

J M
G O L D S O N

EMPOWERING PEOPLE.
CREATING COMMUNITY.

Stow Comprehensive plan 2035

Envision Stow for All of us

Existing Conditions

PRESENTED BY

JENN GOLDSON, AICP

KADINEYSE PAZ

NOAH HARPER

3/18/24

p: 617-221-4003 w: JMGOLDSON.COM



MEETING AGENDA

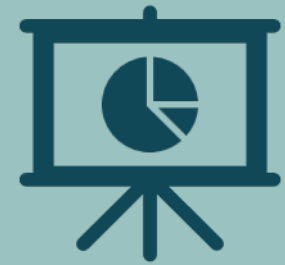
- : All About Comprehensive Planning**

- : The process, the fundamentals, and the point.*
- : (~5 minutes)*



- : Sharing our Research**

- : Our findings, next steps, and hearing your thoughts.*
- : (~20 minutes)*



- : Overview of Phase II**

- : How to get the community engaged.*
- : (~5 minutes)*



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FUNDAMENTALS

Jenn Goldson



PURPOSE AND PROCESS



Historical & Cultural



Economic Development



Open Space & Recreation



Demographics & Housing



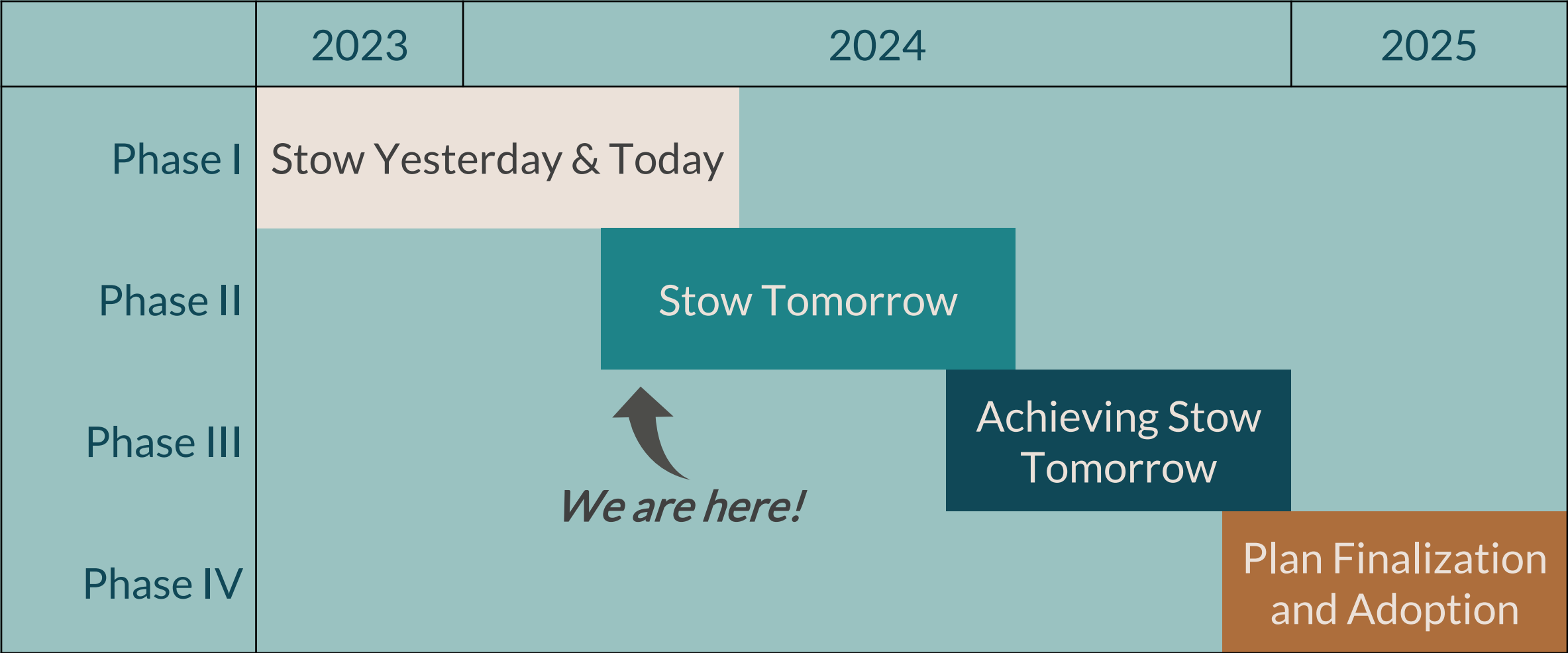
Land Use & Zoning



Municipal Facilities & Services



Transportation & Mobility



PROJECT TIMELINE



STOW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2035

ENVISION STOW FOR ALL OF US

SUMMARY PROFILE OF TRENDS & ISSUES

This report is a summary profile of trends and issues in Stow, Massachusetts, written in Phase I of the comprehensive planning process. This summary profile addresses each of the Commonwealth's required elements as described in M.G.L. c.41, Section 81D.

