



DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This Master Plan (The Plan) is the result of a collaborative process that included the community at large, as well as the Planning Board, representatives of Town Departments and Administration, a Master Plan Advisory Committee and a team of consultants. Various combinations of this group are referred to throughout the report as The Natick 2030+ Team.

Under each goal, recommendations and action items are listed in the order of the time frame in which they might be implemented, based on complexity of implementation and requirements for coordination with other recommendations and actions. The order does not imply priority.

While it is the intent of the Master Plan that all of the recommendations be considered, some of the recommendations represent relatively minor changes to existing procedures and bylaws while others are more ambitious. Recommendations highlighted in green are generally considered to be particularly ambitious because they require actions or cooperation by public entities outside the jurisdiction of Natick (e.g., state agencies or adjacent municipalities) or by private businesses and/or property owners; they require the Town to take on new roles (e.g., establishing and managing a loan program); or they require extensive further analysis.

Recommendations that support sustainability and resiliency are indicated with this leaf icon.



Drawing from an understanding of the existing conditions of Natick's population and housing stock, and keeping in mind the identified issues and opportunities, the Natick 2030+ Team worked with residents to develop goals for the future of housing in Natick. Through survey responses, public meetings, and topic-based focus groups, community members helped identify areas of improvement and identify and modify specific recommendations. Those ideas and recommendations are organized by the following agreed upon goals:

1. **Provide housing affordable to the full range of income levels.**
2. **Provide for a mix of housing options at the full spectrum of price points.**
3. **Support seniors who wish to remain in their homes, as well as those who are looking for other housing types at different sizes and price points.**
4. **Support the continued existence and increase of naturally occurring housing that is affordable (i.e., existing housing that is or becomes affordable as a result of age, location, size or other characteristics).**
5. **Support and create housing options for special needs populations which could include, among others, veterans, homeless, families in need, developmentally or physically disabled and elderly.**

The recommendations for achieving these goals are listed on the following pages under each goal heading. Listed next to each recommendation are the primary and support parties responsible for carrying out the recommendations in the years to come. A suggested time frame is also included, associated with the specific actions (in blue) of each recommendation. In some cases, a recommendation may require coordination with recommendations from other chapters. In those cases, the icons for the related chapters will appear next to the recommendation. Metrics of progress are also included for recommendations that involve tracking progress over time.

Over the course of preparing the Master Plan, there was considerable discussion about providing a range of housing options and encouraging the development of new multi-family housing and/or housing as part of mixed-use districts. During the July 2018 Goals Survey residents strongly supported the proposed goal to provide a mix of housing options at a variety of price points (83% agreed and 17% disagreed) and were fairly evenly split over the proposed goal to encourage higher density housing in appropriate locations throughout Natick (47% agreed and 53% disagreed). A more specific recommendation proposed at the June 20, 2018 Public Meeting and again during the August 2018 Survey - Revise zoning to allow for multi-family and mixed-use development in appropriate zoning districts - received stronger support: 83% of the meeting attendees agreed or somewhat agreed, while 65% of the Survey respondents agreed or somewhat agreed.

GOAL 1

Provide housing affordable to the full range of income levels.



R1.1

INCREASE THE STOCK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

LEAD



PLANNING BOARD
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUPPORT



AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD

Inclusionary zoning is a regulatory tool which communities can enact that creates a mandatory set aside of affordable units as part of a housing development project. Communities typically establish a percentage which is applied to the total number of housing units in the project. For example, if a fifty-unit development were approved and built and the Town had an inclusionary percentage of 10 percent, then five residential units would need to be reserved for affordable housing.

The Town should consider adopting an inclusionary zoning bylaw with the following considerations at a minimum:

- + The percentage set aside for affordable units (typically 10-20 percent)
- + Threshold for the number of units that would trigger inclusionary zoning (e.g. 10 units or more)
- + Allowing a payment in lieu of affordable units or allowing off-site units to count toward the inclusionary percentage
- + The Area Median Income (AMI) threshold for affordable units to count (e.g. 30%, 60%, 80% of AMI)



I-5 YEARS



The formulation of an inclusionary zoning policy needs to be tailored to Natick's local market and size and type of housing most commonly developed. The policy should also result in housing that meets the State eligibility criteria for placement on the DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), making it "countable" for compliance with MGL 40B. Setting the percentage of affordable units too high could cause development to slow substantially if developers are unable to financially cross-subsidize these units with enough market rate units. The Town should also consider how low to set the unit threshold for triggering the inclusionary zoning requirement. Setting the threshold too low could stymie smaller infill or rehab projects, while setting the threshold too high could miss opportunities to capture affordable units.

