

Brewster Local Comprehensive Plan (LCP)

**VPC Revisions to Draft
version 4.0: July 2023**

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The development of Brewster's Local Comprehensive Plan was the result of the active participation, thinking and hard work of many people who value our community's future. We would like to thank them for their time and efforts.

Thanks to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction: What is an LCP? Why have one?

Brewster's Local Comprehensive Plan (LCP) describes how Brewster looks today and where it wants to go in the future. The LCP is not law or regulation and does not itself create regulatory mandates or restrictions. It creates policy direction to help guide land use decisions and policies in the Town for the next 10+ year planning period. It has been developed with general guidance from the Cape Cod Commission according to its regulations, adapted to Brewster's specific needs and circumstances.

After its local adoption, a Town can choose to submit the LCP to the Cape Cod Commission for certification of the LCP's consistency with the Regional Policy Plan. Potential benefits of Cape Cod Commission LCP certification include: the ability for the Town to enter into Development Agreements as a type of land use permitting; prioritization for planning technical assistance; and the establishment of the LCP as review criteria for Districts of Critical Planning Concern and Developments of Regional Impact. Certification would require that the Town regularly communicate progress on the LCP to the Cape Cod Commission, that the LCP be updated to remain consistent with updates to the Regional Policy Plan, and that the Town's land use by-laws and regulations be consistent with the LCP. Brewster's LCP has also been prepared and is intended to serve as a comprehensive land use plan under state planning law (MGL Chapter 41, Section 81D); similarly, after adoption, the Town can choose to file a copy of the LCP to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) (formerly the Department of Housing and Community Development- DHCD).

Brewster first adopted a comprehensive land use plan in 1970. A prior draft LCP was completed in 1997 but was never brought to Town Meeting. The development of this LCP started in earnest with the 2018 Brewster Vision Plan. The Vision Plan process commenced in 2017, serves as a foundation for the LCP, and includes goals and actions for eight key issue areas (called 'Building Blocks').

The LCP is structured along the same lines as the Vision Plan. It includes a Vision Statement and the eight Building Blocks: Community Character, Water Resources, Open Space, Housing, Coastal Management, Local Economy, Governance, and Community Infrastructure. The goals for each of these Building Blocks remain similar to those stated in the Vision Plan, with some modifications made to recognize changing circumstances and conditions in Brewster and beyond, and the goal statements and policies in the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan.

In addition, two new Building Blocks have been included in the LCP since the adoption of the Vision Plan: Solid Waste Management and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation. The Solid Waste Building Block recognizes both the Town's efforts to decrease and manage the community's waste stream and regional guidance from the Cape Cod Commission. The Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Building Block recognizes the major threat to the community posed by climate change and the efforts by the Town to mitigate or adapt to its effects.

The heart of the LCP is the Action Plan, which includes an ambitious list of strategies, policies, and actions associated with the Building Blocks. The Action Plan sets out these proposed strategies, policies, and actions to advance the vision, goals, and purposes of the LCP. The Action Plan calls for Town government, in partnership with its residents, businesses, organizations, to pursue a variety of initiatives over the next 10+ years. More broadly than Town government, the Action Plan is also intended to guide future decision-making and actions by community organizations, businesses, and residents.

Brewster's Vision

The LCP is informed, but not limited, by the 2018 Vision Plan. In many ways, both Plans exist along the same planning continuum, although the LCP has been updated to reflect changed conditions (including an unprecedented world-wide pandemic and its associated social and economic effects on society) and input received through the entire planning process.

The LCP includes a vision statement, similar to that of the 2018 Vision Plan, articulating at a high level a vision for Brewster's future and the values held by the community. The Action Plan strives to achieve the vision. It is important to note that these values are not intended to conflict, especially in terms of implementing the related Action Plan, but should be viewed as complementary, mutually supportive and on equal footing with one another. The Vision Statement has also been prepared for consistency with the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan.

Community Engagement

Processes for developing both the Vision Plan and the Local Comprehensive Plan were highly participatory. The Vision Planning process included three series of public workshops and a public survey. These events were accompanied by broad public outreach, including newspaper coverage and opinion pieces, postings on the Town website and through the Town email-list, distribution of announcements through the e-mail lists of approximately 10 local not-for-profit organizations and religious groups, local public television interviews and announcements, and document distribution at Town Hall, the Brewster Ladies Library, and the Council on Aging. A postcard to all property owners was also sent out for the public survey.

The LCP process and its preparation has been shepherded by the Vision Planning Committee (VPC). The LCP planning effort began during the COVID pandemic, and thus was constrained by restrictions on public meetings. Nevertheless, the VPC took a very similar approach to outreach for the LCP as they did for the Vision Plan, actively informing the Brewster public about the planning effort and soliciting their ideas and feedback. Most notable was the *Brewster's Next Steps* survey to gauge support for over 65 proposed actions, to which over 2,300 people, broadly representing the community's age and residential status profile, responded. The Committee used print and electronic media announcements, email lists, postcards to property owners, and pop-up events at Town locations to publicize the survey. A summary of results is available on the Town website.

In addition, the Committee partnered with Town Management to organize workshops of Town staff, officials and key local organizations to review and comment on a draft Action Plan. The Committee announced a public comment period on the LCP that included the draft Action Plan in July 2022. The Committee reviewed the comments received during the comment period and revised the Action Plan to reflect many of the public comments. A final draft LCP was recommended by the Vision Planning Committee and endorsed by the Select Board and Planning Board following a public hearing in October 2022. In November 2022, the LCP was presented to Town Meeting. Primarily because of concerns about a potential Wing Island Boardwalk project and related references in the LCP, Town Meeting voted to remand the draft back to the VPC for further study and re-drafting. With an eye towards completion and adoption of the LCP, the Select Board revised the VPC's charge and the VPC re-commenced its work on the LCP in March 2023. **The VPC anticipates completing a final, recommended draft LCP for Town Meeting to consider in Fall 2023 (revise as process unfolds in Summer/ Fall 2023).**

Building Blocks - Existing Conditions and Issues

This section contains an overview of existing conditions in Brewster organized by Building Block and based on summary papers that have been prepared for all Building Blocks. Each overview includes background information, recent actions by the Town, and key issues moving forward. These existing conditions summaries detail circumstances in the town and identify town assets, strengths, concerns and related challenges and opportunities. The summary papers prepared in 2017 for the original eight Building Blocks of the Vision Plan have been updated to reflect changing conditions, evolving issues, and implementation of actions to date. In addition, summary papers have been added for the new Building Blocks, Solid Waste and Climate Change. The section begins with a description of 'Brewster Today' focusing on demographic and land use issues and drawing on the Land Use summary paper. Interpretive maps are also contained throughout the LCP to depict certain concepts or conditions.

The Action Plan – Building Block Goals, Purposes, and Actions

The goals and purposes for the LCP are organized by Building Blocks, a concept originated in the 2018 Vision Plan. They have been slightly modified in the LCP to reflect changing conditions in Brewster and to align them with the goals of the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan.

The Action Plan is proposed to advance the LCP vision, goals, and purposes over the next 10+ years. The list of actions is not intended to be a complete list of all that the Town could do but does include the most important actions essential to advancing the identified goals. While a large and ambitious number of actions are presented, priorities for implementation will be identified during the Select Board's annual strategic planning exercise, which is a process that involves soliciting public input. Each action serves as a jumping-off point that will trigger its own process of consideration, discussion, and refinement by the appropriate Town Departments, Board/Committee, community groups, and the general public. Any program, project, or activity decision must be representative of the will of Brewster residents and the circumstances then present. In this way, the Action Plan is neither binding nor definitive.

The list of actions has been drawn from numerous sources including the following:

- Actions from the Vision Plan that have not yet been implemented;
- Recommendations from stakeholders about current needs;
- Recommendations from the Vision Plan Summary Papers about trends and needs; and
- Results of the *Brewster's Next Steps* survey gauging public support for individual actions.

Among other input, the Action Plan was reviewed by Town staff and local organizations to assess the accuracy, relevancy, and feasibility in implementing each action, and the VPC revised the Plan based on input received. As part of this process, the VPC held an interactive workshop with Town staff, Board and Committee chairs and representatives of local organizations in Summer 2022 on the first draft of the Action Plan. This vital part of the process helped ensure the ability, capacity, and commitment to implement the Action Plan and is subject to future adjustments that will make the LCP a “living” plan.

Capital Facilities Planning

In this section, the LCP aligns and cross-references capital investments contemplated in the Action Plan with the Town’s on-going capital facilities planning. This analysis ensures that the capital requirements necessary to implement the LCP are planned for and met. The Town annually revisits and updates the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan to align with community priorities based on available financial resources. Per Code/ Charter, the Town also publishes annually in the May Town Meeting Warrant Booklet a summary of the capital improvement plan, identifying all proposed capital expenditures for the next 5 years estimated to cost \$100,000 or more.

Housing Production Plan Summary

The Town has recently completed, and the State has approved, the 2022-2027 Housing Production Plan (HPP), which principally deals with provisions for affordable housing in Brewster. This section includes a summary of the Town’s 2022 plan. The full HPP can be accessed on the Town website.

Implementation and Performance Monitoring

The prioritization of undertaking LCP actions will be set primarily through the Select Board’s annual strategic planning. Monitoring and reporting to the community are crucial to the successful implementation of the LCP and are described in this section. A copy of the Select Board’s current Strategic Plan for FY24-25 is included in the LCP Appendices. Inclusion of any LCP action in the Select Board’s strategic planning begins the community conversation with applicable stakeholders, including year-round and seasonal residents, businesses, community organizations and relevant Town Boards, Committees, and Departments, to discuss what, if any, program, project, or action the community wants to pursue. Similar to the Capital Improvement Plan, the Select Board Strategic Plan is updated on an annual basis to reflect current needs and priorities.

Supporting Regulation, Plans and Policies

The LCP references other existing Town land use plans, policies, bylaws and regulations that both inform, and will be informed by, the LCP. Many of the LCP's actions deal with potentially updating and amending these documents to advance the goals and vision of the LCP. Any new bylaws or amendments to existing bylaws require a public hearing and Town Meeting approval. It is important to note that, under the current zoning bylaw, consistency with the comprehensive plan is a criterion of approval for certain permits and proposed developments.

SECTION 1: BREWSTER'S VISION

The LCP's vision for Brewster's future, as articulated below, is grounded in the Town's Vision Planning process, which began in 2017. The Vision Plan, completed and approved in 2018, serves as a foundation for the LCP. The LCP's vision statement is also informed by the shared experiences of the community since that time including, among other things, an unprecedented world-wide pandemic and its associated social, political and economic effects, and the Town's acquisition of the former Cape Cod Sea Camps properties.

This vision statement is a product of significant community input. It reflects the shared values of the Brewster community related to, among other things, future growth and development and resource protection in the town. The vision also harmonizes with the regional vision articulated in the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan. In particular, the Town's visioning process involved discussion of "town centers": identifying existing centers of concentrated activity, development and infrastructure in the town that might accommodate expanded future housing and economic opportunities.

This vision serves as the backdrop and reference point for the 'Building Blocks' and their associated goals, purposes and actions set out in the LCP. The multiple values and interests articulated in the vision statement are mutually dependent, complementary and on equal footing with one another. In practical application, the vision requires that these values and interests be reconciled or compromised with one another. In order to fulfill and realize the vision, it is necessary to advance all of these constituent values and interests.

Brewster is a welcoming community that celebrates our special character and strives for greater social diversity and inclusiveness.

We preserve our historical setting and seek to protect its contribution to our town's character. We work to preserve the rural, small town feel of Brewster while recognizing opportunities for growth, which adds to our shared quality of life.

Brewster has been, and will continue to be, a leader in open space planning and protection, which contributes to protecting water resources and sensitive natural habitats and provides scenic areas for recreation and contemplation.

In the context of coastal change, we protect our natural bayside coastline, which defines our sense of place and provides special recreational and economic opportunities.

We are committed to address climate change locally, one of the great global challenges of our day, by reducing our contributions to carbon emissions and continuing to support practices that take up and store carbon through natural processes.

We honor our history as a working community and partner with Brewster businesses and other organizations that support residents and visitors by providing high-quality products, services, and experiences built on our character and environment, and that offer local social, economic, and employment opportunities that help sustain the community.

We support growth that is appropriately scaled and sited within the context that it is proposed.

As a commitment to the social diversity we value, we seek to support housing production tailored to the changing needs of the community, including housing that is affordable to current and future residents of all ages and economic standing.

Within our fiscal capabilities, we strive to provide the infrastructure necessary to ensure public health and safety and to support the ability of our entire community, from older people to families with children, to live, work, learn, recreate, and gather in the town.

The communication methods and practices that we set in place encourage and promote public discourse and collaboration. We look to successful models in other communities and organizations as examples to manage and guide our approach to sharing information and shaping change in our town.

We are committed as we move forward, through careful planning and coordination, to improve our community and honor what we value about Brewster, and ensure the town's continued social, economic, financial, and environmental sustainability for present and future generations.

SECTION 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (NOTE: To be updated in Fall 2023 to reflect outreach activities)

Processes for developing both the Vision Plan and the LCP were highly participatory. The Vision Planning process included three series of public workshops and surveys. These events were accompanied by broad public outreach, including newspaper coverage and opinion pieces, postings on the Town website and through the Town email-list, distribution of announcements through the e-mail lists of approximately 10 local not-for-profit organizations and religious groups, local public television interviews and announcements, and document distribution at Town Hall, the Brewster Ladies Library, and the Council on Aging. A postcard to all property owners was also sent out for the public survey.

The LCP planning effort began during the COVID pandemic, thus was constrained by restrictions on public meetings. Nevertheless, the Planning Committee took a very similar approach to outreach for the LCP as they did for the Vision Plan, used many of the same outreach efforts to actively inform the Brewster public about the planning effort and to solicit their ideas and feedback. Most notable was the 2022 *Brewster's Next Steps* survey to gauge support for over 65 proposed actions, to which over 2,300 people, broadly representing the community's age and residential status profile, responded. The Committee used broad print and electronic media announcements, email lists, postcards to property owners, and pop-up events at town locations to publicize the survey. A summary of results is available on the Town website.

The survey results were fundamental to drafting the Action Plan. A draft of the Action Plan and an Overview of the LCP were made available to the public during a 21-day public comment period from July 25 to August 12, 2022. Comments and feedback were reviewed carefully by the VPC and revisions were made as appropriate. Brewster's Select Board, Planning Board and Vision Planning Committee held a joint public hearing on the draft LCP in October 2022 prior to advancing a recommended draft to Town Meeting in November 2022.

The LCP vision statement is a product of significant community input: it reflects the shared values of the Brewster community related to, among other things, future growth and development and resource protection in the town. The Town's vision statement also harmonizes with the regional vision articulated in the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan. In particular, the Town's visioning process involved "town center" discussions: identifying existing or potential centers of concentrated activity, development and infrastructure in the town, outside of large, unfragmented, natural resource corridors, that might accommodate expanded future housing and economic opportunities.

