

Table 10. Strategies

	Recommendation					Priority		Value			Goal	PG#
1	Modify the zoning to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on existing single-family lots.					DO		2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10			2, 8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	7	0	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
2	Modify the zoning to allow smaller lot sizes, and/or multiple units, on existing lots (e.g. one or two duplexes on a lot).					DO		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9,10			2, 8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	6	1	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
3	Create zoning to encourage senior-friendly housing so that seniors can remain in the community.					DO		2, 5, 6, 8, 9			8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	6	0	0	0	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
4	Apply for grants for dam maintenance and water quality monitoring.					DO		2, 5, 6, 8, 9			1, 9	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	5	2	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
5	Develop a potable water resiliency plan.					DO		1, 3, 4, 7			1	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	5	2	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
6	Prioritize climate resilient solutions for repairs and maintenance of culverts, bridges, and roads.					DO		1, 3, 4, 7			1, 2, 9	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	3	4	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
7	Increase the Fire and Ambulance budgets to allow for 24/7 coverage to support increasing cases of slip/falls with seniors.					DO		2, 6, 8			9	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	1	5	1	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
8	Establish an energy resiliency plan.					EXPLORE		1, 3, 4, 7			5	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	4	1	1	1	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
9	Develop a communications plan for the town for emergencies and other events.					EXPLORE		3, 4, 6, 7, 8			9	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	4	1	0	0	2	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
10	Establish a comprehensive beaver management strategy.					EXPLORE		1, 3, 4, 7			1, 2	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	3	2	0	1	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

NCR : Natural and Cultural Resources | OSR: Open Space and Recreation | S+F Town Services and Facilities

	Recommendation					Priority		Value			Goal	PG#
11	Update land use regulations to encourage climate resiliency.					EXPLORE		1, 3, 4, 7			1-5, 9	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	3	2	0	1	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
12	Create a Land Stewardship Plan for Town-owned land.					EXPLORE		1, 3, 4, 7			1-5, 9	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	1	4	1	0	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
13	Join the Franklin Regional Transit Authority in order to increase access opportunities for residents (especially seniors).					DISCUSS		2, 6, 8, 9			8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	2	3	2	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
14	Engage with regional partners to implement action plans in the Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan for age and dementia friendly communities.					DISCUSS		2, 6, 8, 9			8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	1	3	2	0	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
15	Establish heating/cooling shelters across town that can be used during the school year.					DISCUSS		2, 6, 8, 9			6, 7, 10	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	2	2	2	1	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
16	Allow for the development of multi-family units.					DISCUSS		2, 6, 8, 9			8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	2	1	0	1	2	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
17	Use CPA funds to purchase parcels to protect the aquifer.					RETHINK		1, 3, 4, 7			1	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	2	1	1	0	3	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
18	Modify the Town zoning to permit activity for economic resiliency.					RETHINK		2, 4, 6, 8			8, 10	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	2	1	1	0	3	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
19	Modify the Town zoning to allow for senior housing, and partner with a developer to build affordable/senior housing on Town owned land, including applying for State grants to finance the construction.					RETHINK		2, 6, 8			8	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	1	2	0	0	3	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F
20	Investigate adding a community center.					RETHINK		2, 6, 8			6, 7, 10	AA
	High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
	1	1	4	0	2	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

5. Next Steps

5.1 CONTINUING COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

A clear message from the participants was how much they enjoyed gathering to discuss the data and topics. In fact, the third workshop was restructured at the request of participants in the earlier workshops to allow attendees to talk with each other in groups about the potential recommendations and implications. (The first two workshops prioritized individual comments rather than group discussion). A strong recommendation of this plan will be to continue to find ways to discuss topics of importance to the community outside the Town Meeting or town committee structure.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION INITIATIVE

A frequent first step for communities that have completed a comprehensive plan is to appoint an implementation committee. Members of this committee are typically appointed by both the Planning Board and the Selectboard and are often responsible for reporting on progress in completing actions and recommending next steps to the Town Meeting. The committee may collect data from departments to track progress and may, at the request of the Selectboard and Planning Board, oversee some implementation actions.

As discussed in **Sections 3.3 and 5.2**, the Leverett community has identified a series of topics that require further exploration, discussion, and perhaps a different approach. One participant noted how hard it is for the community to discuss areas of interest outside Town Meeting or the board/committee structure. Rather than creating a new implementation committee, this plan recommends creating a Community Conversation Initiative. This initiative would convene 2-4 times per year to discuss topics of interest, starting with those that are identified in the plan as Explore, Discuss, and Rethink.

The Planning Board would invite the board or committee with the most relevance to the topic to convene the next session, to spread the work across many hands. An alternative would be a twice-yearly check-in among

the boards and commissions to identify areas in which community input would be helpful. Such a structure would support the conversations that began during this planning process and allow the boards, commissions, and departments to test new ideas and directions with the community in a less formal setting.

