

Town of Lanesborough, Massachusetts

Master Plan

Adopted at the June 23, 2025 Planning Board Meeting



Acknowledgements

Lanesborough Planning Board

Courtney Dondi, Chair

Renee DeRagon

Tara Mullett

Joe Trybus

Leanne Yinger

Andrew Groff, Planning Board Consultant, through an intermunicipal agreement with the Town of Williamstown.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Cornelius Hoss, Community Planning and Development Program Manager

Seth Jenkins – Senior Community Planner

Andrew McKeever, Community Planner

Mark Maloy - GIS, Data, & IT Manager

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The cover photo is looking south from the shoulder of Mount Greylock with Yokun Ridge and Pontoosuc Lake in the background. Photo Credit: Andy McKeever.

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Preface

A Master Plan is largely a data-driven document. For this reason, it is important to explain the data sources that are used in this report. The majority of the information presented has been collected from the United States Census Bureau. The Census Bureau is the largest statistical agency in the country and provides data on America's people, places, and economy.

The Census Bureau conducts a host of surveys and programs, but this report relies heavily on the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey. The Decennial Census is mandated by the U.S. Constitution to count each resident of the country every ten years on the year ending in zero. The Decennial Census questions account for population, age, gender, race, and some basic questions about housing. Since the goal is to reach every resident and the questions asked are easily quantifiable, the information gathered comes with a high degree of accuracy. The results of the Decennial Census determine the number of seats for each state in the U.S. House of Representatives and are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts and to distribute more than \$675 billion in federal funds each year. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024)

The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly basis. This survey is sent to approximately 295,000 addresses monthly, which equates to about 3.5 million per year. Since the number of people surveyed is less than during the Decennial Census and much more extensive questions are included, the results come with a lesser degree of accuracy compared to the Decennial Census.

The Massachusetts Municipal Association is a trade organization representing the 351 Municipalities in the State. They provide a forum for all municipalities to gather and share information, receive updates, and collaborate on projects. They publish valuable information on their Massachusetts Municipal Data Hub and other information for local elected officials. Information from their site was used to inform this plan. (Association, Massachusetts Municipal, 2025)

The Massachusetts Division of Local Services is responsible for ensuring fairness and equity in local property taxation. The Division oversees local municipalities' accounting, distribution of state aid to cities and towns, maintains a municipal data warehouse, and provides municipal consulting and training services. Much of the information contained in the plan regarding municipal finance comes from this site. (Division of Local Services, 2025)

Figure 1.1 Josh Billings Quote at Town Hall



Introduction

Figure 1.2 Lanesborough Mural on Partridge Road under the Route 7/8 Connector Road



A mural painted by Lanesborough Elementary School students in 2024 is a welcoming sight for those travelling into town on Partridge Road.

The Town of Lanesborough is located in Berkshire County in western Massachusetts. The Town has a total area of 29.6 square miles, of which 0.7 square miles (or 2.4%) is water.¹ New Ashford borders Lanesborough to its north, Dalton and Cheshire to its east, Pittsfield to its south, and Hancock to the west (See Figure 1.3)

Located north of Pittsfield, the largest community in the Berkshires, the area was settled in the 1750s and was first known as New Framingham. Through the early colonial period, the community became more established, maintaining a population of just over 1,000 residents. From 1880-1900, the population decreased. In 1900, the town reached its lowest population of 780, but has since grown to over 3,000 residents.

What Does this Plan Address?

This plan addresses a wide range of issues and priorities as expressed by the Town through community engagement initiatives, stakeholder interviews, and the efforts of the Lanesborough Planning Board. When assessing a town, it is important to look at strengths that need to be maintained or expanded, deficiencies that need to be corrected, and prepare for future changes the Town may experience in order to plan accordingly. These topics are analyzed through the lenses of social demography, land use, economic development, natural and cultural resources, open spaces, housing, transportation, and public services.

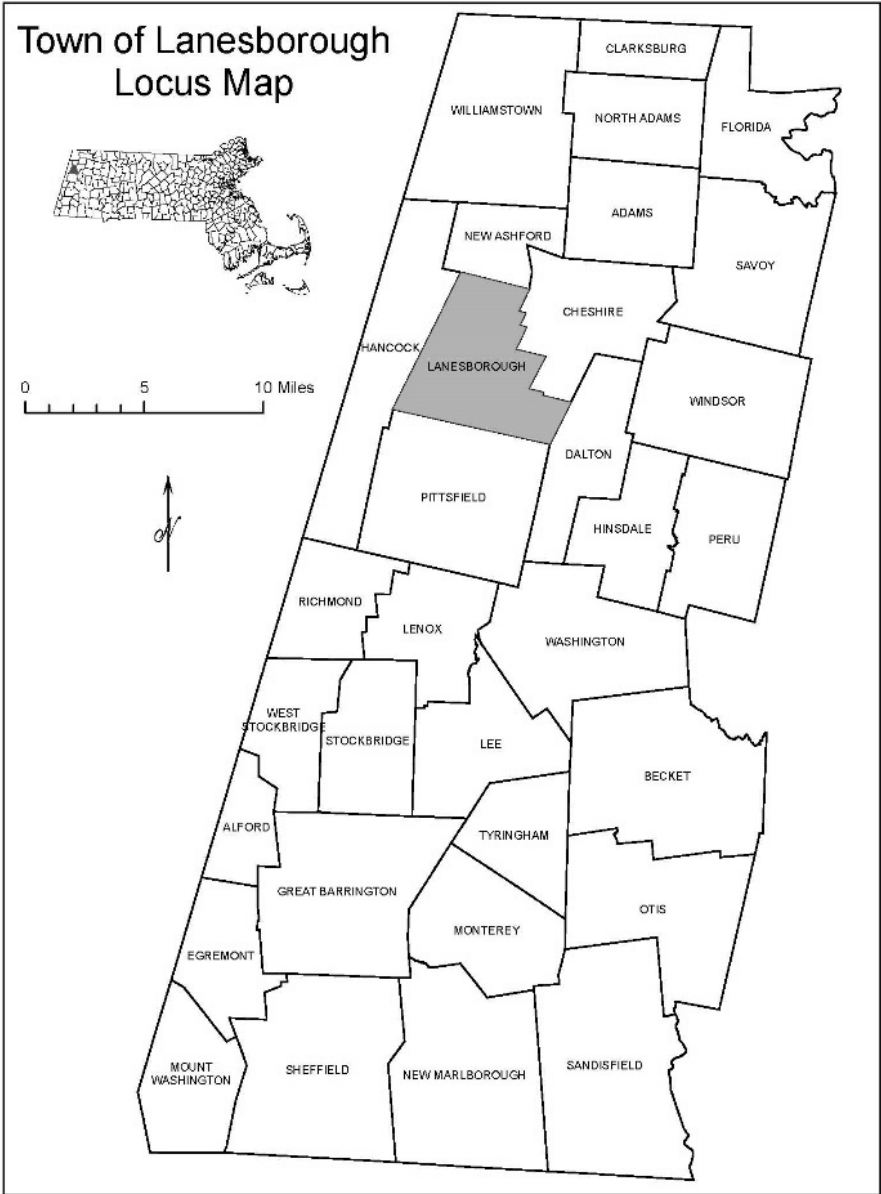
About Master Plans

A master plan is a document that sets a blueprint for municipal decision makers to use in their day-to-day roles of public service. *Master plans are advisory documents, not regulatory documents.* The plan makes realistic recommendations and provides detailed actions on how to achieve goals, but does not impose any kind of regulation for the Town as a whole or its people.

¹ U.S Census Bureau:

https://archive.vn/20200212154722/http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/DEC/10_DP/G001/0600000US2500377990

Figure 1.3 Lanesborough Locus Map in Berkshire County



Under Mass General Laws Chapter 41 Section 81 D, a planning board established in any city or town... shall make a Master plan of such city or town. Such a plan shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations, or other forms of communication, that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.

The purpose of this plan is to create an opportunity for Lanesborough to reflect and determine what it wants for its future. With this vision in mind, clear actions can be determined based on empirical data and proposed to the Town's elected and appointed officials. Using the actions described in the implementation

chapter of this plan, municipal officials can make informed policy changes and disperse municipal funds to priority projects.

Master plans take precedence over existing community plans, such as transportation and open space plans. Master plans are required by state law to cover a host of topics and, consequently, tend to be more general than plans dedicated to a singular subject. The contents of these existing plans greatly inform the master plan and can provide helpful recommendations. For this reason, master plans are not designed to replace existing plans but rather work in coordination with them. Likewise, future plans and projects can refer to the Lanesborough Master Plan for overarching guidance to specific topics and as evidence of documentation in the community.

Methodology of this Plan

All master plans generally begin by explaining how they work, how they are organized, and what they aim to achieve. This is because master plans tend to be lengthy documents, so it is crucial that the audience has a good grasp of what they are about to read. While master plans are used by municipal officials, they are ultimately public documents and need to be easily understood by anyone who chooses to read them.

The introductory chapters offer background information on Lanesborough to provide context for the topics to come. Part of these early chapters is being clear about what the Town's vision is, as this will guide the planning process. Early in the plan is a chapter on demographics, which does not provide recommendations or any subjective information but rather has concrete data that will support recommendations made later in the plan.

The succeeding chapters delve into specific topics that consist of recommendations and supporting data. Additionally, these chapters provide a tiered order of how Lanesborough's vision can be achieved.

Goals

The vision is the "big picture" statement of where the town would like to be five, ten, or twenty years from now.

Objectives

Goal statements go into detail on the different strategies Lanesborough will need to pursue in order to make the vision a reality.

Actions

Actions are the specific tasks that individuals or groups will need to complete to achieve specific policy statements.

The Planning Process

The Lanesborough Master Plan was developed through a planning process that included participation and feedback from the community over multiple years. Once the town identified the need for a long-term vision for the community, it worked with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to develop a scope of work and funding package to allow for project development.

The Lanesborough Planning Board managed the process beginning in late November 2023. The group spent the next six months developing a survey, meeting with community stakeholders, and publicizing the development of the Master Plan in the Town.

The survey was launched in coordination with the inaugural Lanesborough day and was open from August 1 until October 31st, 2024. The survey received a total of 326 responses. Among those responses, 39 said they were local businesses, and 12 stated they were local farmers. Demographic information shared by respondents indicated that responses represented 904 individuals in the town. Almost all respondents (96%) were year-round residents, with approximately 2% each of seasonal and weekend residents. Results of the survey are interspersed throughout the document.

Some of the things we heard from the community in the survey were:

It truly is a small town in a good way.

There is a nice community of young families who are glad to be here.

We need more affordable housing options, especially for our elders and long time residents. They are being priced out of town due to taxes and inflation.

The farm scene is so vibrant.

Sewer extensions, bring in more business, help with mall development, and reduce taxes.

Housing is number one, it's too expensive, especially for families.

The Planning Board presented the results of the survey to the Town's residents at a public forum on December 2, 2024, at the Lanesborough Elementary School. The event was advertised on the Town's website, with flyers at public buildings, and in the local news. The event featured an interactive online presentation that allowed participants to ask questions and provide feedback on town issues. The results of the public forum were posted on the town website and are included in the appendix to the Master Plan. Figures 1.3 and 1.4 graph the responses to the first two survey questions; what would you like to see in the coming twenty years, and why do you chose to live in Lanesborough.

Figure 1.4 Graph of Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 1 Results

Answered: 326 Skipped: 0

Q1: What would you like to see for the town of Lanesborough for the next 20 years (Choose up to 5)?

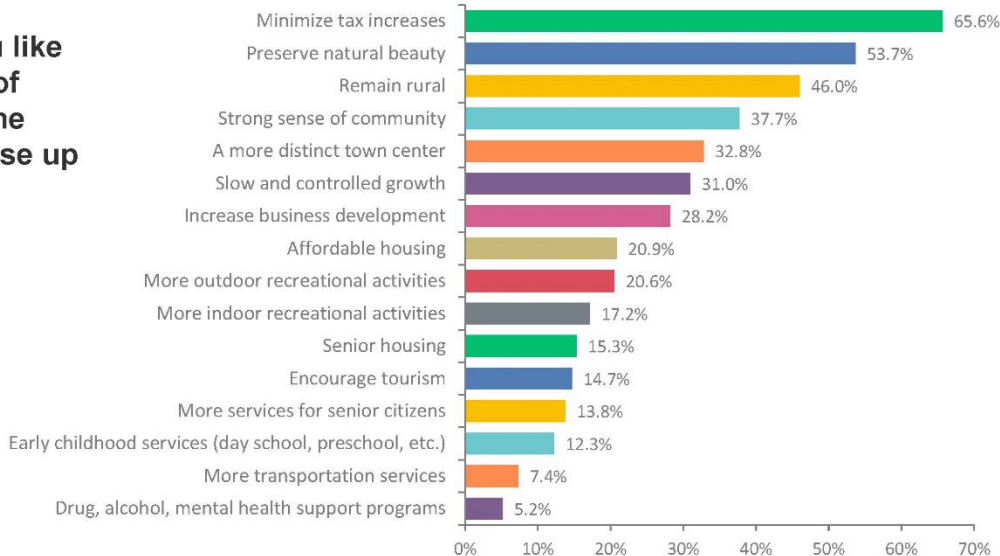


Figure 1.5 Graph of Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 2 Results

Answered: 326 Skipped: 0

Q2: Click and drag the preference order for the reasons that you choose to live in Lanesborough (rank your choices)?



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Using those results, the survey responses, and stakeholder interviews with the various town boards, committees, and department heads, the Planning board developed a set of Goals, Objectives, and Actions during the Winter and Spring of 2025. Seeking additional public feedback, the Planning Board presented these Goals, Objectives, and Actions at a second public forum, held on March 31, 2025. These results were again posted to the town's website for public review.

The Master Plan draft was released for public comment on May 27, 2025, on the News Banner of the Town's website and with printed copies in Town Hall and the Library. Public listening sessions were hosted at the Library and Council on Aging to give opportunities for residents to provide feedback on the draft plan. Using public comments, the draft plan was revised by the Planning Board and BRPC. Lastly, the Planning Board approved the Master Plan at their June 23 meeting.

Figure 1.6 Lanesborough's Town Seal



History of Lanesborough

Lanesborough is located on the ancestral homeland of the Mohican people, whose territory spanned from the Catskill Mountains to Lake Champlain, bordered by the Schoharie River to the west and the Berkshire Mountains to the east, and southward into Northwest Connecticut, northward to the Green Mountains in southern Vermont. These people lived here for generations prior to the arrival of European settlers. The arrival of these peoples displaced the indigenous people, who were pushed westward. The descendants of the original Mohican people now reside in Wisconsin.

Dutch and English settlers moved into the land starting in the 1600s, taking the Mohican land, killing and displacing thousands of people who lived there. Within three decades, the Mohican population dwindled by 90%.

In 1741, the Court authorized the settlement of the land, which included what is now Lanesborough but was then known as Richfield. Land proprietors began staking claim to land and setting the boundary line between what later became Pittsfield. In 1742, the General Court confirmed the newly created home lots and renamed the town as New Framingham. However, the French and Indian War and subsequent conflicts in the region slowed the development of the land.

The earliest known settler, Moses Brower, moved to New Framingham in 1753. The town established a committee to map out the roads in 1759, and in 1760, the town formed its first school committee.

The early settlers included both Episcopalian and Baptists, a religious diversity that remained a constant influence in the town's formative years. By 1765, the Commonwealth incorporated many settlements across western Massachusetts, recognizing Berkshire County as its own region. The Court incorporated the town, and the governor renamed it as Lanesborough, an homage to the Countess of Lanesborough, Ireland.

From 1761 until 1790, Lanesborough was home to the original Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds, located on Prospect Street, at the intersection of Route 7. This building still stands and is used as an informal museum of local history by the Historic Commission.

Lanesborough residents played prominent roles in the American Revolution. What is known as "The Lanesborough Affair" was a town-wide act of rebellion against the Stamp Act, recognized as an early example of unrest throughout the country that led to the Declaration of Independence.

Figure 1.7 Lanesborough has a long and storied history.



The original Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds building on Prospect Street remains standing.

Figure 1.8 The beginnings of the Hoosac River are in the Berkshire Village Section of Lanesborough



The original schoolhouse in Berkshire Village is on the shore of Berkshire Pond.

Lanesborough farmer Jonathan Smith, whose words are immortalized on a plaque outside of town hall, is recognized as an influential advocate in favor of ratifying the Constitution. The town's economy in the early years centered on farming and marble quarrying. Quarrying took place in various places in town, including the Silver Street area, Quarry Road, and near the New Ashford town line, and employed hundreds of people.

Around 1847, the Briggs Iron Works formed, mining iron ore on Ore Bed Road and building its furnace at the current location of the town hall. The operation employed as many as 200 people at its peak.

Today's downtown area began to develop alongside the growth of the company. The Briggs Iron Works constructed a company store next to the furnace, on the south side of Bridge Street.

A series of fires devastated the company, leading to its 1888 closure. In 1916, the town built the Newton Memorial Town Hall on the location, which featured both the library and the post office.

Berkshire Village established itself in the same era. Berkshire Glassworks, located in what was then known as East Lanesborough, drove the development of Berkshire Village. The company employed more than 100 people at its peak in the late 19th Century. In the neighboring town of Adams, the Cheshire Reservoir, originally known as Lake Hoosac, powered Arnold Printworks.

Berkshire Village established a schoolhouse in 1872, which is now home to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. Volunteers, mostly veterans, distribute more than 100 meals per week out of the building as the Berkshire Food Pantry today.

The concurrent developments created two distinct villages.

In 1846, a trolley system from Pittsfield to North Adams began operating along Route 7, up Summer Street, to Glassworks, and northward. However, the introduction of the freight option placed Lanesborough companies at a competitive disadvantage, and the industrial boon that drove the town's economy began to shrivel. By 1900, the population reached an all-time low of 780 people as workers began leaving the area to seek meaningful employment elsewhere.

Figure 1.9 Tourism on Pontoosuc Lake during the early 1900's



The Sheila is the town's most remembered boat which offered tours of Pontoosuc Lake. (Photo credit: Bill Tague/iBerkshires.com)

The advent of automobile travel in the early 20th century changed Lanesborough's economy to one supported by tourism as visitors came to town for its scenic beauty and access to two lakes (Pontoosuc and Cheshire). As personal commutes to work became available, more and more families began to move to Lanesborough and work elsewhere.

In the 1900s, General Electric purchased the Stanley Electric Manufacturing Company in the neighboring city of Pittsfield. The company grew throughout the 1900s, expanding significantly in the post-World War II era and employing thousands of people. Lanesborough became a suburb of Pittsfield while still retaining a tourism economy. General Electric closed in the 1990s.

Outdoor recreation at Pontoosuc Lake grew significantly in the early 20th Century. The lake became a tourist draw and is renowned for recreation and socialization. The large crowds of people and opportunities to utilize the lake led to the development of Gunn's Grove on Bull Hill Road. Lester B. Gunns built the first cottage and began subdividing the land spanning from Bull Road to the lake. On Narragansett Avenue, Jacob Wilbur began developing that neighborhood. By the 1930s, approximately half of the town's households lived in the Pontoosuc Lake area.

The town built its current Town Hall in 1916 to host town offices and the library, adding services to support the residents.

Figure 1.10 Lanesborough's Volunteer Fire Department has a long history in the Town.



The 1937 GMC was the Firemen's Association's first brand new fire engine.

The town's development continued, and the expanding use of automobiles led to the creation of new main and side roads.

In 1922, a large barn burned, and the town was ill-equipped to extinguish the blaze. The town's Fire Department formed shortly thereafter and was incorporated in 1934. The Volunteer Fire Department began purchasing equipment and constructing its current station on Main Street.

The department opened the fire station in 1929, and the department purchased its first brand-new, conventional fire engine in 1937, which served on the front lines for more than 30 years.

The town installed its first municipal water system and established the Fire and Water District in 1939.

The population increased dramatically following World War II, when there was a post-war building boom to address a housing shortage. Many of the new homes constructed remained along the lake, but the town also expanded by building new neighborhoods off the main roads, constructing new roads to accommodate the new neighborhoods. The sprawling, fast-moving development led the town to adopt its first zoning bylaws in the 1950s.

From 1940 until 1960, the population steadily increased and doubled. By 1960, the town's population reached 2,933.

In the 1950s, the town constructed a new elementary school, and in the 1960s, the town constructed a regional high school in partnership with the town of Williamstown. The nearby city of Pittsfield grew a diversity of businesses in those years, and Lanesborough residents more frequently traveled there for work, entertainment, and shopping. The town developed into more of a "bedroom community" to Pittsfield while still supporting small businesses, outdoor recreation, and hotels and motels to support tourism.

The Berkshire Mall became the town's largest taxpayer when it opened in 1988. Developed by Pyramid Companies, the mall featured five anchor stores. It remained a popular development until the late 2010s as consumers transitioned to shopping more and more online. Vacancies in the mall increased until 2019, when the former owners of the mall closed it. Today, Target, which owns its suite on the property, is the only retailer still operating at the location.

Figure 1.11 Berkshire Mall in the early 2000's with Sears and Filenes still operating on the site.



Existing Conditions

Demographics

The 2020 Decennial Census estimates the town of Lanesborough's population to be 3,038 people. The town experienced significant growth in the post-World War II era, which coincided with significant growth of General Electric in the neighboring city of Pittsfield. During that period, Lanesborough's population increased from 1,238 in 1940 to 2,933 in 1960. The population has remained relatively stable since the 1960 Census. Table 2.1 shows the population in the town, along with surrounding communities since the 1800's. For comparison, several Berkshire County Towns are also included in the table. These communities were chosen because they share some similarities to Lanesborough, such as population size, governance structure, similar amenities, or proximity to the largest city in the Berkshires. These communities are Lanesborough, Dalton, Cheshire, Pittsfield, Hinsdale, and Berkshire County as a whole. In some cases, Williamstown was also included in the analysis of town data.

Table 2.1 Lanesborough Population over time.

	1850	1900	1950	2000	2020
Lanesborough	1,229	780	2,069	2,990	3,038
Dalton	1,020	3,014	4,772	6,892	6,330
Cheshire	1,298	1,221	2,022	3,401	3,258
Pittsfield	5,872	21,766	53,348	45,793	43,927
Hinsdale	1,253	1,485	1,560	1,872	1,919
Williamstown	2,626	5,013	6,194	8,424	7,513
Berkshire County	49,591	95,667	132,966	134,953	129,026

The UMass Donahue Institute estimates that the town of [Lanesborough will see a steady decline in total population](#) during the next 25 years. The estimates show an approximately 12% decline in population between 2025 and 2050, reaching a population of 2,656 in the next three decades.

Age

The current population demonstrates that most people are between the ages of 55 and 64, accounting for nearly one in five people in that age range. Lanesborough has a low percentage of residents between the ages of 20 and 30, which reflects nationwide trends following the “baby boom.”

Lanesborough is an aging community like the rest of Berkshire County. The median age has grown consistently over the last 40 years from 35.6 years old to 52, in the latest Census, American Community Survey -Table DP05.

Lanesborough’s median age is older than both the statewide and countywide median ages. Among the neighboring towns, Dalton is slightly younger with a median age of 49.8, Chesire is slightly older at 52.1, and Pittsfield is younger at 43.4.

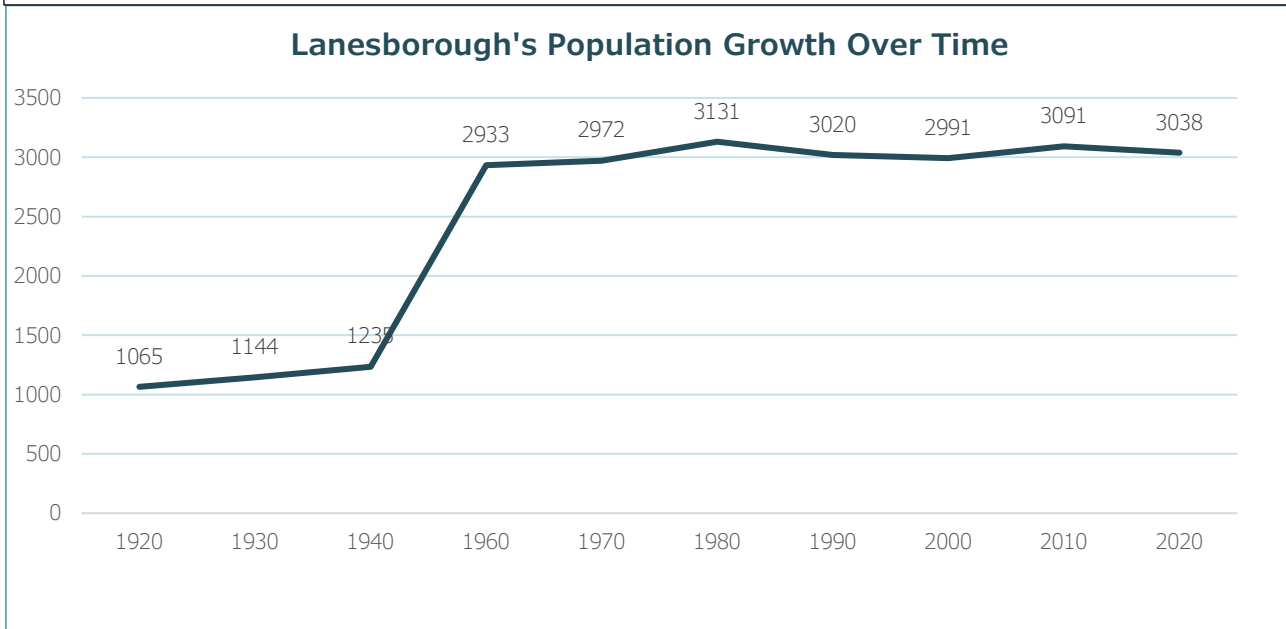
Table 2.2 Median Age Berkshire County Towns

Community	Median Age
Lanesborough	52
Berkshire County	47.5
Massachusetts	39.8
Cheshire	52.1
Dalton	49.8
Pittsfield	43.4
Hinsdale	47.1

The American Community Survey, Five-year Estimates, demonstrate Lanesborough as having an older population than its neighboring towns and the Commonwealth as a whole. Year?

Berkshire County’s median age [dropped consistently following General Electric’s departure](#) from the city of Pittsfield. The county’s demographics saw a high volume of younger adults, ages 20-30, move out.

