
Sherborn Town Center Housing Study

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(PMTA)

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This Town Center Housing Study Report records the analysis, research and synthesis that was part of the Sherborn Town Center Housing Study process. The report was developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in partnership with the Town of Sherborn. MAPC is Greater Boston's regional planning agency whose mission is to promote smart growth and regional collaboration. MAPC has been working closely with the Sherborn Planning Department and members of the Planning Board throughout the study process.

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Study Summary and Conclusions

SUMMARY

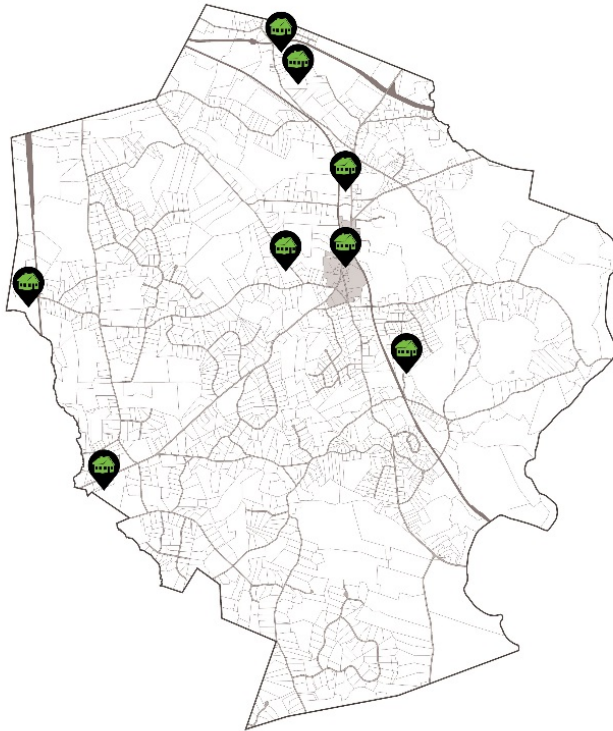
The Town of Sherborn has experienced past successes in creating and encouraging greater density and diversity of housing types near its Town Center. The past residential production occurred through public and private partnerships to advance affordable and senior housing opportunities that benefits residents, the community, and the Town Center of Sherborn specifically. This planning study is focused on the next generation of housing opportunities, improvements and amenities that can advance the vitality of Sherborn Town Center. The study was required to recalibrate that focus to acknowledge the unique moment that is occurring in the production of housing in Sherborn. Currently, the Town of Sherborn is experiencing unprecedented residential development attention. The Town of Sherborn finds itself at a unique moment in its history where the production of housing is poised to increase at a pace not seen since the middle of the 20th century. During this Study, it became apparent that the Commonwealth's 40B regulations are at the heart of any housing discussion in Sherborn. According to the regulation, simply stated, the Town must at some point achieve and maintain a proportion of affordable housing that is equal to or greater than 10% of its entire housing inventory.

For the Town and the conclusions of this Study, the question is most about influence and control of housing and how it may contribute to, or detract from, overall patterns of settlement and use in the Town. While faced with a growing list of housing development proposals in Town, the Town is also faced with a lack of autonomy in regard to these projects. Most are being proposed through the Commonwealth's 40B regulations, designed to promote the production of affordable housing by allowing for a single comprehensive permit application that is administered by the Zoning Board of Appeals that is not required to comply with local zoning or development regulations. The Town has come to appreciate the difficulty of its current position of reacting to individual proposals and has begun to take steps to proactively guide housing to be most consistent with the Town's overall goals. Facing this type of activity, it is even more important for the Town to articulate its vision and plan for the production of housing in Sherborn in an effort to both shape current projects and not lose track of larger goals and settlement patterns that the Town would like to promote. As described in the Town's General Plan, those goals include strengthening the Town Center and conserving town open space, agricultural land and forests. The following summary describes the context and recommendations for how the Town of Sherborn may take a more proactive role in the production of housing in Town and position that housing to strengthen the Town Center over time.

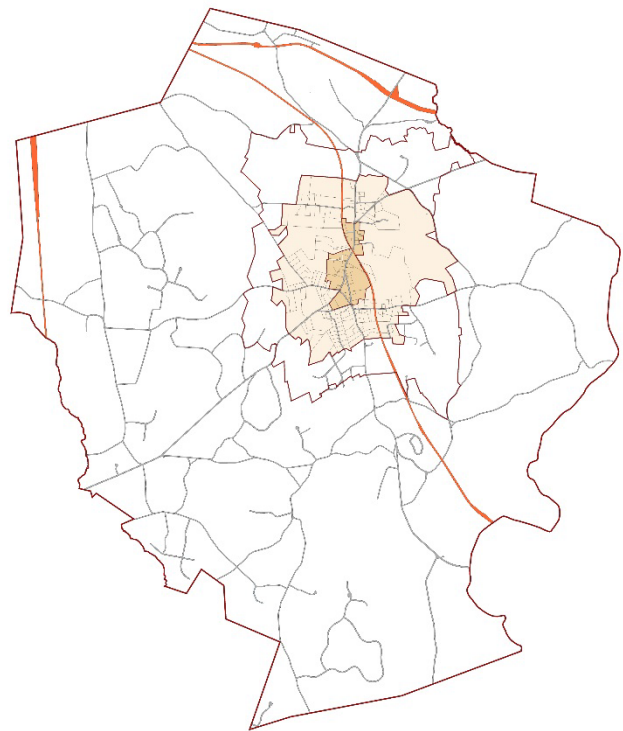
The Town Center Housing Study Report helps frame the Town's next steps and overall approach to housing by articulating a vision for meeting the affordable housing mandate of 40B, but also providing a vision for strengthening town housing and settlement patterns to benefit the economy and walkability of the Town Center. Given the number of proposals and projects under consideration, it is not easy to predict what the context of affordable housing in Sherborn will be in two or more years. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) began a planning effort with the Town of Sherborn in the spring of 2016 with the award of District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funds to study Town Center Housing opportunities in Sherborn. At the start of this process, the context for housing production in Sherborn was quite different, three housing projects that are large for Sherborn were progressing in various stages of construction and approval, including Whitney Farms, Abbey Road and The Fields. At the time of the writing of this summary, the Town is faced with the prospect of five additional housing proposals for a total of eight projects and 380 new housing units. 215 of those units are projected to be affordable.

The current combination of housing proposals would put Sherborn over the statutory requirement of 10% affordable housing that is part of 40B. Even given these changing circumstances, the recommendations of this planning effort are relevant and meaningful as the Town considers concrete actions and next steps to address housing. Sherborn can either remain subject to the ad hoc nature of private development proposals that will eventually accumulate enough affordable units to provide the Town more control over project approvals, or the Town can take steps that would allow it to reassert some control over the production of housing in the Town. The Town has already begun to take steps toward the latter by re-establishing the Housing Partnership Committee which is currently drafting a Housing Production Plan. While the Housing Production Plan and related efforts to achieve “Safe Harbor” from 40B development are temporary, lasting a year or two, that intervening time can be used to improve Town service and infrastructure needs that may help alleviate impacts of future housing development. It may also help the Town to align the geography of future housing proposals with the Town Center and to support and strengthen housing in the Town Center with improvements to walkability, water and wastewater infrastructure.

MAPC is a strong advocate for the principles of smart growth to concentrate growth in compact walkable centers that support the conservation of land and limit the impacts of dispersed settlement patterns. Through the production of future housing, Sherborn has an opportunity to increase the concentration of uses in its Town Center, while simultaneously preserving open space, agricultural and conservation resources in the Town. By providing housing in proximity to the Town Center a long term opportunity is created to enhance the economic viability of local businesses and vitality of activity in the Town Center by providing more residents living within walking distance. Below is a simple diagram that shows the current context of housing proposals in the Town, as compared to the more compact area that would be associated with “Town Center supporting” redevelopment that would concentrate housing activity to support the Town Center and retain conserved land in other parts of the Town.



Current Distribution of Housing Proposals



Preferred Town Center Focus

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following immediate next steps are recommended to assist Sherborn in better aligning its housing production with its desire to strengthen its Town Center. The first of actions are short term steps that can be undertaken immediately and the second set of actions are midterm steps that may require additional study to implement. A set of guiding principles for redevelopment in the Town Center is the final set of conclusions that should be used to guide investments in Town Center.

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. **Track and pursue “Safe Harbor” using 2% progress** allowing the Town to pause potential additional 40B development for one year, while other Town actions can be advanced. In the pursuit and use of any “safe harbor”, it is important that the Town use any time granted productively.
2. **Articulate clear support for housing projects proposed in or near Town Center and define the characteristics of those projects**, items that would be seen as required and desirable by the Town should be clearly communicated to project proponents. This articulation has begun through previous Town Center studies, the General Plan, and this report, and can be expanded on a project-by-project basis.
3. **Hire a consultant to perform a Fiscal Impact Analysis** of the potential impacts of the housing development pipeline on the Town services and infrastructure to develop an approach to providing services that may be needed in the future.
4. **Draft and approve a Town supported Housing Production Plan** to enable the Town to use current housing production to its advantage and to become more proactive in managing housing development.
5. **Certify the Housing Production Plan** using housing projects that are currently proposed and others that will soon be made an official application.
6. **Monitor progress of housing production** and continue to identify properties or housing proposals that are consistent with the Housing Production Plan and support of the Town Center.

While not all future housing production needs to occur within the direct vicinity of the Town Center, ideally a high proportion of new housing should be nearby. Leland Farms, Woodhaven, and Abbey Road have all shown the successful synergy of housing as part of the Town Center and each project contributes to the vitality and critical mass of activity in the center. In the Community Forum MAPC facilitated, the community expressed a substantial preference for mixed-use housing development as a new type of housing that does not yet exist in the Town Center. Similarly, a preference for clustered housing was expressed for use near the Town Center that could provide another diverse housing type in the mix of housing offerings that strengthen the Town Center. In addition to the short term actions directly related to housing production, the following complementary midterm actions should be pursued to advance the synergy between Town Center and new housing patterns in Sherborn.

MIDTERM ACTIONS

1. **Explore New Town Center zoning** that accommodates mixed-use redevelopment and defines principles for town center residential development.
2. **Replace the Town’s Open Space Subdivision** to better define the characteristics of clustered housing near Town Center or add a new clustered housing zoning district.
3. **Undertake close study of the pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic improvements** that would reinforce a safe and walkable mixed-use Town Center including consideration of easements for such improvements.

4. **Continue exploration and progress toward infrastructure improvements** for the Town Center including the provision of a new water and wastewater district.
5. **Track and confirm new household composition** and impact on local market demand for retail and public services including Police, Fire and School services. This could potentially be in combination with or a continuation of the Fiscal Impact Analysis effort.
6. **Consider an inclusionary policy to maintain affordable housing requirements** in new housing that is produced in the Town in the future.
7. **Consider the revision and expansion of an accessory dwelling unit policy** to allow more opportunity for the addition of modest housing units in the Town Center.

A set of consistent principles underlies most of the Town Center discussion and ambition for Sherborn Town Center. In the advancement of development proposals, infrastructure investments or streetscape improvements, these principles should be referenced and used as both a guide and checklist for projects appropriate for Town Center. Each new project that is proposed to be located in the Town Center should contribute to the vitality of the center and be consistent with these principles.

TOWN CENTER PRINCIPLES

1. **Concentrate Uses** – By building on the concentration of uses already assembled in Town Center, other land in the Town may be conserved for other uses such as open space, agriculture or town forest, development near Town Center should also conserve portions of property away from the center and transition in scale and density, decreasing as moving away from the center.
2. **Increase Density of Uses** – Each Town Center investment should increase the critical mass of activity in the Town Center and infrastructure should be configured to increase density of the Town Center, including parking, water, and wastewater systems that enable an increase in density.
3. **Increase Pedestrian and Bike Safety and Amenity** – Expand and enhance the walkable, pedestrian and bike-friendly characteristics of Town Center by adding sidewalks, bike amenities, and landscape such that all portions of the district are a safe and pleasant place to walk and that visitors and patrons would feel comfortable circulating in the district without a car (implement Complete Street standards).
4. **Create Complementary Mix of Uses** – Include mixed-use program components – ground floor retail space, services, and amenities for locations with frontage on Main Street, residential uses above or in the rear of properties to add built-in support and complementary activity.
5. **Reinforce Town Character** – Strengthen the rural New England village character of Town Center through scale, massing and architectural detailing to respect the modest scale and historic assets of the community.
6. **Improve Landscape, Streetscape and Parking** – Enhance the visual appeal and consistency of Town Center with improved and consistent sidewalk, landscape, lighting compliant with Dark Sky standards, and signage conditions. Conceal parking by its placement and integration with landscape while respecting natural topography and features.
7. **Strengthen Civic and Communal Places** – Expand and enhance civic open spaces in Town Center by adding new shared spaces near building entries and street frontages that provide a sense of community and the opportunity for gathering.
8. **Advance sharing of resources across properties in the district** – parking, water, wastewater, etc. To make more efficient and effective use of a compact area.

