing depressive symptoms within the past 12 months (17%) are both higher than the regional percentage (19.8% and 14.3% respectively).

Recent data from the Massachusetts Youth COVID-19 Community Impact Survey (2020), indicate that almost half of all youth in MA (48%) reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row and that they stopped doing some usual activities. This is 21% higher than the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MA YRBS 27% in 2017).³ Additionally, LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual or Ally) and youth with disabilities are suffering from the highest rates of mental health concerns and delayed access to medical care during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Trends in mental health and substance use data indicate that there is a need to increase protective factors for youth such as increasing access to trusted adults, school engagement, and parent involvement.

² MetroWest Health Foundation Adolescent Health Survey, 2016, 2018

³ COVID-19 Community Impact Survey, Youth Survey



Older Adults

Massachusetts is set to experience growth in the number of residents who are 65 years and older. The growth in the number of older residents will challenge how residential and commercial infrastructure is built, what health, social, and economic services are offered; and how and where older residents interact with other cohorts of the community. Currently, about a quarter of Dedham residents are 60 years and older; this population is projected to increase to the year 2030.

The Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative has developed municipal profiles for cities and towns that show the health of older residents. Their data suggests that while older residents in Dedham engage in healthy behaviors like meeting guidelines for physical activity, nutrition, and sleep, they are still suffering from poor health outcomes at higher rates than other older adults across the state (learn more here: <https://mahealthyagingcollaborative.org>).

Key stakeholders such as Livable Dedham, which is an community group supporting an age-friendly Dedham, has collected data showing affordable age-friendly housing is a top concern among Dedham's older adults. As discussed in the Housing Chapter, Dedham's housing stock is currently suffering from a lack of housing unit diversity. The lacking housing types are called the "missing middle" including housing options with 2, 3-4, 5-9, and 10-19 units. This missing middle creates barriers for Dedham's older adults to downsize which can force them to move out of the

Dedham community to search for more appropriate housing. It can have an additional effect of reducing turnover in the single-family housing market, affecting availability and affordability for younger families.

Data from the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative indicates that older adults in Dedham experience depression at higher percentages than the state average (34.8% and 31.5%, respectively). Issues of depression and social isolation have only been heightened as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Respondents shared they have seen increased reports and incidences of older adults experiencing social isolation due to the need for social distancing, quarantining, and isolation.

Active transportation and walkability are another important area of concern older adults face in Dedham. As noted in the Transportation Chapter, 42% of streets in Dedham do not have a sidewalk on at least one side and currently there is limited dedicated bike infrastructure. The lack of interconnected networks of sidewalks and bike infrastructure creates barriers for older adults to reaching important local destinations such as businesses, restaurants, medical appointments, grocery shopping, etc.

In October 2021, Dedham Council on Aging celebrated the grand opening of the new Ames Senior Center. An accomplishment that will be a major asset for the community, particularly with an aging population. The Senior Center serves as a gateway connecting older adults to vital community services that can help



them stay healthy, independent, and connected. The Ames Senior Center presents several opportunities such as intergenerational programming, health clinics (i.e., blood pressure) or transportation services to better address top concerns older adults are facing.

Elements of a Livable Community

The following narrative describes some of the most critical elements of a livable community including important characteristics of housing, transportation, access to healthy food, access to open space, exposure to contaminants, and connections in the community. On the following page is a summary of factors that influence public health and livability. For each factor there is a brief description. It also includes an indication of the direction of impact, whether it is increasing a positive, or decreasing exposure to a negative impact. It also shows the general likelihood of the impact, and the general magnitude of the impact on improved public health and livability.

Stable, Healthy and Quality Housing

Housing has major effects on health through multiple pathways: stability and affordability, quality and design, and location.

Stable housing is an essential component of good health because when individuals live in a safe, affordable home and community, they can prioritize their health, better manage disease, and invest in their well-being. High housing costs can force individuals to choose between housing payments and other essentials such as

food, medical care, and utilities. It can also contribute to increased stress, which decreases resistance to disease.¹ Children in unstable housing are at increased risk of malnutrition and developmental delays that can lead to lifelong health consequences.²

Results from the Designing Dedham 2035 Initial Community Survey show that the majority of Dedham residents (75%) feels that having affordable and attractive housing options for a variety of income levels and life stages was either important or very important for the future of Dedham.

As described in the Housing Chapter, it is estimated that 56% of renters and 27% of homeowners in Dedham are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Cost burden is especially harmful for low-income households. In Dedham, there are about 2,268 households earning 80% of the Area Median Income or below (low to extremely low-income households) and are cost burdened or severely cost burdened (spending more than 50% of their income on housing).³ Cost burden is also related to the broader economic context of income trends, inflation, the cost of living, mortgage rates, and other considerations.

There are several measures of housing quality. Housing that is not adequately maintained, ventilated, or free from pests and contaminants, such as mold, lead, and radon, is an important contributor to rates of injury, asthma, cancer, neurotoxicity, cardiovascular disease, depression, and poor mental health. A common hazard in many Massachusetts homes, as a result of older housing stock, is lead paint. Disturbed or aging paint can

¹ RWJF How Does Housing Affect Health?


² Cutts, Diana Becker, et al. "US housing insecurity and the health of very young children."

American Journal of Public Health 101.8 (2011): 1508-1514.

