



*ADOPTED 8/14/2024*

# **METHUEN 2035: A MASTER PLAN FOR GROWTH AND INVESTMENT**

*Prepared By JM Goldson and RKG*



Dear Methuen Community Members,

With great excitement and anticipation, we present Methuen 2035: A Master Plan for Growth and Investment. We hope this plan will serve as a guiding light for our city's sustainable growth and development. Our city, with its rich tapestry of history, culture, and diversity, is a testament to the resilience and spirit of its inhabitants. However, as we look toward the horizon, we recognize the pressing need to address the challenges of growth, environmental sustainability, economic vitality, and social equity. This plan provides us with a unique opportunity to chart a course that not only preserves the essence of our identity but also propels us toward a future of prosperity and inclusivity.

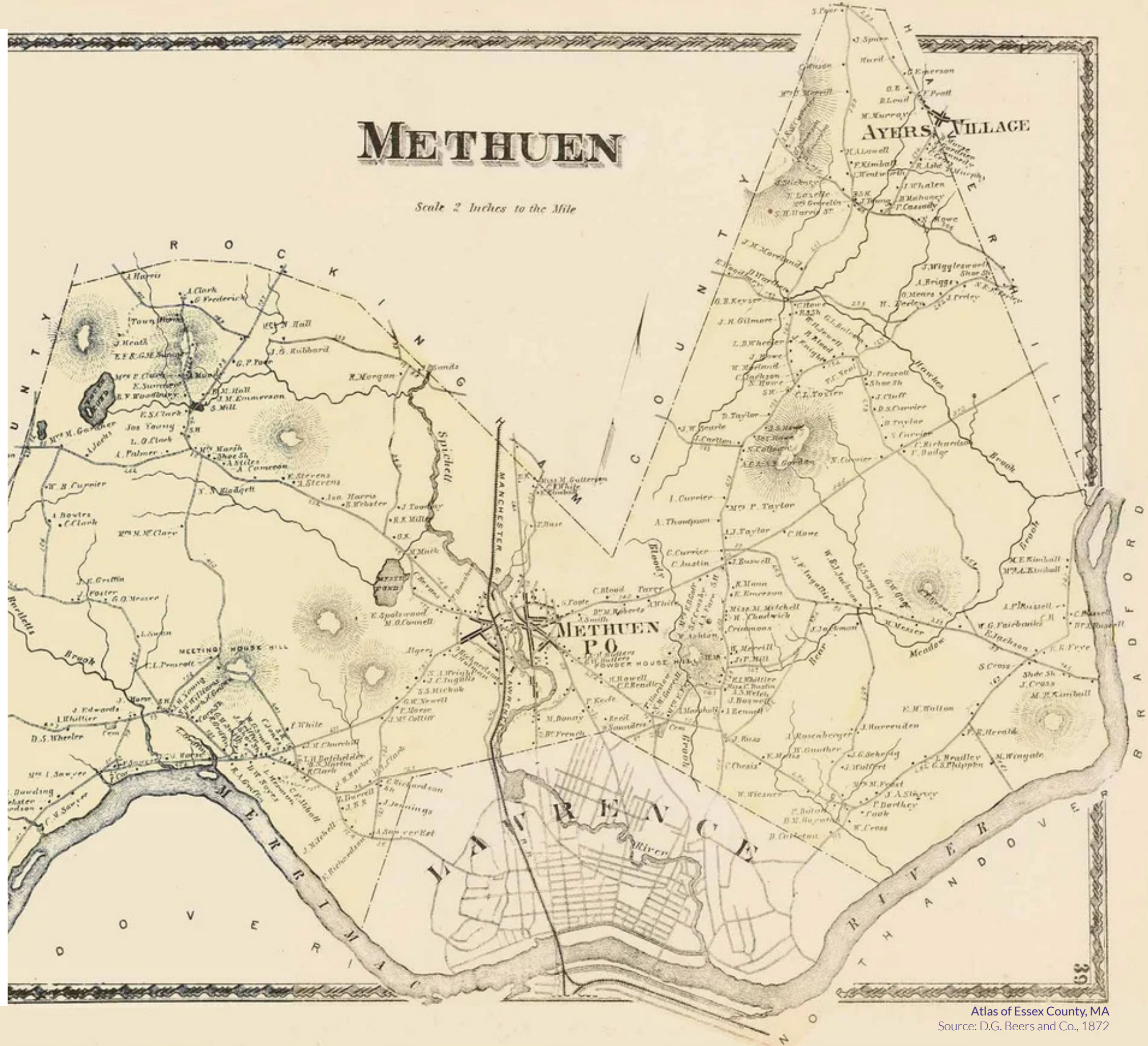
Community members' invaluable input and participation are at the heart of this endeavor. Your insights, concerns, and aspirations are the bedrock on which we built our vision for the future. Through collaborative dialogue, innovative thinking, and a shared commitment to progress, we sought to create a roadmap that reflects our diverse community's collective aspirations.

Methuen 2035 offers guidance on creating vibrant neighborhoods, promoting economic opportunity, sustaining resilient public services and infrastructure, fostering health and safety, and celebrating the history and community. However, it is expected to be a living document, as needs may change. By embracing innovation and change, we will ensure that Methuen remains a dynamic and thriving city for generations. As we embark on this journey together, we invite every one of you to continue to lend your voices, ideas, and expertise to the conversation. Your input is valued and essential to this endeavor's success.

Together, let us seize this future that we can all be proud of—one that honors our past, embraces our present, and paves the way for a brighter tomorrow. Thank you for your commitment to our city, and we look forward to embarking on this transformative journey with you.

Sincerely,

Methuen Master Plan Steering Committee





Acknowledgments

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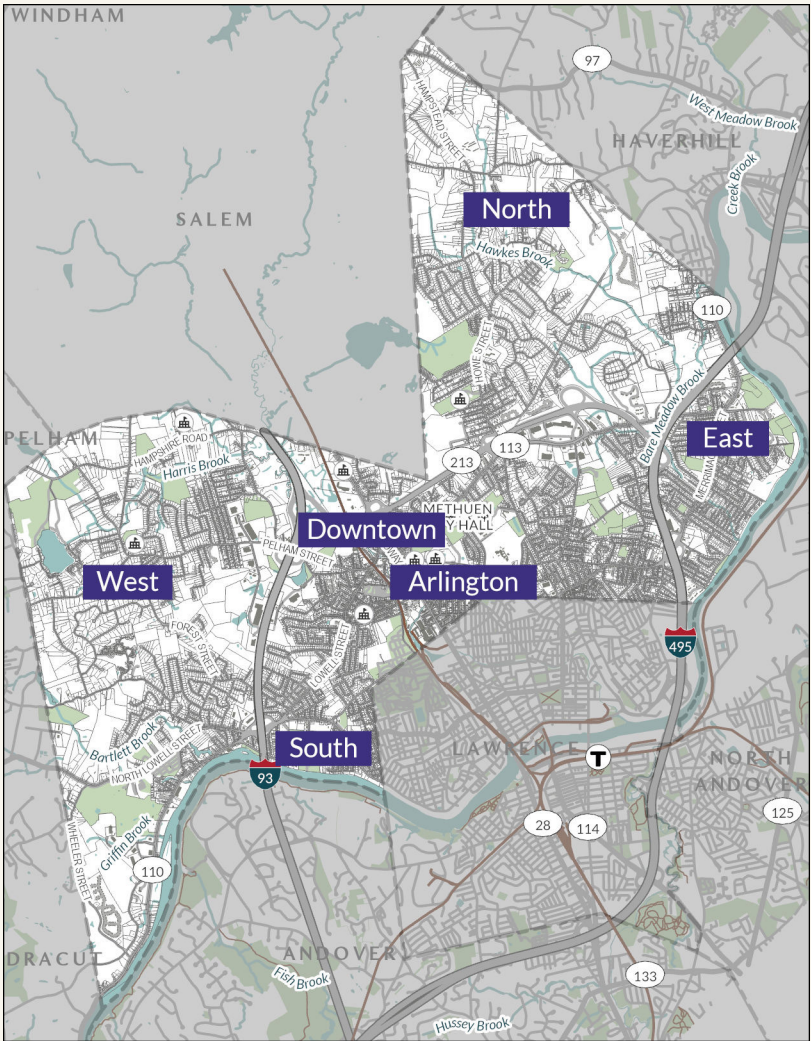
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# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose of this Master Plan

A master plan is a way to respond to change over time. It is a long-range (10-year) visionary plan for the community’s physical evolution. This plan helps the community imagine—and create—a better future. The existing conditions component of the planning effort helps the community understand trends, issues, and key opportunities in the municipality and region to lay a foundation for the plan.

Methuen’s last Master Plan was written in 2007, when the population was 45,476 (2005)<sup>1</sup>. In 2020, the population was 53,059<sup>2</sup>, an increase of 16.7 percent in fifteen years. Methuen has changed, and this new planning effort will be built on the foundation of this existing conditions report, which details Methuen’s recent growth and changes over time, particularly highlighting the last two decades.



<sup>1</sup>Methuen Master Plan, 2007.  
<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census decennial census data, 2020.

What forces have shaped the community over time?

What makes Methuen unique?

How should the city move forward in the next ten years?

## Components of this Master Plan

Master Plans are tailored to reflect the communities in which they are produced but follow statutory requirements. Massachusetts, under MGL c.41 § 81D, requires master plans include the following components:

- An analysis of existing conditions that builds on past and current plans with the most current data available;
- A ten-year community vision with measurable goals to support the vision;
- Specific regulatory, programming, and physical improvement strategies;
- A future land use map (FLUM) outlining desired land use changes; and
- A ten-year implementation strategy.

## Statutory Elements

Massachusetts municipal master plans require planning for seven required elements: 1) Housing, 2) Economic Development, 3) Natural and Cultural Resources, 4) Open Space and Recreation, 5) Services and Facilities, 6) Circulation, and 7) Land Use.

Methuen’s Master Plan does not cover topics related to Open Space and Recreation or Circulation, as they are not included in the scope of the master plan. However, we understand these are significant and valued aspects of the community.

## Methuen’s Master Plan’s Elements

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING

LAND USE

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

SERVICES & FACILITIES



# PLANNING PROCESS & APPROACH

## Previous Citywide Planning Initiatives

The City has undertaken a variety of effective planning efforts in the recent past. Together, these plan serve as a foundation for Methuen 2035. These plans include:

- [Methuen Master Plan – Planning for our Future \(2007\)](#)
- [2018-2022 Final Methuen Housing Production Plan \(2017\)](#)
- [Methuen Center Parking Study \(2019\)](#)
- [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan \(2019\)](#)
- [Riverfront Master Plan \(2019\)](#)
- [Open Space and Recreation Plan \(2021\)](#)

## Project Phases and Schedule

1	2	3	4
SEPT – FEB 2023	FEB – JUN 2023	JUN – APR 2024	APR – AUG 2024
Phase I: Methuen Yesterday and Today	Phase II: Methuen Tomorrow	Phase III: Achieving Methuen Tomorrow	Phase IV: Plan Finalization and Adoption
Laying the foundation for the plan by reviewing local plans and gathering insight from focus groups to understand current issues and opportunities.	Working with the community to think aspirationally and envision the ideal future for the city.	Thinking critically about how best to achieve the future conditions in the City’s vision and goals.	Refining strategies and the path to implementation to finalize and formally adopt the plan.

## Plan Framework

To create a meaningful and effective Master Plan, the elements of this plan overlap with Core Themes. Rather than planning for each component individually, Methuen’s Master Plan combines elements, so they consider and reinforce one another to support the City’s overall vision.

1

### Vision

A vision statement is an aspirational view of what residents hope the community will be like at its very best. Before a meaningful plan can be created, the community needs to imagine the future it is striving for. The vision statement then becomes the driving force behind the plan.

4

### Core Themes

Four core themes emerged through the planning process based on the communities’ values and priorities: Foster balanced housing and economic growth in strategic locations & promote small business development. Create sustainable & resilient public services and infrastructure. Advocate for health, safety, and well-being through planning & designing for those with the most vulnerabilities and fewest choices. Support social and cultural vitality & preserve historical assets.

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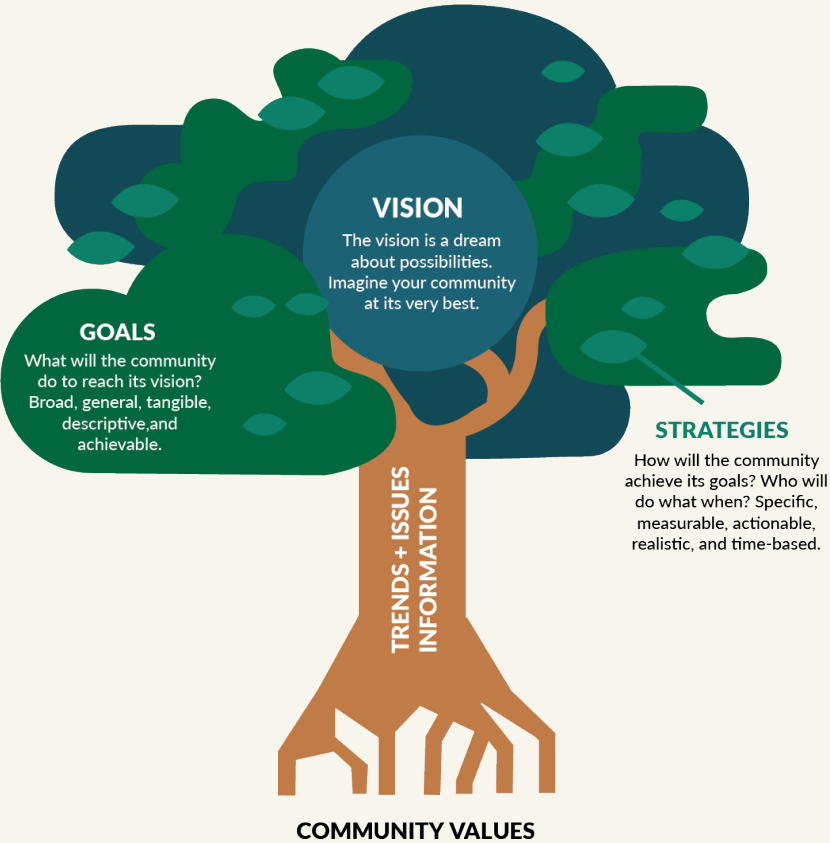
### Goals

This plan includes 10 goals that describe the conditions for striving to achieve the community vision over time. Goals describe what the community wants to achieve.

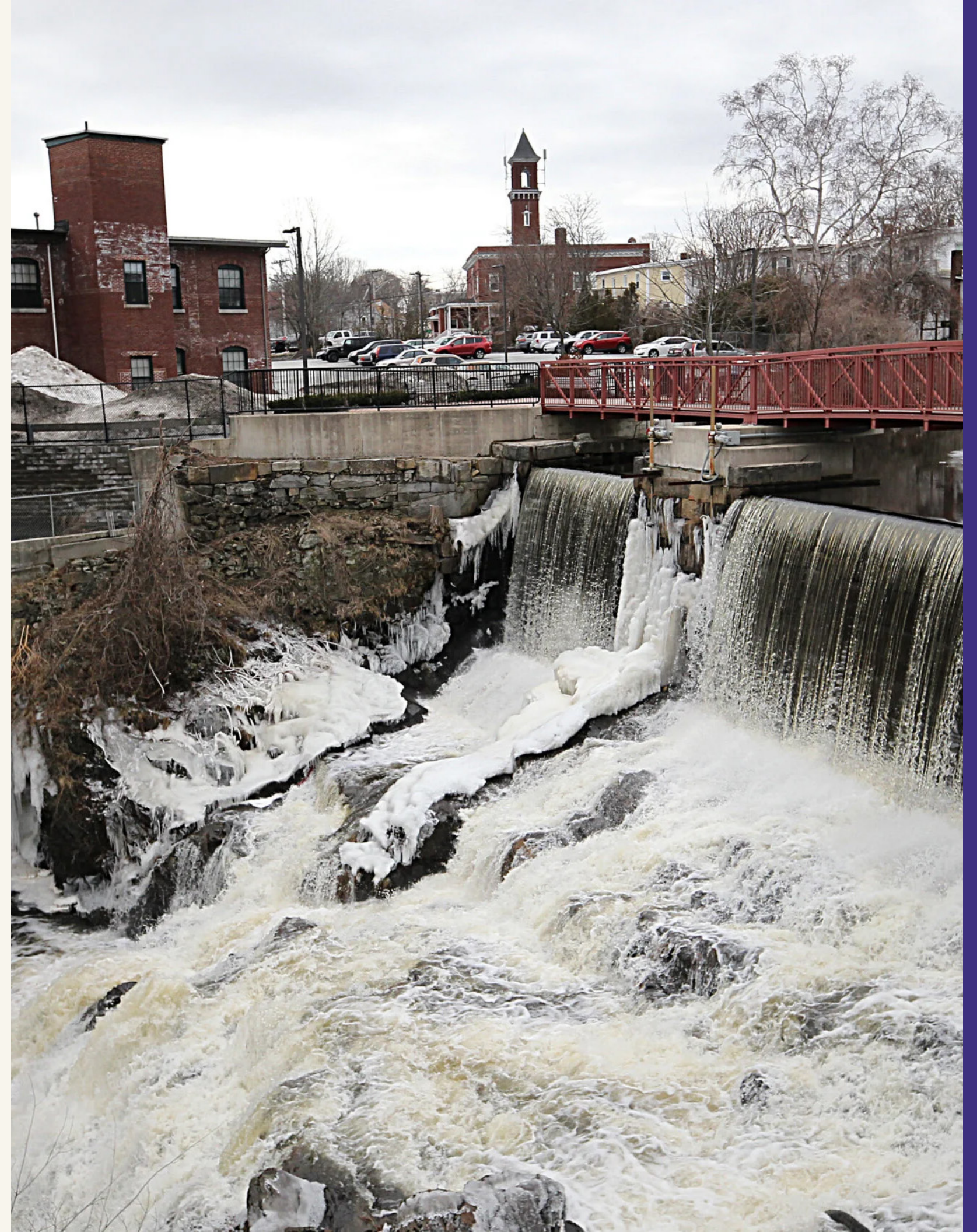
67

### Strategies

This plan includes 66 strategies describing how to achieve the community’s goals. Strategies are ways that the Town will work to achieve its goals. They are actionable and involve funding, regulations, programs, and other town resources, such as staff or volunteer time.







