

TOWN OF HOPEDALE  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
TOWN HALL  
78 HOPEDALE STREET  
HOPEDALE, MA 01747

Christopher P. Hodgens, Chairman  
Nicholas A. Alexander, Member  
Sandra E. Biagetti, Member  
Louis J. Costanza, Member  
Scott M. Savage, Member

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October 19, 2022

Ms. Glenda Hazard  
Mr. Bernie Stock  
Mr. Brian Keyes  
Hopedale Select Board  
Town Hall  
78 Hopedale Street  
Hopedale, MA 01747

Re: Resignation

Dear Chair Hazard, Mr. Stock, and Mr. Keyes:

This afternoon, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito announced that Governor Charlie Baker nominated me as a justice of the Massachusetts Appeals Court.

As a judicial nominee, I am bound by the Governor's Executive Order, which references the Code of Judicial Conduct. After reviewing these documents, I have concluded that service on the Hopedale Zoning Board of Appeals is incompatible with my responsibilities as a judicial nominee.

Therefore, I am resigning from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

I wish to thank you for the opportunity to serve the residents of Hopedale, and I thank my colleagues on the Zoning Board of Appeals for the courtesy and collegiality that we have shared. It has been a pleasure to work with such dedicated people.

Most of all, I wish to thank the residents of Hopedale for the privilege of trying to help them make our town a better place to live for all of us and the generations that follow.

Very truly yours,

Christopher P. Hodgens  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Chairman

**TOWN OF HOPEDALE  
BOARD, COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE  
TALENT BANK FORM**

Local Government needs citizens to give of their time and talents serving the Town of Hopedale. A Talent Bank has been established to compile a list of interested citizens, willing to serve on a voluntary basis on boards, commissions and committees. Some groups meet often, others require less time, and still others are busy only at specific times of the year. Occasionally, there are requirements for ad hoc committees or sub-committees appointed to work on specific projects. Experience indicates that the two most appropriate qualities for successful service are an open mind and exercise of common sense.

If you are interested in serving, please list the position(s) you wish to be considered for:

Board, Commission or Committee applying for:

Cultural Council

Please return completed forms to:

Town Administrator's Office – Hopedale Town Hall 78 Hopedale Street, Hopedale, MA 01747

The Town Hall mailing address is: P.O. Box 7, Hopedale MA, 01747

Please Note:

- The Board of Selectmen may fill vacancies until next election.
- It is recommended that you attend a few meetings of the committee or board you are contemplating joining to help determine your interest.
- The board/committee will be asked for their recommendation on each applicant appointment.

Name: Diane (Dee) Hughes

Are you a registered voter?  Yes  No

Address: 20 Prospect St

How long have you lived in Hopedale? 1 yr

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: 862 432 2125 E-Mail: deehughes392@gmail.com

How would you like to be contacted? cell, text or email

Occupation: Director Nokia of America

Please list any potential conflicts of interest, e.g. membership in an organization or your

business:

Education and Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

How many times during the last year have you attended a meeting of the Board/Committee to which you are requesting appointment? 0

Have you ever had business before the Board/Committee to which you are requesting an appointment?

Yes  No If yes what type of business? \_\_\_\_\_

Special interests and skills: Project Planning

Activities, e.g. Government/Civic & Community/Charitable & Educational: Previous town Ways & Means Committee for Boys Scouts, Lasagna Love Club Habitat for Humanity

Reasons for wanting to serve: To help continue the summer concert series of Day in the Park

*The completion of this form in no way assures appointment. Citizens deemed most qualified to serve in a particular capacity will fill all board, commission or committee vacancies.*

Applicant's Signature  Date 10/14/2022

# Cultural and Historic Resources

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## Introduction

The town of Hopedale is characterized by its rich history and vibrant community. Hopedale’s natural landscape and historic building stock connect locals and visitors to the town’s past. Numerous cultural experiences are offered that enhance life in this small community, including annual events like Hopedale Day in the Park, Fairy Walk, Scarecrow Fest, Downtown Winter Stroll and Community Tree Lighting, and more. Volunteers and community groups work to strengthen the Hopedale community through a variety of events, entertainment, recreation, education, philanthropy, arts, support of local businesses and artisans, and other opportunities to improve quality of life for residents.

Planning for historic and cultural resources allows the community to reflect on its evolution as a town and envision its direction for the future. Hopedale residents have witnessed the Draper Factory, an industrial complex that once was the primary employer and driver of community development, sit vacant for decades and eventually be demolished. The eerie absence of this massive structure in the center of town is disheartening for many, however the site has immense development potential to bolster various community needs while honoring the history of the Draper family and business. This chapter aims to identify what is valued and irreplaceable in the community, who the key stakeholders and partners are, and what steps can be taken to preserve and enhance Hopedale’s heritage for generations to come.



*Photo 1: Spindleville Pond. Photo Credit: Greg Rogrow.*

## Prior Planning and Engagement Efforts

### Hopedale Community Development Plan (2004)

Under Scenic and Unique Resources, Hopedale highlights the goal of preserving the Parklands and Hopedale Pond for recreational activities and preserving the unique history and architectural design of housing. Scenic and Unique Resources listed include Upton State Forest, Parklands, Hopedale Pond, Grafton and Upton Railroad, Little Red Shop, Former Draper Mill, Spindleville Pond, Hopedale Country Club, and Mill River. Included in the plan's ten-year goals is the preservation of historic buildings and the small-town character of town center.

### Hopedale Reconnaissance Report (2007)

The Hopedale Reconnaissance Report, conducted in 2007, is part of the Heritage Landscape Inventory program which was created to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources. The Reconnaissance Report was a collaborative effort between the project team and town residents. Residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes.<sup>1</sup> A group of priority landscapes were identified in the process-including the Draper Factory, Grafton and Upton railroad, The Parklands and Town Park, The Little Red Shop, Bancroft Memorial Library Grounds, and The Ledges. The report outlines the community's landscape history, discusses broader land planning issues identified by the community, reviews existing preservation tools, describes the priority heritage landscapes and associated issues, and provides recommendations for future preservation efforts. The following three recommendations were prioritized in the report:

- Creation of an Overlay District for Draper Factory
- Development of Master Plans for the Parklands and Town Park that incorporate an integrated preservation approach to treatment of the sites
- Consideration of a Local Historic District for Hopedale Village

In summary, the Hopedale Reconnaissance Report was designed to be a critical tool in identifying, preserving, and building upon the rich and diverse landscapes in Hopedale.

### Historical Commission Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2017)

The Historical Commission's primary mission during fiscal year 2017 was to affect the formation of a Local Historic District Study Committee, a required first step in pursuit of establishing a local historic district. The Commission partnered with the National Park Service and the Massachusetts Historical Commission to begin the process. The Historical Commission also

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<sup>1</sup> The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation defines Heritage Landscapes as "Special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of a community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities."

educated Hopedale’s citizens about the importance of local historic districts through a public presentation in mid-November 2016 titled “Establishing Local Historic Districts- Historic Preservation.

### Historical Commission Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2018):

The Historical Commission announced the Little Red Shop Museum as a Local Historic District.

## Commissions and Active Groups

### Friends of Historic Hopedale

The Friends of Historic Hopedale (FOHH) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to historic preservation, charitable giving, and community philanthropic and education purposes. The group assists the town of Hopedale in the maintenance and operation of the Little Red Shop Museum. Events sponsored by FOHH include the Hopedale Downtown Winter Stroll, Coffee Houses at the Museum, Scarecrow Fest, Fairy Walk, Pondsides Fires, and more. Several fundraisers are held each year to help give back to the community and net proceeds of these events go towards charitable purposes. In the past, funding contributions have been made towards projects at the local fire and police departments, park commission, library, and school music groups. The Friends of Historic Hopedale continues to seek ways to improve the group and support the community.

### Historical Commission

Up to seven members may be appointed by the Board of Selectmen to serve on the Historical Commission. The Commission meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the Little Red Shop Museum. The Commission is tasked with overseeing preservation, protection, and development of the town’s historical or archaeological assets. The full powers and duties of the Hopedale Historical Commission are described in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 8D. The Commission manages the Little Red Shop, which became a Local Historic District in 2018.

### Cultural Council

The Hopedale Cultural Council is part of the Massachusetts Local Cultural Council (LCC) Program, which funds and manages a network of LCCs across the state. The Mass Cultural Council receives funding from the Massachusetts Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts and distributes those public funds through two channels, one of which is distributions to LCCs which then re-grant funds to individuals and organizations in their own communities. Each council awards money based on individual community cultural needs, assessed and set by council members who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Applicants apply directly to local councils. The Hopedale Cultural Council encourages programs that support local artists, performers, and venues. The FY2022 allocation for Hopedale was \$6,000. The Hopedale Cultural Council also plans community events such as the Summer Band Concert Series and Day in the Park.

## Hopedale Community House, Inc.

The Hopedale Community House Inc. manages the Hopedale Community House and the Draper Gymnasium. The Draper Family gave both facilities to Hopedale residents to provide recreational activities in the Town. The Community House has been open since 1923. The Hopedale Community House, Inc. runs a Bowling Alley in the facility, has meeting and event rooms available for public use, and offers a variety of activities for Hopedale residents, including yoga, Zumba and rug hooking.

## Hopedale Foundation

The Hopedale Foundation is a philanthropic foundation housed under the Hopedale Community House, Inc. The Foundation offers tuition loan assistance to Hopedale residents who wish to attend college.

## Hopedale Charitable Corporation

The Hopedale Charitable Corporation is a foundation that funds religious, charitable, scientific, literary and education organizations and efforts in Hopedale and Milford.

# Existing Conditions

## History and Overview

### Pre-Colonial Period (Before 1675)

The tribes of the Nipmuc Indians were the original inhabitants of Hopedale and the surrounding southern New England lands between present-day Boston and Springfield. The land was likely used for seasonal hunting, fishing, and agriculture due to its good soil and plentiful water resources. In 1664, fifteen families from Braintree and Weymouth settled an eight-by-eight mile tract of land, called Squinshepaug, following the purchase of land from the Nipmuc Indians. This area became the town of Mendon, which was incorporated in 1667. A gristmill was built by Benjamin Albee on the Mill River, in what is now the south end of Hopedale, to grind settlers' corn in 1669. This drew in additional settlers from Worcester and Medfield.

### Colonial Period (1675-1775)

Much of the region was abandoned by settlers during King Philip's War (1675-76) and the extended period of unrest that followed. The gristmill and the rest of the buildings in Mendon were destroyed during the war. A new mill was built on the site of the destroyed gristmill by Matthias Puffer in 1684. Around 1700, colonists began their return to dispersed farms along the Mill River valley, by which point was known as the Dale. Several sections of Mendon broke off to form separate towns, and a group led by John Jones attempted to establish a new town in the area that eventually became Milford. For ten years, Jones faced strong opposition to this endeavor to achieve incorporation so he and his group, the Mill River Men, called an

Ecclesiastical Council of area churches and received permission to start a new church. Due to the mandate that only a town could have a church, this helped the group establish Milford, including what is now Hopedale, in 1780. While present-day Milford waterpower led to manufacturing, present-day Hopedale remained largely agrarian, consisting of scattered farms and two grist mills.

### Federal and Early Industrial Periods (1775-1870)

Adin Ballou was a Universalist minister in Milford and Mendon who was involved in various reform movements such as peace, women's rights, abolitionism, temperance and Practical Christian Socialism. In 1840, he proposed “a compact neighborhood or village of practical Christians, dwelling together by families in love and peace, insuring themselves the comforts of life by agricultural and mechanical industry and directing the entire residue of their intellectual, moral and physical resources to the Christianization and general welfare of the human race.”<sup>2</sup> After a long period of fundraising and planning, Ballou purchased a 258-acre farm on the Mill River in present-day Milford known as The Dale, renaming it Hope Dale. In 1842, Ballou and about forty others moved into the Old House, built in 1703, and immediately began planting crops, repairing buildings, constructing a mechanic shop, building a school, dormitory, chapel and office, and erecting a dam. By 1846, Hopedale grew to seventy residents and by 1852 the town reached 200 residents.

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, Ballou and the Community promoted causes they identified with, hosting anti-slavery meetings where Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, and William Lloyd Garrison spoke to a thousand people; allowing women to vote on Community affairs and participate in committees and jobs typically held by men; and opposing the Mexican War. The Community operated as a joint-stock association with many members having few or no shares and a few owning large numbers. Ebenezer Draper, who operated a small textile machinery shop, invested in the Community with his brother George; however, in 1856 they withdrew their investment. This action contributed to the disbandment of the Hopedale Community and the beginning of the Draper era.

### Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

The Drapers purchased the land and buildings of the Hopedale Community and reorganized Hopedale as a company town, taking Warren W. Dutcher into partnership and manufacturing innovative and successful textile equipment. The firm prospered, and over the next half-century the village took shape as a planned industrial community. New streets were laid out, and high-quality employee housing was built as the company grew. Hopedale was incorporated as a town in 1886.

The Grafton and Upton Railroad arrived in Hopedale in 1890 and by the turn of the century, the

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<sup>2</sup> Sheltered from the Wicked World: Stories and Pictures from Hopedale's Past.  
<http://www.hope1842.com/hope1842/index1.html>



Milford-Mendon Street Railway ran through town; however, streetcars were eventually abandoned in favor of improved roadways in the 1920s. Main Street then became Route 16, and Route 140 passed through the eastern part of town. The town and Draper Company continued to grow and by 1900, was the largest producer of automatic cotton looms in the world. The Draper family invested heavily in municipal improvements, along with 250 buildings of attractive and carefully planned housing for all mill employees at low rents. Only one strike, in 1913, was ever recorded in Hopedale through some of the most turbulent eras of American labor unrest. Twelve miles of streets were paved, municipal parks were laid out, and utilities including water lines, sewer lines, and a sewage system were built. During this time of growth and prosperity, Hopedale became distinguished as a prototype garden city, winning several awards from international housing congresses.

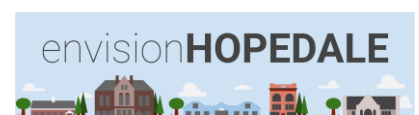
### Early Modern & Modern Periods (1915-present)

By World War I, the town’s village area was nearly completely built out. The Draper Company continued its industrial success, remaining the town’s principal employer and a major benefactor of municipal projects until the 1960s, before closing its doors in the 1970s. Hopedale has evolved into a commuter town and bedroom community for professionals working in Worcester and Greater Boston since the decline of the manufacturing industry. The small town is attractive for families in part due to its highly ranked public school system.

### Historic Resources Inventory

A complete inventory of the town’s historic resources can be located in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), managed by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. A copy of Hopedale’s historic resource inventory from MACRIS is included in the Appendix. Notable historic resources within Hopedale are included in Table HC1 with some represented in Map HC1.

Table HC1: Major Historic Resources in Hopedale			
<b>Historic Structures</b>	Grafton and Upton Railroad Tracks	Draper Ball Park	Draper Corporation Hopedale Pond Dam Raceway
	Hopedale Bandstand	Hope Street Wooden Bridge - West Abutment	Draper Corporation Tailrace
	Hopedale Town Park	Hope Street Wooden Bridge - East Abutment	Adin Ballou Memorial Park
	Parklands	Grafton and Upton Railroad Bridge over Hopedale St	Draper Corporation Hopedale Pond Dam
	Draper Corporation Oil Tank Berm (Demolished)	Draper Corporation Railroad Bridge	
<b>Historic Areas</b>	Bancroft Park	Hartford Turnpike Village	Bancroft Memorial Library



	Lake Side Group	Upper Jones Group	Hopedale Village Historic District
	White City	Lower Jones Group	Hopedale Single Building Local Historic District
	Spindleville	Draper Corporation Factory Complex	
	South Hopedale Village	Hopedale Village - Draper Village	
<b>Monuments/Statues</b>	Adin Ballou Memorial Statue	Statue of Hope Fountain	Hopedale Old House Memorial
<b>Historic Archaeological Sites</b>	Albee Grist Mill	Thwing Grist Mill	Old Saltbox Rd
<b>Burial Grounds</b>	Hopedale Village Cemetery	South Hopedale Cemetery	
<b>Historic Buildings (Located on the following streets)</b>	Adin St	Freedom St	Maple St
	Bancroft Pk	Greene St	Mellen St
	Beech St	Hartford Ave	Mendon St
	Cemetery St	Highland St	Mill St
	Centennial St	Hill St	Newton St
	Cross St	Hope St	Northrop St
	Daniels St	Hopedale St	Oak St
	Dennett St	Inman St	Park St
	Depot St	Jones Rd	Peace St
	Dutcher St	Lake St	Pierce St
	Elmwood St	Fitzgerald Dr	Lower Jones Rd
	Plain St	Social St	Union St
	Progress St	South Main St	Warfield St
	Prospect St	Soward St	West St
	Williams St		
<i>Source: MACRIS, 2021</i>			

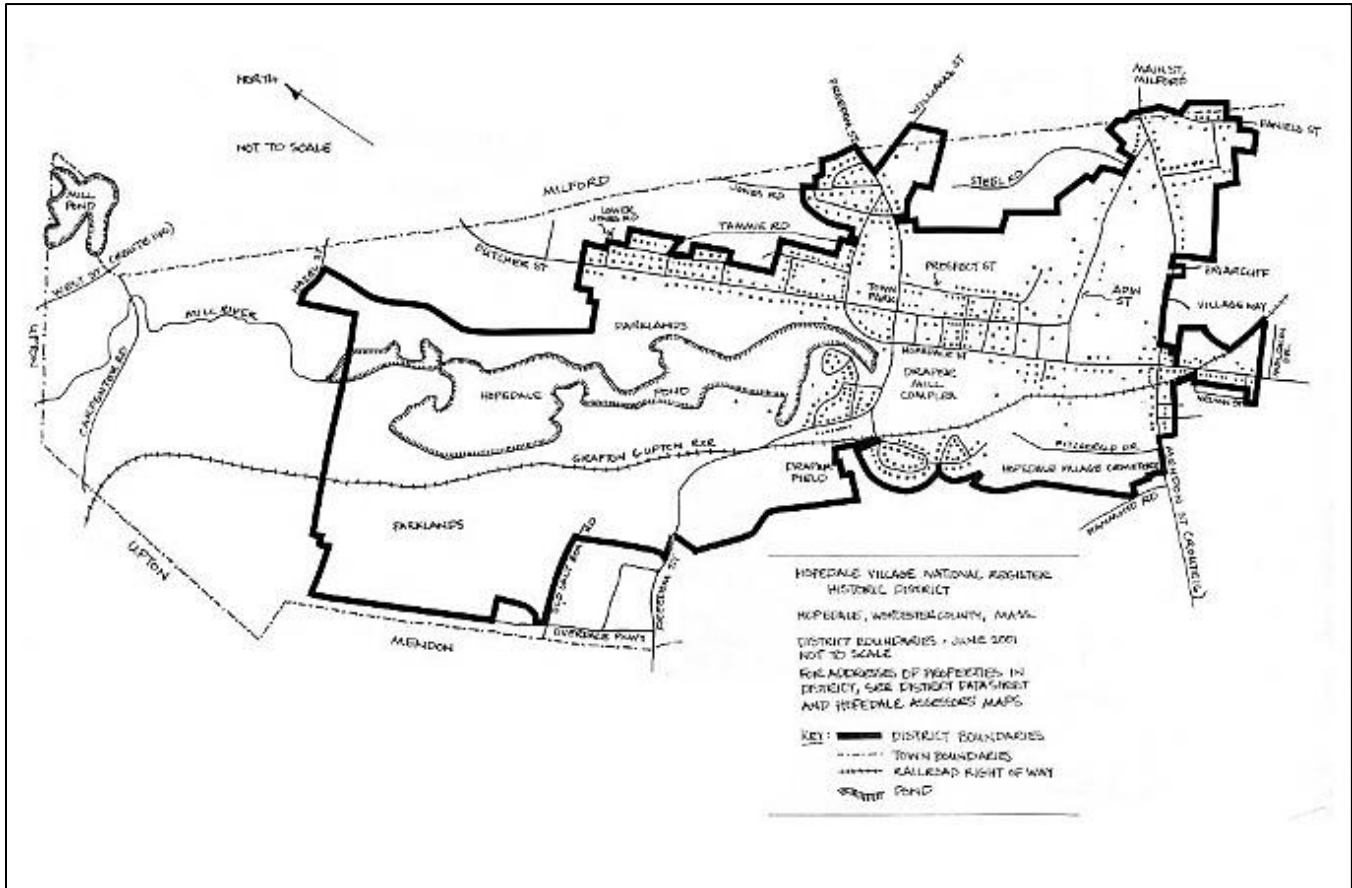
## Historic Districts

### Hopedale Village National Register District

A National Register District is a part of the National Register of Historic Places, which is a list of the individual buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts deemed important in American history, culture, architecture, or archaeology. A National Register District is a federal designation and provides national recognition that the area is significant to the history of the community, state, or nation. In 2002, Hopedale Village received this honorary distinction and was added to the National Register of Historic Places. This historic area is roughly bounded by the Milford Town Line, Malquin Drive, Mendon Town Line, and Upton Town Line. See Figure HC1 for a map

of the National Register District. The primary feature of the district was the former factory complex of the Draper Company at Hopedale and Freedom Streets, which has since been demolished. The district has also been included as part of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.

**Figure HC1: Map of Hopedale Historic District**



### Little Red Shop Local Historic District

Hopedale’s first and only Local Historic District (LHD) is the Little Red Shop, located at 12 Hopedale Street. Hopedale Special Town Meeting voted to approve the Little Red Shop as a Local Historic District in 2018, the only one to pass of the six proposed districts in town. LHD’s are much more effective at preventing changes or demolition than National Register Districts. For a building located within the boundaries of a Local Historic District, a locally appointed Historic District Commission must review any proposed changes to exterior architectural features visible to the public view. This design review process assures that changes will not detract from the district’s historic character. Local Historic Districts may be a group of historic buildings and their settings or a single building, as is the case of Hopedale’s Little Red Shop.

# Cultural and Historic Destinations

## Draper Factory Site

The Draper Factory was Hopedale's most dominating feature and the driver of most aspects related to the town's development. The Draper Corporation was centrally located in the town of Hopedale. The building was constructed throughout many stages during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was a massive brick complex of 1.7 million square feet in several factory buildings located along 80 acres bounded by Hopedale and Freedom Streets. The Draper Corporation produced power looms in this location for approximately 130 years. Upon production ceasing in the 1970s, the complex sat vacant for decades. Prior to its complete demolition in 2021, most buildings had severely deteriorated, posing a safety risk. While some Hopedale residents hope for the redevelopment of the historic property, the private property owner made the difficult decision to tear down the remaining structures and consider alternative redevelopment opportunities for the site.

## The Parklands

The major open space feature of Hopedale is The Parklands, an approximately 273-acre park in the northwest area of town. About 36 acres of the park consist of the pond and islands. A monument for the Hopedale Parklands Nature Trail, dedicated to Willard W. Taft is located in an open space north of the bathing beach, which is a brass plaque attached to a granite boulder. The Parklands was designed by landscape architect Warren Henry Manning, who finalized the plan in 1898 after leaving the firm of landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted and establishing his own practice. The plan was approved in 1899 and the park was created over time as the town appropriated money, with final improvements occurring in 1914. Manning was one of the most important landscape architects of his time and was a founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. The park's development involved combining several properties and reclaiming land through draining, filling, and replanting. Manning introduced many plant species, including hemlock, tulip, mountain ash, willows, black alder, Carolina poplar, and cedars. At one time the work crew for the park, led by a park superintendent, numbered 30-40 during spring planting season.

Today the Parklands features nearly four miles of walking paths and a pond with picnic tables and benches. There are six entrances, the main one located on Freedom Street. Community events such as the annual Hopedale Fairy Walk are held at The Parklands.

## Town Park

Hopedale's Town Park is a six-acre multi-use recreation park located on the corner of Dutcher and Freedom Streets. It sits within the boundaries of the Hopedale Village National Register Historic District. The park was designed by Warren Manning and developed at approximately the same time as The Parklands. Land for the park was acquired from various landowners in 1899 using funds approved by Town Meeting, upon the formation of the Town's first Park

Commission. The park is surrounded by a boulder wall, constructed from stones found on the property during excavation. A bandstand in the park is used for concerts in the summer. There is a basketball court, baseball field, tennis courts, and a playground. Town Park remains a popular recreation destination for residents of all ages.

### The Little Red Shop

The Little Red Shop is a one-story rectangular wood frame structure approximately 20' x 90' with a gabled roof and an ornamental cupola with a weathervane. Research indicates that the existing building is the second floor of the original structure, and that the cupola was originally located atop another Draper shop building. The first Draper shop, known as the Little Red Shop, was built in the early 1840s by the Hopedale community. Water from Hopedale Pond powered the machines by a water wheel located in the lower floor of the ell. It was in this building that the Draper Corporation began. As the Draper Company and plant grew, the shop was used for visitors and sales tours. The building sits on the east side of Hopedale Pond at the corner of Dutcher and Freedom Streets, where it was moved in the 1950s from the opposite side of the pond. This was the last of three moves of the building, and it brought the original Draper shop into a close relationship with its much larger successor across Freedom Street. An interpretive plaque in front of the building on 12 Hopedale Street tells the story of the Little Red Shop and Hopedale's unique evolution as a utopian and industrial community. The Little Red Shop is owned by the Town of Hopedale and managed by the Historical Commission. A Preservation Restriction was placed on the building in 2002.

### Bancroft Memorial Library

The Bancroft Memorial Library is the public library that serves the Hopedale community. Located within the Hopedale Village National Register Historic District, the library sits on a small sloping lot bounded by Hopedale Street and a contemporary office building and parking lot. A Romanesque building constructed in 1898-99, it is a single-story stone structure designed by Boston architect C. Howard Walker of the firm Walker & Kimball. The southeast lawn of the library property features a large marble fountain surmounted by a Statue of Hope carved in 1904 by Waldo Story from Carrara marble.

The library was built for the town by Joseph Bubier Bancroft, an executive with the Draper Company and a member of the original Hopedale community, in memory of his wife Sylvia. It was built proximate to Bancroft's home and was donated to the town when construction completed in 1899. The library is home to a small collection of artifacts and memorabilia, including Adin Ballou's cradle and writing desk, along with portraits of Hopedale's founders. The historic building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a Preservation Restriction was placed on the property in 2000.

## The Ledges

The Eben S. Draper II Estate, or The Ledges, is an approximately 22-acre estate located at 55 Adin Street. The property was originally the home of Eben S. Draper, one of the second generation of Drapers in Hopedale, who lived here during his term as Governor of Massachusetts and as the agent in charge of sales at the Draper Company. When Draper's son, Eben S. Draper II, inherited the property he conducted major renovations on the site, including removal of the original shingle style mansion. Now, three houses sit on the property, which can be accessed by a long driveway entrance. The main house is a large English Revival style structure built in 1925. Rolling lawns, a variety of large trees, rock outcroppings, and a manmade pond define the estate's grounds, blending seamlessly with the impressive stone and brick buildings. The landscape design can be attributed to the notable landscape architect Warren Manning.

The property has since been subdivided into three separate parcels. The current owner purchased the carriage house on the estate in 1960 and established The Ledges, a home for adults living with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, physical disabilities, and/or significant medical challenges. The remaining parcels are private residences.

## Unitarian Church and Town Hall

The Hopedale Unitarian Parish was formed on October 2, 1867. The church's first minister was founder Adin Ballou. The Unitarian Church is a granite structure erected in 1898 in the name of George and Hannah Draper by their sons, George Albert Draper and former governor Eben S. Draper. It is a two-story, L-shaped building constructed of pink Milford granite and trimmed in Indiana limestone. The architectural style is English Gothic. The church is located at 65 Hopedale Street.

Located just across the street, Hopedale's Town Hall was built in 1887 and was gifted to the Town by the children of George Draper, Sr. as a sign of prosperity and memorial to him. The building was constructed in the Romanesque style of architecture from blocks of Milford granite with Longmeadow brownstone trimmings. The building was designed to host businesses on the ground floor and has an auditorium on the second floor. At the building's dedication ceremony, former Governor John D. Long stated that the building stands for the New England town meeting and that the hall commemorates a noble New England life. Its character of strong and simple architecture has become a symbol throughout town. The Town Hall is one of Hopedale's noteworthy cultural destinations that help strengthen the identity of the town and preserve its heritage.

## Grafton and Upton Railroad

The Grafton and Upton Railroad is a 15.5-mile-long industrial railroad line that runs from Milford through Hopedale, Upton, West Upton, and Grafton to North Grafton and to Worcester. The Grafton Centre Railroad was chartered in 1873 and opened in 1874 as a narrow-gauge

connection from Grafton to a junction with the Boston and Albany Railroad at North Grafton. The final narrow-gauge train ran in 1887, and the line was rebuilt to standard gauge that same year. The name was changed to the Grafton and Upton Railroad in 1888 by an act of the state legislature and in 1889 the railroad was installed between Grafton and Upton, providing the first direct rail link to what was once the Draper Complex. Railroad access became an important economic factor in the expansion of the Draper Company. The Grafton and Upton Railroad was operated and controlled by the Draper Company and its principals for 80 years, an unusual feat for a railroad of that length. It was additionally one of the few railroads to transition from steam to electric operation before transitioning to diesel power. While ownership of the Railroad has changed hands, and the Draper Factory has been demolished, Grafton and Upton offices and main yards are still located in Hopedale, adjacent to the buildings once associated with the Draper Company.

## Issues and Opportunities

### Local, Regional, and National Resources

#### Little Red Shop Museum

Built in 1841, the Little Red Shop is Hopedale's oldest industrial building and symbolizes the beginnings of what became the largest textile loom manufacturing operation in the world, the Draper Corporation. The mission of the Little Red Shop Museum is to preserve and communicate the story of Hopedale through the artifacts of the town's history, and to provide continuity between the town's past and future.

With a grant from Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc., matched by cash, in-kind donations, and volunteer time, the Hopedale Historical Commission was able to complete an archive of important historical documents and artifacts in 2017. A collection of artifacts, documents, and photos was properly catalogued using archiving equipment and a historic loom was relocated from the museum to the Noble & Cooley Center for Historic Preservation in Granville, MA in order to allow for more space for cataloguing. This effort has been called a catalyst for revitalizing the mission of the museum and sparking renewed interest from the public.

The Little Red Shop Museum is managed by the Hopedale Historical Commission and is open limited hours to the public or by appointment. It has been used as a venue for events such as painting workshops and a vendor location on the Annual Downtown Winter Stroll.

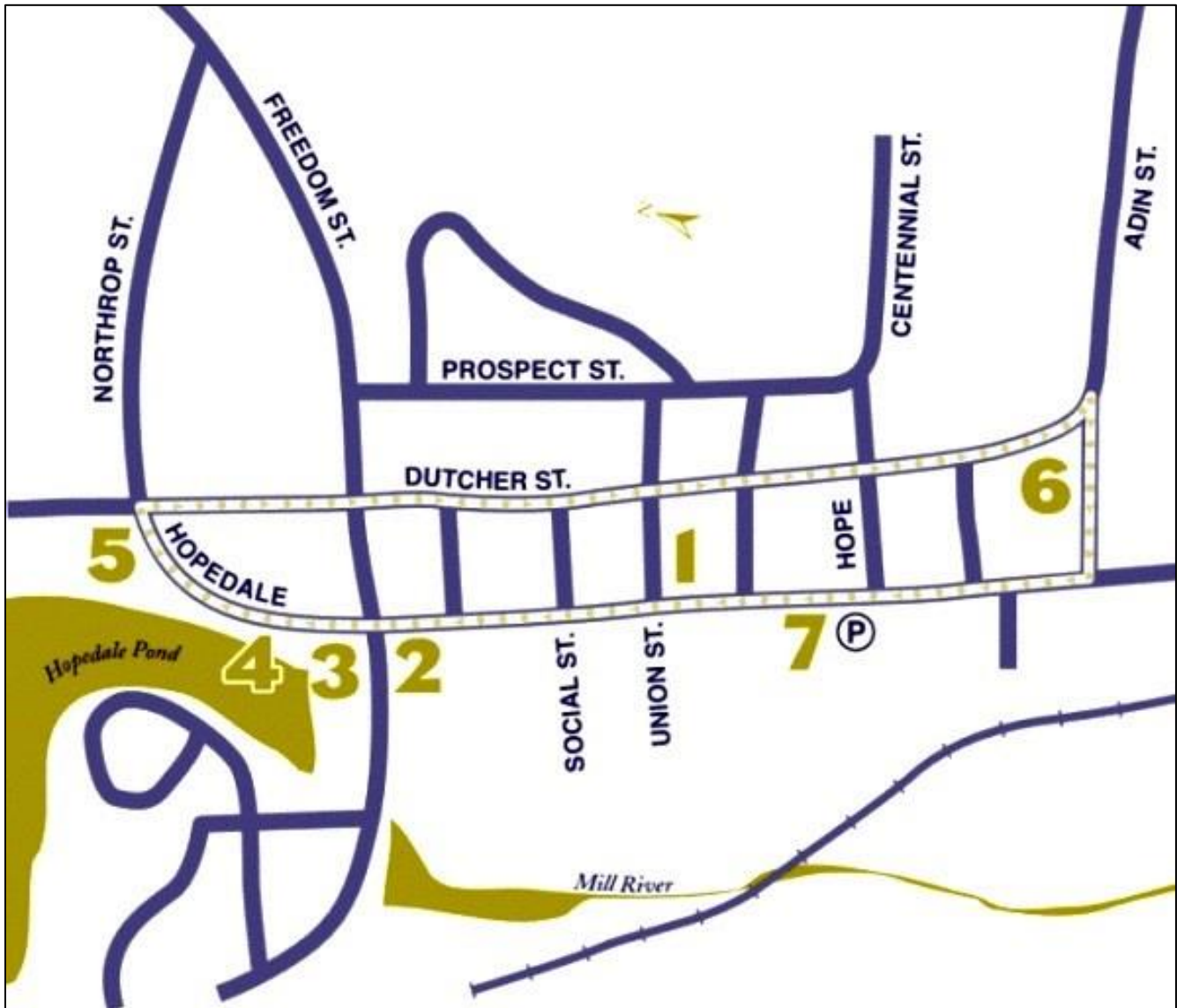
#### Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Inc. (BHC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that partners with organizations, local communities, businesses, and residents to preserve and promote the valley's historic, cultural, natural, and recreational resources for current and future generations. Hopedale is one of the 25 towns that BHC provides services to.

Since its inception in 1986, BHC has facilitated meaningful investments in the Blackstone Valley. The organization recognizes the importance of historic preservation and telling the story of America's industrial past while ensuring the Blackstone Valley is a thriving place for those who live and work here.

BHC is the local coordinating partner of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, assisting the National Park Service in planning for the future of the park while playing a broader role in the Corridor as a whole. Using an integrated approach, BHC promotes meaningful partnerships, provides educational resources, and takes action through specific projects or programs, particularly for those that require region-wide focus. BHC is a valuable partner for Hopedale to engage with in promoting and preserving its rich history.

**Figure HC2: Tourist Map of Hopedale**





## Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park (National Park Service unit)

Hopedale belongs to the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, which was established on December 19, 2014 as the 402<sup>nd</sup> unit of the National Park Service. The boundary of the park was finalized on July 27, 2021 and it is headquartered at Wilkinson Mill in the Historic Slater Mill Complex in Pawtucket, RI. Six areas that make up the park, one of which is the Hopedale Village Historic District. The park emphasizes the region's significance as the Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution and how manufacturers along the Blackstone River transformed the American economy and lifestyle throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The National Park Service offers a Self-Guided Walking Tour for Hopedale, which features seven stops including:

1. Adin Ballou Park
2. Factory Site
3. Little Red Shop
4. The Parklands
5. Dutcher Street Company Housing
6. Unitarian Church and Town Hall

To encourage tourism and awareness of all the valley's resources, the National Park Service has issued a Park Passport for the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, in which visitors can acquire a Passport book at any of the sites and collect stamps for each park area. The Hopedale stamp can be found at the Bancroft Memorial Library and the Little Red Shop during business hours. The park continues to evolve, and work is in progress on the planning and construction of additional facilities and exhibits.

## Community Planning Tools

### Demolition Delay Bylaw

Demolition delay ordinances or bylaws are tools for communities to protect historic buildings and structures. Enacted by a majority vote at Town Meeting, a demolition delay ordinance or bylaw provides a review procedure requiring a delay in the demolition of historically significant buildings. This process provides a time period in which Towns can consider alternatives to demolition of historic buildings and structures. During this process of establishing a demolition delay bylaw, the Local Historical Commission collaborates with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to develop a bylaw that would appropriately fit the Town's needs. The Local Historical Commission should also work with other local groups to coordinate public education outreach and widely publicize the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. Typically, demolition delay bylaws apply to structures that were built over 50 years ago. The most common delay of demolition is six months, although many communities have discovered that a 1-year delay is more effective. This is a tool that can help temporarily protect structures with historic value but not completely impede development options. The Town should explore the adoption of a Demolition Delay Bylaw that will extend time for concerned parties to consider alternatives to demolition.

## Local Historic District

Local Historic Districts, as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, are some of the most effective ways to prevent inappropriate alterations to historically significant buildings. If a property owner wishes to make changes to exterior architectural features visible to public view, then a locally appointed Historic District Commission must review the proposed changes. A public hearing is held by the locally appointed Historic District Commission in order to determine whether the changes are suitable. To assist property owners within Local Historic Districts, many Historic District Commissions opt to prepare Historic District Design Guidelines.

There are numerous advantages to establishing a Local Historic District. Residents of Hopedale take pride in the town's historic character and dedication to preservation. In the Master Plan community survey, 83% of respondents agreed that historic resources are an essential part of Hopedale's character and 69% of respondents felt strongly that local regulations should protect certain historic resources and regions. Adding Local Historic Districts will allow Hopedale to continue to preserve meaningful buildings and sites and protect them from needless demolition or inappropriate remodeling without adequate review. A LHD can also encourage design that is creative and new but stays consistent in size and dimensions with other buildings in the surrounding neighborhood. It is important to note that when a Local Historic District is created, there are many proposed changes that are exempt from review, including review of interior and a variety of external features (i.e., HVAC units, storm doors, storm windows, paint color, and temporary structures). The decision on which features are exempt from review depends on how the local bylaw or ordinance is written and voted on at Town Meeting. According to a study by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, property values within Local Historic Districts remain the same or increase at a faster rate than those in similar, non-LHD designated areas.

It is important to distinguish Local Historic Districts from National Register Districts, which are far less effective preservation tactics. A National Register District is a federal designation and provides national recognition that the area is significant to the history of the community, state, or nation. A property listed on the National Register of Historic Places does not place any restrictions on the way an owner handles their property, given there is no state or federal involvement in a project and no pertinent local or regional regulations. While designation as a National Register District has benefits such as qualifying property owners for state and federal preservation grants or making certain tax incentives available for preservation, inevitably it does not protect buildings and structures within the district from demolition or substantial alteration.

## Preservation Restriction

Defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter, 184 Section 31, a Preservation Restriction (PR) is a voluntary legal agreement that protects a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource from changes that may be inappropriate. It assures that an historic or culturally significant property's intrinsic values will be preserved by present and future owners by restricting the demolition or alteration of its significant historic features. A PR must be filed at the

Registry of Deeds and runs with the property. While PRs typically focus on exterior architectural features, they may also address any significant interior spaces. Preservation Restrictions offer protection of a historic property or site for a term of years or in perpetuity.

At the core of a PR is the Grantor's Covenants, where the owner of the property agrees to maintain the building exterior in good repair consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, which are federal standards that define appropriate treatment of historic properties. A Preservation Restriction may be held by any governmental body or charitable corporation or trust capable of acquiring interests in land and whose purposes include historic preservation. This includes local Historical Commissions; however, they cannot hold a PR on a town-owned property. Those who want to use a working model to establish a Preservation Restriction can utilize the Massachusetts Historical Commission long form template, available in its Guidebook on Preservation Restrictions.

### Community Preservation Act

Codified as Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44B, the Community Preservation Act (CPA) is one of the most valuable tools available to communities that want to protect their open space and historic sites, create affordable housing options, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA funds are generated through two sources: a voter-approved surcharge of up to 3% on annual real estate taxes, and an annual disbursement from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund administered by the Department of Revenue, which distributes funds each year to communities that have adopted CPA. At least 10% of the annual revenues must be used for each of the three core areas: (1) open space, (2) historic resources, and (3) affordable housing. The remaining 70% can be used for any combination of the above uses as well as recreational uses.

Hopedale adopted CPA at a Town Meeting on November 3, 2020 with the measure passing 2,302 to 1,176. This vote approved a 1% surcharge on annual real estate taxes after subtracting the first \$100,000 in residential property value. These funds are transferred to the town's Community Preservation Fund. A locally appointed Community Preservation Coalition is tasked with making recommendations on CPA projects to be approved at Town Meeting.

CPA can be a valuable funding source for many heritage landscape projects. These projects could include completing Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) inventory forms, National Register nominations, cemetery preservation, open space acquisition and permanent preservation, religious institution preservation, historic barn rehabilitation, or restoration of public buildings and significant historic artifacts. Hundreds of projects in Massachusetts have been completed since 2001 using funds allocated from CPA. Examples of projects in Central Massachusetts include the restoration of a roof on Old Town Hall in Grafton, resolving humidity and drainage problems in a vault storing historical records in Mendon, restoring and preserving permanent town records that date back to 1733 in Sturbridge, and historic cemetery preservation

in West Boylston. A full list of completed projects utilizing CPA funds in Massachusetts can be viewed using the Community Preservation Projects Database on the Community Preservation Coalition website.

## Scenic Roads Bylaw

A Scenic Roads Bylaw is a preservation planning tool that helps communities preserve the scenic, historic, and aesthetic characteristics of the public right-of-way. This regulatory tool can help Hopedale maintain its small-town character. Roads that are designated as “scenic roads” by the town and approved at Town Meeting require additional review and protection regarding actions like tree removal, stone wall removal, or other significant alterations within the public right-of-way. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 15C states that if a city or town passes a bylaw in accordance with the Scenic Roads Act, the cutting or removal of trees, or the altering or removal of stone walls within a road right-of-way, requires prior written consent of the planning board, select board, or city council.

Roads could be designated as a scenic road based on the following criteria:

- Overall scenic beauty and view from the roadside
- Contributions of trees to scenic beauty
- Contributions of stone walls to scenic beauty or prevalence of historic stone walls along the right-of-way
- Age and historic significance of road, trees, or stone walls

A bylaw will establish the process and criteria for designating roads as scenic roads, the types of work on trees or stone walls that will require hearings, the process for conducting hearings, the criteria for approving proposed work, and how the bylaw will be enforced. The town may develop a bylaw that is appropriate for Hopedale’s needs.

Other means of managing change along historic roads include a Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw, Scenic Overlay District, or Corridor Overlay Protection Bylaw.

## Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 1: Utilize protective zoning, regulatory, and legislative tools to preserve and maintain Town-owned and, optionally, privately-owned historic assets.**

- Objective 1: Ensure protection of the town’s historically significant structures
  - Implement a town-wide education campaign on the benefits of local historic districts
  - Explore adoption of a Demolition Delay Ordinance or Bylaw to protect historic and architecturally significant buildings from demolition
  - Educate property owners on the benefits of Preservation Restrictions (PR) while encouraging them to pursue this protective measure

- Utilize local Community Preservation funds as a sustainable funding source for historic preservation efforts
- Objective 2: Ensure cultural landscapes are thoroughly protected
  - Explore bylaws and policies that would help preserve the town’s cultural landscapes such as Scenic Roads Bylaw, Scenic Vista Bylaw, Scenic Overlay District Zoning, Corridor Protection Overlay District Zoning, Transfer of Development Rights, Greenbelt Ordinance, Design Guidelines, Shade Tree Act Bylaw, Billboard Controls, or other appropriate preservation measure

**Goal 2: Provide adequate cultural opportunities for Hopedale residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.**

- Objective 1: Expand community outreach initiatives related to the town’s cultural and historical resources
  - Consider initiatives such as guided community tours, self-guided walking tours, history days, farmer’s markets, concerts, community theater, etc. in order to attract visitors and build appreciation for local history and culture
  - Promote local history and culture at Town events
- Objective 2: Enhance public access to cultural and historic resources and information
  - Develop a publicly accessible, comprehensive inventory of the town’s historic resources including the historic artifacts, properties, structures, districts, burial grounds, and any other notable features of Hopedale’s history.
  - Make information on Hopedale’s rich cultural and historic assets widely available to residents and visitors in formats that are accessible, attractive, and easy to understand
  - Utilize new wayfinding signage, enhanced gateway features, and other beautification or place-making projects to promote the community’s rich heritage, enhance local identity, and foster a sense of place
  - Promote arts and cultural events and programming through efforts such as enhanced social media outreach, a comprehensive and user-friendly town events calendar, links on the Town website, or any other appropriate methods.
- Objective 3: Ensure there are cultural opportunities that cater to the needs and desires of all town residents
  - Encourage greater participation from youth to serve on committees that sponsor cultural opportunities
  - Work with community leaders and organizations to identify any barriers to arts and cultural programming, including financial, transportation, child-care, or accessibility issues.

**Goal 3: Support strong connections among Hopedale’s arts, culture, historic, and business communities through efficient communication and coordination.**

- Objective 1: Encourage greater coordination and collaboration among local and regional preservation groups
  - Develop formal communication channels among local preservation groups to ensure awareness of current issues and activities in Hopedale, including routine distribution of meeting agendas and minutes, scheduling of occasional group meetings to share resources and ideas, and development of joint activities.
  - Partner with organizations such as the Central Massachusetts Historical Commission Coalition, Blackstone Heritage Corridor, and National Park Service to host public events dedicated to Hopedale’s history and heritage
  - Pursue partnerships with local college and university programs that could provide assistance to the town with arts, history, and preservation activities
- Objective 2: Ensure long-term sustainability of Hopedale’s historic and cultural resources
  - Coordinate, develop, and implement a plan outlining routine maintenance activities and sustainable funding sources for Town-owned historic properties
  - Actively seek public and private funding to enhance maintenance and preservation of historic and cultural resources
- Objective 3: Ensure the history of Draper Mill is adequately preserved and promoted
  - Preserve remaining artifacts from the historic Draper Mill
  - Properly document and share the mill’s history and impact on the town of Hopedale

# Population and Housing

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## Introduction

This section focuses on housing and population in the Town of Hopedale, looking at population growth, housing unit development, affordability, and other demographic and market trends. Analysis of demographic and housing market trends is important to the other topics in this master plan as housing and population growth have ripple effects on areas from land use to capital expenditures. A careful examination of population and housing data will provide the community with a full understanding of the potential impacts of future development.

This chapter will analyze the current demographics, housing stock, market trends, issues and opportunities facing Hopedale in the near future. It will conclude with a discussion of goals and possible actions for the Town to pursue to achieve their stated goals.

## State, Regional, and Local Trends

The Commonwealth has identified a need to aggressively pursue housing development to meet the demands of population growth. The recent Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Housing Choice program set a goal of producing 17,000 new housing units statewide per year between 2017 and 2025. Recent analysis shows that the Commonwealth needs to produce around 500,000 new housing units by 2040 to “maintain the existing levels of employment without accommodating any significant job growth” (Massachusetts Housing Partnership, 2019). This means that housing production will continue to be a key challenge facing Massachusetts and the Town of Hopedale for the next several years. The COVID-19 crisis has created other challenges in achieving this goal in that employment has changed drastically at least for the time being. Many people are working from home and others are no longer employed. If people continue to work from home, their housing needs may likely change. Recent record increases in home values and supply chain issues are also impacting housing production. The following population and housing trends support the finding of housing needs and will inform the recommendations of this chapter.

## Summary of Key Population Trends

- The Hopedale population has seen a slight increase since 2000.
- The elderly population has realized a sharp increase in population, and the young family and pre-school groups have realized a decrease in population.
- Healthy aging issues will become increasingly salient as Hopedale’s population of retirement-aged residents continues to grow.
- Along with the decrease in the young family and pre-school groups, Hopedale Public

Schools has seen a decrease in enrollment.

### Summary of Key Housing Trends

- Hopedale is a small town with limited land available for development as most available land has either been preserved or built out. The Town will need to compile a list of potential sites for housing development.
- Multi-family property is being developed at a slower rate. The limited supply of rental units is likely driving up prices for existing units and cost-burdening existing residents.
- Hopedale's limited inventory of housing and high cost of living is failing to bridge the affordability gap for owners and renters.
- Redevelopment of the Draper Factory site will provide the greatest opportunity for building new housing.
- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) may provide additional options for generating affordable housing units. They can also provide a way for multi-generational families to live in proximity. With family nearby to help care for elderly or disabled family members, ADUs can allow these individuals to remain in their homes longer. These units can also provide housing for individuals with significant debt such as emerging college graduates. A recent internet search indicated that there are more short-term rentals available in Hopedale than are long-term rentals. Some property owners may have elected to rent their properties as short-term rentals rather than long-term thereby reducing the amount of long-term rental units available for residents.

### Summary of Key Market Trends

- Housing unit development has largely recovered from the 2008 housing crisis with new unit growth coming within a few percentage points of pre-recession demand as of 2020. Current conditions include a very low inventory of existing homes for sale with high demand, resulting in increased prices.
- Due to COVID-19, it is possible that people may continue working remotely and elect to relocate outside of employment centers such as the Boston region to attractive and more affordable suburban areas. As a result, it is possible that Hopedale could experience a high demand for housing in the coming years.
- Development in Hopedale has been limited in recent years, but the majority of new development is in single-family detached housing units which account for more than 79 percent of the total new structures added since 2006.
- The high cost of housing combined with a low volume of available housing has precluded some from buying a home.
- The cost in the rental market has increased, largely in response to the increase in home values, the very low amount of available rental units, and the lack of new multi-family units.



## Prior Planning and Engagement Efforts

As a small town, both in area and in population, Hopedale has had limited opportunities to engage in large-scale planning efforts. However, several plans and studies over the past couple of decades have laid out substantial visions for the Town's land use. The 2008 report by the Draper Complex Reuse Committee represents the most robust effort to date, produced with the cooperation of the Town, the owner of the Draper Factory, and outside consultants and featuring strong citizen participation including community meetings. Especially important for Hopedale in 2021 is the recommendation to increase water and sewer capacity at the Draper Factory site. With a large amount of development planned for the area, the Town will need to make sure that its infrastructure capacity is up to the task. Additional efforts include the Basic Housing Needs Assessment for Hopedale<sup>1</sup> and the 2017 Community Development Plan.<sup>2</sup> Each of these is detailed below.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has completed housing needs assessments for communities in Massachusetts. The Basic Housing Needs Assessment for Hopedale, MA, completed in 2012, resulted in the following summary of findings and recommendations based on data that was available at that time.

