

Town of Monterey

Master Plan

September 28, 2023



Photo Credit: Suzanne Sawyer

Acknowledgments

Planning Board Members:

Tom Sawyer, Co-Chair

Laura Mensi, Co-Chair

Chip Allen,

Roger Tryon,

Lauren Behrman,

Margy Abbott,

Mort Salomon,

Noel Wicke

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Seth Jenkins- Community Planner

Mark Maloy- GIS, Data, & IT Manager

Funding for the *Town of Monterey, Massachusetts: Master Plan* was provided by a Community Compact Grant from the State of Massachusetts.

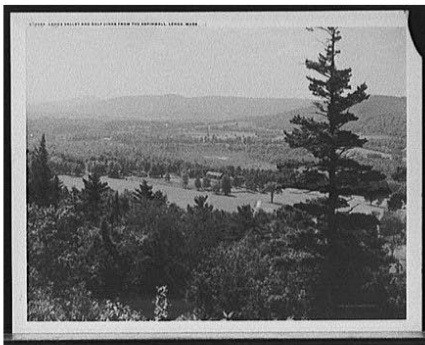


Photo Credit, Clockwise from Top Left: Seth Jenkins, BRPC Staff 1, BRPC Staff 2, Roger Tryon, Seth Jenkins, Unknown, BRPC Staff

Table of Contents

1 Acknowledgments.....	2
Introduction	7
Monterey.....	8
Who We Are and Where We Want To Go.....	14
PUBLIC FORUMS	14
PUBLIC FORUM EVENTS	15
Demographics.....	17
POPULATION	17
RACIAL COMPOSITION	19
EMPLOYMENT	20
Services and Transportation.....	22
Highway Department	22
PRIVATE ROADS IN MONTEREY	25
Highway Department Survey Results	25
Emergency Services	26
FIRE DEPARTMENT	26
POLICE DEPARTMENT	28
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	29
ANIMAL CONTROL	29
EMERGENCY SERVICES SURVEY RESULTS	29
Facilities.....	30
Town Hall	30
Waste Disposal/Transfer Station.....	31
Broadband	31
Public Transportation: Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA)....	31
Council on Aging	32
Food Pantry	32
Veterans Service Office	32
Monterey School Building	33
Housing	34
HOUSING SURVEY RESULT	36
Land Use and Open Space.....	37
Zoning Ordinance	39
Zoning.....	39

Recreation, Historical, and Cultural Resources	40
Monterey Public Library	40
Monterey Community Center	41
Recreational and Open Space Areas	43
Monterey Town Beach	43
LAKE GARFIELD	45
BREWER POND	47
LAKE BUEL	48
BEARTOWN STATE FOREST	50
APPALACHIAN TRAIL	52
Greene/Bidwell Park	53
MONTEREY PRESERVATION LAND TRUST	55
HISTORIC DISTRICT	56
DIANE’S TRAIL	57
BERKSHIRE NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL- BOB’S WAY	58
BERKSHIRE TROUT HATCHERY	58
WATERSHEDS	59
HOUSATONIC RIVER WATERSHED,	60
FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED	60
EXPANDING OPEN SPACES AND RECREATIONAL AREAS	61
Town Finances	62
Taxes	62
Tax Sales of Delinquent Property	64
Financial Planning	64
Energy Conservation	65
Local Economy	66
Gould Farm	66
Camps	67
CAMP KIMAMA HALF MOON	67
HUME NEW ENGLAND	67
Bidwell House Museum	68
AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES/FARMS	68
HOME-BASED BUSINESS	69
Economic Development Survey Results	69
Economic Development Recommendations	69
VILLAGE (TOWN CENTER)	69
RESTAURANTS/BARS	70
Survey Results	71
DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS	72
Monterey’s Future: Implementing Our Master Plan	83
Appendix	89
Relevant Studies and Reference Materials	89
• Monterey Master Plan Public Forums Mentimeter Presentations	89
• Forum Synopsis Document	89

- Monterey News Articles 89
- Monterey Stakeholder Meetings 89
- Monterey Master Plan Survey Results 89
- Monterey Survey- Open Responses 89
- Monterey Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2020) 89
- Summary- Monterey Solar Energy Report 89
- Summary of Capital Improvement Plan..... 89
- List of inventoried properties on Massachusetts Cultural Resource
Information System (MACRIS) maintained by the Massachusetts Historical
Commission 89

Introduction

This Master Plan was developed to update the most recent version completed in 2003ⁱ. This updated Master Plan, outlining priorities for future development, spending, and the community's needs, will help to guide Monterey through 2040. Through the analysis of publicly available information and a process to gain a clearer understanding of current residents' preferences and priorities in the town, this Master Plan seeks to serve as a guide for the next 5 to 20 years.

Beginning in June 2022 and ending in June 2023, the Planning Board conducted a series of interactive public forums, interviewed town officials and private citizens, and conducted an internet survey to obtain public input in order to create this Master Plan.

This Master Plan will help inform elected town officials in setting policies and funding priorities consistent with residents' wishes, emphasizing infrastructure, housing, community gathering needs, and maintenance of solid financial viability while considering climate vulnerabilities. This Master Plan will also enhance the town's ability to successfully pursue future state and federal grants and position the town to respond to future needs.

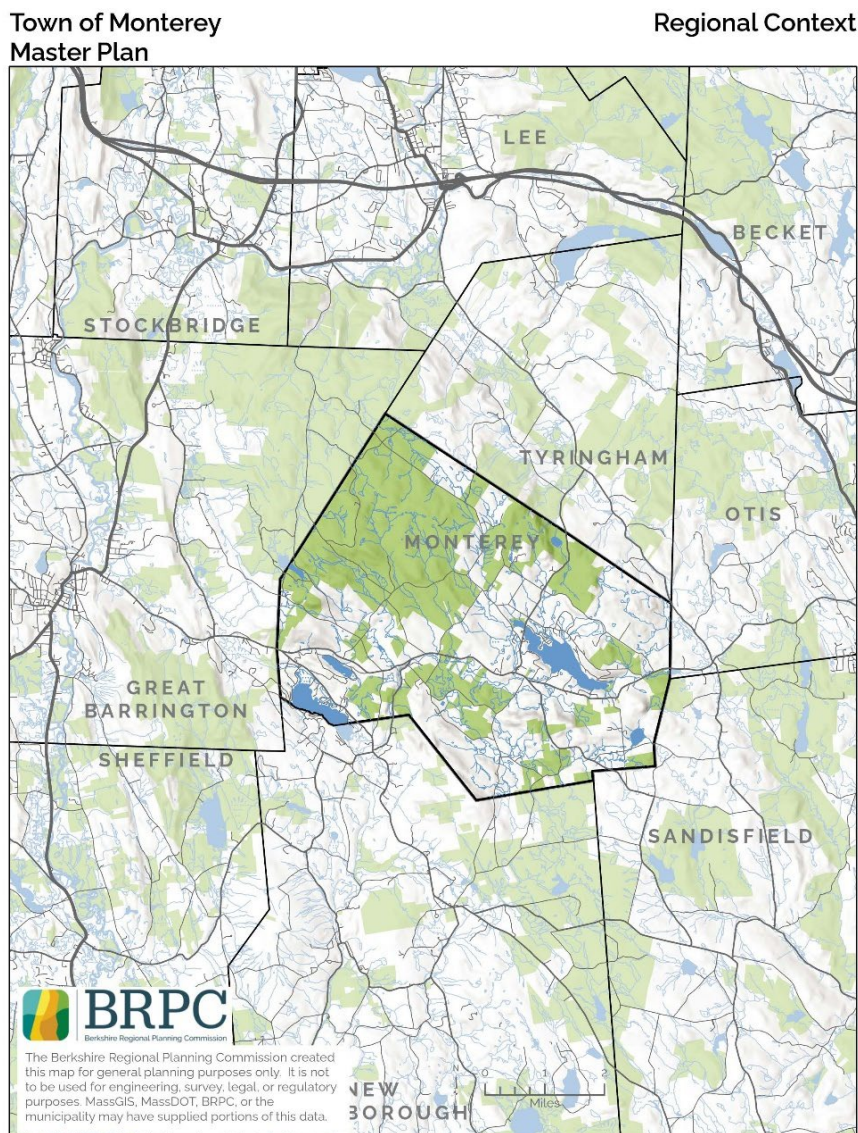
Monterey is a small, rural community with two lakes and numerous ponds, including: Lake Garfield, Lake Buel and Stevens Pond. Previously, the town hosted a general store and a small restaurant; both are currently under construction and renovation. The town is also home to several farms and agricultural operations (including Gould Farm, a residential therapeutic treatment facility that uses farming as a treatment protocol), several camps, and a handful of municipal buildings and facilities. A large percentage (44%) of the town's land is state forest or protected status (charitable ownership or owned by utilities).

School-aged children either attend schools within the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD), or families can exercise school choice and send their children to a surrounding district school with an opening. Currently, the school system is considering merging with Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

Monterey

Monterey has an area of 27.23 square miles (17,538 acres) and is surrounded by Tyringham to its north, Great Barrington to the West, New Marlborough and Sandisfield to its South, and Sandisfield and Otis to its East. Monterey in its regional context is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1- Regional Context for Monterey



The town's topography ranges from 920 feet above sea level to 2,106 feet at Mount Wilcox. Other notable peaks in the town include: Livermore Peak- 1,837 feet, Hunger Mountain- 1,768 feet, and Chestnut Hill- 1,847 feet. Figure 2 shows the town's topography with 3 M and 15 M contour intervals (~10 and 50 feet.)

Figure 2 shows a topographic map of Monterey.

Town of Monterey Master Plan

Topographic Map

Contours (3 m)
Major Contours (15 m)

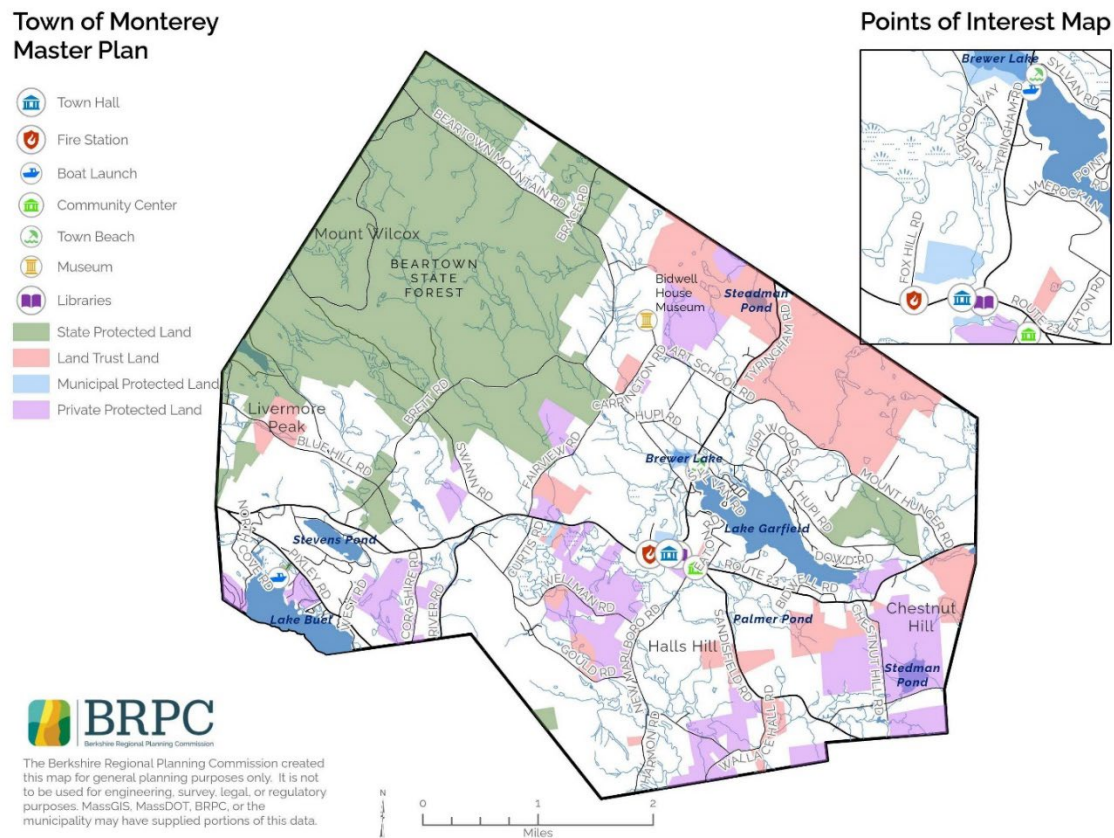


The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission created this map for general planning purposes only. It is not to be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, MassDOT, BRPC, or the municipality may have supplied portions of this data.



Figure 3 shows a variety of points of interest within the town. Highlights include: Lake Garfield and Lake Buel, other ponds and peaks, the Town Hall, the Fire Station, the boat launch and Town Beach, the Library and the Community Center, The Bidwell House Museum, as well as Beartown State Forest, municipal land, land trust land and private land.

Figure 3 Monterey Points of Interest Map



2023 Survey Responses about Monterey:

- "I adore Monterey for exactly the beautiful, quiet and natural place that it is."
- "I have been a summer resident for my whole life and have a community of friends here."
- "We found our land back in 1983- had never heard of Monterey before- been happy ever since."
- "Close to many cultural activities"
- "The charm of Monterey, which distinguishes it from other towns in the state, is its steadfast [desire] to remain a traditional New England town, without becoming over commercialized in its appearance or use."
- "While I am not a current resident, I care very much about Monterey and keep up with the town's growth and development through the much respected Monterey News and lasting connections with current residents. I see the town as a model of community strength, conversation, and deliberation (the past few years of challenges being a good example of how difficulties are faced and dealt with democratically). The next twenty years, I believe, will require skill-sets and much accumulated "muscle memory" throughout the citizenry to deal with the monumental changes that we are facing. Thanks for doing the survey - another great example of what I admire about Monterey."

2023 Survey Respondents

OUR HISTORY¹

Monterey and all the surrounding area are the traditional, ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, and before them, other Indigenous peoples beyond memory or record. The Mohicans were part of the Eastern Algonquin family who inhabited most of the east coast and New England. The band who lived in the Housatonic River Valley prior to European Settlement became known as the Stockbridge Indians. Despite tremendous hardships from being forced off their lands, the Mohican community today resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. Today, the Stockbridge-Munsee community continues their advocacy and stewardship of these ancestral homelands.

Monterey was originally part of Township No. 1 – one of four townships chartered by the provincial government in 1735 along the main road which was to be improved between Westfield and the north parish of Sheffield (Great Barrington). After the land was purchased from the Stockbridge Indians, settlement began in 1739. The first permanent settlers were Lieutenant Isaac Garfield, Thomas Slaton, and Captain John Brewer. Captain Brewer built the first sawmill and a grist mill on the Konkapot Brook outfall of Twelve Mile Pond (later named Lake Garfield, in honor of Pres. James A. Garfield, a relative of Lt. Isaac Garfield).

The south part of Tyringham was the original settlement centered along what are now called Hupi Road, Mt. Hunger/Art School Road, Beartown Mountain Road, and Brett Road. This part of South Tyringham was later called “Old Center.” This is where the first and second Meeting Houses were built, and the homes of the 67 original proprietors were located. Many of the key roadways laid out at this time follow those same courses today. The saw mill and grist mill were built by Capt. Brewer, 2 miles southeast of Old Center along the Konkapot River, creating what eventually became the village of Monterey. The south section of Tyringham Road was laid out to connect the Mills and the Meeting House. The Hop Brook section of town was settled after Old Center, and became known as North Tyringham.

The Reverend Adonijah Bidwell was the town’s first minister arriving in October 1750, serving there until his death in 1784. He built the present “Bidwell House” about 1762. The Bidwell House Museum opened in 1990 on 196 acres of the original settlement (see figure 4), including the site of the first meeting house and the old Boston-Albany Post Road. The Museum offers visitors insight into life in the 18th century. The Bidwell House has been historically renovated and preserved, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. House tours are offered during the summer and fall. The

¹ The Planning Board would like to thank Rob Hoogs for his help in editing this section.

Museum grounds are open for free year-round, including fields, gardens, and 6 miles of trails, including a Native American Interpretive Trail.

In 1847, the third Meeting House was built in the village, and Monterey separated from Tyngham. The town was named in commemoration of the Battle of Monterrey, Mexico (September 21-24, 1846), an American victory over Mexican forces during the Mexican-American War.

Historically, industry in the town has been focused on agricultural and timber production. In the early 1800s, most of the land in town was used agriculturally. Today, stone walls remain throughout the woods and on mountain sides – testament to this land use. In the 1820s, merino sheep were introduced, which resulted in even more clearing and fencing of land.

The preponderance of both forests and rivers in the town made water-powered milling of lumber practical. An 1830 map of the town shows two sawmills, a carding factory and grist mill soon followed by a downstream paper mill and woolen factory by 1858. Shingle mills and factories for making twine, rat traps, whips, and even a distillery were located in Monterey. Most of the mills were located along the Konkapot River close to Monterey Village and downstream along River Road, and in the Old Center along Loom Brook. Other mills were located along smaller brooks throughout Monterey.

