



CHAPTER IV – RECOMMENDATIONS

Vision and Goals

Sudbury Master Plan

Sudbury's Historic Preservation Program

Municipal Bylaws and Regulations

Public Awareness, Programming, and Education

Municipal Policy, Management, and Capital Improvements

Mechanisms to Protect Public Investment in Private Properties

Mechanisms for Oversight/Management of Historic Town-Owned Properties



RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter IV of the Historic Preservation Plan presents strategies and recommendations for the further identification, preservation, and treatment of historic properties in Sudbury. These strategies and recommendations are based on the information developed in Chapters II and III of the Historic Preservation Plan which outline existing conditions and address different aspects of historic preservation in the Town. Chapter IV is organized into six sections:

- **Vision and Goals** – providing context for the strategies and recommendations;
- **Sudbury Master Plan** – acknowledging the importance of aligning historic preservation initiatives with the Town’s broader goals and activities;
- **Sudbury’s Historic Preservation Program** – recognizing that Sudbury has a historic preservation program with coordinated elements related to inventory, study, coordination, and the work of preservation-related commissions and committees;
- **Municipal Bylaws and Regulations** – aligning Town bylaws and regulations with historic preservation goals and initiatives;
- **Public Awareness, Programming, and Education** – emphasizing the importance of public outreach, engagement, and support; and

- **Municipal Policy, Management, and Capital Improvements** – focusing on historic properties, particularly on the treatment of Town-owned historic properties.

Interviews with over forty individuals with interests in historic preservation and representing Town boards, commissions, and committees as well as non-profit organizations contributed to the recommendations presented here. Several of the prioritized strategies and recommendations for the Historic Preservation Plan focus on engaging residents and raising public awareness and support over the long term. Priorities also focus on coordination among Town entities on the stewardship of historic, archaeological, and natural resources.

Chapter IV's final sections outline mechanisms that can be used to protect investments made to support the preservation of historic properties in both the public and private sectors.

VISION AND GOALS

A Vision and Goals were presented in the Executive Summary for the Historic Preservation Plan and are represented here in relation to the plan's strategies and recommendations.

The strategies and recommendations outlined in Sudbury's Historic Preservation Plan are informed and guided by the principles of historic preservation that have been developed and honed by practitioners in the field over the decades before and after enactment of the 1966 federal Historic Preservation Act. Preservation is a practical discipline that can accommodate growth and change while continuing to preserve the characteristics that make a place special and of value.

The following brief vision statement has been developed to guide development of this Historic Preservation Plan in coordination with the Sudbury Master Plan:

Vision Statement

Sudbury is a community where historic, cultural, and natural resources are valued, preserved, and enhanced as central to the Town's character and quality of life.

Goals for Historic Preservation

Four broad goals are identified that together express how Sudbury's historic resources and character relate to the Town's vision for the future and are embodied in the strategies and recommendations presented in the plan.

Goal 1 – Preserving Historic Resources:

To prevent the further loss of historic building, landscape, and archeological resources in Sudbury. Historic resources are irreplaceable – once lost they cannot be regained.

The Historic Preservation Plan recognizes the full range of historic resources in Sudbury and seeks to encourage their preservation and provide guidance for their appropriate treatment. A particular concern is the periodic loss of

historically significant buildings. The prevention of further loss should be a town-wide goal.

Goal 2 – Coordinating Stakeholders:

To facilitate coordination among public and private stakeholders in the recognition, preservation, and appropriate treatment of historic resources.

Historic preservation is primarily a product of grassroots initiatives undertaken over many years by private property owners. Public and non-profit entities are critical in providing leadership and through example. It is important that the various stakeholders impacting historic resources be engaged, informed, and coordinated toward desired preservation outcomes.

Goal 3 – Raising Public Awareness:

To raise public awareness about the role historic resources play in representing Sudbury's history and embodying the Town's character and quality of life.

Special emphasis is placed in this plan on raising public awareness about Sudbury's history and historic preservation. Needed and desired preservation actions will be easier if Town residents recognize the significance of historic resources, their intrinsic value, and the benefits they provide to public and private interests. Rekindling the public spirit that led to the establishment of local historic districts in the 1960s and adoption of the Community Preservation Act in 2000 is an ongoing task as new preservation initiatives are considered.

Goal 4 – Informational Resources:

To provide Town government, the community, and owners of historic properties with information, resources, and support for the appropriate treatment of their historic buildings and landscapes.

In order to achieve desired outcomes, it is critical that good information is available as issues arise and options are weighed. With respect to public policy, Sudbury's various boards, commissions, and committees must be provided with guidance on the appropriate treatment of historic resources as development and change are considered. With respect to private property, information and guidance should be made available to property owners to help with decision-making as they consider needed change to their historic buildings and other resources.



Historic residence in Sudbury

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In addition to the Vision and Goals outlined above, the following Guiding Principles shape implementation of the strategies and recommendations outlined in the Historic Preservation Plan.

Authenticity: We recognize and value authentic historic places and the complexities that derive from the layers of change that have occurred over time.

Shared Stewardship: We collaborate in the care and appropriate treatment of our natural, historic, and cultural assets, respecting individual resources as well as the contexts in which they are found.

Best Practices: We foster a continuing process of upgrading to best practices in planning and stewardship.

Preservation Values: We seek to infuse historic preservation values and considerations into all public and private activities.

Accommodating Change: We recognize that change is often necessary but can be accommodated in ways that incorporate preservation principles and can be leveraged to enhance historic assets and their contexts.

Quality: We promote and expect quality in all things. Work undertaken now should make a lasting contribution to the community and be worthy of the respect of future generations.

Community Respect: We respect the varied experiences and perspectives of individuals and organizations throughout the community.

Environment and Sustainability: We promote ecological and economic sustainability in our planning and our actions as the foundation of a successful community, including the preservation and rehabilitation of historic and cultural assets.

Long-Term Interests: We work in the best long-term interest of Sudbury, its people, neighborhoods, natural and historic assets, and environment.



Barns are recognized as significant historic resources from Sudbury's past.

SUDBURY MASTER PLAN

This Historic Preservation Plan is prepared in concert with and as an implementing action of the Sudbury Master Plan, completed in September 2021 as work on the Historic Preservation Plan was about to begin. The Master Plan states:

The rich history of Sudbury is the cornerstone that gives the Town a sense of place and creates a unique experience for the people who live here and those who visit. Connections to the past are part of the experience in the historic Town Center and traveling among the hundreds of historic homes scattered about Town.

Historic landscapes in the community include an array of historic homesteads, and remaining farmlands maintain living connections to Sudbury's rural past. Many of these sites are connected by scenic roads lined with old stone walls, mature trees, and fields.

Sudbury has an impressive collection of noteworthy sites, many of which are listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

The Sudbury Master Plan includes a strong section on Historic and Cultural Identity with the stated goal to *preserve, protect, and develop the historical and cultural assets of Sudbury to foster appreciation of the Town's heritage for enjoyment today and by future generations.*

Specific historic and cultural action items specified in the Master Plan have been incorporated in the Historic Preservation Plan and further developed for implementation, as outlined in the set of recommendations below. Other sections of the Master Plan that will impact historic resources, such as development of the Route 20 corridor and approach to conservation lands, are also relevant to the Historic Preservation Plan and are addressed.

In general, the implementation of all historic preservation initiatives should be aligned with the Sudbury Master Plan and coordinated with other Town entities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Maintain an ongoing awareness of implementation initiatives associated with the Sudbury Master Plan. Provide information, input, and support for initiatives impacting historic resources when appropriate.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission

- **Be proactive in anticipating and planning in advance for upcoming implementation initiatives associated with the Master Plan.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission

- **Coordinate historic preservation initiatives with the Sudbury Master Plan.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission

SUDBURY'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

This Historic Preservation Plan seeks to establish that Sudbury has a specific Historic Preservation Program consisting of ongoing initiatives directly associated with historic preservation and Town governance as overseen and implemented by the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, and Community Preservation Commission.

Sudbury's Historic Preservation Program was initiated in 1963 with the establishment of the Old Sudbury Historic District and Historic Districts Commission. Over the years, the program has grown and matured as described in Chapters II and III of this plan. Various topics and initiatives associated with the program are outlined below and should be viewed as a coordinated whole. They include the following existing and potential future elements:

- Certified Local Government,
- Stewardship Working Group
- Historical Commission,
- Historic Districts Commission,
- Community Preservation Committee,
- Historic Properties Inventory,
- Local Historic Districts,
- National Register of Historic Places,
- Heritage Landscapes, and
- Public Outreach.

Specifics related to other Town programs, entities, and activities, such as land conservation and the treatment of Town-owned properties, are included in later sections of this Part III. Public outreach as a broader initiative beyond the activities of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission is addressed later as well. Specific bylaw and regulatory issues and recommendations related to historic preservation are also addressed in a separate section below.

Certified Local Government

Sudbury is in the process of seeking designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Park Service. Municipalities with established historic preservation programs can be recognized through designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC).

The CLG program is a federal program managed by the MHC through which federal funding is allocated specifically to be used as grants to qualified CLGs. Each year, 10% of the federal funds provided to the MHC are required to be offered as grants to local municipalities that have qualified as Certified Local Governments (CLGs). As of 2020, 25 Massachusetts municipalities participate in the CLG program.

By becoming a CLG, Sudbury will have a higher likelihood of receiving a yearly allocation of historic preservation grant funding for inventories and other key projects as outlined in this plan. Sudbury will also be eligible to receive technical assistance from the MHC that is not available to non-CLG communities. In contrast, by not being a CLG, Sudbury competes with about 300 other municipalities across the Commonwealth for funding and technical assistance.

Becoming a CLG demonstrates a community's readiness to take on preservation projects and be successful when seeking other opportunities for community revitalization and development using local historic assets. Sudbury already meets the most important requirement in becoming designated as a CLG through its establishment of local historic districts and the work of its Historic Districts Commission and Historical Commission. Becoming a CLG is a priority action and a critical next step in support of the other recommendations in this Historic Preservation Plan.

The Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission should use the CLG designation as the organizing concept and structure for Sudbury's Historic Preservation Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Undertake and complete the application process for designation as a Certified Local Government in accordance with processes administered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Park Service.**

*Short term and **priority** action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission with support from the Planning Department and approval of the Select Board.*

- **Review obligations under the CLG program and organize the Sudbury Historic Preservation Program to meet program requirements both administratively and regarding implementation initiatives.**

Short term action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission with support from the Planning Department.

- **Prepare a yearly report to be provided to the Massachusetts Historical Commission and Select Board on activities and accomplishments of the Town with respect to CLG designation and the Town's Historic Preservation Program as a whole.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission with support from the Planning Department.

Stewardship Working Group

The Sudbury Master Plan called for creation of a Historic and Archaeological Working Group to advance the protection, preservation, and development of historic and archaeological resources and Town character (Action A.1 of the Master Plan under *Historic and Cultural Identity*). It is suggested that this action be launched in conjunction with the Town's Certified Local Government designation as a means of establishing the concept of a Town-wide historic preservation program and of engaging stakeholders with respect to it.

It is suggested that the Town's conservation and planning entities be included and that conservation issues and initiatives be recognized and supported through the Working Group as well, by renaming it the **Stewardship Working Group**. The purpose of the group's expansion would be to better integrate historic and conservation interests and to demonstrate that the stewardship of historic and natural resources is interrelated.