(right)  
**Spicket Falls**  
 Source: Suzanne Kreiter, 2018

# CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

A meaningful and effective plan recognizes that these elements cannot be divided into silos; they instead are integrated systematically to consider and reinforce one another — while collectively supporting the regional planning framework. The structure and flexibility of the planning process are critical to reaching a substantive understanding of the system it is planned for.

## Sustainability & Resilience

Recognizing the importance of promoting a long-term, livable, and resilient Methuen community, sustainability practices are woven throughout the chapters as is best practice in planning. Sustainability practices for a livable community include<sup>3</sup>:

- Providing nurturing places that promote healthy lifestyles for everyone and supporting nature-based climate solutions.
- Contributing more than it takes concerning water, soil, and energy — focusing on energy conservation and generation, collecting and retaining soil nutrients, and water capture and treatment.
- Designs and develops multi-functional properties, understanding that nothing needs only a single purpose — that everything can offer multiple benefits to the community and environment.
- Providing regenerative, resilient, and connected spaces for people and natural ecosystems to thrive, even in the most developed portions of the community.
- Promotes equity by creating walkable and bikeable places, offering financially attainable housing options, and sustaining and growing public transportation options.

## Vulnerable Groups

Planning for vulnerable groups requires recognizing previous planning practices that have had a disparate impact on certain communities and actively working with affected residents to create better communities for the whole community. Health, income, mobility, and other inequities are institutionalized in policies and systematic practices that disproportionately limit opportunity and assign undue burden to individuals and groups based on their race, age, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, religion, disability, or any intersection of marginalized identities.

The American Planning Association AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct describes this principle: “People who participate in the planning process shall work to achieve economic, social, and racial equity.” The association also calls on planners to “incorporate equity principles and strategies as the foundation for preparing plans and implementation programs to achieve more socially just decision-making.”

Planning principles aimed at including vulnerable groups are woven throughout each element and will continue to be present in every part of this planning process.

<sup>3</sup> Inspired by the International Living Future Institute Living Community Challenge, <https://living-future.org/lcc/basics/>.



# ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The project team’s approach to the Methuen Master Plan process is rooted in the belief that facilitating a meaningful, accessible, and inclusive process is as — or arguably more — important than the final plan report itself. Facilitating collaborative and highlighting interactive community engagement that utilizes various outreach tools to solicit the highest level of participation is critical to this planning effort.

Throughout the plan, the consultant team hosted several engagement opportunities to hear from local experts and community members on various topics. These engagement opportunities included running activities at the Master Plan Steering Committee meetings, setting up interactive boards at Methuen’s Community Forum, hosting focus groups with local experts, and interviewing key stakeholders, including municipal staff. The Community Engagement Report (a separate document) includes complete summaries of these engagement tools.

SHARE YOUR IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE OF METHUEN!  
¡COMPARTA SUS IDEAS PARA EL FUTURO DE METHUEN!

Host your own Meeting-in-a-box!

¡Organice su propia Meeting-in-a-box!

Answer our Virtual Forum Questions!

¡Responda a nuestras preguntas sobre reuniones virtuales!

The Methuen Master Plan Steering Committee is looking for feedback on what you'd like to see in the City in the next ten years!  
¡El Comité Directivo del Plan Maestro de Methuen está buscando comentarios sobre lo que le gustaría ver en la Ciudad en los próximos diez años!

Methuen is currently in the process of writing its next Master Plan and we'd like to hear your ideas for the future of the City!  
Methuen está actualmente en el proceso de escribir su próximo Plan Maestro y nos gustaría escuchar sus ideas para el futuro de la ciudad!



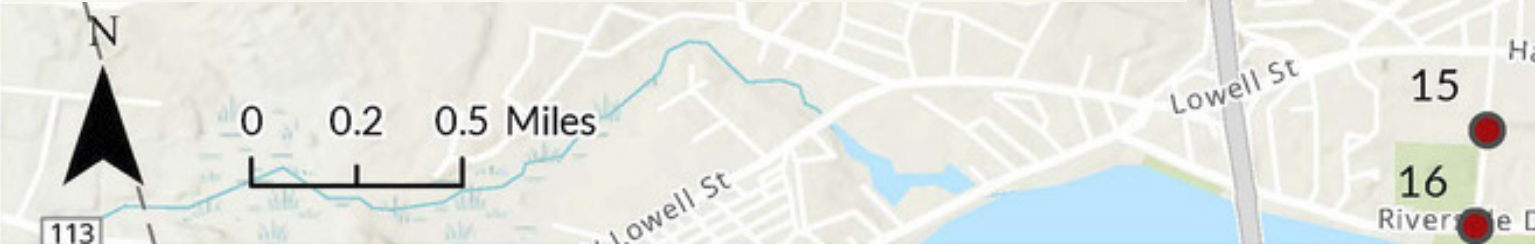
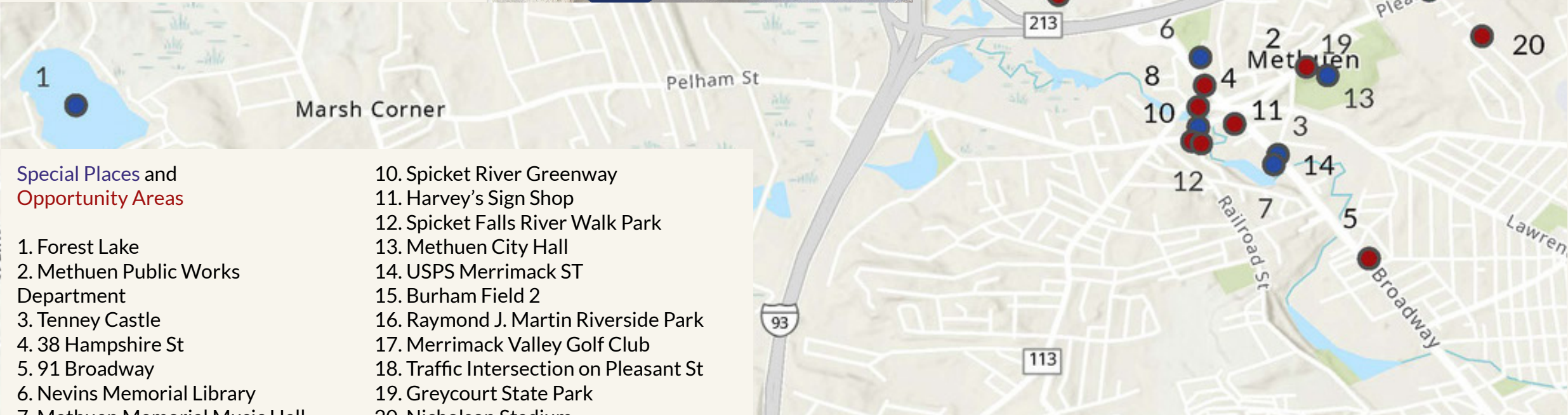
Scan the QR code or use the link below to learn more! ¡Escanee el código QR o use el siguiente enlace para obtener más información!  
[www.tinyurl.com/methuen2035](http://www.tinyurl.com/methuen2035)



Virtual Forum Flyer



Engagement Activity



10 Focus Groups  
Participants



11 Interviews



52 Public  
Comments



26 Strategy  
Interviews



99 Forum  
Participants



467 Survey  
Responses



We had over **665** total touch points with the Methuen community throughout this process.

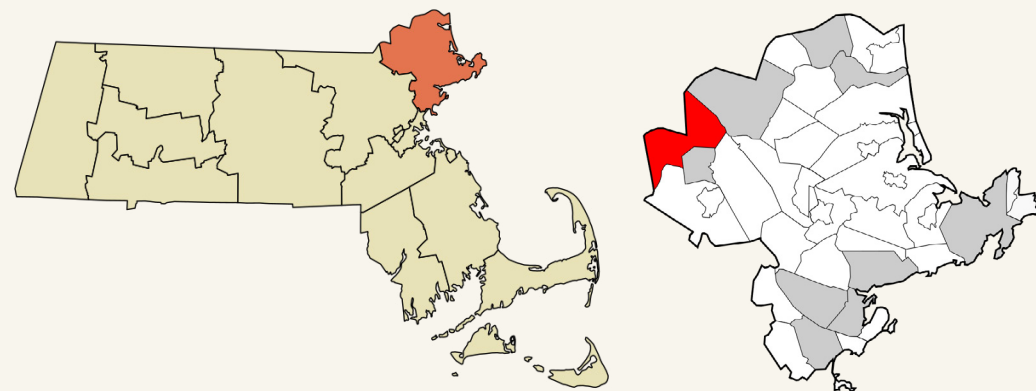




# COMMUNITY CONTEXT

## REGIONAL CONTEXT<sup>4</sup>

Methuen is a 23-square-mile inland City in Essex County, Massachusetts. The city sits 27 miles north of Boston, Massachusetts, and approximately 25 miles southeast of Manchester, New Hampshire. Methuen lies along the northwestern edge of Essex County and shares its borders with seven municipalities — Haverill to the northeast, North Andover to the southeast, Lawrence and Andover to the south, Dracut to the west, Pelham, New Hampshire to the northwest, and Salem, New Hampshire to the north. Methuen has remarkable access to New England through its highway connections and proximity to the MBTA commuter rail and Amtrak Downeaster lines. Though the I-93/I-495 interchange is not within City limits, Methuen has access to both via MA-213. Thus, businesses and residents can travel to major employment and population centers such as Boston, Lowell, Worcester, Portsmouth, and Portland. The city is also crossed by Route 28, Route 110, and Route 113. This helps make Methuen an important crossroads within the Merrimack Valley, with thousands of people traversing the city daily.



Methuen Regional Context Maps  
Source: Rcsprinter123, 2017

## EARLY HISTORY

The Merrimack Valley was originally stewarded by the Pennacook (sometimes called the Pawtucket) people. While no indigenous tribe is known to have called modern-day Methuen home, the Agawam, Wamesit, and Pentucket tribes of the Pennacook nation lived in and around the Merrimack River<sup>5</sup>. Methuen was originally a part of Haverhill — once called Pentucket, or “place of the winding river.” Haverhill was founded in 1640 by settlers who purchased the land from two indigenous people, Passaquo and Saggahew, who claimed to act on Pennacook sachem Passaconaway’s behalf. The facts of this purchase are still debated today.

The land of modern-day Methuen was not settled until 1642 and officially incorporated in 1726 when settlers petitioned the General Court to form a new separate town. The boundaries of Methuen, named for Sir Paul Methuen (member of the King’s Privy Council and friend of Governor William Dummer), have shrunk over the years. The then-town remained largely agricultural until the Industrial Revolution reached its borders in the 1800s, and manufacturing facilities began popping up along the Spicket River. According to historical census data, the City’s population grew around the manufacturing district, with newcomers seeking jobs in Methuen’s booming textile industry, particularly in hat and shoemaking.

**Methuen was originally a part of Haverhill — once called Pentucket, or “place of the winding river”.**



Falls and Mills on the Spigot River  
Source: Library of Congress

<sup>5</sup> Howe, Joseph Sidney. Historical Sketch of the Town of Methuen, from Its Settlement to the Year 1876. Methuen, MA: E.L. Houghton & Co. Printers, 1876. <https://lcn.loc.gov/01011519>.

<sup>4</sup> Methuen Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2021.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

The 2023 Existing Conditions Analysis (a separate document) followed the typical master plan statutory elements: demographics and housing, economic development, historic and cultural resources, public facilities and services, and land use. Unlike a typical master plan, this did not include the topics of natural resources, open space and recreation, or circulation/transportation.

## DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING

Methuen is situated in the lower Merrimack Valley, which has experienced consistent growth over the last several decades. The city is home to an impressively diverse population with a healthy mix of age groups, income, and education levels. Furthermore, with a significant population of people of color and foreign-born residents, Methuen’s population has grown twelve percent in the last ten years, faster than the county and state rates of nine and seven percent, respectively. Methuen has more people per household than state or County averages. Meanwhile,

after an increase between 2000 and 2010, net new housing units decreased slightly between 2010 and 2020 (18,340 to 18,334). Most housing units (73.5 percent) are owner-occupied, and 62 percent are single-family detached homes. Methuen’s environmental justice population (minority, low-income, and non-English speaking residents) is concentrated in the southeast part of the city. This is also where the City’s older housing stock and density are concentrated. In the past ten years, incomes have not kept up with the increase in housing costs. Similarly, housing production has not kept up with demand. While not unique to Methuen, these factors exacerbate existing housing affordability challenges.



Methuen Home  
Source: realtor.com

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Methuen’s population is growing and diversifying. The mix of education levels, income levels, age, race, and ethnicity all point to a well-balanced community that can support various businesses and services. The local labor market is incredibly tight, with extremely low unemployment and shrinking participation rates locally and regionally. Rents and vacancies for various commercial and industrial property types are generally trending in such a way that more space will be in demand. Methuen offers unique opportunities for development and business creation, given its demographics, regional access, and regional context. However, there is room for improvement in the local business environment, further strengthening the city’s economic development position. The City may be unusually reliant on a few major property taxpayers. Still, those properties tend to be inefficiently used compared to those in the Downtown district and other walkable, mixed-use areas.



Loews Theatres, The Loop  
Source: John Phelan, 2014



## FACILITIES & SERVICES

The City's FY2020-FY2024 Capital Needs Assessment included 172 projects submitted by City departments, with a total projected cost of \$133.8 million. New facility construction for a Fire Department emergency services complex, a new DPW building, and the Water and Sewer building rehabilitation accounted for more than two-thirds of all costs (\$88.45 million). One of the reported highest priority issues was the condition of the 120-year-old highway administration and maintenance building. JM Goldson interviewed stakeholders in Methuen to understand local perspectives on municipal and school facilities and services, such as what aspects are working well and where there is an opportunity for improvement. Interviews with department heads in late 2022 and 2024 confirmed the FY2020-FY2024 Capital Needs Assessment findings.



Methuen City Hall

## HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Methuen has several significant historic buildings and civic spaces in good condition in its old neighborhoods and commercial districts. This is an important asset, both from a community identity standpoint and a marketing standpoint. These structures and spaces have contributed to the city's uniqueness for generations and differentiate it from its neighbors. Residents can and should be proud of these features, from massive mill complexes to monumental civic buildings to elaborate residential structures to historic parks. They often present opportunities for creative renovation and adaptive reuse approaches that could not be recreated under current market conditions. Such buildings and spaces are major attractors for both residents and businesses.



Spicket River Mill Pond  
Source: User:Magicpiano, 2012



## LAND USE

Methuen is home to several large and diverse areas of commercial activity, ranging from local main streets to regional shopping hubs or, for example, from small-scale production to significant regional manufacturing operations. Each area serves a specific purpose within the City's economy. These commercial/industrial districts represent a critical asset for the City; not only are they a source of property tax revenues that ease the tax burden for residents, but they also connect to the regional and global economy, drive demand for housing, and bring thousands of people into town for work each day.



Gaunt Square  
Source: John Phelan, 2008





# COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

Greycourt State Park

## In 2035...

Methuen is committed to being a fiscally responsible, sustainable, and inclusive “Gateway City” that anchors the regional economy. Our city will balance new growth while preserving its historic and cultural appeal. We will celebrate our abundant historical and cultural assets, maintain a thriving and walkable Downtown, provide strong schools, and strive towards financially attainable housing. Our government will deliver public services transparently and efficiently with representative leadership. We will recognize the challenges faced by our most vulnerable members of society and take proactive measures to meet their needs. Our city will have homes appropriate for all stages of life and diverse incomes to support our long-term residents and welcome new families and individuals that add to the community’s civic life. Above all, Methuen will be a safe place where everyone feels comfortable living, working, learning, and playing.

Please note that the vision mentioned above does not cover topics related to open space, natural resources, recreation, or transportation, as they are not included in the scope of the master plan. However, we understand these are significant and valued aspects of the community.





