



Strategic Danvers

VISION + GOALS WORKSHOP

October 18, 2023





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01 // WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN?

02 // WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM YOU

03 // DRAFT VISION AND GOALS

04 // THINKING ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION

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07 // GROUP REPORT BACK



00 //

Welcome

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 generate areas to focus on during the Strategic Plan process.



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)



Create 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.



Identify Priorities, Strategies, and Metrics

Once the vision is confirmed:

- We'll evaluate tradeoffs and identify priorities together
- 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?



Our Planning Process



02 //

What We Heard From You

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



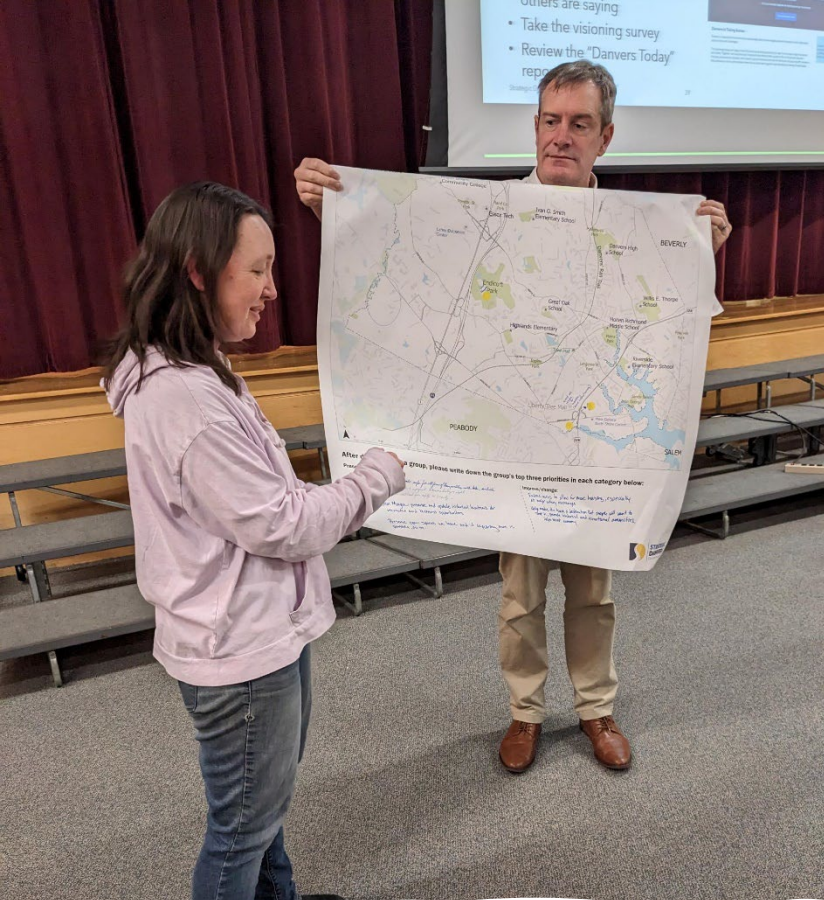
Visioning Forum

Small group discussions about vision for future

Mapping exercise to identify places to *preserve/enhance* and places to *improve/change*

38 personal vision statements and 18 “Danvers in 2030” headlines





Visioning Forum

- Identifying shared priorities

"Danvers in 2030" Headlines

"Danvers: A welcoming community"

"Strategic Danvers set the blueprint for the Town's resurgence and prominence on the North Shore"

"Danvers has not lost the small town feel"

"Honoring history.
Boosting economy.
Inclusive community.
Nurturing"

"Danvers: True to our heritage, dedicated to our future"

"Danvers has kept its 'old town' character and created a new town section that is thriving. But do we have enough water?"



