



# LYNNFIELD

# 2040

Shaping our  
Future Today





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# Acknowledgments

This project is led by the Lynnfield Planning Board, with support from Lynnfield Planning Staff, Administration, and the Select Board. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the regional planning agency for Greater Boston, provided technical assistance. The project is funded by a Community Compact Best Practices state grant and technical assistance funds from MAPC.

Special thanks to the Lynnfield community and their participation in the Visioning.

# A Note From the Planning Board

The Lynnfield Planning Board is an independent Town board that acts on behalf of the townspeople as stewards of the Lynnfield Zoning Bylaws and the Rules and Regulations of the Planning Board governing the Subdivision of Land in Lynnfield. In making decisions, the Planning Board is guided by various Town plans and policies, including the town-wide master plan. Lynnfield's most recent master plan, completed in 2002, included aspirational goals pertaining to improved public facilities, economic development and increased socialization opportunities. These goals guided the approvals of MarketStreet, the Rail Trail, public safety facilities improvements, school expansions and other town projects.

It's been 21 years since Lynnfield's master plan was developed and the town has changed considerably during that time. There are also recommended strategies from the master plan that have not been implemented. The vision plan, the document that you are currently reading, is the first step to updating the Town's master plan. Select Board member Phil Crawford aptly summarized the fundamental value of a vision plan at the February 27, 2023 Select Board meeting when he said that it "...doesn't just support the work that we are doing, it defines the work that we are doing." Indeed, the importance of a town-wide vision plan is critical to successful town management and general governance, as it allows for collective reflection, exploration and imagination about what Lynnfield could become in 20 years. It asks, what is working? What isn't working? What could be improved and what should be preserved? The answers to these questions serve as guideposts to town leaders as they consider what plans and projects should be pursued and endorsed, and they will inform debate at future Town Meetings and other forums.

Our goal with this process was to develop a vision for the future of Lynnfield that reflects the aspirations, goals, and values of its residents. We worked in concert with town officials, committees, community groups, and public schools to ensure that residents had multiple opportunities to be a part of the visioning process. It is our intention that this document will serve as a roadmap for decision-making, not only for the Planning Board, but for all Town decision-makers. Our next step will be to develop a master plan that builds on the vision plan by identifying clear goals, objectives, and strategies with actionable steps to meet these expectations. In the meantime, the Planning Board will use the vision plan to make decisions on applications that come before us and will advocate for its use by other Town leaders. We hope that you will join us in being stewards of the Lynnfield vision plan too.

## 4 The Town of Lynnfield

### *Planning Board*

Brian R. Charville, Chair  
Katherine Flaws, Vice Chair  
Edward P Champy III, Clerk  
Amy MacNulty, Member  
E. Page Wilkins, Member

### *Planning Staff*

Emilie Cademartori, Director of Planning and Conservation  
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Jennifer Welter, Planning & Conservation Administrator

