



Prepared for the Tisbury Planning Board and Master Plan Steering Committee
Barrett Planning Group LLC | Dodson & Flinker | Horsley Witten Group | BETA | FXM Associates

Tisbury Master Plan

April 2024

Tisbury Planning Board
Benjamin Robinson, Chair
Constance Alexander
Cheryl Doble
Elaine Miller
Casey Hayward

Project Support
Dan Doyle, Special Projects Planner
Martha's Vineyard Commission

Master Plan Logo
Sean Roach

Master Plan Steering Committee
Lyndsay Famariss, Chair
Susannah Bristol
Cheryl Doble
Phil Hale
Rick Homans
Mary Ellen Larsen
Melinda Loberg
Sean Roach
Elissa Turnbull
Nikeya Tankard

Consulting Team
Barrett Planning Group LLC
Horsley Witten Group
Dodson & Flinker
BETA
FXM Associates

Photographs
Judi Barrett, Barrett Planning Group
Krista Moravec, Horsley Witten Group
Peter Flinker, Dodson & Flinker
Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker
Cheryl Doble, Tisbury Planning Board

Community Participants



THANK YOU to everyone involved in developing the Tisbury Master Plan, and to all of you for ensuring this was truly a participatory planning process. These contributions have been foundational to the work.

Steering Committee

Susannah Bristol
Cheryl Doble, Planning Board
Lyndsay Famariss, Chair
Phil Hale
Rick Homans
Mary Ellen Larsen
Melinda Loberg
Sean Roach
Nikeya Tankard
Elissa Turnbull
Dan Doyle, Administrator

Planning Board

Connie Alexander
Cheryl Doble
Casey Hayward
Elaine Miller
Ben Robinson, Chair
Lora Ksieniewicz, Associate Member
Amy Upton, Administrator

The Committee attended dozens of meetings, formed and facilitated key working groups, and immersed themselves in countless reviews and discussion to ensure the Plan stayed on course and addressed the most critical issues we face as a Town. They never relented throughout the nearly two-year planning effort.

Several members did not serve for the entirety of the process, but certainly made valuable contributions along the way, namely Alec Sargent, Valerio Destefani, Pricila Vilaca, and Bow Von Riper. Thank you.

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We also had extensive cooperation and contribution from Town Department Staff, and Boards & Committees. This was invaluable in trying to understand existing conditions, constraints, and opportunities – and ensuring additional space for community engagement events. Thank you.

We give a big shout out to Lynne Fraker for volunteering her expertise to film and edit numerous Master Plan events, and to the First Friday Committee for dedicating space to us at many of their events.

Community engagement took place early and often. We had key stakeholder input from local business owners, community health practitioners, the Vineyard Haven Business Association, the Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District, fisherfolk, housing advocacy representatives, transportation providers, open space & recreation activists and owners, and Martha's Vineyard Commission staff – amongst others. This was further enhanced by town residents who showed up to dozens of meetings and turned an optimistic eye to our shared future while thinking constructively about how we can learn from past mistakes. Thank you to all involved – let's use the momentum to implement this Plan.

Tisbury Master Plan

Table of Contents

PART I. VISION, GOALS, AND PLANNING PROCESS.....	1
1. Vision, Goals, and Policies	2
What is a Master Plan?	2
Master Plan Vision*	4
Master Plan Goals and Policies	4
2. Community Participation.....	8
Introduction	8
Outreach and Information	9
Listening and Learning	10
A Deeper Dive: Stakeholder Meetings	12
Commercial Districts Vision Plan Weekend	13
Vision Plan Review	23
Developing the Implementation Plan	24
PART II. INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT	25
3. Natural Resources	26
Introduction	26
Existing Conditions	26
Local Policies and Practices	34
4. Sustainability and Energy	40
Introduction	40
Existing Conditions	40
Local Policies and Practices	47
5. Land Use	57
Introduction	57
Existing Conditions	57
Local Policies and Practices	59
6. Open Space	69
Introduction	69
Existing Conditions	69
Local Policies and Practices	73
7. Housing.....	77
Introduction	77

Existing Conditions	78
Local Policies and Practices	98
8. Economic Development.....	100
Introduction	100
Existing Conditions and Trends	101
9. Public Facilities.....	135
Introduction	135
Existing Conditions	136
10. Transportation	151
Introduction	151
Existing Conditions	151
11. Community Health	172
Introduction	172
Existing Conditions and Trends	174
Local Policies, Practices, and Services	184
12. Governance.....	190
Introduction	190
Existing Conditions and Trends	190
Past Plans and Studies.....	196
Local Government Trends.....	197
PART III. KEY ISSUES AND MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM.....	199
13. Key Issues	200
Natural Resources	200
Zoning and Land Use	204
Open Space	205
Housing	207
Economic Development	208
Transportation, Public Facilities and Services	210
Community Health	213
Governance	215
14. Implementation Program	217
Framework	217
Implementation Program User Guide.....	220
Action Plan	221
APPENDIX	253

List of Tables

Table 3.3. Wildlife Species of Conservation Concern in Tisbury.....	33
Table 4.1. Energy Use by Martha’s Vineyard Communities.....	47
Table 5.1. Land Use Category by Area (by Tax Parcel)	58
Table 5.2. Tisbury Zoning Districts by Area.....	60
Table 5.3. Tisbury Zoning Bylaw – Selected Dimensional Regulations.....	60
Table 5.4. Tisbury Zoning Overlays.....	62
Table 6.1. Open Space Level of Protection.....	70
Table 6.2. Open Space by Primary Purpose.....	70
Table 6.3. Open Space by Owner Type	71
Table 7.1. Population by Race	79
Table 7.2. Tisbury Population by Place of Birth.....	79
Table 7.3. Vacancy Rates in Tisbury and Neighboring Communities	80
Table 7.4. Owners and Renters in Tisbury and Neighboring Communities	81
Table 7.5. Housing Units by Number of Units in Structure	82
Table 7.6. Selected Characteristics of Single-Family Housing Stock (by Parcel)	83
Table 7.7. Annual Building Permit Data	84
Table 7.8. Affordable Housing Income Limits by Household Size (Dukes County, 2022).....	85
Table 7.9. Tisbury Subsidized Housing Inventory (October 2022)	86
Table 7.10. Median Household Income (MHI)	87
Table 7.11. Income Below Poverty Level in Past 12 Months.....	88
Table 7.12. Housing Cost Burden by Household Tenure	88
Table 7.13. Housing Cost Burden by Household Income.....	89
Table 7.14. Housing Demand Context: Tisbury 20-Minute Market Area	93
Table 7.15. Estimated Average Annual Demand for Rental Housing.....	95
Table 7.16. Average Rental Listings on Cape Cod.....	97
Table 8.1. Labor Force and Education	101
Table 8.2. Dukes County Towns Ranked by Population and Employment.....	103
Table 8.3. Employment by Industry and Location Quotients	104
Table 8.4. Change in Employment by Industry, 2016-2021	104
Table 8.5. Wage by Industry and Location Quotient.....	105
Table 8.6. Tisbury Wages by Employment Type	108
Table 8.7. Tisbury Residents’ Top 10 Workplace Destinations	109
Table 8.8. Tisbury Workers by Top 10 Home Community	109
Table 8.9. Demand for Commercial Space	121
Table 8.10. Retail Opportunity/Surplus Gap Market Overview	123
Table 8.11. Retail Stores Opportunity Gap Analysis.....	124
Table 8.12. Selected Retail Surplus: Tisbury 15-Minute Market Area	124
Table 8.13. Tax Levy by Class.....	127
Table 8.14. Housing Units, Occupied and Vacant.....	130
Table 9.1. Summary of Water Usage 2017-2020	137

Table 9.2. Summary of Active Town Buildings.....	139
Table 9.3. Tisbury and Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Enrollment 2021-2022 School Year	146
Table 10.1. Classification of Tisbury’s Roadways	152
Table 10.2. Summer Vehicle Volumes.....	153
Table 10.3. Parking Utilization in Vineyard Haven in 2016	156
Table 10.4. Annual Ferry Ridership 2007-2017	159
Table 10.5. Annual Passenger Enplanements 2010-2017	160
Table 11.1. Public Health and Community Planning Crosswalk	173
Table 11.2. Select Indicators Related to Mental and Behavioral Health for Tisbury Seniors.....	177
Table 11.3. Select Indicators Related to Health Care Access for Tisbury Seniors	178
Table 11.4. Number of Yard Surveys with at least 1 Lone Star Tick (Larvae, Nymph, Adult)	182
Table 11.5. Public Trail Sampling	182
Table 12.1. Elected Local Officials in Tisbury.....	192
Table 12.2. Committees Appointed by Select Board.....	193
Table 12.3. Appointees to Regional Organizations	196
Table 12.4. Comparative Look at Local Government Organization in Selected Small Towns.....	198
Table 13.1. Impacts of Climate Change	203
Table 13.2. Impacts of Climate Change on Public Health	214

List of Maps

Map 3.1 Soil Drainage Class.....	36
Map 3.2 Water Resources.....	37
Map 3.3 FEMA Flood Hazard Area	38
Map 3.4 Agricultural Land and Farmland Soils.....	39
Map 4.1 Projected Sea Level Rise	51
Map 4.2 Projected Sea Level Rise: Downtown Vineyard Haven.....	52
Map 4.3 Projected Sea Level Rise: Vineyard Sound Coastline.....	53
Map 4.4 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk	54
Map 4.5 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk: Downtown Vineyard Haven.....	55
Map 4.6 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk Vineyard Sound Coastline.....	56
Map 5.1 Land Use by Parcel	66
Map 5.2 Zoning Districts	67
Map 5.3 Zoning Overlays	68
Map 6.1 Open Space by Level of Protection.....	75
Map 6.2 Open Space by Owner.....	76
Map 9.1 Tisbury’s Existing Wastewater System.....	149
Map 9.2 Tisbury Town Structures.....	150
Map 10.1 Classification of Tisbury’s Roadways.....	167
Map 10.2 Summer Daily Traffic Volumes.....	168
Map 10.3 Sidewalks, Shared Use Path, and Walking Trails	169
Map 10.4 Public Transportation	170
Map 10.5 Roadway Crashes 2015-2019	171
Map 11.1 Environmental Justice Communities in Tisbury	189



Part I. Vision, Goals, and Planning Process



1. Vision, Goals, and Policies

Welcome to the first Tisbury Master Plan. This document is the culmination of a 20-month process that included stakeholder participation, assessment of existing needs and resources, visioning and goal setting, and identifying strategies to help achieve the Town’s common aspirations. The Plan has been prepared with care and attention to building on Tisbury’s existing assets and being mindful of the Town’s implementation capacity.

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is a plan for preservation, growth, and change adopted by the Planning Board and led by townspeople. It defines a long-term vision and growth policies to guide the community’s future development, land use, facilities, and conservation decisions.

A Master Plan includes an action program to support the community’s vision, values, and future needs. The plan serves as a guidance document for town officials, residents, landowners, developers,

environmental organizations, and others when decisions need to be made about development, infrastructure investments, the economy & resource protection.

In Massachusetts, Planning Boards oversee the preparation and periodic update of their community's master plan. G.L. c. 41, § 81D calls for a master plan with text, tables, and maps to identify current and future needs, trends, problems, and opportunities in:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Services and Facilities
- Circulation

The statute also calls for Goals and Policies and an implementation program to address all these topics. Like many towns, Tisbury has expanded on the state's list of master plan elements by adding three topics: Governance, Energy and Sustainability, and Community Health.

A Master Plan Vision describes the town at its best and the value the community places on its people and the natural and built environment.

Master Plan Goals are the objectives a community aims to achieve by implementing a master plan. The goals are typically broad and long-term, guiding the implementation of policies and strategies that will help achieve them.

Master Plan Policies are designed to guide decision-making and ensure that development within the community is consistent with the goals of the master plan. The policies are developed based on analyzing existing conditions, trends, and future projections for the community. Once the master plan policies have been developed, they guide decision-making related to land use, zoning regulations, transportation infrastructure, and other aspects of community development.

Master Plan Actions are specific tasks that should be completed to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in a master plan. They are individual steps to be taken to implement the policies and strategies developed for the master plan.

Master Plan Vision*

Sustain a strong, resilient, healthy, forward-looking, year-round community.

The village of Vineyard Haven is the heart of Tisbury, and as Martha's Vineyard's year-round port, it is committed to maintaining its role as the welcoming gateway to the Island.

The residents (both year-round and seasonal) of Tisbury, a resilient year-round community, are committed to working cooperatively with each other and Town staff to accomplish tasks through effective leadership, planning, and organization. It is envisioned that private and public partnerships will help establish a network of open spaces connecting recreation areas and residential neighborhoods with its business districts, including State Road, a vibrant town center, a diversified waterfront, and a working harbor.

Through public investment and private development, the Town intends to actively support a prosperous year-round economy that provides residents with housing, education, jobs, and services. The Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District is envisioned as a platform to celebrate Tisbury's unique history and support Island artists and artisans.

Under the stewardship of thoughtful leaders, in collaboration with an active and diverse citizenry with a range of interests and aims, Tisbury strives to protect its natural resources, foster a sustainable future, welcome its seasonal and daily visitors, and preserve and celebrate its distinctive small-town character and rich history.

*Adapted from the 2015 Vision Plan; see "Vision Plan Review" section for a description of the development and refinement process of the 2015 Vision Plan to the current Master Plan Vision statement.

Master Plan Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Provide the Town government with the human and financial resources and facilities to implement the Master Plan.

Policy 1.1: Modernize the organization of town government to provide effective leadership, equip Town staff with the authority and resources to do their jobs, and provide support for local government volunteers.

Policy 1.2: Provide accountability and transparency and encourage broad participation of year-round and seasonal residents in implementing this Master Plan.

Policy 1.3: Provide residents and visitors access to Town government through online communication channels and well-maintained, accessible facilities.

Policy 1.4: Engage and collaborate with other island municipalities on priorities where coordinated planning or shared services may prove more effective and efficient.

Policy 1.5: Improve and update annually the Capital Improvement Plan process to account for all costs and benefits associated with municipal projects, including sustainability, construction, planned

preventive maintenance, project timelines, and funding. Institute a prioritization process that includes participation by Town departments and the Town's major policy boards.

Policy 1.6: Provide and maintain public facilities, including parks, to serve the residents, visitors, and town staff of Tisbury.

Goal 2: Act as responsible stewards for our natural environment and partner with other island towns whenever possible.

Policy 2.1: Preserve and enhance biodiversity of the natural environment, open space, parks, and scenic views throughout the town, including downtown and commercial areas.

Policy 2.2: Use multiple approaches, including regulations and public education, to protect the health of our environment, water supply, wetlands, the water quality of our estuaries and other waterbodies, and reduce nitrogen loads in Lake Tashmoo and Lagoon Pond, and other areas as required.

Policy 2.3: Use the best available data and science on the projected impacts of climate change to make decisions on land use, infrastructure, public health, and delivery of services.

Policy 2.4: Set pollution reduction targets across known pollution sources, reduce and control waste, and monitor and reduce emerging chemical pollutants and plastics.

Goal 3: Foster a beautiful, enduring, and sustainably built environment.

Policy 3.1: Update the Zoning Bylaw and other regulations to ensure they are easy to use and aligned with the Town's Master Plan and its goals.

Policy 3.2: Support the efforts of private property owners, using both incentives and code enforcement, to improve unmaintained properties and keep them in good condition in the future.

Policy 3.3: Protect the architectural character of the town and the environment by developing regulations for preserving and demolishing public and private buildings within a building's useful life.

Policy 3.4: Re-imagine properties limited by current infrastructure and utilities to enhance public use and future infrastructure needs.

Goal 4: Encourage private investments and improvements to the town's business districts (Waterfront Commercial, B-1, and B-2) to drive the economy while maintaining the town's character and harbor and being responsive to the impacts of climate change.

Policy 4.1: Foster a business-friendly town government that encourages the creation of sustainable jobs for year-round residents, prioritizes islander-owned year-round businesses, and offers a transparent regulatory environment.

Policy 4.2: Encourage and incentivize businesses that build on the town's current year-round services to create a strong service and retail economy serving the island community.

Policy 4.3: Strengthen the economy by enhancing the public experience, creating a coherent and connected pedestrian network, and improving harbor services and access.

Policy 4.4: Embrace the Blue and Green Economy and the Creative Economy.

Policy 4.5: Prepare for the impacts of climate change by protecting the water-dependent economy and low-lying commercial areas, helping to relocate non-water-dependent businesses, and preparing a workforce to fill new jobs created in response to climate change.

Goal 5: Develop a multi-modal transportation system that reduces congestion and dependence on automobiles and creates a safer environment for residents and visitors.

Policy 5.1: Develop a comprehensive traffic, parking, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and water transportation strategy to accomplish multiple goals that include reducing congestion and automobile dependence; increasing the use of public transit; minimizing truck impacts; encouraging bicycle and pedestrian activity through increased use of bike paths and sidewalks.

Policy 5.2: Work with the Steamship Authority (SSA), Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC), and other port users to develop a strategic plan that identifies infrastructure improvements that must be made to ensure continuity of service in the face of the impacts of climate change and anticipated Sea Level Rise (SLR).

Policy 5.3: Develop and implement a strategy to improve the safety of critical intersections and roadways, including Five Corners, the State Road intersection with Edgartown Vineyard Haven (EVH) Road and Look Street, and the MassDOT-owned corridor that runs through Tisbury.

Policy 5.4: Add new transportation infrastructure that creates a more efficient network of roads and pathways that strengthen multimodal connections within and to other towns while reducing congestion.

Goal 6: Increase equitable and sustainable housing choices.

Policy 6.1: Use regulatory strategies to provide housing choices for year-round and seasonal residents, mainly through adaptive reuse of existing housing stock and infill in developed areas.

Policy 6.2: Create and provide a variety of incentives to create permanently affordable and attainable housing.

Policy 6.3: Ensure energy-efficient design and use of sustainable construction materials to maintain long-term affordability and a safe residential environment.

Goal 7: Ensure our year-round residents, including our under-resourced populations, seasonal residents, and visitors, have access to quality health services.

Policy 7.1: Support local and island-wide initiatives that build equitable access to essential public health services for year-round and seasonal residents.

Policy 7.2: Collaborate with local, state, and federal programs to mitigate hazards and support efforts to address emergency response and the effects of climate change on residents.

Policy 7.3: Support the efforts of the community in educating, preventing, and treating residents and employees with substance use disorders, mental health, and other community health concerns.



2. Community Participation

Introduction

Public input is a critical component of a master planning process in any community. In Tisbury, the planning process led by the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) encouraged year-round and seasonal residents, business owners, town officials, and others to join conversations about important matters facing the Town. The community's involvement over 16 months culminated in the goals, policies, and implementation program that form the heart of the Tisbury Master Plan.

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The eleven-member MPSC was organized in May 2022 and held monthly public meetings throughout the planning process. The Master Plan logo they adopted early helped with community outreach by branding events as master plan engagement opportunities. The MPSC was comprised of a range of perspectives and a range of ages. The MPSC played a key role in public participation and outreach

during the Master Plan process. They also were intimately involved in every step of the consultant team’s work in developing the Master Plan and the Commercial District Vision Plans.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

With help from the consulting team, the MPSC developed a community engagement plan to organize all public outreach and planning activities. The plan included outreach strategies and multiple ways to reach year-round and seasonal groups.

Outreach and Information

RACK CARDS

The MPSC made rack cards, or informational flyers, available throughout Tisbury in July-August 2022. The rack cards promoted the Tisbury Master Plan website, announced initial public participation events, and briefly explained the scope and purpose of a Master Plan. Tabling events on Main Street, outside of Cronig’s Market, and at First Friday events in Owen Park created great opportunities to distribute the cards and meet people in the community.

WEB-BASED ENGAGEMENT

The Master Plan website, www.tisburymasterplan.com, became the go-to place for all information about the planning process. It provided timely updates about the project, the community engagement schedule, access to the master plan survey, and informational resources for residents. The website also supported community input through an online comments box, allowing residents to provide feedback and suggestions.

SOCIAL MEDIA

MPSC members created content for updates and engagement through social media profiles on Facebook and Instagram. It was an effort to engage more people through these platforms, but they ultimately did not receive as large of a following as was hoped for. Content was added so followers could stay up to date on the process and participate in “question of the week” online discussions.

Community Participation Summary

- Master Plan Steering Committee meeting: 18+
- Kickoff open house events, August 10, 2022: 60+ participants
- Town staff and leadership interviews: over 30 participants
- High School students: 100 participants
- Community survey: 445 participants
- Local business survey: 48 participants
- Virtual presentation on themes and key issues, October 11, 2022
- Commercial District Vision Plan Weekend, October 2022
- Stakeholder sessions, September-December 2022: 70+ participants
- Commercial District Planning Workshops, February 2023
- Virtual presentation on Master Plan goals and purposes, April 10, 2023
- Local business roundtable meetings, March 2023: 14 participants
- Presentation and Open House on implementation program, September 22-23, 2023, Tisbury Senior Center

Listening and Learning

KICKOFF OPEN HOUSE

The Master Plan process was introduced to the community in four sequential meetings on August 10, 2022. MPSC members and the consultants facilitated SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) conversations with small groups of participants. The 60+ participants in these events generally agreed that:

- Key strengths: The harbor, history, culture, physical characteristics, sense of community, and natural resources
- Key weaknesses: Town governance, taxes, ferry terminal area, downtown commercial district's declining vitality, and transportation issues
- Key opportunities: affordable housing, pedestrian, and bicycle path connectivity, strengthening the business community, improving traffic circulation, island-wide cooperation and collaboration, and taking advantage of tourism opportunities.
- Key threats: wastewater infrastructure, sea-level rise, traffic congestion, circulation, and parking

TABLING EVENTS

MPSC members held tabling events during the summer and fall of 2022 to increase awareness about the master plan. They introduced themselves as volunteers, provided information about the Master Plan process, and encouraged people to participate in upcoming planning events. By reaching out to the community through these impromptu events, the committee engaged many people and built interest in the master plan process.

BUSINESS SURVEY

In November – December 2022, the MPSC invited local businesses to participate in a survey. Forty-eight people responded.

Connection to Tisbury

- All businesses that responded to the survey were independent, locally owned businesses. Eighty-three percent said Tisbury is their sole location while 17 percent operate in multiple locations in Tisbury or on the Island. Almost all lived (98 percent) in Tisbury or elsewhere on the island.
- Two-thirds were long-time, local businesses, operating 20 years or longer in Tisbury. The rest ranged from new businesses (under 5 years) to somewhere between 10 and 20 years.
- About 46 percent of businesses said that their primary customer base is Tisbury locals, with 27 percent saying visitors and tourists are their direct customers, and another 27 percent saying that it is generally split between locals and visitors.

Business Types and Employment Base

- The most common industries reported by respondents included retail (19 percent), professional services (13 percent), arts and entertainment (10 percent), health services (10 percent), and hotel or accommodations (6 percent).
- Most businesses (83 percent) said they operate year-round. Among the seasonal businesses, nearly all said they operate all summer season and into the shoulder season. For most, summer remains their busiest season, yet almost 30 percent see much less fluctuation.

- About 50 percent of businesses employ between one and five workers and about 20 percent between six and ten workers, regardless of season. The rest were larger businesses employing more than 10, and they hire more during peak season. Over 60 percent reported problems hiring and retaining new workers.

Real Estate, Rents, Vacancies

- Respondents included people who own their space (42 percent), rent from a commercial property owner (25 percent), work from home (13 percent), commercial property owners who rent to local businesses (10 percent), and employees of local companies (10 percent).
- Renters reported rents ranging from \$21-30/ft (59 percent), \$31-\$40/ft (15 percent), over \$41/ft (23 percent) and \$10-\$20 (7 percent).
- Just over half the respondents (51 percent) said finding space is challenging or extremely difficult, yet almost half (49 percent) reported little or no difficulty finding space. Only 13 percent knew of a vacant space close by.
- Vacancies in Tisbury concerned many of the respondents. The average response was a four on a one-to-five scale (five meaning very concerned). Many said the vacancy of the Capawock Theatre and the building next to it are detrimental to Vineyard Haven and Main Street.

Priorities and Concerns

- Top priorities: Main Street beautification, improving environmental quality, transportation, and circulation.
- Lowest priority: Attracting more tourism and visitors.
- Concerns: Parking and traffic (especially during the summer), high property taxes, affordable housing for workers, local government effectiveness and efficiency, and strengthening Tisbury's competitive edge compared to other island towns.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The MPSC sponsored an online community survey in January-February 2022. The survey presented findings from previous in-person planning events and allowed respondents to comment. A total of 445 people responded, including year-round (60 percent) and seasonal (32 percent) residents. To encourage participation, the MPSC made the survey available in English and Portuguese and provided paper copies at the Tisbury Public Library and Council on Aging. MPSC members manually entered the paper survey responses into the online survey tool.

A summary of the community survey is in Appendix A.

STUDENT SURVEY

The MPSC sponsored a survey of 100 students at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) in Spring 2003. Here is what they said.¹

Tisbury's Strengths and Advantages

- Restaurants and cafes
- Shopping
- Thrifting

¹ A special thanks to Master Plan Steering Committee member Nikeya Tankard (MVRHS Class of 2024), who developed, distributed, processed, and presented the survey results.

- Places open year-round
- Outdoor space
- Concentrated
- Accessible to walk around
- Job Opportunities

Tisbury's Weaknesses and Disadvantages

- Not many public events
- No activities
- Small
- Traffic
- Unpleasant roadwork
- Outdoor space not safe
- Small beaches and parks

Primary Concerns for Tisbury

- Natural Resource Preservation and Open Space Preservation: Environmental threats like pollution and declining biodiversity, and park and beach maintenance
- Zoning and Land Use: Improper and unorganized construction projects
- Housing: Lack of housing
- Aesthetics: Maintenance of visual aesthetics

A Deeper Dive: Stakeholder Meetings

MPSC members tried to learn from people who had experience, interest, and knowledge of specific topic areas as a next step to understanding key issues and opportunities within the town. They agreed to share responsibility for leading discussion meetings with a variety of residents and local experts, focusing on key master plan topics: housing, economic development, natural resources, governance, open space, and transportation. Using the Tisbury Master Plan website for outreach, the MPSC publicized these “stakeholder” discussion meetings and posted the meeting notes after each session. Participants shared their thoughts about what was working well or not well and what was urgently needed.

KEY CONCERNS

- Town government
- Lack of volunteers
- Car traffic

Stakeholder Meetings

- Economic Development - September 28 and October 12, 2022
- Natural Resources, Energy and Sustainability: October 24, 2022
- Lunch Hour Conversations: October 28, 2022
- Transportation: November 7, 2022
- Open Space & Recreation: November 9, 2022
- Community Health: November 17, 2022
- Governance: December 6 and 7, 2022
- Affordable Housing: December 8, 2022
- Economic Development, Fisher Folk Stakeholder Meeting: December 22, 2022

- Workforce housing shortage
- Climate change is a real threat to the waterfront.
- Stewardship of open space
- Preserving water quality

The stakeholder engagement sessions allow for in-depth dialogue about the issues of concern, along with a pace of discussion that helped tease out complexities.

Commercial Districts Vision Plan Weekend

On October 21- 22, 2022, the MSPC held a series of public workshops about the Town's three commercial districts: the Waterfront/Commercial District, B1 District (Downtown), and B2 District (State Road Area). The workshops were designed for community members to share local knowledge about the areas and provide input to inform a vision for the future of the three Commercial Districts. This document summarizes the workshop activities and the information that was gathered.

The workshop series began with two walking site tours on the afternoon of Friday, October 21. The first site tour explored the downtown and waterfront. The second site tour explored the B2 area. Attendees had the opportunity to visit various locations in the three districts to show the consultants what works well and what needs to change. Attendees shared their ideas for improvements and discussed their experiences and ideas with each other.



Figure 1. Participants talk about Main Street pocket parks and underutilized properties during the first site walk.

The second part of the workshop series was an evening Listening Session. The session began with a presentation that introduced the Master Plan project, the purpose of the Commercial District Visioning component, and the history of the development of the B2 District, the Downtown, and the Waterfront. Afterward, attendees were divided into four groups. Each group visited four stations focused on four themes: transportation, environment and climate resilience, businesses and housing, and design and placemaking. At each station, participants shared their thoughts on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and trends (known as SWOT) of the study areas related to the theme.² They did this by writing comments on color-coded sticky notes, placing them on maps of the study areas, and discussing the results.



Figure 2. The map of the B2 District from the Transportation Station shows sticky note comments. Green sticky notes indicate the strengths of the area. Red sticky notes indicate weaknesses. Yellow sticky notes indicate opportunities.

The third and final part of the workshop series was a Visioning Workshop held on Saturday morning, October 22, 2022. The workshop began with the consultant team sharing key takeaways from the

² To streamline the workshop, the downtown and waterfront were shown on one map and discussed together. On Friday night, facilitators for each station alternated whether groups began by discussing the B2 district or the downtown and waterfront. This ensured that equal time overall was given to the study areas.

Friday evening Listening Session. A brief question and answer session followed. Participants were divided into four groups. Each group prioritized the issues facing the study areas and evaluated ideas for improvements drawn from previous Town planning projects or generated by participants. After a break, participants were divided into two groups: one focused on the downtown/waterfront and the other on the B2 District. The groups summarized the key takeaways from the morning's four break-out groups and prioritized the key challenges facing the study areas and the most promising improvement opportunities.

Overall, these workshops allowed community members to collaborate and contribute to developing a vision for the future of the Waterfront/Commercial District, B1 (Downtown), and B2 District (State Road Area) in Tisbury. They produced a wealth of information about the study areas and ideas for improving them.

Walking Tour 1, Downtown and Waterfront

The participants steered the route of the walking tour of the Downtown. It began at the Post Office, proceeded up Water Street to the pavilion and steamship authority ferry terminal, went up Union Street to Main Street, traveled south on Main Street, turned left down Norton Lane, and then right on Cromwell Lane to Beach Street. The tour crossed Beach Street and proceeded through Veteran's Park to Lagoon Pond Road. It traveled down Lagoon Pond Road, cut through Safe Harbor Marina to Tisbury Marketplace, and then crossed over Beach Road to the Shell Station to look at the waterfront before returning to the Post Office.



Figure 3. Participants discuss Lagoon Pond Road during the first site walk.

During the walking tour, community members discussed a variety of topics, including circulation for people on foot, in cars, and on bicycles, the legibility of the downtown, public spaces, property maintenance, design of new development, the benefits and challenges of the working waterfront,

public access to the waterfront, flooding and sea level rise, water quality, and the town's economic development strategy.

Regarding circulation in the downtown and waterfront areas, participants pointed out that Vineyard Haven is walkable. Still, it can be confusing for visitors (both on foot and in cars), especially Five Corners and the one-way circulation around downtown. Participants said there is a need for a more explicit linkage from the Steamship Authority to Main Street. The information booth on Union Street needs to be more visible. Changes to the direction of traffic flow on Union Street have made it possible to proceed directly from the Steamship to Main Street. Still, many visitors need to be made aware of this and follow the dominant flow of traffic left out of the Steamship Authority arrival lanes. In addition, the directional change on Union Street has made it more difficult to circulate for parking on Main Street. Previously, if drivers did not find parking on Main Street, they could turn down Union Street and loop back to Main Street via Water Street and Beach Street. Now, a driver must wind through the one-way streets uphill of Main Street, a longer route requiring more turns.

Participants discussed Stop and Shop and its relationship to the town parking lot. Some people said having a walkable grocery store is vital to Vineyard Haven. Others expressed concerns about the scale of a new store shown in plans that Stop and Shop previously put forth.



Figure 4. Benjamin Robinson explains how the Union Street Mall is part of a developing pedestrian network that connects Union Street to Veteran's Memorial Park.

The need for legible, accessible, and attractive public spaces was discussed at several points on the walking tour: at the Gazebo and pathway along the beach by the ferry terminal, at Union Street Mall,

at the pocket park on the corner of Union Street and Main Street and the pocket park next to the former Capawock Theatre. These spaces were described as valuable for visitors and residents. At the pavilion, participants raised concerns about the quality of plants and maintenance. At the space next to the Capawock, there were concerns about poorly maintained spaces adjacent to the pocket park, including the former theater itself. The site tour explored the developing pedestrian pathway that connects Union Street to Veterans Memorial Park. Some participants needed to be made aware of the pathways. They pointed out that access to the path network is not visible in some locations, and whether the paths are private or public is still being determined.

The role of the working waterfront was another topic of discussion. Some participants said they liked the authenticity of the working waterfront. Others said that it is unattractive and could use some cleaning up. There was a strong desire for increased public access along the waterfront. This would improve residents' quality of life and attract and retain visitors downtown, which would support local businesses.

On the other hand, some people were concerned about implementing a continuous walkway along the waterfront, given the diverse ownership and potential conflicts between uses based on “work” and recreation. The waterfront/commercial zoning was also discussed. One property owner in the area pointed out that the zoning allows property owners to make improvements but that permit review authorities often say “no.” He said this is a disincentive to improving properties and that there is a need to clarify the zoning to ensure that businesses can survive in the waterfront area.

Community members expressed strong concerns about flooding along the waterfront, both currently and for the future, as sea level rise continues to increase flood levels and frequency. They said Five-Corners, Beach Road Extension, and Beach Road frequently flood. The need to clarify and adjust allowed building heights was also discussed. Participants recognize the need to raise the first floor of buildings above the base flood elevation, but some are also concerned about the visual impact of taller buildings. Likewise, there were differing opinions about Veterans Memorial Park. Some said it is an essential downtown park space that should be maintained and improved, and others said it will increasingly be flooded, so it should be allowed to return to the marsh.

Water quality in the Lagoon, especially the west arm, was another significant concern, as was hypoxia at the lower levels of the pond.

Participants discussed the need for improved building maintenance throughout the downtown and waterfront and improved design consistency between new development and historic buildings. For example, some participants said siding on new development should be painted white or shingled.

Regarding economic development, there was a consensus that the town should build on its strengths rather than focusing on its weaknesses. One participant said we cannot address blight, so “let’s focus on letting everyone else shine.” Strengths included the town’s walkability, diverse economy, maritime-related businesses, First Friday event, visitors, and year-round economy.

Walking Tour 1, B2 District

The B2 Walking Tour began at the Park and Ride Lot. After an introductory conversation, participants proceeded up Eleanor Street to Olga Road, Marie Street to Evelyn Way, State Road, and High Point Lane.

While the downtown and waterfront site tour often focused on the design details of specific places, the conversations on the B2 site tour were broader—both physically and conceptually. Participants tended toward discussing district-wide changes rather than site-specific improvements.

Participants appeared to agree that the B2 District holds significant potential for Tisbury, including potential for housing development. It is well situated in the town. It is close to the school and the downtown, served by the VTA, on a major road, near walking paths and natural areas, and it is a large area that will not be directly affected by sea level rise. Most participants appeared to share a vision of redevelopment, transforming the B2 District into a mixed-use walkable center with better-connected roads, more organized and attractive development, additional trees, and safer and more efficient transportation for people on foot, on bikes, and in cars. The natural areas around the B2 could be preserved, and trail connections to adjacent neighborhoods could be improved. The lack of wastewater service and the existing zoning were cited as a significant deterrent to additional housing development in the area. The group discussed appropriate building heights, densities, and parking requirements for the area and expressed various opinions. Existing patterns of ownership and private roads were described as barriers to transportation and overall improvements.

Much of the site walk was spent discussing previous and current efforts at changes in the B2. Participants discussed the last Town effort to establish a road connecting Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road to State Road through the B2 area. While most participants generally supported the idea, they differed in their understanding of why it failed at town meeting and what could be done to revive the proposal and successfully implement it. Based on the conversation, safe facilities for walking and biking would be required for project success. Participants also discussed recent development efforts in the area and adjacent sites, including the proposal for housing at the IFP site and Brook Katzen's interest in pursuing a mixed-use project at the Island Cove Adventures site.

At several points in the site walk, participants discussed the impact of existing commercial activities on adjacent residential neighborhoods. Some participants said that light industrial activities were encroaching on residential neighborhoods. They also mentioned concerns about the disorganized appearance of some properties, with a proliferation of storage of vehicles and containers, some of which may not be functional. On the one hand, the B2 District is one of the few places on the Island for these activities. On the other hand, participants thought it could be managed better. Another viewpoint was that this area is home to many island businesses. It supports good jobs and necessary services. Businesses need to be protected and helped to ensure their continued success.



Figure 5. Participants gathered in the Cronig’s parking lot to discuss opportunities for improving State Road.

Participants discussed the State Road corridor and the best design approach for improving it. Participants valued the lovely old trees along State Road. They discussed front setbacks: the current front setbacks reflect those of the older houses in the area, but they limit the development potential of the lots and may not be appropriate for what the area is now—a major commercial center—or a future vision where the area is more walkable (e.g., with smaller or no front setbacks so that storefronts are connected to sidewalks, with parking located behind buildings). Several approaches to improving the State Road corridor were discussed. One approach was described as “clean and green”—reducing curb cuts and creating cross access between lots, relocating parking to the side or rear of buildings, and sharing parking where possible, improving front landscaping and sidewalks, and screening. Another approach discussed was developing secondary pathways adjacent to State Road. Overall, there was a strong desire for safe walking and biking in the area.

Listening Workshop

During the Listening Workshop, participants visited topic stations about transportation, the environment and climate resilience, businesses and housing, and design and placemaking. At each station, participants wrote comments on sticky notes and placed them on base maps of the study areas. The sticky notes were color-coded. Red sticky notes indicated study area weaknesses. Green sticky notes indicated strengths. Yellow sticky notes indicated opportunities. The groups discussed their input with station facilitators. The consulting team facilitated served as facilitators. While the stations focused on specific topics, participants often commented on other issues and areas adjacent to the

study area. This reflects the interconnectedness of community systems. Input from all the stations is summarized in Appendix B.



Figure 6. A group discussing climate resilience at the Listening workshop.



Figure 7. Discussing housing and businesses in the Waterfront district.



Figure 8. Listening to the introductory presentation on Friday night.

VISIONING WORKSHOP

The Visioning Workshop began with the Consultants summarizing the key takeaways from the previous day's Site Tours and Listening Workshop and key ideas for improvements that have been identified in previous planning. A brief question and answer session followed. The participants were then divided into four groups. Each group had a facilitated discussion of both the B2 District and the Downtown and Waterfront centered on the following questions:

- Which of the challenges facing the study area are most important to solve in the next 10-20 years?
- Where do you see the biggest opportunities for improvements over the next 10-20 years?
- Which of the ideas for improvements are particularly strong?
- Critical path: Are there any problems that need to be solved first because other improvements depend on them?
- Multiple objectives: Would any of the ideas for improvements fulfill objectives across more than one theme? For example, help with climate change and transportation.

In the final session of the Visioning Workshop, participants self-selected one of two stations—one focused on the B2 District and the other focused on the Downtown and Waterfront. At each station, facilitators presented the results from the four morning groups. Participants then prioritized the key

issues and improvement ideas that arose from the morning's work. The notes from these sessions are included in Appendix C.



Figure 9. A discussion of the B2 District during the Visioning Workshop.



Figure 10. Notes from the final session about the B2 District.

Commercial Districts Vision Plan Workshops, February 2023

The Town of Tisbury held two virtual workshops on February 13 and February 16, 2023, to review and discuss alternatives for visions for the Town's Commercial Districts—a component of the town's ongoing Master Plan project. The meetings began with a presentation by Dodson & Flinker that introduced the project, explained what vision is, summarized input from a series of project workshops held in October, introduced the study areas, and showed alternative visions for the study area. Three vision alternatives were presented for the B2 District. Two vision alternatives were offered for the B1/Waterfront commercial districts. The vision alternatives showed potential changes in the commercial districts to:

- test what changes are physically possible in the study areas, and
- provide a starting point for a community conversation about what Tisbury's people want the commercial districts to be like in the future.

Notes from these workshops can be found in Appendix D.

Commercial Districts Open Houses with Business Owners

In March 2023, a working group comprised of Master Plan Steering Committee members and Planning Board members, along with Dan Doyle of the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) and Planning Board Administrative Assistant Amy Upton, held three open houses at the Town Annex to further discuss the commercial district vision plans with business owners and gather input.

PRESENTATION OF UPDATED COMMERCIAL DISTRICT VISION PLANS

On October 17, 2023, the consulting team presented Commercial District Vision Plans based on extensive input from local business owners, the Master Plan Steering Committee, and the Planning Board. This presentation took place virtually via Zoom.

Vision Plan Review

The Tisbury Master Plan is strengthened by the initial Vision Plan conducted by the Planning Board and Vision Advisory Committee in 2015. The early vision statement provided a framework for the Master Plan process and set preliminary goals, including completing a Master Plan by the Town. As an iterative part of the Master Plan process, Master Plan Steering Committee Members, Town Administrator, Town Department Heads, and Elected Officials reflected on the completion of goals and recommendations from the 2015 Vision Plan. An update to the shared community vision supports the nine Master Plan elements and subsequent recommendations.

Early development of the Vision Plan before the Master Plan process began brought together the year-round Tisbury community to elicit local insights regarding the town's role as a gateway to Martha's Vineyard as of 2015. Recent outreach as part of the Master Plan pushed to incorporate this group from the 2015 efforts while extending the process to newcomers and seasonal residents. People who reside, work, and choose to travel to Tisbury bring an irreplaceable perspective to the planning process. New

year-round residents also provide a fresh perspective with new ideas and experiences from other places to reinvigorate local efforts.

On September 19, 2022, consulting team members led the Tisbury Master Plan Steering Committee, local officials, and residents through a preliminary review of the Town of Tisbury 2015 Vision Plan, along with related purposes and actions. Those in attendance participated in an icebreaker followed by a presentation of the Vision Plan and an interactive review. While those in attendance had handouts with the goals, purposes, and actions, most of the analysis occurred on large sheets of paper posted on the walls. Facilitators asked those in attendance what they thought had been accomplished, what was ongoing, what was still relevant, what was no longer relevant, and what was missing.

Developing the Implementation Plan

The Tisbury Master Plan Steering Committee and members of the public gathered virtually for a working session on April 10, 2023, focused on the purpose statements (objectives) put forth in the 2015 Vision Plan. Participants were asked to reflect on their perceptions of the purpose statements almost a year into the process after various stakeholder meetings, outreach, and the existing conditions report.

Many agreed that most of the purpose statements remained relevant with added urgency among climate change and bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. While many of these statements were not adopted over the past eight years, Tisbury's ability to implement them is tied to local capacity.

A working group was formed to continue public outreach and work to refine the goals, policies, and action items contained in a draft implementation plan that the consulting team developed based on all research and community engagement up to this point.

On September 22, 2023, the consulting team presented the draft implementation plan at an in-person meeting at the Tisbury Senior Center. The following day, September 23, 2023, the Master Plan Steering Committee and Planning Board hosted an open house where the consultant team and MPSC and PB members could speak with attendees as they reviewed recommended actions in the draft implementation plan on large poster boards. Approximately 60 people were in attendance for Friday's presentation, and 40 were in attendance for the open house on Saturday.



Part II. Inventory and Assessment



3. Natural Resources

Introduction

Tisbury's natural resources are critical to the Town's sense of place and character. They should be protected as resources for their economic, environmental, and social benefits to the Town. These benefits include visual, recreational, and aesthetic qualities; wildlife habitat; and hazard mitigation. Natural resource systems are not confined to within Tisbury; as such, they should be viewed and stewarded in a way responsive to both their local and regional context. Tisbury's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) provides detailed environmental inventories and more information on the conditions of the Town's natural resources.

Existing Conditions

SOILS

The dominant soil type in Tisbury is Carver, defined by the Soil Conservation Service as a well-drained loamy, coarse sand. This soil can support residential and commercial development, though it can pose challenges to groundwater quality due to its inadequate filtering of septic effluent (Map 3.1 Soil

Drainage Class). Due to the limited presence of steep slopes and preponderance of easily worked soils, Tisbury’s landscape presents few development constraints. This condition helped to promote rapid development during the 1980s and early 2000s.

WATER RESOURCES

Watersheds and Surface Waters

Tisbury is located within the Tisbury Coastal, Tashmoo Pond, and Lagoon Pond watersheds, which drain to Vineyard Haven Harbor and Vineyard Sound, Lake Tashmoo, and Lagoon Pond, respectively (Map 3.2 Water Resources). These surface water bodies provide critical environmental, recreational, and economic resources and benefits to Tisbury and are integral to the Town’s character.

Each of Tisbury’s major surface water bodies has water quality impairments (and accompanying Total Daily Maximum Loads (TMDLs))³ that the Town is working to address. As wastewater is the primary source of pollution—especially nitrogen—the Town is developing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP), which will encompass a multi-year phased assessment and planning process, to evaluate pollution reduction options and access funding for water quality infrastructure. The Town completed the Needs Assessment, the first phase in the CWMP, in 2022. The Needs Assessment identifies pollutant sources, loadings, and areas of need for improved wastewater disposal solutions. A primary consideration is Tisbury’s limited wastewater service area and reliance on on-site septic systems. Tisbury’s soils are mostly loamy coarse sand, which is highly permeable and well-drained soil and does not filter and treat nitrogen and other pollutants effectively before they enter local water bodies.

What is a TMDL?

TMDLs are critical tools for restoring and protecting the water quality of degraded water bodies. A TMDL specifies the maximum allowable amount of a pollutant that can enter a water body so that the water body will meet water quality standards for that pollutant. The TMDL also sets a pollutant reduction target and allocates the pollutant load across different sources. This allocation can then be used to identify control actions that will help achieve the applicable water quality standards.¹

Vineyard Haven Harbor is a 47-acre harbor that serves as the primary transportation center for ferry and barge traffic to the island. Owen Little Way Beach and Owen Park Beach are both located within the harbor. Eastville Point Beach is also located within the harbor on the Oak Bluffs side of Beach Road. The harbor is impaired due to bacteria pollution, which can result in closure of shellfisheries and beaches and has a pathogen TMDL. Sampling at the two beaches during the 2021 season exceeded the enterococcus bacterial standard twice each, with only one event associated with a rainstorm.

³ “Overview of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs),” US EPA, last modified November 30, 2022.

Lake Tashmoo is a 270-acre embayment that opens to Vineyard Sound. Lake Tashmoo was previously a freshwater estuary but was permanently opened and armored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers after the hurricane of 1938.⁴ As a now coastal estuary, Lake Tashmoo supports shellfisheries and recreation and boating activities. The Tashmoo Beach at Lake Tashmoo is located coastward of Herring Creek Road on the Sound. Development around Lake Tashmoo has contributed to nitrogen loading and bacteria contamination, with pollutants from controllable sources primarily originating from septic systems, and there is a nitrogen TMDL in place.⁵ Other controllable pollution sources include stormwater runoff, agriculture, fertilizer, and the wastewater treatment facility and landfill. Additional pollution sources of local concern include waterfowl and boats. The area around Lake Tashmoo is zoned residential and regulations are intended to limit excessive development. Districts 3A and R50 have the largest minimum lot size requirements in Tisbury at 3 and 1.15 acres, respectively. *(Additional information about the Town's zoning and land use regulations can be found in the Land Use chapter).*

Lagoon Pond is accessed via the harbor and supports shellfishery (including hatcheries), boating, and other water recreation activities. As with Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond is impaired for nitrogen and has a TMDL. Primary controllable sources of pollution are septic systems, stormwater runoff, agriculture, and fertilizer.

Water Supply and Aquifers

The Martha's Vineyard Regional Aquifer underlies the majority of Tisbury and, as a Sole Source Aquifer, is the only viable source of public drinking water for communities on the island. The aquifer is recharged through rainwater and other surface water that infiltrates the ground. Current withdrawals from the aquifer do not exceed the capacity of natural processes to recharge, therefore, the primary concern is protecting groundwater quality. The soils in the Sole Source Aquifer are well-drained with a high level of transmissivity, leaving it vulnerable to high threat land uses. Possible sources of contamination include pollutants in stormwater runoff from developed and agricultural areas and improperly maintained residential septic systems. According to the CWMP Needs Assessment, "the levels of all monitored contaminants, including nitrogen... are well below regulatory thresholds." This includes per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, more commonly known as PFAS, which are long lasting chemicals found in many products (e.g., households and personal care products, food packaging, fire extinguishing foam) that may contribute to harmful health effects.⁶

Tisbury operates three drinking water supply wells in the aquifer (Map 3.2 Water Resources). The Town's Zoning Bylaw establishes a Groundwater Protection District overlay to protect water quality by regulating uses that may be potential sources of pollution. Tisbury also owns extensive aquifer protection landholdings around the Town's wells. *(Additional information about the Town's water supply and aquifer can be found in the Public Facilities chapter).*

⁴ Tisbury Planning Board, Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Plan (March 2019), 34.

⁵ Town of Tisbury, Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Phase I – Needs Assessment, (April 2022), 14.

⁶ "Our Current Understanding of the Human Health and Environmental Risks of PFAS," U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, last accessed February 2023, <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/our-current-understanding-human-health-and-environmental-risks-pfas>.

Inland Flood Hazard Areas

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) updated its flood hazard mapping of Tisbury in 2016. Flood zones are categorized as Zone AE (1% annual chance of flooding or 100-year flood), Zone VE (coastal areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding), or Zone X (0.2% annual chance of flooding or 500-year flood). Most of the floodplain areas in Town are within the VE zones, or coastal high hazard areas, because they are subject to damaging, high-velocity wave action during storms (Map 3.3 FEMA Flood Hazard Area).

Areas of concern within the floodplain are Vineyard Haven Harbor, Tisbury’s commercial district and an important fuel storage and transportation hub for the island, the War Veterans Memorial Park, Lagoon Pond, portions of Main Street at West Chop, from Lake Tashmoo to West Chop around James Pond, areas bordering Lake Tashmoo, Smith Brook, and Passamaquoddy Avenue. The area from Lake Tashmoo to West Chop is a Coastal Barrier Resource Unit, which is a designation established by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) of 1982 to restrict development in coastal barrier areas that provide important buffers during coastal storms.⁷ To disincentivize development of these protective areas, most federal expenditures, including National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies for new or substantially improved buildings, are prohibited within CBRA units.

Areas within Zone X include Cranberry Acres, Smith Brook, Page Way at Lake Tashmoo, between Main Street and Golf Club Road at Squantum Avenue, between Main Street at the Tisbury Town Beach at Owen Little Way, at Vineyard Haven Harbor, and at the neck of Hines Point.

All critical facilities and infrastructure in the floodplain identified in the Dukes County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2022) are listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Critical Facilities & Infrastructure in the FEMA Floodplain		
Site Name	Facility/Infrastructure	Flood Zone
Tisbury Steamship Authority Ferry Terminal	Ferry Terminal	AE (1% annual chance)
Tisbury Harbor Master Office	Government Office	X (0.2% annual chance)
Packer Fuel Dock West	Fuel Storage	AE (1% annual chance)
Packer Fuel Dock East	Fuel Storage	AE (1% annual chance)
Eastville Breakwater	Infrastructure	VE (1% annual chance)
Lagoon Pond Road Bridge Culvert	Infrastructure	VE (1% annual chance)
Beach Road Seawall	Infrastructure	AE (1% annual chance)
Water Street	Infrastructure	AE (1% annual chance)
Beach Road	Infrastructure	VE (1% annual chance)
Lagoon Pond Road	Infrastructure	AE (1% annual chance)
Lagoon Pond Drawbridge	Bridge	AE (1% annual chance)
Source: Dukes County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2022)		

⁷ “Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS)?”, FAQ, FEMA, last modified February 5, 2020.

Additional facilities and infrastructure within the floodplain include the U.S. Post Office on Lagoon Pond Road and wastewater infrastructure (e.g., pump stations and generator) on Water Street and in the Steamship Authority lot.⁸

The Floodplain District overlay in the Town's Zoning Bylaw attempts to mitigate harm to human life and property by regulating development within FEMA floodplains (see Map X Zoning in *Land Use* chapter). Regulations in Zone AE prohibit development that results in any increase in flood levels (e.g., a no-rise requirement) in watercourses without an established regulatory floodway. Regulations in VE Zones prohibit on man-made alternation to dunes that would increase potential flood damage.

The Zoning Bylaw also establishes a Coastal District overlay to protect sensitive environmental areas and mitigate natural hazards—including flooding—in coastal areas. Generally, the Coastal District overlay applies to land below the 10-foot elevation above mean sea level and within 500 feet of mean high water of large, coastal water bodies. The overlay district allows for additional oversight over specific proposed non-residential structures and uses and additions to existing residential structures by the Board of Appeals. (*Additional information about the Town's land use regulations can be found in the Land Use chapter*).

Wetlands

Wetlands provide a variety of benefits to human and environmental systems. Wetlands recharge ground and surface water, store floodwaters and prevent erosion, filter pollutants, and provide rich habitat for plant, fish, and wildlife species throughout different stages of their life cycles. Tisbury is primarily home to marsh, wooded swamp, and salt marsh wetlands distributed along the coves of Lake Tashmoo and Lagoon Pond, at West Chop beach, and along Vineyard Sound (Map 3.2 Water Resources). Veterans Park in Vineyard Haven Harbor sits atop a filled wetland and was created in 1961, prior to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act's passage.

Seagrass beds consisting mainly of eelgrass in Tisbury's shallow marine ecosystems are also important wetlands. In Tisbury, eelgrass beds are important for mitigating erosion by stabilizing sediment in shallow areas and attenuating the movement of water. They provide important habitat areas for Tisbury's shellfisheries, including the bay scallop. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has mapped and monitored submerged aquatic vegetation since the early 1990s; mapping indicates that the extent of eelgrass beds in Tisbury has declined since 1995, in part due to water quality impairments, with significant beds remaining in Lake Tashmoo and smaller beds located in Vineyard Haven Harbor and along West Chop.⁹ Eelgrass beds were last detected in Lagoon Pond in MassDEP's 2010-2013 Phase 4 mapping following years of consistent declines; no eelgrass beds were detected during the agency's subsequent 2015-2017 Phase 5 mapping initiative.¹⁰

⁸ Martha's Vineyard Commission, Dukes County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (October 2021, amended May 2022), 248.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ "MassDEP Eelgrass Mapping Project," MassGIS, November 2020.

In addition to regulations established by the Commonwealth Wetlands Protection Act, Tisbury's wetlands are further protected under the Town's Wetland Bylaw, which establishes the Conservation Commission's jurisdiction over activities within buffer zones of resources. For coastal wetlands—defined as coastal beaches, tidal flats, coastal dunes, barrier beaches, coastal banks, salt ponds, land containing shellfish, and land subject to storm flowage (i.e., the coastal floodplain)—and inland wetlands the Conservation Commission regulates activities within a 100-foot buffer zone of a resource. Specific regulations are established for each type of coastal wetland for water-dependent and non-dependent uses. The Wetland Bylaw also establishes provisions for activities in and within 100 feet of Lagoon Pond, Lake Tashmoo, or any resource area adjacent to the two surface water bodies to further protect water quality, water circulation, eelgrass beds, and other characteristics. *(Additional information about the Town's land use regulations can be found in the Land Use chapter).*

LANDSCAPES AND VEGETATION

Tisbury is in the Cape Cod and Islands ecoregion, a region characterized by sandy beach, grassy dune, bay, marsh, and scrubby oak-pine forest ecosystems.¹¹ The globally rare sandplain ecosystem, characterized by treeless coastal communities of native grasses and herbaceous vegetation in sand and other dry, poor soils, is present on Martha's Vineyard, including in Tisbury.¹²

Inland, nearly all forestland on the island of Martha's Vineyard was harvested following European settlement for heating, construction, and farming purposes. Today, land once used for grazing and farming has reverted to the pine and mature oak woodlands that once characterized the landscape. Large contiguous tracts of forestland can be found at the West Chop Woods Sanctuary, M.A. Phillips Preserve, along with woodlands situated between the Oak Bluffs and West Tisbury town lines in Tisbury.

There are few scrub or shrub fields and grasslands in Tisbury. The Tisbury Meadow Preserve, an approximately 84-acre Martha's Vineyard Land Bank property, is the largest contiguous tract of fields; the Land Bank leases out a portion of the property for agricultural use. The Town and Land Bank have also acquired forestland near Old Holmes Hole Road for aquifer protection purposes. There is little forestry activity in Tisbury except for the Davis Property; this property is enrolled in the Chapter 61 program.¹³

The Chapter 61 programs offer a property tax reduction for landowners willing to keep their property undeveloped for a period of time. Three programs exist and focus on different land uses: forestry (Ch. 61), agriculture (Ch. 61A), and open space and recreation (Ch. 61B).¹¹

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) documents the presence of plant and animal species protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) across the Commonwealth. Table 3.2 identifies plant

¹¹ "U.S. EPA Ecoregions," MassGIS, July 1999, prepared by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

¹² Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, [Sandplain Grassland](#), (2016), 1.

¹³ UMass Amherst and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, [Chapter 61 Programs: Understanding Massachusetts Ch. 61 Current Tax Programs](#) (Revised 2018).

Species of Conservation Concern (e.g., species protected under MESA or of significant regional conservation concern) found in Tisbury. By protecting Species of Conservation Concern, Massachusetts communities can help ensure the long-term survival of rare and other native species and maintain a high level of biodiversity.

Common Name	Scientific Name	MESA Category
American Sea-blite	<i>Suaeda calceoliformis</i>	Special Concern
Bicknell’s Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus bicknellii</i>	Endangered
Bristly Foxtail	<i>Setaria parviflora</i>	Special Concern
Crane-fly Orchid	<i>Tipularia discolor</i>	Endangered
Eastern Prickly Pear	<i>Opuntia humifusa</i>	Endangered
Grass-leaved Ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes vernalis</i>	Threatened
Mattamuskeet Rosette-grass	<i>Dichanthelium mattamuskeetense</i>	Endangered
Saltpond Grass	<i>Leptochloa fusca ssp. fascicularis</i>	Threatened
Sea Lyme-grass	<i>Leymus mollis ssp. mollis</i>	Endangered
Sea Pink	<i>Sabatia stellaris</i>	Endangered

Source: Rare Species Viewer, MassWildlife Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, accessed October 2022

Invasive plant species are a threat to biodiversity and can also have negative impacts on the fish and wildlife whose life cycles are tied to native vegetation. Phragmites and purple loosestrife have been found in wetland areas, including around Veterans Park (a filled wetland constructed over the course of 12 years and presented to the Town in 1964). There are also significant stands of Japanese Knotweed, Russian Olive, porcelain berry, and bamboo in areas across the community.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Prime farmland—land defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service as having the best combination of desirable characteristics for food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crop production—are primarily found south of State Road.¹⁴ Tisbury has approximately 120 acres of agricultural land, most of which are in the western Tisbury along State Road and west of Lake Tashmoo (Map 3.4 Agricultural Land and Farmland Soils). These agricultural lands are near other conservation land or open space and provide some benefits to wildlife habitat and movement. Pilot Hill Farm, a 73-acre private farm, is a Chapter 61A property.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Tisbury’s beach, dune, bay, wetland, and forest habitats support a range of fish and wildlife species. Characteristic of many island environments, Tisbury (and Martha’s Vineyard) has a lower diversity of species relative to mainland areas due to its isolation. Tisbury’s barrier beaches and ponds provide important quality habitat to migratory shorebirds. Large, protected open space areas provide recreation opportunities for people and connect habitat, facilitating the movement of wildlife. Such areas include the Carpenter Woods Preserve and West Chop Woods at West Chop, the M.A. Phillips Preserve and

¹⁴ “Soil Data Access (SDA) Prime and other Important Farmlands,” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Accessed January 2023.

Emmet property at Lake Tashmoo, and the Land Bank and Tisbury aquifer protection lands in southwest Tisbury.

Common Name	Scientific Name	MESA Category
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Special Concern
Barrens Dagger Moth	<i>Acronicta albarufa</i>	Threatened
Chain Dot Geometer	<i>Cingilia catenaria</i>	Special Concern
Collared Cynia	<i>Cynia collaris</i>	Threatened
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Special Concern
Eastern Box Turtle	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Special Concern
Faded Gray Geometer	<i>Stenoporpia polygrammaria</i>	Threatened
Herodias Underwing Moth	<i>Catocala herodias</i>	Special Concern
Imperial Moth	<i>Eacles imperialis</i>	Threatened
Least Tern	<i>Sternula antillarum</i>	Special Concern
Melsheimer's Sack Bearer	<i>Cicinnus melsheimeri</i>	Threatened
Northern Long-eared Bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Endangered
Pine Barrens Zale	<i>Zale lunifera</i>	Special Concern
Piping Plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Threatened
Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	Endangered
Water-willow Stem Borer	<i>Papaipema sulphurata</i>	Threatened

Source: Rare Species Viewer, MassWildlife Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, accessed October 2022

However, encroachment by human development, water quality impairments, invasive plants, colonization of open areas by tree and shrub growth, and rising sea levels can negatively affect fish and wildlife habitat. Table 3.3 lists wildlife species identified by the NHESP as Species of Conservation Concern in Tisbury.

The bay scallop, quahog, soft shell clam, blue mussel, and channeled whelk are commercially harvestable shellfish species found in Tisbury. The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) manages commercial and recreational saltwater fisheries and “opens” waters for shellfish harvesting based on sanitary surveys which assess whether shellfish are safe for human consumption given local water quality, pollution, and physical conditions. Shellfisheries may be closed because of temporary poor water quality and the presence of bacterial and/or viral contaminants, such as the fecal coliform bacteria.¹⁵ However, shellfish harvesting is prohibited in western Lagoon Pond at Lagoon Pond Road and lower Lake Tashmoo at Drew’s Cove.

Tisbury finalized its shellfish aquaculture license regulations in 2019 to permit managed aquaculture operations complementary to existing marine and shellfishing activities in its waters. Aquaculture license applications are reviewed by the Tisbury Shellfish Constable, Harbormaster, and Conservation Commission, as well as other municipal bodies as necessary. Potential aquaculture sites are reviewed to ensure they comply with all applicable Commonwealth and local guidelines (e.g., they are not within

¹⁵ “Learn about shellfish sanitation,” Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, accessed November 2022, <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-shellfish-sanitation>.

an existing or historic shellfishing area or in an area with eelgrass present). The Tisbury Select Board and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries must then approve licenses. The Town currently limits individuals to two licenses or no more than two acres, with new permits limited to one acre. Aquaculture proponents cite the benefits of additional economic activity for the town and shellfish's water filtration benefits. Since 2019, three growers have received approval for aquaculture sites in Lagoon Pond (three sites) and off West Chop (one site). Conditions in Lake Tashmoo are less conducive for the private aquaculture industry, and the Town has not approved aquaculture licenses for operation in the area. Aquaculture operators have primarily focused on cultivating American oysters and bay scallops.

In Tisbury, the Shellfish Constable is responsible for enforcing local and state shellfish regulations, maintaining the shell fishery, and coordinating with other constables on the island. Public education is an essential role of the constable, informing the public and media about any law changes, season openings, and areas open and closed to shellfishing.

Local Policies and Practices

In addition to the local regulations discussed earlier, other local initiatives enhance and protect the Town's natural resources.

Community Preservation Committee

Tisbury officially adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2006 after voters approved it the previous year. A 3 percent local surcharge on property tax bills in Town and supplemental funding from the Commonwealth provides for CPA funds.¹⁶ The Community Preservation Committee guides the usage of CPA funds and comprises appointed members representing the Town's various boards and commissions. The Town has used CPA funds extensively to advance open space and historic preservation, improve recreational facilities, and expand affordable housing. The Town spent approximately \$8,537,000 in CPA funding between April 2007 and June 2022, with the majority devoted to community housing (\$4,991,100) and historic preservation (\$2,242,100) projects. Recreation projects have received approximately \$916,100 in funding, while open space projects have received roughly \$187,700.¹⁷ Open space projects have received funding for land preservation, dredging, invasive species removal, and restoration activities, among other project types.

Martha's Vineyard Land Bank

The Martha's Vineyard Land Bank is a public conservation organization created by island voters in 1986 that works to preserve land for habitat, recreation, agriculture, and other uses across the island. The Land Bank is funded via public surcharges on most real estate transfers on the island, with the buyer subject to a fee equal to 2 percent of the purchase price.¹⁸ Since its founding, the Land Bank has

¹⁶ "Community Preservation Act," Massachusetts Division of Local Services, accessed November 2022, <https://www.mass.gov/lists/community-preservation-act>.

¹⁷ Tisbury CPA Project History Completed Projects, April 2007 – June 2022, (August 2022).

¹⁸ Martha's Vineyard Land Bank, Chapter 736 of the Acts of 1985.

conserved approximately 3,960 acres, or 7 percent of the total land area, on Martha’s Vineyard.¹⁹ The Tisbury Land Bank Advisory Board is an advisory body to the Land Bank, which also maintains a Board of Commissioners with representation from all island communities and the Commonwealth.

Open Space and Recreation Committee

The Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Committee is the primary body tasked with maintaining and implementing the 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan, which guides the management and protection of the Town’s open space and recreation resources. The Committee also helps distribute public education information materials and organize community programs related to open space and recreation.

Stormwater Management

The Town’s Department of Public Works (DPW) has worked closely with local and state partners and private consultants to develop stormwater management strategies to reduce runoff to local water bodies and mitigate stormwater-related flooding. Tisbury’s Drainage Master Plan was completed in 2018 by Environmental Partners Group, Inc. (EPG) and includes mapping and assessment of over 700 drainage structures, which will enable the Town to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to maintain a database of its drainage infrastructure, inform routine maintenance, and prioritize areas that experience drainage problems, such as Five Corners.

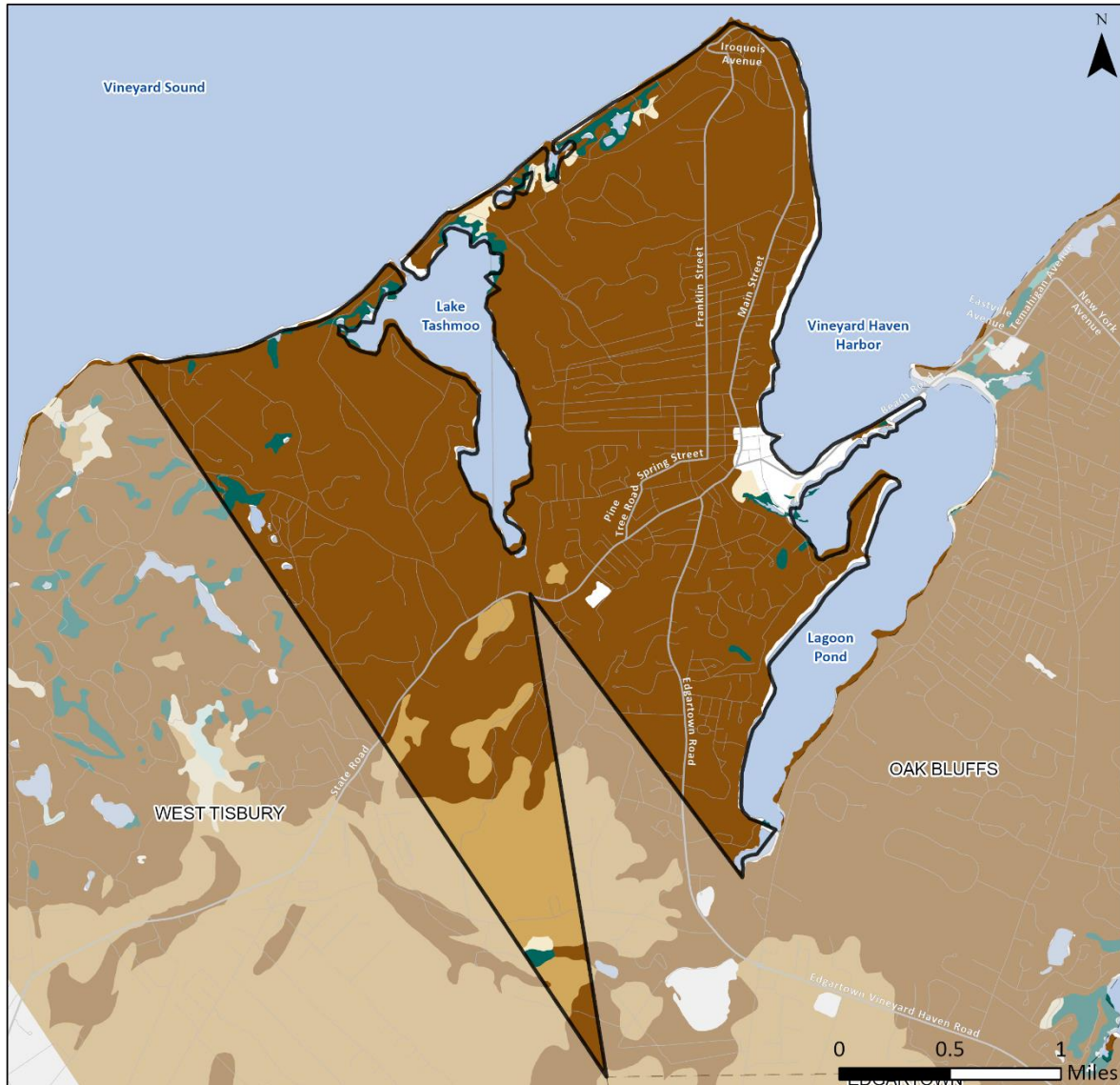
In coordination with MVC, Tisbury Waterways Inc., and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Tisbury completed an Impervious Cover Disconnection (ICD) Project in 2020 to create an integrated approach to stormwater management. To facilitate disconnection or the prevention of “impervious cover runoff from flowing directly to surface waters,” the ICD Project goal was to quantify the benefits (e.g., flood mitigation, nutrient, and pathogen load reduction) of green infrastructure and other stormwater control measures to identify cost-effective solutions for implementation.²⁰ The ICD Project includes concept designs for locally identified priority areas (which reinforce and supplement the priority projects identified in the Drainage Master Plan). *(Additional information about DPW’s operations can be found in the Public Facilities chapter).*

Public education about stormwater is also critical to managing runoff and mitigating pollution. One popular, easy-to-implement strategy for stormwater education is using storm drain markings to raise public awareness about where stormwater goes. Many of Tisbury’s catch basins feature eye-catching medallions to alert the public that dumping is prohibited, and the catch basin drains directly to a waterway.

¹⁹ “About the Land Bank,” Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank, accessed November 2022, <https://www.mvlandbank.com/about/about-the-land-bank>.

²⁰ Paradigm Environmental, University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center, and Great Lakes Environmental Center, *Tisbury MA Impervious Cover Disconnection (ICD) Project: An Integrated Stormwater Management Approach for Promoting Urban Community Sustainability and Resilience* (March 2020), i.

Map 3.1 Soil Drainage Class



Soil Drainage Class

- Town of Tisbury
- Surrounding Towns
- Water
- MassDOT Major Roads
- Administrative Type
- Non-numbered Road
- Local Roads

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soils

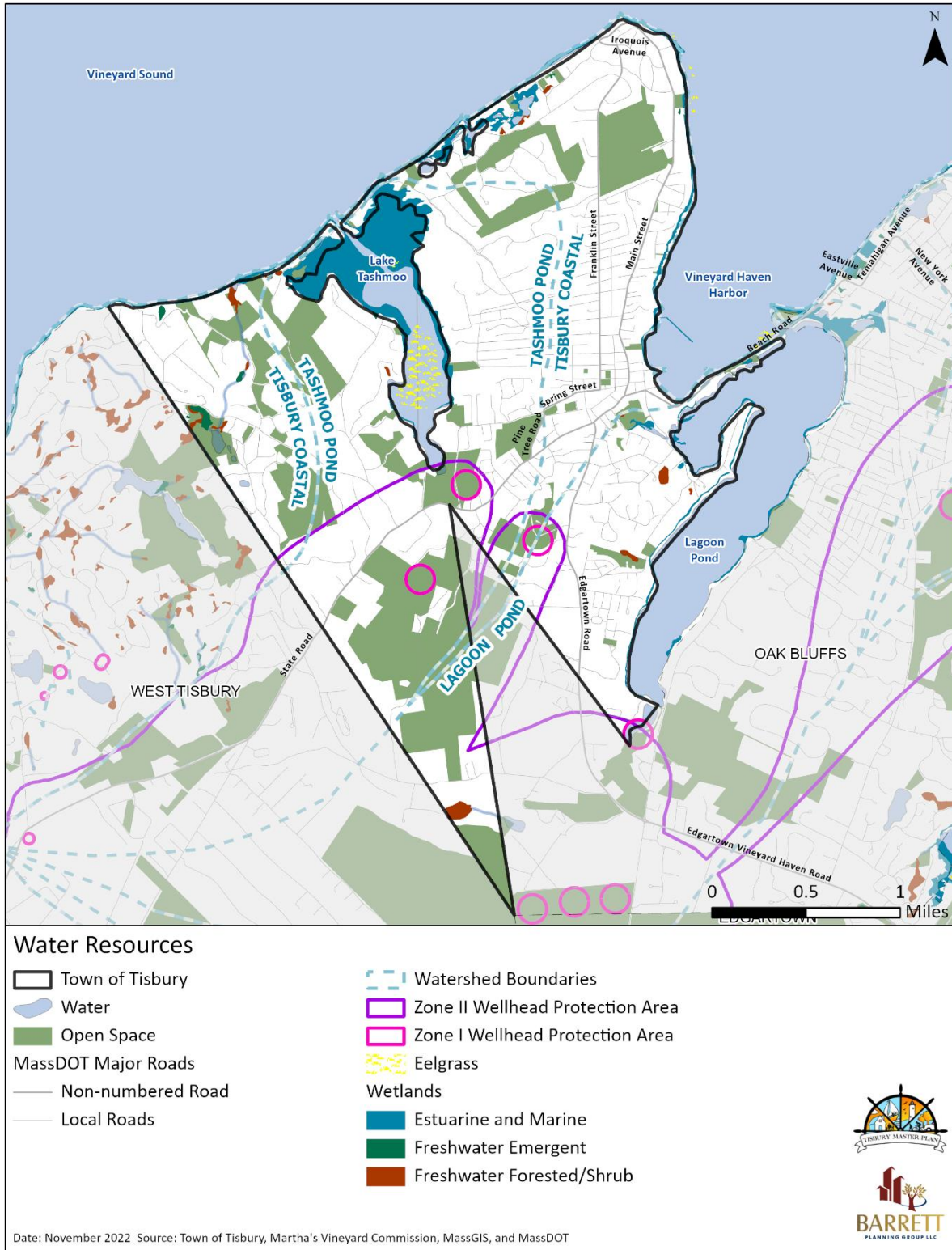
Soil Drainage Class

- Excessively drained
- Well drained
- Moderately well drained
- Poorly drained
- Somewhat poorly drained
- Very poorly drained

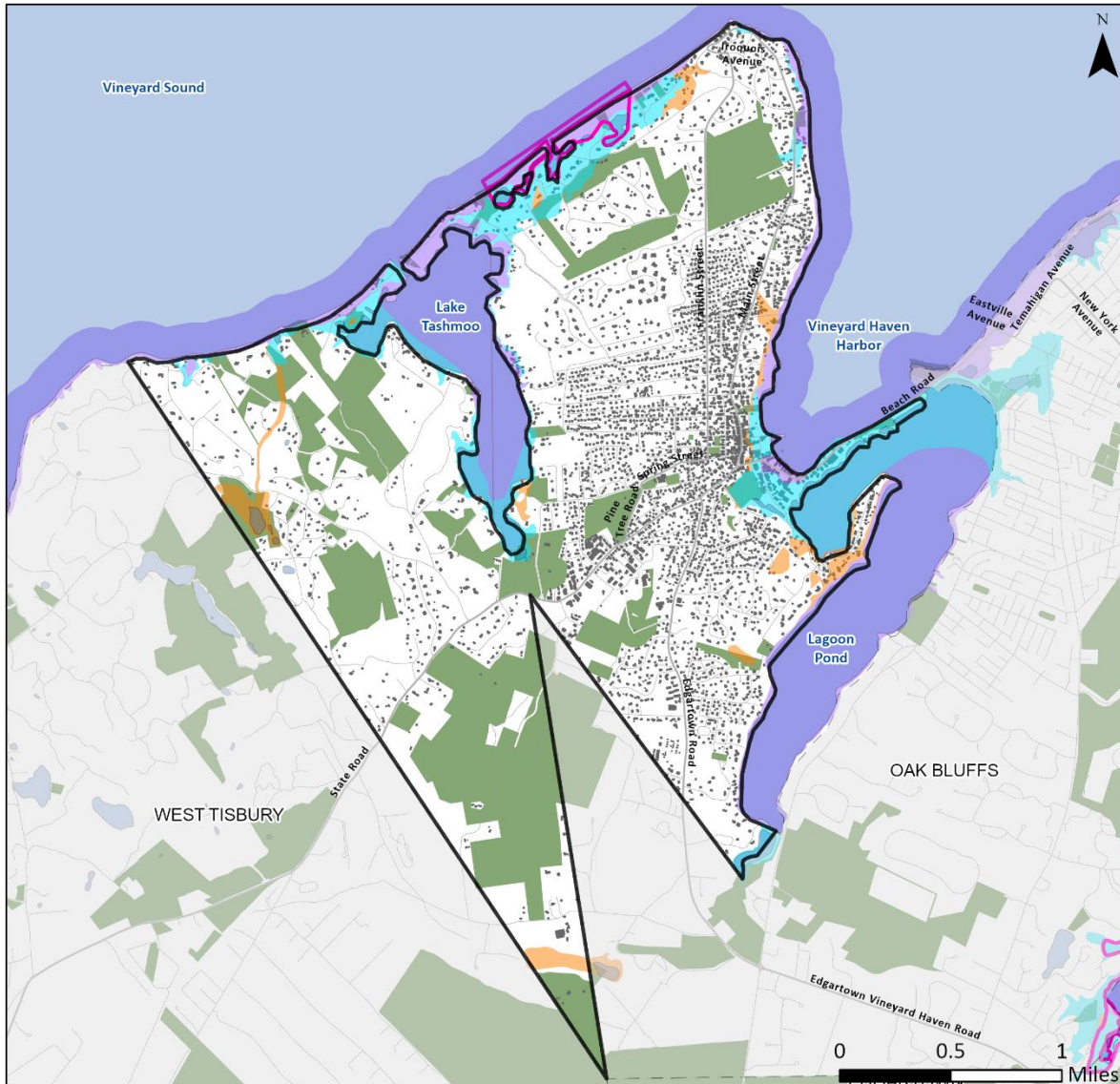


Date: November 2022 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT

Map 3.2 Water Resources



Map 3.3 FEMA Flood Hazard Area



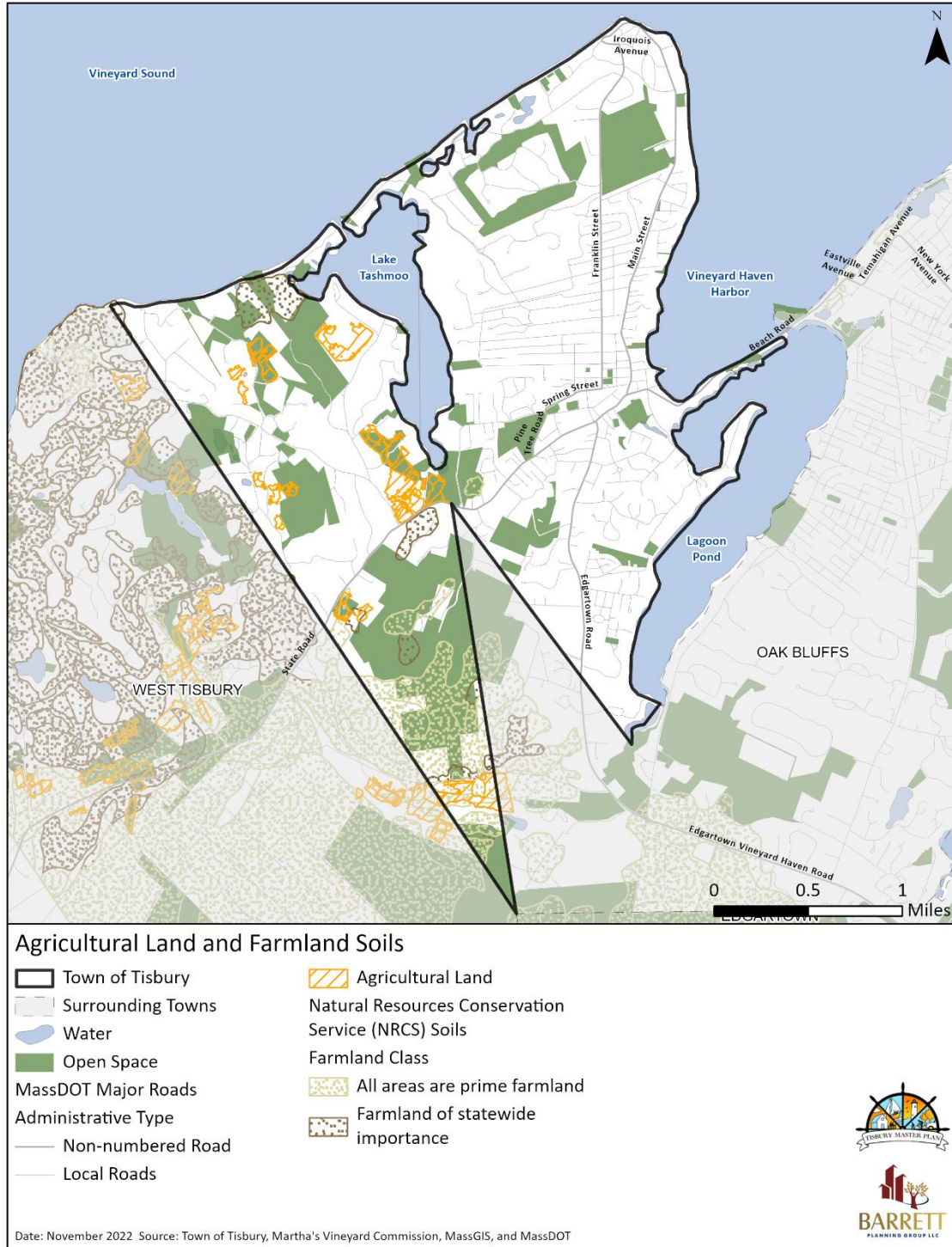
FEMA Flood Hazard Area

- Town of Tisbury
- Surrounding Towns
- Water
- Open Space
- Building Footprints
- MassDOT Major Roads
- Administrative Type
- Non-numbered Road
- Local Roads
- Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) Unit
- FEMA Flood Zones
- AE: 1% Annual Chance of Flooding, with BFE
- VE: High Risk Coastal Area
- X: 0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding

Date: November 2022 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT



Map 3.4 Agricultural Land and Farmland Soils



4. Sustainability and Energy

Introduction

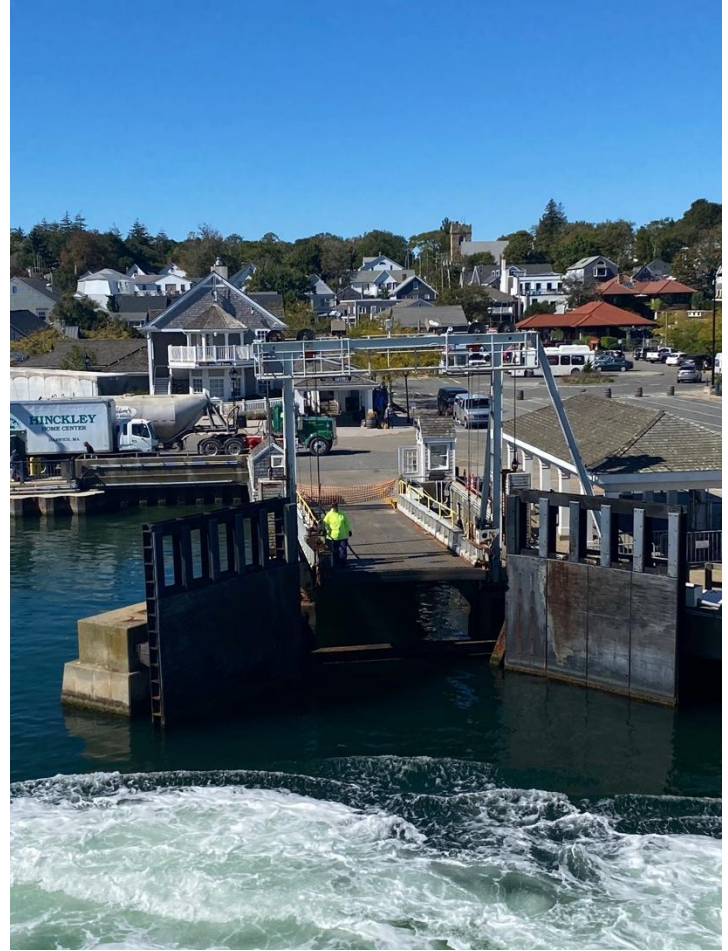
Being sustainable means Tisbury can meet the challenges of a changing climate, including rising sea levels, increased frequency and intensity of severe storms, and extreme fluctuations in precipitation and temperatures. As an island community, Tisbury is uniquely affected by climate change. It must increase its resilience to the impacts it is already experiencing today and those it will experience in the future, which may be more costly and dangerous.

Building resilience also focuses on reducing the Town's contributions to climate change. Climate change is driven by human activities that release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere (e.g., burning of fossil fuels). This necessitates action to reduce Tisbury's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, Tisbury must assess its use of fossil fuels, reduce consumption, and develop more energy-efficient alternatives in its municipal operations, facilities, and community.

Existing Conditions

CLIMATE PROJECTIONS

Resilient MA identifies the following climate projections: the climate change clearinghouse for the Commonwealth and the recently released Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (2022). Climate projections are critical to enabling Tisbury to plan for the opportunities and challenges of today's environment and those of a future, changed environment.



Rising Temperatures

The presence and continued accumulation of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere increases surface temperatures. In the Martha's Vineyard basin, annual average temperatures are projected to increase from the current baseline by 2.4-5.2° Fahrenheit (F) by 2050 and 3.0-9.1° F by 2100. Maximum and minimum temperatures are both expected to increase, meaning Tisbury will experience hotter summers and warmer winters because of climate change. Annually, Tisbury may see 2-10 more days with maximum temperatures over 90° F by 2050, and as many as 41 more days by 2100.

Rising temperatures and a higher incidence of extreme heat events have diverse impacts on the community. They can reduce air quality and lead to heat-related illnesses (*See Community Health*). They also contribute to drought conditions and will likely increase demand on drinking water resources. Tisbury's agricultural community, representing eight out of 32 land-based farms on the island could face crop damage and shifting growing seasons among other impacts.²¹ Harmful algae blooms are driven by nutrient pollution and warm water temperatures, which already occur in Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond, and Vineyard Haven Harbor on occasion and may become more frequent with extended days with warmer temperatures. Harmful algae blooms create poisonous marine biotoxins, and when molluscan shellfish eat the toxic algae, it can remain in their systems and cause illness, even death, in humans and other mammals that eat them.

Tick-borne diseases and the spread of invasive species are commonly facilitated by rising temperatures (*see Community Health chapter*). Finally, rising temperatures mean increased risk of wildfire. While there has not been a major wildfire on Martha's Island since 1965, MVC's mapping of the wildland urban interface²² includes much of Tisbury, with the exception of Vineyard Haven Harbor and surrounding residential areas.²³ A wildland urban interface community hazard assessment evaluates factors that have the potential to mitigate or exacerbate wildfire risk to a community (e.g., ingress and egress routes, defensible space, building construction, vegetation, available water sources). The assessment conducted as part of the Dukes County Community Wildfire Protection Plan rates Tisbury's wildfire risk as high.²⁴ Specific factors that contribute to Tisbury's high wildfire risk include limited ingress and egress routes around Lake Tashmoo, limited water access around Lake Tashmoo, narrow road widths, and the use of combustible building, fencing, and decking materials. Wildfires within the wildland urban interface have the potential to occur with little warning and cause substantial loss of life and property.

Rising Sea Surface Temperatures and Ocean Acidification

The oceans absorb heat, causing surface temperatures to increase. The oceans are also important regulators of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and take up some CO₂ that would otherwise become concentrated in the atmosphere. The average sea surface temperature in the Atlantic Ocean has already increased

²¹ Kim Lundgren Associates, *Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan* (June 2022), 64.

²² The wildland urban interface is defined by the *U.S. Fire Administration* as "an area where human development meets or intermingles with undeveloped wildlife and vegetative fuels that are both fire-dependent and fire-prone."

²³ "Wildland Urban Interface," U.S. Fire Administration, accessed November 2022, <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/stories/wui-report/index.html>.

²⁴ SWCA Environmental Consultants, Dukes County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, (2021), 36-37, E-1-3.

0.74° F between 1950 to 2009 and is expected to increase 1.8-5.4° F by 2100. While these numbers may sound inconsequential, even small increases like these can have dramatic impacts on ocean ecosystem health. Moreover, climate change models project faster rates of sea surface warming in the Northeast as compared to the global average. The ocean's pH level has decreased by approximately 0.1 units, and it is expected to continue to become more acidic in the future.

Rising sea surface temperatures and ocean acidification can lead to declines in pond water quality, loss of habitat for fisheries, changes in fish migration patterns, and changes to shellfish life cycles and growth rates. Like rising temperatures, changes to ocean characteristics can also lead to the increased potential for marine and aquatic invasive species. All together, these impacts can negatively affect commercial and recreation fishing.

Sea Level Rise

Sea level rise is driven by two primary factors: the melting of polar ice and the expansion of warmer waters. Sea levels on Martha's Vineyard have risen approximately six inches since 1970, and the rate of local sea level rise is expected to outpace the global rate due to local subsidence (the settling of the land into the ocean). The MVC's recommended sea level rise projections also suggest that rising sea surface temperatures will cause an accelerated rate of sea level rise in the latter part of this century. MVC's recommended sea level rise projection and models estimate a 0.6-foot increase by 2030, 1.5-foot increase by 2050, 3.2-foot increase by 2070, and 5-foot increase by 2100. Map 4.1 Projected Sea Level Rise shows the potential extent of Mean Higher High Water (the average high tide mark) as influenced by future sea level rise.

Higher sea levels will also lead to more nuisance flooding—commonly known as “sunny day flooding”—of low-lying areas during routine high tide events. The island is projected to experience 35-135 nuisance flooding days per year by 2050, up from 3-7 per year in 2020.

Sea level rise and associated nuisance flooding may increase beach and dune erosion, especially during storm surges. Damage to coastal property and infrastructure should be expected; public drinking water wells may be affected by saltwater intrusion. Additionally, inundation may lead to the loss of salt marshes. Areas most affected by projected sea level rise are in downtown Vineyard Haven and along the Vineyard Sound coastline (Map 4.2 Projected Sea Level Rise: Downtown Vineyard Haven and Map 4.3 Projected Sea Level Rise: Vineyard Sound Coastline)

Changes in Precipitation Patterns

Shifting climate patterns will affect the amount, frequency, and timing of rainfall and snowfall. These projections are variable, with the winter season expected to see anywhere from 4% less to 14% more precipitation by 2050 and 1% less to 24% more by 2100. Annually, the number of consecutive dry days (e.g., days that have less than 0.004 inches of precipitation) during the summer season are expected to increase by up to four days by the end of the century.

Warmer and wetter winters may increase the risk of tick-borne diseases, and increased dampness and mold can lead to associated health problems. More intense and frequent precipitation can also increase

stormwater runoff and inland flooding. On the opposite side of the spectrum, sustained periods of dryness can increase drought and wildfire risk.

Extreme Storm Events

Climate change and its associated effects can also create more extreme and frequent storm events. Future hurricanes are expected to produce more rain and may have higher wind speeds, and some evidence suggests that nor'easters will also experience increases in frequency and intensity. Extreme storm events have the potential for widespread damage to environmental, infrastructural, and social systems that may persist long after a storm event has passed. Anticipated impacts can include increased erosion of beaches and dunes, increased coastal flooding from storm surge, increased stormwater runoff and inland flooding, and damage to infrastructure, such as power lines. As Tisbury and the other island communities have experienced, hurricanes and tropical storms do not need to make landfall in the area to cause damage. Hurricane Sandy made landfall in New Jersey but still caused severe local damage from storm surge and high winds, prompting Dukes County to be included in a federal disaster declaration. Since the beginning of the 21st century, four tropical storms or extratropical storms have made landfall in New England.

VULNERABILITIES TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL HAZARDS

The following vulnerabilities were identified during Tisbury's 2018 Community Resilience Building workshop as part of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program and the MVC Climate Action Task Force's 2020 Annual Report.

Buildings and Infrastructure

The Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (2022)—written by MVC in coordination with all six island communities, the Wampanoag Tribe, and community partners—summarizes the main climate change challenges to buildings and infrastructure island wide:²⁵

1. "Damage to coastal roads and infrastructure from stronger and more frequent storms, sea level rise, and higher storm surge.
2. Increased tidal flooding to coastal roads and infrastructure (including wastewater, water, communications).
3. Damage to ferry and harbor infrastructure and increased ferry cancellations from extreme weather, causing an inability to get off-Island for medical and other needs, as well as supply chain disruptions.
4. Loss of access to critical facilities such as the Martha's Vineyard Hospital and Steamship Authority due to coastal storms, storm surge, and flooding."

²⁵ [*Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan*](#), 64.

In Tisbury, many buildings and infrastructure highly exposed to coastal hazards are in and around Vineyard Haven Harbor, including the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket Steamship Authority (SSA) terminal, the Packer Barge Dock, and various fuel storage facilities. Important regional roads and coastal armoring infrastructure that provide protection to landward areas are also located in this area, such as the Eastville Breakwater, Beach Road (an access road to the Martha's Vineyard Hospital in Oak Bluffs) and Seawall, and Lagoon Pond Road and Drawbridge. By 2070, the 3.2-foot sea level rise projection shows much of Vineyard Haven Harbor as permanently inundated. FEMA flood mapping does not currently account for future sea level rise, so the geography of flood risk in Tisbury will shift over time.

The Steamship Authority is a prime example of a key service to the island that is in harm's way. While the authority feels their docks and berths are prepared for higher water levels, the surrounding roads and support buildings are a weak link with roads already flooding quickly in normal rainstorms and at highest tides.

Master Plan Committee Stakeholders' Meeting, 10/24/2022.

Areas Vulnerable to Coastal Flooding Due to Storm Surge

In combination with more intense and frequent storms and sea level rise, Tisbury can expect coastal flooding due to storm surge to worsen over time. Coastal flooding regularly occurs at properties along the Vineyard Haven Harbor waterfront in the Steamship Authority/Five Corners/Beach Road area, and along Lagoon Pond Road. Stormwater drainage in this area can back up and cause flooding in Vineyard Haven Harbor due to storm surge and more routine high tide events. Many key pieces of infrastructure, such as the Vineyard Haven Ferry Terminal, Tisbury Police Department, Post Office, the planned Vineyard Wind operations and maintenance facility, and Beach Road causeway, are within this area and at risk of failure due to flooding. Moreover, Vineyard Haven Harbor lacks protection from northerly storms.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has estimated the extent of future coastal flooding accounting for sea level rise (Map 4.4 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk).²⁶ In 2030, much of Vineyard Haven coastward of Main Street and Causeway Street, including Beach Road and Lagoon Pond Road would be inundated (Map 4.5 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk: Downtown Vineyard Haven). Low-lying areas along West Chop and around Lagoon Pond and Lake Tashmoo would also face flooding (Map 4.6 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk: Vineyard Sound Coastline). Tisbury's northwestern coastline along Vineyard Sound would also experience substantial flooding, particularly along Chappaquonsett Road and Herring Creek Road, and around the Mink Meadows Golf Club. In 2050, areas along Hines Point Road would be inundated by coastal flooding, cutting off access to Cedar Neck, as well as areas around Lake Tashmoo's shoreline and along the Vineyard Sound coastline.