- The total number of households in Hopedale is staying mostly stagnant.
- The senior population is expected to increase by approximately 75 percent in the next 10 years.
- The average household size is expected to slightly decrease from 2.66 in 2010 to 2.35 in 2030.
- The total number of households is expected to increase by 9 percent by 2030.
- Householders aged 30-60 and over are expected to decrease by approximately 14 percent.
- Householders aged 60 and over are expected to increase from 32 percent to 46 percent in 2030.
- Net housing demand is increasing by approximately 10 percent annually.
- While not apparent in the Hopedale housing analysis, the number of households is expected to increase faster than population growth as the size of households declines.
- Twenty-three (23) percent of all households qualify for affordable housing programs based on income.
  - Thirty-four (34) percent of households are cost-burdened (pay more than 30 percent of income for housing)
  - The percentage of households that are severely cost-burdened is 8.6 percent including 53 percent of renters and 29 percent of owners.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.housing.ma/hopedale/report>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif711/f/uploads/master\\_plan\\_-\\_community\\_development\\_chapter.pdf](https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif711/f/uploads/master_plan_-_community_development_chapter.pdf)

- There is an affordability gap which is an imbalance between the number of households by income level and the number of housing units affordable by income level. In Hopedale, the affordable housing is occupied by higher income households, thus creating a supply problem in affordable housing. Hopedale households at less than 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI), 50 to 80% AMI, and above 80% AMI, face affordability gaps of 190, -210, and 30, respectively. The positive gap indicates a shortage in affordable housing.
- The Comprehensive Permit Act (MGL 40B) allows developers to build more densely than municipal zoning laws allow if a proportion (20-25%) of the development is affordable. Affordable housing is defined at units that be purchased or rented by a household with 80 percent AMI.

The Hopedale Community Development Plan was completed by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) and the Massachusetts Watershed Coalition in 2004 and later updated in 2017. It included topics such as history, housing stock, the regional economy, demographic trends, and the community’s vision for its future. The plan was drafted after receiving public input on community priorities.

Some of the goals from the earlier plan include updating the Hopedale Master Plan, protecting Hopedale well fields using Zone II regulations, and redeveloping the Draper Factory Complex. It also called for strengthening the local capacity to assess development proposals to ensure that they contribute to sought-after solutions consistent with the Master Plan and Community Development Strategy. Further, the plan identified the need to increase affordable housing options for both rental and home-ownership units through adaptive re-use of existing properties.

## Existing Conditions

### Population Characteristics

The following section provides an analysis of trends of population growth including population projections.

#### Historic and Projected Population Growth

Between the 1940’s and 1970’s, the town experienced modest but consistent growth, remaining between approximately 3,000 and 4,000 residents. However, between 1970 and 1980 the population dropped sharply by 10%, likely because of changes to Draper Factory operations and residents needing to seek jobs elsewhere. The 1990 Census showed a population boom of 31% from 1980, reaching 5,666 residents in Hopedale. Since then, population growth has been limited, increasing 6% between 1990 and 2020. As of 2020, the town has 6,017 residents. Population projections expect the town to reach 6,309 residents by the year 2040.

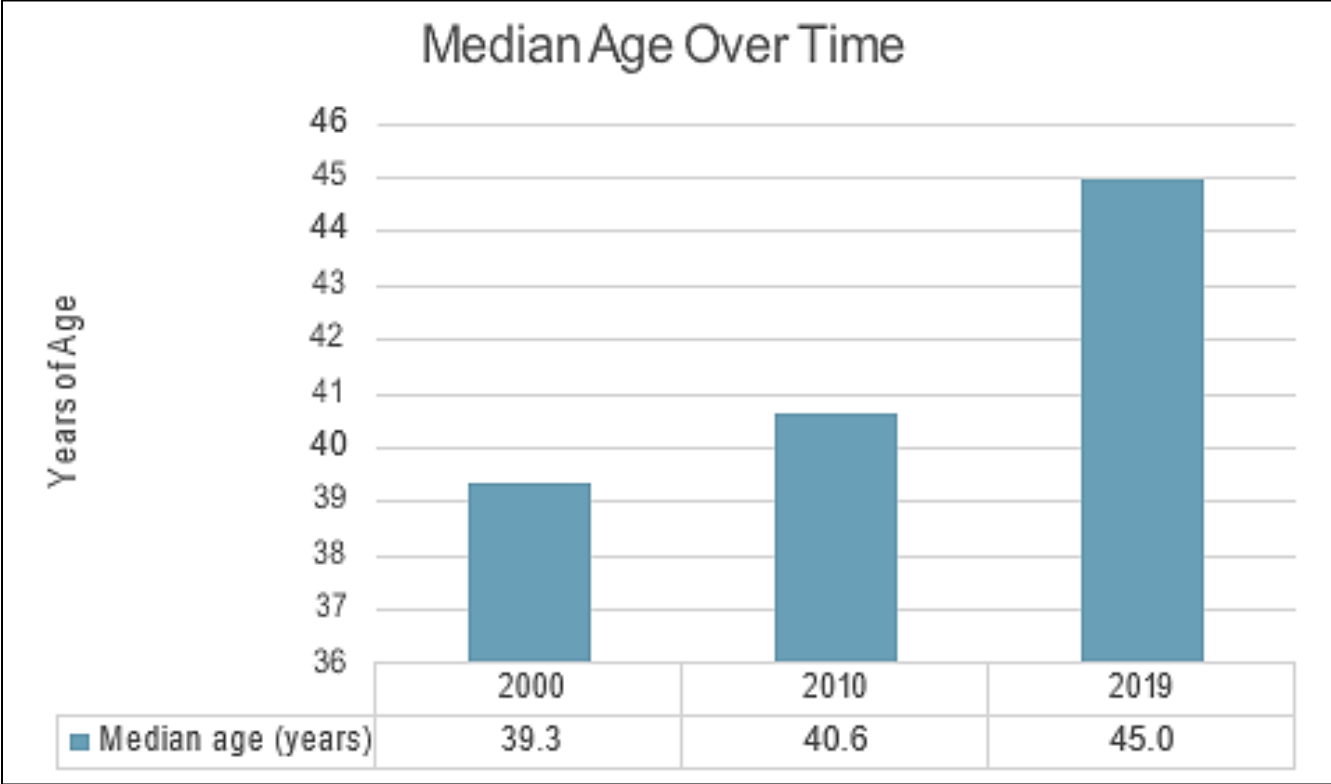
#### Median Age

Median age of a community is a helpful indicator of how age distribution is changing over time.

Akin to many small Massachusetts towns, Hopedale’s median age is steadily increasing. The median age in Hopedale has increased from 39.3 years in 2000, to 40.6 years in 2010, to the most recent estimate of 45.0 years as of 2019 (Figure HP1). However, the 2019 estimate includes a margin of error, with the true value somewhere between 42.8 and 47.2 years (a margin of error of +/- 2.2 years).

Figure HP2 shows the Median Age in 2019 comparing Hopedale with the surrounding communities. According to the ACS data, the median age in Hopedale is higher than surrounding communities and the state average. In comparison, the City of Worcester has a relatively young population with a median age of 40.3 years while the State of Massachusetts median age is even lower at 39.7 years.

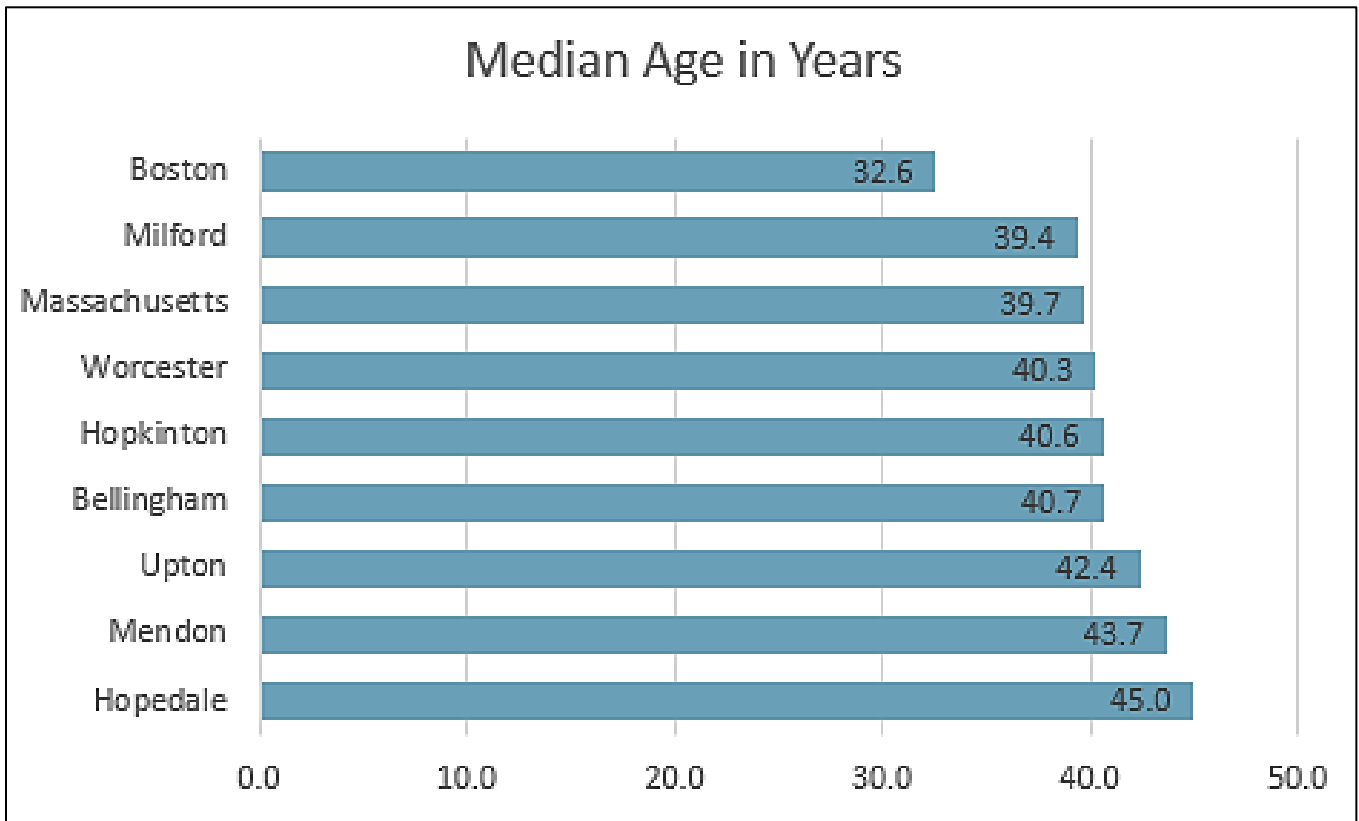
**Figure HP1: Median Age Over Time**



Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Figure HP2: Median Age in Years



Source: US Census, ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates

### Lifecycle Group

Lifecycle group refers to the age group categories typically used by the decennial census reports. Analyzing population change by lifecycle group can help contextualize the median age patterns previously discussed. Table HP1 and Figure HP3 summarize these trends for Hopedale. Since 2000, the largest decrease is in the Pre-School cohort that realized a 49.8 percent decrease in population followed by the Young Family cohort that realized a 24.3 percent loss in population. Given the correlation between the Young Family and Pre-School cohorts, it is expected that a change in one of these groups would impact the other. The Middle Family cohort saw a moderate loss of 11.5 percent. Collectively, the Young Adult and “Family” cohorts make up most of the main working- age population. While the Young Adult cohort saw a modest increase of 5.2 percent, the “Family” cohorts both decreased from moderately to significantly.

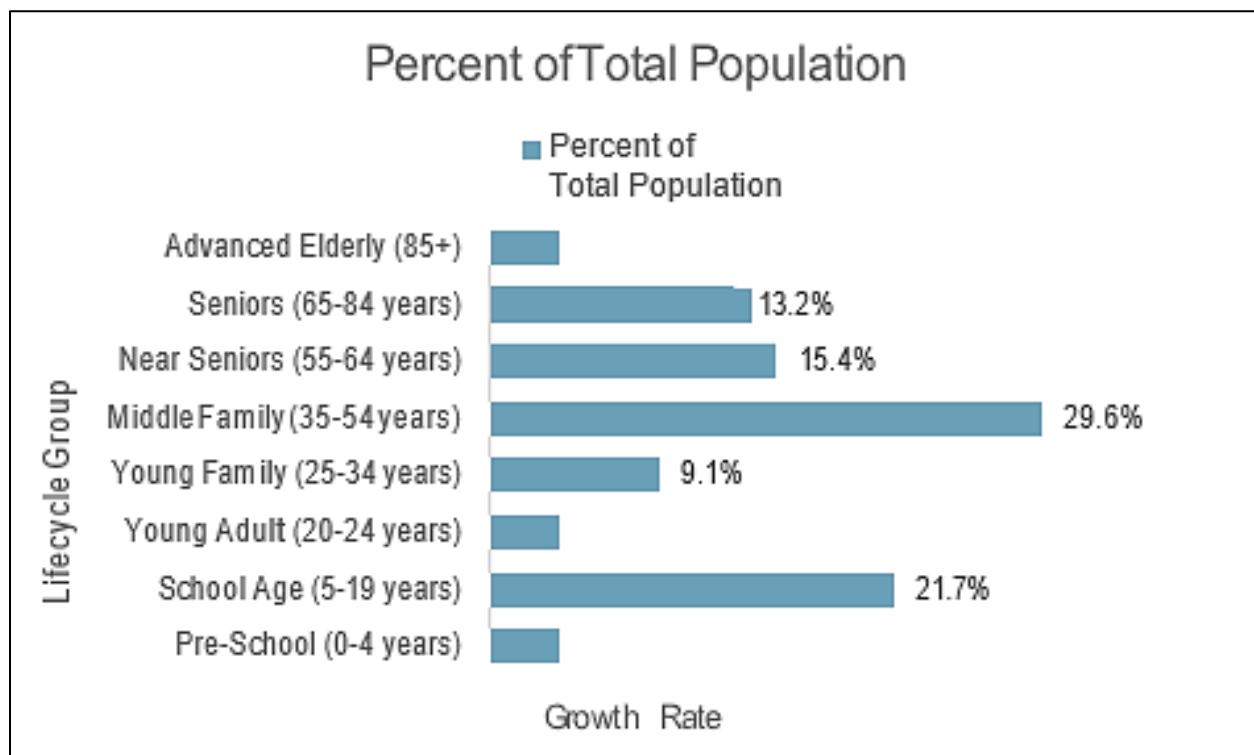
The Near Seniors realized a significant increase of 108.2 percent since 2000. The Advanced Elderly cohort saw a 63.4 percent increase in population. From this data, the Hopedale population has been trending to an older population. This suggests that the existing housing in Hopedale may be more readily available to the more financially established households, leaving the younger, less established households locked out of the market. While these growth rates

may at first seem alarming, it is important to put that number into the context of share of the total population. Figure HP3 shows the percentage of the Lifecycle Groups as a share of the total population. While the growth rate for Advanced Elderly increased by 63.4 percent (Table HP1), this group comprised just 3.9 percent of the total population.

Table HP1: Lifecycle Groups				
Lifecycle Group	2000	2010	2019	Growth Rate
Pre-School (0-4 years)	428	323	215	-49.8%
School Age (5-19 years)	1,228	1,314	1,291	5.1%
Young Adult (20-24 years)	192	239	202	5.2%
Young Family (25-34 years)	715	501	541	-24.3%
Middle Family (35-54 years)	1,990	2,012	1,762	-11.5%
Near Seniors (55-64 years)	441	719	918	108.2%
Seniors (65-84 years)	771	621	786	1.9%
Advanced Elderly (85+)	142	182	232	63.4%
Population Total	5,907	5,911	5,947	

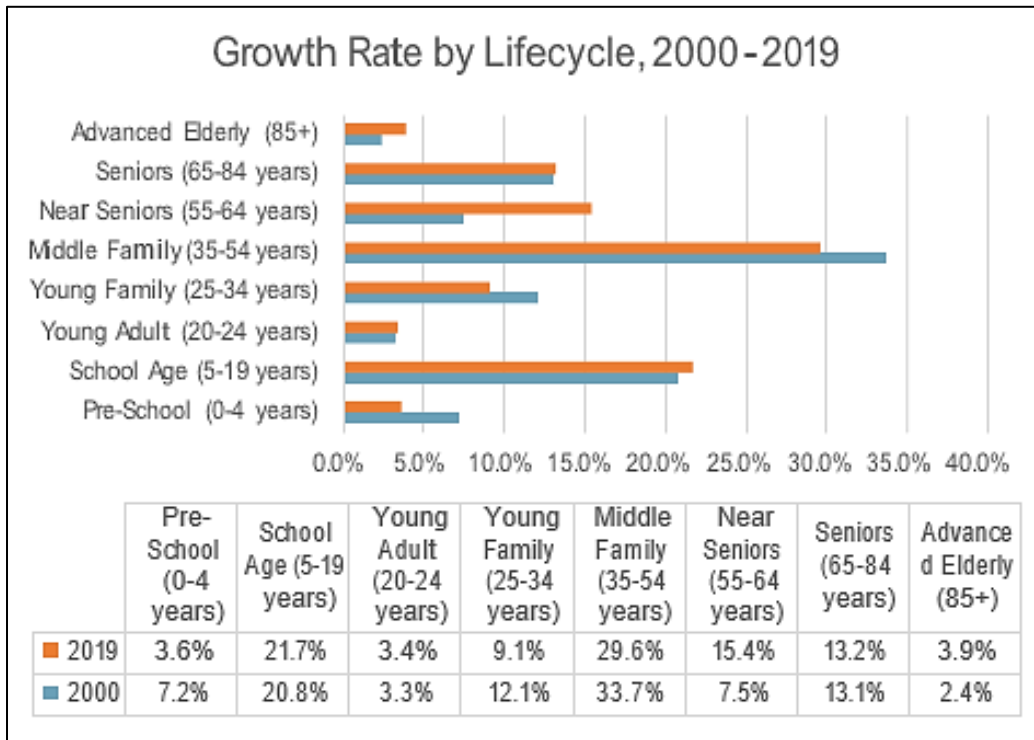
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, 2010; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

**Figure HP3: Lifecycle Groups as a Percent of Population**



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

**Figure HP4: Growth Rate by Lifecycle**



Source: US Census Bureau 2000; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

### Cohort Data from American Community Survey

Figure HP4 shows the percentage of the total population by lifecycle group in 2019. Compared to 2000, some groups show a loss of population while others have increased as was indicated in the previous section. There are many factors that may be contributing to the apparent increase in older residents and the decrease in Young Families and the Pre-School group. First, ACS data is not a hard count, but an estimate based on inferences from the larger statistical area of which Hopedale is a part. This introduces a potentially significant margin for error. Beyond this, simple attrition may be a contributing factor. As time passes, individuals naturally age out of one cohort and occupy another. Thus, a drop in one cohort often translates into gains for another cohort. This may not be the case in Hopedale as the gains in the Near Senior cohort are not enough to account for all the movement. There are likely a combination of factors that have resulted in the changes including aging out of one cohort as well as the availability of housing stock.

### Household Composition

Household composition can be a key indicator of potential future housing need. Table HP2 shows the breakdown of households by family type. There was a slight increase in the total number of family households during the census period of 2000-2010 but there was a slight drop in the census period of 2010-2019. During the same periods, there was a marked decrease in

family households with children under 18 years, in those with a householder living alone, and with elderly single-person households. Non-family households also saw a moderate decrease. Household size and family size each saw slight increases at 3.7 percent and 2.2 percent respectively.

**Table HP2: Households by Household Type**

	2000		2010		2019		Change 2000-2019
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Population	5,907	100%	5,911	100%	6,017*	100%	1.8%
Households	2,230	100%	2,115	100%	2,181	100%	-2.2%
Family Households	1,578	70.8%	1,641	27.8%	1,569	71.9%	-0.6%
Family households with children under 18 years	833	37.4%	706	33.4%	739	33.8%	-12.7%
Non-family Households	652	29.2%	474	22.4%	612	28.1%	-6.5%
Householder living alone	576	25.8%	423	20.0%	508	23.3%	-13.4%
Elderly single-person households	308	13.8%	212	10.0%	282	12.9%	-9.2%
Median Age	39.3	(X)	40.6	(X)	44.6	(X)	11.8%
Average household size	2.59	(X)	2.56	(X)	2.69	(X)	3.7%
Average family size	3.16	(X)	2.93	(X)	3.23	(X)	2.2%

\*2020 Census

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2000. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

Note: Sub-categories in this table have been selected and extracted from the full Census dataset

## Race and Ethnicity

Table HP3 shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of the population in Hopedale. From this information, one can ascertain that the Town is primarily white. Of the identified groups, the second most populous is Hispanic or Latino at 4.4 percent, followed by Asian at 1.8 percent. A total of 6.1 percent of the Hopedale population is two or more races. Since 2000, the white population and the population of one race have decreased. The most notable increases were with the Hispanic or Latino population and with those of two or more races. The 2000 decennial Census indicates that the population of 5,907 residents, 1,127 were of English descent, 1,573 were Irish, and 1,566 were Italian. The 2019 ACS estimate shows that of the Hispanic or Latino population, 81 percent are Puerto Rican. It does not provide a breakdown for the Asian population. Of those who are two or more races, 53.4 percent are white and Black or African American, and 11.3 percent are white and Asian. In Hopedale, 94.3 percent of residents speak

English only whereas in Worcester County, 76.8 percent speak English only. Of the languages identified in the 2019 ACS estimates, Asian languages are spoken most by 3.3 percent of the population. In contrast, Spanish is the most spoken language in Worcester County at 9.9 percent (Table HP4).

Table HP3: Race of Population					
	2000 Population	2010 Percent	2019 Population	2019 Percent	Percent Change
Total Population:	5,907	100.0%	6,017	100.0%	
Population of one race:	5,867	99.3%	5,651	93.9%	-5.4%
White alone	5,761	97.5%	5,342	88.8%	-8.7%
Black or African American alone	33	0.6%	51	0.8%	0.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1	0.02%	13	0.2%	0.2%
Asian alone	42	0.7%	106	1.8%	1.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race alone	30	0.5%	139	2.3%	1.8%
Population of two or more races:	40	0.7%	366	6.1%	5.4%
Hispanic or Latino	73	1.2%	264	4.4%	3.2%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

Table HP4: Languages Spoken				
Language Spoken	2019 Hopedale Population	Percent	2019 Worcester County	Percent
Population over 5 years of age	5732	100.0%	786,430	100.0%
Speaks English only	5408	94.3%	603,590	76.8%
Speaks language other than English	324	5.7%	182,840	23.2%
Spanish	96	1.7%	77,887	9.9%
Other Indo-European languages	190	3.3%	63,955	8.1%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	27	0.5%	24,594	3.1%
Other languages	11	0.2%	16,404	2.1%

Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates



## Educational Attainment

Education attainment is one of the greatest factors in determining employment and wealth, particularly now that high school education is the minimum requirement to obtain a job in most industries. The most recent American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that 94.6 percent of Hopedale residents hold a high school degree or higher, whereas the state and county have educational attainment rates closer to 91 percent (Table HP5). Hopedale residents with a bachelor’s degree or greater (43.3%) is higher than Worcester County (35.9%) but comparable to Massachusetts (43.7%). Of the working age population totaling 4,707 Hopedale residents in 2019, 67.2 percent were participating in the labor force, a rate on par with the state and slightly higher than the county. Based on educational attainment rates in the town, many Hopedale residents are well-positioned to hold high-paying professional jobs.

**Table HP5: Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over**

	Population 25 Years and Over	Percent high school graduate or higher	Percent Bachelor's degree or higher	Less than 9th grade	9 <sup>th</sup> to 12th grade, no diploma	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
Hopedale	4,239	94.6%	43.3%	1.4%	4.0%	22.4%	17.6%	11.3%	30.7%	12.6%
Worcester County	568,517	90.7%	35.9%	3.2%	6.1%	27.8%	17.5%	9.1%	22.0%	14.4%
Massachusetts	4,781,683	90.8%	43.7%	4.4%	4.9%	24.0%	15.4%	7.6%	24.1%	19.6%

*Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019*

## School Enrollment

Hopedale is a unique small town as its public school system is not regionalized with neighboring communities, a quality that has added to the attraction of Hopedale for many families in town. Hopedale Elementary School covers Kindergarten through Grade 6 while Hopedale Junior Senior High School represents grades 7 through 12. While enrollments in school districts naturally fluctuate year to year, the overall trend of elementary school enrollment in Hopedale has been a consistent decrease in number of students nearly each year. Despite a few upticks in elementary school enrollment over the last two decades, since 2002 the elementary school has gradually been declining in enrollment by an average of -1.2% per year.

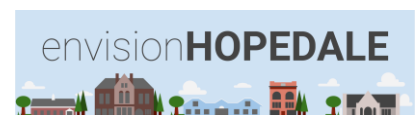
Hopedale Junior Senior High School has experienced a less consistent pattern of annual enrollment fluctuations, but overall has had more growth compared to the elementary school.

Between the 2002-2003 and 2013-2014 school years, the Junior/Senior High School experienced a growth of 116 students (+21%) while the Elementary School experienced a loss of 37 students (-6%) (Table HP6). Since 2013, both the elementary school and junior/senior high school have had a gradual and consistent decrease in student enrollment (Figure HP5). These changes are reflected in the changing age cohorts previously presented.

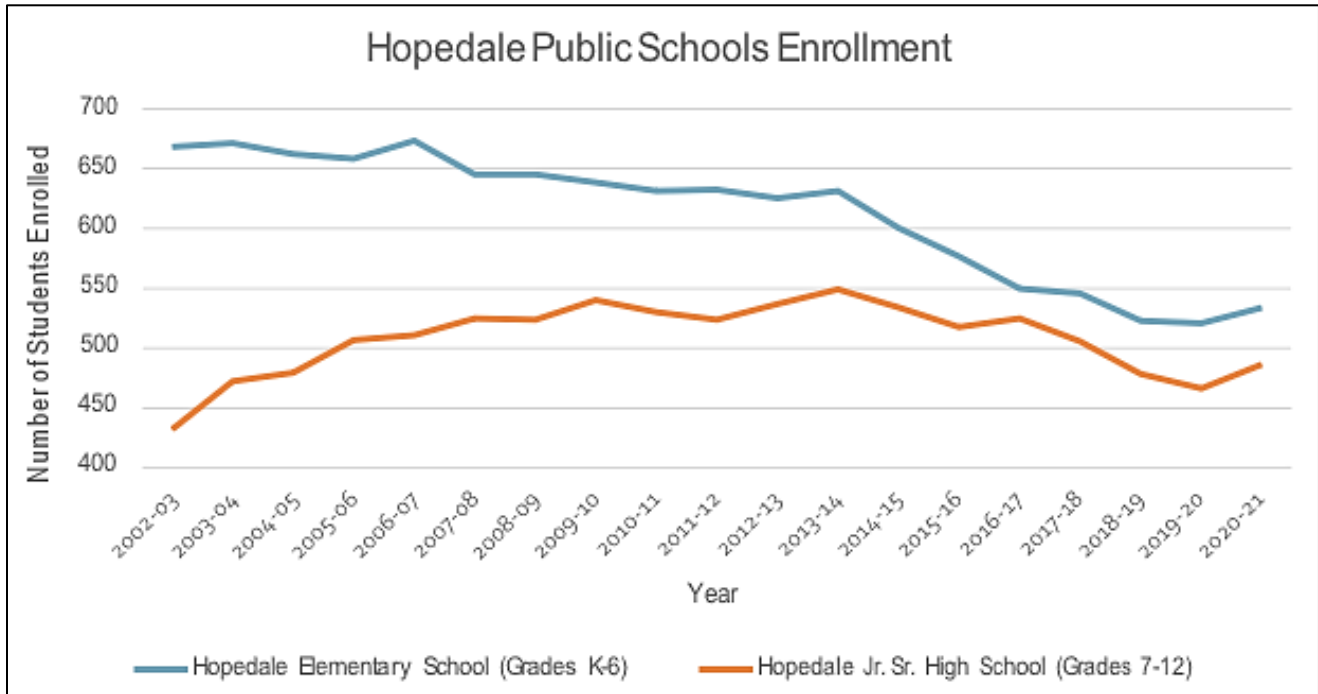
While many are concerned with the additional costs to the community that new students bring in, declining enrollments can have a substantial negative impact on a town’s financial health. It is a possibility that the pandemic-driven shift to remote learning may contribute to a continued drop in public school enrollment, particularly for younger students. Parents may opt into home schooling options for their children, particularly since many workplaces are allowing greater flexibility for work-from-home.

Table HP6: Hopedale Public School Enrollment					
Year	Hopedale Elementary School (Grades K-6)			Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School (Grades 7-12)	
	Count	Change	% Change	Count	% Change
2002-03	668			432	
2003-04	671	3	0.4%	472	8.5%
2004-05	662	-9	-1.3%	479	1.5%
2005-06	658	-4	-0.6%	506	5.3%
2006-07	673	15	2.3%	510	0.8%
2007-08	645	-28	-4.2%	524	2.7%
2008-09	645	0	0.0%	523	-0.2%
2009-10	638	-7	-1.1%	539	3.0%
2010-11	631	-7	-1.1%	529	-1.9%
2011-12	632	1	0.2%	523	-1.1%
2012-13	625	-7	-1.1%	536	2.4%
2013-14	631	6	1.0%	548	2.2%
2014-15	600	-31	-4.9%	533	-2.8%
2015-16	576	-24	-4.0%	517	-3.1%
2016-17	549	-27	-4.7%	524	1.3%
2017-18	545	-4	-0.7%	505	-3.8%
2018-19	522	-23	-4.2%	478	-5.6%
2019-20	520	-2	-0.4%	466	-2.6%
2020-21	533	13	2.5%	486	4.1%
2010 to 2020	-98		-16%		
Average 2010 to 2020	(9.55)		-1.6%		
<b>Average percent change 2002-2020</b>			<b>-1.2%</b>		<b>0.6%</b>

*Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Enrollment Data*



**Figure HP5: Public Schools Enrollment**



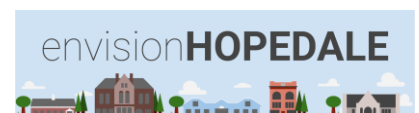
Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Enrollment Data

**Income**

Household income is a factor that directly influences the ability of residents to pay for housing costs including rent, mortgage, utilities, condominium fees, homeowners associations fees, property taxes, interest, etc. The widely accepted rule of thumb is that residents should not be paying more than 30% of their gross monthly income on housing costs, in order to have enough money left over to afford everyday expenses like food and transportation. Household income also influences the capacity of residents to support their families, local businesses, and town services.

The median household income in Hopedale is \$108,294 as of 2019 (Table HP7), while two-thirds of households earn an income of greater than \$75,000 per year, and 13 percent of households earn over \$200,000 annually.

Table HP7: Median Household Income	
	Median Household Income
Hopedale	\$108,294
Worcester County	\$74,679
Massachusetts	\$81,215
<i>Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019</i>	



The Hopedale population that is living below the poverty level is low at 4 percent (Table HP8). Neighboring communities of Mendon and Upton are very low at 1.2 percent and 2.5 percent respectively. The poverty level in neighboring Bellingham is also low at 3.2 percent in comparison to Worcester County (10.1%) and Massachusetts (10.3%).

Table HP8: Poverty Level	
	Population Below Poverty Level
Bellingham	3.2%
Hopedale	4.0%
Mendon	1.2%
Milford	10.1%
Upton	2.5%
Worcester County	10.1%
Massachusetts	10.3%
<i>Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019</i>	

### Housing Characteristics

The quantity of inventory, age, and other characteristics play an important role in in- migration and population growth. The analysis will cover current and projected housing units, market trends, consumer trends, and affordability metrics, as well as Hopedale’s subsidized housing inventory and status of compliance with Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 40B (The Comprehensive Permit Law).

### Housing Types and Tenure

The 2000 U.S. Census showed that there were 2,240 occupied housing units in Hopedale. Between 2000 and 2019, the total number of housing units decreased by 0.6 percent, representing a loss of 14 units (Table HP9). A reason for this seeming reduction in housing units may be due to the margin of error for the 2019 5-Year ACS Estimate. When available, the 2020 Decennial Census figures should be compared. Most of the housing units (66.4%) are single-family detached units while 17.7 percent are single-family attached (TableHP10). Just 15.8 percent of housing units are considered multi-family. Owner-occupancy in Hopedale increased by 5.1 percent while renter-occupied units decreased markedly by 30 percent. While it appears that there is an anomaly in the U.S. Census and ACS data that includes a 91.8 percent increase in the number of vacant housing units while also indicating a 100 percent decrease in vacancy rate for both owner- and renter-occupied units, it is important to note that the ACS estimate includes a high margin of error. A vacancy rate between 4 percent and 6 percent is typically considered healthy in that supply is close enough to demand to keep prices relatively stable.



The lack of supply of both owner- and renter-occupied housing is not balanced and has contributed to an increase in demand and in asking price for purchasing and renting homes. Rental housing is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

<b>Table HP9: Housing Units and Vacancy Rates 2000-2019</b>					
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>Percent change 2000-2019</b>	<b>Margin of Error</b>
Total housing units	2,289	2,115	2,275	-0.6%	+/- 117
Occupied housing units	2,240	2,115	2,181	-2.6%	+/- 105
Owner-occupied units	1,747	1,831	1,836	5.1%	+/- 132
Renter-occupied units	493	284	345	-30.0%	+/- 102
Vacant housing units	49	0	94	91.8%	+/- 63
Homeowner vacancy rate	0.30%	0.00%	0.0%	-100.0%	+/- 1.9
Rental vacancy rate	2.40%	0.00%	0.0%	-100.0%	+/- 9.6
Average household size of owner-occupied unit	2.70	2.62	2.67	-1.1%	+/- 0.13
Average household size of renter-occupied unit	2.16	2.18	2.79	22.6%	+/- 0.53

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, 2010, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019*

<b>Table HP10: Housing Stock</b>		
<b>Units in Structure</b>	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Total Housing Units	2,275	100%
1-unit, detached	1,510	66.4%
1-unit, attached	403	17.7%
2 units	201	8.8%
3 or 4 units	73	3.2%
5 to 9 units	53	2.3%
10 to 19 units	0	0.0%
20 or more units	35	1.5%
Mobile home	0	0.0%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%

*Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019*

## Age of Housing Stock

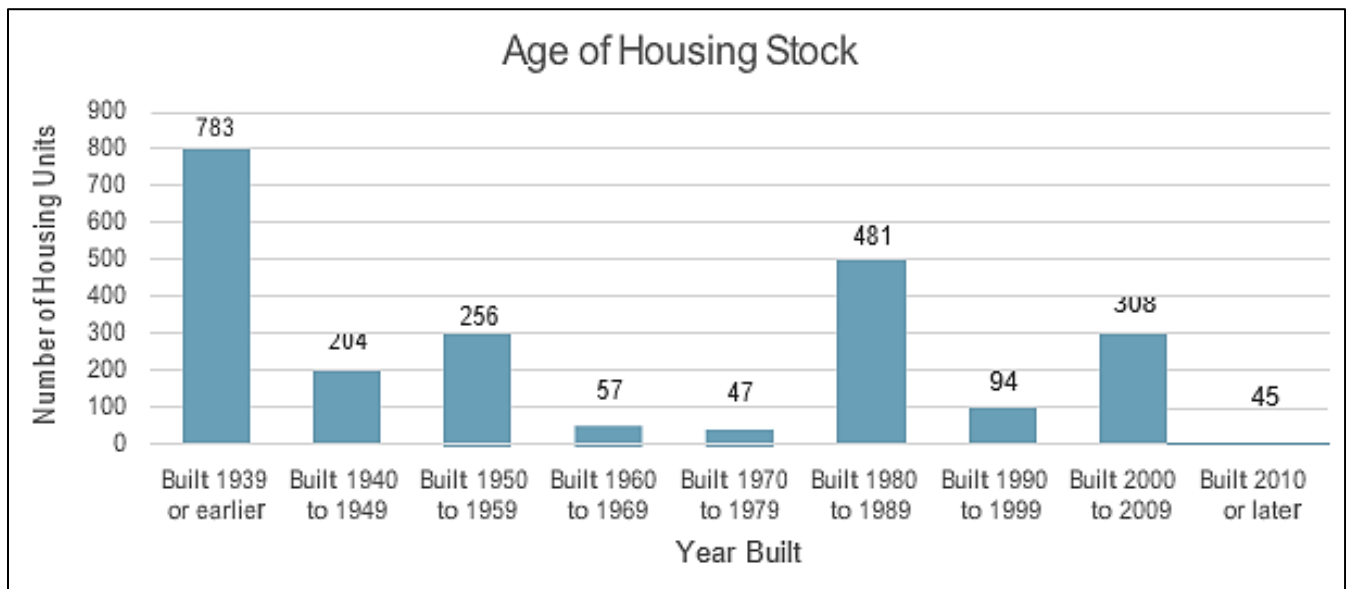
Nearly 61 percent of the housing stock of Hopedale was built prior to 1980. Approximately 21 percent was built from 1980 to 1989, and 13.5 percent was built from 2000 to 2009. Much of the earlier housing was built as factory housing for Draper Factory employees. Typical factory housing took on the form of duplexes within proximity of the Draper Factory complex and the Bancroft Park area. Interspersed with the factory housing are boarding houses and single-family residences. Other housing was built in subdivisions primarily for families that often worked out of town in the late 20th century.



Photo credit: Frederick Oldfield

Only 45 homes have been built since 2010 representing 2 percent of the housing stock (Figure HP6). Except for the anticipated redevelopment of the Draper Mill site, one would not anticipate much additional growth due to limited available land area. However, the current owners of the Draper Factory site are considering a mixed-use development with a residential component.

**Figure HP6: Age of Housing Stock**



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019

## Housing Market Trends

Overall, the housing market in Hopedale is strong. Home values in Hopedale and across the region have risen sharply in recent times due in part to low supply of available homes for sale which has driven up demand. In fact, in a Milford Daily News article published on September 27, 2021 titled “*With 26.1% jump in median home sales price, Hopedale is a hot ZIP code,*” Lauren Young reported that Hopedale and other surrounding small towns such as Mendon and Upton are “often ignored compared to other areas but are great options.”<sup>3</sup> Factors that drew people to Hopedale included the small town atmosphere, slightly lower home prices than some communities in the state, more space, and a key factor was the public school system which has a lower teacher-to-student ratio that is typically found in private schools. The school system is not regionalized which is seen as an advantage.

In quoting a local realtor, the article noted that when homes go on the market in Hopedale they do not stay on the market for long and typically sell far above asking price. As of publishing the article, the statewide median home sale price was \$535,000 which was an all-time high, and the median home sale price in Hopedale was \$495,000. Also interviewed for the article was Tim Warren, CEO of The Warren Group, who indicated that with rising home prices and low volume, many people can no longer afford to buy and have given up on their dreams of buying a home.

As detailed below in the section on rental housing, there are very few rental options available in Hopedale. Given the decrease in population in the Young Family and Pre-School lifecycle groups, the lack of housing options for Young Families, and the decrease in school enrollment, there is cause for concern that if enrollments reach too low of levels, schools may be impacted. This would result in a burden to the town finances as well as the dilemma of providing education for youth in the community. As noted previously in the discussion on schools, some parents may opt into home schooling. Given that many people are working remotely due to COVID-19, this may be a viable long-term option for some. The town may also be again forced into considering other options such as regionalized education.

Of vital importance is the need to identify available areas for housing development, yet with little land area available development may be limited. Redevelopment of the Draper Factory site holds the greatest prospect for mixed-use development. Equally important is the need to provide housing that meets the MGL 40B requirements for subsidized housing inventory for low- and moderate-income housing. Additionally, with an aging population in Hopedale, meeting the needs for this growing population should also be considered.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.milforddailynews.com/story/news/2021/09/27/hopedale-ma-sees-26-percent-jump-median-home-price-in-a-year/5821607001/>

## Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdown forced countless employees across the nation to work remotely from their homes for months in 2020. It is possible that people may continue working remotely and elect to relocate outside of employment centers such as the Boston region to attractive and more affordable suburban communities in Central Massachusetts including Hopedale. Even as conditions gradually return to a state of normality, remote work is likely to increase in popularity and feasibility with workers embracing more freedom and flexibility without needing to make lengthy commutes every day. Major companies have announced that employees working from home may continue to do so permanently. It is possible that Hopedale could experience a high demand for housing in the coming years due to these factors. The town's quality of life, clean air, excellent school system, and other attractive small-town features make it a prime location for families to gravitate towards. While it is challenging to anticipate how the pandemic will furthermore affect the economy and housing market in the long-term, there will undoubtedly be profound impacts.

## Single-Family Homes

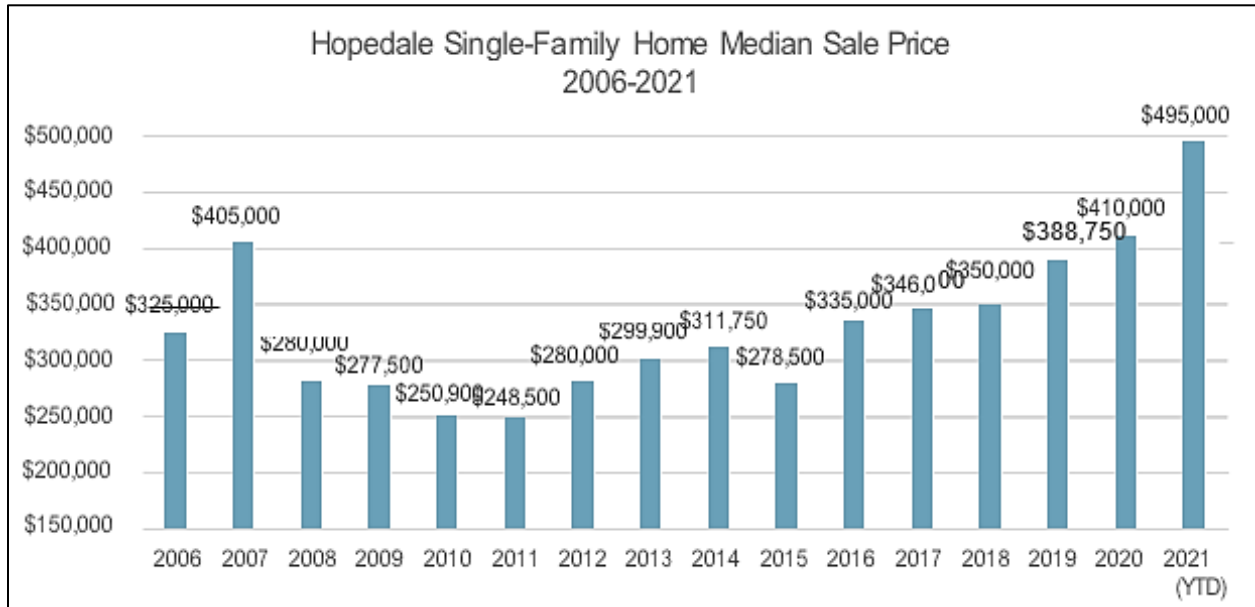
Single-family median home values in Hopedale declined sharply in 2008 due the economic conditions at that time – and continued to decline through 2011. While there were slight increases in value from 2012 through 2014, home value dropped again in 2015. By 2016, with the economy improving, home value increased by 16.9 percent and steadily increased through 2020. Due to a number of factors including COVID-19 and the low supply of homes and home building materials, demand has risen sharply in 2021 resulting in a 17.1 percent increase in home value compared to values in 2020 (Figure HP7).

The number of homes sold each year mostly corresponds with the fluctuation in home value. One exception is in 2015. While the median sale price decreased, the number of homes sold in Hopedale increased 67 percent from 2014 (42 homes sold) to 2015 (70 homes sold) and remained at that level until 2017. The number of homes sold decreased by 17.4 percent between 2017 and 2018 and is at a similar number of homes sold to date for 2021 (Figure HP8). This can be attributed to the low supply of homes that are for sale.

The ACS data available for home value of owner-occupied units in Hopedale is an estimate for the years 2015 through 2019 and does not reflect the current values for 2021. As of 2019, there were 1,836 owner-occupied units with the largest group of homes (768 homes) ranging from \$300,000 to \$499,000 in home value. The median home value for this period was \$341,000 (Table HP11).

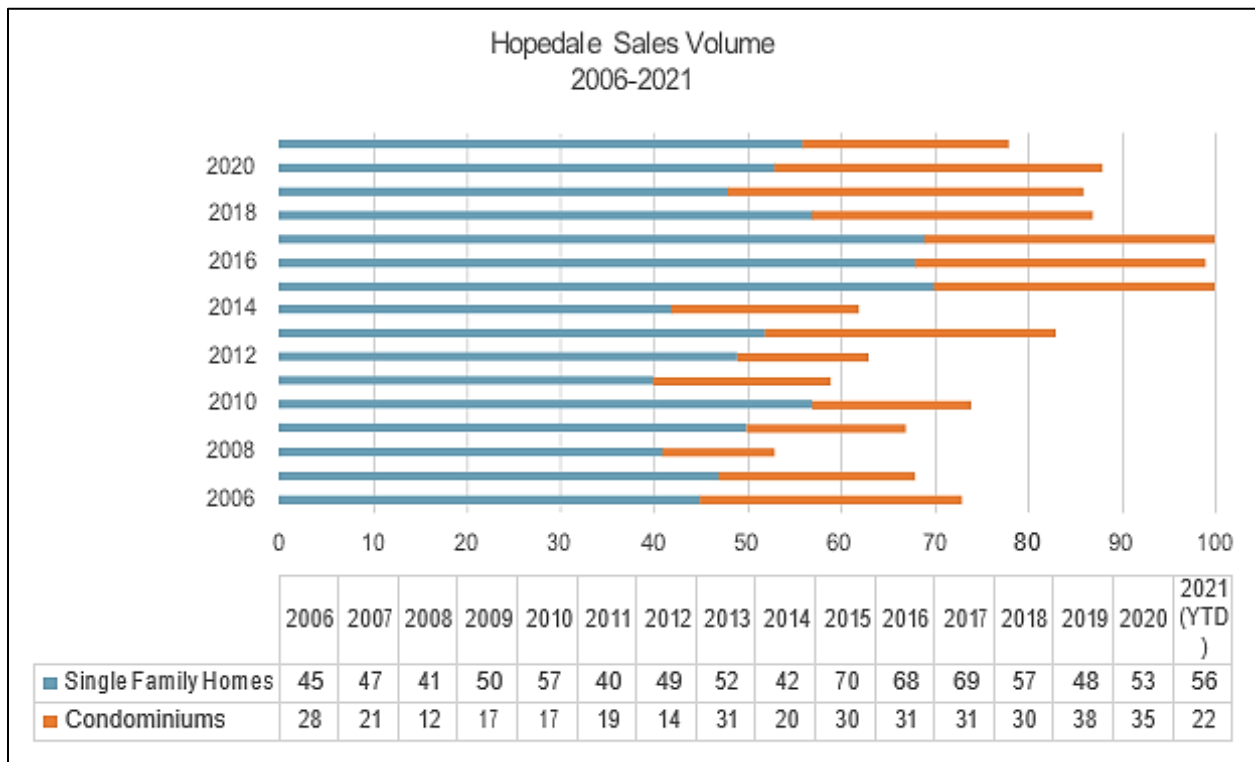


**Figure HP7: Single Family Home Sales Price**



Source: Warren Group 2006-2018; Massachusetts Association of Realtors 2019-2021

**HP8: Homes Sales Volumes**



Source: Warren Group 2006-2018; Massachusetts Association of Realtors 2019-2021

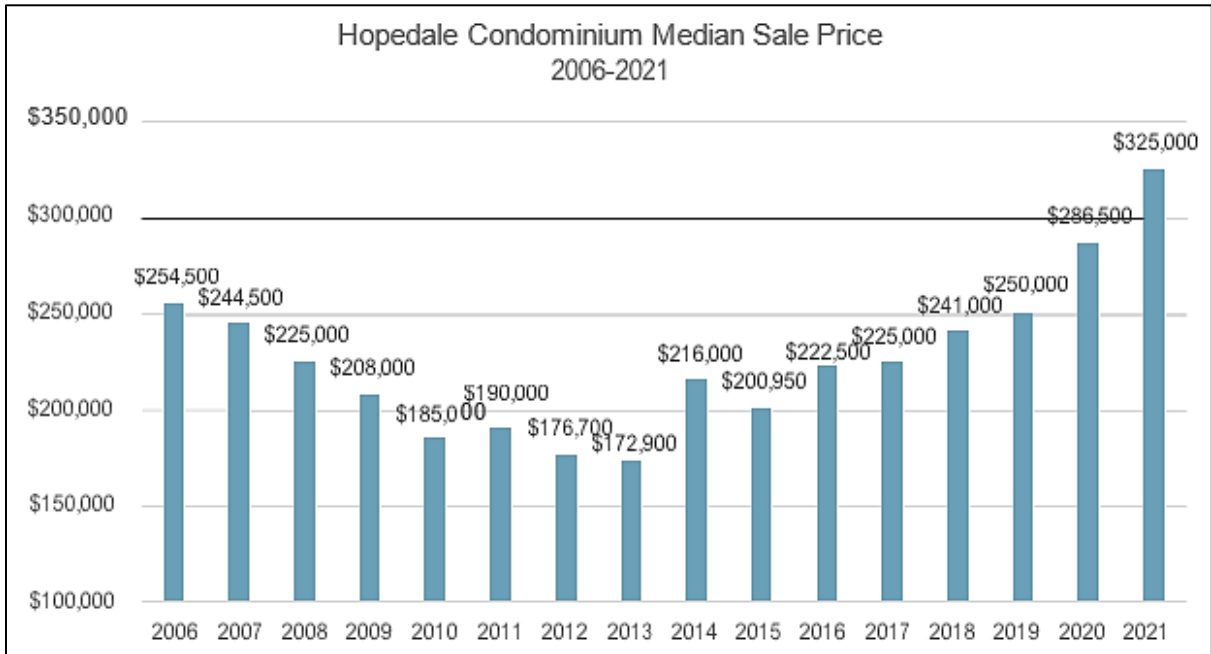
Table HP11: Value of Owner-Occupied Units	
Value	Estimate
Owner-occupied units	1,836
Less than \$50,000	18
\$50,000 to \$99,999	0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	30
\$150,000 to \$199,999	192
\$200,000 to \$299,999	436
\$300,000 to \$499,999	768
\$500,000 to \$999,999	372
\$1,000,000 or more	20
Median (dollars)	341,100
<i>Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019</i>	

## Condominiums

Condominiums are often regarded as a type of middle ground between apartments and single-family home ownership and can help meet the demand for households in transition. A transitional household in this context is a household that is moving between rental housing and single-family housing. Examples of this could be a young family purchasing a starter home or a senior long-time resident seeking to downsize.