Focus Group Feedback

"Lots of great businesses in this town"

"I hope people get involved to discuss changes"

"We want transformational change, not merely transitional change to check a box"

"Danvers is a town, I don't want to see it become like a city"

"Danvers is the place I live but not a home"

"A great town to live in and raise a family"

"Downtown leaves a lot to be desired"



Quality of Life

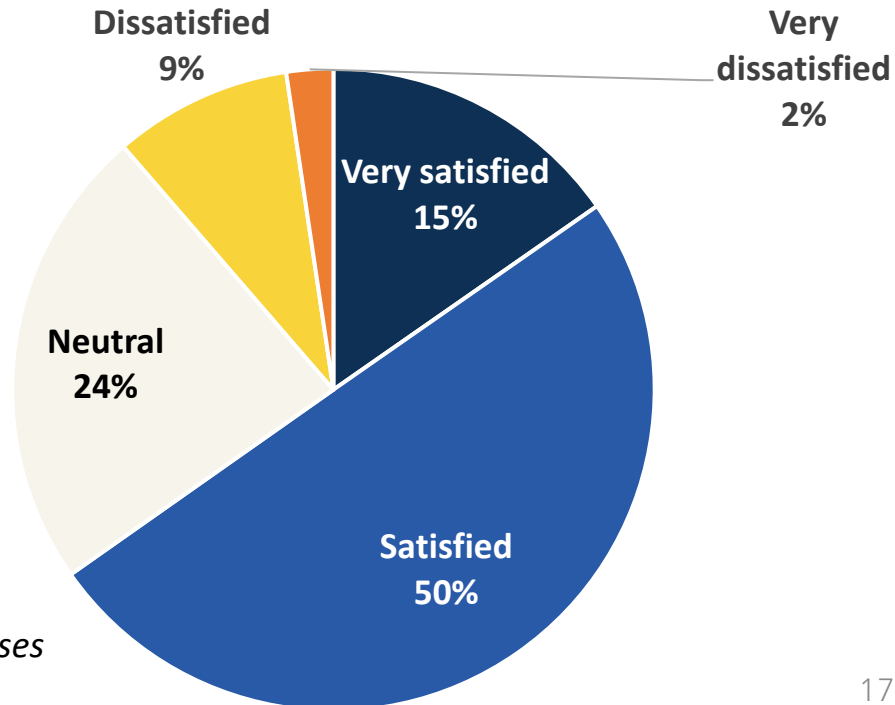
Overall:

67% Satisfied or Very Satisfied

→ Comparable to national average:

65% very/somewhat satisfied

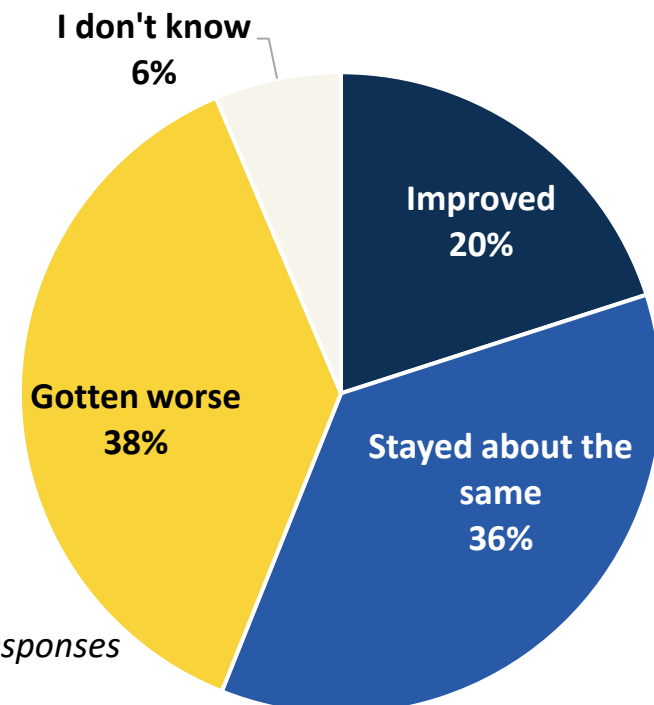
Reference: Gallup 2023



679 Total Responses
1 Skipped

Change in Past Five Years:

