



# Strategic Danvers

**PRIORITIZATION WORKSHOP**

November 8, 2023







**00 // WELCOME**

**01 // WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN?**

**02 // DRAFT VISION AND GOALS**

**03 // PRIORITIZING ACTIONS**

**04 // WHAT'S NEXT?**

**05 // SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

**06 // GROUP REPORT BACK**



# Agreements

- Speak from “I” – Remember you are an expert in your own experience, but your experience is not universal.
- Engage with the idea, not the person – Assume good intentions when you can, and avoid personal attacks on people who share.
- Share the floor – Everyone has different styles and levels of engagement. Be sure to make space for folks who need more time to process, and support the participation of everyone.
- Understand tonight’s purpose – to provide a space to reflect on the current community and discuss ways to prioritize potential future actions



01 //

# Strategic Danvers - Why a Strategic Plan?

# Why a Strategic Plan?

A Select Board priority to plan for the future (2030 and beyond) and how to get there through a community-led process

- Understand trends influencing present and future
- Develop a shared vision with the public
- Address growth and development topics
- Identify opportunities and understand trade-offs
- Balance competing priorities





# Danvers At a Glance

## Population

- 28,087 people (Census 2020)
- +6.0% 2010-20 (1,600 people)

## Households

- 10,652 households (ACS 2016-20)
- +3.6% 2010-20 (373 households)

## Housing

- 11,763 housing units (Census 2020)
- +5.6% 2010-20 (630 units)



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Some takeaways...

- We're changing, but not through significant growth in past decade
- Our population is growing older, and we're becoming more diverse
- How we respond to change will shape who we become as a Town in the future



# Our Planning Process





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# Draft Vision and Goals

# Creating a Vision for the Future

We talked with residents, business owners, students, and other stakeholders to inform a draft vision for the future of Danvers in 2030.



# Public Engagement by the Numbers

**680**

Survey Responses

**50+**

Vision Forum Attendees

**82**

Interactive Map Respondents

**40+**

Focus Group Participants

**242**

Summer Engagement Poll Participants

**1,000+**

Total Engagement So Far





# Our Vision for the Future...

- Describes Danvers in 2030 and beyond
- Provides the overarching framework for *Strategic Danvers*
- Is supported by a series of goals and strategies to achieve it



# Informed by Community Input

## Draft Vision Statement

Danvers is a North Shore community that prizes our small-town feel, vibrant downtown, and treasured open spaces like Endicott Park while welcoming new residents. We take pride in our strong sense of community, the events that bring us together, and proactively managing change. We remain strong stewards of our physical and financial resources by growing responsibly to meet the needs of our community and provide a high quality of life for all.



# Our Goals

1

Maintain our small town feel while fostering appropriate growth in downtown and along commercial corridors.





# Our Goals

2

Foster an inclusive and welcoming community.



# Our Goals

3

Preserve and enhance our shared open spaces.





# Our Goals

4

Promote civic engagement and diverse community activities.





# Our Goals

5

Continue our financial stewardship by growing equitable and fiscally responsible revenues



03 //

# Prioritizing Actions

# Identifying Priorities, Strategies, and Metrics

- What do we want to achieve by 2030 (and beyond)?
- How will we achieve it?
- Who will take the lead?
- How will we measure progress?





# What Can the Town Do?

- Develop department work plans to focus effort on priorities
- Allocate budget to fund key projects or programs
- Review zoning and regulations that guide private development and business activity
- Invite broad public participation