In addition to the regulatory component of inclusionary zoning, the Town should also designate a recipient fund for payments in-lieu-of affordable units if Inclusionary Zoning becomes a reality. If developers are able to make payments in lieu of creating actual affordable housing units, the Town should ensure that money is going into a designated fund to be used by another entity in Natick for the creation or preservation of affordable housing. Many communities designate the Affordable Housing Trust as the recipient of these funds.

An Inclusionary Affordable Housing Bylaw was approved at the Fall 2018 Town Meeting. The Bylaw includes the mandatory provision of affordable units for any project that results in a net increase of two or more units; the subdivision of land for two or more dwelling units under an Inclusionary Housing Special Permit, or any residential project that includes two or more assisted living units. The Bylaw mandates that 15 percent of the units in a Residential Project shall be established as affordable dwelling units (20 percent on projects with 30 or more units in the Downtown Mixed Use District) in any one or a combination of methods including: provision of affordable units on site, provision of affordable units off-site, provision of fees-in-lieu of units payment or provision of buildable land. The Natick Affordable Housing Trust is designated as the recipient fund for fees-in-lieu of units payment.

The HOOP District has been successful in adding affordable units in locations in and around Natick Center where Town Meeting has allowed it. In existing HOOP-I and HOOP-II Districts, the Town allows for higher intensity housing development as long as 15 percent is set aside for affordable units as part of the overall unit mix. The HOOP Districts also allow a higher density of development at 17 units per acre in the HOOP-I (up to 29 units per acre with bonuses) and 12 units per acre (up to 14 units per acre with bonuses) in the HOOP-II. **An expansion of the HOOP Districts to other key industrial development parcels in Natick Center would provide incentives to bring in additional housing and at the same time ensure a portion of the new housing is set aside as affordable.** *(Expansion of the HOOP II District north to Bigelow Avenue to allow for continued multi-family residential development consistent with the existing development was approved at Spring 2018 Annual Town Meeting.)*



1-5 YEARS



R1.2

LEAD



HOUSING AUTHORITY

SUPPORT



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



7-12 YEARS

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NATICK HOUSING AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO A PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WITH A DEVELOPER TO HELP SHARE THE COSTS OF MODERNIZING PUBLIC HOUSING AND INTEGRATING A MIX OF INCOMES TO HELP OFFSET DEVELOPMENT COSTS.

Modernizing existing public housing facilities in today’s financial climate is challenging for large cities and small towns alike. While limited resources do allow for some interior or exterior maintenance and modification, the vast majority of our nation’s public housing stock is substandard and needs to be replaced. **As Natick evaluates improvements to its existing public housing facilities, some consideration should be given to creating a public/partnership with an outside developer to help finance and construct new public housing for Natick’s most vulnerable populations.** To accomplish this, the Town would have to incorporate a mixed-income strategy to any new redevelopment so market-rate housing units could be used to cross-subsidize the deeply affordable units needed to maintain or increase the number of public housing units. This strategy would require allowing a higher intensity of development on the site to accommodate both affordable and market rate units, but would result in substantial improvements to the housing stock and the quality of life for residents.

R1.3

LEAD



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD

SUPPORT



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PLANNING BOARD



1-5 YEARS



METRIC

COMPLETION AND ADOPTION AN UPDATED HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN.

1-5 YEARS



METRIC

AT LEAST THREE EDUCATIONAL FOCUS GROUPS HAVE BEEN HELD WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

UPDATE THE TOWN'S HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN.

Natick last completed a Housing Production Plan (HPP) in 2012. Since then, a number of new housing developments have been completed and additional projects are under construction or in the pipeline. At the same time, housing prices have continued to climb and availability of units has declined. Completing an HPP gives the Town a deep assessment of current housing conditions, future projections, and a series of recommendations for addressing housing needs in the community.