At minimum, the Stewardship Working Group should include the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Community Preservation Commission, Sudbury Historical Society, Wayside Inn Foundation, Conservation Commission, and Sudbury Valley Trustees.

It is suggested that the Working Group meet twice yearly, spring and fall, to discuss issues, coordinate activities between participating entities, establish yearly goals and work program, and measure progress. It is suggested that the Working Group be the lead entity in implementation of a Town-wide interpretive program as outlined later in this chapter.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Establish a Stewardship Working Group as recommended in the Sudbury Master Plan as the vehicle for engaging stakeholders in historic preservation Town-wide. Include land conservation entities as a means of better integrating historic and conservation interests.**
*Short-term, ongoing, and **priority** action of the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Conservation Commission, and others as appropriate.*
- **Designate the Stewardship Working Group as the lead entity in implementation of a Town-wide interpretation and public engagement program as described later in this chapter.**
Mid-term and ongoing action of the Working Group.



Sudbury is continuing to inventory and study the significance of its historic resources.

Historic Properties Inventory

Sudbury's Historic Properties Inventory is discussed in Chapter III of the Historic Preservation Plan. In general, the inventory has been comprehensive and is of high quality. Most resources pre-dating 1940 have been documented, and a significant number of older inventory forms have been updated over time.

Nonetheless, inventory work should continue on a regular basis as an ongoing project of the Historical Commission. The *Sudbury Survey Update, 2020-2121, Final Survey Report* includes Further Study Recommendations with respect to the Town's inventory of historic properties as well as recommendations for National Register study and designation. These recommendations are outlined in Chapter III.

This Historic Preservation Plan fully endorses the recommendations included in the Final Survey Report with the following prioritization.

First, undertake an ongoing program of inventory work using Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. Apply for \$6,000 to \$8,000 CPA grants to undertake inventory work on a specified, targeted number of sites to be determined based on recommendations in the Final Survey Report and other considerations. It is recommended that a single consultant be retained for a six-year period of inventory work.

This recommendation assumes that inventory work will be undertaken without the use of MHC/CLG grant funding, which requires a minimal total expenditure of \$25-30K including grant and matching funds. This plan assumes that MHC/CLG grant funding will be used for other, higher priority study recommendations included below, such as the National Register thematic

nomination, Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study and Survey, Route 20 Corridor Preservation Study, Hosmer House Reports, and others.

Future inventory work would include preparation of new survey forms and/or updating of older forms. A list of specific properties for which new or updated forms are desired is included in the Final Survey Report. Additionally, the Report recommended preparation of an expanded area inventory form for the Wayside Inn Historic Districts.

Historic Preservation Plan recommendations with respect to National Register nominations are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Undertake an ongoing program of inventory work on an annual or biannual timeframe specifying work to be undertaken during each cycle including both new and updated inventory forms as determined appropriate.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission.

History of Suburbanization in Sudbury

With respect to post-1940 resources, the Final Survey Report included a brief context statement and suggested undertaking a reconnaissance survey as a first step in developing a working list of resources to be inventoried. The Report notes consideration of commercial, municipal, and private institutional buildings as well as custom-built dwellings and residential subdivisions. The Report urges confining future survey work to recording resources that retain their historic integrity, or the character defining physical materials, design features and aspects of construction that contribute to their historic appearance.

Further developing these thoughts, this Historic Preservation Plan suggests that a history of Sudbury's suburban development be prepared focusing on the period 1940 to the present. This recommendation would include expansion of the context statement and the proposed reconnaissance survey into a more comprehensive history documenting the Town's tremendous growth during this period. The study might begin with review of the development of the Pine Lakes neighborhood in the 1920s. A thorough documentation of Sudbury's suburban growth now would prevent the loss of vital information that will be lost if left to a later date. Use the history to help establish priorities for future inventory work.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare a history of Sudbury's suburban growth from the 1940s (or earlier) to the present to record this important period while information is available and fresh.**

Mid-term to long-term action of the Historical Commission

It should be noted that study and potential inventory of post-1940 resources should not automatically subject those resources to the Demolition Delay Bylaw. See recommendations for the Demolition Delay Bylaw below.

Heritage Landscapes

An overview of Heritage Landscapes was prepared for Sudbury in 2006 and is discussed in Chapter II, *History of Historic Preservation Planning in Sudbury*. Eight priority Heritage Landscapes were identified.

Consideration of future inventory work in Sudbury should revisit the Heritage Landscape Report to reaffirm its conclusions, add potential priority landscapes, and determine whether area inventory forms should be prepared for those landscapes. A possible preferred alternative to inventory forms would be the preparation of cultural landscape reports for those landscapes.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Revisit the 2006 Heritage Landscape Report to reaffirm its findings and determine whether area inventory forms or cultural landscape reports should be prepared for identified priority Heritage Landscapes in Sudbury.**

Mid-term to long-term action of the Historical Commission.

Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study and Survey

As stated in this Plan, the Historical Commission is charged under M.G.L Chapter 40 Section 8D with not only the protection and preservation of historical resources but also archaeological resources. Although historical resources have been inventoried over the last three decades, Sudbury's pre-European history and archaeological resources have not been a focus of study. Many residents are not aware of historic indigenous settlement and use areas.

It is recommended that a study be undertaken as an Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study and Survey relating historic Native American presence and use of the land with natural landscape characteristics and features. The study would:

- Assess the characteristics of Sudbury's glaciated landscape during the pre-contact period;
- Summarize Native American history with a special focus on the several hundreds of years prior to contact;
- Include an archaeological reconnaissance survey of precontact and post contact sites and resources.
- Review how Native American peoples used and impacted different character areas within the landscape;
- Assess the types of archaeological resources that might be found there today; and
- Prepare an archaeological sensitivity map for the Town.

The study will help raise public awareness of indigenous history and resources and provide a basis for landscape protection where appropriate. The National Historical Preservation Act, as amended, refers to these resources as Traditional Cultural Properties. The archaeological sensitivity map should be used by the Historical Commission and Planning Board to raise awareness when archaeological resources are threatened by new development.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare a study of Sudbury's Indigenous Cultural Landscape with an archaeological survey component relating to Native American presence, use, and significance.**

*Short and mid-term **priority** action of the Historical Commission.*



The study of cultural landscapes recognizes the interrelationship between natural and cultural resources in both pre- and post-contact eras.

Cultural Landscape Approach

Similar to the above recommendation, in its inventories and assessments of historic resources and properties from all periods, it is recommended that the Historical Commission and its partners take a cultural landscape approach to historic preservation, emphasizing the relationship of historic buildings and other features to their surrounding landscape contexts. This is particularly important with respect to Sudbury's conservation lands and for the related National Register thematic nomination discussed in the following section of Part III.

Over the past thirty or forty years, historic preservation has taken an increasingly broader perspective in moving away from a concentration upon historic buildings as isolated objects toward a more holistic appreciation of buildings and related historic resources in their landscape context. In historic resource inventories, community planning, growth management, new development, and other activities, historic features in the landscape should never be viewed in isolation, but in relationship to the landscape as a whole.

The National Park Service has led the recognition and study of historic and cultural landscapes in the United States and has developed methodologies and guidelines for their identification, assessment, and treatment. These

methodologies and guidelines can be useful in helping us to understand Sudbury’s historic resources and landscapes as they have evolved over time. They provide a set of best practices that can help us recognize and preserve character defining features of the landscape significant to the Town’s character and identity.

The National Park Service has developed *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, which is accessible online and which discusses the principles and methodologies for cultural landscape assessment and how to apply the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* to historic landscapes.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Take a cultural landscape approach to the identification and assessment of historic resources and properties, and post-contact archaeological resources. For each identified area or resource, identify its character defining features and work toward their preservation and enhancement.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and its partners.

National Register of Historic Places

As discussed in Chapter III, *National Register of Historic Places*, there is great potential for the listing of additional resources and areas in Sudbury on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of historic resources that have been determined worthy of preservation. Listing on the National Register is purely an honorary recognition, recognizing the importance of a historic resource without placing any obligations or restrictions on the resource owner. Listing does not give the federal government any ownership rights or regulatory controls with respect to a property.

The Sudbury Survey Update, 2020-2021, Survey Final Report provides recommendations for the individual listing of identified resources on the National Register as well as recommendations for further study. Recommendations are related to the Town’s association with the historic contexts *Agriculture and Industry* and *Early 20th Century Suburbanization and Seasonal Development*. Additionally, further study for expansion of the Wayside Inn National Register Historic District and potential designation of National Register districts for the King Philip and George Pitts Tavern Historic Districts is recommended.

This Historic Preservation Plan respects and fully endorses these recommendations. As an alternative priority, however, this Historic Preservation Plan recommends preparation of a thematic Town-wide nomination to the National Register based on the Town’s agricultural history.

Sudbury’s history is distinctive for its 300-year-long evolution (1639-1940) as an agricultural landscape and community without significant intrusion from non-related commercial, industrial, or other forms of development. Sudbury’s

agricultural history parallels and exemplifies the history of agriculture in eastern Massachusetts.

Preparation of a thematic nomination will encompass the entire agricultural landscape in Sudbury, including historic farm complexes, farmhouses, barns, other outbuildings, and landscape features. It will include mills as an integral part of the agricultural landscape and Sudbury's important greenhouse industry that extend this history through the 20th century to the present. The study will facilitate and enhance the identification of resources for documentation and protection. It will inform preservation understanding by identifying architectural styles and building types, including barns and outbuildings.

In addition to documenting this significant history in Sudbury, the thematic nomination will help raise public awareness, especially that of the owners of historic properties outside of the Town's local historic districts. It will provide a basis for interpretation as recommended elsewhere in this section.

This is a priority recommendation of the Historic Preservation Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Prepare a thematic nomination of Sudbury's agricultural building and landscape history and resources to the National Register of Historic Places including assessment of related post-contact archaeological resources.**

*Short-and-mid-term **priority** action of the Historical Commission.*

- **Pursue the nomination of individual resources to the National Register as recommended in the Sudbury Survey Update 2020-2021.**

Long-term action of the Historical Commission.



A thematic nomination of Sudbury's agricultural resources and landscapes to the National Register will emphasize the central role of agriculture to the Town's history.

Historical Commission

The Sudbury Historical Commission has taken on issues and projects of increasing range and complexity in recent years and has responded to the challenges with perseverance and professionalism. As with many of the Town boards and commissions, the Historical Commission has had a full agenda of issues to address and has expanded to include Associate Members in the last five years to meet the increased workload.

Role of the Historical Commission

The Historical Commission's mission as stated in its enabling legislation is the preservation, protection, and development of Sudbury's historical or archeological assets. The Historical Commission is responsible for implementing many of the initiatives and activities addressed in the Historic Preservation Plan, including inventories, nominations, and studies.

In accordance with MGL Chapter 40, Section 8D, the roles and responsibilities of the Historical Commission include:

- Lead advisory preservation planning role,
- **Inventory and documentation** of historic resources within the Town,
- Making recommendations for listings of buildings or other resources on the **National Register of Historic Places**,
- **Monitoring** of issues related to historic resources, especially threats such as demolition by neglect,
- Providing **information and guidance** to Town boards, commissions, committees, and departments on issues impacting historic resources,
- Recommendations on the **design** of new development projects involving historic resources undergoing Planning Board review,
- Review and recommendations with respect to **impact studies** prepared in conjunction with zoning, subdivision, and land development applications,
- Administration of Sudbury's Demolition Delay Ordinance and review and recommendations with respect to the proposed **demolition** of historic resources,
- **Public outreach** to residents within Sudbury providing information and educational programming on the history, significance, and appropriate treatment of historic resources.

