



Hanson
Master Plan
Public Draft
2024-2034

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Introduction

Summary:

A Master Plan is defined by Massachusetts General Laws as a “Statement, through text, maps, illustrations, or other forms of communication, which is designed to provide a basis for decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.” [Chapter 41, Section 81-D]. A master plan is a guiding document for the town, formed through the collaboration of local government and residents, that serves as a guide for local public policy that will support the vision and goals of the community.

Relevant Data:

- The Master Plan consists of the following chapters, Introduction, Land Use, Economic Development, Housing ,Natural and Cultural Resources , Open Space and Recreation , Sustainability and Climate Resiliency, Services and Facilities, Transportation , Action Plan for Implementation, Community Profile, and an Appendix.

Community Survey Results:

- When asked what they liked most about living in town, 71% selected “Small-town charm/ rural atmosphere” and 57% chose “Natural and Scenic Areas”. Other common choices were “Public Safety” and “Strong Sense of community. feeling of belonging” .

INTRODUCTION

Creating the 2024 Master Plan

The Town of Hanson is a Plymouth County community established in the western portion of Pembroke in 1632 and rated as a separate municipality in 1820. It has a total size of 15.66 square miles, breaking into 15.0 square miles of land and 0.66 square miles of water. Hanson had a population of 10,639 based on the 2020 Decennial Census count. Hanson, which is approximately 18 miles southeast of Boston, is bordered by six communities: Whitman and East Bridgewater (to the west), Halifax (to the south), Hanover (to the northeast), Pembroke (to the east), and Rockland (to the north). The Town of Hanson was named after U.S. Senator Alexander Contee Hanson, who, earlier in his life, worked as a publisher of the Federal Republican Newspaper.

Through an exciting and extensive effort, the town of Hanson has updated its master plan. A Master Plan is defined by Massachusetts General Laws as a “Statement, through text, maps, illustrations, or other forms of communication, which is designed to provide a basis for decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.” [Chapter 41, Section 81-D]. A master plan, from the perspective of the town, is a guiding document formed through the collaboration of town government and residents that serves as a guide for local public policy that will support the vision and goals of the community. Hanson's first master plan was prepared in 1963. This work is an opportunity to reflect on prior plans, last edited in 2007, to see where the town has met its goals and what has changed since and to determine new goals that meet current residents’ wishes for their community.

Outlining the Plan

The town of Hanson collaborated with Old Colony Planning Council, the town’s regional planning agency, to write the updated master plan. Work on the master plan started in the winter of 2023 and ended in the summer of 2024. During this time, the town and OCPC reviewed former planning documents and researched extensive demographic and relevant data to inform the plan, in addition to strong community engagement efforts. The document is outlined in 3 sections: master plan, action plan, and community profile.

The Master Plan is the primary document for setting policies and strategies in Hanson.

It identifies the formative issues that will shape policy in all areas of town. It lays out the framework for how the Town will reach its vision. Public input from workshops, open houses, surveys, and interviews guided its development. The Master Plan sets short-, mid-, and long-term goals and will be used by Town leaders, staff, boards, committees, and other decision-makers. Each chapter created is a required element by the state and analyzes ongoing initiatives and new actions for the town that are supported by needs identified from both quantitative analyses of the town and the experience of residents and employees.

The Action Plan details how the Master Plan is implemented. It includes individual action items needed to address community issues and needs.

An advocate, such as a Town department, board, committee, or commission, is identified along with implementation timeframes. It is important to note that the Action Plan and Master Plan are companion documents and should be read together to understand the full context of action items.

In addition to the data within each chapter, you can find a more extensive data resource called the Community Profile in the plan's appendix. Staff use this supporting document to understand the town quantitatively before gathering all other information.

Examining Hanson provides a snapshot of where we are today and where we have been as residents. While demographics are continually changing, analyzing patterns over time helps us to understand how Hanson has changed and what it might look like in the future. From this understanding, we can plan for needs around housing, recreation, transportation, and other aspects of our community that impact the quality of life.

Data Trends

As part of creating this plan, a deep dive into data regarding the town was conducted. These efforts included reviewing existing local plans, present and past, zoning, and demographic data from the US Census and Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Below is a summary of key data trends found during this work. A complete view of demographic data can be found in the community profile.

The Town of Hanson conducts population and demographic updates every ten years to comply with the national census updates. The most recent census data was conducted in 2020. More detailed current information from the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Population Estimate Program (PEP) provides population estimates for 2020.

- Hanson's estimated 2021 population of 10,639 represents a 12.5% increase from 2000, with most of this growth occurring between 2000 and 2010. By comparison, the Commonwealth and Plymouth County grew by 10.72% and 12.27%, respectively, since 2000.

- The town is slowly growing more diverse with a composition of White 91.63%, Black or African American 0.85%, and Asian 0.99%. The increased diversity includes a 118.8% increase in the Asian population, a 115.8% increase in the Hispanic population, and a 165% increase in the population that self-identified as Two or More Races since 2010.
- Hanson's median age was 42.8 years in 2021 compared to 39.6 years for the Commonwealth and 42.7 years for Plymouth County; 17.05% of Hanson residents are 65 or older, 17.4% of the Commonwealth are 65 or older, and 19.1% of Plymouth County residents. Between 2010 and 2021, the Hanson population aged 65 to 74 increased by 78.1%, residents aged 75 to 84 increased by 68%, and residents aged 85 and over increased by 150.8%.
- In 2021, 19.5% of Hanson residents were children and teenagers 18 years and younger, consistent with Plymouth County (20.8%) and the Commonwealth (19.5%) averages.
- Compared to Plymouth County and the Commonwealth, Hanson's percentage of the population between 20 and 34 years old was 18.2%, slightly higher than Plymouth County (17%) and lower than the Commonwealth (21.1%).

Local Government

General Government in Hanson

The Town of Hanson has an Open Town Meeting form of government, with a three-member Select Board and a Town Administrator.

Under the general supervision of the Select Board, the Town Administrator functions as the Town's Chief Administrative Officer. The primary duties of the Town Administrator

include overseeing the town’s personnel system and the central administration of non-school employee files, recruitment, appointment, and supervision of personnel; labor negotiations; and development of personnel policy and procedures, and serves as the Town's Chief Procurement Officer for Goods and Services. The Town Administrator also assists and works under the direction of the Select Board in formulating policy.

What is Town Meeting?

The word “Town Meeting” can refer to both the event and the legislative body. As an event, one might say, “The spring Town Meeting will begin next Tuesday”; and as a body, “The budget must be approved by a vote of the Town Meeting.” State law requires every town to have an annual Town Meeting.

What is the Purpose of Town Meeting?

- Receive reports from several town officials and boards.
- Pass the town budget for the coming fiscal year (July 1 to June 30)
- Authorize debt issuances.
- Enact local laws, known as bylaws, including zoning bylaws.
- Approve fund transfers and expenditures for specific projects.
- Establish studies and committees.

What is the Select Board and What do They do?

Table 1: Role of the Select Board

Powers and Responsibilities	Position Particulars
Prepare and issue the Town Meeting warrant (agenda)	Composed of five members
Make appointments to town boards and offices	Elected at-large (not by district)
Employ professional administrative staff	Elections each spring for staggered, three-year terms

Approve the payment of all town bills	Typically meets weekly or bi-weekly (sometimes less in July and August)
Grant licenses and permits	Must have posted public meetings with a majority of the board present to have legal authority
Review budget recommendations before they go before the Town Meeting	Volunteer position
Place any Proposition 2½ question on the local ballot	

What is a Town Administrator and What do They do?

The Town Administrator is the chief administrative officer in a town. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of a town management position are determined and defined locally, by a special act approved by the Legislature or the town charter. Most Town Administrators have delegated appointment authority, authority for the direction of the budget and capital plan process, responsibility for coordinating financial operations, and other duties as assigned by the Select Board.

How does the Master Plan play a role in town government?

The Master Plan creates a guideline of community needs for decision-making over the next 10 years. It should be used by the Town Administrator, Select Board, Planning Board, and other committees in the Action Plan. The boards were a part of the ongoing process to make sure that the Plan reflected the ongoing goals of these Boards.

During the creation of the Master Plan, the town put together a Steering Committee consisting of residents who were a part of relevant boards or were interested in the process. After completion, this committee

will transition to a Master Plan Implementation Committee to assist in the continued use of the document. According to Massachusetts General Law, the Planning Board is responsible for the approval of the Master Plan.

How can I get Involved in Local Government?

Attend Town Meetings and Events:

Participate in annual town meetings where important decisions are made. Keep an eye on the town calendar for other events and gatherings that you can attend.

Explore Boards and Committees:

Hanson has various boards, committees, and commissions that manage different aspects of town government. These include the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and more. If you're interested in serving on a town board, committee, or commission, visit <https://www.hanson-ma.gov/boards>.

Learn About Local Government Offices:

Visit the Hanson Town Offices located at 542 Liberty St. They handle various town-related matters, including land use planning and zoning. You can also explore other town departments and their functions.

Remember that community involvement is essential for a thriving town, and your participation can make a difference!

Public Engagement

Public engagement is the most influential step in drafting a master plan. The town of Hanson put together a steering committee to inform the strategy. The committee's role included sharing their lived experience and expertise of the town. This translated into helping prepare public engagement materials and editing goals and document chapters. A survey was made public to residents, asking them about their experience of living in town and where they wanted to see improvements

or enhancements in their community. The survey launched in November and closed out in March with a total of 257 responses.

Additionally, three (3) public meetings allowed the town to participate in planning. The first meeting introduced the process and the data collected to prepare the plan. OCPC staff prepared a hybrid presentation that described the plan's creation process, the RPA's role in the plan, and an initial look at the data gathered. Participants were then invited to ask questions about the plan and process. They were then encouraged to walk around and view posters containing previously presented data and a series of posters depicting land use and land of ecological significance in town.

The second meeting allowed for deeply informed conversations on specific topics and concerns of the town to facilitate discussions on the town's priorities moving through the next decade. Staff tabled at the Town Library the week before the event to share information with residents and inform them of the event.

The second meeting was held at Camp Kiwanee, a space of local significance to the town's history and residents. Participants were again encouraged to look at an expanded collection of grouped maps to promote conversation. Conversations primarily focused on the potential to repurpose town-owned land, areas of traffic and dangerous intersections, and how to connect conservation land.

The third meeting was a review of the vision and goals created through the planning process, allowing the community to see and comment on the results of their participation. This meeting was held at the Hanson Public Library on June 20th and had access to viewing through Zoom.

OCPC Staff also held an open informational session at the Council on Aging on May 9th, 2024. Participants were given background on the project, and community engagement

process and provided feedback on their top concerns for the community. Participants largely identified the cost of living in town as a concern.



Figure 1 First Public Meeting



Figure 2 Second Public Meeting

ELEMENTS

State Requirements - M.G.L. c. 41, s. 81D directs Planning Boards to prepare a Master Plan with the following elements.

1. Land Use
2. Economic Development
3. Housing
4. Natural and Cultural Resources
5. Open Space and Recreation
6. Sustainability and Climate Change Resiliency
7. Services and Facilities
8. Transportation and Circulation
9. Statement of Goals and Implementation Strategies (Action Plan)

While Sustainability and Climate Change are not a mandate, it is required that towns with a completed Hazard Mitigation Plan or Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan include the outcomes and goals from those plans in all other town documents. This element will cover that requirement.

The rest of the document will have a chapter dedicated to each element. Each chapter will have relevant data, survey outcomes, and strategies for the town to rely on over the next decade.

Land Use

Summary:

This chapter reviews past and current land use trends in Hanson. Creating a balance between conservation and development will allow the town to thrive. Trends are identified by reviewing zoning, maps and residential experience.

Relevant Data:

- Mass Audubon (2020), the amount of land that is not developed nor permanently protected is 64% or about 6,444 acres.
- Town Population will likely peak in 2030 at 10,772 and then drop to 10,322 by 2050

Community Survey Results:

- When asked what they liked most about living in town, 71% selected “Small-town charm/ rural atmosphere” and 57% chose “Natural and Scenic Areas. Other common choices were “Public Safety” and “Strong Sense of community / feeling of belonging”.
- When asked what they were most worried about in town 51% put Development/ losing small-town feel”, 49% selected Aging Infrastructure, and 45% selected “Affordability and Cost of Living”.

LAND USE

The Town's vision hinges on the land use plan, serving as its fundamental cornerstone. Based on the "Losing Ground Report" written by Mass Audubon (2020), the amount of land that is not developed nor permanently protected is 64% or about 6,444 acres. Decisions regarding the utilization of developable and conservation land are pivotal, influencing the Town's capacity to realize its vision while maintaining the Town's character.

Furthermore, judicious planning is essential for both the utilization of available land and the redevelopment of currently used land. The land use plan serves as the overarching framework for the entire plan, as various elements are interconnected. Housing and business locations, open space plans, town services, streets, utilities, and financial decisions all derive from and align with the land use plan, highlighting its central role in shaping the Town's future.

Existing Conditions

Hanson is a sprawling suburban town with primarily single-family housing and some commercial and business zoning. The only significant changes to land use have been the addition of residential developments. As a car-centric community most must depend on vehicular transportation as most streets do not have sidewalks and are not generally interconnected. With new zoning changes and policy initiatives, there is a renewed interest in development in the Town of Hanson. Commercial zoning has remained relatively the same over the past decade.

Hanson stands out for its distinctive feature of encompassing two watersheds within its borders: The North River Watershed and The Taunton River Watershed. Enhancing water

security, the town strategically installed its first well in the North River Watershed. This strategic addition enables the town to access water from two sources, adding to its resilience in water supply.

Land Use Patterns

Numerous elements contribute to land use decisions, encompassing factors like terrain features, soil conditions, transportation corridors, economic considerations, policies, and regulations set at the state and local levels. Hanson has been known to be a sprawling bedroom community with high residential development primarily along existing roads. To meet housing demand and the state's housing goals, the town has seen more demand for more dense housing and apartment buildings.

Historically, commercial and industrial development in Hanson has been constrained, primarily concentrated in specific areas such as Liberty Street (Route 58), Main Street (Route 27), and Bryantville. Limited business zoning is permitted near the Monponsett neighborhood, with minimal activity.

During the early phases of Hanson's development, growth primarily occurred along the Eastern boundary and the central part of town, leading to the establishment of industrial and heavy commercial uses in the western part, adjacent to the railroad and Main Street. Monponsett historically experienced the most housing congestion, as former summer cottages transitioned into year-round homes. However, this scenario is rapidly evolving with new developments emerging near the train station.

Nearly 41% of Hanson's soil is poorly drained, and or has a high-water table therefore generally not usable for development. This will help Hanson keep its characteristic of a quaint town surrounded by

wildlife and recreational opportunities. The undevelopable lands are distributed throughout the town strongly correlating to the vast network of streams, bogs, and ponds.

As regional, economic, and housing factors change so will the characteristics of Hanson. With proper planning, the town should retain its reputation as a quiet New England town. The town has many beloved qualities, to enhance these characteristics but evolve with the economy, planning and accepting change will be imperative to staying in Hanson.

Tables 2 and 3 offer insights into land use trends spanning from 1965 to 2016. Changing category definitions and conducting year-to-year comparisons isn't feasible, and the latest available data is from 2016. Remarkable trends observed over the decades indicate the town's expansion in terms of acreage across various categories, including single-family homes, multifamily dwellings, businesses, and industrial areas. However, comparing categories like streets, water bodies, and open spaces proves challenging due to changes in their definitions.

Trends and Influences:

Table 2: 2016 Land Use

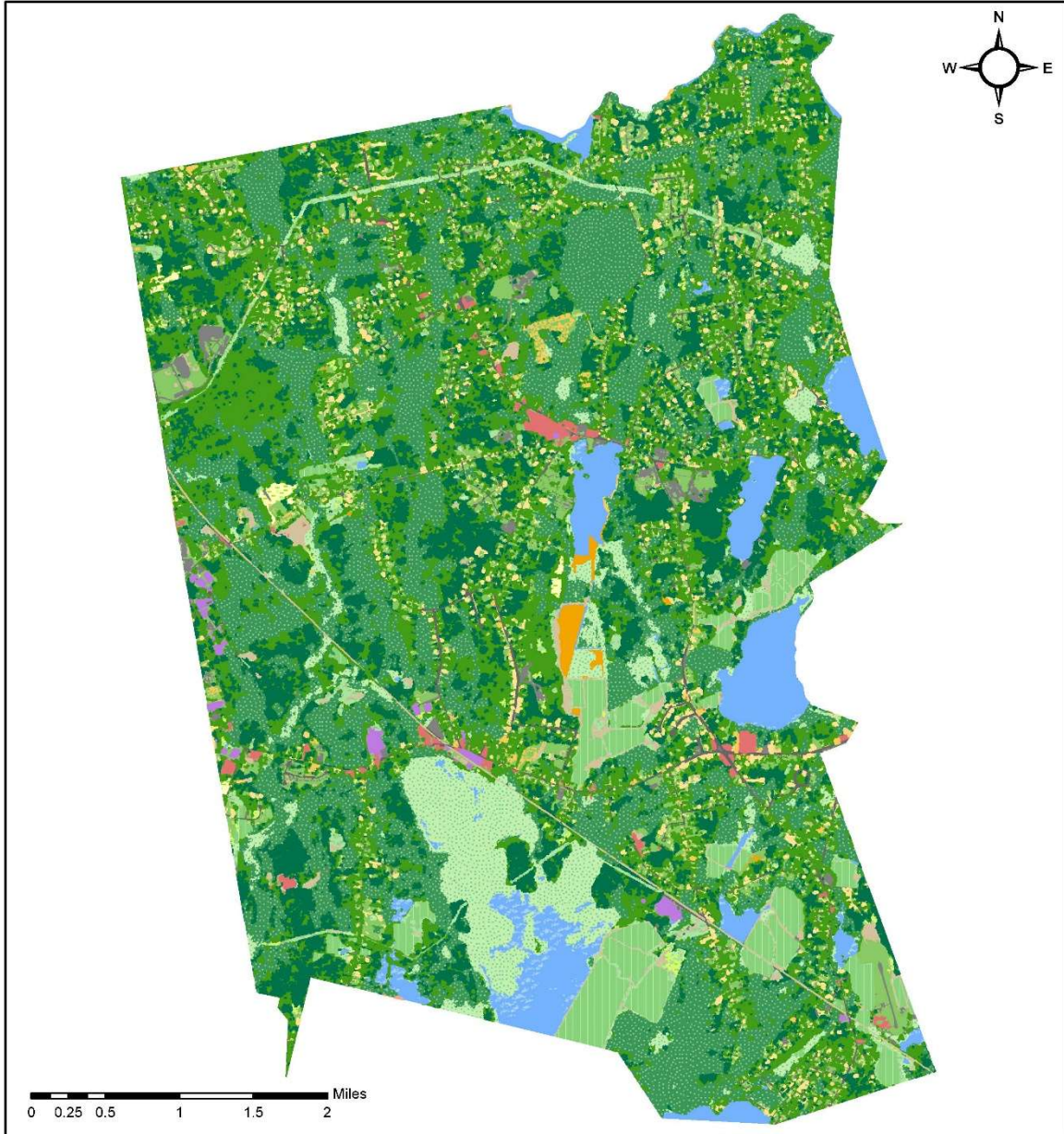
2016 Land Use Hanson		
Cover Name	Acres	Percentage
Residential - Single Family	359.336	3.6%
Residential - multi-family	45.2333	0.4%
Residential - Other	3.338214	0.0%
Commercial	67.0827	0.7%
Industrial	37.3293	0.4%
Mixed Use - Primarily Residential	7.5406	0.1%
Other Impervious	20.2531	0.2%
Right-of-way	293.9474	2.9%
Cultivated	398.285	4.0%
Pasture/Hay	26.13066	0.3%
Developed Open Space	1,029.73	10.2%
Deciduous Forest	2,550.06	25.3%
Evergreen Forest	1,287.51	12.8%
Grassland	172.6693	1.7%
Scrub/Shrub	26.2373	0.3%
Bare Land	106.8389	1.1%
Forested Wetland	2,416.23	24.0%
Non-forested Wetland	571.524	5.7%
Saltwater Wetland	0.05031663	0.0%
Water	425.925	4.2%
Aquatic Bed	126.143	1.3%
Total	10,069.70	

Table 3: Past Land Use

Past Land Use Trends		
Land Use in Acres	1965 (Original Master Plan)	1999 (Mass GIS Data)
Single-Family	1036.0	5588.02
Two Family and Multifamily	8.5	51.62
Business	30.5	69.30
Industry	39.0	106.94
Public and Semi-public	379.0	292.4
Streets	161.9	59.7
Sand and Gravel	11.0	15.8
Agriculture	229.2	735.35
Swamp	2765.0	5571.47
Water	540.1	480.74

Hanson Land Use

Map 1: Land Use



- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Residential - Single Family | Other Impervious | Scrub/Shrub |
| Residential - Multi-Family | Right-of-way | Bare Land |
| Residential - Other | Cultivated | Forested Wetland |
| Commercial | Pasture/Hay | Non-forested Wetland |
| Industrial | Developed Open Space | Saltwater Wetland |
| Mixed Use - Primarily Residential | Deciduous Forest | Water |
| Mixed Use - Primarily Commercial | Evergreen Forest | Unconsolidated Shore |
| Mixed Use - Other | Grassland | Aquatic Bed |

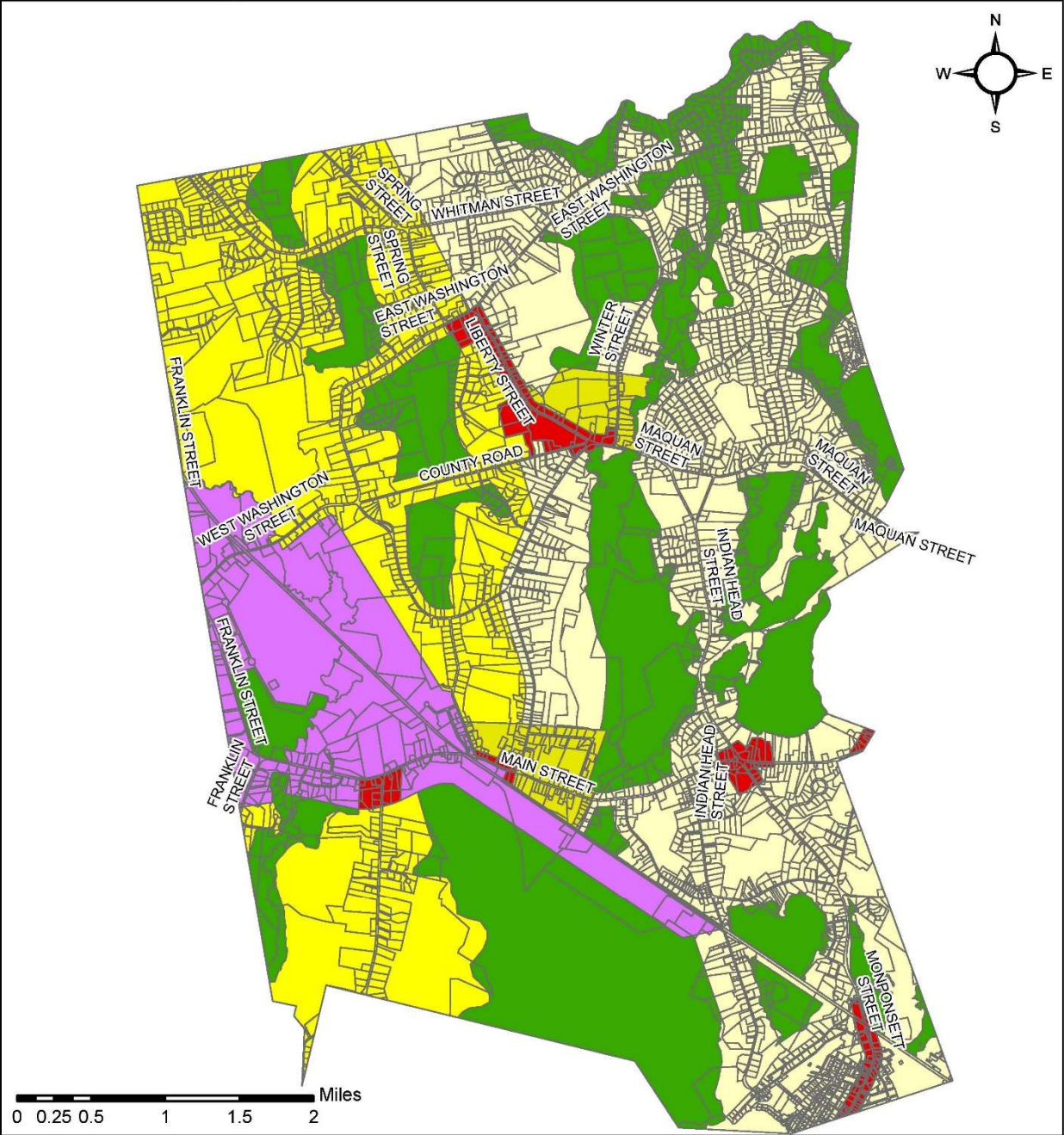


Old Colony Planning Council
70 School Street, Brockton, MA 02301

oldcolonyplanning.org
Created July 2023

GIS Data Sources: MassGIS,
Old Colony Planning Council

Hanson Zoning



- Agriculture-Recreation
- Business
- Commercial-Industrial
- Residence A
- Residence AA

Map 2: Zoning



Old Colony Planning Council
70 School Street, Brockton, MA 02301

oldcolonyplanning.org
Created July 2023

GIS Data Sources: MassGIS,
Old Colony Planning Council

Population

Table 4: Population Projection

Census 2010	Census 2020	Projection 2030	Projection 2040	Projection 2050
10,209	10,639	10,772	10,738	10,322

According to the Donahue Institute report, Hanson's population projection appears stable, showing minimal growth through 2050. However, several factors could influence this projection, including new housing initiatives, market dynamics, and broader state-wide influences. Population trends directly shape land use patterns, a significant concern for Hanson, which places a high value on its open spaces and natural aesthetics. The community exhibits resistance towards growth, a sentiment justified by its commitment to preserving its undeveloped lands and open space. Without updated zoning regulations, especially regarding density and building height, there's a valid concern about urban sprawl compromising these cherished characteristics. Adjusting building heights could mitigate this concern by reducing the footprint of construction and preserving the natural environment.

Soils

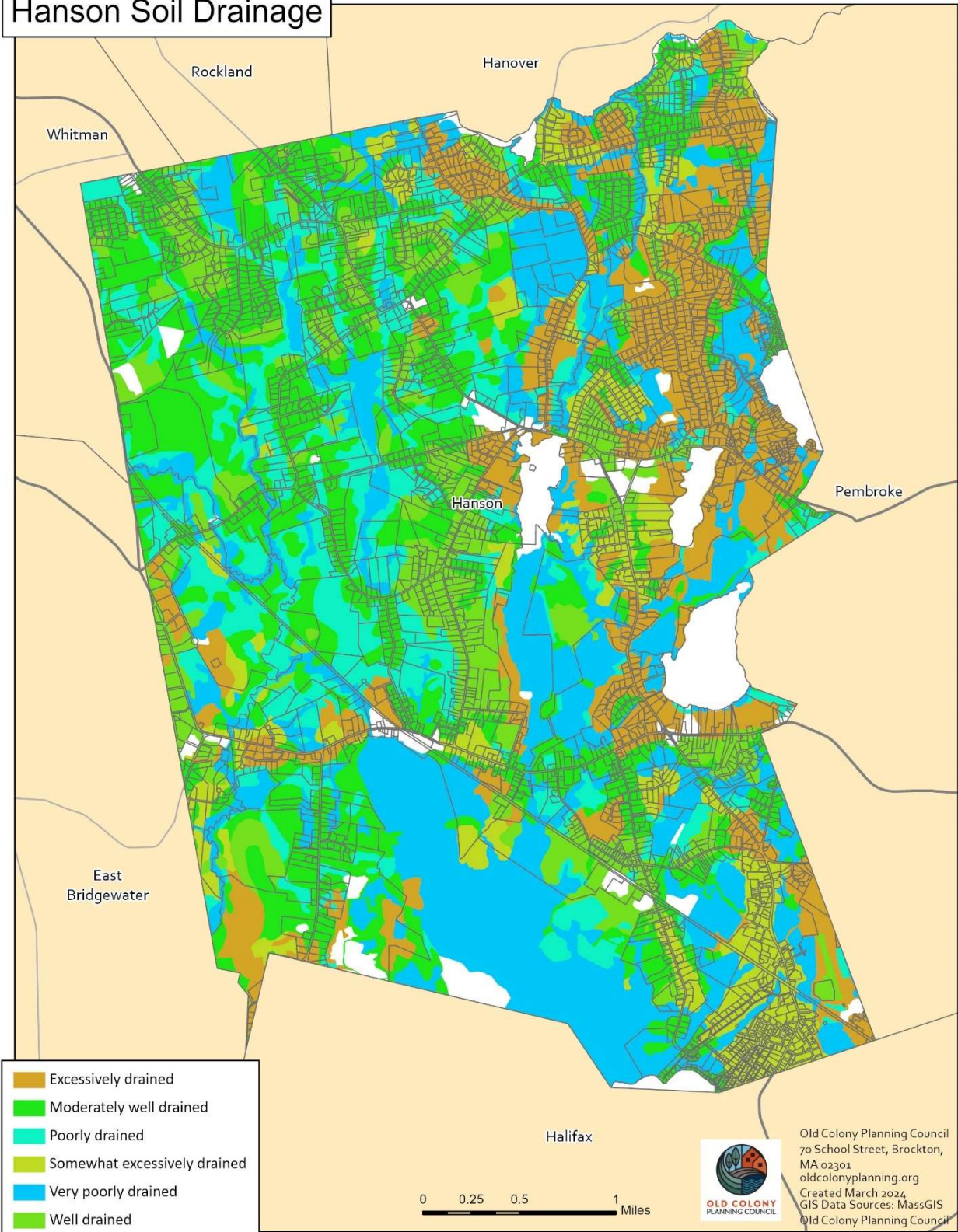
Soil characteristics play a pivotal role in shaping development possibilities, influencing the viability of on-site sewage disposal and the land's suitability for construction. With no sewer in the Town of Hanson, this limits development opportunities.