²⁶ This MassDOT mapping is titled "Statewide Coastal Transportation Systems Estimated Coastal Flood Exceedance Probabilities and Depths."

Areas Vulnerable to Inland Flooding Due to Heavy Rain

The stormwater network can back up during heavy rain events, whether from too much stormwater flow, debris, or storm surge/high tides entering pipes from the ocean. Flooding frequently occurs at Five Corners, Main Street/Union Street, Delano Road, Lagoon Pond Road, Spring Street/West Spring Street, and Grove Avenue. Stormwater runoff caused from heavy rain events is a major cause of pollution in coastal waterbodies and can negatively affect aquatic and marine life. Additionally, coastal waterbody pollution hinders the economic wellbeing of the Town, which depends on tourism from fishing, boating, swimming, and recreating near the shore, as well as a developing shellfish industry.

Areas Vulnerable to Coastal Erosion

The rate of coastal erosion in Tisbury is relatively stable; approximately one foot of erosion occurs along headland and moraine sediment shorelines each year.²⁷ West Chop and Vineyard Haven Harbor, which are northeast-facing, experience higher rates of erosion. One section of West Chop has experienced a highly visible rate of erosion, receding nearly 400 feet since 1897.²⁸ Developed areas and coastal infrastructure, especially installations that interfere with natural depletion and accretion of sediments, are especially vulnerable to erosion in Tisbury. The Eastville breakwater is too short to be sufficiently protective of Vineyard Haven Harbor and Beach Road, an important transportation route. Beach Road is also particularly vulnerable to overtopping and undercutting—when erosion wears away material at a feature’s footing to create an overhang susceptible to collapse. According to the Dukes County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2020), there are 48 homes near bluffs, mostly along West Chop and Lagoon, that may be especially exposed to the impacts of coastal erosion. The plan also identifies the Lake Tashmoo inlet as vulnerable and providing insufficient protection against storms and erosion due to its current configuration.

The Town has explored options to increase the wave attenuation benefits of the Eastville breakwater and jetty to provide additional shoreline protection to critical areas within Vineyard Haven Harbor.²⁹ However, modeling of the proposed extensions found that they would not provide sufficient protection to critical areas, including Beach Road and east of the Steamship Terminal.

Power Utilities

Island power utilities are most vulnerable to high winds from hurricanes and coastal storms (i.e., nor’easters). Such events (and even smaller high wind events) can bring high, sustained winds and gusts that down power lines, and downed trees and other debris can delay responses to power outages. Most of Tisbury’s electrical wires are above ground and the community has experienced widespread power outages during high wind events in the past. Power outages during nor’easters, which commonly occur during colder months, can result in a dangerous lack of home heating capacity. Other health impacts of

²⁷ Massachusetts Coastal Erosion Commission, Report of the Massachusetts Coastal Erosion Commission, Volume I: Findings and Recommendations (December 2015), 3-4.

²⁸ The Trustees of Reservations, State of the Coast (2021), 13.

²⁹ Applied Coastal Research and Engineering, Evaluation of Coastal Processes and Storm Impacts to Support Resilient Planning and Mitigation Strategies for the Vineyard Haven Harbor Shoreline (July 2020), 77-83.

power outages may be related to a lack of refrigeration for food and medicine and loss of power needed for cooking or sanitary purposes.

Supply Chain Vulnerabilities

As an island community, Tisbury relies heavily on ferry service for goods and services delivery and transporting people for work, recreation, and other purposes. Major categories of ferry freight are mail, fuel, food, and building materials. The SSA runs the only year-round passenger service out of Vineyard Haven Harbor and is the most heavily used passenger and freight service. Aside from the SSA ferries, other modes of transport are tug and barge, licensed private ferries, and commercial aircraft. Most barge traffic to the island docks at R.M. Packer's Wharf. Truck traffic, transported to the island via ferry, delivers goods to major retail locations or terminals throughout Martha's Vineyard. Petroleum and other fuel products are delivered by barge, and SSA ferries also carry tank trucks to enable efficient last mile delivery service. As measured during peak summer season in 2006, approximately 32 percent of truck trips carry food, and 8 percent carry fuel.³⁰

The Vineyard Haven SSA Ferry Terminal is the only year-round terminal on Martha's Vineyard, and shutdowns of passenger and freight service result in disruptions island wide. They cause cascading impacts on the transport of food, fuel, other materials, and skilled workers are delayed or canceled. During a March 2018 Nor'easter, the SSA was forced to halt passenger and freight services for two days, just a small fraction of the over 1,700 weather-related boat cancellations between 2018 and 2020.³¹

Vulnerable Populations

Climate change and natural hazards can disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, as these communities are often more exposed to hazards and lack resources or face barriers to accessing resources to help prepare for, withstand, and recover from chronic and acute climate stressors. Vulnerable populations are commonly conceived to include racial and ethnic minorities, people who are economically disadvantaged, the elderly, and those with limited English language proficiency, among other characteristics. *See Community Health.*

ENERGY

Tisbury is heavily dependent on energy resources generated off-island, as are the other communities on Martha's Vineyard. All fossil fuel products (e.g., gasoline and propane) are delivered via barge and ferry to the island. This dependence on off-island energy resources represents a three-fold conundrum: Tisbury is highly vulnerable to supply chain disruptions that prevent the regular delivery of fuel products used for transportation, home heating, and other needs; residents absorb the costs of transporting energy resources, contributing to high costs of living, while money leaves the community; and reliance on off-island fossil fuels contributes to the ongoing climate crisis and its impacts on Tisbury.

³⁰ Martha's Vineyard Commission and the Joint Transportation Committee, *Martha's Vineyard Transportation Plan (MVTP) 2015-2050 DRAFT* (June 2015), 97.

³¹ Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan, 37.

In recognition of this energy challenge and through the advocacy of the Vineyard Sustainable Energy Committee, a joint committee of the island's local Energy Committees has adopted a non-binding resolution in support of increasing local energy self-sufficiency and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Using 2018 energy use and emissions data as its baseline, Tisbury will seek to reduce its fossil fuel use by 50 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2040. Tisbury will also work to increase the fraction of its energy use derived from renewable sources by 50 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2040.

Current Supply

As measured in the 2018 baseline, the Martha's Vineyard communities used 945 gigawatt hours (GWh) of energy and emitted approximately 270,000 metric tons of CO₂ across three categories. Table 4.1 shows the breakdown of energy use and emissions by category. Most of the energy consumed and emissions generated can be traced to transportation sources, such as driving and ferries.

	Energy Use	Emissions
Transportation (cars, ferries, planes, boats)	45%	44%
Heating and hot water (oil and propane)	32%	28%
Electricity	23%	28%

Source: Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (2022).

Renewable energy is a growing source of electricity, currently generating 43 percent of the island's electricity from a mix of wind, solar, and hydroelectric sources.³² Much of this renewable energy comes from off-island sources. On-island sources of renewable energy are primarily small wind turbines and solar systems.³³

Local Policies and Practices

TISBURY CLIMATE COMMITTEE

The Tisbury Climate Committee was established in 2021 to support the Town's work on energy and climate matters. Specifically, the Committee works to increase the Town's and its residents' resilience, sustainability, safety, and health across social, economic, and environmental sectors. The Committee acts as Tisbury's representatives on various energy and climate related stakeholder groups, including MVC's Climate Action Task Force and Climate Resilience Committee, and was involved in the creation of the Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (2022).

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

Tisbury became an MVP community after receiving a Planning Grant to complete its Community Resilience Building workshop in 2018. Town stakeholders developed high priority action items to build resilience to identified climate hazards, which will inform the Town's planning efforts. Tisbury is eligible for future rounds of MVP Action Grant funding to complete climate resilience projects. Tisbury successfully applied for Action Grant funding in Fiscal Year 2020 with the other Martha's Vineyard

³² Ibid, 70.

³³ "Energy," Martha's Vineyard Commission, accessed November 2022, <https://www.mvcommission.org/energy>.

communities to develop an island wide adaptation strategy. The Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan was released in mid-2022.

DISTRICT PLANNING

Tisbury has also engaged in district planning focused on downtown Vineyard Haven, one of the Town's most vulnerable areas, to develop more detailed adaptation scenarios in response to sea level rise and other coastal hazards. In 2017, adaptation strategies for downtown Vineyard Haven were prepared by a graduate student and local advisory committee. The project reviewed phased responses over time based on three primary adaptation strategies: protection, which involves strategies to mitigate hazards and prevent their impacts (e.g., using seawalls to prevent coastal waters from inundating inland areas during storms); accommodation, which involves adjusting physical and institutional environments to enable normal functions during temporary disruptions from hazards (e.g., elevating structures to accommodate temporary floodwaters below); and retreat, which involves relocation away from hazardous areas. Specific adaptation strategies included elevating critical structures and roads and hardening coastal infrastructure.

The Town engaged the consulting firm Applied Coastal Research and Engineering, Inc. (ACRE) in 2019 to undertake a feasibility assessment and conceptual design report for shoreline management strategies in Vineyard Haven Harbor after receiving funding through the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management's Coastal Resilience Grant Program. The project identified areas within downtown Vineyard Haven that are particularly susceptible to flooding and/or help channel floodwaters inland through elevation mapping, flood simulations, and hydrologic and sediment transportation analyses. The initial 2020 study evaluated multiple measures to improve coastal resiliency, with a 2021 study further expanding on possible adaptation strategies. ACRE identifies three shoreline management strategies to increase resilience over the course of the project's 50-year planning horizon: a harbor shoreline dune, elevation of critical Beach Road sections, and elevation of critical Lagoon Pond Road sections and adjacent areas. A final study is ongoing.

The Town is also engaged in outreach to the Steamship Authority regarding the planned remodeling and replacement of the existing terminal building to make it more resilient to current and future coastal hazards. The Steamship Authority's recent improvements to its Woods Hole facility on the mainland already includes design features to make it more resilient to sea level rise.³⁴

REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION INITIATIVES

The Town also actively participates in regional initiatives to build resilience, especially in coordination with MVC. Tisbury participated in development of the Dukes County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2020) and Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2021). More recently, Tisbury participated in the development of the Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (2022), which was funded through the MVP Program. Various Town staff, members of boards and committees, and residents sat on the plan's steering committee and thematic working groups or participated in activities. Tisbury will continue to actively participate on various subcommittees and planning meetings as MVC and the communities work on implementation and progress tracking of the plan. Moving forward, the

³⁴ Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan, 37.

Climate Action Plan provides a shared framework for Tisbury and the other Martha's Vineyard communities to pursue adaptation strategies.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Since 2012, Tisbury has participated in the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources' (MassDOER) Green Communities Designation and Grant Program, which provides competitive grant funding and technical assistance. As a designated Green Community, Tisbury is committed to achieving a 20% municipal energy reduction and must meet five criteria related to zoning for and permitting of renewable energy and complementary facilities, municipal energy consumption, vehicle fleet, and new construction. The Town has competed successfully for several Green Communities grants.

Tisbury has met many of the Green Community requirements. It adopted the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code to better emphasize energy performance in its building code. Additionally, to satisfy the municipal energy consumption criterion, Green Communities must establish an energy use baseline inventory for its municipal buildings, lighting, and vehicles and adopt an Energy Reduction Plan to guide energy reduction measures. Tisbury has completed energy audits of its municipal buildings, including the Tisbury Police Station and Tisbury Elementary School. The Town also evaluates opportunities to incorporate renewable energy into municipal building upgrades. The proposed addition to the Vineyard Haven Public Library includes solar renewable energy and fundraising for the capital improvements is currently underway. As required by the vehicle fleet criterion, Tisbury adopted a Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy+, which will help guide electrification of its fleet. The Tisbury Climate Committee helps coordinate the Town's energy efficiency initiatives.

Tisbury is a member of the Cape Light Compact (CLC), a municipal energy aggregator jointly operated by 21 Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Dukes County municipalities.³⁵ Under the 1997 Massachusetts Restructuring Act, the Compact is empowered to purchase power on behalf of its customers and implement local energy efficiency programs. The Compact offers competitive electricity pricing and, as a green aggregator, the Compact offsets excess electricity consumption with Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), a tradable commodity representing a defined amount of energy generated by a renewable energy resource, to provide a "100% renewable product" to its customers.³⁶ Customers can opt-in to the Compact's Local Green program, which matches either 50% or 100% of their energy usage with Massachusetts Class I RECs from local renewable energy sources. The Compact offers resources to improve energy efficiency to their customers' homes and businesses. The Compact also provides energy efficiency assistance to its member communities, especially related to the requirements of the Green Communities program. For example, the Compact worked in coordination with Tisbury to complete LED upgrades of the Town's streetlights.

³⁵ "About Us," Cape Light Compact, accessed November 2022, <https://www.capelightcompact.org/about-us/>.

³⁶ "Green Aggregation," Cape Light Compact, accessed November 2022, <https://www.capelightcompact.org/green-aggregation/>.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Tisbury is exploring local renewable energy options for solar generation. The Tisbury Climate Committee is focused on pursuing Town-owned solar generation on Town buildings and property, including the Senior Center and new Tisbury School Building. The Committee is also helping prepare for the planned purchase of the solar field at the Town landfill.

Massachusetts is positioning itself to be a leader in the developing offshore wind industry and is supporting the planning for, leasing, and development of several wind projects south of Martha's Vineyard. Vineyard Wind, an offshore wind development company, is constructing 62-turbine wind energy project 15 miles south of Martha's Vineyard.³⁷ Two submarine cables will link the project to Barnstable, and an onshore substation in Hyannis will serve as the connection to the local energy grid.³⁸

Efforts to transition Martha's Vineyard to local, renewable energy resources and keep the benefits of renewable energy development within the community have made great progress. Vineyard Power, a nonprofit, member-owned cooperative formed in 2009, signed a Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) with Vineyard Wind in 2015. CBAs are legal agreements that community groups and developers voluntarily enter into and "[stipulate] the benefits a developer agrees to fund or furnish, in exchange for community support of a project."^{39, 40}

The Vineyard Power/Vineyard Wind CBA includes "local job creation [and] the construction of an operations and maintenance facility in Vineyard Haven harbor" in Tisbury.⁴¹ Once completed, Vineyard Wind's Vineyard Wind 1 and Park City Wind projects will generate enough energy to power over 800,000 homes and businesses. The Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (2022) identifies key benefits that offshore wind development will bring to Martha's Vineyard more generally:⁴²

- "Over \$15 million in infrastructure investments, including a resilient port on Vineyard Haven's working waterfront.
- 50 year-round local jobs at an offshore wind operations center generating \$75 million in economic development over 15 years.
- \$25 million in funding to facilitate the transition to a more resilient and equitable 100% renewable community."

³⁷ "Vineyard Wind I," Vineyard Wind, accessed February 2023, <https://www.vineyardwind.com/vineyardwind-i>.

³⁸ Ibid.

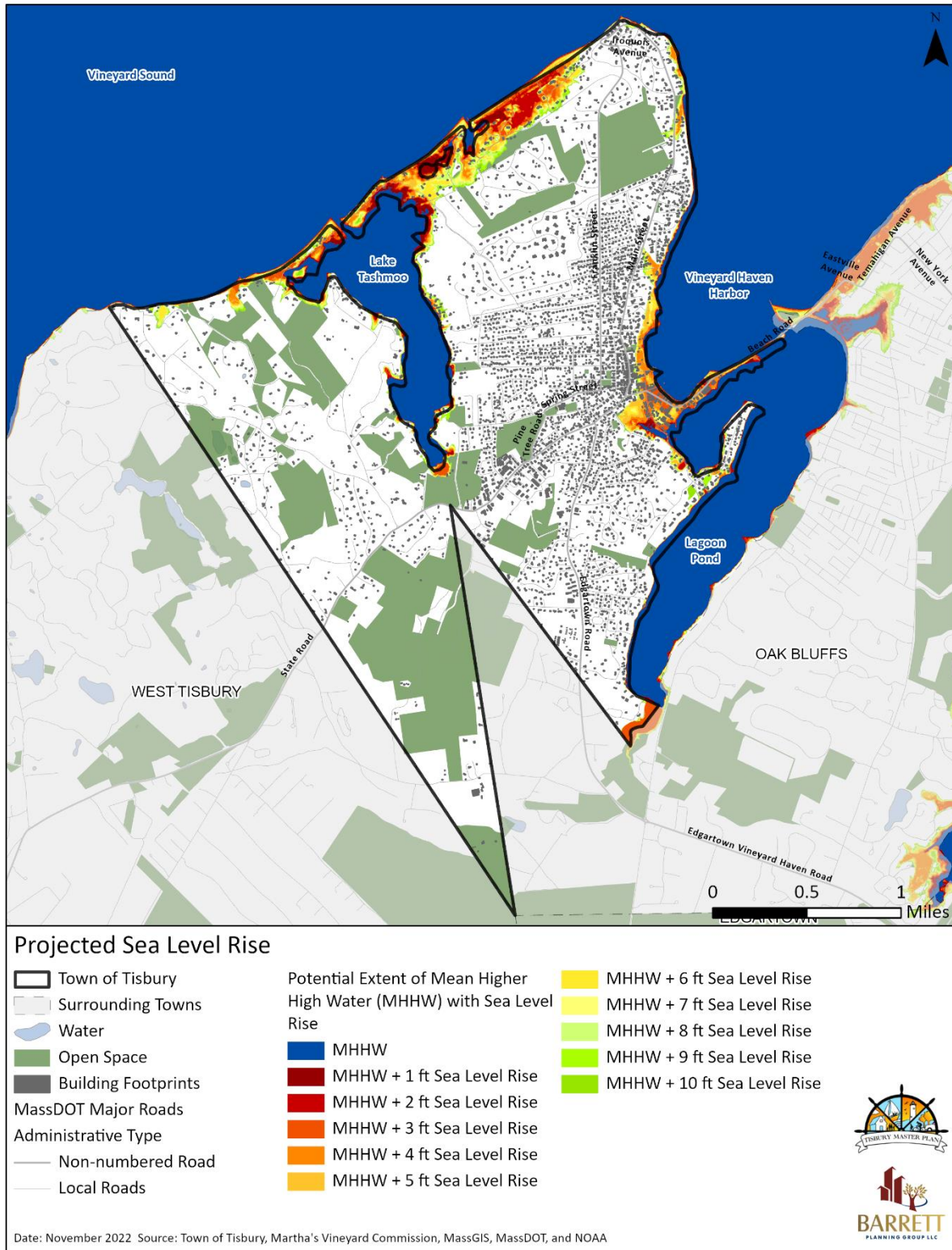
³⁹ "Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) Toolkit," U.S. Department of Energy Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, accessed November 2022, <https://www.energy.gov/diversity/community-benefit-agreement-cba-toolkit>.

⁴⁰ Noah Asimow, "Vineyard Wind Proposes Plan to Redevelop Tisbury Marine Terminal," Vineyard Gazette, August 28, 2021.

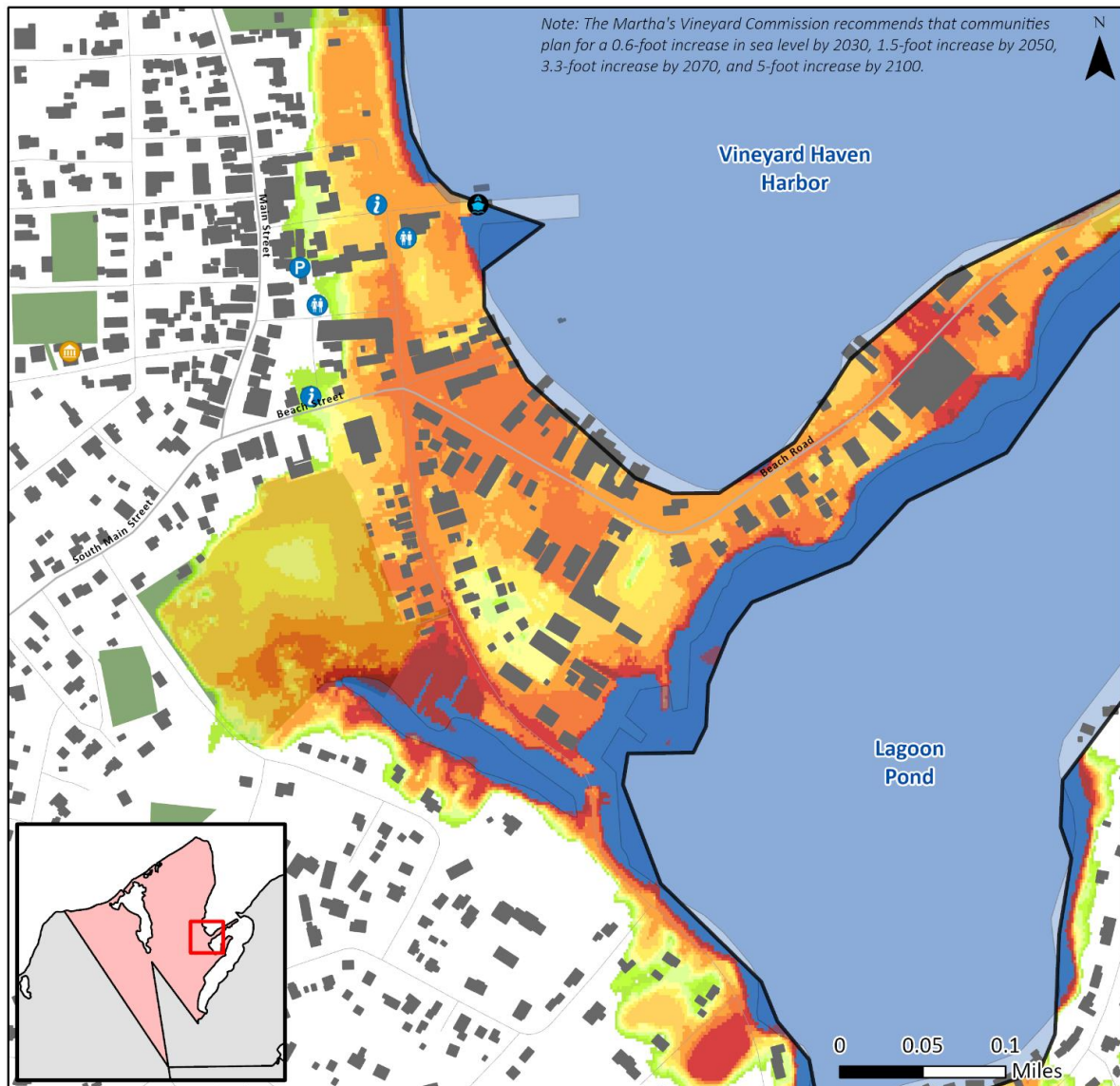
⁴¹ "Vineyard Power," Vineyard Wind, accessed November 2022, <https://www.vineyardwind.com/community-partnership>.

⁴² Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan, 70. (Internal citations removed).

Map 4.1 Projected Sea Level Rise



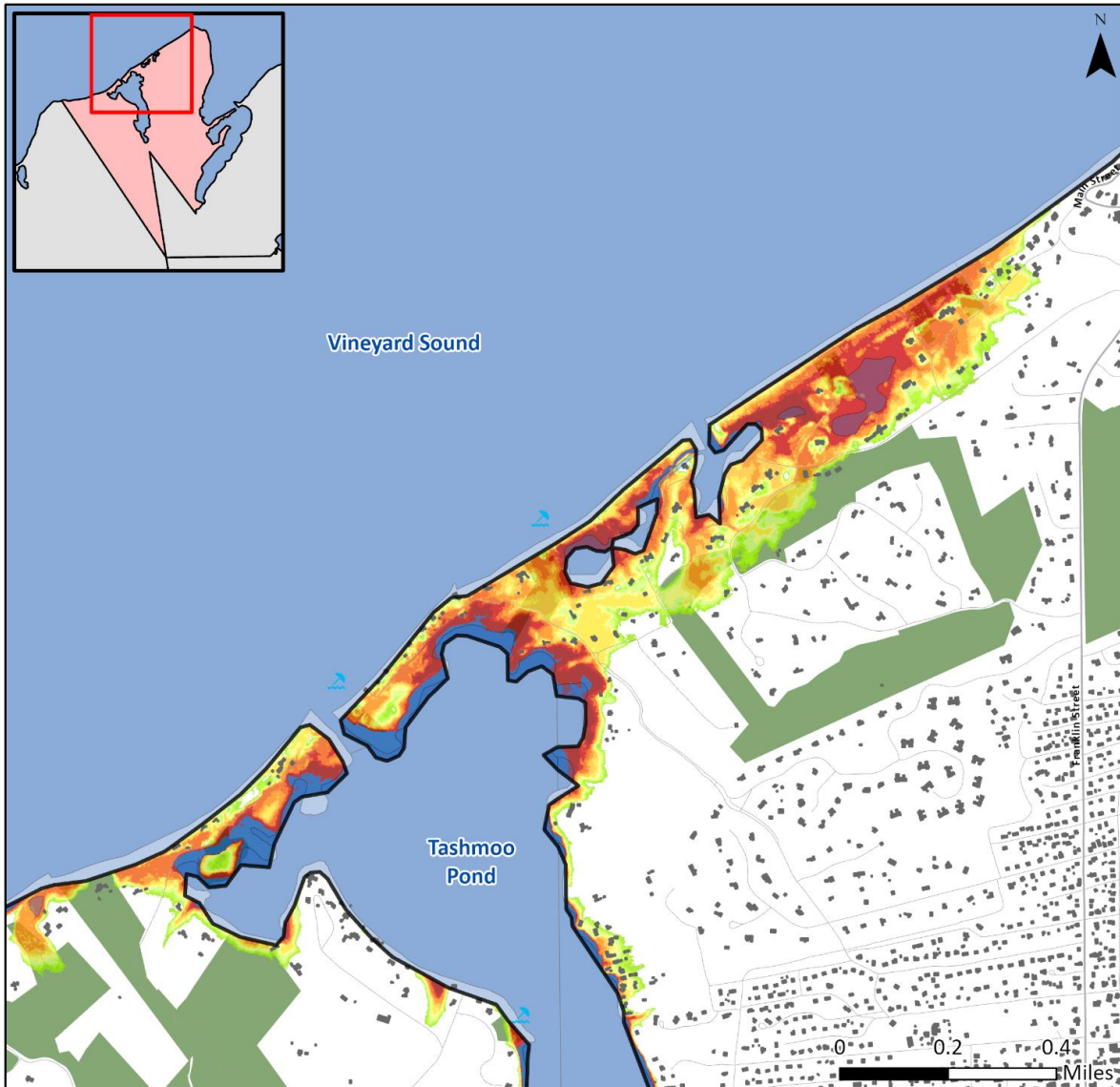
Map 4.2 Projected Sea Level Rise: Downtown Vineyard Haven



Projected Sea Level Rise (SLR): Downtown Vineyard Haven

Town of Tisbury	Potential Extent of Mean Higher High Water (MHHW) with SLR	MHHW + 8 ft Sea Level Rise
Water	Mean Higher High Water	MHHW + 9 ft Sea Level Rise
Building Footprints	MHHW + 1 ft Sea Level Rise	MHHW + 10 ft Sea Level Rise
Open Space	MHHW + 2 ft Sea Level Rise	MVC Points of Interest
MassDOT Major Roads	MHHW + 3 ft Sea Level Rise	Police Station
Administrative Type	MHHW + 4 ft Sea Level Rise	Town Hall
Non-numbered Road	MHHW + 5 ft Sea Level Rise	Ferry Terminal
Local Roads	MHHW + 6 ft Sea Level Rise	Info Center
	MHHW + 7 ft Sea Level Rise	Public Restroom
		Beach Public

Map 4.3 Projected Sea Level Rise: Vineyard Sound Coastline

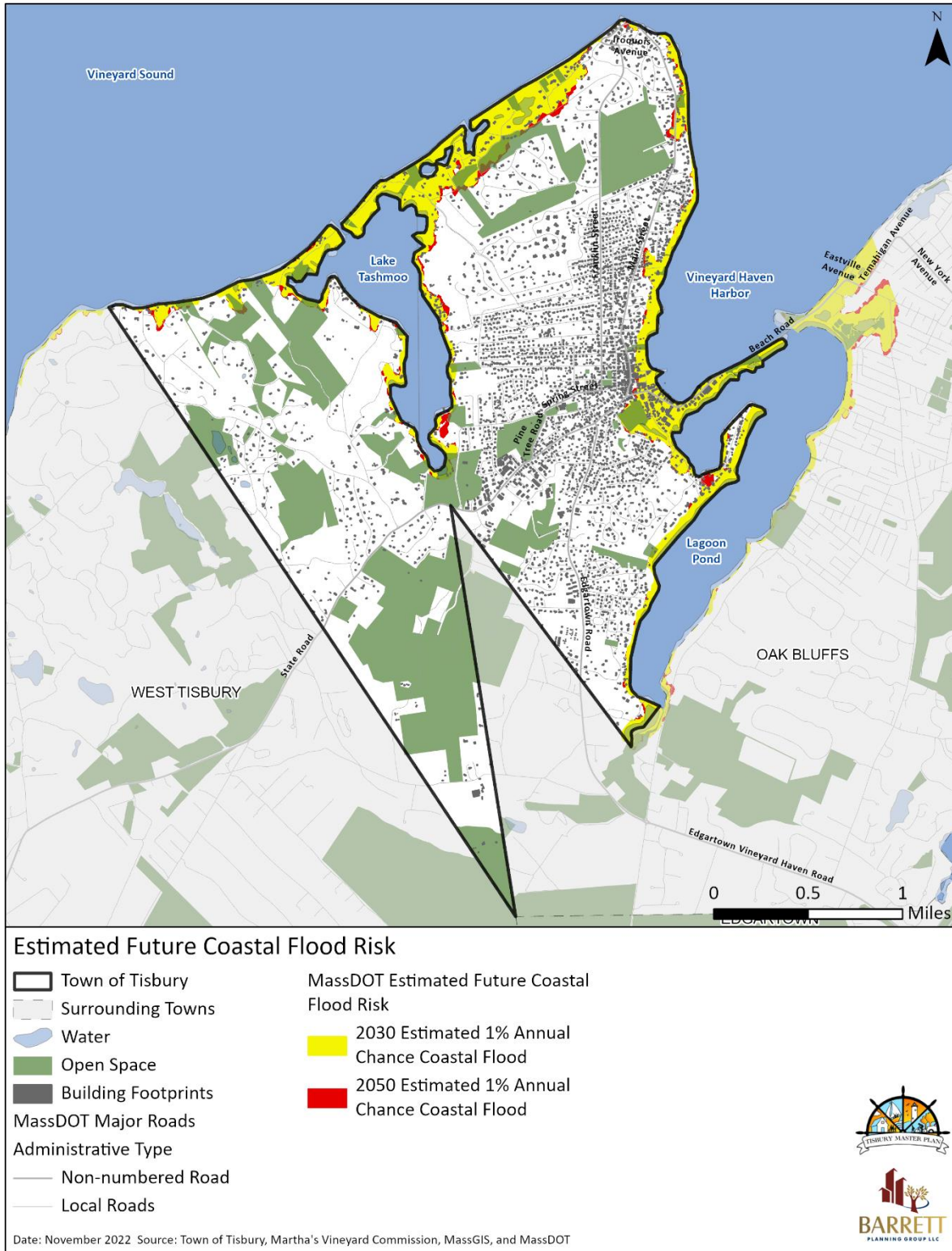


Projected Sea Level Rise (SLR): Vineyard Sound Coastline

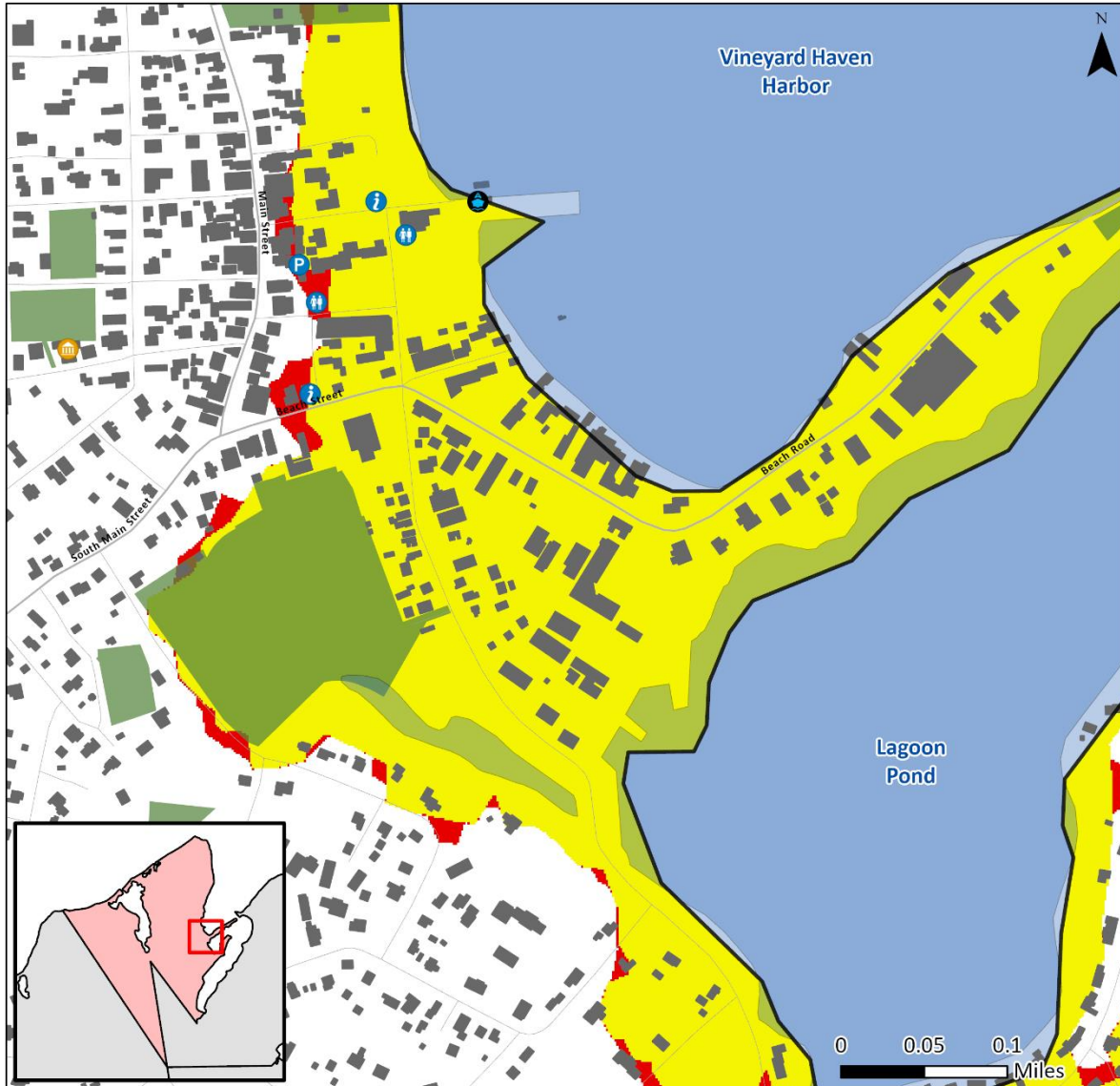
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Tisbury Water Building Footprints Open Space MassDOT Major Roads Administrative Type Non-numbered Road Local Roads <p>Date: February 2023 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT</p>	<p>Potential Extent of Mean Higher High Water (MHHW) with SLR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mean Higher High Water MHHW + 1 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 2 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 3 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 4 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 5 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 6 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 7 ft Sea Level Rise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MHHW + 8 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 9 ft Sea Level Rise MHHW + 10 ft Sea Level Rise <p>MVC Points of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach Public <p><i>Note: The Martha's Vineyard Commission recommends that communities plan for a 0.6-foot increase in sea level by 2030, 1.5-foot increase by 2050, 3.3-foot increase by 2070, and 5-foot increase by 2100.</i></p>
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Map 4.4 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk



Map 4.5 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk: Downtown Vineyard Haven



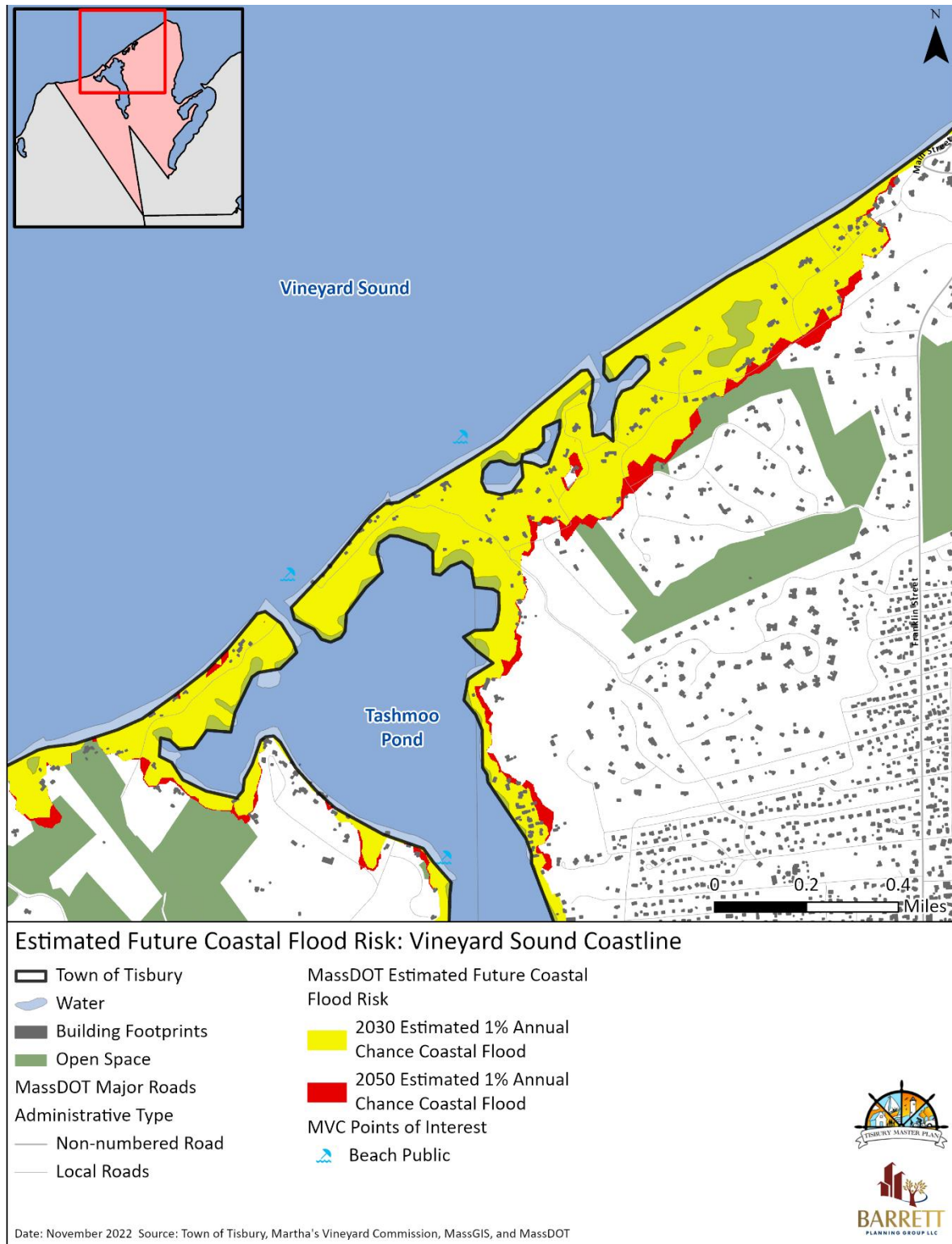
Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk: Downtown Vineyard Haven

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|------------------------|
| Town of Tisbury | MassDOT Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk Value | MVC Points of Interest |
| Water | 2030 Estimated 1% Annual Chance Coastal Flood | Police Station |
| Building Footprints | Layer2 Value | Town Hall |
| MassDOT Major Roads | 2050 Estimated 1% Annual Chance Coastal Flood | Ferry Terminal |
| Administrative Type | | Info Center |
| Non-numbered Road | | Public Restroom |
| Local Roads | | Beach Public |
| Open Space | | |

Date: November 2022 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT



Map 4.6 Estimated Future Coastal Flood Risk Vineyard Sound Coastline





5. Land Use

Introduction

Tisbury is a town with very little land, only about 6.5 square miles, and climate change threatens to reduce the total further through coastal erosion and sea level rise. Despite its small size, the Town has a diverse set of development patterns and land uses including a dense village center, agricultural land, and a variety of housing types. It is vital that the Town has a clear and thoughtful vision for land use planning, balancing the needs of a sensitive coastal environment and a growing population that requires housing and services.

Existing Conditions

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Single-family residences are the most common land use in Tisbury, as shown in Table 4.1. There is significant diversity within the “single family” category, from the historic mansions of West Chop to the relatively humble cottages built in the 1970s and 80s. Tisbury’s oldest homes are in downtown Vineyard Haven and along the coast up to West Chop.

Map 5.1 shows every tax parcel in Tisbury color-symbolized according to the assessor’s primary use codes. Residential parcels of any type make up most of the Town’s land area (about 53 percent). About one-quarter of the Town’s area is taken up by open space, a broad category that includes protected conservation land, agricultural properties, and outdoor recreation space such as golf courses. Less than 80 acres are devoted to commercial activity.

The densest residential development has taken place between Vineyard Haven and Lake Tashmoo. Homes here are relatively small and close together, including many lots with multiple houses. Much of the western half of Tisbury is undeveloped, and most residential development there consists of larger single-family homes on large lots that are largely left forested. The abundance of undisturbed land and lack of intensive development lend the area a rural character.

Land Use	Acres	% of land	Land Use	Acres	% of land
Single Family Residential	1,593.2	41.9%	Other Residential Land	107.9	2.8%
Conservation	580.9	15.3%	Public Land	93.2	2.5%
Other Vacant	320.2	8.4%	Nonprofit & Religious	82.7	2.2%
Multiple Houses on Lot	314.2	8.3%	Commercial	76.4	2.0%
Vacant - Developable	235.6	6.2%	Vacant - Undevelopable	73.8	1.9%
Outdoor Recreation	157.6	4.1%	Utilities and Infrastructure	31.1	0.8%
Agriculture	119.8	3.1%	Two or More Units	16.5	0.4%
			TOTAL	3,802.9	100.0%

Source: Tisbury Assessor’s Database, Martha’s Vineyard Commission, 2022.

For parcels classified as residential, the assessor’s information reported in Table 5.1 does not distinguish between year-round and seasonally occupied properties. Martha’s Vineyard is an internationally renowned summer vacation destination, and even in a predominantly year-round town like Tisbury, about one third of all housing units are part of the seasonal market.⁴³ The most common seasonal uses are second vacation homes and short-term rentals using online platforms such as Airbnb or Vrbo.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Tisbury has a large share of the commercial development on Martha’s Vineyard and therefore serves as a commercial center for the entire island. Many businesses are concentrated in Vineyard Haven to take advantage of the tourist traffic from the island’s busiest port of entry. Vineyard Haven’s commercial area is a walkable village center with narrow streets and a wide variety of retail, restaurant, and entertainment establishments largely catering to both tourists and residents. Important services for year-round residents include Stop & Shop (one of two major grocery stores in Tisbury), gas stations, a post office, and retail stores. Mixed-use development featuring both commercial and residential uses on the same property is not common in Tisbury, but the mixed-use properties that do exist are concentrated in downtown Vineyard Haven, where they are allowed by zoning.

⁴³ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020.

The Business 2 district is Tisbury’s inland commercial area, located along State Road near the border with Oak Bluffs. The district contains an eclectic mix of retail, housing, restaurants, construction companies, and auto services, as well as Cronig’s, Tisbury’s other major grocery store. Retail is oriented toward traffic on State Road, but further back in the district, the roads become rough or unpaved and there are intensive auto and storage uses. The southern part of the district contains a large solar array and the Tisbury Park-n-Ride on Town-owned land.

Tisbury does not have an industrial zoning district and no parcels are officially classified under industrial uses, but there are two areas where some light industry has arguably developed. Parts of the B2 district set back from State Road have relatively intensive construction and auto uses, and portions of Beach Road along Vineyard Haven Harbor in the Waterfront/Commercial District have shipping and warehousing uses that lend the area an industrial dockside feel.

OTHER LAND USES: OPEN SPACE, MUNICIPAL, AND VACANT

The island-wide Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank (MVLB) owns over 250 acres of permanently protected land in Tisbury, making it the largest steward of the Town’s open space. Most of the MVLB’s local holdings are in the western part of Tisbury, including Ripley’s Field Preserve, Tisbury Meadows Preserve, and Wapatequa Woods Reservation.⁴⁴ In addition, there is a small amount of active agricultural land in western Tisbury, most notably Thimble Farm in the Town’s extreme southern tip. The most significant outdoor recreation areas in Tisbury are its beaches and docks along the ocean, Lake Tashmoor, and Lagoon Pond. The Mink Meadows Golf Club also takes up a large amount of land to the north. The Town owns a relatively small portion of its conservation land, but there are several municipally owned parks, the most significant being Lagoon Harbor Park, Veterans Memorial Park, and Owen Park Beach, all in Vineyard Haven. Map 5.1 shows that most of the Town’s land is concentrated in southwestern Tisbury.

Around 6 percent of the land in Tisbury (236 acres) is privately owned, vacant, and classified by the assessors as developable.⁴⁵ The parcels are scattered throughout town, and most are zoned for residential development.

Local Policies and Practices

ZONING DISTRICTS

Tisbury is divided into eight zoning districts, each with its own regulations about what types of land uses are allowed and dimensional standards that lots and structures must adhere to. A use may be allowed by special permit, which requires a public hearing by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals, or by right, which requires no special permissions. The Town’s districts can all be classified as either residential or commercial districts based on the primary type of use each is designed to

⁴⁴ “Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank,” Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank, accessed October 2022, <https://www.mvlandbank.com/>.

⁴⁵ The Assessor’s Office classifies land as developable or undevelopable based on a variety of factors including conformance to zoning regulations, so it is still possible for some “undevelopable” land to someday be developed.

encourage. Map 5.2 shows the location of Tisbury’s zoning districts and Table 5.2 lists each district by total size in acres.

Table 5.2. Tisbury Zoning Districts by Area					
District	Acres	% of land	District	Acres	% of land
Residential 3A (R3A)	1,360.8	32.6%	Business 2 (B2)	125.9	3.0%
Residential 50 (R50)	1,262.7	30.3%	Waterfront/Commercial (WC)	41.0	1.0%
Residential 10 (R10)	653.7	15.7%	Business 1 (B1)	18.4	0.4%
Residential 25 (R25)	351.9	8.4%	Lagoon Harbor Park*	8.4	0.2%
Residential 20 (R20)	351.0	8.4%	TOTAL	4,173.8 ⁴⁶	100.0%

*Designated separately on the zoning map, but not established as its own district.
 Source: Martha’s Vineyard Commission

Residential Districts

Over 95 percent of Tisbury’s land is zoned for single-family residential use (see Table 5.3). The Town’s five residential zoning districts differ mainly in their dimensional regulations. Each district is named after its minimum lot size in square feet except for Residential 3A (R3A), where the minimum lot size is three acres. Districts with larger minimum lot areas have more intensive dimensional requirements in general; for example, the amount of lot frontage required ranges from 80 feet in R10 to 200 feet in R3A.⁴⁷

Table 5.3. Tisbury Zoning Bylaw – Selected Dimensional Regulations							
District	Min. lot area (sf)	Min. lot depth (sf)	Min. lot frontage (ft)	Min. front setback (ft)	Min. side setback (ft)	Min. rear setback (ft)	Max. building height (ft)
Residential 3A (R3A)	130,680	200	200	50	50	50	21-35
Residential 10 (R10)	10,000	80	80	20	10	20	35
Residential 20 (R20)	20,000	100	100	20	15	20	35
Residential 25 (R25)	25,000	125	125	25	25	25	35
Residential 50 (R50)	50,000	150	150	50	35	50	35
Commercial Uses in Commercial Districts							
Business 1 (B1)	0	0	0	0	2	4	35
Business 2 (B2)	0	0	0	30	15	15	35
Waterfront/Commercial (WC)	0	0	20	20	4*	30**	28
Residential Uses in Commercial Districts							
Single-family (B1 & B2)	10,000	80	80	20	10	20	35

⁴⁶ Total land area for Tables 5.1 and 5.2 differs due to methodology. Area calculations for zoning districts include roads, some water bodies, etc., where those for parcel-level data do not.

⁴⁷ The length of a lot boundary line along a road or way, important for assuring adequate access to the lot.

District	Min. lot area (sf)	Min. lot depth (sf)	Min. lot frontage (ft)	Min. front setback (ft)	Min. side setback (ft)	Min. rear setback (ft)	Max. building height (ft)
Multi-Unit (B2)	20,000	100	100	30	20	20	35
*4-foot minimum per side, but all sides must add up to at least 20 feet							
**50 feet if abutting tidewater							
Source: <i>Town of Tisbury Zoning Bylaw</i>							

Single-family homes, customary home occupations, the renting of rooms to three or fewer people, and one detached guest house (800 square feet maximum)⁴⁸ are allowed by right in every residential district. Multi-family development requires a special permit from the Planning Board in any district, but the minimum lot size required for multi-family is the same as would be required for the same number of single-family units.

Residential 10 (R10) is the highest-density residential area. The district makes up about 16 percent of Tisbury’s residentially zoned land but contains just over half of its 2,438 residential lots. Mobile home parks are allowed in R10, but with a 10-acre minimum land area, the opportunities to develop one are extremely limited. Residential 20 (R20) and Residential 25 (R25) have few distinctive use regulations, differing from R10 largely in terms of allowed density. Along with R10, non-exempt agricultural activities like roadside farm stands require a special permit.

Residential 50 (R50) and R3A are the two largest zoning districts by area and the most rural parts of Town, and many agricultural and related uses, such as roadside farm stands, are allowed by right there. R3A has a large amount of undisturbed land and few municipal services (for example, most of the district is not served by Town water), and accordingly has the most stringent dimensional and environmental requirements of any residential district, as well as a unique cap on the rate of development in the area. Subdivisions of ten or more units can only construct one-tenth of the total residential structures per calendar year. The Planning Board may issue a special permit to as much as double the rate of construction and nonprofit developers are exempt.

All new development with more than one dwelling unit requires a special permit from the Planning Board. Two parking spaces per dwelling unit are required in every residential district for any type of housing, except for the Waterfront Commercial and Business 1 Districts which are exempt from minimum parking requirements.

Commercial Districts

The Waterfront Commercial (WC) and Business 1 (B1) Districts together comprise the traditional village center and port of Vineyard Haven, while Business 2 (B2) is further inland along State Road. B1 begins northwest of the Five Corners intersection and contains Stop & Shop and many tourist-oriented

⁴⁸ 800 square foot maximum in most districts; in R10, a 600 square foot maximum.

galleries, gift shops, and restaurants. WC encompasses the ferry terminal, shipyard, and the entirety of the Beach Road corridor.

The WC District is divided into two subdistricts: the Waterside Management Area and Commercial Management Area. In the Waterside Area, most development is prohibited except for waterfront uses such as boat yards and docks. The Commercial Area allows all Waterside uses, plus retail, offices, and single-family dwellings. WC is also the only zoning district that allows mixed-use development incorporating both residential and commercial uses on the same lot. The first floor of a mixed-use structure must contain a commercial use, but a dwelling unit may be located on an upper floor.

In B1, retail uses, offices, and light manufacturing by right. Residential dwellings and hotels are allowed by special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. In B2, all B1's by-right uses are also allowed, plus some others like large ground-mounted solar installations and food service establishments. More intensive uses that are prohibited in B1 such as lumber yards and auto yards are allowed by special permit, usually from the Board of Appeals. Multi-family developments of two or three units are allowed by right in B2. In both business districts, any use that is otherwise allowed that exceeds 3,000 square feet in area must receive a special permit from the Planning Board finding that the proposal will have minimal impact on the surrounding area.

Residential uses are allowed in all three commercial districts, although in B1 and B2 there are different dimensional standards for commercial and residential uses (see Table 5.3). B2 allows the creation of up to three units on a single lot, subject to meeting dimensional standards. Commercial uses have comparatively few dimensional restrictions: they do not have a minimum lot size or lot depth in any commercial district and no minimum frontage requirement in B1 and B2.

B1 and WC are exempt from minimum parking requirements. B2 requires one space per 150 square feet of office or retail, although the Zoning Board may allow a parking reduction of up to one-third when six or more spaces are required.

Tisbury's three commercial zoning districts define the boundaries of the study areas for the Commercial District Vision plans.

Overlay Districts and Other Zoning Regulations

Overlay districts are areas with supplementary regulations that apply in addition to the underlying zoning district. Tisbury has nine zoning overlays, all of which address either historic or environmental preservation (see Table 5.4). The locations of all overlay districts are shown on Map 5.3.

Table 5.4. Tisbury Zoning Overlays	
District Name	Purpose/Details
Environment-Focused Overlays	
Coastal Districts (Including sub-zones: Shore Zone, Inland Zone)	To prevent flood damage, maintain water quality, assure adequate water supply, prevent pollution, promote wildlife habitats, assure the maintenance of cultural and historic sites and values, preserve and enhance the character of the views, prevent damage to structures, land and water because of erosion, promote economic development of fisheries and

Table 5.4. Tisbury Zoning Overlays	
District Name	Purpose/Details
Environment-Focused Overlays	related industries, and maintain and enhance the overall economy of the island. This district applies to areas within ten feet of mean sea level or within 500 feet of a large body of water.
Marine Districts and Designated Channels	Many Marine Districts and Designated Channels are established in water bodies across Tisbury, but there are no regulatory implications to this designation described in the bylaw.
Groundwater Protection District	The purpose of this... district is to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the community by ensuring an adequate quality and quantity of drinking water, to preserve and protect existing and potential sources of drinking water supplies, to conserve the natural resources of the town; and to prevent contamination of the environment. This overlay is superimposed over the R10, R20, R50, R3A, and B2 Districts. A special permit is required for any use that renders more than 15 percent or 2,500 square feet of any lot impervious.
Wild and Scenic North Shore District	To protect the wild and scenic natural beauty of the District from undue visual intrusion; to allow the unimpeded natural processes of littoral drift to occur, providing continuous beach nourishment along the length of the North Shore; to protect wildlife habitats; to prevent obstruction to navigation, throughout the District: to protect against storm damage that may be caused or exacerbated by inappropriate development; to allow economic development of fisheries and related industries.
Floodplain District	This overlay includes all special flood hazard areas within the Town of Tisbury designated as Zone A, AE or VE on the Dukes County Flood Insurance Rate Map. Its purpose is to ensure that new development is designed to minimize flood damage and provide adequate drainage.
Historic-Focused Overlays	
Tisbury Island Road Districts	To allow for safe access and travel along the roads, and to protect the visual character diversity of landscape and historic features of the journey along the roads. Located along parts of State Road, Lambert’s Cove Road, and Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, this overlay regulates the removal of stone walls, road access, and the height of structures near the road.
Special Ways Districts	The Special Ways designation protects old cart paths and trails that are cultural and historic links to the community’s past, recreational resources for the enjoyment of the outdoors, a conservation resource to accommodate and promote non-motorized forms of travel, links to other trails and roads, and spaces of quiet beauty. There are two Special Ways Districts: Red Coat Hill Road and Shubael Weeks Road.
Scenic Roads Districts	Any repair, maintenance, reconstruction, or paving work done with respect to the designated Scenic Roads shall not involve or include the cutting or removal of trees, or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls, or portions thereof, except with the prior written consent of the Planning Board, after a public hearing.

Table 5.4. Tisbury Zoning Overlays	
District Name	Purpose/Details
Environment-Focused Overlays	
	The public portion of Lambert’s Cove Road is the Town’s only Scenic Roads District.
Historic District	William Street Historic District is established in the Zoning Bylaw but has its own separate regulations. The William Street Historic District Commission must approve any changes to the exterior of structures in the district to preserve local architectural heritage.
Source: Town of Tisbury Zoning Bylaw	

Lagoon Harbor Park, a Town-owned piece of open space along Beach Road between Lagoon Pond and Vineyard Haven Harbor, is shown on the Town’s official zoning map as a zoning district but is never officially established as such in the zoning bylaw. The bylaw contains specific regulations for each of the three tax parcels that make up Lagoon Harbor Park, an approach that is typically discouraged as parcel-by-parcel zoning regulations could potentially be considered illegal “spot zoning.”

Other Regulations

Cluster Development is an alternative type of residential development that minimizes the disturbed area on a property by allowing for more flexibility in design and dimensional regulations. The Planning Board may grant a special permit for a cluster development on a site of at least ten acres that also has enough area to support the proposed number of units for a conventional development. The lots created must individually meet the dimensional requirements of the R10 District.

Accessory apartments are small dwelling units subordinate to a larger, existing primary dwelling on the same site. In Tisbury, one per lot is allowed by special permit from the Zoning Board in any district but R3A and the Coastal Overlay District. Accessory apartments must be located within the existing structure and must be smaller than 600 square feet or 40 percent of the existing habitable area. Only one parking space is required per unit, as opposed to two for any other type of dwelling. Finally, if the accessory apartment is subject to an affordable housing restriction or used for a caregiver, it may take up to 50 percent of the existing structure.

LOCAL CAPACITY

Both the Planning Board and Board of Appeals are responsible for issuing special permits, depending on which district a project is in and the specific proposed use. The Planning Board is responsible for Site Plan Review, a process by which the Board can regulate the design, layout, and built character of a development that is allowed by right.

The Zoning Bylaw establishes a Site Plan Review Board to provide advisory input on most applications for any permit type (including building permits), with few exceptions for minor projects that do not involve significant alterations. This board also is charged with administering rules and regulations for the Coastal District, Tisbury Island Road District, and the Waterfront Commercial District.

As of 2022, Tisbury does not have a Town Planner. The Building Inspector functions as the primary staff liaison to the Planning and Zoning Boards.

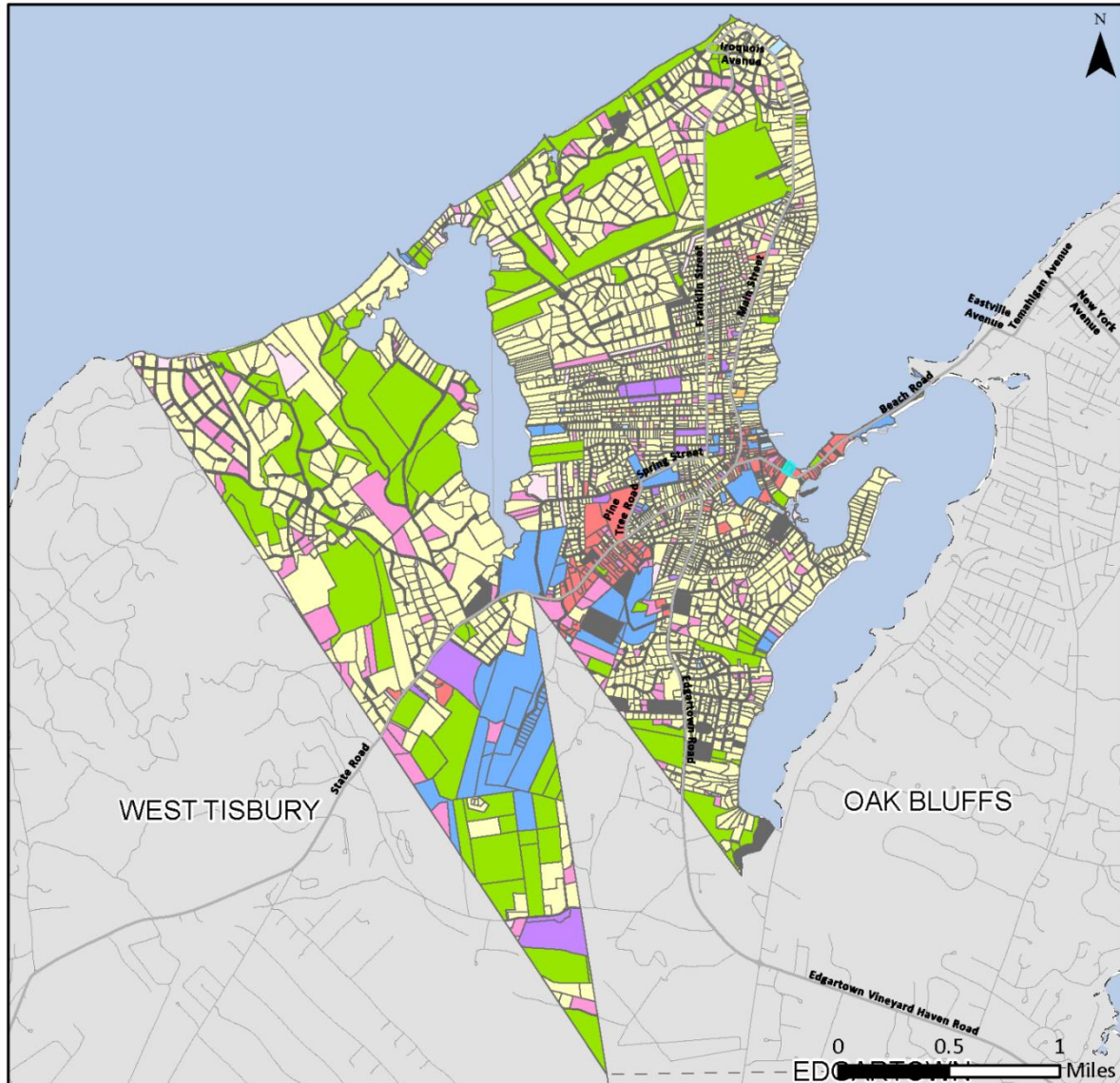
Unlike in most Massachusetts municipalities, certain areas of land use policy on Martha's Vineyard may be subject to regional regulation and review by the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) in addition to local approvals. Towns may also submit a nomination to the MVC to create a District of Critical Planning Concern (DCPC) for "an area that is important to more than one town on the island or to the island as a whole,"⁴⁹ where the Town may then create special regulations for the area. Vineyard Haven Harbor and Lagoon Pond are the DCPCs located at least partially in Tisbury.

The MVC also plays a role in regulating individual projects that meet the definition of Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). Developments may be classified as a DRI "because of their magnitude or the magnitude of their effect on the surrounding environment, are likely to present issues of significance to more than one municipality."⁵⁰ The MVC holds a public hearing on each DRI to determine whether the benefits of the proposal outweigh the detriments and whether it is consistent with existing plans and regulations. The Commission may impose conditions on a DRI as opposed to outright approval or denial.

⁴⁹ Martha's Vineyard Commission, *Districts of Regional Planning Concern*, accessed October 2022, <https://www.mvcommission.org/dcpcs>.

⁵⁰ Martha's Vineyard Commission, *Developments of Regional Impact*, accessed October 2022, <https://www.mvcommission.org/dris>.

Map 5.1 Land Use by Parcel

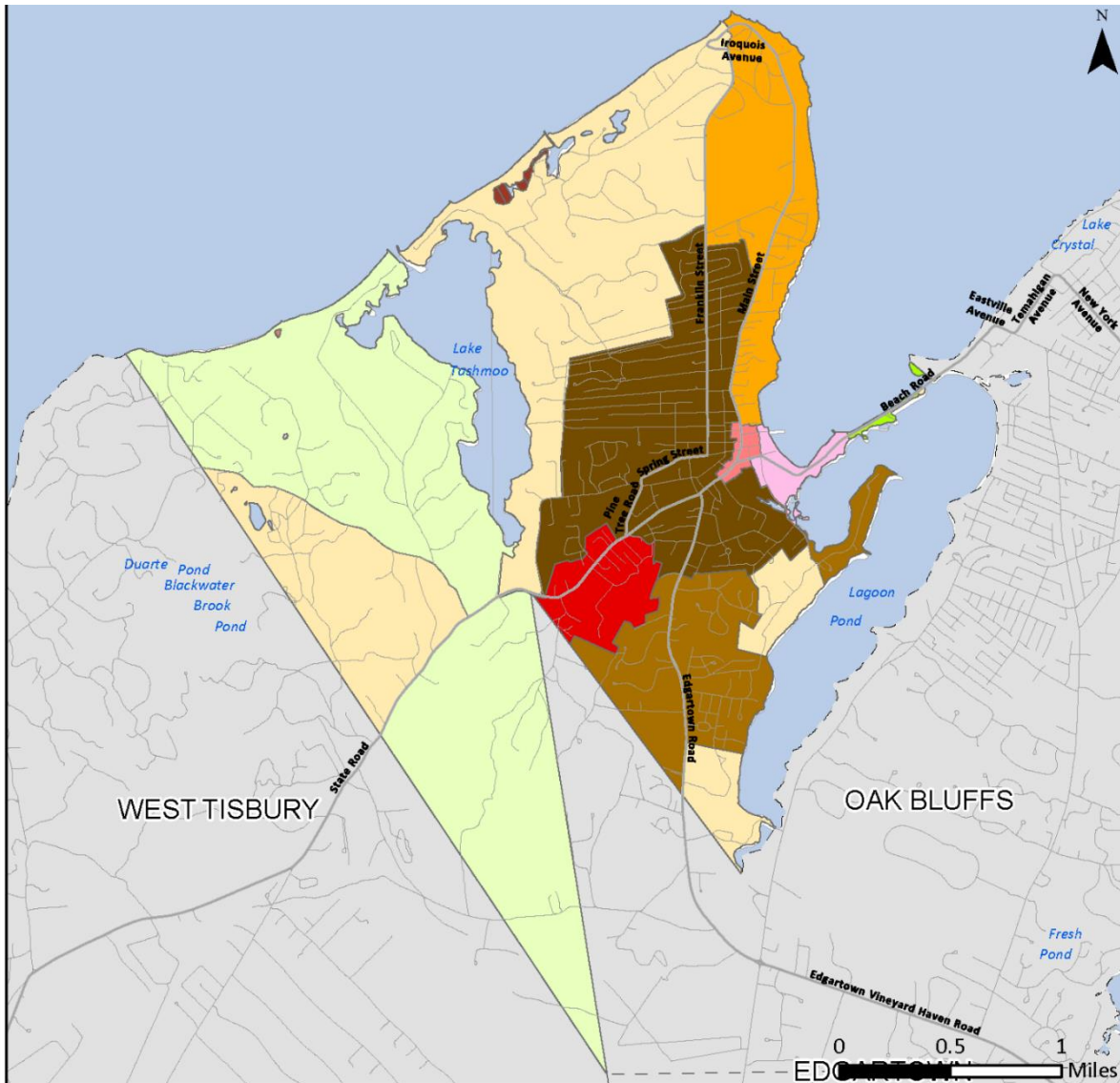


Map 5.1: Land Use by Parcel















- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| — Interstate | ■ Open Space & Agriculture |
| — U.S. Highway | ■ Other Government |
| — State Route | ■ Residential - 3 or more units |
| — Non-numbered Road | ■ Single-Family Residential |
| — Local Roads | ■ Two-Family Residential |
| — Water | ■ Vacant - Developable |
| ■ Surrounding Towns | ■ Vacant - Undevelopable |
| ■ Commercial | ■ Vacant Land - Developable |
| ■ Infrastructure | ■ <all other values> |
| ■ Mixed-Use | |
| ■ Municipal | |
| ■ Nonprofit | |

Date: January 2023 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT

Map 5.2 Zoning Districts

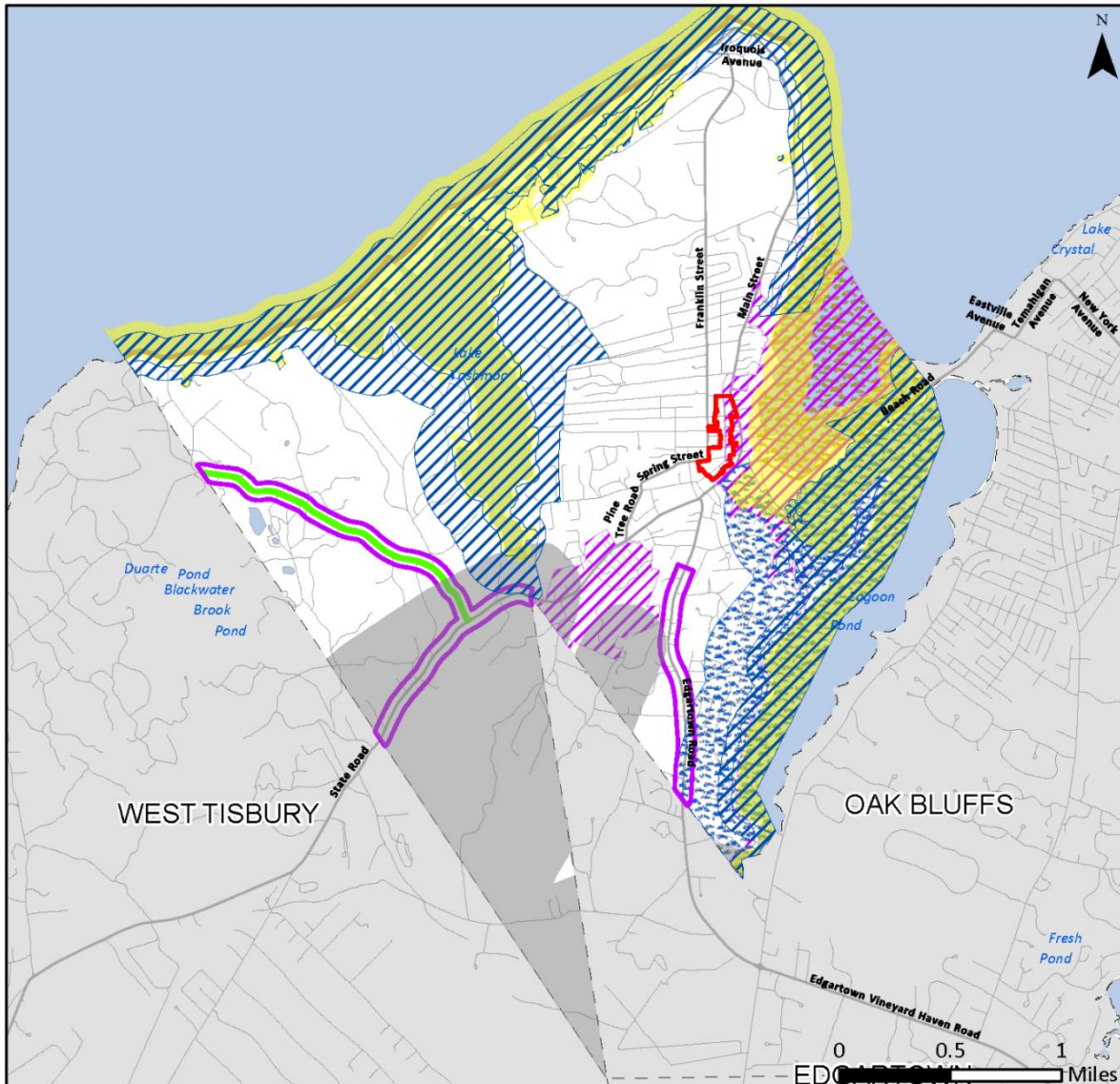


Map 5.2: Zoning Districts
















- | | |
|---|---|
|  Residential 10 |  State Route |
|  Residential 20 |  Non-numbered Road |
|  Residential 25 |  Local Roads |
|  Residential 50 |  Water |
|  Residential 3A |  Surrounding Towns |
|  Business 1 | |
|  Business 2 | |
|  Waterfront Commercial | |
|  Lagoon Harbor Park | |

Date: January 2023 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT

Map 5.3 Zoning Overlays



Map 5.3: Zoning Overlays

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------|
|  | Coastal District |  | State Route |
|  | Floodplain District |  | Non-numbered Road |
|  | Groundwater Protection District |  | Local Roads |
|  | Historic Districts |  | Water |
|  | Island Roads District - Major Roads Zone |  | Surrounding Towns |
|  | Lagoon Pond District | | |
|  | Scenic Roads | | |
|  | Special Sanitary Control District | | |
|  | Vineyard Haven Harbor District | | |
|  | Wild and Scenic North Shore District | | |

Date: January 2023 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT



6. Open Space

Introduction

Open Space in this plan includes any parcel of land that is managed for conservation, recreation, or environmental protection. Open space and parks make important contributions to the quality of life in a community providing places for public life and contributing to the community's distinctive character. Open space also serves important environmental functions providing wildlife habitat, contributing to stormwater management, and helping to maintain water quality.⁵¹

Existing Conditions

Much, but not all, of the open space in Tisbury is protected in perpetuity from future development. Certain properties held by the town, if no longer needed for a public purpose, could be declared surplus and sold. Some of the town's open space is privately owned and is protected temporarily through

⁵¹ Tisbury Planning Board, *Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Plan* (March 2019), 53.

limited conservation easements.⁵² The Open Space and Recreation Committee looks forward to addressing long term protection of Tisbury’s town parks and open spaces as part of this Master Plan.⁵³

STEWARDSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Tisbury residents value their access to parks, water bodies, and natural areas. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the town of Tisbury has a total area of 19.1 square miles, of which 6.5 square miles is land and 12.6 square miles is water. Of the 6.5 square miles of land, over 22 percent is open space and recreation land.

The Town’s open space stewardship and conservation is coordinated and guided by its current State approved 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). An Open Space and Recreation Committee was established in 2020. Guided by a seven-year action plan, the Committee continues to serve in an advisory capacity to the Select Board and works to implement the town’s OSRP.

Table 6.1 lists Open Space by Level of Protection and shows three parcels totaling 144.7 acres with no open space protection. Two of the parcels comprise Mink Meadows Golf Club and the other parcel is the St. Augustine Church Tot Lot. Seventeen parcels totaling 48.9 acres have limited open space protection and are located mainly in the downtown and waterfront areas and include cemeteries, school playgrounds, parks and recreation department land, beach areas and access ways, and Lagoon Bridge Park (see Map 6.1). Tisbury contains 113 parcels totaling 838.8 acres of open space protected in perpetuity. Most parcels protected in perpetuity are in the west and southwest parts of town and consist of town-owned water supply land, land trust properties, land bank, DCR State Forest land, as well as private properties with Conservation Restrictions. Table 6.2, Open Space by Primary Purpose, shows that 52 percent of open space is conservation land, followed by 21 percent as water supply land.

Table 6.1. Open Space Level of Protection

Level of Protection	# of Parcels	Total Area (ac)
None	3	75.1
Limited	17	48.9
In Perpetuity	113	838.8
Source: MassGIS Data: Protected and Recreational Open Space, August 2022.		

Table 6.2. Open Space by Primary Purpose

Primary Purpose	# of Parcels	Total Area (ac)
Recreation and Conservation	16	129.4
Conservation	62	497.8
Historical/Cultural	6	31
Recreation	12	97.8
Water Supply	37	206.8
Source: MassGIS Data: Protected and Recreational Open Space, August 2022.		

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Town of Tisbury Annual Report (2021), 107.

Open Space classified by owner type can be found in Table 6.3 and illustrated in Map 6.2. Municipally owned land accounts for 28 percent of open space parcels, followed by 26 percent for both Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank and a consortium of land trusts. That leaves the remaining 20 percent of open space owned by state, non-profit, and private owners.

Owner Type	# of Parcels	Owners	Total Area (ac)
Public Non-Profit	28	Martha's Vineyard Land Bank	254.1
State	2	DCR-State Parks & Recreation	36.1
Land Trust	30	Vineyard Open Land Foundation; Sheriffs Meadow Foundation; The Nature Conservancy	254.0
Municipal	59	Town of Tisbury Water Dept.; Parks & Rec. Dept.; Conservation Commission; MV Public Schools Dept.; Cemetery Commission	272.2
Non-Profit	3	St. Augustine Church; Island Housing Trust; Hebrew Center	4.0
Private	11	Private owners; Mink Meadow Association	142.4

Source: MassGIS Data: Protected and Recreational Open Space, August 2022.

MAINTENANCE

Tisbury does not have the staffing and committee resources of larger towns. Managing the town’s open space and recreation resources is the responsibility of two departments. The DPW oversees maintenance and improvements of town properties and reservations for group activities and private events. The Facility Department oversees the maintenance of buildings and structures at town parks. Non-profit conservation organizations manage their individual properties and volunteer groups and committees have worked to develop and implement improvement plans at individual parks. The upkeep of open space and recreational facilities covers a broad range of activities, including mowing and landscape maintenance, clearing litter and debris, and repairing damaged equipment and facilities.

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Open Space and Recreation Committee continues to work with partners to establish and promote public knowledge of open space resources and existing pedestrian and bike routes.

Created by Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation, the free TrailsMV mobile app features easy-to-read maps and highlights over 100 conservation properties open to the public. The new and improved TrailsMV includes trail maps and descriptions for each property, along with excursions, informational articles and alerts, event listings, and photographs.

CONNECTIVITY

Town parks and open spaces are unevenly distributed throughout the town and not equally accessible to all residents. The neighborhood between Franklin Street and Lake Tashmoo and the neighborhoods south and east of State Road contain Tisbury’s largest year-round population but are distant from town

recreation areas. There is a strong desire to develop a safe pedestrian and bike network to connect the open space lands and parks.⁵⁴

In 2021, The Martha's Vineyard Commission created walking tours in GIS StoryMaps that are accessible online, that allows anyone to take a self-guided tour from Vineyard Haven to West Chop or through the southeast side of Vineyard Haven along Lagoon Pond Road.⁵⁵

The Land Bank has worked to establish a new trail from the Bare Hill Preserve to Old Sailors Burying Ground Cemetery and has implemented a walking/biking path along Herring Creek Road toward the Tashmoo Town beach. The Land Bank has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Tisbury to maintain these trails and paths.

The Town is working in collaboration with the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation on a plan for a connected network of trails through Tisbury and is working with the MVC Bike Pedestrian Committee and local Tisbury bike enthusiasts, to create an inventory of "quiet streets" that might be used to create a bike network connecting town parks and link to broader island-wide bike routes.⁵⁶

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Town does not have a recreation program. Currently, children can participate in island summer programs and there are island-wide adult recreation programs. In summer 2022, the Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Committee, in conjunction with the West Chop Club offered a tennis outreach program with free tennis lessons for Tisbury residents at the Lake Street tennis courts. This was successful and could continue to be offered in the future.

A citizen group (Friends of Owen Park) worked with the town planning board and DPW to research the park history, document site conditions, identify the needs of different user groups and convened residents to set goals for future park improvements. This group also completed a master plan for the park in 2017. Over the past year the friends group worked with the town planning board and DPW to implement improvements at the park including repairing the historic flagpole, planting two new gardens, relocating and leveling benches, repainting the band stand, and completed an accessible seating area at the top of the park. The volunteers in the citizens group will continue to partner with the Town DPW and the Vision Council to make park improvements and provide ongoing maintenance support. Currently, the Open Space and Recreation Committee guides park planning with public input through surveys and workshops.

Owen Park, Veterans Memorial Park, and Lake Street Park are recreational spaces managed by the Town Recreation and Parks Department. Owen Park has a bandstand, beach, dock, playground, public restroom and showers. Veterans Memorial Park has athletic fields, basketball courts, a sand volleyball area, and restrooms and is also the site of the annual summer Beach Road Weekend music festival. Lake Street Park has a boat slip, dock, and tennis courts. New pickleball courts were proposed for Lake

⁵⁴ Tisbury Planning Board, Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Plan (March 2019), 68.

⁵⁵ "Tisbury – Self-Guided Tours," Dukes County GIS, compiled by the Martha's Vineyard Commission (2021).

⁵⁶ Town of Tisbury Annual Report (2021), 94.

Street Park in 2022. The installation of new clay tennis courts at Church Street is underway and new pickleball courts are proposed for Lake Street Park. A comprehensive inventory of parks, beaches, and open spaces and their current conditions and potential improvements was completed as part of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.⁵⁷

WATERFRONT ACCESS

Greater waterfront access for both active and passive recreation was the top priority based on the community survey and public meetings that were part of the 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Over 70 percent of the survey respondents noted the addition of a swimming beach as a top recreation need. There are three town owned properties with swimming facilities and one Martha's Vineyard Land Bank property where swimming is permitted. Most of the town's 15 miles of shoreline is held in private ownership without public access. Several town streets that end at the water's edge are informally used for swimming by residents in surrounding neighborhoods. All these beaches are small, several are difficult to access, and some give the appearance of being private.

In 2021, the Town improved the Owen Little Way Park parking lot, and with additional funding, the Town has plans to create an ADA compliant walkway from the parking area to the beach/water, and to add a bike rack and provide a picnic table. at the beach.

Improvements to public access at Lagoon Harbor Park are in an initial planning stage, as well as improvements along Lagoon Pond between Winds Up and the Town Landing, where the town park land will have public gathering areas and water access.⁵⁸

Local Policies and Practices

State and local measures are available to protect open space and recreation land, including:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund Protection – properties acquired with the receipt of grant funding through this program are afforded protection as parkland, essentially in perpetuity.
- Article 97 of the articles of amendment to the Massachusetts Constitution protects publicly owned lands used for conservation or recreation purposes. For a property to be sold, transferred, or converted to a different use, Article 97 requires a vote by the Conservation Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting, and a 2/3 vote of the State Legislature in support of the disposition.
- Conservation restrictions, easements, and other deed restrictions can be used to limit future development.
- Chapter 61 – tax incentives can help protect forest, recreation, and agricultural lands by providing tax incentives to landowners who are willing to manage their lands for these purposes.

⁵⁷ Vision Planning Summary – Parks, Beaches, and Open Space, 2014.

⁵⁸ Town of Tisbury Annual Report (2021), 94-95.

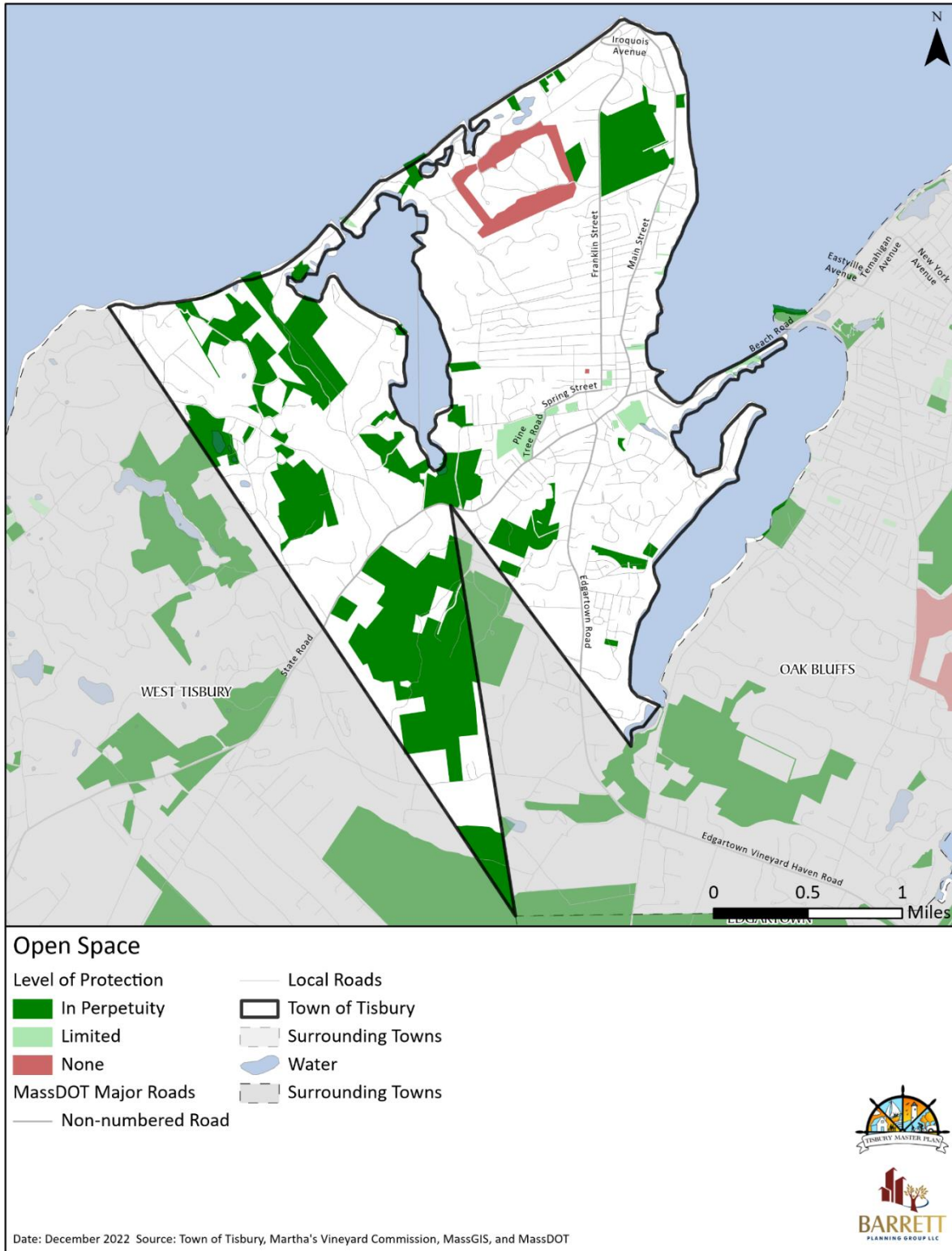
- Chapter 91 – lands that fall under the jurisdiction of Chapter 91 (Commonwealth Tidelands) must include provisions for public use and access.⁵⁹

In 2005, Tisbury adopted the provisions of the Community Preservation Act (CPA), which established a nine-member Community Preservation Committee (CPC) which receives applications for funding and makes recommendations to the Town. Tisbury has appropriated over \$11 million over the past fifteen years, FY 2006-2021. In 2021 the following CPC projects related to open space were completed:

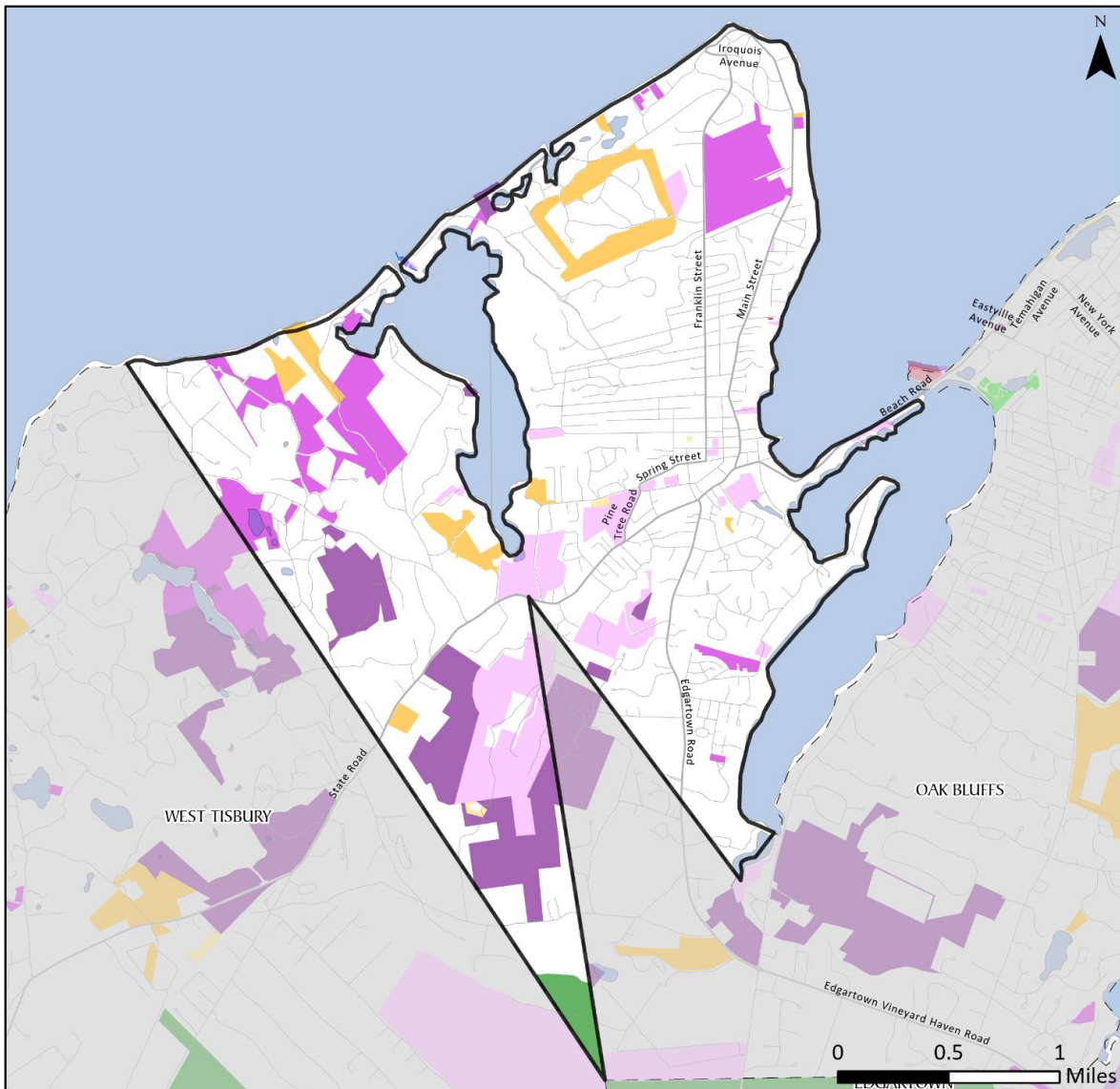
- Owen Park Upper Terrace Seating Area
- American Legion – Flagpole Pocket Park
- Veterans Memorial Park Parking Lot Upgrade and Handicapped Accessible Parking
- Amphitheater Accessibility and Safety Upgrade
- Tashmoo Waterworks Accessibility Study
- Town Benches – Purchase and Installation

⁵⁹ Tisbury Planning Board, *Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Plan*, March 2019, 54.

Map 6.1 Open Space by Level of Protection



Map 6.2 Open Space by Owner



Open Space

OpenSpace: Lands

- DCR-State Parks & Recreation
- Department of Fish & Game
- County
- Municipal
- Public Non-Profit
- Land Trust

- Conservation Organization
 - Non-Profit
 - Private
 - Municipal and County
- MassDOT Major Roads
- Non-numbered Road
 - Local Roads

- Town of Tisbury
- Surrounding Towns
- Water
- Surrounding Towns

Date: March 2023 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT





7. Housing

Introduction

Housing is an essential part of every community, yet often it poses difficult and highly charged challenges. Since every household pays some type of shelter cost, housing serves as a community's socio-economic infrastructure and gatekeeper; the cost of housing plays a major role in determining who can live in a town.

Tisbury's year-round housing market operates under significant constraints. The pressures of the seasonal market mean that Tisbury residents must sometimes compete for housing with high-income visitors from across the country and world. Tisbury also has a lack of buildable area as one of the

smallest municipalities in Massachusetts (only containing about 6.5 square miles of land area), where some areas are already significantly developed. Other constraints include a rising cost of living, rising construction costs, and the Town’s desirable and relatively isolated location on the island of Martha’s Vineyard. Overcoming these obstacles and providing an adequate supply of safe, affordable housing to accommodate year-round residents will continue to be a significant challenge for the Town in the coming years.

Existing Conditions

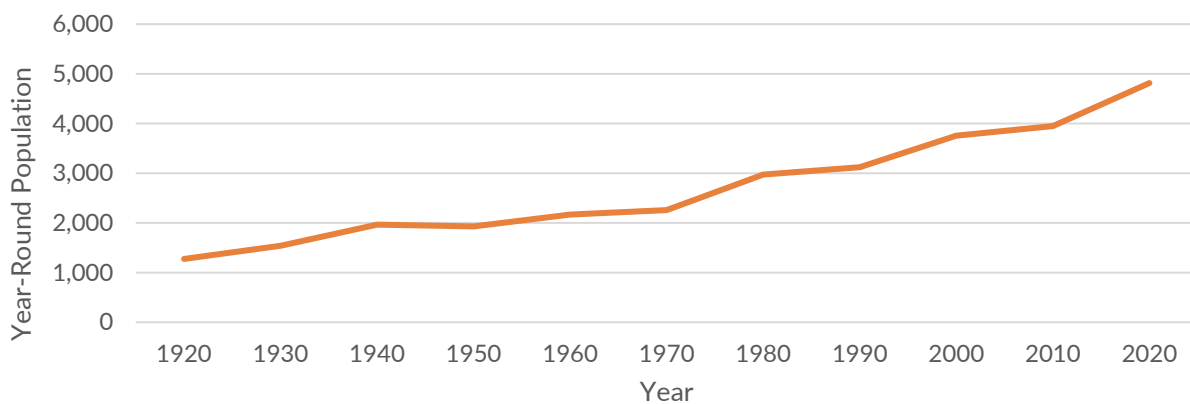
WHO LIVES IN TISBURY?

Demographics

Understanding Tisbury’s housing inventory and housing market requires knowing who already lives here and how that population is changing. The Town’s year-round population has been growing consistently for decades (see Figure 7.1), but according to Census 2020, a particularly sharp increase of 22 percent has occurred since 2010.

Figure 7.1. Tisbury Population Over Time

(Source: US Decennial Census 2020)



Tisbury is not only growing but also becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Between 2010 and 2020, the proportion of White residents fell from 84 percent to 75 percent, but this is due to growth in other racial groups rather than an absolute decrease in the White population, which also grew. The number of residents identifying as “Two or More Races,” more than quintupled. In the 2020 Census, Tisbury’s proportions of minority racial groups exceeded the Dukes County averages in all cases but one, American Indian or Indigenous Americans.