I do think more public forums on town issues would be important, even though I think we have enough other types of community events. For example, the issue of zoning + development and how both to honor the goal of more affordable housing and yet to conserve the rural nature of town + its conservation lands would be a good topic for a public forum. Also, other uses for existing town buildings to serve a range of needs, eg seniors.

5.2 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

The following pages provide more specific detail about each of the strategies described in **Section 3.3**, including the following information:

- The chart of values, goals, scores, and planning elements to support the priority designation.
- The origin of the recommendation (community workshops, the survey, previous plans, or research by the consultant team).
- Why the recommendation was included based on its relevance to what the consultant team heard from the planning process.
- How the strategy could be implemented if the Town chooses to move forward. This could include additional studies.
- Barriers to and opportunities for implementation, based on community comments or existing conditions.

The twenty recommendations described in **Section 3.3** are first in this section. **Section 5.3** provides a list of recommendations from the plans and reports from the last ten years (see **Section 2.1**). The list groups recommendations by the Section 81D planning element to aid in evaluating whether similar recommendations from different plans can be grouped for implementation.

1	Modify the zoning to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on existing single-family lots.	DO
----------	---	-----------

Value					2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10						
Goal					2, 8						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
7	0	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

The Leverett Planning Board; community workshops and the survey.

Why is it important?

In the publication of The ABCs of ADUs by AARP, it was found that ADUs play a major role in serving the housing need for communities. ADUs are economical, community compatible, better for the environment, and able to house people of all ages.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Conduct community conversations around ADUs and other zoning changes.
- Develop zoning to send to Town Meeting.
- Work with Town staff and officials to ensure buy-in.

We need to allow accessory buildings as we age.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Requires a zoning change by the vote of Town Meeting.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- The Town will help create another options for seniors wishing to remain in their homes.

2

Modify the zoning to allow smaller lot sizes, and/or multiple units, on existing lots (e.g. one or two duplexes on a lot).

DO

Value					1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9,10							
Goal					2, 8							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
6	1	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Desire for additional housing, including affordable housing and senior-friendly housing from community workshops and survey; desire to cluster housing near existing infrastructure.

Why is it important?

88% of all housing in Leverett is single family detached. Lot sizes are large and multifamily and multiple buildings per lot are not allowed in the zoning. Two-family units require 50% more land than a single-family. Further development on the remaining unbuilt parcels is limited.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Conduct community conversations around ADUs and other zoning changes.
- Work with Town staff and officials to ensure buy-in.
- Develop zoning to send to Town Meeting.

Good idea, but must maintain H2O quality, septic regulations – esp need affordable housing/senior housing.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- As the Leverett population ages, seniors can remain in place (and limit housing turnover) or leave Leverett (opening up stock but breaking community ties).

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Infill development to create denser areas balanced with conservation.

3	Create zoning to encourage senior-friendly housing so that seniors can remain in the community.	DO
----------	--	-----------

Value					2, 5, 6, 8, 9							
Goal					8							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
6	0	0	0	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Community workshops and surveys; analysis of demographic trend projections.

Why is it important?

Encouraging senior-friendly housing in Town would allow for seniors to remain in their community. Surrounding towns will also experience a growth in their senior population, limiting nearby options.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Conduct community conversations around ADUs and other zoning changes.
- Work with Town staff and officials to ensure buy-in.
- Develop zoning to send to Town Meeting.

Access to grants to allow older residents to make improvements to live in place.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Assumption that senior-friendly housing is the same as a large multi-family development.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Several comments noted that Accessory Dwelling Units are an option to support seniors remaining in their homes.
- Providing seniors a way to age within the Leverett community preserves critical social ties and community memory.

4	Apply for grants for dam maintenance and water quality monitoring.	DO
----------	---	-----------

Value					2, 5, 6, 8, 9							
Goal					1, 9							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
5	2	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

<p>Where did this recommendation come from?</p> <p>2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan</p> <p>Sawmill River Dam and the Leverett Pond Dams- Low Hazard but greatest impact.</p>	<p>Why is it important?</p> <p>Wells and septic systems are impacted by climate change. Periods of drought may lead to wells running dry or being contaminated. Flooding can lead to contamination of the water supply from septic systems.</p>
--	--

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Apply for grants (see **Section 7.1 Funding Resources**).
- Evaluate necessary repairs to dams and schedule them on the capital plan.
- Also implement recommendations for culvert and road repairs to protect from flooding and degradation of water quality.
- Test surface water assets to establish a baseline.

