

I AMESBURY
2030
MASSACHUSETTS
Master Plan



NOTE

This is a draft copy of the plan and is pending acceptance by the Planning Board at their monthly meeting on April 22, 2024.

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Planning

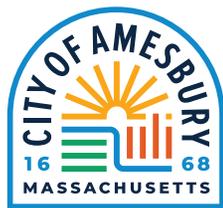
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Elements

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Administration

Kassandra Gove
Mayor

Ann Marie Casey
Chief of Staff

William Donohue
Communications Director

City Council

Scott Mandeville
President, At Large

Pamela Gilday
Vice President, District 1

Anthony S. Rinaldi
District 2

Owen Corcoran
District 3

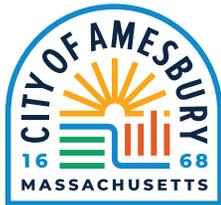
Nicholas Wheeler
District 4

Jessica Redfern
District 5

Michael Hogg
District 6 Councilor

Claudel Frederique
At Large

Steve Stanganelli
At Large



Directors

Joseph Buckley
Director, Department of
Public Works

Nicholas Cracknell
Director, Office of Community and
Economic Development

Nipun Jain
Planning Director

Planning Board

Pascal Rettig
Chair

David Frick
Vice Chair

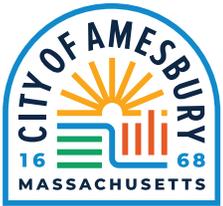
Michael Jewell

Lorri Krebs

Joel Nice

Keith Ratner

The I AMesbury 2030 task force would like to recognize the city of Amesbury former directors, city council members, and board members who contributed to the success of this plan.



Former Directors

Angela Cleveland
Director, Office of Community and
Economic Development

Rob Desmarais
Director, Department of
Public Works

Caitlin Thayer
Communications Director

Former City Council

Adrienne Lennon
Vice President, At Large

Jonathan Hickok
District 1

Roger Deschenes
District 3

Peter Frey
District 5

Former Planning Board

Scott Kelley

Robert Laplante

This plan was made possible by the hard work and dedication of a group of volunteers. Their commitment to this thorough and comprehensive “road map” for the future of the city of Amesbury, which spanned the course of three years, is a shining example of volunteerism and community involvement.

I AMesbury 2030 Task Force Members

Mary Chatigny, Co-Chair

Brittany Steingesser, Co-Chair

Peter Frey

Peggy Green

Ann McKay

Jonathan Miller

Michael Woo



Mary Chatigny has lived in Amesbury since 1986 raising three children with her husband Bill. She is a retired HR professional and throughout her life in Amesbury has volunteered to serve whether as City Councilor, Board President of the Amesbury Carriage Museum or in her upcoming role in 2024 as Library Trustee. Mary loves to travel and seek out new adventures. She enjoys walks on the rail trail, spending time at Salisbury Beach State Reservation, going to rock and jazz concerts with family and friends and reading, reading, reading.



Brittany Steingesser has lived in Amesbury with her husband, Dave, and pug, Franklin, since June 2020. An avid traveler, she always finds herself returning to the beauty and serene pace of Amesbury. She enjoys puzzles, sewing and seeing the sites in her RV “Annie the Vannie” in her pastime. Brittany is a sustainability professional, currently working in energy efficiency programs across the United States.



Peter Frey grew up in Portland, ME, graduated from Syracuse University with a degree in Biomedical Engineering in 2009, and settled in Amesbury with his wife, Becky, in 2016. They have raised 2 beautiful children and are navigating youth sports and extracurricular activities as their oldest starts at Shay Elementary School. He works as a field service engineer for life science research equipment. In his spare time, he enjoys attending music festivals and is an avid fan of the New England Patriots. Peter served on Amesbury’s City Council from 2021-2023 and is passionate about prioritizing improvements to Amesbury’s infrastructure and ensuring an equitable future for the community.



Peggy Green grew up in Merrimack, New Hampshire. She and her husband Devin (an Amesbury native), moved to Amesbury in 2018 with their dog Sadie, and now have two children, Victor and Josie. They spend most weekends involved in extracurricular activities with their kids and visiting with friends and family. Peggy loves music, traveling, art, concerts and festivals, and spending time outdoors – especially the ocean, where she dives in at least once a month, even in the winter. Peggy has a background in people management and specializes in leadership development and adult education. She consults with organizations to develop, customize, and facilitate programs for leaders and executive teams.



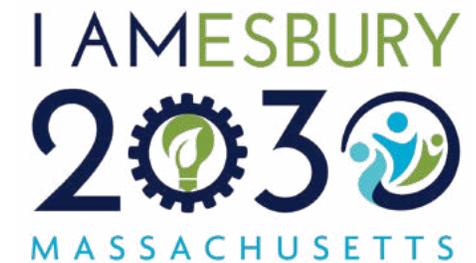
Ann McKay has lived in the Merrimack Valley since 1980 and is happy to call Amesbury home. Ann spends much of her time outdoors with her husband, children, and eight grandchildren and newest addition to her family, their puppy, BillyBob. A registered nurse, Ann spent many years practicing community and public health in the area. After living in the United Arab Emirates, Ann now is an adjunct nursing professor at Endicott College and Northern Essex Community College. She is enjoying volunteering and is a member of PACT and Co-Chairperson of the Amesbury Board of Health.



Jonathan Miller After earning an MFA in Theatre Engineering from the Yale School of Drama, Jonathan Miller enjoyed a 40 year career developing and managing not-for-profit theaters in Cambridge and Boston. Since 2017 he has served as a panelist for the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Cultural Facilities Fund. Upon retiring in 2016 he and his wife moved to Amesbury to be closer to family in the area and nearer to their summer retreat in Maine. The 2030 Task Force has deepened his interest in local history and Amesbury’s institutions.



Michael Woo attended both Amesbury Middle and High School. His first job was at Flatbread, working there throughout high school. From his involvement with the Rotary Club of Amesbury to the Chamber of Commerce, he has been an active community member before going to college to study business management and marketing at Lasell University. One of his favorite spots in Amesbury is the downtown. He loves seeing old and new faces around the city. He hopes that his perspective on the city has helped to generate new ideas and approaches you’ll see throughout the plan.



Task Force



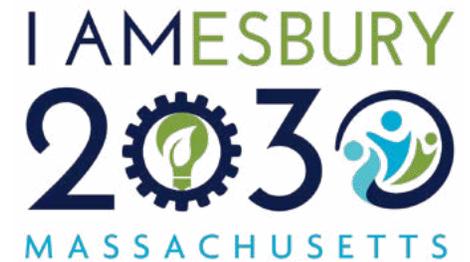
Mayor Cassandra Gove has been in office since 2020 and navigated challenges of the pandemic while taking a pragmatic approach to strategic economic development, investing in city infrastructure, improving communication and government transparency, and supporting our youth. A lifelong resident, she has always been passionate about the Amesbury community. She is the only Amesbury native to serve in the position, the youngest and the first female. When not conquering a mountain of emails she has found time to hike all the 48 New Hampshire 4,000 footers and Maine's tallest peak, Mount Katahdin.



William Donohue, having lived in New York, California, and Connecticut, moved to Amesbury in 2001 where he has since raised 3 children, all attending the Amesbury Public Schools. He enjoys the many cultural events Amesbury has to offer. He also enjoys the outdoors and spends a lot of time with family in the White Mountains. William currently works as the Director of Communications for the city of Amesbury. Despite living in Massachusetts for 20+ years, he remains a New York Yankees fan, much to his family's dismay.



Nick Cracknell, originally from Toronto Canada, has resided in Amesbury for nearly 30 years since becoming Amesbury's first City Planner in 1995. As an advocate for historic preservation and traditional architecture, Nick has spent most of his professional life working as an urban planner in the seacoast communities of Amesbury, Newburyport, and Portsmouth, NH. He currently works as Amesbury's Director of the Office of Community and Economic Development. Nick's outside interests include trekking with family and friends in the White Mountains and making frequent trips to Charleston, SC to study preservation efforts and its exceptional architectural heritage.



City Representatives

From the Mayor

Dear Residents of Amesbury,

I am thrilled to announce the unveiling of our city's new Master Plan, a comprehensive blueprint that charts the course for our community's growth and development towards the year 2030. I have to start by thanking the members of our task force, led by Co-Chairs Mary and Brittany, Peter, Peggy, Ann, Jonathan and Michael have done tremendous work to make this a reality.

When I took office in January of 2020 our team quickly decided that we needed to establish a way for the community to come together to build consensus and agree on what made Amesbury unique and how we can harness that as we moved forward into the future. In March of 2020 our work took a turn towards responding to a global health crisis. However, it only made this master planning initiative more important. We wanted to be thoughtful and bold about the way Amesbury would rebound from this crisis. Our task force was comprised of residents with varying professional and personal backgrounds. We also chose residents who have experienced Amesbury as children and young adults, some who have raised children here, and others who recently moved here as older adults. The group has had perfect attendance at nearly every meeting and took a pragmatic approach to drafting this plan for the future of Amesbury.

Before you sit down to read the full plan, I want you to know how we got here. First, the group did a deep dive into existing and past plans. They wanted to know what we have and haven't accomplished and why. Throughout this plan you might see things that you've seen before. If they haven't been accomplished but still came up in conversations and feedback from you, it was determined they still matter. Maybe we haven't had all the right pieces in place to see them come to fruition but they're still worth working towards.

The task force determined the elements and worked in subcommittees of trends and research, community engagement, vision and goals, and plan infrastructure. Each element included an opportunity for community feedback (a summit, a survey, a live event, etc.). That feedback led the group to draft goals which were worked through with staff to learn more about how their work would be impacted by the proposed goals and what they would need to be successful. From there the task force redrafted and published short docs or report cards for each element. As more elements were completed a review was done to see how they each impacted each other and how the selected lenses were represented, health, equity, and sustainability.

I intentionally called this plan I AMesbury 2030, pronounced I AM Amesbury. We consistently hear that what makes Amesbury special is the people who live here. I want you to see yourself in this plan. To think, "Wow, I've said that before", or "I've always thought that should happen", or "I'd love that option". This is a plan written by you, for you. It's both achievable and aspirational.

We lovingly refer to this as "not your average master plan". We didn't hire a firm to write it, but it was crafted with extensive input from citizens, stakeholders, and experts in urban planning. This plan reflects our collective vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive future for Amesbury. We wanted it to be easy to read, something that can be used with staff in our day-to-day operations and budget planning.

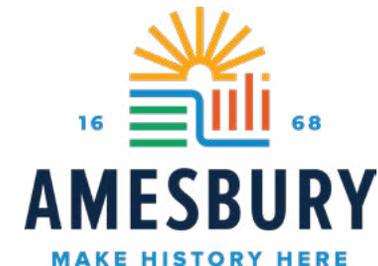
You will see in this plan our commitment to fostering a healthy and resilient community. We've included initiatives to expand access to recreational amenities, promote options for learning, encourage housing growth, and strengthen constituent services to support the well-being of all residents.

Again, I want to express my gratitude to all those who contributed to the development of this visionary Master Plan. By working together, we have laid the groundwork for a prosperous and sustainable future for our beloved city of Amesbury. As we embark on this journey of growth and transformation, I am confident that with continued collaboration and dedication, we will realize our shared vision for a brighter tomorrow. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to making Amesbury the best it can be.

Sincerely,



Kassandra Gove
Mayor of Amesbury



The City of Amesbury

Amesbury, Massachusetts, a charming city located in Essex County, boasts a rich history that dates back to the 17th century. Nestled along the banks of the Merrimack River, Amesbury is renowned for its picturesque landscapes and a blend of historic architecture that reflects its colonial roots. The city's historic downtown area is characterized by well-preserved buildings, some of which boast thriving businesses, while others provide a place to call home.

The city is perhaps most famous for its connection to the industrial revolution, as it was home to several mills and factories that played a pivotal role in shaping the region's economic landscape. This industrial heritage is evident in the red-brick mill buildings that still stand along the river, serving as a reminder of Amesbury's contribution to the country's industrial growth. Today, these historic structures have been redeveloped for various uses, such as residential lofts, art studios, and boutique shops, contributing to the city's vibrant cultural scene.

Amesbury is not only a place of historical significance but also a hub for outdoor enthusiasts. The city is surrounded by natural beauty, with ample opportunities for hiking, boating, and other recreational activities, making it a popular destination for residents and visitors alike.

In addition to its historical and recreational offerings, Amesbury takes pride in its close-knit community. The city hosts various events throughout the year, fostering a sense of camaraderie among its residents. From seasonal festivals to annual car shows, these community gatherings contribute to the warm and welcoming atmosphere that defines Amesbury, making it a place where both history and community converge to create a truly special experience.



“We don’t have to compare ourselves to other communities, but we do need to declare our own values and vision and set a path to keep us in line with those. Growth for the sake of growth is not the same as evolving to be more inclusive and engaged.”

- Amesbury Resident
Community Survey

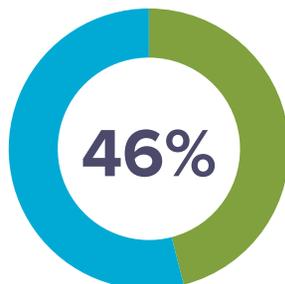
Amesbury at a Glance



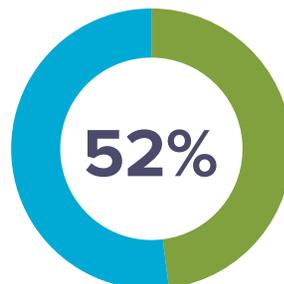
Total Population

17,286

Household Families



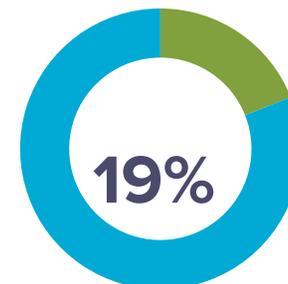
Married Couples



Singles



Seniors Living Alone



Household Income

Above \$200,000

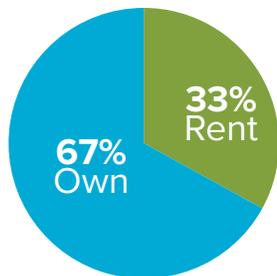
15%

Median Income

\$87,433

Below \$25,000

14%



Home Owners vs. Renters

Source: US Census Bureau 5-year ACS



Square Miles

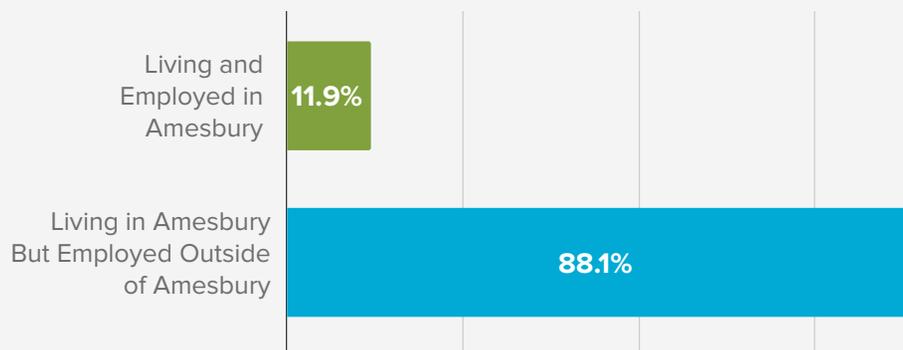
13.76



**900+
ACRES**

Recreation &
Conservation Space

Commute vs. Work in Amesbury



Source: OnTheMap



2021 Median Home Value

\$538,875

Source: Zillow Housing Market Research, January 2024



What is a Master Plan?

A city master plan is a comprehensive and strategic document that serves as a roadmap for the development and growth of a city or urban area. It is a vital tool used by urban planners, policymakers, and city officials to guide the physical, economic, social, and environmental development of a city over a specified time frame, typically ranging from 10 to 20 years or more. This plan is essential for ensuring that a city evolves in a sustainable, organized, and efficient manner, meeting the needs of its current and future residents.

Master plans are crafted through a meticulous and collaborative process that involves input from various stakeholders, including city officials, urban planners, architects, community groups, and residents. Public participation and feedback are crucial to ensure that the plan reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of the community it serves.

Organizers consider the unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities of the specific city or region in question. Factors such as population growth, economic trends, transportation demands, and environmental concerns are meticulously analyzed and incorporated into the plan. The goal is to create a balanced, sustainable, and livable urban environment.

Implementing a city master plan often involves a phased approach, with short-term and long-term goals. Regular updates and revisions are necessary to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities. Successful execution of a city master plan can lead to improved quality of life for residents, increased economic opportunities, enhanced infrastructure, and a more attractive and vibrant urban environment.

I AMesbury 2030 set forth to produce a master plan that would be easy to read, with specific goals and action items.

MASTER PLAN
PROCESS



ELEMENTS

I AMesbury 2030 task force looked at every aspect of our community to make sure that we're moving forward with one vision. They looked at 8 Elements:

- Recreation & Open Space
- Learning & Education
- Arts & Culture
- Mobility
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Municipal Operations.

These icons can be used in future city documents to identify the element it applies to.



Recreation & Open Space



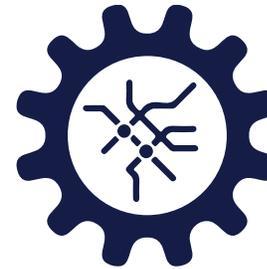
Learning & Education



Arts & Culture



Mobility



Infrastructure



Economic Development



Housing



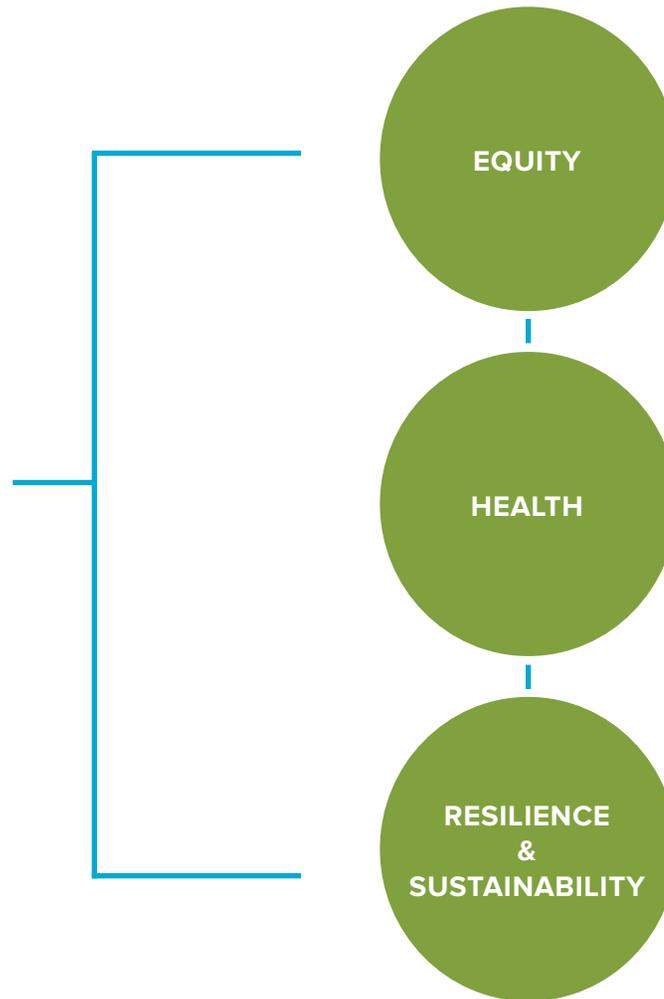
Municipal Operations

LENSES

The task force looked at all of these elements with three lenses top of mind:

- Equity
- Health
- Resilience / Sustainability.

