



MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

October 23, 2025

AGENDA

1. // FRAMING THE PLAN
2. // PLAN THEMES & PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS
3. // WHAT'S NEXT

01 // FRAMING THE PLAN



Executive Summary: Crafting the Right Narrative

Framing the plan's story to enhance community understanding and inform implementation:

- The need for an updated plan
 - What is a Master Plan?
 - Plymouth Today
 - Community Engagement Snapshot
 - Vision & Goals
- The Facts: Existing Constraints
 - Big Aspirations vs. Financial Realities
 - Top Priorities

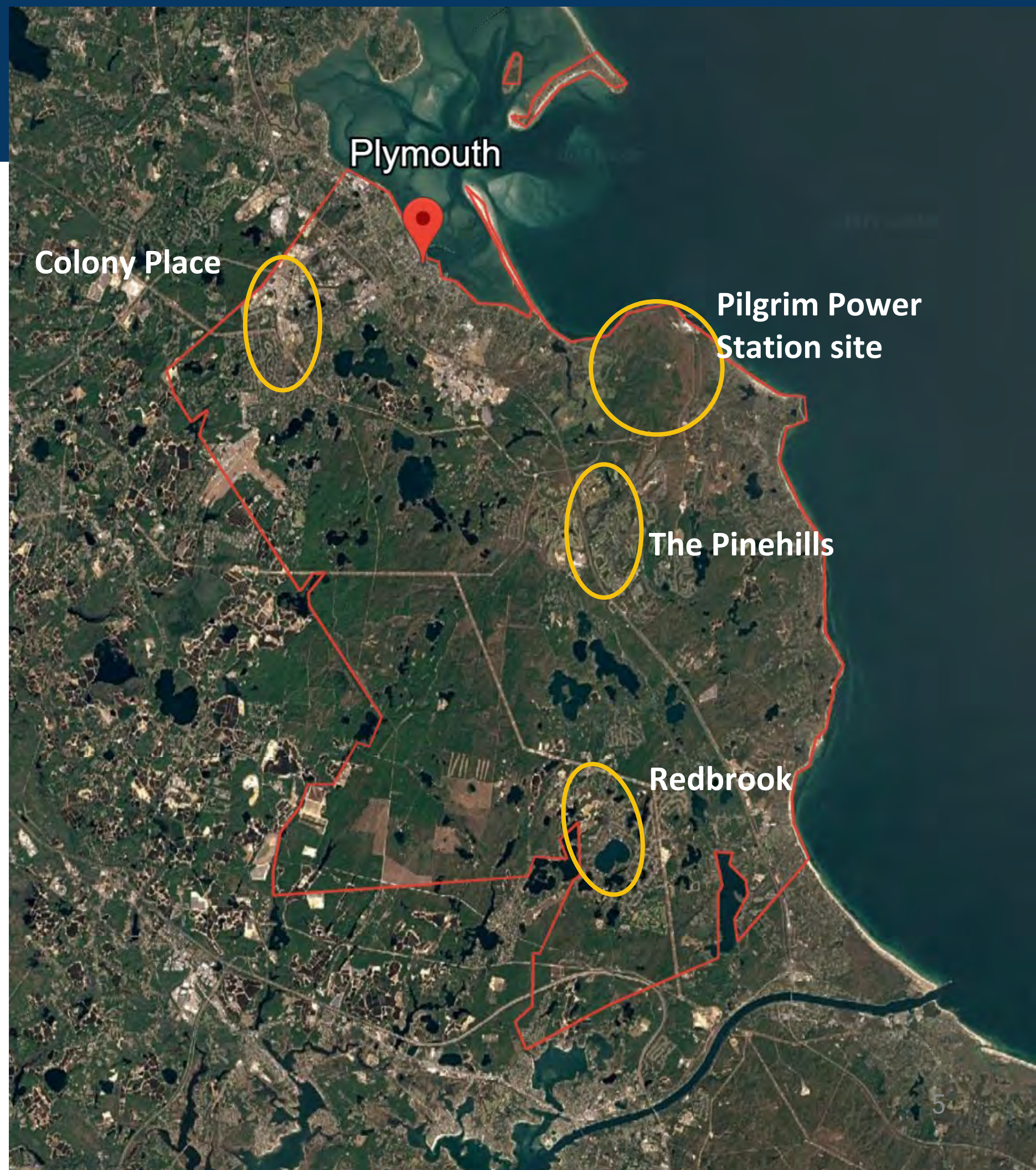