In the mid- to late-1800s, charcoal production (for the iron furnaces in Great Barrington and elsewhere) was a major industry in Monterey. In 1875, Monterey was the largest producer of charcoal in Massachusetts. As a result, by the end of the 19th century almost all of Monterey – as well as most of the Berkshires – was virtually cleared of trees.

About 4,500 acres in Monterey is part of Beartown State Forest, established by the state in 1921. The Civilian Conservation Corps built several projects there during the 1930s, including the damming and creation of Benedict Pond. Many of the original proprietors' home sites – now just cellar holes and stone walls in deep woods – were located in Beartown. The Appalachian Trail passes through this part of the town, and residents use both areas for recreation.

Beginning in the latter 1800s and early 1900s, Monterey became a summer resort, with many cottages built around Lake Garfield and Lake Buel, and many hotels and boarding houses throughout town. Summer camps were also established and kept the town hopping through the 1970s. Since then, most of the camps have closed. Many of the small summer cottages have been expanded and winterized. There is now a large second home

population, many of whom have been coming to Monterey for two or three generations, and who are very active in the community.

Monterey's population has fluctuated between 761 in 1850 to a low of 282 in 1920. More recently, the town has grown to its apex population, with more than 1,000 residents reported in the 2020 Census. During the summer, the seasonal population increases to over 2,000.

Figure 4: Adonijah Bidwell House



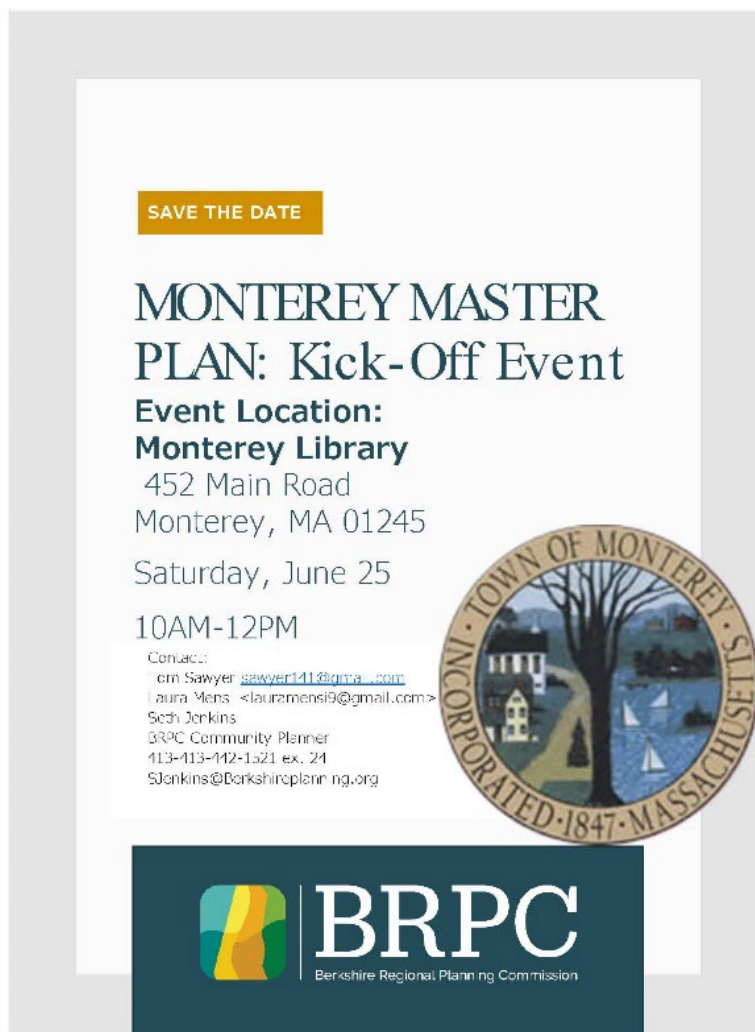
Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Who We Are and Where We Want To Go...

Public Forums

As part of the Master Plan process, a series of public forums were held at the town's library and town hall. All forums were publicly advertised on the Town's website, at town hall, through the Google Group, and in the Monterey News (Figures 5,6,7).

Figure 5: Flyer advertising the initial public forum.



All events were 2+ hours and held on Saturday Mornings or on a Thursday evening. Attendance varied but most events were attended by approximately 20-25 townspeople. More detailed information about these events can be found in the appendix to this document and also on the Town's website.

Figure 6- Open Space Forum, August 20



Public Forum Events

- Master Plan Kick-Off Event, June 25th 2022
- Open Space and Recreation Forum, August 20, 2022
- Housing Transportation, and Economic Development Forum, October 13, 2022
- Cultural Resources, Facilities, and Services Forum, November 12, 2022
- Townwide Survey Development/Timeline Announcement, December 10, 2022
- Survey Results: Goals and Objectives of the Plan, August 10, 2023

At these events, town residents' love for the open spaces, walking trails, farms, and lakes and rivers of the town quickly became apparent and concern for changes resulting from climate change were also voiced. Townspeople place a high priority on planning for future climate resilience and adapting to these changes. They recognize that the town is becoming increasingly unaffordable to middle and lower income individuals. They also recognize that the town is getting older and planning for an aging population will become increasingly more important. Lastly, they would like to see more options for bike and pedestrian travel and public transportation in the town. Figures 6 and 7 show public events held at the library.

Figure 7- Services and Facilities Forum, November 12, 2022.

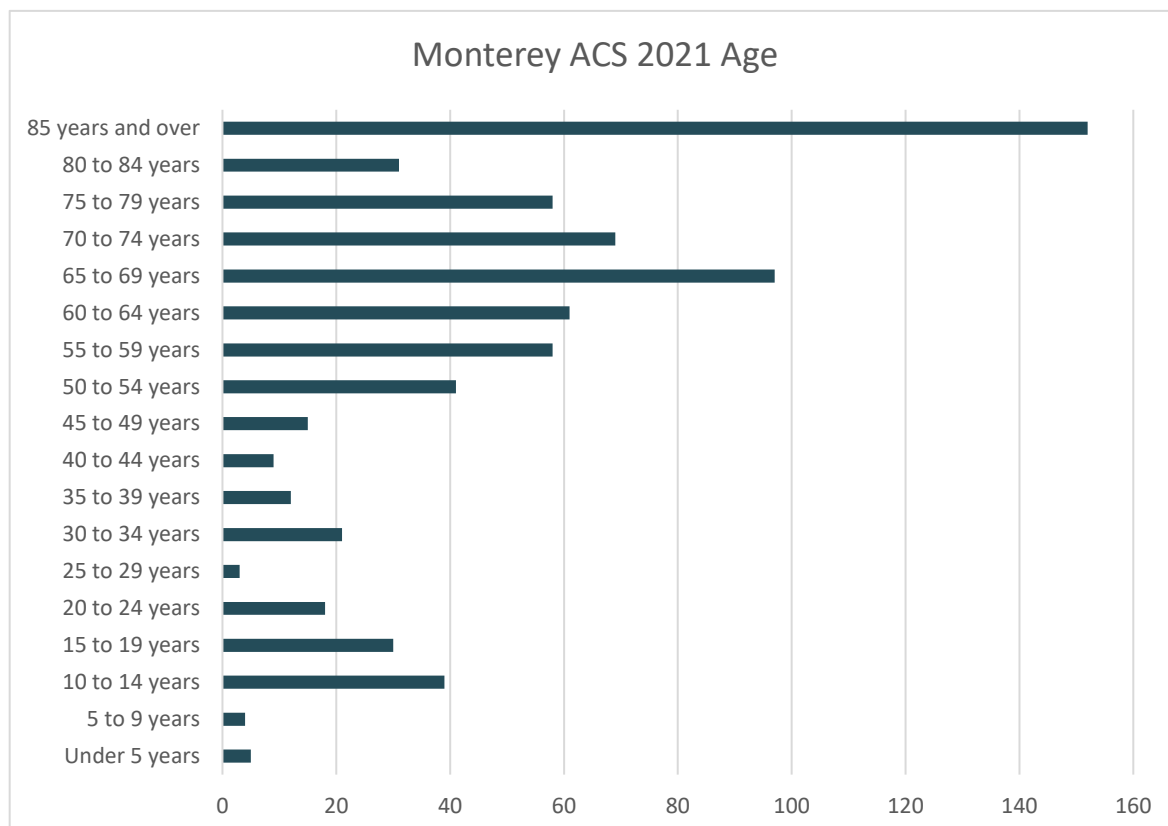


Demographics

Population

The most reliable source of demographic data comes from the United States Census Bureau. The Census Bureau publishes two different metrics that describe population data: 1. The American Community Survey (ACS) which is published annually and is an extrapolation of data based upon a survey of approximately 1% of the population, and 2. The Decennial Census, which is conducted every 10 years and surveys every person living in the United States (DCS). The ACS asks a wider variety of questions than the DCS and offers a more detailed analysis of topics such as education, employment, internet access, and transportation. However, because of the relatively small sample size, it is subject to sampling errors, especially in a small town such as Monterey. For this reason, the information presented in the ACS is less reliable than that of the DCS and should be used more to determine trends in the population. However, some information is only available through the ACS, and as the only source, information should be viewed as instructive and not definitive.

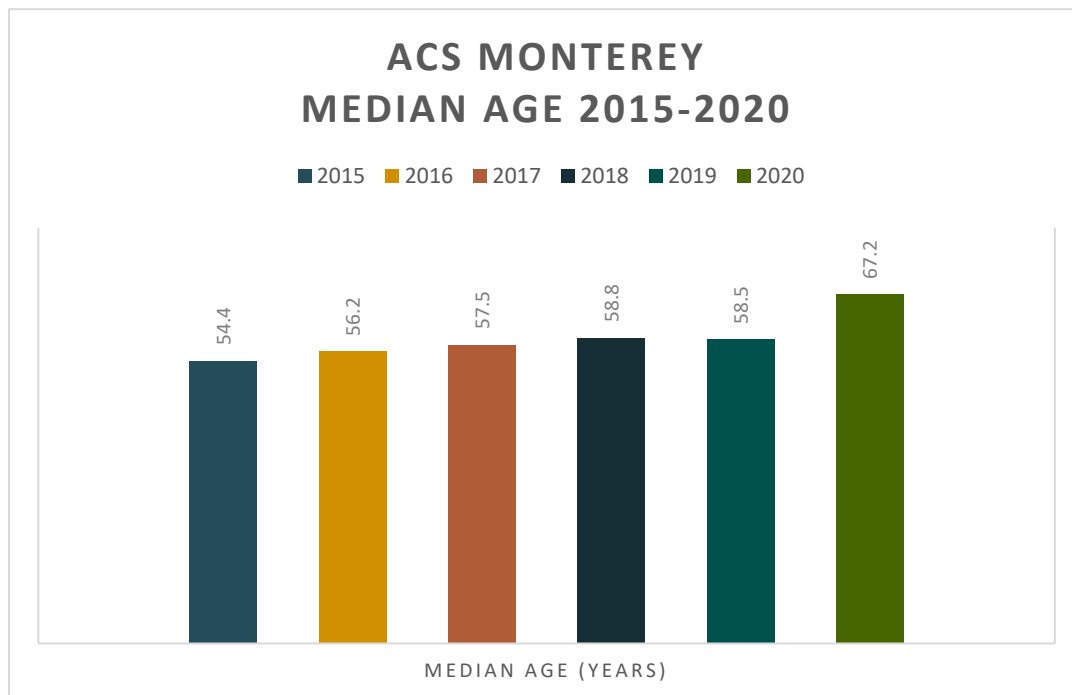
Figure 8 Monterey Population Age Data, 2021



The 2021 American Community Survey 5-year estimates that the largest cohort of the population in the town is in the 85-year and over age category, with 152 individuals. It is likely that due to Monterey's small size and the tendency of outlying data points in the small sample sizes of the ACS that ages in the town are skewed older. This is demonstrated in Figure 8.

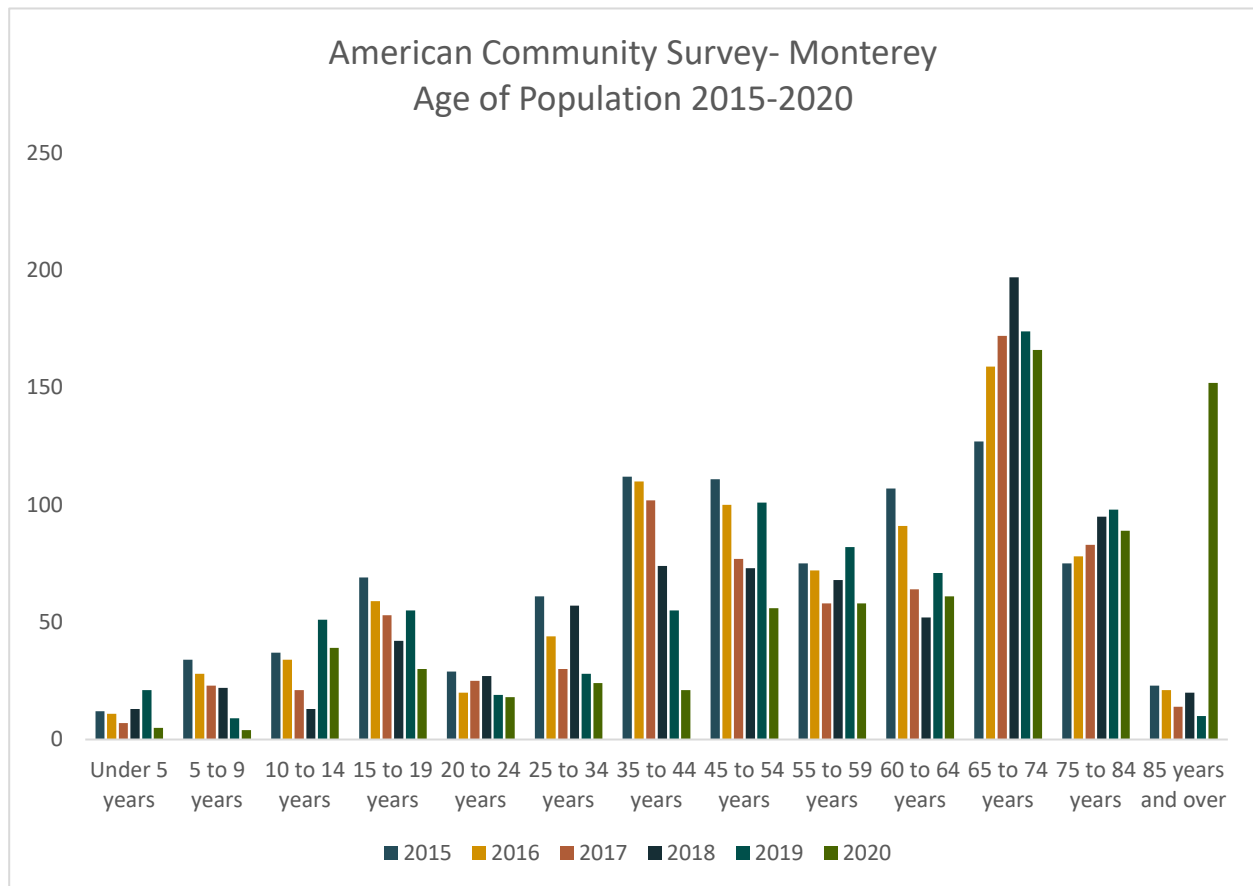
Figure 9 presents the Median Age of town residents from 2015-2020 using ACS data. As was previously mentioned, the 2021 data is likely skewed older and likely not representative of actual town data, but the regional population continues to trend as an increasingly aging population. In looking at the trendline in the population and factoring in other demographic results that will be discussed further herein, it is clear that the town is aging.

Figure 9 Monterey Median Age, 2015-2020



Looking at age cohorts, the data for Monterey from 2015-2020 is presented in Figure 10. Trendlines can be determined by reviewing the fluctuations in each age grouping across the 5-year interval: the majority of age cohorts showed a decrease during this time period, including 5-9 years of age, 15-19 years of age, 25-34 years of age, 35-44 years of age, and 45-54 years of age. Age groups of 55 and older showed some increase in population, especially those in the 65-74 and 74-84 cohorts during the period of 2015-2020.

