



# Sudbury Master Plan Update Community Conversation *Historic and Cultural Assets*

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As part of its Master Plan update process, the Town of Sudbury hosted a series of **community conversations** throughout October 2019. These individual meetings allowed participants to dig deeper into issues that shape the quality of life in the town. A total of five meetings were held at the Lower Meeting Room of Town Hall and focused on the following topics:

- Transportation, Mobility, and Connectivity (Including Complete Streets Projects): October 10
- Economic Resilience, Town Services, and Infrastructure: October 15
- Public Health, Housing, and Equity: October 24
- Historic and Cultural Assets: October 28
- Natural Environment, Open Space, and Recreation: October 29

The conversations were organized around small group discussions. After a brief presentation on the Master Plan update, an overview of the topic, and what issues in Sudbury were heard to date from prior public input opportunities, participants dove into their conversations. The objectives of these discussions were to understand the full spectrum of issues and needs in Sudbury, gain a better understanding of what direction residents felt the town should be headed, and what types of projects, policies, or initiatives they supported moving forward.

At the tables were topic “primers,” highlighting facts and stats in Sudbury, maps, and other information to inform participants about the issues. Discussions were recorded on flipcharts and personal worksheets if participants chose to use them. Note that no worksheets were submitted from participants at this meeting.

## Historic and Cultural Assets

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Approximately 14 people attended the Historic and Cultural Assets meeting. **The purpose of this summary is to document what was discussed at the Community Conversations meetings. Below are comments and discussion from those that attended the meetings and should not be taken as the opinions of the Town or new town policies or actions.**

### 1. What current and future issues around Historic and Cultural Assets were missing from the opening presentation?

**Communication and Education:** Residents lack of knowledge about historic and archeological resources in Town. Many are not aware of the Cultural Council and its purpose. They also discussed the lack of guidance for new homeowners of historic properties on resources and agencies that can help them make informed decisions about their properties.

**Preservation Efforts:** The Town has been reactive instead of proactive in its preservation efforts. There is a lack of protocols for local boards and commissions when reviewing the impacts to historic resources. Funds to support historic preservation are limited. Overall it is a challenge to coordinate the efforts of the many local historic groups.

## 2. Based on these issues, where should we be headed and how do we get there? What's working now, or what could be better? What are some new strategies, programs, or initiatives?

**Communication and Outreach:** More efforts can be made to increase awareness of historic and cultural resources by residents and visitors to Sudbury. This could be done by maintaining a presence on social media about historic resources and events in Town. Using historic areas and properties such as Loring Parsonage and Hosmer House as a gathering places for residents and tourists can also increase the exposure of resources to the public and promote preservation efforts to the community. Developing self-guided tours, either walking or biking, can link historic properties with open space/conservation areas and town parks.

**Education:** To promote historic preservation and its importance, more education could be done to local decision makers as well as town departments, boards and committees, and residents. This might include the creation of educational programs and materials on historical background, value, and benefits of historic resources to the Town. These materials can be available to new committee members or staff as leadership changes over time.

Outreach to owners of historic homes and properties can include ways they can determine the historic significance of their property, the importance of these features to the community as a whole, and ways to enhance and maintain these features.

**Preservation Efforts:** The Town should develop a town-wide preservation plan to be more proactive about preservation efforts. The plan would include an inventory of historic resources and prioritization for preservation to avoid putting undue pressure on properties with lower historic significance outside of the designated historic districts. It can also be a basis to enhance coordination among historic groups and those that can support these groups, and build partnerships.

The Town also needs to revisit existing bylaws and policies around historic preservation and consider new tools and approaches. For example, the demolition delay bylaw should be reviewed to determine if it is meeting its objectives in finding alternative solutions for threatened significant resources. Communities like Newton and Concord can provide examples of best practices.

**Town Staff:** Hiring a dedicated staff person can help coordinate many of these efforts, particularly outreach to owners of property with historic buildings outside of the historic districts.

