

# TOWN OF WESTON

## Plan of Conservation and Development

Public Workshop  
September 9, 2019

 MILONE & MACBROOM

# AGENDA

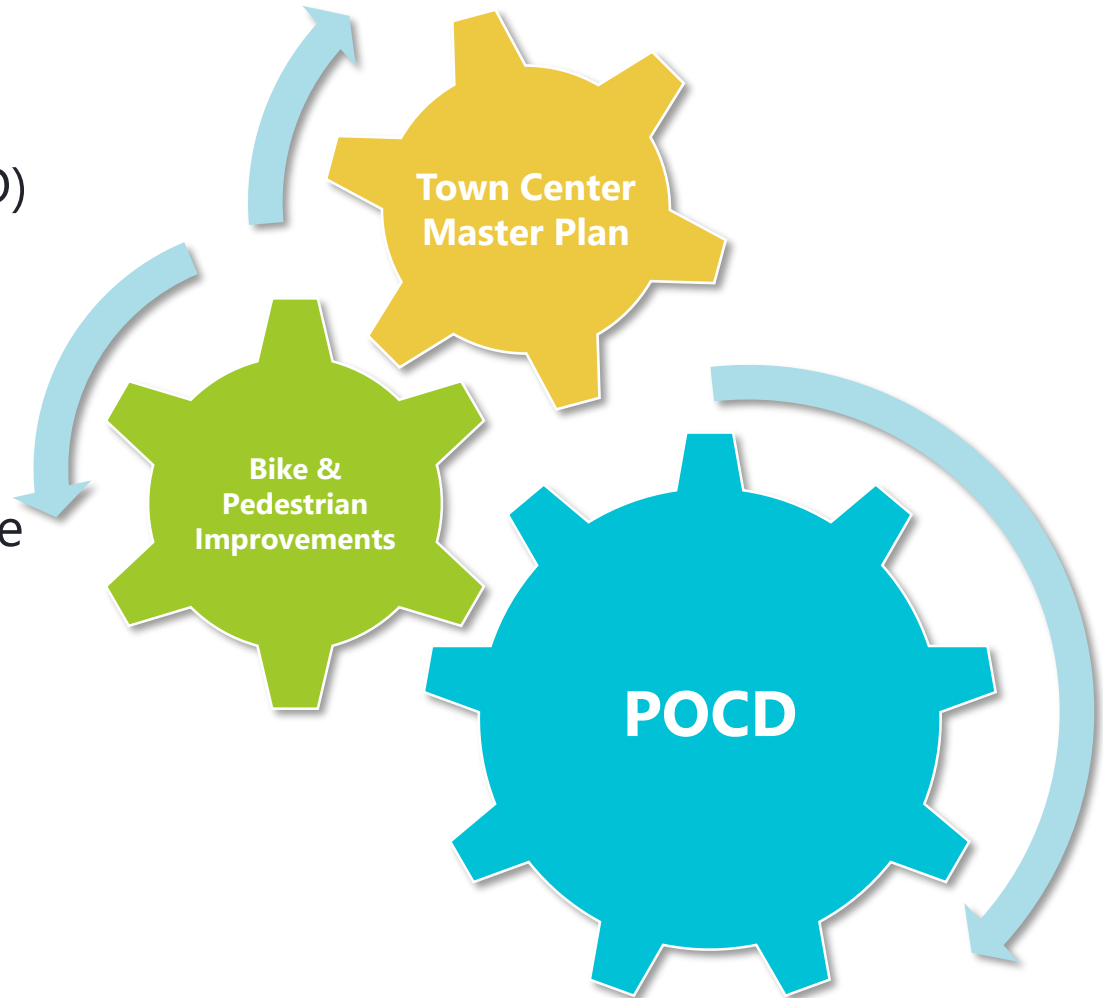
- Welcome
- Presentation
- Group Exercises
- Report Back from Activities
- Wrap-up and Next Steps