Town Center Context

TOWN CENTER STUDY AREA GEOGRAPHY AND CONTEXT

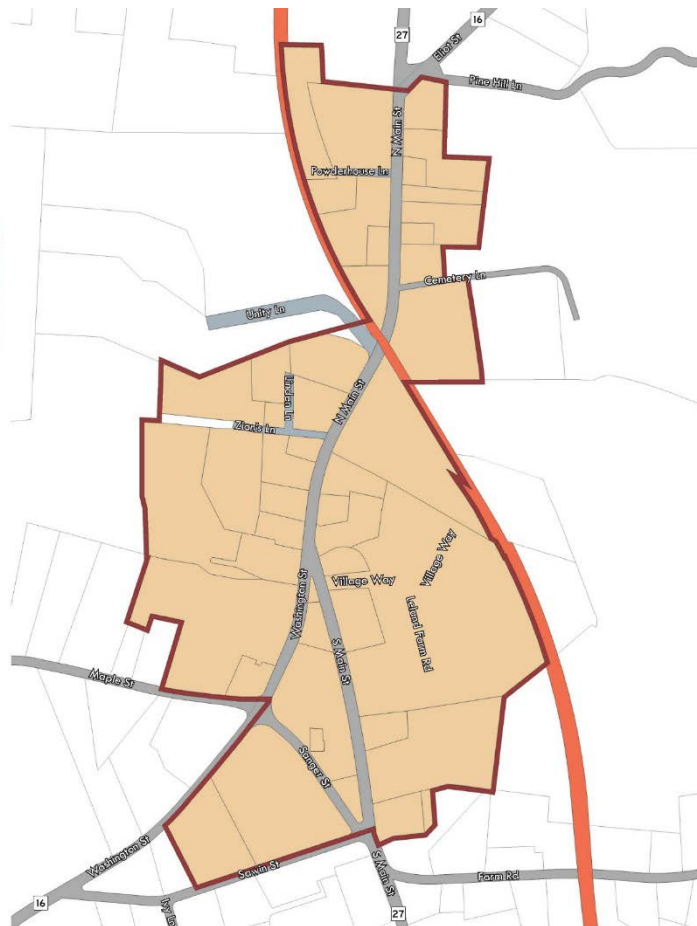
The geography of the Town Center is well understood in Sherborn. What is less agreed upon is the extension of the area around Town Center that may or may not contribute to the vitality of the center. Arguably the entire Town supports the Town Center, but after a certain distance from the center, a resident or patron is just as likely, if not more likely, to visit Natick, Framingham, Holliston, Ashland, Millis, Medfield or Dover for needs that may be provided by a visit to Sherborn Town Center.

The Sherborn Town Center core is an assembly of parcels that have historically been at the center of commerce, Town governance and institutions for Sherborn. The Town Center is bisected by the road network and divided into a northern half and southern half. The southern half, Village South, is the location of Town Hall, the Town Community Center, Town Library and religious institutions, it is known as the municipal and institutional anchor of Town Center. The North Village is the commercial center of the Town Center and includes retail, commercial, restaurants, an inn and several municipal/institutional uses, such as the Fire Station, Post Office, and Town recreation fields and playgrounds. Both Villages also include several single-family residential properties, most with historic structures.

The Town Center “Core” includes 46 parcels, 310,118 square feet or 7.1 acres of land area. The diagrams below depict the Town Center core parcels.



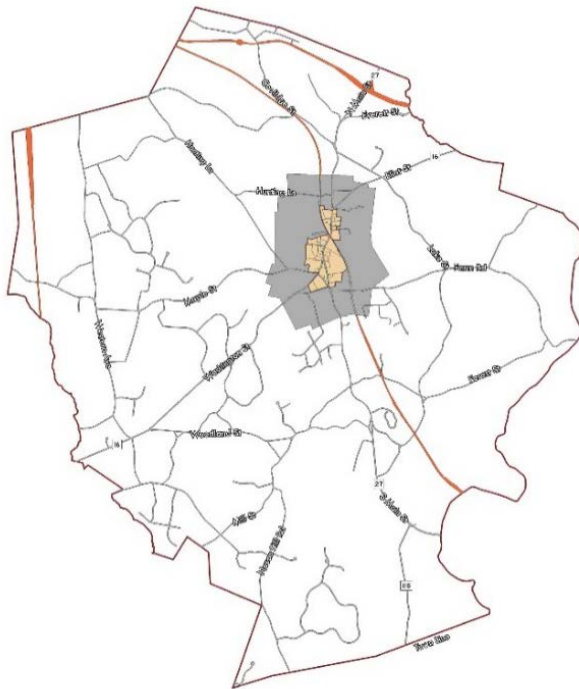
Town Center highlighted in Sherborn



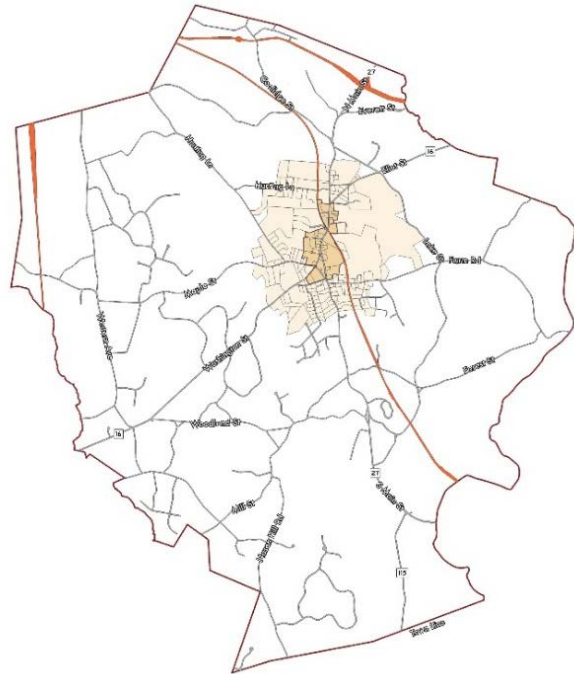
Town Center Study Area

TOWN CENTER INNER WALKING ZONE

For the purposes of this Study, the Town Center Core has been expanded to include areas that may generally be viewed as walkable to and from the Town Center. The first such boundary, combined with the Town Center Core, is the focus of this study. This area includes all parcels that have a portion of the parcel within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the Town Center Core Parcels. This will be referred to as the Town Center Inner Walking Zone ($\frac{1}{4}$ mile) and it includes 150 additional parcels that total 3,011,160 square feet or 69.1 acres of additional land area beyond the Town Center core. The methodology for the creation of this area is depicted below:



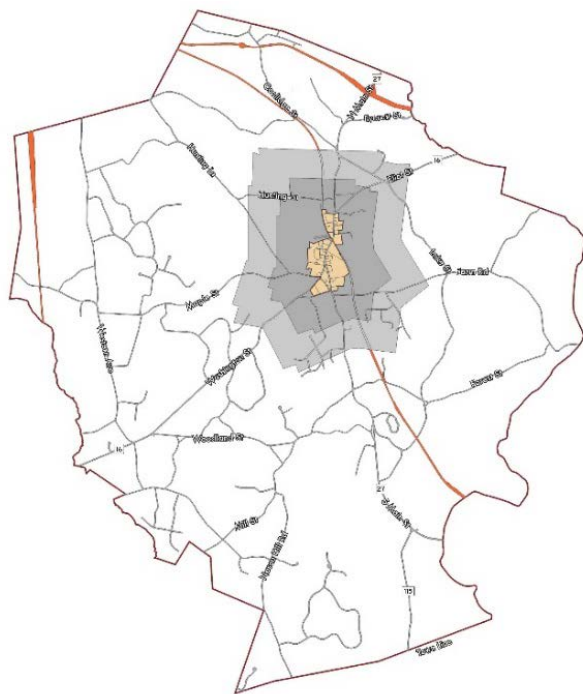
$\frac{1}{4}$ mile offset from
Town Center Core



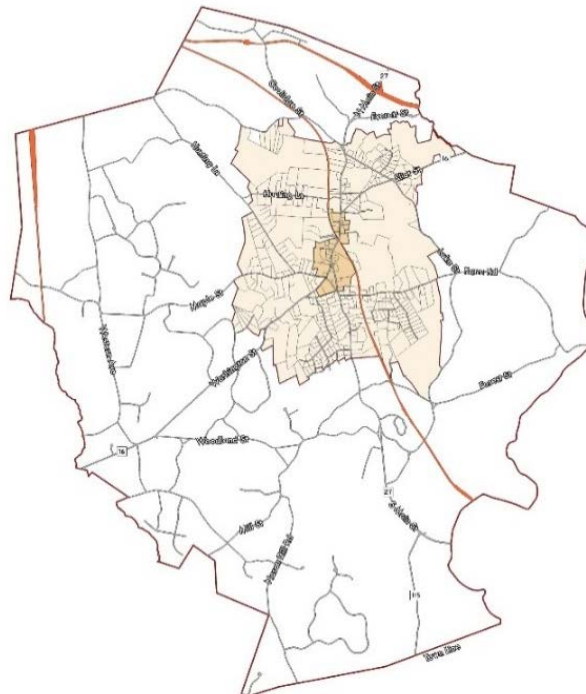
Parcels captured by the
 $\frac{1}{4}$ mile offset

TOWN CENTER OUTER WALKING ZONE

The second walkable area, captures any remaining parcels that may be considered to be within the walking catchment area of the Town Center. These parcels have a portion of the parcel within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the Town Center Core Parcels. This will be referred to as the Town Center Outer Walking Zone ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile) and it includes 219 additional parcels that total 3,655,331 square feet or 83.9 acres of additional land area. This second area includes many parcels that are too far out of reach for a comfortable walk or viable connection to Town Center, except that they are very convenient by bike or car. The methodology for the creation of this area is depicted below:



1/2 mile offset from
Town Center Core



Parcels captured by the
1/2 mile offset

In any context the desirability of walking is impacted by many factors. Foremost among those factors are safety, most impacted by the provision of continuous and adequately sized sidewalks and trails, marked street crossings, and the quality of the walk. If a route is beautifully wooded, includes attractive streetscape or active storefronts, it makes for a much easier and pleasant walk. While the configuration of streets and the influence of these factors may not support the full extent of the walk zones that have been identified, most of the inner walking zone is likely to be a part of a walkable center in the future and much of the outer walking zone could be viably connected as part of the walkable district.

TOWN CENTER LAND USE

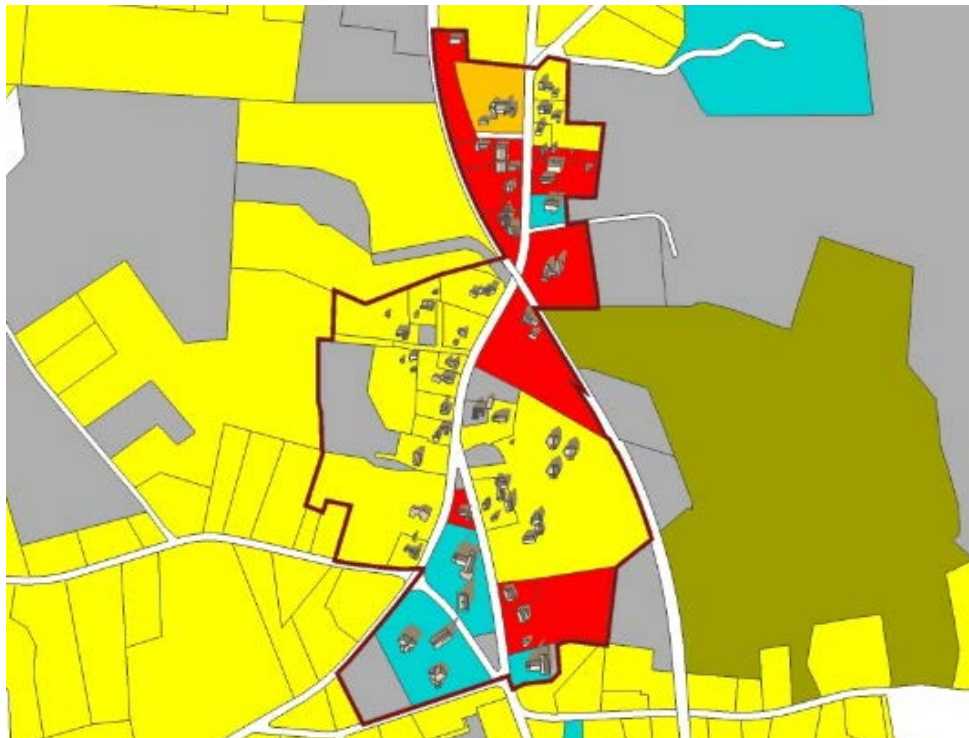
Even though the majority of its soils were unillable, Sherborn has been a farming community since its settlement in the 1600's with dairy farming and apple production as its leading agricultural activities. The historic origins of Sherborn as a farming community remain evident today and its soils continue to have an impact on the type and nature of land use and development in the Town. As outlined in the Sherborn Open Space and Recreation Plan (2007), much of Sherborn has constrained soils, with seasonal high water, hardpan and bedrock close to the surface. This constraint, combined with the lack of public infrastructure for sewers and water, have made the siting of septic systems, and therefore development, difficult in the Town.

Land uses in the Town Center indicate the concentration of commercial, municipal and institutional uses in the Town Center with surrounding residential, conservation and agricultural land. The mix of uses is shown in the diagram below depicts each land use in the Town Center Study Area based on current parcels, including residential (yellow), commercial (red), institutional (blue-green), open space (green), hospitality (orange), and vacant (gray) land uses. While Town Center does represent the largest concentration of commercial, institutional and hospitality uses in the Town, the district also includes a sizable proportion of single family

homes. Many of the residential properties in the Town Center are historic structures with frontage on Main Street or Washington Street and are contributing to the character of the district, but are not contributing to the concentration of activity that is fundamental to the function of Town Center. The Town Center Core Parcels Land Use mix with break-down by Village North and South.

