Town of Watertown
Plan of Conservation and Development
2017 Update
Survey Results
Survey Overview

- Online survey asked residents about housing, quality of life, recreation, use of public land, access to services and amenities, and other topics of importance
- Survey open from 6/9 to 8/2, 2017
- 760 total responses, 612 complete surveys
Demographics

- Over half of respondents between the ages of 35 and 54
- More than half of respondents have lived in Watertown more than 10 years
- Another 27% have lived in Watertown their whole life
Employment

- 2/3 of respondents are employed full-time
- 18% are retired
- Many work in Watertown or Waterbury
Housing Types

- 90% of respondents live in single-family homes
- Split on whether town needs more apartments or duplexes

Does Watertown have too many, too few, or about the right amount of the following housing types?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Too few</th>
<th>About the right amount</th>
<th>Too many</th>
<th>Don't know/No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large apartment complexes (5 or more units)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplexes or other small multi-family units (up to 4 units)</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condominiums or Townhouses</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large single family houses</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small, affordable single family houses (i.e., &quot;starter homes&quot; or homes for empty nesters)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elderly Housing

- Most support for 55+ restricted housing

Watertown is expected to see a large increase in its elderly population over the next 10 years. What types of housing do you think are needed to support this growing population?

- 55+ Restricted Housing (Apartments or other housing restricted to those age 55 and over)
- Independent Living Facilities (Generally provide some services such as housekeeping and laundry, but do not offer health care or assistance with activities of daily living such as...)
- Assisted Living Facilities (Offer health care and assistance with activities of daily living such as medication, bathing, eating, etc.)
- Secondary Suites/Accessory Units (i.e., "granny flats", "Mother-in-law Apartment", or other small self-contained apartment in an owner occupied single-family home or lot)
- Other (please specify)
75% see themselves living in Watertown in 10 years

Most of these plan to stay in current home, but 10% wish to move to larger home and 5% wish to downsize within 10 years

Reasons given for moving include high taxes (state and local), harsh winters, concerns with the school system, lack of convenient employment, desire for more rural environment, lack of activities, and others.
Most commuters drive in a car by themselves

Respondents generally would not take public transportation

Reasons why respondents would not take public transportation include:

- Unable to chain trips (school, work, errands)
- Unpredictable or odd work schedules
- Possible cost
Top 3 reasons for choosing to live in Watertown are:

- Friends/Family
- Housing or neighborhood
- Location (close to work/transportation)
Community Concerns

- Road maintenance is top concern
- 29% have no concerns about the area in which they live
Services & Amenities

- Playgrounds and town parks are rated highly
- Respondents had uncertainty about senior services and senior housing
- Recreation for teens, adults, and hiking/biking trails need improvement
Community Connections

- Most respondents feel a sense of community in Watertown
- Community events are well-liked and seen as important community-building opportunities

![Bar chart showing responses to the question: Do you feel a sense of community in Watertown?](chart1)

![Bar chart showing favorite community events: Holiday Parades, Night Out on Main Street, Watertown Fall Festival, Watertown Farmers' Market](chart2)
Main Street in Watertown

- Respondents feel safe walking on Main Street in Watertown
- Parking is difficult
- Can not do all shopping on Main Street

Do you say this about Main Street in Watertown?

- I feel safe walking here
- Sidewalks are wide enough
- The buildings feel appropriate in scale to the setting
- Sidewalks are separated properly from traffic
- It is easy to cross streets
- There is a good mix of shops, offices, restaurants,…
- Sidewalks are shaded/lined with trees
- It is within walking distance of my home
- Parking here is easy
- If I bike, I feel safe biking here
- I can do all of my shopping here

Legend:
- Green: Agree
- Grey: Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Yellow: Disagree
Main Street in Oakville

- Respondents feel safe walking on Main Street
- Parking is difficult
- Poor mix of shops, offices, and restaurants compared to Main Street in Watertown
Businesses

- Respondents feel there are too many auto sales, service and repair businesses
- Too few home improvement, clothing, and furniture stores – retail uses commonly found in “big box” retailers
Economic Development

- Respondents mostly agree that Watertown needs to grow grand list
- More split on whether Watertown should expand areas to allow new commercial and industrial development
Parks and Recreation

- Veteran’s Memorial Park is the park most respondents use daily to monthly.
- Many respondents had never used Sylvan Lake Park, Mattatuck State Forest, or UNICO Fields.
- Many felt that there were too few hiking trails, kayak/canoe/boat opportunities, and places to bike, skate, or skateboard.
Respondents were split on what to do with Old Town Hall and Town Hall Annex buildings:

- Sell to private developer: 36%
- Retain for community use: 32%
- Sell to non-profit: 16%
- Other: 16%
Greatest Challenge

“What is the greatest challenge facing Watertown today?”

450 write in responses

Top responses:

- 27% mentioned taxes
- 27% mentioned the town government
- 18% mentioned the school system
“What is the greatest opportunity Watertown has overlooked?”

368 write in responses

Top responses:

- 29% mentioned the town government
- 16% mentioned development
- 15% mentioned businesses

Walking Trails, Listening, Echo Lake, Environment, Route 8, Commissions, Commercial, Rec, Property, Young Families, Park, Bike, Development, Retail Stores, Town, Teens, Businesses, History, Shopping, New People, School, Chain, Main Street, Rte, Open Space, Question, Watertown and Oakville Education