# METHUEN TOMORROW: VISION CORE THEMES

**Core Theme 1 – Foster balanced housing and economic growth in strategic locations & promote small business development.**



**2 Goals**  
**17 Strategies**

**Core Theme 2 – Create sustainable and resilient public services and infrastructure.**



**4 Goals**  
**26 Strategies**

**Core Theme 3 – Advocate for health, safety and well-being through planning & designing for those with the most vulnerabilities and fewest choices.**



**2 Goals**  
**12 Strategies**

**Core Theme 4 – Support social and cultural vitality & preserve historical assets.**



**2 Goals**  
**12 Strategies**



Spicket River  
Source: John Phelan, 2008

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- HOUSING
- LAND USE
- NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES
- SERVICES & FACILITIES

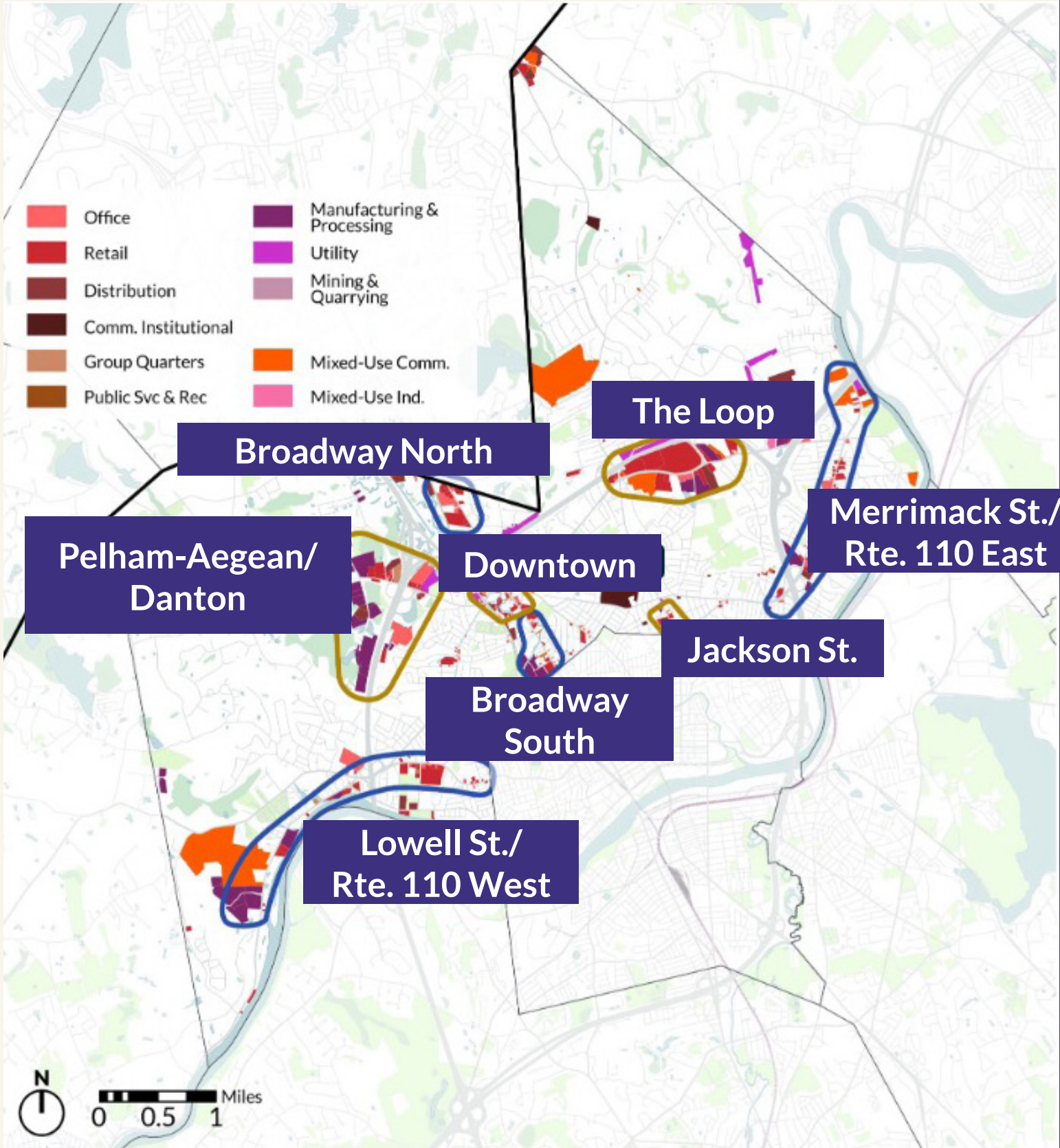


1

CORE THEME ONE:  
FOSTER BALANCED  
HOUSING & ECONOMIC  
GROWTH IN STRATEGIC  
LOCATIONS AND PROMOTE  
SMALL BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT.

Metrics to measure progress:

- Unemployment rate.
- Number of jobs.
- Number of Subsidized Housing Inventory units and building permits issued.
- Commercial development building permits in the past year.
- Mixed-use development building permits in the past year.
- Tax revenue from industrial and commercial uses in the past year.
- ADUs permitted in the past year.
- Infrastructure funding amount in the Capital Improvement Plan in industrial and commercial areas.





# GOAL 1A:

## *Provide a broader range of housing options, including tenure, price points, and housing types in residentially zoned districts.*

- 1A1** *Strategy 1A1:* Create a zoning ordinance and design guidelines to encourage multi-family and mixed-use housing consistent with Section 3A of the Zoning Act. Review zoning ordinance for consistency regarding multi-family density between sections and the Table of Dimensional regulations.
- 1A2** *Strategy 1A2:* Update/revise the existing Affordable Housing Density Bonus Special Permit (Section XI-D(7)) to better align with current financially attainable housing goals and market conditions. Revise to include a requirement for Inclusionary Zoning for 10 or more units with additional units allowed by special permit with additional financially attainable units. Consider a lower or higher percentage of Area Median Incomes (AMI) while keeping the SHI requirements in mind.
- 1A3** *Strategy 1A3:* Revise existing Accessory Apartment (Section V-G) to align with the State’s new definition in The Affordable Homes Act of 2023, Section 12. Take advantage of the state Accessory Dwelling Unit program of loans or grants created to help homeowners or tenants with a household member with severe disabilities (including elders) in making modifications to build an accessory unit.
- 1A4** *Strategy 1A4:* Review existing zoning districts to determine appropriate locations to support a wider range of housing types: such as duplexes, triplexes, and townhouses at a higher density than currently allowed (4-8 units per acre), prioritizing transit access.

- 1A5** *Strategy 1A5:* Reintroduce the Community Preservation Act (CPA) through a community-wide educational campaign. CPA is a critical source of funding that can be used to develop low- and moderate-income housing, as well as for historic preservation and open space and recreation needs.
- 1A6** *Strategy 1A6:* Establish an Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) to advocate for the importance of financially attainable housing and to provide financial assistance to low-income homeowners and renters. An AHT would manage funds generated from inclusionary zoning, local or state funding (e.g., Community Preservation Act if adopted), and other housing programs that may arise from the Affordable Homes Act of 2023 to achieve targets set in the Housing Production Plan, as well as partner with local nonprofit developers, to build deeply subsidized housing for vulnerable populations.
- 1A7** *Strategy 1A7:* Create a Housing Coordinator position within DECD to apply for and manage housing grants and programs, staff an Affordable Housing Trust and Community Preservation Committee (if created), and partner with non-profits. This position could be funded using Community Development Block Grant funds or Community Preservation Funds.
- 1A8** *Strategy 1A8:* Review/Update Zoning Ordinance and Map to align lot sizes and setback requirements to the building type that exists on the ground. This may result in smaller lot sizes and setbacks, as large sections of the current 80,000 SF zoned areas contain much smaller lots.
- 1A9** *Strategy 1A9:* Apply for funding from new programs detailed in the Affordable Homes Act (2023) and the Housing Development Incentive Program to increase Methuen’s supply of financially attainable housing.



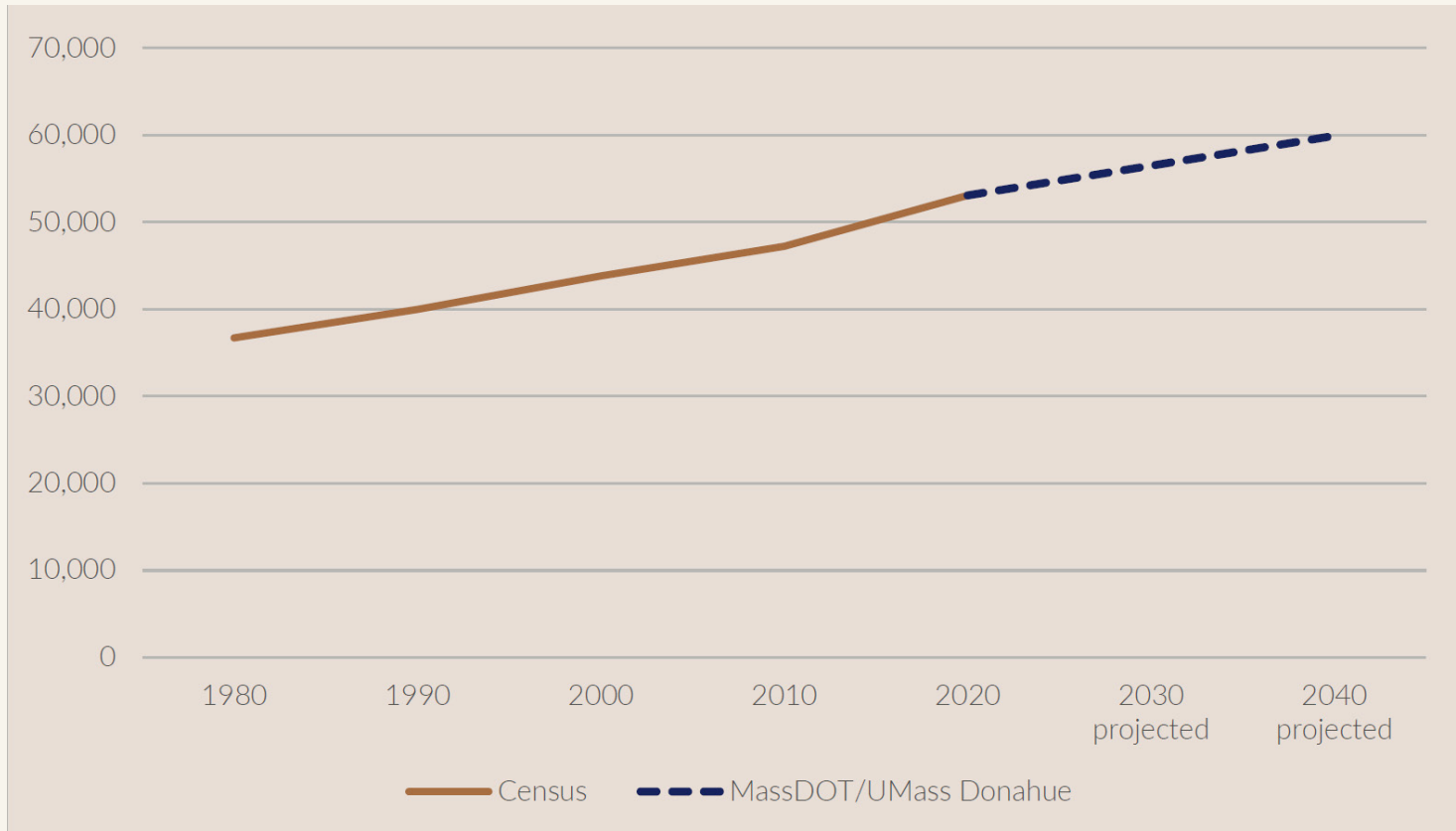
Methuen Estimated Housing Demand by 2040

Source: ACS, JM Goldson LLC

Population Increase	Household Size	Housing Units
1,505	1-person: 22.0 percent	1,505
2,059	2-person: 30.1 percent	1,030
1,348	3-person: 19.7 percent	450
1,272	4-person: 18.6 percent	318
657	5+ person: 9.6 percent	131
Total: 6,841 residents	Total: 100 percent	Total: 3,434 units

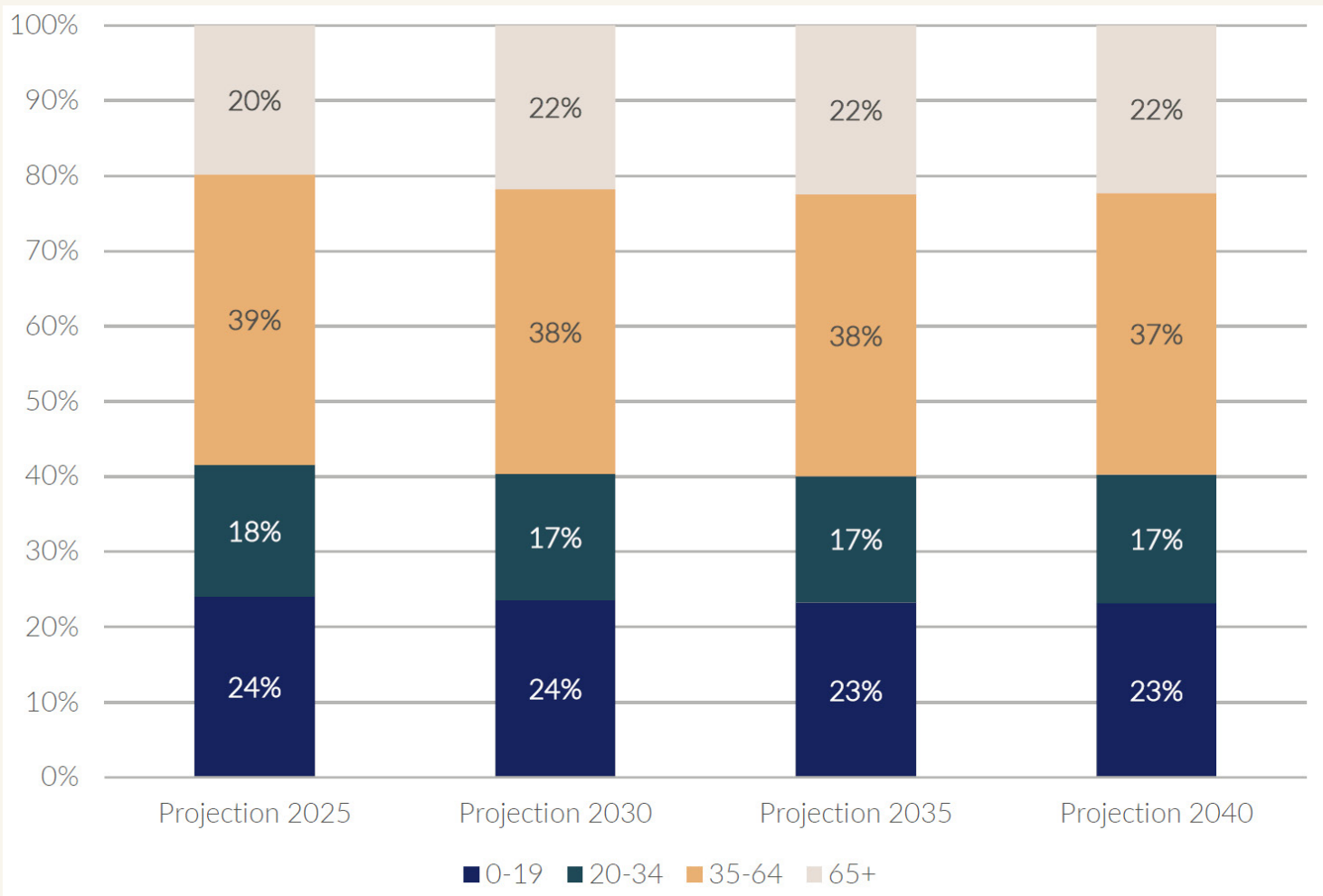
Methuen Historic and Projected Future Population