Draft for Discussion Purposes Only

J M GOLDSON

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Summary of Key Findings

Kadineyse Paz



*Passion provides purpose,
but data drives decisions.*

- Andy Dunn

SECTIONS OF THE SUMMARY PROFILE

1. Population & Demographics
2. Housing
3. Economic Development
4. Transportation
5. Cultural & Historic Resources
6. Open Spaces & Recreation
7. Municipal Facilities & Services
8. Land Use & Zoning

WHAT ARE THE PROFILES BASED ON?

Local Knowledge

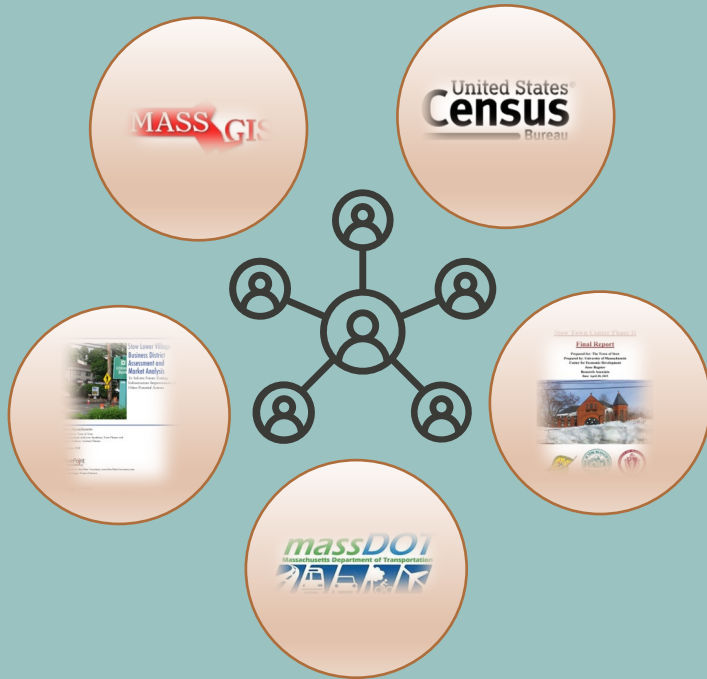
- : Recent Plans & Studies
- : Interviews with Town staff and committee members