Town Center Core – Village North		
<i>Use</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>% of Parcels</i>
Municipal/Institution	1/31	3%
Commercial/Retail	10/31	32.5%
Residential	14/31	45.5%
Hospitality	1/31	3%
Industrial	0/31	0%
Open Space/Agricul.	0/31	0%
Vacant	5/31	16%
Total	31/31	100%

Town Center Core – Village South		
<i>Use</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>% of Parcels</i>
Municipal/Institution	5/15	33%
Commercial/Retail	3/15	20%
Residential	4/15	27%
Hospitality	0/15	0%
Industrial	0/15	0%
Open Space/Agricul.	0/15	0%
Vacant	3/15	20%
Total	15/15	100%



Land use patterns in Town Center including residential (yellow), commercial (red), institutional (blue-green), open space (green), hospitality (orange), and vacant (gray)

TOWN CENTER ZONING

Overall, the Town of Sherborn is divided into a limited number of zoning districts including residential districts, business districts, and a multi-dwelling/elderly-affordable district with the vast majority of the Town divided among the residential districts. The Residence Districts A, B and C are 1, 2 and 3 acre minimum lot sizes respectively. The large lot sizes have been legally upheld due to difficulty in supporting septic systems and maintaining sufficient distances between private on-site wells and septic systems.

The following zoning districts are part of the Town Center Study Area including the Town Center Core, Inner and Outer Walking Zones that have been identified. The Town Center effectively includes all the zoning districts that are found in the Town of Sherborn: Residence A (RA), Residence B (RB), Residence C (RC), Business General (BG), Business Professional (BP), Elderly and Affordable (EA)/Multi-Dwelling (M), and Wireless Communications Overlay District (WCOD-2). The following Schedule of Dimensional Requirements is found in the Town of Sherborn Zoning By-Laws (2014):

<i>Current Zoning By-Law Dimensional Requirements</i>										
District	Min. Lot Size (acres)	Min. Continuous Frontage (feet)	Min. Lot Width (feet)	Lot Depth (feet)	Min. Setback (feet)			Max. Height		Max. Lot Coverage
					Front	Side	Rear	Stories	Feet	
Residence A	1	150	150	-	60	30	30	2.5	35	-
Residence B	2	200	200	-	60	40	30	2.5	35	-
Residence C	3	250	250	-	60	40	30	2.5	35	-
Elderly and Affordable EA/ Multi-Dwelling M	6	50	NA	300	100	60	60	2.5	35	-
Business G B-G	None	100	100	150	60	15+	-	2.5	35	1/3
Business P B-P	None	100	100	150	60	30	30	2.5	35	1/3

In addition to the zoning districts outlined above, a special permit option exists for an “Open Space Subdivision” and for a “Planned Unit Development”. An Open Space Special Permit allows development to waive requirements of a traditional subdivision in order to preserve open space for conservation, agriculture, or recreation. Lots created may be no smaller than 4 times the minimum area for the district, and 40% of the original parcel must be set aside for open space. No density bonus is included. A “Planned Unit Development” (PUD) allows for mixed-use development in the B-G or B-P districts if 25% of the land is in one of those districts. All uses allowed or permitted in the B-G or B-P districts are allowed as part of a PUD, except service stations.

All districts allow by right detached single family dwellings. In the Town Center drive-through and service stations are allowed by special permit. In any zoning district, accessory apartments are allowed by Special Permit. They must be occupied by relatives or domestic employees of the homeowner and pay no rent. An accessory dwelling unit may also be designated as a “Local Initiative Unit” restricted to low or moderate income households that pay rent. Generally, multi-dwellings are prohibited, except that single family homes are an allowed use in the business districts, provided they meet the dimensional requirements of the RA district and therefore would be allowed as part of a PUD in which the Planning Board has the authority to vary dimensional requirements. However, crafting a clearer standard that would allow multi-dwellings in the Town Center may be useful and appropriate and is discussed in more detail as part of the recommendations.

The current zoning does not include an inclusionary housing zoning provision that would require a certain percentage of affordable units be included within each market-rate project. The Elderly and Affordable (EA) district provides a means of developing denser market rate projects, if affordable units represent at least 25% of the total units.

A Historic District exists in Sherborn Town Center with the purpose to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of the Town of Sherborn.

TOWN CENTER CIRCULATION

Today, the residents of Sherborn rely on the private automobile as the primary mode of transportation. The Town is served by Routes 16, 27 and 115 with connections to I-90, I-95, and I-495 through neighboring communities. The Town has no public transportation (MBTA or commuter rail service), private bus service or taxi service, depending on neighboring communities for access to such transportation resources. Diversifying resident and visitor options for getting around would greatly benefit the Town. Town Center provides one of the best opportunities for building multi-modal capacity due to its density of mixed-uses, connecting trails and recreational fields. For example, the Bay Circuit Trail with its regional connections intersects North Main Street and Eliot Street just north of the Town Center.

In order to reinforce the advantages of housing in close proximity to the Town Center, the circulation characteristics of the roadway and sidewalk network are very important. In terms of vehicular access, the Study Area benefits from strong regional connections through Routes 16 and 27. Both roadways include one lane in each travel direction with shoulders that vary in width. The presence of sidewalks on Study Area roads is inconsistent and discontinuous and sidewalks vary from at-curb conditions or conditions separated from the street by a landscape strip. Existing sidewalks are present or not present in the following locations:

Sidewalks Present

- West side of South Main Street (Route 27) south of Town Center
- North side of Farm Road south of Town Center
- South side of Village Way
- West side of North Main Street (Route 27)
- North side of Eliot Street (Route 16)
- South side of Pine Hill Lane
- West side of Washington Street (Route 16) from Town Center to Town Hall
- West side of Sanger Street at Town Hall only
- East side of Ivy Lane

Sidewalks Not Present

- No sidewalks on Butler Street (north of Town Center)
- No sidewalks on Hunting Lane
- No sidewalks on Powderhouse Lane
- No sidewalks on Cemetery Lane
- No sidewalks on Zion's Lane
- No sidewalks on Washington Street (Route 16) west of Town Hall
- No sidewalks on Sawin Street
- No sidewalks on Maple Street

- No sidewalks on Green Lane

Another measure of active transportation networks is MAPC's Local Access Score. The Composite Local Access Scores show how useful each road segment would be for people walking or biking from their homes to school, shops and restaurants, parks, and transit stations. Local Access scores are 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. Street segments that connect densely populated areas with many local destinations receive higher scores than streets in areas with low population density or with few businesses, schools, parks, and transit options.

Each of the streets in the Town Center Study Area are included below, as evaluated as part of the Local Access Score analysis. Overall, the streets in the study area show a higher score that would indicate the Town Center is a useful area for people walking or biking to destinations. The study area streets in the table below are ordered from most useful to least useful for enhanced walkability and bikeability. The Town Center represents the area that is most useful in the Town of Sherborn for connectivity for walking and biking. Coolidge Street and North Main Street near the Natick town line are the other locations outside of Town Center that are found to be most useful based on this analysis.

Street	Composite Utility Score	Walk Utility Score	Bike Utility Score
North Main Street at Zions Lane	1.88	1.51	1.95
Washington Street at South Main Street	1.41	1.02	1.68
Maple Street	1.21	0.66	1.86
Washington Street at Sanger Street	1.01	0.56	1.56
North Main Street at Eliot Street	0.75	0.70	0.59
Sanger Street	0.68	0.44	0.94
South Main Street	0.46	0.48	0.26
Hunting Lane	0.38	0.19	0.61
Sawin Street	0.35	0.02	0.88
Eliot Street	0.13	0.02	0.29

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Sherborn is home to 4,119 residents and 1,438 households, as of the 2010 U.S. Census. Since 1990, the population increased 3%, while the number of households has risen 7%. Based on an analysis of changing trends in births, deaths, migration, and housing occupancy, MAPC projects the population could decrease to 3,666 by 2030, while the number of households will continue to increase to 1,505. The Sherborn population has already begun to contract from its position in the 2000 U.S. Census from 4,200 residents at that time. A higher rate of growth among households compared to population can be explained by shrinking household size, a trend in Sherborn and many other communities in the MAPC region. Currently, average household size in Sherborn is 2.86; MAPC projects a sharper decline in the coming decades to 2.44 in 2030.

The Sherborn population has been aging. Going forward, younger residents, currently a significant portion of the population thanks to slight increases since 1990, is projected to decrease while those age 65 and older will increase significantly. A similar trend is projected for householders. Currently, Sherborn is home to fewer younger and elderly householders. But by 2030, dramatic increases are projected to those 65 and older, tempered by increases projected for those in their 30s, while all other cohorts are projected to decline.

Sherborn is majority Caucasian, though that population has declined from 96% in 2000 to 93% in 2010. Residents are generally highly educated: 83% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher educational attainment. The median household income in town is \$155,564; 40% of households earns \$200,000 or more, approximately 10% earns between \$150,000 and \$199,999, and 25% earns between \$100,000 and \$149,999.

Despite this income distribution, 179 households, or 12% of the total, are low income and therefore eligible for deed-restricted affordable housing. Of these households, 95, or 53%, are cost burdened, meaning they pay more than 30% of their household income on housing costs, according to 2007-2011 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data (CHAS). For comparison, the overall rate of cost burden in Sherborn is 35%, or 494 of 1,422 households, according to 2010-2014 American Community Survey data from the U.S. Census.

HOUSING CONTEXT

There are 1,495 housing units in Sherborn, up from 1,374 in 1990. Today, the majority of the housing stock is single-family homes; only 8% is multifamily housing at various scales. Half of the town's housing was built between 1960 and 1979. Only 99 units have been added since the year 2000. The vacancy rate in Sherborn is 5%, indicating a very tight housing market. According to the Census Building Permit Survey, Sherborn permitted only 20 new housing units between 2009 and 2014, all of which were single-family homes. Census estimates for housing are based on building permits, estimates of non-permitted construction, and other data sources. The Census estimates should capture new units created as a result of removal and replacement of an existing house with a new house.

Of the town's 1,495 housing units, 34 or 2.3% are deed-restricted affordable and available only for eligible households earning at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI), or \$98,100, according to the Massachusetts Subsidized Housing Inventory as of October 2015. The rate of affordable units in town has not changed since 2002; before then, there were no affordable units in Sherborn. These 34 units are split between two developments: Leland Farms, consisting of 10 ownership units that are set to expire in 2019, and Woodhaven, consisting of 24 rental units that are affordable in perpetuity. The Town of Sherborn was responsible for the development of these affordable housing units.

Below are the few Sherborn precedents for housing that are not single family homes located in the Town Center area. They include three housing developments that have occurred over the last 35 years.

Woodhaven is located on Village Way in the Town Center of Sherborn. It includes 24 units in total that are comprised of no market rate and 24 affordable senior housing units. The units are rentals and 75% are one bedroom. The development was built in 1980.



Woodhaven

Leland Farms is located at Leland Farm Road in the Town Center of Sherborn. It is directly adjacent to the Woodhaven site. It includes 17 units in total that are comprised of 7 market rate units and 10 affordable housing units. The units are condominium ownership with an affordable deed restriction. For the development of the housing, the Town used Town-owned land and the Town Capital Budget to fund a portion of the long term debt to cover over \$1 million in gap financing that was required. The financing is being retired through rental income. The Leland Farms development was built 1999.



Leland Farms

Abbey Road is the final Town Center multi-dwelling housing project and it is under construction at the time of this Study. Abbey Road is located at 2 North Main Street in the Town Center of Sherborn. It is also located adjacent to the Woodhaven site. It includes 18 units of age-restricted condominium housing (55+). Although age-restricted, the housing units are market rate. Occupancy began in early 2017 and construction is expected to be complete in 2017. The Town was able to assist in the development planning through a thoughtful land swap.



Abbey Road

The Sherborn Community Development Plan (2004) suggested the following housing types are potentially attractive alternatives to the majority of the Sherborn housing stock that is provided in the form of single-family homes. The following is the list of alternative housing types that may be attractive to the community: in-law apartments, garden type rental or condos, rental apartments or condos – two family, and rental apartments or condos – multi-family. As part of this Study, MAPC facilitated a discussion with the community which highlighted several additional community preferences. Those results are discussed in the next report section.

The Sherborn Community Development Plan (2004) established the following Housing Vision Statement: “A rural residential community at its core, Sherborn responds to the pressures for residential growth and the need to protect its water and natural resources by adopting various growth management measures that allow the Town to retain its rural character and develop housing in a manner that is compatible with open space, economic and transportation goals of the community.” The plan also defined Housing Goals as follows:

- Provide a variety of housing opportunities that serve all segments of the community
- Broaden the range of housing types to offer affordable housing opportunities for all age groups in the community
- Provide for economic and age diversity
- Maintain the rural, residential, and historic character of town as more development occurs

- Manage housing development in environmentally sensitive areas to protect specified wildlife corridors and other environmental assets of the Town

CURRENT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE IN SHERBORN

As described in the introduction, the current residential development pipeline in Sherborn is a departure from historic housing trends for the Town. The list of relatively large multi-family housing developments has grown substantially since the initiation of this study and is recorded in the table below. Also noted as part of this table is the potential for the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory to increase beyond the 10% threshold established by the 40B regulations, if these residential projects are approved and completed. The proposed projects are up-to-date as of the writing of this report, but subject to change.

