

Master Plan Visioning Survey & Interactive Map Engagement Summary

OVERVIEW

Following a project kickoff meeting on June 20, 2024, the project team encouraged the public to complete an online visioning survey (that mirrored activities at the kickoff meeting) and to participate in an interactive mapping exercise. The visioning survey's questions focused on respondents' relationship with Plymouth, what they value about the community, what they would improve or change, and how they envision Plymouth's future.

Both online engagement activities ran from June 21, 2024, through February 20, 2025. The visioning survey received 207 total responses and the interactive mapping exercise received 361 comments from 151 unique contributors. Feedback from this online engagement effort is in addition to the more than 185 people who attended the kickoff meeting and responded to similar questions.

OVERARCHING THEMES AND TAKEAWAYS FROM ALL COMMENT VENUES

- Plymouth's natural resources were consistently cited as a unique and cherished aspect of the Town. Residents expressed an interest in preserving these natural resources and making sure population growth and development does not negatively affect natural resources.
- There were mixed opinions on how residents would like to see Plymouth grow. Some expressed interest in more growth, especially moderately priced housing for families. Of those interested in more growth, density was urged as a means to reduce outward growth that could impact natural resources. Conversely, other residents expressed concern about the rate of growth, looking to maintain Plymouth's "small-town" feel.
- More specific comments often referred to infrastructure improvements (roadway improvements, sidewalks, traffic, etc.) and areas of Plymouth that could be improved with new facilities. Many respondents who commented on infrastructure felt population growth was a key factor in the deterioration of current infrastructure and a reason it should be improved.
- Overall, Plymouth's growth was a central theme in many responses. The rapid increase in residents and perceived increase in tourists cause anxiety for some long-time residents, however an almost equal number of respondents expressed a desire to see more growth. Almost all respondents agreed long-term planning is important.

VISIONING SURVEY RESULTS

WHY DO YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE IN PLYMOUTH?

Of 207 respondents, 124 answered, and 83 skipped

By far the top response for why people choose to live in Plymouth is the proximity to the beach/coast, with 70% of respondents selecting that option. Proximity to wooded areas and ponds tied for the second-most responses (46%). These responses demonstrate the importance of Plymouth's natural resources to residents.

WHY DO YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE IN PLYMOUTH? (multiple responses allowed)	#	%
Proximity to beach/coast	87	70.16%
Close to family and/or friends	58	46.77%
Proximity to wooded areas & ponds	58	46.77%
Community character	49	39.52%
Close to major highways	42	33.87%
Good place to raise children	38	30.65%
Quality of schools	29	23.39%
Close to employment	27	21.77%
Type of housing	25	20.16%
Best overall value	20	16.13%
Cost of living	12	9.68%
Reasonable tax rate	9	7.26%
Other Answers	12	9.68%
Total:	124	

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT PLYMOUTH?

Of 207 respondents, 185 answered, and 22 skipped

- Many responses referenced the natural open space and biodiversity Plymouth offers, especially access to the ocean.
- Plymouth's historical character was another recurring theme.
- Downtown, schools, and the sense of community were also mentioned often.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE OR CHANGE?

Of 207 respondents, 187 answered, and 20 skipped

- Many comments focused on development in Plymouth. Some would like development to stop, feeling that infrastructure services cannot keep up with growth, while others advocated for denser development to preserve land and lower housing costs for families.
- A variety of infrastructure improvements were listed, primarily sidewalks roads, and utilities. Traffic congestion was also mentioned.

- Some commented on Town politics, feeling that Plymouth is large enough to warrant a mayor. Taxes were also frequently mentioned as being too expensive.

WHAT DO YOU WISH PLYMOUTH WOULD BE LIKE IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS?

Of 207 respondents, 176 answered, and 31 skipped

- The charm of Plymouth and its villages was mentioned often and something respondents hope can be maintained. Suggestions were to maintain access to the ocean and natural land, ensuring Plymouth remains a destination.
- Some hoped for less vehicular traffic and more of a focus on the environment, while others hoped for more economic development through growth.
- High property taxes and the rising cost of living are common concerns. Many residents feel that the town is becoming unaffordable, especially for long-term residents and retirees. There is a call for more affordable housing options.