³ American Community Survey, 2011-2015



A Framework for Healthy and Livable Community Design




DIRECTION OF IMPACT: ↑ ↓
LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT: [Bar chart with 3 bars of increasing height]
MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT: [Sun icon]

Walkability / Active Transport
Create a more walkable environment, increase access to destinations, and improve State of Place score




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Safety from Crime
Bring well-lit mixed-used developments and new commuters, residents, and employees to the area



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Affordable Housing
Add new income-restricted affordable units



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Green Space
Add new vegetation and site-specific tree plantings in public spaces and thoroughfares



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Safety from Traffic
Increase traffic by bringing more people into the area




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Food Access
Increase the area's access to healthy affordable foods and local, fresh produce markets




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Gentrification /Displacement
Use anti-displacement strategies and provide supports that increase housing stability




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Social Cohesion
Add space for social interactions



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Residential Energy Efficiency
Add energy efficient homes and assist with retrofits to improve weatherization, ventilation, and energy efficiency



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Air Quality
Mitigate air pollution with the additional vehicular traffic




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MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT: [Sun icon]

Economic Opportunity
Expand economic opportunity by creating new jobs in a transit-accessible location



DIRECTION OF IMPACT: ↑ ↓
LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT: [Bar chart with 3 bars of increasing height]
MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT: [Sun icon]

Environmental Contamination
Remediate and mitigate environmental exposures to prevent future environmental exposures to residents, workers, and visitors




DIRECTION OF IMPACT: ↑ ↓
LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT: [Bar chart with 3 bars of increasing height]
MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT: [Sun icon]

Climate Change
Use environmental design and community development programs to reduce exposure and increase adaptive capacity



DIRECTION OF IMPACT: ↑ ↓
LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT: [Bar chart with 3 bars of increasing height]
MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT: [Sun icon]

Moving to Opportunity
Provide housing search and relocation assistance to families with limited incomes and assets



DIRECTION OF IMPACT: ↑ ↓
LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT: [Bar chart with 3 bars of increasing height]
MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT: [Sun icon]

Ownership of Change
Build resident power in relation to neighborhood development

Source: MAPC HIA Healthy Neighborhood Equity Fund, 2020



release lead dust, which is then inhaled or consumed. Lead can cause damage to the brain, kidneys, and nervous system, slow growth and development, and create behavioral problems and learning disabilities in children. The use of lead in household paint was banned in 1978, but lead paint applied before the ban is still present in many older homes across the Commonwealth. In Dedham, 74% of houses were built before 1978 (higher than the state average of 69%), and 76% of children have been screened for elevated blood lead levels.¹ The location of housing is critical, as well. In general, households in neighborhoods that have higher population densities, access to destinations, more grid-like street patterns, and access to high-quality bicycle options, will support a more active and healthier lifestyle. This is discussed in more detail in the next section on active transportation.

Safe, accessible, and active transportation

Transportation is a critical factor that influences people's health and the health of a community. Air pollution associated with traffic congestion and physical inactivity due to sitting for hours in traffic have significant long-term impacts on a person's health such as asthma, obesity, heart disease, respiratory disease, neurological as well as increased mortality rates. Near-term health risks such as traffic crashes also present health risks. Investments in sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, public transit, and other infrastructure that supports physical activity can result in improvements to individuals' health and decreased health care costs.

¹ Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health, Massachusetts Environmental Health Tracking (EPHT), 2017. EPHT Community Profile for Dedham

² National Center for Health Statistics, FastStats: Exercise or Physical Activity, 2014

³ Lee, I-Min, Eric Shiroma, Felipe Lobelo, Pekka Puksa, Steven Blair, Peter Katzmarzyk. 2012. "Effect of Physical inactivity on Major Non-communicable Diseases Worldwide: An Analysis of Burden of Disease and Life Expectancy."

The health benefits of physical activity have been well documented, yet less than half (49%) of all adults in Dedham meet the Surgeon General's recommended 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week.² Research has linked physical inactivity to poor health outcomes such as coronary heart disease, Type II diabetes, certain cancers, and even premature mortality.³

Evidence suggests that good infrastructure (sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.) and public transportation access leads to increased walking and biking for transportation purposes, and therefore plays an important role in increasing population-level physical activity.⁴ A robust body of literature links physical activity to a wide range of health benefits.^{5 6}

Walk Score measures the walkability of any address using a patented system analyzing walking routes to nearby amenities. The analysis of pedestrian friendliness is based on distance to amenities, population density, and road metrics such as block length and intersection density. For overall Town and neighborhood rankings, the Walk Score of approximately every city block is calculated and weighted to determine a composite score. Overall, the Town of Dedham has an average walk score of 43 which classifies the Town as a car-dependent community. The most walkable Dedham neighborhoods are noted as Dedham Square, East Dedham, and Oakdale.

⁴ Sallis, J. F., Floyd, M. F., Rodríguez, D. A., & Saelens, B. E. (2012). Role of built environments in physical activity, obesity, and cardiovascular disease. *Circulation*, 125(5), 729-737

⁵ Li, J., & Siegrist, J. (2012). Physical activity and risk of cardiovascular disease—a meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 9(2), 391-407; National Cancer Institute (NCI). Physical Activity and Cancer Fact Sheet.

⁶ Biddle, S. J., & Asare, M. (2011). Physical activity and mental health in children and adolescents: a review of reviews. *British journal of sports medicine*, bjsports90185



Compared to the national walking average of six minutes per day, public transit users spend a median of 19 minutes walking per day. Estimates show that an individual walks an additional 8.3 minutes per day when they switch from driving to transit.¹ A sizable portion (79%) of Dedham commuters drive to work and a smaller proportion of commuters either take public transit or bike to work (11% and 4%, respectively).² Shifting additional car commuters to public transit or active transit such as walking or biking could help improve resident health outcomes and would have the added benefit of removing vehicles from the roads to reduce vehicular congestion.

As described in the Transportation Chapter, 42% of the streets in Dedham do not have a sidewalk on at least one side. This creates barriers for safe and accessible walking options for residents, particularly for vulnerable populations like older adults and those with mobility issues. In addition, there also is little dedicated bicycle infrastructure within Dedham. A review of recent crash cluster data (2017-2019) indicates that 50% of pedestrian crashes occurred in locations without a sidewalk and all cyclist crashes occurred in areas without bike lanes. Upon further assessment of crash cluster data, the majority of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes happened near or in a minority Environmental Justice census block which has implication around health equity.

¹ Hill, J. O., Wyatt, H. R., Reed, G. W., & Peters, J. C. (2003). Obesity and the environment: where do we go from here?, *Science*, 299(5608), 853-855.

² American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5 Year Estimates

³ Morland, Kimberly, Steve Wing, Ana Diez Roux, and Charles Poole. 2002. "Neighborhood Characteristics Associated with the Location of Food Stores and Food Service Places." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 22 (1) (January): 23–29

⁴ Rose, Donald, and Rickelle Richards. 2004. "Food Store Access and Household Fruit and Vegetable Use Among Participants in the US Food Stamp Program." *Public Health Nutrition* 7 (8) (December): 1081–1088. doi:10.1079/ PHN2004648.