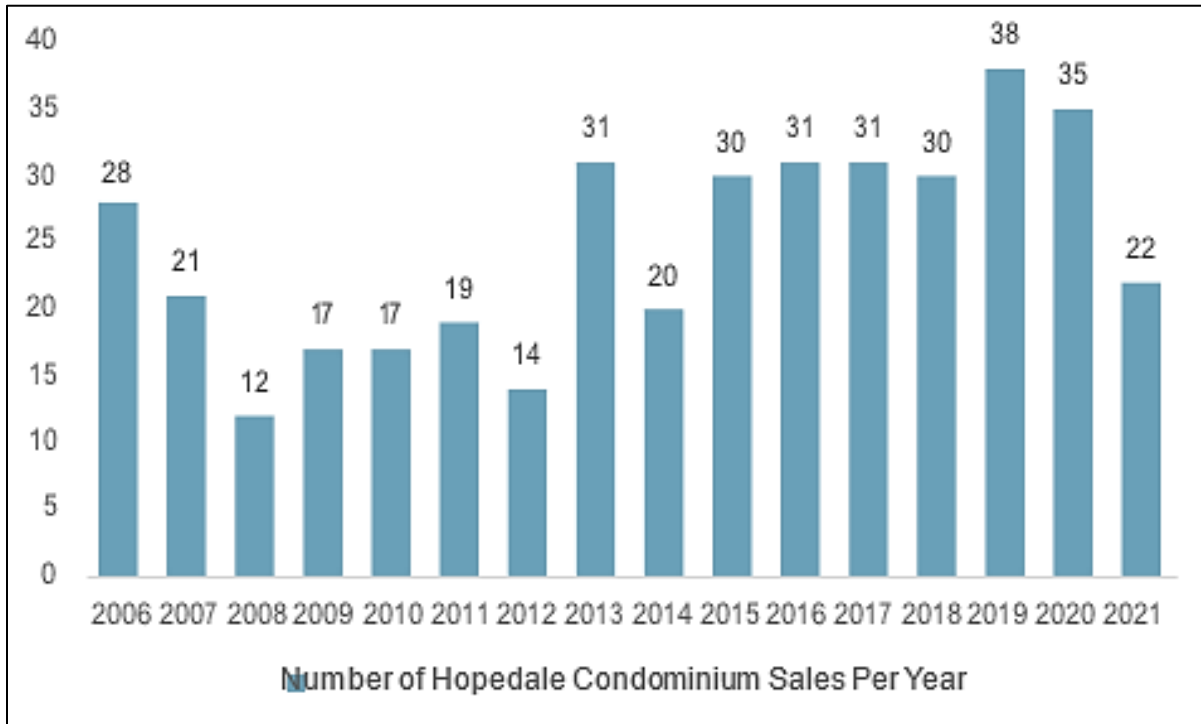
As was observed with single-family median home value in Hopedale, condominium home value also declined in 2008 due the economic conditions and continued to decline through 2013. One exception was a slight increase in home value in 2011 before home value declined further. Both the volume of transactions in condominiums (Figure HP10) and the median price they command (Figure HP9) has been rising steadily from 2015 to 2021 with a sharp increase of 30 percent in median sale price from 2019 to 2021. Price inflation among condominium units has accelerated over time to the point where the median price of a condominium (\$325,000) in 2021 is 65.7 percent of a single-family home (\$495,000). This indicates a strong demand compared to unit supply. As shown in Table HP12, condominium sales represented between 22 percent and 44 percent of total sales annually since 2006.

### HP9: Condominium Median Sales Price



Source: Warren Group 2006-2018; Massachusetts Association of Realtors 2019-2021

### Figure HP10: Condominium Sales Per Year



Source: Warren Group 2006-2018; Massachusetts Association of Realtors 2019-2021

<b>Table HP12: Condominium and Single-Family Home Sales</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Hopedale Condominium Sales</b>	<b>Number Of Hopedale Single-Family Home Sales</b>	<b>Total Sales</b>	<b>Percent Condominium Sales Compared to Total Sales</b>
2006	28	45	73	38.4%
2007	21	47	68	30.9%
2008	12	41	53	22.6%
2009	17	50	67	25.4%
2010	17	57	74	23.0%
2011	19	40	59	32.2%
2012	14	49	63	22.2%
2013	31	52	83	37.3%
2014	20	42	62	32.3%
2015	30	70	100	30.0%
2016	31	68	99	31.3%
2017	31	69	100	31.0%
2018	30	57	87	34.5%
2019	38	48	86	44.2%
2020	35	53	88	39.8%
2021	22	56	78	28.2%

*Source: Warren Group 2006-2018; Massachusetts Association of Realtors 2019- 2021*

## Rental Housing

As of 2019, Hopedale has an estimated 307 units of occupied rental housing, or around 23.3 percent of the total occupied housing stock (Table HP13). The 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated the median gross rent for Hopedale at \$1,342, which is slightly lower than the state (\$1,360) and county (\$1,360). The most recent local data collected from Zillow, Trulia, Realtor and Craigslist result in very limited rental listings, including one small apartment with an asking rent of \$1,450 and a condominium with an asking rent of \$2,200. An additional search on VRBO and Airbnb resulted in options for short term rentals, but this is not a viable option for long term housing needs. The 2019 ACS estimate shows a 0.0-percent rental vacancy rate.

Low vacancy rates paired with recent increases in rents pose challenges for low-income families that participate in the Section 8 Program. Once individuals and families make it off the years-long waiting list for this program, eligible households are issued a Section 8/HCPV Voucher and given only 120 days to locate their own rental housing. If no rental housing options within their price range come on the market, then the families lose the voucher opportunity.

Initial costs of renting an apartment (first and last month’s rent, security deposit, and sometimes

broker fees) can be costly and preclude some lower-income households from affording to rent a home that meets their needs. While home sales prices are on the rise, so too have rents risen in the region. Reasons for this increase may be attributed to financial uncertainty of owning a home, and an expensive housing market that excludes first-time homebuyers from entering the homeownership market and forcing them to rent for longer periods of time, as well as significant individual debt (such as emerging college- graduates) preventing entrance into the homeownership market.

Having a sufficient supply of rental housing allows people to meet their needs at different stages of their lives and to meet the needs of those with different financial means. In addition to providing a housing option for those who cannot afford to buy a home, it allows people to remain in their community if they want to downsize, be closer to family, if there is a change in their family makeup such as in the case of divorce, or if they need to sell their home for various reasons. It is important for communities to have a diversity of housing options available to accommodate residents from all walks of life and for all stages of life.

<b>Table HP13: Hopedale Monthly Rent</b>		
<b>Gross Rent</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Occupied units paying rent	307	100%
Less than \$500	40	13%
\$500 to \$999	69	22%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	83	27%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	65	21%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	50	16%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0%
\$3,000 or more	0	0%
Median Gross Rent (\$)	1,342	
<i>Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019</i>		

**Residential Property Taxes**

Property tax is discussed in detail in the Economic Development chapter which shows that approximately 80 percent of the Hopedale tax base is residential. Hopedale’s average single-family tax bill is \$6,463 and is slightly lower when compared to the neighboring communities. According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, the average single-family tax bill in the state for 2020 is lower at \$6,182. Towns like Hopedale that have very limited tax revenue from businesses are particularly dependent on real-estate taxes to fund local government services like schools, public safety, and public works.

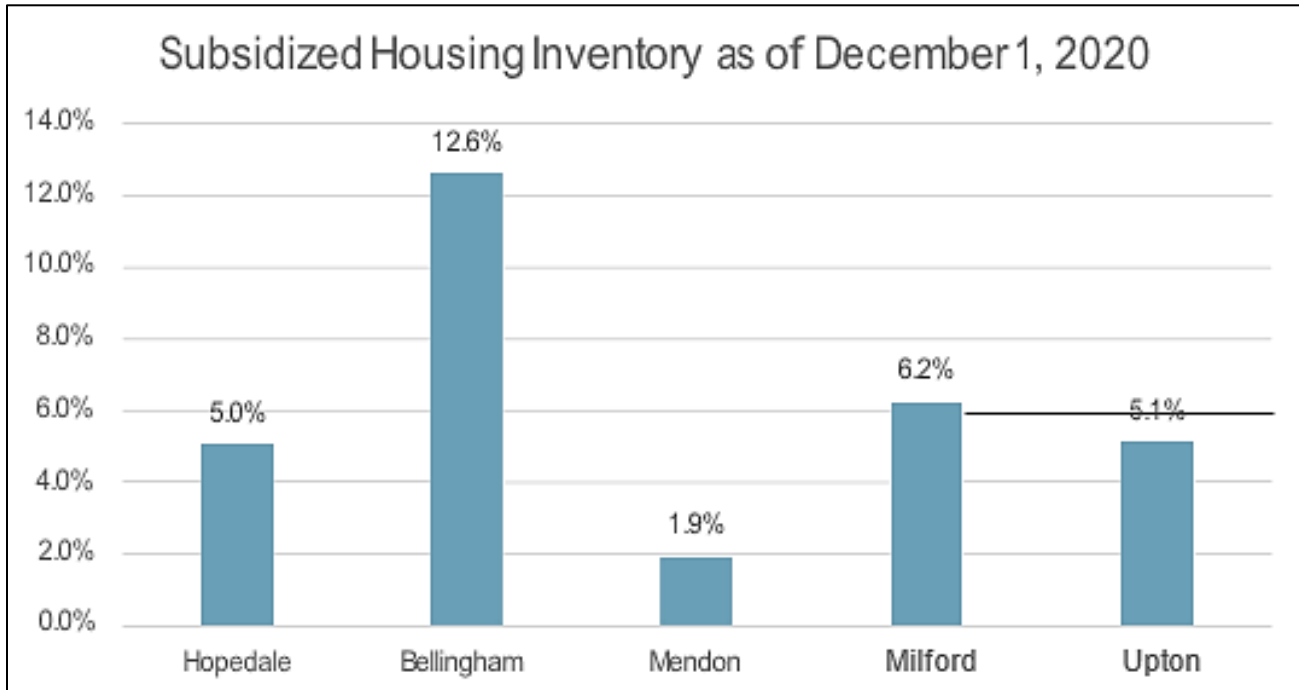


## Affordability

Under Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Law, Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 40B, all Massachusetts municipalities have an obligation to strive to ensure that at least 10 percent of their housing stock is affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI). When communities do not meet this threshold, developers are allowed to build more densely than what municipal zoning laws allow if a proportion of the development is affordable to buyers or renters with an 80 percent AMI (Table HP14). While it is a goal of the Town of Hopedale to attempt to meet the 10 percent affordability threshold under Chapter 40B, the Town desires to strive to meet a wide range of local housing needs that may not necessarily result in the inclusion of units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). Compared to surrounding towns, Hopedale's SHI stands at 5 percent (Figure HP11). Only Mendon has a lower SHI at 1.9 percent. Upton is slightly higher at 5.1 percent, and Milford's SHI is at 6.2 Percent. Of the surrounding communities, only Bellingham exceeds the MGL 40B requirement by providing 12.6 percent of affordable housing.

<b>Table HP14: Low &amp; Very Low-Income Limits and Affordable Housing Costs</b>				
<b>Household Size (Number of People)</b>	<b>Low Income (80% of AMI)</b>		<b>Very Low Income (50% of AMI)</b>	
	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>Maximum Affordable Housing Payment</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>Maximum Affordable Housing Payment</b>
1	\$55,950	\$1,399	\$41,000	\$1,025
2	\$63,950	\$1,599	\$46,850	\$1,171
3	\$71,950	\$1,799	\$52,700	\$1,318
4	\$79,900	\$1,998	\$58,550	\$1,464
5	\$86,300	\$2,158	\$63,250	\$1,581
<i>FY2021 Income Limit Area: Eastern Worcester County, MA HUD Metro FMR Area</i>				
<i>Area Median Income (AMI) = \$126,500</i>				
<i>Max Affordable Housing Payment = Income Limit / 12 (months) x 0.3</i>				
<i>Source: Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development 2021</i>				

**Figure HP11: Subsidized Housing Inventory**



Source: Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development 2021

### Housing Cost Burden

A cost-burdened household is defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be any that is paying more than 30 percent of their household income on housing while severely cost-burdened households pay more than 50 percent of their household income on housing. This can occur when there is a rapid increase in housing prices coupled with extremely limited growth in incomes. Cost-burdened households exist on the edges of financial stability. These households are more vulnerable to economic shocks and other shifts in the market. This makes them more likely to have to leave a community after a financial hardship or even experience homelessness. According to the Basic Housing Needs Assessment previously referenced in this chapter, 34 percent of Hopedale households are cost-burdened, and 8.6 percent are severely cost-burdened including 53 percent of renters and 29 percent of owners.

### Development and Building Activity

Since 2006, 48 residential building permits have been issued in Hopedale. This included 38 permits for single-family structures, two (2) permits for two-family structures, and eight permits for structures with three (3) or more units (Table HP15). This amounts to 79.2 percent of permits for single-family, 4.2 percent for two-family structures, and 16.7 percent for structures with three or more units. This number of new housing structures is quite low and when considered on an annual average for the 15-year period since 2006, the average is just 3.2 structures per year.

With limited available land area for development, one option to spur development and to increase the amount of affordable rental units is with Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (also known as accessory apartments or in-law apartments). These units may be permitted on a lot that already contains a single-family home. In addition to providing affordable rental units, ADUs can also provide for multi-generational families to live in proximity. With family nearby to help care for elderly or disabled family members, ADUs can allow these individuals to remain in their homes longer. These units can also provide housing for individuals with significant debt such as emerging college-graduates. Accessory units are discussed in further detail in the Land Use chapter.

<b>Table HP15: Building Permits</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Building Permits</b>	<b>Single-Family Structures</b>	<b>2-Family Structures</b>	<b>3+ Unit Multi-Family Structures</b>
2006	8	8	0	0
2007	5	5	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	2	2	0	0
2010	5	5	0	0
2011	2	2	0	0
2012	1	1	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	1	0	0
2015	1	1	0	0
2016	3	3	0	0
2017	1	1	0	0
2018	0	0	0	0
2019	10	0	2	8
2020	9	9	0	0
Totals	48	38	2	8
Percent	100.0%	79.2%	4.2%	16.7%
<i>Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development SOCDs Building Permits Database, 2021</i>				



# Issues and Opportunities

## Population and Housing Issues

### Housing Affordability

Hopedale has a shortage of affordable housing, with only 5.0% of its housing units deed-restricted as affordable to low- and moderate-income households. While the Hopedale Housing Authority provides public housing opportunities for low-income, elderly, and disabled members of the community, they have an extensive waitlist for units.

In the community survey, 46% of respondents confirmed that housing affordability is an issue for them or someone they know. Additionally, the number one reason why respondents would consider moving out of their community would be to live in an area with lower property taxes. Despite three-quarters of survey respondents reporting that it is important for them to remain in the Hopedale community as they age, issues such as taxes and affordability would drive them to relocate. For 2021, the Tax Assessor's Annual Report indicated an average tax bill of \$6,704. The average tax for 2022 is \$7,042. This represents a 5% increase from 2021 to 2022. Data shows that 34% of households (29% of homeowners and 53% of renters) are "cost burdened", meaning a household spends more than 30% of income on housing costs. Those that spend more than 50% on housing costs are "severely cost-burdened". If more than 30% of households in an area are cost-burdened, that indicates an affordable housing shortage, which data shows is the case for Hopedale.

### Housing for Seniors

Throughout the Master Plan public outreach process, much input was received regarding the town's need for more housing that is suitable for the community's senior citizens. In the community survey, 44% of respondents indicated that more small market-rate homes geared toward seniors is needed, 40% of respondents said that more general housing for the elderly is needed, and 27% said that more assisted living options are needed.

As residents age, they may not be able to keep up with the maintenance requirements of a large, multi-level, single-family home. Retirees on a fixed income may not be able to afford their homes any longer. Empty-nesters or those who have lost a spouse may want to downsize. Homes may not be designed to accommodate older adults with mobility limitations who want to live independently. More often than not, residents want to remain in their community despite desiring a different home to meet their needs. However, resident input indicates that there are currently not enough options available to seniors wishing to remain in Hopedale. As the proportion of residents over the age of 55 rises and the town's median age grows steadily, Hopedale is faced with an increasingly urgent issue of managing the needs of an aging population.

### Limited Housing Variety to Meet Existing Demand

As the town is primarily encompassed by single-family homes and duplexes, there are few alternative options for housing other than these. Most homes are owner-occupied and only 16% are occupied by renters. Since 2006, only 2 building permits for multi-family units have been granted in the town, while all others have been for single-family housing units. It is important for a community to offer a range of housing options and maintain a diverse housing stock in terms of cost, unit types, accessibility, and occupancy. Research shows that neighborhoods with diverse housing types can be more resilient to downturns in the housing market.

Housing that is affordable to the local workforce is critical to the town's economy and directly benefits businesses, school districts, government and public safety, and others who employ moderate-income workers. Housing that accommodates the needs, lifestyle choices, and limitations of seniors is important, as well as for families with children. Large lot, single-family homes are not suitable for all members of the community and Hopedale's existing housing stock is restrictive towards certain populations who may want to move into the town or relocate within town. The most popular housing type that respondents of the community survey indicated Hopedale needs more of was mixed use development. There are many options for new housing that Hopedale can pursue without sacrificing its identity as a small, New England town, such as in-fill housing, "missing middle" housing, accessory dwelling units, cottage homes, rentals, and more.

### Limited Land Suitable for New Residential Development

While many communities have ample land to create new residential or commercial opportunities, Hopedale is a small town in which most of the buildable land has already been built out or preserved. The town experienced enormous growth during the 1980s, when the population grew by 45% and housing units increased by 50%. According to the Buildout Analysis prepared for Hopedale by CMRPC in 1999, only 961 developable acres remained, which could have yielded 334 new residential lots under zoning bylaws and environmental constraints. Scarcity of building lots can lead to escalating housing costs, potentially resulting in the development of larger houses on remaining lots. Since 2006, an average of 3 building permits has been issued each year in Hopedale, indicating limited growth in the last few decades. Excessive minimum lot size, setback, and parking requirements may also restrict the types and sizes of homes that can be built in Hopedale.

### Limited Protection for Historic Housing Stock

Hopedale's housing stock is some of the town's most important historic resources. The Draper family invested in attractive and carefully planned housing for all of their employees at the factory, which included duplex worker housing, boarding houses, and single-family homes for managers. Lake Point Development, a 30-duplex project along Hopedale Pond designed by Arthur S. Shurcliff (1904), became distinguished as a model of company housing and suburban planning. The town earned several awards from international housing congresses for its commitment to

high-quality housing for workers. The houses that remain today contribute to the town's overall historic character. However, an aging housing stock carries with it several potential issues.

Environmental hazards, costs associated with deferred maintenance, and vulnerability to development threaten Hopedale's older housing stock. Without properly addressing these issues, Hopedale could witness significant decay or redevelopment of its older homes. Access to housing rehabilitation funds or tools to bring properties to code compliance and eliminate health and safety threats to residents may be in need. Despite the distinctive character and immense value that the town's historic homes bring to Hopedale, it is inevitably the decision of property owners to make any structural modifications to their homes. Across most of Hopedale's historic properties, few have any regulatory protection from demolition or alteration of significant historic features. Many homeowners may not have a complete understanding of the resources that are available to them to protect their historic homes and the benefits that come from doing so.

## Population and Housing Opportunities

### Redevelopment of Draper Factory Site

Now that the Draper Factory has been demolished, the site presents an opportunity for the construction of many new housing units. The current owner and developers of the Draper site have publicly stated the intention to build new housing along with the potential for office, retail, or other uses that are in demand. The proximity of the Draper site to Hopedale's town center implies the future development will need to strike a balance with what uses are economically viable and what the community desires. With such an expansive site to develop, the economics of large-scale development mean housing is a likely proposition, as it serves as a reliable anchor for mixed use projects. Utilizing this Master Plan as a guide, developers should carefully consider what types of housing are most needed in Hopedale, be it rental units, small-to medium-sized homes, handicap-accessible units, condominiums, low-income apartments, age-restricted housing, or anything else that is in high demand. Redevelopment of the Draper site is an excellent opportunity to address the housing needs of Hopedale's current and future residents.

### Future Planning and Community Engagement

Given the town's lack of subsidized housing units, Town leaders may want to consider pursuing a Housing Production Plan in the future. Falling under the 10% subsidized housing threshold set by the Department of Housing and Community Development leaves Hopedale vulnerable to comprehensive permitting under M.G.L. Chapter 40B, a law allowing developers to override local zoning bylaws and build more densely if they include a certain percentage of deed-restricted affordable units in their proposed housing developments. A Housing Production Plan is a way for the town to proactively plan for creation of affordable housing while achieving a temporary "safe harbor" from comprehensive permits (given the town adds 0.5% subsidized units to its housing stock over the course of one year or 1.0% over a two-year period). Housing Production Plans typically take 8-12 months to complete and include a robust public outreach component,

comprehensive housing need assessment, and formulation of housing production goals and appropriate implementation strategies.

Another type of planning process that the town could engage in is a buildout and fiscal impact analysis. This type of study determines the amount of developable land in residentially zoned areas, analyzes regulatory or environmental constraints to development, and summarizes the estimated capacity that the Town can anticipate for future housing and population growth under current law. This strategy can be useful for understanding impacts on the community such as tax base, traffic, school enrollment, historic resources, open space preservation, utilities, etc. A Buildout Analysis was prepared for the town by CMRPC in 1999 but should be updated to reflect any changes in the past two decades.

Given the town's limited availability of land, it will be critical for Hopedale to inventory its publicly and privately owned property, vacant, underutilized, deteriorated land, and buildings with residential reuse potential. These types of properties can occasionally be acquired through tax taking, donation, negotiation, distress sale, bank foreclosure, or brownfield remediation. The Town should also consider allowing for greater flexibility with development on non-conforming lots.

This Master Plan process is an excellent point to build off and continue engagement with the community about the town's future. In terms of housing, the town should practice transparency and seek input from the public whenever possible. Tools for engagement can include community meetings, participatory mapping, focus groups, visual preference surveys for housing types, providing educational materials on the town website and social media, surveys, web-based engagement platforms, and more.

### Existing Housing Resources

Hopedale Town Meeting voters approved adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2020, which adds a 1% tax surcharge on real estate, matched by funds from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund. CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and affordable housing. Having CPA funds available allows for a wide range of opportunities to enhance affordable housing, including, but not limited to:

- Acquire land for the purpose of creating affordable housing
- Adaptive re-use of existing buildings through the conversion of nonresidential properties into affordable housing
- Support the development of affordable housing on publicly owned land
- Support the construction of new housing on small, non-complying lots in existing neighborhoods
- Support the costs of improvements necessary to develop accessory dwelling units, with the provision that the units be permanently deed-restricted to preserve affordability

In addition to CPA, each year Hopedale is entitled to a minimum of 12 hours and a maximum of 24 hours of Local Planning Assistance (LPA) from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. There are a variety of ways that Hopedale can choose to utilize these hours of technical assistance from CMRPC staff, including planning related to housing. Updating zoning maps or other GIS mapping services, data requests, meeting facilitation, and grant application development are examples of eligible uses.

## Goals and Recommendations

### **Goal 1: Encourage development of new housing types that are supportive of an aging population, new families, and low-to moderate-income households.**

- Objective 1: Support development of more congregate living opportunities, assisted living, and nursing care to meet the needs of the town’s growing senior population.
  - Ensure new senior housing developments are in walkable areas of town with access to transportation alternatives.
- Objective 2: Promote the development of housing that is accessible for people with disabilities and mobility difficulties.
  - Advocated for a higher inclusion of accessible units in proposed affordable housing developments.

### **Goal 2: Take a proactive approach to planning for the housing needs of current and future Hopedale residents.**

- Objective 1: Analyze and consider the impact of new housing on schools, public safety offices, and public services.
  - Conduct GIS-based buildout analysis of developable land to depict future potential of housing units, new residents and schoolchildren, and demand on utilities and infrastructure when the town is fully developed.
  - Conduct more robust school population projections and scenario planning to help the school district better plan for future capital expenditures.
- Objective 2: Develop a comprehensive local housing strategy to coordinate all housing initiatives and meet housing objectives.
  - Complete a Housing Production Plan to be certified by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).
- Objective 3: Expand the Town’s capacity to respond to local housing needs and opportunities.
  - Hire a Town Planner to provide technical assistance and professional expertise on matters of housing in town.
  - Establish an Affordable Housing Committee to guide the process of creating more affordable housing opportunities in Hopedale.

- Objective 4: Stay actively informed on market trends and new opportunities to support growth in housing.
- Encourage community leaders to participate in informational meetings and forums hosted by organizations such as CMRPC, Mass Housing Partnership (MHP), Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), or Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC).

**Goal 3: Pursue creative policies, partnership, and resources that support the development of new affordable and diverse housing options as well as the rehabilitation of existing homes.**

- Objective 1: Consider and identify appropriate zoning amendments to encourage new developments in appropriate areas of town.
  - Review zoning bylaws to determine if there are excessive dimensional requirements and parking provisions prohibiting the creation of affordable housing.
  - Consider adoption of a Cottage Housing Bylaw.
  - Consider adoption of an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw to mandate developers set aside a portion of proposed housing units as affordable to low- to moderate-income households.
  - Review the existing Accessory Apartment Bylaw and consider modification to allow for more flexibility and offer greater opportunities for development including whether accessory units should be allowed by right in certain parts of town.
- Objective 2: Identify and pursue funding opportunities to expand affordable housing options.
  - Utilize Community Preservation Act funds to further affordable housing goals.
  - Consider adopting a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust.<sup>4</sup>
  - Apply for funding for capital projects that support the construction and rehabilitation of homes through the Rural and Small Town Development Fund Capital Grant Program as part of the Community One Stop for Growth.<sup>5</sup>
  - Actively pursue funding for housing development and rehabilitation as opportunities arise.
  - Complete a fiscal impact analysis to determine the benefit that difference types of housing will bring to the community.
- Objective 3: Coordinate with regional developers to attract “Friendly” 40B developments to increase units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory.
  - Host roundtable discussions in which developers are invited to speak to municipal boards, committees, staff, and residents about potential housing developments and associated challenges or concerns.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/municipal\\_affordable\\_housing\\_trust\\_guidebook.pdf](https://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/municipal_affordable_housing_trust_guidebook.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/doc/rural-and-small-town-guidelines/download>

- Objective 4: Ensure the existing housing stock is safe, healthy, and meets code requirements.
  - Facilitate opportunities for residents to obtain grants and/or zero interest loans for housing rehabilitation.
  - Support preservation of existing historical homes through initiatives such as historic rehabilitation tax credits, conservation restrictions, or local historic districts.
  - Provide educational resources to homeowners and landlords on the enforcement process and detecting defective conditions that are health- hazards.

**Goal 4: Ensure new housing design and location is harmonious with the existing community.**

- Objective 1: Prepare design guidelines that clearly spell out Town design preferences for the construction of new multi-family housing.
  - Contract a planning consultant to work with the Planning Board to develop a set of multi-family housing design guidelines.
- Objective 2: Determine suitable areas for future multi-family, mixed used, and higher density housing
  - Identify tracts of land available for development including infill sites and redevelopment of currently developed sites.
  - Conduct a land suitability analysis with a set of criteria to determine the best areas in town for new housing.
  - Ensure local officials and boards are familiar with Smart Growth principles to promote sustainable development.

# Economic Development

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## Introduction

Hopedale is a small suburb in Southeast Worcester County, 20 miles southeast of Worcester and 25 miles southwest of Boston. The Town shares many characteristics of many communities in MetroWest Massachusetts – the gradual transformation from an agrarian to an industrial economy. Located in the upper valley of the Mill River in the Blackstone River Valley, Hopedale positioned itself as a small but mighty factory town in the mid-seventeenth century. As the Town entered the eighteenth century, new settlers and the technological evolution paved the way for a burgeoning manufacturing base. George and Ebenezer Draper, original followers of Reverend Adin Ballou, created a lucrative textile business that became the country's largest producer of machinery for textile mills.

The Drapers transformed Hopedale into a planned company town rooted in the ideologies of Ballou's Christian utopian community. Unlike worker housing elsewhere, the Drapers constructed high quality duplexes and tree-lined roads, invested in public infrastructure, schools, and community parks for the employees of Hopedale Machine, Northrop Loom, and Hopedale Elastic. Hopedale became such a profitable manufacturer of looms and machinery to produce textiles that by the turn of the century its products were shipped internationally. Although Hopedale's peak manufacturing era ended in the 1970s and 1980s with the closure of Draper Corporation, the factory's social and economic impact is visible today through the Town's open spaces, housing stock, and its Town Center.

*Photo 1: Hopedale Town Hall  
Photo Credit: Suzanne MacNeil*





Hopedale residents continue to cherish the Town's history while recognizing the need for balanced growth. An extensive community planning and outreach process with residents, business owners, and other stakeholders identified central goals that will drive future decision-making over the next ten years. Recognizing existing land use limitations and the desire to preserve community character, targeted strategies in this Master Plan ensure the Town uses its resources to support the following goals:

Goal 1: Develop responsible growth incentives for a variety of uses for available commercial and investment property to diversify the tax base without overburdening town resources.

Goal 2: Create and implement a marketing and communications plan designed to drive awareness of Hopedale's new and ongoing opportunities while providing transparency to its citizens.

Goal 3: Maintain the Town's vision throughout the planning process by developing and implementing open space, business design and upkeep, and sustainability bylaws.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to community outreach and consultations with the Master Plan Committee, previous planning efforts form the basis for the Master Plan's strategies. These efforts helped shape past policies that still affect how Hopedale operates today. The following section is a benchmark review of prior planning and engagement efforts. An analysis of prior efforts indicates how priorities have shifted, gives the reader context behind current issues, and ultimately establishes a pathway to success.

## Prior Planning and Engagement Efforts

Hopedale's previous economic planning efforts include:

### Community Master Plan: Community Development Chapter (2007)

Hopedale completed a Community Master Plan in 2007 with a Community Development Chapter and a Town Government Chapter. Findings highlighted Hopedale's economic strengths - consistently maintaining low unemployment rates, high annual payrolls, and much lower poverty rates when compared to surrounding communities and the state. Issues identified in the Plan include relatively lower educational attainment, high commercial and industrial tax levies, and a deficit of 8,550 potential jobs under a complete build-out scenario.<sup>2</sup>

The economic development section's only goal was to maintain fiscal stability by promoting commercial and industrial growth appropriate to the community, expanding the tax base, and increasing employment opportunities for all residents, particularly those considered low and

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<sup>1</sup> Town of Hopedale. "A History of Hopedale." <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/about-us/pages/history-hopedale>

<sup>2</sup> The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. Community Development Plan for the Town of Hopedale, Massachusetts. 2007.

moderate-income.<sup>3</sup> The Plan then established several recommendations to achieve this goal:

- Form an Economic Development Commission/Business Development Advisory Board
- Streamline the permitting approval process
- Promote small business development and expansion
- Pursue marketing and outreach efforts
- Develop the Town's grant writing capacity
- Improve workforce education
- Become active in regional and state economic development planning
- Explore Tax Increment Financing.

The Town has attempted these recommendations via the promotion of commercial and industrial development that "fits" with the community character and by having a quality education system to attract professional talent. However, progress has been slow and each of these goals is as relevant as they were in 2021. One recent accomplishment in support of these goals is the Town's award from the Community One Stop of Growth program in the fall of 2021 for a study of the Draper Factory and Village Center Area Parking, Traffic, and Circulation. The study will provide strategies to address existing circulation needs as well as those resulting from the planned redevelopment of Draper Factory.

Since this Plan's publication, the Town of Hopedale has taken further steps to advance Draper Factory's progress, working with the property owner and Worcester Business Development Corporation (WBDC) on the demolition and redevelopment of the site. Adjacent to the Village Center, the Draper Factory site offers an unparalleled opportunity for Hopedale's revitalization. As a next step, the Town should convene residents and appropriate boards to establish- and then articulate in zoning- a vision for the Village Center and adjacent areas including the Draper Factory site. A vision for the area's redevelopment has been touched on in various plans throughout the years. Revisiting, formalizing, and regulating allowed uses accordingly is essential to ensuring that any subsequent downtown or downtown-adjacent development is consistent with the desires of Hopedale's residents. Such visioning work is well-suited to a Downtown Revitalization Committee, which Hopedale established subsequent the 2007 Community Development Strategy, but has since disbanded.

### Hopedale Community Development Strategy (2017)

Hopedale's 2017 Community Development Strategy (CDS) was part of a joint grant with the Town of Bellingham for housing rehabilitation through the state's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application. The CDS is a former prerequisite of CDBG program application that is no longer required. However, it provides a useful snapshot of resident priorities and needs in the last decade, partly informed by prior planning efforts such as Town's E.O. 418 Community

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<sup>3</sup> Low and moderate-income individuals make 80 percent or less than the Area Median Income (\$126,500)

Development Plan (2004) and the previous Community Master Plan (2007). The goals were as follows:

- Housing
  - Increase housing opportunities for a broad range of income levels
  - Promote housing affordability
  - Improve the condition of Hopedale's housing stock
- Economic Development
  - Maintain stability and manage commercial and industrial growth
  - Expand the local tax base
  - Increase employment opportunities for Hopedale residents
- Community Facilities, Programs, and Services
  - Provide and maintain adequate community facilities, programs, and services
  - Provide recreational programs and facilities that reflect contemporary needs
  - Ensure adequacy of services to seniors
  - Maintain Town's high educational standards
  - Provide adequate and coordinated development and regulatory resources and policies
- Resource Protection and Open Space
  - Sustain and restore water resources
  - Retain habitats, open spaces, and scenic/unique resources
  - Enhance recreational opportunities and facilities
- Transportation
  - Increase availability of public transportation
  - Maintain availability of community services within walking distance
  - Maintain quality of existing public roadways
- Public Social Services
  - Provide necessary services to low and moderate-income, elderly, and disabled residents
  - Increase economic self-sufficiency
  - Educate and assist first-time homebuyers

### Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project (2012)

CMRPC conducted the Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project (BVPP) to foster regional planning in the Blackstone Valley communities of Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. CMRPC completed the project with the support of the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funding program. The overarching goal was to establish local and regionally significant Priority Development Areas (PDA's), Priority Preservation Areas, and Priorities for Signature Infrastructure Investments.

There were 64 local PDA's, two local combination PDA/PPA's, and 60 local PPA's identified in the study area, with full PDA build-out potential equating to 18,000 jobs. Local PDAs cover roughly 7,000 acres, with half of that acreage being vacant. There were 24 regionally significant PDAs and 33 regionally significant PPAs. Regional PDAs covered about 4,000 acres and could provide an estimated 7,800 jobs – 30 percent of existing jobs available in the Blackstone Valley. PDAs identified as regionally significant in Hopedale included the Draper Factory, the Hopedale Airport Industrial Park, and the Grafton-Upton Railroad. Regional trends to monitor include the concentration of jobs in public administration and professional and business services, the projected housing gap (8,000 units between 2010 and 2035), and water and wastewater demand increases.

### Southern Worcester County Economic Development Strategy (2018)

The Southern Worcester County Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is an in-depth analysis of Massachusetts's Southeast and Southwest regions and their ability to access markets, support supply chains, and tap into the labor pool. The strategy is rooted in workforce and industry data and analyzes the region's viability via its transportation systems, availability of public infrastructure, its business climate, and the willingness/capability to offer financing and incentives. The Plan's vision is for the region's forty communities includes "being talked about as collaborative, flexible, adaptive, innovative, and connected by several transportation modes and state-of-the-art telecommunications to other regions and economic hubs." A series of goals and objectives resulted from the Strategy Committee's public participation efforts and ground-level outreach, including four outreach meetings, an online SWOT Survey, individual meetings, and group meetings. CMRPC and the Committee drafted performance metrics to evaluate the progress of goal implementation throughout the Plan's lifespan. The goals are:

- Create and operate a robust regional economic development program
- Site availability, development, and support infrastructure
- Creation of a steady and robust talent turnpike
- Regulatory flexibility and development tools
- Enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit

The CEDS' findings included regional strengths and weaknesses and which industries are considered the industry *target clusters*. Based on the availability of infrastructure, transportation, and build-out potential, the Plan recommends that the region focus on manufacturing, education services and health care and social assistance, professional, scientific, and technical services, and agriculture between now and 2038. The region's industrial diversity, ability to collaborate, and adoption of hazard mitigation plans, and other resiliency strategies are also considered major strengths. Reliance on retail and service industries, lower wages, lack of diversity in the tax base, loss of production and a young workforce, as well as automation across many industries (mainly manufacturing) were identified as weaknesses that will affect the region over the next twenty years.

In conjunction with feedback gleaned from various outreach activities, these plans provide a benchmark of progress thus far and help distinguish the next steps for Hopedale. The following section provides an overview of existing conditions.

## Existing Conditions

### History and Overview

Hopedale has remained an economic engine since its first recorded settlement in 1669. Settlers capitalized on the area’s topography, using the Mill River to produce corn in its Albee grist mill. Agriculture and small industry dominated the local economy until 1842 when Reverend Adin Ballou purchased six hundred acres in Downtown Hopedale and established *Fraternal Community Number One*, a utopian social experiment based on Transcendentalism.<sup>4</sup> At the time, the nation was undergoing a spiritual revival known as the Second Great Awakening, and many were in pursuit of religious liberalism. The community continued to pursue farming and manufacturing until they went bankrupt in 1856. It was then that the Draper brothers, who had already begun manufacturing automatic looms for the textile industries in Lowell and Lawrence, purchased the property. By the 1880s, they had a reported 800 employees and 400 patents for textile machinery and had generated \$1 million in sales. By 1892, the Draper Company was the nation’s largest producer of textile machinery. Hopedale was eventually incorporated as a Town from Milford in 1886, and George Draper constructed Town Hall in 1887<sup>5</sup>. The Drapers called the Town *Hopedale* because it had been known as the "Dale of Hope" for new immigrants to America.<sup>6</sup>

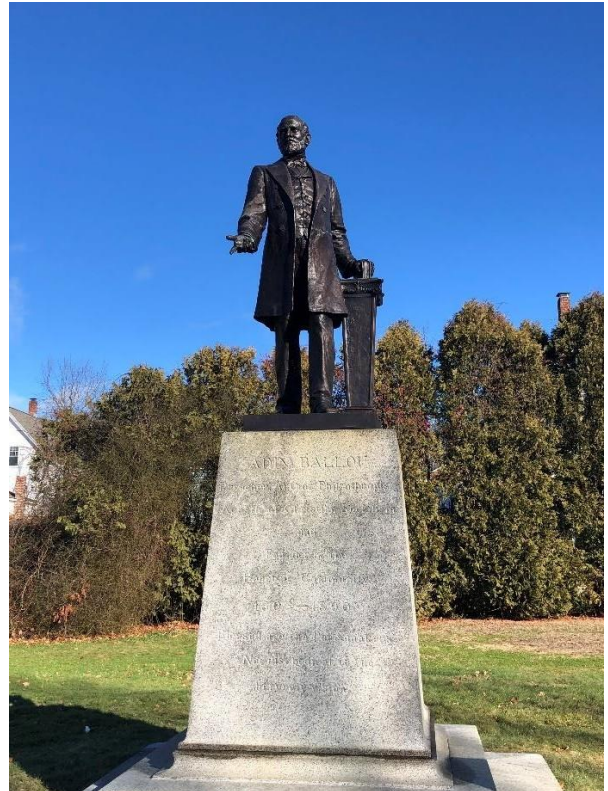


Photo 1. Statue of Adin Ballou  
Photo Credit: Frederick Oldfield

The Drapers’ success ushered Hopedale into the twentieth century. They sold upwards of 78,000 Northrop looms out of Draper Factory by 1903 - the Town’s primary textile production site. The Draper Factory and the Draper Company sustained Hopedale’s manufacturing base long after

<sup>4</sup> The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. “Hopedale, Massachusetts.” <https://www.achp.gov/preserve-america/community/hopedale-massachusetts>

<sup>5</sup> Town of Hopedale. “A History of Hopedale.” <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/about-us/pages/history-hopedale>

<sup>6</sup> Hopedale High School Alumni Association. [hopedale-alumni.org/hopedale-memories.html](http://hopedale-alumni.org/hopedale-memories.html)

many New England mills closed. As technology modernized, the textile industry abandoned New England and moved south in pursuit of cheaper labor. The Drapers are often cited as one of the driving forces behind the loss of the textile industry to the South, selling their products to Southern mill owners who could afford the equipment and financing the construction of some southern mills. By this time, agriculture was a smaller percentage of

Hopedale's local economy than in the nineteenth century. Agricultural production on its 31 farms and 500 acres consisted of dairy products (27 percent), hay (17 percent), and poultry (16 percent). However, the Draper Company's expansion boosted the value and quantity of agricultural goods from \$26,000 in 1895 to nearly \$75,000 in 1905.

Hopedale underwent its first and only strike in 1913 during the period of great expansion; the International Workers of the World (IWW) went on strike for four months before the company eventually won. As the Town entered the early modern period (1915-1940), the Draper Company reorganized and became the Draper Corporation. Shortly after, the Draper Corporation developed a Rayon loom in the early 1920s, and later a high-speed loom, that ran 20 percent faster. The invention of the streetcar and changes in residential construction patterns paved the way for the housing stock we see today, albeit slower than the surrounding suburbs. Throughout WWI, local industrial activity remained strong, and improvements in loom machinery continued until WWII before declining in the mid-twentieth century. In 1967, Rockwell International purchased Draper Corporation. By the mid-1970s, a combination of international competition and computerized machinery led to the demise of the Blackstone Valley's textile industry.<sup>7</sup>

Today, Hopedale nods to its industrial and utopian roots via its historic and cultural assets, its Town Center, and the fabric of its tax base. The Town is home to several major employers, including National Grid and the Aoude Autism & Medical Center. Other large employers include Hopedale Public Schools, Jehovah's Witnesses, Braun's Express Inc., Front Line, and Automation Consulting Services Inc. The population of 5,947 people and 2,181 households are predominantly well-educated, white collar, high-wage earners. Hopedale's growing popularity is due not only to its reputable public school system and "small-town" character but its relatively affordable housing, proximity to major transportation routes, central location between Worcester and Boston, and passive and active recreational opportunities. According to CMRPC projections, the Town is expected to grow by 6 percent between 2010 and 2040, posing potential challenges considering the limited amount of developable land and capacity of its infrastructure. The redevelopment of the Draper Factory presents an opportunity to proactively address the Town's growing housing and service needs, but will require thoughtful planning to ensure infrastructure is fully addressed.

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<sup>7</sup> Massachusetts Historical Commission. MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Hopedale. 1983

## Income and Employment

Hopedale has high household incomes compared to the County and the state. The median household income (MHI) is \$108,294, compared to the state figure of \$81,215 and the County figure of \$74,679. The median family income in Hopedale is also relatively high at \$117,326, compared to \$103,126 for Massachusetts and \$96,393 for Worcester County. Although primarily a “working-class” community when the factory was operating, today Hopedale is predominantly “white collar.” Hopedale has seen an 11 percent rise in median household income over the past decade. Though a seemingly small change compared with that of nearby communities, Hopedale’s households also began the decade with the advantage of the subregion’s highest incomes.

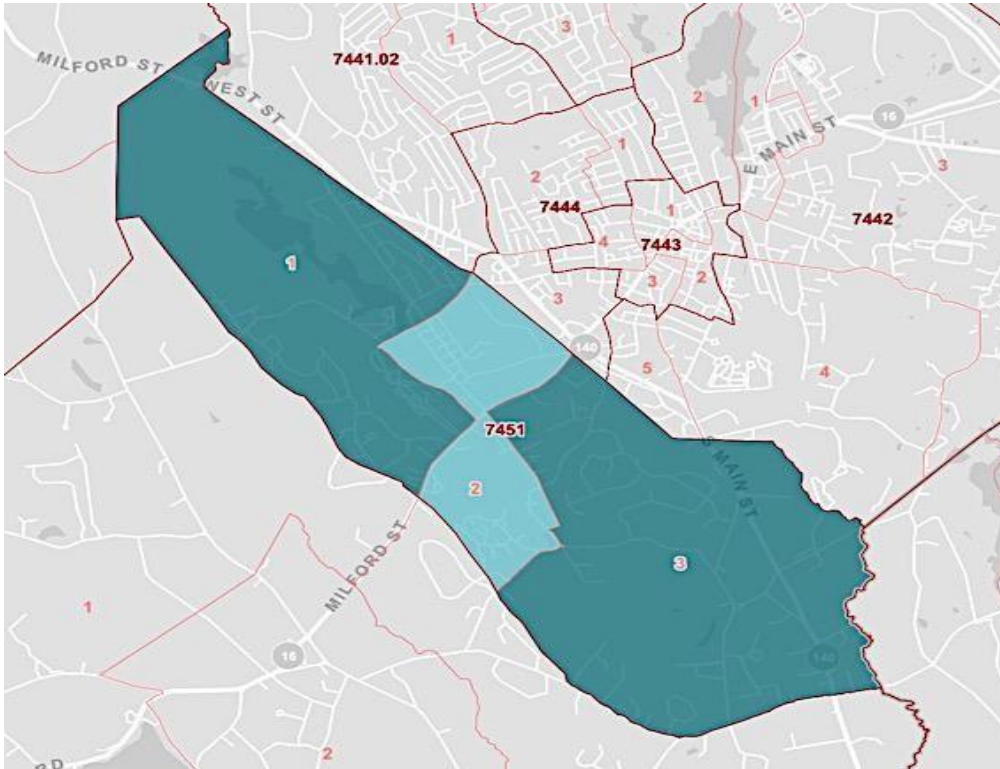
<b>Geography</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Bellingham	\$78,290	\$101,477	30%
Hopedale	\$97,227	\$108,294	11%
Mendon	\$102,625	\$125,945	23%
Milford	\$66,636	\$83,243	25%
Upton	\$107,950	\$128,796	19%
Worcester County	\$64,152	\$74,679	16%
Massachusetts	\$64,509	\$81,215	26%

*Source: American Community Survey 2006-2010 and 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates, Table B19013*

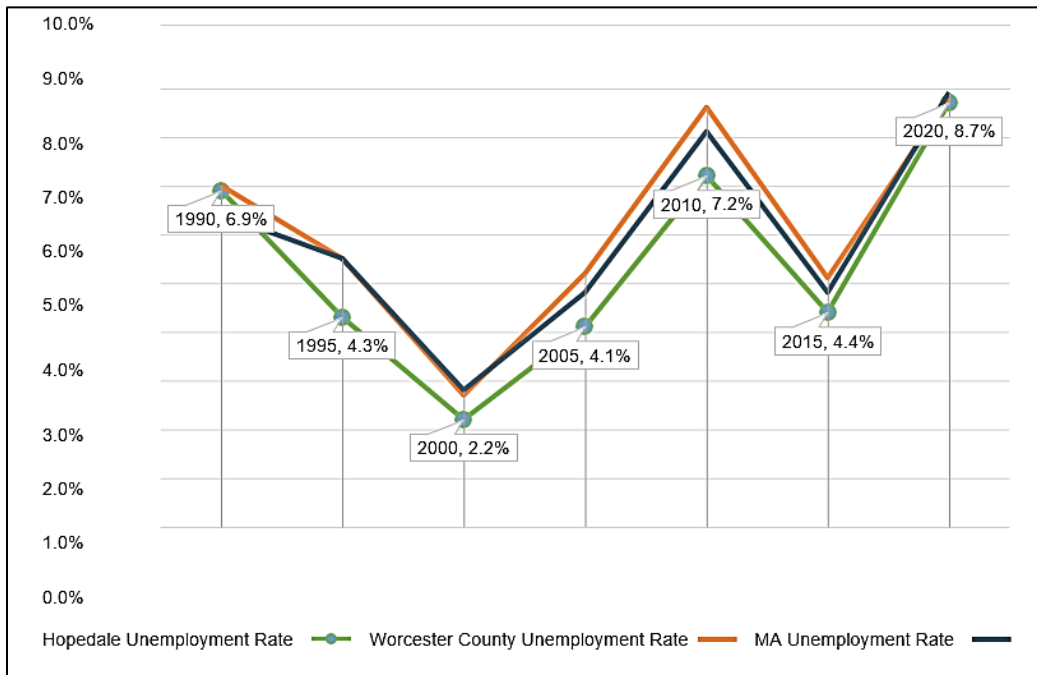
The percentage of Hopedale households with incomes of \$100,000 or more is higher than Worcester County in each of the Town’s Census Block Groups. Census Block 7451.2, which encompasses the Town Center, Hopedale Junior-Senior High, and several small commercial businesses, has the lowest MHI in Town at \$54,683. Block 7451.1’s - the northern portion of Town - MHI is \$113,170, and Block 7451.3’s is \$142,513, which is the southern portion of Town. A detailed breakdown of economic demographics by block group is in the Appendix.

Hopedale’s labor force, defined as residents 16 years and over who are employed or looking for work, includes 3,030 people according to the Massachusetts Labor Force and Unemployment Data Reports (LUR). The labor force’s size has decreased by roughly 2.4 percent since 2010 (3,104 individuals), whereas the County’s labor force has increased by 3%, and the State’s has increased by 5%. The LUR also shows that the annual unemployment rate has increased from 7.2 to 8.7% since 2010. Today’s rate is slightly below the State rate of 8.9% and the County rate of 8.8%. When examining unemployment.

### Map ED1: Hopedale by Block Group



**Fig ED1: Hopedale Unemployment Trends, 1990-2020**

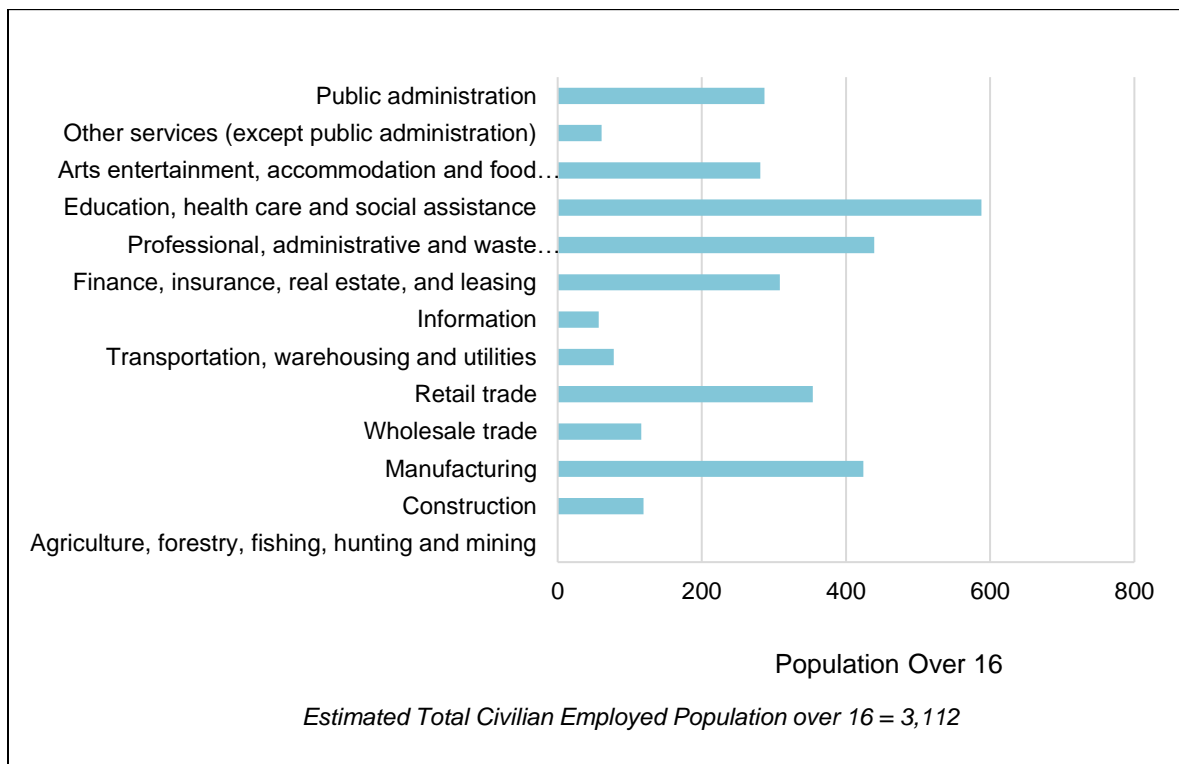


Source: MA Labor Force and Unemployment Data



patterns, it is critical to incorporate the unprecedented impact of COVID-19. The pandemic significantly interrupted employment and business activity, causing many to lose their jobs. When comparing initial and continued claims data between April 2020 and 2021, the uptick is apparent. There were sixty-five initial unemployment claims made in April 2020 versus 11 initial claims in April 2021. There were 427 continued claims versus 72 continued claims during the same time frame. A more realistic picture of unemployment trends can be found by comparing trend patterns over the past 30 years. The figure above highlights that, aside from COVID-19, Hopedale’s unemployment trends have mostly aligned with the County and State since 1990.

