



**TISBURY MASTER PLAN – MASTER PLAN KICK-OFF SWOT ANALYSIS
AUGUST 10, 2022**

On August 10, 2022, four meetings were held to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for the Town of Tisbury by its citizens for the Master Plan process; over 60 individuals attended these events.

Take a minute to read the summary from the Tisbury Master Plan Kick-Off meetings on August 10. Repeated topics are included to reflect repetition throughout multiple discussion groups.

Strengths

Community

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Community – year-round | Diverse community |
| Year-round community | Diversity of |
| Family-oriented Town – SAFE | Range of ages |
| Nice place for kids to summer/grow up | Housing – year-round Town primarily |
| Safe community | Diversity in housing stock |
| Community | Working town |
| Our kids | Working community |
| Community-minded | Public forums – dialog |
| Community support | Diverse community |
| Community Culture | Thrifty |
| Diversity of community | Local community groups willing to make changes |

The Harbor

- | | |
|---|---|
| Maritime; harbor; unique places | Working Waterfront |
| Maritime history | Working waterfront – harbor |
| Harbor (2) | Working Waterfront |
| Port of entry | Working harbor – waterfront |
| Being a getaway/ferry town | Relation of the harbor to the community |
| Gateway to island | Ferry proximity |
| Port of entry – welcoming – arrival gateway | Working Waterfront |
| Port | Working waterfront – harbor |
| Gateway | Working Waterfront |
| Ferry is close | Special wooden boats |
| Harbor/Boats (wooden) | Wood boats |

Physical characteristics

Traditional NE character
 SMALL town NE feel
 Quaintness – scale, walkable, village feel
 Quiet/residential community
 Quiet
 Compact Town
 Vibrant residential Main St
 Commercial centered downtown

Historic Infrastructure
 It feels like a working-class town
 Historic Infrastructure
 Mobility/Accessibility
 Walkable
 Close to hospital
 Close to YMCA
 Downtown village
 Small – geographically (for walkability) as well as the year-round community

Natural environment, open space, and parks

Varied natural resources
 Open space; water bodies
 Pastoral nature; beauty
 West Chop Woods - Walking/biking trail networks
 West Chop Woods + trees and woodlands
 Town parks – Tashmoo, Owen Park, Drawbridge

Natural resources, beaches, open space, etc.
 Public walking trails
 Our parks, Owen Park, etc.
 Public beaches: Willet Pond, Hillman Point, Tashmoo, Owen Park
 Tashmoo- diversity of use and beauty
 West Chop woods - Open space - Walking

Town Facilities and services

Town properties
 Town services
 Fire, police, EMS
 EMS building
 EMS – Building of service

Library (2)
 Central wastewater
 Tisbury waterworks
 Zoning
 Library (2)

Businesses

Year-round businesses (2)
 State Road Corridor
 Groceries
 Grocery stores
 Shop owners are working to enhance storefronts with flowers, etc.

Mixed-use
 Special wooden boats
 Wooden boats
 Vineyard Wind

Entertainment

Museum, Restaurants, Playhouse
 Museum Film Society
 Arts + leisure + music + First Friday
 First Fridays

Arts – playhouse
 Artist studios
 Tisbury street fair (2)

History/Culture

Community History
Long interesting history
Museum

Maritime history (2)
Wooden boats and boat building
Shenandoah turning into FUEL (repurposed to new use)

What we do not have is seen as a strength

No big box stores
Less resort-y
No bars/liquor

No bars or liquor stores
No highways
No box stores

Tisbury School

Tisbury School Physical assets
Great school

School (3)

Public Transportation

VTA – to State Road Corridor
VTA

Public transportation
Public transportation

Organizations

VH Yacht Club

West Chop

Weaknesses

Traffic, parking, and pedestrian/bike facilities

Traffic esp. during summertime
Traffic
Narrow sidewalks or lack of sidewalks
No downtown walking/biking trail network
Parking issues - Parking on Main St year-round
employee/merchant taking up parking space
Traffic at 5 Corners
Traffic management
State not upkeeping crosstown bike paths
Overburdened VTA – unreliable year-round vs. seasonal riders

Narrow sidewalks or lack of sidewalks
Not bicycle friendly
curb cuts certain spots
Pedestrian bike/walking
Not bicycle friendly
Lack of sidewalks/road repaid
Not pedestrian friendly
Look St/Edgartown Road Intersection
Congestion/intersections
Lack of sidewalks/road repaid – not pedestrian friendly

Downtown Commercial

Vibrancy of downtown has decreased/declined
Vacant commercial properties
Not enough attractions to generate \$
Downtown economic development
Difficult/not easy for new business owners to open downtown

Downtown economic development
Economic vitality
Business vacancies - anchors
Empty movie theater
No liquor stores

Empty businesses – don't APPEAR to be thriving,
too expensive for renters

No one in town governance responds to
assist new business owners/dev.