Sherborn Development Pipeline, 2016				
Project Name	Address	Units (SHI Units)	Tenure/Type	Status
Whitney Farms	59 Whitney St.	48 (12)	40B, for-sale	Approved, stalled
Abbey Road	2 N. Main St.	18 (0)	55+, for-sale	Approved
The Fields	257 Washington St.	32 (8)	40B, for-sale townhouses	Approved, under appeal
Coolidge Crossing	104 Coolidge St.	88 (22)	40B, for-sale	Proposed
Green Lane	Green Lane	16 (4)	40B, for-sale	Proposed
The Villages at Sherborn		84 (84)	40B, rental	Proposed
Proposal Withdrawn				
59 N. Main St.	59 N. Main St.	12 (3)	40B, for-sale	Concept
Sewall Brook Lane	Sewall Brook Lane	82 (82)	40B, rental	Concept
Existing Housing Units (2010 Census)		1,479		
Existing SHI Units		34	2.3%	
Total Potential New Housing Units		380 (215)		
Total Potential Housing Units		1,859		
Total Potential SHI Units		249	13.4%	

Source: Town of Sherborn, DHCD

Community Discussion and Preferences

CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS

As discussed in the introduction, the Town Center Housing Study for Sherborn began with the premise exploring actions required to attract housing to Town Center. As the Study began, the context of housing and the current housing development pipeline changed dramatically along with the conversation about housing in Sherborn and the Town Center. MAPC facilitated one community forum as part of this Study and attended a developer's community forum hosted by the Planning Board. During the study process, the Town Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals also hosted a 40B information session that was presented by engineering and planning firm Beals and Thomas. This session was funded by MassHousing and provide information on the 40B process, Statutory Minima, "safe harbor" provisions, and Housing Appeals Committee. The meeting was also an opportunity for residents to provide Town officials with input.

The results of the Community Forum that MAPC facilitated as part of this study are below. The Forum occurred in June of 2016 to discuss housing in the Town, and Town Center specifically. The Forum was attended by approximately 65 members of the community. The purpose of the meeting was articulated as providing information regarding this study, discussing strengthening Town Center, identifying complementary housing types for Town Center and identifying suitable types of housing locations in and near Town Center. The Forum included a presentation and discussion of the sites potentially available for housing near Town Center and the market demand for such housing. The meeting asked the attendees to complete exercises that describe their preferences for a vision for Town Center, housing types and potential locations for housing near Town Center.



Images of the character and community of Sherborn

What makes a good Town Center? In the community forum this question was asked rhetorically and discussed in four categories – destinations, convenience, community amenity, and character. Typically, a good town center has assets within each of these categories. The strengthening of a town center can also occur within these four categories and is typically supported by strong local spending, visibility and activity and additional households. The Town Center of Sherborn is subject to these same patterns and has seen retail and service uses that are dependent on capturing local resident expenditures, experiences through traffic and additional expenditures drawn from Route 27 and Route 16 traffic, and new households would provide the most additional support for local businesses.

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Town of Sherborn
 Town Center Housing Study Report

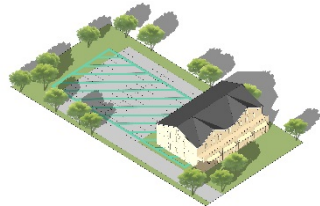
The word cloud is a great tool to understand a broad collection of perspectives through a few meaningful words. In the focus of this Study, several of the most prominent words highlight housing as a part of that vision. Among the responses to this exercise were many other themes that were often repeated by forum attendees, several of these themes are included below.

When asked what makes a great Town Center for Sherborn? Many community meeting attendees responded with one of the following repeating themes:

- Many people like the Town Center the way it is – described as a **classic and quaint small town New England** village feel
- Expand welcoming, social, mingling, gathering, active and spontaneous spaces for **bringing community together** in a family-friendly town common for events, concerts or other activities
- Better, safer and more pleasant **connections for walking, biking** and linking Town Center to the trails and recreational resources nearby
- Expand offerings of shops in Town Center to **increase local destinations and vibrancy of Town Center** including potentially a grocery or general store, retail shops, place to eat
- Provide sufficient parking with attractive landscaping and street trees that frame strong connections in the Town Center to **encourage less congestion**

As part of the Community Forum presentation, MAPC discussed different types of housing that may be appropriate for Sherborn's Town Center. Today, the range and diversity of housing types that could be developed in Town Center is limited. This limitation reduces the opportunities for investment in the center. One of the most vital ingredients to a strong local Town Center is the strong support of that center by residents. The more residents that live nearby the center, the easier and more dependable that support becomes for local businesses. The housing types included, in order of increasing density, single family home, in-law apartments, two family home, clustered housing or pocket neighborhood, mixed-use, townhouse, and multifamily. Each of these types was presented as a simple diagram on a typical 1-acre lot in Sherborn Town Center with typical characteristics and some example photographs for that housing type. The second exercise of the Community Forum invited attendees to consider these housing types and the potential for them to be part of the future of the Town Center. Participants were asked to order preferences regarding the (6) housing types for areas around the Town Center. The ranked results are below:


<u>Type of Housing:</u>	<u>General Diagram:</u>	<u>Rank from Community Forum:</u>
Mixed-use Residential		1
Clustered Housing		2



Type of Housing:	General Diagram:	Rank from Community Forum:
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In-law Apartments		3
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Townhouse		4
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Two Family Home		5
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Multi-Family		6
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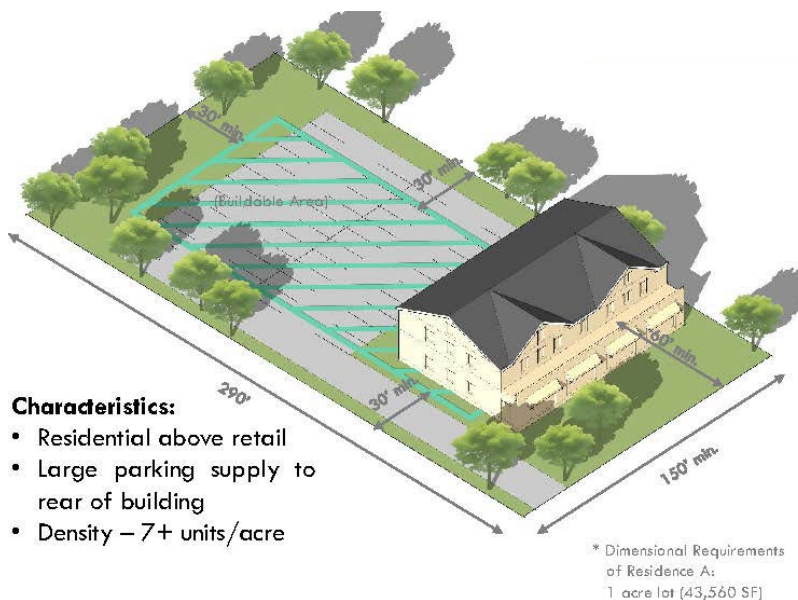


One of the surprising results of the exercise was the community preference that was expressed for a mixed-use residential housing type for Town Center. This type of housing had not been considered previously as part of Town Center studies and may provide a new and productive direction for investment in the Town Center that would support local economic development and vitality.

Each of the six housing types are illustrated in more detail below. The housing type is shown on a typical 1-acre residential lot that represents the minimum requirement for the size of a residential project in the Town. The simple illustration is drawn to scale and shown with realistic building dimensions and parking requirements. The typical density of the type of housing is noted. Several example photographs are included as well.

Mixed-use Residential

The 1st most preferred housing type for Town Center as expressed by the community at the Forum was Mixed-use Residential. This type typically includes a ground floor commercial or retail space that is oriented to the street with building entries and visible storefront space. The upper floors can include either residential units or commercial/office space. The upper level space is typically provided with a separate entry lobby and vertical circulation, often including an elevator. Parking should be provided to the rear of the building on the site. The variety of uses may create the ability to reduce overall parking supply, with different uses experiencing different peak parking demand days and times. Even at a modest scale that is suitable to Sherborn's Town Center, this type of housing can provide a substantial boost to the vitality of the Town Center. The donut chart shows the more specific location preferences that were expressed for this housing type at the Forum. The two most preferred locations for mixed-use residential development are the Town Center with frontage on Main Street, or Washington Street in the core area or Town Center Connected with frontage on a side street that connects to Main Street in the core area. The conclusions and recommendations focus on this type of housing for Town Center.



Characteristics:

- Residential above retail
- Large parking supply to rear of building
- Density – 7+ units/acre

* Dimensional Requirements
of Residence A:
1 acre lot (43,560 SF)

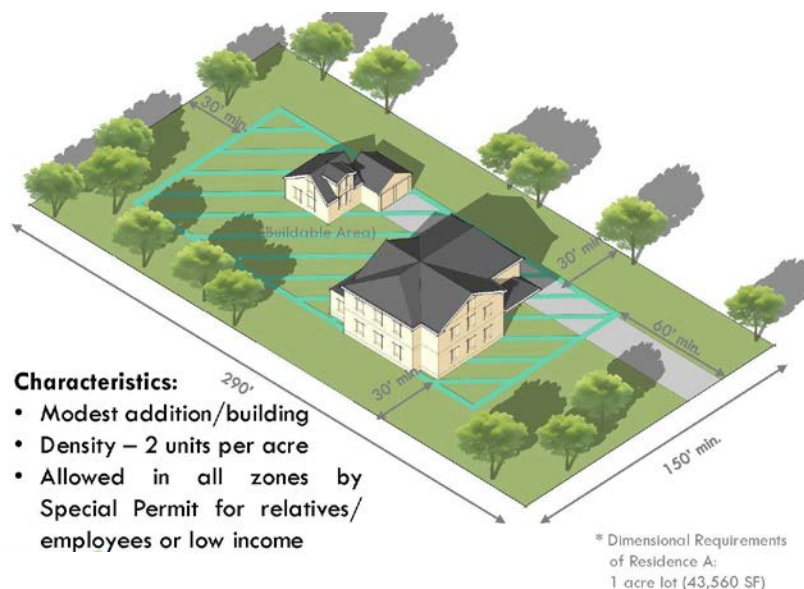
Clustered Housing

The 2nd most preferred housing type for Town Center as expressed by the community at the Forum was Clustered Housing. This type typically includes small or modestly scaled homes that are densely clustered together to both preserve open space on the site, but also to frame and compose community open spaces and neighborly relationships between buildings. The benefit of adding this type of housing around the perimeter of the Town Center is that it may be a way to increase the local resident population that could walk to goods, services and activity in the Center. Typically, residential uses are the only uses included, except occasionally small community rooms or common amenities could be included in a separate building. It is imaginable that a retail or commercial building could be included as part of frontage on a primary road. Parking attempts to integrate into the overall site plan through smaller dispersed parking areas and the use of modest garages, on-street and tandem parking. The donut chart shows the more specific location preferences that were expressed for this housing type at the Forum. The two most preferred locations for clustered residential development are Town Center Connected with frontage on a side street that connects to Main Street in the core area and Town Center Adjacent with parcels that may connect to directly the Town Center through other abutting parcels. The conclusions and recommendations provide additional guidance on future steps to advance clustered housing as a potential contributor to the future success of Town Center.



In-Law Apartments

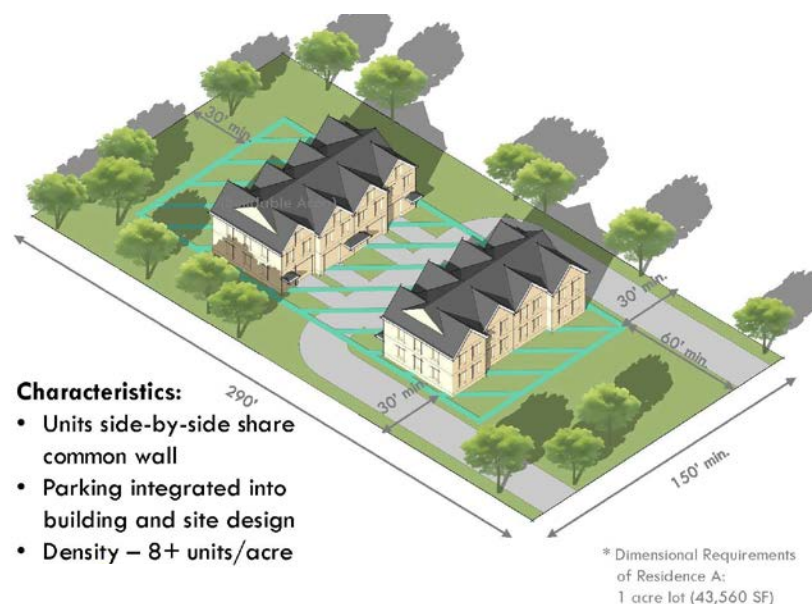
The 3rd most preferred housing type for Town Center as expressed by the community at the Forum was In-Law Apartments. An In-Law Apartment is often also referred to as an Accessory Dwelling Unit. This type of housing is a relatively straightforward addition of a housing unit on a single family home lot. This unit is often stand-alone, but may also be integrated with a garage structure or integrated with the primary residential structure. The accessory unit is typically modest in size and positioned in such a way as to defer to the main residential structure. The benefit of adding this type of housing to Town Center is that it can increase the local resident population that could walk to goods, services and activity in the Center. Allowing for a doubling of the current density. It is also an effective approach to enhance affordability of larger and older properties, provide additional residential units in the Town Center that may be more affordable than a single family home, and may provide an economic benefit that could be used in combination with the preservation of historic structures. The Town of Sherborn allows this type of unit today with certain restrictions. The donut chart shows the more specific location preferences that were expressed for this housing type at the Forum. The two most preferred locations for In-Law Apartment development are Study Area Primary Streets including the area around Town Center with frontage on a street directly linked to Main Street, for example, Hunting Lane. The other preferred location is the Study Area Secondary Streets including the area around Town Center with frontage on a street not directly linked to Main Street, for example, Green Lane. The conclusions and recommendations provide additional guidance on future steps to advance In-Law Apartments as a potential contributor to the future success of Town Center, particularly observations regarding the current restrictions placed on this type of unit in Sherborn today.