Organic soils, similar to the peat and muck described in the chart, are typically located in wetlands. Characterized by a high water table and extremely poor drainage, this soil type is unsuitable for development, as mentioned earlier. Lacustrine soils exhibit a range from sand to fine silt to muck, posing challenges for percolation testing in the context of septic system installation. Consequently, a majority of the areas on the map identified with Lacustrine soils are intentionally left undeveloped.

Glacial till is a mix of moderately well-drained sandy loams with relatively impermeable layers and intermittent densely packed clay layers. Simultaneously, tills are frequently situated in north-south running drumlins, which are shallow hills that rise above the less buildable wetlands. These areas served as sites for early roads and development, exemplified by locations such as Hanson's High Street. This historical pattern is evident on even the earliest land use maps.

Sewage treatment and disposal systems have the potential to enhance the developability of certain marginal lands. These systems achieve this by necessitating shallower depths to the water table and effectively removing greater quantities of nutrients and nitrates should the town choose to add over time.

Hanson Soil Drainage



Map 3: Soil Map

Town Sectors

The sections below focus on different town elements and neighborhoods regarding land use in Hanson that should have special consideration. Each section offers unique opportunities and has concerns that should be considered.

Town Center

The Town Center, situated near Town Hall along Liberty Street, serves as a hub with numerous businesses, recreational options, and two major routes intersecting it. Given its economic role and the community's desire to preserve a small-town ambiance, striking a balance between these demands is crucial.

Since the last Master Plan, there have been several new developments near the Town Center with another new development of Liberty Woods being built next to the McDonalds. Increasing the opportunities for pedestrians to walk to local shops or schools.

With the town growing and more developments becoming reality near the town center, congestion in the Town Center has also grown. Expanding opportunities for different modes of transportation such as protected bike lanes, sidewalks and multi-use trails through the town center should be a priority.

The Town has unique opportunities to enrich its Town Center, transforming it into a destination rather than merely a thoroughfare to elsewhere. Several enhancements could achieve this vision and the town should consider the following: burying powerlines, adorning lamp posts with banners or flowers, incorporating green strips for trees, and prioritizing the walkability for pedestrians. Additionally, to further solidify its sense of place, the town could reassess parking requirements, reduce minimums, and prioritize more green spaces within parking lots. By cultivating a more inviting ambiance,

there's potential to redirect passing traffic toward local businesses.

Entrances to the Town

As one enters the Town of Hanson, one may or may not know it, as there are only a few "Entering Hanson" signs along the major routes. There are no notable changes as one enters the town. There is an opportunity to create a welcoming and noticeable entrance to the town through the addition of signs and landscaping. It would help with creating a sense of community and could be beneficial to economic development and property values.

Neighborhood Needs

Monponsett is a neighborhood on the southern part of Hanson along Rt. 58 and the Halifax line, abutting the West Monponsett Pond. Originally this neighborhood was just a summer vacation spot comprised of seasonal cottages that slowly turned into year-round housing. This neighborhood is the most densely built area in Hanson. There has been discussion on creating a management district for Monponsett to help create a sewer system for the neighborhood. While this is not the plan at this time, in the future should the town choose it would help mitigate the impact of the dense neighborhood built on the pond. Other areas of concern for this neighborhood are the narrow streets, tight corners, and overall navigability.

South Hanson, also known as Main Street, has a lot of opportunities for economic development, but the barrier of not embracing change in the community, private ownership, and environmentally sensitive areas has hindered its revitalization efforts. The outcome of a walkable downtown village would be extremely beneficial to economic development.

With several new housing developments and

new regulations from the Commonwealth requiring more housing near the MBTA station. Hanson could see a change in this neighborhood over the next decade as the Town meets these new regulations. It will be important to control these developments through zoning and other municipal bylaws to achieve what the town envisions for its new village. It is strongly encouraged that Hanson approves 40R as it will receive additional grants to help with this growth.

Bryantville located on the east side of town, shared with Pembroke, is a mixed neighborhood comprising commercial and residential uses. Some considerations for this neighborhood are the connectivity of pedestrian routes in neighboring towns and throughout its own. The Towns of Hanson and Pembroke should establish regular meetings to discuss the shared neighborhood to help economic growth and address neighborhood needs.

Factory Pond From 1907 to 1970, the site served as a hub for research, development, and manufacturing activities related to munitions, pyrotechnics, and civilian fireworks for both the U.S. government and commercial purposes. Various hazardous substances such as mercury, lead, organic solvents, propellants, and explosives were utilized in these operations, resulting in widespread contamination across the site. Mercury contamination has been identified in sediment, soil, groundwater, and fish tissue, while lead, along with other heavy metals and volatile organic compounds, has been detected in soil, groundwater, and sediment. Additionally, munitions and explosives have been discovered in the soil and Factory Pond. Presently, the cleanup of the site is being supervised by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. It is recommended that the Town continues to

seek ongoing funding from the EPA to complete this cleanup.

Business Areas

There is a demand in Hanson for more commercial space but not enough square footage. While the community wants to keep the feel of a small town, it should realize it is possible to accomplish both increasing commercial square footage and keeping the charm of a small town through smart growth initiatives. The Town can meet this compromise through the development of mixed-use spaces and increased commercial space to welcome more businesses to the community.

Industrial Zones

The town has commercial-industrial zoning in town to promote local business and diversify tax levies to meet the growing needs for public service. While Hanson is not near a major highway, it is centrally located on the South Shore, making it a great place for distributing.

Open Space

To continue the preservation of open space enhancements and creating connectivity between land in permanent conservation the town needs to update its Open Space and Recreation Plan. In doing so, the town can take a deeper dive into the needs of park management and land protection as well as unlock state funding sources.

Land Use Goals and Actions

1. Do an in-depth review of current zoning bylaws in town to ensure they are promoting the type of growth Hanson wants to see.
 - a. Create a Priority Development and Priority Protection Area map to guide future zoning updates.
 - b. Consider the amendment of bylaws to support mixed-use to increase the height of buildings and reduce parking spot minimums to help reduce the footprint of developments and preserve open space.

2. Consider mitigating future traffic increases through pedestrian safety efforts, aesthetics, and promotion of public transit.
 - a. Update supporting plans including but not limited to the Open Space and Recreation Plan, Housing Production Plan, and Community Preservation Action Plan.
 - b. Create a schedule to include when plans are set to expire and ways to access funding to limit the burden of updates on the town.
 - c. Maintain a master list of objectives of the town across different themes and plans.

3. Schedule regular joint land use committees (Board of Selectboard, Assessors, Planning, ZBA, and Conservation) together to review goals and objectives identified in the Master Plan and evolving needs over time.

Economic Development

Summary:

Economic Development seeks to create a strategic framework that will guide and promote economic growth for attracting investment, creating jobs, and improving the well-being of the community by leveraging its strengths and addressing challenges.

Relevant Data:

- Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MADOT) Demographic and Socio-Economic Forecast indicated there were 2,653 jobs in town in 2020
- Hanson's two largest sectors being "Leisure & Hospitality" occupying 30% of those jobs, and "Education & Health Services" consisting of 20%.
- Between 2010 and 2020, Hanson added 495 jobs – an overall gain of 23% in 10 years.

Community Survey Results:

- Should more land in the town be rezoned for commercial or light industrial use? 36.24% answered "No," 32.31% answered "Yes," and 31.44% answered "Not sure." This suggests a relatively balanced distribution of opinions among the respondents regarding the question asked.
- The overwhelming majority (91.19%) expressed support for small local businesses, including retail and restaurants, while other types of businesses received varying levels of support. Farms and agricultural businesses received the second-highest level of support (60.79%).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A local economic development plan for Hanson seeks to create a strategic framework that will guide and promote economic growth for attracting investment, creating jobs, and improving the well-being of the community by leveraging its strengths and addressing challenges. By expanding the town's tax base through infrastructure, developing specific pro-growth strategies and goals, and undertaking various policy initiatives, Hanson can become more desirable, livable, and resilient.

The Master Plan public input process identified the South Hanson Station area, its Main Street Business Districts, Hanson's Commercial Center (Routes 14/58), and potential for commercial/industrial expansion as the town's principal competitive advantages for future growth. This blended approach is appropriate for the small, inland Massachusetts town dominated by lakes, rivers, and swamps. Not unexpectedly, these target areas have re-emerged as priorities originally identified in the 2008 master plan developed by OCPC, the 2019 FXM Report, and the 2021 Local Rapid Recovery Plan. It is also supported by several data points and the desires Hanson residents have expressed in conversations and identified during public workshops and meetings.

Existing Conditions

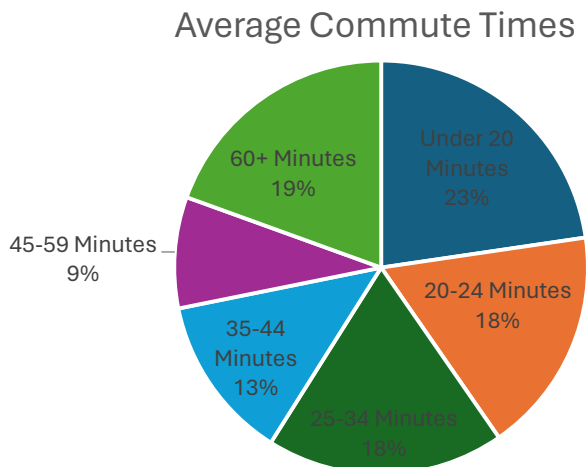
Jobs & Workforce

Hanson is primarily a residential community and in recent history has not provided major employment opportunities to its residents. Residents commonly work and shop in other regional cities and towns, including Boston, and travel between them for recreation, education, and entertainment. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MADOT) Demographic and Socio-Economic Forecast indicated there were 2,653 jobs in town in 2020, with Hanson's two largest sectors being "Leisure & Hospitality" occupying 30% of those jobs, and "Education & Health Services" consisting of 20%.

Between 2010 and 2020, Hanson added 495 jobs – an overall gain of 23% in 10 years. Longer term, the MADOT Forecast estimates that Hanson employment will grow to 2,836 jobs projected in 2050, however, that represents no growth in jobs or population from when those figures peak around 2030 – a trend that mirrors most of the region. According to 2021 ACS estimates, Hanson's labor force consists of 5,701 active workers (in jobs spanning the region/state), most of which were in "educational services, health care, and social assistance" that make up 24%, and "construction" at 14%.

Table 5: Average Commute Times

■ Under 20 Minutes ■ 20-24 Minutes ■ 25-34 Minutes ■ 35-44 Minutes ■ 45-59 Minutes ■ 60+ Minutes



Most of the local labor force travels outside the community for work, with 60% staying within Plymouth County, and 40% commuting outside of it. Based on 2021 data from the ACS, the average travel time to work for Hanson workers aged 16 and over is 35.5 minutes to work. More workers travel 60 or more minutes (19.5% of residents, likely traveling to Boston), followed by 20 to 24 minutes (17.7%, likely traveling to Brockton) and 35 to 44 minutes (12.9%, other areas).

Housing & Homeownership Relative to Economic Development

As Hanson’s residential tax base is the anchor of its finances, naturally, housing plays an integral role in the town’s local economic development and growth. Hanson’s housing stock is overwhelmingly comprised of owner-occupied single-family detached dwellings, indicating that the town lacks housing diversity in size and tenure. However, several higher-density developments have recently been constructed to provide residents with more housing choices. About 91.1% of residences in Hanson are owner-occupied (3,572), an increase of 2.8% from 2010, when owner-occupied housing units were estimated at 3,104. However, residential growth continues to be inhibited by a lack of sewer, and the

presence of wetlands that limit access to buildable uplands.

According to the 2021 ACS, there were 331 renter-occupied housing units, 8.4% of the total occupied housing units in Hanson. Although the number of renter-occupied housing units increased by 42, the percentage of total occupied housing units in Hanson decreased by -3.25% between 2010 and 2021. Hanson is an expensive place to buy a house, and home prices are becoming less and less affordable, with major cost burdens at lower income levels. While most of Hanson’s moderate-to-high-income households do not struggle to pay their monthly housing costs, lower-income families face affordability problems. Almost a third of owners and 48% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Recent Development & New Growth

New developments in the South Hanson Station area may modestly improve the housing choices available for those residents seeking affordable options. Pre-dating any draft of this masterplan, 2 projects on Main Street located in the commercial/industrial overlay zone (within feet of the MBTA Station) were in the pipeline – creating a total of 53 new residential units with 6,276 square feet of commercial floor space. Just behind the station, situated in the Residential B zone is Depot Village - a recently constructed 40B housing project completed at the end of 2021 which added 48 affordable units and spawned a walkable pedestrian connection to the train station. Much less recently, has been the creation of the Town-owned Commerce Park which is currently at full capacity until plans for further development of that area take shape.

Considering some of these recent developments and a small and fairly stagnant commercial base, the town has seen modest new growth in recent years, with \$316,309 generated in FY2024. These new numbers largely reflect the new mixed-use and residential properties in South Hanson near the MBTA station. In striving for growth, it is recommended that priority should be given to areas that link to community assets, including transit and undeveloped or underutilized land that offers opportunities for new investment.

Tax Base

Hanson's tax base is 93% residential. This compares to 92% in Halifax, 90% in East Bridgewater, 84% in Hanover, 88% in Pembroke, and 89% in Whitman. The largest of its neighboring towns (only slightly), from an obvious perspective, Hanson relies heavily on residential property taxes and has a commercial tax base that is weak and less competitive. And considering the number of residents commuting out of town to as far as

Boston and as close as Brockton, there is a great incentive to expand Hanson's commercial market and draw more workers from the Town's labor pool and elsewhere in the region.

Table 6: Local Residential Tax Base

Residential Tax Base	
Town	Residential Tax %
Hanson	93
Halifax	92
East Bridgewater	90
Whitman	89
Pembroke	88
Hanover	84

Despite the burden on residents to carry Hanson's local tax base, the town's residential and commercial tax rates (both \$15.10) are low when compared with other communities in the Old Colony Planning Council region. In OCPC's network of 17 municipalities, Hanson ranks 5th lowest in residential tax rates and 4th lowest for commercial. This is an additional incentive for the town to concentrate on growing its commercial market as the cost of doing business in Hanson may be cheaper than its neighboring towns – leveraging one of its significant attributes and making them regionally competitive within the realm of attracting new investment and creating opportunity.

As for potential remedies to Hanson's oversized residential levy, a course correction on future growth that is beyond housing could be advantageous for the Town. Hanson may wish to consider setting a modest long-term goal of growing the commercial tax base over some time. At 93%, relief to the residential taxpayer could be felt by a roughly 3-4% shift in the levy. An examination of other communities' levies in the region, including those abutting Hanson, could suggest that a residential levy that falls within the mid-to-

high 80% range would seem comparable - effective at decreasing the current burden placed on residents and increasing the Town's competitiveness. Specifically, the Towns of Easton (87.81%) and Kingston (86.66%) are perhaps very fiscally comparable communities that set a realistic bar for where Hanson could be.

Furthermore, to encourage growth that really "belongs in Hanson," attention should be given to the commercial/industrial zones and business districts to incentivize opportunities at locations such as the Route 14/58 Commercial Center, Hawks Avenue from Pleasant to Main, and the Main Street business corridor along Route 27, including underutilized land in the south near the privately owned Hanson Industrial Park and Town-owned Commerce Park on the East Bridgewater line.

Developing additional commercial and residential uses in the vicinity of the MBTA commuter rail station is expected to provide the Town of Hanson with more tax revenues, job opportunities, and housing that could satisfy multiple economic development objectives. This all suggests that commercial growth and mixed-use development be directly targeted in economic development strategies to capture jobs among the existing regional labor force and stimulate home ownership/rental options for new residents.

Diversify Local Tax Base with Commercial Investment

The town of Hanson relies far too heavily on its residents to generate revenue and maintain a basic level of municipal services. In addition, local businesses still pay taxes that generally exceed the cost of the public services they are consuming. In Hanson, the designated Business Districts provide consumer goods and services, and the Commercial-Industrial zones promote office

buildings, laboratories, and light industry. Broadening Hanson's revenue stream will not only ease the financial burden placed on residents but also encourage a diversity of tax-generating entities that will add to the community's desirability & fabric and enhance its appeal to others from elsewhere in or outside the region. It is believed that the town's nonresidential areas provide the best opportunity for jobs and new growth.

The recommended approach to diversification is through supportive zoning and sound business development that prioritize commercial/industrial opportunity.

Form-based zoning may benefit the commercial sector by creating a more attractive and functional built environment. This type of zoning ensures careful consideration of the physical design and layout of commercial areas in Hanson, promoting a mix of businesses and amenities that cater to the specific needs of the community, including mixed-use development, pedestrian-friendly design, enhanced sense of place, and adaptability to changing needs.

In any future conversations about zoning or zoning reform, form-based zoning may provide a strong framework that supports the growth and sustainability of the commercial environment that Hanson needs.

Prioritize Main Street Business Districts

An expansion of South Hanson's Main Street Business Districts could enhance economic vitality by attracting more businesses, increasing employment opportunities, creating a vibrant community hub, and driving local economic growth. Sections of the existing C/I zones along Main Street discourage land use for commercial opportunities that are fruitful for the town and practical for local consumers. Previous

findings from a 2019 assessment of the local market (FXM, 2019) suggest there is strong market support for additional commercial development. Furthermore, projected regional and submarket growth trends indicate increasing demand for commercial space of all types including office, industrial/warehouse, and retail.

Additionally, roads within the Hanson Street system very conveniently connect these districts to highlight the commercial center at the junction of County Road, High Street (Route 14), Winter Street, and Liberty Street (Route 58). The system also gives good access to the industrial/heavy commercial areas in South Hanson (including the MBTA station), which is the major east-west roadway on Route 27 along Main Street. These state-numbered routes are particularly important for local circulation and for transition to the regional network, as they are gateway corridors that experience a large flow of people and grant direct access to other highways. Traffic counts conducted in these areas, particularly along Route 14 and Route 27 (especially during rush hour) indicate heavy volumes.

While traffic data for these areas is not yet entirely up to date, the most recent comparisons between OCPC's 2005 and 2014 (RSA) figures (for travelers along Main Street Rt. 27) indicate a solid trend in volume of between 10,300 –11,000 vehicles per day, increasing in activity in the South Hanson commercial corridor. This is a particularly large volume of potential consumers driving through this area nearly 5 days a week. Following a similar trend of high volume is the Route 14 Commercial Center by Shaw's Plaza, specifically along Liberty Street (Rt. 14/58) which has historically been the busiest roadway in town. With around 16,000 vehicles per day passing through the Town Center, proper planning could successfully

draw commuters from in and out of town here to shop or run errands as they pass through. Route 58 traffic builds up as one goes south from the Rockland line to the Center and then diminishes. As Route 58 splits from Route 14, south of the Center, the volume then drops.

Of particular importance for the Main Street Business Districts is the opportunity gap within the local retail sector. Town-wide, residents had an estimated \$158 million of retail purchasing power in 2021, yet Hanson businesses were estimated to account for only \$75 million in retail sales, indicating a leakage of \$83 million that could be captured from residents. Employment in local businesses, especially retail businesses, and services, offers opportunities for part-time employment, local services, reduced travel time for workers and customers, and increased Town recognition. Expanding the boundaries of the two Main Street business districts that are at opposite ends of the South Hanson Station area may encourage new business and offer convenient options for local consumers that each ultimately expands the town's tax base, making the community more financially stable.

Consider an examination of possible expansion of the small town-owned Business District currently bisected by Elm Street on the southern side of Route 27 traveling eastward (Moe's Breakfast). The district's boundaries stop at the roadway and do not cover the area on the northern side of the street. Expanding the boundaries here to include both sides of Main Street could create symmetry and potentially offer new opportunities for commercial activity. The current zoning for this area is C/I but includes a flex overlay that is recommended the town keep as part of the said expansion.

The other business district within proximity is adjacent to the MBTA station, between Phillips and High Streets. This district notably omits 1057 Main Street, the historic former Ocean Spray cranberry processing facility, as well as the mixed-use Egan Development sites. The town should consider prioritizing these locations for mixed-use only development with first-floor commercial ground space, to create an extension of the existing Business districts at each end of the South Hanson Station area.

Redefine & Intensify the Commercial Value of Hanson Center (Route 14/58)

About 3.5 miles from the South Hanson MBTA Commuter Rail Station is the Town's Center where Routes 14 and 58 both meet in a compact, vibrant civic and commercial type hub along Liberty Street. Most of the stores here are grouped in Shaw's Shopping Plaza near major public facilities such as the Town Hall and the Fire Station. However, there are some free-standing businesses across from the plaza, east of Shaw's complex, and just beyond High Street whose locations are impractical and discourage shoppers from trying to park only once and doing their business on foot. This has not been conducive to any commercial growth and has limited opportunities for progress in this area for some time. Having said that, this area captures retail sales that exceed Hanson's estimated market, indicating that it regularly draws shoppers from surrounding communities to Hanson, a benefit to businesses nearby. The disconnectedness also contributes to a severe lack of identity for Hanson Center which has been without a vision. Encouraging commercial expansion contiguous to the existing center and improving the local pedestrian system here may help address both issues.

Hanson Center is zoned as the largest Business District in town – stretching from the intersection of 14/58 all the way North to West Washington Street. Liberty Street, which is the spine of the district, experiences the highest traffic volume of any other road or area in town. While this is by far the largest business district, it remains stagnant and has not experienced significant growth in recent memory. Unlike other Business Districts in town, Hanson Center is fairly lacking the pedestrian connections or groundwork for those connections one might expect for an area zoned as such. Reimagining this area in a way that intensifies new commercial opportunities for businesses and encourages local spending by customers could be very advantageous for the Town. Hanson may wish to consider a dual strategy for intensifying the commercial value of this area.

While previous master planning has suggested that Hanson Center could benefit from design guidelines, it is believed that the Town should once again consider this as they may protect the business potential, address pedestrian circulation, and assure compatibility with the character of the Town. Previous recommendations have indicated that attention be given to signage, landscaping, curb cuts, and architecture. Additionally, the Town may want to consider exploring what opportunities there are to reduce parking in this area. The Shaw's Plaza parking lot routinely has significantly more parking spaces than it has shoppers, wasting a large swath of space in the commercial center that could serve some other useful function that contributes to the town's local economy. Engaging in conversation with property owners here could be advantageous to long-term visioning and planning.



Figure 4: Town Employee at Shaw's Plaza

To support these measures, Hanson could entertain zoning modifications to enhance the business district here, perhaps by considering a Flex Overlay that allows for greater use and is more suitable for the area.

A Flex Overlay zone is a regulatory tool that allows for additional or alternative land uses and development standards on top of the base zoning regulations in a designated area. This adaptability could allow for greater commercial land use here that may attract businesses of various sizes and industries, fostering a more dynamic business environment along the corridor.

Alternatively, a mixed-use approach could create a more vibrant pedestrian-friendly area, attracting both residents and visitors and supporting local businesses.

Expand Commercial-Industrial Development between Hawks Ave and Hanson Commerce Park along Route 27

The extensive commercial-industrial zoned area that spans Hawks Ave and heads west on Main Street to the East Bridgewater line poses a significant opportunity for the growth of Hanson's commercial sector. This particular zone runs south of the train tracks until it reaches the MBTA station to link up with Route 27, accommodating both the privately-owned Lockwoode Industrial Park and town-owned Hanson Commerce Park, including pre-existing uses in the Burrage neighborhood (Former Lite Control Plant). Opportunity may lie within the 22.6 acres of undeveloped land at Lockwoode Industrial, the 9.3-acre property on Hawks Ave, and potentially the 7.28-acre tract of vacant, wooded land located on the easterly side of

West Washington within the C/I zone that abuts Hanson Commerce Park.

Lockwoode Industrial is privately owned property and the majority of undeveloped space at Hanson Commerce Park falls within a Zone II Wellhead Protection District. However, both areas offer potential for future commercial growth. Interest has been expressed by the town to pursue development in some of these areas, as they have recently been successful in two notable grant applications for 1) *Site Readiness* funds that would position Hanson Commerce Park to expand by developing a future roadway, and 2) *Brownfield Redevelopment* funds that would assess redevelopment of the former Lite Control Plant property at 100 Hawkes Ave for any potential impacts to soil and groundwater from that operation.

The Town should consider directing much focus to follow-through on both grant awards, as they are very productive means in what's often a long process to get such sites either back online or newly developed. While the Town may wish to examine its current zoning in these areas as development becomes increasingly feasible with the progress at each site, the future of both (Hanson Commerce Park & Hawks Ave) presents a significant opportunity for expanding Hanson's commercial tax base, creating jobs, and capturing skilled labor from directly within the community.

Lockwoode Industrial Park (22.6 acres)

While privately owned, Lockwoode Industrial Park does contain a significant portion of acreage that remains undeveloped in a desirable location along Main Street on Route 27. Commercial expansion here could be highly advantageous for the Town, particularly with ongoing TOD mixed-use development occurring within a half-mile. Any action taken here would require a

balance of coordination with the owner and measures taken to protect conservation areas.

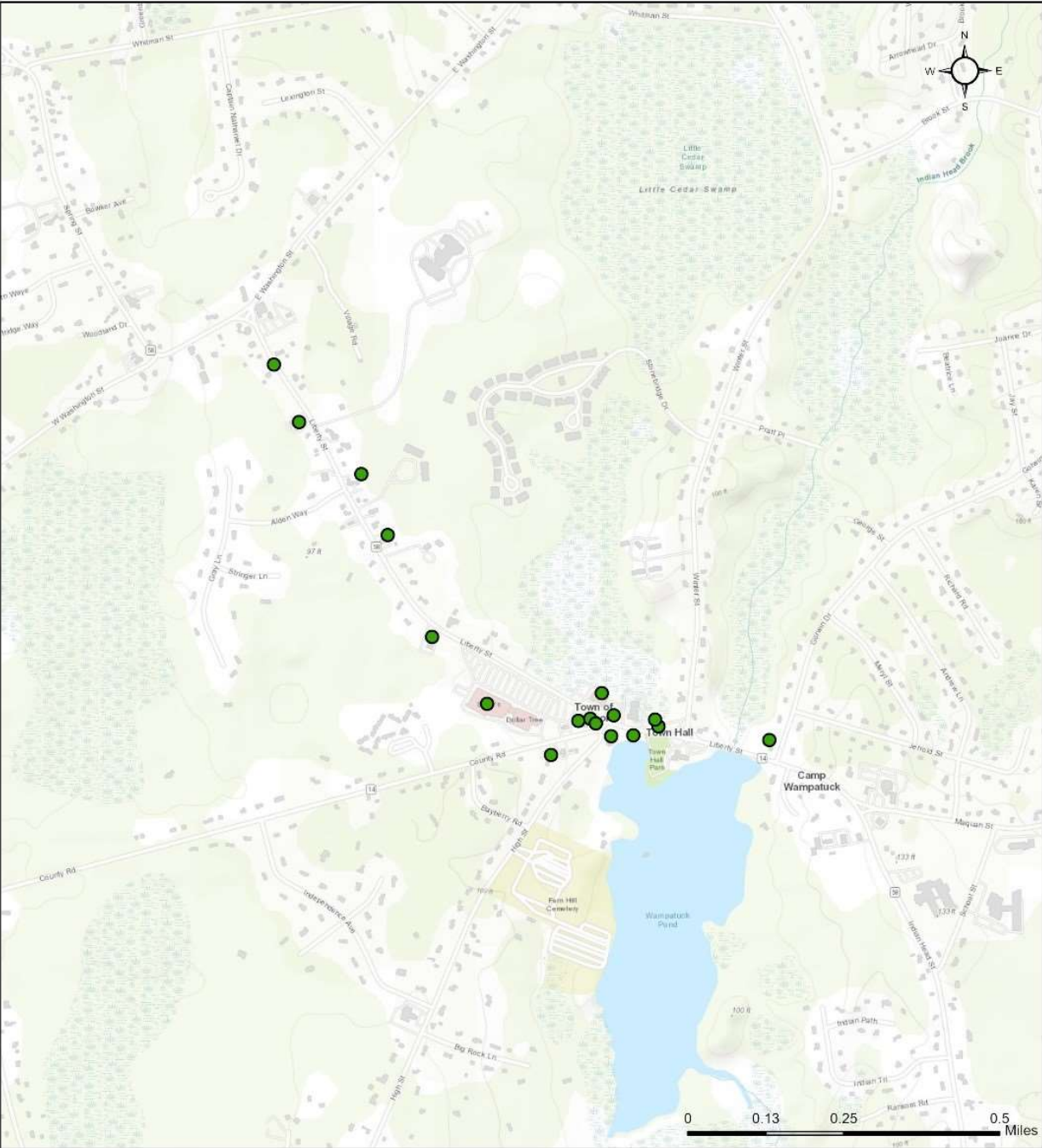
Hanson Commerce Park (7.2 acres)

It's recommended that the Town proceed expeditiously with the plan outlined in its Site Readiness application. The expansion of this property into individual commercial-industrial sites could allow for the creation of a wide variety of businesses that would serve many of the residents of Hanson and the surrounding communities. Provided the Town can overcome zoning challenges associated with the Zone II Wellhead Protection District, the potential development of this site could yield several lots that would provide great overall economic benefit.