We want the Executive Summary to tell the plan's story

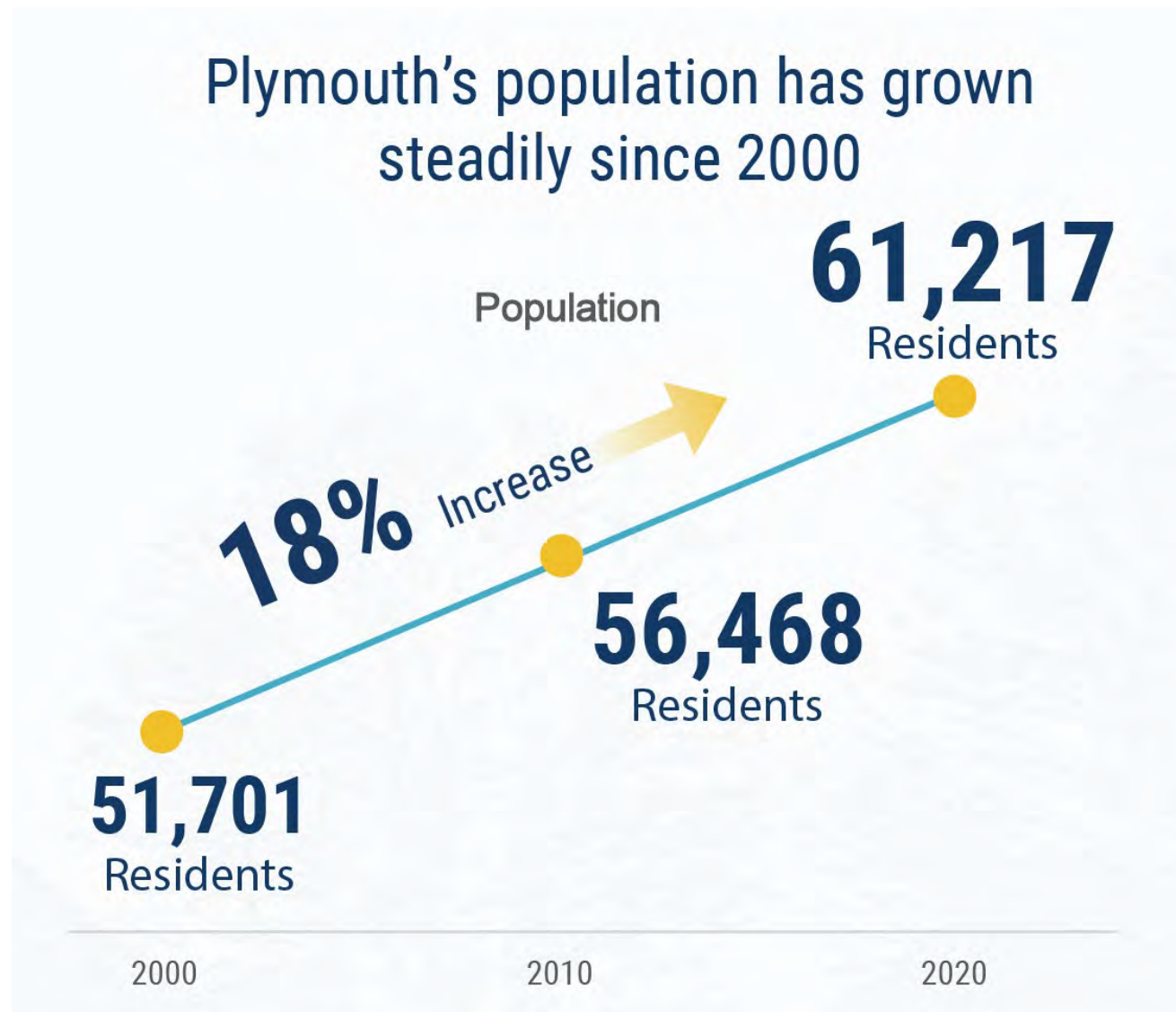
The Need for an Updated Plan

Plymouth's last master plan was adopted twenty years ago. Much has changed since then:

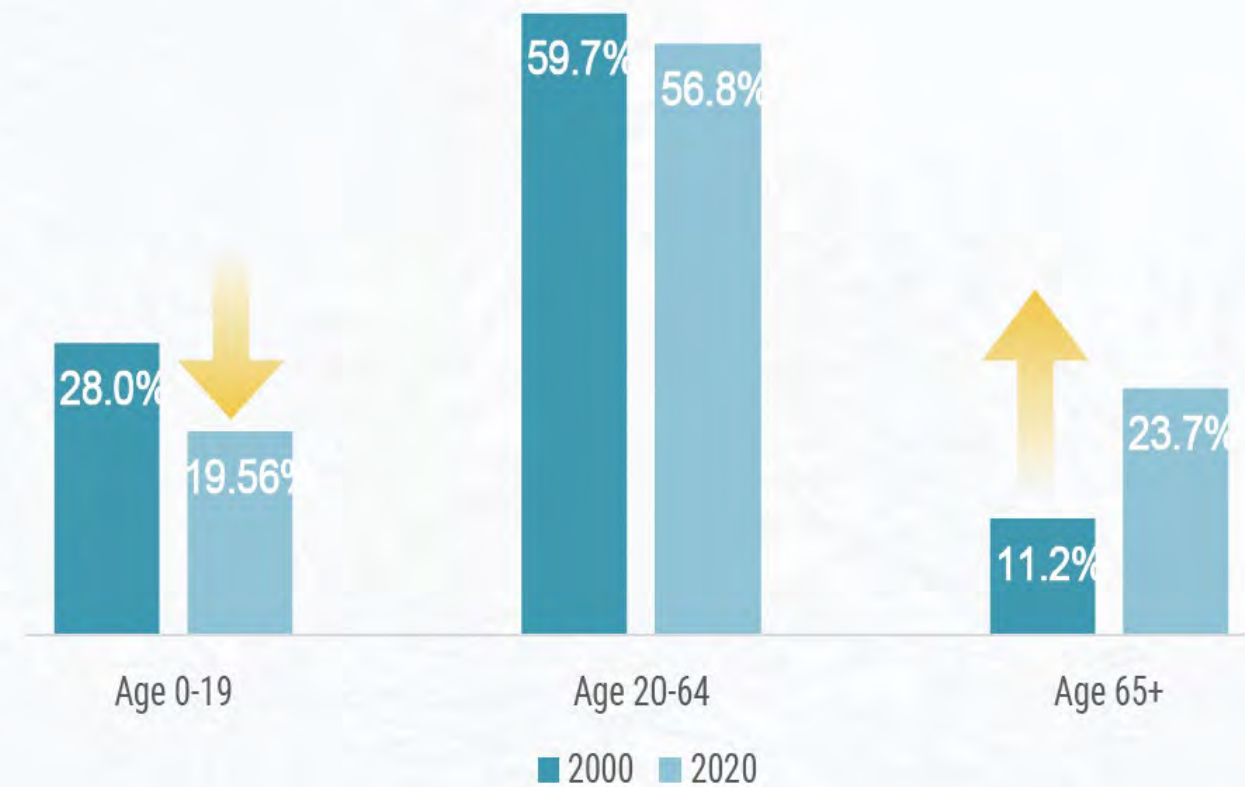
- Added 7,000 new housing units and 10,000 more residents from 2000 to 2020
- Substantial development - Colony Place, The Pinehills, Redbrook
- Shut down of Pilgrim Power Station - loss of local jobs and tax revenue



Key trends from existing conditions:



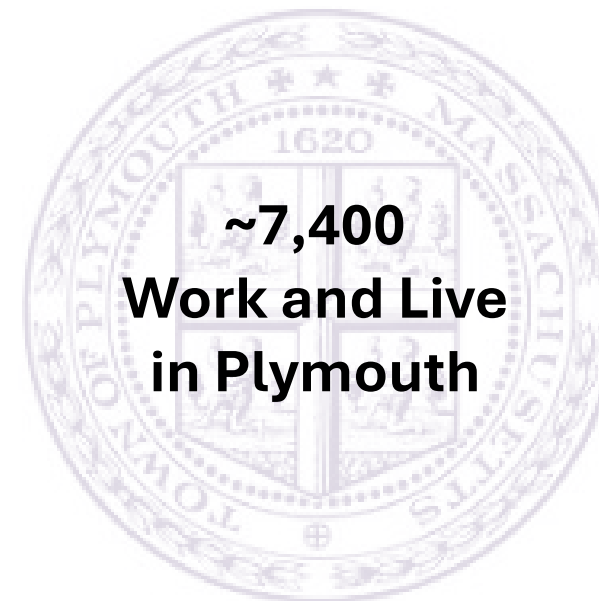
The share of the population age 65+ more than doubled since 2000