The Historical Commission should continue to participate actively in Town governance and be integral to municipal activities, policies, and programs. As an advisory body, the Historical Commission should make sure that other Town entities have the information and guidance they need to make informed decisions about actions that may have an impact upon historic buildings, structures, landscapes, sites, and archaeological resources.

In particular, the Historical Commission should work closely with the Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, Community Preservation Committee, and Conservation Commission. The Historical Commission should make recommendations to these bodies on issues related to historic preservation and should advocate for the appropriate treatment of historic resources.

In its operations, it is recommended that the Historical Commission prepare an **annual work plan** to (1) maintain ongoing relationships and monitoring of Town affairs and (2) undertake special designated projects such as the National Register thematic nomination, inventories, and public outreach initiatives.

The Historical Commission should continue to **organize assignments** for members and alternates for its ongoing work. Specific members or alternates should be assigned as **liaisons** to other Town boards, commissions, and committees. Members or alternates should be assigned to follow developments related to particular projects of interest or concern.

With the assistance of Department of Planning and Development staff, the Historical Commission should maintain a **spreadsheet** with a running list of projects and issues under consideration by Town boards, commissions, and committees affecting historic resources. Of particular importance are construction, land development, and subdivision projects under review by the Planning Board and Zoning Board. Note the status of each project, dates by which action of the board is required, and dates by which information and support from the Historical Commission is needed.

The Historical Commission should **monitor** the condition of historic resources in Sudbury on an ongoing basis. It should consider maintaining a **watch list** of potentially endangered resources and engaging with property owners and others in encouraging their care and appropriate treatment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Make sure that the Historical Commission is kept aware of topics and issues being addressed by other boards, commissions, and committees that may impact historic resources.**

Ongoing action of the Town Manager and Planning staff.

- **Organize Historical Commission members and alternates to engage and maintain relationships with key Town boards, commissions, and committees and their activities.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Historical Commission.

- **Proactively and positively engage in topics and issues being addressed by other Town boards, commissions and committees providing information and guidance on the treatment of historic resources.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission.

The Historical Commission would benefit from access to professional guidance on some topics which it is required to address. While the Town's Planning staff provides important support, it is primarily administrative and on topics of general planning and process. It is recommended that the Historical Commission have access to a professional **preservation consultant** experienced in preservation planning and the architectural treatment of historic buildings who can be called in to provide guidance on a case-by-case basis

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Provide the Historical Commission with access to a professional preservation consultant experienced in preservation planning and the architectural treatment of historic buildings who can be called in to provide guidance on an as-needed basis.**

Mid-term action of the Select Board and Town Manager.

Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission members have participated in **workshops and training** session on historic preservation on a regular basis. To be effective, it is essential that the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission maintain public confidence in its procedures and determinations as well as the confidence of applicants that procedures and determinations are predictable, professional, and fair. It is important that members are qualified and experienced in historic preservation and public processes. Communication through public outreach, discussed further below, is key. It important is that members continue to commit to participation in training in historic preservation on an ongoing basis as provided by the MHC, Preservation Massachusetts, and other preservation organizations.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Participate in periodic, ongoing training in historic preservation to enhance the qualifications and experience of all members of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission.

Sudbury Master Plan

The first section of this chapter addresses the importance of the Sudbury Master Plan as a primary venue for the implementation of future projects and initiatives. The actions recommended in that section are attributed primarily to the Historical Commission as an aspect of its Town-wide role.

Here, the Preservation Plan wishes to emphasize the Master Plan as a central organizing element for Town initiatives. The Historical Commission should fully and proactively participate in Master Plan initiatives, recognizing its importance and embracing its goals and objectives, and providing input and guidance with respect to historic resources.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Acknowledge and maintain awareness of the importance of the Sudbury Master Plan as a primary venue for Town projects and initiatives.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission.



The study of historic resources along the Route 20 corridor will identify the capacity of historic properties for adaptive reuse as new development is considered.

Route 20 Corridor Preservation Study

One of the primary initiatives of the Sudbury Master Plan is development of a vision and plan for commercial and mixed-use development along the Route 20 corridor. The Master Plan favors redevelopment of Route 20 as a mixed-use area of high-quality design that serves as a pedestrian friendly destination for people in Sudbury and surrounding communities. The planning initiative will build upon and expand the work completed in early plans undertaken for the corridor.

The Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission should actively engage in the visioning and design process, seeking to preserve and enhance historic resources along the corridor and to enhance the character of South Sudbury, the George Pitts Tavern Historic District and the King Philip Historic District along the Route 20 Corridor.

As a proactive and short-term action, the Historical Commission should undertake an assessment of historic resources along the Route 20 corridor to assess their capacity for development and adaptive reuse. The planning work should be undertaken by a professional planning consultant experienced in work with historic buildings and contexts. The study should identify the historic resources, their significance, their character defining features and landscape contexts, and their capacity for adaptive reuse while retaining their historic integrity.

The study should recognize that the Route 20 corridor may change dramatically in overall density and character and should provide guidance to the broader visioning, planning, and development process. The planning study should be

undertaken in collaboration with the Sudbury Planning Board. Community Preservation Act monies may be used to fund the study.

This is a priority recommendation of the Historic Preservation Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Support the Historical Commission's and Historic Districts Commission's active engagement in the visioning and planning for the Route 20 corridor with respect to historic preservation issues.**

Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission with the Planning Board.

- **Prepare a Route 20 Corridor Preservation Study to identify the capacity of historic properties for adaptive reuse and change in accordance with visioning and planning for the corridor.**

*Short-term and **priority** action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission in collaboration with the Planning Board.*

Town Center Cultural Landscape Assessment

The Sudbury Master Plan also recommends preparation of a Town Center Master Plan under Action A.2 which relates to the Historic Preservation Plan. Major renovations to road circulation in Town center were completed in 2015.

In discussions with stakeholders involved in preparation of the Sudbury Master Plan, it was stated that the Town Center Master Plan was intended to address landscape issues related to pedestrian circulation and potentially inappropriate treatments. Improvements to the parking lot behind Town Hall associated with planned additions and renovations to Town Hall, which would create a new primary entrance to the building facing the rear, was a primary issue to be addressed.

A full Town Center Master Plan is a project that is appropriate for the Planning Board to undertake as a larger planning project in association with proposed new work. The master planning should be undertaken with participation of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission.

In advance of a Master Plan, it is recommended that the Historical Commission prepare a Cultural Landscape Assessment for Town Center identifying character defining historic and landscape resources, making recommendations for their preservation and appropriate treatment, and providing recommendations to guide the design of new proposed work, including appropriate trees, plants, landscaping, signage, and site features for the historic context.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare a Cultural Landscape Assessment of Town Center in support of proposed development and changes to Town Hall and the surrounding landscape.**

***Priority** short to mid-term action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission in collaboration with the Planning Board.*



Hosmer House is among Sudbury's most significant Town-owned historic properties. A combined historic structure report/cultural landscape report is recommended to support its appropriate maintenance.

Hosmer House

One of the most important and rewarding responsibilities of the Historical Commission has been the oversight and management of designated historic buildings owned by the Town, of which Hosmer House is probably the best known. In past years, management of Hosmer House has been one of the primary activities of the Historical Commission.

In more recent years, as the range and complexity of preservation issues has increased, Hosmer House has received a lower percentage of the Commission's time and attention. Under the recent COVID pandemic, Hosmer House was closed to the public and is only now in the planning stages of reopening.

The Historical Commission has explored the possibility of delegating management of Hosmer House to a **subcommittee** so that it may more reliably receive the attention it deserves. Additionally, specific actions have been recommended to support the appropriate care and treatment of Hosmer House and its collections.

This Preservation Plan endorses the establishment of a subcommittee with authority to manage Hosmer House on a day-to-day basis. It is suggested that two Historical Commission members collaborate in leading the subcommittee with the addition of other volunteers to assist them. The subcommittee can be authorized to expend designated funds for operations, maintenance, and support up to predetermined limits within the Historical Commission and Hosmer Fund budgets. The subcommittee may consider employment of a part-time **Museum House Manager** to lead day-to-day operations.

The leaders of the subcommittee should report on activities at regular meetings of the Historical Commission. It is recognized that meetings of the subcommittee may need to be open to the public, and a simple process for scheduling meetings should be established with the support of Planning staff.

To support the maintenance and appropriate treatment of Hosmer House and its landscape, it is recommended that a combined **Historic Structure Report and Cultural Landscape Report** be prepared to (a) outline the history and significance of the property, (b) identify character-defining historic features, (c) outline appropriate treatments for features, building fabric, and landscaping; and (d) undertake strategic planning for Hosmer House operations and management.

Similarly, Historical Commission members have proposed retaining a professional consultant to assess the **collections** in Hosmer House and identify steps toward their appropriate management, care, and treatment. The professional consultant could be retained on an ongoing basis, or a series of collections projects could be undertaken in sequence. A collections assessment should be undertaken as defined by the American Institute for Conservation Program (CAP). Matching grants may be available through the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation.

Additionally, it is proposed that Hosmer House be featured as an anchor site in the Town-wide **interpretive presentation** outlined later in this section. The Hosmer House Subcommittee should collaborate closely with the Sudbury Historical Commission and Wayside Inn Foundation in developing and implementing interpretive content and programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Establish a Hosmer House Committee of the Historical Commission with authority to manage the day-to-day operations of Hosmer House.**
Short-term action of the Historical Commission.
- **Pursue employment of a part-time Museum House Manager to lead day-to-day operations at Hosmer House.**
Short to mid-term action of the Historical Commission.
- **Prepare a combined Historic Structure Report/Cultural Landscape Report for Hosmer House and its surrounding landscape to document their historic features, guide their appropriate treatment over time, and undertake strategic planning for operations and management.**
*Short to mid-term **priority** action of the Historical Commission.*
- **Retain a consultant to assess the Hosmer House collections, prepare an assessment report, and provide ongoing guidance for their care and treatment.**
*Short to mid-term **priority** action of the Historical Commission.*

Public Outreach

It is important that outreach be undertaken to engage residents with historic resources and build public support for historic preservation. Collaboration in public outreach may be undertaken with other entities with interests in history and conservation through the Stewardship Working Group discussed earlier in this section.

The thematic nomination to the National Register discussed in the previous section and the design guidelines and Town-wide interpretive program discussed in more detail later in this section are primary recommendations intended to help raise the profile of historic preservation in a positive way.

The National Register nomination will provide national recognition of the Town's agricultural history and its related resources. It will help educate residents about the significance of resources outside of the local historic districts and hopefully encourage property owners to treat them with care and respect.

The design guidelines are one of several tools that provide information and technical support to the owners of historic properties throughout Sudbury, providing them with principles and practical guidance in their appropriate treatment. The Town-wide interpretive program, a primary recommendation of this Historic Preservation Plan, is intended to engage residents with historic resources, promote their preservation, and increase coordination and cooperation between the Town's public and private preservation and conservation entities – something everyone can get behind and enjoy.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Focus on initiatives that will engage residents, support property owners, and create positive perceptions about historic preservation and Sudbury's Historic Preservation Program.**

Mid-term and ongoing action of the Historical Commission in collaboration with members of the Stewardship Working Group.