According to the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), as of September 2017 the Town has 10.4 percent of its year-round housing stock preserved as affordable. This is just over the 10 percent threshold required through Massachusetts Chapter 40B. When the new US Census is conducted in 2020, there is the possibility that Natick will see an increase in year-round housing units thereby reducing the denominator in the 40B affordable housing calculation. If that occurs, the Town could slip below the 10 percent threshold opening itself up to additional unplanned 40B housing developments. **The creation and adoption of an HPP would provide the Town with a tool to plan for the types of affordable housing it would like to see in the locations where the Town feels it is most appropriate and desirable.** If the Town creates affordable housing in a quantity great enough to meet the certification thresholds in a given year it can apply for Safe Harbor status from the MA Department of Housing and Community Development. This again provides opportunities for the Town to pro-actively plan for affordable housing without the unknowns of unplanned 40B developments.

After the completion of the HPP, the Town should **conduct focus groups with Planning Board, Selectmen, and Town Meeting members to help educate them about affordable housing needs, policies, programs, and financing.** These workshops and/or focus groups can help facilitate the often difficult conversations around housing need, housing production, housing type, financing, and where new housing should be located. This can also be an opportunity to discuss how best to implement the recommendations of both the Comprehensive Master Plan and the updated HPP.

R1.4

LEAD



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

SUPPORT



AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD
FINANCE COMMITTEE



1-5 YEARS



CREATE A DEDICATED SOURCE OF FUNDING THROUGH TOWN MEETING FOR THE HOUSING TRUST.

Funding is one of the biggest challenges to creating affordable housing locally, absent a development partner. Fortunately, Natick has an Affordable Housing Trust Fund and a Board that oversees the funds available for affordable housing production and preservation, but the Board is limited in scope by the funding available. Absent payments that could come in the form of fees in lieu of units payments, **the Town could consider setting up an annual disbursement of funds to the Trust through Town Meeting.** This consistent source of funding would allow the Trust plan and program funding for both short-term and long-term projects and programs. The Trust could then become much more proactive in seeking out projects, rather than being reactive with the uncertainty of funding from year to year. The 2018 budget included this line item, and a line item has been proposed for the 2019 budget. An annual disbursement would provide more predictability, allowing the Trust to better plan for the future.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A RECURRING LINE ITEM IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND.

4-7 YEARS



R1.5

LEAD



AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD

SUPPORT



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FINANCE COMMITTEE



ASSIST LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN FINANCING HOME REPAIRS.

In an effort to help residents remain in their homes and make home repairs accessible to those who can least afford it, the Town could consider creating a no- or low-interest rate loan program specifically for home repairs. The Town belongs to the WestMetro HOME Consortium and could access funds through their annual allocation to establish a program. This fund could function as a dedicated revolving loan fund and the Town could gift an amount to match what is available through the HOME Consortium to increase the pool for loans. Other communities around the Commonwealth have similar programs, although many do have dedicated revenues through CDBG and HOME funding that is not shared with other municipalities through a consortium. The Town of Weymouth is one such community that has established a zero interest rate home improvement financing and technical rehabilitation assistance program.

The recommendation is ambitious because the Town would need to establish, fund and administer a loan program; this would likely require hiring a housing coordinator or paying the WestMetro HOME consortium to administer the program. The program would be particularly beneficial to seniors on fixed-incomes who cannot afford necessary home repairs, and could potentially help to keep existing housing stock in a state of good repair to discourage future tear-downs.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOAN FUND AND FIVE HOMEOWNERS ASSISTED WITH REHABILITATION PROJECTS.

GOAL 2

Provide for a mix of housing options at the full spectrum of price points.



R2.1

LEAD



PLANNING BOARD
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUPPORT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SUPPORT THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTIES IN NATICK CENTER BY ALLOWING AND ENCOURAGING MIXED-USE AND MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING THAT PROVIDES HOUSING OPTIONS AND BRINGS MORE PEOPLE TO DOWNTOWN TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES.

Natick Center provides many of the amenities of urban living in a suburban setting. Access to an MBTA commuter rail station, restaurants and shops, civic buildings, and public spaces are just some of the amenities attracting new investment to Natick Center. Demand for new housing in mixed-use buildings in Natick Center is strong, and projects like Natick Common Residences and the conversion of the former American Legion building are proof that people want to live, work, shop, and enjoy Natick Center.



New outdoor seating at Buttercup Restaurant at 13 West Central Street.