56% Improved or Stayed About the Same



644 Total Responses
36 Skipped



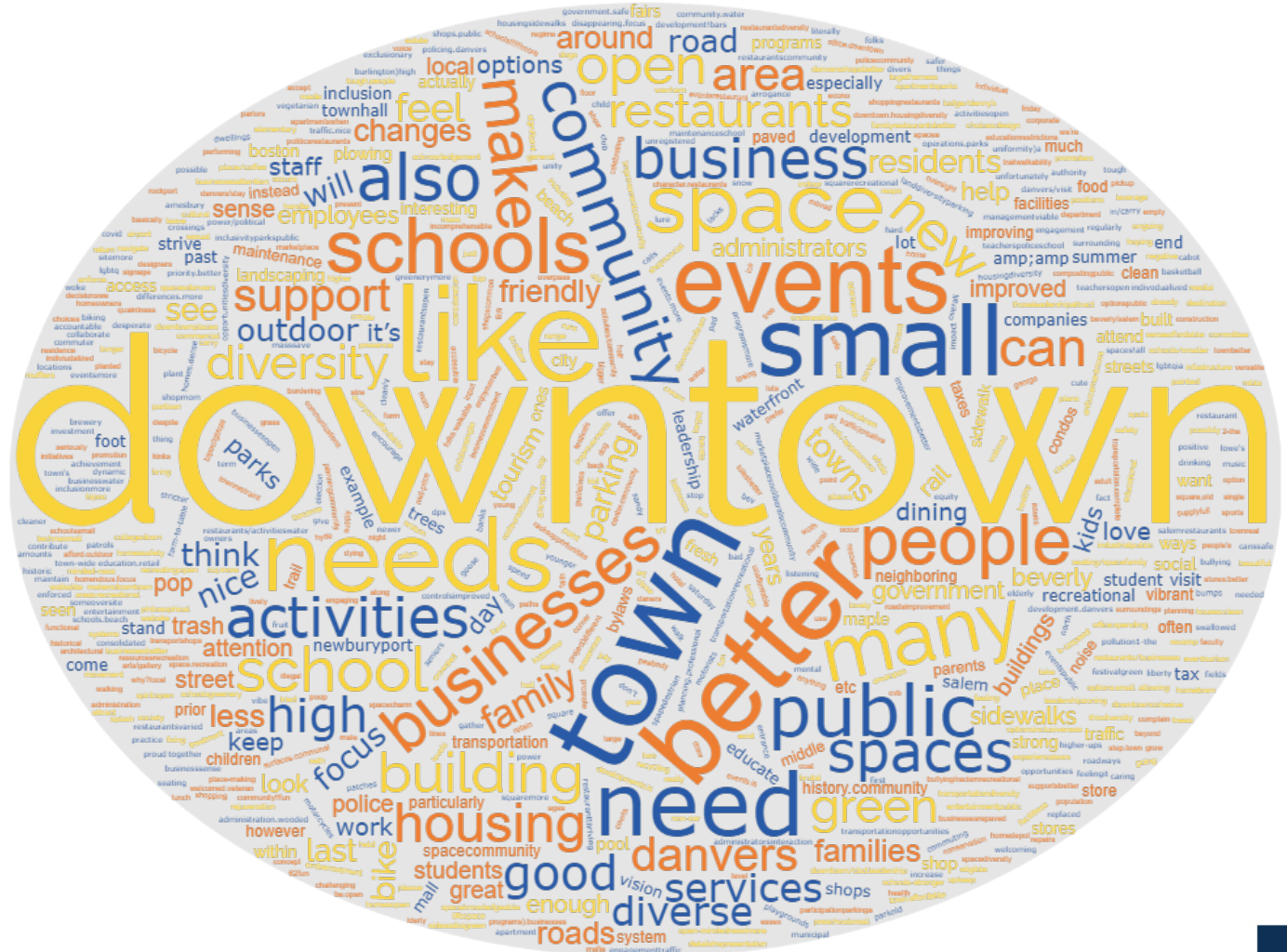
What I love about Danvers...