Demolition Delay

The Historical Commission is responsible for administering Sudbury's Demolition Delay Bylaw, which seeks to find alternatives to the demolition and loss of historic buildings when proposed. As implemented, Demolition Delay Bylaw review addresses both full or substantial demolition of buildings as a whole as well as partial demolition impacting a historic building's exterior building fabric.

With respect to **full or substantial demolition**, the existing potential for a 6-month delay is not an adequate time period to allow for the exploration of alternatives to demolition. Municipalities are trending toward adoption of an 18-month time period as necessary to leverage discussions when major development projects propose the demolition of historic buildings. A recommendation to adopt a longer potential delay period is included later in this chapter in the section addressing bylaws.

With respect to **partial demolition**, the Historical Commission makes a special effort to simplify and expedite reviews and make the review process friendly to property owners. However, the expedited review process is not written into the bylaw or described by regulations implementing the bylaw. It is recommended that regulations be prepared describing the review process for partial demolition and standards or requirements for avoiding triggering of a delay.

Additional potential modifications to the Demolition Delay Bylaw and its implementing regulations have been discussed by the Historical Commission and are outlined later in this section under discussion of *Municipal Bylaws and Regulations*.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare regulations related to the Demolition Delay Bylaw that outline a simplified and expedited review process for projects involving partial demolition.**

Short-term action of the Historical Commission.



First Parish Meeting House in Sudbury Center



Sudbury Center Common – Sudbury’s local historic districts are at the heart of the Town’s historic preservation program.

Historic Districts Commission

As discussed in Chapter III, *Issues and Opportunities*, Sudbury’s five local historic districts are widely accepted as important community assets. Sudbury Center, the Wayside Inn, and South Sudbury (the King Philip Historic District) are readily cited by residents as the Town’s historic places. They have been local historic districts since 1963, 1967, and 1972 respectively, with the addition of the George Pitts Tavern Historic District in 2011, and design review is accepted as part of the building permit process with respect to making changes to buildings.

Sudbury’s Historic Districts Commission (HDC) reviews proposed new construction projects visible from the public way within the Town’s local historic districts. The HDC has been in transition in recent years, with new members replacing former long-time members. 2021 Town Meeting approved expansion of the HDC membership by adding two alternates, which has been subsequently approved by the State Legislature. The HDC collaborated with the Historical Commission in seeking Sudbury’s designation as a Certified Local Government by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Park Service.

Design Guidelines

As planning for this Historic Preservation Plan was in progress, the HDC initiated a process for development of design guidelines to assist property owners as an educational resource and to facilitate HDC review and compliance. Funding for preparation of the design guidelines was approved by the Community Preservation Commission and by Town Meeting.

The preparation of design guidelines is strongly supported by this Historic Preservation Plan as an educational resource for the owners of historic properties throughout Sudbury. They will also be useful in clearly communicating design principles and guidance for meeting the standards used by the HDC in awarding Certificates of Appropriateness for proposed new work on historic buildings in the local historic districts. The new design guidelines will expand upon and illustrate the existing written General and Specific Guidelines currently in use.

In addition to guidelines for new design, it is recommended that the design guidelines provide information on the appropriate maintenance of historic buildings and conservation of historic materials. The guidelines should describe common issues affecting historic materials and appropriate means and methods for their care and repair.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare the HDC’s proposed design guidelines as an educational resource for the maintenance, repair, and implementation of changes to historic buildings throughout Sudbury.**

Short-term action of the Historic Districts Commission in collaboration with the Historical Commission.



Design guidelines are a resource to assist property owners in the care of their historic properties.

Historic District Boundaries

The HDC and some stakeholders have expressed interest in the possible expansion of existing local historic districts and designation of new districts. For example, the Concord Road corridor between the King Philip Historic District of South Sudbury and Sudbury Center has been noted as significant to both districts. Existing small clusters of historic properties have been cited as possible new districts.

These discussions are underway and may be put forward for Town consideration in the future. It has been noted that local historic districts may be discontinuous – not all land between the resources of interest need be included. Any recommendations for expanding existing local historic districts or designation of new districts must be undertaken in partnership with and with approval of property owners.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Consider the expansion of existing local historic districts to incorporate significant adjacent resources or the designation of new local historic districts where appropriate.**

Long-term action of the Historic Districts Commission in collaboration with the Historical Commission.

Over the long term, consideration might be given to creating a Town-wide local historic district in which designated historically significant buildings are included in design review by the Historic Districts Commission. Such designation could be undertaken on a thematic basis, such as for historic farmsteads. Sudbury's use of the Special Act for establishment of local historic districts provides flexibility in the use of a potential town-wide designation.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Consider establishment a Town-wide local historic district for designated historically significant buildings.**

Long-term action of the Historical Commission.

One note – as discussed in Chapter IV, *Municipal Bylaws and Regulations*, Sudbury's Old Sudbury District was established by Special Act of the state legislature in Chapter 40 of the Special Acts of 1963 and includes a provision allowing for the establishment of new local historic districts and for changes in the sizes of historic districts by a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting.

Massachusetts also has a statewide enabling statute, the Historic Districts Act of 1960, authorizing municipalities to establish local historic districts through their own bylaws. Because Sudbury's local historic districts have been established by Special Act of the state legislature, no provisions for local historic districts are included in the Town's General Bylaws. Sudbury may continue to establish new local historic districts and make changes to its local historic districts through the Special Act as approved by Town Meeting. Use of the Special Act gives Sudbury greater flexibility in its establishment of local historic districts because it is not bound by some of the limitations included in the Historic Districts Act.

Several other issues in discussions with the HDC and stakeholders arose that should be addressed over the long term.

The Sudbury Center, King Philip, and George Pitts Tavern Historic District boundaries are defined by distance from the public right-of-way rather than by property parcel lines. This has caused complications with significant buildings (especially outbuildings) located just beyond the historic district boundaries not being subject to review and protection. Some new construction projects are sited just beyond the boundary to avoid review even though they are part of the visible historic context.

Additionally, buildings and structures deemed historically significant that straddle the boundary line become subject to review by both the HDC and Historical Commission (under the Demolition Delay Bylaw), complicating the review process. While this happens only rarely, it has been raised as an issue for consideration.

Over the long term, it is recommended that the boundaries of these three local historic districts be revised to be the actual parcel lines of properties rather than distance from the public right-of-way. The expansion of local historic districts and/or establishment of new local historic districts should be implemented using property lines.

In the meantime, should conflicts occur with respect to buildings straddling the line, it is recommended that the Historical Commission defer to the HDC in undertaking review on its behalf with the provision that the entire building be subject to review, rather than just the portion visible from the public right-of-way.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Over the long term, revise the boundaries of the Sudbury Center, King Philip, and George Pitts Tavern Historic Districts to be the full parcel lines of properties rather than distance from the public right-of-way.**

Long-term action of the Historic Districts Commission in collaboration with the Historical Commission with approval of Town Meeting.

- **Should conflict occur with respect to buildings straddling the historic district boundary, defer to a single review by the HDC with provision that the entire building be subject to review.**

Long-term action of the Historical Commission and HDC.

Non-historic Building Review

As mentioned in Chapter III, a significant number of buildings within the two Wayside Inn Historic Districts are not historically significant and are not located within a historic landscape context. Many are located within contemporary private subdivisions that have no relationship to historic landscape areas or features. While property owners within these neighborhoods may wish to have their properties subject to design review, there is no need that this occur other than the consensus of these owners.

It is recommended that such contemporary subdivision properties within the Wayside Inn Historic Districts not be subject to design review. Decisions on which properties should be subject to review should be made on an area-by-area basis by the HDC with input from property owners. The current HDC's guidelines allow for abbreviated review, yet in practice the review process still appears to be substantial.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Substantially limit or exempt design review for contemporary residences in non-historic areas of the Wayside Inn Historic Districts as provided for in the districts' guidelines.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Historic Districts Commission.

Single Property Historic Districts

A Single Property Historic Districts program should be established and promoted by the Historic Districts Commission and Historical Commission for privately owned historic properties where owners wish to establish a level of protection for the future as a legacy in the interest of the property and the community. Such designation would be provided solely on a volunteer basis for property owners who wish to establish such protection as a legacy to benefit the property.

As Single Property Historic Districts, properties would undergo review by the Historic Districts Commission when exterior changes are proposed as would any property located within a local historic district. The process for establishing a Single Property Historic District is the same as that for establishment of a local historic district under Sudbury's Special Act.

The Single Property Historic District designation provides a simplified mechanism through which oversight and protections can be provided for a historic property short of the establishment of preservation restrictions or easements. Preservation restrictions typically require the recruitment of a non-profit organization to hold the restriction in perpetuity, legal costs in setting up the restriction, and a substantial donation to the non-profit for its long-term management. The Single Property Historic District program is simpler, cost-effective, and gives the Town and Historic Districts Commission the responsibility for review and protection.

Single Property Historic District designation could be used as a means of establishing a public interest in a property in exchange for rehabilitation grants from the Community Preservation Commission (discussed below) or other form of Town incentive.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Invite the private owners of historic properties to participate in the Single Property Historic District program as a means of providing long-term protection of their historic properties.**

Mid-term and ongoing action of the Historic Districts Commission and Historical Commission.

Preservation Consultant

As discussed above with respect to the Historical Commission, the HDC would benefit from access to professional guidance on occasion with respect to some project reviews. It is recommended that the HDC have access to a professional preservation consultant experienced in the architectural treatment of historic buildings who can be called in to provide guidance on a case-by-case basis

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Provide the Historic Districts Commission with access to a professional preservation consultant experienced in the architectural treatment of historic buildings who can be called in to provide guidance on an as-needed basis.**

Mid-term action of the Historic Districts Commission, Select Board and Town Manager.



Community Preservation Act funding is instrumental in the preservation and rehabilitation of Town-owned and non-profit historic resources.

Community Preservation Committee

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has been supportive of historic preservation in Sudbury by providing funding for a variety of preservation-related projects over the past two decades. In general, priority may be given to bricks-and-mortar projects in the maintenance and rehabilitation of Town-owned and non-profit historic buildings, structures, and sites. However, the funding of inventories, research studies, and educational resources is also very important and are emphasized in this Historic Preservation Plan as necessary to raise public awareness and support for historic preservation action in Sudbury.

Among the recommended projects outlined in Part III that could be funded through the CPC are:

- Design guidelines (already approved),
- Ongoing inventory work on a biannual basis,
- Thematic National Register Nomination for Sudbury’s Agricultural Buildings and Landscapes,
- Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study and Survey,
- Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey,
- Hosmer House Historic Structure, Cultural Landscape and Collections Assessment Reports,
- Route 20 Corridor Preservation Study,
- History of Suburbanization in Sudbury,
- Historic Structure Reports and Cultural Landscape Reports,
- Funds for retaining a Preservation Consultant,
- Funds for Preservation and Conservation Restrictions, and
- Educational resources, programming, and interpretation for environmental conservation and historic preservation.

Of this list, the Historic Preservation Plan recommends prioritization of (a) thematic National Register nomination, (b) educational resources, programming, and interpretation, (c) Route 20 Corridor Study, (d) Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study., and (e) Hosmer House HSR/CLR and collections recommendations.