Whereas, the application of the first three housing types appears supportable by the community and could foreseeably be integrated with the current context and character of Sherborn Town Center. The next three housing types were less supported by the community and would require very careful design and implementation to successfully integrate with existing patterns of development for the Center

Townhouse

The 4th most preferred housing type for Town Center as expressed by the community at the Forum was Townhouses. This type typically includes small or modestly scaled homes that share a common wall. Units are typically stacked vertically, with vertical circulation integrated into the unit, and may be integrated with a garage below the livable space. The removal of separation and setbacks between many of the units results in a higher density. The benefit of adding this type of housing in and around Town Center is that it would increase the local resident population that could walk to goods, services and activity in the Center. Parking attempts to integrate into the overall site plan through smaller dispersed parking areas and the use of garages below units, on-street and tandem parking. The donut chart shows the more specific location preferences that were expressed for this housing type at the Forum. The two most preferred locations for Townhouse residential development are Study Area Secondary Streets including the area around Town Center with frontage on a street not directly linked to Main Street, for example, Green Lane and nowhere in Town. The conclusions and recommendations do not feature recommendations for encouraging or allowing Townhouse residential development as part of the Town Center housing strategies.



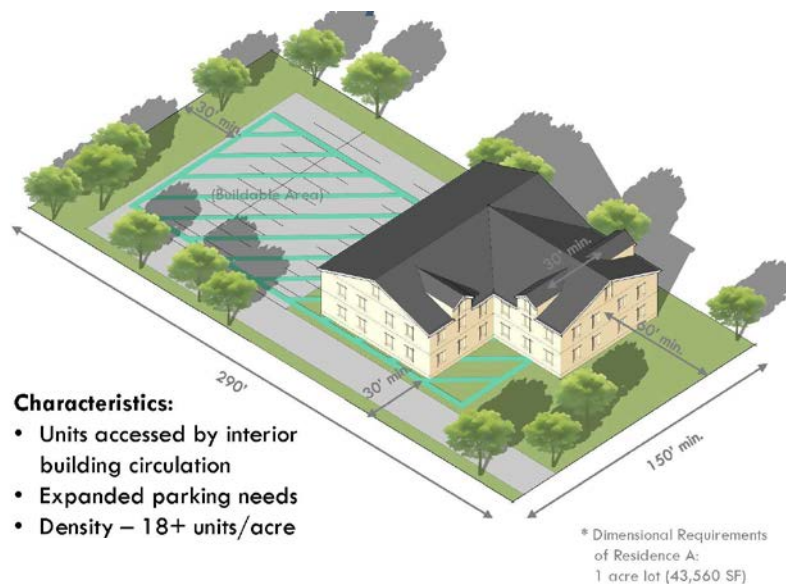
Two Family Home

The 2nd least preferred housing type for Town Center as expressed by the community at the Forum was Two Family Homes. This type typically includes two small or modestly scaled homes that share a common center wall. The combined two units can be designed in such a way as to mimic a large single family home which can be a useful way of complying with an inclusionary zoning bylaw. Often the integration of parking and garages makes it difficult to perfectly mimic a single family home, but can be overcome with the orientation, siting, and design of the building. Similar to the In-Law Apartment, the benefit of adding this type of housing around the perimeter of the Town Center is that it may be a way to increase the local resident population that could walk to goods, services and activity in the Center by adding two units per lot instead of only one. The donut chart shows the more specific location preferences that were expressed for this housing type at the Forum. The two most preferred locations for Two Family homes are Town Center Connected with frontage on a side street that connects to Main Street in the core area and Town Center Adjacent with parcels that may connect to directly the Town Center through other abutting parcels. The conclusions and recommendations do not feature recommendations for encouraging or allowing Two Family Home residential development as part of the Town Center housing strategies.



Multi-Family

The least preferred housing type for Town Center as expressed by the community at the Forum was Multi-Family housing. While the term Multi-Family housing can be used to describe housing generally that has multiple units, in this case Multi-Family housing is being used specifically as a term to describe a residential housing type that includes residential uses only that include units arranged with circulation that is internal to the building. This internal circulation typically includes internal central corridors and common circulation lobbies that include stairs and elevators. This housing type is the most effective and efficient way to add new residents. Depending on the scale of development and size of available land it may be associated with wastewater constraints that are discussed in more detail in the subsequent report section. Typically, residential uses are the only uses included, except occasionally small community rooms or common amenities could be included in a separate building. The donut chart shows the more specific location preferences that were expressed for this housing type at the Forum. The two most preferred locations for Multi-Family residential development are Town Center Connected with frontage on a side street that connects to Main Street in the core area and nowhere in the Town. The conclusions and recommendations do not feature recommendations for encouraging or allowing Multi-Family residential development as part of the Town Center housing strategies.



TOWN CENTER AND THE COMMUNITY

Overall the community has expressed a keen interest in strengthening the Town Center. The discussion and exercises at the Community Forum held as part of this process would seem to indicate that the community supports the expansion and diversification of housing as one part of the strategies to strengthen Town Center. The overall density and character of Sherborn and the Town Center should be respected. The ability of Town Center to provide vital and active non-residential uses should be preserved and enhanced and new residential should be integrated with the Town Center in such a way as to reinforce walkability and vitality. The current expression of interest is generally consistent with the addition of resident development to Town Center that has occurred in the past through town supported developments, such as Woodhaven, Leland Farms, and Abbey Road. As defined in the housing typologies discussed, each of these would likely fall into the category of Townhouse, one of the housing types that was not well supported today.

Town Center Housing Constraints and Feasibility

While community preferences certainly weigh into residential development considerations for Town Center, other constraints may be equal in defining the feasibility of particular housing types. The most common constraints to be considered are constraints on the land and the characteristics of properties that may be available or that are likely to be available in the future. The market constraints regarding supply of and demand for housing in Sherborn and the achievable rents and sales figures that are part of the context. Infrastructure constraints are of particular importance, as the Town does not have municipal water or sewer to support development. All of these factors are variables in determining the financial feasibility of residential redevelopment in the Town Center and the desirability of the Center for future real estate development and investment.

LAND CONSTRAINTS

Land in Sherborn is relatively rural and agricultural in its overall character. The Town Center gives a similar impression of including a fair amount of undeveloped areas that are wooded or open fields or that could potentially provide a long term redevelopment opportunity. The reality is that many of the properties in the core of the Town Center, the Inner Walking Zone and the Outer Walking Zone are associated with a number of land constraints and challenges that severely limit the availability of land for redevelopment. In fact when examining the parcel characteristics in the Town Center Study Area for this effort, only a handful of properties emerged as being relatively unconstrained. The methodology to determine these properties and brief fact sheets about the properties are included as an appendix to this Report.

Each of these land constraints is well known, and relatively obvious. However, the conclusion is less obvious, there is not much land available for redevelopment in and around Sherborn Town Center. This conclusion was determined by analyzing the following site and property characteristics:

- Parcel size
- Topography
- Wetlands/Waterbodies
- Existing use/development conditions
- Ownership (public/private)
- Conservation Value Map (Mass. Audubon)

When combining each of these property characteristics, the constraints become evident and much of the land in Sherborn Town Center is encumbered by a number of factors. Large sites include sizeable wetlands and

or waterbodies that would severely limit developable area. Existing uses may include historic structures, conservation land or Town Forest, or topography may pose land preparation costs.

MARKET CONSTRAINTS

Reflecting the broader housing market in the Metropolitan Boston region, housing demand in Sherborn is strong. However, the housing recovery has not been as fast in Sherborn as in neighboring towns. A larger and more diverse housing stock is necessary to accommodate regional and local demographic changes, including shrinking household size and a corresponding increase in the number of households. Yet the modest rate of housing production in Sherborn since 2000 and the low vacancy rate leaves the town, generally, and Town Center, specifically, with untapped market potential. This Study has been exploring the desirability and feasibility of expanding the housing stock in Sherborn's Town Center to benefit an increase in economic activity, improve the center's walkability and diversify the mix of uses.

Sherborn Town Center is positioned among other nearby centers of retail and residential activity and experiences housing pressures and retail patterns that are associated with that context. Because the housing market crosses municipal boundaries, this analysis considers Sherborn's potential housing demand within a regional context of residential supply and demand. A community may experience more or less market demand depending on what is happening in surrounding communities, and whether they are producing or not producing housing. For example, if a Sherborn neighbor community is producing housing at a rate that exceeds demand, then that town may capture some of the demand for housing in Sherborn. The housing markets that might compete with Sherborn in attracting residents include the following six municipalities: Ashland, Dover, Holliston, Medfield, Millis, and Sherborn. These communities are all neighboring and comparable with similar characteristics and housing stock. Other nearby communities not listed are neighboring, but have housing markets and contexts that are dramatically different from Sherborn. These communities, such as Framingham, Natick, and Wellesley, have housing markets and transit-attributes which are not as immediately comparable to Sherborn. Based on how changing trends in births, deaths, migration, and housing occupancy may result in higher population growth and greater housing demand, MAPC projects demand for more than 25,000 housing units within the focus area, of those six comparable and neighboring municipalities, between the years 2010 and 2020, as outlined in the table below.

Housing Unit Demand, 2010-2020			
	SF	MF	SUM
Ashland	4,450	3,148	7,597
Dover	1,972	288	2,259
Holliston	4,581	1,052	5,633
Medfield	3,741	970	4,711
Millis	2,150	1,130	3,280
Sherborn	1,391	247	1,639
TOTAL	18,285	6,834	25,119

Source: MAPC Housing Unit Demand Projections, 2010-2014

It is important to understand how supply is aligning with demand in the time since 2010. Building permit data for the years 2010-2014, the most recent years available, shows there have been approximately 750 residential unit permits issued in the focus area of these six municipalities. Based on these permitting rates, the focus area has produced just 3.00% of the projected housing unit demand for 2020 over the first four-year period. This leaves unmet demand for more than 24,000 housing units that is shared across these six municipalities. While this overall number may seem daunting, it is consistent with the larger unmet need for housing in the Boston region and the associated upward pressure on housing value (rental and sale).

Permitting, 2010-2014			
	SF	MF	SUM
Ashland	83	97	180
Dover	98	0	98
Holliston	174	34	208
Medfield	90	92	182
Millis	51	14	65
Sherborn	20	0	20
TOTAL	516	237	753

Source: Census Building Permit Survey

Of the 700-plus units produced in the focus area, Sherborn issued 20 permits, all of which were for single-family houses. This means the town has met less than 1% of the overall projected housing demand for this focus area between 2010 and 2014, and only slightly more than 1% of the local projected housing demand. This large unmet housing need, combined with relatively low land costs, has also been observed by the development community as evidenced by recent 40B activity in the community. Since 2015, Sherborn has seen an expanding pipeline of proposed housing units, most of which proposed under the 40B regulations. Based on the current development pipeline (shown on page 17), it's clear that developers understand there is unmet residential market demand in Sherborn. This substantial development pipeline is a stark contrast to the previous permitting activity from 2010 through 2014, when only 20 single-family home permits were approved and 0 multi-family permits were approved.

Unmet Demand, 2014-2020	
	UNITS
Ashland	7,417
Dover	2,161
Holliston	5,425
Medfield	4,529
Millis	3,215
Sherborn	1,619
TOTAL	24,366

INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRAINTS

The water, wastewater and roadway infrastructure that serves Sherborn Town Center is an important aspect of its future potential. The lack of a municipal sewer and water system in Sherborn are a primary consideration for redevelopment of the scale and density under consideration through the Town Center Housing Study. Each of the housing types explored in the previous section offer a base density that is higher than that of a single family home. As such, the State Environmental Code (310 CMR 15.000), Title 5, has direct consequence on the financial feasibility and scale of a housing development. Title 5 establishes an exact limitation on the volume that a conventional on-site sewage disposal system is allowed to process. This limitation is 10,000 gallons per day. The regulation also defines the number of gallons that are assumed to be produced by each bedroom of a housing unit, 110 gallons per bedroom. These two factors limit residential development that is to be served by conventional on-site sewage disposal systems to 90 bedrooms. (10,000 total gallons per day/110 gallons per day per bedroom).

