



WESTFORD
MASSACHUSETTS

ROUTE 40 CORRIDOR STUDY

Advisory Committee Meeting #5

February 17, 2026



Introduction



WESTFORD
MASSACHUSETTS

Advisory Committee Members

Michael E Bonenfant, Chair, PB Chair

Scott J. Hazelton, Former Select Board Member

Disha Patel, Resident

Arnold H Price, Vice Chair, Resident

Jeffery Valcourt, ZBA

Ming Zhang, Clerk, Resident

Town Staff

Jeffrey Morrissette, Assistant Town Manager – Land Use & Economic Development

Joseph Giniewicz, Town Planner

Consulting Team



Innes Land Strategies Group

Emily Keys Innes, AICP, LEED AP ND, President

Supriya Kelkar, AICP, LEED AP ND, Senior Planner/Urban Designer

Grant Perry, Planner

Jimmy Rocha, Spatial Analyst



RKG

Eric Halvorsen, AICP, Principal



The Engineering Corp - TEC

Eric Riese, PE, PTOE, Team Leader - Transportation



Project Schedule

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Town Check Ins			11/13	12/11	01/08	02/12	03/12	04/09
Advisory Committee Meetings	-	10/7	11/18	12/16	01/20	02/17 WE ARE HERE!	03/17	04/21 (optional extra date)
Deliverable Due Dates	9/30 Work plan			Vision concepts	-	Feb 10 Results of community planning process	Mar 9 or 16 Results of community planning process	
Tasks	-	Oct 30 Staff and advisory committee Co-exploration process	Nov 18 Present existing conditions findings		Jan 27 Public Workshop #1	Feb 23 Public Workshop #2	-	Week of Apr 20 Final report

Agenda

A. Review

- i. DRAFT Report Outline
- ii. Public Workshop #1 Summary and Key Takeaways
- iii. Survey Results

B. Discuss Next Steps

- i. Public Workshop #2 Agenda
- ii. Open House Plan

C. Adjournment

A. Review

REPORT OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Community Insights
3. Existing Conditions
4. Vision, Goals, and Recommendations
5. Conceptual Scenarios
6. Implementation

Vision

The Route 40 Corridor will evolve as a cohesive, well-designed gateway that balances vitality, housing choice, environmental stewardship, and community character. Future changes along the corridor will build on existing development patterns while responding to current needs for housing, employment, and access to natural resources.

Growth along the corridor should be focused, context sensitive, and incremental, supporting mixed-use activity and housing diversity in appropriate locations, strengthening connections between neighborhoods, improving access to green and blue spaces, and preserving the low-density character of the surrounding areas.

Over time, Route 40 should function as a primary residential corridor, with consistent site building design, neighborhood services, and improved access to natural resources. New development and redevelopment should reinforce Westford's established character, avoid over-intensive land use, and respect the environmental and scenic qualities that define the corridor today.

REPORT OUTLINE

Goals

1. Establish Route 40 Specific Planning and Design Guidance.
2. Improve how vehicles enter, exit and move along the corridor
3. Strengthen Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity
4. Preserve Neighborhood Stability and Scale
5. Allow Housing Diversity with clear standards
6. Focus Mixed-use Development in Existing Commercial Areas
7. Retain Industrial uses while minimizing impacts
8. Protect Water Resources and Improve Public Access
9. Foster Safe and Resilient Town Infrastructure
10. Align Zoning, Capital Planning, and Board Review

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 1.

Establish Route 40 Specific Planning and Design Guidance.

1. Prepare corridor-specific design guidance to address building placement, height, massing, parking location, landscaping, and buffering along Route 40.
2. Apply consistent expectations for how buildings relate to the roadway, even where land uses differ.
3. Ensure that future zoning amendments related to Route 40 are aligned with the corridors' intended function as a residential town corridor rather than a high-intensity commercial roadway.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 2.

Improve how vehicles enter, exit, and move along the corridor.

1. Limit new curb cuts where feasible and encourage shared driveways or internal site connections.
2. Prioritize access management strategies during redevelopment and site plan review.
3. Coordinate with MassDOT, where applicable, to ensure roadway improvements support local access, safety, and corridor character.
4. Avoid roadway widening or design changes that would significantly increase the visual scale or traffic intensity of Route 40.

GOAL 3.