Access to affordable healthy food

Research suggests that access to healthy and nutritious foods in neighborhoods may play a critical role in residents' diets.^{3 4} Dietary choices are associated with risks for chronic diseases, such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, overweight, and obesity.⁵ The USDA defines food security as the condition of having access to enough food for an active, healthy life, while food insecurity describes the condition of having limited financial resources to buy food.

Poverty is the largest contributing factor to food insecurity in the United States. Although Dedham has a relatively low poverty rate (4.5%) compared to Massachusetts (9.4%), low-income residents are vulnerable to food insecurity because they often lack resources to meet other basic demands and are dealing with multiple overlapping issues such as affordable housing, social isolation, and chronic or acute health problems.

Food insecurity trends in Dedham	
Total Town Population	25,377
Percentage of population in food-insecure households (2018)	6.5%
Number of persons in food-insecure households (2018)	1,650
Percentage of population in food-insecure households (2020 projected)	10.9%
Number of persons in food insecure households (2020 projected)	2,780

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Guide to Community Preventive Services - Promoting Good Nutrition



In 2018, it is estimated that around 6.5% of Dedham households were considered to be food insecure and in 2020 this percentage was expected to increase to 10.9% in part due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the table on the previous page the number of persons represented by these percentages are shown. Using a five-mile drive radius, most of Dedham's residents have access to a grocery store as well as other food access points like specialty shops and convenience stores.

The Dedham Food Pantry is a volunteer organization working to address food insecurity in the Town by providing food at no cost to qualifying Dedham residents. It distributes more than 28,000 bags of food annually to more than 400 households in Dedham.

Access to open and green space

Parks and recreational spaces present opportunities for physical activity and community connections. In studies, good access to large, attractive recreation spaces has been associated with greater levels of exercise.¹ Access to parks, open space, and greenery are associated with protection against poor mental health outcomes and greater socializing and social support.²

A measure used to assess the need for more access to open space is population density. Population density can influence the demand for outdoor recreation facilities. Homes in high density residential areas often lack adequate or sufficient yards to be of recreational value and homes in lower density residential areas often are not in similar need of access to parks due to

¹ Lee, A. C. K., & Maheswaran, R. (2011). The health benefits of urban green spaces: a review of the evidence. *Journal of Public Health*, 33(2), 212–222.

² Cities, Green Space, and Mental Well-Being

³ Dedham Open Space and Recreation Plan, December 2019

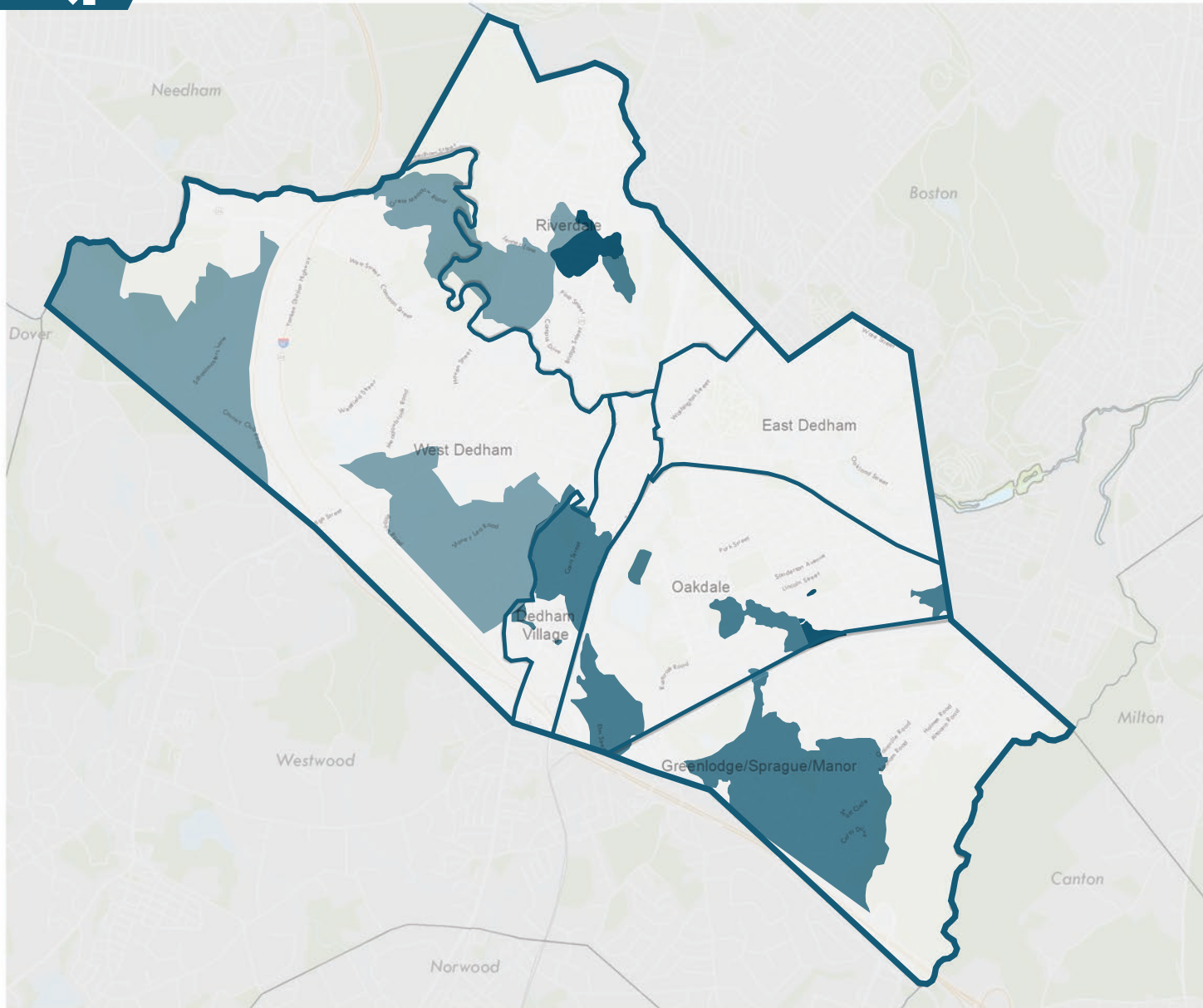
larger private yards. Based on 2015 population estimates and Dedham's land use data, the Town has an average population density of 3.7 persons/acre, compared to 1.3 person/acre in MA, and 22.7 persons/acre in Boston.³

