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TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

2030 Strategic Plan



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LAKE QUINSIGAMOND - SHREWSBURY, MA

A Message from the Town Manager

On behalf of the Shrewsbury Select Board and Town Staff, I am pleased to present the Shrewsbury 2030 Strategic Plan. Shrewsbury has always been a proud New England town focused on sustainable, self-sufficient operations. In doing so, the Town offers our community a full range of traditional municipal services, including public safety, public utilities, human services, community development, and education, all of which are underpinned with excellent financial and administrative support. Shrewsbury has encountered continual rapid population growth over the past decades, and is excited and committed to creating a vibrant, inclusive, collaborative community where all can thrive, while maintaining the small town community feel residents have grown to appreciate.

Most importantly the Strategic Plan builds upon what residents enjoy and love about Shrewsbury today for an even better tomorrow.

about Shrewsbury today for an even better tomorrow. That is why community engagement and feedback were a focal point for the development of this plan.

The Shrewsbury 2030 Strategic Plan kicked off in the Fall of 2021 through initial engagement with Town Staff and various Board and Committee members. These engagement sessions helped facilitate conversations on the strengths and challenges the Town faces and goals each of these groups have for the Town in the future. In late



Kevin J. Mizikar
TOWN MANAGER

January of 2022, the Town participated in the National Community Survey, which asked questions of the community on certain service and topic areas to be later tied into the development of the Strategic Plan. Throughout the month of March 2022, Town Staff volunteers met with various community groups to gather feedback for the Strategic Plan. The volunteers met with over 180 individuals across 18 different community groups. During this time period, Town Management developed a Mission and Values Statement for the Town as an organization. This was crafted from a survey sent to employees earlier that same year. During the late spring, the Shrewsbury Select Board developed the draft Strategic outcome areas. Over the summer these were taken back for further community feedback and engagement. The Town utilized a variety of methods to engage with residents on the draft Strategic Plan including



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY TOWN HALL

attending community events like the Farmers' Market and Food Truck Thursdays, hosting several in person and virtual engagement sessions, and creating an online feedback platform.

The Strategic Plan is built on five strategic outcome areas that the community, Select Board, and Town Staff have identified as priorities. These outcome areas are: Engaged and Connected, Exceptional, Thriving, Prosperous, and Sustainable.

These outcome areas are paired with various specific goals that will help the Town and the community achieve its vision for Shrewsbury 2030. The Strategic Plan will also guide the yearly budget process and individual goals of employees to exceed the needs and meet the priorities of Shrewsbury residents.

I extend my thanks to the residents of Shrewsbury, Town Staff, and the Select Board for their participation and engagement in the strategic planning process. We look forward to continuing to work alongside our residents to meet their vision for Shrewsbury 2030.

Kevin J. Mizikar
Town Manager



The Shrewsbury Community

The Town of Shrewsbury has a history of delivering quality services to its residents while prioritizing sustainable, self-sufficient operations. It offers its residents a rich history alongside modern amenities, and balances a small-town, community feel with easy access to the Cities of Boston and Worcester.

The Town was first incorporated in 1727 and is home to many historically significant sites. The Town Center includes the Shrewsbury Historic District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Notable sites include the First Congressional Church, built in 1766, a brick schoolhouse built in 1830, and the Shrewsbury Public Library, built in 1903. Priority has been given to the redevelopment of the Town Center. The vision for this initiative is to promote redevelopment of the Center into an economically vibrant area where residents and visitors can shop, dine, and gather.

1727



TOWN COMMON HISTORIC DISTRICT MARKER SHREWSBURY, MA

Shrewsbury offers its community ample recreation options. The Town, which spans approximately 20 square miles, maintains 17 Town parks and more than 10 miles of trails. Additionally, the Town offers access to Lake Quinsigamond, a four-mile-long lake bordering the Town and the City of Worcester. The Lake offers the opportunity for a wide variety of recreation, including fishing, rowing, sailing, and swimming.



JORDAN POND WALKING TRAIL SHREWSBURY, MA

Shrewsbury has a highly rated public education system and a highly educated population.

Nearly two thirds of the population aged 25 or older have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to only 37% for Worcester County overall. The population is also diverse, with 22% of the population identifying as Asian and 5% identifying as Hispanic or Latino. More than one quarter of residents were born in another country, and more than 30% of residents speak a language other than English at home.