As the Town strives to create a more vibrant and active downtown, the addition of housing can bring a built-in market for businesses and reduce traffic impacts as residents can more easily walk to nearby amenities or even take the commuter rail to work. Housing in Natick Center is also more likely to include smaller units in new or refurbished buildings, providing a different housing choice for those who cannot afford or do not want a single-family home. **The Town should consider updating the existing base zoning district(s) covering Natick Center to allow more by-right integration of housing through a streamlined permitting process.**



ON-GOING



R2.2

LEAD



PLANNING BOARD
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUPPORT



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MULTI-FAMILY AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS.

While Natick's overall population is anticipated to grow by about one percent between 2020 and 2030, a diverse housing stock is still needed to support both existing and future residents. The average number of persons in a household continues to shrink, and housing preferences for younger and older residents are changing. These two changes are creating a situation across most communities where the housing stock does not match the market demand. Young professionals are delaying family formation and instead opt for smaller units in amenity-rich environments like Downtown Natick. Older residents are looking to move out of single-family homes to reduce costs, decrease maintenance responsibilities, and find housing with universal design elements.



If Natick wants to retain its older citizens and attract new residents to keep the community vibrant and active, housing will have to play a critical role. **One step the Town should take is critically reviewing zoning in the parts of town where multi-family and mixed-use development are likely to be supported politically and financially. Siting higher intensity development in specific locations where impacts to existing single-family neighborhoods will be minimal could help increase housing choice and price diversity.**

Suitable areas of Natick where zoning should be reviewed for the inclusion of multi-family housing and mixed-use development include existing commercial corridors or clusters of economic activity.

GOAL 3

Support seniors who wish to remain in their homes, as well as those who are looking for other housing types at different sizes and price points.

R3.1

CHANGE ZONING TO ENABLE THE PRODUCTION OF A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES TO HELP SENIORS TO STAY IN NATICK.

LEAD 
 COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
 DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
 PLANNING BOARD

SUPPORT 
 ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Sometimes referred to as “granny flats,” accessory dwelling units (ADU’s) are secondary homes built on existing residential properties, either separate from or connected to a principal structure. While generally smaller in size, ADU’s can vary greatly in scale and amenities.

ADU’s can provide cost-effective housing in places where open land on existing lots may not be fully utilized. This helps minimize their impacts on infrastructure, and typically provides options for (increasingly common) one- and two-person households. By eliminating the largest cost driver of most new homes, (because the land is already owned by the principal homeowner), ADU’s can provide new housing options at a fraction of the cost of most “affordable units.”

By fitting an ADU on an existing lot or as a careful extension of another home, communities can add much-needed housing with a greatly limited impact on a neighborhood’s scale or feel. Building an ADU also can be a financial incentive for principal homeowners; the supplemental rental income from an ADU may help senior residents stay in their home.

Most barriers to the construction of these units are regulatory. Proponents contend that owner-occupancy rules are the most damaging to ADU construction. Municipalities in California, Oregon, and British Columbia have allowed ADU’s after settling on requirements for lot sizes, setbacks, parking, and scale. Boston is in the midst of its own pilot program in select neighborhoods in 2018, and New Hampshire has released a guide for municipalities looking to make ADU’s a reality. Some municipalities are working to provide revolving loans and other incentives to make ADU’s financially feasible for homeowners considering them.



Example of a detached ADU.



I-5 YEARS



The Town should explore options for allowing ADUs, taking into consideration how and where ADU's might serve as an effective housing option, how zoning and performance standards would ensure that new units fit with Natick's existing development pattern and neighborhoods, and how to regulate the units so that all single family houses are not priced as potential two-family houses. Natick currently allows only "family suites" which are limited to a relative of the primary owner.

While assisted living facilities are not the cure-all for senior housing needs, they can provide yet another option for seniors who are looking for additional care or assistance as they age in the community. Natick has struggled to find the right balance in their approach to zoning for assisted living over the last year or two, and has yet to settle on a set of performance measures or a geographic location that can garner wide support at Town Meeting. As the community continues to struggle with this issue, senior housing needs grow. Finding ways to allow assisted living in the right location and with minimal impacts to surrounding properties will be key to introducing this new housing option in Natick.

The Town should create zoning that allows assisted living in geographically appropriate areas and minimizes impacts on surrounding properties.



I-5 YEARS



Cluster zoning is a regulatory tool municipalities can use to accommodate residential development on a parcel of land while preserving open space and natural vegetation and views along roadways. The primary principle behind cluster development is to create smaller lots and smaller homes and gather them together in one area of the parcel while preserving the remainder of the parcel as open space. Under conventional subdivision rules, the entirety of the parcel could be developed using standard lot sizes, required infrastructure, and the minimum set aside for open space.