**Figure ED2: Working Population by Employment Industry, 2019 Estimates**



Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, 2019

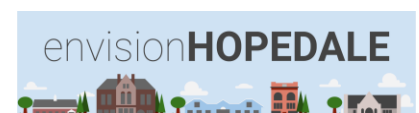
It is important to distinguish between industry and occupation when analyzing labor force, as these terms are often confused. A person’s occupation is what they do for work, e.g., an administrative assistant. The industry is the type of economic activity conducted, e.g., finance and insurance. Location Quotients (LQ) indicate the strength of local industries in comparison to larger reference geographies. LQ’s are indicators of employment characteristics that assist with long-term forecasting. A ratio between .90 and 1.10 indicates the proportion of jobs per industry is similar between geographies, while a ratio below .85 or over 1.15 indicates a more notable difference. The higher the ratio, the stronger the industry is in the community. The table below

reports the LQ for Hopedale based on the State, County, and Workforce Development Area (WDA) reference geographies. Hopedale is in MassHire’s Central Region WDA with Worcester, Southbridge, and the Blackstone Valley communities.

**Table ED2: Industry Location Quotients in Hopedale**

Industry Name	Hopedale % Monthly Employment	MA % Monthly Employment	LQ	County % Monthly Employment	LQ	WDA % Monthly Employment	LQ
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	N/A	0.3%	N/A	0.3%	N/A	0.19%	N/A
Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction	N/A	0.0%	N/A	0.1%	N/A	0.07%	N/A
Construction	22.03%	4.8%	4.59	4.8%	4.59	4.8%	4.55
Manufacturing	8.85%	6.7%	1.32	10.1%	0.87	8.5%	1.04
Durable Goods Manufacturing	5.34%	4.3%	1.23	6.3%	0.84	6.1%	0.87
Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing	3.56%	2.4%	1.50	3.8%	0.94	2.4%	1.49
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	14.32%	16.7%	0.86	18.8%	0.76	18.9%	0.76
Wholesale Trade	2.55%	3.4%	0.75	3.2%	0.79	3.3%	0.78
Retail Trade	2.24%	9.7%	0.23	10.8%	0.21	10.3%	0.22
Transportation & Warehousing	4.24%	3.1%	1.36	3.8%	1.12	4.1%	1.03
Information	0.59%	2.7%	0.22	1.3%	0.46	1.4%	0.43
Financial Activities	2.51%	6.0%	0.41	4.5%	0.56	5.0%	0.51
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2.37%	1.3%	1.77	0.8%	2.96	0.7%	3.18
Professional & Technical Services	3.51%	9.6%	0.37	4.7%	0.75	4.8%	0.73
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0.64%	2.0%	0.31	1.5%	0.42	1.4%	0.45
Administrative & Waste Services	10.72%	5.2%	2.07	4.7%	2.28	5.1%	2.09
Education & Health Services	24.82%	28.1%	0.88	33.1%	0.75	34.1%	0.73
Social Assistance	4.93%	4.1%	1.20	5.1%	0.97	5.1%	0.97
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	1.37%	1.9%	0.72	1.5%	0.91	1.4%	0.97
Accommodation & Food Services	1.96%	8.7%	0.23	7.9%	0.25	7.6%	0.26
Other Services, Except Public Administration	5.75%	3.4%	1.71	2.9%	1.96	3.1%	1.85
Public Administration	N/A	3.8%	N/A	3.7%	N/A	3.6%	N/A

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, ES 202 Data, 2019.



Understanding the employed labor force’s division by occupation type is also helpful when planning for future job growth. Occupation data provides an added layer of insight into the makeup of the employment base and the kinds of employers that provide local wage and salary jobs. Almost half (49 percent) of Hopedale’s employed population over 16 works in Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations. The median earnings for those occupations are approximately \$22,500 higher than the average median earnings of \$76,619 in Hopedale. The table below provides a breakdown of occupations by class of worker and median earnings. Class of worker refers to the type of establishment that employs someone, such as a private wage employee or self-employed person.

**Table ED3: Occupation by Class of Worker and Median Earnings**

Occupation Type	Median Earnings	Private Company Employees	Self-Employed, Own Inc. Business	Private Nonprofit	Government Workers	Self-Employed, Own Not Inc. Business & Unpaid Family Workers	Total
Management, Business, Science & Arts	\$99,133	892	28	206	315	34	<b>1,475</b>
Service	\$90,179	295	11	36	111	27	<b>480</b>
Sales & Office	\$56,319	579	0	9	14	28	<b>630</b>
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	\$72,833	177	0	0	0	19	<b>196</b>
Production, Transportation & Material Moving	\$44,839	153	9	29	0	0	<b>191</b>

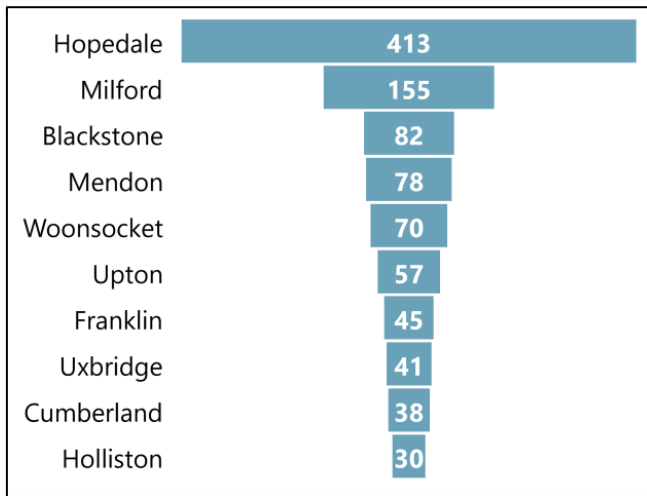
Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates, Table C24060

Educational attainment largely overlaps with job choice, workforce skillset, and the wages people are likely to earn. In Hopedale, there is a high correlation between education, employment, and income. Ninety-eight percent of those with a Bachelor’s degree in the civilian labor force are employed, compared to 88 percent of those with some college experience”, and 93 percent of those with a high school diploma. Statewide, Bachelor’s degrees have become a minimum credential to enter the workforce. Trending toward higher levels of educational attainment is particularly evident in Hopedale because residents with at least a Bachelor’s degree make up 49.6 percent of Hopedale’s population between 25 and 64, compared to 38.7 percent of Worcester County’s 25-64 population and 46.4 percent of Massachusetts’s 25-64 population.

Most residents send their children to Hopedale public schools but work outside the Town. The average commute is 30 minutes, with driving being the principal means of transportation (85 percent). Means of transportation to work is a strong indicator of median earnings, with higher earners usually driving alone to and from their job. Those in Hopedale who drive alone to work

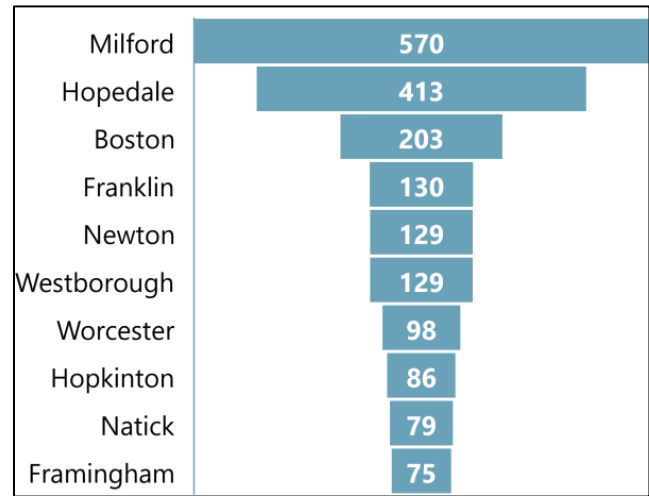
(as opposed to carpool) earn about \$5,000 more than other commuters. The small percentage of workers who take public transportation<sup>i</sup> (2.3 percent) also tend to be employed in well-paying occupations, as do the 7.6 percent of individuals who work from home. Because Hopedale lacks a public bus or train line those who report taking public transportation typically still use an automobile for a portion of their commute.

**Figure ED3: Where Hopedale Workers Live**



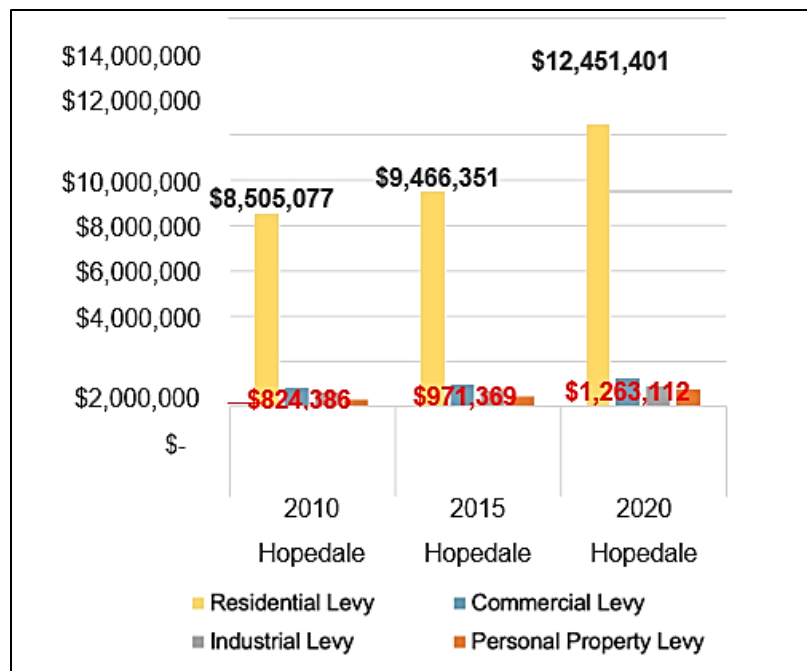
Source: ACS Community Flows

**Figure ED4: Where Hopedale Residents Work**



Source: ACS Community Flows

**Figure ED5: Hopedale Tax Levy by Class**



Source: MA Municipal Databank

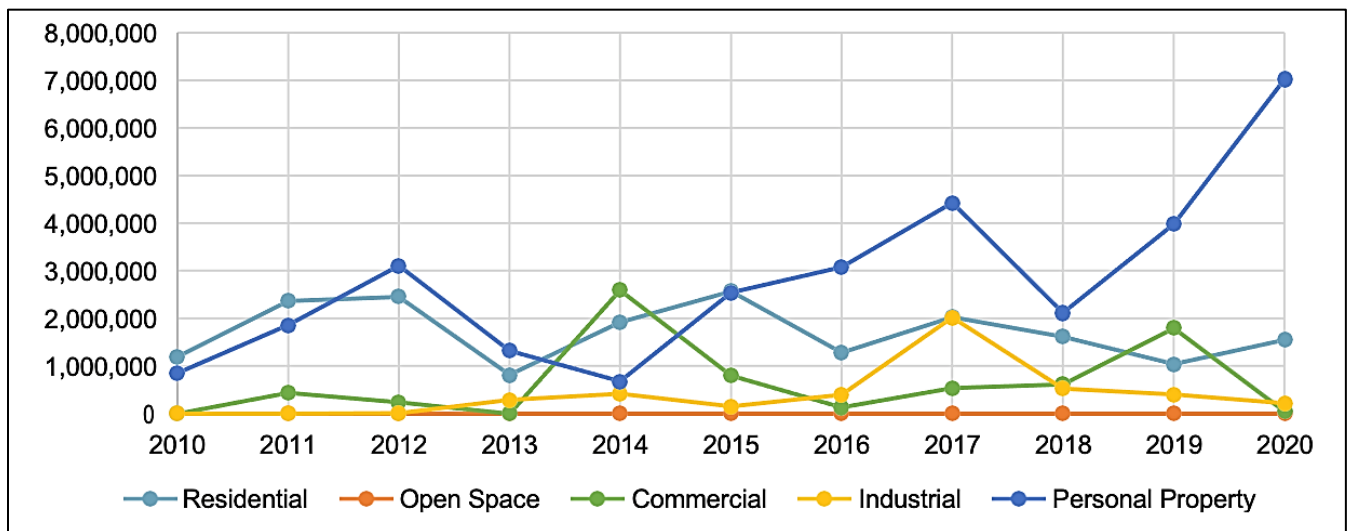
There is likely an overlap between those working from home and those who are self-employed. According to ACS estimates, 8.7 percent of households reported having self-employment income. However, most commuting Hopedale residents work in Milford (19 percent), and 7% commute to Boston. Roughly one-third of Hopedale workers live in Town, which provides opportunities to spur investment in collaborative work environments and small office spaces with support services and near amenities.

Roughly 80 percent of Hopedale’s tax base is residential; 8 percent is commercial, 6 percent industrial, and 5 percent personal property.<sup>8</sup> Hopedale does not have any open space assessed as taxable property. 2020. The commercial and residential levy have also increased significantly over the past decade – by 53 percent and 51 percent, respectively. The residential tax levy has increased by 46 percent between 2010 and 2020. The commercial and residential levies have also increased significantly over the past decade- by 53 percent and 51 percent, respectively.

### Tax Base

However, the greatest increase was in personal property (172 percent). These increases can be attributed to patterns of new growth seen in Hopedale. Between 2019 and 2020 alone, there was a 49 percent increase in new residential growth, a 46 percent increase in industrial growth, and a 76 percent increase in personal property. Contrary to the community’s desire to see more commercial and mixed-use development, there was a 97 percent decrease in new commercial growth between 2019 and 2020. In total, new growth in 2020 was 1.63 percent of the prior year’s levy. The chart below illustrates new growth trends in Hopedale since 2010.

**Figure ED6: New Growth in Hopedale by Class**



Source: MA Municipal Data Bank

<sup>8</sup> Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services defines personal property as “generally includes tangible items that are not firmly attached to land or buildings and are not considered to be part of the real estate, for example merchandise, machinery, animals and equipment.”

Hopedale’s single-family tax bill is \$6,463, slightly lower when compared to the neighboring communities of Mendon (\$7,097) and Upton (\$7,541) but higher than Bellingham (\$4,612) and Milford (\$5,448). Hopedale’s average single-family tax bill increased by 47 percent since 2010, while single-family home assessed values increased by 15 percent. Hopedale’s single-family tax bill is roughly 16 percent of household incomes, ranking 101st in the state. Assessed residential value is \$728,758,809, while the assessed value of commercial property is \$44,813,699 (5 percent of total assessed values), and \$32,771,500 (4 percent) for industrial property. Tax rates are structurally consistent with surrounding communities in that they have a rate for commercial, industrial, and personal property uses. However, Hopedale’s rates are much higher than its counterparts – 28.8 versus an average of 22.49. In 2020, the residential tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed value was \$17.87. A strategy to incentivize commercial growth is to move towards a single rate tax plan.

Table ED4: Tax Rates in Hopedale and Surrounding Communities					
Municipality	Residential Rate	Open Space Rate	Commercial Rate	Industrial Rate	Personal Property Rate
Bellingham	14.41	0.00	20.58	20.58	20.47
Hopedale	17.87	0.00	28.80	28.80	28.80
Mendon	16.79	0.00	16.79	16.79	16.79
Milford	15.98	0.00	29.69	29.69	29.69
Upton	16.60	0.00	16.60	16.60	16.60

*Source: MA Municipal Data Bank, 2020*

### Business Overview and Leakage

Hopedale is home to a small group of smaller-scale businesses as well as several larger industrial employers. There are no “big box” retailers in Town, as most are in Milford and larger municipalities. To understand the number and type of establishments, this chapter uses the following data sources: “Doing Business As” (DBA) certificates, ESRI Business Analytics, and Employment and Wage data (ES 202) from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance.

DBA certificates are filed annually with the Town Clerk per Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 110. Larger entities do not have to file a DBA certificate if they are registered with the state, but they remain an effective way to track smaller businesses and those who are self-employed. This data is important as the community participation survey revealed that 76 percent of respondents felt “too few local businesses for economic growth” was the biggest economic challenge facing Hopedale over the past ten years. According to DBA filings, there are 294 businesses, with 202 filed in Hopedale. Any home-based recruitment and retention strategies should look to DBA certificates to understand the small commercial fabric and gauge their most pressing needs.

ESRI Business Analyst is a demographic mapping software created by ArcGIS. ESRI contains



a plethora of market, business, lifestyle, and spending data necessary to understand the local business community, shopping patterns, and where sales leakage occurs. This data also provides an inventory of larger companies that fills the gap left by DBA certificates. ESRI estimates state that there are 253 businesses in Town with approximately 2,260 employees, generating \$489,014 in total sales. The table below outlines the number of businesses and employees by type of industry.

Table ED5: Business Summary Table			
Business	Number of Businesses	Employees	Percent of Total Employees
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	0	25	1.0%
Mining	0	0	0.0%
Utilities	1	260	10.9%
Construction	46	283	11.9%
Manufacturing	13	141	5.9%
Wholesale Trade	14	108	4.5%
Retail Trade	26	212	8.9%
Transportation & Warehousing	8	89	3.7%
Information	2	9	0.4%
Finance & Insurance	3	14	.6%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	6	19	0.8%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	19	150	6.3%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1	3	0.1%
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services	16	66	2.8%
Educational Services	8	339	14.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	16	262	11.0%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	4	33	1.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	8	26	1.1%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	37	290	12.2%
Public Administration	9	73	3.1%
Unclassified Establishments	16	8	.3%

*Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Business Summary, 2021*

ES 202 data monitors the average number of business establishments across the Commonwealth, average weekly wages, and average employment. This information provides an added layer when analyzing commercial trends over time and helps recognize a community’s trajectory. When tracking ES 202 data, one can see the number of establishments in Hopedale has increased by 46 percent since 2001.<sup>9</sup> The greatest increase in the number of establishments was between 2001 and 2005. There was nearly a 10 percent increase in average weekly wages during the same time frame, with the greatest increase of 19.3 percent between 2005 and 2010. The total increase in average weekly wages from 2001 to 2019 was 55 percent. Accommodation and Food Services experienced the highest growth (133% increase) in number of

<sup>9</sup> ES 202 data begins in 2001, and annual report data is only available through 2019.



establishments, while the construction industry saw the greatest growth in wages (729%) and average monthly employment (324%). Financial activities experienced the greatest increase in weekly wages (153%).

Table ED6: Hopedale ES 202 Summary Data, 2001-2019						
Category	2001	2005	2010	2015	2019	% Change
No. of Establishments	147	179	192	190	214	46%
Average Monthly Employment	1,687	1,629	1,587	2,044	2,192	30%
Average Weekly Wages	\$746	\$819	\$977	\$1,052	\$1,153	55%
Total Annual Wages	\$65,414,742	\$69,388,678	\$80,618,301	\$111,803,406	\$131,417,570	101%

Hopedale’s businesses generate about \$55,704,113 in annual retail sales, according to the most current estimates from ESRI Business Analyst. Please note that these estimates do not account for the unprecedented impact of COVID–19, and the pandemic’s impacts are under continued surveillance as they unfold. Hopedale’s *Retail Marketplace Profile* indicates that demand exceeded supply in nearly all industry categories. Leakage and surplus analysis is a supply and demand comparison across industry categories. It produces a leakage/surplus factor ranging from -100 to +100, with surplus indicated by negative values and leakage indicated by positive values. A surplus factor indicates that the specific industry has a greater supply than demand. In Hopedale, the only industries that had negative leakage/surplus values were:

- Building Materials, Garden Equipment, and Supply Stores, which had a retail gap of -\$827,709 and a factor of -5.2
- Building Material and Supplies Dealers, which had a retail gap of -\$1,395,615 and a factor of -9.2
- Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers, which had a retail gap of -\$76,711 and a factor of -1.7
- Direct Selling Establishments, which had a retail gap of -\$1,771,996 and a factor of -64.3

In all other categories, demand exceeded supply, indicating the type of establishments the Town should market to and the type of revenue lost to neighboring communities. The Retail Trade and Food and Drink Demand (or retail potential) was \$123,049,082 while supply (retail sales) was \$30,798,692, producing a gap of \$92,250,390 and a leakage factor of +60. Although there has been a drastic shift to e-commerce/online ordering and businesses are continuing to recover from COVID-19, Hopedale has an opportunity to magnify its retail base with specialty commercial options and restaurants. Community members expressed a need for these establishments during the Master Plan Visioning Session and the Needs Assessment Survey,



specifically mentioning restaurants, groceries, smaller boutique-style stores, and customer service options.

Table ED7: Hopedale Retail Demand Outlook by Industry Group			
Industry Store Type	NAICS Code	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus Factor
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$14,054,910	45.1
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$2,075,713	45.9
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$3,987,942	73.8
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	(-\$827,709)	5.2
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$17,196,303	68.6
Health & Personal Care Stores	446, 4461	\$7,042,501	100
Gasoline Stations	4,474,471	\$8,580,217	81.3
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$7,550,920	87.2
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$4,350,957	100
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$13,575,612	100
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$935,824	12
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$2,095,675	31.6
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$11,631,525	87.5
<i>Note: This database is in mature status. While the data are presented in current year geography, all supply- and demand-related estimates remain vintage 2017.</i>			
<i>Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Retail Marketplace Profile, 2021</i>			

Additional information on Hopedale’s Market Profile is the spending potential index (SPI) for the Town. The SPI value compares the amount of money spent locally for a good/service to the average amount spent nationally for that same good/service. In each category, Hopedale residents are spending at least 30% more than the national average. The findings specify that residents are more likely to spend higher than average amounts for goods and services but are not spending this money within Town limits. The complete Market Profile is in the Appendix of this Master Plan.

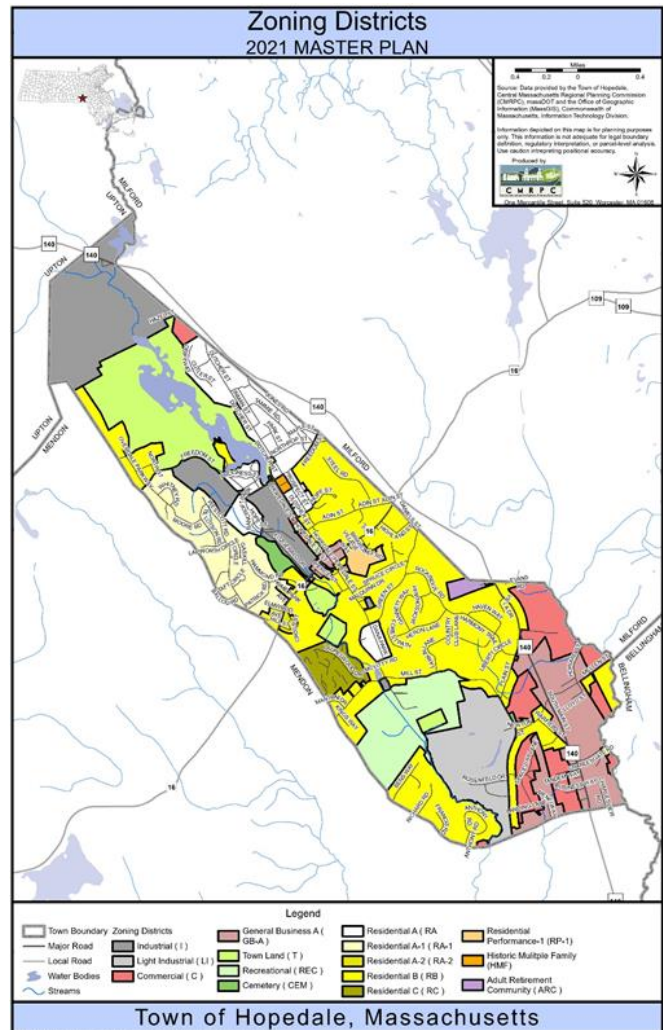
### Commercial and Business Districts

Hopedale’s Zoning Bylaw has one Commercial district (C) and two general business districts - General Business (GB) and General Business A (GB-A) although no parcels are currently zoned GB. The C District is about 191.44 acres in the southeastern section of Town, bordering Milford and Bellingham. Route 140 runs vertically through it, continuing to Mendon and across to Bellingham. Route 140 is one of the main arteries in Town, generating approximately 13,692 annual average daily trips according to MassDOT's Transportation Data Management System. The C District has most of Hopedale’s larger commercial players, including National Grid. Business, professional and general offices, indoor eating places, drugstores, salons, repair shops, and most types of businesses are allowed by right. Hotels, motels, outdoor eating places,

establishments selling farm products, and vehicle repair shops require a Special Permit for operation. A combination of commercial uses that exceed 3,750 square feet will also require a Special Permit. In addition to the established districts, there are several scattered sites around the Town Center zoned for commercial use.

The GB-A District overlaps with the C District in southeastern Hopedale. These districts are a combined 236.16 acres. GB-A allows for single and two-family housing in addition to the same commercial uses as the C district. Development is concentrated in southeast Hopedale in a stand-alone fashion. Smaller, more clustered commercial buildings are in Town Center. The Center is the most walkable portion of the Town and home to municipal facilities and services – police, fire, the library, and Town Hall. Route 16, running right through the Town Center, is generating roughly 12,562 annual average daily trips. There is potential for a Complete Streets Prioritization Program in the Town Center and along Hopedale Street. Complete Streets is a Mass DOT program that integrates accessibility, walkability, and connectivity in the built environment to make communities healthier, economically viable, and safe. Hopedale has an approved Complete Streets policy as of March 2021 but not an approved Prioritization Plan. The Plan would promote foot traffic, capturing sales leakage that may be lost elsewhere. The 2017 Community Development Plan (2017) previously recommended a system to link the Parklands, Town Center, and riverfront areas.

**Map ED2: Zoning Districts**



### Agricultural Business

Hopedale’s agrarian beginnings are an inextricable part of its history and character, although agriculture’s role in today’s local economy is minimal. Across the Commonwealth, farmland and the agriculture industry are rapidly declining due to low rates of returns compared to other land use options. Hopedale, like many places, has faced growing development pressures, which has in turn reduced land-based uses, natural resources, and remaining farms. For example, both the golf course and Mellen Field were once farms.

Open space in Hopedale is predominantly active and passive recreation land (42.4 percent of

acreage). There are no large areas of prime farmland in Town. Nevertheless, Hopedale has a small grouping of farms that continue to operate: Ferrucci's Egg Farm, Whyte Farm, and Young Farm.<sup>10</sup> The Zoning Bylaw allows for commercial farms and orchards by Special Permit in the Residential B, Residential Performance-1 (RP-1), GB- A, and C districts. Commercial raising, boarding, and breeding are only allowed by Special Permit in the GB-A, and C districts. There are no agricultural uses allowed By-Right in Hopedale. Due to the lack of land agricultural land, there is no functioning Agricultural Commission, Right-to-Farm Bylaw, Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR), or a similar effort to preserve/protect farmland. Residents did not indicate the preservation and promotion of agricultural enterprises as a priority in the engagement process.

## Industrial Business

Several large swaths of land are zoned for industrial use in Hopedale, including the northernmost section of Town bordering Upton, the Draper Factory site in the center of Town, and the district abutting district C in south Hopedale. As seen with some commercial parcels, a few scattered industrial sites are in the C district and around Hopedale Street. Given its importance in the town's ongoing revitalization and proximity to downtown, the area surrounding the Draper Corporation Site should be considered for a zoning amendment, such as a mixed-use overlay, mixed use base district, or other zoning consistent with the Town's vision for the area. Similar considerations should be given to other areas of town with large undeveloped parcels.

There are approximately 190.33 acres of light industrial uses and 377.11 acres of industrial uses in Town, accounting for 19 percent of the Town's acreage. The definition for light industrial (sometimes referred to as light manufacturing) varies depending on the community, but it is usually industrial operations that do not emit the noise, smoke, odor, or waste that is typical of a traditional industrial site. The Light Industry (LI) district is located off Plain Street and Rosenfeld Drive in south Hopedale (adjacent to district C).

## Airport Industrial and Business Park

The LI district is the Hopedale Airport Industrial and Business Park and Rosenfield Concrete. The Airport Industrial and Business Park has over 40 mixed-use buildings on 60 parcels, ranging from large industrial spaces to small office units and self-storage facilities. The Park is over 70 acres and includes the municipal airport, the Hopedale Business Park, Hopedale Mini-Storage, and the Hopedale Industrial Park.<sup>10</sup> There is an interesting mix of current tenants ranging from a restaurant to a school to construction companies. Some of Hopedale's largest employers reside there, such as D. C. Bates Equipment Co. Inc., Expose Signs, and Kelley & Ryan Assoc. To the north of the park is Rosenfield Concrete, a 141-acre site that produces concrete product, fiber, color, and admixtures. Beyond light manufacturing (metal stamping, assembling, precision machine shops, laboratories engaged in research, experimental and testing activities), warehouses and heavy equipment sales are allowed By-Right in the LI District. Biotechnology research and manufacturing, automotive service stations, and automotive repair are allowed by Special Permit. The Park offers water, sewer, and broadband connection, and there is potential

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<sup>10</sup> Hopedale Airport Industrial and Business Park, "Tenants," 2021. <http://hopedaleindustrialpark.com/Tenants.html>>

for build-out opportunities. There are few vacancies currently, indicating positive growth post-COVID-19.

## Draper Factory

The Industrial (I) District in the center of town consists mainly of the Draper Factory site, 141 Mendon Street, and 161-163 Freedom Street. The total area is over 400 acres and upwards of 20 parcels. There are a variety of businesses operating in the area that include the Grafton-Upton Railroad and the Town of Hopedale's municipal operations. The district includes the Town-owned Little Red Shop Museum – Hopedale's first and only Local Historic District in the Blackstone River Valley National Historic Park. It is also across from Hopedale Pond, which is considered an area of minimal flood hazard according to FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer Viewer.

In the I district, business, professional and general offices are permitted By-Right, as is light industrial, automotive repair, heavy machinery, storage and warehousing, and textile/mill operations. General retail establishments, automotive service stations, biotechnology research and manufacturing, and any form of manufacturing not explicitly stated in the Zoning Bylaw requires a Special Permit. By-Right allowances are consistent with what one would see in towns of similar size to Hopedale. The Town is predominantly residential and open space, so the limitations on industrial development plus the availability of land/space make heavy industrial operations unworkable at larger scales.

The historic Draper building and 80-acre site are undergoing demolition and remediation with the assistance of the Worcester Business Development Corporation (WBDC). The I District has 222.25 acres of brownfield sites registered with the Department of Environmental Protection, including the factory and three abutting properties. The accumulation of hazardous sites had historically posed serious market and development challenges, leaving the site vacant for years. Upon securing a new development partner and financing, the WBDC conducted a redevelopment analysis of the district. The analysis proposes a walkable, mixed-use center with residential, commercial, historic, and public space components that the community has widely supported. The Projects phases will include ongoing consultation with the Hopedale Master Plan Committee, infrastructure upgrades, new traffic/pedestrian connections, and a build-out analysis of mixed-use opportunities. Town staff, property owners, and other stakeholders work together and maintain a strong collaborative relationship as the project unfolds. Due to the nature of the project and the required workload, the property's redevelopment will take at least ten years.

## Town Center

As with many traditional New England Town Centers, Hopedale's center is at a crossroads. From the intersection of Route 16 (Mendon Street) and Hopedale Street, the area continues along Hopedale Street to the Freedom Street intersection. Route 16 is an important connector to Milford and Mendon. Other than minor rush-hour traffic, there was no mention of traffic or parking-related issues by the community. Parking options are somewhat limited already and will likely need reevaluation once the Draper Factory demolition is complete. Minimal overflow options and prohibited parking on most side streets will not be sufficient. The desire to activate the area with

pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure may call for unique approaches to parking management. A Traffic and Parking Study of the area, led by the WBDC, is currently underway to examine possibilities.

The Center contains many of the small commercial enterprises in Town, in addition to industrial land, open space, and several residential blocks. The Town Hall, Bancroft Memorial Library, the Police and Fire Departments, Hopedale Junior-Senior High School, Hopedale Community House, Adin Ballou Park, the Little Red Shoppe, and the Hopedale Housing Authority are just a few of the Center's landmarks. Despite density being an ongoing concern, there is potential for more housing options in the Center. Existing two-family homes there are in older neighborhoods and likely need rehabilitation, but new housing on the Draper Factory site would bring an influx of new tax revenue and walkable opportunities for local workers/employers.

### Processes and Procedures

Hopedale's permitting process is typical of a smaller Massachusetts community, with little feedback from the community regarding the need for improvements. The state introduced the "Community One Stop for Growth" portal in 2021 – a single application and collaborative review process of community development grant programs that allow for a municipality to apply to multiple grant programs simultaneously. According to discussions with Town staff, there has been an expression of interest in the program. The Planning Board voted in March of 2021 to use the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) Local Planning Assistance (LPA) program for application submittal.

For other types of permitting required for the Board of Health, the Building Department, and the Fire Department, Hopedale has a landing page on the Town Website with all the necessary permits and forms. Permits/forms are electronically fillable PDFs for convenience. Currently, the Town is seeking a vendor to provide licensing, permitting, and work order software for use in multiple departments. The software will manage the licenses and permits, streamline applications, and track licenses/permits. The software will have mobile capabilities and be hosted on the cloud to facilitate public and department interaction.<sup>11</sup>

The Planning Board (PB), Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), Conservation Commission (Con Comm), and the Building Inspector/Enforcement Officer are responsible for reviewing and approving new development. There is not one planning department to house each of these bodies. Rather, the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer is part of the Building Department, and the PB, ZBA, and Con Comm are part-time boards that meet monthly. The Planning Board reviews Approval Not Required (ANR) plans and is the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for subdivision plans and site plan reviews, which require Site Plan Review and a public hearing.<sup>12</sup> The ZBA issues Special Permits for all other uses, also requiring a public hearing. Other than Special Permits, the ZBA manages use and dimensional variances, non-conforming uses, and appeals to Planning Board and Building Inspector/Enforcement decisions.

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<sup>11</sup> Town of Hopedale, "RFP - Permit System Software and Implementation," June 16, 2021. < <https://bit.ly/3A9EqPS>>

<sup>12</sup> The Planning Board is also the SPGA for the Floodplains District, which does not require Site Plan Review

The PB, ZBA, and Con Comm do not have dedicated staff, including no administrative support to process paperwork. The Town currently does not have a Conservation Agent, nor is there a Planner to assist in approving subdivision plans and Site Plan Review applications. The PB has employed a consulting engineer for larger developments in the past but has since stopped that practice due to payment processing issues. An Economic Development Committee or similar entity would be helpful here. Their duties typically include working in an advisory capacity to staff, offering recommendations to streamline regulatory requirements, collaborating with the business community, and advising the Town on economic policies. Economic Development Committees also spearhead efforts such as permitting guides and design guidelines.

Given the current volume of activity, Hopedale's permitting system is functioning well. It is recommended that processes are regularly reviewed and modified by staff and executive decision-making bodies as the town attracts more development. Hopedale does not have expedited permitting or a combined application process. There are also no joint permitting meetings and limited review sessions with developers due to low staff levels and limited bandwidth. One option to expedite the process is Site Plan Review without a Special Permit (where the review would already be triggered), as opposed to requiring a Special Permit for a variety of uses. Site Plan Review assures the applicant that the use is allowed, and the Town can use it as a tool to control project design. Site Plan Review offers more assurance that the project will go forward, whereas a Special Permit is always at risk of denial. This change would involve little to no staff-level changes, compared to adopting Chapter 43D Planned Development sites. Chapter 43D, available through the Community One Stop for Growth portal, secures permits in approximately 180 days via a master permit application. The system is helpful but does require staff to review and design a track to completion.

## Issues and Opportunities

Hopedale's community engagement process highlighted several issues regarding economic development. The community discussed opportunities, areas for growth, and what are considered top priorities. There was a tremendous need to balance promoting vitality in commercial nodes with small business and mixed-use development with maintaining feasible growth and preserving community character. Most participants wished to optimize the Draper Factory site by incorporating a variety of uses to diversify the tax revenue stream. Survey respondents repeatedly commented on the need for small retail shops, i.e., boutiques and restaurants. Approximately 70 percent agreed that the Town should explore the potential for development on underutilized municipal land. Lastly, participants highlighted the benefits of being close to I-495, I-90, and other major routes and having the option to take the commuter rail. Community participation is vital to the planning process. The feedback received helped shape this chapter's goals, objectives, and action items, as well as tie them to the overarching Vision Statement. It will guide future policy decisions and the evolution of development patterns over the next decade. The following sections outline issues and opportunities discussed during the participation process and their relation to commercial and industrial sectors.

## Town Center and Draper Factory Site

### Connectivity and Complete Streets

The Town Center is a treasured piece of Hopedale for residents and visitors alike, offering space for community gatherings, local shopping destinations, and beautiful parks, amongst other things. However, many felt the Center as it exists now is disjointed and lacks connectivity and definition. Connecting existing uses cohesively would revitalize the area, catalyzing a more robust economic center. Complete Streets is a popular program offered by MassDOT for communities of all sizes. There are 265 communities enrolled, 75 of which have approved Tier 3 project applications. Complete Streets projects in business districts/economic centers range from large scale, (i.e., corridor-wide improvements) to small scale (i.e., new bike infrastructure, ADA-accessible sidewalks, etc.). Investment in the program often leads to additional planning initiatives, including district design standards, historic preservation efforts, or park redesign. Participation increases a community's competitiveness when applying for other grants, particularly infrastructure grants. Hopedale has a state-approved policy but needs a Prioritization Plan. According to the Funding Program Guidance, municipalities may request up to \$38,000 in technical assistance funding for a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. Once the Prioritization Plan is approved, the Town can submit an application for up to \$400,000 in construction funding for a designated project. Due to the regulatory requirements, participation can be challenging for an understaffed department. Because of this, municipalities will commission regional planning agencies (RPA's) to assist with the process.

*Photo 2: This mural represents placemaking efforts that can help connect Hopedale's streets and districts.*

*Photo Credit: Greg Rogrow*



## Transparent and Inclusive Planning

Meetings with the Master Plan Committee and the community underscored the need to maintain transparency and clarity in the planning process and the importance of community buy-in on long-term decision-making. For larger-scale projects such as Draper Factory, the next steps will impact everyone in Town. Decisions related to housing, commercial activity, transit, parking, and other land uses must be conveyed to the community, and their concerns accounted for. How decisions are arrived at should be explained and incorporate stakeholder input. The Master Plan Committee has met with the developers throughout the drafting process, and the property owner is an active member. A Community Visioning Session, survey, and Goals Workshop garnered more input and ensured that information was incorporated accordingly.

Final approval of the Master Plan does not conclude the process; planning continues into the implementation phases, with action items doubling as performance benchmarks. Master Plans are dynamic documents that are regularly reviewed and updated with new information. Many communities have Master Plan Implementation Committees that track progress concerning the goals, recommendations, and action items, using the data to determine which activities/projects to pursue. This is particularly true regarding economic development, as Hopedale residents wish to see growth in commercial tax revenue.

## Collaboration and Leadership

Hopedale's municipal departments are limited by staffing and budgetary constraints. Although operating within these constraints, the Town is not staffed to proactively visit existing businesses or new businesses when they arrive in Town. Outreach is at a baseline level, answering questions and providing basic technical assistance as needed. Marketing and online information-sharing can help, but the Town also should consider a dedicated Economic Development Commission, Business Expansion and Assistance Team (BEAT), or ambassador to distribute the workload required to retain and attract desired new businesses. A dedicated person/group can help establish a business association, serve as a liaison, conduct research, pilot new programs, provide staff support, seek financing/apply for grants, and host events. These groups have historically met with success and are common across the Commonwealth. Examples of successful economic development organizations representing Town Centers include "Dedham Square Circle" and Walpole's "Destination Downtown." Due to limited funds available for a dedicated staff position, Hopedale would need a volunteer-based organization. The Town should capitalize on its involvement with local/regional organizations and pursue new collaborative opportunities. These collaborations are often low-cost or subsidized ways to access new information/data, resources, and opportunities that would not be achievable otherwise. Some of the collaborations that the Master Plan Committee wishes to see strengthened are those with the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce, the Metrowest 495 Partnership, the Milford Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce. Hopedale is ideally situated to reap the Metrowest and Greater Boston's labor pool's benefits and break into those market areas. As Hopedale evolves, it is important that staff take on a strong leadership role to capture workforce talent, generate commercial activity within Town lines, and ultimately appeal to the



Boston area labor market. The Town could certainly benefit from establishing a leadership role at the regional level. The Master Plan is a chance to expand economic opportunities and job growth to keep professionals living, working, and playing here.

## Commercial Businesses and Specialty Retail

### Marketing and Communication Plan

Hopedale requires a comprehensive marketing and communications campaign that includes a marketing plan/strategy, branding, and materials that let business owners know they are “open for business.” Although some signage is in the Town Center, the Town would benefit from a town-wide marketing effort that highlights proximity to transportation routes/the commuter rail, historic and cultural amenities, and commercial/industrial districts. The effort should include information packets and recruitment materials for new businesses that contain zoning information, an inventory of buildable parcels and on-site utilities, social media and website information, permitting information, contacts for local/regional collaborators, and more. Cross-marketing with entities such as the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce can also expand their advertising reach. It is typical for towns to use a marketing/branding strategy with physical and digital components to educate visitors and residents and form a shared identity as part of their broader business strategy.

Hopedale’s website is not a complete source of information for interested business owners. Information can be difficult to locate, and the landing pages do not always have updated information. There is no economic development/planning page to provide information, technical assistance resources, or tools for business owners/commercial tenants. By continuing to develop the website to include this information, the Town has an opportunity to improve its exposure and become more business friendly. Clickable links to social media sites, parcel data, office/commercial/industrial properties for sale or lease, and current business listings are just some of the many items to feature on the page.

### Business Incentives

Visioning Session attendees discussed diversifying the commercial and industrial tax base to help lessen future residential property tax increases. Comparing this observational data with the leakage data in Hopedale’s Retail Marketplace Profile shows that steps should be taken to bolster commercial attraction and retention. Common tools to incentivize development, attract businesses, and remove barriers to growth are Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and District Improvement Financing (DIF). A TIF is an agreement in which the Town abates the property tax for a period of time, and the business agrees to expand/relocate there and create a specific number of jobs. Once this occurs, a company can receive an investment tax credit from the state. A DIF is used to capture tax revenues from new private investment in a specific area and directs them toward public improvement and economic development projects.<sup>13</sup> TIF/DIF’s do not

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<sup>13</sup>MassDevelopment, “District Improvement Financing,” 2021. < <https://bit.ly/3diga4j>>

increase the tax rate and are not a new tax or special assessment. They also may be combined with grants and loans from local, state, and federal development programs. A local TIF/DIF program could ensure jobs remain in Hopedale, local contractors are used, and local businesses are the service providers. It may take several years to feel the tax benefits, but the local economy immediately benefits. TIF/DIF's allow for controlled, feasible growth - an important need in Hopedale as there is ongoing concern regarding overburdening facilities and services. TIF/DIF's indicate to developers and business owners that the community is willing to invest in economic growth. The Draper Factory site could consider one type of TIF - the Urban Center Housing TIF (UCHTIF) – for a mixed-use development on the site. The UCHTIF provides real estate exemptions on the increased value of the improved real estate. DIF could be considered in the Town Center to attract new retail and restaurant opportunities- a point repeatedly mentioned during the public engagement process.

Home-based businesses and self-employed enterprises should be a target for incentivization. ACS estimates state that approximately 8 percent of workers in Hopedale are working from home, and 8.7 percent of households reported having self-employment income. As businesses begin to return to in-person operations post COVID-19, home-based businesses and self-employed individuals could be a source of commercial tenants. It is recommended that the Town engage these groups to see who is looking for space; this would also be a point to highlight in the marketing and communications plan.

### Façade Improvement Program

Vacant, deteriorated, contaminated, and run-down properties eligible for redevelopment would benefit from a Facade Improvement Program in Hopedale. Facade Improvement Programs are popular in smaller towns because they are less expensive and easier to implement than other revitalization efforts. Small business grants and loans for these programs are widely available and often underutilized. These programs improve the value of a property and its surroundings and help with related efforts such as creating design guidelines. By matching public and private funds, communities can offer grants for building improvements, restoration, and rehabilitation. Facade and Sign Improvement Districts are often used as a mechanism to administer these programs. A district-style arrangement will usually include property inspections and program criteria. The District will ensure final applicant approval and assign responsibility for renovation and repair to the applicant depending on the type of agreement. These programs have administrative, regulatory, and compliance requirements, including screening applications and monitoring the use of funds to awardees. If a community is just starting a program, it may need to create guidelines, determine eligible vs. ineligible activities, establish an application process, or appoint a committee. There has been positive feedback regarding façade improvement throughout this Master Plan's process, as many indicated a desire to see a cohesive vision for Hopedale's business community.

## Mixed-Use Development

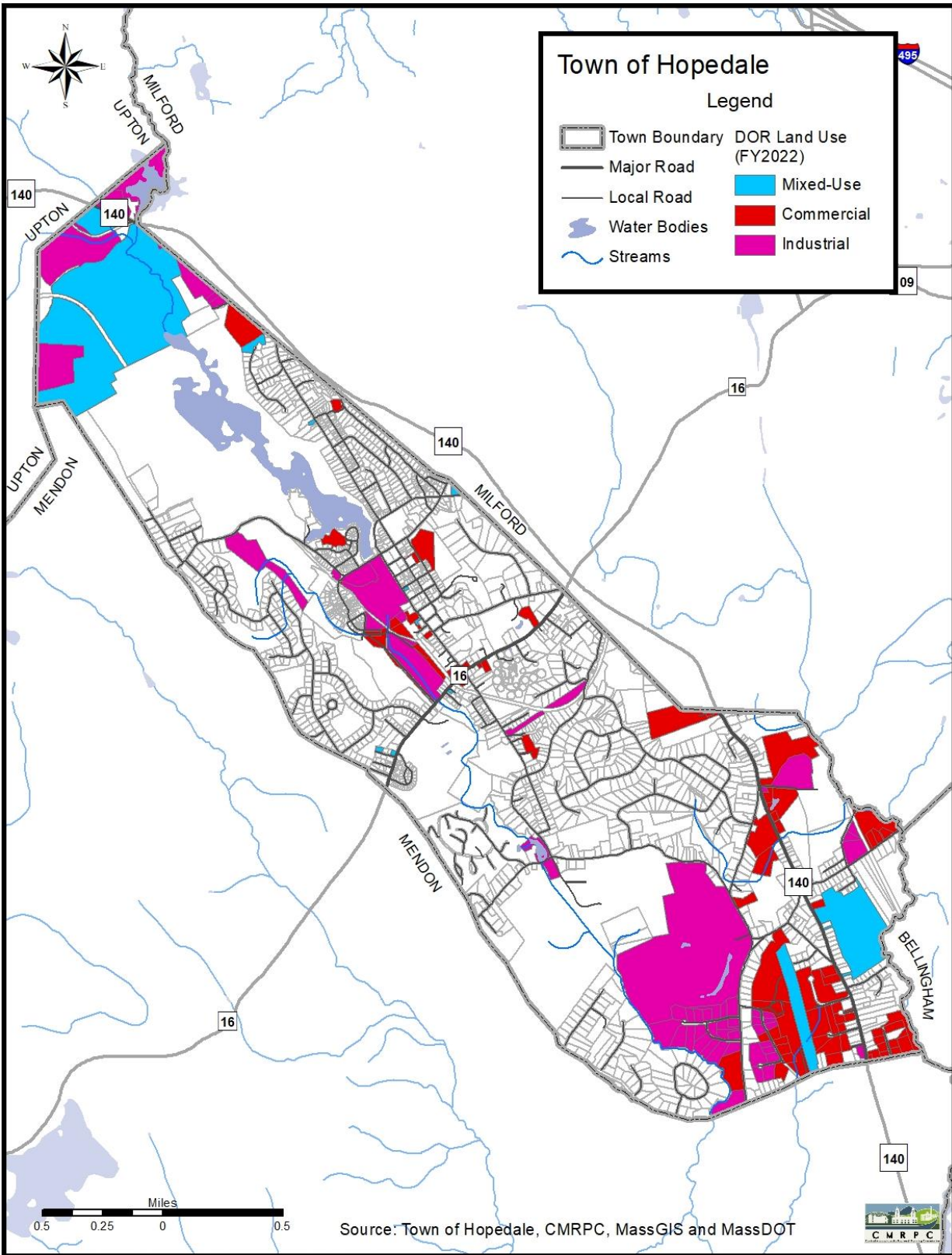
Hopedale residents and Master Plan Committee members expressed the following concerns regarding future development in Town:

- Concern over the Town’s ability to sustain dense development projects/an influx of development proposals
- Concern over maintaining Hopedale’s small-town character - one of its most notable qualities
- Concern over future development in harmony with the natural environment

Mixed-use development, adaptive reuse, and infill opportunities are suitable solutions to ensure incoming commercial and industrial development is measurable and mindful of these concerns. Mixed-use development refers to a deliberate mix of housing, civic, and commercial uses on a site or in a building. In contrast, adaptive reuse is the renovation of an existing building to change its use. Infill development is developing unused and underutilized lands within existing development patterns. Sixty-two percent of survey respondents agreed that Hopedale needs more mixed-use buildings, 73% supported more business opportunities in existing buildings, and 61 percent wished to see more mixed-use housing over the next 20 years. At this time, there are only ten mixed-use parcels in Town, with eight classified as primarily residential, meaning there is a registered business operating from someone’s home.