Unit mix of (studio, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, and 3-bedroom) apartments varies from development to development so the exact maximum number of units is not predetermined. However, if a unit mix is weighted

toward smaller units (40% 1-bedroom, 45% 2-bedroom, 15% 3-bedroom), it would result in about **53 units** of housing including (22) 1-bedrooms, (25) 2-bedrooms, and (6) 3-bedrooms. The total number of bedrooms is 90. Of course, the site must be able to support 53 units in terms of the building, parking and land needed for a conventional on-site sewage disposal system.

For many of the properties in Town Center, this set of requirements would present some challenges. First, the scale of many of the parcels is only large enough to support a redeveloped and denser mixed-use retail and residential building if sharing of infrastructure and parking needs can occur in conjunction with adjacent and abutting properties. An agreement between property owners would need to be reached to support such redevelopment. If such an agreement were technically and politically feasible, the development would potentially be of a modest enough scale that it would not be able to adequately spread the costs of non-conventional sewage disposal systems. The provision of municipal sewer could change the need to physically accommodate wastewater needs or share that infrastructure with adjacent properties. The provision of adequate parking for many smaller parcels, if redeveloped, would remain contingent on agreement with surrounding properties to support the parking needs of the development.

If a parcel in Town Center is available that is large enough to support a sizeable mixed-use development that may exceed the Title 5 limitations for on-site sewage disposal, a package treatment system could be designed and employed to expand the density and scale of the development. It has been observed through this process that the approximately 90 bedroom limitation posed by Title 5, may be about aligned with the community sensitivities to scale and density in Sherborn Town Center. In other words, even if a more expensive on-site package treatment system could be employed and used to support a denser residential project, that project would probably be met with resistance from the community because of its scale. That's not to say that this type of project couldn't be done well, or provide overall benefit to Sherborn Town Center, but that the infrastructure limitations may not be the only impediment. The provision of municipal sewer service also factors into these considerations. The municipal sewer service would provide greater flexibility for the type and scale of redevelopment that could occur, while allowing the costs to be distributed, rather than carried by a single development project. If municipal infrastructure is available for Town Center housing projects, it would be a financial benefit to the development, both in terms of reducing on-site construction costs and providing the ability to maximize use of the land.

PRECEDENT CONSIDERATIONS

When considering the constraints and feasibility of what may or may not happen, it is also helpful to look to local examples of what could possibly happen. The following precedent projects are outlined, as each one is thought to be a good example for how the two most community preferred types of redevelopment could occur in the Town Center. The first two precedents offer examples of mixed-use development from Bedford and Lincoln, MA and the third precedent offers a clustered housing example from New Hampshire.

Bedford Great Road Mixed-Use Redevelopment

A mixed-use redevelopment project has been completed at the center of Great Road in Bedford, MA. This is a mixed-use development that provides a new vitality to the center of Bedford with additional ground floor retail, restaurant, and commercial space and upper level residential units. The scale is also interesting and directly translatable to Sherborn, retaining a two-story building height that is a part of the immediate context. The upper level includes 7 residential units. Parking is provided in the rear of the building to maintain a Town Center feel and promote walkability. The images below are from Google Street View and provide a before (left) and after (right) snapshot of the difference this type of redevelopment has made to the vitality and character of this portion of Great Road in Bedford.



Lincoln Station Redevelopment

The redevelopment around Lincoln Station in Lincoln, MA provides several interesting lessons for redevelopment and conservation that could be applied in some form to Sherborn. First, land around the commuter rail station was acquired decades ago by the Rural Land Foundation (RLF) of Lincoln. Part of this land, about 16 acres, was used to create 125 residential units that included affordable and moderate income housing and several commercial uses. All designed to support and enhance the commuter rail station. The Rural Land Foundation maintains local control over the commercial center with an objective to benefit the community by ensuring that core commercial services provide a convenience for Lincoln residents. Additionally, proceeds from this Lincoln Station redevelopment are used to protect and conserve Lincoln's open space. The commercial uses include a Donelan's Supermarket, a small local market chain with locations in Lincoln, Wayland, Acton, Littleton, Groton and Pepperell. The two images below show the scale and character of the Lincoln Station redevelopment.



Nubanusit Neighborhood and Farm

Another precedent worth considering for a different model of a clustered housing approach for the area around Sherborn Town Center is the Nubanusit Neighborhood in Peterborough, New Hampshire. The residential neighborhood includes 29 households and is dedicated to sustainability, community, and farming – core values that would fit well within the context of Sherborn. The housing includes single family homes, duplexes and four unit homes that are composed around community open spaces, a common house and a farm with parking set at the perimeter of the core community. The 4,200 square foot common house includes an entertaining room, large kitchen, community rooms and children’s play space. The land area of the community is substantial, approximately 113 acres, but this type of community could occur on a smaller property and be scaled to match the land. The houses are clustered together on the site, in order to protect more community open space and farmland. Images of the Nubanusit neighborhood from www.peterboroughcohousing.org are shown below, including a duplex, the common house, and farm (left to right). The image below provides a bird’s eye view of the overall community design with clustered housing, shared open spaces and surrounding wooded conservation area.



Town Center Conclusions and Recommendations

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

The Town of Sherborn has a number of active processes that can integrate the feedback and recommendations of this MAPC study. The following immediate next steps are recommended to assist Sherborn in better aligning its housing production with its support of the Town Center. While the focus of the recommendations remains on the Town Center, many of these recommendations for immediate next steps are applicable to the broader context of housing in the Town of Sherborn and highlight ongoing coordination with Town efforts underway.

1. **Track and pursue “safe harbor” using demonstrated Recent Progress towards the 10% SHI goal**, allowing the Town to pause potential additional 40B development for one year while other housing actions can be advanced.

For communities where SHI-eligible housing units totally 2% or more of total housing have been added within the 12 months preceding the filing of a comprehensive permit, Chapter 40B (Recent Progress, 760 CMR 56.03(3)(1)(c), 56.03(5)) provides the option to seek safe harbor. Units that count towards the 2% are either inventoried on the SHI, under building permit, available for occupancy, or established as occupied as of the date of the applicant’s initial submission to the ZBA.¹ In Sherborn, 2% amounts to 30 units.

If this is the case, the process for achieving Recent Progress safe harbor works as follows:

- Within 15 days of opening the comprehensive permit hearing, the ZBA must provide written notice to the applicant with a copy to DHCD that it considers a denial of the permit or imposition of conditions/requirements would be consistent with local needs, on what grounds, and supportive documentation (including the above mentioned information on units counting towards 2%).
- The applicant has 15 days to challenge the ZBA assertion by providing a claim and corresponding supportive documentation to the ZBA and DHCD.
- DHCD has 30 days following receipt of all materials to issue a decision. Failure to act within this timeframe is equal to a decision in favor of the ZBA.
- Should they so choose, either the ZBA or applicant can then file an interlocutory appeal to the Housing Appeals Committee within 20 days of the DHCD decision.

The period of safe harbor under Recent Progress varies. For example, if the comprehensive permit application which the ZBA is seeking to deny is filed 11 months after the creation of the units the Town is counting towards Recent Progress, then the period of safe harbor would be 1 month. If the comprehensive permit were filed 1 month after the creation of those units, then the period of safe harbor would be 11 months.

More information on this process can be found online at www.mass.gov/dhcd.

¹ Units that require a Comprehensive Permit under M.G.L. c.40B, §§ 20 through 23, or a zoning approval under c.40A or completion of plan review under M.G.L. c.40R, count towards Recent Progress beginning on the date when (a) the permit or approval is filed with the municipal clerk, notwithstanding any appeal by a party other than the Board, but subject to the time limit for counting such units set forth at 760 CMR 56.03(2)(c), or (b) on the date when the last appeal by the Board is fully resolved.

In the pursuit and accomplishment of any “safe harbor,” it is important that the Town use the period that follows productively. This could mean using that time to develop and potentially have certified a Housing Production Plan (HPP) or otherwise positioning the Town to respond to future 40B development proposals by articulating what type of housing it would support and where.

2. **Articulate clear support for housing projects proposed in or near Town Center and define the characteristics of those projects**, items that would be seen as required and desirable by the Town should be clearly communicated. This articulation has begun through previous Town Center studies, the General Plan, and this report, and can be expanded on a project-by-project basis. One of the primary conclusions of this study is that additional housing units in Sherborn Town Center are an important part of supporting the vision for a more vital and attractive town center for the community. Adding housing to the Town Center may be part of the solution for the Town, in terms of improving the availability of affordable housing, but the focus of adding housing to the Town Center is to support local businesses, concentrate activity at the center, and add a built-in source of pedestrians and activity.

One step for the Town to articulate a clear support for housing in or near Town Center, would be the formal endorsement of this MAPC report by the Planning Board and/or Board of Selectmen or the drafting of a letter of support for specific recommendations that are brought forward through this report. Additionally, many of the recommendations are relevant to and appropriate for the updates underway for the Town’s General Plan and anticipated Housing Production Plan. Both documents could and should echo the overall support for additional housing as an important part of the economic development efforts for the Town Center.

In addition to the helpful precedents outlined in the previous section, Millis, MA offers a unique example of articulating support for a specific vision and then following through with implementation. Millis desired to maintain its rural character, build a strong tax base and retain a healthy economy. The Town completed a Master Plan process that articulated these goals and an overall vision. This articulation was implemented through mixed-use zoning and resulted in a mixed-use redevelopment that offers an alternative to the typical Millis single family home and created additional vitality for the Town Center. The images below show the pre-development (left) and post-development images (right).



Clear articulation of support is aided by a clear definition of terms. Several terms are used in this report and will be used as efforts proceed in Town Center. Several of the most important terms

are clearly defined below. Community meetings or other forums for discussion may want to post or circulate these terms to be clearly communicate the topics. *Mixed-use* or *mixed-use development* refers to the combination of multiple uses within a single building (vertically mixed) or within the same development site within several buildings (horizontally mixed), the uses may be residential, office, retail, restaurant, or community uses. In this study, *multi-dwelling* building or unit has been used a general term that refers to any housing type that includes multiple separate housing units. A multi-dwelling may include duplexes, townhouses, or multi-family buildings. *Multi-family* is used as a more specific term referring to a specific housing type that includes multiple units stacked vertically with a shared entry, vertical circulation, and interior central corridor that accesses the units.

3. **Hire a consultant to perform a Fiscal Impact Analysis** of the potential impacts of the housing development pipeline on the Town services and infrastructure to develop an approach to providing services that may be needed in the future. As part of this study process, MAPC both facilitated and attended Community Forums that discussed housing in the Town Center. Several community members and meeting attendees mentioned that they were concerned about the fiscal impact on Town services of new housing in the current development pipeline.

A fiscal impact analysis compares the municipal operating and capital costs (Police, Fire, schools, roads, etc.) with the municipal revenue generation (property taxes) projected and estimates the balance of the impact on the Town financially, to determine whether a proposed development may have a positive or negative impact on Town financials. The importance of this type of study is to provide more detailed information as to how the Town can prepare for these impacts and use the time prior the completion of proposed projects to make any adjustments in services that may be necessary, or at least have a plan and be prepared to make those changes as they may be needed. A Fiscal Impact Analysis could be performed for a single project or for the current development pipeline of proposed projects. In Sherborn's current circumstance, the latter is probably preferable. This study may be able to be at least partially funded by the development proponents for projects currently proposed.

While not a comprehensive list, the following economic development consultants have recently provided Fiscal Impact Analyses in New England Communities and may be able to offer initial advice about pursuing this type of study. TischlerBise is a fiscal, economic and planning consultancy that recently provided the City of Somerville with a Fiscal Impact Analysis. Camoin Associates recently provided economic development consulting services and a Fiscal Impact Analysis to Northampton, MA. Economic & Policy Resources, Inc. is a Vermont-based consultant that has provided Fiscal Impact Analyses. RKG Associates Inc. are economic planning and real estate consultants that provide Fiscal Impact Analyses. Other resources that may be helpful include DHCD's *Growth Impact Handbook* and the UMass Donahue Institute's *The Fiscal Impact of New Housing Development in Massachusetts: A Critical Analysis*, 2003.

For immediate next steps, the Town could either ask one of the communities listed above if they have the RFP or RFQ that associated with the Fiscal Impact work they had performed and then prepare a similar RFP or RFQ for a Fiscal Impact Analysis of Recent Housing Development Proposals in Sherborn or could speak with one of the listed consultants to better understand how to frame and request the type of analysis that would be most appropriate for Sherborn's needs.

4. **Draft and approve a Town-supported Housing Production Plan** to allow the Town to use current housing production to its advantage and to become more proactive in managing housing development.

Sherborn should create and adopt a five-year HPP to help position the Town to address unmet housing needs in the community; influence the type, amount, and location of affordable housing; work towards the State mandate requiring 10% of total year-round housing units be affordable; and possibly prevent unwanted 40B development.

Sherborn can choose to work with MAPC or another consultant to develop a HPP, which includes an assessment of the community's housing needs and demand based on current data, population trends, and regional growth factors; an analysis of regulatory and non-regulatory development constraints; identification of specific sites where the Town will encourage affordable housing development; housing goals, including a numerical annual housing production goal; strategies for achieving goals; and an implementation plan. MAPC recommends that this planning process be public and transparent, including adequate community outreach and community engagement strategies like forums, a survey, and roundtables. This can typically be achieved with a budget of \$25,000 over a nine-month period.