Figure 2.1 Graph of Lanesborough’s Population over time from 1920-2020



Lanesborough experienced significant growth in the 1940s and 1950 and the total population has leveled since then.

Respondents to a 2017 survey of young adults who moved out of the county cited the [pursuit of career opportunities are the biggest reason for relocating.](#)

Racial Demographics

The population is predominantly white, representing 96% of the community, which is slightly less than in the last two decades. In 2000, the population was 98% white.

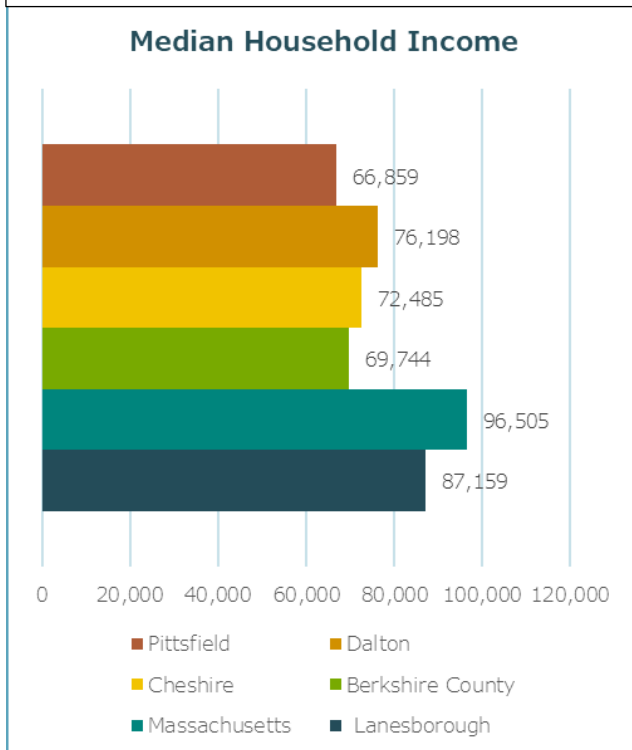
Approximately 2.1% of the population is Black, 1.5% American Indian or Alaska native, 1.6% Asian, and 4.2% some other race. Approximately 2.7% of the population has a Hispanic ethnicity, which has increased since 2000, when less than 1% of the population was Hispanic.

Overall, the Hispanic community grew from 20 to 83 persons in the last two decades.

Educational Attainment

Approximately 95% of Lanesborough residents graduated high school, and 37% attained a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

Figure 2.2 Graph of Median Household Income in Berkshire County Communities



While the town has a higher percentage of high school graduates than the state (91%) and the county (93%), it has fewer residents who obtained a Bachelor’s Degree or higher(46% of statewide residents and 38% for the county).

Employment and Income

Many of Lanesborough’s residents work in education, health care, and social assistance. Approximately one in three Lanesborough workers is employed in those trades.

Retail trade, arts, entertainment, recreation, food service, transportation and warehousing, and manufacturing are the next most occurring occupations among Lanesborough residents.

The employment fields align with the county’s economic drivers. Countywide, 33% of workers are in educational services, health care, and social assistance, the county’s leading employment fields.

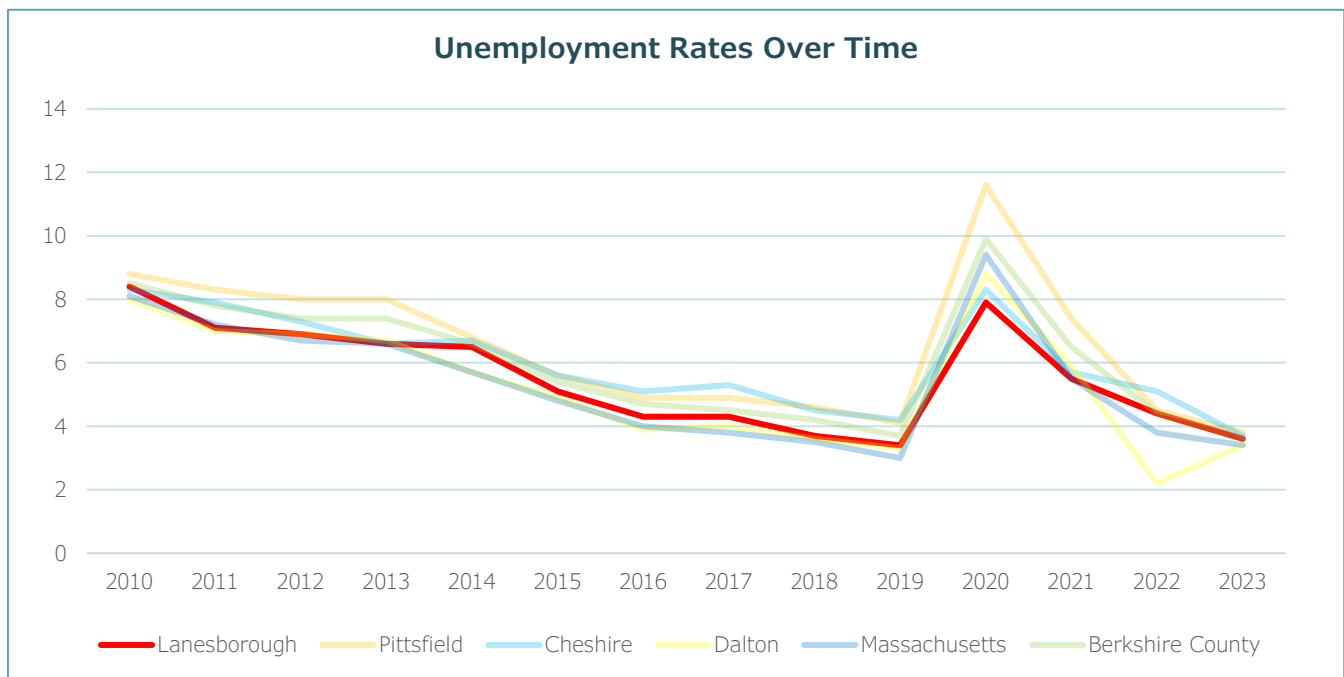
Lanesborough’s median household income outpaces its neighbors.

The town’s per capita income is \$44,896, which trails both the state and county per capita incomes. The per capita income increased over the last 15 years from \$34,863 in 2010. Comparably, Massachusetts’ per capita income is \$53,513, and Berkshire County as a whole is \$45,300. Among neighboring towns, Cheshire and Pittsfield have slightly lower per capita incomes than Lanesborough, while Dalton has a higher per capita income.

The median household income is \$87,159, which is above neighboring towns and the county but less than the Commonwealth’s median. The town’s household income levels are consistently below the state’s but ahead of the countywide and neighboring towns.

The unemployment rate is 3.8%, according to the Department of Revenue. In 2020, Lanesborough's annual unemployment rate spiked to 7.9%, which remained the lowest among comparable towns. In 2023, the annual unemployment rate of 3.6% is the lowest it has been since 2019.

Figure 2.3 Unemployment Rates- Berkshire County Communities



The unemployment rates followed countywide and statewide trends. During the 2010 recession, Lanesborough’s unemployment rate went up to 8.4%, compared to Massachusetts’s 8.1% and Berkshire County’s 8.5%. The downward trends continued from there among neighboring towns, the county, and the state.

The American Community Survey estimates that 2.8% of the population is living in poverty, but the margin of error is significant, at plus or minus 1.7%, rendering the specific number unreliable. However, even if the percentage is undercounted, Lanesborough still has a lower poverty rate than the county-wide percentage. By age, the largest cohort living with poverty is those over the age of 65. Approximately 85.7% of Lanesborough residents work in another town, and 11.7% work out of state. (ACS S0801)

Figure 2.4 King Elmer- the State Record Elm Tree on Summer Street.



Economic Development

While Lanesborough is predominantly a residential community, there are hundreds of small, local businesses ranging from brick-and-mortar restaurants and professional services to farms and home-based businesses.

The region and the state are buoyed by life sciences and advanced manufacturing. The Berkshire Innovation Center assists in providing incubator space for startup companies, workforce training programs, and access to emerging technologies and markets.

The tourism economy remains the county's strongest sector, which is most heavily concentrated in the Southern Berkshires and Mass MoCA in North Adams. A burgeoning outdoor recreation economy remains a stable tourism driver, with the Greylock Glen in Adams representing one of the county's most ambitious investments into outdoor recreation in recent years. Lanesborough's Ramblewild and nearby Jiminy Peak in Hancock are longstanding anchors and recreational attractions assisting Lanesborough's economy. Lanesborough also has premier outdoor spaces contributing to the county's outdoor recreational attractions including Mount Greylock, Balance Rock, Pontoosuc Lake, Constitution Hill, and caves for spelunking.

The county's landscape lends itself to many home-based businesses, but expansion remains challenging due to a lack of capital. The 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy recognizes the business needs of accessing capital, technical assistance, and opportunities for expansion.

Currently, Lanesborough has a single tax rate for all property classes.

Figure 3.1 Commercial Plaza on Route 7 with current temporary police department facility

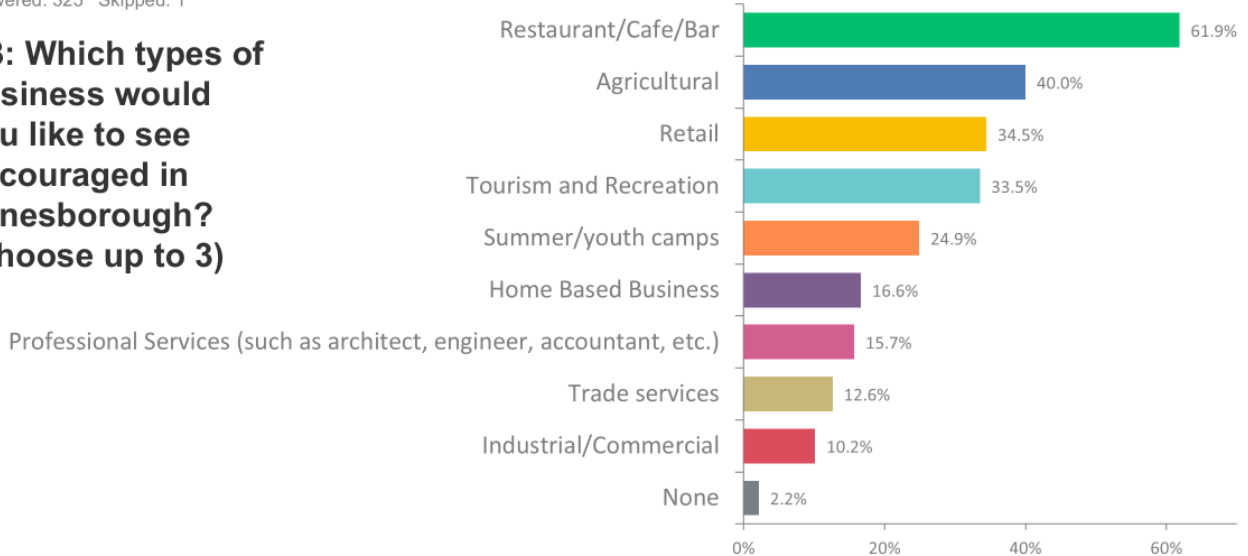


The town has a variety of businesses operating along Route 7.

Figure 3.2 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 3 respondents preferred businesses activities.

Answered: 325 Skipped: 1

Q3: Which types of business would you like to see encouraged in Lanesborough? (Choose up to 3)



Powered by SurveyMonkey

In 2017, the Lanesborough Board of Selectmen appointed a five-member board to support economic development in the town. The group worked to develop and implement the 2017 Lanesborough Economic Development Plan. This work was supported by BRPC staff and a Community Compact grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The purpose of the plan was to identify priority economic development efforts for the coming 5 to 10 years. As a result of these efforts, four strategies were identified for Lanesborough to pursue.

- Communicate Lanesborough’s favorable tax rate for commercial properties, available commercial spaces, and developable parcels to current and potential investors, while sharing information with current and potential residents about the school system, housing opportunities, and quality of life.
- Explore market feasibility and possible redevelopment scenarios through a methodical process in cooperation with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the Baker Hill Road District, as well as our elected officials at the state and federal levels.
- Promote the town as a gateway to the natural features that make the Berkshires unique, including the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, Mount Greylock, Jiminy Peak, Ramblewild, and Pontoosuc Lake, along with golf courses and many equestrian and agritourism destinations.
- Leverage our network of resources to support the business community of Lanesborough, offering connectivity and marketing opportunities. Work collaboratively with planning and zoning boards.

Lanesborough's Commercial Properties and Centers

Berkshire Mall

The largest commercial/industrial property is the Berkshire Mall, which was the town's largest taxpayer and employer for decades following its 1988 opening. The building spans 720,000 square feet and originally opened with five anchor tenants. It is situated on an 86-acre parcel along Route 8.

The construction included the creation of the Route 7/8 Connector Road, also referred to as Baker Hill Road, which traverses the hill separating the Housatonic River valley to the west and the Hoosac River valley to the east. The road provides a more convenient bypass previously served by Summer Street/Swamp Road and is used heavily by commercial traffic.

The Pyramid Companies operated the mall until 2016. Since then, the mall has switched ownership multiple times. It shuttered in 2019, leaving only Target and Regal Cinemas open, both of which owned portions of the mall. Regal closed in 2022.

It is the county's largest redevelopment opportunity. The Cheshire Road property is one of only approximately 10 properties in Berkshire County that is larger than 50 acres, zoned for mixed commercial, and with close access to main roads and utilities. It has an on-site water system and wastewater treatment facility; however, it is likely to require significant improvement to resume operation. It is connected to commercial electric and gas systems.

The development of the Connector Road established the Baker Hill Road District. The District is a taxing authority responsible for maintaining the Connector Road. Initially, the mall was the only taxpayer to the BHRD but in 2008 Target was added. Any business owning property within the BHRD automatically becomes a taxpayer to the District in addition to paying property taxes to the Town of Lanesborough. The creation of the special taxing district shifted some of the costs of providing emergency services, road maintenance, and administrative services to owners of the mall parcels to provide services on the site. It also created an oversight body with representatives from each of the interested parties.

Figure 3.3 The Berkshire Mall is currently unoccupied.



Redevelopment of the Berkshire Mall is one of the town's greatest economic opportunities.

Assessments from the mall have been decreasing as a result of the depreciation of the facilities. Table 3.1 demonstrates the assessed value of the property since 2016. The town’s tax revenue is based on the assessed value of the property multiplied by the tax rate. From 2020 to 2023, the property lost approximately 55% of its value.

Table 3.1 Assessed Value of the Berkshire Mall Parcels over time, 2016-2025,
Source: Lanesborough Assessors Office

Year	Berkshire Mall Parcel	Target Parcel
2016	\$31,500,000	\$9,439,400
2017	\$19,500,000	\$9,356,200
2018	\$19,500,100	\$8,001,000
2019	\$19,500,100	\$8,001,000
2020	\$16,387,900	\$8,160,600
2021	\$9,575,000	\$7,885,500
2022	\$9,914,700	\$8,647,100
2023	\$7,369,600	\$7,176,100
2024	\$7,261,200	\$7,090,500
2025	\$7,836,800	\$5,800,000

Figure 3.4 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey, Respondents preferences for reuse of Berkshire Mall property.

Answered: 291 Skipped: 35

Q12: During a 2019 study of potential uses for the Berkshire Mall, the following re-use scenarios were suggested. Rank your preferences for the re-use of the property? (The town does not own the property, but local zoning does regulate the use of the site. The Master Plan can only make recommendations about town wishes to the current owner.)



Vacation Village

Figure 3.5 Commercial Properties extend along route 7 up to the former Vacation Village



The Village at Greylock is a more recent economic development featuring an array of businesses.

The 6.7-acre Route 7 property, known to many in town as the former Vacation Village, is home to multiple businesses. The property features five buildings.

The property was once home to Par 4, a recreational facility featuring mini-golf, go-karts, and ice cream. Patriot Resorts Corp purchased the property in 2002 and operated it as a sales complex until 2012. The property sat vacant and for sale for many years before businesses began to reoccupy the facility.

In 2020, the complex found new life as The Village at Greylock. The property was recently full of tenants, but its largest store, Berkshire Mantiques, recently moved to the former Skyline property.

Main Street Corridor

Dozens of businesses are located on the Route 7 side of Lanesborough. Beginning at the border of Pittsfield, a variety of businesses, including hospitality, restaurants, retailers, outdoor recreation, and professional services, span both sides of Route 7 northward to the town hall. From there, farming remains prevalent northward until the New Ashford border.

Route 8 Corridor

A smaller stretch of commercial properties spans Route 8 from the Pittsfield border northward. The businesses are restaurants and retail, with several commercial and automotive/truck-oriented businesses. The Berkshire Mall has two primary entrances on Route 8, one at the northern end of the property servicing Target and Old State Road/Swamp Road, and one on the southern end of the property serving the majority of the mall property and the Route 7/8 Connector Road.

Downtown Development

The town's original development along Route 7 in a diffuse way has led to a lack of a distinct town center, so typical of many other nearby Berkshire County communities. This has led to a mixture of development along both Route 7 and Route 8. Many residents expressed concerns in the survey about the appearance of these important roadways and creating a more distinctive, welcoming town center. Additionally, some residents mentioned a need for architectural standards along these key business corridors to create a more unified appearance to the town.

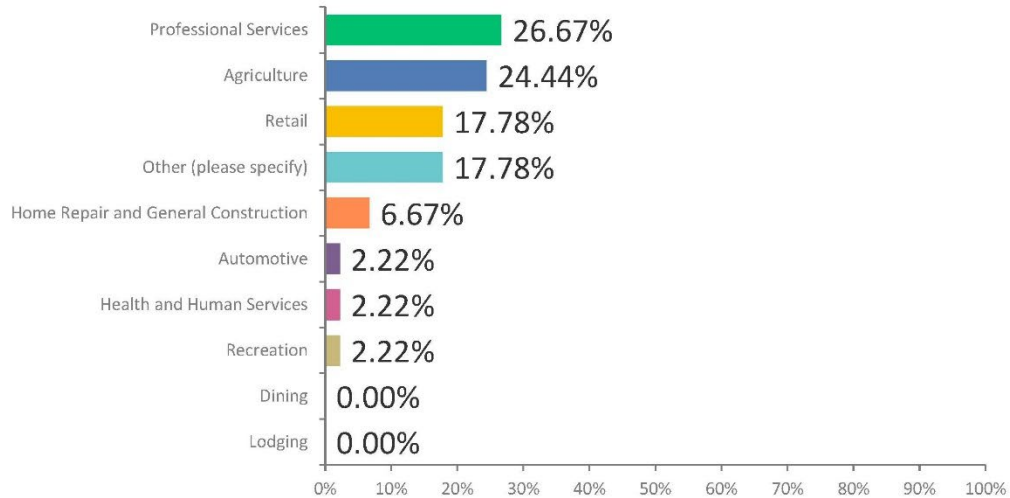
Business Survey Results

The Master Plan Survey also asked for feedback from area businesses. Figures 3.6 to 3.8 present the results of respondents who identified as business owners in the town.

Figure 3.6 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 21, Respondents business types.

Q21: How do you classify your business type (categories are taken from the Lanesborough Business Directory)?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 281

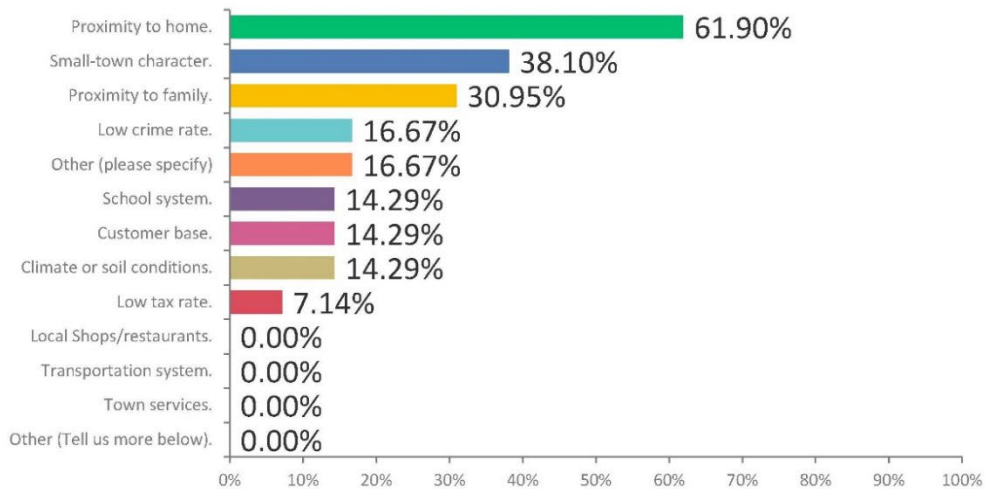


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Figure 3.7 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 22, Business respondents' preferences for operating in Lanesborough

Q22: Lanesborough Farms/Business owners, please tell us why you operate your business in the town? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 42 Skipped: 284

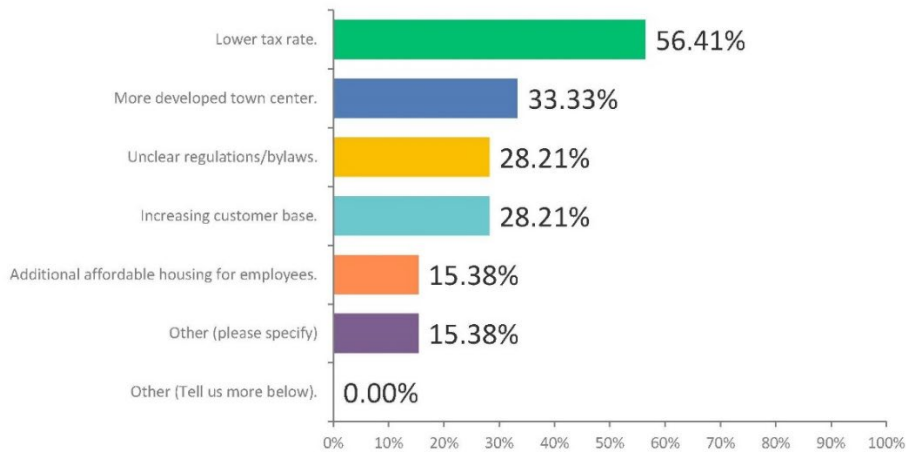


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Figure 3.8 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 23, Business respondents’ preferences for making operating a business easier in Lanesborough

Q23: Lanesborough Farms/Business owners, please tell us how doing business in the town could be made easier? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 39 Skipped: 287



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The following list of businesses are featured on the town’s website under the Business Directory. The town is actively working to make business development easier through a variety of economic development efforts. This includes publicizing local businesses through the business directory, providing links to forms and applications and online permitting for homeowners/contractors on the town’s website.