Hawks Ave – Lite Control Plant (9.3 acres)

While this area abuts the residential section within the Burrage Neighborhood, the Town should consider the advantages of keeping the undeveloped acreage zoned for commercial use. Redevelopment of the site would provide tremendous benefit to the town in jobs and revenue, but more importantly, Hanson Commerce Park has very limited expansion potential and the redevelopment of Hawks Avenue would allow for expansion of the industrial-commercial tax base in a way that is impactful.

Hanson Business District



● Business



Old Colony Planning Council
 70 School Street, Brockton,
 MA 02301
oldcolonyplanning.org

OLD COLONY
 PLANNING COUNCIL

Created April 2024
 GIS Data Sources: ESRI, MassGIS,
 Old Colony Planning Council

Map 4: Business District

Create a Strategy for Developing Large-Scale Infrastructure that Will Leverage Job Creation and Appeal to New Business

In both aforementioned areas of Hanson (Main Street & Commercial Center), investments in the local infrastructure could reinforce any changes to policy and fulfill the community's desire for an enhanced commercial market. For meaningful growth and long-term sustainability, the town should weigh its current constraints relative to infrastructure, and consider future enhancements that will catalyze investment, and expand the local tax base. Robust utility infrastructure and sustainable development will create a conducive environment for Hanson businesses to thrive, expand, and create jobs.

Long-term, the Town may wish to consider investing in sewer; either by tapping into someone else's service network, or perhaps constructing a mini-treatment facility to accommodate areas that are in high demand along Main Street on Route 27 or Route 14 central to businesses who may need it. While being sensitive to over-development, the Town could benefit greatly from better positioning itself for the dwindling workforce and declining population projected in 5-10 years by creating an incentive for people to live or do business in Hanson. The Town of East Bridgewater invested in their own 30,000 gpd facility at the High School that offers significant potential for expanded capacity in the Town Center. It may be advantageous for the Town to consider a similar path if it is serious about long-term infrastructure projects that will stimulate real impactful growth.

Additionally, for consumers to patron businesses, infrastructure must support and encourage their participation in the local economy. While actual upgrades and physical

construction are the ultimate goal, such large-scale projects will require careful, strategic planning and engineering for charting a long-term path for scalable development that Hanson should begin to consider.

Prioritize Investment Around South Hanson Station

Findings from previous planning initiatives relative to the South Hanson Station area have all emphasized the considerable economic potential it offers the community. Formerly the center of town during the industrial era, at the heart of the corridor is the Hanson MBTA Commuter Rail Station which attracts hundreds of weekday riders commuting to Boston. This segment of Main Street where South Hanson Station is located is of much higher density than the rest of the roadway and has far more auto-free accessibility [around the station] than the rest of the town. While some businesses do occupy the corridor, it largely suffers from urban decay and de-industrialization given its large number of run-down buildings. There is a great opportunity for higher density mixed-use Transit Oriented Development here that is walkable, attractive to developers and offers new commercial and residential uses to the community. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is a type of urban planning that focuses on creating vibrant, livable communities centered around public transportation hubs, such as train stations, bus stops, or metro stations. The goal is to design neighborhoods where people can easily walk, bike, or use public transit to reach work, shops, schools, and other services. Such investment would create additional tax revenues, job opportunities, and housing that could satisfy multiple economic development objectives.

Implement a Transit-Oriented Development Strategy that Provides Mixed Use Housing Options and a Retail “Business Center”

Commuter rail transportation access fixed within the center of South Hanson and along MA-27 presents a great opportunity for the Town to leverage its existing assets and address some of its longest-standing challenges. Intensified uses here will compensate for Hanson’s [30-minute] distance to a major highway interchange, create new housing options for residents and commuters, and grow the commercial market to broaden and sustain local tax revenue. Mixed-use TOD zoning would encourage the economic revitalization of the South Hanson area by concentrating varied residential, commercial, office, and civic uses and amenities near the train station to create a multi-use node offering easy transit access to jobs, local retail, and high-density housing with pedestrian access.

First and foremost, it will be highly advantageous for the Town to complete its MBTA Compliance Zoning District. Implementing 40R Smart Growth zoning here would create a dense mixed-use zoning district that will help consolidate growth and cut down on community dispersal. While there are parameters for density (number of units by acre), this would provide great benefit for the town, as it could create a distinctive sense of place for the South Hanson neighborhood and fulfill a significant market demand for walkable, livable convenience in this area. 40R enables communities to overcome zoning obstacles to Smart Growth development through overlay zoning, allowing the desired development as-of-right, subject to appropriate dimensional and use standards and fine-tuning through site plan review (See Housing Chapter for Relevant Goals).

Rezoning under provisions of Chapter 40R will provide some reimbursement from the Commonwealth for passing the bylaw and more for the permitted new units as well as support under the new Chapter 40S for any resulting net increase in school costs. The 40R district would be layered over the MBTA compliance zone once that is fully approved by the town. Should other commercial zoning revisions (recommended earlier) take place within the business district, this could create a significant node of commercial density here.

Improve Local Circulation and Streetscape to Create a Vibrant, Compact Corridor that Caters to Pedestrians and Invites Consumers/Patrons.

Most of Hanson is largely automobile-dependent, but sidewalks and basic pedestrian infrastructure do exist as the area is dense in the commercial district. However, it is neither inviting nor particularly hazard-free as it does not entice patrons, aid in visual appeal to storefronts, clearly guide secure pathways, or encourage visual cues from people traveling on foot. Parking is adequate around most storefronts in town, particularly around commercially zoned areas. However, large parking lots in front of shopping centers further separate parcels and lack visual appeal for both drivers and pedestrians. A large boost to business, particularly with housing increasing in the area, is curb appeal and walkability of residents. While large-scale infrastructure improvements tend not to be within reach for many communities like Hanson, the Town may want to consider baseline streetscape enhancements that improve the visual and functional aspects of the area’s streets and public spaces. Focusing enhancements on creating a more attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and vibrant environment may have a positive impact on the

Downtown's local business community and improved safety. Creating a sense of town character within the commercial district may increase the pride and usage of the small businesses found here.

A commercial space beautification strategy that introduces placemaking, perhaps a seasonal farmers market or concert series, encourages storefront improvements, and curb appeal may enhance vibrancy that will help lure customers and develop the neighborhood's character. By incorporating streetscape elements that will assist in creating a more attractive and cohesive area, such as functional and aesthetic items in pedestrian spaces that provide a more convenient, safe, and visually attractive space for pedestrians, the town may be able to increase the intensity of its retail activity here. Examples of streetscape elements include period/historic light fixtures, trees and plants, sidewalk enhancements, and street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, and bollards). The inclusion of streetscape elements in Hanson Center will assist in identifying the area as a special and distinct place.

Economic Development Goals and Actions

1. Expand Local Zoning to Support Diversifying the Tax Base
Local Zoning in town is currently limited and does not support the expansion of local businesses to diversify the tax base and alleviate residential tax pressure.
 - a. Reimagine Main Street Business Districts
 - b. Redefine & Intensify the Commercial Value of Hanson Center (Route 14/58)
 - c. Expand Commercial-Industrial Development between Hawks Ave and Hanson Commerce Park along Route 27.
 - d. Create a Strategy for Developing Large-Scale Infrastructure that Will Leverage Job Creation and Appeal to New Business.
 - e. Consider a Flex Overlay that allows for greater use where applicable.

2. Prioritize Investment Around South Hanson Station
 - a. Implement a Transit-Oriented Development Strategy that Provides Mixed Use Housing Options and a Retail “Business Center.”

3. Improve Local Circulation and Streetscape to Create a Vibrant, Compact Corridor that Caters to Pedestrians and Invites Consumers/Patrons.
 - a. Prioritize pedestrian infrastructure and connections at South Hanson Station.
 - b. Consider design guidelines for Hanson Center that prioritize convenience for shoppers.
 - c. Consider basic streetscape enhancements and placemaking ideas for activating the South Hanson Station neighborhood with attractive spaces and/or seasonal activities.

Housing

Summary:

Housing takes in to account the overall housing stock of the community and how it compares to the wealth and households of the town. The Housing Chapter also complies with the Town's Housing Production Plan and the states Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory program.

Relevant Data:

- There are 3,960 housing units in Hanson, of which 3,780 were occupied and 180 were vacant.
- Between 2000 and 2010, 411 new housing units were developed (10.7%), and 371 were constructed from 2010 to 2020 (10.3%).
- The median household income in Hanson is \$112,315, and the median family income is \$160,933.
- The SHI identified 229 total development units and 188 subsidized housing units, resulting in an SHI of 4.79%.

Community Survey Results:

- The potential reasons for moving out of respondents' current homes. The majority of respondents indicated the desire to reduce housing costs (35.81%), followed by the desire for a smaller home with less maintenance (30.23%) and the desire for a warmer climate (29.77%).
- Smaller single-family houses (1,800 square feet or less) received the highest level of support for "YES" responses (66.22%), followed by accessory dwelling units (in-law apartments) (57.96%) and green design (low environmental impact) housing (54.95%).

HOUSING

Hanson is located near some of the South Shore’s most rapidly growing towns, which could make it attractive to market-rate and mixed-income housing developers. Hanson also has land and redevelopment opportunities poised to grow. Over time, Hanson has adopted very few regulatory tools that Massachusetts communities rely upon to promote housing diversity and affordability. Yet, in most cases, the affordable housing created in Hanson has relied upon Chapter 40B comprehensive permits - and they, in turn, have relied upon the strength of the regional housing market. However, the most pressing housing needs in Hanson and the surrounding towns will continue to defy market-based solutions.

Existing Conditions

- Hanson is a relatively affordable town – relative to most of the South Shore, but its 10-year rate of growth in single-family sale prices is higher than that of all the surrounding towns.
- Hanson seems to attract young families, which is suitable for community development and the vibrancy of a small town. Yet, Hanson has fewer families with school-age children than other South Subregion communities.
- Hanson offers direct access to commuter rail service, enabling residents to reach large regional employment centers in Boston and Cambridge. Still, relatively few people in Hanson’s labor force travel to work by public transportation. Residents say they appreciate what they consider reasonable commutes to jobs in the immediate region. The trade-off for convenient subregional commuting is that jobs in the Brockton labor market

tend to pay lower wages than similar jobs in Boston. There is a significant difference between the wages earned by Hanson residents who commute by public transportation and those who commute by car.

- Hanson’s housing is overwhelmingly comprised of detached single-family homes, which has had a noticeable impact on the make-up of Hanson households. The prevalence of single-family homes makes sense because Hanson is a small town with limited municipal infrastructure, and most people seem to appreciate Hanson’s quiet suburban ambiance. The downside is that Hanson’s lack of housing diversity means the Town has few options for seniors, young people, and virtually anyone looking for small units or some managed housing.
- Hanson has a very small inventory of affordable housing – defined here as housing eligible for listing in the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). Today, the town has only 157 SHI-eligible units, many of which the Hanson Housing Authority owns. Moreover, 31 existing SHI units are subject to “expiring use restrictions,” which means they can eventually become market-rate units. People leave to downsize or “move up” to more valuable housing in communities like Hanover. The irony of housing in Hanson is that, on the one hand, the town has very few affordable units; on the other, it is not a high-end community.
- Hanson’s housing supply is generally of good quality and moderately priced, with some advantages and disadvantages for the town. One reason Hanson has not attracted more interest from Chapter 40B developers is that its market-rate housing is not pricy enough to offset the loss of

income to developers from the sale or rent of affordable units.

Household Characteristics

A household can be a single person living alone, a married couple, a family headed by a single parent, or unrelated people living together as a single housekeeping unit. By contrast, a family is a household of two or more people, usually not always related. Given that Hanson is small and so much of its housing comprises detached single-family homes, it is no surprise that most households are families.

Key household characteristics for Hanson:

- The number of households was estimated to be 3,920 in 2021, an increase of 14.12% between 2010 and 2021. There were 3,435 households in 2010, a 21.04% increase from the number of Hanson households in 2000.
- Hanson's estimated homeownership rate was 91.1% in 2021, compared to 77.5% for Plymouth County and 62.4% for the Commonwealth.
- Married-couple families constituted 61.10% of Hanson households in 2021 versus 52.3% for Plymouth County and 46% for the Commonwealth.
- The number of Hanson households led by married couples with children has decreased by -13.29% during the past decade, while those without children have increased by 20.70%. In comparison, for Plymouth County, the number of married couples with children decreased by -5%, and -3.10% for the Commonwealth.
- For households with at least one person over 65, Hanson was estimated to be in the middle at 34.3%, with Plymouth County at 35.7% of families and 31.7% for the Commonwealth.
- Hanson's estimated median household income in 2021 was \$112,315. The

estimated household income for owner-occupied housing was \$117,413; renter-occupied accommodation was \$39,082 annually.

- Hanson stands out with 15.9% of households with incomes of at least \$200,000 annually.
- Hanson has a smaller share of family households living below the poverty level (0.50%) than Plymouth County (5.3%) and the Commonwealth (7.10%). Hanson families with children under 18 living below the poverty level were estimated at 1.20%, while Plymouth County estimates were 8.2% and 10.7% for the Commonwealth.

More than population, the number and type of households and their spending power within a community correlate with housing demand.

A household is a single person or two or more people who occupy the same housing units, which can be a house, apartment, mobile home, group home, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters.

According to the US Census Bureau, a household comprises everyone occupying a housing unit (e.g., house, apartment, single room). A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers or foster children who share the housing unit or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit, also called a household. The household count excludes group quarters.

According to the US Census Bureau, the number of households in Hanson has increased steadily over the past twenty years. Hanson had an estimated 3,920 households in 2021, an increase of 14.12% between 2010

and 2021. The 2000 – 2010 years experienced the most significant percentage increase (21.04%) with the addition of 597 new households, which is larger than the average for the OCPC Region, which increased the number of households by 11.66% during the same time. Hanson experienced a 14.12% increase in households between 2010 and 2021, while the growth for the entire region was half that at 6.01%. Between 2010 and 2021, Plymouth County experienced a 9.8% increase in households, while the number of homes in the Commonwealth increased by 12.3%.

Hanson's households have a much higher income, with a more significant proportion of homeowners (91.1%) than Plymouth County (77.5%) and the Commonwealth (62.4%). Hanson has a smaller share of family households living below the poverty level (0.50%) than Plymouth County (5.3%) and the Commonwealth (7.10%). Hanson families with children under 18 living below the poverty level were estimated at 1.20%, while Plymouth County estimates were 8.2% and 10.7% for the Commonwealth.

The average household size in Hanson has decreased; in 2010, the average household size was 2.99 persons, and in 2021, that number decreased to 2.70. The average household size for Plymouth County in 2021 was 2.58; for the Commonwealth, the average family size was 2.44.

The average family size decreased from 3.36 per family in 2010 to 3.25 in 2021. Hanson continues to be a town primarily composed of families, 77% of the population of Hanson resides in Married Couples households but only 23.5% of those households have children under 18 years of age.

As seen in both local and county estimates, for Massachusetts, the number of households

without children has increased by 1.5%, and the number of households with children has decreased by -3.10%. The number of married-couple families in the Commonwealth has reduced by -1.6% from 2010 to 2021.

Housing Characteristics

According to the 2020 Census, there are 3,960 housing units in Hanson, of which 3,780 were occupied and 180 were vacant. Between 2000 and 2010, 411 new housing units were developed (10.7%), and 371 were constructed from 2010 to 2020 (10.3%). Most of the housing in Hanson consists of 1-unit detached housing (82.5%), which increased by 1.7% between 2010 and 2021. 1-unit attached housing increased significantly by 194.3% (171 new units), while three or 4-unit housing increased by 164.1% (151 new units). Most of the housing stock in Hanson is older, constructed in 1939 or earlier (20.30%) or between 1960 and 1969 (16.3%), although 18.6% has been built between 2000 and 2021 (750 new units of housing).

Housing Units

According to the 2021 ACS, there were 4,029 total housing units in Hanson; 3,920 were estimated to be occupied housing units (97.3%), with 109 vacant housing units (2.7%). Of the 3,920 occupied housing units, 3,572 are occupied by the owner(s), and a renter or renters occupy the remaining 348 units. The town was estimated to increase housing choice through the development of 376 new housing units between 2010 and 2021 (10.3%).

Low homeowner and rental vacancy rates are typically interpreted as a sign of tight housing markets, with lower vacancy rates signaling a greater housing shortage. According to the 2021 ACS, the Town of Hanson was estimated to have 4,029 housing units within

the Town's borders: 3,920 units were occupied (97.3%), and 109 units were vacant (2.7%). According to the US Census Bureau, the vacancy rate for Hanson, MA, in 2020 was 5.9%, down from 6.8% in 2010¹. This is lower than the national average of 9.7%² but higher than the state average of 2.1%³. A lower vacancy rate means fewer available housing units for rent or sale, indicating a higher demand and a tighter market. However, other factors, such as the type, size, price, and location of the housing units, also affect the vacancy rate and the housing market.

Of the housing units in Hanson in 2010, 89.5% were estimated to comprise 1-unit detached dwellings (3,260), while in 2021, with an increase of 56 units (1.7%), only 82.5% were within 1-unit detached dwellings (3,325). The number of 1-unit attached dwellings increased to 259 units (6.4%) during the 2010 to 2021 years through the

construction of 171 new attached housing units (194.3%).

The 2-unit (apartments, townhouses, duplexes) housing choices decreased by -18 units (-10.9%) between 2010 and 2021 to 147 two-unit housing opportunities.

There were significant increases in the number of multi-family housing choices for residents through the construction of three or 4-unit and 5-to-9-unit housing units. In 2021, three or 4-units were estimated to be 6% of the total housing stock at 243 housing units, and 151 were estimated to have been constructed between 2010 and 2021 (164.1%). Five to nine-unit housing was estimated to be 1.4% of the total housing stock at 55 units, 40 of which were constructed between 2010 and 2021 (266.7%). No ten or more housing units were estimated to be constructed. The number of boats, RVs, and vans decreased by 100% during the decade. There are no mobile home opportunities in Hanson.

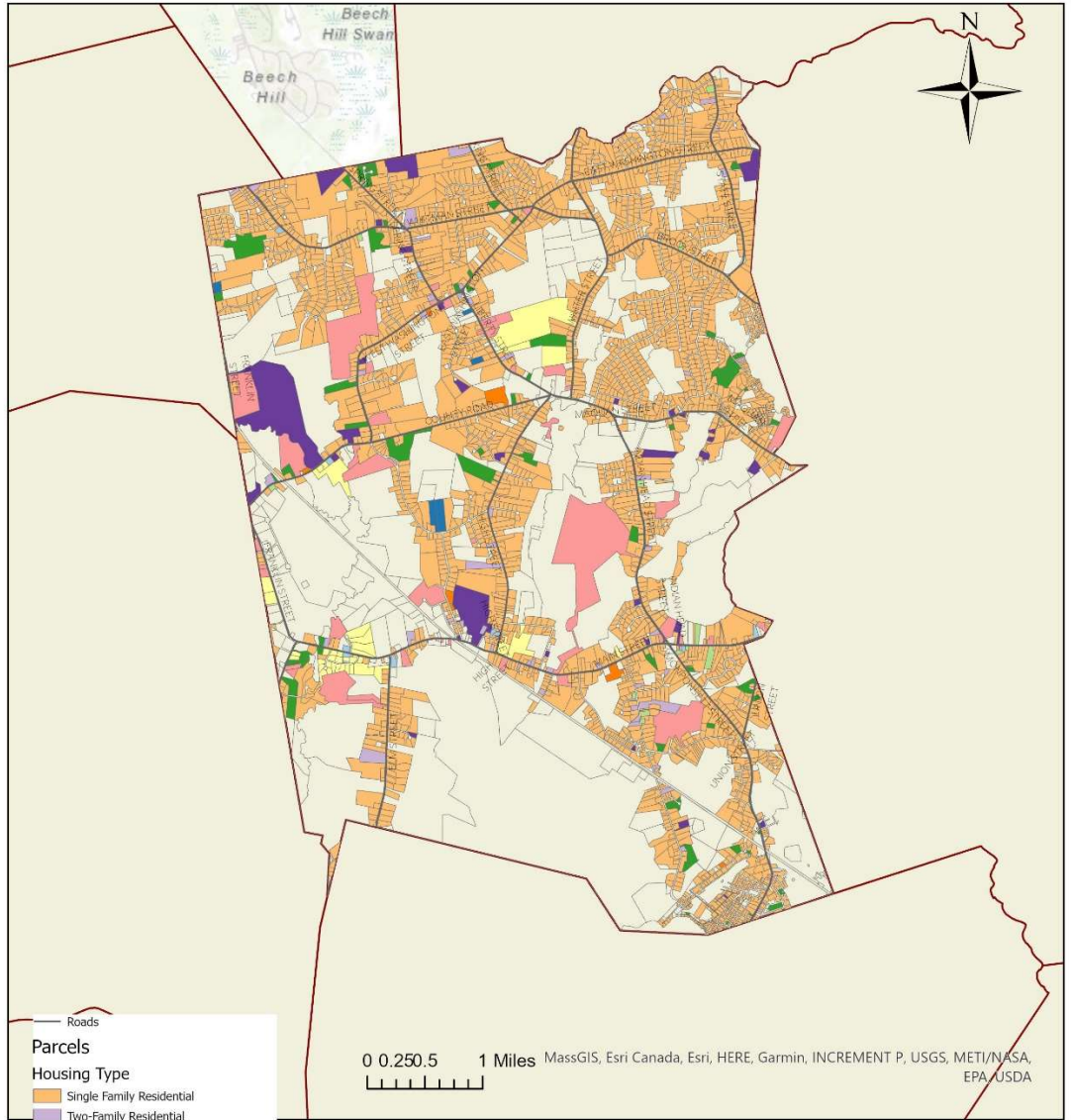
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<https://bing.com/search?q=Hanson+MA+Housing+Vacancy+Rates>

² <http://www.hansonhousingauthority.com/>

³ <https://www.hanoverlegion.com/>

Hanson Housing Stock



Old Colony Planning Council
 70 School Street, Brockton, Ma 02301



oldcolonyplanning.org
 May 2024

GIS Data Sources: MassDOT, Office of Geographic Information (MassGIS)
 Old Colony Planning Council

Map 5: Housing Stock

Household Wealth

The Income Distribution for Hanson indicates that 3.3% of households earn less than \$10,000 per year, and a large percentage of Hanson residents, 15.9%, earn more than \$200,000 per year. The median household income in Hanson is \$112,315, and the median family income is \$160,933. The median income for nonfamily households was significantly less at \$71,672 annually.

The financial health of a community is generally examined using median household income and per capita income. Median household income is calculated by combining the income of everyone living in a single housing unit. Per Capita income is calculated by taking the payment of an entire area and dividing it by all people living there (including those not earning income, such as children).

The median household income in Hanson is \$ 112,315, which is a little higher than the median income for Plymouth County (\$ 98,190) and Massachusetts (\$89,026). Approximately 2.3% of Hanson residents live below the poverty line, with seniors 65 and over accounting for 3% of those living below poverty.

Hanson has a higher median and per capita income than the average for the OCPC region, Plymouth County, the Commonwealth, and the US. The median income for Hanson during the 2010 – 2010 decade increased by 37.03%, while the per capita income increased by 64.53%, significantly more than increases observed in the county, OCPC region, the state, and the US. The median income for the OCPC region increased by 36.7%, and the per capita income increased by 43.9%.

Table 7 Median Income

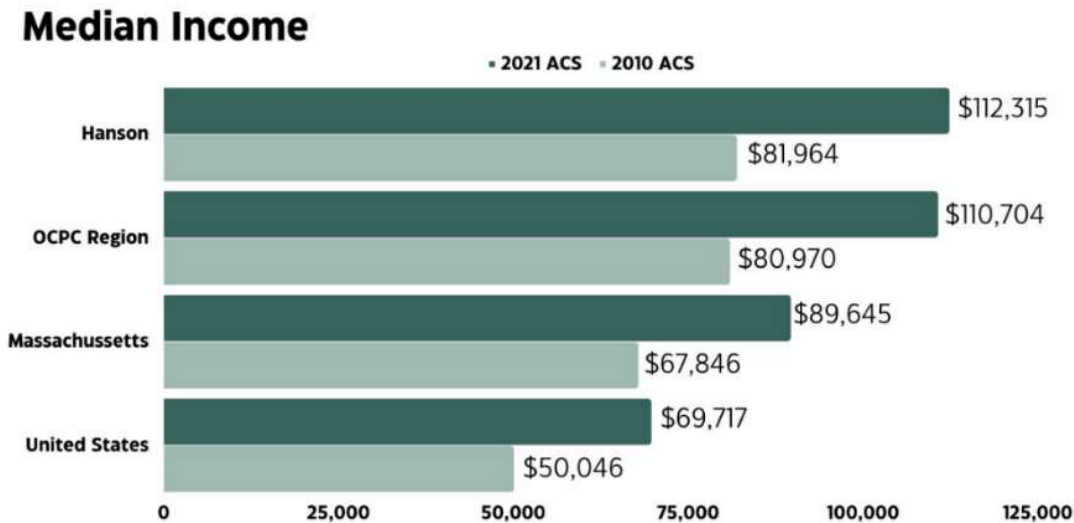


Figure 5: Median Income

Housing Affordability

Housing Cost Burden

Income alone does not adequately measure a household's financial health; the proportion of income that must be allocated toward housing costs is a major factor in determining whether a household is considered affordably housed. "Cost-burdened" households pay more than thirty percent of their income toward housing costs, limiting the amount of "leftover" money available for other expenses and the ability to accumulate savings. Technical definitions are as follows:

- **Moderately cost-burdened** households pay between 30-49 percent of their income toward housing costs, whereas **severely cost-burdened** households pay 50 percent or more.
- **Extremely Low-Income** households earn 0-30 percent of the HUD Area Median Family Income, known as HAMFI. (HUD refers to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.)
- **Very Low-Income** households earn between 31-50 percent of the HAMFI.
- **Low-income** households earn 51-80 percent of the HAMFI.
- **Moderate Income** households earn between 80-100 percent of the HAMFI.
- **High-income** households earn over 100% of the HAMFI.

In Hanson, 8.7%, 5.5%, and 8.3% of households are extremely low, very low, and low income, respectively. This means that 22.5 percent of all households qualify for federal, and state affordable housing programs based on household income.

Cost Burden by Tenure

Cost burden rates are typically higher among renter households. Statewide, 47% of renters and 31% of owners are cost-burdened, respectively. In Hanson, 61% of renters are cost-burdened, versus 31% of owners.

Cost Burden by Household Type

Younger, non-family, and elderly households typically have lower incomes and are more likely to rent. They are also more likely to be cost-burdened. Statewide, 21% of elderly family households and 45% of non-elderly, non-family households are cost-burdened, respectively. As the number of elderly households increases, the number of cost-burdened elderly households is likely to increase. In Hanson, the cost burden among elderly family households and non-elderly non-family households is 21% and 45%, respectively.

Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

The affordable housing law in Massachusetts, commonly called Chapter 40B, has the overarching purpose of providing for a regionally fair distribution of affordable housing for people with low or moderate incomes. Affordable units created under Chapter 40B remain affordable over time because a deed restriction limits resale prices and rents for many years or permanently, in some cases. The law establishes a statewide goal that at least 10 percent of the housing units in every city and town will be deed-restricted affordable housing. This 10 percent minimum represents each community's "regional fair share" of low- or moderate-income housing and is not a direct measure of actual housing needs.

In Massachusetts, housing units eligible for the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) must be affordable to households with incomes not exceeding 80 percent of AMI for the HUD region in which the units will be located. Housing units generally qualify for listing in the SHI if they are subsidized under an eligible subsidy program, subject to an affordable housing restriction that controls sale prices or rents and limits occupancy of the units to income-

eligible people on a fair, open basis. Affordable units created under Chapter 40B remain affordable over time because a deed restriction limits resale prices and rents for many years or permanently, in some cases.

Chapter 40B gives the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) authority to adjudicate appeals arising from the ZBA's denial or conditional approval of comprehensive permits. However, the HAC's discretion to overturn local decisions applies only to cases involving a city or town that has not met its regional fair share obligations under the statute. If the town meets one of the statutory minima, the HAC must uphold the decision as "consistent with local needs." The statutory minima include:

- If the number of low- or moderate-income housing units in the community exceeds 10 percent of the total number of housing units reported in the most recent federal (decennial) census or,
- If low or moderate-income housing has been developed on sites comprising 1.5 percent or more of the total land area in the community zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use or,
- If the comprehensive permit application before the ZBA would lead to the construction of low or moderate-income housing on sites comprising more than 0.3 of 1 percent of the total land area in the community zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use or ten acres, whichever is larger, in the calendar year.

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) releases a Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) to account for the number of affordable housing units available per community.

The most recent release identifies Hanson as having 3,922 housing units, according to the 2020 Census (as of 06/29/2023). The SHI identified 229 total development units and 188 subsidized housing units, resulting in an SHI of 4.79%.

The Town of Hanson does not meet the statutory tests described above. Therefore, "consistent with local needs" means balancing the regional need for affordable housing against local health, safety, open space, and site and building design concerns.

Through 2020, new households headed by someone currently under the age of 35 will need an additional 460 housing units. Households headed by someone currently between the ages of 35 and 55 will demand 450 more units. Householders currently over the age of 55 will need 380 fewer units than they do today. After accounting for the units freed up by departing seniors and the units needed to maintain a healthy vacancy rate, this translates into net demand for 400 single-family and 130 multi-family units.