The Town supports the community through robust social programs while maintaining a commitment to affordability. It maintains one of the lowest tax rates in Massachusetts for both residential and commercial property owners. These competitive rates are a key element of the Town's strategy to spur population and economic growth.

20
SQUARE MILES

17
TOWN PARKS

10
TRAIL MILES

Strategic Planning Process



PROSPECT PARK - SHREWSBURY, MA

Shrewsbury's strategic planning process was designed to ensure:

- A shared vision of the Town's ultimate goals. The process included a significant number of opportunities for input from members of the community, as organizations driven by collective goals and vision increase their capacity for success.
- A collective understanding of the Town's operating context, available resources, and long-term direction. Ultimately, five strategic outcome areas were selected for inclusion in the 2022 plan, and each has accompanying measures of success and specific strategies to guide implementation.
- Acceptance of the Town's overall direction and the urgency of the Strategic Plan, which will ultimately be integrated into the way the Town is operated on a day-to-day basis. Progress reporting against the strategic outcome areas will be a key part of organizational updates to the Select Board and Community.

To achieve these conditions for success, Shrewsbury's strategic planning process involved input from a broad group of internal and external stakeholders. This group included Board and Committee members and members of the public through a combination of in-person and virtually facilitated sessions, interviews, focus groups, retreats, an online employee survey, drop-in sessions, a dedicated website run by the Town amongst other methods to gather feedback at different points in the process.

Strategic Plan Community Engagement:



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Strategic Framework

The strategic framework, based on considerable community input, considers both Shrewsbury's present circumstances and its future goals, and will serve as a blueprint for decision-making moving forward. It contains a vision, mission statement, values, and strategic outcome areas that address the Town's current challenges and help to ensure continued success in management of Shrewsbury's resources and assets.

Vision

Shrewsbury is a vibrant, inclusive, collaborative community where all can thrive.

Mission

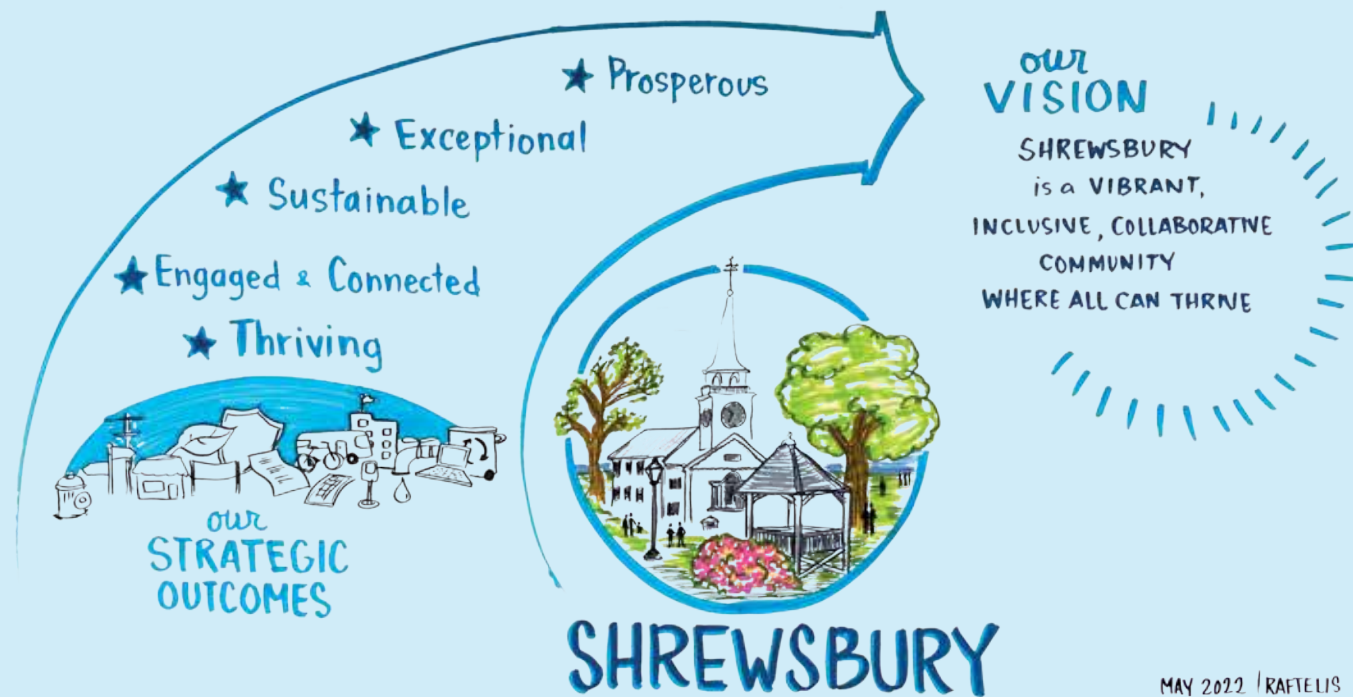
In Shrewsbury, we are dedicated professionals who work creatively and collaboratively to provide exceptional services that enhance the quality of life and surpass the needs of those we serve.

