

# INFRASTRUCTURE



# I AMesbury 2030

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Mayor Cassandra Gove created the I AMesbury 2030 Task Force to help our community plan for the future. This group is spending two years (2021-2022) gathering community feedback, evaluating our strengths and weaknesses and helping to determine where we collectively want Amesbury to be in the next 10 years.

I AMesbury 2030 is looking at every aspect of our community to make sure that we're moving forward with one vision. They are looking at eight elements: open space and recreation, learning, arts and culture, mobility, infrastructure, economic development, housing, and operations. They are considering each of these elements with three lenses top of mind: equity, health, and resilience / sustainability. These three key areas are an important consideration to incorporate into every aspect of the 2030 plan.

As the Task Force completes an element, they release a short document to share some background, research and goals. These short documents reflect the work and findings that will be found in the complete, comprehensive document, which will be released at the end of this process in 2023.

**We hope this document sheds light on the work of the Task Force, with the understanding that this document will not have all the answers. We look forward to sharing the full, comprehensive plan with you in 2023!**



## **I AMesbury 2030 Task Force**

Mary Chatigny, Co-Chair

Brittany Steingesser, Co-Chair

Peter Frey

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# Our Vision for Infrastructure

A strong infrastructure system will support priorities for land use enabling the City to grow and develop strategically as a vibrant and resilient community with a diverse tax base. Our infrastructure planning will account for roads, sidewalks, water, wastewater, municipal technology and our buildings. The safety and dependability of these systems is critical to the quality of life we provide to our residents and businesses.

# **GOAL:** Create and follow a comprehensive capital plan that includes infrastructure projects and revenue projections that provides transparency and long term planning.

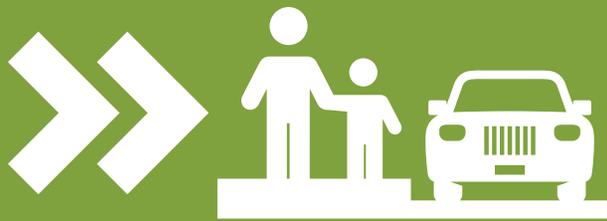


In November of 2023, the city voted to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The CPA establishes a dedicated funding source to acquire, create and preserve open space, historic resources, land for recreational use, and affordable housing.

## **Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Apply for a Community Compact Best Practices Grant to seek outside expertise in creating a capital investment plan.
- Build a system of knowledge sharing between the Office of Community and Economic Development, Inspectional Services and Assessor's Office to accurately forecast and capture New Growth.
- Prioritize appropriations from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to support these improvements as applicable.
- All supporting infrastructure plans will be developed in alignment with the capital investment plan.
- Complete a rate study and provide accurate billing and revenue for sewer and water service and improvements and recommendations for other fees as applicable.

# **GOAL:** Improve roadway and sidewalk infrastructure and accommodations for multi-modal transit supporting the goals of our Mobility Element.

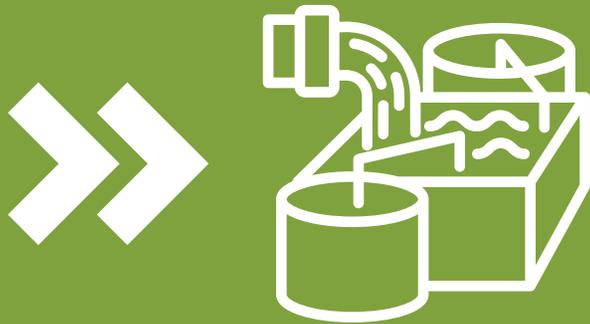


In November of 2023, City Council voted and accepted a revision to the special stabilization fund created in 2013 which will allow receipts from local meal taxes to be set aside in a fund dedicated to sidewalk and road repairs in Amesbury.

## **Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Amend the Council Bill establishing a streets and sidewalks revolving fund utilizing meals tax to appropriate those funds subsequent to MGL updates in 2016.
- Increase staffing levels and training to enable regular ongoing improvements in accordance with a pavement index and identified priorities. Review and update city's design standards for new roads and sidewalks.
- Prepare a sidewalk capital plan that prioritizes connections between points of interest and main corridors.