The *Brewster's Next Steps* survey queried residents about the possibility of designating or recognizing "town centers". While 20% of survey respondents preferred no designated "town center", the area around Foster Square was identified most frequently (44%) as a potential "town center" (see Figure 1 below). Other frequently mentioned areas were along Rte. 6A/Main Street from Rte. 124 near the Brewster General Store to Ellis Landing Road (25%) and Rte. 6A/Main Street from Underpass Road to Ocean Edge Resort (23%). Respondents would prefer sidewalks, bike lanes/paths, small parks, and small-scale commercial development in these areas. There was strong support for regulations such as architectural design controls, height limitations and landscaping improvements, consistent with maintaining Brewster's small town and historic character. Support for housing, including mixed-use residential use, was moderate. Overall, there was widespread concern about increasing traffic on Rte. 6A/Main Street, including impeding access from residential side streets. Preference for locating commercial and industrial development on Underpass Road or Freemans Way was frequently mentioned in respondent comments.

Discussions around the concept of a “town center” have since revealed confusion as to the meaning or intent of this term, for example, that a center does not necessarily connote the geographic center of town or a ‘downtown’; that there can be more than a single “town center”; or that areas deemed “centers” are more significant or important than other areas not deemed centers. Therefore, going forward, the Plan refers to such areas as “town centers”. For purposes of the Plan, “town centers” is defined as “a distinct geographic area - sized to be walkable but which could range from a single parcel to a neighborhood or district - that attracts people for its concentration of economic, social, civic, recreational and/ or cultural vitality that owes to the mix of uses, development, amenities, infrastructure, activities and services present.

Pie chart here based on the above percentages.

[Brewster LCP Potential Town Centers – Panel 1]

[Brewster LCP Potential Town Centers – Panel 2]

[insert photo of flyer prepared for 2021 survey]

In addition, the Committee partnered with Town Management to organize workshops of Town staff, officials, and key local organizations to review and comment on the draft Action Plan.

In anticipation of the possibility of Cape Cod Commission (CCC) LCP certification, the Town communicated and worked with CCC staff iteratively and collaboratively throughout the development of the LCP, providing draft sections of the LCP for review and comment at various stages:

- CCC staff completed a review of the LCP's goals for consistency with RPP goals and provided feedback to the Vision Planning Committee on ways to align the LCP's goals with RPP goals. A comparison table of RPP goals and LCP goals was prepared to assist in this review.
- CCC staff provided general input and guidance during preparation of the draft LCP on compliance with the CCC's LCP Regulations.
- CCC staff gave a presentation on the Cape Cod Climate Action Plan at a meeting of the Vision Planning Committee in August 2021.
- CCC staff completed reviews of the Building Block summaries and draft Action Plan, and provided recommendations on additional or revised content. These recommendations were reviewed by the Vision Planning Committee and incorporated into the LCP as appropriate.

SECTION 3: BUILDING BLOCKS - EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES (Note: update data/statistics in Fall 2023)

This section contains an overview of existing conditions in Brewster organized by Building Block and based on summary papers that have been prepared for all Building Blocks. Each overview includes background information, recent actions by the Town, and key issues moving forward. The summary papers prepared in 2017 for the original eight Building Blocks of the Vision Plan have been updated to reflect changing conditions and actions that have been recently implemented. In addition, summary papers have been for the new Building Blocks, Solid Waste and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation. The section begins with a description of Brewster today focusing on demographic and land use issues and drawing on the Land Use summary paper.

“Existing conditions” include physical and socioeconomic conditions; existing assets and resources; and the identification of associated concerns, challenges, strengths, and opportunities. Taking stock of these existing conditions assisted the Town in establishing its planning vision, goals, and actions.

Brewster Today

The Town of Brewster is characterized by its small town, rural and historic qualities, with an abundance of natural resources, protected open space and miles of both coastal and freshwater shoreline. About 80 freshwater ponds cover some 1,700 acres.

The majority of developed land within the Town consists of single-family, residential development and small-scale commercial development concentrated along Rte. 6A/Main Street, a nationally designated scenic byway and the largest historic district in the U.S. Additional small-scale commercial areas are located on Underpass Road, and at the Route 137/Millstone Road intersection. The Town also includes an approximately 245-acre industrial district in the southeastern section of Town.

The Town has been committed to the protection of its valuable natural resources for decades. The Town has largely retained its small-town character through its efforts to protect open space and historic resources. According to the Brewster Open Space and Recreation Plan, updated in 2021, the town includes within its boundaries over 2,200 acres of State and non-profit open space and recreational holdings, such as Nickerson State Park, State-acquired Camp Monomoy land, Brewster Conservation Trust lands, Orenda Wildlife Trust lands, and the Cape Cod Rail Trail (CCRT).

Brewster itself has made major open space investments. The Town, through the Conservation Commission, owns approximately 882 acres of permanently conserved land, and about another 1,000 acres of open space held by other entities like the Select Board. The Town has an ongoing program where it formally transfers tax title and other Town-owned land appropriate for open space use to the care and custody of the Brewster Conservation Commission for permanent conservation. Since 2012 alone Brewster has acquired or transferred approximately 200 acres of open space for permanent conservation purposes and has acquired conservation restrictions or easements on another approximately 121 acres.

Historic Development Patterns

Since 1633, Brewster has been home for small business entrepreneurs since the opening of the first grist mill on what is now Stony Brook. Relying on the land and sea, business has always supported the natural setting and rural nature of the town. Perhaps the most notable of Brewster's entrepreneurs were the sea captains. From the 18th to 19th centuries, as many as fifty sea captains lived in Brewster, building stately homes along Rte. 6A/Main Street, adding a sense of elegance to the community. Today, many of these sea captains' homes are still occupied by entrepreneurs. Business continues to support the small-town setting of Brewster by creating services for residents and visitors and at the same time maintaining many important historic buildings and the natural surroundings.

Current Land Use Patterns

The most recent version of the Mass Audubon study, "Losing Ground", Sixth Edition 2020, calculates that 34% of Brewster is permanently conserved, 26% is developed, and 40% remains undeveloped as natural or open land but is not permanently conserved.

****INSERT ZONING FIGURE – ADD KEY TO THE FIGURE**

As stated in the 2022 Brewster Housing Production Plan, nearly 75% of the housing stock in Brewster is in the form of detached single-family homes. Mixed-use development is not currently allowed under the Brewster zoning bylaw, although development in commercial districts is allowed to have an accessory residential unit by special permit.

Cluster residential development and planned residential development (PRD) are only allowed by special permit, and both have significant minimum land area requirements.

There are also 145 properties along Rte. 6A/Main Street where business activity is taking place. Most of these businesses are in the Residential (R-M) zoning district.

[Figure # - Land Use]

Recent Trends

A December 2021 Elementary Schools Master Plan completed for the Town of Brewster indicates that the seasonal population in Brewster, when averaged over a full year, is nearly double the number of full-time residents. The increase in seasonal population places stress, not only on the town's natural resources and recreation facilities, but also on its infrastructure.

Based on 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data of housing market trends compiled by the Cape Cod Commission, the median value for a single-family home in Brewster in 2019 was \$442,000 while the median sales price in July 2022 was \$711,000 for single-family homes and \$455,500 for condominiums (Cape Cod and Islands Association of Realtors- CCIOAR). Under the 2022 HUD-defined Barnstable County Area Median Family Income (\$115,600), a family could affordably purchase a home at a maximum of \$420,579, significantly less than the median single-family home sales price. As of July 2022, there is an inventory of only 15 single-family homes and 2 condominiums for sale in town (CCIOAR). The Census Bureau classifies nearly 44% of all housing units in Brewster as vacant most of the year and held for seasonal or recreational use (ACS data).

Today, there are 15 lodging businesses and one resort on Rt. 6A/Main Street, with all but one in residential zones. In addition, there are 18 eating establishments on Rte. 6A/Main Street, with 75% in residential zones. Numerous other existing businesses are located on Rte. 6A/Main Street. Expansion or change to these businesses require a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Recent Actions by the Town

The Town has adopted strict regulations to protect public drinking water supplies, manage land use and preserve open space within the town by managing land use within Brewster's Zone IIs (drinking water supply areas in East and West Brewster) and Pleasant Bay and Herring River watersheds.

In 2021, the Town purchased a total of 121 acres of Cape Cod Sea Camps property, including the 66-acre Long Pond Property and 55-acre Bay Property that stretches from Rte. 6A/Main Street north to Cape Cod Bay. Acquisition for public use is aligned with community priorities identified in this LCP and resident feedback from other recent strategic planning initiatives. Detailed comprehensive plans for each property will be developed and brought to a future Town Meeting for subsequent voter adoption.

[insert photo of Sea Camps property]

Key Issues Moving Forward

The Town has implemented specific land use controls and protected open space to minimize the impacts of future development on natural resources and protect the character of the community. The LCP also recognizes the need to evaluate policies and zoning bylaws that would support more housing choice. The 2022 *Brewster's Next Steps* survey included questions on potential locations for identification or designation of "town centers" in Brewster. Consideration of appropriate locations for mixed-use and/or additional residential density will be needed in order to meet the town's future housing needs while continuing to meet other community goals of protecting water quality, natural resources, and community character.

The Brewster Chamber of Commerce has cited the need for the Town to support and design vibrant and diverse business and cultural centers that offer more walkable, mixed-use options with affordable living units. However, a change in zoning or an overlay district would be required for mixed-use or to streamline local permitting for expansion or substantial change to businesses along Rte. 6A/Main Street.

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Building Block Summaries

Community Character

Background and Current Status

The Community Character Building Block encompasses both Brewster's physical and social character. Community Character is closely inter-related to several other Vision Building Blocks including Open Space, Local Economy, Housing, and Community Infrastructure. Positive actions on those Building Blocks will also have a positive impact on Community Character.

Physical Character - Brewster has a large collection of significant historic properties, with the great majority located along Rte. 6A/Main Street and Stony Brook Road. The town has two large National Register Historic Districts: one includes historic buildings along Route 6A/Main Street and Lower Road, roughly from Paine's Creek to Sea Pines Drive; the other includes structures along Stony Brook Road in the vicinity of the Grist Mill. Most of Brewster's historic resources are within the Old Kings Highway Historic District, which also includes properties along the town's old roadways including Rte. 6A/Main Street, Lower Road, Stony Brook Road, as well as Satucket Road, Route 137/Long Pond Road, Tubman Road, and several smaller connecting roads. The Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee has authority to review and approve all exterior alterations and demolition proposals. In the early 1900s, as automobile ownership grew, summer tourism became a major economic force and residential construction consisted mostly of summer cottages and summer cottage communities such as Brewster Park, Pineland Park, and Ellis Landing Colony. These cottages are now 75-100 years old, and some are considered of historic value.

The Brewster Historical Commission continues to work with a preservation consultant to document the architecture and history of significant houses built prior to 1925. The four small Village Business zones are located along Rte. 6A/Main Street near Betty's Curve, Underpass Road, Villages Drive, and at the Orleans town line. The larger Commercial zone is centered along Underpass Road. Many of the town's distinctive antique shops, inns, galleries, and other small businesses along Rte. 6A/Main Street are outside of the commercial zones and operate as home occupations within residentially zoned areas.

[Figure 4 – Historic Resources]

All construction along Rte. 6A/Main Street requires review by the Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee. Much of the Commercial (CH) district on Underpass Road is outside the historic district and is primarily governed by Planning Board Site Plan Review and, as applicable, Special Permit review. Certain uses such as multi-family residential, outdoor commercial, and accommodations uses are allowed only in the Commercial district by special permit, which requires specific criteria to be met. Restaurants and drive-through banks are allowed by Special Permit in both the Village Business and the Commercial districts.

The Town has well-developed Site Plan Review standards dealing with, among other things, site design, transportation and access issues for commercial, multi-family and industrial uses. While the Town's current dimensional regulations practically limit building size and scale on most small to medium size lots, they still allow larger buildings on larger lots.

The Town has walkable clusters of commercial development in each of the Village Business zones, but no focused "town center" or downtown. The Town's institutions are located along Rte. 6A/Main Street—the Brewster Ladies Library, Senior Center, Town Hall, and the Eddy Elementary School.

Formula retail businesses are expanding in many communities on the Cape, submitting proposals to expand existing structures or rebuild. In Brewster, Cumberland Farms applied to significantly increase building size and expand the range of products they offer. After considerable public debate, the expansion was approved in 2017, but with fewer gas pumps than originally proposed.

The 2017 Brewster Vision Planning workshops identified the preservation of community character as an important issue, with responses like 'small town feel,' 'historic charm,' 'scenic Rte. 6A,' and the landmark 'Grist Mill Herring Run' appearing in 36% of comments about town "Treasures." Community Character also played a major role in comments relating to the vision for Brewster's future. While community character was primarily interpreted to mean the physical fabric of the community—its buildings, landscapes, and neighborhoods—workshop participants also acknowledged the town's diverse residents, social challenges, and a desire to be more connected with each other as part of the social character.

Social Character - Brewster's population is changing in ways that are similar to the Cape in general. The 2020 US Census showed that Brewster's population has increased by 5% over the past 10 years. The population of residents over 65 was projected to grow from 42% of the population in 2020 to 53% in 2030. By 2022, the 65+ Brewster population has increased to 43% of the population (2022 Town Census). Brewster's high-quality schools are an important factor in attracting young families with diverse backgrounds. This younger population (i.e., age 25-49), many with school age children, currently accounts for 22% of the Town's population (2022 Town Census), already lower than the US Census (2020) projected decrease to 38% in 2030. The US Census also projected that the number of school age children 5-19 would fall from 11% in 2020 to 9% of the population in 2030 but has already decreased to 8% in 2022 (2022 Town Census). Recent Census data also shows while Brewster is predominantly white (91.4%), the Town has seen a significant increase in racial diversity over the past decade with the minority population increasing from 3.3% in 2010 to 8.6% in 2020. (US Census 2010 & 2020)

Housing is critical to support a diverse population, and the Town has been proactive in pursuing affordable housing to address both the needs of older residents as well as focusing on attracting young families, including amendments to the accessory dwelling by-laws to allow greater opportunities for year-round rental options and home ownership. Brewster is also pursuing several projects to expand affordable single-family homes, rental units, and housing for older adults.

Seasonal workers come from a variety of countries and add to the vibrancy of the town. The Town continues to work to find housing for the seasonal workforce, with consideration being given to structures on the Bay Property for this purpose. Brewster also provides a variety of social services to families and individuals in distress. Most of these services are provided through not-for-profit service organizations. The Town has a Human Services Committee which annually funds approximately 15 to 20 local non-profit organizations that assist Brewster residents. The Town also has a good neighbor fund available to residents who income-qualify. The Town offers both a rental assistance program through the Brewster Affordable Housing Trust and Housing Rehabilitation and Child Care Vouchers through a Community Development Block Grant for income eligible residents.