Location
Outdoor/Green Spaces
Community Feel
Small Town



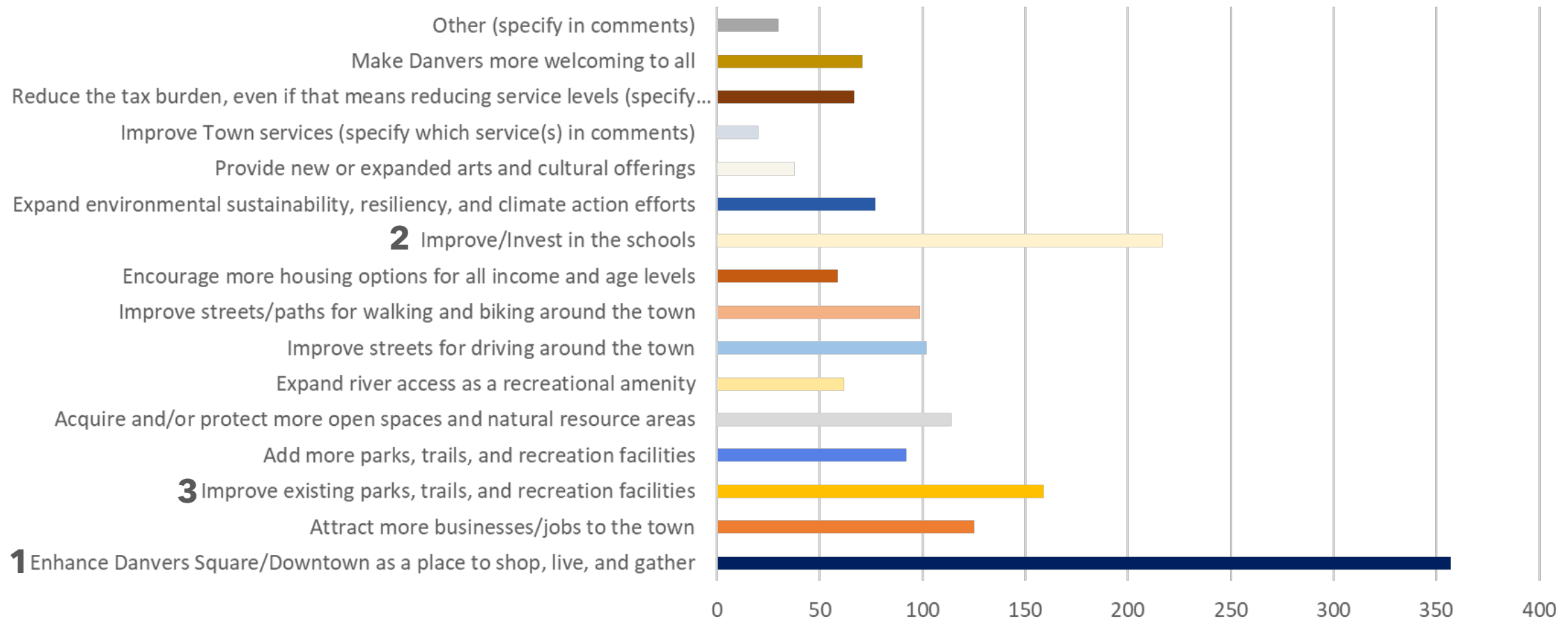
What I think Danvers needs **more of...**

**Social Events/
Gatherings**
Improved Amenities
Local Businesses

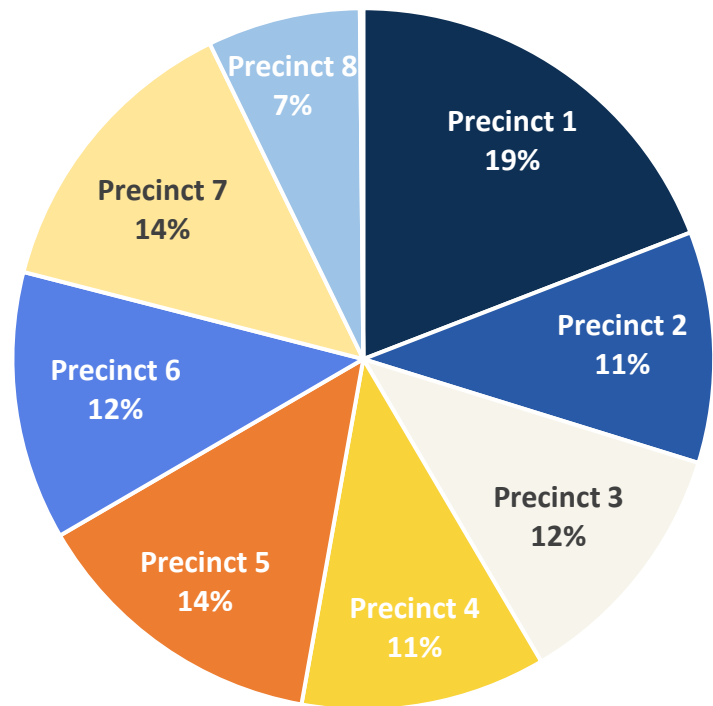


Top 3 Potential Improvements

- Enhance Danvers Square/ Downtown as a place to shop, live, and gather
- Improve/ Invest in the schools
- Improve existing parks, trails, and recreation facilities



