



# Natick Sustainability Committee

Research Findings and Recommended Strategy

Presentation to Natick Board of Selectmen  
September 2017

# Charter

The Sustainability Committee hereinafter referred to as the “Committee” shall provide the Town of Natick and the Natick community at large with active leadership and practical solutions in reducing costs, mitigating environmental impacts and preparing for future environmental challenges. In this capacity, the Committee will be responsible for:

- Evaluating Natick's environmental impacts, challenges and opportunities
- Recommending sustainability goals and prioritizing their implementation
- Engaging municipal and school departments, businesses, institutions and volunteer groups to achieve sustainability goals
- Supporting the implementation of sustainability programs
- Monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of sustainability programs undertaken by the Town

# Members

- Leo Ryan, Chair
- Katie Schindall, Vice-Chair
- Matthew Gardner, Town Administrator's designee
- Devon Long-Lytle, Superintendent's designee
- Patrick Haswell
- Amy Boyd Rabin
- Patrick Conaway

# Focus Areas



- Cleaning and greening our energy supply
- Reducing vehicle miles
- Improving energy efficiency



- Preserving open space and natural resources
- Protecting natural ecosystems



- Reducing solid waste

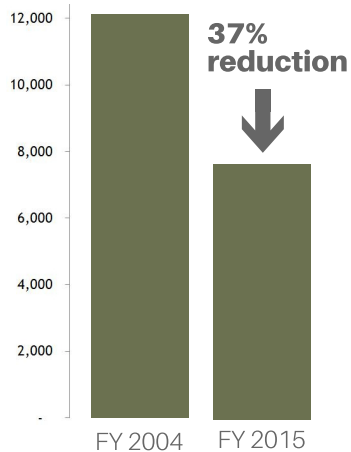


- Protecting and restoring local water bodies
- Securing community water systems
- Conserving water

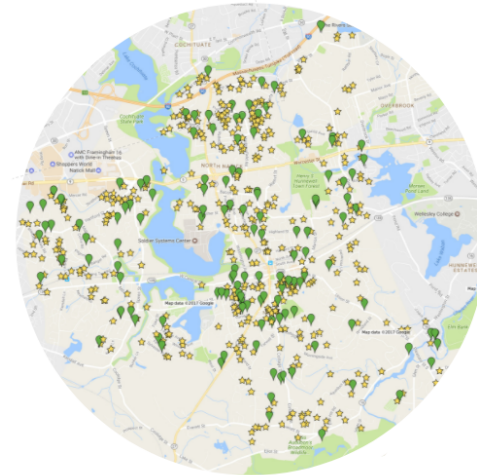


*Building for the future  
Preparing for climate change*

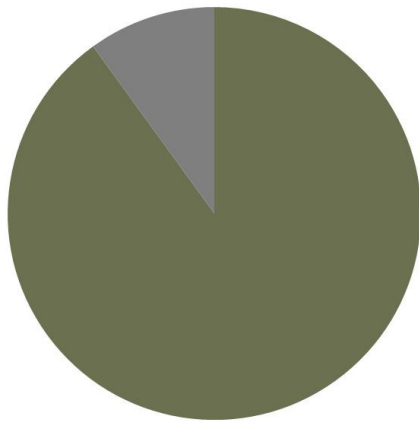
# Natick's Progress to Date



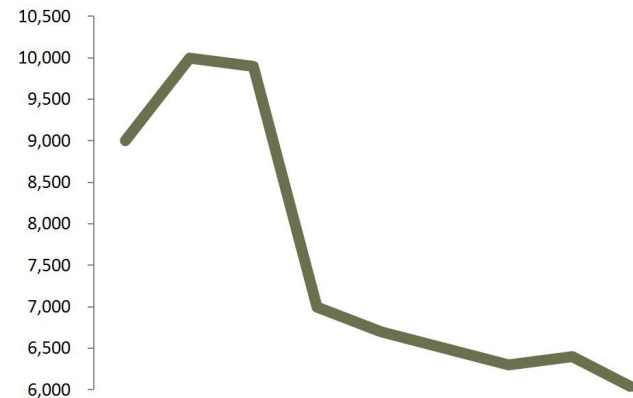
**37% REDUCTION IN MUNICIPAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**