These three key areas were an important consideration to incorporate into every aspect of the 2030 plan.





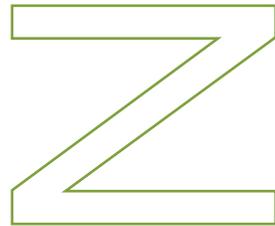
Equity

Consideration and evaluation of each element with a focus on fairness, justice, inclusion, resources, accessibility, accountability, and impartiality. The concept of equity involves recognizing and addressing disparities, inequalities, and systemic barriers that may exist within a particular context. This perspective goes beyond treating everyone the same way (equality) and instead emphasizes providing individuals with what they need to have equal opportunities and outcomes.



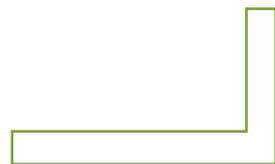
Health

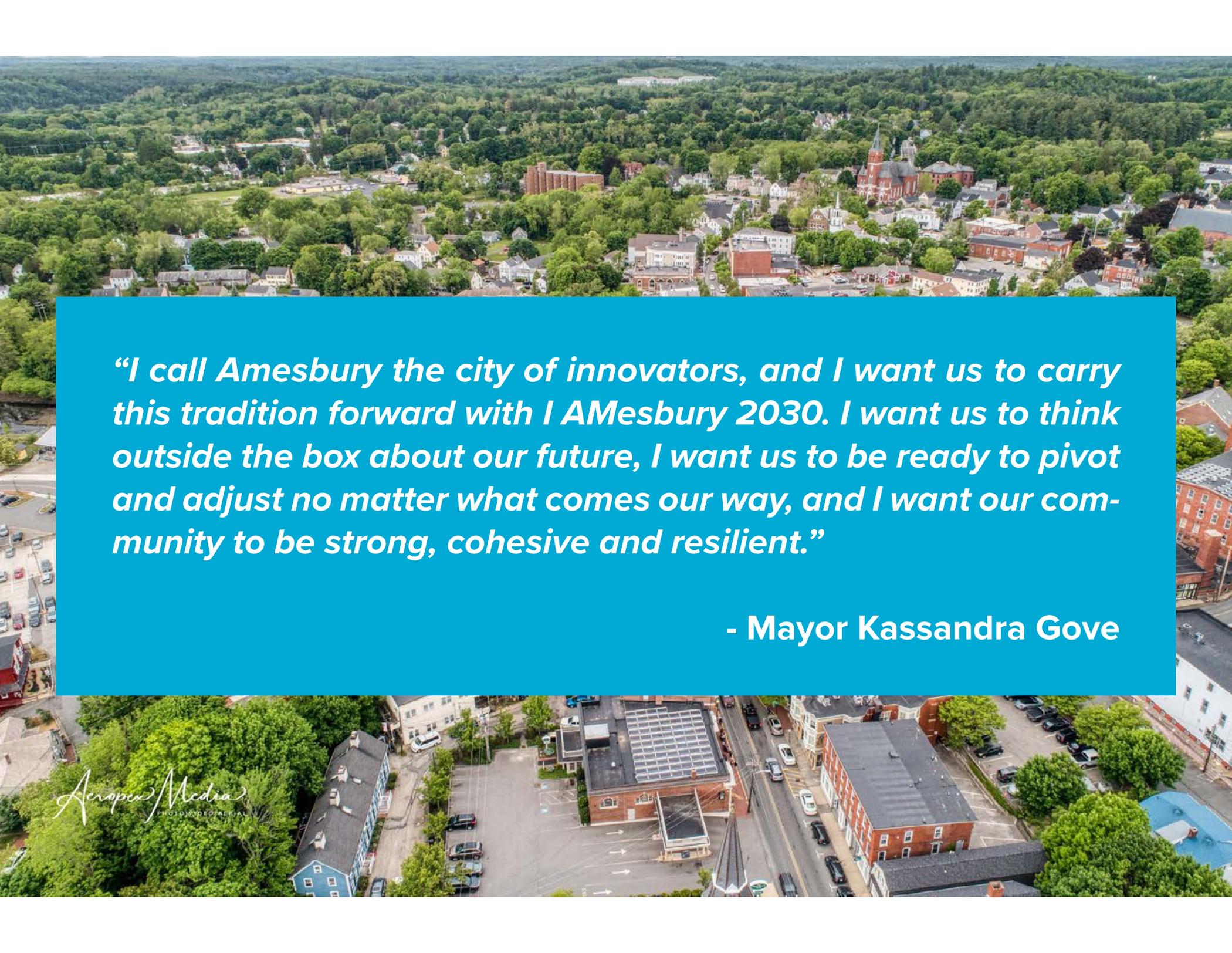
Consideration and evaluation of each element with a focus on its impact on physical, mental, and social well-being. This perspective recognizes that health is a complex and multifaceted concept that also includes environmental and behavioral health of the community. Looking through the lens of health concentrated our efforts on the interconnectedness of the various dimensions of health, both individual and communal.



Resilience & Sustainability

Consideration and evaluation of each element with a focus on long-term viability, adaptability, and the ability to withstand challenges and changes. This perspective challenges the robustness and longevity of elements and promotes the well-being of the ecological, social, economic, and organizational systems in place. The goal of this lens's application is to create systems that are both adaptable to change and capable of sustaining themselves over time.





“I call Amesbury the city of innovators, and I want us to carry this tradition forward with I AMesbury 2030. I want us to think outside the box about our future, I want us to be ready to pivot and adjust no matter what comes our way, and I want our community to be strong, cohesive and resilient.”

- Mayor Kassandra Gove

City of Amesbury





RECREATION & OPEN SPACE



“Amesbury is located in a beautiful area- with INCREDIBLE natural resources and attractions- hills, waterways, open space, forested land. These should be promoted. The rivers, and the river crossings over roads should be recognized and beautified.”

- Amesbury Resident
Community Survey



Recreation & Open Space

Amesbury's open spaces and recreation areas have always been a priority for our community. At one time in our history Amesbury was heavily a farming community, and since then, farmland has turned into conservation land with trails and recreation spaces.

Our open spaces and recreation areas include sports fields, trails, conservation areas, waterways and beaches, playgrounds, event spaces and more. Our recreation areas are used for passive recreation (walking,

bicycling) and active recreation (team sports, organized activities) by individuals, families, leagues and more.

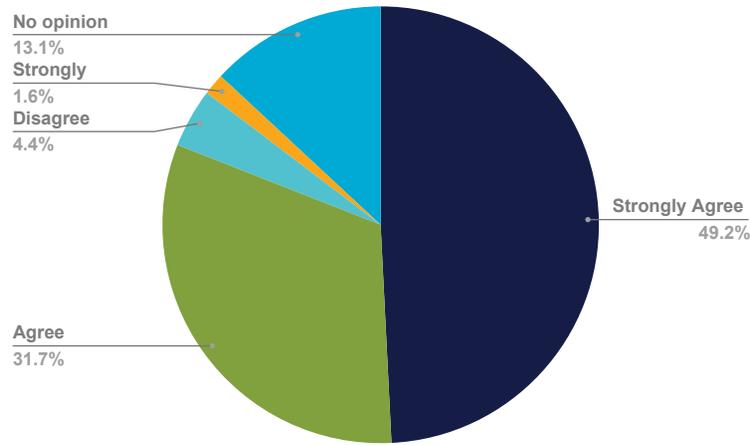
While many of our spaces are able to be used 24/7/365 no matter the season, other areas are underutilized in different seasons, limiting people's access to recreational spaces and activities. Several of our recreational spaces are poorly maintained, also limiting people's ability to properly utilize these spaces.



93%

In a March 2021 community survey about Amesbury's Identity, more than 93% of respondents said that "Amesbury's open spaces and natural resources are vitally important to our community, and play a large role in why I chose to live here and/or what I enjoy about living here."

Our natural resources are healthy for our community and increase our resilience to the effects of climate change.



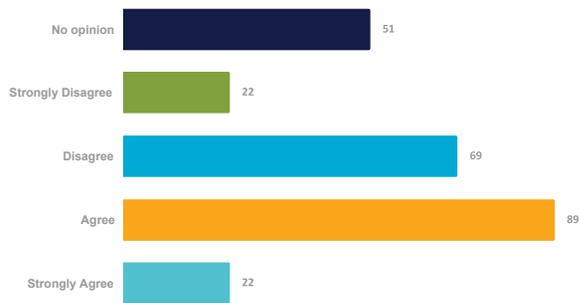
Source: Recreation and Open Space Survey

Top Four Amesbury's Open Space and Recreation Resources Ranked as Poorly Maintained

1. Lake Gardner Facilities
2. Lake Gardner Beach
3. Landry Stadium
4. Pow Wow River

Source: Recreation and Open Space Survey

Amesbury's recreation activities and facilities are designed and built to be universally accessible to residents and visitors of all ages, abilities and interests.



Source: Recreation and Open Space Survey

Land Use In Amesbury

	# Of Parcels	% of Parcels
Residential	5,540	79.80%
Commercial	217	3.12%
Industrial & Manufacturing	84	1.20%
Chapter 61 Land - Forest	3	0.04%
Chapter 61 Land - Agriculture	75	1.10%
Chapter 61B Land - Recreation	11	0.15%
Vacant/Exempt/Other	1,014	14.60%
TOTAL	6,944	100%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) Municipal Data bank, Fiscal Year 2020

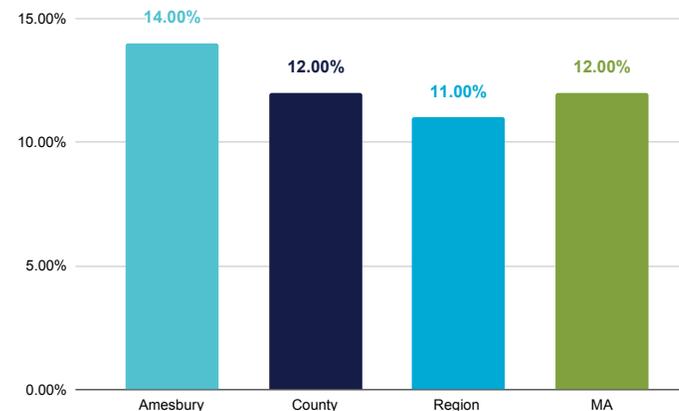
48% of respondents were **dissatisfied** with options for persons with disabilities.

35% were **dissatisfied** with options for young adults (ages 19-25.)

33% were **dissatisfied** with options for high school students.

Source: Recreation and Open Space Survey

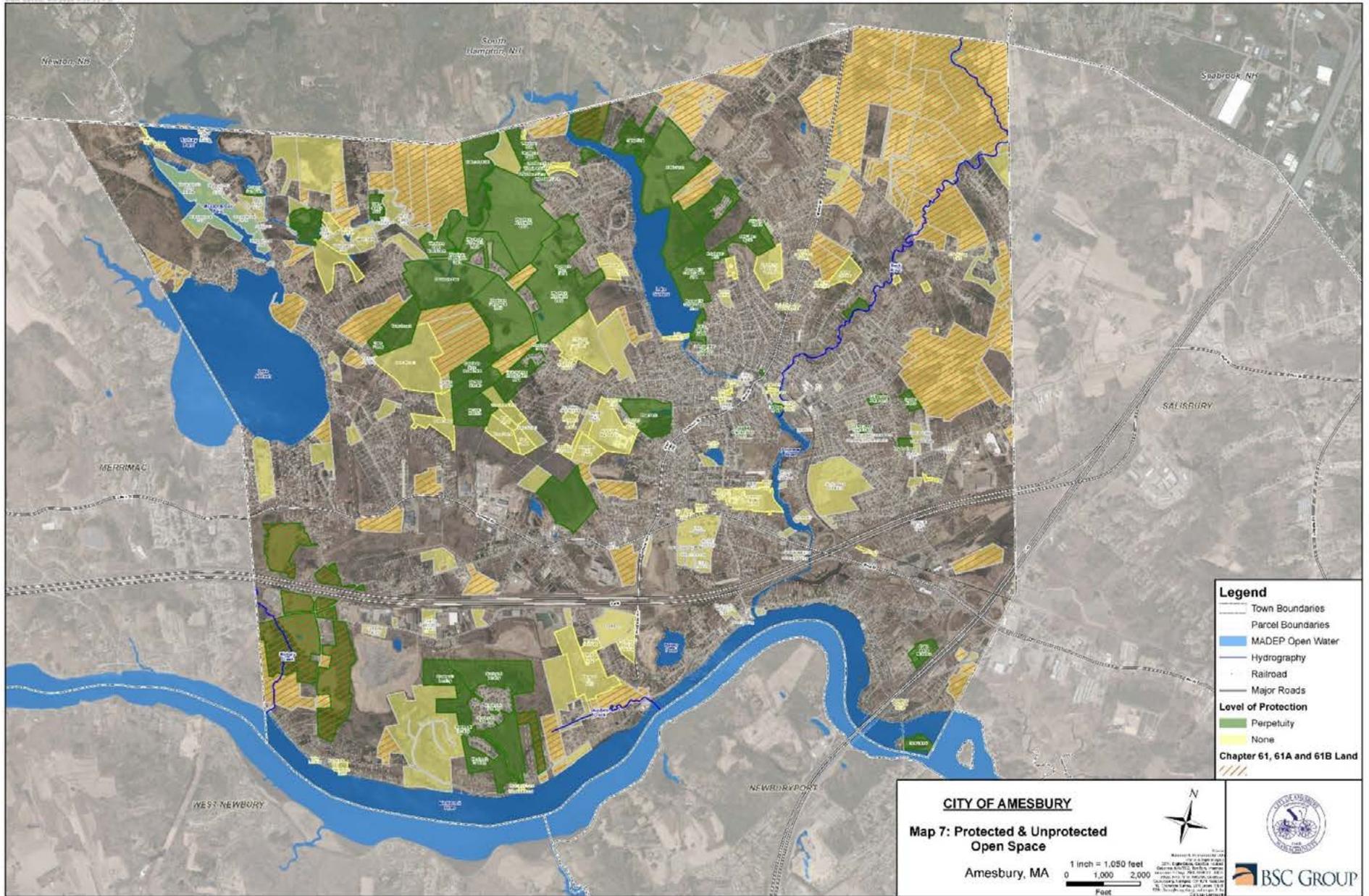
Proportion of Population Reporting Disabilities



Source: Amesbury Open Space & Recreation Plan 2020-2027

Protected and Unprotected Open Space in Amesbury

File Location: \\bsc\server\GIS\PDF\GIS\2017\0842257\Output\Map\MS2\Report\Map\Amesbury_24x36_Map7_ProtectedOpenSpace_20180818.mxd
 Date System: 8/27/2018 9:16:27 AM



THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED FOR GENERAL PLANNING & INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY. ALL MEASUREMENTS & LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE



Our Vision For Recreation & Open Spaces

The City of Amesbury is fortunate to balance its urban setting with its wealth of open spaces, parks, fields, and other natural resources that encourage intergenerational recreation. We must prioritize management and funding to sustain these spaces for the future benefit of everyone.

The City's budget, staff, and goals must work together to support our open space and recreation areas, ensuring all residents the opportunity to live a healthy and active lifestyle.





Goal

Ensure that information about Amesbury's open spaces, parks, fields and natural resources is easy to find and navigate.

Action

- Refine job responsibilities and reporting structures to establish City-wide ownership over management and maintenance of spaces.
- Centralize reservation systems for City and School open spaces and recreation areas.
- Make contact information for management and facility maintenance needs clear and accessible to users.
- Create tutorials and trainings about how to reserve and use the spaces, communicate and make accessible to stakeholders.

We heard from many residents that reliable information about our recreation and open spaces is difficult to find, both in person and online. By 2030 we will make sure that information is easy to find and access, and that our natural resources are being promoted to residents and visitors.





Goal

Plan for the long-term operation and maintenance of our open spaces and recreational areas.

Action

- Outline or establish who is responsible for care and custody of each area at the time of adoption or acceptance.
- Require maintenance and operations plans for all spaces at the time of adoption or within 60 days with consideration of long-term costs, and expedite plans for existing spaces.
- Consider the implementation of user fees and sponsorships as alternative funding to sustain maintenance of these spaces.
- Explore possibilities to centralize all maintenance and management for outdoor spaces.
- Conduct a feasibility study to determine which spaces have potential for year-round use.

49%

In an August 2021 community survey about Amesbury's recreation spaces, 49% of respondents said that they Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed that Amesbury's recreation facilities are safe and well-maintained year-round.



Goal

Regularly assess the recreation needs of our residents to ensure equity for all.

Action

- Establish a professional practice of tracking demographics of current users and the spaces they're using.
- Use demographic information to inform decisions for future use and programming.
- Evaluate all spaces for ADA accessibility and develop an Accessibility Score to be included on the City's website for each space.
- Expand printed and digital communications about open spaces and recreation areas to meet multiple languages and literacy needs.

50/50

In an August 2021 community survey about Amesbury's recreation spaces, respondents were split roughly 50/50 about whether Amesbury's recreation activities and facilities are designed and built to be universally accessible to residents and visitors of all ages, abilities and interests.





Goal

Proactively plan for climate resilience in our open spaces and recreation areas.