Strengthen Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity

1. Identify priority segments of Route 40 where bicycle facilities can be incrementally implemented.
2. Improve pedestrian crossings and connections near neighborhood retail nodes, trail connections, and residential clusters.
3. Require new development and redevelopment to provide internal pedestrian connections and links to adjacent properties, with similar or compatible uses wherever feasible.
4. Coordinate corridor connectivity improvement with Town-wide trail and open space planning efforts.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 4.

Preserve Neighborhood Stability and Scale

1. Maintain residential zoning as the primary regulatory framework.
2. Update dimensional standards, where needed, to discourage excessive lot disturbance and residential buildings with massing that is out of scale with the neighborhood.
3. Require preservation of mature trees and natural buffers during subdivision or redevelopment.
4. Discourage land-clearing practices that result in significant loss of canopy or visual exposure of development from the roadway.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 5.

Allow Housing Diversity with clear standards

1. Identify specific areas where duplexes, triplexes, and cluster-style housing may be appropriate.
2. Require building forms that resemble larger homes rather than apartment-style buildings.
3. Establish clear standards for height, lot coverage, setbacks, and open space to ensure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods and also reduce pre-existing non-conformities in the study area.
4. Encourage shared access and compact site layouts to reduce roadway impacts.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 6.

Focus Mixed-use

Development in Existing Commercial Areas.

1. Direct mixed-use and multifamily development to establish commercial zoning districts along the corridor.
2. Support neighborhood-serving retail uses such as cafes, bakeries, small restaurants, libraries, and pharmacies, where appropriate.
3. Require parking to be located to the side or rear of buildings where feasible.
4. Apply design standards that ensure commercial buildings reflect residential scale, materials, and roof forms, particularly near homes.
5. Avoid expansion of strip-style commercial development into predominantly residential areas.

GOAL 7.

**Retain Industrial uses
while minimizing impacts.**

1. Retain existing industrial and quarry zones without expanding these areas into adjacent residential zones.
2. Allow flexibility for compatible commercial and light industrial uses that do not introduce significant traffic, noise, or visual impacts.
3. Strengthen buffering, landscaping, and setback requirements where industrial uses abut residential properties.
4. Encourage reinvestment that improves site organization, circulation, and appearance without increasing intensity.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 8.

Protect Water Resources and Improve Public Access.

1. Map wetlands, streams, and floodplain areas within and adjacent to the corridor as part of future planning and zoning work.
2. Require site designs that protect natural drainage patterns and water quality.
3. Identify opportunities to improve public access to green and blue spaces through trails, shared access points, or visual access.
4. Discourage development patterns that permanently block access to water bodies without providing alternatives.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 9.

Foster Safe and Resilient Town Infrastructure.

1. Coordinate roadway, utility, and stormwater infrastructure planning with land use policies to ensure systems are appropriately scaled.
2. Design roadway improvements to enhance safety and emergency access without widening or increasing traffic intensity.
3. Incorporate stormwater and drainage practices that minimize impervious surfaces and protect groundwater, particularly within Area II zones.
4. Address known drainage and flooding issues near wetlands, brooks, and low-lying areas.

REPORT OUTLINE

GOAL 10.

Align Zoning, Capital Planning, and Board Review.

1. Use the Route 40 Corridor Study to inform future zoning amendments and map changes.
2. Coordinate corridor priorities with capital planning, including roadway, drainage, and bicycle infrastructure investments.
3. Provide training or guidance to boards and staff on how to apply corridor-specific recommendations during project review.
4. Periodically review progress and update recommendations as conditions change.

Key Takeaways

HOUSING

1. Support for 3- to 4-unit buildings along the corridor in the future.
2. Support for increased residential development, but not large apartment complexes.
3. Interest in encouraging smaller residential unit sizes.
4. Support for new housing along the western part of the corridor.

RETAIL/ MIXED USES

1. Concern that the current land use and zoning create a mix of incompatible uses.
2. Preference for increased separation between different land uses.
3. Interest in smaller retail units and neighborhood businesses, such as cafes, pharmacies, bakeries, and sit-down restaurants.
4. Desire for neighborhood retail near the intersection of Route 40 and Nutting Road.
5. Consensus in favor of Scenario 2, with some comments.
6. Less interest in two-story mixed-use residential development.