Another measure of access to open space is a municipality's ParkScore, which measures the percentage of residents that are within a 10-minute walk of a park. Dedham's ParkScore is 76% which means most of Dedham residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park. Although the majority of Dedham residents have access to open space and recreation options, there are neighborhoods that have been identified as priority areas for new parks and open space.⁴ Parts of the Riverdale neighborhood, which is among the most diverse and lowest median income compared to most other Dedham neighborhoods, have been identified as very high or high priority for new parks.⁵ Other neighborhoods that also have been identified as priority areas includes parts of Greenlodge/Sprague/Manor, Dedham Village, and Oakdale/Endicott. This Park Need Map based on the Trust for Public Land's ParkScore analysis is provided on the following page.

In addition to the physical, cognitive, and social health co-benefits vegetation, and open green space offer ecological benefits to the community. Vegetation and green spaces can alleviate heat impacts, offer stormwater retention, and improve air quality locally as well as provide carbon sequestration opportunities and regulate temperature regionally.

⁴ The Trust for Public Land calculates park priority area for populated areas that fall outside of a 10 minute walk of a park based on 6 equally weighted demographic and environmental metrics (population density, density of low income households, density of people of color, community health, urban heat islands, and pollution burden.

⁵ The Trust for Public Land



Public Health The Trust for Public Land Park Need Map

- High need
- Moderate to high
- Moderate
- Neighborhoods
- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- Open Space
- Dedham

Data from The Trust for Public Land's ParkServe mapping application



Exposure to Air Pollution and Environmental Justice Concerns

Environmental justice is based on the principle that all individuals have a right to be protected from environmental pollution and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthy environment. It also recognizes that specific racial and economic groups have disproportionately lived in areas where there are greater exposures to environmental hazards.

Exposure to very high noise and traffic-related air pollution has been linked to increased risk for heart disease, respiratory disease, and neurological health conditions. Noise annoyance, a condition mentioned by focus group participants, increases the risk for chronic stress. Night-time noise exposure can disturb sleep and can lead to the body's inability to regulate blood pressure. Concentrations of traffic-related air pollution can be particularly high in areas with heavy congestion or high volumes of vehicular traffic. Chronic pollutant exposure concerns pose most risk to those living or actively recreating within 200 meters of roadway corridors that have traffic volumes exceeding 25,000 vehicles per day. About 12% of Dedham residents currently live within 200 meters of a high traffic road with more 25,000 vehicles, which is higher than the state average of about 8% of the population.¹

Community Connections

Social cohesion, which describes the extent of connectedness and

¹ US Department of Transportation, 2015 National Transportation Atlas Database.

² Kawachi, I., and B. P. Kennedy. 1997. "Socioeconomic Determinants of Health: Health and Social Cohesion: Why Care About Income Inequality?" *BMJ* 314 (7086): 1037; Marmot, Michael, and Richard Wilkinson. 2009. *Social Determinants of Health*. Oxford University Press.

³ Cohen, S., and T. A. Wills. 1985. "Stress, Social Support, and the Buffering Hypothesis." *Psychological Bulletin* 98 (2): 310–357.

solidarity of a community, and social support are associated with positive health outcomes. Communities with greater levels of social cohesion, often characterized by high levels of trust and respect, participation in community activities and public affairs, and increased participation in community groups, have better health outcomes than those with low levels.²

People within rich social environments, who have more friends and social interactions, hold a greater level of trust in their neighbors, and are part of a more tightly knit community, have access to a greater network of social resources, which in turn helps them stay healthier.³ Access to social support is associated with protective health effects, including improved mental health outcomes, reduced stress, better cardiovascular health, better immune system functioning and more.⁴ Given the positive association that social cohesion and community connectedness has on positive health outcomes, cities and towns should facilitate improvements that seek to enhance the social impact of the public spaces and social cultural programming of these spaces and promote initiatives and programs that value inclusiveness, diversity, and health promotions across all ages and backgrounds.⁵

Dedham Day



Source: patch.com

⁴ Berkman, L. F., and I. Kawachi. 2000. *Social Epidemiology*. Oxford University Press, USA; Uchino, B N, J T Cacioppo, and J K Kiecolt-Glaser. 1996. "The Relationship Between Social Support and Physiological Processes: a Review with Emphasis on Underlying Mechanisms and Implications for Health." *Psychological Bulletin* 119 (3) (May): 488–531.

⁵ Transit-Orient and Development and Health, September 2020.



Public Health and Livability Goals and Strategies

NOTE: Master Plan strategies are recommendations that will depend on follow-up activity from Boards and Committees to carry forward. No Board or Committee is obligated to carry this work forward. For example, it is up to the Planning Board to decide how best to implement the many goals, strategies, and actions of the Master Plan that relate to planning..

Summary: Ensure equitable access to health resources and information so all residents can achieve their greatest health potential.

PH1 **Goal 1: Invest in Dedham’s Health Department’s core public health services, cross-sector partnerships, and projects to reduce health risks, particularly for vulnerable residents.**

Massachusetts’ fragmented local public health system has presented significant barriers to local health departments’ ability to efficiently and effectively meet their current state statutes as well as expand their capabilities and capacity. Barriers from a fragmented public health system are not unique to Dedham’s Health Department and COVID-19 has highlighted shortcomings. Dedham should continue to progress toward a high performing “Public Health 3.0” department that leads and advances preventative health initiatives, responds to health threats including threats from climate change, and works toward health equity.

Strategy 1.1: Continue to fund core services in the Dedham Health Department (i.e., housing inspections, restaurant inspections, Public Health Nursing, etc.) according to the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) core capabilities and credentialing frameworks.