U.S. Census Bureau Data

- : Decennial Census
- : American Community Survey

Massachusetts data sources

- : MassGIS
- : MACRIS
- : MassDOT

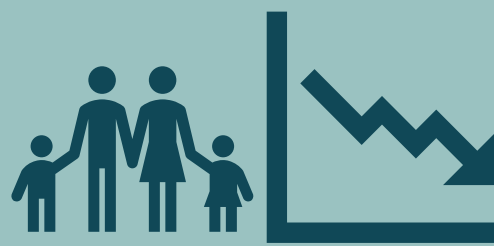


POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

Kadineyse Paz



POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS



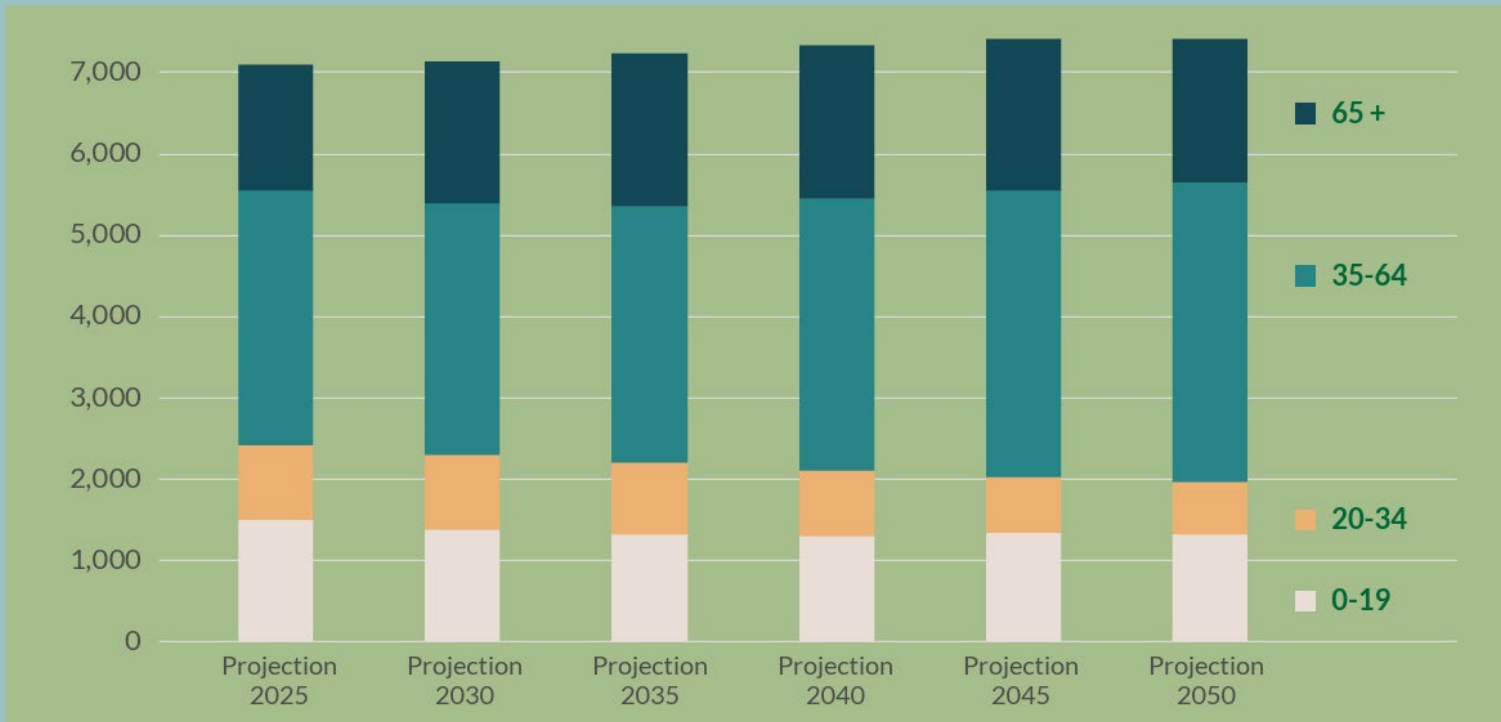
Income by tenure

Owner-Occupied:

\$179,467

Renter-Occupied:

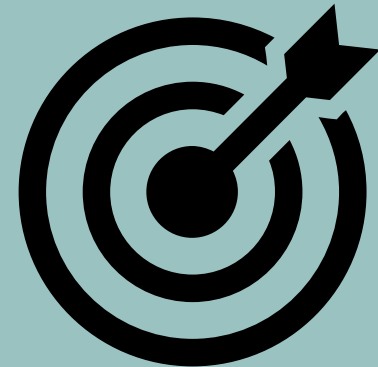