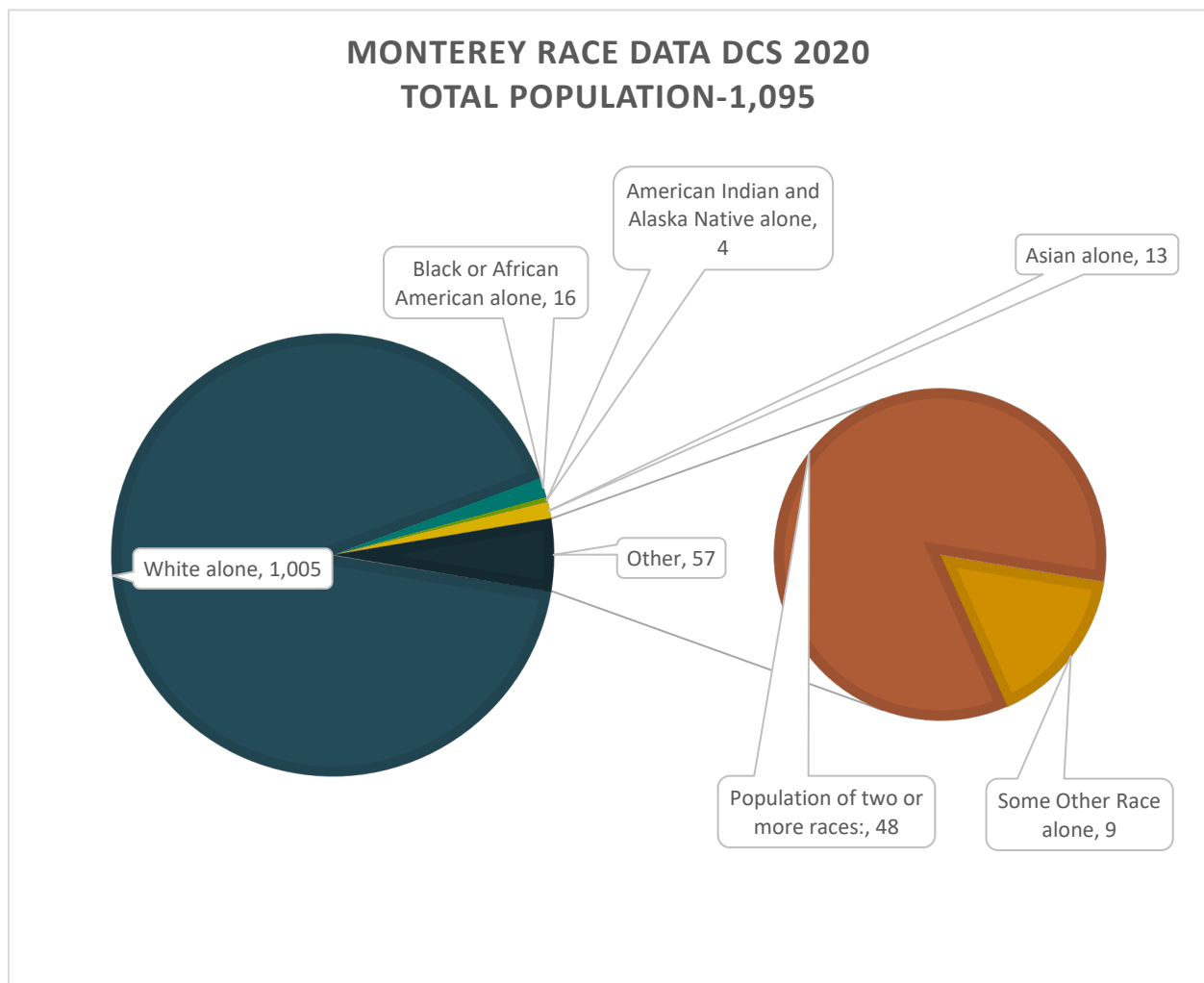
Figure 10 Monterey Age Cohorts, 2015-2020



Racial Composition

The 2020 Decennial Census recorded 1,095 residents in the town. Monterey has very little racial diversity with 1047 residents reporting as white alone, 16 residents reported Black or African American, 4 Residents of American Indian, 14 residents of Asian descent, and 9 residents reporting some other race alone. Residents of any race that identify as Hispanic or Latino in the town constitute 32 individuals. The town has 48 residents reporting as two or more races. The town's racial composition is shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11- Monterey Racial Characteristics, 2020



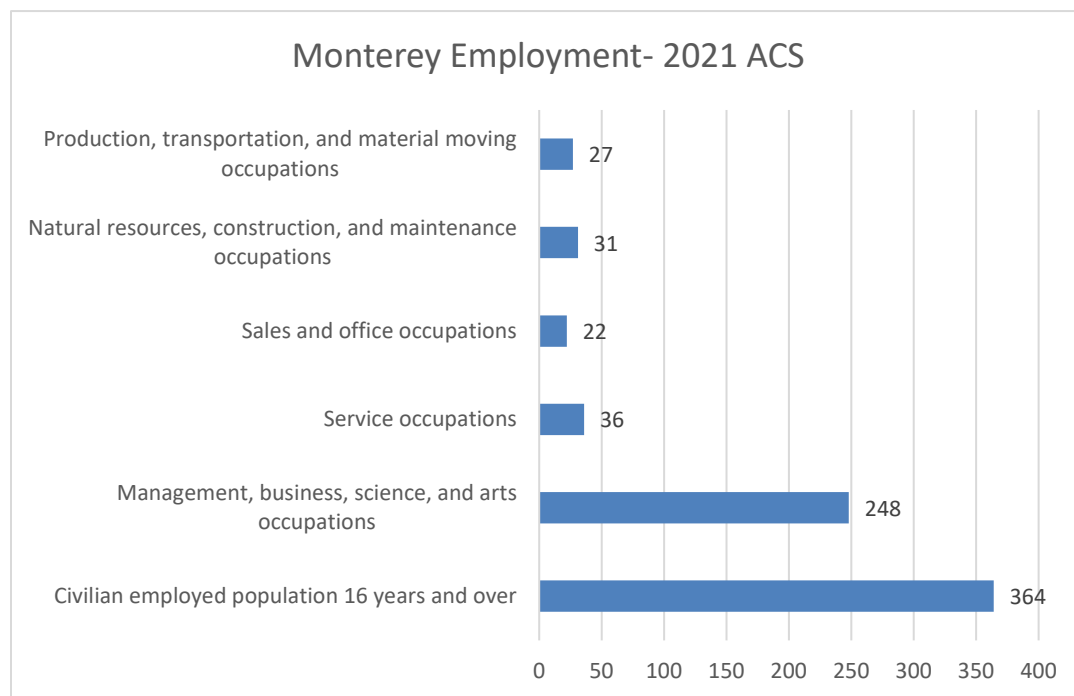
Employment

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, Monterey has 364 individuals 16 or over currently employed. The majority of the population (248) is working in management, business, science, and arts occupations. Other areas of occupation include production, transport, and material moving occupations (27), natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (31), sales and office occupations (22), and service occupations (36). This information is presented in Table 12.

Information about the number of retired individuals is not available from the United States Census Bureau, however, numbers of individuals over the age of 65 is available. According to the 2021 ACS, there are 395 individuals over the age of 65. Although some of these individuals may continue to work on a limited basis, it is likely that the majority of these individuals are not

working full-time. The same survey indicates that more than 250 individuals are over the age of 75, a cohort more likely to be fully retired.

Figure 12- Monterey Employment Categories



Monterey Unemployment is demonstrated in the Table 1 below. For comparison, Berkshire County, and Massachusetts unemployment statistics are also featured. During the past 10 years, the unemployment numbers in Monterey have fluctuated between a high of 16.8% (in 2010) and a low of 1.9% in 2019. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, unemployment in Monterey spiked to 6.2% locally in Monterey. By August, 2022 unemployment in the town had fallen to 3.6%

Table 1- Monterey Unemployment, 2010-2020

Location	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Monterey	16.8%	4.8%	7.5%	9.2%	6.4%	5.7%	4.8%	2.6%	2.0%	1.9%	6.2%
Berkshire County	7.5%	8.4%	9.2%	9.9%	9.4%	8.9%	8.2%	6.8%	6.0%	4.8%	5.1%
Massachusetts	7.4%	8.1%	8.5%	8.9%	8.4%	7.6%	6.8%	6.0%	5.4%	4.8%	5.1%

Services and Transportation

Highway Department

Figure 12- Monterey Sign at Royal Pond



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

The department issues permits for new driveways, logging operations, and any other work in the road right of way. The department has a facility located at 40 Gould Road for equipment storage, maintenance, repair and storage. The department has also recently constructed a salt shed for easy storage and transfer of road sand/salt. The department maintains town roads in Monterey for both mowing in the summer and snow/ice removal in the winter. The town maintains approximately 50 miles of public roads, 25 miles are paved while 23.5 are unpaved, gravel roads.

The Director of Operations reports that his current crew is able to handle the maintenance needs of town roads. The town retains ownership of and management of State Route 23 that runs between the town lines of Otis and Great Barrington. The Director of Operations reports that the current state of roads in Monterey is good. Town roads consist of a mixture of paved and unpaved roads. Paved road maintenance is sufficient with fog and crack sealings regimen in place for both necessary maintenance and capital

improvements. Particularly relevant in Monterey, with its multiple water bodies, streams, and wetlands, is the maintenance of culverts, bridges, and drainages. Several significant culvert replacement projects are scheduled for replacement or are in engineering stages. Projects include Hupi Road, Curtis Road, and Route 23 at Town Hall.

The State Chapter 90 Program provides municipalities annual funds based on a formula of the number of miles and the population of each town. The funds are for investment in and improvements to our local transportation network. The funds can be used for roads, bridges, culverts, and even some equipment. The town is using Chapter 90 funds for a new loader with a grass cutting attachment in FY 2023. The town is reserving some of these funds to finance larger future projects.

The Hupi Road and Route 23 projects were both identified in the Municipal Vulnerability Program and have been partially financed with MVP fundingⁱⁱ. The State's Small Bridge Program will be used for the Curtis Road bridge replacement, scheduled for summer of 2023, expected to take 6-9 months, and cost approximately \$1 million.

Dredging the town's dams was identified in the town's 2020 Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. According to the town's Director of Operations, dredging of Lake Garfield and Lake Buel's dams are projected to begin in 2024 and expected to take 6 months to complete. This project will help protect the downtown areas directly downstream.

Another scheduled project is the replacement of the town owned portion of Fox Hill Road next to the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department. This project will involve the full reclamation and replacement of 1/10th of a mile of roadway.

As previously mentioned, the town has a schedule for crack and fog sealing of town roads that significantly lengthens the lifespan of the roadways. Recently completed roads include Hupi, Tyringham, Beartown, Gould, and Curtis Road. Scheduled roads include Pixley Hill, River, Corashire, and New Marlborough. For bulk purchasing of road projects and maintenance materials, the town works with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission in its bulk purchasing program. This enables the town to pool purchasing power with other regional towns to obtain better prices on rock salt, gravel, drainage-related materials, crack seal, etc. This also allows the town to avoid some of the requirements associated with state procurement law.

The town closes Chestnut Hill Road during the winter (and several other roads without residences) due to the steep grade. This limits access to

Hume Camp to the south via Cronk Road. The large delivery vehicles and tour buses arriving to Hume are a concern for the impact on the road, especially given the effects of climate change with warmer, wetter winters. For this reason, the town should consider improvements to Cronk Road (possibly in partnership with the camp), however many residents in the area would prefer the roads to remain as dirt roads. Beartown Mountain Road's remote location and relative inaccessibility have resulted in road closure due to muddy conditions. Monterey Roads are shown in Figure 14.

The town has worked with the various department heads and the Finance Committee to develop a Capital Improvement Plan. Planning for major purchases is forecast for the coming 5 years and includes investment in equipment, mitigation of Emerald Ash Borer tree damage, bridge and culvert repair and replacement, and facilities improvements.

The State of Massachusetts maintains roadways within Beartown State Forest.

Figure 13- Downtown Monterey



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins:

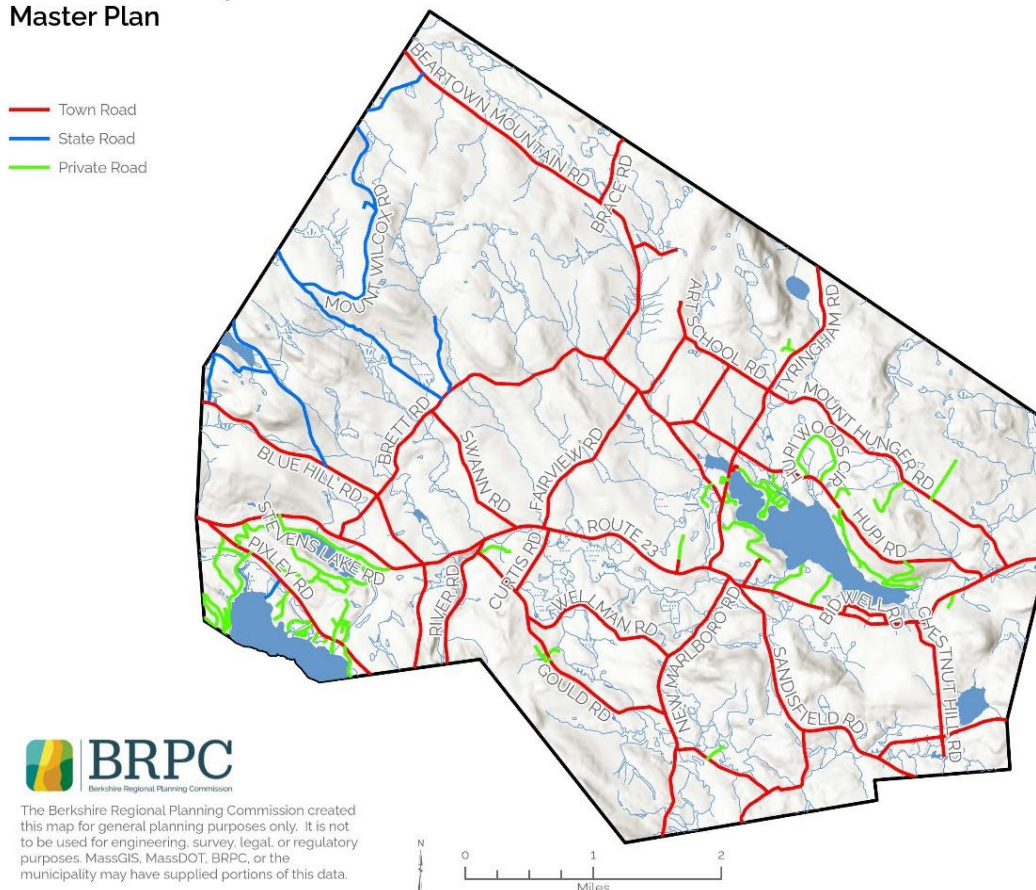
Private Roads in Monterey

Private roads in Monterey are clustered around the edge of Lake Garfield, Stevens Pond, and Lake Buel. Residents that live on these roads are responsible for maintaining accessibility for emergency vehicles year-round. Improvements and maintenance is generally handled with private contractors. Conditions during Winter and Spring precipitation events have sometimes created impassable road conditions for residents. Predicted increases in precipitation will only exacerbate this problem. The town highway department should coordinate with landowners to verify that private roads remain accessible to emergency vehicles. Residences on private roads can petition the town to have those roads accepted as town roads, if those roads can be shown to meet acceptable standards (based upon State Subdivision ordinance.)

Figure 14 Monterey Road Jurisdiction

Town of Monterey Master Plan

Road Jurisdiction Map



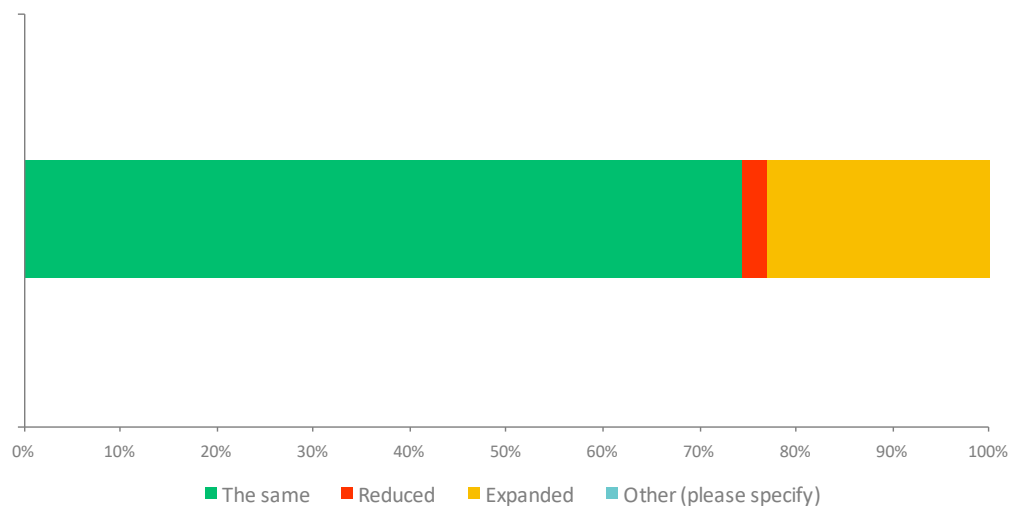
Highway Department Survey Results

Respondents who said that road services are good and should remain the same are the majority (75%) Approximately 23% of respondents would like to see road services expanded. Results to survey the question on road maintenance in Monterey are shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15- Monterey Survey Results- Road Facilities

Q7: Should road maintenance in Monterey be kept the same, reduced, or expanded?

Answered: 376 Skipped: 9



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Emergency Services

Fire Department

The Monterey Fire Company, located at 411 Main Road, was first organized in 1930, and then in 1980 as the Monterey Company LTD and was incorporated to create a larger, more modern fire station (Figure 16.) The Company is a non-profit and fundraises at several events annually, primarily at the Steak Roast which in 2023 will celebrate its 46th year. The existing facility and pavilion were constructed in 1980 and are owned and operated by the members of the company. The town supports the department in two ways: through an annual rent payment and financing capital purchases of town-owned trucks and equipment. The Fire Company's pavilion is the site of a winter ice rink and is also used for Town meetings and for other public events.