By incorporating mixed-use development, adaptive reuse, and infill strategies to incoming development, Hopedale can integrate housing to attract the critical mass needed to support new/existing businesses. These strategies are useful for reusing vacant and underutilized parcels in commercial nodes with basic infrastructure in place. Offering financial incentives to well- integrated mixed-use properties would keep people in the area and capture commerce normally spent elsewhere. Hopedale may need to consider modifying their zoning to allow for more uses By- Right and allow for a general mix of uses, often referred to as a “Village Center” district. The community will need to evaluate the feasibility of using an Overlay District versus changing the underlying zoning. Other considerations if the zoning is changed include incentives for developers, reevaluating the Special Permit-Granting Authority (SPGA), reexamining area boundaries, and if new development design will be regulated by zoning standards or design criteria/performance standards.

# Map ED3: Land Use Map



Edited Dec. 17 2010 H:\Projects\WestBrookfield\_2010OSRP\WestBrookfield\_SoilsGeologic\_11x17.mxd

## Industrial Businesses

Hopedale has Light Industrial and Industrial district designations in their bylaw. Despite little discussion of the topic by the community, some participants suggested light industrial as an option for the Draper Factory site. This industry style is amenable to the needs and wishes of the community and would be considered appropriate for the site.

## By-Right Uses

Due to the availability of suitable land, proximity to residences, and limited capability to offer comprehensive site-ready services such as water/sewer, efforts to expand industrial uses should focus on maximizing existing industrial areas in the Hopedale Airport Industrial and Business Park. Industrial parks are becoming hubs of activity, often housing gyms/sports complexes, breweries, research and development facilities, and other unique businesses. Building out the Park where feasible would bring in new business and substantially supplement tax revenue. At present, the Park has minimal vacancies and maintains positive communication with the Town. The relationship could be reinforced if the Town explored expanding By-Right uses to reduce future vacancies. Amending the zoning to substitute Special Permits for By-Right with Site Plan Review would attract developers. At this time, it is recommended the Town work with the Park's commercial leasing team to focus on attracting tenants with low-intensity needs, such as transportation, warehousing, shipping, and distribution. Other helpful zoning considerations may need to include increasing lot coverage for industrial uses and a mixed-use development overlay district. Lastly, the Town should also consider working jointly with southern Worcester County communities to invest in site readiness/pad sites, site consolidation, brownfield remediation, and cross-boundary infrastructure.

## Becoming a Regional Competitor

For a smaller-sized community, Hopedale has some industrial “magnet businesses,” or businesses that attract local and regional workers, including Rosenfield Concrete and National Grid. However, the limited ability to build out utilities and services hinders attracting more magnet businesses. The Town has finite resources, often leading to difficult decision-making. Maintaining services is a balance, and the demand for certain services outweighs the demand for others. This reality impacts the Town's ability to grow its industrial base, results in losing employers and decreases Hopedale's status as a regional competitor. Adopting a regional approach where most feasible would be an effective tool for industrial recruitment. The Blackstone Valley Prioritization Plan recommends a regional approach to addressing common land use issues and creating more cost-effective service delivery. Collaboration with the public and private sector is one method to increase what the Town has to offer. Hopedale should be proactively thinking about infrastructure maintenance and leveraging resources to ensure high-quality water treatment and protection of resources, cited as a tremendous need by the Plan's participating communities. Hopedale should also consider if there is political will to create an Industrial Development Commission to advocate on the industrial community's behalf, communicate with Town officials, work with realtors to scout interested tenants, and perform other basic functions.

## State Resources

Due to Hopedale's financial limitations, the Town should continue to leverage state resources for alternative funding. MassDevelopment offers a site readiness program through the Community One Stop portal. The program accelerates private-sector investment in industrial and commercial projects and supports the conversion of abandoned sites and facilities into active properties. Eligible uses include site preparation predevelopment and permitting. "Manufacturing in Massachusetts" - the state's clearinghouse for manufacturers - has an extensive list of site-finders, financing options, and incentives for new/existing industrial employers for communities of all sizes.

Incentives offered include Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP), Massachusetts STEP program, and research & development tax credits. Financing options include equipment and real estate loans, energy savings programs, bond financing, capital loans, and technical assistance via the Mass Growth Capital Corp (MGCC). The Southern Worcester County CEDS explicitly highlights MassEcon's site selection service - ReadyMass100. ReadyMass100 selects 100 properties in the Commonwealth based on marketability and provides detailed site information to interested developers/tenants. For a property to meet the ReadyMass100 minimum criteria, a one-time fee is applied, and the site is given priority status. In addition to utilizing state programs to supplement financing, Hopedale should take advantage of online listing services and site certification programs locally, regionally, and state-wide.

## Permitting

### Staff Capacity

The permitting analysis in this chapter underscored that Hopedale's permitting bodies are operating with minimal staff assistance. The Town also does not have an economic development commission or similar body to assist. Many communities have a dedicated department or a dedicated planner/economic development director to support the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Conservation Commission. Hopedale should consider building its capacity to offer the needed support. Options include staff trainings, volunteer recruitment, hiring an intern, or even financing a part-time position. The Town is actively seeking a vendor for licensing, permitting, and work order software, which should help significantly. Another common alternative to share responsibilities is inter-local agreements. Inter-local agreements are inter-municipal agreements (IMA's) used to create mutual aid agreements, shared service agreements, and agreements between municipalities and host agencies. IMAs, governed by Chapter 40, Section 4A of the Massachusetts General Laws which states that the chief executive officer of a municipality "may enter into an agreement with another governmental unit to perform jointly or for that unit's services, activities or undertakings which any of the contracting units is authorized by law to perform." Essentially, two or more municipalities may jointly do anything that a single municipality can do by law independently with approval by the Select Board.<sup>14</sup> Shared inspectional services, e-government, and sharing Advisory/Oversight Committees are

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<sup>14</sup> The Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies, *Massachusetts Shared Services Manual*, 2013.

examples of IMA's. Taking even basic steps such as these will allow the town to perform promptly, save on consulting fees, and eventually encourage more businesses to locate to Hopedale.

### Streamlined Permitting

Hopedale should continue defining and streamline its permitting processes wherever possible. In 2021 and 2022, the Town worked to implement online permitting for a variety of departments. In 2022, remaining permitting applications will be brought online as well. Further work is needed to provide a clear and consistent permitting process, including development a of formal Site Plan Review application, Special Permit application, and similar processes. In 2021, the Town began collaborating with a consultant on a Permitting Guidebook. This project can be completed once permitting processes are clarified at the municipal level. As the Town assesses its permitting processes, it should consider best practices known to shorten permitting timeframes, improve the quality of applications, and help the Town establish a reputation for being business friendly:

- Continue to bring permitting applications online.
- Define the permitting process and create formal applications.
- Finalize the Permitting Guidebook so that prospective developers have a clear picture of all necessary steps.
- Identify opportunities where Special Permit requirements can be replaced with By-Right with Site Plan Review: Limiting Special Permit requirements will simplify the process for the applicant and reduce the workload of Town staff and Boards.
- Implement fast-track/Chapter 43D permitting for priority development sites through the Community One Stop for Growth portal.

### Design Guidelines

Hopedale should consider implementing comprehensive design guidelines for commercial and industrial development in certain areas to enhance the Town's vision, promote sustainable development principles, and encourage sound design in key corridors. According to the Zoning Bylaw, design standards are applied during the Site Plan Review process. Site Plan Review is triggered if there is new development that is 6,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area or ten or more parking spaces, or a change that results in exceeding these thresholds. Creating clear guidelines and a permitting manual/guide for designated areas would eliminate many questions up-front and help the staff and the applicant complete the permitting process with greater ease.

Hopedale staff and boards should adopt design standards that promote their values and vision: walkability, connectivity, sustainability, accessibility, mixed-use, and smaller-scale commercial sites. Comprehensive guidelines should include, at a minimum: siting, dimensional criteria (setbacks, height, massing, form, etc.), typology characteristics, parking and access requirements, and environmental quality regulations.

There should also be specific regulations for ground floor retail/mixed-use. The Town will need to decide if the most effective way to enforce the guidelines is during the existing Site Plan Review Process, or if extra steps are required, such as a specific area plan. Most importantly,

Hopedale must determine what will be suggested compared to what will be enforced. The state's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Planning Assistance Grant Program, the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI), and CMRPC offer technical assistance to assist with this. Larger entities such as Main Streets America also offer a variety of resources.

*Photo 3: The Little Red Shop decorated for the holidays. Similar design guidelines could be set for specific districts in Hopedale.*

*Photo Credit: Carol Donaher*



## Goals, Objectives, and Action Items

**Goal 1: Develop responsible growth incentives for a variety of uses for available commercial and investment property to diversify the tax base without overburdening town resources.**

- Objective 1: Increase economic development capacity.
  - Continue applying for Economic Development grants through the Community One Stop for Growth and other programs so the Town can expand its capacity for grant research, writing, and regulatory compliance.
  - Utilize the existing Economic Development Commission/Economic Development and Industrial Corporation to attract and retain businesses, also operating as a Business Development Advisory Board; explore benefits of reestablishing a distinct Downtown Revitalization Committee.
  - Hire a Town Planner to assist with developing town guidelines, ensuring any new potential commercial and industrial development does not overburden services and infrastructure, helping applicants navigate the application and permitting processes, assist land use boards. Explore shared staffing and inter-municipal agreements.
  - Establish a 'Planning Department' to conceptually house planning, zoning, conservation, and inspectional services.
  - Create a Master Plan Implementation Committee to ensure the strategies contained



- in the plan are implemented in a timely manner.
- Objective 2: Offer incentives for businesses to develop, expand, relocate, and/or grow.
    - Seek technical assistance from state/regional entities that specialize in/have access to a variety of financing such as bonds, loans, tax credits, and grants for commercial endeavors, including MassDevelopment and CMRPC.
    - Implement fast-track/Chapter 43D permitting for priority development sites.
    - Consider implementing “village center” (mixed-used district) zoning in the Town Center, where the most activity/foot traffic occurs, which also forwards the Town’s housing goals. Allow for more uses By-Right and for a general mix of uses.
    - Allow for on-site development incentives where appropriate, including increased height/density bonuses.
    - Explore options for providing resources for small businesses with the help of existing collaborations/memberships. An option may include supplementing code enforcement with outside grants, loans, and technical assistance for commercial tenants.
    - Implement District Improvement Financing (DIF) or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to capture tax revenues from new private investment in a specific area and use those revenues toward other economic development or public improvement projects.
    - Explore opportunities to fund a Facade and Sign Improvement matching grant program.
  - Objective 3: Eliminate existing barriers that may discourage desirable new growth including providing clear and predictable permitting and procedures.
    - Commission a comprehensive zoning diagnostic and regulatory review that focuses on clearly encoding the development guidelines into the Zoning Bylaw, modifying regulations for a streamlined approval process, and enforcing predictable, intentional development standards.
    - Review zoning for opportunities to have Site Plan Review without a Special Permit for certain commercial and industrial uses where appropriate.
    - Consider moving towards implementing a single tax rate structure.
    - Resume using consulting engineers for Site Plan Review and other planning functions; ensure all departments use the same engineering firm for consultation.
    - Implement Joint Permitting Meetings or convene regularly scheduled Round Table Review (where developers can meet with all permitting staff at any stage of application) to improve quality of applications and reduce permitting timelines; alternatively, amend Zoning Bylaws to allow Site Plan Review without a Special Permit for a variety of uses.
    - Use a combined permitting and application process; hold joint hearings with the Planning Board and the ZBA.
    - Continue working to bring permitting online.
    - Complete a Permitting Guide.

**Goal 2: Create and implement a marketing and communications plan designed to drive awareness of Hopedale’s new and ongoing opportunities while providing transparency to its citizens.**

- Objective 1: Develop a town-wide commercial marketing campaign that includes multiple components and is at the forefront for when businesses are considering locating in Hopedale.
  - Create investor-friendly material on various topics (zoning, planning, tax information, schools, census, etc.) that is available in online and print formats.
  - Establish public relations communications/public domain website updates (wiki) and a plan for regular website maintenance beyond updates to the main Town of Hopedale website.
  - Consider a rebranding competition or commissioning local graphic/website designers and artists to assist in the marketing campaign.
  - Publish a request for proposals (RFP) for a private marketing consultant to complete an all-inclusive marketing plan.
  - Establish working relationship with the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce and strengthen collaboration with the Milford Area Chamber of Commerce and the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce to expand reach.
  - Promote access to major routes (i.e., I-495, I-90, Rt. 16, Rt. 140), local industries (Information Technology, Medical Devices, Professional Services, Healthcare, etc.), and workforce talent.
  - Continue “on-the-ground” work with property owners and businesses to promote the Town’s vision, branding, and marketing efforts, i.e., working one-on-one with the business community to involve them, collect their buy-in, and help them prosper.
  - Create an inventory and assessment of buildable parcels and available properties with access to water, sewer, and other utilities to determine adequate space for development/redevelopment. This avoids deterring interested developers and streamlines the process.
  - Engage home-based businesses and self-employed individuals as a source of potential commercial tenants.
- Objective 2: Maintain inclusive, transparent, and ongoing communication with citizens.
  - Work with land use boards and committees to increase participation and expand the availability of public information regarding incoming projects.
  - Create a town-wide economic development strategic plan and action plan that forwards the recommendations in this Master Plan and allows for added community participation.
  - Utilize and regularly maintain social media platforms to disseminate information and create a Facebook page for the Town.
  - Maintain transparency when pursuing mixed-use development that incorporates housing with commercial elements.

- Consider the feasibility of hiring multiple positions to carry out the goals and actions of Envision Hopedale.

**Goal 3: Maintain the Town’s vision throughout the planning process by developing and implementing open space, business design and upkeep, and sustainability bylaws.**

- Objective 1: Apply environmental/sustainability principles and open space protection toward incoming development.
  - Develop bylaws/ local regulations that incentivize developers to maintain open space and Sustainable Development Principles<sup>17</sup> in development, i.e., an increase in gross floor area if using green infrastructure.
  - Employ smart growth <sup>18</sup> where feasible, as outlined in the Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit Modules, to encourage newer, denser development that promotes connectivity to amenities and affordability.
  - Employ Sustainable Development Principles to undertake a comprehensive approach to community investment (public and private) on the Draper Factory site that respects natural resources and utilizes green practices.
  - Identify community preferences for the Village Center and Draper site and enact corresponding zoning changes to help guide development in the area.
  - Create an Advisory Committee to work with boards/commissions and Town staff on drafting and implementing the design guidelines for commercial/industrial development.
  - Implement comprehensive design guidelines for various development types in certain areas to enhance the Town’s vision, promote sustainable development principles, and encourage sound design in key corridors. Ensure the guidelines include permitting and utility information for new commercial/industrial construction and expansion.
  - Advance the Town’s Complete Streets efforts by undertaking a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan.
  - Require and institute sound parking demand management (TDM) and traffic analyses for new development in Town.
  - Ensure the Town oversees the fiscal impact of new commercial projects, commissioning additional fiscal impact analyses when required.
  - Work with the potential Town Planner to coordinate the land use plan within Envision Hopedale, enforce the Zoning Bylaw, develop strategies, and help carry out those strategies on behalf of the Planning Board

# Land Use

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## Introduction

Land Use is a far-reaching section of a Comprehensive Master Plan that examines where different types of development have taken place, where further development might take place, and how a Town should actively plan for the future development patterns that will best serve its citizens. The process for writing this chapter involved community feedback via a survey, meetings with Hopedale’s Master Plan Steering Committee, and original research into Hopedale’s zoning regulations and assessor’s records. Hopedale is a physically small town yet contains a robust set of land uses with a long history. The key question for the Town’s future, however, is how to continue developing new residential and commercial uses when most available land has either been preserved or built out.

The two major components of a Land Use chapter are a description of past development patterns and an examination of current zoning regulations. The former demonstrates the historic trends that have shaped the landscape seen in Hopedale today, and the latter is a way to predict what future development might take place. Zoning is instrumental in understanding the future of a community’s land use because a Zoning Bylaw prescribes what uses are allowed in each part of town and on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Photo 1. The Town of Hopedale is marked by a variety of land uses, from its denser urban center to open spaces and ponds like the one pictured here. Photo Credit: Joe Clar.*



## Prior Planning and Engagement Efforts

As a small town, Hopedale has had limited opportunities to engage in large-scale planning efforts. However, several plans and studies over the past couple of decades have laid out substantial visions for the Town's land use.

### Hopedale Reconnaissance Report (2007)

Conducted as part of the Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program, the 2007 Hopedale Reconnaissance Report lists the Town's "heritage landscapes," or sites that are important to local history, community character, or culture. Despite its historical focus, the Reconnaissance Report discusses some important land use issues:

- *Draper Factory Vacancy*: The plan notes the need to reintegrate the vacant building into the town's economic and cultural landscape.
- *Limited Open Space Remaining in Town*: The plan acknowledges that most of the available land in Hopedale has either been developed or preserved.

The report lists the following Priority Landscapes, and makes recommendations for how to best preserve them while encouraging redevelopment where appropriate:

- Draper Factory
- Grafton & Upton Railroad
- The Parklands and Town Park
- The Little Red Shop
- Bancroft Memorial Library Grounds
- The Ledges

Since 2007, Hopedale has adopted a Local Historic District for the Little Red Shop, but other proposed districts did not pass at Town Meeting. The owners of the Draper Factory building continue to pursue redevelopment of the site, but they determined that the structure itself could not be preserved, and demolition was completed in 2021.

### Draper Complex Reuse Committee Report (2008)

Since the Draper Complex became vacant in 1980 there has been a strong local desire to see new uses and new development on the site, and various plans have been drafted over the years with this goal in mind. The 2008 report by the Draper Complex Reuse Committee represents the most robust effort to date, produced with the cooperation of the Town, the owner of the Draper Factory, and outside consultants and featuring strong citizen participation including community workshops.

The plan recommended mixed-use development for the site including residential, office, commercial, retail, and an outdoor park. While elements of the plan related to the reuse of the

existing factory building(s) are no longer applicable, it is still a valuable document for thinking about the future uses on one of Hopedale's most significant development sites.

### Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project (2012)

This regional plan laid out a development strategy for the Blackstone Valley region, which includes Hopedale. The BVPP included lists of specific Priority Development Areas (PDAs) for each community, some of which were identified as regionally significant. Hopedale's PDAs were:

- Rosenfield Concrete
- Draper Factory
- Grafton & Upton Railroad
- Airport Industrial Park and Hopedale Industrial Park

Except for Rosenfield Concrete, these sites were all designated as regionally significant. Since 2012, significant development progress has been made only on the Draper Factory site. In service of prospective redevelopment, demolition of the Draper Factory was completed in 2021.

The BVPP also included infrastructure and transportation priorities for Hopedale, which if realized would have a significant impact on land use:

- Railroad bridge at Hopedale Ave.
- Route 16 upgrades
- Additional water and sewer capacity – Draper Factory

Especially important for Hopedale in 2021 is the recommendation to increase water and sewer capacity at the Draper Factory site. With a large amount of development planned for the area, the Town will need to ensure its infrastructure capacity is up to the task.

### Hopedale Community Development Plan (2017)

Hopedale's Community Development Strategy (CDS) was an update to a 2013 CDS that provided a snapshot of the town's community development goals, including topics such as history, housing stock, the regional economy, demographic trends, and the community's vision for its future. The Board of Selectmen solicited public feedback at a public meeting and through writing, allowing Hopedale citizens input on the community priorities outlined in the plan. While it did not address land use as a specific category, it nonetheless included several goals and action items related to land use, including:

- Update the Hopedale Master Plan
- Protect Hopedale well fields using Zone II regulations
- Expand parklands and protect rare habitats in north Hopedale
- Redevelop the Draper Factory Complex
- Strengthen the local capacity to assess development proposals to ensure that they contribute to sought-after solutions consistent with the Master Plan and Community

### Development Strategy

- Increase affordable housing options (both rental and home-ownership units) through adaptive re-use of existing properties.
- Complete and maintain an inventory of buildings, rental spaces, and vacant land available for business and residential development and a system for matching interested developers or businesses with appropriate opportunities within the Town.
- Develop a marketing strategy to draw small to moderate sized businesses to the town center. In 2015-2016, the town re-zoned certain parcels of land along Routes 16 and 140 as well as South Main Street from residential to commercial in support of this effort.

## Existing Conditions

### Land Use Distribution

Hopedale was founded in the 1840s as a socialist Christian utopian experiment, under the leadership of Reverend Adin Ballou. Ballou and his followers brought industry and a planned town center to what had been a sparsely populated agricultural area. From these early days through a century of acting as a “company town” for the Draper corporation, Hopedale has always been a small town defined by top-down forces and large land uses. Between large tracts of Town-owned land and longstanding major industrial uses, a large portion of Hopedale’s 5.3 square miles has remained untouched by market development forces. To illustrate this point, the four single parcels in town over 100 acres are: the Hopedale Parklands (280 acres), a permanently protected public nature reserve, Hopedale Country Club (185 acres), most of which is taken up by a municipal golf course, and the undeveloped parcel north of the Parklands (155 acres), and the Rosenfield Concrete plant (141 acres). These four parcels alone make up around 23 percent of the Town’s total land area.

Table LU1 uses Hopedale Assessor’s data to classify parcels by their primary use. It lists each land use category from largest to smallest by acreage. It is a snapshot of what was physically on the ground at the time of the data (before the demolition of the Draper Complex).

Table LU1: Land Use		
Use	Acres	% of Total
Residential (single family)	946.6	31.2%
Tax exempt	676.06	22.2%
Open Land	612.4	20.2%
Industrial	198.2	6.5%
Mixed Use (other)	162.97	5.4%
Right-of-way	137.69	4.5%
Residential (multifamily)	131.14	4.3%
Commercial	112.28	3.7%

Other Residential	29.11	1.0%
Other/Unknown	17.16	0.6%
Mixed Use (primarily residential)	12.4	0.4%
Water	1.67	0.1%
Recreational	0.99	0.0%
<i>Source: Hopedale Assessor's Office; MassGIS</i>		

Single-family residential parcels are the largest group, as would be expected for a primarily residential community like Hopedale. However, this use takes up less than one third of Hopedale's land area, which is unusual for a primarily residential town.

Table LU2 consolidates the land use descriptors in Table LU1 into broader categories (all residential uses, all industrial uses, etc.), and shows use type by the whole parcel based on assessor classification. As shown in the table below, most of the area classified as "Tax Exempt" is made up of outdoor recreation areas like the Parklands and Hopedale Country Club, so combining the Tax Exempt, Open Land, and Recreation categories reveals that open space of all kinds is actually the largest land use category in Hopedale. Residential uses, including multi-family, are the other large group, while all other use categories are significantly smaller.

<b>Table LU2: Parcel Types by DOR Use Code Field</b>		
<b>DOR Use Type</b>	<b>GIS Acres</b>	<b>% of Total Area</b>
Commercial	145.18	4.80%
Industrial	251.22	8.31%
Mixed Use	235.59	7.80%
Residential	1,154.21	38.19%
Tax Exempt/Open/Recreation	1,235.99	40.90%
Grand Total	3,022.19	100.00%
<i>Source: FY2022 Assessor Data</i>		

Table LU3 provides one more way to assess Hopedale's land use: a Land Cover/Land Use hybrid table. This analysis uses satellite imagery in combination with parcel-level use data to provide a more detailed picture of how much land cover each use takes up, regardless of parcel boundaries. For example, a five-acre parcel may be classified under a single-family residential use, but satellite imagery could reveal that four acres of that parcel are actually undisturbed forest while the remainder is actively used as a residence. This granular analysis reveals that the majority of Hopedale's land area is undeveloped. Forests account for more than half of all land cover and developed open space (such as yards or golf courses) makes up another 16 percent of the Town. Only around 10.5 percent of Town consists of impervious area, with single-



family residential uses being the most prominent. It is worth noting that this does not mean that 90 percent of the Town is open to development. In fact, between conservation concerns and open space that is part of existing subdivisions, the majority of land in Hopedale is likely not developable.

Table LU3: Land Cover/Land Use Hybrid		
Land Cover	Acres	% of Total Area
Deciduous Forest	1,358.99	44.72%
Developed Open Space	478.62	15.75%
Evergreen Forest	352.57	11.60%
Forested Wetland	233.09	7.67%
Residential - single-family	107.46	3.54%
Right-of-way	71.41	2.35%
Grassland	68.41	2.25%
Water	63.07	2.08%
Emergent Wetland	50.45	1.66%
Aquatic Bed Wetland	38.19	1.26%
Residential - multifamily	33.62	1.11%
Tax Exempt	31.47	1.04%
Bare Land	30.61	1.01%
Commercial	28.45	0.94%
Scrub/Shrub Wetland	25.52	0.84%
Industrial	25.50	0.84%
Impervious Open Land	15.68	0.52%
Scrub/Shrub	13.92	0.46%
Pasture/Hay	8.31	0.27%
Residential - other	1.62	0.05%
Mixed use - primarily residential	0.92	0.03%
Mixed use- other	0.57	0.02%
Unknown	0.10	0.00%
<i>Source: Hopedale Assessor's Office; MassGIS</i>		

Table LU4 shows a break down by zoning district of potential developable land after removing a number of absolute constraints. As shown below, Hopedale has an estimated 1,540 developable acres. This estimate is based on a partial buildout analysis that included the following constraints: 2016 Land Use typology, Protected Open Space (e.g., federal, state, county, or



municipal land; land listed with a level of protection of in perpetuity), 100-year floodplains, slope 25% or more, water bodies, and river protection act buffers.<sup>1</sup>

Table LU4: Partial Buildout Analysis		
Zoning District	GIS Acres	% of Total Area
ARC	13.66	0.89%
C	136.59	8.87%
CEM	9.18	0.60%
GB-A	134.57	8.74%
I	238.63	15.50%
LI	138.67	9.01%
RA	101.19	6.57%
RA-1	52.01	3.38%
RA-2	1.05	0.07%
RB	658.91	42.79%
RC	23.34	1.52%
REC	1.17	0.08%
RP-1	20.85	1.35%
T	9.99	0.65%
Grand Total	1,539.80	100.00%
<i>Source: CMRPC GIS Division</i>		

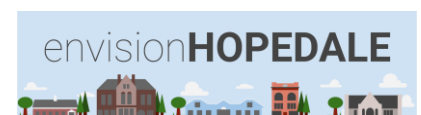
## Land Use Patterns

The following sections discuss the history and existing conditions of specific types of development in Hopedale.

### Industrial Development

Hopedale’s history as a center of industry has shaped every aspect of its development, from the layout of its streets to its cultural identity. Founded almost concurrently with the Town itself in the 1840’s, the industrial complex operated by the Draper Corporation (commonly referred to as the Draper Factory site) served as the economic and cultural heart of Hopedale for over a century. At one point the largest manufacturer of textile machinery in the world, the Draper Factory drew employees to settle in Hopedale in droves. During its boom years, the company built new housing for workers and their families and expanded the worksite itself, creating a planned community. At its largest, the Draper Factory complex comprised over 100 acres of land

<sup>1</sup> The table does not consider partial constraints. Acreage values show in the table are based on GIS calculated acres. Open space data was current as of 12/2021. It does not account for any redevelopment potential of lots.



in central Hopedale, directly abutting the historic downtown originally settled by Adin Ballou and his followers.

The Drapers proved themselves dedicated patrons of the Town, funding the construction of many of the civic buildings that are still in use by the Town today, such as the high school and town hall. It is due to the Draper Corporation's influence that Hopedale's downtown has remained well-developed and vibrant. The factory fully shut down in 1980 and ever since, periodic efforts to reuse the property have occurred but all so far have failed. After sitting vacant for decades, the main Draper Factory building is fully demolished at the time of writing.

A rail line currently owned by the Grafton and Upton Railroad runs to the northwest of the Draper complex towards Upton, then turns eastward to Milford in southern Hopedale. The railroad operates a yard adjacent to the Draper site and downtown Hopedale, making it the last active industrial use in the center of Town.

While the Draper Factory is Hopedale's most famous and culturally significant industrial presence, there is another, currently active industrial use that takes up more land area than the old factory. Rosenfield Concrete (owned by Boston Sand and Gravel) operates a plant in southern Hopedale that takes up nearly 147 acres and has been in operation since the 1930s. The area has been considered for its redevelopment potential in past plans. As of February 2022, a Site Plan for a 600,000 square foot warehouse had been submitted and was undergoing review. The property is at least partly in a groundwater protection district and will also need approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals for a Special Permit.

Finally, Hopedale is home to two industrial parks, the Hopedale Industrial Park and Hopedale Airport Industrial Park (not to be confused with one another), that are located across Plain Street from one another and host a variety of commercial and light industrial uses.



*Photo 2. The Draper Mill. Photo Credit: Frederick Oldfield.*

## Residential Development

Substantial residential development in Hopedale can be broken down into two main phases: first, the proliferation of company housing for Draper Corporation employees, and then residential subdivisions for families that tended to work out of town in the latter decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Hopedale's industrial past led to a pattern of denser residential development than is typical of a town of 6,000 residents. Company housing largely took the form of duplexes in the vicinity of the Draper Complex, such as those found in the Bancroft Park neighborhood, although boarding houses and single-family homes were also built. Dwellings are located closer to the street and to each other than in typical suburban residential development, and this development pattern can be seen throughout central and northeastern Hopedale.

Hopedale's more recent subdivisions are typical of a Massachusetts middle class commuter town. Mostly built during the Town's post-1980 population boom, these neighborhoods are characterized by larger yards and open space buffers between dwellings. This type of development can be found throughout Hopedale, although it is most concentrated south of downtown.

## Commercial Development

Compared to industrial and residential uses, commercial uses have played a smaller role in Hopedale's development. Commercial space and businesses are concentrated in the south of Town, along Route 140, with another handful at the intersection of Hopedale Street and Route 16 in the center of Town. Businesses include gas stations and restaurants, with a minimal retail presence. Hopedale citizens recognize the need for more commercial development, including conveniences like restaurants and grocery stores, with over 80 percent of community survey respondents agreeing that Hopedale needed more business growth.

## Other Land Use Trends

As shown in Table LU2, Hopedale is unusual in that permanently Town-owned land for outdoor recreation is a primary land use. The Parklands to the north and the Hopedale Country Club to the south are the two largest parcels of land in town, and along with several smaller parcels "Tax-exempt" uses take up nearly a quarter of Hopedale's total area. A further 20 percent of the Town falls under the "open space" category. By all accounts this abundance of open space and outdoor recreation opportunities has been a boon for the Town (its website proclaims Hopedale Pond and the Parklands Hopedale's "crown jewels"), but it also means that relatively little of an already small town is open to traditional development. However, the town may want to explore uses that are compatible with outdoor recreation that can be sustainably introduced to complement these open space areas, provide additional amenities, and potentially generate additional revenue for the Town (e.g., a parks department community center/building for parks/arts activities that the town could also rent out for private events, or a small campground that allows hiking, biking, and fishing).

Hopedale Industrial Park Airport, found to the east of Hopedale Industrial Park in southern Hopedale is one of five airports located in Worcester County. Very little air traffic is generated there, but the airport is yet another example of the unique land uses found in the Town.



*Photo 3. One primary land use for town-owned land in Hopedale is open space such as Hopedale Pond pictured above.  
Photo Credit: Kevin Sheldrake*

## Zoning

As shown in Map 1, Hopedale has thirteen zoning districts, more than half of which are primarily residential in character Table LU5 lists these districts by total acreage, showing Residential B and Industrial at the top, followed by the Town Land District, all of which come in above 400 acres. It is unusual for a town of Hopedale's size to have such large non-residential districts, but large areas of undeveloped land such as the Parklands and the large undeveloped parcel off of West Street in northern Hopedale contribute to the size of the Town Land and Industrial Districts, respectively.

Generally, Hopedale's Zoning Bylaw needs improvement. Many provisions are outdated. For example, no uses may be permitted in Hopedale without the issuance of a "zoning permit" from the building commissioner, an archaic and unnecessary practice that most towns do not utilize. Furthermore, districts such as the Adult Retirement Community District are not properly established or defined, and regulations such as those for residential uses in the GB-A district are unclear or missing.

# Map 1. Hopedale Zoning Districts Map

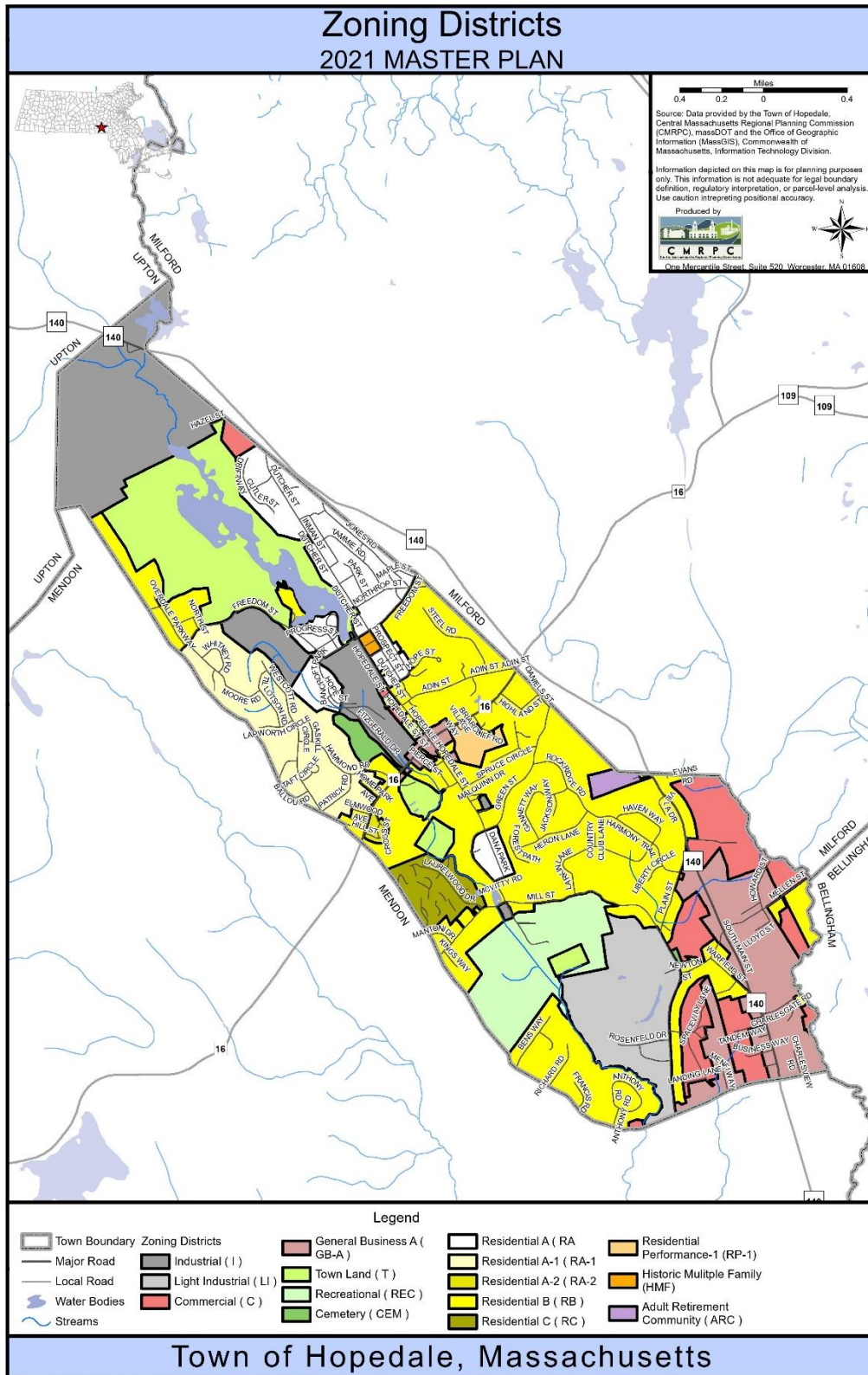


Table LU5: Zoning Districts by Area		
Zoning District	Acres	% of total
Residential B	1116.74	33.1%
Industrial	421.49	12.5%
Town Land	403.23	12.0%
Residential A	262.83	7.8%
Commercial	231.59	6.9%
Residential A-1	221.15	6.6%
Light Industry	200.78	6.0%
General Business A	200.23	5.9%
Recreation	182.18	5.4%
Residential C	63.00	1.9%
Residential Performance 1	22.44	0.7%
Cemetery	18.79	0.6%
Adult Retirement Community	13.66	0.4%
Residential A-2	7.53	0.2%
Historic Multiple Family	4.67	0.1%
<i>Source: CMRPC GIS Department</i>		

Similar to Table LU2, Table LU6 groups Hopedale’s zoning districts by general category. A slim majority of Town is zoned for residential uses, while industrial, commercial, and “other” (Town Land, Recreation, and Cemetery) zones make up a significant proportion of Hopedale’s area as well. One way to assess a town is to compare the area zoned for a certain use with the amount of space actually taken up by those uses. A mismatch between these figures can indicate that certain areas may be zoned incorrectly, or that certain districts are unable to produce their intended type of development. In Hopedale, all three main types of zoning districts (residential, industrial, and commercial) are more widespread than the type of use they are meant to encourage. For example, about 13 percent of Hopedale’s land is zoned for commercial uses, but parcels with commercial uses take up less than 4 percent of the Town’s area. The reasons for this mismatch between zoning and use can be explained by several different factors. Land in the Industrial District is mostly either undeveloped or disused, as is the case of the Draper Factory. There is a lot of land zoned for residential uses that has been set aside for conservation and open space, as well. Finally, Hopedale’s “other” zones are actually larger than its commercial zones, mostly due to the Parklands.

Table LU6: Zoning Category by Acreage	
Zoning Category	Acres
Residential	50.8%
Industrial	18.5%
Other	17.9%
Commercial	12.8%
<i>Source: CMRPC GIS Department</i>	

## Residential Districts

Most of Hopedale’s zoning districts are residential in character, with the single-family dwelling being the standard dwelling unit in most. Single-family dwellings are allowed by right in every residential district except for Residential C and Historical Multiple Family, which exist to facilitate other specific types of development. Multi-family uses are limited; they are not permitted by right in any district and may only be created through Site Plan Review or Special Permit in a few specific districts. No commercial or industrial uses are permitted in any of Hopedale’s residential districts.

### Major Residential Districts

#### Residential A

The Residential A (RA) District is located in the northeast area of Hopedale and contains the densest and oldest residential development in Town. The RA district has a minimum lot area of 15,000 square feet and some of the least intensive setback requirements in Hopedale (minimum front yard of 20 feet, side yard of 10 feet, and rear yard of 30 feet). These requirements reflect the existing character of the Draper-era company houses in the area. Like many of Hopedale’s zoning districts, RA is significantly built out.

#### Residential A-1

The RA-1 District, located to the west of the Draper Complex has two sets of dimensional regulations that may apply. Special, more permissive dimensional regulations for the RA- 1 District can be used if the Planning Board determines that there is at least 20,000 square feet of additional open space per subdivision lot. Otherwise, more restrictive RB regulations apply. The RA-1 dimensional regulations require smaller setbacks across the board and only half of the minimum lot size (20,000 square feet compared to 40,000 square feet in RB).

The stated purpose of the district is to encourage the provision of open space to subdivision residents by allowing less restrictive dimensional regulations in exchange for more open space. Many subdivisions have been built in this zone, although given the significant open space requirements the remaining development potential is likely low



## Residential B

Residential B (RB) is the single largest zoning district in Hopedale, covering nearly one third of the Town's total land area. It also has the largest minimum lot size (40,000 square feet) and setback requirements (65-foot front yard, 15-foot side yard, and 35-foot rear yard) of any residential district. Similar regulations are very common in Massachusetts towns seeking to maintain a typical single-family, large-lot suburban residential character. Accordingly, much of the RB District is made up of low-density subdivisions.

## Smaller Residential Districts

Hopedale has several residential zoning districts found only on a single site or small cluster of sites. These districts are either entirely built out with the single project the zoning was enacted to facilitate or have so far remained undeveloped. In either of these cases, these small zoning districts do not represent significant avenues for future development. It is also worth noting that these districts tend to be where the Town allows multi-family development.

## Residential A-2

Residential A-2 (RA-2) comprises a single neighborhood of 1920's bungalow-style houses near the Mendon line. RA-2's dimensional requirements are the least strict in Hopedale by far, requiring a minimum lot area of only 4,000 square feet, and accordingly the neighborhood consists of many small homes located close together. Newer dwellings off of Mendon Street were constructed more recently, leaving the district fully built out.

## Residential C and Townhouse Development

A townhouse development can only be constructed in the Residential C District on a parcel of 25 acres of land or more, with benefit of Site Plan Approval. Townhouse structures may contain up to 4 units, and minimum residential lot area requirements within a development are computed per dwelling unit. Permanently protected common land is also required. Only one parcel in Hopedale is zoned as RC, and the Laurelwood Condominiums have already been built there. Given that there is unlikely to be 25 contiguous acres of developable land elsewhere in Hopedale, the future utility of the Townhouse Development Bylaw is questionable.

## Residential Performance 1 and Residential Performance Development

The Residential Performance 1 District is found only in a series of small circular lots east of the intersection Route 16 and Hopedale Street. This is the only district in which a Performance Residential Development (PRD) is permitted, through a Site Plan Review process. A PRD is a mixed-use development allowing for a range of different residential densities and provisions for common land, dependent on the site. Residential building outwards. The total allowable density on-site is formula-based and dependent on total buildable area.

Section 16 of Hopedale's Zoning Bylaw deals with Performance Residential Development

Provisions, and takes up approximately 100 pages, or about half of the total length of the Bylaw. Incredibly detailed guidance is provided for design aspects such as the types of trees allowable in a PRD, yet these intricately crafted regulations are misplaced considering the small scale of the RP-1 District and the fact that it remains undeveloped. Such a complex bylaw might benefit from a larger area of land, but Hopedale does not have many large, developable parcels remaining. Still, the concept of performance-based zoning is something the Town should keep in mind going forward.

### Historic Multiple Family

The Historic Multiple Family (HMF) District is extremely small, constituting just a few contiguous parcels in downtown Hopedale. At only a few acres the HMF already contains Uncommon Place condominiums, located in the old Dutcher Street School building, and the Atria Draper Place Senior Living Community. Absent a re-zoning initiative, the HMF District will have very little to do with shaping future development in Hopedale. Therefore, the HMF District is a potential tool in the Town's pocket to be applied in the future where appropriate to promote the goal of adaptive reuse of older properties.

The HMF has the same base dimensional regulations as the RB district and is one of few in Hopedale where non-condo multi-family dwellings are allowed through a Site Plan Review process. Only buildings 40 years or older are eligible for redevelopment under HMF standards.

### Adult Retirement Community

Buried at the end of Hopedale's Zoning Bylaws is a section describing the Adult Retirement Community (ARC) zoning district. An ARC development may contain single or multi-family dwellings, along with other accessory uses permitted in Hopedale's other residential districts, requiring a Special Permit from the Planning Board. All units in such a development must be age-restricted to residents 55 years or older. The minimum lot size for the ARC District is 10 acres, and since the only parcel in the district is about 14 acres in size, only one ARC development may be constructed in Hopedale at time of writing.

### General Business A

Unusual for a Business district, Hopedale's General Business A (GB-A) allows single-family residences by right. Accordingly, a large percentage of the GB-A District is residential in character. In terms of what dimensional regulations apply to a dwelling in the GB-A District, the Zoning Bylaw is unclear. It lists residential dimensional requirements for the C District, which are similar to those of the RB District, despite residences being prohibited in that area, while providing no residential guidelines for GB-A. It is likely that these regulations for "residences in a commercial zone" would apply in GB-A.

## Commercial Districts

### General Business A and General Business

Single-family dwellings are allowed by right in the GB-A District, and accordingly much of the district is populated by single-family residences. Every commercial use listed in the Zoning Bylaw's Use Regulations is allowed in the GB-A District, either by right or by Special Permit. Much of the land abutting Route 140 in southern Hopedale is zoned GB- A, but only near the border with Bellingham does the area resemble a true commercial corridor. The intersection of Hopedale Street and Route 16 was recently rezoned as C, and a handful of businesses operate in the area.

So far, this section has only discussed the GB-A district, with good reason: based on current zoning data, it does not seem that the GB District is in use. No parcel in Hopedale is classified as GB by the Assessor's Office, and the district regulations are unsuitable for a commercial area anyway, requiring a Special Permit for most commercial uses. The GB District should therefore be removed from the Zoning Bylaw.

### Commercial

The Commercial (C) District is, appropriately, Hopedale's only true commercial district. GB-A is dominated by residential uses and GB is not present at all, but the C District closely resembles a typical small-town business/commercial zone, allowing a range of commercial uses by right. The C District is located mostly in southern Hopedale near the Route 140 corridor, although the district is largely set back from the highway. Most of the commercially zoned land directly adjacent to 140 is GB-A, whereas areas such as Hopedale Airport Industrial Park that are farther from major roads are zoned as Commercial. A few scattered parcels zoned C exist across northern Hopedale as well. Many of the businesses operating in the C District resemble light industry, with uses like light manufacturing and trucking services.



*Photo 4. A snowy street in Hopedale's commercial district.  
Photo Credit: Josh O.*

## Industrial Districts

### Light Industry

The Light Industry (LI) District is found in southern Hopedale and contains the Rosenfield Concrete plant (despite disallowing concrete plants) and Hopedale Industrial Park. Most commercial uses are not permitted by right; uses such as restaurants and offices are prohibited while automotive services require a Special Permit. Light manufacturing and warehouses are allowed by right, but heavier industry is prohibited. The LI District has a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet and setback requirements similar to the RB District.

### Industrial

The Industrial (I) District is significantly more permissive than the Light Industry District, with the former allowing uses such as textile and paper mills and sellers of building equipment that are prohibited in the latter. Dimensional requirements are identical in both industrial districts except that the I District requires a lot frontage of 150 feet where the LI District only requires 100 feet. Most of the I District is not being actively used for industry: the old Draper Complex was previously vacant and is now demolished/ slated for redevelopment, and the large industrial parcels in the Town's northern tip are mostly undeveloped.

## Other Districts and Overlays

### Town Land, Cemetery, Recreational

Taking an uncommon approach, Hopedale zones its municipal land, cemeteries, and outdoor recreation facilities using specialized districts for each. Almost no uses are permitted in these districts, except what cannot be excluded under state law (such as religious uses and day cares) and outdoor parks. Clearly, these three zoning districts are meant to exclude development from land of public value, such as the Hopedale Parklands, and therefore have little to do with Hopedale's future development.

### Flood Plains

The Flood Plain District is an overlay district that encompasses the 100-year flood plain as defined by FEMA. New construction, substantial improvements to existing structures, and earth movement within the Flood Plain District requires a Special Permit from the Planning Board if it determines that the proposed activity will not negatively impact flooding risk. Standards for subdivisions within the Flood Plain District requiring extra flood protections are also provided.

### Groundwater Protection

The Purpose of the Groundwater Protection Overlay District is to protect the Town's drinking water by minimizing the contamination of groundwater. The Overlay is located around aquifers and recharge areas and carries its own set of prohibited uses aimed at minimizing pollution. Development activity that would otherwise be permissible in the underlying zoning district

requires a Special Permit in the Groundwater Overlay.

## Other Land Use Policies

### Local Historic District

In 2018, Hopedale Town Meeting adopted a Local Historic District covering the famous Little Red Shop at 12 Hopedale Street. A number of other historic sites were proposed at that Town Meeting as Local Historic Districts, but for various reasons only the Little Red Shop site was approved. At the same time a new General Bylaw regulating the establishment of Local Historic Districts was adopted, so the possibility remains that additional districts may be added in the future. Within the district, a certificate from the Historic District Commission (appointed by the Select Board) is required to make any alteration of an exterior architectural feature or construct a new building. The Local Historic District Bylaw adopted by the Town charges the commission to “encourage and support new and innovative building designs and techniques compatible with the existing architecture.”

### Home Occupations

A home occupation is a business or commercial use that a resident conducts from their own home. Towns do not typically allow commercial activity as a primary use in residential zones, but through a home occupation citizens may devote a portion of their dwelling to such activity as a secondary use. Hopedale allows home occupations in all residential districts as long as the following criteria are met:

- a. The home occupation must be conducted fully indoors within a dwelling in which the principal practitioner actually lives.
- b. No more than 25 percent of the floor area or 400 square feet (whichever is less) shall be devoted to the home occupation.
- c. Commercial vehicles and off-street parking spaces must be appropriately screened and cannot be located on the front yard.
- d. The home occupation shall not store materials outside, use loud or noxious equipment, or fall under certain specific prohibited categories.

Specific use standards exist for certain types of home occupations such as “professional office” or “personal service.” Home occupation regulations can provide residents with the flexibility to start and run businesses even in communities with limited commercial zoning.

### Accessory Apartments

An accessory apartment (also known as an accessory dwelling unit, in-law apartment, etc.) is an additional dwelling unit that may be permitted on a lot that already contains a single-family home. In Hopedale, an accessory apartment must not exceed 600 square feet in area or increase the existing floor area of the dwelling by more than 10 percent, and may contain no

more than one bedroom. The Zoning Bylaw is clear that accessory apartments should be designed to have minimal visual impact and not alter the appearance of the dwelling from that of a single-family dwelling unit.

### Off-Street Parking Requirements

Minimum parking requirements can play a large role in determining what constitutes a viable land use on any given property. Hopedale's current parking regulations require two spaces per single-family dwelling and three spaces per two-family dwelling. Parking for industrial uses is based on the number of employees on the largest shift (1 space per 1.2 employees) and retail stores require one space per 1,000 square feet of floor area. Notably, Hopedale lacks any specific parking requirements for multi-family and mixed-use developments.

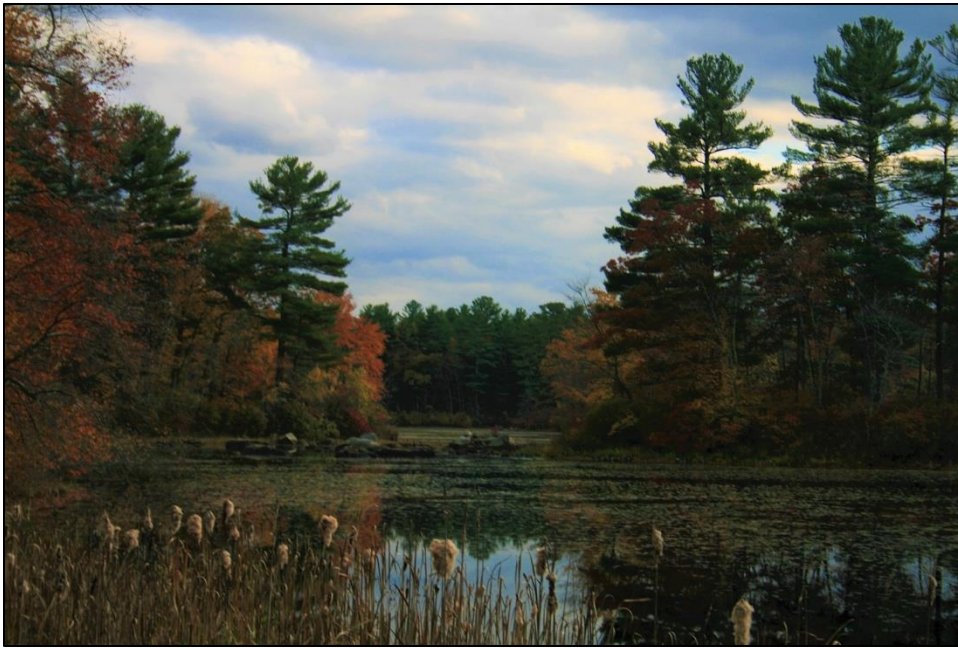
### Site Plan Review

Site Plan Review is a process by which a Town can shape a major project by establishing criteria regarding aspects such as site layout, appearance, safety, and environmental impact. Unlike a Special Permit, a board does not usually have the discretion to outright deny a project through Site Plan Review. Instead, the Town can go back and forth with an applicant until the project takes on a more acceptable form. In Hopedale, the Planning Board conducts Site Plan Reviews for any development with at least 6,000 square feet of gross floor area or requiring the provision of ten or more parking spaces. An improvement or alteration to an existing site that would cause it to exceed this threshold would also require Site Plan Review. In addition to these general requirements, this section of the Master Plan has described several specific types of development that automatically require Site Plan Review, such as a Performance Residential Development.

