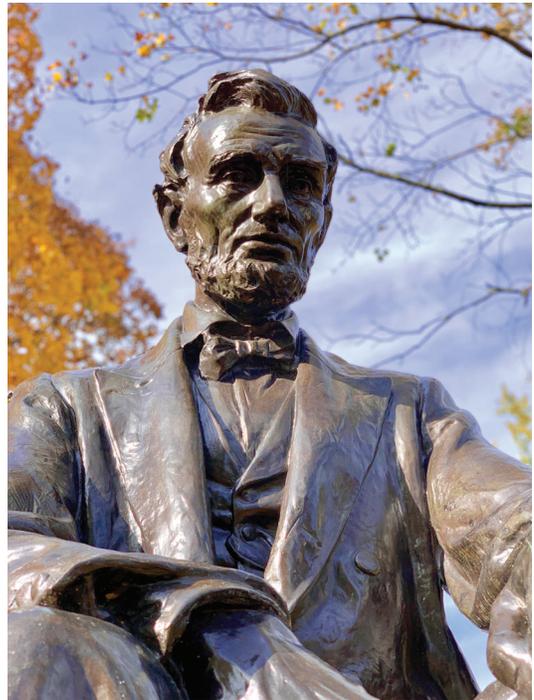


# Town of Hingham MASTER PLAN



Approved by the Hingham Planning Board  
August 23, 2021

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# 1

## Introduction

### What is a Master Plan?

**A master plan is a policy framework to guide decisions about growth and change. Its main purpose is to shape public policy about the use of tools a city or town has to manage growth and change: regulation, public investment, and leadership. A master plan is primarily a plan for a town's physical evolution and a set of policies, programs, and actions to achieve what the plan envisions.**

A master plan is...

- It is a process for deciding what to do, and how, when, why, and where to do it;
- It includes a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of community development;
- It works to improve the community's well-being;
- Its purpose is to create a community that offers better choices for where and how people live;
- It is a plan for preservation and development; and
- It provides recommendations and an action plan, typically for a ten- to twenty-year implementation period.

In Massachusetts, Planning Boards oversee the preparation and periodic update of their community's master plan. G.L. c. 41, § 81D calls for a master plan with text, tables, and maps to identify current

and future needs, trends, problems, and opportunities in:

- Land use
- Housing
- Economic development
- Natural and cultural resources
- Open space and recreation
- Services and facilities
- Circulation

The statute also calls for Goals and Policies and an implementation program to address all of these topics. Like many towns, Hingham chose to expand on the state's minimum list of master plan elements by adding a focus on sustainability. The land use plan, which lays out regulatory reforms to address the Town's needs and embodies all of the other master plan elements, is recorded and documented in the implementation program.

## A Community Speaks

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The foundation for the entire Master Plan is the Vision Statement, crafted and revised by the Master Plan Committee over several meetings in 2020. The Vision Statement provides the framework for the Master Plan goals, and the goals provide the structure for the Master Plan's many recommendations. Ultimately, the recommendations support each of the Master Plan elements.

Developing a shared community vision requires many ways for residents to participate. People who know their town well bring an invaluable perspective to the planning process. They help to educate and inform others who may be new to a town planning exercise. Newcomers to town also provide an invaluable perspective: fresh ideas, experience from other places, and a desire to take part in the public life of their community. Providing multiple avenues for public engagement helps to bring a range of voices into the conversation about a town's future and allows residents, town officials, business owners, and others to learn from one another. It also increases the potential for community support to implement the plan.

At the start of this Master Plan process, the Master Plan Committee approved a community engagement plan from the consultants. The plan laid out an outreach strategy that would span several months and allowed for input from a variety of groups. Central to the engagement process was creating the Master Plan logo and tagline to help residents easily identify any activities relating to the plan's development. Following this, active public outreach began, which included the opportunities described below.

#### Master Plan Committee

The fifteen-member Master Plan Committee met for the first time in September 2019. Over the sum-

### SNAPSHOT: COMMUNITY VISION PROCESS

**6 Master Plan Core Assessment Meetings**

**6 Major Community Visioning Sessions**

**2 Senior Visioning Sessions**

**3 Student Visioning Sessions**

**6 "Meeting in a Box" Sessions**

**4 Community Comment Boards**

**947 Responses to Online Survey**

mer, the Town appointed the committee with representatives from numerous boards, committees, and commissions, along with some "at-large" members. The Master Plan Committee met at least once a month throughout the development of the plan, with more frequent meetings to develop and agree on the plan's recommendations. All of the Committee's meetings were public, and the Planning Department maintained a webpage with meeting materials for public review and a link for submitting comments.

#### Core Assessment Meetings

The community engagement process began with "core assessment" meetings with Town officials, residents, and staff. The meetings introduced the consultants to Hingham's natural and built assets and culture, and notable "cross-cutting themes" affecting more than one element of the plan. A recurring theme in this process was the immense pride Hingham residents take in their town. Peo-

# Hingham's Community Vision

In 2035, Hingham will be a place that ...

**Honors** its coastal New England heritage and **celebrates** its place and role throughout our country's history.

**Safeguards** its coastal and inland natural resources.

**Enhances** public access to Hingham Harbor and its amenities.

**Strengthens** its pride of place and **sense of community** through town-wide events and celebrations.



**Provides infrastructure and services** to encourage multimodal mobility linking key locations throughout town, such as the Shipyard, Harbor, Downtown, and South Hingham.

**Promotes the safety and well-being of older adults** and supports aging in community by providing high-quality amenities and services and encouraging housing that meets the needs of seniors..

**Provides excellent schools** and supports families by meeting the needs of children and youth, offering a wide range of recreation, athletic, social, and cultural activities.

**Provides** for strong, resilient commercial districts by supporting responsible development that brings economic growth and diversifies our tax base.

**Welcomes** racial, cultural, and economic diversity.

**Encourages** a range of housing types and prices.

Systematically **plans for and invests** in planned preventive maintenance and capital improvements to municipal and school facilities and infrastructure.

**Encourages and values** its tradition of public participation in government.

ple value Hingham's natural beauty, excellent services, access to Boston, safety, history, mix of businesses, and town character. In almost all the meetings, however, residents had concerns about the potential impact of new development on the Town, particularly traffic, strain on the schools and municipal services, and the gradual loss of Hingham's charm. These sessions took place on the following dates:

- Open Space and Recreation (9/24/2019)
- Historic Preservation (9/24/2019)
- Transportation (9/24/2019)
- Economic Development (10/09/2019)
- Sustainability, Water, and Energy (10/09/2019)
- Land Use (10/09/2019)
- Community Services and Facilities (10/21/2019) and (11/05/2019)

### Community Visioning Sessions

Following a presentation about the master plan process, participants in community visioning sessions engaged in small- and large- group discussions. Individual input was also provided through comment boards featuring questions about how people would define Hingham's character, what makes Hingham unique, and what they identified as their favorite location in town. The Master Plan Committee and consultants worked together to provide several visioning sessions:

- Monday, 11/18/2019; Morning Session
- Wednesday, 11/20/2019; Evening Session
- Saturday, 11/23/2019; Daytime Session
- Tuesday, 12/11/2019; Evening Session with Hingham Downtown Association
- Wednesday, 12/11/2019; Evening Session



- Friday, 12/13/2019; Morning Session, Senior Center, and Linden Ponds

### Student Visioning Sessions: Voices from Hingham's Future

Members of the Master Plan Committee led visioning sessions at the South School (November 15, 2019; Fifth Grade Leadership Club), Hingham High School (November 18, 2019), and Hingham Middle School (November 19, 2019). Many themes from the student visioning sessions mirrored the adult-centered meetings, such as appreciation for the Town's history, natural beauty, location, and more.

However, the students voiced greater concern about the environment and taking steps to become a "greener" community. They more frequently noted Hingham's lack of diversity, too.

Youth also emphasized a desire for more “hang out” spaces and events around town. Generally, students expressed more pride in Hingham athletics than the adults, so they made more frequent requests for turf fields and better athletic facilities. At the same time, some students wanted to see more focus on non-athletic activities, too.

### “Meeting in a Box” Visioning Sessions

To reach as many people as possible in Hingham, Master Plan Committee members invited numerous organizations and groups to participate in less formal “Meeting in a Box” visioning sessions in the fall of 2019.

- Hingham Republican Town Committee (11/03/2019)
- Ladies’ Book Club, (11/12/2019)
- Men’s Group, Hingham Congregational Church (11/12/2019)
- Hingham Development and Industrial Commission (11/19/2019)
- Ralph’s Hingham Wine Merchant (12/05/2019)
- Special Needs Athletic Partnership (12/12/2019)

### Comment Boards

Comment boards featuring major questions from the visioning sessions were strategically placed around town, beginning with a “kick-off” booth hosted by Master Plan Committee members at the Hingham Farmers’ Market on October 26, 2019. Longer term boards were placed at the Hingham Community Center from November 1-7, 2019, Town Hall from November 5-13, 2019, and the South Shore County Club from November 6-14, 2019. All boards elicited significant feedback.



### Online Survey

In January 2020, the consultants conducted an online visioning survey on the Master Plan Committee’s behalf. The feedback received throughout the previous engagement activities shaped the questions included in the survey, which remained open from January 6-February 11, 2020. Nearly 1,000 people took the survey. Ninety percent identified themselves as Hingham residents.

- Approximately a third of the respondents have lived in Hingham for over 20 years.
- The largest represented age bracket was 45-54 (28 percent).
- At the time of the survey, thirty-seven percent of respondents had children in the Hingham public schools.

Over three quarters of respondents did not participate in any other community visioning events. This reinforced the importance of the survey. Their feedback was new and unique to the planning process.

## What did residents say? THE SURVEY

### People LOVE . . .

- The Town's history and how much it is valued
- Greenspace
- Schools
- Harbor
- Town character
- Sense of community connection and pride
- Commuter options to Boston
- Civic engagement

### Common Concerns ...

- Overdevelopment
- Traffic
- Loss of character
- Homes that do not "blend in" with Hingham (e.g.: newer large single-family homes replacing smaller tear-downs; condos)
- Lack of housing diversity
- Lack of population diversity
- Underutilized waterfront

### Common WANTS ...

- Coordinated traffic lights at select problem locations
- Traffic mitigation
- Sidewalks and better pedestrian access
- Harbor amenities
- Comprehensive green plan
- Community pool

## Planning in 2020

### The Pandemic

When the Master Plan Committee met for the first time on September 18, 2019, no one could have imagined that six months later, an international public health emergency would shut down government office buildings, schools, and businesses. The last year of this Master Plan process coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic that forced retailers, restaurants, and other businesses to close for many weeks. Schools sent children home in March 2020 to finish the year on distance education platforms. At the end of March, Hingham had its first case of COVID-19; by the end of the year, there were over 600.

Churches looked to social media for online worship. Doctors and other health care providers switched to “tele-health” services for all but the very ill. Businesses that never allowed employees to work at home suddenly had no choice. By September, with COVID-19 still spreading and school buildings unable to accommodate all 4,300 students safely, Hingham children and their parents adapted to a “hybrid” plan with alternating days in the classroom and days with in-home learning. With homes converted to make-shift classrooms for children and offices for their parents, the market for desks, laptops, and tablets exploded.

The state gradually loosened restrictions on indoor gatherings in May 2020. Shuttered stores in Downtown Hingham, at the Shipyard, and at Derby Street reopened to socially distanced customers in face masks. Still, some businesses had closed for good. Hand sanitizer stations stood in the doorways of grocery stores, and customers stood six feet apart at checkout counters. Restaurants that never had outdoor seating before started serving everything from cheeseburgers to scallops at sidewalk tables.



Meanwhile, many companies had acclimated to the new world of telecommuting, raising questions about the regional office market – both in Boston, where many Hingham residents work, and locally along the Route 3 corridor. Nowhere have these concerns been more obvious than the dramatic drop in ridership on MBTA commuter lines, the ferry, and the region’s private bus services, all of which were jeopardized, to some degree, by late fall 2020. Local officials, developers, and regional planning and economic development leaders worried that losing public transportation services could put commercial real estate values at risk and threaten new growth. Just about everyone in Hingham understands that all the commercial and housing development around the Shipyard has happened as a direct result of the commuter ferry.

Against the backdrop of a shaken economy, Hingham’s housing market boomed. In 2020, Hingham witnessed one of the highest rates of sale price growth of any town on the South Shore. In October 2020, the median single-family sale price in Hingham climbed to \$985,000, up 26 percent over the previous year, while the inventory of homes for sale dropped to a mere 39 units, or less than a two-month supply. Rental vacancies rose slightly



*Photo by Robin Chan, courtesy of Hingham Journal.*

in the Hingham's established apartment developments, but nowhere near the extent experienced in Downtown Boston. Motivated by some combination of concerns – associating urban density with the pandemic, the attractiveness of more living space for the same or lower rent, or long-term prospects for working at home – renters left Boston and condo owners looked to the suburbs for a home with a yard. The good news for Hingham home sellers is that their properties significantly appreciated in value in 2020. The bad news for home seekers: if Hingham's housing was already out of reach before March 2020, it was even moreso by the end of the year.

### **Black Lives Matter**

As coronavirus infections overwhelmed the U.S., other tensions erupted in plain view. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a Black man, died following his arrest by a White police officer in Minneapolis. Videos of Floyd's last words ("I can't breathe") riveted though social media, triggering racial unrest and sometimes-violent protests throughout the country over the summer. Black Lives Matter signs dotted lawns and roadsides everywhere, including Hingham. Social media feed featuring the #saytheirnames hashtag accelerated.

From small firms to large regional and national corporations, personnel departments promoted job openings with the promise of a diverse, equitable, inclusive workplace. Hingham's own Blue Cross Blue Shield boasted its recognition as among the best places to work for LGBTQ Equality and a Top Diversity Company by the

Urban League. Affluent, predominantly White suburbs started to look for ways to educate the public, address prejudice, and become more welcoming communities to people of color. Hingham joins those communities through recommendations made in this Master Plan.

### **The New Normal**

Despite the worrisome turn of events that COVID-19 and other events caused in Hingham and beyond, Town government continued to serve the community and the Master Plan process moved forward. Unable to hold in-person meetings, Town boards and commissions switched to videoconference services and conducted business remotely – a change that required executive orders from the Governor's office and special legislation as well.

With indoor activities still limited to 25 people in June, Hingham held its Annual Town Meeting outdoors on a Saturday afternoon in sweltering heat and approved some big-ticket items that relate directly to issues described in this Master Plan. By the time the planning process came to a close, the 15-member Master Plan Committee had met some 30 times, sponsored an extensive community visioning program, organized three major "status" events for the public, and worked tirelessly to finish its charge. Throughout, the Committee discussed and deliberated and sometimes argued, always united by respect and a desire to see this project through despite all the hurdles known as 2020.



*Photo by Robin Chan, courtest of Hingham Journal.*

### Near-Term Challenges

**Housing Choice Bill.** While unemployment had eased by year's end and residents settled into the "new normal," other challenges lay on the horizon for Hingham. After four years of promoting changes to the state Zoning Act to remove barriers to housing growth, Gov. Charlie Baker secured passage of his proposed "Housing Choice" bill shortly after the new year (January 14, 2021). Housing Choice has significant implications for Hingham because it:

- Requires MBTA towns to establish an as-of-right multi-family zoning district within a half-mile of at least one station or other public transportation service;
- Reduces to a simple majority vote the adoption of as-of-right zoning for multi-family housing, accessory dwelling units, or open space residential development, or the adop-

tion of zoning for special permits for multi-family housing, density bonuses, detached accessory dwellings, or residential parking waivers;

- Reduces to a simple majority vote the adoption of Chapter 40R (so-called "smart growth" districts); and
- Authorizes the courts to impose cash bond requirements on plaintiffs appealing the approval of new multi-family housing, mixed-use developments, or open space-residential developments.

The Housing Choice bill passed within a few weeks of completing this Master Plan, so the recommendations outlined in Chapter 10 do not reflect the new requirements Hingham will need to address.

**Climate Change.** Another challenge Hingham may face soon is the imposition of tougher emis-

sion standards. On March 26, 2021, Governor Baker signed comprehensive climate change legislation that codifies into law the state's commitment to achieve Net Zero emissions in 2050. The new law, An Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy, among other things, establishes new interim goals for emissions reductions, significantly increases protections for Environmental Justice communities across Massachusetts, and authorizes the administration to implement a new, voluntary energy efficient building code for municipalities. These initiatives will accelerate the need to attend to policies and actions discussed in Chapter 5 of this plan.

**The Local Economy.** In addition, there are unanswered, long-term questions about the future of Hingham's economy. The pandemic brought into high relief many of the problems the retail industry had already experienced for several years as consumers turned to online shopping and scaled back trips to brick-and-mortar stores. Hingham's non-residential tax base is very reliant on the vitality of retail, with significant shopping nodes on Derby Street, the Shipyard, and Downtown/Hingham Square. Exploring ways to diversify the retail experience, enable a wider range of uses, simplify permitting where possible, and support the value of commercial real estate in these locations will be challenging for Hingham. This is especially true as competing properties in Weymouth, Hanover, and elsewhere along the Route 3 corridor have already jump-started the redevel-

opment process with housing as a core component of new mixed-use growth.

### **An Enduring Vision**

Regardless of the pandemic and all the other hurdles faced during this Master Plan effort, what people fundamentally value about Hingham has not changed. The plan's aspirational goals have not changed. Arguably, the timing of implementation and sense of priorities may differ from the Committee's original intentions. However, COVID-19 does not alter how residents feel about the natural resources and built environment that distinguish Hingham from the rest of the South Shore. The urgency to address sea level rise, reduce Hingham's carbon footprint, or solve critical public facility problems like the fate of Foster School are no different now than fifteen months ago. In that spirit, this Master Plan sets a vision and promotes a set of policies for conservation and development that will guide Hingham to 2035, the Town's 400th Anniversary.

**GOALS AND POLICIES**

(See Chapter 10)

Goal	Policies for Decision Makers
<p><b>1. Honor town character.</b></p>	<p>1.1 Continue to document, prioritize, and protect historic buildings and resource areas.</p> <p>1.2 Provide stewardship of priority open space and natural resource areas, connecting passive and active recreation lands wherever appropriate and possible.</p> <p>1.3 Increase vibrancy of the harbor for residents and visitors and improve connectivity to the Downtown.</p> <p>1.4 Develop a strategic plan for public and private historic preservation and heritage tourism.</p> <p>1.5 Facilitate open communication and coordination among all Town boards and committees to advance the Master Plan’s goals and better serve the residents.</p> <p>1.6 Value diversity and inclusiveness in our community.</p>
<p><b>2. Protect the environment and prepare for the impacts of climate change.</b></p>	<p>2.1 Prepare and implement a comprehensive plan to address and adapt to climate change.</p> <p>2.2 Establish goals to achieve Carbon Neutral status by 2050.</p> <p>2.3 Protect critical public infrastructure along the coast from sea level rise.</p> <p>2.4 Reduce energy and water consumption by residents, businesses, and town government.</p> <p>2.5 Enhance public access to the harbor and its amenities while protecting the coastline.</p>

Goal	Policies for Decision Makers
<p><b>3. Improve safety for all modes of travel and reduce traffic congestion.</b></p>	<p>3.1 Improve safety for all modes of travel and reduce traffic congestion.</p> <p>3.2 Enhance public transportation services connecting parts of town, particularly linking the downtown to the Shipyard and Harbor.</p> <p>3.3 Pursue public-private partnerships to coordinate public transport and traffic to benefit the commercial districts.</p>
<p><b>4. Provide a variety of housing to encourage population diversity and aging in the community.</b></p>	<p>4.1 Provide for the development of housing appropriately designed, managed, and located for older adults and people with disabilities.</p> <p>4.2 Encourage Universal Design in new neighborhoods.</p> <p>4.3 Continue to create and preserve a range of housing affordable for a wide range of incomes.</p> <p>4.4 Explore opportunities for creative retrofit of existing structures and infill development for a variety of housing.</p> <p>4.5 Regulate the form and scale of housing to encourage new homes to be compatible.</p>

Goal	Policies for Decision Makers
<p><b>5. Support a vibrant, resilient local economy.</b></p>	<p>5.1 Support local businesses and attract new enterprises that provide employment and deliver goods and services to residents and visitors alike.</p> <p>5.2 Attract nonresidential development to increase tax revenue.</p> <p>5.3 Encourage mixed-use development and a wide range of businesses and institutions in business districts.</p> <p>5.4 Guide development to desired locations with regulatory incentives and adequate infrastructure.</p> <p>5.5 Promote Hingham as a destination and each commercial district as a unique experience, such as Hingham Square and other long-time commercial centers.</p> <p>5.6 Ensure that proposed developments provide mitigation and community benefits in order to maintain high-quality services and amenities in Hingham.</p>

Goal	Policies for Decision Makers
<p><b>6. Provide high-quality services that support the health and wellness of residents of all ages.</b></p>	<p>6.1 Achieve and deliver excellence in education and state-of-the-art school facilities.</p> <p>6.2 Provide facilities and services that support older adults to age in the community.</p> <p>6.3 Provide a range of opportunities for cultural, recreational, leisure, and social activities for all ages and abilities.</p> <p>6.4 Support the health and wellness of the most vulnerable residents in Hingham.</p> <p>6.5 Monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and plan for future public health events that may impact the Town's ability to deliver services.</p>
<p><b>7. Provide public facilities and infrastructure that support the Town's need to manage growth and town services.</b></p>	<p>7.1 Conduct long-range capital planning and service delivery with the foresight to anticipate and address future needs.</p> <p>7.2 Explore opportunities for instituting planned preventive maintenance (PPM), with prudent and transparent budgeting that considers future maintenance and replacement costs.</p> <p>7.3 Provide adequate spaces to support municipal facilities in their missions.</p> <p>7.4 Increase wastewater treatment capacity.</p> <p>7.5 Support the Hingham Municipal Light Plant and Weir River Water System in their efforts to increase capacity and conserve resources.</p> <p>7.6 Lead in the regionalization of services on the South Shore when it is in the Town's interests to do so.</p>



## CONTACT PERIOD

### Before 1620<sup>1</sup>

Hingham's well-protected shallow harbor, coastal plains, fertile river valley, and adjacent upland areas have long been valuable assets to the area's inhabitants. The Massachusett (Massachuseuck) people, indigenous to much of the Greater Boston area, harvested the diverse local resources, from the coastal clam flats and Weir River to the upland grasslands and forests. Two major trail systems facilitated movement along the coast (Fort Hill, South, Main, East, and Hull Streets) and further inland (along the axis of Whiting Street, Route 53). Artifacts of pre-colonial life and death have surfaced over time throughout the area, including along the shore, on the harbor islands, and along the Weir River outlet.

While much of Hingham has changed over time, its history echoes through the names of some of the area's landmarks. The Massachusett names of nearby Assinippi ("rocks in water"), Nantasket ("at the strait"), Cohasset (derived from Conahassett or "long rocky place"), and Scituate (derived from Satuit or "cold brook") still describe the area's natural landscape. More than 3,500 acres of forests, rivers, and ponds in Hingham and its neighboring communities are protected today in Wompatuck State Park, named for Sachem Josiah Wompatuck of the Mattakeeset Massachusett tribe.

### 1620-1675

Between 1633 and 1639, approximately 200 people emigrated from the Hingham area of East Anglia, England and settled in the area known today as Bare Cove and eastward along North Street. The newcomers incorporated their settlement and renamed it Hingham in 1635.<sup>2</sup> Bringing with them their own customs and traditions, these settlers began to rapidly transform the area's built environment by establishing a village organized with assigned house lots along South, North, Lincoln, and

<sup>1</sup> Historical periods reflect the standards established by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

<sup>2</sup> The Town's geographic limits included today's Town of Cohasset until Cohasset's incorporation as a separate town in 1770.

## FIRST SETTLEMENT PERIOD

Main Streets. They tended fields and livestock, planted orchards, built grist and saw mills, and established cottage (in-home) industries such as tanning and coopering (using wooden staves and hoops to make barrels and other vessels). In this period, maritime endeavors were limited.

Structures from the First Settlement Period known to remain in Hingham today include the Tower Homestead (1650, 528 Main Street), Edward Wilder Home (1650, 597 Main Street) and portions of the General Benjamin Lincoln House (1670s, 181 North Street). Portions of several other houses may exist as part of newer additions, such as the Enoch Whiton House (1083 Main Street). Extant landscape features include the layouts of Pleasant, High, Free, Prospect, and



Scotland Streets, as well as the Hingham Cemetery (1672).



## COLONIAL PERIOD 1675-1775

The Town's population grew steadily between 1675 and 1775, reaching a total of 2,506 in 1765 due, in part, to settlers from Scituate migrating northward to a new, secondary village in South Hingham. Settlements expanded with farms in Liberty Plain and mills in Queen Anne's Corner. Hingham's agrarian focus began to shift toward lumbering, and by the early 1700s, several mills operated on Cushing and Triphammer Ponds, manufacturing framing lumber, boards, clapboards and shingles, and timber for shipbuilding and cooperage (which became the dominant cottage industry).<sup>3</sup> Near the end of the Colonial Period, a small commercial fishing industry also emerged.

Over 120 houses and other structures in Hingham date to the Colonial Period, with the bulk of these constructed after 1700. Most are vernacular-style central-chimney

<sup>3</sup> The "Hingham Bucket" came to be a symbol when the quality of Hingham's buckets earned the Town national renown and the moniker "Bucket Town."

## FEDERAL PERIOD



Cape Cod cottages and central- chimney houses, along with some twin- chimney houses. Examples include the Benjamin Gardner House (1696, 962 Main Street), Seth Sprague House (1730, 514 Main Street), David Lincoln House (1737, 66 Lincoln Street), Thomas Gardner House (1754, 995 Main Street), and Daniel Whiton House (1768, 1019 Main Street). Several high-style structures also exist, including the Georgian-style Rev. Daniel Shute House (1745, 768 Main Street) and Peter Jacob House (1752, 648 Main Street). The most prominent structure from this period is the Old Ship Meeting House (1681, 107 Main Street), the oldest continuously-operational wooden church in the United States and a Registered National Historic Landmark. Today's Second Parish Church (1742, 685 Main Street) served as a place

of worship and meeting house in South Hingham as the community grew.

## 1775-1830

The late eighteenth century saw population stagnation, but in the early nineteenth century, Hingham's population began to climb, and it reached a total of just over 3,000 in 1830. Construction of new homes and businesses largely took place in the established village clusters. Derby Academy became the first coeducational private school in the United States at its 1784 inception, and new religious entities also served the population, including Methodist, Baptist, and Universalist Churches. The economic base shifted towards fishing and its associated industries, including copper and brass ship hardware, ship chandlery, saltworks (for the preservation of fish), and cordage. Hingham became home to umbrella and parasol manufacturing and other commercial ventures throughout this period, including a newspaper, *The Hingham Gazette*, beginning in 1827.

Houses built during the Federal Period reflect both vernacular and high styles, and over 130 of these homes remain today. Vernacular structures, as typified by the Aram Carlye House (ca. 1775, 16 East Street) and Stephen Stodder House (1781, 91-93 Fort Hill Street) include central-chimney cottages and double houses, many with fine entry surrounds. High-style homes, such as the Samuel Norton House (1785, 45 Fearing Street) and Capt. Moses L. Humphrey House (ca. 1790, 38 Cottage Street), are hip-roofed with symmetrical facades and ornamented with decorative mouldings. The New North Meeting House (1807, 1 Lincoln Street) reflects the influence of esteemed American architect Charles Bulfinch, to whom the church's design is attributed. The Methodist Episcopal Meeting House (1828, 235 North Street), First Baptist Church (1829, 85 Main Street), and

## EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD

### 1830-1870

First Universalist Society Meeting House (1829, 196 North Street) also each exhibit Federal Period architectural details. Today, the Hingham Historical Society headquarters in the Federal-style Old Derby Academy building (1818, 34 Main Street) overlooks Downtown Hingham.

Immigration in the early industrial period, primarily from Ireland, brought the population to over 4,300 in 1870. New steam-powered transportation technologies improved access to the area, starting with limited, seasonal ferry service (1832), and developing further as the South Shore Railroad (1849) connected Hingham Center with other stops on its route from Braintree to Cohasset. Most new building continued to take place in the existing village centers, with resort development emerging in the late 1860s near the coast. Production of wood products and cordage continued, with the C. A. Wilder Company and Hingham Cordage Company, respectively, dominating the industries. Ironworks, such as the Eagle Iron Foundry and Weymouth Iron Company, produced nails, hammers, edge tools, ploughs, guns, and scales and balances. Producers of soft goods and textiles spun and wove wool and silk, cobbled shoes, and companies like Burr, Brown and Company furnished accessories for boats, including tassels, fringe, and upholstery. Commercial fishing continued, with the Clams, Oysters and Plum Pudding Corporation (C. O. & P. P.) established in 1855, but by the late nineteenth century this industry had begun to decline.

In 1855, Samuel Downer and Charles Cushing built Melville Gardens, a harbor-side resort on 40 acres at Crow Point. The site operated for 25 years, attracting up to 70,000 visitors each season to its music hall, café, clambake house, dance pavilion, bowling and other attractions. The band-leader's house (ca. 1870s, 228 Otis Street) is the enterprise's only remaining structure.



Americans developed a keen interest in horticulture and scientific farming during the Early Industrial Period, and Hingham participated in earnest. Hingham residents, many of whom were involved in industry, trade, and commerce, formed the Hingham Agricultural and Horticultural Society in 1858 for farming and plant propagation, as well as for social and educational purposes. In 1863, Hingham resident Fearing Burr published *Field and Garden Vegetables of America*, and in 1867 the Agricultural and Horticultural Society built an agricultural hall (no longer extant). In keeping with this movement, proprietors of the Hingham Cemetery upgraded the grounds by shaping the topography, sculpting terraces, laying out roads and paths, planting specimen trees, and adding other prominent features, including the Soldiers' and Sailors' monument (dedicated in 1871).

Early Industrial Period structures were built in the Greek Revival, Italianate, and Victorian Gothic styles, and several hundred buildings still remain today. Examples of these homes include

the Charles Seymour House (1838, 136 Main Street), Ezra Wilder House (1841, 567 Main Street), Elijah Whiton House (1857, 2-4 Friend Street), and Hayward House (ca. 1870, 137 Fort Hill Street). Architect Ammi B. Young's Loring Hall (1851/2, 65 Main Street) and the Hingham Mutual Fire Insurance Company (1860/9, 49 Main Street) also exhibit the architectural styles of the era.

### LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD 1870-1915

Although Hingham's population largely remained steady between 1870 and 1915, its ethnic composition continued to shift, and by the end of this period Irish- and Italian- born immigrants represented 20% of the Town's residents. In 1871, the South Shore Railroad connected passengers even further south along the Old Colony Railroad in Plymouth, and by 1880, the Nantasket Beach Railroad extended the network even further still. The Hingham Street Railway, opened in 1896, ran from Hingham Square to Queen Anne's Corner, and also connected Melville Gardens, Hull, and Weymouth. The town's industrial economy peaked in 1875, but by the turn of the century, manufacturing had declined precipitously, and Hingham began to evolve into a largely residential community.

Hingham retains roughly 300 buildings and other structures dating to this period, with architecture reflecting the Victorian Gothic, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Neo-Tudor, and other late Victorian styles. Victorian Gothic-style summer cottages appeared on the west side of Hingham Harbor (Crow Point area), while larger, architect-designed estate homes, including the E. A. Hill House/Carriage House (ca. 1889, 22/34 Martin's Lane) and Francis Willard Brewer's Great Hill



(1898, 161 New Bridge Street), were concentrated in the north and west parts of town. Among the many institutional buildings constructed in this period are Wilder Memorial Hall (1879, 666 Main Street), the Ames Memorial Chapel (1887, Hingham Cemetery, designed by J. Sumner Fowler), and the Hingham Town Office Building (1913, 14 Main Street, which today serves as private offices).

### EARLY MODERN & MODERN PERIODS 1915-TODAY

Hingham's population increased gradually between 1915 and 1940 and grew more rapidly between 1945 and 1965. New and improved highway corridors, including the modern Routes 3 and 3A respectively, as well as increased commuter ferry service, contributed to this growth by expediting commutes, facilitating personal travel, and ultimately replacing many streetcars. Ferry service originally began between Boston and Hingham began in 1832. Year-round service to Hull was reintroduced in 1963, and was then the only commuter ferry service in the country. Renewed Rowes Wharf-Hingham service began with a single round trip on October 6, 1975. This was followed by Hingham service in 1975. In March 1983, Massachusetts Bay Commuter

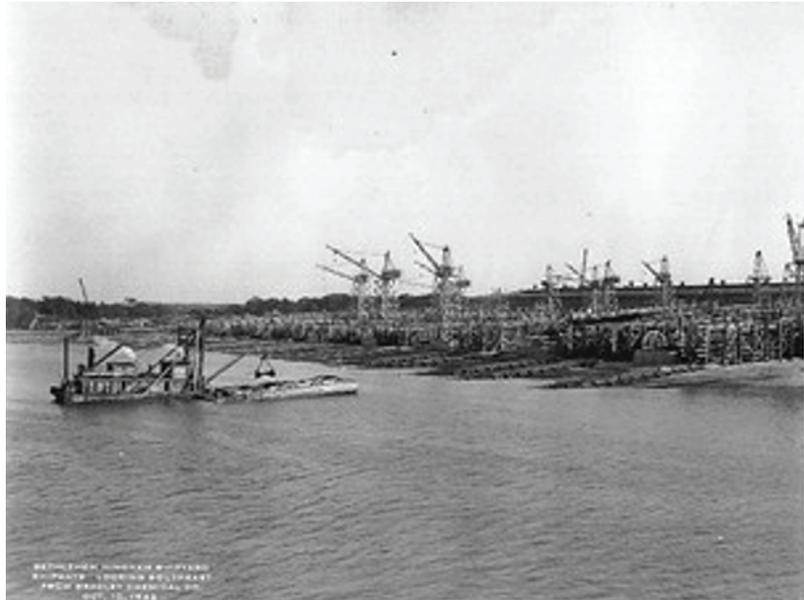
Services began round trips and provided additional round trips by Boston Harbor Commuter Services in 1984 during Southeast Expressway reconstruction. In the 1990s, expanded ferry service was proposed as an alternative to the controversial return of commuter rail service on the Greenbush Line. Boston Harbor Cruises (which had briefly operated Hingham service in 1978) took over the Hingham–Boston service in 1997.

The current MBTA Greenbush Commuter Rail Line began on October 31, 2007. The extension of MBTA commuter rail service was intended to reduce congestion along the Southeast Expressway, Route 3 and Route 3A. This service restoration, put in place as environmental mitigation for the Big Dig project in Boston, was the first passenger service on the line since 1959.

Service was first started by the South Shore Railroad which was chartered in March 1846 to build a branch off the Old Colony Railroad at Braintree. The popularity of the train was short-lived, however, due to the increasing popularity of the automobile. Only an emergency subsidy by the state kept trains running until June 30, 1959, when the Southeast Expressway opened and all passenger train service ended. Freight trains continued to use the line as far south as the Hingham Lumber Yard located, where the Nantasket Junction station now exists, until 1979. All service was terminated in 1983.

### **Hingham's Role in the War Effort and Its Contribution to the Town's Evolution**

**Bethlehem/Hingham Shipyard.** The present-day Hingham Shipyard mixed use development fea-



tures a residential, retail shopping and waterfront boating experience in the former Hingham naval Shipyard. It is important to know what came before in this area and the important role it has played in the history of Hingham.

The site of the current mixed-use community that grew out of the remnants of the Hingham Bethlehem Shipyard was previously the Bradley Horse Farm and the Bayside Airport prior to 1941. The Bethlehem Hingham Shipyard operated from 1941 until 1945. Located on the Weymouth Back River, it was owned by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company and operated by the nearby Fore River Shipyard. During the three and a half years that the yard was operational, it produced 227 ships, including a destroyer escort delivered in 23 days.

Shortly before the entry of the United States into World War II, the United States Navy began designs on destroyer escorts and commissioned Bethlehem Steel to be the major contractor. Because Bethlehem's shipyards were operating at full capacity, there was need to build a new

shipyard. A location for a shipyard was chosen in Hingham, at the site of the former Bayside Airport. Within weeks of the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, a survey team arrived in Hingham and crews worked around the clock to clear 150 acres of land. After the land was cleared, a steel mill stretching a third of a mile was erected, and wooden cradles that would hold each ship were built along with sixteen ship launch ways.

Facing a lack of skilled labor, 400 shipbuilders were brought in to train a workforce that totaled 15,000 within a year. Included in this number were 2,500 women due to a lack of available men who were in wartime Europe.

A simplified process was created to streamline how ships were constructed at the time, which enabled a construction rate of around six ships a month. As a result, the Navy ordered sixty ships to be delivered in 1943, a quota which was matched and exceeded when the yard produced ninety ships that year, for which it was awarded the Army-Navy "E" Award, displayed in stainless steel, which is now mounted at the top of the clock tower at the entrance from Lincoln Street (Route 3A) at Shipyard Drive.

Around this time, orders in the yard shifted from destroyer escorts to Landing Ship Tank craft, which were first delivered in 1944. Hingham was flooded with orders for new ships. The largest of these could carry ten tanks and equipment or 1000 men. It was called the Landing Ship Tank or LST. On June 6, 1944, D-Day, thousands of flat-bottomed ships landed on the coast of France. In the months following, other crucial landings would take place on beaches in the Pacific. Together the landings helped turn the tide of World War II.

**The Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot.** For almost sixty years, the Hingham Naval Ammunition

Depot (originally called the Hingham Naval Reserve) occupied nearly a thousand acres on the Hingham-Weymouth line and generally bounded by Route 3A, Beal Street and Fort Hill Street.

Until 1903, the land was privately owned. The United States took the land for the U.S. Navy to establish the Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot because of its close proximity to Boston Harbor. From 1903 until 1961, the Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot was a major supplier of U.S. munitions, occupying 990 acres on the Weymouth Back River. At peak capacity in 1945, over 2,400 civilians and military personnel worked there. In the mid-1950s, the site contained over 90 buildings, its own telephone exchange, and 15 cranes. The base was decommissioned in 1961. In the 1970s the federal government began disposing of the property. More than half of the property was conveyed to the Town under the Federal Land to Parks Program, including over 500 acres dedicated to the Town's Bare Cove Park, athletic fields and the school bus depot. The remainder of the land was transferred to private owners for residential and commercial development.

**The Hingham Naval Ammunition Annex-Wompatuck State Park.** Wompatuck State Park is a state-owned, public recreation area of about 3,500 acres in size located primarily in Hingham with portions in Cohasset, Norwell, and Scituate. In addition to a large campground and an extensive trail system, the park is noted for the free spring water that can be obtained at Mt. Blue Spring, which has been in operation since the mid-19th century. The park is managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) which protects forests of the northeastern coastal forests ecoregion.

The land was originally the property of Chief Sachem Josiah Wompatuck, who deeded the land



to English settlers in 1655. The park is built on the former Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot Annex and the Cohasset Annex, which was in use from 1941 until 1965. It contains over 100 decommissioned military bunkers, many of which have been backfilled, but some of which remain exposed, including one which housed parts of the Navy's first nuclear depth charge in the 1950s. Several old military buildings can be found on park property as well as an extensive network of abandoned railroad spurs and roadbeds made into bike paths. Most buildings have been demolished or permanently sealed.

A rail spur known as the Whitney Spur formerly connected the Ammunition Depot to the Old Colony Railroad's Greenbush Line. In 2003, the DCR sold the land for the Cohasset commuter rail station and parking lot to the MBTA in exchange for the construction of a rail trail on the former rail spur. The station opened with the rest of the Greenbush Line on October 31, 2007. The 1.5-mile Whitney Spur Rail Trail opened from the station to the park around the same time.

Reverted to maintenance status after the War, the Annex was reactivated for the Korean War, during which time it held some of the Navy's first experimental nuclear depth charges, in bunker N9. Depth charges, bombs, and rocket motors were

assembled at the Annex until it was declared surplus by the Navy in 1962.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts took possession of the Annex, in 1966, and later turned the 3,500 acres into the present day Wompatuck State Park.

**World's End.** One of the most influential twentieth century efforts to preserve Hingham's cultural heritage and natural beauty took place in 1967, when The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) acquired World's End, a 251-acre site on Hingham's northeastern-most peninsula, to preserve the scenic property as a park and protect it from development. Past plans for the site have included a large residential subdivision (1890s), a potential location of the United Nations (1945), and a nuclear power plant (mid-1960s), but today, the sprawling park features miles of carriage paths and footpaths for recreation. Esteemed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his firm designed these paths for 19<sup>th</sup>-century businessman and "gentleman farmer" John Brewer when he commissioned the subdivision. Through the generous efforts of Hingham and other South Shore residents, TTOR purchased the site and today provides a publicly accessible open space for year-round recreational use.

### Recent Development Patterns

Architecture of the early and mid-twentieth century was modest in scale and designed in the bungalow, eclectic, and Colonial Revival styles as exemplified by the houses at 7 Burton's Lane (ca. 1920) and 83 Central Street (ca. 1920). Later, "McMansions" appeared.<sup>4</sup>

Commercial development has increased along major roadways: the Derby Street Shops lifestyle center opened in 2004 near Route 3 Exit 36 (formerly Exit 15), and beginning in 2003, Hingham approved the first phases of

construction of the redevelopment of the Hingham Shipyard, a large mixed-use development at the site of the former Bethlehem Steel shipyard on Route 3A. The Shipyard is home to a multi-story complex with market-rate and affordable housing units and first-floor commercial space, intended to broaden Hingham's economic base and provide greater equity in the housing market. The tall buildings, large massing, and expansive parking lots of the Shipyard, the Alliance/Broadstone development on Beal Street, and the recent Avalon development on Route 3A address modern Hingham's evolving housing, economic, and transportation needs.



<sup>4</sup> The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines McMansion as "a very large house usually built in a suburban neighborhood or development; especially one regarded critically as oversized and ostentatious."



# 3 Historic and Cultural Resources

## Introduction

When residents talk about what they love in their town and the places that make Hingham special, the conversation invariably turns to Hingham’s character-defining historical and cultural assets. While ideas like “sense of place” can be difficult to explain, it usually relates in some way to the built environment that has evolved organically throughout a town’s history and how that environment is influenced by the natural landscape. There is strong desire to protect the qualities that make Hingham a unique place, and over time, Hingham has dedicated considerable time and funding to historic preservation. Still, the Town’s desirability and limited supply

of vacant land make it more difficult than ever to protect the historical, architectural, and archaeological resources that make an indelible contribution to the Town’s character.

This chapter identifies and describes Hingham’s historic and cultural resources and efforts to preserve, promote, and enhance them by the Town and others. Physical and non-physical resources, ranging from architecture, landscapes, and historic and pre-historic archaeological sites to organizations, clubs, programs, events, and traditions, together contribute to Hingham’s quality of life.

## Existing Conditions

### Inventory of Historic, Architectural, and Archaeological Assets

To date, Hingham has inventoried over 1,500 areas, properties, and other historic resources including buildings, structures, objects, and landscapes (sites). Each appears on the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) as well as the Town's Comprehensive Community Inventory of Historic, Architectural and Archaeological Assets (Map 3.1). For many of these resources, the associated written inventory forms have been scanned and uploaded into the Town's GIS as one of the layers in MapsOnline, and into MACRIS maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), making the forms available for anyone with access to the Internet.<sup>1</sup> These forms document the historical and architectural significance of the properties, their architects/builders, and original owners (to the extent known). All resources included on the inventory that are not located in one of the Town's historic districts are under the jurisdiction of the Historical Commission.

### Historic Property Designations and Protections

Since the 1960s, Hingham residents have actively sought to protect its historic resources by obtaining state and national designations and securing protective restrictions and easements, as follows:

National Historic Landmarks are historic places that the U. S. Secretary of the Interior has determined to hold national significance and have an exceptional ability to illustrate American heritage. Nearly 2,600 properties, resources, and sites nationwide have received this designation, 189 of which are in Massachusetts, with two in Hingham.<sup>2</sup>



Designated as a National Landmark in 1960, Old Ship Meetinghouse is located atop a promontory and adjacent to Hingham's first burial ground. This house of worship is believed to be the oldest wooden church in the nation still used for religious services and the only remaining Puritan meetinghouse. Its name refers to its architecture, which resembles an inverted wooden ship's hull. Since its initial construction in 1681, the church has been enlarged and retrofitted several times, and today contains its original eighteenth century wooden stalls and one of its most prominent original features – a "hammerbeam" roof. Today, the church holds Unitarian Universalist services each Sunday, except in summer months.

In 1972, the Benjamin Lincoln House was also designated as a National Landmark. Located at 181 North Street near the center of Hingham, this two-story home may be one of the oldest wood frame structures in the United States. It was the birthplace and principal residence of Continental Army Major General Benjamin Lincoln (1733–1810), a prominent military leader of the American Revolutionary War, whose family has retained the property from construction to the modern day. Portions of the house are said to date to the 1660s, with significant eighteenth-cen-

1 Massachusetts Historical Commission, Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System, <http://mhc-macris.net>

2 Massachusetts ranks second in number of National Historic Landmarks; New York holds 273.

**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY**



ture additions, and the last major modifications to the house were probably undertaken by Major General Lincoln in the late eighteenth century. A preservation restriction on the property, held by Historic New England (HNE), helps assure that any exterior and interior changes are in keeping with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s standards for the treatment of historic properties. As of December 2020, the Hingham Historical Society owns the Lincoln house and will preserve the property as a public historic site.

The State and National Registers of Historic Places include four individual listings of historic resources in Hingham and three districts. Inclusion on the National Register is honorary, but the designation can protect listed properties from the negative effects of federally funded projects, such as roadway and bridge construction. The individual properties and districts are as follows:

- Old Ship Meetinghouse (listed 1966), 90 Main Street
- Major General Benjamin Lincoln House (listed 1972), 181 North Street
- Cushing Homestead (listed 1973), 210 East Street
- Thomas Chubbuck, Jr. House (listed in 1992), 1191 Main Street
- Lincoln National Register Historic District (1990) encompasses Hingham’s Downtown and overlays two Local Historic Districts, the Lincoln District (including extensions) and the Bachelor’s Row/Pear Tree Hill District.
- South Hingham National Register Historic District (1998) includes properties along Main Street between Cushing Street and Tower Brook Road, as well as the properties in the Tower-Wilder, Glad Tidings and Liberty Plain Local Historic Districts (discussed later in this chapter).

MHC has determined that five additional districts are also eligible for the National Register:

- Fort Hill
- Beal Area
- Barnes Area/Old Colony Hill
- Hersey-Elm-Central Streets

- Matthew Cushing (East-Summer Streets)

Many of Hingham’s resources have also been listed on the State Register of Historic Places, a comprehensive listing of the buildings, structures, objects, and sites that have received local, state, or national designations based on their historical or archaeological significance. Listings for Hingham include the established National Register Historic Districts, Local Historic Districts (listed in the following section), and many individual properties.

### Local Historic Districts

Hingham established its first Local Historic District (LHD), the Lincoln Historic District, in 1966. It includes 20 historic properties at the intersection of Lincoln and North Streets, and its purpose is to preserve the structures as well as their settings. While this protection of historical integrity is key, another aim of LHDs is to increase public awareness of and engagement with Hingham’s cultural and historical heritage.

Since establishing the first LHD, the Town has expanded the Lincoln Historic District several times, and it has added five more LHDs, bringing the total number of protected residences and other buildings in Hingham to 574. (Map 3.2) Additional significant resources including objects such as milestones, memorials, sculptures, cemeteries and archaeological sites located in LHDs bring the total number of protected properties to 702. The Hingham Historic Districts Commission (HDC) reviews proposed alterations to LHD properties visible from a public way through a Certificate of Appropriateness process.

Preservation Restrictions and Easements Additional protections for several of Hingham’s historic properties have been secured through preservation restrictions and easements. Such instruments, held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), Historic New England (HNE), or the

### Hingham’s Local Historic Districts

**Lincoln Historic District (1966, 1988, 1998).** Hingham’s first and largest Local Historic District, the Lincoln District was approved in 1966. It has been extended three times, once in 1988 (Phase I Extension), and twice in 1998 (Phases II and III Extensions). The Lincoln Historic District includes 284 resources located along North, South, Main, and Lincoln Streets, and it makes up a part of the larger, federally-recognized Lincoln National Register Historic District (1990).

**Glad Tidings Historic District (1975).** Located along Main Street, the Glad Tidings Historic District contains 35 properties, including Wilder Hall and the distinctive linear common known as Glad Tidings Plain. This Local Historic District makes up part of the federally-recognized South Hingham National Register Historic District (1998).

**Tower-Wilder Historic District (1987, 1988).** Developed in two phases, this district includes a total of 51 properties. Of these, 25 properties line Main Street between Towerbrook Road and the Crooked Meadow River, and 26 properties extend along Main Street to the boundary of the Glad Tidings Historic District. Notable resources in this district include the High Street Cemetery and the “Rainbow Roof” House. This LHD is also included in the South Hingham National Register Historic District (1998).

**Bachelor’s Row/Pear Tree Hill Historic District (1988).** This 82-resource district encompasses the portion of Main Street between South Street and Garrison Road. This LHD is also included in the Lincoln National Register Historic District (1990).

**Liberty Plain Historic District (1988).** Bounded by Prospect Street on the north side, and Pine and Grove Roads on the south, this district encompasses 36 properties. The district includes Liberty Plain Cemetery, the final resting place of many Revolutionary War soldiers, and it is part of the South Hingham National Register Historic District (1998).

**Hingham Centre Historic District (1990, 2008).** Bounded by Main, Pleasant, and Middle Streets, this district, established in two phases, includes 86 properties.

Hingham Historical Commission (HHC) provide legal protection from interior and exterior alterations that do not comply with the U. S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Preservation of Historic Properties. Past and present restriction or easement-protected properties include:

- Thomas Chubbuck, Jr. House, 1191 Main Street (MHC)
- Cushing Homestead, 210 East Street (MHC)
- W. Allan Gay House, 262 South Street (HHC)
- Samuel Lincoln House, 182 North Street (HNE)
- Memorial Bell Tower, 68R Main Street (MHC)
- Old Ship Meetinghouse, 90 Main Street (MHC)
- Perez Whiting House, 1231 Main Street (MHC)
- John Leavitt Homestead, 133 Leavitt Street (HHC)
- General Benjamin Lincoln House, 181 North Street (HNE)

**Local Preservation Commissions, Regulations, and Initiatives**

In addition to the designations, restrictions, and easements listed above, the Town has established stewardship entities, adopted regulations, and advanced initiatives in order to further protect its historic and cultural resources.

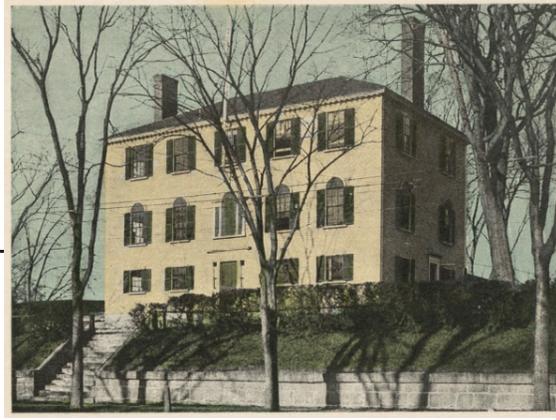
The Town employs a full-time **Historic Preservation Administrator**. The position supports both the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commissions, discussed below.

The **Hingham Historical Commission (HHC)** is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and protect-

ing the historic, architectural, and archaeological resources of the Town. The Town voted to form the seven-member Commission in 1974. In addition to maintaining the Town’s Inventory of Historic, Architectural and Archaeological Assets and administering the Demolition Delay Bylaw, the Greenbush Historic Preservation Trust, and the Preservation Projects Fund, the HHC provides educational materials to owners of historic homes, produces videos highlighting people, places and events significant in the Town’s history. The HHC publishes books and other written material on the Town’s historic assets, sponsors an annual historical essay award for high school students, and recently launched an annual Historic Preservation Award program in order to recognize community members for their special efforts in preservation projects. Annually in May, the HHC joins with Veterans Services, the Historical Society, the Hingham Militia and others to host a reenactment of the Battle of Grape Island, another significant event in Hingham’s history during the Revolutionary War.

Formed in 1974, the **Hingham Historic Districts Commission (HDC)** works to preserve Hingham’s historical and architectural legacy. In accordance with G.L. c. 40C, the HDC reviews the appropriateness of all proposed exterior alterations and renovations of historic properties, as well as the design of any new construction located within Hingham’s Local Historic Districts. The HDC includes ten members appointed by the Select Board, with five voting members and five alternate members. Each group of five must include, an architect, a Planning Board designee, a Historical Society designee, a resident of an historic district, and one at-large member.

**Certified Local Government Program.** In 1996, the U. S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and MHC awarded Hingham Certified Local Govern-



ment (CLG) status. Hingham is one of 26 cities and towns in Massachusetts enrolled in the CLG program, which aims to assist local governments in becoming more directly involved with identifying, evaluating, protecting, promoting, and enhancing the educational and economic value of local properties of historic, architectural and archaeological significance. In accordance with program guidelines, the MHC designates at least 10 percent of its annual DOI Historic Preservation Fund allocation to CLG communities.

**Other Regulatory Initiatives**

Hingham adopted zoning in 1941. Over time, the Town has amended the Zoning Bylaw several times, including for the purpose of adding measures to protect the Town’s historic character and cultural resources. For example:

- **Downtown Hingham Overlay District**, established to “protect and promote the viability and value of business and residential properties located in the Downtown...in a manner consistent with Hingham’s historic character.” Among several objectives, the District serves to make the Downtown area a visitor destination for historic sightseeing, to encourage maintenance of existing historic structures in a manner consistent with Hingham’s historic character, and to preserve or complement the visual context of the street-scape
- **Hingham Harbor Overlay District**, established to “promote access to and the use and enjoyment of the land and water along Hingham’s inner harbor, while protecting

and enhancing its cultural, scenic and natural character.” Among several objectives, the District serves to promote aesthetic harmony between structures and to promote and enhance connections between the inner harbor and Downtown Hingham.

Hingham adopted a **Demolition Delay Bylaw** in 1988 to protect “the historic and aesthetic qualities of the Town by preserving, rehabilitating, or restoring whenever possible, buildings or structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural or historic resources of the Town, thereby promoting the public welfare and preserving the cultural heritage of the Town.” Administered by the HHC, the bylaw may be used to delay removal or alteration of an historically significant structure for up to six months. “Significant” is defined as any resource (1) listed or determined eligible for listing on the National or State Registers of Historic Places; (2) located within 200 feet of the boundary of any federal, state, or local historic district; or (3) appearing on the Town’s Comprehensive Community Inventory of Historic, Architectural and Archaeological Assets. The Historical Commission has had some successes in saving historic structures through enforcement of the bylaw since its inception, however the six-month delay period has often prompted property owners to simply endure the relatively short delay and then proceed with demolition or remodeling.

Under the **Scenic Road Act**, G.L. c. 40A, Section 15C, Hingham has designated eight Scenic Roads in order to prevent the removal of trees and other historic features. These designations take place through a local review process with the Planning



Board. The designated Scenic Roads include Free Street, Lazell Street, Leavitt Street, Popes Lane, Union Street, Turkey Hill Lane, South Pleasant Street, and Martins Lane. These roadways exhibit distinctive rural character, mature trees, and stone walls, and serve as secondary (rather than primary) connector streets.

### Town Archives

Following adoption of the last Master Plan (2001), Hingham established the Historical Archives Task Force to address the care of historic documents relating to Town affairs. Working with the Hingham Historical Society and Hingham Public Library, the task force was able to secure a total of \$264,611 in CPA money for preserving Town documents and photographs between 2008 and 2015. Funding enabled the Town to hire a part time archivist and assistant archivist and to purchase archival materials.