Lanesborough Businesses

- Agriculture
 - Echo Farm
 - Flores Farm
 - Four Seasons Stables
 - Fubazi Farm
 - Heart and Soil Collective
 - Hill top Farm and Fiber Arts
 - Lakeview Orchard
 - Mountainview Farm
 - Nick of Time Equine
 - Olsen Farm LLC
 - R and R Wirtes Grain, INC
 - Red Shirt Farm
 - Salt Box Farm Flowers
 - Square Roots Farm
 - Talus Wood Farm
 - Wedgewood Stables
 - Whispering Pines, LLC
- Automotive:
 - Lanesborough Auto Sales
 - Lanesborough Gulf Station
 - Lanesborough Mobil Station
- Dining
 - Mange Auto Sales and Service
 - R.A. Marine LLC
 - Sayers Auto Wrecking, Inc.
 - Village Truck Sales, Inc.
 - Bob’s Country Kitchen
 - Brookhaus Sports Pub and Restaurant
 - Desserted 228 LLC Bakery
 - Hendricks Summit Lodge
 - Jakes Java
 - Krispy Kone

- Lanesboro Pizzeria
- Mad Jacks BBQ
- Starbucks
- Ye Olde Forge Restaurant
- Health and Human Services
 - Elder Services of Berkshire County
 - Elle Day Spa, Inc.
 - Greylock Medical Clinic
 - Greylock Physical Therapy Inc.
 - IDEAL Health and Wellness Solutions
 - Laurel Ridge Senior Living Residence
 - Operation Nehemiah Missions International Inc.
 - St Lukes Episcopal Church
 - Seventh Day Adventist Church
 - Stress Less Ministries
- Home Repair and General Construction
 - 925 Brush Hour Painting
 - A.C. Wood Contracting, Inc.
 - AT Honest Renovations
 - All American Plumbing
 - Berkshire Green Septic Services
 - Berkshire Mountain Design Build, LLC.
 - Berkshire Pittsfield Septic Tank Cleaning
 - Cabinetworks
 - Carlow-Zepka Construction
 - D. Condron Construction Inc.
 - DR Billings Contractor
 - Daunais Building and Remodeling
 - Girard Custom Cut Hardwood
 - Hassan Drywall
 - HJ Pirzi
 - Homestead Renovations and Design LLC
 - Iron Spade Excavation
 - Johns Tractor and Excavation Services LLC
 - J Paris Roofing
 - Knysh Excavating and Trucking
 - MacPherson Stone Masonry
 - Made in the Shade Landscaping
 - M and J Dumpsters
 - Mr Lawn Care
 - Polson Electric Inc
 - Precision Home Care
 - Sanitary Septic Services Inc.
 - Sinopoli and Son Construction
 - Sinopoli Construction Corp.
- Steve McCann Construction
- Walsh Builders, Inc.
- Wooliver, DJ and Sons Roofers
- Lodging
 - Mount Greylock Campsite Park
 - Stone School Cottage
 - The Lake House
 - Weathervane Motel
- Professional Services
 - Absolute Services
 - Abrams Hospitality Marketing
 - Adams Community Bank
 - Aetherbind.com
 - Amentik, Inc.
 - American Towing and Transport
 - Alphadu
 - B and T Pump and Well Services
 - Barb Hassan Realty inc.
 - Barnaby Heating and Cooling
 - Berkshire Film and Video
 - Berkshire Woodworks
 - Boston Manhattan Group
 - Bryant Co. (Web Design)
 - Captured by Cody
 - Crazy Chameleon Body Piercing
 - Dean Messana Electrical

- Dreamy Flower and Garden Design
- Gilettes Taxidermy
- H J JPirzi
- House Doctor
- Injected Solutions
- Jacobs
- Jamie Zdon Income Tax Preparation
- Jeff Walter, Snap On
- Judy Dias Photography
- Lanesborough 525 Storage
- Lansen Mold Co, Inc.
- League of Their Own Electric
- Lily and Oaks Properties
- Locus Tutor Inc.
- Mark's Tree Service
- Meerkat Pest Control
- Macintosh Upholstery
- Maker Suppy
- Nail Studio
- Pioneer Valley Waste Solutions
- Pratt Meadow Puppies
- Professional Disposal
- Rainbow Distributing
- Raven Publishing Co.
- Root 7 Salon
- Stone School Consulting
- Squaw Peak Travel, LLC
- Unkamet Property Services
- Weldon Trucking, LLC
- Wendling Properties
- Wolf Tree Plumbing and Heating
- Recreation
 - Bakers Golf Center
 - Berkshire Scenic Treks and Canoe Tours
 - Mount Greylock Campsite Park
 - Lakeview Orchard
 - Ramblewild
- Retail
 - American Garage Door Sales
 - Berkshire Box
 - Berkshire Mantiques LLC
 - Berkshire Taxidermy
 - Caballian Games
 - CVS Pharmacy
 - Dollar General
- Evans Software Services
- Greylock Grounds LLC
- LA France Inc/Imperial Pools
- Lanesborough Auto Sales
- Lanesborough Firewood
- Lanesboro Junction
- Lanesboro Liquor Center
- Lanesborough Local General Store Inc.
- Liberty Market
- Mange Auto Sales
- Moonspun Makers
- Natures Way Dog Harness
- Pontoosuc Package Store
- R.A. Marine LLC
- Savoy Books
- Second Life Books
- Ski Fanatics
- Skyline Antique and Event Center
- Target
- The Berkshire Dog
- Uniq Vape

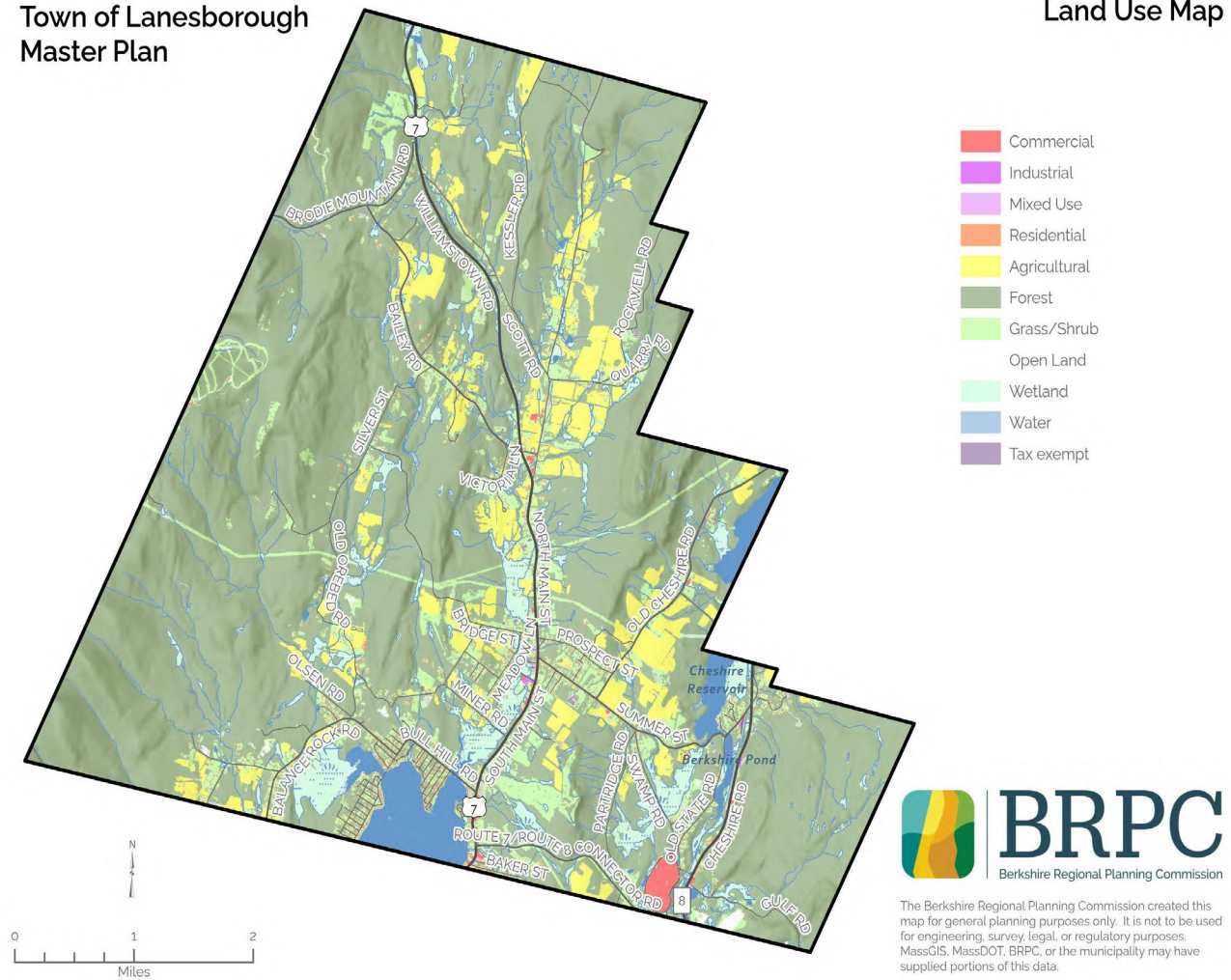
Land Use

The Land Use Map (Figure 4.1) shows the 11 different categories of land use similar to the Zoning Map (e.g. commercial, residential, etc.) but also includes landscape characteristics such as forest, water, and wetland. Table 4.1 shows the number of acres of each category in the town.

Figure 4.1 Lanesborough Land Use Map

Town of Lanesborough
Master Plan

Land Use Map



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Table 4.1 Lanesborough Land Use Categories and Acreage.

Land Use Classification	Acres
Commercial	80.92
Industrial	5.40
Mixed Use	28.50
Residential	1095.46
Agricultural	1359.93
Forest	14098.06
Grass/Shrub	638.18
Open Land	406.95
Wetland	978.11
Water	418.39
Tax Exempt	36.11

Historic Land Use

Patterns of Historic Development

Historical development patterns in the town are shown in Figures 4.2 and 4.3. The first figure shows development through time, with all eras of building shown on one map. Subsequent maps show building by era and are shown as: 1742-1850 as purple, 1851-1900 blue, 1901-1950 green, 1951-1975 yellow, 1976-2000 orange, and 2001-2021 red.-

Shortly after settlement, Lanesborough’s development from 1742 through 1900 centered in two areas – North Main Street and Berkshire Village. Formerly known as East Lanesborough, Berkshire Village was the home of Berkshire Glassworks, which employed more than 100 people by the end of the 19th Century.

During the period from 1901- 1950, there was a large increase in development in the Bull Hill neighborhood, providing new homes with access to Pontoosuc Lake (see Figure 4.3, Green, Yellow, and Red dots).

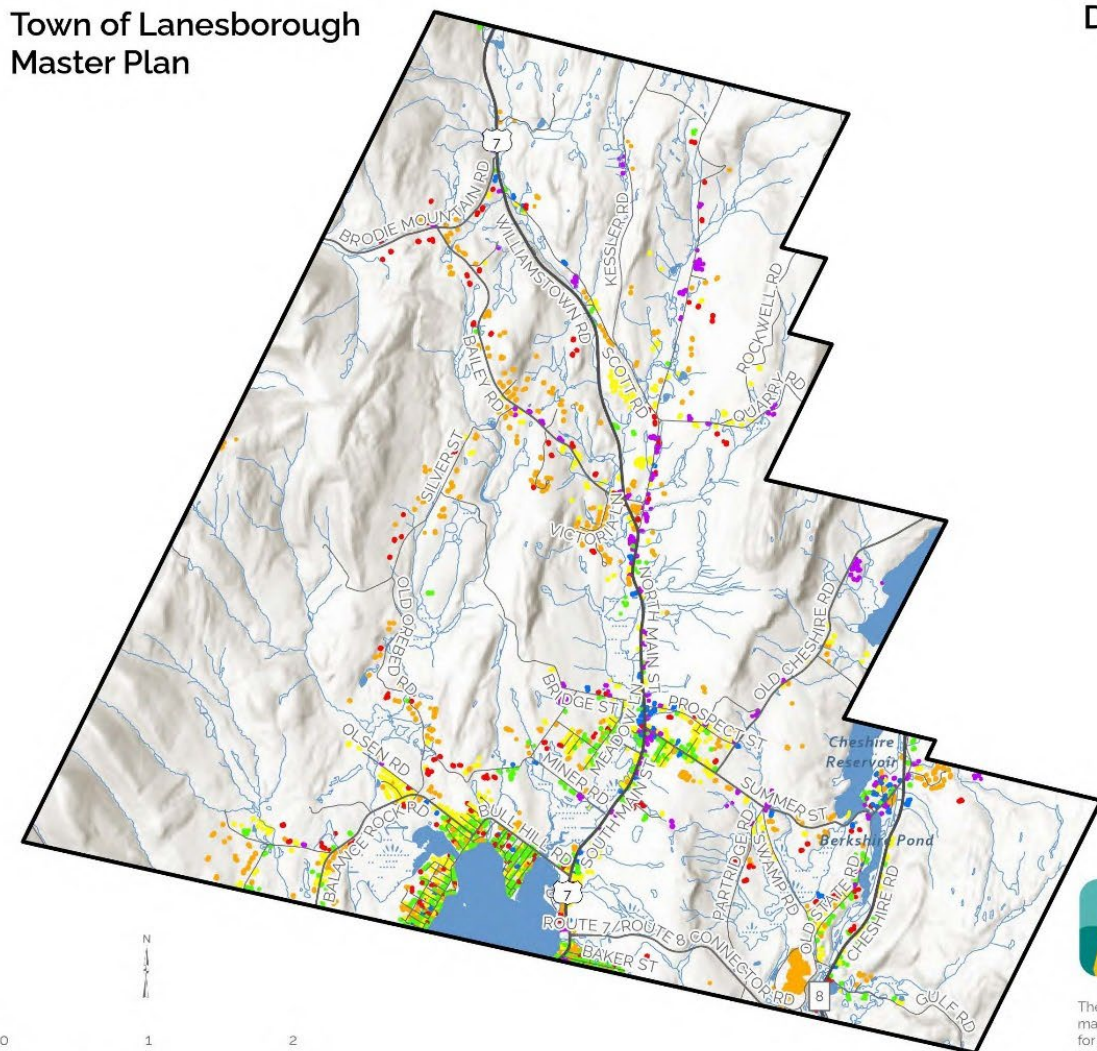
From 1951-2000, development occurred throughout all traditional areas of the town and began to spread out toward New Ashford and Hancock. During this time, the mall was built, and development along the Pittsfield border intensified. Residential development occurred throughout the town in various locations. The development of Bailey Road, Silver Street, and Old Ore Bed Road, which had previously been mostly wooded areas, expanded in the late 20th Century.

Since then, there have been a few sporadic homes constructed throughout town.

The town amended its Zoning Bylaws multiple times over the years. Currently, the town divides its land use regulations into seven types of usages – Residential, Residential and Agricultural, Business, Limited Business, Mixed Commercial, and Industrial.

Figure 4.2 Development Trends Map, 1742-Present.

Town of Lanesborough
Master Plan



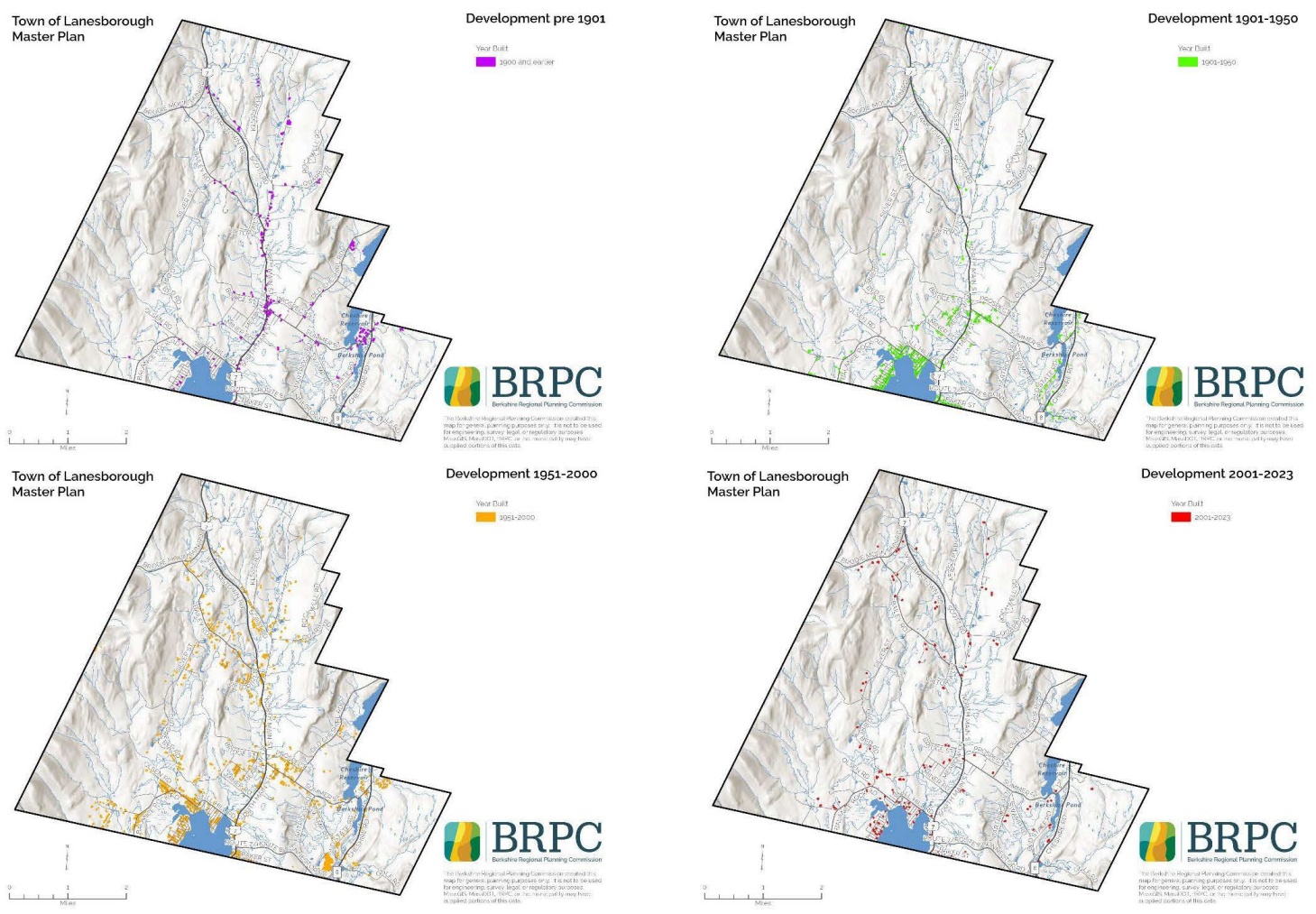
Development Trends Map



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Lanesborough Master Plan- Existing Conditions

Figure 4.3 Development Trends Maps by Era



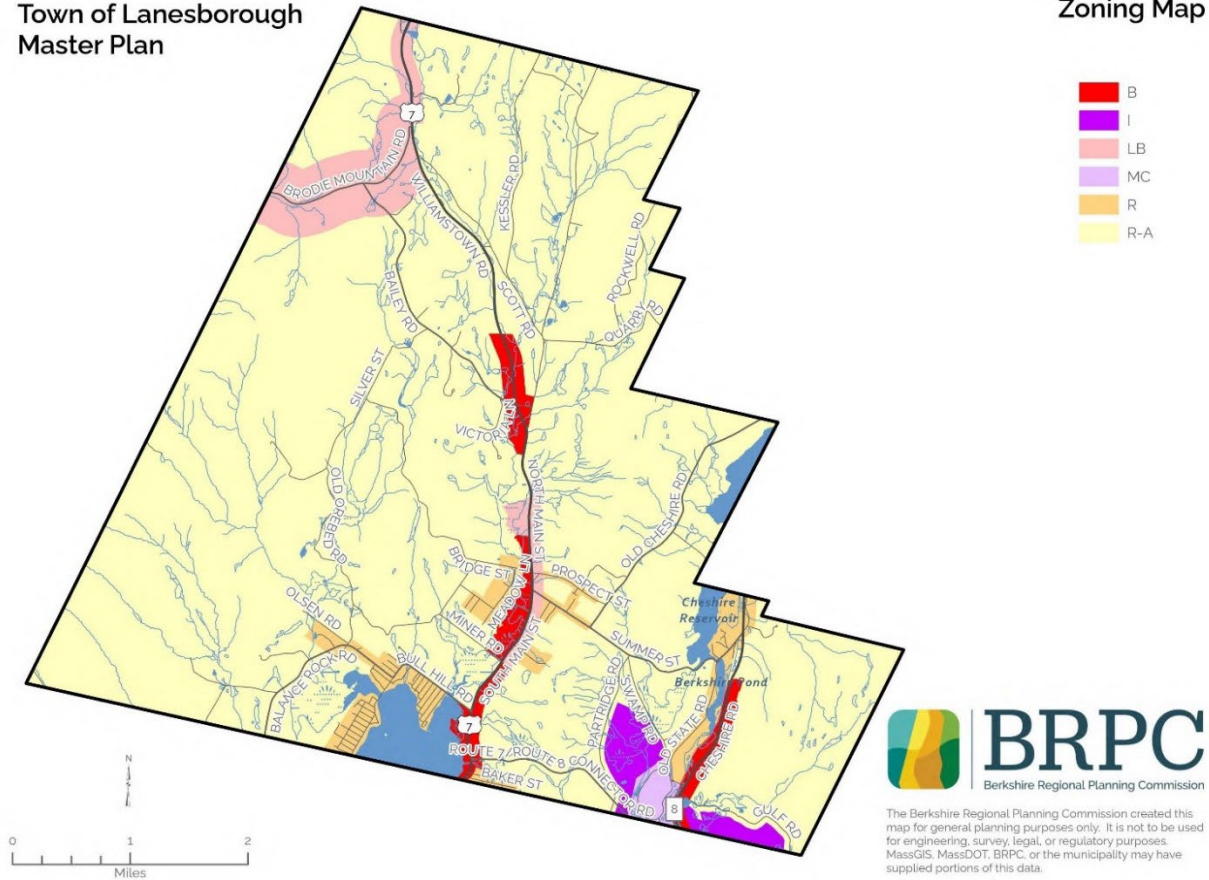
Zoning

The majority of the land in Lanesborough is zoned for residential and agricultural (light yellow on Zoning Map, Figure 4.4) The residential and agricultural zoning allows housing of up to four units, farming and other agricultural uses by right, and has provisions allowing for various outdoor recreational activities such as campgrounds and ski areas.

Figure 4.4 Lanesborough Zoning Map

Town of Lanesborough
Master Plan

Zoning Map



The more densely developed neighborhoods along Pontoosuc Lake, Berkshire Village, and the neighborhoods west of the modern-day downtown are zoned for residential only (shown as orange on the zoning map), which restricts construction to just one or two-family homes. There is no permitted business use in those neighborhoods. Figure 4.4 shows the Zoning Map for the town.

The business zone (red) is concentrated in commercial centers along Route 7, spanning from the Pittsfield Line to slightly north of Bridge Street, and along Route 8 from the Pittsfield Line to just south of the intersection with Old Cheshire Road. The business zones are the least restrictive, allowing by-right use of up to four housing units and most types of commercial uses.

Lanesborough Master Plan- Existing Conditions

Table 4.2 Lanesborough Zoning categories and requirements.

Zone	Description	Type of Use	Area	Frontage	Front	Side	Rear	Maximum Lot Coverage	Stories	Maximum Height	
R	Residential	Single dwelling unit	10,000	75	25	10	30	30	2.5	35	
R	Residential	Double dwelling unit	15,000	100	25	10	30	30	2.5	35	
R	Residential	Other than dwellings	20,000	100	35	20	30	30	2.5	35	
LB a and B	Limited Business and Business	Single dwelling unit	22,500	100	25	20	30	30	2.5	35	
LB and B	Limited Business and Business	Double dwelling unit	27,500	150	25	20	30	30	2.5	35	
LB and B	Limited Business and Business	Multi-unit dwelling (3 units)	32,500	150	30	20	40	30	2.5	35	
LB and B	Limited Business and Business	Multi-unit dwelling (4 units)	37,500	200	30	20	40	30	2.5	35	
LB and B	Limited Business and Business	Apartment buildings	See § 165-19	200	50	50	50	30	2.5	35	
LB and B	Limited Business and Business	Other than dwellings ^{1,2}	22,500	100	35	20	30	LB - 30	2.5	35	
								B - 50			
R-A	Residential and Agricultural	Single dwelling unit	87,120	200	30	20	40	20	2.5	35	
R-A	Residential and Agricultural	Double dwelling unit	87,120	200	30	20	40	20	2.5	35	
R-A	Residential and Agricultural	Multi-unit dwelling (4 units)	108,900	250	30	20	40	20	2.5	35	
R-A	Residential and Agricultural	Other than dwellings	87,120	200	40	40	50	20	2.5	35	
I	Industrial	All	87,120	200	35	40	40	50	N/A	35	
MC	Mixed Commercial	Commercial	87,120	200	35	3	40	40	97	N/A	80

The limited business zone is the west side of Route 7 until Bridge Street, where the zone expands to both sides of the road until just north of Bailey Road. There is a second limited business zone on the North side of town along Brodie Mountain Road, which previously connected businesses such as Brodie Mountain in New Ashford to Jiminy Peak. The area currently has RambleWild operating, and the former Donnybrook Golf Course remains for sale.

The limited business zone (pink or salmon on zoning map) provides developers the by-right ability to construct up to four housing units, agricultural use, and some commercial uses. The limited business district has greater provisions for developers to seek Zoning Board of Appeals or Planning Board approval for several other commercial uses than the residential zones.

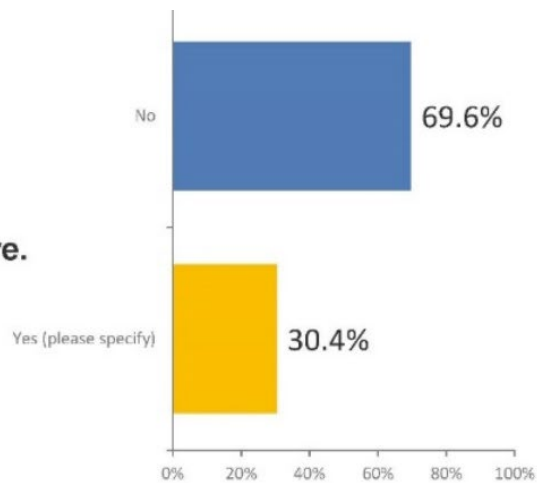
The mixed commercial (light purple) consists of the Berkshire Mall property, and the Industrial Zone (dark purple) is the land between Swamp Road and Partridge Road to the North and West and on the Eastern Side of Route 8, next to the Unistress property.

Questions 8 and 9 of the Master Plan survey asked residents about their preferences for revising the town's zoning laws and are featured in Figures 4.5 and 4.6. Most residents did not support expanding housing or commercial zones to additional areas of the town.

Figure 4.5 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 8 respondent preference for expansion of commercial areas in Lanesborough.

Answered: 299 Skipped: 27

Q8: Would you be in favor of expanding or enlarging commercially zoned areas in the town? If you said Yes, tell us more. (Refer to zoning map, above)

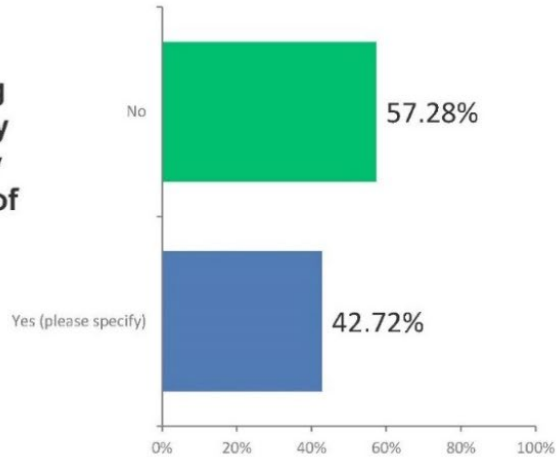


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Figure 4.6 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 9 respondent preference for the expansion of housing types and areas in Lanesborough.

Answered: 309 Skipped: 17

Q9: The town's zoning bylaw controls the location, size, and shape of housing in the town. Most of the community only allows the development of single-family homes by right. Would you be in favor of revising the zoning bylaws to promote more housing opportunities/options?

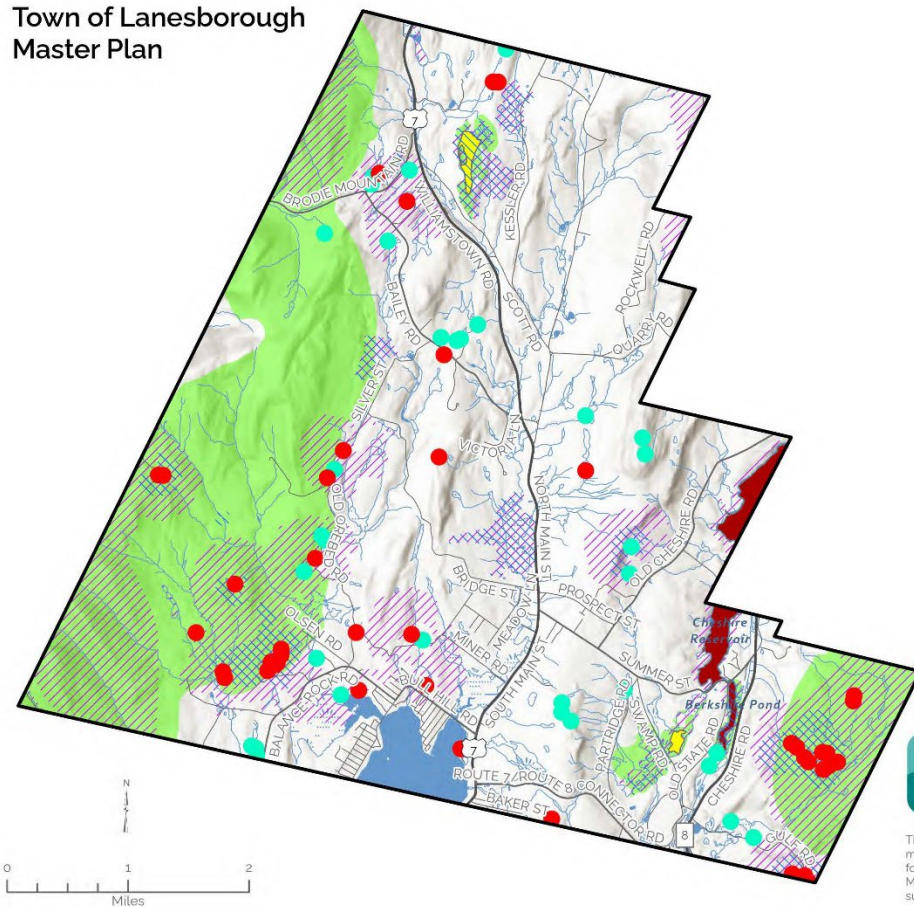


Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources

The remnants of the early days of the town’s 258-year history remain present today, adding to the character and charm that attracts many families to move and stay in Lanesborough. The downtown area is home to many historic buildings and the farmland, which coalesces to create a bucolic setting. Natural resources attract visitors and residents alike. Figure 5.1 shows unique habitats in the town including vernal pools, rare habitats, conservation areas, and important water resources.