The department has 25 members including a chief, deputy chief, 2 captains and 19 firefighters. The department is responsible for weekly training of volunteer members and has facilities onsite for training. The department currently maintains a ladder truck, engine, two rescue vehicles, a brush truck, and a rescue boat, which are owned by the town.

The department responds to an average of 150 calls per year, of which 65% are fire related and 35% are EMS callsⁱⁱⁱ. Responses include structure fires, motor vehicle accidents, brush fires, alarm calls, lost hikers, and water rescues.

Figure 16- Monterey Fire Company Sign



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Fire Calls 2021 Annual Report

- 54 EMS calls
- 24 Structure fires
- 2 Motor vehicle accidents
- 4 Brush fires
- 1 Water rescue
- 2 Lost hikers
- 41 Alarm activations
- 30 Various emergencies

The department hosts the annual steak roast held in the pavilion. This event is widely reported by town residents (at public forums) as an extremely popular event. The pavilion is also used in the winter (conditions permitting) for ice skating and pickup

hockey. Adjacent to the pavilion is a small playground for town children to use.

Police Department

Currently the Monterey Department consists of 3 full-time police officers and 4 part-time officers for covering weekends, vacations etc. The department hopes to hire an additional part-time officer in the near future. Currently the Chief and full-time officers share responsibility for the 12 AM-8 AM on-call shift on alternating weeks. Recent staffing losses to other local police departments have been difficult for the department, it is hoped that recently increased pay levels will enable the department to hire new staff.

A new hybrid police vehicle, approved at the 2022 town meeting will reduce fuel costs for the town and provide reliable service for years to come. A second hybrid police vehicle was approved for FY 2024.

Road Conditions: Currently the highest speed limit in the town is 40 mph. The Select Board voted to reduce speed limits in the downtown area to 25 mph in 1983. Many roads do not have shoulders or sidewalks but installing these features might require “eminent domain,” taking land from property owners. Determining the town’s willingness to undertake this would be an important preliminary step to making improvements in pedestrian accessibility. Beartown Mountain Road at the northwestern corner of town has very limited cellular services. Responses to this portion of town are difficult, especially during Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Mutual Aid: Pittsfield Dive Response Team and Haz-Mat Team have assisted the town in the recent past. Town PD assists with nearby towns as needed, especially with Great Barrington and New Marlborough.

The police chief also serves as the harbormaster for both Lake Garfield and Lake Buel. Estimated average responses/year: 500-600,

2021 Police Calls:700, including:

69 calls to assist a citizen	23 auto accidents
39 complaints	2 stolen vehicles
38 abandoned 911 calls	3 domestic disturbances/abuse
36 burglar alarms	2 missing persons
34 mutual Aid with nearby community	6 trespass
33 wires or trees in roadway	4 mental health crisis
7 arrests	

Emergency Medical Services

The town contracts with Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance squad for coverage in Monterey. This service is shared with other Berkshire County towns such as Great Barrington, Sheffield, and Egremont. Beginning in FY2024 the Town will enter into a contract for service with Southern Berkshire Ambulance Service based upon a real estate assessment. \$51,670 was approved at the FY2024 Annual Town Meeting. During fiscal year 2022 77 emergency calls were handled by the service. This service is approved annually at town meetings. In prior years, the Town made an annual contribution for this service of approximately \$5,000. Due to increasing costs the Select Board examined other options and will continue to do so.

Animal Control

Calls to the animal control officer are handled through the Monterey Police Department. The Town clerk maintains vaccination records for all town dogs and cats. Town bylaws stipulate that all pets will be vaccinated on an annual basis, that dogs must be under their owner's control (leashed) at all times, and that the dog officer is authorized to cite owners of nuisance animals.

Emergency Services Survey Results

Figure 17- Monterey Volunteer Fire Department Facilities



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

The survey specifically asked respondents what infrastructure or improvement should be a priority for the town, the development of an Emergency Services Center was the fourth most popular option with 21% of respondents selecting that option. Consolidating police, fire and EMS services could offer savings for the town. However, it would be complicated by the

town's lack of dedicated EMS services and current contract with the volunteer fire department.

Facilities

Town Hall

Figure 18- Monterey Town Hall



Photo credit: Melissa Noe

The Town Hall facility is located at 435 Main Road and houses a variety of town services including (Figure 18):

- Town Administrator/Notary Public
- Town Clerk
- Tax Collector
- Select Board Meeting Space
- Police Department
- Assessor's Office
- Building Department/Inspector
- Council on Aging

The two-story facility has had a series of additions and renovations to the original Monterey Grange Hall, originally built in 1920. The Town Administrator reported that the building was expanded sometime between 2000 and 2004. Reports indicated that some additions to the original building are inadequate with limited heat in the winter. Storage for town records is also becoming a problem for the town. Scanning and digitization of some records might help to alleviate this problem. Problems are exacerbated by the lower level being within the floodplain of the Konkapot River. Further use of this space will necessitate the completion of the Route 23 culvert replacement project to reduce the risk of flooding. Additional work may be needed to floodproof the building and its mechanicals. This should occur concurrently with the culvert replacement along with other improvements at Greene Park.

Waste Disposal/Transfer Station

The town's Transfer Station offers trash disposal, recycling, and a "swap shop" for town residents. Residents must register to use the facility and pay an annual fee. The facility also offers residents salt/sand for use on sidewalks and driveways and compost/mulch for gardens. The facility is open on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. Residents must purchase and display a sticker with their annual registration. Stickers are issued on an annual basis from July 1 through June 30.

Broadband

The town has contracted with Fiber Connect, LLC to install fiber optic lines throughout the town with a few exceptions closest to other towns with existing services (including several houses on River, Corashire and Tyringham Roads). Work began in 2017 and was completed in the spring of 2023. This network will supply almost all residents with high-speed fiber optic lines. The Town has negotiated a reduced rate for low-income customers. To qualify for the reduced rate, customers must be qualified by a 3rd party and must re-qualify annually.

Public Transportation: Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA)

Monterey is not on a regularly scheduled bus route for the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority but as a member of the consortium, Monterey residents are eligible for paratransit services. To participate in the service, residents need to fill out the application form available on the BRTA website.

The service offers door to door transit trips and must be arranged 24 hours in advance. Transit is available for trips to medical appointments, shopping, work, or school.

Council on Aging

The Council on Aging (COA) has a part-time coordinator who assists town seniors with a variety of activities and groups. Events include Veteran's Day Recognition at the Library and Cemetery, Barrington Brewery Luncheon, a monthly Parkinson's Support Group (the only group in Southern Berkshire County) attended by an average of 20-30 people, as well as weekly drop-in hours at the library. The group sponsors speakers at the Community Center several times a year presenting topics relevant to seniors, (cell phone assistance and estate planning for example), a weekly Tai Chi class, and movies twice a month. The Great Barrington COA has a small van that is available to seniors. The COA also organizes trips to local points of interest, such as the recent trip to The Clark Art Institute. The town's coordinator indicated that town records indicate more than 440 of the town's permanent residents are over the age of 60.

Food Pantry

The Monterey Pantry Pick-Up was started by members of the COA, Community Center, and other concerned citizens in response to community needs beginning in October of 2020. The volunteer-run organization operates a Saturday Morning food bank at the Monterey United Church of Christ.

Veterans Service Office

Monterey is a member of a consortium of towns in the Southern Berkshire Veteran's Service District including the majority of towns in Southern Berkshire County and headquartered in Great Barrington.

Monterey School Building

The Monterey School is located at 459 Main Road to the east of downtown. The building is no longer in use, having formerly been used as an elementary and Kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten facility, most recently in 2016^{iv}. The site is difficult to access and needs significant renovation to have any serviceable use to the town (Figure 19.)

Figure 19- Monterey School Building



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

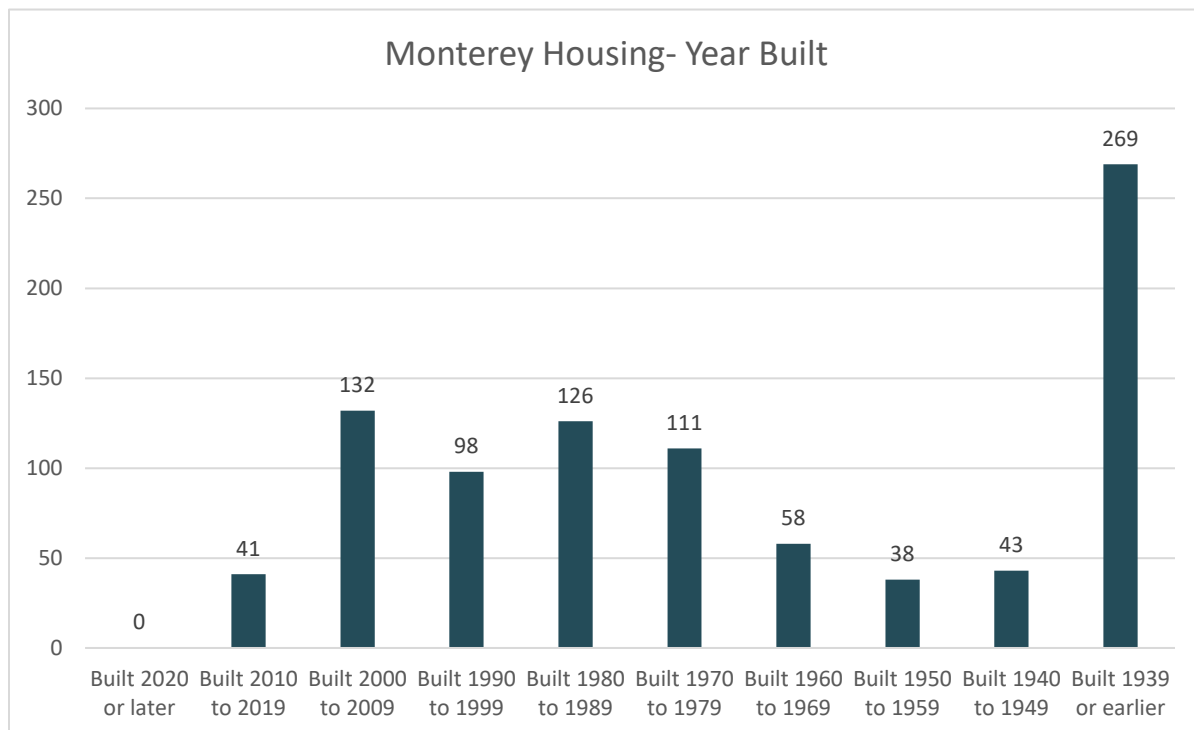
Housing

Monterey is a primarily residential town consisting of single-family homes on multi-acre lots. New home construction requires a 2-acre minimum lot size in either the Agricultural-Residential (AR) district or Lake Shore (LS) districts (steep slopes over 12% grade require larger lots). The business district allows lots as small as .25 acres. There are no cluster developments, or subsidized elderly, disabled, or low-income housing. About 50% of the homes in town are occupied year-round with the remainder occupied seasonally, both Lake Garfield and Lake Buel have a larger percentage of seasonal cottages occupied only in the summer months.

The following figures represent data from a variety of sources about a variety of property types, over the course of several years. This is the reason for the discrepancy in housing numbers.

Assessors for the town of Monterey report a total of 1219 total taxable properties and 91 tax exempt properties. Single family homes are the largest property class with a total of \$426,493,900 in value, followed by condominiums at \$3,640,400, and two/three family homes at \$3,546,500. Currently there are no multi-family homes in the town. Vacant properties are assessed at \$42,269,600. Total residential properties are valued at \$520,926,359.

Figure 20- Monterey Housing Age

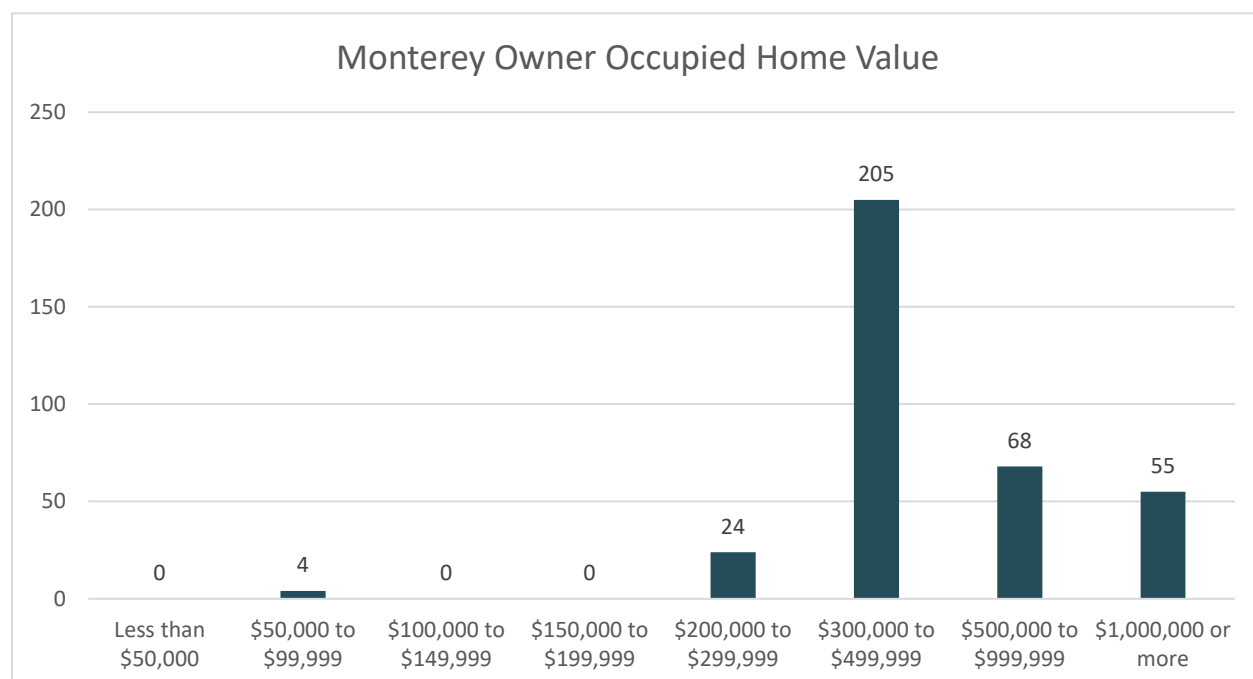


The 2020 Decennial Census lists a total of 883 housing units in Monterey. Of that total, 499 Housing units are listed as occupied while 384 are listed as vacant (vacant units include second homes, listed for sale, and unoccupied) (Bureau, 2023). The 2021 ACS estimates total housing units at 916 with a median home value of \$460,700. The survey also presents estimates for the ages and value of those units. The largest number of housing units was built prior to 1939, the second largest group of housing (132 units) was built between 2000 and 2009. This information is presented in Figure 20.

The 2021 ACS also provides data as to the value of owner-occupied home values. This survey estimates the largest number of homes in the \$300,000-499,999 range at 205 homes. Also of note, Monterey has 55 homes valued at more than \$1 million. This information is presented in Figure 21.

In order to incentivize the building of affordable housing, Massachusetts has enacted the Chapter 40B statute which mandates that all towns in the Commonwealth should be working toward 10% of housing stock reserved as affordable housing. Affordable housing is generally defined as for individuals earning 80% of Area Median Income. Currently, the town does not have any housing classified as affordable and registered with the Department of Housing and Community Development. The need for affordable housing has been brought up at several of the Master Plan public forums.

Figure 21- Monterey Housing Value



Many Berkshire County towns have become increasingly concerned about short-term rentals competing with rental housing stock and making housing less affordable. Property owners with available housing are able to generate a much greater return on their properties offering them as short-term rentals rather than as long-term rental housing (especially in tourist destinations such as Monterey.) A short-term rental bylaw was approved at the 2023 town meeting during the drafting of the Master Plan. This bylaw enabled by M.G.L. c64G sec. 3A assesses a 6% excise tax on room occupancies. Additionally, the town passed a 3% impact fee for short-term rentals (M.G.L. c64G sec. 3D.) Other nearby towns that have or are implementing short-term bylaws include Great Barrington, Lenox, and Stockbridge. While no authoritative source aggregates all short-term housing available, anecdotal research about existing short-term rentals was collected from websites (AirBnB, VrBO, and Avant Stay) at various points over the Master Plan process. Approximately 25-40 short term rentals are available in Monterey ranging from a price of \$160- 650 per night.

Housing Survey Result

More residents were supportive of more diverse housing choices in the town, 56% to 44%, than not. This could be in the form of new regulations in the zoning or subdivision control ordinance, additional housing types such as multifamily housing or accessory dwelling units or working with a housing developer to create affordable housing (Figure 59).

The development of additional housing could work in tandem with resident's desire to create a more defined town center. Promotion of the business district through acquisition of land in that zone was supported by 54% of respondents.

The Community Preservation Act is another source of funding to support the development of affordable housing, open space, and historic preservation- all ideas endorsed by town residents throughout both the public forums and responses on the survey.

Land Use and Open Space

Monterey has an average elevation of 1,200 feet and is heavily forested with a variety of streams, wetlands, ponds, and open fields. More than 4,500 acres of the town is part of Beartown State Forest. There are two lakes in the town: Lake Garfield, Lake Buel. Several ponds in the town are privately owned including Stevens Pond, Stedman Pond, and Palmer Pond. Other ponds are open to the public including the Trustees of the Reservation's Steadman Pond, Brewer's Pond (off Lake Garfield) and Benedict Pond in Beartown State Forest.