Strategy 1.2: Continue regional collaboration with Norfolk County 8 (NC-8), a regional public health collaborative with Norwood, Westwood, Milton, Canton, Walpole, Wellesley, and Needham, to foster delivery of public health services through shared municipal initiatives and cross-sector partnerships (hospitals, faith-based community, high education, etc.).

Strategy 1.3: Explore a 5-year strategic plan for Dedham Health Director position as Chief Health Strategist which will enable the department to transition into a Public Health 3.0 service model and implement more holistic and health promoting interventions.

Strategy 1.4: Continue with improved communications by developing and implementing a communications strategy for Dedham Health Department to inform residents, businesses and municipal staff about existing health services, including multi-lingual outreach.



PH2 Goal 2: Reduce environmental exposures and health harmful impacts that adversely affect the health of Dedham residents.

The patterns of the built environment including uses, buildings, roads, infrastructure and natural features contribute to individual health outcomes. These patterns should be reconsidered to promote health, foster formal and informal connections among neighbors, and provide connected and convenient access to a high density of activities and services. This will contribute to more livable neighborhoods and a healthier community.

Strategy 2.1: Implement actions within the Public Health and Safety section in Sustainable Dedham Climate Action and Resiliency Plan and prioritize action items.

Strategy 2.2: Provide age-friendly home remodeling guidance (e.g., AARP Home Fit Guide, Universal Design Guidelines) through the Building Department and pair with waived permitting fees, streamlined permitting process, and/or low interest municipal loans to provide assistance so changes are more affordable for elderly residents.

Strategy 2.3: Continue in efforts to mitigate underage drinking and smoking by conducting regular compliance checks to identify, warn, and educate alcohol, marijuana, cigarette, and vaping outlets (in-store and delivery) about underage sales and promotion.

Strategy 2.4: Define and pursue mitigation measures to reduce health impacts for locations near high volume traffic roadways, particularly the locations that overlap with Dedham's Environmental Justice Block groups to identify potential air quality mitigation measures.

Youth with helmets in Riverdale



Source: cocotbodol-blog.com



PH3

Goal 3: Support the mental and emotional wellness of Dedham residents, specifically youth and children, to mitigate conditions that contribute to harmful behaviors.

Support for mental and emotional wellness can help improve health outcomes and community cohesion. The variety of services available should be regularly reviewed and coordinated with service providers and awareness of the services should be expanded among populations that may be facing mental and emotional wellness challenges.

Strategy 3.1: Strengthen communication and coordination between organizations who work with youth and families (e.g., Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness (DOSA), Dedham Youth Commission (DYC), Riverside Community Care, Dedham Police Department, INTERFACE, Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Parks and Recreation Commission, Dedham Public Library) and municipal offices to raise awareness and knowledge of available resources to Dedham residents, families, and youth.

Strategy 3.2: Support DOSA and Dedham Youth Commission on the following efforts:

- Establishing a Youth Coalition to ensure issues that are affecting youth the most are identified by youth.
- Conducting annual school wide social norms campaign targeted towards youth to correct misperceptions about how

prevalent youth alcohol and substance use is.

- Mobilizing youth to create and deploy Town-wide campaign to combat stigma around mental health.

Strategy 3.3: Inventory and share local, regional, and state mental health resources available to Dedham residents to destigmatize and promote mental health as a public good. Resources can help provide interim support for residents awaiting mental health treatment.

Strategy 3.4: Improve access to youth activities and services, particularly afterschool, by coordinating with existing programs such as DYC and YMCA, expanding use of Town facilities for youth activities, and advancing development of a community center.

Early Childhood Education Center playground



Source: nofault.com



PH4 Goal 4: Support daily physical activity and eliminate risk of traffic related injuries and fatalities.

Walking and biking are both convenient and desirable forms of transportation, and provide opportunities for residents to engage in physical activity with overall public health benefits. Dedham should prioritize active living, open space, and connectivity investments to reduce the risk of acute, chronic disease, injury and premature death and ensure that all residents have access to safe outdoor recreational areas.

Strategy 4.1: Adopt a Vision Zero approach to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries among all road users. Vision Zero is a strategy to ensure safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. It was first implemented in Sweden in the 1990s, where traffic deaths have been cut in half even while the number of trips increased. It has been gaining momentum as an approach to traffic safety in many U.S. communities. The Town recently received \$200,000 in grant funding from the United States Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All program. The project led by a Select Board appointed working group, will develop a Local Road Safety Plan to increase safety of Dedham's roadways and sidewalks.

Strategy 4.2: Use MAPC's Local Access Score to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian capital investments that connect residents to health destinations such as grocery stores, commercial districts, recreation s destinations, transit, and schools.

Strategy 4.3: Ensure the Dedham Council on Aging is recording unmet transportation and trip requests. Use this data to help develop revised transportation services.

Strategy 4.4: Develop multi-lingual guides to parks and public lands that show trails, special features, and access points for pedestrians and vehicles.

Traffic calming features



Source: dedhamkidsbiking-streetsblog.org



PH5

Goal 5: Foster community connectedness and intergenerational ties.

Community gathering spaces and outdoor activity areas fosters community. Access to green and open space is linked to numerous health benefits including increased social interactions, perceptions of safety, improved mental health outcomes, and increased physical activity. Providing programming that caters to the needs of Dedham residents, especially older adults, can help prevent issues such as social isolation. Dedham should designate existing indoor and outdoor spaces for physical improvements, using universal design, and provide intergenerational programming for connectedness and physical activity.

Strategy 5.1: Identify or develop publicly accessible spaces as physical community hubs in each Dedham neighborhood.

Strategy 5.2: Designate spaces in existing community buildings (e.g., Town Hall, Library, etc.) for physical improvements, using universal design principles, to host inter-generational community programming.

Strategy 5.3: Implement Dedham's 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan and prioritize objectives.

Senior Center opening



Source: cocotbodol-blog.com



PH6

Goal 6: Continue policies and programs that foster inclusive civic and social engagement and expand the outreach and communication for health services available to residents.