### Local Preservation Funding

#### Hingham Greenbush Historic Preservation Trust.

This \$3.5 million special fund was established through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and the MBTA in conjunction with the Greenbush Rail Project. The HHC and the Town Treasurer administer the fund. The trust provides up to \$100,000 per year to fund projects proposed by the Town, individuals, and private non-profit organizations along the Greenbush rail right-of-way in order to preserve historic resources within the existing National Register and Local Historic Districts, as well as the five districts that have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register. These include Fort Hill, Beal Area, Barnes Area/Old Colony Hill, Hersey-Elm-

Central Streets, and Matthew Cushing (East-Summer Streets).

Applicants must own or hold a lease on the property or resource. Since its adoption, the Trust has awarded over \$700,000 for 46 projects. Examples of these projects include restoration, stabilization, and protection of historic properties, accessibility upgrades, and landscape and hardscape improvements.

#### Preservation Projects Fund.

In 1989, the HHC and Town Treasurer established the Preservation Projects Fund under G.L. c. 40, Section 8D, in order to advance the Commission’s mission by accepting gifts, contributions, and bequests of funds from individuals, foundations, and from federal, state, or other governmental bodies. In order to preserve and protect the Town’s historical, architectural, and archaeological assets, the fund has supported Historical Commission educational initiatives, programs, and signage; the Town of Hingham Preservation Award; the historical Essay Contest; publication of five books on Hingham’s history; and maintenance of the Town’s historic assets. These assets include the Memorial Bell Tower, sculptures such as the Lincoln Statue in Fountain Square and the sculpture Victory at the Harbor, and the many monuments and markers throughout Town.

#### Hingham adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2001.

Through a local real property tax surcharge, the Town collects and expends funds for open space, affordable housing, recreation lands, and historic preservation initiatives specifically defined by the CPA. The current Hingham CPA surcharge rate is 1.5 percent, and

the state matches Town funds annually at a varying rate. Since 2003, the Town has awarded funding to 138 projects, roughly half of which fell under the historic preservation category. The CPA is administered in Hingham by the Community Preservation Committee, a nine-member body with representatives from the HHC, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Hingham Housing Authority, and four citizens at large.

The Hingham Cultural Council is part of a network of locally based re-granting entities funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Hingham’s Council promotes and supports cultural activities within the Town with full or partial grant awards, with the goal of supporting visual and performing arts disciplines, and education activities within each grant cycle. The Council gives priority to organizations or individuals living in Hingham, or to non-residents providing activities within the Town. In FY 2020, the Council awarded 21 grants, ranging in amounts from \$100 to \$750, to arts, humanities, and science organizations.

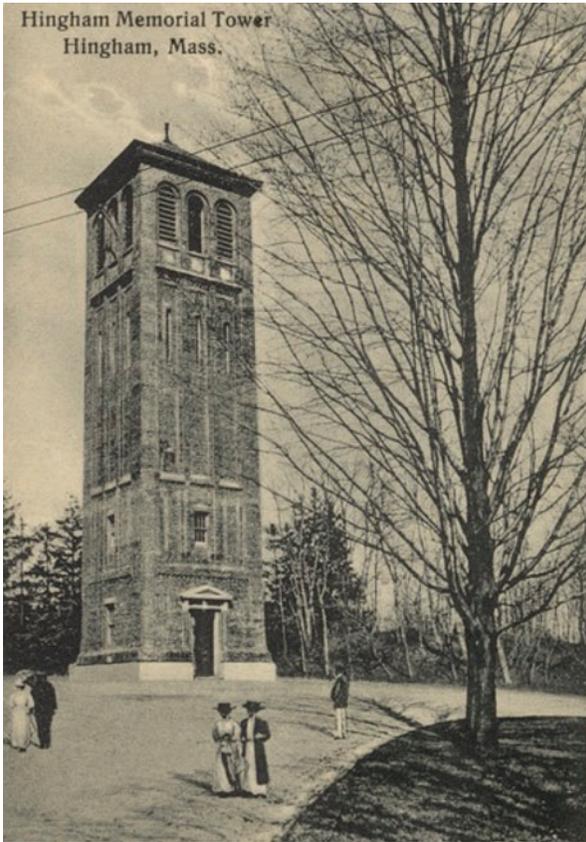
Local Historic and Cultural Organizations In addition to the above activities, regulations, and initiatives, Hingham is home to several public and private organizations dedicated to preserving and expanding public knowledge and appreciation of Town history and culture.

Established in 1771 and known as the first Social Library, the Hingham Public Library lies at the intersection of Leavitt and East Streets. Built in 1966, the library expanded in 2000 into the adjacent former Town Hall building. As a result, much of the library occupies former office space, a layout that has proved inefficient, unsuitable, and insufficient to accommodate the library’s many functions.

In addition to providing reference and circulation services, it also serves, with the Hingham Historical Society, as an historical and cultural hub. Programs serve over 20,000 children, teens, adults and seniors, and provide 190,000 wireless connections each year. The library operates a gallery on the first floor and manages a local history collection with its own dedicated librarian. The library also maintains a small climate-controlled area to store important and fragile Town documents. There are, however, many Town documents dating back to 1633 that are housed in offices, store-rooms and other facilities, the environments of which are not suited to preserving these original and irreplaceable documents. Additional storage is desperately needed. (See Chapter 8, Community Facilities & Services.)

Hingham’s locally designed Neo-Gothic-style Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Memorial Hall was built in 1888 as a meeting place for veterans. Located at the corner of Main and Pond Streets (358 Main Street), the facility continues to serve as a meeting and social venue today. The Hall also houses historic and wartime memorabilia connected to local and national military history, and it is open to the public during specified times. Hingham’s three G.A.R. Trustees manage the Hall, in addition to assisting the Town Veterans’ Agent with the high school’s annual Sophomore Class History Field Day.

The six-member Memorial Bell Tower Committee manages the historic Memorial Bell Tower at 68B Main Street, adjacent to the Old Ship Church and Hingham Cemetery. The tall brick structure, built in 1912 and dedicated to the settlers of Hingham, houses ten English Change Ringing Bells cast by the former Whitechapel Foundry in London. It is one of only eleven free-standing change-ringing towers in the United States. In 2018 and 2019, the committee launched an effort to restore all ten of



the bell frames and mechanisms, a project supported by Hingham’s Community Preservation Committee and Greenbush Historic Preservation Trust. The Bell Tower budget is a line item in the Historical Preservation budget, and it basically covers the cost of electricity, cleaning and maintenance.

Hingham has sixteen commemorative markers, including stones, plaques, monuments, benches, and a cannon honoring veterans and military personnel, located in parks, squares, cemeteries, and on the grounds of public buildings throughout the Town. The Veterans Memorials play a central role in celebrations on Memorial and Veterans’ Days, and they each serve as a reminder of Hingham’s nearly 400- year history of contributing to military service. Currently, management and maintenance of these objects (e.g. regular cleaning, ongoing condition assessment, treat-

ment and conservation) is not in the hands of any single town department or committee, but is a proposed line item in the Historical Preservation budget for 2021. There is an eternal flame at the site of the war monuments of Matthew Hawkes Square, which will need someone to maintain it in the near future.

The private, non-profit Hingham Historical Society located in Downtown Hingham on Main Street was established in 1914 to collect, preserve, and promote Hingham’s historic heritage. The Society maintains the 1686 Old Ordinary, a house museum chronicling early life and history in Hingham, and the 1818 Hingham Heritage Museum in the Old Derby Academy building, which was once home of the original Derby School, the country’s oldest co-educational school. The Hingham Historical Society also owns the 1667 Major General Benjamin Lincoln House.

Renovated and reopened in 2017, the Hingham Heritage Museum houses the Historical Society’s archives, the third floor Gillis Reading Room, second floor Kelly Gallery, museum shop, and visitors’ center. The Society offers open research hours three days per week, and other Hingham-based non-profits often rent the second-floor Ballroom for events. Programs include museum tours, an annual tour of historic homes, exhibits, lectures, and other special events and programs. The Society presents annual special achievement awards to high school students and to individuals who achieve distinction in the preservation and restoration of historic buildings in Hingham. It also maintains a website that hosts the “Hingham Heritage Map,” a web-based interactive tool that allows users to locate historic and cultural sites throughout the Town. The Society collaborates with the HHC in managing an historic home marker program.

### Other Cultural Facilities

The Hingham Community Center (HCC) is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the historic Ensign Thaxter House for the use and benefit of the community. Located at corner of South and Central Streets in Hingham Square, the house was built in 1718 as a family residence, and remained as such until the 1950s, when it was acquired by the HCC (formerly the Wompatuck Club). The HCC offers classes and programs, hosts community events, serves as a venue for private events, and provides a welcoming space for social gatherings.

The Wilder Memorial Hall, an 1879 Second Empire-style building located at 666 Main Street, was built at the bequest of South Hingham resident Martin Wilder, whose last will and testament specified that the bequest be used to set up a school and charitable fund. In 1922, a group of Hingham mothers collaborated on development of a preschool, and in search of a location, approached the Trustees of Wilder Memorial Hall. In 1924, Wilder Memorial Nursery School opened, and continues to operate today. On the building's second floor are the words "Education - Art - Charity."

The Bare Cove Fire Museum at 45 Bare Cove Drive is owned by a non-profit organization that maintains a collection of artifacts, equipment, and documents, including restored motorized fire apparatus, that chronicle the development of fire-fighting technology in Hingham and other farming communities, especially in New England.

Also located in Bare Cove Park, the Green Dock Building/Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot maintains interpretive displays pertaining to the magazine that operated on the property beginning in 1909.

Established in 1924, the Garden Club of Hingham is a member-based non-profit educational organization dedicated to broadening members' horticultural knowledge and beautifying landscapes throughout the town. The organization currently tends garden and park spaces at the Leavitt entrance to the Hingham Public Library, the Habitat House (Central Street), the Old Ordinary, and the traffic islands in Hingham Center. The club has also mapped the trees at More Brewer Park, financed a master landscape plan for the South Shore Country Club and paid for a new design for Jackass Park. The Club is a member of the Federated Garden Clubs of Massachusetts.

South Shore Conservatory (SSC) is the largest community school for the arts in Massachusetts, offering arts education for all ages and levels. Nationally celebrated for its innovative programming, SSC presents more than 100 performances annually. The Conservatory operates from three locations, Duxbury, Hingham, and Hanover. Its Hingham campus, located on Conservatory Drive, boasts an arts-integrated Preschool/Pre-K/Kindergarten program and an open-air amphitheater.

### The Cemeteries

In the heart of Hingham Square lies the 13-acre Hingham Cemetery, a historical cemetery dating to the 1670s. It is the final resting place of many locally and nationally prominent citizens, including veterans, political leaders, and individuals who helped to build the Town. Settlers' Monument (1839) marks the historic site of the town fort and the final resting place of some of Hingham's early settlers. The cemetery contains an arboretum, veterans' area, and many distinctive gravestones, monuments, and historic landscape features. The cemetery operates as a private, non-profit organization that hosts tours and a "Dead of the Winter"

## LOCAL PRESERVATION FUNDING

cultural series, including performances, lectures, and readings by various authors. The cemetery's historic, Queen Anne-style Ames Chapel accommodates up to 120 people (standing) and hosts many types of events. The Chapel is available for rent to Hingham residents at cost.

Seven other cemeteries are scattered about the Town, and except for one, each is owned and managed by a private entity. The condition of their landscapes, including entrances, enclosures, roadways, trees, monuments, and markers, varies:

- Barnes and Stoddard Cemetery (1820), Canterbury Street, also known as the Canterbury Street Cemetery (abandoned and overgrown until recently when the Town took ownership)
- Fort Hill Cemetery (1751), Fort Hill Street
- Glastonbury Abbey Cemetery (1978), Hull Street
- High Street Cemetery (1681), High Street, contains the Whiting Memorial Chapel (1905)
- Hingham Centre Cemetery (1692), Short Street
- Liberty Plain Cemetery (1739), South Main
- St. Paul's Cemetery (1859), Hersey Street, owned and managed by the Catholic Church.

### PRESERVATION PLANNING

Hingham's 2001 Master Plan set specific goals and objectives relating to historic and cultural resources. The goals focused on mitigating the im-

pact of the Greenbush commuter rail, expanding historic resource protections, identifying and protecting scenic roads, and providing adequate administrative staffing to accomplish these goals. The plan included nine historic preservation recommendations, and most have been addressed in whole or in part.

- Devise suitable Greenbush Line mitigation measures. *As a result of lengthy negotiations with the MBTA, the Town secured a \$3.5 million endowment to preserve historic resources along the rail line right-of-way. The Greenbush Historic Preservation Trust is discussed later in this chapter.*
- Expand the Hingham Centre Historic District. *The Hingham Centre Historic District, established in 1990, was expanded in 2008 to include a total of 284 properties. Since then, no additional expansions have taken place.*
- Add the Fort Hill Street Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. *While determined eligible for listing on the National Register, a nomination for the Fort Hill Street district has not been completed.*
- Add the proposed Beal Area/East Street Historic District to Hingham's protected historic districts. *While determined eligible for protection, either as a National Register and/or Local Historic District, the Beal Area/East Street district has not been so designated.*
- Identify and protect properties not previously listed which are now at least fifty years old. *Hingham has continued to update its inventory of historic and cultural resources, to include properties that reach the 50-year mark.*
- Identify additional scenic roads and valued streetscapes for designation and protection (current designations at the time includ-

ed Lazell Street/Union Street, Free Street, Turkey Hill Lane/Pope’s Lane/a portion of Leavitt Street. As of 2020, the Town had designated two additional roads as scenic, South Pleasant Street and Martins Lane, and had adopted a set of rules and regulations under the Scenic Road Act (G.L. c. 40, Section 15C).

- Provide adequate administrative staffing resources. *Staffing for both the Historical*

*Commission and Historic District Commissions is managed by one full-time staff administrator, with some support from the Planning Department’s administrative assistant. Annually, the administrator handles 60 to 70 applications for changes within the historic districts requiring Historic Districts Commission review and administratively manages 80-120 applications for maintenance and repair.*

## Issues and Opportunities

### ISSUES

- Much of Hingham’s development took place long before the adoption of zoning. Sometimes, new buildings and structures that comply with today’s zoning seem incompatible with nearby properties, mainly due to significant differences in size. During the master plan process, residents voiced concerns about the loss of older homes to “mansionization,” or the conversion of modest houses into very large ones. This can happen with renovations that expand the footprint of a house, leading to more lot coverage, or when a house is demolished and replaced by a new residence that is both larger in footprint and taller in height. The gradual loss of older housing has a visual impact on neighborhoods, dilutes the historic character of the Town, and removes important starter housing stock. Existing zoning is not equipped to address these concerns.
- Hingham has eight cemeteries and burying grounds, and some date as far back as the seventeenth century. The latest established, recently uncovered on Canterbury Street, dates back to the 1820s and is the only one of Hingham’s cemeteries not to be admin-

istered by a private association or religious entity. Cemeteries and burying grounds are (minimally) protected from desecration by state law, but responsibility for their management falls to the owners. Some of Hingham’s cemeteries are in noticeable disrepair.

- Hingham’s parks, squares, and cemeteries contain a total of sixteen monuments and memorials that honor veterans and military personnel. Some of these landmarks stand on Town-owned property, and others on private property. The condition of these objects is unknown, and funds have not been regularly allocated to conserve and care for them.
- Hingham has centuries of records and resources, but the Town has not established town-wide standards for cataloging or preserving these resources. Individual departments have developed their own approaches to protecting historical documents, but centralizing care and maintenance in a single archive could facilitate interdepartmental or public access to them, as well as ensure their safekeeping. The Town currently lacks a controlled storage facility and a professional archivist.

- Hingham has the potential to develop as a regional heritage tourist destination, aimed at visitors interested in early American history. This could be achieved, in part, through cooperative marketing and programming with historical organizations in other South Shore towns, e.g., Cohasset, Scituate, Norwell, Marshfield, Duxbury, and Plymouth.
- The Town has potential to become a laboratory for history and historic preservation scholars interested in studying early American architecture and landscape. This could be achieved through partnership with an institution of higher education. Both Boston University and the University of Massachusetts offer advanced degrees in historic preservation.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Hingham’s historical and cultural resources date from the Town’s incorporation nearly 400 years ago to the modern day. Hingham has established Local Historic Districts that protect some 700 homes, but they are only 10 percent of all structures in Hingham. The Town has opportunities to establish more Local Historic Districts and it can explore varied approaches to preservation based on the age of development in different parts of Town.
- The Scenic Road Act provides limited protection of trees, stone walls, and other natural and man-made features of aesthetic value associated with public ways designated as scenic by the Town. Hingham has opportunities to strengthen its approach to scenic roads by updating the scenic roads bylaw and documenting existing conditions on designated roadways. Having advanced docu-

mentation can help the Planning Board in its decision-making process when applications come before it for work on scenic ways.

- Town boards like the HHC and the CPC are tasked with weighing historical significance against other important factors. Creating a Community-Wide Preservation Plan presents a great opportunity to confirm and enhance the goals and objectives of local preservation initiatives, determine preservation needs, establish recommendations, and collaborate with private historic and cultural organizations to guide preservation policy and decision-making. The planning process would also be an opportunity to educate the public about Hingham’s ongoing preservation efforts and needs.
- Balancing the interests of historic preservation and modern homeowners can be a challenge. The HHC and HDC have a proactive homeowner education program and updated guidelines for new construction, but fostering new partnerships, including in the real estate community, could help to extend these educational programs to new audiences. The Town has the opportunity to focus on educating prospective homeowners and newcomers to Hingham about the Town’s long history and the significance of its preservation. Furthermore, the Town could consider incentivizing first-time buyers to purchase and restore historic properties.
- Hingham implemented a Demolition Delay Bylaw in the late 1980s. Since the Bylaw’s enactment, however, roughly half of the buildings reviewed have ultimately been demolished (as defined in the Bylaw) at the end of the six-month delay. Hingham can consid-

er extending the delay period, as many other communities have done, for as long as two years.

- Hingham has struggled with maintenance of some Town-owned historic buildings, including the Skate House (407 East Street) and the North Fire Station, which are important resources in the community. Opportunity exists to inventory Town-owned historic buildings, assess their conditions, establish priorities for upgrades, and expand staff capacity to oversee long-term maintenance.
- The Town of Hingham is exploring the potential impact of creating cultural districts through a Massachusetts Cultural Council initiative, both for historic preservation and to support cultural and heritage tourism. Initial discussions suggest that a Downtown and Harbor Cultural District could help facilitate and deepen connections between the Downtown and Harbor areas in an effort to expand regional employment opportunities, bolster the economy, and increase tourism in Hingham. At the time of this Master Plan, however, the Massachusetts Cultural Council had suspended cultural district designations.

## Policies and Recommendations

**Policy 1.1: Continue to document, prioritize, and protect historic buildings and resource areas.**

### Recommendations:

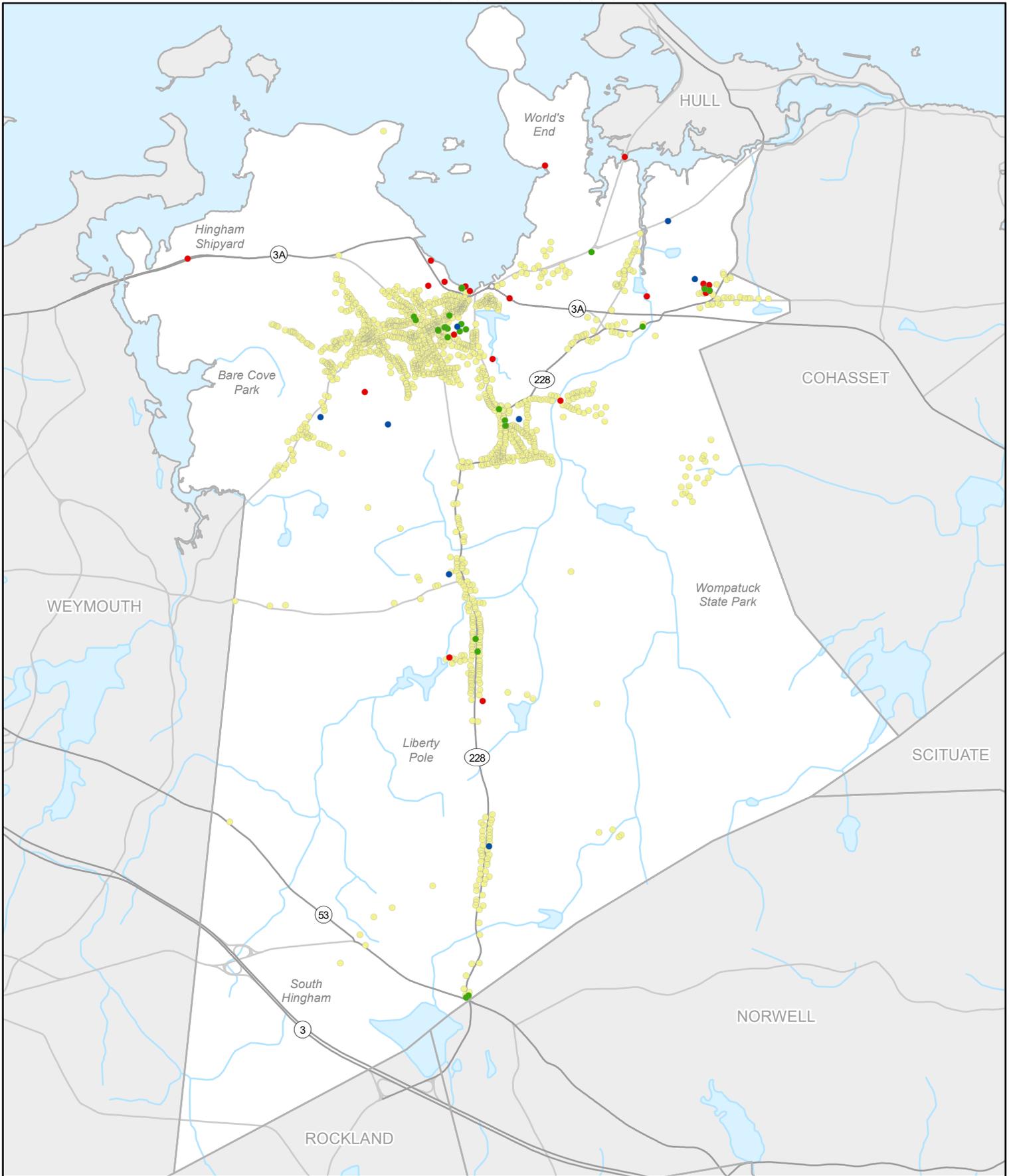
- Improve the condition of Town-owned historic buildings; annually appropriate funds (CPC or other sources) to keep up with maintenance.
- Explore alternative approaches to protecting historically significant buildings from demolition, including extending the term of the existing Demolition Delay Bylaw.
- Build on existing efforts to identify new or expanded Local Historic Districts to ensure further protection of historic properties and consider tiered level of districts to address evolving historic/age designations of neighborhoods.
- Establish a Town Archives program; identify a storage location, develop a cataloging system for Town records and other historical documents and artifacts, engage in document conservation, hire a professional archivist to carry out these tasks, appropriate funds to implement the program.
- Retain single-family development patterns in established neighborhoods in order to preserve character.

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**Policy 1.4: Develop a strategic plan for public and private historic preservation and heritage tourism.**

**Recommendations:**

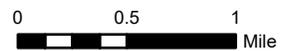
- Appropriate funds and engage a preservation planner to develop a 20-year town-wide Preservation Plan to help guide preservation decisions. Such a plan should involve and share coordination with Town commissions, including the Historical Commission and the Historic Districts Commission, as well as private preservation organizations, such as the Hingham Historical Society.
- Expand efforts to educate new and prospective owners of historic properties about best practices and guidelines/requirements for historic building preservation and homeownership of historic properties; establish partnerships with the real estate community and other welcome organizations and develop a newcomer/homeowner education program.
- Include historic/heritage tourism as part of Hingham's economic development plans; collaborate regionally with other communities to advance and develop a heritage tourism implementation plan.
- Support long-term efforts to designate Downtown as a Cultural District, connecting the harbor, downtown businesses, and historical organizations.
- Establish a partnership with a nearby college or university to study Hingham's historic resources further and to store and manage Hingham data.



**Map 3.1 Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS)**

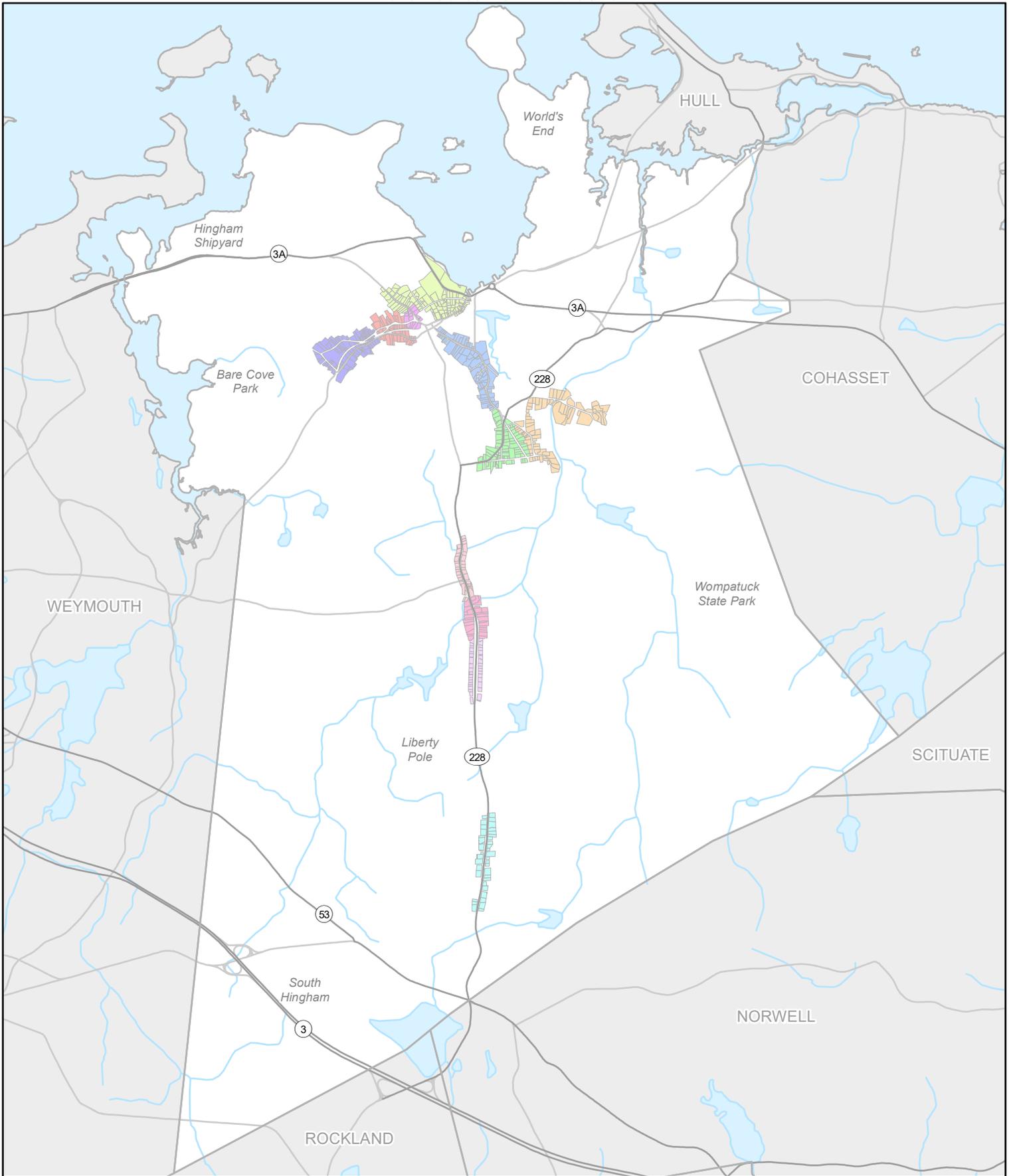
MACRIS Inventory Points, by Type

- Building (1,164)
- Burial Ground (8)
- Object (28)
- Structure (22)



Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS





Map 3.2 Local Historic Districts

- |                               |                                   |                            |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Glad Tidings LHD              | Lincoln Extension (Phase I) LHD   | Pear Tree Hill LHD         |
| Hingham Center (Phase I) LHD  | Lincoln Extension (Phase II) LHD  | Tower Wilder Extension LHD |
| Hingham Center (Phase II) LHD | Lincoln Extension (Phase III) LHD | Tower Wilder LHD           |
| Liberty Plain LHD             | Lincoln LHD                       |                            |

0 0.5 1  
 Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of Hingham





# Natural, Open Space, and Recreation Resources

## Introduction

Hingham's well-protected shallow harbor, coastal plains, fertile river valley, and adjacent upland areas have long been vital resources for the area's inhabitants. The Massachusetts (Massachuseuck) people, indigenous to much of the Greater Boston area, were among the first known to have harvested Hingham's diverse food resources of the coastal clam flats, Weir River, and upland grasslands and forests. Today these rich natural resources and picturesque open spaces add to the overall quality of life in the Town. They provide residents and visitors with places to explore, play, relax, and recharge. Hingham's commitment to protecting these resources has safeguarded them for the benefit of generations to come.

The purpose of this chapter of the Master Plan is to analyze Hingham's resource protection planning needs, both today and in the future, and identify steps the Town can take to address those needs. It describes the many public (federal, state, and local) and private entities involved in resource protection, both in Hingham and the surrounding area, and examines resource protection issues and opportunities facing Hingham today and in the near future.

## Existing Conditions

### Geology, Topography, and Soils

Hingham's geology consists of exposed and shallow-covered bedrock, drumlins, glacial till, and floodplain deposits. Bedrock outcroppings or "nobs" appear in the east and southwest. Drumlins<sup>1</sup> lie around the northern end and include Bumpkin Island, World's End, Planter's, Baker, Turkey, Otis, Squirrel, and Great Hills. Loose glacial till, consisting of fine textured sandy, silty, and clay soils suitable for planting dominate the level plains, including Liberty and Glad Tidings Plains, and the flat south of Penniman Hill. Post-glacial geology includes floodplain deposits, swamp deposits, and tidal flats. These appear along the Weir River and smaller streams, in low-lying areas, and along the north coast.

The topography of Hingham takes three general forms. A series of low, irregular hills interspersed with freshwater wetlands dominate the south, and a portion of this expanse serves as recharge area for the Town's water supply. The coast, ranging in width from one to two miles, extends along the northern border and features a series of headlands interspersed by broad, tidal estuaries (including Weymouth Back River, Hingham Harbor, and the Weir River), and tidal flats. A group of islands, including Button, Langley, Ragged, Sarah, and Bumpkin Islands, stands off the north coast.

The soils that occur in Hingham each have characteristics that support or constrain development with slopes as shown on (Map 4.1).<sup>2</sup> The Accord Pond Watershed and Hingham Aquifer Protection District areas (an area of 3,330 acres) primarily contain the sandy soils of the Warwick and Quonset series at 16% (529 acres) and 30% (1,009 acres), respectively. These series are defined as very deep, somewhat excessively drained, with

slopes ranging from 0 percent up to 70 percent, found on terraces, outwash plains, and deltas. Within the Town (an area of 14,519 acres), the two most common soils are Quonset (16% or 2,267 acres) and Chatfield-Rock outcrop-Canton complex (14% or 2,011 acres). Bedrock areas consist of very deep (greater than 60 inches to bedrock) Canton soils and moderately deep (20 to 40 inches to bedrock) Chatfield soils. Major development limitations are related to areas that have shallow depth to bedrock.

### Water Resources

**Watershed and Surface Waters.** Much of Hingham lies within the Boston Harbor Watershed, a 293-square mile area bounded by Wilmington (to the north) and Stoughton (to the south), Framingham (to the west) and Hingham (to the east). Eight smaller watersheds feed into the Boston Harbor Watershed, including the Weir River Watershed, encompassing 27 square miles and approximately 85 percent of Hingham. Its principal waterway is the Weir River, a tidal estuary that picks up several smaller rivers and brooks: Plymouth River/Eel River, Fulling Mill Brook, and Tower Brook, all of which drain into the Crooked Meadow River; Accord Pond/Accord Brook; and Weir River.

The remaining 15 percent of Hingham drains through small rivers and streams into the Weymouth Back River, a 1.5-mile-long estuary extending southward from Hingham and Weymouth Harbors, and the South Coastal Watershed, a 240.7-square mile area encompassing 19 cities and towns along the southeast Massachusetts coastline.

<sup>1</sup> A drumlin is an egg-shaped, compacted till deposit (boulders, cobbles, pebbles, sand, silt and clay) formed by the movement of glacial ice sheets.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Soil Conservation Service, Plymouth County.

## NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY



Scattered across Hingham are several freshwater ponds, most of which are man-made impoundments of the rivers and brooks created through the construction of water-power-producing dams. According to Massachusetts GIS maps, there are currently eight dams in Hingham, four of which are maintained by the Town. The largest of Hingham's ponds, 100-acre Accord Pond, stands at the headwaters of the Weir River and straddles the Hingham, Norwell, and Rockland town lines. Its brook feeds into Hingham's water supply and the municipal wells on South Pleasant Street. Smaller freshwater bodies include Cushing, Fulling Mill, Triphammer, and Foundry Ponds. Home Meadows, located near Hingham Center, contains the remnant of a tidal mill salt pond.

**Water Supply and Aquifers.** Groundwater, recharged by Accord Brook and its several tributaries, supplies much of the Town with drinking water. (See Map 4.2.) Section III-D of the Zoning Bylaw establishes the Accord Pond Watershed and Hingham Aquifer Protection District, which protects the Town's aquifer and the soils within the Accord Brook watershed by regulating and

controlling toxic or hazardous substances in the district. (*Additional information about the Town's water supply and aquifer can be found in this inventory's Chapter 8, Services and Facilities.*)

**Flood Hazard Areas.** Despite its location along the Atlantic coast, natural barriers have largely shielded Hingham from flooding. One reason is the Town's location: Hingham is nestled into an inlet and protected from storm surges by Nantasket Beach, a Hull barrier beach to Hingham's northeast, and Peddock's Island, an island in the Boston Harbor Islands chain to Hingham's northwest. In addition to these factors, the relatively small sizes of the Weir River and the Town's other brooks and streams, combined with the limited development in the inland floodplain areas, has minimized flood hazards in Hingham. Most in-land flood hazard areas mapped by FEMA stand along immediate edges of streams and overlap with wetlands and ponds.

**Wetlands.** Wetland areas in Hingham consist of marine wetlands, estuaries, and freshwater inland wetlands. Marine wetlands include intertidal flats, intertidal rocky shores and

eelgrass beds, while estuaries include salt marshes. Inland wetlands in Hingham include red maple swamps, emergent marshes, and vernal pools. As of March 2020, Hingham's number of certified vernal pools stood at 37,<sup>3</sup> however hundreds of additional potential vernal pools dot the Town. The Hingham Conservation Commission oversees the protection of these sites through enforcement of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Town's Wetlands Protection Bylaw. These protection measures each stipulate that the Conservation Commission must issue a permit prior to filling, dredging, building upon or otherwise altering wetlands and 100' wetland buffer zones.



Hingham's forestlands are heavily fragmented, due to the suburban development of the past 50-70 years. The few remaining large contiguous blocks of forests make up parts of Wompatuck State Park, the Whitney-Thayer Woods, Turkey Hill, and the Weir River Farm. Two conservation areas owned by the Town, Triphammer Pond and Leavitt Street, contain a total of approximately 114 acres of forest. The George Washington Forest (Town Forest) is 107.6 acres of wooded open space located off South Pleasant Street. The site contains forested upland dominated by red and white pines and Norway spruces, and it has been affected by aggressive invasive pests.

### Agricultural Land, Fields and Forest

Hingham contains little actively farmed land, and nearly all the remaining lands once used for agriculture are now open fields or have been developed into residential subdivisions. Open fields comprise parts of Town-owned Lehner property, Bare Cove Park, More-Brewer Park (off Hobart Street), Marchesiani Farmlands, and State-owned Stodder's Neck (off Lincoln Street). The 8.5-acre Schultz's Field, also owned by the Town, is leased to a dairy farmer who raises crops and silage, as is Cushing Field (0.4 acres), located on East Street. The Weir River Farm, owned by The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR), consists of 75 acres of fields, pastures and woodlands on Turkey Hill, and supports diverse wildlife habitat, including upland grasslands. World's End, also owned by TTOR, maintains open fields, some of which are leased for hay farming to feed dairy cows.

### Vegetation

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) assembles vegetation and the wildlife it supports into a series of "natural communities," groupings of species "found in recurring patterns that can be classified and described by their dominant physical and biological features."<sup>4</sup> Hingham contains twelve such communities, dispersed throughout the Town, ranging

3 MassGIS, Vernal Pools (database).

4 Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), Natural Communities

from the common White Pine- Oak Forest to the quite rare Maritime Juniper Woodlands. Found in the salt spray zone along the coast in areas protected from direct salt water flooding, Maritime Juniper Woodlands contain red cedar, pitch pine, American holly, bayberry, and winged sumac, among other species.



World's End, in the extreme northern portion of the Town, is home to an expansive and high-quality example of this rare natural community.

**Wildlife**

Hingham's natural resources, including the harbor and associated mudflats, estuaries, shoreline, fresh water brooks and ponds, and forests all provide habitat for a diversity of shellfish, fish, birds, and mammals. The harbor is home to flounder,

bluefish, striped bass, and rainbow smelt, and the mudflats support populations of soft-shell clams, blue mussels, quahogs, and razor clams. Anadromous and catadromous fish, including alewives, blueback herring, and American eels live and spawn in the waters of the Weir and Fresh Rivers and Turkey Hill Run. Birds include hawks, songbirds, and shorebirds. Many mammals of various sizes, including coyote, fisher, cottontail, and shrew, contribute to Hingham's wildlife population. There are riverine wildlife corridors along

**Table 4.1 Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) Rare Species in Hingham**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Taxonomic Group	MESA Status
Adder's Tongue Fern	<i>Ophioglossum pusillum</i>	Vascular Plant	Threatened
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Bird	Special Concern
Bristly Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus pensylvanicus</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern
Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>	Bird	Special Concern
Eastern Box Turtle	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Reptile	Special Concern
Pale Green Orchid	<i>Platanthera flava var. herbiola</i>	Vascular Plant	Threatened
Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Bird	Endangered
Seabeach Dock	<i>Rumex pallidus</i>	Vascular Plant	Threatened
Small-flowered Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus micranthus</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered
Spartina Borer Moth	<i>Photodes inops</i>	Butterfly/Moth	Special Concern
Whorled Milkweed	<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>	Vascular Plant	Threatened
Wood Turtle	<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Reptile	Special Concern

Source: Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife NHESP

the major perennial streams, including the Weir, Weymouth Back, and Crooked Meadow Rivers.

**Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species.** The NHESP has identified twelve species of conservation concern in Hingham, listed in Table 4.1. The locations of these species are purposely not described in order to protect their continued existence.

**Biomap2 Areas.** Created by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and The Nature Conservancy, Biomap2 combines documentation of rare species and natural communities with spatial data (mapping) to create a visual chart of species diversity in the wake of climate change. The map contains two databases: Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscapes,<sup>5</sup> shown in Map 4.3. According to the statewide biodiversity analysis, Hingham has 27 Core Habitats and 15 Critical Landscapes consisting of the following area within Hingham's 14,555 acres, located largely within the Wompatuck State Park: 1,672 acres of Core Habitat, 79.7 percent (or 1,333 acres) of which is protected, and 2,193 acres of Critical Natural Landscape, 90.3 percent (or 1,980 acres) of which is protected.

### Public Shade Trees

Hingham's Shade Tree Committee, established by the Board of Selectmen in 2012, is responsible for Town policy regarding stewardship of Hingham's tree canopy. The committee advises the Department of Public Works by recommending appropriate tree species and planting locations on public lands, and also promotes the value of shade trees through advocacy and education. The committee has posted several reports about shade

trees on the Town's website, dealing with pertinent topics such as the benefits of shade trees, tree biology, and tree selection.

### Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Hingham's 2016-2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan highlights several scenic resources that are unique to the Town. In addition to the geologic features noted earlier in this chapter, and the resources identified in Chapter 3, the following natural resource areas are considered scenic resources of particular value:

- Hingham Waterfront/World's End, including the Hingham Harbor islands, marine headlands, bathing beach, Crow Point, Hewitt's Cove, and the 251 acres of World's End;
- Wompatuck State Park, over 3,600 acres of woodland interspersed with wetlands, in Hingham as well as Cohasset, Norwell and Scituate; and
- Home Meadows, a tidally influenced marsh located near the downtown.

**Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.** An Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) is a place that receives special recognition because of the quality, uniqueness, and significance of its natural and cultural resources. Massachusetts has designated 28 natural areas as ACECs. The nomination process begins at the community level and ultimately requires a favorable designation decision by the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) administers

<sup>5</sup> Core Habitat is specific areas necessary to promote the long-term persistence of rare species, other species of conservation concern, exemplary natural communities and intact ecosystems. Critical Natural Landscapes are intact landscapes that are better able to support ecological processes and disturbance regimes, and a wide array of special habitats over long time frames.

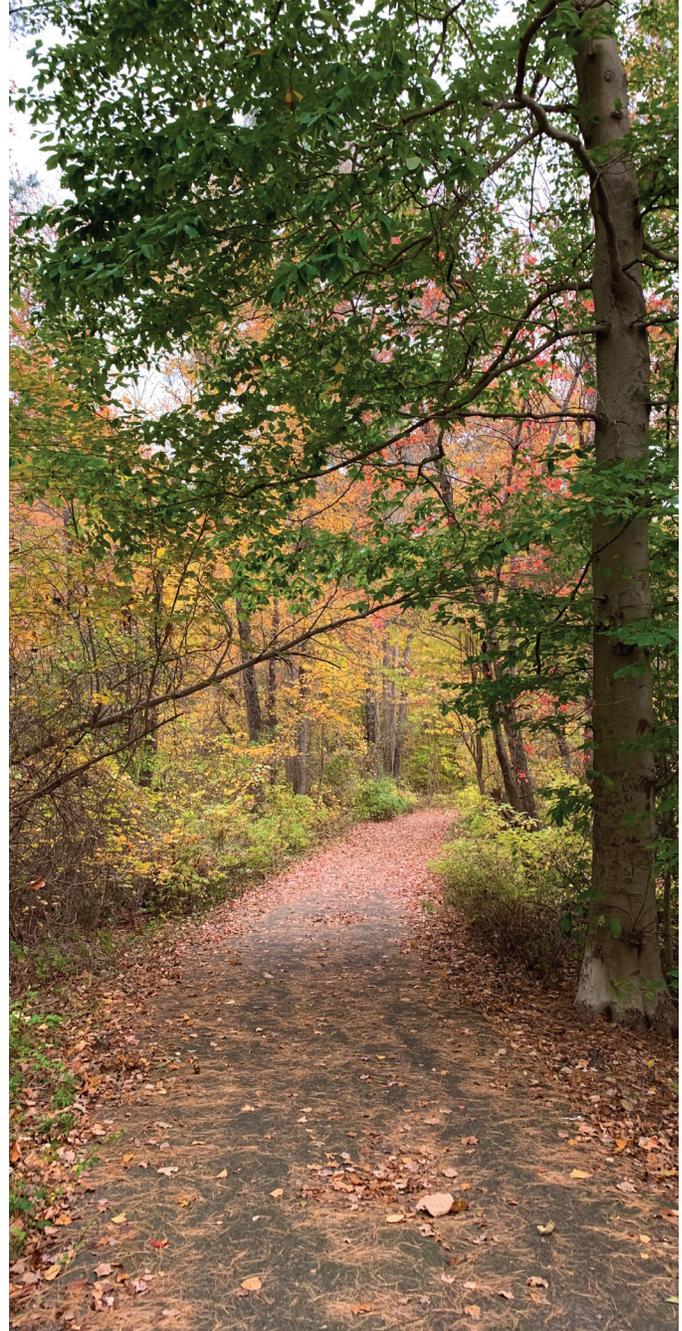
the ACEC Program on behalf of the Secretary. Hingham has two ACECs:

- Weir River (designated in 1986) including 950 acres encompassing the river and its estuary. The Weir River Estuary Park Committee, a six-member group with representatives from Cohasset, Hull, and Hingham represent stewards of this area.
- Weymouth Back River (designated in 1982) including 468 acres protecting tidewater and salt marsh along the Weymouth Back River, with boundaries encompassing most of Bare Cove Park, part of the More-Brewer Park (Hingham Conservation Commission), and Great Esker Park (Weymouth). Stewardship of a portion of this area is overseen by the Bare Cove Park Committee, comprised of seven members appointed by the Select Board, including a park ranger.

**Scenic Roads.** The Town has designated eight “Scenic Roads” under G.L. c. 40, Section 15C, because of their rural character, mature trees, stone walls, and status as secondary (rather than primary) connector streets. Designations take place through a local review process with the Hingham Planning Board. The existing Scenic Roads are Free Street, Lazell Street, Leavitt Street, Turkey Hill Lane, Popes Lane, South Pleasant Street, Martins Lane, and Union Street.

### Past and Current Natural Resource Protection Efforts

Town of Hingham Master Plan (2001). The update of a 1968 plan, Hingham’s 2001 Master Plan included specific goals and objectives relating to natural resources. These goals focused on protecting and enhancing the Town’s natural envi-



ronment; protecting natural areas from inappropriate development; protecting freshwater and saltwater resources; maintaining sufficient natural areas to sustain native plant and wildlife species; and protecting groundwater and surface water supplies to safeguard public drinking water. The plan included fifteen recommendations to protect Hingham’s natural resources. Three of those recommendations have been implemented:

- Institute “conservation design” for residential development as a way of maintaining and enhancing natural resources. *In 2001, the Town amended its Zoning Bylaw to include a Flexible Residential Development bylaw, providing incentives for open space preservation with the development of residential subdivisions.*
- Evaluate the impact of road management activities on water quality and adjust, as required. *This evaluation takes place through the MS4 permitting process.*
- Modify the local Wetlands Bylaw to include certified vernal pools and identify additional vernal pools for certification. *Town bylaws and regulations address certified vernal pools.*

**Hingham Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) (2016-2023).** Reviewed and conditionally approved by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, this plan will, in part, guide the Town in protection of its natural resources through 2023. Town staff reviewed the previous plan (2009-2016) and other related planning efforts, interviewed various Town departments and committees, and distributed a questionnaire to residents. An analysis of natural resource protection needs identified the following:

- Protection of drinking water resources to ensure adequate and safe supply now and in the future;
- Maintenance of plant and animal diversity throughout the Town; and
- Protection of Hingham Bay and the ecosystems associated with this feature.

The plan included five goals, including one specifically related to natural resources: “protect Hingham’s natural resources and the ecological and biological integrity of its wildlife through open space acquisition, development regulation, and collaboration with varied authorities and interests.” To achieve this goal, the OSRP promotes four objectives, some of which were underway during this Master Plan process: protecting and promoting biodiversity; protecting local occurrences of natural communities and rare species habitats; protecting and enhancing wildlife corridors; and protecting the coastal zone, river and stream connectivity and riparian areas, and aquatic ecosystems.

### Protected Open Space

According to the Massachusetts Audubon Society’s Losing Ground statistics for 2020, Hingham ranks 152 in size out of 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts but 109 in the amount of land protected by the Town, the Commonwealth, and non-profit organizations and land trusts (Table 4.2). The means of protection include ownership, conservation restrictions, and easements.<sup>6</sup>

Permanently protected lands are lands that are committed to use for conservation or recreation through ownership or permanent conservation restriction or deed restriction (Map 4.4). Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution prohibits a

<sup>6</sup> A complete inventory is published in the Town’s Open Space and Recreation Plan.

**OPEN SPACE RESOURCES INVENTORY**

change in use of such lands without municipal and state approval.

**Permanently Protected Town-Owned Lands.** Over half of the protected open space in Hingham is owned by the Town. The Open Space Acquisition Committee evaluates open space lands for their acquisition potential and consults with Hingham’s Conservation Officer. The committee consists of three members appointed by the Select Board, Conservation Commission, and Planning Board.

Hingham also owns four small islands located off the north coast of Hingham Bay protected for public use as part of the Boston Harbor Islands State Park and Boston Harbor National Recreation Area. Langley, Ragged, Sarah, and Button Islands consist of approximately 133 acres of uplands and intertidal area, accessible only by boat.

**State-Owned Permanently Protected Lands.** The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) owns and manages two tracts of land in Hingham that total of 1,560 acres. Most of this land is in Wompatuck State Park (1,540 acres). The park is named for Mattakeeset-Massachusetts Sachem Josiah Wompatuck (see Chapter 3). The property became an ammunition depot in World War II, and in 1969, a state park. Stodder’s Neck, located off Lincoln Street, is a 20-acre peninsula at the mouth of the Weymouth Back River. This area is also part of the Weymouth Back River ACEC.

**Permanently Protected Lands Owned by Non-Profit Organizations and Land Trusts.** Two 501(c)(3) entities have permanently protected a total of 618.46 acres in Hingham through acquisitions,

**Table 4.2 Protected Land in Hingham (2020)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>State Rank</b>	
Overall area protected (acres)	4,321	109
Overall percent protected	30%	103
Total area (acres)	14,439	132
Total area (square miles)	22.6	153

*Source: Massachusetts Audubon Society Losing Ground Project. The total of 4,321 acres does not include privately-protected land, but does include land on four islands in Hingham Bay, owned by the town and part of the Boston Harbor Island State Park and Boston Harbor National Recreation Area. This acreage varies, as some portions of the islands are intertidal.*

conservation restrictions, and conservation easements:

- The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR), established in 1891, is America’s oldest land trust, managing conserved open space throughout Massachusetts. TTOR owns 511.5 acres in Hingham, including World’s End (the 251-acre peninsula stretching off the northern-most coast of Hingham), Weir River Farm, Whitney and Thayer Woods, and Turkey Hill.
- Hingham Land Conservation Trust (HLCT), established in 1972, preserves and maintains 106.96 acres, and serves as a local advocate for land preservation and educator about land conservation and stewardship. The HLCT’s properties include Eel River Woods, Jacobs Meadow, Whortleberry Hollow, and land in Home Meadows and along the Fulling Mill River.

A third non-profit land trust is associated with Hingham. Founded in 1973, Wildlands Trust is one of the largest and oldest regional land trusts in Massachusetts and has helped to ensure the protection of 8,500 acres of natural and agricultural lands. The trust works with allied public agencies and other non-profit land trusts to achieve land protection. Its Board of Directors includes representatives from the communities it serves, including

Hingham. Currently, the trust does not own land in Hingham.

**Partially or Temporarily Protected Lands**

Several parcels of privately-owned land in Hingham are partially or temporarily protected, meaning that the land is still in use, but the protection that exists today may be lifted if the owner’s needs change in the future.

**Chapter 61 Lands.** Ninety-eight acres and eleven parcels of private land in Hingham has been partially or temporarily protected through G.L. c. 61 (14.48 acres), 61A (30.74 acres) and 61B (25.13 acres), as forest, agricultural, or recreational land, respectively. The largest area still in agricultural use is located along Fulling Mill Brook and is managed by the Fulling Mill Brook Farm Trust.

**Private School, Church and Other Institutional Land.** Six such institutions own 193.1 acres of open space in Hingham: the Benedictine Fathers, South Shore Conservatory, Derby Academy, and Sisters of Notre Dame (all non-profit), and the Hingham Yacht Club.

**Drinking Water Protection.** The Weir River Water System provides Hingham’s public drinking water and the Town holds hundreds of acres as open space to safeguard water quality.

**Cemeteries and Miscellaneous Town Holdings.** Hingham has eight cemeteries and burying grounds: seven are privately owned, and the last was abandoned on Canterbury Street and acquired by the Town. Along with the Town’s non-recreational school lands, public safety facilities, and properties held through tax takings, these

open spaces have little or no protection.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the state, Town and other non-profit organizations hold or have held time-limited preservation restrictions on historic properties. (For information about these temporary restrictions, see Chapter 3).

**Unprotected Lands**

The Town has taken 20 parcels of land totaling 17.69 acres for unpaid taxes.<sup>8</sup> The largest is 3.75 acres of salt marsh. Seven parcels contain wetlands, and several are valuable for groundwater recharge and the potential to support (and for the public to observe) wildlife.

**Additional Efforts to Protect Open Space**

Town of Hingham Master Plan (2001). Hingham’s last Master Plan embraced five open space goals:

- (1) expanding the Town’s network of protected open spaces to create a system;
- (2) developing a strategy for increasing open space acquisition;
- (3) providing four-season open spaces;
- (4) increasing public awareness of open space; and
- (5) preserving the Town’s scenic character.

Of the seventeen recommendations made to achieve these goals, four have been implemented in whole or in part:

- Purchase, through transfer of development rights or outright, additional Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands. *The Town negotiated the*

<sup>7</sup> G.L. Title XVI, Chapter 114 protects public cemeteries from desecration, as well as abandoned cemeteries and burial sites, however, it does not address private cemeteries established prior to 1936.

<sup>8</sup> Source of data: 2016-2023 Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan

*inclusion of 14.48 acres on Lazell Street and 9.88 acres on East Street in Chapter 61.*

- Purchase private undeveloped land. *In 2015, voters moved to purchase the 50-acre Lehner Conservation Area on South Pleasant Street as a way of safeguarding the land from development, and to protect the Town aquifer.*
- Expand the existing trails systems in open spaces to provide longer-distance routes. *Hingham completed a Comprehensive Trails Plan in 2015 that spelled out action steps for improving trails throughout the Town and beyond.*
- Create an “ocean walk” along Hingham Harbor. *The Town is developing a “Harbor Walk,” a walkable path from Crow Point to the Hingham Maritime Center, substantially as envisioned in the Town’s 2007 Harbor Master Plan.*

The Hingham Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan (2016-2023) identifies several resource protection needs:

- Increasing the number of walking paths, bike trails, swimming areas and picnic areas in existing open spaces;
- Acquiring more open space; and
- Increasing the connections between open spaces.

Of the five plan goals, Goal 5 specifically addresses open space: “acquire and preserve land, easements, and restrictions for conservation, preservation, and recreation purposes.” Objectives for meeting this goal included evaluating potential acquisitions; supporting open space protection in the Town’s two ACECs; working in concert with other related studies and plans; partnering with other public and private entities to increase protection efforts; and working with Town depart-

ments to develop policies and/or regulations that promote open space protection.

**Community Preservation Act.** Hingham adopted the Community Preservation Act (G.L. c. 44B) (CPA) in 2001. Through a local real property tax surcharge, the Town collects and expends funds to support open space, affordable housing, recreation lands, and historic preservation. Hingham’s CPA surcharge is 1.5 percent, and the state contributes annually at a varying rate. Since 2003 when the Town began awarding CPA funds for eligible purposes, Hingham has funded 138 projects, roughly 20 percent for open space preservation. One of the most significant recent CPA-funded efforts was the 2015 acquisition of the 50-acre Lehner Conservation Area on South Pleasant Street, a project intended both to preserve scenic open space and protect the Town aquifer. The CPA is administered in Hingham by the Community Preservation Committee, a nine-member body with representatives from the Historical Commission, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Housing Authority, as well as three citizens at large.

**Hingham Zoning By-Law.** In 1941, Hingham adopted its first Zoning By-Law as a means for managing growth. Since then, the Town has made many amendments to the bylaw, several of which were written to protect open space resources, including establishment of the Official and Open Space District and Waterfront Recreation District, and introducing changes to the Flexible Residential Development and Residential Multi-Use Development regulations.