Figure 22- Geese Cross a hayfield in Monterey.



Photo credit: Roger Tryon

Monterey is primarily forested with more than 82% of the land cover forested. Wetlands comprise the next largest percentage of town land at 5.6%. Grass and shrubland and open water- each comprise approximately 3.5% of the town's area. Table 2 presents the primary land usage types. Figure 23 presents a map of the town with land uses color classified.

The natural environment provides benefits to a community that are not always quantifiable. Studies have shown that clean air, carbon sequestration, clean water, wildlife habitat, water retention, wind and heat mitigation, also contribute to increased real estate values and better mental health.

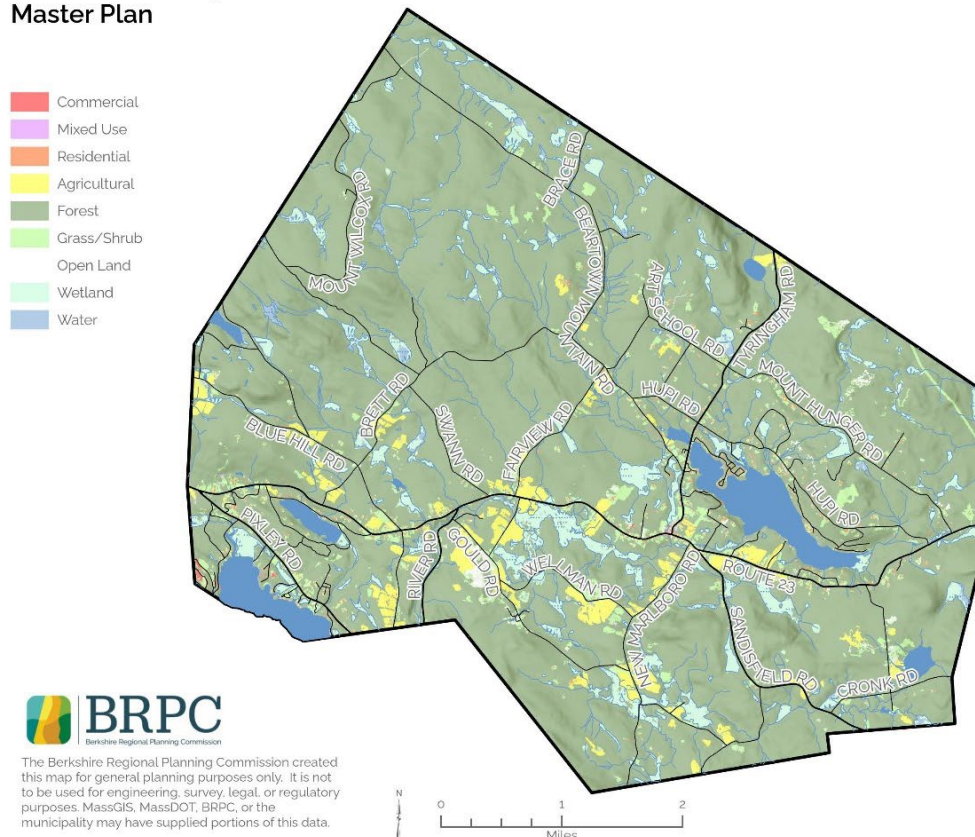
Table 2-Monterey Land Use

Monterey Land Use	Acres	Percentage
Commercial	10.7	0.06%
Mixed Use	10.8	0.06%
Residential	107.6	0.61%
Agricultural	514.5	2.93%
Forest	14452.3	82.40%
Grass/Shrub	631.9	3.60%
Open Land	220.7	1.26%
Wetland	979.4	5.58%
Water	610.8	3.48%
	17538.7	

Figure 23- Monterey Land Use

Town of Monterey
Master Plan

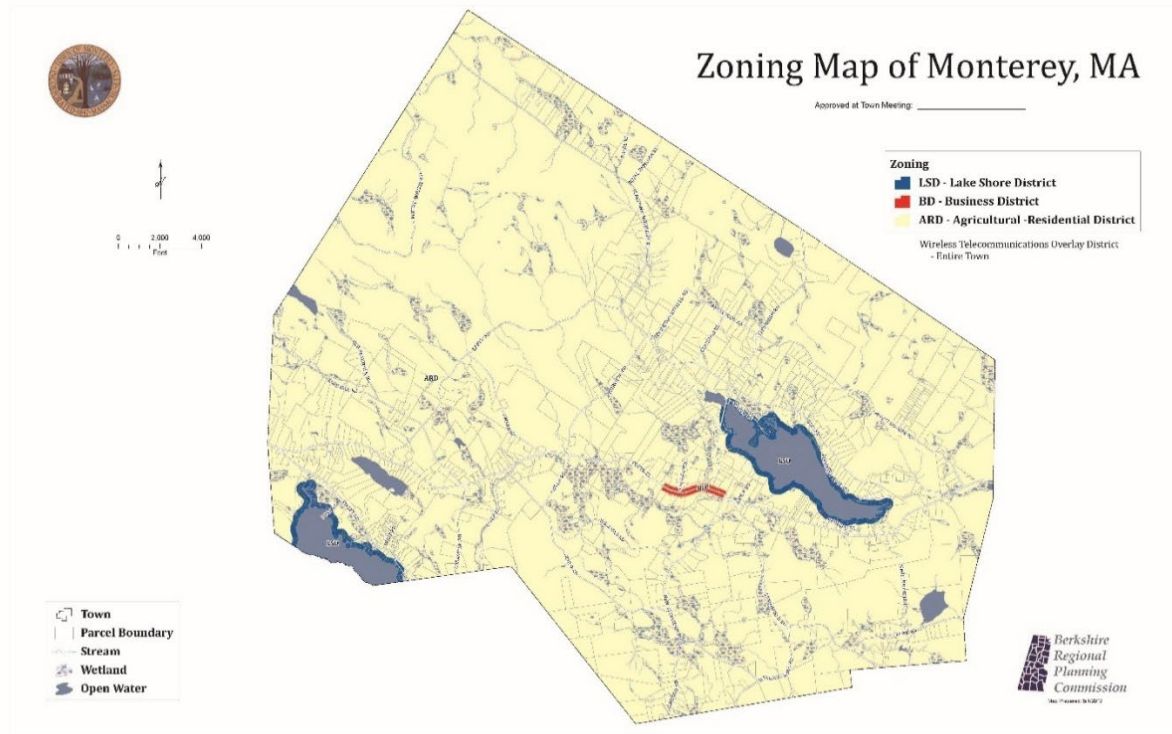
Land Use Map



Zoning Ordinance

The zoning bylaw in Monterey specifies three different districts within the town: Agricultural-Residential District, Lake Shore District, and Business District. The districts are shown in Figure 24.

Figure 24- Monterey Zoning Map



Zoning

Allowed land uses are specified in Section 3.0 of the zoning ordinance and set forth in the usage table. Uses are allowed by right, by a special permit, or prohibited.

Each of these districts has different requirements for minimum area, frontage requirements, front, side and rear setbacks, land coverage, and building height. This information can be found in the Dimensional Requirements table, section 4.2.

The zoning bylaw further defines requirements for non-conforming structures and lots, parking requirements, signage, common driveways, multi-family dwellings, wireless cell towers, solar photovoltaic systems, as well defining special permit requirements including site plan review.

Recreation, Historical, and Cultural Resources

Monterey Public Library

Figure 25- Public Event at Knox Gallery, Monterey Public Library



Photo credit: Mark Makuc:

The Monterey Free Public Library has a long history in the town on its current site (since 1931). The building recently underwent a \$3 million renovation that updated and enlarged the facilities. Planning began in 2014 for the design of the facility and construction occurred from 2018-2019. The project was financed with a combination of state, town, and donated monies. The renovations were well supported by the town's population by an overwhelming margin at town meeting in 2017. The library is currently developing a Strategic Plan for the next round of improvements, a similar plan led to the renovations. The current director has been in the position since 2005.

The Friends of Monterey Public Library, a 501c3, is an active participant in the Library's operations and strategic planning. The Group raised more than \$350,000 for upgraded equipment for the facility such as audio/visual equipment.

The Knox Gallery (Figure 25) is used for public events (including Master Plan Public Forums), as an art gallery with rotating exhibits, and for a monthly movie night. The Library has purchased both a license to show movies including a variety of family friendly movies to project.

Monterey Community Center

Figure 26 and 27- Monterey Community Center, interior (top).

Monterey Community Center, exterior (bottom.)



The Edith Wilson House, also a 501c3, was a historic structure renovated by volunteers and opened to the public in April of 2017. The 28-acre (20 of which are wetland) property was a donation to the town and is a product of community input and participation (Figure 26 and 27). The property is managed by the Friends of Wilson/McLaughlin House, a volunteer group that coordinates community center activities. The facility is used by a variety of community organizations including the Bidwell House, Flying Cloud Institute, Hume Christian Camp, as well as private individuals. The facility is free for use by community members and events or for a minimal fee for those hosting classes or events (for profit). The building has a capacity of

40 people and features a is also host to the community gardens. (See Figure 28)

Figure 28- Monterey Community Gardens



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

During the COVID Pandemic a large tent was set up on the property in order to hold events outdoors under cover. The popularity of this structure has led to plans for a permanent pavilion on a similar footprint as the tent. This 20 x 40 foot structure will enable more diverse and larger events at the community center, such as a Farmers' Market. Other proposed improvements to the

facility include: enlarged parking, improved lighting, additional kitchen facilities, and an additional bathroom. With these improvements it is hoped that the facility will be used for more Council on Aging events.

Currently the grounds host community gardens that feature raised beds and are available to community members for a small fee. The site features tool storage, water for irrigation, and is fenced. Fees for use of the gardens are on a sliding scale with levels for low-income residents, Monterey Residents, and those outside Monterey.

Potential improvements being considered on the grounds of the center include native plantings that attract pollinators, trails for hiking on the site, and a natural amphitheater on a hillside.

Current Activities include:

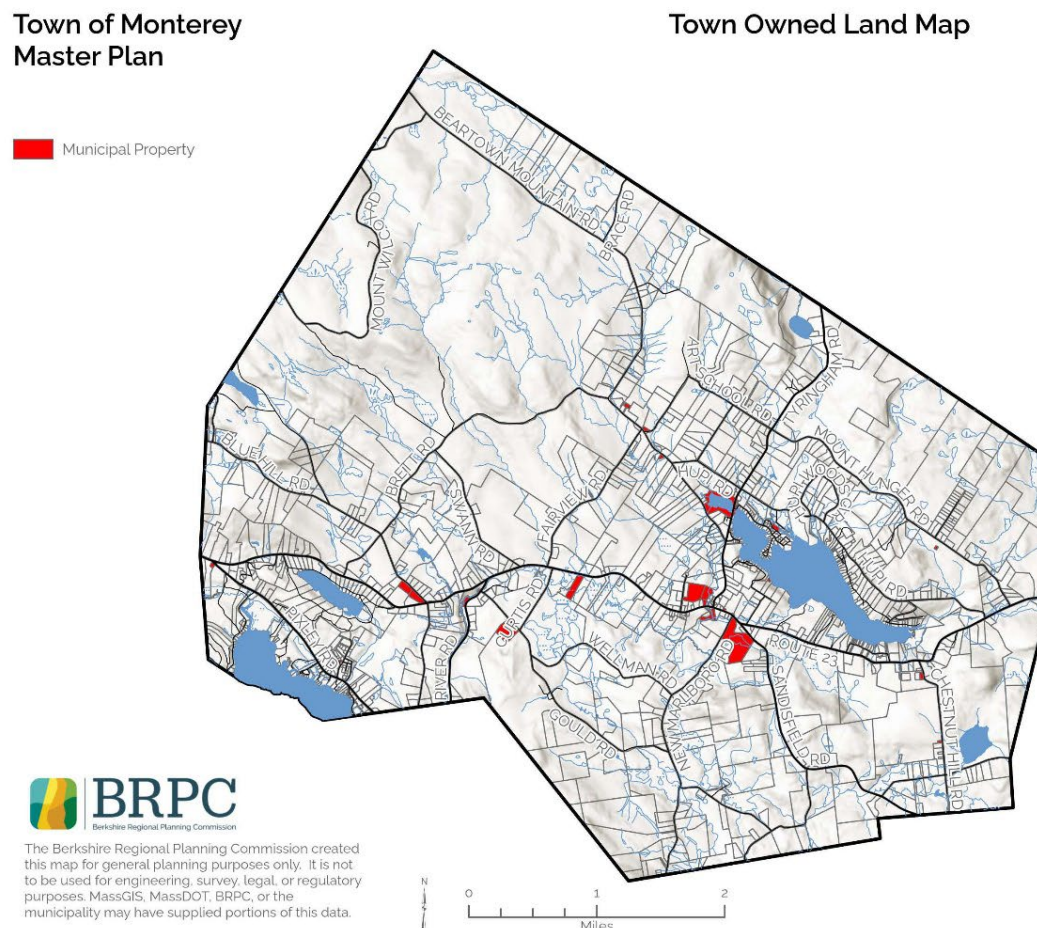
- Chair Yoga
- Bridge
- Mah Jong
- Tai Chi
- Diabetes Support Group
- Al Anon Meetings
- Renewable Energy Working Group
- Concerts

- Birthday Parties/Family Reunions
- Community Garden
- Historical, Plant, Ecology Talks
- Ping Pong
- Darn Yarners
- Yoga

Recreational and Open Space Areas

Town owned lands are shown in Figure 29, this includes parks, town facilities, and miscellaneous town owned parcels.

Figure 29 Town-Owned Lands



Monterey Town Beach

The Monterey Town Beach is located on Tyringham Road at the northwest corner of Lake Garfield, across from Brewer's Pond. The site features a

sandy beach, picnic tables, a native pollinator raised garden bed, use rules and approximately 15-20 parking spaces. During the summer season, the town maintains a lifeguard to ensure the safety of swimmers within the roped-off swimming area at the town beach.

Currently, there is no parking pass requirement to use the parking area, however, during public forums residents expressed an interest in instituting a parking pass for town residents. This would ensure that during the summer, when the beach is most heavily used, the beach would remain accessible to town residents. Nearby towns with residency requirements for town beach usage include Lenox, Lee, and Becket. As previously mentioned, the town has recently approved a beach attendant and signage to encourage use by town residents (transfer sticker will serve as residency confirmation.) The goal of this position is to promote beach rules and regulations and to encourage respect for town owned property.

Immediately to the south of the town beach, a public access boat ramp is maintained by the town. During the summer, access to the boat ramp requires police supervision. Boaters are required to clean and sanitize boats in order to control invasive species and prevent transportation between lakes. This includes controlling the invasive zebra mussel which has become established on nearby Laurel Lake in Lee. Currently, no evidence of a zebra mussel infestation in Lake Garfield exists and it is important to keep this problematic invasive species out of the lake.

Figure 30- Kayak Racks, Monterey Town Beach



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

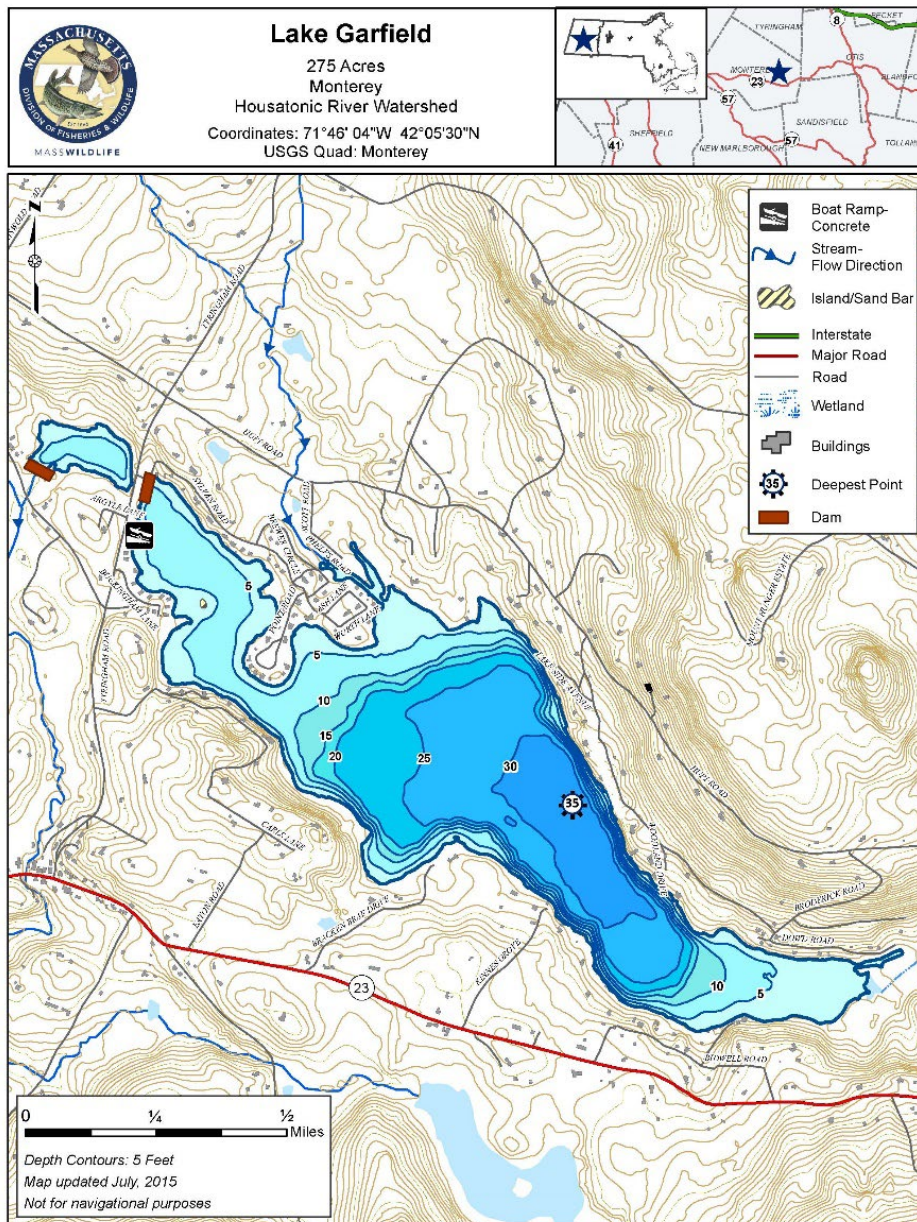
The town maintains a number of canoe and kayak racks across Tyringham Road from the town beach, see Figure 30. These are available, on a first come first served basis, by obtaining a sticker at the town hall and are required between March 15 and October 15. Stickers are issued by the Parks Commission.