## Anticipated Outcomes

- Obtain input on community vision and values

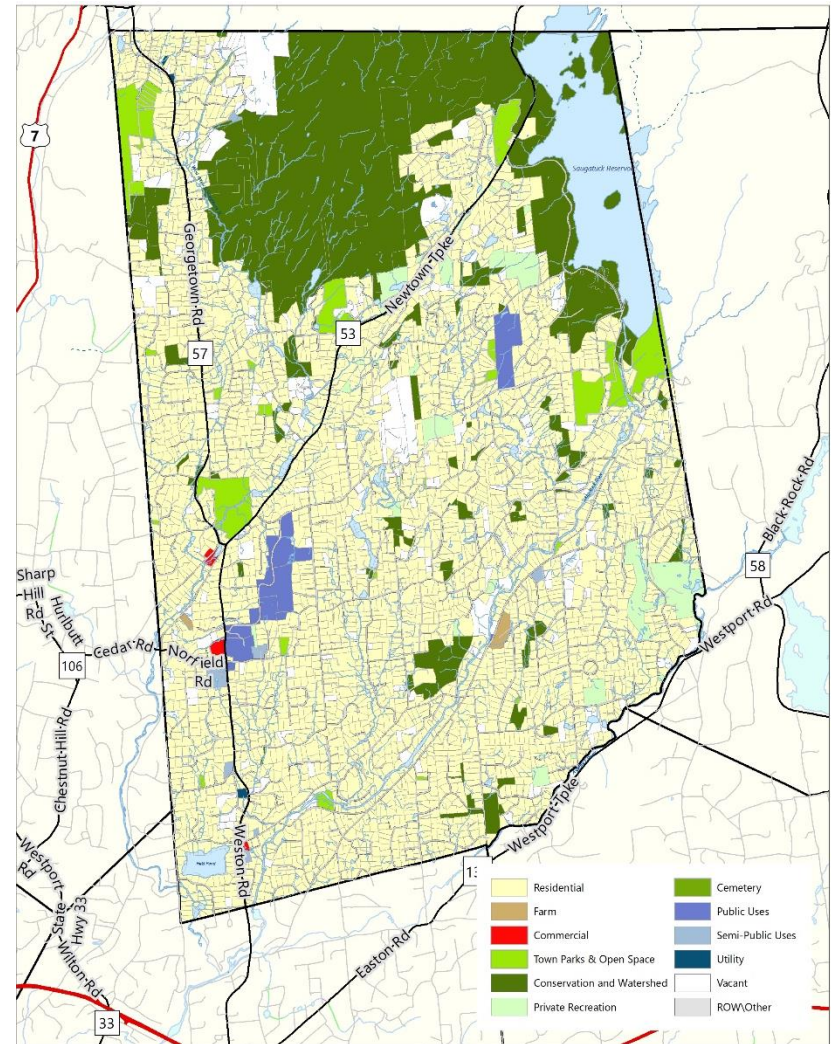
# WHY WE ARE HERE

- Creating an update of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)
- In conjunction with Town Center Master Plan and Sidewalk Master Plan
- These three plans are part and parcel of one another