The Town Planner plays an important role in the HPP planning process, even if the planning department outsources the lead role to a consulting project team. Typically, he or she provides needed qualitative and quantitative, such as information on development constraints including school capacity and infrastructure, existing municipal tools to produce affordable housing, and the residential development pipeline. This person may also assist with preparation for public meetings and reviews drafts of the plan in progress. Sherborn may consider whether an advisory committee made up of residents and members of various boards would be helpful in guiding this planning process and shaping goals and strategies.

The final plan must be adopted by the Sherborn Planning Board and Board of Selectmen. Towards that end, it is important that members of both are involved in the planning process, familiar with plan content, and aware that the plan cannot be approved by DHCD without local adoption. Typically, the project lead will give a presentation on the key findings and housing strategies at a Planning Board and at a Board of Selectmen meeting; sometimes this occurs at a joint meeting.

Once adopted, the final plan, minutes from the adoption meeting(s), and a letter of support from the Town Manager can be submitted to DHCD. DHCD conducts an initial 30-day completeness review, and offers the municipality the opportunity to remedy any deficiencies. Within 90 days of DHCD's finding that the HPP is complete, it will approve the plan providing it meets all requirements. If disapproved, DHCD will offer a statement of reasons. A revised HPP can be submitted at any time.

5. **Certify the Housing Production Plan** using eligible housing projects to demonstrate the required rate of housing unit production.

Once an HPP has been approved by DHCD, Sherborn can seek safe harbor if the Town is able to demonstrate compliance with plan goals ((760 CMR 56.03(1)(b), 56.03(c) - (f)), specifically the numerical annual housing production goal. If Sherborn can provide evidence of recent and future housing production that indicates the town is on track to achieve an increase in SHI-eligible housing

by at least 0.5% of total units each calendar year over a 5-year period, the town is eligible for 1 year of safe harbor; if the rate is 1% or higher, safe harbor can be granted for 2 years.

The first step in this process is for Sherborn to gather the necessary documentation, including copies of Comprehensive Permits, residential building permits, and/or occupancy permits. Units being counted must have been produced after the HPP was approved. If at any time the units become ineligible for the SHI, the certification will lapse as of that date. If those units once again become eligible for inclusion on the SHI during the remaining term of the certification period, then the certification will be reinstated.

Requests for certification will be accepted by DHCD at any time during the calendar year in which the units are produced and up to January 10th of the following year. If granted, the certification is effective as of the date that the municipality achieved its numerical target for the calendar year in question, regardless of the date of the certification notice from DHCD.

Since 2003, more than 50 municipalities have achieved DHCD certification of compliance with HPP goals. Were Sherborn to be counted among them, it is important that the Town use the period of safe harbor to continue to implement HPP strategies, work with affordable housing developers within the zoning bylaw, and generally position itself to meet ongoing housing need and demand. No form of safe harbor—Recent Progress, certification, getting to 10% on the SHI, or others—grants permanent relief from 40B development. It is likely that developers will show continued interest in Sherborn so long as there is site availability. Therefore, Sherborn should take the time to determine how best to respond to future 40B proposals and prepare to do so.

6. **Monitor progress of housing production** and continue to identify properties or housing proposals that support the Town Center and are consistent with broader Housing Production Plan goals.

Whether it be a Housing Production Plan Implementation Committee or some other entity, it is important to monitor progress made towards achieving HPP goals, successes and challenges with strategy implementation, the town's changing housing landscape and attitude towards housing, and of course market-rate and affordable housing production.

Municipalities have the responsibility of submitting updated SHI numbers to DHCD every two years, but Sherborn should track these numbers on a semi-annual basis if not more frequently given the Town's high level of 40B activity. Different communities assign this responsibility to different entities, such as the Town Planner, local housing corporation or committee, or a Regional Housing Services Office or the like.

The portion of units in a project that are eligible for inclusion on the SHI depends on whether it is rental or homeownership. In a rental project, if at least 25% of units will be occupied by households earning up to 80% of AMI or if at least 20% of units will be occupied by households earning up to 50% of AMI, then 100% of units are eligible for inclusion on the SHI (even the market-rate units). If fewer than those percentages of units are so restricted, then only the restricted units are eligible. In homeownership projects, only the affordable units are eligible for inclusion on the SHI.

In 2020, well within the five-year timeframe of a Sherborn HPP developed in the next couple of years, the decennial Census will release new housing figures. This statistic will serve as the new denominator, with Sherborn's number of SHI-eligible units in the numerator, to calculate the updated rate of affordable housing in town. Because the denominator will have increased, so too should the numerator, lest Sherborn fall further below 10% on the SHI. One way to work towards

this is by adopting an inclusionary housing policy that requires 10% or more of units in a new housing development of a certain scale to be eligible for inclusion on the SHI.

Another risk to achieving 10% is SHI units at risk of expiration. In Sherborn, the 10 units at Leland Farms are set to expire in 2019. The Town should monitor these units, and actively work with the property owner to achieve long-term preservation. Towards that end, the Town can work to connect the property owner with State agencies such as the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC) to secure the housing subsidies that would enable these ownership units to remain affordable to households earning at or below 80% of AMI.

MID TERM ACTIONS

In addition to the immediate next steps outlined above, and directly related to housing production, the following complementary steps should be pursued to advance the synergy between Town Center and housing patterns in Sherborn. Each of the following would be outlined in greater detail as part of the final report.

1. **Exploration of New Town Center zoning** that accommodates mixed-use redevelopment. As a result of this Study, an important conclusion can be drawn relative to the current zoning regulations in Sherborn. The Town Center zoning does not currently allow for the type of housing and redevelopment opportunities that would be most consistent with the community preferences that have been expressed.

New Town Center zoning could be achieved in a number of ways, potentially the creation of a new underlying zone would be one approach. This new zone, the Town Center, zone would be focused on the enhancement of Town Center through mixed-use development, walkability and the support of small businesses. Another approach would be a Town Center Overlay zone that could operate independently of underlying zoning boundaries, allow added uses, and provide incentives for achieving Town Center goals.

Given the sensitive nature of this type of development in Sherborn's Town Center, it would be advisable to require a Special Permit for mixed-use development. The special permit granting authority would be the Planning Board.

The following characteristics of the current of the current zoning (Business G District) should be modified for the new Town Center zoning:

- a. **Allowed Uses** – allow vertical mixing of uses in the same building, or horizontal mixing of uses in multiple buildings on the same lot. The first floor uses with street frontage should be reserved for retail, restaurant or office uses. Upper levels should typically, be reserved for residential uses, but may include office uses as well. A limitation on the density of housing units, ratio of residential area to commercial area or other metrics for the amount and mix of uses is often used, but for Sherborn Town Center this type of limitation may pose arbitrary limitations on the type of mix and amount of development program that may be required for financial feasibility. Language that asserts that the uses must be mixed between commercial and residential and the location of commercial is at on the first floor, oriented to the street, leaves enough flexibility for a variety of development programs. Also, the dwellings associated with the mixed-use development should not be required to conform to the dimensional requirements for Residence A, as noted in Section 4.3.6 of the Zoning By-Law.
- b. **Dimensional Regulations, Setbacks** – the Business G District currently has a front setback of 60 feet. This setback is too far from the street to create the type of walkable, mixed-use

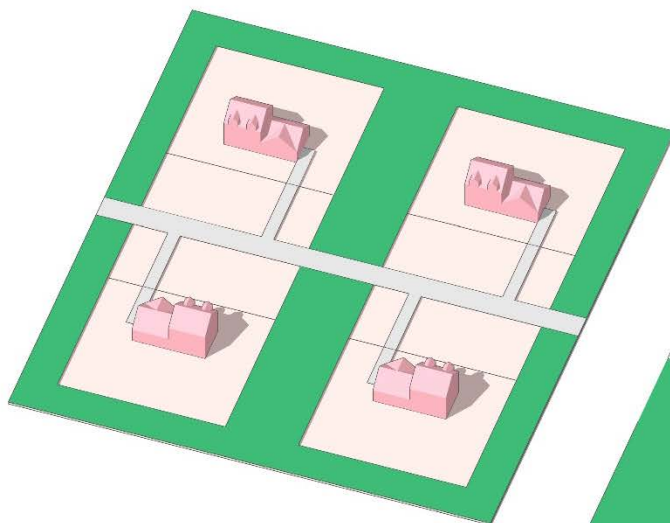
Town Center that is desired. The new zone should potentially reduce setbacks required in Town Center, while still maintaining a street buffer to retain the rural village scale of Sherborn Town Center. A recommendation would be to reduce the front setback to 15 feet, or a range of between 15 minimum and 30 feet maximum.

- c. **Dimensional Regulations, Height** – the Business G District currently has a maximum height of 2.5 stories and 35 feet. This height limitation may pose feasibility issues in allowing financially viable projects that are able to build enough development program to support the investment. The new zone should potentially increase allowable height in the Town Center, while still retaining a rural village scale that respects the context. A recommendation would be to increase the maximum height from 2.5 to, at minimum, 3 stories. Or, 3.5 stories, if this scale would be acceptable to the community.
 - d. **Dimensional Regulations, Lot Coverage** – the Business G District currently has a maximum lot coverage of 1/3 or 33%. This lot coverage limitation may pose feasibility issues in allowing financially viable projects that are able to build enough development program to support the investment. The new zone should potentially increase maximum lot coverage from 33% to 50% (building footprint coverage within the lot) to allow more flexibility and more incentive due to an increase in potential scale of the development program.
 - e. **Parking Requirements** – some language could be included regarding possible parking reductions. One approach would be to allow the development to justify its own parking required as part of review and approval. Another method would be to allow shared use parking reductions, such that residential and retail uses would not need to provide the full sum of all spaces required for each individual use, but that a reduction could occur based on some portion of the spaces being used as different times. The Urban Land Institute has a detailed *Shared Parking* reduction methodology and calculation that could be used for this purpose.
 - f. **Other Requirements** – other requirements that are part of the Town's Planned Unit Development Special Permit, may be useful to include in mixed-use redevelopment zoning, such as pedestrian linkages to abutting properties, vehicular linkage with abutting business parcels, significant public amenities on or off site, and building designs that are appropriate for a small New England Village. Another requirement may be the provision of shared parking allowed between adjacent parcels and the ability to provide and use parking across property boundaries with agreements between property owners.
2. **Replacement of the Town's Open Space Subdivision Special Permit with a new Clustered Housing Provision** to better define the characteristics of clustered housing near Town Center or creation of a new clustered housing zoning district. The current Open Space Special Permit was added to the Zoning By-Law in 1996. No project has ever been advanced under the Open Space Special Permit as it is currently written and no subdivision project has occurred in Sherborn more generally. As outlined in review of the Community Forum, an interest in clustered housing has been expressed by the community with the shared goals of improving housing production, offering a new type of housing or neighborhood and enhancing the preservation of open space. As part of this change, the existing Open Space Special Permit, Section 4.5, could be replaced, removed, or remain in place.

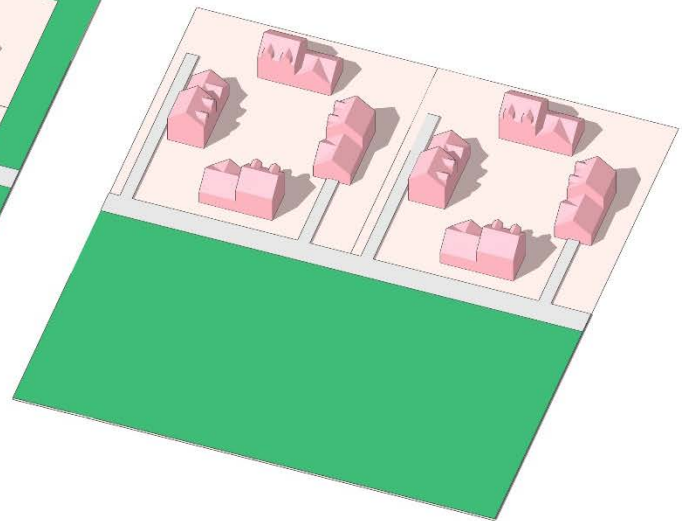
The current Open Space Subdivision includes a minimum area of 6 acres, requires a minimum of 40% undeveloped upland area and allows no more building lots than the number of Standard Subdivision Lots that would be allowed on the parcel of land subject to the application. The

incentive for offering this commitment to open space is flexibility in the site planning of the project. This incentive has not been enough to attract use of the special permit.

A new Clustered Housing Special Permit may be more attractive as the recommendation would be to add an increase in density, along with flexibility, as the primary incentives. Under this incentive structure other requirements, including the conservation of undeveloped land, integration of low impact development (LID) strategies and sustainability of the buildings (zero net energy or other standards could potentially be part of the special permit. The densest residential district in Sherborn is currently 1 unit per acre. A Clustered Housing Special Permit could potentially double that density, while preserving large amounts of contiguous conservation land and defining more community-oriented housing and useable shared open spaces. The density could potentially increase if connected to a prescribed reduction in the size of the housing. The simple diagram below compares four 1-acre residential zoning lots with approximately 3,000 square foot homes, one on each lot (left diagram). The required setbacks from the side and rear of the lot are effectively distributed conservation land (the areas in green). The same four acre area could be used to cluster the same 3,000 square foot homes more closely together around shared open spaces (right diagram). This clustering also could allow the number of homes to double, from four to eight and conserve approximately half of the 4 acre area as contiguous undeveloped land. The overall area of conservation should be at least 50% and in some clustered housing examples it is as high as 75%.