Action

- Identify spaces and areas that are most at risk of experiencing climate change impacts as high priority spaces.
- Operation and maintenance plans will include climate resilient initiatives for these high priority spaces.
- Address water quality in all lakes and waterways, and update maintenance plans of watershed areas.
- Encourage the use of electric maintenance equipment in our open spaces.

US Climate Data* estimates that we will see a 3.34 degree average temperature increase by 2030. With this increase, Amesbury will experience 5 more days over 90 degrees Fahrenheit and 13 fewer days under 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Climate change is impacting Amesbury in multiple ways including increased flooding, extreme weather, coastal storm surge, and drought. These challenges affect people, infrastructure, and the environment.

*www.usclimatedata.com, included in 2020-2027 Open Space & Recreation Plan



ARTS & CULTURE

“Amesbury seems to have a more fun and vibrant environment compared to surrounding communities, evidenced by the well maintained downtown and the art scattered throughout. More of this would be encouraged, as the community is promoted by the idea that people WANT to live here.”

- Amesbury Resident
Community Survey



Arts & Culture

Arts & Culture in Amesbury

Amesbury, Massachusetts, boasts a rich tapestry of arts and culture that reflects its historical significance and vibrant community spirit. Nestled along the Merrimack River, Amesbury's cultural scene is deeply rooted in its colonial history and has evolved into a diverse and dynamic expression of creativity. The city is home to numerous art galleries, showcasing the work of local and regional artists. These spaces provide a platform for residents and visitors alike to engage with a wide range of artistic expressions, from traditional paintings and sculptures to contemporary multimedia installations.

One of the highlights of Amesbury's cultural calendar is the annual Amesbury Open Studios Tour, where the downtown area transforms into a bustling hub of creativity. Local artists and artisans open their studios exhibiting their work and engaging with the community. This event not only promotes the appreciation of art but also fosters a sense of unity and pride among residents. The city's commitment to supporting the arts is further evident in the presence of the Amesbury Cultural Council, which actively funds and promotes cultural events,

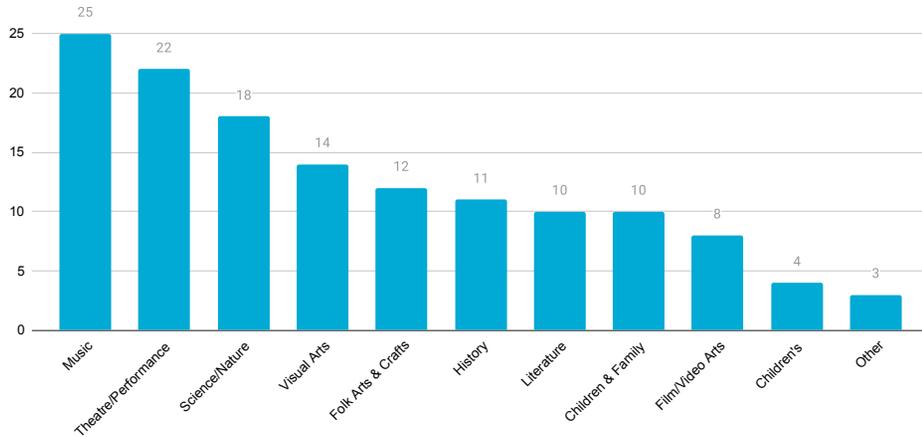
ensuring that the arts remain a vibrant and integral part of community life.

Amesbury's cultural landscape is not limited to visual arts alone; it extends to the performing arts as well. The city is home to various theatrical productions and musical performances like Music in the Millyard hosted by the Amesbury Chamber of Commerce.

In addition to the arts, Amesbury takes pride in preserving its cultural heritage through destinations like the Industrial History Center at Mill No2, which celebrates the city's industrial history. This museum offers visitors a glimpse into the craftsmanship and innovation that defined the region during the carriage-making era. By combining efforts to preserve its past with a commitment to fostering contemporary artistic expressions, Amesbury continues to cultivate a vibrant and dynamic cultural scene that enriches the lives of its residents and attracts visitors from near and far.

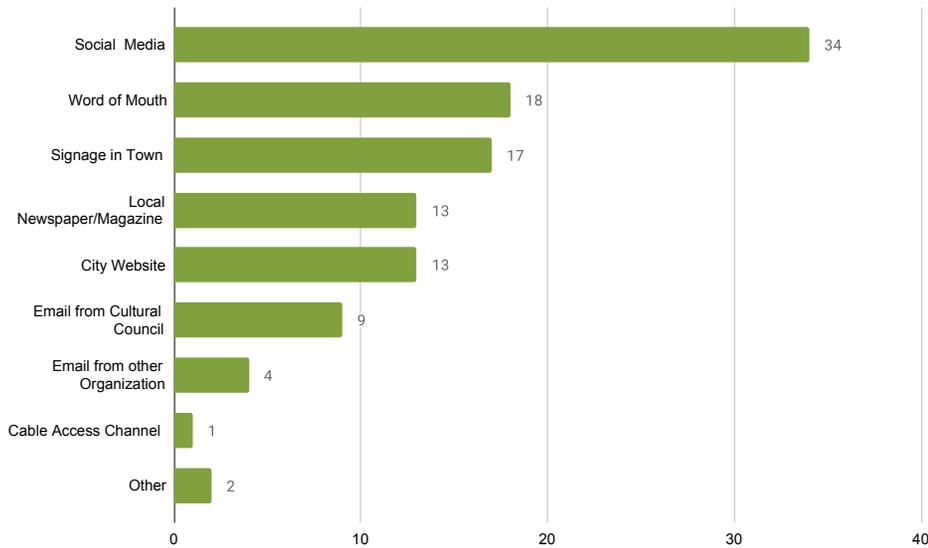


What types of free or low cost programs would you like to see more of Amesbury?



Source: Arts & Culture Community Survey

How do you usually hear about cultural activities that interest you?



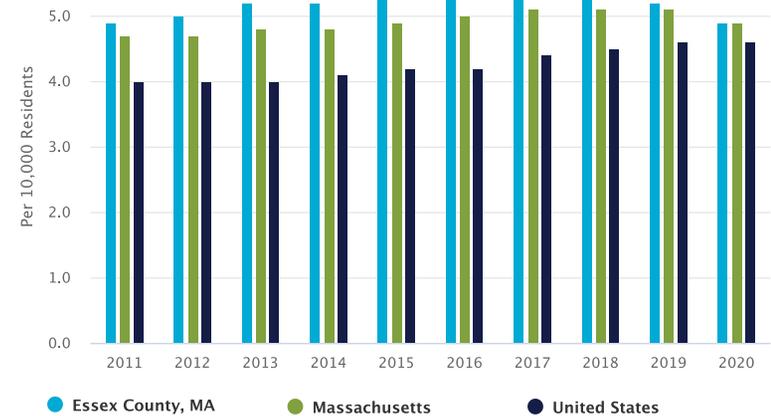
Source: Arts & Culture Community Survey

What do you consider to be the **MOST** important issues relating to culture in Amesbury?

- #1 Development of Downtown and Business Community
- #2 More Programming for Adults
- #3 Artist Live/Work Spaces

Source: Arts & Culture Community Survey

In 2020, there were 4.9 establishments in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector per 10,000 residents in Essex County. This was similar to the state rate and higher than the U.S. rate of 4.6.



Source: Essex County Community Foundation

79% of people believe arts benefit their personal well being.

72% of people believe the arts unify us, regardless of age, race and ethnicity.

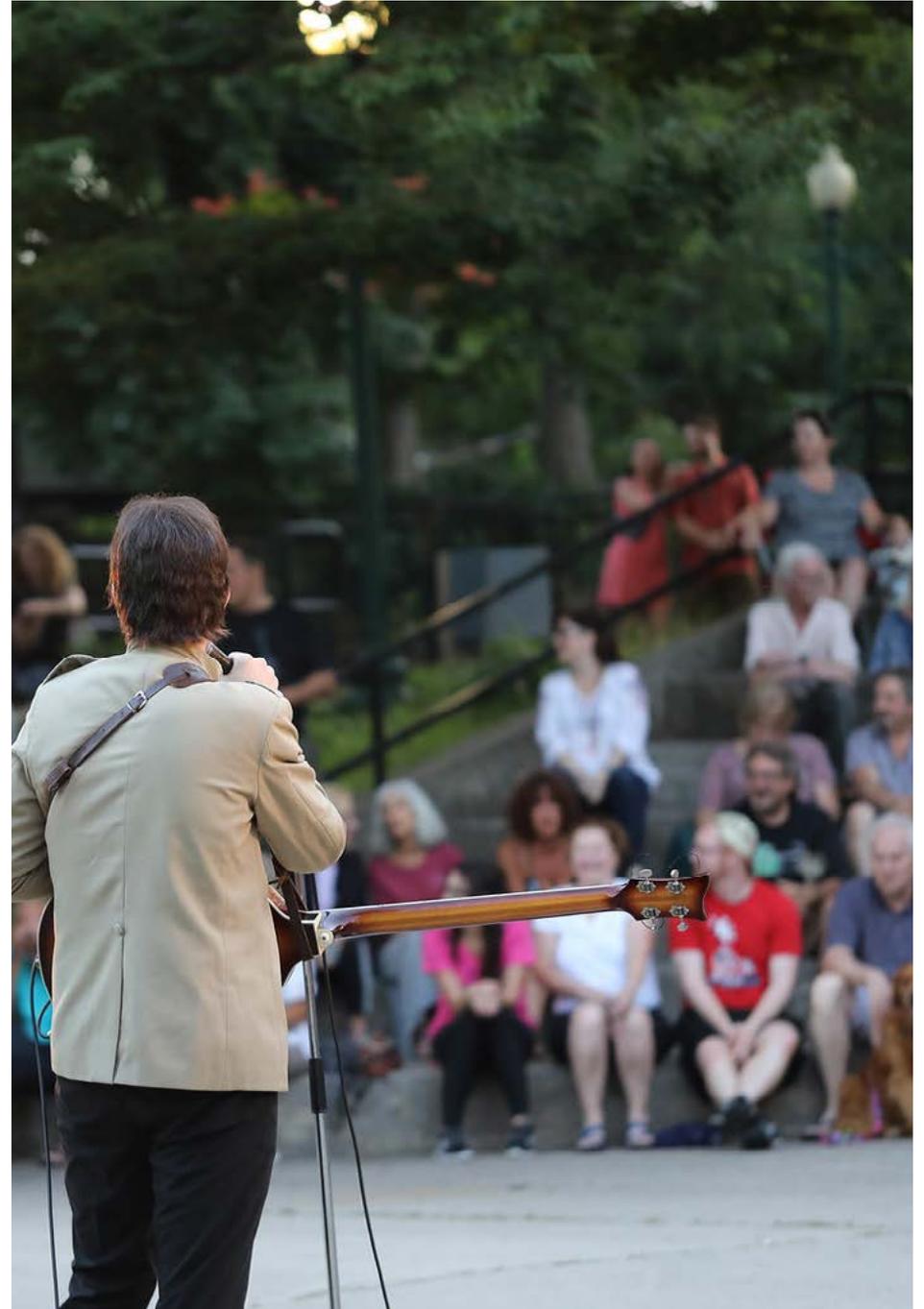
60% cite the arts as a key factor in their decision to locate to an area.

Source: artsfund.org Social Impact Study



Our Vision For Arts & Culture

Arts and culture have the power to make a community a better place for people to live, work, and thrive; building connections and reducing barriers between diverse groups. Amesbury recognizes the presence of creators, consumers, critics and supporters within the community and its neighboring cities and towns. To foster these natural, historic, artistic, and cultural resources as an integral part of the city's identity we will support arts and culture in our public spaces, downtown, natural and built environments, and in our neighborhoods.





Goal

Establish a network of regional arts and culture creators and venues.

Action

- Elevate the role of the Local Cultural Council as a central resource for stakeholders in arts and culture.
- Engage the Chamber of Commerce in establishing business opportunities for creators.
- Support stakeholders by holding an annual summit of creators.

Arts are a key driver of our economy and an engine of job creation. Roughly 3 million Americans earn a living working directly in the creation and distribution of art. In Essex County, there were 5.4 establishments in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector per 10,000 residents (2018); slightly higher than the state rate of 5.1 and higher than the U.S. rate of 4.5.

www.impactessexcounty.org;
Community Life Data



Goal

Increase and improve promotion of regional arts and culture creators.

Action

- Include arts and culture section and/or announcements in City newsletters (including Council on Aging, Library, and Amesbury Insider).
- Expand public galleries in municipal buildings and access to municipally held historic and cultural resources.
- Foster a reverence for craft, craftsmanship, and artistic expression in all its forms through programming and continued collaboration with the local schools and local artists.
- Create or utilize existing public calendars for arts and culture events.

At a December 2021 Arts & Culture Summit with regional arts organizations and venues, we heard loud and clear that they need support with “Communication, having a central place where people can find out how to participate in arts and culture” and ensure that the “individuals who create and craft art collaborate with those who promote content and support the production of art”.



Goal

Identify and prepare public spaces for use by consumers and creators of the arts.

Action

- Conduct appropriate assessment of all local spaces available for events and programming.
- Centralize, to the extent possible, reservation information and systems.
- Improve municipal spaces to meet the needs of creators and optimize utilization.

Did you know? City Hall has an art gallery called Art @ City Hall, run by a small group of volunteers with the support of the Amesbury Cultural Council. The exhibit changes quarterly and features artists from our community and the region! Visit www.amesburyculturalcouncil.com for details on upcoming shows and how you can submit art to their call for artists!



Goal

Actively bridge generations within our community through encouraging varied programming and participation modes.

Action

- Support the Local Cultural Council initiatives to define and promote membership.
- Continue active engagement of Mayor and staff liaison with Local Cultural Council for developing programs based on community needs.

By 2030, there will be more than 72 million people over the age of 65 and the number of children will increase to 80 million. Intergenerational programming increases cooperation, interaction and exchange between people of different generations, allowing for the sharing of talents, knowledge and resources, and supporting each other, benefiting those individuals and the community.

www.gu.org;
Generations United
Intergenerational Programs



LEARNING & EDUCATION

“Provide people with the opportunities to share their knowledge and talents with others who are interested in learning. I feel like our community’s values should be driven by our residents’ talents, and the community role should really be in facilitating the connections between people and groups.”

— Amesbury Resident
Community Survey



Learning & Education

Learning and education in Amesbury spans everything from youth learning in school and out of school, to adult lifelong learning, to expanding our personal and professional development and knowledge of equity, diversity and culture.

When discussing learning and education in our community, the conversation expands beyond the school district and youth learning. Community organizations like the Amesbury Public Library, the Council on Aging and Amesbury Recreation, and formal education centers

like Northern Essex Community College and Newburyport Adult & Community Education provide ongoing opportunities for learning to residents of all ages.

Through community surveys and conversation, we know that these resources can be promoted better, and additional opportunities can be created by utilizing the talent, knowledge and skills of our residents who are willing to share those experiences with others in a formal setting.



96%

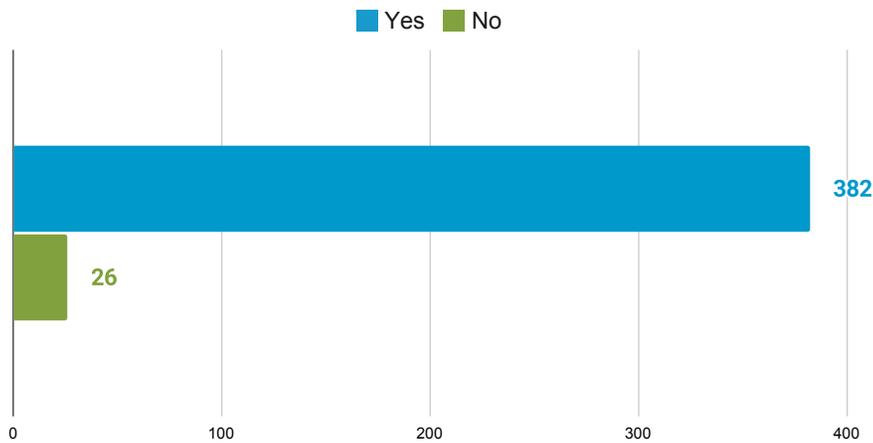
of Amesbury residents age 25 and older are high school graduates or higher

39.9%

of Amesbury residents age 25 or older have a Bachelor's degree or higher

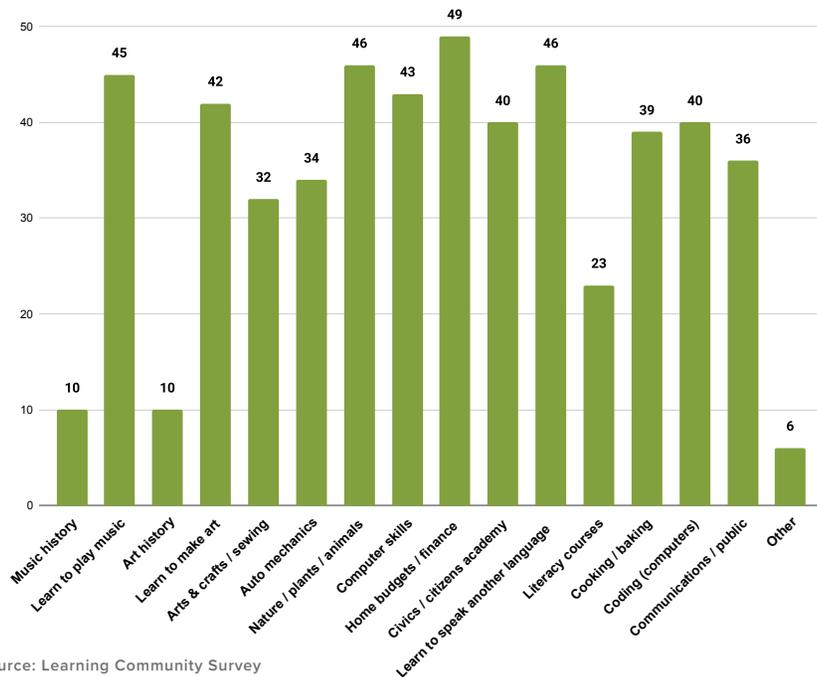


Is having strong public resources (schools, library, extra-curricular activities) in Amesbury important for those who live here as well as to draw new people to our community?