Lake Garfield's designation as a "Great Pond" (any water body in the state of 10 Acres or more) results in residents of Massachusetts retaining access rights to the lake for recreation, including hunting and fishing. The proximity of the boat ramp to the swimming area at the town beach is a safety concern mentioned by

town residents at public forums and on the survey.

Lake Garfield

Figure 31- Lake Garfield Bathymetric Map



Lake Garfield is a 275 acre Great Pond located approximately 1/2 mile North of the town center. Average depth is 16 feet with a maximum depth of 35 feet. The water is transparent to 11 feet and the bottom is a mixture of boulders, clay and mud. Aquatic vegetation is abundant to a depth of about 8 feet, particularly in the inlet and outlet coves.

Early development in the town was supported by waterpower

provided by various dams along the Konkapot River and mills that harnessed the power of falling water to saw lumber, card wool, grind flour. The lake, formerly known as Twelve Mile Pond was dammed and enlarged in 1870.

At the furthest western point of the lake near Tyringham Road, a public boat ramp and parking lot serves the Town Beach. The town of Monterey provides

lifeguards at the beach during the swimming season.

A 1979 survey recorded a total of 12 species of fish in Lake Garfield: smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, pumpkinseed, yellow perch, chain pickerel, rainbow trout, golden shiner, brown bullhead, bluegill, white sucker, rock bass and white perch. Lake Garfield is a popular fishing site for rainbow trout during spring. Lake Garfield is stocked with trout in early April.

The lake is moderately developed, with about 75 homesites located on the shoreline. A bathymetric map of the lake is presented in Figure 31.

Invasive species, especially Eurasian Milfoil, have increasingly become a problem in the lake with a large patch growing in depths of 12-16 feet of water. This species is able to outcompete native plants resulting in large patches of monoculture that do not provide habitat or food sources for native fish or invertebrates. Additionally, the dense growth of plants interferes with recreation on the lake, fouling motors and making swimming and fishing more difficult on the lake. Aquatic plant growth is exacerbated by the overuse of lawn fertilizers on lakeside properties, use of cleaning products containing phosphates, and improper maintenance of septic systems. A variety of control techniques have been implemented, with the most successful being Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting.

Figure 32- Summer Fun, Lake Garfield



Photo credit: Laura Mensi

This technique involves manual removal of the plants from the substrate by a scuba diver and then suction and bagging of the resulting plant material and removal from the lake.

Currently two groups share responsibility for management, education, and preservation of the lake: The Friends of Lake Garfield and the Lake Garfield Working Group.

The Friends Of Lake Garfield is a citizens group that was established to help educate residents about the health of the lake, coordinate volunteer workdays, and highlight best practices for conservation and management of this important recreational area.

The Lake Garfield Working Group is a town body composed of town officials including the Select Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Health, Parks Commission, and several town citizens. This group hires outside consultants or contractors to assess and manage lake resources. They also report to the town in the annual report, apply for funding to support lake management, and hold public meetings at least once a month.

Figure 33- Brewer Pond Park



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

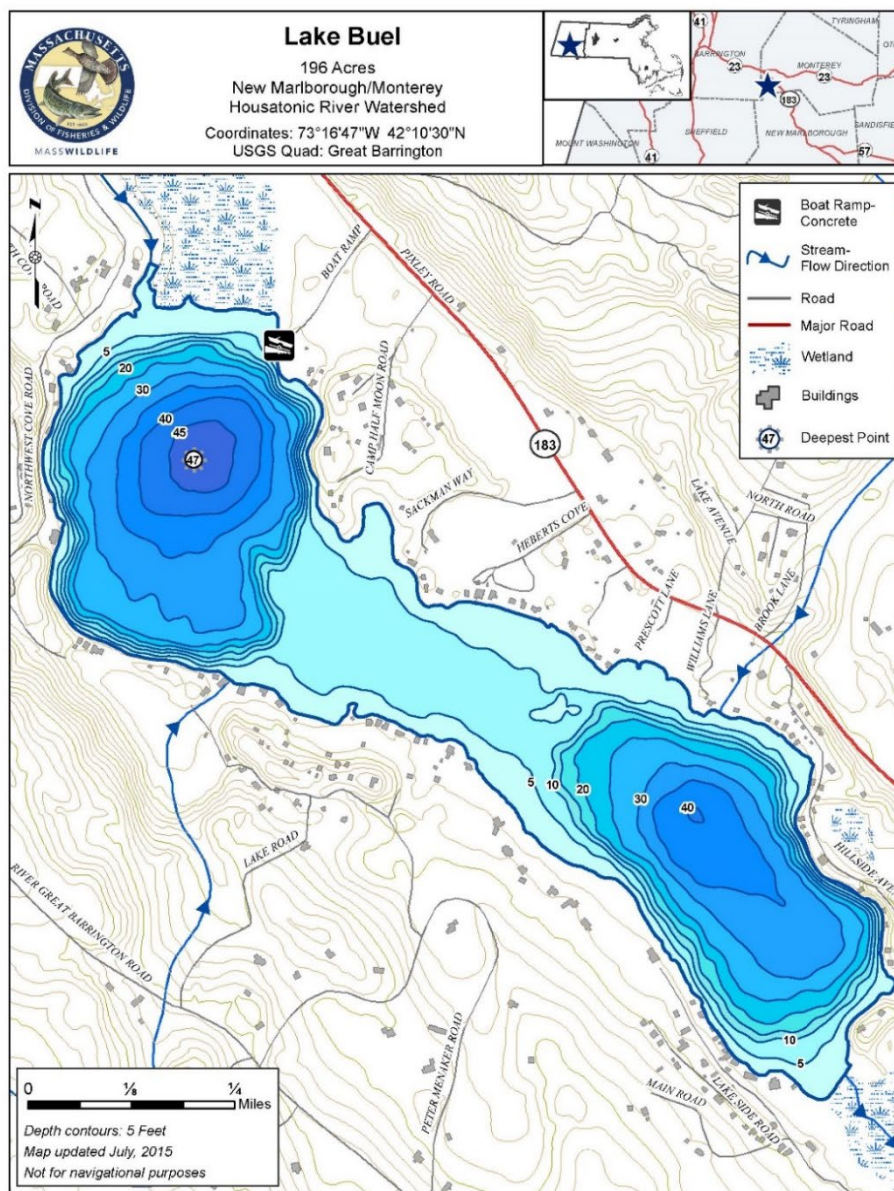
Brewer Pond

Just north, almost bordering the town beach, are three culverts that pass under Tyringham Road. A canoe or kayak can easily pass under. If you feel adventurous, pass into the little lake and explore. It's 0.6 miles around with an earthen dam and outlet at the southwest end. A trail has been proposed to encircle the pond and is planned for later during 2023 and 2024. The town Highway Department hopes to work with Greenagers, a local youth employment agency to construct the trail. Trail construction is financed with fees collected from the Conservation Commission.

Lake Buel

Lake Buel is a 196 acre great pond located approximately 3 miles to the west of town center and sits on the border with New Marlborough. The north shore of the lake is located in Monterey while the southern shore is in the Town of New Marlborough. It was named for Samuel Buel, a resident of Tyringham who saved several individuals from drowning in 1812. The lake has a long history of resorts, inns, and camps. Currently, Camp Kimama Half-Moon and Kutsher's Sports Academy operate as summer camps for youth on the lake.

Figure 34- Lake Garfield Bathymetric Map



The Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains a public access boat ramp in the northwest corner of the lake. The lake has an average depth of 20 feet and a maximum depth of 42 feet. Much like Lake Garfield, Eurasian Milfoil has become established in the lake and impedes both the ecological and recreational uses on the lake. An organization, the Lake Buel

Restoration/Preservation District is responsible for maintaining the quality of the lake and collects taxes for this purpose. The group maintains a Control of milfoil has been enacted through mechanical harvesting using a floating weed harvester and can be seen in Figure 35.

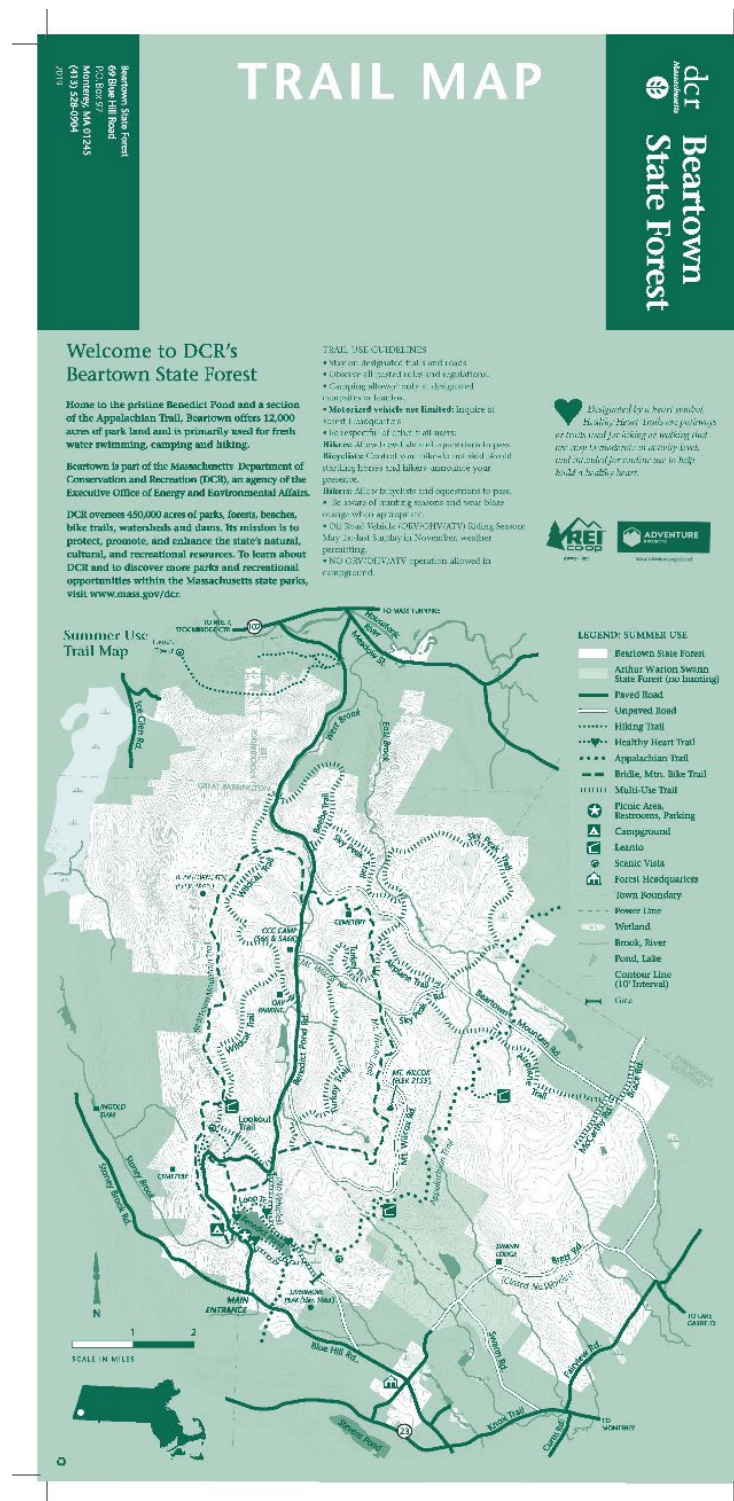
Figure 35- Weed Harvesting Machine, Lake Buel



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Beartown State Forest

Figure 36- Beartown Forest Trail Map



Beartown State Forest (Figure 37) has two distinctly different worlds between the summer and winter. During the warm months the pristine 35-acre Benedict Pond attracts swimmers, boaters and fishermen. An extensive network of trails on over 12,000 acres offers visitors a chance to glimpse deer, bear, bobcat, fisher cats and other wildlife, including the park's namesake, the Black Bear. Brooks, beaver ponds, rich deciduous forest, flowering shrubs and wildflowers and fall foliage are plentiful. The Appalachian Trail passes near Benedict Pond and offers spectacular wooded views (Figure 36).

The other half of the year the forest becomes a winter wonderland, where visitors on cross-country skis, snowshoes or snowmobiles can explore a snow-covered wilderness. The 1.5-mile Benedict Pond Loop Trail is a must in any season. Year-round camping is also available.

Beartown State Forest constitutes more than

12,000 acres of forested land open for year-round activities including hiking, canoeing, camping, hunting and fishing, ATV/snowmobiling, x-country

skiing, wildlife viewing, and other activities. Beartown land within the town of Monterey includes 4592 acres. Daily fees for parking are charged between May 14 and Labor Day, Massachusetts residents are \$8/day while out-of-state residents are \$30/day. Many of the facilities are handicap accessible, including picnicking, camping, fishing/boardwalk, and beach wheelchair.

Like many other state parks and forests within Berkshire County, Beartown was created by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933. Benedict Pond was the result of an earthen dam built as part of CCC efforts, along with roads throughout the forest.

Approximately 7.5 miles of the Appalachian Trail passes through the state forest. There are two Appalachian trail shelters within Monterey, both close to the trail (1/2 mile or less), Mt Wilcox Shelter north sleeps 10 and Mount Wilcox Shelter South sleeps 5 individuals.

Figure 37- Beartown State Forest Entry Sign



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Appalachian Trail

Figure 38- Appalachian Trail Sign



The nearly 2,200-mile Appalachian Trail (Figure 38) passes through Monterey for about 5.3 miles.

Completed in 1937, the trail is managed by the National Park Service and passes through 14 states, from Georgia to Maine. Estimates are that some 3000 individuals attempt to hike the trail with an average of 25% completing the entire trail. There are currently 51+ communities that participate as "A.T. Communities" with Great Barrington, Lee, Dalton, Cheshire, and North Adams participating in the program. Monterey could pursue this designation to

coordinate special events with the Appalachian Trail Community. More information is available on the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's website.

Greene/Bidwell Park

Figure 39- Greene Park Sign



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Greene Park (Figure 39) is located behind the town hall property. Facilities on the site include a playground, basketball court, and softball field. The park hosts a long-standing pick-up softball game on Sunday afternoons. The Parks and Recreation Committee has surveyed the townspeople and determined that replacing the playground equipment and moving the facilities away from the leach field for the Town Hall septic system. The Parks and Recreation Committee is replacing the playground structure with updated equipment and surveyed the

community regarding preferred components to the park. Proposed park and existing facilities are shown in Figures 39 and 40.

Bidwell Park is across the street from the Town Hall and was closed for most of 2022 due to unsafe conditions resulting from a windstorm that damaged many trees. The town has recently completed (Spring 2023) the necessary tree work to reopen the park to the public. The site features picnic tables and stream access to the Konkapot River, along with dramatic views of the

historic dam, the library, and downtown. The Native Plants Working Group has worked to install native plantings at Bidwell Park.

The Parks and Recreation Committee

The Parks and Recreation Committee works closely with the department of Public Works and Town Administrator to maintain town facilities such as Greene Park, Town Beach, and the ice rink at the Firehouse. The group is working to respond to resident concerns about facilities including the softball field and playground at Greene Park, kayak storage at town beach, hiring of lifeguards to monitor town beach and use of the boat ramp at Lake Garfield. A recent project completed by the group is the basketball court at Greene Park. This court is used for basketball and pickleball and is shown in Figure 40.