Key Takeaways

BLUE, GREEN AND CONNECTIVITY

1. Support for sidewalks and bike lanes, similar to those on Route 110.
2. Belief that sidewalks benefit local businesses.
3. Interest in developing a bike trail.
4. Support to connect sidewalks to retail areas rather than scattered throughout.
5. Concerns that bike lanes may be inappropriate or unsafe for cyclists.
6. Desire for a crosswalk near Stony Brook School.
7. Interest in a bike path along the old red line, though ownership is unclear.
8. Support for formalized access to Long Sought Pond.
9. Interest in improving access to green and recreational spaces.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

Key Takeaways

	HOUSING TYPES	MULTIFAMILY TOWNHOUSES DUPLEXES TRIPLEXES	8
	COMMERCIAL/ RETAIL	CAFES/ BAKERY GROCERY/ RESTAURANTS DAYCARE MEDICAL	6
	EMPLOYMENT USES	OFFICE/ PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CREATIVE/ KNOWLEDGE BASED WORKSPACES	1
	INDUSTRIAL USES	FLEX/ INDUSTRIAL SPACES WAREHOUSING/ DISTRIBUTION MANUFACTURING & ASSEMBLY EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES	0
	GREEN SPACES	PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS PLAZAS TRAILS & GREENWAYS COMMUNITY GARDENS	12

SURVEY #1 RESULTS

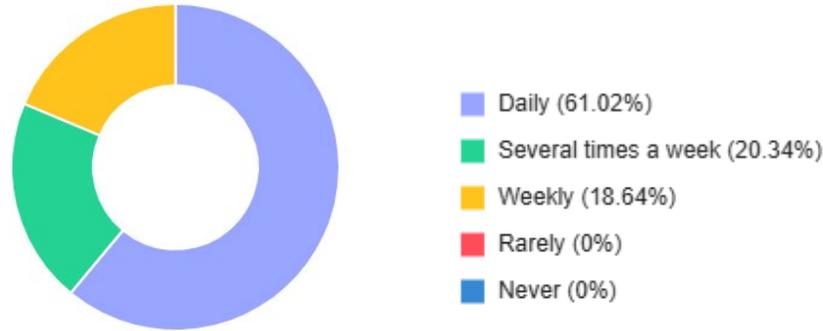
Community Priorities

FIRST. Protect and Enhance Natural Assets

SECOND. Add alternative Housing Types

THIRD. Increase Commercial Activity

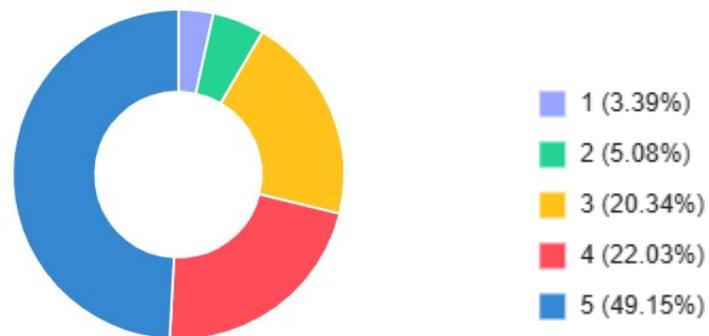
How often do you travel on Route 40/ Groton Road?



How safe do you feel biking along Route 40/Groton Road?



How safe do you feel walking along Route 40/Groton Road?



How safe do you feel traveling in a vehicle on Route 40/Groton Road?



SURVEY #1 RESULTS

What do you like most about Route 40/ Groton Road right now?

1. Route 40 is valued for its rural and scenic character, with lots of trees, open spaces, and minimal overdevelopment.
2. Many people appreciate the quiet, light traffic, and the fact that it is less busy than other nearby roads like Route 110.
3. The road provides a convenient and direct connection to Route 3, Groton, and Chelmsford, making travel fast and easy.
4. Few traffic lights and intersections help keep driving smooth and efficient.
5. Residents like the mix of small businesses and homes, such as Dunkin's and Ace Hardware.
6. The area's primarily residential nature and limited number of large businesses help maintain a peaceful atmosphere.
7. Well-maintained roads, good street markings, and reasonable speed limits are highlights for some.
8. Natural features, like patches of forest and views of ponds, are appreciated for their beauty.
9. Some people mention the presence of sidewalks and accessibility features, though others wish for improvements.
10. A few respondents simply like living there or value the local community feel.