Future Efforts

Fortunately, Hanson has adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA), giving access to a housing development and subsidy source many Massachusetts cities and towns have not yet embraced. Hanson needs development capacity to invest its CPA funds wisely and leverage other funding sources. The existing capacity gap should be addressed by [establishing a municipal housing trust](#) and strong working partnerships with NeighborWorks Housing Solutions (NHS) (formerly South Shore Housing Development Corporation) and other non-profit housing development organizations in the Greater Boston area.⁴

⁴ Town of Hanson Housing Production Plan, March 2019

Another strategy to increase the supply of housing that is affordable for a wide range of incomes and household types is the Local Initiative Program. The Local Initiative Program (LIP) is a state program that encourages the creation of affordable housing by providing technical assistance to communities and developers who are working together to create affordable rental opportunities (as the town and developer jointly apply). Unlike conventional housing subsidy programs, in which a state or federal agency must approve every aspect of financing, design, and construction, LIP allows most of these decisions to be made by the municipality. LIP regulations and guidelines address those program components that must be reviewed and approved by EOHLC. For example, incomes of households served, fair marketing, profit limitation, and establishing long-term affordability for the units that are built.

The town will need to continue to maintain its Housing Production Plan and work with the state to create the mandated 10% affordable housing stock. At this time, the town is also not in compliance with the new MBTA Communities Law (Section 3A of MGL c. 40A).

Figure 6: Local Housing



Housing Goals and Actions

1. Staff from the Housing Authority and Housing Committee will work with the planning board on ways to increase housing potential to meet the following needs as defined by the Housing Production Plan and state regulation:
 - a. Deeply subsidized rental units for low-income families: units rarely built under any form of regulatory relief except by public agencies and private non-profit housing development organizations.
 - b. Subsidized and modestly priced studio apartments and single-room occupancy units for one-person households with low or moderate incomes.
 - c. Deeply subsidized rental units for senior citizens to relieve some of the pressure on the Hanson Housing Authority's waiting list.
 - d. Homeownership units for people in a somewhat lower income range than Chapter 40B or inclusionary zoning developments typically serve.
2. Increase opportunity for Veteran and Senior Tax Relief programs to keep the most financially threatened residents in their homes.

Agriculture, Natural, and Cultural Resources

Summary:

Hanson has many natural and cultural resources within the town, including lakes, rivers, parks, trails, and historic properties. These assets are important to both the aesthetic of the town but also provide rich recreational opportunities and are essential to maintaining healthy ecosystems and clean waterways.

Relevant Data:

- Only 18% is under permanent conservation
- In Hanson, 400 acres of agricultural land is protected to some degree under Chapter 61A.
- Hanson lies within two major surface watersheds: the North River and the Taunton River watersheds.
- As of January 2024, the town has 300 historical site listings in Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System.

Community Survey Results:

- The majority of respondents (52.02%) support the purchase of new land for either conservation or recreation purposes. Additionally, a significant portion (69.51%) advocate for promoting the use of existing space. Encouraging the donation of land or conservation restrictions on privately owned land also garnered considerable support, with 39.91% of respondents in favor.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Hanson has many natural and cultural resources within the town, including lakes, rivers, parks, trails, and historic properties. These assets are important to both the aesthetic of the town but also provide rich recreational opportunities and are essential to maintaining healthy ecosystems and clean waterways.

Land

While Hanson is fortunate enough to have so much land already under conservation, the town must seek permanent conservation over parcels that hold environmental significance. Using the following data the town can work to increase permanent conservation.

Table 8: Mass Audubon Losing Ground 2012-2017

<i>Mass Audubon Losing Ground 2012-2017 Data Collection (2019 Publishing)</i>		
Land Use	Acres	Percent
<i>Total Area of Development</i>	2,711	26
<i>Total Area of Natural Land</i>	6,527	64
<i>Total Area of Open Land</i>	645	6
<i>Total Area of Permanently Conserved Land</i>	1,791	18
<i>Total Size of Town</i>	10,069	

Mass Audubon uses multiple data sources to compare the 351 town and city's conservation land. The following statistics are from the Losing Ground 2020 report by Mass Audubon. The numbers reflect the values and changes in land use between 2012 and 2017. These numbers may vary today. The town of Hanson is fortunate to still have a majority of its land in a natural state. Only 27% of Hanson's land is developed. Of the combined 70% of natural and open land, only 18% is under permanent conservation. As Hanson's population continues to increase over time developed land will increase to meet the town's economic and housing goals. The town needs to identify land that holds the most environmental and recreational benefits to place under permanent conservation.

Since 2008, the Town has acquired:

- The Thomas Mill Site on Liberty Street, via CPA funds.
- The Edgewood bogs 103 acres adjacent to Camp Kiwanee, now known as Smitty's Bogs, via the federal Wetlands Reserve Program.
- The Peterson property, 11.2 acres adjacent to the Crystal Springs wells, via CPA and Water Surplus funds.
- The Stone property, 115 acres off Holmes Street, via a Massachusetts LAND grant and CPA funds.
- The Sleeper property, 13.1 acres adjacent to Smitty's Bogs and Town of Pembroke conservation land, via a Massachusetts LAND grant and CPA funds.
- 485 Winter Street, a 9-acre parcel part of the Little Cedar Swamp, via CPA funds.

In addition, the townspeople have placed several other Town-owned properties into the care and custody of the Conservation Commission:

- A 5.1-acre parcel on Crooker Place that forms the trailhead for the Indian Crossway portion of the Bay Circuit Trail.
- The Town Forest off Indian Head Street.
- The 101-acre Smith Nawazelski parcel off Elm St.
- A large part of Little Cedar Swamp, about 67.6 acres, off Whitman and Winter Streets. (An additional 8 acres is being negotiated as a possible gift from Eversource).
- A 26.4-acre parcel of wetland off Lakeside Road and Country Way that protects Spring Brook, and another tributary to Oldham Pond.
- Two lots on Brook Street that bracket Indian Head Brook at an old tack factory mill site.
- Two lots on West Washington Street that bracket the Shumatuscacant River at the site of the Moore's Forge mill.
- The meadow lot, 25.4 acres, at the top of Bonney Hill was part of the Plymouth County Hospital property.

Any significant, Town-owned conservation land that is not currently permanently protected should be placed under protection by the most appropriate means available (transfer to the Conservation Commission; Conservation Restriction, etc.). The appropriate departments or commissions within the Town should also research the deeds of the property under their control, including the acquisition history of each. The next step is to identify the parcels that have affirmative Town Meeting Votes stating that the subject property is to be dedicated to either conservation or recreation use and determine that the deed reflects the purpose of the acquisition. If research reveals that the

accompanying deed does not reflect the intent of the acquisition, the situation may be remedied by recording a corrective deed (it is recommended that the authorizing Town Meeting Vote is recorded as an adjunct to the corrective deed).

Table 9: Publicly & Non-Profit Owned Open Space

Town-owned – Hanson Conservation Commission	571.133	5.67%
Town Owned – Water Department	92.3877	0.92%
Town Owned – Recreation	64.0108	0.64%
Town Owned – Municipal land without buildings	1,670.75	16.59%
Town Owned – Municipal land with buildings	106.4807	1.06%
Public Schools	112.148	1.11%
Commonwealth of Mass – protected by Article 97	663.521	6.59%
Plymouth County Land	10.10762	0.10%
Non-profit Organizations	19.23466	0.19%
Land permanently protected by ownership or CR	255.805	2.54%
• <i>Smith Nawazelski CA</i>	101	1.00%
• <i>Poor Meadow Brook Greenway</i>	11.22	0.11%
• <i>Poor Meadow Brook Confluence Protection Project</i>	114.954	1.14%
• <i>Alton J. Smith Reserve</i>	103.47	1.03%
• <i>Nathaniel Thomas Mill</i>	1.35	0.01%
Total publicly owned open space	2,081.01	20.67%

BioMap

One way to determine where land holds the most value to wildlife and water quality is by reviewing the most recent BioMap data produced in 2022 through the state of Massachusetts and The Nature Conservancy. BioMap is defined by the following categories:

- Core Habitat identifies critical areas for the long-term persistence of rare species, exemplary natural communities, and resilient ecosystems across the Commonwealth.
- Critical Natural Landscape identifies large landscape blocks that are minimally impacted by development as well as buffers to core habitats and coastal areas, both of which enhance connectivity and resilience.
- Local Components are additions to Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape assessed from the perspective of each city and town to inform municipalities and others when making local decisions.
- Regional Components are additions to BioMap that are of particular importance for conservation from the perspective of the Northeastern United States.

Areas of importance for Hanson include the land around Indian Head River at the northern part of town, and wetlands in the southern part of town. There is an ongoing effort from the Conservation Commission to

work on acquiring and preserving land in this area. While it may look small it feeds into the larger system of water bodies throughout town.

Poor Meadow Brook and surrounding land in the western part of town make up the largest parcel of local importance. Fortunately, much of this land is already under protection.

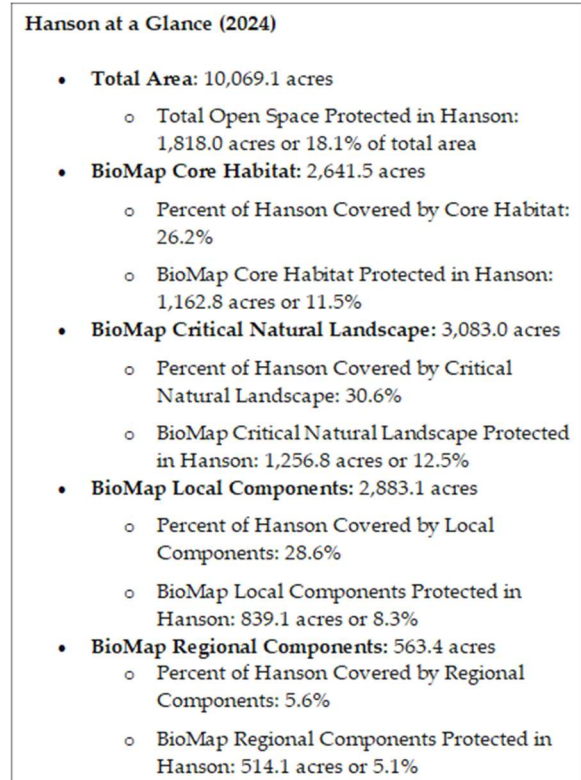
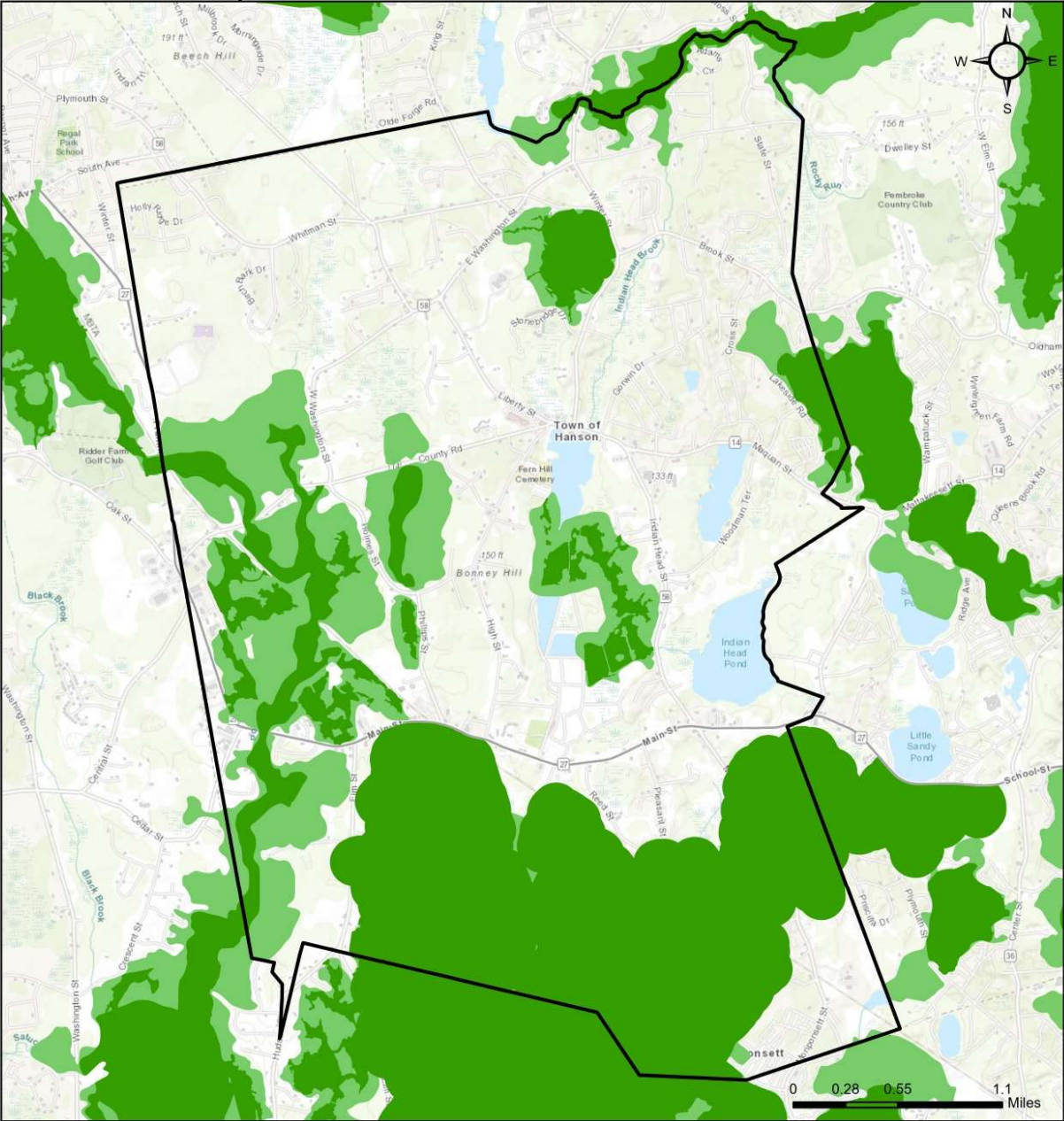


Figure 7: Hanson at a Glance Biomap 2024

Hanson BioMap Elements



- Core Habitat
- Critical Natural Landscape



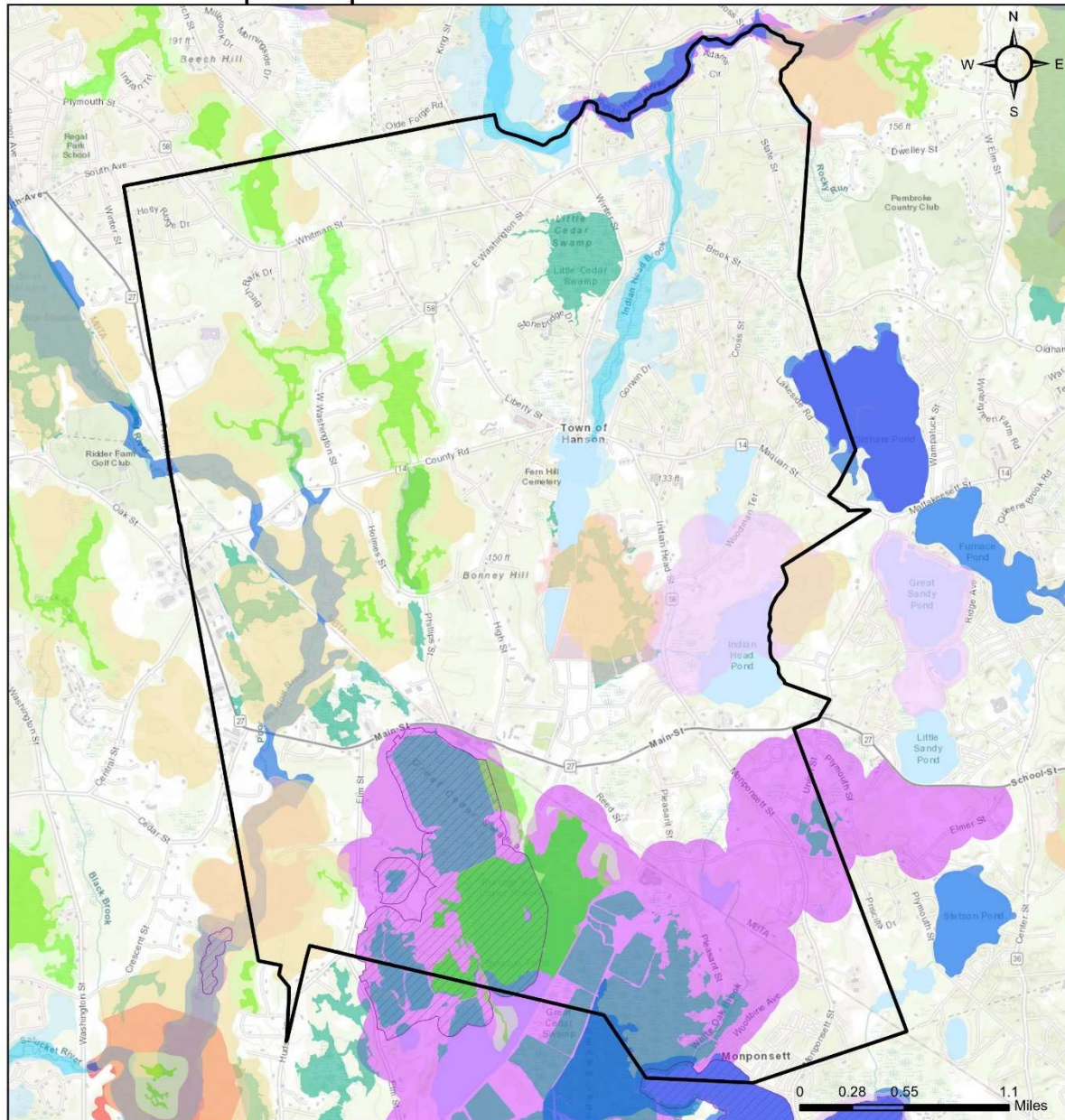
Old Colony Planning Council
70 School Street, Brockton, MA 02301

oldcolonyplanning.org
Created Nov 2023

GIS Data Sources: ESRI, MassGov,
Old Colony Planning Council

Map 6: Biomap Elements

Hanson BioMap Components



- Regional Rare Species
- Local Aquatic Habitats
- Local Aquatic Habitat Buffers
- Local Wetlands
- Local Wetland Buffers
- Local Landscapes
- Local Vernal Pools
- Local Rare Species
- Aquatic Core
- Wetland Core
- Priority Natural Communities Core
- Vernal Pool Core
- Rare Species Core



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OLD COLONY
PLANNING COUNCIL

GIS Data Sources: ESRI, MassGov,
Old Colony Planning Council

Map 7: Biomap Components

Agriculture

Agriculture and agricultural lands remain a large part of the identity of towns along the south shore like Hanson. There are several farms still working in town and many more in the surrounding area. Some of the farms seen throughout town include Lipinski's Farm Stand, Channell Homestead Farm, Sentas Family Farm, Local Honey Stand, Country Farm Cranberry Associates, and Red Horse Farm. MassGrown lists The Blueberry Farm as a local farm in town that is open to the public for pick-your-own and purchasing local produce.

Farms in town hold valuable land for towns to keep protected. Through the Chapter 61 state incentive program lands of agricultural use can be temporarily protected in exchange for tax relief. Land may fall under Ch. 61, Ch. 61A, and Ch. 61B based on their primary purpose ranging between different crop types. In Hanson, 400 acres of agricultural land is protected to some degree under Chapter 61A.

Protecting agricultural lands can be done by supporting local agriculture and by working with owners who no longer wish to farm the land and are seeking to sell it. Agricultural land is not only valuable for the food it grows but also for the scenic views and important habitat.

The town has recently begun considering becoming a Right to Farm community. This process allows certain agricultural practices to be a by-right of the land owner.

This would also create an agricultural commission in the town that would help relay the status of farmland and concerns between the town and residents. The town may choose to create an active agriculture commission without the creation of a Right-to-Farm bylaw. Having a commission is a good way

to share information, strategies, and concerns between farmers and the town.

The planning board and conservation board must consider that agricultural lands are only under temporary protection. Strengthening their partnership with local land trusts will help preserve agricultural land whenever possible in the future.

Water

The Town of Hanson lies within two major surface watersheds: the North River and the Taunton River watersheds. There are about 4,600 acres in the northeast section of town contained in the North River watershed. Indian Head Brook serves as the only major surface drainage way in this area, flowing north from the Indian Head Pond through Wampatuck Pond and Little Cedar Swamp into the Indian Head (or Drinkwater) River. Indian Head Brook has numerous intermittent and permanent tributary water courses which drain its watershed. The watershed contains many swampy areas with ridges of high ground. The Indian Head River flows in an east-west direction, ultimately tying into the North River. Most of the Indian Head River and all of the North River can be canoed.

Hanson also contains approximately 5,700 acres of the Taunton River drainage area within its border, including the Great Cedar Swamp. The major surface drainage ways in this area are the Shumatuscancant River and Poor Meadow Brook. The Shumatuscancant River flows south from Whitman into Poor Meadow Brook, which is a tributary of the Satucket River.

Open Space in Hanson is a major controller of both water quality and quantity, which in turn are important determinants of habitat quality, biodiversity, natural processes, and recreation. Significant aquatic features of the town include Maquan Pond, Indian Head Pond and Brook, Wampatuck Pond (Town Hall Pond), and Burrage Pond.

Maquan Pond is one of Hanson’s most treasured aquatic features. It is a surface water pond, which has “remarkably soft water” (quoting 1830 map surveyor notes). Recent studies by Professor William Hagar of UMass Boston confirm that acid rain events are very poorly buffered due to the pond’s relative purity. In contrast, the Indian Head Pond, located downstream, has a higher mineral content, such that the same 1830 surveyor notes “[bog] iron ore of high quality was formerly taken from this pond.” Indeed, in many locales the groundwater seeping to the surface is coated with reddish-brown oxide (rust) a bluish-black metallic sheen of manganese oxide, or both; these discolorations are often mistaken for pollution by uninformed observers. Another unique aquatic geologic feature in Hanson is the flow of cold, clean groundwater into Indian Head Brook from gravelly uplands, especially in the Gorwin

Drive neighborhood. This results in the brook’s ability to support a state-documented cold-water fishery (e.g., native brook trout, *Salvelinus fontinalis*). Such cold-water habitats are increasingly rare, and thus valuable, in southern New England.

To continue to protect ponds in Hanson, with the continued work of conserving land on the perimeter of water bodies, the town needs to fully assess the quality of the ponds to get a better understanding of the nutrient levels, conditions, and capacity of the town’s water resources.

Stormwater discharge and other aspects of development in Hanson affect the quantity and quality of water in streams, ponds, wetlands, and the ground. The location of the Town within the watersheds has implications both for water quality beyond town borders and for the water flowing in from the sources discussed above.

The Town of Hanson has taken significant measures to minimize the amount of pollution and sediment that drains from impervious surfaces into the stormwater system. The Town submits annual reports under the EPA National Pollutant Discharge



Figure 8: Major Watersheds

Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued to the town.

With an increase in development over the past several decades, the town's reliance on septic systems does pose a threat to groundwater. As the town continues to expand it will need a wastewater treatment plant for both an increase in commercial industrial space and to also mitigate residential waste. Many factors influence water demand for a system, including population served, economic activity, climate conditions, and conservation efforts. As Hanson is predominantly a residential town, population is an essential indicator of water demand. As noted in the facilities chapter, under SWMI, if a water system anticipates that it will exceed its baseline withdrawal volume of 0.72 MGD, the town will be required to develop a mitigation plan. Future demands in Hanson will approach this baseline withdrawal volume by 2035 based on projections developed in the updated Water Master Plan (2018). When considering the projected need to increase water intake, there is also an increasing amount of output.

Historic Properties

The Massachusetts Historical Commission Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database is highly dynamic, compiled from various records and files with new information added daily. Digital inventory form files, National Register nominations, and photographs are uploaded periodically. As of January 2024, the town has 300 MACRIS listings (See complete list in Appendix X). At this time the town does not have a Historic District. There is a community-driven interest in creating one along Winter St and High St. Creating a district signifies the unique preservation of historical homes in town that create a true small town New England aesthetic.

Most noteworthy are the Plymouth County Hospital, Camp Kiwanee, United Cape Cod Cranberry Company, Burrage, Albert C., and Company Worker Housing.

The former Plymouth County Hospital Site and Camp Kiwanee have been large areas of interest for the town in previous decades due to their historical character and their recreational potential. Camp Kiwanee is a 64-acre parcel that boasts an historic and charming tree-lined entrance, leading to the two-story “Needles Lodge” that sits along a glacial ridge with commanding views of Maquan Pond. The Camp is also home to a softball field, cabins for rent, and Cranberry Cove which is used for the town’s long-standing summer swim program.

The Lodge is rented out for various functions including weddings, parties, and corporate events. Since the last master plan, Camp Kiwanee has had its own Master Plan (2005) implemented which has allowed for restoration and better and frequent use of the space.

Plymouth County Hospital was originally built for tuberculosis patients, but over time offered more general care. Unfortunately, after purchasing it the town lacked funds to properly maintain the historic Spanish-style building and it was subject to much vandalism and several fires. Despite a desire to see the building and property redeveloped, attempts to do so were unsuccessful. As of 2018 a 5-member Final Plymouth County Hospital Reuse Committee was formed and has since been working on a plan of action for the property. To date, the hospital has had parking lot upgrades and the addition of a paved trail system based on former roadways. There is interest in further expanding recreational opportunities at the site.