Source: US Census (T1), ACS (A00001), UMass Donahue Institute



Methuen Population By Age 2025 - 2040 Projection

Source: US Census (T1), ACS (A00001), UMass Donahue Institute





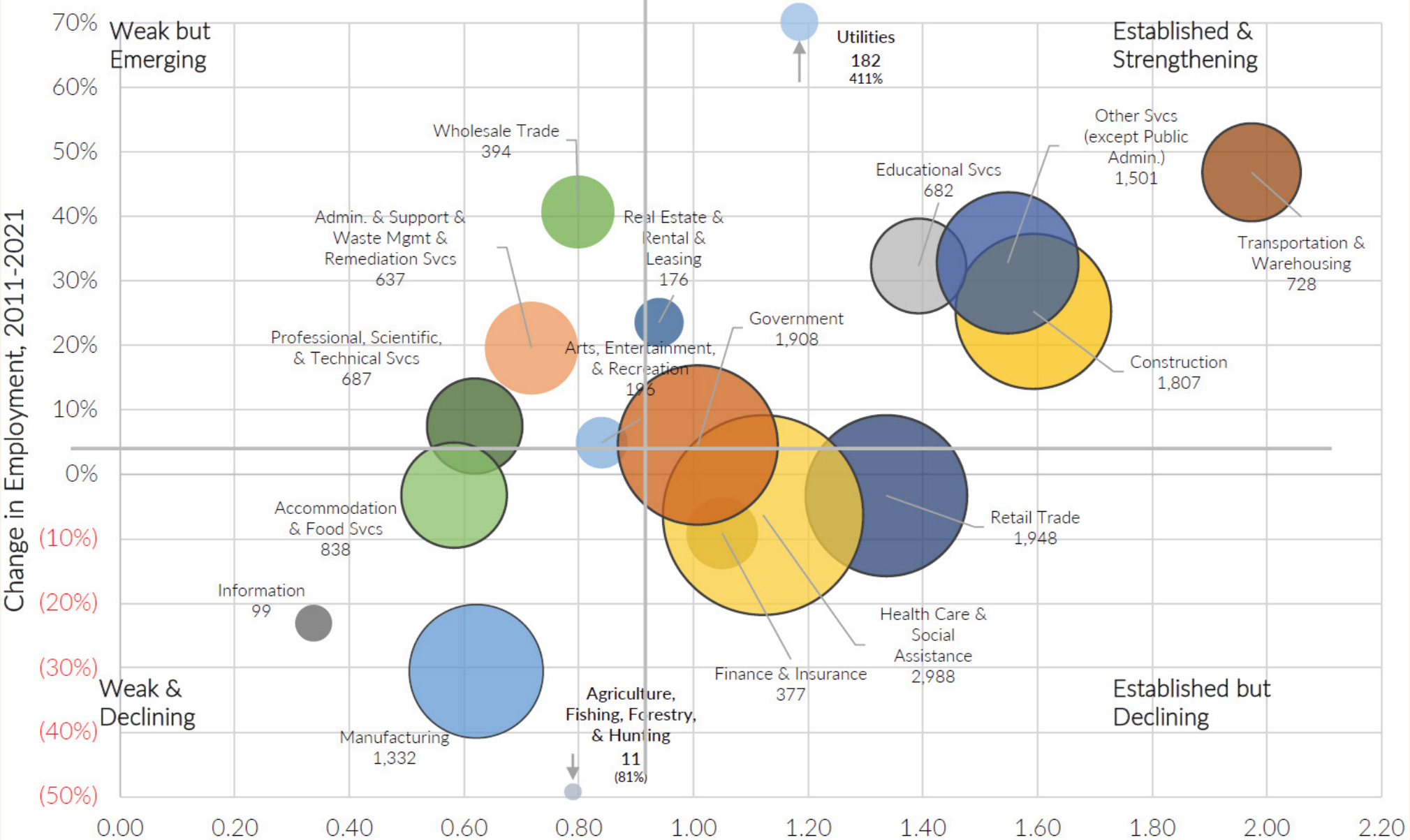
## GOAL 1B:

### *Promote economic development.*

- 1B1** *Strategy 1B1:* Plan, design, and construct infrastructure upgrades as needed to support and potentially expand Methuen's industrial and commercial areas including Merrimack Street, Haverhill Street, Old Ferry Road, Lindbergh Avenue, Pleasant Valley (The Loop), Danton Drive, Aegean Drive, and Griffin Brook Park. Planning for these areas should also include a review of existing zoning to ensure flexibility in allowed uses and removal of any regulatory barriers that may hinder future economic development opportunities. Where possible, link plan recommendations and infrastructure projects together to describe how strategic capital investments can advance economic and housing goals in the city.
- 1B2** *Strategy 1B2:* Manage and maintain an inventory of unused/underused commercial and industrial properties and publicize their availability to businesses and developers in partnership with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission.
- 1B3** *Strategy 1B3:* Create district plans for the existing commercial and industrial areas that establish clear visions for future uses and infrastructure investment. Be careful not to hinder future opportunities; establish a short list of target industries and tailor city services and policies toward attracting them.
- 1B4** *Strategy 1B4:* Create an Economic Development Planner position in City Hall to guide small businesses through startup and permitting; outreach to business and property owners; establish a local technical assistance program to support small and locally owned retailers across the city; establish incentives for minority- and women-owned businesses; and conduct an Economic Development Strategic Planning process to develop citywide and subarea goals for development, job growth, and services.

- 1B5** *Strategy 1B5:* Manage and maintain an inventory of previously developed brownfields or blighted strategic urban areas to promote reinvestment through developer/investor packages that leverage partnerships for redevelopment.
- 1B6** *Strategy 1B6:* Organize and undertake community-based planning processes for the Historic Downtown, Merrimack Street Business Corridor, and the Loop, focusing on streetscape redesign emphasizing the pedestrian experience, small business development as opposed to formula businesses, reducing visible surface parking, and identifying opportunities for programmable open space to support cultural and business activities.
- 1B7** *Strategy 1B7:* Conduct a review of the city's current parking requirements for commercial and industrial uses to determine if more parking is required in Methuen compared to national best practices and standards. Where parking requirements may be higher than what is needed, consider amending the zoning ordinance to lower parking thereby reducing costs for future commercial and industrial developments.
- 1B8** *Strategy 1B8:* Pursue financial support to conduct an economic and public health impact analysis describing the important role the Holy Family Hospital plays in Methuen's local economy and the health and wellbeing of residents.





2021 Location Quotient, Compared to MVPC Region  
Source: Methuen 2035 Existing Conditions Report

Real Estate Implications

Substantial regional growth – 10 percent or greater for five different clusters-of-clusters – suggests that there will be increased demand for commercial and industrial space across the Merrimack Valley. The estimates described above point to strongest future demand for industrial and flex-R&D spaces, while some office, flex, and specialty spaces for Eds, Meds, & Creative and Business & Financial Services are also likely to be in demand. The expected growth in the Retail & Hospitality and Personal & Human services indicates that retail and other ground floor commercial space will also see increased demand.

Cluster-of-Clusters	Projected Aggregate Regional Growth, 2021-2030	Clusters with Largest Total Job Growth
Industry	4,579 11.5%	Local Real Estate, Construction, & Development Distribution & Electronic Commerce Research & Development Local Logistical Services
Eds, Meds, & Creative	4,165 10.0%	Education and Knowledge Creation Local Health Services Performing Arts
Business & Financial Services	3,442 12.6%	Local Commercial Services Business Services Information Technology & Analytical Instruments
Retail & Hospitality	3,419 12.2%	Local Hospitality Establishments Local Household Goods & Services
Personal & Human Services	3,340 20.9%	Local Community & Civic Organizations Local Personal Services (Non-medical)
Food & Agriculture	714 8.5%	Food Processing & Manufacturing Livestock Processing Agriculture & Horticulture
Utilities	409 - 17.9%	Local Utilities

(right)  
**Methuen Industry Cluster-Of-Clusters**  
Source: Lightcast, Industry Report, datarun 2022.4; Porter, et al.; RKG Associates



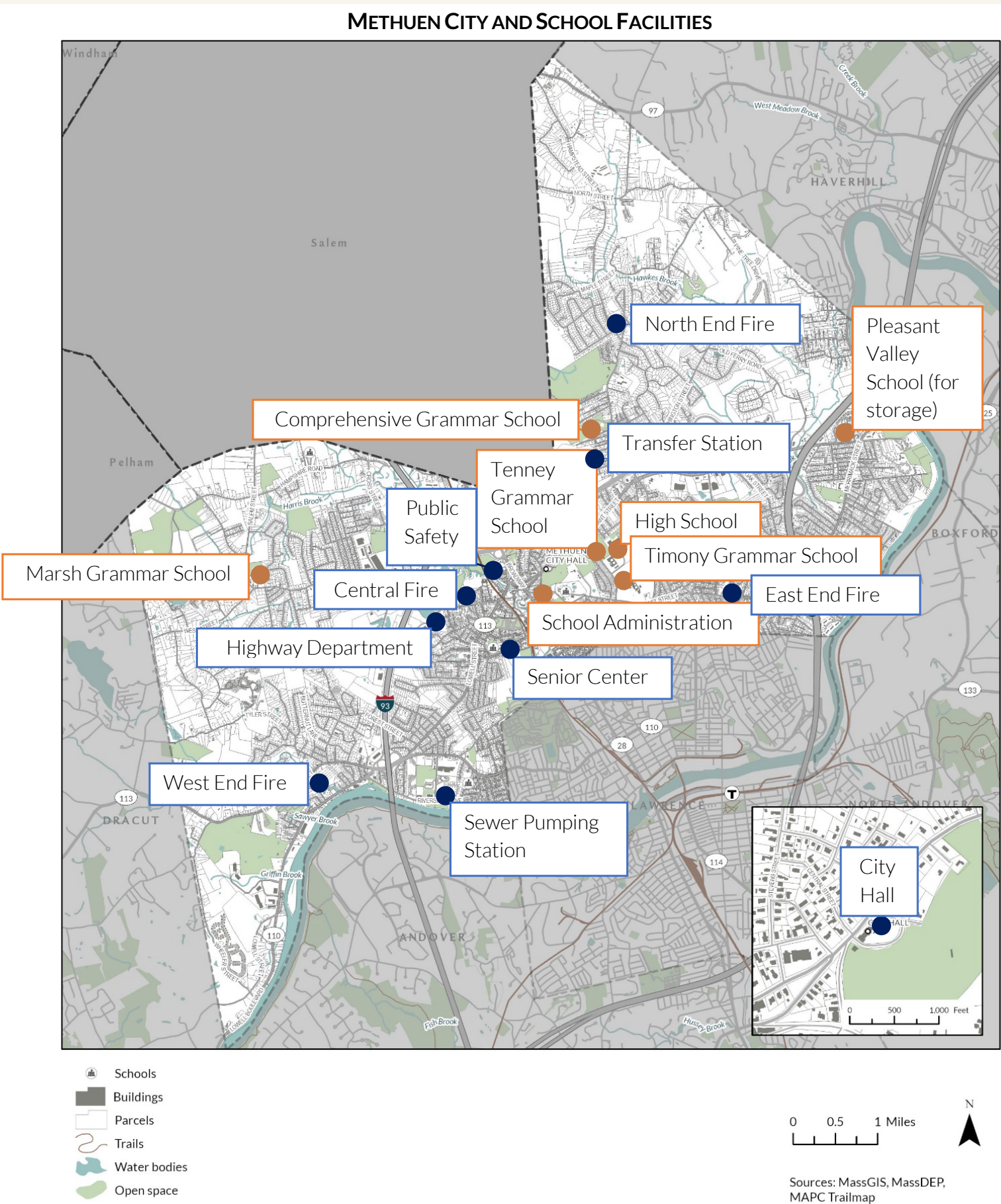
2

CORE THEME TWO:  
CREATE SUSTAINABLE AND  
RESILIENT PUBLIC SERVICES  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE.



Metrics to measure progress:

- Amount of funding on the Capital Improvement Program for municipal facilities.
- Percentage of existing public infrastructure in good or better condition over time (according to pavement management plan or asset management plan).
- Total amount of energy (renewable and fossil fuel) used by municipal and school properties, open space, and vehicles (according to the Green Communities annual reporting).
- Staffing levels and salaries across departments are above the median of comparable communities (population, density, square miles). Comparable communities are determined by human resource salary surveys.
- Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions compared to the baseline year 2022, broken down by major sources.
- Solid waste tonnage versus 2022 baseline.
- Recycling tonnage and recycling rate versus 2022 baseline.
- Recycling contamination rate percentage. The 2023 baseline is 16.4 percent, and the goal is less than 10 percent.





# GOAL 2A:

## *Continue governing and fiscal best practices while building sustainable staff capacity and professional development.*

- 2A1** *Strategy 2A1:* Remain current with the latest financial software to manage financials, procurement, human resources, payroll, and revenue, and provide ongoing training to staff.
- 2A2** *Strategy 2A2:* Use asset and facilities management software to develop an inventory of existing public infrastructure assets, current infrastructure conditions, and priorities for maintenance or rehabilitation., and provide ongoing training to staff. Create detailed equipment, facilities, and infrastructure management plan(s). Outsource initially or increase capacity as necessary to implement.
- 2A3** *Strategy 2A3:* Continue to create and maintain a long-range financial forecast regarding debt affordability, liabilities such as pensions, OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits), economic development strategies, reserve policies, and asset management strategies.
- 2A4** *Strategy 2A4:* Evaluate current staffing levels and salaries across departments and positions relative to comparable communities. Create a 5-year staff operating plan using benchmarking.
- 2A5** *Strategy 2A5:* Continue to host regular training for municipal and school staff, including Diversity Equity and Inclusion, sexual harassment, safety, the on-demand language translation service, and other software platforms.

# GOAL 2B:

## *Strategically invest in sustainable and resilient public infrastructure.*

- 2B1** *Strategy 2B1:* Continue to fund the City’s water system (drinking water and fire protection) and infrastructure as recommended in the most recent Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan or as required by state or federal law.
- 2B2** *Strategy 2B2:* Coordinate with the City of Lawrence to replace the existing common sewer and drain system in the Arlington neighborhood that contributes to Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in the Spicket and Merrimack Rivers.
- 2B3** *Strategy 2B3:* Seek opportunities to increase municipal buildings’ use of renewable energy, such as solar panels on roofs and carport solar canopies.
- 2B4** *Strategy 2B4:* Explore opportunities for school and municipal vehicle electrification.
- 2B5** *Strategy 2B5:* Prioritize Green Building Design standards for new and renovated buildings.
- 2B6** *Strategy 2B6:* Study options to establish a reliable funding source to support Massachusetts Small MS4 General Permit (stormwater permitting) compliance and pollution reduction.
- 2B7** *Strategy 2B7:* Increase the quality and quantity of native vegetation (trees and other plants) city-wide, especially along arterial and collector roads, at Housing Authority locations, and through updating subdivision regulations.



City Hall  
Source: City of Methuen



Nevens Memorial Library  
Source: Elia Hbaiter, 2022



Methuen School Administration Building  
Source: Google Street View



Timony Lower & Upper Grammar School  
Source: Google Street View

Central Fire Station  
Source: Ana Cruz, 2020



Comprehensive Grammar School  
Source: HMFH architects



Water Works Harris Brook Pump Station  
Source: ElaserGirl, 2003



High School  
Source: John Phelan, 2017

Police Department  
Source: Joshua Waller, 2017



Forest Lake Beach  
Source: Julissa Batista, 2022



Mash Grammar School  
Source: Marsh Grammar School PTO Facebook page



9 Branch Street  
Source: Loopnet.com

Senior Activity Center  
Source: Google Street View, 2019



Highway Garage  
Source: Google Street View, 2019



Tenney Grammar School  
Source: Google Street View



## GOAL 2D:

### *Ensure transparent and accessible government services and structures.*

- 2D1** *Strategy 2D1:* Develop capacity for implementing a multifaceted plan for modernizing City communications. Elements of the City’s information outreach system are to include multiple languages, utilizing the City’s website (with notifications and improved ADA accessibility), reverse 911 alerts, the government channel, and social media. Also, conducting targeted outreach to low-income residents, ethnic and racial minorities, and non-English speaking residents, for example, through Spanish newspapers and radio.
- 2D2** *Strategy 2D2:* Expand the public-private partnership with Methuen Community Studios to televise and record all public meetings for on-demand viewing with multi-lingual closed captioning.
- 2D3** *Strategy 2D3:* Restart a Charter Commission/Committee to consider improving the government structure to include, but not be limited to, term extensions for elected officials.
- 2D4** *Strategy 2D4:* Offer programming for residents to meet Department Heads and public safety officials (like the Senior Activity Center and Methuen Arlington Neighborhood). For example, in-person neighborhood group meetings, using community connections to advertise resources and programs, or recorded interviews with Department Heads.
- 2D5** *Strategy 2D5:* Optimize the use of the Smart 911 system, including the incorporation of multiple languages. Methuen public safety departments could share local dispatch resources if a joint public safety building is created.
- 2D6** *Strategy 2D6:* Update the See-Click-Fix software and do ongoing municipal employee training with accountability. Continue to advertise this resource to residents. In the long term, build up to a staffed 311 system (Resident hotline).
- 2D7** *Strategy 2D7:* Seek to increase voter turnout and civic participation using strategies such as educational programming, civic engagement training, hired ambassadors, marketing campaigns, and more.