### *Lynnfield Town Administration*

Robert Dolan, Town Administrator  
Robert Curtin, Assistant Town Administrator

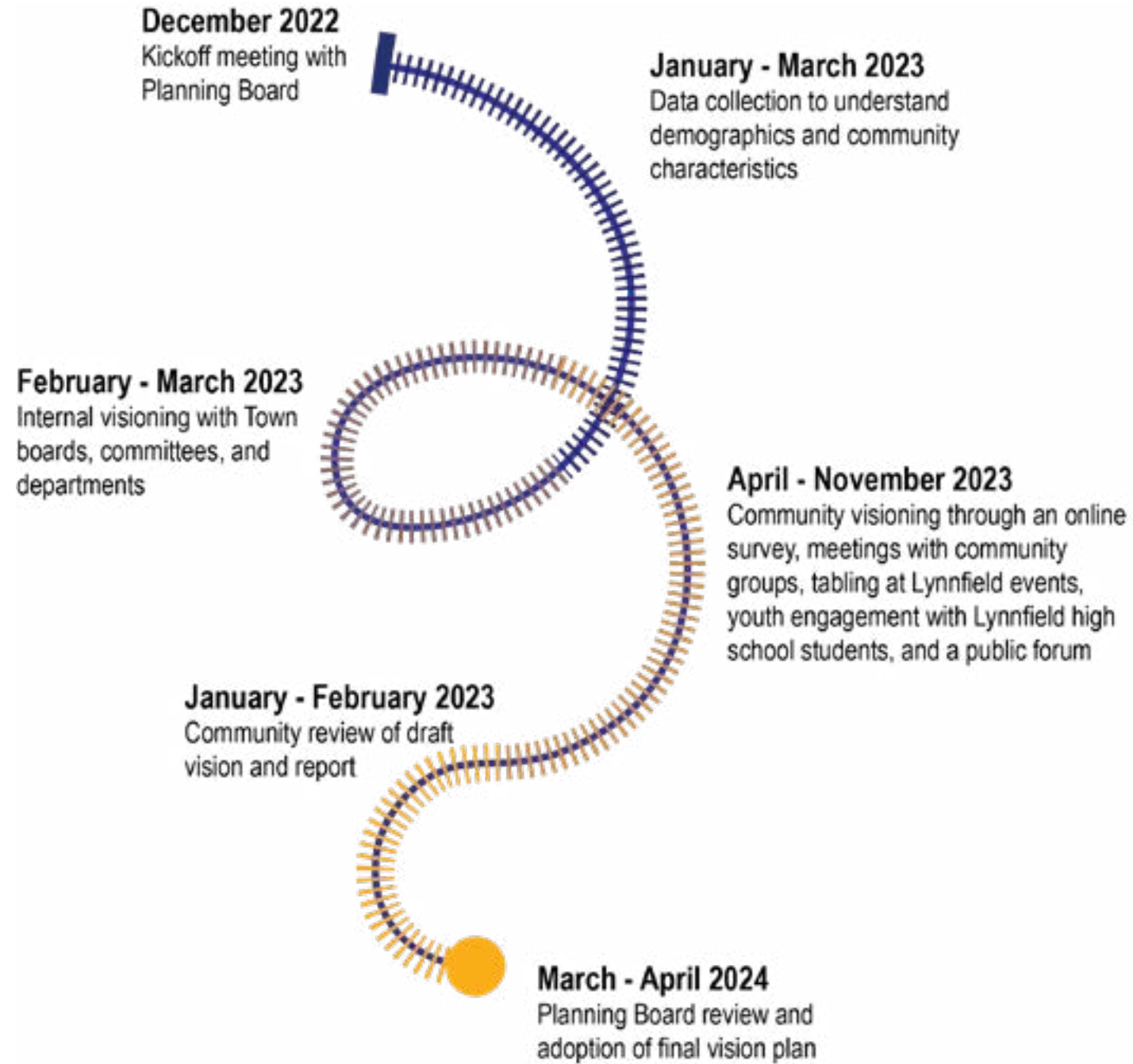
### *Lynnfield Select Board*

Joseph Connell, Chair  
Richard Dalton, Vice Chair  
Philip Crawford, Member

### **Metropolitan Area Planning Council**

Andrea Harris-Long, Manager of Housing and Neighborhood Development (Project Manager)  
Sarah Scott, Regional Land Use Planner II  
Ananth Udupa, Associate Arts & Culture Planner (graphic designer for final plan document)

# Project Timeline



## Lynnfield, Past and Present

The Town of Lynnfield was incorporated in 1814, when it split off from the present-day City of Lynn. It was around that time that the area began to transition from a primarily agrarian economy to an industrial one. Transportation access to Lynnfield also increased during this time, with the construction of the Newbury Turnpike (Route 1) in 1806 and two railroad lines. Suntaug Lake and Pillings Pond became popular recreational destinations for visitors, especially during the summer.

After World War II, Lynnfield experienced significant growth in its housing stock and its population. Over 1,600 houses were built in the 1950s and 1960s and the population more than doubled. The once rural community was transformed into a suburb with increased public services such as post offices, fire and police stations, a new high school, new shopping centers like the Colonial Shopping Center, and an addition to the library.

Today, Lynnfield is an upper-income residential suburban community predominantly composed of single-family homes where most residents work outside of the town. In recent years, Lynnfield has seen an increase in commercial and residential development interest, including the growth of Market Street, as the Greater Boston economy has grown. The Town has responded to this increased development pressure with a variety of plans and land use regulations.





## Recent Planning efforts in Lynnfield

As Lynnfield has grown and changed, the Town has undertaken a variety of planning projects to continue to best meet the needs of residents and visitors. The following summarizes key planning efforts from the 2002 Master Plan to today.



### Master Plan (2002)

Covers a range of topics, including natural resources, public facilities and services, transportation, economic development, housing, and zoning. Includes a vision statement along with goals, recommendations, and implementation actions. The general objectives of the plan are to preserve the existing character of the town, enhance Lynnfield Center through mixed-use development, provide suitable facilities for Town activities, stabilize the tax base, increase the amount of affordable housing, redevelop two of the three golf courses, and position the Town to be pro-active in meeting future challenges and opportunities.



### Housing Production Plan (2006)

Focuses on meeting state-mandated affordable housing requirements in a manner consistent with the character of the community. The plan recommends a variety of types of affordable housing development including small, scattered-site development; high-density cluster development; a large rental housing development; and a mixed-use, village-style development. It also recommends adopting an inclusionary zoning policy that requires affordable units in certain residential developments.



### Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (2019)

Following the adoption of a Complete Streets policy in 2018, the Town developed a prioritization plan that outlines 15 projects where the Town would like to make improvements to enhance multi-modal travel. The top three priorities are Pedestrian Access and Safety Improvements at Lynnfield Middle School, Summer Street School, and Huckleberry Hill Elementary School; Pedestrian and Vehicular Safety Improvements surrounding the Town Common; and Main Street Sidewalk and Intersection Improvements (Lowell Street to Pine Hill Road).



### Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2018) and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Report (2020)

These two plans identify the Town's top local natural and climate-related hazards of concern and provide a suite of mitigation recommendations. Identified hazards include flooding, strong storms, and drought and extreme temperatures. Recommendations include redesigning and retrofitting aging and undersized culverts; intentionally managing Reedy Meadow/Beaverdam Brook; and evaluating town-wide water supply resiliency.



### Open Space and Recreation Plan (2022)

Includes an inventory of historic sites, open space and recreation areas, environmental assets, and lands of conservation and recreation interest along with an analysis of infrastructure and development patterns. Identifies five goals and related objectives along with a seven-year action plan for implementing those goals.

## Community Snapshot: Lynnfield Today

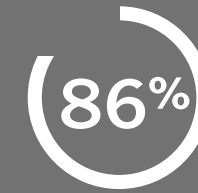
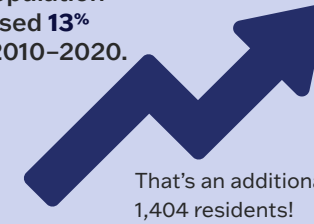
Sources: U.S. Decennial Census, American Community Survey, Banker & Tradesman, ES-202, Census On the Map

### Community Snapshot



### Population

The population increased **13%** from 2010-2020.



of residents identify as White.

### Housing

The average household size is **2.83** people.



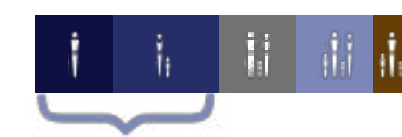
**40%** of households include children



**37%** of households include seniors



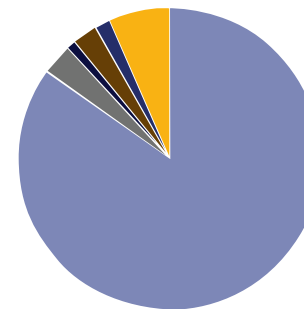
**15%** of households are renters.



**52%** of households are made up of one or two people.



The median sale price of a single-family house has increased **157%** since 2000.



- 85%** Single-Family Detached
- 3%** Rowhouse/Townhouse
- 1%** Duplex
- 3%** Small Multifamily (3-19 units)
- 2%** Medium Multifamily (20-49 units)
- 6%** Large Multifamily (50+ units)

Single-family houses make up nearly all of the housing stock in town.



**One-third** of households spend more than **30%** of their income on housing costs.

### Economy

**39%** of jobs based in Lynnfield are in the service industry.



The top three industries are:



car dealerships

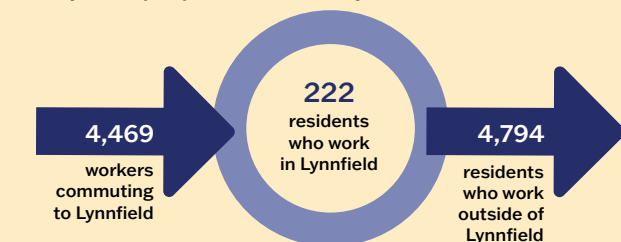


clothing stores

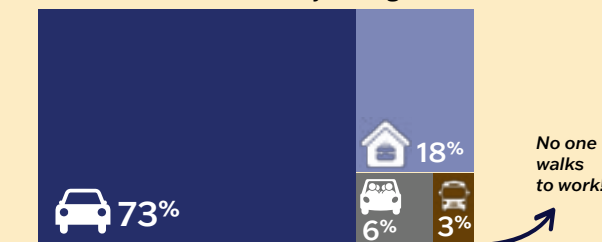


restaurants

Only **5%** of people who work in Lynnfield are residents.



Most residents commute by driving alone.