Figure 5.1 Lanesborough Unique Habitats Map

Town of Lanesborough
Master Plan



Unique Habitats Map

- Certified Vernal Pools
- Potential Vernal Pools
- Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- Living Waters Core Habitats
- Natural Communities
- BioMap3 Core Habitat
- Priority Conservation Area



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Historic Properties

The National Register of Historic Places is a nationwide program overseen by the National Park Service and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The town has two properties on the register. In addition, 77 properties have been inventoried in the town and registered with the Historical Commission.

Sites on the National Register

St. Luke's Episcopal Church was built in 1836 in the rare Adam style of Gothic architectural style. As settlers from the New Haven, Conn. area moved northward into Lanesborough, the Episcopalian community grew prominently in the town's early formative years. The parish's records date back to 1767,

Figure 5.2 Now a private residence, the Old Stone Church on Route 7, is a Historic Site



Known as the old stone church, St. Luke's is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

when they were founded in the living room of William Bradley's farmhouse, which makes Lanesborough's parish the 11th oldest Episcopalian parish in Massachusetts. The parish also boasts of being the first church in New England to host a Christmas tree inside the building.

Shortly after construction, lightning struck the church tower, and for more than two centuries it leaned slightly. In 1898, the parish constructed St. Luke's Parish Hall and stopped using the stone church regularly.

In 2017, the parish celebrated its bicentennial anniversary and undertook a restoration project to preserve the windows and an 1862 Johnson Organ. In 2021, the Episcopal Church sold the building to a private entity and now known as Hinterland Hall is a bed and breakfast resort. The new owners reconstructed the historic bell tower.

Figure 5.3 Pettibone Farm sits on the north end of Berkshire Village on Old Cheshire Road



Pettibone Farm is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The building is the only one in town with a historic preservation restriction.

Pettibone Farm is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The farm is located near the Cheshire border on Old Cheshire Road. The farm features a 1780 farmhouse, four period barns, cabins, and other outbuildings.

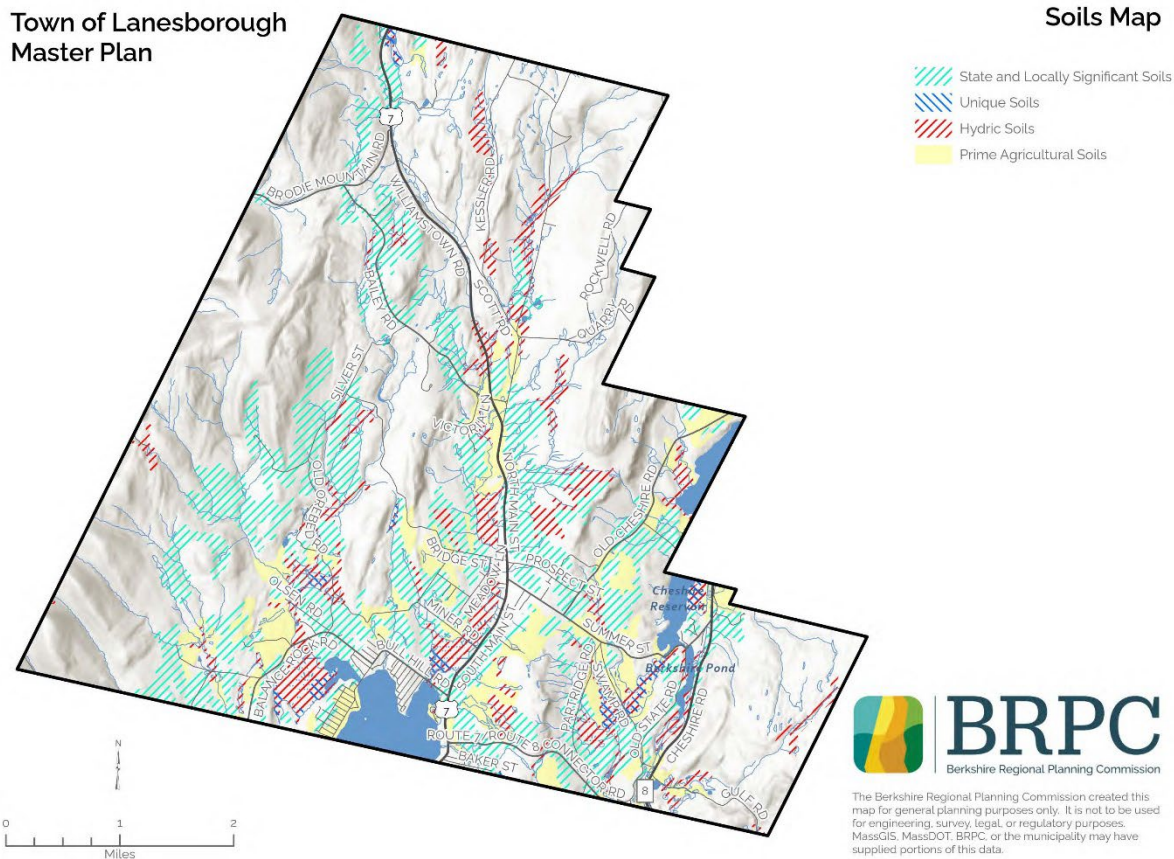
Col. Jonathan Pettibone, who served as a lieutenant during the Revolutionary War, built the home between 1787 and 1789, and it stayed in the family for more than a century. The property, which over time grew to encompass 350 acres, was farmed until the family sold it. In 1936, Frederick Westphal turned the property into Camp

Mohawk. The use change aligns with Berkshire County’s transition from a farming community to a tourism-based economy.

The Schulman family acquired the property in 1946 and expanded Camp Mohawk and added cabins behind the main house. The Schulmans closed the camp in 2017 and in 2024 listed it for sale.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

Figure 5.4 Lanesborough Map of Agricultural Soils



The Commonwealth operates a voluntary program to assist farmers in maintaining the financial value of their land. The Department of Agriculture pays landowners to deed restrict their property to ensure it is retained for farming.

There is a total of 340.37 acres of preserved farmland in Lanesborough. Figure 5.4 shows the soils in the town. State and locally important lands are shown in green, unique soils are shown as blue, hydric soils are shown as red, and prime agricultural soils are shown as yellow (all areas shown as hashmarks)..

Located on North Main Street, **Wirtes Farm** preserves a total of 102.57 acres among three parcels. The restriction includes the farm 28.9 acres of land the to the North, South, and West of the farmhouse

properties. The other two acres are open, located along Greylock Road, 56.71 acres on the North side of Greylock Road and 16.96 acres on the South.

Windy Ridge Farm preserves 112.85 total acres on two parcels. The two connected parcels of space from Lanesborough Cheshire Road to Cheshire Reservoir.

Collins N Tr APR land consists of three parcels. The APR consists of 56.32 acres on the eastern side of Old Cheshire Road at the intersection with Summer Street, the adjacent 26.36 acres, and 29.12 acres on the western side of Old Cheshire Road.

Figure 5.6 shows the Land of Conservation and Recreation interest. This map shows Federal, State, Land Trust, municipal protected land, and Agricultural Protection and Conservation restriction lands.

Chapter 61 lands are not shown on this map, as this tax abatement program is a temporary protection and can be withdrawn from protection. It is important to note that in exchange for a reduced tax liability for agricultural producers, the town can protect these lands by exercising its first right of refusal and can work with local land trusts to protect important agricultural lands.



Figure 5.5 Agricultural production goes back to the Town's founding.

The Collins N Tr APR consists of three parcels along Lanesborough Cheshire Road.

Echo Farm
 Flores Farm
 Four Seasons Stables
 Fugazi Farm
 Heart and Soil Collective
 Hil Top Farm and Fiber Arts

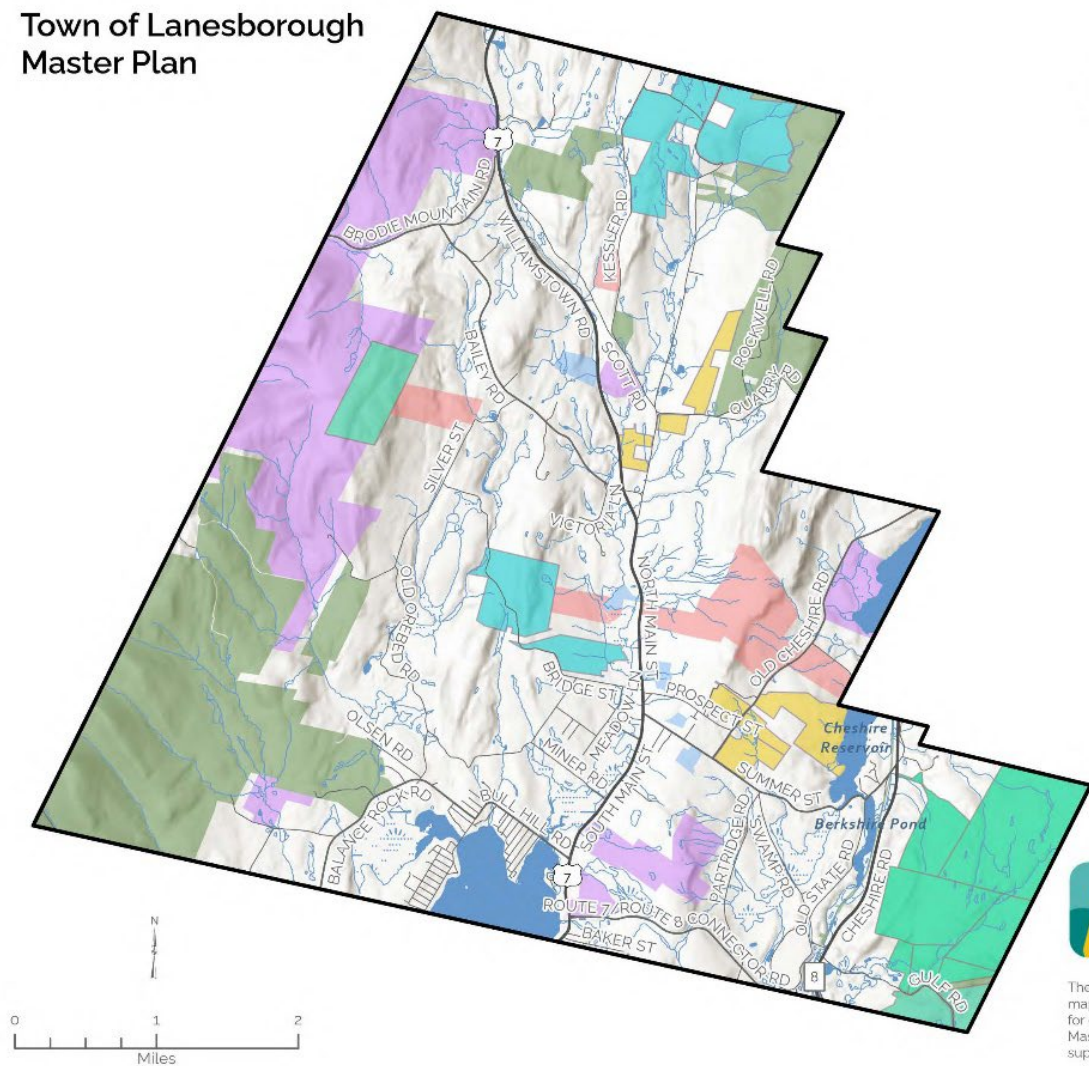
Lakeview Orchard
 Mountainview Farm
 Nick of Time Equine
 Olsen Farm LLC
 R and R Wirtes Grain Inc.
 Red Shirt Farm

Saltbox Farm Flowers
 Square Roots Farm
 Second Drop Farm
 Talus Wood Farm
 Wedgewood Stable
 Whispering Pines Farm, LLC.

Lanesborough Master Plan- Existing Conditions

Figure 5.6 Protected land in Lanesborough. Includes municipal, State, and private lands. Unprotected lands are shown in Purple.

Town of Lanesborough Master Plan



Inventory of Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest Map

- Federal Protected
- State Protected Land
- Land Trust Land
- Municipal Protected Land
- Private Recreation Land Not Protected
- APR
- CR



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Cultural Resources

Lanesborough Youth Sports

The Lanesborough Recreation Committee coordinates and oversees parks in the town including Narragansett Park, Bridge Street Park, and William Laston Memorial Park. Youth Sports are staffed by volunteer directors and coordinated through the Recreation Committee, as well as all age activities. The committee meets on a monthly basis and is appointed by the Select Board. The following sports are currently organized in the town. Most use Bill Laston Memorial Fields for both practice and games.

- Lanesborough Youth Baseball
- Lanesborough Youth Basketball
- Lanesborough Youth Soccer
- Lanesborough Youth Softball
- Lanesborough Youth Football

Lanesborough Day

In 2024, the town launched its first annual Lanesborough Day to celebrate all things Lanesborough at Bill Laston Memorial Park. The event featured entertainment, activities, food vendors, and highlighted local businesses and organizations.

The Community Development Committee organized the event, and it drew more than a thousand people to the park throughout the day.

Memorial Day Parade

The town hosts an annual Memorial Day Parade and ceremony on Sunday morning, the day before Memorial Day. The parade features town organizations, youth groups, and other local organizations.

The parade route is along Route 7 from the Olde Forge restaurant to Center Cemetery, where town leaders invite a guest speaker to provide remarks recognizing the day.

Figure 5.7 Photographs from the 2024 Memorial Day Parade. Clockwise from right- The Mount Greylock Regional Middle and High School Band, Shriners Go-Karts, The Select Board and Town Administrator greet the town, The Lanesborough Volunteer Fire Department fire equipment is showcased, and many Town Boards and Committees are featured, such as the Agricultural Commission



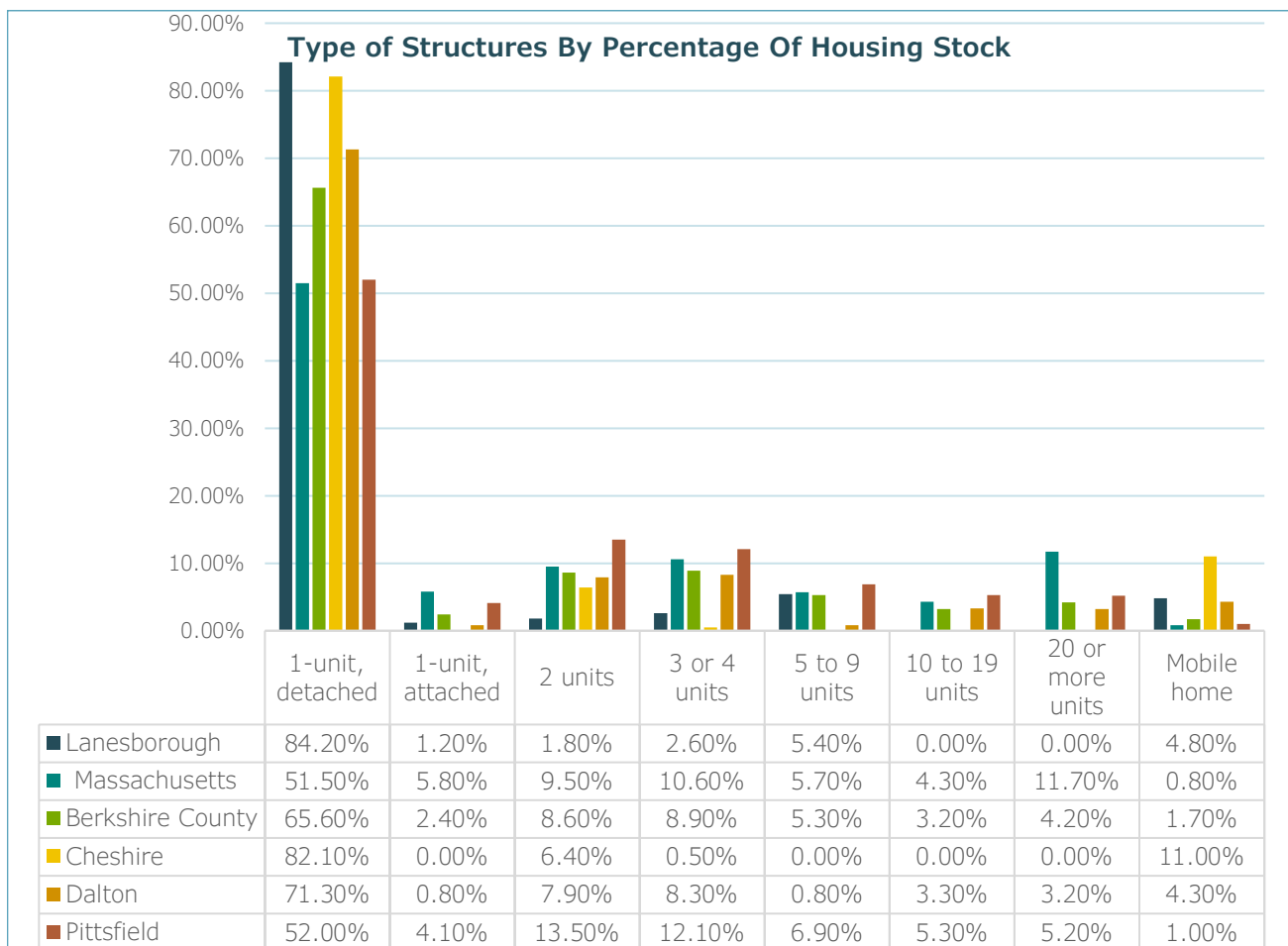
The Mount Greylock Regional Middle and High School Band marches in the Memorial Day Parade and performs patriotic music at the ceremony at Center Cemetery.



Housing

According to the American Community Survey, 2022 Five-year Estimates, Table DP04, there are 1,574 total housing units in the town of Lanesborough (with a margin of error of 158). Approximately 84.8% of the units are occupied, and 15.2% are vacant. Vacancies include houses for sale or rent, second homes which are not primary residences, and uninhabited and abandoned properties.

Figure 6.1 Graph of Berkshire County communities housing types as a percentage of total housing.



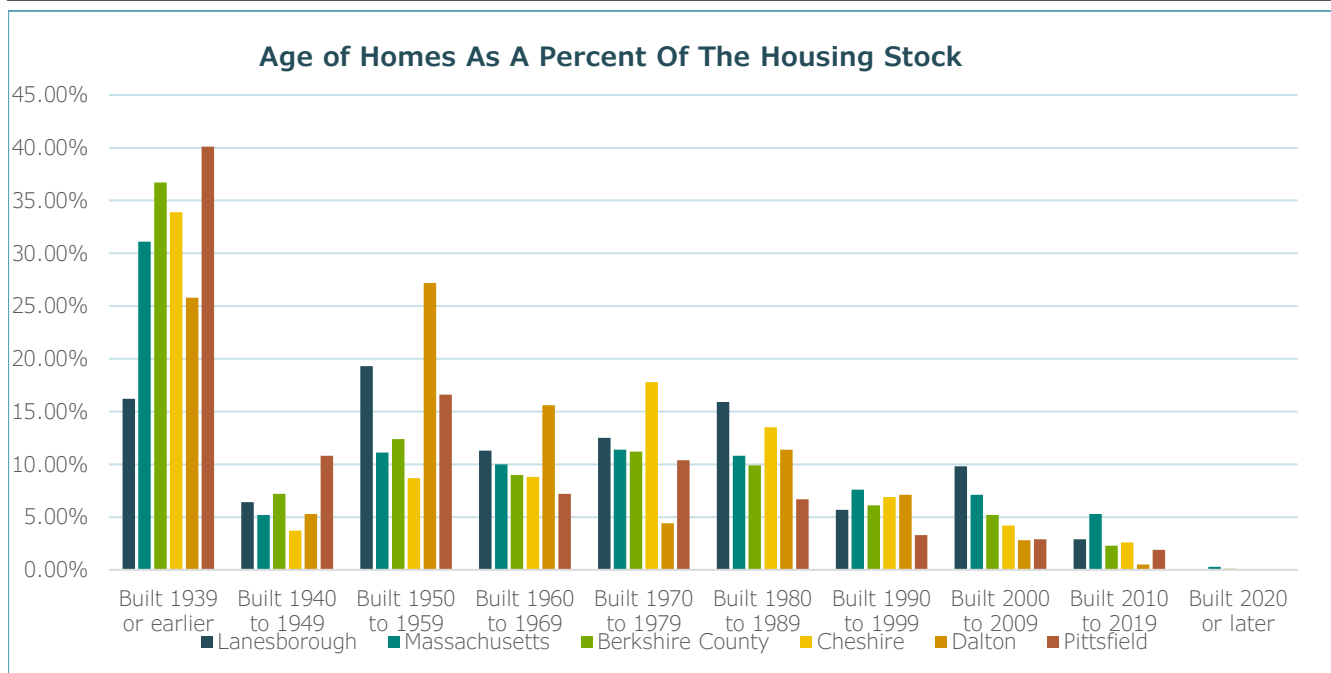
Lanesborough’s housing stock is primarily single-family homes.

The housing units are predominantly single-family homes. A greater percentage of Lanesborough’s housing stock is single-family homes compared to its neighbors, the county, and the state. See Figure 6.1.

Lanesborough has a much higher percentage of owner-occupied housing units than the state, the county, and comparable towns. Approximately 95.7% of Lanesborough’s housing units are owner-occupied compared to 64.2% of Massachusetts, 88.6% of Cheshire, 76.7% of Dalton and 61.6% of Pittsfield (ACS DP04).

The median owner-occupied home value is on par with the countywide level and slightly above its neighbors. The American Community Survey is a five-year estimate between 2018 and 2022, and national trends showed significantly increased values in the last three years. The American Community Survey likely has an undercounted number.

Figure 6.2 Graph of Berkshire County communities housing by year built.



Most of the town’s housing stock was constructed prior to 1990.

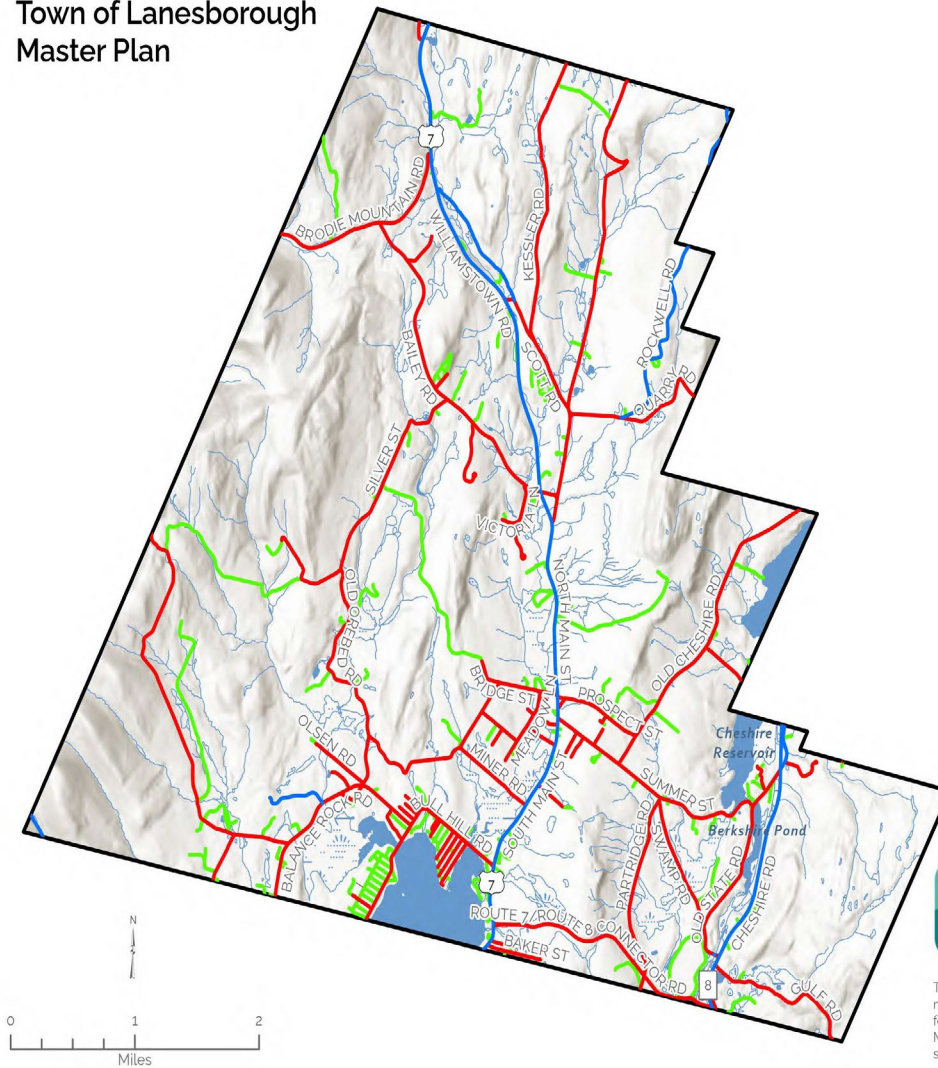
The fluctuation in Lanesborough’s housing values aligns with countywide trends, which include a decrease in value following the 2010 recession and a steady year after year increase since then.