Recent Actions by the Town

As noted in the Open Space and Water Resources summaries, the Town has had a long-standing commitment to purchase open space for its inherent value as well as to protect the town's drinking water and surface water quality. In 2021 the citizens of Brewster overwhelmingly voted to purchase the Cape Cod Sea Camps properties of over 100 acres. The Town is now working with citizens to determine how best to use both parcels.

A 2016 Brewster Council on Aging needs assessment found that the typical older adult wants to stay in Brewster and is aging with sufficient resources and social support. However, there are segments of this population that struggle to age in place. Transportation, caregiving services, and health and wellness programs were seen as priorities. Most older adults think that the current COA building/senior center is inadequate for community needs and supported the creation of a multi-generational community center. This finding mirrors many statements in the 2017 Brewster Vision Planning workshops about the value of a multi-generational community center to meet the needs of Brewster's diverse population and a place that would bring all age groups together.

The Select Board adopted a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) pledge in 2021. The Town has undertaken a DEI report and has received a State Grant to perform a DEI audit and training for municipal staff and officials. The Town will look to engage stakeholders in this important community conversation.

Key Issues Moving Forward

As noted in the summaries for Community Infrastructure and Local Economy, there are several areas in town where maintaining community character is a key issue, including potential "town centers" along Rte. 6A/Main Street, the Bay Property and Long Pond Property, and a potential multigenerational community center. Important to these and all planning considerations, including to changes in zoning bylaws and regulations, is maintaining Brewster's historic and small-town, rural character. To help accomplish this, zoning Site Plan Review and Special Permit criteria could be evaluated and amended to provide enhanced landscape, architecture and building design standards.

[Figure # - Priority Natural Resource Areas]

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Open Space

Background and Current Status

Open Space figured prominently in the 2017 Vision Planning workshops. As a treasure, participants valued protected open space because of its contribution to Brewster's rural character, low density, tranquility, protection for the town's drinking water supply, recreation, and preservation of natural habitat. The single highest scoring action in the 2018 Vision Plan survey was "Identify and protect priority parcels in sensitive natural resources areas, particularly in designated drinking water supply areas". Similarly in the 2022 *Brewster's Next Steps* survey, acquiring land to protect drinking water supply and critical habitat rated among the top scoring actions. Land protection in drinking water supply areas (Zone IIs) has become a major criterion for land acquisition for both the Town of Brewster and Brewster Conservation Trust land acquisition projects.

In addition to the contributions to Brewster's character and recreational opportunities, open space contributes in many ways economically and financially to the town. Forested open space also acts as a carbon sink by capturing and sequestering carbon emissions. In contrast to other Cape towns, Brewster's past open space investments have, in part, allowed the Town to avoid the high cost of sewerage large areas of town in sensitive watersheds.

While Brewster residents and visitors appreciate the rural feel and low-density development, it is important to recognize what is "open space". Many people may perceive much of the undeveloped land in Brewster as permanent open space, but in fact much of it is not formally restricted for such purpose. A study by Mass Audubon in 2020 characterized Brewster as 34% protected open space, 26% developed, and 40% vacant or undeveloped. In comparison to Brewster, 40% of Barnstable County is protected open space according to the Regional Policy Plan. A recent analysis of the conversion of "vacant land" in Brewster from 2013 to 2020 indicated that an equal amount of land has gone from vacant to developed as from vacant to conservation – 158 acres.

The Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan 2021 Update provides a detailed summary of currently protected lands, but a partial list includes: 2,200 acres of state and non-profit protected lands, 1,000 acres of Town owned lands, and another 822 Town-owned acres controlled by the Conservation Commission. The not-for-profit Brewster Conservation Trust owns 636 acres of permanently protected land and an additional 246 acres through conservation restrictions on private land. Orenda Wildlife Land Trust owns another 27 acres, and the Brewster Conservation Commission also has conservation restrictions on a limited number of privately held properties.

The Town's commitment to open space started many years ago with the purchase of over 800 acres in the Punkhorn Parkland in the late 1980s and early 1990s to protect the wellfields in West Brewster. During the same period, the Town also purchased several hundred acres in south-east Brewster to protect wellfields in that part of town. Even though water supply protection has been an important criterion for land acquisition in recent years, only approximately 40% of the "Zone II" (area of draw-down around Town wells) is currently protected.

As a heavily used public park and scenic vista, Drummer Boy Park represents a unique asset in Brewster. In spring 2023, the Town established the Drummer Boy Park Advisory Committee to re-assess the master planning conducted and adopted to date for Drummer Boy Park .

Wing Island is another open space asset cherished by those in town and beyond. The Town has decided not to pursue an elevated boardwalk system to Wing Island as had previously been discussed but instead will pursue more formal recognition of Wing Island as protected for conservation and open space purposes.

Recent Actions by the Town

Brewster's Open Space Committee completed an update of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) in 2021. The Plan identifies the following overarching goals:

1. Protect the town's drinking water supply to meet the needs of residents today and in the future.
2. Provide open space and recreation opportunities that maintain Brewster's rural character and small coastal community identity and support a sustainable local economy as a center for eco-tourism
3. Preserve and enhance habitat diversity and protect marine and fresh surface water resources to maintain their ecological functions and values to the community.
4. Provide a variety of recreation and open space opportunities to promote active and healthy lifestyles for Brewster residents, ensuring equitable access for all users and abilities.
5. Support coordination and communication of regional open space and recreation needs.

Between 2018 and 2020, 13 parcels totaling 133 acres in the drinking water supply areas have been protected, often through a partnership of Town and Brewster Conservation Trust. The Brewster Water Commissioners have also recognized this priority and have created funding within their tariff structure for land protection.

Much has also been accomplished to improve access to open space and recreation resources. The Town expanded the satellite parking lot at Crosby Landing, and a new access linking the Cape Cod Rail Trail at Nickerson State Park to the bayside at Linnell Landing has been designed and permitted. This multi-use trail will provide walking and bike access to a large stretch of state-owned beach. In addition, the Town and the Brewster Conservation Trust have opened up new public trails and published an updated guide to Brewster's walking trails.

Key Issues Moving Forward

Acquiring and managing open space to protect water resources and provide outdoor recreation will continue to be an important goal for the Town and other organizations, such as the Brewster Conservation Trust. Another important consideration is enhancing accessibility to public trails for people with mobility, vision and other challenges or impairments.

The acquisition of the former Cape Cod Sea Camps properties presents enormous possibilities for the expansion of open space and passive and active recreation. The Town has established planning committees for both the Bay and Long Pond Properties, each charged with the development of a comprehensive plan for the respective properties. The planning committees for the properties will consider all potential uses for the properties to develop a comprehensive plan consistent with community needs and interests.

Housing

Background and Current Status

The cost and availability of housing in Brewster was identified as the largest single challenge at the June 2017 Vision Planning Workshops, with an emphasis on how the lack of affordable housing impacts young families. Workshop participants saw housing as key to allowing young families to stay in Brewster, maintaining the diverse community that residents value, and providing the workforce that the local economy needs.

“Affordable Housing” is a term defined under state and federal law and policy meaning housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households, i.e., households earning no more than 80% of the area median income (AMI) for the county. In contrast, “attainable” or “workforce” housing is not a formally defined term. It refers to housing affordable for households whose incomes are too high for “affordable housing” but are priced out of the market i.e., households earning between 80-120% AMI. In either case, households should not be required to spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Affordable housing was identified by workshop participants as the biggest challenge facing the Town. While those with the lowest incomes face the greatest housing need and challenges, the cost and availability of housing, both for year-round rentals and ownership opportunities, is an issue as well for many households who do not qualify for affordable housing, making it challenging for both younger families and older residents to remain in town.

Brewster, like the rest of the Cape, is facing housing issues that are common to a number of resort, tourist-based areas throughout the country that have a significant percentage of seasonally-used housing stock (44% in Brewster). These areas all have high housing costs, in part because the average income of second homeowners is greater than that of year-round residents, which can drive up the cost of housing. Brewster’s housing stock primarily consists of detached single-family homes (75%). Brewster has twice the percentage of residential condominium units (11%) than in Barnstable County towns on average (ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2020). Environmental and infrastructure factors also contribute to the higher cost of housing in Brewster. According to the Cape Cod Commission, one of the affordable housing challenges is the gap between the Cape’s comparatively low wages and high housing costs. While wages have remained relatively stagnant, housing costs have risen dramatically. Brewster’s housing problem is also exacerbated by its aging population, with few young people and limited local workers.

As for affordable housing, the town has 327 units or 6.8% counted as affordable and needs to add 153 affordable units to meet the 10% goal. The 10% metric, however, understates the range of housing needs that exists in town. Currently, 260 of the affordable units are rental units. In 2021, 31% of all rental units in Brewster were deed restricted affordable housing units. This is reflected in the median Brewster rent of \$1,097, which was artificially depressed by the percentage of subsidized housing. The median rent in 2021 was \$1,340, a 22% increase in 2 years.

A challenging housing situation has worsened dramatically since 2017. Intensified with changes associated by the COVID pandemic, the cost of housing has increased along with a sharp decrease in the number of properties for sale. Additionally, there has been a reduction in the number of homes used for year-round rentals. In 2022, the median sales price of a single-family home in Brewster was \$775,000, an increase of 44% over \$540,000 in 2020, and an 99 % increase from the original Housing Summary statistic of \$389,750 in 2015. The affordability gap has also grown tremendously. The 2022 HUD-defined Barnstable County Area Median Family Income (\$115,600) could affordably purchase a home, with current tax and mortgage rates, at a maximum of \$420,579. In terms of ownership, 85% of Brewster year-round households own their own homes,

31% of which are housing-cost burdened (paying over 30% of their income on housing), while 64% of Brewster year-round rental households are housing cost burdened.

Recent Actions by the Town

Over the past six years, a clear pattern has emerged in Brewster's housing response. Town support has resulted in a number of housing initiatives and their corresponding Community Preservation Act (CPA), Town budget, and free cash funding. Creative collaboration, supportive teamwork, and resident involvement have exponentially increased the Town's efforts. Many of the strategies identified in the Town's 2017 Housing Production Plan (HPP) have been implemented. In 2017, the Town hired a part-time housing coordinator with CPA funds to coordinate the remaining strategies identified in that Plan. The Town then created a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, supported with CPA funds and free cash allocations. In 2021, the Select Board adopted a policy to allocate 50% of the forecasted new short-term rental revenue to the Housing Trust. In 2017, Ocean Edge Resort received a special permit to create seasonal workforce housing on their property. The Housing Coordinator role has since been expanded to support all housing initiatives in the Town, including providing day-to-day resident support with housing questions. In recognition of the growing housing challenges and needs in the community, a part-time housing assistant position has been created and funded beginning FY24.

In 2018, Town Meeting amended the zoning bylaw with new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions. ADUs are a way to utilize current infrastructure, assist homeowners, and create environmentally friendly housing. Approximately 16 accessory residential units, which includes ADUs, have been permitted since 2018.

The Town has initiatives to both preserve housing and support housing without new construction. In 2021, along with Dennis and Wellfleet, Brewster was part of a \$1.3-million-dollar regional Housing Rehabilitation and Childcare Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). As the lead community, Brewster was awarded another \$1.3-million-dollar regional CDBG grant to continue the program in 2022. In response to the high price of rental housing and impact of COVID pandemic on workers, the Housing Trust created a rental assistance program funded with a CPA grant and managed by Housing Assistance Corporation. The Town also continues to operate an affordable home ownership buydown program funded through the CPA.

Partnerships with non-profit organizations and effectively using Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permits were additional strategies in the HPP. In 2018, the Town used CPA funds to purchase an access parcel and officially designated the 16 acres of Town-owned land off Millstone Road for community housing. Upon the recommendation of the Brewster Housing Trust, the Select Board accepted a proposal to build a compact grouping of 45 energy efficient affordable rental apartments which leaves most of the property untouched. Partnerships with non-profits and effectively using Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permits were additional strategies in the Housing Production Plan (HPP) that have been pursued. Brewster Woods, comprised of thirty affordable rental apartments for those in the low to moderate income bracket on Housing Authority land off Brewster Road, opened in February 2023. Elevation Financial, working in partnership with the Town, redeveloped the former vacant Wingate Rehabilitation Center into Serenity at Brewster with 132 apartments for people aged 55 and over. Construction was completed in July 2022. At Serenity, 20% of the units are deed restricted affordable for households up to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

In 2022 Brewster completed an update to its 2017 Housing Production Plan (HPP). This plan assesses the community's housing needs, sets goals, and guides the implementation of Brewster's Housing Program over the next five years. The HPP aims to produce 24 units of affordable housing a year as Brewster works towards the state mandated 10% affordable year-round housing stock. Brewster's 2017 HPP met this production goal twice

and was so certified by the Commonwealth. Funded with a Community Preservation Act grant, the 2022 HPP was prepared by Barrett Planning Group with a robust outreach process led by the Housing Partnership. The Select and Planning Boards approved the HPP update in July 2022; state approval followed in August 2022

Key Issues Moving Forward

In the current housing market, finding year-round attainable and seasonal workforce housing has become more challenging. There is no single solution that will provide all the needed housing options for our residents and workforce. While the unanticipated pandemic has shown how housing intertwines with physical, economic, and community health, the 2021 Cape Cod Sea Camps purchase demonstrates the Town's ability to mobilize around a common goal. The updated HPP will help the Town better understand the impacts of the pandemic, reassess the housing needs, and retool strategies for the next five years. A summary of the 2022 HPP is provided in Section 7. The lack of a centralized or smaller scale wastewater treatment infrastructure limits the development potential of available land. Rehabilitation and support programs continue to be needed to both create and preserve housing.

Education is a key part of both understanding and addressing housing challenges. Opportunities ahead for increasing housing options include expanded collaboration with Town and community entities, as well as an ongoing commitment to funding. Additional possibilities exist for joint work with conservation and environmental groups as well as businesses and the Chamber of Commerce. Finally, zoning remains an area of potential housing opportunity, including reassessing the current ADU bylaw provisions.

Local Economy

Background and Current Status

The 2017 Vision Planning workshops defined a sustainable local economy as one that builds on Brewster's natural and human assets, addresses the needs of small businesses, and provides year-round employment for Brewster's young families. Specifically, the workshop participants wanted to see:

- A greater focus on building a “green economy” based on the town's natural beauty and resources
- An economy that fosters the growth of small business that are compatible with the town's character; and
- Growth of a more sustainable year-round economy that encourages small businesses and better supports Brewster's workforce.

Regional Economy - According to the 2019 Cape Cod Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the dominant industries in the region are related to Cape Cod's seasonal economy and retiree population: 17% in healthcare, 16% in accommodations and food services, and 16% in retail trade (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017 ES-202 data via the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi_es_a.asp). Just under a quarter of jobs on Cape Cod are in emerging industry sectors including creative economy sectors, financial and information sectors, and professional services and technical services sectors, with wages around or above the average for the region (Cape Cod Housing Market Analysis. 2017. www.capecodcommission.org/housing).