### **Town-Owned Recreation Land**

The Town-owned open space discussed earlier in this chapter provide wildlife habitat, mitigate flooding, and preserve scenic views, and are also



open to the public for recreational use. The complete list can be seen in the Town’s Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan. The following summarizes the largest or most popular sites (Map 4.5):

**Bare Cove Park.** Located on the western edge of Hingham along the eastern bank of the Weymouth Back River, this approximately 484-acre park is a portion of the former ammunition depot consisting of upland forest and salt marsh, and provides many miles of woodland trails suitable for biking, hiking, running, and Nordic skiing, as well as opportunities for ice skating, canoeing, and kayaking. The Bare Cove Park Commission oversees stewardship of the park. Adjacent to the Park, on other land of the former ammunition depot are Lynch Field and Carlson Fields which provide multiple athletic facilities.

**More-Brewer Park.** This 186.5-acre former farm estate contains a pond for ice skating as well as

five miles of carriage roads for hiking, horseback riding, and Nordic skiing. Visitors also enjoy picnicking and birdwatching.

**George Washington Forest (Town Forest),** a 107.6-acre wooded open space located off South Pleasant Street, containing three miles of hiking and horseback riding trails, including some wide paths used for forest maintenance.<sup>9</sup>

**Burns Memorial Park (Tranquility Grove).** Located on 24 acres off Hersey Street in the heart of Hingham, this wooded area staged a “Great Abolitionist Picnic” in 1844. Minimally maintained for many years, access to Tranquility Grove has recently been improved through the addition of a new entrance, steps, cleared areas, and trails.

**Town Conservation Areas.** In addition to those discussed above, the Town maintains several large conservation areas that provide opportuni-

<sup>9</sup> Acreage for the Town Forest is listed in the 2016-2023 Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan as 107.6.

## RECREATION LANDS INVENTORY

ties for hiking, nature observation and other activities. These include the Lehner Conservation Area (51 acres), Bouve Conservation Area (32 acres), McKenna Marsh (103 acres) and Triphammer Pond Conservation Area (97.8 acres).

### State-Owned Recreation Land

DCR provides recreation amenities at two state-owned properties. Wompatuck State Park offers 40 miles of forested trails, 12 miles of roads for non-motorized vehicles, a 250-site campground, and allows horseback riding, hunting, and bird-watching. Stodder's Neck has hiking trails and picnic spots, and visitors enjoy long views from its high points.

### Waterfront and Urban Parks

**Hingham Bathing Beach.** The Trustees of the Bathing Beach and Select Board (acting as the Board of Park Commissioners) oversee this narrow beach located along Hingham's north coast. The parcels include a bath house, a bandstand for summer concerts, a picnic area, a public boat ramp, and paved parking areas.

**Whitney Wharf.** This finger of land sits between Victory Park (to the west) and POW/MIA Memorial Park (to the east). An 89-foot pedestrian bridge, constructed beginning in 2012, connects the wharf to 3 Otis Street, a private property and marina to the west, allowing for a safe pedestrian connection along Route 3A.

**Barnes Wharf.** A 1966 gift to the Town made by Charles Barnes, this harbor front venue is home to the Hingham Maritime Center (HMC, formerly the Lincoln Sailing Club), a non-profit organization offering rowing, sailing, and maritime education programs. Facilities at the wharf include the Curtis Pavilion and Curtis Boathouse and recreational offerings include rowing and sailing in-

struction and competition. The HMC also hosts an annual Harborfest in September to raise funds for activities at the wharf. Barnes Wharf is under the case, custody and control of the Select Board.

**Steamboat Wharf.** This 1.8-acre largely tree-covered property lies to the east of Barnes Wharf.

The 1.27-acre **Hingham Town Common**, located at the intersections of Common, Short, School and Middle Streets, contains a grassy lawn and perimeter shade trees.

**Veterans' Memorial Park** is a 0.5-acre park on Central Street in front of Hingham Town Hall.

**Victory Park** (commonly known as Iron-Horse Park) is a one-acre passive recreation site located on the Hingham harborfront near the Town pier. The park features the Iron Horse Statue -- an equestrian statue, actually formed from bronze, of a heroic figure named "Victory".

**Jackass Park**, located on Main Street near Hobart Street, was upgraded in 2012 by the Hingham Garden Club and Shade Tree Committee to include plantings of maple trees, a pink flowering dogwood tree, and perennial flower beds.

### Athletic Fields and Playgrounds

Hingham maintains over 460 acres of athletic fields and playgrounds on 17 different sites, including soccer fields, baseball and softball diamonds, lacrosse fields, tennis courts, and playgrounds. Municipal oversight is distributed between the Select Board, School Department, and Recreation Commission (Map 4.5):

- Carlson Complex (16 acres, Select Board): 2 rectangular fields, a Little League Baseball field, softball field, 2 basketball courts and skate park

- Lynch Fields (8 acres, Select Board): 2 Little League Baseball fields, 2 (overlapping) rectangular football fields, a batting cage and support building
- Margett's Fields (6.22 acres, Select Board and Recreation Commission): 2 lacrosse fields, lacrosse wall
- Powers Field (1.15 acres, Select Board): Little League baseball/ softball field
- Hingham High School (71.6 acres, School Department): 17 fields accommodating softball, track and field, shot put, baseball, varsity field hockey, regulation soccer (3 fields), small soccer (2 fields), and lacrosse, 6 tennis courts and 2 batting cages
- Hingham Middle School (31 acres, School Department): Little League Baseball field, 2 rectangular fields, and 4 tennis courts
- East Elementary School (11.52 acres, School Department): 2 rectangular fields, informal basketball court, and playground
- Foster Elementary School (40.9 acres, School Department): Little League Baseball/softball field, soccer field, 3 basketball courts, 3 tennis courts, and playground
- Plymouth River Elementary School (62.06 acres, School Department and Recreation Commission): Little League baseball/ softball field, rectangular field, basketball court, 6 tennis courts and playground
- South Elementary School (28.3 acres, School Department): Little League field, rectangular field, basketball court, and playground
- Cronin Complex (17.21 acres, Recreation Commission): baseball field, soccer field, basketball court, street hockey court, 6 tennis



courts, a running/walking track, volleyball court and playground

- Haley Field (Recreation Commission): Little League baseball field
- Hersey Field (4.73 acres, Recreation Commission): Little League baseball field and playground
- Hull Street Field (5.8 acres, Recreation Commission): rectangular field and playground
- Kress Field (5.03 acres, Recreation Commission): Little League baseball/ softball field, basketball court, playground

Hingham also owns the **South Shore Country Club (SSCC)**. The day to day operations of SSCC is under the Country Club Management Committee (CCMC). This facility has a golf course, hiking trails, swimming pool, and three tennis courts. The 70-year-old pool recently closed because of structural issues. In response, the CCMC has prepared a campus plan to redevelop the site and reactivate the pool. The Town purchased the club 30 years ago and operates it as a municipal enterprise, i.e., as a self-supporting entity, and the recreational facility continues to pay for itself.

The estimated cost of updates and upgrades is \$11 million. The CCMC is seeking CPA funding, grants, and other ways to finance these improvements.

### Indoor Recreation Facilities

The Hingham Recreation Department operates two facilities, located within and adjacent to Town Hall, 341 Main Street: (See also, Chapter 8.)

**Recreation Center.** Located in the lower level of Town Hall, this multi-use facility includes a gymnasium, game room, two studios, and a fitness center. Outdoor amenities include a playground, street hockey rink, tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts, and soccer and baseball fields, and hosts a popular summer camp program.

**Rec Barn.** This newly renovated building located directly behind Town Hall offers public restrooms and a new multi-purpose program room that is home to a dance school and adult fitness classes.

### Privately-Owned Recreation Land Open to the Public

**Weir River Farm.** Located on 75 acres at the end of Turkey Hill Lane, this working farm consists of fields and pastures surrounded by oak and red cedar woodlands. Visitors can hike along 1.5 miles of trails that connect to Whitney and Thayer Woods and lead to the Wompatuck State Park and Triphammer Conservation Area. TTOR operates the Weir River Farm Market, which sells beef, lamb, chicken, pork and eggs.

**Whitney and Thayer Woods/Turkey Hill.** The Whitney and Thayer Woods property consists of 114.5 acres with ten miles of carriage roads suitable for hiking. At the property's summit is Tur-

key Hill, which had an anti-missile control station during the Cold War. The summit stands at 187 feet and offers spectacular views of the South Shore and Boston skyline. TTOR annually mows and maintains the fields atop Turkey Hill and at adjacent Weir River Farm as an ongoing effort to restore grassland bird species habitat.

**World's End.** TTOR acquired this 251-acre former gentleman's farm on Hingham's northeast coast in 1967. In the nineteenth century, Boston businessman John Brewer owned the land and considered developing it for 163 homes. In 1890, he hired Frederick Law Olmsted's landscape architecture firm to layout the property and design a circulation plan.<sup>10</sup> Four-and-a-half miles of carriage roads were constructed, but the houses were not. Today, World's End is one of the state's premiere open spaces. Site amenities include parking (recently expanded), benches, drinking fountains and port-a-potties. TTOR is currently raising funds to construct a new visitor center with ADA-compliant restrooms.

**Jacob's Meadow** is a 65-acre open space owned by HLCT, located between Main Street and Fulling Mill Brook and containing a hiking trail and trailside seating. Other publicly accessible properties of the HLCT include Eel River Woods (12.2 acres between Cushing Street and the Eel River) and Whortleberry Hollow (16 acres also accessible via Cushing Street).

### Efforts to Meet Recreation Needs

The 2001 Hingham Master Plan set four goals and thirteen recommendations for recreation. Four of those recommendations have been implemented:

<sup>10</sup> The work at World's End likely was conducted by the Olmsted firm, rather than personally by Frederick Law Olmsted, who was elderly and unwell in 1890. Olmsted died in 1903.



- Providing lighted playing fields and a stadium at the High School. Lighting has been installed and new seating has been constructed at the High School.
- Providing a skateboard park. A skateboard park was built at the Carlson Complex.
- Supporting construction of a recreation facility at the Weymouth Naval Air Station.
- Funding improvements at Whitney Wharf. *The Town has secured CPA funding for multiple improvements at Whitney Wharf, including construction of a pedestrian bridge in 2012 and lighting of the bridge in 2016.*

The Hingham Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan (2016-2023) sets a goal to “maintain and enhance Hingham’s formal and informal recreation facilities in an environmentally sensitive way in order to provide diverse recreation opportunities and access to fields, courts, playgrounds and major open spaces.” Objectives for meeting this goal included supporting and improving existing facilities; assessing the Town’s recreational needs and filling in the gaps; creating links between non- contiguous open spaces to provide a more unified system of recreation facilities; and

enhancing public access to the waterfront.

**Hingham Comprehensive Trails Plan (2015).** The Comprehensive Trails Plan, completed in 2015, addresses a concern about the growth of residential development in Hingham, and the detrimental impact on unprotected open space. Driven by a public engagement process and directed by a citizen-based Trails Committee, the plan included an inventory of existing open space and trails, recommendations for future connections, and designs for access, trails, and trail signage.

**Community Preservation Act (CPA).** Roughly 15 percent of the 138 CPA-funded projects in Hingham fell under the recreation category. Projects have ranged in scope from playground upgrades, to athletic field improvements, to pedestrian bridge construction at Whitney Wharf.

**Comprehensive Athletic Field and Outdoor Court Study (2020).** In 2019, the Town launched a project to inventory the fields and courts, assess conditions, identify maintenance issues, and make recommendations for future additions, improvements, and long-term management.

## Issues and Opportunities

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### ISSUES

**Wildlife Protection.** Hingham faces tremendous development pressure, brought on by rising home prices in Boston, ferry service, and completion of the Greenbush Commuter Rail Line. In order to prevent land fragmentation and wildlife habitat destabilization that can result from unplanned development, Hingham and neighboring towns, as well as local and regional land trusts, must work together toward preservation of wildlife habitat.

**Watershed Protection.** Hingham lies within the Weir River Watershed, which feeds into the larger Boston Harbor Watershed. The Weir River Watershed also occupies land in adjacent towns. Cooperation and coordination between Hingham and its neighbors will be critical to safeguarding the water quality associated with these areas.

**Managing Open Space.** Currently, Hingham has more than 4,000 acres of protected open space through ownership and easements held by the Town and land trusts. The cost of both purchasing and maintaining open space is high. The Town need to take better care of what they have before acquiring more land, and explore alternative approaches to managing this land (friends groups, cooperatives, etc.).

**Recreation Needs.** The Town has commissioned a recreation fields assessment to better understand existing conditions and forecast long term needs. Given the many priorities for more and improved public services (including Foster School, a new public safety building, and new senior center), Hingham will need to balance support for field recommendations with other needs.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Water Quality.** Hingham's existing watershed protection district is one of the Town's largest environmental protection measures. Opportunity exists to update/strengthen the regulations associated with this district, and to take additional measures, such as regulating the watering of lawns, to ensure a safe and sufficient water supply.

**Tree Protection.** Currently, Hingham lacks any type of ordinance to protect trees, and a committee has been formed to explore such an ordinance. Opportunity exists to support the work of this committee by enacting a tree protection ordinance that would minimize tree removal in the development process.

**Cemeteries and Burial Grounds.** Hingham's seven private cemeteries and burying grounds are (minimally) protected from desecration by state law, but management of them is the responsibility of each owner. The Town has acquired the burying ground (Canterbury Street) and has the opportunity to restore it.

**Open Space Connections.** Many of the open space parcels in Hingham are disconnected from one another. A recently developed trails plan identified many opportunities for making connections. Opportunity exists for the Town to devote more resources to establishing these connections.

**Aging Playgrounds.** Hingham maintains several neighborhood playgrounds, each with equipment that has a shelf-life of 20 to 30 years. Opportunity exists for the Town to explore more sustainable approaches to designing and building playgrounds.

## Policies and Recommendations

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**Policy 1.2: Provide stewardship of priority open space and natural resource areas, connecting passive and active recreation lands wherever appropriate and possible.**

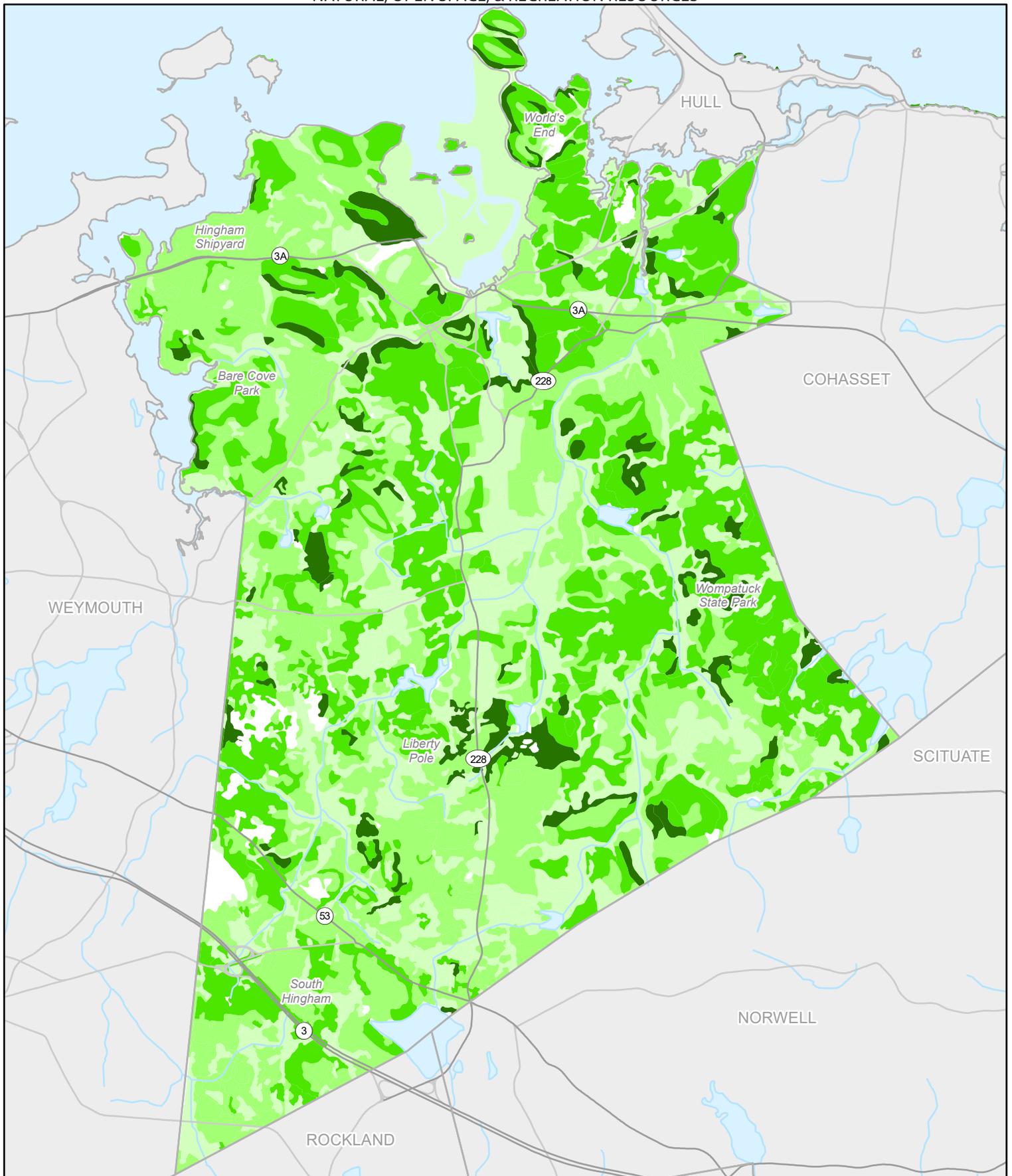
**Recommendations:**

- Better define and beautify Hingham’s approaches, or its “gateways” by installing signs, adding planting, and upgrading other landscape features.
- Increase the protection of historic trees, stone walls, and other landscape features by strengthening and making clearer the existing Scenic Road regulations.
- Identify measures to strengthen regulations related to water quality and quantity.
- Appropriate funds to acquire land that connects existing open space parcels when they become available, consistent with the Town’s Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP).
- Establish a policy regarding the design of public playgrounds, with a focus on using recyclable/renewable materials.

**Policy 6.3: Provide a range of opportunities for cultural, recreational, leisure, and social activities for all ages and abilities.**

**Recommendations:**

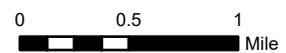
- Maintain existing recreational facilities and undertake a plan for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance at all playgrounds.
- Once the Athletic Fields Study is approved and finalized, evaluate the recommended additional recreational opportunities / facilities.



NRCS SSURGO-certified Soils, by Slope

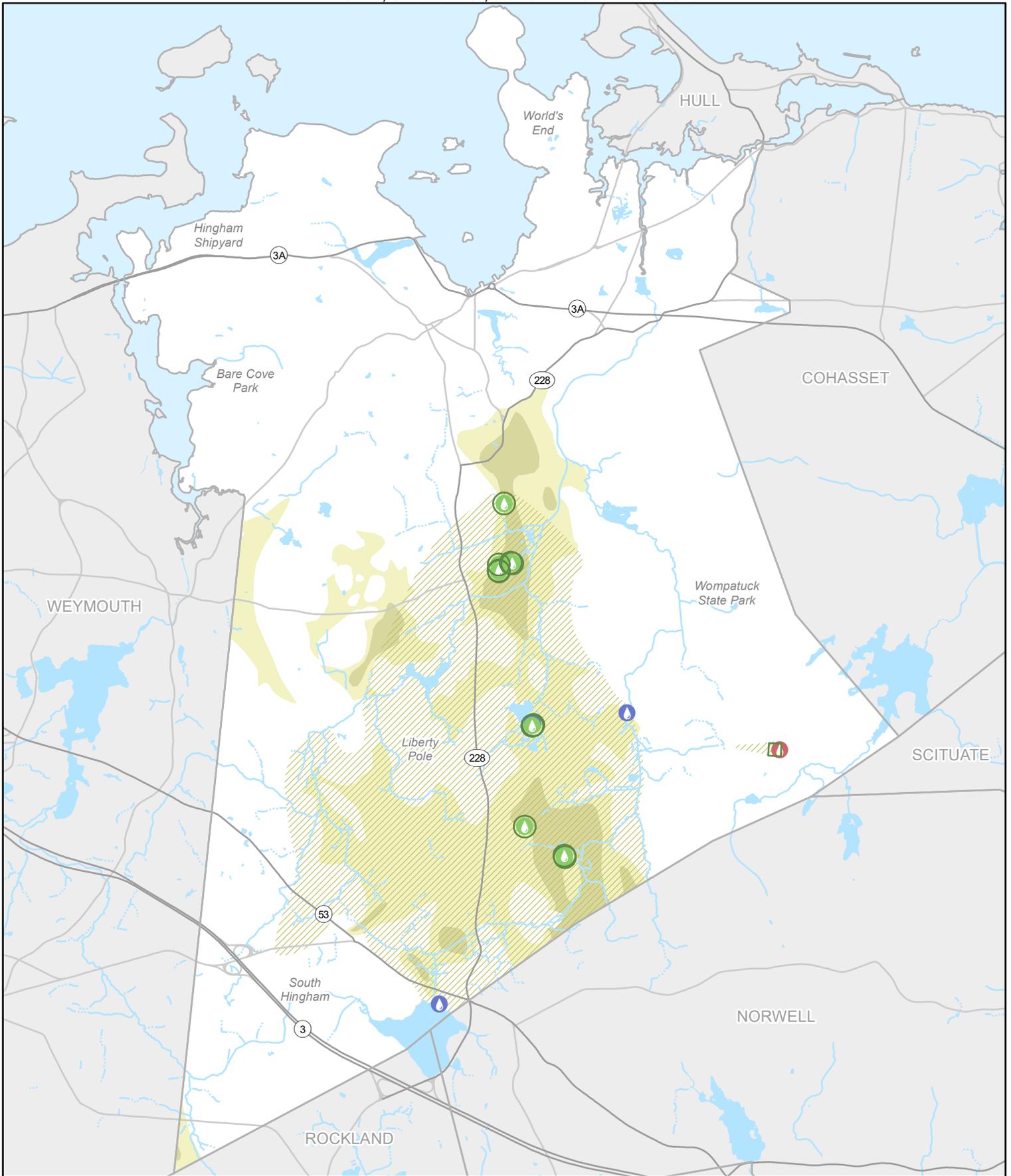
- 0-3%
- 3-8%
- 8-15%
- 15-25%
- 25-35%

Map 4.1 Soils by Slope



Source: the Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) data base was produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and distributed by MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS, November 2012





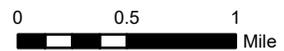
**Map 4.2 Water Resources**

**Public Water Supplies**

-  Community Groundwater Source
-  Surface Water Intake
-  Non-Community Groundwater Source

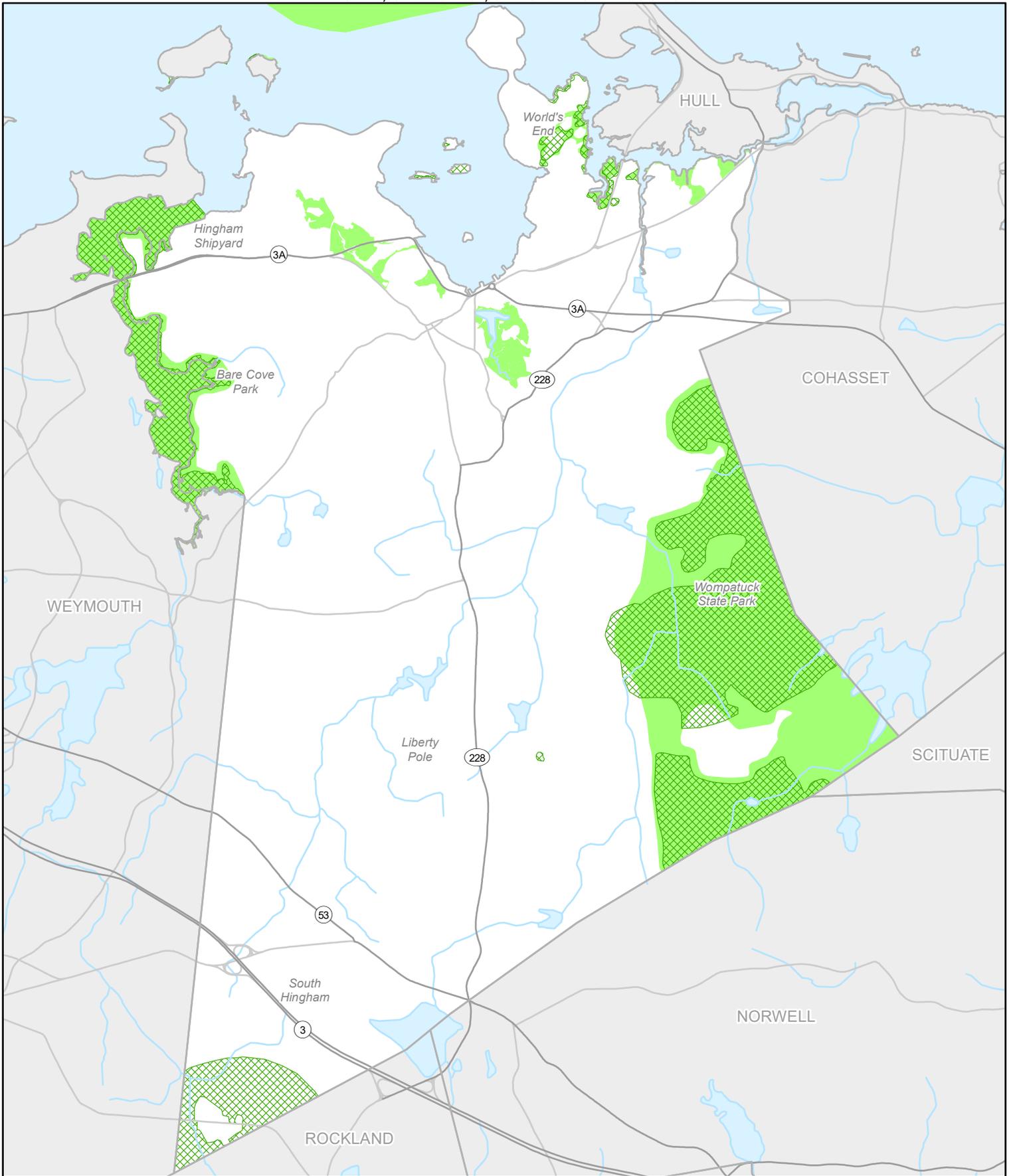
**Aquifers**

-  High Yield
-  Medium Yield
-  DEP Approved Zone I
-  DEP Approved Zone II



Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS





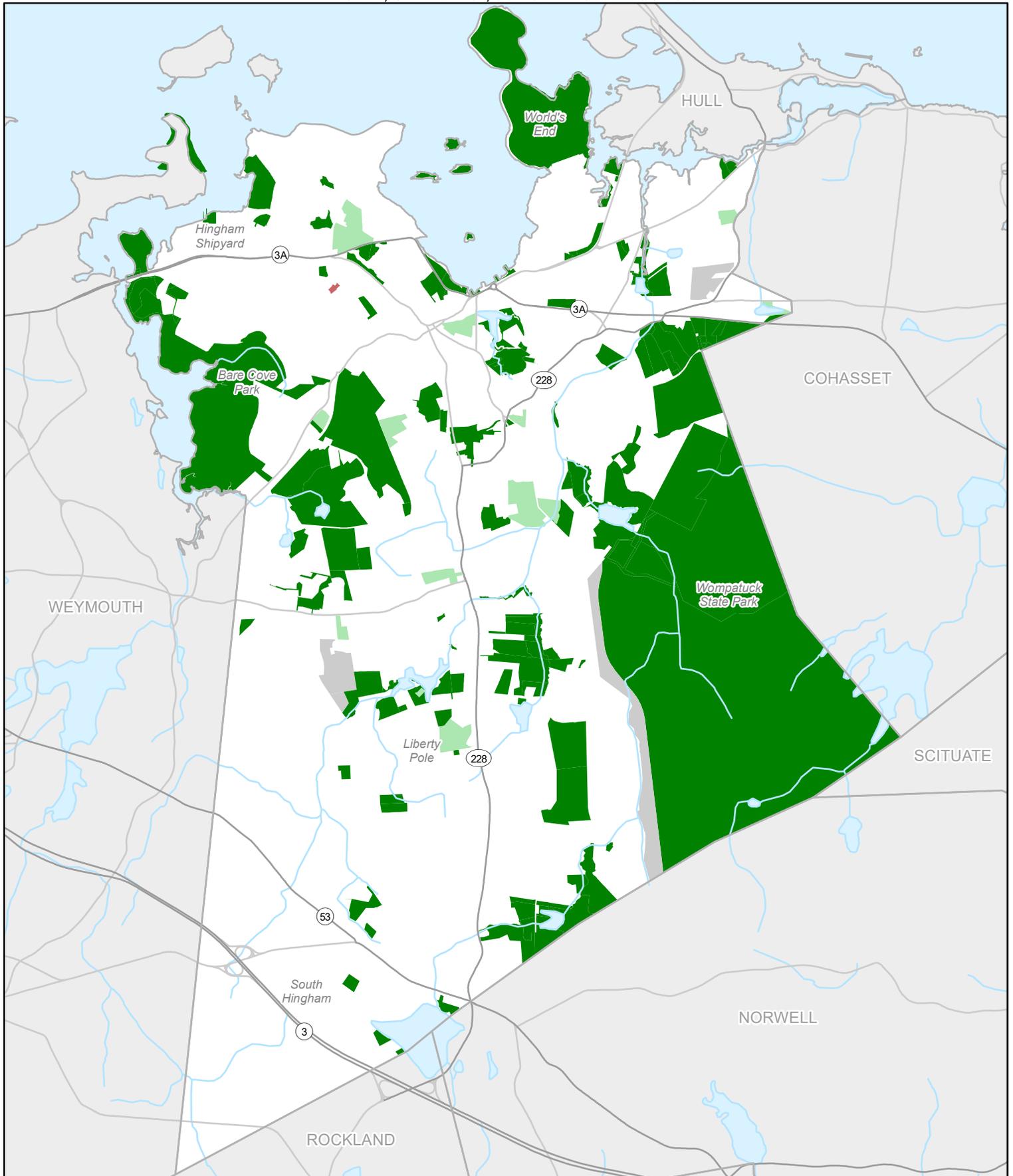
Map 4.3 BioMap Critical Areas for Rare and Endangered Species

 BioMap2 Core Habitat  
 BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscape

0 0.5 1  
Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information),  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS



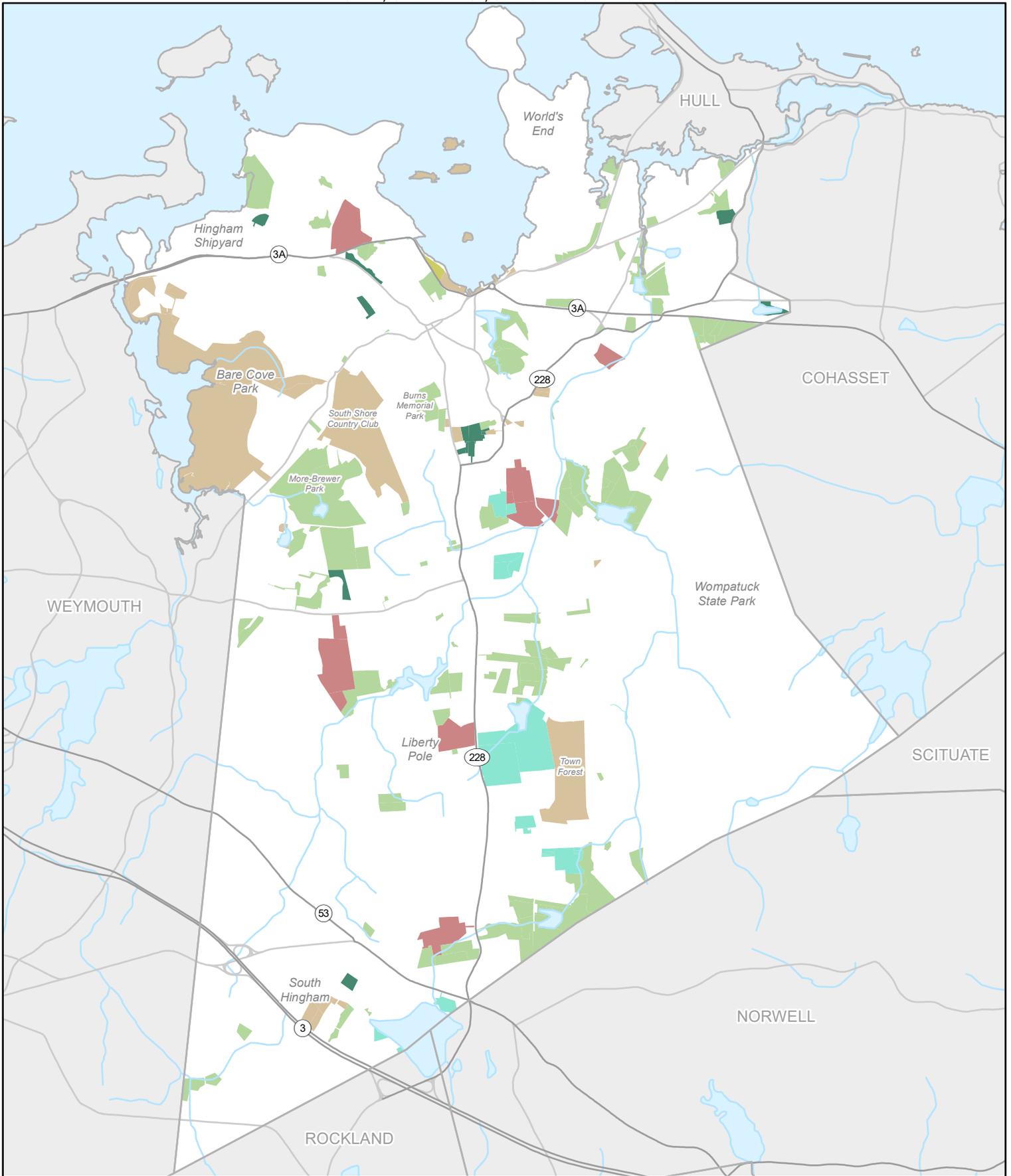


- Open Space, by Level of Protection
- In Perpetuity
  - Limited
  - Term Limited
  - None
  - Unknown

Map 4.4 Protected Open Space

0 0.5 1 Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS



Map 4.5 Town-owned Open Space

- Board of Water Commissioners
- Conservation Commission
- Recreation Commission
- School Department
- Select Board
- Trustees of Hingham Bathing Beach

0 0.5 1  
 Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of Hingham





# 5 Sustainability, Water, and Energy

## Introduction

**Hingham is rich in natural, cultural, and economic resources, and the community has developed and flourished by protecting and cultivating these resources over time. Sustainability, in its most basic form, means meeting our own needs today without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. It transcends environmentalism, so in addition to caring for and protecting the town’s natural resources, sustaining Hingham means planning for the continued social well-being, cultural richness, economic health, and general welfare of Hingham residents for decades to come.**

This chapter focuses on three interrelated issues within environmental sustainability, each with social and economic implications for the Town: Water, Climate Change/Sea Level Rise, and Energy Use. Hingham is a seaside community, so its marine and aquatic features and resources shape community identity, experience, and lifestyle. Protecting and investing in these resources can foster economic development (e.g. boating, fishing, and tourism), elevate quality of life (e.g. drinking water quality, transportation access and ferry service, and aesthetic appeal), and preserve natural wildlife habitats. Efforts to prevent and plan for the natural hazards associated with these resources also serve Hingham and its residents’

health and safety. Climate change, resulting from decades of carbon storage in the planet’s atmosphere, has increased the frequency and severity of coastal and inland flooding and erosion as sea levels rise. Hingham has already made strides in building a more sustainable future by creating a Hazard Mitigation Plan (2014; 2016) and a Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study (June 29, 2015), prepared by Kleinfelder (commonly referred to as the “Kleinfelder Study”), which serve as the foundations for local government efforts to institutionalize the Town’s responses to natural hazards.

Responding to Hingham’s environmental changes at the local level is critical to the Town’s sustainability, but the Town must also assume responsibility for its global impact. The carbon footprint, or total greenhouse gas emissions, of any community largely comes from its energy use, usually with greatest contributions by buildings and vehicles. Improving the energy efficiency of local buildings and vehicles and expanding opportunities for the use of renewable energy have community support, and the Town’s designation as a Massachusetts Green Community results from its pursuit of a sustainable future through proactive planning.

## Existing Conditions

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Public discussions for this Master Plan process highlighted sustainability among Hingham's collective values, and many individuals and local organizations demonstrate this commitment through policies, everyday activities and behaviors, and longer-term objectives. The Town is dedicated to advancing these values of sustainability, leading by example and approaching all issues from a sustainability perspective.

### Climate Change & Sea Level Rise

**Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness.** In 2018 the Town received a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant from the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to:

- Define top local natural and climate-related hazards of concern;
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities;
- Develop prioritized actions for the community; and
- Identify immediate opportunities to collaboratively advance planning actions to increase resilience.

The Town completed the MVP process in early 2019 and has since become an MVP-certified community. The top climate-related hazards identified through this process were coastal flooding, inland flooding, severe storms, and heat/drought.

As an MVP-certified community, the Town is now eligible to apply to EEA through implementation grants to advance the actions identified out of the MVP process to address Hingham's top climate-related hazards.

**Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment, and Adaptation Study (Kleinfelder Study).** In 2014, Hingham received a Coastal Community Resilience Grant from the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Agency (CZM) under CZM's Pilot Grants Program to:

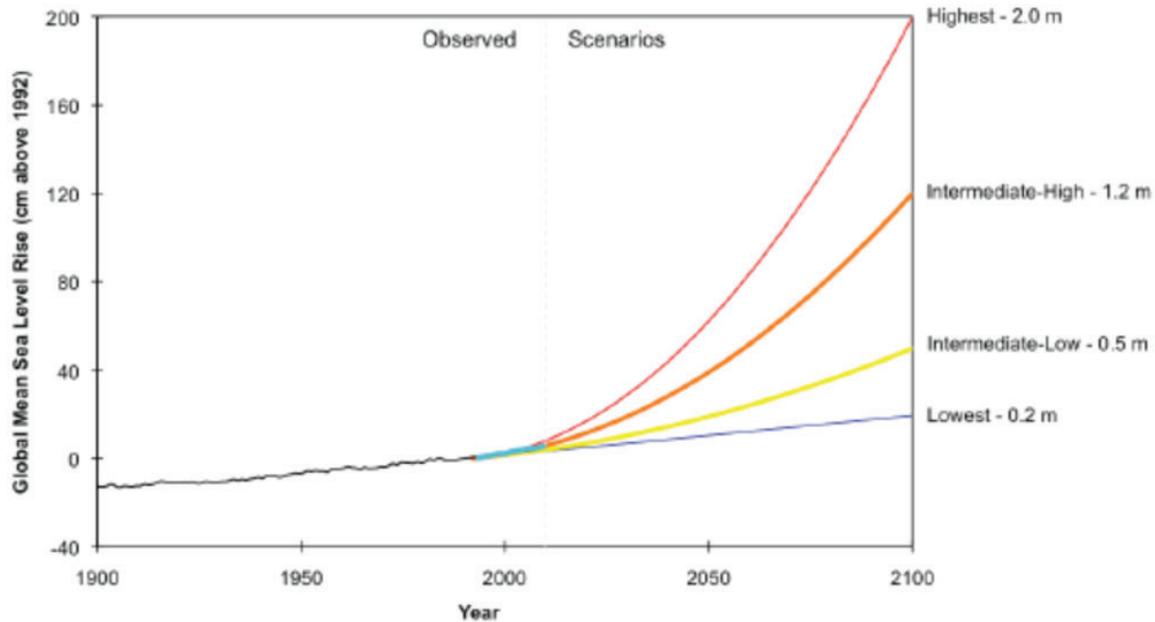
- Identify areas of the town that are vulnerable to the combined effects of sea level rise and storm surge from extreme storm events;
- Assess the vulnerability of municipally owned public infrastructure and natural resources;
- Identify adaptation strategies that will help mitigate the long-term effects of sea level rise and storm surge; and
- Educate the public, town officials, and state legislators about those potential impacts.

The sea level rise and storm surge modeling developed for this study (based on mathematical representations of these natural processes) serves in assessing vulnerability to and risk of coastal flooding to Hingham's infrastructure and natural resources. The model incorporates climate change influences on sea level rise, tides, waves, storm track, and storm intensity for the present (2013), 2030 and 2070.

The sea level rise scenarios used are the same as recommended by Massachusetts CZM and those used by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and other state agencies (Global Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States National Climate Assessment, NOAA Technical Report OAR CPO-1, December 12, 2012), see Figure 5.1. The water surface modeling utilized in this study comes from the 2015 Boston Harbor Flood Risk Model (BH-FRM), which includes the Town of Hingham.

## CLIMATE CHANGE & SEA LEVEL RISE

**Figure 5.1 Sea Level Rise Scenarios**



Source: *Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment, and Adaptation Study*, Kleinfelder, June 29, 2015 (7).

The study assessed impacts to natural resources such as beaches, coves, and salt marshes on a qualitative basis. Additionally, as part of a larger project with CZM, Sea Level Rise Affecting Marshes Model software (SLAMM) was linked to the Marsh Equilibrium Model (MEM) and incorporated into this analysis. The study also utilized 2011 Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data for the Northeast from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the 2011 National Wetlands Inventory data layer, sea level rise projections, and additional data input (accretion rates, erosion rates, tidal range and attenuation, freshwater parameters, dikes and dams, and impervious surfaces).

Findings from the modeling show the various wetland classification areas for 2011, 2030, and 2070 where natural resources are evolving (reductions and growth) in response to sea level rise.

A risk-based vulnerability assessment for municipally owned infrastructure subject to flooding il-

lustrated how damaging a flood event can be and what the consequences are to the community, and included:

- Determining critical assets subject to flooding;
- Determining critical elevations;
- Obtaining probability of exceedance data;
- Determining consequence of failure scores; and
- Calculating risk scores and rankings.

As a result of the modeling, various adaptation strategies were identified. Generally, there are three approaches for adapting to the effects of sea level rise and storm surge from extreme weather events: protection, accommodation, and retreat. Simply stated, these terms mean:

- **Protection:** setting up temporary or permanent structures between a waterway and infrastructure to hold back flood water.
- **Accommodation:** Altering infrastructure to be more resilient to flooding, such as jacking up houses, adding height to foundations, building homes on stilts, raising road levels, and so on.
- **Retreat:** Moving infrastructure away from risk zones.

This study reported on a combination of protection and accommodation strategies since retreat strategies would likely not be feasible given the extent of expected inundation by 2070 (although retreat strategies may become more viable by 2100 if sea levels continue to increase as predicted). Recommended adaptation options are based on a base flood elevation equivalent to the 0.2 percent probability of exceedance in 2030 and 2070, the approximate 500-year recurrence interval.

### Water Supply

In 2019, Hingham residents voted to buy the Town’s water system from Aquarion Water Company and take ownership of the water distribution system for the first time since 1879. The purchase includes a treatment plant located at 900 Main Street, 14 registered water sources including Accord Pond, 192 miles of pipe, more than 3,100 valves, 917 public fire hydrants, two storage

tanks, and two booster pump stations.

As of August 1, 2020, the Town’s Weir River Water System (“WRWS”), operated by SUEZ Water Environmental Services, services the Towns of Hingham and Hull and a portion of North Co-hasset. The water system is under the direction of the WRWS Managing Director/ Water Superintendent, the Board of Water Commissioners and the Citizens Advisory Board of resident from each town served. This is a major step toward creating a sustainable municipal water supply for years to come.

All of the current water supply sources serving the Weir River Water System are located in the Weir River watershed, classified by the state as a “stressed basin.” Under the Water Management Act, the Weir River Water System has a (transferable) Registration Statement from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) through 2021. The WRWS Rules and Regulations include annual water restrictions for watershed management and stewardship. The water distribution system expands when the WRSW determines it will improve system hydraulics, fire flows, and water quality, or when a developer requests and pays for an extension of a main. With the implementation of annual water restrictions for watershed management and stewardship, and as the Town assumes control of the

Table 5.1 Average Annual Water Withdrawals: 2014-2019

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Withdrawal (MG)	1,266.36	1,247.43	1,164.31	1,154.57	1,184.69	1,153.91
Withdrawal (MGD)	3.47	3.42	3.18	3.16	3.25	3.16

Source: Aquarion Water Company

## WATER

water system, residents could petition for water main extensions funded through betterments or other means. The WMA Registration Statement allows a combined withdrawal of 3.51 MGD from all Registered Sources. As is evident in Table 5.1, the Town is well within the allowed millions of gallons per day withdrawal limit.

The withdrawal of the water resources to serve Hingham, Hull, and North Cohasset are regulated and limited by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). In order to manage these water withdrawals within the limits established, regulated, and enforced by the MassDEP, and in order for Weir River Water System (WRWS) to maintain the ability to supply water to its existing customers, water usage for new developments and the expansion of existing uses must be offset through the Water Balance Program (WBP). The Water Balance Program applies to all new and expanded water use projects except; (1) a single-family residential housing unit limited to 3 bedrooms and a single service connection, and (2) new, expansion, or retrofit building projects resulting in new usage or expanded usage projected that requires less than an additional 100,000 gallons per year.

Since assuming ownership of the water system, Hingham has begun to develop a Water System Master Plan (“WRWS Master Plan”). A WRWS Master Plan is essential for the effective and efficient planning and management of the WRWS and the water supply. Elements of the WRWS Master Plan include; a) status of the assets and recommendations; b) water system supply; c) an updated hydraulic model; d) distribution system analysis; e) storage and availability assessment; f) treatment plant operations review; and g) other important water system attributes. The full report is expected to be completed in the fall of 2021 and will provide a road map for the implementation of distribution and treatment system

improvements as well as a management tool for addressing day-to-day operational issues and decisions.

Consistent with the expectations set forth prior to purchasing the water system, the WRWS and its Board of Water Commissioners have committed approximately \$2.7 million per year for infrastructure and overall system capital improvements. In addition, we have included in our near future plans additional storage capacity by installing a redundant storage tank in the system and to rehabilitate the aging Turkey Hill Water Storage Tank.

### Hingham Harbor

Hingham Harbor is among Hingham’s most character-defining natural features because it contributes to the Town’s aesthetic, recreational, and economic appeal. Located in Hingham Bay, north of Hingham Center and east of Weymouth Back River, the Harbor and its coves and islands offer beautiful views to the waterfront’s visitors, beach walkers, and bathers, and unique economic opportunities in boating, fishing, commuting, and more.

The study area extends approximately three-quarters of a mile from east to west along the southerly shoreline of Hingham Harbor and includes a mixture of Town-owned properties and privately held properties with active commercial establishments. State highway Route 3A and heavily traveled Summer Street define the southern boundary of the study area. The Harbor provides a mix of commercial businesses, offices, marine services, and automotive repair/gasoline sales.

The Town-owned lands include the Bathing Beach and picnic grove, bandstand, “Iron Horse” Park, Town Pier, Whitney Wharf Park, POW/MIA Memorial, Barnes Wharf, and Steamboat Wharf. The



Commonwealth of Massachusetts controls the land at the rotary on Route 3A.

In 2020, Hingham contracted with MAPC to facilitate a "Hingham Harbor and Downtown Sustainable Vision Study." Among the goals of the study -- which involves a broad group of stakeholders -- are to:

- Create a shared vision for the district;
- Define short- and long- term recommendations that are focused on;
- District public realm and open space improvements;
- District resiliency and sustainability improvements; and
- District land use and zoning recommendations.

The study is expected to be completed and provide recommendations to the Town by the third quarter of 2021.

**Master Plan for Hingham Harbor.** In July 2007, the Town, led by the Hingham Harbor Development Committee, completed a Master Plan for Hingham Harbor. The goals of this plan include:

- Creation of contiguous, safe, attractive, and universally accessible pedestrian access along the harbor;
- Increased mixture of public recreational opportunities;
- Visionary planning for future harbor area land uses and improvements; and
- Identifying selected projects for near-term (5-15 years) implementation.

The Harbor Development Committee is seeking funding to update this plan now that it is over ten years old. Focus areas that should be considered for any plan update include sections on programs and facilities, and ways to better connect the Harbor area with Downtown Hingham.

**Hingham Harbor Development Committee.** Originally formed in 1957 as the Dredging Committee, the Harbor Development Committee (HDC) was established in 1971 by Town Meeting Warrant Article as an advisory committee to the Select Board with a charge to "coordinate the planning and development of the tidal water areas within the Town borders."

The Town has made many recent investments in the Harbor area, and has future investment in the pipeline including:

## ENERGY

- Basin dredging (completed every 10 years);
- A pedestrian bridge was built linking the Harbor to Whitney Wharf;
- Bathhouse and snack stand improvements;
- Harbor wharfs and walls have been studied and recommendations made for elevating them to account for sea level rise;
- Armor stone replacement at Bathing Beach;
- Protective dune installation at Bathing Beach parking lot;
- Harbor Walk being installed in three phases;
- Replacement boat ramp has been designed and will be built soon; and
- New mooring technology that may allow for boats to be moored in more dense configurations.

Further, the ongoing Route 3A transportation corridor improvements, led by the Route 3A Task Force, are a driving force behind much of the change along the Harbor now.

### Energy Use

As environmental and financial costs of energy rise, increasing energy efficiency and relying on renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels can help mitigate the environmental impacts of Hingham's buildings, street lighting, municipal vehicles, and equipment. Traditional sources of energy and existing rates of consumption are not sustainable for the environment or for the economy. Communities across the country are responding by modifying operations, with an emphasis on energy conservation and efficiency, renewable energy sources, and fuel-efficient vehicles, lowering the cost of municipal services while also re-

ducing environmental impacts. Clean energy is also a growing sector in the Nation's economy and presents an opportunity for local jobs.

It is important to keep the local, regional, and global perspective in mind when thinking about energy issues in Hingham. Energy requires a tremendous amount of infrastructure for both supply and distribution. Energy planning is relevant to the Town's operations but also to residents living and businesses operating within Hingham. This Master Plan considers strategies to reduce consumption as well as the sources of energy, generation, and distribution within the Town, security and reliability, and the impact on the local and regional economy.

Much like sustainability, energy is an important consideration within every component of the Master Plan because energy strategies help to foster Town-wide sustainable development practices, energy-efficient housing, environmentally- and cost-conscious business operation, and efficient transportation options. The Town has implemented several measures to reduce energy costs, diversify energy generation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to municipal operations. This assessment provides an overview of municipal energy projects and programs currently being employed by the Town.

**Green Communities Designation.** In December 2018, the Green Communities Division of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) designated Hingham a Green Community. Once a community has been designated as a Green Community, the Division provides technical assistance and financial support to improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy in public buildings, vehicles, facilities, and schools. For example, Hingham has al-

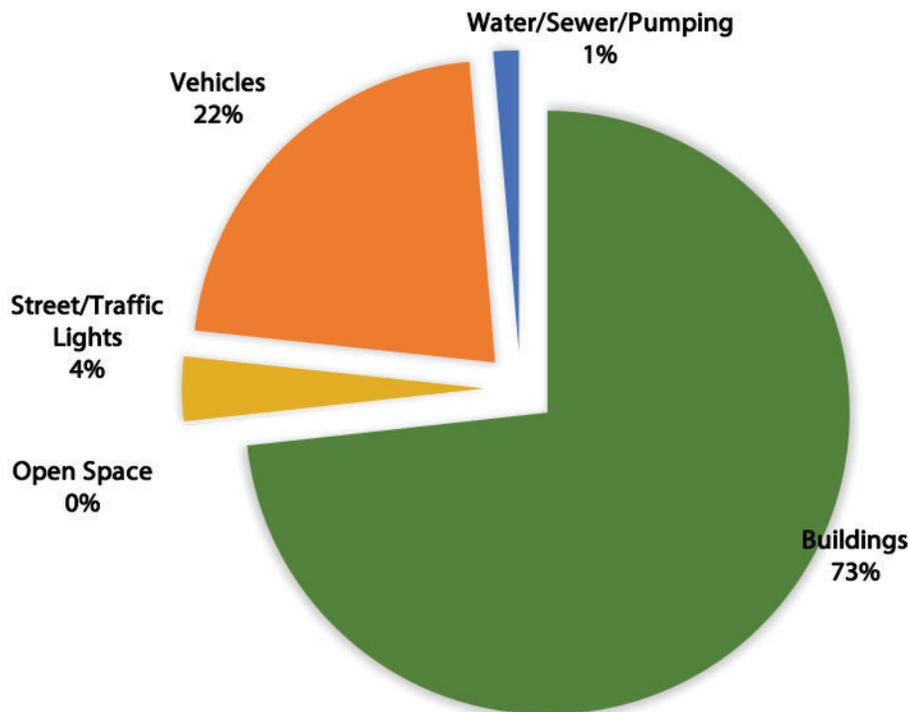
ready received over \$140,000 in grant funding to implement energy efficiency measures at the Broad Cove Sewer Pumping Station, South Elementary School, and Hingham High School.

**Town of Hingham Energy Reduction Plan.** Hingham has a concrete plan to reduce municipal energy consumption by 20 percent between 2018 and 2023. All data below come from the Hingham Energy Reduction Plan, which the Town approved in November 2018. The results of this effort will make a significant difference in the carbon footprint of Hingham’s municipal buildings, street and traffic lights, utilities, vehicles, and other infrastructure. The report showed that in 2018, the Town’s baseline energy usage was 102,787 MMBTUs (Million British Thermal Units – a stan-

dards measurement of the energy content of fuel). At this target reduction of 20 percent, Hingham would reduce its energy consumption by 20,557 MMBTUs, which is the equivalent of over 3,700 barrels of oil.

Figure 5.2 shows that the vast majority of energy consumption (95 percent) comes from buildings (73 percent) and vehicles (22 percent). Consequently, building energy efficiency is where the Town stands to gain the most. The top ten energy users in Hingham are all buildings and include all six public schools. Five energy users alone make up about half of the Town’s energy use, and therefore present the best opportunities for reduction in energy consumption.

**FIGURE 5.2**  
Hingham Municipal Energy Use 2018



## **Hingham's Qualifications as a Massachusetts Green Community**

### **Criterion 1: As-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable/alternative energy generation, research and development, or manufacturing facilities.**

The Town allows such uses by right in both the Industrial and Industrial Park zoning districts. A recent buildout analysis conducted by the Town suggests there is more than the minimum required development potential than what is required by the Green Communities program.

### **Criterion 2: Expedited application and permit process for as-of-right energy facilities.**

Most such facilities are subject only to non-discretionary site plan review, which means they must be approved within 75 days so long as they meet all technical requirements. Further, in 2014 the Town designated South Shore Park

– an area within the Industrial Park zoning district in South Hingham – as a Priority Development Site (PDS) under G.L. 43D. This mechanism can facilitate faster, predictable permitting and financial and technical assistance from the Commonwealth.

### **Criterion 3: Energy use baseline and plan to reduce energy use by 20 percent within five years.**

The Town worked with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to prepare an Energy Reduction Plan in November 2018. The plan and its baseline assessment are summarized below.

### **Criterion 4: Purchasing only fuel-efficient vehicles.**

In October 2018, the Town formally approved a Fuel-Efficient Vehicle policy. Under this policy, all Town departments and divisions must purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever these vehicles are commercially available

and practicable. The policy does not apply to “exempt” vehicles such as fire trucks, police cruisers, and other vehicles that do not currently have more fuel-efficient options. The Town will keep an inventory of all vehicles in order to track progress over time. Currently, Hingham owns and maintains 112 vehicles, but only twelve are “non-exempt” and subject to the Fuel-Efficient Vehicle policy. The average age of the twelve vehicles is 7.8 years and their average fuel efficiency is about 22 miles per gallon (MPG).