“Dam failure is a highly infrequent occurrence, but a severe incident could prove catastrophic.” (2020 HMP, pg. 195)

<p>What are the barriers to implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant funding will be competitive. ▪ Competing priorities for capital funds. 	<p>What are the opportunities for implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Per the 2020 HMP, proper maintenance of dams will prevent more catastrophic floods. ▪ Preservation of potable water is a major concern; flooding has a negative impact on water quality and such flooding is likely to increase with heavier storms.
--	--

5	Develop a potable water resiliency plan.	DO
----------	---	-----------

Value					1, 3, 4, 7						
Goal					1						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
5	2	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

MVP Resiliency Plan

Why is it important?

Leverett's draft MVP Resiliency Plan recommends developing a potable water resiliency plan as a priority. Residents are dependent on private wells for water needs, and because wells run on electricity, access to water is a concern during power outages. Actions suggested by the MVP workshop included determining the locations of artesian wells throughout town, or installing microgrids to limit the number of residents who lose power, and the ability to pump water.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Public education about water quality.
- Regular testing of water to catch potential contamination early,.
- Explore developing a microgrid to address power outages.

PFAS pollution in town wells - a public water system would help this issue but might be too expensive - town could consider helping low income residents whose water is contaminated with ongoing maintenance costs for remediation clean up.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Grant funding will be competitive.
- Competing priorities for capital funds.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Supporting resiliency of the electrical grid will provide additional benefits, including potential protections for vulnerable members of the community during storms.

6

Prioritize climate resilient solutions for repairs and maintenance of culverts, bridges, and roads.**DO**

Value					1, 3, 4, 7						
Goal					1, 2, 9						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
3	4	0	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan

Why is it important?

Many roads are unpaved and do not have sufficient drainage, with flooding contributing to increased deterioration of gravel roads. Bridges across town often are subject to closures due to severe weather. These closures of roads and bridges is a concern for access to routes for responders and residents in the event of an emergency.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Identify and publish list of private and public roads.
- Identify those roads that are critical for emergency access and those most under threat.
- Prioritize repairs to infrastructure most at risk of failure and most at risk for additional impacts (i.e. a culvert that is blocked and causes widespread flooding).

**Yes climate resiliency
BUT: DON'T PAVE
OUR ROADS!**

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Some members of the community have a strong preference to not pave the dirt roads.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- Explore other options for maintaining dirt roads.
- Continue community conversations about climate resiliency and required maintenance of and improvements to infrastructure.

7	Increase the Fire and Ambulance budgets to allow for 24/7 coverage to support increasing cases of slip/falls with seniors.	DO
----------	---	-----------

Value					2, 6, 8						
Goal					9						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
1	5	1	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

Community survey, Analysis of demographic trends, Leverett Fire Department.

Why is it important?

Seniors over 75 tend to require more medical services. The Leverett Fire Department has been seeing a consistent upwards trend in call volume over the last several years as the population has aged (128 calls in 2018 vs. 215 calls in 2023).

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- The Selectboard, Fire Department, and Police Department (see **Section 5.5** and **Table 88**) have roles in implementing this recommendation.
- Town Meeting will need to support any budget changes.

“The community is aging and we need 24 hour emergency medical response.”

“Seems like current system is working.”

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Concerns about cost and whether regionalization is an option.
- Conflicting values between self-reliance and age-friendly policies.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- One table at the third workshop discussed whether the Council on Aging could have a role in educating the community about the danger of falls for elderly people.
- The Town could also consider working with the police department and Council of Aging to develop a vulnerable seniors list for wellness checks on seniors who live alone. Signing up for the list would be voluntary.

8 Establish an energy resiliency plan.**EXPLORE**

Value					1, 3, 4, 7							
Goal					5							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
4	1	1	1	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

2020 MVP Resiliency Plan, community workshops and survey.

Why is it important?

Leverett's draft MVP Resiliency plan recommends establishing an energy resiliency plan to reinforce the power grid. This may include a feasibility assessment of microgrids and the connection of any solar grids to three-phase power. Community solar is also of interest based on comments from the workshops and the community survey

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- The Energy Committee (see **Table 88**) is a logical lead for investigating this strategy.
- More information about microgrids is available here: <https://www.nrel.gov/grid/microgrids.html>

**Microgrid ASAP
for public corridor
(school, PSC,
library).**

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Grant funding will be competitive.
- Competing priorities for capital funds.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- Energy resilience addresses several needs in this comprehensive plan, including Strategy #4, Strategy #15, and the strategies related to age-friendly communities.
- If Town-owned land is used for the microgrid, this strategy could also work with Strategy #12.

9	Develop a communications plan for the town for emergencies and other events.	EXPLORE
----------	---	----------------

Value					3, 4, 6, 7, 8						
Goal					9						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
4	1	0	0	2	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

2020 MVP Resiliency Plan

Why is it important?

Residents noted that it is very difficult to get in contact with everyone in town in the event of an emergency. Development of a communication plan would focus on providing public education, outreach, and resources for residents during the event of an emergency.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- The Emergency Planning Board (see Table 88) meets quarterly to discuss planning for emergency needs. Assign this recommendation to that board for discussion.