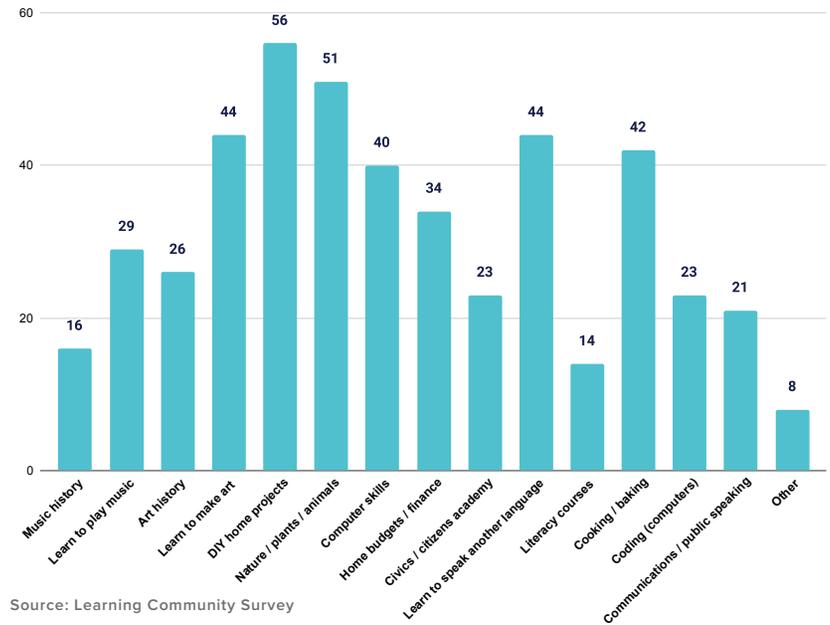
Source: Learning Community Survey

What Subjects Are You Most Interested in Seeing Made Available for Youth Outside of School?



Source: Learning Community Survey

What Subjects Are You Most Interested in Seeing Made Available for Adult / Lifelong Learners?



Source: Learning Community Survey

Most Popular Library Adult Programs

- 1 Author Talks & Book Clubs
- 2 Lectures on Seasonal Topics
- 3 Music Concerts

Source: Learning Community Survey

Subjects most interested in seeing made available for adult / lifelong learners?

- 1 DIY home projects
- 2 Nature / plants / animals
- 3 Learn to make & Learn to speak another language (tie)

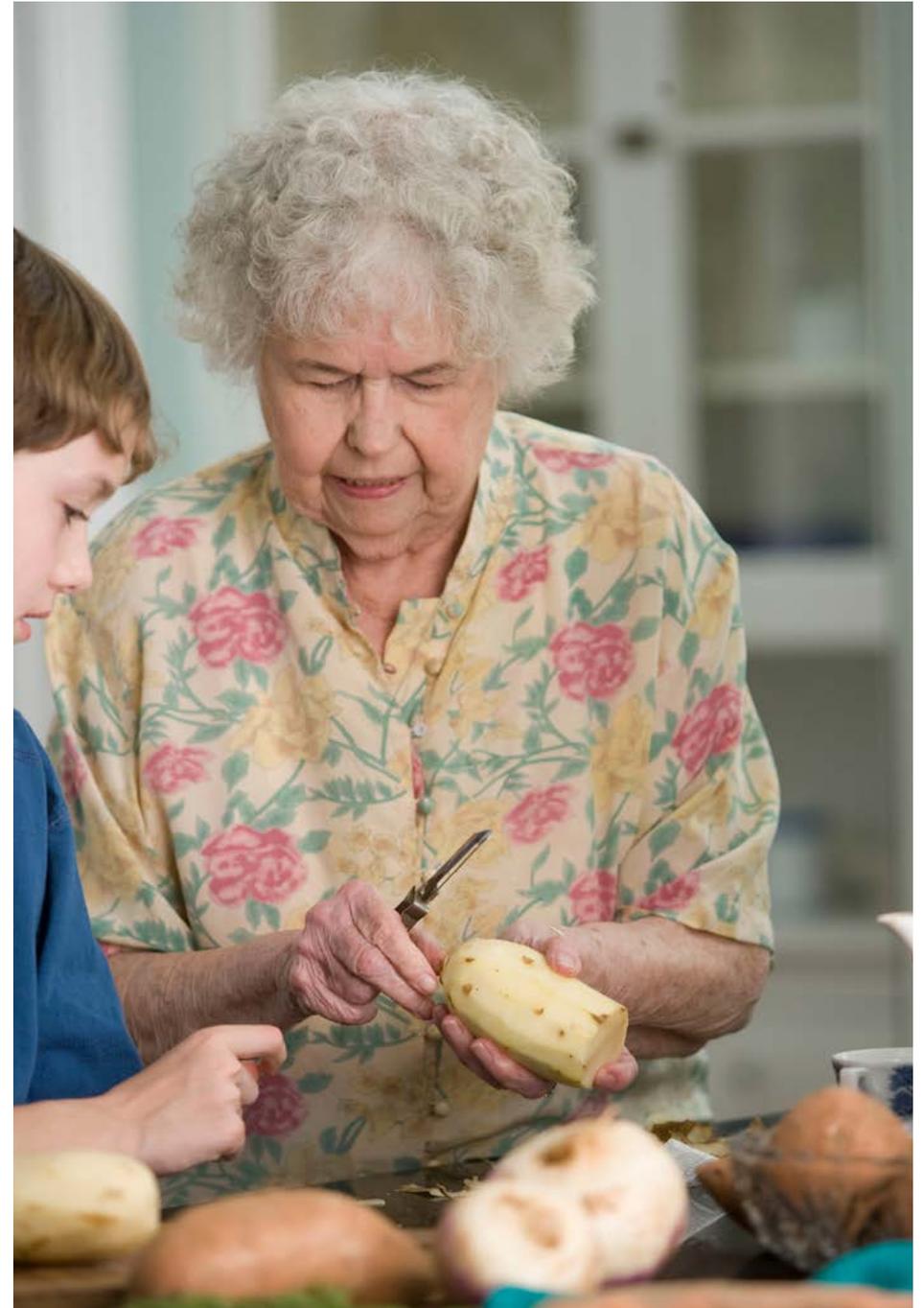
87% of workers said it was essential for them to get training and develop new job skills in order to keep up with changes in the workplace.

Source: Pew Research



Our Vision for Learning & Education

The City of Amesbury will enable residents to contribute and benefit from the pursuit of knowledge in order to enhance active citizenship and individual development. Intergenerational connections and community wide learning opportunities create a learning society acknowledging that learning occurs in all forms and venues. We must activate and utilize our local and regional network of formal, non formal, and informal providers for a holistic approach to create an overall system of lifelong learning. The City endeavors to build community partnerships and incorporate learning in all areas.





Goal

Improve local access and awareness of existing learning opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Action

- Expand existing newsletters to highlight content, services, and resources available across the community and explore potential for combining distribution.
- Increase regular ongoing social media interactions between City owned pages to reach diverse audiences.
- Create and establish a central calendar and registration platform with regular maintenance and management as well as a physical informational board for community members.
- Market and promote learning opportunities to intentionally include visual, historical, digital, and cultural learning outcomes.
- Explore partnerships with neighboring communities and institutions currently offering diverse learning opportunities for adults.

We heard from many residents that information about educational opportunities is difficult to find. Not many people are aware of the classes and programming available in our region. By 2030 we will make sure that information is easy to find and access, and widely promoted.





Goal

Provide opportunities to engage local experts in sharing their talents and knowledge.

Action

- Develop a human library featuring local experts under the management of the Amesbury Public Library.
- Increase awareness and capacity of the Senior & Veteran Tax Work Off program for residents to contribute and benefit as active citizens.

In our 2021 Community Learning Survey, many respondents said they would be willing to teach courses and share their knowledge and expertise with others! Organizations like the Amesbury Public Library can tap into our community's vast network to expand program offerings.



Goal

Actively bridge generations within our community through varied programming and participation modes.

Action

- An increasing percentage of annual programs led by the Public Library, Recreation, and Council on Aging will be dedicated to multi-generational participants.
- Elevate the reputation of Partnership for Amesbury Community & Teens (PACT) and support their work in building strong relationships between youth and adults in our community.
- Incorporate successful intergenerational programming on a regular, recurring basis.
- Create and foster space and participation platforms that bring all generations in our community together.

There are health benefits to having intergenerational spaces and programming. **“Active, involved older adults with close intergenerational connections consistently report much less depression, better physical health, and higher degrees of life satisfaction. Children develop higher self-esteem, better emotional and social skills (including an ability to withstand peer pressure), and can even have better grades in school.”**

www.legacyproject.org
Guide to Benefits of
Intergenerational Connections





Goal

Community-wide learning opportunities will align with the mission of the Amesbury Public School District.

Action

- Local and regional providers will be selected thoughtfully to develop a diverse catalog of opportunities and allow equitable pursuit of knowledge.



“In the Amesbury Public Schools, we are unconditionally committed to the growth of every child. By creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment that provides dynamic learning experiences, the highest quality staff, and a vitally involved community, every child experiences success.”

Mission of Amesbury Public Schools





MOBILITY

“Having safe walking and cycling lanes creates a more inclusive environment and tighter knit community, and also makes the city more welcoming to tourists.”

— Amesbury Resident
Community Survey



Mobility

Mobility across the city of Amesbury is an important topic for now and the future. A well-designed transportation network not only enhances accessibility to employment, education, and healthcare but also fosters social cohesion by bringing communities closer together.

Options that prioritize sustainability, such as public transit systems and active transportation modes like walking and cycling, contribute to mitigating environmental degradation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, thus promoting healthier and more livable cities.

When discussing mobility within the community, the conversation spans beyond vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Parking, bike lanes, safe winter roads, and ADA compliance are also concerns of residents as shown in each 2030 survey that has been shared.

By leveraging data-driven insights and adopting integrated approaches to opportunities, Amesbury hopes to optimize mobility to meet the evolving needs of their residents while ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience in the face of emerging challenges such as population growth and climate change.

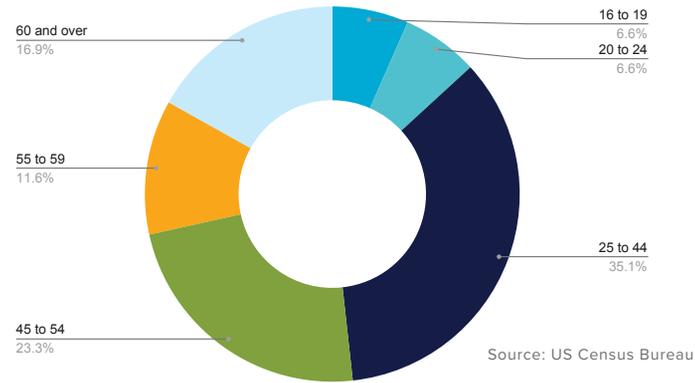


95%

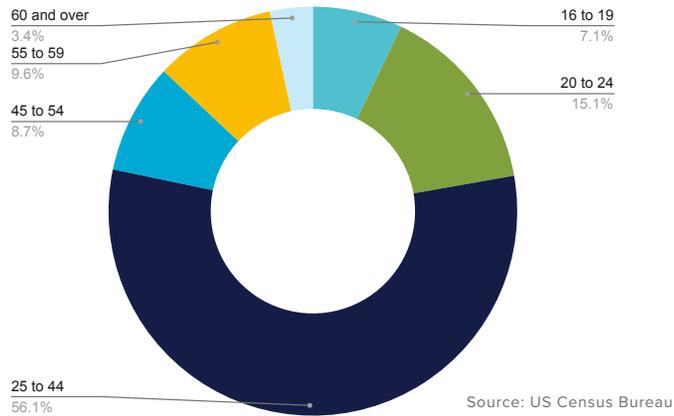
of Amesbury residents have access to a personal vehicle. On average, Amesbury residents travel 33.7 miles daily.

2020 Merrimack Valley Regional Transportation Plan

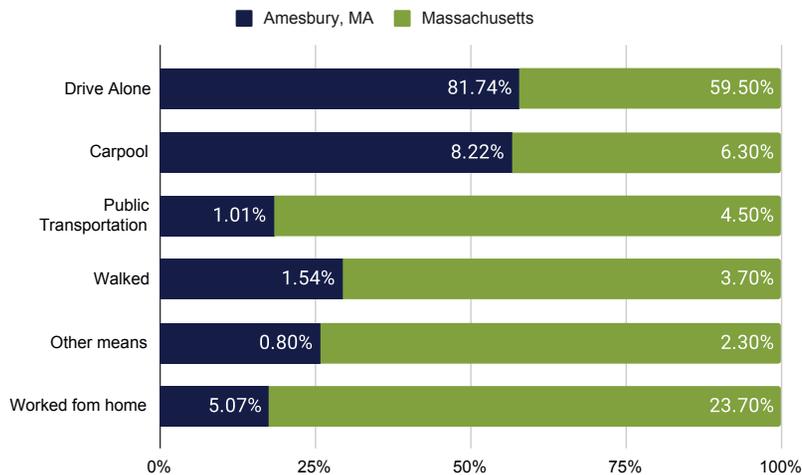
Percent of Amesbury Commuters by Age



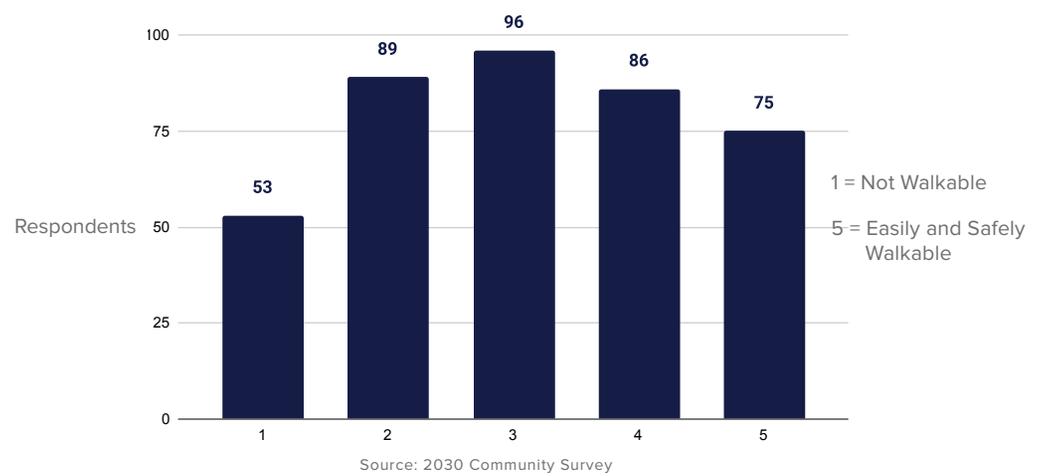
Percent of Amesbury Population Who Carpool



Commuting to Work / Travel Type Comparison



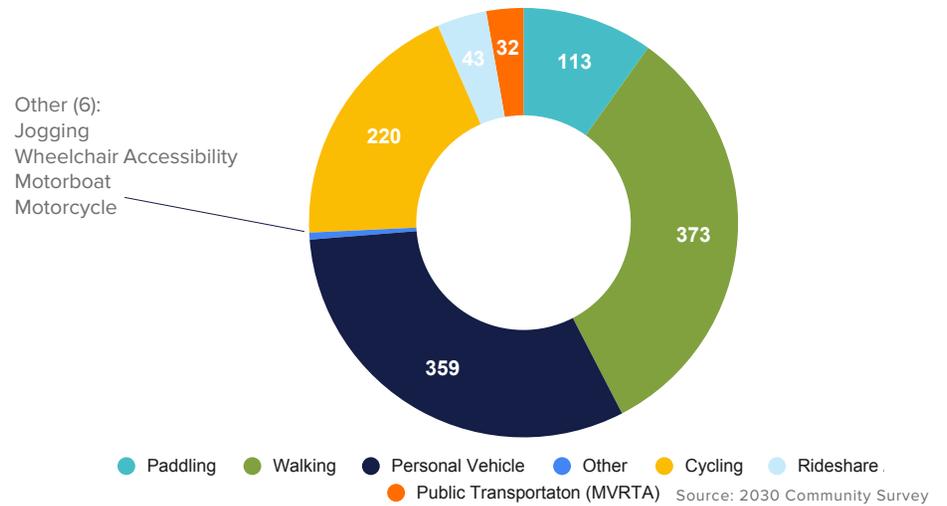
Walkability From Amesbury Neighborhoods to the Downtown Area in Terms of Infrastructure



Top Three Traveled Streets by Volume (Vehicle Traffic)

- 110 / Macy Street (34,318 over a 48 hour period)
 - Elm Street (12,622 over a 4 hour period)
 - Main Street (9,305 over a 48 hour period)
- Source: MVRP 2016 Traffic Volume Report

Modes of Transportation Residents Are Interested In

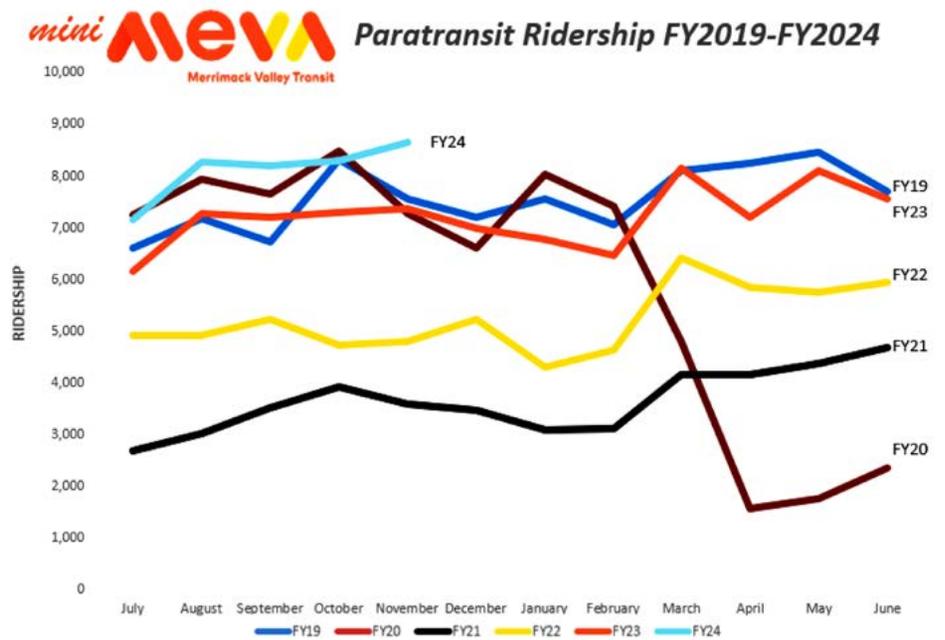
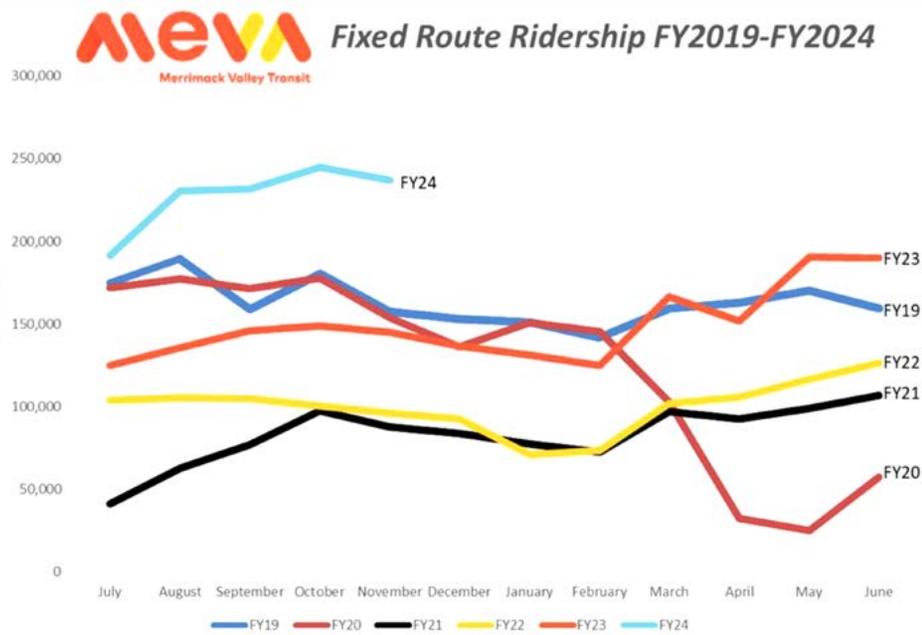


Merrimack Valley Transit (MEVA)

In March of 2022, Merrimack Valley Transit (MEVA) took a commendable step towards enhancing community accessibility and fostering a sense of connectivity by announcing the provision of free rides to residents of Amesbury and the serviceable area. This initiative reflects MEVA's commitment to supporting local communities and ensuring that transportation barriers do not hinder individuals from accessing essential services, employment opportunities, and recreational activities. By offering complimentary rides to Amesbury residents, MEVA is not only addressing economic disparities but also promoting a more sustainable and inclusive public transportation system.