Values

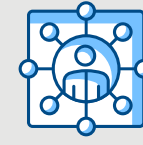
Integrity
Inclusion
Innovation

LAKE QUINSIGAMOND
SHREWSBURY, MA

Strategic Outcome Areas



MAY 2022 | RAFTELIS



Engaged and Connected

Shrewsbury engages residents and creates community connections that foster a sense of belonging through:

- Strong relationships between the Town government and residents
- Intentional inclusion and outreach to build trust in Town government and services
- Empowered volunteers who contribute their time, talent, and expertise to the community



Exceptional

Shrewsbury's Town government and workforce set a standard of excellence through:

- Responsible fiscal stewardship
- Effective long-range planning
- Innovative and proactive customer service
- Smart, reliable, and robust municipal services and utilities



Thriving

Shrewsbury enables the highest quality of life through:

- Community oriented public health and safety
- Comprehensive and compassionate social services
- Equitable educational opportunities
- Cultural and social experiences
- Multimodal transportation
- Active and passive recreation



Prosperous

Shrewsbury fosters partnerships for residents, businesses, and the community that result in:

- Purposeful land use planning and outcomes that promote livability
- An environment that enables residents and businesses to succeed
- Business attraction and retention that contributes to the Town's economic base
- Local retail and restaurants that build community and meet resident needs and preferences
- Diverse and affordable housing options



Sustainable

Shrewsbury prioritizes environmental responsibility by:

- Reducing the Town's carbon footprint
- Improving access to clean energy options
- Preserving open and natural spaces
- Protecting natural resources



Engaged and Connected

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Shrewsbury’s focus is to maintain an engaged and connected community, regardless of age, economic circumstances, ethnic and cultural background, among other factors.

The Town is committed to transparency in its operations, producing extensive, detailed annual budget documents and annual Town reports that provide comprehensive records of the operations and accomplishments of each Town department. The Town also engages the community by maintaining an active social media presence and regularly hosting public meetings on topics of interest to the community.

The Town works to engage with its residents to understand their opinions and feedback. The process of developing this Strategic Plan, for example, solicited resident feedback through multiple channels and community events, and included opportunities for virtual and in-person participation at various stages of the process to give feedback on the proposed Strategic Plan elements. Shrewsbury also maintained a website, GetInvolvedShrewsbury.com, to gather resident feedback throughout the process.

Strategies in the 2030 Strategic Plan build on these efforts to help ensure that the Town remains engaged and connected with all members of the community, and are highlighted to the right.

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Strategies

- Develop a Shrewsbury Citizens Academy and Town Ambassador program to increase resident engagement and knowledge of local government roles and responsibilities
- Conduct a biennial community survey to better understand broad resident perspectives on Town Government and services
- Expand interest in and engagement with Shrewsbury’s Boards and Committees
- Create and implement a plan to ensure regular and consistent multilingual information-sharing across all communication platforms
- Develop, centralize, and maintain new resident resources, including a webpage and printed materials

Project Spotlight: Strategic Communications Planning

In January of 2022, the Town engaged with the University of Massachusetts Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management to both assess Town-wide communications and create a Communications Strategic Plan for Shrewsbury. The main goal of the project is to develop a more strategic approach to communications with the community, with a particular focus on underserved populations in Town, including renters. The assessment and communication planning are currently underway, with the next steps including reviewing and implementing the recommendations.