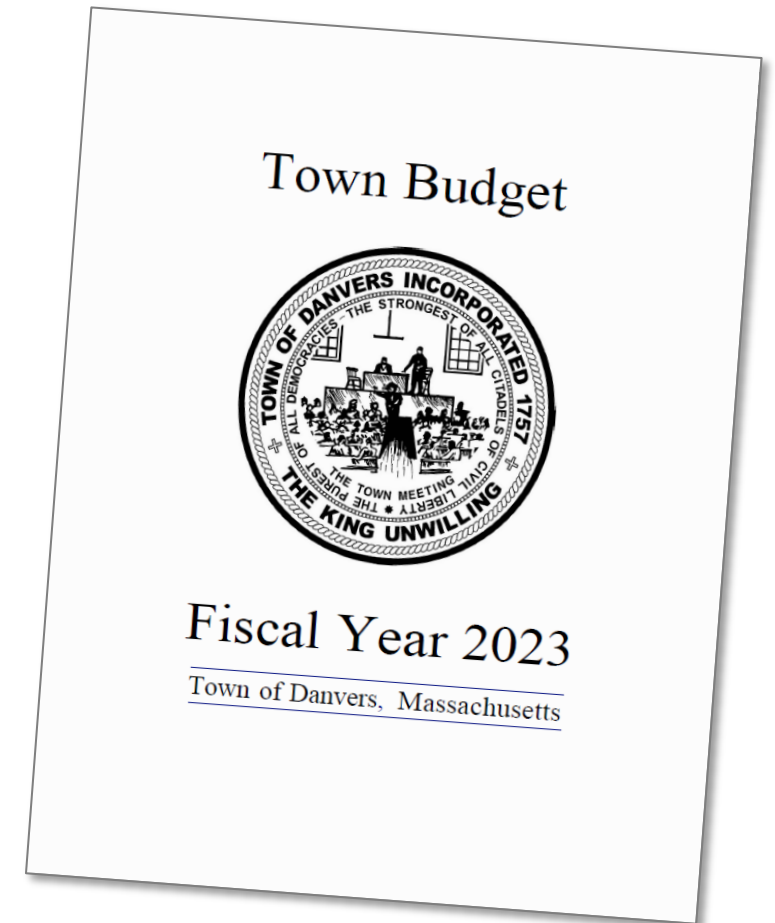


# However, the Town Is Near Its Overall Tax Levy Limit

**\$50,000**

Amount Town was from its  
\$89.74M levy limit in FY2023  
(0.06%)

- Danvers has a Triple-A (AAA) bond rating and good fund balance
- The Town has adequate debt capacity—but making debt payments within budget is an issue



# How Do We Consider Priorities and Evaluate Trade-Offs?

*"We can do anything, but not everything."*

## Tangible Factors

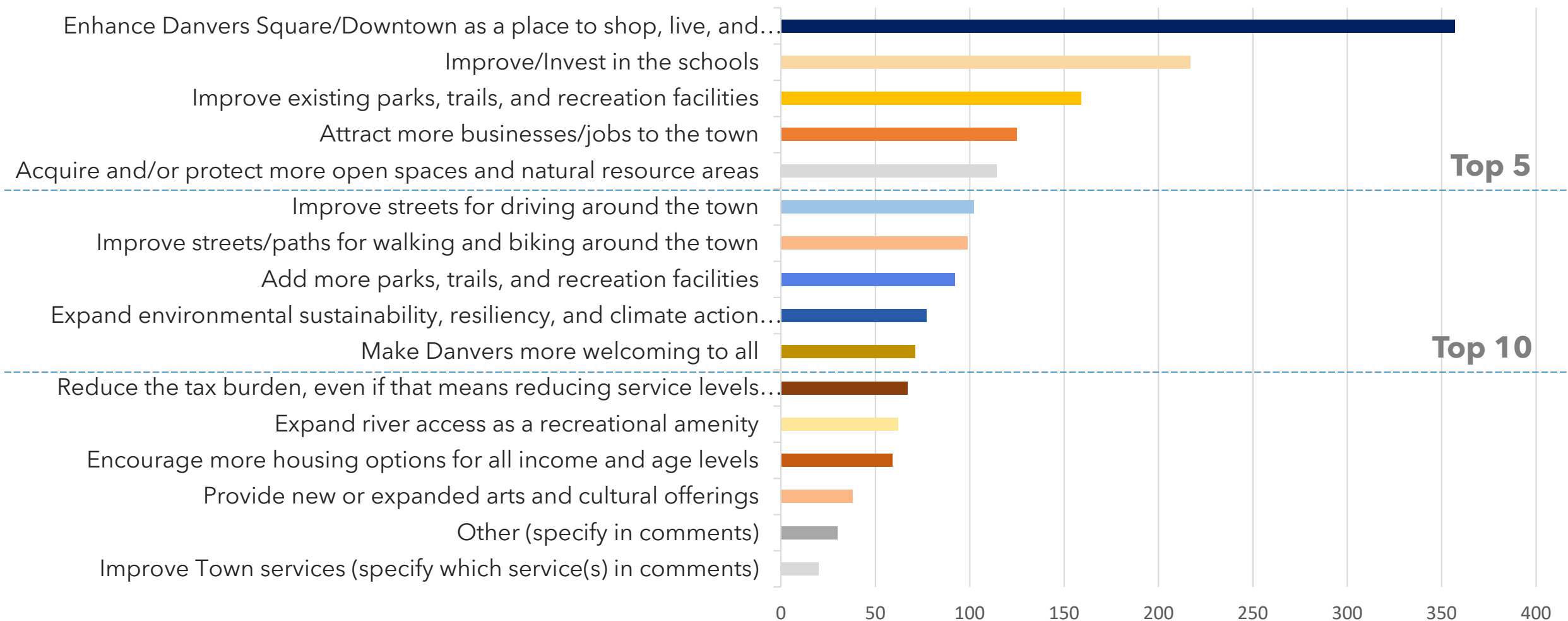
- Costs to Town to implement
- New revenues to Town generated by action
- Physical change

## Intangible Factors

- Community priorities
- Quality of life improvements
- Maintaining or enhancing character



# Survey Feedback on Potential Improvements



593 responses to the prompt: "Identify the three that you think would most improve the overall quality of life in Danvers over the next 5-7 years."





# Potential Action Items for Consideration

1

Maintain our small town feel while fostering appropriate growth in downtown and along commercial corridors.

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- ❑ Improve aesthetics of downtown and commercial corridors
- ❑ Create spaces to gather downtown
- ❑ Encourage redevelopment of underutilized properties for new housing and businesses



# Potential Action Items for Consideration

2

Foster an inclusive and welcoming community.