Table 7.1. Population by Race						
	Tisbury		Dukes County		Massachusetts	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Population	4,815	100.0%	20,600	100.0%	7,029,917	100.0%
White	3,603	74.8%	16,321	78.2%	4,896,037	69.6%
Black	203	4.2%	813	3.9%	494,029	7.0%
American Indian	24	0.5%	214	1.0%	24,018	0.3%
Asian	49	1.0%	185	0.9%	507,934	7.2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	10	0.0%	2,301	0.0%
Other	228	4.7%	830	4.0%	496,731	7.1%
Two or More Races	708	14.7%	2,227	10.8%	608,867	8.7%

Source: US Decennial Census (2020)

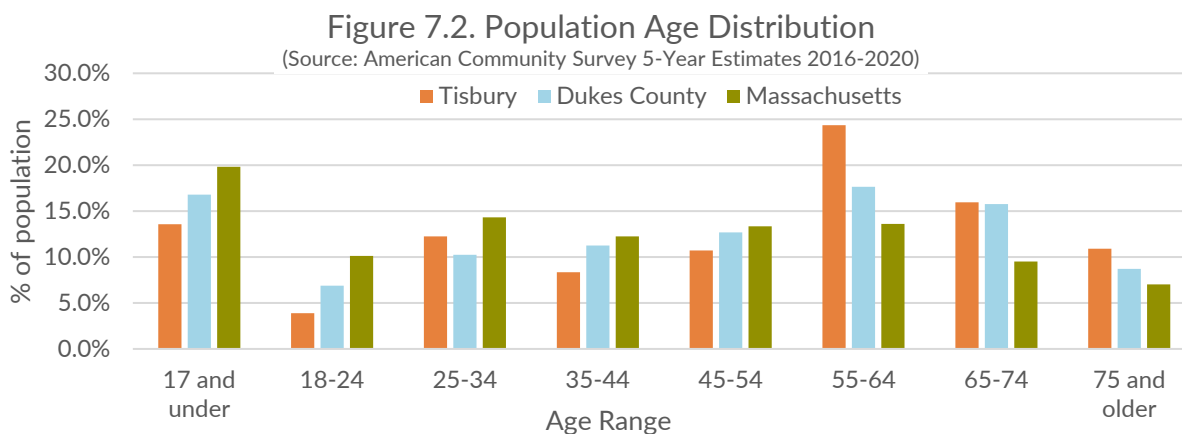
Federal policy defines “Hispanic” not as a race, but as an ethnicity. For Census purposes, respondents indicate whether they are Hispanic or not in addition to one of the races listed in Table 7.1. The 2020 Census counted 153 Hispanic Tisbury residents, or about 3 percent of the population. This is a slightly higher proportion than Dukes County (2.6 percent) but lower than the state average (12.6 percent). Most residents of Tisbury were not born in Massachusetts. The largest group was born elsewhere in the United States, and about 21 percent were born abroad (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2. Tisbury Population by Place of Birth		
	#	%
Born in Massachusetts	1,545	37.4%
Born elsewhere in USA	1,705	41.3%
Foreign-born, naturalized citizen	481	11.6%
Foreign-born, not a US citizen	401	9.7%
Total Population	4,132	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020

According to the American Community Survey 2016-2020 Five Year Estimates (ACS), most of the nearly 900 foreign-born Tisbury residents immigrated from South America. Brazil was the most frequently reported country of origin, while many residents reported being from Western Europe and the Caribbean, too. The official sources cited in this plan do not, however, account for undocumented migrants that may live in the community.

Tisbury’s population has aged significantly over the last decade. In 2010, about one-third of residents were aged 55 or older, and in 2020 it was estimated that residents over 55 were the majority. Figure 7.2 shows that Tisbury has a higher proportion of residents in the three oldest age groups than Dukes County or Massachusetts and a lower proportion of residents aged 24 or younger.



HOUSING INVENTORY

Vacancy and Tenure

Tisbury is commonly known as the Vineyard’s year-round community, and according to the U.S. Census Bureau, most of the Town’s housing units have indeed historically been occupied by year-round residents. Table 7.3 shows that in 2020, about two-thirds of the homes in Tisbury were occupied year-round, a higher rate than any neighboring town and higher than the Dukes County average.

However, compared to communities outside of the Cape and Islands region, a vacancy rate of one-third is very high. Most of the vacant units in Table 7.3 are occupied seasonally. If a home is not occupied when the decennial census occurs (every ten years on April 1), the Census Bureau considers the unit vacant. There are many different reasons a unit may be unoccupied, so the Census Bureau also estimates the types of vacancy in each community. In Tisbury, an estimated 96 percent of vacancies are due to the seasonal market, with the remaining 4 percent awaiting sale or rent. Vacancies in the other Martha’s Vineyard communities are also mostly due to the seasonal market, so vacancy rates are a reasonable proxy for the prevalence of seasonal units on the Vineyard.

	Occupied Units		Vacant Units*		Total Units	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Tisbury	2,139	66.3%	1,087	33.7%	3,226	100.0%
Edgartown	2,191	41.9%	3,043	58.1%	5,234	100.0%
Oak Bluffs	2,316	52.3%	2,113	47.7%	4,429	100.0%
West Tisbury	1,509	63.6%	862	36.4%	2,371	100.0%
Dukes County	8,932	51.0%	8,598	49.0%	17,530	100.0%
Massachusetts	2,749,225	91.7%	249,312	8.3%	2,998,537	100.0%

Source: US Decennial Census (2020)
*Vacant Units include all vacancies, not only units used for seasonal or vacation purposes.

Map 7.1 shows vacancy rates by **census block group**. The Census Bureau uses block group geographies to report data in areas smaller than an entire city or town, e.g., in areas that often

approximate neighborhoods or villages.⁶⁰ The block group containing West Chop is the only one with mostly seasonal units, and the block group centered on the State Road commercial area has the lowest vacancy rate at 25 percent. For homes that are occupied, Tisbury has the highest proportion of renter households in Dukes County, roughly in line with the state average (see Table 7.4). An estimated 39 percent of all households in Dukes County that rent their homes live in Tisbury. Nearly 80 percent of all households west of Lake Tashmoo own their homes (Map 7.2), whereas in Vineyard Haven, renters make up about 45 percent of households.

Table 7.4. Owners and Renters in Tisbury and Neighboring Communities						
	Owner Households		Renter Households		Total Households	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Tisbury	1,195	61.9%	737	38.1%	1,932	100.0%
Edgartown	1,069	73.8%	380	26.2%	1,449	100.0%
Oak Bluffs	1,331	71.1%	542	28.9%	1,873	100.0%
West Tisbury	712	86.9%	107	13.1%	819	100.0%
Dukes County	4,990	72.5%	1,897	27.5%	6,887	100.0%
Massachusetts	1,654,892	62.5%	992,088	37.5%	2,646,980	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020

Tisbury has a relatively diverse housing stock for Martha's Vineyard, with about 12 percent of dwellings in multiple-unit structures compared to 8 percent across Dukes County. ACS estimates indicate that Tisbury has most of the Vineyard's supply of 3-to-4-unit buildings. However, the Town is still heavily weighted towards single-family homes compared to the state average of about 58 percent single-family homes.

⁶⁰ Census block groups are the next-smallest geographic division below the town level available for Tisbury used by the Census Bureau in data collection.

Table 7.5. Housing Units by Number of Units in Structure				
# of units	Tisbury		Dukes County	
	#	%	#	%
1, detached	2,903	86.4%	16,312	90.5%
1, attached*	35	1.0%	266	1.5%
2	82	2.4%	774	4.3%
3 or 4	267	7.9%	366	2.0%
5 to 9	48	1.4%	153	0.8%
10 or more	25	0.7%	112	0.6%
Mobile Home or Other	0	0.0%	47	0.3%
Total Units	3,360	100.0%	18,030	100.0%

*Typically describes a condominium
 Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020

Age and Location of Housing

The age of housing units can illuminate the local history of residential development and help in making assumptions about current conditions. Map 7.3 shows the year of construction for the principal residential structure on each parcel in Tisbury. Pre-twentieth century homes are concentrated in Vineyard Haven and West Chop, although historic properties can be found throughout town. Most housing units in Tisbury were constructed before 1980, but many of the houses in western Tisbury and other traditionally rural areas were constructed after 1980.

Figure 7.3 shows the year residential structures were built in Tisbury compared to Dukes County and the state. The Vineyard’s housing stock skews newer than the rest of Massachusetts, with a large percentage of dwellings built between 1970 and 1999. Tisbury has a higher proportion of homes built before 1940 than Dukes County as a whole, while post-2010 Massachusetts has produced more units relative to its total existing stock than Tisbury or the Vineyard in general.

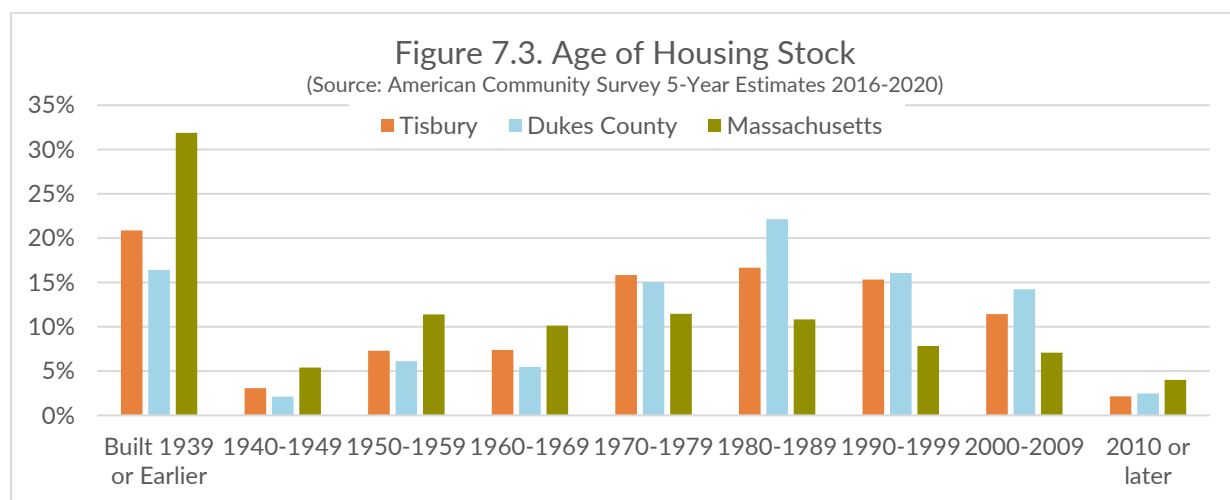


Table 7.6 presents a series of characteristics for Tisbury’s single-family dwellings. The top half of the table reports Tisbury’s single-family residential properties by year built.⁶¹ The “building to land value” in the far right column is a simple calculation where the assessed value of the structure on a property is divided by the assessed value of the underlying land. A ratio above 1.00 means that the building is worth more than the land it is situated on, and a ratio below 1.00 means that the land is more valuable. The further away the ratio is from 1.00, the greater the discrepancy between building and land value. A low building to land value ratio often indicates an increased likelihood that the existing building may be torn down and rebuilt, as an investor could increase the value of the entire property by modernizing (and usually expanding) the house.

Like the building to land value, the floor area ratio (FAR) is a simple ratio that compares the total floor area of a building to the area of the lot on which it is located. A high FAR means that a building is relatively large for its lot size. Older residences tend to be built on smaller lots and are larger on average than midcentury homes, correlating with higher FARs. The smallest houses, on average, are those built during the 1940s and 1950s and the largest are those built in the twenty-first century. Homes built between 1901 and 1960 have an average building to land ratio less than one.

The bottom half of Table 7.6 lists the same statistics as the top half, but the same single-family residential properties are instead divided by zoning district (zoning districts are discussed in detail in Chapter 5: Land Use; see Map 5.2). Most units are in the densely populated Residential 10 District, where homes are on average smaller than any other residential zone. Only the Residential 25 District has an average building-to-land ratio less than one, and Residential 50 and 3A districts have low FARs due to their large minimum lot sizes (see also, Table 5.3 in Chapter 5: Land Use).

Table 7.6. Selected Characteristics of Single-Family Housing Stock (by Parcel)						
	# of properties	Avg. Building Area	Avg. Lot Area	Avg. Stories	Avg. FAR*	Avg. BtL**
By Year Built						
1900 or earlier	227	4,432	0.56	1.9	0.309	1.193
1901-1920	93	3,725	0.55	1.8	0.213	0.842
1921-1940	171	3,108	0.50	1.5	0.215	0.844
1941-1960	216	2,887	0.56	1.3	0.192	0.778
1961-1980	473	3,347	0.82	1.4	0.160	1.054
1981-2000	620	4,072	0.94	1.7	0.188	1.415
2001 or later	560	4,570	0.98	1.7	0.208	1.837
By Zoning District						
B Districts	24	2,125	0.23	1.5	0.286	1.184
Residential 10	1,212	3,210	0.33	1.8	0.261	1.409

⁶¹ Other housing types are excluded because the characteristics shown in Table 7.6 are not easily comparable between different housing types, and as single-family makes up over 85 percent of the Town’s housing stock it should be representative of larger trends.

	# of properties	Avg. Building Area	Avg. Lot Area	Avg. Stories	Avg. FAR*	Avg. BtL**
Residential 20	322		0.63	1.6	0.169	1.356
Residential 25	274	5,025	0.73	1.8	0.212	0.940
Residential 3A	148	5,490	3.09	1.6	0.063	1.181
Residential 50	380	4,805	1.69	1.6	0.091	1.214
Total Avg.	2,360	3,887	0.81	1.6	0.203	1.299
*Floor area ratio						
**Building to land value ratio						
<i>Source: Tisbury Assessor's Data (2021)</i>						

Housing Production

Local building permit data show how many new residential units are approved each year, even when some approved units have not yet been constructed. Table 7.7 shows the residential permits issued by the Tisbury Building Department between 2017 and 2021.

	Single Family Dwellings	Accessory Apartments	Multi-Family Dwellings	Mixed-Use Buildings	Demolition	Net Residential Structures*
2017	18	0	0	2	10	10
2018	18	55	0	0	4	69
2019	19	5	1	0	7	18
2020	17	5	2	0	15	9
2021	26	4	10	0	13	27
Total (2017-2021)	98	69	13	2	49	133
*Number of building permits minus number of demolition permits						
<i>Source: Tisbury Building Department</i>						

On average, just under twenty single-family units have been built per year since 2017, and there were frequently more than ten residential demolitions. Few multi-family dwellings are permitted, although many were approved in 2021.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Chapter 40B, the state's regional planning law, includes a provision for affordable housing development (Sections 20-23). The law assumes that if less than 10 percent of a city or town's housing is deed restricted as affordable for low- or moderate- income people, the town has not provided its regional "fair share" of affordable housing. State regulations define low income as a household with income at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) for the region in which they reside (see Table 7.8 for Dukes County income limits, determined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development). In a development created under Chapter 40B, the rent or mortgage payment for low-

income households cannot exceed 30 percent of their monthly gross income. For example, in Dukes County a family of three with a total annual income of \$85,150 would be considered low-income (80 percent AMI), and for them, the maximum affordable housing cost per month would be \$2,128. According to state guidelines, the deed restrictions required for SHI units must also require that the tenant or owners of the unit occupy that as their primary residence.

Table 7.8. Affordable Housing Income Limits by Household Size (Dukes County, 2022)

	30% (extremely low income)	50% (very low income)	80% (low income)	100% (median income)	120% (moderate income)
1-person	\$25,850	\$43,050	\$66,250	\$75,200	\$90,200
2-person	\$29,550	\$49,200	\$75,700	\$85,900	\$103,100
3-person	\$33,250	\$55,350	\$85,150	\$96,700	\$116,000
4-person	\$36,900	\$61,500	\$94,600	\$107,400	\$128,900
5-person	\$39,900	\$66,450	\$102,200	\$116,000	\$139,200

Source: Dukes County Regional Housing Authority

Under Chapter 40B, developers proposing affordable developments may file a comprehensive permit to simplify and expedite local review. A comprehensive permit requires review only by the local Zoning Board of Appeals and can allow for many local regulations, such as zoning or a local wetlands bylaw, to be waived to promote the creation of affordable units. DHCD keeps an official count of affordable units in each community, called the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). If SHI units make up less than 10 percent of a community’s total year-round units, it is difficult for that community to deny a comprehensive permit.

Due to unique housing market pressures and high property values, Dukes County, along with Nantucket, has special permission from the State Legislature to create permanent deed restrictions for households with incomes up to 150 percent AMI. While income-restricted, year-round units above 80 percent AMI⁶² are an important part of addressing Tisbury’s local housing needs, they do not meet the requirements for inclusion on the SHI.

Tisbury’s SHI is shown in Table 7.9. Notably, the way DHCD counts rental and homeownership units is different. For rental projects, if at least 25 percent of units are affordable per the Chapter 40B definition, every unit in the project may be counted on the SHI regardless of actual affordability.

⁶² Often called “community” or “attainable” housing depending on the context although these terms currently have no legal definition under Massachusetts law.

Table 7.9. Tisbury Subsidized Housing Inventory (October 2022)					
Name	Tenure	SHI Units	Expires	Comp. Permit?	Subsidizing Agency
Greenough House	Rental	6	Perp.	No	DHCD
Hillside Village	Rental	40	2025	No	RHS
Vineyard Village	Rental	12	2029	No	DHCD
Hillside Village III	Rental	5	2035	Yes	DHCD, HUD
Hillside Village II	Rental	10	2030	Yes	HUD
Love Housing Apartments	Rental	5	2042	Yes	HUD
Fairwinds	Ownership	3	Perp.	Yes	MassHousing, FHLBB
Kelsey Project	Ownership	1	2104	Yes	DHCD
Habitat for Humanity of Martha's Vineyard	Ownership	1	2106	Yes	DHCD
Lamberts Cove Road	Ownership	1	Perp.	Yes	DHCD
DMH Group Homes	Rental	8	N/A	No	DMH
Water Street	Rental	6	Perp.	Yes	DHCD
Lake Street	Rental	2	2110	Yes	DHCD
Greenwood Avenue	Ownership	2	Perp.	No	DHCD
Daggett Avenue	Ownership	1	Perp.	No	DHCD
Kuehn's Way ⁶³	Rental	20	Perp.	Yes	DHCD
Perlman House	Rental	7	Perp.	???	DHCD, MassHousing
Village Court Apartments	Rental	6	Perp.	No	DHCD
Total Units:		136	SHI Percentage:		6.9%
<i>Source: DHCD</i>					

Fifty-five SHI units (about 40 percent) are age-restricted rentals at a single site, Hillside Village, owned and operated by local nonprofit Island Elderly Housing Inc., and eight are group home units operated by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. This leaves families seeking low-income housing with comparatively few choices, and even fewer for those looking to own a home. Most of Tisbury's affordable units are rentals, with only nine deed-restricted homeownership units.

The deed restrictions on several SHI properties are set to expire within the next decade. However, all of these are owned and managed by established community nonprofits. Nonprofits will typically renew any expiring affordable housing restrictions, so Tisbury should not expect to lose units from the SHI over the lifetime of this plan.

⁶³Initially, the twenty Kuehn's Way units were mistakenly excluded from the SHI. As of this writing, the Town is working to correct the error.

The Island Housing Trust, an island-wide nonprofit specializing in the production of affordable housing using a community land trust (CLT) model,⁶⁴ has successfully completed nine of the projects in Tisbury’s SHI, totaling forty-six affordable units (about 39 percent of the SHI). Their largest and most recent project is Kuehn’s Way, off State Road, which was completed in 2022.

The IHT-developed units on the SHI are only a portion of housing the organization has created. The Trust has 22 units in Tisbury that are income restricted above the 80 percent AMI level- up to 140 percent AMI- and are therefore not eligible for inclusion on the SHI. For example, in addition to the two Lake Street units listed in Table 7.9, the project also created four units at 100 percent of AMI. The IHT participated in two more projects in Tisbury: Hanover House created 15 affordable units for Martha’s Vineyard Hospital employees and a collaboration with Harbor Homes created a six-unit group housing opportunity for extremely low-income households. These are both valuable community assets that nonetheless are not counted on the SHI due to the targeted populations they serve.

In recent years, developers have shown interest in pursuing comprehensive permits for large-scale multifamily housing projects in Tisbury. In 2020, a developer submitted a comprehensive permit application for a 52-unit apartment project in Vineyard Haven on the site of the former Hinckley’s Hardware, but the project was never realized and commercial uses have subsequently been proposed for the site.⁶⁵ In 2021, another developer applied for a 54-unit mixed-use comprehensive permit project at 386 State Road in the Business 2 zoning district (Island Cove Apartments), but this project is also on hold. MVC staff report that it is possible this project may move forward.

Tisbury has the highest number of affordable units of any Martha’s Vineyard town, and accounts for over one-third of the total affordable units on the island. Still, the Town is dozens of units short of its 10 percent obligation, and there are many local housing needs beyond those defined by Chapter 40B (see “Housing Needs” section).

HOUSING NEEDS

Income and Poverty

Tisbury has the lowest median household income (MHI) and highest poverty rates on Martha’s Vineyard. Table 7.10 shows that the Town’s MHI falls significantly below that of other Dukes County communities and the state.

Place	MHI
West Tisbury	\$98,843
Chilmark	\$98,417
Aquinnah	\$98,182

⁶⁴ A CLT is a nonprofit entity that can be used to create affordable housing while retaining ownership of the underlying land. Homebuyers purchase their homes but lease the underlying land from the CLT, removing the cost of land from the sale price of the unit and allowing the CLT to maintain affordability in perpetuity.

⁶⁵ Martha’s Vineyard Commission, *Developments of Regional Impact*, accessed October 2022, <https://www.mvcommission.org/dris>.

Table 7.10. Median Household Income (MHI)	
Oak Bluffs	\$90,313
Massachusetts	\$84,385
Edgartown	\$78,419
Dukes County	\$77,318
Tisbury	\$52,711
<i>Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020</i>	

In 2020 Tisbury was estimated to have a 4.3 percent family poverty rate and a 9.9 percent individual poverty rate (see Table 7.11).

Table 7.11. Income Below Poverty Level in Past 12 Months				
	Families		Individuals	
	#	%	#	%
Tisbury	43	4.3%	406	9.9%
Edgartown	34	3.3%	257	6.0%
Oak Bluffs	34	3.4%	329	7.1%
West Tisbury	0	0.0%	140	6.5%
Dukes County	127	3.1%	1,291	7.5%
Massachusetts	110,418	6.6%	653,454	9.8%
<i>Source: US Decennial Census (2020)</i>				

Households are considered housing cost burdened when they pay more than 30 percent of their total income for housing costs, including utilities. Table 7.12 shows HUD’s estimates for housing cost burden among Tisbury households. About one-third of all Tisbury households are thought to pay more than 30 percent of their incomes for housing. The problem is less prevalent among homeowners, but hundreds of owner households still pay more for housing than they can afford.

Table 7.12. Housing Cost Burden by Household Tenure						
Cost Burden as % of household income	Owner Households		Renter Households		All Households	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
less than 30%	725	72.1%	490	59.0%	1,215	66.2%
30%-50%	140	13.9%	115	13.9%	255	13.9%
Greater than 50%	140	13.9%	210	25.3%	350	19.1%
Cost Burden not available	0	0.0%	15	1.8%	15	0.8%
Total	1,005	100.0%	830	100.0%	1,835	100.0%
<i>Source: HUD CHAS (2019)</i>						

Table 7.13 shows housing cost burdens affect households in different income ranges as well: at income levels below 30 percent of AMI, most households are housing cost burdened. Forty percent or more of

households at the under 30 percent and 50 to 80 percent AMI levels are severely housing cost burdened, meaning that they pay more than half of their incomes in housing costs.

Table 7.13. Housing Cost Burden by Household Income										
Cost Burden as % of household income	< 30% AMI		30-50% AMI		50-80% AMI		80-100% AMI		> 100% AMI	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 30%	155	42.5%	215	65.2%	215	53.8%	185	75.5%	455	92.9%
30%-50%	50	13.7%	100	30.3%	25	6.3%	60	24.5%	20	4.1%
Greater than 50%	160	43.8%	15	4.5%	160	40.0%	0	0.0%	15	3.1%
Total	365	100.0%	330	100.0%	400	100.0%	245	100.0%	490	100.0%
*Uses HUD's HAMFI definition Source: HUD CHAS (2019)										

Homelessness

The Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness conducts an annual point in time (PIT) count of people who are unsheltered or staying in an emergency shelter. In 2021, nine individuals and two two-person families were found to be living unsheltered in Dukes County. PIT counts can only offer a snapshot of a single day, however, and do not account for other types of housing instability, such as “couch surfing.” Harbor Homes MV, the primary local nonprofit dealing with homelessness, performed another count in their own facilities and counted 43 people in 2022, rising from 28 in 2020.⁶⁶

There is no year-round homeless shelter on the Vineyard, although Harbor Homes MV offers a temporary winter shelter on an annual basis and has several programs for housing individuals and families in need.

HOUSING MARKET TRENDS

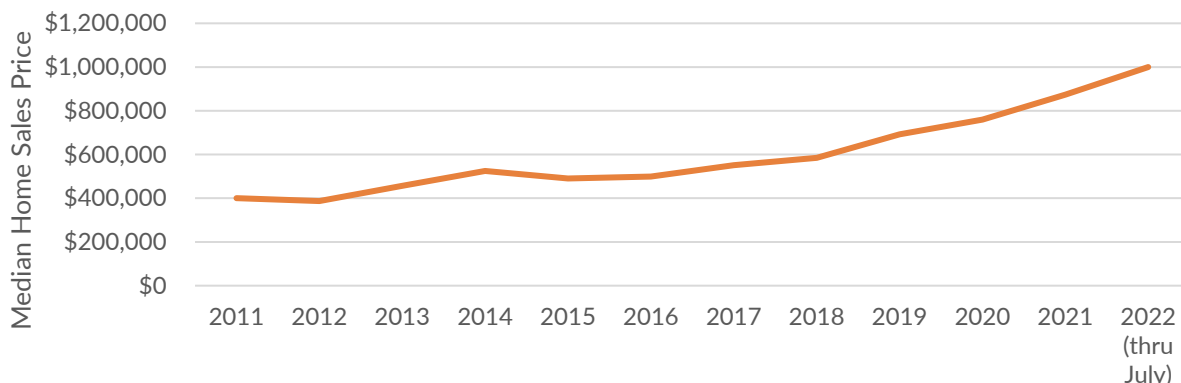
Tisbury's housing market has become less affordable for middle- and lower-income households over time, and sale prices are still rising rapidly (see Figure 7.4). From 2011 to mid-2022, the median home sales price (including all housing types) in Tisbury grew from \$400,000 to \$1,000,000, an increase of 150 percent. Median sales prices for both single-family homes and condominiums have more than tripled since 2000, but median household income did not even double during the same period.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Eunki Seonwoo, “Homeless count inches up on MV,” *MV Times*, (March 15, 2022).

⁶⁷ US Census, 2000-2020.

Figure 7.4. Median Home Sale Price in Tisbury

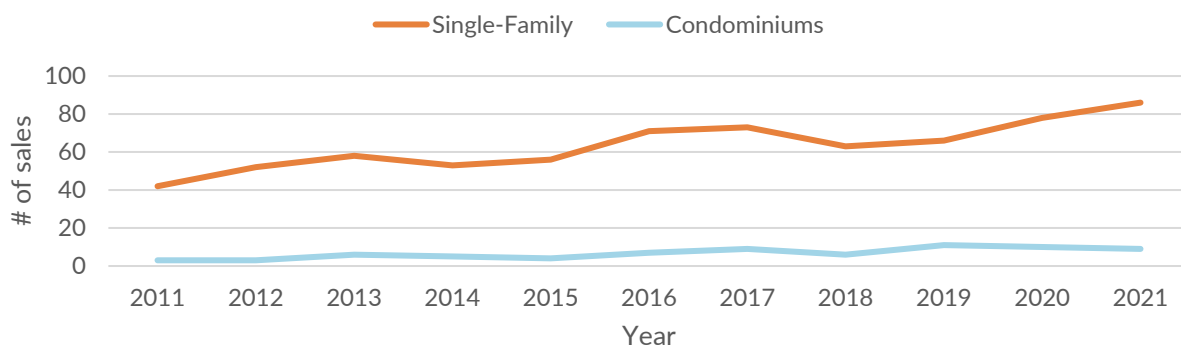
(Source: Banker & Tradesman)



The volume of annual home sales in Tisbury reached its lowest point of the new millennium in 2009 due to the housing market crash of 2008 but has tended to rise since. The total volume of sales reached 136 in 2021, the highest since 2004. Single-family home sales have been particularly strong in recent years, reaching an all-time high of 86 in 2021 (see Figure 7.5), even while the median sales price was above \$900,000.

Figure 7.5. Annual Home Sales in Tisbury

(Source: Banker & Tradesman)



SHORT-TERM RENTALS

In October 2022, there were 605 short-term rental properties in Tisbury registered with the state’s short-term rental tax database, up from 439 earlier in March of the same year (a 38 percent increase), a rate of growth seen across the Vineyard. These 605 properties represent about 19 percent of all housing units in Tisbury (including both occupied and vacant/seasonal units). Some of this growth is likely due to existing rentals coming into compliance with the law, but there has been a noticeable increase in both the supply and demand for short-term rentals.⁶⁸ In the same October 2022 period, Airbnb and Vrbo listed a combined total of 229 active rentals, concentrated in downtown Vineyard Haven but found in all residential areas. According to industry data, the daily rate for a short-term rental

⁶⁸ Noah Asimow, “Island Sees Significant Uptick in Short-Term Rental Properties,” *Vineyard Gazette*, (October 27, 2022).

in 2022 peaked in August at \$631 per day.⁶⁹ At the same time rates peaked, the Town's entire supply of short-term rentals was completely booked, which demonstrates the extremely high demand for these types of rentals in the summer. The pressure on the year-round housing supply from the in-demand short-term rental market is significant and likely growing.

RENTAL HOUSING DEMAND TRENDS

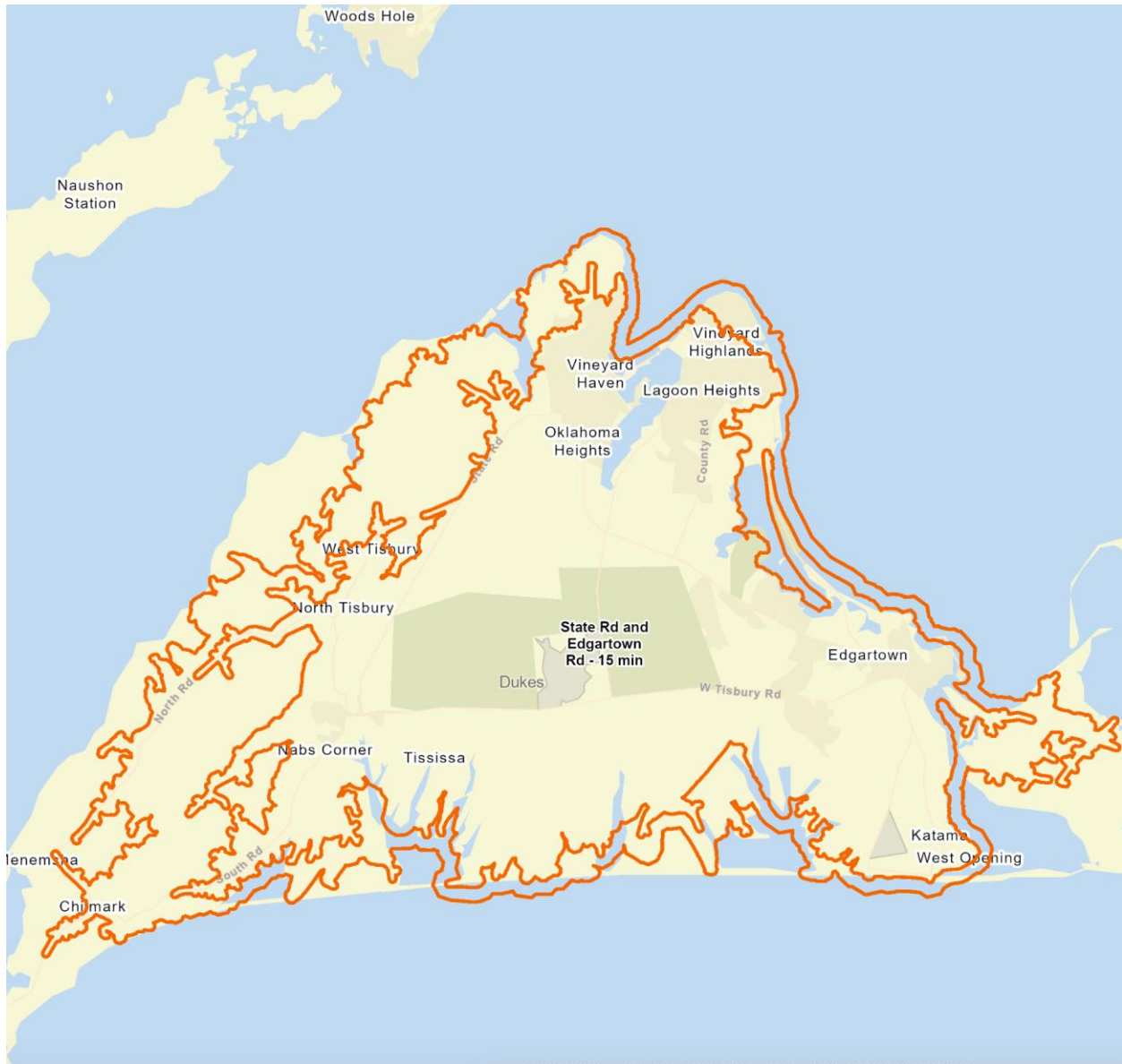
Rental housing is increasingly considered an important asset to economic development, particularly as it enables a community to attract or retain its younger labor force and others not interested in, or able to, afford homeownership in traditional single-family neighborhoods. To the extent that rental housing development can complement mixed uses in older commercial centers, it also represents an opportunity to upgrade underutilized properties. Younger households and empty nesters are able and willing, and often prefer, to live in areas that enable them to walk to restaurants, retail shops, recreational opportunities and even jobs. Employers are increasingly looking to communities that will enable their current and prospective employees to live and work close to the business location.

The average annual demand for rental housing by age group, income, and affordable rental rates has been analyzed for this master plan. By the consulting team's economist.⁷⁰ The objective is to assist Tisbury officials and residents in understanding residential development potential, and to target types of rental units, in terms of cost and size and amenities, to various age groups of potential renters, depending on the direction the Town may wish to take. For the purposes of this analysis, the market area is defined as the area within a 20-minute drive time of State Road and Edgartown Road. The 20-minute drive time area is consistent with the generally accepted view of the primary geographic area within which communities offer similar economic development attributes and constitute the competitive region for attracting jobs and households. This market area is shown graphically in Figure 7.6 below.

⁶⁹ AirDNA, accessed October 22, 2022, <https://www.airdna.co/>.

⁷⁰ FXM Associates. FXM's model is distinctive in that it captures mobility within the market area as well as net new growth. Over 90 percent of expected demand for rental housing in most market areas in New England is generated by households already residing in the area, who are looking to change from owners to renters, upsize or downsize from the current unit, or change location for family or work reasons. FXM's model explicitly accounts for propensity to own or rent and frequency of moving by householder age and income.

Figure 7.6. 20-minute Housing Market Area



Source: EnvironicsAnalytics, Claritas *Spotlight Reports*, 2022.

Data in Table 7.14 below provide an overview of population, households, and renters within the market area. Currently, about one-third of housing units within a 20-minute market area are renter-occupied.

Table 7.14. Housing Demand Context: Tisbury 20-Minute Market Area	
2022 Population	16,811
Households	7,642
Renter Households	2,569
% Renters	34%
Renters Moving in Average Year	197
% of All Households	2.6%
Median Household Income	\$80,508
<i>Source: Claritas Inc., Spotlight Reports, Demographic Snapshot, 2022 Estimates, and FXM Associates</i>	

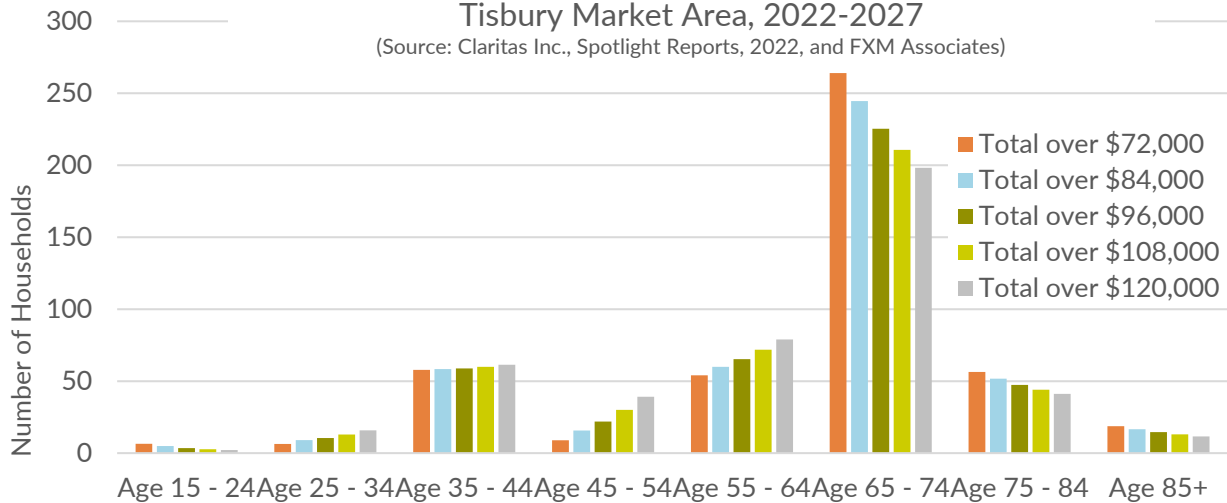
The following demand assessment is segmented by age and affordable rents. Rent levels needed to support rehabilitation or new construction will vary depending upon the development costs of a specific project, which may include tax credits, favorable financing terms, land write-downs and other mechanisms to assure feasibility.

Households within the under-35 and 55-to-74 age groups are often targeted by developers for multi-unit and specialty rental housing, such as re-use of formerly commercial and institutional structures, because they are less likely to have school-age children and therefore more open to units with fewer bedrooms. They are also likely to be attracted to denser town and village environments that allow walking distances to restaurants and retail shops. Households in other age groups, however, also generate demand for housing within the market area, and this analysis assesses potential demand for all age groups.

Figure 7.7 shows a key factor in estimating future rental demand: changes in households by age and income. These demographic factors heavily influence household decisions on whether to change housing situation and, if so, what will be affordable to them. The changes projected over the next five years in numbers of households by age and income are shown in the figure below. The incomes chosen are in the upper ranges, since these households could afford the rents necessary to support rehabilitated or newly constructed market-rate rental housing.

Figure 7.7. Change in Number of Households by Age and Income
Tisbury Market Area, 2022-2027

(Source: Claritas Inc., Spotlight Reports, 2022, and FXM Associates)



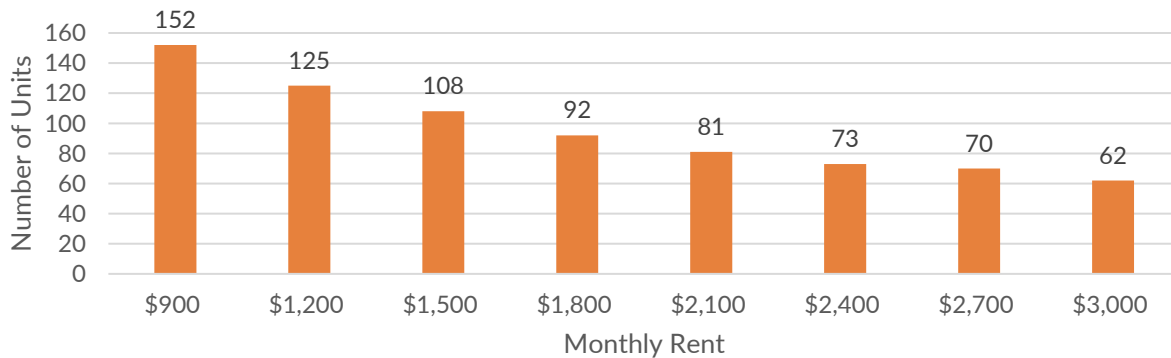
Particularly striking is the projection of changes in age cohorts in the market area over the next five years: the greatest gains across all five income categories are estimated to be in the age 65-to-74 cohorts, while the age category 45 to 54, typically a population segment at peak earning capacity, would gain very few households in all categories of income selected above. Young households, ages 25 to 34, barely register at any income level.

These projections provide an indication of robust ability to afford market rents in the age 65-to-74 category. Households in the income category over \$108,000 – who could afford rents up to \$2,700 per month – gain population and households in all age categories, indicating potential future demand for high quality rental housing for a variety of lifestyles.

Figure 7.8 translates these factors into average annual demand for all rentals by all age groups in the Tisbury 20-minute Market Area, taking into consideration affordability, propensity to move in any given year, and propensity to rent.

Figure 7.8. Average Annual Demand For Rentals: All Age Groups
Tisbury Market Area, 2022-2027

(Source: Claritas Inc., Spotlight Reports, 2022, and FXM Associates)



For example, of the total number of households, 152, expected to move to rental housing each year within the 20-minute market area and able to afford at least \$900 per month rent, approximately 92 would be able to afford monthly rents of up to \$1,800; 81 would be able to afford \$2,100; 70 would be able to afford \$2,700, and 62 rents at \$3,000.

As shown in Table 7.15 below, based on Tisbury's current share of rental housing in the market area, an estimated 22 households able to afford up to \$2,400 a month rent might be absorbed by additional rental development in a competitive rental property in Tisbury each year. Table 7.15 presents these estimates for each of the rental points shown in Figure 7.8 above. (Note that the figures in the demand columns are **not** additive. They are cumulative, with the "Rentals @ \$900" figure representing total estimated average annual demand in both Figure 7.8 and Table 7.15).

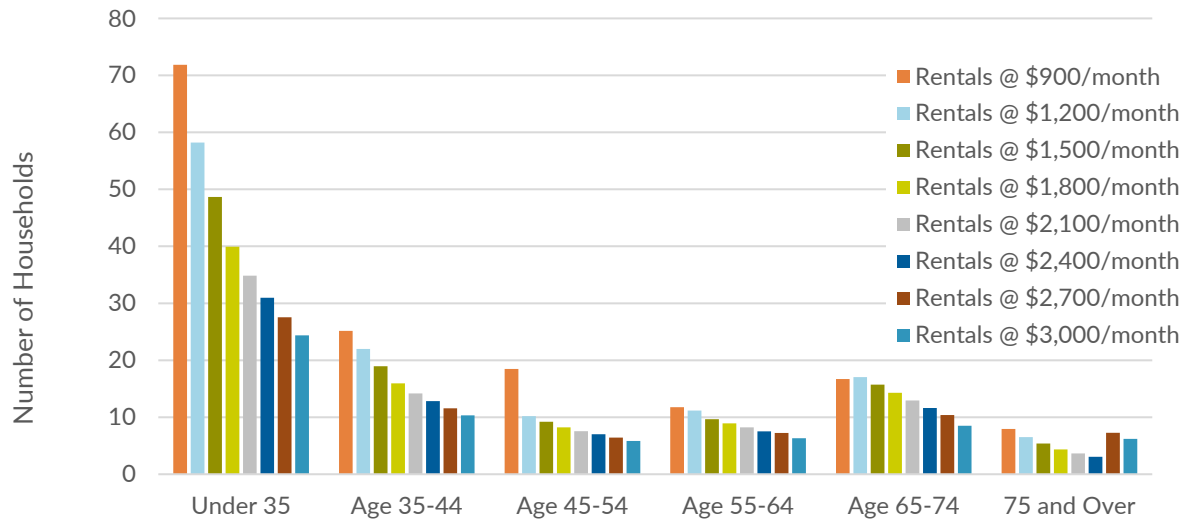
Table 7.15. Estimated Average Annual Demand for Rental Housing		
	Total Average Annual Demand in 20 min Market Area	Total Average Annual Demand in Tisbury
Rentals @ \$900	152	46
Rentals @ \$1,200	125	38
Rentals @ \$1,500	108	32
Rentals @ \$1,800	92	27
Rentals @ \$2,100	81	24
Rentals @ \$2,400	73	22
Rentals @ \$2,700	70	21
Rentals @ \$3,000	62	18
<i>Source: Claritas Spotlight Reports, 2021, and FXM Associates</i>		

The actual number of units that might be captured at these rental prices in a development or redevelopment project in Tisbury would depend on the quality and size of the units, site and building amenities, pricing, marketing, and other factors such as competing rental development in other towns.

The information in Figure 7.8 and Table 7.15 can be further broken down into age groups, which may be useful to marketing efforts based on the relative numbers of households by age group. Figure 7.9 presents these data by age group.

Figure 7.9. Average Annual Demand for Rentals by Affordable Rent and Age Group, Tisbury Market Area, 2022-2027

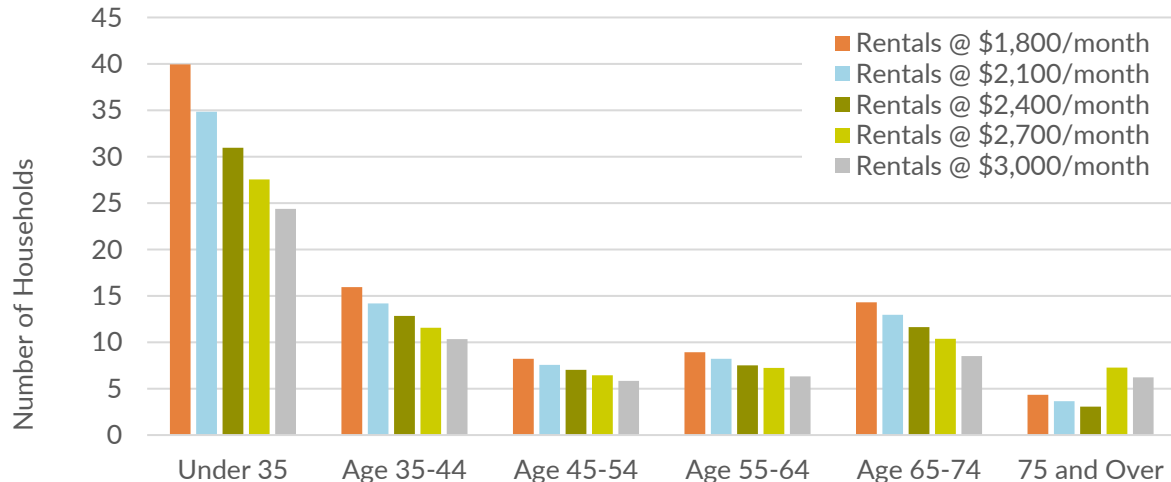
(Source: Claritas Inc., Spotlight Reports, 2022, and FXM Associates)



The graph reflects the greater propensity of younger households to rent and the frequency of their moving compared to older households, as well as the sensitivity of levels of demand to varying rental prices. Figure 7.10 offers the same kind of analysis, but with the data for rents in the upper ranges only.

Figure 7.10. Average Annual Demand for Selected Monthly Rents by Age Group, Tisbury Market Area, 2022-2027

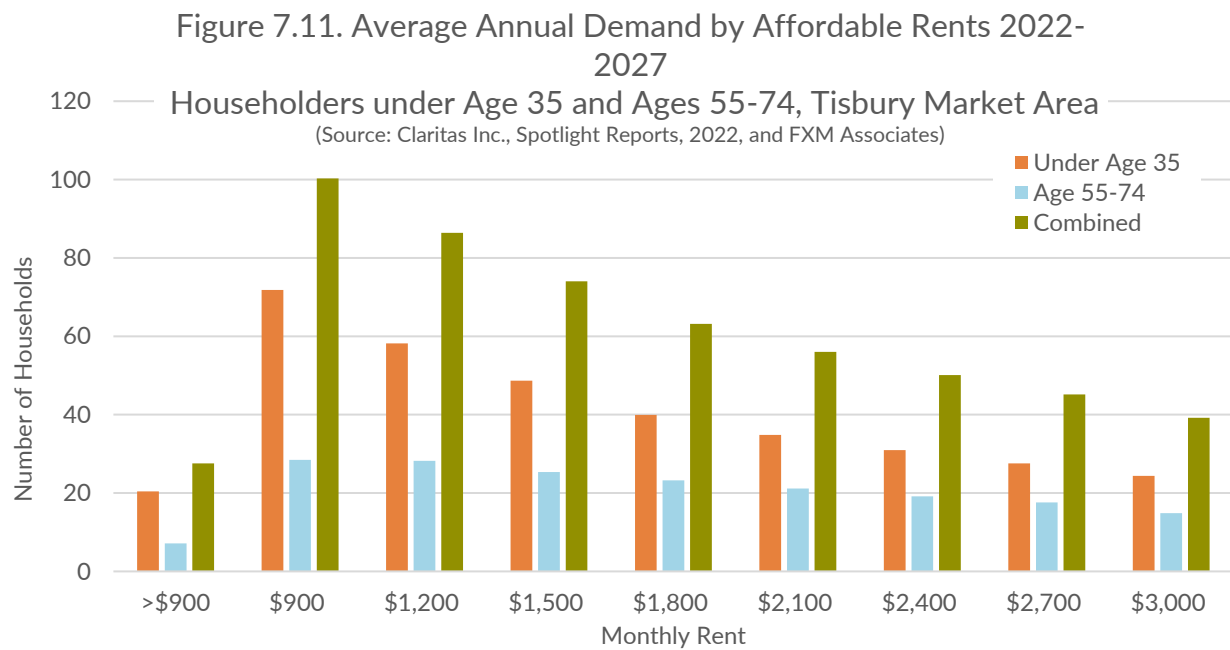
(Source: Claritas Inc., Spotlight Reports, 2022, and FXM Associates)



Some developers in recent years have targeted rental units to households under age 35 and age 55 to 74, who often mix well within the same developments. Both groups show a higher propensity to live within walking distance of retail stores, restaurants, and transit if possible. The number of younger households in the Tisbury market area, however, is projected to experience very little growth over the next five years.

Conversely, as shown by the data in Figure 7.10 above, the baby boom generation households are growing in number within the 55 and older age categories, and these households have shown an increasing propensity to rent in recent years as they become empty nesters and sell their single-family homes for smaller, more manageable units. Others want to cash in the equity of their former dwellings because they need liquid income in the absence of the pensions enjoyed by prior generations of retirees. Many also continue to work part time.

Data in Figure 7.11 show the average annual demand by selected rental rates for the under 35 and 55- to 74-year-old householders, and their combined demand.



To assess the appropriateness of the rental categories used in the above demand analysis, an examination of actual rents on listings of available rentals within Tisbury’s market area was undertaken. No rental listings on Martha’s Vineyard appeared on Zillow.com at the times sampled, however. Since there are known to be rentals in the market area, local ads and agents, or word of mouth are likely more commonly used methods or recruiting tenants. In the absence of data for Tisbury’s market area, average rents on available units on Cape Cod are shown in Table 7.16 below.

Table 7.16. Average Rental Listings on Cape Cod		
1 BR	2 BR	3BR
\$ 1,708	\$ 2,511	\$ 3,149
Source: Zillow.com, March 2023		

Local Policies and Practices

LOCAL AND REGIONAL CAPACITY

The Town does not have any employees, full or part-time, whose primary responsibilities explicitly include addressing affordable housing issues. There is a lack of clear procedures for tasks such as updating the Town’s Subsidized Housing Inventory at the municipal level.

Large residential projects, including comprehensive permits, are subject to review at the regional level by the Martha’s Vineyard Commission (MVC) if they qualify as Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). The MVC must hold a public hearing to weigh the regional costs and benefits of a DRI and may impose conditions or deny an application.

In the spring of 2022, all six Martha’s Vineyard Town Meetings voted to support the creation of an island-wide Housing Bank, modeled after the successful Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank. The proposed Housing Bank legislation would create a 2 percent fee on real estate transactions over \$1 million, which would then be used by the bank to purchase property and facilitate the development of housing aimed both at low-income households below 80 percent AMI as well as middle-income households up to 240 percent of AMI. At time of writing the legislation is awaiting review and approval by the Massachusetts State Legislature.

Finally, there are several island-wide nonprofit and public agencies working on housing issues in addition to the Island Housing Trust and Island Elderly Housing Inc. discussed in the “Affordable Housing” section.

- Habitat for Humanity of Martha’s Vineyard builds homeownership units across the island, sometimes in partnership with the IHT.
- The Dukes County Regional Housing Authority helps with affordable housing administration, such as running housing lotteries and managing 101 total affordable rental units.
- Harbor Homes MV provides services for local homeless individuals like emergency shelter in hotels and a congregate house in Vineyard Haven for those who have recently experienced homelessness.
- The Martha’s Vineyard Commission employs an Island Housing Planner who provides support to towns, helps coordinate island-wide housing efforts, and interfaces with state decision-makers on housing issues.

ZONING REGULATIONS

Most of Tisbury’s land area is zoned for residential development, and most residential zoning districts encourage the production of single-family homes (for a more detailed discussion of residential zoning in Tisbury, see Chapter 5, Land Use). In the Business 2 District (along State Road), up to three housing units may be allowed on a single lot without the need for a discretionary permit and in the Waterfront/Commercial District (in Vineyard Haven) the Town allows development with commercial uses on the first floor and a residential unit on an upper floor.

Tisbury's zoning bylaw (ZBL) has few provisions aimed explicitly at producing affordable housing units. The ZBL provides for "community housing," deed-restricted units for households in the 80 to 150 percent AMI range. Multifamily projects that include at least one-quarter community housing units and one quarter affordable units may waive most dimensional standards such as minimum lot size and setbacks.

Accessory apartments are small dwelling units subordinate to a larger, existing primary dwelling on the same site. In Tisbury, one per lot is allowed by special permit from the Board of Appeals in most residential areas, limited to an area of 600 square feet or no more than 40 percent of the existing dwelling's area. This can be increased to 50 percent when the accessory unit is subject to affordability restrictions. Accessory apartments are required to meet all dimensional regulations for the district in which they are located. Tisbury has many homes that were constructed prior to the first adoption of town wide zoning regulations in 1972 that may not conform with current regulations, limiting the areas where accessory apartments can be proposed.



8. Economic Development

Introduction

Economic development includes aspects of a community like its economy and the health of its tax base, as well as other issues and policies that affect an area's economic vitality, such as the attractiveness of its commercial districts and main streets, the ability of schools to educate the next generation of workers and citizens, the quality of local infrastructure, and the effectiveness of its government to support the needs of businesses and residents alike. Economic development is key to maintaining and improving a community's quality of life and its ability to attract and retain businesses and the customers and employees that come with them.

In a place like Tisbury, that means serving multiple communities and constituencies: the yearly surge of summer visitors attracted to the island's legendary beauty; the residents who call the island home and work to power the local economy; and the many businesses, self-employed people, and community institutions that operate both seasonally and year-round given Tisbury's role as the island's off-season hub and only year-round ferry port.

Existing Conditions and Trends

LABOR FORCE

Tisbury is the third most populous community on Martha's Vineyard, with 4,815 residents, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. Still, it has the island's second largest labor force and the highest labor force participation rate on the island at 66.8 percent (Table 8.1). Tisbury is commonly called the hub and only year-round economy on the island due to the presence of year-round ferry service by the Steamship Authority to the Port of Vineyard Haven from Woods Hole.

	Tisbury	W. Tisbury	Edgartown	Aquinnah	Chilmark	Oak Bluffs	MA	New England
Labor Force Participation	66.8%	51.6%	62.1%	56.4%	66.6%	65.8%	67.2%	66.3%
Unemployment	2.8%	0	3.7%	2.8%	5.2%	4.2%	3.4%	3.4%
Bachelor's Degree or more	38.1%	55.4%	39.2%	38.5%	56.1%	45.4%	44.5%	40.8%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2016-2020 via Social Explorer

In 2020, Tisbury had a comparable or lower unemployment rate than its island neighbors, at an extremely low average of 2.8 percent. This is lower than both the state and New England regional unemployment rate, 3.4 percent. Tisbury, however, does have the lowest higher education attainment on the island, with 38.1 percent of residents obtaining a bachelor's degree or more. This is lower than the state rate of 44.5 percent but still significantly higher than the national rate of 23.5 percent.⁷¹

In total, the 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (ACS) results show that 2,452 Tisbury residents are employed. Of those, only 49.8 percent work in the private sector, with 24.7 percent of all workers self-employed. This is compared to 65.8 percent of Massachusetts in the private sector, and 8.7 percent of workers self-employed at the state level. This high rate of self-employment is something Tisbury shares with its Vineyard neighbors, though the highest levels of self-employment are in Aquinnah (39.5 percent) and Edgartown (38.3 percent).

Age

With a median age of 55.9, Tisbury finds itself with a statistically older population than Dukes County overall (49) and two other large towns on the island. Edgartown has a median age of 45.2 and Oak Bluffs 43.8, the youngest municipality on the island. This is in comparison with the state's median age of 39.6 and New England's at 40.8. Twenty-seven percent of Tisbury residents are age 65 or older, compared to 22.6 percent in Oak Bluffs and 19.5 percent in Edgartown. Children under 18 represent 13.6 percent of the population, compared to 23.3 percent and 16.9 percent for Oak Bluffs and Edgartown respectively.

⁷¹ 2020 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimate)

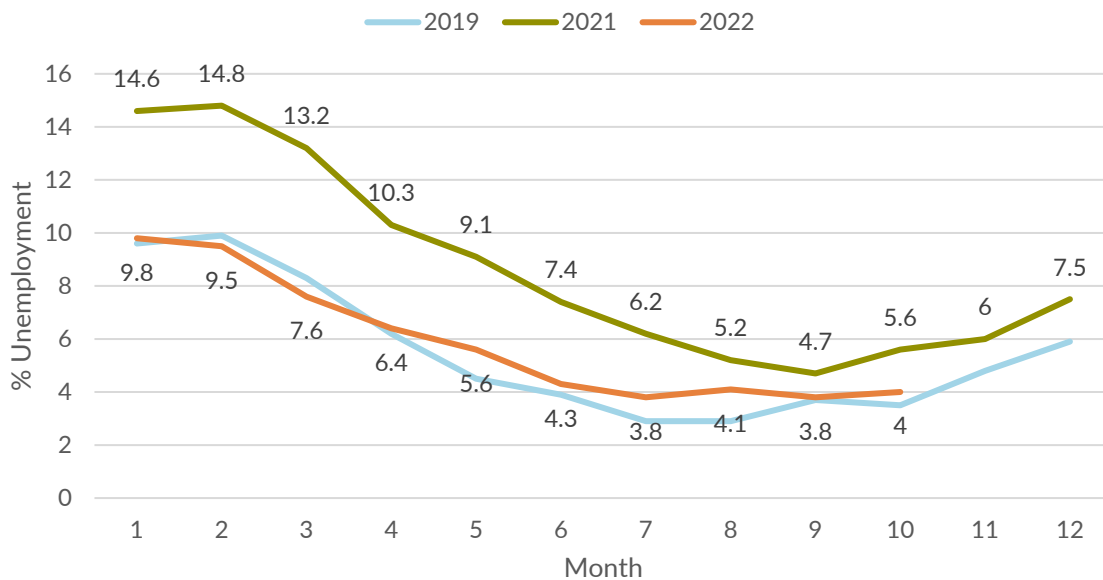
Unemployment Trends

Employment in Tisbury was deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the unemployment rate skyrocketing to 30.7 percent in April 2020. Unemployment rates remained above their 2019 levels until 2022. Initial unemployment claims peaked the week of March 21, 2020, while continuing claims peaked the week of April 25, 2020, according to data from the Massachusetts Office of Labor and Workforce Development. Industry sectors that were especially impacted were Construction, Retail Trade, Administrative & Support, Waste Management & Remediation, and Accommodation and Food service.

Based on data from the Massachusetts Department of Economic Research, the unemployment rate in Tisbury typically peaks in January and February, before dropping during the busy summer months and rising again through the fall and early winter. The seasonal changes in employment can also be seen in the monthly unemployment rates, with the highest unemployment rates in the first few months of the year before dropping significantly during the summer months and rising again during the fall.

Figure 8.1. Tisbury Monthly Unemployment Rate

(Source: Mass. DER)



EMPLOYMENT BASE

Although ranking third in population, Tisbury has the second largest number of jobs on the island. It ranks behind Edgartown and slightly ahead of Oak Bluffs among all Dukes County towns in overall employment, with an estimated 4,382 jobs in 2021. Tisbury leads other Vineyard communities in Construction and in Health Care and Social Assistance jobs, and is second to Edgartown in Administrative Services, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate, and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation jobs. Tisbury ranks third behind Edgartown and Oak Bluffs in Accommodation (hotels/motels) and Food Services (mostly restaurants) jobs.

Table 8.2. Dukes County Towns Ranked by Population and Employment

Rank	Town	Population	Rank	Town	Population
1	Oak Bluffs	5,341	1	Edgartown	4,564
2	Edgartown	5,168	2	Tisbury	4,382
3	Tisbury	4,815	3	Oak Bluffs	3,460
4	West Tisbury	3,555	4	West Tisbury	1,185
5	Chilmark	1,212	5	Chilmark	519
6	Aquinnah	439	6	Aquinnah	152
7	Gosnold	70	7	Gosnold	58

Source: US Census, 2020; Mass. Dept of Labor and Workforce Development, ES202 Reports; REIS 2021; and FXM Associates

Location quotients (LQ) are a helpful tool for evaluating strengths or weaknesses in employment and wages for a given jurisdiction compared to others. The LQs for Tisbury show certain sectors make up a larger share of employment and the economy in Tisbury compared to the state. This includes industries like natural resources and mining, which covers farming, fishing, and aquaculture, whose share of employment is 3.68 times larger in Tisbury compared to the state. In an average month, however, this sector employs only 40 people in Tisbury, yet it is a critically important source of livelihood for commercial fishermen on Martha's Vineyard. The construction LQ for Tisbury is 2.23 while for other services (like auto repair and personal care) it is 1.91, demonstrating the strength of these industries in Tisbury. Finally, the trade, transportation, and utilities sector, which includes activities like retail and grocery stores or warehousing and bus drivers, has an LQ of 1.31 while leisure and hospitality have an LQ of 1.39, both in line with conceptions of Tisbury as a tourism and service-centered economy.

LQs are calculated by finding what percentage of a focus geography's workforce is employed in any given industry and dividing that by the percentage of a comparison geography's workforce in any given industry. For example, an LQ score of 1 means that the two geographies have an equal percentage of their employment in a given industry. But an LQ score of 2 demonstrates that the focus geography has double the percentage of employment in an industry versus the comparison geography.

NAICS	Industry	2021 Avg Monthly Employment	% of Jobs	LQ vs. MA
10	Total, All Industries	2,872	100.0%	1.00
101	Goods-Producing	408	14.2%	1.17
102	Service-Providing	2,464	85.8%	0.98
1011	Natural Resources and Mining	40	1.4%	3.68
1012	Construction	325	11.3%	2.23
1013	Manufacturing	43	1.5%	0.22
1021	Trade, Transportation and Utilities	630	21.9%	1.31
1022	Information	62	2.2%	0.75
1023	Financial Activities	109	3.8%	0.61
1024	Professional and Business Services	250	8.7%	0.49
1025	Education and Health Services	835	29.1%	1.02
1026	Leisure and Hospitality	349	12.2%	1.39
1027	Other Services	169	5.9%	1.91
1028	Public Administration	60	2.1%	0.52

Source: Massachusetts Department of Economic Research, ES-202

Overall, Tisbury has seen a steady increase in employment since 2016. Table 8.4 shows that some industry sectors are performing better than others, however. Goods-producing jobs like Natural Resources and Mining and Construction experienced a 30 percent or greater growth in the number of jobs. Service-providing jobs grew significantly slower and more unequally. Some industries, like Professional and Business Services or Leisure and Hospitality swelled over these five years. Meanwhile job numbers in other industries such as Information or Trade, Transportation, and Utilities dropped considerably on a percentage basis.

NAICS	Industry	2016 Avg Employment	2021 Avg Employment	% Change
10	Total, All Industries	2,688	2,872	6.9%
101	Goods-Producing	322	408	26.7%
102	Service-Providing	2,366	2,464	4.1%
1011	Natural Resources and Mining	30	40	33.3%
1012	Construction	249	325	30.5%
1013	Manufacturing	43	43	0.0%
1021	Trade, Transportation and Utilities	766	630	-17.8%
1022	Information	81	62	-23.5%
1023	Financial Activities	95	109	14.7%
1024	Professional and Business Services	192	250	30.2%
1025	Education and Health Services	719	835	16.1%
1026	Leisure and Hospitality	284	349	22.9%
1027	Other Services	156	169	8.3%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Economic Research, ES-202

WAGES

Location quotients for wages allow an easy comparison against the state's and reveal that wages in Tisbury are a good deal lower compared to the state average. Table 8.5 shows the overall 2021 weekly wage LQ for Tisbury workers, which was 0.77 compared to the state's weekly wage. In some sectors, Tisbury wages were significantly lower than the state average. For instance, in Manufacturing, the average weekly wage for a Massachusetts worker was \$1,913. Yet in Tisbury, it was only 46 percent of that amount at \$876. In only three industries (Education and Health Services, Leisure and Hospitality, and Other Services) did the Tisbury weekly wage exceed the state average weekly wages. The largest wage LQ is for Leisure and Hospitality at 1.53, though this is still a low-wage sector, with workers earning \$986 weekly.

Table 8.5. Wage by Industry and Location Quotient			
NAICS	Industry	Tisbury 2021 Average Weekly Wages	Wage LQ vs. MA
10	Total, All Industries	\$1,295	0.77
101	Goods-Producing	\$1,423	0.79
102	Service-Providing	\$1,274	0.76
1011	Natural Resources and Mining	\$793	0.57
1012	Construction	\$1,573	0.94
1013	Manufacturing	\$876	0.46
1021	Trade, Transportation and Utilities	\$1,092	0.86
1022	Information	\$1,134	0.39
1023	Financial Activities	\$1,532	0.48
1024	Professional and Business Services	\$1,368	0.53
1025	Education and Health Services	\$1,506	1.17
1026	Leisure and Hospitality	\$986	1.53
1027	Other Services	\$1,021	1.10
1028	Public Administration	No Data	NA

Source: Massachusetts Department of Economic Research, ES-202

While these figures provide a yearly picture for employment in Tisbury, it should come as no surprise that employment in a place like Tisbury is highly variable and seasonal. Figure 8.2 illustrates the trend in overall employment for all industries with a clear increase in jobs during the summer tourist season, though this trend is not as extreme for Tisbury's more year-round economy as it is for other larger economies on the island like Edgartown or Oak Bluffs. Due to the impact of the pandemic on the last two years of employment trends, available data from 2019 data may provide a clearer picture of Tisbury's employment base and the seasonal fluctuations that occur here. Employment in Tisbury was lowest in February 2019 at 2,416 workers before peaking in July at 3,466, a 43.5 percent increase. By comparison, Oak Bluffs experienced an 88 percent increase between the lowest (March) and highest (August) months of employment while Edgartown saw a 139 percent increase between the lowest (February) and highest (July) months.

Figure 8.2. Tisbury 2019 Monthly Employment
(Source: Mass. DER)

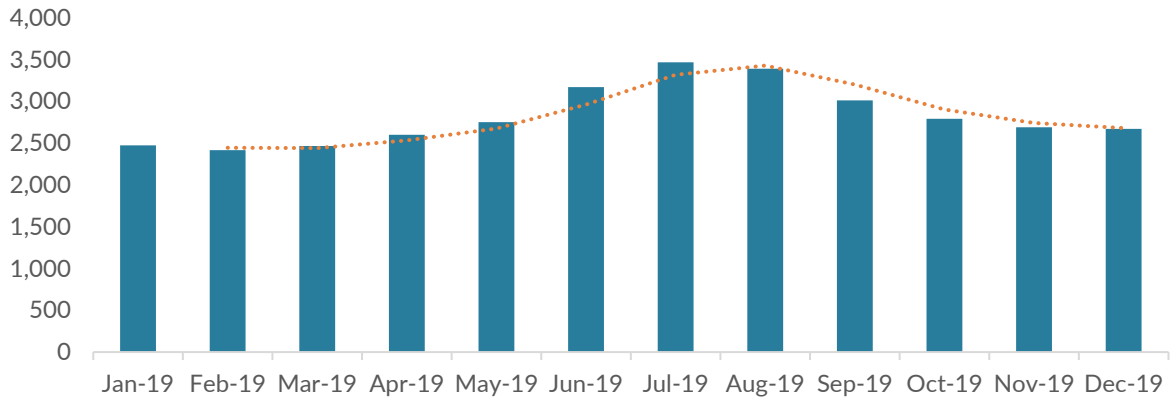


Figure 8.3. Oak Bluffs 2019 Monthly Employment
(Source: Mass. DER)

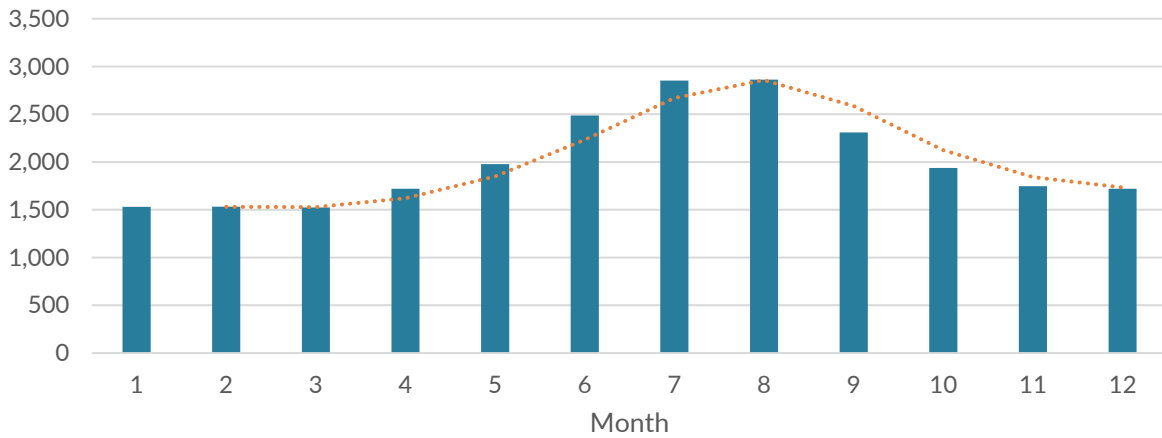
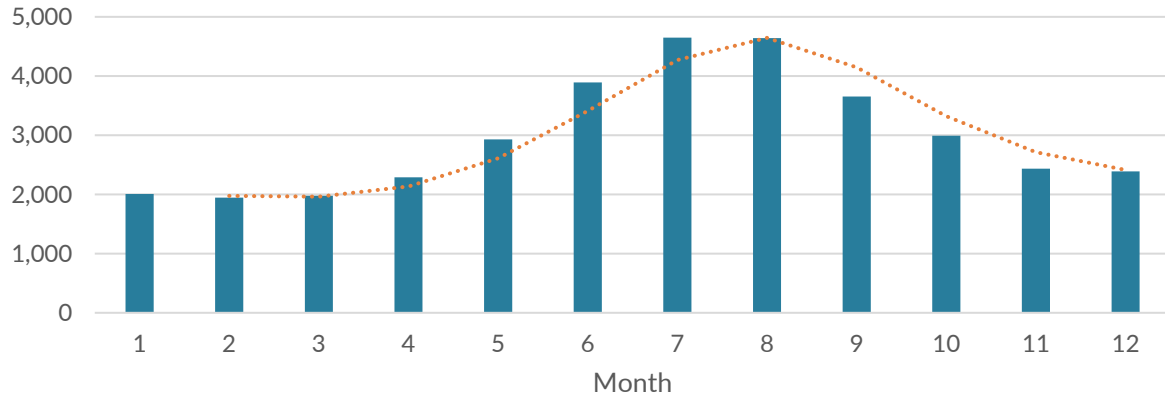
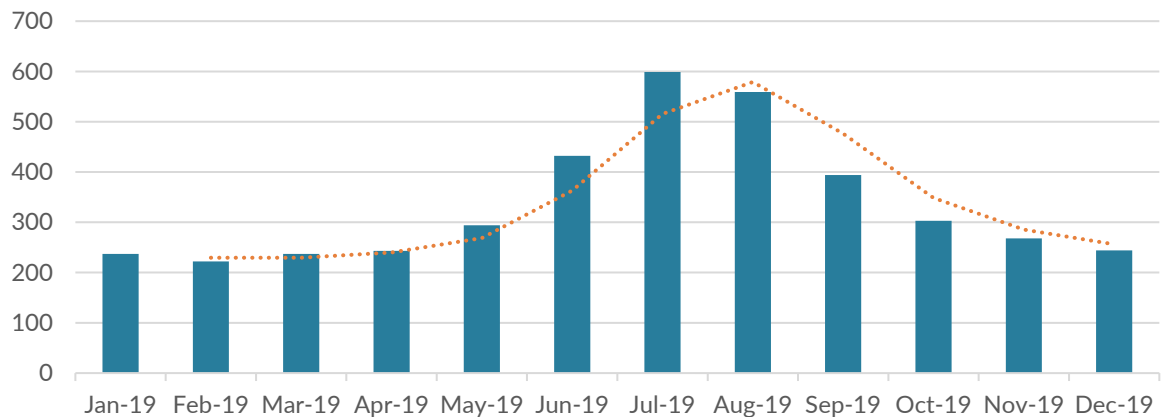


Figure 8.4. Edgartown 2019 Monthly Employment
(Source: Mass. DER)



Individual sectors of the Tisbury economy are still affected by the swing in seasonal employment, particularly sectors related to tourism. For instance, the Leisure and Hospitality sector faced a 169.8 percent increase in jobs between the low in February and the high in July. By July, leisure and hospitality represent 17.28 percent of all jobs in Tisbury, compared to the yearly average of 11.9 percent.

Figure 8.5. Tisbury Leisure and Hospitality Monthly Employment in 2019
(Mass. DER)



This variability in seasonal work has a significant impact on earnings in Tisbury. According to data from the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS), the median earnings for a Tisbury resident employed full-time, year-round are nearly 34 percent more than the generally employed population. This generally employed population includes those who work part-time, seasonally, or who work multiple part-time jobs. For some industry sectors, that gap is much larger. In the Construction industry, the median gap is 74.1 percent, while the General Services industry except public administration has a median earnings gap of 88 percent. The widest median earnings gap, however, is in the Finance and Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing industry at 142 percent and the Health Care and Social Assistance industry at 299 percent.

Table 8.6. Tisbury Wages by Employment Type			
Industry Sector	Median 2020 Earnings: General Civilian Employed Population	Median 2020 Earnings: Full-time, year-round, civilian employed population	Percent Difference
Construction	\$30,782	\$41,193	33.8%
Retail Trade	\$25,607	\$27,039	5.6%
Finance And Insurance, And Real Estate, And Rental And Leasing	\$16,923	\$40,938	141.9%
Professional, Scientific, And Management, And Administrative, And Waste Management Services	\$31,014	\$31,855	\$2.7%
Professional, Scientific, And Technical Services	\$31,895	\$31,260	(2.0%)
Administrative And Support And Waste Management Services	\$27,396	\$44,545	62.6%
Educational Services, And Health Care And Social Assistance	\$31,447	\$32,760	4.2%
Educational Services	\$30,448	\$21,778	(28.5%)
Health Care And Social Assistance	\$32,648	\$130,258	299.0%
Arts, Entertainment, And Recreation, And Accommodation And Food Services	\$31,324	\$41,042	31.0%
Accommodation And Food Services	\$33,000	\$41,042	24.4%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	\$24,504	\$46,064	88.0%
Public Administration	\$64,125	\$64,125	0%
<i>Source: ACS 5-Year Est. 2016-2020. *This chart contains only entries where full data are available.</i>			

While it is not surprising that full-time, year-round workers have a higher median income than part-time or seasonal workers, the breadth of the gap reveals significant disparities in the labor economy of Tisbury. For industries where the generally employed earnings outpace full-time, year-round earnings, this may indicate that workers in those industries are seeking multiple jobs – something not uncommon in high-cost geographies like Tisbury and Martha’s Vineyard.

COMMUTING

According to 2019 commuting data, from OnTheMap by the U.S. Census Bureau, most of Tisbury’s residents and workforce live and work on the island and are mainly employed in the Island’s economic centers. Tisbury has an inflow of 1,176 workers entering town for jobs, but an outflow of 1,599 residents leaving for jobs outside of Tisbury. Table 8.7 shows that of all the employed residents of Tisbury, about 24 percent of those residents also work in Tisbury. Meanwhile, 20.8 percent, 14.3 percent, and 9.3 percent of Tisbury residents work in Oak Bluffs, Edgartown, and West Tisbury respectively. Boston is the fifth largest employment destination for Tisbury residents, with 3.7 percent of residents commuting to the capital. Cape destinations like Barnstable and Falmouth both employ just over one percent of Tisbury residents. Rounding out the top ten is New Bedford, with 1 percent of Tisbury residents journeying there for work.

Table 8.7. Tisbury Residents' Top 10 Workplace Destinations

Jurisdiction	Share of Tisbury Residents Work in:
Tisbury	23.8%
Oak Bluffs	20.8%
Edgartown	14.3%
West Tisbury	9.3%
Boston	3.7%
Chilmark	1.9%
Barnstable	1.2%
Falmouth	1.1%
Aquinnah	1.0%
New Bedford	1.0%

Source: 2019 U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap

Meanwhile, 29.8 percent of all workers in Tisbury also live in Tisbury, while 13 percent live in Edgartown, 11.5 percent in Oak Bluffs, and 8 percent in West Tisbury. The Cape is another significant source of Tisbury's workers, with four of the top ten worker home locations being Cape communities, including Falmouth (3.3 percent), Mashpee (1.7 percent), Barnstable (1.6 percent), and Bourne (1.3 percent).⁷²

Table 8.8. Tisbury Workers by Top 10 Home Community

Jurisdiction	Share of Tisbury Workers Living in:
Tisbury	29.8%
Edgartown	13.0%
Oak Bluffs	11.5%
West Tisbury	8.0%
Falmouth	3.3%
Chilmark	1.9%
Mashpee	1.7%
Barnstable	1.6%
Boston	1.6%
Bourne	1.3%

Source: 2019 U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap

Historical Trends in Employment

The measure most used for commercial market trends analyses is employment because jobs are a good indicator of the status and future direction of a given industry. Increasing employment indicates industries that are growing, whether through expansion of existing businesses or opening of new ones. Also, reasonably reliable historic data are readily available and can be used to project employment trends. The sources used here for the employment trends graphs are the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Regional Economic Information System (REIS)* and the ES202 reports from

⁷² Other transportation focused data regarding Journey to Work times and commuting mode share will be discussed further in the transportation section, Chapter 10.

the Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development.⁷³ 2021 is the most recent year for which actual jobs data are available, so the projections shown are for only three years from 2023.

When using historical data to produce future projections, such as the least squares linear regression technique used here, it is important to consider the reliability of a given dataset. A statistic commonly used for this purpose is called the R^2 calculation and is presented alongside each projection given below. The closer the R^2 value is to 1, the better the predictive value of past performance. A limiting factor on 2026 projections is the influence of the 2020-2021 pandemic, which is still being felt in some sectors and which may also affect the R^2 values for employment projections. For example, a sector might have been showing strong growth since 2010 but the volatility introduced by the pandemic-related job losses could pull down the sector's projected growth and lower the R^2 value of the projection. *Note that, because of the relatively small number of jobs in Tisbury and the other towns, the predictive value of history may be weak across all sectors.*

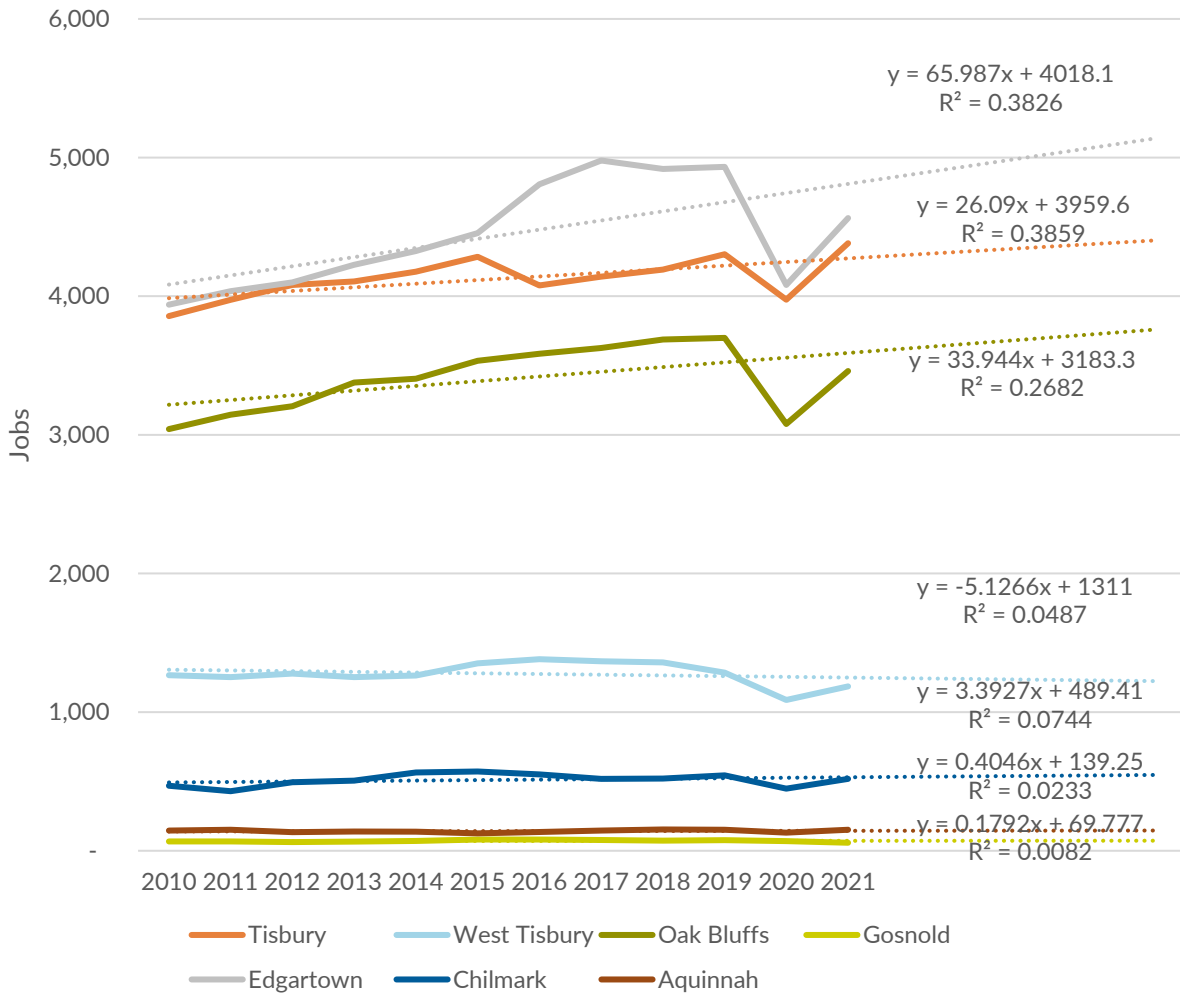
The following graphs display trends and projections for the Town of Tisbury and the surrounding towns of the Vineyard.

Figure 8.6 displays total employment in the seven towns of Dukes County.

⁷³ These include estimated full and part time jobs with wages and salaries plus self -employment. Island-wide, proprietors (self-employed) account for almost half (48%) of all jobs according to the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System (REIS). REIS data are not available below the county level and the Massachusetts Department of Labor ES202 data – the only publicly available source of jobs at the community level—do not include jobs held by self-employed persons. To estimate total jobs at the community level, we compared jobs overall and by sector at the county level and, using ratios between the more inclusive REIS data and ES202 data, apply those ratios to ES202- community level employment. We recognize this involves simplified assumptions, but it is a technique that FXM has used on many projects including legally scrutinized federal EISs and other peer reviewed analyses. REIS has the further advantage of including all full and part time jobs (including multiple jobs held by a single individual), so it is especially good at capturing activity in tourist-oriented economies where individuals may hold multiple jobs in or out of season. Another feature of REIS is that it is the only available source of employment based on actual tax filings with the IRS and is generally considered by economic professionals to be the most reliable data source at the county level.

Figure 8.6. Total Employment Trends by Town, 2010-2021

(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



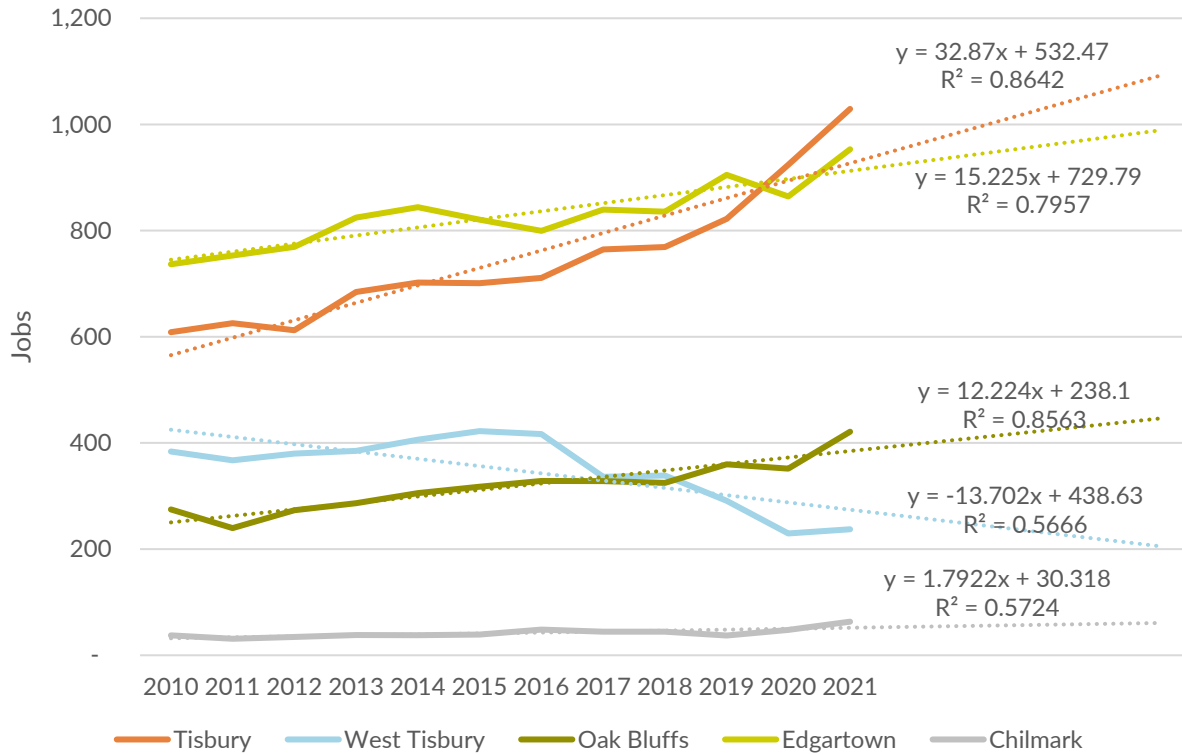
Edgartown and Tisbury have the largest numbers of employees, followed by Oak Bluffs, West Tisbury, and Chilmark. Gosnold and Aquinnah have the smallest. All towns except for the two smallest show a dip in jobs caused by the pandemic, but all except for Gosnold also show an uptick in 2021. Edgartown and Oak Bluffs do not yet show recovery to pre-pandemic levels, but the trend projections suggest they will. Tisbury has already exceeded pre-pandemic levels of total employment.

The following graphs delve into employment trends and projections by sector, which give an indication of which industries might be expected to grow or decline.

The Construction sector is the largest jobs sector in Tisbury and Edgartown (Figure 8.7), enjoying strong growth, which is projected to continue, with high levels of reliability. Construction in Oak Bluffs is also trending upwards, while it is in decline in West Tisbury. Construction growth in Chilmark is flat.

Figure 8.7 Employment Trends in Construction 2010-2021

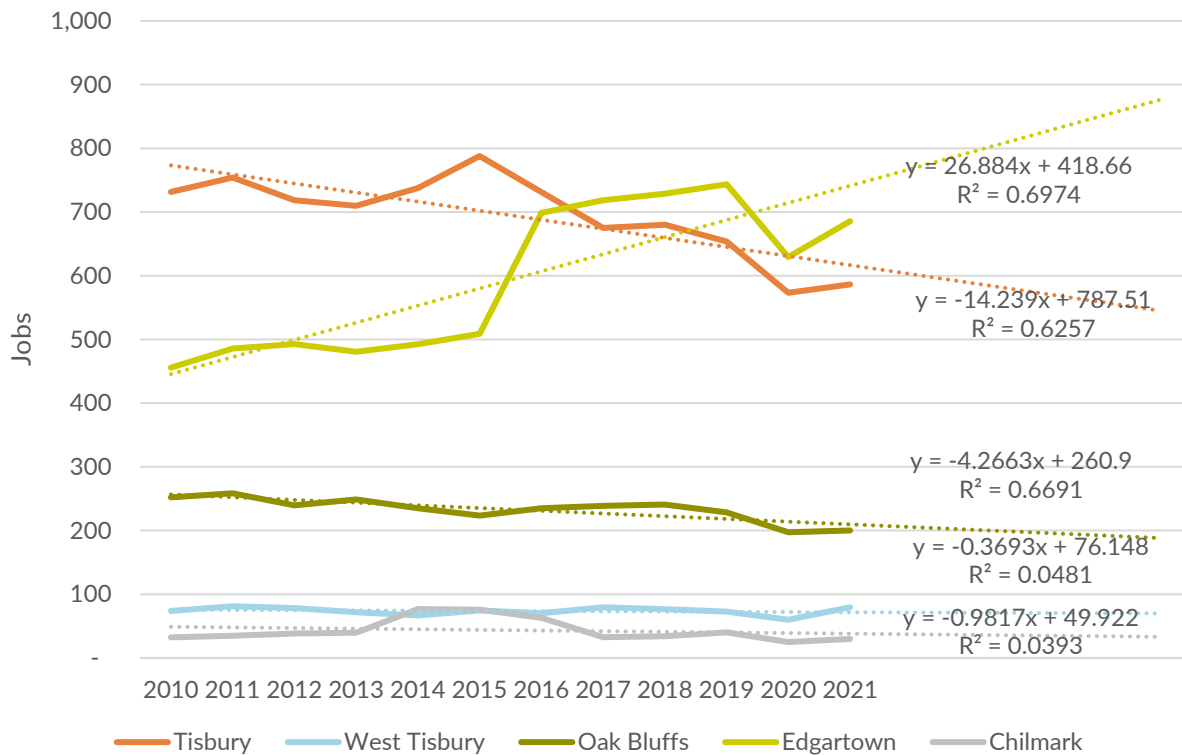
(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



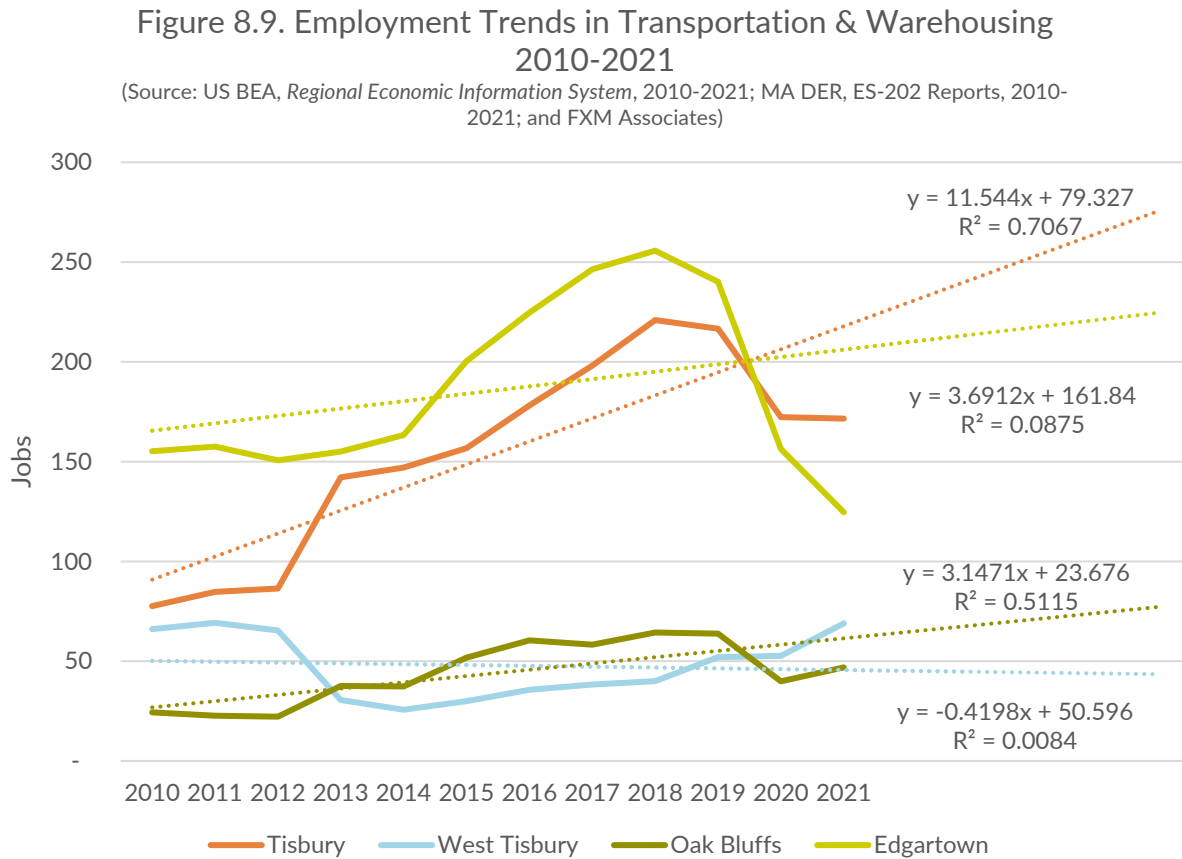
Retail Trade is the second largest sector on Martha’s Vineyard behind Construction. Figure 8.8 shows that in Tisbury, it is exceeded only by the Construction and Health Care and Social Assistance, and Administrative and Waste sectors in 2021 employment, but Retail has been in decline, even before the pandemic. It is a growth sector only in Edgartown. (Note that the projected trendlines in West Tisbury and Chilmark are at a very low level of reliability, and the number of jobs is small.) There appears to be a post-pandemic rebound in effect through 2021.

Figure 8.8. Employment Trends in Retail 2010-2021

(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



Transportation and Warehousing has an erratic history across the four towns in which job data are available. In Figure 8.9, Tisbury and Edgartown show marked decline since 2018 but the longer-term trends for Tisbury are favorable and the R square is good.

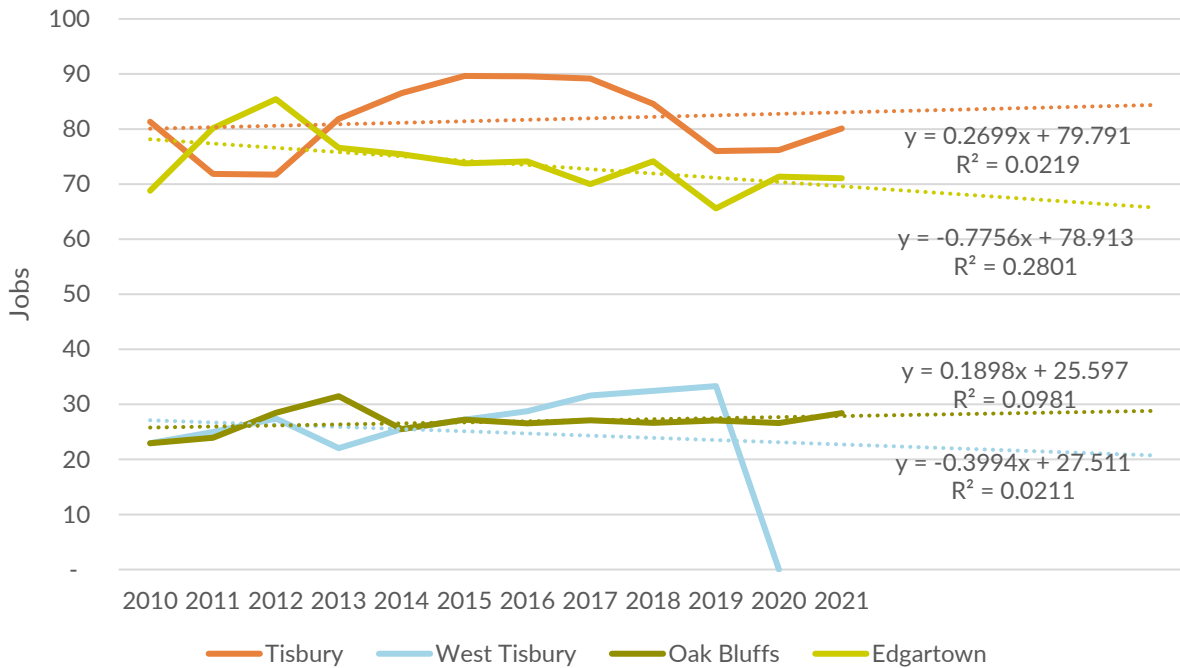


The next four graphs belong to a group of industries that could be characterized as Office-using. They include Information, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, and Professional and Technical Services. The ES-202 job numbers may be slightly lower than the actual, as they do not include self-employed persons who are often found in these sectors.