## GOAL 2C:

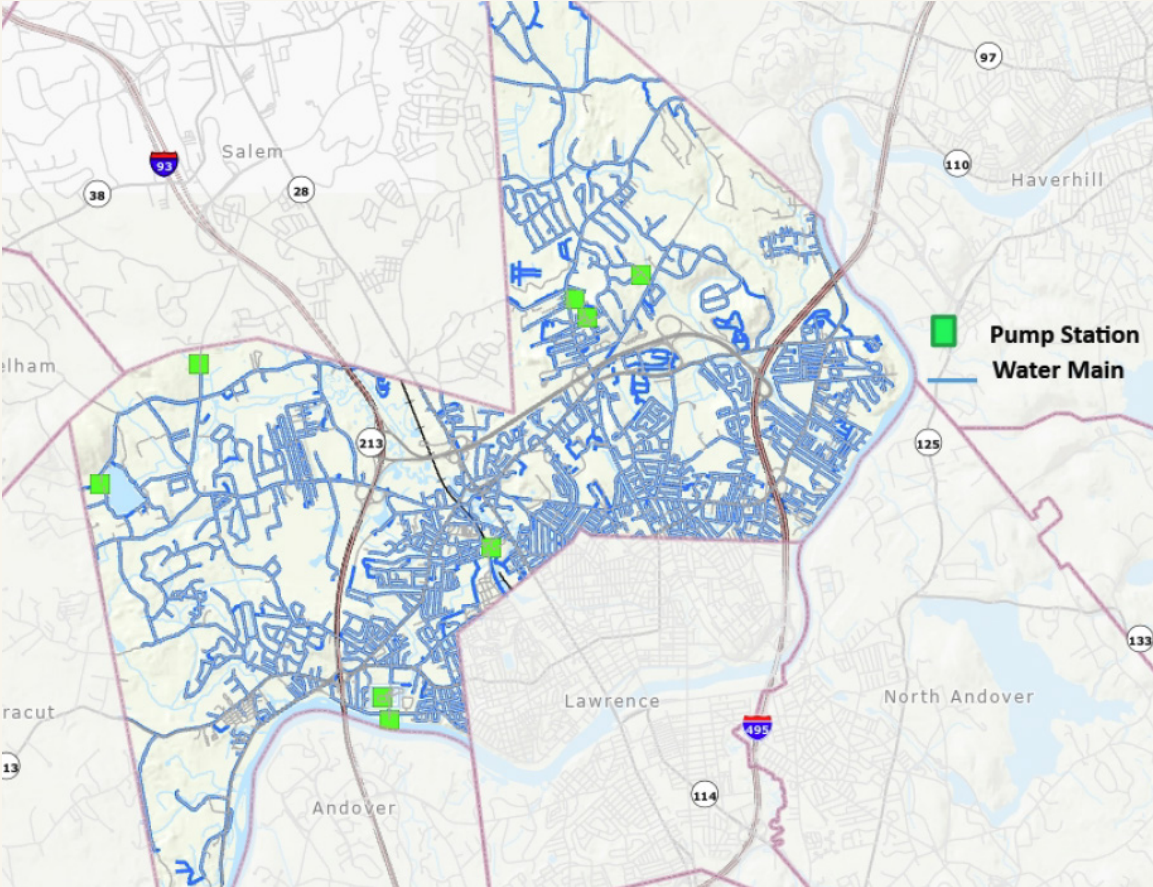
### *Continue to explore the creation of new or updated municipal facilities and equipment, especially Public Safety, City Hall, and the Department of Public Works.*

- 2C1** *Strategy 2C1:* Relocate the DPW Facility, including advancing the conceptual design and finalizing a site.
- 2C2** *Strategy 2C2:* Assess locations for a Public Safety Facility to optimize the ability to respond to emergencies City-wide.
- 2C3** *Strategy 2C3:* Continue to repair and renovate City Hall to advance physical and technical accessibility.
- 2C4** *Strategy 2C4:* Adopt landscaping guidelines for new and renovated municipal buildings.
- 2C5** *Strategy 2C5:* Determine the future use of city-owned property at 180 Pleasant Valley Street.
- 2C6** *Strategy 2C6:* Continue maintenance of all schools with attention to safety features, roofs, playgrounds, and energy-saving initiatives. Continue to update the 2016 Schools Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize school projects.
- 2C7** *Strategy 2C7:* Continue implementing the comprehensive transitional plan for the Americans with Disabilities Act and Massachusetts Access Board regulations in the city.



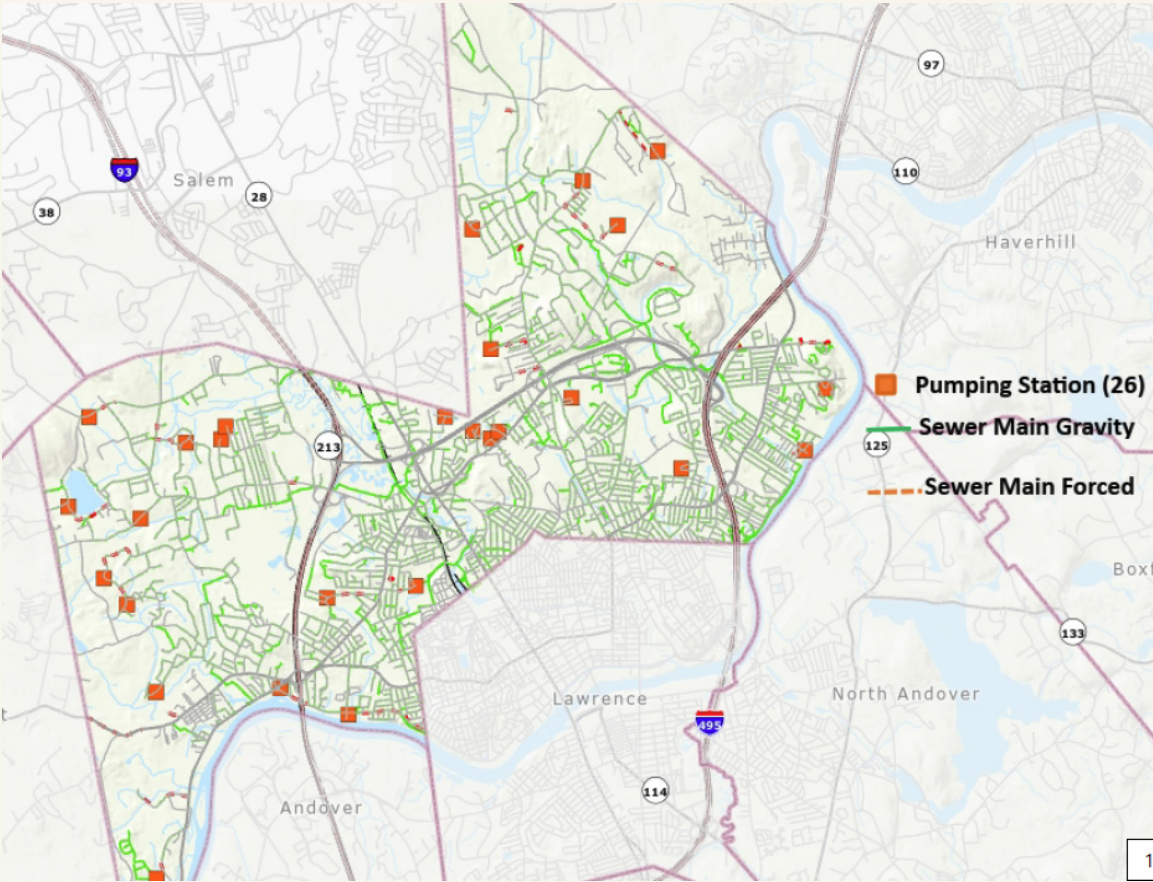
Methuen Water Network

Source: MVPC, using data provided by the City of Methuen and MassIT, MassGIS, August 2022



Methuen Sewer Network

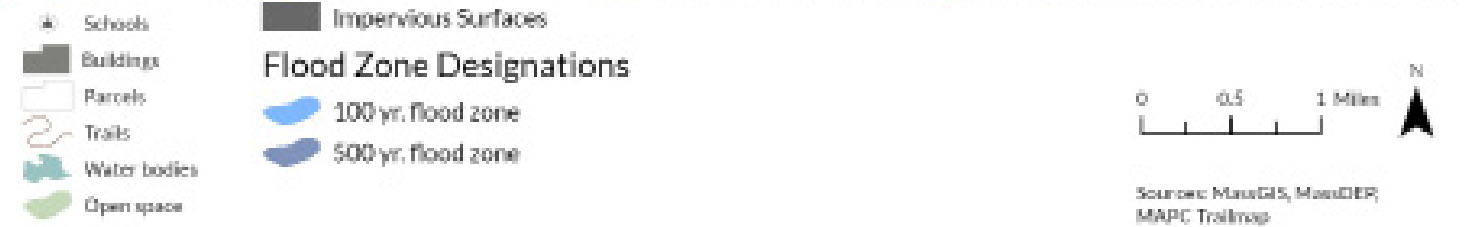
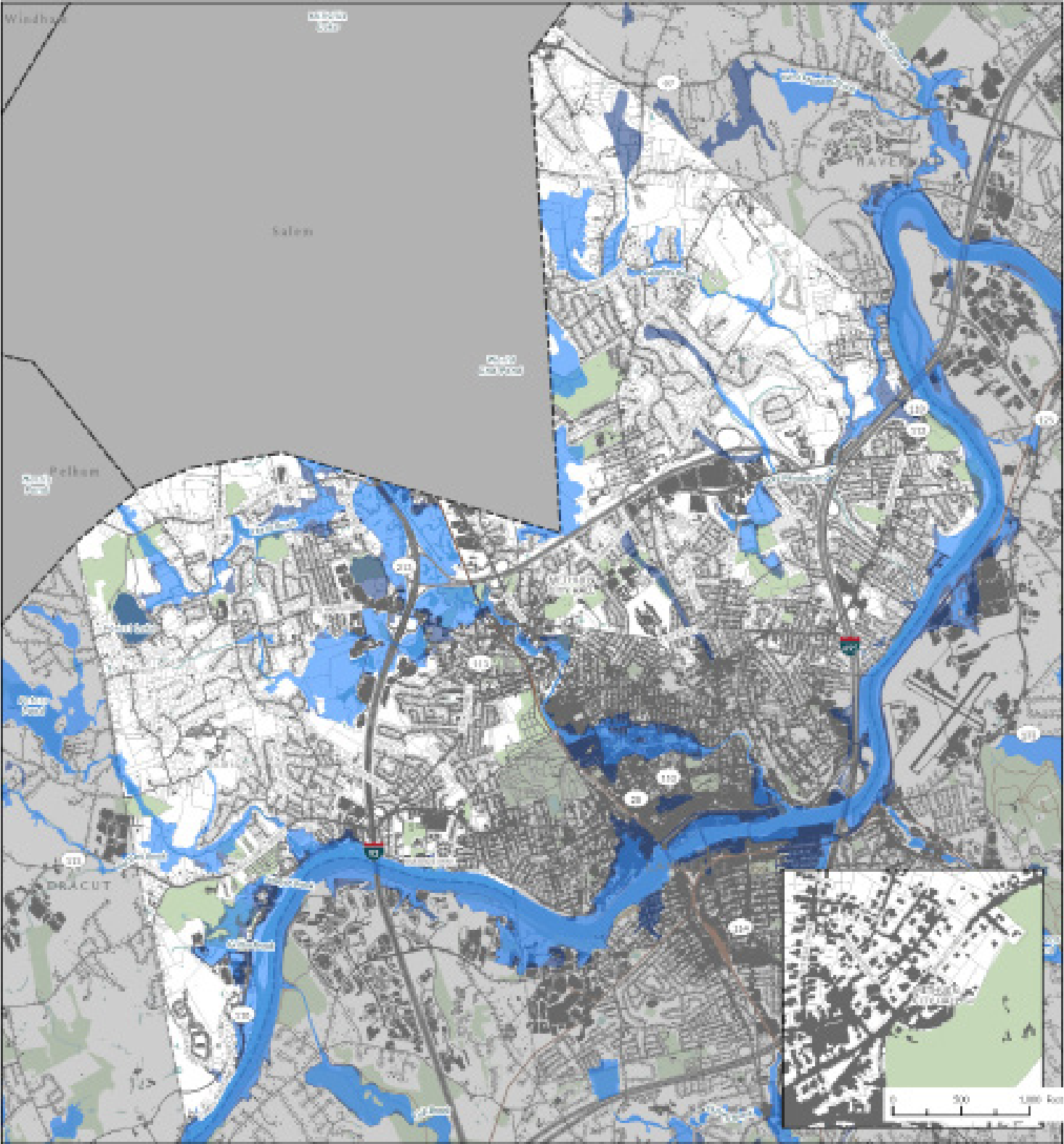
Source: MVPC, using data provided by the City of Methuen and MassIT, MassGIS, August 2022



CITY OF METHUEN - CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Prepared by JIM Goldson LLC

JIM GOLDSON





# 3 CORE THEME THREE: ADVOCATE FOR HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING THROUGH PLANNING & DESIGNING FOR THOSE WITH THE MOST VULNERABILITIES AND FEWEST CHOICES.

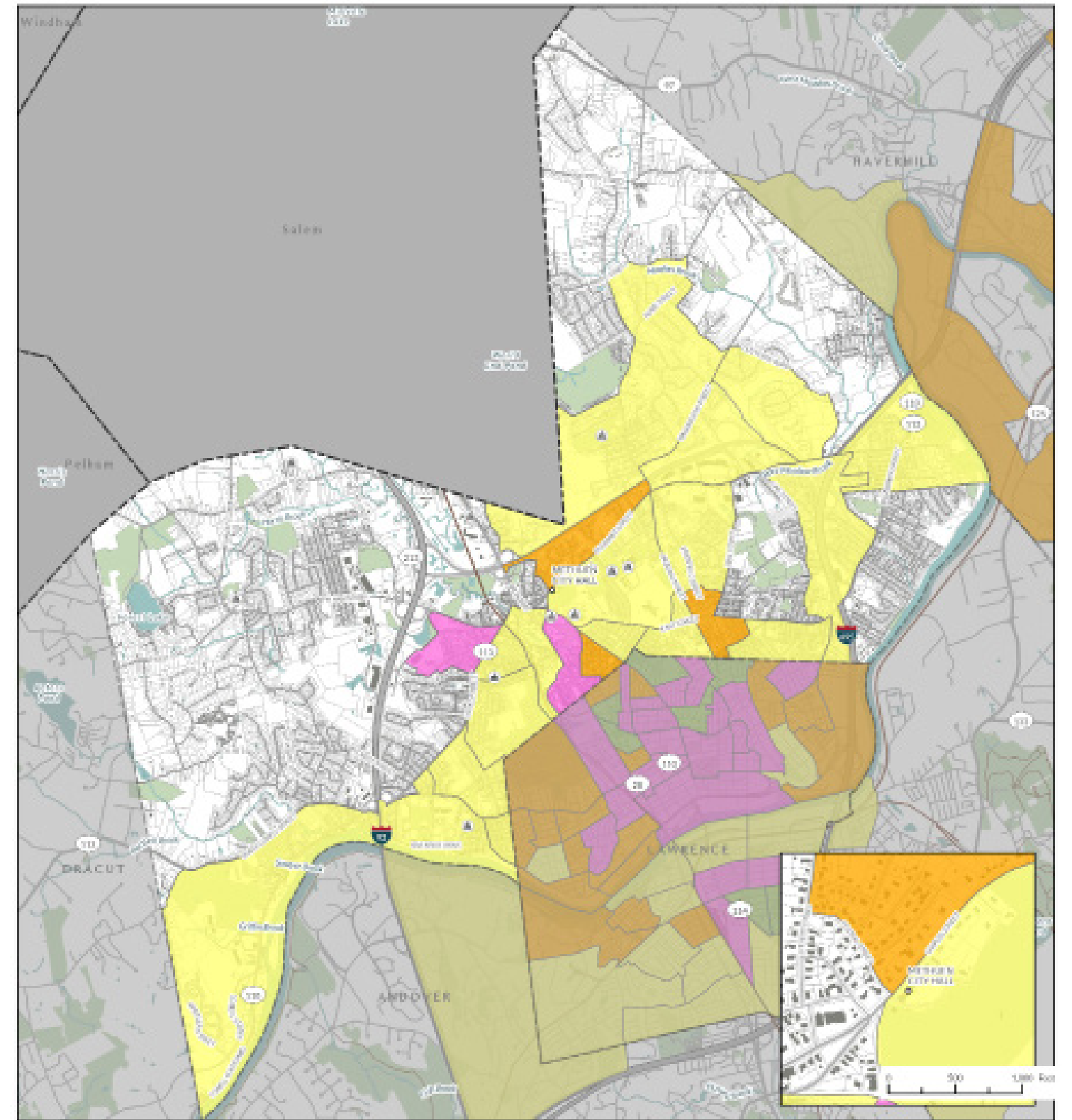
## Metrics to measure progress:

- The number of full-time mental health and social work positions within all city government offices, broken down by department.
- The number of guidance counselors in Methuen public schools.
- Unemployment rate (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool).
- Limited English Speaking (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool).
- Over age 64 (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool).
- Less than High School Education (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool).
- Low life expectancy (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool).
- Persons with disabilities (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool).



CITY OF METHUEN - ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POPULATIONS  
Prepared by J.M. Goldson LLC

J M GOLDSON



- Environmental Justice Populations**
- Income
  - Minority
  - English Isolation
  - Minority and Income
  - Income and English Isolation
  - Minority and English Isolation
  - Minority, Income and English Isolation



Sources: MassGIS, MassDER, MAPC Trailmap



# GOAL 3A:

## Strengthen connections to community and health services, especially behavioral health.

- 3A1** *Strategy 3A1:* Continue to seek opportunities to increase funding for trauma-informed substance abuse programming within the Methuen Public Schools.
- 3A2** *Strategy 3A2:* Continue to seek funding to decrease counselor to student ratio in the Methuen Public Schools.
- 3A3** *Strategy 3A3:* Continue efforts to create full-time mental health and social work positions within the Methuen Police Department.
- 3A4** *Strategy 3A4:* Seek designation for Methuen as an age-friendly and dementia-friendly community through an age-friendly community network, such as AARP Livable Communities.
- 3A5** *Strategy 3A5:* Collaborate with the Center for Behavioral Health to host wellness programming.
- 3A6** *Strategy 3A6:* Work with the Health Division to create multi-lingual guides and programming for accessing local health care, including establishing care with a primary care physician.
- 3A7** *Strategy 3A7:* Form a local advocacy coalition to engage with state and US representatives to push for continued health care/hospital use at the Holy Family Hospital campus.