Plymouth Today

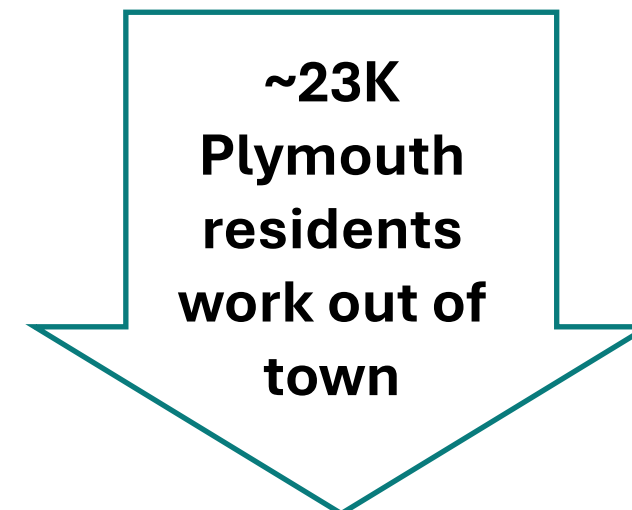
Key Trends from existing conditions:

Plymouth's housing stock has grown by 32% since 2000.



~7,400
Work and Live
in Plymouth

Many local workers are in jobs with wages that make them unable to afford living in Plymouth



Public Feedback Informing the Master Plan



**2,000 unique interactions
overall**



**12 community
workshops &
listening sessions**



5 surveys



2 pop-up events



Public Feedback Informing the Master Plan

Development

- A more diversified land use mix that includes greater commercial, light industrial, and mixed-use opportunities
- Balanced approach to development that takes into consideration infrastructure capacity and open space preservation
- Focus development in already developed areas; protect and expand open and recreational areas



Public Feedback Informing the Master Plan

Housing

- Housing affordability for all
- A wider range of housing types – multifamily, townhomes, cluster housing, smaller single family, ADUs



Public Feedback Informing the Master Plan

Economic Development

- Job growth
- Expansion of Plymouth's waterfront and related industries
- A diversified and active economy that benefits residents and year-round tourism
- Prioritize growth in already developed areas and development that includes a mix of uses
- Preferred industries: tech, healthcare, higher education, green & blue economy, hospitality, light industrial/ manufacturing, and small businesses



Public Feedback Informing the Master Plan

Open Space & Recreation

- Preserved and protected natural environments and open spaces that continue to support public access to nature and a variety of recreation opportunities



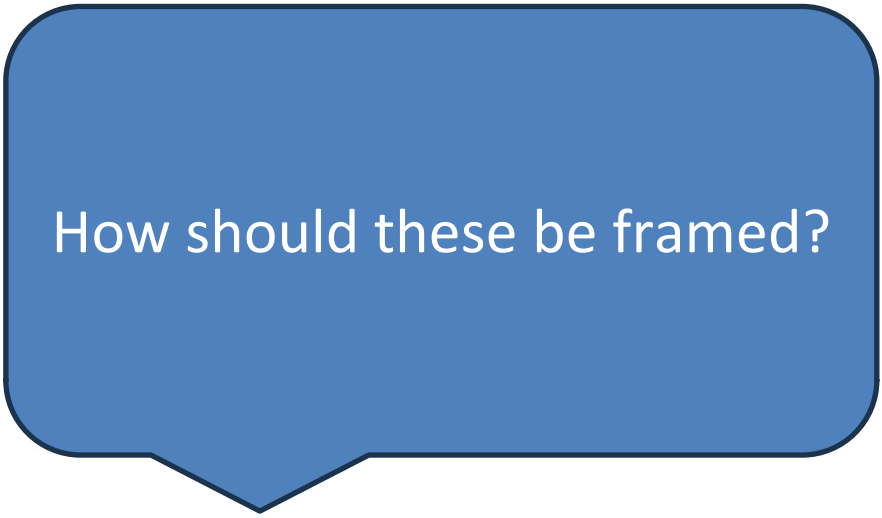
Goals

1. Develop a variety of housing types
2. Preserve and protect our natural resources
3. Maintain the historic and cultural character of Plymouth
4. Continue to support the current business base and increase the number of living wage jobs
5. Improve connectivity for all modes of transportation
6. Maintain and improve Town services and infrastructure
7. Advance Plymouth's long-term fiscal sustainability
8. Integrate sustainability and resiliency into all aspects of Town planning and decision-making
9. Maintain the Master Plan as a living document that guides Town actions.



Working Within Plymouth's Context

Plymouth has inherent constraints that limit what change can be possible over the next ten years. The plan's narrative will recognize these conditions to both inform the community and ensure that its recommendations remain practical and achievable.



How should these be framed?

Less Developable Land Than Before

Plymouth has less developable land left than was developed in the past 25 years:

- 1999 – 2024: **~8,200 acres** was developed (12.5% of Plymouth's land area); 85% of which was residential
- Today: **~5,700 acres** are potentially developable (8.5% of land area)
 - o ~2,100 acres of developable or potentially developable land remains; ~3/4 of which is zoned residential
 - o ~3,600 acres are designated as chapter lands (agri, forest, private rec). 75% reduction in the amount of chapter lands since 1999

Helpful detail or confusing?

Less Developable Land Than Before

Plymouth will continue to see infill development opportunities:

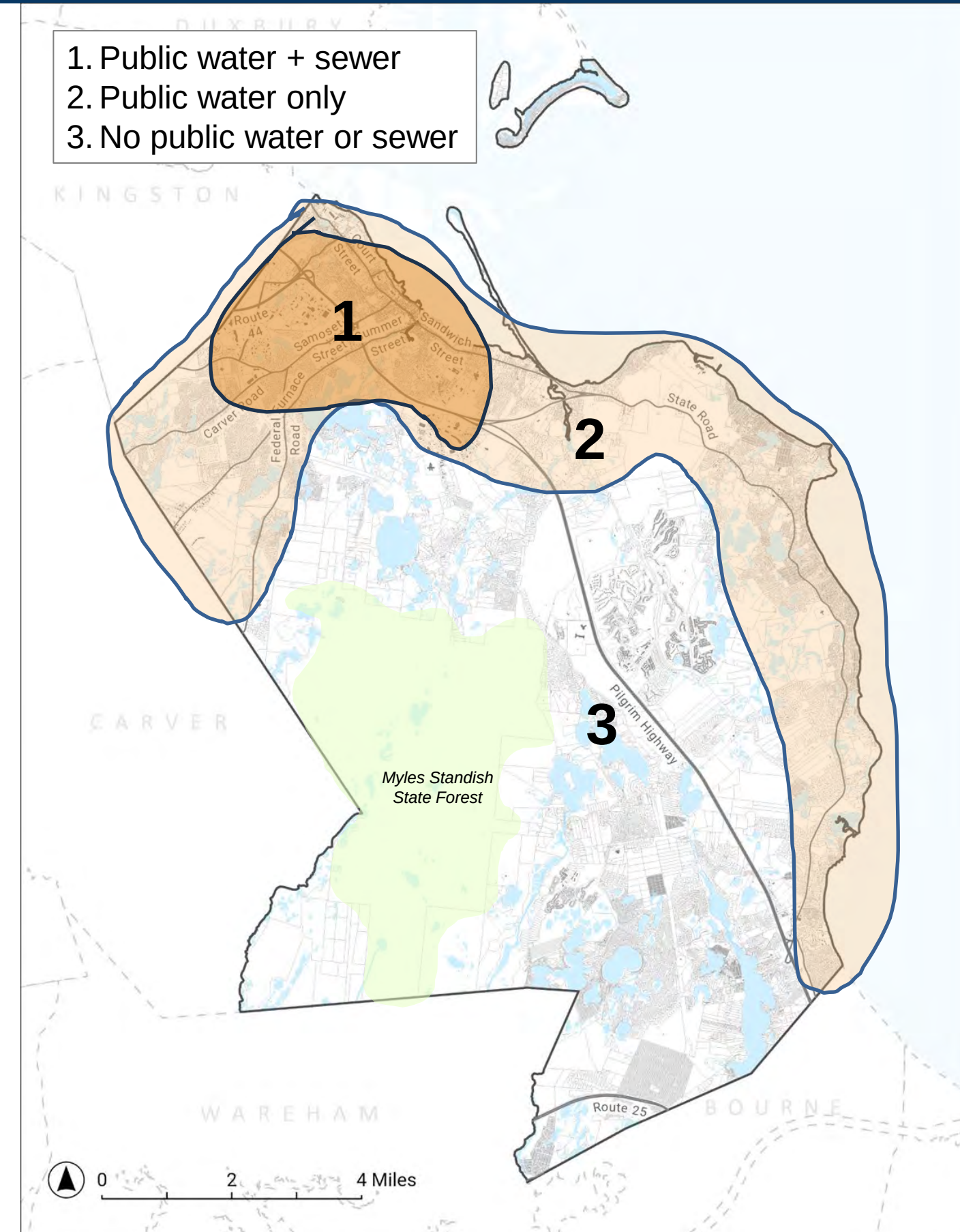
- These opportunities can add jobs, housing, and amenities in areas with existing infrastructure and help take pressure off greenfield development in rural parts of town. Appropriate density is important to maximize infrastructure.

This message is key – is it framed appropriately?

Limited Water and Sewer Utilities

Plymouth has limited public utilities:

- Water: Less than 1/3 of Plymouth's land area with about 70% of the population
- Sewer: About 5% of Plymouth's land area with less than 25% of the population



Limited Water and Sewer Utilities

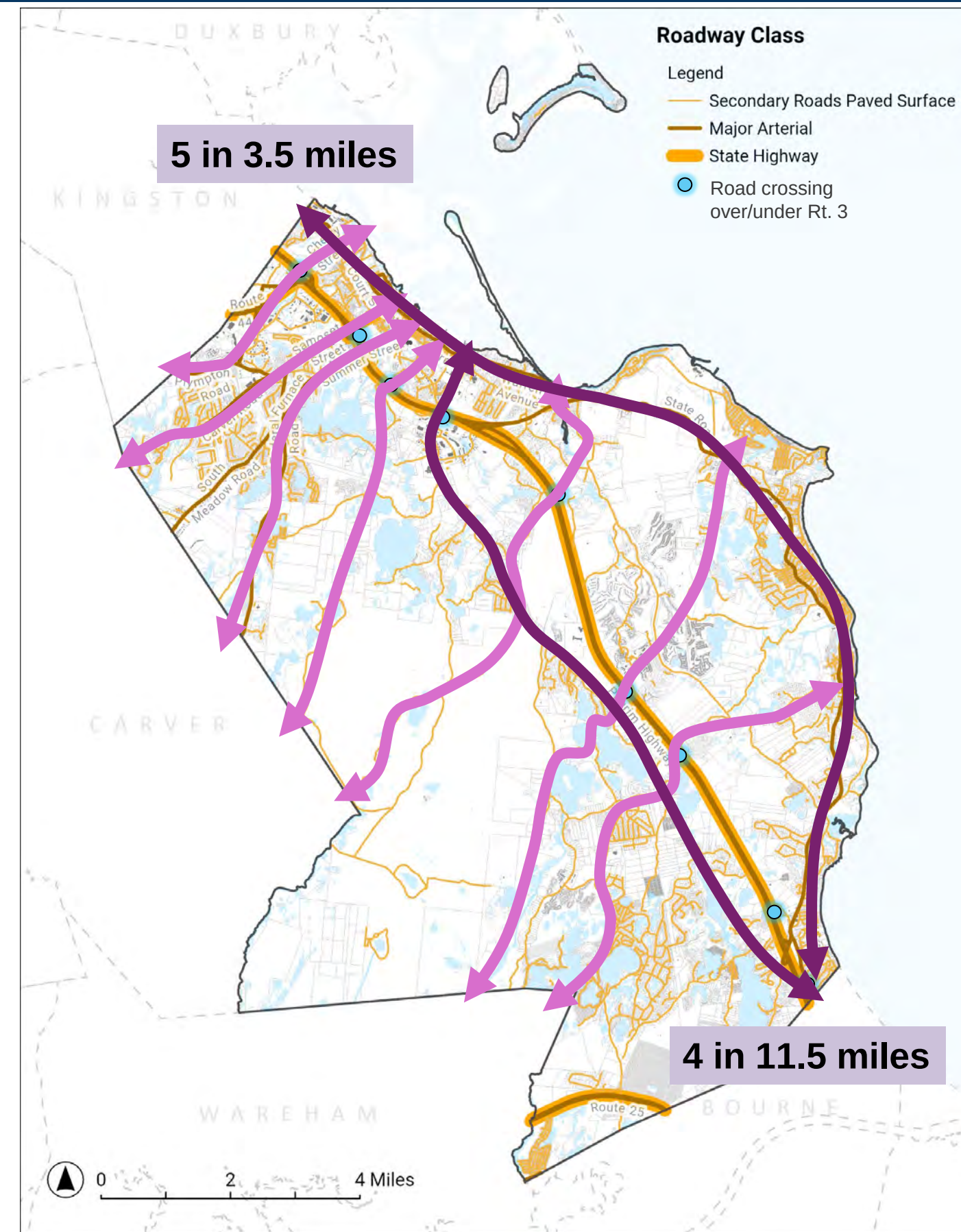
What does that mean?