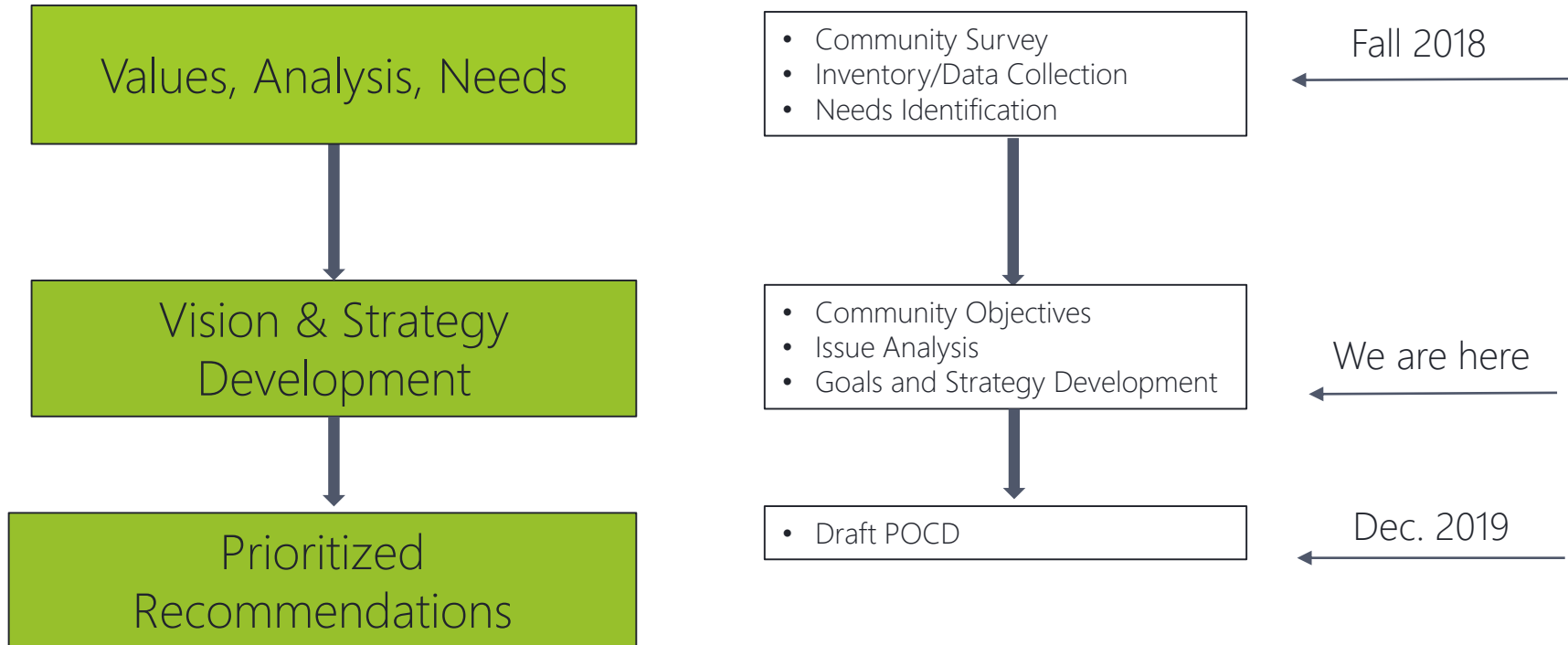
# WHAT IS A POCD?

- Advisory document for long-term vision and short-term decision-making
- Provide policy guidance for the physical, economic and social future of the community
  - Determine through robust public engagement the community's vision, and the goals and strategies that will advance Weston towards that vision
- States Town's Goals and Visions
- POCD **Does Not Have Authority** of a Law or Regulation but **Recommends Actions to Help Achieve Goals**



# POCD PROCESS

- Anticipate completion later this year
- Three stages
- Each stage gets more specific in nature



# FINDINGS TO DATE

## Findings to date are based on:

- Community Survey (over 2,500 respondents)
- 2 Community workshops & Consultant Recommendations on the Town Center
- Discussions with Planning & Zoning Commission and Town Staff
- Data “Fact Book”

## Grouped into Three Categories:

- **Values & Strengths** – Assets to preserve and maintain
- **Opportunities** – Resources to capitalize on
- **Challenges** – Things to be addressed



### 2018 Town of Weston Planning Survey

The Town of Weston and its Planning & Zoning Commission are conducting this survey to gauge the opinions of our community on a wide range of issues relevant to the future of our town. One use of this survey is to provide guidance to the Planning & Zoning Commission as it performs its State-mandated update of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development.

As part of this update, the Commission is seeking input from community members to determine community values, generate ideas, and encourage participation in the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) process.

The Plan will significantly influence the Commission's, and Weston's, policies and priorities over the next 10 years.

Filling out this survey will assist us greatly as we commence this important undertaking. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes. Just click on the "next" button and it will take you to our survey.

All responses will be collected anonymously and analyzed as aggregated data. Please complete one survey per person, and please participate so that Weston can be best served. Your response is your voice; let it be heard!

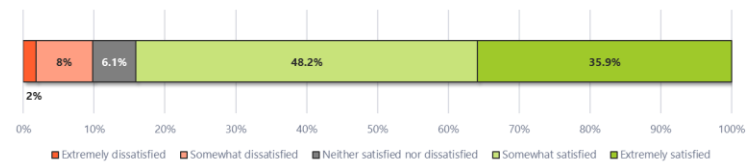
Thank you for your participation.