# GOAL 3B:

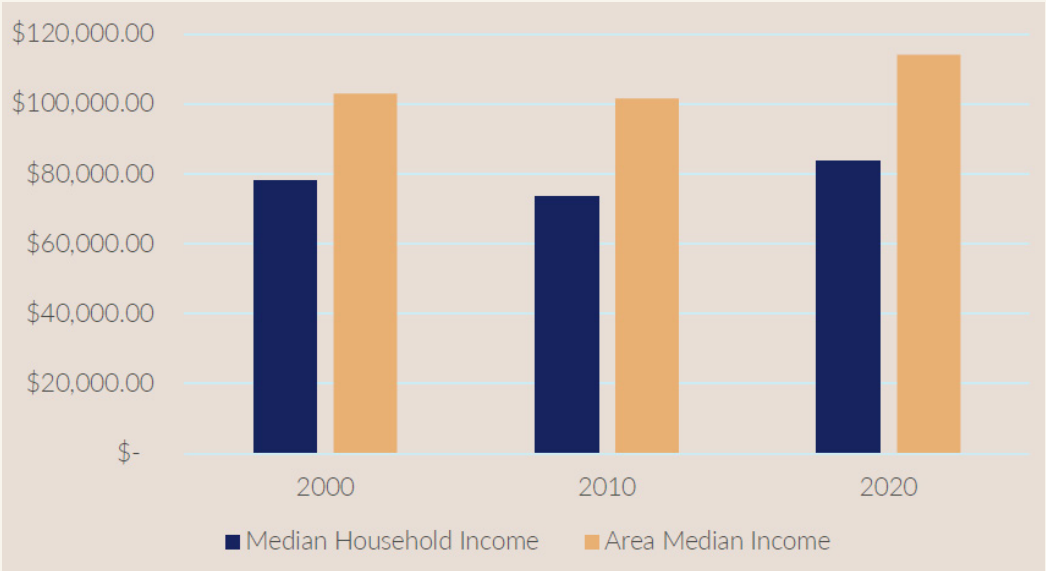
## Strengthen community partnerships and programming to increase access to education and job opportunities.

- 3B1** *Strategy 3B1:* Continue strengthening the partnership with the Lawrence MassHires centers to offer regular Career Seminars in Methuen.
- 3B2** *Strategy 3B2:* Continue to support the Adult Learning Center’s free or reduced-cost high school equivalency (e.g., HiSET) training program to increase educational attainment for Methuen residents.
- 3B3** *Strategy 3B3:* Continue to work with Northern Essex Community College to establish a Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership (CDEP) to allow students access to early college and increase the percentage of college-ready graduates.
- 3B4** *Strategy 3B4:* Explore more ways of connecting the library, schools, and adult learning opportunities.
- 3B5** *Strategy 3B5:* Promote access to English Language Learning (ELL) programs and citizenship classes for Methuen residents.



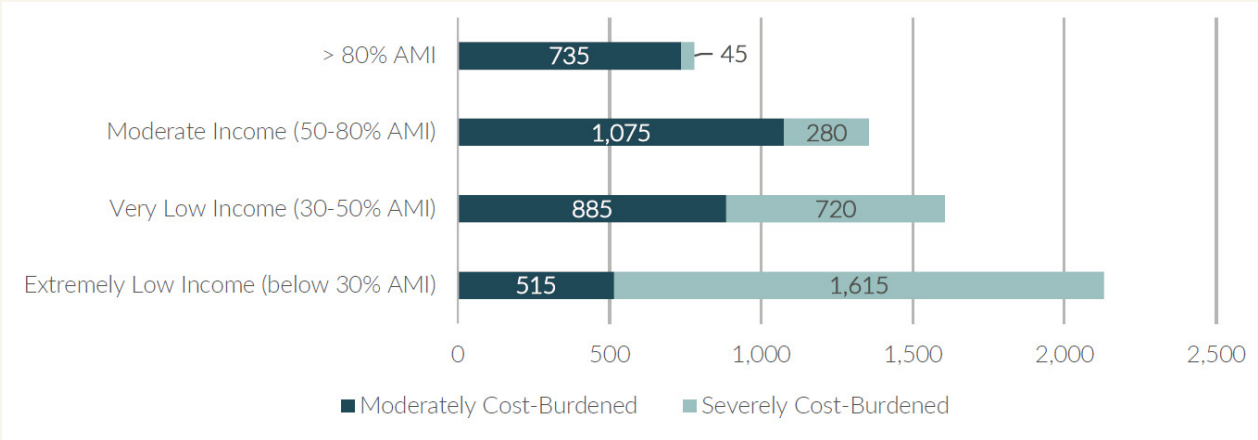
Methuen Median Income and Area Income, 2000 - 2020 (Inflation-Adjusted)

Source: US Census (T93, T95, T98, T100)/ACS (A14006, A14010, A14012, A14015)



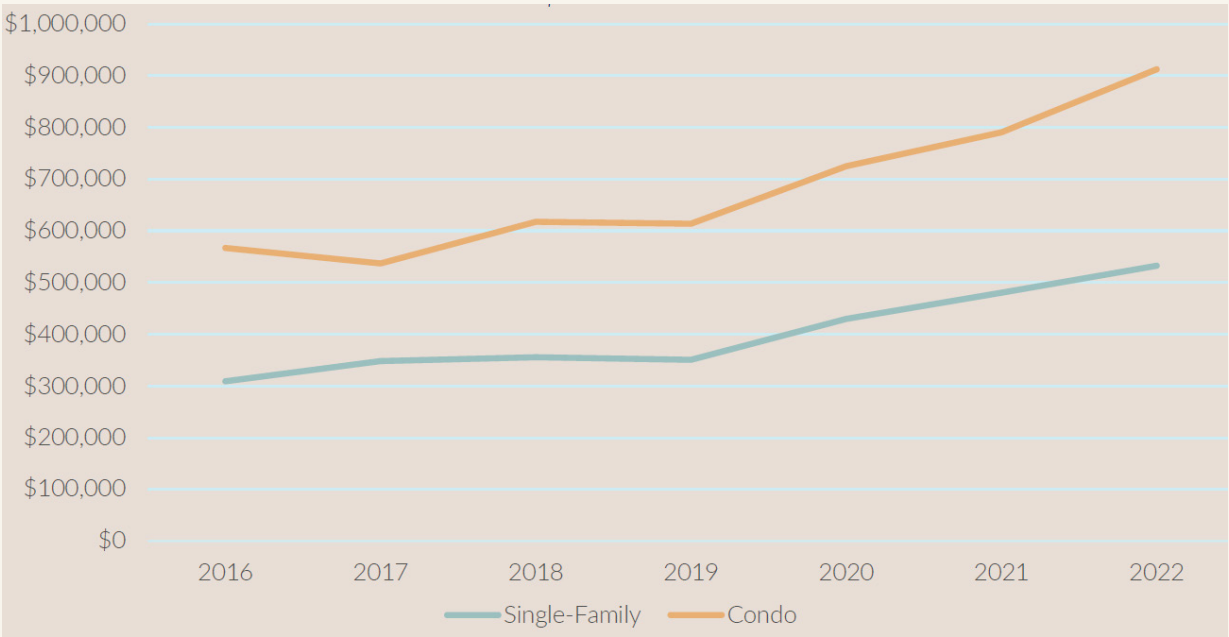
Number of Households in Methuen by Cost Burden, 2015 - 2019

Source: HUD CHAS



Median Sales Price in Methuen, 2016 - 2022

Source: marealtor.com



Holy Family Hospital  
Source: WHAV News photograph, 2024



North Essex Community College  
Source: Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges, 2024



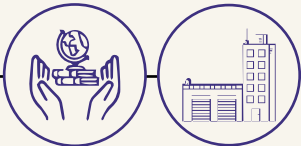
Community Cancer Care  
Source: Google Street View, 2018





4

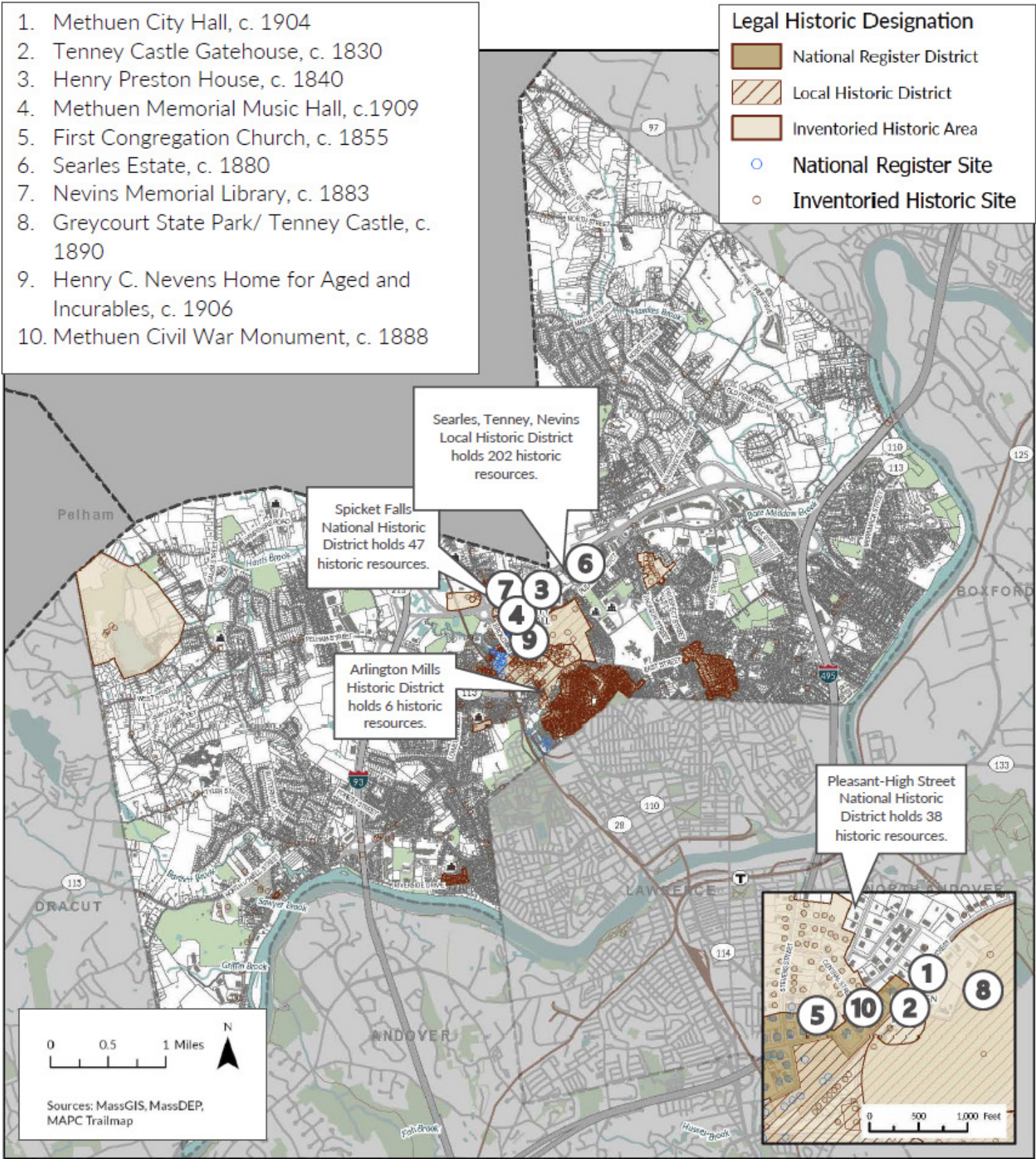
CORE THEME FOUR:  
SUPPORT SOCIAL AND  
CULTURAL VITALITY AND  
PRESERVE HISTORICAL  
ASSETS.



Metrics to measure progress:

- Amount of funding (grants or other) to support cultural activities and events.
- The number of publicly available events held in the Organ Hall, Senior Center, public schools, Nevins Library, or other indoor or outdoor community places.
- Amount of funding (grants or other) for historic preservation or inventory purposes.
- The number of historical markers refreshed or installed.

293 OF METHUEN’S HISTORIC RESOURCES FALL WITHIN  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS.





# GOAL 4A:

## Support coordinated educational, artistic, and fun cultural activities and events for all community members.

- 4A1** *Strategy 4A1:* Explore dedicated funding streams and grant programs to support cultural activities and events. Support staff across departments on grant writing for social, cultural, and historical programming.
- 4A2** *Strategy 4A2:* Conduct pilot project placemaking initiatives, prioritizing neighborhoods furthest from open space and recreational lands.
- 4A3** *Strategy 4A3:* Add municipal capacity for cultural activities through dedicated staff, citizen or private groups, or incentivizing volunteers. Encourage collaboration with art organizations in surrounding communities like Elevated Thought (Lawrence, MA).
- 4A4** *Strategy 4A4:* Work with a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) consultant on strategies to increase diverse cultural programming in Methuen.
- 4A5** *Strategy 4A5:* Encourage greater use of community facilities (i.e., Organ Hall, Senior Center, High School, Nevins Library, etc.) in off-hours for cultural use by promoting and supporting frequent, publicly available events and programs.
- 4A6** *Strategy 4A6:* Support ongoing efforts for a new intergenerational Community Center.

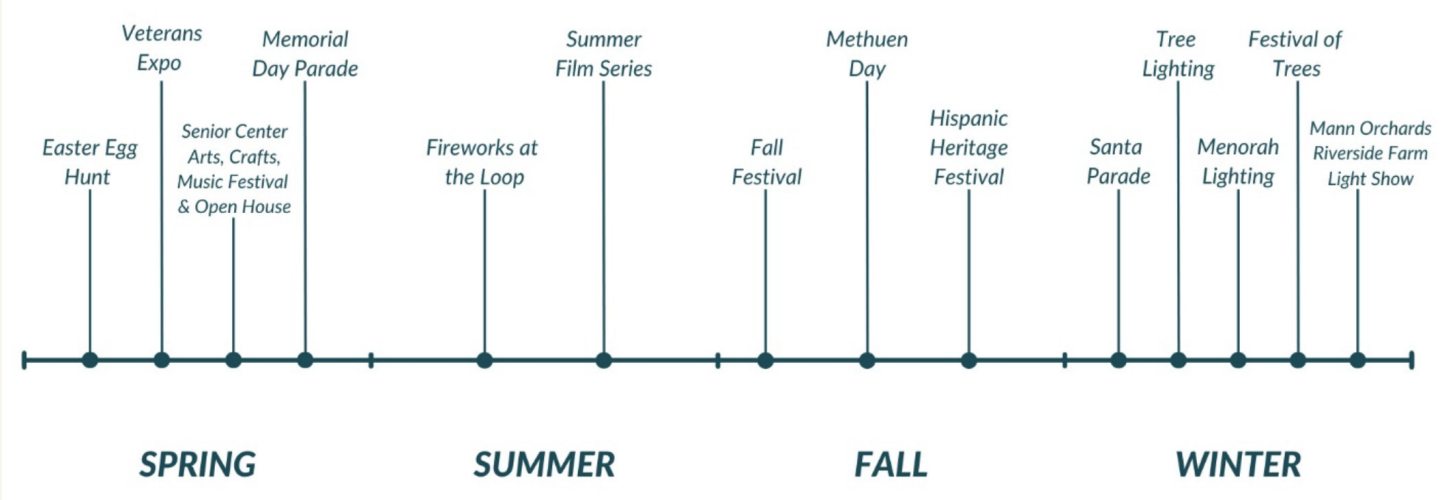
# GOAL 4B:

## Increase local awareness and protect historic resources, especially near Downtown.

- 4B1** *Strategy 4B1:* Seek local, state, and federal support to develop a viable reuse and preservation plan for historic structures, such as the Searles Estate.
- 4B2** *Strategy 4B2:* Reevaluate the demolition delay ordinance to include properties built after 1875 (up to a year to be determined) to increase protections for Methuen’s industrial history. Extend the demolition delay period from six months to 12 months.
- 4B3** *Strategy 4B3:* Expand the historical marker program for historic resources with a consistent appearance. Consider installing wayfinding and informational signage to accompany historic tours better to promote historic resources, especially in Downtown Methuen.
- 4B4** *Strategy 4B4:* Reevaluate historic preservation regulations to promote modern adaptive reuse.
- 4B5** *Strategy 4B5:* Develop a strategy for maintaining and restoring municipally owned historical structures and assets. For example, reconsider adopting the Community Preservation Act to fund historic preservation and explore using and promoting Historic Preservation Tax Credits to renovate existing historic buildings.
- 4B6** *Strategy 4B6:* Add municipal capacity for historic preservation and property inventorying through full-time dedicated staff.