The current housing stock reflects the town’s prior growth. Approximately one in five Lanesborough homes (19.3) were originally constructed in the 1950s and another 11.3% were constructed in the 1960s. The town further developed in the 1970s and 1980s at a lower rate before new construction on homes declined significantly. Less than 20% of the housing stock was built after 1990.

Transportation

Figure 7.1 Lanesborough Transportation Map

Town of Lanesborough
Master Plan



Road Jurisdiction Map

- Town Road
- State Road
- Private / Unknown Road



The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission created this map for general planning purposes only. It is not to be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC, or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

Table 7.1 Municipal Road Miles- Berkshire County communities.	
Municipality	Road Miles
Lanesborough	64.87
Cheshire	58.31
Dalton	47.81
Hinsdale	42.54
Williamstown	77.56

Vehicle transportation throughout town is primarily accessed by either Route 7 or Route 8, both of which are north-south highways owned and maintained by the Commonwealth. Route 7 connects from Pittsfield’s west side, through town, and into New Ashford and Williamstown. Route 8 connects Pittsfield’s east side, through town, into Cheshire, Adams, and North Adams.

The Commonwealth owns 10.58 miles of highway, according to the division of local services, of roadway. The town has 47.46 miles of accepted, municipal roadways and 4.3 miles of unaccepted roads. There is an additional 2.53 miles of public roadways in Mount Greylock State Park, also managed by the Commonwealth.

Route 7 features the most extensive sidewalk system in town. The route has large spans of sidewalks along the commercial area to the south, bordering Pittsfield, and in the downtown area. There is a sidewalk network that connects downtown to the Elementary School. Beyond that, there are few sidewalks providing safe pedestrian travel throughout town.

The Department of Transportation accepted the town’s “complete streets” policies in 2018 and subsequently approved its prioritization plan in 2019. The adoption of “complete streets” policies allows the town to access additional funding to construct roads that provide safe and accessible means of transportation to all users, including vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit systems.

Lanesborough has limited public transportation options. Approximately 91.90% of workers drive to work, 76.2% of which drive alone. Less than 1% of workers use public transportation while 2.6% walk and 4.7% work from home (ACS S0801).

The Berkshire Regional Transition Authority is the county’s public transportation agency. The organization operates three bus lines through Lanesborough – Route 1, Route 5A, and 5B.

Route 1 departs the Intermodal Center in Pittsfield, travels Tyler Street and Dalton Avenue to the Allendale Plaza, and then into Lanesborough, where riders can request a stop at the Berkshire Mall. The route continues along Route 8 into Cheshire, Adams, and ends at Walmart in North Adams. The bus operates Monday through Friday on an hourly basis starting at 5:30 a.m. (stopping at the Mall by request sometime around 5:45) until 8:30 p.m. On Saturday the BRTA starts the route at 6:30 a.m. and ends at 5:30 p.m., also departing on an hourly basis.

Route 5A and 5B will travel to the Lanesborough Post Office, Elementary School, Village at Greylock Plaza, and Mount Greylock Visitor’s Center by request only. Otherwise, both routes have stops in Pittsfield only, one traveling from the Intermodal Center to Berkshire Medical Center and onto North Street and the other traveling from the Intermodal Center onto Linden, Pecks, and Wahconah Streets. The Lanesborough options are available from 6:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. every other hour on weekdays and from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30, departing every two hours, on the weekend.

The Council on Aging partners with the BRTA to provide older adults with van transportation at a low fare.

Currently there are several issues related to jurisdiction over roadways in the town. Status of town acceptance of roads around Pontoosuc, removal of unbuilt paper streets, water rights vested among property owners off Narragansett Avenue, usage of Scott Road, and town responsibilities over Rosenberg Road are all situations that could be clarified with an official town map. Working through these varied issues will take the participation of varied parties including the Select Board, Highway Department, property owners and will require concerted effort by all parties to resolve.

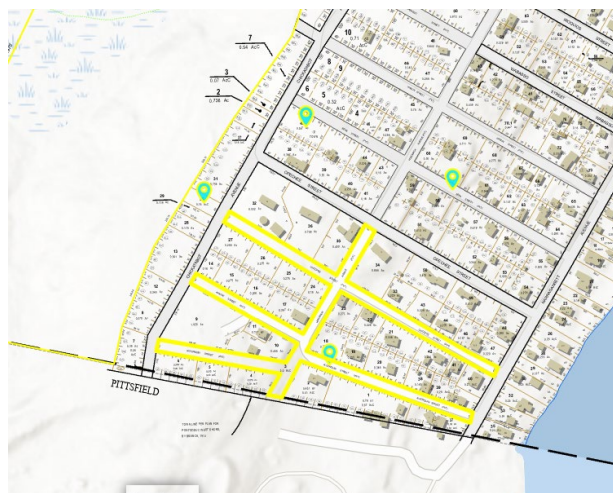
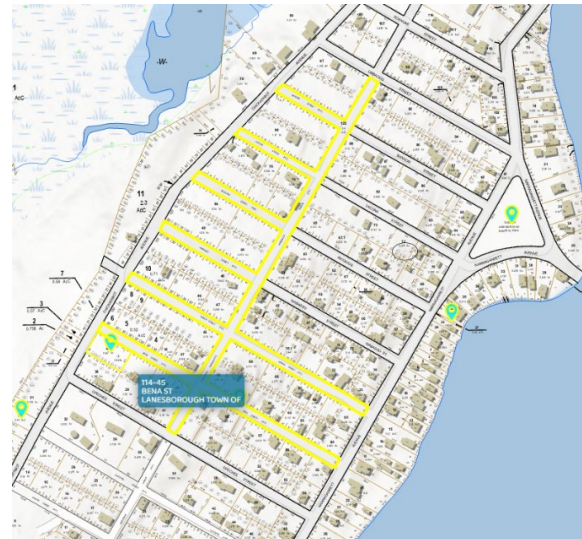
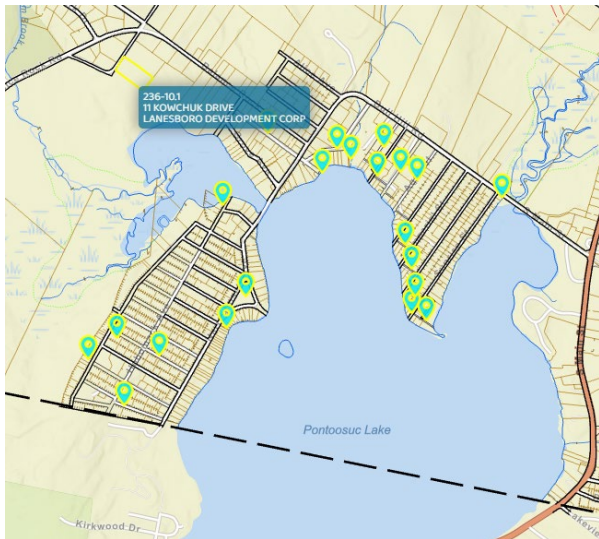
Figure 7.3 shows Town-owned roads and paper streets around Pontoosuc Lake on the following page.

Table 7.2 Lanesborough Transit

Means of Transportation	Percentage of Residents
Drove Alone	76.2%
Carpooled	15.7%
Public Transportation	.8%
Walked	2.6%
Bicycle	0%
Taxi	0%
Worked From Home	4.7%

The American Community Survey, Five-year Estimates, 2018-2022, Table S0801.

Figure 7.3 Paper Streets, or unbuilt roads that appear on maps and are referenced in deeds are confusing in the neighborhood around Pontoosuc. The level of responsibility of town roads, private roads, and town acceptance are also confusing. Screenshots of town owned roads in the vicinity of Narragansett Avenue and Hobomack Ave are featured here. Many of these roads were built prior to current road widths on cottage scales. The neighborhood around Pontoosuc has transitioned from seasonal cottages to year round residences.



Open Space and Recreation

The Town of Lanesborough is split between two river valleys by the southern spur of the Mount Greylock massif. Most of the town is nestled in the valley of the Housatonic River which originates in the town with Town Brook at the foot of Mount Greylock and the New Ashford border to the North. Most of the center of town is built around this river and its tributaries. Mount Greylock rises to the east of town, which contains parts of Mount Greylock State Reservation. The brook flows south to where it is dammed to create Pontoosuc Lake.

The eastern third of the town forms the headwaters of the Hoosac River. The Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, a multi-use path, follows the path of the river northward from the Pittsfield border to Cheshire. The trail is heavily used by both town residents and Berkshire County residents and connects Adams to Pittsfield on an off-road path open to pedestrian use. Future plans for the trail connect it to North Adams and Williamstown in the north and Lenox to the south. The Appalachian Trail follows the southeastern border with Dalton on its way from Georgia to Maine.

Open spaces include local, state, and national parks and properties, Land Trust lands, and other publicly accessible lands, agricultural lands, and lands dedicated to conservation and wildlife habitat. While considered part of open space, brownfield and other redevelop-able industrial sites are reviewed in the Economic Development section.

The Master Plan Survey asked respondents about their use of Parks and Open Spaces in the Town. The results of these questions are featured in Figures 8.2 through 8.3. Respondents use the Ashuwillticook Trail, Pontoosuc Lake, Local Farms, and Mount Greylock Reservation the most frequently and Barton Ledge, Widow White, and Constitution Hill the least.. The information is displayed according to properties used very frequently by respondents.

Residents were asked about improvements they would support at Town Parks. These results are displayed in Figure 8.3. The respondents said additional bathrooms, additional hiking trails, and water access points were preferred, while additional playgrounds, senior exercise equipment, and additional playing fields also garnered support. Lastly, respondents were asked about support for the Community Preservation Act, which helps to fund open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing in the town. Respondents stated that they would support the passage of a CPA Bylaw, which would require passage at Town Meeting. (Figure 8.4)

Figure 8.1 Bill Laston Memorial Fields

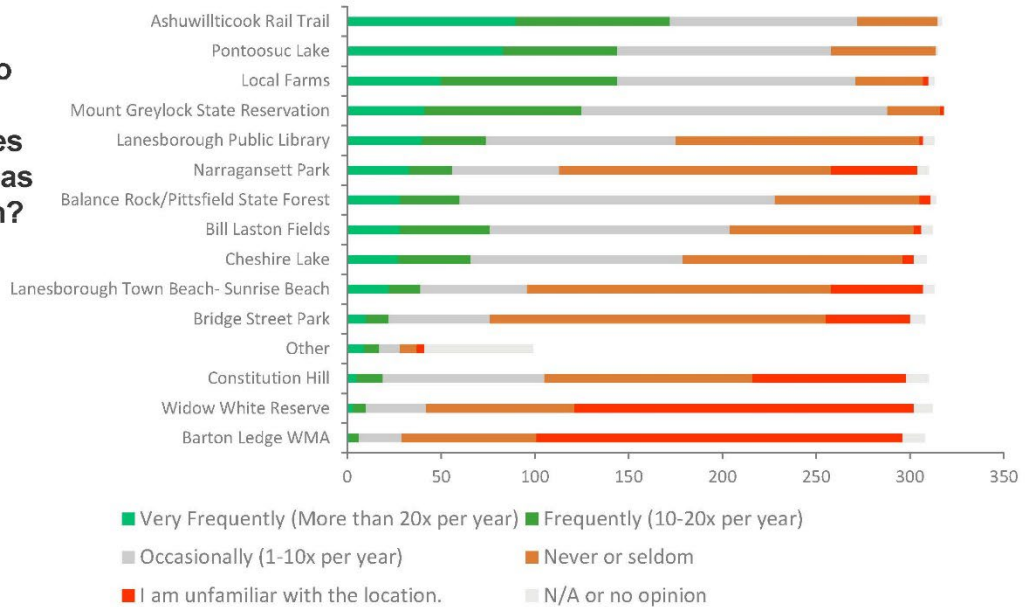


The site features a pavilion, baseball fields, playground, basketball court, Softball field, nature trail, and access to Town Brook.

Figure 8.2 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 4 Respondent frequency of use of outdoor recreation areas.

Answered: 322 Skipped: 4

Q4: How often do you use the following facilities or recreation areas in Lanesborough?

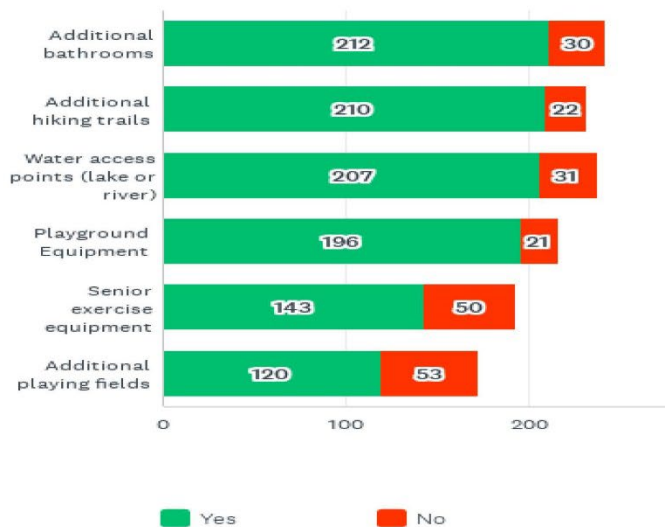


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Figure 8.3 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 11 Parks Improvements

Answered: 307 Skipped: 19

Q11: What improvements would you support at town parks?

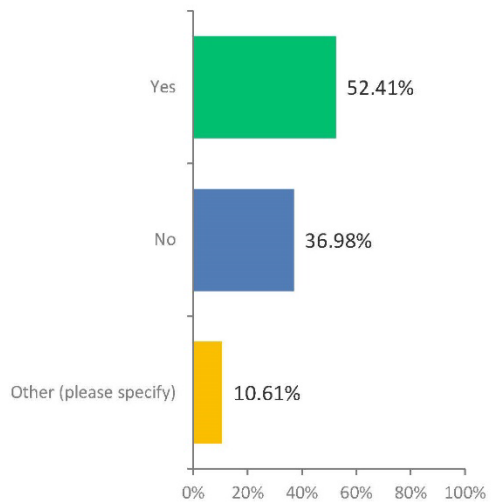


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Figure 8.4 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 10 Support for Community Preservation Act

Answered: 311 Skipped: 15

Q10: Would you support the town's adoption of the Community Preservation Act, or CPA, to facilitate projects in open space, historical preservation, and affordable housing? (CPA allows communities to create a local fund that can only be used for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation. These funds are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of up to 3% of property tax bills. Municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum. Communities enrolled in the program receive annual funding from the state that contributes to the local fund. For more information visit- <https://www.communitypreservation.org>



Powered by SurveyMonkey

The following list of open space properties in the town is categorized by ownership.

Town Properties

- **Bill Laston Memorial Park** is the largest town park at just under 15 acres. The site features a baseball field, softball field, basketball court, football field, playground, bathrooms, and a concession stand. An open-air pavilion has recently been built by the town and is used for community events, including for Lanesborough Day (Figure 8.5). The space is available for rental by town residents and visitors alike. A trail along the southern edge of the property features an arboretum installed by the Town’s Tree and Forest Committee. The western edge of the property allows access to the Town Brook. Plans for the site include additional improvements to the pavilion and working with Berkshire Natural Resources Council to create an east/west connection between the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail and the Taconic Crest Trail.

Figure 8.5 Pavillion and Basketball Court at Bill Laston Park



- **Bridge Street Park**, immediately behind the Town Hall property, this park is currently closed due to necessary repair work on the bridge over Town Brook. The site features a T-ball field and basketball court. Currently a town committee is considering a variety of park improvements to the site, including an age-friendly exercise area.
- **Elementary School Grounds and Playgrounds** the school has several soccer fields, playgrounds, and a basketball court that are open to the public during non-school hours.
- **Town Beach/Sunrise Beach** at the end of Sunrise Street on the north side of Lake Pontoosuc, a small sand beach is available for town residents. Parking at the site is difficult due to the narrow, residential street. The .1-acre site allows residents to access the lake for wading, swimming, and launching of canoes or kayaks. No lifeguard is on duty and swimming is at the risk of the user.

Figure 8.5 Left, Sunrise Beach Right, Bridges Park Basketball Court from Town Hall



- **Narragansett Park** across the lake on the western shore, Narragansett Park is a 1-acre triangular park on the street of the same name. A dilapidated basketball court on the site is scheduled to be improved by the Parks Committee during the summer of 2025. The site also has a small playground and a lake access point for canoes and kayaks.
- **Old Registry/Police Station**, a triangular 1-acre parcel sandwiched between Route 7, Church Street, and Prospect Street. The site of the First and Second Meeting Houses and former Police Station has potential for the development of a small roadside park or historical museum.

- **Landfill/Gravel Pit**, at almost 50 acres, the capped landfill is off Orebed Road near Balance Rock State Park.
- **Zucker Property** has almost 30 acres of forested hillside on the west side of Route 7. Access to Town Brook and State Highway pull-off and rest area. The property has a deed restriction limiting uses to conservation, but an opportunity exists to develop trails in coordination with BNRC.
- **Olsen Road on Laurel Hill**, 47 acres of land. Recently, the timber was harvested by the town.

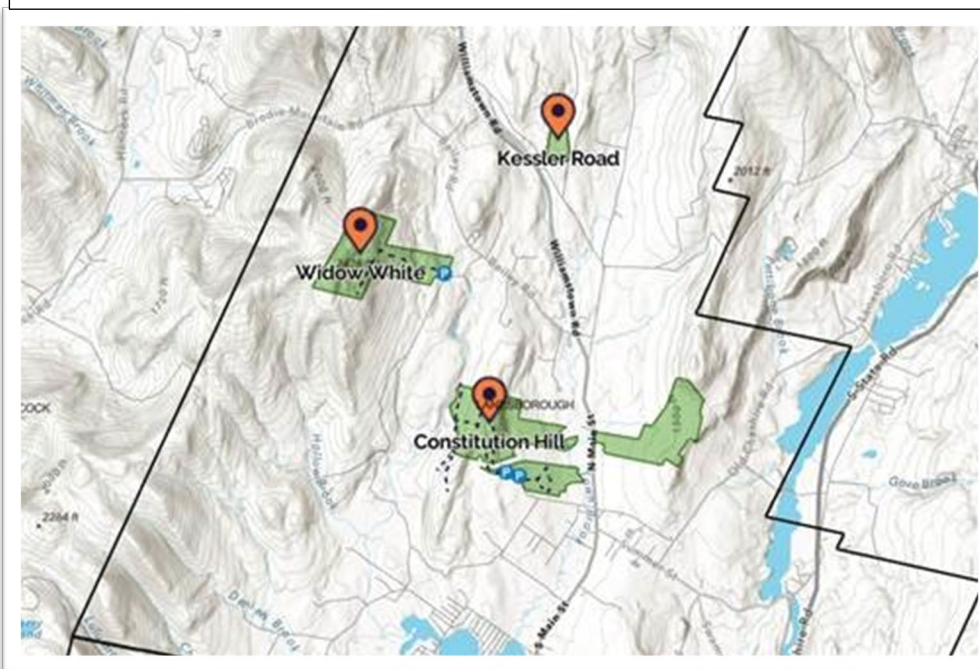
Cemeteries

- **Center Cemetery** is almost 2 acres in the traditional center of town on South Main Street/Route 7.
- **Mountain View Cemetery**, 5.76 acres between Summer and Prospect Street.
- **Pettibone Cemetery**, .39 acres off Old Cheshire Road on the Cheshire border. Historic cemetery dating to the Revolutionary War.
- **Talcott Cemetery** is 1 acre north of Bill Laston Park.

Berkshire Natural Resources Council Properties

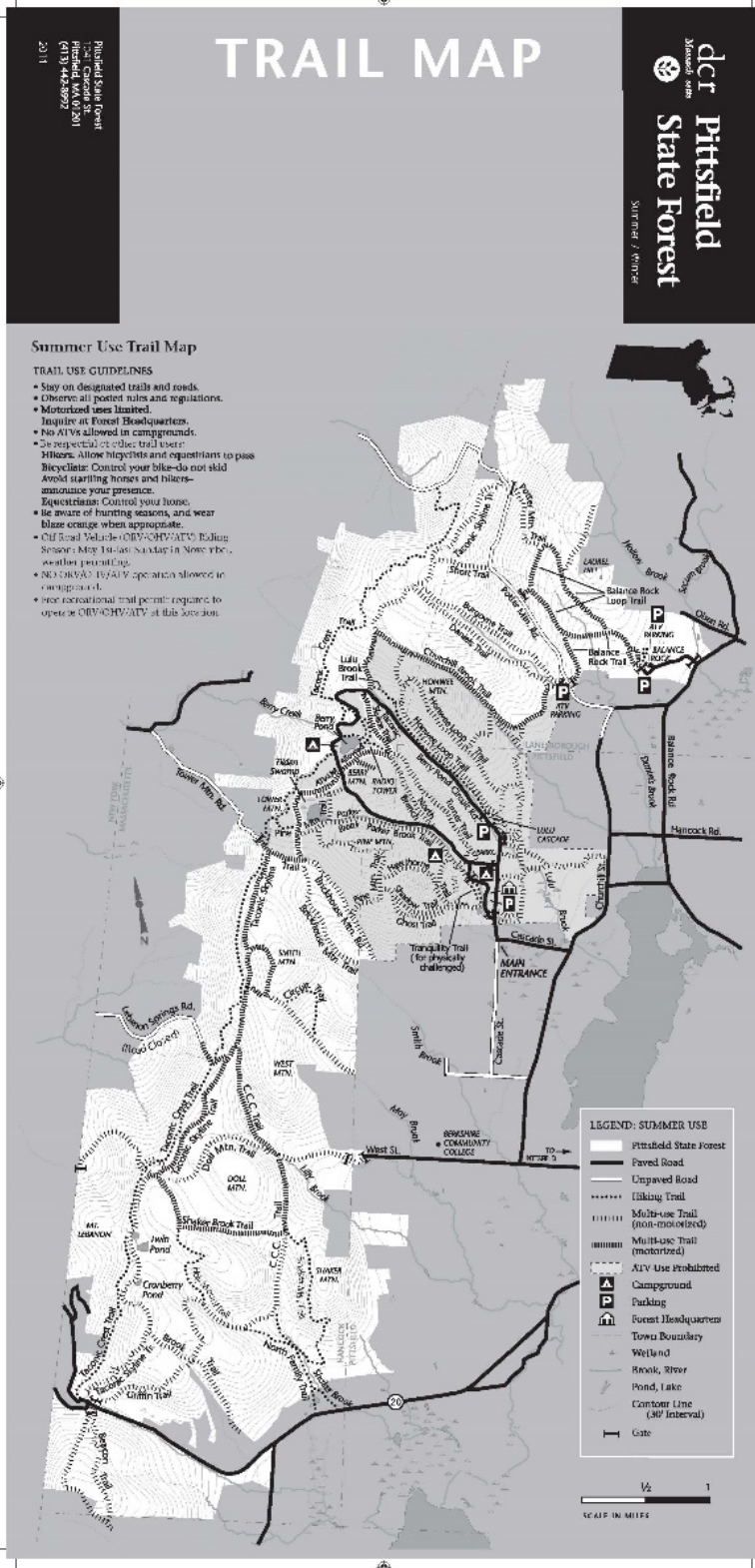
- **Widow White**, the forested 270-acre parcel, is open to hunting and features sections of Secum Brook, which flows underground in several spots throughout the property. Several historic sites mark the long history of Lanesborough, including an abandoned quarry and a chiseled message from a bitter suitor during the late 1800s..
- **Constitution Hill** with several miles of trails open to a variety of outdoor recreational activities. These include horseback riding, dog walking, cross-country skiing, and hunting. The site was named by town farmer Jonathan Smith, who lit a bonfire on the summit after the ratification of the US Constitution by Massachusetts. He announced the news to the surrounding community after representing the town at the convention in Boston. This parcel forms an important part of the ‘Cross-Country Connector’ trail which will connect the Ashuwillticook to the Pittsfield State Forest.
- **Fletcher Farm** is a small 2-acre farm dedicated to APR? or CR?
- **Nesbit Property**- this 30-acre wood is open to hunting and features a mature stand of trees, some of which may be over 150 years old.

Figure 8.6 Screenshot of BNRC Properties Map, Lanesborough



- **The Boulders** in the far southeastern corner of the town, a small section of the Boulders property, is accessible from Gulf Road. While the majority of the property is located in nearby Dalton and Pittsfield, almost 50 acres of the 645 total are in Lanesborough. The more than 6 miles of trails bring visitors to a rocky summit with views south toward October Mountain.

Figure 8.7 Pittsfield State Forest Trail Map



State of Massachusetts Properties

Balance Rock State Park is named after the glacial erratic boulder seemingly balanced on one point. The park is a popular spot for picnicking, mountain biking, hiking, and ATV riding. This area is part of the larger Pittsfield State Forest managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Figure 8.8 The Balance Rock



Pittsfield State Forest, at more than 11,000 acres and 30 miles of trails, this park is shared with Pittsfield and Hancock to the south and west. Berry Pond at the top of the Taconic Range features vistas west toward the Hudson River valley. The park is open both summer and winter and has several different campgrounds.

Figure 8.9 Off Road Vehicle Trails in Pittsfield State Forest



Figure 8.9.1 Mount Greylock State Reservation Trail Map

Mount Greylock State Reservation at 3,491 feet, Mount Greylock is the tallest mountain in Massachusetts and the summit is accessible from Lanesborough. Roads to the summit are open from May through October and are popular with visitors who come for the 90-mile vistas. At the summit, visitors find the newly renovated Veterans' War Memorial Tower and the CCC constructed Bascom Lodge.

The lodge hosts both day visitors and Appalachian Trail through hikers and is open during the summer for meals. Visitors entering the park from Lanesborough and points south will find the visitors center and the road to the summit. The park is open to a variety of activities, including hiking, hunting, snowmobiling, and camping. The Appalachian Trail passes through the park from north to south, and several shelters are available for camping on a first-come first-served basis. The Thunderbolt Ski Trail is a historic ski trail on the eastern face of the mountain and requires dedication to hike to the summit from nearby Greylock Glen.