## Issues and Opportunities

### Climate Change

It is every municipality's responsibility to proactively plan for the impacts of climate change in order to protect citizens and natural resources alike. The Town of Hopedale has many opportunities to guide land use in a sustainable direction. For example, building denser, more compact residential and mixed-use developments will decrease the amount of land that will need to be developed in Town, and zoning can be used to focus development in certain desirable areas while leaving others preserved. The Town should also maintain responsible stewardship of the significant natural resources it already owns, while exploring opportunities to acquire environmentally sensitive properties.



*Photo 5. Habitats like Hopedale Pond may be threatened by climate change. Photo Credit: Wilma Manning*

## Draper Factory Complex

### Expansion of Housing Stock

While Hopedale's population growth has been slow in the 21<sup>st</sup> century so far, any significant redevelopment of the Draper site is likely to bring with it an unprecedented influx of new housing units, due to the solid economic anchor that housing provides to a large project. The current owner and developers for the site have stated publicly that they plan to build new housing, but even if current plans do not come to fruition the economics of large-scale development means that housing is always a likely proposition.

### Commercial Opportunities

The redevelopment of Draper Factory is also likely to bring with it opportunities for increased commercial activity in Hopedale. The community survey conducted for this plan indicated that Hopedale residents are eager to see the economic base of their town expanded, and the redevelopment of the Draper property will likely provide new, centrally located commercial space to attract new businesses to town. Establishment of zoning that enables desired commercial opportunities at the former Draper Site (e.g., a mixed-use overlay) is essential to its redevelopment into a vibrant commercial asset.

### Downtown Revitalization

Finally, the factory's proximity to downtown Hopedale provides an opportunity to integrate whatever new amenities arise from the redevelopment of the Draper Complex with the cultural and historic resources of the downtown.

## Grafton & Upton Railroad

With offices and its main railyard still located proximate to the former Draper Factory, the Grafton and Upton Railroad is working to expand operations via the “Hopedale Transloading Expansion Project.” This expansion project is intended to provide Grafton and Upton Railroad customers with immediate access to their freight by creating multiple loading areas as well as storage tracks. The expansion project, as proposed by the Railroad, would significantly impact the accessibility of the Draper site. Future expansion of the railroad should be carefully considered in light of its potential impact on implementing the master plan, and for consistency with community vision and best practices in economic development and downtown planning. The expansion project should also be carefully evaluated for potential impact on village center traffic, noise, aesthetics, and character. Future support of expansion efforts should be done with the broader impacts to the town in mind.

Similarly, the large, undeveloped parcel directly north of the Parklands, the third-largest parcel in Hopedale, is the subject of a major ongoing debate about the future of Hopedale’s land use. In 2020 the Grafton and Upton Railroad (G & U Railroad) announced its intention to acquire the parcel for the expansion of their operations. After months of legal battles, the Town and G & U Railroad reached a settlement, splitting the land between approximately 85 acres of conservation land for the Town and the rest to be acquired by the railroad company. However, in Spring 2021 a group of concerned residents filed an injunction to stop the deal, claiming that the Town had a responsibility to acquire the full 130 acres previously voted upon at Town Meeting, not 85 acres. The Board’s agreement with the Railroad was reviewed in court and deemed procedurally defective, as residents had not taken a vote on the agreement as settled. As of February 2022, the outcome of the dispute has yet to be determined.

## Planning and Zoning Capacity Building

Many of the recommendations in the following section will deal with proactive planning activities and changes to zoning, both of which require a significant amount of Town Staff capacity to achieve due to the time and expertise required. A small town like Hopedale does not typically have the capacity to undertake such initiatives, which is why it is important that the Town seeks out as many grants and partnerships as possible in order to undertake important recommendations such as a rewrite of its Zoning Bylaw. Programs such as the District Local Technical Assistance Program and, and the State’s “Community One Stop for Growth” portal that allows users to access a wide range of available grant programs from a single portal are good places to start.



# Goals, Objectives, and Action Items

## **Goal 1: Promote the development of new housing units in appropriate location, in a manner that is mindful of preserving Hopedale's natural beauty and open space.**

- Objective 1: Focus on adaptive reuse, mixed-use, and higher-density strategies for housing development.
  - Identify areas suitable for mixed-use development and develop zoning to encourage an appropriate mix of uses in those areas.
  - Identify existing buildings suitable to be adapted for new uses and lots with existing structures that might be redeveloped with the same or a similar footprint.
  - Conduct a feasibility study to determine appropriate locations for denser multifamily development, including the potential sites for Comprehensive Permits.
- Objective 2: Develop zoning to facilitate the redevelopment of the Draper Factory into a site with a variety of uses that will allow it to be integrated with the existing Town Center.
  - Work with developers and state and regional partners to craft a new underlying zoning district or a new overlay district to expand the allowable uses on the Draper site beyond industrial.
  - Work with landowners and developers to create zoning tools to allow and regulate the types of large-scale development appropriate for the Draper site, such as multifamily housing or significant commercial development.
  - Conduct a community engagement process to develop a vision for a revitalized downtown Hopedale to help guide the redevelopment process.
- Objective 3: Develop a list of tools to facilitate the achievement of Hopedale's land use goals and recommendations.
  - Study the feasibility of adopting tools and programs such as Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Districts, tax-increment-financing, and Business Improvement Districts in targeted areas.
  - Pursue the technical assistance and grants needed to successfully implement desired zoning provisions.
  - Conduct a community engagement process to develop a vision for a revitalized downtown Hopedale to help guide the redevelopment process.
- Objective 4: Allow multifamily units by right in some areas of town, such as the Draper Factory site.
  - Determine the most desirable locations to encourage multifamily units based on factors such as the availability of transit, utilities, and amenities.

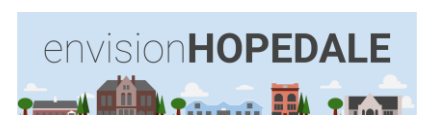
- Develop Zoning Bylaw amendments to regulate the design, scale, and location of multifamily development allowed by right.
- Objective 5: Re-examine parking standards for all use, and develop new standards as needed.
  - Conduct an analysis to determine parking requirements for uses that are new to Hopedale, such as multifamily housing.
  - Reevaluate current parking standards to ensure that adequate space for vehicles is provided without unduly converting open space into parking lots or making development infeasible.

**Goal 2: Strengthen the commercial and industrial uses that contribute to Hopedale’s economic base.**

- Objective 1: Evaluate current zoning districts and ensure that they reflect appropriate uses.
  - Evaluate whether the current extent of commercial and industrial zoning districts are consistent with local priorities, and potentially develop a plan for appropriate re-zoning.
  - Reevaluate the purpose and regulations for each existing zoning district. Outdated or obsolete districts may be removed, and existing districts may be altered to better achieve land use goals.
- Objective 2: Explore the option of more targeted zoning in order to encourage commercial and industrial development.
  - Consider reconfiguring commercial and industrial zones to be smaller but more permissive, limiting development to only the most appropriate areas while making development easier within those zones.

**Goal 3: Update and recodify Hopedale’s Zoning Bylaw to fit with long-term goals and values.**

- Objective 1: Make necessary administrative updates to the Zoning Bylaw.
  - Conduct a comprehensive review of zoning changes passed at Town Meeting and ensure that all have been properly accepted by the Attorney General and incorporated into Hopedale’s Zoning Bylaw.
  - Review the Zoning Bylaw for consistency with other Town regulations and plans, including those outlined in this Master Plan.
- Objective 2: Recodify and edit the by-laws as needed.
  - Conduct a zoning audit to check for consistency, clarity, and completeness in the Zoning Bylaw, culminating in a recodification



- process that addresses these issues without altering the substance of any regulations.
- Conduct a Zoning Bylaw rewrite where substantive policy changes recommended in this Master Plan should be considered.
- Objective 3: Make zoning by-laws accessible to the public.
  - Maintain an up-to-date, easily searchable online version of Hopedale's Zoning Bylaws.
  - Create a high-quality full color zoning map to be made available to the public online potentially utilizing interactive GIS technology.
- Objective 4: Review the by-laws of similar communities as a model.
  - Commission a report analyzing recent zoning trends and best practices in a set of local comparison communities.

**Goal 4: Continue to strengthen Hopedale's tools for protecting open space and other land use through zoning.**

- Objective 1: Create an accessible inventory of existent open space, environmentally significant areas, and other natural resources.
  - Identify parcels of significant environmental value to be catalogued and made accessible to Town staff and volunteers as well as the public.
  - Allow Town boards and departments to provide up-to-date recommendations for the most appropriate use of underutilized parcels.
- Objective 2: Zone for areas of natural beauty appropriately.
  - Rezone identified areas of environmental importance to encourage either preservation or environmental conscious forms of development and design.
  - Require increased preservation of open space in certain zoning districts in exchange for increased density in the developable portions of a parcel.
  - Require sustainable or energy efficient design for new developments.

**Goal 5: Preserve historic structures and historic areas of Town.**

- Objective 1: Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
  - Adopt zoning provisions that encourage the preservation of existing historic buildings by offering incentives such as increased flexibility for use and dimensional standards.
- Objective 2: Publicly revisit and codify as needed the criteria and restrictions for a "historic district" and/or "historic building," etc.
  - Revisit appropriate locations for a Local Historic District, based on past proposals and community feedback.
  - Develop Local Historic District regulations that preserve the appearance of historically

significant areas without placing an undue burden on homeowners or stifling new development.

# Town Services & Facilities

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## Introduction

Present-day Hopedale reflects its history as an industrial powerhouse. Local textile industrialist George Draper believed his workers needed to live in good homes to sustain good work. Consequently, Hopedale blossomed into a self-contained company town, where workers left their high-quality duplex houses to walk to work at the local mills. The Drapers donated funding to the high school, built roads and sewage systems, and water and gas lines to the almost 300 buildings that were home to their workers. The Draper Company is gone now, but its high-quality worker's community laid the foundation for the infrastructure and development that we see in contemporary Hopedale.<sup>1</sup>

Today, the services and facilities once provided by the Draper Company are the domain of local government. The Town of Hopedale maintains the roadways, water and sewer infrastructure, and most (but not all) of the Town's community facilities. These town resources are the most visible representation of the local government and arguably the most important aspect. The following chapter closely examines status and needs of Town Services and Facilities in Hopedale. It was developed to address the following goals, which were established by the Master Plan Committee:

- **Goal 1:** Strengthen the Town's financial position so that funding is available for necessary services and facilities.
- **Goal 2:** Provide quality facilities and services to meet current and future needs.
- **Goal 3:** Meet the town's transportation needs to ensure optimal mobility in town.
- **Goal 4:** Provide high-quality parks facilities accessible to all residents.
- **Goal 5:** Provide social, recreational, and cultural opportunities that enhance the quality of life for all ages and incomes in Hopedale.
- **Goal 6:** Improve the safety, resiliency, and sustainability of town operations.
- **Goal 7:** Improve the town's water and sewer systems to meet current and future demands.
- **Goal 8:** Improve the functioning of local government.

These goals were crafted through a robust community engagement process. This process included a community survey, visioning workshop, vision and goals survey, and monthly public meetings. Results relevant to town services and facilities are included in the Community Input section located later in this chapter. Key findings that informed the goals include:

- **Hopedale residents especially value increasing business growth in town.** 70% of survey respondents indicated that a larger amount and higher success of current businesses is very

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<sup>1</sup> A history of Hopedale. Town of Hopedale MA. (n.d.). Retrieved June 22, 2022, from <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/about-us/pages/history-hopedale>

relevant to Hopedale's future. Hopedale also values attracting "Green" companies to develop businesses in town.

- **There is a high demand for improvements to the water supply in town.** Even though 89% of survey respondents are serviced by town water and sewer, the Water and Sewer Department states that the existing water capacity is very poor, and demand exceeds capacity.
- **Hopedale residents also value increasing recreational opportunities in town.** 54% of survey respondents agree that Hopedale needs more parks and recreational resources. Survey results also showed residents want more sports facilities, such as fields, gym, and track, at the Hopedale Public Schools.
- **Hopedale understands the need to adapt to its aging population in town.** The Senior population in Hopedale is expected to increase by approximately 75% in the next 10 years.
- **Hopedale residents would like to see more walkability in town.** This includes more sidewalks throughout town, bike lanes, and actively shoveling existing sidewalks when there is snow/ice. A large portion of written-in comments on the Community Survey showed resident interest in having their kids be able to walk to school, however, there are not currently sufficient sidewalks.

The following chapter details a Town Services and Facilities strategy built upon these preferences, needs, and goals. It assesses town facilities and services conditions and provides a path for improvements deemed important by residents. To provide a context for these strategies, we will review the history of Hopedale's public facilities, recap prior planning efforts, summarize existing economic conditions, and detail issues and opportunities.

## Prior Planning Efforts

The Town has undertaken many prior planning efforts related to Town Services and Facilities.

### Community Master Plan: Town Government Chapter (2007):

Department heads were interviewed to collect information regarding facilities, equipment, budget, staffing, responsibilities, programs offered, and upcoming needs. An analysis of each municipal department is provided, including the level of services offered within Hopedale's local government. Highlighted are the goals Hopedale citizens desire within their town government:

- Professional management
- Quality services
- High level of public confidence

Recommendations included:

- Implement an infrastructure replacement plan for its water and sewer systems.
- Prepare an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan to address town facilities not compliant with ADA handicapped accessibility standards.
- Prioritize building needs that address new wiring for technology, plumbing, and heating.

## Hopedale Pond Green Infrastructure Design (2016)

The 2016 Hopedale Pond Green Infrastructure Design encouraged the reopening and reuse of the Hopedale Pond. Hopedale's Parks Commission began efforts to improve the water quality using green infrastructure. As of 2021, the Pond is still inactive and does not support swimming due to of pathogens in the water.

## Hopedale Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) (2017)

In 2000, Congress enacted the Disaster Mitigation Act. The law established a nationwide program to aid in pre-disaster mitigation efforts and streamline the administration of disaster relief. The Hopedale HMP emphasizes measures to reduce damage brought on by natural disasters and hazards. The goal is to prepare for risks that can harm human life and property. Through the HMP the town of Hopedale assessed its vulnerabilities, critical areas and facilities, and infrastructure, and identified strategies to mitigate negative effects.

## Hopedale Energy Reduction Plan (2020)

To achieve Green Communities designation, the Town completed an energy reduction plan in 2021. The plan aims to reduce municipal energy usage and was adopted along with other changes necessary for Hopedale to become a Green Community. Being designated as a Green Community provided new funding opportunities for the community. When Hopedale's grant closes out its Green Communities Designation grant, the Town will be eligible to apply for competitive grants annually. With the help of CMRPC, Hopedale mapped out a path to a 25% reduction in energy consumption in five years.

## Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (2021)

To address the ongoing decline of today's climate, the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program was enacted in 2016. The MVP program provides grants to municipalities to complete vulnerability assessments and create action-oriented resiliency plans. In 2021, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission facilitated a MPV workshop for Hopedale. Through this session, residents identified top hazards in their community, and vulnerable areas of concern. Some of the concerns highlighted included:

- Infrastructure such as dams, culverts, bridges, and buildings
- Roads
- Draper Mill
- Forested areas
- Public water supply

The four hazards that the MVP Core Team and MVP process participants found to have the greatest potential impacts on the Town were flooding, severe storms (wind), winter storms/extreme cold (ice), and drought/extreme heat (wildfire/invasives).

# Summary of Community Input

In the fall of 2021, the project team conducted a community-wide survey. The survey was intended to identify resident priorities, needs, and preferences across the topics addressed in the Master Plan. Below are the results that focused on the town services and facilities.

One of the survey questions asked Hopedale residents: “What do you think Hopedale needs more of?” Responses to this question are recorded in Table TSF1 below. The most common identified need was business, with 71% of respondents desiring business growth. Lower taxes, parks, and recreational resources were also viewed as needed. Historic amenities and sewers were the least supported services/facilities, with less than 10% of Hopedale residents responding that the Town needs more of such services.

**Table TSF1. Hopedale Master Plan Community Survey, Question 2**

“What do you think Hopedale needs more of?”	Responses
Business growth	71%
Lower taxes	52%
Parks and recreational resources	52%
Open space preservation	35%
Town services (Highway/Fire/Police)	21%
Schools	15%
Water	13%
Housing	12%
Other	7%
Historic amenities	7%
Sewers	3%

Responses to a question about use of town services and facilities are detailed in Table TSF2. The most frequently used town service/facility are parks and open space, with over 50% of survey respondents stating that they use parks and open space daily or weekly; over 80% of respondents stated that they use them at least once a month. The Bancroft Memorial Library is the second most frequently used service/facility in town, with 12% of respondents indicating that they use the library daily or weekly, and almost 40% of residents indicating that they use it at least monthly. The survey showed that less than 25% of town resident respondents used the Town Hall, Hopedale Recycling Center, and Senior Center monthly. Over 85% of respondents stated that they never use the Senior Center.



**Table TSF2. Hopedale Master Plan Community Survey, Question 15**

“How often do you use these town services and facilities?”	Frequently (Daily or weekly)	Occasionally (Once a month)	Very Rarely (Once every few months)	Never
Bancroft Memorial Library	12%	27%	36%	25%
Parks and open space	52%	31%	12%	4%
Town Hall	2%	19%	59%	20%
Hopedale Recycling Center	6%	11%	42%	41%
Senior Center	5%	2%	8%	85%

Two questions in the survey asked Hopedale residents about their satisfaction with town facilities and the services. For every facility surveyed, most of the residents who used the facility, reported that they were very satisfied or satisfied with both the facilities themselves and the services provided. The Bright Beginnings Center was the most highly rated facility, with most resident users indicating they were very satisfied with the facility and its services. Also notably, respondents were more satisfied with the services provided by Memorial Elementary School than the facility itself. According to the survey, parks and open spaces, the Town Hall, and the Draper Gym were both used by most respondents and had a significant percentage (at least 14% for the facilities themselves and at least eight percent for the services at the facilities) of resident respondents who were not satisfied with them.

The survey also asked Hopedale residents about library use. Over 70% of respondents who use the library stated that they use it to check out books, music or DVD’s while over 40% of respondents stated that they use it to check out a museum pass and to visit the children’s department. Around 20% of respondents stated that they use the library for attending an adult program or an event or for digital downloads including audio, E-books, videos and historical documents, while less than 10% of respondents indicated that they use it to use the computers or mobile hotspot, to use the copier, or to utilize the teen programs such as homework resources, games, or teen writers.

Several survey questions related to Town’s public schools. Almost 75% of survey respondents stated that the quality of Hopedale Public Schools factored into their decision to live in the community. Concerning school funding, 55% of Hopedale resident respondents stated that they would like to see an increase in the Town’s school funding, as opposed to only seven percent of respondents who stated that they would like to see a decrease in school funding. As shown in Table TSF3, safety was a primary concern for residents within walking distance of Memorial Elementary School. Many parents stated that they do not allow their children to walk or bike to school because the sidewalks, paths, and crossings are missing or in poor condition. Other common reasons included traffic (fast and heavy), personal security or safety, lack of motorist caution around cyclists/pedestrians, and the poor condition of bike facilities (bike lanes, paths, wide shoulders).

**Table TSF3. Hopedale Master Plan Community Survey, Question 11**

<i>“If your child(ren) lives within 1.5 miles of Memorial Elementary School and do not walk or bike to school, why not?”</i>	Responses
Not applicable	44%
Sidewalks/paths/crossings are missing or in poor condition	30%
Traffic is too fast and heavy	25%
Concerned about personal security or safety	17%
Motorists do not exercise caution around cyclists/pedestrians	16%
Lack of or poor condition of bike facilities (bike lanes, paths, wide shoulders)	13%

## Conditions

The following section details existing conditions in Boylston town services and facilities. It presents a point-in-time snapshot of governance, staffing, services, facilities, utilities, and infrastructure.

### Governance and Administration

The Town of Hopedale was incorporated on April 7, 1886. The Town is governed by the Open Town Meeting form of government. The two basic powers provided by this form of government are the adoption of laws and the appropriation of money. An elected three-member Select Board serves as the Town’s executive branch. The Select Board is responsible for making and implementing Town policies and procedures, appointing members to unelected boards and commissions, executing certain contracts, and various other tasks. A professional Town Administrator is appointed by the Select Board to manage Town Departments and advise on other matters. The annual Town Meeting (held the third Tuesday of each May) serves as Hopedale’s legislative session. Hopedale’s Annual Town Election is the week before, on the second Tuesday of each May. In Open Town Meeting governments, all registered local voters are allowed to bring up, nominate, and vote on all issues presented at the Town Meeting. In 2022, Hopedale was home to 5,735 residents and 3,844 registered voters.<sup>2</sup>

### Town Processes and Procedures

Municipal processes and procedures are the inner workings of town government. Some processes and procedures are prescribed, such as those governed by through bylaws, charters, and state laws. Others are a matter of local custom, current or historical staff preferences, and needs. Whether regulated or habituated, town processes and procedure can facilitate or constrain most every facet of local government. Topical assessments of the permitting process are included in the Land Use and Economic Development chapters. Overarching processes and procedures are described below.

<sup>2</sup> The Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Hopedale-Ma.gov.  
[https://www.hopedalema.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif711f/uploads/annual\\_weekday\\_ent\\_license\\_appl.pdf](https://www.hopedalema.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif711f/uploads/annual_weekday_ent_license_appl.pdf).

### *Capital Planning*

As defined by the Massachusetts Division of Local Services, “A capital improvement program (CIP) provides a blueprint for planning a community's capital expenditures. It coordinates community planning, financial capacity, and physical development.”<sup>3</sup> Capital planning is a tool to help foster and maintain long-term financial sustainability. It is therefore one of the most important responsibilities of any local government.

The Hopedale Capital Program Committee consists of five members (two members from the Finance Committee and three members from the general body), all of whom are appointed by the Select Board. The Town Accountant serves as an ex officio member without right to vote. The Committee's purpose is to study proposed capital outlays involving the acquisition of land or involving an expenditure of \$10,000 or more and having a useful life of at least three years.

Each September, every Hopedale Board and Committee provides the Capital Program Committee with information on all projects anticipated to need Town Meeting action during the ensuing six years. The Committee considers the relative need, timing, and cost of these expenditures and the effect each will have on the financial position of the Town. The Committee issues its recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year to the Finance Committee for its review and possible inclusion in the Town budget. No capital outlay of over \$10,000 can be considered by Town Meeting unless a recommendation has been adopted by the Capital Planning Committee pursuant to this bylaw.

In recent years the Town of Hopedale has worked to improve its Capital Planning mechanism including making a Community Compact Commitment with the Commonwealth to document its planning process for long-range financial planning and forecasting, and development of a multi-year capital plan that is reviewed annually and fits within a financing plan that reflects the Town's ability to pay.

### *Town Website and E-Permitting*

Towns across the Commonwealth have embraced the internet to help expedite and improve access to core government services. Bill-pay, permitting, assessments, and other services are increasingly funneled through town websites and their processing platforms. The Hopedale town website (hopedale-ma.gov) is a hub for information related to municipal government and town information. The town website provides community news, information and records related to public meetings, plans and project information, assessing data, and other services and information. An online permitting system will soon be available on the town website for public use.

In fiscal year 2021, Hopedale received nearly \$47,000 in funding from the Community Compact Efficiency and Regionalization program to implement an e-permitting system. The forthcoming system will allow anyone to apply online for a permit, check the status of a permit, and review permits on properties. Online bill pay is available for real estate tax, personal property tax, motor vehicle excise tax, and water and sewer bills

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<sup>3</sup> Capital Improvement Planning Guide. Massachusetts Division of Local Services. August 2016.

### *Community Preservation Act*

In November of 2020, the Town of Hopedale adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and established a funding mechanism for community preservation. The funds can be used for acquisition, preservation, and rehabilitation of historic and other resources. At least 10% of the funds for each fiscal year must be spent (or reserved for later spending) on each of the three pillars of CPA: 1) open space and recreation, 2) historic resources, and 3) affordable housing.

In Hopedale, the funding source is a surcharge of one percent on the annual tax levy on real property and the annual distributions made by the state from a trust fund created by the CPA. Exempt from the surcharge is \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential property.<sup>4</sup>

### *Fiscal Overview*

Like other towns across the state and region, Hopedale has faced significant financial and economic challenges over the past few years. The COVID-19 Pandemic caused record unemployment (approximately 16%) for several months in mid-2020. Over-reliance on revenue from the residential property tax base has constrained staffing and facilities modernization for many years. The Town's outstanding long-term debt more than doubled in FY2020 and was only slightly reduced in FY2021. In FY2021, a budget shortfall was prevented through a timely increase in state aid, a decrease in health insurance costs and Medicare premiums, and a short-term cut to the school budget. Town needs new sources of non-residential revenue to sustainably balance its budget.

In FY2022, Hopedale's budget was XX. Actual FY2022 revenue and expenses were unavailable at the time of plan publication, but tax revenue and receipts were expected to increase by a combined 5.3%, while the Town's expenses were expected to increase by 3.7%. However, the FY2022 budget was an "expense conservative" budget that excluded capital improvement needs totaling approximately one million dollars. These capital needs were not included in the FY2022 budget and were voted on separately at a town meeting in the fall of 2021.

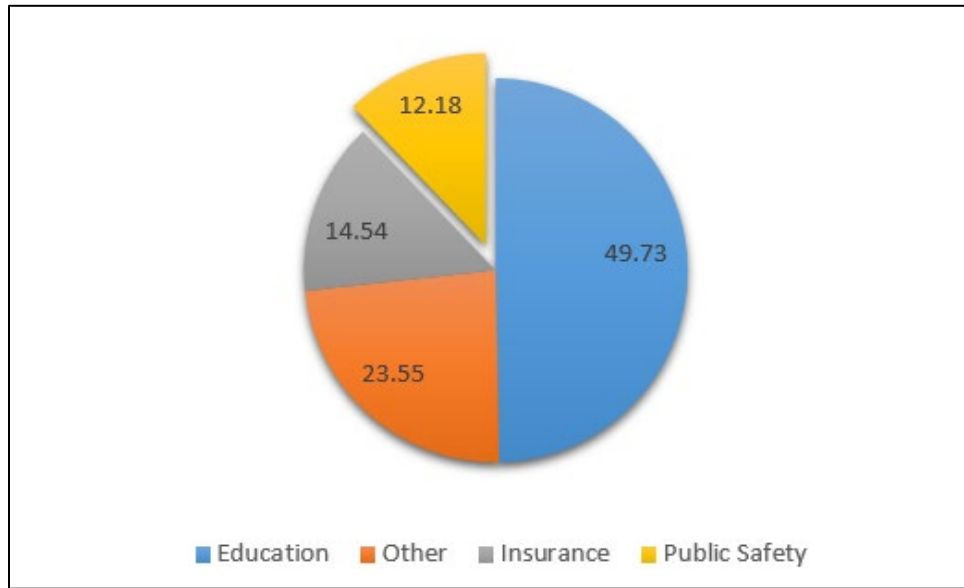
### *Expenses*

As shown in Figure TSF1, most of the Town's FY2022 expenses are for education (50%), public safety, which includes fire, EMS, and police (12%), and insurance (15%). These figures are fairly consistent across recent years.

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<sup>4</sup> Town of Hopedale Annual Town Report, FY2021

**Figure TSF1. Expected FY22 Town Expenses**



Source: Hopedale FY22 Budget Planning Presentation (May 21, 2022)

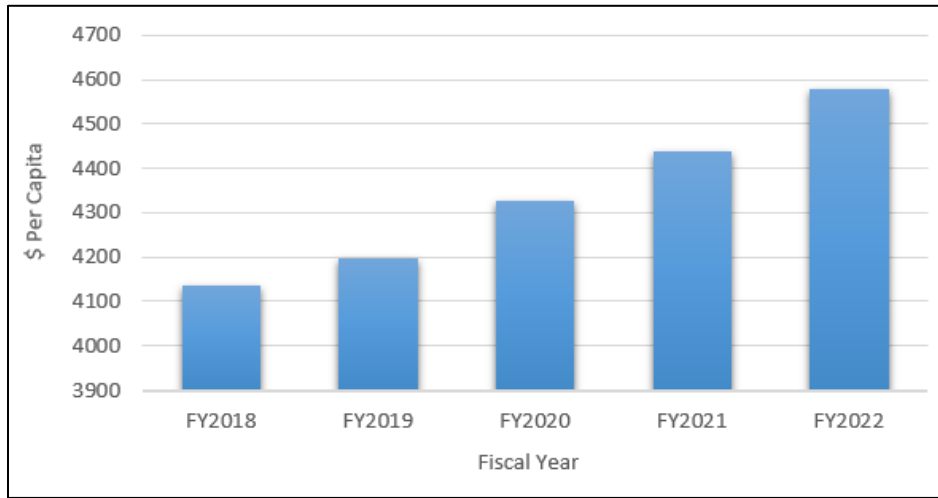
### Revenue and Receipts

In FY2021, the Town's revenue was mostly from the tax levy (60%) and state aid (30%). Approximately 82% of the Town's tax levy came from residential properties, as there is limited commercial development in town. For the past few years, expenditure growth rates have been outpacing revenue growth rates. Similarly, increases in tax bills have been outpacing increases property values over the past few years. State aid to the Town increased in absolute numbers from FY2012 until FY2020; however, it has been decreasing as a percentage of the Town's budget over the past few years and decreased slightly as an absolute number in 2021. Hopedale has lagged comparable nearby towns in residential growth and overall recovery from the 2007/2008 Great Recession.

A large majority of the Town's expected receipts for the FY2022 budget are from Chapter 70 Education Aid, with significant minorities coming from local receipts, offset receipts, and unrestricted government aid. Local receipts collected have been slightly higher than estimates for four out of the five years from 2017 to 2021.

The Town recently entered into revenue-generating agreements with several marijuana dispensaries and cell tower owners. Such agreements exemplify newer but still conventional means of supplementing revenue. Such offsets are needed to address increasing per capita expenses without overburdening residential property owners. Figure TSF2 depicts Hopedale's total budget per capita, which has increased slightly each year since FY2018.

**Figure TSF2. Total Budget Per Capita**



Source: Hopedale FY22 Budget Planning Presentation (May 21, 2022)

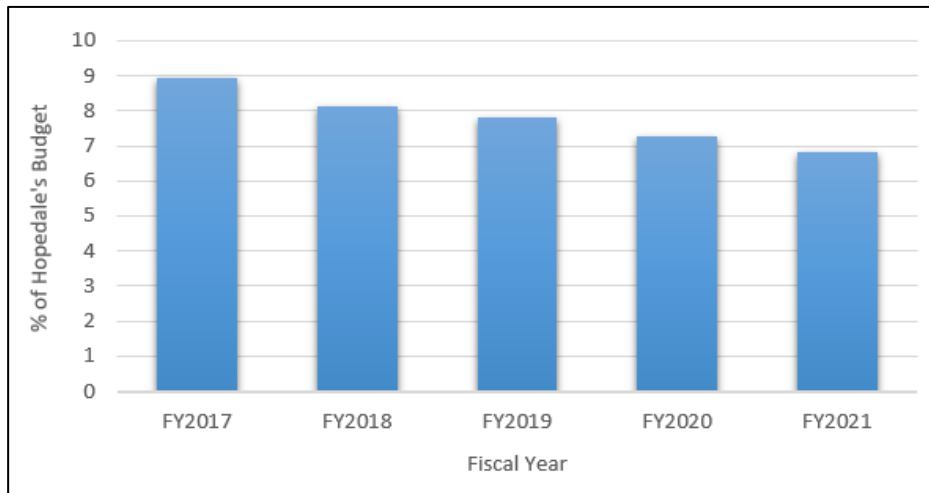
### Reserves

The Town's enterprise fund retained earnings have increased from approximately \$130,000 in FY2020 to approximately \$580,000 in FY2022. The Town's stabilization fund balance took a hit of over \$340,000 during FY2020 but bounced back in FY2021 to a higher balance than FY2019.

### Debt and Bond Rating

As shown in Figure TSF3, debt service has decreased as a percent of the Town's total budget, from approximately 18% in FY2017, to six to eight percent between FY2018 and FY2020, to four percent in FY2021. As of fiscal year 2021, the Town's bond rating from Moody's Investors Service is Aa3. This indicates that the Town is rated as making high-quality long-term obligations with low credit risk and making short-term obligations for which they have a superior ability to repay.

**Figure TSF 3. Debt Service as a Percent of Budget**



Source: Hopedale FY22 Budget Planning Presentation (May 21, 2022)

## Boards, Committees, and Nonprofit Partners

Hopedale operates in no small part due to its municipal Boards and Committees. All such entities are volunteer based. Table TSF4 presents Hopedale Boards and Committees and their missions.

**Table TSF4. Hopedale Boards and Committees**

Board/ Committee	Mission/ Job
Board of Assessors Office	It is the mission of the Assessing Department to administer all Massachusetts General Laws relating to valuation and taxation in a fair and equitable manner throughout the community.
Board of Health	The Board of Health (BOH) is responsible for disease prevention and control, health, and environmental protection, and promoting a healthy community. It serves as the local arm of both the MA Department of Public Health and the MA Department of Environmental Protection. To fulfill its duties, the BOH develops, implements, and enforces health policies, oversee inspections to maintain minimum standards for sanitation in housing and food service, and assure that the basic health needs of their community are being met.
Capital Planning	Capital Planning Boards maintain the value and continued improvements to the Town's capital assets. The Hopedale "Capital Program Committee" is composed of two members from the Finance Committee and three additional members to be appointed by the Select Board. None of the appointees are Town officers or Town employees. The Town Accountants shall be an ex officio member without right to vote.
Conservation Commission	The Conservation Commission is responsible for protecting the land, water, and biological resources of their communities. Conservation commissions are volunteers who work long hours to achieve community conservation goals.
Council on Aging	The Hopedale Council on Aging's mission is to identify the needs of older adults and ensure that those needs are met by providing opportunities for education, recreation and access to resources.
Cultural Council	The Cultural Council partners with the MA Cultural Council to expand local access, improve education, promote diversity, and encourage excellence in the arts, humanities, and sciences.
Development & Industrial Commission	The commission conducts research into industrial conditions, investigates and assists in the establishment of educational or commercial projects, including projects involving private enterprise, for the purpose of expanding or strengthening the local economy, and seeks to co-ordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for said purposes."
Disabilities Commission	The mission of the Disabilities Commission is to guarantee equal participation in all life aspects for those with disabilities.
Downtown Revitalization Committee	This mission of the Downtown Revitalization Committee is to encourage the durable growth of economic activity in the town of Hopedale.
Finance Committee	The finance committee is an appointed board of town residents who examine the municipal finances and recommend what financial actions the town should take.
Historical Commission	The Historical Commission is an appointed by the Selectboard that works to promote, preserve, and develop the town's historical assets for present and future use. In addition, the Commission oversees the operations of our Historic Town Hall.

Housing Authority	The Hopedale Housing Authority is a Massachusetts, State-aided Public Housing Agency, which provides housing for low-income elderly and persons with disabilities. It is the mission of the Hopedale Housing Authority to be committed to working with community, state, and local officials to provide decent, safe, and affordable housing for the people of Hopedale with dignity and respect.
Library Trustees	The Library Trustees are responsible for the custody and management of the Library and of all property owned by the Town pertaining to the Library, for the monies appropriated by the Town for the Library, for the appointment of the Library Director, and for the establishment of written policies governing the library activities and services.
Open Space and Recreation Committee	The Open Space and Recreation committee devises Town Boards on land acquisition/protection opportunities; acting as a municipal liaison with individuals and land protection advocacy groups including local, state and national land conservation trusts active in the protection of open space; identifies state and federal funding opportunities for open space protection; acts as sponsor and/or advocate for open space protection funding proposals; and assists in updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan when required.
Park Commission	The Hopedale Park Commission is an elected (three-year term) Board which governs all policies, rules, and regulations for Hopedale's active and passive recreational resources. It was chartered by our founding fathers at town meeting in 1899 with the vision of purchasing select town land for both "practical recreational development" and the "preservation of natural scenic beauty." The Commission has a rich history of enhancing and upholding these values - through Hopedale's prosperous Draper era and less prolific times thereafter - for the enjoyment and betterment of all our citizens.
Planning Board	The Planning Board is charged with long range planning (Master Plan); review of subdivision plans; holding public hearings and forwarding recommendations on proposed zoning changes; and reviewing major developments.
Storm Water Committee	The Stormwater Committee acts as an advisory body to the Department of Public Works. The Committee reviews and makes recommendations on stormwater ordinances and related regulations and perform other tasks relevant to assisting the DPW with the implementation of best practices for stormwater management.
Select Board	The Select Board consists of three members elected for a three-year term on a staggered basis. The executive powers of the town are vested in the Select Board, which is the Chief Executive Office of the Town. The Select Board serves as the chief policy making agency of the Town.
Zoning Board of Appeals	The ZBA holds public hearings to consider petitions for a variance or special permit and public hearings on appeals brought to the Board by anyone aggrieved by a decision of the Zoning Enforcement Officer or the Building Inspector.

### *Nonprofit Partners*

In addition to its volunteer Boards and Committees, and municipal staff, Hopedale is home to numerous nonprofit organizations. These entities work closely with the town government and other organizations to coordinate and supplement local and regional efforts. The below noted organizations are especially relevant to town services and facilities.

**Hopedale Community House Inc:** The Hopedale Community House Inc. manages the Hopedale Community House and the Draper Gymnasium. The Draper Family gave both facilities to Hopedale



residents to provide recreational activities in the Town. The Community House has been open since 1923. The Hopedale Community House, Inc. runs a bowling alley in the facility, has meeting and event rooms available for public use, and offers a variety of activities for Hopedale residents, including yoga, Zumba, and rug hooking.

**Hopedale Charitable Corporation:** Hopedale Charitable Corporation aids in the holding and the investing of funds for scientific, charitable, religious, literary, and educational organizations.

**Hopedale Foundation:** The Hopedale Foundation is a philanthropic foundation housed under the Hopedale Community House, Inc. The Foundation offers tuition loan assistance to Hopedale residents who wish to attend college.

**Friends of the Hopedale Library:** The Friends of Hopedale Library was founded in 1983. It is a non-profit consisting of town membership and an executive board. The organization works with Library staff and trustees to aid in providing funds for materials, equipment, and programs that may not be covered by the library's budget. Membership is \$5.00 annually.

**Friends of Historic Hopedale:** The Friends of Historic Hopedale is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to historic preservation, charitable giving, and community philanthropic & educational purposes. Among other programs, they assist in the maintenance and operation of the Little Red Shop Museum.

**Friends of Bright Beginners:** Bright Beginnings is a preschool program that is committed to providing children with developmentally appropriate practices where they can engage and develop physically, socially, and emotionally, and cognitively at their own pace.

**Hopedale Cable Access Inc:** Hopedale Cable Access Inc. has been serving the town of Hopedale since 1985 covering municipal meetings, broadcasting concerts and ceremonies, and providing entertainment and information.

## Municipal Facilities and Services

The Town of Hopedale operates 17 municipal buildings (excluding water and sewer pump stations). Map TSF1 depicts the Town of Hopedale's Major Public Facilities. These buildings include:

- Town Hall
- Library
- Police Station
- Fire Station
- Hopedale Jr./Sr. High School
- Memorial Elementary School
- Bright Beginnings Preschool
- Highway Department (Town Barn and Salt Shed)
- Water Treatment Plant
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Little Red Shop Museum
- Park Facilities (Bandstand, Bath House, and Town Park Bathroom)

The following section details existing conditions at Hopedale facilities.



*Town Hall*

Built and gifted to the Town by George Draper, the Hopedale Town Hall was constructed to celebrate the Town’s political separation from Milford, MA. As detailed in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) National Register listing, the Town Hall is a “wonderful example of high style Richardsonian Romanesque design in a public building.” Constructed in 1886, the three-story, 20,000 sq. ft. building is made of pink Milford granite.



*Photo: Town Hall. Photo Credit: Greg Rogow.*

According to Massachusetts Historical Commission, “The building originally was for mixed use with commercial space in the lower level and first floor. Town offices were on the first floor and meetings of up to 350 people congregating on the second and third floor. The Town Hall was the demarcation of an area of the Hopedale Community which would represent in grand statements, architectural gifts by the industrialist who operated both town and the "shop." Collectively it is one of the great "City Beautiful" expressions of land use development in the Blackstone Valley.”<sup>5</sup>

Today, the first and second floors support town hall services such as Assessing, the Town Clerk, and the Town Administrator. A private business (breakfast restaurant “Beyond Full”) also occupies part of the ground floor. The Board of Health and the Building Commissioner’s Office are in the basement of the building. The second-floor auditorium remains; however, the Town is unable to use the space due to ADA accessibility issues. As shown in Table TSF5, Town Hall is staffed by approximately 13 employees.

**Table TSF5. Town Hall Staffing**

Staff	Full-time (FT) Part-time (PT)
Town Administrator	FT
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator	FT
Treasurer & Collector	FT
Assistant Collector	FT
Assistant Treasurer & Payroll Clerk	FT
Water/Sewer Administrative Assistant	FT
Town Clerk	FT
Assistant Town Clerk	PT
Principal Assessor	FT

<sup>5</sup> MACRIS, 2022

Building Department/Assessing: Administrative Clerk	FT
Board of Health: Secretary	PT
Board of Health: Health Agent	PT
Building Inspector/Commissioner	PT <sup>6</sup>

### Public Schools

The Hopedale Public Schools operate in three school buildings.

The Jr.-Sr. High School building was originally built in 1929, with additions in 1964 and 2001. It now consists of 95,084 square feet with 40 classrooms, a state-of-the-art Media Center, cafeteria, auditorium with a capacity seating of 500, and a stage. Hopedale students in grades 6-12 walk to the Draper Gym for most of their physical education classes.

The Memorial Elementary School was originally built in 1957 and underwent a major addition and renovation in 1995. It consists of 62,575 square feet that include 32 classrooms, a Media Center, a cafeteria, and a gymnasium.

The Bright Beginnings Center at the Park Street School was built in 1913 and comprises 15,020 square feet including its five classrooms. The oldest of the school buildings, its systems and surfaces have been maintained to accommodate the Town’s growing pre-school population. It is minimally accessible according to ADA guidelines. An overview of the three school buildings is presented in Table TSF6 below.

**Table TSF6. Hopedale School Facilities**

Facility	Year Built	Size	Function	Facilities	Student Capacity	Number of Students	Excess Student Capacity	ADA Compliant
Bright Beginnings Center	1913, no additions	15,020 Sq. Ft.	Pre-K (two daily sessions)	5 classrooms	100	110	0	No
Memorial Elementary School	1955, major renovation /expansion in 1995	61,576 Sq. Ft.	Pre-K through Grade 6	32 classrooms, gym, library, media center and computer lab	675	643	23	Yes, fully
Hopedale Junior-Senior High School	1927, renovated in 1964 and 2001 with major addition	73,131 Sq. Ft.	Grades 7 through 12	40 classrooms, media center, library, cafeteria and auditorium (uses Draper Gym for fitness activities)	600	471	129	No, not fully

<sup>6</sup> Shared with the Town of Bellingham.

### *Bancroft Memorial Library*

The Bancroft Memorial Library was originally constructed in 1898 out of local pink Milford granite trimmed in ashlar. The lower level was finished in the mid-1950s, and an elevator was installed in 1998. The library is approximately 6,700 square feet. The building is almost fully compliant with the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the sole exception being the width of the aisles. There are several computers with internet access that are available to the public. In 1999, the Bancroft Memorial Library was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The library is home to the Town's Statue of Hope fountain. Commissioned by the Draper family as a gift to the Town in 1904, the fountain was designed by celebrated sculptor T. Waldo Story. The fountain is located between the Library and Hope Street Extension. The Statue of Hope is an "elaborate fountain, with an exedra wall and bench seating. In the center, a female figure (symbol of Hope) stands atop an orange fountain basin."<sup>7</sup> The monument was restored in 2002.

The library has an ever-increasing circulation of roughly 26,947 items. The collection is made up of books, print periodicals and newspapers, audio books, videocassettes, and DVDs. The library is considered a "mini-net" affiliate of the Central-Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing service (C-W MARS), which provides an online catalog for all public and academic libraries in the Central and Western regions of Massachusetts. This shared online catalog allows patrons access to a collection of over 6 million items from participating libraries. Patrons can order items from home or through the library staff. The Library Director estimates that a family of four that makes full use of the library's resources (books, DVDs, videos, programs, museum passes, etc.) can save as much as \$10,000 per year in rentals, purchases, and passes.

The Friends of the Library group raises funds to help support the library's programs. Most of the programs are offered at the library, although some are held at the Hopedale Community House. The Hopedale Cultural Council and Hopedale Charitable Foundation also provide funding for programs held at the library.

Staff at the library includes the Library Director (full-time), Youth Services Librarian (full-time hourly), Senior Library/Technical Services Assistant (full-time hourly), two Library Assistants (part-time), and a Library Page (part-time). Programs at the Bancroft Memorial Library include:

- Fundraising activities such as an annual book sale, raffles, art shows
- Children's story hour (one per week in summer)
- Young adult/adult book groups
- Summer reading program
- Holiday programs (Halloween and Christmas, two per month for children)
- Puppet shows, singers, dancers, concerts, crafts, etc.
- Craft sessions on Fridays and Saturdays in summer
- School visits on Community Reading Day

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<sup>7</sup> MACRIS, 2022

- Passes to regional and Boston-area cultural events (with assistance from the Cultural Council)
- Book group (meets once a month)
- Knitting charity group (meets once a week)



*Photo: Statue of Hope at Bancroft Memorial Library. Photo Credit: XX*

### *Council on Aging/ Senior Center*

The Hopedale Council on Aging (COA) aims to meet the social, cultural, recreational, and health needs of older adults (older than 60 years of age). The COA serves an estimated 1,120 Hopedale seniors. It provides information to seniors concerning healthcare and drug insurance coverage, Social Security, housing, food stamps, and caregiver support. It also serves as a resource for those seeking information on any federal assistance programs for health insurance, food, or heating assistance.

The COA does not own any buildings or major capital equipment. For the last 50 years the COA has been using space in the Hopedale Community House. This three-story brick building was built in 1929 and is managed by the non-profit Community House Foundation. For the Senior Center, the COA has use of a room that is approximately 1,000 square feet in size. The COA does not have to pay rent for this space and the Foundation pays for all the building's utilities and maintenance.

The Council has a shared agreement with the Milford Council on Aging to provide travel within the region

(Hopedale, Milford & Upton) for seniors during the weekdays. The COA has a \$0 lease for a van from the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA). The COA uses Traveler's Transit (a third-party vendor) for provided out-of-town transportation.

The COA's core programs include:

- Local and out-of-town medical and errand transportation
- Meals on Wheels Program
- Enrollment in Federal Fuel (SMOC) and Food Stamp Assistance (SNAP) programs
- Enrollment in Medicare and Medicaid related assistance programs
- Health and prescription drug insurance counseling
- Wellness, and flu clinics and crisis assistance for elders and their caregivers
- Veterans' Services Program and Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE)
- Health Insurance Counseling Program
- Senior Tax Credit Program

The COA has three part-time employees. These include the Director, Outreach Worker, and Staff Assistant. The council utilizes two Van Drivers. The COA makes great use of volunteers, with more than 40 volunteers. The Council on Aging does not have any secretarial support.

### *Police Department*

The police station is a repurposed office building constructed in the 1980s, with renovations in 1996. The station is a three-story wood building divided into two segments, with each segment consisting of approximately 2,400 square feet. The building contains the Town's emergency response dispatch center and a State certified lock-up facility. The building is fully ADA compliant. The Police Department has 13 full-time Police Officers, four full-time Dispatchers, two part-time Reserve Officers, and two part-time Dispatchers. The Police Department has an in-house dispatch that receives approximately 14,000 calls per year.

Police Department programs include:

- Child identification program
- Free gun locks
- Annual bike safety class (will continue pending grant funding)
- School resource officer for all schools
- CPR classes for local schools and residents
- Car seat checks and installation
- Safety talks to schools and other organizations including Scouts and the elderly
- Tours of the station
- Ride-a-long program
- Distribution of free coffee, hot chocolate, and cookies at Christmas tree lighting ceremony
- Safe rider award program for children that wear bike helmets (will continue pending grant funding)
- Mock O.U.I. accident event during prom season

- Officer Phil Program (teaches pedestrian, bicycle, and personal safety) (will continue pending grant funding)
- House property watch
- Yearly exhibit at the Day in the Park
- Halloween, Santa, and Easter bunny parade

As of July 1, 2022, there is a new system of regional animal control in Hopedale. Led by the Uxbridge Police Chief, the Towns of Mendon, Uxbridge, Blackstone, and Hopedale share an animal control department. There are two full-time staff members. The animal control department is headquartered at the Uxbridge Police Station. The animal control shelter is in Blackstone, so the Town of Blackstone manages the shelter. The other towns in this regional animal control department, including Hopedale, pay the Town of Uxbridge for animal control services.

According to the Town of Hopedale's 2021 Annual Report, the Hopedale Police Department (HPD) is working to improve public safety and trust between police and town residents, while maintaining the quality of its traditional duties such as traffic enforcement, patrolling, and responding to emergencies and calls. HPD has adopted the guidelines of the Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission. This includes establishing certification and decertification processes for officers. POST includes improved guidelines on suspension of certification and reprimand due to certain misconduct if necessary.

### *Fire Department*

The Hopedale Fire Station was originally built in 1914. It is a two-story brick building with a full basement. The building was substantially rehabilitated between 2001 and 2004 to add two additional bays and to make the building ADA accessible. The building comprises 21,500 square feet.

The Fire Department uses fire hydrants for fire suppression in approximately 90% of Hopedale. Municipal water services the hydrants. For the small portion of Hopedale that is not covered by fire hydrants, the Fire Department has a Water Shuttle Plan. The Water Shuttle Plan calls for utilization of eight tanker trucks to shuttle water from either a hydrant or from the Hopedale Pond or the Spindleville Pond, depending on the location of the fire. Areas with potentially inadequate fire suppression via fire hydrants include the Neck Hill Road area, upper Freedom Street area, and Overdale, Western Ave, and North Street.