# Engaging the Lynnfield Community

## Approach to Community Engagement

The Planning Board was eager to ensure that the visioning process included feedback from a diverse array of community stakeholders, so the project team developed a community engagement strategy that was accessible, creative, and prioritized full-circle communication. In addition to the key community engagement opportunities identified here, the project team also publicized the project widely through a Town Talk video, newspaper editorials and social media outreach, water bill inserts, community newsletters, and attendance at various community meetings and events. Over 800 people participated in the townwide survey, and hundreds of people interacted with the Visioning project team at Lynnfield tabling events and civic meetings over the spring/summer in 2023. The draft Vision plan was also released in February for a month-long public comment period, with an accompanying survey.

## Hearing from the Lynnfield Community

### Key Community Engagement Opportunities



### Who We Heard From

Throughout the planning process, demographic information was collected when possible to understand the various groups represented and where perspectives and lived experiences may be over or underrepresented. People who have lived in Lynnfield less than 10 years were less engaged (27% of survey respondents identify in this category). Throughout the process, people of color, people with lower incomes, and renters were underrepresented. These groups represent smaller shares of the Lynnfield population, but the Town should consider how to hear from these groups as it works to diversify both racially and socioeconomically. MAPC interviewed municipal staff to understand current Town dynamics and priorities. Planning Board members met with local community organizations to promote the project and opportunities to provide feedback. MAPC and the Planning Board engaged Lynnfield High School students to hear from younger residents – a group who was less represented in the townwide survey and other engagement activities. MAPC and the Town also had paper copies of the townwide survey and other project materials available at community locations to reach residents who are less comfortable with online engagement. This increased the share of older adults who provided feedback.



### Community Engagement Themes

From the community engagement activities that were undertaken throughout the planning process, three key themes emerged with broad community consensus. The next six pages detail these three themes and identify related strategies that the Town may want to consider pursuing.





# Balanced Community Growth

Many current residents chose to live in Lynnfield because of its quiet, small-town character. They're concerned that new development will negatively impact the town due to demands for increased town services, including school enrollment and water supply, increased traffic congestion, and loss of the natural environment. At the same time, 40% of survey respondents expressed fear of housing instability due to high housing costs, including property taxes. Seniors noted that there are limited options for downsizing and longtime residents said that their children cannot afford to stay in Lynnfield. Two-thirds of survey respondents who moved to Lynnfield in the past three years had a difficult time finding housing, and this is likely to continue as housing supply is limited.

Residents also shared an openness to pursuing economic development and job growth, partly to support the tax base and partly to make town center and South Lynnfield more vibrant, as long as it doesn't change the residential character of the town. 21% of respondents are supportive of more economic development initiatives, and another 45% of respondents are open to the idea but need more information. On the whole, there is a **desire for thoughtful planning that balances growth with its impact on residents**. 68% of respondents note that loss of natural resources is one of Lynnfield's greatest challenges, calling for strategic and efficient land use decisions that advance environmental goals. 78% of respondents identified open space and natural resources as important community features; 70% identified parks and trails as important. Lynnfield High School students agree that open space and natural resources are vital community features. High school students also acknowledged that Lynnfield's rising housing costs are a great concern for keeping existing residents and attracting young people back to Lynnfield. Through a new master plan, the Town can continue to have conversations with community members about how to balance expanded housing options, affordability, and new small business growth with the desire to preserve open space and natural resources.

12 The survey highlighted an opportunity for neighborhood planning aimed at strategically improving key areas in town. 76% of survey respondents noted that a vibrant Lynnfield Center is important, while slightly fewer (62%) believe South Lynnfield should be a vibrant activity center. Lynnfield would be well-served to focus planning efforts in existing centers, while finding ways to preserve the small-town feel of outlying areas of town that are more interspersed with open space and natural resources. Focusing planning efforts can ensure new development remains smaller in scale, further retaining the small-town look and feel that so many current residents love about Lynnfield.

## Emerging Strategies

Feedback related to this theme can inform potential goals for future master plan topic areas such as Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Open Space & Recreation, and Transportation. The following strategies emerged as suggestions through community engagement for the vision plan and could be explored further through a more comprehensive planning process:

- Explore land use techniques, applying strategically in key areas of Lynnfield, that can better address changing housing needs while also considering environmental goals (e.g., water quality, water supply, tree protection).

- Expand the local housing supply to support residents' needs at all phases of life. This could include allowing accessory dwelling units by-right; allowing duplex or triplex conversions in some parts of Lynnfield, particularly when considering how household sizes change and the larger housing stock ages over the next 10-20 years; or incentivizing "starter home" housing types.
- Pursue economic development initiatives to attract new commercial uses that diversify the local tax base without changing residential character of town. Initiatives can be tailored to attract locally owned small businesses.
- Continue to invest in trails and parks so Lynnfield residents have options for recreating and traveling.

## Perspectives from Lynnfield Community Members

"I bought my home 30 years ago and cannot afford to move within the Town."