# FINDINGS TO DATE: VALUES & STRENGTHS

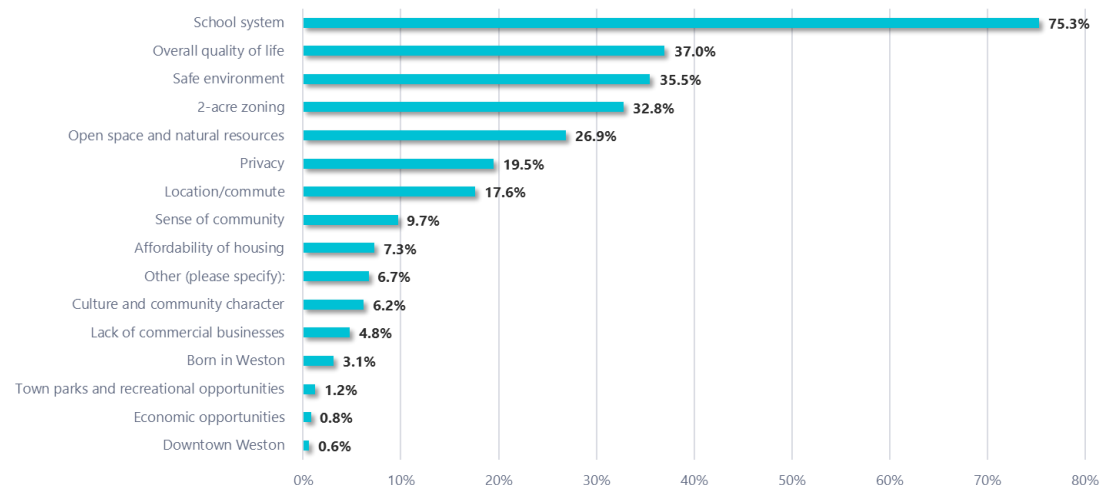
## Preserve and enhance what we already have

- Strong sense of community
- Quality of life
- Natural resources, recreation and open space
- Quality educational system and town services

WHAT IS YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH WESTON AS A PLACE TO LIVE?



SELECT THE TOP 3 REASONS YOU CHOSE TO LIVE IN WESTON



# FINDINGS TO DATE: OPPORTUNITIES

## Opportunities to capitalize on

- Potential to strengthen Town Center
- Investments in town facilities and transportation infrastructure
  - LOTCIP & Community Connectivity grants
  - EMS



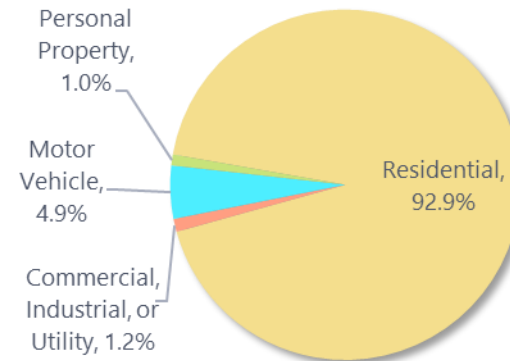


# FINDINGS TO DATE: CHALLENGES

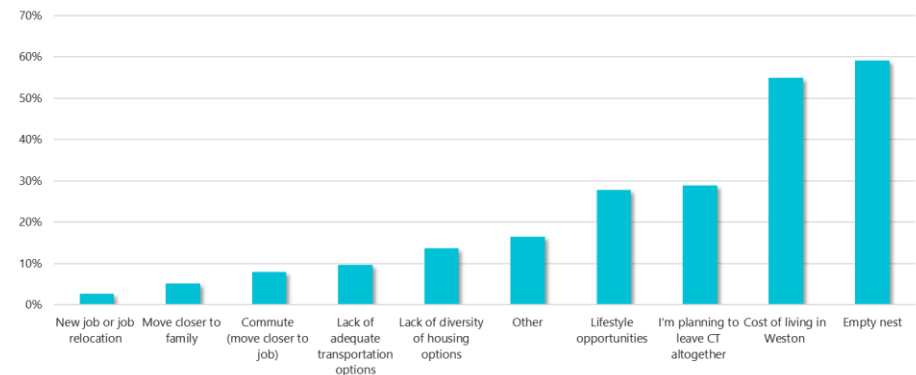
## Things to be addressed

- Aging population
- Housing affordability – particularly for senior population (6% of units are attainable for Weston seniors)
- Homogenous housing types (98.5% single family detached)
- Limited sidewalk and biking network
- Reliance on residential property tax revenue

Weston Grand List Composition  
(GLY 2015)



## WHY ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE OUT OF WESTON?



# WORKSHOP PURPOSE

## Clarify What We've Heard Thus Far

*For Crafting a Vision and Objectives*

- Exercises intended to verify collective values
- Obtain input on vision for all of Weston (not just the Town Center)
- Identify priority areas of focus
- Discussion to develop strategies and objectives