As shown in Table TSF7, the Fire Department consists of 30 full-time or on-call staff. Of the 30 staff members, 16 are certified Emergency Management Technicians (EMTs). One of the full-time firefighters serves as the Director of Emergency Medical Services while one of the part-time firefighters conducts quality assurance reviews for the Department's medical reports. The Department does not have any clerical support. There is a joint Police/Fire/Ambulance dispatch center that operates out of the Police Station. The Department has had its own ambulance service since 1999. Each firefighter receives at least 48 hours of training per year. The Ambulatory unit provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) services.

The Fire Department is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days per week, 365 days per year. For any



concurrent incidents or incidents requiring more than the on-duty firefighters, off-duty firefighters will be called in from home. The Hopedale Fire Department receives about 1,500 emergency calls per year. In 2021, there were 987 EMS/Ambulatory calls, and 555 Fire-Related calls to the Hopedale Fire Department. The average response time for ambulatory and fire-related called is approximately two minutes.

**Table TSF7. Fire Department Staffing**

Staff	Full-time (FT) or Paid Call (PC)
Chief/EMT	1 FT
Deputy Chief/EMT	1 FT
Lieutenant/ EMT	1 FT
FF/EMT	8 FT
Paid on-call FF	16 PC
Volunteer FF	4 PC

*Emergency Management*

As a part of the Hopedale Fire Department, the Hopedale Emergency Management Agency (HEMA) consists of the Fire Chief acting as Director (providing one or two hours a week) and an eight-member all-volunteer Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT). HEMA does not have any paid staff; rather, the Director and CERT members handle all tasks. HEMA is responsible for handling the response logistics for large-scale emergencies such as natural disasters and civil emergencies. HEMA spends half of its time undergoing emergency preparedness training and the other half securing equipment and supplies.



*Photo: Hopedale Fire Department in service on a snowy day. Photo Credit: Josh O*

### Highway Department

Hopedale Highway Department facilities include a highway barn, a storage garage, and a sand/salt shed located at the end of Depot Street. The main highway barn was built in 1941 and is in poor condition. It is a single-story brick building consisting of approximately 3,000 square feet. The metal storage garage was constructed in the 1980s and contains approximately 2,100 square feet. The sand/salt storage facility needs to be moved into a secure indoor facility because it is currently located within the municipal water well's Zone II contribution area and poses a contamination threat to the wells. In 2003 the Town appropriated \$65,000 for the purpose of securing a new sand/salt shed location, but the funds have yet to be expended as finding a new location for this facility has proven difficult. Unfortunately, the lots that contain the Department's buildings are too small to support expansion. As of 2022, some of the Department's equipment is stored on land owned by the Grafton & Upton Railroad. The Town is in discussions with the Railroad to secure a portion of the land for the Highway Department.

The Highway Department consists of seven full-time employees, including the Highway Superintendent. Collectively, these staff maintain approximately 30 miles of Town roads. An additional 3.5 miles of new subdivision roads slated to come online soon. The Department maintains Route 16, but not Route 140, which the State maintains through its Mass Highway District #3 Regional Office. The Department also maintains all town-owned athletic fields and parks, including the Parklands conservation area and its interior road. Highway staff clear sidewalks, fix road signs, mow and trim along roadsides, remove rubbish for town-owned properties, clean catch basins, plow snow, and repair pavement. The department also has an elected Tree Warden to manage trees, including dying trees and branches.

The Department oversees the construction of new roads in subdivisions to make sure they meet the Town's roadway design standards. This includes reviewing subdivision plans in conjunction with the Building Inspector and other municipal department heads. The Department also issues driveway permits.

### Park Commission

The Hopedale Park Commission is an elected board that governs Hopedale's recreational spaces. The Commission is staffed by three Chairmen supported by a clerk who works four hours per week. The Commission oversees and works to maintain outdoor spaces, including:

- *Town Park:* At the Town Park, the Commission runs activities for children and tennis lessons for all ages. It also hosts the Hopedale Youth Baseball and Babe Ruth leagues.
- *Hopedale Pond and Parklands (further described below):* At Hopedale Pond and Parklands, the Commission manages weeds and harmful vegetation around the pond and focuses on water quality.
- *Phillips Field:* The Commission conducts fertilization and grub control at these public softball and Baseball fields.
- *Draper Field:* The Park Commission has administrative control over a land grant that includes the play and grass areas of Draper Field.
- *Community Events:* In 2021, the Commission sponsored and facilitated programming such as Band Concert, Hopedale Fairy Walk, Winter Stroll, and Day in the Park.

### *Hopedale Parklands*

The Hopedale Parklands was another City Beautiful project sponsored by the Drapers. The company created a massive reservoir to power its mills and undertook an ambitious project around the mill pond. The company hired famous landscape architect Warren Henry Manning to create a park around the mill. It served the dual purposes of preventing development around the mill and providing residents with a place to recreate. “Over the next decade, Hopedale spent \$2,500 a year on developing approximately 1,000 acres of land into a public park. More than 4 miles of winding forest trails were created. Picnic areas, tennis courts, a bathhouse and a boat house were built. Sand was brought in, and an artificial beach was created on the shores of the mill pond.”<sup>8</sup>

### *Bathhouse and Beach at Hopedale Pond*

The Bathhouse and Beach at Hopedale Pond are located within the Parklands. Coming from Hopedale Street, the beach and bathhouse are the first landmarks within the park. They date to turn of the century (1899 and 1904, respectively). According to local historical databases,

Swimming at Hopedale Pond peaked in 1968, with over 18,000 townspeople registered – an increase of 6,000 over the previous five years. But the numbers would slowly drop, until swimming in the pond was restricted in 1997. The town’s selectmen finally closed the town’s beach in 2003 due to funding issues and “lack of interest.” But the bath house still stands as a reminder of a fight for the right to take a dip.<sup>9</sup>



*Bath House at the Parklands, (date). Photo Source: XX*

<sup>8</sup> The Parklands. National Park Service. Retrieved 2022. <https://www.nps.gov/places/the-parklands.htm>

<sup>9</sup> <http://hopedalewomen.org/2019/05/15/a-highly-appreciated-utility/>

### *Hopedale Town Park*

Hopedale Town Park is a multi-use recreational space open from 8:30 AM until 10 PM. A baseball field and batting cage, tennis courts, a basketball court, a bandstand, and a playground are in the park. These sports facilities host games for school leagues and townwide leagues as well as other school and Park Department events. Usage applications are required for official events at park facilities.

### *Community Facilities not Owned by the Town*

Hopedale is home to several facilities that are not owned by the Town but provide public benefit. These facilities are primarily a legacy of the Draper Corporation.

**Hopedale Community House:** The Hopedale Community House and Draper Gymnasium are managed by the non-profit Hopedale Community House Inc. Both facilities were commissioned by the Draper Family for public use. The Community House was designed as a social and civic center for Hopedale residents and Draper Corporation employees. It was planned and built to satisfy what George A. Draper felt was a missing piece within his birthplace of Hopedale. The Community House has been open since 1923.

**Draper Gym:** The Draper Gym was built in 1954. It is officially known as the George Albert Draper Gymnasium. “Establishment of Draper Gym enabled development of a full school athletic program, which was not possible prior to the donation. The Draper Gym was accepted by the townspeople as a necessary asset for the community to share, and spark interest in physical improvement.”<sup>10</sup>

## Utilities and Infrastructure

### *Electric Supply*

The Town receives its electricity from National Grid.

### *Renewable Energy*

The Town does not operate any renewable energy facilities currently. In 2017, the Town signed an agreement with BlueWave Community Solar (BCS) to subscribe to a solar farm project located in Westport Massachusetts. BCS is a community solar provider and alternative energy financing company. The contracted amount of kwh’s supplied to the Town by the Project, and corresponding savings, is based on kwh usage by some of the higher volume Town departments. The solar farm project went online in December 2018.

### *Water Supply*

The Town of Hopedale provides water for about 90% of its residents (as shown in Map TSF\_\_). The downtown and surrounding areas have Town water, while four streets of Neck Hill Road and three streets off Freedom Road rely on private wells. Town water supply comes from ground water. Two groundwater wellfields supply the water system. The Mill Street wellfield is a tubular system comprised of 32 two-and-

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.hope1842.com/hope1842/gymMilfordNewsRvsd.html>

a-half-inch wells. The Green Street wellfield consists of one 36-inch gravel-packed well and two eight-inch satellite wells. Water from both wellfields is treated for acidity (pH) and corrosion control (iron). The State has permitted the Mill Street wellfield withdrawal at 400,000 gallons per day and the Green Street Well for 250,000 gallons per day, for a combined water system yield of 650,000 gallons per day. Water demand exceeds current capacity in town, resulting in very poor existing water capacity (see Issues and Opportunities section for more details on this topic.)

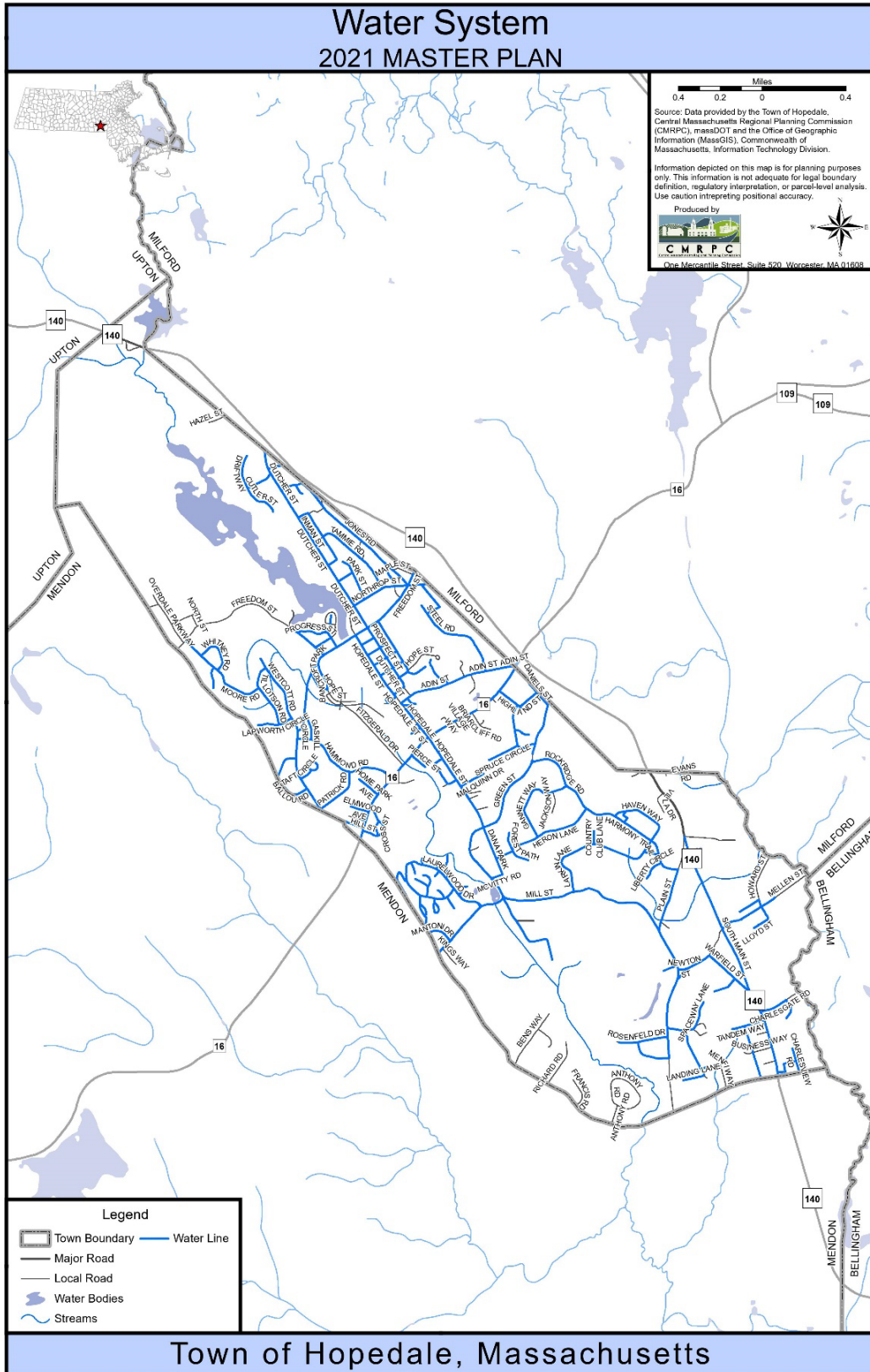
A water treatment plant in Hopedale was built in 2011 and is in good condition. The building houses the lab and the Manager's office with a four-bay garage. The water department mainly uses four other facilities. The Greene Street Pump Station was built in the mid-1980s and is in fair condition. The pump station houses one well with two wells outside. The building houses pumps, meters, sample taps, and electronic controls. The Mill Street Pump Station was built in the mid-1940s, is in fair condition, and serves as the pump house for mill street well field. The Moore Road Booster station, built in the 1990s, is in good condition and serves as an in-ground booster station to increase water pressure to residents in higher elevations in town. Finally, the Williams Street storage tank is an 849,000-gallon water storage tank. Built in the 1940s, it is in poor condition and needs maintenance. The Department purchases water from the Milford Water Company during periods of high demand (usually the summer months). Milford serves as the Town's emergency water supply source. On average, the Department purchases between 24-to-32 million gallons of water from Milford annually.

A three-member elected Board of Commissioners manages the Water and Sewer Departments. The Commissioners are elected to three-year terms. The Board meets monthly. A professional water and sewer Manager is responsible for the day-to-day administration of both departments.

The water department is staffed as follows:

- Manager (full-time): Responsible for all aspects of the Water and Sewer Department operations.
- Water Department Forma (full-time): Responsible for oversight of daily operations and state reporting. Primary certified treatment operator.
- Operations Supervisor Water & Sewer (full-time): Primary certified distribution operator. In charge of all maintenance operations within Water and Sewer Departments and budgetary oversight.
- Water operator (full-time): Responsible for general Water Department operations.
- Administrative secretary (full-time): Responsible for billing, collections, auditing, and scheduling for the Water and Sewer Departments.

# Map TSF2. Hopedale Water Supply



Source: CMRPC, 2022

### *Wastewater System*

Municipal wastewater services are available to approximately 60% of Hopedale residents. The services are generally available in the downtown and surrounding areas. Most of the southern areas of Hopedale (south of Route 16) do not have sewer service. There, residents rely on private septic systems. The Town of Hopedale owns, operates, and maintains two wastewater pumping stations as well as the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is located at the junction of Route 16 and Mendon Street. Wastewater is treated and then drains into the Mill River. The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in the Town of Hopedale was built in the early 1980s.

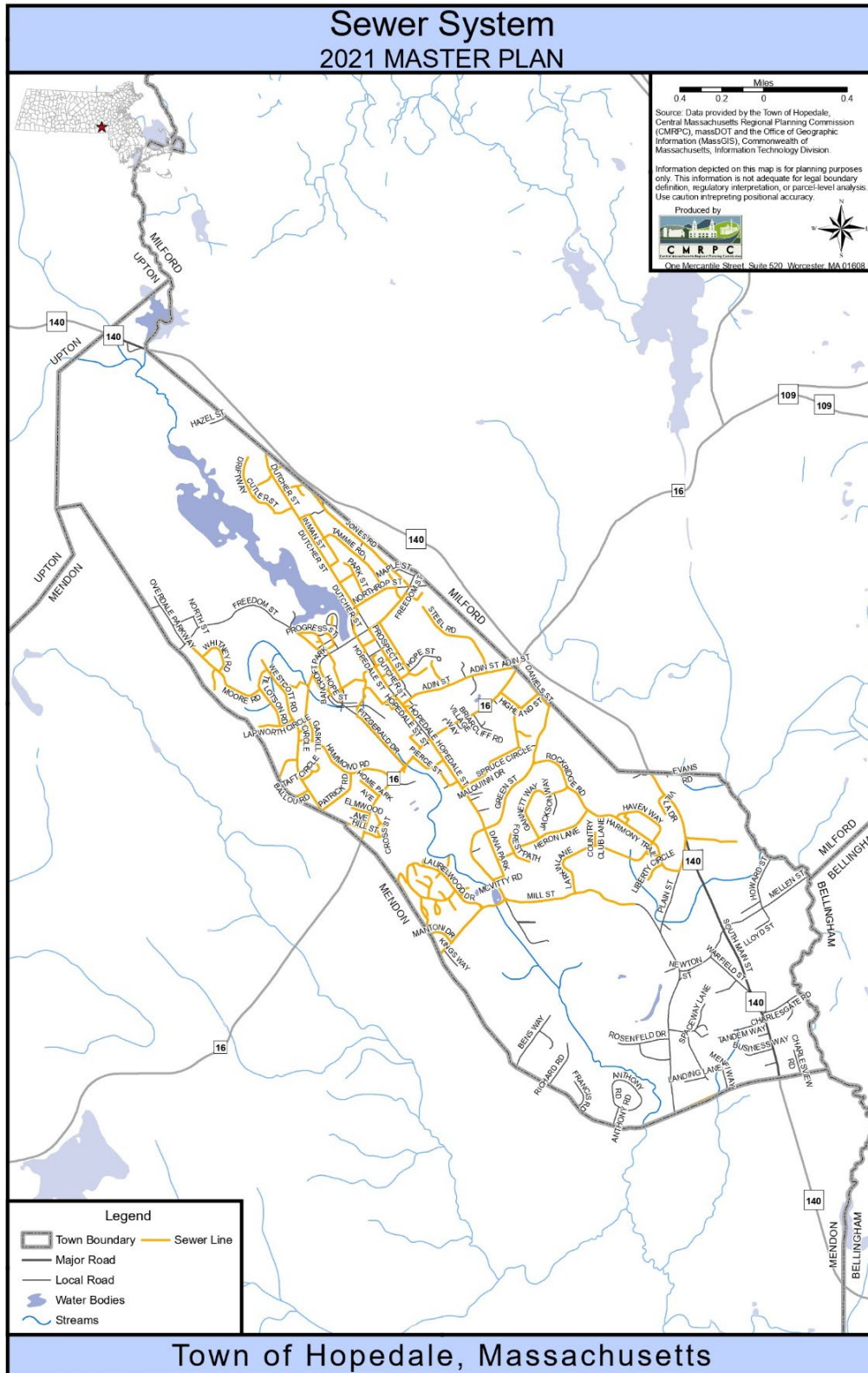
In addition to the Hopedale Wastewater Plant, the town is home to the Milford Wastewater Treatment Plant. Each of these Plants primarily treats wastewater from their namesake communities; however, each also treats a small portion of the other town's wastewater. This arrangement is necessary due to geography and where the treated water will be deposited.

The Hopedale Wastewater Treatment Plant is in good condition. In 2018, the town added a 20x10 facility to provide fine screening and demolished an outdated building. Other recent improvements include the installation of high efficiency motors and drives that utilize reused water, and new secondary clarifiers also driven by high efficiency motors and reuse pump motors.

The Sewer Department is staffed as follows:

- Chief Operator (full-time): Responsible for the operations and compliance of the wastewater treatment plant and collection system.
- Assistant Chief Operator (full-time): Assists the Chief Operator in all aspects of the wastewater operations and collection system.
- Lab technician/ operator (full-time): Ensures compliance with water quality discharge, and general operations of the wastewater plant and collection system.
- Operator (full-time): Oversees general operations of the wastewater facility and collection system.

# Map TSF3. Hopedale Sewer System



Source: CMRPC, 2022



### Stormwater

In April 2021, Hopedale adopted a Stormwater Management Bylaw, and the Town completed a Stormwater Management Plan in June 2021 with the help of the Weston & Sampson design and consulting firm in order to comply with MS4 general permits from the US EPA. The Town’s stormwater regulations focus on draining stormwater through natural and manmade infrastructure into water bodies in an efficient and safe manner so that it can replenish aquifers, streams and rivers, and other water bodies.

### Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, Hopedale contracts weekly curbside trash and recycling pick-up to E.L. Harvey and Sons, Inc. of Westborough, MA. The Town also runs the Hopedale Recycling Center, which can be accessed through a Route 16 entrance at the Town’s Sewage Treatment Plant. To use the recycling center, residents must purchase a per vehicle per year permit from the Hopedale Board of Health Office.

### Underground Storage Tanks

Hopedale has five underground storage tanks located within town boundaries. Underground storage tanks are important to inventory and monitor due to their potential adverse environmental effects should there be a leak, spill, or some other type of problem. Table TSF8 details the location of underground storage tanks in Hopedale. The below noted Rosenfeld Concrete site is closed with an Activity Use Limitation (AUL) due to the underground tank and soil contamination, limiting future development possibilities.

**Table TSF8. Underground Storage Tanks**

Address	Identifier
404 South Main Street	Hopedale Mart
75 Plain Street	Rosenfeld Concrete
90 Mill Street	Hopedale County Club
115 Mendon Street	Cumberland Farms
7 Depot Street	Hopedale Highway Department

Source: MASSGIS

### Street and Traffic Lights

The Town of Hopedale has 415 streetlights. All the streetlights are owned by National Grid and are on an S-1 tariff rate.<sup>11</sup> The Town is in the process of purchasing the streetlights from National Grid so that they can be converted to LED. The Hopedale School District also has one (1) streetlight at the Jr/Sr High School, and the Hopedale Housing Authority has two (2) streetlights on its properties. The Town owns and operates one set of six (6) traffic lights at the intersection of Mendon and Hopedale streets.

<sup>11</sup> S-1 is the electricity tariff rate for communities that operate streetlights owned and maintained by National Grid.

## *Cemeteries*

Hopedale contains two cemeteries, both of which are maintained by Town.

### **Hopedale Village Cemetery**

The Hopedale Village Cemetery was a planned industrial cemetery and burial ground. Designed by Adin Ballou in 1886, it became a resting place for many Drapers, Bancrofts, and other individuals that influenced the progress of Hopedale. As an industrial cemetery, is served as not only a burial ground but a recreational area complete with paths for carriages and gardens designed to serve as a reminder of Hopedale's past and boost local patriotism.<sup>12</sup>

### **South Hopedale Cemetery**

The South Hopedale Cemetery is an early rural New England cemetery. The Cemetery is informal in design. Individual marker placements and family plots are outlined with raised granite curbs. The Cemetery is located at the crossroads of the community's earliest streets. The site was laid out in the late 1700's to serve South Milford and was their second oldest cemetery. When Hopedale separated from South Milford, it became the town's oldest cemetery. Markers within the Cemetery reflect the history and evolution of the 1790's to the present day.

## **Issues, Opportunities, and Recommendations**

The issues, opportunities, and recommendations presented herein were through outreach to municipal staff, community surveys, town reports, and other means. The identified issues and opportunities directly inform the recommendations for this chapter.

## **Municipal Processes and Procedures**

### *Capital Planning*

Hopedale is working to improve its financial position and fund deferred capital improvements. The Town is considering is using debt and capital exclusions instead of a tax levy override to make up for capital expenditure and budget shortfalls. This could allow the Town to raise increased revenue in the present without permanently increasing the Town's tax levy limit. For the FY2022 budget, the Town includes both the previously applied automatic 2.5% tax levy increase and a debt exclusion. Debt exclusion limits are set at bond authorizations for capital purchases which require a two-thirds vote to approve at a town meeting. Free cash, which is unrestricted leftover funds from the previous year, can also be used as revenue in later years. Hopedale's free cash has been increasing since FY2019.

A significant amount of the Town's property tax levy has gone uncollected in the past few years, although

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<sup>12</sup> file:///C:/Users/dcdut/Downloads/HOP.800.pdf  
<https://www.hope1842.com/hope1842/cemeteryhopedalevill.html>

the percentage of uncollected property taxes has decreased from 9.26% to 7.21% from FY2017 to FY2021. The Town should work on strategies to further reduce this percentage.

The Town also expects significant tax revenue of \$100-200K per year from a new cannabis business in town. Other major opportunities to increase revenue in future years include:

- Exploring commercial development
- Department enterprise revenue such as from the recently agreed-upon ambulance interlocal transfers from Milford Regional Medical Center (MRMC)
- Fee-for service programs for trash/recycling and fall leaf collection
- Negotiating more cost-effective health insurance benefits for employees and retirees
- Establishing financial policies through multi-year forecasting and capital expense planning to make prudent financial decisions.

## Town Hall

The municipal Town Hall is in serious need of repair. Built in 1887, the building suffers from deferred maintenance and does not meet contemporary standards for accessibility or use. The building is not ADA accessible and there is no elevator in the building. The only wheelchair ramps are in front of the building. The Board of Health and the Building Commissioner's Office are in the basement of the building, and neither office is ADA accessible. The Town should consider adding an elevator to the Town Hall.

The heating system for the entire building needs to be updated as well. The building envelope needs repairing, to prevent rain from permeating the building. The Town Hall has also had issues with basement flooding, as well as the restaurant in the building leaking grease into the basement. The front steps of the building are deteriorating, and the windows and plumbing may need maintenance as well. To address some of these issues, the town should investigate a Green Communities competitive grant.

Additionally, there is a large amount of wasted space in the Town Hall. There is an auditorium on the second floor that is unused as a public auditorium space because it does not have an elevator. There is the possibility of using the auditorium as office space. Turning the Town Hall into a collaborative workspace would provide office space for the community and perhaps offset the building's operating expenses.

## Bancroft Memorial Library

There are many opportunities for the library to enhance its services. The building needs an HVAC system upgrade and repair/restoration of the building envelope. These issues should be examined for Green Communities competitive grant opportunities. The library would also benefit from expanded indoor and outdoor programming space. The Community Room is used for most of the programming yet is undersized given the typical turn-out for programs and events. Parking, including accessible parking, at the library is limited.

## Senior Center

The space allotted to the COA at the Community House is undersized and not fully ADA compliant.

Eventually, the COA would like to find a space, or additional space, that can meet these long-standing needs. Shared space, such as in a future town hall, that included common or community rooms, a kitchen, and a gym, would help the COA meet the needs of its growing senior population. The COA also needs more full-time staff to adequately staff its existing and future services.

## Schools

The Master Plan Community Survey indicated that Hopedale parents are very happy with the quality of the staff and teaching at Hopedale Public Schools. However, the survey underscored a need for building improvements and repairs. The town can investigate whether such improvements would be competitive applications for Green Communities grants.

In addition, the School Department has stated that two of the three schools are at full capacity. A discussion of future space needs should be initiated sooner rather than later. As the Town and School Department explores strategies to increase school capacity, it should consider several related needs:

- The Draper gym, which is owned by the Hopedale foundation, is outdated and consists of a single large court. Similarly, the Memorial School gym needs cosmetic updates. It too consists of just one court. Limited court space makes it challenging to coordinate practice and games for the town's six basketball teams.
- Residents also indicated a desire for more space in the Hopedale Public Schools dedicated to the visual and performing arts.
- Parking supply and quality is an issue at each of the schools. Creative solutions for student parking at the junior/senior high school, and for teachers, admin, and guests at the elementary school, are needed.

## Water and Sewer

The Town water supply comes from ground water supply. According to the Hopedale Water and Sewer Departments, water demand currently far exceeds capacity. Without additional water sources and storage, the water department will not be able to support the current summer water demands, let alone additional development in Hopedale. The town is actively searching for new sources of funding to address this issue. Hopedale should continue to pursue funding and explore additional funding sources, such as the Drinking Water Supply Protection Program through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA).<sup>13</sup>

Hopedale is also currently planning for the establishment of an additional water tank. This new water tank has already completed a system study and hydraulic evaluation. The tank's citing is also completed. The department is in the process of tackling the next step: final engineering plans. In addition to the water source and storage issue, PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances) treatment of the water is also necessary. PFAS are a group of manufactured chemicals used in many everyday items, such as food packaging, clothing, and non-stick cookware. These chemicals are long-lasting, can contaminate drinking

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<sup>13</sup> "Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program." Mass.gov, <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/drinking-water-supply-protection-grant-program>.

water, and cause various health defects in people. One public water well is no longer used due to PFAS contamination. Three public water sources in town are nearing the Maximum Containment Level for PFAS and will also need restoration. The town should continue looking into funding for these issues.

Drought is expected to become a more common issue in Hopedale as this century progresses due to climate change. Water bans have become commonplace in the Town, and the Town should work to ensure the safety of vulnerable populations, including the elderly, in cases of drought. The Town is considering ways to increase its water supply and remove PFAS contamination from this supply.

As for wastewater, expanded sewer is an opportunity. Expanding town sewer was presented in a town meeting, and it was not approved by the town. However, although it didn't pass town meeting and expanding town sewer is not desirable now, the town should continue to assess the need for expanded wastewater and monitor political viability. Public opinion on expanding town sewer can change over the course of 10 or 20 years. In addition, a grant may become available to expand town sewer that could incentivize the motion to be passed in town meeting. The town should continue to monitor and explore options and resident support for expanded sewer. Currently, the Wastewater Treatment plant receives a higher amount of sewage than the design capacity. This is due to infiltration during events of heavy rain. Each year, the department conducts more than \$100,000 in sewer main relining to attempt to reduce unwanted flows. The town should expand its sewer system after these infiltration issues are corrected.

The Wastewater Treatment plant facility building is also in need of roof repair and Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) remediation, which will cost an estimated \$4 million. The department is also waiting to handle these issues until debt is lowered. Borrowing additional funds at this time would increase rates and assessments to an undesirable level.

## Police Department

The police station is in good condition, but it lacks the space to accommodate the Department's needs, as it was built in a renovated office space. Long term, Hopedale's Police Department (HPD) hopes find a new location for the station with a larger amount of space. It can also work to green its police fleet and reduce fuel expenses through various grant programs available through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (i.e., Mass EVIP) and Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (Green Communities).

## Fire Department

The Hopedale Fire Station needs several repairs, installations, and replacements for the Department to function optimally. The most important needs for the Fire Station are architectural improvements, increased spatial capacity, and additional equipment.

The Fire Station has reached its spatial capacity. It has been overgrown since renovation of the station in the early 2000s. While the building contains a total of 21,500 square feet, the facility cannot accommodate additional equipment. The Town should explore options to increase Fire Department space, including an additional building for the department, and redesigning of the garage doors to accommodate large equipment. These issues may be addressed by repairs or redesign of the garage

doors, or an additional space to be used in addition to the station. The Department is also understaffed and looking to hire four additional full-time positions.

## Emergency Management

The Hopedale Police Station building is very old, and the Fire Station is currently at maximum capacity. One option for housing emergency services is the establishment of a Municipal Center that would also serve as a hub for Emergency Management. The Municipal Center can combine the resources and personnel of Hopedale Police, Fire, and other town offices to improve public safety in town.

In terms of emergency situations, Hopedale has several churches, schools, and public buildings in town that can be used as emergency shelters. The Town should consider installing or updating emergency generators in the Hopedale Gymnasium and the Hopedale Junior-Senior High School, Senior Center/Community House, and Hopedale Memorial School. The Hopedale Housing Authority should consider installing emergency generators in all its buildings. Atria Draper Assisted Living has an emergency generator but should consider making evacuation plans in case of emergency to help ensure the safety of incapacitated patients.

Hopedale residents want to see more education about potential hazards facing the Town as well as more outreach regarding the Town's CodeRED emergency alert system, Town website, and Town social media pages as resources that can help the community prepare for and address potential hazards.

## Highway Department

### *Facilities and Staffing*

The Highway Department's main garage was built in 1941, and the mechanics garage and salt shed were both built in the early 1980s. The garages are in fair condition; however, the department has outgrown the buildings, and is forced to sit much of its equipment outside. The Highway Department needs a larger salt shed and a separate wash bay for department equipment.

### *Roads*

Severe snowstorms, ice storms, and Nor'easters are among Hopedale's high-risk hazards. This is especially the case with the Town's roads, as the Town receives an average snowfall of 45 inches per year. Roadways such as Green Street, Rockridge Road, Adin Street, Cemetery Street, and Hope Street, can experience icing, while snow drift can be an issue on Hopedale Street, Freedom Street, and the privately-owned Fitzgerald Drive. However, the Town is well-equipped to manage snowstorms, especially if places to push snow off roadways to can be more easily found.

Bridges on Freedom Street, Mill Street (a historically significant bridge), and Mellen Street need repairs, and culverts throughout town need to be inventoried and repaired when needed; the most vulnerable culverts include those on Route 16 and Cook, Dutcher, and Mendon Streets.

In 2021 the Town received a grant to study downtown parking and traffic circulation. If the community decides to change the layout of street grids as a result of this study, it should consider adding

infrastructure which reduces impervious cover and helps with stormwater management. However, any new development should be undertaken in a way which minimizes soil disturbance.

### *Flooding*

Hopedale averages 49 inches of rain per year, and precipitation is expected to increase over this century due to climate change. Flooding is a moderate risk, especially near Hopedale rivers and ponds. This flooding includes minor flooding caused by drainage problems, culverts in poor condition, areas with low elevation, and beaver activity as well as major 100-year floods or worse. Green infrastructure development in town can help mitigate flooding as well as polluting runoff. Specific flooding hazards include:

- The Town’s highway department building and salt shed are vulnerable to flooding from the Mill River. Underground fuel tanks run by the highway department are also at risk of flooding.
- The primary evacuation routes out of the Town are Route 140 and Route 16, and they both have bridges vulnerable to flooding and in the 100-year flood zones. Several secondary evacuation routes also are at risk of flooding.

### *Beaver activity*

Beaver dams have been impacting Hopedale’s parklands, pond levels, recreational facilities (draper field flooding) and privately owned properties. The Town should identify strategies to reduce the impacts of the beaver population. Beaver controls should be considered in some cases to control flooding and when culverts are being maintained and/or replaced.

### *Dead trees*

High winds from severe snowstorms and thunderstorms and, in rare cases, hurricanes and tornadoes, have been known to cause trees to fall in the Town; trees are vulnerable to these storms throughout the whole Town, but especially along Adin, Dutcher, and Freedom Streets. The Town’s high-water table may also be harming tree health. Invasive Bittersweet have also been known to wrap around and harm hardwood trees in Town, causing an increase in tree mortality, tree vulnerability to extreme weather, and dead tree clean-up, while invasive Winter Moths and Gypsy Moths can also infest trees and cause similar effects.

Wildfires/brushfires are also a threat to trees and other vegetation in town, especially in overgrown and leaf-littered parklands as well as near the Grafton-Upton railroad.

Routine trimming and other maintenance of trees can help the Town reduce the burden of clean-up after storms as well as reduce wildfire risk; Hopedale already conducts annual roadside mowing as part of this maintenance effort. However, the Town could do more in actively managing, removing, and replacing trees so they will not fall and damage roads, powerlines, and homes.

### *Dams*

Dam failure is a concern for the Town. There are four dams in Hopedale, three of which have a “Significant Hazard” hazard code by the State and the other (Factory Pond Dam) which has not been assigned a hazard code. The privately-owned Mill Pond Dam has not been maintained since 2013 and is in poor

condition. The privately-owned Hopedale Pond Dam is an earthen dam near a gas pipeline which cannot be turned off due to mechanical and structural issues and would lead to disaster downstream if it failed. The Spindleville Pond Dam, which is owned by the Town, was rebuilt ten years ago by Massachusetts authorities but still needs repairs due to storm debris accumulation. The privately-owned Hopedale Pond Dam is being repaired. There is a significant amount of drainage area that leads into Hopedale Pond, and this combined with several dams upstream from Hopedale in towns such as Hopkinton and Milford are also a concern; dam failure upstream could also lead to disastrous effects in the Town.

## Park Commission

### *Budgetary constraints and deferred projects*

The Park Commission is working to ensure that all park facilities are high quality and accessible to all residents. Its ability to maintain, expand and make continuous improvements to existing parks/recreation areas is limited due to a lack of resources. Various deferred maintenance and enhancement projects require funding. For example, Hopedale has ample youth programs (baseball, soccer, softball basketball, field hockey, tennis, etc.); however, facilities to support these programs are on average substandard.

Beyond repairing and maintaining all existing parks facilities, the Commission should undertake a feasibility study for upgrades and boat access at the bathhouse at the Parklands. Installation of bleachers at local fields would also enhance recreation opportunities in town. Hopedale Pond, which requires annual treatments for invasive species, would benefit from an additional treatment every 4-5 years at an additional cost of \$40-50,000. This would provide adequate protection from invasive species for at least a portion of the pond and support its possible expanded use.

### *Development pressures*

The town is experiencing development pressures from several angles. Projects in litigation between the Town and Grafton and Upton Railroad could reduce the overall footprint and/or have environmental impacts on the Parklands. Potential housing developments off Overdale Parkway could also impact the open space and recreation area footprints. Future development of the Draper Mill is another potential project with impacts to be determined. The Town should consider proactively purchasing Hopedale land from private property owners to preserve the Parklands and expand parks, recreational areas, and facilities.

## Municipal Vehicle Fleet

Opportunities to upgrade the vehicle fleet are underway. In its efforts to become a Green Community, Hopedale identified and committed to strategies and policies to make its municipal vehicle fleets more energy efficient. The Town adopted a Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy that says the town will only purchase fuel-efficient vehicles whenever such vehicles are available and practical (off-road vehicles, motorcycles, heavy-duty vehicles, and police cruisers are exempt from the policy). Implementing this policy will help the town reduce fuel consumption and expenses. Potential fuel-efficient vehicle projects eligible for grant funds include purchasing electric vehicles, electric vehicle charging stations, and Idle-Right devices to save energy while vehicles are idling.



Along with the Green Communities program, there are numerous other grant and funding opportunities for achieving energy efficiency in a municipal vehicle fleet. The Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program aims to fund projects that help local governments follow the requirements of the Clean Air Act. This often takes the form of grants to upgrade outdated municipal vehicles (CMAQ). In addition, the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (MassEVIP) has numerous incentive programs to assist in the process of purchasing electric vehicle charging station, such as the MassEVIP Public Access Charging Program, DC Fast Charging Incentives, and Workplace and Fleet Charging Incentives.

## Summary of Strategies

The Master Plan recommends the following action items based on the goals and objectives crafted with careful consideration of the public outreach results, analysis of current conditions, and progress achieved on prior plans. The action items accompanying the objectives will also be reflected in the Implementation Matrix (Chapter XX).

- **Goal 1: Strengthen the Town’s financial position so that funding is available for necessary services and facilities.**
  - **Objective:** Pursue new revenue streams.
    - **Action item:** Continue to support and cultivate new business development.
    - **Action item:** Continue to engage with business types that provide local sales tax.
    - **Action item:** Continue to pursue department enterprise revenue.
    - **Action item:** Explore fee-for-service trash, recycling, and leaf collection.
  - **Objective:** Reduce unnecessary operating expenses and revenue leakage.
    - **Action item:** Explore more cost-effective health insurance benefits for employees and retirees.
    - **Action item:** Continue to reduce the percentage of property taxes that go uncollected.
  - **Objective:** Enhance capital planning processes.
    - **Action item:** Establishing financial policies through multi-year forecasting and capital expense planning to make prudent financial decisions.
    - **Action item:** As a component of capital planning, develop a long-term maintenance program and the continual allocation of sufficient resources for implementation.
    - **Action item:** Continuously review the long-term planning guides in the school departments budget book and support the critical needs through capital planning.
  
- **Goal 2: Provide quality facilities and services to meet current and future needs.**
  - **Objective:** Address deferred maintenance and critical needs at existing facilities.
  - **Objective:** Ensure that public facilities are accessible to all residents.
    - **Action item:** Prepare a transition plan that implements the recommendations of the American’s Disabilities Act (ADA), and secure funding for its phased implementation.
  - **Objective:** Address existing and foreseen capacity issues.
    - **Action Item:** Conduct a school enrollment study that identifies upcoming needs based on population growth and outlines various options for increasing capacity.

- **Action Item:** Continue to explore the feasibility of building a Municipal Center to house Town Hall government, public safety services, the Senior Center, and other departments.
    - **Action item:** Work with the Police Department to devise a course of action to improve the size and configuration of the Police Department building.
    - **Action item:** Work with the Fire Department to devise a course of action to improve the size and configuration of the Fire Department building.
    - **Action item:** Acquire a larger salt shed and Highway Barn for the Highway Department.
    - **Action Item:** Explore strategies to make the Town Hall auditorium space suitable for use or adaptive reuse.
    - **Action item:** Identify and implement strategies to expand indoor and outdoor programming space and parking at the library.
    - **Action item:** Identify new spaces the town could hold senior programming.
  - **Objective:** Ensure that staffing levels are adequate for quality service provision.
    - **Action item:** Address understaffing in various departments including Police, Highway, and Senior Center.
- **Goal 3: Meet the town’s transportation needs to ensure optimal mobility in town.**
  - **Objective:** Create and maintain a multi-modal road network.
    - **Action item:** Institute a Complete Streets Plan for the town.
    - **Action item:** Increase the number of sidewalks and crosswalks in town to enhance pedestrian mobility.
    - **Action item:** Evaluate town sidewalk and crosswalk conditions in town to determine where sidewalks need repair.
    - **Action item:** Evaluate town street/sidewalk lighting conditions to determine where lighting needs repair.
    - **Action item:** Improve condition of bridges on Freedom Street, Mill Street, and Mellen Street.
    - **Action item:** Locate additional areas to put plowed snow.
    - **Action item:** Increase management of trees to prevent them from falling and damage roads, powerlines, and buildings.
  - **Objective:** Provide adequate staff and equipment for necessary transport services.
    - **Action item:** Include school busses in capital plans as capital expenses.
    - **Action Item:** Hire school bus drivers.
    - **Action item:** Hire senior center van drivers.
    - **Action item:** Continue to explore a multi-town partnership in the delivery of errand transportation.
    - **Action item:** Collaborate with Upton, Northbridge, and Mendon on the hiring and sharing of drivers.
- **Goal 4: Provide high-quality parks facilities accessible to all residents.**
  - **Objective:** Repair and maintain existing park facilities.
  - **Objective: Enhance, protect, and expand parks facilities.**
    - **Action Item:** Proactively purchase Hopedale land from private property owners to preserve the Parklands and expand parks, recreational areas, and facilities.
    - **Action Item:** Conduct a feasibility study for upgrades and boat access at the bathhouse.
    - **Action Item:** Protect Hopedale Pond from invasive species by providing necessary water treatments.

- **Goal 5: Provide social, recreational, and cultural opportunities that enhance the quality of life for all ages and incomes in Hopedale.**
  - **Objective:** Increase services, resources, and opportunities for seniors consistent with the town's growing senior population.
    - **Action item:** Collaborate with adjacent towns to share spaces and programming (e.g., Mendon and Upton Councils on Aging).
    - **Action item:** Create additional senior entertainment programming.
    - **Action item:** Create additional daily issue-related programming for seniors.
    - **Action item:** Provide additional technological skills training to address senior skills gap.
  - **Objective:** Increase services, resources, and opportunities for children in Hopedale schools.
    - **Action item:** Develop fields for athletics.
    - **Action item:** Address the shortage of gymnasium and indoor court space.
    - **Action item:** Address parking supply and quality issues at the Memorial Elementary and Junior/Senior High schools.
    - **Action item:** Provide additional space for visual and performing arts.
  
- **Goal 6: Improve the safety, resiliency, and sustainability of town operations.**
  - **Objective: Enhance emergency operations.**
    - **Action item:** Ensure that buildings designated as emergency shelters or that house vulnerable populations have up-to-date generators and evacuation plans.
    - **Action item:** In the case of emergencies and hazards, provide extra support, services, and communication with at-risk populations in town (such as seniors).
  - **Objective:** Mitigate flooding and other impacts of climate change.
    - **Action item:** Using the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plan, identify and monitor areas vulnerable to climate change impacts.
    - **Action item:** Use and require green and low-impact development infrastructure help mitigate flooding and polluting runoff.
    - **Action item:** Make necessary repairs at Sprindleville Dam and maintain the facility moving forward.
    - **Action item:** Engage with private dam owners to explore hazard mitigation strategies.
    - **Action item:** Inventory and repair culverts, with attention to those most vulnerable to climate change impacts (Route 16 and Cook, Dutcher, and Mendon Streets).
  - **Objective:** Control widespread invasive species impacting streams, ponds, rivers, parks, and forested areas through town.
    - **Action item:** Identify strategies to reduce the impacts of the beaver population, including use of beaver controls as appropriate when culverts are being repaired or replaced.
  - **Objective:** Reduce carbon emissions from town buildings and vehicles.
    - **Action item:** Ensure all new vehicle purchases fall under the Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy as part of the Green Communities program.
    - **Action item:** Ensure that applicable Town departments are following the Town's anti-idling policy.
    - **Action item:** Utilize grants to acquire and install electric vehicle charging stations, electric vehicles, and after-market energy saving devices.
    - **Action item:** Utilize semi-annual Green Communities grants to undertake energy efficiency projects in town-owned buildings.

- **Goal 7: Improve the town’s water and sewer systems to meet current and future demands.**
  - **Objective:** Increase water sources and storage for the town water system.
    - **Action item:** Continue searching for new sources of funding to expand water capacity.
    - **Action item:** Support the Water and Sewer Department’s efforts to construct an additional water storage tank.
    - **Action item:** Discuss ways to support the Water and Sewer Department department’s formulation of final engineering plans.
  - **Objective:** Improve water quality for the town water system.
    - **Action item:** Provide PFAS treatment where necessary.
    - **Action item:** Navigate existing debt in order to fund future renovations/improvements.
    - **Action item:** Address runoff contamination due to flooding.
  - **Objective:** Provide adequate sewer service.
    - **Action item:** Address infiltration and inflow issues affecting the wastewater system.
    - **Action item:** Address deferred maintenance of the wastewater system.
    - **Action item:** Continue to monitor public opinion around expanded sewer service; expand service when warranted.
  
- **Goal 9: Improve the functioning of local government.**
  - **Objective:** Continue bringing town hall services online.
    - **Action item:** Expand online permitting to incorporate all municipal applications and permitting processes.
    - **Action item:** Explore permit tracking software to support staff procedural and enforcement duties.
  - **Objective:** Increase communication and coordination between town departments and with residents.
    - **Action item:** Create a communications plan that establishes standards, strategies, and accountability for interdepartmental and town to resident communications.
    - **Action item:** Identify creative and equitable ways to educate residents about issues, resources and opportunities for service on municipal boards, committees and commissions.
    - **Action item:** Consider establishing student liaison positions on committees.
  - **Objective:** Implement the recommendations of the Master Plan.
    - **Action item:** Establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee that regularly reviews the Master Plan, facilitates its implementation, and maintains the Plan as a living document.



# Town of Hopedale

## CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

*Unanimously Adopted by the Select Board on February 28, 2022*

### **1. ENABLING AUTHORITY – MGL Chapter 268A, Section 23 (e)**

A municipality may have a Code of Conduct, provided it is consistent with State law and that the Select Board, as the chief appointing officials for the Town, vote to adopt such policy.

MGL Chapter 268A, §23 (e): Nothing in this section shall preclude any ... head of such agency from establishing and enforcing additional standards of conduct.

### **2. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The intent of this policy is to establish a clear statement and guidelines to serve as the standard for achieving and maintaining a high level of public confidence, trust, and professional respect regarding how the Town and its officials conduct business. This policy will define and create a centralized policy regarding conduct and ethical standards.

The Select Board recognizes the importance of professional standards at all levels of the government including those who volunteer their time and services on behalf of the Town. The Board encourages other boards and committees of the Town who are not appointed by the Select Board to adopt this standard by reference thereby creating a **Unified Code of Conduct and Ethics for Town Officials** as a standard for expectations of public officials.

### **3. APPLICABILITY**

This policy in all its sections shall apply to the boards, presiding officers, public officials, commissions and committees and other representatives appointed by the Select Board and those representatives appointed by the Board, more particularly defined below:

- The term “the Board” shall apply to the Select Board
- The term “member” shall apply to those appointed by the Select Board
- The term “official” shall apply to a Select Board member or a member appointed by the Select Board
- The term “chair or presiding officer” shall apply to the chairperson of a committee/board/commission or the officer serving in the absence of the chair
- The term “appointing authority” shall apply to the Select Board

- All the terms used herein including commission members, committee members, board members, representatives appointed by the Board or Town Administrator and other officials mentioned in this guideline are subject to this policy

#### **4. CODE OF CONDUCT**

##### **4.1 Obligations**

These obligations and commitments shall be assumed by all members of the Board and other officials defined in the Applicability section:

- Be well informed concerning the local and state duties of a board/committee member whenever applicable
- Remember that he/her/they always represents the Town of Hopedale
- Accept their position as a means of unselfish public service, not to benefit personally, professionally, or financially from his/her/their board/committee position
- Treat all members of the board/committee with respect despite differences of opinion; keeping in mind that professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion but requires respect within those differences
- Recognize that the chief function of local government always is to serve the best interests of all of the people
- Honor confidential information, seek no favor and believe that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by holding these positions is dishonest
- Conduct themselves to maintain public confidence in their local government and in their performance of the public trust
- Conduct official business in such a manner as to give the clear impression that they cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of their official duties
- Unless specifically exempted (e.g. Executive Session), conduct the business of the public in a manner that promotes open and transparent government and maintain full compliance with the Open Meeting Law (MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B)

##### **4.2 Relationships to Fellow Board Members and other Persons:**

A member in his/her/their relations with fellow Select Board members and other persons shall:

- Accept differences of opinion as building blocks of our democratic process
- Always treat other members, the Town Administrator and employees with personal respect and act in a civil manner towards them
- Concentrate all dialogue on the issue and refrain from personal criticism
- Recognize that Board action at official meetings is binding and that he/she/they alone cannot bind the Select Board outside such meetings
- Realize that statements or promises should not be made regarding how he/she/they will vote on matters that will come before the Select Board

- Uphold the confidentiality of executive sessions and documents presented during such meeting and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions
- Not withhold pertinent information on municipal matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her/their own Select Board or from members of other bodies who may be seeking help and information on problems
- Make decisions only after all facts on an issue have been presented and discussed by the Select Board
- Cooperate with the Chair of the Board in the conduct of meetings
- Treat persons who appear before the Board with respect, and dignity and in a manner free from discrimination, abuse and harassment
- Act in a civil and professional manner at all Board meetings
- Speak in a civil manner and not harass or bully citizens, other Board members, the Town Administrator, and employees

#### **4.3 Community Responsibility:**

A member in his/her/their relations with the community should:

- Realize that his/her/their primary responsibility is to all Hopedale citizens
- Remember that he/she/they is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Select Board decisions once they are made
- Be well informed concerning the duties of a Select Board member on both a local and state level and on the municipal issues in Hopedale
- Remember that he/she/they always represents the entire community of Hopedale
- Accept the office of Select Board member as a means of unselfish public service with no intent to "play politics" in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her/their Select Board activities

## **5. CODE OF ETHICS**

### **5.1 Purpose**

This policy is issued for the purpose of ensuring that the Board and all other officials defined in the Applicability section comply with the provisions of MGL Chapter 268A, the Conflict-of-Interest Law, including disclosures made under Sections 19 and 23 and **more stringent policies adopted by the Board herein.**

### **5.2 Actual Conflict of Interest (MGL Chapter 268A)**

The Board and all other officials defined in the Applicability section must understand that there may be times when actions they take could be inconsistent with Conflict-of-Interest laws of the Commonwealth. There may also be times when an appearance of conflict exists.