Additionally, it is recommended that the CPC establish a program providing limited grant funding to private property owners as a means of providing financial assistance for preservation and rehabilitation projects. Property owners have lamented the cost of undertaking historic preservation projects in accordance with appropriate standards, not only as required within the Town’s local historic districts, but Town-wide. A small grants program established through the CPC would provide incentives for projects of community interest.

Guidelines for the grants programs could be needs-based, could emphasize certain types of maintenance and rehabilitation work, and could emphasize vulnerable building types such as barns and agricultural outbuildings. Use of the grants program would require the property owners to agree to some sort of legal preservation agreement for receipt of public support, which could be a preservation restriction, establishment of a single property historic district, or another form of agreement.

Establishment of a single property historic district for properties receiving grants outside of existing local historic districts is recommended by this plan. However, several communities have examples of other forms of agreements that may be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Continue to fund a variety of historic preservation projects that directly preserve historic resources, further documentation and understanding of historic resources, and raise public awareness and support for historic preservation.**

Ongoing action of the Community Preservation Committee as recommended and requested by the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, and others as appropriate.

- **Consider establishment of a small grants program available to private property owners as an incentive for the preservation and maintenance of historic buildings.**

Mid-term action of the Community Preservation Committee with support of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission.



Historic residences are the most common historic resources in Sudbury and are present from 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Private property owners are the important audience for preservation.

MUNICIPAL BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS

The Town of Sudbury was one of the earliest municipalities in Massachusetts to enact bylaws specifically protecting significant historic resources. Over the years, in addition to the Special Act that enabled the establishment of local historic districts, Sudbury has established a Historical Commission, enacted a Demolition Delay Bylaw, enacted a Scenic Roads Bylaw, and adopted the Community Preservation Act—all of which are among the most important and commonly enacted regulatory mechanisms in Massachusetts. These are in addition to the several environmental and conservation bylaws which the Town has enacted.

Going forward, preservation in Sudbury is more about making its regulatory framework work as efficiently and effectively as possible than it is about enacting additional bylaws and regulations. The following recommendations are offered.

Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Regulations

Sudbury's existing Zoning Bylaw and Rules and Regulations Governing Subdivision of Land are reviewed in Part II, Section II.E, *Municipal Bylaws and Regulations*, of this Historic Preservation Plan. In general, the language in both documents with respect to the recognition and protection of historic resources is very limited and could be strengthened.

Without expanding regulatory authorities, simple changes to the existing language could strengthen the Planning Board's hand in negotiation of historic preservation issues with developers. Specifically:

- Provide definitions for historic resources, historic landscape resources, historic landscape context, and archaeological resources. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 7000; Subdivision Regulations, Section II.A*)
- State that it is Town policy that historic resources should be preserved and incorporated into new development in a manner that preserves their historic integrity. (*Zoning Bylaw, general, non-regulatory statement of policy added to Article 2000; Subdivision Regulations, a new section on Protection of Historic Resources in Section V, Design Standards*)
- Require that historic building and landscape resources be surveyed and identified on existing conditions plans. Include identification of resources on adjacent properties. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Site Plans; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.B.4, Preliminary Plan Form and Contents and Section IV.C.3, Definitive Plan Form and Contents*)
- Require that historic landscape contexts associated with historic buildings be identified. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Site Plans; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.5, Site Evaluation*)

- For properties where historic resources have been identified on a property being developed or on a property immediately adjacent, include Historical Commission review as part of the review process. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6360, Reports from Town Boards or Agencies; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.6.c, Review of Other Town Boards and Commissions*)
- Require that developers describe the proposed treatment of historic resources and their historic landscape contexts in their development project. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Application; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.5, Site Evaluation, Section IV.C.8, Expert opinion, and as a new section on Protection of Historic Resources in Section V. Design Standards*)
- Allow for adaptive reuse that preserves the overall historic integrity of historic buildings and building complexes. Consider the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation for guidance. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Application; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.5, Site Evaluation, Section IV.C.8, Expert opinion, and as a new section on Protection of Historic Resources in Section V. Design Standards*)
- When negative impacts are anticipated, require mitigation measures as an element of negotiation. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Application; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.5, Site Evaluation, Section IV.C.8, Expert opinion, and as a new section on Protection of Historic Resources in Section V. Design Standards*)
- When appropriate, require the preparation of a full Historic Resource Impact Study detailing the above measures in increased detail. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Application; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.8, Expert opinion, impact studies*)
- When appropriate, require an archaeological survey. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Application; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.8, Expert opinion, impact studies*)
- When appropriate, require HABS/HAER standard photo documentation of historic building interior and exterior. (*Zoning Bylaw, Article 6300, Site Plan Review, Section 6350, Application; Subdivision Regulations, Section IV.C.5, Site Evaluation, Section IV.C.8, Expert opinion, and as a new section on Protection of Historic Resources in Section V. Design Standards*)

While these measures do not provide additional regulatory authority, they make the Town’s intent that historic resources be preserved and appropriately treated clear, and they provide the context and basis for negotiations to achieve that aim.

In support of preservation planning goals, it is important the Town’s historic resource inventory be made accessible through the Town’s GIS system. This is

easily accomplished through data sets available through MassGIS. Additionally, the Town’s historic resource inventory should be made available digitally to developers online.

Both mapping and inventory forms are currently available through the Massachusetts Historical Commission MACRIS program, however making them available through the Town’s systems would simplify data collection and help underscore the Town’s intent. It would be desirable over the long term to have the GIS mapping and inventory forms linked such that when a location is clicked the inventory form appears, but this is not essential.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Include additional language in the Sudbury’s Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Regulations supporting the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic resources when new development is being planned.**

Mid-term action of the Planning Board with support from the Historical Commission.

- **Make Sudbury’s historic resource inventory available through the Town’s GIS system and make historic inventory forms available online.**

Short-term action of the Information Technology Department and Planning and Community Development Department with support of the Historical Commission.



Close coordination between the Planning Board and Historical Commission is critical in applying historic preservation principals to areas where development is occurring, such as along the Route 20 corridor.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

Sudbury's Demolition Delay Bylaw is discussed earlier in this section in relation to the Historical Commission, and issues related to the bylaw are outlined in Chapter III, *Issues and Opportunities*.

As noted in the Historical Commission section above, adoption of an 18-month period of potential delay for full or substantial demolition is recommended to provide adequate time for the consideration of alternatives to demolition as intended in the bylaw. Six-month periods have found to be inadequate in practice as many projects involving land development take considerably longer and the 6-month delay is not found to be a disincentive for negotiation.

It is recommended that several additional revisions be made to the bylaw to clarify and simplify review processes, as follows:

- Amend the bylaw to allow for notification of hearing by posting notice on the Sudbury Historical Commission webpage of the Town website instead of in a newspaper. (See Wayland 2022 Town Meeting Article 17 for an example of suggested wording.)
- Simplify the description of Regulated Buildings and Structures as (1) historic resources pre-dating 1940 identified in Sudbury's Historic Resources Inventory, and (2) resources post-dating 1940 that have been specifically designated by the Historical Commission.
- Provide definitions for *historic resource* and *Sudbury Historic Resource Inventory*.
- As discussed above, revise the delay period for preferably preserved buildings proposed to be fully or substantially demolished to 18 months to provide an effective period during which alternatives to demolition may be sought.
- Maintain the 6-month period for preferably preserved buildings where partial demolition is being proposed.
- Include an enforcement mechanism for agreements established between the applicant and Historical Commission avoiding enactment of a delay through a legally binding agreement between the applicant and the Town that may be enforced by the Town Manager.
- As discussed previously, adopt regulations supplementing the bylaw that describe the review process for partial demolition and standards or requirements for avoiding triggering of a delay. Include definitions for *full or substantial demolition* and *partial demolition*.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Revised language in the Demolition Delay Bylaw as needed to strengthen and clarify the review process and make it more effective with respect to full or substantial demolition.**
Long-term action of the Historical Commission with approval of Town Meeting.

Historic Districts Special Act

Recommendations that would require use of the Sudbury provision with respect to local historic districts in Chapter 40 of the Special Acts of 1963 are included earlier in Part III in discussion of the Historic Districts Commission. These include:

- Potential use of property lines as the boundaries for local historic districts in lieu of distances from the public right-of-way,
- Consideration of the expansion of existing local historic districts or establishment of new districts,
- Use of Single Property Historic Districts, and
- Potential for a future Town-wide Historic Overlay District for significant historic buildings outside of the existing local historic districts.

Demolition by Neglect Bylaw

As noted in the Sudbury Master Plan, consideration should be given to the adoption of a Property Maintenance Code or Demolition by Neglect Bylaw in Sudbury.

A number of historic buildings have been lost in Sudbury due to the neglect and lack of maintenance by property owners. While this problem has been most evident in the loss of historic outbuildings, such as barns, carriage houses, and other agricultural buildings, it has also occurred with respect to significant historic houses that have been left abandoned to deteriorate. Enactment of a Property Maintenance Code and/or Demolition by Neglect Bylaw would provide tools to help address this problem.

Many municipalities have Property Maintenance Codes, which are routine and closely associated with building codes. They are most common in more urban or heavily developed communities where neighborhood maintenance and character are under threat due to rental, low income, and social issues. While these are not common problems in Sudbury, a Property Maintenance Code would support neighborhood upkeep, character, and property values on the occasions when needed.

Demolition by Neglect Bylaws are a common tool in use in historic preservation to help prevent the loss of buildings through lack of maintenance. The most common problem is the deterioration of roofing which allows water to penetrate a building and cause the structural elements to decay.

Demolition by Neglect Ordinances are difficult to enforce, and policies must be established through which municipal officials begin gently with a request that repairs be made and then move to more forceful means such as fines if they are ignored. A truly effective means of enforcement in difficult cases is when the municipality takes action to enter onto the property to take stabilization measures itself and then places a lien on the property to recover costs.

This Historic Preservation Plan recommends adoption of a Demolition by Neglect Bylaw as the most appropriate preservation-related tool to address the issue of neglect. Enactment of a Property Maintenance Bylaw is a broader topic that may be considered by the Select Board and Planning Board, but is not

specifically recommended here. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has model Demolition by Neglect Bylaws that may be considered for adoption by Sudbury, and models used by other Massachusetts towns should be considered as well. Along with the bylaw, regulations should be established outlining the process by which the bylaw will be implemented and enforced by the Town.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Consider adoption of a Demolition by Neglect Bylaw to help address the issue of loss of historic buildings including barns to intentional lack of maintenance.**

Long term action of the Select Board with input from the Historical Commission and approval of Town Meeting.



Archaeological resources may be present in many types of landscape areas and should be identified and protected when possible. The thematic nomination to the National Register recommended in this section can help address identification of post-contact and settlement archaeological resources. The Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study recommended will help identify Native American archaeological resources.

Archaeological Resource Protection Bylaw

As outlined by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, an Archaeological Resource Protection Bylaw is a general bylaw that modifies existing regulatory processes to address protection of archaeological sites. An Archaeological Resource Protection Bylaw can require review by the Historical Commission for development projects proposed in areas that can be identified on a reliable archaeological sensitivity map. Inclusion of archaeological resources in the definitions sections of subdivision regulations, wetlands protection bylaws, and

sections of local zoning bylaws adds a level of regulatory review for new construction projects that might affect archaeological resources.