Based on the 2017 Cape Cod Housing Market Analysis, average wages in all of the top seven Cape Cod sectors—accommodation and food services, retail trade, healthcare, professional and technical services, construction, local government, and administrative/waste services are below the amount of household income per year required to afford a median priced house in the region. Only the highest paid employees within the county's major employment categories were able to afford owning a house in 2015 (Cape Cod Housing Market Analysis. 2017.

www.capecodcommission.org/housing). Household income has not kept up with rising costs of homeownership or rental housing on Cape Cod, an issue that will be greatly exacerbated given the forecasted trends in population and employment,

Local Economy - According to the 2019 CEDS, Brewster's top three employment sectors are in education and health services (39%), leisure and hospitality (22%), and construction (9%). Based on the Cape Cod Commission's Data Cape Cod portal, Brewster's 2019 median household income was \$75,321. The unemployment rate in 2019 was 2.9% with average wages at \$44,979. Forty-six percent of Brewster's workforce was employed in management, professional, and related industries, in comparison with the County at 36.7%. Brewster had a total of 314 business establishments with average wages of \$44,998. The majority (68.5%) of these establishments employed 1–4 employees.

Local Demographics - Brewster, like much of Cape Cod, is populated by a mixture of working families, retirees, summer residents, and visitors. Brewster's median age is 54.3 years, compared to 53.3 for Barnstable County as a whole. In 2022, Brewster's population is 9,716 (2022 Town Census, Town Clerk, 8/15/2022) with a total of 8,243 housing units. As noted in the Land Use section, Brewster has one of the highest percentages of total units that remain vacant for seasonal or recreational use at 46% in 2022, compared to 42% for Barnstable County as a whole. Forty-three percent of the year-round residents in Brewster are over 65 years old. With many adults now working up to age 70, the working age population (between 25-70 years old) accounts for 55% of the total population.

Brewster has many defining elements that make it an attractive place for retirees, seasonal residents, and visitors as well as the working residents that support them. Like the rest of Cape Cod, the business and job mix in town is heavily influenced by the non-working populations. Economic growth and new opportunities depend in-part on bringing resources/money from outside the area into the area, which is what retirees, second-home owners, and tourists do for the region. Defining Brewster as a place, and investing in the elements that define that place, is essential to building a strong local economy.

Recognizing that much of Brewster's economy is based on its natural assets, the Chamber of Commerce's Sustainability Strategy promotes Brewster as an eco-tourism center and builds on "green" opportunities such as recycling and biking. As noted in the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation section, the Town has taken important steps in creating many elements of a green economy through its policies and initiatives.

Recent Actions by the Town

Brewster Select Board Strategic Planning has included actions under the Local Economy Building Block to complete and launch an electronic permitting platform and guide to doing business in Brewster to assist residents, contractors, and businesses in navigating local permitting processes. In 2022, the Town commenced electronic permitting through the OpenGov platform. In addition, the Town acquisition of the Cape Cod Sea Camps properties gives the Town control over future land uses for these key assets and associated economic development opportunities.

Key Issues Moving Forward

Brewster has an opportunity to review and revise local bylaws and investment strategies to meet its economic and community goals. With a clear vision for a sustainable economy, the Town can align its public policies, public investments, and private efforts to build on and protect its assets. One of the approaches the Town could take to support its economy and local businesses, while also supporting Community Character, is considering, in appropriate areas, zoning that focuses more on the physical form rather than on specific uses.

Further evolution of "town centers," with the necessary infrastructure, services, and mix of uses, can help to maintain Brewster's community character, protect natural resources, and open space, and provide opportunities for local businesses that provide for residents and visitors. Planned or proposed public facilities, including a multigenerational community center, will also play a key role in supporting "town center" planning.

Brewster's economic challenges include the high cost of housing, low wages, and funding for appropriate infrastructure, including green infrastructure investments to protect natural resources. Addressing Brewster's housing needs, including year-round and seasonal workforce housing, will require multiple strategies including implementation of the updated 2022 HPP. The lack of existing centralized or smaller scale wastewater treatment limits the development potential of available land and will require creative solutions by the Town to focus physical infrastructure in locations where it can be supported without compromising natural resources or community character.

[Economy Graphic?]

[Figure #- Coastal Resources]

Coastal Management

Background and Current Status

Brewster's residents recognize the importance of the town's coastal resources to both residents and visitors. They provide access to a range of summer and year-round activities, including swimming, boating, commercial and recreational shell fishing, walking on the flats, watching sunsets, and other recreational activities. In the 2017 Vision Planning workshops, the town's beaches were identified as the second most important treasure, and directly linked to the highest ranked treasure, the overall character of the town. Town residents want to preserve and expand access to the shoreline while also preserving and protecting the natural resources that make the coast so special.

The Town's public access points are threatened by storms, which can damage both the beaches and their access points, and by the increasing impacts of climate change. Nor'easters have damaged parking areas and eroded the coastal dunes and beaches in some of these locations, prompting improvements to Paine's Creek, Ellis Landing, and Breakwater Landing facilities over the last decade. Concerns over repetitive storm damage and planning for these improvements led to the creation of the Brewster Coastal Advisory Group and the development of the September 2016 Coastal Adaptation Strategy to address future management of Brewster's shoreline. The Strategy presumes a sea level rise of one foot in 20 years.

Building on the Coastal Adaptation Strategy, the Brewster Coastal Committee completed the Brewster Coastal Resource Management Plan (CRMP). Phase I has specific recommendations on improving and protecting coastal access, incorporating the guiding principles, and employing a robust public involvement process to help refine specific plans. The Brewster Natural Resources Advisory Commission, established in 2021, is charged with overseeing the implementation of the CRMP.

The Town owns 11 coastal beaches or landings on Cape Cod Bay, all with public parking areas, including the resident-only First Light Beach. Figure 1 shows the 7 miles of Brewster shoreline.

[insert graphic of beaches]

From an access standpoint, the Town maintains approximately 349 parking spots across all coastal beaches and landings and 50 interim spaces at First Light Beach, including dedicated handicap parking spaces and bike racks and other facilities during the summer months. Unfortunately, during summer peak season, demand can be greater than the available access, and additional parking opportunities are limited. The beaches and their access points are vulnerable to erosion from coastal storms and require frequent maintenance and investment by the Town. Impacts to the landings are expected to increase over time due to rising sea levels and the potential for stronger, more frequent storms. In response, the Town is adapting to recurring and increasing erosion and storm damage through retreat, such as at the Paine's Creek, Ellis, and Breakwater Landings where pavement was moved further from the ocean edge.

In February 2022, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released its Sea Level Rise Technical Report. Based on NOAA's analysis, the Town's planning scenario of 1 foot rise in sea level in 20 years for Brewster's coastline is quite possible. Extensive sections of Brewster's seven miles of coast have historically and recently been exposed to storm surge impacts, including dune wash over, flooding, and significant erosion. Based on the Center for Coastal Studies' 2015 Century Scale Sediment Budget, it is not clear if the tidal flats will remain exposed at low tide under future sea level rise scenarios. Lacking the buffering capacity of the tidal flats, Brewster's beaches and dunes would likely experience significant erosion and storm surge during serious weather events.

Recent Actions by the Town

As noted in the Background section, the Town developed a consensus-based coastal adaptation strategy to identify priorities and principles for future action. Survey results from the 2016 Coastal Adaptation Strategy confirmed broad support for the Brewster's coastal resources among all age groups and resident status.

The Town has added 80 parking spaces (for total of 138 spaces) for access to Crosby Landing Beach. The Town replaced an unsafe footbridge over the Freeman's Pond creek to facilitate access to the large Town-owned beach located between Mant's Landing and Paines Creek. In 2021, the Town replaced the culvert under Crosby Lane, accompanied by Low Impact Design-type stormwater management improvements, with the goals of increasing tidal flow to salt marsh, improving water quality, and making the road infrastructure more resilient to the effects of climate change, while preserving a corridor for wildlife passage. Also in 2021, the Town purchased the former Cape Cod Sea Camps bayside property, with 800 feet of shoreline that extends to the Spruce Hill beach. Public access to this beach for residents was established in 2022 along with an interim parking area.

The Town also completed a Hazard Mitigation Plan Update in 2021 that was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As a result, the Town is eligible for funding under FEMA guidelines for mitigation measures that reduce disaster losses.

In November 2021, Brewster Town Meeting approved a new stormwater bylaw to better manage parcel-specific stormwater changes associated with development and to meet the Town's "MS4" permit requirements under state and federal law. At this same Town Meeting, voters approved changes to the town's floodplain district incorporating state planning guidance.

The Town, jointly with Dennis and Orleans, is also the beneficiary of Coastal Resilience grant in 2022 from the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management office to develop a comprehensive shoreline management plan and database for the 14.5-mile shoreline between Bass Hole and Rock Harbor for the purpose of addressing the impacts of climate change. A potential follow-up grant could fund a public data portal and mapping for the data collected.

Key Issues Moving Forward

Existing and future coastal and climate processes indicate that Brewster's coastal resources are under threat. The Town is faced with the challenge of accommodating access to its coastal resources that has been impacted and could potentially be reduced by coastal and climate processes. Ongoing development and redevelopment of existing properties along the shoreline is also a concern.

With the projected significant acceleration of sea level rise in the next 30 years, it is not clear if Brewster's tidal flats will remain exposed at low tide under future sea level rise scenarios. Lacking the buffering capacity of the tidal flats, Brewster's beaches and dunes would likely experience significant erosion and storm surge during serious weather events. The Town could consider updating the 2015 Century Scale Sediment Budget (prepared by the Provincetown center for Coastal Studies) in collaboration with Dennis, Orleans, and Eastham. Brewster also participated in a 2021 effort by the Cape Cod Commission to review current land use regulations and to develop a model coastal resiliency by-law.

The Town is heavily involved in maintaining and increasing access to existing beach facilities. Impacts to the landings are expected to increase over time due to rising sea levels and the potential for stronger, more frequent storms. A number of these landings are important for access to private beaches and the Town's aquaculture sites as well as for emergency vehicles.

[Figure # - Water Resources]

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Water Resources

Background and Current Status

Brewster residents value the town's water resources and recognize that they are an integral part of the community's character. In the 2017 Brewster Vision Planning workshops, residents especially identified Brewster's freshwater ponds as important assets to the town for their aesthetic and recreational values. Residents also recognized the importance of clean drinking water and the relationships between protecting open space and preserving water quality throughout the town.

Over the last 40 years, the Town has made a concerted effort to protect groundwater quality. The Town has purchased significant areas of open space to protect the Town's ponds and drinking water, particularly in the zones of contribution to its six municipal wells. The Town has also developed land use management policies and regulations to prevent development activities from harming water resources, including new water quality performance standards in the Town's Water Quality Review Bylaw.

In 2015, the Town completed an Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (IWRMP). A 2022 IWRMP update indicates that Brewster's drinking water is consistently excellent and has won two awards from the New England Water Works Association as the best tasting water in New England. More than forty percent of the land area that contributes water to the Town's drinking water wells is protected open space. Nitrogen concentrations in the Town's water supplies are consistently below 1.0 mg/L, well below the federal standard of 10 mg/L. This is a direct result of the limited development in the vicinity of the wells. However, developed land uses (housing, industrial uses) without proper management may threaten the quality of drinking water.

There are about 80 freshwater ponds in Brewster. Based on the last summary of pond water data from 2009 developed by the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology along with the Cape Cod Commission (SMAST and CCC, September 2009), five of these ponds have excellent water quality while approximately 15 are classified as impaired due to nutrient inputs, predominantly phosphorus, which contribute to excess algae growth in the ponds. Phosphorus enters the ponds from septic systems, stormwater runoff, and fertilizers applied to lawns and gardens.

Portions of Brewster lie within the watersheds to Pleasant Bay and Herring River. Nitrogen inputs from septic systems, stormwater, and fertilizers within Brewster have contributed to water quality impairments in these estuaries. While Brewster only has limited access to these coastal resources, the Town has an obligation to reduce nitrogen inputs to support the restoration of the estuaries.

Recent Actions by the Town

The Town continues to actively manage its water resources. Collaboration with the Brewster Conservation Trust and the Brewster Ponds Coalition expands the Town's ability to manage and protect its water resources. Specific actions over the last five years related to the implementation of the IWRMP and other Town initiatives are summarized below:

The Town, in collaboration with the Brewster Conservation Trust, continues to actively pursue open space preservation in the wellhead protection areas that contribute water to the Town's wells. Between 2018 and 2020, an additional 113 acres of land was preserved to further protect drinking water quality. In addition, the Town is monitoring drinking water quality for per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) that have been found

in other drinking water systems on Cape Cod and are associated with a variety of sources, including firefighting foams, food packaging, skin care and clothing products. To date, none of the PFAS compounds have been detected in water pumped from the Town's water supply wells.

In 2016, the Town developed a Water Resource Atlas for 43 of the freshwater ponds in Brewster. The atlas highlights the sensitive areas around each pond, including the surface watershed, the groundwater recharge area to each pond, and the septic buffer around each pond. The atlas allows residents to understand the land use around each pond that affects water quality.

The Mill Ponds Management Plan developed by SMAST (November 2014) provided an overall strategy for the restoration of Walker's Pond, Upper Mill Pond, and Lower Mill Pond, including recommendations for weed harvesting in Walker's Pond and an alum treatment in Upper Mill Pond to trap phosphorus in the sediments on the pond bottom, that were implemented by the Town. These measures are helping to restore water quality in both Upper and Lower Mill Ponds.

Brewster continues to work with Orleans, Chatham, and Harwich to implement the Pleasant Bay Watershed Permit and reduce its proportionate share of nitrogen to Pleasant Bay, which was the first permit of its type in the Commonwealth. A study, begun in August 2021, is evaluating fertilizer application leaching rates at the Captains Golf Course to inform nitrogen management decisions.

In November 2021, the Town adopted a stormwater bylaw that will improve how stormwater is managed across Brewster. The bylaw will help ensure that stormwater is treated prior to discharge, using best management practices to treat for nutrients and other pollutants that could drain into nearby surface waters or groundwater. It also assists the Town in maintaining compliance with MS4 permit requirements under the Federal Clean Water Act. Regulations and guidance documents that explain how the bylaw will be implemented have been adopted and promulgated by the Town.

In 2023, consistent with the Select Board's strategic plan, the Town established a Water Resources Task Force, a technical working group made up of Town staff and certain other ex officio members, which aims to coordinate the multi-pronged, water resources work in the town.