Figure 39- Greene Park Playground Rendering

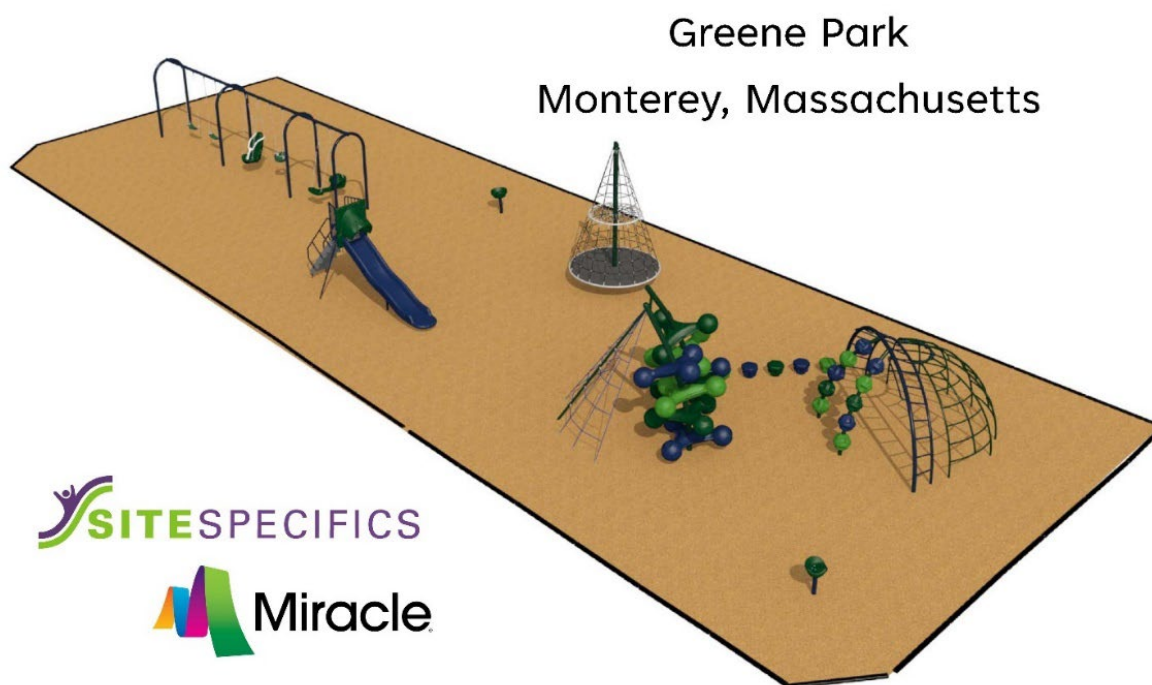


Figure 40- Greene Park Basketball Court



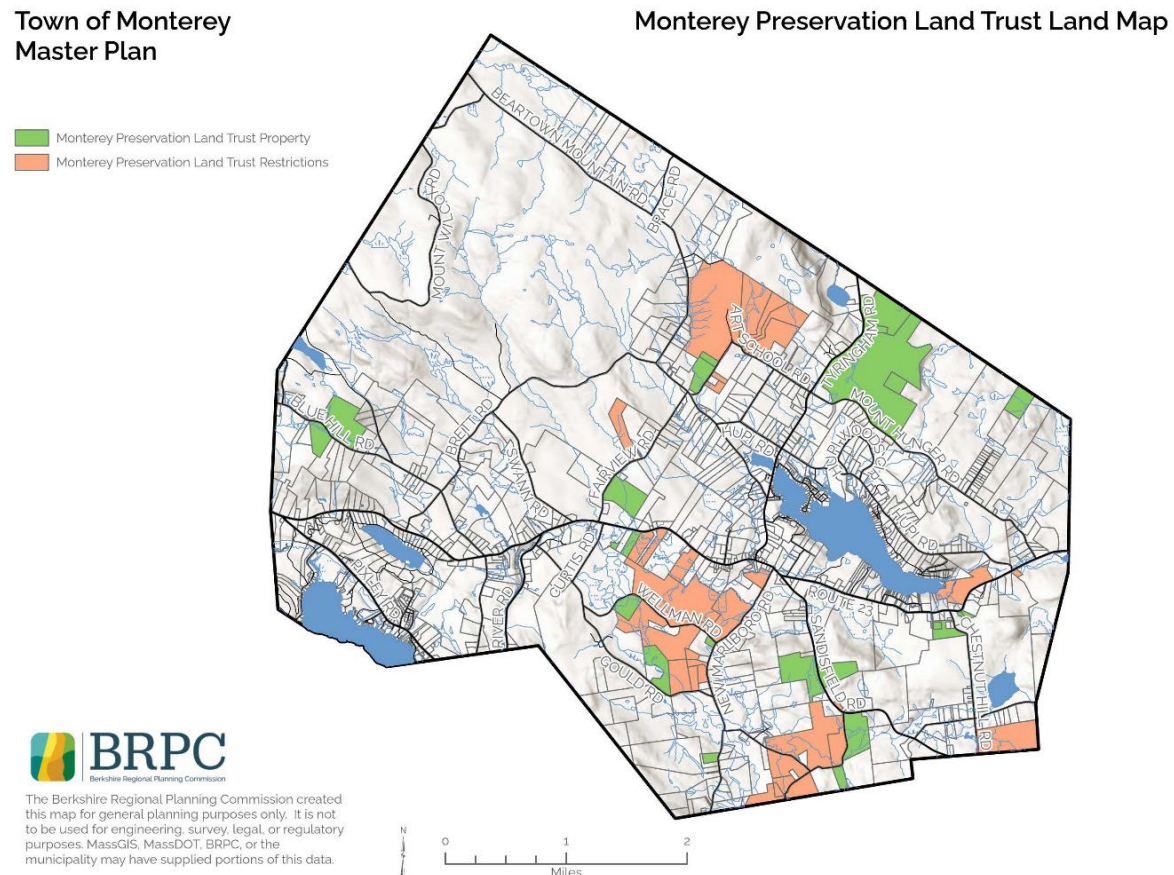
Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Monterey Preservation Land Trust

The Monterey Preservation Land Trust is the first land trust established in Berkshire County (1984) and currently manages 26 properties comprising more than 800 acres and \$6.5 million in property value. The Land Trust also works with local farmers to conserve farmland through conservation restrictions or agricultural preservation restrictions. The group works closely with both the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Berkshire Natural Resources Council. These partnerships recently led to the conservation of Steadman Pond on the border between Monterey and Tyringham. The group also partners with other organizations, such as Gould Farm and the Berkshire Trout Hatchery to protect natural resources in the town.

Figure 41 shows the properties owned or managed by the Monterey Preservation Land Trust.

Figure 41- Monterey Preservation Land Trust Properties

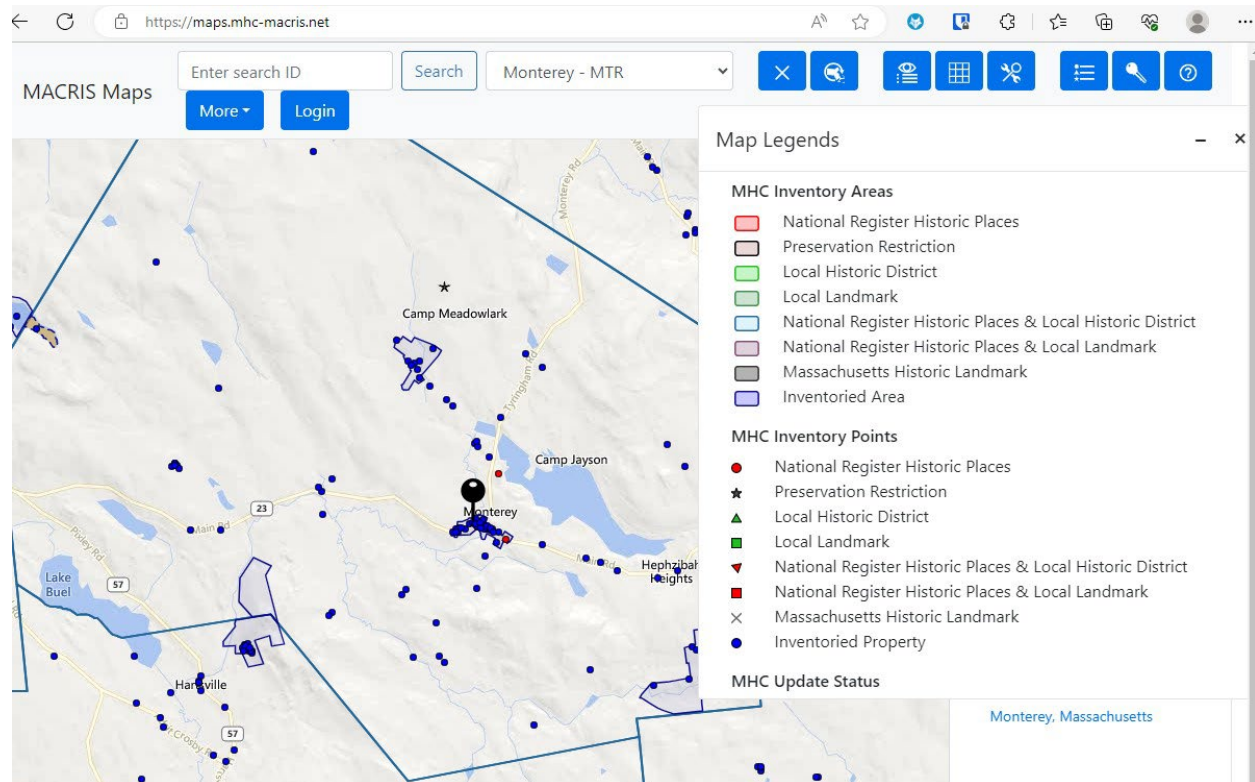


Historic District

The Town of Monterey established a Historic District Study Committee in December 2020. This committee was tasked with preserving the historical significance of the town center and obtaining financial support to restore various historical structures. The committee has recommended that the town create a National Registered district. This will require approval by at least 51% of the property owners within the district. The committee consists of 5 members, appointed by the Select Board for three-year terms. The committee is working on documentation of historic properties in the town and registering them with the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, or MACRIS. Figure 42 shows a screenshot of the currently registered properties in Monterey (many properties are aggregated together in the downtown area and do not show as distinct points, currently about 95 properties in the town have been registered (see appendix.)

Updating and adding to the list of properties will continue to enhance the efforts of the committee and historic preservation in Monterey.

Figure 42- Screenshot of MACRIS Registered Historic Sites in Monterey



Diane's Trail

Diane's Trail, on the grounds of Gould Farm on Curtis Road, is named for Diane Rausch, the late wife of Gould Farm's Forest Director, Bob Rausch. The trail is a 1.5-mile loop through grassland, wetlands, and a mix of white pine, red oak, and other mixed hardwood forests. The trail follows Rawson Brook, which flows into the nearby Konkapot River. The trail is open for passive uses such as hiking, birdwatching, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing and leashed dogs are welcome. The variety of ecosystems on the site mean that a multitude of bird species are typically present. Birdwatchers should be sure to bring binoculars and a field guide.

Berkshire Natural Resources Council- Bob's Way

Located 3 miles East of the town center on the Sandisfield town line, the 263-acre Bob's Way is managed and preserved by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council and offers town residents both a 1.75- and 2.5-mile loop trail. The trails are open to hikers, snowshoers, cross country skiers, dog walkers, and hunters and fisherman. The trails feature elevation changes and are moderately difficult. A stone bench is featured at a mid-point on the trail. The property is largely forested with Northern hardwoods, hemlock, white pine, and mountain laurel but also contains wetlands and ecosystems modified by beaver activity. Evidence of former human settlement can also be found along the trails.

Berkshire Trout Hatchery

Figure 43- Berkshire National Fish Hatchery Sign



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

The Berkshire National Fish Hatchery is a cold-water aquaculture facility that lies on 148 acres in both Monterey and New Marlborough, Massachusetts. The site is located approximately six miles east of Great Barrington and roughly six miles southwest of Tyringham. Its primary mission is to support the restoration of lake trout populations in the Lower Great Lakes by supplying lake trout eggs to other federal hatcheries and rearing native brook trout for stocking in local waterways to support recreational fishing and educational programs.

The hatchery is part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fish and Aquatic Conservation program (Figure 43.) The Fish and Aquatic

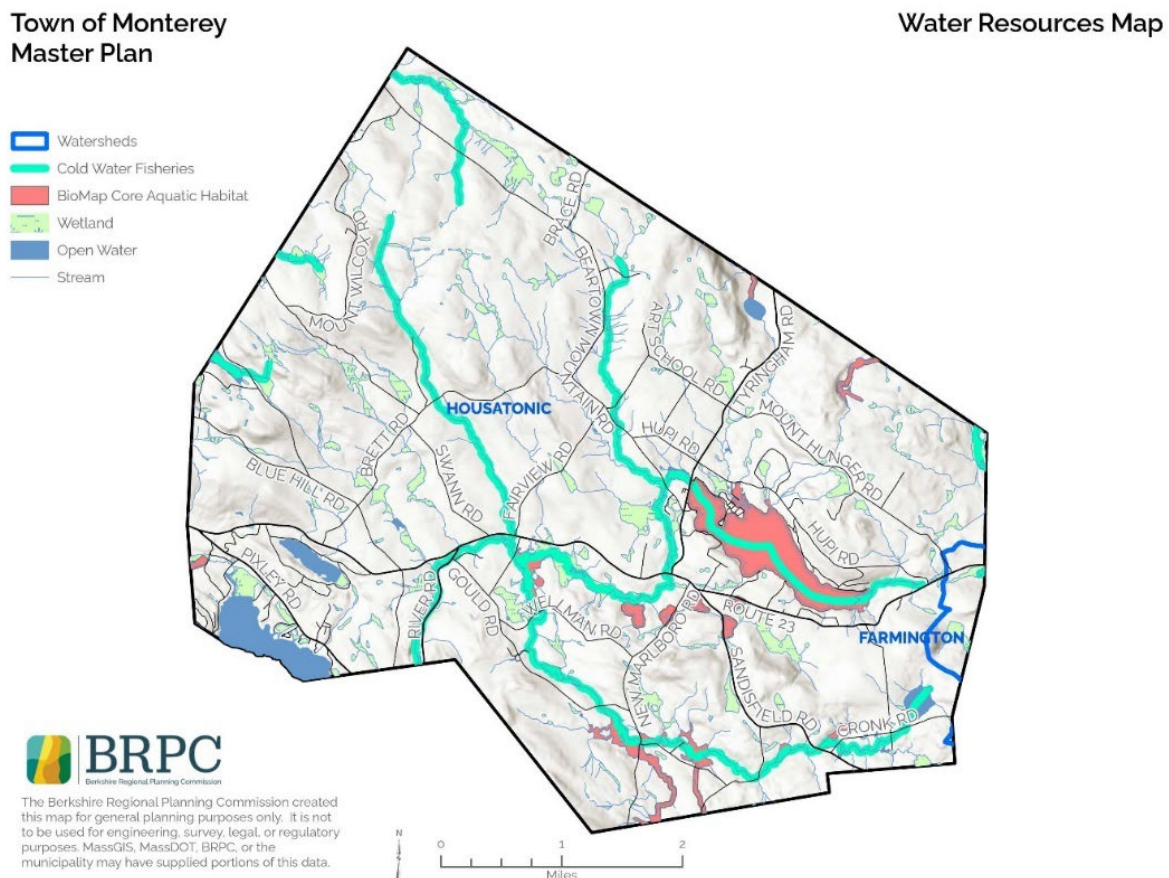
Conservation program works throughout the country to restore habitat across the landscape, prevent and control invasive species, assist Native American Tribes and other partners in managing their fish and wildlife resources, advance fisheries and aquatic sciences and technologies, foster outdoor recreational opportunities, educate the public on the economic and

ecological benefits of aquatic species and their habitats, and address new and emerging challenges—such as climate change.

Watersheds

Monterey's rural and forested land is interspersed with a variety of streams, wetlands, ponds, lakes, and eventually two different river systems. Many of the streams in town are cold water fisheries that support trout populations and are assets both for biological diversity and recreation. Lake Garfield and many tributaries of the Konkapot river identified as Biomap Core Aquatic Habitat (Figure 44.)

Figure 44- Monterey Watersheds



Housatonic River Watershed,

Northern and western portions of the town, including Lake Garfield and the Konkapot river all drain into the Housatonic River system at Ashley Falls in Southern Berkshire County. This river system eventually drains into the Long Island Sound west of New Haven, CT.

Farmington River Watershed

A small section of southeast Monterey drains into the Farmington River Watershed, this tributary eventually flows into the Connecticut River near Hartford, CT.

Figure 45- Fall Sunshine, Royal Pond, Route 23



Photo credit: Seth Jenkins

Expanding Open Spaces and Recreational Areas

Participants in the public forums and the Survey expressed a significant desire for expanding recreation and open spaces.