Survey Demographics

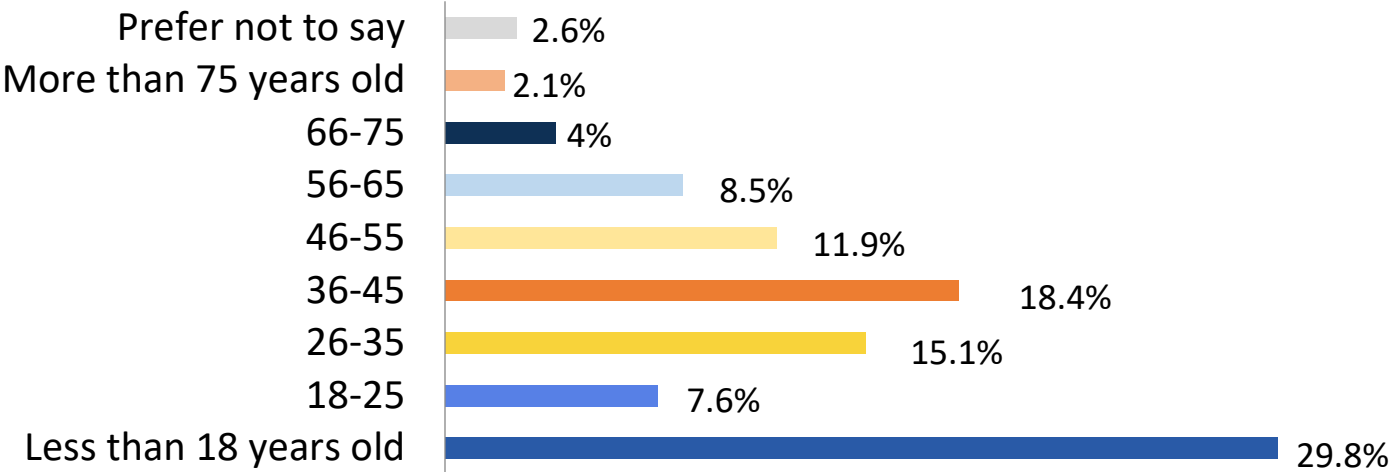


15%

Respondents living in
Danvers less than 5 years

32%

Respondents living in
Danvers 20+ years

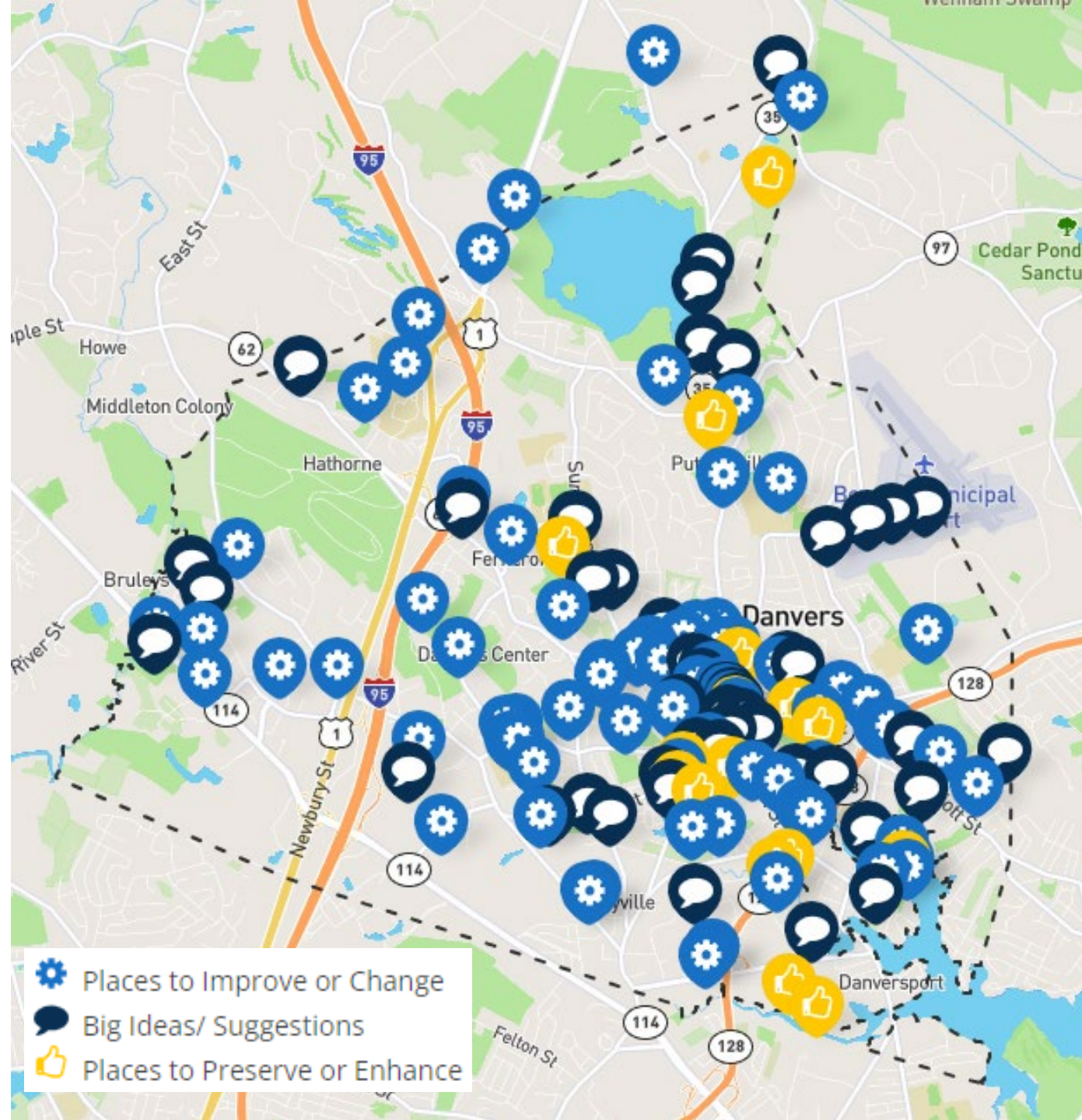


Interactive Map

80 Places to Improve or Change

52 Big Ideas/Suggestions

16 Places to Preserve or Enhance



Summer Engagement Summary



03 //

Draft Vision and Goals

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



04 //

Thinking About Implementation