"The only people I went to school with (K-12 in Lynnfield) who will be able to afford to have their own place in Lynnfield (not their parents) are people who are in VERY well-paying professions."

"[I'm leaving Lynnfield] because I still live with my parents and want to move out on my own now that I've graduated college. There is nothing at all within the budget of either my current job or my immediate job prospects."

"I would like to see the Town retain its character. Neighboring towns such as Middleton have become so overcrowded and congested with traffic that I breathe a sigh of relief when I get back home after driving through them."

"Keep the town small and avoid allowing developers buying up properties followed by tearing down these homes and building very expensive homes."

"Maintain small town feel with lots of green space and accessible natural areas."

"I would like to see us preserve and enhance our history and historic buildings. The colonial look of the town is what gives it its charm."

"Incorporating water needs in development and enforcement of water restrictions to protect our drinking water. Water restrictions are routinely ignored by most residents and by LCWD."

"I'm afraid that Lynnfield will continue to add big box businesses to attract a tax base; and it will lose its character. We need to focus on developing a small town feel with strong schools, local independent shops – which encourages people to want to visit and feel safe to live."

Youth: "I would change how affordable the houses are so the town can be more diverse."



# Connected Community

Lynnfield residents expressed a **desire for community cohesion and gathering**, a theme that was also present in the 2002 Master Plan. 76% of survey respondents said that it is important for the Town to provide social opportunities for youth, seniors, and others. Lynnfield High School students love Lynnfield’s sense of community most. This desire for community includes maintaining and improving public facilities like the library, schools, and other gathering spaces, and providing new recreational opportunities, such as a multigenerational recreation center. 74% of respondents think that it is important for Lynnfield to be a community where everyone can thrive. 64% of respondents said that it is important for the Town to address access to health and

social services. Having a **revitalized town center** with a variety of businesses was also seen as a way to bring people together in so-called “third places.” Having things to do and places to go is very important to Lynnfield High School students. Residents also expressed a **desire for improved transportation connections around town, especially well-maintained sidewalks and safe bicycle facilities**. 67% of residents believe multi-modal transportation options are important. High School students noted that Lynnfield’s lack of bike paths and sidewalks are some of Lynnfield’s greatest challenges. Having the ability to move around Lynnfield and see neighbors out and about is something that residents of all ages would like to see more.

## Perspectives from Lynnfield Community Members

“Would like to see more non-chain restaurants in town and a better use of both Post Office square and Lynnfield Center. The stores do not really appeal to our family, would love to see kids’ activities, a gym, a local restaurant, etc.”

“Creating a vibrant town center and South Lynnfield shopping area should be a priority.”

“[I envision] a vibrant town center where small business can thrive, residents can gather and build community, and young families can build connections/relationships.”

“We want Lynnfield to be a family town with parks and activities for children through high school.”

“Outside of MarketStreet, what is there to do in Lynnfield? Would like more recreation opportunities – bike paths! Maybe a movie theater or something that gets people out of their homes.”

“[I envision] a community center to be shared with youth and seniors.”

“Building the rail trail and creating more walking and biking paths will help the town be healthier, friendlier, more just, and more pleasant to live in.”

“[I envision a] walkable town with amenities, good schools and access to housing.”

“Children are riding bikes after school in the streets which is a massive danger to both them and car drivers. Bike paths must be built to protect both bikers and car drivers.”

“[I would like] increased availability of public spaces for community groups.”

“Would love to see more vibrant areas in town and local transportation options that can help young teens and young adults be occupied and have entertainment.”

“Sidewalks and roads are beyond awful. Some locations don’t even have sidewalks.”

“I love this town. However, if one is not sports-minded, there are few alternatives. It appears that the arts are often overlooked. Also, where does a new library for all ages fit into the plan?”

Youth: “We need more community spaces in general.”

## 14 Emerging Strategies

Feedback related to this theme can inform potential goals for future master plan topic areas such as: Community Services and Facilities, Open Space and Recreation, Housing, and Economic Development. The following strategies emerged as suggestions through community engagement for the vision plan and could be explored further through a more comprehensive planning process:

- Add more safe ways to recreate and see neighbors for everyone, but particularly younger and older residents who may have fewer mobility options.
- Establish a plan for revitalizing town center with a variety of small businesses, housing choices, and community gathering spots (including an improved library), in a way that respects Lynnfield’s history and heritage.
- Continue improving public amenities that serve diverse users (e.g., school, library, arts) and evolving public programming.
- Consider a thorough assessment of Lynnfield’s transportation network and opportunities to improve connectivity both within town but also to neighboring towns and frequented amenities.