2022 FARMERS MARKET
SHREWSBURY, MA





Exceptional

Shrewsbury's Town government and workforce set a standard of excellence through:

- Fiscal responsibility
- Effective long-range planning
- Innovative and proactive customer service
- Smart, reliable, and robust municipal services

The Town takes pride in its fiscal stewardship, which allows Shrewsbury to maintain one of the lowest tax rates in Massachusetts, while supporting extensive public services and a high quality of life.

Shrewsbury has made significant investments in its infrastructure and facilities to ensure that it remains safe and reliable for Town residents and businesses. In Fiscal Year 2022, the Town invested more than \$3.9 million in non-utility capital improvements alone, for projects such as a bridge replacement, sidewalk improvements, and updates to parks and playgrounds.

The Town also prioritizes high quality and convenient customer service. Visitors to the Town website are immediately presented with self-service options, including signing up for notifications or newsletters on a variety of topics, requesting a trash or recycling pickup, and options for paying taxes and fees online.

The Town has identified several strategies to help maintain its commitment to exceptional service and fiscal responsibility, as listed to the right.



Strategies

- Invest in the Town's infrastructure and services to ensure they are future-ready
- Recruit, develop, and support a highly skilled and compassionate workforce through appropriate employee training
- Increase self-service, convenience, and transparency options for Town residents and customers

Project Spotlight: Water Quality Improvements

The Town's drinking water supply is sourced from gravel-packed wells that contain the naturally occurring mineral manganese. While manganese is not harmful to drink, it can cause water discoloration at some levels. To address this water quality issue, the Town constructed a state-of-the-art water treatment plant, which began operating in 2018. The plant uses a cutting-edge biological treatment method to completely remove the manganese.

Over time manganese built up within water mains, which allowed discolored water issues to continue even after the construction of the new treatment plant. Unidirectional Flushing (UDF) is now used to improve operations and enhance the water system. Water main flushing is an effective method to remove unwanted tastes, odors, or discolorations of the water, and to improve chlorine residual. UDF cleans accumulated deposits on pipes, uses less water than conventional flushing, and reduces the impact on customers.

Unidirectional flushing will be an ongoing program with work taking place in the spring and fall seasons. The Town aims to complete unidirectional flushing in each of the 12 zones every 2-3 years, depending on seasonal demand.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT
SHREWSBURY, MA





Thriving

Shrewsbury enables the highest quality of life through:

- Community oriented public health and safety
- Comprehensive and compassionate social services
- Equitable educational opportunities
- Cultural and social experiences
- Multimodal transportation
- Active and passive recreation

Shrewsbury is committed to supporting a high quality of life for residents of all ages and backgrounds. Its school system provides consistent high-quality education for students of all backgrounds. Additionally, the Town provides funding for Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services (SYFS), a nonprofit, assisting children and families with a wide variety of issues from homelessness to domestic violence to academic support to depression and eating disorders. SYFS assists more than 7,000 families per year, on average, of which more than 40% have incomes below the federal poverty line.

Shrewsbury also provides support for seniors in the community. It operates a Senior Center, which hosts a variety of activities and provides affordable meals for older Town residents. The Town also provides support and outreach on a number of issues affecting older adults, such as nutrition, elder abuse, and fraud. Additionally, Shrewsbury operates a van service to help seniors get where they need to go, and offers a property tax work off program that allows seniors to work limited hours for the Town in exchange for a substantial property tax reduction.

The strategies identified for this area enhance and expand the Town’s commitment to providing residents the support they need to thrive.

In 2022, the Shrewsbury Police Department hired two mental health clinicians to provide safety services in situations that don’t involve immediate violence or serious crime.

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Strategies

- Expand community oriented public health and safety initiatives
- Evaluate and pursue opportunities to improve multimodal transportation infrastructure, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails
- Enhance residents’ sense of belonging through access to distinct cultural and social experiences
- Provide a variety of community-driven recreational opportunities
- Incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging principles into new and existing programs, policies, and priorities.
- Expand social services through increased opportunity and equitable access
- Partner with Shrewsbury Public Schools in achieving their mission and core values
- Support additional diverse educational opportunities for residents of all ages

Project Spotlight: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

In October of 2021, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force presented its final report to the Select Board, fulfilling their charge a year after being established. From there, the Board engaged with a consultant, VISIONS Inc, for training and to prepare to review and act on recommendations from the DEI Task Force’s final report.