- Public water and sewer allow for greater development intensities (typically more value per acre for the Town).
- Reliance on septic systems limits development intensity (typically less value per acre for the Town) and precludes some commercial and industrial uses.
- Aging septics also degrade water quality in ponds and groundwater, posing an environmental concern

Limited Roadway Connections

Roadway network in the central and southern areas is limited to a few main roads that absorb all the traffic:

- Route 3: ~15 miles with just 9 local crossings
- Only 4 continuous north-south roads and 3 east-west roads in southern Plymouth



Limited Roadway Connections

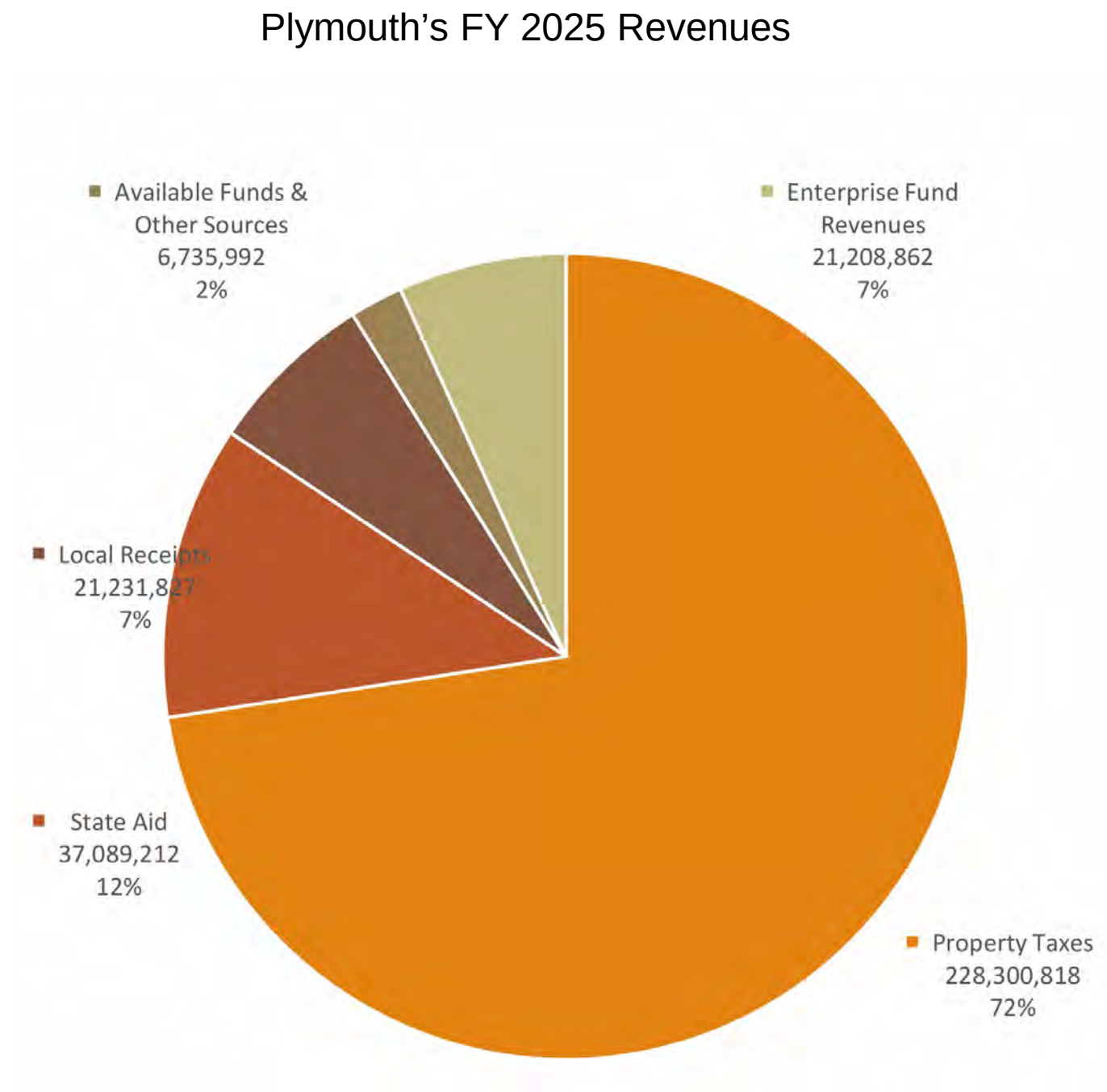
What does that mean?

- Increased development in southern Plymouth relies on a limited roadway network – so most people have to use the same roads
- Many existing roads have limited space to expand or add pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Distinctive rural character of some roads also limits improvement options
- Northern Plymouth has more connected roadway network with multiple options, better access to regional highways

The Facts: Existing Constraints

Plymouth has high dependency on its residential tax base for its municipal budget:

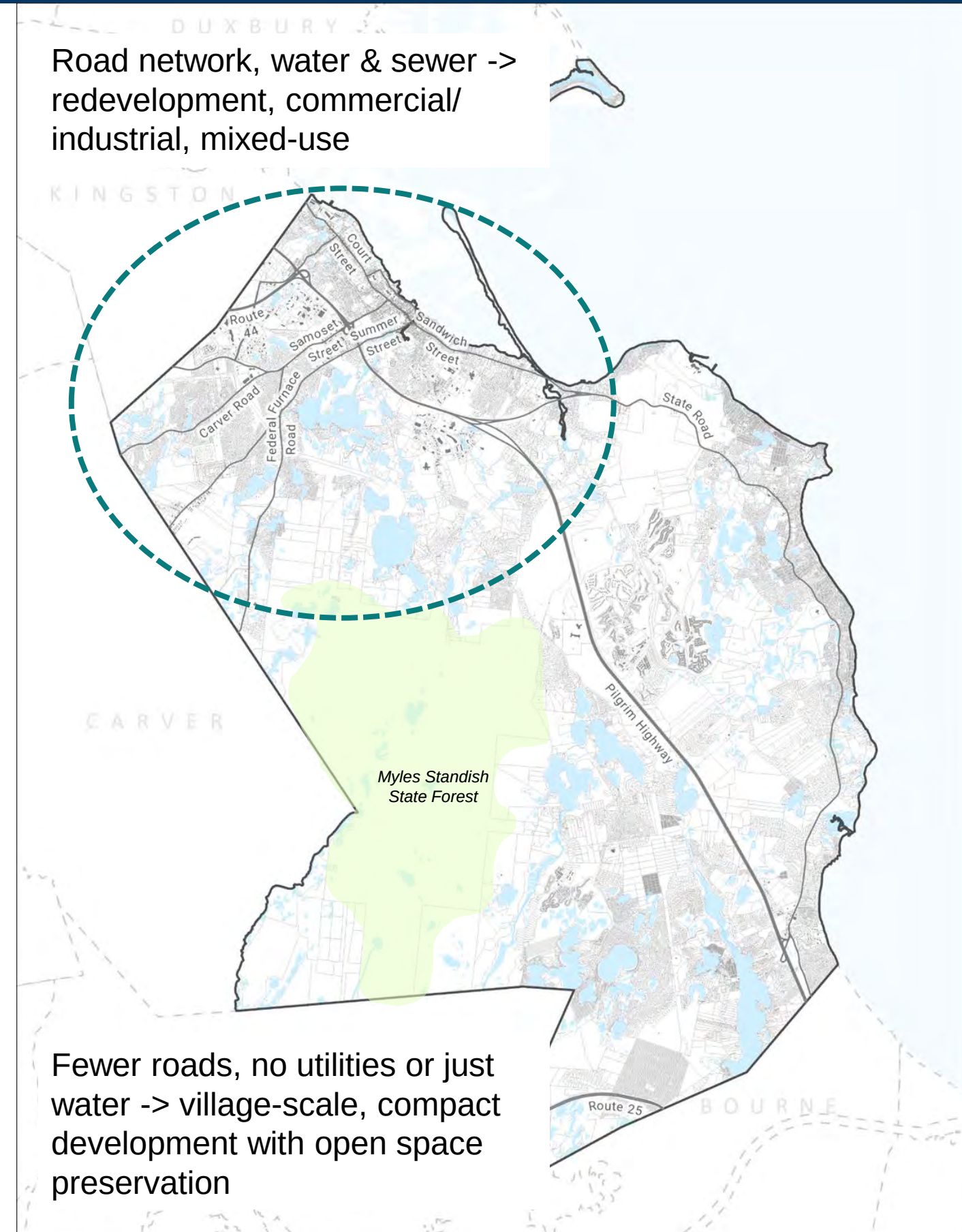
- 72% of budget is supported by property tax, mostly residential
- School budget is largest component of Town budget – 61%.



The Facts: Existing Constraints

The northern and southern areas of Plymouth have very different contexts which impact where and how growth should occur

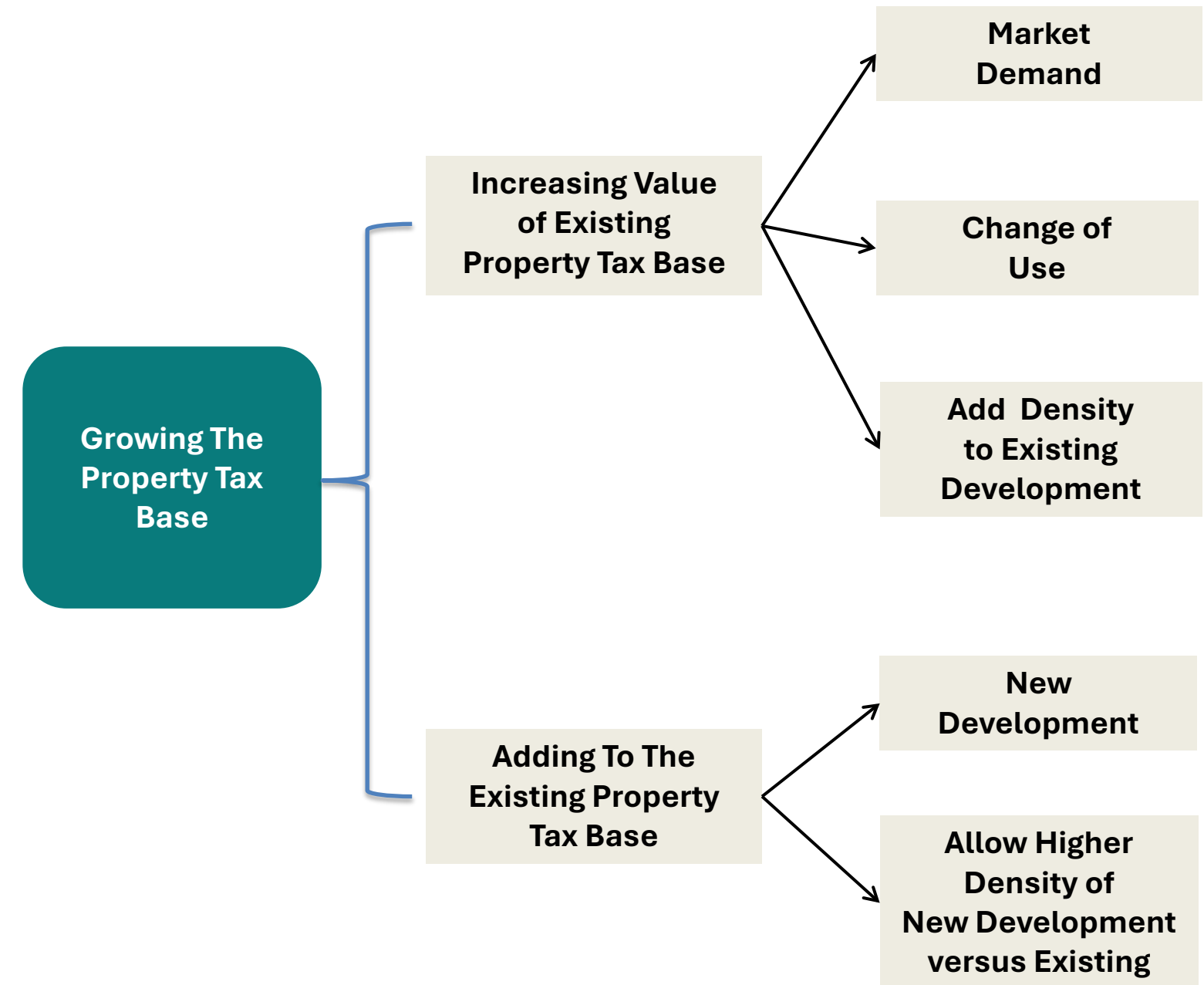
Is this distinction helpful?