Town leadership and planning

Lack of government leadership forward thinking
Lack of Master Plan
Most progress has been made by local groups vs.
town-led
Culture (old) can be a hindrance to change, such as
bike lane improvement on Beach Road
Lack of accountability/enforcement
Town website

Echo chamber conversations
“a failure to plan is a plan to fail”
Understanding growth

Town facilities and maintenance

Old infrastructure: library, town hall, police, school
Not enough funds for proper building
maintenance
Small sewer system Town services
Snow removal is uneven + town piles on sidewalks
Decentralized Town Hall

Decentralized Town Hall
Town facility maintenance
EMS building flooding
Infrastructure

Town taxes

High taxes (real estate +) © Water cost
Tax rate – burden
Small tax base, highest taxes
Highest property tax rate in MA + how that affects
the ability to fund new facilities... if it increases,
people may go elsewhere to live, etc.

Tax base constrained by area (size)
High taxes – new school
TAX BASE IS SMALL

Ferry

Stress of being a ferry town on infrastructure
Bottleneck at Steamship Authority during arrival
Stress of being a ferry town on infrastructure
Steamship – Park + Ride doesn't coordinate with
boats

Entry port to the whole island
Port of entry; traffic
Ferry traffic (gateway)
Steamship ferry proximity (traffic)

Open space and recreation

Public land preservation through deed restrictions
Vineyard youth opportunities
Lack of recreational facilities for children

Tashmoo day boat usage
Waterfront areas
Tree warden

Climate change and sea level rise

Vulnerability to sea level rise/flooding
Climate change + sea level rise

Bigger storms increase debris
5 Corners flooding



Sea level rise in low-lying areas

Environmental concerns

Environmental Impacts
 Eversource’s use of herbicides
 Fertilizer runoff

Water infrastructure – asbestos
 Limited wastewater capacity

Tisbury School

Tisbury School
 Tisbury School project

Tisbury School

Hidden resources

Unique places are not well known/appreciated
 Less noticing of cultural centers

A disconnect of the harbor to adjacent areas

Groceries

Grocery store location
 Stop & Shop

Groceries

Affordable housing

Availability of housing options

Short term rentals

Lack of regional cost sharing

Lack of sharing of costs for services; lack of regionalization

Duplication of services between towns

Opportunities

Strengthening the business community

Downtown (encourage services)
 Encourage a thriving downtown
 Downtown economic development
 More year-round businesses
 VH Business Association – better leadership;
 stronger membership + help for small businesses

More year-round businesses
 Streamlining the new business process
 Sell alcohol – keep customers here

Aligning business owners, residential property owners + Town government + MVC

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Make/keep VH economically vibrant + sustainable while keeping with VH character

Capawock and Bowl + Board (CD addition: large empty spaces in the downtown)

Improving traffic circulation

Two-way streets, one-way streets with bike lane
 5 Corners solutions (2 responses)
 Traffic control lights/safety

VTA Expansion
 Rideshare citizen shared
 Better multimodal transportation



Restrict number of cars
 Improved pedestrian/bike/car Leverage the harbor

Traffic reduction
 Better bike lanes; provide better parking

Taking advantage of tourism

Tourism
 Ferry – attract more people to Tisbury
 Park + Ride income for Town
 Appreciation of working waterfront Walking
 guided tour – welcome kiosk – visitor center
 Waterfront area
 Park + Ride – more like Palmer Lot.
 Improve public transportation

Shoulder season attractions
 Gateway
 Tourism as a revenue generator
 Gateway
 Park + Ride – more like Palmer Lot Improve
 public transportation

Climate change (mostly fossil fuel reduction)

Better behavior on climate and ecological issues
 Renewable energy, Public Participation
 Vineyard Wind income

Energy transition to electric
 Electric vehicles
 Solar

Connecting in-town pedestrian/bike network

Bike and pedestrian infrastructure
 Appreciation of working waterfront Walking
 guided tour – welcome kiosk – visitor center
 Ernie Boch Park – connectivity

Beach St Extension as a walkway ONLY
 Connect via easements, etc. 16 unique places
 in the general downtown area

Infrastructure/maintenance

Infrastructure
 Be proactive and focus on what we can fix –
 encourage participation
 Refurbish, and repair existing facilities

Better waste management (compost, etc.)
 Change/preservation easily implemented
 (build consensus)
 Better waste management (compost, etc.)