How Do We Achieve Our Vision?

Three primary actors:

- **Town of Danvers:** direct action guided by *Strategic Danvers* plan
- **Property and business owners**
- **Community partners**



What Can the Town Do?

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

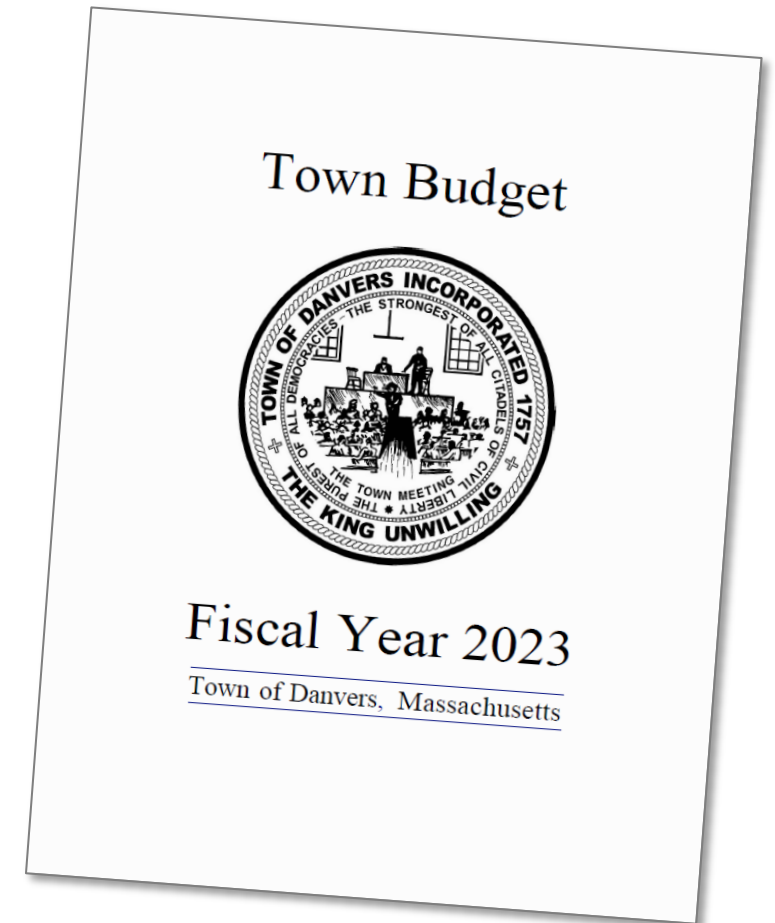


However, the Town is Near Its Overall Tax Levy Limit

\$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



What Else Can the Town Do?