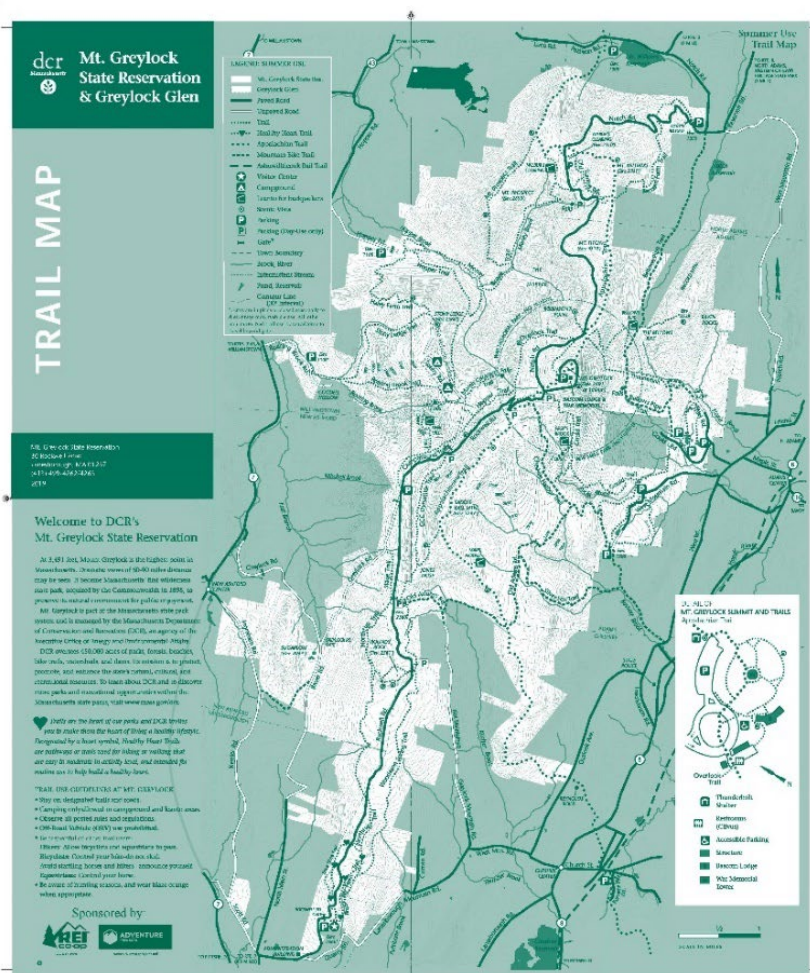


Figure 8.9.2 Mount Greylock view west toward New York

- o **Ashuwillticook Rail Trail** is a 10-foot-wide path connecting Pittsfield, Lanesborough, Cheshire, and Adams. The trail has many parking areas, including at the Berkshire Mall. Future plans extend the trail through Pittsfield and north to North Adams with a connection to Williamstown. The Trail follows an abandoned rail line along the Hoosic River and features views of Mount Greylock along Cheshire Lake. The trail is open to a variety of uses, including rollerblading, dog walking, cycling, walking, and running, and is fully accessible. Many Lanesborough residents report using the Ashuwillticook Trail on a regular basis.

Figure 8.9.3 Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Brochure

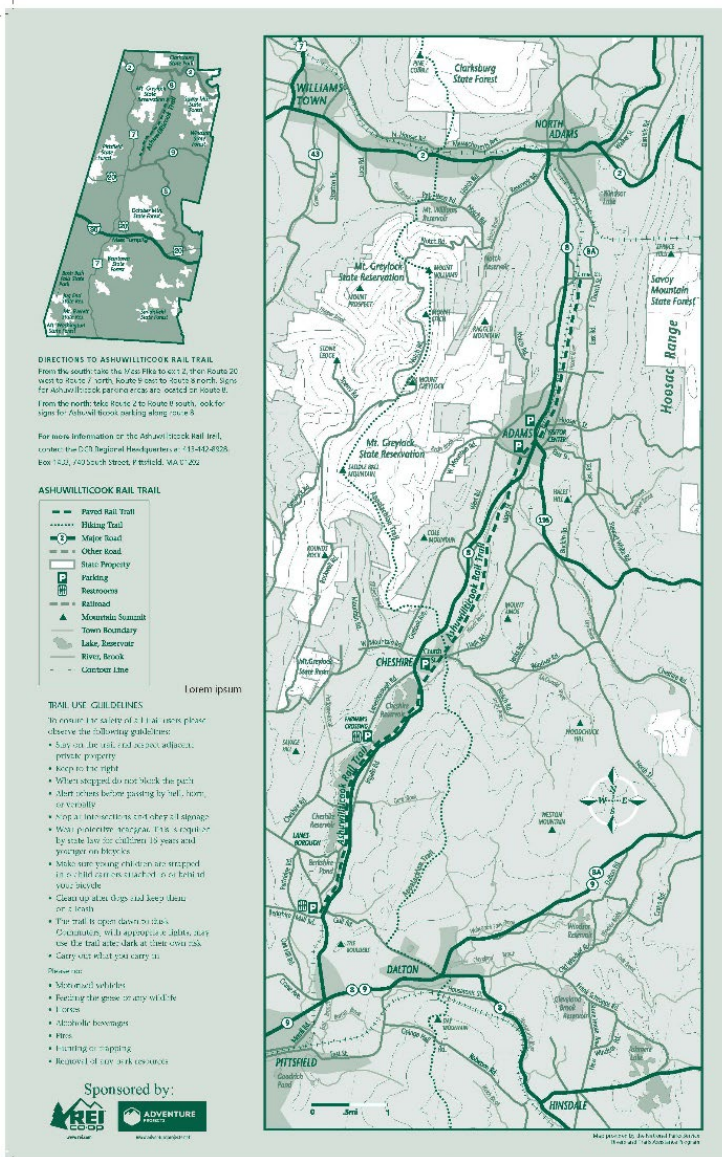


Figure 8.9.4 Ashuwillticook Rail Trail at the Mall looking north



Figure 8.9.5 Ashuwillticook Trail Sign



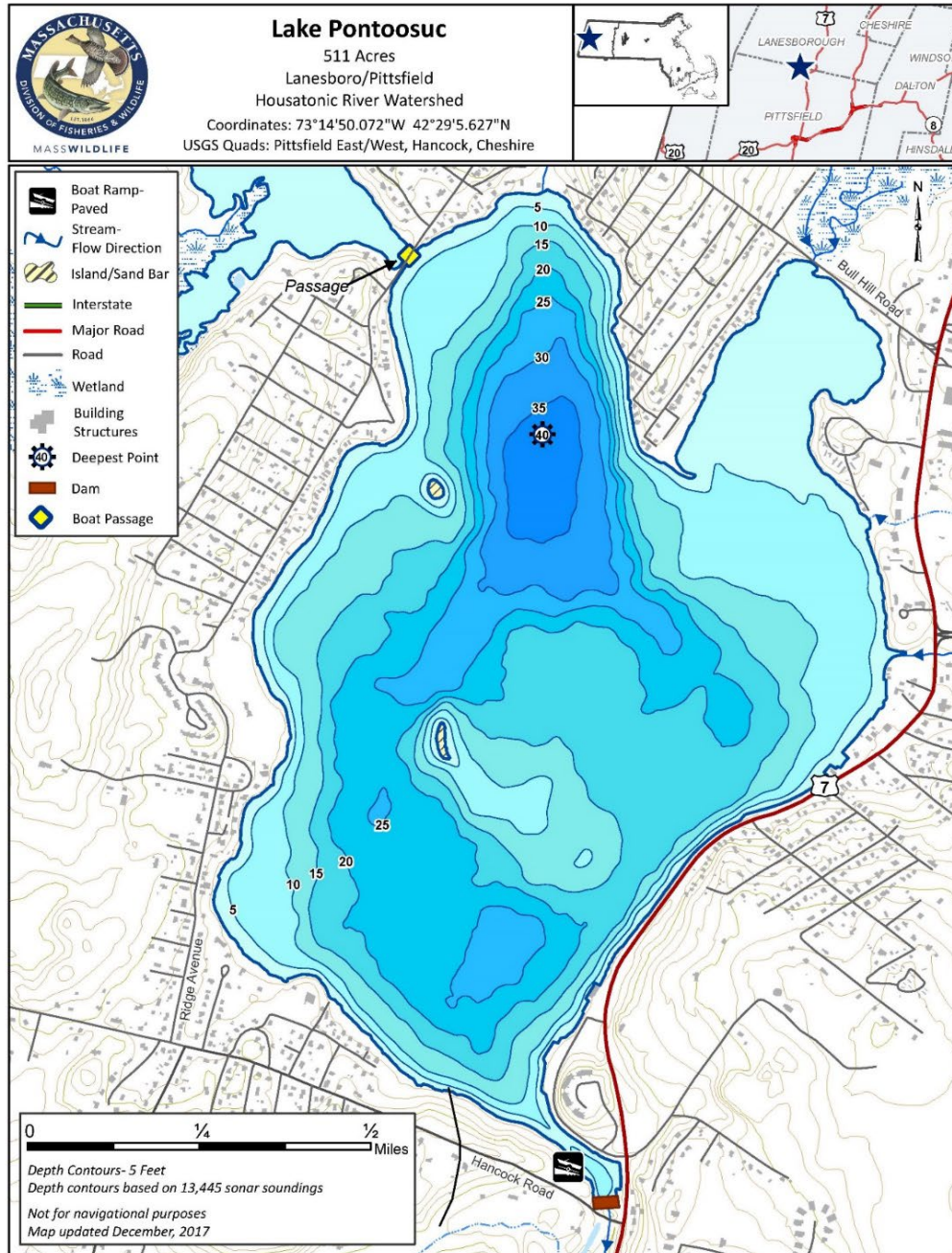
- **Barton's Ledge Wildlife Management Area**, 88 acres between Kessler Road and Route 7. This land is open to the public for hunting and wildlife viewing but doesn't have trails or improvements.
- **Chalet Wildlife Management Area** between Route 8 and Gulf Road, a small portion of the larger Chalet Wildlife Management Area is in Lanesborough. The State Fish and Wildlife land extends into Cheshire, Dalton, and Windsor. The land is unmanaged and lacks trails but is open to hunting and wildlife viewing.
- **Outdoor Related Business in Town**
 - Bakers Golf –a locally owned business at the corner of the 7 8 connector/Berkshire Mall Road, this business features a miniature golf course and a 300-yard driving range.
 - Potter Mountain- hiking and Biking –
 - Ramblewild-Adventure Park is an aerial adventure park of almost 1000 acres along the Taconic ridgeline in the northwest corner of the town. Several different levels of aerial adventure courses meander through the property and offer something from the relatively tame to a challenging aerial course through the treetops.
 - Jiminy Peak Ski Area is primarily located in nearby Hancock, but some portions of the ski area are located in the town. The ski area has a vertical rise of 1,150 vertical feet and 167.4 acres of skiable terrain. With an average snowfall of 68 inches and 96% coverage for snow making. The mountain has 9 lifts servicing 45 trails with a variety of beginner, intermediate, and advanced ski trails.
 - Pittsfield Sportsmen's Club with almost 400 acres on Silver Street. This members-only club has a shooting range, sponsors youth events, and allows members to hunt on the property. The property is bordered by Pittsfield State Forest and Jiminy Peak.

Figure 8.9.6 One of Lanesborough's many farms.



- Pontoosuc Lake is a 511-acre Great Pond with an average depth of 15 feet. The lake is shared between the two municipalities of Lanesborough and Pittsfield. The deepest point of the lake is 40 feet (see Bathymetric Map figure 8.9.7). The lake has extensive plant growth with a mixture of native and non-native species. To help control the growth of invasive species, the lake is annually drawn down in the winter by approximately 3 feet. This also helps to protect the dam and shoreline structures from ice buildup. A public boat ramp is maintained by the City of Pittsfield on the southern end of the lake at Pontoosuc Park and has room for approximately 30 cars/trailers. The lakeshore is developed with housing along the majority of the shoreline. Fish species in the lake include: Small and Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, Chain Pickerel, carp, perch, crappie, pumpkinseed, and a variety of minnows and baitfish. The State of Massachusetts annually stocks the lake with trout. The lake is popular with anglers both in summer and winter.

Figure 8.9.7 Lake Pontoosuc Bathymetric Map



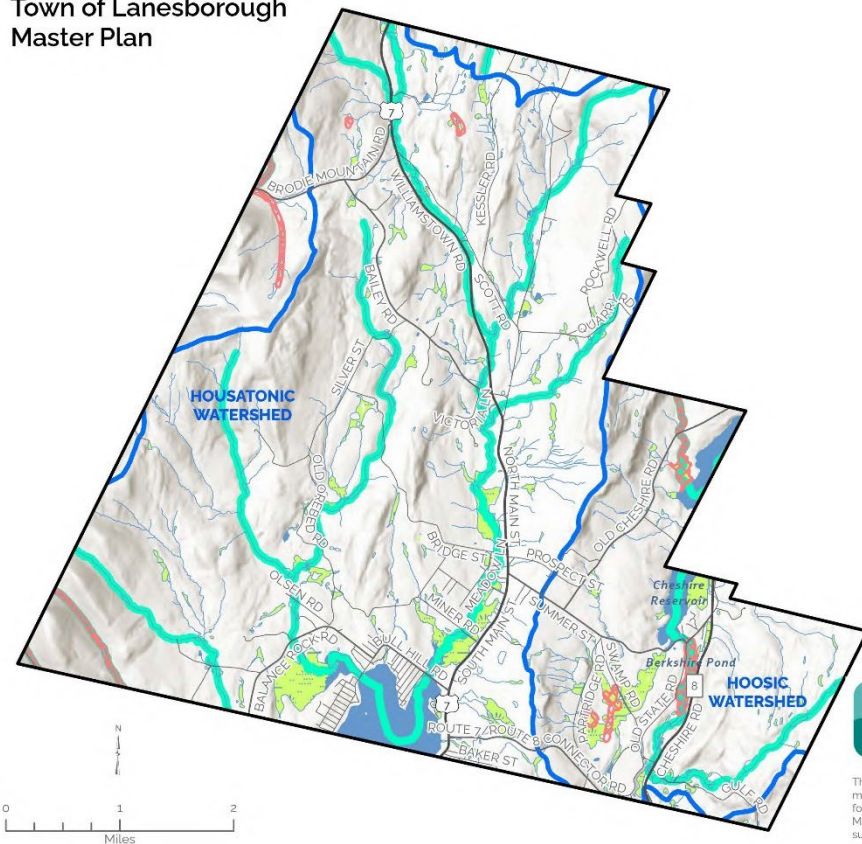
The lake is shared between the two municipalities of Lanesborough and Pittsfield. The deepest point of the lake is 40 feet (see Bathymetric Map figure 8.9.7). The lake has extensive plant growth with a mixture of native and non-native species. To help control the growth of invasive species, the lake is annually drawn down in the winter by approximately 3 feet. This also helps to protect the dam and shoreline structures from ice buildup. A public boat ramp is maintained by the City of Pittsfield on the southern end of the lake at Pontoosuc Park and has room for approximately 30 cars/trailers. The lakeshore is developed with housing along the majority of the shoreline. Fish species in the lake include: Small and Largemouth Bass,

Northern Pike, Chain Pickerel, carp, perch, crappie, pumpkinseed, and a variety of minnows and baitfish. The State of Massachusetts annually stocks the lake with trout. The lake is popular with anglers both in summer and winter.

- **Habormaster** The Town Habormaster is appointed annually by the Board of Selectmen. The position has several responsibilities including managing the macrophyte control program in coordination with the Pittsfield Habormaster, managing the annual drawdown, monitoring the water quality in the lake, representing the town to state agencies with control over Pontoosuc Lake, issuing permits for moorings, floats, and buoys, and assisting residents for obtaining dock permits.
- **Friends of Pontoosuc Lake/Watershed Inc.** is a corporation incorporated in 2003 to improve the quality of Pontoosuc Lake. In its charter, the organization states that it will provide advice to the public agencies responsible for the management of Pontoosuc Lake and its watershed, coordinating activities that impact the lake, organizing volunteers to improve the lake, and raising public and private funds to accomplish all these activities. Membership is open to any individual interested in the preservation of the lake, and dues are \$5 for individuals and \$10 for a family. The organization holds an annual meeting to elect officers and a board, and quarterly meetings of the board.

Figure 8.9.8 Water resources in Lanesborough

Town of Lanesborough Master Plan



Water Resources Map

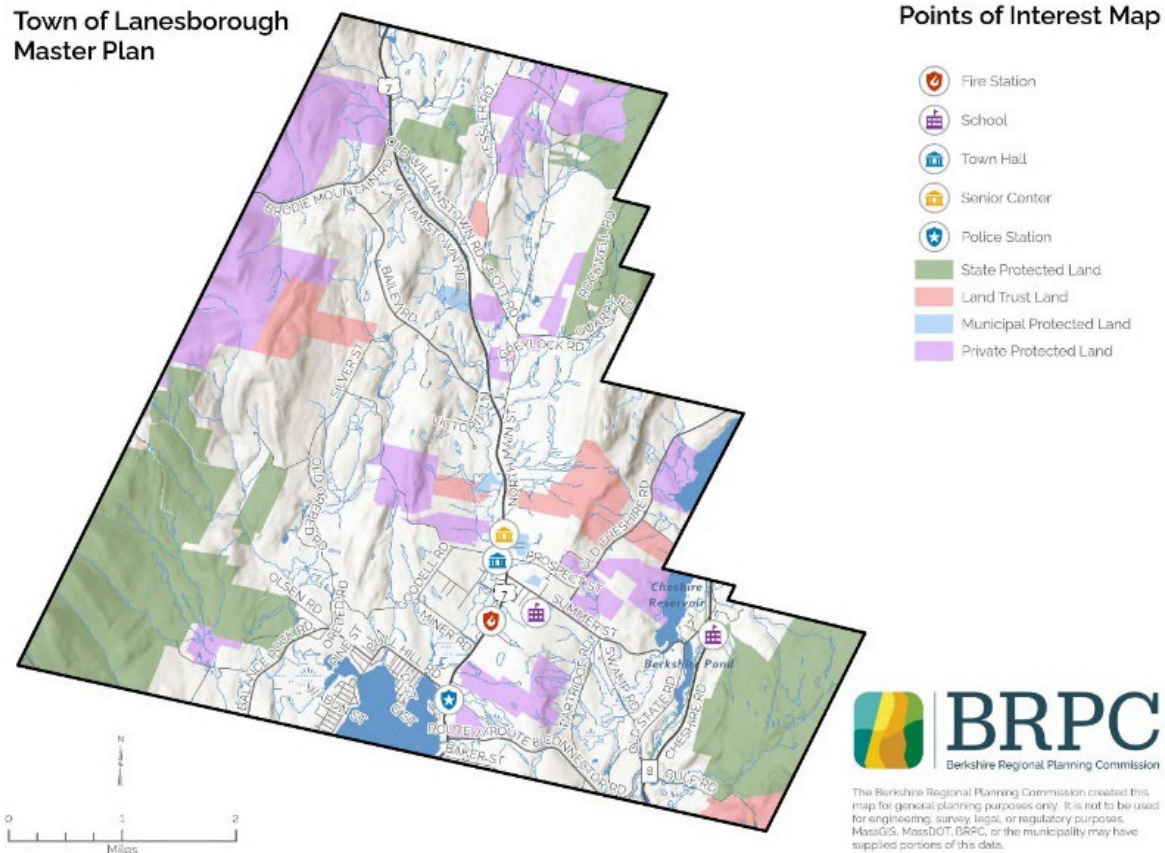
- Watersheds
- BioMap Core Aquatic Habitat
- Cold Water Fisheries
- Wetland
- Open Water
- Stream



The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission created this map for general planning purposes only. It is not to be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC, or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

Services and Facilities

Figure 9.1 Lanesborough Town Services and Points of Interest Map



Many of the Town’s services and facilities buildings are located near the intersection of Route 7 and Prospect Street. The Town Hall, Highway Department, Lanesborough Elementary School, and Lanesborough Volunteer Fire Department are all within ½ mile of this intersection. The police department is farther south in a temporary location north of the Route 7/8 Connector Road. The locations of these sites are shown in Figure 9.1.

Lanesborough Police Department

The Lanesborough Police Department is staffed by seven full-time and five part-time officers. The department responded to 5,827 calls for service in the 2024 annual report. A breakdown of the call types can be found in the Town’s 2024 Annual Report. The department also employs an Animal Control Officer.

Figure 9.2 The Lanesborough Police Department responds to emergencies in the town in coordination with the EMS and Fire Department, as well as the State Police and nearby municipalities.



The Lanesborough Police Department responds to more than 6,500 calls for service each year.

The officers are part of the Lanesborough Police Officers' Union and are currently under contract through June 30, 2026. The department is overseen by a five-member Police Advisory Review Commission.

The department frequently only has one officer available to respond to calls and relies on mutual aid from nearby police agencies. Mental health and substance use is some of the top issues it faces, and the department is actively involved in the Northern Berkshire Community Hub, which is a multi-disciplinary cooperation with nearby communities addressing the underlying causes of crime before police intervention is required.

The town currently leases space in the shopping plaza located at 545 South Main Street after moving out of its prior location on Prospect Street in 2022. The town shuttered the former station due to the building's physical condition.

Police officer recruitment continues to be a challenge for the town. The police department is reliant on the Baker Hill Road District for a large portion of its budget and regular replacement of police cruisers.

The proposed combined Police and Emergency Services facilities plan is presented in Figure 9.3.

Figure 9.3 Proposed Combined Emergency Services Facility housing both Police and Emergency Services. Floor plan and Site plan proposed on Route 7 frontage at former Skyline Golf Club. (Next Page)

Lanesborough Ambulance Service

Figure 9.4 Lanesborough Ambulance Service provides a number of important services in the community and responded to over 700 calls in 2024.



The Lanesborough Ambulance Service responds to emergency medical calls and combined response calls with the Police and Fire Departments. The service responded to approximately 700 calls during the past year and has a staff of 9 full-time and part-time Emergency Medical Technicians, including the director. The service is part of the countywide mutual aid system and assists with emergencies in nearby communities. The organization also supports the community with wellness checks on seniors, meal deliveries, and participation in community events.

The Lanesborough Ambulance Service currently operates out of the Lanesborough Volunteer Fire Department Facility. This facility is

inadequate for the current needs of the ambulance service. The need to store medical equipment and supplies in a climate-controlled environment, the need for 24-hour staffing along with restroom and storage facilities for employees. Finding a permanent facility for the service is a priority need for the community.

Lanesborough Volunteer Fire Department

The volunteer fire department currently consists of 23 members, including firefighters, EMTs, inspectors, and educators. In 2023, the department responded to 414 calls for service. In 2024, the department answered 138 calls. Volunteers commit to an average of 150 hours of training and practicing responding to emergencies. The group trains every week and is always looking for additional members. While recruitment is a challenge, the department's volunteers often move on to careers as professional firefighters.

The department also issues burning permits, controls spills and leaks of toxic substances, pumps out flooded basements, helps with animal rescues, assists the police, and provides mutual aid to neighboring towns.

The station is located at 180 South Main Street. The Department currently maintains a fleet of apparatus, including two pumper trucks and several command, rescue, and operations vehicles. The department has developed a capital plan and is currently contributing to a revolving fund to purchase a new pump truck. The current facility is expected to remain serviceable for 10-15 years in the future. Recruitment of volunteer firefighters remains difficult. Training and state requirements for volunteers make it difficult to retain members.

Figure 9.5 The Lanesborough Volunteer Fire Department marching in the 2024 Memorial Day Parade.



The Volunteer Fire Department currently has a membership of approximately 30 who respond to various calls for service.

Council on Aging

The Lanesborough Council on Aging provides social and support services for older adults, families, and caregivers. Staffed by a director and a van driver, the Council on Aging provides older adults with referrals to services, transportation, meals, and hosts programming, which includes fitness, recreation, wellness, and health insurance benefits counseling.

The Council on Aging is on the basement level of Town Hall and is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. They offer luncheons on Tuesdays and Thursdays and have a variety of activities, including bingo, yoga, and classes. The Council on Aging operates van transportation in partnership with the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority, which provides older adults with reduced fares for transportation throughout the county.

Lanesborough Public Library

According to "Lanesborough, Massachusetts: the story of a wilderness settlement, 1765-1965" by Frances S. Martin (1965), the Lanesborough Public Library began full operation in 1871, thanks to the efforts of Justus Tower, Mr. Dickie, Rev. William F. Avery, Josiah Royce, and Verlorus Burlinghame. Before that, Justus Tower had appealed to the state legislature to direct the "dog tax" to the support of libraries throughout the Commonwealth. In 1890, the State of Massachusetts created a system for the running of public libraries, and management was delegated to three elected Trustees. The original library was housed in the stone building currently used by the Historical Commission, open one afternoon and evening each week. In 1916, Maria Newton donated funds to build a Town Hall and Library, and the library continues to share space in Newton Memorial Town Hall to this day.

Located in the Town Hall Building, the library is open 25 hours per week, Monday-Thursday and Saturday. The library is a full member of the Central and Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (C/WMARS) system, enabling Lanesborough patrons to borrow from libraries across Central and Western MA. They provide books, magazines, CDs, audiobooks, DVDs, museum passes, e-books and e-audiobooks, Wifi Hotspots, and of course, reference services. The library provides public computers with printers/copiers and free wifi. The host a variety of educational and entertaining programs for all ages throughout the year, including computer literacy and use. In FY 2024, the library had a total of 819 local patrons and circulated 5055 physical materials in addition to 5361 e-books/audiobooks.

Veterans Services

The town is part of an inter-municipal agreement with eight other towns to share a Veterans Services Office to assist veterans and their families in applying for federal benefits, most commonly through Veterans Affairs, and wraparound support.

The veterans' service officer assists veterans living in Lanesborough, Clarksburg, Dalton, Adams, Williamstown, Florida, Savoy, Cheshire, and North Adams. The office is in North Adams.

Separately, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10338 and American Legion Post 446 operate the Veterans' Outreach Food Pantry in Berkshire Village. The pantry is open from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. on Fridays.

Municipal Operations and Finance

The Town has developed an employee handbook and a number of policies and procedures that are featured on the website. Expectations and guidance for town employees and volunteers regarding conflicts of interest, social media, and CORI checks are available on the site. Many different boards and

Figure 9.6 The Town Hall on Route 7 contains Town offices, the Library, and the Council on Aging.



committees have forms available on the town's website, including Animal Control, Board of Health, Conservation Commission, through Planning Board, Police Department, Select Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals. The need to continue refinement and standardization of town policies and procedures has been recognized at a variety of board and committee meetings.

Town Hall is located at the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets.