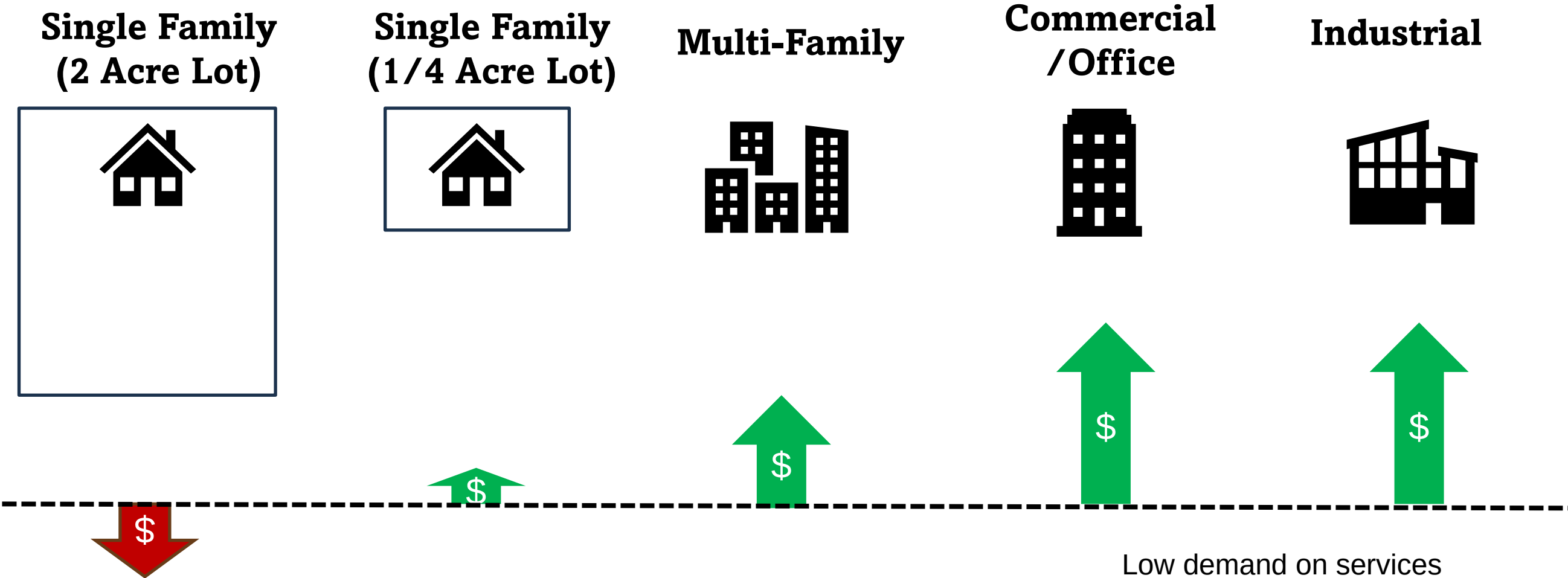
Balancing Big Aspirations & Financial Realities

Plymouth can do anything, but it can't do everything

- Growing the property tax base is important for the financial future of the Town
 - Rising costs outpacing revenue
 - Affordability pressures, especially for fixed-income households