B. Discuss Next Steps

Goals

- I. Confirm **community preferences for corridor design character, building form, and streetscape standards.**

- II. Ensure the **emerging planning recommendations reflect community feedback and visual preferences.**

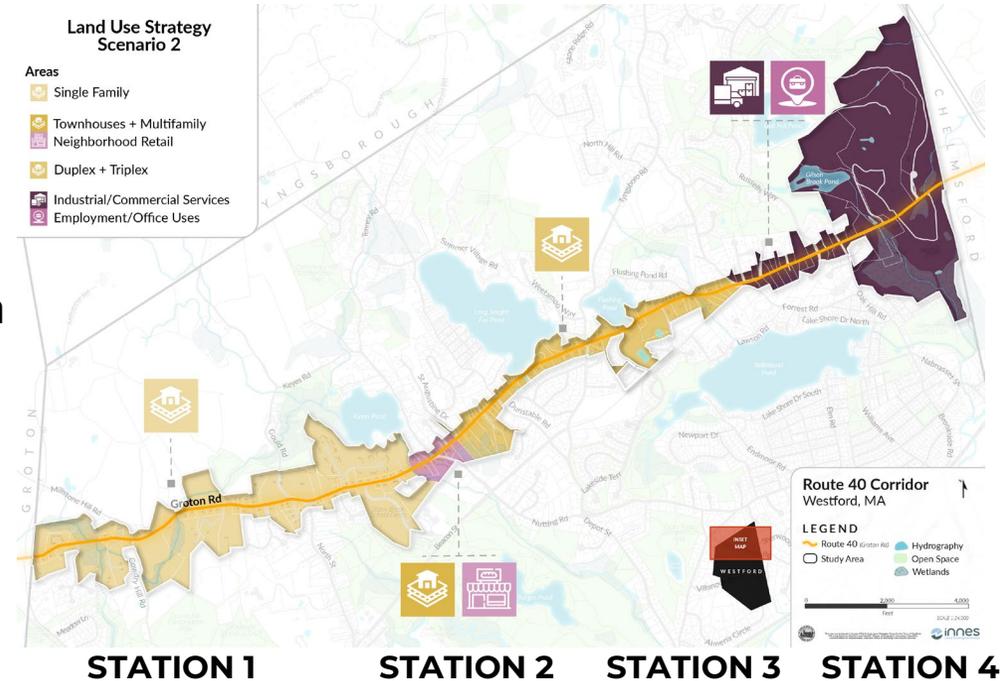
- III. Collect **final input to guide refinement of corridor design frameworks and recommendations.**

- IV. Strengthen **community ownership and understanding** of the study's proposed design direction.

OPEN HOUSE

Agenda and Plan

- The workshop is set up like an **open house, so participants can come and go at any time during the two hours.**
- At the entrance, there will be an area with information about the project, a complete study area map, existing photos, and the project's goals.
- Since most participants preferred Scenario 2, there will be four areas, focusing on different segments of the corridor, each with its own station.
- Each station will show potential uses for that segment and possible design ideas, and participants can review the options, leave comments, and vote for what they like.



ROLES

Town Staff

Town staff serve as hosts and listeners, providing background on the project, and supporting the workshop by answering factual questions and observing the issues that emerge.

Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee members are present to listen and observe community perspectives – not to guide discussion or promote solutions. Your insights after the workshop will help translate public input into informed recommendations.

Project Team

The project team designs and facilitates the workshop, guiding activities, managing time, and ensuring all voices are heard. They will be responsible for documenting input and summarizing results into community-informed scenarios and recommendations.