Figure 8.10 shows that the number of jobs in the Information sector is highest in Tisbury and Edgartown, but the sector has a small number of jobs in all towns. Tisbury's R2, however, is low so the projected trend is not very reliable, while Edgartown's projection is only slightly stronger. The post pandemic uptick in Tisbury is encouraging.

Figure 8.10. Employment Trends in Information 2010-2021

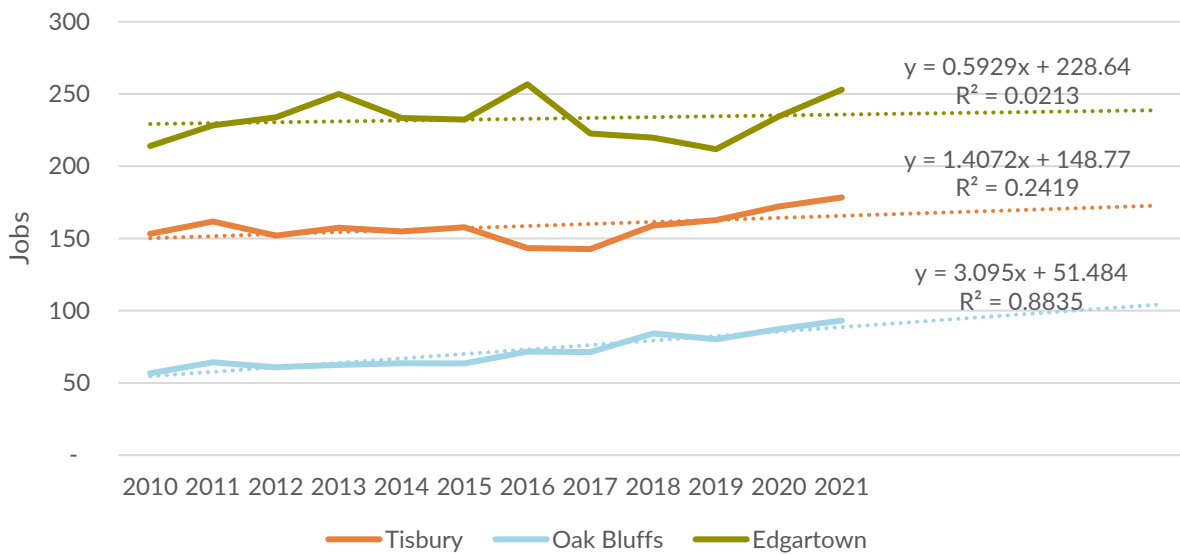
(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



Only three towns have reported jobs in Finance and Insurance, shown in Figure 8.11. The sector has been increasing in jobs since the pandemic, which may be in part a reflection of remote work opportunities.

Figure 8.11. Employment Trends in Finance & Insurance 2010-2021

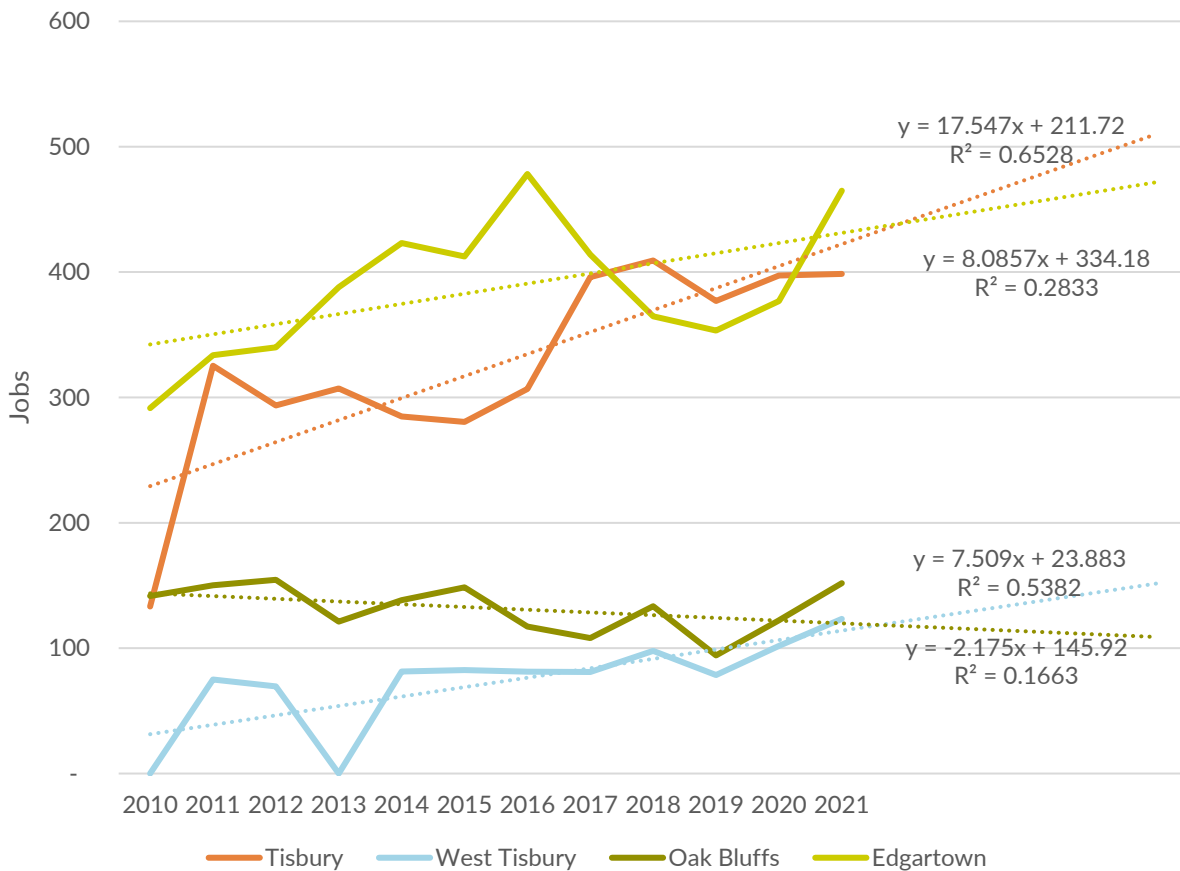
(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



Historic job trends in the Real Estate and Rental and Leasing sector by town in Martha’s Vineyard (Figure 8.12) have been highly variable, reflecting variability in the real estate industry but also the relative locations of real estate professionals (for example Oak Bluffs and Tisbury had the same number of jobs in 2010 but Tisbury has substantially more by 2021). The job trends are generally positive in Edgartown (the leading job location) and Tisbury with a relatively large number of persons working in this sector (full and part time jobs are included).

Figure 8.12. Employment Trends in Real Estate & Rental & Leasing 2010-2021

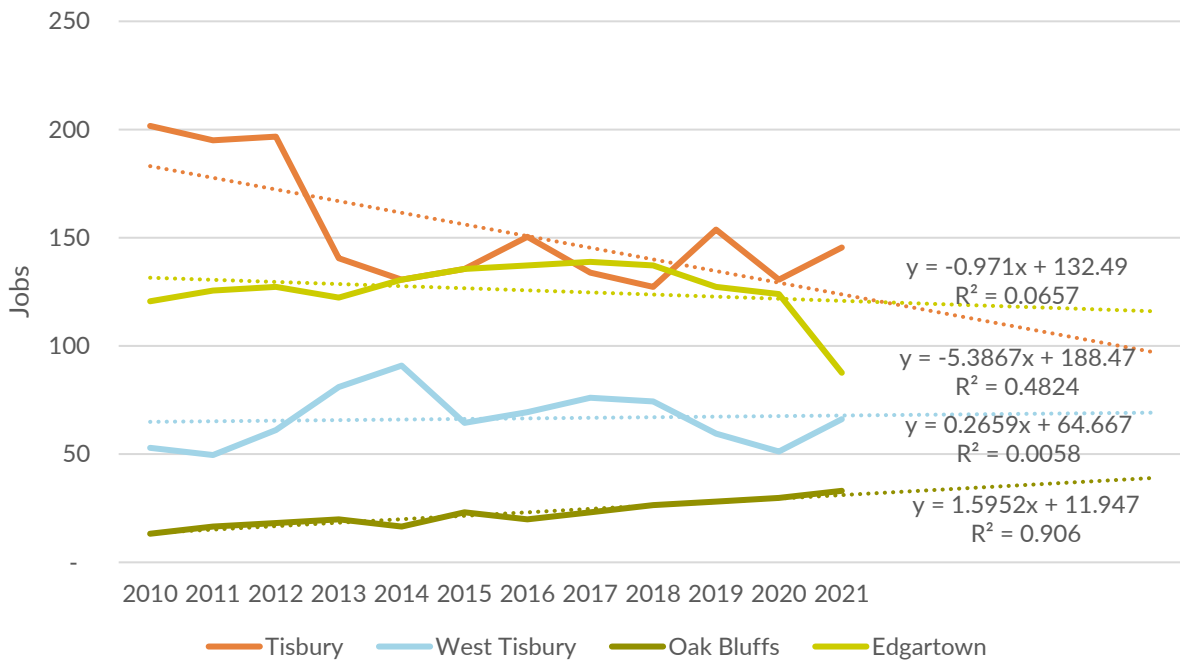
(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



Employment in the Professional and Technical Services sector has been in decline in Tisbury, where the largest number of these jobs are located (Figure 8.13), and in Edgartown, although Tisbury’s downward trend appears to have reversed since 2020. Edgartown’s jobs have shown a sharp decline since the pandemic year 2020. These jobs in Oak Bluffs and West Tisbury show slightly positive trends, with Oak Bluffs at a very high R² of .91.

Figure 8.13. Employment Trends in Professional & Technical Services
2010-2021

(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



The Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services sector is a large employer on Martha’s Vineyard (Figure 8.14). The industry is defined as:

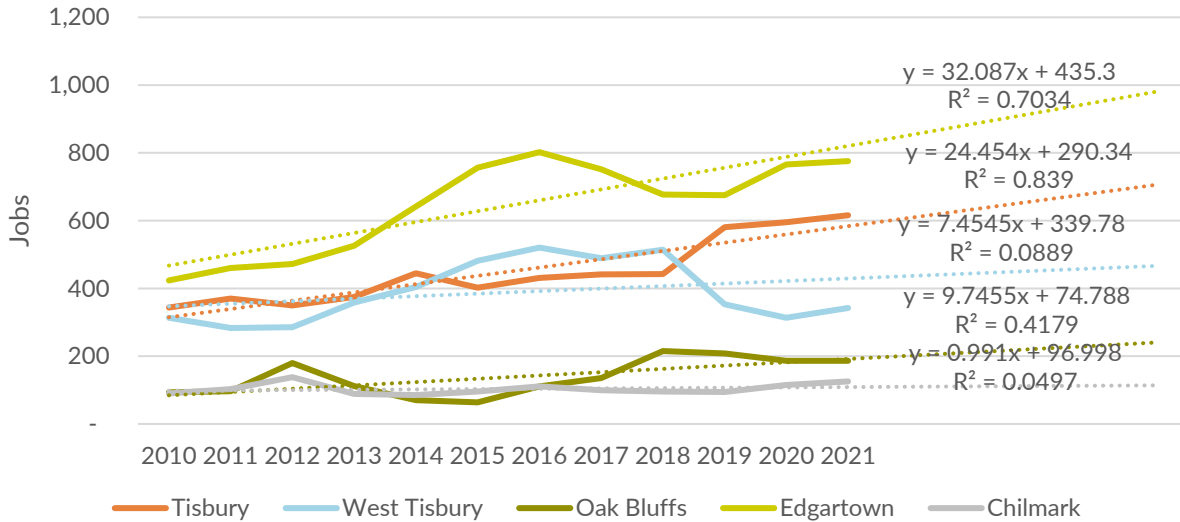
..establishments performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations....The establishments in this sector specialize in one or more of these support activities and provide these services to clients in a variety of industries and, in some cases, to households. Activities performed include office administration, hiring and placing of personnel, document preparation and similar clerical services, solicitation, collection, security and surveillance services, cleaning, and waste disposal services.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

Tisbury’s employment in this sector is growing, as is Edgartown’s and Oak Bluffs’, and is projected to continue to do so.

Figure 8.14. Employment Trends in Administrative & Waste Services
2010-2021

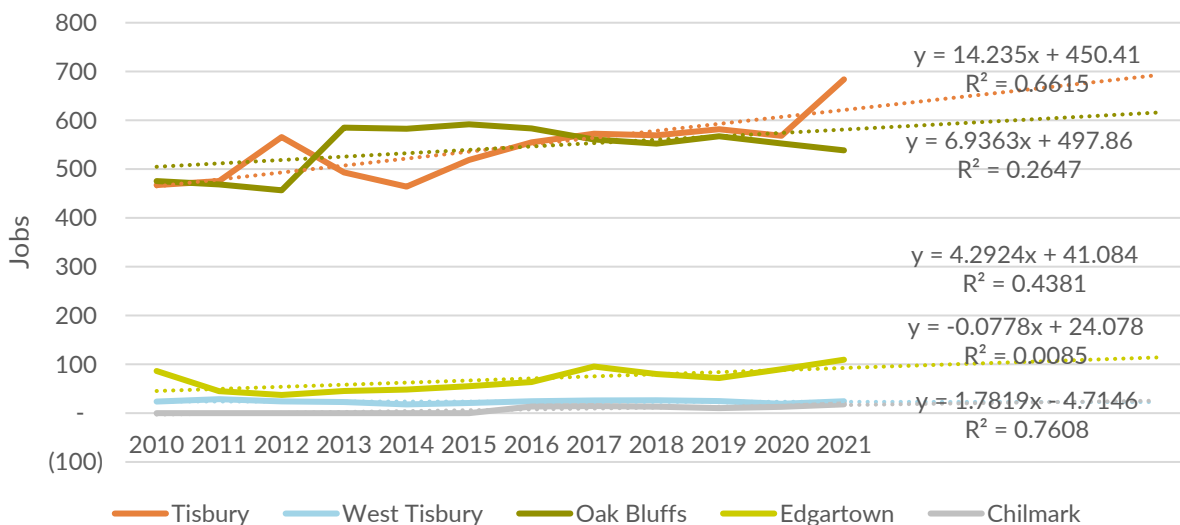
(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



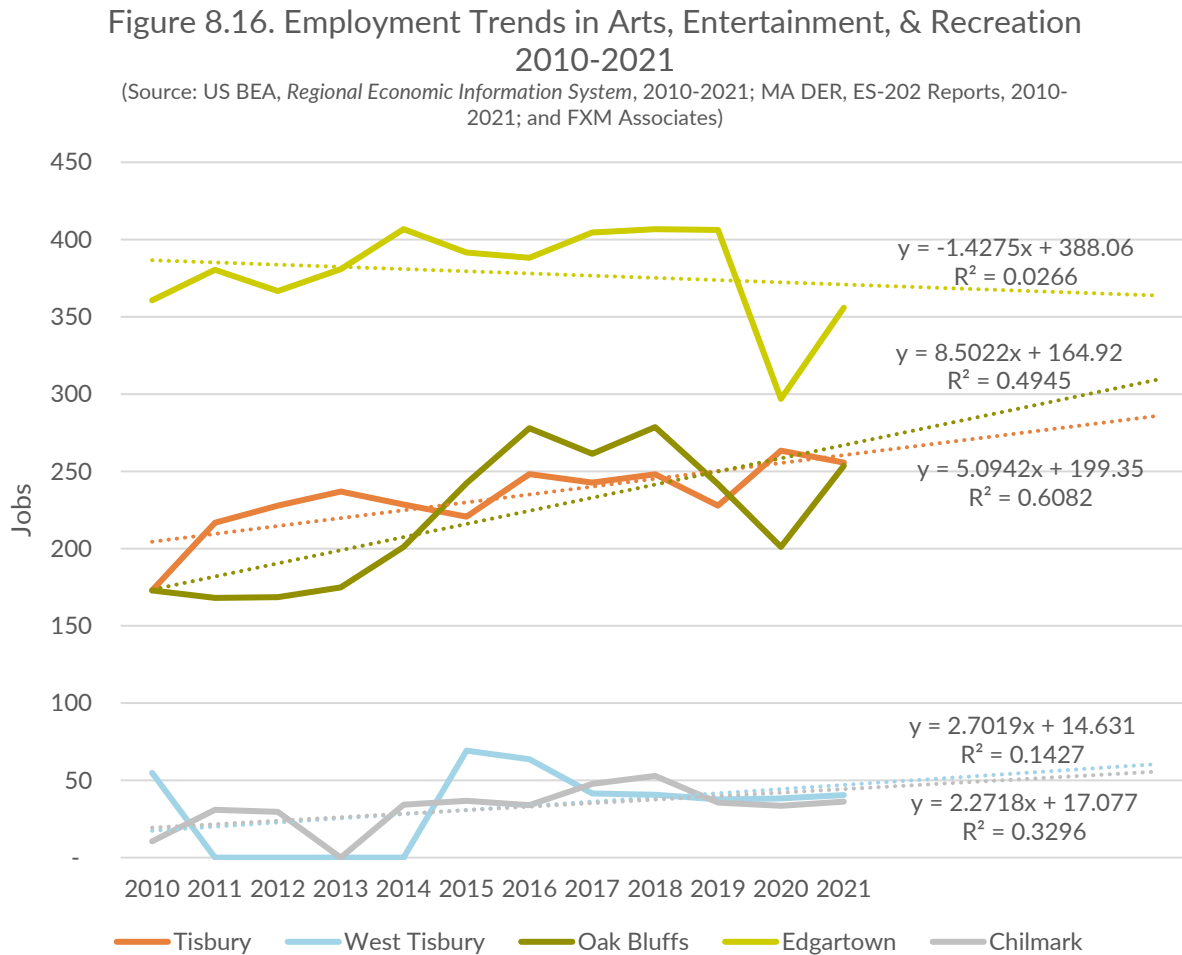
With nearly 700 full and part time jobs (including self-employed), Tisbury currently has the largest number of jobs in Health Care and Social Assistance (Figure 8.15). The steadily rising trendline for the next five years is at a high level of reliability. In Oak Bluffs, Martha’s Vineyard Hospital contributes to the high employment numbers for this sector relative to the smaller town’s employment in most other sectors.

Figure 8.15. Employment Trends in Health Care & Social Assistance
2010-2021

(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector was among that hardest hit by the pandemic, although Figure 8.16 shows employment in Tisbury was less affected than that of Edgartown (highest number of jobs) and Oak Bluffs. Although the sector shows signs of rebounding in Edgartown and Oak Bluffs, its projection for future growth in Tisbury is based on steady historical performance as shown in the figure below. Both Edgartown and Oak Bluffs show signs of rebounding since pandemic.



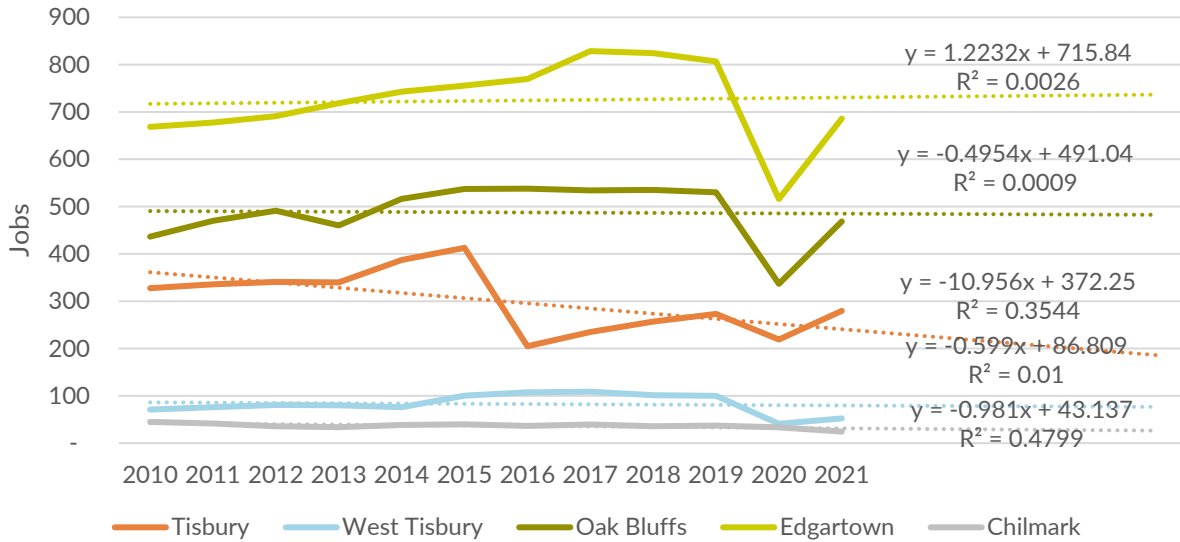
The Accommodations and Food Services sector include (1) entities that provide lodging or short-term accommodations for travelers, vacationers, and others and (2) those that prepare meals, snacks, and beverages to customer order for immediate on-premises and off-premises consumption.⁷⁴

The sector was also badly hit by the pandemic and employs more than twice the number of people as Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation. Tisbury, which ranks below Edgartown and Oak Bluffs in number of jobs, showed some recovery in 2021, but the sector has been in a decline which is projected to continue, as it is in all the towns except Edgartown (Figure 8.17). Depending on the degree of recovery, some of these declines may disappear in future years as the pandemic effect recedes.

⁷⁴ NAICS definitions for NAICS codes 721 and 722

Figure 8.17. Employment Trends in Accommodation & Food Services
2010-2021

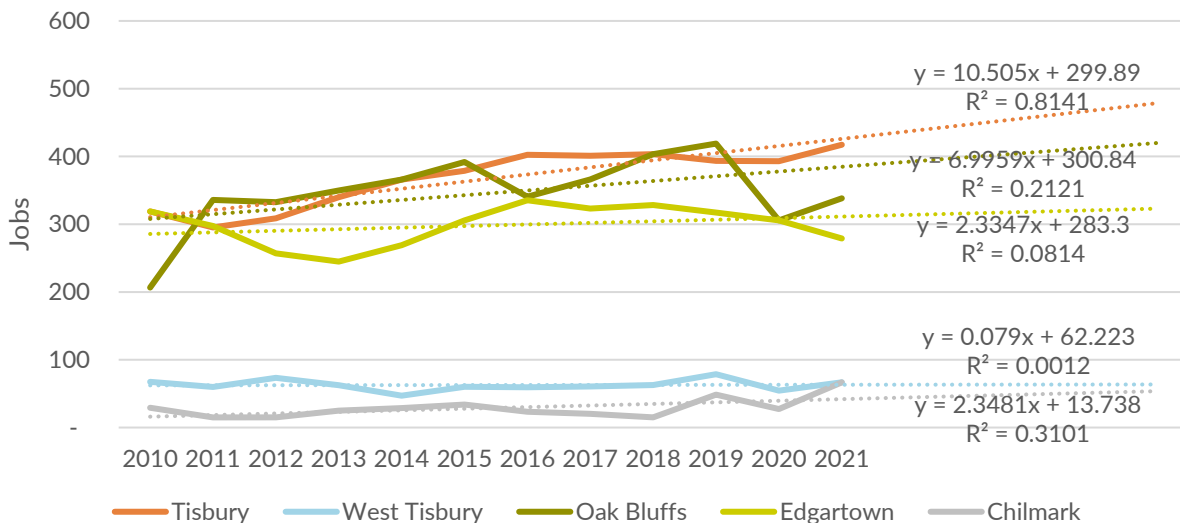
(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



Other Services (Except Public Administration) include repair and maintenance of a variety of equipment, such as automobiles, electronic equipment, commercial machinery, and household goods. Figure 8.18 shows trends in the sector have been steadily upward in Tisbury. Tisbury, Edgartown, and Oak Bluffs are projected to increase employment in the sector, following post-pandemic rebounds. Tisbury’s high R² values suggest reliable growth prospects.

Figure 8.18. Employment Trends in Other Services Except Public Administration 2010-2021

(Source: US BEA, *Regional Economic Information System*, 2010-2021; MA DER, ES-202 Reports, 2010-2021; and FXM Associates)



Implications for Demand for Commercial Space

The above employment projections, with their relevant caveats regarding reliability, can be translated into estimates of future demand for commercial space using industry norms for square foot per employee. Table 8.9 compiles these projections.

	Dukes County		Tisbury
	2022 SF	Avg Annual Projected SF Demand	Avg Annual Projected SF Demand
Industrial	77,700	8,500	4,300
Retail	394,000	14,000	3,700
Office	49,000	9,900	2,300

Source: CoStar Property Information Services; US DOC Regional Economic Information System, MA Department of Labor, ES-202 Data Series; and FXM Associates

These projections estimate average annual demand by major space type⁷⁵ based on county-level employment and space demand projections over the next 5-years. Tisbury's share is based on its current share of projected county-wide employment in each of the categories comprising demand for retail, industrial (manufacturing, wholesale, and transportation and warehousing) and office uses. This should be considered a conservative estimate since Tisbury (or any other community) could capture more than its current share of employment with investment in expanded or new construction in any of the major space categories.

Retail Opportunity Gap/Surplus

Another approach to assessing potential opportunities for expanding retailing is a retail opportunity gap/surplus analysis, a tool used by major retailers and chain restaurants to gauge market demand and competition within a specified geographic area. The analysis presents a snapshot of current consumer spending on various retail categories alongside actual retail store sales in those same categories within the same geographic area. Where expenditures by households in the market area exceed sales in that market area, a gap or opportunity exists for existing or new stores within the market area to "capture" more of those household expenditures. (This loss of potential sales is also called "leakage.")

Conversely, where market area household expenditures are less than actual sales categories, it indicates that stores in that retail category in the market area already attract consumer dollars from outside the market area, and opportunities for additional retail activity would be more limited.

The retail gap analysis is a picture of current opportunities for retailers to newly locate or expand facilities based on a well-established principle drawn from many empirical studies showing that people will typically purchase goods and services within the shortest available walking or drive time from

⁷⁵ CoStar's data for existing SF by major space type are considered reasonably reliable for county-wide estimates but not for estimates below the county level. The projected space demand is based on projected employment and not historical space inventories reported by CoStar.

where they live. The principle applies to comparable and competitive goods, services, and pricing: there is no guarantee of success based strictly on location advantage, which simply presents the opportunity.

Retailers typically define market areas in terms of drive times, with a 15-minute drive time considered the maximum time consumers would be willing to drive for all but the largest stores and store types. Market support within a 5-minute drive time is considered the maximum time consumers would be willing to drive to smaller, convenience type retailers, and market demand within a 10-minute drive time is considered essential for most medium sized stores and restaurants. If a specific category of retail sales opportunity were shown for a 5-minute drive-time market area and held up at the 10-minute market area, then most retailers would consider market conditions favorable – from a demand standpoint – to locating or expanding a store within that market area.

Figure 8.19 below shows the areas encompassed by 5-, 10-, and 15-minute drive times. The 15-minute area covers most of Martha’s Vineyard.

Figure 8.19. 5-, 10-, and 15-minute Drive Time Areas



The analysis examines demand for retail goods and services by the year-round population as estimated by the Consumer Expenditure Survey. These annual purchases may be made on- or off-island. In addition to the demand of on-island residents, retail and restaurant stores on the Vineyard sell their goods and services to seasonal residents and transient visitors. Total store sales, shown in Table 3 below, are estimated at \$543,000,000 in 2022, nearly \$200,000,000 or 58% more than year-round resident demand (non-resident purchases represent 37% of total sales). As shown by the data in Table 5 below, in some sectors the proportion of total sales is much greater than the 37% overall surplus. These data indicate the importance of seasonal residents and visitors to island businesses. Many of these businesses could not function without the purchases of non-island residents. They are therefore providing goods and services to on-island residents -- whether year-round or seasonal -- they could not provide without the off-islander spending. This includes the indirect effects of the purchases made by seasonal businesses from year-round ones for materials and supplies. To maintain the goods and services they now enjoy, year-round residents need thriving seasonal as well as year-round businesses.

According to Claritas Spotlight Reports, a subscription data source widely used in the real estate industry and by professional analysts, within a 15-minute drive time of Tisbury (roughly island-wide) these expenditures totaled about \$344,000,000 (demand by island residents, including purchases at restaurants and other food services in addition to retail stores) in 2022, as shown in Table 8.10 below. For each drive time market area, overall retail and restaurant sales exceed the purchases made by households living within those drive times from the approximate center of the island (the intersection of State Rd and Edgartown Rd). Stores are pulling in sales from outside the drive time areas, so there is no overall gap in retail/restaurant supply, with the surplus shown in Table 8.10.

Table 8.10. Retail Opportunity/Surplus Gap Market Overview			
	5-min	10-min	15-min
Households	188	3,075	6,618
Total Retail and Restaurant Expenditures	\$ 10,758,227	\$ 163,003,922	\$ 344,390,965
Total Actual Store Sales	\$ 10,877,063	\$ 253,400,593	\$ 542,667,758
Retail Opportunity/Surplus gap	\$ (118,836)	\$ (90,396,671)	\$ (198,276,794)
<i>Source: Environics Analytics, Claritas Spotlight Reports, 2022, and FXM Associates</i>			

Notwithstanding these large surplus sales beyond local demand, a retail gap analysis suggests opportunities for existing or new retail stores in selected categories to capture about \$12,000,000 in sales currently leaked off island, potentially supporting about 30,000 square feet in expanded or newly constructed space. Table 8.11 presents the results of the comparison of spending and sales in selected retail store types, along with the translation of the gap, or "leakage," into square footage which could support new or expanded businesses. Because the gaps shown are relatively small, they may be more useful as indicators or where existing retailers within the respective store types may have an opportunity to expand their current sales. (In practice, this area would be expected to capture only a part of the current sales leakage shown, some of which may be captured by stores outside the area or not recaptured at all.) All the selected gaps shown are for the 15-minute drive time, essentially the Vineyard overall. Purchases of goods made on-line by island residents are accounted for outside these data.

Retail Store	Selected Gap	Potentially Supportable Area (sq. ft)
Home centers (NAICS 44411)	\$ 8,174,716	16,954
Nursery, garden center, and farm supply stores (NAICS 44422)	\$ 1,195,045	4,170
Shoe stores (NAICS 4482)	\$ 1,506,555	4,214
Snack and non-alcoholic beverage bars (NAICS 722515)	\$ 1,123,955	4,656
Total	\$ 12,000,271	29,994

Source: EnvironicsAnalytics, Claritas Spotlight Reports 2022; varied industry sources for sales per sq ft; FXM Associates

The analysis includes spending on Food Services, a separate NAICS category from Retail Trade, but one which is an important and growing component of economic development generally. It ranks sixth in employment in Tisbury. Figure 8.17 in the market trends section above shows that the broader sector, Accommodations and Food Services, has been a declining one in Tisbury. That the area is already a destination for eating from outside the drive time market area suggests that building on the current mix of restaurants, essentially to capture more seasonal spending now made off-island, may still be a productive economic development strategy.

	2022 Demand	2022 Supply	2022 Surplus	Surplus as % of Sales
All Retail	309,279,664	445,812,509	136,532,845	31%
Furniture and home furnishings stores (NAICS 442)	7,858,899	13,680,594	5,821,695	43%
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (NAICS 444)	27,609,122	75,489,083	47,879,961	63%
Food and beverage stores (NAICS 445)	47,835,125	137,872,318	90,037,193	65%
Health and personal care stores (NAICS 446)	19,339,246	20,716,916	1,377,670	7%
Clothing stores (NAICS 4481)	8,121,514	30,303,569	22,182,055	73%
Gift, novelty, and souvenir stores (NAICS 45322)	889,695	19,783,212	18,893,517	96%
Art dealers (NAICS 45392)	793,466	30,636,038	29,842,572	97%
Full-service restaurants (NAICS 722511)	15,673,989	77,869,114	62,195,125	80%

Source: EnvironicsAnalytics, Claritas Spotlight Reports 2022; FXM Associates

The retail gap analysis is used by developers, property owners and brokers to recruit tenants, and economic development professionals seeking to expand existing businesses and recruit new ones as part of an economic revitalization program (including mixed use development with residential uses, for example). All the caveats that would apply to successful stores anywhere – good maintenance and

attractive premises, managed supply, competitive prices, good services, sufficient parking, and transportation access – apply as well to realizing potential gap opportunities.

CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN TISBURY

Tisbury has two main commercial nodes, the historic downtown core of Vineyard Haven, and inland along State Road. These are designated Business District 1 (B1) and Business District 2 (B2).⁷⁶

Business Survey Results

As part of the community outreach process for this Master Plan, the consulting team created a 24-question survey and distributed it to the local business community in Tisbury in November and December 2022. In total, the survey received 48 responses.

Fifty one percent of respondents both live and work in Tisbury, while 46.8 percent work in Tisbury but live in another community on the Vineyard. Just one person, 2.1 percent, worked in Tisbury but lived off-island. All the respondents were independent, locally owned businesses. Eighty-three percent said their sole location is in Tisbury while 17 percent operate multiple locations in Tisbury or elsewhere on the Island. Respondents represent a variety of industries. The largest industry groups are the clothing and retail trade at 18.8 percent, professional services at 12.5 percent, arts and entertainment and health services both at 10.4 percent, and hotel or accommodation at 6.3 percent. Twenty-five percent felt their business did not fit neatly into one category or another. Many of these businesses are long-time, local institutions, with 62.5 percent operating 20 years or longer, 16.7 percent operating between five and 10 years, and 10.4 percent operating between 10 and 20 years. About 6.3 percent have been open for 1-3 years or less and 4.2 percent between three and five years.

Of the 48 responses received, 41.7 percent said they are business owners who own their space, 25 percent are business owners who rent their space, 12.5 percent are home operated businesses, and 10.4 percent are commercial property owners. The remaining 10.4 percent are employees of a Tisbury business. In terms of rents, 58.3 percent of those who participated in the survey report that they own their own commercial space or otherwise do not pay rent. Of the 13 respondents who do pay rent, over half (53.8 percent) say they pay between \$21 and \$30 per square foot. Twenty three percent pay more than \$41 per square foot, 15.4 percent pay between \$31 and \$40 per square foot, and 7.7 percent pay between \$10 and \$20 per square foot. No one pays less than \$10 per square foot.

Survey results portray a mixed picture when it comes to vacancies. About 48.8 percent believe there is either little or no difficulty finding space when looking and that there are a typical number or many vacant spaces. Meanwhile 51.2 percent believe that finding space is either difficult or extremely difficult, with few or a low number of spaces available. But only 12.5 percent said they knew of a vacant space immediately adjacent to them. On average, these business owners and operators are fairly concerned with vacant spaces in Tisbury: on a one-to-five scale, five meaning very concerned about vacant space, the average answer is a four. Many noted the vacancy of the Capawock Theatre and its

⁷⁶ See also, Land Use.

neighboring building as particularly concerning and detrimental to the life of Vineyard Haven and Main Street.

While the Vineyard's economy is known to be seasonal, 82.9 percent of respondents operate year-round, while 19.1 percent operate seasonally. Of those that operate seasonally, nearly all operate during the summer season, but also during the shoulder season, especially the fall and into December. For 59.5 percent of businesses, summer remains their busiest season but still 28.6 percent say they have relatively even business throughout the year. One business said winter is its busiest season while another said fall and spring are the busiest. About 46 percent of businesses said that their primary customer base in Tisbury are locals, with 27 percent saying visitors and tourists are their primary customers, and another 27 percent saying that it is roughly evenly split between locals and visitors.

In terms of employment, about 50 percent of businesses employ between one and five workers and about 20 percent between six and ten workers, regardless of season. Larger businesses employing more than 10 are the remainder and employ the most during the peak season. While 31.8 percent of respondents said they were not looking for new employees, the 61.4 percent said they are experiencing some or significant difficulty hiring and retaining new workers. Many of the businesses placed recruiting and hiring better trained workers as their highest priority when asked as well, followed by Main Street beautification, improving environmental quality, transportation, and circulation. Attracting more tourism and visitors was the lowest priority.

Most, 41.7 percent, chose to situate their business in Tisbury because they already live there while 12.5 percent said the customer base attracted them to Tisbury and another 12.5 percent wanted to take advantage of the year-round ferry access. A third of folks gave various other reasons – such as simply finding the right space for their needs, or the business already existed in Town when they took ownership or control.

Overall, survey respondents are happy with operating a business in Tisbury, with 52 percent saying they are either satisfied or very satisfied with operating a business in Town. Twenty-five percent are somewhat satisfied, and 8.3 percent are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. About 14.6 percent said they were somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied and no one said they were very dissatisfied. Many businesses did express concern, however, around well-known issues like parking and traffic (especially during the summer), high property taxes, affordable housing for workers, and strengthening Tisbury's competitive edge compared to other island towns to attract and keep businesses and visitors. The lack of effectiveness and efficiency by the local government is another item that many respondents noted and hope to see improve.

TAX BASE

In fiscal year 2021, the Town of Tisbury's budget stood at \$29.8 million, up 23.8 percent from FY 2017.⁷⁷ Per the Town's website, real estate property taxes support about 90% of the yearly operating costs of the local government.⁷⁸ According to 2022 data from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), residential property taxes represent 90 percent of the town's total property tax levy, commercial provides 7.6 percent, industrial 0.15 percent, and personal property 2.3 percent.⁷⁹

Fiscal Year	Residential/ Open Space	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property	Total
2019	\$22,994,161	\$2,214,562	\$44,250	\$547,872	\$25,800,845
2020	\$23,557,950	\$2,257,445	\$44,876	\$543,916	\$26,404,187
2021	\$23,978,334	\$2,213,113	\$45,205	\$562,325	\$26,798,977
2022	\$24,977,741	\$2,097,809	\$42,615	\$643,522	\$27,761,687
2019	89.12%	8.58%	0.17%	2.12%	100.00%
2020	89.22%	8.55%	0.17%	2.06%	100.00%
2021	89.47%	8.26%	0.17%	2.10%	100.00%
2022	89.97%	7.56%	0.15%	2.32%	100.00%

Source: DOR Municipal Databank.

There were 3,497 residential, commercial, and industrial properties representing a total value of \$3.14 billion in Tisbury in 2019.⁸⁰ Not all property is treated the same, however. Tisbury takes advantage of a residential exemption, meaning full-time residents can receive a discounted tax rate compared to seasonal residents. In FY22, the average property value in Tisbury is \$1,051,350, but 1,079 residents received an exemption of 18 percent on their properties. The Town set the 2022 property tax rate at \$8.70 per \$1,000 in value for residential property and \$8.12/\$1,000 for commercial, industrial, and personal property.⁸¹

Tax rates are often the first comparator used in fiscal analyses. As shown in the figure below, Tisbury ranks considerably higher in both residential rates and commercial/industrial/personal property rates than the other towns.⁸² Oak Bluffs is second, but its rates are much lower, like those in Aquinnah and West Tisbury. Tisbury's commercial tax rate is almost 59 percent higher than the average of the seven towns and 67 percent higher than the average residential tax rate. These differences might reduce Tisbury's competitiveness with surrounding towns in attracting business and residential development.

⁷⁷ Review of Fiscal 2021 Operating Budget, Town of Tisbury (2021).

⁷⁸ "Primer on Tisbury Real Estate Taxes," Town of Tisbury MA, Accessed January 2023. <https://www.tisburyma.gov/treasurer-collector/pages/primer-tisbury-real-estate-taxes>.

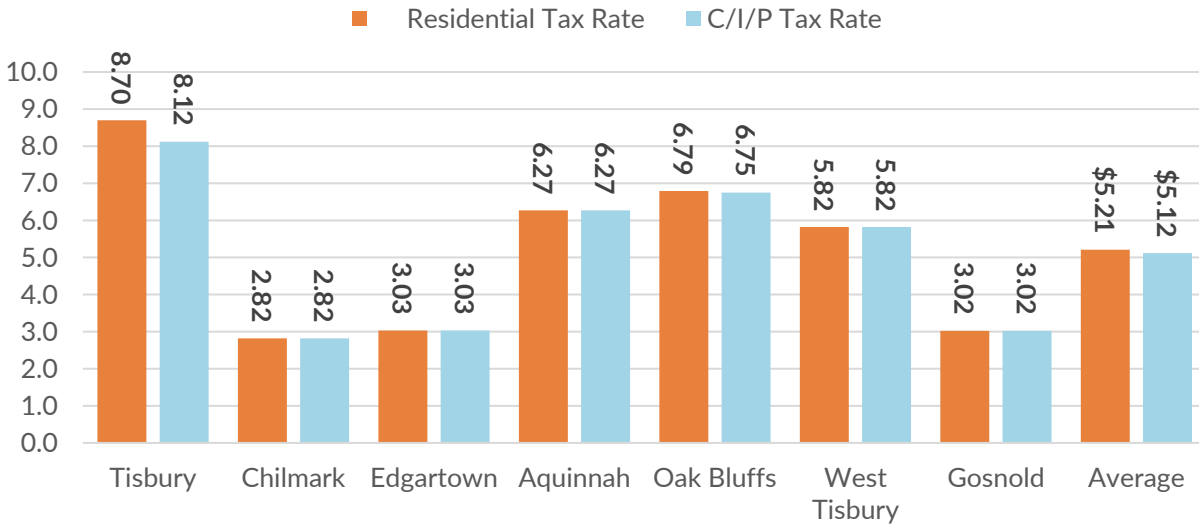
⁷⁹ "Tisbury: Tax Levy by Class," Municipal Databank, MA Department of Revenue Division of Local Services.

⁸⁰ "Real Estate for FY2019," Town of Tisbury Tax Commitment Book, Town of Tisbury (December 14, 2018).

⁸¹ "Town of Tisbury Fiscal 2022 Residential Exemption History," Town of Tisbury (2022).

⁸² Personal property assessments and tax levies account for less than 2% of assessed values and tax levies in any of the Vineyard towns and are not addressed here.

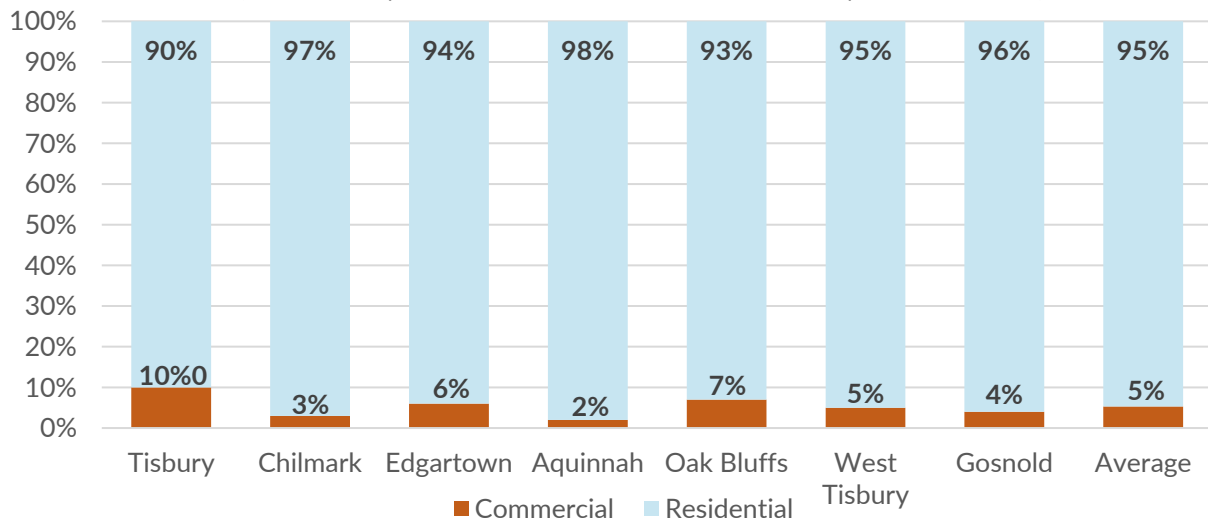
Figure 8.20. Tax Rates (per \$1,000 valuation) FY 2022
 (Source: Mass Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)



As shown in the following chart (Figure 8.21), 10 percent of the assessed value of all real property in Tisbury is commercial. This is the highest proportion for commercial of all the towns, and twice the average proportion.

Figure 8.21. Residential & Commercial Property % of Total Assessed Valuation 2022

(Source: MA Dept. of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)



All towns are heavily dependent on residential properties or revenues, as shown below. The tax levies track the valuations of real property shown in the previous chart. Of the seven, Tisbury derives the lowest proportion, 90 percent, of its total levy from residential real property sources and raises the

largest proportion, 10 percent, of its levy from commercial real property tax sources. The average of all the towns is 95 percent from residential and 5 percent from real property commercial tax sources.

Figure 8.22. Commercial and Residential as % of Total Tax Levy 2022

(Source: MA Dept. of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)

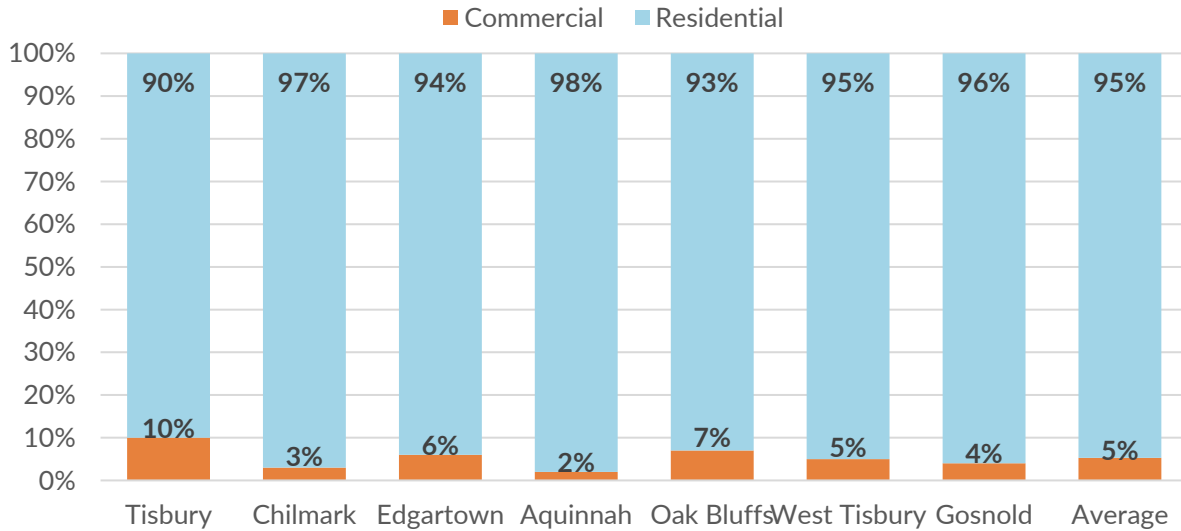
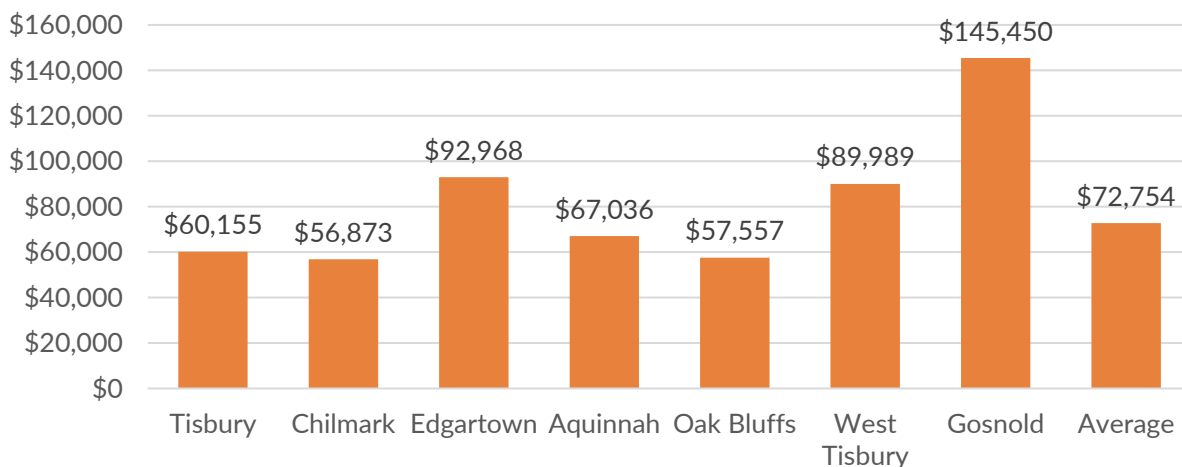


Figure 8.23 shows commercial real property valuations on a per job basis show different variations across towns. Tisbury’s Commercial/Industrial valuations per job are the second lowest of the towns, 21 percent below the average for all Vineyard towns.

Figure 8.23. Commercial/Industrial Real Property Assessed Values per Job

(Source: MA Dept. of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)

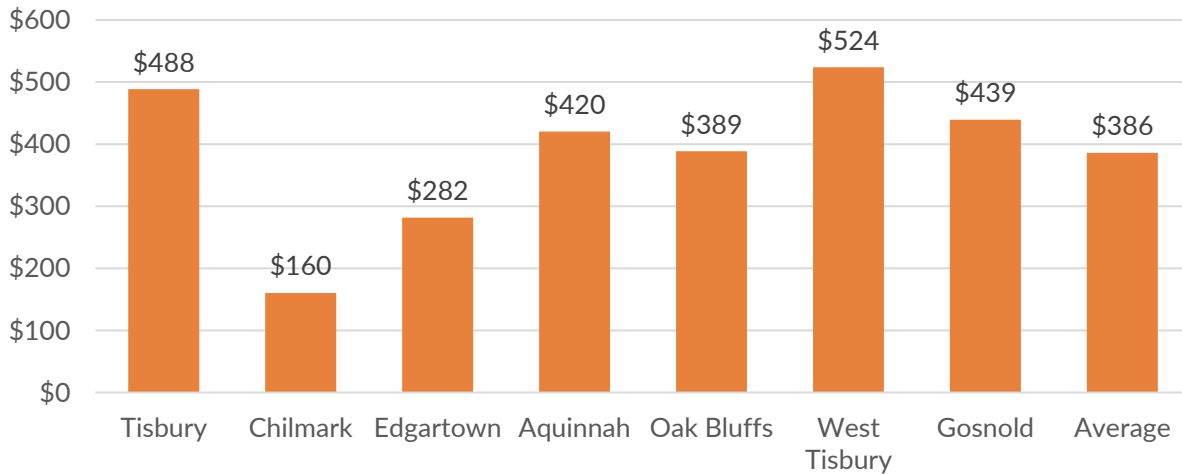


From a per job tax standpoint, Tisbury is the second most expensive business location behind West Tisbury, with commercial/industrial real property tax levies 26 percent higher than the average of all

Dukes County communities (Figure 8.24), despite 26 percent lower than average assessed values per job. This reflects Tisbury’s higher tax rates.

Figure 8.24. Commercial/Industrial Real Property Tax Levy Per Job

(Source: Mass Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)

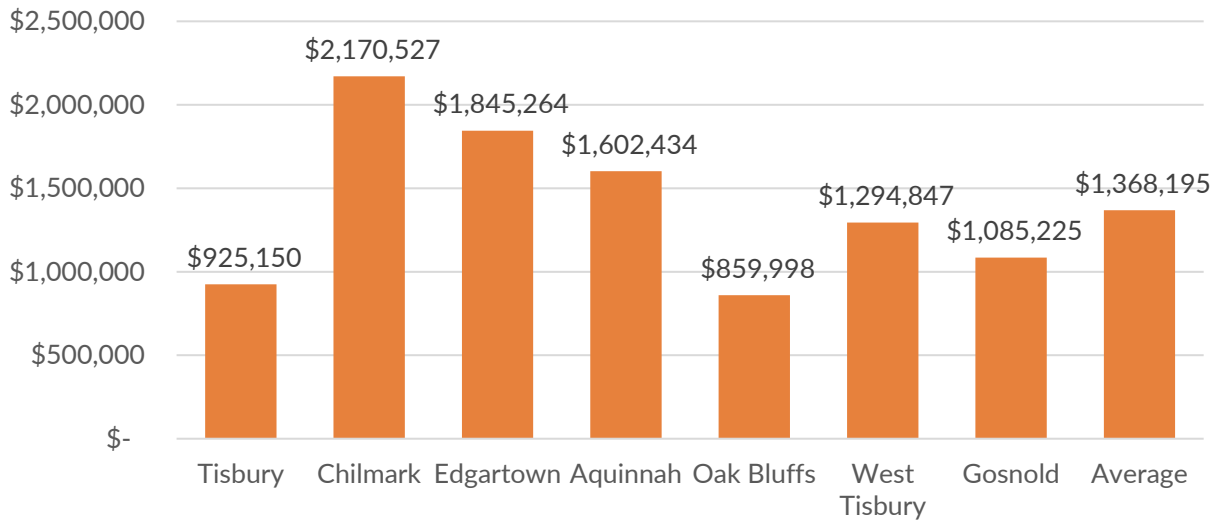


All the towns on Martha’s Vineyard have substantial non-resident property owners, consistent with the seasonality of its economy. Table 8.14 below shows the relative vacancy rates across the towns. Vacancies classified as such by the census include seasonal homes (not occupied year-round) which are assumed to comprise most of the units classified as vacant. Tisbury and West Tisbury have the lowest proportion of seasonal homes, based on vacancy data. Most properties in Chilmark, Edgartown, Aquinnah, Oak Bluffs, and Gosnold are classified as vacant year-round.

Table 8.14. Housing Units, Occupied and Vacant							
	Tisbury	Chilmark	Edgartown	Aquinnah*	Oak Bluffs	West Tisbury	Gosnold*
Total:	3,226	1,574	5,234	523	4,429	2,371	211
Occupied	2,139	538	2,191	161	2,316	1,509	37
Vacant	1,087	1,036	3,043	362	2,113	862	174
% vacant	34%	66%	58%	69%	48%	36%	82%
*Claritas data used in absence of Census data							
Source: U.S. Census, 2020; EnvironicsAnalytics Claritas Spotlight Reports, 2022; FXM Associates							

To account for both seasonal and year-round property, assessed values per housing unit are shown in the following chart. Of the seven towns, Tisbury has the second lowest assessed value per unit. Five of the towns exceed \$1 million in residential assessed value per unit.

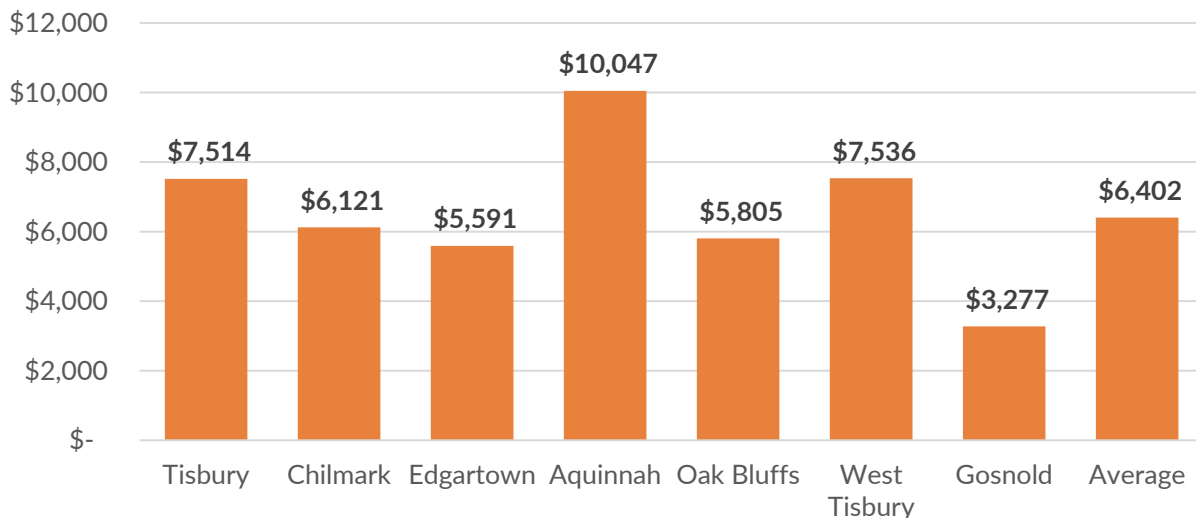
Figure 8.25. Residential Assessed Value Per Housing Unit
 (Source: MA Dept. of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)



Despite the second lowest average assessed values per unit, shown in Figure 8.25 (32 percent below average assessed values), residential property owners in Tisbury are paying the third highest average tax levies per unit (17 percent above average). Residential levies per unit are shown in the figure below (Figure 8.26). Here, Tisbury ranks third from the top, only slightly lower than West Tisbury. This reflects Tisbury’s higher tax rate.

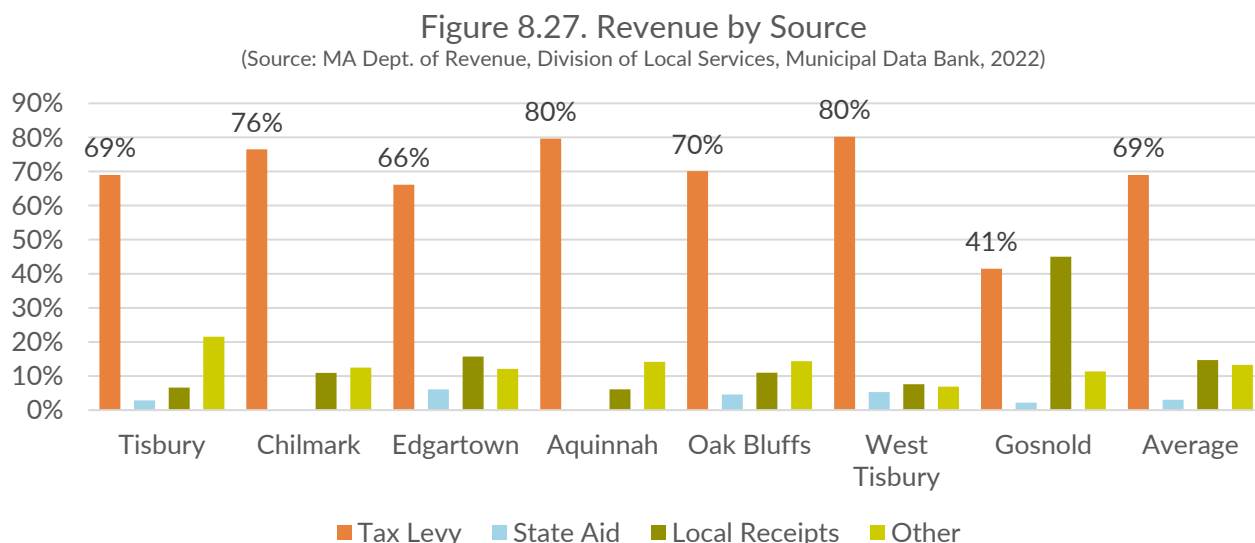
Figure 8.26. Residential Tax Levy Per Unit

(Source: Mass Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank, 2022)



Looking at revenues by source (Figure 8.27), Tisbury ranks fifth in the proportion of its budget that comes from the tax levy and first in the proportion that comes from local receipts and various “other” sources. Aquinnah and West Tisbury derive the largest proportion of their budgets from this source. Among the towns, Edgartown and West Tisbury rank first and second in the proportions of state aid

budgeted, 6.1 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively. Gosnold derives most of its budget from Local Receipts (include excise taxes, occupancy taxes, fees, charges, etc.).



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), which serves the secondary education needs for Tisbury and other island communities, offers several career and technical education as well as co-op pathways to students for careers in automotive technology, carpentry, culinary arts, early childhood development and education, health assisting, horticulture, marketing, and maritime sciences. Currently, Martha’s Vineyard lacks an institution of higher education on the island, including a community college. In 2022, the Martha’s Vineyard Center for Training and Education (MVCET) created a pilot program called the Martha’s Vineyard Community College Consortium (MVCCC) to provide better education access for islanders by partnering with other regional community colleges. According to MVCET, this is in response to concerning outcomes from MVRHS: 55 percent of the class of 2020 either never enrolled in college or have dropped out. Of the 2018 graduating class, just 37 percent obtained a degree (two or four year) within six years of graduation.⁸³ MVCCC offers select course credits that can be applied toward degrees at Massachusetts public institutions as well as toward career certificates.

WATERFRONT CONSIDERATIONS: VINEYARD WIND 1 OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

Vineyard Wind is currently building the nation’s first utility-scale offshore wind energy project fifteen miles south of Martha’s Vineyard. The Vineyard Wind 1 (VW1) project will consist of an array of 62 wind turbines that will generate 800 megawatts (MW) of electricity. The development and construction of the project will proceed in three phases: Development, Construction, and Operations and Maintenance (O&M). The Development phase is complete, and the Construction phase is underway, with the first turbine scheduled to begin operation in Q4 2023.

⁸³ “MV Community College Consortium,” MVCET, Accessed December 2022, <https://mvcet.org/mvccc/>.

The O&M phase will begin once the first turbine is producing energy, although Vineyard Wind and its partner Vineyard Power have begun hiring and training a workforce in anticipation of this milestone. O&M is the longest phase, extending throughout the life of a wind farm: approximately 25 years. The turbines, foundations, cables, and other components are inspected regularly during the O&M phase, and any necessary repairs or upkeep are performed. Additionally, the environmental impacts of the OSW farm are monitored during this period. Vineyard Wind and the turbine manufacturer will jointly maintain the OSW farm during the five-year warranty period.

Vineyard Wind O&M Support Facility

Vineyard Wind is constructing an O&M support facility at 69 Beach Road in Vineyard Haven. The O&M facility will be approximately 14,440 ft² and will serve as the central location for the primary maintenance activities, including office space, storage of spare parts, maintenance equipment, other materials, and parking. The facility will also serve as the hub for all the primary and back-office support of the O&M activities, including planning, training, procurement, and any additional activities as they arise in the operation of the VW1 project.⁸⁴

Tisbury Marine Terminal

Vineyard Wind's O&M support facility is part of a larger O&M system that includes the expansion of the Tisbury Marine Terminal (TMT) at 91 Beach Road and the development of a helicopter hangar at Martha's Vineyard Airport. The TMT project, currently under construction, includes two primary components: 1) expansion and alteration of the northern section of the Tisbury Marine Terminal to accommodate an O&M facility, and 2) improvements to the existing terminal operations in the northern section of the terminal that will continue to serve TMT operations, including a marine terminal with transfer and storage facilities.

The O&M facility is designed to service wind farms of up to 1,600 MW (the VW1 project is 800MW). The project will also require dredging, a new 186 ft steel sheet pile bulkhead constructed along the landward side of the berthing area, a new 38,821 ft² pile-supported pier deck landward of the berthing area, and a new 283 ft steel bulkhead that will run along the southern edge of the pier deck.⁸⁵

Economic Benefits

Developing, constructing, operating, and maintaining Vineyard Wind's O&M operations will require workers drawn from a diverse range of occupations that represent a wide distribution of skill and educational levels, ranging from white collar jobs such as managers and engineers to blue collar jobs such as marine transportation and warehouse workers. These steady and well-paying jobs will positively impact the Martha's Vineyard economy, which experiences severe seasonal fluctuations in employment due to its largely tourism dependent economy. Adding long-term and high-quality year-

⁸⁴ DRI #81-M3 Vineyard Wind Maintenance Building MVC Staff Report – 2022-7-7 UPDATED, Martha's Vineyard Commission, Revised July 2022.

⁸⁵ DRI # 277-M Tisbury Marine Terminal Expansion MVC Staff Report – 2021-7-27 DRAFT, Martha's Vineyard Commission, (July 2021).

round employment will significantly increase the number of opportunities for local workers to obtain currently unavailable stable sources of full-time year-round income.⁸⁶

Vineyard Wind, along with its partner Vineyard Power, has set a goal of hiring 100% on-island employees within five years of the start of operations.⁸⁷ Apart from constructing the facilities, the developer estimates the creation of 56 jobs, including 12-year-round onshore jobs, 24 year-round offshore jobs, and 20 seasonal offshore jobs. Salaries are estimated to range from about \$79,000 to \$128,000.⁸⁸

Because OSW is a new industry in the United States, there is not a ready pipeline of OSW workers to immediately fill many of these positions. However, most of the onshore O&M positions require skills that are easily transferrable from other on-island occupations. In addition, while offshore O&M workers such as turbine technicians and marine transportation workers requires more comprehensive training, the required skills are also transferable from current island occupations such as the marine trades, radio, cellular, and tower equipment installers & repairers, electric/electronic repairers, commercial and industrial equipment operators, industrial machinery mechanics, and machinery maintenance workers.⁸⁹

Other Economic Benefits; Indirect and Induced Economic Impacts

The O&M facilities will primarily be constructed by union workers. While it is unlikely that new jobs will be created during construction, local spending by construction workers on items such as food and beverages and purchases made by the construction companies on materials, fuel, and other items on will support additional economic activity.

Local businesses will be further supported once O&M begins because of year-round employee purchases on everyday items such as rent, food, healthcare, fuel, and childcare. Workers will also pay taxes that directly and indirectly support local government such as property, excise, and sales taxes. Business-to-business benefits (i.e., indirect effects) will primarily be created from purchases made on items that support the back-office operation such as office supplies and rent. Larger components that support the wind farm will likely be produced offsite and transported to the island. Overall, the Public Policy Center estimated in 2017 that the indirect and induced effects of O&M activities on Martha's Vineyard would generate \$5,889,000 additional sales in the Southeastern Massachusetts economy, with a portion of those additional sales occurring on Martha's Vineyard.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Proposed Vineyard Wind Offshore Wind Energy Project: Estimated Contribution to Employment and Economic Development, Public Policy Center at UMass Dartmouth and Vineyard Wind, (December 2017).

⁸⁷ DRI 699 Tisbury Marine Applicant response to MVC memo 3-19-21 Re: Combined Supplemental Information Provided through March 19, 2020, Martha's Vineyard Commission, (2021).

⁸⁸ DRI #81-M3 Vineyard Wind Maintenance Building MVC Staff Report – 2022-7-7 UPDATED, Martha's Vineyard Commission, (Revised July 2022).

⁸⁹ DRI 699 Tisbury Marine Applicant response to MVC memo 3-19-21 Re: Combined Supplemental Information Provided through March 19, 2020, Martha's Vineyard Commission, (2021).

⁹⁰ Proposed Vineyard Wind Offshore Wind Energy Project: Estimated Contribution to Employment and Economic Development, Public Policy Center at UMass Dartmouth and Vineyard Wind, (December 2017).



9. Public Facilities

Introduction

Having access to adequate services and facilities is necessary for public health, well-being, and safety of residents, businesses, and visitors. The Town of Tisbury provides a public school system, a municipal sewer system, solid waste disposal, public safety and emergency services, library services, and senior resources; and maintains the municipal buildings and infrastructure needed to provide these services. Quality public schools are critical for attracting families and raising a civically engaged next generation, and Town-owned buildings provide centers for civic engagement and house day-to-day municipal operations and administration. The enhancement and maintenance of these services and facilities is critically important to support town residents and business owners, institutions, and visitors in their everyday needs.

Existing Conditions

MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

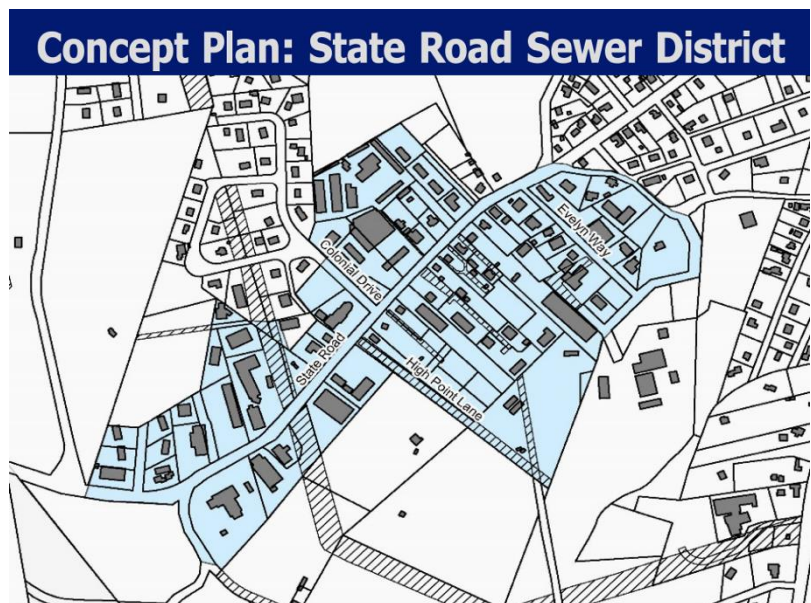
Wastewater. Tisbury’s sewer system was installed in 2004 to mitigate the effects of septic systems on Lagoon Pond and Vineyard Haven Harbor. The existing sewer system is located primarily in Downtown Vineyard Haven between Main Street, Water Street, Lagoon Pond Road, and Beach Road, shown in Figure 9.1. The sewer system has approximately 130 sewer connections to residential and business structures served by both gravity flow sewer and low-pressure sewer force main.⁹¹

The Tisbury Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) at 155 High Point Lane is approved for a maximum daily flow of 104,000 gallons per day (gpd). It discharges into two leaching fields at the Department of Public Works (DPW) building at 115 High Point Lane and behind the Tisbury Emergency Services Building. The division has three vehicles in good condition. Recent wastewater projects include the Wastewater Grease Trap Policy of 2018, the installation of a sludge processing centrifuge in 2013, and installation of effluent filtering drum filters in 2014. The Town plans to connect the Harbormaster’s office to the sewer system to assist with pump outs.

The Town is expanding the Sewer Service Area on State Road to the B2 district, where development is currently constrained by wastewater disposal limitations, as shown in Figure 9.1. The expansion will advance the Town’s goal of reducing nitrogen discharges to Lake Tashmoo. The proposed district will serve 72 parcels, with a combined flow of 18,000 gpd.⁹² The expansion will require minor modifications to the wastewater treatment facility including an aeration system, decant system, and mixers. The Town can accommodate up to an additional 36,000 gpd of wastewater flow with only the minor modifications described, but any more than that would require significant expansion to the wastewater plant. The department planned to request bids in 2022 on the State Road sewer expansion project.

Figure 9.1. Concept for State Road Sewer District, produced by Environmental Partners (2018)

The DPW Wastewater Division operates and maintains the WWTF under the direction of the Wastewater Superintendent. In August 2022, the division had four full-time staff, including an administrative assistant and the plant operator.⁹³ The department



⁹¹ “Wastewater,” Town of Tisbury, Department of Public Works, (March 17, 2022), accessed December 2022. <https://www.tisburyma.gov/wastewater>

⁹² Environmental Partners, Sewer Advisory Committee: State Road Sewer District Information Session, (2018).

⁹³ Town of Tisbury, *Employee Personnel Report*, (2022).

has expressed difficulty filling vacant positions due to lack of housing for potential workers. Massachusetts requires that wastewater personnel have a wastewater license, which is time consuming to obtain.

In 2021, the Town began developing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP), aimed at assessing town needs, identifying alternatives, and drafting an action plan for the next 20 years. The plan is expected to identify priority wastewater projects for the Town and the plan will allow the Town to access funding programs like the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Islands Water Protection Fund.⁹⁴ According to town staff, in the next 20 years, the Town will likely need to build a new wastewater plant and continue expansion of the sewer system to reduce nitrogen to acceptable levels for water quality protection, called the total daily maximum load (TDML). The Town's ability to manage wastewater contributes to the housing supply and commercial expansion in town as well as the water quality of Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond, the Harbor, and ultimately, drinking water systems. The demand for dense housing options and increased development is constrained by the limited existing sewer capacity.

Drinking Water. Tisbury Water Works provide public drinking water to the densely developed eastern side of Tisbury. It serves 2,550 active accounts, 89.5 percent of which are residential. The average daily demand (ADD), the amount of water consumed daily per account, is 261 gallons. This translates to a per capita usage of 110 gallons per day, well above the state's goal of less than 65 gallons per capita per day.⁹⁵

Table 9.1. Summary of Water Usage 2017-2020				
	Commercial	Town	Residential	Total Active Accounts
Accounts	240	23	2,287	2,550
Percent of Accounts	9.4%	0.9%	89.7%	
Percent of Usage	15.5%	1.7%	82.8%	
Average Day Demand (ADD) (gpd)	466	536	261	280
Median Day Demand (gpd)	232	178	177	178

Source: Comprehensive Wastewater Management Draft Needs Assessment, 2022.

Drinking water comes from three wells, the Sanborn, Tashmoo, and Manter Wells, which draw groundwater supplied by the island of Martha's Vineyard's sole source aquifer, replenished from rainwater, snowmelt, lakes, ponds, and streams. Along with the three wells, an emergency interconnection exists with the Oak Bluffs Water District on Edgartown Road, ensuring the water supply remains constant.

- **The Sanborn Well**, off Edgartown Road, is a 220-foot-deep gravel packed well, in operation since 1952. The well is capable of pumping 950 gallons of water per minute (gpm).

⁹⁴ Town of Tisbury, Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Frequently Asked Questions, (2021).

⁹⁵ Town of Tisbury, Draft *Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Needs Assessment*, (2022).

- **The Tashmoo Well**, on West Spring Street, is a 219-foot-deep gravel packed well in operation since 1965. The well is capable of pumping 850 gpm.
- **The Manter Well**, located off Old Holmes Hole Road, is a 215-foot-deep gravel packed well, online since 2004. It is capable of pumping 1,000 gpm.

In 2020, Environmental Partners completed a Water Distribution System Capital Improvement Plan. The report found the Town's three well fields have sufficient capacity to meet maximum daily demands for the next fifteen years. The Town does not forecast drinking water supply and services as a constraint on development in the region. The Plan found the Town has a current deficit of distribution storage of approximately 260,000 gallons and undersized water mains.

Prior to distribution, water is treated, then pumped into the 350,000-gallon water storage tank located on High Point Lane, from which it flows using gravity to homes and businesses.

A Groundwater Protection Overlay District, added in 1999, protects Tisbury's three well fields. According to the most recently available annual Water Quality Report from 2020, the levels of contaminants in Tisbury are all well below the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL).⁹⁶ While continual water testing has found levels of contaminants including nitrogen and Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) well below regulatory thresholds, MassDEP considers the sole source aquifer susceptible to contaminants due to high threat land uses within the Water Supply Protection Area including several users of pesticide, hazardous materials storage, residential underground storage tanks, the Tisbury Town Landfill, and Carroll's Trucking on Edgartown Road.⁹⁷ Town-wide reliance on septic systems resulting in nitrogen emissions has been raised as an issue with potential future impacts on town drinking water.

In 2018, Tisbury Water Works moved to a new building at 400 West Spring Street, which is in great condition. Water Works staff includes the Water Superintendent, an Assistant Water Superintendent, and the Administrative Assistant. The department is overseen by an elected Board of Water Commissioners.

Solid Waste Management. The Department of Public Works contracts with Bruno's Rolloff, Inc. for residential recycling and trash pick-up in town. Bruno's provides solid waste management services for all towns on Martha's Vineyard and picks up trash weekly and recycling bi-weekly curbside or in yard.⁹⁸ Tisbury residents purchase trash and recycling stickers annually at either the DPW building or at Cronig's Market. Residents can also drop waste off at the landfill at the DPW complex. The DPW landfill accepts general trash, furniture, brush, leaves and grass, household goods, bicycles, auto parts, and paper, glass, and plastic recyclables. To use the landfill, residents must purchase a permit annually, and

⁹⁶ Tisbury Water Works, *Tisbury Water Works: 2020 Water Quality Report*, Town of Tisbury, (2021).

⁹⁷ Town of Tisbury, *Draft Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan Needs Assessment*, (2022).

⁹⁸ Bruno's Rolloff, *Tisbury Residential Trash & Recycling*, schedule, (2022).

then pay for each drop off.⁹⁹ All items except recyclables incur a charge, and all waste except organic material is transported from the landfill.

The Oak Bluffs Transfer Station at 16 Pennsylvania Avenue in Oak Bluffs is also available to Tisbury residents for an additional charge.

According to the DPW, trash and recycling is shipped off island on a regular freight boat to New Bedford where it is transported domestically. To reduce the cost of shipping waste off island, the Town, in partnership with Bruno's, strives to reduce waste through recycling of large bulk items like furniture, bicycles and auto parts. The Town does not have a town composting program or composting site, though a regional site has been considered. While the Town does not have a swap shop, Tisbury has several secondhand stores that are very successful at allowing residents to donate underused items and acquire items secondhand.

TOWN BUILDINGS

The Town owns eleven public buildings that house all its basic municipal services. Table 9.2 lists these buildings and their location and provides a summary-level assessment of their condition in 2022, as described by town staff members. The conditions assessments are described further in the narratives that follow.

Building	Address	Condition
Town Hall	51 Spring Street	Needs Improvement
Town Hall Annex	66 High Point Lane	Needs Improvement
Tisbury Water Works	400 W Spring Street	Very Good
Tisbury School	40 West William Street	Currently under Construction
Emergency Services Building	215 Spring Street	Good
Library	200 Main Street	Needs Improvement
Police Department	32 Water Street	Good
Department of Public Works Building	115 High Point Lane	Needs Improvement
Tisbury Senior Center	34 Pine Tree Road	Adequate
Natural Resources (Harbormaster & Shellfish)	19 Owen Park	Needs Improvement

Police Station

The Police Department headquarters is located at 32 Water Street. The Department's stated mission is to "work together with residents and visitors to provide safety, security and enhanced quality of life within [the] community." To do so, the Department has four divisions: the Detective Division, the Patrol Division, School Resource Division, and the Traffic Division.¹⁰⁰ The Detective Division investigates crimes by a formal process of information review, including review of field reports and investigations by patrol officers, victim statements, and witness statements. Cases range from minor to serious

⁹⁹ Town of Tisbury, Town of Tisbury Local Drop Off Fee Schedule, (July 1, 2022).

¹⁰⁰ "Divisions," Tisbury Police Department, accessed February 2023, <https://www.tisburypolice.org/divisions>.

offenses. The Patrol Division is the most visible part of the Police Department and responds to emergency and non-emergency calls. The officers also work within the community in varying roles including as part of the Martha's Vineyard Drug Task Force, with the Council on Aging, with the Youth Task Force, and the schools. The School Resource Division works within schools to monitor the safety of the school grounds and assist in school lockdown procedures. The school resource officer also assists in bullying and threat cases, family issues, and liaisons between the Elementary School and the High School. The Traffic Division works to direct traffic, enforce parking regulations, and assist with ferry related traffic at the Steamship Authority. The division is busiest during the summer months.

In 2022, the department has 14 full-time officers, including the Chief, with three unfilled but budgeted positions for full-time officers. The department also has one part-time officer, and one full-time non-sworn position responsible for parking and traffic control. Six other part time seasonal traffic and parking officers join the department in the summer season. The department has a full-time administrative assistant. According to the Chief, the staffing levels are generally sufficient. Minor staffing concerns are attributed to the increased need for traffic enforcement and staff disinterest in working overtime. Tisbury's role as the island's year-round port, coupled with its mostly year-round resident population, can be seen in the comparatively large number of calls the Police Department responds to each year (approximately 14,000).

Police Department personnel report that the calls they receive are similar in nature to the calls off island, with less frequency of serious calls. Frequent call types include minor to major vehicle crashes, domestic violence, and alcohol and drug-related calls for service. While the department is primarily responsible for criminal investigations and cases, the police also mediate neighbor disputes. As a matter of routine, when staffing is available, the police respond to ambulance runs (typically illness and minor injuries) and fire calls (typically alarms). The police also offer complimentary services, such as car lock-out or flat tire assistance.

The police station, built in 1997, is in fair to good condition. It is large enough to accommodate the police functions and it does not need major repairs, but it does have several deficiencies: minor water damage, a second-floor reception area that sometimes causes confusion to visitors, and a hard-to-reach attic storage area accessible only by a ladder. The Police Department has seven vehicles, including two hybrid vehicles, and one motorcycle in fair to good condition. The department keeps up with routine maintenance on the vehicles. The Police do not have a boat and respond to water-related calls in partnership with the Harbormaster. The Police Department recently became certified with the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission, and the next step is full accreditation involving full review of all policies, procedures, the building, and security of records. Recently, the department has partnered with the Harbormaster to have police officers ride on the Harbor patrol boat to give a public safety presence in the busy Tisbury waters and to allow for the police to quickly respond to search and rescue operations.

As a result of resident complaints, the police have worked to increase traffic calming measures with the installation of speed feedback signs, funded from the police budget. Currently, the Police Department is not pursuing body cameras in the department due to the logistical burden. Six members of the department have recently undergone a nationally certified boating and seamanship training

program with the Coast Guard. All new officers are required to go through the 22-week police academy. Every year the police go through in-service training. Staff also attend specialty trainings on topics including school resource, sexual assault investigations, drug investigations, background investigations, and grant applications.

Fire & Emergency Response

Fire and Emergency Response are both located at 215 Spring Street in a ten-year-old building in good condition with minor issues. The building includes three bunk rooms, a walk-in safe haven, a small conference room, a computer room, and offices, along with a training room that doubles as a community room for voting and community meetings. The garage where the department parks emergency vehicles is attached to the building and has six bays. While the building is new and in generally good condition, emergency response staff noted a few minor building issues. The garage lacks air conditioning or dehumidification, so it becomes very hot during the summer. An HVAC system upgrade is needed as well as replacement of flooring. The garage roof has mold and sometimes leaks, attributed by staff in part to the solar installation on the roof. At ten years, the building is due for repainting and minor repairs.

The Fire Department is led by the Chief and the Deputy Chief and is staffed by an administrative assistant and over 40 volunteer firefighters. The department has experienced staffing challenges in recent years. The department staff have trouble keeping up with the summer influx of calls. Recent short-term rental regulations requiring fire inspection have added work to the department, as the Fire Chief and Deputy are responsible for these. The department's heavy reliance on volunteers in the summer means volunteers are driving through high traffic areas while responding to calls. The number of volunteer firefighters has been increasing. The department is currently upgrading the program used to coordinate volunteer firefighters to include additional public outreach functionality.

The department has three engines, a ladder truck, a medium duty rescue truck, a forestry truck, a hazmat truck, a high-water truck, and a small boat. The vehicle fleet is in good condition, and the number of vehicles is sufficient to meet the fire and emergency response needs of the Town. Most calls to the Fire Department are related to alarm system malfunctions. The number of calls has increased over the past ten to fifteen years. Older residents are unable to turn off fire alarms on their own, and the department forecasts a continued increase in calls as the older population on the island increases for non-emergency alarm calls and emergency calls. Response times in the winter are five to nine minutes, and in the summer fifteen to twenty minutes.

The Fire Department has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) 3 rating, which, as a volunteer fire department, is as low as they can go. The best rating a town can receive is a 1, and the worst is a 10. ISO examines fire department standards of practice and the ISO score a town receives affects the cost of property insurance in the community.

The Emergency Response Department provides emergency medical services 24/7, 365 days a year. The EMS Director leads the department. As of summer 2022, the department has three full-time paramedics and a full-time EMT. Per diem workers and volunteers fill the remaining shifts not covered by full-time staff members. During the summer, the department relies on seasonal EMTs, mostly

students, to cover shifts. When students go back to school, the department loses roughly 40 EMTs, down to around fifteen volunteer and per diem EMTs and three per diem paramedics.

The department has two advanced life support ambulances, one staffed ambulance, and one backup ambulance. The primary ambulance is three years old and in good condition. The backup ambulance is ten years old and will likely need to be replaced in two to three years. One of the full-time staff members checks the tires, oil, fluids, doors, and windshields monthly. The department also has a response vehicle in very good condition.

The department has seen a dramatic increase in calls over the past three years, from about 600 calls per year with 420 requiring transport to 750 calls per year, with around 600 transports. They have seen an increase in the number of calls involving falls by older adults and mental health incidents. The department has also seen an increase in critical calls where an external debriefing team is called to help staff members process a traumatic event. In the summer, the department receives more trauma calls while in the winter, they receive more calls involving older adults. With the aging population on the island, Emergency Services has seen an increase in calls that require lifting older adults and have increased the number of staff responding to a 911 call from two to three staff. The number of calls received has become steadier throughout the year as the population has aged and with more people working from home on the island during the off-season. The department increased staffing during the pandemic off-season to accommodate the increase in calls. As staff are all at the station, when a call comes in, the paramedics and EMTs can be out the door in two minutes. Response times in the summer are longer due to traffic congestion on Tisbury's roads.

The department has seen a dramatic increase in calls over the past three years ... including an increase in the number of calls involving falls by older adults and mental health incidents.

The Emergency Services Department is short staffed. The only time full-time employees see each other is during the shift change, and when a paramedic calls out sick, the EMS Director often needs to fill the shift. With regional labor shortages and the high cost of housing on Martha's Vineyard, the department has experienced challenges filling open paramedic positions. Recently, the department has implemented a program where people who have done first responder training can come along for a ride to build interest in working with EMS to recruit EMTs.

In-person training, discontinued during the pandemic, is being reinstated at least once per month, except in July and August. Both EMTs and paramedics must keep up with training hours to be eligible for recertification with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with EMTs requiring 40-50 hours and paramedics requiring 60 hours every two years.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ "EMTs – all levels," OEMS Administrative Requirements, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, accessed November 2022.

Harbormaster

The Harbor Department manages the busiest waterfront on Martha's Vineyard. It is responsible for waterfront access, boating facilities, and the mooring fields in Vineyard Haven Harbor, Lagoon Pond, and Lake Tashmoo, maintaining the two public piers at Lake Street Landing and Owen Park, enforcing waterways regulations, and protecting public safety in an environment that accommodates recreational, commercial, fishing, and ferry vessels. There are four full-time staff and numerous part-time employees. The Harbor Department frequently works with the Shellfish Department, for they have some overlapping jurisdiction in coastal and marine resource management. However, they have different purposes and priorities – recreation, water safety, and transportation on one hand, and natural resource stewardship on the other.

The Harbormaster is responsible for Tisbury's inner harbor, outer harbor, Lagoon Pond, and Lake Tashmoo. The Harbormaster's responsibilities include overseeing and collecting payment for the Town's 780 moorings, managing and permitting the dredging of Lake Tashmoo opening every 2-3 years, enforcing the waterways regulations.

The Harbormaster and Shellfish functions are both within the Natural Resources Department. The department includes the Harbormaster, the Shellfish Constable, the Natural Resources Assistant, and the Administrative Assistant. The Natural Resources Assistant and the Administrative Assistant are also both sworn in as assistant harbormasters. In the summer, the department hires around eight interns ranging in age from 14 to 18 years old who tie up boats, rent out dock space, staff the radios, assist with pump outs, and handle phone calls. The staffing is sufficient to meet the needs of the Town.

The Harbormaster building at 19 Owen Park Way is in poor condition and does not meet the needs of the department. The building has insufficient storage for the harbormaster equipment, ranging from mooring balls to vessels. Currently, the harbormaster stores equipment in a Quonset hut at the DPW facility with a dirt floor and leaking roof. In addition, the building does not have a shower facility for staff coming back from working out on the water. The Town has identified site selection for a new facility as a priority. The department recently upgraded the Lake Street Landing Pier and plans to upgrade the Owen Park Pier in the next year.

The Harbormaster boats include a brand-new patrol boat, two pump-out boats, and two skiffs. The pump-out boats will need to be replaced in five to ten years. For the most part, the boats are sufficient to meet the needs of the Harbormaster and the fleet is in good condition.

Public Library

The Town of Tisbury's Vineyard Haven Public Library is at 200 Main Street. The elected Board of Library Trustees oversees the library finances, and the library staff manage daily operations. The library has a director and six staff members: a children's librarian, a reference librarian, a young adult librarian, an adult program coordinator, and two circulation staff members. Services at the library include book and equipment borrowing, document printing, computer access, Wi-Fi, digital library resources,

museum and beach passes, online tutoring, and study rooms.¹⁰² The library staff hold seven to ten free programs each week, including children story-times, summer outdoor play, language conversation programs, drawing, arts classes, and writing workshops. The library also offers after-school programs for children and a summer reading program.¹⁰³

In a normal year, the library has around 75,000 visits. During FY 2022, however, usage declined to around 26,000 visits, with an additional 10,000 virtual visits. According to library staff, the heaviest library users are retirees and families with young children. Working adults also use the library space and internet to work remotely.

The Vineyard Haven Public Library meets all Massachusetts requirements for libraries in towns their size. It is currently open 42 hours per week, Monday through Saturday, with evening hours two days a week. The library is working toward being open seven days a week but currently does not have enough staff to do so. The Town pays for the library staff and part of the library's programming budget. The library also has an endowment that supplements the operating expenses, supports library programming, and pays for new books and network membership dues. Along with Town and library endowment funding, library operations are supported to a lesser extent by state grants.

The library facility is in poor condition. According to the library's recent 2014-2018 strategic plan, the existing community room in the basement is not meeting the needs of library visitors and Tisbury residents due to poor ventilation, low ceilings, lack of windows, lack of ADA accessibility, and insufficient space. According to town administration, the library needs replacement of all major systems, along with energy saving improvements, painting and roofing. The strategic plan's public engagement process led the library to hire an architect to design an addition to the existing building and develop a cost estimate for construction of a new 1,200-1,500 square foot event/programming space. The library has a non-profit foundation that is conducting a capital campaign to raise money for the new facility. As of August 2022, the campaign had secured about \$1 million. The library is hoping to embark on the next five-year strategic plan and long-range plan soon.

Council on Aging / Senior Center

The main goal of Tisbury's Council of Aging (COA) is to "enhance the quality of life of seniors by ensuring them equal access to social, economic and political systems in a safe, secure and comfortable environment." The COA offers activities and services for adults 55 and older and their families. The Council on Aging is managed both by an appointed Board of Directors and by town staff members.¹⁰⁴

Tisbury's Senior Center at 34 Pine Tree Road is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. The facility was built in 1991 and has approximately 4,000 square feet of space. It contains a large

¹⁰² "Currently Available Library Services," Vineyard Haven Public Library, accessed November 2022, <http://www.vhlibrary.org/Covid19.shtml>

¹⁰³ "All Programs and Events," Vineyard Haven Public Library, accessed November 2022, <http://www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/V/VH/ekp.cfm?curOrg=VH>

¹⁰⁴ "Council on Aging," Town of Tisbury, accessed November 2022, <https://www.tisburyma.gov/council-aging>

group event space, a large kitchen, and an outdoor deck, and provides community events and social services to seniors. The facility is in fair condition with enough space for programming. The center (See also, Chapter 11, Community Health.) According to town administration, the Senior Center needs improvements to the parking lot including pavement sealant and repair of catch basins.

The Council on Aging has a director and four staff members: an activities director, an elder companion, and two receptionists. The existing staff does not meet all the needs of the senior center. In August 2022, the center was working on hiring an outreach coordinator to fill gaps in COA services by supporting applications for social assistance and referring residents to service providers.

Tisbury Town Hall and Town Hall Annex

Tisbury Town Hall at 51 Spring Street houses the Town Administrator, Treasurer/Collector, Town Accountant, Assessors, Human Resources, Town Clerk, and Select Board. The Town Hall was built in 1844 and is not meeting the needs of the Town. The building does not have enough space for all general government functions, and in 2022, the auditorium was used as a de facto office area. The building also has accessibility issues for people with disabilities.

Tisbury's Town Hall Annex complex at 66 High Point Lane houses Building Inspection and Zoning, the Board of Health, Information Technology, Conservation/ Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board, and the Dog Pound. The complex includes the Dog Pound structure from 1995, and two office trailers placed in their current location in 2009. The Town Hall Annex trailers, originally a temporary solution, have received minimal maintenance since their placement, leading to several major issues. The outside of the trailers is starting to rot, and the heating, cooling, and electric systems are reaching the end of their useful life.

In 2022, fifteen staff worked in the Town Hall building, with one vacancy in accounting, and ten staff worked in the Town Hall Annex complex,¹⁰⁵ with one vacancy in Animal Control. The DPW maintains these buildings. According to town administration, the DPW building located at 115 High Point Lane needs an expanded maintenance building.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public schools are the largest department and most costly operation of any service provided by cities and towns. Tisbury is no exception. The Town is a member of the all-island Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, a regional district covering all six municipalities. Each town has an elementary school, and all children entering grade 9 transfer to the regional high school in Oak Bluffs. The regional school committee that oversees the island's school district includes members chosen by the participating communities, and the committee chooses the regional superintendent. Every school has a building principal and vice-principal, guidance staff, a school nurse, librarian, specialists, regular and special education teachers, and English language support personnel. There are also parent councils for each school, and an island-wide parents council for special education services. It goes without saying that the public schools on Martha's Vineyard are small and geographically distributed across the island.

¹⁰⁵ Town of Tisbury, *Employee Personnel Report*, (2022).

These conditions contribute to what is arguably one of the highest-cost school districts in the Commonwealth, measured on a per-student basis.

Students in Tisbury can also attend the Martha’s Vineyard Charter School (K-12) in West Tisbury. Table 9.3 shows public school enrollments for 2021-2022. Approximately 39 percent of the FY 2023 operating budget is appropriated for the schools, with \$8.1 million for Tisbury School (not including shared costs), and \$5.4 million for the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School.¹⁰⁶

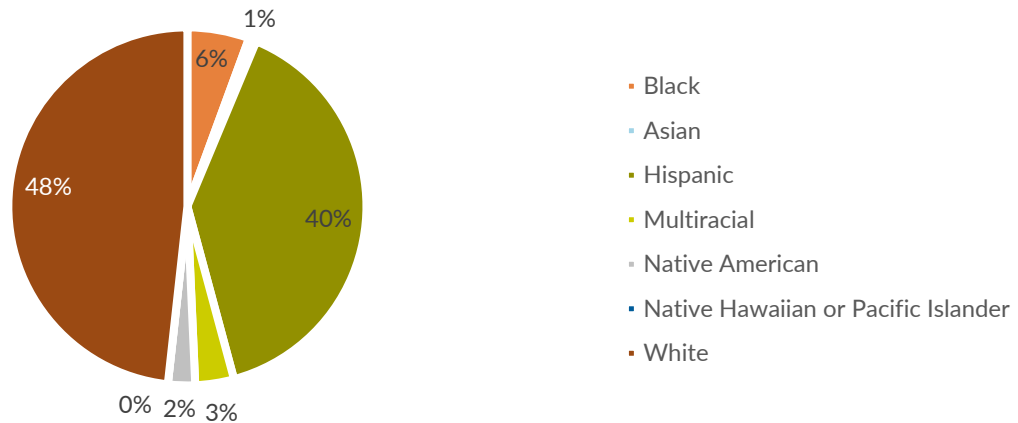
Table 9.3. Tisbury and Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Enrollment 2021-2022 School Year			
School	Grades Served	Year Built	Student Enrollment in 2021-2022
Tisbury School	PreK-8	1938	289
Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School	9-12	1959	703

Source: Enrollment by School/Grade School Year 2021-22, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Staffing at the Tisbury School includes the Principal and Assistant Principal, 43 teachers, 22 teacher assistants, three custodians, three cafeteria workers, three secretaries, and a technologist. Some staff are shared between the regional district’s schools, such as an occupational therapist, school nurse, and guidance counselor. Tisbury School and Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School both have large populations of Portuguese-speaking students and families. Of the 289 students at the school in 2021-2022, 52 percent were students of color, as shown in Figure 9.2. Seventy one percent of students in the Tisbury Elementary School are high needs, including 20 percent of students with disabilities and 34 percent are English language learners.¹⁰⁷

Figure 9.2 Race and Ethnicity of Tisbury School Students, 2021-2022

(Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)



¹⁰⁶ Town of Tisbury, Appendix A - Article 30 Fiscal 2023 Operating Budget, (2022).