Key Issues Moving Forward

Effective July 7, 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Regulations has promulgated new regulations for Watershed Permits and amended "Title 5" wastewater regulations to address nitrogen-impaired estuaries and embayments on Cape Cod. For Brewster, these watersheds are Pleasant Bay, Herring River, Bass River and Swan Pond River. Brewster already shares a Watershed Permit from DEP with Harwich, Chatham and Orleans for the Pleasant Bay watershed (a first-of-its-kind permit in the Commonwealth, which is referenced in and serves as a model for other Cape Communities under the new Watershed Permit regulations). The Town is actively considering long-term funding strategies, including through participation in the Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative.

In addition to the low-cost nitrogen management practices being adopted at the Captain's Golf Course to lower the nitrogen loads, the Pleasant Bay Watershed Permit requires that any remaining reductions required for existing loads could be met through combined solutions such as neighborhood-scaled wastewater treatment facilities, the use of individual nitrogen reducing onsite system treatment systems, or nitrogen trading with other watershed towns. Planning for future load management could involve other initiatives like regulatory changes or open space acquisition. Cost could be reduced based on the results of the golf course fertilizer leaching rate study which will be completed in 2023. The Pleasant Bay Watershed Permit also requires that the Town address nitrogen inputs from future development in the watershed. Options to manage

future nitrogen inputs include amendments to Town bylaws or regulations. For the Herring River watershed, there is no need to reduce the current nitrogen inputs to meet the total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) established in the watershed under state and federal law, but future inputs from increased development will need to be managed.

The Town continues to monitor drinking water quality for per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) that have been found in other drinking water systems on Cape Cod and could begin development of a response and remediation plan for any future detections.

The Town is currently working to develop an updated summary of water quality in the major ponds in Brewster, utilizing the annual monitoring data that has been collected since the last summary report in 2009. In 2016, the Town, through Board of Health Regulations, established a minimum 300' septic leaching system setback from ponds. The Town could consider further policies and regulations related to pond setbacks in the future. The Town could also consider pilot programs for innovative alternative septic system technologies that treat for phosphorus in contributing areas around ponds.

Governance

Background and Current Status

In 2016, the Government Study Committee completed its 2-year review of the Town's organizational structure, duties and responsibilities of various Boards and Departments, and overall methods of communication. The Committee's final report identified recommendations for the Town to consider, ranging from the form of governance to the number of boards and committees with overlapping charges.

Primary themes that emerged from the 2017 Vision Planning workshops relative to Governance included:

- A desire for government to be more transparent and customer-service oriented, and to further embrace technology to better communicate and engage citizens in town-wide decision-making processes.
- A highly valued school system that is treasured by existing residents and one that attracts people to Brewster; and
- An opportunity to more proactively engage both Brewster's skilled retiree population and general citizens of every age in Town affairs.

Recent Actions by the Town

The Town established a Charter Committee in 2019 to address the structure and powers of Brewster town government. The Charter was approved by the Select Board, then by Town Meeting vote in Spring 2021 followed by state approval in January 2023.

The Select Board develops an annual Strategic Plan with goals linked to the Vision Plan Building Blocks/Goals to keep work aligned with the Vision Plan. The Plan's goals inform the Town's ongoing and upcoming policy and operational initiatives. A monitoring matrix with general timeline, priorities, responsible parties, and key stakeholders for each goal facilitates accountability and tracking of progress. Significant progress has been made on many priorities identified in the Vision Plan as a result of this coordinated effort. The Strategic Plan will similarly continue to incorporate and implement the LCP Action Plan.

Several initiatives have been undertaken to expand and improve communication with residents about Town initiatives, plans and progress.

Town Website - The Town has long maintained a website where current information is posted by Department, as well as developed bulletin boards, informational brochures, and an email list with more than 1000 current subscribers. The Town has also created dedicated webpages such as for the Bay and Pond Planning Committees established for the former Cape Cod Sea Camp properties where interested persons can learn about meetings, specific projects, or planning status. In response to public input, a more user-friendly website was designed and developed, with launch in March 2023.

Expanded Use of Media and Social Media - The Town requires all Board and Committee meetings to be presented live and/or recorded for viewing on Government Channel 18 and online in an effort to increase transparency and better inform the public of governance processes and decisions. The Town made the BGTV media resources available by downloading the "Cablecast" app. Town livestream and media are now available on various platforms. Announcements are frequently posted on the Town's home page with links to recorded board and committee meetings and posted on social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter. Beginning with the start of the COVID pandemic in 2020, the online meeting platform ZOOM was used initially for purposes of remote, and now hybrid, board and committee meeting participation that is open

to the public for viewing and participation as appropriate. Viewing is either live or by recording. The option of in-person attendance at these meetings was reinstated in March 2023. In order to reach a wider group of older residents, the Council on Aging and Brewster Ladies Library expanded its online offerings through taped presentations on BGTV and LCTV, continuing after in-person participation was resumed.

Other Online Communication Tools - Starting with FY23, the Town began publishing the annual budget in a user-friendly online format. The OpenGov platform provides a dynamic, visual representation of Town finances for citizens to better understand where Town funds are being spent. Residents can view budget details by department as well as current year accomplishments and goals for the coming year. The capital planning process transitioned to this platform in FY2023. Use of this platform is intended to enhance transparency and public engagement.

Citizens Forums - The opportunity for residents to raise issues and make announcements at many Town Committee meetings was introduced through inclusion of a “Citizens Forum” item on many standing meeting agendas. While the Committees are unable to respond to public comment, issues raised can be placed on future agendas for further discussion with the public. Most Town Committees now have an associated email address so that residents can provide comments and questions directly to a Committee.

Use of Public Forums - To improve communication and community engagement around important issues and projects, Town Management regularly hosts public forums. The purpose of these sessions is two-fold: first, to present information and/or progress reports, for example, providing overviews of warrant articles prior to Town Meeting or project updates on public works efforts. The second purpose is to provide an avenue for the public to give their input and insight on those same matters for consideration and incorporation moving forward. Similar informational sessions are provided through other community groups like the Brewster Chamber of Commerce and League of Women Voters.

Other Efforts - The vast majority of Town Committees and Boards are staffed by volunteers. Volunteers also help make Town Department programs very successful. The Select Board has implemented procedures for Standing Committee appointments to increase volunteerism. A future “Citizens Leadership Academy” is planned to support volunteer recruitment and enhance volunteer contributions. Managing volunteer programs requires staff resources. A “Serve Your Community” form to recruit new volunteers is available on the Town website and maintained by individual Town Departments and Committees, but there is no central database of volunteers. A central database of volunteers would offer many advantages.

The Town has launched several initiatives to strengthen the customer service approach to Town services, including staff training in customer service, the 2021 adoption of a pledge and training for Town officials to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion for all. This is reinforced through Town Manager quarterly meetings with staff and monthly meetings with Department heads. Town Management and the Brewster Chamber of Commerce cohost biannual meetings with local business owners. Town Management and the Select Board also started holding public office hours in 2023.

The Town launched an electronic permitting platform to replace its paper-based applications for Building, Health, and Planning Departments. Online applications for beach, recycling, and shellfish permits have been implemented along with the FY23 use of license plate reader technology. To facilitate resident or business owner communication with the appropriate Department, a seasonal, volunteer Town Hall “Greeter” position was instituted in 2019. After being discontinued due to the pandemic, the volunteer position was reinstated in 2022. The Town runs a robust Senior and Veteran’s Volunteer work-off program which both assists residents with their tax bill and provides volunteers throughout Town departments.

Key Issues Moving Forward

While the Town has made substantial progress since adoption of the 2018 Vision Plan, the Town is committed to further enhance communication, transparency, and customer service, and continue to identify and pursue the most effective methods for engaging residents of all ages. The Town is preparing to embark on the development of a “Communication Plan,” aimed at dealing with how Town Government can best communicate and share information with residents.

Community Infrastructure

Background and Current Status

The term “community infrastructure” is meant to encompass the variety of physical infrastructure and facilities that the Town and other community organizations provide for public purposes. Comments received in the June 2017 Vision Planning workshops demonstrated the considerable value of community infrastructure for recreation, public gatherings, and alternative transportation. The most frequently mentioned infrastructure need was for a multigenerational community center combined with a new location for the Council on Aging. Bike trails and sidewalks for recreation and as a means of alternative transportation around town were the second most frequently mentioned infrastructure need. A survey of Eddy School students also identified the need for active recreation sites such as skateboard parks and swimming pools.

Community Infrastructure supports many of the other Building Blocks, particularly Community Character, Local Economy, and Coastal Management. This section will focus on the issues of a potential multigenerational community center, bike and pedestrian ways, and active recreation as high priorities.

A variety of facilities are currently used for public meetings and gatherings, including the Ladies Library, Brewster Baptist Church, Council on Aging, and Eddy and Stony Brook Elementary Schools. Town Hall is used primarily for official board and committee meetings. There is no multi-purpose facility which allows a variety of uses and interactions for all generations.

The Cape Cod Rail Trail (CCRT) stretches 7 miles from south central Brewster to the northeast line with Orleans, connecting to the entire 25 miles of paved bike/pedestrian trail. Maintained by the Commonwealth’s Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the CCRT is one of the most actively used recreational facilities in Brewster and serves as a centerpiece of Brewster’s “green economy.” In the summer, it also serves as a way for visitors and summer workers to get around the town. A new access linking the CCRT at Nickerson State Park to the bayside at Linnell Landing has been designed and permitted, but funding sources are yet to be determined. DCR also maintains the numerous bike and hiking trails in Nickerson State Park. There are 7 miles of sidewalks along Rt. 6A/Main Street from Nickerson State Park to Stony Brook Road.

Among other projects, re-paving of Underpass and Snow Roads also extended sidewalks and created narrow bike lanes. Millstone Road design work also includes pedestrian and bike improvements. The Town has designed proposed improvements from Rte.137 at Rte. 6A/Main Street to the intersection of Rte. 124, including re-surfacing, drainage improvements and accommodations for bike and pedestrian traffic. The main challenge to expanding bike and pedestrian ways is the narrow width of Brewster’s roads and the extent of wetlands. Speed limits also dictate design standards on major roads and require separation of vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists. Creating public access on Brewster’s private roads or pursuing local transportation projects within State road layouts can also be a challenge. The majority of roads in Brewster are private.

[Figure # - Transportation Resources]

Town facilities for active recreation are spread out throughout the town, including baseball and athletic fields, community tennis and pickleball courts, and playgrounds are located at Drummer Boy Park, the Eddy Elementary School, and Stony Brook Elementary School. Captain's Golf Course is a significant Town-owned community recreational facility and a visitor attraction with public meeting space.

Recent Actions by the Town

A 2021 School Consolidation Study proposed three options for consolidation of the Eddy and Stony Brook Elementary Schools and housed at an expanded Stony Brook School. This would make the Eddy School available for repurposing. Further action will be determined by the School Committee. As of 2023, in light of continued stable enrollment, the School Committee voted to table the discussion of consolidation until enrollment levels necessitate a change. The recent purchase of the former Cape Cod Sea Camps properties, particularly the Bay Property on Rte. 6A/ Main Street, offers significant potential as a location for a multigenerational community center, as well as beach access and a variety of recreation activities. The Town established Planning Committees for both the Bay and Long Pond Properties at the end of 2021 to develop comprehensive plans. A consultant team was hired in 2022 and the public engagement process to inform long-term planning began in the Spring of 2023. In the interim, the Recreation Department has been using the Bay Property for a number of programs, First Light Beach opened to residents in 2022, and the Brewster Community Pool opened in June 2023.

The Town updates and implements a Pavement Management Plan (PMP) on a regular basis to prioritize funding for improvements to Town roadways including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. As supported by the PMP, in Spring 2023, the Town received \$186,000 in Winter Recovery Assistance Program (WRAP) funds to resurface Foster and Breakwater Roads to ensure safe usage by vehicle, cycle, and foot travelers, which was completed in April 2023. Additionally, the Town coordinated with the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) to add a bus stop at the newly-constructed Brewster Woods housing complex on Brewster Road in FY23.

A 2016 report prepared by the Brewster Bikeways Committee identifies alternative biking routes for transportation and recreation, proposes safety improvements, and recommends public education measures. In 2017, Town Meeting approved \$100,000 in CPA funds for the installation of warning lights at the four Cape Cod Rail Trail (CCRT) crossings in town to enhance safety at the crossings. The Town also completed a Beach Access strategy, which includes expanding bike and pedestrian access to Town landings as a way to reduce the need for more beachfront parking. A CCRT spur from Nickerson State Park to Cape Cod Bay is also planned to expand bike and pedestrian access to the beach.

In January 2020, the Select Board approved a Complete Streets Policy to accommodate all users by creating a context-sensitive roadway network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. The Policy directs decision-makers to consistently plan, design, construct, and maintain roadways to accommodate all anticipated users. Private ways may be exempted from this requirement upon approval by the Select Board with consultation from appropriate Town Departments.

An updated Master Plan for Drummer Boy Park was approved by Town Meeting in Fall 2021. In Fall 2022, Town Meeting voted to remand the Plan back to committee for further study rather than move forward with its implementation, due in large part to concerns over a potential elevated boardwalk to Wing Island referred to in that plan's appendix. The Select Board approved the charge for the new Drummer Boy Park Advisory Committee in March 2023. Member selection for that Committee is expected to conclude in June 2023. It's anticipated that this newly reconstituted committee will report to Town Meeting in Spring 2024. Town Meeting also approved funds to improve accessibility at the Freemans Way fields. As noted elsewhere in the LCP, the Bay and Pond Properties represent a significant opportunity for active recreation facilities, and the Recreation Department is making use of existing fields and facilities for interim programming.

Key Issues Moving Forward

Priority community facilities and infrastructure needs for the coming years include reevaluation of the Master Plan for Drummer Boy Park; future consideration of consolidation of the Eddy and Stony Brook Elementary Schools; and identification of a location for a multi-generational community center. The Bay and Pond Properties offers a unique opportunity for the Town to consider a variety of potential uses for the property to meet multiple Town needs.

Continued expansion of bike and pedestrian trails and paths to provide alternatives to automobile travel as well as recreational opportunities for residents and visitors is a key component of Brewster's vision and goals. The Town will continue to consider the Complete Streets design as appropriate in future repaving projects.

Solid Waste Management

Background and Current Status

Solid waste management is a critical activity designed to protect human health and the environment while providing a service at a reasonable cost and supporting the economy. Many municipalities, including Brewster, have assumed this important management role by providing either a transfer station or curbside collection. New regulations adopted at the state level resulted in the Town initiating the lengthy process of closing its landfill. The current transfer station building was built in 1988 and designed for trash hauling.

The SEMASS Partnership Agreement signed in 1985 by the Town of Brewster with other Cape Towns reduced the amount of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to trash disposal while generating electricity. The initial 30-year contracts required that all waste be delivered to SEMASS either via the “trash train” or by direct haul. The SEMASS Partnership Agreement was originally due to expire in 2015. The SEMASS facility was constructed, owned, and operated by Energy Answers Corporation until it was acquired by Covanta in 2008.