This initiative not only benefits individual commuters but also contributes to the overall well-being and vitality of the community. It encourages residents to rely on public transportation, reducing traffic congestion, lowering carbon emissions, and fostering a sense of shared responsibility towards the environment.

MEVA continues to expand services and in January of 2024, they will be offering scheduled pick-ups for veterans in the Merrimack Valley, providing rides to appointments at the VA hospital in Bedford, MA.

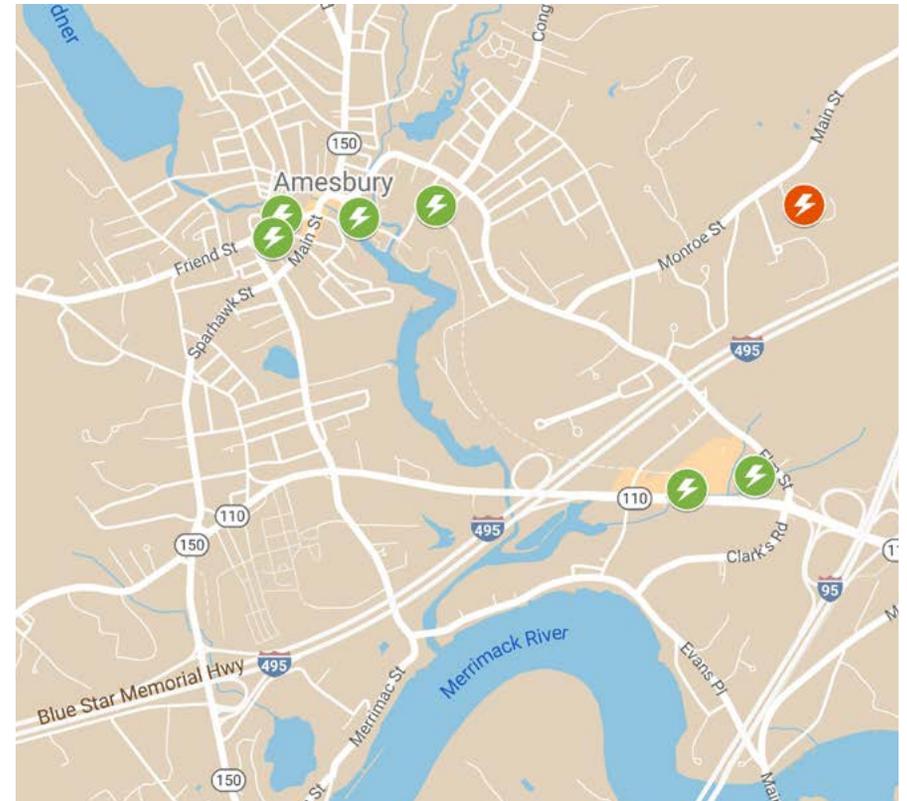


EV Charging Stations

Amesbury, Massachusetts, has emerged as a forward-thinking community, embracing sustainable practices and addressing the growing demand for electric vehicles (EVs) with the installation of an extensive network of EV charging stations. The city has strategically positioned these charging points throughout key locations, including public parking areas, shopping facilities, and municipal facilities. This proactive approach not only supports current EV owners but also encourages the adoption of electric vehicles by providing convenient access to charging infrastructure, thus contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions and promoting environmental sustainability.

The commitment to expanding EV charging infrastructure in Amesbury aligns with broader state and national efforts to promote cleaner transportation options. These charging stations not only enhance the city's appeal for environmentally conscious residents but also cater to the needs of visitors and commuters, fostering a community-wide commitment to reducing the carbon footprint associated with traditional gasoline-powered vehicles. By investing in EV charging infrastructure, Amesbury not only supports the present needs of its residents but also positions itself as a progressive community ready to embrace the future of sustainable transportation.

Technology is advancing and upgrades for faster charging options will be needed. Additionally, charging for municipal fleet transition will be required to ensure successful adoption.



 Chargepoint Stations  Private Charging Stations



Our Vision for Mobility

Amesbury will provide and maintain safe, healthy, efficient and environmentally friendly networks for all modes of transportation. Safe streets and efficient transportation systems will reinforce the quality of life in our neighborhoods. We will be a community that is safe and easy to move about for all providing access to a wide range of community resources. We will continue to explore methods to enhance the use of public, shared, and micro-mobility options especially for connections to regional attractions, jobs, and other transportation systems. Particular attention will be given to promoting a pedestrian oriented downtown environment to support commercial and residential viability.





Goal

Enhance connection of adjacent communities, neighborhoods and recreational amenities that are safe for people of all abilities year-round.

Action

- Establish a plan and demonstrate progress towards ensuring the connections between points of interest and main corridors have proper bike lanes and pedestrian ways, with curbing, ramps, and places of respite that incorporate universal design.
- Engage city staff in ADA compliance training and encourage stakeholder feedback sessions during project planning.
- Increase the visibility and use of regional public transit in partnership with providers to support job growth and economic development.
- Thoughtfully determine specific areas to focus on snow removal for safer sidewalk navigation for all during winter months.

We heard from many residents that reliable snow removal is an important issue. In 2022, a snow removal plan was created to ensure safe access for all during winter storms.



Goal

Establish measures and policies to improve roadway and sidewalk design and maintenance that all future road work will follow to provide a safe and efficient flow of movement.

Action

- Create a five-year improvement plan for streets and sidewalks that is organized and available to the public to be updated annually.
- Establish a design standard in partnership with the Planning Board to accelerate sidewalk improvements City wide.
- Utilize Complete Streets guidelines to enhance projects.
- Participate in regional planning for safe streets with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission and act upon results to leverage grant funding.

In the 2021 Community Survey, **97%** of Amesbury residents said they believed “Having well-maintained infrastructure (sidewalks, roads) is important for residents”.



Goal

Parking policies will be reviewed for long term sustainability and relevancy.

Action

- Conduct a full parking study of the downtown business district and implement recommendations in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce and Police Department.
- Revise parking ordinance based on the outcome of the parking study.

In 2022, Amesbury Police dispatched to **479** calls for parking complaints, issuing **258** parking violations.

Source: Amesbury Police Department



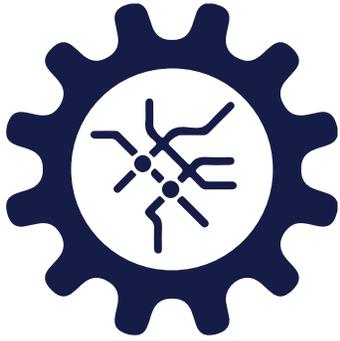
Goal

Establish and/or improve wayfinding and interpretative signage to ensure circulation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic that supports commercial and residential viability.

Action

- Implement a city-wide wayfinding signage system including iconography and interpretive signage.

In the 2022 Community Resilience Study, consultants recommended Amesbury create a cohesive wayfinding brand to support community and business viability.

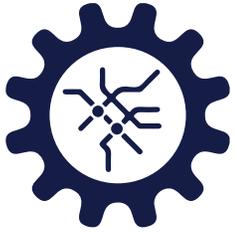


INFRASTRUCTURE

“Being able to safely walk from neighborhood to neighborhood and to the downtown area would be a game changer in developing a community and family-friendly feel. Plus, it would boost tourists’ ability to enjoy the farming and downtown areas.”

- Amesbury Resident

Community Survey



Infrastructure in Amesbury

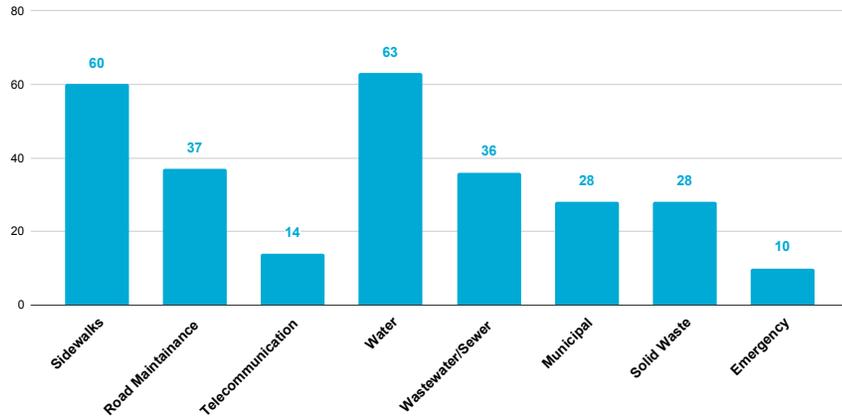
The City of Amesbury faces several infrastructure challenges that impact the daily lives of its residents. Notable concerns include the state of the city's roads, bridges, and culverts. The aging infrastructure has led to pothole-ridden streets and deteriorating bridges, affecting both the safety of commuters and the overall accessibility of the city. Addressing these issues requires significant investments in maintenance and repairs to ensure a reliable and efficient transportation network for residents and businesses alike.

Furthermore, the city of Amesbury grapples with outdated utilities, including water and sewage systems.

Aging pipes and infrastructure pose a risk of leaks, disruptions, and environmental concerns. Modernizing these essential services is crucial not only for the well-being of the community but also for attracting new businesses and residents. As Amesbury looks to the future, strategic investments in infrastructure improvements become imperative to create a sustainable and resilient environment for all who call the city home. Collaborative efforts between local government, businesses, and the community will be essential to address these infrastructure challenges and pave the way for a more robust and sustainable future in Amesbury.

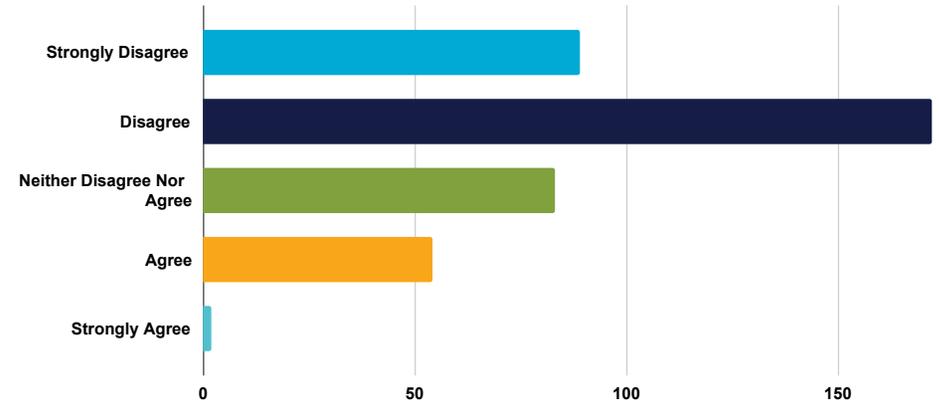


Number of People Rating Most Important for Improvement



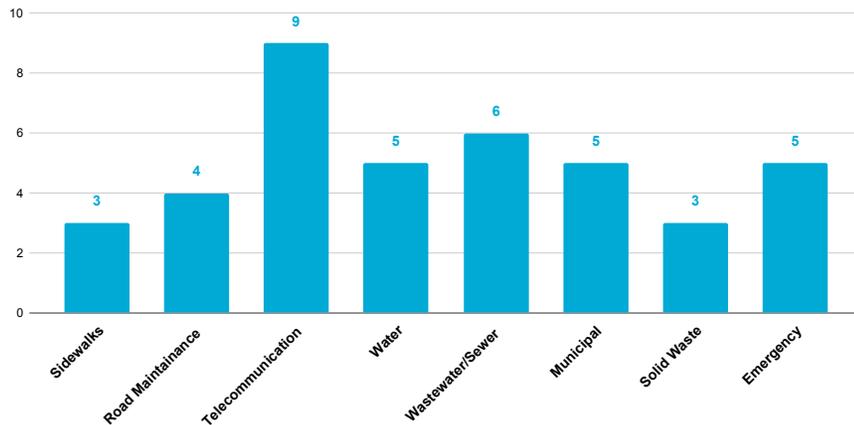
Source: 2030 Community Survey

Amesbury's Infrastructure (Sidewalks & Roads) is Well Maintained



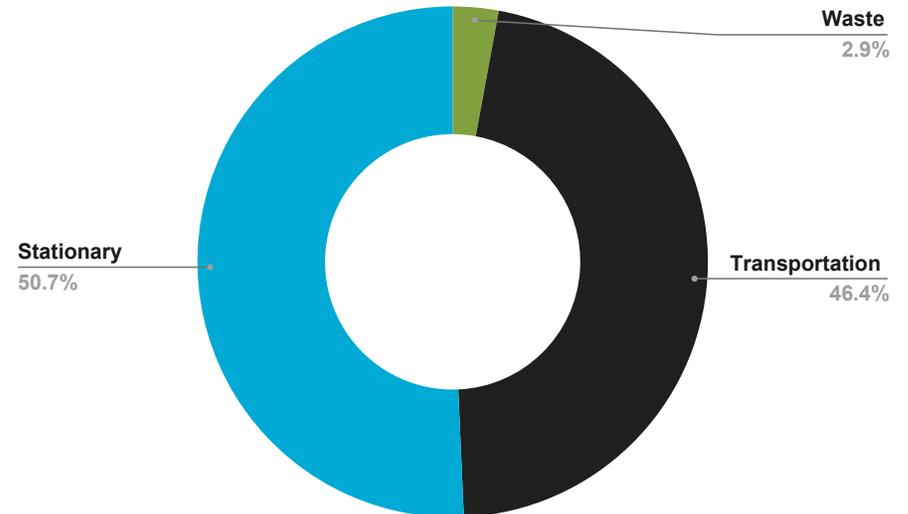
Source: 2030 Community Survey

Number of People Rating Least Important for Improvement



Source: 2030 Community Survey

Greenhouse Gas Inventory by Sector



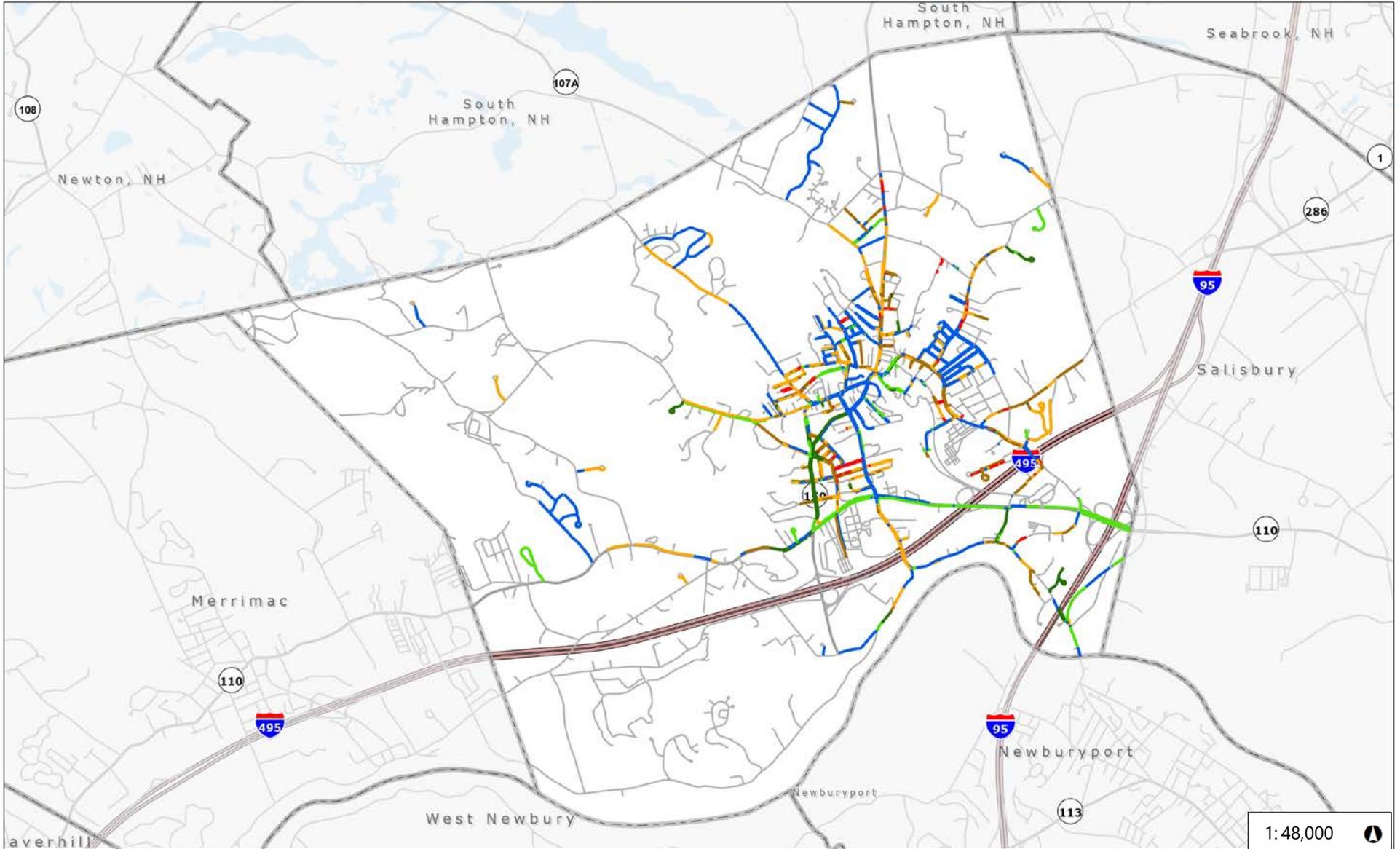
Source: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission and John Snell LLC.