### **Criterion 5: Adopt the Board of Building Regulations and Standards Stretch Code for new construction.**

The Town adopted the “stretch code” which emphasizes energy performance, as opposed to prescriptive requirements, and is designed to result in cost-effective construction that is more energy efficient than that built to the “base” energy code.

The energy reduction plan calls out 67 specific energy conservation measures to take over the next four to five years in twenty-three different facilities. It also provides general guidance for pursuing even more and deeper conservation efforts beyond the first five years. The Green Communities program is an excellent way for Hingham to continue taking steps toward more sustainable energy policy and outcomes well into the future.

Massachusetts offers a number of programs designed to support energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades to buildings. From single-family homes to commercial and industrial structures, to municipally owned buildings, programs are available to aid in financing and provide support. Energy efficiency upgrades can come at a wide variety of costs. Some efforts, like replacing light bulbs with new higher efficiency model, come at a nominal cost. However, when a property owner faces higher cost improvements

such as upgrades to heating and cooling systems, or the installation of renewable energy systems, the cost of those improvements can at times become prohibitive. The programs discussed below each provide opportunities to assist property owners in securing the knowledge and funding necessary to lower their energy costs and reduce environmental impact.

**Local Resources.** The Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant (HMLP) provides electricity to customers in Hingham. HMLP is a member of New England Power Pool (NEPOOL) and ISO-NE (Independent System Operator - New England), so it can provide power more reliably since it is connected to the power grid and not buying power from a single supplier. HMLP is a public power system, one of over 2,000 in the country. Hingham residents enjoy HMLP’s prioritization of resident interests instead of those of investors. HMLP offers incentives to customers looking to make their

homes or buildings more energy efficient, including ENERGY STAR appliance rebates, energy efficient light bulbs, and an Energy Advisor service that provides over-the-phone consultations as well as in-home energy audits.

In order to incentivize renewable energy, HMLP offers bill credits for customers who install and own a photovoltaic system at their homes in Hingham. Rebate values vary according to the capacity of the photovoltaic system.

**State Resources.** At the state level, Massachusetts has at least thirty energy efficiency and renewable energy financial incentives potentially available to the Town or local property owners and businesses. These incentives include loans, rebates, and grants, tax credits, incentives, exemptions, and deductions. The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has compiled a clearinghouse of rebates and incentives called the Commonwealth Energy Tool for Savings (energyCENTS). It provides a single-entry point to all the energy saving opportunities available to Massachusetts residents, businesses, and institutions. However, not all of the state programs for consumers are available to Hingham residents because the Town has a municipally owned, not investor-owned, power company.

**Electric Charging Stations.** The number of plug-in electric cars on American roads grows every year, and with them comes the need for more places to charge them. In order to plan for electric vehicles, it is important to understand the difference between the three types of charging currently common in the United States.

- *Level 1 (120-volt):* The “charging cord” that comes with every electric car has a conventional three-prong plug that goes into any properly grounded wall socket, with a

connector for the car’s charging port on the other end and a box of electronic circuitry between them. This is the slowest type of charging, although for plug-in hybrids with smaller battery packs, it may be enough to recharge in a few hours to overnight.

- *Level 2 (240-volt):* Most dedicated home and public charging stations operate at 240 Volts, with their cables again connecting to the standard charging port on a car. For charging stations installed at home, this requires the same type of wiring as an electric stove or clothes dryer. This will be at least twice as fast as Level 1 charging, often quicker, due to the higher amperage of the circuit. At a minimum, such charging stations should be installed on a dedicated 40-amp circuit, but to future-proof the wiring, 50 or 60 amps is better. Generally, owners of battery-electric cars will require a Level 2 home charging station to provide overnight recharges.
- *DC Fast Charging:* DC fast charging uses direct current (DC) rather than household alternating current (AC) and is very high-powered. This means that DC charging is really only practical at dedicated public sites, often along highways, given the higher cost for a utility to install dedicated high-power lines. Unlike the first two charging types, where every plug-in car in the U.S. uses the same “J-1772” socket (except Tesla, and even it provides an adaptor), there are three different kinds of DC quick charging.
- *CHAdEMO:* This is currently the most popular standard, used by many Japanese and Korean car makers.
- *CCS (Combined Charging Standard):* All U.S. makers except Tesla and all German makers use this standard.



- *Tesla Supercharger:* Tesla has gone its own way and created a dedicated network of free, high-powered fast-charging stations that can only be used by Tesla owners.

For owners of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles in Hingham, the following are the charging options available today.

- *Home:* Across the country, most recharging is done at home and overnight. This is when electricity is usually cheapest. Many battery-electric car owners will install a charging station in their garage or carport. For plug-in hybrids, many owners just stick with the 120-volt charging cords described above.
- *Work:* Charging at work is quietly growing in popularity. It's a good way for corporations to cut their carbon footprint, it's not that expensive to install, and it's a nice employee perk--whether or not the company or landlord charges a fee for it. Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) at 25 Technology Place offers two Level 2 ChargePoint electric vehicle charging stations for BCBS employees.
- *Public Sites:* Finally, there are thousands of public charging stations throughout the U.S. and Canada, and the number grows each week. Virtually all public sites offer Level

2 charging, with a few providing DC fast-charging as well - increasingly with both CHAdEMO and CCS cables. Some public charging is free, while other sites impose a fee, using several different networks that generally require membership up front.

According to the website PlugShare ([www.plugshare.com](http://www.plugshare.com)) there are currently no charging stations in Hingham that are open to the public. The nearest charging station is located at Weymouth Town Hall, with seven others located around the periphery of Hingham in Weymouth, Braintree, Rockland, Norwell, and Scituate.

### Other Energy Resources and Efforts

**MBTA Solar Land Lease.** In 2018, the MBTA installed a solar panel array above the parking lots at the West Hingham and Nantasket Junction Commuter Rail Stations. The project is intended to provide environmental benefits (e.g. reducing carbon emissions) while providing covered parking space for residents.

**Cleaner Greener Hingham** (officially known as the Long Range Waste Disposal and Recycling Committee). This Town committee provides resources to residents on green practices. Their mission is to promote the practice of long-range planning for recycling and composting through education and facilitation.

## Issues and Opportunities

**Energy Action Committee.** This Town committee is charged with helping to reduce energy use and promote energy efficiency and renewable energy use throughout Hingham. It is also the committee charged with planning for climate change.

### ISSUES

- Even despite the natural geographic features that protect it, Hingham is a coastal community, and climate change and sea level rise pose risks. Under current conditions, many areas of Hingham are vulnerable to flooding, including Hingham Shipyard, Bare Cove Park, the Hingham Harbor shoreline, and Broad Cove. These areas contain many historic and cultural resources as well as forested and open spaces that are home to wildlife, and these areas are also served by Town facilities, roads through Hingham, and public transportation.
- The Town's emergency evacuation preparedness depends on public knowledge of evacuation routes, as well as the ongoing accessibility and utility of these resources in the face of a crisis. Road conditions can change rapidly during emergency events, and there may be routes that become unsafe for travel in extreme conditions. Road access to and from other towns (e.g. Hull) may depend on coordinated efforts between the towns in emergency situations. The towns might also establish cooperative debris management and bridge inspection protocols to ensure safe access to George Washington Boulevard, Rockland Street, and Hull Street. Furthermore, an adequate supply of electronic warning signs can efficiently provide even a high volume of drivers with updated information and directives.
- There are currently no public electric vehicle charging stations in Hingham, and few in the immediate vicinity. The Town has an opportunity to help spur greater use of electric vehicles by installing charging stations at public properties or working with other local businesses and institutions to install them.
- Hingham Harbor's marinas are very popular, and they currently accommodate approximately 1,500 – 1,600 boats. Because of limited capacity and increasing demand, opportunity exists to explore more modern and advanced approaches to mooring field engineering. More efficient moorings can use less space by decreasing vessels' swing radii and allowing for tighter parking. Some of Hingham's mooring fields accommodate long-term mooring rentals, and others offer more transient mooring opportunities. Analysis of the balance between these needs could help the Town most effectively allocate resources and meet boating demands.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Hingham's seawalls and coastal stabilization structures shield the Town and its resources from the damaging impacts of storm surge and coastal flooding, but these resources will need continued maintenance and repair as well as increases to seawall height to continue to protect Hingham from the effects of sea level rise. Where sea walls are private, coordination with private property owners for improvements will be necessary.
- Some flood-prone areas without existing seawall have nature-based flood protection. Salt marsh (e.g. adjacent to Rockland Street) and other protective ecosystems create a transitional buffer between land and sea. Beal

Cove and its marsh represent a good location for potential green resilience design (e.g. thin layer deposition projects, marsh expansion projects, or living shorelines).

- Floods and storms also threaten Town services. Improvements to sewer pump stations and pump station buildings, as well as the installation of watertight mitigation gates, and sealing of manhole covers could bolster the resiliency of Hingham’s drainage infrastructure and sewer facilities.
- Because both of HMLP’s transmission lines are on the same structures, residents are vulnerable to service outages in the event of major storm damage. Building additional HMLP facilities could help the Town ensure fewer power interruptions and reduce its environmental effects. These upgrades can have long-term positive fiscal impacts and save the Town and taxpayers money over time. Regular efforts to assess the condition of municipal buildings will expose more opportunities for energy reductions and give the Town a long-term asset management strategy for budgeting and the maintenance of municipal buildings. Furthermore, the Town can lead by example and encourage residents and businesses to improve their own energy efficiency and use of renewable energy. There is a need to continue to educate local residents, business owners, and landowners to improve their own energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.
- Nearly 90 percent of the Town’s fleet of vehicles are considered “exempt” from the Fuel-Efficient Vehicle policy, and the Town will need to look for alternative ways to decrease energy use from vehicles. Finding more energy efficient options to replace policy-exempt vehicles is the single largest opportunity for reducing vehicle-related energy use. However, there are several other opportunities, such as instituting an “anti-idling” policy, monitoring tire air pressure, using fuel efficient tires, and using one-hundred percent synthetic oil. According to the Hingham Energy Reduction Plan, these alternative efforts could reduce the Town’s baseline energy use by 3,536 MMBTUs or roughly 3.4 percent.
- Parts of Route 3A, including the rotary, are vulnerable to flooding under current conditions. Planning, engineering design, and environmental assessment of the proposed changes will help identify actions to prevent flooding, identify ways to protection water quality and ecosystem health in the Cove, and improve tidal flow.
- Regular harbor dredging has many benefits, including fostering the health of marine ecosystems and increasing safety for boaters, but the associated costs can present challenges. Hingham has an opportunity to address larger issues related to dredging, including the importance of doing so every ten years.
- Section III-D of Hingham’s Zoning Bylaw establishes the Accord Pond Watershed and Hingham Aquifer Protection District, which protect the town’s aquifer and the soils within the Accord Brook Watershed by regulating and controlling toxic or hazardous substances in the District. Additional protections of the existing quality and quantity of ground and surface water could include identifying additional sources of water supply, reducing water usage throughout the Town, educating homeowners on private wells, developing a bylaw related to irrigation, and establishing emergency water distribution sites.

## Policies and Recommendations

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**Policy 2.1: Prepare and implement a comprehensive plan to address and adapt to climate change.**

**Recommendations:**

- Maintain a Climate Action Plan Task Force responsible for developing a climate action plan.
- Develop a public visioning workshop to collect input on community priorities for the climate action plan.

**Policy 2.3: Protect critical public infrastructure along the coast from sea level rise.**

**Recommendations:**

- Proactively budget for and implement the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness project recommendations and the Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment, and Adaptation Study (“Kleinfelder Study”).
- Increase the height of the existing seawalls, other coastal stabilization structures, and adjacent upland; and continue ongoing maintenance of existing seawalls and related structures. Educate private property owners to improve private seawalls and related structures; and maximize the protective ecosystem functions of adjacent salt marshes and other natural resources.
- Implement resiliency improvement and critical protections to sewer pump stations, including installing watertight mitigation gates, improvements to pump station buildings, and sealing of manhole covers.
- Protect the quality and quantity of potable groundwater and surface water supply by identifying additional water supply sources unlikely to be affected by sea-level rise,

establishing emergency water distribution sites, and educating private well owners about the risks of sea-level rise.

**Policy 2.5: Enhance public access to the harbor and its amenities while protecting the coastline.**

**Recommendations:**

- Plan and budget for adequate dredging of the harbor at least once every ten years and include dredging of the bathing beach swimming area with future dredging projects to improve the beach’s recreational use.
- Redesign and restore the wharves and related harbor infrastructure to be more resilient in the face of projected sea-level rise, following recommendations from the Climate Change study.

**Policy 2.2: Establish goals to achieve Carbon Neutral status by 2050.**

**Recommendations:**

- Continue to explore a path to “carbon neutrality.”
- Investigate and develop strategies for reducing emissions to the greatest extent possible, including potentially a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, and explore options for offsetting the remainder as feasible.
- Invest in a framework for tracking and evaluating progress over time.

**Policy 2.4: Reduce energy and water consumption by residents, businesses, and town government.**

**Recommendations:**

- Consistent with the town budget, identify resources, and continue to meet and seek opportunities to exceed the 2020 Massachusetts Green Communities criteria and actively implement the Town’s Energy Reduction Plan.
- Investigate adopting a “net-zero” policy for new municipal construction and evaluate a budget strategy to accomplish this goal.
- Find more energy-efficient options for replacing municipal vehicles exempt from the Fuel-Efficient Vehicle policy.
- Develop an energy and water use reduction campaign, with resources targeted to municipal staff and facilities, businesses and institutions, and residents. Focus on changing the daily habits of individuals that cumulatively make a difference over time.
- Install electric vehicle charging stations at public properties and work with local businesses and institutions to install them. Consider an addition to the Zoning Bylaw to require EV charging stations at commercial developments. Dedicate parking spaces for electric vehicles at prominent public facilities such as Town Hall and the Library.

**Policy 7.5: Support the Hingham Municipal Light Plant and Weir River Water System in their efforts to increase capacity and conserve resources.**

**Recommendations:**

- Work with the utilities on a coordinated public resource conservation campaign, promoting ways and incentives for individual homes and businesses to reduce their energy use.
- Support Weir River Water System to address existing deficiencies and conduct system upgrades to meet existing and future needs, to assess future water demand and water storage needs based on existing and projected supply and demands.
- Support the plans of the HMLP to add another transmission and sub-station to reduce the Town’s carbon footprint and increase capacity to accommodate the trend towards electric cars, buses, home heating, and other uses.
- Work with HMLP to better promote existing incentives for electric vehicles, energy efficiency, and renewable energy including solar, and explore opportunities for additional incentives for these and other resources. Determine how HMLP may participate in existing incentive programs for consumers/residents.
- Work with the Weir River Water System Water Superintendent, Board of Water Commissioners and Citizens Advisory Board to regularly forecast water needs and have a long-term plan for managing and expanding capacity.



# Population & Housing

## Introduction

**Hingham's built environment is captured in all sorts of images, from Colonial-era churches to the Shipyard, Hingham Square to Derby Street Shops, and modern office buildings like Blue Cross Blue Shield to walk-up offices in the Buttonwood Building, yet few images can compete with that of the well-kept homes that line Main Street, Route 228, north of Cushing Street. There is no Main Street like Hingham's in any other town on the South Shore. The houses and their unique arrangement along the road, the generous front yards, the mature trees, the pattern of neighborhood walkways all come together to define the first impression of Hingham for many newcomers and visitors.**

Housing makes such a distinctive contribution to Hingham's character that distilling its influence to a few words is difficult. The types, ages, and styles of homes in Hingham tell a story about the town's physical evolution and culture. These same qualities shed light on Hingham's place in the suburban housing market and play a major role in determining housing costs in the town.

Main Street is memorable, to be sure, but Hingham has modest post-war neighborhoods in pockets all over town, and grand homes nestled within views of World's End and the Harbor. It has apartment buildings, too, and the largest senior residential compound in the region, Linden Ponds. At the same time, Hingham has lost some of its historically "middle class" homes to tear-downs. All of these factors affect not only the visual perception of Hingham, but also its demographic trends.

Communities shape the make-up of their population by the steps they take to control housing growth, and this is one of many reasons that zoning bylaws matter so much. Participants in the Hingham's Master Plan process say they value the town's beauty and the opportunities it offers to residents, but many of them also lament the town's lack of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. How affluent suburbs can retain all that they love and still work on tough policy issues such as social equity and fair housing is a challenge for many Eastern Massachusetts communities, and Hingham is no exception.

## Existing Conditions

### WHO LIVES IN HINGHAM?

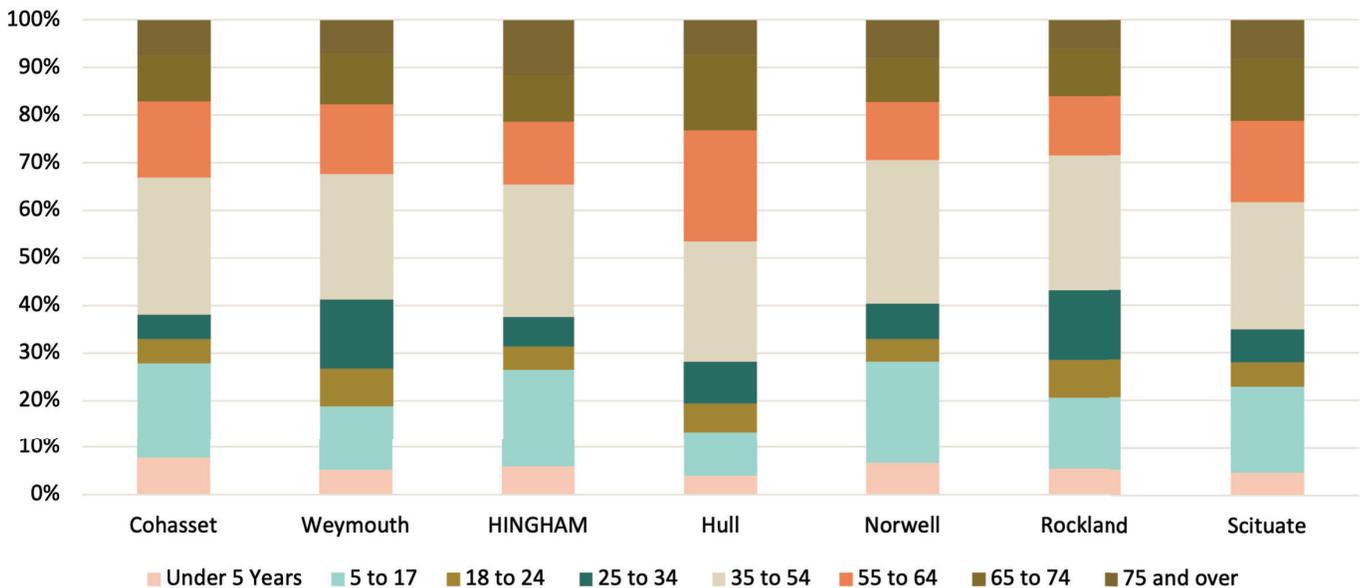
It may be hard to imagine Hingham as a smaller town than Rockland, but at the outset of the Great Depression, Rockland had the second largest population of the towns in Hingham’s area – second only to Weymouth. After World War II, the combined forces of high household formation and birth rates, regional highway improvements, and White flight prompted rapid growth throughout the upper South Shore. In Hingham, the result was a near-doubling of the population between 1940 and 1960. As the “Baby Boom” era waned in the 1960s, Hingham’s population grew slowly for about 25 years, at one point witnessing a slight decline. By 2010, however, the population had climbed to 22,157, representing an 11 percent increase in one decade – a sudden uptick that outpaced all the surrounding towns.<sup>1</sup> Some of that growth can be attributed to the post-2000 opening of Linden Ponds, an 1,100-unit retire-

ment center, as Hingham experienced a high rate of growth among older adults between 2000 and 2010.

**Population Age.** Towns everywhere are gaining older adults faster than any other age group, and this can be seen in Hingham, too. Undeniably, the presence of Linden Ponds and other facilities such as Allerton House have an impact on the rate of growth and total size of the older adult population in Hingham. Still, even setting aside these projects, Hingham is not immune to the nation’s aging trends. Hingham and all of its neighbors still have residents today whose families brought them to the suburbs in the 1950s, triggering the rapid construction of new homes, new schools, and new streets. Figure 6.1 is a snapshot of the age make-up of Hingham’s population and that of surrounding towns. It illustrates Hingham’s relatively large percentages of older

**Fig. 6.1. Comparison Population Age Profiles**

(Source: ACS 2017 5-Year Estimates)



1 University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI), Massachusetts State Data Center, “Total population for the state, counties, and cities and towns, 1930-2016,” (Excel).

## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

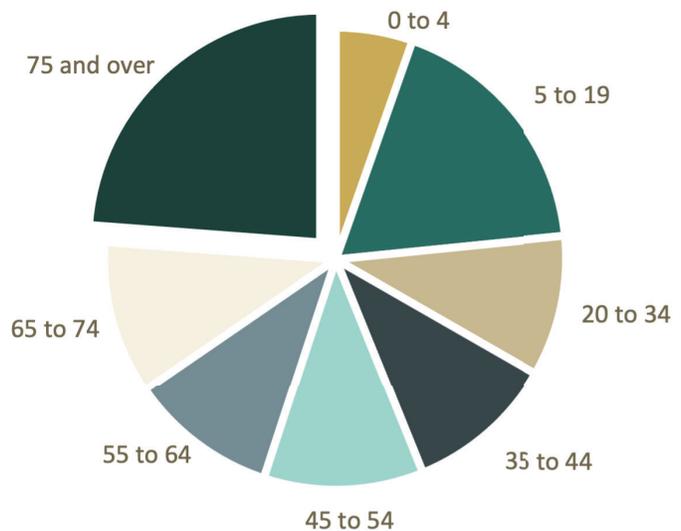
adults and children under 18, the latter being pronounced in Norwell and Cohasset as well, for all three towns have great schools. By contrast, the region's youngest households tend to live in communities with more types of housing and more affordability.<sup>2</sup>

**Population Projections.** The University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI) forecasts steady population growth in Hingham for the next 15 years, to 25,264 by 2035, and a faster rate of growth than that of any town nearby.<sup>3</sup> In a recent report to the Hingham School Committee, the New England School Development Council (NESDC) cited UMDI's projection as one of the factors considered in near-term school enrollment projections.<sup>4</sup> Figure 6.2 illustrates Hingham's 2035 population projection in age cohorts. By 2035, 24 percent of Hingham's population will be 75 and over, compared with 12 percent today. By contrast, the proportion of Hingham residents under 18 will drop slightly, to 23 percent, down from 26 percent today.

**Race, Ethnicity, and National Origin.** The South Shore is among the least diverse regions of the Commonwealth in terms of race, ethnicity, and national origin. According to current estimates from the Census Bureau, 96 percent of Hingham's population is White: a statistic similar to that of the adjoining towns except Weymouth. Asians

**Fig. 6.2. Projected Population by Age in Hingham, 2035**

(Source: UMDI)



comprise the largest minority group in Hingham, representing several countries and cultures: China, India, Vietnam, Japan, and Korea.

Hingham's White population also includes a mix of backgrounds, though the overwhelming majority of residents responding to ancestry questions from the Census Bureau cite Irish, Italian, and to a lesser extent, German heritage. There is a very small Latin American population in Hingham, 75 percent of whom identify as White. Overall, Hingham's population is similar in make-up to that of most of its neighbors.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, demographic data and estimates in this section of the Master Plan are from the U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census or American Community Survey (ACS), or special tabulations from the ACS prepared for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Use of these federal sources and data published by sister agencies allows for regional comparisons with data that has been systematically gathered and consistently reported. Population counts may vary from those reported by local or other sources.

<sup>3</sup> UMDI, "City\_TownTotals\_UMDI\_2035 Projections," (Excel), 2013.

<sup>4</sup> NESDC, "Hingham, MA Demography and Enrollment Projections," August 9, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> 2018 ACS Five-Year Estimates (ACS 2018), B04004, B04005, B04006, and SEA03002, retrieved from Social Explorer.

**Immigration.** Less than 6 percent of Hingham’s population was born abroad and immigrated to the United States. Most towns around Hingham also have a very small foreign-born population except Weymouth (11.2 percent), but even Weymouth falls noticeably below the state average of 15.6 percent. In Hingham, 70 percent of the foreign-born population has naturalized, and almost half came to the United States over 30 years ago. Consistent with the racial makeup of Hingham’s total population, 70 percent of foreign-born residents hail from Europe (mainly Northern and Western Europe) and Canada.<sup>6</sup>

**Disabilities.** Communities just about everywhere have seen increases in the number of residents with some type of disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): people with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. The increases reflect, at least in part, the aging of the nation’s population and improved methods of evaluating and identifying disabilities in

school-age children, young adults, veterans and others. While Hingham’s disability population has increased, the town still falls well below regional and statewide norms (Table 6.1). The differences between Hingham and the state as a whole are especially striking in the prime earning years (35 to 64) and early retiree (65 to 74) age groups.

**Educational Attainment.** The educational achievements of a community’s adult residents usually go hand-in-hand with types of jobs they have, the wages they earn, and the expectations they have for the quality of their public schools. Figure 6.3 shows that of the population 25 years and over in Hingham, 70 percent hold a bachelor’s degree or higher and only 14 percent have a high school diploma or less. Hingham far exceeds the state average of adults with college or graduate degrees (42 percent). The town has always surpassed the state for educational attainment, yet the 30-year change is dramatic. In 1990, 48 percent of town residents and 27 per-

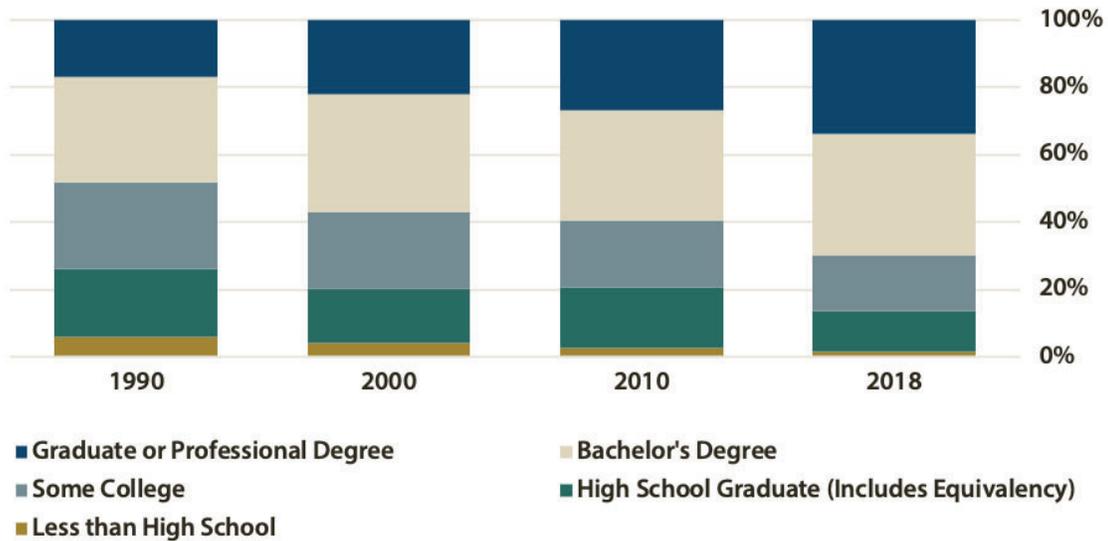
**Table 6.1 Comparison Estimates of Population with Disabilities (2018)**

	Hingham			Massachusetts		
	No Disability	Disability	Percent Disability	No Disability	Disability	Percent Disability
Under 5	1,371	0	0.0%	360,002	2,679	0.7%
5 To 17	4,723	68	1.4%	956,270	57,869	5.7%
18 To 34	2,474	119	4.6%	1,552,314	97,971	5.9%
35 To 64	9,036	481	5.1%	2,395,878	291,411	10.8%
65 To 74	1,968	248	11.2%	475,505	128,921	21.3%
75 Plus	1,656	905	35.3%	230,615	206,580	47.3%
Total	21,228	1,821	7.9%	5,970,584	785,431	11.6%

Source: ACS 2018, B18101. Note: “disability” as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is not the same as “disability” in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Massachusetts Special Education Law, Chapter 71B. As a result, the 1.4 percent of children 5-17 with a disability in Table 6.1 cannot be compared with the 14+ percent students with disabilities in the Hingham Public Schools.

<sup>6</sup> ACS 2018, SE:A06001, Nativity by Citizenship Status; SE:A10058, Year of Entry for the Foreign-Born Population; and SE:A0700, Place of Birth for the Foreign-Born Population, retrieved from Social Explorer.

**Fig. 6.3**  
**Changes in Educational Attainment, Hingham Residents 25+**  
**1990-2018**  
 (Census 1990, 2000; ACS)



**Table 6.2 Comparative Industry by Median Earnings for Full-Time Employed Population**

	Massachusetts	Plymouth County	Hingham
Total (All Industries)	\$61,369	\$61,949	\$120,810
Construction	\$57,497	\$65,742	\$97,534
Manufacturing	\$65,785	\$61,317	\$135,179
Wholesale Trade	\$60,768	\$63,839	\$64,236
Retail Trade	\$45,634	\$47,192	\$50,521
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	\$59,018	\$63,460	\$100,865
Information	\$78,558	\$72,696	\$94,643
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	\$76,828	\$79,939	\$167,845
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	\$92,818	\$91,555	\$175,872
Educational Services	\$63,858	\$68,891	\$81,500
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$53,312	\$52,177	\$97,269
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	\$47,490	\$43,965	\$87,250
Accommodation & Food Services	\$31,857	\$37,247	\$68,281
Other Services	\$42,575	\$42,433	\$69,500
Public Administration	\$73,482	\$74,815	\$98,088

Source: ACS 2018, C24010.

cent of the state’s residents had college or graduate degrees.

Education has an impact on the choices people can make about where they will live and work and the economic opportunities they can offer their families. Given the education of many Hingham residents, it makes sense that over 60 percent have some type of management, professional/scientific, legal, educational, or health care occupation. Compared with residents throughout the state or in Plymouth County, Hingham residents are far more likely to have jobs in these fields and far less likely to work in sales, service occupations, the trades, or logistics. On average, they also earn twice as much as their counterparts in most of the industry and occupational categories tracked by federal agencies (Table 6.2).

### Households

**Household Types.** People usually ask about population forecasts for their community, but for city and town plans, household formation rates matter even more. This is because households, not population per se, drive the demand for housing. In demography terms, a household is one or more people living together in a dwelling as a single housekeeping unit.

The term “household” includes two mutually exclusive categories: family and non-family. The definitions used by most demographers today, all based on the Census Bureau’s long-standing glossary, can seem pretty archaic given changes in family types that have occurred over the past few decades. To the Census Bureau, a family household includes two or more people living together who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption (though a family so defined can include unrelated people, too). A nonfamily household is single people living alone or multiple unrelated people sharing a dwelling as a single housekeeping unit. Table 6.3 is a snapshot of households in Hingham and nearby communities.

The make-up of Hingham’s households has changed somewhat over time. Much like the state, Hingham has absorbed an increase in non-family households in the past 30 years. Unlike the state, however, the increase in nonfamily households in Hingham is quite dramatic: 70 percent between 1990 and 2018 compared with just 30 percent statewide. The difference is largely due to growth in one-person, older adult households living at Linden Ponds and elsewhere in town, but it also reflects the growth of rental housing in Hingham.

**Table 6.3 Households by Type, Hingham and Surrounding Towns**

	Cohasset	Weymouth	HINGHAM	Hull	Norwell	Rockland	Scituate
<b>Total Households</b>	3,119	23,284	8,743	4,860	3,674	6,897	7,146
<b>Families</b>							
<b>Married couple</b>	65.1%	45.4%	63.2%	41.6%	71.8%	47.4%	60.2%
<b>Single parent, male</b>	4.3%	4.2%	1.3%	4.4%	3.2%	5.5%	1.7%
<b>Single parent, female</b>	2.7%	12.3%	6.5%	8.6%	7.9%	11.0%	10.3%
<b>Nonfamily households</b>							
<b>Male householder</b>	7.8%	14.4%	6.9%	16.3%	9.0%	16.1%	10.5%
<b>Female householder</b>	20.0%	23.6%	22.1%	29.1%	8.1%	20.0%	17.2%

Source: ACS 2018 (retrieved from Social Explorer).

## HOUSING INVENTORY

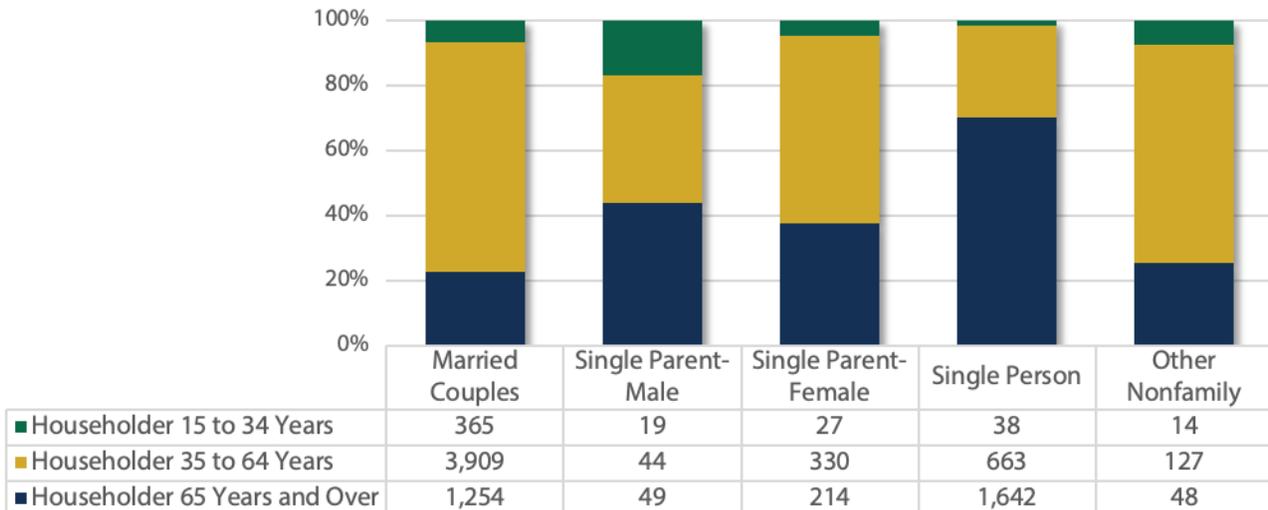
A second factor that sets Hingham apart is that the number of single-parent families in Hingham has declined 15 percent, but throughout Massachusetts, that number has increased 24 percent. Today, married-couple families comprise 63 percent of all households in Hingham (compared with 47 percent statewide). Nonfamily households make up 29 percent of Hingham’s households, and the remaining 8 percent are families headed by single men or women.<sup>7</sup> The drop in single parent households probably stems from the growth in housing costs that Hingham has experienced since 1990.

**Household Sizes.** Hingham’s appeal to families can be seen in the size of its households. Like Norwell and Cohasset, Hingham has many families with three or more people and typically, those households include dependent children. The average household size in Hingham, 2.6 people per household, falls just below the Plymouth County average, 2.7, but the average reflects the very large number of one-person households living in the town.

**Households with Children.** Of the town’s estimated 8,743 households, 36 percent (3,128) have children under 18. The overwhelming majority of these families (62 percent) have school-age children, and roughly 17 percent have both school-age and pre-school children. The remaining households with dependents have pre-school children only. These statistics underscore that Hingham is often the community of choice for homebuyers or renters seeking a town with good schools.

**Age of Householders.** The term householder refers to the head of a household or the person who owns or rents a dwelling unit. Householders 35 to 64 years make up 58 percent of all householders in Hingham. They are fairly well represented in some household types, though not in single-parent or one-person households. The least well represented age group, compared with the state as a whole, is young householders: people under 34. This population accounts for about 5 percent of all householders in Hingham, yet 17 percent

**Fig. 6.4. Hingham Households: Age of Householder**  
(Source: ACS 2018)



<sup>7</sup> ACS 2018, SE:A10008. Households by Household Type; Census 2010, SE:T58; Census 2000, SE:T20; 1990 Census, SE:T16, retrieved from Social Explorer.

**Table 6.4 Median Household Income Trends (Adjusted for Inflation;2018)**

Town	2018	2010	2000	1990
Cohasset	\$132,204	\$131,824	\$127,232	\$123,397
Weymouth	\$79,034	\$76,002	\$78,110	\$81,540
HINGHAM	\$133,596	\$114,137	\$125,511	\$118,183
Hull	\$85,573	\$83,293	\$79,186	\$73,887
Norwell	\$151,306	\$125,741	\$132,132	\$118,552
Rockland	\$79,807	\$74,459	\$76,520	\$78,038
Scituate	\$116,750	\$100,094	\$107,142	\$102,046

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF3; Census 2000, STF 3; ACS 2010, 2018; and Barrett Planning Group LLC.

throughout the state. Moreover, the household type often associated with young householders – single people living alone – is far more likely to consist of older adults in Hingham, as shown in Figure 6.4. Young householders make up a fraction of other nonfamily types in Hingham (<8 percent) but over 53 percent in Massachusetts.

**Household Incomes.** Hingham households are fairly well-off. Hingham’s state rank for median household income is 47 out of 352 cities and towns in Massachusetts, but its median family income rank is somewhat higher, at 30. The difference in rank may be due to the presence of many older adult households with fixed incomes at Linden Ponds, and Hingham’s relatively recent increase in rental housing stock may play a role, too. Figure 6.5 compares the distribution of households by income range in Hingham, Plymouth County, and the state as a whole. It shows that Hingham has a significantly larger percentage of households with annual incomes of \$200,000 or more. Most of the households in this income cohort are married- couple families.

Like Norwell and Cohasset, Hingham has enjoyed high ranks for household, family, and per capita income for many years. Table 6.4 tracks changes in median household income in Hingham and the surrounding communities between 1990 and 2018. Incomes have increased considerably in Hingham and Norwell in the past 30 years, and to some degree, Scituate as well. While the percentage of households with lower incomes has gradually increased in Hingham since 1990, the incomes of households in the higher-income cohorts are generally much higher, i.e., with fewer households “in the middle.”<sup>8</sup>

## HOUSING INVENTORY & TRENDS

The most recent estimates reported by the Census Bureau (2018) place Hingham’s housing supply at 9,237 units, or about 284 more than the number existing when Census 2010 took place in April 2010. The Census Bureau’s estimates fall short of the Town’s estimates. However, federal census estimates rarely match up well with local permit records, in part because the former focuses on habitable buildings and the latter reflects records that

8 Source of low-income household estimates: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data, 1990, 2000, 2016.



exist many months before a dwelling is actually available for occupancy. Regardless, there have been more changes to Hingham's housing inventory than may be apparent from growth statistics.

The make-up of Hingham's housing stock is changing due to the combined forces of new multifamily development, major alterations and renovations, and teardowns of older, small single-family dwellings to make way for new, large residences. Hingham has more renters today than ever before: almost 19 percent of all households, many of whom live at Linden Ponds. Though different in terms of land use, these forces both speak to economic pressures on Hingham's land market as housing demand grows while the town's readily developable land disappears.

**Age of Housing.** Hingham has a significant, very beautiful collection of historic homes that help to define what makes the town so special. Approximately 23 percent of all housing units in Hing-

ham were built before 1940, the first year the Census Bureau began to collect detailed information about the nation's housing stock. This needs to be placed in perspective, though, because the number of units built in Hingham over the last 20 years is almost as large as the inventory of extant homes built between the 1600s and 1939.

After World War II, subdivision activity spread throughout Greater Boston due to three conditions: the new regional highway system, unprecedented growth in household formation rates associated with the "Baby Boom," and federal housing policies that favored new homes outside the nation's cities. When access between Boston and Cape Cod was enhanced by the completion of Route 3 in the early 1960s, growth accelerated on the South Shore. Another wave of growth occurred in the 1970s as white families left Boston due to busing for school desegregation.

Hingham's desirability, natural beauty, declining

supply of developable land, and large-lot zoning contribute to the high value of its housing, but its housing values also correlate with the age and size of the dwelling units. On average, Hingham's oldest and newest homes have the highest values (Map 6.1). Especially indicative are those categories in which the value of the land significantly exceeds the value of the building itself, e.g., homes built during the inter-war years.

**Other Housing Types.** According to town assessing records, Hingham has 1,057 residential condominium units and a limited assortment of two-family (167) and small, older multi-unit buildings (15), usually tucked into some of Hingham's oldest neighborhoods. Map 6.2 illustrates the housing mix found in various parts of Hingham. Fourteen of the existing two-family dwellings were recently created (since 2010) under a provision of Hingham's zoning that provides for single-family conversions by special permit. In addition, at least ten Hingham homeowners have created an accessory dwelling unit in their single-family residence in the past few years.<sup>9</sup>

The housing type most people mention as an indicator of change is the town's mixed-income multifamily apartments, notably Avalon Residences at the Shipyard (281 units) and the 220-unit Broadstone Bare Cove developed by Alliance Residential. The Hingham Housing Authority (HHA) also owns 106 low-income rental units, most of which are age-restricted and all in much smaller buildings than the Avalon or Broadstone developments. Hingham also has a large continuing care development, Linden Ponds, with 1,100 units for householders 65 and over, including 272 units considered affordable by the state.

**Housing Size.** Hingham's single-family homes have increased in size, especially since the 1950s when housing growth accelerated all over Eastern Massachusetts. The Town's housing is actually more varied when the units are grouped by tenure, i.e., owner- vs. renter-occupied, as illustrated in Fig. 6.5. Of the estimated 1,627 renter-occupied units in Hingham today, 13 percent provide three or more bedrooms compared with 82 percent of the town's homeownership units.<sup>10</sup>

**Housing Values.** Hingham's housing inventory includes a large number of very valuable residences. The Census Bureau estimates that 23 percent of all owner-occupied homes in Hingham are worth at least \$1 million. Compared with nearby towns, this makes Hingham second only to Cohasset at 34 percent. Hingham has the largest inventory of multi-million-dollar homes on the South Shore (1,630 units). Almost half of the owner-occupied housing stock in Hingham is valued at \$750,000 or more. The high value of housing in Hingham is inextricably tied to the town's desirability and, while beneficial to the town's homeowners, it presents a challenge to middle- and lower-income households that would likely choose Hingham if they could afford it.

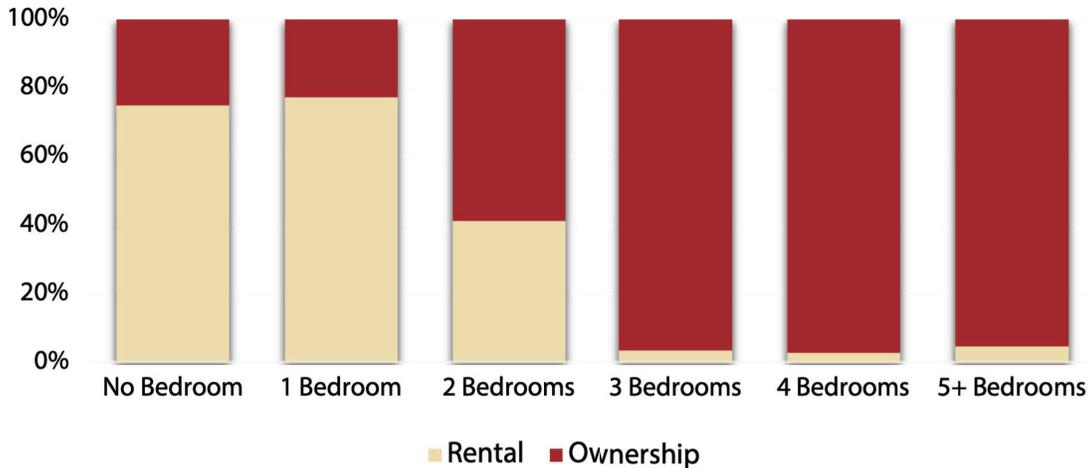
**Property Taxes.** Hingham homeowners pay fairly high property taxes. The Hingham's state rank for average single-family tax bill has hovered between 30 and 35 (of 351 cities and towns) for at least 20 years.<sup>11</sup> Though Hingham property taxes are very high in absolute numbers, the residential tax burden in Hingham is fairly typical of affluent suburbs in Eastern Massachusetts. The average tax bill as a percentage of family income in Hingham is just above the midpoint for the South

9 Hingham Planning Department, April 2020.

10 Social Explorer A10050. Occupied Housing Units by Number of Bedrooms, citing ACS 2018.

11 Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank.

**Fig. 6.5. Housing Size by Tenure**  
(Source: ACS 2018)



Shore. (See Chapter 9 for more information about property taxes in Hingham.)

**Building Permits.** Building permits are filed by owners or builders when they initiate any type of major construction or demolition on a piece of land in Hingham. Permits for activities such as new construction, renovations, and demolitions are useful indicators of housing demand and conditions in the housing market. Based on available building permit data, Hingham has experienced an uptick in building permit activity since 2015. In the ten year period from 2010-2019, the Town has issued new construction permits for a total of 923 new units (mainly for apartment and condominium units). The overwhelming majority of these new units are in larger multi-unit developments: Avalon at Shipyard, Broadstone Bare Cove, Linden Ponds, and Brio, a market-rate condominium development at the Shipyard.

Just over 20 percent of the building permit activity in Hingham over the past decade has involved construction of new single-family dwellings. These are “net new” units, however, not includ-

ing tear-down projects. Data from the Town indicate that since 2010, Hingham has issued demolition/ rebuild permits for 127 homes. The average lot area for single-family dwellings actually declines after 2010. This is mainly due to units that replaced dwellings on older, substandard lots.

**Housing Market.** Hingham is a buy-up suburb that attracts affluent homebuyers, mainly families. Since 2010, the median single-family sale price has increased 27 percent and the median condo price, 35 percent. For the past three years, the median sale price in Hingham has hovered around \$800,000, as indicated in Fig 6.6. Hingham has seen a considerable amount of housing turnover, too. Considering just single-family homes, over 2,800 have changed hands since 2010, and when all types of units are included, 36 percent of all households in Hingham moved into their current residence since 2010. Much of this is due to the expansion of rental housing in Hingham, but the single-family home sales capture homeownership activity.

### Affordable Housing in Hingham

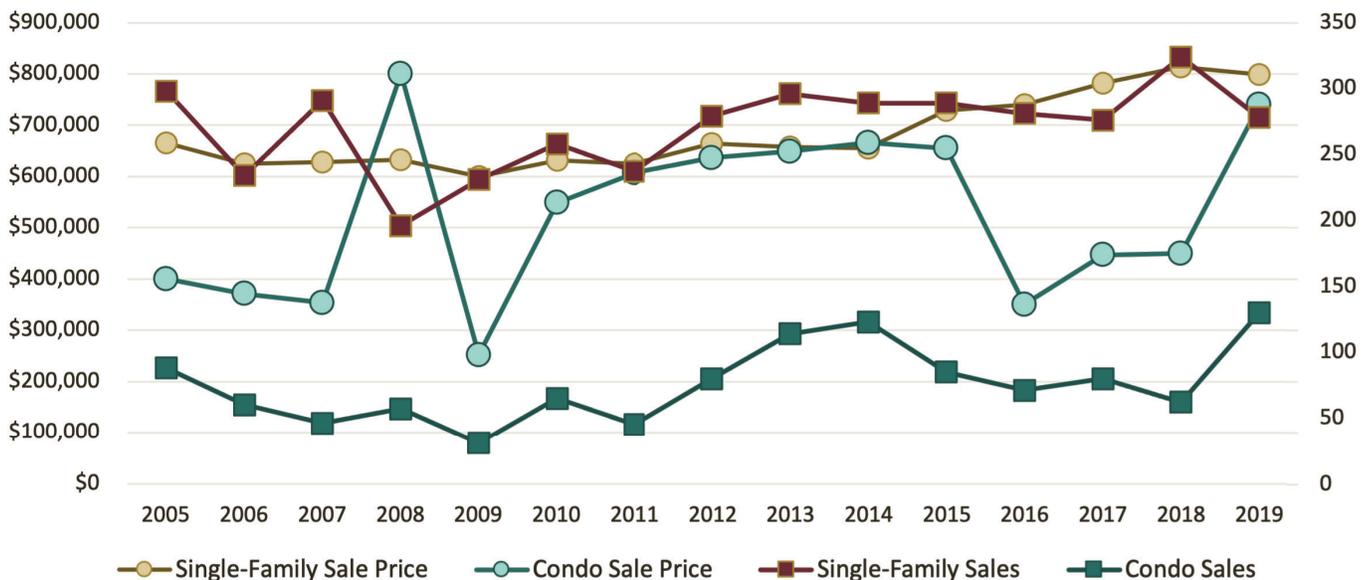
Massachusetts has established a goal for all communities have housing that is affordable to low-income households and remains affordable to them even when home values appreciate under robust market conditions. Another type of affordability - generally older, moderately priced dwellings without deed restrictions, and which lack the features and amenities of new, high-end homes - can help to meet housing needs, too, but only if the market allows. There are other differences, too. For example, any household - regardless of income - may purchase or rent an unrestricted affordable unit, but only a low- or moderate-income household qualifies to purchase or rent a deed restricted unit. Both types of affordable housing meet a variety of housing needs and both are important. The difference is that the market determines the price of unrestricted affordable units while a legally enforceable deed restriction determines the price of restricted units. Furthermore, unrestricted units that may have offered a

pathway to owning a home in the past have been a key target of teardown/rebuild projects, as can be seen in Hingham.

**Chapter 40B** is commonly known as the affordable housing law, but it is actually the Commonwealth's regional planning law, enacted in 1964. The four short sections that address affordable housing were added in 1969, following passage of the Federal Fair Housing Act (FFHA) 18 months earlier. They are called "Chapter 40B" in this master plan to be consistent with affordable housing nomenclature in Massachusetts. Nevertheless, remembering the regional planning umbrella for affordable housing helps to explain the premise of the law. Chapter 40B's overarching purpose is to provide for a regionally fair distribution of affordable housing for people with low or moderate incomes and increasing opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities to live where they choose.

**Fig. 6.6. Median Sale Price and Sales Volume in Hingham, 2005-2019**

Source: The Warren Group



## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & OTHER NEEDS

Affordable units created under Chapter 40B remain affordable over time because a deed restriction limits resale prices and rents for many years, if not in perpetuity. The law establishes a state-wide goal that at least 10 percent of the housing units in every city and town will be deed-restricted affordable housing. The official roster of affordable units is the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), which is somewhat of a misnomer because today, most mixed-income housing developments have no public funding. The 10 percent minimum represents each community's "regional fair share" of low- or moderate-income housing. It is not a measure of housing needs.

For eligible affordable or mixed-income developments, Chapter 40B gives the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) authority to grant a single comprehensive permit that encompasses all local permitting requirements. Under Chapter 40B, the ZBA can waive local requirements and approve, conditionally approve, or deny a comprehensive permit, but in communities that do not meet the 10 percent minimum, developers may appeal to the state Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). During its deliberations, the ZBA must balance the regional need for affordable housing against valid local concerns such as public health and safety, environmental resources, traffic, or design. In towns that fall below this 10 percent affordable housing threshold, Chapter 40B tips the balance in favor of housing needs.

Hingham currently exceeds the 10 percent minimum, and local officials believe the Town will remain over 10 percent through the next decade. This is largely because all of the apartments in a mixed-income rental development "count" on the SHI under a state policy that has been in place since the early 1990s. As a result, even though 75 percent of the apartments in the Avalon and Alli-

ance Residential developments are actually market rate rental units, they count on the SHI, along with the 25 percent affordable units. Because the counting of all rental units toward the SHI is only a state agency policy and not state law, and despite the fact that it has been in place for several decades, it remains a possibility the policy could be changed in the future to no longer apply to all rental units in the SHI count in order to encourage the development of more affordable units. Such a future change could put Hingham in jeopardy of falling below the 10% threshold.

**Local Capacity.** While most of the housing on Hingham's SHI came about through initiatives from the private market, some of the activity reflected in Table 6.5 is attributable to the town's own local capacity and commitment. In addition to the Board of Appeals, the main participants have included the Hingham Housing Authority, Hingham Affordable Housing Trust, and Community Preservation Committee (CPC), all of which have played a role – albeit differently – in providing affordable housing opportunities in Hingham. In addition, Hingham has provided professional staff support to affordable housing planning and implementation, a step many Massachusetts suburbs have yet to take.

The Hingham Housing Authority, the oldest of these groups, has existed for almost 50 years, and it owns 106 public housing units (Table 6.5). Hingham was among the first towns in Massachusetts to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2001, and the CPC has provided financial support that made some of the units on the SHI feasible. Hingham's CPC includes nine members, with one from each of the Planning Board, Historic Commission, Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission and Housing Authority, along with three appointed "at large" members. According to the Town, the CPC has

**Table 6.5 Hingham Subsidized Housing Inventory**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>SHI Units</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Affordability Expiration Date</b>
Hingham Housing Authority				
Thaxter Street	58	Rental	Elderly; disability	Perpetuity
30 Thaxter Street	26	Rental	Elderly; disability	Perpetuity
100 Beal Street	14	Rental	Elderly; disability	Perpetuity
30 Thaxter Street	8	Rental	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Whiting Lane	6	Homeownership	Individual/family	2042
Lincoln School	60	Rental	Age-restricted	2030
Brewer Meadows	21	Rental	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Lincoln Hill	4	Homeownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
DDS Group Homes	10	Rental	Adults with disabilities	N/A
Linden Ponds	272	Rental	Age-restricted	Perpetuity
Central Street	1	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Ridgewood Crossing	3	Ownership	Age-restricted	Perpetuity
Avalon at Hingham Shipyard	91	Rental	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Back River Condominiums	5	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Derby Brook	5	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
80 Beal Street	2	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Damon Farm	1	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Avalon Hingham Shipyard II	190	Rental	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Beal's Cove Village	1	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Fort Hill (Commander Paul Anderson House)	6	Rental	Veterans	2062
Weathervane at Chestnut Gardens	1	Ownership	Individual/family	Perpetuity
Broadstone Bare Cove	220	Rental	Individual/family	Perpetuity
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,005: 11.37%</b>			

Source: DHCD, July 2020. Note: The Town of Hingham has not waived its position that 100% of the units in Linden Ponds (DHCD ID# 5711) are eligible for inclusion in the SHI, thereby significantly increasing Hingham's actual percentage of subsidized housing units.



committed over \$2 million to affordable housing initiatives since 2003.

In 2007, Town Meeting established the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust, the group that has sponsored recent production of affordable housing and worked on updating Hingham's Housing Plan.<sup>12</sup> The state law that empowers communities to establish a housing trust defines the trust's authority, including its use of funds and its ability to acquire, hold, develop, and sell real property for affordable housing purposes.

In some communities, local capacity to create affordable housing also involves regulatory techniques, i.e., zoning that encourages or requires affordable housing in residential or mixed-use developments. Hingham has two provisions in its Zoning Bylaw that address affordable housing: Flexible Residential Development (Section IV-D) and Residential Multi-Unit Development (Section IV-E). However, there is no comprehensive inclusionary zoning policy in Hingham. To create one that works, the Town would need to consider density incentives and other cost-offsets such as fee waivers or tax incentives that make sense from a developer's perspective. Allowing sensitive renovations and conversions of older buildings for reuse as multiple-unit dwellings is another option. Over 60 percent of the inclusionary zoning bylaws in Massachusetts have failed to produce any affordable units, and all of

the non-productive bylaws are in predominantly single-family home suburbs that have few or no options for multifamily housing.