On August 23, 2022 the Select Board issued a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Statement and established the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee. The Board has been working to fill the seats of the committee and continue this important and necessary work for the Town in order to meet the Vision of the Strategic Plan that Shrewsbury is a vibrant, inclusive, collaborative community where all can thrive.





Prosperous

Shrewsbury fosters partnerships for residents, businesses, and the community that result in:

- Purposeful land use planning and outcomes that promote livability
- An environment that enables residents and businesses to succeed
- Business attraction and retention that contributes to the Town's economic base
- Local retail and restaurants that build community and meet resident needs and preferences
- Diverse and affordable housing options

Shrewsbury works to foster responsible development while still preserving the Town's unique character, which helps attract and retain residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Town is committed to robust, smart development. Between 2018 and 2021 it helped facilitate more than \$120 million in new commercial and industrial development. It also balances this development with efforts to support small businesses and maintain the Town's historic character. Shrewsbury's Small Business and Nonprofit Grant Program, for example, awards American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds of up to \$2,500 to assist in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the Town's Community Preservation Committee works to preserve open space and historic sites in the face of growth.

In 2006, the Town adopted inclusionary zoning within the Zoning Bylaw. Inclusionary zoning requires developers to provide affordable housing units within projects with 5 units or more. In 2021, the Town established an Affordable Housing Trust dedicated to creating and maintaining affordable housing for low and middle income residents.

The following strategies are intended to support and expand this ongoing commitment to a prosperous community for all.

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Strategies:

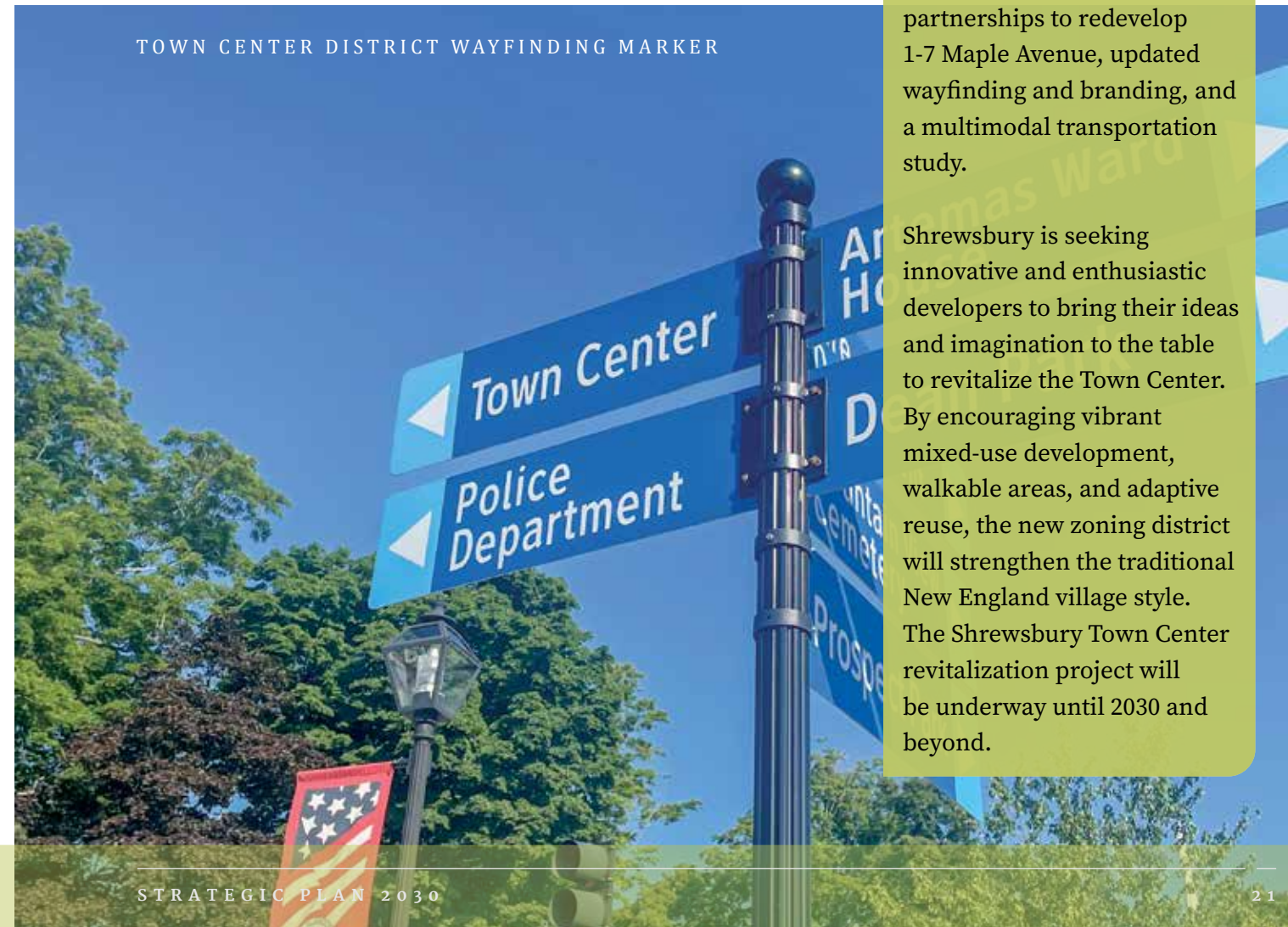
- Identify and invest in opportunities for the Town to support diverse and affordable housing options
- Ensure a robust, transparent, and streamlined licensing and permitting process
- Dedicate additional resources to economic development, including a tailored marketing strategy
- Partner with business districts and groups to build and diversify the Town's economic base
- Enhance existing land use planning to benefit residential uses, while increasing commercial opportunities