In 1990, the MassDEP introduced waste bans on many recyclable items as well as those containing toxic materials. Once introduced, the Town began its recycling program in earnest, while continuing to send its residual, non-recyclable waste, to SEMASS for energy production. In parallel with negotiations with SEMASS for a new agreement in 2010, the Recycling Commission began discussing ways to reduce how much of Brewster’s waste was sent to SEMASS. The new contract negotiated by the Town and effective January 01, 2011, allowed for any legitimate waste reduction, reuse, or recycling program to be implemented with no penalty. The Town chose to renegotiate 5 years early to keep future tip fees in check by providing stable, below market rates until 2030. In addition, commercial waste haulers were prohibited from using the transfer station effective January 1, 2011.

Recent Actions by the Town

The Town implemented Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) in 2013 as a means of increasing recycling and decreasing the volume of trash for disposal and re-branded the transfer station to the Brewster Recycling Center. During the first full year, the PAYT program resulted in a 47% reduction in waste for transport to SEMASS for energy recovery and an increase of 26% recycling. Since the introduction of PAYT, the Town has continued to derive benefit from the program, despite COVID and the increase in the Town’s population.

The Town has added organics recycling, to help decrease the amount of material that is sent off-site for combustion, and separation of newsprint, cardboard and glass to save money and better manage these materials. Collections for e-waste, hazardous waste, mattresses, and yard waste continue to be successful and desired by permit users. The Swap Shop rules were re-drafted, resulting in more materials being diverted from Brewster’s waste stream. Waste practices at all Town offices and facilities were evaluated, and a recycling program was established at all beaches and recreational areas.

Barnstable County Extension offers a household hazardous waste collection program, funded in part by the Town. Collection events occur regularly throughout the year, are hosted at the Harwich Transfer Station, and are advertised on the Town website and at the Brewster Transfer Station.

Several Town bylaws have been passed including a ban on single-use plastic bags and the sale of single-use plastic bottled water by Brewster businesses, and a ban on single-use bottled water by Town Departments. The 2023 Spring Town Meeting approved a ban on the sale of miniature

single use containers, i.e., “nips”, effective on January 1, 2024. Prior to the pandemic, the Brewster Recycling Commission was continually active in community outreach to promote better management of household waste.

Key Issues Moving Forward

There are two major challenges facing good solid waste management in Brewster:

1. Changes in the recycling industry as to what and how to recycle; and
2. Re-education of patrons regarding the importance of these changes.

The recycling industry must continually adapt to new materials and new ways to manage those materials. To process materials effectively at MRFs (Material Recovery Facilities), a combination of mechanical and human separation is necessary. For the system to work effectively, residents must follow the Recycling Guide to maximize what can and should be recycled.

As an alternative to providing solid waste management through the Recycling Center, the Town could choose to use total curbside collection for trash and recyclables, and compliance could be better. However, there is a significant cost to town-wide collection and a feeling of loss of control by homeowners.

To maximize recycling, reuse activities, and reduction of the amount of waste generated by Brewster’s homeowners, the following can be considered:

1. Recycling Center user-wide survey (based on permits) to determine the most effective method of communication so that changes in procedures can take quickly place when most economically advantageous to the Town; and
2. A local on-going multi-media campaign covering what, why and how to recycle typical household materials.

In November 2022, Massachusetts extended its waste ban to include textiles. This provides the Town and private markets opportunities to address textiles in reuse or recycling.

It has been recognized that better education is needed for landlords and seasonal renters regarding waste and recycling, including available facilities and services.

Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Background and Current Status

According to the July 2021 Cape Cod Climate Action Plan, climate change is an unprecedented challenge that is transforming Cape Cod. Rising seas and changes to the coastline are the most dramatic evidence of climate change, but a changing climate is also impacting every facet of Cape Cod's natural, built, and community systems. Our land use patterns and way of living dictate our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the leading cause of the climate crisis. Dedicated and immediate actions at the state, regional and local level are necessary to slow the effects of climate change and improve the region's resiliency to its impacts. By the end of the century, damage to Cape Cod's buildings and land lost to inundation from sea level rise alone could total over \$30 billion.

In response, the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan and climate policy call for dramatic reductions in GHG emissions including a 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and a net zero carbon emission target for 2050. The Cape Cod Climate Action Plan and 2018 Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan identify goals and policies as well as strategies and actions to reduce GHG emissions for Cape communities and enhance local and regional resiliency to present and future climate threats.

The Town of Brewster has taken important steps in adopting local policies designed to support attainment of statewide GHG targets and regional goals for climate mitigation, specifically addressing the municipal stationary and transportation energy sources. The Town adopted a Climate Change and Net Zero Emissions Resolution in October 2020, to reduce net greenhouse gas and the Town's vulnerability to climate change.

Brewster's 2019 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Summary of Findings report documents climate and weather-related challenges in recent years. Intense rainstorms in 2017 and 2018 caused street flooding, coastal flooding, coastal erosion, storm surge, power outages and major travel disruptions. Low lying roadways and access points to Town beaches often flood during king tides (e.g., especially high spring tide). Brewster can expect to experience more severe events in the years to come in addition to rising sea levels due to climate change.

Recent Actions by the Town

The following are specific actions the Town has taken to support the newly adopted Brewster Climate Change and Net Zero Emissions Resolution and Town policy objectives on reduction of GHG emissions and to address the town's vulnerability to climate change.

Energy Reduction Measures

- Board of Building Regulations and Standards Stretch Energy Code (2019) minimizes the life-cycle cost of new construction by utilizing energy efficiency, water conservation and other renewable/alternative energy technologies. The Stretch Energy Code applies to all new residential and commercial construction in the town.
- The Town-Wide Energy Reduction Plan includes a summary of municipal energy uses and short- and long-term plans for municipal energy reduction. The majority of energy consumed is by municipal buildings (60%). The remaining usage includes vehicles (30%) and utility pumping (10%). The goal is to reduce baseline energy consumption by twenty (20) percent by FY2023.
- The Town established the Energy and Climate Action Committee in 2023 to evaluate the economic and practical feasibility of all energy-related projects and climate change-related activities on Town municipal property, including energy efficiency, energy

conservation, and greenhouse gas reduction. Committee work includes review of Town bylaws, regulations and policies as well as educational outreach to residents and businesses on climate change mitigation and adaptive strategies. The Committee is also charged to lead Town efforts to address climate mitigation and adaptation goals, as identified in the Town's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Hazard Mitigation Plan, Climate Emergency and Net Zero Declaration, Local Comprehensive Plan and Select Board Strategic Plan.

- Three of the buildings at the Bay Property (former CCSC) have roof-mounted solar panels which provides 'clean' on-site power to the property and lowers operational costs.

Green Communities Designation

- Brewster was designated as a Massachusetts Green Community in 2020 under the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Green Communities Act of 2008. Grant funds through the Green Communities program were awarded for energy conservation measures such as programmable thermostats, an energy management system, heat pump water heater, and demand control ventilation in Municipal Buildings.
- The Town has completed several solar projects with funding from the Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative, including 3.18628 total MW of solar generating facilities located on four municipal properties: the transfer station, the Stony Brook and Eddy Schools; and the Captains Golf Course and driving range. The Town has also entered into a new 'off-taking' agreement with Truro which will significantly reduce the Town's net utility expenses in the coming years. The total revenues and savings to the Town through leases and off-taking arrangements with other municipal facilities is approximately \$273,772.06 (FY22). The total energy savings to the town from the rooftop solar installations on Stony Brook and Eddy Elementary Schools is 256,345.61 kWh (FY22). Carport solar canopies over the golf course parking lots produce an estimated 740,291 kWh annually, saving approximately 523 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent and providing the Town with more than \$40,000 annually in revenue.
- The Town's long-standing commitment to open space protection has helped sequester carbon by protecting forested lands as a natural carbon sink.

Complete Streets

- Brewster adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2020 to encourage safe and accessible options for all modes of travel including less personal vehicle travel, a significant source of GHG emissions, and more opportunity for walking, biking, and transit.

Low Lying Roads

- In partnership with the Cape Cod Commission, the Town has participated in a regional initiative supported with state Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant funds to consider traditional, green, and hybrid solutions and associated cost estimates for three low-lying road segments (Betty's Curve at Route 6A/Lower Road, Lower Road at Freemans Pond, and Route 6A at the Dennis town line).

Key Issues Moving Forward

The Town is in the process of converting municipal vehicle fleets to electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or vehicles using cleaner fuels. For municipal vehicles that will not be converted to electric in the near-term, the Town could also consider the use of hybrid vehicles or cleaner fuels, as available. The Town is also reviewing methods to convert the conventional heating system in the Stony Brook School to cold weather heat pumps.

There are three private electric vehicle charging stations in Brewster. The Town is interested in pursuing resources and programs to support additional electric vehicle charging stations in appropriate locations to help reduce the local GHG emissions in support of State goals.

One of the ways the Town can consider mitigating climate change while simultaneously addressing other Building Blocks is by focusing future development in previously developed areas of the town with infrastructure capacity, served by transportation routes conducive to walking, biking, transit or the like.

The Town employs a part-time energy manager to analyze the energy uses of the Town and find ways to save money and reduce dependency on fossil fuels. The Town could consider updating energy assessments on its buildings as part of its Green Communities designation, including working with available programs offered by the Cape Light Compact..

The Town could also consider pursuing adoption of small-scale community solar at appropriate locations. The CCC created an online screening tool to identify areas in Barnstable County that may be appropriate for large-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) projects and those areas that may be less appropriate due to potential impacts to natural resources. This tool could be used as a starting point to help inform the siting of potential solar PV projects. More information on the solar screening tool can be found here: <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/solar-screening-tool/>. The Commission has also prepared a model bylaw for large-scale, ground mounted solar arrays: <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/model-solar-bylaw/>.

Brewster is also working with the Cape Cod Commission on 1) updating and strengthening local bylaws to better address coastal development and redevelopment with the goal of building coastal resiliency, and 2) participating in the regional Low Lying Roads project to examine vulnerabilities in the roadway network and identify adaptation alternatives, with funding support provided by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program.

SECTION 4: THE ACTION PLAN - BUILDING BLOCK GOALS, PURPOSES, AND ACTIONS

The Action Plan is intended to advance Building Block goals over the next 10+ years. The constituent actions, strategies and policies represent a menu of possible options that have been identified as important or essential to contributing to these goals but are not a complete or exclusive list of all that the Town could do. While a large and ambitious number of actions are presented, priorities for implementation will be identified during the Select Board's annual strategic planning exercise. The identification of these planning actions represents the very early, beginning of the process, not the end. Decisions about whether and how to pursue any one of these actions will be made through a participative, public process.

The list of actions has been drawn from numerous sources including the following:

- Actions from the Vision Plan that have not yet been implemented.
- Recommendations from implementing stakeholders and public comments about current needs.
- Recommendations from the summary papers about trends and needs; and
- Results of the *Brewster's Next Steps* survey gauging public support for individual actions.

Actions were also established and included in consideration of:

- Presenting a level of specificity appropriate for a high-level land use plan, i.e., enough specificity to provide policy direction for future implementation, but with sufficient flexibility not to impede or foreclose successful future implementation.
- The feasibility of implementation.
- A fair representation of the full spectrum of comments and opinions received throughout the entire comprehensive planning process; and
- The opportunity to provide benefits across multiple Building Blocks.

As the final phase of Action Plan development, the draft list of actions was reviewed and refined by workshops of key Town Departments and local organizations to assess the accuracy, relevancy, and ability to implement each action. This vital part of the process helped ensure that the capacity and commitment to implement the Action Plan will make the LCP a living plan.

The Action Plan is presented by Building Block, a concept established by the 2018 Vision Plan, with corresponding Community goals, purposes, and a broad array of proposed actions to achieve those the Community's vision, goals and purposes. While the Building Blocks are presented separately, the Town recognizes that they are, in fact, highly interrelated and should not be treated in a stove-pipe manner. Action in one Building Block should help advance the goals of the others.

At the same time, given the breadth of Brewster's goals and the large number of actions to achieve them, there will be inevitable tensions or conflicts between actions. It will be the responsibility of the Select Board and other commissions and committees to strike the necessary balance to resolve those tensions and achieve the community's vision for the future. Further, the actions presented in this plan will require discussion among Town decision-makers, residents, and other stakeholders as to how and when specific actions are implemented. These discussions will take into

account changing circumstances, available Town resources, the regulatory framework, and other conditions and challenges. The implementation of many or most actions will require Town Meeting approval.

DRAFT

COMMUNITY CHARACTER (CC)

GOAL: Sustain and foster Brewster's historic and archeological values, rural nature, small town feel, and socially inclusive spirit and vitality

PURPOSE 1: Provide social opportunities and services for all

Actions:

CC1. Expand, enhance, and support social opportunities, recreational activities and services for all at the Bay and Long Pond Properties, Brewster Ladies Library and a potential multi-generational community center.

CC2. Identify, develop, and support new services as needed to strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion.

CC3. Ensure that school facilities and activities meet the needs of young families.

CC4. Increase accessibility to all Town activities and facilities.

CC5. Evaluate provision of financial support for Pre-K programs to attract and retain young families.

PURPOSE 2: Maintain Brewster's historic heritage and style

Actions:

CC6. Support existing regulations and educate the public on building and site design along Rte. 6A/Main Street and in the historic district to preserve historic character.

CC7. Incorporate sensitivity for historic resources into the design of Town projects.

CC8. Investigate the need for a Demolition Delay Bylaw and implement if supported and feasible.

PURPOSE 3: Maintain Brewster's small-town feel and scale through appropriate planning and design

Actions:

CC9. Explore and support the designation of "town centers", including identifying what uses might best support such areas.

CC10. Explore and establish, as desired and appropriate, building design standards and enhanced site design standards in the zoning bylaw for commercial areas.

WATER RESOURCES (WR)

GOAL: Protect Brewster's groundwater, ponds, wetlands and their buffers, and marine watersheds

PURPOSE 1: Preserve an adequate quantity and the high quality of our drinking water

Actions:

- WR1.** Continue land purchases to protect drinking water.
- WR2.** Consider further strengthening drinking water supply protection in industrial zones.
- WR3.** Evaluate actions to limit further development in drinking water supply areas.
- WR4.** Evaluate the feasibility of testing for PFAS and other contaminants of emerging concern.
- WR5.** Continue to educate and communicate with the public about water conservation practices and programs.
- WR6.** Continue to update and implement the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan.
- WR7.** Coordinate aquifer protection with neighboring towns.