# Transparent and Well-Run Town Government

Lynnfield has a strong culture of volunteerism, with many residents offering their time and energy to keep the town running. However, residents' needs are outpacing the capacity of both town staff and volunteers. Many residents feel like they don't know what's going on in Town Hall; the lack of communication has led to a distrust of town government and frustration with all involved, based on comments provided in the survey and reiterated in the draft plan survey from February 2024. 92% of survey respondents said that a well-functioning town government is an important community feature, with 83% noting that accessible town services is also important. Comments highlighted that residents want

a better understanding of ongoing Town initiatives and projects, including capital improvements such as the rail trail and policy changes like zoning and property tax rates. At least 70% of respondents said that municipal finances and local tax rates, maintenance of municipal facilities, or issues with town governance were among Lynnfield's greatest challenges. 67% of respondents identified community-wide communication infrastructure as an important topic that the town needs to address. 63% of respondents identified opportunities for shared services with neighboring towns as an important topic that the town needs to address to help lower municipal costs. Public health and safety are identified as important topics by 79% of respondents, highlighting these as areas to shift focus.

## Perspectives from Lynnfield Community Members

- "Should concentrate on the necessities of Lynnfield like clean water not the luxuries."
- "[My priorities are] lowering taxes and improving efficiency and accountability."
- "I like this town but man my property tax is through the roof and it just seems to be more of the same around here."
- "[I envision the Town] being good stewards of the resident tax dollars and delivering a legacy to our children of being fiscally responsible and careful stewardship of public resources."
- "Communication and access to town management and resources in Lynnfield appears to have frozen somewhere in the 1950s. Scheduling and contact with town management must be brought up to modern standards."
- "I'd like employees who work for the town to be trained in customer service. I don't think most people understand their role in helping residents and/or I wonder if they work in an environment that is not supportive of them."
- "There needs to be a leadership change as it's become quite clear the different boards aren't always working for the well-being of the Town. There has to be more honesty and transparency from leadership who are actively working to represent town residents and listening to what is being asked such as bike paths and road paving being done."
- "Diversifying political positions so that more younger people have the ability to shape the future of Lynnfield and have their voice heard is extremely lacking in this community and needs to change. There should be limitations as far as how long people can hold positions of power and how many political affiliations they can hold."
- "Move to a 5 person select board like most towns our size. Inhibits decision-making. Too much authority in the hands of a few."
- "The leadership in this community does not seem to know their Lynnfield audience. Leadership talks about transparency, but on all levels, there is limited chance for discussion or feedback."
- "I am really disappointed in the progress of the rail trail...When I read a hopeful completion of 2029, I was shocked. This should be a wake-up call to everyone to select the proper people who are dedicated to get this completed."

## 16 Emerging Strategies

Feedback related to this theme can inform potential goals for future master plan topic areas such as Community Services and Facilities and Economic Development. The following strategies emerged as suggestions through community engagement for the vision plan and could be explored further through a more comprehensive planning process:

- Keep the public apprised of project timelines and share updates when work is stalled.
- Explore innovative communication techniques to keep Lynnfield residents and other stakeholders informed. This applies to board/committee meetings and the ways that residents can engage in public discourse. This will improve relationships between residents and Town officials (those elected, appointed, and hired).
- Engage similarly sized communities to expand shared services.
- Adopt new tools that support transparent governance, such as bringing back the Town Annual Report and improvements to the Town website. These efforts can help Lynnfield residents understand why certain projects take longer to advance and overall how municipal finances and connections connect to property taxes.

A significant share of Lynnfield residents care about these three topics, but there was less consensus around them. The Planning Board and Town administration should consider ways to further engage community members on these topics as part of a future master plan update.

# 1

## Economic Development

Lynnfield has undertaken few economic development initiatives beyond permitting the Market Street development since the 2002 Master Plan. Lynnfield residents often voiced displeasure with the Town's reliance on the residential tax base and increasing property taxes. Review of the Town's zoning map shows that there are few areas available for commercial growth, and existing commercial centers are somewhat underutilized. Additionally, while Lynnfield has nearly 6,000 jobs, many of these do not pay wages that match local housing costs. 40% of these jobs are in retail, accommodation, and food services. This jobs-housing mismatch results in very few people who are able to afford to live and work in Lynnfield – only 5% of Lynnfield residents do. It is notable that 19% of survey respondents noted that they want better access to job opportunities that meet their needs in Lynnfield. 4,469 workers commute into Lynnfield every day, while 4,794 residents leave for work. 42% of respondents do not think it is important to be able to live and work in Lynnfield. This commute pattern increases traffic and impacts health outcomes for Lynnfield residents. The survey indicated that despite all this, only 28% of respondents think it is important to address Lynnfield's local economy. Another 28% of respondents answered as "neutral." 24% said this is not important at all. When the town updates the master plan, it will be important to initiate conversations around the importance of resilient local economies that can help pay for quality public services and facilities. Expanding options for Lynnfield workers to live in town and Lynnfield residents to work in town will also have positive impacts on local traffic and health concerns.