\$75,439



POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

Issues & Opportunities

- : Restrictive zoning is pricing out new neighbors and pressuring existing residents.
- : The COA is working to connect younger and older adults in skill-sharing initiatives.
- : **Affordability of housing and transportation are key drivers of who can live in Stow.**

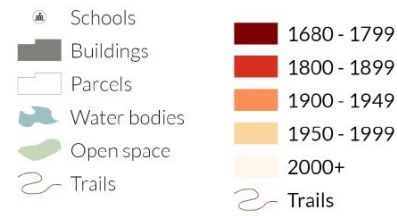
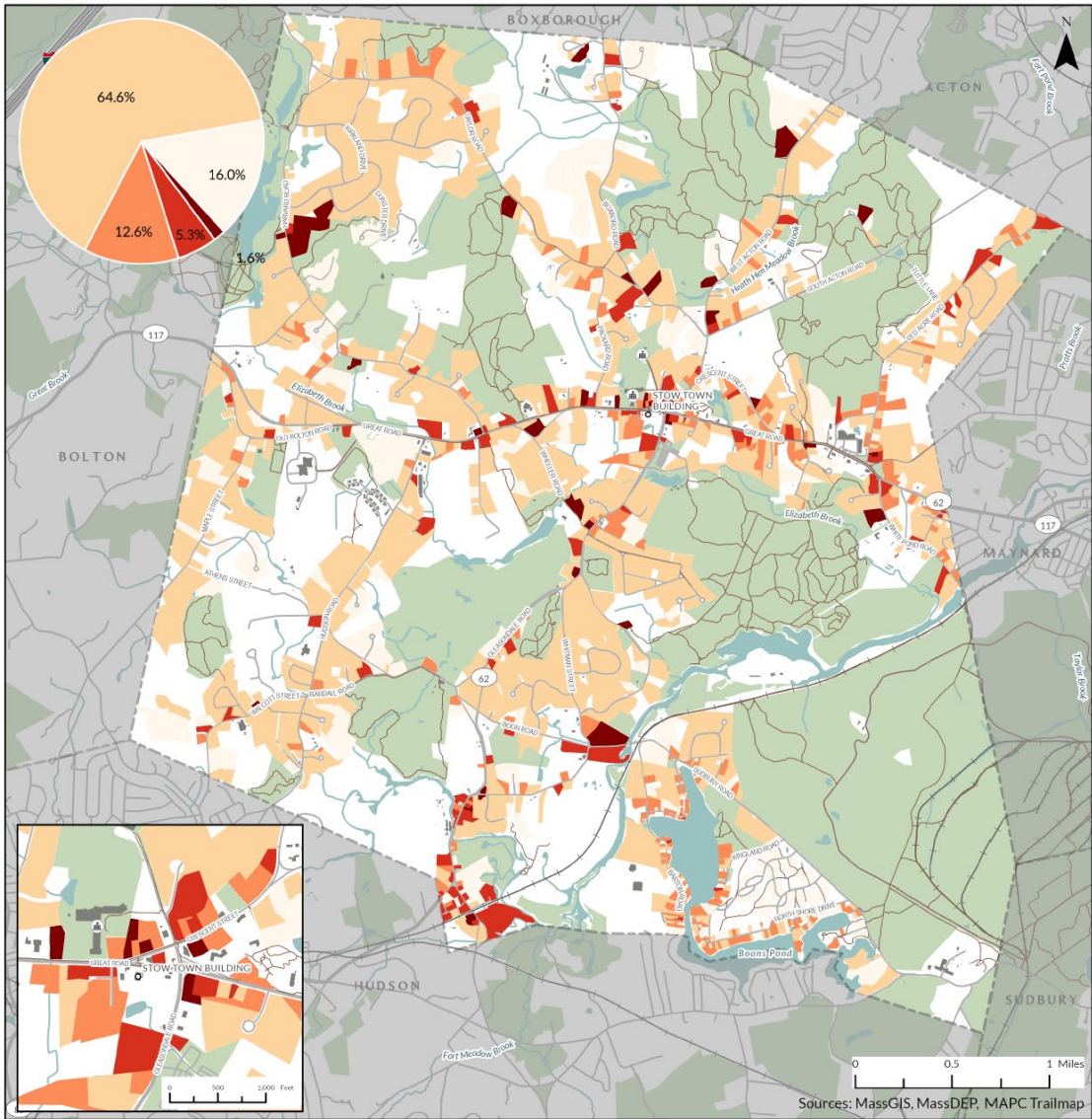