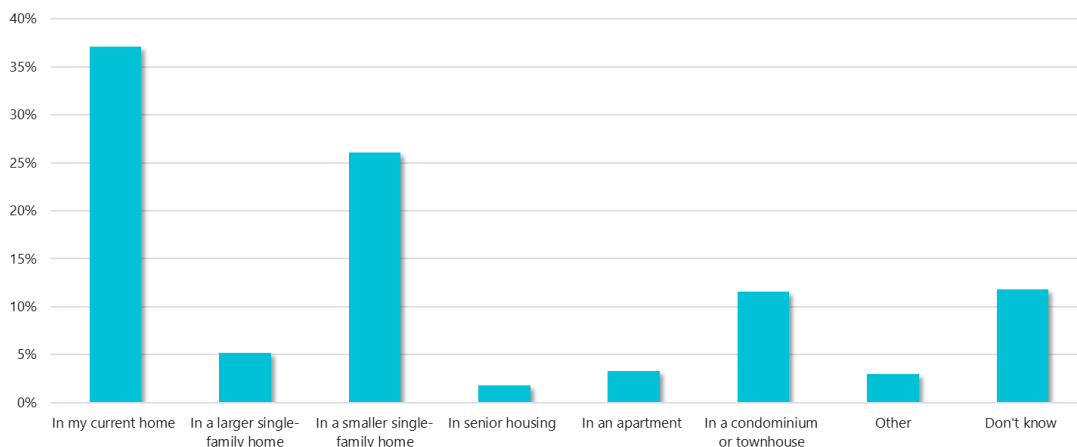


# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

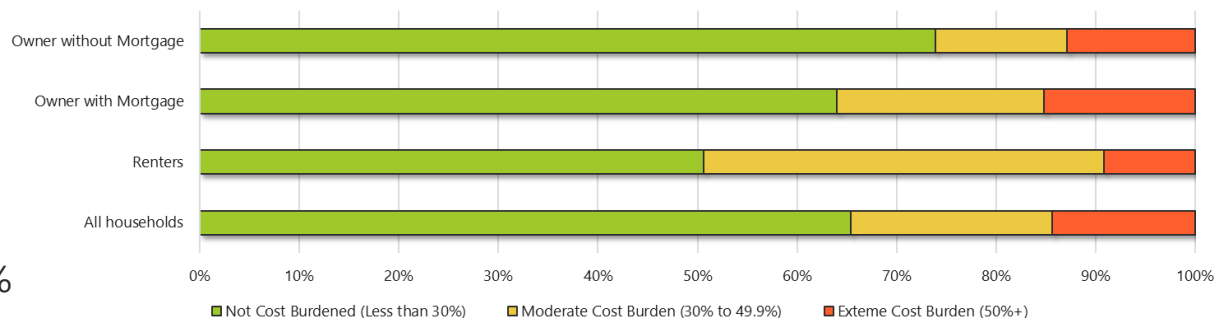
## Housing: What we know

- 98.5% of housing units are single family detached.
- 21 new housing units have been built since 2010.
- Over 25% of Weston's residents are looking to downsize into smaller housing units over the coming decade.
- Housing in Weston is more expensive than most of its neighboring Towns.
- Affordability is a challenge for many residents. About 34% of all households pay more than 30% of their income towards housing.
- The average senior household in Weston can afford to buy 6% of owner-occupied units in town.

### WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING DO YOU SEE YOURSELF LIVING IN 10 YEARS FROM NOW?



### Affordability of Housing by Tenure, 2016



# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Housing

What types of housing would you like to see encouraged and discouraged over the next ten years?

Place a **green sticker** on uses that you would like to see **encouraged**


Place a **red sticker** on uses that you would like to see **discouraged**

**How Should Weston Plan for Housing in the Future?**  
Place a **Green** sticker on the strategy you support or a **Red** sticker on the strategy you do not support

**What We Know:**


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**"In-law"/ In-fill Apartment**




A small home, that typically sits in the backyard of a main house.

**Open Space Subdivision**



Option for new development where density is determined for a specified area, rather than lot-by-lot. In specified area, there's greater flexibility to place homes and preserve open space.


**Do Nothing**



Density determined lot-by-lot (2 acre) zoning through out all of town.