**GOAL:** Improve aging public water distribution system, any wastewater collection system, and other subsurface infrastructure in a planned and coordinated manner relative to roadway surface improvements.

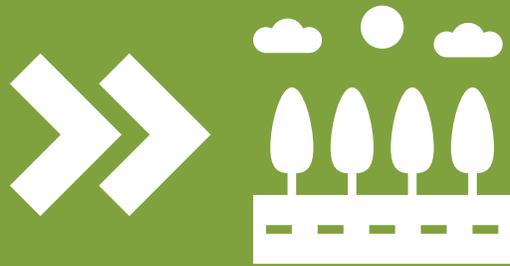


In the December 2022 Infrastructure survey, water infrastructure was rated residents' highest priority for future improvements. This includes protection of our water supply, operation of the water treatment plant, and installing new delivery pipelines.

**Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Prioritize water and sewer infrastructure in the capital plan to properly sequence and maximize our investment in roadway and sidewalk infrastructure.
- Document age of subsurface infrastructure city-wide to ensure continuity of planning within the public works department and protect institutional knowledge.

## **GOAL:** Ensure that future land use and development aligns with infrastructure and roadway capacity through coordinated staff and board processes.



Climate conscious infrastructure is essential in managing and minimizing climate change risks and impacts in our city, and it can aid in reducing costs over time. A study by the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions estimates that every dollar invested in pre-disaster infrastructure can save up to \$11 in costs as opposed to post-disaster repairs. Examples of climate conscious infrastructure include resilient power grid construction, permeable pavement, and bioswales.

[www.c2es.org/document/investing-in-resilience/](http://www.c2es.org/document/investing-in-resilience/)

### **Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Improve coordination with staff and board processes utilizing the Technical Review Committee.
- Refine the Technical Review Committee process to ensure consistency between departments and land use boards as projects are evaluated and local needs are addressed.
- Increase staff resources to prepare and respond to climate change impacts by hiring an expert in the field of sustainability and resilience.

**GOAL:** Provide municipal services in buildings that meet the needs of the community, are accessible, and respect the age and character of the buildings themselves.



In the 2022 Infrastructure survey, 161 residents voiced their concerns about the state of our municipal buildings. Some of the top concerns include accessibility to the library, rehabbing the Ordway building and school buildings..

**Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Complete a Feasibility Study for Downtown Municipal Buildings and align short and long term decisions with recommendations that allow for consolidated services, improved efficiency, a safe working environment and better access for all.
- Expand facilities staff and resources to regularly evaluate and perform minor repairs on city buildings and property and include estimated costs in operating and capital improvement budgets.

**GOAL:** To support municipal operations, the internet, phones, websites and other technology will be kept up to date to enable successful service delivery.



Amesbury is in the process of sourcing and implementing a customer relationship management system. We heard from many residents that information about the permitting process can be difficult to find. A review and update is being made to the OpenGov platform to include more permits, and be more prominent on the city website.

**Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Pilot and explore the expansion of technology devices and support to regulatory board and commission members to enable streamlined and improved access to permitting software, application materials, files, and documentation to facilitate smooth operations and enable economic growth.
- Expand online permitting platform to include additional permits and offices.
- Establish an archival system for documentation and tracking of projects and files, digitizing existing files and establishing best practices for the future.
- Expand staff support for technology services to ensure security and operations are monitored and running smoothly. Follow best practices for user to support staff ratios.

# **GOAL:** Support public safety services that accommodate and meet the needs of Amesbury's population and changing land use.



As we approach 2030, Amesbury will continue to adapt to ensure safety in our municipality by evaluating and adjusting public safety staffing as our economic development, housing production, and population grows.

## **Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:**

- Develop a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan that includes consideration of fire flow, water & sewer modulating capacity, fleet and facility demands.
- Monitor staff levels for safety, best practices, demand, response, etc.
- Work with local, regional and national agencies on flood and disaster updates. Establish a local crisis response team.

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## Resources and Existing Plans

- [2004 Master Plan](#)
- [PAS-Report-599-Smart Cities](#)
- [PAS-Report-592 - Autonomous Vehicles](#)
- [HUD-Climate-Action-Plan](#)

## Community Input

- [Infrastructure Survey Results](#)

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