¹⁰⁷ “School and District Profiles”, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Tisbury School, Accessed March 2023.

High needs students can impact the resources of a school as they typically require additional resources and support to be successful in school. The resources may include additional staff, specialized programs, assistive technology, modifications to facilities, and professional development.

The school works to support this highly diverse population of students with needs such as assisting parents unfamiliar with the health care system with appointments and providing staff who are multilingual.¹⁰⁸

Historic and Projected Enrollment

According to the New England School Development Council (NESDC), Tisbury School enrollment declined 16 percent between 2011 and 2021 (Figure 9.3). In contrast, Martha’s Vineyard Public Schools has seen an 8 percent increase in enrollment over the same ten-year period (Figure 9.4). Based on birth data, NESDC projects Tisbury School enrollment will grow by 32 percent over the next ten years, based on real and estimated birth rates.¹⁰⁹

Figure 9.3. Tisbury School Historical and Projected Enrollment

(Source: NESDC)

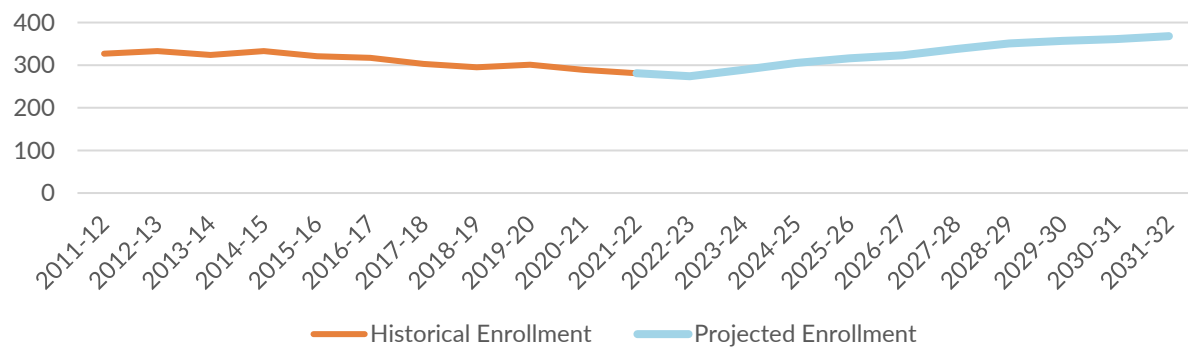
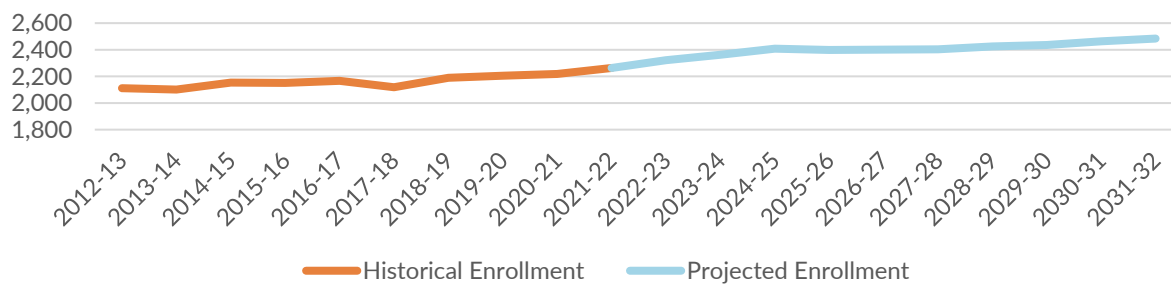


Figure 9.4. Martha's Vineyard Regional Schools Historical and Projected Enrollment

(Source: NESDC)



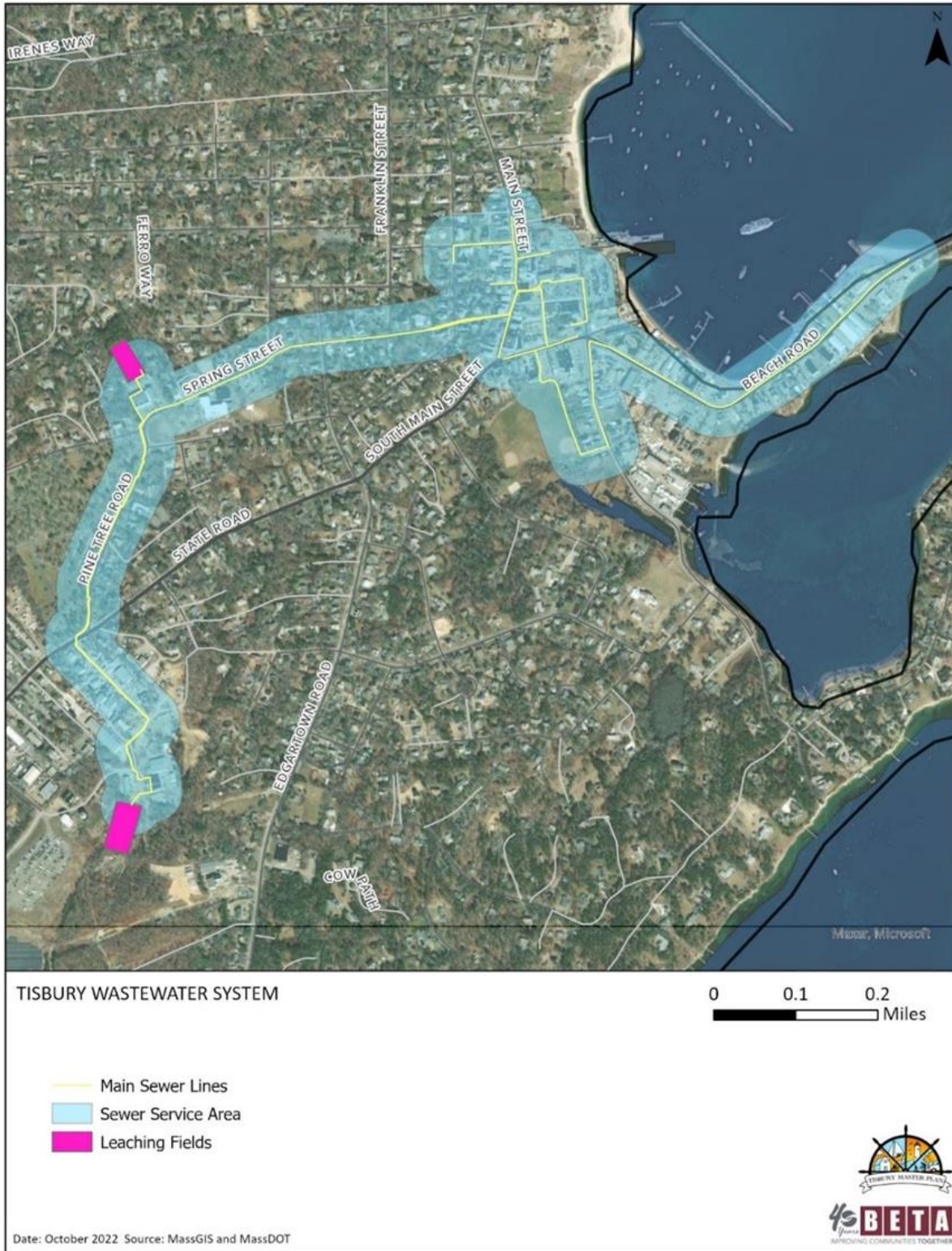
¹⁰⁸ “Enrollment by District/Grade/Race School Year 2021-2022,” Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, accessed March 2023.

¹⁰⁹ New England School Development Council, *Martha’s Vineyard Public Schools 2021-22 Enrollment Projection Report*, (2021).

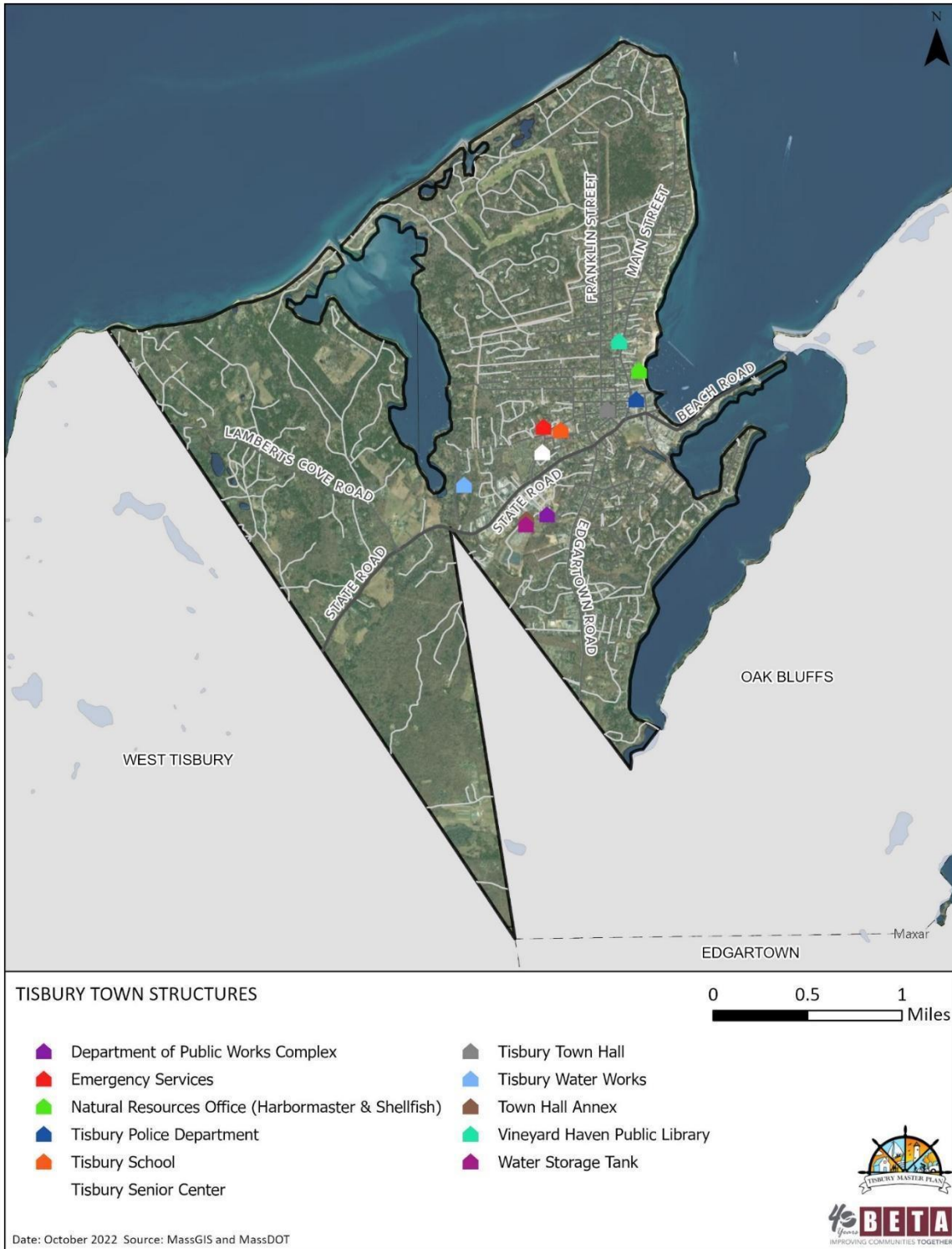
Facility and Service Condition

The main school was built in 1929 with additions in 1938 and then again in the early nineties. Asbestos abatement occurred in the 1980s and additional abatement was completed in 2018 with the school relocating half the campus to the high school. In recent years, the school has experienced a drop in enrollment due to abatement work and with the anticipation of a multi-year school construction project. An interim school facility was established to keep the entire school faculty and students on site while the comprehensive renovation and addition to the school is constructed. The \$81 million modernization of the school facility is expected to be completed in 2025.

Map 9.1 Tisbury's Existing Wastewater System



Map 9.2 Tisbury Town Structures





10. Transportation

Introduction

The local transportation system in Tisbury should provide safe and efficient mobility for all transportation modes, including walking, biking, public transit, water transport, vehicles, trucks, and taxis, and connections to destinations in town, on Martha's Vineyard, and off-island. The transportation system design, in tandem with land use decisions, affects island energy consumption, equitable outcomes, traffic congestion, pollution, and public health. The choices made over the next 10-20 years with regards to maintenance and enhancement of the transportation system will impact how Tisbury residents and visitors interact with Martha's Vineyard and get around in the future.

Existing Conditions

INVENTORY OF EXISTING ROADWAYS

Tisbury has around 71 miles of roadways. Roads in town can be classified using the federal road classification system into arterials, collectors, and local roads. Map 10.1 shows roadways by federal

road classification. Table 10.1 shows the total length of each classification of roadway in Tisbury by centerline miles, the roadway length without accounting for the number of lanes.

Table 10.1. Classification of Tisbury's Roadways		
Roadway Class	Centerline Miles	% Of Centerline Miles
Arterial	8.12	11.5%
Collector	2.46	3.5%
Local	60.28	85.0%
Total	70.86	100%
Source: MassDOT Roads 2018		

Arterial Roads

Arterial roads typically move people across town or between towns while providing access to popular destinations. Approximately 12 percent of the roadways in Tisbury are arterials. In Tisbury, Beach Road, Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, and part of State Road are principal arterials that together form a regional connection between Vineyard Haven and other towns on Martha's Vineyard. Franklin Street, Main Street, Spring Street, Pine Tree Road, and parts of State Road are minor arterials providing local and regional connections.

Collector Roads

Collectors typically move traffic from local roads to arterial roads, while providing access to places along the road. State Road in western Tisbury and Lambert's Cove Road are both collector roadways. Only about three percent of Tisbury roadways are collectors.

Local Roads

Local roadways provide the highest access to adjacent properties. Approximately 85 percent of all roadways in Tisbury fall under this classification. Local roadways in Tisbury are characterized by predominantly residential development and lower vehicle volumes and speeds.

Roadway Jurisdiction

In Tisbury, Beach Road and State Road are under state jurisdiction, making up around four percent of roadway miles. The Town owns around 31 percent (22 miles) of roadways in town. The rest of the roadways, the majority, are owned privately.

Scenic Roads

In 1976, Tisbury Town Meeting designated the public portion of Lambert's Cove Road as a scenic road. Designation as a scenic road requires any repair, maintenance, reconstruction, or paving work not involving the cutting down or removal of trees or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls except with the prior written consent of the planning board and a public hearing.¹¹⁰

MAJOR TRIP GENERATORS

¹¹⁰ Tisbury., Mass., Rev. Ordinances ch. 9, § 4 (1976).

Major trip generators in Tisbury are the Ferry Terminal, the B2 commercial area, and the Vineyard Haven commercial area. Ferry arrivals and departures have a large impact on Tisbury traffic patterns and operations.

VEHICLE VOLUMES

Table 10.2 and Map 10.2 show the most recent available summer vehicle volumes on Tisbury roadways. Beach Road and Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road have the highest number of vehicles (over 13,000 per day). State Road volumes are assumed to be high in town as well, though recent data for the roadway is not available.

Tisbury’s roads experience a large increase in traffic during the summer season; however, the Town has experienced more consistent levels of residential and commercial vehicular traffic year round after the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic as second homeowners chose to live on Martha’s Vineyard during the fall, winter, and spring. Members of the Tisbury community note the roads in Tisbury were not originally designed to accommodate the high number of vehicles currently using the roadways. The roads consistently experience vehicle backups, particularly at specific locations including the Five Corners intersection and the intersection of Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road and State Road.

Table 10.2. Summer Vehicle Volumes				
Roadway	Location	Weekday ADT	Saturday / Sunday ADT	% Trucks on Weekday
Skiff Ave	Near Top of Hill	2,690 (2017)	2,357 / 1,548 (2017)	2%
Lagoon Pond Road	South of Beach Road	2,686 (2021)	2,778 / 1,530 (2021)	NA
Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Rd	South of Sanborn Way near bank	13,836 (2017)	NA	5%
Main Street	By Montessori School	2,610 (2016)	2,138 / 1,854 (2016)	NA
Beach Road	Beach Road at Five Corners	13,524 (2013/2014)	14,072 (2013/2014)	NA
<i>Source: MVC, MassDOT</i>				

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Tisbury's sidewalk network is concentrated in the eastern side of town leading to and from the Vineyard Haven commercial area on Beach Road, State Road, Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, Franklin Street, Main Street, and adjacent roadways.

Tisbury has three shared use paths wide enough for people to walk and bike on Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, through Veteran's Memorial Park and on Beach Road, shown in Map 10.3. A sidewalk or shared use path exists on seventy-five percent of arterial roadways. Along with the shared use paths, Tisbury has two on-road marked bike lanes on a portion of Skiff Avenue and Beach Road. On Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road south of Mount

Aldworth Road, large unmarked shoulders provide space where people currently bike. Tisbury's many low-volume local roads also generally present a comfortable place for people to walk and bike, though in recent years, town staff have observed increased vehicular traffic on these roadways. While the western side of town has no sidewalks or shared use path facilities along the roadways, walking trails connect people through wooded areas. In general, narrow roadways are frequently shared between people walking, biking, and driving which presents mobility and safety challenges.

Bike racks are available around town at various locations including the Ferry Terminal Bus Loop, the Ferry Terminal Ticket Office, and by the Main Street Commercial District. Visitors can rent bicycles at the Ferry Terminal from a local business. The areas with the highest bicycle and pedestrian traffic are located near the Ferry Terminal and in the Vineyard Haven commercial district. Some students walk to Tisbury school, and so pedestrian volumes increase near the school during the school year at arrival and dismissal.



People walking and biking in the wide shoulder on Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road

PARKING

On-Street Parking

On-street angled parking is provided on Main Street and on-street parallel parking is provided on Franklin Street, Church Street, Spring Street, Union Street, William Street, and Clough Lane. Angle and parallel parking are provided at the Owen Park Beach and Lake Street Landing.

Off-Street Parking

The Town-owned Park & Ride lot is located on High Point Lane. The Park & Ride lot offers short-term parking free of charge, and long-term passes for a charge. The lot has 420 spaces and is served by a free shuttle bus to the ferry terminal operated year-round by the VTA in partnership with the Town of Tisbury and the Steamship Authority.¹¹¹ The lot is well used by Tisbury residents and employees. Several abandoned vehicles were observed in the lot in July 2022.

The Town owns the lot next to the Police Department and the Stop and Shop, the lot next to the VTA bus terminal by the Steamship Authority, as well as the old fire station town lot on State Road. Tisbury School, the Emergency Services building, the Town Hall Annex, and DPW all have off-street parking areas, along with the town tennis courts on Court Street.

Commercial parking is typically provided through off-street parking lots. According to the Martha's Vineyard Commission, the Town has two electric vehicle charging stations at the Martha's Vineyard Family Campground and at Cronig's market.

Parking Use

The Town-owned parking lot located next to the Police Department and the Stop & Shop supermarket complex is heavily used, serving the Vineyard Haven commercial area and the supermarket. According to the police, summertime congestion in the lot can delay emergency response vehicles. Depending on



Bicycle parking by Ferry Terminal.



People biking on Beach Road bike lane.

¹¹¹ "Park and Ride," Tisbury Police Department, accessed November 2022, <https://www.tisburypolice.org/park-ride>

the time of day, much of the on-street parking and the town-owned lots reach or near their capacity, particularly in the summertime. Residents and town staff note parking conflicts as a major challenge to mobility in the area. Occupancy at select on-street and off-street locations, as collected by VHB in the summer of 2016, is shown in Table 10.3.¹¹²

	# of spaces*	Friday 7/15/16 11 AM	Thursday 8/18/16 2PM	Wednesday 6/29/16 3PM	Tuesday 7/12/16 4PM	Average
Town Lot by Stop & Shop	49	98%	92%	94%	94%	95%
Main St (State - Owen Park)	54	81%	90%	92%	85%	87%
Post Office Parking Lot	39	95%	84%	77%	86%	86%
Union St (Main-SSA terminal)	13	92%	85%	92%	62%	83%
Centre St (Main – Franklin)	27	81%	89%	74%	85%	82%
Spring St (Franklin-Main)	21	82%	86%	77%	77%	81%
Church St (Main- Franklin)	22	86%	86%	82%	55%	77%
William St (Spring- Colonial)	43	58%	47%	84%	84%	68%
Town Lot next to VTA hub	24	48%	63%	89%	59%	65%
SSA Angled Parking lot ¹¹³	16	100%	83%	44%	33%	65%

BRIDGES

According to the most recently available data from MassDOT, the bridge on Lagoon Pond Road by the Martha's Vineyard Museum is the only identified bridge in town, and it is structurally sound.¹¹⁴

MAINTENANCE

The Tisbury Department of Public Works (DPW) maintains 22 miles of Town-owned roads, including pothole repair, sidewalk construction, road resurfacing, and snow removal. Private roads, accounting for approximately 70 percent of roadways, are maintained by private owners, and according to town staff, are often in poor condition. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation is responsible for state-owned roads including Beach Road and State Road.

The Town implements a pavement management program to monitor and maintain the conditions of roadways and prioritize their repair. The GIS-based program collects and evaluates data about the condition of roadways to determine a schedule of maintenance. The DPW, excluding the Wastewater division, has 18 total full-time employees as of August 2022, with three unstaffed positions.

¹¹² VHB, Vineyard Haven Parking Study, (2016).

¹¹³ The Steamship Authority angled parking lot is only used for pick up and drop offs to the ferry terminal.

¹¹⁴ MassDOT. *Bridges*. (September 2, 2022). Accessed November 1, 2022. <https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/bridges/explore>.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The regional transit authority serving Tisbury is the Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) which operates five bus routes, paratransit service, a Boston hospital shuttle, and on-demand service in Tisbury. In addition to the VTA, the Steamship Authority operates ferries to Tisbury and Oak Bluffs. Map 10.4 illustrates public transit services in Tisbury.

Local Bus Service

The VTA operates Route 1, Route 2, Route 3, Route 10/10A, and Route 13 in Tisbury. All routes terminate at the Vineyard Haven Steamship Authority Terminal and operate increased service during the summer season between June and October. Bus routes provide direct service to West Tisbury, Oak Bluffs, and Edgartown. The VTA schedules vary by time of year with a spring and fall off-season schedule, winter schedule, and summer peak schedule. In general, Route 1 to Edgartown, Route 10 serving the Tisbury Park and Ride, and Route 13, to Edgartown, are the most frequent routes with service running every half hour to hour depending on time of year and day of the week. VTA is currently converting their entire fleet to electric buses, including inductive charging.

Figure 10.1 VTA Annual 2019 Boardings on Tisbury Routes

(Source: Vineyard Transportation Authority)

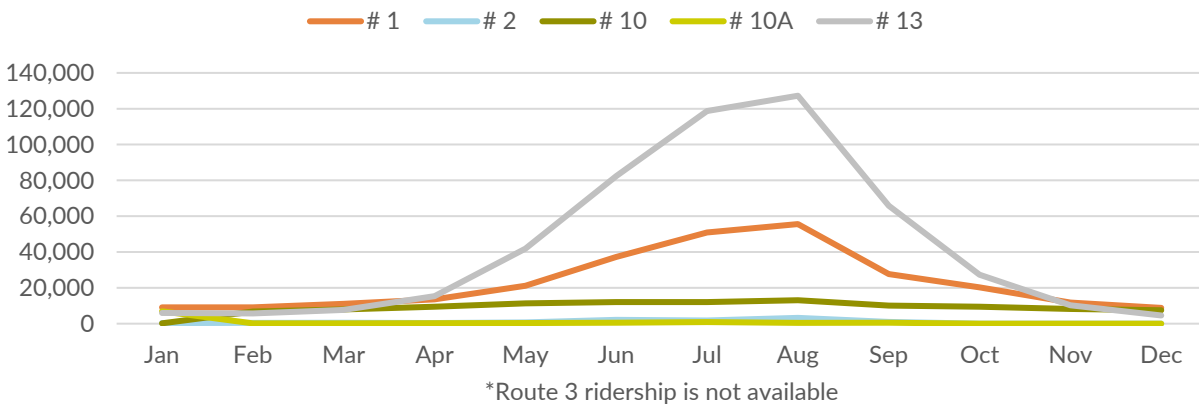
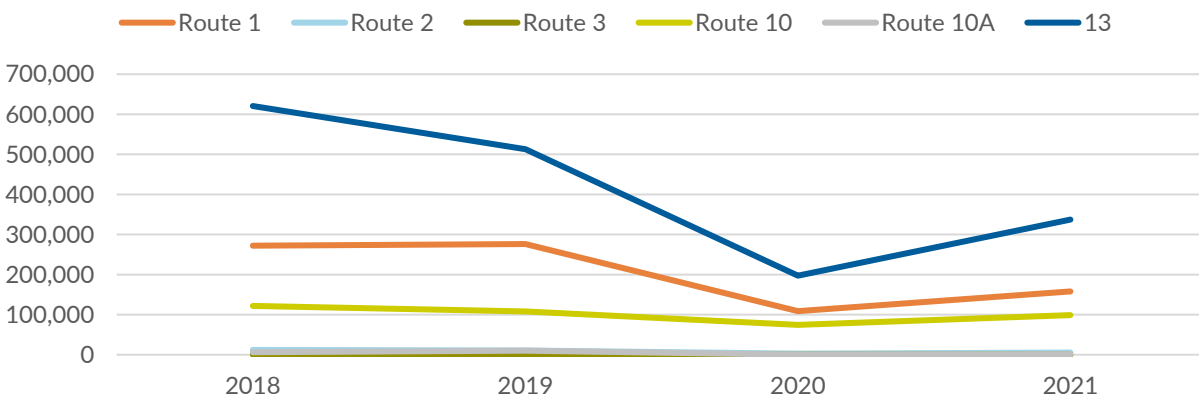


Figure 10.2 VTA Ridership 2018 to 2021*

(Source: Vineyard Transit Authority)



All fixed-route bus services vary in cost by number of towns traversed and time of year. The VTA offers 1-, 3-, 7-, 31-, 100-, and 365- day passes (valid for consecutive calendar days). The 100 day-passes are targeted at seasonal workers. The 365-day passes were formerly “annual” passes. Seniors, youth, riders with disabilities, and military veterans are eligible for reduced fares.

VTA Route 13, serving Oak Bluffs and Edgartown, is the highest ridership route. According to the VTA, Route 13 serves day trippers and seasonal workers and Route 10 predominantly serves trade workers who live off-island and park their commercial vehicles overnight in the park and ride lot. Figures 10.1 and 10.2 show transit ridership in Tisbury in 2019 and over time between 2018 and 2021.

The LIFT Paratransit Service

The LIFT is the VTA’s paratransit service provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) offering shared rides in accessible vehicles to riders with disabilities who cannot use fixed route service. The service operates within a ¼ mile buffer from fixed route bus service.

Boston Medivan Service

The VTA provides service to Boston Area Hospitals every Tuesday year-round eligible for people 60 years and older or people with disabilities.¹¹⁵

Senior Center Shuttle

The Town of Tisbury does not offer a senior shuttle service but provides VTA senior bus passes at the senior center. Vineyard Village at Home, a non-public partner of the Tisbury Council on Aging, organizes rides for seniors.¹¹⁶

School Buses

According to Tisbury Town staff, the Martha’s Vineyard public schools own and operate the two buses bringing Tisbury students to Tisbury School and to Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School.

Steamship Authority Ferries

The Steamship Authority (SSA), a quasi-public agency, operates privately contracted ferries from Woods Hole in Falmouth to Vineyard Haven on Martha’s Vineyard year-round (as well as to Oak Bluffs between May and October). The ferry from Woods Hole runs hourly during the off-peak season, and every fifteen minutes to an hour during the peak season from the end of June to beginning of September. Passengers pay \$9.50 per adult, with reduced rates for children. Vehicle rates vary by time of year, day of the week, and size of the vehicle but range between \$59 to \$125 one-way. Bicycles cost \$4 to bring onto the ferry each way. Steamship Authority ferries account for around 90 percent of passengers coming to and from Martha’s Vineyard and bring passengers to Tisbury and Oak

¹¹⁵ “Services Provided,” VTA, accessed November 2022, <https://www.vineyardtransit.com/services-provided>

¹¹⁶ “Become a Member of Vineyard Village at Home Today,” Vineyard Village at Home, accessed November 2022, <http://vineyardvillage.org/become-a-member/>

Bluffs.117 The Town of Tisbury imposes an embarkation for departing passengers of \$0.50 per passenger from the Steamship Authority, as allowed by state law.118

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Passengers	2,143,160	2,179,567	2,189,530	2,263,708	2,378,303	2,466,548
Automobiles	381,930	368,704	375,615	388,864	399,277	415,753
Trucks	98,257	115,600	114,782	118,922	125,078	136,706
Total vehicles	480,187	484,304	490,397	507,786	524,355	552,459

Source: Martha's Vineyard Steamship Authority and Martha's Vineyard Statistical Profile, 2019¹¹⁹

According to data collected by the Martha's Vineyard Commission from the Martha's Vineyard Steamship Authority monthly business reports in Table 10.4, both the number of total passengers and the total number of total vehicles using the Steamship Authority ferries have increased between 2007 and 2017 by fifteen percent.

Taxis and Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)

Several private taxi companies and Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) operate on Martha's Vineyard and in Tisbury. Taxis have a designated pick up and drop off area at the ferry terminal.

To operate, taxi companies must purchase an annual taxi license through the Select Board for \$400 plus \$40 for each vehicle they operate. Taxi operators also pay an annual permit to the town through the Police Department costing \$20. TNCs pay a fee to the State of Massachusetts to operate. The State then distributes funds to municipalities through their TNC Division to municipalities by the number of rides started in the town. In 2021, the Town of Tisbury received \$2,714 in TNC fees, an increase over 2020 where the Town received \$1,857, but a drop from 2019 where the Town received \$4,426.¹²⁰

FREIGHT

According to the MVC 2020-2040 Transportation Plan, most freight comes to the island on the Steamship Authority (SSA) ferries. In addition to the SSA ferries, some freight is delivered by barge to the RM Packer Company located on Beach Road in Vineyard Haven, east of the Steamship Authority Ferry Terminal. Few businesses in town have dedicated loading docks off-street. In the summer, the ferries operate a freight run in the morning.¹²¹

AIRPORT

The closest airport with commercial flights is Martha's Vineyard Airport in West Tisbury. As of 2022, six airlines served Martha's Vineyard Airport with year-round flights to New York, Boston, and Nantucket and seasonal flights to Philadelphia, Charlotte, Washington DC, White Plains, Teterboro,

¹¹⁷ Martha's Vineyard Commission, *Martha's Vineyard Regional Transportation Plan 2020-2040*, (2019).

¹¹⁸ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, General Law, Ch. 55, § 11 (2004).

¹¹⁹ Martha's Vineyard Commission, *Martha's Vineyard Statistical Profile*, (Oak Bluffs, 2019).

¹²⁰ Massachusetts TNC Division, *2021 Rideshare Data Report*, (2021).

¹²¹ Martha's Vineyard Commission. *Martha's Vineyard Regional Transportation Plan 2020-2040*.

Barnstable, and New Bedford.¹²² Table 10.5 shows annual one-way passenger enplanements at the Martha's Vineyard airport between 2010 and 2017. Anecdotally, since 2020, residents have noticed more noise from flights coming over Tisbury towards the airport.

Year	Enplanements (one way)
2017	48,000
2016	53,000
2015	49,000
2014	51,000
2013	54,000
2012	50,000
2011	48,000
2010	43,000
Total	396,000

Source: Martha's Vineyard Airport and Martha's Vineyard Statistical Profile, 2019

PRIVATE WATER TRANSPORT

Tisbury's waterways, including Vineyard Haven Harbor, Lagoon Pond, and Lake Tashmoo, are regulated by the Harbormaster. In April 2022, the Harbormaster was updating the Waterways Regulations, which cover speed limits on the waterways, water sports, pollution, commercial uses, houseboats, town piers and landings, and moorings.¹²³ According to the Harbormaster, the Town controls around 780 moorings in the Tisbury Inner Harbor, Outer Harbor, Lagoon Pond, and Lake Tashmoo which are at capacity with a waiting list of more than 200 people.

SAFETY

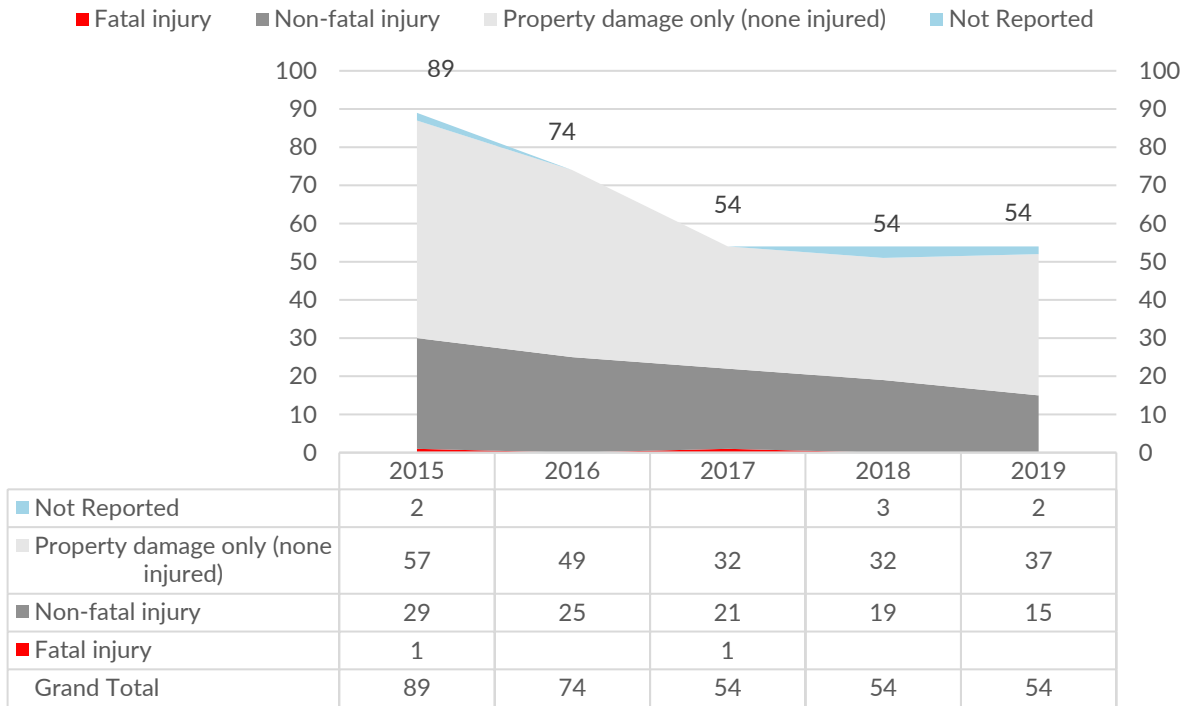
Map 10.5 shows a map of crashes in Tisbury between 2015 and 2019, the most recent data for analysis from MassDOT. Roadway crashes are concentrated in the Vineyard Haven section of town near the Ferry Terminal. Intersections with relatively high crashes include Five Corners, State Road and Pine Tree Road, and Franklin Street and Center Street. The intersection of South Main Street and State Road was identified as a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) cluster between 2017-2019.

¹²² Martha's Vineyard Airport, *MVC Route Map*, accessed November 2022, <https://mvyairport.com/mvy-route-map>

¹²³ Town of Tisbury, *Draft Waterways Regulations*, (2022).

Figure 10.3. Total Crashes by Severity 2015-2019

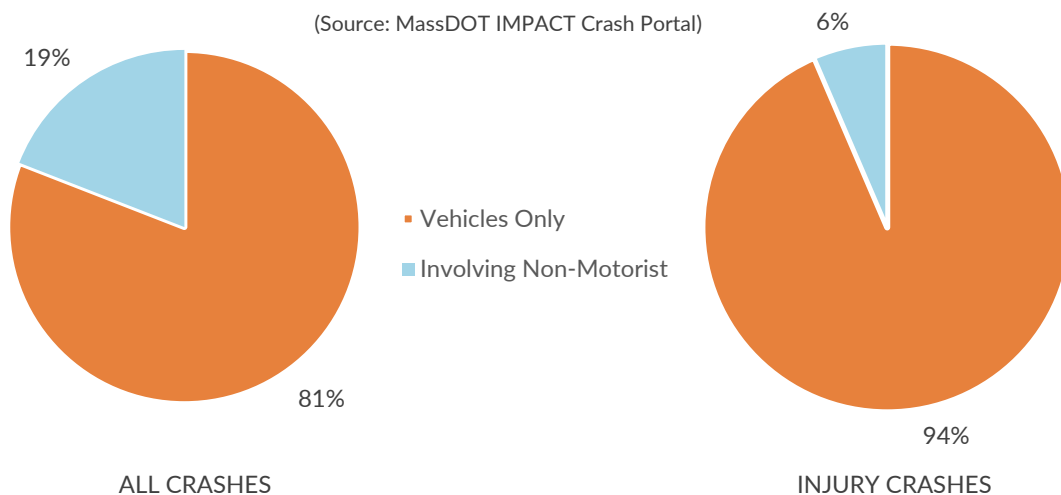
Source: MassDOT IMPACT Crash Portal



There were two fatal crashes, one of which involved a person walking on State Road at Pine Tree Road. Both total and injury crashes trended downward, as shown in Figure 10.3. Non-motorist crashes resulting in injury are overrepresented, as shown in Figure 10.4. According to Tisbury Police, the top three safety complaints they receive are speeding, stop sign violations, and non-compliance at crosswalks. The Harbormaster also has cited speeding and jet skiing as being the largest safety concerns on the waterways.

Figure 10.4. Injury Crashes Involving Non-Motorists 2015-2019

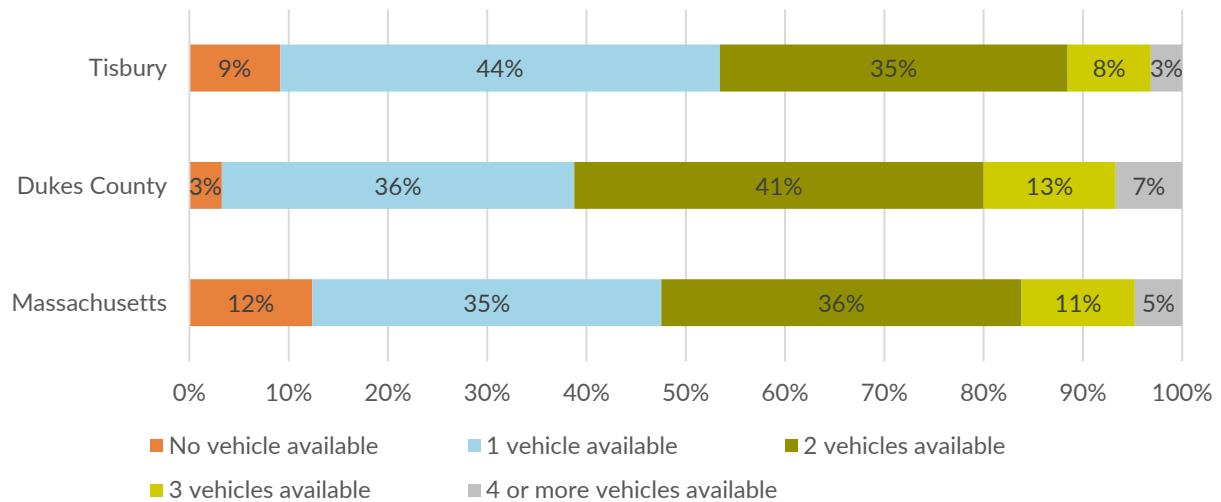
(Source: MassDOT IMPACT Crash Portal)



VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

Figure 10.5 shows the estimated number of vehicles available per household for the Town of Tisbury, Dukes County, and the State of Massachusetts based on the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2016-2020 Estimates. Most households in Tisbury (51 percent) have access to one or no vehicle.

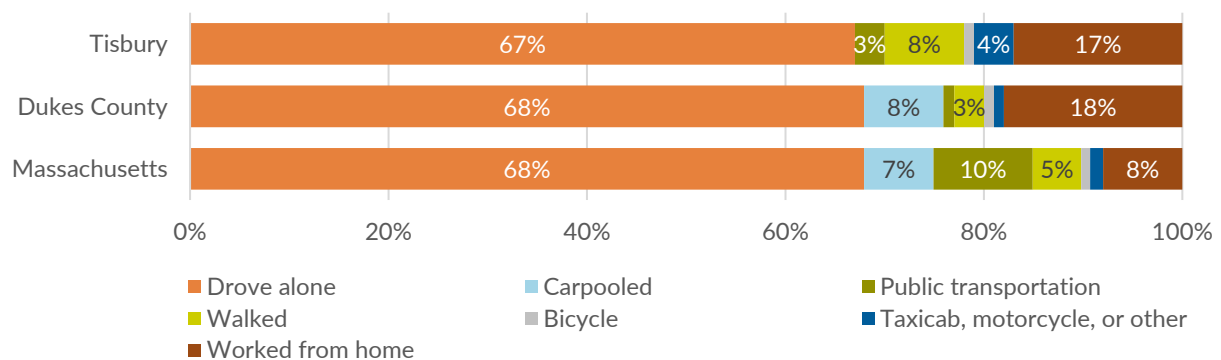
Figure 10.5. Households by Vehicles Available
(Source: American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2020)



COMMUTING PATTERNS

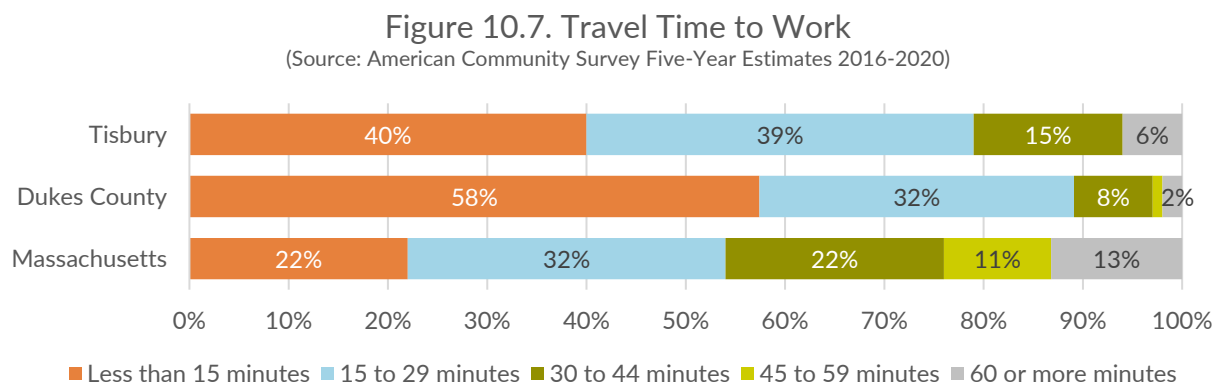
Figure 10.6 shows the modes of transportation to work for residents in Tisbury, Dukes County, and the State of Massachusetts according to the ACS 2016-in 2020 Five-Year Estimates. Dukes County with 18 percent and Tisbury with 17 percent both have a significantly higher percentage of people working at home than throughout the state (8 percent). Town staff have said second homeowners who can work from home shifted to work in Tisbury during the pandemic, causing an increase in the share of people working from home.

Figure 10.6. Commute to Work by Mode
(Source: American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates 2016-2020)



Travel Time to Work

Figure 10.7 shows the reported travel times to work for Tisbury, Dukes County, and Massachusetts. According to the ACS 2016-2020 Five-Year Estimates, approximately 80 percent of Tisbury residents had an average commute time of 30 minutes or less. The short commute times for residents of Tisbury reflects the short distances most workers travel to get to jobs either in Tisbury or in one of the nearby Vineyard towns, as described in Chapter 8: Economic Development.



RECENTLY COMPLETED PLANS AND PROJECTS

Complete Streets Projects. In 2017, Tisbury received funding from the Massachusetts Complete Streets Program.¹²⁴ Through this program, the town constructed a bike path from State Road to Veteran’s Park by the old fire station lot and sidewalk improvements on Crowell Lane and Norton Street.

Traffic Calming on Franklin Street by Woodlawn Avenue. The Tisbury Department of Public Works recently narrowed lanes on Franklin Street by Woodlawn Avenue and added a painted curb extension to reduce vehicle speeds.

Sidewalk Replacement on Summer Street. DPW recently reconstructed part of the sidewalk on Summer Street in Tisbury with concrete sidewalk and granite curb.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements on Norton Street. DPW recently added traffic calming elements including curb extensions and bicycle and pedestrian signage on Norton Street off Main Street.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ “Massachusetts Complete Streets Funding Program Participation,” MassDOT, accessed November 2022, <https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/completestreets/Map/>

¹²⁵ “DPW Current Completed Projects,” Tisbury Department of Public Work, (Updated July 23, 2021), accessed November 2023, <https://www.tisburyma.gov/department-public-works/news/dpw-current-completed-projects>

Pilot of the GoGo Grandparent Program. Beginning in July 2021, this pilot program provides both scheduled and on-demand car rides for both essential and recreational trips for older adults on the Vineyard through a grant received by the Martha's Vineyard Community Foundation.¹²⁶

Union Street Reconfiguration. In 2015, the Town changed the direction of travel on Union Street.

Beach Road Redesign. In 2022, MassDOT reconstructed Beach Road with multimodal infrastructure improvements including extended sidewalk and on-street bike lanes.

VTA 100-day Digital Pass. In 2022, The VTA implemented a 100-day bus pass available conveniently on mobile devices with an in-person physical pass option. The pass is geared at seasonal workers employed on Martha's Vineyard for the summer and costs \$100.

GIS Database Expansion. The MVC has been expanding their database of publicly available GIS layers for walking trails, transit routes, bicycle/pedestrian paths and other transportation elements in Tisbury and across the island.

Speed Feedback Signs. The Police Department and DPW have collaborated to place four portable speed feedback signs on roadways in Tisbury on a rotating basis.

Installation of Permanent Traffic Counters In 2019, the MVC worked to install five permanent traffic counters in Oak Bluffs, Edgartown, and Tisbury as part of the TIP.¹²⁷

Upgrade to Lake Street Landing Pier. The Harbormaster recently replaced the Lake Street Landing Pier funded through a Seaport Economic Council grant.

25 MPH Speed Limit on Select Roads: In 2021, the Town opted into the Massachusetts program MGL c. 90 § 17C allowing the statutory speed limit on roadways in thickly settled or business districts to be reduced from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour. The entirety of Daggett Avenue, Franklin Street from Leland Avenue to Spring Street, and the entirety of Skiff Avenue were included.¹²⁸

Alternative Routes to Walking and Biking on State Road. The Open Space & Recreation Committee is currently discussing ways to promote alternative routes to State Road for people walking and biking in partnership with the West Tisbury Complete Streets Committee, using lower volume roadways.

PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED, UPCOMING, & ONGOING PROJECTS

Phase 1 Main Street Sidewalk Improvement Project. Starting in October 2022 the Tisbury Department of Public Works will oversee construction on Phase 1 of Main sidewalk improvements. The project will

¹²⁶ "GoGo Grandparent Pilot Program," Martha's Vineyard Older Adult Transportation Coalition, (September 21, 2021), accessed November 2022, <https://www.hamv.org/transportation-workgroup>

¹²⁷ Martha's Vineyard Commission, *Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) For Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2021-2025*, (2022).

¹²⁸ "Speed limits in thickly settled or business districts," MassDOT, (September 21, 2021), accessed November 2022.

focus on pedestrian safety by adding high visibility crossings and curb extensions along Main Street between Spring Street and Owen. The project will also include installation of street trees, planters, benches, and bike racks. The expected completion date is June 20, 2023.

VTA Vehicle Fleet Electrification. The VTA is in the process of upgrading their entire bus fleet to battery electric buses.

MVC Collection of Transportation Volumes for Vehicles and Bicycles. The MVC plans to purchase at least two additional permanent traffic counters for motor vehicles, and to collect bicycle count data on the bicycle paths and shared use paths across the Vineyard.

Pre-Feasibility Study of the Extension of the Martha's Vineyard Network of Shared Use Paths. In 2009, the extension of several shared use paths through Tisbury were explored as part of a larger pre-feasibility study examining connections across the Vineyard. In Tisbury, the study examined options for connecting the existing Beach Road path with the Veteran's Memorial Park Shared Use Path and the Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road shared path using Beach Road, Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, Skiff Ave, Lagoon Pond Road, or connecting through private and town property.

Road Safety Audit for Five Corners Intersection In 2015, MassDOT commissioned a study of the Five Corners intersection of Beach Street, Water Street, Lagoon Pond Road, and Beach Street Extension in Tisbury. The Audit recommended reversing the direction of Union Street, signalization or a roundabout, closing Beach Street Extension to just pedestrians, bicyclists, and loading, and making Lagoon Pond Road one way.¹²⁹

Road Safety Audit for State Road at Look Street/Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road. In 2015, MassDOT commissioned a study of the State Road at Look Street/Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road intersection. The audit recommended enhancements to the intersection including making Look Street one-way northbound, installing a roundabout or signal, improving sight lines, narrowing the roadway visually, adding signage, creating a bypass route, adding bike lanes, and improving crosswalk visibility.¹³⁰

System of Connector Roads Traffic Study: This report published in 2005 examined the traffic impacts of adding connector roads between State Road and Edgartown-Vineyard Haven by the Tisbury Park and Ride utilizing the existing utility corridor. The study found the connector roads would reduce traffic at the State Road, Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road and Look Street intersection to the north. Preliminary concepts of alternative alignments have been developed since the 2005 study.

Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. Massachusetts offers up to \$500,000 (increased from \$400,000 in August 2022) in funding for Complete Streets projects that improve safety and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities walking, biking, taking transit or driving. Tisbury passed their Complete

¹²⁹ GPI, *Road Safety Audit: State Road at Look Street/Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road*, (2015).

¹³⁰ GPI, *Road Safety Audit: Five Corners Beach Street at Water Street/Lagoon Pond Road/Beach Street Extension*, (2015).

Streets Policy in 2017 and completed a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan in 2018. The plan includes 117 projects across town.

2020-2040 Transportation Plan. In 2019, the Martha's Vineyard Commission released a long-range transportation plan for Martha's Vineyard, including Tisbury. The plan's transportation goals and recommendations provide guidance and direction to the Town of Tisbury, including managing vehicles in town and encouraging multimodal transportation options.

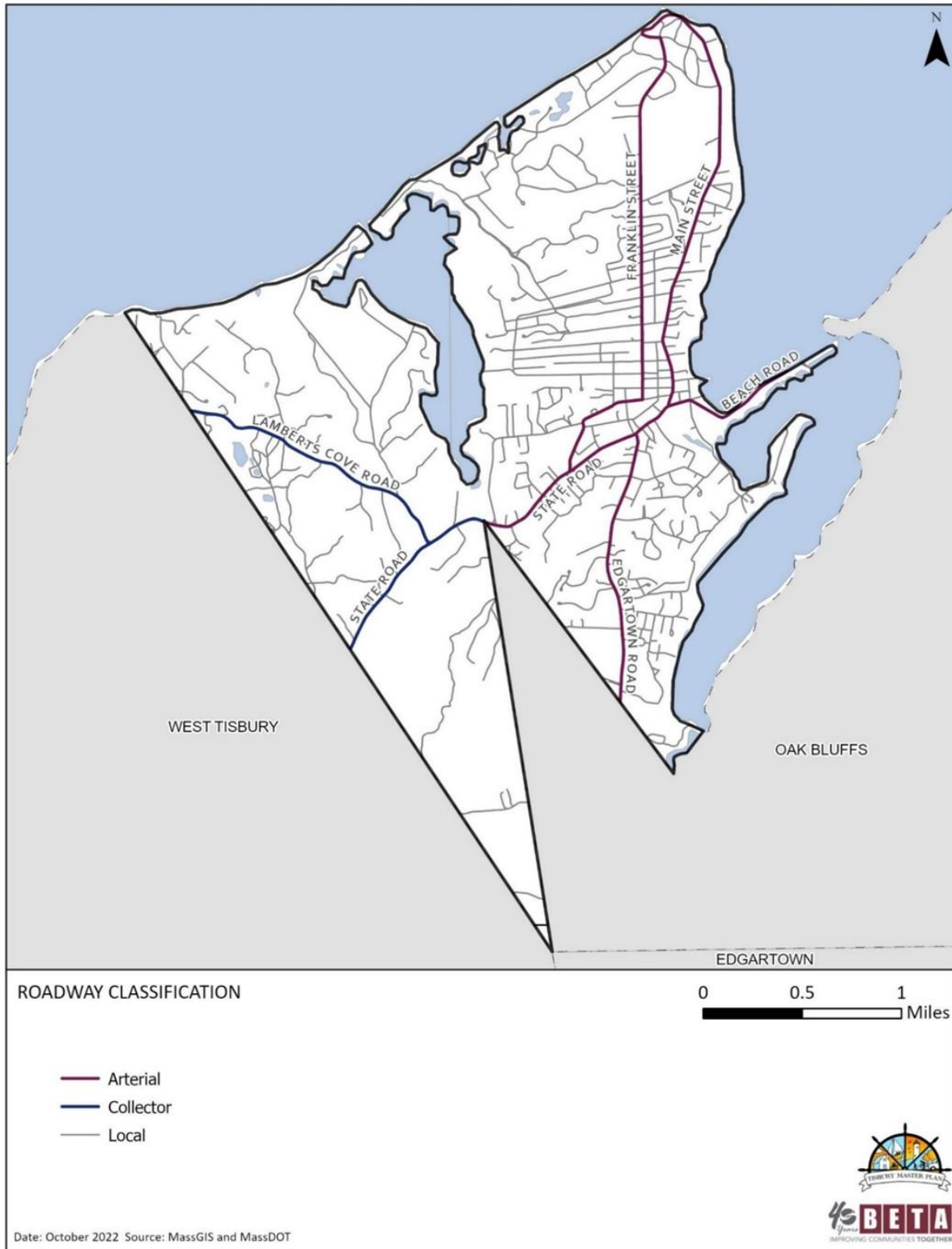
Island-Wide Elder Transportation Study. This study is prioritized for \$100,000 in the TIP for 2025-2029.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. Infrastructure is prioritized for \$100,000 in the TIP for 2025-2029.¹³¹

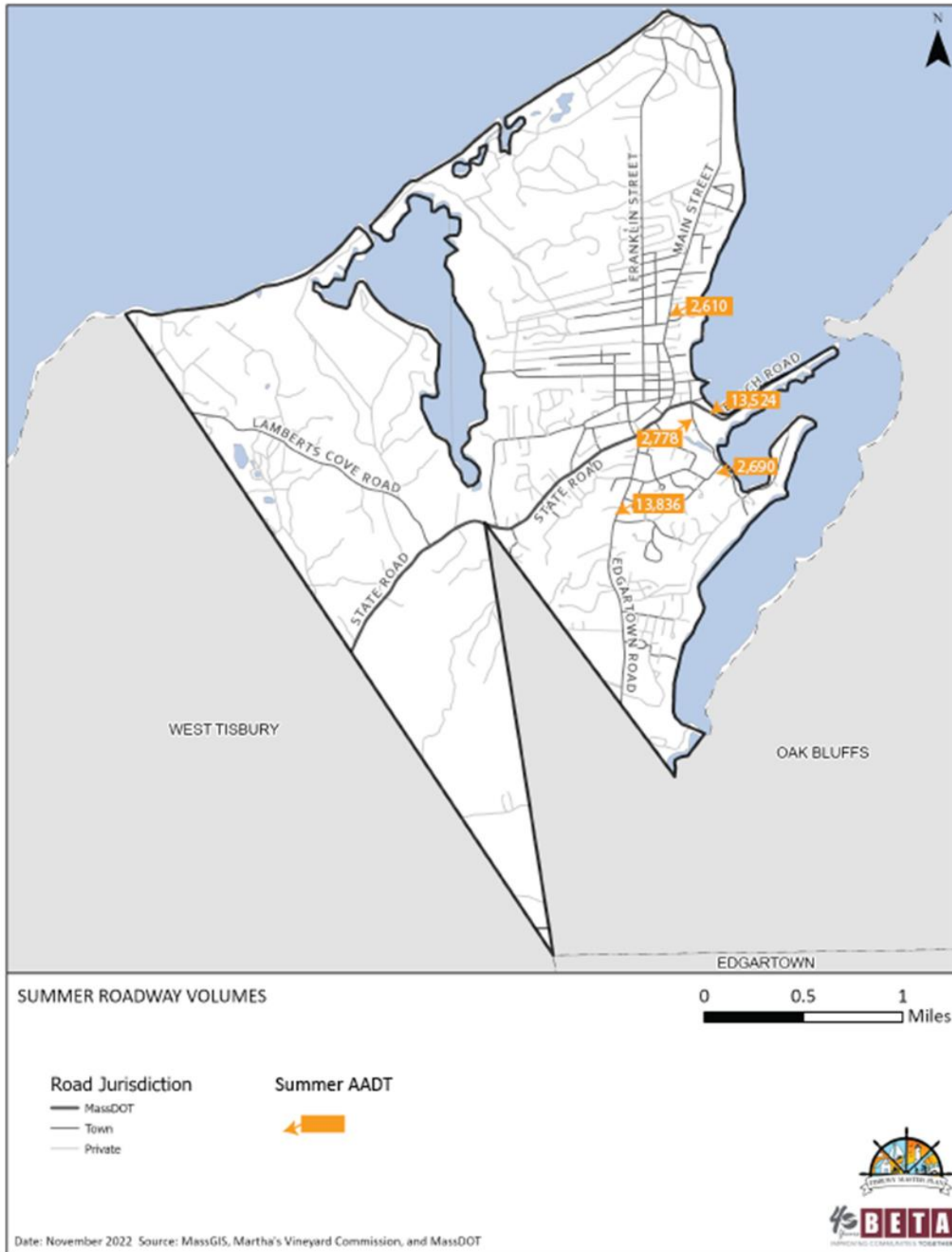
Preliminary Concepts for Ferry Terminal Circulation. As of 2022, the Town and the VTA have begun collaboration on multimodal solutions to the ferry terminal circulation issues.

¹³¹ Martha's Vineyard Commission, *Martha's Vineyard Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) For Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2023-2027, (2022)*.

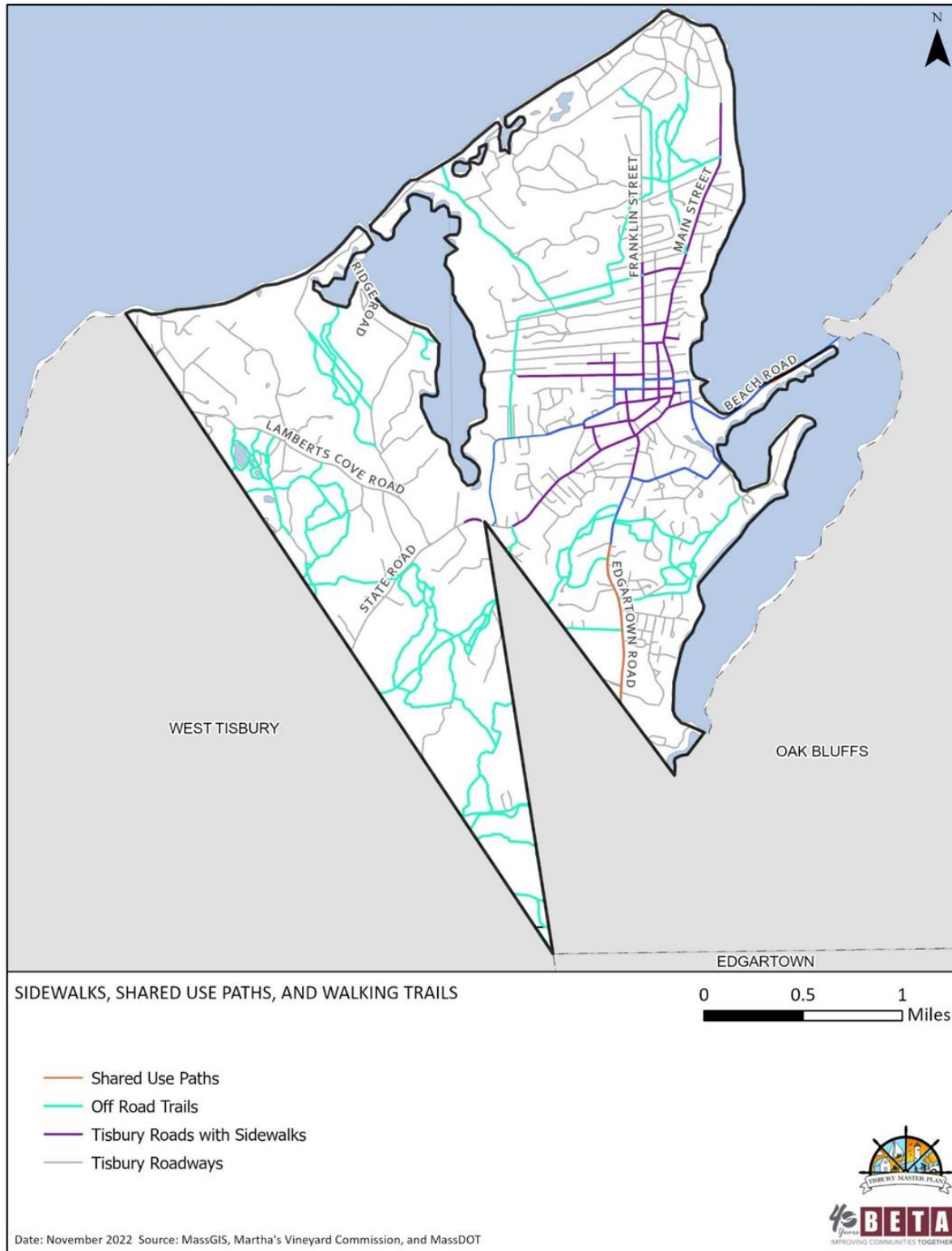
Map 10.1 Classification of Tisbury's Roadways



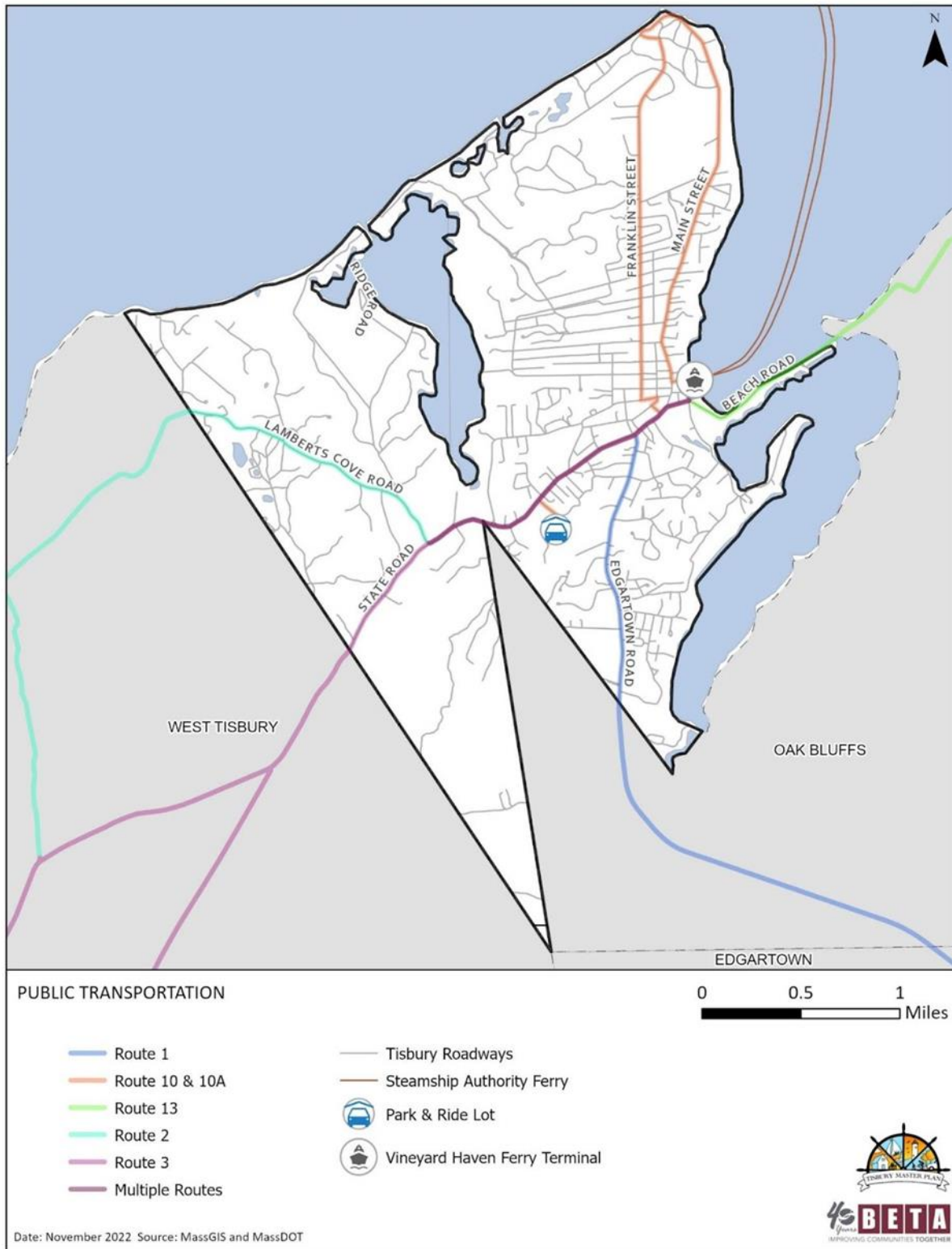
Map 10.2 Summer Daily Traffic Volumes



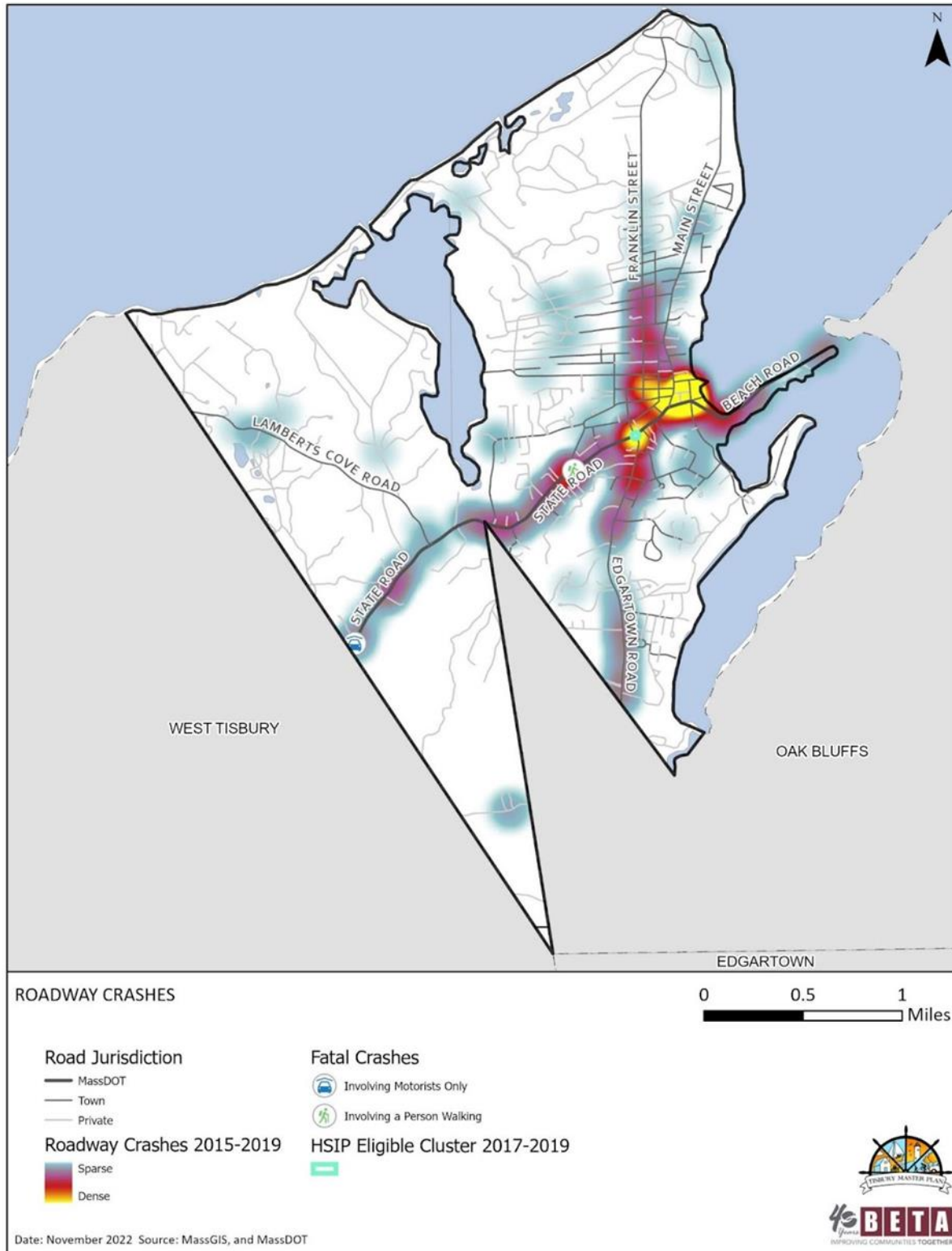
Map 10.3 Sidewalks, Shared Use Path, and Walking Trails



Map 10.4 Public Transportation



Map 10.5 Roadway Crashes 2015-2019



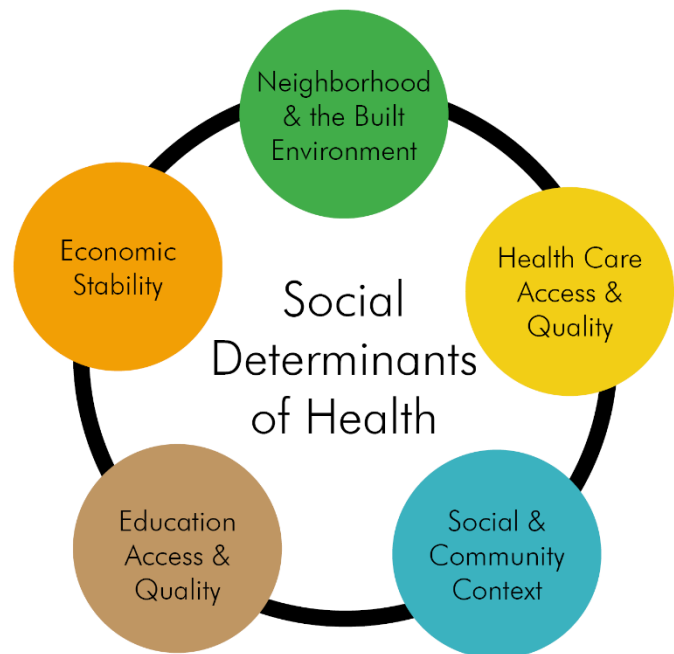


11. Community Health

Introduction

Many of the early milestones in community planning (such as zoning regulations and infrastructure design) were a direct response to historical public health concerns. Today, to improve our personal health and wellness and overall quality of life, we are experiencing a return to place-making with an emphasis on community health. The term “health” can mean many things to different people. While it can be seen narrowly as an absence of disease, those in community health planning see it more broadly – incorporating physical, mental, and social wellbeing. Although genetics and health care can influence an individual’s health, social determinants of health (SDOH), the conditions of the environment in which we are born, live, work, play, worship, and age, can dramatically affect quality of life and health outcomes.

SDOH are grouped into five areas, as shown in the inset above. Examples include:



Adapted from U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services “Healthy People 2030”

- Safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods.
- Racism, discrimination, and violence.
- Education, job opportunities, and income.
- Access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities/
- Polluted air and water.
- Language and literacy skills.¹³²

SDOH vary widely across communities and are influenced by policies, programs, and institutions at all levels, public and private. Focusing on social determinants can help us identify root causes of disease, address health equity, and create prosperity and security in our community.

Through the local planning process, a community can improve outcomes by exploring the relationship between the built environment and social, economic, and environmental conditions that impact the physical health and wellness of its residents. Table 11.1 is a crosswalk that shows the connections between public health concerns/SDOH and community planning issues, and where policies in the Tisbury Master Plan can improve health outcomes.

Table 11.1. Public Health and Community Planning Crosswalk		
Public Health/SDOH	Community Planning Topic	Tisbury Master Plan Links
Active Living	Active Transportation Options Recreation Opportunities	Transportation Open Space and Recreation
Emergency Preparedness	Climate Change Natural Hazards	Sustainability
Environmental Health	Air and Water Quality	Natural Resources
Food and Nutrition	Access to Food and Healthy Food Options Clean Drinking Water	Community Health Natural Resources
Health Care and Human Services	Accessible Health Care and Human Services Aging-Friendly Community	Community Health Town Services
Social Cohesion and Mental Health	Housing Quality and Affordability Public Safety Equity and Inclusiveness Accessibility for People with Disabilities	Housing Economic Development Town Services Community Health
<i>Source: Adapted from Healthy Plan Making: Final Report, American Planning Association Planning Community Health Research Center (n.d.)</i>		

There are several studies and data available to understand public health conditions on Martha’s Vineyard and Tisbury. Sources range from state agencies to assessments by island health care providers to local surveys of residents. Each has its value in evaluating trends and needs of Tisbury residents. The following are the primary sources used to provide a baseline for future planning because they are

¹³² “Social Determinants of Health,” *Healthy People 2030*, US Department of Health and Human Services, accessed November 2022, <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>.

updated on a regular schedule or as new data are available. This offers consistency in monitoring trends and community needs. Other sources are cited, as appropriate.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) collects, analyzes, and interprets data about environmental hazards, exposure to these hazards, and the public health effects from that exposure.¹³³ Data are available for all communities in the Commonwealth.

The Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative prepares a Healthy Aging Report and compiles Healthy Aging Community Profiles for each community in Massachusetts and several neighborhoods of Boston.¹³⁴ Using 2018 data, these profiles summarize various health indicators for seniors related to nutrition, chronic diseases, behavioral health, disabilities, and access to health care, among other information.

Some local health institutions, such as the Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH) and Island Health Care (IHC), conduct triennial Community Health Needs Assessments. Data are generally island-wide. The most current assessments available for both were released in 2022 and helped assess public health conditions and health care needs for Tisbury.

In 2021, Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard (HAMV) published the findings of a survey conducted in December 2020. The survey provided insight into the behaviors and preferences of older residents for socializing, working, volunteering, transportation, health services, technology, and other needs. Findings will be used to support the planning, prioritization, and collaboration across the island for those who provide services to this population. The survey findings are available by community.¹³⁵

The following section presents a public health snapshot of Tisbury organized around available data to describe the overall health of Tisbury residents, their access to health care and human services, existing environmental conditions that impact residents' health, and economic and social conditions of Tisbury related to equity and environmental justice.

Existing Conditions and Trends

CHRONIC ILLNESSES AND HEALTH CONDITIONS

Chronic health conditions, those that persist for long periods of time, can be the result of environmental factors and exacerbated by social and economic conditions. Understanding the prevalence of these types of health concerns in Tisbury can direct town policies to limit or reduce exposure or identify ways to improve conditions that are leading to these adverse health outcomes.

¹³³ Massachusetts Environmental Public Health Tracking Index, Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Human Services, (Updated December 8, 2022).

¹³⁴ *Healthy Aging Data Report: Highlights from Massachusetts, 2018*, Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative, (December 2018).

¹³⁵ "MV Older Adult 2020 Survey Results," Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard, Accessed November 2022, <https://www.hamv.org/2020survey>

Asthma

Asthma is a common chronic disease with increasing prevalence. It is the most common chronic disease in children. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has an elevated rate of asthma compared to the national prevalence rate. Causes of asthma are unknown, but episodes of asthma (asthma attacks) can be triggered by certain environmental conditions such as air pollution, mold, pets/pet dander, and dust mites. Reducing exposure to these pollutants can help prevent symptoms. Climate change can also decrease air quality and have an impact on individuals with asthma. Increasing numbers of very hot days due to climate change may increase ozone and pollen levels that can trigger attacks. Other factors such as access to medical care and health behaviors (e.g., diet or exercise) are also linked with asthma and should be considered in community planning.

In 2018, 14 percent of Tisbury residents 65 years and older reported to have asthma, compared to 15 percent statewide.¹³⁶ Asthma emergency department visits are tracked for people of all ages. As shown in Figure 11.1a, in 2017, the rate of visits by Tisbury residents visiting the emergency department was nearly double the statewide rate. The prevalence of asthma in Tisbury students in kindergarten through eighth grade was slightly higher than the statewide rate, 12.9 per 100 students compared to 12.1 (Figure 11.1b).

¹³⁶ 2018 Health Aging Community Profile for Tisbury, Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative, (2018).

Figure 11.1a Asthma Emergency Department Visits, 2017

(Source: Tisbury Community Profile (2017), MA EPHT)

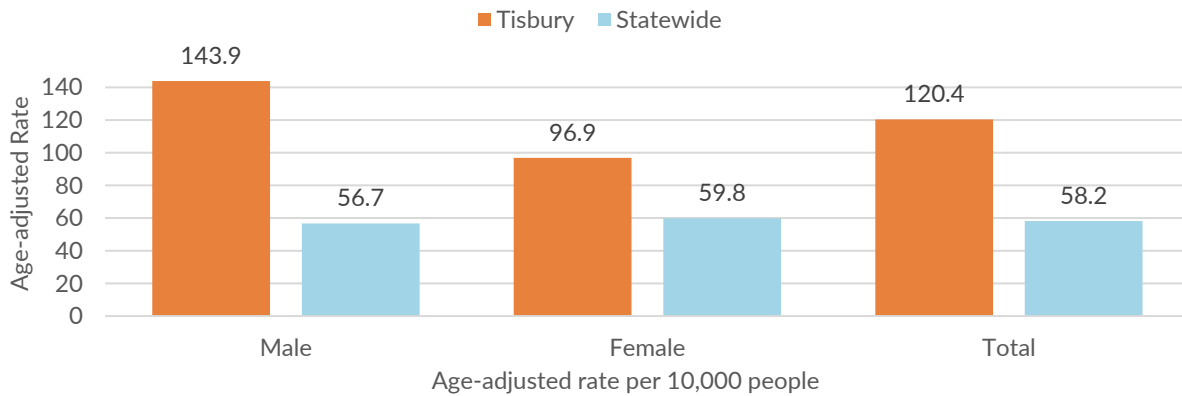
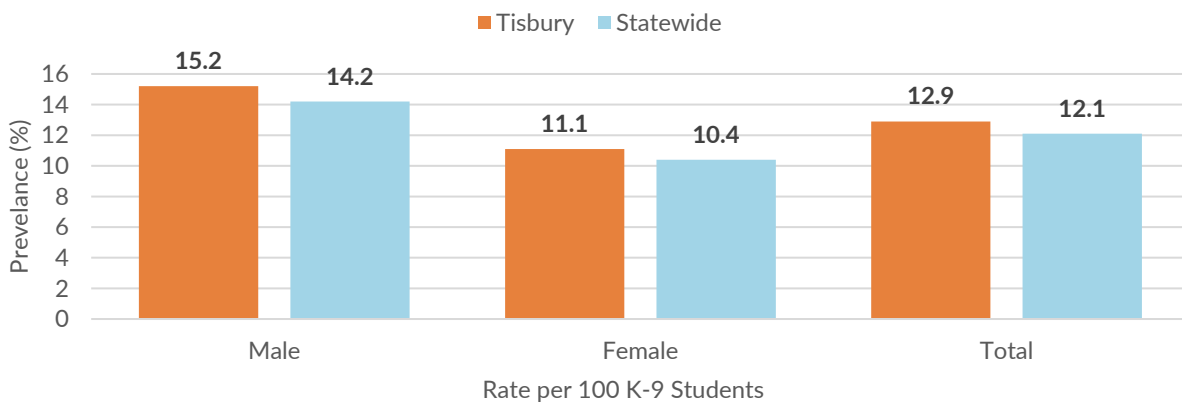


Figure 11.1b Pediatric Asthma Prevalence in K-8 Students, 2017

(Source: Tisbury Community Profile (2017), MA EPHT)

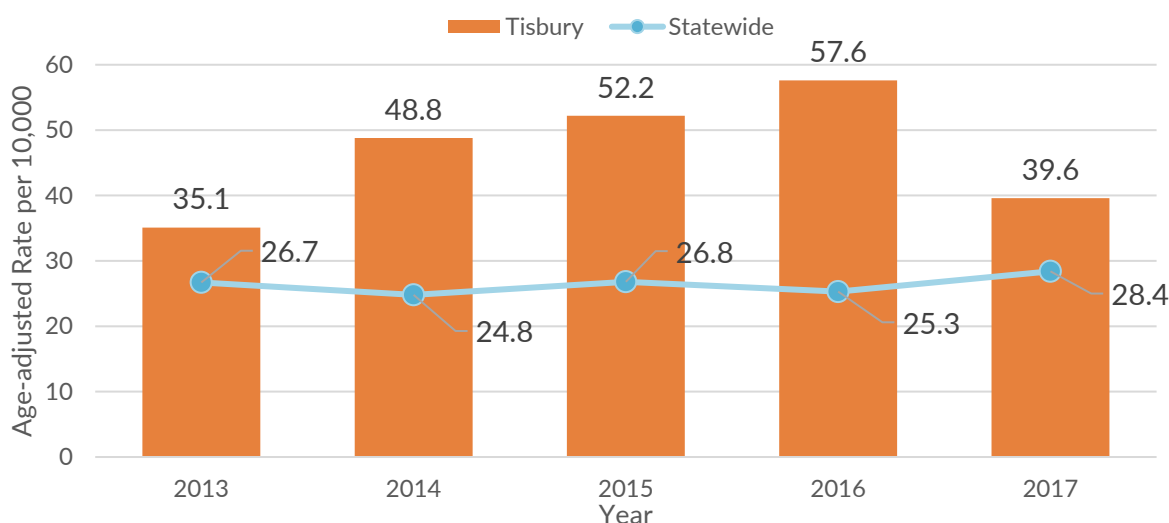


Heart Attacks

In Massachusetts, heart disease, stroke, and other diseases of the heart and blood vessels are responsible for approximately 35 percent of all deaths in the state. Risk factors for heart attack include health and lifestyle factors. Environmental factors also contribute to risk. Exposure to certain air pollutants like ozone and particulate matter has been shown to increase the rate of heart attacks, especially for the elderly and individuals with pre-existing cardiovascular conditions.

Heart attack hospitalizations are tracked for adults over the age of 35. Overall rates across the population are significantly higher in Tisbury than statewide: 39.6 per 10,000 compared to 28.4 per 10,000 (Figure 11.2). In 2017, 4.8 percent of Tisbury residents 65 years and older reported to have a heart attack, compared to 4.6 percent statewide. Nearly 12 percent were living with the effects of a stroke, like the statewide percentage.

Figure 11.2 Heart Attack Hospital Admissions for Tisbury and Commonwealth, 2017
(Source: MA EPHT)



Mental Health and Substance Abuse

The MVH and ICH both report in their 2022 assessments that mental health and substance use disorders are primary community health needs and according to the assessment surveys and interviews. There is a need for increased access to services available on Martha’s Vineyard for both adults and children, especially for the Brazilian Portuguese-speaking residents overall. The assessments note that lack of services to address these needs were associated with staffing shortages on the island, attributed to the cost of living and housing crisis on Martha’s Vineyard. IHC also notes that Dukes County does not have on-island inpatient detox options. Several populations appear to be at risk for behavioral health problems, including young adults, the homeless, isolated seniors, people with disabilities, and children and youth who have experienced family and housing instability and other adverse life events.

For Tisbury’s older residents, indicators related to mental and behavioral health are listed in Table 11.2. Note that these numbers are estimates and could potentially underestimate impacted seniors. Rates are higher locally compared to the Commonwealth for depression (more than one third of Tisbury seniors) and substance abuse. A lower percentage of local older residents is not keeping up with regular physical exams than those statewide. Nearly one quarter of Tisbury seniors suffer from anxiety.

Table 11.2. Select Indicators Related to Mental and Behavioral Health for Tisbury Seniors

Indicator	Tisbury Estimate	State Estimate
60+ with 15+ days poor mental health last month	5.1%	7.0%
60+ with physical exam/checkup in past year	83.9%	89.3%
65+ with depression	37.1%	31.5%
65+ with anxiety disorders	23.1%	25.4%
65+ with substance abuse disorders (drug use +/- alcohol abuse)	7.0%	6.6%

Table 11.2. Select Indicators Related to Mental and Behavioral Health for Tisbury Seniors

65+ with tobacco use disorders	8.5%	10.2%
65+ with asthma	14.3%	15.0%
<i>Source: 2018 Health Aging Community Profile for Tisbury, Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative</i>		

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES

According to the MVH, there are several health care services residents cannot secure on the island. Accessing care on the mainland can be costly and challenging for people of all ages, particularly when ambulance transport is needed to an off-island facility. This is particularly challenging in the summer months when ferry reservations are difficult to secure. MVH also finds that coordination of care among providers on- and off-island is also challenging. Because providers and residents do not have a full understanding of the range of services available on the island, some may be traveling off-island to access care unnecessarily. More work needs to be done to improve access to dental services to meet demand, particularly for those participating in and on the waitlist for the Health Safety Net Dental program, which supports dental services for the uninsured and underinsured. Table 11.3 provides an overview of select indicators related to accessing health care services by Tisbury seniors, a particularly vulnerable group. As noted above, these numbers are estimates, and could potentially underestimate impacted seniors.

Table 11.3. Select Indicators Related to Health Care Access for Tisbury Seniors

Access to Care Indicator	Tisbury Estimate	State Estimate
Medicare (65+ population)		
% Medicare managed care enrollees	2.4%	23.1%
% dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid	12.7%	16.7%
% 60+ with a regular doctor	90%	96.4%
% 60+ who did not see doctor when needed due to cost	5.6%	4.1%
# of primary care providers within 5 miles	21	10,333
# of hospitals within 5 miles	0	66
# of nursing homes within 5 miles	0	399
# of health care agencies	1	299
# of community health centers	0	116
# of adult day health centers	0	131
# of memory cafes	1	95
# of dementia-related support groups	1	136
<i>Source: 2018 Health Aging Community Profile for Tisbury, Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative</i>		

The island's population is getting older, and MVH highlights that efforts are underway to improve services, particularly for seniors and address needs, such as home-based care as well as mental health and dementia care. Additionally, anecdotal evidence suggests that Tisbury's non-English speaking population is often unaware of the availability of basic medical services, and this represents a recurring gap in healthcare communications.

FOOD INSECURITY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active and healthy life, typically because of a lack of financial resources for food.¹³⁷ Food insecurity is complex and many who experience it. For example, low-income families that are food insecure are more susceptible to other issues like a lack of affordable housing, social isolation, chronic or acute health problems, high medical costs, and low wages.¹³⁸ A report from the Rural Scholars Program¹³⁹ identified three populations most vulnerable to food insecurity on Martha's Vineyard to be the Brazilian population, chronically ill patients, and the island's older residents. But it is important to recognize that food insecurity impacts all communities and individuals of all ages.

Understanding food insecurity in Tisbury can come from a few data points and observations. In 2020, an estimated 140 Tisbury households (7.2 percent) reported receiving cash public assistance or aid through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), compared to 11.6 percent statewide. Of those, approximately one third had an individual 60 years and older (43.2 percent statewide), and one quarter had a person 18 years or younger (39.2 percent statewide). MVH notes that there is a "SNAP gap" statewide, in that all those eligible for SNAP benefits do not enroll to receive them.¹⁴⁰ Additionally, according to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), during the 2022-2023 school year, 56.6 percent of students in the Tisbury School District were either eligible for free or reduced lunch, received Transition Aid to Families benefits, or eligible for food stamps.¹⁴¹ Rural Scholars suggest that some may not participate in these assistance programs because of social stigma of enrollment, or the idea that "others need it more." Knowledge of these resources by families and individuals to connect to these programs and local resources may also be a barrier.

The need to access healthy, affordable food exists. In 2022, Island Food Pantry in Oak Bluffs reported that 620 residents of Martha's Vineyard visited per week during the peak summer season, a 52 percent increase from 2021. Nearly 3,000 individuals are registered with the pantry, which is more than double registrants before the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁴² Both the MVH and IHC assessments highlighted that more work is needed to better understand food insecurity with residents of the island.

¹³⁷ "Definitions of Food Security," Economic Research Service, USDA, (Updated October 17, 2022), Accessed March 2023, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/>

¹³⁸ "Hunger and Food Insecurity," Feeding America, Accessed March 2023, https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/#_ftn2

¹³⁹ Rural Scholars is a select group of students from the University of Massachusetts Graduate School of Nursing and Medicine. Sponsored by the Dukes County Health Council and housed by the Martha's Vineyard Hospital, the students spend time on the Vineyard researching and analyzing health related topics of critical importance to the island. See <https://www.dchcmv.com/rural-scholars>.

¹⁴⁰ "Closing the 'SNAP Gap' in Massachusetts," The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Accessed March 2023, <https://www.foodbankwma.org/closing-the-snap-gap-in-massachusetts/>

¹⁴¹ "Select Populations (2022-23)," Tisbury School District Profile, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

¹⁴² "Food Insecurity Sees Dramatic Rise," *The Vineyard Gazette*, (August 2, 2022).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Exposure to pollutants in the air, water, soil, and materials in our homes or workplace can cause health problems or exacerbate existing chronic illnesses. The following sections provide a snapshot of environmental quality in Tisbury.

Air Quality

Exposure to air pollution can contribute to heart or lung illnesses. As noted earlier, air pollution can worsen asthma and other respiratory ailments and can trigger heart attacks. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes limits on air pollution levels to protect public health, including the health of at-risk populations. These limits, called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), are established for Carbon Monoxide (CO), Lead (Pb), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂), Ozone (O₃), and Particulate Matter (e.g., PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). Exceedances are a measure of bad air quality days. Monitoring is done by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) at 22 stations across the Commonwealth, including one on Martha's Vineyard operated by the Wampanoag Tribe at Gay Head (Aquinnah).

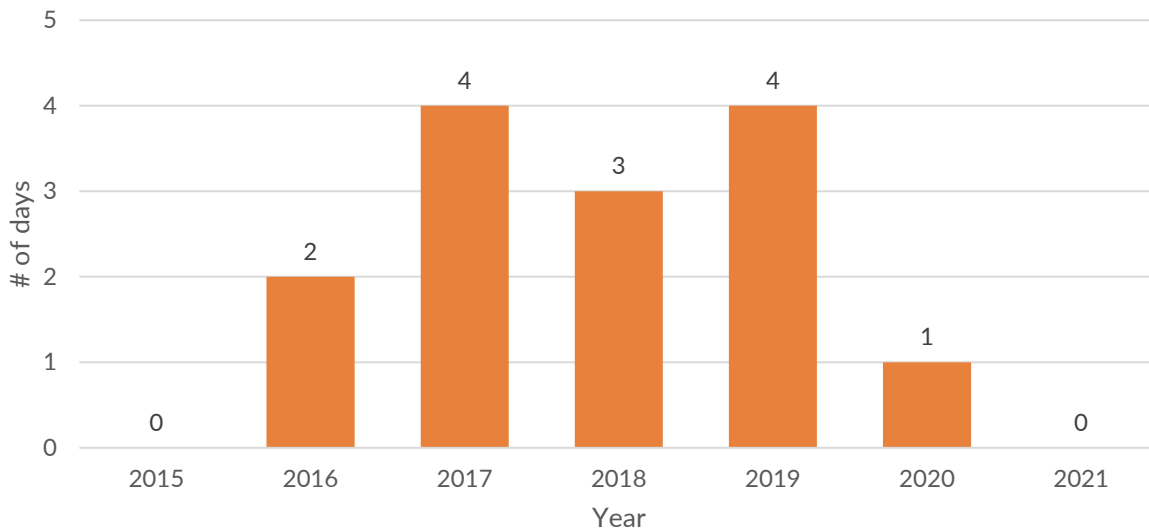
Fine particulate matter, or PM_{2.5}, refers to a mixture of extremely small airborne particles. In 2021, MassDEP measured 17 exceedances of PM_{2.5} concentrations statewide above the NAAQS of 35 µg/m³ over a 24-hour period between July 20 and July 27. These exceedances were a result of wildfire smoke originating in western U.S. and Canada. Despite these exceedances, MassDEP reported that there was no violation of the two PM_{2.5} NAAQS standards: the 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard (35 µg/m³) and the primary annual PM_{2.5} standard (12 µg/m³). None of MassDEP's PM_{2.5} monitoring stations exceeded these standards in 2021.

The ozone (O₃) layer found high in the upper atmosphere (the stratosphere) shields us from much of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. However, ozone air pollution at ground level (in the troposphere) results from gasses that come out of tailpipes, smokestacks, and many other sources (also referred to as greenhouse gasses or GHG). When these gasses meet sunlight, they react and form ozone smog making it difficult to breathe and potentially causing serious health problems.¹⁴³ Figure 11.3 shows that since 2015, the Aquinnah Tribe monitoring station recorded a few days where estimated ozone concentrations were above the NAAQS of 0.070 ppm over an 8-hour period. None were measured in 2021.

¹⁴³ "Ozone," American Lung Association, Updated April 17, 2023, Accessed July 2023, <https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/what-makes-air-unhealthy/ozone>

Figure 11.3 Estimated Ozone: Number of days greater than NAAQS

(Source: Massachusetts Annual Air Quality Reports, 2015-2021, MassDEP)



Drinking Water

EPA also establishes limits of acceptable and safe levels of contaminants in drinking water, monitored and enforced by MassDEP’s Drinking Water Program. Most Tisbury residents receive their drinking water from the Town sourced from groundwater. The Town issues annual Water Quality Reports to inform residents about the quality of the drinking water, including if monitoring shows any exceedances of contaminants. In recent years, none have been reported. (See also, *Community Facilities and Services Town Services and Facilities for more information on the Town’s water supply.*)

Tick-Borne Illnesses

Certain tick species carry harmful diseases and spread them to humans when bitten. In Massachusetts, common tick-borne diseases are Lyme Disease, Babesiosis, and Anaplasmosis. The Martha’s Vineyard Board of Health (MVBOH) recently reported that Martha’s Vineyard has become a hotspot for Alpha-gal Syndrome. The MVBOH Tick-borne Illness Reduction Initiative (the Tick Program) works to reduce the number of ticks and tick-borne diseases on the island through education, advocacy, and cooperation with other local organizations and individuals. The Tick Program surveys private yards and public trails for ticks to monitor the location and number of ticks on the island.