HOUSING

Kadineyse Paz



HOUSING AGE & DEVELOPMENT



Almost 70 percent (or 1,817) of homes in Stow were constructed in the past sixty years, a result of suburbanizing development patterns.

HOUSING COST



HOUSING

Issues & Opportunities

- : Exclusion is an historic problem within the legacy of settler-colonialism, and **the increasing affordability challenges on existing residents directly result from restrictive zoning.**
- : Zoning, BOH, and other regulations limit the Town's ability to address this.
- : Exploring new approaches, like Community Land Trusts, is a key opportunity to grow permanently affordable housing.

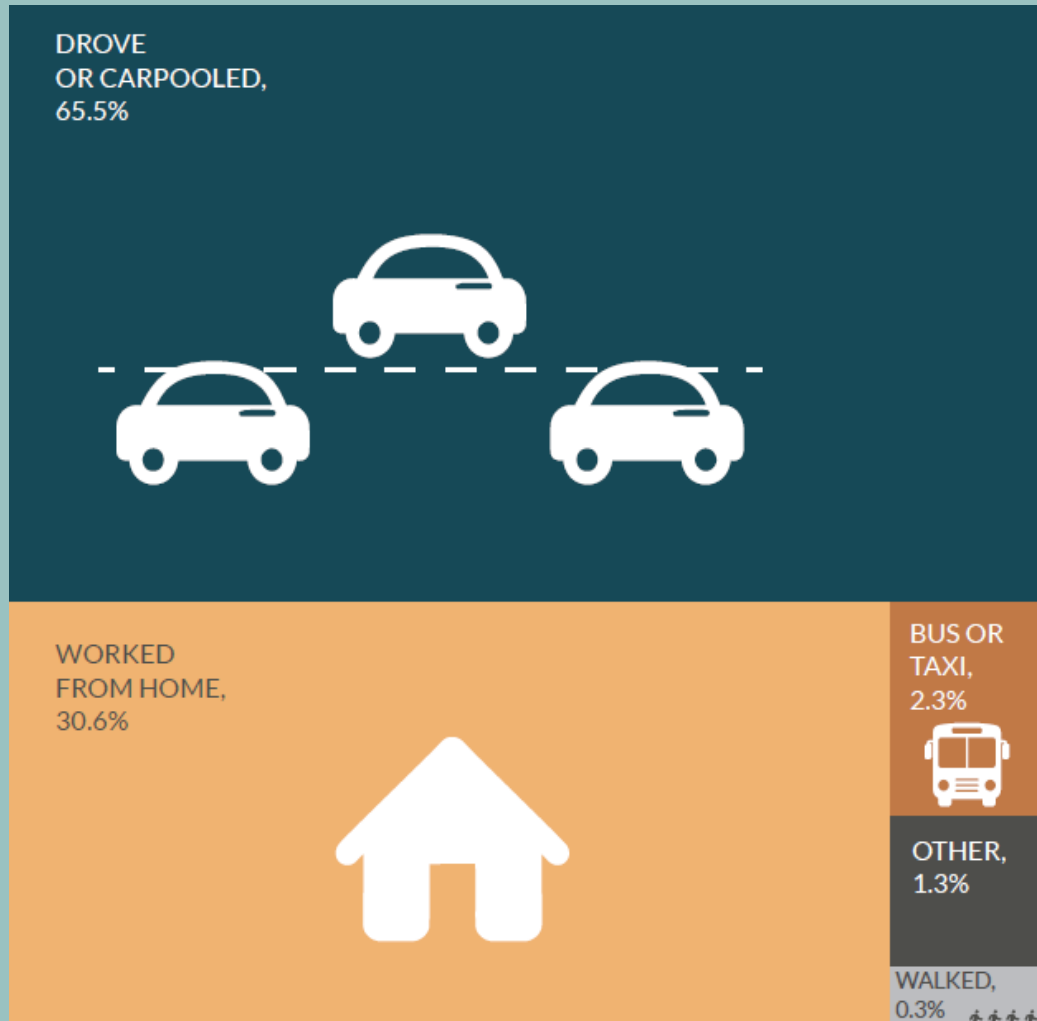


ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Noah Harper



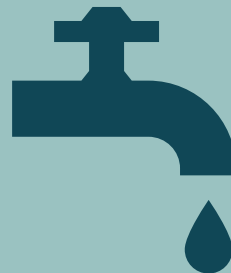
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Increase in remote workers



Stow lacks a commercial tax base

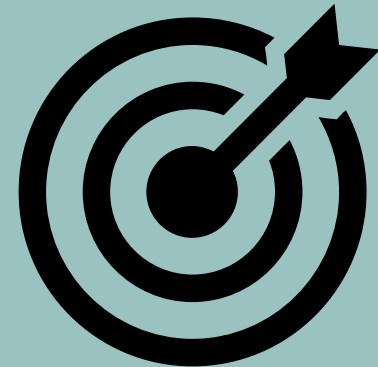


Stow lacks public water and sewer

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Issues & Opportunities

- : **Water and sewer in Lower Village** is a key outstanding opportunity to encourage development.
- : Developing an **economic development plan**, with potential Town staff, is a key opportunity.
- : Agritourism is a strength to continue leaning into.



TRANSPORTATION

Noah Harper



TRANSPORTATION

TWO
VEHICLES,
49.5%



THREE
VEHICLES,
27.1%



ONE
VEHICLE,
20.7%



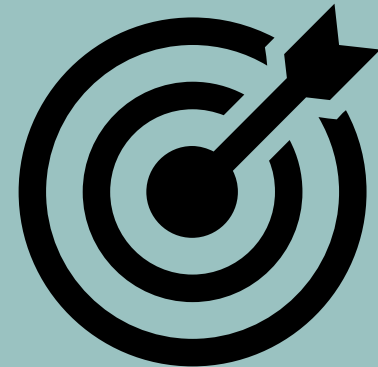
NO VEHICLES, 2.8%

*Stow residents
own more cars
than they have
in the past.*

TRANSPORTATION

Issues & Opportunities

- : **Enhancing regional connectivity**, through continued support for the GoStow and MART shuttles, creates opportunity for residents.
- : **Complete Streets improvements** and future rail trail connections in Gleasondale are key opportunities.



CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Noah Harper



CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Nearly 90 percent of the historic resources in Stow that are listed on the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) are buildings.

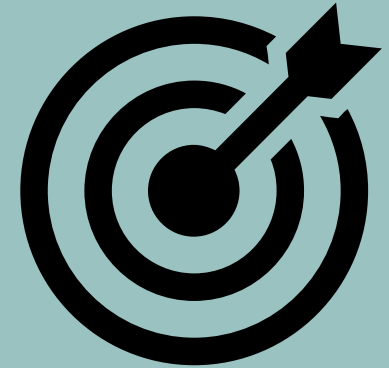


ID	Name	Address	Before 1700s	National Register Individual Properties
1	Brown - Stow House	1/2 Harvard Rd	Y	Y
2	Hapgood, Hezekiah House	76 Treaty Elm Ln	N	Y
3	Lower Village Cemetery	Pompositticut Rd	Y	N
4	Minister's House, The - Eveleth, Rev. John House	9 Red Acre Rd	Y	N
5	Randall - Hale Homestead	6 Sudbury Rd	N	Y
6	Stevens, Thomas Allotment House	138 Crescent St	Y	N
7	Tenny Homestead	156 Taylor Rd	N	Y
8	Walcott - Whitney House	137 Tuttle Ln	N	Y

CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Issues & Opportunities

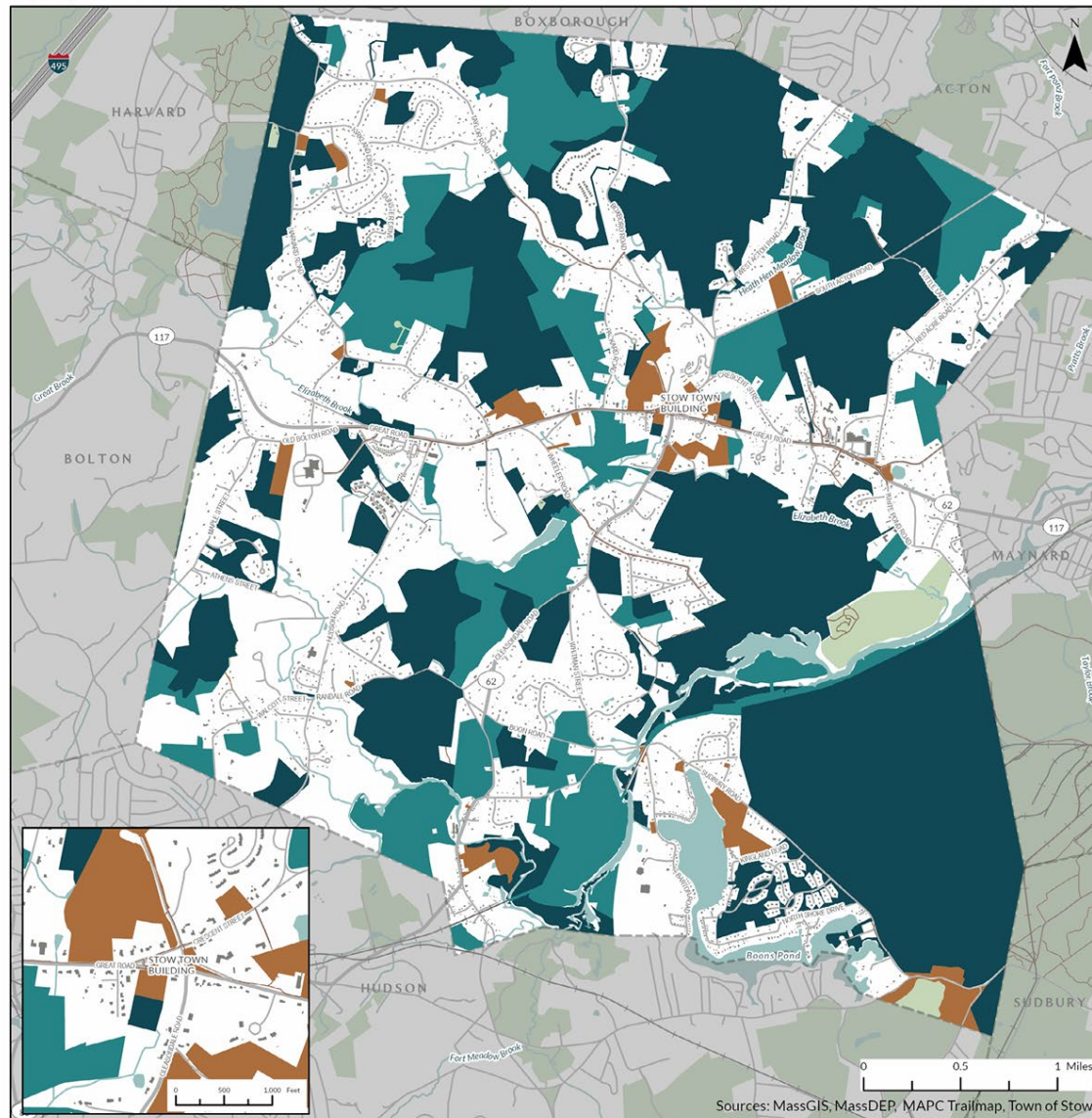
- : Preservation funding has been geared toward landscapes, rather than other historic resources.
- : Gleasondale, particularly around the Mill, has **room to grow as an historic and cultural hub**.
- : Stow Acres, with history as Mapledale Country Club, is one of Stow's most underappreciated historic places.
- : **Supporting Indigenous Nipmuc cultural activity** in Stow is a key opportunity to build equity in Stow's cultural landscape.



OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Jenn Goldson





- Schools
- Parcels
- Buildings
- Trails
- Water bodies
- Open space
- Protected Open Space
- Limited Protected Open Space
- Unprotected Open Space

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

: *Over 37% of Stow's total land area is permanently protect – exceeds global and national goals for 30% of all land to be protected*

Of all undeveloped land in Stow,

- : *71.8% is permanently protected*
- : *24.6% has limited protection (chapter 61 programs)*
- : *0.6% potentially developable*

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Issues & Opportunities

- : Building connections with Indigenous peoples to lead land stewardship efforts is a key opportunity. The community could lead in giving back through partnerships with the Native Land Conservancy.
- : Upcoming retirements among staff will challenge the **preservation of institutional knowledge**.
- : Stow's recreation areas could benefit from a formal **Recreation Needs Assessment**.



MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

Jenn Goldson



MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

The Town allocated \$100,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funding to a feasibility study for creating a privately managed Public Water Supply in Lower Village; this study is ongoing.



MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

Issues & Opportunities

- : High housing and transportation costs are a challenge to **municipal hiring and retention**.
- : **Proactive facilities maintenance** has conflicted with other budget priorities in the past, and growing project cost estimates are presenting challenges.
- : The **ending of pandemic relief funding** will change how the municipal budget has been functioning.