**NEARLY 600 SOLAR INSTALLS;  
#1 SOLARIZE CAMPAIGN IN MA**



**90% OF LAND AREA WITHIN  
A 1/4 MILE OF OPEN SPACE**



**40% DROP IN WASTE SINCE 2003;  
43% OF WASTE RECYCLED**

# Sources

- 459 community members surveyed

*Survey conducted in-person at Earth Day, online and in-person at Town Meeting*

- 10+ representatives of Town government interviewed

*Representatives from DPW, Health, Community & Economic Development, Transportation Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Natick2030+ participated*

- 10+ plans and background data reviewed

*Local and regional reports reviewed including: Open Space Plan, Master Plan for Parks and Fields, Complete Streets, MS4 permit filings, 2030 reports and presentations, Town maps, MAPC MetroFuture report, MA Global Warming Solutions Act, Mass Audubon Low Impact Development analysis*

# Findings

- Residents identified preserving open space, transitioning to clean energy and protecting local water bodies as top issues
- Our community's long-term sustainability is influenced by nearly every Committee and Town Department; however these groups often operate in silos
- Key performance metrics for sustainability are tracked by Town staff, but not comprehensively reported to the public and other important metrics are not currently measured
- Staff need tools and guidance to integrate sustainability into decision-making and day-to-day operations
- Natick's zoning regulations do not currently meet best practices for low impact development and sustainable design
- Pollution from residential stormwater represents a significant financial and environmental risk to the Town

# Our Plan for FY2018

## Measure & Evaluate

Work with stakeholders to set goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and identify/drive the creation of a mechanism for public reporting and accountability

## Advocate

Provide input/consultation to Town Staff and other Committees on strategic, time-sensitive initiatives including:

- Natick 2030+
- Changes to zoning bylaws to support low impact development
- Municipal vulnerability preparedness planning
- Sustainable design of upcoming public projects (KMS, West Natick Fire Station, CRT, Natick Center parking garage, etc.)

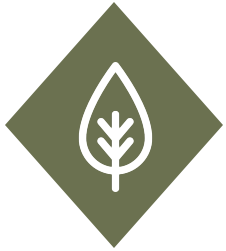
## Educate & Engage

Partner with key stakeholders to launch a campaign on how residents can improve water management and reduce stormwater runoff

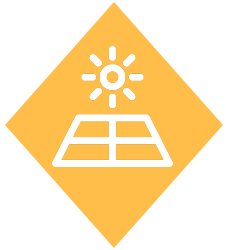
## Support Implementation

Create a series of "Sustainability Manuals" for Town staff and Committees on how to better incorporate sustainability into design and decision-making processes

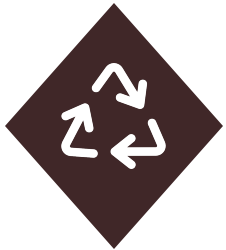
# Initial Thinking: Key Performance Indicators



- Total open space vs. developed
- Total pervious vs. impervious land coverage
- Total tree coverage
- Total land protected/conserved vs. "protectable"/"conservable"



- Total energy use and efficiency (use/unit floor area) by building area and property type
- Total greenhouse gas emissions and efficiency by building area and property type
- Total installed solar capacity
- Percent of properties with renewable energy solutions
- Total private vehicles registered in Natick
- Use of MBTA stations and MWRTA services from/within Natick



- Total waste by type and property type
- Contamination rate of recycling programs



- Total water usage by property type
- Presence and rating of local water bodies on MA EPA 303(d) list of Impaired Water Bodies
- Total observed or reported non-stormwater discharges
- Total non-compliant annual inspections
- Results of ongoing water quality testing (water bodies and municipal water sources)

# Next Steps



## Measure & Evaluate

- Receive feedback from Board of Selectmen, Town staff, Town Meeting Members and other stakeholders
- Finalize metrics and develop a standard procedure for compiling data
- Gather data and develop first snapshot for FY 2017

## Advocate

- Introduce Sustainability Committee to other Town Committees and Boards
- Monitor posted agendas for sustainability-related topics
- Continue to advocate for sustainable solutions on current public projects

## Educate & Engage

- Connect with the Natick DPW to determine how the Sustainability Committee can support stormwater goals through an educational campaign

## Support Implementation

- Work with Town staff to identify priority areas for integrating sustainability
- Develop first set of manuals in collaboration with Town staff and issue experts



# Thank You!