# 2

## Climate Resiliency and Adaptation

Related to previous themes concerning preservation of natural resources and balanced growth is Lynnfield's need for climate resiliency and adaptation. 64% of respondents noted this is one of the greatest challenges facing Lynnfield. Lynnfield's suburban, auto-centric development patterns are less energy efficient. Conversations around land use decisions and impacts to the climate and natural resources should be considered in a future master plan update. Furthermore, adapting Lynnfield's existing infrastructure to endure extreme weather events and other climate-related hazards will be critical in the coming years. The townwide survey highlighted that residents are expecting improved resilience and adaptation, and the town should explore the many different actions that can be taken as part of the master plan update.

# 3

## Racial and Social Equity

In 2020, the Planning Board adopted a resolution regarding past discrimination and present and future solutions. The resolution acknowledged government's role in racial discrimination and specifically historical planning and zoning practices that led to racial and socioeconomic segregation. The resolution recommitted to making the Town of Lynnfield "a welcoming place for all." Beyond the Planning Board's commitment through this resolution, a community-based group – Lynnfield for Love – works "to create a more connected Lynnfield community by fostering an appreciation and understanding of diversity and promoting kindness, equality, and justice for all people."

In the townwide survey, 64% of respondents said racial and social equity is important to varying degrees. 16% of respondents said this is not important, while 19% of respondents were neutral. When asked how welcoming and inviting respondents feel Lynnfield is to residents of different groups, 39% of respondents said Lynnfield is not very welcoming to people with lower incomes. 27% of respondents do not think Lynnfield is welcoming to those whose primary language is not English. 25% of respondents said Lynnfield is not very welcoming to people of color. Interestingly, survey respondents only felt confident that Lynnfield is very welcoming to young families (64% of respondents noting this).

While there is some consensus that racial and social equity is important, the survey responses highlight that community conversations about actions towards advancing racial and social equity and expanding inclusivity are necessary. For example, Lynnfield can become more racial and socioeconomically diverse through expanding access to more affordable forms of housing (rental homes, accessory dwelling units without an occupancy requirement, and smaller housing types like townhomes or duplexes); however, many comments received in the survey are opposed to these ideas.

“ [Lynnfield] needs a great deal more work to be inclusive and welcoming of ALL persons and families. ”

- Community Survey Respondent



# Looking Ahead: A Vision for 2040 and Beyond

## Vision

In 2040, Lynnfield will be a quiet, safe, suburban community with outstanding schools, friendly neighbors, and a transparent, modern government. People can walk, bike, and roll safely through town to get to school, shops, and recreational areas. Lynnfield Center and Post Office Square will be thriving retail centers with small businesses that cater to residents' needs and help create a sense of community. The development of new housing will provide opportunities for seniors to downsize and young people to buy a starter home. The Town will manage public resources to alleviate individual tax burdens while providing key community services and amenities. Economic development initiatives will support the local economy and tax base in a manner consistent with Lynnfield's small-town feel. Proactive measures will be taken to steward our natural resources, including addressing water supply challenges and climate change.

## Guiding Principles

A vision provides a description of where a community wants to be in the future; principles provide guideposts for how to get there and give town officials a common framework from which to make municipal policies and administrative decisions, which strengthens accountability and improves community confidence. Community engagement for this plan indicated support for establishing the following principles to help advance municipal governance in Lynnfield:



### Fiscal Responsibility

Lynnfield is mindful of the impact of increasing property taxes on homeowners, especially those with low and/or fixed incomes. The Town considers cost-savings measures such as shared services, co-locating municipal services in public facilities, and forecasting maintenance costs for long-term financial planning, in addition to revenue-generating measures such as targeted commercial development.



### Civic Access and Discourse

Lynnfield continues to find new ways to keep residents, business owners, and other community members engaged in local governance and decision-making. Town Meeting is a welcoming and modernized process that allows for a variety of residents to participate. Boards and Committees are comprised of diverse voices and lived experiences.



### Lifelong Community

Lynnfield offers quality services and amenities for residents of all ages and abilities, including opportunities for people to meet and gather. Housing options support a variety of household types, from new graduates and young families to aging adults, that allow residents to live in Lynnfield their whole life.



### Resource Management

Lynnfield considers the impacts of its decisions on existing natural resources and strives to balance growth with environmental sustainability. New development maintains Lynnfield's small-town feel and quality of life while contributing to sustained community vibrancy.