**Housing Needs and Housing Demand.** One measure of housing needs is the shortfall of Chapter 40B units. However, Chapter 40B developments usually respond to the strength of a regional housing market, so comprehensive permits do not always address a community's affordable housing needs. Furthermore, low- and moderate-income households make up a significantly larger percentage of all households than 10 percent. This can be seen in Hingham, where just under 30 percent of the town's households have incomes that would qualify for a moderate-income Chapter 40B unit. Understanding housing needs requires a more nuanced approach than can be gleaned from a community's Chapter 40B "gap." It involves an assessment of needs and barriers that exist within individual communities and the region of which they are part.

A disparity between growth in housing prices and household incomes contributes to a housing affordability problem known as housing cost burden. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing cost burden as the condition in which low- or moderate-income households spend more than 30 percent of their monthly gross income on housing. When they spend more than half their income on

<sup>12</sup> The Housing Plan was still in draft form as of the end of this Master Plan process. It is on file with the Planning Department.



housing, they are said to have a severe housing cost burden. Housing cost burden – not Chapter 40B – is the key indicator of affordable housing need in cities and towns. According to a database the Census Bureau prepares for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), 70 percent of Hingham’s lower-income households qualify as “housing cost burdened.” Housing cost statistics in Hingham are skewed by Linden Ponds, where residents can live even if they have limited incomes because the cost of entry is typically covered by a large up-front charge (e.g., from the sale of their home). Still, even setting aside Linden Ponds, housing cost burden affects anywhere from 20 percent to 60 percent of the renters in some federal census tracts.

Housing needs are not limited to low- or moderate-income people, but often, other needs overlap with economic need. Accessible homes for people with disabilities, small housing units for older adults, and a base of modestly priced apartments for young citizens entering the workforce are common needs throughout Massachusetts. Hingham’s draft Housing Plan identifies several needs and not all are tied to household income, notably an increase in units for older adults and people with special needs. Household preferences are changing, too, as not everyone perceives the “American Dream” in terms of single-family ownership. The fact that Hingham has attracted so much interest in rental development, including potential plans for more housing in South

Hingham, is not an isolated interest expressed by some developers. Rather, it is a response to market interest and market demand. There is considerable pressure and unmet demand in the South Shore/Route 3 multifamily market, where the vacancy rate is currently lower than that of the Boston region as a whole, vacancies are down, and rents continue to trend upward.

## Issues and Opportunities

### ISSUES

**Aging in Community.** There is disagreement about how far the Town should go (if at all) to create and preserve for affordable housing, and where the balance of responsibility lies between government and the private sector. Hingham has a limited mix of housing, with single-family homes on one hand and large apartment buildings on the other, but whether the Town should provide for or actually encourage a broader variety of housing types is unclear. Some say the Town should do more to anticipate and address long-term needs such as housing that enables older adults to age in their community, yet aging in community involves more than creating dwelling units with barrier-free entrances and kitchens. It also involves rethinking how commercial centers and new neighborhoods are designed for universal access. The conversation about housing in any community, including Hingham, is inextricably linked to stated planning goals such as population diversity – however the Town wishes to define that term – and to accommodating and adapting to social change.

**Teardowns and Loss of Older Housing Stock.** There seems to be some understanding, even if people disagree about policy, that Hingham has lost to demolition older homes that once provid-

ed an affordable avenue to homeownership in the community. Protecting historic properties is one reason to impose demolition delay, but sometimes houses that may not seem “historic” play an essential role in defining the character of mid-century neighborhoods. Whether the Town should take steps to save some of these homes through more restrictive dimensional regulations or let the market determine their future is another topic about which there seems to be limited agreement.

**Missing Middle.** Residents participating in this Master Plan process frequently had concerns about the amount of development that has taken place in Hingham. Both the pace of growth and kind of growth have been cited as detracting from the Town’s quality of life. People often associate what they consider excessive growth with Hingham’s recently built apartment developments – projects that are happening throughout the Boston metro area because of market demand for small units in managed housing developments – as well as new residential subdivisions.

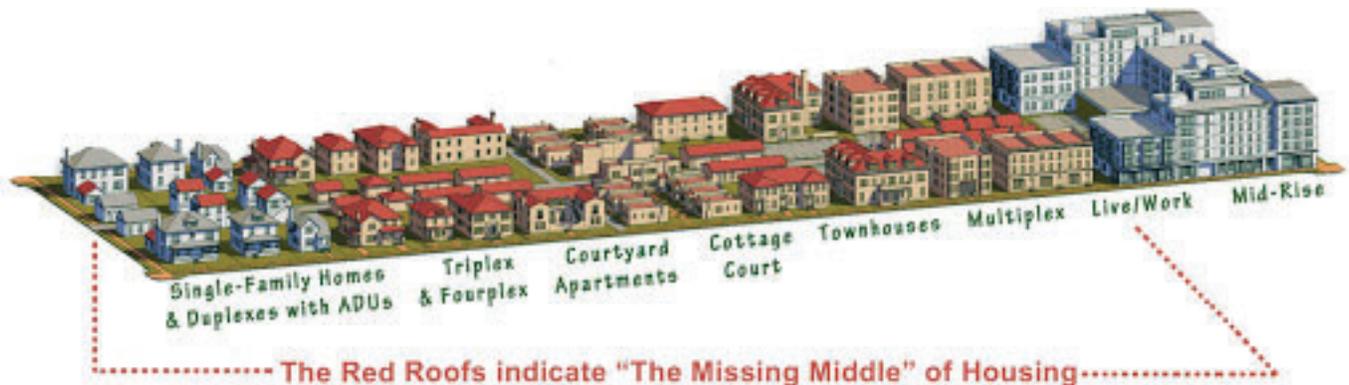
Hingham is not unlike other Eastern Massachusetts suburbs with zoning that either prohibits or severely restricts the type of housing that can be built. For these towns, the arrival of large apartment buildings comes as a shock and an unwanted intrusion on established town character. Perhaps zoning that gives developers op-

### What is Universal Design?

*Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. . . . If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits.*

tions to respond to changing market conditions by building more types of housing would help. Notably, Hingham has no zoning for “missing middle” housing – duplexes and small-scale, multi-unit dwellings along busy streets near the business districts, making a gradual transition between activity areas and neighborhoods.

**Chapter 40B.** As of the completion of this Master Plan process, Hingham exceeds the 10 percent minimum under Chapter 40B and may well remain above 10 percent for the next decade. However, not everyone agrees that the Town is “safe” from large, unwanted comprehensive permit projects in the future. Hingham’s status under Chapter 40, and that of other towns in the Commonwealth, hinges in large part on whether the state decides to make policy changes that determine whether affordable units “count” on the Subsidized Housing Inventory, or for how long they count.



## OPPORTUNITIES

**Zoning for Affordable Housing.** Hingham could use its own zoning powers to be an effective tool for creating affordable housing that qualifies for the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory without having to resort to the Chapter 40B comprehensive permit process. Some Massachusetts communities have successfully paired zoning for multifamily development and mixed-use development with inclusionary housing incentives or requirements. These kinds of opportunities exist for Hingham in areas like South Hingham.

**Housing Choices.** Opportunities exist to provide for a modest mix of housing that includes small multi-unit structures by allowing conversions of older homes as an alternative to outright demolition. Similarly, the Town could encourage accessory apartments by allowing them as of right – consistent with trends in much of the Commonwealth today.

**Disability Housing.** For a town of Hingham’s size, there is a very limited inventory of group homes and other types of supportive housing for adults with disabilities. Opportunities exist for Hingham, perhaps through the Affordable Housing Trust, to create residences for people with disabilities and simultaneously add to the Town’s Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The state counts each bedroom in a group home as a housing unit for purposes of the SHI, so a single group residence helps not only the six to eight adults who live there, but also the Town in its efforts to stay ahead of the 10 percent minimum.

**Neighborhood Character.** Hingham has opportunities to protect established neighborhoods from the change in character associated with new construction of single-family dwellings that are much larger than surrounding residences. The Town can consider adopting zoning strategies

such as regulating bulk with a maximum floor area ratio, limiting the footprint of buildings to keep them reasonably consistent with intensity of use in the neighborhood, and keeping accessory structures in check with height and bulk controls. A non-zoning option available to the Town is a neighborhood conservation district, which is similar to a historic district but not as restrictive, and its focus extends beyond buildings to include site planning and landscape design.

## Policies and Recommendations

**Policy 4.1: Provide for the development of housing appropriately designed, managed, and located for older adults and people with disabilities.**

### Recommendations:

- Work with the Council on Aging (CoA), the Health Department, and local social service organizations to identify properties appropriate for group residences for adults with disabilities.
- Consider designating Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for use by the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) to acquire, renovate, and lease or sell existing homes to group residence organizations.
- Identify opportunities for small scale developments and other types of “missing middle” housing.
- Explore options and policies to encourage the development or redevelopment of residential properties to serve older adults and

## Policies and Recommendations

those with disabilities.

### Policy 4.2: Encourage universal design in new neighborhoods.

#### Recommendations:

- Encourage universally designed common areas and outdoor amenities in all-new high-density multi-unit residential and mixed-use developments
- Encourage both universal design and visitability in age-restricted developments.
- Adopt universal design guidelines as part of the site plan review requirements for commercial and mixed-use developments.

### Policy 4.3: Continue to create and preserve an affordable range of housing for a wide range of incomes.

#### Recommendations:

- Develop and implement a robust public education program about fair housing and affordable housing, including videos, panel-of-expert presentations, website materials, and periodic presentations at televised Select Board and Planning Board meetings.
- Finish the Housing Plan and disseminate to Town boards and commissions.
- Pursue enough funding and staff capacity to the Affordable Housing Trust to enable it to target a goal of at least five affordable units each year.
- Adopt an inclusionary housing bylaw that requires affordable units in all new residential or mixed-use developments over a certain size (e.g., six units), or requires a com-

parable financial contribution to the HAHT to produce the necessary units elsewhere in town.

- Adopt a hotel room occupancy tax and explore other funding sources such as residential demolition fee to fund the Affordable Housing Trust.
- Commit at least 10 percent of the CPA set-aside for affordable housing directly to the Affordable Housing Trust each year, to be expended by the Trust for purposes consistent with the housing trust bylaw and G.L. c. 44, s. 55C.
- Conduct an annual inventory of Hingham's position relative to the state's SHI database to ensure the town remains above the current or future 40B thresholds.

### Policy 4.4: Explore opportunities for creative retrofit of existing structures and infill development for a variety of housing.

#### Recommendations:

- Explore the possibility of allowing detached accessory dwelling units in some or all of the areas where accessory dwelling units are now allowed for family members, but not for rental.
- Amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow for the conversion and adaptive reuse of existing commercial and institutional buildings for multi-family residential and/or mixed commercial/residential uses, in conjunction with performance standards for minimizing impacts on surrounding properties.

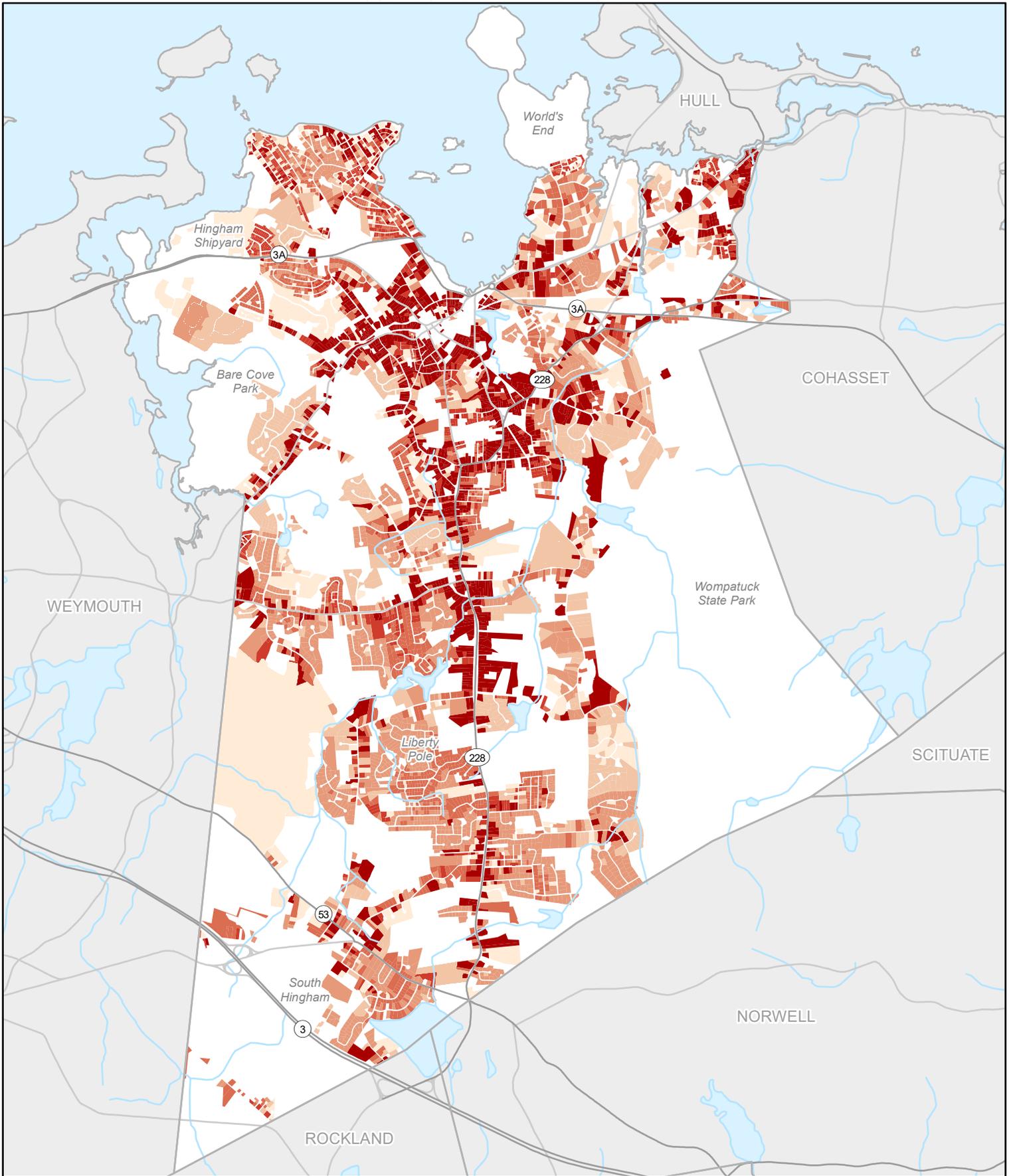
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**Policy 4.5: Regulate the form and scale of housing to encourage new homes to be compatible with older, established single-family neighborhoods.**

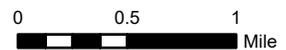
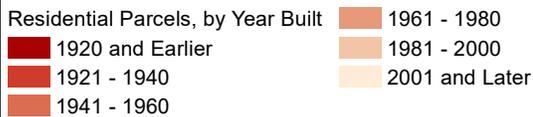
**Recommendations:**

- Explore the option of establishing a maximum Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) for new construction in residential zoning districts, in order to control the massing of new homes.
- Explore other Zoning Bylaw amendments related to dimensional requirements for residential districts, including setting rear and side yard setbacks on a ratio based on building height and setting building height based on the average height of nearby buildings.

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

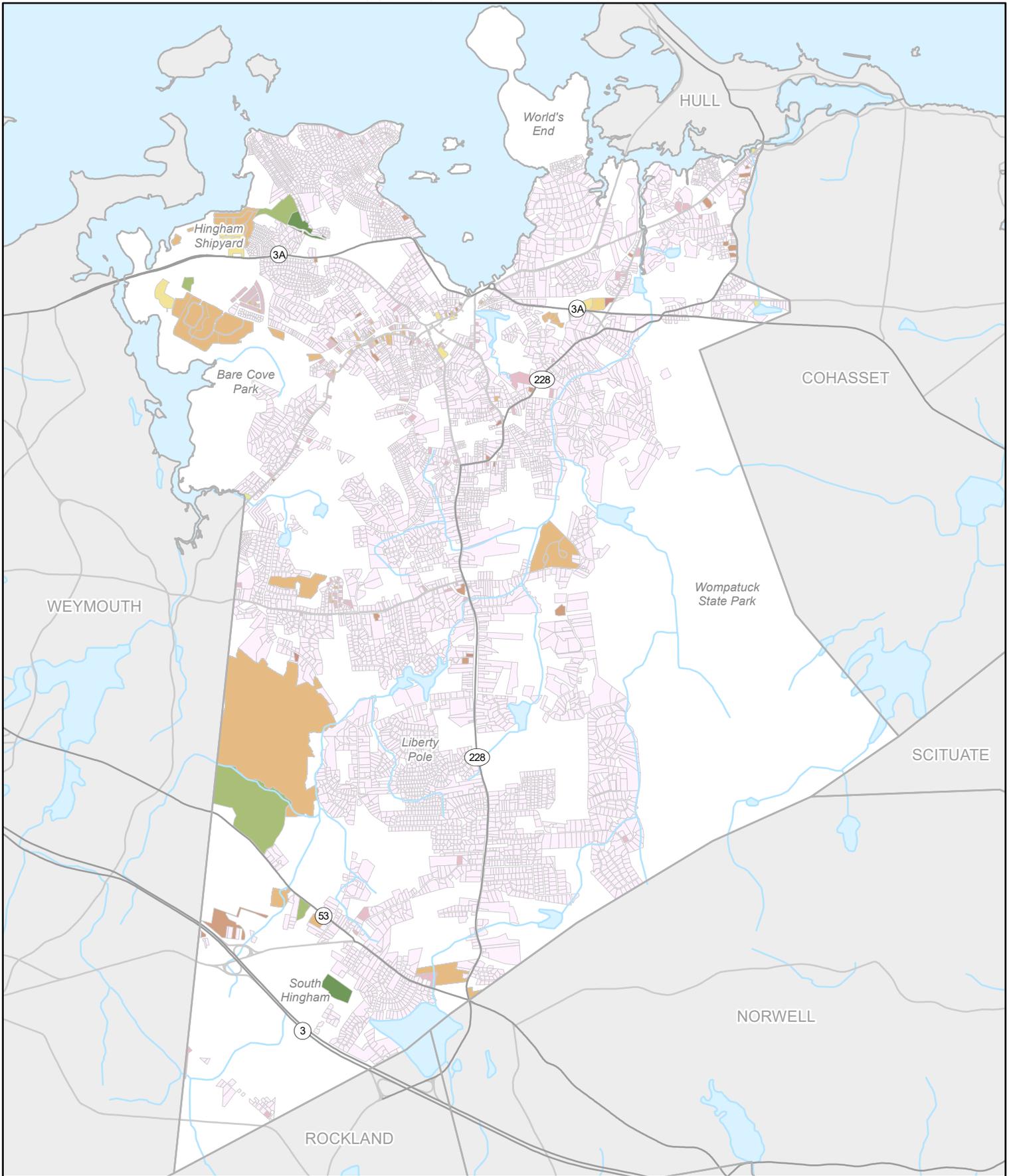


Map 6.1 Age of Housing



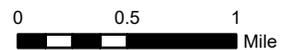
Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of Hingham





Map 6.2 Housing Types

Residential Parcels, by Use Code	Multiple Houses on One Lot	Mixed Use, Primarily Residential
Single Family	Condo	Assisted Living
Two Family	Apartments, 4-8 Units	Nursing Home
Three Family	Apartments, Over 8 Units	



Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of Hingham





# Transportation and Circulation

## Introduction

**From pre-colonial trails to modern high-speed roadways and from historic railroad routes to varied public transport options, the many modes of transportation in Hingham accommodate the needs of residents and travelers alike. Local, winding roads encourage drivers to take in the many beautiful and culturally significant landmarks along their storied routes. State highways and other high-speed thoroughfares facilitate faster travel, and they illustrate the evolution of transportation technologies as drivers traverse long stretches of straight, wide roads across leveled ground.**

The Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) operates local bus routes and the Greenbush rail line, streamlining travel and connecting Hingham with the Great Boston area. The MBTA-contracted ferry services also offers an extensive commuter schedule, unparalleled views and fresh, salty air year-round to its ridership, transporting workers between Boston and Hingham in under 45 minutes.<sup>1</sup>

Like other historic New England communities whose roads witnessed the introduction and advancement of automotive technology, Hingham has transportation challenges. Today, there are more than 130 centerline miles of road in Hingham, but tight lanes and unforgiving shoulders discourage bicycling and walking. There are 60 miles of sidewalks in Hingham, but limited designated bicycle lanes. Increasing emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle safety has begun to yield new accommodations in Hingham, but the community is still largely car-dependent.

Local transportation systems aim to provide safe, efficient mobility for people using all transportation modes and connections to local and regional facilities. The availability and quality of the transportation system matter to residents, businesses, students, visitors, and emergency services. Maintaining and enhancing the transportation system plays a crucial role in supporting Hingham's interest in a strong, resilient tax base.

<sup>1</sup> While this Master Plan process was underway in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on transportation access in Hingham. The MBTA reduced service on all public transit services in the Boston area after mid-March 2020 because ridership fell as employees resorted to working at home. Much of the information in this chapter is based on the existing conditions inventory and assessment prepared for the Town prior to the pandemic, and readers should bear this in mind.

## Existing Conditions

### Journey-To-Work Profile

Figure 7.1 shows the most popular work destinations for Hingham residents based on U.S. Census OnTheMap data from 2017.<sup>2</sup> It is most common for Hingham residents (3,409 residents or 33 percent of workers) to commute to jobs in Boston. Many Hingham residents also work in nearby communities such as Quincy (510 residents) and Weymouth (341 residents).

Figure 7.2 shows major residence locations for people working in Hingham, also based on U.S. Census OnTheMap data (2017). Weymouth residents make up the largest share (1,371) workers employed in Hingham, even beating out Hinghamites. Approximately 1,272 of the 15,477 people who live in Hingham also work in Hingham (8.2 percent), which is significantly below the statewide average of 26 percent of Massachusetts residents who work in their town of residence. About 1,100 Boston residents commute (or “reverse commute”) to Hingham.

### Vehicles Available

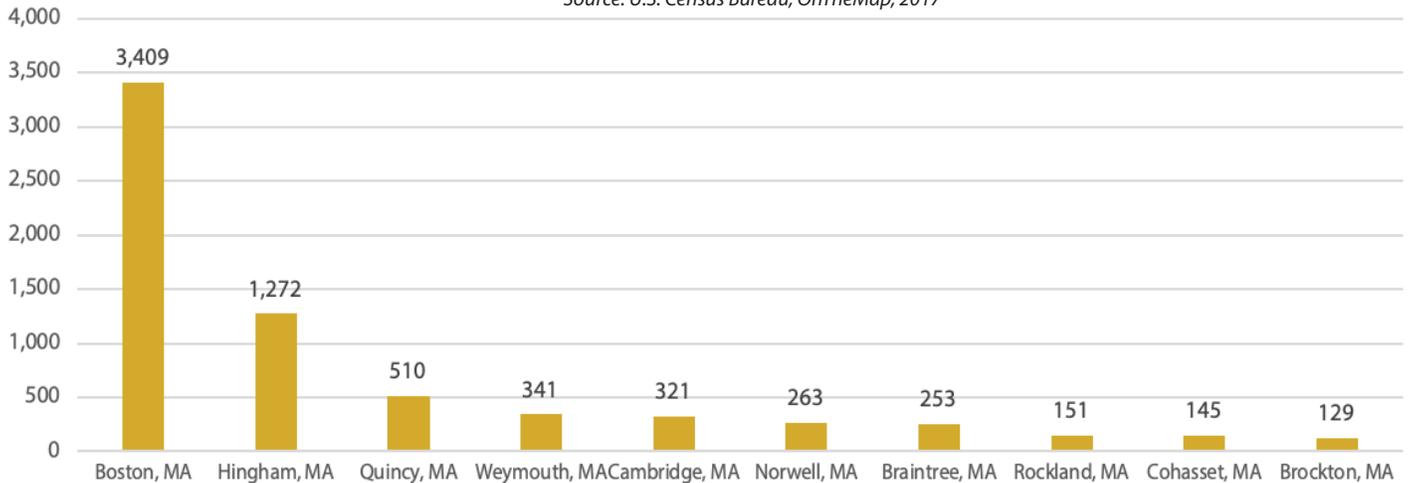
Figure 7.3 shows the number of vehicles available per household for both the Town of Hingham and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts based on the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS). As shown, Hingham residents have access to more vehicles (on average) than most Massachusetts residents have. The proportion of Hingham households with exactly one vehicle is 10 percent, while 24 percent of Massachusetts households have exactly one vehicle. Most Hingham households (89 percent) have two or more vehicles, while statewide this is true for about 70 percent of households. More than a third of Hingham households have three or more vehicles, whereas this figure is lower statewide at 28 percent.

### Mode Share and Commute Time

Figure 7.4 shows the modes of transportation Hingham residents take to work. More than two thirds of residents drive alone in private vehicles,

**Fig. 7.1: Workplace Locations of Hingham Residents**

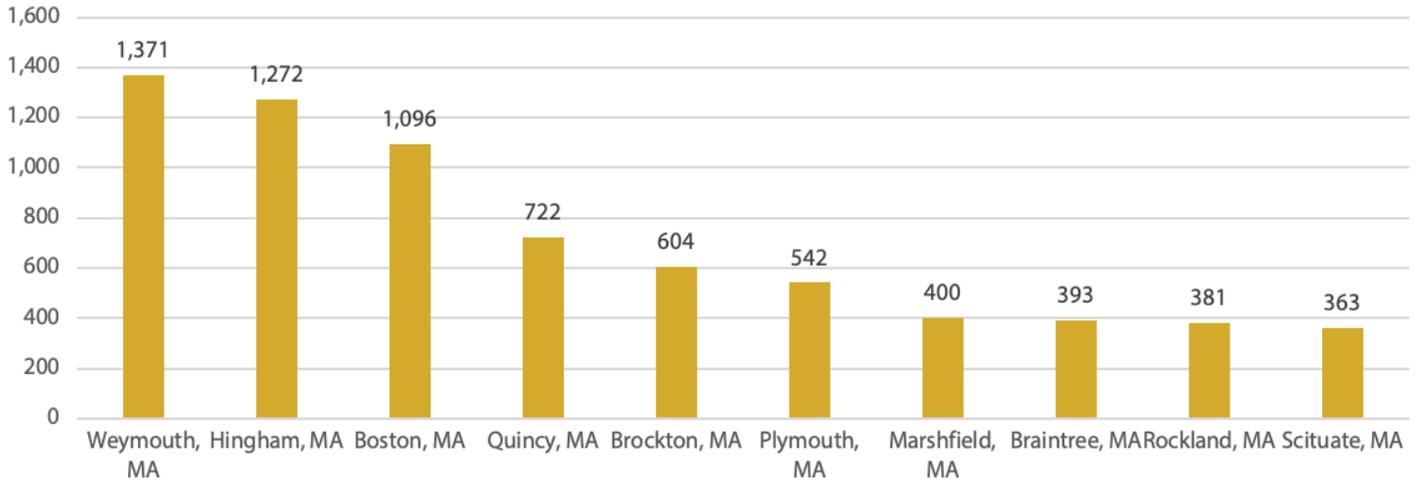
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2017*



<sup>2</sup> The most recent commuting estimates from the Census Bureau come from the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Estimates. Unless otherwise noted, all other demographic statistics reflect ACS 2018 Five-Year Estimates. Note that throughout the transportation data and statistics presented in this chapter reflect information available when the Transportation inventory and assessment was prepared for the Town in January 2020.

TRAVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Fig. 7.2: Residence Locations of People Working in Hingham



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2017

Fig. 7.3: Vehicles Available Per Household

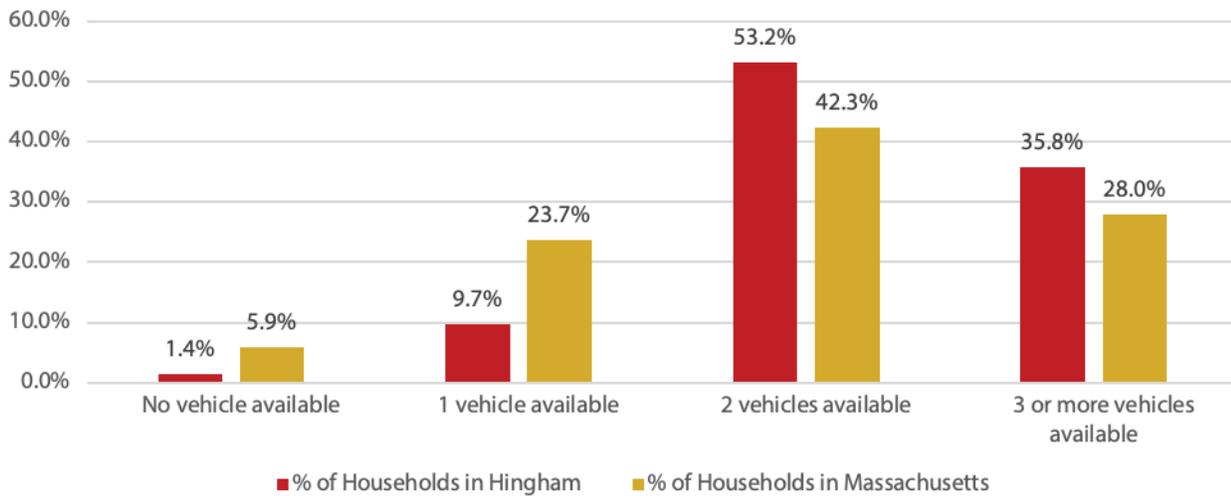
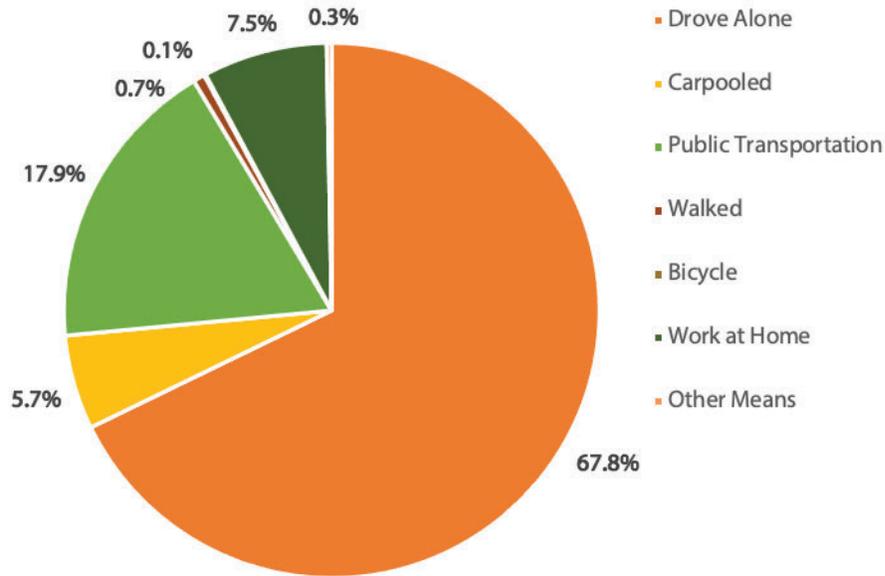


Figure 7.4: Mode of Transportation to Work



17.9% use public transportation, 5.7% carpool, and fewer than 1% of commuters walk or bike. While driving is by far the most popular among these options, Hingham residents commute by public transportation at a rate well above those throughout Massachusetts (10.2 percent) and Plymouth County (5.7 percent). Hingham’s ease of access to MBTA commuter facilities, including the ferry terminal at Hewitt’s Cove and two Greenbush commuter rail stations at West Hingham and Nantasket Junction, explains Hingham’s above-average use of public transportation.

The percentage of Hingham residents who work from home is 7.5 percent, which is higher than the statewide average of 4.9 percent.

**Travel Time.** Approximately 42 percent of Hingham residents have an average commute of less than 30 minutes, 30 percent have a commute of

30-60 minutes, and 28 percent have a commute of an hour or more. The mean travel time to work for Hingham residents is 36.9 minutes, which is longer than the Plymouth County average of 33.0 minutes and the state average of 29.3 minutes.

**Public Transportation**

Hingham is fortunate to have two MBTA commuter rail stops, an MBTA commuter ferry terminal, and MBTA bus service within its limits. Map 7.1 shows the locations of public transportation infrastructure in Hingham.

**Commuter Rail.** The MBTA commuter rail’s Greenbush line runs from Scituate to Boston, and it makes two stops in Hingham: West Hingham Station (20 Fort Hill Road) and Nantasket Junction (190 Summer Street). Figure 7.5 shows the average daily inbound boardings at each station

**TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE**

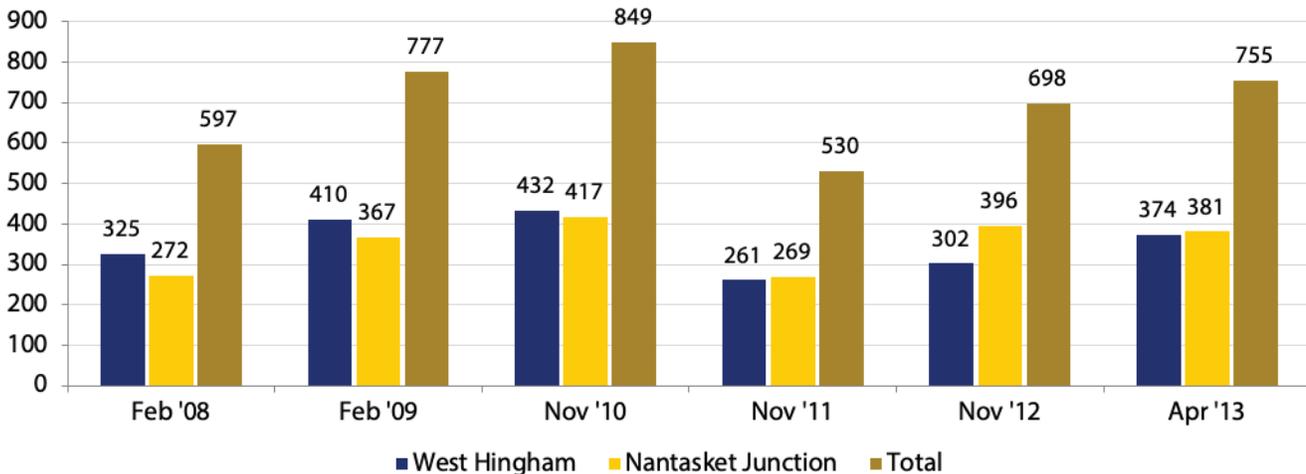
reported by the MBTA from the years of 2008 to 2013.<sup>3</sup> West Hingham is located in MBTA commuter rail Zone 3, and its fares (in 2019) are \$8.00 for a one-way ticket or \$261.00 for a monthly pass. The surface parking lot at West Hingham has a total of 231 parking spaces, including 7 accessible spaces, and on weekdays this parking lot nearly reaches capacity. Nantasket Junction is located in MBTA commuter rail Zone 4, and its 2019 fares are \$8.75 one-way or \$281.00 for a monthly pass. The surface parking lot at Nantasket Junction has a total of 490 spaces, including 9 accessible spaces. Residents have noted that this parking lot does not reach capacity.

**Ferry.** The MBTA commuter ferry, operated by Boston Harbor Cruises (BHC) since 1997, runs from Hewitt’s Cove at Hingham Shipyard across Boston Harbor year-round. The Hingham Shipyard – also referred to as the Hingham Intermodal Center – is one of the MBTA’s 15 designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) projects across the Commonwealth. The MBTA defines

TOD as “compact, walkable development at or near transit stations, generally including a mix of uses such as housing, shopping, employment, and recreational facilities.” The establishment of the ferry service and TOD designation has led to the creation of hundreds of residential units in and adjacent to the Shipyard.

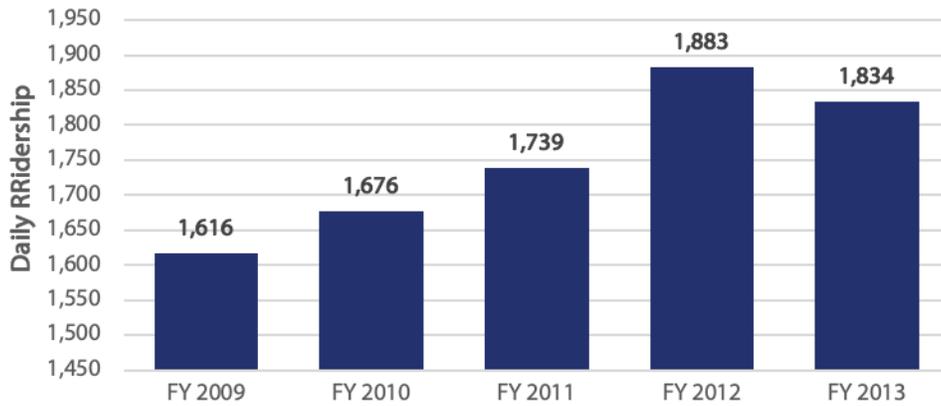
The Hingham-Boston route runs directly between the Hewitt’s Cove and Rowe’s Wharf in Boston. Another route (Boston-Logan-Hull-Hingham) runs between the Hewitt’s Cove and Long Wharf in Boston, with stops at Hull’s Pemberton Point and Boston’s Logan International Airport. The ferry enjoys slightly higher ridership in the summer, and it also stops seasonally at George’s Island in Boston Harbor from Memorial Day weekend through Columbus Day weekend. The 2019 daily fare is \$9.75 one-way or \$329.00 for a monthly pass. Commuters have noted that the ferry is crowded on weekdays. Figure 7.6 shows the average daily ridership from 2009 to 2013 on a yearly basis for the Hingham to Rowe’s Wharf ferry.

**Figure 7.5 : Hingham MBTA Ridership, Typical Weekday Inbound Boardings 2008-2013**



<sup>3</sup> The last consistent set of annual ridership data from the MBTA was published in 2014. Source: MBTA Ridership and Service Statistics, 14th Edition (2014).

**Figure 7.6: Hingham-Boston Commuter Ferry  
Average Daily Ridership 2009-2013  
Hingham Shipyard - Rowes Wharf**



Ridership rose steadily from 2009 to 2012 and decreased from 2012 to 2013. The surface parking lot at the Shipyard has a total of 1,726 spaces, including 29 accessible spaces.

It should be noted the daily ridership data from 2009-2013 in Figure 7.6 was the most current available to the consultants during the development of this chapter. It also includes only data to and from Rowes Wharf and does not include the ridership to another destination at Long Wharf. In addition, the timeframe covered includes most of the period of the Great Recession that began in late 2008, and the timeframe in Figure 7.6 also precedes the creation of many of the TOD residential developments referenced above. As a result, this data likely reflects a much lower ridership – and parking – number than what has been experienced in more recent years leading up to and including 2019 prior to the pandemic. When updated ridership data becomes available, the Master Plan will be updated.

**Bus.** Hingham has three MBTA bus routes. Route 220 provides service between Hingham Depot and Quincy Center, with stops in Downtown Hing-

ham, along Lincoln Street, and near the Launch at Hingham Shipyard. According to the most recently available data released by MBTA, Route 220 experienced 868 weekday daily inbound boardings and 851 weekday daily outbound boardings in 2014. In 2019, the bus stop serving Hingham Shipyard moved to Hingham Depot in order to reduce trip times by two minutes. The result of this effort at improving trip times was to remove the intermodal connection between the bus service and the ferry service to and from the Shipyard. Operated by Joseph’s Transportation under contract to the MBTA, Route 714 provides service between Hingham Depot and Pemberton Point in Hull, and passengers are able to board or exit the bus at any safe point along the fixed route. In 2014, approximately 120 passengers per day used Route 714.

**Shuttle Service.** The Town of Hingham operates a shuttle service for seniors. This includes service to and from medical appointments as well as on-call service for other errands. It also includes transportation to and from programs and lunch at the Senior Center. The shuttle service operates Monday through Friday. This service currently

**Table 7.1: Destinations of Rideshare Trips Originating in Hingham in 2018**

Destination	Number of Trips	Percent of Total Trips
Hingham	19,949	27.90%
Boston	14,749	20.63%
Weymouth	10,043	14.05%
Quincy	6,347	8.88%
Hull	3,494	4.89%
Braintree	3,221	4.51%

Source: Rideshare in Massachusetts (2018 Data Report)

**Table 7.2: Origins of Rideshare Trips Ending in Hingham in 2018**

Destination	Number of Trips	Percent of Total Trips
Boston	25,114	28.39%
Hingham	19,949	22.55%
Weymouth	11,722	13.25%
Quincy	9,417	10.65%
Braintree	4,331	4.90%
Hull	2,840	3.21%

Source: Rideshare in Massachusetts (2018 Data Report)

experiences capacity challenges and is unable to meet all needs of the senior population. Hingham Elder Services is currently performing a transportation needs analysis as part of their “Age-Friendly Communities” initiative.

**Rideshare**

Transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft continue to grow in popularity, especially in communities in close proximity to Boston and other metropolitan areas throughout the country. In 2017, 46,795 TNC trips originated in Hingham. In 2018, that number grew by 53 percent to 71,492 trips.

Table 7.1 shows the most popular destinations of TNC trips originating in Hingham in 2018. Most

often, trips that started in Hingham brought their passengers to other locations within Hingham. Table 7.2 shows the most popular origins of ride-share trips ending in Hingham in 2018. The largest proportion started in Boston.

**Roadways**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) classifies roads by the functions they serve. Ranging from interstate highways to local roads, some roads are high-mobility, designed for speed and volume, and others prioritize access, designed to reach and connect residents with neighbors and local facilities and amenities. Tucked into the South Shore’s coastline, Hingham is not directly connected to the Interstate Highway System, but the Town has arterials, connector roads, and local roadways. Map 7.2 shows Hingham’s road network and identifies roads by functional classifications. Table 7.3 shows the total length of each classification of roadway in Hingham.

**Arterials.** Arterial roadways provide the second highest level of mobility among roadway classifications, and while they allow for rapid travel, they are not primarily intended to provide access to abutting properties. Hingham contains approximately 29 centerline miles and 71 lane miles of arterials, making up 22 percent of its road network. Summer Street, Lincoln Street, North Street east of Lincoln Street, South Street, Main Street,

**Table 7.4: Classification of Roadways in Hingham**

Roadway Class	Centerline Miles	Lane Miles
Interstate	0.00	0.00
Arterial	28.60	71.43
Collector	21.73	43.17
Local	81.52	147.49
Total	131.86	262.10

Source: MassDOT Road Inventory 2018

Water Street, Central Street, High Street, Derby Street, Whiting Street (Route 53), and Route 228 are minor arterials. The two major arterials in Hingham are Route 3 and Route 3A.

Route 3 (also known as Pilgrims Highway) is a north-south divided limited-access highway extending from the Cape Cod Canal in Bourne to Interstate 93 (Southeast Expressway) in Braintree. It passes through the southwest corner of Hingham and can be accessed via the Derby Street interchange (exit 36) or using the Route 228 interchange (exit 35) in Rockland.

Route 3A (also known as Lincoln Street, Broad Cove Road, Summer Street, and Chief Justice Cushing Highway) is a major east-west route through northern Hingham. It provides access to Hingham Shipyard, Whitney Wharf Park, Hingham Harbor Marina, Nantasket Junction station via Summer Street, and neighboring communities of Weymouth, Cohasset, and Hull.

**Collector Roads.** Collector roads move traffic from local streets to arterials. They provide moderate amounts of mobility and access to adjacent properties. Hingham contains approximately 22 centerline miles and 43 lane miles of collector roadways, making up 16 percent of its roadway network. In Hingham, major collector roadways include Downer Avenue, Otis Street, Summer Street, Middle Street, Pleasant Street, Union Street, Thaxter Street, North Street west of Lincoln Street, and Beal Street.

**Local Roadways.** Local roadways provide the highest level of access to adjacent properties with the lowest level of mobility. Approximately 62 percent of all roadways in Hingham fall under this classification. It is typical for communities such as Hingham to have most local roadways under town jurisdiction.

**Scenic Roadways.** Under the Scenic Roads Act, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section

**Table 7.4: Daily Traffic Volumes in Hingham**

Location	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Route 3 south of Derby	90,993	90,738	92,478	96,218	96,644	96,013	94,947	
Route 3A west of North				21,220			24,771	
Route 3A east of Kilby Street					14,613			
South Street west of Main		5,536			5,036			5,354
Lincoln Street north of Burditt Avenue	5,797			5,140			5,737	
Hull Street north of Canterbury		3,771			4,906			4,808
High Street west of Stanford Drive		6,610			8,006			7,803
Route 53 east of Weymouth Line		12,053		13,277	13,400	12,371		12,717
Derby Street at Weymouth Line			18,528			19,121		
Route 228 west of Route 53								32,684

Source: MassDOT Transportation Data Management System

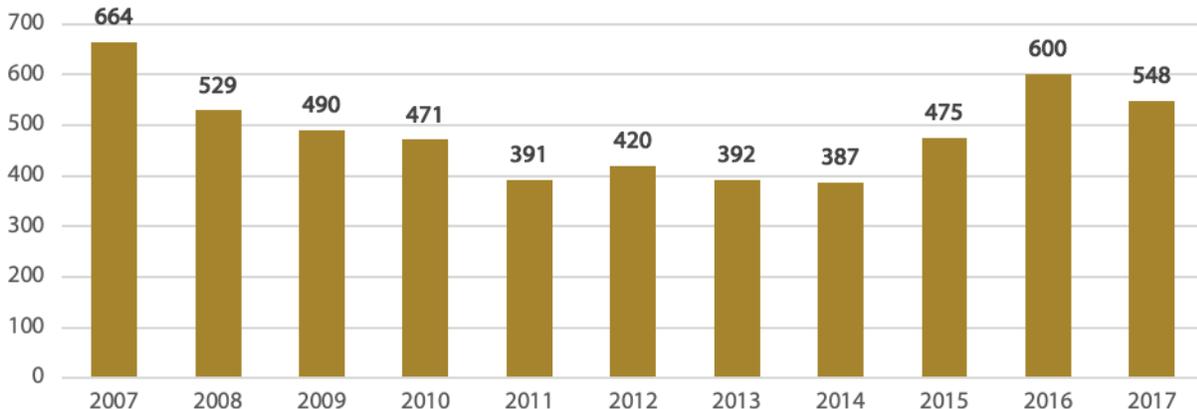
15C, cities and towns in Massachusetts may designate Scenic Roads at the request of the municipality’s planning board, historical commission, or conservation commission. In Hingham, these protected roadways are Free Street, Lazell Street, Leavitt Street, Popes Lane, Union Street, Turkey Hill Lane, South Pleasant Street, and Martins Lane. In order to preserve the character of the scenic roadways, this State designation prevents the removal of trees or other historic features. (See also, Chapter 3.)

**Traffic Volumes.** Traffic congestion is one of the main concerns of Hingham residents. Table 7.4 reports average daily traffic volumes on Hingham roadways from 2012-2019. The data show that traffic volumes are heaviest on Route 3, Route 3A, Route 228, Route 53, and Derby Street. Traffic volumes on Route 3A west of North Street grew from an average daily traffic volume (ADT) of 21,220 in 2015 to 24,771 in 2018, indicating a compound annual growth rate of approximately 5 percent per year. Traffic volumes on Route 53 east of the Weymouth Town Line have fluctuated slightly, but remained consistent overall since 2015. Traffic volumes on Derby Street at the Weymouth Town

Line grew from an ADT of 18,528 in 2014 to 19,121 in 2017, indicating a compound annual growth rate of approximately 1 percent per year. Map 7.3 illustrates these average daily traffic volumes. Some of the traffic on the roadways in Hingham is a result of residents of Hull and Cohasset who work in Boston and cut through Hingham to travel to work. In 2017, 1,422 Hull residents and 1,178 Cohasset residents worked in Boston. However, commuter peak hour traffic volume growth may be different than daily traffic volumes.

**Roadway Safety.** Crash data from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) indicate that 1,623 crashes, or approximately 541 crashes per year, have occurred in Hingham from the years of 2015 to 2017. As shown in Figure 7.7, the total number of crashes each year has fluctuated since 2007, with a low of 387 in 2014 and a high of 664 in 2007. From 2016 to 2017, the total number of crashes decreased from 600 to 548. Of the 1,623 crashes from 2015 to 2017, 17 crashes involved pedestrians and 11 crashes involved bicyclists. During that same time frame, 296 crashes resulted in non-fatal injuries, and four crashes resulted in fatalities. These fatal crashes occurred

Figure 7.7:  
Total Reported Motor Vehicle Incidents



on Route 3A east of Beal Street, at the intersection of Route 3A and Kilby Street, on George Washington Boulevard, and on Route 3.

MassDOT maintains a database of top crash locations in the state. The database includes locations identified under the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), as well as a list of the top 200 crash locations in the state. The intersection of Kilby Street and Chief Justice Highway (Route 3A) was identified as an HSIP cluster for the years of 2014 to 2016, making it eligible for a Road Safety Audit. (Map 7.4)

For the years of 2013-2015, the following intersections in Hingham were identified as HSIP clusters: Route 53 (Whiting Street) at Derby Street; Derby Street at Keith Way; Route 3 at Derby Street on/off -ramps; and Route 3 at Route 228 off -ramp.

MassDOT oversaw a Road Safety Audit (RSA) on behalf of the Town of Hingham for the segment of Derby Street between the Route 3 northbound and southbound ramps in December 2013. Many concerns were noted, including insufficient sight distance, inadequate traffic control, guide sign placement, pedestrian accommodations, and capacity deficiencies for left turn lanes. Potential short-term, mid-term, and long-term safety enhancements were identified to address these concerns. Suggested enhancements include reconfiguring lane geometry, clearing vegetation, improving warning and guide signs, installing ADA compliant wheelchair ramps, and constructing a full clover interchange. MassDOT has recently installed new traffic signals and adjusted roadway geometry to improve safety and mobility, and they added crosswalks and a bike lane along a segment of the road.

Road Safety Audits were completed for the Summer Street Rotary and the intersection of Derby

Street and Gardner Street. Improvements are being advanced at both locations.

Although not a high crash location, the intersection of Main Street and Cushing Street is often reported as being unsafe by residents. Cushing Street is a highly utilized corridor between Derby Street and Main Street, leading to the downtown area. There is an opportunity to perform a traffic signal warrant to determine whether the intersection could be signalized to increase safety and reduce delay. Figure 7.7 shows the total number of crashes at intersections experiencing high numbers of crashes for the three most recent years available through the MassDOT Crash database (2015-2017).

**Planned Projects.** Two transportation projects are currently planned in Hingham. One is Route 53 Resurfacing, on MassDOT's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Years 2019-2023. The project also includes sections of Route 53 in Weymouth and Braintree. In 2018, Hingham performed a temporary pilot of a road diet on Route 3A. The roadway was reduced from four lanes to two, with four lanes remaining at signalized intersections. The permanent reconfiguration for Route 3A, as well as improvements to the Summer Street Rotary, has been accepted for the 2024 TIP.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations**

A comprehensive sidewalk network is provided in Downtown Hingham, with sidewalks extending along some streets outside of the downtown area. There are approximately 60 miles of sidewalks in Hingham, shown on Map 7.5. Residents of South Hingham have expressed concerns about the lack of sidewalks on residential streets, which necessitates driving short distances to destinations that could be accessed by walking



if adequate pedestrian facilities were provided. Additional crosswalks and accessible curb ramps would improve the walkability of Hingham.

Martins Lane, which leads to World’s End, a popular hiking destination that also allows biking, is a winding, narrow road with blind spots. It lacks a sidewalk which prevents people from accessing it without a vehicle. The historic designation and presence of ledge may prevent widening to accommodate a sidewalk.

Improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations connecting the Harbor and Downtown are desirable. There are currently very few dedicated bicycle lanes in Hingham: the only bicycle lanes run along the Derby Street corridor between the Route 3 interchange and the intersection of Derby and Cushing Streets. “Sharrow” (shared lane) markings are present in shoulders along Central Street, but the shoulders are less than 4 feet wide, which is too narrow to safely and comfortably accommodate bicycles.

Several off-road trails exist for both biking and walking at World’s End, Weir River Woods and Estuary Park, Wompatuck State Park, More-Brewer Park, Brewer Reservation, and Bare Cove Park.

**Safe Routes To School.** The Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Program aims to increase the safety of walking and bicycling infrastructure along travel paths to schools. East Elementary School, South Elementary School, and William L Foster Elementary School participate in the program and are therefore eligible for infrastructure improvement funding from the state.

**Parking**

There are surface parking lots at each of the MBTA commuter rail stations as well as at the ferry terminal:

- West Hingham Station Parking Lot: 231 spaces, 7 accessible
- Nantasket Junction Station Parking Lot: 490 spaces, 9 accessible
- Hingham Ferry Terminal Parking Lot: 1,726 spaces, 29 accessible

Publicly available off-street parking in Downtown Hingham includes the Station Street Parking Lot and the Merchant’s Lot. The Station Street Lot is accessible from North, Mill, and Water Streets. The town-owned parking facility provides 267 spaces, including 8 accessible spaces. The Merchant’s Lot, located between South Street, Main Street, Elm Street, and Central Street, is pri-

vately owned, but operates as a municipal parking lot through a license agreement between the owners and the Town. The Merchant' Lot consists of 67 parking spaces. On-street parking is also provided in Downtown Hingham, with a mix of two-hour parking, 15-minute parking, and unrestricted parking.

A public parking lot, consisting of approximately 155 spaces, is provided at Town Hall on Central Street. The parking lot often reaches capacity because it serves multiple uses including town offices, the police station, the regional dispatch center, recreation department programs, and the senior center.



Cove Marina is located just west of the Hingham Harbor Marina at 3 Otis Street. It is privately owned providing 38 slips, several tie-up docks, and access to over 100 moorings in the Inner Harbor Mooring Basin. A public boat ramp is west of Bare Cove Marina.

## WATER TRANSPORTATION

### Marinas

Hingham Shipyard provides access to the MBTA/BHC commuter ferries as well as private and commercial boats. The Hingham Shipyard Marina is privately owned and contains over 500 slips and a dinghy dock. It also provides a launch service to 100 moorings located in Hewitt's Cove. Approximately 50 slips are reserved for commercial use only. A total of 300 parking spaces are available at the marina. The slips and moorings are available to rent on a seasonal, monthly, weekly, or overnight basis and can be reserved online. Docks are also available to rent for a maximum of three hours to access the waterfront amenities on a first come, first serve basis.

Hingham Harbor Marina is a privately owned marina located at 26 Summer Street in the Inner Harbor. It provides 44 slips and caters to both seasonal and transient recreational boaters. Bare

### Additional Waterfront Access

In addition to Hingham's marinas, the Town of Hingham manages five mooring areas: the Inner Harbor (205 moorings), Outer Harbor (364 moorings), Worlds End (39 moorings), Hewitt's Cove (85 moorings), and Back River (78 moorings). All mooring areas are open to the public with access granted from an assignment list maintained by the Harbormaster's Office. World's End, a popular destination for both day trips and overnight trips, especially on holidays and weekends during summer months. Members of the public can rent one of four moorings daily from 11:00 AM to 10:00 AM the following day. Hingham Yacht Club (HYC) also maintains a private dock and provides its members access to the public moorings in the Outer Harbor adjacent to Crow Point. Waterfront residents interested in mooring

their boats outside of designated mooring fields may apply to the Harbormaster's Office for Residential Mooring Permits on a case-by-case basis.

The Boston Harbor Islands collectively make up a National and State Park, and five of them are parts of the Town of Hingham: Bumpkin Island, Button Island, Langlee Island, Ragged Island, and Sarah Island. Managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Harbormaster, Bumpkin Island is the only of these islands accessible seasonally by shuttle, which arrives from Boston or Quincy via George's Island. Hingham's other islands (Button Island, Langlee Island, Ragged Island, and Sarah Island) in Hingham Harbor are owned and managed by the Harbormaster along with DCR. These islands are only accessible by private craft. The Harbormaster allows camping on Langlee Island by permit only and provides rental moorings.