The Town Administrator has worked closely with the Select Board to identify areas of concern and address human resources issues in the town.

In FY 2023, the town is operating on a \$11.3 million budget (excluding enterprise accounts), 77.18% of which is derived from the tax levy. Approximately 5.07% of the revenues came from state aid, 11.24% from local receipts, and another 6.51% came from other sources.

Slightly more than half of the annual expenses in FY23 support the education system (56.85%); 10.59% supported public works; 12.47% supported the general government; and 6.60% for police.

The following tables compare Lanesborough to several nearby communities from a variety of different perspectives, including: average single-family tax bill, population, tax rate, town employees, expenditures per department and capita, and assessed values for different property classes. All data referenced based on 2025 Tax Rate and Revenue Data and 2024 Expenditures available numbers.

**Table 9.1 Municipal Comparisons-
Lanesborough, Cheshire, Dalton, Williamstown, Hinsdale, Pittsfield, and Massachusetts (when relevant.)**

Town	Average Single Family Tax Bill	Average Tax Bill as a % of Per Capita Income ²
Lanesborough	\$5,313	18.06
Cheshire	\$3,258	10.54
Dalton	\$4,995	14.59
Williamstown	\$7,287	15.95
Hinsdale	\$3,713	9.06
Pittsfield	\$4,546	16.42
Massachusetts	\$7,056	Unknown

The average single-family tax bill in Lanesborough is above neighboring communities but significantly below the statewide average.

The tax bill also accounts for a greater percentage of the town’s per capita income than neighboring towns.

² 2025 DLS Statistics

Lanesborough Master Plan- Existing Conditions

Municipality	Population	Population Density	Land Area	DOR Revenue Per Capita	EQV Per Capita	Tax Rate: Residential	Tax Rate CIP	Tax Levy per Capita	Free Cash 7/1/2024
Lanesborough	3007	104	28.84	38946	201003	\$16.73	\$16.73	\$3,293	1,252,853
Cheshire	3195	119	26.81	38048	140202	\$11.13	\$11.13	\$1,565	713,353
Dalton	6,200	285	21.78	38962	152883	\$16.47	\$16.47	\$2,548	2,455,469
Williamstown	7,385	158	46.76	43591	193022	\$13.80	\$13.80	\$2,790	1,248,858
Hinsdale	1896	91	20.73	43699	262247	\$11.15	\$11.15	\$2,828	298,991

³

The \$9,421,115 the town collected in taxes primarily comes from residential property taxes (83.48%), while 10.57% comes from commercial and industrial property and 5.85% derives from personal property tax. The town historically maintained a flat tax rate, meaning all property classes are taxed at the same rate. In 2023, the tax rate was \$17.67 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

	Total Employees	Total Salaries and Wages	Per Employee Wage
Lanesborough	22	1,634,558	\$74,298.09
Cheshire	17	1,055,709	\$62,100.53
Dalton	49	2,978,484	\$60,785.39
Pittsfield	2,238	90,343,236	\$40,367.84
Williamstown	109	4,648,664	\$42,648.29

Contributing to the greater tax bill is a lack of state aid. In fiscal year 2024, the town derived only 5.07% of its income from state aid, which ranks in the bottom fifth among all Massachusetts cities and towns and is lower than neighboring towns. Pittsfield derived 34.99% of its revenues from state aid; Cheshire derived 13.33%; and Dalton derived 8.30%.

³ DLS, [Community Snapshot](#)

Lanesborough Master Plan- Existing Conditions

All Data Financial Year 2024

Municipality	General Government	Public Safety	Education	Public Works	Human Services	Culture and Recreation	Fixed Costs	Intergov Assessments	Debt Service	Total Expenditures
Lanesborough	850,016	1,219,717	6,930,756	1,152,539	106,187	143,562	1,016,240	113,143	0	11,532,160
Cheshire	872,688	423,470	3,512,910	1,190,815	157,598	51,904	488,850	65,343	272,947	7,036,525
Dalton	1,290,605	1,726,436	10,689,549	3,077,460	346,021	314,562	1,568,135	50,569	408,047	19,471,384
Williamstown	1,667,025	2,108,101	13,543,804	2,586,433	454,568	753,605	2,471,196	47,864	547,188	24,179,784
Hinsdale	562,806		3,270,577	1,182,270	40,532	117,870	501,236	21,626	18,176	6,306,149

Municipality	General Government per Capita	Police per Capita	Fire per Capita	Other Public Safety per Capita	Education per Capita	Public Works per Capita	Human Services per Capita	Culture and Recreation per Capita	Fixed Costs per Capita	Intergov Assessments per Capita	Debt Service per Capita
Lanesborough	283	262	33	111	2,305	383	35	48	338	38	0
Cheshire	273	85	34	13	1,100	373	49	16	153	20	77
Dalton	208	231	0	48	1,724	496	56	51	253	8	66
Williamstown	226	243	0	42	1,834	350	62	102	335	6	74
Hinsdale	297	248	47	16	1,725	624	21	62	264	11	10

Lanesborough Master Plan- Existing Conditions

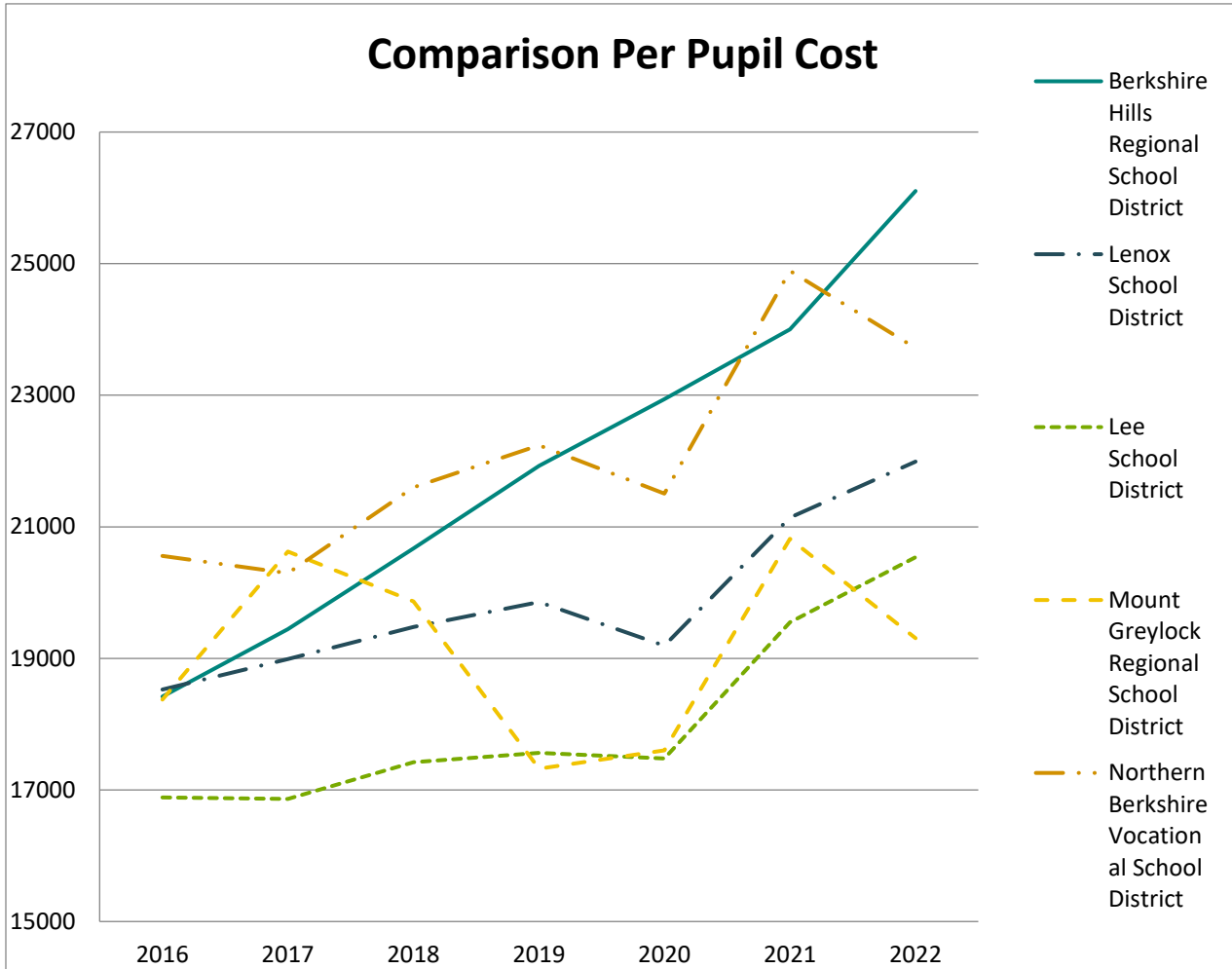
Municipality	Assessed Value Residential	Assessed Value Commercial	Assessed Value Industrial	Assessed Value Personal Property	Total Assessed Value	Residential and Open Space % of Total Value	Commercial Industrial, Personal Property % of Total Value
Lanesborough	431,250,687	46,655,214	7,959,800	30,749,515	516,615,216	83.48	16.52
Cheshire	356,671,659	22,331,867	1,772,615	14,265,675	395,041,816	90.29	9.71
Dalton	660,104,932	32,325,972	51,599,100	40,106,610	784,136,614	84.18	15.82
Williamstown	1,343,051,038	106,946,266	11,644,957	31,642,684	1,493,284,945	89.94	10.06
Hinsdale	377,349,160	27,766,330	7,912,600	67,861,385	480,889,475	78.47	21.53
Hancock	196,518,070	113,235,915	16,176,900	15,604,870	341,535,755	57.54	42.46
Pittsfield	3,582,488,605	418,098,525	155,279,207	332,497,570	4,488,363,907	79.82	20.18

Public Education System

Lanesborough is part of the Mount Greylock Regional School District. The district encompasses Lanesborough Elementary School, Williamstown Elementary School, and Mount Greylock Regional Middle and High School. It is a Title 1 school district. Figure 9.7 compares the cost per pupil at Mount Greylock Regional School District with several other nearby schools between 2016 and 2022. Mount Greylock was

less

Figure 9.7 Cost Comparison for Berkshire County School Districts.



than most of the other schools, per pupil throughout this time period and comparable to Lee and Lenox schools but generally less than Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

The partnership with Williamstown extends back to 1960 when the two towns partnered in building Mount Greylock Regional High School on Cold Spring Road in Williamstown. The towns operated the schools under a supervisory union agreement until 2017 when votes in both towns created the Mount Greylock Regional School District. The district is overseen by a regional school committee consisting of four Williamstown residents and three Lanesborough residents.

Lanesborough Elementary School

Lanesborough Elementary is a pre-K-6 school on Summer Street, educating more than 200 students per year. The teaching staff of approximately 38 consists of teachers, special educators, specialists, paraprofessionals and support staff. The school building was built in 2001.

In FY25, the school operated on a \$3.3 million budget.

Enrollment increased during the last decade. In 2014, 205 pupils attended Lanesborough Elementary School and in 2024 the number grew to 229.

Figure 9.8 Lanesborough Elementary School and site for Annual Town Meeting.



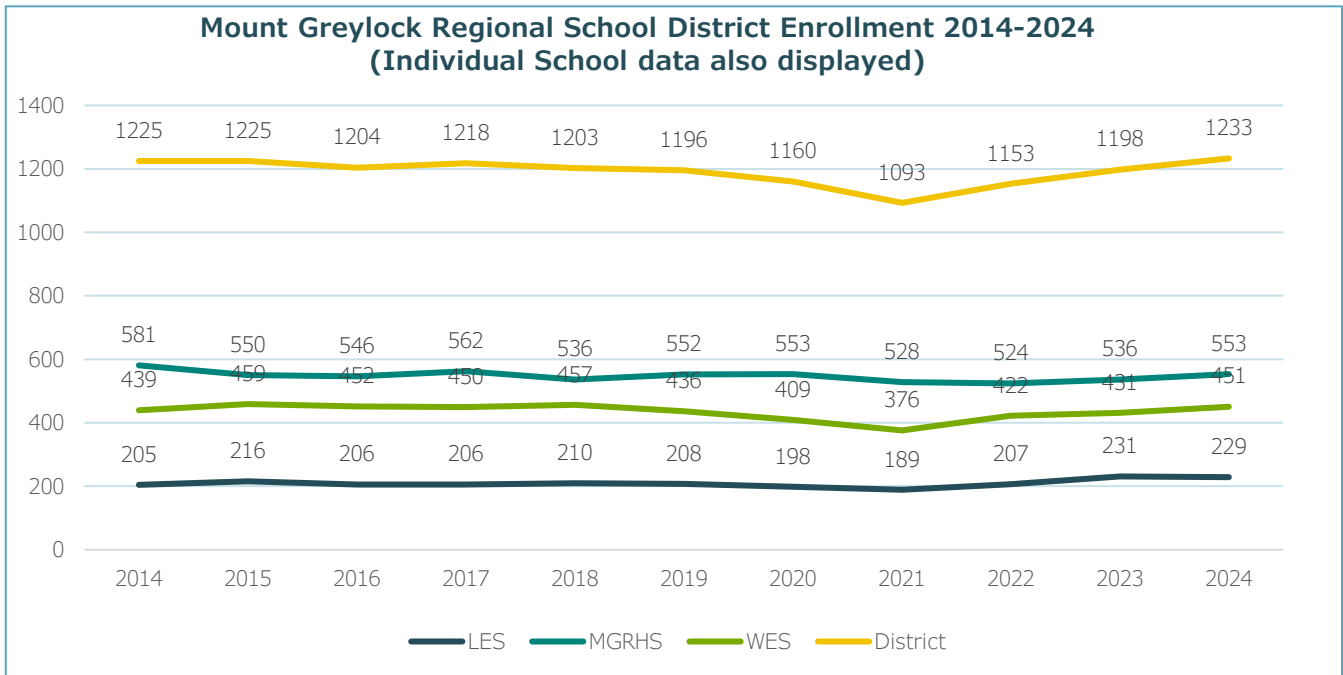
Lanesborough Elementary School.

Mount Greylock Regional Middle and High School

Located in Williamstown, Mount Greylock Regional Middle and High School serves grades 7-12 from Williamstown and Lanesborough. The district also has tuition agreements with Hancock and New Ashford.

The student body of approximately 550 is supported by a staff of approximately 100 educators and professionals. The school operates on a \$7 million budget in fiscal year 2025, with Lanesborough paying \$2.5 million of that cost based on the number of students.

Figure 9.9 Mount Greylock Enrollment 2014-2024



The schools in the district have kept a relatively stable level of enrollment during the last decade.

The school recently underwent a partial renovation and new construction project, welcoming students to the new building in the fall of 2018. These renovations were paid for with a 30-Year Bond. In the end of FY 2024 the outstanding debt was \$25,285,000. During FY 2025 the district paid \$815,000 in principle on this debt.

In 2024 the High School underwent significant renovations to the fields and grounds. This work was also financed through bond issuance. Both towns contribute to the bond payments and other capital expenses each year. The field improvements at the High School cost approximately \$800K with \$274K remaining during FY 2026.

The district maintains a relatively stable enrollment, with a dip during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and a subsequent rebound.

Department of Public Works

The Lanesborough Department of Public Works is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of roads, bridges, drainage, and parks.

The Department of Public Works provides plowing and sanding of streets, road repair, culvert oversight and replacement, sign replacement, equipment and facility maintenance, as well as maintaining and conducting burials at the local cemeteries.

The Department consists of a director, a foreman, and a laborer. The workers are represented by the International Union of Operating Engineers.

Municipal Properties, Utilities, and Special Taxing Districts

Sewer Line

Existing Sewer connections to the Pittsfield Municipal Water Treatment plant are limited in scope and currently service the neighborhoods off Route 7 up to Bull Hill Road. An additional connection on the western side of Lake Pontoosuc serves a limited number of houses on and around Naragansett. The utilities in the town are shown in Figure 9.9.1.

Extending the sewer line northward from the current terminus on Route 7 would enable the town to increase the density of development along the existing commercial route and would enable the following additional connections to be made:

- ~1.5 miles from the existing terminus at the Post Office to the Town Hall
- Adds the ability to connect to sewer services for
 - Town hall
 - Town-owned land across from the town hall
 - Fire Department
 - Police/EMS facility
 - Summer Street and Lanesborough Elementary
 - Route 7 Commercial businesses
 - Greater density of housing on Route 7
- ~1.3 miles from Town Hall to Jake's Java Plaza
- Adds the ability to connect to sewer services for
 - Bill Laston Fields
 - Mobile Station
 - Olde Forge
 - Route 7 Commercial businesses
 - Greater density of housing on Route 7
 - Potential connections at Bailey Hill Road and Lynne Court

Perhaps just as importantly, enabling new development that does not require onsite wastewater treatment would allow more dense housing, additional businesses, and environmental benefits, or removing failing systems from polluting local surface waters.

Lanesborough Fire and Water District

Lanesborough Fire and Water District provides potable water and a fire suppression system for customers in the town. The district created an asset management plan for the water distribution system in 2021.

The district is served by two gravel-packed wells on Miner Road off Route 7. This 18-inch well is 67 feet deep. A second well serves as a backup supply. Plans for an additional well are currently in development on recently acquired land near Bull Hill Road. A 750,000-gallon tank serves as storage and provides sufficient pressure throughout the system. The district provided 66 million gallons of water to its customers in 2019 through more than 22 miles of water mains. In 2021 and 2022, the district expanded over Summer Street to approximately 40 new customers in Berkshire Village. The district reports that until the new wellhead comes online in 2028, there is limited capacity for additional customers.

Baker Hill Road District

An independent municipal district within the larger municipality of Lanesborough, Massachusetts, the District is a governing body that maintains the Route 7/8 Connector Road as a public way and may provide other services for economic and business development within the district. With the revenue it collects, the District pays for municipal services to ensure adequate emergency services in the district, and it ensures that the property owners meet their financial obligations to the town regardless of the ownership of the property. The District collects taxes from the property owners at the mall, currently two condominium owners at the Mall, and a third that owns the remainder from the Mall to Route 7. Those property owners pay a proportionate share of taxes covering the expenses related to the budget of the district. The majority of those expenses are paid to the Town of Lanesborough for emergency services and highway maintenance-related items. The remainder of the district's expenses are dedicated to administrative costs such as collector costs to the Town, staff treasurer, clerk, legal representation, insurance, and stipends for prudential committee members (some members waive this), and capital infrastructure improvements.

The District contribution to the Lanesborough Fire Department goes into a gift account for the purchase of fire equipment able to service any facility in the district, the Lanesborough Police Department for the annual salaries of two full time police officers and a replacement police cruiser every other year and contracting with the highway department for year-round maintenance on the road.

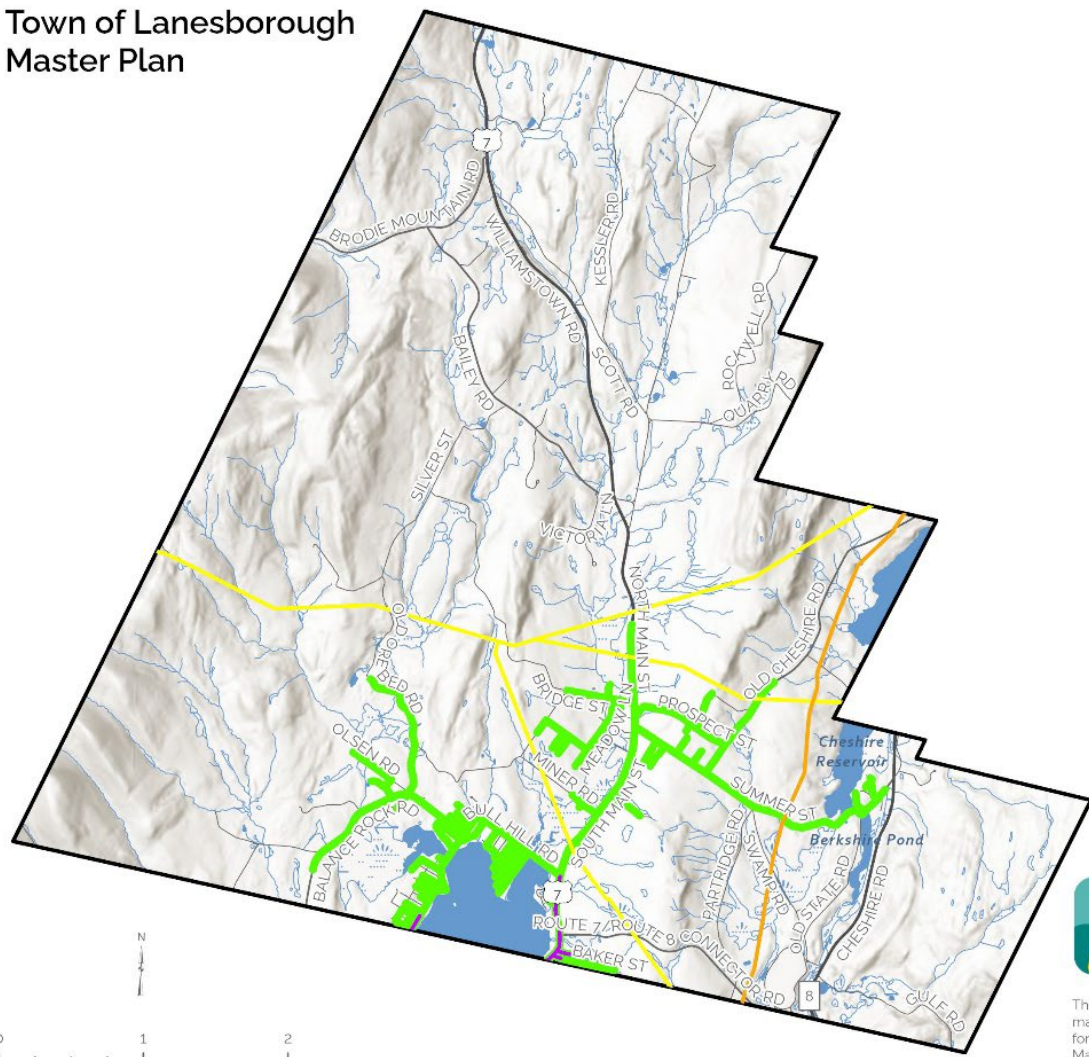
The District was established by an act of the Massachusetts State Legislature in 1989, which defined its boundaries, purposes, requirements, the composition of the prudential committee, budget, bylaws, ability to issue bonds, and the manner of dissolution. The language of the act was modified in 2018 when the powers of the District were expanded to include Economic Development Efforts and the ability to acquire and hold real property within the District. The District worked with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to develop a reuse study for the property in 2018 when it became apparent that the mall would no longer remain economically viable.

The Prudential Committee consists of three members, three residents appointed for 3-year terms. Two of the members are appointed by the Town's Select Board, and one is appointed by the property owners in the District. Collection of taxes owed to the District has been problematic in the past, with some property owners in significant arrears and several lawsuits filed against those owners. More recently, real estate transactions have resulted in the payment of back taxes to the District.

Figure 9.9.1 Lanesborough Utilities Map showing potable water, wastewater, electrical, and natural gas lines.

Town of Lanesborough
Master Plan

Utilities Map



- Water
- Wastewater
- Electrical Transmission Lines
- Natural Gas Pipeline



The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission created this map for general planning purposes only. It is not to be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC, or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.

Public Participation Process

The development of the Master Plan began in the Fall of 2023 when the Planning Board met with consultants from BRPC to discuss the contents of a master plan, the scope and sequence of development, and a timeline to complete the project by Spring of 2025.

Figure 10.1 December Public Forum at Lanesborough Elementary School



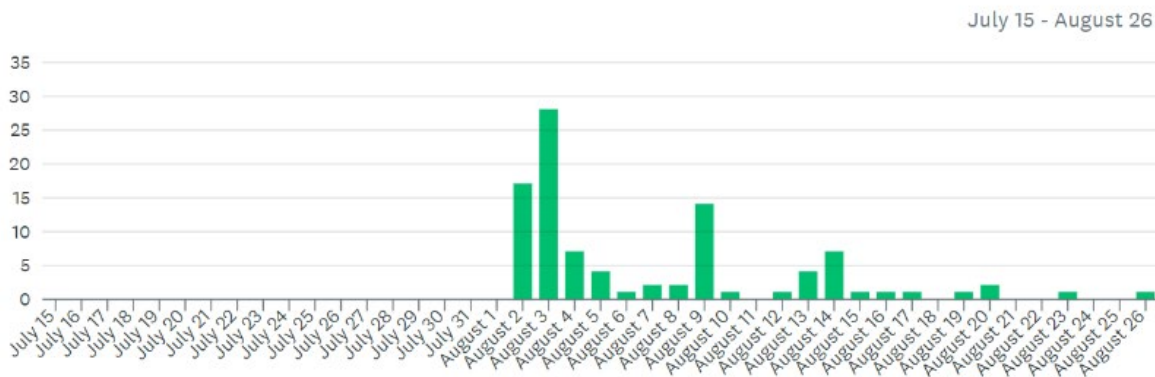
The Planning Board met xx times to discuss the existing conditions in the town, develop a survey and public outreach efforts, review drafts and presentations, and incorporate public feedback into the 2025 Master Plan.

Public outreach included the SurveyMonkey survey, multiple public forums (see Figure 10.1), stakeholder meetings with town Boards and Committees, and public comments when the public was asked to provide feedback on the various versions of the plan.

Figure 10.2 shows the dates and volume of responses during the Master Plan Survey.

Figure 10.2 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey responses over time.