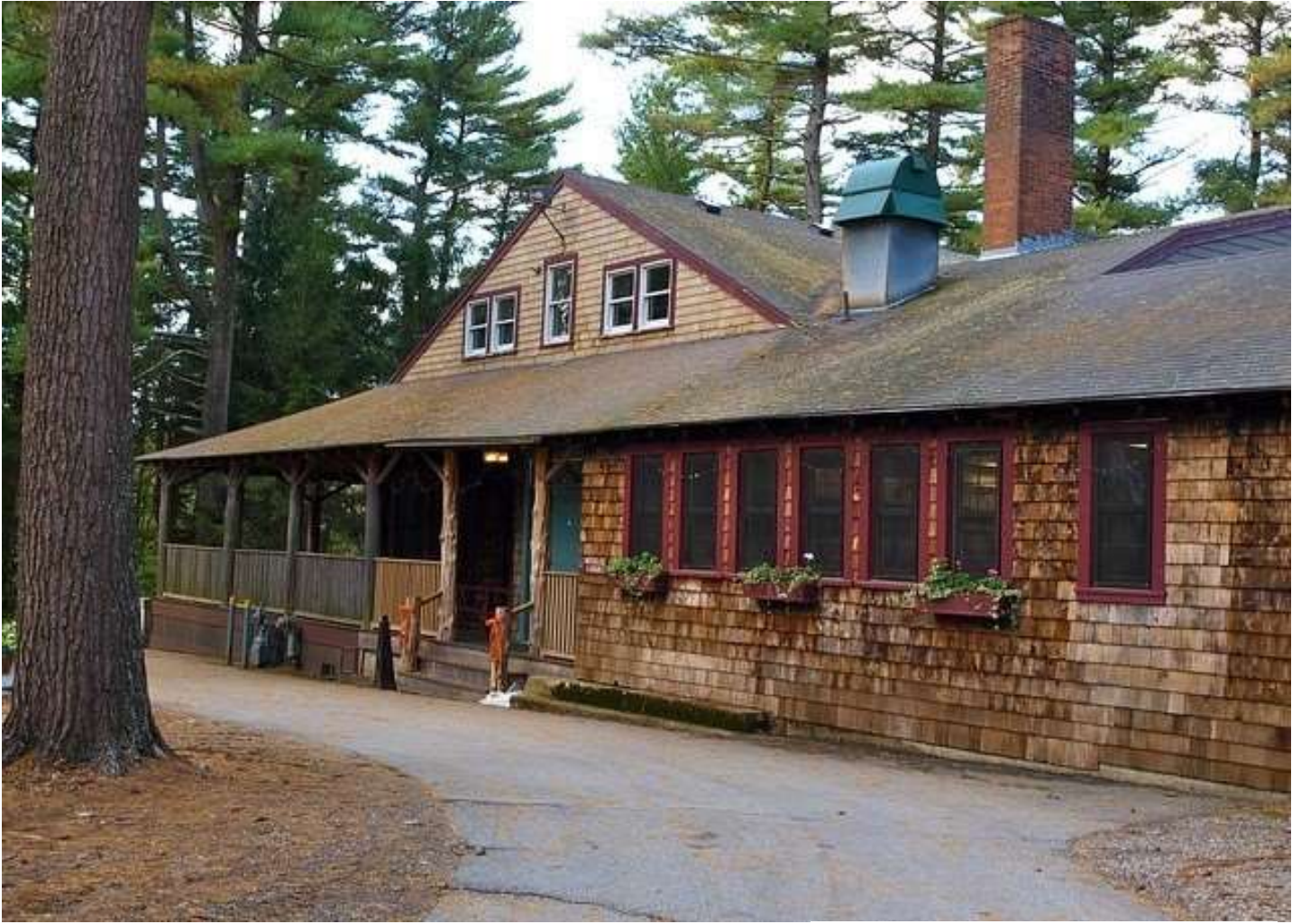


Figure 11: Needles Lodge at Camp Kiwanee

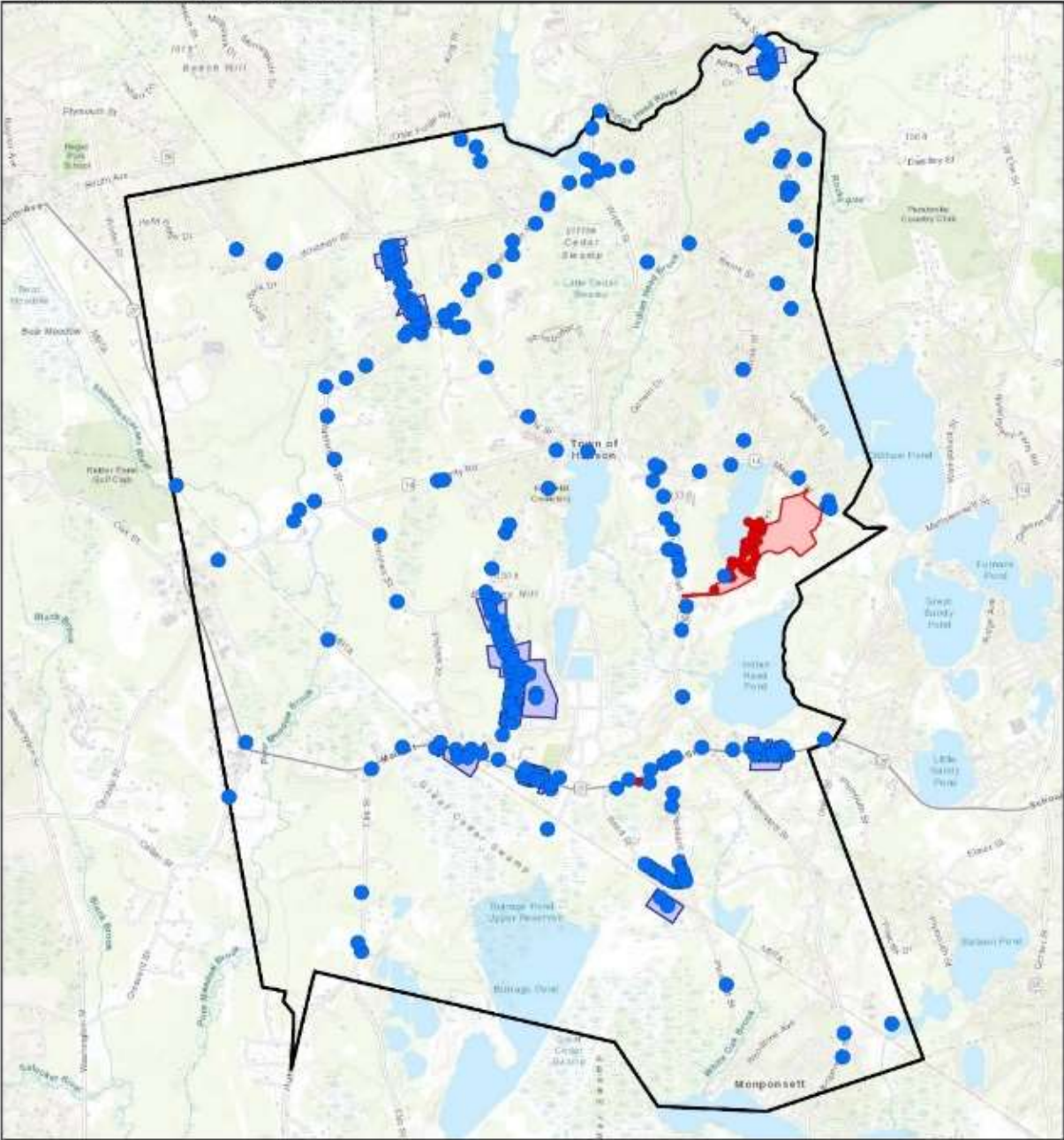
Figure 10: Current Trail at former State Hospital Site



Figure 9: Patients of former State Hospital Playing Outside



Hanson Historical Sites




MassHistoric Commission Inventory (Points)

- National Register of Historic Places
- Inventoried Property

MassHistoric Commission Inventory (Areas)

- National Register of Historic Places
- Inventoried Property



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 Jan 2024
 GIS Data Sources: MassGIS, ESRI,
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Map 8: Historical Sites

Ongoing Efforts

Conservation Commission

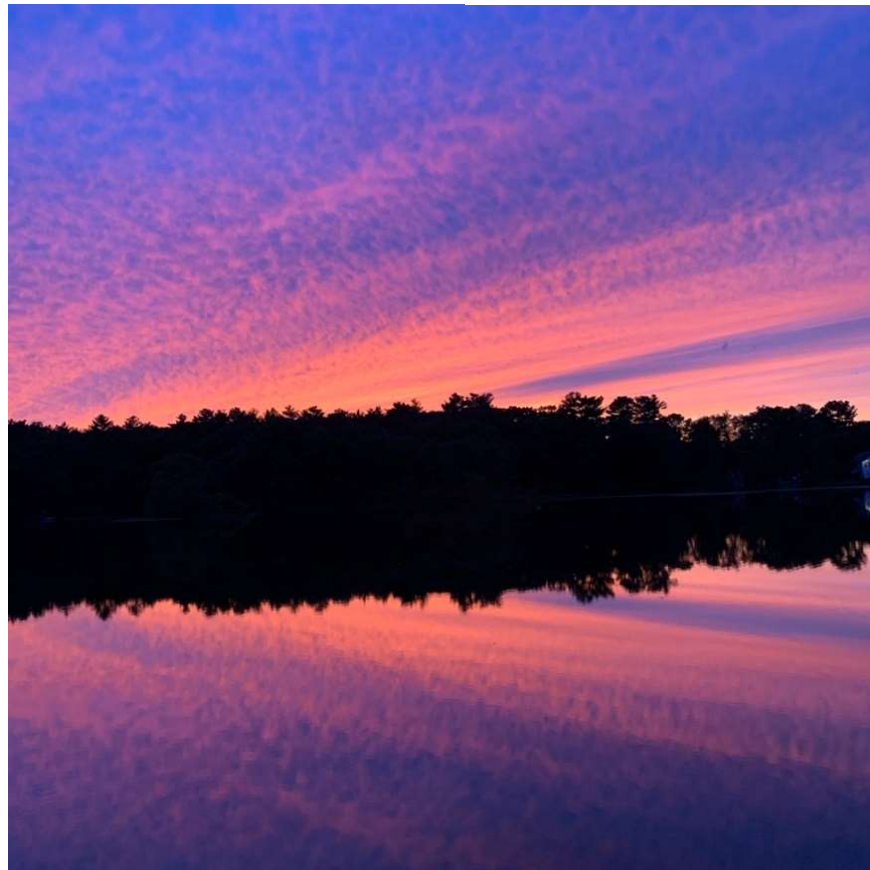
The Conservation Commission continues to play a key role in land conservation and water protection for the Town. The key role of the Conservation Commission is to evaluate site plans and ensure they do not inflict stress upon protected wetlands. In addition to this essential work, the Conservation Commission also holds multiple town properties under conservation restrictions to make sure they remain undisturbed as noted in Table 9. These land parcels are important for water quality and recharge. Recently the Conservation Commission has been working on trail maintenance. Learn more about ongoing efforts in the Open Space and Recreation chapter.

Community Preservation Committee

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts created the Community Preservation Act (CPA) as a smart growth tool that helps

communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. Hanson is one of many towns across the state that has adopted CPA. In doing so the town created a Community Preservation Committee (CPC) which oversees the projects to which the town dedicates these funds. Since creating a Community Preservation Plan in 2016, they have also provided funding for a Housing Production Plan, ongoing maintenance at Botieri Field, Town Forest, and recreational facilities at Whitman Hanson Regional High School Outdoor Recreation Area. They have also allocated funds to Camp Kiwanee master plan implementation projects and land preservation purchases to name a few. See [Appendix X](#) for the full document of CPC work in town (2023) or visit the town website for update announcements.

Figure 12: Maquan Pond by Matt Dyer



Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Goals and Actions

1. Conserve farmland and support existing agriculture businesses in town.
 - a. The Assessor's office should continue to keep an up-to-date record of all Chapter 61, farm parcels, to promote permanent protection of working land and share any changes with the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.
 - b. Chapter 61 creates temporary land protections on farms in exchange for property tax reduction. Should the land be sold it can come out of Chapter 61. The town can purchase the land first. By keeping a record of parcels and working with farmers to understand their intention in the stewardship of their land we can protect farm land permanently.
 - c. Creating an active Agriculture Commission to work with farmers to figure out ways to promote agribusiness in town to ensure long-term success in town. Keeping farmers working and agribusiness successful is the best way to ensure that farmland is not sold for development. Local food is a resource, nutritional asset and a cultural infrastructure, such as deep sump basins and infiltrating catch-basins;
 - d. The institution of housekeeping programs to minimize sediment accumulation, including annual catch-basin cleaning and street sweeping.
 - e. Conserve land around existing bodies of water for filtration and increased protection.
 - f. Public education is an important tool in water quality protection. Educating residents on pollution prevention including ecologically safe lawn care helps prevent local pollutants
3. Expand recreational opportunities at Camp Kiwanee and the former Plymouth County Hospital Site.
 - a. Continue implementing Camp Kiwanee master plan
 - b. Use the Camp as an asset to the town and a way to increase profits to improve other parks in town.
 - c. Apply for funding to continue to improve the Plymouth County Hospital Ground Trail network
 - d. Work with town residents to create a long-term vision for the grounds.
2. Work to limit run-off in town to keep drinking water sources clean.
 - a. As the town relies on local water, and in appreciation of the recreational opportunities ponds and lakes provide to the town it is important to protect these resources.
 - b. The design and implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) bylaw to minimize the number of impervious areas.
 - c. Construction improvements and upgrades to existing stormwater

Open Space and Recreation

Summary:

Open space refers to a relatively continuous area of public or private lands without buildings or highways that holds significant value either for conservation or recreation. To provide a functional network of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for a town's future, the protection of key open space properties is important. Open space comes in varied forms, especially farmland, playing fields, parks, and other types such as golf courses and gravel pits.

Relevant Data:

- Almost half of all land in town is forested still today.
- There are ten ponds in town that range from 121 acres in size (Indian Head Pond) to 15 acres in size (Factory Pond).
- The town has many natural assets including Camp Kiwanee and Bay Circuit Trail.
- 10% of all land area in town is owned by Hanson and permanently protected, including 85 acres of recreational land.

Community Survey Results:

- Among the respondents, 26.55% reported using the spaces multiple times a week, while 22.57% reported using them at least once a week.
- The majority of respondents indicated a preference for walking or hiking (92.83%), followed by playgrounds (38.12%) and kayaking/canoeing (33.63%). Other popular activities included team sports (28.25%), swimming (27.35%), and fishing (21.52%).

Protecting and Restoring Open Space and Recreation

The town of Hanson has many stunning views supporting its mostly rural character. Its long history of agriculture is visible beyond the farms and cranberry bogs but through the amount of untouched and conserved land. Almost half of all land in town is forested still today. Ten ponds range from 121 acres in size (Indian Head Pond) to 15 acres in size (Factory Pond). The larger ponds are used for fishing, boating, and other forms of recreation, and contribute to the Town's identity and special vistas. Hanson boasts several unique cultural and recreational resources that contribute to the Town's landscape character including rustic 62-acre Camp Kiwanee and the regional Bay Circuit Trail and Greenway.

For the purposes of a Master Plan, open space refers to a relatively continuous area of public or private lands without buildings or highways that holds significant value either for conservation or recreation. To provide a functional network of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for a town's future, the protection of key open space properties is important.

Open space comes in varied forms, especially farmland, playing fields, parks, and other types such as golf courses and gravel pits. In Hanson, town-owned open space is either conservation land, municipal land, or public school land. The first is permanently protected and is managed for conservation values such as wildlife habitat, groundwater, and aquatic ecosystems. Municipal land is managed for various town purposes which may change over time and may include areas held for potential future needs. Town municipal land may include natural areas managed for, but not protected for, conservation value. Either of these land types can have recreation purposes. 10% of all land area in town is owned by Hanson and permanently protected, including 85 acres of recreational land. Recreational lands include Hancock St Playground, Girls Softball Field, Memorial Field, Camp Kiwanee, and Cranberry Cove swimming area.

Figure 13: Map of Bay Circuit Trail Full



Table 10: Municipal Recreation Lands

Acres	LUC	Ownership	Location	Rec Potential
1.190	9030	HANSON TOWN	HANCOCK ST PLAY	Playground
1.190	9300	HANSON TOWN	GIRLS SOFTBALL FIELD	Softball, recreation
9.810	9310	HANSON TOWN	MEMORIAL FIELD	baseball
67.800	9310	HANSON TOWN	CAMP KIWANEE	H, PR, scenic vista
5.000	9310	HANSON TOWN	CRANBERRY COVE	Swimming cove
Total Acres 84.990				

Table 11: Unprotected School Lands

Acres	LUC	Ownership	Location	Rec Potential
10.000	9340	HANSON TOWN	INDIAN HEAD SCHOOL	Playground
17.800	9340	HANSON TOWN	MAQUAN SCHOOL	Playground
68.090	9890	WHITMAN- HANSON	SCHOOL DISTRICT	Rec fields
83.320	9340	HANSON TOWN	MIDDLE SCHOOL	Rec fields
Total Acres 179.210				

Most conservation land is in a natural state (i.e., not planted or intensively managed), and is protected against development in perpetuity. Conservation lands may be permanently protected through fee-simple ownership or through a conservation restriction (CR). Conservation and other public and private lands may be further restricted under an agricultural preservation restriction (APR), to preserve farmland use in perpetuity. Temporary protection may be through current use programs (Ch. 61, Ch. 61A, and Ch. 61B). In Hanson, 400 acres of agricultural land is protected to some degree under Chapter 61A.

Previous Work

Through the process of creating the town's 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the town addressed the importance of open space, conservation, and recreational spaces to the town and its character. The town identified the need to acquire land and or create conservation restrictions on currently unprotected parcels of land to ensure that key land parcels were protected from development. Outside of conservation, the town addressed the need to improve the quality of existing recreational spaces including the maintenance of sports fields and facilities and the need for potential expansion to meet population growth. The town also emphasized creating connections in their extensive trail network and creating a better-shared knowledge of conservation and recreation information for residents. The master plan reflects on these past goals, current residential concerns, and present data to inform this plan.

The 2017 OSRP public survey had the following findings:

The survey asked residents about their current use of open space properties and the

respondents were encouraged to choose more than one option, if applicable. Most respondents indicated that they use open space parcels for walking, the number one choice with 115 responses, followed by canoe/kayak (46 responses), and fishing/swimming (35 responses each).

The survey asked what is needed to increase use of open space. The respondents indicated that marked trails (69%) and detailed trail maps and bike paths (47%) were the highest responses, with accessible parking areas (33%) and improved canoe/kayak access (32%). Trail activities, including hiking, walking, jogging, nature study, bicycling, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing, continue to be extremely popular at the state, regional, and local levels.

The survey asked respondents what their favorite scenic vistas are, 47 respondents chose Wampatuck Pond, and 32 selected Camp Kiwanee while Burrage WMA followed closely behind with 31 residents. The survey asked if there are specific properties in Hanson that the respondents think should be protected. The survey responses indicate that Plymouth County Hospital Grounds was selected by 23 residents with Camp Kiwanee chosen by 17 respondents.

For further interpretation of data collected please refer to the 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan of the Town of Hanson.

Open Space and Recreation Goals (2017)

1. Acquire or create permanent protection on Open Space that holds the highest conservation and recreational value to the town.
2. Conserve land that promotes the protection of surface water and groundwater protection.

3. Continue creating a linked system of open space, trails, and greenways for the benefit of wildlife and humans alike.
4. Improve public access to passive recreation information and parks through various media.
5. Continue to maintain a list of Chapter 61 parcels that the town may wish to conserve should they come out of temporary protection.
6. Implement the Camp Kiwanee Master Plan
7. Continue to maintain and expand recreational opportunities through the update of the existing master plan and open space and recreation plan as well as creating site-specific management plans.

Looking further back, the 2008 master plan echoed the same interests. Since the writing of both of these plans the Conservation Commission, Camp Kiwanee Committee, and Community Preservation Committee have worked hard to preserve quality open space in town both as environmental and recreational assets. Through the update of this plan, several key projects have been developed to continue enhancing park space in town.

The Future of Parks in Town

Maquan School

The former Maquan School site is a valuable asset to the town. The size of the parcel allows the town to meet many of its growing needs several of which include recreation space. At the time the town needs increased ball fields and a relocation of the ones that do exist. At this time the fields are down at the Highway Department. The fields are off of a busy street and have limited parking or expansion space.

Creating fields as one of the several features at this site will allow the town to improve the existing fields. Additionally, the Maquan

School site is adjacent to what currently serves as the Library and Council on Aging. Maquan Site may also allow for the Library and COA to separate, and each has adequate space. The rearrangement and expansion of public facilities in this area will allow the town to create a safe vibrant community space. These efforts are ongoing and no final decisions have been made to date. The town should plan for current and future needs to maximize the usability of its town-owned spaces.

There is also an opportunity to create a trail system surrounding the design. The town should seek to create ADA-accessible paths in this area so it can be an accessible trail for all residents. This is a great spot for this as there will be paved parking and it is located next to the COA.

Camp Kiwanee

Camp Kiwanee has a dedicated committee to implement the park's Master Plan. Over the last decade, the town has been able to meet many of the planned improvements. With Camp Kiwanee restoration underway the town has been able to gain profit from the site by using it as a private event space. Camp Kiwanee has become a sought-after event space for local towns and private events such as weddings.

Potential for the former Plymouth County Hospital Property

The Plymouth County Hospital Property is being converted into a new park for the town. The space will now be referred to as a High St Park. This has included improvements to the trail system surrounding the hospital. This site has lots of potential for recreation for the town. Hanson currently has a reuse committee for this land as well. The committee should look into creating public outreach for the redesign of this space. There is room to have playgrounds, local historical

education about the site, and other popular properties in town through informative signage, and expanded walking trails. While some buildings at the park are not salvageable there is an opportunity to repurpose others, including those that are still in use.

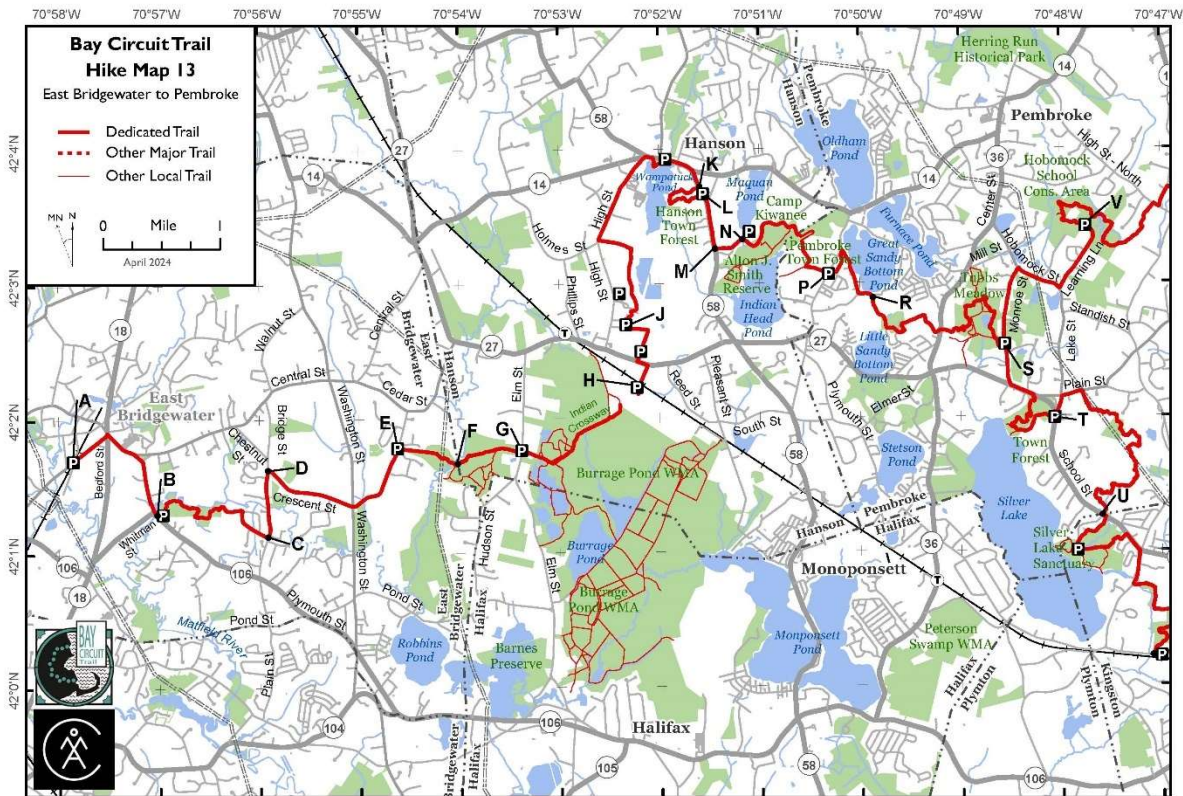
Creating Pedestrian Connection

Hanson is full of beautiful walking trails and park spaces, many of which are close together. The town is currently seeking to expand sidewalks as defined in the Transportation Chapter. Creating safe connections between parks through walking and cycling paths on or off the road will allow for safer access to parks. It will also expand the miles of available walking and cycling paths.

Hiking Opportunities in Town

Hanson has many beautiful hiking trails. Hanson is fortunate to be a part of the Bay Circuit Trail system. The Bay Circuit Trail connects Newburyport to Kingston over 230 miles of trails and runs through town. Bay Circuit Trail system connects Hanson to other local features, including the Burrage in town and Poor Meadow Brook in East Bridgewater. The Bay Circuit Trail network is operated through the Appalachian Mountain Club. The following site gives access to a series of trail maps and train maintenance updates.

<https://www.baycircuit.org/>



Disclaimer and Cautions: The Bay Circuit Alliance, as the advocate and promoter of the Bay Circuit Trail, expressly disclaims responsibility for injuries or damages that may arise from using the trail. We cannot guarantee the accuracy of maps or completeness of warnings about hazards that may exist. Portions of the trail are along roads or train tracks and involve crossing them. Users should pay attention to traffic and walk on the shoulder of roads facing traffic, not on the pavement, cross only at designated locations and use extreme care. Children and pets need to be closely monitored and under control. Bay Circuit Trail maps are intended for personal use only. Reproduction for commercial purposes is prohibited. © Bay Circuit Alliance

Map 13

Figure 14: Bay Circuit Trail Hike Map 13

The town also has several town-owned trail systems that run through conservation lands. Areas to hike in Hanson include The Webster-Billings Conservation Area, Rocky Run on State Street at the Hanover Town Line, and Norcross Property on King Street at the Hanover Town Line. This property links into an extensive Hanover trail network and borders the Drinkwater River. As the town continues to improve maintenance and expand hiking opportunities for residents it should consider adding a webpage on the town site dedicated to local trail maps and information.

The town does have an adopt-a-trail program to keep residents involved in the maintenance process.

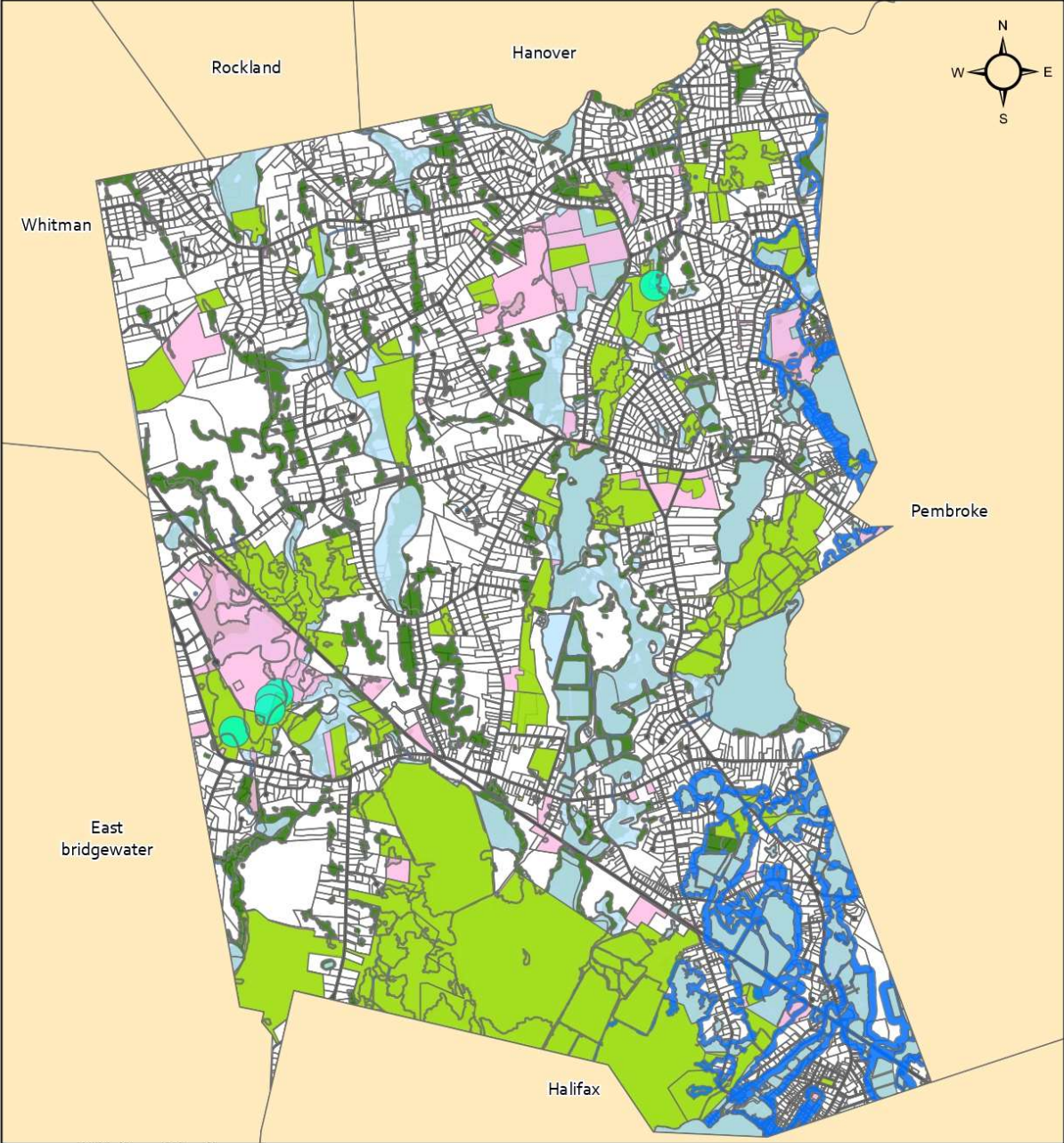
Long Term Maintenance





Parks and Open Spaces require maintenance over time. Creating an updated inventory of parks in the town will be impactful for the town to keep up with the maintenance of sites over time just like for any other town facility. Having an idea of needs and conditions will allow the town to prepare for needs better financially when they are anticipated. Other ways of doing this would be to update the Community Preservation Committee Plan and the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Having an OSRP opens the potential for the town to receive state grants to benefit parks and implement goals.

Figure 15: Maquan Pond in Fall by Matt Dyer



Hanson Excluded Land



- | | |
|---|---|
|  Title V and Surface Water Protection Zone A |  Public and Institutional Land |
|  Wellhead Zone 1 |  Hydrography |
|  Right of Way |  Additional DEP Wetlands |
|  Restricted Open Space |  Parcel |



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Created Sep 2023
GIS Data Sources: MassGIS,
Old Colony Planning Council

Map 9: Excluded Lands

Open Space and Recreation Goals and Actions

1. Create a pedestrian-safe connection between open and public spaces
 - a. Continue implementing the Complete Streets Priority List
 - b. Identify gaps in pedestrian-safe ways surrounding parks.
 - c. Continue to identify and promote trails that allow for outdoor walking paths.
2. Reimagine the use of The Plymouth County Hospital Property as a historical and educational space in addition to a new park.
 - a. Create public outreach for reimagining the space. Allowing public input on the project creates community interest and ownership leading to better long-term outcomes.
 - b. Identify needed maintenance to expand the recreation space of the site. The Highway Department at this time is responsible for all mowing and has limited capacity.

Sustainability and Climate Resiliency

Summary:

Sustainability and Climate Resiliency is building and maintaining a healthy and safe community by reducing climate pollution, adapting to a changing global climate, enhancing natural resources and the environment, fostering a prosperous and just regional economy, and meeting the needs of current and future generations.

Relevant Data:

- Hanson chose to pursue certification from the Massachusetts Vulnerability Preparedness program by creating an MVP plan which identifies Environmental an infrastructural and societal concerns
- Hanson is a Massachusetts Green Community which unlocks access to implementation grants for creating more sustainable municipal buildings and lowering overall municipal costs.

Community Survey Results:

- When asked what the town should promote or pursue to ensure current and future generations enjoy high quality of life in town, the top selections were “improved walkability throughout town” (52%), “improved access to fresh, locally grown food” (40%), and “improved management of stormwater to prevent flooding and improve water quality”(34%). An additional 30% selected all of the above which additionally included energy efficiency and renewable energy, proactive maintenance and expansion of tree canopy, and the promotion of responsible pesticide and fertilizer use and alternatives.

SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Hanson is building and maintaining a healthy and safe community by reducing climate pollution, adapting to a changing global climate, enhancing natural resources and the environment, fostering a prosperous and just regional economy, and meeting the needs of current and future generations.

Existing side-by-side with the region's growth and prosperity are challenges from current and future hazards, such as climate change. These also include inequities in housing affordability, food insecurity, and lack of resources and access to robust social and safety networks and preventative health services.

The Sustainability and Climate Resilience chapter is not just a document; it's a road map to build a sustainable community. It prioritizes serving historically marginalized and vulnerable community members and establishes a vision that addresses the emerging societal challenges posed by the changing climate and social and racial inequities. It emphasizes building resilience and outlines the actions the town will take to create a sustainable governmental agency and community, thereby playing a crucial role in our collective efforts to overcome these challenges.