- ❑ Prioritize school investment to support physical and programmatic improvements
- ❑ Promote greater housing variety to meet residents' changing needs over time
- ❑ Address physical accessibility of public buildings, parks, and streets/sidewalks



# Potential Action Items for Consideration

3

Preserve and enhance our shared open spaces.

- ❑ Enhance neighborhood parks for residents of all ages and abilities
- ❑ Improve open spaces like Sandy Beach and Lebel's Grove to meet current and future needs
- ❑ Improve local streets to encourage safe, convenient, and attractive alternatives to short car trips



# Potential Action Items for Consideration

4

Promote civic engagement and diverse community activities.

- ❑ Implement a Town communication strategy to share timely, accurate information and meeting notices
- ❑ Work with community partners to expand programming and events
- ❑ Support arts and culture activities that bring people of different ages and backgrounds together





# Potential Action Items for Consideration

5

Continue our financial stewardship by growing equitable and fiscally responsible revenues

Grow/maintain  
our tax base

Maintain/reduce  
our costs

- ❑ Encourage the conversion of underused commercial sites into new mixed-use or housing with shared public amenities
- ❑ Retain and attract businesses
- ❑ Evaluate the range and cost of Town services



04 //

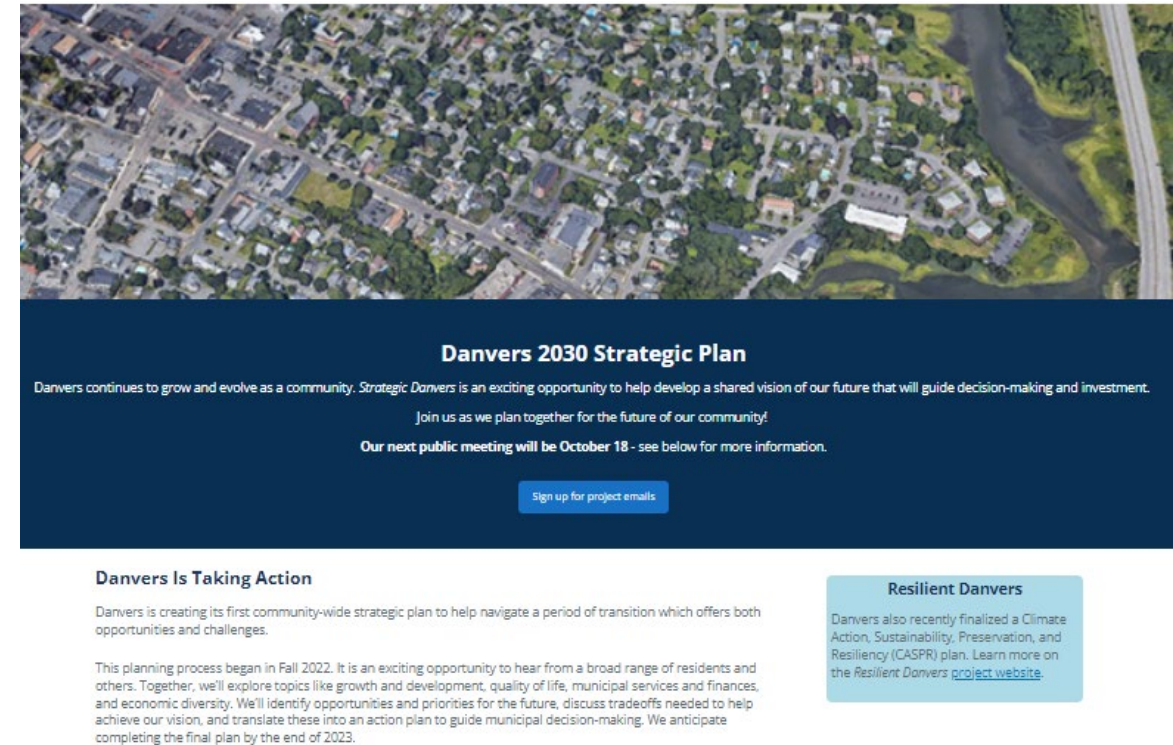
# What's Next?

# Share Our Website with Neighbors

<https://strategic.danversma.gov>

Available now...

- Brief **survey** like tonight's small group discussion
- Share this **presentation** with friends – recording online soon
- Review the "**Danvers Today**" report and past presentations
- Sign up for project emails





# Zoom Participants:

## Take the Surveys:

<https://tinyurl.com/Danvers-popup>

- Draft vision and goals survey
- Prioritization of potential action items



05 //

# Small Group Discussions

# Talking With Each Other

In your small groups...

- Individual prioritization exercise: *5-10 min*
- Talk about how you prioritized action items and work toward group consensus on top 5 priorities: *30-35 min*





# Hearing From Other Groups

Report backs: *3-4 minutes per group*

- Did your group reach consensus on your top 5? If so, which action items?
- If not, what were the differences?



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# Thank You!



<https://strategic.danversma.gov>