Affordable housing

Understanding the impacts of short-term rentals
 Preserve land for housing
 Re-zone usage of land on MV to allow for
 affordable housing; downtown/higher density area

Affordable Housing (Housing Bank)
 Improve infrastructure

Island-wide collaboration and cooperation

Regional (6 towns) working together better
 Address housing regionally

Information sharing across all six towns
 Regionalization

Managing Development

Master Planning

Opengov.com



Centralized government Improve water quality
Zoning Better zoning ordinance to support what the community wants to see
Activities, quality of life for residents and visitors
Waterfront access (all activities + natural resources) Access to waterfront Gateway
Waterfront development – how to promote this to address the whole community

Engaging seasonal residents

Enlist/engage the taxpayers who do not vote
Revisit school renovation plans + include a committee with members from all communities, including seasonal residents

New opportunities

Innovative food production Town services Aquaculture
New skills for young people

Threats & Challenges

Infrastructure

a. Infrastructure general – 3 comments
b. Circulation/Roads, multimodal, condition, traffic, parking
Ferry impact – traffic on roads parking (2)
Connect VTA with Steamship (Palmer) Too many people/cars
Reliable transportation @ public funding Islanders parking long-term downtown
Improve roads for safety and access Parking
Edgartown/Vineyard Haven Road and Look St intersection Parking – Catholic Church, Hebrew Center – borrow spaces
Traffic – island-wide solution needed Maintaining Pathways (safe) and connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians
town roads; unable to make changes to State
State-maintained roads need more traffic lights
Traffic -Traffic – Traffic
c. Wastewater
Septic issues Wastewater and nitrogen
Wastewater Wastewater flow
Wastewater limits Sewer

Managing development

Zoning (2) Planning for future
Outdated bylaws Population volatility
Outdated zoning Keep trees with development
Regulatory complexities/process Overdevelopment
Guidance for designing a successful Master Plan Housing density
The Big Picture – implementation Smart building ideas - Environmental



Density – housing options - What is the right amount?

Rate of change

Community Wellbeing - Food availability/Security

Good grocery store
Grocery store downtown with traffic etc.
Childcare
Environmental justice
Stop & Shop – best use of real estate by the ferry terminal
Retain the year-round community

Groceries
Food security
Cost of living
Isolation & Depression
Isolation & Depression

Housing, caregiving, affordability

Housing

Housing + house for workforce
Affordable housing
Affordable housing
Housing Bank - Affordable - narrow the gap
Affordable Housing

Air BnB + corporate ownership
Short-term rentals (2 responses)
Rental grouping
Housing – affordable
Capacity (population) Short-term rentals

Stewarding Environmental Resources

Managing our forest environment
Protecting natural resources
Access to waterfront
Access to water
Water quality (2 responses)

Access to conservation land
Access to conservation land
Sustainability (across the board)
Balancing development/open space
Tashmoo and lagoon keeping it clean - West Tisbury affects Tashmoo

Climate change resilience

Environmental impacts
storms/sea level rise, Beach Road + 5 Corners
Floodplain
Climate change State Road Corridor
Protecting the Harbor – sea level rise

Sea level rise
Climate change
Flood planning
EV charging
Sustainability (across the board)

Community process and attitudes

Public participation
Integrating seasonal residents into the process
Public relations – change the narrative
Cohesiveness

Resistance to change
Understanding our values
OUTREACH
The non-voting population is a big part of Town, but their insight, etc. is not incorporated
“How we’ve always done it” pushback to change

Goals of seasonal and/vs. fulltime residents

Regional Challenge/Burden

Representation - One island/one Town
Working with other towns
Regionalization
Lack of sharing of costs of services;
disproportionate fall on Tisbury

Representation – island context
ONE ISLAND mentality
Share tax base among tri-town community
Tisbury bearing the brunt of infrastructure
costs that serve the whole island

Vineyard Haven Vitality

Steamship Authority
Port of entry
Ferry impact – traffic on roads
Compact downtown

More visible welcome to VH
Gateway (2)
Park + Ride – public transportation

Business and Economy

Encourage business & commercial Development
Economic vitality, development, small business
Workforce accommodations- Transportation -
Housing
Maintaining seasonal workforce

Aquaculture
Streamlining the new business process
State Road Corridor – business district
opportunity vs. Main St. retail businesses

Town Costs/Budget

BUDGET
Costly capital expenditures
Tax keeps increasing; it is excluding younger
generations + which is a threat to
culture/community

Lower incomes than the rest of the island
Funding
How to diversify tax revenue to protect
individual property taxes

Town Services, Facilities, and Maintenance

DPW, too much cost/too many employed
Town services

No Community Center
Maintenance and upkeep cost of Town
buildings, Tisbury School

Tisbury School

Tisbury School

The school