401 respondents agreed that having well-maintained infrastructure (roads and sidewalks) is important for residents, as well as to draw new people to our community.

11 disagreed.

Source: 2030 Community Survey

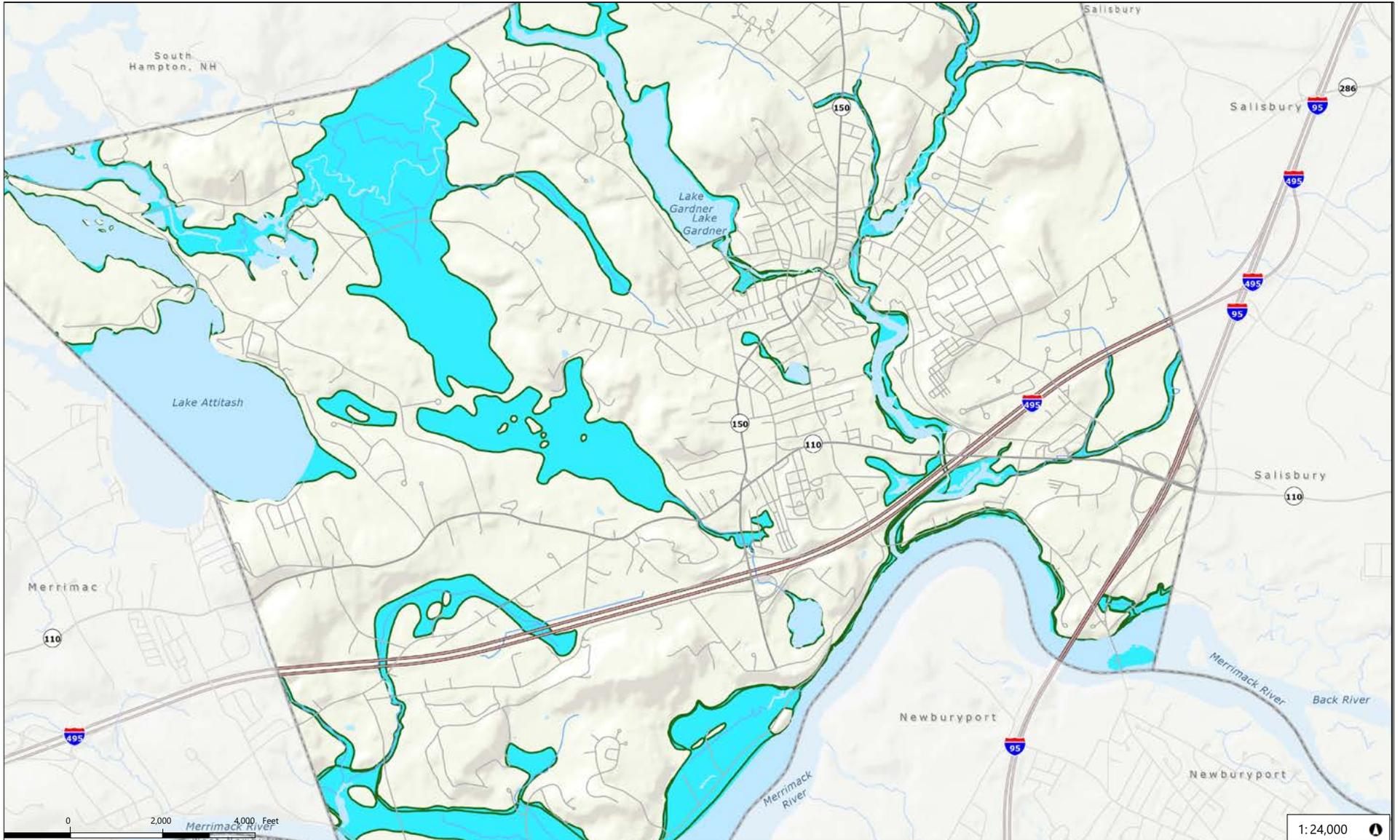
Sidewalks in Amesbury



- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor
- All Other Values

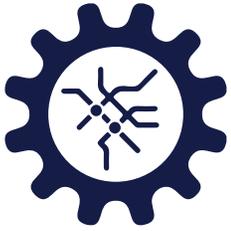
Source: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
2018 Sidewalk Inventory

100 Year Floodplain- a flood event that has on average a 1 in 100 chance (1% probability) of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.



 Floodplain

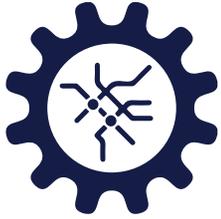
Source: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission



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.





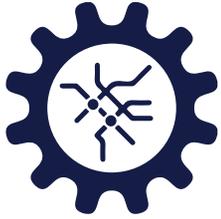
Goal

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

Action

- 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.

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.



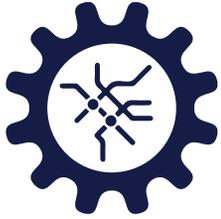
Goal

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

Action

- 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.

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.



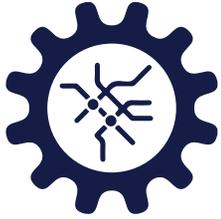
Goal

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.

Action

- 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.

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.



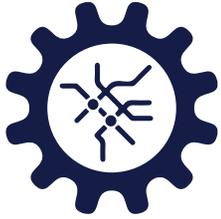
Goal

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

Action

- 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.

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.



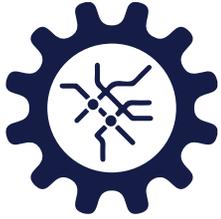
Goal

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

Action

- 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.

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.



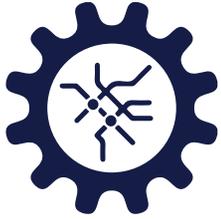
Goal

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

Action

- 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.

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.



Goal

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

Action

- 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.

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.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

“It ‘takes a village’ to make something work well. Whether it is the cultural and arts council, chamber of commerce or any other various organizations that make us what we are today. I think the city has a responsibility to embrace and support growth in our community, work with all organizations, and make itself familiar to business owners.”

- Amesbury Resident
Community Survey



Economic Development

Since its early settlement, the City of Amesbury has historically kept up with the ever-changing economy and demands. From early shipbuilding through the industrial period of textile, carriage, and automotive mills, to today's defense contractors, solar roofing and dehumidifiers, and cannabis production, Amesbury continues to evolve while maintaining a strong local economy. As we look towards the future, the City of Amesbury will continue to maintain our robust

community of small-scale makers as well as connect existing businesses to build stronger relationships. Resilience studies have been conducted to identify recommended short- and long-term strategies, to develop a stronger, more vibrant downtown district through wayfinding signage, shared parking, public parks and pedestrian connections, mixed-use zoning, and expanded adaptive reuse of Amesbury many historic mill buildings.



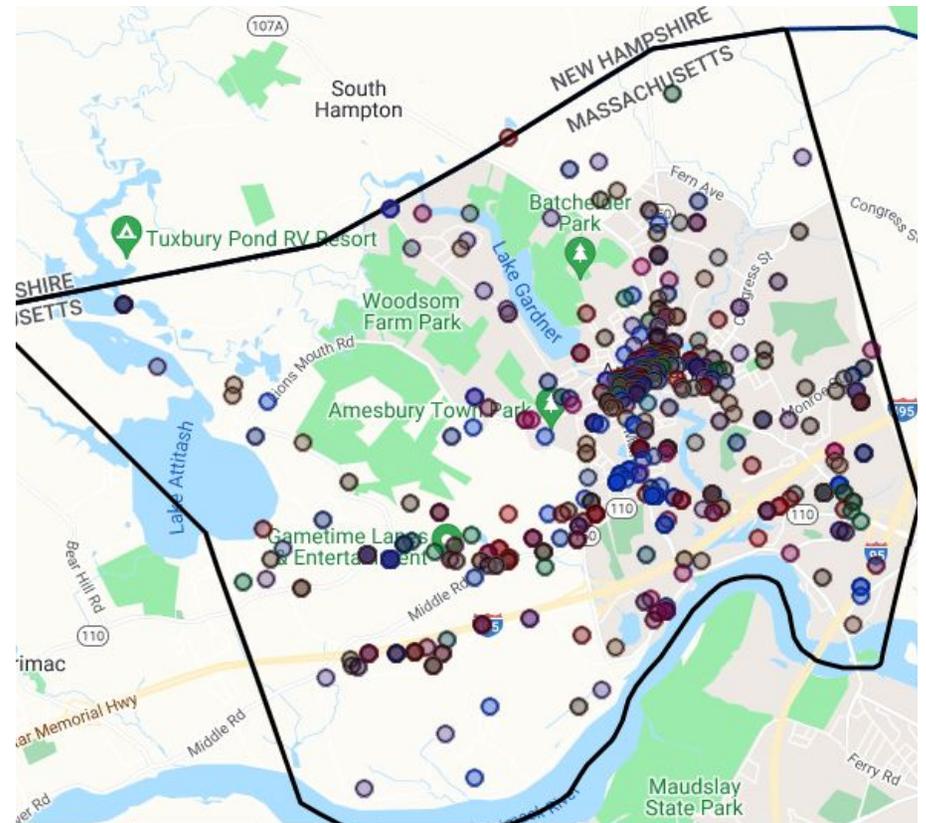
“Most of the people of Amesbury belong to the productive class, very few are raised above the necessity of personal exertion. All are active and industrious, readily find employment, and command good wages.”

-James B. Newell, 1836. From The Essex Memorial - a guide to towns in Essex County, MA.

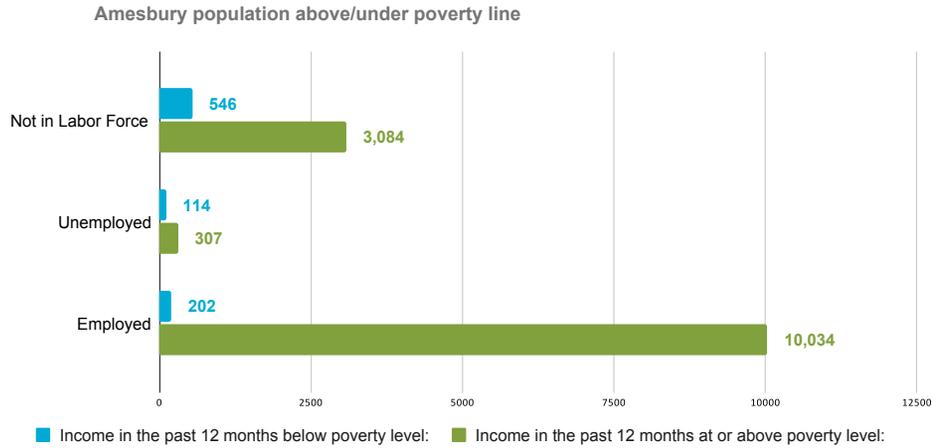
Business Locations in Amesbury

Amesbury hosts a diverse array of business locations that contribute to the city's economic vitality and offer residents a broad range of services. The city's commercial landscape is characterized by a mix of historic buildings and modern facilities, creating a unique blend of traditional charm and contemporary convenience. Amesbury's downtown area, with its picturesque streets and historic architecture, serves as a hub for local businesses, including boutique shops, cafes, restaurants, and civic services. This vibrant district not only caters to the daily needs of residents but also attracts visitors, contributing to the city's tourism appeal. In addition to the historic downtown, Amesbury boasts industrial zones that house manufacturing and technology companies. These locations play a crucial role in preserving the town's industrial legacy while also driving innovation and economic growth. From advanced manufacturing

facilities to research and development centers, these business locations underscore Amesbury's adaptability to changing economic landscapes. The strategic placement of these commercial zones facilitates efficient transportation and logistics, further enhancing the city's appeal for businesses seeking well-connected and strategically positioned locations. The diversity of business locations in Amesbury extends beyond the commercial and industrial sectors to include healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and professional service providers. Medical offices, clinics, and educational campuses contribute to the well-rounded nature of Amesbury's business landscape, offering a comprehensive range of services to residents. This diversity not only meets the immediate needs of the community but also positions Amesbury as a multifaceted city with a rich tapestry of economic activities.

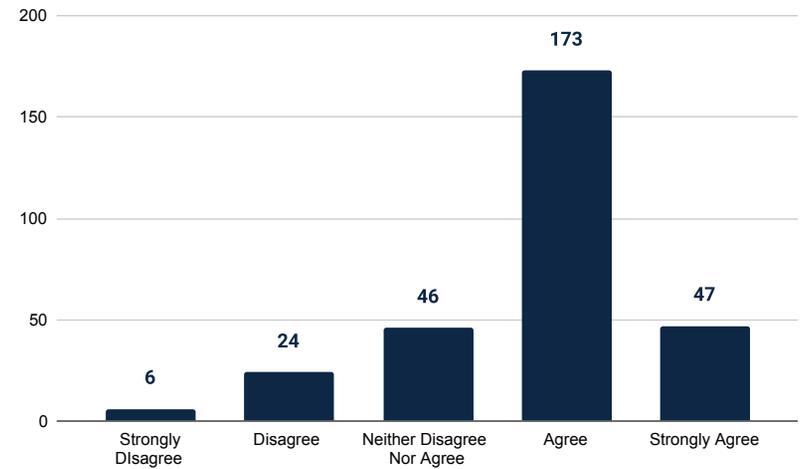


Amesbury Population Above / Under the Poverty Line



Source: US Census Bureau

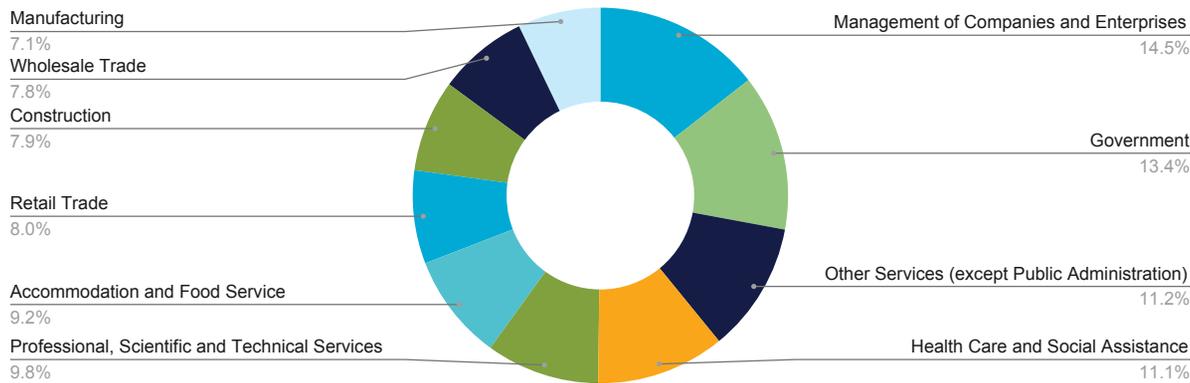
"Amesbury Has a Broad Range of Small Businesses and Services That I Regularly Frequent"



Source: 2030 Community Survey

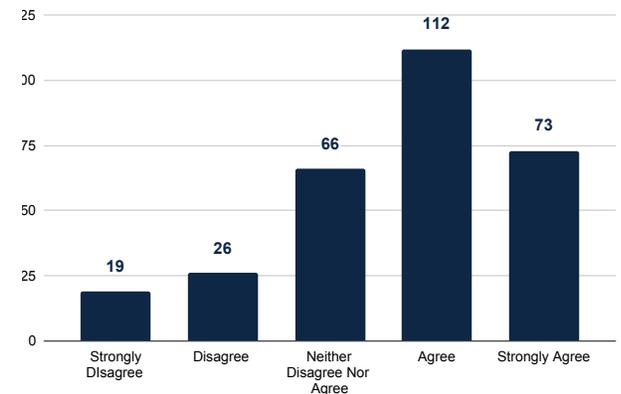
55.2% of business owners who responded to a survey chose Amesbury as their location for the business because of proximity to home.