The Bathing Beach, owned by the Town of Hingham, is the only public beach maintained by the Town. It is located on Otis Street, north of the public boat ramp. A project to improve the parking lot and walkways was completed in 2016. The goals of the project were to protect the parking lot, improve the beach response to erosion, complete a portion of the harbor walkway, improve parking lot circulation, and improve pedestrian safety. There is no cost to use the parking lot. The Hingham Maritime Center is located just east of the Hingham Harbor Marina. The wharf is owned by the Town and leased to the Hingham Maritime Center which offers both sailing and rowing.

### **Pavement Management Program**

Hingham has a pavement management program to monitor roadways and prioritize their repair. The GIS-based program collects and evaluates

data about the condition of roadways in order to determine a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) and schedule of maintenance. The PCI is a numerical index between 0 and 100 which is used to indicate the general condition of pavement for a community's roadways. The higher the PCI score, the better overall pavement condition. Map 7.6 shows the PCIs for roadways in Hingham. In 2016, the Town allocated \$2 million for roadway repairs (Article 20) with the goal to have 92 percent of the Town's roadways rated Good or Excellent by 2020. The current overall pavement rating for Town roadways in 2020 is 80-82.

### **Bridges**

According to the most recently available data in MassDOT's database, 14 bridges are located in Hingham. Five of the bridges are owned and maintained by the town and the remaining 9 are owned and maintained by MassDOT. Of the 14 bridges, 1 is listed as structurally deficient (Route 228 over Weir River) and 6 are in unknown condition.

## Issues and Opportunities

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### ISSUES

- Vehicular traffic and road congestion are frequently-cited problems in Hingham. Routes 3A, 228, and 53, as well as Derby Street all experience heavy traffic volumes. Seventy percent of Massachusetts households have two or more vehicles, but in Hingham, this figure is even higher. Because 89 percent of households in Hingham have two or more vehicles, many families are able to get more drivers on the roads, and therefore further contribute to traffic volume.
- Sidewalks and bicycle lanes do not currently connect many of the destinations throughout Hingham. Most sidewalks are concentrated in the town's business centers, but they do not extend into the residential areas of the community. The only dedicated bicycle lanes presently in Hingham line the Derby Street corridor from Cushing Street to the Route 3 (South) access ramps, and there are shared lane markings on Central Street. Insufficient pedestrian and bicyclist safety accommodations on Hingham's roads discourage walking and biking between locations in town.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- The growing popularity of navigation software enables drivers to avoid congested routes, but among other factors, it has also led to an increase in cut-through traffic on

Hingham's relatively low-capacity local roads. At different times of day, increased volume on these roads may slow travel, or visitors may not realize that their speeds exceed posted limits. Developing a Traffic Calming Policy and Guidelines could help to clarify safety standards, as well as implementing lower speed limits.

- Intersections with high numbers of traffic accidents, like the intersection of Kilby Street and Chief Justice Cushing Highway (Route 3A), are eligible for MassDOT Road Safety Audit. Identifying the factors that make these locations less safe is an important first step in preventing future accidents. Where crashes are less common, such as at the intersection of Cushing Street and Main Street, a traffic signal warrant could help the Town determine whether signaling the location would increase safety or reduce delays.
- Parking at the commuter rail station in West Hingham is limited, and the lot regularly nears or reaches its capacity. Lack of available parking near the station may discourage commuters from using public transportation to get to work. Piloting a town-wide shuttle with stops at the commuter rail stations and the ferry terminal could improve MBTA ridership, as well as serve to connect destinations around Hingham, such as the Down town and Harbor areas.

## Policies and Recommendations

### Policy 1.3: Increase vibrancy of the harbor for residents and visitors and improve connectivity to the Downtown.

#### Recommendations:

- Develop a wayfinding signage plan and information kiosks to direct visitors to destinations at the harbor and Downtown.
- Conduct a town-wide sign inventory.
- Make sidewalks ADA-accessible for all users
- Evaluate providing bike lanes/ accommodations and streetscape improvements on roadways between the harbor and Downtown.

### Policy 3.1: Improve safety for all modes of travel and reduce traffic congestion.

#### Recommendations:

- Continue to fund the maintenance of roads, intersections, and sidewalks primarily through MassDOT Chapter 90.
- Continue the Pavement Management Program, which was allocated \$2 million in 2016.
- Conduct a Pedestrian and Bicycle Study to improve safety, accessibility, connectivity, and mobility for active transportation.
- Develop consistent standards for crosswalks for different areas, including dimensions and materials, to address varied safety needs, with added features as needed.
- Evaluate the need for new traffic signals at high traffic and high crash intersections along Main Street to improve safety.
- Implement a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan through MassDOT's

Complete Streets Funding Program.

- Develop a Traffic Calming Policy and Guidelines to help reduce traffic speeds and cut-through traffic on residential streets.
- Consider designating a 20 MPH safety zone in the Downtown area.
- Consider to opt-in to GL c.90 s. 17C to reduce the statutory speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph in thickly settled or business districts.
- Support road safety improvements related to the Route 3A road improvement project.
- Work with Traffic Committee to identify potential locations for a Road Safety Audits in high crash locations.

### Policy 3.2: Enhance public transportation services connecting parts of town, particularly linking the downtown to the Shipyard and Harbor.

#### Recommendations:

- Consider developing a shuttle bus or micro-transit pilot program to provide service for residents to local destinations, business districts, and regional connections.
- Evaluate options for providing first-mile/ last-mile connections to transit stations.

### Policy 3.3: Pursue public-private partnerships to coordinate public transport and traffic to benefit the commercial districts.

#### Recommendations:

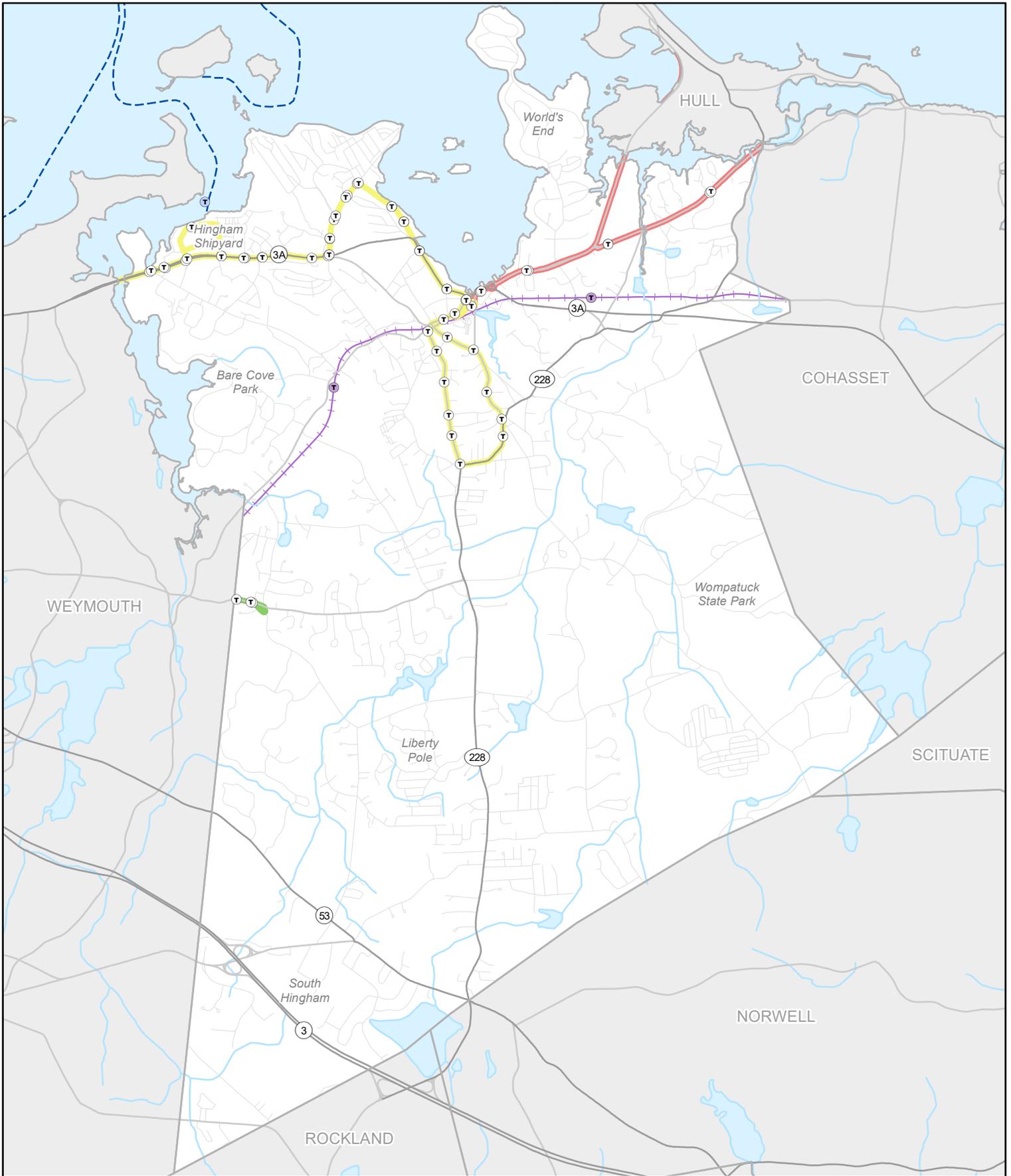
- Work with large employers, business parks, and developers to implement strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicles. This may include carpooling, shuttle vans, flexible work hours, and subsidized transit passes.

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**Policy 5.4: Guide development to desired locations with regulatory incentives and adequate infrastructure.**

**Recommendations:**

- On top of investments in water and wastewater capacity, explore options for investing in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in South Hingham as an incentive for private development.



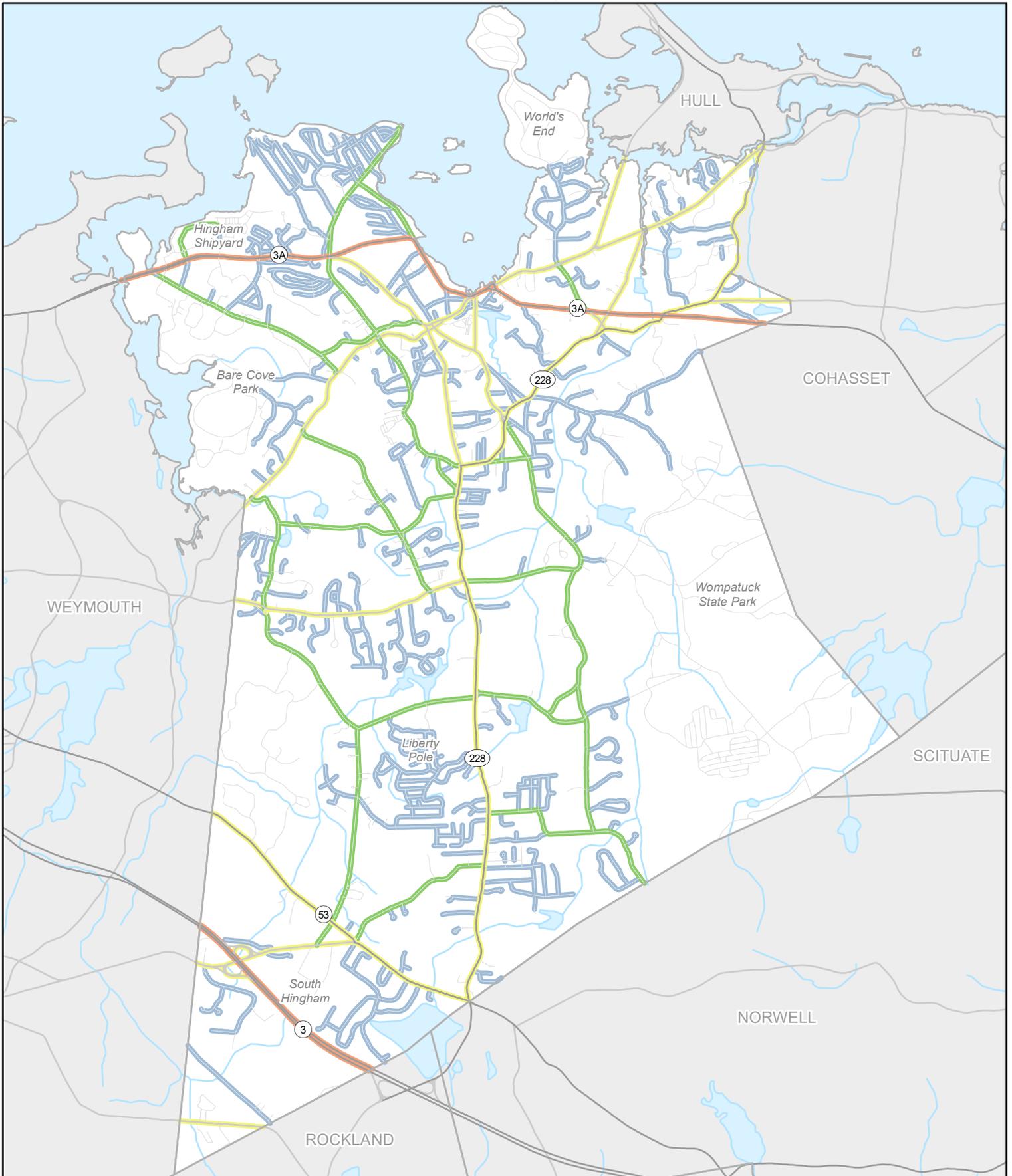
**Map 7.1 Public Transportation Infrastructure**

- Ferry Terminal
- MBTA Bus Stop
- MBTA Commuter Rail Station
- Ferry Route
- MBTA Bus Route 220
- MBTA Bus Route 222
- MBTA Bus Route 714
- MBTA Commuter Rail Line

0 0.5 1 Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS





Map 7.2 Roadway Network and Roadway Functional Class

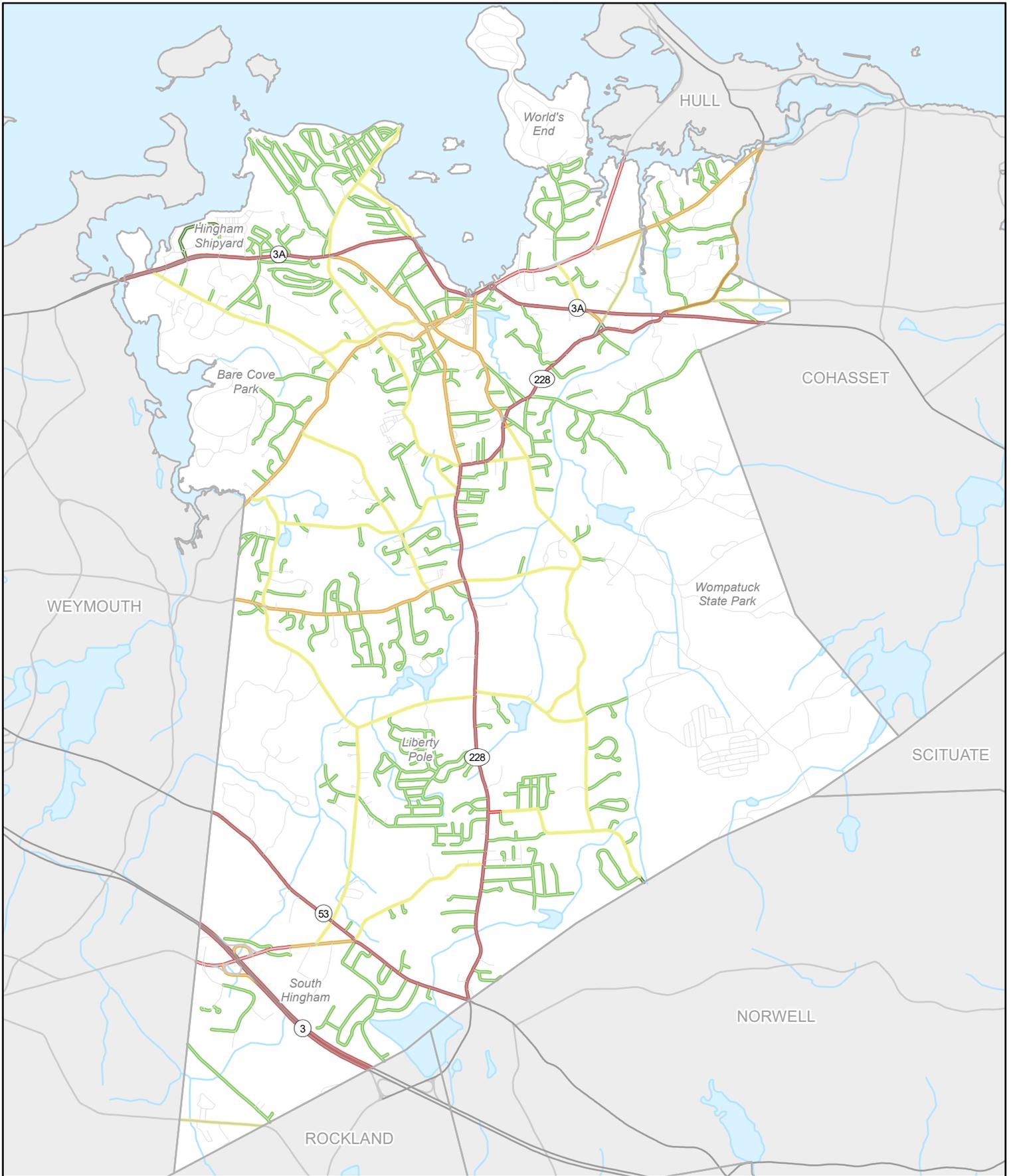
Accepted Roadways, by Federal Functional Class

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Local

0 0.5 1  
Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS

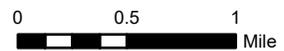




Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

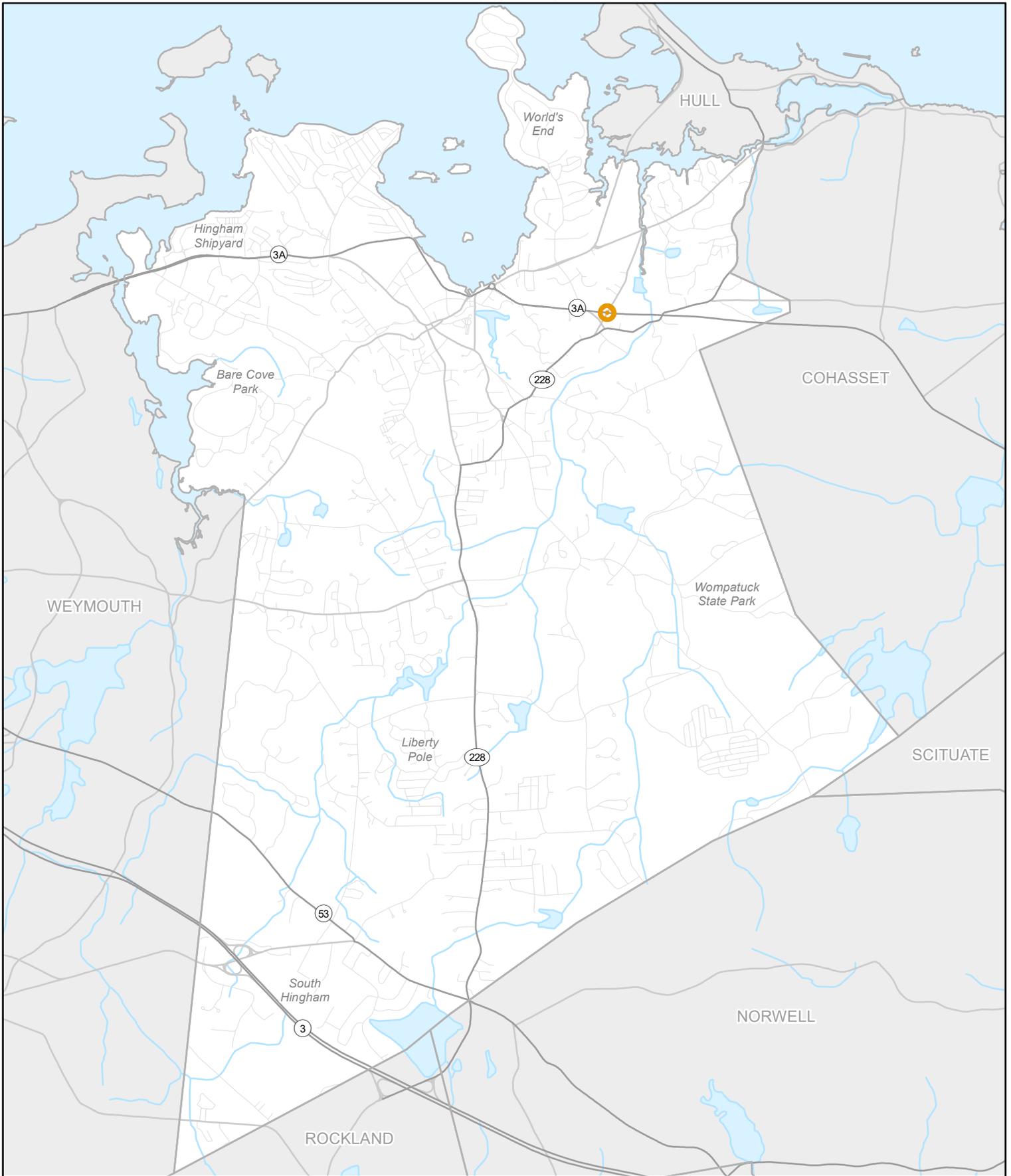
- < 1,000 vehicles
- 1,001 - 1,500 vehicles
- 1,501 - 5,000 vehicles
- 5,001 - 10,000 vehicles
- > 10,001 vehicles

Map 7.3 Average Annual Daily Traffic Volume



Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS





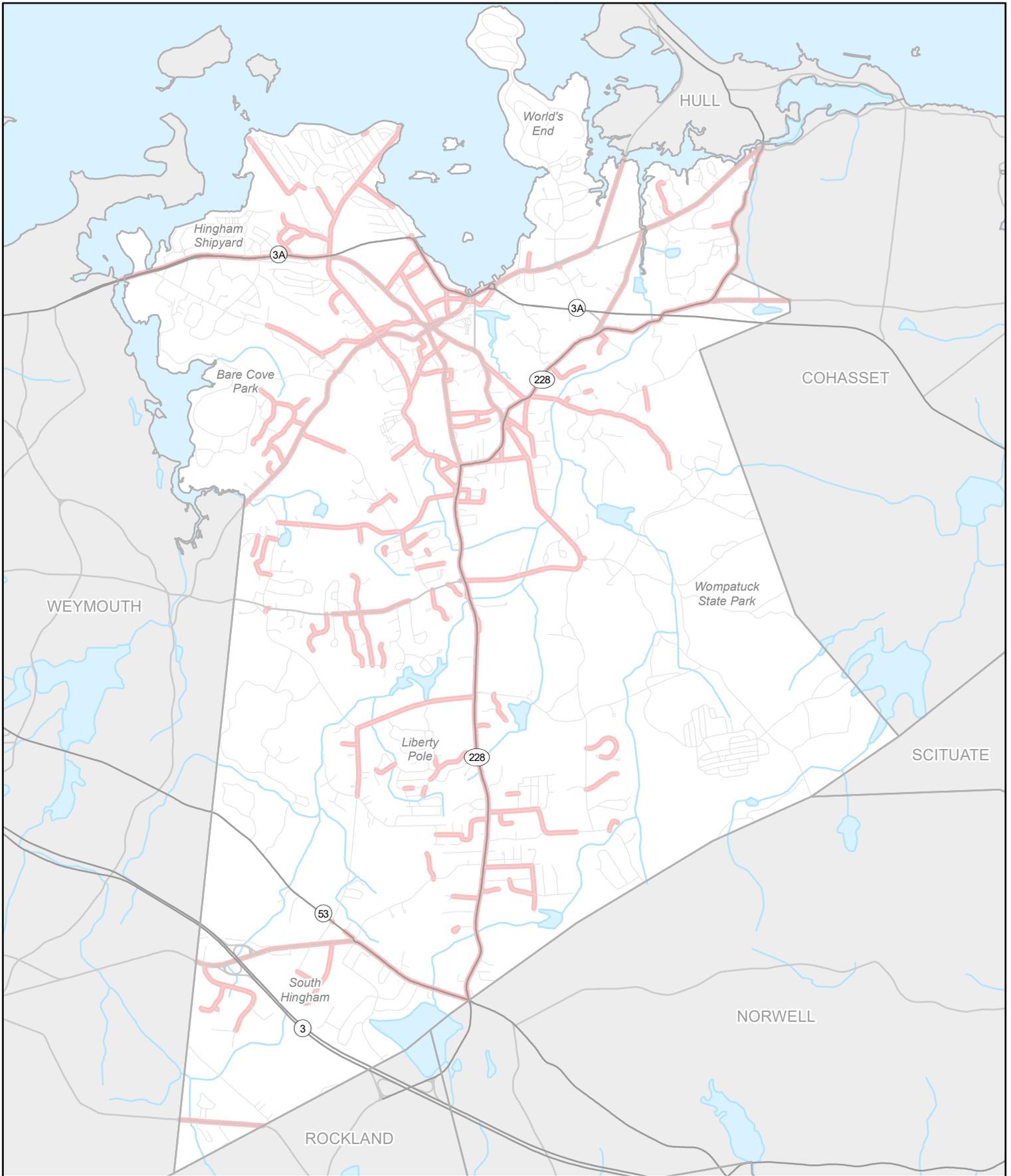
Map 7.4 High Crash Locations

 High Crash Location (1)

0 0.5 1  
Mile

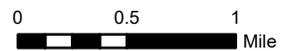
Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information),  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and MassDOT  
Crash Open Data Portal





Map 7.5 Hingham Sidewalk Inventory

Existing Sidewalk



Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS





# Services & Facilities

## Introduction

**Hingham’s public facilities are a critical component of the Town’s identity. They foster a sense of community. Places where the community gathers, like the Town Hall, the Library, the Senior Center, and recreational facilities each contribute to the way residents and officials interact with each other and their environment, but these are not the only municipal institutions that shape the community. Residents take great pride in Hingham’s highly ranked and well-regarded public schools.**

Even utilities like the Weir River Water System and Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant unite the Town because residents have confidence in them. The condition and quality of buildings and services indicate the investment and care that a community commits to public well-being.

Good facilities planning and management and steady investment in public buildings and equipment save money in the long term. Collaboration among Town departments, facilities managers, and staff can extend the life and usefulness of Town property through regular and systematic

maintenance (and catching up on deferred maintenance), and it demonstrates a community’s commitment to meeting the needs of its residents.

Capital planning decisions should be made systematically and the process should be transparent. A Town-wide Facilities Study, approved by Town Meeting in June 2020, is an important step forward for Hingham. The study “will provide the needed information for the Town to set its own priorities.” It will include information about space use options and order-of-magnitude estimates of the cost of these options, and help the Town work toward “a long-term financial plan for establishing long-term priorities.”<sup>1</sup>

As a number of school and municipal programs have space needs, the Town is considering long-term options for new facilities and this will involve significant capital expenditures. The Town-wide Facilities Study can help to identify ways to optimize the use of existing facilities before making new investments.

1 Town Meeting Warrant, Article 14, June 2020.

## Existing Conditions

### Town Hall

Hingham's Town Hall, a former high school and middle school that was converted into a Municipal Complex in 1998, houses Town offices and public meeting spaces, as well as the Police Department, School Department, the Council on Aging, and the Department of Recreation.

Many departments have expanded since 1998, and today they report crowding, a lack of appropriate space, and inadequate room for storage. It will be important to identify ways to reallocate space at the Municipal Complex to provide adequate amounts and types of spaces, and to address each of the departments' needs. The Town owns approximately 20 acres behind the building.

In June 2020, Town Meeting passed an Article to provide funds to renovate the entire IT Department space in Town Hall by expanding the data center and reconfiguring the office space to meet all of the department's infrastructure and other requirements.

The new space will be properly sized and will have sufficient power/grounding, and other security requirements.

### Technology

The Data Center occupies a space (10 ft by 23 ft) on the third floor of Town Hall, but this space is unable to meet the growing demands of the Town's technological equipment and network.<sup>2</sup>

The Data Center connects

sixteen municipal buildings with fiber and handles all the municipal computers as well as the phone systems in the schools. In addition to its spatial inadequacy, the Data Center also lacks a back-up system and fire suppression. The Direc-

tor wants to share data with the other Town data centers at the High School and in the main Fire Station. Currently the Data Center is operated by three full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel, and there are plans for a fourth FTE GIS coordinator position. According to the Director, Town Hall is the ideal location for the Data Center.

There is a plan to computerize all Town records, and to monitor town equipment remotely. In the future there will be a need to expand the Town's data storage capacity in order to archive the increasing numbers of videos. Cameras have been installed at the Transfer Station, DPW, the Library, and the Harbor, and additional cameras are planned for the athletic fields and the exterior of Town Hall. Additionally, the Town is increasing its cybersecurity capabilities in order to protect against ransomware attacks. It is also in the process of replacing the fiber in the sixteen municipal buildings (initially installed by Comcast in 1999) and to expand to the athletic fields, sewer pump stations, and the business areas to provide Wi-Fi access and camera surveillance.

### Public Schools

The School Department's central offices in the Municipal Complex are reportedly inadequate for the Department's functions. Privacy is limited, and there is a need for a variety of spaces, including offices, space for School Committee meetings, and additional room for storage.

The Hingham School Department oversees six school buildings (Table 8.1). The Department is in the process of developing a Schools Master Plan to assess the condition and space needs of all buildings and facilities. However, this effort

<sup>2</sup> In June 2020, Town Meeting passed an Article to provide funds to renovate the entire IT Department space in Town Hall by expanding the data center and reconfiguring the office space to meet all of the department's infrastructure and other requirements. The new space will be properly sized and will have sufficient power/grounding, and other security requirements.

**FACILITIES & SERVICES INVENTORY**

**Table 8.1 Hingham School Buildings**

<b>School</b>	<b>Approx. Size (square feet)</b>	<b>Year Constructed (renovations, additions)</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Hingham High School	218,000	(Addition and complete renovation 2000)	59.5	9-12	In need of upgrades and updates  Science Wing added in 2000; needs new tech, STEAM, etc.  Poor lighting and air quality issues  The campus has a number of athletic fields
Hingham Middle School	176,000	2014	34	6-8	Has capacity for 1020 students
South Elementary School	78,731	1950 (addition and complete renovation: 1999)	28.3	K-5	At enrollment capacity (500 students)
Foster Elementary School	62,600	1951	39.6	K-5	Needs to be rebuilt (currently located in flood zone)  Enrollments are growing at a faster rate in this school due to housing developments at the Shipyard
Plymouth River Elementary School	59,300	1968 (renovation 2008)	49.5	K-5	Existing enrollment is 423 and capacity is approximately 500 students
East School	91,350	2009	12.5	K-5	Also accommodates special education for Pre-school
Building 179	10,262				School Department storage
Building 12	18,000				A TRACES (STEM) program for industrial arts was run by the High School in this building, but had to be vacated as the building's condition deteriorated.
Gate House	4,839				
Bus Garage	23,462				

Source: Hingham School Department

has been on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has required the School Department to focus on more immediate challenges such as school reopening plans.

Most of the Town’s schools are just below or at capacity and can, for the most part, accommodate the relatively small increases in projected enrollments. Plans are underway to rebuild the Foster School outside of the flood zone area. The other schools are able to accommodate the number of students anticipated, but in many cases, do not have the spaces to support more contemporary functions such as special needs, psychological counseling, socio-psychological issues, training for professionals, maker spaces, etc. and will eventually need renovation/addition(s).

The School Department maintains all of its buildings and playgrounds, while the Department of Public Works manages the grounds and cuts the grass at the school properties.

**Historic Enrollment.** Table 8.2 shows student enrollments between 2001 and 2018. The schools saw increased enrollment between 2001 and 2010 as more housing was developed and newcomers were attracted by the school system’s reputation. Enrollments remained fairly steady during the following decade, which is generally consistent with trends throughout Eastern Massachusetts.

**Enrollment Projections.** Table 8.3 indicates that student enrollments are expected to gradually increase, with the greatest growth projected for Grades K-5. This assumes the current pace of residential construction and real estate sales. Based on past patterns, the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) predicts that as new

**Table 8.2 Hingham Public School Student Historical Enrollments (2001-2011)**

School Year	Enrollment	Increase (Decrease)
2001	3,457	57
2002	3,554	97
2003	3,596	42
2004	3,678	82
2005	3,763	85
2006	3,796	33
2007	3,850	54
2008	4,023	173
2009	4,110	87
2010	4,154	44
2011	4,135	(19)
2012	4,202	67
2013	4,237	35
2014	4,292	55
2015	4,327	35
2016	4,317	(10)
2017	4,299	(18)
2018	4,232	(67)

Source: Hingham School Department

families move into Hingham, about 70 percent of the school-age students will enroll in the elementary grades, 20 percent in the middle school grades, and about 10 percent at the high school level.<sup>3</sup> Some new families may have pre-school children and therefore, the full enrollment impact may not occur until the second or third year after they have moved into Town.

There are also 588 Hingham students in grades K-12 currently registered at the five private and parochial schools located in Town: Derby Academy, Notre Dame Academy, St. Paul School,

<sup>3</sup> New England School Development Council (NESDEC), Hingham, MA: *Demography and Enrollment Projections*: August 9, 2018, Revision #2.

**Table 8.3 Hingham Public School Student Enrollments Projections (2019-2028)**

School Year	Enrollment	Increase (Decrease)
2019	4,203	(29)
2020	4,221	18
2021	4,245	24
2022	4,251	6
2023	4,229	(22)
2024	4,223	(6)
2025	4,223	0
2026	4,254	31
2027	4,237	(17)
2028	4,277	40

Old Colony Montessori, and Su Escuela Language Academy. Additionally, there are 15 homeschooled students (2017) and ten in Charter or Magnet schools (2017).

**METCO Program.** Hingham accepts students through the METCO Program, which gives Boston students of color access to predominantly White suburban school districts like Hingham. This voluntary school integration program, established by the legislature in 1965, creates opportunities for students in White suburban school districts to experience the advantages of learning and working in a racially and ethnically diverse setting.

**Department of Elder Services/Senior Center**

The Council on Aging is appointed by the Board of Selectmen and serves in an advisory capacity to the Department of Elder Services. Elder Services provides programs, services, activities and transportation for all residents 60 years of age and older and serves as a resource for information to families, friends and neighbors who care for an older person.

The **Hingham Senior Center** is located in the Municipal Complex. It has approximately 5,000 square feet (sq. ft.) of floor space and includes two classrooms and one multi-purpose room with seating capacity for 60. Senior Center programming often requires space beyond the Senior Center’s spatial and scheduling capacity, so many events take place at the Hingham Public Library or within the Municipal Complex’s other meeting rooms. Senior Center staff report office and storage space problems, and the facility currently does not meet all ADA compliance recommendations.

The Senior Center has three full-time paid professionals, two part-time grant-funded positions, three part-time drivers, and a large number of volunteers. Services provided include door-to-door transportation, outreach, health and wellness clinics, fitness classes, volunteer opportunities, cultural programs, special events and opportunities for learning and for socializing. The Center provides a congregate lunch twice a week and Meals on Wheels to 40 Hingham residents. The Department of Elder Services partners with community agencies to provide services and programming, e.g., South Shore Elder Services, Inc., Hingham Interfaith Food Pantry, and Visiting Nurse Association.

**Transportation.** The Department of Elder Services has two eight-passenger vans and a medical car (three part-time drivers) to bring older adults to medical appointments. The vans take seniors to the grocery store, to the pharmacy, to the Senior Center, to the library, on trips, etc. There is no bus from Linden Ponds to the Senior Center.

Due to Hingham’s senior residential facilities such as Linden Ponds, the Town has the highest percentage of people 65 and over on the South Shore. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of Hingham residents aged 65 and over increased by 55 per-

cent compared to 16 percent statewide. Currently, residents 60 years and older comprise 31 percent of the Town's population and the number of older adults is expected to grow over the next decade. The Department of Elder Services anticipates that as the number of older adults in Hingham increases, many will express a desire to "age in place" and the Town will likely see growth in the need for Town services.<sup>4</sup>

While the number of Hingham seniors has risen dramatically, only about 14 percent of residents 60+ use the Senior Center. Some cite parking and the Senior Center's location as obstacles. There also seems to be a perception that the Senior Center's primary clientele are frail, older, and lower-income elders. Many middle- and upper-income seniors do not attend events or use the Center at all. Many aging "Baby Boomers" do not identify with the term "senior," and some prefer intergenerational experiences. Additionally, Baby Boomers often have different programming preferences than previous generations of older adults. With the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hingham's Senior Center in 2020, this milestone anniversary may be a good time to "re-brand" the facility and assess its programs, services, and outreach.

The Department of Elder Services has a stated goal of achieving "continuous contact with at least 90 percent of Hingham's senior population and active participation by at least 50 percent of Hingham's senior population in one or more programs or services."<sup>5</sup> According to its Strategic Plan and

### Impact of Older Adult Population Growth on Town Services

**Council on Aging/Elder Services:** As the population continues to age, there will be an increased demand for services including programming, transportation, socialization, etc.

**Police Department:** The Police Department has experienced an increase in service calls associated with the aging population. Some of this is linked to large new housing developments in the community, but much of the increase occurs broadly throughout the community. Examples of issues on the upswing include scams targeting seniors, driving concerns involving seniors, and issues resulting from the isolation of some seniors, especially those living alone without children in the area.

**Fire Department:** EMS calls have increased considerably. Some increase in calls relating to older people falling is also noted.

**Town Nurse:** There is an increased demand for public health nursing, services geared toward seniors (e.g., specialized flu clinics, programs offered in collaboration with the Senior Center). Additional issues observed are mental health issues and limitations among some seniors that threaten their ability to stay home safely.

in line with current trends, future goals include providing lifelong learning, fitness and wellness, and technology programs. The Department also wants to pursue a dementia-friendly designation from AARP<sup>6</sup> and a Memory Café for those with Alzheimer's disease and their caretakers.

In 2018, the Baker-Polito Administration recognized "age-friendly" best practices as part of the

4 UMass Boston, Center for Social and Demographic Research in Aging Gerontology Institute. *Aging in Hingham. A Community Affair*. February 2013, p. 51.

5 From Town of Hingham, Department Elder Services: *Strategic Plan* July 1, 2015-June 30,2020.

6 Originally known as the American Association of Retired Persons, AARP today simply goes by its acronym.

Community Compact Initiative, a program of incentives for cities and towns. Age-friendly communities are accessible, equitable, inclusive, safe, and supportive. Age-friendly communities place a focus on creating a social and physical environment that supports all ages and abilities. The Hingham Senior Center and Department of Elder Services hope to achieve the Age-Friendly Community designation.

**Hingham Public Library**

The Library was originally built in 1966 and renovated and expanded in 2001, including a connection to the former Town Hall to create a total floor area of approximately 40,000 sq. ft. The “bridge” connecting the two buildings includes an art gallery with exhibits that change monthly. The Library holds more than 343,000 physical and digital items including books, magazines, DVDs, compact discs, eBooks, and other materials, and some of the Town’s historical collections. It also houses extensive print and electronic reference resources. It is one of 29 member libraries in the South Shore’s Old Colony Library Network. Over 100 people volunteered a combined total of more than 5,000 hours at the Library in 2018.

More than half of Hingham’s residents hold library cards (12,343), placing it statistically well above national and state averages (Table 8.4).



About 1,000 people visit the Library each day.<sup>7</sup> While circulation numbers have remained relatively stable, staff report that demand for programming has increased significantly. Some of the Library’s most active users include people working from home, parents with small children, students, and older adults who come from Linden Ponds on a bus twice a week.

In keeping with national trends, the Library hopes to become more of a community center with programming for all ages, appropriate spaces for children, technology and a café space (it currently has a small vending area on the second floor).<sup>8</sup> From the vending area, patrons enjoy views of the library’s landscaped outdoor courtyard (maintained by the Hingham Garden Club), and they can enjoy the outdoor space’s seating and water feature in pleasant weather.

While the Library complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it does not adequately support existing functions and cannot provide the appropriate types and sizes of spaces to accommodate future plans. Library staff say that often, all the seats in the Library are taken, especially after school. Structural walls in the former

**Table 8.4 Library Usage 2013-2018**

Year	# of adults attending library programs	# of children attending children’s programs	Total # of visits
2018	20,351	12,000	252,216

7 Hingham Public Library, *Needs Statement. Proposal for Building Addition.*

8 The Library also offers a significant number of off-site programs including monthly programs at Linden Ponds for older adults (tech help, lectures, etc.); Senior Center (technology petting zoo); Arts Walk – children’s activities; Farmer’s Market; Children’s Librarian program at pre-school; Teen Librarian program at the high school.

Town Hall building obstruct sight lines and create safety and security concerns for staff, particularly in the Children's Room. Tutoring services take place at a local bank instead of the library because of a lack of space. Additionally, there are not enough quiet spaces and no collaboration spaces.

The Library provides opportunities for lifelong learning, but it cannot meet demand for additional programming and cultural offerings such as lectures and performances. Its two meeting rooms (90 and 22 seats respectively) are not large enough, and their availability is very limited. There is one computer training room and 17 dedicated Internet workstations. The facility also has limited parking (99 spaces).

To address these needs, the Library completed an extensive study of library needs and found the present location is ideal due to its central location and proximity to the high school. The Library Director has developed a proposal and long-range plan to redesign and expand the facility, based on input from staff, the Library trustees, and Hingham residents.<sup>9</sup>

### Recreation

The Recreation Center, also located in the Municipal Complex, includes a gymnasium, game room, two studios, and the Fitness Center. The Recreation Center operates seven days a week and for more than a 100 hours per week. The outdoor facilities include a playground, street hockey rink, tennis, basketball and volleyball courts, and soccer and baseball fields. Insufficient parking has been a concern, but there may be an opportunity to add parking to nearby Haley Field with a

walkway between the parking lot and the Town Hall complex.

In addition to overseeing the Recreation Center, the Recreation Department manages the newly renovated Rec Barn behind Town Hall at 341 Main Street. The Rec Barn offers public restrooms and a new multi-purpose program room that houses the Department's summer camp program, dance school, and a variety of adult fitness classes. (See Chapter 4 for more information about the Recreation Department's programs, services, and facilities.)

### South Shore Regional Emergency Communications Center

Hingham, Hull, Norwell, and Cohasset belong to a regional dispatch center. The South Shore Regional Emergency Communications Center (SSRECC) is responsible for all public safety communications and dispatch for the four participating towns. It is funded through assessments to each town based on population and calls for service. Hingham Police and Fire are responsible for approximately 47 percent of the costs. Established under a special act of the legislature in 2010,<sup>10</sup> the SSRECC occupies a space on the second floor of the Hingham Municipal Complex. Like other uses in this facility, the SSRECC needs more space.

Approximately 20 employees staff the SSRECC year-round. The facility pays rent and purchases some payroll services from the Town, but its employees are not considered employees of the Town of Hingham. The Center has the capacity to handle two additional towns, but it would require an additional six to eight employees. One of the significant benefits of this arrangement

<sup>9</sup> Hingham Public Library, *Long Range Plan 2016-2020*.

<sup>10</sup> Chapter 156 of the Acts of 2010.

**Table 8.5 Hingham Fire Department- Calls for Service: 2015-2019**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Total Calls	4333	4372	4389	4433	4616
EMS Calls	1883	2018	1952	2375	2810
Ambulance Transports	1726	1846	1766	2025	1980
Linden Ponds	172	238	246	669	590
Gave Mutual Aid	353	314	257	363	320
Received Mutual Aid	80	110	127	109	80

*Source: Hingham Fire Department*

has been over \$10 million in state funding over the last 8 years, but there needs to be some clarity about ownership and maintenance of the dispatch equipment.

The State aims to continue to regionalize dispatch centers by using grant funds to help incentivize towns to join regional centers. Massachusetts residents pay a monthly surcharge on E911 (Enhanced 911, which provides the operator with the caller’s location) services for each mobile or landline, and telephone providers collect the fees in order to fund these grants. It is expected that the funding will be supported for the next ten years. As of January 1, 2019, users pay \$1.50 monthly, and in 2024, this charge will drop to \$1.00 monthly. At this time the State is not offering grants for capital expenditures to replace aging infrastructure.

**Fire Department**

Hingham has three fire stations, all built in the 1940s, and all in need of significant upgrades. Central Station (#1), the Fire Department’s Headquarters, was renovated and expanded most recently. North Station (#2) is the primary station, serving northwestern Hingham, including the Shipyard area, the commuter boat terminal, Hingham Square, portions of several historic districts,

and a railroad tunnel. Both North and South (#3) Stations are aging structures, and they lack adequate space to accommodate modern fire equipment, as well as facilities designed to accommodate both male female and male firefighters.

The Asset Review Committee and the Fire Station Building Committee have recommended a three-part modernization of the fire stations, beginning with North Station. This would be followed by construction of a new station in the Cushing, Whiting, and Derby Streets area, and the renovation of the existing South Station. The Fire Department currently has 57 full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel working out of the three stations.

Central Station (#1) (Department Headquarters) underwent a major renovation in 2007 and 2008. It has outstanding facility issues that need attention, including problems with the heating system, a leaking roof, and an aging boiler. North Stations (#2) & South Station (#3) have received relatively few upgrades. These stations need living use upgrades, including bathrooms and kitchen. The stations lack sprinkler systems. In addition, the bays are too tight, there is not enough storage, and there is no training or workout space. Multiple studies have recommended replacing the stations or conducting major renovations of them.

About 2 percent of the Department’s budget is spent on firefighting; the rest for fire prevention and increasingly, medical calls, as is the case in most towns. The Department plans to expand public education with the schools and wants to provide mobile integrated health care, more preventive medicine, and to expand home safety visits program with the Board of Health.

**Calls for Service.** Table 8.5 illustrates the increase in calls for service between 2015 and 2019. Call volume will continue to climb as Hingham’s population ages because older adults are most likely to need the Department’s medical services, including ambulance transport and emergency medical services. Of the Fire Department 4,800 calls per year, 70 percent are EMS transports and approximately 2,000 are medical calls. The Department has two full-time paramedics.

Currently, the Fire Department cannot meet the industry standard of a four-minute response time to the Industrial Park and sometimes to Linden Ponds. Response times in South Hingham are even longer (up to seven minutes) than in the rest of Hingham. Plans for additional development in South Hingham may necessitate station relocation in order to minimize response times, or if growth continues at the current rate, the Town may need a fourth station.

**Police Department**

The Police Department’s space in the Municipal Complex is too small and not conducive to supporting police work. There is limited space for private interviews with reporting parties, and no training space or dedicated gym space. The locker room is inadequate for current size of the department. (There are not enough lockers or space.) In addition, the facilities were not designed to accommodate both female and male officers.

**Table 8.6 Police Department: Calls for Service: 2011-2019**

Year	Number of Calls for Service
2011	18,117
2012	18,927
2013	20,854
2014	20,527
2015	24,374
2016	23,857
2017	20,796
2018	22,582
2019	26,031

*Source: Hingham Police Department*

The Police Department does not have enough storage space or holding facility for confiscated items. Additional equipment is needed to bring the evidence room into compliance, too. Furthermore, parking in the Municipal Complex is so limited they reportedly cannot have meetings at the police station during the day due to a lack of parking space.

The Police Department employs 53 officers. The Police Chief anticipates needing 60 officers in the future to meet demand for services, especially policing large events such as Christmas in the Square and other community activities, road construction projects, and others. Many of the calls for service have become more complex (e.g. mental health, drugs, technology, fraud), requiring more of an officer’s time per call. An additional officer may be required to meet the needs of the Town’s growing population of older adults and people with special needs, too.

Calls for service have increased over the last decade (see Table 8.6). Recent developments at the Shipyard, and in South Hingham along the Route 53 and Derby Street corridors have seen higher

call volume to the Police Department, in part because of greater incidence of traffic accidents and shoplifting.

The majority of calls to the Police Department involve traffic violations. The Traffic Division, the primary purpose of which is traffic enforcement, has identified high accident locations and is in the process of working with the state to make improvements along on the Route 3A Corridor, including the Bathing Beach area, Rotary, and Summer Street. (See also, Chapter 7)

A new Public Safety Facility will house the Police Department Headquarters and a satellite station of the Fire Department, replacing the current North Fire Station. The proposed location for the new Public Safety Complex is 335 Lincoln Street. The Fire Department Headquarters will remain at 339 Main Street and the regional dispatch (SS-RECC) will remain at Town Hall. A Public Safety Facility Building Committee has been established, and in November 2020, a Special Town Meeting approved both the purchase of 335 Lincoln Street.

The Police Department has taken a regional approach to opioid addiction and mental health issues by helping to develop the Plymouth County Outreach and Hub Initiative, comprised of 27 communities. From 2017 to 2019, Hingham has had three fatal opioid overdoses, 25 non-fatal opioid overdoses and eight opioid at-risk referrals.

The **Office of the Harbormaster** is the Hingham Police Department's marine division. It oversees public safety in the Town's waterways and the protection of waterway resources. Under the supervision of the Chief of Police, the Harbormaster enforces laws, regulations, and policies governing navigable waters, islands, and shorefronts

of the town; protects the harbor environment, life and property; manages the shorefront, islands, and departmental properties; implements the Town's Shellfish Management Plan, protects and develops shellfish areas, and monitors the harvesting shellfish.

The Harbormaster's facilities include:

- Public waste pump-out facility shoreside
- One town public tie-up in the inner harbor
- Town pier and inner harbor dingy dock
- One shed used by employees
- Five islands are within the Harbormaster's jurisdiction, one with 2 camp sites
- Town-owned vessels and vehicles, including:
  - Three vessels
  - Two vehicles
  - Two trailers
  - Small gator utility vehicle
- Numerous small pumps, generators and other rescue equipment

The Office of the Harbormaster is located in the shipyard at the Foss Intermodal building where it rents a small office from the MBTA. This location is important for the Office of the Harbormaster as it provides easy access to the boats and waterfront. The Harbormaster also uses a small storage bay within the school department's bus depot, but this facility is not equipped for repairs or boat storage. A large designated indoor repair facility would enable maintenance and repair work, and could reduce the need for out-of-town repairs in marine shops. On-site or in-town repair capabilities would benefit the Town's emergency preparedness by expediting the repair process, and they could also reduce transportation costs and allow boats to weather the winter indoors without being subject to the harsh winter weather.

Designated slips for two vessels in the shipyard are more desirable than leasing slips each year. Placing the slips adjacent to each other closer to the Harbormaster's Office at 28 Shipyard Drive will make them more accessible from the office and decrease response time when responding to a call from land and coordinating maritime efforts. Discussions with the Harbormaster's Office for this Master Plan suggest that a small boat with a shallow draft would also represent a valuable addition to the fleet by meeting the occasional need for shallow-water and low-clearance access at the bridge at George Washington Boulevard.

In order to dock or moor a boat in Hingham's waterways, boaters must first apply for a permit from the Harbormaster. Each year, the Harbormaster issues approximately 1,500 permits to boaters and assigns each vessel a slip or mooring. There are 600 slips and five engineered mooring fields, each optimized to maximize mooring capacity while taking into consideration mooring desirability, vessel specifications, and environmental concerns. The Harbormaster periodically updates the Mooring Plans and Mooring Regulations.

The boat ramp is in disrepair and needs to be replaced. The Department's request to the Public Access Board to replace the boat ramp has been on a waiting list for over ten years and it is expected to come to fruition in the next few years.

The Harbormaster's role in the community continues to grow. The public and private sailing and rowing programs begin their operations before the start of Boating Season (May 1-October 1) and conclude after the Season ends, requiring the Harbormaster to fill more patrols. World's End Mooring Area has upwards of 600 transient boats visiting over a summer weekend. The Har-

bormaster's jurisdiction includes the largest ferry terminal feeding Boston harbor with over 5,000 people transiting during peak times. Law enforcement activities and investigations continue to increase. An extensive coastal video system was installed with federal port security funds and is maintained by the Harbormaster. In addition to its obvious homeland security benefits, this system provides law enforcement and coastal monitoring benefits. Shellfish duties have been minimal since 2012 and have not been budgeted as the Town's shellfish, as well as the large Boston harbor resource struggles to recover from a disease causing the population to die before reaching harvestable size. The Harbormaster anticipates these activities will resume in the coming years and require budgeting increases for staff.

The Harbormaster also oversees maintenance dredging every ten years and coordinates funding and grant applications. The Harbormaster is a routine recipient of federal Homeland Security and other environmental improvement grants.

**Animal Control.** Hingham employs a full-time Animal Control Officer (ACO) responsible for public safety and enforcing regulations in cases involving animals, including those that are sick, injured, or deceased. A division of the Police Department, Animal Control currently shares space in the police station with two other officers and a mental health counselor. As both the ACO and Animal Inspector for the Town, the Animal Control Division responds to over 700 calls annually. The Department keeps files of animal bite quarantines, kennel and barn inspections, and other animal-related reports. With only one filing cabinet in the office for Animal Control use, there is not enough storage space and as a result, other paperwork and equipment are the ACO's truck or in other storage.



The Animal Control Division wants a dedicated office and a small holding facility or attached room to an office that can be made into a small kennel area for holding animals until the owner is found or the animal is transferred to a shelter or rescue for adoption. The ACOs in Hingham, Hull, Cohasset, and Norwell have expressed interest in having a small, regionalized holding facility, with each town contributing to the cost of operating it. Together, the ACOs in these towns pick up between 5-15 stray dogs a month, and occasionally other stray animals as well. Most animals are returned to their homes, but locating a pet's owner can take from one hour to two days, and sometimes longer. Currently, they rely on local boarding facilities that are not always able to accommodate the Department's needs.

Since the ACO removes deceased animals that would be considered a hazard to drivers or citizens and children, the Department needs access to a large freezer chest and a proper incinerator for appropriate holding and disposal. The ACOs in Hingham, Weymouth, Braintree, Norwell, Cohasset, Hull, and Rockland have all expressed an interest in a regional incinerator. Regionalization of the incinerator and boarding facilities could provide a future source of income to the host community because other towns would be expected to pay a monthly or a yearly fee.

### Department of Public Works

Hingham's Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for maintaining over 1,000 acres of open and recreational space, from baseball fields and tennis courts, to municipal grounds, to parks and traffic islands, as well as 10,000 shade trees, more than 130 miles of public roadways, 60 miles of sidewalks, the Town's Recycling and Trash Transfer Facility, and public drainage systems. The DPW mows and maintains athletic and recreational fields, Town grounds (including the Municipal Complex and Library) and playgrounds, and 110 parks and traffic islands. It is responsible for snow and ice control on the Town's public roadways, sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots, as well as on some of the 20 miles of private roadways. The DPW is also responsible for sea wall reinforcements. A study is currently underway to identify where and in which order these reinforcements will need to be made.

The DPW is involved in the EPA's Storm Water Phase II Rule, which regulates the discharge of storm water into the waterways. In addition, the Department developed a Stormwater Management Plan in June 2019. Approximately 75 percent of the catch basins have been mapped.

The Town constructed a new building for the DPW in 2010. The building reportedly has plenty of office space (two floors) and equipment storage and garage and maintenance space for 50-60 vehicles and pieces of equipment. Off-season equipment is stored in the former DPW facility,



which is unheated and needs roof work. Approximately twenty pieces of DPW equipment need updating. Due to budgetary constraints, the DPW vehicle replacement schedule was changed from every eight years to every ten years, which is less than ideal.