Communication!
Too much reliance on websites and not enough direct outreach.

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Volunteer resources to organize the guide, collect the appropriate information, and make it available in both digital and printed form.
- Volunteers and funding to support the reintroduction of the community newsletter.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- Comments from participants at the third workshop linked this strategy to the need for more cell service, including the possibility of installing cell towers on town-owned land.
- Some groups also suggested a Neighborhood Resource Guide, listing who has what resource (ex. generator, wood stove) and contact information. The guide could also contain a list of local services and who would be willing to provide rides for people.

10

Establish a comprehensive beaver management strategy.**EXPLORE**

Value					1, 3, 4, 7							
Goal					1, 2							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
3	2	0	1	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Leverett's Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2020, community workshops

Why is it important?

Beaver activity in Leverett has increased and caused environmental changes such as flooding and development of wetlands. In some cases, beaver activity has led to the contamination of private wells and overflows of septic systems.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Seek funding and technical assistance and convene a team (NRCS, etc.) to develop a beaver management strategy to reduce the risk to infrastructure, private property and residents from flooding associated with beavers.
- Maintain communication with property owners on Richardson Road where a beaver dam is a known concern.
- Monitor additional beaver activity and impoundments in town. (HMP 2020, page 213)

**People think
beavers are
cute.**

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Unfamiliarity with the impact of beaver dams on flooding and water quality.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- Addressing this issue is part of a multi-pronged strategy to meet other community goals, such as protection of potable water and climate resiliency.

11	Update land use regulations to encourage climate resiliency.	EXPLORE
-----------	---	----------------

Value					1, 3, 4, 7						
Goal					1-5, 9						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
3	2	0	1	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

2020 Hazard Mitigation and MVP Resiliency Plans

Why is it important?

Leverett's draft Hazard Mitigation Plan (2020) addresses the negative impact that climate change will have on the town over the next few decades, such as increased flooding, rising temperatures, and extreme weather. The draft MVP Resiliency Plan (2020) recommends reviewing zoning bylaws to encourage climate resiliency for land use.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- The Planning Board should include climate resilient measures in the recommended updates to the Town's Zoning Bylaws (see **Section 5.4** and **Table 87**).

1) climate resilience and adaptation, 2) creative economic development opportunities such as regenerative agriculture/ carbon sequestration

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Confusion about what "land use regulations" means indicating a lack of familiarity with the two plans.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Incorporation of development standards into the Town's Zoning Bylaws to address energy efficiency and climate resiliency for new/renovated buildings.

12

Create a Land Stewardship Plan for Town-owned land.**EXPLORE**

Value					1, 3, 4, 7						
Goal					1-5, 9						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
1	4	1	0	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

Protecting the components of natural resources are the top four goals identified by the community in the survey.

Why is it important?

Forests have a significant ecological importance for the town. Implementation of a plan would allow for a committee to monitor, manage, maintain, and preserve lands in addition to educating land owners on best management practices for collective stewardship.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Consider options for stewardship that include the productive use of the land.
- Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan (see **Section 5.6**) to create a community process for discussing the potential uses and protections.
- Evaluate whether any land is suitable for housing, which could be done through a Housing Production Plan (see **Section 5.6**).

The Town owns forest that no one is tending to. A plan would assure better management of these resources.

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Respondents were unclear on who was responsible for stewardship of Town-owned lands. Some participants identified the Conservation Commission and the trail committee (not currently active) as possible leads for this responsibility.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- The City of Amherst, MA notes that one key priority for focusing on land preservation efforts is continuing to expand the funding of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR) and Conservation Restrictions (CR) for the acquisition of farmland, forest land, riparian corridors, and water supply sources.
- Timber sale, ATV trails, grassland pellets for livestock, renewable energy

13	Join the Franklin Regional Transit Authority in order to increase access opportunities for residents (especially seniors).	DISCUSS
-----------	---	----------------

Value					2, 6, 8, 9						
Goal					8						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
2	3	2	0	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

Comments from workshops about the need for public transit; demographic projections

Why is it important?

Many people commented in both the workshops and the survey about the need for public transportation, although a few questioned it. The Town used to have service from the FRTA that provided valuable connections to services and jobs. With a growing elderly population who may be less likely to drive as they age, adding options is important for an age-friendly community.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

The FRTA currently serves 41 towns in the region and connects to the JWO transit center in Greenfield for access to Greyhound bus service and the Valley Flyer and Vermonter Amtrak routes. FRTA also operates medical and demand service in member communities. Annual assessments are charged based on the utilization and service levels provided to the Town.