Project Spotlight: Town Center Revitalization

Shrewsbury's Master Plan prioritizes strengthening and enhancing the Town Center. The Town has studied the existing conditions around the Town Center and is implementing several programs and projects including Town Center visioning, a parking study, creation of a Town Center Zoning District, public-private partnerships to redevelop 1-7 Maple Avenue, updated wayfinding and branding, and a multimodal transportation study.

Shrewsbury is seeking innovative and enthusiastic developers to bring their ideas and imagination to the table to revitalize the Town Center. By encouraging vibrant mixed-use development, walkable areas, and adaptive reuse, the new zoning district will strengthen the traditional New England village style. The Shrewsbury Town Center revitalization project will be underway until 2030 and beyond.

TOWN CENTER DISTRICT WAYFINDING MARKER





Sustainable

Shrewsbury prioritizes environmental responsibility by:

- Reducing the Town’s carbon footprint
- Improving access to clean energy options
- Preserving open and natural spaces
- Protecting Natural Resources

The Town recognizes the importance of sustainability and environmental protection and has already made significant strides toward reducing the environmental impact of Town operations. Shrewsbury has been designated as a Green Community by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources since 2018. As part of that designation, it has adopted energy codes designed to encourage conservation as well as a Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy and an Energy Reduction Plan for Town operations.

The Town is also committed to maintaining a vibrant, verdant environment for its residents. The Department of Public Works maintains 17 parks across the Town, as well as recreational facilities. Since 2006, the Town has also managed the Shrewsbury Water Conservation Project, which mandates and supports the careful use of water by the Shrewsbury community. Elements of the project include implementation of restrictions on outdoor water use as well as education for residents on how they can conserve water in their homes.

Additionally, Shrewsbury acknowledges the threat posed by climate change and the need to act quickly and comprehensively. It has taken the first steps toward creating a Climate Action and Resiliency Plan to guide the Town moving forward. Strategies in this area focus on completing that Plan as well as taking other steps to protect the Town’s environment.