### Public Health and Safety

Lynnfield provides access to health and social services, affordable and healthy food, and diverse recreation options for all ages. The Town ensures residents feel safe in daily life and during emergencies and disasters.

## Making the Vision a Reality

### Recommendations

Once a vision is established, the town must take concrete steps to achieve it. The following recommendations are the first steps to implementing the vision plan.

#### 1 Adopt vision plan

The Planning Board and Select Board should adopt the vision plan. The Planning Board, as the main implementers of the vision, should share the vision plan with Town boards and committees. Planning staff should share the vision with other town departments. Administratively, town staff should revisit decision-making processes and find ways to integrate the findings and recommendations of vision plan to ensure consistency with community desires and needs.

#### 2 Develop a new master plan

Throughout the visioning process, it was clear that Lynnfield residents are prepared to dive deeper into the policy topic areas traditionally covered in a master plan. The vision is the first step in Lynnfield updating the 2002 master plan. The Planning Board should initiate the master plan update process, continuing to engage with the vision serving as a basis.

The townwide survey and feedback received at in-person events offers a wealth of qualitative data, including several ideas for specific goals, strategies, and actions for the town to undertake. The Master Plan update should more thoroughly examine existing conditions and engage the community more deeply in all of the various topic areas. This vision plan connects themes heard through the community engagement to future master plan topics.

Lynnfield could fund a master plan update with local funds, but the Town can also pursue regional and state planning grants that help communities undertake long-range planning efforts. MAPC recommends applying for a [Community One-Stop for Growth Planning Grant](#) to help fund a master plan update. The Town could also apply for a MAPC Technical Assistance grant to help fund the update.

This visioning process engaged a wide variety of Lynnfield stakeholders, and this engagement can serve as the basis for the master plan update. Additional outreach methods should be employed, such as a townwide mailer, focus groups with residents and workers who are usually under-represented, pop-up events or presentations at community gathering spots and meetings, etc.

#### 3 Improve town communication and transparency

At the culmination of the visioning process, the Planning Board should provide an update to community members in the new Lynnfield newsletter and continue to provide substantive updates to keep residents informed. The Town's Town Talk video series and local Lynnfield newspapers are excellent resources for sharing information. Business owners should be engaged to establish deeper community ties. Community conversations about challenging topics like local tax base and financial considerations, racial and social equity, climate change resiliency and adaptation, housing, and economic development should occur so residents are more informed as they participate in a master plan update and ultimately vote on individual proposals at Town Meeting. Lynnfield should consider best practices like Beverly's [Community Conversations series](#) (a partnership with a local theater) where experts and community members come together to discuss emerging trends and topics. These forums can also be leveraged to provide updates on town initiatives such as the rail trail project, roadway projects, capital improvement projects, etc.

## Considerations for Future Planning Efforts

Even robust public engagement that uses a variety of outreach methods and communication channels will only engage a small percentage of a community's population. The project team learned valuable lessons that should be applied to future planning efforts in Lynnfield, especially a future master plan update:

- Identify community members who are well-connected and are trusted in the Lynnfield community. Establish a liaison engagement model to help share information and encourage participation when engagement opportunities arise.
- Prioritize talking with community members who have less influence in local government, including younger residents, renters, people of color, people with lower incomes, people who are new to Lynnfield, and people who work in Lynnfield but do not live in town.
- Include the business community in conversations about economic development, housing, and land use regulations.
- Regularly ask people how they want to be engaged. When engaging with people, collect demographic information for tracking who is and is not represented.
- Budget appropriately for expensive but effective outreach methods, like townwide mailers, yard signs and large banners, etc. can be used to broaden reach.





## Resources and Background Information

Throughout the project, materials and information have been made available on the project webpage:

<https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/lynnfield-2040/>

### Key Background Materials for Further Information

Introductory [Town Talk video](#) with Town Administrator Rob Dolan and Planning Board Chair Brian Charville

Relevant Planning Board Presentations:

- [March 1, 2023 Meeting](#) – presentation on “community snapshot” data
- [July 26, 2023 Meeting](#) – findings from spring/summer engagement activities, including the townwide survey results

[Community Snapshot Infographic](#)

[Community Survey Results \(summary slides and complete results\)](#)

November 29, 2023 Open Housing [Recording](#) and [Presentation](#)

[Draft Vision Plan, released for public comment in February 2023](#)

[Draft Plan Survey Results \(summary slides and complete results\)](#)

### Data sources utilized to understand community characteristics included:

- US Decennial Census
- American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates
- Census On the Map
- MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- MASS Department of Transportation
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, ES-202 Employment and Wage Data



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