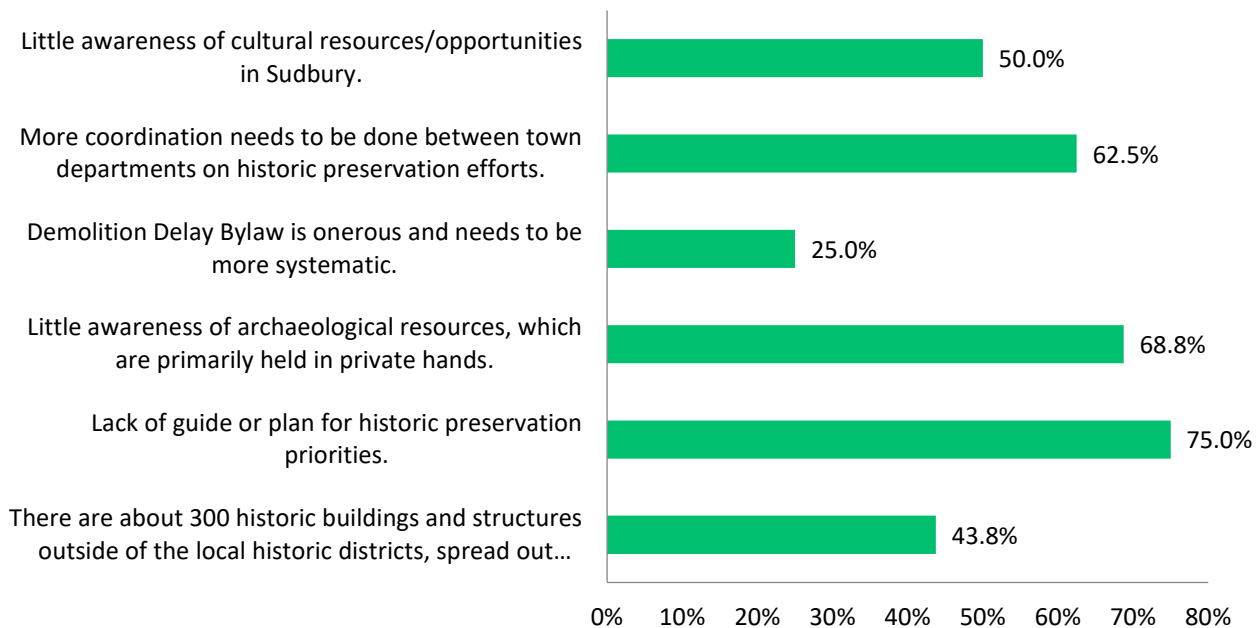
## Follow-up Survey

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Following the Historic and Cultural Assets community conversation on October 28, 2019, the Town administered an online survey to provide an opportunity for those who could not attend the meeting to give input on the questions asked during small group discussions. Similar to the community conversation, the goal of the survey is to understand issues that are important to residents, what is working to address the issues and ideas on how the Town should move forward. The survey was available from November 6-15, 2019, and 16 people responded.

**The purpose of this summary is to document comments and feedback through the survey. Below are comments and discussion from those that took the survey and should not be taken as the opinions of the Town and new town policies or actions.**

1.) The following issues were identified at the public meeting on October 28th. Please select issues with which you agree. (Answered: 16, Skipped: 0)



Other issues are we missing? (Answered: 5, Skipped: 11)

helping private owners maintain town historic sites and buildings

Exploring historic designations outside of historic districts, even in the case of single properties or structures

Provide more guidance for historic homeowners

Preserve the rural character of the town

2.) What is the Town doing that is working and/or what could be better? (Answered: 9, Skipped: 7)

Instead of acquiring properties, use funds to preserve, maintain, and enhance historic and cultural resources in town.

The partnership between the Town and the Sudbury Historical Society concerning the Loring Parsonage History Museum.

need better communications and publicity about the sites we have

Proactively protect historic assets and provide handicap accessibility of historic buildings in historic sites

We need to stop commercial development, ease traffic by eliminating stoplights and adding capacity

the town of Sudbury could provide more support to the Cultural Council

### 3.) What are some new ideas the Town should be thinking about? (include specific locations, if applicable.) (Answered: 7, Skipped: 9)

Create Historic trust to fund preservation efforts	descriptive historic markers similar to the ones in Marlborough
Build overpasses and bypasses to get around traffic jams.	Turn the Town Center area into a cultural site (e.g., arts, performance).

### Respondents' Profile

Comparing the demographics of survey respondents to the overall town population can help understand if responses are representative of the community and if we are reaching all residents.

#### How long have you lived in Sudbury? (Answered: 15, Skipped: 1)

Less than 2 years	0.0%
2-5 years	0.0%
6-10 years	13.3%
More than 10 years	86.7%
Not a resident	0.0%

#### Which geographic area in Sudbury most closely represents the area you reside?

(Answered: 15, Skipped: 1)

North Sudbury	33.3%
Central Sudbury	33.3%
South Sudbury	33.3%
Other (please specify)	0.0%

#### What is your race/ethnicity? (Answered: 15, Skipped: 1)

American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0%
Asian	6.7%
Black or African American	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.0%
White	40.0%
I prefer not to answer.	46.7%
Other (please specify)	6.7%
• Hibernian	

#### How old are you? (Answered: 15, Skipped: )1

Under 18	0.0%	36-45	6.7%
18-25	0.0%	46-65	40.0%
26-35	0.0%	Over 65	53.3%