Identification of areas with potential for archaeological sites through sensitivity mapping is an important first step in planning for the adoption of an Archaeological Resource Protection Bylaw. Such a sensitivity map is recommended to be produced as part of the Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study discussed earlier in this Part III under Section III.C.3. Sensitivity mapping is undertaken to identify areas containing or likely to contain archaeological resources. When development projects are proposed in these areas, levels of archaeological investigation and mitigation may be considered.

Use of an archaeological sensitivity map would be an important tool in the protection of potential archaeological resources whether or not a full bylaw is adopted. The Historical Commission should use the sensitivity map to advise the Planning Board of the potential for resources, and the Planning Board could then negotiate with the developer for investigations, protections, or mitigations as deemed appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Use an archaeological sensitivity map as a tool to increase awareness of potential archaeological resources when new residential or commercial development is proposed.**

Mid-term action of the Historical Commission as an advisor to the Planning Board.

- **Consider adoption of an Archaeological Resource Protection Bylaw to protect archaeologically sensitive areas when new residential or commercial development is proposed.**

Mid-term action of the Historical Commission in consultation with the Planning Board and Select Board.

PUBLIC AWARENESS, PROGRAMMING, AND EDUCATION

Sudbury has a strong identity grounded in its pastoral suburban landscape character and featuring both natural and historic resources. Local residents are keenly aware of the Town's character and appear to value the quality of life it affords. In conversations and surveys, Town residents were aware of Sudbury's most historic places – Sudbury Center and the Wayside Inn – and yet other Town-wide resources are not as highly recognized, and the importance of their preservation is not as widely appreciated.

There is need in Sudbury for an ongoing program of public engagement to raise public awareness and support for the preservation of remaining historic resources. Such a program should include stewardship within Sudbury broadly, bringing together entities involved in natural resource conservation as well as historic preservation. It is suggested that this be a task of the proposed Stewardship Working Group discussed earlier in Chapter IV under Sudbury's Historic Preservation Program.

Several potential initiatives for public engagement are suggested below.

Preservation Advocacy Organization

Residents interested in historic preservation should consider forming a local Preservation Advocacy Organization. Such an advocacy organization would be a small non-profit organization that could promote historic preservation from the private sector without the restrictions binding governmental entities such as the Historical Commission or Historic Districts Commission. The organization could advocate for historic preservation at public meetings and undertake private sector initiatives, building its capacity over time.

A Preservation Advocacy Organization would be capable of undertaking pro-active private sector preservation activities within the Town. It must be capable of marshalling volunteer efforts and raising funds for its initiatives. It could start small with minimal or no funding and build its capacity over time. Some of its potential initiatives might be eligible for CPC funding.

The Preservation Advocacy Organization should be a companion organization to the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT). It should assist the SVT with historic preservation issues on properties SVT owns or protects, recognizing that historic preservation is not part of the SVT mission. Historic preservation actions could be separately funded and implemented by the Preservation Advocacy Organizations in collaboration with SVT.

Among its activities, the organization should advocate for historic preservation issues and undertake historic preservation projects where possible. For instance, it could purchase threatened historic properties and resell them with preservation restrictions to responsible buyers.

In forming an advocacy organization, founders should consult with organizations throughout the Town in developing a vision, role, and guiding principles for the initiative. They should cultivate a leadership group that can provide guidance and a basis for future financial support. It should identify a Board of Directors with a strong interest in historic preservation and good relationships with the network of Town interests that will be important to success.

Draft mission and vision statements, bylaws, and a set of guiding principles should be prepared. Consult with potential partnering organizations for guidance and support. Conduct public meetings to gather input on the initiative and its potential activities. Cultivate relationships with organizations and entities sympathetic with its mission, especially the Sudbury Valley Trustees.

In the beginning, the group can function on an informal, ad hoc basis. When ready, the organization should file for incorporation as a 501c3 non-profit organization.

The Preservation Advocacy Organization should be a bipartisan, private sector entity working to build community consensus around historic preservation issues. It should be professional in all its actions and should carefully maintain a reputation as an honest broker upon which other organizations and the public can depend. It should maintain good working relationships with Town boards, commissions, and committees. The Falmouth Preservation Alliance in Falmouth, MA is a possible model.

RECOMMENDATION

- **Create a local preservation advocacy organization to provide Sudbury with a non-profit partner that can address historic preservation issues through private sector initiatives.**

Long-term action of local residents and entities interested in historic preservation.

Communications – Semi-annual Newsletter

It is recommended that the Historical Commission and Conservation Commission collaborate in publication of a semi-annual newsletter to Sudbury residents on preservation and conservation topics. The newsletter could be a product of the Stewardship Working Group discussed earlier in Section III.C.2.

Other means of public outreach could also be employed, making sure that stewardship topics are included in any broader Town publication formats.

RECOMMENDATION

- **Publish a semi-annual newsletter to residents on preservation and conservation topics and make it available online, through email distribution, and through regular mail.**

Mid-term action of the Historical Commission and Conservation Commission, lead entities in the Stewardship Working Group discussed in this section.

Preservation/Conservation Awards Program

It is recommended that the Historical Commission and Conservation Commission collaborate in establishing an annual awards program to highlight initiatives undertaken by residents or entities in the historic preservation and conservation. Various award topics could be established, including building preservation/rehabilitation, landscape conservation, leadership and advocacy, and others. The program should be established as a public event that can be widely attended and publicized. The awards program could be a project of the Stewardship Working Group discussed in Section III.C.2.

RECOMMENDATION

- **Establish an annual Preservation/Conservation Awards Program to highlight and celebrate preservation and conservation initiatives and achievements by residents and entities in Sudbury.**

Short-term action of the Historical Commission and Conservation Commission, lead entities in the Stewardship Working Group.

Sudbury, A Pictorial History

The book *Sudbury, A Pictorial History* by Laura Scott was published in 1989 in celebration of Sudbury's 350th anniversary and was sponsored by the Sudbury Historical Society, Sudbury Select Board, and the Wayside Inn. This book provides an accessible and informed overview of Town history into the late 20th century that is not available in other publications such as Hudson's 1889 *History of Sudbury* or the 1939/1987 *The Brief History of Sudbury*.

Sudbury, A Pictorial History is now out of print and copies are hard to obtain. It is recommended that the book be republished so it can be readily available to Town residents again. As a longer project, it would be desirable to update the book in content and perspective, perhaps in preparation of the Town's 400th anniversary.

RECOMMENDATION

- **Republish the book *Sudbury, A Pictorial History* and make it available for purchase to residents and the general public.**

Mid-term action of the Sudbury Historical Society in partnership with the Historical Commission and Community Preservation Commission.

Technical Assistance to Homeowners

The Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission should consider offering technical assistance to the owners of historic properties in the form of a professional consultant who could be called upon on an as-needed basis to meet with the owners and provide advice on the maintenance of historic buildings and building materials. The consultant could also provide advice on the approach to needed changes.

The consultant could be the same as proposed to provide advice to the two commissions, as discussed earlier in this section. He/she should have experience in architectural design, materials conservation, and preservation planning. The program could be funded through the Historical Commission budget or as a special initiative funding through the CPC.

RECOMMENDATION

- **Offer a program of professional technical support to the owners of historic properties providing analysis and advice on the maintenance and potential changes to historic buildings and historic building fabric.**

Long-term action of the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, and Community Preservation Commission.

Town-wide Interpretive Program

Interpretation — storytelling through public exhibits and media — is a means of exposing residents and visitors to the rich and diverse stories of Sudbury's natural and historic places. A robust interpretive program in Sudbury will raise public awareness about those places and support historic preservation and conservation by stimulating interest, conveying significance, and highlighting the resources important to the Town. Interpretation will relate Town history to the authentic places that give Sudbury its distinctive character and quality of life.

As a primary initiative of this Historic Preservation Plan, a Town-wide interpretive presentation should be developed that offers a comprehensive summary of Sudbury's history and natural landscape to the public using online and onsite exhibits. The initiative should include both historic and natural sites and should be organized and led by the Stewardship Working Group discussed above.

The Sudbury History Center (Loring Parsonage), Hosmer House, Wayside Inn, and Great Meadows NWR should serve as anchor sites to which visitors are directed for personal contact and an interpretive overview. Digital and onsite exhibits presented at natural and historic sites throughout Sudbury would expand the stories, provide places to explore, and provide in-depth personal experiences. The Town’s local historic districts, conservation lands, parks, trails, and other publicly accessible places would be featured for storytelling.

The presentation should coordinate storytelling between natural and historic sites – weaving the Town’s natural and cultural history together. Natural, indigenous, settlement, and agricultural stories should be featured. Implementation should be phased in over time. Together, the Town’s existing attractions, public lands, and potential new programming should be presented as a single coordinated Town-wide system such that interpretation of Sudbury’s identity is consistent between sites and landscapes. The program should be a feature of the Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area, which will be approached for support, promotion, and marketing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop a coordinated Town-wide interpretive presentation of Sudbury’s natural and historic places to raise public awareness and encourage support for preservation, conservation, and stewardship.**

*Mid-term **priority** action of the Historical Commission, Conservation Commission, Sudbury Historical Society, Wayside Inn Foundation, Sudbury Valley Trustees, Parks Department, Community Preservation Commission, and others.*

- **Designate the Stewardship Working Group as the lead entity in implementation of the Town-wide interpretation and public engagement program.**

Mid-term action of the Stewardship Working Group.



The Wayside Inn is a principal historic attraction in Sudbury.

In implementation of the Town-wide Interpretive Presentation, it is recommended that representatives of the Stewardship Working Group prepare a simplified **Town-wide interpretive plan** that can be implemented in phases over time. Professional interpreters and individuals experienced in public history should lead the effort and provide quality control. Assistance should be sought from the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, Minute Man National Historical Park, and Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.

A set of Town-wide **themes and storylines** should be developed to organize and guide interpretation. Themes are the *Big Ideas* that convey meaning and the significance of historic sites and resources. Themes are intended to help residents and visitors connect individual stories with broader contexts, understand what those stories mean, and why they matter.

Storylines are threads of events that trace Sudbury's historical development over time by topic and are used to convey and illustrate themes. Themes should help relate Sudbury's stories to regional and national contexts. **Theme statements** should be prepared for each storyline to guide interpretive content. Each storyline may have several relevant themes, which may also track between different storylines.

Every potential interpretive area, site, and historic resource in Sudbury should have a place within the structure of storylines and themes for the Town-wide presentation. Both natural and historic sites should be included. Stories relating to individual sites and resources should be told and related to both the Town-wide contexts and those of other individual sites and resources.

Orientation materials should include an overview of Town-wide storylines and themes; sites where they are presented; and suggested routes, trails, and itineraries. Kiosks or other forms of orientation exhibit should be installed at key places where residents and visitors gather, such as the History Center, Wayside Inn, Rail Trail junction in South Sudbury, and at parks and trailheads.

The interpretive plan should outline how residents and visitors will be oriented to the Town-wide presentation. Sudbury's **website** can host orientation and interpretive information using the Town branding and graphic identity and may be linked to the websites of partnering sites and organizations. A family of **brochures and maps** that can be downloaded or printed and displayed should be created based on the storylines and themes.