Responses Volume



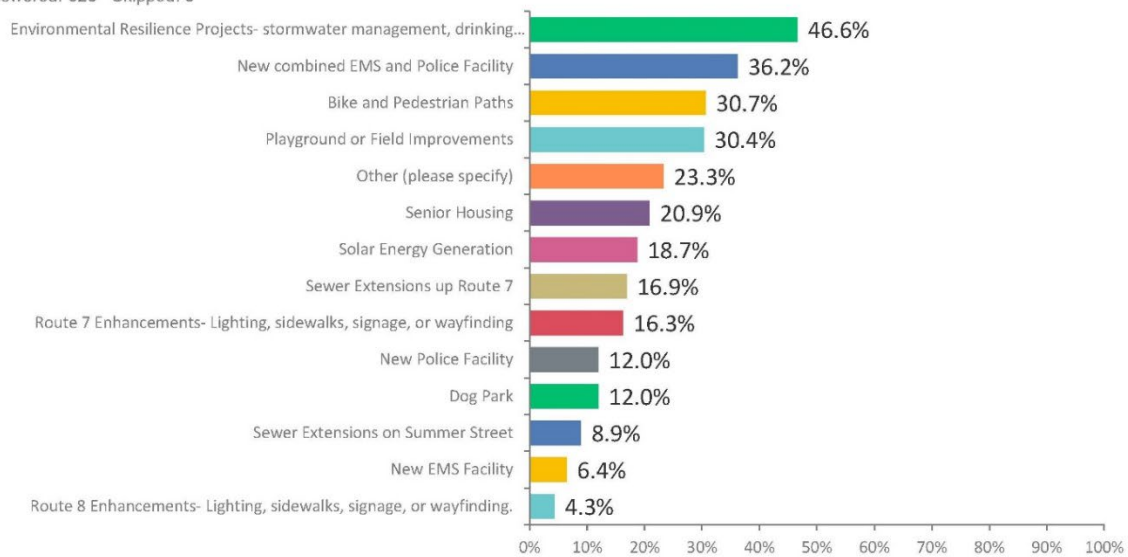
Survey responses started strong with a public awareness campaign and attendance at Lanesborough day by BRPC Staff members. Later efforts at publicizing the survey including a Berkshire Eagle and iBerkshire Articles, publicizing at local businesses, and at committee meetings helped to maintain a steady rate of

participation in the survey. Any Survey results not presented elsewhere in the plan are featured here and were instrumental in developing the Action Plan which follows.

Figure 10.3 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 5- Priority infrastructure and improvement projects in the Town.

Q5: What infrastructure project or improvement do you think should be a priority in Lanesborough (Choose 3)?

Answered: 326 Skipped: 0

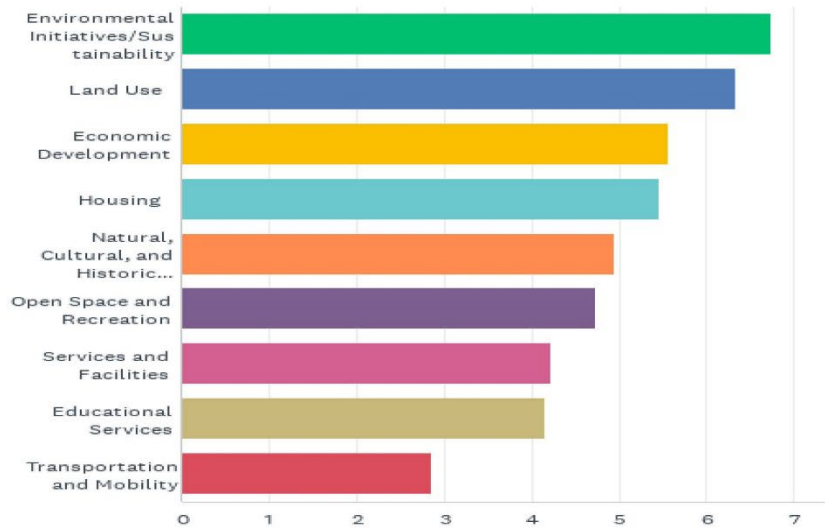


Powered by SurveyMonkey

Figure 10.4 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 6- Priority initiatives for the Town during the coming 10-20 years.

Answered: 326 Skipped: 0

Q6: Which of the following areas do you think should be high priorities for Lanesborough during the next 10 to 20 years? (Rank from High to Low Priority)



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Question 7: This question received 162 responses and asked-

Tell us more about your most important topic- what concerns or issues should Lanesborough town government address?

- *build a new police station that is adequate for this town.*
- *As the population ages we need more public transportation. A real draw to live in Lanesboro for me was its semi-rural nature yet closeness to Pittsfield and cultural centers. That would be made even better with more public transportation.*
- *Housing is number one, it's too expensive especially for families. We need more families in Lanesborough. And a building for EMS and Police, that should be priority too.*
- *I would love to see the mall turned into something useful. Indoor recreational facility, restaurants, etc. I hate to see it crumble when it has so much potential.*
- *Infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, water and sewer are important to create an attractive and functional place to live and work.*
- *Keeping taxes down*
- *Maintenance and planning for existing facilities/buildings/roads/services etc rather than deferring/ignoring until there's a crisis or failure which costs more to resolve*
- *My first and second choices, environmental initiatives/ sustainability and natural, cultural and historic preservation are closely tied. We have a unique and irreplaceable natural landscape in the Berkshires and Lanesborough specifically that if not thoughtfully protected from overdevelopment, deforestation and pollutants, will be destroyed. Infrastructure like sewer extensions around Pontoosuc Lake, wetland and open forest protections, preservation of farmland, and serious considerations of development must be made priorities in order to maintain Lanesborough's ecosystems and future.*
- *Need to get the mall area revitalized. It would help reduce the tax burden on the town and would provide much-needed jobs to Berkshire County. Some of the plans to have the area used as a partial location for senior housing, apartments, and hospitality would allow for some unique solutions that would help out the county.*
- *Sewer extensions bring in more business, help with mall development, and reduce taxes*
- *Taxes keep increasing to an unaffordable level, with many town residents struggling to make ends meet. When is enough, enough?*
- *We have a great and beautiful town - let's maintain its beauty. Let's organize town clean-up days. Let's have a town fund to help repair and beautify the homes of those who need a hand. Let's take steps to preserve our bodies of water. Let's support local farms. Let's improve transportation options for our elderly.*

Question 18: This question received 74 responses and asked-

Please use this space to provide any additional comments or suggestions.

- *I would like the town to gather emails from homeowners and circulate update information, monthly newsletter for example. I think its great that we are now using emails for tax payments.*
- *More community building. Days where we gather to clean up cemeteries, streets, and empty spaces. Days like the recent Lanesboro Day! Brainstorming ways for neighbors to meet neighbors. An annual town barbecue. Our version of the Josh Billings races - he's one of ours! Movies in the park. Closed streets for street fairs, festivals, walking, and biking. A celebration of town artists: painters, musicians, etc. Meet and greets with local folks - like show and tell, but for the whole family. Focus on a resident and post a video interview with them on the town website. "Get to know Jane Doe" type of video. Eventually, all of us could be featured that way! There are millions of ways we could all get to know each other better. We could be one big family - the town is small enough to make that happen!*
- *Thank you for asking residents for feedback. I always want to get involved but it seems like the town isn't really welcoming to new people. Its nice to be asked for feedback this way, to not feel scared about getting yelled at for making different suggestions.*
- *Thank you to everyone working on gathering this information on this really important project. Lanesborough is a special place, and there is so much we can do to keep this town beautiful. We just need a long-term plan that can be referred to so everyone is on the same page and misinformation doesn't get in the way. Keep Lanesborough rural, focus on the positives we have here instead: clean water, good schools, emergency*

services with familiar faces, nature all around, instead of being obsessed with the tax rate. We've got it pretty good here.

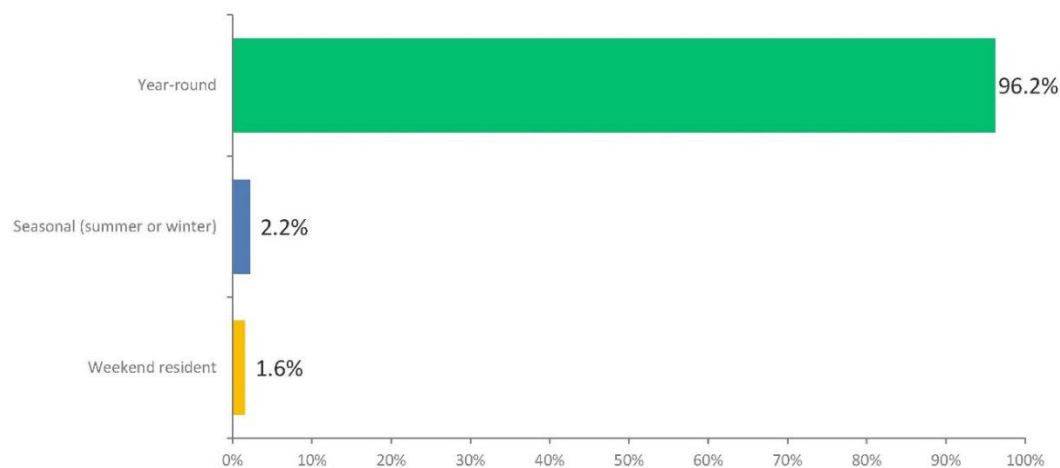
- This seems like a pretty good thing for the town to do. I hope it helps make some consistent rules and policies that everyone is held to, no matter who you know or how long you've lived in town. Thanks for doing this and asking for opinions on it.

The following survey questions asked for the demographic characteristics of respondents. This provides a snapshot to compare respondents with the expected characteristics of the townspeople. Survey responses reflected expectations of income, residency, and age. Question 17 asked about how the respondents hear about news in the local community. This provides insight into the most effective methodologies to communicate with townspeople.

Figure 10.5 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 13 Residency status.

Q13: What type of Lanesborough resident are you?

Answered: 318 Skipped: 8

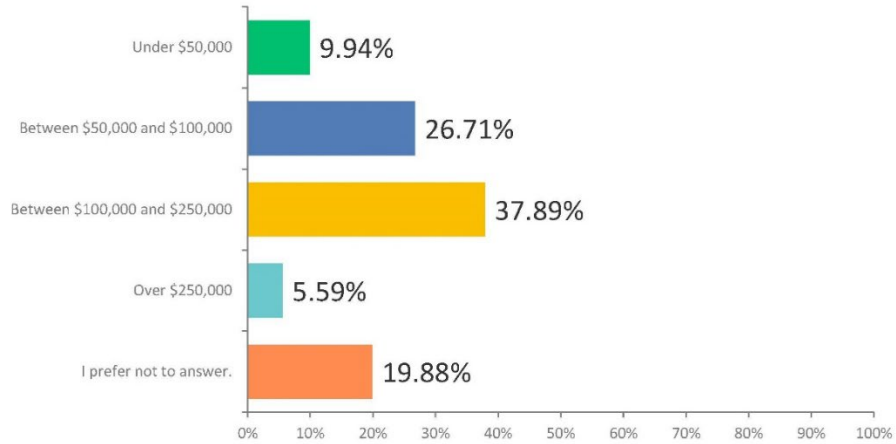


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Figure 10.6 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 14 Household Income

Q14: What is your household income?

Answered: 322 Skipped: 4

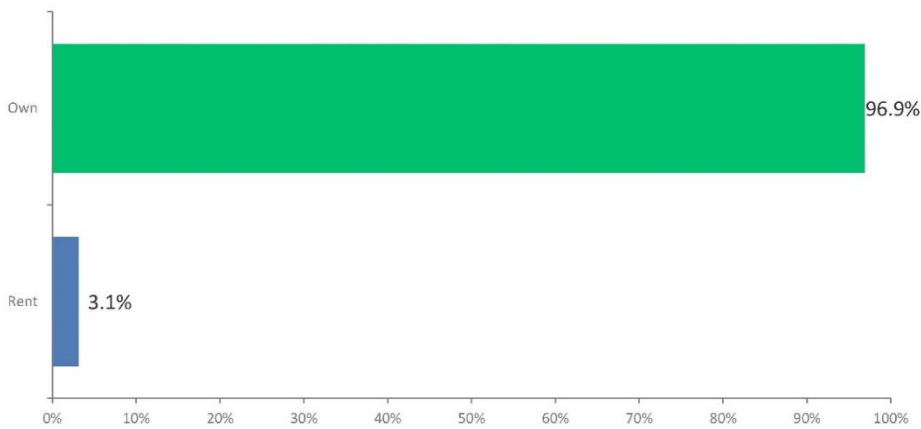


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Figure 10.7 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 15 Homeowner or Renter.

Q15: Do you own or rent a home in Lanesborough?

Answered: 318 Skipped: 8

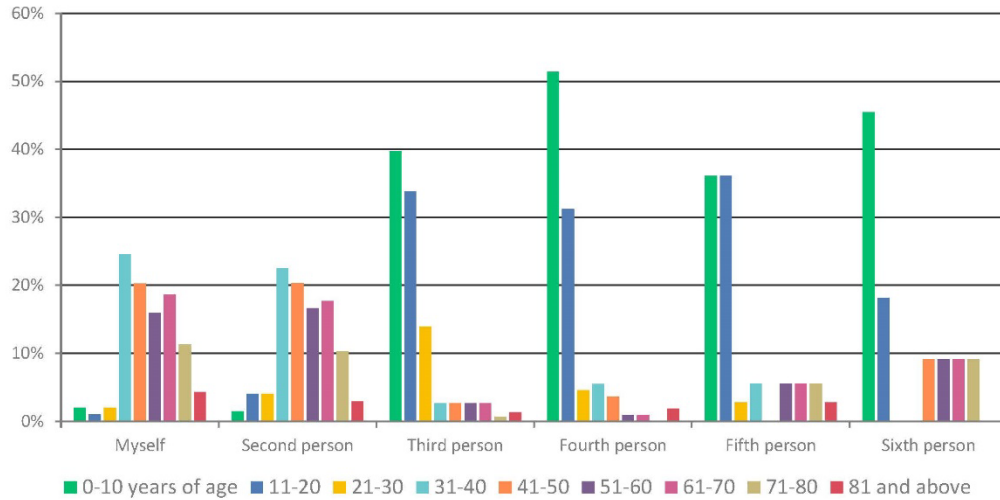


Powered by SurveyMonkey

Figure 10.8 Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 16 Household Composition.

Q16: Including yourself, indicate the numbers and ages of people in your household.

Answered: 301 Skipped: 25

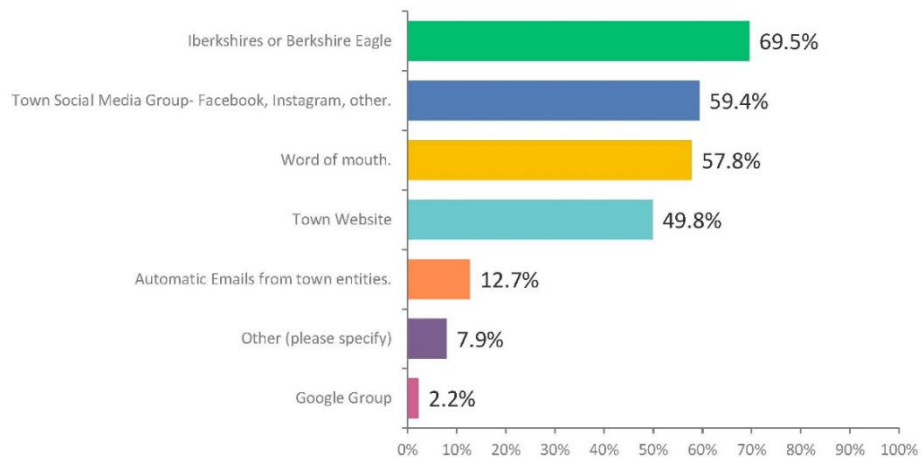


Powered by SurveyMonkey

Figure 10.9. Lanesborough Master Plan Survey Question 17 Sources of Information.

Q17: How do you get your local information?

Answered: 315 Skipped: 11



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Lanesborough Master Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal 1: Ensure the town maintains high-quality and efficient services for Lanesborough residents and businesses.

- 1) Objective 1.1: Pursue opportunities to minimize the tax burden on residents.
 - i) High Priority
 - ii) Actions:
 - (1) Raise awareness amongst town residents of tax expenditures, services provided, and comparable costs in other communities. Publicize through Town Meeting and Annual Town Report.
 - (2) Evaluate the possibility of a split tax rate with a marginally higher commercial rate to reduce the burden on residents.
 - (3) Maintain an up-to-date capital improvement plan.
 - (4) Create a Human Resources Plan that accounts for town employee retirement and develop a network of potential employees for town vacancies.
 - (5) Work with nearby communities to regionalize services wherever possible to find efficiencies and distribute costs between the partner communities.
 - (6) Investigate adopting the residential tax exemption to reduce the tax burden from properties used as primary residences to vacation and second homes.

- 2) **Objective 1.2: Ensure all property owners are paying fair assessed value for their real and personal property.**
 - i) **High Priority**
 - ii) **Actions:**
 - (1) Actively pursue delinquent property owners.
 - (2) Dispose of surplus town-owned residential properties seized through tax delinquency.
 - (3) Review all property assessments on a 5-year cyclical basis,
 - (4) Publicize property abatement opportunities to make living in the town more affordable for cost-burdened residents
- 3) **Objective 1.3: Review town expenditures to reduce costs/increase revenues wherever possible.**
 - i) **Medium Priority**
 - ii) **Actions:**
 - (1) Work with the Regional School District and vocational school to understand per-pupil cost and find savings wherever possible.
 - (2) Work with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Bulk Municipal Purchasing Program to reduce the cost of highway maintenance products.
 - (3) Investigate options to encourage adaptive reuse of underutilized properties in the town, e.g., a TIF district.

Goal 2: Diversify the economic base and types of businesses in the town to improve a varied revenue stream for town services.

- 1) **Objective 2.1: Create a Residential/Tourism district to expand lodging/development opportunities in the Ramblewild/Jiminy Peak/Shaker Trails Areas**
 - i) **High Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1) Provides additional revenue sources while developing tourism infrastructure and development in the northern 1/3 of the town.
 - (2) Diversify housing stock with both rental and multifamily units
 - (3) Allow for cottage court, conservation subdivision design, or other innovative development models.
 - (4) Consider adopting the small commercial entity property tax exemption, which shifts the tax burden from commercial properties employing fewer than 10 people and valued at \$1 million or less.

- 2) **Objective 2.2: Adopt the Community Preservation Act.**
 - i) **Medium Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1) Identify a group of stakeholders to champion the benefits of CPA to bring it to a town vote.
 - (2) Identify a list of Open Space, Historic Preservation, and Affordable Housing projects in the community that could be funded by CPA.
- 3) **Objective 2.3: Work with the Berkshire Mall property owners to ensure the property continues to contribute to the town's tax base. This includes payments to the Lanesborough Fire and Water District and the Baker Hill Road District.**
 - i) **Medium Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1) Collect current and back taxes on Mall property.
 - (2) Pursue opportunities with owners to improve the site and add value, employment, and usage to the site.
- 4) **Objective 2.4: Promote the town as an Outdoor Recreation destination in Berkshire County.**
 - i) **Medium/High Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1) Work with local businesses such as Ramblewild, Jiminy Peak, and Mountain Greylock Campsite Park to highlight outdoor recreation/tourism offerings in the town.
 - (2) Partner with the State of Massachusetts to promote Mount Greylock State Reservation, Balance Rock State Park, and the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.
 - (3) Partner with non-profits such as Berkshire Natural Resources Council to highlight their work in the town.
 - (4) Work with Pittsfield to promote opportunities at Pontoosuc Lake.
 - (5) Assist with the development of proposed Shaker Ridge Mountain Bike trails.

Goal 3: Create new housing opportunities in the town.

- 1) **Objective 3.1 Increase the availability of rental housing, starter homes, and senior housing.**
 - i.) **High Priority**
 - ii.) **Action**
 - (1.) Evaluate the town's existing zoning bylaws to understand barriers to creating new housing.
 - (2.) Work with the City of Pittsfield to understand the potential of the expansion of existing sewer infrastructure.
 - (3.) Explore the creation of an affordable housing trust.
- 2) **Objective 3.2: Explore the potential for housing on town-owned land across from Town Hall.**
 - i.) **Medium Priority**
 - ii.) **Action**
 - (1.) Develop a feasibility study to understand the potential for siting housing on the property.
 - (2.) Pursue funding related to removing zoning barriers and the design of utilities to facilitate housing development on the property.

Goal 4: Plan for the long-term provision of town services, including local governance, economic development, roads, emergency services, parks and open spaces, and infrastructure needs.

- 1) **Objective 4.1: Plan for long-term needs of Town Services/Infrastructure**
 - i) **Medium/High Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1). Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for town-owned buildings, land, vehicles, and equipment that includes condition, lifespan, cost to replace, and projected replacement date.
 - (2). Continue exploring improvements to Town Hall that ensure adequate accessibility to all residents and enhanced functionality of space within the building.
 - (3). Develop a plan for the Town Library to maintain and enhance services by ensuring adequate hours, offering a wide selection of books and other media, hiring and training staff as needed, improving building facilities, and investing in technological improvements.
 - (4). Implement Fire and Water district capital improvements.
 - (a) Development of a new wellhead at Bailey Hill Road.
 - (b) Increase connections serviced by the Lanesborough Fire and Water District, especially in areas showing contaminants in groundwater.
 - (5). Work with Baker Hill Road District and Berkshire Mall ownership to ensure continued funding for town services.

- 2) **Objective 4.2: Develop a clear understanding of street and road designations in town to eliminate confusion regarding town and private responsibilities of service and maintenance.**
 - i) **High Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**

Create an official town map that documents the existing classification of each roadway.

 - (1). Clarify the status of paper streets on the north and west sides of Lake Pontoosuc.
 - (2). Remove unnecessary paper streets.
 - (3). Provide clarity on the differences between fully accepted roads and maintained private ways
 - (a) Work with the State to resolve issues with pedestrian access to Scott Road
 - (b) Determine the extent of town responsibility for Rosenberg Road and other dead-end town roads.
- 3) **Objective 4.3: Plan for continued Emergency Service provision in Lanesborough.**
 - i) **Medium/High Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1). Maintain current high level of service while planning for future needs.
 - (2). Develop proposals and communicate to the residents the long-term plan for Police Facilities.
 - (a) Develop a financial forecast for providing services in a variety of different scenarios.
 - (b) Potential loss of revenue from BHRD.
 - (3). Develop proposals and communicate to the residents the long-term plan for EMS Facilities.
 - (a) Develop a financial forecast for providing services in a variety of different scenarios.
 - (b) Potential loss of revenue from BHRD.
 - (4). Develop a long-term plan for Fire Facilities (Existing facility expected to last 10+ years).
 - (a) Develop a financial forecast for providing services in a variety of different scenarios.
 - (b) Potential loss of revenue from BHRD.
 - (5). Determine the potential for increased service needs based on various re-use scenarios at the Berkshire Mall property.
- 4) **Objective 4.4: Develop plans for adaptive re-use of the former Police Station site.**
 - i) **Low Priority**
 - ii) **Action:**
 - (1). Evaluate the feasibility of re-use opportunities such as a museum, park, or other community resource.

Goal 5: Develop town infrastructure with environmental resilience and hazard mitigation prioritized.

- 1) **Objective 5.1: Expand water and wastewater service along the Route 8 corridor to allow for residential, commercial, and industrial development proximate to Berkshire Village and the Berkshire Mall.**
 - i.) High Priority
 - ii.) Action:
 - (1.) Develop a feasibility study to understand the cost and steps necessary to connect to the Pittsfield wastewater and water utilities and the Lanesborough Fire and Water District.
 - (2.) Begin the process of working with the City of Pittsfield and/or the Lanesborough Fire and Water District to expand access to water and wastewater.
- 2) **Objective 5.2: Provide expanded wastewater connectivity on Route 7 to create new opportunities for business and housing, especially in relation to creating a more defined town center**
 - i.) High Priority
 - ii.) Action:
 - (1.) Develop a feasibility study to understand the cost and steps necessary to connect to the Pittsfield wastewater system. Evaluate the capacity of the Lanesborough Fire and Water District to ensure the availability of potable water to new users.
- 3) **Objective 5.3: Develop an Open Space and Recreation Plan to make the town eligible for State grant programs. Identify priority projects and create a timeline for improvements.**
 - i.) High Priority
 - ii.) Action:
 - (1.) Develop a capital improvement plan that lays out needed improvements at local parks.
 - (2.) Ensure all parks are adequately funded and that facilities are accessible to all.
 - (3.) Develop connections to the Ashuwillticook trail, including work with BNRC to develop east/west trail linkage to Taconic Crest Trail via Constitution Hill
 - (4.) Design improvements at Bill Laston Park, including:
 - A. Additional trails
 - B. Bathroom Improvements
 - (5.) Provide senior exercise equipment at Bridge Street Park.
 - (6.) Make necessary improvements at Sunrise Beach/Lanesborough Town Beach, including:
 - A. Parking, signage, sand replacement, cordoned off wading area
 - (7.) Improve the basketball court at Naragansett Park.
 - (8.) Design and implement Bike/Pedestrian Improvements with DCR and BNRC to increase linkages in town.
 - (9.) Provide new hiking trails in town, including:
 - A. Develop trails with BNRC connecting Constitution Hill with Laston Park and other properties
 - B. Develop Trails at Green Forest in coordination with non-profit organizations

- 4) **Objective 5.4: Safeguard Pontoosuc Lake to ensure that recreational potential and water quality are balanced to maintain Pontoosuc Lake as both a community asset and tourism draw.**
 - i.) **Medium/High Priority**
 - ii.) **Action:**
 - (1.)Partner with Friends of Pontoosuc Lake to implement best practices at the lake.
 - (2.)Partner with Pittsfield to ensure shared responsibility/oversight of lake access, water quality, invasive species remediation, and recreation potential.
 - (3.)Facilitate town access to sites such as Sunrise Beach as a community amenity.
 - (4.)Implement best practices to decrease sediment infiltration and nutrient loading from non-point sources in the lake to control weed growth and blue-green algae blooms.
 - (5.)Increase the number of parcels surrounding the lake serviced by municipal water and sewer services to reduce reliance on wells and septic systems in the area.
- 5) **Objective 5.5: Protect the town's water resources**
 - i.) **Medium/Low Priority**
 - ii.) **Action:**
 - (1.)Adopt a stormwater management bylaw
 - (2.)Educate officials and the public about MS4 regulations.
 - (3.)Ensure separation of sanitary and stormwater sewer systems to limit infiltration of water into sanitary sewer systems.

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Appendices

The following documents are included to provide a record of the public participation process, as well as records and tables too lengthy to include in the body of the document.

- Kickoff Meeting Presentation with Planning Board, 11/17/2023
- Master Plan Survey Flyer, Paper Version of the Survey, Public Announcements about the Master Plan survey.
- Master Plan Survey Results, Graphs of aggregate data
- Master Plan Survey Results, Individual survey responses
- Master Plan Public Forum Flyer and results, 12/2/2024
- Goals and Objectives Forum Flyer and results, 3/31/2025
- Master Plan Public Review of Draft Flyer and results
- Table of Accepted Roads in Town
- Board of Assessors Executive Summary of FY 2025 Tax Classification