The MVBOH reports that lone star ticks, believed to be the main cause of Alpha-gal Syndrome, continue to spread throughout the island. They are found in a variety of habitats from open grassy areas to dense forest with leaf litter, and therefore lone star ticks in residential mowed lawns are the greatest concern. As shown in Table 11.4, there is an increase in the proportion of yards with lone stars in all towns. MVBOH notes that they found at least six properties with lone star ticks (typically nymphs, not adults) from perfectly mowed lawns.

Table 11.4. Number of Yard Surveys with at least 1 Lone Star Tick (Larvae, Nymph, Adult)						
Town	2019			2022		
	# of Surveys	Surveys w/ Lone stars	% w/ Lone stars	Surveys	Surveys w/ Lone stars	% w/ Lone stars
Aquinnah	20	20	100.0%	5	5	100.0%
Chilmark	49	25	51.0%	10	8	80.0%
Chappaquiddick	58	56	96.6%	10	10	100.0%
Edgartown	24	6	25.0%	28	14	50.0%
Oak Bluffs	16	2	12.5%	8	2	25.0%
Tisbury	11	0	0.0%	14	5	35.7%
West Tisbury	34	12	35.3%	22	9	40.9%

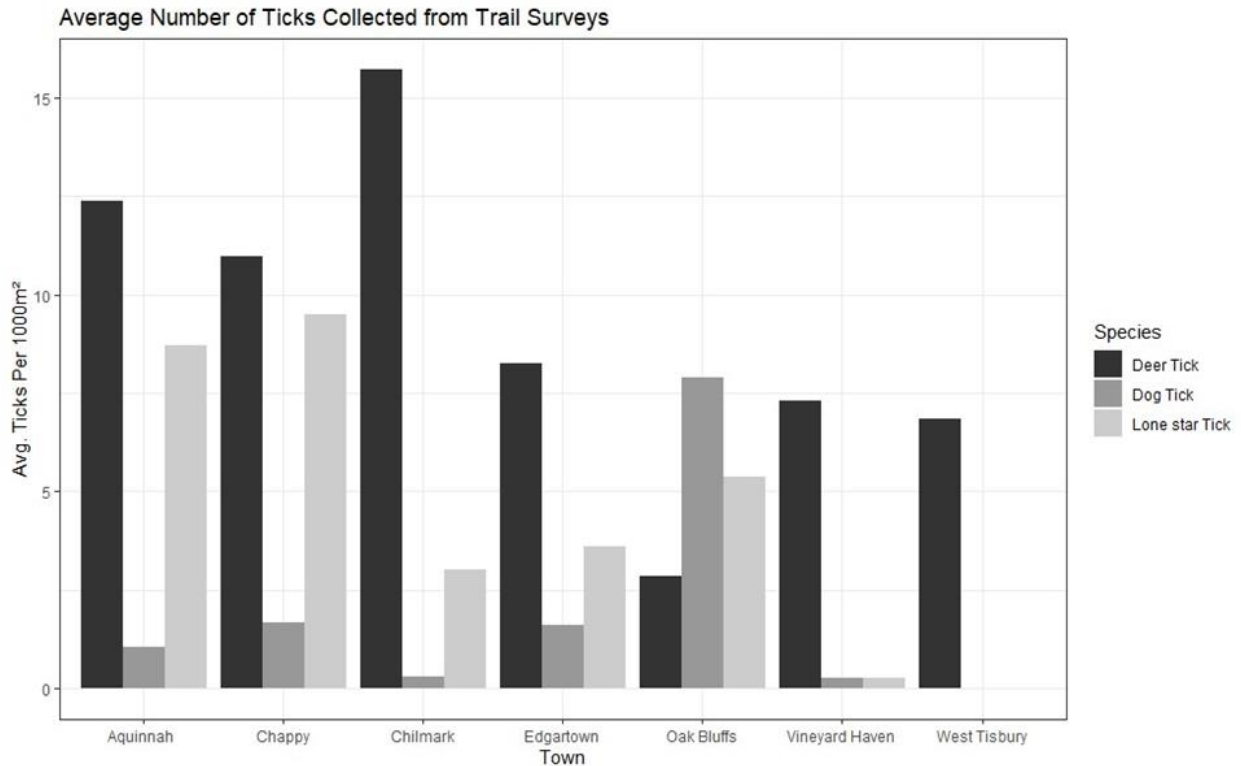
Source: MV Tick-Borne Illness Prevention Program, Annual Report 2022, Martha's Vineyard Board of Health

MVBOH surveys are also done on public trails in wooded areas. Table 11.5 shows the number of samplings done on the island and locations of the samplings. Nine samples were done at Phillips Preserve. Figure 11.4 shows the average number of ticks collected per 1,000 m² along the trail edges by town. This can be interpreted as the average number of ticks encountered during a 10- to 15-minute walk. The sample size in Tisbury was low and not specifically reported by the MVBOH in this graph, but the occurrences of various tick species are island wide.

Table 11.5. Public Trail Sampling		
Town	Trails	# Times Sampled
Aquinnah	Gay Head Moraine	7
Chilmark	Fulling Mill Brook & Waskoskim's Rock	13
Chappaquiddick	Poucha Pond Preserve	6
Edgartown	Huckleberry Barrens, David H. Smith Preserve & Caroline Tuthill Preserve	20
Oak Bluffs	Tradewinds Fields & Pecoy Point Preserve	16
Tisbury	Phillips Preserve	9
West Tisbury	Christiantown Woods Preserve	12

Source: "MV Tick-Borne Illness Prevention Program, Annual Report 2022," Martha's Vineyard Board of Health

Figure 11.4 Average Number of Ticks Collected from Trail Survey



(Source: “MV Tick-Borne Illness Prevention Program, Annual Report 2022,” Martha’s Vineyard Board of Health)

EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The concept of "environmental justice" (EJ) is rooted in the assumption that everyone has a right to live in and enjoy a clean, healthy environment. Everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, income, where you live, etc., should have fair treatment and involvement in environmental decisions and enforcement of environmental regulations and policies. EJ is also rooted in the understanding that vulnerable segments of our population are disproportionately impacted by policies and practices that create environmental harm. Historically, lower income neighborhoods and people of color have been disproportionately exposed to poor air quality, contaminated soil, toxic pollutants, and other threatening environmental conditions.

The Massachusetts Environmental Justice Policy defines environmental justice populations as:

“those segments of the population that EEA has determined to be most at risk of being unaware of or unable to participate in environmental decision-making or to gain access to state environmental resources or are especially vulnerable. They are defined as neighborhoods (U.S. Census Bureau census block group data for minority criteria, and American Community Survey (ACS) data for state median income and English isolation criteria) that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income;
- Minorities comprise 40% or more of the population;
- 25% or more of households lack English language proficiency; or

- Minorities comprise 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income.”

In Tisbury, environmental justice areas cover much of the western side of town, as shown in Map 11.1. These neighborhoods meet three criteria: household income is 65 percent of statewide annual median income or less, residents identifying as a minority make up 40 percent or more, or those identifying as a minority make up 25 percent of the population and household income is 150 percent or less of the statewide annual median. However, it should be noted that populations that speak English as a second language are also significant in Tisbury, with nearly 9 percent of residents reporting they do not speak English very well and their primary language is Portuguese or Portuguese Creole.¹⁴⁴ DESE reports that during the 2022-2023 school year English was not the first language of 56.6 percent of students in the Tisbury School District, and 33.8 percent were English language learners (English is not their primary language and are unable to perform ordinary classwork in English).¹⁴⁵

Local Policies, Practices, and Services

COUNCIL ON AGING

The Tisbury Council on Aging (COA) manages the Senior Center, which was built in 1991. It is fully air-conditioned in the summer months. Rooms are available to accommodate small gatherings as well as large community events and productions. A large kitchen allows the Town to host cooking classes as well as community meals. A congregate lunch is available Monday through Friday, all year.

The Senior Center offers a broad range of group and individual activities and services to serve the needs and interests of those adults who are 55 and older, as well as their families, including the following:

- Financial Services
 - Health Insurance Counseling
 - Fuel Assistance
 - Money Management
 - Tax Assistance provided by AARP volunteers.
- Health Care
 - Health Screening - Blood Pressure Screening
 - Medical Equipment Loans
 - Referrals for Supportive Day, help for caregivers caring for someone with Alzheimer's Disease, and Home Care
 - Home Safety Modification Program
 - Companion to help with shopping and errands
 - Diabetes support group

¹⁴⁴ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates 2011-2015, Table B16001, via MA Executive Office Energy and Environmental Affairs GIS Viewer.

¹⁴⁵ “Select Populations (2022-23),” Tisbury School District Profile, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

- Legal Resources and Documents
- Nutrition
 - Food distribution and Food Pantry
 - Congregate Meals at the Senior Center
 - Holiday meals
- Transportation
 - Referrals for on and off island medical and non-medical transportation through the Vineyard Transit Authority
 - A new pilot program called Gogo Grandparent Program that offers affordable transportation to get to doctor's appointments and errands
 - Resident senior discount bus passes for island residents 65 and over

The Center also works with other agencies and partners, such as Martha's Vineyard Center for Living, Healthy Aging, and Elder Services, to address needs associated with transportation (a shopping shuttle runs three days a week), access to medical care, and fall prevention.

HEALTHY AGING MARTHA'S VINEYARD

HAMV, a planning, advocacy, and community-building organization dedicated to creating an aging-friendly Island since 2013. Its mission is to ensure it has the infrastructure and services in place to serve the island's growing older adult population. Today one in three Islanders are 65+. HAMV maximizes its effectiveness by "building bridges" with a broad and diverse array of island stakeholders and seeks, whenever possible, to support the development of an integrated, island-wide perspective to optimize its collective energy and financial investment. It educates, builds awareness, and activates in the following ways:

- Convenes and manages coalitions of island organizations/consumer activists to focus on key priority areas;
- Identifies evidence-based programs/services to address service gaps, secure seed funding, and create pilot programs;
- Conducts research and shares analysis/recommendations with older adults, service organizations and local governments to stimulate conversation, support decision making and create a long term, shared vision on priorities;
- Sponsors educational/awareness seminars; and
- Addresses ad-hoc needs of our older adults and the agencies that serve them.

In May 2022, HAMV released its *5-Year Community Plan for an Aging and Dementia Friendly Island*.¹⁴⁶ It outlines six broad initiatives with strategic actions and local supporting partners for implementation. These initiatives include:

1. Ensure that the essential services older adults need and the workforce necessary to provide them are in place.

¹⁴⁶ Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard, Martha's Vineyard 5-Year Community Plan for an Aging and Dementia Friendly Island, (May 2022).

2. Expand older adults' transportation options and raise awareness of these options.
3. Develop a database/central clearing house of information as a resource for the island's older adult population.
4. Support digital equity and inclusion for older adults focusing on ongoing education/assistance.
5. Expand opportunities for community engagement (coordinated volunteer program, time banking, educational programs etc.).
6. Address older adults' safety/accessibility regarding infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, bike paths, beaches) to support their lifestyle aspirations.

LOCAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The following provides an overview of select health and social services compiled by IHC in its 2022 community health needs assessment on Martha's Vineyard.

Martha's Vineyard Community Services

Martha's Vineyard (MV) Community Services is a social services umbrella organization that houses a range of services to meet different needs of the community, including:

- Disability services to promote community integration and independence of residents with disabilities, such as employment services, family support center, and others.
- Youth and family services, such as childcare, Head Start, family support center, and others.
- Domestic violence and sexual violence services, including counseling, education, and advocacy.
- Mental health services, including counseling, urgent care, senior care, and health care assistance associated with mental health needs.
- Senior services, including CORE (Counseling, Outreach, and Referral for Elderly), Healthy Aging MV, and caregiver support group.
- Veterans services such as support groups, outreach programs, and others.

Also, under MV Community Services is First Stop MV, a comprehensive directory of community resources for all ages. First Stop MV was developed and run for its first three years by Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard (formerly Healthy Aging Task Force.) In 2016, First Stop MV was transferred to MV Community Services, which runs it today. Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard raised the initial funds to design and develop First Stop MV.

Island Health Care

IHC in Edgartown is a community health center with nurse practitioners, nurses, physicians, and other health professionals. Services are available for primary care, oral and dental health, mental and behavioral health, substance abuse counseling, and chronic disease management. IHC also offers prevention services, wellness coaching, and has a public health nurse on staff.

Martha's Vineyard Hospital

MVH is a not-for-profit hospital and provides limited inpatient services with 14 beds. The hospital has an emergency department that is physician-staffed 24/7. There are several specialty physicians with their main practice at MVH with others holding office hours on the Island on varying schedules.

MVH also operates the Island's largest nursing home, Windemere. This facility provides short-term rehabilitation and has a 25-bed unit for residents with Alzheimer's disease. According to IHC, the hospital is phasing out the Windemere facility and planning to partner with a corporate entity Navigator Elder Homes to provide 20 rest-home beds to independent seniors in the community.

Health Imperatives Martha's Vineyard

This is a satellite office of a mainland agency providing reproductive health services as well as STD counseling and testing. Health Imperatives also houses the Island's WIC program, and the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod, which provides harm reduction services.

Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands

Elder Services is a private non-profit corporation, the federally designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA), and the state-designated Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) for the Island. Services offered by this agency include:

- Protective Services (Elder at Risk Services)
- Long-Term Care Screening, Senior Nutrition Program (Dining Centers)
- Meals on Wheels
- Long-term Care Ombudsman
- Senior Employment and Training Program
- AmeriCorps Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Home Care Program
- Options Counseling
- Family Caregiver Support Program
- Money Management Program and Information and Referral Services

Vineyard Health Care Access Program (VHCAP)

The VHCAP formed in 1999 as a program of Dukes County and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. The agency helps uninsured Island residents secure and access public and private health insurance. VHCAP also serves as a resource to help people obtain needed health services. According to IHC, VHCAP helps over 3,000 (15%) of Island residents – seniors, frail elders, low-income families, pregnant women, and working adults who are not covered by employer insurance. It also assists employers with part-time employees and/or contract employees who are not eligible for employer insurance, people with disabilities or who need assistance applying for disability benefits, and people in financial distress.

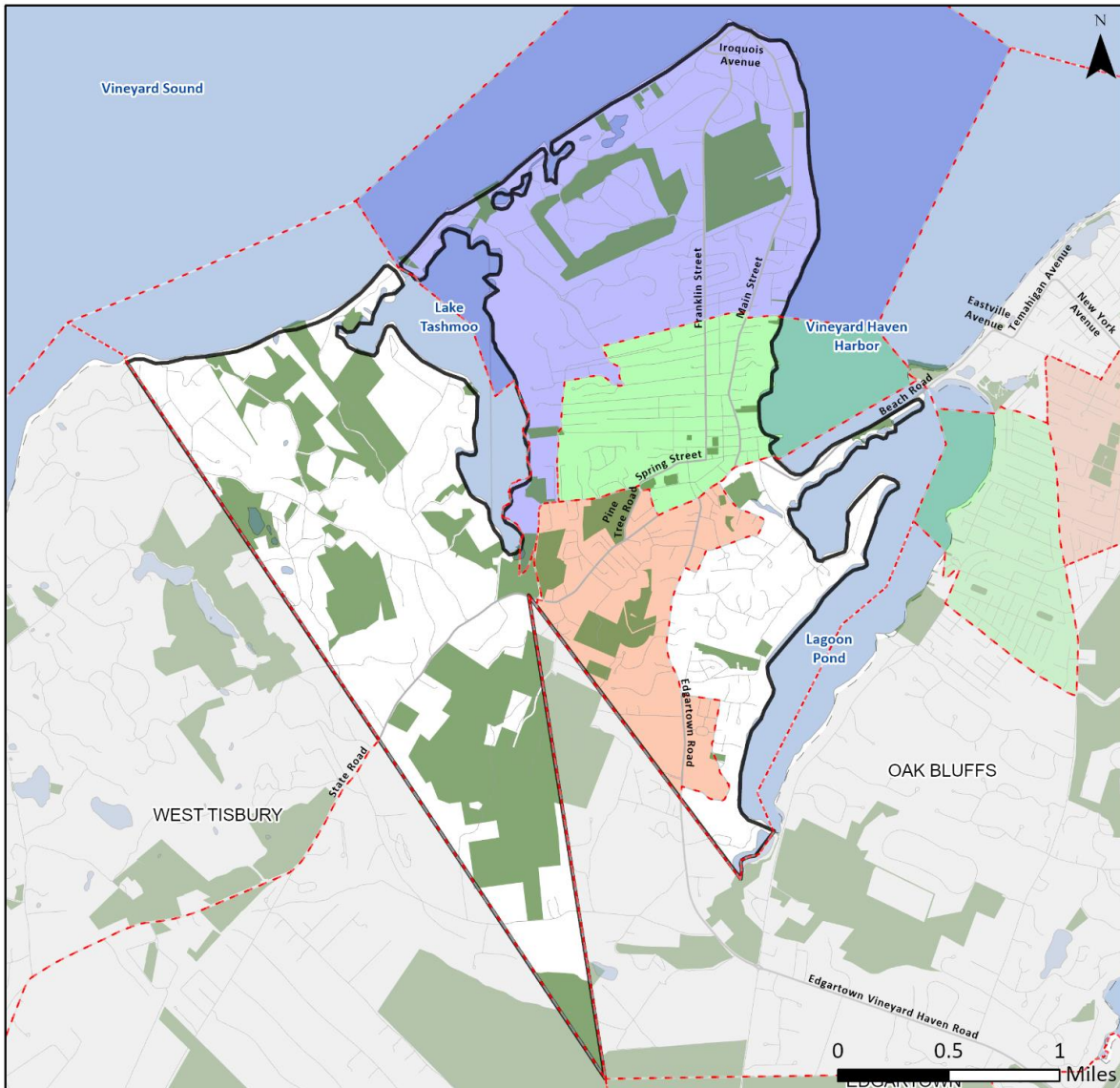
VHCAP operates several additional health care access initiatives, including Prescription Medication Assistance Program (uninsured or underinsured who need medicine or dental care but cannot afford) and the Senior Assistance Plan, specializing in prescription assistance for low income Island residents

including seniors and people with disabilities. IHC employs an outreach and enrollment specialist who works closely with VHCAP.

LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

There are many nonprofits that run food pantries on Martha's Vineyard that are accessible to Tisbury residents. They include, but are not limited to, the following. Several churches, such as the First Baptist Church in Vineyard Haven, Shepherd Parish in Oak Bluffs, and Catholic Church, have food pantries or food distribution programs. Island Food Pantry, part of the Island Grown Initiatives, is located at the Portuguese American Club in Oak Bluffs. It is open to the public three days a week, with a fourth morning available to seniors only, and makes deliveries to homebound people.

Map 11.1 Environmental Justice Communities in Tisbury



Environmental Justice Communities

- Town of Tisbury
- Surrounding Towns
- Water
- Open Space
- MassDOT Major Roads
- Non-numbered Road
- Local Roads

- 2020 Census Block Groups
- Environmental Justice Communities ***
- Qualifying Criteria*
- Income
- Minority
- Minority & Income

** Per the Massachusetts Environmental Justice Policy, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs identifies neighborhoods at the U.S. Census Bureau census block group level based on income, minority population, and English language isolation criteria.*

Date: February 2023 Source: Town of Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard Commission, MassGIS, and MassDOT





12. Governance

Introduction

Governance refers to a city or town's form and structure of government and the distribution of powers and duties within it. Although governance is intertwined with the operation of municipal facilities, a governance analysis is more concerned with a community's capacity – human, financial, and political – along with public access to opportunities to serve and participate, how the community resolves conflicts and makes law, and the locus of authority for major decisions. Thus, while Chapter 9 of this plan focuses on Tisbury's public buildings and infrastructure, this chapter focuses on the organization and functions of town government and the capacity and cost to provide town services.

Existing Conditions and Trends

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tisbury incorporated as a town 352 years ago. Its first charter dates to 1671, and it was reviewed a few times in the 1980s.¹⁴⁷ Like most small towns and rural communities in Massachusetts, Tisbury has a Select Board-Open Town Meeting form of government organized under the general laws of the

¹⁴⁷ Camp, Dresser, McKee, *Town of Tisbury Organizational Assessment*, (2012).

Commonwealth. Tisbury does not have the kind of home rule or special act charter often found in communities today, so it has the basic statutory framework followed by many small towns.¹⁴⁸ In addition to operating under various state laws, Tisbury has locally adopted bylaws that cover matters such as fees and fines, town cemeteries, wetlands protection, and zoning.

On one level, Tisbury's town government is a large organization for a town with roughly 2,200 year-round households.¹⁴⁹ It seems so large that sometimes people have trouble identifying all the Town's boards and committees or agreeing on which board, committee, or Town employee is responsible for a given task or set of responsibilities. In 2022, based on available records and input from Town staff, the Town has 10 elected boards and commissions with a combined total of 44 members, two elected individuals, 159 town and school employees, and at least 20 relatively active committees with a combined total of 114 members. In addition, Tisbury has elected or appointed seats on several boards, committees, and organizations. With so many positions to fill, it comes as no surprise to find Tisbury residents sitting on more than one board or committee or Town staff wearing multiple hats. For example, individual Planning Board members participate in eleven other committees.

This type of decentralized government appeals to communities because it seems to encourage public involvement and puts residents in the driver's seat when it comes to making policy and spending decisions. However, it also has disadvantages. Given the enormity of the challenges Tisbury faces over the next decade, the Town will need to decide if its present government size and structure are up to the job at hand.

Select Board

The Select Board leads the executive branch of Tisbury's town government. As the town's chief elected officials, the Select Board is responsible for formulating and promulgating policy directives and guidelines to be followed by all town agencies that fall under the Board's jurisdiction. While it does not control all the Town's general government operations, the Select Board has some unique statutory powers, e.g., the power to commit the Town to contracts or purchase and sell municipal real property. The Board serves as the town's licensing authority, issuing licenses for the sale of alcohol, food, and other consumer products. In addition, the Select Board appoints several prominent town positions and boards, including the Town Administrator and most town department heads, along with the Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Board of Registrars, Affordable Housing Committee, and many others. The extent of the Select Board's responsibilities means they are very busy. Participants in the master plan process noted that it can be difficult for the Select Board to address all the items on their meeting agendas because of the number of matters they are asked to approve.

¹⁴⁸ In 1966, Massachusetts granted home rule authority to cities and towns under Article 98 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution.

¹⁴⁹ As of the writing of this chapter, the U.S. Census Bureau has released very little information from Census 2020. The number of year-round households is a rounded estimate based on the 2020 actual count, 2,139. It is clear that the number of year-round households has increased faster than the total number of new housing units, and vacancy overall (including seasonal residences) has declined somewhat.

Town Administrator

Day-to-day programs and services in Tisbury operate under the direction of a full-time Town Administrator who reports to and serves at the pleasure of the Select Board. Unlike many towns, Tisbury has never adopted a home rule petition to assign powers to the Town Administrator. Instead, it appears that in Tisbury, the position is generally organized G.L. c. 41, §23A, a state enabling law enacted in the early 1970s so that towns could have a professional employee acting at the behest of the Select Board. Using the limited authority available under the enabling act, Tisbury established and funded its first Executive Secretary position ca. 1975 and renamed the job as Town Administrator approximately fifteen years ago. Regardless of the title, the position is effectively the same. Town Administrator positions vary widely in Massachusetts, from positions that are essentially ministerial to those with the powers but not the actual title of Town Manager.¹⁵⁰

The Town Administrator coordinates the work of municipal departments and is responsible for carrying out the goals, policies, and directives of the Select Board. The position has little inherent power (e.g., authority that would be established under a town charter or a special act), but the Select Board entrusts the Town Administrator to see that departments under their purview operate cooperatively and efficiently, to ensure that residents, businesses, and property owners receive municipal services, and to resolve complaints. Tisbury has delegated several extra responsibilities to the Town Administrator, from common ones such as personnel director or chief procurement officer to serving as a voting member on the Affordable Housing Committee and Affordable Housing Trust and representing Tisbury with the Cape Light Compact, Cape & Vineyard Electric Cooperative, and others.

Elected Officials

Tisbury's local government consists of fourteen elected boards and individual officials with a combined total of 48 people, as shown in Table 12.1. Some offices have regulatory powers, such as the Board of Health and Planning Board, while others serve in a policy-making role, such as the Board of Library Trustees.

Table 12.1. Elected Local Officials in Tisbury			
Office	Members	Office	Members
Select Board	3	Finance & Advisory Committee	11
Board of Assessors	3	School Committee	3
Board of Health	3	Town Clerk	1
Planning Board	5	Town Moderator	1
Water Commissioners	3	Board of Library Trustees	9
Constables	3	Fish Committee	3
		Total	48

Source: Annual Town Report, 2021.

¹⁵⁰ Tisbury's General Bylaws makes only four references to the Town Administrator – three in connection with amnesty for affordable accessory dwelling units, and fourth in reference to enforcing a prohibition against marijuana use on public property.

Until a few years ago, the Town also had an elected Board of Public Works under a 1989 special act of the legislature (prompted by a home rule petition from Town Meeting). In 2015, however, as with most towns in Massachusetts, Tisbury changed the Department of Public Works to a department operating under the Select Board.¹⁵¹ The centralization of public works functions under the Select Board is in keeping with trends statewide toward clarifying roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

Appointed Officials

The Select Board has authority to appoint most Town employees, but some of the boards listed in Table 12.1 have authority over hiring the employees working in their facility or division. For example, the Library Trustees appoint the Library Director and staff, the Water Commissioners appoint the Water Superintendent, and the Board of Health appoints the Health Agent. In almost all cases, however, volunteer committees in Tisbury are appointed by the Select Board. Table 12.2 lists the Town's local committees and the number of appointees per committee, where known. Most function as standing (permanent) committees.

Appointed Office	Number Appointed	Appointed Office	Number Appointed
Affordable Housing Committee	7	Open Space & Recreation Committee	5
Affordable Housing Trust	7	Personnel Board	3
Beautification Committee	5	Sewer Advisory Board	8
Board of Appeals	7	Shellfish Constables	2
Board of Registrars	4	Short-Term Rental Task Force	5
Community Preservation Committee	9	Spring Building Management Committee	3
Conservation Commission	7	Town Picnic Committee	7
Council on Aging	5	Water Resources Committee	5
Embarkation Advisory Committee	5	Waterways Committee	7
Energy Committee	5	Williams St. Historic District Commission	8
Natural Resources Committee	Unknown	Total Appointees	114

The Town also has some committees appointed by other boards. For example, the Planning Board selects the Site Plan Review Committee and chooses members to serve on the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Public Schools

Tisbury is a member of the all-island Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, a regional district covering all six towns on Martha's Vineyard. Each town has an elementary school, and all children entering grade 9 transfer to the regional high school in Oak Bluffs. The regional school committee that oversees the island's school district includes members chosen by the participating communities, and the committee chooses the regional superintendent. Tisbury voters elect three members to serve as the local school

¹⁵¹ Acts of 2015, Chapter 93.

committee for the Tisbury School, and those three members may then serve on the regional school committee. Public schools are the largest department and most costly operation of any service provided by cities and towns, and Tisbury is no exception. Every school has a building principal and vice-principal, guidance staff, a school nurse, librarian, specialists, regular and special education teachers, and English language support personnel. There are also parent councils for each school, and an island-wide parents council for special education services.

Form of Town Meeting

Tisbury has an Open Town Meeting, which means all of Tisbury's registered voters are entitled to attend and vote on any matter on the Town Meeting Warrant. Under state law, towns with fewer than 6,000 residents must have an Open Town Meeting unless they seek and are able to obtain special permission from the legislature to establish a different legislative body. Towns are required to hold an Annual Town Meeting to set the operating budget for the coming fiscal year, which begins on July 1. Tisbury's Annual Town Meeting normally occurs in April, with town elections following two weeks later. Local officials decided to move the Annual Town Meeting to June for two years because of COVID-19.

Town Meeting's most important functions include appropriating funds to operate town government and approving bylaws that are within a town's purview. As a "home rule" state, Massachusetts allows cities and towns to regulate a wide range of activities that have not been preempted by state law or barred under the state constitution. Town Meeting cannot act on any matter without a quorum, which in Tisbury is at least 100 registered voters.¹⁵²

Town Bylaws

Like other towns, Tisbury has two types of bylaws: the Zoning Bylaw (discussed in more detail in Chapter 5), and general bylaws. The Town has published a collection of general (non-zoning) bylaws, though it is not clear that the publicly available version is up to date (2013). They are not uniformly codified and not listed alphabetically, which makes the general bylaws difficult to navigate. Under state law, most bylaws adopted by Town Meeting require review and approval by the Commonwealth's Attorney General. According to records available from the Attorney General's Municipal Law unit, it appears that there has been very little activity to amend Tisbury's bylaws over the past ten years, other than marijuana regulations.¹⁵³

Despite the near absence of any references to the Town Administrator, the general bylaws formalized the creation of the Finance Department in 1999, when Town Meeting merged the functions of town accountant, town collector, town treasurer, and assessors under a single director appointed by the Select Board.¹⁵⁴ Some town boards and committees have explicit recognition in the bylaws, e.g., the Finance and Advisory Committee and Community Preservation Committee. In addition, the bylaws provide for local wetlands protection to supplement the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, G.L.

¹⁵² Tisbury General Bylaws, Sec. 30 (1940).

¹⁵³ The Municipal Law Unit maintains a searchable database of bylaw amendments for all Massachusetts towns from 2010 to the present: <https://massago.hylandcloud.com/203publicaccess/mlu.htm>.

¹⁵⁴ Annual Town Meeting, 1999, Article II.

c. 131, S. 40. Still, Tisbury's bylaws have quaint features sometimes found in other towns where no comprehensive update has occurred in a very long time (if ever). For example, Tisbury still has bylaws on the books to regulate "driving horses," sledding, school attendance and truancy, moped sales, "peddlars [sic] and hawkers," and loose farm animals.

Town Cabinet

Over 20 years ago, Tisbury officials saw the need to improve interdepartmental communication and formed the Town Cabinet. It includes the chairs of several elected boards – the Select Board, Board of Health, Department of Public Works, Finance and Advisory Committee, Planning Board, School Committee, Board of Assessors, Water Commissioners, and the Library Trustees – along with the Town Clerk. The Cabinet meets quarterly. The Town Administrator and Finance Director also participate but in an ex officio, non-voting capacity.

ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

Many of Tisbury's elected and appointed board members have served in their positions for several years. The most active boards include the elected Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Planning Board, and Advisory and Finance Committee. In addition to serving in local government through elected or appointed office, Tisbury residents participate in local civic and service organizations and clubs that offer volunteer opportunities. An obvious example is the Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce, but Tisbury also has the Martha's Vineyard Museum and Martha's Vineyard Playhouse. In the adjacent town of Oak Bluffs, there is the Island Food Bank and the Martha's Vineyard Hospital. For a resident or visitor hoping to find basic information about non-governmental community services, the Town of Tisbury website is not a useful resource because it is old and hard to navigate. Many communities do provide a basic directory of community services as an aid for residents, but it takes IT capacity and a website manager to provide this kind of assistance and keep the information up to date. Tisbury does not have the staff resources to support timely web-based communications.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Despite the fragmented, decentralized system of government in Tisbury, the Town has made progress on several fronts, and Town staff take pride in what they have been able to accomplish. Moving forward with funding for the long-stalled Tisbury School project is an important step forward in Tisbury, but there have been other important milestones, too. Town employees seem universally committed to public service and the jobs they have been asked to perform even without the resources they need.

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Dukes County

Although many types of regional services exist in Massachusetts, there is little in the way of regional government. Until recently, Massachusetts had fourteen county governments, each with administrative responsibility for county courts, jails, and a registry of deeds, and maintenance of county roads. In the late 1990s, the Commonwealth abolished the governments of four Massachusetts counties. Two counties have since secured special charters to become regional councils of government. They provide a variety of services to participating cities and towns (who pay an annual assessment), including planning, public safety, engineering, water, and waste disposal. The remaining six county governments

are organized under county charters and the provisions of state law. Dukes County is one of the six remaining county governments.

Dukes County government is overseen by the elected County Commission, comprised of seven members (no more than two residing in the same town). The Commission appoints the County Manager who, much like a town manager in communities that have one, serves as the County’s Chief Executive Official (G.L. c. 34, Sec. 18). The county-wide Department of Health and Human Services, the Martha’s Vineyard Airport and Business Park, Emergency Management, Veterans Services, and several others fall under the Commission’s jurisdiction. In addition to electing members of the County Commission, Dukes County voters elect the County Treasurer, Sheriff, and Register of Deeds.¹⁵⁵

Island-Wide Representation

The six towns on Martha’s Vineyard participate in several regional entities, most of which have some type of board or commission oversight. In addition to the elected representatives to the Martha’s Vineyard Commission and Land Bank Commission, Tisbury has appointed members on the boards of the agencies and organizations listed in Table 12.3.

Appointed Office	Number Appointed	Appointed Office	Number Appointed
Land Bank Advisory Board	7	Steamship Authority Port Council	1
Martha’s Vineyard Cultural Council	2	Steamship Long-Range Task Force	1
Martha’s Vineyard Regional Transit	1	Steamship Working Group	1
MVTA Disability Representative	1	Cape Light Compact	1
Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC) Finance Advisory Board	1	Cape & Vineyard Electric Cooperative	1
RECC Public Safety Advisory Board	3	Total Appointed Representatives	20

Sources: Tisbury Annual Town Report, 2021, and Dukes County Government, <https://www.dukescounty.org>.
 * The Town appoints one member (can be a Select Board member or resident); no less than one and no more than two members can be voted in, representing Tisbury.

The Town of Tisbury also provides funding (together with other Dukes County communities) for agencies and organizations providing county-wide services, such as the Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living, Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, and Dukes County Cultural Council. Finally, the Town is a member of the Dukes County Retirement System, which is overseen by a five-member board.

Past Plans and Studies

In 2012, the Town commissioned a town government organizational assessment. The study was intended to identify where Tisbury performed well and where it needed to make some organizational or structural changes to improve. The CDM Smith consultants who led the study found that at the staff

¹⁵⁵ Dukes County Administrative Code, (Amended October 2017), <https://www.dukescounty.org/county-commissioners/pages/administrative-code>

level, Town employees value public service, teamwork, and transparency, and they shared a sense of responsibility to control costs. At the same time, they said Tisbury's fragmented decision-making, lack of a long-term vision, problems maintaining adequate full-time staff, and lack of institutional redundancy – i.e., lack of shared or overlapping responsibilities, lack of standard operating procedures, and no formal process for transferring job responsibilities when a staff member leaves – all created significant vulnerabilities for the Town. Several recommendations came out of the study, including:

- Establish the positions of Human Resources Director and IT Coordinator;
- Establish a uniform information management system so that Town staff can share information and transfer data across departments;
- Adopt documented policies and procedures, job descriptions;
- Conduct a gap analysis of current services; and
- Collaborate with other towns on Martha's Vineyard to create a regional full-time Fire Department or establish a full-time Fire Department within Tisbury.

CDM's organizational assessment team also found that Tisbury's decentralized government, with many boards and committees and many decisions requiring Town Meeting approval, may seem democratic and inclusive, but suffers from the lack of a clear chain of command and the inability to make timely decisions. Another challenge noted in the report was that Tisbury's reliance on several independent boards made it difficult for local government to operate cohesively. The fragmentation of oversight and services identified by the consultants led to recommendations in the report to reduce the number of Town committees, relocate all Town departments to a single administration building, and hold regular staff meetings.

Local Government Trends

State law requires small towns like Tisbury to have Open Town Meeting as the legislative body. The varieties found in town government today involve the locus of administrative and financial management authority. In 2022, 90 percent of the towns in Massachusetts have some sort of professional manager or administrator, and 60 percent use the title "Town Administrator," like Tisbury. However, at least 20 towns have moved to a Select Board/Town Manager arrangement in the last 15 years, largely responding to the increasing complexity of running local government. The composition of Select Boards has changed over time, too, with growth in the number of five-member boards.

Today, about the same number of towns has a three-member board or a five-member board. To some extent, the movement toward five-member boards has happened concurrently with elevating the responsibilities and authority of an executive secretary to town administrator or town administrator to a town manager, but not always. Table 12.4 presents a sample of Massachusetts towns with a year-round population like Tisbury's.

Table 12.4. Comparative Look at Local Government Organization in Selected Small Towns							
Municipality	County	Administration	Select Board	2020 Population	Average Tax Bill	DOR Per Capita	2020 EQV Per Capita
Aquinnah	Dukes	Town Adm.	3	439	\$9,966	\$29,446	\$1,846,667
Avon	Norfolk	Town Adm.	3	4,777	\$6,193	\$36,559	\$191,099
Boylston	Worcester	Town Adm.	3	4,849	\$7,243	\$63,181	\$184,505
Chilmark	Dukes	Town Adm.	3	1,212	\$6,135	\$69,931	\$3,017,331
Deerfield	Franklin	Town Adm.	3	5,090	\$5,165	\$46,378	\$158,928
Edgartown	Dukes	Town Adm.	3	5,168	\$5,555	\$68,652	\$1,959,729
Hampden	Hampden	Town Adm.	3	4,966	\$5,784	\$46,241	\$133,354
Hubbardston	Worcester	Town Adm.	5	4,328	\$4,414	\$38,753	\$121,772
Lenox	Berkshire	Town Mgr.	5	5,095	\$5,068	\$56,099	\$265,264
North Brookfield	Worcester	N/A	3	4,735	\$3,925	\$30,230	\$99,908
Oak Bluffs	Dukes	Town Adm.	5	5,341	\$6,279	\$26,047	\$679,763
Paxton	Worcester	Town Adm.	3	5,004	\$6,969	\$39,965	\$121,307
Sherborn	Middlesex	Town Adm.	5	4,401	\$16,760	\$214,974	\$313,675
Tisbury	Dukes	Town Adm.	3	4,815	\$9,150	\$21,660	\$669,656
Warren	Worcester	N/A	3	4,975	\$3,491	\$21,221	\$86,490
Wenham	Essex	Town Adm.	3	4,979	\$14,265	\$78,745	\$190,064
West Newbury	Essex	Town Mgr.	3	4,500	\$8,754	\$78,619	\$228,235
West Tisbury	Dukes	Town Adm.	3	1,343	\$7,172	\$67,702	\$844,520

Sources: Mass. Department of Revenue Municipal Data Bank, and Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA).

West Newbury (Essex County), which established a town manager position in 2017 under a special act of the legislature, retained a three-person Select Board. Lenox (Berkshire County) established its town manager position approximately 18 years ago and simultaneously increased the Select Board from three to five members. Attesting to the innovation towns will consider to make local government as efficient and affordable as possible, the Towns of Lenox and Lee executed an interlocal agreement in 2017 to share a single town manager. It was intended as an experiment and a period of discovery for both communities. The arrangement ended a year ago when Lee obtained a special act of the legislature to have a town administrator serving both as the town's chief administrative officer and chief financial officer – in effect, a town manager.



Part III. Key Issues and Master Plan Implementation Program

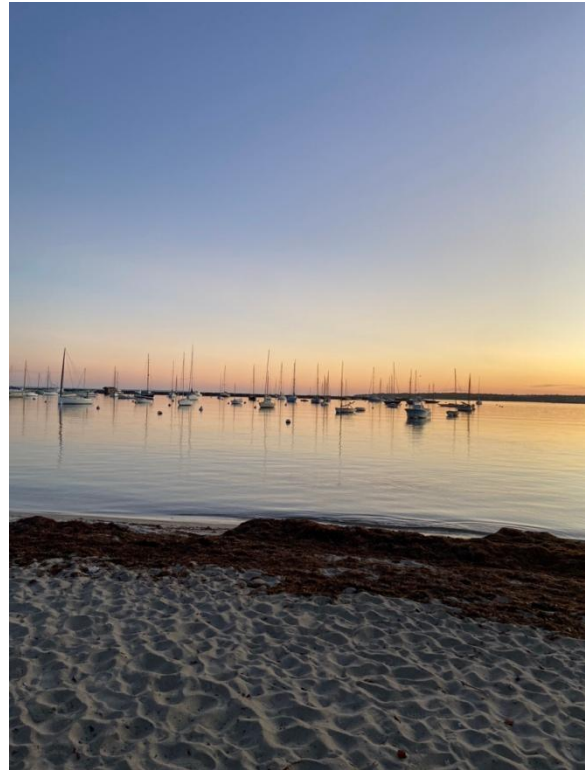
13. Key Issues

This section identifies a series of key challenges currently facing Tisbury. The issues and related opportunities are essential to understanding and framing Tisbury's first town-wide Master Plan and preparing to develop its vision, goals, and strategies for the next ten to twenty years.

Natural Resources

The diversity, beauty, and recreational use of Tisbury's natural resources are all recognized as strengths contributing to the overall quality of life in town. Many community members have noted the multiple benefits natural resources provide, including recreational and economic benefits. Residents have named West Chop Woods, Lake Tashmoo, and the Town's public beaches as some of its most valued resources. Much of Tisbury's open space is protected in perpetuity, especially in western Tisbury, and offers significant benefits for recreation, wildlife habitat, and aquifer protection.

Despite these strengths, several challenges hinder the Town's ability to enhance and maintain high-quality natural resources. Tisbury's wastewater infrastructure serves a limited area around Vineyard Haven. It has a confined capacity to accommodate additional flows from existing connections, economic growth areas, and housing development, among other potential users. Development outside the service area relies on on-site septic systems, which are the primary driver of water quality impairments for nitrogen in Lagoon Pond and Lake Tashmoo. The Massachusetts Estuaries Project (MEP), a partnership between MassDEP, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, and southern Massachusetts communities, estimated that 76 percent and 80 percent of the total controllable nitrogen sources are attributable to septic systems in Lagoon Pond and Lake Tashmoo, respectively.¹⁵⁶ Eastern Tisbury neighborhoods, especially along State Road and in Vineyard Haven, have high concentrations of impervious surfaces that contribute to stormwater runoff within the watersheds. Stormwater runoff is an additional nitrogen source in both water bodies and contributes to the pathogen Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for Vineyard Haven Harbor. These water quality impairments degrade habitat quality, affect the economic viability of local shellfisheries, and impact recreational use.



¹⁵⁶ *Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan: Phase 1 Needs Assessment*, (2021) 1, 41.

The attractiveness of Tisbury’s natural resources draws high levels of recreational use, which can contribute to environmental degradation. Traditional block and chain moorings (such as those allowed in Tisbury’s waterways) and anchors for boats can disturb and destroy eelgrass beds when the chain or anchor drags across lake and ocean bottoms.^{157, 158} Concerns about eelgrass along with noise levels drove the Tisbury Select Board to vote to introduce a temporary moratorium on anchoring in Lake Tashmoo in March 2023.^{159, 160} The temporary moratorium will be in place until the Town has a policy to reduce the number of boats in the water body. The Town also needs to address wastewater pump-out service needs for vessels in Lake Tashmoo. The Town’s existing pump-out boat for Lake Tashmoo was deemed past its service life in early 2023 and there are concerns that wastewater from recreators and boaters could introduce additional nitrogen loads into the water body.¹⁶¹

Additional community stakeholder concerns include the vulnerability of natural resources to climate change, particularly sea level rise. The lack of an extensive tree canopy cover in eastern Tisbury and Vineyard Haven, combined with unshaded impervious groundcover, is also a concern as average temperatures trend higher and Tisbury experiences more high-heat days.

Opportunities from recent planning initiatives locally and regionally can help guide and improve the management of natural resources. The Town’s Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) recently updated in 2019 with final edits in 2021, provides a comprehensive evaluation of ongoing and emerging challenges, such as climate change, and a set of goals, objectives, and actions for open space and recreation resource protection and management. Multiple projects are currently underway to determine the future of Tisbury’s sewer system, including the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) and the State Road Sewer Expansion project. Tisbury’s completion of Phase I of a CWMP in 2022 builds off previous work assessing the link between development patterns, wastewater management, and environmental quality. It will serve as a guide to making environmentally and financially sound decisions about wastewater management infrastructure, including in the context of any future development. DPW’s Impervious Cover Disconnection (ICD) Project will also help address water quality and flooding issues by prioritizing projects.

Tisbury also works collaboratively with partners across the island on natural resource planning and protection, including the Martha’s Vineyard Commission (MVC), other island municipalities, and nonprofits like the Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank. A recent effort led by MVC in partnership with all six island communities, the Wampanoag Tribe, and community stakeholders produced the *Climate Action Plan* for Martha’s Vineyard in 2022, which establishes goals, objectives, and actions related to land use management, natural resource protection, and biodiversity that encourages the island towns to work together to address resources and issues that cross town boundaries. The Climate Action Fair in May

¹⁵⁷ Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, “DMF’s Eelgrass Restoration and Monitoring,” accessed March 23, 2023, <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/dmfs-eelgrass-restoration-and-monitoring>.

¹⁵⁸ Town of Tisbury, *Waterways Regulations*, (May 2017), 16-18.

¹⁵⁹ Louisa Hufstader, “Anchoring Moratorium Begins in Lake Tashmoo,” *The Vineyard Gazette*, March 22, 2023, <https://vineyardgazette.com/news/2023/03/22/anchoring-moratorium-begins-lake-tashmoo>.

¹⁶⁰ Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, *Lake Tashmoo, Tisbury, MA Eelgrass Survey*, (April 2022), 7-8.

¹⁶¹ Louisa Hufstader, “Tisbury Eyes Anchoring Moratorium in Lake Tashmoo,” *The Vineyard Gazette*, February 10, 2023, <https://vineyardgazette.com/news/2023/02/10/tisbury-eyes-anchoring-moratorium-lake-tashmoo>.

2023, hosted by the MVC Climate Education Committee and other local sponsors, focused on how the island communities, individuals, and other stakeholders can support and advance the Climate Action Plan's goals.¹⁶² Collaborations will help Tisbury meet limited staffing and funding capacity at the municipal level to address long-term challenges to improve water quality, wildlife habitat, and resilience of natural resources against climate change.

Sustainability, Resiliency, and Environmental Impact

Pursuing sustainability and resiliency will require the Town to strengthen its natural resources, including by minimizing negative impacts of land uses and policies, and mitigate current and future climate impacts to both the natural and built environment. As an island community, Tisbury is uniquely affected by the challenges of a changing climate, including sea level rise, increased frequency and intensity of severe storms, and extreme fluctuations in precipitation and temperatures. It must increase its resilience to the impacts it is already experiencing today and those it will experience in the future, which may be more costly and dangerous. As part of Tisbury's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Workshop held in 2018, community stakeholders identified hurricanes and Nor'easters, coastal flooding and storm surge, sea level rise, and intense rain and flooding as the climate change hazards most relevant to the Town.¹⁶³ These hazards have high potential for damage to property and infrastructure, particularly in coastal areas. Sea level rise also threatens to reshape the Town's landscape with as little as 1-3 feet of sea level rise inundating low-lying critical facilities and infrastructure, residences, and areas of downtown Vineyard Haven (Map 4.1 and Map 4.2). With Tisbury projected to experience a 0.6-foot increase in sea level by 2030, 1.5-foot increase by 2050, and 3.3-foot increase by 2070 relative to 1990 sea level, future planning for and adaptation to sea level rise and its impacts on other coastal hazards are a priority.¹⁶⁴

Flooding, water quality issues, and resource consumption exemplify the interconnectivity between Tisbury's natural and built environment. Wastewater infrastructure (grinder pump stations and lift stations) located within the floodplain is vulnerable to increased coastal flooding and can become inoperable when flooded, and on-site septic systems and leaching fields may also have compromised function during localized flooding events. Drinking water comes from wells accessing the underground aquifer, meaning preserving clean water quality is vital for both natural environment conservation and maintaining a high quality of life. A Groundwater Protection Overlay District, added in 1999, protects Tisbury's three well fields and corresponds with the Zone II Wellhead Protection Areas established by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for drinking water supply protection. However, there are several high-threat land uses within the Groundwater Protection Overlay District that could lead to contamination issues, including several users of pesticide, hazardous materials

¹⁶² The Vineyard Way, "Climate Action Fair 2023," accessed March 23, 2023, <https://www.thevineyardway.org/category/climate-action-fair-2023>.

¹⁶³ Town of Tisbury. 2018. Tisbury Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Workshop Summary of Findings. Prepared by the Horsley Witten Group, Inc., Sandwich, MA.

¹⁶⁴ Martha's Vineyard Commission, Dukes County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (October 2021, amended May 2022), 38.

storage, residential underground storage tanks, the Tisbury Town Landfill, and Carroll's Trucking on Edgartown Road.

Residential water use per capita exceeds the recommended usage by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Town does not have a composting program to redirect organic waste from the solid waste stream. The transfer station diverts waste from the trash stream by accepting items, including furniture and hazardous waste. There is an opportunity to expand diversion by providing composting programs and strengthening existing programs. According to the recent *Climate Action Plan*, shipping food waste off the island between 2020-2040 is projected to cost more than \$19 million. The success of diversion programs has the potential to reduce the financial burden incurred by the town, as shipping waste off the island is expensive.

Building Local Capacity

The Town has participated in projects and facilitated studies to understand the critical infrastructure, facilities, and places vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, summarized in Table 1.

Table 13.1. Impacts of Climate Change	
Climate Change	Most Vulnerable Areas and Physical Resources/Infrastructure
Rising temperatures	Areas with high impervious surface cover (e.g., Vineyard Haven Harbor, State Road area) Agricultural resources (e.g., farms)
Rising Sea Surface Temperatures and Ocean Acidification	Surface water bodies (e.g., Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond, Vineyard Haven Harbor) Shellfisheries
Sea Level Rise	Coastal areas (e.g., downtown Vineyard Haven, Vineyard Sound coastline)
Changes in Precipitation Patterns	Flood-prone coastal areas and low-lying areas (e.g., downtown Vineyard Harbor, Five Corners) Surface water bodies (e.g., Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond, Vineyard Haven Harbor)
Extreme Weather Events	Flood-prone coastal areas and low-lying areas (e.g., downtown Vineyard Haven Harbor, Lagoon Pond Road, Beach Road) Coastal infrastructure and facilities (e.g., Tisbury Steamship Authority Ferry Terminal, Packer Fuel Docks, Eastville Breakwater, Lagoon Pond Drawbridge) Electrical utility infrastructure
Source: Compilation of findings from Tisbury Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Workshop (October 17, 2018) and Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan (June 24, 2022).	

Addressing these challenges requires increased local capacity, including staff and technical expertise, to secure funding and move projects through design and construction. Tisbury does not have a full-time conservation agent to help guide protection of Tisbury's sensitive natural areas and assure all state

and local statutes are being sufficiently met.¹⁶⁵ The Town's Open Space and Recreation Committee works without the aid of an administrative assistant or annual budget. However, Tisbury benefits from strong partners and partnerships across Martha's Vineyard that recognizes the unique climate, natural hazard, and energy challenges that an island setting creates, and plans for a sustainable future are already underway.

The Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan is a comprehensive document that establishes goals, objectives, and actions for interrelated thematic areas, including energy transformation; transportation, infrastructure, and waste; and public health and safety, and outlines ongoing opportunities for collaboration between island communities and their partners. Continuing to foster collaboration on climate goals will require the Town to stay actively engaged in the Climate Action Plan's implementation. Locally, Tisbury can rely on the recent town- and district-focused planning initiatives as the foundation for understanding its vulnerabilities and resilience priorities. An ongoing challenge, however, is coordinating various related efforts involving different local and state government agencies and private entities. Several recent and ongoing projects in Tisbury focus on issues related to stormwater runoff, coastal resiliency, and wastewater management, but it can be challenging to share information and thus coordinate recommendations for action that are supportive and complementary to one another.

Zoning and Land Use

Regulatory Issues

Tisbury's zoning bylaw has several significant issues that hinder the Town's ability to regulate land use and development effectively. First, there is a lack of clarity and organization in the bylaw. For example, it lacks a clear table of use regulations, the subdistricts of the Waterfront Commercial District are not delineated on the zoning map, and the parcel-by-parcel regulations for Lagoon Harbor Park are inappropriate for the bylaw as a single zoning district should have uniform regulations.

Beyond poor usability, the Town's zoning regulations sometimes limit or unduly complicate badly needed types of development. Many proposals are subject to multiple layers of discretionary review: special permits from the Planning Board, advisory opinions from the Site Plan Review Board, and sometimes additional review by the Martha's Vineyard Commission. Some local stakeholders reported that the Town relies too much on special permits, which, when applied inappropriately, can create needless delays, risks, and uncertainty for developers. The dimensional requirements for multifamily are also excessive and prohibitive. For example, a four-unit project in the Residential 20 district would require an 80,000-square-foot lot, which is nearly impossible to find in Residential 20 and is much larger than necessary to support that many units in the first place.

Administrative Challenges

The Town lacks a full-time staff position dedicated to planning, zoning, or land use regulation. The building commissioner acts as a *de facto* staff contact for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of

¹⁶⁵ As of March 2023, Tisbury employs a part-time Conservation Agent for one day a week.

Appeals but has many other duties and cannot devote the proper time to reviewing the zoning bylaw, supporting and building the capacity of volunteer boards, and handling development applications. Dedicated, professional staff support will be essential to implementing many recommendations of the master plan, not just those associated with land use.

Regional Land Use Needs

Tisbury is a major port of entry and commercial center for Martha's Vineyard, and thus the needs of the entire island drive development pressure and shape the Town's land use needs. Many local stakeholders expressed concerns that Tisbury is developing and maintaining roads, housing, and commercial areas to benefit the whole Vineyard without support from the other towns. Tisbury should pursue increased coordination and cooperation regarding land use decisions and development impacts with the other five municipalities, taking advantage of the MVC's assistance and resources.

Open Space

Issues of primary concern and strategies to manage and care for parks and open space are well documented in the Vision Planning Summary for Parks, Beaches, and Open Space.¹⁶⁶ This summary also includes the importance and perceived need for village parks and street improvements in the Vineyard Haven waterfront and business district.

There has been success with collaboration and diversity of entities that contribute to protecting open space. Opportunity exists for the town to continue collaborating with nonprofit conservation groups and increase its role in the effective stewardship of properties. A challenge is to improve accountability for routine maintenance, such as removing sand from bike paths and trash, as responsibilities are unclear.

Several challenges have been identified in the realm of open space planning and preservation. It is unclear who is responsible for accomplishing the work specified in the *Open Space and Recreation Plan*. More staff-level support specifically for the Open Space and Recreation Committee would help. Another challenge is identifying land that could lose protected status and ensuring that significant properties are not lost to development. Acquiring the funds to manage and maintain the parks is a challenge. Making sound decisions and investments is difficult without empowering a planning department



¹⁶⁶ Vision Planning Summary – Parks, Beaches, and Open Space, 2014.

or parks committee to take responsibility for comprehensive, long-term planning.¹⁶⁷ Figuring out a way to coordinate planning, maintenance, and stewardship of all town open space and recreation resources is a challenge and an opportunity for the town going forward.

To protect open space lands that face “repurposing” or development, the Town can establish a review process with evaluation criteria that would enable a rigorous and fair review to document the anticipated benefits to conservation and community recreation.¹⁶⁸

Opportunities are plentiful to improve education about natural and cultural resources in existing open spaces. To increase public awareness about available open space resources, the Town may clarify where public access is allowed and improve mapping and signs at town parks and open space properties. The Town could build on the well-attended First Fridays to host more community events in parks and open space areas.

In addition to connecting open space by developing trails between natural areas and improving pedestrian and bike routes in developed areas of the town, Tisbury also has opportunities to join some of the open space areas on Lagoon Pond and Lake Tashmoo by water routes. Creating a more robust recreation program could increase physical activity among town residents, contributing to improved health and providing opportunities for social engagement.

Waterfront Access

Increasing and improving waterfront access to beaches for swimming is a challenge. The growing interest in kayaking and paddle boarding also creates a greater need for small boat storage and launching areas. For many years community members have expressed a desire for public access and a boardwalk along the waterfront. In addition, improved pedestrian walks from Main Street to an accessible waterfront would benefit residents and tourists by connecting cultural resources, recreation, and commercial activities to help strengthen the Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District.¹⁶⁹

Increasing public access to the waterfront will require creative approaches and collaboration between the town, nonprofit groups, and private landowners. There may be an opportunity to increase public access as a condition of waterfront development and through Chapter 91 licensing. Through Chapter 91, the Commonwealth seeks to preserve and protect the rights of the public, and to guarantee that private uses of tidelands and waterways serve a proper public purpose. There may also be an opportunity to acquire additional waterfront open space when development retreats from the shoreline due to climate change, increased storms, and rising sea levels.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Tisbury Planning Board, *Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Plan*, March 2019, 70.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Tisbury Planning Board, *Tisbury Open Space and Recreation Plan*, March 2019, 68.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Housing

Protecting Existing Housing Stock

Tisbury has several key advantages for housing a substantial year-round population that the Town should recognize and preserve. The Town has a high proportion of rental units compared to the rest of Martha's Vineyard. Rental units are often smaller and less expensive on average than homeownership units. Areas like Vineyard Haven have existing residential density and access to utilities, amenities, and transit. Tisbury has also worked successfully with nonprofit partners like the Island Housing Trust to produce dozens of permanently affordable units.

However, significant challenges threaten Tisbury's role as a center for the Vineyard's year-round population. The growth in housing costs affects both year-round residents and many of the seasonal residents whose families have owned homes on the island for a long time. The proliferation of short-term rentals throughout the Cape and Islands region concerns both year-round and long-time seasonal residents. Over the next five years households in the 65-74 age bracket will comprise by far the largest relative growth of all age cohorts within a 20-minute drive of Tisbury, its primary market area for rental housing.

Regulatory Barriers

Tisbury's zoning bylaw should be updated to reflect the types of residential development that the Town will need going forward. Local regulations could do more to facilitate and encourage the production of needed year-round affordable housing. Many of the zoning issues described in Chapter 5, "Land Use," make it difficult to pursue the multifamily housing developments that are most likely to produce affordable units. Tisbury has a few regulations explicitly aimed at creating income-restricted units (see "Zoning Regulations" section above); these could be expanded and made easier to utilize.

Housing Affordability

Despite the Town's support for developments proposed by the Island Housing Trust, Tisbury remains well below the 10 percent minimum for low- or moderate-income housing under Chapter 40B, the Commonwealth's affordable housing law. In 2023, just 5.76 percent of Tisbury's year-round housing is affordable and eligible for the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), leaving an existing shortfall of about 100 units.¹⁷¹ However, the Chapter 40B shortfall does not begin to capture the number of existing households paying more for housing than they can actually afford. According to data published by the federal Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), 515 low- or moderate-income households in Tisbury are housing cost burdened, i.e., residents paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income for a mortgage payment or rent and utilities. Of these 515 households, some 64 percent (330) are *severely* cost-burdened, which means more than half of their monthly income goes toward housing.¹⁷² Tisbury needs effective strategies to

¹⁷¹ Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (HLC), Subsidized Housing Inventory, June 29, 2023.

¹⁷² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data.

increase its housing supply and in doing so, leverage greater affordability – and deeper affordability - from new development.

Regional Cooperation

The towns of Martha’s Vineyard have recently demonstrated a newfound desire to cooperate on island-wide housing issues through initiatives like the Martha’s Vineyard Housing Bank and an upcoming study on short-term rentals. The Island Housing Trust successfully combined CPA funds from multiple towns in exchange for building local preference into the design of the housing marketing plan. Tisbury houses about 23 percent of the island’s year-round population and should continue cooperating with the five other Vineyard towns and the MVC to pool resources and funds to address housing issues affecting the entire island.

Economic Development

From an economic development perspective, Tisbury has several strengths and opportunities. The year-round ferry access is a competitive benefit for Tisbury. The regular service of this crucial transportation link means that Tisbury maintains a year-round economic activity and vitality that other towns on the Vineyard lack. Employment and economic activity are steadier throughout the year, which attracts a more significant labor force and a business community that caters to the daily needs of local residents and visitors. The strength of the local, year-round economy and the ferry terminal allows Tisbury to continue leveraging its role as the Vineyard’s hub and commercial center - to islanders and visitors, no matter the season.

Tisbury also faces its fair share of weaknesses and challenges. While less seasonal than neighboring towns, the economy is still seasonal compared to other regions of the state. To a degree, Tisbury’s vitality is far more beholden to fluctuations in tourism than one would find in a more diverse economy. The high cost of living on the island also makes it hard to attract and retain new community members. While there may be jobs, the high cost of housing means groups like service workers, young people, and new families simply cannot find housing they can afford. Living in Tisbury is increasingly unattainable for the next generation, and this has already had an impact on the local economy. Many people have observed that the ferry pier and Main Street require aesthetic and circulation improvements to encourage a sense of welcome, ease mobility, bring in visitor dollars, and create a better environment to build businesses. On top of these, Tisbury faces the generational challenge of climate change and sea level rise. These forces will increasingly affect the Main Street business district and the town’s critical economic lifeline, the waterfront. Finally, many in the community perceive the



local government as a hindrance or obstacle. The Town government will need to be more proactive as a force of positive change in the face of these challenges.

High Island Cost of Living and Staffing Constraints

While Tisbury departments have many dedicated staff members, the Town has struggled to hire and retain staff in recent years. The unaffordable cost of living is the most significant barrier to adequate staffing, as expressed by the library, Tisbury School,

wastewater, emergency services, and the fire department. Some Tisbury School staff commute daily from Falmouth due to a lack of affordability on the island. The library struggles to find qualified librarians and support staff on the island; for example, cybersecurity concerns at the library require an experienced IT professional. The wastewater and emergency services departments noted that general worker shortages in licensed professionals and paramedics contribute to the existing hiring challenges. Town staff members have considered opportunities for alleviating the housing burden by creating affordable housing on town-owned land.

Growing and Changing Service Needs

Tisbury town services evolve as the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors change. In recent years, town services have responded to a population with higher needs cohorts such as an increasing senior population, year-round population, and limited English-speaking population, increased storm events, changing requirements for short-term rentals, and regional housing shortages. The emergency services department has experienced increased off-season calls, calls involving older adults, and trauma-related calls. These calls increase the physical and emotional burden on staff members needing to carry older adults and process traumatic experiences. The department currently has one ambulance but foresees needing two ambulances in the future as calls continue to increase. More intense storm events have also required emergency services staff to work additional hours and longer shifts. More regional collaboration for emergency services should be considered to meet the growing needs.

The schools, police, and library need bilingual staff and resources. The police already provide bilingual information on their website, the schools connect limited-English families with health services, and the library has mentioned a desire to hire a staff member who speaks both English and Portuguese. The increase in fire inspections required by new short-term rental policies strains fire staff capacity. Regional housing shortages and a growing number of seniors increased the needs of the Senior Center, which was, as of 2022, working to hire an outreach specialist to connect seniors with external resources, including housing and transportation services. Future development in Tisbury requires expanding the sewer system and additional staffing at the wastewater plant.

Sewer System Constraints

Tisbury's wastewater system and sewer are underbuilt, especially vulnerable in the commercial areas in town. Currently, Tisbury's sewer system only serves 130 connections. In areas without sewers, new multifamily housing developments need to build septic systems, which inhibits development. Reliance on on-site wastewater systems results in nitrogen pollution, potentially contaminating the water supply. Expansion to the wastewater system and investment in nitrogen-reducing septic systems can potentially reduce the risk of nitrogen pollution; however, the sewer system can only experience a limited expansion without a costly expansion of the wastewater treatment plant. Multiple projects are currently underway to determine the future of Tisbury's sewer system, including the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan and the State Road Sewer Expansion project.

Transportation, Public Facilities and Services

Building, Vehicle, and Asset Condition

Tisbury's Water Works building, Senior Center, and Police Station are all in generally good condition with minimal issues. The Fire and Emergency Services building was built in 2012 and is in generally good condition but needs some improvements including air conditioner/dehumidifier; removal of mold on the roof, and repainting. For the most part, the town vehicle fleets are also in good condition with ongoing planned maintenance. The Library, Harbormaster building, Town Hall, and Town Hall Annex fail to meet the Town's needs. The Library does not have sufficient programming space and is currently undergoing a capital campaign to identify potential funding strategies for an addition. The Harbormaster building has insufficient storage and lacks necessary shower facilities. The Town Hall Annex is in a trailer needing replacement due to outdated HVAC and general deterioration, while the Town Hall does not have sufficient space for office staff. Separate Town Hall Annex and Town Hall locations make cross-departmental coordination a challenge. An ongoing renovation to the Tisbury School aims to address long-standing building concerns, but has had a financial impact on the town. The Town recently underwent a Water Distribution System Capital Improvement Plan, offering recommendations for storage and distribution facilities improvements after realizing the severity of water distribution storage deficits.

Downtown Vineyard Haven's Multimodal Demands

The Steamship Authority Ferry Terminal and surrounding roadways experience extreme congestion, parking challenges, and multimodal conflicts, particularly around ferry departure and arrival times in the summer months. The Vineyard Haven ferry terminal is the most heavily used on the island, meaning Tisbury must accommodate freight, vehicle, and transit traffic to other towns while also providing multimodal access to local



destinations. Town staff and residents identify the Five Corners intersection as a significant bottleneck location that impacts mobility, connectivity, and safety for all travel modes and users, including long vehicle queues on Beach Road towards Oak Bluffs. Other transportation issues in the downtown area include, the Town parking lot next to Stop and Shop, and the VTA bus terminal as areas with frequent multimodal conflicts and congestion. Insufficient loading docks, confusing roadway patterns, and narrow sidewalks contribute to these concerns. To address these issues will require the collaboration of public and private realm integrated partners including the Town, MVC, VTA, SSA, Post Office, Stop & Shop, and Cumberland Farms, and others.

Town officials recognize the importance of Vineyard Haven's commercial activity and the existing strain on the roadway system. Town residents and staff considered redirecting barges carrying freight vehicles to the RM Packer location in the harbor and redirecting vehicles headed to Vineyard Haven to the Park & Ride lot to reduce vehicles in the area. The Town must continue to work with regional partners, including the VTA, the Steamship Authority, and other transportation providers, to create a more welcoming multimodal gateway.

Seasonal Demand on Transportation Resources

Severe and frequent congestion affects the Vineyard Haven area and roadways across town. Traffic conditions are exacerbated in the summer season. Congestion town-wide lengthens travel times for personal vehicles, transit vehicles, and emergency vehicles and impacts the quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors. The intersection of State Road and Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road experiences long vehicular queuing and delays on most intersection approaches during the high summer season and shoulder spring and fall seasons. Vehicle queues at this intersection can extend back towards West Tisbury. The poor operation of this intersection has a significant impact on the mobility and safety of all vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. The level of congestion also creates noise and air quality impacts which affects the quality of life for residents.

Town residents and the Martha's Vineyard Commission have considered ways to limit the number of vehicles and freight entering the town to ease the burden on Tisbury's roadways without changing the town's character. Options for reducing vehicle burden on the town include actively monitoring and regulating the number of vehicles (not visitors) entering and exiting through Steamship Authority ferries, restricting the number of vehicles at vacation rentals, increasing bike share options, and modifying the existing reservation and pricing system for bringing vehicles to the island.

While Tisbury has shared-use paths, sidewalks, and bike lanes, critical gaps in the network inhibit movement by people walking, biking, scooting, or using a wheelchair. The Town's existing bicycle and pedestrian connections to the town's beach areas and waterfront are limited. Sidewalk networks in town are incomplete, with missing sidewalks leading to important destinations, including the Senior Center. State Road, the major east-west running arterial in town, does not have accommodation for people riding bicycles. Some sidewalks in downtown Vineyard Haven are narrow (Water Street) and many have obstructions (utility poles and signs) which reduce the effective sidewalk width and do not support the existing pedestrian volumes. No safe biking option exists for children going to the library after school. There are several private dead-end roadways throughout town that limit connectivity and access for all modes, increase vehicle miles traveled and increase emergency response times.

Traffic calming measures on Tisbury's residential roadways present an opportunity to slow vehicles and improve multimodal connections. The existing right of way below the power lines provides an opportunity for formalized pedestrian and bicycle trails through coordination with utility companies. Existing underutilized roadways, like Beach Street Extension, present the opportunity to pilot pedestrian-only streets at certain times of day. In addition, the Town is eligible for \$500,000 in Complete Streets funding through MassDOT and has already completed the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. The current Prioritization Plan was completed in 2017 and should be updated to reflect current needs and projects.

Safety and Sustainability

There are existing safety concerns for people walking, biking, driving, and taking transit affect quality of life. The issues identified by town staff and residents include visibility for turning vehicles, speeding vehicles on residential roadways, and abandoned vehicles at the Tisbury Park & Ride lot. Residents at a public meeting mentioned the need for bicycle accommodation on State Road in response to a severe bicycle crash occurring within the last fifteen years. MassDOT has identified State Road at Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road, Five Corners, and State Road at North Main Street as high crash intersections, and South Main Street and State Road as an HSIP Crash Cluster between 2017-2019. The Town is currently reinstating the Traffic Safety Committee, including the DPW director, the police, and one select board member to discuss town-wide road safety issues and collaborate on solutions. So far, the police have implemented speed feedback signs. Along with safety concerns on town roadways, Tisbury's coastal roadways are susceptible to flooding from storm events and eventual sea level rise. Specifically, Beach Road and the Five Corners intersection experience severe flooding during storm events and long-term sustainability is in question. Many services and goods must be brought from the mainland to the island. Interruptions in the supply chain impact the ability of Tisbury residents and businesses to sustain shipments of goods and services.

Collaboration

The Town of Tisbury departments work together with other Martha's Vineyard towns and regional organizations to provide emergency services, senior services, drinking water, and public schools. The Harbormaster and police department respond to water emergencies together when necessary. The Senior Center works with Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard and the Island Housing Trust to connect residents to transportation and housing. Oak Bluffs and the Town of Tisbury offer mutual aid when responding to emergencies requiring an ambulance. The Sewer Advisory Board, Public Works, and the Select Board coordinate sewer-related decisions. This collaboration is key to the provision of services to island residents.

Community Health

It is important to recognize that community health is linked to employment and income security, housing affordability, transportation needs, or other issues that local decision-makers can impact. The following highlights key issues specific to public health, but it will be important to talk about community health impacts when addressing cross-cutting themes of the Master Plan. Key issues associated with community health are also not unique to Tisbury or contained within the boundaries of Tisbury, and therefore must be tackled in collaboration with the municipalities and organizations of Martha's Vineyard.

Access to Health Care and Services

Health care services and treatment are limited island wide. Clinics and health care providers cite capacity challenges associated with staffing, funding, and space to provide services. Top needs focus on dental services, mental health care, and substance abuse treatment. Assistance and programs for the uninsured and underinsured to get health care is also limited due to state and federal financial resources to support these programs. Islanders most at risk are young adults, the homeless, isolated seniors, seniors with fixed incomes, people with disabilities, and children and youth who have experienced family and housing instability and other adverse life events.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

In general, the environmental conditions of Tisbury and Martha's Vineyard do not appear to have an adverse effect on the public health of residents, although higher rates of heart attacks and hospital visits related to asthma call for further investigation. However, the Martha's Vineyard Board of Health reports that lone star ticks, believed to be the main cause of Alpha-gal Syndrome, continue to spread throughout the island. They are found in a variety of habitats from open grassy areas to dense forest with leaf litter, and therefore lone star ticks in residential mowed lawns are the greatest concern island wide.

Over time, the impacts of climate change, including increased temperatures, changes in precipitation, more frequent and intense storms and other weather events, and sea level rise, can change environmental conditions and increase risks. These changes can impact the health of all residents, but the community's more vulnerable residents are most at risk. They are the elderly, young children, pregnant women, those with chronic illnesses, people with lower incomes, and people with limited

English proficiency. Changes in a person’s physical health or surrounding environment can lead to stress and anxiety, which can be most impactful for those with existing mental health conditions. Table 2 provides a summary of the impacts of climate change on public health.

Table 13.2. Impacts of Climate Change on Public Health		
Climate Change	Impact	Most Vulnerable or At-Risk Residents
Temperature-related Changes	Increased number of hotter days Longer heat waves (consecutive days) Urban heat island effect Tick/pathogen adaptation and shifts or expansion of geographic ranges	Elderly People with chronic respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses Lower-income people
Air Quality Changes	Increased temperatures leading to increased air pollutants like PM2.5 and ozone Changes in spring pollen season (earlier, longer)	Elderly People with chronic respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses
Extreme Weather Events	Limited access to food and other commodities Infrastructure damage (roads, bridges, utilities, etc.) Water quality impacts Evacuation and emergency preparedness needs Creating/worsening mental health impacts such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder	Elderly Isolated individuals People with disabilities People with mental health conditions Lower-income people People with limited English proficiency
Sea Level Rise and Increased, Prolonged Flooding	Infrastructure damage (roads, bridges, utilities, etc.) Habitat loss Personal property damage/loss	People living in low-lying areas and along the coast Lower-income people

Source: “Climate Effects on Health,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As the Town plans for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, it has not to date considered how to address the public health and social impacts of climate change.

FOOD SECURITY

In Martha’s Vineyard food security is a key issue for the Brazilian population, the chronically ill, and the island’s older residents, but it is also important to recognize that food insecurity impacts all communities and individuals of all ages. More than half of the students in the Tisbury School District are eligible for free or reduced lunch, and many families do not participate in food assistance programs.

EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In Tisbury, environmental justice areas cover much of the western side of town, as shown in Map 11-1. These neighborhoods meet three criteria: household income is 65 percent of statewide annual median income or less, residents identifying as a minority make up 40 percent or more, or those identifying as a minority make up 25 percent of the population and household income is 150 percent

or less of the statewide annual median. Additionally, populations that speak English as a second language are significant in Tisbury, with nearly 9 percent of residents reporting they do not speak English very well and their primary language is Portuguese or Portuguese Creole.¹⁷³ DESE reports that during the 2022-2023 school year English was not the first language of 56.6 percent of students in the Tisbury School District, and 33.8 percent were English language learners (English is not their primary language and are unable to perform ordinary classwork in English).¹⁷⁴

Households with lower incomes or with limited language proficiency often experience poorer health outcomes. Many cannot afford health insurance or are underinsured, and some will not seek preventative care or get medications if money is needed to put food on the table or pay rent. As noted earlier, assistance programs are limited on Martha's Vineyard because of capacity and availability resources. Having limited English can also deter people from seeing a health care professional because they cannot understand what is said or materials are not translated. Increasing access to assistance programs and overcoming language barriers are key issues. Agencies and health care services on the island understand that language is a key issue in offering services to the Brazilian population.

Governance

In 2012, the Town commissioned a town government organizational assessment. The study intended to identify where Tisbury performed well and where it needed to make organizational or structural changes to improve. The CDM Smith consultants who led the study found that at the staff level, Town employees value public service, teamwork, and transparency, and they shared a sense of responsibility to control costs. At the same time, they said Tisbury's fragmented decision-making, lack of a long-term vision, problems maintaining enough full-time staff, and lack of standard operating procedures all created significant vulnerabilities for the Town. Several recommendations came out of the study, including:

- Establish the positions of Human Resources Director and IT Coordinator;
- Establish a uniform information management system so that Town staff can share information and transfer data across departments;
- Adopt documented policies and procedures and formalized job descriptions;
- Conduct a gap analysis of current services; and

¹⁷³ Languages spoken by persons who do not speak English well, by Census Tract. Source: American Community Survey, Table B16001, 2011-2015 5-year estimates. Acquired from MA Executive Office Energy and Environmental Affairs, <https://mass-eoeea.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=dffdbf9c109647fc9601f7524c1fd9f4>.

¹⁷⁴ MA DESE, Tisbury School District Profile, Select Populations (2022-23). See <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgtypecode=5&leftNavId=305&fycode=2023&type=DISTRICT&orgcode=02960000>.

- Collaborate with other towns on Martha's Vineyard to create a regional full-time Fire Department or establish a full-time Fire Department within Tisbury.

CDM's organizational assessment team also found that Tisbury's decentralized government may seem democratic and inclusive but suffers from the lack of a transparent chain of command and the inability to make timely decisions. Another challenge noted in the report was that Tisbury's reliance on several independent boards made it difficult for local government to operate cohesively. The fragmentation of oversight and



services identified by the consultants led to recommendations in the report to reduce the number of Town committees, relocate all Town departments to a single administration building, and hold regular staff meetings. These changes led to, or in one way or another were associated with, losing volunteers and creating frustration among those who have stayed on as volunteers.

In 2023, Tisbury is trying to function as a year-round town that has *big* challenges with the human, financial, and organizational capacity of a small hamlet. It has dedicated volunteers and staff, but the staff have very limited authority, and this weakens their effectiveness. At times, residents and officials say town government should be able to do more, but Tisbury's general bylaws provide no clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the Town Administrator or other Town departments, or for many of the boards and commissions that rely on volunteers. There is no town charter, and any special acts of the legislature that Tisbury has petitioned for over the years are hard to find, not codified, and seemingly invisible to the general population as well as people working inside town government. As a result, Tisbury relies on the Commonwealth's antiquated statutes for municipal organization – statutes that long pre-date the movement toward professional town government that for small communities like Tisbury only began in earnest in the 1980s.

In some ways, what is remarkable about Tisbury is not what the Town has trouble accomplishing, but rather what it manages to accomplish despite its decentralized government and unclear lines of departmental authority. Just as the Town needs to overhaul its land use regulatory framework, it also needs to take a hard look at whether the system of government it has today is up for the job of leading, managing, and making the tough decisions that have to be made – and made soon. The choices Tisbury makes about how it governs will have an indelible impact on how well the Town can address issues that cut across every element of the Master Plan.

14. Implementation Program

Framework

The **Master Plan Vision Statement** articulates a better future by providing a clear picture of the value the community gives to everyone who lives, works, or plays in the town.

MASTER PLAN VISION

Sustain a Strong, Resilient, Healthy, Forward-Looking Year-Round Community.

The village of Vineyard Haven is the heart of Tisbury, and as Martha's Vineyard's year-round port, it is committed to maintaining its role as the welcoming gateway to the Island.

The residents (both year-round and seasonal) of Tisbury, a resilient year-round community, are committed to working cooperatively with each other and Town staff to accomplish tasks through effective leadership, planning, and organization. It is envisioned that private and public partnerships will help establish a network of open spaces connecting recreation areas and residential neighborhoods with its business districts, including State Road, a vibrant town center, a diversified waterfront, and a working harbor.

Through public investment and private development, the Town intends to actively support a prosperous year-round economy that provides residents with housing, education, jobs, and services. The Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District is envisioned as a platform to celebrate Tisbury's unique history and support Island artists and artisans.

Under the stewardship of thoughtful leaders, in collaboration with an active and diverse citizenry with a range of interests and aims, Tisbury strives to protect its natural resources, foster a sustainable future, welcome its seasonal and daily visitors, and preserve and celebrate its distinctive small-town character and rich history.

MASTER PLAN GOALS

Master Plan Goals are the objectives that a community aims to achieve through implementation of a master plan. The goals are typically broad and long-term in nature, and they guide the implementation of policies and strategies that will help achieve them.

Goal 1: Provide Town government with the human and financial resources and facilities to implement the Master Plan.

Goal 2: Act as responsible stewards for our natural environment and partner with other island towns whenever possible.

Goal 3: Foster a beautiful, enduring and sustainably built environment.

Goal 4: Encourage private investments and improvements to the town’s business districts (Waterfront Commercial, B-1, and B-2) to drive the economy, while maintaining the character of the town and its harbor and being responsive to the impacts of climate change.

Goal 5: Develop a multi-modal transportation system that reduces congestion and dependence on automobiles and creates a safer environment for residents and visitors.

Goal 6: Increase equitable and sustainable housing choices.

Goal 7: Ensure our year-round residents, including our under-resourced populations, seasonal residents, and visitors have access to quality health services.

PRIORITY ISSUES

The five key issues driving the implementation program are:

1. **Governance – structure and capacity:** The themes of vision, leadership, and follow-through were recurrent, and this issue seeks to improve the town’s governance structure and capacity to ensure that it can effectively manage its resources and meet the objectives outlined in this Master Plan. The plan proposes to create the position of Town Manager to manage and direct the Master Plan implementation process, with the Select Board serving as the chief goal setting and policy-making body of the Town. The plan calls for creating a second critically important position, the Director of Planning and Sustainability, accountable to the Town Manager for coordinating, managing, and supporting town planning and permitting, grant writing, climate adaptation and sustainability planning and implementation across Town departments, boards, and commissions. Furthermore, the plan calls for the creation of a Revenue Assessment Task Force to evaluate all existing and potential revenue streams for the town to ensure that it has the resources in place to meet its current and future needs.
2. **Regulatory Reform:** This issue aims to maximize the regulatory process and make it more efficient, transparent, predictable, and aligned with the goals of the Master Plan. In particular, the Master Plan seeks to rewrite the town’s Zoning Bylaws to make them more accessible and responsive, but also to ensure they are supporting town goals such as open space, environmental protection, climate change, short-term rentals, affordable housing, and water quality.
3. **Capital Improvement Process:** This issue focuses on the need to develop a rolling five-year capital improvement plan that realistically prioritizes the town’s infrastructure needs and identifies funding sources to support them.
4. **Climate:** Being a port town on an island makes Tisbury highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including sea-level rise. This issue calls up the need for the community to proactively address the impacts of climate change on the town’s natural and built environment and develop strategies, and funding sources, when necessary, to mitigate and adapt to these impacts.
5. **Island-Wide Shared Responsibilities:** Many of the issues that Tisbury faces – including but not limited to housing, transportation, emergency services, energy supply – cannot be addressed in isolation from the other towns on the island. This issue focuses on the need to collaborate with other towns on Martha’s Vineyard to address common challenges and opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM: POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Master Plan Policies are designed to guide decision-making and ensure that development within the community is consistent with the goals of the master plan. The policies are developed based on an analysis of existing conditions, trends, and future projections for the community. Once the master plan policies have been developed, they are used to guide decision-making related to land use, zoning regulations, transportation infrastructure, and other aspects of community development.

Master Plan Action Items are specific tasks that need to be completed to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in a master plan. They are individual steps to be taken to implement the goals and policies guiding the master plan.

Implementation Program User Guide

Key to Lists of Leadership Parties

AHC, Affordable Housing Committee
 AHT, Affordable Housing Trust
 BoH, Board of Health
 BZD, Building & Zoning Dept.
 CoC, Chamber of Commerce
 CPC, Community Preservation Committee
 ConCom, Conservation Commission
 CC, Climate Committee
 CoA, Council on Aging
 DPW, Department of Public Works
 EMS, Emergency Management Services
 FAC, Finance & Advisory Committee
 H, Harbormaster
 IT, Information & Technology Dept.
 MVC, Martha’s Vineyard Commission
 MVTA, Martha’s Vineyard Transit Authority
 NRC, Natural Resources Committee
 OSRC, Open Space and Recreation Committee
 PB, Planning Board
 SC, School Committee
 SB, Select Board
 SBAM, Spring Building Area Management
 SSA, Steamship Authority
 THC, Tisbury Historical Commission/Williams
 St. Historic District Commission
 TW, Tisbury Waterways
 WR, Water Resources
 WW, Waterworks
 VHBA, Vineyard Haven Business Association
 VHHCD, Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural
 District

Key to Priority Rankings

Immediate (1-2 years)
 Near-term (3-5 years)
 Longer-term (6-10 years)
 TBD (to be determined; adjustable pending
 further study)
 Ongoing

Key to Estimated Financial Resources












\$ Low Cost
 \$\$ Moderate Cost
 \$\$\$ Higher Cost; Possibly New Staff
 \$\$\$\$ Significant New Non-Personnel
 Investment or Capital Improvement
 \$TBD Needs Additional Study
























KEY TO ELEMENT ICONS




-  Governance
-  Natural Resources and Open Space
-  Zoning and Land Use
-  Economic Development
-  Transportation
-  Public Facilities and Services
-  Housing
-  Sustainability and Energy
-  Community Health
-  Commercial District Visions





Action Plan






Goal 1: Provide Town government with the human and financial resources and facilities to implement the Master Plan.


ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 1.1: Modernize the organization of town government to provide effective leadership, equip Town staff with the authority and resources to do their jobs, and provide support for local government volunteers.					
A. Develop a Special Act of the Legislature to adopt a Town Meeting-Select Board-Town Manager form of government along with any necessary accompanying structural changes.		SB	Moderate	Immediate	Home Rule Petition Consultant Staff Support \$
B. Hire a qualified, experienced organization to assist the Town with the Town Manager hiring process and the transition to the Town Manager form of government.		SB	Moderate	Immediate	Consultant or Semi-Public Agency \$
C. Hire a qualified Town Manager through a professionally conducted search process.		SB	Moderate	Immediate	\$\$\$
D. Establish a Director of Planning and Sustainability reporting to the Town Manager, to coordinate, manage, and support town planning and permitting, grant writing, climate adaptation and sustainability planning and implementation across Town departments and boards/commissions.	     	Town Manager PB, SB	Moderate	Near-term	Bylaw Amendment Staff \$\$\$
E. Provide a mentoring program and access to free or low-cost training	 	Town Manager/Admin.	Low	Near-term	Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) MMA


ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
opportunities for Town staff and volunteers.					\$
F. Evaluate staff support for its committees and develop a support policy for their staffing.		SB, Town Manager	Low	Near-term	
G. Continue to update a Volunteer Handbook to assist volunteer members of Town boards, commissions, and committees to understand their roles and responsibilities. Town staff should provide support to the committees.	 	Town Manager	Low	Near-term	Community Compact Grant
Policy 1.2: Provide accountability and transparency, and encourage broad participation of year-round and seasonal residents in the implementation of this Master Plan.					
H. Engage schools and other youth organizations (such as Scouts) to create a curriculum to study local government and get involved.	         	School Committee, PB. SB, Town Manager	Low	Immediate	Troop leaders School leaders
I. Conduct an annual strategic planning retreat for the Town Manager, town boards, and department heads to evaluate progress on Master Plan implementation, plan for board- and department-level implementation for the next year, and consider needs for plan amendments, if any. Provide yearly progress report to Select Board at a Select Board meeting as well as Town Meeting.	         	PB, SB Town Manager	Low	Ongoing (annual)	Staff Volunteer participation & cooperation. Include Youth Representatives from Ambassador Program at H.S. \$

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 1.3: Provide residents and visitors access to Town government through online communication channels and well-maintained, accessible facilities.					
<p>J. Improve and invest in technology, digital tools and practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for making town documents easy to find and access online; • For posting meeting agendas and minutes in a timely manner; • Create a policy that requires posting meeting agendas that need to be posted on the town website; • Create a policy to require the town post meeting minutes to the town website; • To enable effective hybrid meetings; • Continue to adopt online permitting and fee-based transactions for Town services. 		<p>Town Manager, SB, IT Coordinator, Director of Planning & Sustainability</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>IT Support \$</p>
<p>K. Consolidate or cluster the Town Annex departments (ZBA, Conservation Com, BoH, Planning) with other Town Hall departments (Select Board, Finance, Assessors) into one centrally located, accessible public facility, whether through lease or acquisition of existing building or new construction.</p>		<p>SB, Town Manager</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Site selection process Acquisition through lease or purchase G.L. c. 30B, Sec. 16 \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$</p>
<p>L. Conduct a feasibility study to relocate the Police Department out of congested, hazard area.</p>		<p>SB, Town Manager, Police Dept.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>\$TBD</p>





ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>Policy 1.4: Engage and collaborate with other island municipalities on priorities where coordinated planning and/or shared services may prove both more effective and efficient.</p>					
<p>M. Collaborate with the Martha’s Vineyard Commission (MVC) and island towns and entities on regional solutions such as shared services, climate change, workforce, transportation, solid waste, emergency preparedness, and supply chain among others. This may include creating an online island-wide survey to understand how people feel about an island-wide approach to some key issues.</p>		<p>MVC, Towns Dir. Planning and Sustainability</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Planning Staff support \$TBD</p>
<p>N. Quantify the island-wide burdens disproportionately shouldered by Tisbury and meet with island towns to discuss ideas to share the burden in an equitable way. Prepare a report for the Select Board.</p>		<p>MVC, SB, Director of Planning & Sustainability or PB</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Longer-term</p>	<p>MVC, Planning \$TBD</p>
<p>O. Determine need for a regional emergency manager / management coordinator role and act on the findings.</p>		<p>MVC, Dir. Planning & Sustainability, Emergency Management</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Planning Staff support \$\$\$</p>
<p>Policy 1.5: Improve and update annually the Capital Improvement Plan process to account for all costs and benefits associated with municipal projects, including sustainability, construction, planned preventive maintenance, project timelines, and funding. Institute a prioritization process that includes participation by Town departments and the Town’s major policy boards.</p>					
<p>P. Update and reorganize the Town’s approach to developing the 5-year capital plan, to be led by the Town Manager with assistance from the Finance Director,</p>		<p>SB Town Manager FAC</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Staff support Volunteers Consultant or Semi-Public Agency</p>














ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Town department heads, F&A Committee, and board/committee chairs. Seek assistance from a qualified organization to assist the Town with improving the capital planning process.					\$TBD
Q. Incorporate findings from Facilities Master Plan (action item in Policy 1.6) into the Capital Improvement Plan.		SB, Town Manager, BZD, DPW	Moderate	Near-term	Planning \$\$\$
R. Evaluate and incorporate climate risks into Capital Improvement Plans and financial considerations for publicly funded projects and infrastructure maintenance.		Climate Committee, SB, Town Manager Dir. Planning & Sustainability, FAC	Moderate	Near-term	Staff Volunteers Consultants \$\$-\$\$\$\$
S. Create a structure to obtain and manage grant funding including additional staff support, provided within the grant, to find, write, coordinate, and implement grant opportunities across town departments.		SB, PB	Low	Immediate	Grant funding Additional staff support \$
T. Establish a Revenue Assessment Task Force to evaluate town revenue sources and recommend changes, with the goal of increasing revenue to meet towns needs and the objectives outlined in this Master Plan. Develop additional revenue sources outside of traditional property tax assessment such as harbor revenue, fees, licenses, grants, tax structure, etc.		Finance Committee	Moderate	Near-term	Volunteers
U. Use Hazard Mitigation Plan critical infrastructure inventory to prioritize, upgrade, relocate, or adapt to climate		DPW	Moderate	Near-term	Staff support \$





ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
impacts through the Capital Improvement Program. Ensure that inventory and prioritization is complementary to other hazard mitigation planning.					
Policy 1.6: Provide and maintain public facilities, including parks, to serve the residents, visitors, and town staff of Tisbury.					
<p>V. Complete a Town Facilities Master Plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tabulation of current and projected municipal space needs; • evaluation of condition of existing buildings; • code compliance review for existing facilities that are considered for renovations; • architectural programming and budget estimates for renovated or new facilities; • Consider financial and opportunity costs, operational efficiencies, impacts on other uses; • Evaluate appropriate disposal of property; • Include Energy Transition Planning for facilities that includes distributed generation needs. Additionally include the exploration of microgrids. 		SB, Town Manager, BZD, DPW	Moderate	Near-term	Planning \$\$\$








ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>W. Complete a Park facilities plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a maintenance schedule; • a map of public land that could accommodate park facilities; • a decision-making process for new uses of town owned land. 		<p>OSRC, PB, SB, DPW</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Longer-term</p>	<p>Staff support Grant \$</p>


Goal 2: Act as responsible stewards for our natural environment and partner with other island towns whenever possible.

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME (PRIORITY)	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 2.1: Preserve and enhance biodiversity of the natural environment, open space, parks, and scenic views throughout the town, including downtown and commercial areas.					
A. Develop a Land Management Plan, that includes a biodiversity inventory, to assess and actively oversee town-owned open space. Identify ways to institute Conservation Restrictions on public land important for preservation, establish evaluation criteria and review process for any new use of public lands, and identify partners in overall implementation.		Dir, Planning & Sustainability, All departments & appropriate committees	High	Near-term	Staff support MVC Consultant (possibly) \$-\$
B. Establish a process to prioritize the acquisition or preservation of open space properties of interest, including but not limited to those that confer public safety/hazard mitigation benefits or protecting existing and future water resources.		PB, OSRC, ConCom, Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate	Longer-term	Planning Open Space & Recreation Plan Staff Support \$
C. Continue to work with the Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank (MVLB) and other conservation groups to identify potential opportunities for preservation and conservation restrictions in Tisbury.		PB, OSRC	Low	Ongoing	Volunteers Staff
D. Develop a planting program and require the use of native, drought tolerant, and pollinator-friendly vegetation appropriate for the urban environment on Town-		DPW, PFS	Low	Ongoing	Bylaw amendment Guidelines \$


ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME (PRIORITY)	RESOURCES NEEDED
owned land and site development standards for private property.					
E. Develop a policy for comprehensive park planning including a continuing public engagement process to enhance and add recreational facilities and programs.	 	PB, SB, OSRC	Medium	Near-term	Staff support
F. Raise awareness of parks, beaches and open space through multiple methods that reach diverse users, such as through the Town’s website, printed materials, and holding events at town spaces.	 	OSRC	Low	Near-term	Volunteers
G. Develop a tree management plan for trees in public rights-of-way and on town land that includes strategies for a tree inventory, long-term management of existing trees, removal and replacement of trees, types of trees to plant, and other key elements.	  	DPW, Facilities	Moderate	Longer-term	Staff support Consultant (possibly) \$
H. Adopt a land clearing and grading bylaw to limit development and construction impacts related to erosion and sediment.	 	Dir. Planning & Sustainability PB, CC	Moderate	Near-term	Staff support Bylaw amendment
Policy 2.2: Use multiple approaches, including regulations and public education, to protect the health of our environment, water supply, wetlands, water quality of our estuaries and other waterbodies, and reduce nitrogen loads in Lake Tashmoo and Lagoon Pond, and other areas as required.					
I. Protect the Town’s drinking water supply through land acquisition, bylaws and regulations, enforcement, and public education.	   	SB, DPW, Water Dept., Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate to High	Ongoing	Staff support Bylaw amendment \$-\$\$\$




ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME (PRIORITY)	RESOURCES NEEDED
J. Implement priority stormwater management projects as identified in the Tisbury Drainage Master Plan and the EPA study.		DPW, MassDOT	Moderate	Immediate	Staff support \$\$-\$\$\$
K. Work with nonprofit community and conservation partners, town committees, state agencies, and private property owners to protect coastal open space that could serve as a buffer from storm damage and sea level rise.	 & Open Space and Recreation Committee	Dir. Planning & Sustainability, PB, CC	Complex	Ongoing	Staff support \$\$-\$\$\$\$
L. Continue to implement a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan, including specific management plans for Lake Tashmoo and Lagoon Pond, to comply with the State’s Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for nitrogen.		DPW, Water Resources Committee, Wastewater Dept., Town Manager	High	Immediate, Ongoing	Staff support \$\$\$
M. Review existing policies and modify as needed to better manage boating (including anchoring and mooring) on Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond, and the Harbor, to ensure long-term protection of these important and valuable waterways to address environmental impacts.		SB, Harbormaster, CC	Low	Near-term	Planning Bylaw amendment and regulations
Policy 2.3: Use the best available data and science on the projected impacts of climate change to make decisions on land use, infrastructure, public health, and delivery of services.					
N. Use data and assessments in the Dukes County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, in conjunction with the MA Integrated Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, in local decision-making around public and private		DPW, Dir. Planning & Sustainability PB, SB, EMS	Moderate	Immediate	Planning Staff support \$

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME (PRIORITY)	RESOURCES NEEDED
investments to understand vulnerabilities and implement plans associated with sea level rise, coastal erosion, flooding, and other hazards.					
O. Continue to participate in the implementation of the Climate Action Plan to identify and support town and island wide actions.		PB, SB Dir. Planning and Sustainability, CC	Low	Ongoing	Volunteers Staff Support No cost to \$TBD
P. Conduct a study about where it is appropriate to fortify, accommodate, and/or retreat and evaluate options.		PB, SB, Dir. Planning and Sustainability, CC	High	Near-term	Additional Planning Staff or Consultants \$\$
<p>Policy 2.4: Set pollution reduction targets across known pollution sources, reduce and control waste, and monitor and reduce emerging chemical pollutants and plastics.</p>					
Q. Establish Town Meeting approved (article 13 in the June 13, 2020) committee to create an action plan and bylaw to manage plastic reduction and mitigation.		SB, Town Manager	Moderate	Near-term	Volunteers
R. Adopt regulations to limit plastic use and waste streams within municipal and commercial operations.		SB, BOH	Moderate	Near-term	Staff support Bylaw amendment Town counsel
S. Use nature-based solutions and green infrastructure that provide co-benefits to manage stormwater runoff.		PB, DPW	Low	Near-term	Additional Planning Staff or Consultants \$\$
T. Enhance public awareness campaign on the importance of reducing pollutants in stormwater runoff and ways individuals can contribute.		Dir. Planning & Sustainability CC, DPW	Low	Near-term	Volunteers Staff support Mass. Audubon
U. Use existing studies and efforts to develop local actions that will reduce		PB, DPW, CC, BOH	Low	Longer-term	Additional planning Staff of consultants

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME (PRIORITY)	RESOURCES NEEDED
major sources of pollutants that impact water quality, such as the use of fertilizers, insecticides, wastewater discharges, and septic systems, among others. This may include bylaw changes, increased enforcement, or other approaches.					Legal services \$\$
V. Continue to support actions to meet the non-binding advisory resolution made by the Town in 2021 to become 100% renewable by 2040.		CC, Facilities, SB	High	Ongoing	MVC













Goal 3: Foster a beautiful, enduring and sustainably built environment.




ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 3.1: Update the Zoning Bylaw and other regulations to ensure they are easy to use and aligned with the Town’s Master Plan and its goals.					
A. Complete Phase I of the Zoning Bylaw Update. Recodify the Zoning Bylaw including a review for clarity, internal consistency, organization, and consistency with state law and current zoning practices.		PB	Moderate	Immediate	Planning Regulatory Update Consultants \$
B. Complete Phase 2 of the Zoning Bylaw Update to achieve substantial consistency with this Master Plan. Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regulatory incentives to create a variety of housing types and increasing the supply of year-round housing; • Encourage infill development and modest intensification of use in established areas of town; • Prepare for climate change including enhanced protections for natural resources and services; • Update site plan review criteria, including performance standards for commercial uses and larger residential developments; • Update site plan review criteria to include viewsheds and scenic vistas; • Streamline permit review; 		PB Dir. of Planning & Sustainability	High	Near-term	Planning Regulatory Reform Consultants MVC Staff support \$\$

















ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve predictability of permit outcomes for applicants and abutters; • Short-term rentals; • Update town floodplain bylaws, based on climate science, to address relocation of damaged or at-risk coastal structures and encourage risk mitigation. Update on a fixed-interval basis; Consider height restrictions in Waterfront Commercial District • Address commercial activity in residential zoning districts. 					
<p>Policy 3.2: Support the efforts of private property owners, using both incentives and code enforcement, to improve unmaintained properties and keep them in good condition in the future.</p>					
<p>C. Inventory vacant, underutilized, and poorly maintained properties throughout the town and develop strategies to improve them.</p>		<p>PB, BZD</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Staff support Code enforcement Regulatory incentives \$\$\$</p>
<p>D. Design and obtain funding for a commercial property improvement program.</p>		<p>Town Manager</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Longer-term</p>	<p>Staff support MVC CDBG \$\$</p>
<p>Policy 3.3: Protect the architectural character of the town and the environment by developing regulations for the preservation and demolition of public and private buildings within a building's useful life.</p>					
<p>E. Prepare a Community-Wide Preservation Plan, that also documents buildings with high value architectural character and identifies property by property any restrictions.</p>		<p>THC, PB</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>MHC Survey & Planning MVC Grants CPC \$\$</p>


ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
F. Establish rules/programs in the Zoning Bylaw or a General Bylaw for preservation and reuse of buildings and reuse of demolished materials.		PB Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Low	Near-term	Staff support Technical assistance: MHP, Mass Audubon
G. Establish a coordinated process to work through redevelopment of impactful uses or large properties with property owners and developers.	 	PB, SB Town Manager	Moderate	Immediate	Staff support Planning/engineering/ design services \$TBD
H. Work with property owners who wish to expand public access to the waterfront and extend trail networks to points of interest. Provide incentives via zoning. Leverage grants and other funding sources, where possible.	  	SB, PB	Moderate	Ongoing	Regulatory Funding \$TBD
Policy 3.4: Re-imagine properties limited by current infrastructure and utilities to enhance public use and future infrastructure needs.					
I. Develop a conceptual plan to examine co-siting opportunities within the utility corridor that advance other Master Plan (or Town) interests/priorities.	   	OSRC, WRC, DPW, SB, PB	Moderate	Ongoing	Eversource
J. Study the former landfill site to evaluate options for future development.	 	BoH, PB	Low	Longer-term	Additional Town Planning Staff or Consultants \$TBD
K. Study septic lagoon area (42A-18) for equipment storage purposes (fisher community, town assets, etc.).	  	DPW, Natural Resources Committee, BoH	Low	Immediate	MVC Additional Town Planning Staff or Consultants \$TBD

Goal 4: Encourage private investments and improvements to the town’s business districts (Waterfront Commercial, B-1, and B-2) to drive the economy, while maintaining the character of the town and its harbor and being responsive to the impacts of climate change.


ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 4.1: Foster a business-friendly town government that encourages creation of sustainable jobs for year-round residents, prioritizes islander-owned year-round businesses and offers a transparent regulatory environment.					
A. Continue to support and expand workforce development programs to meet existing and future needs of local businesses as well as career objectives of residents.	 	Finance Committee, SB, MV Regional High School, VHHCD	Moderate	Near-term	MV Regional High School, MV Center for Education & Training, MV Community College Consortium, CoC
Policy 4.2: Encourage and incentivize businesses that build on the town’s current year-round services to create a strong service and retail economy serving the island community.					
B. Partner with the business associations to encourage economic activity.		VHHCD	Low	Immediate	Volunteers
C. Make Gap Analysis available to businesses and private developers.		PB	Low	Near-term	Volunteers Staff support VHBA
Policy 4.3: Strengthen the economy by enhancing the public experience, creating a coherent and connected pedestrian network, and improving harbor services and access.					
D. Design and implement improvements to the pedestrian network, including shared pedestrian vehicular streets. Focus on accessibility of commercial areas and key destinations, especially from points of entry and transit connections for the purpose of placemaking and improvement of harbor access and services.	   	Town Manager, DPW, VHHCD	Moderate	Ongoing	Capital improvements; MassWorks \$TBD
E. Further develop and implement a comprehensive wayfinding system for	   	Town Manager,	Moderate	Near-term	Staff Support MassWorks, MDI



ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>the town with a focus on commercial districts and visitor destinations. Consider installation of temporary wayfinding elements for areas where significant changes to pedestrian routes are being explored.</p>		<p>PB, DPW, PD, VHHCD</p>			<p>\$-\$\$\$</p>
<p>F. Study expanding moorings and improved launch capabilities. Adopt an online harbor mooring / online res. system, and all reservation and fee-based activities, permits, and licenses.</p>		<p>H, SB, BZD, BOH, IT</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>IT Support, Permitting, Software Staff Training Consulting services \$</p>
<p>G. Conduct temporary short-term tests of partial or full pedestrianization of selected streets and municipal properties in the Downtown.</p>		<p>DPW, SB, VHHCD</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Staff support \$</p>
<p>Policy 4.4: Embrace the Blue and Green Economy and the Creative Economy.</p>					
<p>H. Support expansion of aquaculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in ongoing suitability analysis by MVC through an MVP grant; through study, identify specific locations in the waterways of Tisbury that would be appropriate for shellfish aquaculture; develop a map of the waterbodies showing pre-approved lease areas; analysis of how the Town could support commercial aquaculture, including constructing a pier; analysis of places to store commercial fishing equipment as 		<p>Dir. Planning & Sustainability, H, PB, SB, BOH</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Volunteers Staff support Local Artists Business Owners Waterfront planning \$\$-\$\$\$</p>




ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
well as other small commercial equipment					
I. Sponsor a program featuring speakers who address the potential benefits of focusing on the Blue and Green and Creative economies.	 	Town Manager, PB, CC, VHHCD	Low	Longer-term	Volunteers Staff support \$TBD
J. Develop a strategic plan to encourage green practices and a circular economy and support businesses that provide these services in Tisbury and across the island	 	Town Manager, PB, CC	moderate	Near term	Volunteers \$TBD
K. Support the VH Harbor Cultural District activities to support a Creative Economy.		VHHCD, Town Manager, Select Board	Low	Ongoing	Staff support
Policy 4.5: Prepare for the impacts of climate change by protecting the water dependent economy and low-lying commercial areas, helping to relocate non-water dependent businesses, and preparing a workforce to fill new jobs created in response to climate change.					
L. Implement resiliency measures for sea-level rise in the waterfront commercial district, including residences in that area.	   	SB, DPW, VHHCD	High	Longer-term	Planning \$\$\$
M. Implement measures to reduce flooding from relatively frequent storms, rain events, and sea level rise.	    	SB, DPW, VHHCD	High	Immediate	Volunteers Staff support \$\$-\$\$\$\$
N. Study town-owned land in the B2 district and potential financial mechanisms to be used for existing businesses migrating out of the Waterfront Commercial District owing to climate change.	 	PB, Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate-High	Near-term	Planning \$\$, MVC




ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
O. Provide public information and engagement regarding potential funding prospects to implement measures commercial and residential property owners can take to contend with sea level rise.		Dir. Planning & Sustainability, DPW	Low	Immediate	Program development Staff support \$-\$\$






Goal 5: Develop a multi-modal transportation system that reduces congestion and dependence on automobiles and creates a safer environment for residents and visitors.

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>Policy 5.1: Develop a comprehensive traffic, parking, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and water transportation strategy to accomplish multiple goals that include: reducing congestion and automobile dependence; increase use of public transit; minimize truck impacts; encourage bicycle and pedestrian activity through increased use of bike paths and sidewalks.</p>					
<p>A. Develop a townwide Transportation Plan that includes parking, mobility, safety, circulation, and connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, public transit, and the SSA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish improved multi modal infrastructure throughout town. • As part of the townwide Transportation Plan, include a comprehensive parking plan that includes the consideration of a lot for commercial vehicles, more workforce parking, on-street parking, and overnight parking. • Engage existing businesses where illegal parking/operations creates conflicts with roadway users. • Conduct a transportation demand analysis of ways to reduce reliance on automobiles and research parking alternatives. Techniques may include car-sharing, bike-sharing, free bicycles on ferry, and transit incentives. 		<p>Dir. Planning & Sustainability</p> <p>SB, DPW, MVC, VTA, VHHCD</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Planning, SSA, Staff support \$\$\$</p>






ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform a study to determine the need for more frequent bus and/or shuttle service between key destinations in Tisbury. Evaluate options to reduce truck impacts via ferry in the downtown area such as evaluating prohibition of trucks on some roadway segments and considering moving freight shipments to other locations. Develop and implement a strategy to improve the safety of key intersections and roadways including Five Corners, the State Road intersection with EVH Road and Look Street, and the MassDOT-owned corridor that runs through Tisbury (Policy 5.3) 					
<p>B. Form a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC would assist the DPW in ongoing projects and will help coordinate future planning including managing TIP projects for the town.</p>		<p>PB, SB, DPW</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Planning, Volunteers</p>
<p>C. Develop a program to teach bicycle, e-mobility, pedestrian rules and safety protocols in Tisbury public schools.</p>		<p>SC, PD</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>MassDOT Safe Routes to School (funding) School Department Police Department \$</p>

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>D. Initiate an all-island Task Force to evaluate the impacts of Tisbury serving as the gateway to the island, including reducing the number of vehicles on island to improve the quality of life for residents, visitors, and businesses (while not reducing the number of visitors). Including restricting the number of vehicles via ferry, and per vacation rental.</p>		<p>SB, MVC, COC, SSA, VTA, VHHCD</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>MVC, COC, SSA, VTA Volunteers \$</p>
<p>Policy 5.2: Work with the Steamship Authority (SSA), MVC, and other port users to develop a strategic plan that identifies infrastructure improvements that must be made to ensure continuity of service in the face of the impacts of climate change and anticipated Sea Level Rise (SLR).</p>					
<p>E. Convene meetings with SSA and port community towns to jointly prioritize resiliency feasibility of future SSA terminal options; collaborate with SSA in submitting a multi-stakeholder funding request to support feasibility options study.</p>		<p>SB, Harbormaster, MVC, SSA Port Council, Transportation Task Force</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Longer-term</p>	<p>Planning Funding \$\$</p>
<p>F. Develop a harbor wide resiliency program that includes Water Street, Beach Road, Lagoon Pond Road, the SSA and other harbor users. Establish timelines and funding mechanisms for top priority infrastructure improvements. Collaborate with MassDOT and regional efforts.</p>		<p>MVC, DPW, SB, MassDOT</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>SSA, Towns, Planning Funding \$\$</p>
















ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>Policy 5.3: Develop and implement a strategy to improve the safety of key intersections and roadways including Five Corners, the State Road intersection with Edgartown Vineyard Haven (EVH) Road and Look Street, and the MassDOT-owned corridor that runs through Tisbury.</p>					
<p>G. Develop a traffic operations and simulation model for existing and projected movement of traffic through key intersections and corridors in Tisbury. Use the model to test effectiveness of potential improvements (e.g. traffic signals, roundabouts, bus lanes, and shared-use paths).</p>		<p>DPW, SB</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Funding Planning \$\$</p>
<p>H. Develop an ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP) to identify obstacles to accessibility, prioritize improvements and identify potential funding as required by the ADA Title 2. Accessibility within the public Right of Way includes existing sidewalks, curb ramps, pedestrian crossings, and pedestrian signals.</p>		<p>DPW, SB</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Funding, Planning, \$\$</p>
<p>I. Develop a traffic calming policy and program to identify intersection and roadway improvements to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. Identify sidewalks, crosswalks, and walkways for improvement to meet ADA compliance.</p>		<p>MassDOT, DPW, SB, Town Manager</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program \$</p>










ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 5.4: Add new transportation infrastructure that creates a more efficient network of roads and pathways that strengthen multimodal connections within and to other towns, while reducing congestion.					
<p>J. Within the comprehensive transportation plan, finalize design plans for a new street that connects State Road to EVH Road. Ensure the street is suitable for pedestrians, bicyclists, passenger cars, and trucks. Pursue project funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).</p>		<p>SB, DPW, PB</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>TIP Funding \$\$\$\$</p>
<p>K. Pursue the establishment of publicly accessible shared-use pathways or trails in utility corridors.</p>		<p>SB</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Planning Funding Easements \$TBD</p>
<p>L. Map informal paths and access routes and then find a mechanism to compensate the property owners. Prioritization should be included.</p>		<p>OSRC</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Volunteers</p>
<p>M. Develop continuous sidewalks and safe bicycle infrastructure between the B2 district and downtown commercial area.</p>		<p>SB</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>MassDOT Chapter 90 Funding \$\$\$</p>
<p>N. Develop a wayfinding signage program to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the waterfront and other destinations.</p>		<p>DPW, SB, VHHCD</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Leadership MassTrails Funding \$\$</p>

Goal 6: Increase equitable and sustainable housing choices.


ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
Policy 6.1: Use regulatory strategies to provide housing choice for year-round and seasonal residents, mainly through adaptive reuse of existing housing stock and infill in developed areas.					
A. Encourage mixed-use development with upper-story housing in the B2 district.		PB, Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate	Near-term	Staff support Planning, Consulting services \$
B. Encourage multifamily housing and apartments within and in close proximity to the B2 district under clear regulations and approval procedures.		PB, Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate	Near-term	Staff support Planning, Consulting services \$
C. Examine as of right attached and detached accessory dwelling unit conditions to be developed in the zoning update.		Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Low	Immediate	Staff support Planning, Consulting services \$
D. Adopt inclusionary zoning ¹⁷⁵ for modest apartment development.		PB, AHC, Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate	Near-term	Staff support Planning, consulting services \$
E. Develop a bylaw to regulate the operation of short-term rentals (STR) as provided for in G.L. c. 64G, including a ban on commercial (corporate-owned) STRs. Review bylaws adopted in Great Barrington, Lenox, and Provincetown for guidance.		PB, AHC, BOH, Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate	Immediate	Staff support Planning, consultant services \$ Assistance from MVPC





¹⁷⁵ Definition of Inclusionary Zoning: Typically, the bylaw or ordinance states that a certain percentage of the units, in developments of a certain size, must be affordable. These are then deed restricted to remain affordable long term. Inclusionary zoning creates neighborhoods that have a range of housing types, with housing units for a variety of incomes.



ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
F. Investigate feasibility of a buy-down program.		AHC Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Moderate	Longer-term	Staff support Volunteers Training resources (e.g., MHP)
Policy 6.2. Create and provide a variety of incentives to create permanently affordable and attainable housing.					
G. Increase the short-term rental registration fee and allocate a significant portion of the short-term rental income to be used to preserve existing and support new year-round housing.	 	SB	Low	Immediate	Volunteers Staff support MVC
H. Continue to support the Island Housing Bank.	 	SB, PB, AHC	Low	Ongoing	Volunteers MVC
I. Join with other Cape and Island communities to promote amendments to state law to allow deed restrictions for year-round housing.	  	Dir. Planning & Sustainability	Low	Ongoing	Staff support MVC
J. Design and administer a tax incentive financing program to support the feasibility of developing affordable housing.	  	Town Manager PB, AHC, CPC	Moderate	Longer-term	Staff support Consulting services \$
K. Formalize collaboration between the CPC/AHC/AHT to streamline the process for committing funds to affordable housing projects. Maintain an up-to-date inventory of Affordable Housing units.		AHV, CPC	Low	Near-term	Volunteers Staff support
L. Continue to use CPA funding to support moderate-income and community housing.	  	CPC	Low	Ongoing	Volunteers \$\$-\$\$\$





ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
M. Adopt the 3% Local Option Community Impact Fee on professional managed/multi-unit STRs, and dedicate the amount collected to the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust.		AHC	Moderate	Immediate	Volunteers
N. Update the Housing Production Plan.	 	Dir. Planning & Sustainability. AHC	Moderate	Near-term	Staff Volunteers Funding for consultant
Policy 6.3: Ensure energy-efficient design and use of sustainable materials in construction, to maintain long-term affordability and a safe residential environment.					
O. Review and update historic preservation goals and requirements in concert with housing needs and climate risk to remove conflicts and facilitate projects that can address all three needs jointly.	  	Dir. Planning & Sustainability, PB, THC	Moderate	Longer-term	Staff support Consulting services \$
P. Develop a policy that may require all new multi-family residential and/or rental apartment construction and major renovations to include a conduit to convenient charging location and breaker for future EV charger.	  	Dir. Planning & Sustainability, BZD	Moderate to High	Longer-term	Staff support



Goal 7: Ensure our year-round residents, including our under-resourced populations, seasonal residents, and visitors have access to quality health services.

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>Policy 7.1: Support local and island-wide initiatives that build equitable access to essential public health services for year-round and seasonal residents.</p>					
<p>A. Convene municipal departments and others to educate and bring awareness of the impacts of local decision-making on public health issues in Tisbury. Priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a resource/contact sheet that lists the roles of who to contact for various needs and provide training to educate and encourage staff. Update list every 6 months. • Establish a better understanding of how municipal staff interact with residents around public health issues. • Document information and data collected by individual departments related to public health or social wellbeing of residents. • Improve communication with the public and across departments about public health issues. • Identify potential needs to better meet the public health needs of residents. • Establish regular meetings (e.g. quarterly) to improve communication and coordination between departments and island-wide public health services to support Tisbury residents. 		<p>Town Manager, Personnel Department, Public Safety, Schools, DPW, Library, COA, BoH, Health Agent, et al.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Support No cost - \$</p>

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an individual(s) that can spearhead the actions outlined in the Master Plan. 					
<p>B. Continue working with island-wide partners, such as MV Hospital and other agencies conducting health assessments, to identify gaps in needed health services and barriers (including physical, cultural, and economic barriers) to accessing these services, particularly for Tisbury residents.</p>		BoH, Health Agent	Low	Ongoing	Staff MV Hospital Volunteers \$
<p>C. Prioritize outreach to Environmental Justice (EJ) communities and the Town’s most vulnerable populations that may be difficult to reach. Examples might be distributing information about opportunities developed by partners through the Town’s website, Tisbury School, or printed materials at town events.</p>		BoH, Health Agent, Tisbury School	Low	Ongoing	Staff MV Hospital Healthy Aging MV Volunteers \$
<p>D. Participate in data collection and outreach for Community Health Needs Assessments of local health care providers to ensure all resident needs are identified. At the direction of providers conducting outreach, employ the best opportunities through existing municipal programs and services to reach residents.</p>		BoH, Health Agent	Moderate	Ongoing	Staff Volunteers \$
<p>E. Translate municipal materials, both print and online, into different languages to improve bilingual education and</p>		BoH, Health Agent	Moderate	Immediate	Staff, funding \$-\$

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>outreach to underserved and immigrant populations. Partner with organizations that already provide these services to maximize limited resources.</p>					
<p>Policy 7.2: Collaborate with local, state, and federal programs to mitigate hazards and support efforts to address emergency response and the effects of climate change on residents.</p>					
<p>F. Prioritize the Town’s EJ communities and its most vulnerable residents to provide information about climate risks (including flooding, severe storms, drought, and excessive heat) and ways to reduce those risks. This might include FAQs, demonstrations, or other public events. Collaborate with existing networks that already serve these populations to build trust and create materials that are accessible (consider language, culture, literacy, hearing or sight disability, etc.) and are trained in mental health awareness.</p>		<p>PB, Tisbury Schools, CoA, BoH, Health Agent</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Staff Volunteers \$-\$\$</p>
<p>G. Establish a schedule to continuously revisit emergency response protocols to ensure that information is up to date regarding locations of vulnerable residents and contact information to reach them during emergency situations, including hurricanes and other severe storms, heat waves, drought, and other events. Protocols should ensure access to critical services and needs of these residents. Build in communications that are accessible (consider language, culture, literacy, hearing or sight disability, etc.).</p>		<p>EMA, CoA, BoH, Health Agent</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Staff, funding Volunteers Local social service and health care providers \$</p>

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
<p>H. Build consideration of societal and economic impacts of climate change on residents (particularly EJ communities and the Town’s most vulnerable) into the planning process (e.g., development review, planning for infrastructure investments, long-range planning studies). Ensure that benefits of resiliency investments are equitably distributed among residents.</p>		<p>PB, SB</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Near-term</p>	<p>Planning No cost</p>
<p>Policy 7.3: Support the efforts of the community in educating, preventing, and treating residents and employees with substance use disorders, mental health, and other community health concerns.</p>					
<p>I. Create an Ambassador Program, that includes high school, middle school, and charter school aged youth, that establishes better communication channels with town departments to better represent youth/adolescent interests.</p>		<p>BoH, Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School, Tisbury School, Charter School</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Youth Volunteers</p>
<p>J. Support outreach efforts of local and island-wide health and community organizations in their efforts to reach the Town’s most at-risk residents for substance abuse, mental health conditions, and other public health priorities.</p>		<p>BoH, Health Agent, CoA, Tisbury School</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Immediate, then ongoing</p>	<p>Staff Volunteers \$</p>
<p>K. Work with island-wide partners to better understand food insecurity in Tisbury. Based on available resources, develop collaborative strategies to address needs. This might include distributing information on available resources or sponsoring public events</p>		<p>Tisbury School, CoA, BoH, Health Agent, Food Pantry, Island Grown Initiative</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Immediate, then ongoing</p>	<p>Staff Volunteers \$</p>

ACTION	ELEMENT(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES NEEDED
that highlight food insecurity awareness in Tisbury.					
L. Collaborate with state and island partners in routine tick and mosquito surveillance and community outreach on tick and mosquito borne illnesses and other infectious vectors, including prevalence locally and island-wide, prevention, identification, and treatment. This might include updating the Town’s website as new data and resources are available through partners, holding events to increase public awareness, and other actions.		BoH, Health Agent	Low	Immediate, then ongoing	Staff Dukes County Volunteers \$
M. Implement mental wellness programming and provide mental health resources for emergency response personnel, including Fire, Police, EMT and staff.		BoH, Health Agent, Police Department, Fire Department	Moderate	Immediate	Planning Staff Funding \$

Appendix A

Q1 - What best describes your relationship to Tisbury? - Selected Choice

437 Responses



- I live in Tisbury year-round [60%, 262]
- I live in Tisbury part of the year [32%, 141]
- I work in Tisbury but do not live there [3%, 13]
- Other (please explain) [5%, 21]

Q5 - What brought you to Tisbury? - Selected Choice

437 Responses



- Born and raised here [12%, 51]
- Employment [11%, 48]
- Found a home that meets my needs [33%, 144]
- School [0%, 1]
- Family connection [27%, 120]
- Other (please explain) [17%, 73]

Q8 - What is your age?

439 Responses



- Under 18 [0%, 1]
- 18-24 [0%, 1]
- 25-34 [3%, 14]
- 35-44 [9%, 41]
- 45-54 [14%, 62]
- 55-64 [22%, 97]
- 65-74 [30%, 130]
- 75 or older [21%, 93]

Q9 - What is the highest level of schooling you have completed?

438 Responses



- Less than a high school degree [0%, 1]
- High school diploma or equivalent [9%, 40]
- Associate degree [8%, 33]
- Bachelor's degree [33%, 143]
- Graduate or professional degree [50%, 221]

Q10 - What languages are used most often in your home? Select all that apply. - Selected Choice

437 Responses



- English [95%, 436]
- American Sign Language [0%, 0]
- Spanish [1%, 6]
- Portuguese [1%, 6]
- French, Haitian Creole, or Cajun [1%, 5]
- Russian, Bulgarian, or other Slavic language [1%, 4]
- Other (please explain) [1%, 4]

Q3 - What best describes your current living arrangement? - Selected Choice

439 Responses



- I live in a home that I own [89%, 389]
- I live in a home that I rent [7%, 30]
- I live with friends or relatives [2%, 7]
- I live in a hotel or motel [0%, 0]
- I am living in my car or on the streets [0%, 0]
- Other (please explain) [3%, 12]
- I live in an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) [0%, 1]

Q3_6_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

12 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Winter Rental in an ADU

I live in apartment

Residence is provided as part of work

rental apartment

RENT/TEMPORARY HOUSING ABOVE WORK. UNABLE TO FIND YEARROUND HOUSING

Just moved back into town to a year round rental apartment

I live in Tisbury in the spring and summer

I live in a home I created out of a workshop and added a second building and have a home in Vermont

Company housing

Live in a home shared with my partner

I live in a small studio that I rent

I rent a one bedroom ADU

Q2 - How long have you lived in Tisbury?

368 Responses



- Under a year [2%, 6]
- 1-5 years [12%, 45]
- 6-10 years [16%, 58]
- 11-20 years [18%, 65]
- 21-30 years [17%, 62]
- Over 30 years [36%, 132]

Q4 - Where in Tisbury do you live? - Selected Choice

401 Responses

Field	Choice Count
Central	8% 32
Downtown / Historic District	21% 84
Lagoon	12% 47
Lambert's Cove	7% 26
Tashmoo	23% 92
West Chop	23% 89
Other (please explain)	6% 22
Total	392

Q7 - Where do you work? - Selected Choice

258 Responses



● Choice Count

Q7_7_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

36 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Off island from primary residence

Work both in the island and off-island year round

Off-island near my winter home

Tisbury and other towns

Live and work off island

New York

off island

Off island

off-island seasonally

Seasonal resident

part time at Yale

Elsewhere

Both at home and in office in EDG

off island

my husband works in Boston, and I work at home

freelance

Combination of at home remotely -and commute off island

FT off-island

out of state

New York

Off island

off island

In another state when not living on island.

off island year round

summer resident, work off island

On island , I work occasionally

Off island. Remote when I'm on MV.

designed affordable housing and sold and retired.

on/off island trucking on island work seasonaly

At home (remote work) and commute off-island

summer resident

Telehealth At Home

Off island

Off island

Landscaping

Off island

Q11 - Are you satisfied with the overall quality of life in Tisbury?

437 Responses



- Very satisfied [12%, 51]
- Satisfied [53%, 230]
- Neutral or no opinion [16%, 70]
- Dissatisfied [16%, 70]
- Very dissatisfied [4%, 16]

Q12 - How does the quality of life in Tisbury compare to ten years ago, or since you moved if less than ten years?

437 Responses



- Much better [1%, 4]
- Somewhat better [12%, 51]
- About the same [41%, 177]
- Somewhat worse [36%, 156]
- Much worse [8%, 36]
- Not sure or no opinion [3%, 13]

Q13 - How would you rate the appearance of the town?

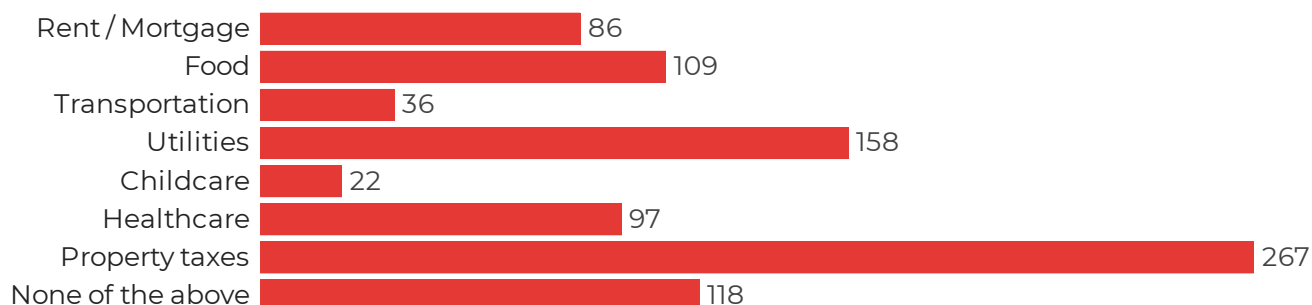
437 Responses



- Excellent [4%, 18]
- Good [27%, 120]
- Fair [43%, 187]
- Poor [19%, 84]
- Very Poor [6%, 27]
- Not sure or no opinion [0%, 1]

Q14 - Are you concerned with being able to afford any of the following? Select all that apply.

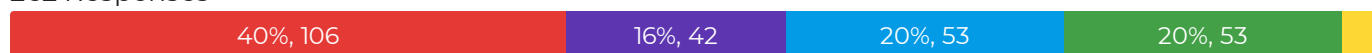
434 Responses



● Choice Count

Q15 - How often do you attend town meeting?

262 Responses



● Every year [40%, 106] ● Often, but not every year [16%, 42] ● Once in a while [20%, 53]
● Rarely or never [20%, 53] ● Prefer not to answer [3%, 8]

Q16 - How often do you vote in town elections?

262 Responses



● Every year [84%, 221] ● Often, but not every year [9%, 23] ● Once in a while [3%, 7]
● Rarely or never [2%, 4] ● Prefer not to answer [3%, 7]

Q17 - How effective do you think town government and committees are in dealing with issues and concerns in the community?

435 Responses



● Choice Count

Q18 - Do you currently serve or have you recently served on any Town board or committees?

436 Responses



● Choice Count

Q19 - Are there adequate recreational facilities, parks, or open spaces in your neighborhood or near your place of employment?

436 Responses



Q20 - How often do you visit Tisbury's recreational facilities, parks, or open spaces?

438 Responses



● Choice Count

Q21 - What recreational facilities, parks, or open spaces do you visit in Tisbury? (Maximum 250 characters)

268 Responses

What recreational facilities, parks, or open spaces do you visit in Tisbury? (Maximum 250 characters)

- Owen Park, beach between ferry and Black Dog, Tashmoo Dock, tennis courts, West Chop Woods
- Owen Park , Tashmoo Town Landing
- Boxberry Tennis Courts
- Tennis courts
- Walking trails
- West Chops woods

Owen Park

Beach off Owen Little way. (Near VH yacht club), West Chop Woods, Herring Creek beach+Land Bank beach, Owen Park/Town Dock school playground (when existed). Owen park (summer), land bank walking path, sailors burial ground to park n ride.

dog park

Tisbury Meadow, Ripley Field, Red Coat Hill Rd

Owen Park

Tashmoo, Lagoon, Owen Park

tisbury meadow, ripley field, red coat hill road

Owen Park, Grove Ave. Beach

Veteran's, School Playground, Owen Park, Owen Little Way Beach

beaches, veterans park, nature trails

Owen Park, Ripley's Field Landbank, West Chop off season, Eastville Beach, Tashmoo

Owen park. beaches. Main Street.

Owen Park, the Black Dog pier (private but I still go there). We need a more attractive public waterfront.

Veterans park

veterans park, beach road boat landing and Owen Park

conservation land, trails water and waterfront cemetery and parking and walking

Pickleball courts

Town beach town cemeteries

owen park tashmoo landing

Owen Park, Eastville, Tashmoo, all of them

Tashmoo Opening, Wilfred's Pond, LCBeach, West Chop Woods, Waterworks

West chop beach

owen park, memorial park, main cemetery

Owen Park, Lagoon Pond, Sheriffs Meadow

Land Bank

Owen Park regularly... none of the other public lands are particularly attractive to visit.

The waterfront. Tashmoo, Lagoon, Bayside/Owen's Little Way

MVLB - Beechtree Woods, ramble trail- bright wood park

harbor areas

Memorial Park, Dog Park and Walking Trails, Beaches

The park near Cumberland Farms

Owen Park

Beaches, Walking Trails

West chop woods. Owen park

Owen Park

Tashmoo, Owen, West Woods, Wilfred's Pond

School playground, Owen Park, hiking trails

Owen park

Owen Park

Owen Park, Cemetery

Owen Park

Playgrounds

Owen park and dog park

Local beaches, trails, tennis courts

Beaches

Museum and most all parks and cemetery.

Owen Park. Daily! Tashmoo Beach

walks, open spaces

Owen Park, Tashmoo opening beach, Veterans' Park, Lake St Tennis and boat ramp access

Tennis court,

Owen Park, Waterfront, Grove Ave beach

Veterans Field

Extremely limited- Veterans Park is constantly flooded. Tisbury school no longer has a playground. West Chop is private. Owen Park is limited but an option.

Beaches

Row in the harbor

West Chop woods

Cemetery Tisbury meadow, main street

Tennis courts, lake tashmoo, Owen park

Owen park, Lagoon water front,

Tennis Courts near Tashmoo, Lake Tashmoo Beach, Owen Park

Beaches. Parks.

West Chop Woods, Blackwater pond

Owen Park, Lake St. Tennis

owen park tashmoo beach

Owen park, library, lagoon, tashmoo

Owen Park, West Chop Woods, Tashmoo Beach, The Ramble by the Lagoon

Owen Park, Tisbury Town Beach (Tashmoo)

Norma Chase tennis court, Owen Park

Norma Chase Tennis Courts, Owen Park

Walks in West Chop Woods, Ramble Path, Owen Park

Tashmoo, Lagoon, water front

Water Works

Owen Park [except winter season]

public beaches, biking on roads, kayaking, west chop woods

Owen Park, Tisbury Meadow, the two Tisbury town beaches north of town...

West Chop Woods, Tisbury Playground, VH Town Park, Tisbury Meadow Preserve, Cedar Tree Neck

Sheriff Meadows properties, Trustees properties. Owen Park

owen park

West chop woods/ Boxberry pickle ball courts

Town Beach at end of Owen Little Way

Phillips Preserve, other Open Spaces, Owen Park

Tashmoo beach, west chop, Owen park, West Chop Woods, both boat ramps

Veteransfield , owen park, boat ramps, beaches, walk cemetary

Owen Park, Tisbury school playground, veterans park

Veterans, beaches

Boxberry courts

Beaches, and Land Bank and other preserved properties

Veterans Park, Owen Park, Lake Street Park

Owen Park

The land bank trails.

Tennis courts, basketball courts

Owen Park

Owen Park, Veteran's Park, Oak Grove Cemetery

Brightwood Park and Rambling Way

West Chop Woods, town landing on Lake Tashmoo

Owen Park

Veterans Park, Owen Park, Oak Grove Cemetery

Tashmoo Beach, West Chop

Lake Tashmoo

West Chop Woods, Herring Creek LandBank trail , Tashmoo Beach , Wilfred Pond beach

Lake Tashmoo

Beach, fishing,

Dog Park across from Black Dog; Sheriff's Meadow; State Forest

West chop woods

I have access to private clubs - not sure that counts? But I certainly walk the beach along the harbor, and appreciate Owen Park. I also visit the lagoon and enjoy the beach there.

Main Street from ferry to West Chop lighthouse.

Owen Park Dock and Park

Owen Park and West Chop Woods

Owen Park, West Chop

Owen Park, Owen Little Way Public Beach

Owen Park is the only park I visit.

Owen Park, Veteran's Park, Woods around Hines Point, Tashmoo Beach

Owen Park

Sheriff's Meadow and Land Bank Trails, some beaches if owners allow

Owen Park, West Chop Woods, Tashmoo, Beach Road Music Festival Park

Vineyard Haven Yacht Club, tennis courts

Owen park, tennis courts, dog park, trails

Owen Park - Town Pier; Veterans Park; Tashmoo Beach

West Chop Woods, Owen Park

Town Beach, Public beaches (Grove Street, Owen Little Way)

West Chop Woods, Lake Tashmoo, Mink Meadows golf, VHYC

Owen Park

West Chop Woods & beaches near West Chop. We have beach access thru the West Chop Club

eastville beach

West Chop Woods

Conservation land, owen park beach

Lake Street landing and park, tashmoo beach via herring creek road, owen park, hike the pole lines

Use both boat ramps

West Chop Woods, beaches

Owen park,

Owen Park, Little Own Way beach, Tashmoo Beach, Sheriff's Meadow

Tashmoo beach & Land Bank

Grove ave beach, w chop woods, lake tasmoo

Sheriff's Meadow, playground, Meadow Preserve

Town beaches, sherries meadow, trustees beaches and trails in West Chop woods

Owen Park, West Chop Woods

Manuel Correllus State Forest, Owen Park, Lamberts Cove, Martha's Vineyard Museum, West Chop Lighthouse,

west chop woods, beaches

Lake street tennis courts/park

Owen Little Park, Sheriff's Meadow, I walk at Tashmoo Pond and Lagoon Pond.

Owen Park Beach / Town Dock

Owen park

Park by harbor, public rest rooms, wharf, depends

Tashmoo tennis court area and woods, Owen Park Beach, Tashmoo Beach

Ocean park, land bank trails, tashmoo, lagoon pond

Brightwood preserve, lagoon pond

Mink Meadows

Veteran Park and Owen park

Tashmoo, Owen park, Wilfred's pond

Causeway Park with small children Owen Park for lunch breaks Memorial Park for sports/ established walking paths (Trustees maintained?)

School playgrounds, Owen Little Park, Tashmoo Beach

Owen park

Town beaches, memorial park, hiking trails

Owen Park, town dock, town beach, tennis court, Cemetery

Wilfred's pond, Owen park, Mink Meadows,

Owen park,

Tashmoo Beach

Owen Park, picnic tables by Beach Rd Restaurant

Land Bank and Sherriff's Meadow trails

the parks and land bank, sheriff's meadows properties

beaches, Owen Park, woods

Owens Oark

West Chop Woods, Owen Park

Conservation lands

Owen Park. Sheriffs Meadow. Tashmoo opening

Tisbury meadow, Ripley's field, Owen Park ,Tashmoo

Land Bank (Wolfort's), The Cut, Boxberry Courts

Walks parallel to Lagoon toward hatchery

Owen Park, beach near the yacht club, hiking trails

Tisbury Town Beach on Owen Little Way and Owen Park

Tashmoo beach, Owen park, Tashmoo landing

beaches

Owen Park, Park and Ride.

owen park, land bank properties, west chop woods

Playgrounds, west chop woods, tisbury meadows, cranberry acres, etc

Walking trails around cranberry acres

Land Bank and Sheriff's Meadow properties, Eversource easement, Mink Meadows roadways/beach

Ripley's Field, Cranberry Acres, Duarte's Pond, Hoft Farm

beaches

Ripley's Field Sandbank Trail, Owen Park, West Chop, Owen Little Beach, Lagoon, Tashmoo, Eastville Beach, Lake Street boat launch

Owen park, the park behind the post office

Owen Park, Tashmoo area, Veterans Memorial park, eagerly awaiting the Church Street Tennis Ct

Veteran's Park, Owen Park, Tashmoo Spring Pond, West Chop Woods, Dog Park, Ripley's Field, Visits are daily.

Beaches

West Chop Woods, Owen Park, Tashmoo Overlook, other LandBank trails

owen park, veterans park

Parks, trails, ponds

Owen Park, Tashmoo, Lagoon

Owen Park, Little Own beach, Tashmoo

Owen park.

Eastville Beach, Owen Park, softball field

Beaches throughout the island.

VHYC beach and Owen Park often to sit on provided benches

West Chop Woods, Veterans Park, Owen & Owen Little, Dog Park, Tashmoo Overlook, Tashmoo Meadow, Tashmoo Beach

Owen Park, Little Owen, Veterans Park, Tisbury Meadow, Tisbury dog park

Owen Park, Veterans Memorial Park, Tashmoo beach, Wilfred's Pond (Land Bank), Tashmoo amphitheatre, tennis courts,

Owen Park, yacht and several moorings, our own beach, Waterworks, I saved a section of West Chop Woods from being used as a septic dump along with 50 citizens and many environmental organizations. Tisbury is nuts. This was West Chop Woods in town.

Tashmoo tennis courts, Owen Park, Tisbury School playground, behind Cumberland Farms

Owen park, west chop woods, beaches, harbor front, vets field, power lines, and other connected trail systems

Owen Park, the beaches, West Chop area, Lake Tashmoo area, the state landing and causeway area, the multi-use path on Beach Rd.

West Chop woods, Tashmoo beach etc

I hike in Tisbury Meadow regularly and visit the dog park often as well

Owen Park/Veterans Park/Lake St/The park just beyond Lower Lamberts Cove Rd.

Veterans' Park, Owen Park, West Chop Woods, Tashmoo Opening, Brightwood Park, Eastville Beach.

beach woods

West Chop Woods

Owen Little Way Beach- no dock, ladder is at an outfall pipe that exposes all swimmers to runoff

Vets Field, Owen Park, Land Bank properties

Veterans Memorial Park

Owen Park

Owen, Lagoon,

Tashmoo landing, Owen park, Lagoon landing, Tashmoo beach

I often visit Owen Park and the beach at Owen Little Way. I walk around West Chop down to Wilfred's Pond. Additionally I access the trails near the dog park.

West Chop Woods, Phillips Preserve, Bare Hill

West Chop Woods, hiking trails, beaches

Owen park---veterans field

Tisbury school playground, Owen Park, Tashmoo landing,

I walk the trails at Wapatequa (Land Bank) 2x daily. Though it is partially in O.B. my trail starts in Tisbury. West Chop Woods, Owen Park

walking paths

Owen Park, yacht club beach, Tashmoo, Boxberry tennis courts, West Chop Woods

Owen Park, Veteran's Park, Eversource utility trails, dirt roads, Land Bank facilities

Water works, Owen Park, Lake Street

Owen Little Park, Trustees of Res properties, West Chop Woods

public access beaches at Grove Ave and Owen Little Way

Wilfred Pond, Tashmoo Beach, Lake Tashmoo. Would really like to see pickle ball courts at Tashmoo (Lake St.)

Tennis Courts, Boating (Harbor, Tashmoo, Lagoon) Owen Park, Soccer Fields, Beach

Owen park, veterans park, tashmoo beach and landing

Veterans Park, Owen Park (OP daily)

The vets park play ground, tisbury school, boat ramp.

beach

walking trails; parks; beaches where allowed

Owen park

Sheriff Meadow, Land bank walks

Veterans Memorial Park

I did visit the tisbury school playground. Now only the veteran's park playground which we only occasionally visit otherwise Owen park more frequently.

Ramble, West Chop Woods, Dog Park, Lagoon Pond Rd end, Owen

Tisbury school playground grove ave owen little way

All especially by sea

All especially by water

Owen park

West Chop Woods, Tashmoo Town Beach

Conservation properties and trails, ie West Chop Woods, Tisbury meadow area

beaches, Owen park,

Q22 - Do you visit recreational facilities, parks, or open spaces in other towns?

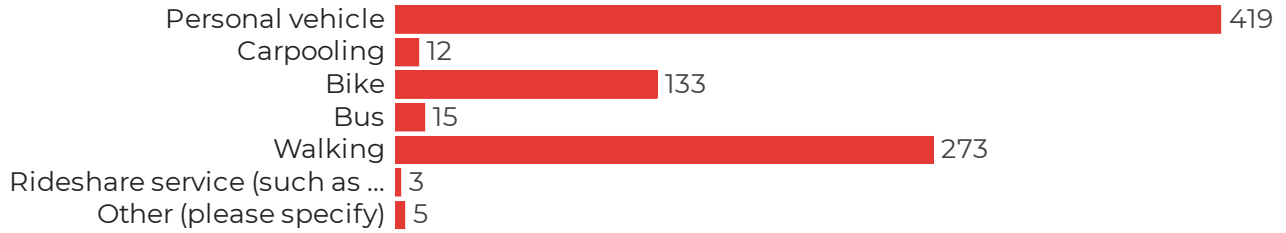
435 Responses



● Choice Count

Q23 - What are your primary ways of getting around town? Choose up to three. - Selected Choice

439 Responses



● Choice Count

Q23_7_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

5 Responses

Other (please specify) - Text

Motorcycle

family

Car

moped

Golf cart

Q24 - How satisfied are you with the quality and condition of the roads, sidewalks, and transportation services in Tisbury?

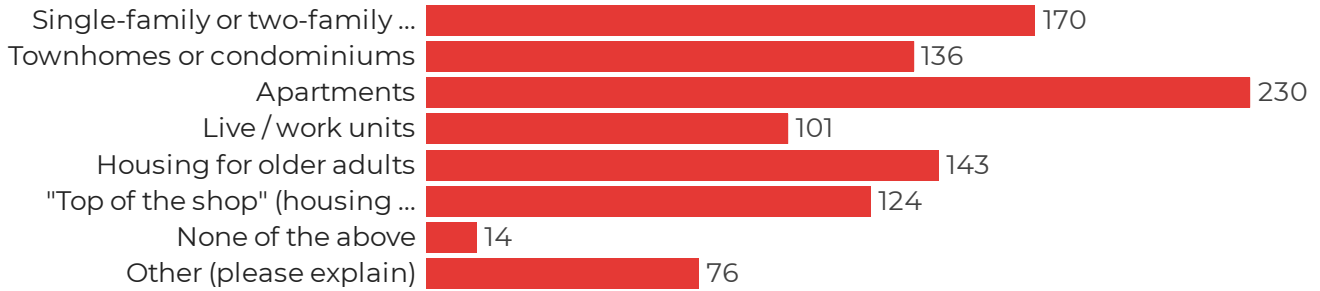
437 Responses



● Very satisfied [3%, 15] ● Satisfied [49%, 215] ● Dissatisfied [43%, 189] ● Not sure or no opinion [4%, 18]

Q25 - What kinds of housing does Tisbury need? Choose up to three. - Selected Choice

428 Responses



● Choice Count

Q25_8_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

76 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

A mix of the above

Affordable rentals for younger workers

i think housing should be balanced with open spaces .. there is too much wildlife habitat being destroyed in the name of progress

accessory dwelling on single family house lot

Accessory living units

make it easier to update business.

mixed-demographic communal housing

year-round, not seasonal

affordable!

Tiny Homes/ADU

Quadplexes, 40B High Rise

Stop overnight AirBNB. Make it 30 day min. Stop flop houses and encourage up to code worker housing.

All of the above

Accessory Dwelling Units

increased pathways to create accessory units

Affordable/rent controlled housing for people who work on island year round

Affordable

affordable housing

Dense development in Vineyard Haven

ADU's

Affordable apartments

affordable apartments for workers

Affordable housing of every kind

perhaps we try to house too many people

ADU's

Affordable housing for middle income people

Affordable housing

change zoning to allow additional small dwelling on every existing lot. This will greatly cheapen opportunities for islanders.

Set aside housing for employees/seasonal workers

seasonal and homeless housing

Multi building affordable housing complexes.

I feel like downtown is too dense, too full of traffic for more housing in or near town. There are also houses in disrepair. Not sure I know what the solution is, but more humans and traffic at the five corners or turnoff to Edgartown Road is highly undesirable.

affordable housing

Affordable housing for year round residents who work

Affordable year round housing

affordable housing for year round residents

Affordable for all

affordable housing for seasonal workers

small homes

Homes spaced closer together, so they will be more affordable.

Probably some mix of all...

all of the above. A small area identified for high density affordable housing (with reliable public transit options) would help alleviate the housing crunch

Affordable housing

unsure

Single family homes for families with 2 or more children.

Accessory Dwelling Units

All of the above!!! We need a diverse and accessible range of housing options in order to allow those of us who grew up and are struggling to stay as well as our next generation.

In-law, year round

affordable

ADUs

School tax burden too great. Look to other towns to increase density

affordable

AFFORDABLE

I am a designer and created my own designs for affordable housing that are superior.

multiple small homes on single lots or smaller lot sizes

i feel we are verging on being overbuilt and bulifdings need to be repurposed

low cost public housing

Public housing should be rental only offer a way to homeownership through subsidized rent.

Any/all housing in the actually realm of affordability for those with actual need

Housing for folks who want to live and work to live here

I do not want to subsidize housing

Combo of the above

Affordable housing

Affordable housing but also year round housing for those who earn to much to qualify for "affordable" e.g. municipal workers, nonprofit workers, healthcare workers, etc.

Accessory Apartments

No STR

No STRs!!!

Any form that increases the stock of affordable housingrdable

accessory apts.

multi family

Not Town Owned Units

Affordable housing

Affordable Multi family homes

Affordable housing

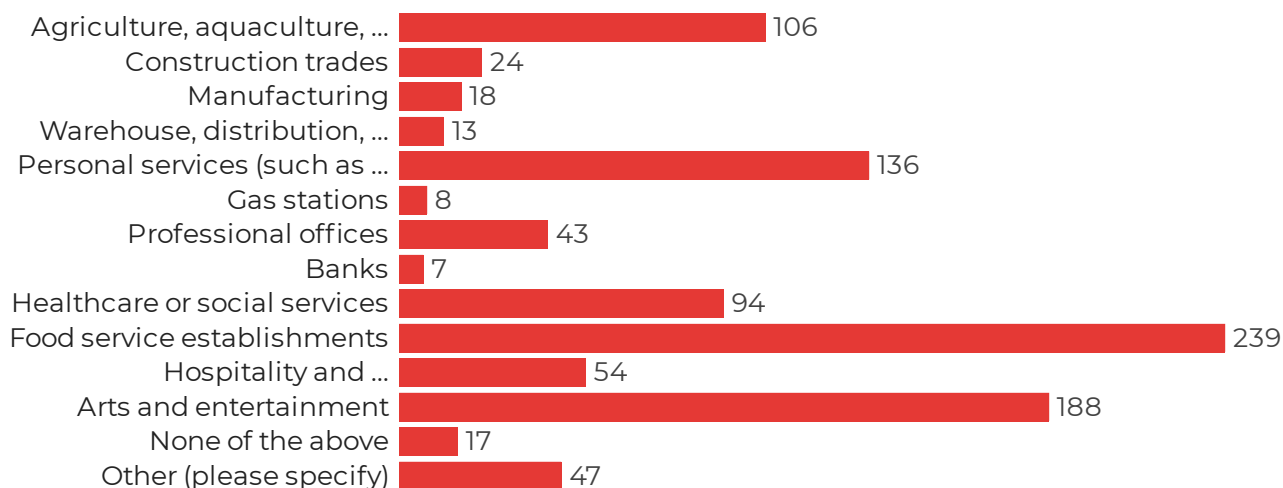
apartments, live/work units, housing for older adults, top of the shop

Housing that's affordable

Q26 - What kinds of businesses does Tisbury need? Choose up to three.

- Selected Choice

421 Responses



● Choice Count

Q26_14_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

47 Responses

Other (please specify) - Text

Movie Theatre

High tech

year round retail stores

Entertainment

none of the above

Retail shops

a town that promotes bussineses

breakfast and light meal food establishments

retail

Ensure the working waterfront can thrive

Bars

Bar/night life

Needs movie theater—Capawok

Wish the movie theater in town would re-open

Commercial spaces that can hold the community (coffee houses for example)

Liquor store, electronics store, affordable new furniture

Larger grocery store

Environmentally focussed business, agriculture, technology

A Pub

Tisbury has a nice mix of services

Bigger Supermarket

Most of these businesses exist in Tisbury. Not sure if the question is asking what businesses do we need to keep or need more of?

SERVICE (COBBLER, DRY CLEANER,)

retail

better quality retailing

In town hardware, dry cleaner, upscale grocery

The return of the movie theater

grocery, gourmet foods, liquor store, quality retail

rental facilities for offering classes independently

Let Stop and Shop expand provide a clean environment. The store is disgusting

a nice pub in the English sense

All of the above

What a bizarre array of options...why are these geared towards visitors and not locals? I need local businesses where I can go and make day to day purchases and support my neighbors, not more hotels.

It's a small island. There's plenty here.

Is this in addition to what's already there?

anything year-round

package store

Indoors children's options, like art classes; gymnastics; etc

something for kids

downtown needs interactive shops including a movie theater, not one where you have to drive to.

Tisbury has lots of businesses

This should be up to whatever people decide . life liberty & the pursuit of

large grocery chain with parking and easy access

bar hall / pool tables

After-school Childcare and summer camps

An Artisan Center

tech

Q27 - Where do you do most of your grocery shopping? - Selected Choice

437 Responses



- Tisbury [80%, 349]
- Elsewhere on Martha's Vineyard [13%, 58]
- Off-Island or online [4%, 17]
- Other (please explain) [3%, 13]

Q28 - Where do you do most of your other shopping, such as for clothing, household goods, and other goods and services? - Selected Choice

439 Responses



- Tisbury [28%, 119]
- Other towns on Martha's Vineyard [8%, 34]
- Off-island [30%, 128]
- Online [29%, 126]
- Other (please explain) [5%, 22]

Q28_11_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

21 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Mix

Tisbury+Other towns on MV

Clothing online...no affordable option on island. Household goods, other goods and services...Shirley's or Cottle's WT

online and Off-island

Shirley's for hardware

Half Tisbury, half online

combination of the above

mix of online and on island

Mix of all of the above equally.

internet

Amazon, other online stores

All the hardware stores in each town And grocery shopping at Reliable Mkt

Half and half. I tried to get what I can whenever I can on Island

Either on the Vineyard or online - depending on what is needed.

Tisbury & online

varies. I would need to do a study.

Tisbury & Oak Bluffs

Tisbury & online

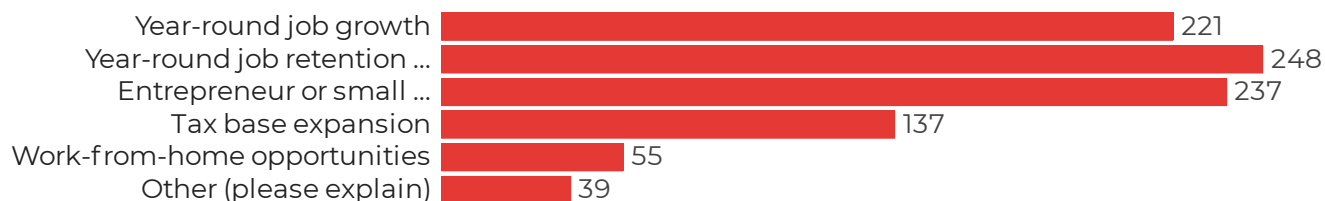
Chicken Alley

On island, all towns, lot of thrift shop buying

Clothes online every thing else is in Tisbury

Q29 - Which of the following economic development objectives are most important for Tisbury to pursue? Choose up to three. - Selected Choice

423 Responses



● Choice Count

Q29_6_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

38 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

College of Martha's Vineyard (micro-college)

New Administration

Tourism

retired people with part-time jobs

people enjoy retirement

Affordable housing

Finding other sources of tax revenue besides property taxes

Protecting the working waterfront

Housing for workers

Not sure

Income vs. housing cost mismatch

encourage ADU's

Housing - for job retention and growth

workforce housing

Tisbury would use some marquee establishments that are actually useful. VH doesn't need another random hippie store it needs retail and markets that people actually know and like: blue bottle coffee; a great yoga store; a restaurant that's actually good (port hunter, raw 19, whatever. Really, a crystal store on Main Street and no one in the movie theater or bowl and board space forever? Short answer: see Edgartown.

Housing

improved pay for service work

stop soaking the summer residents

housing

Education beyond high school, English language for adults

Fulfilling and Supporting Housing in town so that local businesses will thrive and remain open!

expand business district for the trades shop space, warehouse space similar to the airport park

Not sure

This survey was terribly written. If you want a local opinion then please list options in a way a local will understand. 'Tax base expansion' should never have been listed as an option without a corresponding explanation

Entertainment

Do nothing that increases year round school age residents.

tourism

More reliable highspeed internet options

We are in unprecedented times and all of these choices are obsolete.

Preserve and improve green space

Marine jobs

Need to keep affordable. Taxing for inept governance isn't a solution. Need better leadership and common sense decision. Loosing the grant from the State for a new school is a perfect case of horrible mismanagement of fiscal responsibility. The burden is now shifted to homeowners who now need to rent to cover the increase in taxes. This is ruining the heritage and legacy of Vineyard Haven. It makes me angry and sad that some political decisions have now forced drastic increases while other towns like Edgartown are properly managed. All property owners deserve a vote! Example is the Windmill staging area. Who in their right mind thinks that benefits Tisbury. That is prime property that could be developed into beautiful waterfront staging area. Also to have downtown flooding not addressed is a reflection of poor management. Let the people vote on the issues. Not the small political groups. As a long term resident of MV with family dating back to the 70's we are horrified as to the direction and decisions made by politically motivate inept people.

Recreational access to Owen Little Way Beach. Better parks. Move offices out of Katherine Cornell. Purchase Prouty House. Eliminate parking at entrance to Veterans Field. Purchase Educomp for town offices.

housing

free & open commerce , not government management

none

Playground

No more Fly By Night

Q30 - Where in Tisbury do you think the Town should focus activities to encourage economic development? Select all that apply. - Selected Choice

432 Responses



● Choice Count

Q30_5_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

31 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

State Rd is ideal but traffic would be a problem

Beach Rd

waterfront, downtown, State road

We have sufficient spaces. No further growth but retention, and year-round business should be encouraged.

Edgartown/Vineyard Haven Rd

all of the above but with care to preserve the character and look of the town

all of the options

Edgartown/VH Road

Everywhere in Tisbury, including online activity and remote work activity based in Tisbury

See Edgartown

To avoid more traffic congestion on Main Street and the waterfront, use Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road or the west side of Franklin Street.

need to increase business density and shared parking and bathrooms for small businesses

dirt road repair

when you get off the ferry, the "view" is pretty uncharming: parking lots, a grocery store, dilapidated retail.

Conferences, educational groups during off season to keep hospitality active year round

Housing walking distance to the ferry and for commuters to stay overnight. With so many older adults in homes I notice people working age 25-65 + need a place to live!

unsure

Beach rd

The waterfront between the bridge and black dog is a missed opportunity. Its industrial.

high point

But not focus on eating establishments.

Allow stop n shop to improve buildings

Tisbury can not possibly make a good decision.

Beach Road

go after landlords with unimproved and empty buildings

Old fire house parking lot, should be leased to a restaurant such as Dunkin' Donuts where working and retired islanders can afford a bite out, in lease have the back wall made into grand stair case for egress and seating for Memorail Park

With sea level expected to rise, waterfront is not a good choice.

Wherever people are interested in investing & opening a business

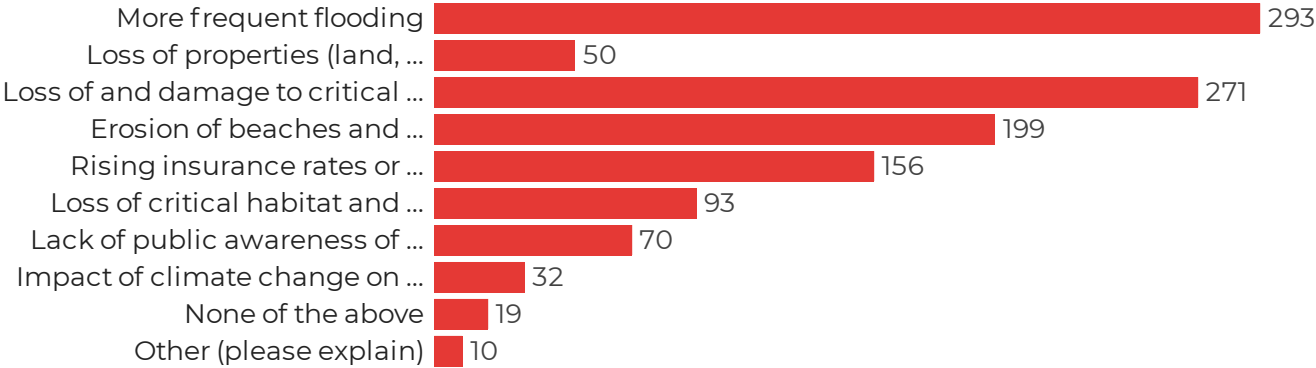
Existing business districts for retail, perhaps residential zoning that better allows for and regulates all the businesses based in people's homes

lets have no EMPTY stores or buildings on Main St, ex all the Hall properties!

All of the above

Q31 - What are your top concerns for Tisbury related to climate change? Choose up to three. - Selected Choice

437 Responses



● Choice Count

Q31_10_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

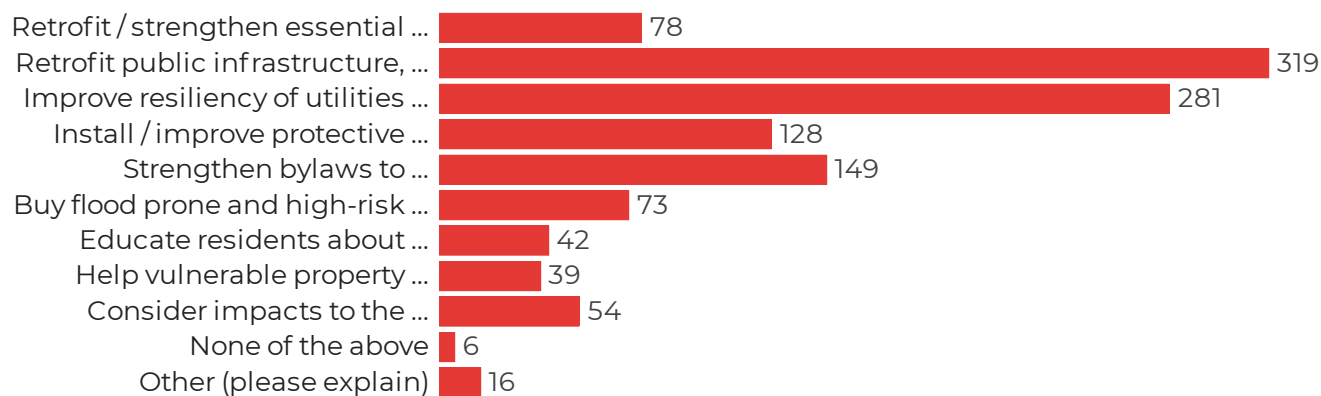
10 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

- loss of biodiversity especially pollinators eg bees
- Waterfront businesses impact due to rising water
- The climate is always changing. Especially when one considers the unregulated and quite operations surrounding geoengineering.
- Affordable / Community Housing is linked to climate change
- climate change is a hoax by the left. Where is the evidence? Is the sea level rising? NO! When roads flood, it's due to heavy rain at high tide.
- Incredibly concerned about fire. There's no education on remediation no maintenance of forested areas or public education
- Over-reaction to gradual change
- Decreased property values
- Town administrator should resign.
- No man or town can control the climate

Q32 - What types of projects or actions are most important for Tisbury to reduce the impact of severe storms and other climate impacts? Choose your top three. - Selected Choice

437 Responses



● Choice Count

Q32_12_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

16 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Single family homes with 6 apartments, think there should be concern about ground pollution. Properties with 2 to 4 commercial vehicle parked in public view .

stop building in high risk areas

Sewer systems need to be improved

not sure how to address this

Did not approve of boatyard being sold to National corp. from Texas!

All of the above

The police department is extremely outdated and falling apart. I work there. It's terribly located in the most congested parking lot on the island.

Upgrade water treatment to handle all town human waste

Retreat, rather than 'protect'

strengthening bylaws would mean decisions would be made by boards - which are incompetent.

Dredge the shoal at Ferry Boat Island to restore the nesting shorebird safe habitat.

Make consideration of externalities a priority when considering projects/policies

Rain barrels for each property

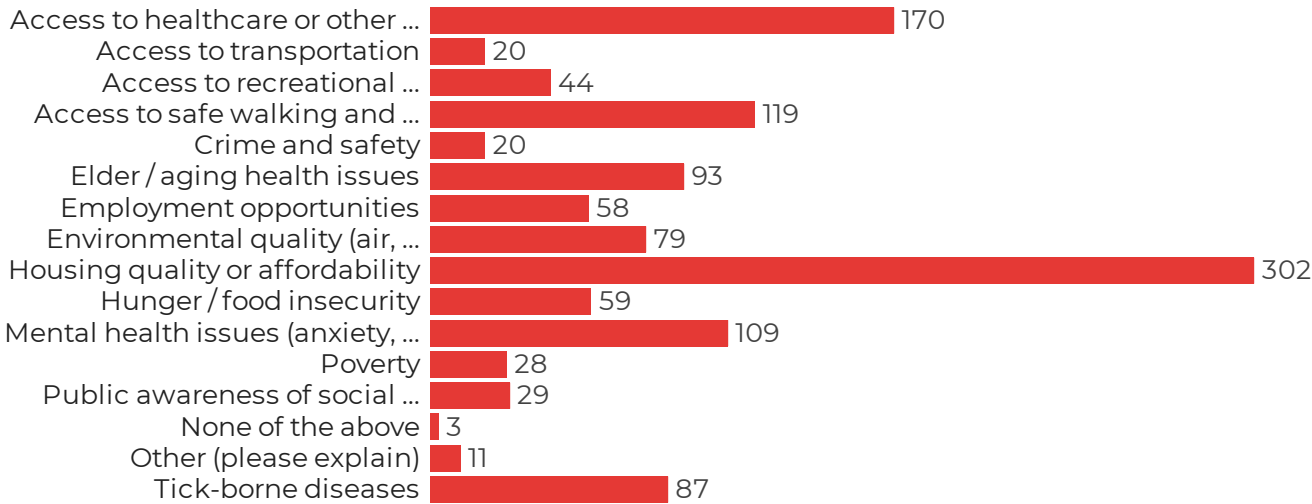
complete overhaul urban planning from Mansion House to the draw bridge

Stop Advertising the Island

All of the above

Q33 - What are the top three concerns that you most see affecting the health of Tisbury residents? - Selected Choice

439 Responses



● Choice Count

Q33_18_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

11 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Excessive tax rate

Protecting the working waterfront

Being able to afford to live here

Taxes

Drug trade and addiction

all

Keep bikes in the road not on sidewalks

slum lords, beach access

We need a hospital that residents can afford to to get care from .

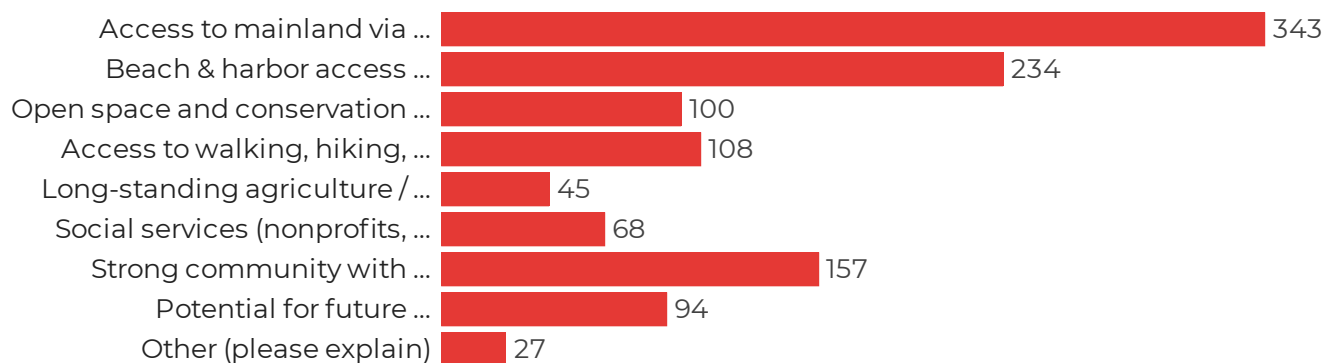
more people and development

Drugs

Q34 - The list below reflects features and characteristics that residents have commonly identified as the town's greatest strengths. Which among the following would you say are the top three strengths? -

Selected Choice

438 Responses



● Choice Count

Q34_10_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

27 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

All I hear about is the town's weakness's

take CARE of town builds after they are built

history

dominant number of year-round residents

That's a tough one.

Working waterfront

Year-round nature of the town - much potential to benefit from this

could be vibrant downtown

The administration and teachers at Tisbury School are the best.

I don't feel as if there is a ton of access to beach and harbor

Desire for change

Potential for attractive development of waterfront

in Tisbury you can feel like you are in the middle of nowhere but be just a few miles from civilization at the same time.

year round downtown stores that are diverse and sell more than tourist souvenirs

harbor access is a strength but the waterfront lacks identity

The most year round services and businesses on the island

year round economy

stores open year round

potential to keep tourism in Tisbury

Beach road weekend

Tisbury is incapable of deciding or implementing anything at all. Tisbury absolutely refuses to establish the park designed adjacent the drawbridge and will not even allow it to be considered. It was terminated after Mass DOT ripped off an elderly black couple - lawyer and opera singer - was sued - she had cancer - was awarded \$850,00 in damages and Mass DOT yanked the park.

year round business base for the island, small compact village, working waterfront

diverse neighborhood

potential access to walking, hiking and biking trails

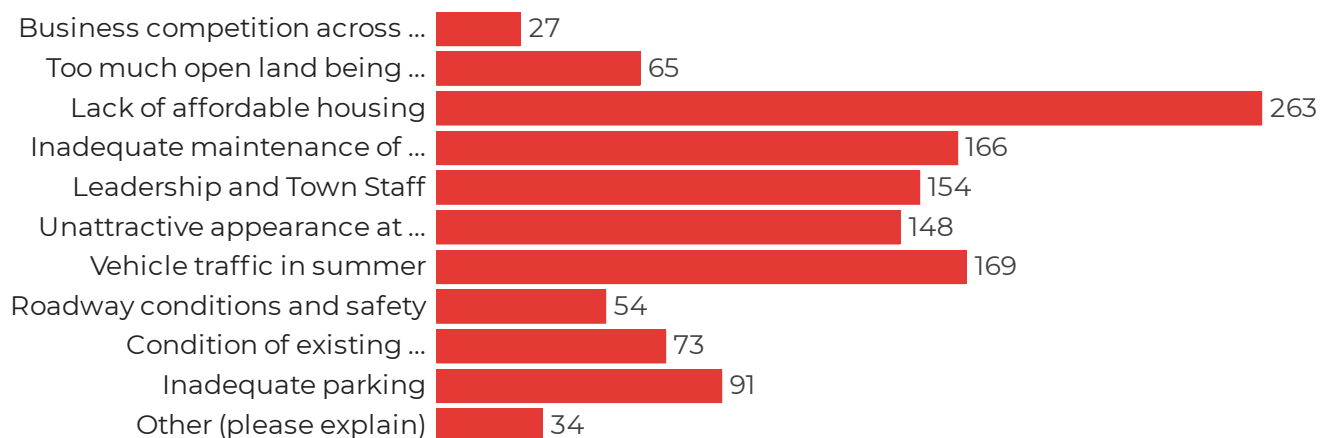
year-round services

Most working-class residents and families

Vibrant arts scene

Q35 - The list below reflects weaknesses that town residents have commonly identified. Which among the following would you say are the top three weaknesses? - Selected Choice

437 Responses



● Choice Count

Q35_13_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

33 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Town Administrator #1 and #2

Lack of warning lights at crosswalks on major roads (Edg Rd, State Rd, etc)

Lack of interest in common sense development opportunities, such as waterfront projects or restaurants

Not serving alcohol in VH. Many visitors choose OB and VH loses revenue

not enough ADU's

control of parking

property taxes

The commercial potential of Main St. VH is not optimized.

Lack of use of the park and ride. I love it and my business keeps our van there as my partner lives off island. I can't believe how many people ask me to take or pick up from the ferry when they could easily use the park and ride. This would really reduce traffic all around.

access to beaches in town, other than small spits of land

Unused / vacant stores on Main St. and State road (e.g., Theater, old Bowl and Board)

Loss of a thriving entrepreneurial and creative community and related businesses

Resistance to reasonable business development. Resistance based on “preserving character of town” (like school facade” disaster), while needing to be considered, is overdone.

Underwhelming downtown area

Develop two roundabouts: Five Corners and VH/Edgartown Road

Property taxes (and tax code in general) is a massive issue

lack of regional approach to island problems

failure to address Stop & Shop

STEAMSHIP Stinks!!!!

Public sewer expansion to eliminate septic usage which is leading to environmental issues

It's a combination of all of them, but strong leadership is top

bike paths need to be better maintained and more of them

Relative high taxes compared to other towns

Minimal public access to water

Lack of bicycle and pedestrian routes (not necessarily sidewalks), abandoned buildings on Main Street

reasons for tourists to stay in the town

Hopeless. Somehow Tisbury leadership is infected thoroughly with sociopaths.

obstinence of 6 towns ability to combine police, fire, emergency operations

Government deciding to do much is a weakness

Town is a dump-cluttered with old rusting junk everywhere-needs to be cleaned up

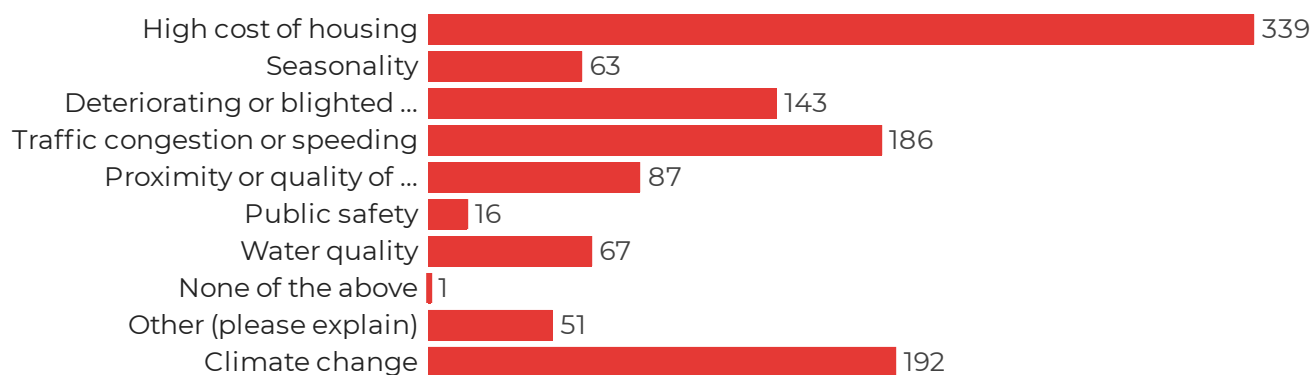
STRs have destroyed are neighborhoods.

poor urban planning

All of the above

Q36 - Which among the following pose the greatest threats to Tisbury's future? Choose up to three. - Selected Choice

434 Responses



● Choice Count

Q36_9_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

51 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Tax rate

Town Administrator

excessive noise in residential areas

Industrial sites like Vineyard Wind

AirBnB dominating real estate transactions

Unwillingness to change or improve

High taxes

Strick Zoning

High Property Taxes

over run by cars

poor governance

approving too many teardown and allowing rampant development near private lands/overly large homes near existing smaller homes

MVC & Land Bank

Poor decision-making

Loss of our middle and low income residents who provide so many services and contribute so much to our culture when they can actually live and work and be a part of our community, rather than commuting in.

Upkeep/Cost to maintain a home

Lack of forward thinking by leadership.

elimination of dead or hazardous trees

Too many vacant retail spaces in town for too long

poor dirt road maintenance

The slowly expanding shuttering of retail spaces on Main St

Alienating non-resident owners with exorbitant taxes not shared in other beautiful areas of the island

Onerous taxes

lack of vision and planning, from town administration

Lack of regional approach to problems

Beach Road weekend

Fire

condition of Stop and Shop

Property Taxes

inadequate town government, poor select board, poorly run town meetings which are difficult for older residents to attend

Overcrowding in residential houses

Inadequate town leadership

Sewage treatment lacking

Property taxes

lack of tourist attractions

hopeless

Overdevelopment

Loss of wildlife habitat.

private seasonal rental properties

Income inequity

Excessive amount of people attempting to live at another's expenses

Too many new, tall, ugly buildings that do not belong on the Vineyard

cleanliness-town is cluttered with junk and garbage

Mismanagement of town finance, poor planning.

Increasing tax burdens, energy use and costs

Selectboard

R.E. Taxes

empty and unkept buildings on MAIN ST

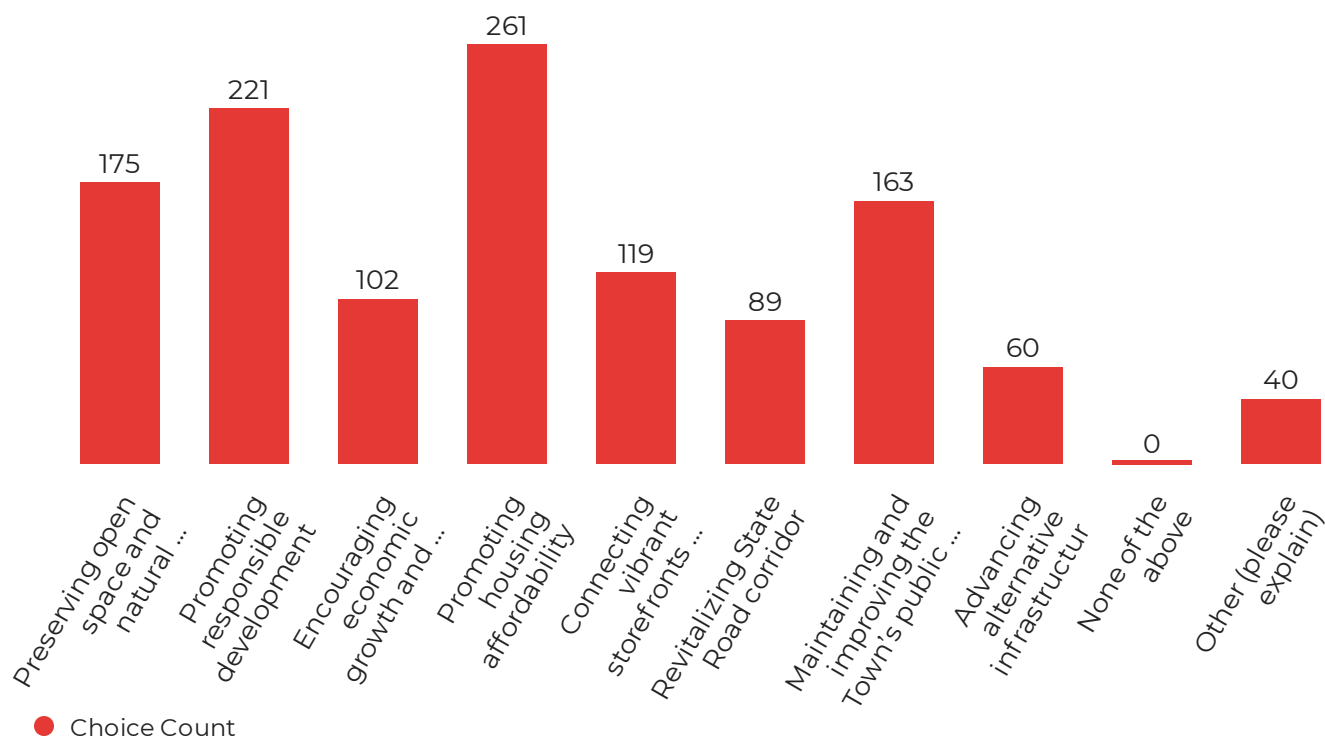
poor urban planning leading to people avoiding the town, contamination of ecosystem

wastewater limits/cost to residents to expand

Climate change. Rising sea level is going to destroy this town.

Q37 - Which of the following values should be addressed or prioritized in Tisbury's 2022-2023 Master Plan? Choose up to three. - Selected Choice

437 Responses



Q37_10_TEXT - Other (please explain) - Text

40 Responses

Other (please explain) - Text

Waterfront revitalization

limiting enormous housing projects that destroy habitat for wildlife and ultimately change the nature of the town to one of suburban sprawl

Connecting development to history so we don't become generic

improve communicaiotn between town and boards

enforce to stop the private property blight

Allowing Tiny Homes/ADU on your own property if you live here year round

Add Town Hall Offices to New School before no one can afford the taxes

Enforce zoning and conservation

Restricting access to Tisbury beaches by other Residents of island. If I'm prevented from going to Lucy Vincent beach, then why can Chilmark residents be able to come and use and park at Tashmoo Pond for nothing?

CLEAN up the trashed area around the bus terminal that people see when they arrive. It's terrible.

promote ADU's

Addressing climate change

Slowing approval processes for overly large residences in a seasonal location.

5 corner flooding

Safe bike path/SUP network

Three is not enough

maintaining dirt roads

Property taxes

Proper enforcement of property law

maintainance of dirt roads near the town

Allow stop and shop to modernize store and appearance

Penalized landlords for not maintaining their properties or keeping them vacant for extended periods of time

Mandating that storefront owners maintain their properties.

bring back the connector road plan

Restructure the Steamship

affordable temporary worker housing

Better control on massive homes replacing original historical more modest ones

Reducing barriers on homeowners to build apartments or make changes to their property

A master plan will be a disaster.

Support for the school

addressing climate change vulnerabilities

Expanding sewerage.

STOP allowing more building and more crowding!!!!

Cleaning up the town

addressing climate change

Expanding select board to five members like Oak Bluffs.

Promote quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Connector Rd to ease the State Rd and Edgartown Rd intersection traffic

I would want to make the town more walkable and safe for pedestrians and cyclists, allowing people to ditch their cars more often. I'd love to see the power lines changed into open space that would connect the tip of West Chop to the other side of town, giving residents the option to enjoy outside connection and a safer transportation option for visits to friends' houses, grocery trips, etc.

Create a walkable and bike-able network of trails connecting the the community's neighborhoods to the three business districts.

The current inefficient governance.

I would change the entry port of entry to make it more inviting.

Regional governance.

Allow entertainment like the rest of down island. People come here to spend money and have fun but they just pass through Tisbury because there is nothing here

Cost of, and lack of maintenance. Privatize the DPW.

More affordable housing options.

Two roundabouts one at five corners and one at state road and the Edgartown road

Improve waterfront area.

Taxes. Minimize the shifting of taxes to seasonal home owners. Tisbury needs to work on improving its economic vitality so years round residents can afford to live there.

Make it harder to get to the Island and stop summer business, fly-by-night

Selectman

Use Eminent domain to take 35 Main St/Theater/rest of the property on that block. Using the same tactic's that Edgartown used. contract a developer to build retail, food service and top of shop housing on the site.

Side walking on state road

Road maintenance for all residents to meet needs of emergency services

Eminent Domain from Mansion house to draw bridge to raise grade and start new on that strip, improving drainage and traffic as a result, put a traffic light at Edgartown Rd/State Rd intersection, widen all streets and connect sidewalks as if it was made for tourism, encourage a Michelin Star restaurant and a nightclub to become a year round destination

THE EMPTY AND UNKEPT BUILDINGS MAIN ST. HAVE TO GO--Appropriate them if owners are not going to put them to good use!!!

Significantly expanding availability of apartments or other affordable housing options for young professionals trying to establish roots on island (more housing that isn't designed as a single-family dwelling)

have a 24 hour noise ordinance like in the past

Affordable Housing

Entry appearance from the Steamship terminal

add more bike paths

Lower senior property taxes for people who have lived here more than 20 years and live on social security

Decrepit public and private buildings. Many places are in bad shape. Buzzy Hall properties, Black Dog buildings, many Beach Rd. buildings, Stop and Shop - Allow them to rebuild for all of us! It is embarrassing that we have that bad a grocery store building in town.

Get rid of STRs.... should be only allowed in business zoned and the owner must be present on the property orca resident of MVI!!

Get rid of STRs !!!

Lower my property taxes

Have the local beaches like Owen Little Way, Grove Ave, Tashmoo beaches be kept up and be more palatable for swimming since State Beach, Oak Bluffs, and Edgartown beaches become over crowded and West Tisbury, Chilmark are off limits Beach access for the common man in Tisbury where the seaweed and rocks do not impede getting into the ocean.

Five Corners

Make it more visually attractive at port entry

I would take us back to 2018 and find 22 people to vote yes to the school construction.

Regionalize emergency services (police, EMS, fire) so that other services could be better funded (school, housing, infrastructure)

Move the police station to the emergency building across street from school

update zoning regulations

Reduce cost of living.

I cannot communicate with the Tisbury Master Plan. I cannot get on any list, though have been told that I am. The Website is Terrible as there is no way to communicate. Phone calls and speaking to people don't work either. This was forwarded by a friend who knows I'm interested.

Make it to easier to access the mainland with a fast boat. This would be great for commuters, and when off island medical appointments are needed.

Lower the taxes!

Lower taxes which goes hand in hand with better financial management

I would every road a town road. We all pay the same taxes. But a lot of roads in town are not maintained by the town. They dont fix or even help if its not a town road. My neighborhood doesnt even have street lights. But i cant pay less taxes. Others receive way more attention. Its not fair.

Better leadership and professional staff

Completely rebuild a children recreational park. Veterans park is terrible fro young children. It is flooded more often than not making it a place no one can go to. it also needs double the amount of playing equipment.

Rebuilding the School When the Loan \$\$\$\$\$ was available, and using these savings + tax money to better our community --- housing & services for workers +young families; roads & sidewalks with SAFE crossings; bike trails through town; better shopping to attract tourists and STRONGER Planning (including more consolidation with other Towns on the Island.

1. Reduce property taxes.
2. Promote and encourage additional businesses to expand tax base.
3. Expand select board to five members.

Solving the flooding of Beach Rd from 5 corners to Packer Oil

The Town government, from the town administrator to the men behind the scenes who totally control him.

Poor governance - we need professionalism in office rather than the cronyism and incompetence that have characterized leadership for decades.

Regionalize services across island to cut costs.

Leadership

Change Main St to pedestrian only.

The inadequate senior center for a burgeoning senior population

More Playgrounds and outdoor gathering spaces for children

Make everyone clean up their properties and get rid of junk (old mattresses, appliances, boats)-have regular fee-free days at the dump and provide cleanup transportation....

Have Select Board push for regional school system.

To stop the town from expanding local government beyond its basic function .

Improved regionalization

Return to the less crowded, less commercial, quieter Vineyard of 50 years ago!!!

Not sure

I would change the haphazard way that development has occurred in this community so that clear guidelines for development, with emphasis on protecting the environment, are adhered to as the town moves forward.

Get commercial property owners to maintain their properties.

Let's make more affordable housing but please stop the Willy nilly development of every last woodland lot. Also, we've all had enough of Sam Dunn and his harebrained projects.

Lower property taxes

I would get rid of the beautification group and focus on re-engineering Main St to include wider sidewalks, trees, outdoor benches, encourage cafe style eateries, replace the cheap street lamps for better quality, install bike routes, install bike racks, tax commercial as the same rate other towns do and or at the same rate private property owners pay. incentives should be made to get housing apartments over stores, Landlords should be encouraged to maintain and improve their properties and bring them up to code. Architectural review board to maintain consistent down town facades.

Encourage a welcoming and directional way finding to Main St and William St from the SSA. Information booth should be enlarged with a wrap around covered porch and seating. Owen Park should expand the second floor of the Harbor Masters office to a hip roof structure and renovate the showers. The park needs to follow the plans submitted a few yrs back and invest in the new flow and parking designs. The Band stand needs to be replaced with the one excepted by the design committee from Moscow Architects.

More safe routes for bicycles

No public parks or spaces be leased to private concerns without thorough prior knowledge and approval by home owners effected and no lease should be signed which are for a longer period than one season

affordable/community housing

Decrease the number of ferries that come into Town. Create a visitors center at the Prouty House. improve Library and Town buildings, fix our Town Beach at Owen Little Way. Move freight out of the downtown.

Prepare for climate change

The area on Water Street should be developed into the major transportation hub that it deserves, through partnerships with corporations like Stop & Shop and the Steamship Authority, using legislation on the local and state levels.

The lack of sense of community, acceptance and patience and over reliance on draconian measures of enforcement of ridiculous laws such as the leash law

Make Tisbury a dry town again... no alcohol at all.

lower taxes

Five Corners

expand water system in downtown

The Town's appearance

All property owners vote. Replace current governance representatives.

Need to encourage business development that creates a destination for visitors coming to the Island like Oak Bluffs & Edgartown have done. The fact that residential taxes are so high as compared to Edgartown is criminal.

Do not use the park for concerts that interfere with your taxpayers living peacefully. Take it to the school where it used to be used for concerts. It doesn't help business in town.

Fix the idiotic and dangerous traffic flow at known problem spots like 5 corners and the intersection with the Edgartown road. Traffic lights are not evil! Do it before someone is killed.

the town administrator

Change the design of the new school

All decision makers resign. But that is impossible. It is all hopeless. They are simply going to use you to say we need a new town hall and spend a fortune thereby and the rest of it will be botched.

Elect forward thinking officials with the capacity to implement change - (like edgartown does!) Solve the decaying appearance of the town - it looks more forlorn, solve for mental health and crime and fox the flooding !!!

Improve the Main Street/downtown district w more shops better dining options movie theater.

Raise the 5-corners intersection and adjacent roads (Beach Rd SE, Lagoon Pond Rd and Water Street) 4 to 5 feet and install a round-about there or traffic light.

ALSO move the police to the Emergency services building and out of the prime parking and center of town near stop and shop.

Lack of affordable housing.

affordable housing

As a summer resident, I care about the community. But the Vineyard seems caught between a group of people that live in a dreamworld when it comes to development. I have had friends turned down for very reasonable projects by what appears to be public officials that are stuck in time. They have a view that the Vineyard should be the way it has always been and those that live there have a god given right to not change things. And there is constant complaining about the need for workforce housing. To solve the housing crisis, the Vineyard needs to allow meaningful development of multifamily housing at scale. There is open land on MV! Everything can't be put into conservation if you want to solve for workforce housing. The Land Bank is a joke. Too few homes and too much "not in my backyard fighting".

The Vineyard also can't become a way station for immigrants if there is no housing. I am for immigration 100%, but we need to live in the real world. As soon as the plane of immigrants showed up the people that pretend to care went crazy! It's all about virtue signaling and not real solutions.

It's time to take off the rose colored glasses and get real. I have been told by people that solving the housing crisis is not a funding problem but an "I don't want any change" problem. I won't allow development problem. Development is also viewed as an insiders game and the people that are in charge of town planning seem petty and clearly antagonistic to the wealthy Summer residents. We have been coming to the Vineyard for 50 years. For the first time we are thinking about going elsewhere which is sad.

If we want to be a community we need to act like one and govern like one. On Martha's Vineyard, sadly I am not sure that is possible.

Unsustainable growth. The massively overbuilt new structures on Union St are an abomination destroying utterly the entrance from the SSA to our Main St. and obliterating the formerly sweet little Italian bistro next to it. Who allowed such an abomination ?? To create a Mexican restaurant is terrific but why increase dwelling places for short-term vacationers at the expense of our year-rounders?? It is greed, profit and self-aggrandizement which motivates. I fear also the fate of the former Educomp building whose clients now put added pressure on our local Library at risk now for much greater computer service overusage. Similar to the stone bank expansion we will likely see summer rentals, putting much more stress on sewage and water needs. I foresee happening on this tiny isle eventual desperate water shortage issues similar to elsewhere. Overgrowth for summer folks is ruining the town as in Venice Italy where the locals have fled owing to inundation of tourists. Enough already!!!

Plan longterm about rising sea levels at, for instance, Five Corners.

Build a town hall

Michelin Star restaurant for attracting tourism year round, incorporating bunkhouses, bars, restaurants near fields or stadiums for children's sports tournaments to attract off-island families to stay overnight, development of more sports training facilities and community centers for kids, more dancing and nightclub options, more parking, more traffic flow including traffic lights

Allow stop n shop to improve building ..looks and safety and expansion for better shipping access and choices of items

Zoning

Change governance and administration so they are actively engaged and accountable to the community.

Resistance to change

Change the governance structure with 5 select board members and a strong town manager so the town can make improvements in a timely fashion, make zoning changes, and respond to long deferred maintenance.

I would find a way to improve town leadership by reducing the number of committees/fiefdoms and creating a more centralized executive authority to enhance efficiency and accountability.

revitalise mainstreet/downtown area- sort out SSA, Stop & Shop area. This will lead to increased economic activity which will help year-round population

Many of the home owners and much of the population is seasonal. It would be good to have ex officio members from this group on all committees and the board so as to get their opinion on things and help to get buy in from this essentially disenfranchised group.

traffic - taking a left onto State Rd. from the EDG-VH road. It is a constant experience of stress.

Enforce the zoning laws

more collaborative and competent town government

inability to address needs and face the expense

building permits

It would be so easy to have the cleanest town. Clean roads, well kept storefronts and public and Town owned properties. We should sub out the DPW, its obvious they are not capable of doing a good job...at anything.

Attractiveness of Downtown areas !!!!

Replace the people that allowed the town to miss the Tisbury School state funded renovation/replacement voted on 5 years ago. Came down to a horrible education effort on the benefits of approval. Now we are paying over twice what that cost would have been.