Efforts to improve community-wide public health should focus on portions of the community that are not equitably served by current practices and that experience persistent health disparities. Inequitable health outcomes often follow socioeconomic and demographic differences in a community including race, age, or economic characteristics. Improving equity in health services can only be achieved when the voices and lived experiences of those not equitably served are heard and integrated during planning and Town decision making. In order to ensure that all Dedham residents feel heard and included, Town decision making should involve residents from a variety of racial, ethnic, age and economic groups. Dedham should also continuously think about how to engage difficult to reach populations to ensure varied perspectives to inform Town decisions.

Strategy 6.1: Explore use of Race Forward's Choice Points framework to approach decision making processes (e.g., Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals) for one year. Track and evaluate outcomes to assess use of framework in other municipal development decision-making. Choice Points are simply decision-making opportunities, pause at these decisions to identify bias and barriers, consider unintended consequences, and generate options with a particular focus on more equitable results.

Strategy 6.2: Expand trainings about requirements and best practices such as Open Meeting Law compliance, email and communication norms, and decision-making processes. This may include regularly connecting board and committee members with existing resources such as the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative, providing information in multiple languages, and providing translation on the Town website.

Outdoor learning space



Source: warnerlarsen.com



Public Health and Livability Implementation

Critical next steps

In the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan, a more detailed level of actions is added under each goal and strategy. The actions are associated with responsible parties, a suggested timeframe, and potential external funding or resources that may be helpful, if available. The following critical next steps highlight several of these actions that would provide tangible steps toward progress on the top priorities that have been identified for public health and livability.

PH1 Assign a staff member to identify local, state, and regional funding opportunities to help facilitate capacity building and professional development for the Dedham Health Department.

This action complements the first Public Health and Livability goal to invest in Dedham’s Health Department and would help advance the health department toward a high performing “Public Health 3.0” department. With dedicated resources, it can augment and expand existing work that the health department is already leading and would help fill gaps in services and programming that have been identified as a priority among Dedham residents. These services include more robust and regular youth prevention programming, mental health and substance resources, climate change, and health and racial equity. Examples of funding that

can help support the health department include Public Health Excellence Grants which encourage municipal health departments to engage in regional and shared partnerships. In addition to grant funding, Dedham should explore where funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) can be used to invest in priorities that have been identified by Dedham residents. The lead responsibility would be the Public Health Department. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources and additional considerations can be viewed in MAPC’s ARPA Priorities Memo at <https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/ARPA-Priorities-Memo.pdf>.

PH2 The Dedham Health Department should continue to encourage collaboration with all relevant parties (Dedham schools, Dedham Youth Commission, Riverside Community Care, Police Department, etc.) and develop regular annual workplans to advance mental health related work.

This action will ensure that all relevant stakeholders and partners that either work in Dedham or serve Dedham residents are engaging in work that is in a coordinated, collaborative, and complementary manner. The workplan should be informed by



needs identified by Dedham residents and families and include components such as goals, actions, person/group to lead on actions, timeframe, resources, and measures of success. The lead responsibility would be the Dedham Public Health Department in close coordination with the Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Youth Commission, Dedham Police Department, Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness (DOSA), and other partners. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process.

PH3 Build organizational capacity for racial equity work within Dedham Town Government to advance public health.

This action takes two important forms: training and infrastructure. Dedham should continue to seek and provide professional development opportunities for its staff to increase understanding of institutional and structural racism and the importance of using racial equity tools to guide Town services. This understanding helps to see ways that policies and practices may impact different groups in Dedham, and in some cases may be creating unintended consequences or unintended harm. Trainings should not only focus on building knowledge among municipal staff but also work on building skills and confidence to implement strategies to advance racial equity in the staffs' daily work. Trainings will help ensure that all municipal staff are operating at the same baseline

of knowledge and skills to advance racial equity which is an important first step to building sustainable infrastructure.

The lead responsibility for this action would be the Town Manager's office in close coordination with all Town Departments and staff. The timeframe for this action would be near-term, to occur within 1 to 3 years of the conclusion of the Master Plan process. Potential resources include reviewing existing models that have been implemented in other municipalities and identifying models that would best complement Dedham's current municipal infrastructure. For additional information and consideration, please view, the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) has prepared a resource titled "Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government" that is available at https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GARE-Resource_Guide.pdf.

PH1

Goal 1: Invest in Dedham’s Health Department’s core public health services, cross-sector partnerships, and projects to reduce health risks, particularly for vulnerable residents.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>Priority</p> <p>PH1.1: Continue to fund core services in the Dedham Health Department (i.e., housing inspections, restaurant inspections, Public Health Nursing, etc.) according to the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) core capabilities and credentialing frameworks.</p>	1. Assign a staff member to identify local, state, and regional funding opportunities to help facilitate capacity building and professional development for the Dedham Health Department.	Health Department	Board of Health	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Public Health Excellence Grants, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Massachusetts Department of Health Shared Services Grants, and Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) are potential funding that can benefit public health services
	2. Increase Public Health Department capacity by shifting some of the services provided to contracted/per diem workers or utilize public health associates from Norfolk County 8 Shared Services Grants. For example, inspection of septic systems.				
PH1.2: Continue regional collaboration with Norfolk County 8 (NC-8) to foster delivery of public health services through shared municipal initiatives and cross-sector partnerships (hospitals, faith-based community, high education, etc.).	1. Identify public health protection and prevention activities that can be filled via regional collaboration with Norfolk County 8.	Health Department	Board of Health	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Norfolk County 8 partners
PH1.3: Explore a 5-year strategic plan for Dedham Health Director position as Chief Health Strategist to transition into a Public Health 3.0 service model.	1. Prepare a comparison of the position descriptions of the current Dedham Health Director to a typical Chief Health Strategist, highlight the differences, and provide support and training to advance toward the new model.	Board of Health	Health Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Align with the State’s Blueprint for Public Health Excellence
	2. Rename to Public Health Department.	Select Board	Town Manager		



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH1.4: Continue with improved communications by developing and implementing a communications strategy for Dedham Health Department to inform residents, businesses and municipal staff about existing health services, including multilingual outreach.	1. Share the inventory of public health resources and services available to Dedham residents, similar to that presented in this Chapter, including access to mental health support. Distribute this information in multiple languages.	Health Department	Town Manager	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Potential support from the Town's Director of Communications
	2. Develop a health indicators database for Dedham neighborhoods including life expectancy, chronic disease rates, food insecurity, and other data to help track the health of Dedham's residents and support pursuit of external funding based on data collected.	Health Department	Board of Health, DOSA, Youth Commission, Dedham Police Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	