Except for **anchor sites** such as the History Center, Wayside Inn, Hosmer House, and Great Meadows NWR, Sudbury's interpretive presentation will be primarily self-guided. A centerpiece of the presentation should be an **outdoor exhibit program** that can be used for self-guided experiences at historic and nature sites throughout Sudbury. The outdoor exhibit program will enable publicly accessible sites to tell their stories without the need for staffing or for indoor museum programming. Self-guided sites can be made visitor-ready with great flexibility and minimal cost such that they can be marketed to visitors alongside the Town's established attractions.

In accordance with the interpretive plan, professional interpreters associated with the Stewardship Working Group and the anchor sites should take the lead

in preparing content and providing guidance and quality control for the development and implementation of the exhibits.

The exhibits should use a common **graphic format** using a Town-wide graphic identity. It is suggested that National Park Service exhibit carriers be considered for use in the exhibits to simplify the design process, reduce costs, ensure consistency, and achieve a high-quality product.

The exhibit program should also consider the use of **digital content** that can be accessed using smartphones, tablets, and online through the Town website. Digital content should be rich in its visual presentation and has the advantage of being easily and frequently updated.

Public art is an important medium through which Sudbury's sites may be enhanced and interpretation offered. Historically, monuments, statues, plaques, and historic objects have been a means of commemorating places and events and may be considered a form of public art – Sudbury has a number of significant monuments that may be included in the Town's interpretive presentation.

New public art for interpretive purposes may include sculpture, murals, and other art formats installed in parks, along trails, and along sidewalks where appropriate to enliven the landscape and to tell Sudbury's stories.

Implementation can begin immediately with sites and programs that are visitor-ready and already active, such as those offered by the History Center, Wayside Inn Foundation, Hosmer House, Great Meadows NWR, and several Town and SVT conservation sites.

Priority can then be given to adding sets of new interpretive exhibits and experiences at key sites and locations over time. Sets of exhibits for any one area should be planned all at one time. Sets of interpretive exhibits to be installed should be phased in over time as funding is available. Sudbury's CPC has a history of funding interpretive exhibits as educational resources supporting historic preservation and natural resource conservation.



A Town-wide interpretive presentation can engage residents with both historic and natural sites.

MUNICIPAL POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

An overview of municipal organization and policy is presented in Part II, Section II.F, of this Historic Preservation Plan, *Municipal Policy, management, and Capital Improvements*. Most aspects of municipal policy with respect to historic preservation are presented in other sections of the plan addressing the history of planning in Sudbury, partners and stakeholders, historic properties inventories, bylaws and regulations, and other topics. Most important is the discussion of Sudbury’s Historic Preservation Program discussed earlier in this section.

Sudbury’s Town government addresses a wide range of topics of community interest as represented by the number of boards, commissions, and committees. Municipal policy is established by the enactment of bylaws by Town Meeting and their administration by Town government. Of particular importance to this Historic Preservation Plan are policies related to planning and growth management, historic preservation in particular, land conservation, and the management of Town-owned historic properties.

Historic and cultural resources are defining features of community character and identity. Municipal policy and planning initiatives should recognize the role of historic and cultural resources in local quality of life and place a strong emphasis on their preservation.

Town Policy and Planning Leadership

Town leadership in policy and planning is provided through the elected and appointed officials, principally the Select Board and Town Manager, and their directives and allocation of resources. The work of the Town’s numerous boards, commissions, and committees is also critical when it impacts historic resources.

The Select Board and Town Manager are essential in providing leadership and direction to Town staff, boards, commissions, and committees in municipal policy, management, the allocation of resources, and the implementation of programs.

Leadership in growth management is provided by the Planning Board and is expressed through the 2021 Sudbury Master Plan. A primary focus in growth management should be given to identifying, preserving, and enhancing the historic character of the built environment Town-wide.

The incorporation of historic preservation values, principles, and processes into Sudbury’s municipal planning and growth management strategies and documents is essential if local community character is to be preserved. It is a key factor in preserving historic buildings and landscapes and is one of the most important ways of implementing this Historic Preservation Plan. The 2021 Sudbury Master Plan provides a framework for these efforts and is supplemented by the recommendations included in this Historic Preservation Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Provide leadership in establishing municipal policies that enhance the historic character of the built environment and allocate the necessary resources toward their realization.**
Ongoing action of the Select Board, Planning Board, and Town Manager.
- **Recognize the role of historic and cultural resources as character defining features in community identity, character, and local quality of life.**
Ongoing action of the Select Board, Planning Board, and Town Manager.
- **Incorporate historic preservation values, principles, and processes into municipal policy, planning, and programs at all levels of municipal activity.**
Ongoing action of the Select Board, Planning Board, and Town Manager.
- **Recognize this Historic Preservation Plan as a companion document to the 2021 Sudbury Master Plan, implementing its preservation strategies and recommendations.**
Ongoing action of the Select Board, Planning Board, and Town Manager.
- **Continue to take advantage of available state and federal programs that will support and help implement the Town’s planning vision.**
Ongoing action of the Select Board, Planning Board, and Town Manager.

Conservation Lands

Land conservation has been an important community initiative in Sudbury over the past fifty years. Significant areas of land have been permanently preserved as open space by governmental entities at the local, state, and federal levels and by non-profit organizations. The Town of Sudbury, its Conservation Commission, and other stakeholders have played important roles in these efforts, which have received strong public support.

The scope and context for land conservation in Sudbury is outlined in the Town’s *Open Space and Recreation Plan.*, which is periodically updated and qualifies Sudbury for state and federal grants. Town involvement in land conservation has stemmed historically from the need to protect lands associated with groundwater supplying public water to the village centers as well as residential development areas Town-wide.

Land conservation helps preserve historic resources. Historic preservation can be framed in terms of landscape and landscape character with appreciation of how the landscape has changed over time through different periods of the Town’s historical development. This is particularly true with respect to Sudbury’s significant agricultural history.

Land conservation is a means through which historic resources can be preserved and is an important tool supporting a landscape approach to historic preservation. While the primary impetus for many land conservation initiatives has been based on ecological and environmental values, cultural and historic

landscape values are important as well. Historic preservation and land conservation are related in three important ways:

1. Most conserved properties have historic resources on them. This is particularly the case for former agricultural landscapes that have succeeded to woodlands, as in Sudbury. Remnant landscape features, and sometimes entire complexes are present within these landscapes. When land is conserved, the historic resources on the property are preserved as well. A landscape's story can be read through its geology, patterns of former land use, remnant historic resources, and successional plant communities.
2. Land conservation can be used explicitly to preserve historic properties, such as Davis Farm, Pantry Brook Farm, and Broadacres Farm in Sudbury. The preservation of Dickson property on Water Row for historic preservation and conservation purposes was one of the first projects for which CPC funding was used in Sudbury.
3. In places where organizations and financial resources are limited, partnerships between historic preservation and land conservation interests can address multiple community goals.

Land conservation and historic preservation interests should work together in expanding Sudbury's Town-wide open space system. In some cases, historic preservation should be a driving factor in land conservation initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Support land conservation efforts that help preserve and connect historic landscapes and landscape resources.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, and Sudbury Historical Society.

Historical and cultural values should be considered by Town and non-profit conservation organizations when properties are being evaluated for protection. Existing condition assessments for conservation lands should include the identification of historic buildings, structures, and landscape context and features. Treatment plans should include the preservation of historic features. Where land conservation organizations are not able to contribute resources to historic preservation treatments, creative preservation partnerships should be sought to provide the information, experience, and management capabilities needed. The establishment of a Preservation Advocacy Organization discussed in this section is one means of providing support to conservation organizations for historic preservation actions.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Incorporate historical and cultural values into the criteria used to assess and prioritize land for conservation initiatives.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Conservation Commission, Sudbury Valley Trustees, and other land conservation entities.

Sudbury's conservation lands and Town-wide trail network should be used to interpret the landscape as outlined in the Town-wide interpretive presentation discussed elsewhere in Chapter IV. Sudbury's trail network is an important recreational amenity for residents and visitors and supports historic

preservation interests by showcasing the historic landscape and providing linkages to historic sites. Community Preservation Act funding can be used as an important funding source in combination with other grants for phased implementation of the trail network.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Use conservation lands and the Town’s open space trail network as an interpretive venue, presenting the natural and historic landscape to residents and visitors.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Conservation Commission, Sudbury Valley Trustees, Historical Commission, Wayside Inn Foundation, and other entities through the Stewardship Working Group.



Conservation lands are often of historical as well as natural significance and have stories to tell.

Maintenance of Town-owned Properties

The Town of Sudbury owns and maintains a considerable number of historic buildings and landscapes including several of the Town’s most historically significant properties. An overview of Sudbury’s Town-owned historic properties is provided in Chapter III, Municipal Policy, Management, and Capital Improvements along with a summary of the Town entities responsible for their maintenance and treatment. Additional information on roles and responsibilities is provided in Chapter II on Partners and Stakeholders.

Sudbury should strive to be a model in the stewardship of its historic buildings and landscapes and an example of what is expected of the private and non-profit sectors. Sudbury’s historic character is central to its identity and quality of life, and the historic resources in the Town’s care are of particular significance.

Sudbury's Town Manager, Facilities Department, and Department of Public Works are responsible for implementation of maintenance and related projects involving historic buildings and landscapes, often using private sector contractors. The Select Board, Permanent Building Committee, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and others are involved in oversight and in new projects involving historic buildings and landscapes.

All should be aware of historic preservation principles and processes and would benefit from professional guidance and information.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Incorporate historic preservation principles, processes, and conservation treatments into capital planning projects, site management, and site maintenance. Sudbury should be a model for the stewardship of its historic buildings and landscapes.**

Ongoing action of all Town boards, commissions, committees, and departments as expressed through the leadership of the Select Board, Planning Board, Historical Commission, and Town Manager.

- **Collect a library of information on *best practices* in preservation treatments and maintenance practices for the types of resources and issues being addressed. Make the information available to planning and maintenance staff and encourage its use.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission through the Stewardship Working Group.

- **Retain historic preservation consultants on an as-needed basis for advice on preservation, conservation, and maintenance treatments. Retain professionals experienced in historic preservation to prepare construction documents for projects being undertaken.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Permanent Building Committee, Facilities Department, and Department of Public Works.

- **Use contractors with proven experience in conservation and historic preservation methodologies for the various trades involved with work on historic buildings and landscapes.**

Short-term and ongoing action of the Permanent Building Committee, Facilities Department, and Department of Public Works.

- **Provide preservation and conservation training to Town planning, parks, facilities, and maintenance staff through workshops, videos, and onsite consultations.**

Mid-term and ongoing action of the Planning and Community Development Department, Facilities Department and Department of Public Works.

Information and resources on the appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes have been developed by preservation professionals and organizations over decades with application in many historic preservation projects. Most important are the preservation principles outlined in the

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and their related guidelines discussed in Part I, Section I.A, *Introduction to Historic Preservation Planning* in this Historic Preservation Plan. Additional information on the Standards is available online.

Literature on conservation practices for various types of materials, features, and conditions is also made available online. The most common source of information on conservation treatments are the *Preservation Briefs* and *Preservation Tech Notes* prepared by the National Park Service's Technical Preservation Services. Preservation Briefs and Tech Notes are available for over fifty different subjects ranging from general topics such as cultural landscapes, new building additions, and accessibility to specific information on materials and features such as windows, siding, masonry, and roofs.



Historic structure reports are an essential tool in the preservation and maintenance of historic buildings.