In the long run, lack of public transportation and access to nearby medical care are two that concern me.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Concerns about the cost.
- Some respondents were not convinced of the need for regular public transportation.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Working with the FRTA and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) to connect the two transit systems through Leverett would significantly increase public transit options. (See **Figure 67** for a map of current options).
- Transportation costs are a component of housing costs; providing less expensive options can help with housing affordability.

14

Engage with regional partners to implement action plans in the Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan for age and dementia friendly communities.

DISCUSS

Value					2, 6, 8, 9							
Goal					8							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
1	3	2	0	1	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Focus on livability and age-friendly communities from the Steering Group; desire to support seniors remaining in their homes from the community workshops; comments on aging-in-place from the survey.

Why is it important?

Leverett joined the AARP network of livable communities in 2021. The Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan covers the region and outlines a series of actions referencing the outdoors, transportation, housing, social and civic participation, communication and health over a 2024 to 2028 time frame.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Become familiar with the Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan (<https://lifepathma.org/wp-content/uploads/pdfs-documents/Age-Friendly-regional-plan-final-for-web-11.13.23-optimized.pdf>).
- Support community conversations about the recommendations.
- Identify the board or committee responsible for taking the next steps and empower the members to do so.

Important, but seems to require more resources than Leverett alone can handle.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Confusion about the recommendation with an assumption that Leverett was solely responsible for implementation of a regional plan.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Establish regional partnerships to address a regional problem of an aging population and the resources necessary to help that population.

15	Establish heating/cooling shelters across town that can be used during the school year.	DISCUSS
-----------	--	----------------

Value					2, 6, 8, 9						
Goal					6, 7, 10						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
2	2	2	1	0	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan

Why is it important?

The current designated heating/cooling /smoke shelter is the elementary school, which may be restricted for this function during the school year. While the community values self-sufficiency, this may leave more vulnerable residents at risk, especially those who live in older houses that are less energy efficient and may not have the resources to afford a generator or who do not have adequate systems for extreme circumstances.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Evaluate other options for shelters that could provide heating/cooling, food, bathing facilities, and sleeping areas.
- Establish a list of people who may need help in an emergency and publicize the ability to join the list. Membership would be voluntary. (See **Table 88. Police Department.**)

People wanting a kind of community mutual aid /not an institutional solution.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- The Leverett Elementary School as a shelter is not optimal during the school year and the systems may need to be upgraded.
- “Do it yourself” opinions that might hurt more vulnerable members of the community.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Establishing several heating/cooling shelters would provide added resiliency for extreme events.
- Some participants suggested a “neighbor-to-neighbor list of resources and contact information that could provide an informal system of shelter which would also help with distribution of options across the town.

16 Allow for the development of multi-family units.**DISCUSS**

Value					2, 6, 8, 9							
Goal					8							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
2	1	0	1	2	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Input from community workshops, desire for more affordable housing, and more housing types, including age-friendly housing.

Why is it important?

Multifamily housing, which is generally defined as three or more units on a lot, is another technique to address community concerns about affordable housing. Multifamily housing is currently not allowed in Leverett. Other configurations, such as two duplexes on a single lot, would also qualify as multifamily housing.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- The Town should continue conversations about smaller housing types (for example, two duplexes on a lot) that would create additional density without changing the appearance of the town.
- Zoning changes, design guidelines, and revisiting Board of Health standards for septic systems should be part of this conversation.

Leverett should address shortage in rental units.

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Assumption that multi-family housing can only be provided in large developments.
- Assumption that multi-family is less environmentally friendly than single-family development.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- Multi-family housing can be found in a wide range of styles and scales, many suitable for a rural environment.
- Multi-family generally represents a more efficient use of land than single-family housing, especially when located near existing streets and when using shared driveway, parking, and other infrastructure.

17	Use CPA funds to purchase parcels to protect the aquifer.	RETHINK
-----------	--	----------------

Value					1, 3, 4, 7						
Goal					1						
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements						
2	1	1	0	3	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F

Where did this recommendation come from?

Concerns expressed during the workshops and in the survey for water protections; mapping of permanently protected land and the aquifer protection district which indicates little overlap.

Why is it important?

Placing conservation restrictions on these parcels will help improve recharging within the aquifer protection district itself and protect the land within the district from potential overdevelopment.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Additional protection of land was a divisive topic in the community conversations. Some participants wanted further protection, while others felt that no further land needed to be protected.
- Updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan (See [Section 5.6](#)) would help the LEverett community continue this conversation and gather additional data about potential threats to the aquifer.

Enough land is already protected. Zoning takes care of it.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Divided opinions about preservation of land might derail important conversations.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Water protection was a significant topic during the planning process, and the desire to protect water availability and quality will become more important as the temperature and storm patterns shift over time. Continuing to discuss alternatives for aquifer protection, both town-wide and individual strategies, is another opportunity for the community conversations mentioned in [Section 5.1](#).