Existing Conditions:

As Hanson moves forward, it's crucial to remember that energy efficiency should be a top consideration in any building construction or renovation project. The Town's participation in the DOER Green Communities program has already shown significant benefits, helping to track energy use better and provide substantial grants for energy-saving projects. However, paying

careful attention to and monitoring energy use is not just important; it's urgent. This ensures that recently implemented measures perform as expected and deliver substantial savings. This emphasis on energy efficiency underscores the urgency and necessity of addressing climate change locally, a responsibility we all share.

- Incorporate climate resilience into all future municipal plans and capital improvement planning.
- Address energy sources, building energy, transportation, land use, food systems, waste systems, trees and forests, carbon sequestration, and waste: recognizing that the first steps in carbon neutralization are conservation and reducing demands.

This Climate and Resiliency Element seeks to ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, policies, plans, and strategies adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and most importantly, advance environmental justice, a crucial aspect that underscores the urgency and significance of our collective efforts.

Building the town's resilience is an interdisciplinary effort that requires action from municipal departments, public service providers, agencies, and the public. Public engagement and adaptability are integral to the entire process.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Element

Hanson faces some critical threats due to climate change, most notably impacts from *heat waves, flooding, drought, fire, intense*

storms, and wind. Increased annual rainfall means the region could experience a single intense downpour that can cause severe flooding, damaging critical facilities and infrastructure or limiting access to essential roads. Given the magnitude of climate change's impacts on the natural environment, development and infrastructure, economy, and public health, municipal-level strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change are necessary. In addition to mitigating the causes of climate change (decarbonization or transitioning away from fossil fuels to clean, safe, sustainable energy, thereby reducing GHG emissions that are accelerating climate change), local governments need to 'adapt' or make changes to prepare for, respond to and minimize the impact of the increasingly severe and unpredictable weather and related impacts already happening.

Driven by the desire to assess its vulnerabilities, build community resilience, and expand its potential to address hazards caused by climate change, the Town of Hanson chose to pursue certification from the Massachusetts MVP program. In the fall of 2019, the Town received funds to start a town-wide conversation about climate change and its effects on the community.

At the MVP Workshop sessions, participants discussed the impacts of the four hazards and articulated features they saw as community strengths and vulnerabilities. These features were discussed as they relate to three community components: **Environmental**, **Infrastructural**, and **Societal**. The workshop attendees were broken into two teams. Each team was tasked with reviewing the details of each feature identified under each component. Team members used a matrix to track each feature, whether a strength or a vulnerability, the hazard that affects it, and the priority and timeline associated with implementation.

Heat Waves: The most significant challenges related to heat waves and higher temperatures were providing cooling centers for residents in need, anticipating and controlling power needs for cooling, and if or when wildfires may occur, including access to areas owned and operated by other entities and utilities.

Flooding: The town has many wetlands, streams, rivers, and ponds that are at risk of flooding during extreme rain events. Flooding issues are primarily due to insufficient storage capacity, dams, natural blockages throughout the stream segments, and inadequate culvert size.

Drought: Drought threatens Hanson's supply capacity, as the town relies on wells and surface water resources. It also affects the Town's agricultural lands and influences other natural features.

More Intense Storms: The most significant challenges related to intense storms, including nor'easters and hurricanes, are prolonged power outages from falling trees and limbs.

Top Projects Identified for Action

- Open Space Master Plan / Comprehensive Plan
- Forge Pond Evaluation and Restoration
- Water Supply Vulnerability Assessment
- Watershed Specific Drainage Studies
- Evaluation of Emergency Generators for Town-owned Facilities

Below is the list of additional action items identified and discussed under each community component, listed in the order of the number of votes they received per the creation of the 2019 plan*:

Environmental:

1. The preservation and protection of water quality, groundwater, and water resources from the impacts of climate change are of utmost importance. It is essential to identify alternative water supplies for times of drought.
2. Water quality preservation. Protection of groundwater and water resources from the impacts of climate change
3. Conduct water quality sampling and analysis to investigate cyanobacteria, algae blooms, coliform, and invasives (Boat Ramps at Maquan and Indian Head) at Maquan Pond, Monponsett Pond, Oldham Pond, Wampatuck Pond, Indian Head Pond, Factory Pond, Cranberry Cove Beach to investigate nutrient bacteria issues and algae blooms.
4. Develop a written water quality sampling plan and an EPA-approved quality assurance project plan (QAPP) and develop and implement a plan to collect input from the communities around Monponsett Pond, watershed associations, DEP, and DPH on the sampling plan. Perform sampling and analysis of water quality data relative to appropriate targets and standards and produce a draft and final technical memorandum summarizing data, findings, and recommendations for improving water quality. Continue identifying opportunities to address climate-change challenges related to lake management for ecosystem/recreational needs.
5. Develop an Integrated Forest Management Plan with the current electric company, addressing drought, forest vector habitats, and a low cost-to-value ratio. Create a fire access road at Smith Nawazelski Conservation Area, Webster Billings, with a Management Plan and maintenance staff.

Infrastructure:

1. We must take proactive measures to address Stormwater flows. This includes identifying flood-prone areas, conducting an inventory of culverts and bridges, creating a prioritization plan to improve infrastructure, and lessening the likelihood of loss due to climate change. A Culvert Maintenance and Repair Plan with long-term implementation is also necessary.
2. Improve the drainage in areas of concern surrounding Indian Head Pond and Maquan Pond from Maquan Street, Indian Head Street, Katydid Lane, and Woodman Terrace.
3. Develop a Town-wide Street tree program: drought, forest vector, and habitats.
4. Provide emergency backup power to all critical facilities and municipal generator maintenance. Establish a program to back up municipal data and institutional knowledge. Municipal data should be digitized and stored in the cloud.
5. The town should fund an engineering study of the Wampatuck Pond Dam and the Pleasant Street Culvert at Snake River. Conduct a dam assessment and fund an engineering study to use an automatic mechanism to control flooding. Acquire remote monitoring equipment to monitor critical structures such as high-hazard dams continuously.
6. Develop a robust local transportation plan that addresses emergency access to transportation and the social and economic consequences accompanying service interruptions. Planning should include supplemental funding and equipment for snow removal, a review of available drivers, and an understanding of potential insurance and union contract issues that may influence access to specific

transportation resources. Access to critical resources such as childcare and provisions should be considered. Promote public transportation to reduce cars on the road during inclement weather and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Traffic and roadway improvements plan to deal with more people.

Societal:

1. Provide shelter for seniors during extreme temperature events and power outages.
2. Education and Outreach: Trailhead access signage and brochures at Camp to warn of vector risks. Work with the state to examine protocols and how we can improve them.
3. The Senior Center is used as a cooling and warming center. It needs a generator and drinking water to shelter elders during emergencies.
4. The Town should integrate the water department into the IT needs assessment. Interdepartmental communications are required to address the needs of vulnerable populations.
5. The town needs more climate-resilient senior and low-income housing and plans to address needs.
6. Develop an integrated evacuation plan, including plans for Senior Living Facilities, Transportation to emergency centers, bus storage capacity, and emergency plans with medical access to oxygen.

All climate strategies must prioritize the equity and well-being of our most vulnerable residents. The plan's success hinges on the ability to ground climate action in human relationships. Those most adversely affected by climate change have contributed to it the

least. We must put people at the forefront of climate adaptation decisions while simultaneously diversifying the persons making those decisions. Solving the problems associated with climate change requires collective action and consistent accountability. Advocating for continued changes will lay the groundwork and resources needed for bold and creative action in Hanson.

Green Communities

Hanson has achieved a significant milestone by being designated a Green Community under the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Green Communities program. This recognition, earned in December 2018, has allowed the Town to receive \$151,183 in state-funded grants over the first year. These funds have been instrumental in implementing energy efficiency projects in schools and municipal buildings. The Town's commitment to energy efficiency will continue, with plans to apply for additional grants to complete other identified priority projects and save energy and money in Town-owned facilities.

The Town received \$151,183 to fund energy conservation measures, streetlight audit, boiler replacement, direct water heater, lighting, weatherization, and administrative costs in municipal facilities, including Indian Head School, Town Hall, Transfer Station, Camp Kiwanee, and Police Station.

Energy use dramatically affects both budgets and the environment locally and globally. Total energy costs represent a significant portion of annual town spending and offer a corresponding prospect for savings.

Table 12: Green Community Designation Awards

GREEN COMMUNITIES' DESIGNATION AWARDS TO HANSON		
Designation Date/Award Date	Destination/Competitive Grant Award	Grant Project Summary
Dec-18	\$151,183	To fund energy conservation measures, streetlight audit, boiler replacement, direct water heater, lighting, weatherization, and administrative costs in municipal facilities, including Indian Head School, Town Hall, Transfer Station, Camp Kiwanee, and Police Station.
Jul-21	\$124,218	To fund energy conservation measures, weatherization, LED lighting, boiler controls, and administrative assistance in municipal facilities, including Highway, Camp Kiwanee, Library, Middle School, and Water Dept.
Jan-23	\$20,245	To fund energy conservation measures, weatherization, and administrative assistance in municipal facilities, including Town Hall.
Jan-24	\$173,654	To fund energy conservation measures, heat pump RTUs, hybrid vehicles, and administrative assistance in Town Hall.

Annual Report Table 2 (MMBTU) Fiscal Year (July 1 start) 2018 Baseline

Please make sure that any data submitted to DOER contains complete Data!

The data in this table reflects the data in the Baseline. Buildings marked in MassEnergyInsight as "Exclude from Baseline" are not included in this dashboard. Please set the baseline year filter on the right to your baseline year and create a custom view so that this report always shows the correct data.

		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Building	Use (MMBTU)	6,040	6,261	5,690	5,550	5,544	4,931
	% Difference from Baseline	0.00%	3.67%	-5.79%	-8.11%	-8.20%	-18.35%
Open Space	Use (MMBTU)	23	26	27	19	19	21
	% Difference from Baseline	0.00%	16.47%	20.59%	-14.45%	-15.18%	-9.16%
Street/Traffic Lights	Use (MMBTU)	488	485	501	501	325	269
	% Difference from Baseline	0.00%	-0.70%	2.61%	2.54%	-33.39%	-44.92%
Vehicle	Use (MMBTU)	4,564	5,648	5,477	5,033	4,846	5,210
	% Difference from Baseline	0.00%	23.76%	20.02%	10.28%	6.18%	14.16%
Water/Sewer	Use (MMBTU)	1,854	1,908	1,921	2,117	1,957	2,103
	% Difference from Baseline	0.00%	2.92%	3.63%	14.19%	5.56%	13.43%
Grand Total	Use (MMBTU)	12,968	14,328	13,617	13,219	12,691	12,533
	% Difference from Baseline	0.00%	10.49%	5.00%	1.94%	-2.13%	-3.35%

Figure 16: Annual Report Table Green Communities

The Town of Hanson was designated as a Green Community in 2018, and its baseline year is Fiscal Year 2018. In 2019, the total municipal energy use was 29,301 MMBTUs (not weather-normalized). Hanson's energy use reductions will be measured against this baseline. The town aimed to achieve a 20% reduction in municipal energy use before the start of FY24. The town overall, only saw a 3% reduction in total energy uses as of fiscal year 2023. However, there were significant decreases in energy use of buildings, street lights, and open spaces. Vehicle Use and Water should be the next objectives for focus.

Working with Energy Conservation Inc., the town identified a variety of measures for implementation that have achieved energy reduction:

- Interior and Exterior Lighting Replacement
- HVAC/IR Replacement
- Boiler Upgrade

These measures were implemented at the following facilities:

- Camp Kiwanee
- Highway Department
- Library
- Transfer
- Water Facility
- Hanson Middle School
- Indian Head School
- Streetlight Conversion

The town uses energy in nine municipal buildings, seven using natural gas for heat. Three school buildings are included in the 2018 baseline; one was decommissioned in FY19.

Buildings

Hanson's nine municipal and three school buildings use 23,571 MMBTUs or 81% of the baseline total. The buildings with the most significant energy use are the Indian Head School, which uses 27% (6,238 MMBTUs), and the Hanson Middle School, which uses 30% (6,972 MMBTUs) of total building municipal energy use.

Water and Sewer

The Town of Hanson provides town water through its water treatment facility, four wells, and one storage tank. Hanson does not have wastewater treatment facilities. Water facilities consume 1,854 MMBTUs or 6% of the baseline total.

Vehicles

Hanson's 47 municipal vehicles use 3,372 MMBTUs, 11% of the baseline total.

Streetlights and Traffic Lights

There are 309 streetlights in Hanson. These lights have not been purchased back by the municipality from their utility provider. Additionally, Hanson has six traffic lights. Traffic and streetlights consume 480 MMBTUs, 2% of the Town's energy use.

ERP Guidance Table 3b - Municipal Energy Consumption for 2023 (MMBTU)

Please make sure that any data submitted to DOER contains complete Data!

		2023				Total
		Diesel	Electric	Gas	Gasoline	
Building	Camp Kiwanee		107	391		498
	Town Hall		239	468		707
	Fire Dept- Main Street		12	97		108
	Fire Dept- Liberty St		307	405		713
	Highway Dept		105	596		701
	Transfer Station		56			56
	Police Department		559	558		1,117
	Library		316	716		1,032
	Total		1,702	3,230		4,931
	Open Space	Recreation & Open Space		21		
Total			21			21
Street/Traffic Lights	Traffic and Street Lights		269			269
	Total		269			269
Vehicle	Vehicle Fuel	1,348			3,861	5,210
	Total	1,348			3,861	5,210
Water/Sewer	Water & Sewer Accounts		1,812	291		2,103
	Total		1,812	291		2,103
Grand Total		1,348	3,803	3,521	3,861	12,533

Figure 17: Table of Municipal Energy Consumption 2023

Climate Resilience and Adaptation

Climate resilience is anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to climate changes and minimizing negative impacts on our natural systems, infrastructure, and communities. Climate resilience and adaptation goals and policies aim to improve the resiliency of Hanson's natural and built assets and communities to the negative impacts of climate change.

- **Emergency Preparedness and Response:** Community preparedness, response, and recovery adaptation are needed as heat waves, drought, flooding, wildfires, and water shortages' impacts on individuals and households will likely increase with the changing climate.
- **Public Health:** Harmful algal blooms, flooding that impacts wells and onsite septic systems, respiratory illnesses from wildfire smoke, temperature-related health issues from intense heat waves, and groundwater recharge changes that affect onsite septic systems and wells are the most likely impacts on public health due to climate change. Food insecurity and health issues could increase for people with natural resource-related occupations, such as fishing, forestry, agriculture, recreation, service industries, and construction. Frontline communities, or communities that often face climate change's first and worst impacts, have and will continue to experience disproportionately higher climate-related health risks. These groups of people include older populations, children, communities of color, people with chronic illnesses, Tribal and Indigenous peoples, and outdoor laborers.
- **Economy:** Future flooding and sea level rise may adversely affect property values in low-lying areas. Various

industries, including construction and development, manufacturing, food and hospitality services, and natural resource economies, may be affected. Workers displaced by flooding, extreme heat, fire, and other natural hazards exacerbated by climate change result in lost wages and productivity.

- **Cultural Resources:** Future flooding, extreme heat, and shifting precipitation patterns will likely damage historical sites and buildings, parks, waterfronts, and archaeological sites. Flooding, habitat shifts, and impacts on specific species will have cultural and health consequences.
- **Public Infrastructure:** Coastal flooding impacts from rising sea levels, storm surges, and heavy precipitation can result in substantial physical, ecological, and infrastructure damage. Coastal flooding can lead to or happen simultaneously with inland flooding. This includes flooding of transportation routes, impacts to onsite sewage systems, impacts to drinking water wells, and overload of stormwater systems.
- **Land Use and Development:** Future urbanization and the increased use of impervious pavements will likely increase the probability and severity of climate impacts such as urban flood events. Land use and vegetation cover may also shift with warmer temperatures and changing precipitation patterns, which may have secondary effects on natural flood control, urban heat island effect, and wildfire risk.
- **Hydrology and Hydrogeology:** Intense precipitation events, changes in seasonal precipitation patterns, higher water temperatures, changing streamflow patterns, less groundwater recharge, and declining water quality have implications for ecosystems,

infrastructure, agriculture, and local communities.

- ***Geologic and Natural Hazards:*** Landslide risk will likely increase due to heavier rain events, soil erosion and destabilization, and sediment transport patterns. Bluff erosion rates may accelerate from winter storms, storm surges, sea level rise, and heavy rain events. Increased erosion rates will have long-term implications for properties, roads, and habitat on bluffs.
- ***Habitat:*** Climate change will likely alter terrestrial, freshwater, marine, and coastal habitats. These habitat changes will have a wide range of impacts on sensitive species and ecological processes. The prevalence of invasive species and diseases is likely to increase.
- ***Wildfire:*** Plymouth County's wildfire risk is growing under future climate conditions. New development within or

adjacent to previously undeveloped (wildland) areas. Increases the risk of larger, more frequent, and destructive fires in susceptible areas and the likelihood of spreading uncontrolled across large areas and broad landscapes.

Resilience and planning for the impacts of climate change are essential so that all residents can achieve their greatest potential. The Resiliency sub-element provides a solid foundation to achieve this vision so that by 2034, Hanson will be resilient to the changing climate.

Resiliency is "the capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure while maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation."

Table 13: Steps To Building Resilience Based on The US Climate Resilience Toolkit

Step	What it means	How to accomplish												
Inventory Assets	Assets are the tangible and intangible things people or communities value. These could include people, resources, ecosystems, infrastructure, and the services they provide	Data sets from the U.S. Census, County or cities, public service providers, and open-source data—survey communities for culturally and historically valued places.												
Explore Hazards	Climate change hazards include extreme heat, rising sea levels, storms, wildfire risks, and wind damage. Landslides and flooding are natural hazards exacerbated by climate change.	Data sets from the UW Climate Impacts Group (CIG), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), state Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association. Coordinating efforts with the Massachusetts Department of Emergency Management and hazard mitigation planning.												
Identify potential hazards for each of your exposed assets.	<p>Next to each asset, list all the weather and climate-related events or situations that could damage it.</p> <p>Example:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="435 989 821 1545"> <thead> <tr> <th>Asset</th> <th>Hazard</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Residents</td> <td>Extreme heat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roadways</td> <td>Flooding Landslide</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Winter Recreation</td> <td>Warming, early snow melt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential Property</td> <td>Wildfires, Flooding, Landslides</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parks</td> <td>Wildfires, storms, water shortage</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Asset	Hazard	Residents	Extreme heat	Roadways	Flooding Landslide	Winter Recreation	Warming, early snow melt	Residential Property	Wildfires, Flooding, Landslides	Parks	Wildfires, storms, water shortage	<p>Use a Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Tool like the MVP CRB, US Census for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wildfire ▪ Extreme Heat ▪ Flood ▪ Sea Level Rise ▪ Ozone Particulate ▪ Heat Island ▪ Reduced Snowpack
Asset	Hazard													
Residents	Extreme heat													
Roadways	Flooding Landslide													
Winter Recreation	Warming, early snow melt													
Residential Property	Wildfires, Flooding, Landslides													
Parks	Wildfires, storms, water shortage													
Sensitivity	The degree to which a system, population, or resource is or might be affected by hazards.	Data sets for health conditions (diabetes, asthma, heart disease), age, housing stock, and housing data—coordination with social service providers and emergency management.												
Adaptive Capacity	The ability of people, assets, or systems to adjust to a hazard, take advantage of new opportunities, or cope with change.	<p>Information regarding community resources, data including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Race/Ethnicity ▪ Income 												

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level of Education ▪ Language Proficiency ▪ Household Size ▪ Housing Cost Burden ▪ Housing Condition.
Assessing vulnerability	Risk is the potential for negative consequences where something of value is at stake. In assessing climate impacts, the term often refers to the potential for adverse consequences of a climate-related hazard. Risk can be evaluated by multiplying the probability of a hazard by the magnitude of the negative consequence or loss.	A program or geospatial tool to consolidate data and information, such as a climate change vulnerability and risk assessment tool.
Understanding Risk	Risk is the potential for negative consequences where something of value is at stake. In assessing climate impacts, the term often refers to the potential for adverse consequences of a climate-related hazard. Risk can be assessed by multiplying the probability of a hazard by the magnitude of the negative consequence or loss.	A program or geospatial tool to consolidate data and information, such as a climate change vulnerability and risk assessment tool.
Investigate Options	List of strategies that could reduce risk.	Working from existing policies, programs, and projects, identify gaps, particularly for areas at high risk of the impacts of climate change.
Prioritize and Plan	Develop an adaptive resiliency action plan with a schedule and funding sources that involve input from various interested parties and the public.	Through interdepartmental committees, community groups, interested parties, and public input. Coordinating efforts with Hazard Mitigation Plans. Funding opportunities include grants, loans, and third-party partnerships.
Take Action	Proceed with a town-wide resiliency plan with progress reports and opportunities to reassess and make any adjustments.	Update and report on the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan. Develop a town-wide resiliency plan with Select Board support and review. Work with the municipal departments, historically and currently marginalized groups, and other community interest groups.

Fuel Reduction

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is imperative to reducing the severity and duration of climate change impacts. This supplement aims to provide information on the sources of localized GHG emissions and establish a framework that results in meaningful reductions in GHG emissions. This effort will help meet the regional emission reduction target and support state efforts.

State Response to Climate Change Global Warming Solutions Act

Massachusetts approved the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) on August 7, 2008, as a comprehensive response to the impacts of global climate change. The GWSA requires the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) to set the state's economy-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals in consultation with other state agencies and the public. The GWSA approved (in consultation with the state executive office of administration and finance) the use of market-based compliance mechanisms to address climate change concerns and to set and reach reduction goals. In addition, it allowed the state to work with other states to develop a plan to expand market-based compliance mechanisms, such

as the regional greenhouse gas initiative, to other sources and sectors necessary or desirable to achieve greenhouse gas emissions. This includes those states that have participated in the regional greenhouse gas initiative in the past and other interested states and Canadian provinces.

Massachusetts Clean Energy And Climate Plan For 2025 And 2030

The Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030 (2023/2030 CECP) details the Commonwealth's actions over the next decade to meet the 2025 and 2030 emission limits. The 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap informs the development of the 2023/2030 CECP, so the strategies, policies, and actions outlined in the 2025/2030 CECP will put the Commonwealth on a pathway to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

2025 And 2030 Emissions Limits And Sub-Limits

Under the Global Warming Solutions Act, as amended in 2021 by An Act Creating A Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy, the Secretary of EEA has adopted the interim 2025 statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit of 33 percent below 1990 level and the interim 2030 statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit of 50 percent below 1990 level.

Sustainability and Climate Resilience Goals and Actions

1. Continue working with Green Communities to lower energy usage and bills in the municipality.
 - a. Remain compliant with annual reporting requirements and apply for competitive grants when applicable.
 - b. Make reporting available to the public to see the ongoing efforts of the town to reduce energy usage and GHG emissions.
2. Use the existing MVP plan to guide infrastructure needs in town.
 - a. Flooding poses a large risk for Hanson as identified in the MVP plan and the OCPC Climate Change Transportation Vulnerability Plan. Culverts, bridges, and roads identified in these plans should be key areas for improvement in upcoming years.
 - b. Consider updating the MVP plan with the state's new grant program.
3. Establish clear actions that assist community members, especially the most vulnerable, in building resiliency to the adverse impacts of climate change.
 - a. The Town shall coordinate responses to extreme weather events, such as extreme heat, flooding, storms, and other natural hazards exacerbated by climate change for those most vulnerable. Response actions may include amplifying weather warning systems, establishing cooling centers or emergency shelters, and providing access to social support programs.
 - b. The Town shall encourage community-scale resources such as emergency hubs, community gardens, and local food banks to help increase community resiliency and reduce the adverse impacts of climate change.

Transportation

Summary:

Transportation refers to the movement of people, goods, and modes of travel. When reviewing transportation, we must consider necessary infrastructure, maintenance, land use, transportation connections, trip traffic, and movement drivers.

Relevant Data:

- Hanson houses an MBTA Commuter Rail stop for the Kingston line. Residents can take the commuter rail to Kingston or North to Brockton and Boston.
- Only 2.1% reported using public transportation. However, this may be because most residents work close to home. 22% of workers travel 30-34 minutes, and more than half of all workers travel less than 34 minutes.
- Between 2020 and April 2024, there were 593 car accidents within the Town. Of these, over 100 accidents resulted in injury and one fatality.

Community Survey Results:

- Road surface conditions: The weighted average indicates a neutral sentiment (0.00), with respondents evenly distributed across all satisfaction levels.
- Sidewalk conditions: The weighted average suggests a negative sentiment (-0.67), with a significant portion of respondents expressing dissatisfaction, particularly in the categories of "Very Dissatisfied" and "Somewhat Dissatisfied."
- Pedestrian safety and Bicyclist safety were both rated negatively as well.

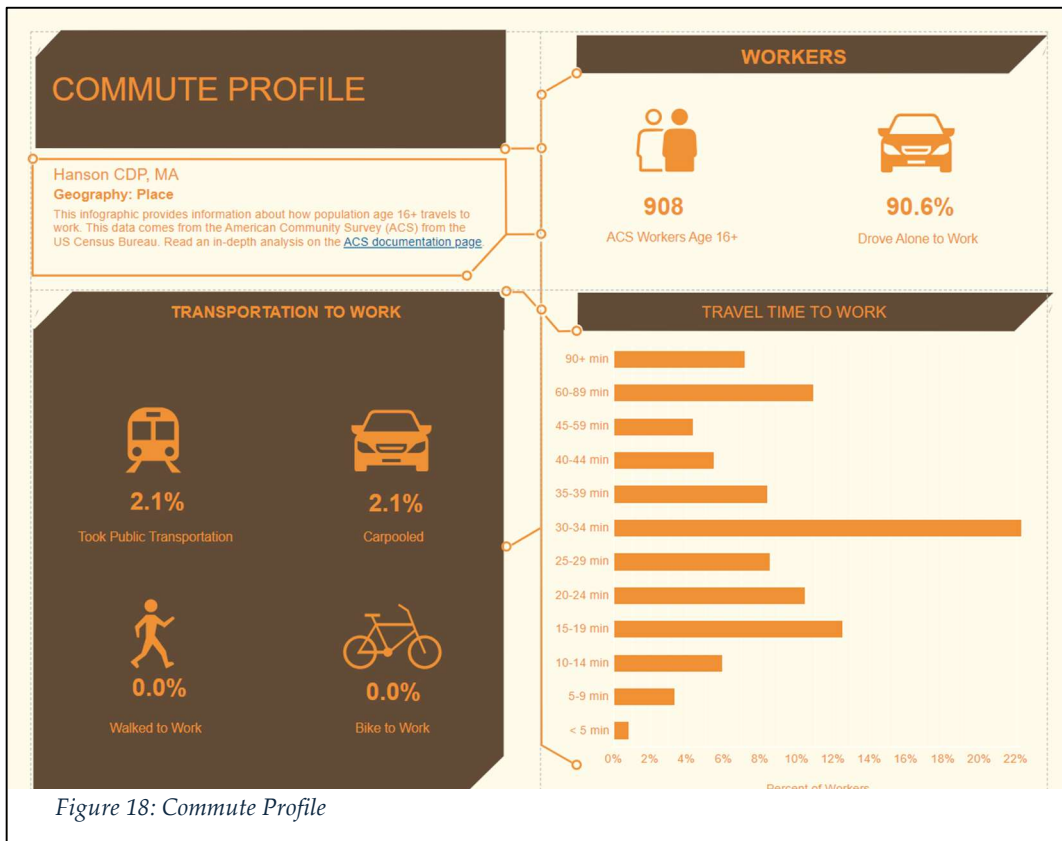
TRANSPORTATION

Transportation refers to the movement of people, goods, and modes of travel. When reviewing transportation, we must consider necessary infrastructure, maintenance, land use, transportation connections, trip traffic, and movement drivers. Safety and infrastructure are the top areas of concern for keeping this system moving. Roads in towns are either owned by the town, privately maintained, or state-owned.

State-owned roads include major cross-town routes, including Routes 14, 27, and 58. These routes in town connect Hanson to nearby towns and grant quick access to other highways, which is a significant benefit for those who work out of town and a benefit to local businesses as commuters from out-of-town drive through. Being quickly connected

to the rest of the region appeals to companies that need to distribute goods.