PH2 Goal 2: Reduce environmental exposures and health harmful impacts that adversely affect the health of Dedham residents

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH2.1: Implement actions within the Public Health and Safety section in Sustainable Dedham Climate Action and Resiliency Plan and prioritize action items.	1. Identify partners and improve volunteer support for public health education (e.g. tick education, sunscreen) and emergency response for all residents.	Health Department		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Dedham Climate Action and Resiliency Plan
	2. Provide training for town staff (e.g. Health Department) and board members on climate-related public health threats, impacts, and response, especially related to vulnerable populations.	Town Manager	Sustainability Advisory Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	3. Ensure that all communications and outreach utilize multimedia and are inclusive for non-native English speakers.	Town Manager		Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
	4. Promote planting of public shade trees in public rights-of-way and on private property. Communicate benefits of shade trees, such as reducing the heat island effect.	Public Works (DPW Department)	Sustainability Advisory Committee, Health Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH2.2: Provide age-friendly home re-modeling guidance (e.g., AARP Home Fit Guide, Universal Design Guidelines) through the Building Department and pair with waived permitting fees, streamlined permitting process, or low interest municipal loans to provide assistance to make the changes more affordable to elderly residents.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop detailed communication guide so residents know what to expect during permitting process and what information and documentation to have prepared for building department. 2. As more of these types of projects and approvals occur, track any approval or permitting barriers that should be addressed to streamline the process for elderly residents with age-in-place remodeling needs. 	Building and Code Enforcement Department	Planning & Zoning Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	AARP Home Fit Guide, available at https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2020/homefit-guide.html
PH2.3: Continue in efforts to mitigate underage drinking and smoking by conduct regular compliance checks to identify, warn, and educate alcohol, marijuana, cigarette, and vaping outlets about underage sales and promotion.	1. Track where violations or issues occur and institute a consistent response based on the number and type of infractions.	Health Department	Dedham Police Department, DOSA	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Encourage more events in town to operate without a one-day liquor license to reduce the prevalence of alcohol.	Town Manager, Select Board	Dedham Police Department, Health Department, Parks and Recreation Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
PH2.4: Define and pursue mitigation measures to reduce health impacts for locations near high volume traffic roadways, particularly the locations that overlap with Dedham's Environmental Justice Block groups to identify potential air quality mitigation measures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inventory locations in Environmental Justice Block groups near high volume traffic roadways. 2. Identify mitigation strategies such as regular air quality monitoring activities, enforcing buffer zones, filtration systems, or vegetative and built barriers that best suit identified locations that are near high volume traffic roadways. 3. Select a pilot location to implement a set of the mitigation strategies and collect data on impact of the strategies. Expand implementation of successful strategies at the conclusion of the pilot program. 	Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department	Active Transportation Working Group, Health Department, Human Rights Commission	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



PH3 Goal 3: Support the mental and emotional wellness of Dedham residents, specifically youth and children, to mitigate conditions that contribute to harmful behaviors.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
<p>PH3.1: Strengthen communication and coordination between organizations who work with youth and families and municipal offices to raise awareness and knowledge of available resources to Dedham residents, families, and youth.</p>	<p>1. The Dedham Health Department should collaborate with all relevant parties (Dedham schools, Dedham Youth Commission, Riverside Community Care, Police Department, Dedham Parks and Recreation Commission, Dedham Public Library, etc.) and develop regular annual work plans to advance mental health related work.</p>	<p>Health Department, Human Rights Commission, School Committee</p>	<p>Dedham Public Schools, Dedham Youth Commission, Dedham Police Department, Library DOSA, and other partners</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	<p>Additional partners and resources may include Riverside Community Care and places of worship</p>
	<p>2. Highlight success stories for utilizing existing resources as a mechanism to motivate other residents to engage with available mental health resources.</p>				
<p>PH3.2: Support DOSA and Dedham Youth Commission efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a Youth Coalition to ensure issues that affecting youth most are identified by youth. Conducting annual school wide social norms campaign towards youth to correct misperceptions about how prevalent youth alcohol use is. Mobilizing youth to create and deploy Town-wide campaign to combat stigma around mental health. 	<p>1. Define the process for convening an annual Youth Coalition in such a way that it can be held each year with consistent data collection and survey results that are comparable year to year.</p> <p>2. Convene the Youth Coalition to both identify the issues affecting youth the most and to define the parameters of successful social norms and mental health campaigns.</p>	<p>Dedham Youth Commission</p>	<p>Dedham Public Schools, Health Department, Dedham Police Department, Library DOSA, and other partners</p>	<p>Near-term (1 to 3 years)</p>	

Priority



Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH3.3: Inventory and share local, regional, and state mental health resources available to Dedham residents to destigmatize and promote mental health as a public good. Resources can help provide interim support for residents awaiting mental health treatment.	1. Create easy to understand and multi-lingual resource guide for residents. Regional resources can include the Canton Recovery Learning Centers, NAMI Newton/Wellesley, Samaritans Inc., etc.	Health Department	Veterans Services, Housing Authority, Council on Aging, Commission on Disability, School Committee, Library	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Mass 211 resources Potential support from the Town's Director of Communications
	2. Identify multiple channels for regular distribution of resources (e.g., water or sewer bill, personal property or real estate tax bill, etc.) Review existing annual de-identified data reports from INTERFACE (a mental health helpline) to identify how residents learned about INTERFACE service. Continue to amplify these channels to disseminate resources.				
	3. Promote Massachusetts 211 as a resource for residents in need.				
PH3.4 Improve access to youth activities and services, particularly afterschool, by coordinating with existing programs such as DYC and YMCA, expanding use of Town Facilities for youth activities, and advancing development of a community center.	1. Inventory use patterns of Town Facilities and determine days and times of underutilization.	Planning & Zoning Department	Facilities and Maintenance Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	2. Collaborate with organizations operating youth activities and services to determine if any activities could be supported by Town Facilities that may be identified as underutilized during certain time periods.	Health Department	Dedham Youth Commission, Dedham Public Schools, Health Department, Dedham Police Department, Library DOSA, and other partners	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	
	3. Begin an exploratory effort to analyze the need for a community center, identify the building program that would be most needed, and potential options for where that building program could be accommodated through existing Town buildings or Town properties.	Planning & Zoning Department	Facilities and Maintenance Department	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	