18

Modify the Town zoning to permit activity for economic resiliency.**RETHINK**

Value					2, 4, 6, 8							
Goal					8, 10							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
2	1	1	0	3	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Desire in community workshops for additional economic activity; analysis of lack of available services within Leverett for an aging population; and desire for more community gathering spaces.

Why is it important?

The closest medical clinics and pharmacies require significant travel times. As the population ages, and particularly once they stop driving, access to these facilities becomes an issue. Allowing these uses will at least open the door for the services to come into the Town (it does not guarantee it).

Adding services and gathering spots by right makes such uses more achievable over time and based on demand.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Economic development is likely to be small in scale because of the lack of town-wide public water and sewer. Support community conversations about other ways to promote economic development. These could include small business clusters, with share wastewater treatment and wells, home-based businesses, or a small business incubation center as part of the community center in Strategy #20.

Group would like to support some commercial activities but not necessarily By Right. It depends on many factors.

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Concerns about unintended consequences.
- Focus on larger-scale businesses that are unlikely to happen without significant infrastructure investments rather than being creative about smaller opportunities.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

- The arts community is a source of cultural and economic development that was not fully explored during this planning process.
- The Leverett community should also continue to discuss the opportunity that Route 63 presents for larger-scale businesses and options for providing water and wastewater treatment to businesses along that corridor.

19	Modify the Town zoning to allow for senior housing, and partner with a developer to build affordable/senior housing on Town owned land, including applying for State grants to finance the construction.	RETHINK
----	---	----------------

Value					2, 6, 8							
Goal					8							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
1	2	0	0	3	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Desire for more affordable housing expressed in the community workshops and survey.

Why is it important?

Partnering with the State and developers to build affordable and/or senior housing on Town land would allow for the Town to control the process.

For example, Sunderland and Gardner partnered with developers and received State grants to build senior housing complexes on Town land. Deerfield is also in the planning process for a 100 unit senior complex on Town land.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Undertake a Housing Production Plan to determine the need for affordable housing and explore options in more depth. (See [Section 5.6](#)).
- Because the Town owns little developable land, explore other options for affordable housing, such as zoning changes to promote small-scale “affordable by design” housing or partnerships with housing nonprofits.

Group supports aging in place improvements but not a large development.

What are the **barriers** to implementation?

- Assumption that this action is restricted to land the Town owns now as opposed to land the Town could purchase.

What are the **opportunities** for implementation?

- Community Preservation Act funds can be used for affordable housing, including purchasing land.

20 Investigate adding a community center.**RETHINK**

Value					2, 6, 8							
Goal					6, 7, 10							
High	Med	Low	Partner	Disc.	Planning Elements							
1	1	4	0	2	LU	C	ED	H	OSR	NCR	S+F	

Where did this recommendation come from?

Community workshops, desire for community spaces expressed in the public survey.

Why is it important?

Community centers serve as gathering places where residents can gather for activities, support, and public information. An easily accessible community center in Leverett would encourage community involvement, promote individual and public health, and strengthen social ties.

How can the Town implement this recommendation?

- Sponsor a community conversation about the need for a community center and the components of that center that are important.
- Investigate grants, such as those from the Mass Cultural Council, for a feasibility study (See **Section 7.1**).
- One participant mentioned the Eisner Foundation as a possible resource (<https://eisnerfoundation.org/>).

**“*Resonating Yes
But where?”**

**“Community FUN
commission”**

What are the barriers to implementation?

- Preference to use an existing space rather than building new may limit options unless existing spaces are willing to share spaces throughout the day (Town Hall, Library, LES)
- Need to focus on programming to attract different ages.

What are the opportunities for implementation?