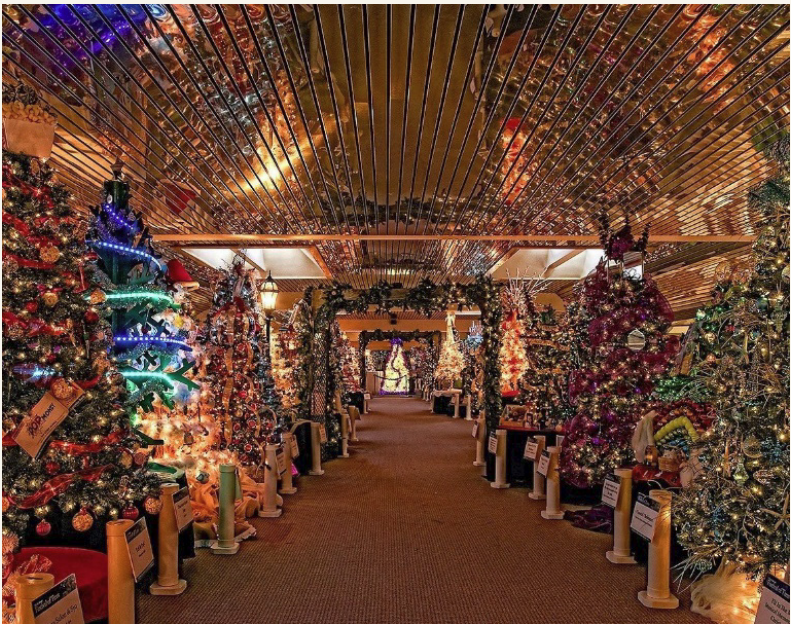


Sample Annual Calendar Events  
Source: Methuen 2035 Existing Conditions Report



Light the Falls - Osgood Street Mills Falls  
Source: City of Methuen

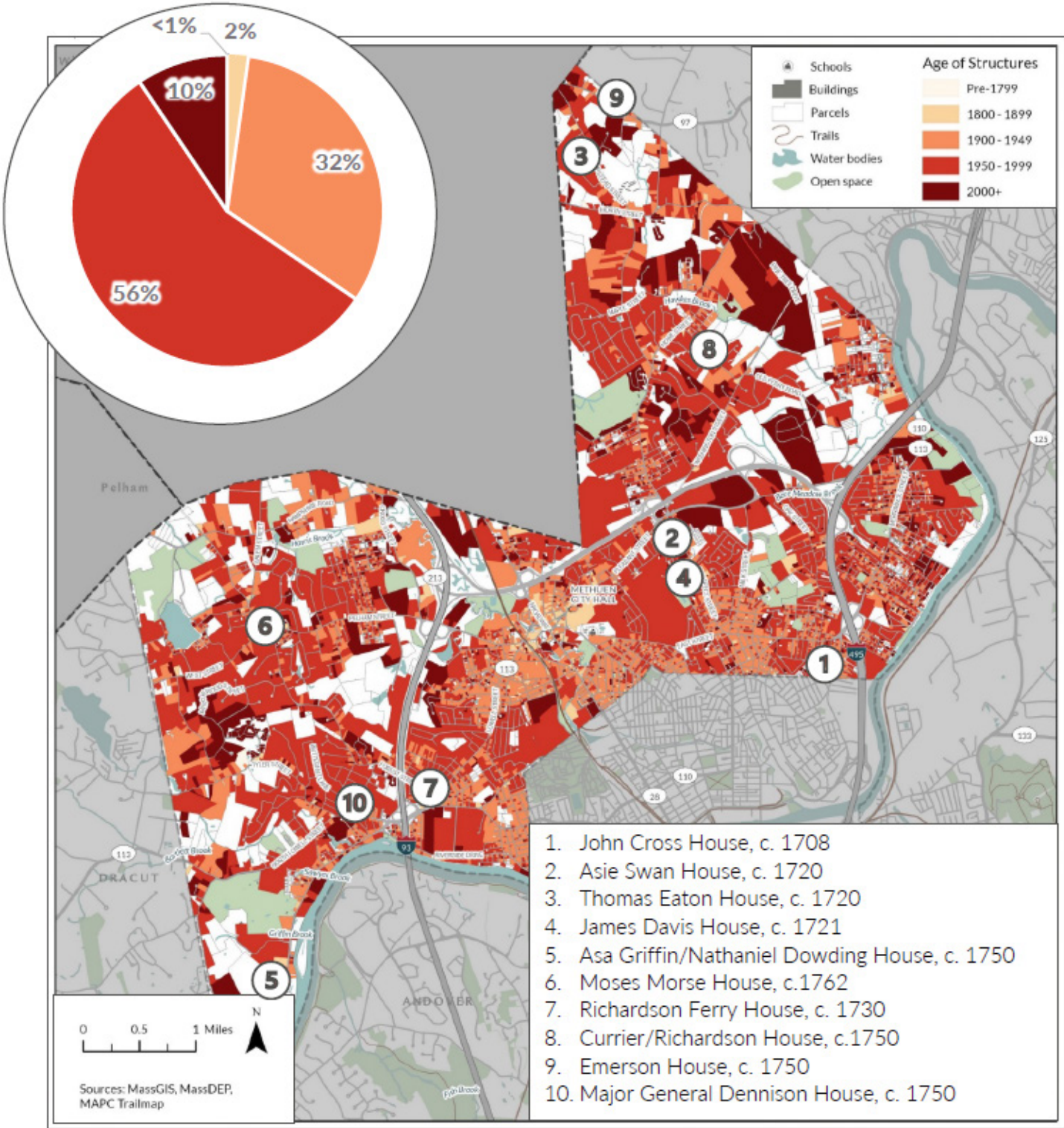
Light the Falls is public art show using a light on the canvas of moving water. The show takes place several times throughout the year depending on the water flow on the Spicket River. Light the Falls serves to bring the ideals of inclusion, technology, and the arts together.



Methuen Festival of Trees  
Source: Methuen Festival of Trees Facebook Page 2022

The Festival of Trees is the largest such Festival in New England and one of the largest in the country. The event has grown to display up to 240 trees and wreaths and has attracted as many as 30,000 guests from nearly 400 cities and towns in Massachusetts and throughout New England.

MOST OF METHUEN'S BUILDINGS ARE DATED AFTER 1950, BUT SOME OF THE OLDEST ARE OUTSIDE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS.





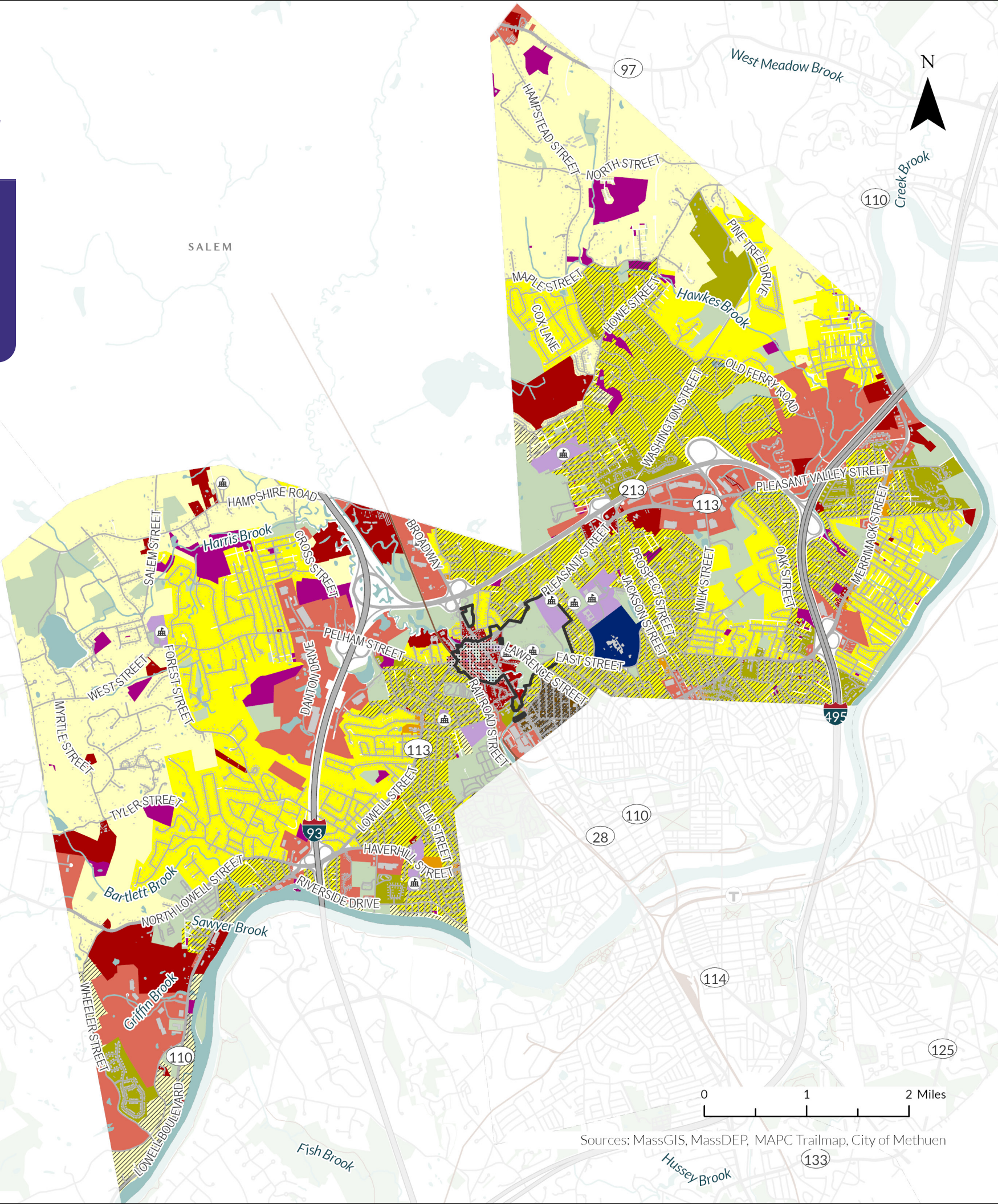
# FUTURE LAND USE VISION

**What is a Future Land Use Vision?**

This map represents a possible scenario for future land use based on the community's goals and strategies — it depicts what Methuen might look like in 2035.

- Schools
- Local Historic District
- Sensitive Community Area
- Downtown Mixed Use Area
- Rural Residential Zone<sup>M</sup>
- Missing Middle Residential Opportunity Area
- Multi-Family Residential Area
- Arlington Neighborhood
- Neighborhood Mixed Use Area
- Economic Development Preservation Area: Employment and Commercial Hub
- Economic Development/Mixed-Use Opportunity Area
- Conservancy Zone
- Hospital District
- Civic Properties
- Educational Properties

\*See next page for descriptions



Sources: MassGIS, MassDEP, MAPC Trailmap, City of Methuen



# FUTURE LAND USE LEGEND

**RESIDENTIAL**

**Rural Residential Zone:** This district has the lowest residential density of all districts and is generally served by local streets only. Intensive land uses, uses that would detract from the desired rural nature of the district are not allowed (Strategies 1A3 and 1A8).

**Sensitive Community Area:** Allow for additional housing choice, with tools to mitigate displacement within this area that has a high proportion of Environmental Justice populations (Strategies 1A3, 1A6, and 1A9).

**Missing Middle Residential Opportunity Areas:** Allow for additional housing choice within existing single-family residential neighborhoods throughout the City (Strategies 1A3 and 1A4).

**Multi-family Residential:** Allow for increased opportunities for multi-family housing development in existing multi-family residential zones including financially attainable housing, along neighborhood corridors, near community amenities, and employment centers (Strategies 1A1, 1A2, and 1A4).

**Arlington Neighborhood:** This neighborhood is not expected to increase its density. Allow for additional housing choice, with tools to mitigate displacement within this area that has a high proportion of Environmental Justice populations (Strategies 1A3, 1A6, and 1A9).

**MIXED USE NODES AND CORRIDORS**

**Neighborhood Mixed Use:** Encourage small retail and service establishments serving the neighborhood and oriented to pedestrian traffic. These centers and corridors will encompass a mix of land uses arranged in smaller scale buildings (Neighborhood Business District zone) (Strategies 1A1, 1A2, 1B1, 1B2, 1B3, 1B5, 1B6, and 1B7)

**Downtown Mixed Use:** A primary, central mixed use activity hub for the City. Retail, service, office, and residential uses (Central Business District and Smart Growth District) (Strategies 1A1, 1A2, 1B1, 1B2, 1B3, 1B5, 1B6, 1B7, and Goal 4B).

**COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL**

**Economic Development Preservation Areas:** Employment and commercial hubs with retail, wholesale, office, service, or light industrial. Residential uses are not allowed (Highway Business, Limited Industrial Zone) (Strategies 1B1, 1B2, 1B3, 1B5, 1B6, 1B7).

**Economic Development/Mixed-use Opportunity Areas:** Encourage offices, smaller scale retail and general business, service, research and development, and light assembly. Multi-family and mixed-uses allowed. (Limited Business district; Central Business District; Land uses categorized as mixed use) (Strategies 1B1, 1B2, 1B3, 1B5, 1B6, 1B7).

**OTHER**

**Conservancy:** Preserves agricultural land, protects groundwater, and prevents flood hazards. Used for conservation, recreational, educational, institutional, or municipal purposes (Goals 2B and 4B).

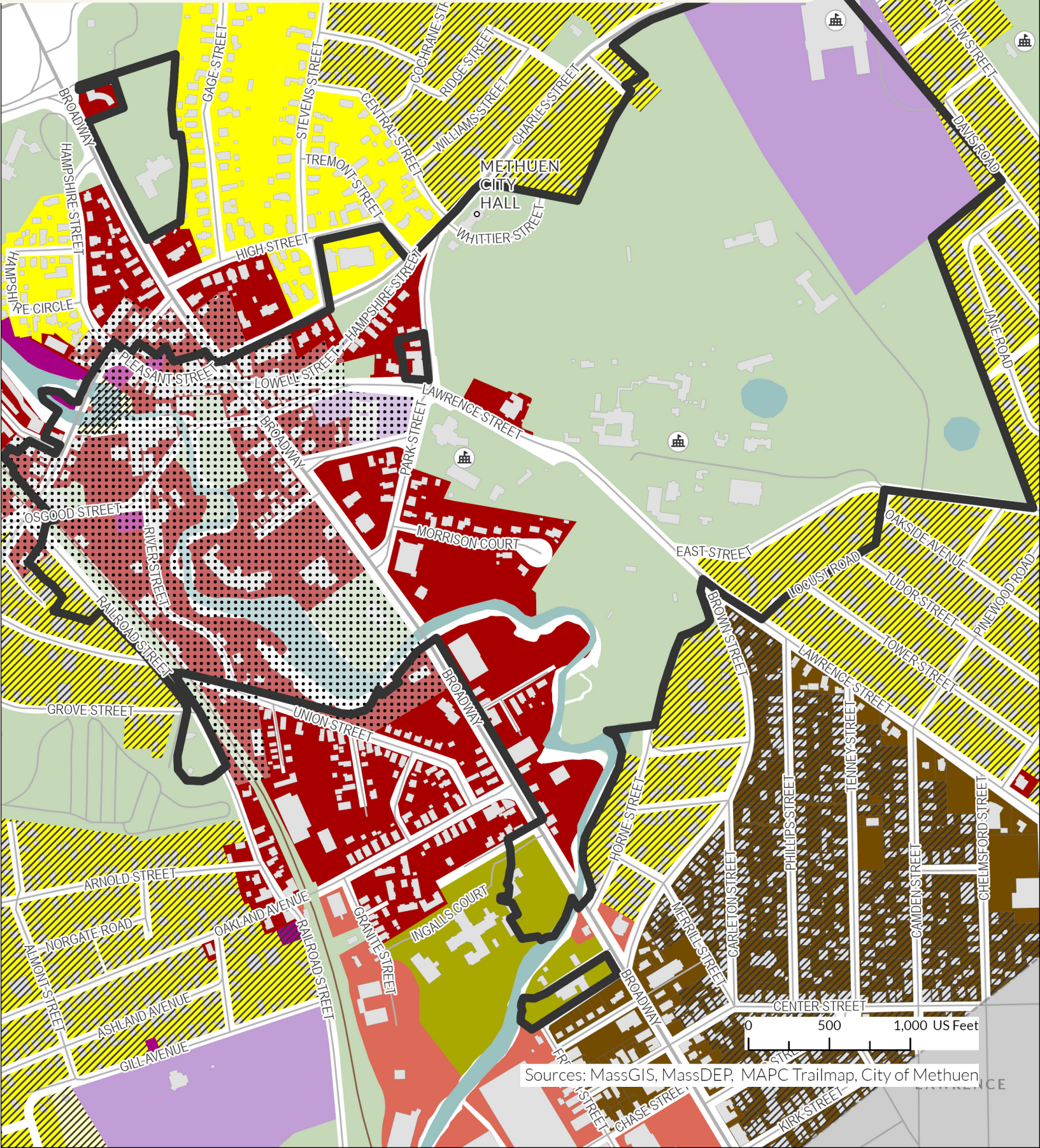
**Historic District:** An area of the City with a large number of historic resources. In this area the Historic Commission reviews proposed changes to exterior architectural features visible from the public way (Goal 4B)

**Hospital District:** Hospital or medical use (Strategy 1B8).

**Civic Properties:** Municipal buildings (Goals 2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 4A).

**Educational Properties:** Methuen public and private schools (Goals 2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A)

# METHUEN DOWNTOWN IN 2035



Sources: MassGIS, MassDEP, MAPC Trailmap, City of Methuen



# IMPLEMENTATION

The Methuen Master Plan serves as the community’s roadmap for the coming decade, guiding significant decisions and actions necessary to realize the City’s envisioned future. Over the next ten years, the implementation of studies, regulatory changes, programs, and infrastructure projects outlined in this document will demand close coordination among staff, boards, commissions, and ongoing communication with residents and local representatives.