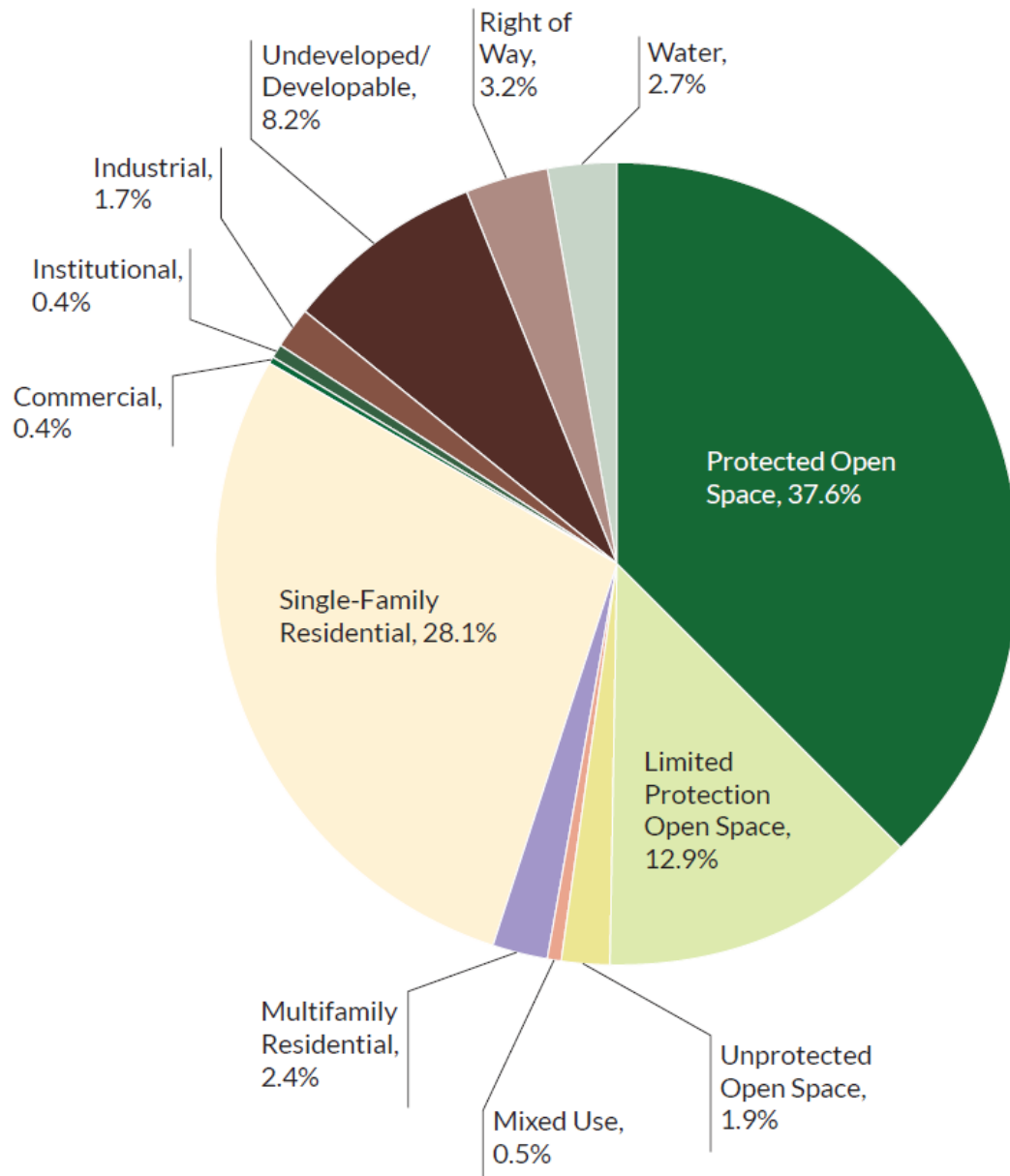


LAND USE & ZONING

Jenn Goldson



LAND USE & ZONING



Nearly all of the development since 2001 has happened in the single-family-oriented Residential district.

LAND USE & ZONING

Issues & Opportunities

- : Prioritization of land conservation has limited areas for new development but is not entirely reflected in the zoning map.
- : Engagement of residents in planning processes is seen as a strength to be continually emphasized.
- : Opportunities for broad zoning reform could support housing, conservation, agriculture, transportation, and sustainability goals.



QUESTIONS?



YOUR FEEDBACK

We'd love to hear your questions and observations about the Existing Conditions Profile!

- : *Do any of these data surprise you?*
- : *Does anything not feel right to you?*
- : *Did anything confirm what you knew or suspected?*
- : *Do you have suggestions for other data or resources we can draw upon?*

WHAT IS HAPPENING NEXT?