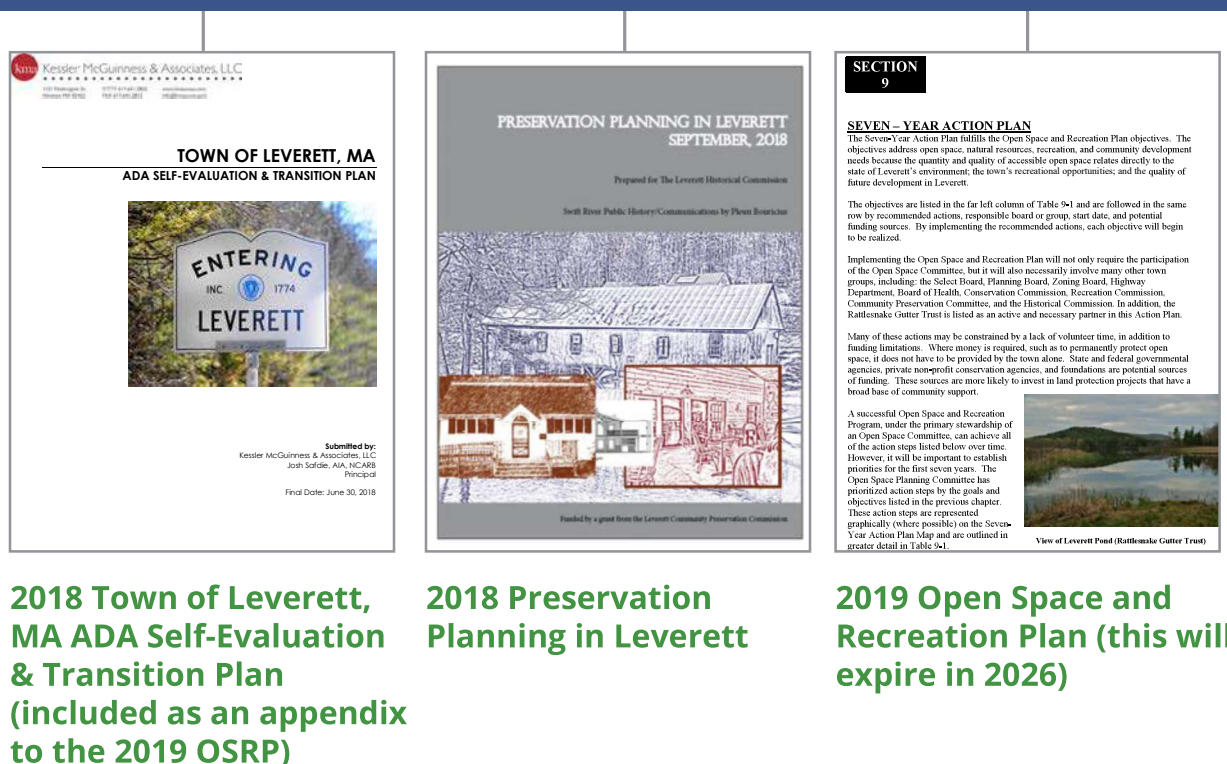
- Opportunities for intergenerational connections.
- Possible renovation of Town Hall or addition to existing buildings to accommodate more space.

2. Existing Plans

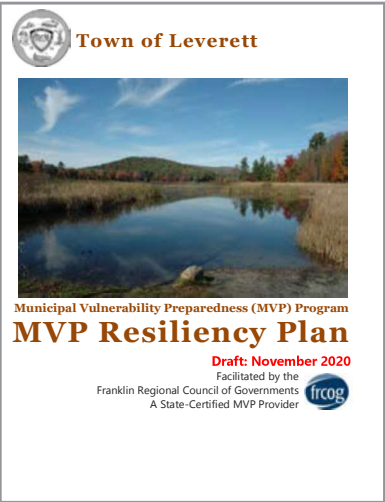
2.1 TIMELINE OF PREVIOUS PLANS

This timeline includes the planning process undertaken over the last ten years. These documents, unless otherwise noted, were summarized in the Phase 1 report. The Phase 1 report also includes summaries of older documents and plans that are of historical importance. The reports listed below, however, have recommendations that should be considered for implementation over the next ten years. **Section 5.3** categorizes the recommendations by Section 81D planning elements and identifies who is responsible for implementation and the original report for each recommendation.

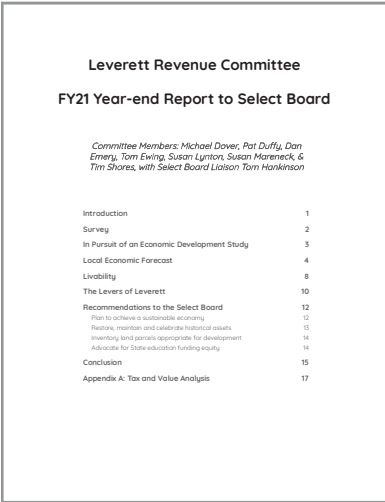
Figure 1. Timeline of Previous Plans



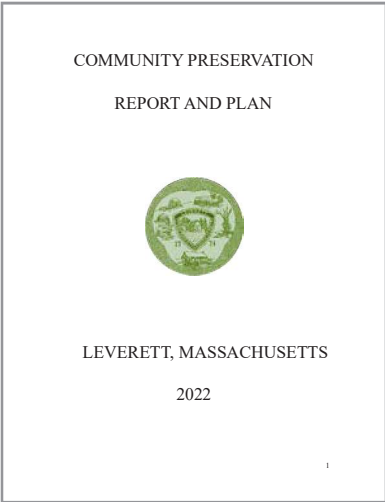
2020 Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) Resiliency Plan