The Department has recently instituted a customer service tracking software for residents to request attention to public works-related matters.

**Highway Division.** The Highway Division has developed a Pavement Management Five-Year Plan and a Sidewalk Improvement Plan. Additional development is increasing pressure on most of the older sidewalks and triggers the need to comply with ADA and to widen sidewalks from 4 ft. to 5 ft. Reportedly there are many areas in Town that are lacking sidewalks.

**Transfer Station.** The Town's Recycling Area and Trash Transfer Facility is open to Hingham residents and some small businesses by annual permit. The Town does not provide curbside collection service (although many residents use private trash services). Residents enjoy a free permit sticker for their first vehicle (with subsequent stickers at \$25 each) and commercial fees vary more widely. Some large items or hazardous materials incur additional charges or require additional precautions for disposal. Bagged household trash costs the Town \$100 per ton for processing, and recycling is mandatory.

The amount of all materials processed at the Station is increasing, as is the cost of recycling. The

Town must now pay for all recycling except for cardboard and market-rate costs are rising. A relatively small SWAP Shop station helps to reduce waste of reusable materials by allowing residents to "rehome" items in good condition. Some items, such as mattresses, upholstered furniture, and computers are prohibited, and the volunteer staff may refuse items on a case-by-case basis. This station is located out of the Transfer Station's vehicular traffic pattern and has approximately 20 parking spaces. Volunteers enforce the station's rules, including a 10-minute time limit and use restrictions, and they often confront problems trying to do so, e.g., when residents push back on the time limit or when local contractors try to use the facility for free.

The former landfill is closed, and the trash building has been converted into a bailing facility for recycling materials. This saves money because the Town can bail materials, which is especially useful now given the recent Chinese ban on waste-paper and requirements that materials be clean.

### Sewer Service

The Hingham Sewer Commission provides sewer service to two sewer districts: approximately 2,500 residences or businesses in the North Sewer District (NSD) and 275 residences and/or businesses in the Weir River Sewer District (WRSD). The Sewer Department (a division of the DPW) currently maintains about 30 miles of sewer pipe and thirteen pump stations. These two districts are distinctively different based on geographical location and discharge points. Approximately 40 percent of the Town is on public sewer in these districts; both located in the northern part of Hingham.

The **North Hingham Sewer District**, created in 1956, serves approximately 2,500 residential and business customers. Of the seventeen sewer pumping

stations in the North Hingham Sewer District, the Sewer Department owns and maintains thirteen (the others are privately owned). The flow from the sewer stations and connections flows directly to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's (MWRA) Stoddard's Neck Sewer Pump Station in Weymouth, which has a capacity of approximately 6.1 MGD. The actual peak usage for this District has been approximately 5.8 MGD.

The **Weir River Sewer District** provides service to approximately 275 customers in the West Corner section of Town. The flow from this district, combined with the flow from about 300 houses in Cohasset, goes to the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Hull. The Hingham-Hull Inter-Municipal agreement ends in 2028, but it is anticipated to be re-negotiated before then. At present, there is no additional capacity available in the Weir River Sewer District. One possible option to increase capacity is to develop an inter-municipal agreement with Cohasset. The rest of Hingham relies on individual septic systems.

The Sewer Commission has a 5-year capital replacement plan for sewer infrastructure, including facilities and equipment. The Sewer Commission is also working on reducing Infiltration and Inflow (unwanted water flowing or pumped into the sewer system, abbreviated as I/I). Additionally, six to eight sewer pumping stations have been identified as vulnerable to sea level rise and will need to be addressed by 2030.<sup>11</sup> More immediate needs include replacing the 60-year-old Lincoln Street force main to help increase flow capacity. Installing Variable Frequency Drives (VFD's) can also increase capacity by keeping pumps running and maintaining flow at an even pace, thus using less power and lowering the peak daily flow.

There is interest in creating a South Hingham Sewer District. Today, there is neither the infrastructure in the ground nor existing sewer treatment facilities to serve this part of Hingham. A MassDevelopment/Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) utility study to explore regional solutions along Route 3 was underway during this Master Plan process, with expected completion set for Spring 2021.

### **Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant**

The Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant Operations Center is at 31 Bare Cove Park Drive in a new building (2016). The capacity is expected to be sufficient for the next 20 years, given the current growth trends. However, looking further ahead, the Lighting Plant will need additional capacity due to a number of plans and trends including the following: 1) the State's carbon reduction plan, 2) the Town's stated but not yet enacted goal to be carbon free by 2050, and 3) the trend moving toward more electric cars and buses.

In recognition of these trends, the Lighting Plant is planning to add another transmission line and sub-station to act as both another back up for improved Lighting Plant reliability and as additional capacity as demand grows. Currently, both of the two transmission lines are on the same structures, which makes repairs difficult during storms and residents vulnerable to extended and widespread power outages in the event of structural failure. The Lighting Plant is currently working with a team of lawyers, engineers, consultants, and Eversource to add the third transmission line. Between permitting and construction, this project will likely take between 3 and 5 years to complete.

11 Kleinfelder, *Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study*, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015.

## Issues and Opportunities

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### ISSUES

- Further development is planned in South Hingham; however there is inadequate water supply and no public sewer to support additional growth. A plan for such expansion needs to be developed. Possibilities to consider include creating a South Hingham Sewer District or constructing a Treatment Plant. A MassDevelopment utility study that explores regional solutions is underway.
- A Municipal Vulnerability Study determined that by 2030 a number of municipal infrastructure assets will be underwater due to sea level rise and associated flooding. These, which include the Foster School and a number of sewer pump stations will need to be relocated. Protecting municipal facilities as well as private property from sea level rise will increasingly need to be a priority.
- While the schools for the most part can accommodate the slight increase projected in student enrollment, they will need some deferred maintenance, updating of types of spaces to accommodate more contemporary pedagogical practices (e.g. STEM, maker spaces, etc.), as well as the need to support special needs, student counseling, and professional training. Need is most pressing in the Foster School.
- The Library is utilized by a large number of residents and the demand for programming has been increasing. The current amount and type of space limits the ability of the Library to offer additional and different kinds of programs. Parking is also an issue.
- Hingham has an increasing senior population, but Senior Center is unable to accommodate even the current level of attendance that reportedly serves only 14 percent of

the older adult residents. There seem to be a number of reasons for the lack of usage of this facility on the part of many of Hingham's senior residents, including the fact that the parking is limited and the perception that the Center is oriented towards "frail, older and lower income elders." There seems to be a need for re-branding in a larger expanded and updated facility. This could be a shared building with the community at large (e.g. Community Center) or a dedicated Senior Center.

- Public Safety facilities are in need of updating and expansion. Additionally, as the number of older adult residents increase, so do the number of calls for public safety service (police, fire and EMS). The Fire Stations are all in need of replacement and/or renovation and the Police Station is inadequate both in terms of size as well as layout. The proposed new Public Safety Complex will address the needs of the Police Department and of one of the three Fire Stations. The remaining two fire stations will need facility upgrades.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Some of the municipal office functions housed in the Town Hall complex need more and different types of spaces. Some departments may need to be relocated. The Police Department plans to move to a proposed new Public Safety Complex, thus freeing up the space it currently occupies.
- In addition to increasing its cybersecurity capabilities in order to protect against ransomware attacks and replacing the fiber in its sixteen municipal buildings, the Town should also investigate best practices in preparing

## Policies and Recommendations

municipal facilities and networks for 5G technology. The town should monitor guidance from the FCC and recommendations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on possible health issues of deployment of 5G, the implications regarding maintenance and monitoring of critical infrastructure, public safety, communications, education, etc. and what decisions and investments are necessary for Hingham to take advantage of the technology when it becomes available.

- In June 2020, Town Meeting passed funding for a Townwide Facilities Study. The study will provide an analysis of the current utilization of 31 town-owned buildings, list potential solutions for space optimization, and provide order-of-magnitude estimates for these options. As there seems to be a need to formalize and to further professionalize preventive maintenance and the management of town-owned facilities, the Town may take additional measures including hiring a full-time Facilities Manager, establishing and working with a Permanent Building and Facilities Management Study Committee to develop criteria and a systematic approach for prioritizing capital expenditures, and conducting a fiscal impact analysis to determine the impact of growth on facilities and services.

**Policy 6.1: Achieve and deliver excellence in education and state-of-the-art school facilities.**

**Recommendations:**

- Continue to make the replacement of the current Foster School a top priority.
- Encourage robust participation in the School Committee's strategic planning process to fund excellent educational programs and update school buildings.

**Policy 1.6: Value diversity and inclusiveness in our community.**

**Recommendations:**

- Support the Town's 50+ year commitment to welcoming METCO students and families in the Hingham Public Schools.
- Actively recruit and hire underrepresented populations to enhance diversity of Town employees and volunteers.
- Establish a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

**Policy 7.3: Provide adequate spaces to support municipal facilities in their missions.**

**Recommendations:**

- Support the Fire Department's plans to renovate and modernize aging fire stations.
- As part of the Senior Center Study, consider creating an intergenerational Community Center for all ages, following models on other towns to create efficiencies, address multiple department and community needs, trigger additional funding sources, and create a more vibrant and widely utilized facility.

- Evaluate space freed up by the relocation of the Police Department to the new Public Safety Complex to support expansion of other departments located in Town Hall.

**Policy 6.2: Provide facilities and services that support older adults to age in the community.**

**Recommendations:**

- Support Town Departments to work together to coordinate programming in order to meet the needs of older adults (e.g., Recreation Department, Library, Schools, etc. to provide opportunities for recreation, lifelong learning, socializing, fitness and wellness, etc.).
- Support Town Departments (Fire, Police, EMS, Town Nurse) as they experience an increase in calls for service from older adults as our population ages.

**Policy 6.3: Provide a range of opportunities for cultural, recreational, leisure, and social activities for all ages and abilities.**

**Recommendations:**

- Once the Athletic Fields Study is approved and finalized, evaluate the recommended additional recreational opportunities / facilities.
- Maintain existing recreational facilities, and undertake a plan for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance at all playgrounds.
- Provide new parks and playgrounds in underserved and more densely populated neighborhoods as needed or requested.
- Create a Community Calendar by centralizing information regarding existing offerings, activities, and facilities from various

Town Departments (including Recreation, the Library, Council on Aging, Community Center).

**Policy 7.1: Conduct long-range capital planning and service delivery with the foresight to anticipate and address future needs.**

**Recommendations:**

- Establish a process for long-term capital planning and investigate the establishment of a Permanent Building and Facilities Management Study Committee to explore alternative approaches to prioritize and manage capital improvement projects.
- Use the recently funded Town-wide Facilities Study, once it is completed, to help set priorities. Develop criteria for capital expenditure priority setting.
- Utilize technology, including Geographic Information Systems, to support long-range planning efforts. Also, increase cybersecurity capabilities in order to protect against ransomware attacks, replace the fiber in the 16 municipal buildings, and investigate best practices for deploying 5G technology.
- Retain ownership of town-owned properties to help fill any anticipated future facility needs.

**Policy 7.2: Explore opportunities for instituting planned preventive maintenance (PPM), with prudent and transparent budgeting that considers future maintenance and replacement costs.**

**Recommendations:**

- Consider hiring a Facilities Manager.
- Develop a preventive maintenance strategy

for Town buildings and other major facilities, and carry out regular and scheduled maintenance that is cost-saving in the long-run.

- Clarify maintenance responsibilities for town-owned facilities and properties.

**Policy 6.4: Support the health and wellness of the most vulnerable residents in Hingham.**

**Recommendations:**

- Explore an opt-in home safety visitation program to regularly check in on the elderly, the homebound, and other vulnerable populations, with the goal of avoiding preventable accidents and health problems. Promote the opportunity for such as service through all channels (the Senior Center, Community Center, Library, etc.) and identify resources to keep each resident healthy and safe and develop a systematic way to identify participants.
- Evaluate capacity of the Dept. of Health/ Board of Health to address current and future public health issues such as mental health, immunization, domestic abuse, food access, communicable disease surveillance, and drug, alcohol, and tobacco control, and overall community communications and monitoring.
- Conduct a community needs assessment to identify gaps in health and social services for current and future residents as certain groups are more susceptible to health issues than others and should get particular attention from the Health Department. This includes seniors, residents with disabilities, and lower-income families and individuals.
- Explore the regulatory landscape, financial implications, and need for a community paramedicine program. Paramedics and EMTs may be deployed to conduct preventive care to vulnerable residents to reduce preventable accidents and trips to the hospital. Such programs are in their early phases, and Hingham should monitor their legal status and success in Massachusetts.

**Policy 6.5: Monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and plan for future public health events that may impact the Town's ability to deliver services.**

**Recommendations:**

- Learn from COVID-19 hotspots in Hingham, such as assisted living facilities and nursing homes, and be prepared to help deploy more frequent testing to these vulnerable populations in the event of future outbreaks.
- Seek input and recommendations from BOH and Health Officer on how the Town can be better prepared in the future. Identify where the Town was successful in delivering services and functions and where gaps existed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be more prepared to store personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, in quantities not only large enough to serve Town staff but also vulnerable populations.
- Begin talking with neighboring communities and state and regional partners about roles and collaboration necessary for better future responses. Establish a clear chain of command, so the Town knows when to rely on the State and where it needs to increase local resources to handle things internally.

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**Policy 7.4: Increase wastewater treatment capacity.**

**Recommendations:**

- Explore public or private alternative wastewater treatment solutions, especially in order to accommodate and support development in South Hingham.
- Continue to replace aging pipes and address infiltration and inflow issues.

**Policy 7.6: Lead in the regionalization of services on the South Shore when it is in the Town's interests to do so.**

**Recommendations:**

- Enlist regional partners and the State to participate in the planning, funding and implementation of interventions to address sea level rise.



# Economic Development

## Introduction

The economic conditions in a town are largely driven by the wealth of its households and the value of its homes, the size and structure of its commercial and industrial base, and the uses allowed on its land. The local economy operates within a larger regional marketplace of cities and towns connected by pools of workers and consumers and clusters of industries. Economic regions are usually defined by similar physical characteristics, utility connections, and transportation infrastructure and services.

The term “economic development” is often thought of as developing commercial or industrial property to expand the tax base, and certainly, a town’s fiscal capacity matters to economic planners and policy makers. Economic development is also about creating economic opportunities and improving the population’s quality of life by attracting, supporting, and retaining business activity. The economic development resources available to local governments include infrastructure and utilities, regulatory reform, zoning accommodation, funding (such as tax incentives), and leadership and qualified personnel. Towns that want to build and support a vibrant local economy embrace practices that make economic growth more attractive while always keeping the community’s fundamental character objectives in view.

In the 20 years since Hingham finished the last master plan, the number of employers in Hingham increased 22 percent and total employment, 43 percent. These changes occurred because of significant commercial investment, much of it happening only a few years after the Planning Board finished the 2001 Master Plan. Just as major new development opportunities were anticipated at the time, Hingham foresees new, transformative opportunities in the coming years, mainly in the far northern end of Hingham and in South Hingham. At the same time, the Town faces new challenges, not only in South Hingham but also in Hingham’s established retail centers.

COVID-19 became a public health emergency in March 2020 and brought new problems for government, businesses, and institutions. It changed the way people live and work; it changed the evolution of

the planning process for this Plan. While the pandemic will not determine Hingham's long-term destiny, it will likely have a lasting impact, and it will influence the economy, revenue, and municipal and school services in the near term. It will have an undeniable impact on the Town's ability to implement big initiatives promoted in this document or in other plans and studies conducted by various Town departments, boards, and commissions. A critical task for this Master Plan is to help guide the Town's response to new – perhaps distant future – opportunities for jobs, taxes, and public benefits to support current and future residents.

## Existing Conditions

### Labor Force

Hingham's labor force includes 10,643 people and, in early 2020, the Town had a remarkably low unemployment rate: 2.6 percent, or a little less than one percentage point lower than the unemployment rate for Massachusetts as a whole. The advent of COVID-19 has had a significant immediate impact on joblessness and business health in Hingham, as highlighted in Table 9.1 and explored more later in this section.

**The labor force of any city or town includes all civilian residents over the age of 16 who are either currently employed or are actively seeking employment.**

Hingham's labor force is well-educated (see Housing, Figure 6.5), with 70 percent of local residents having a bachelor's degree or higher. The employed labor force is concentrated in three higher-wage industries: professional services, information, and finance and real estate. These concentrations can be seen in the high industry quotients (>1.100) in Table 9.2, which compares the percentage of Hingham residents employed in major industry sectors to percentages of the employed labor force in Greater Boston area.<sup>1</sup> Industry quotients matter because they illustrate the competitive employment strengths of a community's residents and, by definition, their earning potential. The quotients also matter because they can help to identify gaps, if any, between the knowledge and skills of local residents and the opportunities they have to work in their own city or town.

Hingham has a large percentage of its residents employed in education and health care, too, but those industries also employ a large percentage of residents throughout the labor market area and the state as a whole. Hingham stands out for its very high labor force ratios in three industries and low ratios (<0.60) in four (transportation, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and "other services"). None of the industries with high labor force quotients are among the highest-risk industries for unemployment and job loss since the economy began to feel the effects of COVID-19 in March 2020.

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this section, the labor market area includes most of Eastern Massachusetts to the New Hampshire border in a statistical entity known as the Boston-Cambridge-Nashua New England City and Town Area (NECTA), Massachusetts part, i.e., excluding the portion that extends into Southern NH.

## LABOR FORCE

Table 9.1. Labor Force Characteristics: 2018, 2020

	2018 Labor Force	2018 Labor Force - Employed	2018 Labor Force - Unemployed	Unemployment Rate		
				Annual 2018	June 2020	Sept. 2020
Cohasset	4,165	3,922	243	5.8%	11.5%	6.4%
Weymouth	33,625	31,375	2,250	6.7%	19.2%	10.1%
<b>HINGHAM</b>	<b>11,054</b>	<b>10,643</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
Hull	6,350	5,921	429	6.8%	17.5%	10.1%
Norwell	5,810	5,575	235	4.0%	15.2%	7.5%
Rockland	10,347	9,979	368	3.6%	20.2%	10.6%
Scituate	10,004	9,593	411	4.1%	14.8%	7.5%

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2018, Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), and Barrett Planning Group LLC. Table 9.1 does not include 2020 labor force estimates due to differences between the ACS and DUA data collection and reporting methods.

Over half of Hingham's employed residents work in just two locations: the Town itself, and Boston, up from 43 percent when the last master plan was completed in 2001.<sup>2</sup> It is little wonder that a very high percentage of Hingham households (almost 20 percent) take public transportation to work, most likely to Boston, with its abundance of lucrative professional, scientific, academic, and finance employment. The rest of the Town's residents commute to a variety of nearby places and regional centers where similar industries tend to cluster. The overall picture of employment destinations has changed very little over time, yet due to the pandemic, many market analysts and demographers predict a long-term shift in the work-at-home population even after the public health crisis subsides. The "journey to work" future for many Hingham residents will likely change even if the location of their employers does not.

Traditional ways of measuring a community's labor force participation rate are less than op-

timal for Hingham. Table 9.3 shows that Hingham has the lowest rate of all towns in the immediate area, with just 62 percent of the population 16 and over in the labor force. This is because age-restricted developments like Linden Ponds, the large retirement community off Whiting Street, generate an unusually high percentage of people over 65.

Table 9.3 also shows that, looking back the past few years leading up to 2020, Hingham had a consistently low unemployment rate - 3.7% in 2018, for example. Low unemployment tends to go hand-in-hand with high educational attainment and high household wealth. On a month-by-month basis, unemployment in Hingham fell as low as 2.2 percent in March 2020. By June 2020, at the height of the pandemic's first surge, unemployment had jumped to 12.2 percent (Table 9.1 and Figure 9.1).

Many Hingham residents work for themselves (see Table 9.4). As is often the case in wealthy

<sup>2</sup> Hingham Master Plan (2001), 2-3, and U.S. Census Bureau, Commuting (Journey to Work), 2011-2015 5-Year ACS Commuting Flows, Tables 3 and 4. See also, Chapter 7, Transportation.

**Table 9.2 Industries that Employ Hingham Residents**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Hingham</b>	<b>NECTA</b>	<b>Industry Quotient</b>	<b>Median Earnings</b>
Total Employed Civilian Population 16+	10,643	2,437,087	N/A	N/A
Construction	5.4%	5.5%	0.993	\$97,534
Manufacturing	4.5%	8.2%	0.547	\$135,179
Wholesale Trade	1.1%	2.1%	0.534	\$64,236
Retail Trade	9.4%	9.6%	0.973	\$50,521
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	2.0%	3.6%	0.553	\$100,865
Information	3.1%	2.6%	1.178	\$94,643
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	21.5%	8.1%	2.662	\$167,845
Professional, Scientific, Management	19.7%	15.7%	1.256	\$175,872
Education, Health Care, Social Assistance	21.0%	27.8%	0.755	\$81,500
Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations	6.8%	8.3%	0.822	\$97,269
Other Services	2.2%	4.5%	0.491	\$87,250
Public Administration	3.3%	3.7%	0.890	\$68,281

Sources: U.D. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey, and Barrett Planning Group LLC. "NECTA" means New England City and Town Area, an economic region similar to a metropolitan statistical area.

towns, the percentage of self-employed people is relatively high: 13 percent in Hingham, compared with 9 percent both statewide and across Plymouth County. Even before the pandemic, Hingham had an unusually large percentage of employed residents working all or part of the week at home.<sup>3</sup> These qualities often correlate with high educational attainment and high household wealth, too. Some industries lend themselves well to remote work or telecommuting, but this is generally not the case for many lower-wage jobs.

Since mid-March 2020 when the Governor declared a public health emergency, about 800 Hingham residents have filed unemployment claims each week. The number of new claims began to fall near the end of June and slowly declined, only to tick upward again in the fall. Not surprisingly, residents working in the retail, health care, and accommodation and food services industries dominate the unemployment roster. While health care workers have

gradually regained jobs, recovery has been much slower for retail and food service employees. Women have been especially affected by the slump in employment. There have been 1.6 unemployment claims from women living in Hingham for every claim filed by men.<sup>4</sup>

### Employment Base

The industries that make up Hingham's employment base are not well aligned with the industries that employ local residents. Not surprisingly, there are more jobs in Hingham than residents to fill them, so the Town imports labor from the region. People commute to Hingham from over 100 cities and towns, and over time the geographic reach of its workforce has grown significantly. In the past, most people working in Hingham traveled from cities and towns along the coast between Boston and Marshfield, but today, it is more common to find Hingham workers commuting from towns to the west and southwest. It is not surprising

<sup>3</sup> Social Explorer; Table A09005, Means of Transportation to Work, citing American Community Survey (ACS) 2018 (5-Year Estimates); and U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018, Table C24070, Industry by Class of Worker.

<sup>4</sup> Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI), "Claims Data by City and Town," August 8, 2020.

**Table 9.3 Labor Force and Unemployment**

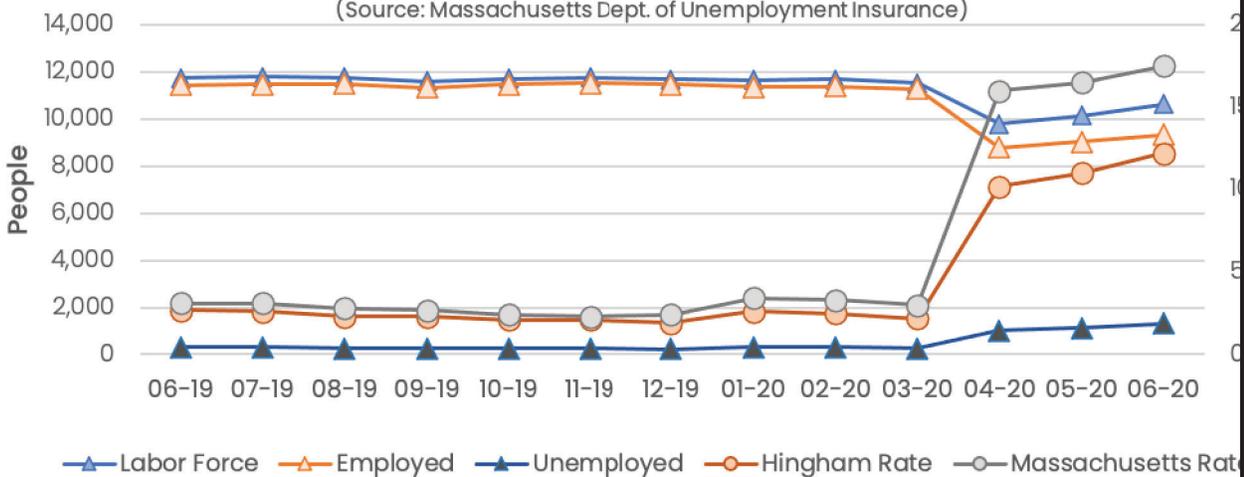
	Population 16 and Over	2018 Labor Force	Labor Force Statistics				
			Labor Force Rate	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment: Annual 2018	Unemployment: June 2020
Cohasset	6,270	4,165	66.4%	3,922	243	5.8%	11.5%
Weymouth	47,077	33,625	71.4%	31,375	2,250	6.7%	19.2%
HINGHAM	17,814	11,054	62.1%	10,643	411	3.7%	12.2%
Hull	9,236	6,350	68.8%	5,921	429	6.8%	17.5%
Norwell	8,296	5,810	70.0%	5,575	235	4.0%	15.2%
Rockland	14,678	10,347	70.5%	9,979	368	3.6%	20.2%
Scituate	15,092	10,004	66.3%	9,593	411	4.1%	14.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey (hereafter, 2018 ACS) and Massachusetts Dept. of Unemployment Insurance.

**Fig. 9.1.**

**Hingham Labor Force and Unemployment, Pre-Pandemic and June 2020**

(Source: Massachusetts Dept. of Unemployment Insurance)



**Table 9.4 Self-Employment Trends**

	Employed Labor Force	Self-Employed	Percent	Work at Home	Percent
Cohasset	3,922	500	12.7%	365	9.3%
Weymouth	31,375	2,039	6.5%	1,017	3.2%
HINGHAM	10,643	1,366	12.8%	932	8.8%
Hull	5,921	727	12.3%	380	6.4%
Norwell	5,575	758	13.6%	349	6.3%
Rockland	9,979	505	5.1%	304	3.0%
Scituate	9,593	1,239	12.9%	911	9.5%

Source: 2018 ACS, retrieved from Social Explorer, A09005, A09001.

**A location quotient is a ratio that allows an area’s distribution of employment by industry to be compared to a reference area’s distribution. The reference area is always larger, e.g., a labor market or economic statistical region, or state. In this case, Hingham’s employment base is compared to that of the Boston metro labor market.**

that so many Hingham residents lament traffic congestion on local roads for, in addition to an absolute increase of some 5,000 jobs since 2001, people are also commuting by car from just about every direction.<sup>5</sup>

Table 9.5 reports the location quotients for Hingham’s employment base. It shows that Hingham’s strongest industries – at least until recently – include the construction trades, retail sales, finance and insurance, and arts, entertainment, and recreation. The Town’s strength in these sectors seems to reflect Hingham’s very strong housing market; the retail/restaurant centers and cultural establishments Downtown, at Derby Street, and the Shipyard; the presence of numerous financial institutions; and major employers in the insurance industry, notably Blue Cross Blue Shield. These industries serve as significant generators of direct and induced jobs and property tax revenue. They tend to be strong industries elsewhere on the South Shore as well.<sup>6</sup>

The strongest industries are not always those with the highest paying jobs. Moreover, the overall average weekly wage reported for Hingham is somewhat less than that of the labor market area or the state as a whole, and mainly because retail makes up such a large share of Hingham’s employment base.<sup>7</sup> Table 9.5 shows that in Hingham, the highest-wage industry is wholesale trade, followed by the construction trades and

5 Hingham Master Plan (2001), 2-3, and U.S. Census Bureau, *Commuting (Journey to Work)*, 2011-2015 5-Year ACS Commuting Flows, Tables 3 and 4.

6 University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, “Massachusetts Economic Growth and Challenges,” January 2020, prepared for South Shore Chamber of Commerce

7 Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, *Employment and Wages Report (ES-2020)*, 2018, Hingham, Boston NECTA, Commonwealth of Massachusetts. See also, South Hingham Study Group Report (2017), 10-11.

**EMPLOYMENT BASE**

professional, scientific, and management sectors. While construction is both high-wage and regionally competitive, wholesale trade is not, and the professional, scientific, technical, and management sectors are roughly on par with the larger labor market area. Among industries that provide jobs to a large number of Hingham residents, the information industry has a limited role in the local economy, but it is likely that some residents working in finance, insurance, and real estate also work in Hingham because the supply of jobs can support them.

**Employers**

Like most suburbs, the Town itself is among the largest employers in Hingham, with approximately 984 municipal and school employ-

ees. For the past ten years, however, Blue Cross Blue Shield has ranked first of all establishments in terms of jobs. According to the Town’s 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), Blue Cross’s payroll has increased significantly, from 990 jobs in 2010 to 1,485 in 2019. Linden Ponds has gained almost 100 workers since 2010 as well. Other major employers reporting 10-year job growth include Harbor House and Eat Well. Russ Electric and Stop & Shop employ fewer people today than 10 years ago, but the most noticeable changes have occurred at EMD Serono Laboratories, where employment has dropped 27 percent, and Talbots, down 20 percent.<sup>8</sup>

The profile of large employers in Table 9.6 bears some similarity to the profile reported in

**Table 9.5 Hingham Employment Base: Location Quotients**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Hingham Jobs</b>	<b>Avg. Weekly Wages</b>	<b>(NECTA) Labor Market Jobs</b>	<b>Location Quotient</b>
Total, All Industries	15,745	\$1,128	2,560,975	
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	20.4%	\$1,540	6.81%	2.989
Retail Trade	13.7%	\$692	9.01%	1.524
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	2.6%	\$519	1.87%	1.375
Construction	6.3%	\$1,793	4.58%	1.370
Accommodation & Food Services	9.2%	\$482	8.47%	1.087
Professional, Scientific, Management	18.0%	\$1,881	18.97%	0.948
Wholesale Trade	2.6%	\$1,941	3.35%	0.763
Education, Health, Social Assistance	18.7%	\$930	26.76%	0.700
Other Services	2.3%	\$629	3.41%	0.665
Manufacturing	3.3%	\$1,594	6.38%	0.524
Public Administration	1.5%	\$1,561	3.74%	0.397
Information	0.8%	\$1,108	3.20%	0.245
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	0.7%	\$1,336	2.93%	0.237
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining	0.0%	\$1,168	0.18%	0.163

*Sources: Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development, Employment & Wages ES-202, Annual 2018; and Barrett Planning Group LLC.*

**Table 9.6 Trends in Major Employers: 10-Year Snapshot**

	<b>2019 Employment</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>2010 Employment</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Jobs +/-</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Blue Cross	1,485	1	990	1	495	50%
Town of Hingham	984	2	989	2	(5)	-1%
Linden Ponds	853	3	767	3	86	11%
Talbots	470	4	590	5	(120)	-20%
Serono Laboratories	436	5	600	4	(164)	-27%
Harbor House	245	6	215	7	30	14%
Whole Foods	227	7	220	8	7	3%
Russ Electric	221	8	265	6	(44)	-17%
Stop & Shop	190	9	210	9	(20)	-10%
Eat Well	168	10	145	10	23	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,279</b>		<b>4,991</b>			
<b>Percent All Jobs</b>	<b>47.5%</b>		<b>48.9%</b>			

Source: Town of Hingham Finance Department, CAFER 2019, 141.

2001 Master Plan, so Hingham benefits from having some long-term establishments.<sup>9</sup> Yet, significant changes have occurred, too. Talbots employed more than twice the number of people in 2001, and the legendary Building 19 still operated on Derby Street. Neither Derby Street Shops nor Blue Cross Blue Shield’s 329,000 sq. ft. facility on Technology Park Drive existed at the time. EMD Serono Laboratories was new in 2001, with just 100 employees, and Linden Ponds had just been approved by the Board of Appeals. Though it was foreseen in the last Master Plan, redevelopment of the Hingham Shipyard came later. In short, the amount of commercial development in Hingham has increased significantly in 20 years, resulting in a 21 percent increase in the number of employer establishments operating in the Town. These changes have fueled growth in Hingham’s em-

ployment base, tax base, traffic volumes, and housing demand.

### COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Despite the amount of new commercial development in Hingham, the Town has a fairly small amount of land used or available for nonresidential purposes. The property database maintained by the Hingham Assessor classifies 418 parcels with a combined total of about 1,600 acres as commercial or industrial land (Map 9.1), or roughly 12 percent of the Town’s land (excluding roads).<sup>10</sup> Almost all the existing nonresidential development can be found in three economic centers: Hingham

9 John Brown Associates, et al., Hingham Master Plan (2001), 2-6.

10 One of these parcels is actually classified for assessment purposes as an exempt use. Blue Cross Blue Shield qualifies as a non-profit organization. Nevertheless, the active land use on the property is commercial/office.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Table 9.7 Existing Nonresidential Development

	Parcels	Total Area	Avg. Parcel (Developed)	Built Sq. Ft.	Eff. FAR	Median Year	Total Value	Vacant Acres
Downtown/Harbor	79	49.29	0.62	304,470	0.142	1930	\$57,259,800	0.23
Hingham Shipyard/Route 3A	58	158.19	3.85	868,983	0.156	1986	\$245,979,500	30.04
Hingham Center	12	3.06	0.22	31,305	0.275	1936	\$6,151,700	0.45
South Hingham	241	1,108.95	3.88	3,568,171	0.088	1982	\$530,842,300	174.07
Other	28	315.74	11.21	278,473	0.020	1902	\$36,344,700	1.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>1,635.22</b>		<b>5,051,402</b>	<b>0.081</b>		<b>\$876,578,000</b>	<b>206.55</b>

Sources: Hingham Assessor’s Database, 2019, and Barrett Planning Group LLC. Notes: (1) The tax-exempt parcel controlled by Blue Cross Blue Shield in South Hingham is included in this table as nonresidential development and the value of its property is also included in the “total value” column. (2) “Effective FAR” is a simple expression of the intensity of use in Hingham’s nonresidential areas. It is calculated against the land area in developed parcels only, i.e., vacant commercial or industrial land is not included.

Square/Hingham Harbor, the Shipyard/Route 3A, and South Hingham.<sup>11</sup> Pockets of nonresidential and mixed uses also exist in West Hingham, Hingham Center, and Queen Anne’s Corner, where Hingham and Norwell converge (an area sometimes included in land calculations for South Hingham). Table 9.7 provides a snapshot of development in these locations. Note that some properties classified as commercial or industrial may be nonconforming uses or lots.

**Downtown/Hingham Harbor**

The Downtown/Hingham Harbor area is an attractive town center with specialty shops, food services, and office space mixed with institutional uses and some housing as well. It serves as Hingham’s civic, social, and cultural hub, and from community meetings for this Master Plan, it is clear that Hingham residents value the Downtown/Harbor area and all that it

has to offer. The development pattern found in this part of Town has early roots, for the buildings are organized around narrow roads in a tightly organized frame bound by Main, North, and Water Streets. This linear, compact development pattern, concentration of institutional uses (religious, educational, public), and “organic” walkability does not exist anywhere else in Hingham. The Town has recently worked with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) on a vision plan for the Downtown/Harbor area.

**Hingham Shipyard/Route 3A**

Hingham Shipyard/Route 3A is a gateway setting for regional travel between Hingham and Weymouth where Route 3A (Lincoln Street) crosses the Weymouth Back River. Today, this section of Town features a large mixed-use development north of Lincoln Street at the property known as the Hingham Shipyard, with

11 The town’s total land area is approximately 14,208 acres, excluding land under water.



retail development and services, a private marina, and a public transportation facility, townhomes, apartment-style condominiums, and mixed-income apartments. Unlike Downtown, the Shipyard/Route 3A commercial area is relatively large with long, through roads, relatively large parcels and large buildings, and in some cases tall buildings by Hingham standards. The retail portion of the Shipyard, known as “The Launch”, offers walkability “by design,” i.e., with storefronts, offices, and restaurants abutting wide sidewalks and parking areas behind the main buildings. South of Lincoln Street is Lincoln Plaza, a shopping center with a supermarket, clothing store, and miscellaneous financial and personal services, and a co-work facility. The headquarters of Talbots, the specialty clothing store founded in Hingham decades ago, occupies a large, now underutilized campus-style site east of the shopping center. Over time, multifamily housing has developed nearby on Beal Street, bringing more customers and workers to Shipyard businesses and commuters to public transit.

The Shipyard/Route 3A commercial area is both a business/mixed-use center and a major water-dependent transportation resource. The Boston Harbor ferry service at the Hewitt’s Cove terminal has played a crucial role in transforming this part of Hingham from a World War II shipbuilding yard to a busy population and employment center. A private boating facil-

ity, Hingham Shipyard Marinas, operates next door. Along the outer edge of the Shipyard/Route 3A area is Bare Cove Park, an extensive open space and parkland facing the Back River.

### South Hingham

Hingham is well aware of the potential that exists for transformative development in South Hingham. It contains more land zoned for high-value industrial and commercial development than any other part of Town, yet it also presents significant barriers to growth: lack of waste-water infrastructure, water supply constraints, aging public safety facilities, and traffic hazards. The absence of sewer service remains a significant impediment to realizing South Hingham’s potential as a source of jobs, housing, and tax revenue. In addition, many South Hingham residents oppose more growth in their part of Town, citing concerns about traffic, over-development, and loss of quality of life.

In 2017, the South Hingham Study Group produced a report on its assessment of development potential in South Hingham.<sup>12</sup> The 2017 study area (900 acres) was very similar to the South Hingham land use map shown in Map 9.2, though it focused on the Office Park and Industrial Park districts south of Whiting Street and extending to the Weymouth and Rockland town lines. When the report was completed,

<sup>12</sup> In 2017, the South Hingham Study Group determined that South Hingham has capacity for an additional 1.5 to 3.6 million sq. ft. of nonresidential and residential floor area - and possibly more.



the South Hingham study area had 3.3 million sq. ft. of commercial, industrial, office, institutional, and residential development. The Study Group concluded that South Hingham has capacity for an additional 1.5 million to 3.6 million sq. ft. of nonresidential and residential floor area (some of it replacing existing space), and potentially more if all properties exercised their as-of-right development potential. These outcomes could yield anywhere from \$3.9 million to over \$10 million in gross revenue per year (2017 values and tax rate assumptions).<sup>13</sup> Ample market strength exists to support significant growth in South Hingham, too. A 2015 presentation to the Select Board reported over 2.3 million sq. ft. of potential new development in South Hingham over 12 years, though about 76 percent of that growth depended on access to water or sewer service from adjacent communities.<sup>14</sup>

**In 2017, the South Hingham Study Group determined that South Hingham has capacity for an additional 1.5 to 3.6 million sq. ft. of nonresidential and residential floor area and possibly more.**

There is considerable interest in the possibilities for economic growth in South Hingham and the tax revenue it may bring. Ten years ago (2010), Town Meeting voted to create a South Hingham Sewer District and a study to connect the district to the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority's (MWRA) sewer system. The Town subsequently found that connecting to the MWRA system could be cost prohibitive. Support for solving South Hingham's wastewater needs has been reinforced since then, however, including funds to initiate design of a wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) in the South Hingham Industrial District. Nevertheless, limited progress has been made toward identifying a feasible, long-term solution.

While this Master Plan process was underway, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and South Shore Chamber of Commerce collaborated to locate sites along the Route 3 corridor (Weymouth to Hanover) that could support expanding water and wastewater infrastructure.<sup>15</sup> The challenge of providing adequate public water remains unresolved. And, many South Hingham residents oppose more intensive development in this part of Town, largely out of concern about traffic.

13 South Hingham Study Group Final Report, (2017), 54, 65.

14 J. Seelen, "Infrastructure and Development in South Hingham" (January 2015).

15 South Shore Chamber of Commerce, South Shore 2030 Update (August 4, 2020).

The Town has known for several years that A.W. Perry, owner of a significant portion of the South Shore Park, wants to reinvest in and reposition existing properties and develop new projects on the available vacant land. In 2012, Hingham Town Meeting voted to designate South Shore Park as a Priority Development Site under G.L. c. 43D.<sup>16</sup> Prior to the pandemic, A.W. Perry had expressed interest in potential rezoning to add commercial/office, industrial, multifamily residential, and some retail uses to South Shore Park if infrastructure and zoning barriers can be addressed but in the aftermath of the pandemic its plans for its properties in the South Shore Park are unclear.

Such a project could boost the tax base and may create other community benefits such as live-work opportunities for a younger workforce that is generally underserved by housing costs and jobs on the South Shore. The constraints of water and wastewater, and to some extent transportation and traffic safety, remain significant challenges in South Hingham. In addition, the existing zoning would not allow any kind of mixed-use reinvention of South Hingham. Still, the existing zoning does allow for uses that could generate high traffic volumes and relatively little tax revenue to offset their impact on other nonresidential properties and nearby neighborhoods.

### **Vacant Commercial Land**

The amount of vacant, potentially developable commercial and industrial land in Hingham is limited: about 300 acres, according to the assessor's database (not including acres classified as undevelopable). Absent rezoning a sizeable amount of land for new nonresidential purposes (an idea that may not appeal to many people in Hingham), the Town's future economy will depend on efficient use of the remaining vacant land, reuse of existing built assets, and infill activity in established areas. These kinds of approaches to economic development will hinge on adequate infrastructure and utilities in priority locations.

### **Taxes**

Hingham's tax base reflects its high housing values, desirable coastal location, and zoning. Over the past five years, the Town's residential property values have grown 23 percent and commercial values, 8 percent. While industrial values have dropped slightly, the value of personal property (the movable assets of a business) has increased 9 percent. Clearly, while the commercial tax base has gained value, it is the value of Hingham's housing stock that drives the size and structure of the Town's tax base. This can even be seen in the Town's recent "Proposition 2 ½" tax levy calculations because housing has accounted for anywhere from 75 to 90 percent of all "new growth" revenue added to the tax levy in any given year.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Chapter 43D (2006; 2012) encourages communities to make development permitting more efficient. It requires towns that adopt the law to guarantee local permitting decisions on Priority Development Sites within 180 days, and toward that end, towns are required to adopt Chapter 43D permitting regulations and designate a PDS coordinator. Communities that submit their PDS locations to the state's Interagency Permitting Board (IPB) for approval and receive IPB designation become eligible for certain economic development incentives, notably infrastructure grants from the Commonwealth's "MassWorks" program, and others. IPB-designated sites also qualify for enhanced marketing support from the Mass. Economic Development Council.

<sup>17</sup> MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank, "New Growth Analysis, FY 2003-Present."

## HINGHAM'S TAX BASE

**Table 9.8 Average Single-Family Tax Bill History**

Year	Single Family Values (Aggregate)	Single Family Parcels	Average Single Family Home Value	Single Family Tax Bill	State Rank
2020	\$5,391,362,700	6,224	\$866,222	\$9,988	
2019	\$5,148,138,600	6,227	\$826,745	\$9,764	31
2018	\$5,019,280,800	6,226	\$806,181	\$9,489	32
2017	\$4,661,710,100	6,216	\$749,953	\$9,187	34
2016	\$4,471,588,300	6,205	\$720,643	\$9,001	30
2015	\$4,289,113,600	6,192	\$692,686	\$8,679	31
2014	\$4,052,662,700	6,186	\$655,135	\$8,228	33
2013	\$3,985,833,700	6,159	\$647,156	\$7,973	31
2012	\$3,963,099,200	6,160	\$643,360	\$7,650	37
2011	\$4,000,363,900	6,136	\$651,950	\$7,224	37

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank.

Hingham residents pay the third highest average single-family tax bill of the communities around it, i.e., less than Cohasset and Norwell and more than Scituate, Hull, Rockland, and Weymouth. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, Hingham ranked 29 out of 351 cities and towns for average tax bill (see Table 9.8), so residential taxes here are relatively high compared with most Massachusetts communities. Since the last master plan was prepared, Hingham's state rank has fluctuated very little, from a high of 26 (1998) to a low of 37 (2011).<sup>18</sup> Multifamily rental and condominium developments have absorbed some of the residential burden, for aggregate value of single-family property as a percentage of total residential value has dropped slightly, from 83 to 81 percent, but clearly, it is Hingham's single-family home values that drive the tax base.

With relatively little land developed for commercial or industrial uses and much of it underutilized, it is not surprising that Hingham's tax base remains overwhelmingly residential.

As Table 9.9 shows, new commercial development in Hingham on the eve of the last recession triggered an uptick in the commercial, industrial, and personal property (CIP) tax base. However, housing values have accelerated rapidly in Hingham – trending upward at about 4 percent per year over the past decade. Commercial values, though strong, have not kept pace with the rate of appreciation in home values in Hingham.

Hingham has a uniform tax rate, currently set at \$11.53 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This practice is common throughout the South Shore, excluding Braintree, Weymouth, and Hanover, as shown in Table 9.10. Communities that adopt a split tax rate divide their total tax levy according to property tax classifications, so the owners of some types of property carry a larger share of the tax burden than others. In most cases, the decision to adopt a split tax rate is based on an intent to transfer more of the tax levy to commercial and industrial taxpayers in

18 Municipal Data Bank, "Assessed Valuation," "Tax Rates by Class," and "Average Single-Family Tax Bill."

**Table 9.9 Assessed Values by Class of Property on Hingham, 2005-2020**

Year	Assessed Values					Percent	
	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Prop.	Total	Residential	CIP
2020	\$76,702,319	\$6,151,361	\$1,947,980	\$1,242,351	\$86,044,011	89.1%	10.9%
2019	\$74,274,632	\$6,329,560	\$1,992,651	\$1,225,636	\$83,822,478	88.6%	11.4%
2018	\$71,638,622	\$6,350,075	\$2,022,347	\$1,202,194	\$81,213,239	88.2%	11.8%
2017	\$69,405,774	\$6,393,227	\$2,160,748	\$1,246,177	\$79,205,926	87.6%	12.4%
2016	\$67,589,051	\$6,183,973	\$2,123,606	\$1,233,544	\$77,130,174	87.6%	12.4%
2015	\$64,702,074	\$6,109,108	\$2,150,280	\$1,209,106	\$74,170,568	87.2%	12.8%
2014	\$60,766,274	\$5,712,368	\$1,949,725	\$1,266,972	\$69,695,339	87.2%	12.8%
2013	\$58,437,075	\$5,406,377	\$1,942,228	\$1,228,438	\$67,014,119	87.2%	12.8%
2012	\$56,387,197	\$5,162,708	\$1,952,554	\$1,157,607	\$64,660,067	87.2%	12.8%
2011	\$53,617,898	\$5,332,094	\$2,020,045	\$1,072,637	\$62,042,674	86.4%	13.6%
2010	\$52,593,165	\$5,118,167	\$1,966,885	\$1,022,636	\$60,700,853	86.6%	13.4%
2009	\$47,803,243	\$4,619,270	\$1,822,427	\$879,616	\$55,124,556	86.7%	13.3%
2008	\$46,014,332	\$4,261,811	\$1,760,090	\$637,016	\$52,673,250	87.4%	12.6%
2007	\$43,924,117	\$3,815,111	\$1,743,871	\$670,276	\$50,153,374	87.6%	12.4%
2006	\$41,745,055	\$3,530,155	\$1,894,098	\$601,359	\$47,770,666	87.4%	12.6%
2005	\$39,529,519	\$2,463,003	\$1,578,229	\$617,299	\$44,188,051	89.5%	10.5%

Source: Mass. Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank.

**Table 9.10 Tax Rate Practices In Route 3 Corridor Communities**

Town	Year	Residential & Open Space	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Prop.
Braintree	2020	\$9.86	\$21.81	\$21.81	\$21.73
Weymouth	2020	\$11.92	\$18.70	\$18.70	\$18.70
HINGHAM	2020	\$11.53	\$11.53	\$11.53	\$11.53
Rockland	2020	\$17.50	\$17.50	\$17.50	\$17.50
Norwell	2020	\$16.63	\$16.63	\$16.63	\$16.63
Hanover	2020	\$16.31	\$17.07	\$17.07	\$17.07
Pembroke	2020	\$14.49	\$14.49	\$14.49	\$14.49
Marshfield	2020	\$13.33	\$13.33	\$13.33	\$13.33
Duxbury	2020	\$14.66	\$14.66	\$14.66	\$14.66
Kingston	2020	\$16.28	\$16.28	\$16.28	\$16.28
Plymouth	2020	\$16.35	\$16.35	\$16.35	\$16.35

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank.

ZONING FOR COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Table 9.11 Tax Base Comparison with Surrounding Towns

Municipality	Total	Single Family Percent	Residential Percent	CIP Percent	FY 2020 Tax Rate	Average Single Family Value	Average Single Family Tax Bill
Cohasset		78.0%	93.2%	6.9%	\$12.97	\$1,005,283	\$13,039
HINGHAM		72.2%	89.1%	10.9%	\$11.53	\$866,222	\$9,988
Hull		75.6%	95.8%	4.2%	\$12.82	\$472,929	\$6,063
Norwell		80.5%	85.4%	14.6%	\$16.63	\$650,268	\$10,814
Rockland		57.0%	80.4%	19.6%	\$17.50	\$333,884	\$5,843
Scituate		84.0%	95.7%	4.3%	\$13.50	\$601,671	\$8,123
Weymouth		62.2%	85.6%	14.4%	\$12.50/\$18.70	\$400,382	\$4,773

Sources: MA Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank, Assessed Valuation, Tax Rates by Class, and Average Single-Family Tax Bill.

order to keep residential taxes as low as possible, and is generally seen in communities with existing robust commercial and industrial development (Table 9.11).

**Hingham Zoning**

Hingham regulates nonresidential development in numerous zoning districts, including **use districts** and **overlay districts**. Converting the Zoning Map to an area table shows that over 90 percent of the Town is residentially zoned (five districts) or located in a protective district for open space and public land uses (Official and Open Space), leaving about 10 percent of Hingham’s land available for business and industrial uses – much of it with-out sewer infrastructure. Table 9.12 reports the approximate acreage in each use district.<sup>19</sup> In addition to these use districts, Hingham has established six overlays, including two for purposes of economic development: the South Hingham Development Overlay District with 868 acres and a Downtown Overlay District, 25 acres (Map 9.2).

In some cases, there are very few differences between use districts. For example, Business A (downtown) and Business B (pockets along Route

3A and 53) are almost identical except for the limited allowance of hospitals, commercial outdoor recreation, warehouses, and storage containers in Business B. The four industrial districts also have similar use regulations, save for differences such as where take-out food services, auto repair businesses, boat sales and storage, or “light industry” uses are allowed, and the type of approval process varies as well. A remarkable number of nonresidential uses require special permits in Hingham’s nonresidential districts, but the same can be said for the zoning in most single-family residential suburbs.

The more noteworthy differences in Hingham’s commercial and industrial zones can be found in the Town’s density and dimensional regulations. For example, the Industrial District calls for a minimum lot of 80,000 sq. ft., and the Office Park requires a tract of at least five acres. The Industrial Park and Limited Industrial Park both require at least two acres per lot, and where retail uses are allowed in an industrial or office zone, the minimum area is much larger. Different requirements apply to the amount of development allowed in various districts, too. They are determined by **coverage ratios** and

<sup>19</sup> Hingham GIS. Acres are approximate.

**Use districts** are traditional zoning districts that divide a town into defined areas based on land use. Residence A and Business A are examples of use districts. Hingham has a total of 15.

**Overlay districts** are applied over one or more use districts, establishing additional or stricter standards in addition to those of the underlying zoning district. They can also be used to promote certain types of development. Hingham has six overlay districts.

**Floor area ratio** is the size of a building (the building's total floor area) divided by the size of the lot, expressed as a decimal. Its use in zoning is to regulate building bulk and intensity of use. A 5,000 sq. ft. building on a 10,000 sq. ft. lot is a floor area ratio of 0.50.

**Coverage ratio** is the footprint of the building divided by the total area of the lot, expressed as a decimal. A footprint of 2,000 sq. ft. on a 10,000 sq. ft. lot is a coverage ratio of 0.20.

**floor areas ratios (FARs)**, and low maximum building heights of 40 feet or less. Hingham also requires deep setbacks (100 feet) both for buildings and associated parking adjacent to residential districts in all of the industrial districts, excluding Office Park. Low thresholds trigger Site Plan Review, and since so many uses in Hingham require a special permit from the Board of Appeals, commercial or industrial projects may need approval from both boards.

Other zoning regulations affect the amount of nonresidential development allowed in Hingham, too. Hingham has some noticeably high off-street parking requirements, e.g. one space per unit in assisted living facilities, five spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. for retail, one space per three seats in restaurants, and 30 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. for fast-food establishments. By contrast, recent best practices in planning and design of off-street parking typically call for one space per two units for assisted living, one space per 250 sq. ft. for retail, one space per four seats for restaurants, and one space per 200 sq. ft. for fast-food establishments plus requirements for queuing capacity in drive-through lanes.

Urban planning and “smart growth” organizations usually recommend significant parking reductions for development in town centers and central business districts, including outright parking waivers for very small establishments. As the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) notes in a recent study of parking demand in multifamily developments: “Excess parking has real consequences. Property that could be landscaped as common or even public green space is instead paved over as parking.” Finding the “perfect fit” for parking to support a variety of land uses, including nonresidential development, can be very challenging, and towns need to have a clear vision of what they want to achieve. Though a detailed zoning audit is beyond the scope of a master plan, the land use, dimensional, and parking requirements that apply in Hingham are noteworthy as they may constrain the Town's goal of increasing commercial development and tax revenue in certain areas.

The overlay districts ostensibly create more opportunities, but with restrictions. The South Hingham Development Overlay District applies to land in the Industrial and Office Park districts south of Route 53. Buildings within the overlay may be as tall as 60 feet and five stories where the underlying district is Office Park, or 48 feet if the underlying district is Industrial District. In exchange for some additional development privileges, the South Hingham Development Overlay District imposes fees (assessments) to mitigate the impact of growth on traffic and other infrastructure. The

Downtown Overlay creates opportunities for mixed-use (commercial and residential) buildings by special permit. Some residents say that downtown’s chief downfall is its shortage of parking, which they say discourages people from visiting downtown to shop, dine, and socialize. Others say the problem is lack of parking enforcement.

**Development Approval Process & Permitting**

Residents and others participating in the community engagement process for this Master Plan gave mixed reviews to Hingham’s zoning policies and permitting procedures for economic development. Residents seemed to have different thoughts about waterfront-oriented development, with some suggesting that the area’s vulnerability to sea level rise raises serious questions about how much development to promote in the “interface between sea and land.” Some business and property owners described Hingham as one of the “hardest towns to build in,” citing some misgivings about local zoning and permitting challenges that may reflect a shortage of planning and inspectional services staff rather than a problem with regulations per se.

**Table 9.12 Area In Nonresidential and Residential Use Districts**

District	Approximate Acres
Business A	43.4
Business B	53.6
Business Recreation	164.3
Industrial	191.0
Industrial Extending into Waterfront	59.4
Industrial Park	770.3
Limited Industrial Park	21.3
Office Park	224.2
Waterfront Business	1.9
Waterfront Recreation	9.5
<b>Land Zoned for Nonresidential Uses (Subtotal)</b>	<b>1,539.1</b>
<b>Residential &amp; Open Space</b>	<b>15,542.2</b>
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>17,081.3</b>

*Sources: Town of Hingham GIS, Barrett Planning Group LLC. Note: Total acres for zoning districts calculated from the Town’s zoning map differ somewhat from acres derived from assessor’s data. Existing uses and uses assumed for vacant land are not the same as the district in which property is located.*

**ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Many communities that seek to strengthen the relationship between business and government hire economic development professionals to improve communications, gather and report market data, provide information to site search and site selection professionals, and promote entrepreneurship, but Hingham has not invested in this kind of capacity. There is no professional economic development staff at Town Hall. The Planning Department has professional planners on staff, but economic development involves a different set of skills and a different focus. Although the Town lacks economic development staff, several groups and organizations are actively involved in promoting economic growth in Hingham.