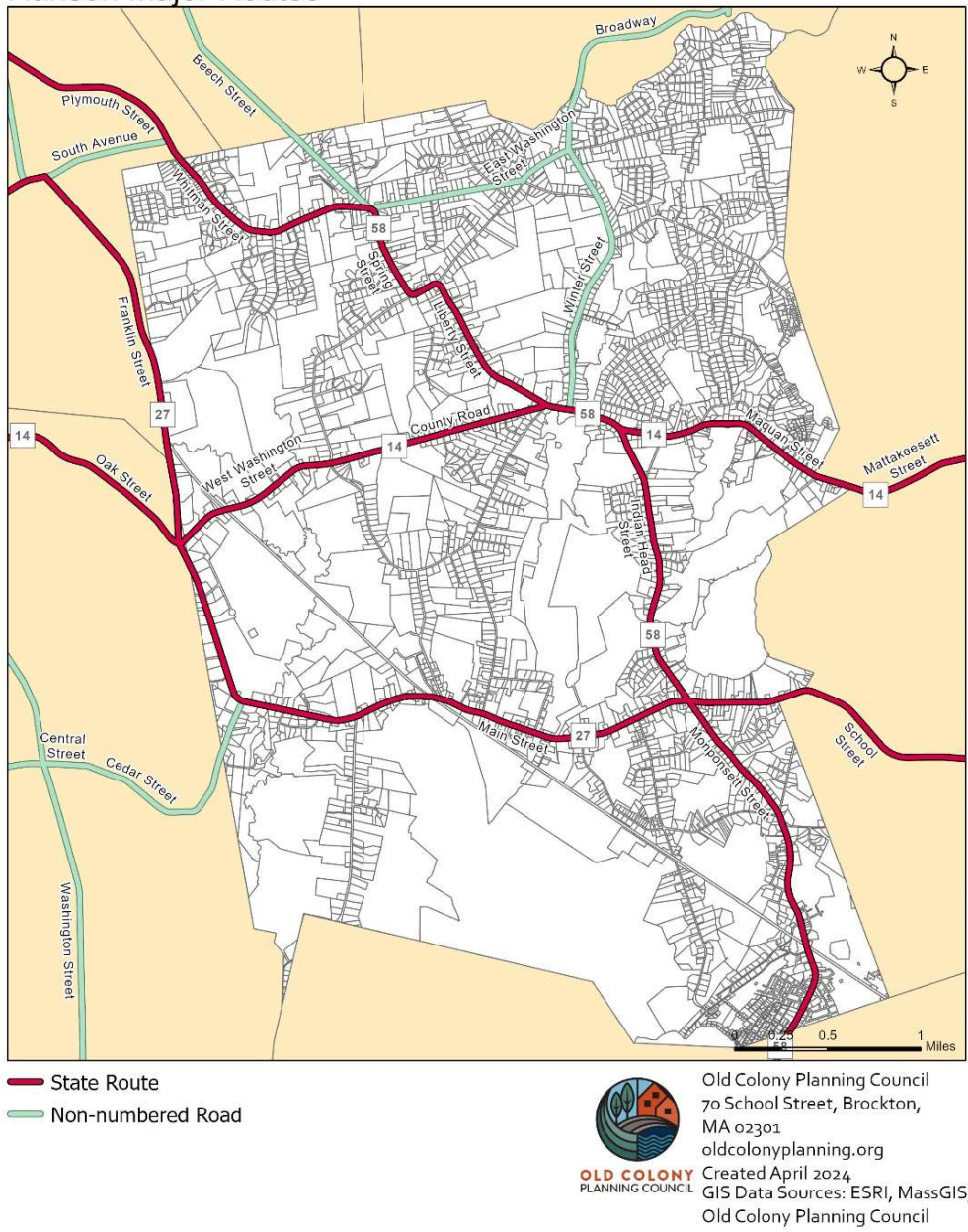
Routes 27 and 14 provide access through East Bridgewater and Whitman to Brockton and limited access to Route 24 to the west. These roads also run east through Pembroke and Kingston or Duxbury to limited access Route 3 and on to Plymouth or Boston. Route 58 runs north through Whitman and Abington, converging with Route 18 in Weymouth and onto Route 3. It also runs south to Halifax, Plympton, and Carver to I-495 and Wareham, Rochester, and Cape Cod. In addition to state-numbered routes, Hanson has several collector roads important for local circulation and transition to the regional network. These include Spring Street (north of Route 58), Whitman Street, King Street, Winter Street, East Washington Street, Brook Street, State Street, West Washington Street, High Street, Elm Street, and Union Street.



Hanson houses an MBTA Commuter Rail stop for the Kingston line. Residents can take the commuter rail to Kingston or North to Boston. The Town is also a part of the Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT). While no routes have stops in Hanson, residents can use the Dial-A-Bat Program.

Hanson is also a part of the regional transportation planning Old Colony Metropolitan Planning, which guides the transportation work at Old Colony Planning Council, and has been responsible for acquiring funding for traffic and safety studies and implementation work.

Hanson Major Routes



Map 10: Major Routes

Travel Trends

Despite having access to the MBTA commuter rail, most workers in town drive a car alone to work. Only 2.1% reported using public transportation. However, this may be because most residents work close to home. 22% of workers travel 30-34 minutes, and more than half of all workers travel less than 34 minutes.

Most traffic congestion in town comes through major routes 14, 27, and 58. Looking at traffic count trends, the average AM travel peak occurs between seven and nine a.m. A slightly larger volume of traffic occurs during peak evening hours, ranging from 4 to 6 p.m. The town's business district also largely falls along Route 14 and 58. This area is home to small businesses and larger stores, including grocery stores, local banks, and restaurants.

Traffic counts are taken periodically on major routes to help inform traffic trends when reviewing safety concerns or needs for road repairs. Because of the nature of these

collections, they are not often done repetitively in the same spot.

However, collection sites are close together and help towns decipher travel trend changes over time. There is a noticeable increase in traffic along Route 27, according to the recently collected data. The conjunction of Route 14 to 58 at Liberty St has decreased in the recent decade for both peak times and all-day travel. Route 58 has not seen any consistent changes in traffic use over time.



Figure 19: Image of Commuter Rail in Hanson

Vehicle Safety

Vehicle safety is important for residents of Hanson. Feeling safe and confident driving through the community is essential. Through outreach and data, residents noted safety issues for both vehicle travelers and pedestrians.

Looking at the state’s crash records helps the town identify areas of significant concern. There are often intersections along major routes, usually caused by visibility concerns for those driving through the intersection. Accidents also occur more frequently on roads with a higher travel rate, such as state routes. Between 2020 and April 2024, there were 593 car accidents within the Town. Of these, over 100 accidents resulted in injury and one fatality.

The majority of these accidents fall along routes 14 and 27. Several studies have been done in this area to address known safety concerns. Because Route 14 and Route 27 are state roads, they may fall out of the town's jurisdiction and require the Commonwealth to correct these issues. Having ongoing reporting in collaboration with OCPC helps inform the state of safety concerns.

Routes 14 and 27 have been an ongoing concern for the town. In 2005, the state began reconstruction in Hanson and East Bridgewater, adding a traffic signal at the Route 14 intersection. While these changes impacted, they did not account for the town's population increase or the south shore.

A Road Safety Audit (RSA) was conducted by the Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC) at the request of the Town of Hanson in 2014. The request was in response to concerns raised by residents regarding traffic safety. The location of the study area includes the intersection of Franklin Street/Main Street (Route 27) and the intersection of Elm Street/Main Street (Route 27) in Hanson. The committee determined several issues at this intersection, including a lack of warning and visibility through the curve. This information has been used in ongoing efforts to impact safety in the area.

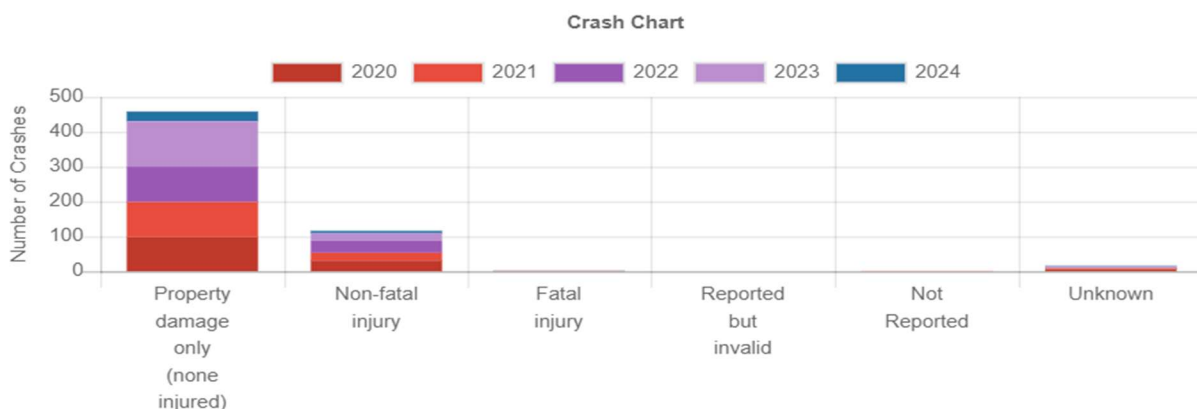


Figure 20: Crash Chart

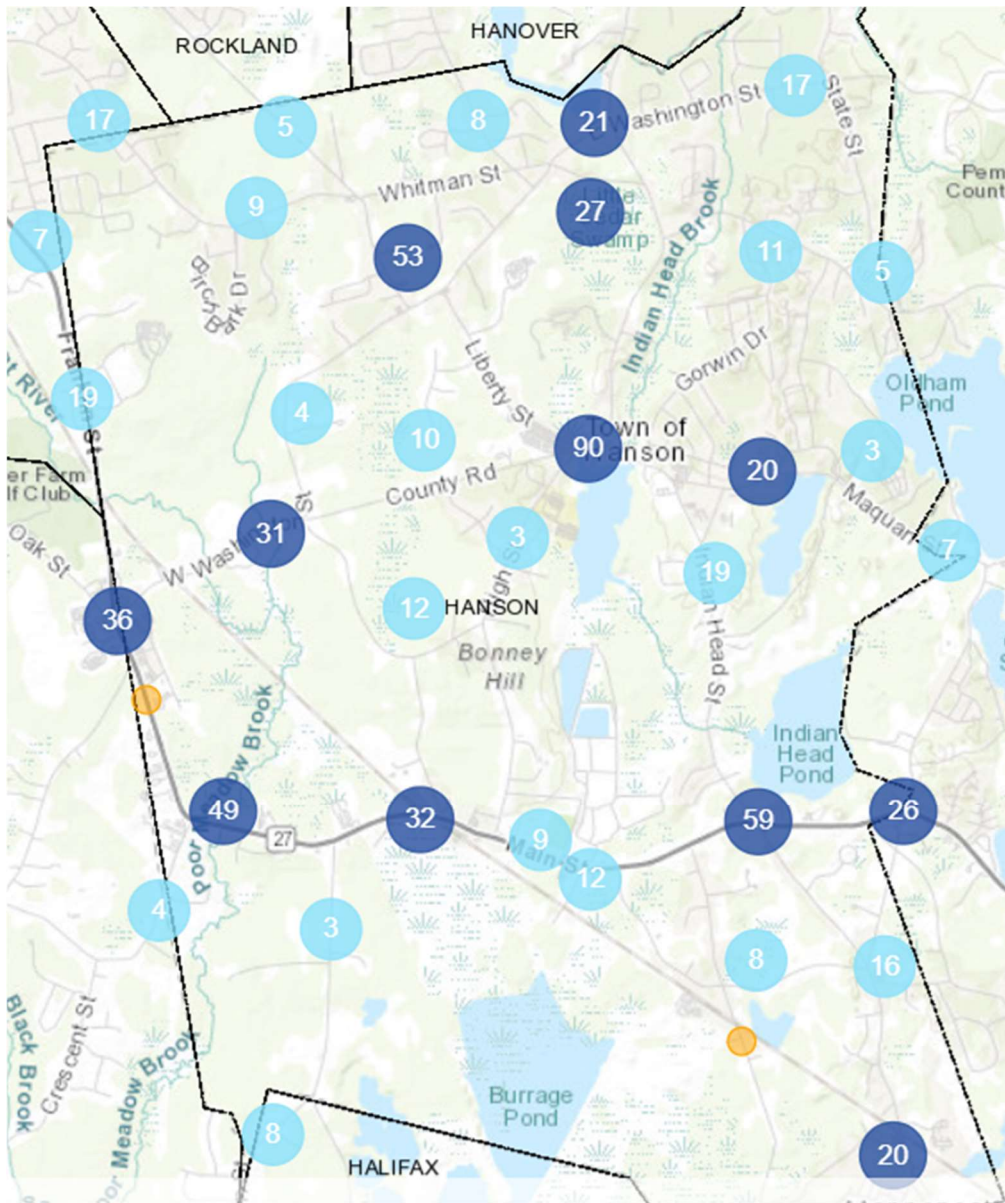


Figure 21: Image of Crashes in Town

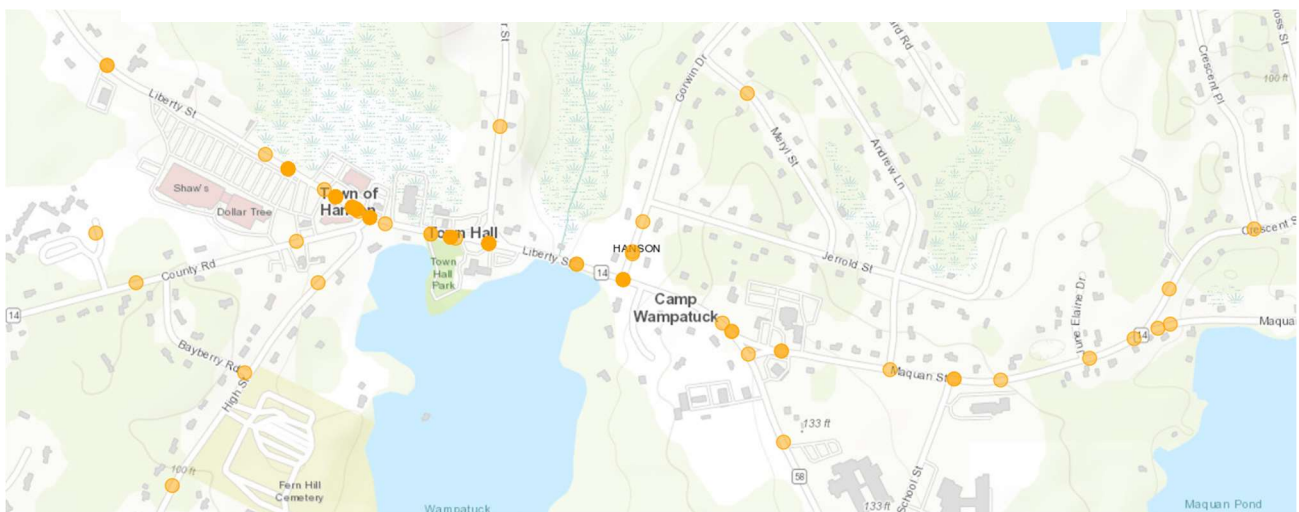


Figure 22: Crashes along Route 14



Figure 23: Crashes Along Route 27

project will include roadway reconstruction, minor widening, improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodation, stormwater upgrades, pavement markings, and signs along the corridor for 1.3 miles. Geometric improvements are proposed at the Route 14 and Route 58 intersection.

Similar concerns were identified in the 2010 Route 58 Corridor Study. The intersection of 14 and 58 is a three-way stop-controlled intersection; however, it is unconventional because two approaches are stop-controlled.

This intersection operates under level-of-service “C” conditions during the morning peak hour, which is characterized by average delays (15 to 25 seconds); however, it operates under failed level-of-service “E” conditions during the afternoon peak hour, which is characterized by long delays (35 to 50 seconds). Installing a traffic signal is recommended here, along with adding an exclusive left turn lane on the Route 58 southbound approach.

Also addressed in the 2010 study are the dual intersections of Liberty Street at County Road and Country Road at the High Street intersection. County Road Route 14/High Street intersection is just south of the signalized Liberty Street Route 58/County Road Route 14/Dunkin Donuts intersection. The County Road Route 14/High Street intersection is unconventional because it is a stop sign controlled on two of three approaches. There are stop signs on the County Road Route 14 approach (northeast),

The peak hour analyses for this signalized intersection showed the lack of storage for vehicles on this northbound County Road approach, and the heavy peak hour northbound volumes create back-ups into the stop-sign controlled County Road Route 14/High Street intersection. As part of a Complete Streets project, work was completed here in 2018, including the new and current traffic signal system. Despite ongoing improvements at this intersection, it is still a concern for the town. For those unfamiliar with the intersection, it is unclear how to approach it, leading to drivers missing stop signs and failing to stop at the light. This area is still a concern for traffic as it gets backed up during peak hours with cars waiting to turn in the center.

During the public outreach sessions, concerns were focused on the challenges posed by the Phillips Street and Main Street intersection, particularly with the arrival of the train. Accessing the station or navigating Phillips Street becomes difficult during these periods. The Town should examine traffic flow carefully as it advances plans for the downtown area.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is essential to making Hanson a walkable community. Pedestrian safety considers alternative modes of transportation in the community, including walking and bicycling. This can be both for exercise, getting around in the business

district, and getting to work. Fortunately, Hanson is already a Complete Streets Community, which allows them to get funding through the state program for bicycle and pedestrian safety, including the addition of bike lanes, road widening, sidewalks, crosswalks, and crossing signals.

In 2018, the Town used Complete Streets to improve the intersection at Country Road (Route 14 and 58), as noted in the previous section. In addition to improving vehicle safety, ADA-compliant sidewalks and curb ramps were added to increase safety and accessibility.

Other Complete Street priority projects identified by the town include:

- Pedestrian Upgrades at the Intersection of Liberty Street (Route 58) and Hanson Middle School
- Hanson Middle School Shared Use Path
- High Street Sidewalk (Multiple Phases)
- Route 58 Bicycle Lanes
- Main Street (Route 27) Bicycle Lanes
- East Washington Street sidewalk and East Washington Street/Liberty Street Intersection Improvements
- Spring Street at East Washington Street Intersection Improvements and East Washington Street Sidewalk (Spring Street to Liberty Street)
- Main St Sidewalk (Multiple Phases)
- Winter Street Sidewalks

The town is also actively applying for other grants to expand connections for existing sidewalks. The Town has received a grant to create sidewalks along Main Street from Elm Street to High Street with the vision of continuing it to Monponsett Street.

Through the planning process, the town has also identified the desire to create bike—and pedestrian-safe paths between parks, trails, and community spaces. This will create

longer and safer ways to travel and exercise in town. This may include the connection between:

- Monponsett Neighborhood and the Hanson Train Station via Burrage Wildlife Management area. 1
- Gorwin Drive to Main Street via High Street Park (Former Plymouth County Hospital)
- Regional Destinations and other bike trails outside of Hanson
- Camp Kiwanee to High Street Park
- North Hanson to South Hanson

The Town of Hanson is also a part of the Bay Circuit Trail. The Bay Circuit Trail is a 230-mile recreational trail system encircling the Boston metropolitan area, offering outdoor enthusiasts a diverse range of landscapes and natural beauty. Winding through forests, fields, wetlands, and historic sites, it provides an escape into nature while remaining accessible to urban dwellers. In Hanson, the trail runs from the East Bridgewater line in the Satucket River Conservation to the Pembroke Town line near Tubbs Meadow.

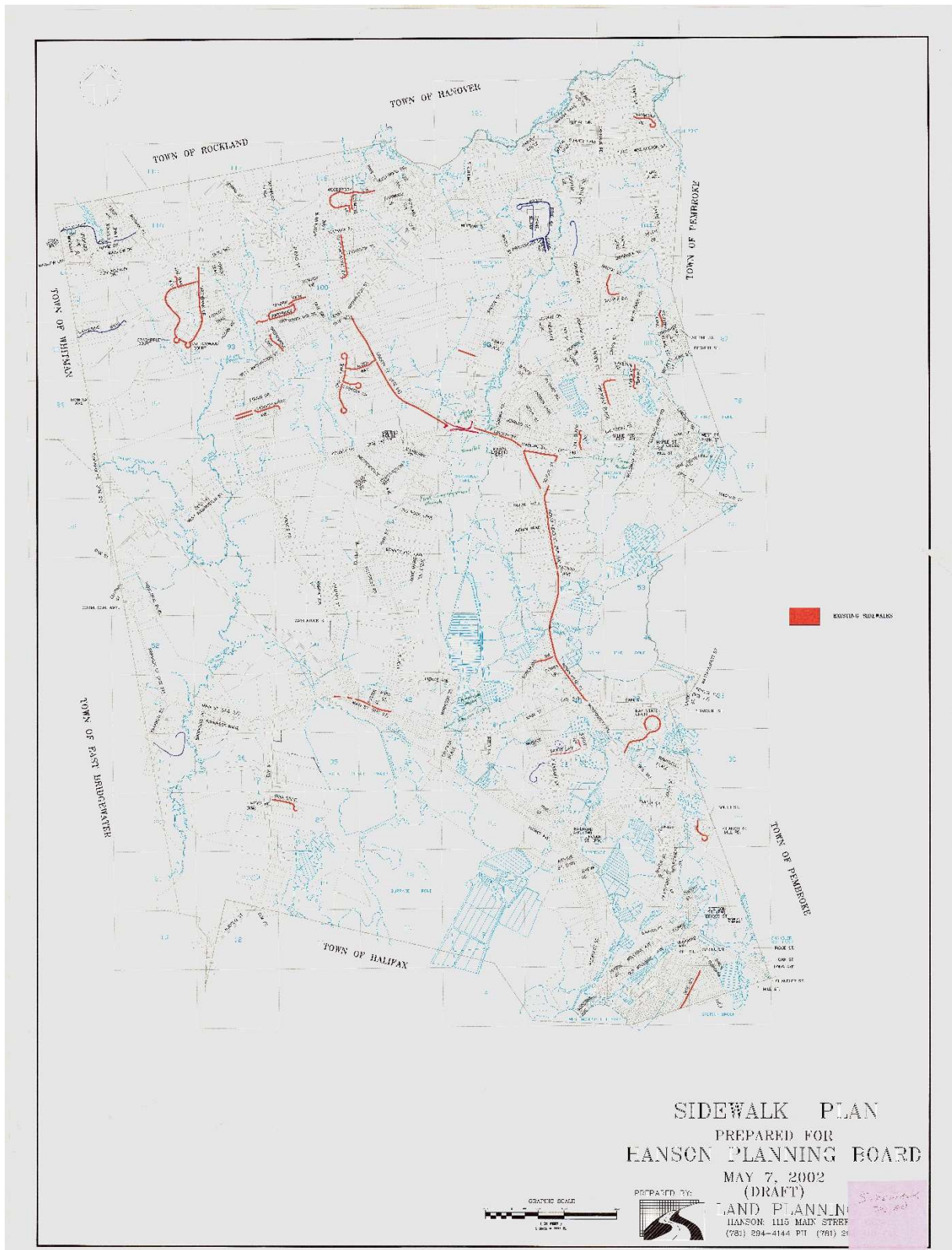


Figure 24: Sidewalk Assessment 2002

Future Concerns

When considering Hanson's transportation needs, it is essential to assess the current concerns and anticipate future needs. Changes in traffic patterns have been recognized over recent years, and the town's population has increased. With the town still seeing more housing being built and the potential for mixed-use property, one can anticipate more cars on the road. Using the Master Plan as a guide for understanding vehicle and pedestrian safety will allow for assessing the impact of new growth. The town may seek to work with large developers interested in improving the streetscape and walkability in corridors of concern. This plan can also be used to prioritize areas of concern that overlap with areas where the town wishes to see growth.

Changing weather patterns also impact road conditions. As documented in the Town of Hanson Integrated Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan (MVP) and Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), several roadways are areas of concern for flooding during significant rain events. The areas identified as most vulnerable to flooding are within 100-year floodplains. According to FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), areas most vulnerable to flooding in Hanson are areas along the Indian Head Brook, Indian Head River, Poor Meadow Brook, and the Shumatuscasant River. In addition to these areas, town officials also noted the following locations where flooding has historically occurred:

- Maquan Street (Route 14) from Rollercoaster Road to the Pembroke Town Line
- East Washington Street at the Pembroke town line (Rocky Run Brook)
- West Washington Street near Pennsylvania Avenue
- Brett's Brook near the Blueberry Farm

Stormwater drainage systems and culverts not sized to accommodate more significant storms will likely experience flood damage as extreme precipitation events increase (ResilientMA, 2018). Both currently undersized culverts and appropriately sized culverts may be overwhelmed by more significant storms. Gravity-fed water and wastewater infrastructure in low-lying areas near rivers and reservoirs may experience increased risks. In the event of backup or failure, these can increase the risk of flooding onto major roadways, which poses a concern for emergency vehicles traveling during a storm of this size.

Transportation Goals and Actions

1. Continue working with the Commonwealth and Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to prioritize intersections of concern.
 - a. Continue communication with the MPO to prioritize projects for the TIP.
 - b. Consider a Route 14 corridor study to assess the impact of traffic flow and vehicle accidents. Route 14 largely contains the town's businesses, and increasing safe travel will improve the town's functionality.
 - c. Assess flooding concerns on major routes in town as identified in MVP and HMP plan. This should include the conditions of culverts in this area and look to improve green infrastructure.
2. Increase sidewalks and bike paths in town to create connections to open spaces and increase walkability around town resources, including the Senior Center and Library.
 - a. Through the Open Space chapter and in the next update of the Open Space and Recreation plan, identify areas of connectivity that should be targeted. Compare these to ongoing town efforts to expand current sidewalk connections.
 - b. Continue seeking funding through Complete Streets and additional grant sources to meet the goals outlined in the Complete Streets plan.

Resources

<https://oldcolonyplanning.org/document/road-safety-audit-hanson-main-street-route-27-at-franklin-street-and-elm-street/>

<https://oldcolonyplanning.org/document/corridor-study-route-58/>

Public Facilities and Services

Summary:

Community facilities provide essential services and amenities to Town residents and provide the basis for a feeling of belonging and a unique community identity. Community facilities include parks and other recreational facilities, open space, historic buildings, Town services, public safety and emergency services, schools, libraries, infrastructure (such as water and sewer systems and utility corridors), and other cultural resources and programs.

Relevant Data:

- Hanson has many public services in need of updates or expansions including the Fire Department, The Highway Department the Library and the Council on Aging

Community Survey Results:

- Among the amenities, "Libraries" and "Community events and festivals" garnered the highest ratings for being "very important," with 34.09% and 39.73% of respondents considering them as such, respectively. "Sports facilities and events" and "Performing arts facilities" also received notable importance ratings.
- "Trash and recycling services" received a weighted average indicating dissatisfaction (-0.60), with a notable percentage (35.94%) expressing being "VERY DISSATISFIED."
- "Police services" and "Fire services" received a highly positive weighted average.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Community facilities provide essential services and amenities to Town residents and provide the basis for a feeling of belonging and a unique community identity. Community and public services are those minimum facilities and services the Town, and other entities provide for the common good. Community facilities include parks and other recreational facilities, open space, historic buildings, Town services, public safety and emergency services, schools, libraries, infrastructure (such as water and utility corridors), and other cultural resources and programs.

Community facilities are critical in supporting desirable land use and development patterns, contributing to quality of life, and encouraging economic development. Providing high-quality community services and facilities that serve Town residents increases community satisfaction, significantly impacts the quality of life, and contributes to a community's reputation as a place where people want to live. Maintaining high coordination between stakeholders at the town, state, and federal levels helps ensure adequate facilities and improvements keep pace with development. Experiences from across the country have repeatedly shown that to provide high-quality services, a community must maintain, upgrade, and regularly reevaluate its utility, facility, and community service needs. Reevaluation is critical because as a community grows and matures, often so does its need for such services. The Facilities and Services element of the Master Plan identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted physical needs for facilities and services provided by the Town.

Facilities are planned in the context of the Town's goals for its municipal services. Facilities must reinforce and support providing these services to residents because adequate facilities ensure that departments can meet their responsibilities by their mandate.

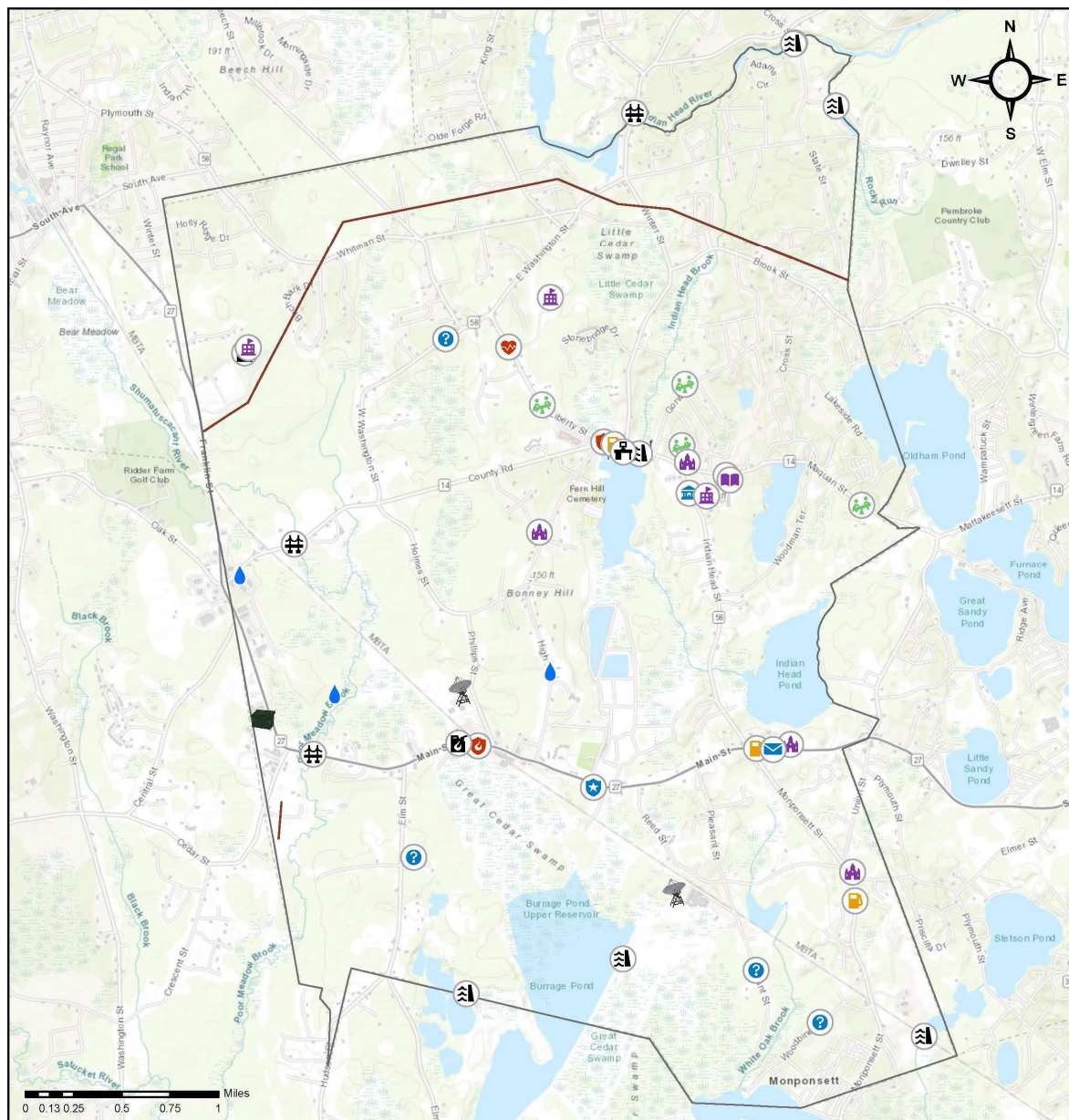
Community facilities aim to provide residents with a wide range of Town facilities, services, and public utilities. Facility policies are to:

- Maintain high public safety within the Town, including provisions for police, fire and emergency services, and infrastructure.
- Promote greater involvement by residents in Town affairs, including volunteerism for committees, boards, and elected offices.
- Focus on activities for all ages, emphasizing teenagers and seniors.
- Increase active recreation facilities and programs to keep pace with growing needs.
- Maintain a quality public school system.
- Maintain quality systems: water/drainage, wastewater, and highway.