Accountable implementation can be supported through three main systems:

- A Master Plan Implementation Committee.
- Tracking measurable metrics.
- A modifiable Action Plan (or implementation matrix).

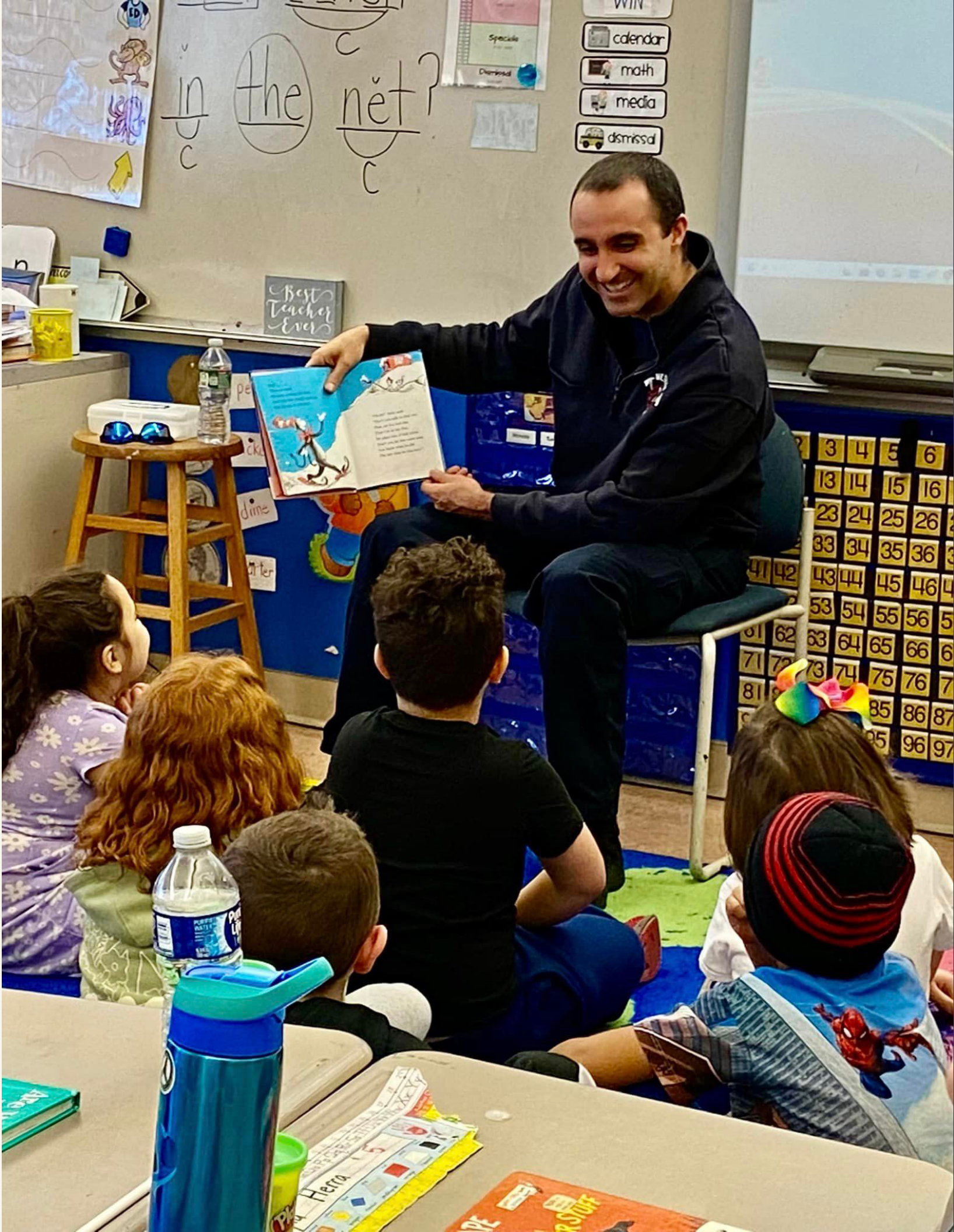
### Implementation Committee

Action Plan



Metrics

(right)  
Firefighter Reads to Children  
Source: City of Methuen





## Implementation Committee



Methuen's Master Plan Implementation Committee is established and populated by the City Council and is responsible for coordinating and monitoring implementation of the Master Plan. It is tasked with:

- Meeting regularly.
- Measuring progress toward achieving the goals and metrics.
- Liaising with town boards and commissions.
- Providing regular updates and prepare annual reports.
- Maintaining an updated live Action Plan spreadsheet for a high level of public transparency.
- Making document modifications when needed.

## Metrics



Methuen's metrics are listed at the beginning of each Core Theme chapter and in the Action Plan.

- Metrics measure quantitative progress toward achieving goals.
- Metrics should be tracked annually on the Action Plan (or implementation matrix).

## Action Plan



The Action Plan (or implementation matrix) details individual strategies to meet community goals. It is meant to be regularly updated and put on the City's website. It includes items such as:

- Strategy type (Programmatic; Regulatory and Policy; Capacity Building; Design, Physical, and Acquisition).
- Responsible parties (Departments, Boards/Committees, Local Organizations).
- Funding Opportunities (Municipal, State, Federal, Non-Profit).
- Logistics (Approximate Cost, Timing).
- Examples and Case Studies.

(left)  
Nevins Farm  
Source: City of Methuen



# APPENDIX: GLOSSARY

This list of key definitions is intended to assist the reader and not to replace applicable legal definitions of these terms. The following definitions are for key terms used throughout the document, many of which are based on definitions in statutes and regulations.

<b>AARP Livable Communities</b>	AARP Livable Communities supports the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities, and rural areas to be great places for people of all ages. It includes an age-friendly network, community challenges, publications, and livability index.
<b>Adaptive Reuse</b>	Adaptive reuse refers to reusing an existing building for a purpose other than what it was originally built or designed for.
<b>Affordable Homes Act of 2023</b>	The Affordable Homes Act was filed in October 2023. the Affordable Homes Act would leverage \$2.3 billion of federal funding and potentially unlock \$1.1 billion of new local revenue and nearly \$9 billion of private sector investment. All told, these investments would fund or enable the creation of an estimated 40,000 homes that otherwise would not be built, including more than 22,000 new homes for low-income and more than 12,000 for middle-income households. In addition, the Housing Affordability Act is expected to preserve, rehabilitate, or make resilience improvements to 12,000 homes for low-income households, support more than 11,000 moderate-income households, and fund accessibility improvements for approximately 4,500 homes.
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Housing targeted to and affordable by households that meet specific income eligibility levels, typically households earning below 80% of the metropolitan area’s median income (or AMI). “Affordable housing” does not refer to the design, type, or construction method of a housing unit or development but to the cost of the housing to the consumer. Housing is generally considered affordable if the household pays less than 30 percent of its monthly income to secure the housing.
<b>Affordable Housing Trust</b>	In 2005, the state legislature passed the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Law (MGL c.44 s.55C), which effectively simplified the process of establishing a local housing trust fund. A local housing trust allows municipalities to collect funds for affordable housing, segregate them from the general municipal budget into a trust fund, and use them for local initiatives to create and preserve affordable housing.

<b>Accessory Dwelling Unit/Accessory Apartment</b>	An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot (often in the same building) as a stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family home.
<b>Americans with Disabilities Act</b>	This 1990 federal law paved the way for Americans with disabilities to be fully included in society.
<b>Architectural Access Board Regulations</b>	Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 22, § 13A, the Architectural Access Board has issued regulations to make public buildings and facilities accessible to, functional for, and safe for use by persons with disabilities.
<b>Areawide Median Income</b>	The 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimate lists Methuen’s median household income at \$88,527, significantly less than the HUD Area Mean Income of \$114,000, which covers Lawrence, MA-NH HMFA. Incomes increased by 14 percent from 2010 to 2020.
<b>Blighted</b>	A dilapidated, hazardous, or unattractive property is “blighted property.” Each state has its own set of blighted property laws for determining whether a property is blighted. Typical criteria include uninhabitable, dangerous, abandoned, and an immediate threat to other individuals or property.
<b>Brownfield</b>	Brownfield is land that is abandoned or underutilized due to industrial pollution.
<b>By-Right</b>	Development that may proceed under a zoning ordinance or by-law without needing a special permit, variance, zoning amendment, waiver, or other discretionary zoning approval.
<b>Capital Improvement</b>	A capital improvement plan lays out the financing, location, and timing for capital improvement projects over several years.
<b>Combined Sewer Overflow</b>	Some older sewer systems have combined pipe systems that carry rainwater and sewerage from homes and businesses. During normal conditions, flows are delivered to treatment plans, but sometimes, during heavy rains, systems become overloaded. Built-in overflows (CSOs) act as relief points by releasing excess flows into the nearest body of water.
<b>Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership</b>	The Massachusetts Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership (CDEP) provides opportunities for Massachusetts high school students to take college-level courses for free or at a discounted price and earn credit toward high school completion and their future college degrees.
<b>Community Preservation Act</b>	CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally by imposing a surcharge of not more than 3 percent of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum. To date, 196 municipalities in the state have adopted CPA.



<b>Cost-Burdened Household</b>	A household that spends 30 percent or more of its income on housing-related costs (such as rent or mortgage payments). Severely cost-burdened households spend 50 percent or more of their income on housing-related costs.
<b>Demolition Delay Bylaw</b>	A regulation that protects historically significant buildings by requiring a demolition permit that can be subject to a 6-month waiting period if the Methuen Preservation Committee determines the structure to be historically significant and preferably preserved.
<b>Density</b>	The number of units or people inhabiting a given area, e.g., units per acre.
<b>Diversity Equity and Inclusion</b>	A conceptual framework that promotes the fair treatment and full participation of all people, especially populations that have historically been underrepresented or subject to discrimination because of their background, identity, disability, etc.
<b>District</b>	A specifically delineated area in a municipality within which regulations and requirements uniformly govern the use, placement, space, and size of land and buildings.
<b>Duplex</b>	A house divided into two apartments or condos, with a separate entrance for each.
<b>Economic Development Strategic Planning Process</b>	An economic development strategic plan is a document and planning process that helps guide a specific area or an entire community's economic growth and development.
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	The highest level of formal education achieved, as documented by the US Census American Community Survey.
<b>ELL programs</b>	Education programs for English Language Learners (ELL).
<b>Elderly Non-Families</b>	A household of one elderly person as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data.
<b>Financially Attainable Housing</b>	Housing that does not exceed 30 percent of a household's monthly income.
<b>Green Building Design Standards</b>	There is a proliferation of standards, rating, and certification programs in the marketplace to help guide, demonstrate, and document efforts to deliver sustainable, high-performance buildings.
<b>Historic Inventory</b>	A historic inventory is part of a state or federal program that lists properties and structures that represent the history or reflect a period in the City's history. In essence, it is a database the City uses to identify properties of potential historical significance. Massachusetts uses the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS).

<b>Historic Preservation</b>	Historic preservation is any activity that identifies, protects, rehabilitates, or enhances historic resources. Historic preservation programs operate at the national, state, and local levels work to identify, evaluate, designate, and maintain historic structures, objects, sites, properties, and districts.
<b>Historic Resource</b>	A building, structure, document, or artifact listed on the state Register of Historic Places or National Register of Historic Places or has been determined by the City's Historical Commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of the City.
<b>Household</b>	All related or unrelated people who occupy a housing unit. It can also include a person living alone in a housing unit or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit as partners or roommates.  <b>Family Household:</b> Family households consist of two or more individuals related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they may also include other unrelated people. <b>Non-Family Households:</b> Non-family households consist of individuals living alone and with roommates who are unrelated by birth, marriage, or adoption.
<b>Housing Development Incentive Program</b>	The Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP), established by M.G.L., Chapter 40V, provides Gateway Cities with a tool to develop market-rate housing while increasing residential growth, expanding diversity of housing stock, supporting economic development, and promoting neighborhood stabilization in designated areas. The program provides two tax incentives to developers to undertake new construction or substantial rehabilitation of properties for lease or sale as multi-unit market-rate residential housing.
<b>Inclusionary Zoning</b>	Inclusionary zoning (IZ) is municipal and county planning ordinances that require or provide incentives when a given percentage of units in a new housing development is affordable for people with low to moderate incomes.
<b>Income Thresholds</b>	The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) establishes income thresholds that apply to various housing assistance programs. These thresholds are updated annually and are categorized by household size. Methuen is part of the Lawrence, MA, HUD Metro FMR Area.  <b>Extremely Low-Income (ELI):</b> The FY 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act changed the definition of extremely low-income to an individual or family whose annual gross income is greater than 30/50ths (60 percent) of Section 8's very low-income limit or the poverty guideline. The FY2022 ELI income limit for a household of one is \$24,200 and for a household of four is \$34,550.



	<p><b>Very Low-Income (VLI):</b> An individual or family whose annual gross income is at or below 50 percent AMI. The FY2022 VLI income limit for a household of one is \$40,300 and for a household of four is \$57,550.</p> <p><b>Low/Moderate income (LMI):</b> An individual or family whose annual gross income is at or below 80 percent of the area median income (AMI). The FY2022 LMI income limit for a household of one is \$62,600 and for a household of four is \$89,400.</p>
Infrastructure	The basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.
Mixed-use development	Mixed-use development incorporates two or more uses into the same building or general area. The term often refers to development that combines residential functions with commercial or even industrial ones, but it can also encompass cultural and institutional uses as well as public amenities.
MS4	The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit is required for most cities and towns in Massachusetts to operate municipal stormwater systems.
Multi-family development	Typically defined in Massachusetts as a residential building with three or more units.
Lot	An area of land in common ownership meeting minimum requirements for area, width, and frontage in the district in which it lies. A lot is buildable.
Operating plan	Unlike capital budgeting, which focuses on long-term investments and assets, operational budgeting deals with the ongoing costs of running a community, such as staffing and supplies.
Ordinance	A rule or law passed by a local government.
Overlay Zoning District	Places special provisions on top of the existing zoning expectations.
Parcel	An area of land that may or may not satisfy the definition of “lot”.
Placemaking	There are many uses of the term placemaking. The simplest definition comes from the Center on New Urbanism, “Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in.” Placemaking is often an incremental method of improving a location over time through many small projects or activities.
Redevelopment	The construction of new buildings in an area, typically after demolishing the existing buildings.

Regulations	Guidelines that a statutory body frames for its own governance and management.
Rules	Basic methods and course of action regarding any section or clause in the Zoning Act.
Special Permit	A Special Permit is an authorization to construct a building or establish a use not allowed by right.
Subsidized Housing Inventory	A list of housing units in each municipality that counts towards the affordable housing stock under Chapter 40B.
Target industries	Specific business sectors that are desirable for the community as defined by market studies or economic development policy.
Technical assistance	This might include small grant awards, consultants, or providing staff time.
Triplex	A residential building with three units.
Unused/underused property	Property, including any improvements, used irregularly, intermittently, or insufficiently.
Wayfinding	Using signage, color, and other design elements to help the public navigate a space.
Zoning	Ordinances and by-laws adopted by cities and towns to regulate the use of land, buildings, and structures to the full extent of their independent constitutional powers to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of their present and future inhabitants.



APPENDIX:  
ACRONYMS

40B	Comprehensive Permit, per MGL Chapter 40B
AAB	Architectural Access Board
AARP	American Association of Retired Persons
ACS	US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit/ Accessory apartment
AHT	Affordable Housing Trust
AMI	Area Median Income
CDEP	Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
COA	Methuen Council on Aging
CPA	Community Preservation Act
CSO	Combined Sewer Overflow
DCR	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
DDS	Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services
DEI	Diversity Equity and Inclusion
DEP	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
DHCD	Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development
DOE	Massachusetts Department of Education
DOR	Massachusetts Department of Revenue
DPW	Methuen Department of Public Works
ELL	English Language Learner
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EOLWD	Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map

FPD	Flood Plain District
FY	Fiscal Year(s)
GIS	Geographic Information Science
GLSD	Greater Lawrence Sanitary District
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
MACRIS	Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System
MassDOER	Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
MassDOT	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MassGIS	Massachusetts Bureau of Geographic Information
MBTA	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
MCSGOD	Methuen Center Smart Growth Overlay District
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
MGL	Massachusetts General Laws
MHC	Massachusetts Historical Commission
MPSC	Master Plan Steering Committee
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MVP	Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness
MVPC	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
MVTRA	Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
OSRP	Methuen Open Space and Recreation Plan
SHI	Subsidized Housing Inventory
WMA	Water Management Act
ZBA	Methuen Zoning Board of Appeals