PH4 Goal 4: Support daily physical activity and eliminate risk of traffic related injuries and fatalities.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH4.1: Adopt a Vision Zero approach to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries among all road users. Vision Zero is a strategy to ensure safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.	1. Begin a community conversation to adopt a Vision Zero strategy and a timeframe for implementation in Dedham. Once community understanding and support is established, develop an official and public commitment to a Vision Zero goal and define a Vision Zero Action Plan.	Engineering Department, Select Board, Public Works (DPW) Department	Transportation Advisory Committee, Active Transportation Working Group, Police Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Process guides and resources are available at the Vision Zero Network at visionzeronetwork.org
	2. Annually review and publish data showing where traffic fatalities and injuries occur (including pedestrian) to aid in decisions and priorities.				
PH4.2: Use MAPC's Local Access Score to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian capital investments that connect residents to health destinations such as grocery stores, commercial districts, recreation destinations, transit, and schools.	1. Invest in new sidewalks and bicycle lanes in locations with a high Local Access Score. Set an annual Town Budget item to support new sidewalk and bicycle lane infrastructure each year.	Engineering Department, Public Works (DPW) Department	Transportation Advisory Committee, Active Transportation Working Group	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	MAPC's Local Access Score data is available at https://localaccess.mapc.org/
	2. All departments, boards, commissions, and committees should collaborate on strengthening walkability as a public health, public safety, and environmental issue.			Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
PH4.3: Ensure the Dedham Council on Aging is recording unmet transportation and trip requests. Use this data to help develop revised transportation services.	1. Analyze data annually to determine where additional transportation services or resources may be most effective and useful to residents. Prioritize these locations for new service or infrastructure investments to improve access.	Council on Aging	Engineering Department	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	
PH4.4: Develop multi-lingual guides to parks and public lands that show trails, special features, and access points for pedestrians and vehicles.	1. Translate and make materials available to populations that may not be connected to typical outreach approaches, such as visiting the Town website. Distribute multi-lingual guides at local businesses or through local church communities.	Open Space and Recreation Committee	Parks and Recreation Committee	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	



PH5

Goal 5: Foster community connectedness and intergenerational ties.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH5.1: Identify or develop publicly accessible spaces as physical community hubs in each Dedham Neighborhood.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and develop culturally resonant and inclusive programming for each neighborhood hub that encourages residents to engage in physical activity or encourages social interaction. 2. Conduct bi-annual creative placemaking events to highlight the diversity of cultures of Dedham residents. 	Dedham Cultural Council	Civic Pride Committee, Livable Dedham, Dedham Historical Society & Museum, Veterans Services, School Committee, Human Rights Commission, Housing Authority, Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Mass Cultural Council Local Cultural Council Grant Program, available at https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process/
PH5.2: Designate spaces in existing community buildings (e.g., Town Hall, Library, etc.) for physical improvements, using universal design principles, to host inter-generational community programming.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement Generations United Sharing Our Space toolkit to plan, implement, evaluate, and sustain intergenerational shared sites to help foster meaningful cross age relationships and informal encounters. 2. Partner, coordinate, and collaborate with existing stakeholders (i.e., Dedham Youth Commission, DOSA, Livable Dedham, COA, Dedham Public Schools, local retirement communities, etc.) to develop intergenerational programming such as AARP Foundation Experience Corps which matches older adult volunteers with students who are not reading at grade level to become great readers by end of third grader, or matching tech savvy high school students with older adults to coach them on using their smart phones, computers, and tablets. 	Town Manager	Council on Aging, Livable Dedham, Dedham Youth Commission, Dedham Public Schools, Library	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Generations United Sharing Our Space Toolkit, available at: https://www.gu.org/resources/sharing-our-space/
PH5.3: Implement Dedham's 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan and prioritize objectives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce comprehensive guides and signage, available in multiple languages, to enhance awareness of open space/recreation resources. 2. Develop and implement an effective communications plan for all open space and recreation programs and offerings. 	Open Space and Recreation Committee	Parks and Recreation Department, Parks and Recreation Commission	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	Dedham's Open Space and Recreation Plan, available at: https://www.dedham-ma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/12755/637170147926070000



PH6 Goal 6: Continue policies and programs that foster inclusive civic and social engagement and expand the outreach and communication for services available to residents.

Strategy	Suggested Action(s)	Potential Lead	Potential Support	Potential Timeframe	Potential Resources
PH6.1: Explore use of Race Forward’s Choice Points to Advance Equity framework in residential development decision making processes (e.g., Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals) for one year. Track and evaluate outcomes to assess use of framework in other municipal development decision-making.	1. Share the Points to Advance Equity framework and propose a one-year pilot program for use of the framework.	Town Manager	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals	Mid-term (4 to 6 years)	Race Forward’s Creating Cultures and Practices for Racial Equity
	2. Prepare an evaluation survey for participants in the pilot to reflect on equity practices before and after use of the framework.				
PH6.2: Expand trainings about requirements and good practices such as Open Meeting Law compliance, email and communication norms, and decision-making processes. This may include regularly connecting board and committee members with existing resources such as the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative, providing information in multiple languages, and providing translation on the Town website.	1. Build organizational capacity for racial equity work within Dedham Town Government to advance public health.	Town Manager, Human Resources Department	Town Departments and Staff	Near-term (1 to 3 years)	For additional information and consideration, please view, the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) has prepared a resource titled “Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government”
	2. Define a list of resources, continuing education, and training opportunities that are available to board and committee members.				
	3. Create a town reimbursement program for pre-approved training and education expenses.				
	4. Consider expanding number of members on the three member Board of Health to increase the opportunity for diverse perspectives and representation that reflects town demographics, inventory boards across the state to understand range and frequency of number of members.				

Priority

Designing Dedham



February 2024