**Within Town Center**

**Second Floor Units**




Modify Town Center zoning so it could allow second floor units above commercial uses.

**Allow Smaller Lots**




Most existing detached houses in Town Center are on 1/4 acre lots. Modify Town Center zoning so it could allow detached homes on less than 2-acre lots.

**Allow Townhomes**



Modify Town Center zoning so it could allow townhomes.

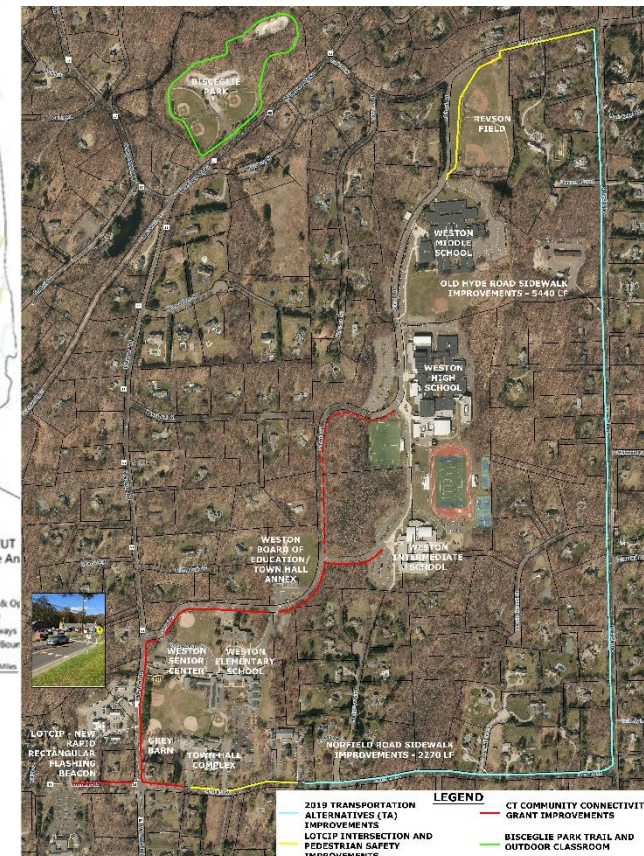
Town of Weston  
Plan of Conservation and Development



# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Connectivity: What we know

- According to the American Community Survey, an estimated 1% of residents walk or bike to work
- Generally, there is a low level of bicycle service on Weston's roads
- Current sidewalk network is very limited and disconnected
- Sidewalk Master Plan recently created
  - LOTCIP and CCCGP projects will begin sidewalk network in the Town Center
  - Additional phases include sidewalk improvements on Norfield Rd and Old Hyde Rd. and path around Bisceglie Park.
  - The Town is actively pursuing grants to fund these phases.