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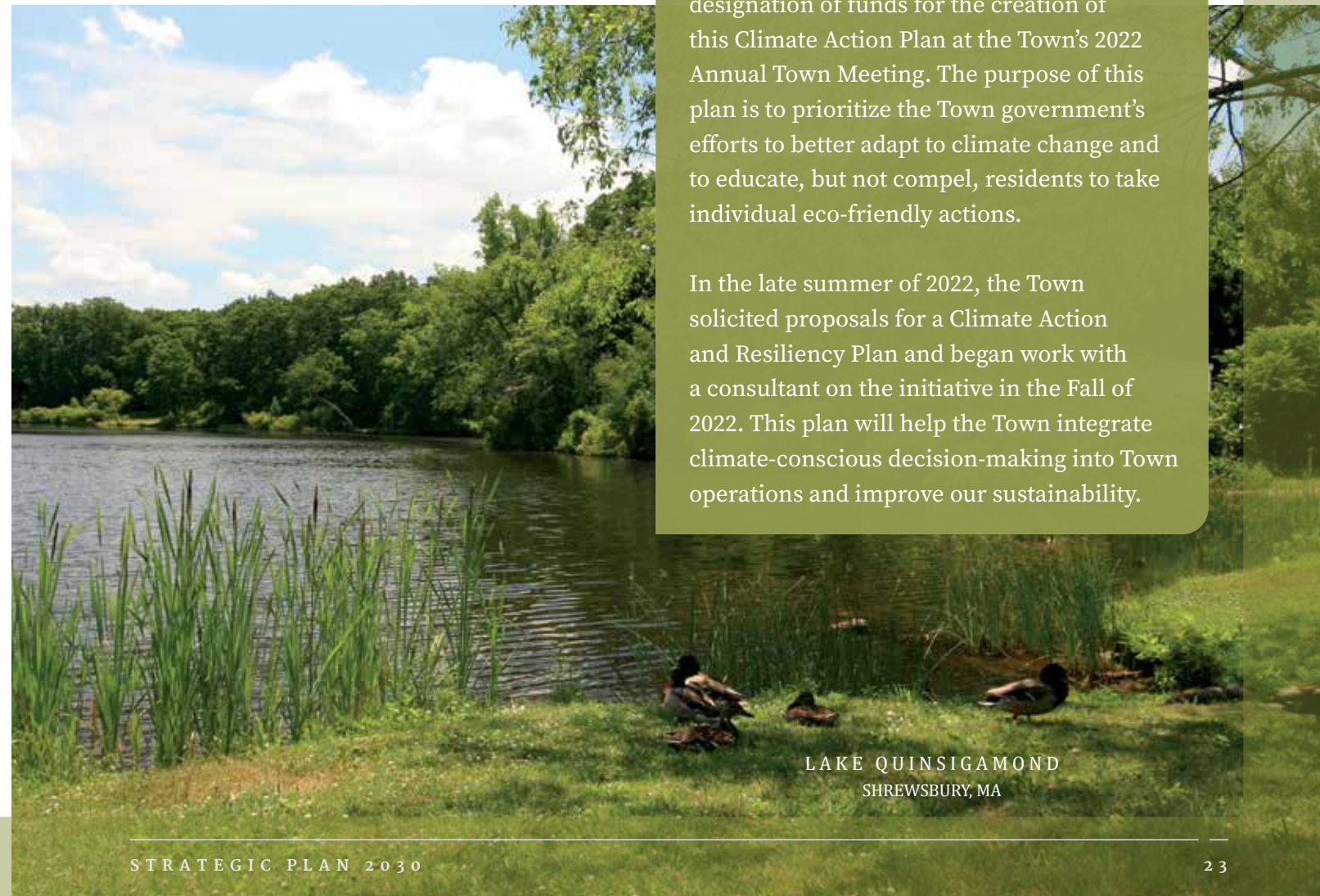
Strategies

- Draft and implement Shrewsbury’s Climate Action and Resiliency Plan
- Implement beneficial and strategic greenhouse gas reducing projects
- Audit and upgrade Town facilities and equipment to improve efficiency of resource use
- Develop a plan to preserve and protect open space and natural resources in Shrewsbury

Project Spotlight: Climate Action and Resiliency Plan

Shrewsbury is committed to reducing its negative impact on the environment. In recent years, residents have clearly demonstrated their desire to find environmentally-friendly solutions, including the Town’s plastic bag ban in 2016, the declaration opposing a natural gas pipeline in 2017, the polystyrene ban in 2018, the Town’s designation as one of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Green Communities in 2018, the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2020, and the designation of funds for the creation of this Climate Action Plan at the Town’s 2022 Annual Town Meeting. The purpose of this plan is to prioritize the Town government’s efforts to better adapt to climate change and to educate, but not compel, residents to take individual eco-friendly actions.

In the late summer of 2022, the Town solicited proposals for a Climate Action and Resiliency Plan and began work with a consultant on the initiative in the Fall of 2022. This plan will help the Town integrate climate-conscious decision-making into Town operations and improve our sustainability.



LAKE QUINSIGAMOND
SHREWSBURY, MA



SHREWSBURYMA.GOV