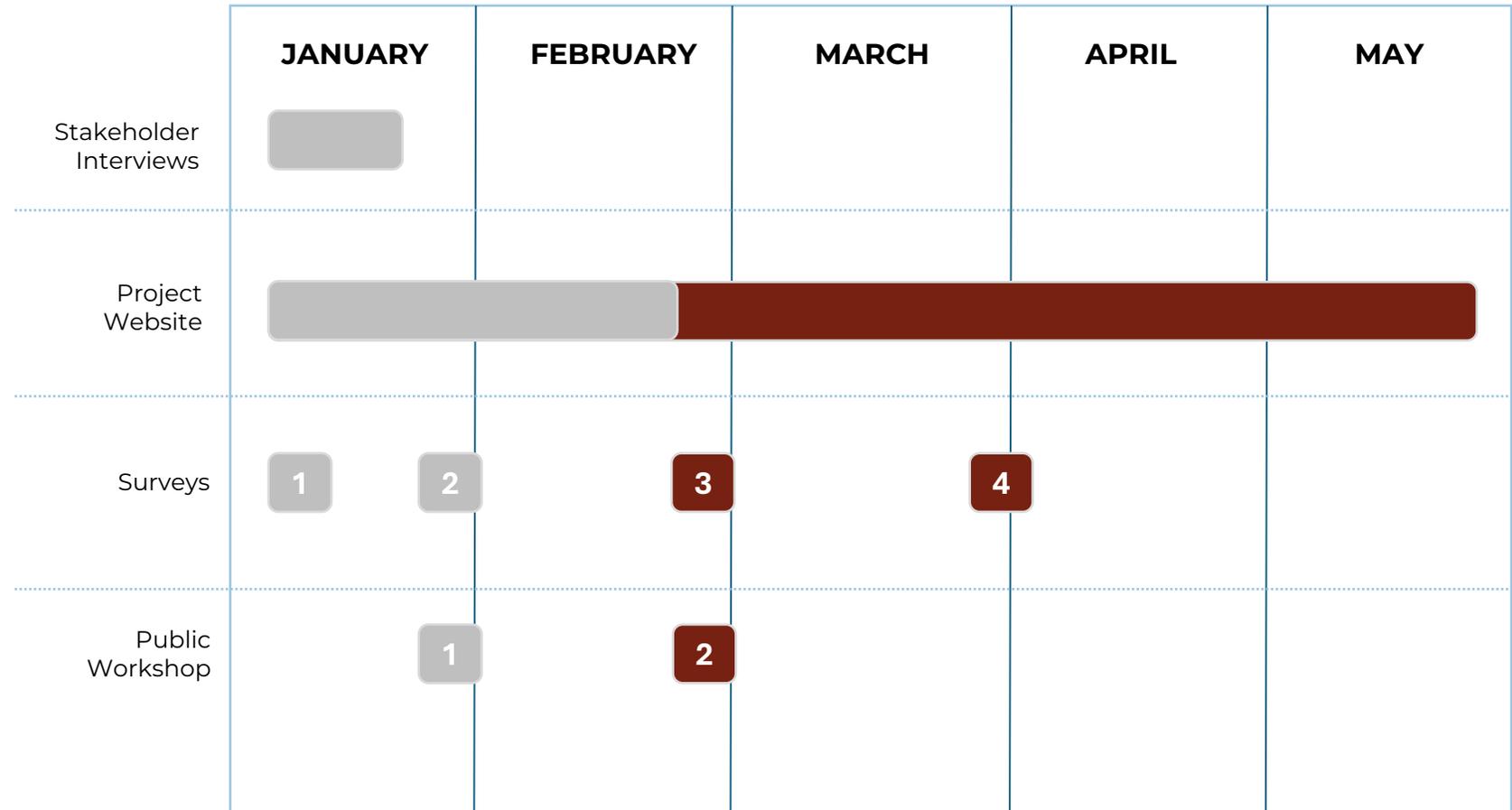
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

1. Stakeholder Interviews

2. Project Website

3. Surveys (4)

4. Public Workshops (2)



DELIVERABLES

TASK 1: KICK OFF AND PROJECT PLANNING

- Develop a **community-planning process** in consultation with the Advisory Committee.

TASK 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Facilitate a **co-exploration process** with staff and the advisory committee to develop **visioning scenarios** for community engagement.
- Conduct **focus groups**.
- Present **existing conditions findings**.

TASK 3: COMMUNITY CO-DESIGN PROCESS

- Conduct **outreach with community members**.
- Facilitate **two public engagement events**.
- Prepare at least **three vision concepts** with graphical representation that incorporate **stakeholder goals and objectives**, and after community feedback, prepare a preferred **final corridor plan**.

TASK 4: DRAFT AND FINAL REPORT

- Identify **draft recommendations for zoning bylaw revisions, draft design guidelines**, and any other relevant materials by early to mid **March 2026**.
- Produce **final project report** for the week of **April 20, 2026**.

NEXT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Agenda

Review

1. Public Workshop #2 Summary and Key Takeaways
2. Survey Results
3. DRAFT Report
 - a) Introduction
 - b) Community Insights
 - c) Existing Conditions
 - d) Vision, Goals, and Recommendations

Discuss Next Steps

NEXT STEPS

TOWN STAFF

- Continue Outreach for Public Workshop #2.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Promote and distribute materials for the Public Workshop #2.
- Next Advisory Committee meeting **March 17, Tuesday – 7 PM.**

PROJECT TEAM

- Prepare materials for the Public Workshop #2
- Finalize and release Survey #3.
- Draft Report with Chapters 1 – 4.

C. Adjournment