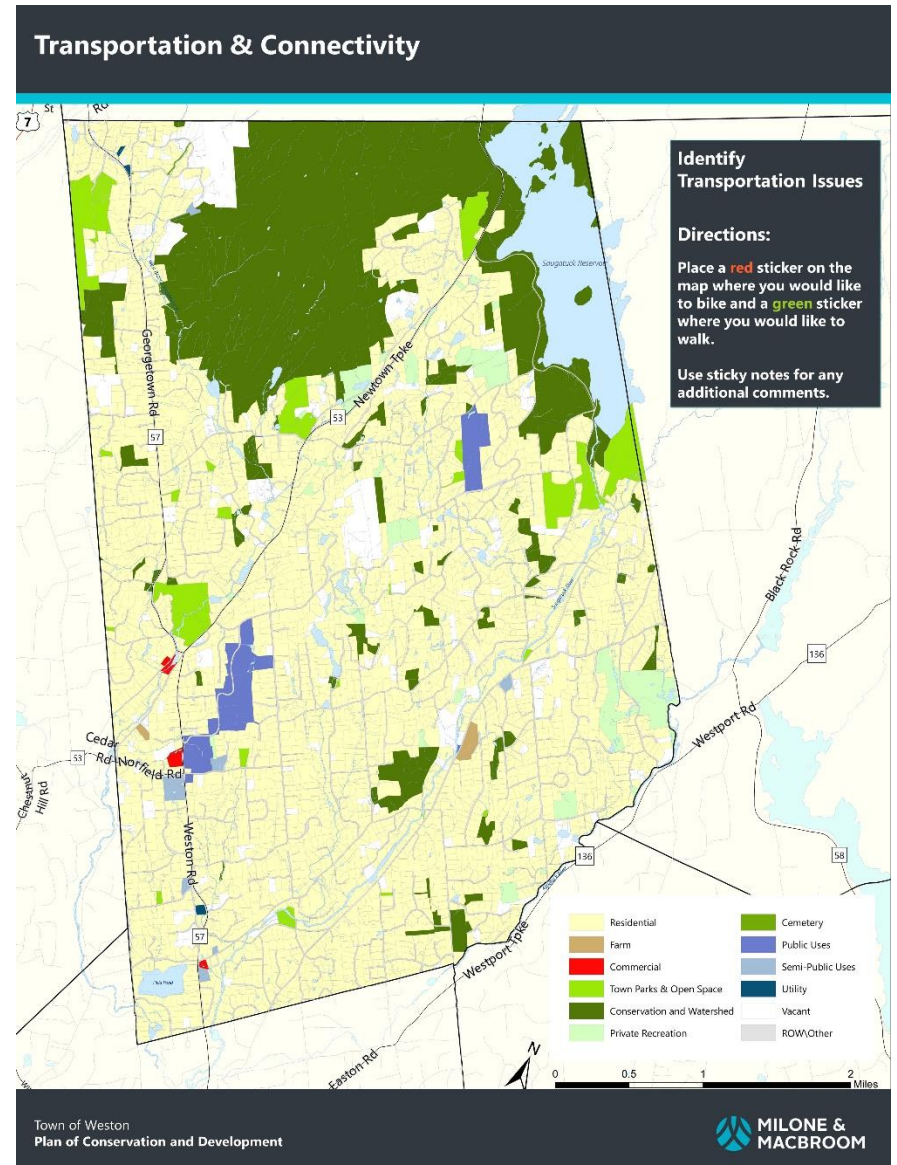
# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Connectivity

Help us identify places to improve walking and biking

Place a **red sticker** on the map where you would like to **bike** and a **green sticker** where you would like to **walk**.

Use sticky notes for any additional comments.



# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Open Space: What we know

- Open Space and Recreation comprise over 28% of Weston's total land area.
- Less than 10% of all Open Space and Recreation land is town-owned.
- Aspetuck Land Trust has acquired 42 acres of land since 2010.



# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Priority Conservation Areas

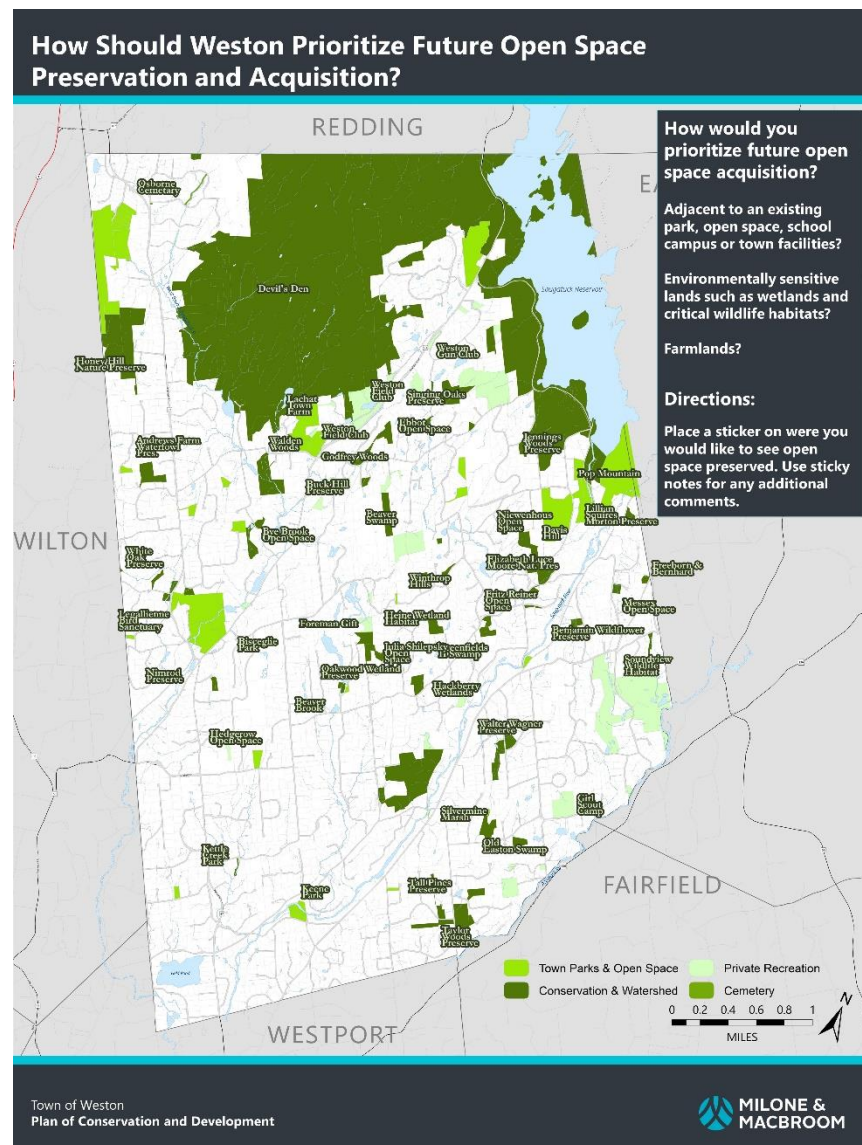
*““Open Space” is generally defined as natural and human influenced landscapes that remain relatively undisturbed. Open space may consist of several land categories, ranging from pristine preserves of high ecological significance to active recreational trails and playgrounds.” – 2010 POCD*