Inventory

The section below discusses each of the components of Town Facilities, with a description of each facility and its identified needs. Recommendations follow.

Hanson Critical Facilities



- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Antenna | Fire Station | Place of Worship | Town Offices |
| Bridge | Fuel Station | Police | Waste Disposal |
| Childcare | Fuel Storage | Postal Services | Wastewater Facilities |
| Dam | Health & Medical Facility | Power Generation | Water Infrastructure |
| Elder Services | Human Services | Public Works | |
| Electrical Infrastructure | Library | Rest Home | |
| | Nursing Facility | School | |



Old Colony Planning Council
 70 School Street, Brockton,
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oldcolonyplanning.org
 Created July 2023
 GIS Data Sources: ESRI, MassGIS,
 Old Colony Planning Council

Map 11: Critical Facilities

Table 14: Asset Inventory and Location

Table (#): Town of Hanson Asset Inventory and Location	
Town Hall	542 Liberty Street
Police Department	795 Indian Head Street
Fire Department	505 Liberty Street
Highway Department	797 Indian Head Street
Public Library	132 Maquan Street
Senior Center	132 Maquan Street
Water Department	1073 West Washington Street
Camp Kiwanee	Off Indian Head Street
Cemetery	Off Fern Hill cemetery and private rural cemeteries
Schools	Maquan, Indian Head, Middle School, and WH High School

1. Town Hall

Hanson Town Hall is an attractive 1890s building with a substantial 1999 addition done in the original style. It borders Wampatuck Pond on Route 58 in Hanson and houses the Board of Selectmen and most other town offices. In general, the building is in good condition. However, areas of concern are tied to the exterior envelope of the building and the need for preventative maintenance.

Meeting Space at Town Hall

The Town Hall needs more meeting space under the current usage. Hanson boards and commissions, including the Board of Health, the Conservation Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals, meet on Tuesday evenings. There is only one large meeting room on the second floor of the Town Hall to accommodate these meetings. The need for other adequately sized rooms forces boards and commissions to meet in their offices, often equipped only with a small conference

table. Controversial issues lead citizens to gather in the hallway. This makes the public process less accessible since the Open Meeting Law is technically satisfied if the door is open, and conversations in the hallway add distractions.

The Veterans' agent does not have an office, though his work is sometimes confidential. Privacy cannot be guaranteed. State statute requires that Veterans' Agents have their own offices, where they can ensure privacy and confidentiality.

Parking in the lots at Town Hall can be difficult to find when simultaneous meetings occur in the building, as is the case on Tuesday evenings. According to town officials, the lots frequently fill up.

2. The Police Department

Hanson has a full-time Police Department consisting of a chief, a deputy chief, five sergeants, eighteen (18) patrol officers, and

three auxiliary officers, all housed in a single police station. There is also a full-time administrative assistant who works for the chief. The chief expressed a need for a part-time records clerk in the not-too-distant future.

The police and fire chief identified a need for a mechanic to service all town vehicles/fleets (such as police, fire/EMS, and highway dept vehicles).

A new police station was built in 2007 on a 3.96-acre site on Main Street (Route 27) across from the Grange Hall. This station replaced its former location at 797 Indian Head Street (now utilized by the Town's Little League and Boy Scout troops. The station has approximately 15,000 square feet, potentially converting 1,500 to 2,000 square feet of storage space to office space. The third floor is unfinished, and the second floor has an area where a dormer could be built for more space in the future. It houses complete facilities, including office space, locker rooms, a public meeting room, conference space, a fitness center, a sally port and fleet garage, and secure storage of weapons, evidence, and records, along with a 63-vehicle parking lot. It is expected to meet projected needs for the next 10-15 years.

3. The Fire Department

The Hanson Fire Department provides a wide range of public safety services consistent with federal, state, and local regulations in fire suppression, emergency medical services, fire prevention, investigation, and disaster response and mitigation. The Fire Department responded to 1,990 calls for service for the calendar year 2023, essentially at the same pace as the previous couple of years, with a slight increase year over year. Recent years have seen the busiest years for the Department. The Fire Department manages a large vehicle fleet to provide

public safety services, including three Ambulances, three frontline engines, two forest fire trucks, and one tower truck. The Fire Department operates smaller vehicles for diving activity, hazardous waste removal, contamination management, and forest fires. Fleet maintenance and replacement schedule is included under the "recommendations" section for the fire department.

Hanson has a full-time fire department consisting of a Chief, a Deputy Chief, four lieutenants, and twelve full-time firefighters, all housed in a single fire station. All full-time staff are paramedics. Twelve "on-call" firefighters support these. There is also an administrative assistant who works for the chief. The firehouse, built in 1978, was initially shared with the Senior Center. Still, the Senior Center is now contained within the Town library, and the Fire Department has expanded into that space. Dispatch for fire, police, and EMS has been outsourced to a regional dispatch center (Old Colony Response Center) located in Duxbury.

The 45-year-old firehouse was not initially designed for 24-hour operation nor a co-ed force. No significant renovations have taken place over the last twenty years; a few updates have been done internally, such as mold remediation stemming from a leaky roof, the addition of a bunk room to the attic space (the bunks are co-ed due to capacity limitations), an added a decontamination room, and an added women's locker room and shower for female firefighters. A Request for Quotes (RFQ) has been released to facilitate a feasibility study for an update to the Apparatus Bay (the bay in which emergency response vehicles are garaged).

The Fire department needs the following upgrades:

- A new heating system.

- Rewiring of the building, including wiring for data systems and a centralized telephone system.
- More storage space.
- Sprinkler systems (fire suppression).
- Fire alarms (fire protection).
- A functional thermostat.

The Fire Department no longer uses its secondary location, the former South Hanson firehouse, on Main Street.

4. The Highway Department

The Highway Department is located at 797 Indian Head Street (behind the old Police Station); the structure was built in 1965 and occupied the same year. The DPW complex comprises four buildings: A concrete block office/garage, a steel building housing a repair garage/parts building, a wood frame salt/sand storage, and a companion steel framed general storage/overflow sand storage building. The Highway Department Building is constructed of concrete cinder blocks, approximately 100 feet in length, 50 feet in width, and 15 feet high. It has office space, two bathrooms, and a garage parking space for Highway equipment. The interior office space consists of a break room for employees and the main office for the Highway Surveyor and Administrative Assistant. All the buildings need substantial upgrades or replacements. The concrete block office/garage and the steel repair garage are extended past their useful life. The block building was constructed in 1964, and the steel building is a vintage military building that was salvaged from an army base and reconstructed on-site in the 1970s. These buildings meet no required state and federal mandated environmental, employee safety, or hygiene codes.

The building was constructed to house the Highway Department, the Water Department, and the Tree Department. In 1990, the Water

Department required more space for equipment and offices, so they moved to vacate their building. Behind the Highway garage is the repair shop. This originally stood at the Charlestown Navy Yard and was dismantled by the Town of Hanson Highway Department, trucked down to its current site, and reassembled in 1975. The Highway Department was granted this building through the Federal Government Surplus Materials Program. Although some minor renovations have occurred, including painting, new carpets, and other amenities, a new integrated town barn complex should be studied to replace some or all the existing buildings. Previous discussions have included a potential relocation of the Highway Department to a site on Hawkes Ave. Still, there were concerns about possible contamination at the site, so those plans were scrapped. A new location for the building should be identified.

Currently, the repair shop houses all town vehicle repairs besides the Fire Department, and it has outgrown its original intended capacity. The office space is inadequate; the parts room is at total capacity. The repair and service areas must be more significant to handle the workload of repairing larger equipment and police vehicles simultaneously. The Highway Department's Town Barn Complex is behind the former Police Station.

One bay of the repair shop is dedicated to a vehicle lift for repairing automobiles only. This lift must be updated and replaced by an aboveground, freestanding, high-capacity lift to accommodate large trucks and cars.

5. The Water Department

The Hanson Water Department was created in 1916 by an act of the State Legislature. Before developing its water source in the early 1980s, the Hanson Water Department

purchased all its water from the City of Brockton and the Abington/Rockland Joint Waterworks. Currently, Hanson continues to maintain interconnections with the Brockton and the Abington/Rockland water systems. Hanson operates four wells at their Crystal Spring Wellfield. The wellfield is located in the Poor Meadow Brook subbasin, tributary to the Satucket River in the Taunton River basin. It is on the western edge of the Town just east of Route 27 at the southern end of the Hanson Commerce Park. The town water system serves approximately 3,500 residents, businesses, and commercial properties.

The Water Superintendent indicates that the garage associated with their structure allows the department to house all its trucks and emergency equipment. Should the department need more room, adding two more bays to the existing structure is possible. Other aspects of the Department's facilities are:

- The Superintendent's office serves a second purpose as the meeting room of the Water Board.
- Upstairs is used for parts storage as well as records storage.
- Hydrants, various-sized pipes, and fittings are stored outside at the rear of the building.
- At the edge of the property line is a septic system that cannot be built upon. Future facility needs are:
 - Rearrangement of space to accommodate the SCADA control and monitoring system once it comes online.
 - A laboratory for water sampling and testing

The Hanson water system connects with neighboring towns, including Abington/Rockland and Brockton. Three interconnections with Abington/Rockland have never been used. There are currently

seven interconnections with Brockton along Route 27 Main St. An interconnection at Route 27 Main Street and Crooker Place was removed. Hanson purchases water from the City of Brockton during times of high demand using the interconnection located at Route 27 Main Street and Franklin Street.

The Town of Hanson operates one chemical addition facility for all four wells. Raw water is treated before entering the distribution system. The raw water is treated for corrosion control using sodium hydroxide to raise the pH. Additionally, raw water is disinfected with sodium hypochlorite. The Town has reported that the effluent is discolored when all four wells run simultaneously – typically a light brown “tea” color. To prevent this from occurring, the Town limits production at the site, and during these periods, the Town must purchase water from Brockton to meet the system demands.

Water Quality and Treatment **Existing Water System**

The existing water system currently serves approximately 94 percent of the Town (approximately 9,327 people), though 3,248 service connections are metered. The town has 0.78 million gallons per day (MGD) registered and permitted withdrawals under their Water Management Act Permit (WMA). The current permit was initially set to expire on February 28, 2010. Still, it was extended during the development and promulgation of WMA amendments, known as the Sustainable Water Management Initiative (SWMI). Hanson's permit was renewed in 2021 and will include new SWMI requirements. The Town's water system is supplied from four groundwater wells in the Crystal Springs Wellfield and supplemented by water purchased through an interconnection with the City of Brockton. Raw water from each well is treated before distribution. Treatment includes the addition

of sodium hydroxide for corrosion control and sodium hypochlorite for disinfection. One tank with a total capacity of 1.0 million gallons provides water distribution storage. Hanson's water distribution system consists of approximately 71 miles of pipe, ranging in diameter from 1 inch to 16 inches.

The 1,000,000-gallon storage tank could supply about 1.5 days of everyday use in the event of a complete breakdown and about one peak day's use. This suggests a need for more storage, but the Department points out that the town has access to significant emergency supplies through connections to the Brockton system and those of adjacent towns.

Water Demand

Water demand is the volume of water that the water system must supply to meet the residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and other needs of all customers provided by the system. Evaluating the historical and current water demand and the projection of future water demands are critical for assessing the adequacy of water supply, distribution storage, and distribution system pipe networks to supply water under a range of expected conditions. The system must provide adequate water during normal and seasonally high conditions while meeting fire flow requirements.

The existing average-day demand is 0.61 MGD, and the maximum is 0.94 MGD. The DEP-allowed maximum daily withdrawal for a peak day is 1.3 MGD. Historically, approximately 1% or less of water is purchased from the City of Brockton. In 2016, 37% was purchased due to water storage tank maintenance that took the tank offline for an extended period. Water demand projections anticipate an average-day water demand of 0.71 MGD and a maximum-day water demand of 1.10 MGD by 2035. Residential water uses account for

approximately 90.4% of metered sales; the average residential water use is 50 gallons per capita per day. Before 2013, the system's average unaccounted-for water was 15.5%; however, since that time, unaccounted-for water has progressively decreased to 10.9% in 2016.

Many factors influence water demand for a system, including population served, economic activity, climate conditions, and conservation efforts. As Hanson is predominantly a residential town, population is an essential indicator of water demand.

Water Supply Requirements

The Town's registered and permitted withdrawal volumes under its current Water Management Act Permit are sufficient to meet current and future demands. Under SWMI, if a water system anticipates that it will exceed its baseline withdrawal volume of 0.72 MGD, the town will be required to develop a mitigation plan. Future demands in Hanson will approach this baseline withdrawal volume by 2035 based on projections developed in the updated Water Master Plan (2018).

The present system could support moderate growth, but more water will be needed in the long run. The pumping capacity of the three remaining wells was determined to be 0.82 MGD, which is adequate to meet current and future average daily demand and summer average daily demand but needs to be more adequate to meet the estimated maximum-day demand of 1.10 MGD in 2035. Accordingly, the Water Department is exploring a potential well off Pleasant Street near White Oak Brook in the southernmost part of the town north of West Monponsett Pond. Pumping tests suggest a yield of about .75 MGD, though treatment for iron removal would be needed, and operation would be tied to the level of Monponsett Pond. Pumping would cease if the pond dropped by

more than a certain amount. A feasibility study for an additional water source and a tank siting alternatives analysis is recommended, which the Town is currently evaluating concerning an additional water source.

6. The Library

The Library/Senior Center was constructed in 1991 as a dual-purpose building. The library occupies most of the single-floor building and uses a small, wholly-filled basement for storage. It is expanding beyond its current confines. Contained in an appealing building linked to the Senior Center, it has already reached its capacity, and books are being piled upon books. In general, the building is in good condition. However, the problems in the building are due to poor design and must be rectified quickly to prevent long-term and costly repairs.

There are numerous programs throughout the year for seniors, adults, teens, and children, including author visits, story hours, movies, plays, homebound delivery service, and crafts programs. In addition to providing books and other reading materials, the library also loans materials through their "Library of Things," where anyone with a Hanson Public Library card can borrow valuable items for free for up to 2 weeks (no renewals) at the Library of Things, such as musical instruments, tools, technology, health, and fitness equipment, and more.

The following needs were identified in the Hanson Master Plan from 2008; these have been recognized as outstanding and still areas of need for the library.

- Shelving for library books and other items. The library needs shelving adaptable to changing format needs, especially with the growing Library of Things collection. Current shelving

units were designed only for books and other "traditional" library formats.

- A relocated Historical Room since it now faces the southwest, subjecting delicate materials to destructive sun exposure.
- Quiet/Study Rooms – previous space has been turned over to computer stations.
- Expanded Audio/Visual Technology and Equipment such as virtual meeting equipment, projectors/screens, presentation equipment, interactive children's games, video gaming stations, etc. Updates are needed to increase the Wi-Fi capacity for library users and staff.
- An enlarged multi-purpose Children's area allowing reading, crafts, and other activities without competing with seniors for the community room.
- Director's Office - combining accessibility with privacy. The goal should be to provide an office that is visible/accessible to public areas/by the public but affords privacy.

The Hanson Master Plan update (2023) has surfaced additional needs:

- Outside locker for curbside/after-hours pickup.
- Additional staff. Due to budget cuts in 2008, the library lost 15 staff hours and gained very few of these positions back during that time, despite increases in the usage of the library and the service/programs provided.
- After-hours access to the library's meeting space.
- Socialization space for recently retired persons and younger seniors.
- As part of the SCORP report, there is an identified need for more teenage-friendly spaces in town and on the state level. Many teenagers use the library currently and require more resources.

The Director indicated that a community center for the town is needed, a space for local youth, specifically middle school students, who tend to spend after-school hours in the community area of the library - this can overwhelm the limited staff at the library. As part of the feasibility study, the Director hopes that some of the outdoor space at the library could be repurposed to create a patio for outdoor activities, taking some strain off the interior of the building.

The library has applied for a construction grant through the state to conduct a feasibility study to determine possible renovation or expansion opportunities for the library. According to the Director, several critical needs need to be addressed to meet the current operational needs of the building: Since the library was built in the early 1990s, electrical outlets are limited, and the wiring is inadequate to serve current needs or any potential expansion of the computer lab. The children's room is small, and additional space for children's activities is needed. New carpeting would be an immediate need if the library is to remain at its current location in the foreseeable future.

7. The Senior Center

The Council on Aging provides a comprehensive service delivery plan to Hanson seniors, including social services, transportation, information and referral, congregate meals program, and a myriad of health, exercise, social, cultural, financial, and life-long learning offerings. The Hanson Council on Aging and Senior Center, located at 132 Maquan Street, strives to address the well-being and lifestyle concerns of older adults living in Hanson.

The Senior Center has been in an attractive building linked to the public library since leaving its space in the Fire Headquarters.

The Senior Center serves as a service and resource hub for older adults in the greater Hanson region. Specific services and resources provided to seniors include referral services for seniors in need, assisting with medical issues and social-emotional support, nutrition services (congregate meals, meals on Wheels), transportation, among other supportive services and opportunities for greater socialization and building social capital among older adults.

Staff proactively assists seniors in filing for fuel assistance, SNAP benefits (formerly food stamps), property tax abatements, senior housing, and other available benefits. A SHINE Counselor is available to guide seniors through the maze of available health and prescription drug programs, including Medicare. The Center serves as a congregate lunch site for a meal program. One thousand one hundred forty-four congregate meals were served during the 2023 calendar year. Additionally, 20 Meals on Wheels are sent daily from the site, Monday through Friday. The Senior Center only has one full-time staff member, the Director. Still, it has several supportive staff, including a SHINE Counselor at 18 hours/week, a part-time Administrative Assistant at 19 hours/week, a van driver at 24 hours/week, a shared custodian, and front desk staff. Since COVID, the Senior Center has seen an increase in seniors seeking assistance and supportive services and opportunities for socializing with Senior Center staff and peers to reverse the effects of the social isolation and loneliness experienced during the pandemic.

The new facility is outgrown, and the center has considered moving for several years due to the need for more program space for the growing senior population.

Needs:

- The HVAC system is original to the building, and upgrades are needed to ensure proper and efficient heating and cooling.
- Increased space for the Senior Center and appropriate staffing levels to accommodate the growing senior population in town.

In 2003, the report Hanson Senior Center Feasibility Study Committee: Final Report to the May 2003 Annual Town Meeting (May 5, 2003) was presented to the Town Meeting to outline the issues involved in potentially moving the Senior Center. The Committee working with the architectural firm of Akro Associates recommended using “a new freestanding building” after considering three options (these options were not explored further after a review of feasibility):

- Expansion of the existing facility at the Library/Senior Center building
- Renovation of the BCI building at the Plymouth County Hospital
- Building a new freestanding building at the Hospital site.

The need for a relocated and enlarged senior center is clear. Expanding at the present site would have to be compatible with the library’s need for considerably more space.

8. Camp Kiwanee

Camp Kiwanee is a 64-acre campground located at Maquan Pond. The camp initially was the property of Boston industrialist Albert Burrage, who built his cabin “The Needles” there in 1905. In 1922, Burrage decided to sell the property to the Camp Fire Girls, a non-profit organization named the camp “Camp Kiwanee” and ran it for the next 57 years. In 1979, the Town of Hanson bought Camp Kiwanee from the Camp Fire Girls and has run it since then.

The camp is now a town-owned park, with facilities for single-day functions such as weddings or large meetings, overnight camping in cabins, and a trendy beach and swimming program. The Camp Kiwanee Management Commission conducts day-to-day operations and management.

Certain camp buildings are under consideration as National Historic Register properties.

A Master Plan was completed in 1990 that examined issues that Camp Kiwanee faced. Among the problems identified in that Plan were the following:

- The concrete block firehouse: It was being used as storage but has now been identified to serve as a workshop for the camp. A structural assessment of the firehouse is currently being processed, and structural repairs will be made. The 1990 Master Plan called for the firehouse to become an artist's studio.
- Entrance drive: the handsome tree-lined single-lane portion of the entrance drive was too narrow for two-way traffic. It is difficult when groups, rather than single cars, try to enter and leave passage simultaneously along the drive. That is still true, and the widening of that road is not likely, given ecological constraints.
- The plan indicated that the entrance drive would remain unchanged to preserve its historical and visual nature. However, the plan called for turnouts at four designated points “to allow traffic to flow on the narrow drive,” and several informal turnouts now allow passage by single cars.

The Master Plan concluded that “Needles/Kiwanee is a recreational jewel for the Town of Hanson” and that the property should be held by the Town of Hanson and

the facilities upgraded to make the camp a viable self-supporting enterprise. Significant repairs and improvements have since been made to the Lodge, essentially renovating much of it; the cottage behind the lodge has been renovated; most of the 34 rental cabins and support facilities are in good condition; and the caretaker's house is in excellent condition. The work has traditionally been done economically. For example, vocational school students restored and improved the cottage using donated materials and labor.

The Master Plan was updated in 2004 to guide and support applications for funds to upgrade facilities on the Camp further. The 2004 Master Plan was used to identify and address the camp's current conditions.

The Camp Kiwanee Commission now identifies and supports the following needs and opportunities:

- Site - Restoration/development of docks and floats and ADA-compatible access ramps to a second waterfront activity area just below the lodge. The former direct stairs from the lodge to the pond are no longer in place, and replacement is prohibitive. The path along the shore is overgrown. The project would also help keep boating activity safe from the beach.
- Lodge – the lodge has been partially renovated since the 1990 plan. Still, work is needed to make the second floor usable and ADA accessible, including installing a second set of stairs and an elevator.
- Cabins - the 34 cabins on site are original to the camp and need repair, specifically wooden shutters to replace the vinyl sheeting currently covering cabin windows and the installation of foundations under the cabins (the cabins currently sit on cement blocks). These recommended improvements to the

cabins include the 34 camping cabins and the Frontier Cabin and Pavilion.

The administrative assistant for the Camp Kiwanee Commission identified the desire for Camp Kiwanee to offer summer camp, which has not been provided at Camp Kiwanee since the 1950s. These improvements would help bring the camp up to code (ADA compliance) and make it more enjoyable for campers.

9. Cemeteries

One privately operated cemetery in Hanson, Fern Hill Cemetery on High Street, and a scattering of older burial sites throughout the community. The town controls a section of the Fern Hill Cemetery, and there is a Town-owned tomb—the grand pond-side veranda with a visitor in the enclosed observation booth at the Camp Kiwanee Lodge.

There are approximately 750 privately owned grave sites in Fern Hill, comprising roughly 600 single, two, and four-grave plots and 150 Cremation-only sites. These are estimated to meet obligations at the current rate for approximately 50 years. The estimate needs to consider the shrinking supply of sites elsewhere in the metropolitan area and the rapidly increasing population in the town and on the South Shore. There will be a need for future expansion, and some potential adjacent land could be purchased, but this has been cost-prohibitive. The existing lots should last another 10-15 years.

Future planning for Hanson cemetery requirements includes maintaining the town's scattered existing small cemeteries and burial plots and establishing a location, or locations, for future cemetery sites.

10. Schools

Note: School data came from the School and District Report Cards (Massachusetts

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) and U.S. News School Rankings. Hanson is served by the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, which operates elementary and middle schools in the two towns, and the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School on the Franklin Street town line. The town's elementary school is the Indian Head School on Indian Head Street (Route 58) between School Street and Maquan Street, and the Indian Head Elementary School and town auditorium. The Indian Head School serves grades K-4.

The 80,000 square-foot Indian Head School and connected auditorium were opened in 1951 and expanded or upgraded in 1960, 1980, and 1999. It presently houses grades 3,4 and 5. It has a capacity of 530 and a 2022-2023 enrollment of 485 (91.5% of capacity), slightly down from the 499 of the 2021-2022 school year. At Indian Head, 32% of students scored at or above the proficient level for math, and 47% scored at or above that level for reading. The school's minority student enrollment is 11%. The student-teacher ratio is 16:1, which is worse than the district's. The student population comprises 48% female students and 52% male students. There are 30 equivalent full-time teachers.

The town's other elementary school, The Maquan School to the rear on School Street between Indian Head Street and Maquan Street, was closed in 2018 and demolished in 2023.

The 88,000-square-foot Middle School houses grades 5-8 and was opened in 1998. It has a capacity of 600 students and a 2022-2023 enrollment of 449 (74.8%), down from 457 during the 2021-2022 school year. The school is off Liberty Street, towards the rear of the parcel. As a result, the bypassing citizenry cannot see it, and it is less

conveniently located for walking/ bicycling to school than the elementary school.

The student population of Hanson Middle School is 457, and the school serves 5-8. At Hanson Middle School, 27% of students scored at or above the proficient level for math, and 43% scored at or above that level for reading. The school's minority student enrollment is 12%. The student-teacher ratio is 13:1, which is better than the district's. The student population comprises 48% female students and 52% male students. There are 35 equivalent full-time teachers and one full-time school counselor.

The 251,219-square-foot Whitman-Hanson Regional High School was opened in 2005. It has been much praised for its innovative, energy-saving, environmentally friendly green design and advanced, cutting-edge features such as electronic blackboards linked to computers and the ability to tap into or add to extensive databases. The school has a capacity of 1,350 students and a 2022-2023 enrollment of 1,093 (81%), up from 1,087 during the 2021-2022 school year. While the school is an exemplary modern high school, the complex lacks adequate storage and maintenance space for snowplows and other ground maintenance equipment. Whitman Hanson Regional is ranked 184th in Massachusetts. Students have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement coursework and exams. The AP participation rate at Whitman Hanson Regional is 50%. The total minority enrollment is 15%.

The High School's location on the Hanson/Whitman line is central to the two towns, though it is not near the population center. Sidewalk improvements and an off-road trail from nearby neighborhoods to ease walking/bicycling to school are proposed in the Circulation Chapter.

The School District feels that Hanson should have sufficient capacity for the near to mid-term future, particularly given the ability to re-assign grades to accommodate bulges in students moving through the system and to draw upon capacity in either community temporarily. Still, the 81% capacity at the High School, the continuing attraction of commuter rail service in light of the MBTA Communities Law, and potential growth associated with creating additional multifamily housing in both Whitman and Hanson suggest examining expansion opportunities when needed.

Public Facilities and Services Goals and Actions

1. Prioritize public facilities that are most needed.
 - a. Complete Fire House Feasibility Study
 - i. Fire House Feasibility Study should consider a mechanic area allowing the town to work on emergency service vehicles.
 - b. Train current mechanic staff to work on emergency vehicles OR hire a pre-certified mechanic to service the town's fleet.
 - c. Complete Library Feasibility Study

The Library Feasibility Study should consider the development of community space. A community space can double to meet the need for additional meeting spaces in town.
 - d. Consider the reconstruction needs of the current library and Council on Aging (COA) building for the ongoing use as a COA based on library feasibility results.
 - e. Consider the relocation or rebuilding of the Highway Department.

2. Create an updated capital improvement plan to keep department heads and the select board aware of upcoming and ongoing needs.
 - a. Continue addressing needs identified by department heads and town officials.
 - b. Town Hall: The hiring of a centralized facilities manager to manage contracts and repairs for elevators, HVAC systems, and other critical utilities in all public buildings.
 - c. Fire Department: Increased staffing for the fire department to bring them up to a minimum of five firefighters per shift to accommodate the multiple runs/emergency calls resulting from a growing population.

The Fire Headquarters needs essential fire safety devices, including sprinklers, fire alarms, and a new heating system. As an issue of basic fire safety, the Town should allocate the resources necessary to update the firehouse and make the building safe for occupants.

Fleet maintenance and replacement. Tower I, the aerial ladder truck, is reaching its useful life and must be replaced shortly. The average lifespan of a ladder truck is 12-15 years; Tower I turned 27 in 2023. One of the engine trucks (E-3) is from 1995 and will need replacement in the next five years. SUVs are replaced every ten years. One will be due for replacement in the next 1-2 years.

- d. Highway Department: Purchase a new lift and expand the repair shed as resources allow.

To keep up with the maintenance needs of the Town, including but not

limited to roadway and sidewalk maintenance, snow operations, street cleaning, roadway striping, mowing, and managing roadway brush, more staffing for the Highway Department should be provided.

To keep up with roadway needs and proper operations, the Highway Department needs a second loader (for sand), a backhoe, and a tractor to clear catch basins. A pavement roller was also identified as a critical asset for the Highway Department.