PURPOSE 2: Maintain and improve pond water quality

Actions:

- WR8.** Promote, research, and pilot innovative alternative septic systems and other non-traditional wastewater solutions.
- WR9.** Explore the feasibility of cluster sewage treatment systems for multifamily housing areas and neighborhoods that will impact pond water quality, where supported by sufficient density.
- WR10.** Fully implement the stormwater bylaw and share further information with the public.
- WR11.** Continue to update pond water quality data and report to the public.
- WR12.** Educate the public on pond water quality issues and what people can do to make a difference in their own homes.
- WR13.** Pursue land acquisition to protect pond water quality.
- WR14.** Research and consider the feasibility of the Town offering public incentives and financing for their use, including upgrades of existing systems in order to encourage innovative alternative septic systems and other non-traditional wastewater solutions,
- WR15.** Research and consider the feasibility of centralized operations and management models for innovative alternative septic systems.
- WR16.** Continue to update and implement the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan.

PURPOSE 3: Protect and restore water quality in the marine watersheds to which we contribute

Actions:

- WR17.** Promote, research, and pilot innovative septic systems and other non-traditional wastewater management models

WR18. Explore the feasibility of cluster sewage treatment systems for multifamily and other neighborhoods that will impact marine watershed water quality, where supported by sufficient density.

WR19. Continue exploring nitrogen reduction practices on golf courses.

WR20. Pursue land acquisition to protect marine watersheds water quality.

WR21. To encourage innovative alternative septic systems and other non-traditional wastewater solutions, research and consider the feasibility of the Town offering public incentives and financing for their use, including upgrades of existing systems.

WR22. Research and consider the feasibility of centralized operations and management models for innovative alternative septic systems.

WR23. Continue to update and implement the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan.

WR24. Continue to meet the ongoing obligations of the Pleasant Bay Watershed Permit, including the identification and implementation of nitrogen mitigation strategies.

WR25. Develop new Watershed Permits for the Herring River, Swan Pond River and Bass River Watersheds and begin applying the permitted nitrogen mitigation strategies.

OPEN SPACE (OS)

GOAL: Maintain and expand open space assets to provide passive recreation, protect fragile plant and wildlife habitat, protect water resources, and contribute to carbon sequestration

PURPOSE 1: Improve public access to, and expand recreational area use of, open space as appropriate

Actions:

OS1. Consider an integrated trail system for the Long Pond Woodlands and the abutting former Sea Camps Pond Property.

OS2. Continue to improve public education and information, including guides and signage, about access to, accessibility improvements, and locations of town open space assets.

PURPOSE 2: Prioritize environmentally sensitive areas for conservation

Actions:

OS3. Continue to prioritize land acquisition in public drinking water supply areas.

OS4. Emphasize and educate about the importance of open space for pond and fragile habitat protection.

OS5. Revise regulations and bylaws to direct growth toward developed areas of the town with infrastructure, public services, economic activities, and transit, and away from environmentally sensitive areas.

OS6. Develop design standards to prevent fragmentation of environmentally sensitive areas.

PURPOSE 3: Document the process for the acquisition and maintenance of open space to better engage and educate the public

Actions:

OS7. Develop and maintain an inventory of all protected open space in town.

OS8. Develop and implement stewardship plans for Town-owned open spaces.

OS9. Formalize the criteria to evaluate open space acquisitions and use, recognizing and balancing varied purposes such as the importance of recreation, the potential for establishing or extending trail networks, habitat benefits and the positive effect of woodlands in climate mitigation as criteria for land acquisition.

HOUSING (HO)

GOAL: Provide more affordable, attainable, accessible, safe, and fair housing, and support residents to maintain and preserve their current housing in order to remain in the community

PURPOSE 1: Achieve the Commonwealth's goal of 10% affordable housing by 2029

Actions:

HO1. Implement the 2022 Housing Production Plan (HPP) Update.

HO2. Collaborate with existing local and regional groups to conduct public forums educating the general public on what affordable housing is and why it is important in Brewster.

HO3. Work collaboratively with other towns to increase opportunities for affordable housing.

PURPOSE 2: Establish attainable housing by promoting housing choices to allow families, single individuals, older adults, and seasonal and year-round workers to live, work, and prosper in the community

Actions:

HO4. Continue to evaluate the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaw provisions to improve efficacy, explore incentives for a greater number of ADUs, and connect owners to community resources to provide support and assistance in developing ADUs.

HO5. Support creative funding and collaborative partnerships (public/private) in the development of community housing, including incentives for year-round rentals.

HO6. Work collaboratively with other towns to increase opportunities for attainable housing.

HO7. Review, evaluate and consider revising the zoning bylaw with the aim of promoting more opportunities as appropriate for various types and forms of housing, including two-family residential/duplex; multi-unit/multi-family residential; and mixed-use residential development.

HO8. Prioritize and incentivize the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for housing.

HO9. Evaluate the use of Town-owned properties for creative housing solutions, including reuse of Town-owned buildings for housing.

HO10. Evaluate the acquisition of land by the Town for housing, including for joint purposes such as open space uses.

HO11. Encourage housing in areas near transportation, public services, and economic activities.

HO12. Explore potential housing programs, opportunities, and funding for those earning 80% to 120% of Area Median Income (AMI).

HO13. Consider programs and regulatory amendments to allow for and support seasonal workforce housing.

PURPOSE 3: Preserve existing year-round housing

Actions:

HO14. Promote ability for residents to transition to different forms of housing and remain in Brewster over a lifetime by providing a wide range of housing choices.

HO15. Explore solutions to allow residents to age in place, including funding or subsidizing building adaptations, support programs, co-housing, and co-pairing situations.

HO16. Continue to evaluate the ADU bylaw provisions to improve efficacy, explore incentives for a greater number of ADUs, and connect owners to community resources to provide support and assistance in developing ADUs.

HO17. Support creative funding and collaborative partnerships (public/private) in the preservation of community housing, including incentives for year-round rentals.

HO18. Analyze the impacts of short-term rental operations in town and consider adopting policies, regulations, or programs to govern or document short-term rental operations.

COASTAL MANAGEMENT (CM)

GOAL: In the context of coastal change, preserve and protect Brewster's coastal resources, expand public access, and minimize the vulnerabilities from coastal hazards

PURPOSE 1: Protect coastal resources in ways that preserve coastal ecosystems and the character of the town and coastal neighborhoods

Actions:

CM1. Evaluate and implement local coastal resiliency by-laws and regulations to protect or preserve the scale of development, visual character and resources in the town's coastal areas.

CM2. Establish a uniform definition of the 100-year coastal floodplain for local regulations.

CM3. Increase public awareness of the importance of healthy coastal wetlands and natural processes, and of the need to protect these resource areas.

PURPOSE 2: Maintain and expand public access to the coast

Actions:

CM4. Explore and evaluate the need for, and feasibility of, alternative transport and off-site parking options for the town's coastal beaches and landings.

CM5. Evaluate, explore, and advance opportunities to preserve or enhance public access to the shoreline and coastal beaches.

CM6. Complete long-term plan for beach access at First Light Beach.

CM7. Support those with mobility challenges by preserving public viewsheds and vistas to coastal resource areas and by evaluating opportunities for enhancing mobility access at beach landings.

PURPOSE 3: Adapt to climate change projections and advance adaptation and resiliency techniques that are financially and environmentally sustainable

Actions:

CM8. Periodically assess coastal resource conditions for comparison to baseline conditions and on a regional scale, including sediment budget update, storm tide pathways, and a regional framework for resilience.

CM9. Explore regulatory options for managed retreat of existing development from high-risk coastal resource areas.

CM10. Explore and evaluate the need for, and feasibility of, potential retreat parking, including for Paine's Creek and Mant's Landings.

CM11. Participate in the development of a comprehensive shoreline management plan with Dennis and Orleans and consider recommended implementation strategies.

PURPOSE 4: Provide access for coastal water dependent activities

Actions:

CM12. Provide access and opportunities for commercial aquaculture by updating regulations, evaluating the designation of an Aquaculture Development Area, and analyzing the costs and benefits of expanding shellfishing and aquaculture.

CM13. Expand propagation and other activities to support recreational shellfishing.

CM14. Manage competing uses at town landings and mooring areas.

LOCAL ECONOMY (LE)

GOAL: Promote a sustainable economy that builds on Brewster's natural and human assets, addresses the needs of local businesses, and provides year-round employment opportunities

PURPOSE 1: Preserve and enhance Brewster's economy based on the Town's natural and cultural resources

Actions:

LE1. Develop an economic development strategy that builds on Brewster's natural, cultural, and human resources and aims to maintain existing and attract local businesses

LE2. Maintain a regular line of communication and working relationship between the Town and the local business community, including the Brewster Chamber of Commerce .

LE3. Provide more information, including signage and online material, to help visitors find their way to public resources, businesses, and other amenities in town.

LE4. Support identified or designated "town centers" through Town or other public capital investments.

PURPOSE 2: Maintain and attract local businesses and promote year-round employment

Actions:

LE5. Review and potentially revise bylaws and regulations to allow a greater variety of small businesses throughout town, including in-home businesses.

LE6. Review and potentially revise use regulations in the commercial and industrial zoning districts.

LE7. Develop a guide to doing business for local businesses in Brewster, including permitting guidance.

GOVERNANCE (GO)

GOAL: Provide an inclusive Town government that encourages participation by all residents by engaging in communication, expanding volunteer opportunities, and providing customer friendly service

PURPOSE 1: Continue to communicate Town plans and activities to, and engage with, residents

Actions:

GO1. Develop a written Communications Plan to better inform residents and local businesses about Town affairs and opportunities for the public to participate.

GO2. Continue to provide relevant news, information, updates, and announcements on the Town website and other media, including regarding Town finances, projects, permitting processes, and other Town initiatives.

PURPOSE 2: Expand the volunteer base to increase the use of citizen expertise and build diversity in decision-making

Actions:

GO3. Develop and launch a Citizens Leadership Academy to help introduce residents to government services and volunteer opportunities.

GO4. Continue the use of town-wide activities and ad hoc committees to engage residents in Town affairs.

GO5. Develop a central database of volunteers to assist with recruitment of qualified volunteers across all Town Departments and appointed Committees.

GO6. Acknowledge contributions of Brewster residents to Town or public affairs and recognize volunteers when they complete their commitment or at other important junctures of volunteer life.

GO7. Continue to partner with community organizations on matters of public importance.

PURPOSE 3: Continue to strengthen the customer service approach to Town services

Actions:

GO8. Develop a resource section on the Town website that includes educational materials, including videos (e.g., by link to Vimeo, BGTV or LCTV files) and fact sheets on topics such as responsibilities of Town Departments, zoning, permitting, ADUs, and other matters of high interest.

GO9. Develop a 'How-to Guide' for homeowners to explain permitting processes.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (CI)

GOAL: Maintain and enhance town infrastructure in an environmentally and economically sustainable way that supports government services, opportunities for community interaction, the local economy and culture, public health, safe multi-modal transportation options, and expanded recreational opportunities

PURPOSE 1: Plan and design Town building and construction projects to benefit the broad cross-section of all users and interests in the community

Actions:

CI1. Include enhanced universal accessibility where feasible on Town properties and projects.

CI2. Conduct a needs assessment for a multi-generational community center, including considering reuse or redevelopment of other Town facilities/properties.

CI3. Re-evaluate Drummer Boy Park master planning to date.

CI4. Complete the comprehensive planning processes for and begin implementation of the plans for the Bay and Pond Properties.

PURPOSE 2: Provide enhanced and safe multi-modal opportunities, access, and facilities for all, including for recreational purposes

Actions:

CI5. Develop a town-wide plan for improving and/ or expanding bike and pedestrian paths and sidewalks.

CI6. Consider pursuit of the proposed Cape Cod Rail Trail (CCRT) extension from Nickerson State Park to Cape Cod Bay including the consideration of alternatives for crossing Rte. 6A/Main Street.

CI7. Continue to coordinate with the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) on additional bus routes and stops and other alternative transportation options.

PURPOSE 3: Plan and design traditional infrastructure projects like road improvements and maintenance to best serve the needs of the overall community, limit environmental impacts, and balance fiscal impacts

Actions:

CI8. Factor, budget, and set aside long-term improvement and maintenance costs in the funding for capital projects.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT (SW)

GOAL: To manage a municipal solid waste system that protects public health, safety, and the environment, optimizes financial methods, communicates effectively with users, and employs innovative strategies to reduce solid waste and related costs

PURPOSE 1: Reduce the waste stream

Actions:

SW1. Implement an ongoing multi-media public education campaign to reduce the waste stream, including re-purposing and re-using items and optimizing recycling.

SW2. Enhance and publicize regional waste collection initiatives such as hazardous waste collection.

SW3. Further investigate opportunities between Brewster and regional initiatives for solid waste management.

PURPOSE 2: Improve the efficiency of the solid waste facility

Actions:

SW4. Enhance communications with the public concerning Recycling Center operations, practices, and policies using a variety of print and electronic media channels.

SW5. Conduct a Recycling Center study and site analysis including traffic circulation, optimal use of space, safety, and potential re-use options.

CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION (CA)

GOAL: Support and advance the Commonwealth's greenhouse gas reduction goals, including promoting sustainable energy use and renewable energy that protects the Town's natural resources

PURPOSE 1: Reduce the Town's contribution to and vulnerability to climate change

Actions:

CA1. Develop a Net Zero Energy Roadmap for the Town's assets and operations.

CA2. Implement the MEMA/FEMA approved 2021 Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

CA3. Consider specific actions for reducing energy use, including completing energy audits in all Town buildings; specifying actions regarding increased energy efficiency in existing and newly constructed Town buildings; locating solar panels/arrays on Town buildings and facilities; and purchasing alternative energy Town vehicles when due for replacement.

CA4. Encourage roof mounted solar panels on buildings and on parking lot canopies/carports.

CA5. Consider provision of incentives and/or assistance, including financial, for installation of solar panels on private homes.

CA6. Work with private entities to install public charging stations at appropriate municipal or publicly accessible locations. **CA7.** Modify or re-locate Town infrastructure and buildings to reduce the potential damage due to climate change such as flooding.

PURPOSE 2: Review and update Town bylaws and regulations to mitigate projected climate change impacts

Actions:

CA8. Review zoning bylaws and develop amendments for consistency with this goal, including small-scale solar installations, and the promotion of compact, walkable and bikeable development patterns.

CA9. Clarify design guidelines for the Historic District regarding installation of renewable energy options.

CA10. Review and consider revising existing Town bylaws and regulations dealing with the use of chemical fertilizers.

CA11. Foster natural carbon sequestration by amending Town bylaw to limit the clearing of forested land, including for solar farms, and exploring opportunities to restore degraded native plant communities.

PURPOSE 3: Build awareness about the nature of climate change and Town efforts to mitigate climate change

Actions:

CA12. Develop an Education and Preparedness Campaign for the general public and the business sector that includes guidance and checklists for reducing fossil fuel use, as well as recommendations to increase community resilience to the impacts.

SECTION 5: CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN

In this section the LCP will align, and cross-reference capital investments contemplated in the Action Plan with the Town's on-going capital planning. This analysis ensures that the capital requirements necessary to implement the LCP are planned for and met.