- The **Hingham Development and Industrial Commission (HDIC)**, a board appointed by the Select Board. By law (G.L. c. 40A, §8A), a Development and Industrial Commission’s focus is industrial and commercial development, though the kinds of activities it can undertake are broad: research, marketing and promotions, and coordinating a community’s approach to economic growth.
- **Hingham Downtown Business Association (HDA)**, a collaborative effort of 70 local businesses and organizations operating or interested in the Downtown/Harbor area. The HDA coordinates special events, networking, and advocacy for downtown vitality. It is currently helping to promote a parallel planning activity in Hingham, a downtown-harbor vision plan led by HDA.
- **South Shore Chamber of Commerce (SSCC)** plays a prominent role in advocacy for regional economic development throughout the South Shore, from Braintree to Plymouth. In 2017, the SSCC and its subsidiary, the South Shore Economic Development Corporation (SSEDC) released a regional economic development plan, South Shore 2030, which seeks to build on the region’s strengths by addressing barriers to economic growth (housing, transportation, infrastructure, leadership).

## Issues & Opportunities

Hingham has so much going for it as a desirable place for living and working, yet there are impediments, too – some of them in the Town’s control and others well beyond Hingham’s power and financial means to address. Situated along a stretch of Route 3 that is arguably the South Shore’s best opportunity for economic growth, Hingham is a highly desirable community with high property values, high household wealth, excellent schools, and an active waterfront and scenic coast. It has both direct access to Route 3 and Route 3A, and it has neighboring communities that are working to enhance their economic future.

Opportunities for regional collaboration exist, supported by the capacity that comes with regional resources, yet Hingham – like most South Shore towns – has limited local capacity for economic development.

Many aspects of economic development lie outside local control. However, a community can

bring certain assets to the table; without them, it will likely miss some desirable opportunities, and it becomes increasingly dependent on decisions made by others. Local governments are uniquely able to deliver the infrastructure, services, professional capacity, tax policies, and regulatory framework needed to maximize the attractiveness of land and underutilized built assets. Hingham has only some of these ingredients in place. There are noticeable gaps in the Town’s readiness to be a “hands-on” agent of its own economic future.

### ISSUES

**Labor Force/Employment Base Mismatch.** Hingham’s well-educated, highly skilled labor force largely depends on external/regional employment opportunities. While Hingham’s employment base offers some high-wage em-



ployment, most local jobs exist in lower-wage industries that provide goods and services to South Shore residents, but not many opportunities for Hingham residents to work locally. In addition, Hingham's labor force is aging. This problem exists, at least in part, because Hingham has so little diversity in housing types and prices – diversity that is key to having the age and economic diversity essential for a young labor force and low age dependency ratio.

**Traffic.** Direct access to Route 3, the South Shore's primary opportunity corridor, and Route 3A along the north side of Town, give prospective employers easy access to key commuter routes and make available property attractive for commercial development. As a result, they channel significant traffic into and through Hingham every day, bringing a largely non-resident workforce in to fill the retail, hospitality, arts and recreation, and lower-wage health care jobs that do not pay enough to support the cost of housing in Hingham. Hingham also feels the traffic generated by region-wide growth, as is the case for nearly all cities and towns served by these two key highways.

**Public Transportation.** Development at the Hingham Shipyard illustrates both the value of Hingham's coastal setting and the impact of public transportation on commercial real estate values. The commuter boat to Boston played a key role in bringing investments in stores and housing to this part of Town: The Launch at Hingham Shipyard, Avalon at Hingham Ship-

yard, the Marinas, The Cove (apartments), and others, with potential for redevelopment nearby. Public transportation service on the South Shore was threatened by the pandemic's impact on MBTA ridership and revenues – conditions that caused a review of possible reductions in service at some stations and outright loss of service at others, such as the ferry.

**Tax Base.** The Town has identified a strong, durable tax base as a priority. There seems to be relatively strong agreement about both the need and desirability for economic growth, with many hoping for new businesses and mixed-use development in South Hingham. However, any significant development in that part of Town faces many hurdles: limited water supply, lack of a comprehensive wastewater solution, impact on traffic and circulation, public safety, and resident opposition. Often, the same obstacles exist in other parts of Hingham.

**Organizational Capacity.** Economic development is fragmented within Town government. Many boards and individuals have roles to play – the Select Board, Town Administrator, Planning Board and HDIC, planning staff, and others – and while all of these players seem to collaborate, there has not been a single point of contact for economic development in Hingham; however, the Town is in the process of hiring a new Assistant Town Administrator for Operations who, along with the Community Planning Director, will be guiding economic development for the Town. This sets Hing-

ham apart from many communities in its peer group and can hamper the Town's ability to attract and sustain a vibrant, resilient economic base. Many "best practices" in local economic development do not exist in Hingham: professional economic development staff, an information-rich, interactive website with data that commercial developers, site selection consultants, prospective business tenants, and a comprehensive economic development strategy.

**Regional Competition.** There are significant commercial real estate projects and mixed-use developments occurring on the South Shore that could work to Hingham's advantage or interfere with the Town's own economic aspirations. Union Point (redevelopment of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station), Hanover Crossing (the mixed-use redevelopment of the Hanover Mall site), and potential for mixed-use development at Queen Anne's Corner in Norwell are examples of major projects planned or underway in 2021.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Capacity Building.** Hiring a qualified, full-time economic development professional will improve Hingham's ability to support and bring focus to the efforts of many Town boards and commissions, collaborate with regional organizations and local groups, and provide point-of-contact assistance to businesses and developers – all steps that will be critical to formulating an economic development plan.

**Economic Planning.** Communities that take the time to create a comprehensive economic development plan can control local economic development, address potential weaknesses,

build on their strengths, set clear and achievable economic goals, and meet them with well thought-out policies and programs. A plan can help to get the message straight and organize the resources a community has to invest in economic development. Without a plan, a community's economic future is largely reactive and dependent on decisions made by others.

**Land and Built Assets.** Hingham has vacant and underutilized land available for commercial and industrial development. Though the Town is substantially developed under current zoning, the Town has opportunities to spur new investment in existing developed areas by modernizing its zoning to embrace best practices in economic development. It has recognized activity centers that can form the basis for formally defined growth boundaries.

**Education.** Hingham's well-respected public school system and private schools attract homebuyers and contribute to the strength of the local housing market. Firms offering high-wage employment consider, among other factors, the desirability of a community's public school system. Continuing to provide strong support for the schools sends a message about Hingham's priorities and willingness to invest in its children and their future. Supporting great schools also maximizes Hingham's residential property values, which matters because housing makes up a large share of the tax base.

**Infrastructure.** Some components of economic development can be controlled or substantially influenced by local governments. Others require some type of state-level approach. In addition to desirable schools, Hingham has responsive, well-trained public safety personnel, emergency medical services, municipal electric and water utilities, and at least in the

Shipyards and downtown areas, access to public sewer through adjacent towns. It also has a uniform tax rate. Just as Hingham values its public schools, the Town will need to preserve and enhance the capacity of the municipal services on which business and industry depend. Partici-

pation in regional initiatives to expand wastewater service could provide significant benefits to Hingham if the Town is well-represented when these initiatives are planned, directed, and implemented.

## Policies & Recommendations

**Policy 5.1: Support local businesses and attract new enterprises that provide employment and deliver goods and services to residents and visitors alike.**

### Recommendations:

- Increase professional capacity in economic development and explore options to strengthen the role of the HDIC in economic development.
- Develop consistent time regulations and restrictions for on-street parking in the Downtown Business District to encourage businesses' parking turnover.
- Conduct a study to evaluate the operational and financial feasibility of structured parking in downtown lots and at Shipyard.
  - As part of the senior center study, review and assess parking at the town hall and consider designating parking spaces at Town Hall for staff and visitors and identifying sign flow parking areas to optimize parking availability.
  - Develop and conduct a business visitation program.

**Policy 5.2: Attract nonresidential development to increase tax revenue.**

### Recommendations:

- Encourage HDIC and others to engage

regional partners such as the South Shore Chamber of Commerce to increase local capacity consistent with the overall strategy.

- Where appropriate, reduce special permit requirements and replace them with clear, predictable site plan approval standards.
- Identify, track, and develop strategies responses to "at-risk" properties, i.e., sites considered "transformative" by the Town, with evidence of near-term change in ownership or use.
- Hold a biannual Economic Development Advisory Summit, advisory to the Town Administrator, Select Board, economic development director, and HDIC to assist the Town with assessing industry trends and CRE conditions.

**Policy 5.3: Encourage mixed-use development and a wide range of businesses and institutions in business districts.**

### Recommendations:

- Commission and periodically update a market analysis and trends assessment of Hingham's business districts and review zoning for market-driven development impediments.
- Consider Shared Parking arrangements between land uses with different peaking

characteristics to increase parking supply in the Downtown Business District.

**Policy 5.4: Guide development to desired locations with regulatory incentives and adequate infrastructure.**

**Recommendations:**

- Prioritize public facilities, utilities, and infrastructure improvements in locations targeted for concentrated development and redevelopment: Downtown/Harbor, Hingham Shipyard, and South Hingham.
- Conduct a Zoning Bylaw audit with an emphasis on making sure new development is targeted to desired locations and discouraged elsewhere.
- On top of investments in water and wastewater capacity (see Goal 7), explore options for investing in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in South Hingham as an incentive for private development.

**Policy 5.5: Promote Hingham as a destination and each commercial district as a unique experience, such as Hingham Square and other long-time commercial centers.**

**Recommendations:**

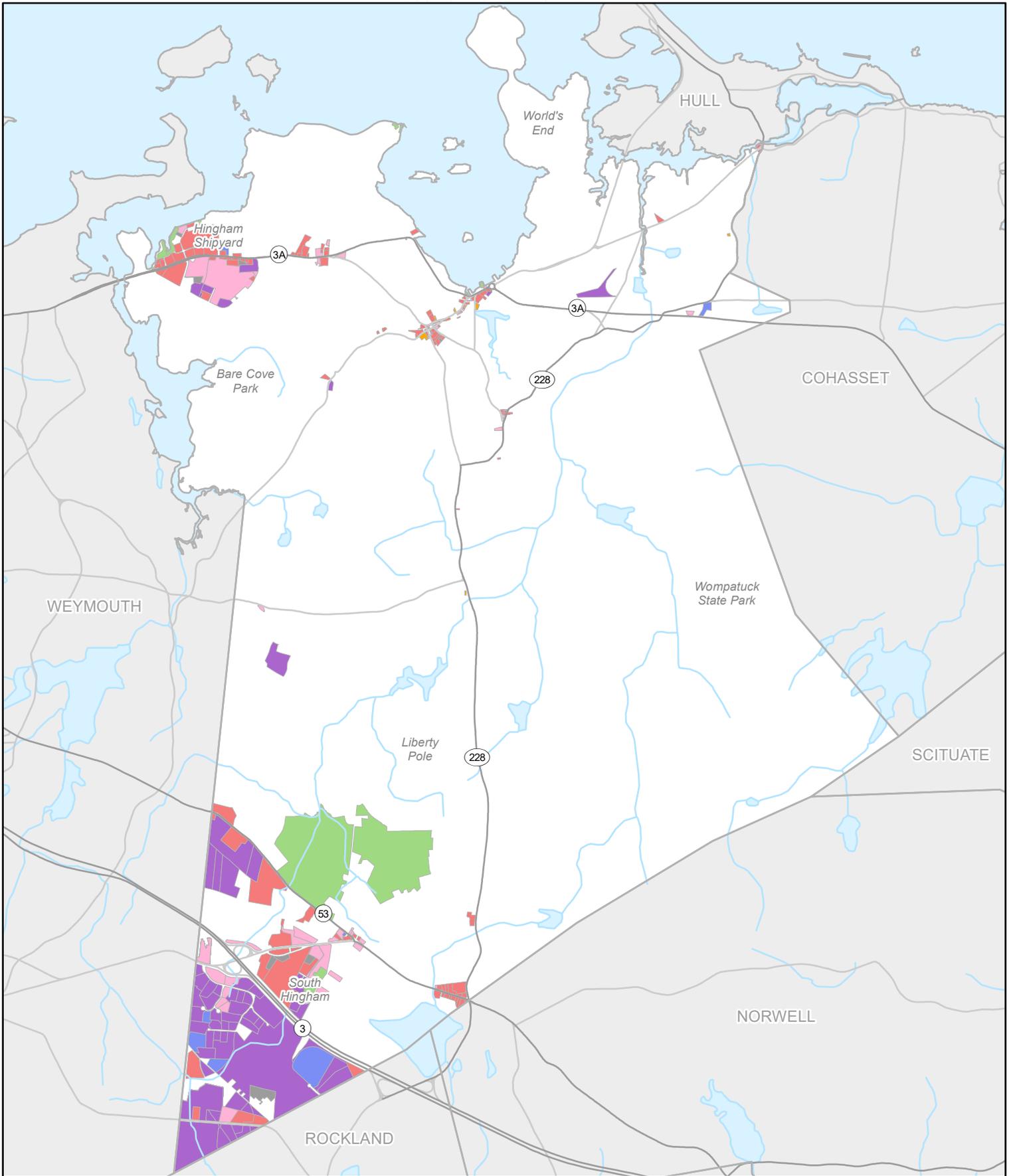
- Support the downtown business association and encourage participation in marketing and branding efforts.
- Pursue/prioritize a boutique hotel in the downtown either as adaptive re-use or new construction.
- Target the commercial areas in the north and south gateways of Hingham for future eco-

economic development that will further diversify tax revenues while protecting traditional neighborhoods.

**Policy 5.6: Ensure that proposed developments provide mitigation and community benefits in order to maintain high-quality services and amenities in Hingham.**

**Recommendations:**

- Explore options for tying the density of larger-scale development (such as in South Hingham) to the provision of needed services and amenities to support that density and enhance the community beyond mitigating the development's particular impacts. For example, consider developing a "menu" of amenities and critical needs (such as affordable housing, open space, transportation demand management, etc., beyond what is otherwise required), each of which may provide a developer with additional density or other needed relief.
- Create an interdepartmental process for conducting development impact assessments on municipal services and measure overall cost-benefit analyses for the adjacent neighborhoods and the Town, overall, and advise on negotiations.
- Establish an interdepartmental mitigation group to represent Town departments to negotiate public benefit agreements with developers of large-scale projects.
- Work with regional municipal partners on critical resource preservation such as water and open space as well as shared participation in utility connections or improvements as appropriate.



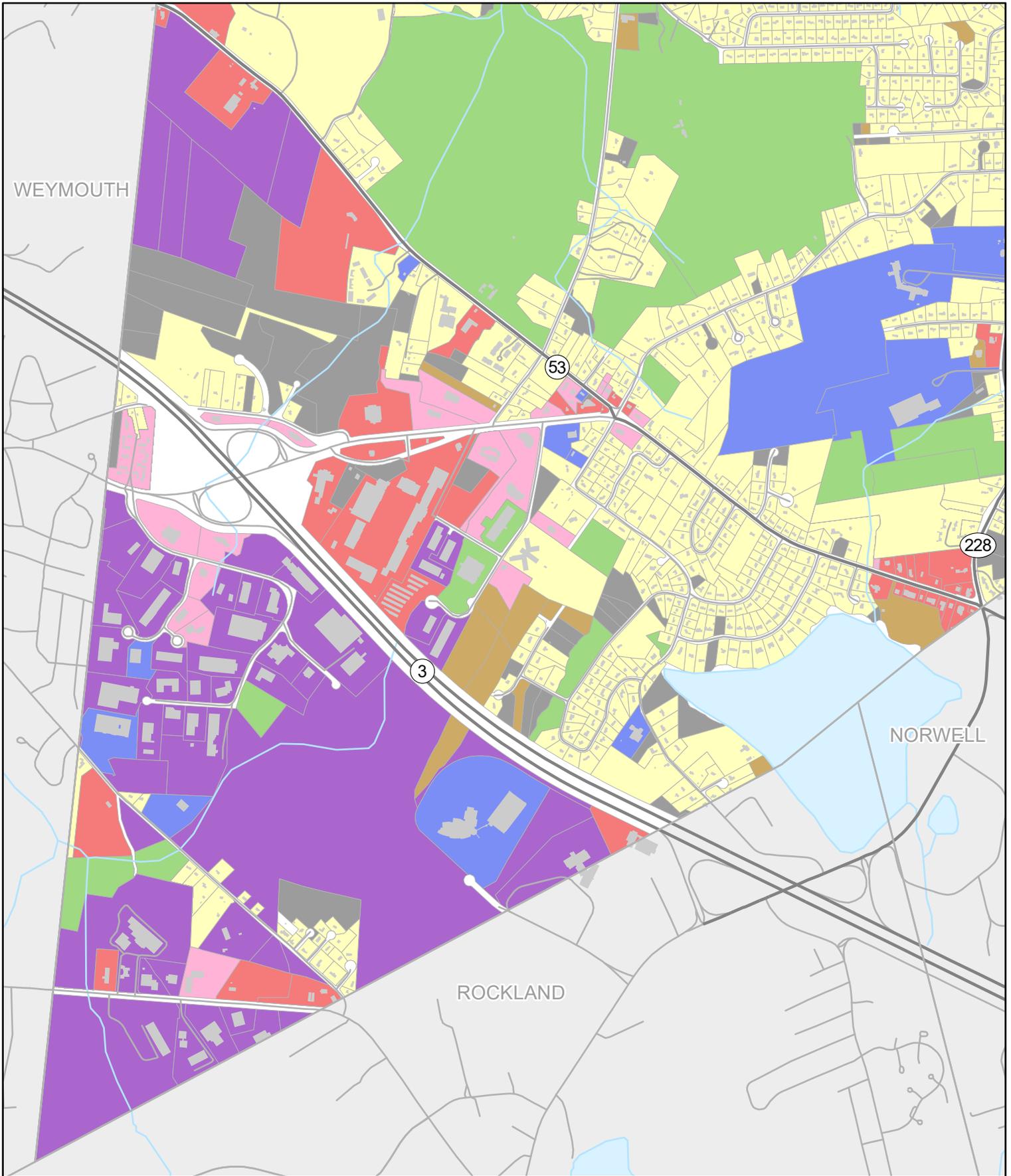
Map 9.1 Commercial and Industrial Land

- Commercial and Industrial Parcels, by Use Code
- Commercial
  - Vacant
  - Institutional
  - Office
  - Recreation
  - Industrial
  - Mixed Use

0 0.5 1  
Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of Hingham





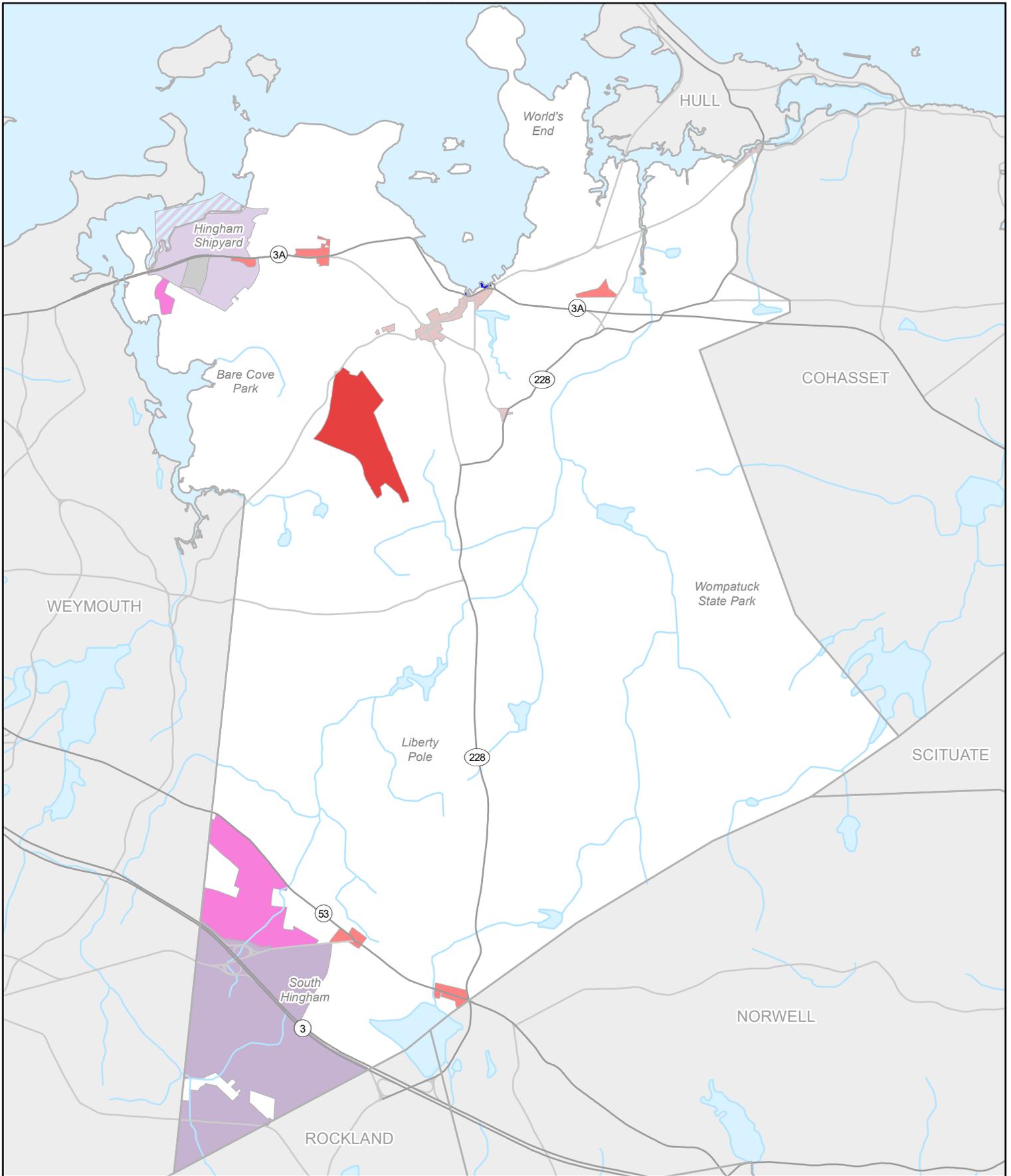
Map 9.2 South Hingham

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Building Footprint | Institutional             |
| Residential        | Office                    |
| Commercial         | Open Space and Recreation |
| Vacant             | Municipal                 |
|                    | Industrial                |

0 0.125 0.25  
Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information),  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of  
Hingham





**Map 9.3 Commercial and Industrial Zoning**

Business A	Industrial Park
Business B	Limited Industrial Park
Business Recreation	Office Park
Industrial	Waterfront Business
Industrial Extending into Waterfront	

0 0.5 1  
Mile

Source: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS and Town of Hingham



# 10 Implementation & Land Use

## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX KEY

### Responsibility Designation Codes

AC, Advisory Comm.;  
AHT, Affordable Housing Trust;  
BOH, Board of Health;  
CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force;  
CC, Conservation Comm.;  
COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services;  
CPC, Community Preservation Comm.;  
DC, Disability Comm.;  
DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering;  
FD, Fire Dept.;  
FM, Facilities Manager;  
HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.;  
HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.;  
HM, Harbormaster;  
HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant;  
MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.;  
PB, Planning Board;  
PD, Police Dept.;  
RC, Recreation Comm.;  
SB, Select Board;  
SBC, School Building Comm.;  
SC, School Comm.;

TA, Town Administrator;  
TC, Town Clerk;  
TCom, Traffic Committee;  
WRWS, Weir River Water System.

### Master Plan Element Codes

CHR, Cultural & Historic Resources  
ED, Economic Development  
HCR, Historic & Cultural Resources  
H, Housing  
NOS, Natural Resources & Open Space  
S, Sustainability  
T, Traffic & Circulation

### Land Use Plan Component

“X” identifies regulatory, infrastructure, or other policy mechanism pertaining to land use, growth management

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

## GOAL 1. HONOR TOWN CHARACTER.

### Policy 1.1. Continue to document, prioritize, and protect historic buildings and resource areas.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Improve the condition of town-owned historic buildings; annually appropriate funds (CPC or other sources) to keep up with maintenance.	CHR; CSF	SB; CPC		Moderate	Ongoing	Planning Funding	3
Explore alternative approaches to protecting historically significant buildings from demolition, including extending the term of the existing Demolition Delay Bylaw.	CHR	HHC	X	Moderate	Near future	Regulatory	3
Retain single-family development patterns in established neighborhoods in order to preserve character.	H	PB	X	Difficult	Ongoing	Regulatory	3
Build on existing efforts to identify new or expanded Local Historic Districts to ensure further protection of historic properties and consider tiered level of districts to address evolving historic/age designations of neighborhoods.	CHR	HHC	X	Moderate	Ongoing	Planning Regulatory	3
Establish a Town Archives program; identify a storage location, develop a cataloging system for town records and other historical documents and artifacts, engage in document conservation, hire a professional archivist to carry out these tasks, appropriate funds to implement the program.	CHR; CSF	SB, TA, HHC, TC		Moderate	Ongoing	Programmatic Funding	3
Evaluate the condition and business viability of Hingham's privately owned small cemeteries and their future.	CHR	SB, HHC, DPW		Moderate	Medium-term	Planning Funding	3

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 1.2. Provide stewardship of priority open space and natural resources area, connecting passive and active recreation lands wherever appropriate and possible.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Better define and beautify Hingham’s approaches, or its “gateways” by installing signs, adding planting, and upgrading other landscape features.	CT; NOS	SB, DPW	X	Moderate	Ongoing	Funding	4
Increase the protection of historic trees, stone walls, and other landscape features by strengthening and making clearer the existing Scenic Road regulations.	CHR	PB	X	Moderate	Near future	Regulatory	4
Identify measures to strengthen regulations related to water quality and quantity.	NOS; S	PB; CC, WRWS	X	Moderate	Near future	Regulatory	4
Appropriate funds to acquire land that connects existing open space parcels when they become available, consistent with the Town’s OSRP.	NOS	SB, CC, RC	X	Not complicated	Difficult	Funding	4
Establish a policy regarding the design of public playgrounds, with a focus on using recyclable/ renewable materials.	NOS; CSF	RC, DPW		Not complicated	Medium-term	Planning Funding	4

**Policy 1.3. Increase vibrancy of the harbor for residents and visitors and improve connectivity to the Downtown.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Develop a wayfinding signage plan and information kiosks to direct visitors to destinations at the harbor and Downtown.	TC	HDIC, DPW		Moderate	Medium-term	Planning Funding	7
Conduct a town-wide sign inventory.	TC	DPW		Moderate	Medium-term		7
Make sidewalks ADA-accessible for all users	TC	DC, DPW		Moderate	Near future	Funding	7
Evaluate providing bike lanes/accommodations and streetscape improvements on roadways between the harbor and Downtown.	TC	SB, Eng, DPW	X	Moderate	Near future	Planning Funding	7
Consider repurposing travel lanes/parking lanes in Downtown to increase outdoor dining and pedestrian capacity and safety.	TC, ED	DPW	X	Moderate	Moderate	Funding	7

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 1.4. Develop a strategic plan for public and private historic preservation and heritage tourism.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Appropriate funds and engage a preservation planner to develop a 20-year town-wide Preservation Plan to help guide preservation decisions. Such a plan should involve and share coordination with town commissions, including the Historical Commission and the Historic Districts Commission, as well as private preservation organizations, such as the Hingham Historical Society.	CHR	HHC	X	Moderate	Medium-term	Planning Funding	3
Expand efforts to educate new and prospective owners of historic properties about best practices and guidelines/requirements for historic building preservation and homeownership of historic properties; establish partnerships with the real estate community and other welcome organizations and develop a newcomer/homeowner education program.	CHR	HHC		Moderate	Near future and ongoing	Planning Programmatic	3
Include historic/heritage tourism a part of Hingham's economic development plans; collaborate regionally with other communities to advance and develop a heritage tourism implementation plan.	ED; CHR	HHC; HDIC		Complicated	Medium- or longer-term	Planning Funding	3
Support long-term efforts to designate Downtown as a Cultural District, connecting the harbor, downtown businesses, and historical organizations.	ED; CHR	HHC; HDIC	X	Moderate	Longer-term	Planning Regulatory	3
Establish a partnership with a nearby college or university to study Hingham's historic resources further and to store and manage Hingham data.	CHR	HHC, TC		Moderate	Longer-term	Funding Programmatic	3

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 1.5. Facilitate open communication and coordination among all Town boards and committees to advance the Master Plan’s goals and better serve the residents.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee reporting to the Planning Board to help coordinate implementation of this Master Plan.	All	PB	X	Not complicated	Immediate	Planning	1
Hold an annual “Master Plan Summit “ with leaders/ representatives of all town boards, committees, and staff to assess the status of master plan implementation, share priorities, plans, and progress on master plan recommendations, and consider possible amendments to the Plan if warranted by unforeseen conditions.	All	MPIC	X	Moderate	Ongoing	Programmatic	1
Set up an Annual “State of the Plan” report to update town meeting in writing on the status of implementation of the recommendations.	All	MPIC	X	Not complicated	Ongoing	Planning	1
Increase and build on the tradition of volunteerism to ensure the continued core commitment to self-governance and participation; recruit volunteers from all age groups, approach newcomers, and be proactive about explaining volunteer opportunities. (See 1-F)	CSF	SB		Moderate	Ongoing		1
Use technology to encourage residents to participate in Town government.	CSF	SB, TA		Complicated	Immediate	Funding	1
Convene semi-annual meetings of chairs of all boards, commissions, and committees to share information on activity and measure progress toward the Master Plan goals.	All	SB, PB	X	Not complicated	Ongoing		1

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 1.6. Value diversity and inclusiveness in our community.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Establish a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.	CSF	SB		Moderate	Immediate	Programmatic	8
Actively recruit and hire underrepresented populations to enhance diversity of Town employees and volunteers.	CSF	TA		Not complicated	Ongoing	Programmatic	8
Support the Town's 50+year commitment to welcoming METCO students and families in the Hingham Public Schools.	CSF	SC		Not complicated	Ongoing	Programmatic	8

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

## GOAL 2. PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND PREPARE FOR THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

### Policy 2.1. Prepare and implement a comprehensive plan to address and adapt to climate change.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Maintain a Climate Action Plan Task Force responsible for developing a climate action plan.	S	SB		Not complicated	Near future	Programmatic Funding	5
Develop a public visioning workshop to collect input on community priorities for the climate action plan.	S	CAPTF		Not complicated	Near future	Programmatic Funding	5

### Policy 2.2. Establish goals to achieve Carbon Neutral status by 2050.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Continue to explore a path to “carbon neutrality.”	S; NOS	SB		Not complicated	Ongoing		5
Investigate and develop strategies for reducing emissions to the greatest extent possible, including potentially a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, and explore options for offsetting the remainder as feasible.	S; CSF	SB		Moderate	Medium-term and ongoing	Planning Funding	5
Invest in a framework for tracking and evaluating progress over time.	S	SB		Complicated	Medium-term and ongoing	Funding	5

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

### Policy 2.3. Protect critical public infrastructure along the coast from sea level rise.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Proactively budget for and implement the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness project recommendations and the Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment, and Adaptation Study.	S; CSF, NOS	SB, AC		Complicated	Near term and ongoing	Funding	5
Increase the height of the existing seawalls, other coastal stabilization structures, and adjacent upland; and continue ongoing maintenance of existing seawalls and related structures. Educate private property owners to improve private seawalls and related structures; and maximize the protective ecosystem functions of adjacent salt marshes and other natural resources.	S; CSF, NOS	SB, DPW, PB	X	Complicated	Near term and ongoing	Funding Regulatory	5
Implement resiliency improvement and critical protections to sewer pump stations, including installing watertight mitigation gates, improvements to pump station buildings, and sealing of manhole covers.	S; CSF	SB, WRWS, DPW	X	Moderate	Medium-term and ongoing	Funding	5
Protect the quality and quantity of potable groundwater and surface water supply by identifying additional water supply sources unlikely to be affected by sea-level rise, establishing emergency water distribution sites, and educating private well owners about the risks of sea-level rise.	S; CSF, NOS	WRWS	X	Moderate	Medium-term	Funding Regulatory	5

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 2.4. Reduce energy and water consumption by residents, businesses, and town government.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Consistent with the town budget, identify resources, and continue to meet and seek opportunities to exceed the 2020 Massachusetts Green Communities criteria and actively implement the Town’s Energy Reduction Plan.	S; CSF	SB, HMLP		Moderate	Ongoing	Funding	5
Investigate adopting a “net-zero” policy for new municipal construction and evaluate a budget strategy to accomplish this goal.	S; CSF	SB, TA		Complicated	Medium-term	Programmatic Funding	5
Find more energy-efficient options for replacing municipal vehicles exempt from the Fuel-Efficient Vehicle policy.	S; CSF	TA, DPW		Moderate	Ongoing	Planning Funding	5
Develop an energy and water use reduction campaign, with resources targeted to municipal staff and facilities, businesses and institutions, and residents. Focus on changing the daily habits of individuals that cumulatively make a difference over time.	S, CSF, ED	WRWS		Complicated	Near future and ongoing	Programmatic Funding	5
Install electric vehicle charging stations at public properties and work with local businesses and institutions to install them. Consider an addition to the Zoning Bylaw to require EV charging stations at commercial developments. Dedicate parking spaces for electric vehicles at prominent public facilities such as Town Hall and the Library.	S, ED	PB; DPW; HDIC	X	Moderate	Medium-term	Funding Regulatory	5

**Policy 2.5. Enhance public access to the harbor and its amenities while protecting the coastline.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Plan and budget for adequate dredging of the harbor at least once every ten years and include dredging of the bathing beach swimming area with future dredging projects to improve the beach’s recreational use.	S, CSF, ED, NOS	SB, HM		Moderate	Medium-term and ongoing	Funding	5
Redesign and restore the wharves and related harbor infrastructure to be more resilient in the face of projected sea-level rise, following recommendations from the Climate Change study.	S; CSF	SB, Eng., HM		Complicated	Near term	Funding	5

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

### GOAL 3. IMPROVE SAFETY FOR ALL MODES OF TRAVEL AND REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION.

#### Policy 3.1. Improve safety for all modes of travel and reduce traffic congestion.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Continue to fund the maintenance of roads, intersections, and sidewalks primarily through MassDOT Chapter 90.	T	SB, DPW		Not complicated	Ongoing	Funding	7
Continue the Pavement Management Program, which was allocated \$2 million in 2016.	T	SB, DPW		Not complicated	Ongoing	Funding	7
Conduct a Pedestrian and Bicycle Study to improve safety, accessibility, connectivity, and mobility for active transportation.	T; CSF, NOS	TCom, DPW	X	Moderate	Near future	Planning	7
Develop consistent standards for crosswalks for different areas, including dimensions and materials, to address varied safety needs, with added features as needed.	T	PD, TCom, DPW		Not complicated	Near future	Planning	7
Evaluate the need for new traffic signals at high traffic and high crash intersections along Main Street to improve safety.	T	TCom, DPW		Not complicated	Near future	Planning Funding	7
Implement a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan through MassDOT's Complete Streets Funding Program.	T	SB, TCom, DPW	X	Not complicated	Near future	Funding	7
Develop a Traffic Calming Policy and Guidelines to help reduce traffic speeds and cut-through traffic on residential streets.	T	SB, TCom, DPW		Not complicated	Near future	Planning Funding	7
Consider designating a 20 MPH safety zone in the Downtown area.	T; CSF, ED	TCom, PD		Not complicated	Near future	Programmatic	7
Consider to opt-in to G.L. c. 90 Sec. 17C to reduce the statutory speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph in thickly settled or business districts.	T; ED	TCom, PD		Moderate	Near future	Programmatic	7

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

### Policy 3.1. Improve safety for all modes of travel and reduce traffic congestion, cont'd.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Support road safety improvements related to the Route 3A road improvement project.	T	SB		Moderate	Near future	Funding	7
Work with Traffic Committee to identify potential locations for a Road Safety Audits in high crash locations.	T	TCom, DPW, PD		Not complicated	Near future	Planning	

### Policy 3.2. Enhance public transportation services connecting parts of town, particularly linking the downtown to the Shipyard and Harbor.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Consider developing a shuttle bus or micro-transit pilot program to provide service for residents to local destinations, business districts, and regional connections.	T; ED	SB, HDIC		Complicated	Longer term	Funding	7
Evaluate options for providing first-mile/last-mile connections to transit stations.	T; ED	SB; HDIC		Complicated	Longer term		7

### Policy 3.3. Pursue public-private partnerships to coordinate public transport and traffic to benefit the commercial districts.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Work with large employers, business parks, and developers to implement strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicles. This may include carpooling, shuttle vans, flexible work hours, and subsidized transit passes.	T; ED	PB; HDIC	X	Moderate	Near term	Regulatory	7

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## GOAL 4. PROVIDE A VARIETY OF HOUSING TO ENCOURAGE POPULATION DIVERSITY AND AGING IN THE COMMUNITY.

### Policy 4.1. Provide for the development of housing appropriately designed, managed, and located for older adults and people with disabilities.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Work with the Council on Aging (CoA), the Health Department, and local social service organizations to identify properties appropriate for group residences for adults with disabilities.	H	AHT; DC		Moderate	Medium-term	Funding	6
Consider designating Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for use by the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) to acquire, renovate, and lease or sell existing homes to group residence organizations.	H	AHT; DC; CPC		Moderate	Medium-term	Funding	6
Identify opportunities for small scale developments and other types of “missing middle” housing.	H	PB	X	Difficult	Long-term	Regulatory	6
Explore options and policies to encourage the redevelopment of residential properties to serve older adults and those with disabilities.	H	PB; DC; COA/ES	X	Moderate	Medium-term	Regulatory	6

### Policy 4.2. Encourage Universal Design in new neighborhoods.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Encourage Universally Designed common areas and outdoor amenities in all-new high-density multi-unit residential and mixed-use developments	H	PB; DC, COA/ES	X	Easy	Near-term	Planning Regulatory	6
Encourage both Universal Design and visitability design in age-restricted developments.	H	PB; DC, COA/ES	X	Easy	Near-term	Regulatory	6
Adopt Universal Design guidelines as part of the site plan review requirements for commercial and mixed-use developments.	H, ED	PB; DC, HDIC	X	Easy	Near-term	Regulatory	6

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### Policy 4.3. Continue to create and preserve a range of housing affordable for a wide range of incomes.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Develop and implement a robust public education program about fair housing and affordable housing, including videos, panel-of-expert presentations, website materials, and periodic presentations at televised Select Board and Planning Board meetings.	H	AHT; SB		Moderate	Near term		6
Finish the Housing Plan and disseminate to Town boards and commissions.	H	PB, AHT		Difficult	Near term		6
Pursue enough funding and staff capacity for the Affordable Housing Trust to enable it to target a goal of at least five affordable units each year.	H; CSF	AHT; SB	X	Difficult	Near term and ongoing		6
Adopt an inclusionary housing bylaw that requires affordable units in all new residential or mixed-use developments over a certain size (e.g., six units), or requires a comparable financial contribution to the HAHT to produce the necessary units elsewhere in town.	H	PB	X	Moderate	Near term	Regulatory	6
Adopt a hotel room occupancy tax and explore other funding sources such as residential demolition fee to fund the Affordable Housing Trust.	H; CSF	SB		Difficult	Longer-term		6
Commit at least the 10 percent CPA set-aside for affordable housing directly to the Affordable Housing Trust each year, to be expended by the Trust for purposes consistent with the housing trust bylaw and G.L. c. 44, s. 55C.	H	CPC; AHT		Difficult	Near term		6
Conduct an annual inventory of Hingham's position relative to the state's SHI database to ensure the town remains above the current or future 40B thresholds	H	PB	X	Moderate	Ongoing		6

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

#### **Policy 4.4. Explore opportunities for creative retrofit of existing structures and infill development for a variety of housing.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Explore the possibility of allowing detached accessory dwelling units in some or all of the areas where accessory dwelling units are now allowed for family members, but not for rental.	H	PB, COA/ES, AHT	X	Moderate	Near term	Regulatory	6
Amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow for the conversion and adaptive reuse of existing commercial and institutional buildings for multi-family residential and/or mixed commercial/residential uses, in conjunction with performance standards for minimizing impacts on surrounding properties.	LU	PB	X	Moderate	Near term	Regulatory	6

#### **Policy 4.5. Regulate the form and scale of housing to encourage new homes to be compatible with older, established single-family neighborhoods.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Explore the option of establishing a maximum Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) for new construction in residential zoning districts, in order to control the massing of new homes.	H	PB	X	Moderate	Medium term	Regulatory	6
Explore other Zoning Bylaw amendments related to dimensional requirements for residential districts, including setting rear and side yard setbacks on a ratio based on building height and setting building height based on the average height of nearby buildings.	H	PB	X	Moderate	Medium term	Regulatory	6

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

## GOAL 5. SUPPORT A VIBRANT, RESILIENT LOCAL ECONOMY.

### Policy 5.1. Support local businesses and attract new enterprises that provide employment and deliver goods and services to residents and visitors alike.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Increase professional staff capacity in economic development and explore options to strengthen the role of the HDIC in economic development.	ED	SB; HDIC	X	Moderate	Near future	Funding	9
Develop consistent time regulations and restrictions for on-street parking in the Downtown Business District to encourage businesses' parking turnover.	ED; CSF	SB; PD; HDIC		Moderate	Near future	Programmatic	9
Conduct a study to evaluate the operational and financial feasibility of structured parking in downtown lots and at Shipyard.	ED	HDIC	X	Moderate	Medium-term	Planning Funding	9
As part of the senior center study, review and assess parking at the town hall and consider designating parking spaces at Town Hall for staff and visitors and identifying sign flow parking areas to optimize parking availability.	T; ED, CSF	SB		Moderate	Near future		9
Develop and conduct a business visitation program.	ED	SB		Difficult	Medium term	Programmatic	9

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 5.2. Attract nonresidential development to increase tax revenue.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Encourage HDIC and others to engage regional partners such as the South Shore Chamber of Commerce to increase local capacity consistent with the overall strategy.	ED	HDIC; SB		Not complicated	Near future and ongoing	Programmatic	9
Where appropriate, reduce special permit requirements and replace them with clear, predictable site plan approval standards.	ED	PB	X	Difficult	Medium term	Regulatory	9
Identify, track, and develop strategic responses to “at-risk” properties, i.e., sites considered “transformative” by the Town, with evidence of near-term change in ownership or use.	ED	PB; HDIC	X	Difficult	Near term	Planning Regulatory Funding	9
Hold a biannual Economic Development Advisory Summit, advisory to the town administrator, Select Board, economic development staff (if/when position is created), and HDIC to assist the Town with assessing industry trends and CRE conditions.	ED	HDIC, SB		Not complicated	Near term and ongoing	Programmatic Funding	9

**Policy 5.3. Encourage mixed-use development and a wide range of businesses and institutions in business districts.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Commission and periodically update a market analysis and trends assessment of Hingham’s business districts and review zoning for market-driven development impediments.	ED	HDIC	X	Moderate	Medium-term	Planning Funding	9
Consider Shared Parking arrangements between land uses with different parking characteristics to increase parking supply in the Downtown Business District.	ED	SB, PB	X	Moderate	Near future	Regulatory	9

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 5.4. Guide development to desired locations with regulatory incentives and adequate infrastructure.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Prioritize public facilities, utilities, and infrastructure improvements in locations targeted for concentrated development and redevelopment: Downtown/Harbor, Hingham Shipyard, and South Hingham.	CSF; ED	SB	X	Difficult	Ongoing	Funding	9
Conduct a zoning bylaw audit with an emphasis on making sure new development is targeted to desired locations and discouraged elsewhere.	ED, H	PB	X	Moderate	Near term	Funding Regulatory	9
On top of investments in water and wastewater capacity (see Goal 7), explore options for investing in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in South Hingham as an incentive for private development.	T; ED	SB; HDIC, DPW		Difficult	Near term	Funding	7, 9

**Policy 5.5. Promote Hingham as a destination and each commercial district as a unique experience, such as Hingham Square and other long-time commercial centers.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Support the downtown business association and encourage participation in marketing and branding efforts.	ED	HDIC		Moderate	Ongoing	Programmatic	9
Pursue/prioritize a boutique hotel in the downtown either as adaptive re-use or new construction.	ED	HDIC; PB		Moderate	Medium term	Planning Regulatory	9
Target the commercial areas in the north and south gateways of Hingham for future economic development that will further diversify tax revenues while protecting traditional neighborhoods.	ED	HDIC, PB	X	Not complicated	Ongoing	Planning Regulatory	9

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 5.6. Ensure that proposed developments provide mitigation and community benefits in order to maintain high-quality services and amenities in Hingham.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Explore options for tying the density of larger-scale development (such as in South Hingham) to the provision of needed services and amenities to support that density and enhance the community beyond mitigating the development's particular impacts. For example, consider developing a "menu" of amenities and critical needs (such as affordable housing, open space, transportation demand management, etc. beyond what is otherwise required), each of which may provide a developer with additional density or other needed relief.	ED; CSF, H	PB	X	Difficult	Near future	Regulatory	9
Create an interdepartmental process for conducting development impact assessments on municipal services and measure overall cost-benefit analyses for the adjacent neighborhoods and the Town, overall, and advise on negotiations.	ED; CSF	SB, PB	X	Moderate	Near future and ongoing	Programmatic	9
Establish an interdepartmental mitigation group to represent Town departments to negotiate public benefit agreements with developers of large-scale projects.	ED; CSF, H	SB, PB	X	Not complicated	Near future and ongoing	Programmatic	9
Work with regional municipal partners on critical resource preservation such as water and open space as well as shared participation in utility connections or improvements as appropriate.	ED; CSF	PB		Moderate	Near future and ongoing	Programmatic Funding	9

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

## GOAL 6. PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES THAT SUPPORT THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES.

### Policy 6.1. Achieve and deliver excellence in education and state-of-the-art school facilities.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Continue to make the replacement of the current Foster School a top priority.	CSF	SC, SB, SBC		Difficult	Short-term	Funding	8
Encourage robust participation in the School Committee's strategic planning process to fund excellent educational programs and update school buildings.	CSF	SC		Moderate	Short-term	Planning	8

### Policy 6.2. Provide facilities and services that support older adults to age in the community.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
During the current analysis of the future senior center, consider how creating an intergenerational Community Center could address multiple community needs, trigger additional funding sources, and benefit a wider range of constituencies.	CSF	SB; COA/ES		Difficult	Near future	Planning	8
Support Town Departments to work together to coordinate programming in order to meet the needs of older adults (e.g., The Recreation Department, Library, Schools, etc. to provide opportunities for recreation, lifelong learning, socializing, fitness and wellness, etc.).	CSF	COA/ES; SB		Moderate	Ongoing	Programmatic	8
Support Town Departments (Fire, Police, EMS, Town Nurse) as they experience an increase in calls for service from older adults as our population ages.	CSF	COA/ES; SB, BOH		Moderate	Medium-term	Programmatic Funding	8

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**Policy 6.3. Provide a range of opportunities for cultural, recreational, leisure, and social activities for all ages and abilities.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Once the Athletic Fields Study is approved and finalized, evaluate the recommended additional recreational opportunities / facilities.	CSF, NOS	RC		Moderate		Funding	4, 8
Maintain existing recreational facilities and undertake a plan for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance at all playgrounds.	CSF, NOS	RC, SC		Not complicated	Ongoing	Funding	4, 8
Provide new parks and playgrounds in underserved and more densely populated neighborhoods as needed or requested.	CSF, NOS	RC	LU	Moderate	Ongoing	Funding	8
Create a Community Calendar by centralizing information regarding existing offerings, activities, and facilities from various Town Departments (including Recreation, the Library, Council on Aging, Community Center).	CSF	SB		Not complicated	Ongoing	Programmatic	8

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

#### Policy 6.4. Support the health and wellness of the most vulnerable residents in Hingham.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Evaluate capacity of the Dept. of Health/ Board of Health to address current and future public health issues such as mental health, immunization, domestic abuse, food access, communicable disease surveillance, and drug, alcohol, and tobacco control, and overall community communications and monitoring.	CSF	BOH; SB		Moderate	Medium term		8
Conduct a community needs assessment to identify gaps in health and social services for current and future residents as certain groups are more susceptible to health issues than others and should get particular attention from the Health Department. This includes seniors, residents with disabilities, and lower-income families and individuals.	CSF	BOH		Moderate	Medium-term	Planning Funding	8
Explore an opt-in home safety visitation program to regularly check in on the elderly, the homebound, and other vulnerable populations, with the goal of avoiding preventable accidents and health problems. Promote the opportunity for such as service through all channels (the Senior Center, Community Center, Library, etc.) and identify resources to keep each resident healthy and safe and develop a systematic way to identify participants.	CSF; H	BOH; FD, COA/ ES		Moderate	Near future	Funding	8
Explore the regulatory landscape, financial implications, and need for a community paramedicine program. Paramedics and EMTs may be deployed to conduct preventive care to vulnerable residents to reduce preventable accidents and trips to the hospital. Such programs are in their early phases, and Hingham should monitor their legal status and success in Massachusetts.	CSF	BOH; FD, COA/ ES		Moderate	Longer term	Funding	8

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**Policy 6.5. Monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and plan for future public health events that may impact the Town’s ability to deliver services.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Learn from COVID-19 hotspots in Hingham, such as assisted living facilities and nursing homes, and be prepared to help deploy more frequent testing to these vulnerable populations in the event of future outbreaks.	CSF	BOH		Moderate	Immediate	Programmatic Funding	8
Seek input and recommendations from BOH and Health Officer on how the Town can be better prepared in the future. Identify where the Town was successful in delivering services and functions and where gaps existed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be more prepared to store personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, in quantities not only large enough to serve Town staff but also vulnerable populations.	CSF	BOH		Moderate	Near future	Funding	8
Begin talking with neighboring communities and state and regional partners about roles and collaboration necessary for better future responses. Establish a clear chain of command, so the Town knows when to rely on the State and where it needs to increase local resources to handle things internally.	CSF	BOH, SB		Moderate	Medium term	Programmatic	8

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## GOAL 7. PROVIDE PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUPPORT THE TOWN’S NEED TO MANAGE GROWTH AND TOWN SERVICES.

### Policy 7.1. Conduct long-range capital planning and service delivery with the foresight to anticipate and address future needs.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Establish a process for long-term capital planning and investigate the establishment of a Permanent Building and Facilities Management Study Committee to explore alternative approaches to prioritize and manage capital improvement projects.	CSF	SB		Moderate	Ongoing	Programmatic	8
Use the recently funded Townwide Facilities Study, once it is completed, to help set priorities. Develop criteria for capital expenditure priority setting.	CSF	SB, TA		Moderate	Near future	Funding	8
Utilize technology, including Geographic Information Systems, to support long-range planning efforts. Also, increase cybersecurity capabilities in order to protect against ransomware attacks, replace the fiber in the 16 municipal buildings, and investigate best practices for deploying 5G technology.	CSF	SB, PB	X	Moderate	Ongoing	Funding	8
Retain ownership of town-owned properties to help fill any anticipated future facility needs.	CSF	SB		Moderate	Ongoing		8

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**Policy 7.2. Explore opportunities for instituting planned preventive maintenance (PPM), with prudent and transparent budgeting that considers future maintenance and replacement costs.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Consider hiring a Facilities Manager.	CSF	SB		Moderate	Near future	Funding	8
Develop a preventive maintenance strategy for Town buildings and other major facilities and carry out regular and scheduled maintenance that is cost-saving in the long-run.	CSF	SB, FM		Moderate	Near future	Funding	8
Clarify maintenance responsibilities for town-owned facilities and properties.	CSF	SB, RC, SC, FM		Not complicated	Near future	Programmatic	8

**Policy 7.3. Provide adequate spaces to support municipal facilities in their missions.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Support the Fire Department's plans to renovate and modernize aging fire stations.	CSF	SB, FD, AC		Difficult	Medium-term	Funding	8
As part of the Senior Center Study, consider creating an intergenerational Community Center for all ages, following models on other towns to create efficiencies, address multiple department and community needs, trigger additional funding sources, and create a more vibrant and widely utilized facility.	CSF	SB, COA/ES		Difficult	Medium-term	Programmatic Planning Funding	8
Evaluate space freed up by the relocation of the Police Department to the new Public Safety Complex to support expansion of other departments located in Town Hall.	CSF	SB, COA/ES		Not complicated	Medium-term	Planning	8

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

#### Policy 7.4. Increase wastewater treatment capacity.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Explore public or private alternative wastewater treatment solutions, especially in order to accommodate and support development in South Hingham.	CSF	SB, PB, HDIC	X	Moderate	Near future	Funding	8
Continue to replace aging pipes and address infiltration and inflow issues.	CSF	DPW		Moderate	Ongoing	Funding	8

#### Policy 7.5. Support the Hingham Municipal Light Plant and Weir River Water System in their efforts to increase capacity and conserve resources.

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Support the plans of the HMLP to add another transmission and sub-station to reduce the Town's carbon footprint and increase capacity to accommodate the trend towards electric cars, buses, home heating, and other uses.	S; CSF	HMLP; SB, AC		Moderate	Medium-term	Funding	5
Work with HMLP to better promote existing incentives for electric vehicles, energy efficiency, and renewable energy including solar, and explore opportunities for additional incentives for these and other resources. Determine how HMLP may participate in existing incentive programs for consumers/residents.	S; CSF	HMLP; SB		Not complicated	Near future	Planning Programmatic	5
Work with the Weir River Water System water superintendent (under the advisement of the citizen's advisory board) to regularly forecast water needs and have a long-term plan for managing and expanding capacity.	S; CSF	WRWS	X	Moderate	Ongoing	Planning	5
Work with the utilities on a coordinated public resource conservation campaign, promoting ways and incentives for individual homes and businesses to reduce their energy use.	S; CSF	HMLP, WRWS; SB, HDIC,		Not complicated	Near future	Programmatic	5
Support Weir River Water System to address existing deficiencies and conduct system upgrades to meet existing and future needs, to assess future water demand and water storage needs based on existing and projected supply and demands.	S; CSF	WRWS; SB, AC	X	Moderate	Ongoing	Funding	5

Key: AC, Advisory Comm.; AHT, Affordable Housing Trust; BOH, Board of Health; CAPTF, Climate Action Plan Task Force; CC, Conservation Comm.; COA/ES, Council on Aging/Elder Services; CPC, Community Preservation Comm.; DC, Disability Comm.; DPW, Dept. Public Works; Eng., Engineering; FD, Fire Dept.; FM, Facilities Manager; HDIC, Hingham Development & Industrial Comm.; HHC, Hingham Historical Comm.; HM, Harbormaster; HMLP, Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant; MPIC, Master Plan Implementation Comm.; PB, Planning Board; PD, Police Dept.; RC, Recreation Comm.; SB, Select Board; SBC, School Building Comm.; SC, School Comm.; TA, Town Administrator; TC, Town Clerk; TCom, Traffic Committee; WRWS, Weir River Water System.

**Policy 7.6. Lead in the regionalization of services on the South Shore when it is in the Town's interests to do so.**

Recommendations	Elements	Responsibility	Element of Land Use Plan	Level of Complexity	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Chapter
Explore possibilities of sharing facilities and/or services with area towns to increase efficiency and cost savings (for example, regional wastewater treatment solutions).	CSF; S	SB		Not complicated	Medium term	Programmatic	8
Enlist regional partners and the State to participate in the planning, funding and implementation of interventions to address sea level rise.	CSF; S	SB; PB, CC	X	Difficult	Near future and ongoing	Funding	8

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