Amesbury's Top 10 Largest Employment Sectors, 2022



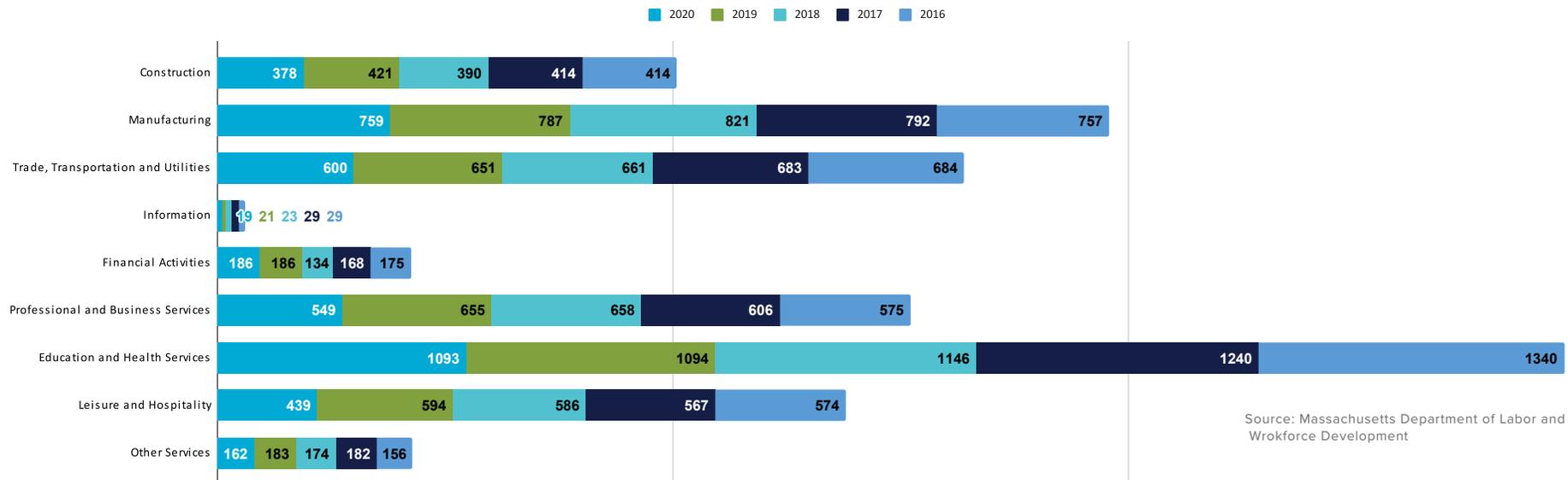
Source: Office of Labor and Workforce Development 2021 (EOWD)

"It is Important to Me that Amesbury Redevelops Underutilized Land and/or Spaces"



Source: 2030 Community Survey

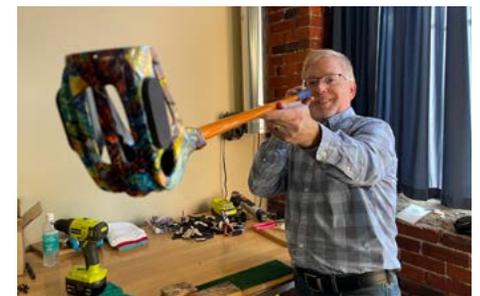
Amesbury's Number of Jobs by Industry



Amesbury is home to a dynamic and industrious workforce that plays a pivotal role in shaping the city's economic landscape. Historically known for its manufacturing heritage, Amesbury continues to house a skilled and adaptable workforce that has transitioned seamlessly into modern industries. From advanced manufacturing and technology to healthcare and education, the city's labor force exhibits a versatility that contributes to its economic resilience. This adaptability is a testament to the city's commitment to fostering a workforce capable

of meeting the evolving demands of the 21st century economy. The workforce in Amesbury reflects a strong sense of community and pride in craftsmanship. Many individuals take pride in the city's industrial roots and are dedicated to maintaining a tradition of excellence. The collaborative spirit among workers, combined with a commitment to innovation, creates an environment conducive to growth and progress. Amesbury's workforce not only drives local businesses but also contributes to the city's reputation as an employment hub for creative

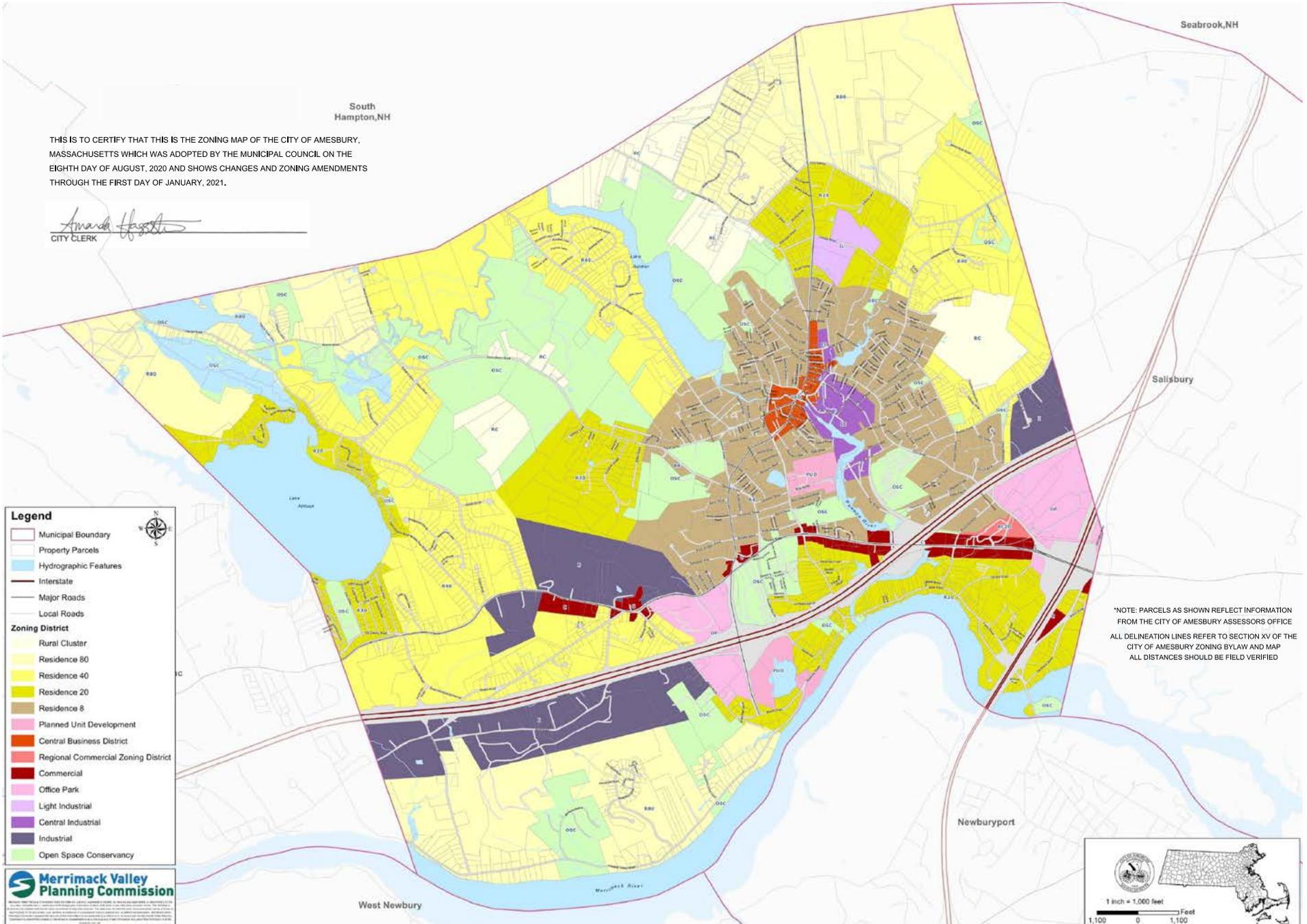
industries. Amesbury's employment data for skilled professionals demonstrates a supportive and engaging work environment. As the city continues to evolve, so does its workforce, embracing technological advancements and seeking opportunities for expansion. This forward-looking approach ensures that the workforce remains a key asset for the city's sustainable development, attracting businesses and professionals seeking a community that values growth, collaboration, and adaptability.



Zoning Districts

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THIS IS THE ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF AMESBURY, MASSACHUSETTS WHICH WAS ADOPTED BY THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ON THE EIGHTH DAY OF AUGUST, 2020 AND SHOWS CHANGES AND ZONING AMENDMENTS THROUGH THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, 2021.

Amanda Hyslop
CITY CLERK



*NOTE: PARCELS AS SHOWN REFLECT INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF AMESBURY ASSESSORS OFFICE ALL DELINEATION LINES REFER TO SECTION XV OF THE CITY OF AMESBURY ZONING BYLAW AND MAP ALL DISTANCES SHOULD BE FIELD VERIFIED

Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Property Parcels
- Hydrographic Features
- Interstate
- Major Roads
- Local Roads

Zoning District

- Rural Cluster
- Residence 80
- Residence 40
- Residence 20
- Residence 8
- Planned Unit Development
- Central Business District
- Regional Commercial Zoning District
- Commercial
- Office Park
- Light Industrial
- Central Industrial
- Industrial
- Open Space Conservancy

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

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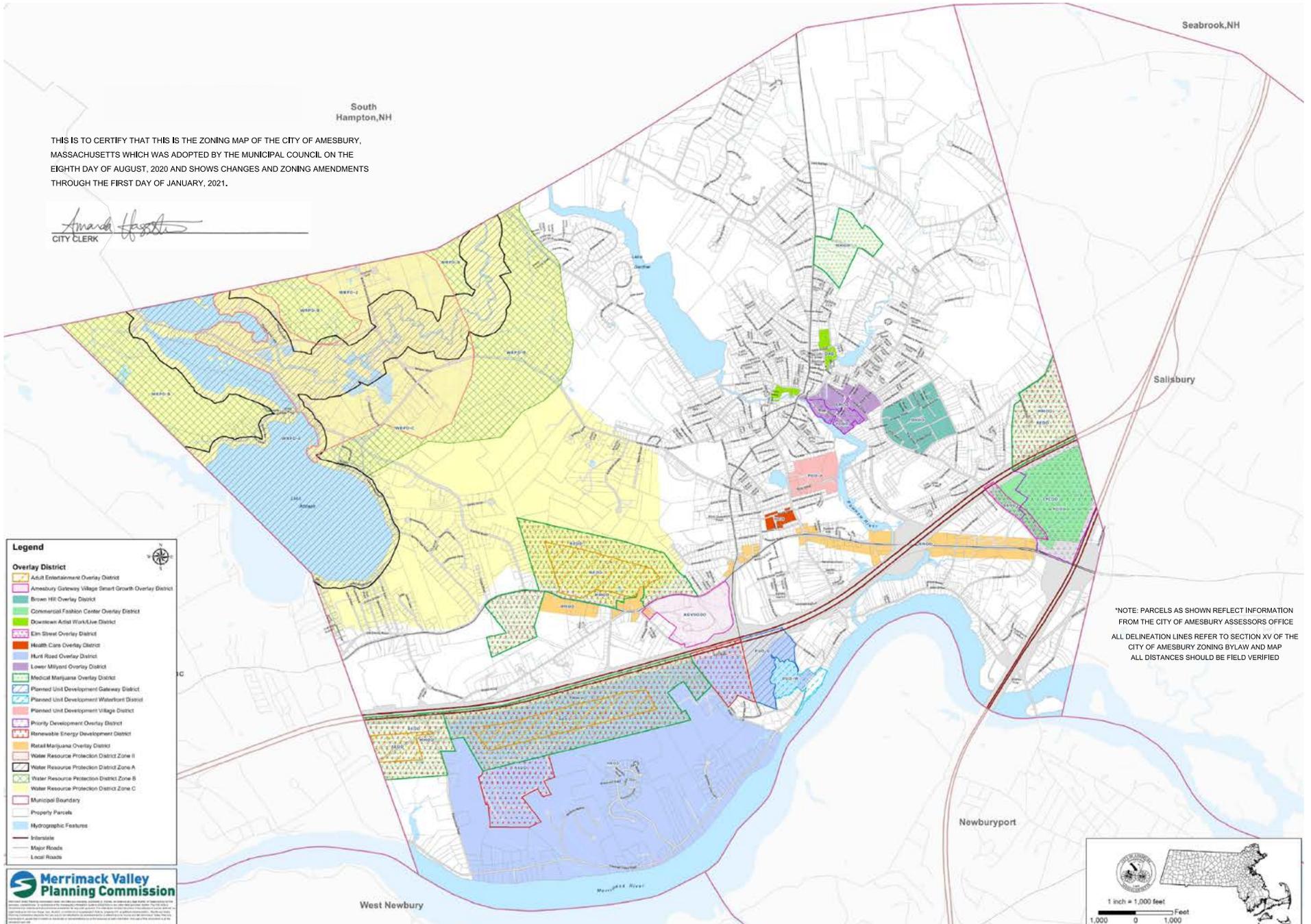
1 inch = 1,000 feet

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Zoning Overlay Districts

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Amara Hyslop
CITY CLERK



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ALL DISTANCES SHOULD BE FIELD VERIFIED

Legend

Overlay District

- Adult Entertainment Overlay District
- Amesbury Gateway Village Smart Growth Overlay District
- Brown Hill Overlay District
- Commercial Fashion Center Overlay District
- Downtown Artist Work/Live District
- Elm Street Overlay District
- Health Care Overlay District
- Hunt Road Overlay District
- Lower Millpond Overlay District
- Medical Marijuana Overlay District
- Planned Unit Development Gateway District
- Planned Unit Development Waterfront District
- Planned Unit Development Village District
- Priority Development Overlay District
- Renewable Energy Development District
- Retail Marijuana Overlay District
- Water Resource Protection District Zone II
- Water Resource Protection District Zone A
- Water Resource Protection District Zone B
- Water Resource Protection District Zone C
- Municipal Boundary
- Property Parcels
- Hydrographic Features
- Intestate
- Major Roads
- Local Roads

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

1 inch = 1,000 feet

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Our Vision For Economic Development

Amesbury will be a vibrant community with a diverse tax base that protects and improves the quality of life while respecting the existing culture and community character. Planned economic development will keep Amesbury affordable and provide community-oriented services in the downtown area. A varied and ecologically sound economic base will include retail, restaurant, commercial, light industry, as well as using culture and the arts to stimulate economic growth. We will balance downtown business development to provide goods and services for Amesbury residents and encourage industrial development in appropriate areas to enhance the tax base and provide local employment opportunities. We will highlight our natural, cultural, and historic resources to promote tourism and ecotourism in Amesbury, complementing regional attractions.

For the purpose of this plan, and in support of our vision, we are defining economic development as focusing municipal services and resources to improve our standard of living through maintaining existing employment and creating new jobs, encouragement of innovation and new ideas, and supporting overall fiscal sustainability.





Goal

Increase and improve communication with the business community specific to resources and current happenings.

Action

- Review Council Bill 2014-116 regarding Special Event Permits on an annual basis including communication to the business community regarding impacts.
- Create clear processes and efficient tools for business interactions with city entities for licenses and permits with training and education for city staff to best assist our businesses.
- Dedicate a staff liaison to take business inquiries and assist with navigating city processes.
- Adopt a city-wide CRM (customer relationship management system) to provide a personalized and highly effective service experience.
- Continue to create and maintain communications (i.e., newsletters, webpage, Makers' Highlight) for Doing Business in Amesbury.

We heard from many businesses and residents that the permitting process in Amesbury was difficult and not streamlined. By 2030 we will develop a more efficient process for business permitting and clear communication about permitting tools.



Goal

Promote Amesbury as an attractive, supportive, and business friendly community.

Action

- Review and update city ordinances that impact the business community, with stakeholder involvement, for relevance (i.e. signage).
- Encourage boards and commissions to create a welcoming and supportive environment at their meetings.
- Leadership staff will engage in best practices to develop relationships with current and potential large employers and innovators within the city.
- Work with employers, community-based partners, schools, technical institutes and training providers to improve and increase the workforce through lifetime training and education.

From 2021 to 2022 Amesbury businesses experienced a 28.63% increase in visitor spending. The Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism identifies a visitor as someone who traveled 50+ miles and stayed 5+ hours. The City, Chamber of Commerce and North of Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau work in partnership to promote the community and support our businesses.

Source: MA Office of Travel & Tourism Economic Impact Data



Goal

Develop the Lower Millyard District to complement adjacent land uses and enhance the tax base.

Action

- Take action on recommendations from existing plans and studies by leveraging private development.
- Improve parking in the Water Street area that supports the surrounding commercial uses and enhances the streetscape.
- Institute improvements to public spaces, such as widening sidewalks, improving street lighting, and traffic control measures to improve the connections between Upper and Lower Millyard.

In the 2022 Neighborhood Economic Resilience Assessment of Amesbury Downtown & Lower Millyard District, **85% of businesses surveyed agreed that their current location in the Lower Millyard helped them make business connections that supported their business growth.**



Goal

Build upon the unique cultural resources within Amesbury as an economic development catalyst and a source of community identity, making Amesbury a regional destination for entrepreneurs and consumers.

Action

- Investigate the creation of a cultural district.
- Establish and/or improve wayfinding and topical (e.g., historical) signage in the district to better ensure that the fascinating history becomes better known to residents and visitors.
- Explore targeted marketing promotions for targeted visitor groups (e.g., summertime coastal New England vacationers; historical professionals, students, and hobbyists).

Amesbury's rich history and diverse geography allow for abundant opportunities for economic development. Beyond our vibrant downtown, Amesbury boasts over **20** museums, historical sites and homes, as well as **900+** acres of recreational and open space. Optimizing our cultural resources as various economic opportunities will allow for continued growth of our city.



Goal

Prioritize emerging industries, including life-sciences and bio-tech, for city owned and commercial properties that will be prepared for new development in the next 10 years.

Action

- Ensure regional and state partners are aware of our interest and available space for these industries.
- Inventory and champion existing businesses in our community that are in emerging industries.
- Develop relationships between city leadership and commercial landlords to collaborate on a shared vision and future commercial growth.

Massachusetts’ “life sciences sector grew its employment base by 14.6% between 2019 and 2022, compared to just 9.4% nationally”. Spaces like the former Trader Alan’s Truck Stop, which has been cleared for redevelopment and is easily accessed from Route 495, have potential to contribute to the growing biotech or life sciences sectors while supporting our current business owners already in these areas of development.



Goal

Work with developers to ensure new projects and redevelopments are sustainable and resilient.

Action

- Use Low Impact Development techniques to reduce impervious surface and address stormwater runoff.
- Incorporate resilient infrastructure into the Capital Improvement Planning process.
- Encourage developments to build structures that are LEED or equivalent green building rating system through structural or financial incentives.
- Coordinate with appropriate departments and boards to ensure sites are electric vehicle ready.
- Improve public access from new and existing developments to open spaces/trails.

The EPA says that approximately **30%** of pollutants in our waters result from stormwater runoff. Reducing stormwater runoff helps to reduce stress on water treatment plants and decreases the bacterial counts in our lakes and waterways. Some ways Amesbury can implement stormwater runoff measures include installing permeable surfaces, eliminating fertilizers, and planting trees.