### How should Weston prioritize Open Space acquisition over the next ten years?

- Adjacent to existing open space, school campus, or recreational facilities?
- Lands with high conservation value such as wetlands and critical wildlife habitat?
- Farmland?

Place stickers where you would like to see open space preserved

Share specific thoughts on conservation and open space priorities and issues (focus on passive open space rather than active/recreation uses)





# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Sustainability: What we know

- Weston HS named Green Ribbon school and Green LEAF school for its work to reduce environmental impacts and utility costs, improve health and wellness, and provide effective sustainability education.
- Recently banned commercial single use plastic bags.
- Weston joined the Sustainable CT initiative in April of 2018.
- The town updated its Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2016.



# WORKSHOP EXERCISES

## Sustainability

Sustainability is a required component of every POCD.

What do you think of these potential sustainability strategies?

Are these items listed worthy investments?

Show us how you'd prioritize efforts by placing your popsicle sticks in the jars provided.

Add your own idea if it's not listed

### What Sustainability Strategies Should Your Community Focus On Over the Next Ten Years?

#### Potential Sustainability Strategies Include:

- Sustainable Waste Management Practices** – More robust recycling and composting programs, Town-led donation and reuse drives (e.g. Terracycle, Minks to Sinks in Wilton)
- Harden Infrastructure for Resiliency** – Capital improvements to protect town from storms (e.g. bury powerlines, improve stormwater drainage)
- Conduct an Energy Audit** - Assess the energy needs and efficiency of all Town buildings
- Retrofit Town Properties to be More Efficient** – Capital improvements to reduce energy usage (e.g. change to efficient lightbulbs, better insulate buildings)
- Renewable Energy Generation** – Town invests in renewable energy (e.g. solar farm)
- Green Purchases** – Town creates a policy to purchase more efficient materials (e.g. vehicles, appliances)
- Provide Incentives for Sustainable Private Development** – Planning and Zoning Commission amends zoning code to encourage Low Impact Development.
- Create Green Grounds & Maintenance Program** - Engage in best management practices at the municipal level in ground treatments, irrigation, land use practices, and/or stormwater runoff
- Sustainability Education** – Hold events to educate the public about multiple facets of sustainability
- Install Electric Vehicle Charging** – Install EV charging stations on one or more Town properties
- Shelve Sustainability** – Town does not engage in any new sustainable strategies in the next 10 years

#### Instructions:

The jars on the table align with sustainability strategies the Town of Weston may engage in over the next ten years

Each participant will get ten popsicle sticks

Please place popsicle sticks in the jars aligning with the strategies you think Weston should prioritize over the next decade

You may place as many popsicle sticks in as many jars as you please, from all in one jar to a few in each or anything in between

**It's up to you!**



# REPORT BACK & NEXT STEPS

## What did we learn?

- Online version of workshops to be posted on town website
- Next meeting October 10