The official should be proactive in recognizing, disclosing, and acting professionally, with the public trust and compliance of the laws at the forefront of their actions. It is the responsibility of each official to determine for themselves whether to make disclosures prior to acting on a particular matter where a conflict exists or might exist.

### **5.3 Procedure**

- The official in question shall not participate in his/her/their official capacity in matters in which such participation is prohibited by the Conflict-of-Interest Law and the official in question shall disclose in writing the conflict of interest to their appointing authority and this disclosure shall be recorded into the minutes of the meeting
- The member shall leave the room for the duration of the discussion unless advised otherwise by Town Counsel or the State Ethics Commission
- When a conflict or appearance of conflict exists, the chair or presiding officer shall state the reason (s) for the conflict of potential conflict and will ensure that the member does not participate in the matter as a point of order
- The chair or presiding officer of the meeting shall ensure that the reasons for the conflict are clearly stated (as stated by the member in person) and this shall be recorded into the minutes of the meeting and made available for public view; if the member chooses to recuse himself from the meeting and is not present to state the reasons for recusal, then the presiding officer shall verbally enter the member's statement which will be recorded into the minutes
- The member shall re-enter the room only after the discussion has concluded and the chair or presiding officer of the meeting will state, upon re-entering the meeting by the member in question, that member has re-entered the meeting.
- This shall be repeated each time the subject in question is discussed at subsequent meetings
- All officials defined in the Applicability section should seek and adhere to advice from the Ethics Commission, their appointing authority and Town Counsel if necessary (Note: the State Ethics Commission offers free advice via phone or in writing)

### **5.4 Appearance of Conflict of Interest (MGL Chapter 268A, Section 23)**

The Conflict-of-Interest Law provides that public officials and employees must avoid conduct that creates a reasonable impression that any official can improperly influence or unduly enjoy their official favor or that they are likely to act (or fail to act) because of kinship, rank, position or undue influence by any party or person.

MGL Chapter 268A, Section 23 allows public officials to act on certain matters, even if it creates the appearance of a conflict, if they openly admit all of the facts surrounding the appearance of bias prior to any official action.

**MGL Chapter 268A, Section 23(b)(3):**



(b) No current officer or employee of a state, county or municipal agency shall knowingly, or with reason to know:

(3) act in a manner which would cause a reasonable person, having knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to conclude that any person can improperly influence or unduly enjoy his favor in the performance of his official duties, or that he/she/they is likely to act or fail to act because of kinship, rank, position or undue influence of any party or person. It shall be unreasonable to so conclude if such officer or employee has disclosed in writing to his appointing authority or, if no appointing authority exists, discloses in a manner which is public in nature, the facts which would otherwise lead to such a conclusion.

Under MGL Chapter 268A, Section 1 (definitions), an official may be classified as a “Special Municipal Employee” when such status is authorized by the Select Board. Such a status provides greater latitude for officials serving in multiple roles. However, the Board’s designation of an employee as a Special Municipal Employee will not preclude the expectation that the official must and will avoid conduct which creates a reasonable impression that any official can improperly influence or unduly enjoy their official favor or that they are likely to act (or fail to act) because of financial interests, kinship, rank, position or undue influence by any party or person.

Irrespective of governing statute, the Board urges all members and officials to exercise due diligence with respect to preserving the public trust. At times, this may mean an official or member must not act or participate until the matter has been determined by Town Counsel, the State Ethics Commission or any other governing entity if applicable. That determination will also be made in writing and be made available for public view.

### **5.5 Procedure**

- The member in question must fill out the appropriate disclosure form, available from the State Ethics Commission ([www.mass.gov.ethics](http://www.mass.gov.ethics)) or from the Town Clerk
- This form must be submitted to the appointing authority for review
- The member in question shall submit, in writing, all the facts surrounding the potential conflict to their appointing authority
- The member in question shall not participate in the matter until and unless the approving authority has granted written permission specific to the disclosure and has filed a copy of such written permission with the Town Clerk
- The reason for the existence of the potential conflict, the granted permission and the compliance of these guidelines shall be stated by the member before participation and shall be verbally disclosed at the meeting and recorded into the minutes of the meeting
- This shall be repeated each time the subject in question is discussed in subsequent meetings
- It is the responsibility of the chair or presiding officer to oversee the procedure after initiation by the member in question; the chair or presiding officer shall also be

responsible for ensuring that these disclosures are entered into the minutes and are appropriately filed with the Town Clerk for public view

- The Town Clerk shall maintain a separate file of disclosure statements which shall be kept available for public view

## **6. DISTRIBUTION AND EDUCATION**

- The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of this policy to all members as defined in the Applicability section upon its issuance and upon the subsequent appointment of re-appointment of any member
- The Town Clerk shall also maintain and distribute educational materials from the State Ethics Commission to members
- The Town Clerk shall develop a schedule of training programs to educate the Board and members on the Conflict of Interest Law and this policy
- The Town Clerk shall have each member sign a statement that they have read these policies and will comply with all requirements set forth in this policy; this form shall be available for public view

## **7. ENFORCEMENT OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

- The Select Board shall enforce the Code of Conduct.
- Any Select Board member violating the Code of Conduct may be removed from Committee assignments and from Board assignments by the Chair and may be subject to public censure by the Select Board.
- During a meeting the Chair may, after an initial warning, remove a member or citizen from a meeting who acts in an inappropriate manner, is unruly or disorderly

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Brian R. Keyes, Chair

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Louis J. Arcudi, III

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Glenda A. Hazard

## **ORDER OF TAKING**

WHEREAS, the Town of Hopedale, a municipal corporation, *acting by and through its Select Board*, with an address of 78 Hopedale Street, Hopedale, Massachusetts 01747 (the “Town”) hereby certifies that the Town did vote to acquire by purchase, eminent domain or otherwise, the fee interest in the land known as a portion of 364 West Street, Hopedale, Worcester County, Massachusetts, containing 130.18 acres, more or less, which is classified as Forest Land under Chapter 61 of the General Laws, and shown on the plan attached hereto as Exhibit A (the “Plan”) as “Map 2, Block 5, One Hundred Forty Realty Trust, Chapter 61 Forest Land Parcel- 130.18 Acres” (the “Property”), which Property excludes the areas shown on the Plan as “Railroad Right of Way” and “Map 2, Block 5, One Hundred Forty Realty Trust, Excluded Wetlands – 25.06 Acres”;

WHEREAS, the Select Board has deemed that public necessity and convenience require that it should take charge of and take by eminent domain a fee interest in the Property to maintain and preserve the Property and the forest, water, air, and other natural resources thereon for the use of the public and for conservation and recreation purposes to be managed under the control of the Hopedale Parks Commission;

WHEREAS, the taking was authorized by a two-thirds vote at the 2022 Special Town Meeting held on July 11, 2022, pursuant to Article 1, a certified copy of which vote is recorded herewith; and

WHEREAS, the Property is currently owned by Michael R. Milanoski and Jon Delli Priscoli, Trustees of the One Hundred Forty Realty Trust, u/d/t dated September 16, 1981 and recorded in the Worcester South County Registry of Deeds (the “Registry”) in Book 7322, Page 177, by virtue of a deed recorded with the Registry on June 11, 2021 in Book 65363, Page 65.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the undersigned Select Board of the Town of Hopedale, acting herein under the authority conferred on us by Chapters 40 and 79 of the General Laws, do hereby adopt this Order of Taking to take, on behalf of the Town, a fee simple interest in all of the Property.

Property: 364 West Street, Hopedale, MA

AND FURTHER ORDERED that included in this taking and without limiting the provisions of the foregoing, said taking includes all trees, bushes, vegetation, roadway improvements and all structures located thereon, including but not limited to structures for the collection of storm drainage and sewerage, but not including wires, cables, poles, towers, pipes, conduits and other appurtenances for the conveyance of gas, electricity, cable television or telephone communication located in or upon the Property, and not including railroad tracks or appurtenant loading structures currently in place on the Property.

AND FURTHER ORDERED that no betterments are to be assessed under this Taking.

AND FURTHER ORDERED that in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 79, as amended, an award of Three Million Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$3,900,000.00) is made.

AND FURTHER ORDERED that a representative of the Town shall record this Order of Taking in the Registry within thirty (30) days from its final passage, shall notify the Treasurer and Collector of Taxes in the Town of Hopedale of this taking in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 79, and shall cause notice of the taking to be given to all persons entitled thereto and do all things necessary for the validity of this Order of Taking.

[Signatures to appear on next page.]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we, the Select Board, have executed this Order of Taking this 24<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2022.

TOWN OF HOPEDALE  
SELECT BOARD

\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenda A. Hazard, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian R. Keyes

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bernard J. Stock

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
COUNTY OF WORCESTER

On this 24th day of October, 2022, before me, the undersigned Notary Public, personally appeared \_\_\_\_\_, members of the Select Board for the Town of Hopedale, proved to me through satisfactory evidence of identification, which was personal knowledge, to be the persons whose names are signed on the preceding or attached document and acknowledged to me that they signed it voluntarily for its stated purpose.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public  
My Commission Expires:

Exhibit A  
(attached)

DRAFT

**TOWN OF HOPEDALE**  
**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT**

Monday, November 14, 2022  
7:00 PM

Worcester SS: To the Constables in the Town of Hopedale in the County of Worcester.

Greetings: In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Hopedale qualified to vote in town affairs to meet in the Dennett Auditorium of the Junior/Senior High School located at 25 Adin Street, Hopedale, MA 01747, on Monday, November 14, 2022, at 7:00 pm, then and there to act on the following articles:

**ARTICLE 1: Prior Year Bills**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from current year expense funds, the sums of money necessary to pay the prior year bills remaining from FY22 or before, or take any other action related thereto.

*9/10ths Vote Required*

Submitted by: Select Board

*Commentary: This article will authorize payment of bills that were incurred during previous fiscal year(s). Since the account for the prior fiscal year has been closed out, it is necessary to pay the amounts, if approved, from currently available funds. A 90% majority will be required for approval.*

---

**ARTICLE 2: Hopedale Fire Fighters Collective Bargaining Agreement**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to fund and implement the cost items of the first year of a collective bargaining agreement between the Town and the Hopedale Fire Fighters IAFF Local 2225 covering the period of **July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024**, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

*Commentary: Required by MGL, 150E, §7, article is necessary to approve the cost items within a newly signed collective bargaining agreement.*

---

**ARTICLE 3: Capital Funding Article**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, including Stabilization, sums of money to fund equipment and capital purchases, or take any other related action thereto.

*2/3rds Vote May Be Required.*

Submitted by: Finance Committee (on behalf of the Capital Improvement Planning Committee)

*Commentary: This article will provide funds for necessary equipment and capital purchases to support various departments and services.*

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**ARTICLE 4: Board of Health Expenses**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to adjust the Board of Health Expenses for FY23, or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by: Board of Health/Town Administrator

*Commentary: This article will provide funds for trash/recycling contract, professional/technical assistance with public health nurse support and response and necessary septic inspections.*

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**ARTICLE 5: Police Detail Expenses**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, a sum of \$11,000 to the Highway Department Other Personal Services account and a sum of \$4,000 to the Election Wages account, for a total sum of \$15,000, to cover the cost of police details for FY23, or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

*Commentary: This article will provide funds for police details for Highway Department work and for Town Elections.*

---

**ARTICLE 6: Health Insurance Expenses**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to adjust the Town's Health Insurance Expenses account for FY23, or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by: Town Administrator

*Commentary: This article will provide additional funds for group insurance benefits for employees.*

---

**ARTICLE 7: Board/Committee Stipends**

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to M.G.L. c.41, §108, to fix the annual salary and compensation for each elected Town officer, and to fix the annual compensation for special appointed officials for service in fiscal year 2023, or take any other action related thereto.

Town Moderator (1)	\$ 200
Board of Selectmen (3)	\$ 5,850
Road Commissioners (3)	\$ 1,980
Board of Health (3)	\$ 1,665
Park Commissioners (3)	\$ 1,440
Water/Sewer Commissioners (3)	\$ 1,980
Tree Warden (1)	\$ 900
Planning Board (5)	\$ 3,330
Board of Assessors (3)	\$ 1,665
Board of Registrars (3) appt.	\$ 1,600
Clerk to Registrars (1)	\$ 500
Zoning Board of Appeals (5) appt.	\$ 2,340
Finance Committee (9) appt.	\$ 4,140
School Committee (5)	\$ 4,950
Conservation Committee (5)	\$ 2,340
Library Trustees (3)	\$ 1,440
Parking Clerk	\$ 600

Submitted by: Board of Selectmen

*Commentary: This article will fix the annual compensation for elected and appointed officials, while the actual funding takes place in articles to follow.*

---



**ARTICLE 8: Police Department Vehicle**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer a sum of money to fund the purchase of a 2023 Chevy Tahoe vehicle for use by the Police Department, or take any other action relative thereto.

*2/3rds Vote May Be Required.*

Submitted by: Police Chief

*Commentary: This article was requested by Police Chief and must be ordered immediately, due to extended delivery time, to stay aligned with the Police Department vehicle replacement schedule intended to keep only productive vehicles in service.*

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**ARTICLE 9: Add Juneteenth to Legal Holidays**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Hopedale MA General Law, Chapter 137, titled Personnel, by amending Article 2, Section 25 to add “Juneteenth” to holidays listed between Memorial Day and Independence Day, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

*Commentary: This article will add Juneteenth to the holidays legally observed by the Town of Hopedale employees.*

---

**ARTICLE 10: Fire/EMS Exempt from Civil Service**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court for special legislation providing that all positions in the Fire Department after passage of the Act not be subject to the Civil Service statute, all as set forth below; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court which are within the scope of the general public objectives of the petition, and to authorize the Select Board to approve such amendments:

AN ACT EXEMPTING ALL POSITIONS IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE TOWN OF HOPEDALE FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE LAW

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:*

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all positions in the fire department of the town of Hopedale shall be exempt from chapter 31 of the General Laws.

SECTION 2. This act shall not impair the civil service status of a person holding a position described in section 1 on the effective date of this act.

SECTION 3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 2, no appointments or promotions made after the effective date of this act will be governed in any way by chapter 31 of the General Laws.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

---

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Hopedale Zoning Bylaws by changing the zoning of the following parcels from the GB-A District to a Commercial (C) District:

24-31-2, 10 Charlesview Road  
24-36-0, 404 South Main Street  
24-37-0, 144 Hartford Avenue  
24-38-0, 1 Charlesview Road  
24-39-0, 3 Charlesview Road  
24-40-0, 5 Charlesview Road  
24-41-0, 7 Charlesview Road  
24-42-0, 8 Charlesview Road  
24-43-0, 6 Charlesview Road  
24-44-0, 4 Charlesview Road  
24-45-0, 150 Hartford Avenue  
24-45-1, 156 Hartford Avenue  
24-55-2, 4 Evergreen Lane  
24-55-3, 2 Evergreen Lane  
Or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Board:

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**ARTICLE 12: Add Marijuana Overlay District to Zoning Bylaws**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw to add Section XX: Marijuana Use Overlay District, or take any other action relative thereto.

Submitted by: Planning Board

---

**ARTICLE 13: Reserve Fund Transfer to Planning Board Salaries**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from the Reserve Fund account to the Planning Board Salaries and Wages Permanent account, or take any other action related thereto.

Submitted by: Select Board

*Commentary: This article will move funding that was already authorized by Town Meeting from the Finance Committee Reserve Fund to an account line in the Planning Board budget so the position of Town Planner can be filled.*

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**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw: Section 12. 12, Non-Medical Marijuana Retailers, to prohibit the issuance of Special Permits allowing the physical locating and operation of Retail Marijuana Establishments, as defined under G.L. c94G 1, on a parcel which is within one thousand (1000) feet (to be measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the property line in question to the nearest point of the property line where the Retail Marijuana Establishment is or will be located) of a parcel occupied by another licensed Retail Marijuana Establishment, or act on anything relating thereto?

Submitted by: **Citizen's Petition**

---

**ARTICLE 15:** This change would alter the restriction against curbside transactions for a Cannabis Retailer. This change would allow Cannabis Retailers to do curbside transactions **ONLY** in the following scenario:

1. The State of Massachusetts changes the law back to allow curbside transactions because of shutdowns preventing customers to enter a Retail Cannabis store. This happened in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Assuming condition 1 has been met, an actual shutdown of Cannabis Retailers has been ordered either at the town or state level. This shutdown would prevent customers from entering a retail store. A restriction on the number of occupants would **NOT** allow curbside operations to commence, only the inability of any customers to enter the store.

Curbside transactions are currently not allowed by the State. This petition is focused on a time in the future if curbside transactions are allowed again. All retailers would have this right to do curbside transactions regardless of Special Permit conditions in play when there is not a shutdown. Once a shutdown order has been ended, Retailers would then immediately discontinue curbside transaction activities.

Submitted by: **Citizen's Petition**

REMAINDER OF PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

You are hereby directed to serve this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof at three public places in different parts of the Town not less than fourteen days before the holding of said meeting. Hereof, fail not to make the due return of the meeting aforesaid.

Given under our hands, this twenty-fourth day of October 2022.

HOPEDALE SELECT BOARD

\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenda A. Hazard, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian R. Keyes

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bernard J. Stock

A True Copy, ATTEST:  
Posted in the Town Hall, Police Station, and Post Office Lobby.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Constable

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Dear Select Board and Finance Committee:

At the October 12th department head meeting, we reviewed the extensive list of capital and significant projects. Using our collective, extensive knowledge of the Town's needs and priorities overall, we, as a group, reviewed and prioritized these projects. This ARPA funding request allows the Town to immediately proceed with ordering capital items that have languished for years, all to better serve the ever changing and expanding needs of the Town. Thank you for your consideration. Submitted by: Department Heads

Fire	Lucas Auto Pulse	15,000
Highway	2024 Freightliner 108SD Plow Truck	279,757
Library	Statue of Hope	25,000
Parks	Town Park Feasibility & Cost Determinations	17,500
Police	Cruiser (Chevy Tahoe)	56,770
Schools	JSHS Boiler	100,000
Town Hall	Security System/Cameras	5,000
Various Dept	Fuel Dispensing Equipment Upgrade	19,000
Town/Schools	Generators @ Schools	400,000
	Total:	918,027

e long lead times until delivery, and to move forward with critical

**HOST COMMUNITY AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE TOWN OF HOPEDALE  
AND LIFTED GENETICS, INC.**

This Host Community Agreement (the “AGREEMENT”) is entered into this day of [REDACTED], 2022 (the “EFFECTIVE DATE”) by and between the Town of Hopedale (the “TOWN”), a municipal corporation with a principal address at 78 Hopedale St, Hopedale, Massachusetts, 01747, acting by and through its Select Board (the “BOARD”) in reliance upon all of the representations made herein, and Lifted Genetics, Inc., a Massachusetts corporation with a principal office address of 42 Holliston Street, Medway, Massachusetts (the “COMPANY”) (the Town and Company, collectively, the “PARTIES” and each a “PARTY”).

This AGREEMENT represents the understanding between the TOWN and COMPANY (collectively, the “PARTIES” and each a “PARTY”) with respect to the proposed use of an approximately 1.285 acre parcel of land known as 5 Condon Way Hopedale, Massachusetts, more accurately described by the deed recorded with the Worcester County Registry of Deeds Book 30592, page 110, and on Map 22 and numbered Lot 32-22 in the Assessor’s database, as well as an approximately 2.494 acre parcel of land known as 6 Condon Way Hopedale, Massachusetts, more accurately described by the deed recorded with the Worcester County Registry of Deeds Book 30592, page 119, and on Map 22 and numbered Lot 32-14 in the Assessor’s database (collectively, the “PROPERTIES” and each a “PROPERTY”) as licensed tier 1 and tier 2 marijuana cultivation establishments (each the “FACILITY”).

**RECITALS**

WHEREAS, COMPANY plans to seek tier 1 and tier 2 marijuana cultivation licenses from the Cannabis Control Commission (the “CCC”) and to operate the FACILITY at the PROPERTY in accordance with and pursuant to applicable state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to G.L. c.94G and 935 CMR 501.000, et seq., and such approvals as may be issued by the TOWN in accordance with its bylaws, rules, regulations, and policies;

WHEREAS, the COMPANY anticipates that the TOWN will experience both direct and indirect impacts to public health, as well as unforeseen impacts, both quantifiable and unquantifiable on the TOWN, which would not be experienced but for the operation of the COMPANY;

WHEREAS, the COMPANY intends to provide certain benefits to the TOWN in the event that it receives the requisite license from the Cannabis Control Commission (the “CCC”) or such other state licensing or monitoring authority, as the case may be, to operate the FACILITY and receives all required local permits and approvals from the TOWN; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises of the PARTIES contained herein and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the PARTIES hereby agree as set forth herein.

### **1. Recitals**

The PARTIES agree that the above Recitals are true and accurate and that they are incorporated herein and made a part hereof.

### **2. Representation of Authority and Warranties**

The COMPANY represents and warrants that it is duly organized and existing and in good standing, has the full power, authority, and legal right to enter into and perform this AGREEMENT, and the execution, delivery and performance hereof and thereof (i) will not violate any judgment, order, state law, bylaw, or regulation, and (ii) does not conflict with, or constitute a default under, any agreement or instrument to which the COMPANY is a PARTY or by which the COMPANY may be bound or affected.

Each person signing this AGREEMENT hereby represents and warrants that he or she has the full authority and is duly authorized and empowered to execute this AGREEMENT on behalf of the PARTY for which he or she signs.

Each person signing this AGREEMENT further represents and warrants that this AGREEMENT has been duly authorized, executed and delivered. This AGREEMENT constitutes legal, valid and binding obligations of each PARTY, enforceable in accordance with its terms, and there is no action, suit, or proceeding pending, or, to the knowledge of either PARTY, threatened whereby an unfavorable decision, ruling or finding would materially adversely affect the performance of any obligations hereunder, except as otherwise specifically noted in this AGREEMENT.

### **3. Costs, Payments and Reimbursements**

A. Community Impact Fees: The COMPANY anticipates that, as a result of the COMPANY's operation of the FACILITY at the Property, the TOWN will incur both direct and indirect expenses and impacts including, but not limited to, consulting services, administrative services and public health education and substance abuse counseling services, and any necessary and related legal and enforcement costs, as well as unforeseen impacts on the TOWN. Accordingly, in order to mitigate the direct and indirect financial impacts on the TOWN and use of TOWN resources, both quantifiable and unquantifiable, the COMPANY agrees to pay annual community impact fees to the TOWN, in the amount and under the terms provided herein (the "ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES").

- i. The COMPANY shall remit ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES to the TOWN in an amount equal to one and one-half (1.5%) of gross sales from all sales transactions of the FACILITY. At such time that the



ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES payments amount to a total of \$35,000.00, the FACILITY shall be excused from making further payments; provided, however, that in the event that a specific cost incurred by the Town thereafter is identified as caused by or related to the FACILITY and/or the PROPERTY, the TOWN shall document and transmit the cost to the COMPANY and the COMPANT shall remit a payment to the TOWN in the amount identified within thirty (30) days of the date of the TOWN's request.

The COMPANY agrees that calculation of the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES in this manner will be within the statutory cap of three percent (3%) of gross sales under G.L. c.94G §3(d) and the COMPANY waives any claims to the contrary.

The ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES shall annually be delivered to the TOWN in quarterly installments per the TOWN's fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) on September 30, December 31, March 31, and June 30 (each, the "PAYMENT DATE"), with the first payment due within three (3) months after the COMPANY obtains a final license from the CCC to commence operations at the FACILITY (the "COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS") and shall continue for a period of five (5) years.

The COMPANY agrees and acknowledges that the direct and indirect impacts of its operation may be impracticable for the TOWN to ascertain and assess as impacts may result in budgetary increases though not separately identified and express waives any claims to the contrary. Consequently, in lieu of attempting to determine actual TOWN impact costs incurred, the PARTIES have agreed to utilize the aforementioned fixed percentage in Section (3)(A)(i) of this AGREEMENT to be paid by the COMPANY to the TOWN as ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES. In exchange for and in reliance on such representation, among others, the TOWN has entered into this AGREEMENT. Therefore, in the event that the COMPANY challenges the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES, the COMPANY shall, notwithstanding the result of such challenge, pay all reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred by the TOWN in defending such challenge and also, waive any claim or request for the TOWN to pay its own attorneys' fees and costs. The COMPANY agrees that the foregoing provision is not intended to prohibit it from exercising any right to judicial relief nor as a penalty for any such exercise, but as an allocation of a specified risk to the COMPANY.

However, in the event that a court of competent jurisdiction and/or the CCC expressly find the fixed percentage set forth in Section (3)(A)(i) of this AGREEMENT to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable, then the COMPANY shall pay ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES to the TOWN in the manner prescribed by Section 3(A)(ii) below.

- ii. The COMPANY shall annually provide written notice to the TOWN within forty-eight (48) hours of the renewal of each of its final license(s) (the “ANNUAL LICENSE RENEWAL”) from the CCC operate at the FACILITY.

Not later than one (1) month after the date of each ANNUAL LICENSE RENEWAL, the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES due shall be documented and transmitted by the TOWN to the COMPANY (the “TRANSMITTAL”); provided, however, that upon notice to the COMPANY, the TOWN may request an extension of time for the TRANSMITTAL, which request shall not be unreasonably denied by the COMPANY.

The ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES shall be paid by the COMPANY within two (2) months of the issuance of the TRANSMITTAL; provided, however, that if the COMPANY believes that the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES are not reasonably related to actual costs imposed upon TOWN in the preceding year by the operation of the FACILITY (“TOWN COSTS”), the COMPANY shall submit a written request (the “REQUEST”) to the TOWN within one (1) month of the issuance of the respective TRANSMITTAL and shall engage in good faith negotiations with the TOWN to review the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES.

The COMPANY acknowledges that the impacts of its operations at the FACILITY may be impracticable to ascertain and assess as impacts may result in budgetary increases though not separately identified, and consequently, unless the COMPANY timely submits the REQUEST to the TOWN as set forth in this paragraph, the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES shall be deemed reasonably related to the TOWN COSTS and due, and the COMPANY hereby expressly waives any claims to the contrary. Further, in exchange for and in reliance on such representation, among others, the TOWN has entered into this AGREEMENT. Therefore, the PARTIES agree that in the event that the COMPANY challenges the ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES, it shall, notwithstanding the result of such challenge, pay all reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs incurred by the TOWN in defending such challenge and also, waives any claim or request for the TOWN to pay its own attorneys’ fees and costs. The COMPANY agrees that the foregoing provision is not intended to prohibit it from exercising any right to judicial relief nor as a penalty for any such exercise, but as an allocation of a specified risk to the COMPANY.

The ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES for each MARIJUANA ESTABLISHMENT shall continue for a period of eight (8) years from the

date each respective cultivation establishment is first granted a final license to operate from the CCC.

- iii. The ANNUAL COMMUNITY IMPACT FEES are expressly included as “other municipal charges” pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 57. A TOWN licensing authority may deny, revoke or suspend any license or permit, including renewals and transfers, of the COMPANY or agent thereof if the COMPANY’s name appears on a list furnished to the licensing authority from the TOWN Collector of individuals delinquent on their taxes and/or water bills.
- iv. The COMPANY acknowledges that time is of the essence with respect to performance of its obligations hereunder and that late payments shall be subject to interest at the rates prescribed by G.L. c. 59, §57.

#### **4. Annual Reporting**

The COMPANY shall file annual written reports to the TOWN on July 31 each year for purposes of reporting on compliance with the terms of this AGREEMENT with a certification of: (1) its annual Gross Sales; (2) its compliance with all other requirements of this AGREEMENT; and (3) copies of all reports which are required to be submitted to the Commonwealth, regarding the COMPANY's operations at the FACILITY. During the term of this AGREEMENT the COMPANY shall, upon request of the TOWN, appear at a regularly scheduled meeting to discuss the annual report and review its compliance with the terms of this AGREEMENT.

The COMPANY shall maintain its books, financial records, and other compilations of data pertaining to all requirements of this AGREEMENT in accordance with standard accounting practices and any applicable regulations or guidelines of the CCC and the Department of Revenue (the “DOR”). The COMPANY shall retain such records for a period of at least seven (7) years. Upon request by the TOWN, the COMPANY shall provide the TOWN and its agents with the same access to its financial records (to be treated as confidential, to the extent allowed by law) as it is required by the CCC and DOR for purposes of obtaining and maintaining a license for the FACILITY. In addition to the above referenced reports, the COMPANY shall also provide to the TOWN such other information as may reasonably be requested by the BOARD.

During the term of this AGREEMENT and for three (3) years following the termination of this AGREEMENT the COMPANY shall, upon request of the TOWN, have its financial records examined, copied and audited by an independent financial auditor of the TOWN’s choosing, the expense of which shall be borne by the COMPANY. The independent financial auditor shall review the COMPANY's financial records for purposes of determining compliance with the terms of this AGREEMENT. Such examination shall be made not less than thirty (30) days following written notice from the TOWN and shall occur only during normal business hours and at such place where said books, financial records and accounts are maintained. The independent financial audit

shall include those parts of the COMPANY's books and financial records that relate to the payment, and shall include a certification of itemized gross sales, and all other information required to ascertain compliance with the terms of this AGREEMENT. The independent audit of such records shall be conducted in such a manner as not to interfere with the COMPANY's normal business activities.

#### **5. No Off-Set Payments**

In the event that the TOWN receives additional payments from the COMPANY, or from the DOR or any other source, the funds for which have been collected by assessment against the COMPANY, including, but not limited to taxes, imposed by an act of the legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or a mandate from the TOWN for said payments, the amounts due from the COMPANY to the TOWN under the terms of this AGREEMENT shall not be reduced by the amount of such other payments.

#### **6. Local Taxes**

At all times during the Term of this AGREEMENT, property, both real and personal, owned or operated by the COMPANY shall be treated as taxable, and all applicable real estate and personal property taxes for that property shall be paid either directly by the COMPANY, and the COMPANY shall not object or otherwise challenge the taxability of such property and shall not seek a non-profit or agricultural exemption or reduction with respect to such taxes.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, (i) if real or personal property owned, leased or operated by the COMPANY is determined to be non-taxable or partially non-taxable, or (ii) if the value of such property is abated with the effect of reducing or eliminating the tax which would otherwise be paid if assessed at fair cash value as defined in G.L. c. 59, §38, or (iii) if the COMPANY is determined to be entitled or subject to exemption with the effect of reducing or eliminating the tax which would otherwise be due if not so exempted, then the COMPANY shall pay to the TOWN an amount which when added to the taxes, if any, paid on such property, shall be equal to the taxes which would have been payable on such property at fair cash value and at the otherwise applicable tax rate, if there had been no abatement or exemption; this payment shall be in addition to the payments made by the COMPANY under this AGREEMENT.

#### **7. Vehicle Excise Tax and Vehicle Management**

The COMPANY shall: (1) keep any and all vehicles used in connection with transportation and/or delivery of marijuana and other products from the FACILITY in TOWN, (2) register all vehicles in the TOWN and (3) pay motor vehicle excise taxes on such vehicles to the TOWN.

#### **8. Local Permitting**

The COMPANY shall apply for, and must receive, all necessary permits and approvals pursuant to the TOWN's Bylaws and Regulations. In accordance with the procedures set forth in G.L. c.44, §53G, any TOWN board or official from whom the COMPANY requires a permit or approval may require the COMPANY to fund the reasonable costs of the such board's or official's employment of outside consultants, including without limitation, engineers, architects, scientists and attorneys.

#### **9. Local Concerns**

The COMPANY shall employ its best efforts to work collaboratively and cooperatively with its neighboring businesses and residents to establish written policies and procedures to address mitigation of any reasonable concerns or issues that may arise through its operation of the FACILITY, including, but not limited to any and all reasonable concerns or issues raised at the COMPANY's required Community Outreach Meeting relative to the operation of the FACILITY; said written policies and procedures, as may be amended from time to time, shall be reviewed and approved by the TOWN and shall be incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this AGREEMENT, the same as if each were fully set forth herein.

The COMPANY further agrees and acknowledges that in the event the TOWN receives complaints with respect to the failure to mitigate conditions at the operation of the FACILITY, the COMPANY shall meet with the BOARD and shall take additional mitigation measures, at the COMPANY's sole expense, to address the specific nature of the complaints to the satisfaction of the BOARD.

#### **10. Local Hiring and Vendors.**

To the extent such practice and its implementation are consistent with federal, state, and municipal laws and regulations, the COMPANY shall employ its best efforts, in a legal and non-discriminatory manner, to give priority to local businesses, suppliers, contractors, builders and vendors in the provision of goods FACILITY services called for in the construction, maintenance and continued operation of the FACILITY, and shall use its bests efforts to hire TOWN residents as employees of the FACILITY before considering other candidates for open positions.

Best efforts shall include, at a minimum, actively soliciting bids from TOWN vendors through local advertisements and direct contact, advertising any job expansion or hiring of new employees first to TOWN residents a minimum of two (2) weeks before advertising through all typical regional employment advertising outlets and such other reasonable measures as the TOWN may from time-to-time reasonably request. The COMPANY also agrees to make best efforts to utilize women-owned and minority-owned vendors within the TOWN and the region.

Further, prior to hiring any new employees for the FACILITY, COMPANY shall advertise and hold at least one (1) hiring event for Hopedale residents, at which it will

review its hiring needs and explain to attendees the process by which they may seek to be hired in connection with the FACILITY.

Thirty (30) days after opening the FACILITY, and annually thereafter, COMPANY shall provide to the TOWN a hiring report. Said report shall include the full and part-time employment levels for the FACILITY as of the beginning of each month during the reporting period and the proportion of Hopedale residents in each category of employment. The COMPANY shall furnish the TOWN with such further information and documentation as the TOWN may reasonably request to support and document compliance with this paragraph.

## **11. Security**

The COMPANY shall maintain security at the FACILITY and PROPERTY in accordance with said approved security plan. In addition, the COMPANY shall at all times comply with all state and local laws and regulations, as well as any special permit or other permit/approval regarding security of the PROPERTY.

The COMPANY shall implement a comprehensive diversion prevention plan to prevent diversion, such plan to be in place prior to the Commencement of Operations at the FACILITY. Such plan shall include, but is not limited to, (i) training the COMPANY employees to be aware of, observe, and report any unusual behavior in authorized visitors or other COMPANY employees that may indicate the potential for diversion; and (ii) utilizing appropriate tracking software to closely track all inventory at the FACILITY.

The COMPANY shall promptly report the discovery of the following to TOWN's Police Department within twenty-four (24) hours of the COMPANY becoming aware of such event: diversion of marijuana; unusual discrepancies identified during inventory; theft; loss and any criminal action; unusual discrepancy in weight or inventory during transportation; any vehicle accidents, diversions, losses, or other reportable incidents that occur during transport; any suspicious act involving the storage, cultivation, sale, distribution, transportation or delivery of marijuana by any person; unauthorized destruction of marijuana; any loss or unauthorized alteration of records related to marijuana, registered qualifying patients, personal caregivers, or dispensary agents; an alarm activation or other event that requires response by public safety personnel; failure of any security alarm system due to a loss of electrical power or mechanical malfunction that is expected to last longer than eight (8) hours; and any other breach of security.

## **12. Annual Inspections**

The COMPANY shall submit to annual inspections by the TOWN's Police, Fire and Building Departments to ensure compliance with the terms of this AGREEMENT and other local approvals. This provision shall not preclude the TOWN or any of its departments from conducting inspections at other times during the year to address enforcement matters.

### **13. Improvements to the Property**

The COMPANY shall make capital improvements to the PROPERTY such that the PROPERTY shall match the look and feel of the TOWN and the surrounding parcels and be of construction standards at least at the quality of other nearby businesses. The COMPANY shall comply with all laws, rules, regulations and orders applicable to the FACILITY, such provisions being incorporated herein by reference, and shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary licenses, permits, and approvals required for the performance of such work. The FACILITY shall be adequately screened from the public way and nearby properties to the satisfaction of the BOARD.

### **14. Limitation on Use**

Even if authorized under CCC regulations, the COMPANY shall not permit on-site social consumption at the FACILITY absent prior written approval from the BOARD.

Further, if authorized under CCC regulations, the COMPANY shall not seek and engage in cultivation operations beyond tier 2 at the FACILITY absent prior written approval from the BOARD.

### **15. Additional Obligations**

- A. Good Neighbor Policy: The COMPANY has committed to a Good Neighbor Policy regarding the TOWN. As an expression of this Policy, the COMPANY shall seek reasonable ways to contribute to the growth, development, and long-term success of the TOWN.
- B. Lighting: The COMPANY shall use lighting practices at the PROPERTY and the FACILITY to reduce light pollution, that minimize the impact on maintaining a 'dark sky', by using best practices for outdoor lighting such as shielding lights and directing them down, selecting lamps with warmer colors, use less light and only where needed, and shielding any indoor lighting after sunset and before sunrise.
- C. Electrical Usage and Renewable Energy Requirements: The COMPANY shall (a) satisfy all minimum energy efficiency and equipment standards established by the CCC and meet all applicable environmental laws, regulations, permits, and other applicable approvals; and (b) adopt and use best management practices as determined by the CCC to reduce energy usage and consumption and engage in energy conservation. The COMPANY shall report to the BOARD annually on its energy use and shall include in its annual report a summary of its ongoing strategies to further reduce electrical demand.
- D. Water Consumption: The COMPANY shall use best efforts to minimize water consumption at the FACILITY and shall follow the CCC's Best Management

Practices for Water Use. Water consumption techniques shall include: (a) a commitment to utilizing hand watering techniques to ensure plants only receive the minimum amount of water needed for each plant; (b) a commitment to not engaging in water intensive cultivation methods such as ebb and flood hydroponic cultivation; and (c) installation of dehumidifiers in each room where cultivation occurs to collect and reuse moisture evaporating from plants resulting in reclamation of significant quantities of water. In addition, the COMPANY shall install water meters, conduct regular water audits to determine the amount and location of water use, and develop and implement a water savings strategy.

- E. Waste and Waste Water Controls: The COMPANY shall ensure that all recyclables and waste, including organic waste composed of or containing finished marijuana and marijuana products, shall be stored, secured, and managed in accordance with applicable state and local statutes, ordinances, and regulations. Liquid waste containing marijuana or by-products of marijuana processing shall be disposed of in compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements, including but not limited to, for discharge of pollutants into surface water or groundwater (Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, M.G.L. c. 21 §§ 26-53; 314 CMR 3.00: Surface Water Discharge Permit Program; 314 CMR 5.00: Groundwater Discharge Program; 314 CMR 12.00: Operation Maintenance and Pretreatment Standards for Wastewater Treatment Works and Indirect Dischargers; the Federal Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq., the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Regulations at 40 CFR Part 122, 314 CMR 7.00: Sewer System Extension and Connection Permit Program), or stored pending disposal in an industrial wastewater holding tank in accordance with 314 CMR 18.00: Industrial Wastewater Holding Tanks and Containers.

The COMPANY shall exclusively use organic or natural cultivation processes to limit the risk of cultivation-related pollutants and contaminants from being discharged into surface water and groundwater. The COMPANY shall utilize cultivation processes such as hand watering of plants and use of dehumidification systems to ensure that there is no wastewater discharged as part of the cultivation at the FACILITY. The COMPANY shall consult with the TOWN regarding its cultivation methods and wastewater plan prior to commencing cultivation at the FACILITY or in the event of a change of the COMPANY's cultivation practices that may result in wastewater discharge at the FACILITY. The COMPANY shall comply with all reasonable requests of the TOWN, including, but not limited to, testing requirements and tank holding requirements if necessary.

The COMPANY shall ensure that no fewer than two agents witness and document how the marijuana waste is disposed or otherwise handled (recycled, composted, etc.) in accordance with 935 CMR 501.000. When marijuana products or waste is disposed or handled, the COMPANY will create and maintain a written or



electronic record of the date, the type and quantity disposed or handled, the manner of disposal or other handling, the location of disposal or other handling, and the names of the two COMPANY agents present during the disposal or other handling, with their signatures. The COMPANY shall keep these records for at least three (3) years.

- F. Odor Control Technology: The COMPANY shall ensure that odor from the FACILITY is not released so as to constitute a nuisance, in the opinion of the BOARD, to surrounding properties. The COMPANY shall develop an odor mitigation plan and submit the plan to the TOWN for approval. At a minimum, the COMPANY shall contain all cannabis related odors onsite through use of odor control technologies, including but not limited to appropriate ventilation and air handling equipment and odor resistant packaging. The COMPANY shall also utilize a closed-loop system at the FACILITY to not relive or introduce any outdoor air into the FACILITY, nor allow any indoor air to escape. In addition, the COMPANY shall employ odor control technology to remove odors and harmful volatile organic compounds from the FACILITY. The COMPANY shall also ensure proper maintenance of all odor mitigation equipment to ensure maximum efficiency.

In the event the TOWN receives complaints with respect to odor impacts in relation to the operation of the FACILITY, the COMPANY shall meet with the BOARD. If requested by the BOARD, the COMPANY shall take additional mitigation measures at the COMPANY's sole expense, including, but not limited to, having its odor prevention mechanism and technologies reviewed and assessed by Independent Engineer, to address the nature of the complaints to the satisfaction of the BOARD. The COMPANY agrees and acknowledges that if odor mitigation is not addressed to the satisfaction of the BOARD, the COMPANY shall immediately, within thirty (30) days of notice, cease all operations at the FACILITY upon the request of BOARD.

Nothing set forth herein, shall limit the authority or jurisdiction of the Building Inspector, Board of Health, or any other local enforcement official from enforcing applicable state laws and regulations, the TOWN's local bylaws and regulations, with respect to odor violations.

- G. Pest Management: The COMPANY shall comply with the CCC's Guidance on Integrated Pest Management and shall apply chemical controls judiciously. Pesticides shall not be used as the primary method of pest control. "Minimum-risk (25(b))" pesticides for use in cannabis cultivation may be used in moderation.
- H. Traffic Mitigation: The COMPANY shall cooperate with TOWN officials on traffic management, including, but not limited to the TOWN's Police Department,

to ensure that sufficient traffic control measures are in place to mitigate traffic impacts.

- I. Hours of Operation: In no event shall the FACILITY be open for business, nor shall any delivery, transportation or distribution of marijuana occur at the FACILITY outside the hours of [REDACTED] A.M. through [REDACTED] P.M. Monday through Sunday, unless further restricted by the TOWN'S special permit granting authority.
- J. Emergency Contacts: The COMPANY shall disclose to the TOWN the names and contact information for individuals that will be the emergency contacts for the FACILITY prior to the commencement of operations. The COMPANY shall immediately, within twenty-four hours (24) provide the TOWN with updated information if the names and contact information for the emergency contacts change at any time.

To the extent requested by the TOWN'S Fire Department, the COMPANY shall work with the Fire Department in reviewing and approving all emergency procedures, including disaster plans with procedures to be followed in case of fire or other emergencies, prior to implementation and commencement of operations at the FACILITY.

## **16. Municipal Support**

The TOWN agrees to submit to the CCC, or such other state licensing, registering or monitoring authority, as the case may be, the required certification(s) of compliance with applicable local bylaws relating to the COMPANY'S application for a license to operate the FACILITY where such compliance has been properly met, but makes no representation or promise that it will act on any other license or permit request, including, but not limited to any zoning application submitted for the FACILITY, in any particular way other than by the TOWN's normal and regular course of conduct and in accordance with its rules and regulations and any statutory guidelines governing them.

## **17. Retained Authority of the Municipality**

This AGREEMENT does not affect, limit, or control the authority of the TOWN boards, commissions, and departments to carry out their respective powers and duties to decide upon and to issue, or deny, applicable permits and other approvals under the statutes and regulations of the Commonwealth, the General and Zoning Bylaws of the TOWN, or applicable regulations of those boards, commissions, and departments or to enforce said statutes, bylaws, and regulations. The TOWN, by entering into this AGREEMENT, is not thereby required or obligated to issue such permits and approvals as may be necessary for the FACILITY to operate in the TOWN, or to refrain from enforcement action against the COMPANY and/or the FACILITY for violation of the terms of said permits and approvals or said statutes, bylaws, and regulations.

## **18. Diligent Pursuant of Licenses and Approvals**

The COMPANY shall diligently pursue all licenses, permits and approvals required to open and operate the FACILITY. Within ninety (90) days of the EFFECTIVE DATE of this AGREEMENT (unless extended by the BOARD for cause), the COMPANY shall file with the TOWN's Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals all application forms and required supporting documents to request special permits to allow the construction and operation of the FACILITY. Also, within said ninety (90) days (unless extended by the BOARD for cause), the COMPANY shall file with the CCC an application and all required supporting documents request provisional licensure for the FACILITY. The COMPANY shall provide the TOWN written status updates at least every ninety (90) days regarding all efforts undertaken by the COMPANY to secure any necessary licenses, permits and approvals for the construction and operation of the FACILITY. The COMPANY shall commence interior fit-up of the FACILITY within one hundred and twenty (120) days after both a) the COMPANY's receipt of special permits from the Planning Board and/or Zoning Board of Appeals and provisional licensure from the CCC and b) the COMPANY's Landlord's receipt of a certificate of occupancy for the building being constructed for the FACILITY (unless extended for cause, including the TOWN's delay in issuing a building permit and CCC's delay in granting approval of architectural plans), and it shall diligently continue construction through completion of the FACILITY. No later than thirty (30) days after completion of construction, the COMPANY shall request a certificate of occupancy from the TOWN's Building Inspector and final licensure from the CCC.

## **19. Term and Termination**

This AGREEMENT shall take effect on the EFFECTIVE DATE, and shall continue in effect for so long as the COMPANY operates the FACILITY in TOWN.

In the event the COMPANY has not secured a final license from the CCC and all necessary local permits from the TOWN and commenced operations at the FACILITY within one (1) year of the Effective Date of this AGREEMENT, this AGREEMENT shall expire at the discretion of the TOWN, and the COMPANY shall be required to negotiate a new host community agreement in order to operate the FACILITY within the TOWN. The TOWN, in its discretion, may agree to an extension of the one (1) year expiration period for good cause which may include the time required to pursue or await the determination of an appeal of the special permit or other legal proceeding.

The TOWN may terminate this AGREEMENT for cause by providing written notice to the COMPANY in the event that: (i) COMPANY with willful or gross negligence violates any laws of the TOWN or the Commonwealth with respect to the operation of the FACILITY, and such violation remains uncured for thirty (30) days following the TOWN's issuance to COMPANY of written notice of such violation; (ii) COMPANY fails to make payments to the TOWN as required under this AGREEMENT, and such failure remains uncured for thirty (30) days following the TOWN's issuance to COMPANY of written notice of such violation; or (iii) there is any other material breach of the AGREEMENT by the



With a copy to:

Hopedale Town Counsel  
KP Law, PC  
101 Arch Street  
12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

To COMPANY:

LIFTED GENETICS, INC.  
c/o Registered Agent, David Griffiths  
42 Holliston Street  
Medway, MA 02053

### **23. Severability**

If any term of condition of this AGREEMENT or any application thereof shall to any extent be held invalid, illegal or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the validity, legality, and enforceability of the remaining terms and conditions of this AGREEMENT shall not be deemed affected thereby unless the TOWN would be substantially or materially prejudiced. For the purposes hereof, substantial or material prejudice shall include, without limitation, reduction or termination of the payments required hereunder.

Further, the COMPANY hereby represents that at the time of execution of this AGREEMENT, based upon the COMPANY's diligent inquiry, it determined to its satisfaction that the provisions of this AGREEMENT are valid, binding and enforceable. In exchange for and in reliance on such representation, among others, the TOWN has entered into this AGREEMENT. Therefore, the PARTIES agree that in the event that the COMPANY challenges the validity of any such provisions in state or federal court, it shall, notwithstanding the result of such challenge, pay all reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred by the TOWN in defending such challenge. The COMPANY agrees that the foregoing provision is not intended to prohibit the COMPANY from exercising any right to judicial relief nor as a penalty for any such exercise, but as an allocation of a specified risk to the COMPANY.

### **24. Governing Law**

This AGREEMENT shall be governed and construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the COMPANY submits to the jurisdiction of any of its appropriate courts for the adjudication of disputes arising out of this AGREEMENT.

### **25. Entire Agreement**

This AGREEMENT, including all documents incorporated herein by reference, constitutes the entire integrated agreement between the PARTIES with respect to the matters described. This AGREEMENT supersedes all prior agreements, negotiations and representations,

either written or oral, and it shall not be modified or amended except by a written document executed by the PARTIES hereto.

## **26. Indemnification**

Excluding any claims caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the TOWN, the COMPANY shall indemnify, defend, and hold the TOWN harmless from and against any and all claims, demands, liabilities, actions, causes of actions, defenses, subpoenas, proceedings and/or costs and expenses, including attorney's fees (collectively, the "CLAIMS"), brought against the TOWN, its agents, departments, officials, employees, insurers, successors or assign, by any third PARTY arising from or relating to this AGREEMENT and/or FACILITY as long as such agents, officials and employees were acting in their official capacity on behalf of the TOWN. Such indemnification shall include, but shall not be limited to, all reasonable fees and reasonable costs of attorneys and consultants of the TOWN's choosing incurred in defending such CLAIMS. The COMPANY shall, within thirty (30) days of written notice by the TOWN, reimburse the TOWN for any and all costs and fees incurred in defending itself with respect to any such CLAIMS.

## **27. Amendments/Waiver**

The failure of any PARTY to strictly enforce the provisions hereof shall not be construed as a waiver of any obligation hereunder. This AGREEMENT can be modified only in a written instrument signed by the BOARD and the COMPANY, prior to the effective date of the amendment. This AGREEMENT shall be binding upon the PARTIES and their successors and assigns.

## **28. Headings**

The article, section, and/or paragraph headings in this AGREEMENT are for convenience of reference only, and shall in no way affect, modify, define or be used in interpreting the text of this AGREEMENT.

## **29. Counterparts**

This AGREEMENT may be signed in any number of counterparts all of which taken together, each of which is an original, and all of which shall constitute one and the same instrument, and any PARTY hereto may execute this AGREEMENT by signing one or more counterparts.

## **30. Signatures**

Facsimile and electronic signatures affixed to this AGREEMENT shall have the same weight and authority as an original signature.

## **31. No Joint Venture**

The PARTIES hereto agree that nothing contained in this AGREEMENT or any other documents executed in connection herewith is intended or shall be construed to establish the TOWN and COMPANY, or the TOWN and any other successor, affiliate or corporate entity as joint ventures or partners.

**32. Third Parties**

Nothing contained in this AGREEMENT shall create a contractual relationship with or a cause of action in favor of a third PARTY against either TOWN or the COMPANY.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the PARTIES hereto have executed this AGREEMENT under seal as of the day and year first written above.

**TOWN OF HOPEDALE,  
by and through its Select Board**

**LIFTED GENETICS, INC.,**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenda Hazard, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
By: [Name, Title]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Keyes

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bernard Stock