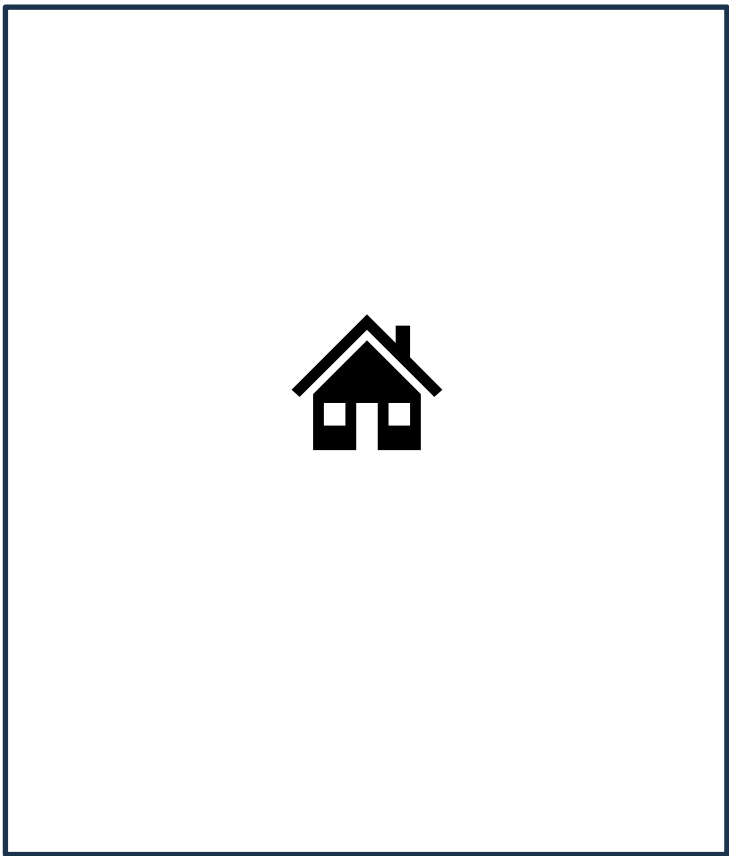


Relative Fiscal Impacts of Growth



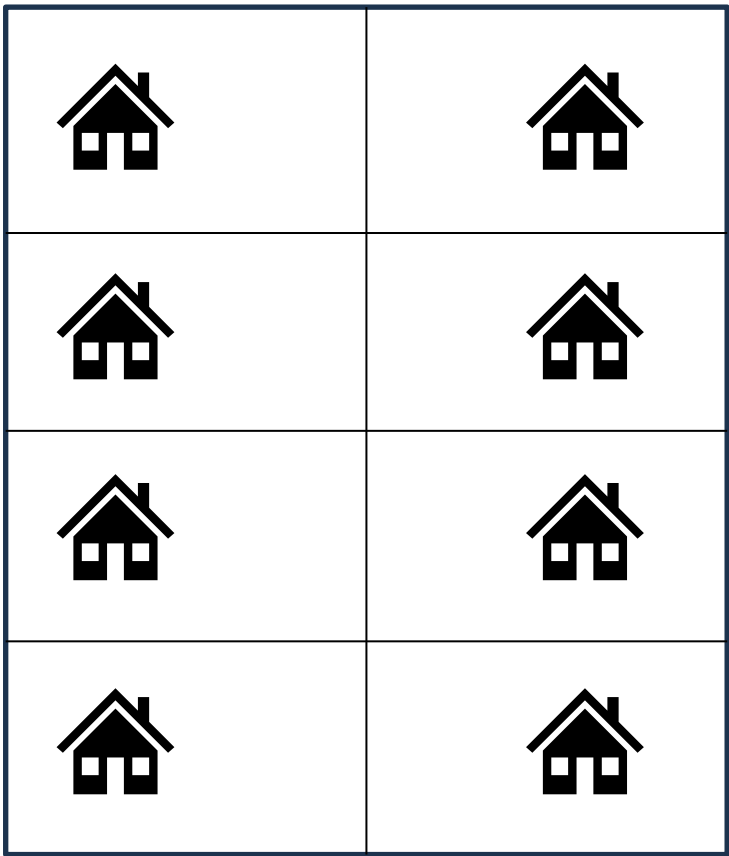
Relative Fiscal Impacts of Growth

2-Acre Lot



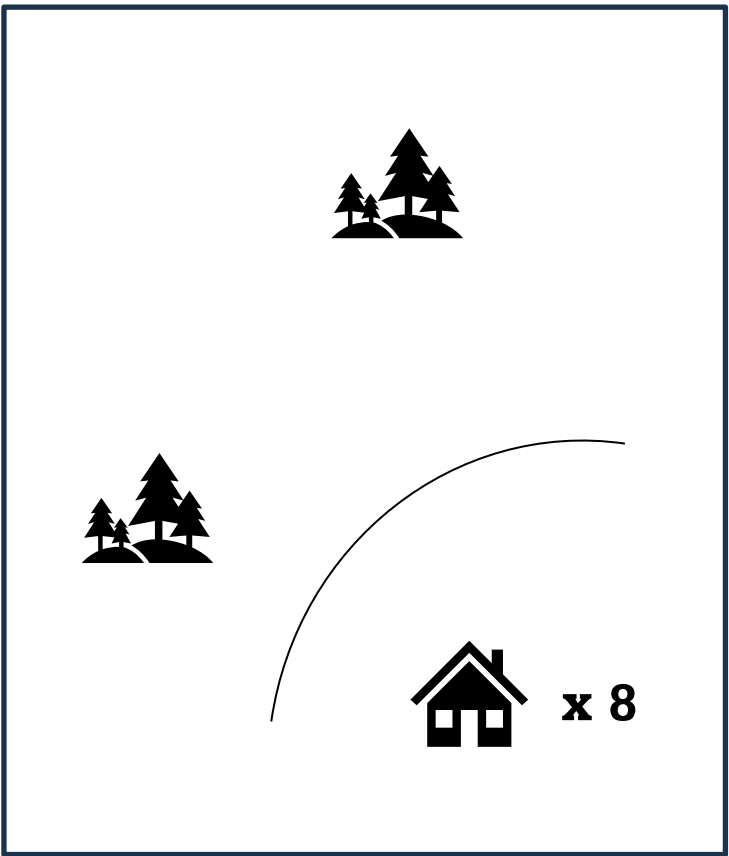
$1 \times \$1,000,000 = \$1,000,000$

8 ¼-Acre Lots



$8 \times \$500,000 = \$4,000,000$

**Open Space
Development**



$8 \times \$500,000 = \$4,000,000$



02 // PLAN THEMES & PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Overarching Themes

Three overarching themes consistently emerged through public feedback and MPC discussions and thread through the plan's goals and strategies.



**Advancing Community
Affordability**



**Integrating
Sustainability &
Resilience**



**Addressing Public Health,
Walkability, & Wellbeing**

Advancing Community Affordability

Housing: improve attainability, options for different types of households and stages of life

Economic development: maintain/grow non-residential tax base, especially higher-paying industries

Transportation options: expand low-cost alternatives to driving (walking, biking, transit)

Sound municipal finance: balancing revenue and costs while addressing key needs

From public input:

High property taxes and the rising cost of living are top concerns. Many residents feel that the town is becoming unaffordable, especially for long-term residents and retirees. More affordable housing options are needed.

“Unlocking Economic Growth: Master Plan Attracts High-Wage Employers with Lower Service Demands”

Ensure residential growth does not outpace the capacity of infrastructure and municipal services and therefore bare additional and unplanned costs on the town and taxpayers

Integrating Sustainability & Resilience

Environmental: coastal management, natural resources and aquifer protection, climate adaptation

Economic: broad economic base resilient to future changes

Housing: sustainable, energy-efficient construction and renovation

Social: public spaces for gathering, public services that support people throughout their lifetime

Fiscal: balancing revenue and costs over time while addressing needs now and in the future

From public input:

Ensure new developments are environmentally sustainable, well-planned, and have the water/sewer infrastructure to support them

Sustainability is not just about energy and natural hazards. Sustainability strategies should expressly include protection and sound management of Plymouth's aquifer, planning land use and water management to avoid impacts to ponds and streams, other open space considerations, etc. Sustainability means preserving natural resources.

“Plymouth conservation efforts provide model for state”

Addressing Public Health, Walkability, & Wellbeing

Demographics: needs of a changing population will evolve over time

Economic: local healthcare industry provides services to residents + jobs

Housing: aging in place and family opportunities, access to amenities

Mobility: safe for walking and biking

Parks and recreation: provide amenities for all ages to encourage physical activity and social interaction

From public input:

Creating bike lanes and improving pedestrian pathways will create more walkable communities and reduce car dependency

“Plymouth opens it 3rd multi generational housing community, proving that smart planning can benefit all ages”

Expand recreational facilities and programming for multi-generational use and engagement



04 // WHAT'S NEXT?

Next Steps in the Master Plan Process

- Complete draft plan document
- Review draft plan with committee - December
- Host draft plan open house – January
- Revise prior to Planning Board hearing(s)



Draft Plan Open House: January

January 2026
Location and date TBD

- Present draft plan document highlights for public comment
 - o Plan themes
 - o Future land use
- Draft plan document available online for review





Thank You!