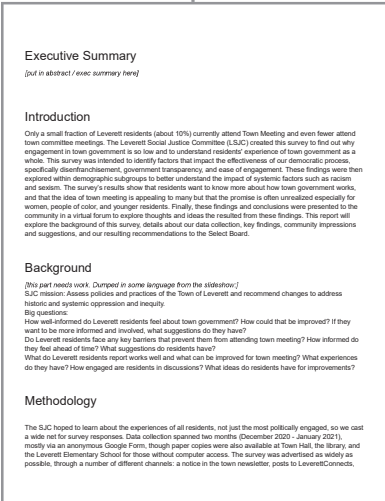
2021 Report of the Revenue Committee (now the Sustainable Economy Committee)



2022 Community Preservation Report and Plan



2020 Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan



2021 Social Justice Report (draft)



2022 Leverett Comprehensive Plan: Phase 1 Report

2.2 LINKING PAST PLANS TO FUTURE ACTIONS

Some of the recommendations of these past plans fit neatly into concerns expressed at the community workshops and in the responses to the survey. These recommendations were tested at the third community workshop. All recommendations from these plans are included in **Section 5.3 Existing Recommendations** and sorted, not by the source plan, but by the planning elements identified in Section 81D. These recommendations should be considered a part of the implementation strategy for this plan.

The 2021 Sustainable Economy Report identified three components that should be part of for the comprehensive planning process that it envisioned. These three components are as follows:¹

¹ 2021 Sustainable Economy Report , page 13.

- An assessment of the economic challenges facing Leverett, and an asset map to reveal strengths and opportunities that the Town can use to address those challenges;
- Facilitated public meetings and listening sessions to hear feedback, engage people with the process, and build consensus for the types of growth or other changes in town that would make the town more sustainable and that residents are willing to accept; and
- Development of sustainable economy scenarios, such as smart growth, infrastructure improvements, amenity enhancement, and encouraging business investment, to guide strategic decision-making.

The focus of economic development In this plan has mostly not been on business opportunities, but on the strong desire to address significant housing needs, including the need for housing that is affordable to members of the Leverett community and housing to allow the growing senior population to age within Leverett. However, **Section 4.3 Economy and Housing** presents existing conditions and **Section 3.1 What We Learned** and **Section 5.2 Recommended Strategies** discuss community thinking around economic development.

Other critical reports that provide context for the community discussion in this planning process include the 2020 Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan, the 2020 Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) Resiliency Plan, and the 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan (this will expire in 2026)

Another critical report is missing from the Town's list of plans, and that is a Housing Production Plan. This is a state-defined document and planning process that would answer many questions about the need for affordable housing in the Town and the steps to address that need.

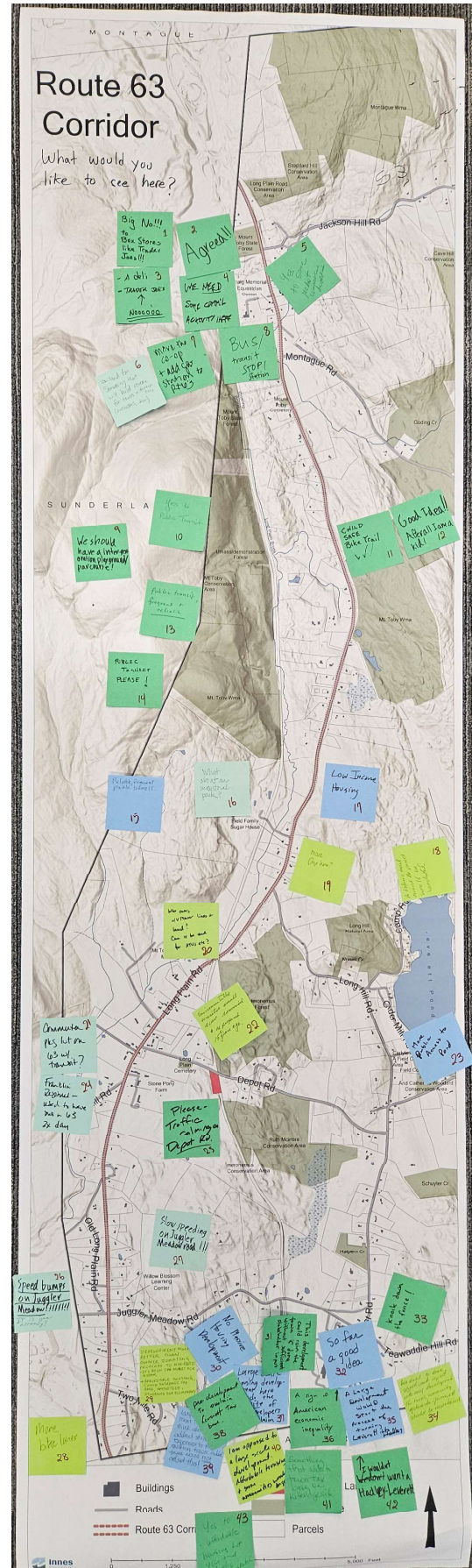


Figure 2. Map Results for Route 63 from the December 2023 Workshop