HOUSING

“One issue growing at an exponential rate all over the Commonwealth is the economic divide between minimum wage and the cost of affordable housing. Affordable housing in Amesbury isn’t a “should do”, or a “can do” it’s an absolute “must do” and we as community leaders must make every effort to show the rest of the State that affordable housing is the key to increasing economic mobility and reducing generational poverty.“

- Craig J. Bailey
Amesbury Chief of Police



Housing

Amesbury is home to 17,286 individuals. It is a tapestry woven with diverse neighborhoods and vibrant communities. Like many other surrounding towns, we recognize that the availability and affordability of housing are fundamental cornerstones of a thriving and inclusive community. The Housing Element serves as a compass, guiding us through the intricate landscape of housing policies, strategies, and actions that will shape the way we live, work, and connect in the years to come.

In the pages that follow, you will discover a comprehensive review of Amesbury's housing, crafted with foresight and care. This element delves into the challenges of today and the

opportunities of tomorrow, striving for a balance that ensures housing is not merely shelter but a place where dreams take root and flourish. We review demographic and employment trends, households, housing units, development trends, pricing, and housing affordability to provide a detailed picture of all that impacts and drives housing in our City.

Join us as we explore the narrative of our city's housing landscape — a story of growth, resilience, and collective prosperity — as we aim to foster neighborhoods that echo the symphony of our residents' aspirations and reflect the rich history that defines us.

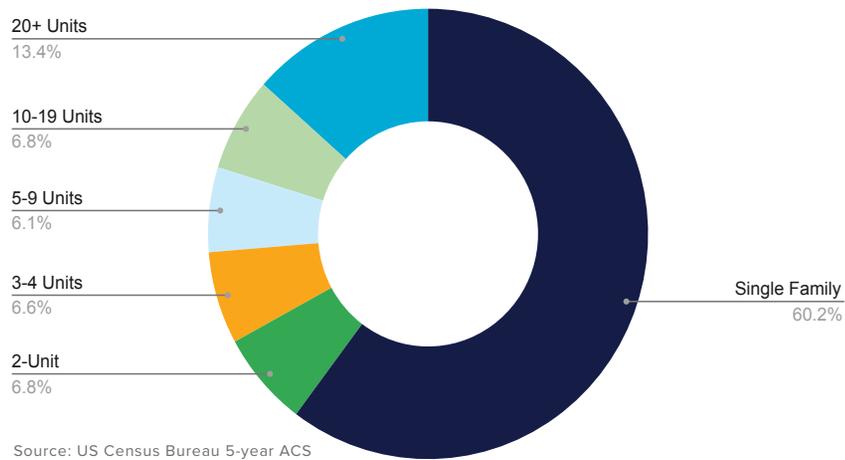


83%

of owner units are single family homes (attached or detached).

Source: US Census Bureau 5-year ACS

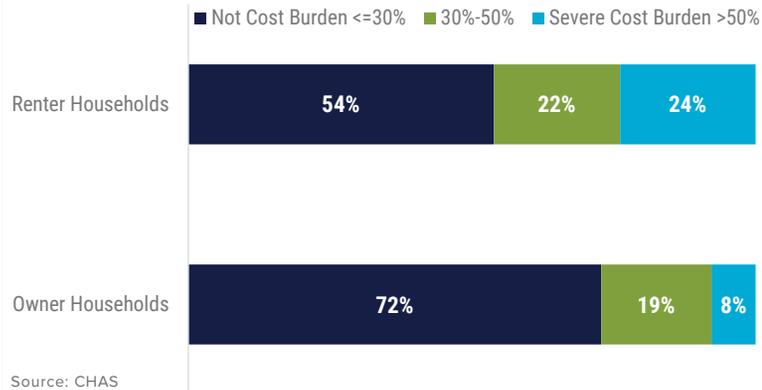
Amesbury Units in Structure



24% of renter households are spending more than **50%** of their income on housing costs compared to **8%** of owner households.

Source: CHAS

Cost Burdened Owner vs. Renter, 2019

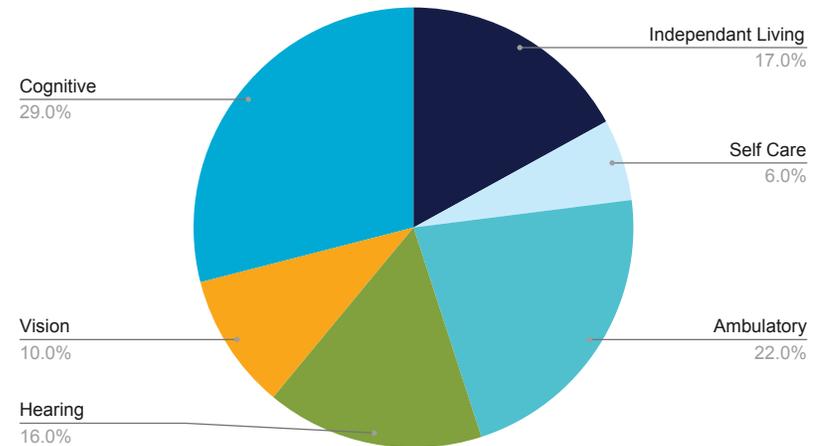


HUD considers a household to be cost burdened if they are spending more than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs. In Amesbury, about 46% of all renter households are cost burdened compared to 27% of owner households, following national trends.

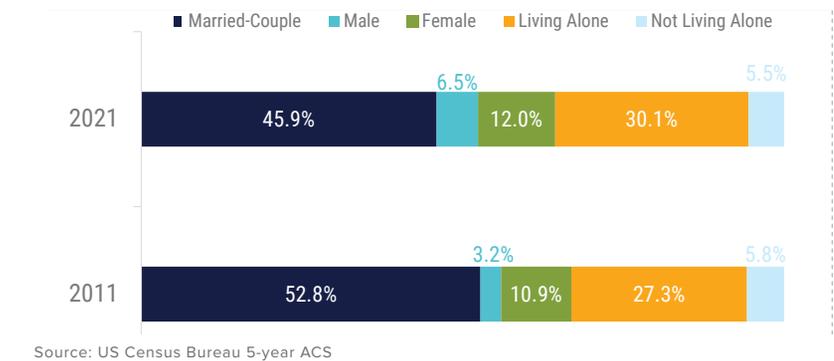
Amesbury Housing Disability Demographics

Amesbury's estimated disability rate (19.3%) is higher than the surrounding region (14.9%), with cognitive difficulty as the most common type of disability for Amesbury residents (6% of the total population, 29% out of all reported disabilities) followed by people with ambulatory difficulty, independent, and hearing disabilities.

Amesbury's higher disability proportion may be due to the aging population, as Amesbury's older adult residents continue to age in place.



Amesbury Household Composition



Household composition has shifted slightly towards an increase of non-family households, single persons, householders with roommates and unmarried couples.



Our Vision For Housing

Safe, accessible, and affordable housing is a key foundation to sustaining our community and ensuring all who wish to live, grow, and thrive in Amesbury have a place to call home. By allowing and encouraging a range of housing types, Amesbury will help foster a continuum of housing choices for residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities. Using policies, incentives, funding, and creative partnerships, the city will work toward reducing inequities and creating pathways for households to feel secure.





Goal

Expand housing choices in Amesbury by allowing units and buildings of varying sizes that accommodate a wider range of household types.

Action

- Update and adopt a new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance that reduces barriers to property owners in building smaller units in Amesbury.
- Adopt zoning that allows Amesbury to comply with the MBTA Communities Act and create districts that allow multifamily housing as-of-right.
- Draft and adopt changes to key housing production areas such as the East End district, Gateway Village district, Golden Triangle, and Lower Millyard that will allow a range of housing options and reduce barriers to housing production.
- Prioritize city-owned or purchased land for housing. Leverage disposition or a long-term lease to encourage creative housing solutions such as clustered starter homes, a senior co-housing community, or exploring a community land trust model.

Over the past decade, Amesbury's population has increased from 16,267 in 2011 to 17,286 in 2021, increasing by

6.3%

Source: RKG Associates



Goal

Leverage funding, regulations, policies, and partnerships to expand the availability and improve the quality of housing to low- and moderate-income households.

Action

- Update and adopt a new Inclusionary Zoning ordinance that regulates the inclusion of affordable housing as part of qualifying residential developments.
- When appropriate, pursue the adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to establish a reliable and recurring funding source for affordable housing.
- Evaluate the feasibility of reducing or eliminating permitting fees for affordable housing which could include filing and review fees, building permit fees, and utility connection fees. Consider working with the Housing Trust to create a program for offsetting fees.
- Seek opportunities to provide housing-related training to elected and appointed boards and committees to encourage continued learning about changing rules and regulations, fair housing laws, and best practices in housing.
- Evaluate the feasibility of instituting a rental registry program in Amesbury that would require annual registration and periodic inspections of rental units as tenants change or after a certain period of time.

Amesbury households have become increasingly wealthier with the fastest growth occurring in households earning more than \$200,000 per year, from 365 to 1,112 residents (747 additional residents), while middle-income households earning between \$50,000 and \$99,999 decreased from 2,173 to 1,895, losing 278 residents.* This may suggest middle-income residents are having a harder time finding affordable housing.

Source: RKG Associates

* 2011-2021



Goal

Provide safe, affordable, and accessible housing options for older adults to help them remain a part of the community.

Action

- Encourage all new housing, particularly multifamily housing and age-restricted housing, to follow Universal Design Standards for accessibility.
- Modify the zoning ordinance to allow for new models of housing that may help older adults remain in Amesbury. This could include housing co-ops, co-living, cluster developments, or single-family conversions to multi-unit structures.
- Create an adaptive modifications program that would provide no interest loans or forgivable grants to low-income older adult households for accessibility modifications to their homes.
- Investigate new or expanded programs to reduce the property tax burden on older adults in Amesbury. This could include options like expanding the senior work off program or instituting a property tax exemption for older adult homeowners who meet certain income criteria.

Amesbury experienced significant increases in its population between the ages of 55 to 64 (+566 residents), and 65+ (+890 residents) between 2011 and 2021.

Source: US Census Bureau 5-year ACS



Goal

Foster partnerships with housing and service providers to address housing needs for those who may be under-housed, experiencing homelessness, or under threat of eviction.

Action

- Ensure city departments coordinate approaches and resources to address housing challenges for those experiencing homelessness or under threat of eviction.
- Work with surrounding communities and the regional planning agency to conduct an annual housing fair with the intent of providing housing-related information, programs, and assistance to area residents.
- Engage the Massachusetts Attorney General's office to offer annual workshops or training on fair housing and tenants rights, laws, and protections.
- Develop and fund a local emergency rental assistance program that can help low-income households cover rent, mortgage, or utilities in the case of an unexpected financial crisis.
- Partner with the Amesbury Housing Authority to identify opportunities to partner on the creation of, or improvements to, public housing.

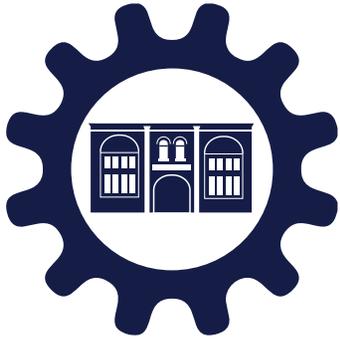
Rents for apartments in professionally managed properties were up **12 percent nationally in the first quarter of 2022 from a year earlier, with increases in several metro areas exceeding **20** percent.**

Source: The State of the Nation's Housing 2022 -Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University.ACS



In March of 2023, the city announced the **At Home in Amesbury** initiative to address housing-related issues including affordable housing, policies that encourage production, zoning, and diversity in housing choices.

To learn more, visit: www.amesburyma.gov/627/At-Home-In-Amesbury



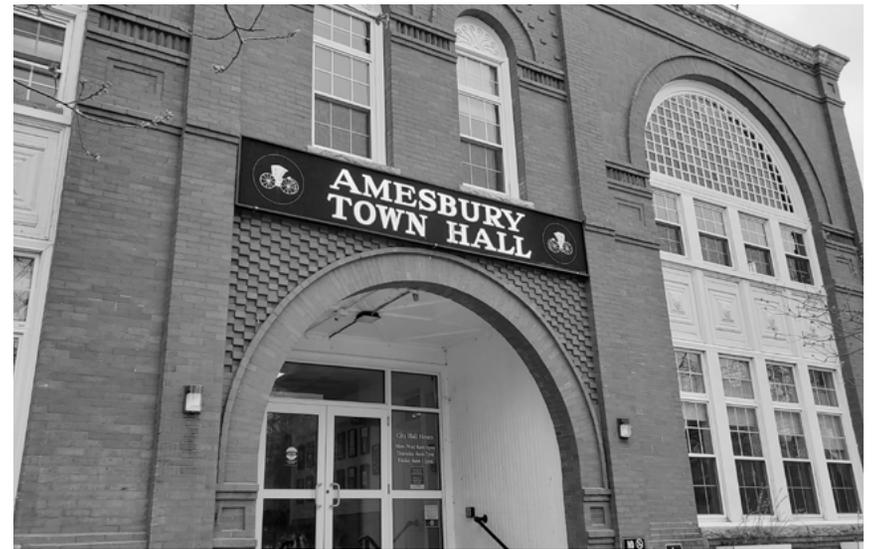
MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS





Our Vision for Municipal Operations

Throughout its development, the I AMesbury 2030 task force has been persistent in ensuring the usability of this master plan. This plan requires no implementation committee. Instead, it includes its own outline — a recommendation — for how the plan is to be integrated and operationalized into the way we work as a staff and progress as a community.



Recommendations for Implementation

Hire a Grant Administrator

- Federal, state, and competitive grants have become part of municipal funding models and the compliance, reconciliation and successful acquisition of these will be critical to achieving other goals in this plan.

Engage a Human Resources/Organizational Expert

- Establishing an organizational chart with updated positions/titles and job responsibilities to support this plan will need to be done in phases and with appropriate legislative approvals. In an era of limited resources, the opportunity to be innovative and meet the community's needs while providing more vertical movement for retention and recruitment opportunities should be captured.
 - Responsibilities identified throughout this plan include but are not limited to climate resilience, arts/culture and business communication and event coordination, education and intergenerational programming, and outdoor/recreational facility management and maintenance.

Establish a Plan for Public Facilities

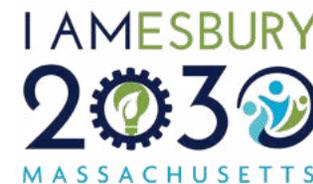
- By 2030 there should be a plan for public facilities to better meet the needs of our community. Data shows that Amesbury has a higher percentage of residents with disabilities, both ambulatory and cognitive, than the region and state. Public buildings that do not meet building code, health inspections, or ADA standards hinder the delivery of public services and do not provide the work environment we value. A community investment in these spaces with attention to multi-purpose opportunities should be thoughtfully considered.
 - There was particular interest from the community in providing safe and engaging space for young people beyond our school buildings and the need for better maintenance of our outdoor recreational facilities.

Improve Inclusionary Practices

- Overall participation in the development of this plan was fairly narrow. Primarily participants were white, English speaking, and older adults. We recommend improving systemic practices to engage all members of our community establishing trust and open communication with our local government. Feedback from renters, young people, and members of our community from different backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities needs to be more present in decision making spaces. There was a resounding need for attention to accommodations for ambulatory disabilities. Consideration should be given to language services and accessibility plans for any progress to be impactful and successful.

Staff Engagement

- Department heads with expertise in each element were included in the development of our goals and action items. To ensure the plan is now integrated into the work of staff, the mayor and leadership team should complete a goals chart with primary and support roles and a red light green light readiness tool indicating staffing and funding needs on an annual basis. Department heads should then use this tool with their team on a regular basis, year-round. This should be made public through the city website.
 - The icons developed in the plan shall be integrated into budget books and annual reports indicating where achievements and progress are being made in alignment with the plan.





ELEMENT RESOURCES

Element Resources

Recreation & Open Space

- [2005 Essex County Landscape Inventory, Amesbury, MA](#)
- [2013 Waterbody Assessment](#)
- [2018 Community Resilience Building Summary](#)
- [2019 Public Sports Fields Master Plan](#)
- [2020 Open Space & Recreation Plan](#)
- [2021 Community Survey on Amesbury's Identity](#)
- [2021 Open Space & Recreation Summit](#)
- [2021 Community Survey on Open Space & Recreation](#)

Learning & Education

- [2016 Pew Research Center Survey on Lifelong Learning and Technology](#)
- [2016 National Academies of Sciences report: Information Technology and the U.S. Workforce](#)
- [2020 Census Data \(QuickFacts\)](#)
- [2021-2022 District & School Committee Goals](#)
- [2021-2022 Superintendent's Goals](#)
- [2021 Community Survey on Amesbury's Identity](#)

Arts & Culture

- [2017 Americans for the Arts - Arts & Economic Prosperity](#)
- [2018 Impact Essex County Community Life Data](#)
- [2018 ArtsFund Social Impact of the Arts Study](#)
- [2022 Arts and Culture Summit](#)

Mobility

- [Introduction to the American Disabilities Act](#)
- [MV Regional Transportation Plan](#)
- [Sidewalk Survey from MVPC](#)
- [Merrimack Valley Planning Commission](#)

Economic Development

- [Amesbury Technical Assistance Panel \(TAP\) Report](#)
- [MA Economic Growth and Challenges in the Age of Covid-19](#)
- [Amesbury Downtown and Lower Millyard District Economic Resilience Assessment](#)
- [Why Amesbury Survey Results](#)

Housing

- [Amesbury Housing Timeline](#)
- [The State of the Nation's Housing 2022](#)
- [Amesbury Existing Conditions - RKG](#)
- [Inclusionary Zoning in Amesbury](#)
- [Accessory Dwelling Units in Amesbury](#)
- [MBTA Communities Act](#)
- [Zillow.com](#)
- [CHAS](#)

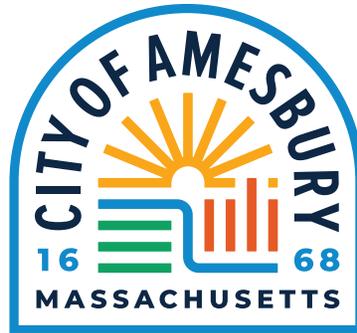
Infrastructure

- [PAS-Report-599-Smart Cities](#)
- [PAS-Report-592 - Autonomous Vehicles](#)
- [HUD-Climate-Action-Plan](#)
- [Infrastructure Survey Results](#)

Consultants

- [RKG Associates](#)
- [Merrimack Valley Planning Commission](#)

Thank you to the residents, businesses, and stakeholders of the city of Amesbury for your participation in the 2030 Master Plan.



www.amesburyma.gov