The LCP's Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) outlines the key capital facilities and infrastructure considerations raised in the Action Plan, intended to support, and advance Brewster's LCP vision and goals. The CFP includes a spreadsheet that identifies these capital projects, and other capital needs, with associated funding information. The CFP also contains a spreadsheet that describes the Town's existing capital facilities, assets and infrastructure. Infrastructure needs, challenges and constraints informed the preparation of the Action Plan and are discussed in the 'Existing Conditions' section of the LCP.

The Town of Brewster, through its Town Manager and Select Board, engage in both an annual Strategic Planning Process and annual Capital Planning Process. The Strategic Plan is arranged by the Building Blocks in the Town's Vision Plan, which was a precursor to the LCP. Going forward, the Strategic Plan will be arranged by the LCP Building Blocks. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provides a blueprint for planning all the community's capital expenditures by aligning the Town's priority capital needs with available funding sources. It includes programming and budgeting functions, allowing for project scheduling and financial adjustments over a 5-year planning horizon. Unless an alternative funding source is available, all capital items/ appropriations are presented to Town Meeting for approval. The current CIP is for FY23-27. The Town also per Code/ Charter publishes annually in the May Town Meeting Warrant Booklet a summary of the capital improvement plan, identifying all proposed capital expenditures for the next 5 years estimated to cost \$100,000 or more.

The LCP, specifically through its Action Plan and Capital Facilities Plan, is the intersection between the Town's Strategic Plan and CIP. The Strategic Plan is the primary way through which the LCP Action Plan will be implemented, and its constituent actions prioritized. Although not every item on the CIP is represented in the Strategic Plan or in the LCP, many Town initiatives and projects appear in all three planning documents. The CFP does not supersede the Town's normal capital budgeting process represented in the CIP. All Town capital projects, whether in the LCP or not, must be included on the CIP. The CIP and Strategic Plan contain more detail about estimated capital costs, funding sources and timing. The CIP includes many operational or customary items outside the scope of the LCP that are necessary to run the Town effectively. The CFP represents ongoing or proposed capital projects related to the LCP Action Plan that are currently on or might advance to the CIP, and from there to the Strategic Plan for implementation.

The Town, through its Finance Team and directed by financial policies established by the Select Board, dedicates a portion of its certified free cash to fund annual capital requests. In addition to the free cash allocation, capital is funded through a variety of grants funds, community preservation funds, debt exclusion, overlay, and capital stabilization. The Golf and Water Departments, which have enterprise funds, pay for their own respective capital items. The Town of Brewster has worked diligently to ensure that the CIP, the Select Board Strategic Plan and the Local

Comprehensive Plan are aligned, inform each other, and address and account for consensus community needs and future growth, and collectively provide an implementation framework to support achieving the community's LCP vision.

[Insert spreadsheets]

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SECTION 6: HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN SUMMARY

This section summarizes the 2022 Town of Brewster Housing Production Plan (HPP) Update, which was approved by the Commonwealth in August 2022. The Housing Production Plan's (HPP) goal is to help the Town make steady progress towards the 10% statutory minimum of affordable housing under Chapter 40B. Every community in Massachusetts is mandated to have 10% of total year-round housing units as deed-restricted to be affordable for low- or moderate-income households.

The HPP includes a housing needs assessment, housing goals, and implementation strategies. Brewster's 2022 HPP is an update to the 2017 HPP which has guided the Town's Housing program over the past 5 years and is currently certified, meaning the Town has met its housing production goal for the present year.

Housing Needs Assessment

Key findings of the housing needs assessment include the following:

- Brewster's population increased by 5% between 2010 & 2020 Census, despite projections forecasting a potential decline.
- Over the past decade, the population under 54 years old has decreased, and the population over 55 years has increased.
- Older adults living alone are the most likely household type to be low-to-moderate income, under 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- Housing sales prices have jumped significantly since 2020 and continue to rise. Rental opportunities are limited, particularly for market rate units. The share of housing units for seasonal recreational, or occasional use has increased, while the share of year-round renters has decreased.

Housing Production Goals

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) HPP guidelines require that the goals include both qualitative and quantitative outcomes based on community and regional needs. Brewster's mandated quantitative goal is to produce 24 new units of Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) eligible affordable housing units a year. The Town identified four major qualitative goals:

1. Increase and diversify year-round housing options in Brewster for a range of income levels and household types.
2. Prevent displacement of current residents and facilitate housing mobility for households looking to move within or into Brewster.
3. Align development with the principles of the Town's Local Comprehensive Plan/Vision Plan
4. Continue to build capacity to produce housing through staffing, funding, regional partnerships, advocacy and education, and relationships with nonprofit and for-profit developers.

Housing Production Plan Implementation Strategies

Brewster has made significant progress implementing its 2017 Housing Plan. This includes hiring a Housing Coordinator, creating a Housing Trust, adopting Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaws, obtaining housing funding, receiving a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for housing rehab and childcare, accepting a proposal to build rental housing on Town land, redeveloping a vacant building for housing, permitting 59 units of affordable housing, and twice certifying the Housing Plan.

The 2022 HPP includes the following Implementation Strategies to meet the 10% DHCD affordable unit goal:

Regulatory Reform - Involve tools that make permitting more efficient, allow more housing development, and allow more types of housing in Brewster.

Strategy 1: Re-evaluate the existing ADU and ACDU bylaws and other references to accessory apartments; explore amendments to streamline these provisions and improve their efficacy.

Strategy 2: Amend zoning to clearly allow mixed uses that include housing in business-zoned areas.

Strategy 3: Re-evaluate the existing multifamily dwelling bylaw (Section 179-34) and consider changes and other regulatory measures to facilitate multi-unit residential development.

Strategy 4: Explore measures to require or encourage the inclusion of affordable units in residential developments over a certain number of units.

Strategy 5: Allow and incentivize the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for the creation of affordable and mixed income housing.

Strategy 6: Utilizing the findings of the ongoing Integrated Water Resources Management Plan, continue to identify appropriate wastewater treatment systems to enable the creation of denser housing developments that can support the inclusion of affordable units.

Funding and Assets - Protect existing affordable housing and pursue specific ways to expand local funds.

Strategy 7: Continue to work with nearby communities on the Cape by pooling CPA funds and other resources to construct affordable housing in suitable locations throughout the region and meet regional housing needs.

Strategy 8: Develop a five-year financial plan for the Brewster Affordable Housing Trust and determine whether additional funding streams should be explored.

Strategy 9: Based upon the BAHT five-year financial plan, explore other funding opportunities to support housing initiatives at a range of income levels.

Strategy 10: Explore local property tax incentives for the creation of affordable housing, such as offering a reduction of property taxes to an owner renting an affordable unit.

Strategy 11: Develop criteria for assessing a property's suitability for the creation of affordable and attainable housing.

Strategy 12: Inventory existing Town-owned land using the criteria developed to determine suitability for housing; develop and issue an RFP for the development of affordable and attainable housing on properties identified as suitable for housing development.

Strategy 13: If deemed necessary based upon the findings of the Town-owned land inventory, develop and issue an RFP for the acquisition of privately held land for the creation of affordable and attainable housing.

Education and Advocacy - Capture key stakeholders most at risk from the effects of limited housing choices.

Strategy 14: Develop a collaborative housing education plan that connects to the Town's Local Comprehensive Plan.

Strategy 15: Continue to ensure regular participation by staff and members of Town bodies in available training on housing-related issues including fair housing, local and regional housing needs, comprehensive permit administration, and other relevant topics.

Local Planning and Policy - Pursue partnerships and create a more welcoming environment for housing development.

Strategy 16: Continue to make good use of Chapter 40B, including the Local Initiative Program (LIP), as a vehicle for creating affordable housing.

Strategy 17: Encourage public/private partnerships to facilitate the collaborative production of affordable housing to meet a range of community needs.

Strategy 18: Continue to monitor the impacts of short-term rentals on the availability of year-round rental units; review and consider changes to local policies accordingly.

Strategy 19: Increase housing staff capacity to ensure continued and consistent collaboration with the Building, Conservation, Health, and Planning Departments.

Community Resources & Local Support – Ensure needs of the program benefactors are met.

Strategy 20: Continue the CDBG-funded housing rehabilitation program to enable income-eligible homeowners to make critical home repairs.

Strategy 21: Evaluate current CPC-funded housing initiatives and consider adjusting to meet current needs.

Strategy 22: Explore other opportunities for direct support for eligible households, including partnerships with local non-profits and housing assistance providers.

SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

An overarching consideration of implementation is to align the LCP, the Town's Capital Plan, and the Select Board's Strategic Plan.

Implementing the LCP will be the responsibility of numerous Town Boards and Departments and organizations in the community. The Select Board will oversee implementation, including delegating responsibilities and identifying priorities. The primary vehicle for LCP implementation will be the Select Board's annual rolling strategic planning exercise which, since its start in 2019, has been structured around the goals of the Vision Plan.

The Select Board's Strategic Plan is updated on an annual basis with input from Town Boards, Committees, Department Heads and residents. A copy of the most recent Strategic Plan is included in this section. The Select Board will balance the various Building Block goals seeking to identify consensus priorities in carrying out its strategic planning. The Select Board will also coordinate LCP actions with the implementation of other actions contained within the Strategic Plan or of public importance, e.g., proposed regulatory changes to forward particular LCP goals would not only be coordinated with one another but with any broader efforts to review and revise Town regulations or bylaws. Implementation of any particular goal or initiative identified in the Strategic Plan will follow and incorporate resident feedback.

The LCP will be the framework to ensure the alignment of the Select Board's Strategic Plan and the community's vision. In addition to the Select Board, the Planning Board will play a key role in implementing the LCP, particularly those elements related to land use policy and reforming the Town's bylaws so that they become better adapted tools for achieving the vision and policy directions of the LCP. Monitoring progress and reporting to the community will be another important aspect of the implementation process.

To assist in understanding the process by which the Town will implement action items, there is a diagram depicting the relationship between the LCP, the Strategic Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan included herein.

After LCP adoption, the Strategic Plan will, among other things, incorporate LCP Building Block goals and actions as a means of implementing the LCP. In terms of implementation, the Strategic Plan assigns timeframes and responsible parties to undertaking actions, which is a particularly effective process in ensuring that the LCP is implemented successfully and with the best available information.

Monitoring progress and reporting to the community will be another important aspect of the implementation process. In 2021, the Vision Planning Committee produced a report on the implementation of the Vision Plan that was well received by the public and Town government. With the LCP becoming the framework for the Select Board's Strategic Plan, monitoring LCP implementation becomes an integral part of that annual process. This will include publishing reports on implementation progress for the Select Board's internal use and reporting to the public on progress in achieving the community's goals. If the Town elects to pursue LCP certification, the Town will also provide the Cape Cod Commission this annual report to communicate progress on the LCP.

[Insert Select Board Strategic Plan FY24-25 here]

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Insert revised Implementation Diagram

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SECTION 8: SUPPORTING LOCAL PLANS, REGULATION AND POLICIES

Community Character

- Historical Commission Survey of Brewster Houses, 2016

Open Space

- Town of Brewster Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, 2021

Coastal Management/ Climate Adaptation

- FEMA CRS Program, established 2018
- Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan 2021
- Coastal Resource Management Plan (Phase I), 2019
- Coastal Adaptation Strategy, 2016
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan, 2019

Water Resources

- Horsley Witten Group, Inc. January 2022. Integrated Water Resource Management Plan 2022 Update
- Horsley Witten Group, Inc. January 2013. Integrated Water Resource Management Plan Phase II Report
- CDM February 2011. Integrated Water Resource Management Plan Phase I Report – Needs Assessment
- Horsley Witten Group, Inc. 2016. Water Resource Atlas Fresh Water Ponds, Brewster, Massachusetts.
- University of Massachusetts School for Marine Science and Technology and Cape Cod Commission. Brewster Freshwater Ponds: Water Quality Status and Recommendations for Future Activities.
- University of Massachusetts School for Marine Science and Technology. November 2014. Mill Ponds Management Plan - Walkers Pond, Upper Mill Pond, and Lower Mill Pond.
- Solitude Lake Management. January 30, 2020. Alum Treatment Final Completion Report, Upper Mill Pond January 2020.

Governance

- Town of Brewster Annual Strategic Plan, adopted by Select Board
- Select Board Policy #58 (Public Engagement)

Community Infrastructure/ Capital Facilities

- Town of Brewster Community Preservation Plan, FY23 – FY27. 3/23/22 Adopted by the Select Board 08/08/2022
- Pavement Management Plan, 2022
- FY22-26 Capital Improvement Plan
- Drummer Boy Park Master Plan update, approved Fall 2021 Town Meeting
- Select Board Policy #61 (Complete Streets Policy)
- Biking Brewster: A Strategy to Enhance Biking in Brewster, prepared by Brewster Bikeways Committee. March 2016

Solid Waste

- Pay As You Throw (PAYT) Report, August 2014

Climate Mitigation

- Town Climate Change and Net Zero Resolution, 2020
- Energy Reduction Plan (Green Community Designation), 2020

Housing Production Plan

- Town of Brewster Housing Production Plan 2022 – 2027

Other Housing/ Local Economy

- American Community Survey 2019 Data, 5-year estimates
- Brewster Community Preservation Plan FY23-FY27
- Cape Cod & the Islands Association of Realtors 2021 Annual Report & December 2021 Brewster Local Market Update
- US Census 2020

Brewster Code (selection, Bylaws)

- Chapter 17, Community Preservation Committee
- Chapter 18, Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Chapter 83, Staff Review
- Chapter 100, Flooding
- Chapter 112, Water
- Chapter 115, Illicit Connections and Discharges (*note: MS4*)
- Chapter 119 Fertilizer Nutrient Control
- Chapter 135, Pollution and Environmental Hazards (*note: single use plastic bags, etc.*)
- Chapter 152, Single Use Plastic Water Bottles
- Chapter 157, Streets and Sidewalks
- Chapter 159, Stretch Energy Code
- Chapter 171, Water Betterments
- Chapter 172, Wetlands Protection
- Chapter 179, Zoning
- Chapter 272, Stormwater Management
- Chapter 290, Subdivision Rules and Regulations

Brewster Wetlands Protection Regulations

Brewster Stormwater Management Regulations

Board of Health Regulations & Policies (Selections)

- I/A Monitoring Regulation
- Nitrogen Loading Regulation
- Percolation Rate Regulation
- Private Well Regulation
- Inspection Maintenance Program Regulation
- Small Wastewater Treatment
- Substandard Septic System Upgrade Regulation
- Leaching Facility Setback Regulation
- Water Quality Report Regulations
- Disposal Construction Limit Regulation
- Recycling Center Regulations
- Zone II Deed Restriction Regulation
- Sand & Gravel Mining Regulation
- Septic System Betterment Regulation
- Designation of Wetlands Conservancy District Policy
- Board of Health Policy on Single Cesspools
- Soil & Percolation Observation Policy
- Bedroom Definition
- Septic System Inspection Requirement for Variance Applications Policy
- In-House Septic Local Upgrade Approval Policy