HEADLINE EXERCISES

Respondents were asked to envision a news headline about Plymouth in 20 years, with the goal that it would speak to respondents' vision of what Plymouth could look like. Responses varied from positive outlooks on the future to manifestations of their current concerns. Respondents could provide one, two, or three headlines about Plymouth generally or about specific topics in Plymouth (like housing, transportation, open space, etc.).

- Many mentioned a thriving downtown.
- Many headlines focused on tourism, tying in the environment and the potential for ecotourism.
- Housing was mentioned many times, a mix of some wanting affordable housing and others wanting less housing to keep a "small town" feel.
- Overall, there is a desire to uplift the positive aspects respondents see in Plymouth (harbor, history, thriving downtown, housing affordability).
- Some are concerned that Plymouth will become too developed, and that development will harm the natural beauty and biodiversity in Plymouth.

HEADLINE EXAMPLES

- "Breathing Life into Plymouth: Master Plan Unveils Path to a More Vibrant Community"
- "Plymouth is a destination for enjoying all that nature has to offer"
- "Plymouth, Top 10 Towns to Raise Your Kids!"
- "Plymouth conservation efforts provide model for state"
- "Plymouth named most livable community in Massachusetts"
- "Plymouth identified as leader in balancing housing and preservation"
- "Unlocking Economic Growth: Master Plan Attracts High-Wage Employers with Lower Service Demands"
- "America's Home Town Solves Housing Scarcity by combining policy, technology, design, and partnership"
- "Town of Plymouth Votes in New Form of Government"

In total, there were 330 headline submissions:

- For the first headline, 133 of 207 respondents answered, and 74 skipped.
- For the second headline, 104 of 207 respondents answered, and 103 skipped.
- For the third headline, 93 of 207 respondents answered, and 114 skipped.

ABOUT THE VISIONING SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The majority of respondents live in Plymouth year-round (77%) and many are long-time residents (44% have lived in Plymouth for more than 20 years). More than 90% of respondents are between the ages of 30-80, with the largest age group comprised of those aged 60-69 years at almost 27% of responses.

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO PLYMOUTH?	#	%
I live in Plymouth year-round	117	76.97%
I own a business in Plymouth	16	10.53%
I work in Plymouth but live elsewhere	6	3.95%
I visit Plymouth and live elsewhere	0	0.00%
Other Answers	33	21.71%
Total: Of 207 respondents, 152 answered, and 55 skipped	152	

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?	#	%
Younger than 20	3	1.99%
20-29 years old	0	0.00%
30-39 years old	17	11.26%
40-49 years old	29	19.21%
50-59 years old	32	21.19%
60-69 years old	40	26.49%
70-79 years old	27	17.88%
80 years or older	3	1.99%
Total: Of 207 respondents, 151 answered, and 56 skipped	151	

IF YOU LIVE IN PLYMOUTH, DO YOU OWN OR RENT THE PROPERTY WHERE YOU LIVE?	#	%
Own	111	89.52%
Rent	9	7.26%
I don't live in Plymouth	4	3.23%
Total: Of 207 respondents, 124 answered, and 83 skipped	124	

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN PLYMOUTH?	#	%
Less than 1 year	0	0.00%
1 to 5 years	22	17.74%

6-10 years	19	15.32%
11-20 years	26	20.97%
More than 20 years	54	43.55%
I don't live in Plymouth	3	2.42%
Total: Of 207 respondents, 124 answered, and 83 skipped	124	

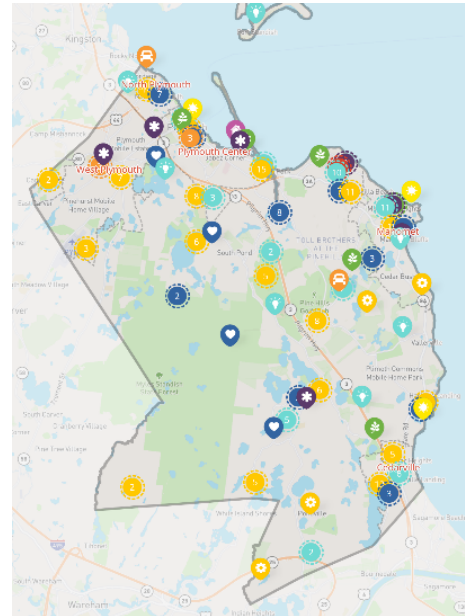
INTERACTIVE MAP RESULTS

An interactive map on the project website allowed the public to place markers on a map of Plymouth to identify important places, places that can be improved or changed, or to provide ideas and suggestions about a place:

- Places to Improve or Change: 178 comments
- Ideas and Suggestions: 94 comments
- Important Places: 57 comments

When the fall topic workshops started, additional markers were added for people to place topic-specific comments:

- Transportation: 8 comments
- Natural Resources: 7 comments
- Public Infrastructure and Services: 7 comments
- Open Space and Recreation: 4 comments
- Climate Resilience and Adaptation: 3 comments
- Economic Development: 2 comments
- Housing: 1 comment



Participants were able to view all comments placed on the map and could either upvote or downvote the comment if they wished, further showing community sentiment towards specific comments. Overall, 151 unique contributors provided 361 comments on the interactive map. There were 2,877 upvotes and 587 downvotes on comments, and only 19 did not receive any up- or down-votes.

The three most upvoted comments included:

- The intersection of Route 3A and State Road is an awful and dangerous intersection, made worse by recently permitted carwash; frequent long traffic back-ups ... needs a traffic light.
 - 52 upvotes
- Re-open the commuter train station.
 - 45 upvotes
- A traffic light was supposed to be put in with the development of Red Brook. Traffic backs up on Halfway Pond Rd to Bourne Rd in the morning. Improvement is needed at intersection.
 - 37 upvotes

The three most downvoted comments included:

- Fremont St should be a one-way street, Sandwich to Union.
 - 26 downvotes
- [In regard to the Holtec site] Ensure high-density development of this area with high-tech companies that produce high-tech products and generate a significant revenue (tax revenue) for the Town of Plymouth. This should be the bulk of the development of the

Holtec Site and the Town should attempt to work with Holtec to secure the remaining property for open space and access for the Town's drinking water supply. If this area is developed, it will greatly impact traffic and resources increasing to taxes.

- 24 downvotes
- Property adjacent to Power House Rd. Isn't it zoned commercial? Is it something we can develop with light industrial?
 - 15 downvotes

Comments with divided up- and down-votes:

- Remote working on vacation is becoming more common. However being cramped up in a hotel room isn't ideal for working. Making Plymouth more attractive to work-cationers might help us stay ahead of some of the trends in recreation and draw more vacationers. One thing that could help, would be outdoor/shelters work areas. Think park pavilion, but smaller desk installations with power outlets, wifi, and shade would be amazing. Even better would be a formal indoor area with nice view for offseason.
 - 16 upvotes, 12 downvotes
- There needs to be a public parking lot along White Horse beach, for non-residents here to visit but not able to obtain a parking pass.
 - 12 upvotes, 9 downvotes
- I think it would be helpful to see more public electric vehicle charging downtown, especially given the adoption of EV's increasing. It might also be worth entertaining some way to incentivize discounts for EV charging with local businesses to drive customers their way.
 - 9 upvotes, 13 downvotes

IMPORTANT PLACES

- Downtown: 13 specific comments
- Waterfront: 12 specific comments
- Holtec Site: 12 specific comments
- Pinehills: 6 specific comments
- Myles Standish State Forest: 5 specific comments

MAP COMMENT THEMES

- There were multiple specific comments on the condition of roadways and intersections. While these comments were dispersed throughout the Town, the sentiment usually spoke to residents' desire for safer intersections, less traffic, and improved infrastructure.
 - This sentiment is further supported by the amount of upvotes on comments that called out specific infrastructure improvements.
- Like the visioning survey, there were mixed opinions on how Plymouth should approach housing. About half of respondents wanted less housing, while the other half wanted more. There seemed to be common ground that the price of housing is too high.
- The natural environment was cited as one of the main benefits of Plymouth, and many comments requested further protection and access to these areas.
- There was a desire to acknowledge the Wampanoag People through land acknowledgements and the protection of land. Respondents felt this should be as important as Plymouth's European history.