Natick has regulations for cluster development, but they are limited to parcels greater than twenty-two acres in size. Since the Town is largely built out at this point in time, there are very few parcels available that meet that minimum size threshold.

Therefore, **the Town should consider reworking the Cluster Bylaws to better suit the development pattern and opportunity sites left in Natick. Some key considerations the Town should discuss as it pursues an update to the Cluster Bylaws include:**

- + What is the ideal minimum lot size requirement?
- + What type(s) of housing should the Bylaw allow or encourage? Should it be limited to single-family homes, or should it include townhouses, duplexes, four-plexes, cottages, etc.
- + Should the Town allow a higher number of units as an incentive to encourage cluster development over conventional subdivisions?
- + What percentage open space set aside should be required?
- + Does the Town want to write the Bylaw in such a way as to preserve views or natural corridors along certain roadways?



I-5 YEARS



Example of a cluster housing development.



R3.2

FORM A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL ON AGING AND LOCAL REALTORS AND BANKS TO BRING IN HOUSING OMBUDS WHO COULD SERVE NATICK SENIORS AS RESOURCES ON HOUSING OPTIONS AND FINANCIAL INQUIRIES.

LEAD 
 COUNCIL ON AGING

SUPPORT 
 AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD
 LOCAL BANKS AND REALTORS

1-5 YEARS 

Throughout the planning process, the issue of senior housing options and affordability came up repeatedly. This is an issue challenging Natick and hundreds of other communities across the Commonwealth. One key challenge with seniors is getting the word out about housing programs and options, particularly to those residents who are not connected to digital media and communication platforms. Even those residents who are connected can find the variety of programs, the application process, and the limitations confusing and difficult to evaluate. **One option is to create an in-town resource through the Council on Aging that uses local lending and real estate experts as ombuds to seniors who are looking for housing options.** These local experts could help walk seniors through available housing options, financing programs, tax abatement programs, advice on buying or selling a home, and other complex topics.

GOAL 4

Support the continued existence of naturally occurring housing that is affordable (i.e., existing housing that is or becomes affordable as a result of age, location, size or other characteristics).



R4.1

IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS AND REGULATORY CHANGES THAT WILL HELP NATICK RETAIN MORE OF ITS EXISTING STOCK OF NATURALLY OCCURRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

LEAD 
 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

SUPPORT 
 PLANNING BOARD
 BOARD OF SELECTMEN
 AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD



1-5 YEARS 

As Natick’s housing stock continues to increase in price, there are fewer and fewer affordable housing options that are not deed restricted and only available to those at a qualifying income level. The stock of naturally occurring housing that is relatively affordable (as a result of its age, as well as building and parcel size) is often bought up by investors or developers, demolished, and rebuilt as a much larger and more expensive single-family or two-family home. Natick has become a very desirable community in which to live, and as a result housing prices and demand now support tear down/rebuild activity.

Natick has an existing demolition delay policy which calls for a six-month cooling period for structures that qualify as historic. During this period, the Town issues a stay on the demolition of the property in hopes the owner will choose to rehabilitate the existing structure instead of tearing it down and rebuilding some larger and more valuable structure. Demolition delay can help maintain the stock of historic structures in Town, and can also be used as a tool to help preserve parts of the housing stock that might be more affordable than new housing units. **To further enhance the demolition delay policy, it is recommended that the delay period be extended from six month to one year.**



4-7 YEARS



In conjunction with the increase in the demolition delay period, **the Town could also consider instituting a demolition fee for which the proceeds could be deposited into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to be used for the creation and/or preservation of affordable housing.** This could also be a mechanism for adding funds to the affordable housing rehabilitation loan fund noted in recommendation 1.6.

The Town may encounter "push-back" on instituting a new fee, but the benefits would include discouraging unnecessary tear-downs and providing additional funds for affordable housing and historic preservation.



DEMOLITION DELAY INCREASED TO ONE YEAR AND A DEMOLITION FEE INSTITUTED.

LEAD



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

SUPPORT



FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Town might also consider taking a more proactive and creative approach. There are some neighborhoods that have smaller more affordable homes that could be considered for a pilot tax abatement program where **the Town could offer a break on property taxes in return for the preservation of the home over a certain period of time. The Town could also create a resale formula that would limit the sale price to a certain percentage of the true market value in return for a continuation of the property tax abatement.**

4-7 YEARS



This approach would require extensive discussion and study to fully understand the tax impacts to both the Town and individual property owners, but would help to preserve existing affordable homes.