An Overview of Phase II

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Community Survey

Community Survey

Economic Development

The next question will ask you to evaluate Stow's assets to identify the Town's strengths and weaknesses. For the purposes of this question, please respond to each statement based on how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

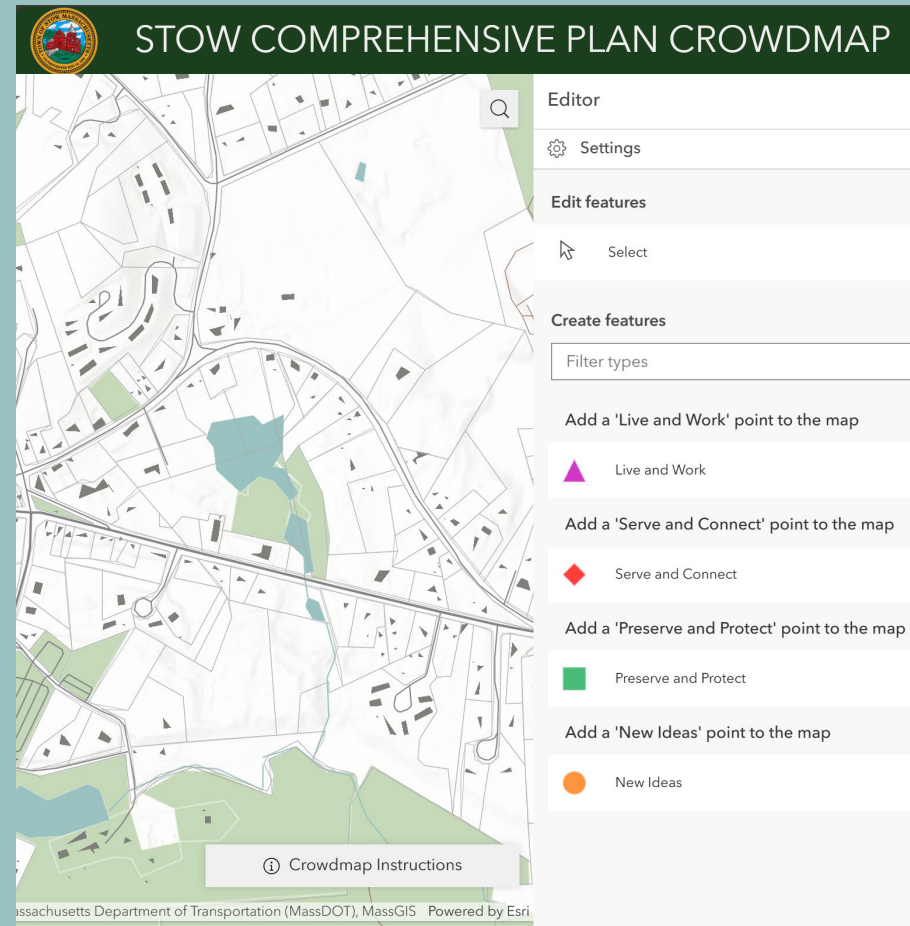
For the purposes of this question, we will interpret your responses to mean the following:

- **Strongly Disagree:** I think Stow absolutely needs to be doing better
- **Disagree:** I think Stow could be doing better
- **Agree:** I think Stow is doing well
- **Strongly Agree:** I think Stow is doing the best

When considering Stow's existing commercial and industrial areas and opportunities, please identify whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about Stow.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Stow's commercial areas have a pleasing aesthetic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stow residents have sufficient access to everyday goods and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Minuteman Airfield brings important value to the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The impact of industrial uses on the community is positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are sufficient employment and job opportunities in Stow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stow has opportunities for new commercial development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are sufficient options for hybrid and/or remote work in Stow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Residents have sufficient access to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Crowdmap



Meeting-in-a-Box

STOW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2035 ENVISION STOW FOR ALL OF US

MEETING IN A BOX

Meeting in a Box is a civic engagement tool designed for use by community groups, associations, or friends to gather at a convenient time and location to share their ideas for the Stow Comprehensive Plan 2035; Envision Stow for All of Us.

The Comprehensive Plan will be a 10-year vision and roadmap for the future. It will serve as the foundational policy document for the Town – guiding local decisions about future growth, preservation, and change. It is critical that community members engage to give their input and help shape the focus and priorities of the Comprehensive Plan.

WINTER-SPRING 2024
DUE: APRIL 29, 2024

J M GOLDSON



PHASE II ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

Tools are active through the 29th of April.



After this engagement period, JM Goldson will prepare an Aggregated Community Engagement Summary (ACES).



The next Committee meeting is April 15th.

- A final push for outreach on the still-live engagement tools!
- Focus on how ACES will inform the Vision, Core Themes, and Goals Working Sessions



THANK YOU!

Jenn Goldson, AICP
Kadineyse Paz
Noah Harper, MCRP

Jennifer@jmgoldson.com
Kadineyse@jmgoldson.com
Noah@jmgoldson.com