Although we are one small town everything feels disjointed, people follow the \$ instead of the earth.

fix up main street. Subsidize the theatre, attract solid year round tenants, and make it an attractive destination.

Get a new select board

With my magic wand, I would rewrite the town's zoning bylaws from start to finish, making it possible to build multi family housing in many parts of town.

Improve waterfront between Black dog and the bridge.

Build more safe bike paths to have an alternative to using cars for transportation

Five corners, Beach Rd flooding

Provide more affordable housing

Downtown is neglected and unsightly. Area between Main St and harbor needs significant attention. Road adjacent to Stop n Shop rear needs paving. Area next to police station has seen no maintenance for at least ten years. Small park next to theatre needs to be completely redone, as do adjacent areas. Walk area between ferry and Black Dog neglected for years, disgraceful. Buildings at Veterans Park need paint, been decades since any have been painted. Anyone arriving at VH for first time and walking up street next to SNS would think VH was a dump.

Lack of beach access for swimming

Leadership

Relocate the Stop n Shop

Fire everyone at the steamship who has been in charge for the last 5 years and start over.

Beautify- downtown buildings, the harbor areas, parks, 5 corner intersection area.

High taxes that continue to increase at an alarming rate

Traffic patterns.

town government

Select Board quality

Improve the appearance of Vineyard Haven in the area of the SSA, Water Street / 5 Corners etc.

That attitude of town officials. Previous selectmen with personal interests have been allowed to make decisions for the town and/or share misinformation that served themselves rather than the public (eg the Tisbury School), then left us to clean up their mess and foot the bill. As a result, the public is so confused about what the actual issues are facing the town that we are almost paralyzed. It's heartbreaking to be born and raised in Tisbury.

VH First Fridays are year round events!

Create, that is re-create, a waterfront that reflects the remarkable island we live on and to which we welcome thousands of visitors a year. The contrast between the arrival in Tisbury and the arrival in Nantucket is something not easily dismissed. It's there the tone is set.

Fix the flooding at Five Corners

Update Main Street. Get rid of the antiquated mindset on bars and entertainment in town. It's 2023. Build a cozy, snug pub, drink a cold Guinness and relax. Also, get a new police department that isn't located in a grocery store parking lot. The department is growing and we need more room.

I would change the waterfront starting at the Black Dog/ Gannon and Benjamin towards Packers. This should be a pedestrian friendly corridor from the SSA to Oak Bluffs with great economic opportunity.

Leadership

Improve the entrance to the Vineyard from the Steamship Authority and along Beach Road to have a beautiful welcoming appearance.

1- Decrease property taxes. Make it more community-oriented.

TRAFFIC and a light at the end of Edgartown / State Road.

The tax rate has become much too high.

Improve the condition of existing buildings in the downtown area, Open-up closed businesses, and the movie theater. Seeing empty storefronts are a symbol of uncaring and greedy owners. It portrays Tisbury as an unfriendly, unwelcoming town for both residents and visitors.

Making Town responsible for snow removal from sidewalks

Get rid of that huge eyesore of a development at the old stone bank which has been built to accommodate the super elite. And make that space into affordable housing for us islanders.

Emphasize the appearance of the entry into town and town itself. It's despicable that particular landlords and we know of one in particular who lets their properties crumble and are both in eyesore and a non-income producer for the town

Remove obstacles and widen sidewalks out-of- town Main Street

More business friendly and a make a vibrant waterfront with combination of restaurants, art spaces, year-round housing and Retail spaces.

Lower tax rate

I'd let Stop and Shop expand their grocery store

Leadership

Force committees to look at history before making decisions

We have some of the busiest and most dangerous intersections on the island, where edg-vh Rd meets state Rd, 5 corners and then the traffic from the drawbridge in the summer. There have been numerous accidents at the corner of skiff ave and edg-vh Rd. I think that one of the most important things that Tisbury should look at are traffic patterns and how to alleviate some of the congestion, or make routes more easily accessed, and better traffic flow.

cost of housing

I love Tisbury as it is.

fix five corners and beach road flooding

The crooked town government

CARS. The biggest issue in Tisbury is that the gateway for most of us to enter the island is this flat, paved, ugly, smelly, loud, dangerous monstrous parking lot, and getting from there to the shops, Main St, etc requires dodging an onslaught of cars and their associated pollution, noise, and physical danger to pedestrians and bikers. I know this would never happen in my lifetime, but imagine how gorgeous and relaxing our town would become if we limited the constant movement of cars on and off the island? Or at least minimized, changed, or hid away the parking lot and created a massive pedestrian friendly through line from ferry entry points to Main St??

Just imagine now you've exited the ferry and want to make your way over to Net Result for lunch, and you're traveling on foot— it absolutely sucks. You walk across a chaotic car filled lot as far as the eye can see, wait to cross a street filled with incoming and outgoing cars getting out of the steamship, and then try to cross 5 corners which is an asphalt monstrosity and enormous danger to pedestrians (as an EMT, there are several pedestrian strikes a year here), and then walk on an insanely narrow sidewalk with a bike lane covered in sand, find your seat outside and realize you're actually just sitting in.. another parking lot!!!

Just get rid of the cars please! Minimize them, limit them, the fabric of our community will thank you. Bump up bus access, make bicycling actually safe and beautiful and people will do it.

Traffic and speed limit monitoring

Tax rate and its impact on esthetic to maintain downtown properties and waterfront

we need leaders with a vision of teh future from an economic sense to revitalize from teh SSA to Main street and beyond

New Town Hall

Lagoon Pond development and nitrogen plans, controls and implementation

Many telephone poles have wires coiled up on them or dangling to the ground. Most likely cable or telephone wire. Looks messy and dangerous

make main street more like Edgartown. Encourage outdoor seating and nightlife.

Lack of adequate sidewalk infrastructure and bike lanes.

Government leaders... Support their voices / their vision and the changes they wish to make to see Tisbury a great place to be

Encourage the halls to sell their properties.

Road maintenance

More support for services, e.g. library, senior center, cultural activities (Cornell Theater) and so on.

Water quality of lagoon pond / flooding in five corners

Tisbury could be the leader of creating a regional governance system that would deal with the environmental, housing, curbs on development that weakens the infrastructure to support the growth.

New town leadership!

Entry to VH once off ferry. Stop and shop should be allowed to modernize and improve appearance. Parker boat yard eye sore.

Fire the city manager and get some competent administration with vision and understanding of development

Their fruitless spending of funds they don't have.

Affordable housing for seasonal workers and year round residents.

Address the broken tax code and promote business growth through incentives/cuts

Property taxes for nonresidents

Too much wasted / run down waterfront space (e.g. Beach Road area). Repurpose / redevelop responsibly.

STOP taxing West Chop to death! We support many things in the Tisbury community but your taxes are killing what used to be a very diverse community. Edgartown residents pay half the taxes that West Chop does. Don't kill the goose that lays the golden eggs!

Make downtown/Main Street area SIGNIFICANTLY more attractive/appealing/more well kept/better shops, more high end brings in more \$ -

Improve entire waterfront and steamship area. It's awful and deteriorating.

affordable housing

Reopen the Capawok and fix up Main Street/Ferry/Stop and Shop area

Add a playground to lake street courts park..its a great open space near a lot of kids and could be a wonderful place for children to play and feel like a community.

property taxes are crazy high compared to other town, but services are less than stellar. I think there is a lot of waste, and some very poor decision making by sometimes dysfunctional town leadership.

Create vibrant, attractive and flood-resistant waterfront area near the ferry terminal - not more T-shirt shops but one-off shops and restaurants similar to those in Edgartown, and/or fishing/shipbuilding-related shops/services. This could increase employment and draw visitors from around the island to spend money in Tisbury.

Provide more affordable housing

The downtown/Steamship dock/beach road area is intensely ugly and has limited offering to many ppl, so people who come through Tisbury have little visual/retail/etc reason to stay and spend money in Tisbury.

reduce property taxes- they are ridiculously high and force people out

Increase the number of seats on the BOS from 3 to 5.

Revitalize the Downtown business area, including allowing Stop and Shop expansion, making the waterfront look better, and trying to allow business downtown enough flexibility to adequately revitalize downtown (including taking the Hall's movie theater and Bowl and Board - those locations being as they are destroy the vibrancy of downtown).

Fill the vacant retail spaces with vibrant business

Improve Herring Creek Road

Add protected bike lanes as they have along Vineyard Haven - Edgartown Road

A comprehensive Master Plan (!) completed and activated.

The political establishment

Improving the downtown area, both physical appearance, accessibility and appeal to business people. Improving the downtown area and making it more appealing to visitors who arrive at our port, should help expand the tax base and the variety of business types by increasing the foot traffic. Currently, the physical appearance in desirability of the port in downtown area is a palling, as is the grocery store and the parking situation

Build more affordable housing.

Extend the sidewalk on Franklin St. out to West Chop and around to Main St.

Improve effectiveness of leadership and governance

Address the enormous potential of the Tisbury waterfront to soar visually, aesthetically, economically, and culturally.

Create a town for year round residents and employees rather than catering to the wealthy

Legalize bars

traffic congestion

Expand the tax base beyond residential. Tisbury=highest taxes MA; Edgartown=4th lowest. Tax base.

don't rely to excess on summer residents paying for infrastructure development. The taxes imposed on that element of the community are unfair.

I would stop new builds and figure out affordable housing.

Housing

stopping the beach road festival every year

Lack of strong Leadership by Town Administrator

Take Hall properties by eminent domain and revitalize Main Street.

Improve quality and appearance of buildings and public spaces near port area to welcome more residents and visitors to stay, shop, eat out, etc in Tisbury.

Fully engage ALL residents in the Master Plan process so that Tisbury's destiny reflects the economic, social and natural priorities of our community.

Handling summer vehicle traffic

DECREASE PROPERTY TAXES

Five Corners

my property taxes are insanely high

Advocate for regional government - police, fire, ambulance, waterfront management

Preserve the appeal of the sailing harbor as done so long by Black Dog owners.

Housing Affordability

Limit car traffic in the summer

make the port and Beach road more attractive: embrace the waterfront, add shops and restaurants..

Think bigger and not so negatively

Leadership! Some flexible forward looking leadership that isn't overly stuck in the past. One of the master plan committee members lost re-election as selectman. There is a message there.

Lack of affordable housing.

Re-open movie theater

A more attractive and vibrant waterfront.

Improve condition and appearance of structures on State road

Harbor/Main Street beautification!!!! Clean up our precious town- it looks run down and there is not sense of arrival- Our harbor front is a disaster.....

Bring back the middle and lower income residents to be full time neighbors and full members of the year round community again.

putting in a roundabout at the State Road and Beach Road juncture

Traffic congestion and parking

Create a comfortable and SAFE bike path network. Especially with e-bikes becoming more popular as an alternative to using a car. Also as a safe way for our children and teenagers to move around.

Help with housing those who work in vital services, like police, medical staff, teachers and housing for seasonal workers.

Better biking paths in and around downtown.

Change the leadership for one that has vision and energy

I feel like we are at a crossroads where the town could go in an Oak Bluffs direction or an Edgartown direction. Are we going to cater to hoards coming off the ferries and live with overflowing garbages, relentless traffic and endless tee shirt shops? Or are we going to put more into preservation/beautification, bring in stores like Rosewater and Slate and the Atlantic and LuluLemon etc etc. Basically: DON'T TURN IT INTO OAK BLUFFS

Provide affordable housing for both year round and seasonal workers

Post stop signs at five corners (ferry, beach road, lagoon pond, etc.). This area with speeding vehicles is very dangerous and no one seems to care.

Affordable housing

Fire all of the police force and hire from scratch

More affordable housing

I love tisbury and if I could do one thing it would be to ensure the small town charm continues for future generations. I do not want to see the town overbuilt to appease tourists.

403 Responses

If you had the power to completely change ONE thing about Tisbury, what would it be?

The structure of the waterfront! Keep the money in VH when it arrives instead of it going to other towns. This will decrease the tax rate and encourage people to live in the town.

Do Not Allow anchoring in Lake Tashmoo.

Prohibit anchoring in Lake Tashmoo; install pilings as Harbormaster has suggested

Control Tax Increases

Lack of affordable housing

Lower property taxes to reflect the actual amount of services provided. Edgartown should be the model and our taxes should be in line with what they are paying. There is no rational reason for our taxes to be as high as they are.

Improve the stop n shop

The costs of Real Estate taxes would be lowered or offset..

Five Corners intersection. Make it a large rotary

N/A

A vibrant, shared , community 'downtown' one that is more than a pass through for people going to and from the ferry

Make waterfront more accessible and more appealing (public docs for visitors to access town from, ocean side restaurants, better access to beaches)

reduce overall cost of living, to include cost of land and homes.

More affordable housing.

Hold a vote of "No Confidence" and oust the Town Administrator. Its the easiest vote a BOS could have. Been saying it for years. He will destroy Tisbury the same way he destroyed Framingham. 100% FACTS

parking availability

Stop making decisions behind closed doors. I have been to enough public meetings where our voices just go with the wind and mean nothing because it is all for show.

Change the anchoring regulations in Lake Tashmoo to , NO ANCHORING ANYWHERE !

make it easier and more attractive for new businesses to move into Main St. Help owners with keeping their buildings looking good...
What happened to the Owen Park Bandstand / Pier project?

eliminating the "good old boys" network where decisions are made behind closed doors to benefit the few at the expense of all

Better waterfront with more year round restaurants.

Allow single family properties of any size to add a detached bedroom in the R25 zone

Steamship Authority to the DrawBridge - Improve Public Access and Beautify

Five corners/Beach Rd flooding

Area surrounding port.

go back to 24/7 noise ordinance

I would create a more attractive public waterfront area where the ferry comes in, like the piers that were created in Oak Bluffs, so that residents and visitors alike would have an attractive, welcoming space by the harbor where they could walk, sit, and congregate.

Bypass road connecting state & Edgartown roads

Remove all Boards and committees from the control of the Select Board. They have too much control over the direction of the town and every time a new person is elected the direction of the town changes and has resulted in millions of dollars wasted.

Tisbury is a small town, and, it can only operate in "moderation." We should focus on what we can "manage" without overburdening or overtaxing us.

1. A strong government that will execute the fair and sensible decisions and follow through with them.

2. Revenue : Disclose and discuss the adequate spending of town revenue, mostly gained from year-rounders' Real Estate tax, and, make sure it goes back to their maintenance of the relevant environment and nothing else.

3. We need to see things clearly. "We are not the tourists" and, we should think for ourselves, first, when the revenue is generated from our Real Estate Tax mostly.

***Why should we spend our local tax to resolve the seasonal issues the seasonal vendors and their visitors create? Find a difference revenue to deal with the seasonal problems, not with our Real Estate Tax revenue. The vendors should be responsible for their clients while they profit from their seasonal business, including the trash, overcrowding, pollutions of all types, including sewers, and costly infrastructure upkeep.

4. Do not offer the public spaces for private profit-making events or uses. That makes our town government appears compromised in many ways.

We need a sensible, fair, uncompromised government that will oversee these issues and put the residents as the top priority.

make decisions concerning functionality instead of aesthetics i.e. taking away parking spots

government structure

Completely redesign the area surrounding the ferry terminal, with small parks/boardwalk and improved "off-ramp" into town

Demand Stop and Shop be renovated/expanded with more parking

Traffic at five corners: make it safer. Give year round Tisbury residents access to Lambert Cove beach

Enforce building and zoning regulations. That way raise money with fines .

Not fair if contractors run commercial company from residential neighborhoods, build what they want , load the trades people into single family houses . Buy up up properties on same street and then continue to pack in more workers . Commercial trucks starting at 6.15 am , then returning from 9 pm on . With workers getting dropped off at the same properties . Like living in a commercial development.

Hopefully taxes don't keep getting higher as I don't see any improvement in the hood . House taxes seem like a mortgage payment .

Figure out how to get property owners to make better use of the several vacant commercial spaces on Main Street.

more bike paths

Get the blight off Main Street, including a Post Office makeover!

More affordable housing

Workers need to live somewhere, more seasonal housing for seasonal workers

Make the harbor more attractive and more user friendly from the steamship up to the draw bridge

Develop businesses in the many empty storefronts

Regionalize K-12 Schools. Erect new town hall on current school property. Make old Town Hall property a park.

More AVAILABLE & AFFORDABLE housing.

Relocate SSA terminal

Real affordable housing, not the IH bullshit salary caps. We need rent control and units so our kids don't have to leave the island because they can't afford to buy.

Representation for seasonal residents. Tax without representation

Allow bars on or near the waterfront in a common sense manner

strengthen town government

Larger harbor-move breakwater further out

Town Administrator

traffic congestion/flow

Maintenance of existing public roads, sidewalk and parks

Traffic flow at five corners and Edgartown Rd/State Road intersections.

How about another way to get from Edgartown Road to Cronig's/Shirley's/ SBS area

Reduce population and preserve open spaces

Reasonable and fair zoning requirements that protect the past, without shutting the door on the future. This applies to residents and business owners. Do not be afraid of the future, embrace its development. Keep things moving, without slowing things down being afraid of change.

To make the staff in town hall understand that they work for the community and that they are in a public SERVICE business.

Zoning in Tisbury is too strict and because of that business development is almost impossible. Tisbury needs more revenue to pay for the upcoming capital improvements needed in sewer and town hall. Tisbury already has the highest taxes on the island, we can't just keep raising taxes, we have to promote Tisbury as a place ready for responsible development. Also we need to allow for guest houses in Tisbury (for work force housing & family members, not short-term rentals), if a home has the septic capacity and the structure meets setbacks then we should allow homeowners the ability to help solve the housing crisis. This would allow the marketplace more flexibility to invest in town and add housing.

End the Tisbury School renovation and regionalize all education levels

Air BNB and like modalities have changed fabric of many places. Take a hard look at how other communities are managing this or failing and impacts. Recognize your conflict of interest/bias secondary to tax windfall. Purely speculative ownership necroses communities.

Change zoning to allow more businesses to develop and grow. Tisbury needs more revenue to pay for all of its capital needs and changing this zoning for businesses would improve the tax base and make the town look more professional and cleaner.

Town manager

Preserving open space.

Restrict our beaches to non Tisbury residents until we are allowed to use other beaches without cost around the island.

Manage traffic in August without signals.

More attention to climate change and more affordable housing.

maintain a vital Main Street -- property owners whose buildings stay unoccupied for long periods because rents are excessive are a drag on the attractiveness of our town. Main Street should be the jewel that it could be.

Installing effective leaders with vision into town administrative and committee roles- ideally, creating opportunities for younger people in the town to be involved in a more practical, realistic way (most town roles require more time than a working parent can spare). I feel that this would shift the efforts of the town to a more progressive and more future-oriented path.

Expand capacity of waste treatment plant to aid clean up of Lagoon and Tashmoo!

Affordable housing

revitalize downtown area as a whole, which would be a LOT of things

Dealing with town issues on an as-needed basis. Not procrastinating the inevitable e.g. school improvements, town government buildings maintenance

I would let Stop & Shop expand

The leadership that chose not to invest in our children.

More affordable housing

Housing costs

State road corridor, homeowners, businesses and alternate transportation could be supported better.

Improve the waterfront. Make it more inviting with cafes, walking areas, fix flooding, make it more attractive and inviting

Traffic flow around Stop and Shop. Especially as it relates to port entry.

Create zoning/modify for multi family homes with a different tax structure than a single family home, creating more revenue to the town to cover for extra costs.

I would like to see large projects such as new schools implemented with a fiscal responsibility that takes into account the quality of workmanship in bids presented, the known reputations of builders for quality of their work and time frame issues such as state grants for building.

Creating a central community where walking was the main means of transportation

Make it a more vibrant downtown area similar to Edgartown and Oak Bluffs,

Improve the affordability for year-round residents. Tisbury's very high property taxes do not yet reflect the cost of the new school. And now there is talk of a new Town Hall. Tisbury already has the highest property taxes on the island. The irony is that with additional tax increases, the young families for whom the new school is being built will not be able to afford to live here. Older longtime residents will be forced out as well. The soul of the town will be lost.

Protect the open spaces from development.

Not much. Tisbury is pretty nice compared to a lot of other places.

Allow for dense development on State and Beach roads to increase the availability of affordable housing for essential employees in areas of health care, education etc.

Have good management so we are efficiently run and do not miss opportunities, like the ability to fund the Tisbury school with State funds. With so many seasonal residents paying huge taxes and using very few services esp schools I am always amazed that taxes are so high and have gotten very high recently. Schools are generally 50% of a town's budget. so where is all the waste of the school funds being paid in but not "claimed" by seasonal residents with no kids in school? To make matters worse we are one of very few towns that offer a 20% discounts to local tax payers. Ridiculous management. And run town town buildings.

Waterfront and downtown

Vibrant stores on main street. So many empty stores,

create the shortcut from state rd. to Edg. Rd.

Responsible development -includes housing needs. Leaders cooperating rather than in fighting . ex. Stop and Shop , Tisbury school .

Housing: Limit seasonal rentals, zoning changes to allow more housing, tax reduction for landlords who rent year round

The intersection of Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road and State Road. It's time to put a stoplight there. It is a nightmare in the summer, causing horrendous backups on both roads, and hazardous all year round.

safe biking routes and more beach access.

Bars/night life

The appearance of the town when you get off the Ferry, and the related development of the waterfront into an attractive downtown area. So that visitors wouldn't arrive and go immediately to other towns to shop and eat and stay.

More community activities like First Friday

Make a downtown that includes the waterfront and surrounding waterfront areas and make it WALKABLE. Include a town green as a town center. (Not just a focus on Main Street) Take the cars out of the picture. Less asphalt to support (parking) cars and more green for walking. Thanks.

Change from Select Board and hire Town manager with oversight by locals

If I had that power, I'd want to NOT change the essence of the small town-ness...not over develop the downtown etc.

The problems of the 21st c. are too vast to be handled by six separate little villages. We must regionalize the island--have a single town of Martha's Vineyard (with six villages within) to be able to cope with environmental issues/climate change, pond health, scope and sequence in Education, fire and safety, libraries and other services. As long as we remain in our tribal postures, we the island will have inadequate governance structures to handle the complexities of modern life. This would help with our current problem of having towns staffed by retirees who are not professional in the preparation for their roles. A regionalized island could afford trained professionals to run the government, and the island would benefit from their expertise.

I would protect the health of the harbor, lagoon, and Tashmoo. Water runoff is a big concern, especially the flooding at five corners. Expanding the shipyard and marina in the lagoon is not safe.

No non resident overnight parking in VH village

Bring about a huge improvement in the way we govern our town. Any improvements would be welcome. But we need a HUGE improvement.

Taxing second homeowners as high as possible to address the year round and worker housing crisis

Merge various town departments across the Island to free up budgets, with the savings redirected to improving services and funding capital needs. Improve accountability.

Reinvigorate the Main St. corridor by making rents affordable and promoting full tenancy across all storefronts and in particular the Capawock and old Bowl & Board which never should have been fallow for so long.

Lifelong residents and visitors are leaving. Why? One thing is that my family cannot afford the taxes currently imposed on summer residents who own a house that is only inhabitable four months of the year. I would like to figure out a way to help without being driven out. Thank you for this opportunity to participate.

Dishonesty of town officials.

congestion in the summer

Lower taxes

Fix the downtown area and make it the vibrant commercial center of the island. Tisbury is a wasted gateway.

Reducing the commitment to growth!

location of post office

Increase amount of affordable housing

Improve traffic flow

Better walking paths along the chop- from downtown and all the way around the chop yo state road.

Redo 5 corners

Add more restaurants and promenade along the scenic working harbor

Allow more year round restaurants

More parking, more housing for workers ! The dry cleaners had to close due to lack of housing for the manager !!!

I'd change the minds of the leadership and voters to boldly embrace change, not fearfully cling to tradition.

Make the taxes less to promote more people to invest and buy houses in tisbury

Revitalize downtown- fill empty storefronts, encourage new businesses etc

Provide sufficient affordable housing

HIGH PROPERTY TAXES

The high taxes compared with other island towns

Responsible growth

New leadership with island residents' priorities addressed.

Allow the Stop & Shop in Vineyard Haven to re-model and expand. It is an eyesore and the town is holding back economic development because of the town's refusal to let them expand and re-model.

Develop the water front and entry port properties to be more attractive and commercially profitable.

Narrow the ugly road along the Tashmoo lookout.

Ensuring access to starter homes and accessibility to affordable housing. Without that, the island will not survive. Tisbury could attempt to engage in securing homes on the market and renting them or selling them to qualified buyers.

More effective leadership

Public access road from State Road to Edg-VH road to avoid dangerous intersection at bottom of Edg-VH road.

Overcrowding and development are of great concerns.

Improve Five Corners, ideally by creating a rotary.

Beach Rd businesses and unattractive appearance

Establish small business in all the Main Street buildings so none are vacant

Hire professionals with proven capabilities to prioritize the needs, create a master plan and execute with excellence.

The blighted run down vacant spaces in center of town. Specifically the marine district (Black Dog boat barn) could be a beautiful area for development maintaining marine aspects with commercial spaces for dining, art galleries, etc. Center of town could encourage better maintenance of properties by owners (painting facades of properties); maybe Tisbury could follow Edgartown's adoption of a way to get the two vacant properties owned by the Hall family (movie theater and old Bowl & Board) occupied by a responsible citizen with a commercial endeavor. Not sure what can be done about this but vacant properties make Vineyard Haven least attractive of the island's towns.

Tisbury has amongst the highest tax rates per capita of communities in Massachusetts (also compared to other towns on the Vineyard), we need to figure out how to use tax revenue more efficiently and we need to reduce the tax rate to a competitive rate.

It is an embarrassment that the Capawock and the former Bowl and Board Bldg (I believe owned by the infamous Halls) remain empty.

Appearance when getting off ferry

Rebuild stop and shop and include real parking.

Improvements to the downtown area, parking,etc.

I would make the town more attractive to small businesses and restaurants.

Stronger and more qualified town leadership

Port appearance. Parts of it are beautiful. Other parts are very ugly

More attractive downtown with fewer cars and more open shops.

Appendix B

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Listening Workshop

During the Listening Workshop, groups of participants circulated among four topical stations about transportation, the environment and climate resilience, businesses and housing, and design and placemaking. At each station, participants wrote comments on sticky notes and placed them on base maps of the study areas. The sticky notes were color coded. Red sticky notes indicated study area weaknesses. Green sticky notes indicated strengths. Yellow sticky notes indicated opportunities. The groups discussed their input with station facilitators. The stations were facilitated by relevant experts from the consultant team. Staff from BETA facilitated the Transportation station. Staff from Barrett Planning Group handled the Housing and Businesses Station. Staff from Horsely Hitten Group ran the Climate and Environment station. Staff from Dodson & Flinker worked the Design and Placemaking Station. While the stations were focused on specific topics, participants often commented on other topics and other areas adjacent to the study area. This reflects the interconnectedness of community systems. The input from all stations is summarized below grouped by study area and topic. The notes are color coded with green indicating strengths, red indicating weaknesses, and black indicating opportunities.

B2 District (State Road Area)

Overall

- Much of the area is unattractive and poorly connected with numerous private roads
- The B2 area has many opportunities, but needs a plan
- Opportunity to relocate town offices to B2, including town hall and grammar school. Combine town hall, school, library with parks to create a campus
- Make the area a village center: walkable, green, with a mix of shops

Transportation

- + The Park and Ride Lot, which is accessible but hidden
- + The bus is used by a lot of workers in Tisbury, but it is difficult to figure it out
- + The trail networks in parts of the B2 and adjacent areas
- + The powerlines which provide an opportunity for a greenway walking and bikeway network
- + Bike paths and sidewalks on Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road. The road is wide and has fewer curb cuts than State Road.
- + West Spring Street is useful for getting around State Road when it is congested
- There are narrow sidewalks and narrow shoulders along State Road.
- The private roads throughout the B2 lack sidewalks and are also narrow.
- Traffic on State Road is either speeding or stopped
- State Road is not safe for bicycling, bike paths there are unsafe
- State Road has developed as a corridor where almost every business has its own access. The huge number of curb cuts makes the corridor less safe and makes traffic flow more congested
- Most of the streets intersecting with State Road in the B2 District are dead end streets. The trucks and equipment operated by the businesses off of State Road end up on State Road. Explore a new access route for trucks.
- There is no connection between State Road and Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road
- Spring Street near the school is dangerous for kids to cross. There is low visibility
- Poor sight lines at the bend in State Road near the “Nobnocket” property (east of Holmes Hole Road)

- VTA does not have clear info about routes, timetables, etc.
- Lambert's Cove Road is narrow and dangerous. The buses on the Lambert's Cove route do not run frequently enough to be useful
- The Park and Ride lot and its bus service is a strength for the B2 District and Tisbury more broadly. It is especially useful for small commercial business owners who can pay to park commercial vehicles there
- Raise awareness of the Park and Ride Lot
- Area southeast of State Road lacks interconnectedness, including lacking a connection to Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road
- Establish Connector Roads between State Road and Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road to ease congestion and improve connectivity. This could be a walking and biking connector.
- Connect Cook Road to State Road so that it can connect Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road to State Road
- Take over private roads in the B2 District and provide sidewalks on them
- Establish roads that connect between existing private roads within the B2 area
- Make State Road a more walkable street; create a better pedestrian and bike connection through the area to downtown and beyond; establish a bike path from downtown to Main Street along State Road
- Enforce the speed limit on State Road
- Bury utilities
- Consider an on-demand crossing light for kids crossing State Road
- Walking trails through town property could be expanded, improved and publicized to connect surrounding neighborhoods to the B2 commercial uses
- Establish a greenway along the powerlines
- Work toward limiting the number of cars in Tisbury, for example, set a limit of two cars per family and charge fees for extra cars.

Housing and Businesses

Overall

- + There is more physical space in B2 than in downtown
- + If businesses or residences need to retreat from downtown, the B2 area can absorb more density
- The current sewer plant is inadequate. Evaluate financing for sewer improvement.
- There is underutilized land in the B2 District, especially near the Park and Ride field

Housing

- + Year-round housing in the B2, including affordable housing on Village Court, and in adjacent neighborhoods
- + Close to strengths outside of the District: School, Fire Department, sledding hill at field near Tashmoo Springs Overlook, the Tisbury Amphitheater



- The more industrial businesses that are located in the B2 need to be there—there are few other suitable locations on the Island—and need to operate freely. If more housing was built in B2 is might cause problems for these businesses.
- The B2 is an appropriate location for housing because it is already a dense developed area with good transportation access
- State Road (and downtown) would be an appropriate location for a tiny house community
- Need neighborhoods of small cottages for young families—think post WWII developments
- Housing above commercial would be desirable but requires sewer service
- Loosen the zoning to allow for apartments in houses and in apartment buildings for affordable housing. At the same time, limit the size of large single-family houses
- Limit short-term rentals; do not allow Airbnb properties that are purely for rental and unoccupied otherwise
- Need rent controlled apartments
- Can new housing be built at the solar field with the panels moved on top of housing?
- Develop the “Nobnocket” property (at corner of Holmes Hole Road and State Road) for housing, mixed use
- Existing housing stock in areas around the B2 District should be preserved to reduce the need for new development
- Allow guest houses in the R-3A District (west of B2)
- Don’t build housing at the Island Food Products Site

Businesses

- + The B2 is a functional commercial district, provides space for many useful businesses
- + B2 district provides year-round businesses
- Some properties have derelict trucks, junked cars, etc.
- The large vehicle storage lot adjacent to the Park and Ride lot is not a good location for heavy equipment and construction vehicles and is a poor use of space
- Potential conflicts between growing businesses and adjacent residential uses

Design & Placemaking (includes Open Space)

- + Existing shade trees and greenery along State Road—keeps it nice
- + Two-story buildings are a good scale
- + There is a good view from the Park and Ride Lot
- + The connection to nature from B2
- + The Oak Grove and Martha’s Vineyard Hebrew Cemeteries are positive green space
- Opportunity for town to take over private roads, rationalize and beautify them and work toward more orderly and efficient development patterns
- If you are going to build housing, also need to build amenities
- Don’t need mediocre suburban apartments or mixed-use blocks
- Want village style apartments: compact layout, low buildings but close together, shared amenities down the block
- Put parking behind buildings



- Need more fields for sports. The B2 area has potential for that; Develop the Park and Ride field for resident use; improve the field; add seating on the slope
- Preserve the pretty knoll at the intersection of Short Hill Road and Holmes Hole Road
- Preserve and enhance natural connections

Climate Resilience and Environment

- + There is a lot of roof top space for solar panels
- + There is open space around the B2 District that is worth preserving
- + Electric vehicle charging station at Cronig's Supermarket
- + Drainage improvements and green catchment at the High School
- Is there contamination in areas that have been used for vehicle and equipment storage?
- Water is running off this area and into estuaries
- There isn't enough sewer infrastructure
- Businesses are encroaching into the natural setting; development at south-eastern edge of B2 area is threatening "wild" lands
- Lots of space for development—compact and energy efficient development preferred
- It is not what you build, but how you build it—opportunity for net zero carbon emissions development, sustainable development
- Convert impervious paved surfaces to permeable pavement
- Opportunity to establish a stormwater utility
- Catch basins on Park and Ride in 2035 when available
- Install rain gardens along State Road and on private properties in area
- Opportunity to take advantage of Massachusetts DER Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program
- Establish Town compost program

Downtown & Waterfront

Overall

- + We are a water town—let's make more use and enjoyment of it
- + Programs exposing youth to maritime careers
- Must have Steamship Authority, so take advantage of it
- The harbor is the identity of the Town—public access is key

Transportation

- + Ferry access
- + Harbor access
- + Neighborhoods uphill of Main Street are walkable
- + Ancient ways provide access through neighborhoods and to the water



- + Bulk shipping and fuel transport comes into the harbor on barges. This reduces need for semis on ferry
- + Union St Mall to Cromwell Lane path is a “secret connector”
- + Visitors who come by boat don’t bring cars
- + Skiff Avenue provides an alternative route for accessing the downtown and waterfront

- Confusing arrival to town. Unclear to first-time visitors what is in Vineyard Haven or how to stay in town
- Five-corners circulation is confusing, and the intersection is difficult to cross from many directions. The intersection is often congested.
- Intersection of Edgartown Road, Look Street and State Road gets backed up
- The intersection of Center and Franklin Streets is dangerous
- The one-way roads uphill from Main Street are difficult to navigate
- Sidewalks along State Road near Main Street are not sufficient
- There is no pedestrian or bike connection between Lagoon Pond Road and Beach Road; need an official marked walking path to connect the two streets
- The bike route along Skiff Avenue is steep and the road is narrow
- Larger ferries result in more cars entering and exiting at once, leading to traffic congestion. On the other hand, the ferries are only at capacity for small portion of the year—so they are inefficient the rest of the year
- The Steamship Authority does not compensate Tisbury enough for the burden it places on the Town
- There is not enough parking in town
- That people get parking tickets
- Parking issues at Owen Park in July and August—resident parking stickers are problematic

- Improve five-corners. Ideas: put in a roundabout and move roads, investigate reconfiguring lanes on the stretch of Beach Street between Main Street and Water Street
- Institute a continuous small shuttle from State Road through Main Street and to the ferry all day. Ideally powered by solar electric.
- Reduce or eliminate cars from Main Street
- Remove cars and parking from Beach Street Extension
- Need beautiful signs to tell people where to go downtown
- Need more connections for safe walking and biking
- Add biking and walking connections between Lagoon Pond Road and Beach Road. The existing private path from Lagoon Pond Road through the Safe Harbor Marina to the Tisbury Market Place is useful. Try to make it public
- Create a mandate for the connector road to Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road. Be creative and work with the private and publicly owned roads
- Improve the walking path network connecting Union Street to Veteran’s Park via Union Street Mall and Cromwell Lane. Make it more visible, attractive, and complete.



- Opportunity for better bike paths. Even the existing bike path on Edgartown Vineyard Haven road crosses many driveway which is hazardous. The Outer Cape is a precedent. It has great, safe bike paths with bridges and tunnels.
- Add a bridge across the spits of land protecting the docks at Safe Harbor Marina (west side of Lagoon Pond)
- Better signage at the Steamship Authority
- The parking lot at the Tisbury School could be used for summer parking
- Regularly grade dirt parking areas—do not pave them

Housing and Businesses

Housing

- + Housing throughout district
- + Housing and businesses in proximity to each other, including mixed use. With increased work-from-home, it is nice to be able to accommodate both instead of separating
- + Houseboats
- Lack of affordable and reasonably priced housing
- Properties that have been historically residential between Lagoon Pond Road and Veterans Memorial Park are zoned for commercial use
- Change zoning to allow more housing density.
- Need to provide better info about accessory apartments
- Keep the housing in a year-round pool. Buy back houses through the housing bank.
- There are properties that are not in use along Beach Road. They could support housing for the waterfront workforce.
- Properties that are zoned for maritime use should be able to house maritime workforce

Businesses

- + The Shipyard provides valuable services and employment
- + The Martha's Vineyard Museum
- + The Film Center
- + The Packard's facility is the single place for petroleum import for the whole island [this was mentioned as both a strength and a vulnerability]
- The Post Office generates a lot of traffic in an area that is already congested and difficult to navigate
- Some businesses do not have any space to expand because their lots are fully built out—for example on Lagoon Pond Road
- Noise from Main Street impacts adjacent houses
- Businesses have trouble finding employees, lack of housing for employees is a big part of the problem



- Need more places to eat! Expand food trucks. Explore food truck parks. Need more affordable food for all, especially workers, residents and visitors on State Road and downtown.
- Need more dining and restaurants. Beach Road is an appropriate location. The harbor doesn't have any restaurant overlooking it from its south side.
- Need more businesses to support island youth. "There is zero opportunity for teens aside from the Y."
- Need more art studios and gallery space for new and longtime artists
- Consider redesigning the Post Office area. It could be more efficient.
- Move the Post Office to reduce traffic, enable it to expand, and provide it with enough parking. Consider moving it to the State Road area
- Expand Safe Harbor Marina to keep boats stored on rocks
- Help the MV Shipyard. Expand the shipyard and provide services. Reduces pond impact with new project and provides jobs.
- Support new businesses that want to establish in the Waterfront
- Keep the working waterfront; no houses please
- Need the harbor to be more attractive, less industrial
- Activate the waterfront. Take advantage of scenic and historic resources
- Support the Shenandoah by providing a dock, for example, take advantage of Vineyard Wind project to create a permanent slip for Shenandoah
- Support visitors by boat (moorings) which support downtown businesses
- With Vineyard Wind hub planned, there are opportunities to support existing waterfront businesses and nonprofits
- Close Beach Street Extension to cars. It would be a great place for outdoor dining, music, etc.
- There is a desire for change at the Stop and Shop lot—both the supermarket and town residents want change. Can there be collaboration?
- Figure out how to redevelop the Stop and Shop and adjacent town owned property so it is better for all. For example, trade Police Station with Stop & Shop. Move the Police Department to a safer place. The Stop and Shop Area would be great for the town.
- The parking lot for Hertz Car rental (on Union Street across from the Ferry Terminal) would be an opportunity if Hertz would relocate. [The parking lot could have numerous functions from providing public parking, to serving as a welcome center, to being the site of future businesses]
- Opportunity for Aquaculture
- Another working movie theater would be incredibly welcome

Design and Placemaking (includes Open Space)

- + Town dock is a great asset
- + The waterfront near Beach Street Extension is a cultural gathering space for people that work on the water
- + First Fridays music
- + Owen Park is an accessible park in town.
- + Beach access right in town
- + The beach north of Owen Park is dog-friendly
- + Veteran's Memorial Park provides open space, recreation, and is easily accessible—a walkable sports and music venue



- + One of the highest concentrations of wood and traditional boats in the world
- + Town boat ramp on Lagoon Pond
- + Spaces for hanging out on Main Street—benches, micro parks (pocket parks)
- + The interior walkway from Union Street to Beach Street activates the back of all of Main Street
- + The working waterfront—the beauty of, and necessity of, the commercial harbor front
- + The open space with picnic tables next to Tisbury Market Place provides access to the shore of Lagoon Pond and is an asset
- + Preserved land near Lobster Alley

- There is a lack of wayfinding; poor signage at the Steamship
- The ferry terminal is not attractive
- Dilapidated buildings are a big problem. Gives the impression that the Town's identity is run down, "dying town." Hall-owned buildings were frequently mentioned.
- New parking lots downtown have bright lights
- Can't walk from Lagoon Pond Road to Beach Road
- The Lagoon is invisible to the public
- Inconsistent infrastructure in front of the Library

- Establish a Welcome Center near five corners
- Redesign Union Street to the park.
- Take over dilapidated buildings
- Transform the old wetland drainage "ditch" between Lagoon Pond Road and Beach Road into a greenway. Use it for stormwater and make the length of it a park. Question: Is this area a Chapter 91 drainage?
- Buy/take the vacant property next to Beach Road restaurant for public use
- Add a boardwalk so people can connect to the water
- Move Owen Park Way over to increase green space
- Redesign town dock to take more day boats, which would increase revenue and visitors;
- Improve access and visibility of Veterans Memorial Park
- Consider moving Veterans Memorial Park and allowing the site to return to wetlands to avert flooding from sea level rise
- Daylight the creek at Veterans Memorial Park, but keep the fields
- Work to secure easements along beach between Owen Park and the Steamship terminal
- Clean up beach front to encourage use
- Opportunity to connect the waterfront between ferry terminal and Shell Gas Station: figure out pedestrian access past docks; provide guaranteed walking on the beach on a sand trail or boardwalk
- Develop walkways along shore in segments
- Organize the public space around the ferry terminal
- Lagoon Park—there is \$400,000 available for park improvements; Develop Causeway Park (in an environmentally sensitive way)
- Could improve "Emergency Beach"
- Need more trees along roads in town
- Need more micro-parks (pocket parks) on Main Street



- Plant more native plants, for example beach plum
- Maintain integrity of architecture along Main Street and downtown
- Add space for food trucks and picnics near the water
- Acquire Boch Park
- Utilize the vacant lot with water access adjacent to the Beach Road Restaurant
- Create a place overlooking the harbor from the south (open space or restaurant)
- Create a home for MV's tall ship (Shenandoah) at a dock so there is increased access to it

Climate Resilience and Environment

- + Breakwater makes the harbor safer
 - Areas uphill of downtown lack drainage and so water feeds down to Five-corners
 - Congested traffic on State Road wastes a lot of fuel, adds pollution and contributes to climate change
 - Runoff issues in roadway along State Road
 - Flooding of Five-corners,
 - Flooding of Beach Street Extension
 - Flooding of Water Street
 - Flooding of Lagoon Pond Road
 - Beach Road is a vital link between Vineyard Haven and Oak Bluffs (including Hospital) but is vulnerable to flooding and sea level rise. It is a weak link.
 - Flooding of Veterans Memorial Park
 - Lawn chemicals and fertilizer flowing into Lagoon Pond
 - Shellfish decline in Lagoon Pond
 - Harbor needs dredging. Getting shallower due to ferry engines running constantly (especially Island Home)
-
- Stay flexible to allow uses to adjust to sea level rise across different planning horizons
 - Need a storm gate to protect Vineyard Haven
 - Analyze the increased grade at Vineyard Wind facility. Will it make other land more vulnerable to flooding.
 - Codify increased allowed building heights to account for raising floor levels to prepare for flooding/sea level rise
 - Must preserve road to Hospital. Fix it for sea level rise and improve the bike path
 - Use flood prone areas for event spaces
 - Use Land Bank funding to denitrify Lagoon Pond
 - Use shellfish to clean ponds
 - Ban plastic turf installations
 - Town should state explicitly what it wants for unimpeded shoreline [this is likely a reference to Vineyard Haven Harbor District of Critical Planning Concern (DCPC) Regulations]



Appendix C

Visioning Workshop

The Visioning Workshop began with the Consultants summarizing the key takeaways from the previous day's Site Tours and Listening Workshop and key ideas for improvements that have been identified in previous planning. A brief question and answer session followed. The participants were then divided into four groups. Each group had a facilitated discussion of both the B2 District and the Downtown and Waterfront centered on the following questions:

- Which of the challenges facing the study area are most important to solve in the next 10-20 years?
- Where do you see the biggest opportunities for improvements over the next 10-20 years?
- Which of the ideas for improvements are particularly strong?
- Critical path: Are there any problems that need to be solved first because other improvements depend on them?
- Multiple objectives: Would any of the ideas for improvements fulfill objectives across more than one theme? For example, help with climate change and transportation.

In the final session of the Visioning Workshop, participants self-selected one of two stations—one focused on the B2 District and the other focused on the Downtown and Waterfront. At each station, facilitators presented the results from the four morning groups. Participants then prioritized the key issues and improvement ideas that arose from the morning's work. The notes from the final sessions are below.

B2 District (State Road Area) –Highest Priority Issues and Ideas for Improvements

- Improve connectivity between properties and between B2 and other parts of town.
 - Area has excessive curb cuts. Need cross-access between properties.
 - For example, connect Black Dog and Merchants Ct (Woodland Market, etc.)
 - Revive the Connector Road idea
 - People are already using roads and trails to make connections through this area, especially for walking and bicycling. Need to ensure the connections remain walkable and bikeable.
 - Should discourage connectivity on some other roads
- Expand sewer capacity to enable additional development.
 - Package plant—expandable
 - \$50 million
 - Probably need to expand plant
 - Use private package plants
 - Sewer district
 - The planned additional capacity is limited but since some existing buildings probably will not tie into the sewer right away, the expansion should be able to support some new uses.
- Potential for commercial node at where the connector road to State Road would come out
- Focus B2 on businesses that serve year-round community and additional housing.

- Encourage and expand development while respecting residential character of adjacent areas
- Optimize function for multiple uses
- How much density? How much height?
 - Appearance of commercial uses—participants like the traditional capes along State Road
 - Behind State Road, it might be ok to go taller
 - Height—architecture that captures residential feel
 - Building in back of existing buildings
 - Explore a form-based code
 - Market adapts to design guidelines
 - Disagreement on appropriate scale of buildings
- Industrial uses
 - Limited places for industrial in Tisbury and on Martha’s Vineyard
 - Plan to continue to accommodate these uses in B2
 - Example: Cook Road—many trucks use it to access industrial areas. There are impacts of truck traffic, but not sure where else truck traffic could go.
- Need buffers between sewer plant, DPW, industrial and residential
 - Should have design guidelines for landscaping, fencing, cleaning
- Need better lighting
- Consider relocating parking behind buildings, especially for new development
- Explore municipal parking

Downtown and Waterfront—Highest Priority Issues and Ideas for Improvements

- Make a plan for mitigating sea level rise
 - Town has been studying coastal flood protection. Decide which ideas are best and move forward with them.
 - It is time to start retreating from sea level rise? Or would that be premature?
- Address the housing shortage—especially need affordable and moderately priced housing. Need housing for employees of businesses and Town, young families, elderly.
- Get a handle on stormwater
 - Explore developing a greenway or canal where Bass Creek was
 - Improve stormwater management throughout downtown and waterfront and in areas that send stormwater into them (i.e. from up State Road)
- Figure out what to do about filled land between Beach Street and Lagoon Pond Road
- Address empty buildings, dilapidated buildings
- Protect Beach Road/Bridge—access to Hospital is key
- Infrastructure
 - wastewater



- and solid waste management
- Develop welcoming gateways—improve accessibility, improve and/or relocate visitor’s center, develop a consistent wayfinding system
- Stop & Shop/Police/Town parking lot
 - Key opportunity for Town
 - Need a spot for visitors to pause and get their bearings here
 - Work with Stop and Shop to see if the site can be redesigned to better meet everyone’s needs
 - Separate bikes/cars
- Manage traffic congestion
- Improve and clarify vehicle circulation—one-way streets are confusing
- Improve 5 Corners
 - it is confusing and congested
 - need to address flooding
- Moorings—expand number of moorings, establish reservation system, provide launch
- Address post office congestion
 - Rural mail delivery
 - Move post office?
- Need better coordination with Steamship Authority
- Develop a Harbor Walk
- Develop more gathering places downtown
- Improve connectivity throughout downtown and waterfront:
 - Improve pedestrian connectivity from Union Street to Veteran’s Memorial Park
 - Connect Lagoon Pond Road to Beach Road
 - Improve small connections throughout areas. For example, black dog fence blocks movement from SSA to Black Dog. Black Dog doesn’t want it. Can it be removed?

Conclusion

The Commercial District Vision Workshops generated extensive public input about the Downtown, Waterfront, and B2 Districts. Participants worked through a series of exercises that elicited detailed information about the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the areas and then worked together to prioritize the key issues and opportunities for improvement facing the districts. The results of the workshops will inform the development of visions for the commercial districts.



Appendix D

Tisbury Master Plan

Commercial Districts Workshop #3

February 13 and 16, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Tisbury held two virtual workshops on February 13 and February 16, 2023 to review and discuss alternatives for visions for the Town's Commercial Districts—a component of the town's ongoing Master Plan project. The meetings began with a presentation¹ by project consultants Dodson & Flinker that introduced the project, explained what vision is, summarized input from a series of project workshops held in October, introduced the study areas, and showed alternative visions for the study area. Three vision alternatives were presented for the B2 District. Two vision alternatives were presented for the B1/Waterfront commercial districts. The vision alternatives showed potential changes in the commercial districts to:

- test what changes are physically possible in the study areas, and
- provide a starting point for a community conversation about what Tisbury's people want the commercial districts to be like in the future.

This document records the community conversation that took place during the February 13 and 16 meetings. It is worth noting that these meetings represent the middle of a process, not the end. Community members are encouraged to review the vision alternatives and provide feedback to the Master Plan Steering Committee. The final vision will be based on input from the community and deliberations by the Master Plan Steering Committee, the Planning Board, and other officials. Ultimately the final visions will be incorporated into the action strategy for the Tisbury Master Plan.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This section briefly summarizes key takeaways from the February 13 and 16 meetings.

Areas with General Agreement

Overall

- Improve walkability and bike-ability in the commercial districts and between them
- Want commercial centers to be attractive and enjoyable
- Need housing
- Plan proactively for sea level rise and flooding
- Prioritize economic development that serves Islanders and provides stable year-round jobs that support a decent life

B2

- Facilitate movement toward a walkable mixed-use village, at least in the core area
- Connect streets and blocks

¹ The presentation is available at: <https://www.tisburymasterplan.com/>



- Consolidate parking
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle systems
- Build a street in the B2 area that connects State Road to Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road , assuming it is feasible and effective
- Add greenspace, plant trees
- Relocate some town functions to B2
- Build a significant amount of housing in the B2, especially housing that is attainable for year-round residents
- Manage negative impacts of light-industrial and service uses on adjacent uses

Downtown/Waterfront

- Enhance pedestrian connectivity with a continuous system of paths and public spaces
- Redesign alleys, parking lots, Beach Street Extension to emphasize pedestrian access and public gathering spaces
- Increase public access to the waterfront (there are significant differences of opinions about the details of implementation of this)
- Focus on uses that reinforce Vineyard Haven's historic use and character and support year-round economy
- Support vitality of Main Street
- Maintain waterfront industrial uses
- Expand use of the harbor
- Plan for sea level rise and flooding
- Improve the environment; make room for nature (e.g. Bass Creek greenway)
- Explore options for key sites: Stop and Shop, Post Office, Capawock, Bowl & Board, etc.

Differing Opinions

- To what extent should we improve conditions for cars?
- What is our vision for the future economy: growth or steady-state economy? Which economic sectors will be most important?
- When, and in what ways, should we act on sea level rise? Is redevelopment in floodplains appropriate?
- Whether the vision should explore potential changes that could occur on private property or whether it should focus solely on publicly-owned land.

Common Questions

- How to implement the vision?
- What will the impacts be? What infrastructure will the town need to invest in?
- What is the feasibility of expanding various sectors of the economy? How much economic benefit would each have?
- Is there a real solution to our traffic issues (5 corners, Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road/State Road)?
- Is there room to expand retail and residential uses in the B2 without displacing light industrial and service commercial uses? How can we mitigate conflicts between uses?



VIRTUAL MEETING: FEBRUARY 13, 2023, AT 5PM

Group 1—Peter Flinker, Facilitator

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Participant 1

- The Waterfront District zoning hasn't produced a lot of economic activity.
- The Arts & Culture scenario is very seasonal – focusing on marine-related businesses would be better.
- The Safe Harbor facility is better than what they have in Oak Bluffs.

Participant 2

- Need to keep an eye on the big picture and think about issues like redevelopment in the flood plain, with an eye to the future and solving issues for the whole town.
- Invest where it makes sense for the long-term.

Participant 3

- Flooding problems, other than at the 5 corners, are primarily going to stem from sea level rise, which is going to take a while to become a significant impediment. For the next thirty years at least there is a lot that can happen there, and we don't have to choose between waterfront and arts-related uses.
- Vineyard wind will have ripple effects, and active waterfront uses (like marinas) bring in a very robust seasonal clientele, which is here looking for things to do: arts, culture and fun.
- Need to link properties with some sort of waterfront walk.
- Gannon & Benjamin is iconic – need to build on that success.
- Oyster farmers are looking for land, too.

Participant 4

- Moving the Post Office makes sense in light of sea level rise – should limit investments on Beach Road.
- Other improvements shown in the plans make sense.

Participant 2

- The Stop and Shop and parking lot are a very sensitive location, and Norton Lane makes fixing the parking lot very complicated.
- Need to look at making the new Stop & Shop smaller and consider moving to the Post Office site.

Participant 5

Likes the idea of providing public access to key open space areas, no matter who owns them.

B2 (State Road)

Participant 2

- Can you use the space behind the Fire Department for housing?



- Many of the existing houses are too small to be converted to commercial uses, and they aren't big enough to meet the need for housing – look at 6 Water Street as a model – more of a barracks building.

Participant 1

- State Road strip is not desirable.

Participant 6

- Likes the idea of shops on the ground floor and apartments above them
- Also likes the idea of creating a byway to get traffic around the district.

Participant 5

- Likes the whole concept
- Makes sense to move business and residential uses out of the waterfront floodplain and into the B2 District

Group 2—Dillon Sussman, Facilitator

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Participant 1

- Private landowners have different ideas than what is shown in the alternatives. We have told the town over and over that we don't want a harbor walk on our property. We have our own vision. It really hurts that we have to keep telling people no and that it keeps coming back. We have done so much for this town. This is harming the health of my family members. It is very upsetting.

Participant 2

- Flooding, stormwater, pavement runoff—need to be cleaned up
- The berm is a good idea, but berms are ugly. A functional retaining wall would be better for slips.
- Bass Creek was designed to clean up runoff. It has become overgrown and isn't functional. Getting it back in working order is a good idea

Participant 3

- People are sensitive to climate change. Hard to image arts district in an area that is flooding. Might need to raise structures.

Participant 4:

- Love the idea of arts, but don't give up on Maritime. Arts and culture are a draw. For example, Alexandria

Participant 5

- Like parking under Stop & Shop
- Would hate for the downtown to lose the Post Office. We used to have Shirley's Hardware at Stop & Shop. We have lost a lot of the functional reasons to be downtown. Don't want to lose anymore.



- Like the idea of the Bass Creek Greenway
- Don't agree with bulkheading the harbor

Group discussed the ideas of a flood protection berm and a walkway along the harbor

Participant 6 (Business owner along Main Street)

- Parking is an issue downtown
- Flooding is an issue downtown, people don't come downtown to do shopping when they think there may be flooding.
- B2—like the idea of streamlining outlets onto State Road from businesses. I live in West Tisbury and drive through the B2 frequently. There are often back ups of contractors trying to get out onto State Road from the B2.

Participant 7

- We might need a traffic light at Edgartown/Vineyard Haven Road intersection with State Road
- But there aren't any traffic lights on the Vineyard. Would people really allow it?

Participant 8

- Believe the earth will conquer us eventually. A berm won't work. I've seen sand dunes be destroyed by nor'easters. People bought land on a sand bank. The town shouldn't be responsible for private property. I have a lot of respect for the people who own those properties and for what they do for the Vineyard, but it isn't our responsibility to protect them.
- Beach road may need to become a causeway

Participant 2

- That would require a lot of eminent domains

Participant 7

- How do you encourage private industry to do things so that you can have robust year-round community?
- How do you encourage public/private partnerships?
- Look to Edgartown and all the have done over the past 30 years

Participant 9 (manager of Stop and Shop)

- The proposed plan for 10 years ago is not under consideration
- We are developing and reviewing plans internally
- Hear to learn what the town wants and is talking about

B2 (State Road)

Participant 4

- You all did a fantastic job
- Give priority to affordable housing
- Walkability is important
- Like town campus, moving post office
- Light industrial is not a good use of land in B2.



Connector Road idea—bring it back

Group 3—Carly Venditti, Facilitator

Overarching Conversation & Concerns

These drawings are trying to do too much in the way that residents feel overwhelmed. When there is the potential to redraw everything, residents struggle to defend the current uses they hope to persist. Group members were stuck on clarifying questions and implementation concerns for the first portion of the conversation.

B2 (State Road)

New Roads

- Many enjoyed the paths and new roads parallel to State Road.
- It made sense to them to push retail to the street and relocate the parking behind.
- Some raised concerns about the proximity to industrial uses like lumber or auto services

Access Road

- Wide support for this across all alternatives. Some individuals expressed frustration since there has been a push for this since the 1980s.
- Is it possible to bring this forward to other towns on the island to generate funding?
- What impact will the alternate routes have on traffic demand for current infrastructure?
- Could traffic modeling be done to better support the creation of the blocks?
- Where do bike lanes enter into these alternatives? Which comes first, the bike lane or traffic slowing techniques?

Stormwater & Wastewater Concerns

- What will happen in this district with more impervious surfaces?
- Does this have an impact on the wastewater expansions planned?
- Were current wastewater expansion plans accounted for during these B2 alternatives?

Housing

- Residential can occur on top of retail needs or moved to the hill on State Road
- Why not establish more housing between the two towns rather than try and capture everything in this historic district?

Car Ideology

- How do we rework the conversation about cars? The island continues to grow, and the strain continues to push Tisbury as the service center.

Town Hall

- How do we move some of the less-public-facing roles out of the existing building?
- Would moving the building have an impact on the historic value?
- The town supposedly bought land near the school to relocate the town hall campus.



Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Overall

- People don't travel to see parking lots – where do you hide parking lots in the B1 and Waterfront?
- Norton Lane is an opportunity and should help relieve some of the pressure on five corners
- Relocation of the police station to the B2 district could open up the area.
- Pedestrian-friendly pocket parks
- Bicycle Infrastructure
- Extension of the potential greenway

Maritime Uses

- Is it right to defend the maritime uses just because they exist now?
- Should there be more space dedicated to nature and retreat?
- At what point do these alternatives prioritize de-development?
- How do we reimagine land that is so valuable along the shore?
- Need a long-term plan for Beach Road – will it become a causeway?

Group 4—Jill Slankas, Facilitator

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Initial Impressions about Vision Alternatives

- Worried about Stop and Shop expansion and keeping the parking lot; will the new proprietors respect the parking area?
- The parking underground and turning the parking lots near Stop and Shop into a more welcoming area with park and walkability, so it's a welcoming place to land off the ferry.
- Need to invite Stop and Shop to the table so we can collaborate with them
- Find out what rights Stop and Shop has to that parking lot
- Would it be a boardwalk vs a pedestrian walkway along the water
- Incorporate the P.O. space to something new
- Relocate police station out of that area
- What is the Town Center? Resolve the issue of Boch Park – make it available to the public in general and develop the area around
- Concerned about underground parking – will that work with flooding, etc.

Elements missing from the vision alternatives

- Public space isn't there; Boch Park area could be the cornerstone of public space
- Main Street was not discussed lot; important to improve it to make it a quaint Main Street
- In front of parking area by Steamship Authority and stretch of Beach – needs to be cleaned up and make an immediate waterfront

Highest priorities for the town to implement



- Stop and Shop; Parking; Five Corners; Capawock; Bowl and Board; Veteran’s Park – can it have multiple uses? Educomp building
- Come up with a consistent paving for the pedestrian walkways

Transportation

- Downtown
 - Prioritize bikes and VTA in downtown
- Waterfront
 - Prioritize biking and pedestrians; provide parking so you can park your car and then walk or bike all around.
 - Current zoning separates the ability to walk around

Economy

- Downtown: prioritize housing in downtown; if you can include more housing in a business district, it will be beneficial

Community or personal values underlying the vision you want for Tisbury

- Small town community feel
- Collaborate better within Town

B2 (State Road)

Housing

- Yes, housing belongs everywhere; multiple stories; need to consider a change in height restrictions; build vertical in an attractive way;

Moving town functions to B2

- Yes; it makes sense consolidate town offices; the town is missing a “Municipal Building”

Connector Road—Would establishing another street connection between State Road and Edgartown/VH road be worthwhile?

- Yes; absolutely; High Point Lane is wider than Mechanics Street, so a question as to why Mechanics St. was shown as the proposed road.

Which commercial uses are most important in this area? Does it make sense to steer some uses to parts of the district? Which conflicts between uses need to be managed?

- Recognize the needs and then give some guidelines on how to keep the properties more organized; State Road is a goldmine for the island; how do we get other towns to understand what Tisbury is contributing?

Are the walkability, bike-ability and streetscape character issues on State Road significant enough to warrant changes?



- Yes, it doesn't feel safe; can we plant more trees along the streets; need nice sidewalks if we are going to walk more and drive less. Traffic calming measures are desired to make this area easier to walk.

Group 5—Krista Moravec, Facilitator

Facilitator's comment: This group spent a lot of time discussing implementation. The notes are sparse because I spent a lot of time explaining things.

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- How do you implement the master plan? Are you going to take property by eminent domain?
- Why is the corner of beach to the bridge not included as mixed use?
- Think about putting things higher. Coastal flooding, move back or raise, accept it as a reality that these areas will be inundated.
- We have a new code to address flooding.
- Question - How many people live in commercial district?
- Moving the post office might be a good idea to reduce traffic because it's used by the entire town.
- More open space is needed to absorb water, and we should not rebuild areas that are impacted by SLR and flooding. We need to slowly recede from these areas that are vulnerable, a lot is underwater when it rains, at high tide.
- I'm in the flood zone and agree will have to move out of this area. More water comes down from town instead of the ocean. It's coming from development uphill.
- It's all the pavement, we need more green infrastructure.
- We need to protect the character of Tisbury. I define it as a seaport community, tourists, arts and music, thread with economic development.

Group 6—Jack Sweeney-Taylor, Facilitator

B2 (State Road)

- Participant 1: How to actually execute/implement scenarios? So many groups to coordinate and requires huge investment
 - Makes more sense to direct things through zoning, to encourage developers that way
- Participant 2: Some of things the town can do is infrastructure investments – many businesses and users are not connected to the wastewater plant – important to any implementation. Connector Road is important as well and within parameter of town
- Participant 3: Let's steer the ship that's aesthetically pleasing, where people want to come – more it gets industrial, we won't attract people to area. Want to make it a beautiful town, place to enjoy walking around, getting a cup of coffee – don't need more auto and industrial on the road. Question the town's zoning that allows ugly things along the road – Sam, maybe you can help with this, develop things that are attractive
- Participant 1: bank it through people's self-interest – regulatory process needs to emphasize things that we're talking about



- Participant 4: If plans were to scaffold/tier different uses, or have two spines – do we need to revise zoning? Agree with Stefan – what we want is a more attractive town overall – Tisbury suffers from dense, industrial activity along road, waterfront you can't walk on – beauty that is not available because of uses on it – the physical appearance is importance
- Participant 1: Zoning is a mess, hamstrings people from doing things that are attractive and functional – needs to be rewritten, in order to achieve goals of these alternatives
- Participant 5: A lot of good thought – reason for this exercise is because we're aware of limitations of zoning – out of date, self-restricting, not aligned with goals – next thing to do after master plan is to change zoning. Response to Richard – B2 district is constrained by nitrogen, wastewater treatment. Love the idea of having more flow in areas around town. Important to improve infrastructure, but has to be based on vision. Our town is place that provides goods and services to rest of island year-round, so we need to attend to goods and services. Area around airport has some of this, but they're maxed out. Our light industrial area is not planned – whoever shows up.
- Participant 6: Agree with Stefan and agree that zoning laws have to change, which comes first – master plan or zoning? Plus, all for trees
- Participant 3: Best thing that town can do is create a place that is attractive to private investment – more attractive a place is, the more people want to go there. Then people/developers are enticed economically, zoning-wise, and aesthetically – then they can support aesthetic of town – if you don't have enough business, can't invest in improving appearance of business
- Participant 7: Interesting to hear the role of zoning. Important to make a place for youth as well.
- Participant 1: Tisbury has a reputation of not being great for business, (“anti-business”) related to prohibition of liquor – background. Licensing is not friendly to businesses. Warring factions, because change they want to see is not what is being represented – too many ugly businesses along road, so people fear development
- Participant 8: Yes, we need connector roads, two spines. Need a nicer, pretty town, but also like connector ideas, want to be able to walk more. And am for trees too. I am surprised airport is maxed out. Appreciate any effort to make Tisbury more attractive.
- Participant 2: Yes, airport has leased all lots.
- Participant 4: B2 Scenarios – Village Center is most appealing but hardest to pull off, so gravitate toward first scenario.

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- Participant 2: Yes, airport has leased all lots. Unrelated – anything being done about 5 Corners? It's a gateway to town, first thing people see, but very ugly.
- Participant 5: Different ideas for circulation and flooding for 5 Corners – spine along Beach Rd could be useful.
- Participant 4: For Waterfront – not enough scenarios – not drawn toward ArtHaven and feel like that would require too much change; like the Waterfront Heritage, but not enough space to accommodate maritime industrial and have appealing maritime district. Right now, too chopped up, from industrial – Alternative: Oak Bluffs fishing pier – greenways are nice, but we need a structure for people to walk and enjoy the water. Problem is that there is not space for a pier – want to make it more attractive for people who come off ferry and want to hang out there, eat lunch (I go to Owen Park). Need harborside



- Participant 3: My concern is that we'd be paving over the beach so people don't have sand in their shoes.
- Participant 2: Harbor access is important.
- Participant 4: Yes.

Report out

Dillon

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- Private property rights vs public goods.
 - Concerns about eminent domain
- How do you move forward with implementation? How to encourage private property owners to implement vision? How to create public-private partnerships
- Sea level rise and flooding were major concerns. Various approaches:
 - Let private property owners deal with flooding
 - Build a dune/berm or seawall to protect
- Support for greenway along Bass Creek
- Reservations about redevelopment in area between Lagoon Pond Road and Beach Road do to flooding
- Main Street: Parking issues. People don't shop when there is potential for flooding.

B2 (State Road)

- One perspective: light industrial isn't appropriate in B2. Should go elsewhere—to airport or Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road.
- Unanimous support for Connector Road idea
- Support for affordable housing
- Support for walkability
- Support for idea of a town campus
 - But also concern about loss of core functions downtown, reasons for people to visit downtown

Carly

B2 (State Road)

- Support for Connector Road
 - Ask other towns on island to help fund it
 - What is the demand? What would change about traffic patterns? What are projected uses and traffic volumes?
- Stormwater and wastewater—what would the impacts of additional development be? What additional infrastructure would be required? What would traffic impacts be?
- Tisbury needs to maintain historic resources—keep customer-facing town hall functions downtown in a walkable area.
- Housing—support for housing in B2. Prefer it closer to west and east.

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront



- Don't focus on cars—parking, roads. Opportunities to change traffic flows—reverse some streets.
- Attract people to Main Street/downtown immediately when they get off the ferry. Open up Norton Lane, possibly move Police Station to free up space.
- Talk of retreat
 - Return some of the land south of Beach Road to natural resources
 - Alternative viewpoint—this is very valuable land. We don't need to retreat yet.

Jill

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- Stop and Shop and town parking there
 - Questions about underground parking, how does this work with flooding? Desirable if feasible.
 - Interest in turning this into a welcoming park area
 - Recognize need to collaborate with Stop and Shop.
- Support for redeveloping Post Office lot
- Support for moving Police Station
- What is the Town Center?
- Boch Park—make it available for public. Redevelop area around it. Make it a welcoming space to visit and go to.
- Main Street—improve Main Street. Needs to be quaint, viable. Bring people/customers to it. Bring new businesses to the Island.
- SSA Gazebo walk—clean it up, make it more attractive
- Key opportunities to figure out—to capitalize on: Five Corners, Stop and Shop, town parking next to Stop and Shop, Capawock, Bowl and Board, Veterans Park, Educomp.
- Like the idea of consistent paving for pedestrian spaces

B2 (State Road)

- Housing belongs everywhere. Consider allowing taller buildings in B2 and Downtown
- Walkability and bike-ability in B2—doesn't feel safe, difficult to cross State Road, better sidewalks, more street trees, traffic calming.

All Districts

- Community values to underly vision—small town community feel, walkable/bikable, being in community—running into people
- Transportation—biking came up a lot, also need for places to park for longer time periods so people can park once and walk around

Peter

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- A lot of support for working waterfront idea as well as more creative things, like ArtsHaven
- Not a lot has happened on waterfront for many years—what impacts will Vineyard Wind have?
- Need to keep various scales and long and short-term in mind.
 - For example, after Stop and Shop is rebuilt, it will remain the same for a long time. Think about it more deeply. Does it need to be that big? In that location?
 - Look at redesign of the Post Office site, consider moving to B2.



- Climate change is happening but flooding isn't happening every day right now. Lots of things will continue to happen in the floodplain for years to come. Consider uses that can focus on people rather than expensive facilities in vulnerable areas.

B2 (State Road)

- Support for significant housing in the B2 district, larger scale more affordable housing
- Didn't reach a conclusion about how much area to reserve for service-oriented businesses.

Jack

B2 (State Road)

- Want B2 to be more attractive and walkable
 - Zoning is important for that
- Need infrastructure to make it possible to improve this area
- Connector roads—support
- Connect other areas too
- Important area for year-round service businesses, but that development has been ad hoc. Support for better planned and coordinated redevelopment
- Comments point toward mixed-use scenario.
- Interest in village center vision. One participant said, Village Center is most appealing vision but also most difficult to pull off.
- Interest in adding two spines of circulation parallel to State Road
- Need space for youth
- Support for more trees

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- Five corners needs improvements: aesthetics, flooding, circulation
- Need more scenarios for downtown.
 - OB fishing pier as a precedent
 - Limitation on space, but access to water is very important
- Can businesses be moved from B2 to airport? Is there land there? One group member said it is maxed out

Krista

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

- Lots of discussion of process, implementation. What are the tools the town needs to make these visions reality
- How do we protect the character of Tisbury?
- Sea level rise, flooding—experiencing this now
 - We should let “nature come back”
 - Better manage water, reduce pavement
 - Vision should manage those issues
- Interest in mixed-use
- Interest in arts
- How many people live in downtown now?



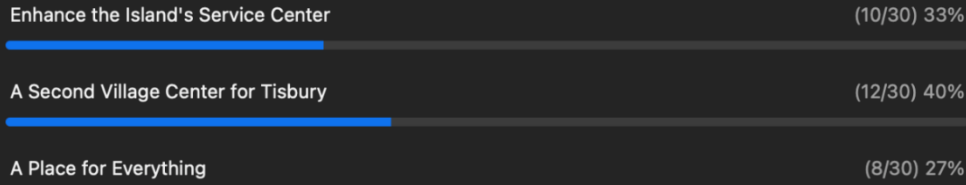
Poll Results

A Zoom poll was administered at the end of the meeting. Due to a survey design flaw the results of questions three and five were not useful and are not shown below. Please note, that the survey participants were not necessarily a representative sample of the population of Tisbury.



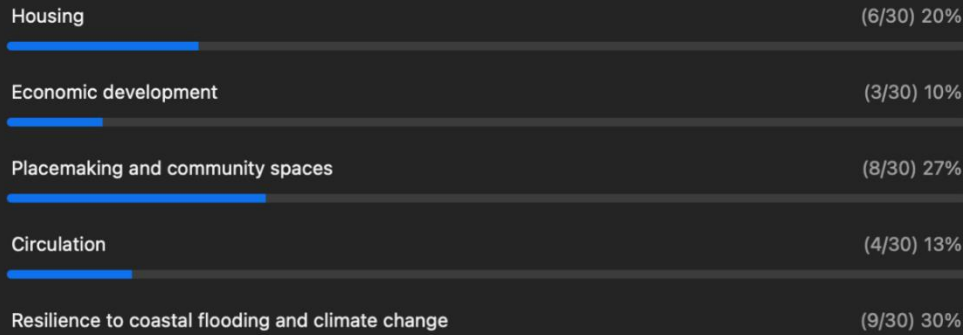
4. Which alternative provides the best vision for the B2 District? (Single Choice) *

30/30 (100%) answered



6. Of the elements shown in the alternatives, which should be the highest priority for the town to implement? (Single Choice) *

30/30 (100%) answered



7. Which community or personal values are most important to your vision for Tisbury? (Select all that apply) (Multiple Choice) *

30/30 (100%) answered



Chat Comments

- 18:44:35 From Phil Wallis & Steve Bernier : from steve - parking is major issue - post office area and can parking go down underground which brings the notion of multi level parking
- 18:44:47 From Meredith Aldrich : i Just wanted to note all the downtown buildings noted as "commercial" are already multi use, as many of them already contain apartments...probably more than you think.
- 18:45:51 From Ruth Konigsberg : I was suggesting a third scenario for the downtown/waterfront plan, something that enables harbor access to the public, like the OB fishing pier and boardwalk. I don't think either "waterfront heritage" or "artistic center" scenarios are viable for a bunch of reasons.
- 18:49:02 From Stefan Knight : Im curious if it were possible to have public "pier" closer to center of town rather than a sea wall for access to the waterfront. Sorry, I just think sea walls are pretty ugly.
- 18:49:06 From _Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker : Thanks Phil/Steve, Meredith, and Ruth, for the comments
- 18:50:29 From Stefan Knight : Im also, curious about the aesthetic of the Vineyard Wind projects under way. Is this going to be more (uninviting and unattractive) industrial looking structures?
- 18:51:20 From _Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker : Stefan--The town currently has a grant that is looking into the idea of a dune along a selected portion of the waterfront as a flood control measure.
- 18:51:51 From Meredith Aldrich : Underground parking in the flood zone isn't realistic.
- 18:51:52 From Richard Andre : The renderings are available as part of the public record from the MVC hearings or alternatively you can come visit us at Vineyard Power and I'll walk you through the project. We have Open Office hours every Wednesday between 3-6
- 18:52:00 From Angel Morris : Any new parking lots should be made with pervious materials
- 18:52:14 From Richard Andre : Reacted to "Any new parking lots..." with 👍
- 18:55:59 From Richard Andre : Replying to "Underground parking ..."

underground is not an accurate description. What is being considered and developed is that all new buildings will have their occupied floors raised, say 8-10' above grade, and parking would take place under the raised buildings.

- 19:00:09 From Lucy Thomson : Great job on the plans. B2 = Yes prioritize affordable housing. Remove light industrial and storage uses to airport or along VH-E road.
- 19:03:25 From Caitlin Burbidge : Agree, maximizing/prioritizing affordable housing opportunities helps the health of all businesses and residents. This is imperative.
- 19:03:26 From H Lee : I suggested to consider a new town hall/Police station in another location, behind the new fire station, ESS in another scenario, with a new elementary school as town admin zone, and, oak grove cemetery as their open space, and connecting the b2.
- 19:03:32 From Lucy Thomson : Please consider using the most precious land areas for people to enjoy. Move parking in waterfront area back away from the water. Move Post Office and Police Station to a new attractive town center in B2.
- 19:04:46 From _Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker : Please scroll down to see all the survey questions. You need to answer them all to submit your answers.
- 19:05:30 From _Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker : Dan says, "I don't think the poll is officially open yet?"
- 19:05:40 From _Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker : does anyone see it?
- 19:05:54 From Caitlin Burbidge : The poll is on my screen
- 19:05:56 From Brook Katzen : I see it, but can't "submit"



- 19:06:00 From Ruth Konigsberg : Yes I submitted
- 19:06:17 From Dan Doyle, Master Plan admin : I have the same issue as Brook
- 19:06:23 From Morgen Schroeder : The poll has 2 questions that are required, but they force you to "disagree"
- 19:06:33 From _Dillon Sussman, Dodson & Flinker : I see it, but can't "submit"
If you scroll down to the bottom can you submit. there are 7 questions.
- 19:06:35 From Caitlin Burbidge : I believe questions 3 + 5 limit our ability to submit (if we don't disagree)
- 19:06:41 From Lucy Thomson : Question 3 in the poll is not valid. It says do you strongly disagree with either of the proposals. An answer should be NO. Otherwise would not let us submit.
- 19:06:43 From Andy Herr : I noticed this as well, would have left those blank
- 19:07:02 From Brook Katzen : We can't submit unless we "strongly disagree" with things.
- 19:08:15 From Brook Katzen : So, should we select responses for "strongly disagree", even if we don't feel that way?
- 19:08:22 From Caitlin Burbidge : Yes, Brook!
- 19:08:41 From Danielle Ewart : I didn't understand that either
- 19:10:26 From Caitlin Burbidge : Thank you for all the work that has been done up to this point. What a lift! Wow
- 19:10:37 From Richard Homans, Steering C'tee : Even if we don't all agree on the details, it's great to actually be talking about a Vision for Tisbury...and to see some concepts. Thanks for the great work.
- 19:10:48 From John Cahill : I found the survey to be to difficult to express how I really felt about the issues. But thank you all the same Great Presentation!
- 19:10:52 From Nancy Weaver : I like the idea of starting any connector road as a bike-pedestrian path. Ideally this will cut down on traffic- giving people a safe alternative to cars- and parking.
- 19:10:55 From Danielle Ewart : Thank you.
- 19:11:16 From Caitlin Burbidge : I like the bike-pedestrian path as well, Nancy
- 19:13:03 From Nancy Weaver : May we see the poll results?
- 19:13:13 From _Carly Venditti, Barrett Planning Group LLC :
https://barrettplanning.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cXYsEqluYw3JtJk?jfefe=new
- 19:13:41 From Dan Doyle, Master Plan admin : Thank you so much to Dodson & Flinker and all of the support team that pulled off tonight's workshop - and for all the community members who attended tonight, and maintained an open mind throughout. Consider coming back on Thursday evening!
- 19:14:03 From Anne McDonough : Hard copies of the survey are available at the library!
- 19:14:12 From Andy Herr : Thank you!
- 19:14:12 From Angel Morris : Thank you!
- 19:14:16 From nancyehre : Thank you



VIRTUAL MEETING: FEBRUARY 16, 2023, AT 6:30PM

Group 1—Peter Flinker, Facilitator

Opening Comments

Participant 1: Lives midway between the districts. Has a research and historical perspective.

Participant 2: Opening a new business in the Tisbury Marketplace, and thinks this process is a great opportunity to look at Today's challenges as well as plan for the future.

Participant 3: Works as a loan officer and has a financial perspective. Concerned about Tisbury's taxes relative to other towns - there are many infrastructure needs that will need to be funded.

Participant 4: Co-owner of a Main Street business - scared about climate changes and the potential impact to the waterfront.

Participant 5: Supports responsible development of the harbor - town should work with the windfarm company to expand anchorage to bring more people to Vineyard Haven who will spend money here. Need to highlight history as an economic resource.

B2 (State Road)

Participant 1

- Many properties around the edges of the district are actively used for materials storage - and it's hard to find places to do that.
- Concerned about past development of Nobnocket that was torn down.

Participant 6

- Likes interconnecting of streets and the handling of parking.
- Interconnectivity is really critical - including the connection to Edgartown Road.
- Need to look carefully at where connections come out.
- Right now light industrial uses butt up against residential - need to provide buffers.

Participant 5

- Grew up here and loves it
- Connector road is important for this area and for the island as a whole.
- We're the doormat for the island - and the whole island has a responsibility to help pay for needed improvements.
- Likes the opportunity for housing shown in the plans. Consider giving some of the town land to local people for housing - Youth Lot Program.
- Tashmoo Park is an incredible resource - need to make better connections.

Participant 2

- There is too much of an emphasis on cars - in 20 years will there be a different type of transportation?
- Need to future-proof the vision - i.e., what about shared vehicles?
- In the downtown the issue for the future is sea level rise.

Participant 7



- Works with older adults
- As the population skews older we need to think about how to accommodate older people in all of these places and facilities.

Participant 5

- Housing is the scariest thing – building a new school, but will we be able to fill it?
- Affordable housing is not really in the nature of the Vineyard, but it's getting to the point where there are no options – the dump is a great site.

Participant 1

- Some of the few apartments existing on the Vineyard are in this district.
- Commercial space is tight all over the island as well.
- Keep in mind this is a small town, with limited water supply and wastewater capacity.
- Need to find the intersection of needs and capacity that will make it all work.

Participant 6

- This would be a great place for seniors – there are services, groceries, transportation options.
- Need to find the sweet spot – and if we consider the need for housing and potential need to retreat from the waterfront, this could be it.
- Need to see more detail of what these ideas look like “on the ground.”

Participant 2

- Need to think about trash, composting and recycling

Participant 4

- Love the idea of more apartments, affordable housing.

Participant 7

- Housing for older residents would provide opportunities for downsizing – right now there's no place to go to.
- Elderly housing is great – look at what Nantucket has done with their apartments
- Need to think about expansion of the WIC program.

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Participant 1

- Wastewater treatment throughout the town has to be thought of in relation to wellhead protection and the disposal of effluents in the B2.
- Low hanging fruit is rethinking Beach Street Extension and expanding Cromwell Lane corridor to Veterans Field, and crossing from Lagoon Pond Road to a public park on the Lagoon at the Marketplace.

Participant 2

- This is the year-round port of call – and it needs to be more welcoming.
- Likes the idea of a Greenbelt connecting the downtown to the Lagoon.



Participant 5

- There is an opportunity for a better solution to the five corners.
- Flooding can be addressed.
- Consider moving the police station out and using the revenue from leasing that space for business use.
- Look at the design of the parking lots, including the “Stop & Shop Lot” – could serve as a town common.

Group 2—Dillon Sussman, Facilitator

Participant 1

- Make Beach Street Extension more pedestrian focused—love that idea
- Post Office—note sure it is feasible to talk about moving it. Ownership is complicated.
- How do you get buy in from private property owners?
- In favor of ped/bike improvements
- Want more green space
- Downtown has a lot of hodge podge. Lots that are small and abut other lots. Lots of businesses and potential conflicts.

Participant 2

- B2-Really impressed
- B1—want to see more
- Have put in a lot of what we have talked about in this process: pedestrian improvements, parking, like the addition of greenspaces.
- Cromwell Lane could be more—pull people up into downtown
- Lot I’m impressed with. How do you implement it?

Participant 3

- Should be a better connection from SSA to Main Street
- Love the idea of parking lot being used on weekends for events
- Move restrooms to open that space. Police station?
- Want more safe walkways and bikeways
- Need more trees, lighting
- Tisbury should say “Welcome”
- Post Office-would be nice to move it.
- A better pedestrian connection between downtown and museum is important
- Maritime heritage—would be nice to connect to this more

Participant 2 (VH Harbor cultural district member, downtown business owner)

- We are always seeking a way to stand out. Build on Vineyard Haven’s maritime history. That is one of our most significant assets
- Most underfunded cultural districts in the state.

Participant 4

- Turning our identity into an attraction



- Post office lot—Prefer the alternative with parking behind a building over a big visible parking lot
- Like daylighting of Bass Creek-big opportunity
- SSA-VH Harbor has a big draft, traffic generator, is there an opportunity for retreat? Could the SSA move somewhere else?

Participant 5

- SSA is going to stay where it is
- Police Station should be moved. Possibly the Post Office too.
- Need a path from SSA to Main Street with signs
- But who is going to implement changes?
- There is a glaring mud and water mess where the lumberyard was. Needs to be fixed.

Participant 6

- Attracting visitors to Main Street is a nice idea but the ferry schedule is designed to accommodate commuters into VH. Day trippers are delivered to Oak Bluffs.

Other Comments

- B1 Mix of year-round and seasonal businesses
- Waterfront: want a thriving waterfront. Coupling this with a focus on maritime history is a great idea
- Makes me sad that tall structures block views. Should restrict this through zoning.

B2

- B2 should serve year-round residents

Participant 2

- Really like connecting across back of properties—would reduce congestion.
- Like housing—critical issue for us
- Like the diversity of plans for this area
- B1—greatly concerned about the age of infrastructure, buildings are falling apart
- If effort was put into B2 first, we might be able to then concentrate on B1

Participant 5

- Like parallel road
- Want sidewalk between SSA to Black Dog

Participant 6 (On wastewater advisory committee)

- Wastewater currently limits development, especially housing
- Tashmoo watershed has limits-limitation

Participant 4



- The illustrative plan was great because it shows existing and proposed buildings. It shows you aren't wiping the deck clean but making incremental improvements
- Like the idea of improving State Road

Group 3—Carly Venditti, Facilitator

B2 (State Road)

Initial Reactions

- Expanding uses in the B2 area is a great idea; there is space to expect the continuation of infrastructure.
- The conversation comes down to “will property owners support this?”
- Many appreciated housing close to SBS and that it was walkable
- It's exciting to see this sort of vision and potential development.
- What will the vision do about storing old vehicles, trailers, and even trash on Highpoint Lane?
 - How do we deal with shipping this clutter and refuse off the island?

Should they decide if they want to cater to the tourist community or year-round residents before deciding on an alternative for B2? Some folks were stuck on prioritizing either district due to pragmatic property or financial concerns.

- Many spoke up that the housing in B2 was exciting because it could mean more year-round housing for existing residents.

What can they prioritize bringing to B2 from the Vineyard Haven Downtown/Main Street area while keeping those storefronts occupied year-round?

- They don't want to bring too much up to B2
- Main Street should have year-round interests too.
- The town hall further inland could allow for more chances to grow.
- State Road makes sense for the town hall and post office since people could drive there and park. A State Road Post Office could also benefit other towns.

Access Road

- People supported the alternate route to Edgartown Road since congestion is a year-round problem, but why did it fail before? Also, where are the easements?
- People did not support the wider looping road behind the solar field.

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Participants in this group were concerned with what the priority should be in a world with limited time and financial constraints and to whom these changes should benefit. We navigated this concern by advocating changes that would attract year-round residents and tourists to Main Street. “We're an island community, not a mall.”

Transportation is a huge issue along Main Street and the Waterfront.

- They need more parking, but they do not want a lot where the post office currently exists.
- Should there be a designated throughway for people getting up the island?



- Walkability downtown is excellent thanks to density, but there needs to be better infrastructure; the sidewalks are not ADA-compliant or safe.
- Can we change the ideological reliance on cars downtown? Do we want to?
- Is it possible to cut off car access on some roads during the height of the season?
- Existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is not safe

How do we meet the needs of people that come here in a car but don't want to see parking lots? Is it their job to cater to car-driving tourists?

The answer was to care less about the car but to confront this question by improving the impression as the entry point. It is not about supporting an increase in tourists or year-round population, but making it a friendlier entry point in general.

- If we do too much to the waterfront, it will look like Coney Island.
- What will make Vineyard Haven economically viable?
- Which of these alternatives aligns with being year-round?

Consistent Vacancies

They want more control over consistently vacant buildings and those currently crumbling into the earth – while also holding onto historical details.

- For example, the Bowl and Board building is falling apart.
- We need to establish a proper plan with a historical framework.

Group 4—Jill Slankas, Facilitator

Downtown (B1) & Waterfront

Any general questions?

Participant 1: I didn't see any proposed plans for Five Corners – are we planning for a roundabout there? Shouldn't this be reflected in planning process now?

Participant 2: We want to work out big picture first, before turning to DOT for big infrastructure improvements; but there are plans for that and it's an important detail.

Do the alternatives provide a good range of options for the study area? Do they address the key issues and opportunities in the commercial districts?

Participant 1: Agree with connectivity, new ped/bike and open space. Like moving P.O. away from 5 Corners.

Participant 3: Like the pedestrian opportunities, roadways, more sidewalk – making places more walkable rather than favored to cars; interested in arts, but don't know about investing in new buildings with threat of flooding. Not thrilled with parking lot proposed for S&S – first place people see when they come in from boat – should be green and friendly. Like all the green and ped

Participant 4: Working for years in managing stormwater – opening up spine where waterway used to be (maybe still has pipe) would help to solve issue of stormwater and help people access and enjoy space. Also like idea of using state funds to build fish pier, marketplace.



Participant 5: Gannon & Benjamin Boatyard – always interested in preserving working waterfront and maritime heritage of area. Embrace public access and welcome walkway through our boatyard. Like the options.

Participant 6: Sea level rise – what happens to Beach Rd up to bridge? What is feasible without full retreat? What are our ideas for dealing with SLR in 2030, 2050, 2070 along Beach Rd. Should look at Museum – [...] Area. Handicapped – Beach St is harder to walk, Causeway has access but hidden behind buildings – maybe more access to Veterans Park. Main St has not been addressed much – need to consider space between library and Owen Park. Also need to consider drivers – get rid of one-way streets. Push everything away from flood plan. Color diagram for [...] Too soon to get deep into plans

Participant 7 (Climate Change Coord at MVC): New construction in flood zone is not a good idea.

Participant 8: Waterfront walk is great idea; also, nice connection over to museum is great idea. Q – how would all this happen?

Jill Slankas: Plan leads to grants and more plans.

Participant 2: Leads to new zoning.

Participant 3: Agree with Brad about walkway around waterfront – great idea

Participant 2: Climate change is huge issue in this area, so flexibility is key to any ideas – more natural solutions, dynamic flexibility (Ex: food truck); need to think about working properties; allow flexibility for people to move away from waterfront; also envision a future without as much auto-dependency.

Participant 1: Q – can walkways be created across private property?

Participant 2: Ch 91 allows for ped ways through private property – we can amp that up more.

B2 (State Road)

What do you feel is the role of the B2 District to the life of the town and the island?

Participant 2: Area is important to year-round community, likely to be a dense area; Island is going to be overwhelmed by development – simplify wastewater; fix intersections. Need to imagine greater density and steady-state economy in this area.

Participant 5: As we respond to sea level rise, nowhere to go, expand, even away from water – B2 District has best opportunity for this, but not much space.

Participant 3: Seems like area has an issue of not being organized – maybe if better organized, more opportunities for more space; lots of possibility in separating area with new roads – how to incorporate suburban planning while still feeling like Vineyard.

Participant 8: Can anyone give update on Connector Road?

Participant 2: It's mostly dead, but need to think about what we want from it – connection for automobiles, or ped/bike?



Participant 1: I like the proposed connections for B2 – new roads parallel to State Road would help divide up space and add smaller spaces; area lacks charm, and moving buildings closer to street, adding trees, and those connector roads could add charm; like 5 Corners, Connector to Edgartown Road is important place.

Participant 6: Connector Road – complicated and very costly; but could attract other townpeople to B2, but would this just result in seasonal businesses, or big box stores; Could we use space for mixed-use with different timed uses, [such as business above restaurant?]; also, high retaining wall by ___ - need to consider plan

Participant 6B (there were two people together on Zoom): [Land by dump – problem with pollution]
Chat: “Nantucket removes the landfill (dump) to create a flat ground, and, remove the pollution. Can we consider that as an option?”

Thoughts on housing in B2?

Participant 3: In Waterfront District plan [...] – It would be great to have mixed-use buildings for artists with studios.

Participant 2: Need to consider how much housing area can afford – if we add housing, also need to amenities, parks, etc. Also need to consider how housing will affect traffic, especially if we add Connector Road – intersection would slow down traffic speed.

Feelings about location of police station? Fine where it is, or move it?

Unknown: Move it.

Participant 4: There is a deal with S&S for the parking area, so [...]

Participant 2: Police Stations are expensive, and one of the newer buildings, so maybe not a priority to move.

What is priority for area?

Participant 2: Can space absorb density? How? How to make more permeable for pedestrians – what is practical, practicable?

Participant 1: Wouldn't new parallel roads add density?

Participant 3: Conditions on road would be improved with resurfacing



Final Group Discussion

Morgan Schroeder

- Opportunity to make VH welcoming
- Housing opportunities for aging population. Support for mixed-use, larger apartments in B2 area. Could opportunity for housing elsewhere.
- B2 State Road

Mac Shiller

- Village of VH has lots of economic opportunity
- Need walkability-Norton Path. Need 3rd path between Main and Water St.
- 1890 fire—the town has never recovered.
- Need to play up history. Edgartown has done so much with their history. We are just as old. Need to make that accessible to people. Play it up.
- 5 Corners and the pipe outflow need to be dealt with

Rachel

- Love the ideas for the B2. Keeping existing businesses, but adding more to ROW—connectivity, walkability, adding housing
- B2 could be a community space—2nd place to spend time. Could ease pressure on Downtown
- Like possibility of connection to Edgartown Vineyard Haven Road.
- Greenspaces

Caroline

- Great ideas to think about. So much to be done. Need time to process it.
- Connecting harbor and museum, maritime heritage is a good idea
- Appreciate adding walkways and greenspace—need to add more
- Need elderly housing.

Carolina

- Our group agreed it would be good to move the Post Office to B2

Morgen Schroeder

- We also discussed moving the Police Station

Dillon

- My group also talked about moving the public bathrooms and the opportunities that would open up for that space.

Ben Robinson

- Need to think about growth
- How to preserve what we have while moving toward a steady state economy
- Don't look to growth to be the solution

Judith Miller

- Like having a categorization of issues



- Public bathrooms are important and serve a good purpose where they are.
- Housing is needed for all alternatives
- You made us think about the big picture. Have to decide as a town and island whether we use time to improve present situation without encouraging more growth. We can't accommodate much more growth.
- I want a sense of a village. Points toward prioritizing downtown over B2
- How to sustain present population
- Arts and Culture may provide economic stability but will it draw more people here?
- Waterfront--need to preserve the essential functions
- What are our priorities? State Road and commerce (important to year round economy) or economy along the shoreline?

Connie A.

- Agree with Ben. Don't want unbridled growth. Need to keep wastewater in mind. Want smart growth.
- Wastewater is wedded to housing. Wastewater will cost money.
- Ferry schedule caters to commuters not day trippers, so if we want more day tripper we need to change the ferry schedule.

Teresa

- Agree with smart growth and what is good for the community
- Like pedestrian improvements and the idea of pedestrianizing Beach Street Extension
- Let's focus less on parking and more on green space and pedestrian areas.

H Lee

- Who is growth for? What is sustainable and what is not? [Remainder of comment was not captured due to sound quality]

Morgen Schroeder

- Challenge is to predict the future and not invest in things that may become obsolete
- Deprioritize cars
- Balance the needs of today and potential issues for the future.
- Don't invest in parking. Other modes are gaining traction—ride sharing, walking, biking.

Chat Comments

20:07:53 From H Lee to Everyone:

Nantucket removes the landfill (dump) to create a flat ground, and, remove the pollution. Can we consider that as an option?

20:15:04 From H Lee to Everyone:

the land value will spike after the road is laid out.

20:36:37 From Dan Doyle, Master Plan admin & Tisbury resident to Everyone:

Please visit the Master Plan website beginning tomorrow to view a recording of the presentation – www.tisburymasterplan.com I had the benefit of attending this workshop twice and there's a chance to make even more sense of what you saw tonight, the 2nd time around. Thank you for making time to join and contribute tonight. And finally, please encourage your neighbors to screen the recording and



be on the lookout for future Master Plan meetings. There will be additional opportunities to weigh in on these alternatives. Check back to the website...
20:37:00 From Teresa Kruszewski to Everyone:
Thank you!