GOAL 5

Support and create housing for special needs populations, which could include, among others, veterans, homeless, families in need, developmentally or physically disabled and elderly.

R5.1

LEAD



AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD

SUPPORT



COUNCIL ON AGING
HOUSING AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

ASSESS THE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS OF NATICK’S RESIDENTS, AND TAKE STEPS TO ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS THROUGH AFFORDABLE HOUSING, SERVICE-ENRICHED HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS RESIDENTS, CONGREGATE HOUSING, OR OTHER RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS.

Often overlooked as a housing need in a community, service-enriched housing or other housing for residents with special needs is a critical component to making a community livable for all residents. **The Town should develop an assessment of the needs of these residents and determine how best to provide them with housing options. This assessment could be a component of the next update to the Town’s Housing Production Plan.**



1-5 YEARS



CREATION OF AN INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS.

1-5 YEARS



Residents who have special housing needs can be very difficult to get in touch with and may face language barriers, mental disabilities, or fear of engaging with Town staff. **Providers should work with Town staff, non-profits, and other local action councils to develop outreach materials and methods of disseminating information to reach the widest audience possible.** This should include digital and print media, as well as attending events, programs, or gatherings to speak with those individuals one-on-one or in groups.

R5.2

LEAD



HOUSING AUTHORITY

SUPPORT



BOARD OF SELECTMEN



ON-GOING



DIRECT LOCAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS.

Natick is already engaged with the WestMetro HOME Consortium to gain access to federal housing funds for which the Town would otherwise not qualify. The most recent Town goals for the HOME Consortium funds include rehabilitation of public housing units.

The Town should continue to pursue HOME funding for this purpose, and look for opportunities to supplement those funds with other local dollars, as well as state and other federal sources (tax credits, etc.).

Goal	Recommendation	Action Step	Lead Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Time Frame	Metric	Coordination
Goal 1: Provide housing affordable to the full range of income levels.	R1.1: Increase the stock of affordable housing.	Inclusionary zoning bylaw approved at Fall 2018 Town Meeting. 	Planning Board Community & Economic Development Department	Affordable Housing Trust Board	1-5 YEARS		Land Use
		Expand HOOP Districts to other key development parcels in Natick Center, to provide incentives to bring in additional housing. Ensure that a portion of the new housing is set aside as affordable. 	Planning Board Community & Economic Development Department		1-5 YEARS		Land Use
	R1.2: Explore opportunities for the Housing Authority to enter into a public/private partnership with a developer to help share the costs of modernizing public housing and integrating a mix of incomes to help offset development costs.	Create a public partnership with an outside developer to help finance and construct new public housing for Natick's most vulnerable populations. 	Housing Authority	Board of Selectmen Community & Economic Development Department	7-12+ YEARS		Land Use Economic Development
	R1.3: Update the Town's Housing Production Plan.	Create and adopt an HPP to provide the Town with a tool to plan for the types of affordable housing it would like to see in the locations where the Town feels it is most appropriate and desirable. 	Affordable Housing Trust Board Community & Economic Development Department	Board of Selectmen Planning Board	1-5 YEARS	Completion and adoption an updated Housing Production Plan.	
		Conduct focus groups with Planning Board, Selectmen, and Town Meeting members to help educate them about affordable housing needs, policies, programs, and financing.	Affordable Housing Trust Board Community & Economic Development Department	Board of Selectmen Planning Board	1-5 YEARS	At least three educational focus groups have been held within the next five years.	