Historic Structure Reports

Historic structural reports provide base information on the treatment of historic buildings and over time should be prepared for all of the Town's significant historic properties. As a priority, a historic structure report should be prepared for Hosmer House, as discussed earlier in this section. A historic structure report for Town Hall would be of benefit as well as rehabilitation and adaptive reuse planning for that building.

Historic structure reports generally include sections on:

- Background history and overview of the building's historical development,

- Statement of significance and discussion of local and national historic contexts to which the building is related,
- Identification of the building’s materials (wood, masonry, metals, etc.) and character defining features (doors, windows, porches, detailing, etc.),
- Conditions assessment for the building as a whole and for each type of material and character defining feature,
- Treatment plan, guidelines, and recommendations, and
- Guidance for accessibility, energy efficiency, and building mechanical systems.

Historic structure reports are baseline documents that are important in providing essential information to guide decision-making in the maintenance and preservation of historic buildings and consideration of needed changes over time. They are important as background for future new staff members and as future changes are considered. Historic structure reports should be prepared for each of Sudbury’s Town-owned historic buildings.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare a Historic Structure Report for each of Sudbury’s Town-owned historic buildings.**

Mid and long-term action of the Select Board, Planning Board, Stewardship Working Group, and Facilities Department.

Cultural Landscape Reports

Cultural landscape reports should be prepared for each of Sudbury’s historic properties as a long-term project with funding support from the Community Preservation Act. Cultural landscape reports are studies of historic properties that are undertaken in accordance with a specific methodology in order to document their features and provide guidelines for their treatment. In general, cultural landscape reports are comprised of the following sections:

- Background history and overview of the property’s historical development,
- Statement of significance and discussion of local and national historic contexts to which the property is related,
- Identification of the property’s character defining features,
- Conditions assessment for the landscape as a whole and for each character defining feature, and
- Treatment plan, guidelines, and recommendations.

The National Park Service has led the recognition and study of cultural landscapes including the preparation of cultural landscape reports and has developed methodologies and guidelines for their identification, assessment, and treatment. The identification and analysis of a landscape’s features and characteristics in a cultural landscape report usually include its:

- Spatial organization and land patterns,
- Views and vistas,

- Topography,
- Natural systems and features,
- Vegetation,
- Circulation,
- Land use,
- Buildings and structures,
- Small-scale features, and
- Other special considerations.

The National Park Service has prepared *Preservation Brief 36, Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes* and *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports, Contents, Process and Techniques*, which are available online and outlines the contents of a cultural landscape report. Additional information and examples are available online as well.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Prepare a Cultural Landscape Report for each of Sudbury’s Town-owned historic landscapes to document the properties and provide guidance for their future treatment.**

Mid and long-term action of the Select Board, Planning Board, Stewardship Working Group, and Department of Public Works.

Cemeteries

Sudbury owns and maintains numerous historic cemeteries as discussed in Chapter III, *Municipal Policy, Management, and Capital Improvements*. The Cemetery Department within the Department of Public Works is responsible for operation and maintenance of the cemeteries. Grass mowing and other routine maintenance is managed by the Parks and Grounds Department and is contracted to private firms. The Historical Commission has undertaken several conservation projects over the past two decades for the conservation of historic headstones.

Cemeteries and cemetery stones are among the oldest and most significant historic resources in Sudbury. Their condition should be assessed, and they should be properly maintained. Cemetery stones may also be considered historic works of art. Additionally, there are architectural elements in the cemeteries like decorative wrought iron railings, stone posts, and stone walls that also require maintenance and care. The Historical Commission and proposed Stewardship Working Group should take the lead in overseeing the maintenance and treatment of the Town-owned historic cemeteries. Conservation work should be undertaken on an ongoing, as-needed basis using CPC funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Continue to perform appropriate routine maintenance of Sudbury’s historic cemeteries. Be careful that maintenance work does not damage historic features and is undertaken using historically appropriate techniques as outlined by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.**

Ongoing action of the Department of Public Works in consultation with the Historical Commission.

- **Continue to undertake the inventory, assessment, and phased conservation of cemetery headstones and other features. Obtain professional guidance and follow established conservation protocols.**
Ongoing action of the Historical Commission and Stewardship Working Group.
- **Prepare cultural landscape reports for Sudbury’s historic cemeteries as has been recommended for other Town-owned historic properties.**
Long-term action of the Historical Commission and Stewardship Working Group.
- **Interpret Sudbury’s historic cemeteries as part of the Town-wide interpretive presentation outlined earlier in this section.**
Long-term and ongoing action of the Stewardship Working Group.

A great deal of experience has been had in the care and maintenance of cemeteries and cemetery stones in Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has prepared guidance for the management of historic cemeteries. The 2009 publication *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries* provides information on the historical background, preservation planning, recommendations for management, and case studies for cemeteries.

The 2011 publication *Terra Firma, Putting Historic Landscape Preservation on Solid Ground, A Guide to Identification and Protection* commemorated the tenth year of DCA’s Massachusetts Historic Cemetery Preservation Initiative and reviews issues and best practices as they have evolved. In addition, the National Park Service has a Preservation Brief on the preservation and treatment of historic grave markers.



Sudbury’s historic cemeteries are significant historic resources that are widely recognized and appreciated.

Town Archives and Historic Documents

Sudbury has a significant number of historic archival documents in Town Clerk's office, Goodnow Library, Town departments, Hosmer House and Sudbury Historical Society. The need for the inventory, assessment, curation, and preservation of these documents should continue to be addressed on an ongoing, long-term basis using CPC funding.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **As a long-term project, continue to address archival needs through inventory, curation, preservation, and digitization.**

Long-term action of the Town Clerk, Goodnow Library, Town departments, Historical Commission, and Sudbury Historical Society.

Other Historic Properties of Special Public Interest

A number of historic properties that are not owned by the Town are of special public interest as discussed in Chapter III of this Historic Preservation Plan. Preservation of these properties should be supported by both public and private efforts.

Perhaps most significant is the First Parish Meeting House in Sudbury Center. An iconic building closely associated with the Town's founding and expansion west of the Sudbury River, the First Parish Meeting House property was the location of the early Town Halls and includes the Common in Sudbury Center.

The congregation associated with the Meeting House has been diminishing in numbers in recent years. The building is expensive to maintain, and the congregation has been reliant on a few large donors and the Sudbury Foundation for ongoing maintenance and preservation work. The question of whether CPC funds can be used to support its preservation due to it being a religious building is not entirely clear and is being further investigated. Alternative management structures are also being explored to determine whether such structures could qualify as non-religious non-profit organizations.

Entities with preservation interests should work with the congregation of the First Parish Meeting House to determine how preservation support can be provided.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Collaborate in strategies supporting the preservation and maintenance of the First Parish Meeting House.**

Mid-term action of the First Parish Church, Stewardship Working Group, Sudbury Foundation, and other preservation entities.

Of additional special interest are the conservation lands managed by the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT), also discussed in Chapter III. The Town and other conservation entities collaborate in land conservation aspects of SVT's work and the need for support with historic preservation aspects of their work is discussed earlier in this section with respect to the possibility of establishing a Preservation Advocacy Organization in Sudbury, with respect to using preservation in conservation criteria, and in interpretation.

SVT work involving historic preservation should be supported on a case-by-case basis with whatever tools are available and most appropriate. Other properties of special public interest should be engaged, monitored, and supported as well.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Collaborate in strategies supporting the Sudbury Valley Trustees and other properties of special public interest in historic preservation issues associated with their sites.**

Ongoing action of the Stewardship Working Group.



A number of privately owned historic and conservation properties are of special public interest and deserve public support.

MECHANISMS TO PROTECT PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN PRIVATE HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The preservation of historic building and landscape resources happens primarily through local grassroots initiative. The most important grassroots initiative is the investment of private property owners in the appropriate maintenance and care of their historic homes.

The federal and state governments provide tax incentives for the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings used for commercial purposes. These federal and state tax credit programs are discussed in Appendix A of this plan but are not really relevant to conditions in Sudbury, where most historic buildings are residential or, if commercial, too small to make use of the tax credit process.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC, however, manages the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund through which grants are provided to municipalities and privately owned non-profit organizations for the preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties. The MHC protects the Commonwealth's investment through the grant program by requiring that a preservation restriction be enacted for the benefitting property. The preservation restriction is held by the MHC and preserves the property in perpetuity. MHC may also require that properties receiving such investment be made available for public access on a limited basis.

Similar grants may be provided at the local Town level through the use of Community Preservation Committee (CPC) funding for the preservation or rehabilitation of privately owned properties, as discussed earlier in this section. The use of CPC funds by non-profit organizations is straightforward. The use of CPC funds for private homes and businesses, as recommended earlier in this section, requires that criteria for awarding grants be established and that the public investment be protected in some way.

Local designation within a **local historic district** is one form of criteria that can be used to qualify a private property for a local public grant. The local historic district requires Historic Districts Commission review of any proposed work.

Establishment of a **preservation restriction** on a property receiving a local grant, as is required for MHC grants, is another common form of protection for the public investment in private property. Preservation restrictions are discussed in detail in Appendix A. Preservation restrictions are reviewed and approved by the MHC and may be held by the Town or by a non-profit organization. Their establishment is complicated and may involve a substantial donation for their ongoing management and monitoring.

Designation as a **single property historic district** provides a mechanism through which a property receiving a local CPC grant or other form of investment can be protected from inappropriate future changes short of the establishment of a preservation restriction. The use of a single property historic district is simpler, cost effective, and gives the Town and Historic Districts Commission the

responsibility for review and protection. A recommendation for the use of single property historic districts is included earlier in this section.

Preservation and Property Maintenance Agreement

Customized legal agreements can also be used to secure public investment in private historic properties. As a condition of receiving a CPC grant, the Town can enter into a legal agreement specifying how a building receiving the grant will be preserved and maintained. Processes, procedures, and requirements for making future changes can be delineated. Payback provisions can be included for violations if appropriate. The legal agreements can be customized to the type of resource, level of grant received, and other circumstances unique to the situation.

Special Permit or Subdivision Condition

Similar provisions can be included as negotiated conditions of subdivision and special permit approvals. Conditions could include the use of the various mechanisms outlined above or could outline specifics as to the use, treatment, and review processes for buildings receiving public investments.

MECHANISMS FOR OVERSIGHT/MANAGEMENT OF HISTORIC TOWN-OWNED PROPERTIES

The recognition, management, and treatment of historic Town-owned properties is discussed in Chapter III, Municipal Policy, Management, and Capital Improvements and in sections above. As emphasized there and here, historic building, landscape, and archaeological resources are central to Sudbury's character and quality of life. The Town of Sudbury should be a model for the recognition and appropriate treatment of historic resources. This can be accomplished through:

- Recognition by community leaders that the preservation of historic resources is central to public policy, especially the Select Board, Planning Board, and Town Manager;
- Understanding of community leaders of the basic principles of historic preservation as outlined in Chapter II of this Historic Preservation Plan;
- Providing community leaders with best practices information on the appropriate treatment of historic resources as they consider issues that may impact them;
- Building public understanding and support for the preservation of historic resources;
- Collaboration among preservation and conservation interests supporting and advocating for historic preservation; and
- Providing mechanisms through which historic preservation issues and recommendations may be fully considered as decisions on public policy are being made.

The purpose of this Historic Preservation Plan is to provide information and recommendations that will enable Sudbury to be a strong and proud steward of its historical and archaeological resources.