Example Diagram – Clustered Housing
More efficient use of 4 acres



Example Diagram – Residence A
1 acre minimum lot size; 4 houses
requires 4 acres

The baseline density of a Clustered Housing Special Permit could also be increased as other community benefits are increased, such as public parks or playgrounds, enhanced sustainability and energy efficiency or other benefits expressed by the community. The clustered housing provision should also permit community sewage disposal systems that are shared among homes and not required to be a part of individual house lots. The undeveloped conservation land could be required to have a conservation easement or deed restriction put in place. Lastly, a concept similar to transfer of development rights, could be potentially used to combine other lots in meeting

open space requirements of the clustered housing provision. If off-site the requirement could be met with the purchase of other property that would be deed-restricted as undeveloped or open space, would potentially be accessible and have equal or greater conservation value as the land to be developed.

3. **Close study and implementation of the pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic improvements** should be undertaken to reinforce a walkable mixed-use Town Center. The ability to safely walk and bike in and around the vicinity of Town Center is an important aspect of its economic health and vitality, investments the Town could make in public realm improvements could further incentivize and encourage private investments in the Town Center. Below are recommendations for improving walkability and connectivity in the Town Center. This list may not be comprehensive, but at least provides a starting point for the type of meaningful improvements that could occur.
 - a. **Sidewalks** – add and connect continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street for Main Street and Washington Street in the Town Center. Connect all public sidewalks to private site circulation that provides safe and accessible pedestrian routes to all building entries.
 - b. **Pedestrian Crossings** – expand the on-demand rapid flashing beacons at marked pedestrian crossings in the Town Center, one location would be in front of C&L Frosty.
 - c. **Bicycle Infrastructure** – at minimum add sharrows and “share the lane” signage in the Town Center, if roadway width allows, add bicycle lanes.
 - d. **Shared Parking** – encourage sharing of parking resources between Town Center property owners and connection of parking areas with circulation patterns independent of Main Street. Expand the parking supply that is aligned with the rail corridor at the rear of properties on the west side of Main Street – provide an example shared parking agreement to property owners that may consider forming such agreements with abutters.
 - e. **Streetscape Improvements** – beautification of Town Center streetscape, improvement of access management and consolidation of curb cuts to allow more continuous pedestrian environment and improved landscaping areas.
 - f. **Potential Transit Connections** – explore the potential for Town Center transit that could consider a service loop that may include West Natick or Natick Center commuter rail stations, or Wellesley and Holliston to create a Metrowest service that can reinforce the centers of activity in neighboring towns, including Sherborn Town Center.
 - g. **Coordinate and Mitigate Impacts** – study of traffic impacts associated with each development project and potential public realm investments that could be associated with each development project.
4. **Continued exploration and progress toward infrastructure improvements** for the Town Center, including the provision of a water and wastewater district. This study highlights the limited availability of opportunities to invest in the improvement of properties in the Town Center and the potential for public health risks that may be associated with on-site sewage treatment and drinking water sources in close proximity with more intensely used and developed land in the Town Center. When an opportunity to invest in the Town Center is pursued it should be supported and leveraged to the best advantage of the Town Center. One method to tangibly show support is through the provision of appropriate infrastructure. The current lack of water and sewer infrastructure reduces the flexibility of future development opportunities. Water and sewer infrastructure is not only about development and new buildings, it would allow for a more independent, flexible and deliberate improvement in the Town Center through the sharing of resource and allowing the land to be used more efficiently and productively.

As has been underway for nearly a decade, the Town of Sherborn should continue the exploration and study of a Town Center Water District. In 2007, the Town Center Water District Workgroup submitted a Final Report to the Sherborn Board of Selectmen. In the same year, the voters of Sherborn supported a non-binding ballot question: Shall the Town encourage the formation of a public water and/or sewer system to service the current Business District?" In 2013, a "smart sewerage" committee was formed and worked with the Charles River Watershed Association to explore the options that may be available for a water and sewer district in Sherborn Town Center. The Town currently has a consultant study underway to provide an estimate of the potential costs associated with a water and sewer district for Town Center.

Once the potential costs are understood and an approach to the water and sewer district is clearly outlined, the potential opportunity should be discussed with landowners and business owners in the Town Center district. A coalition of landowners that support the water and sewer district should be formed and help articulate and advocate for the implementation of the water and sewer infrastructure. The responsibilities of the Town, landowners, and tax payers should be clearly articulated and drafted into a warrant article for approval of Town Center water and wastewater infrastructure at Town Meeting.

5. **Tracking and confirmation of new household composition** and impact on local market demand for retail and public services, including police, fire, and schools.

Sherborn must monitor the changing housing landscape in relation to market demand and capacity of public services. Data relating to household formation and population growth should be tracked, including new residential building permits issued, new electric meters, and new telephone hookups. The number of new housing units produced and occupied should also be tracked and compared to MAPC's housing unit demand projections for Sherborn to understand whether the town could absorb additional units.

Building on the Fiscal Impact Analysis, data on new housing units should be compared to school enrollment, local traffic and accident statistics, water and sewage capacity, calls to police, calls to the fire department, and other data pertaining to public services to understand actual versus perceived impacts of housing production in town. A Housing Production Plan Implementation Committee, the Planning Department, or other entity can take the lead on tracking housing data and connecting with the Building Commissioner, Department of Public Works, Superintendent, and other local government entities to gather the relevant comparison metrics.

6. **Consider the drafting and adoption of an inclusionary zoning policy** to maintain affordable housing levels when future housing is developed. An inclusionary zoning policy either requires or encourages a certain percentage of housing units produced through future development to be affordable housing units. Typically, the percentage of affordable housing units required to be included is in the range of 10-15%. This type of policy would reduce the risk that future housing development may reduce the Town's overall percentage of affordable units to below 10% on the SHI. It also provides the benefit of integrating a modest amount of affordable units with the market rate units that are produced through future development opportunities. Typically, affordability is set at a level of 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). For this calculation, Sherborn is part of the HUD Metro Fair Market Rents Area of Boston-Cambridge-Quincy. The income calculations tend to change every year, in 2016 the 80% AMI calculations for Sherborn are shown here for reference: 1-person household: \$51,150; 2-person household: \$58,450; 4-person household: \$73,050.

7. **Consider the revision and expansion of an accessory dwelling unit policy** to allow more opportunity for the addition of modest housing units that could be added to existing lots near the Town Center. Currently, accessory dwelling of this type are restricted in the Zoning By-Law to either a housekeeping unit or a Low or Moderate Income Apartment unit. At least the low or moderate income apartment unit portion of the accessory dwelling bylaw has not yet been used to approve and permit an accessory dwelling. Relaxing the conditions that are required to approve an accessory dwelling unit could provide additional residents within walking distance of the Town Center.

TOWN CENTER PRINCIPLES

In conclusion, based on review of previous documents, current discussions and the analyses that are part of this study. A set of consistent principles underlies most of the shared vision and ambition for Sherborn Town Center. In the advancement of development proposals, infrastructure investments or streetscape improvements, these principles should be referenced and used as both a guide and checklist for public and private investments and projects appropriate for Town Center. Each new investment or project that is proposed to be located in the Town Center should contribute to the vitality of the center and be consistent with these principles. Town center housing and other investments should contribute the following to the betterment of the district and the Town:

1. **Concentrate Uses** – By building on the concentration of uses already assembled in Town Center, other land in the town may be conserved for other uses such as open space, agriculture or Town Forest, development near Town Center should also conserve portions of property away from the center and transition in scale and density, reducing while moving away the center. Proposed uses that would attract residents to the Town Center on a regular basis are preferred. Proposed uses that support a walkable and pedestrian-oriented environment are preferred. Proposed uses that are auto-oriented or auto-related are discouraged in the Town Center.
2. **Increase Density of Uses** – Each Town Center investment should increase the critical mass of activity in the Town Center. In the Town Center, the number of properties with frontage on primary streets is finite and must be used thoughtfully to increase vitality in the Town Center with each new investment or use. Proposed uses that maximize utilization of Town Center land are preferred. This maximization may occur through shared infrastructure or mixing of uses. Proposed uses that are revenue generating to grow the Town's ability to support the Town Center are preferred. Mixes of uses that may experience peak uses at different times of the day or week are preferred to expand and distribute the vitality and intensity of activity in the Town Center and to allow for parking resources to be used more efficiently by multiple uses.
3. **Increase Pedestrian and Bike Safety and Amenity** – Public and private investments should be designed to increase the walkability and bikeability of the Town Center by adding sidewalks, bike amenities, improved landscape, adding connections between properties, connections to trails small plazas and open spaces or other pedestrian or bicycle amenities, such as benches, bike racks, pedestrian-scaled lighting or public art. Proposed improvements that integrate pedestrian and bicycle paths and amenities into the sites with seating, bike parking, and connection to surrounding sidewalks and paths are preferred.
4. **Create Complementary Mix of Uses** – Mixed uses should not only be provided to enhance vitality and activity in the center, but should be provided in such a way to complement other uses and

reinforce positive synergies in the Town Center. A healthy mix of uses in the Town Center creates a critical mass of activity that enables an efficient use of the center that spreads activity and vitality across the time of the day, the days of the week, and the seasons of the year. One measure of a complementary mix of uses is the typical ranges of uses that occur within a successful Town Center. This range of uses could be used to reinforce complementary uses over time in the district. Residential uses integrated into this mix provide support for all uses and build patrons of the Town Center uses directly into the district. The typical range below has been established using best practice data from both the Urban Land Institute and Nielson Retail Data, combined with MAPC's experience with cities and towns in the Boston metropolitan region.

Typical Range of Complementary Town Center Uses

Shoppers Goods	30-40%
Convenience Goods	20-30%
Food Services	10-20%
Personal Services	10-20%
Professional Services	10%
Vacant	5%

5. **Reinforce Town Character** – Strengthen the rural New England village character of Town Center through scale, massing and architectural detailing of future development. Proposed development that includes high quality design and architecture that builds on the Sherborn heritage of a rural New England community is encouraged. Respect for historic structures that are part of the Town Center identity is encouraged. Preservation and reuse of structures in place or considering sensitive relocation on the same site is encouraged. Relocation of historic structures can occur for great benefit to the character of a Town Center and expansion of mixed-use space. One example of this type of approach recently occurred in Westwood, MA as the Historic Colburn School reuse and relocation in Westwood's Center occurred as part of their main public library construction. Gateway properties are encouraged to properly anchor prominent frontages and corners with buildings and active facades and contribute to a welcoming and engaging view and entry into the Town Center. Building and lot frontages, landscape and character are encouraged to reinforce a cohesive and distinct Town Center character for Sherborn.
6. **Improve Landscape, Streetscape and Parking** – Parking that is concealed by its placement and integration with landscape while respecting natural topography and features is encouraged. Parking in front of buildings is discouraged. Parking to the rear of buildings is preferred and parking to the side of buildings is acceptable. New development that looks forward to a more walkable and attractive Town Center is encouraged. New development should not highlight visibility of a large parking supply as a key feature of the site design.
7. **Strengthen Civic and Communal Places** – Expand and enhance civic open spaces that are publicly available and accessible in Town Center. Prefer site plans that integrate community open spaces, including plazas or greens into the layout of the buildings and parking to strengthen a network of community spaces in the Town Center.
8. **Advance sharing of resources across properties in the district** – Share resources such as parking, water, wastewater, etc. to make more efficient and effective use of a compact area. Discussion and creation of agreements for sharing of resources across property lines in the Town Center is encouraged to maximize utilization of land across the district.

Appendix – Additional Analysis

The following summary was part of a more detailed analysis focused on the potential availability of Town Center parcels for redevelopment in the inner and outer walk zones identified for the Town Center. The properties identified are not necessarily associated with any particular development plans or future change, but are instead the collection of properties that represent potential for future redevelopment more generally.

TOWN CENTER PARCEL ANALYSIS

In the targeted Study Area of the Town Center core and inner walking zone, potential parcels were generally identified as noted in the table below. The potential parcels share several important property characteristics, which when combined, would indicate a higher probability of being well-suited to higher density residential redevelopment. The following Study Area patterns help to inform this analysis and reflect patterns of redevelopment challenges.

- Topography
- Wetlands/Waterbodies
- Existing use/development conditions
- Ownership (public/private)
- Conservation Value Map (Mass. Audubon)

Specifically, the potential parcels were identified through the following inquiries about the property characteristics.

1. Is the property vacant?
2. Is the property large enough to support a sizable redevelopment (greater land area than 4 acres)?
3. Is the property relatively flat?
4. Is the property relatively dry (low presence of wetlands or water bodies)?
5. Is the property publicly or privately owned?

The results of these types of inquiries are summarized in the table below. The table reflects that the Study Area may not include a substantial number of potential sites that provide an open opportunity for redevelopment.

Potential Parcels						
Study Area	# of Vacant Properties	# of Properties Larger than 4 acres	# of Properties with Low/Moderate Topography	# of Properties with Low Presence of Wetlands	# of Properties that are Publicly Owned	# of High Opportunity Properties, All Characteristics
Town Core North	5	1	28	21	2	0
Town Core South	4	3	14	11	5	0
Inner Walk Zone North	12	18	unconfirmed	unconfirmed	5	2
Inner Walk Zone South	11	13	unconfirmed	unconfirmed	3	0
Total	32	35	unconfirmed	unconfirmed	15	2