Goal	Recommendation	Action Step	Lead Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Time Frame	Metric	Coordination
	R1.4: Create a dedicated source of funding through Town Meeting for the Housing Trust.	Set up an annual disbursement of funds to the Affordable Housing Trust through Town Meeting.	Board of Selectmen	Affordable Housing Trust Board Finance Committee	1-5 YEARS	Establishment of a recurring line item in the annual budget for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.	
	R1.5: Assist low income households in financing home repairs.	Create a no- or low-interest rate loan program specifically for home repairs.	Affordable Housing Trust Board	Board of Selectmen Finance Committee	4-7 YEARS	Establishment of a loan fund and five homeowners assisted with rehabilitation projects.	
Goal 2: Provide for a mix of housing options at the full spectrum of price points.	R2.1: Support the redevelopment of properties in Natick Center by allowing and encouraging mixed-use and multi-family housing that provides housing options and brings more people to downtown to support local businesses.	Consider updating the existing base zoning district(s) covering Natick Center to allow more by-right integration of housing through a streamlined permitting process.	Planning Board Community & Economic Development Department	Economic Development Committee	ON-GOING		
	R2.2: Increase opportunities for multi-family and mixed-use development in appropriate locations.	Critically review the zoning in the parts of town where multi-family and mixed-use development are likely to be supported politically and financially. Site higher intensity development in specific locations where impacts to existing single-family neighborhoods will be minimal.	Planning Board Community & Economic Development Department	Zoning Board of Appeals Affordable Housing Trust Board Economic Development Committee	4-7 YEARS		Land Use

Goal	Recommendation	Action Step	Lead Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Time Frame	Metric	Coordination
Goal 3: Support seniors who wish to remain in their homes, as well as those who are looking for other housing types at different sizes and price points.	R3.1: Change zoning to enable the production of a variety of housing types to help seniors to stay in Natick.	Consider how and where accessory dwelling units could serve as an effective housing option, and design zoning and performance standards to that fit with Natick's existing development pattern and neighborhoods. 	Community & Economic Development Department Planning Board	Zoning Board of Appeals	1-5 YEARS		Land Use
		Create zoning that allows assisted living in geographically appropriate areas and minimizes impacts on surrounding properties. 	Community & Economic Development Department Planning Board	Council on Aging	1-5 YEARS		Land Use
		Consider reworking the Cluster By-laws to better suit the development pattern and opportunity sites left in Natick. 	Community & Economic Development Department	Planning Board	1-5 YEARS		Land Use
	R3.2: Form a partnership between the Council on Aging and local Realtors and banks to bring in housing ombudspersons who could serve Natick seniors as resources on housing options and financial inquiries.	Create an in-town resource through the Council on Aging that uses local lending and real estate experts as ombudspersons to seniors who are looking for housing options.	Council on Aging	Affordable Housing Trust Board Local Banks & Realtors	1-5 YEARS		Land Use
Goal 4: Support the existence of naturally occurring housing that is affordable.	R4.1: Implement programs and regulatory changes that will help Natick retain more of its existing stock of naturally occurring affordable housing. 	Extend the demolition delay period from six months to one year. 	Historic District Commission	Planning Board Board of Selectmen Affordable Housing Trust Board	1-5 YEARS	Demolition delay period increased from six months to one year.	Land Use Historic & Cultural Resources
		Consider instituting a demolition fee from which the proceeds could be deposited into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to be used for the creation and/or preservation of affordable housing. 	Historic District Commission	Planning Board Board of Selectmen Affordable Housing Trust Board	4-7 YEARS	Institution of demolition fee.	Land Use Historic & Cultural Resources

Goal	Recommendation	Action Step	Lead Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Time Frame	Metric	Coordination
		Offer a break on property taxes in return for the preservation of the home over a certain period of time. Create a resale formula that would limit the sale price to a certain percentage of the true market value in return for a continuation of the property tax abatement.	Board of Selectmen	Finance Committee	4-7 YEARS		
Goal 5: Support and create housing for special needs populations, which could include, among others, veterans, homeless, families in need, developmentally or physically disabled and elderly.	R5.1: Assess the supportive housing and programmatic needs of Natick's residents, and take steps to address those needs through affordable housing, service-enriched housing for special needs residents, congregate housing, or other residential options.	Develop an assessment of residents' special needs and determine how best to provide them with housing options. This assessment could be a component of the next update to the Town's Housing Production Plan.	Affordable Housing Trust Board	Council on Aging Housing Authority Community & Economic Development Department	1-5 YEARS	Creation of an inventory and assessment of special housing needs.	
		Special needs housing providers should work with Town staff, non-profits, and other local action councils to develop outreach materials and methods of disseminating information to reach the widest audience possible. 	Affordable Housing Trust Board	Council on Aging Housing Authority Community & Economic Development Department	1-5 YEARS		
	R5.2: Direct local funds to support rehabilitation and preservation of public housing units.	Continue to pursue HOME funding and look for opportunities to supplement those funds with other local dollars, as well as state and other rehabilitation federal sources. 	Housing Authority	Board of Selectmen	ON-GOING		