- Complete *Strategic Danvers* process to identify shared community priorities for implementation plan
- Evaluate services and programs
- Identify State and Federal funding for key initiatives
- Future consideration: conduct a Town-wide Master Plan (long-range, policy-oriented comprehensive plan)



What Can Property and Business Owners Do?

- Choose to redevelop existing properties and/or build new construction
- Locate a new business here or invest in an existing businesses
- Actions and decision-making guided by market conditions, zoning, and other regulations



What Can Community Partners Do?

- Raise awareness and promote involvement
- Advocate for issues
- Plan events and activities
- Actions and decision-making guided by involved members



05 //

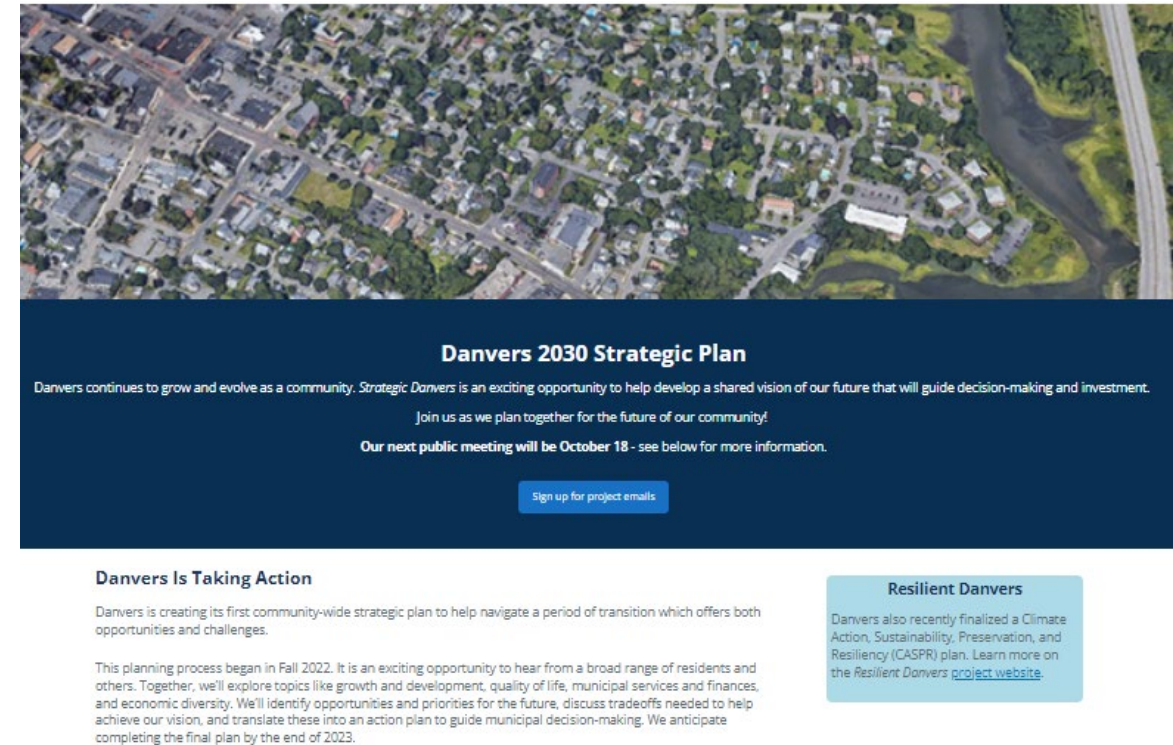
What's Next?

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



Attend Our Next Meetings

Taking Action: Trade-offs and Prioritization

- Mid-day Saturday, November 4 (time TBD)
- Wednesday, November 8 from 6-8pm
- Both at Holten-Richmond Middle School

Same content, slightly different formats



06 //

Small Group Discussions

Hearing from each other

In your small groups...

- Comment on the draft vision and goals individually – *5 min*
- Discuss your comments with the group and identify shared themes – *20 min*
- Talk about potential strategies and how to prioritize – *25 min*



Hearing from other groups

Report backs: 3-4 minutes per group

- What did you like about the draft vision and goals? Anything you would change?
- How should the Town think about prioritizing implementation actions?



Thank You!



<https://strategic.danversma.gov>