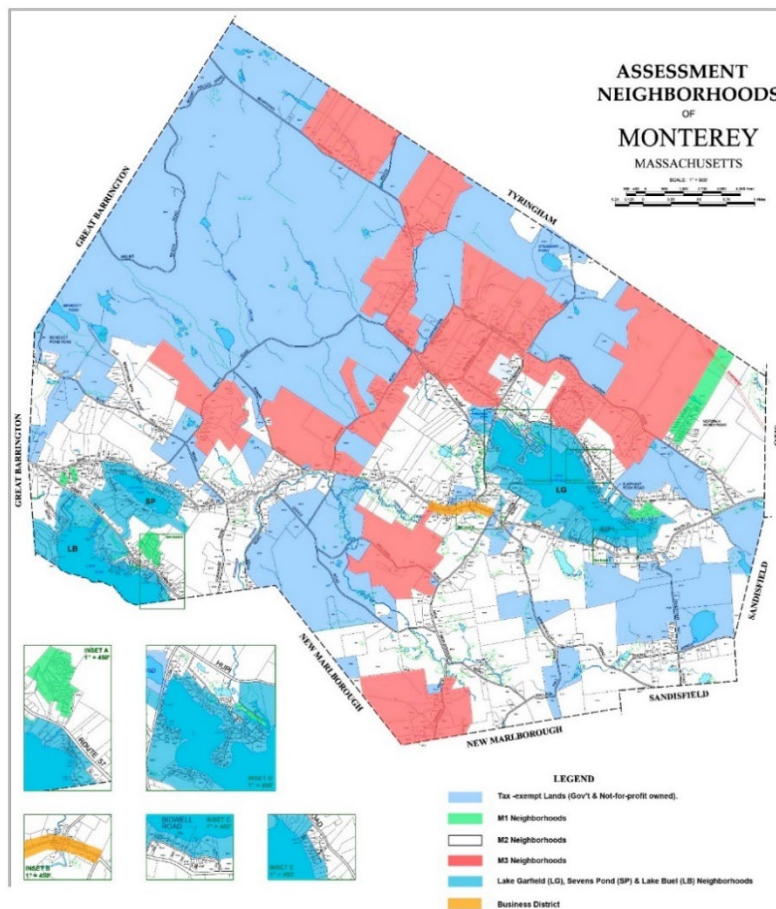
Potential additional park sites or opportunities:

- 1.6 acres on 0 River Road at Gould Road intersection, could provide Konkapot River Access.
- 1.4 acres 0 Scott Road on Harbour Lane
- 2 town owned parcels contiguous to Hume Camp
- A trail along Tyringham Road from the town beach to the town center would be ~.77 miles long. Alternatively, a trail along the Konkapot River, from the town beach to the town center would be ~1.06 miles long.

Town Finances

According to the town assessor's office, during FY 2022 the town had 1476 tax bills issued, with the majority (1218) for properties, 91 tax exemptions (Figure 47), and 167 personal property bills. Total value of taxable properties for FY 2022 was \$543,042,277, an increase of \$7,183,191 from the previous year. Tax revenue from 2022 was \$4,562,282.77 of which \$3,953,347.77 was from property taxes, \$308,935.00 was contributed to the town as part of the State PILOT program for Beartown State Forest, and \$145,000.00 for excise taxes. Total expenditures for town services were \$4,888,300 with educational costs being the largest percentage at 35% (\$1,680,058).

Figure 46- Monterey Assessment Neighborhoods



The town currently has long-term debt of less than \$1,000,000.00, with only two capital projects currently financed. This includes the rebuilding of the library, with debt anticipated to be retired in 2028 and the highway department's tandem axle dump truck. Both projects have been allocated for in future budgets and should be paid off in the near term.

Taxes

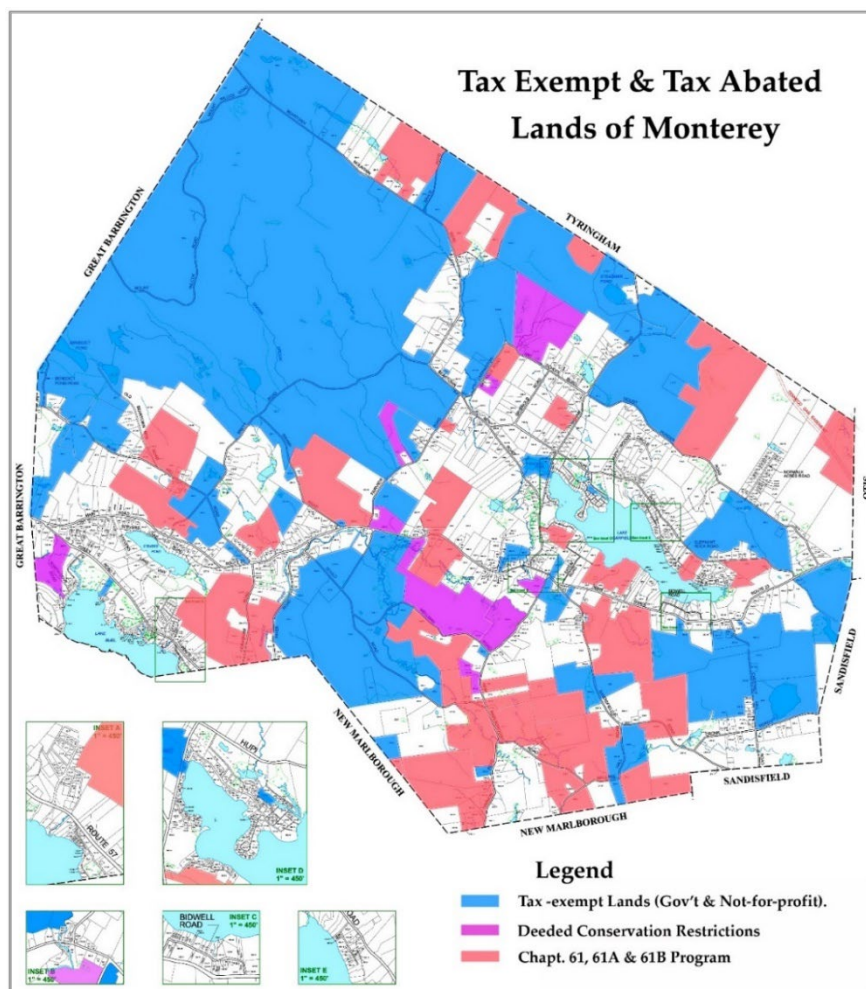
The town is able to maintain a balanced budget and make investments in capital purchases while keeping a lower tax rate than most Berkshire County towns. Currently (2023)

Monterey has a residential/commercial tax rate of \$6.09/\$1000 of assessed value. Adams has the highest tax rate at, \$18.55 residential and \$26.65

commercial, while Hancock has the lowest rate at \$2.68 R/C. Monterey's tax rate is lower than all but three Berkshire County towns, including: Mount Washington, Alford, and Hancock.^v Monterey residents feel that the town is able to provide a greater variety of services to the community while still keeping taxation low. The community could decrease the commercial tax rate in the downtown area to incentivize businesses investment. This would encourage the replacement of residential property in the downtown area as individuals would be incentivized to use properties for commercial purposes. The community has expressed interest in both grocery/convenience stores and restaurants located in the downtown district. A lower commercial rate could bring these types of businesses to the downtown, benefiting both townspeople and entrepreneurs.

Town assessors use a complicated formula to determine assessed value. Parcels are assessed based upon 1. Building site based on relevant zoning requirements, 2. Excess Acreage (over that required by zoning), and 3 Neighborhood (See Figure 46)

Figure 47- Monterey Tax Exempt and Abated Lands



Properties on Lake Garfield are assessed at the highest rate, followed by Lake Buel, Stevens Pond, the three neighborhood classifications, and finally the business district. Currently all excess acreage in all neighborhoods is valued at \$8,000 per acre. Adjusting the value of these assessments could offer the town additional revenue or to steer development in a particular direction. Many properties in Monterey are tax-exempt (see Figure

47) due to enrollment in State Tax Abatement programs (Chapter 61), Conservation Restrictions, State or Federal ownership, and religious or non-profit usage. Additionally, town seniors are offered tax abatement through a work-off program allowing for a maximum value of \$1,500.

Tax Sales of Delinquent Property

During 2022, the town collected \$17,804 in interest on delinquent property. Although every effort should be made to keep property owners in their homes while addressing delinquent taxes owed, sometimes the taxes owed are more than the owner can address and the town is forced to take ownership of personal property due to tax arrears. Some towns use this property as a revenue stream by selling those properties through auction. Alternatively, the town can work with or create an affordable housing trust that enables those properties to become deed restricted affordable housing.

Financial Planning

The Select Board has worked with the Finance Committee to develop a capital plan through 2028. The two groups have worked with the town police, fire, and highway departments to plan for major purchases.

Major upcoming projects requested include:

- Police Cruisers- 2024, 2026
- Town Hall Repairs, computer upgrades- 2024,2026
- Parks Improvements- Softball Field improvements, other parks improvements, 2024,2026
- Fire Engine/Tanker 2025, equipment 2024,2026,2028
- Firehouse Improvements, 2025
- Department of Public Works, 1- ton Pickup and F-550,2025
- Road, DPW Facilities, Culvert replacement, 2025
- DPW replacement loader, 2028

Strategic planning for these major costs will enable the town to distribute these costs over time, keeping long term debt manageable and within reason, and adequately finance these projects. Opportunities to apply for grant funding should enable additional costs to be offset.

The town has also received Federal ARPA funds (\$276,190.00) to offset some needed purchases. This money is allocated to a variety of services and improvements including:

- A contribution to Southern Berkshire Ambulance for a new ambulance in 2022
- Fire Rescue 5 vehicle
- New Playground at Greene Park
- Pavilion at Community Center
- Solar Site Assessment
- Fox Hill site analysis
- Historical Registry assessment

Planning for these major costs will enable the town to distribute these costs over time and finance these projects. Opportunities to apply for grant funding should enable additional costs to be offset.

Energy Conservation

The town Select Board has created a Renewable Energy Working Group that is researching and investigating the potential for renewable energy projects in the town. They are tasked with reporting back on their findings, including cost, funding sources, maintenance, environmental, economic, and aesthetic impacts to the town. During the Spring of 2023, the group worked with the UMASS Clean Energy Extension to analyze the potential for solar projects in the town. The group has identified parcels with development potential for solar projects, best locations for smaller projects (less than 50 KW) and medium scale projects (50-300 KW) projects. A synopsis of this report is included in the appendix of this document.

Monterey does not currently participate in the Green Communities Program, a state program that assists municipalities to upgrade facilities for energy conservation. The community has begun working on developing the application to become a green community. Currently 290 Massachusetts communities are part of the program, Monterey is among the 12 Berkshire County towns that have not adopted the program. The program has a variety of requirements including passing the Stretch Energy Codes and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from town owned facilities. Participation

in the program can provide incentives to communities such as financial savings on future vehicle purchases by switching to EV vehicles.

Local Economy

Many local businesses operate as non-profits, educational, or religious institutions, and as a result, many of these local employers do not contribute to the cost of town services. PILOT or Payment in Lieu of Taxes programs allow many communities to create voluntary payment programs for non-profits to contribute to town costs. Although these payments cannot be mandated, they are a tool which enables non-profits to contribute to town services such as police, fire, and transportation.

Gould Farm

Gould Farm is a therapeutic treatment facility licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health for the treatment of mental illness. The farm was started in 1913 by Will and Agnes Gould, who saw an opportunity to treat individuals with emotional and psychiatric illness through fresh air, work, and community. The farm is home to approximately 100 staff, guests, and family members. Guests typically stay at the facility 9-12 months on average. The community integrates the guests (not patients) into daily life and generally maintains a 1 to 1 staffing ratio. Therapy is centered around working on the farm with one of the farm's work crews.

The farm has a variety of components including operating "Roadside," a café and store featuring their farm products which is open to the general public; a timber management program including firewood harvesting, a dairy operation producing milk and cheese from ~30 cattle, a bakery producing fresh baked goods, and a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) produce share that provides Montereyans who sign up with fresh produce. The plan for Roadside 2.0 has been approved by the Planning Board and is currently under construction. The modern update to the original facility is anticipated to become a draw for residents and tourists to Monterey.

The community is interested in working with the town to improve facilities. Many members of the community mentioned that hiking/biking paths on both Gould Road and Curtis Road are inadequate and dangerous to pedestrians. Implementing "complete streets" principles on the Farm's roads would help to make pedestrians more safely coexist with automobiles. Other projects mentioned by the Farm's management include the development of affordable housing to provide a step-down facility for guests to gain greater independence (a preliminary plan has been developed

for this facility on Curtis Road) and the development of solar generation on the site of a nearby Gravel Pit. As a non-profit, the organization does not pay taxes to the community, however they do provide a voluntary PILOT payment (payment in lieu of taxes) to the town.

Camps

Camp Kimama Half Moon

In 2022, Kimama an Israel Based Jewish summer camp founded in 2004, purchased the 33-acre sleepaway camp on Lake Buel. The organization has renovated the facilities and reopened during the summer of 2022 as both a day and overnight camp for youth 7-17 from across the globe. The camp originated in 1922, as Camp Half Moon. The camp has its roots in Israeli and Jewish culture but is open to campers of all faiths, cultures, and orientations. The camp offers a variety of activities for campers including a variety of sports and water sports, yoga, skateboarding, and a ropes course. The camp is established as a Limited Liability Corporation and operates as a for profit venture.

Hume New England

Hume New England is affiliated with other Hume Christian Camps, located in California. The camp operates as a destination for Christian groups from throughout New England for retreats and conferences and also as a Christian-themed summer camp for 6 week-long summer sessions from May to August (2022 campers- 1,000). The majority of the groups visiting Hume come for the facilitated retreats with camp staff (140 staff members).

The camp has a capacity of 300 people (limited by the current dining hall) however new facilities are under construction which will increase the capacity of the camp. These groups typically arrive on the site in large motorcoach buses. As a non-profit, religious use, the camp does not pay taxes to the town nor do they make voluntary PILOT payments to the town to offset the cost of town services, however the camp has expressed an interest in partnering with the town to make road improvements to limit the impact of these buses. The camp has sought to make improvements to their property, including installing RV hookups for long term staff members and other visitors to camp facilities.

Bidwell House Museum

The Bidwell House Museum is a 194-acre historic property on the northeastern corner of town on Art School Road. The house is the traditional family homestead of the Bidwell family. Reverend Adonijah Bidwell was the first minister for Township 1 (Tyringham/Monterey) in 1750. The museum opened in 1990 and oversees the restoration and programming of the original 1700's property. They feature tours of the home, historic talks, and hold annual reenactments. These events bring several hundred individuals to the museum grounds. 2023 will feature The Army on Campaign, a 1770's Living History Event and is scheduled for late June. The grounds have several networks of loop trails and connect to the Stedman Pond Reserve. The museum has partnered with other non-profit organizations such as the Greenagers to install trails on the property, Berkshire Natural Resources Council and the DCR to connect trail networks, the community center and library for history talks, and other museums in the area such as Arrowhead in Pittsfield, and Housatonic Heritage. The museum has worked with the Stockbridge Munsee Tribe in Wisconsin on several projects including medicinal gardens, educational materials, and historical talks. The museum has an active membership of approximately 150 individuals and families from the surrounding communities of Tyringham, Monterey, and Great Barrington.

Agricultural Businesses/Farms

Monterey has a long history of agricultural production, and it continues to be a priority for town residents. Rawson Brook Farm, a longtime purveyor of goat cheese recently went into retirement, many in the town supported the business and will miss the delicious cheese.

Residents would like to see agriculture businesses prioritized, just behind restaurants/café's with 40% of respondents choosing agriculture. The community has a variety of farm types producing a wide variety of products. Some current farms and their products in the town include:

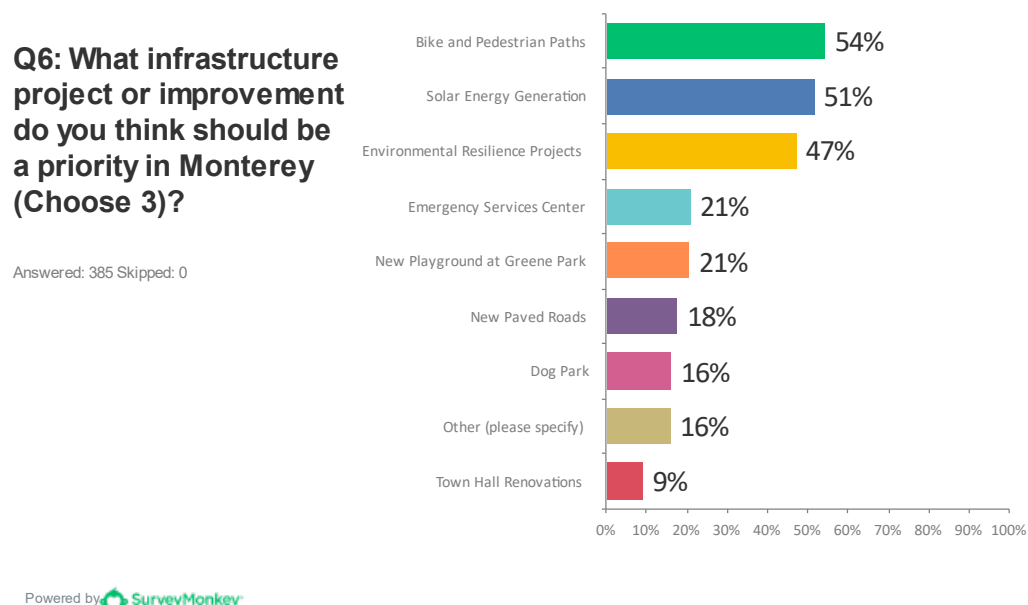
- Gould Farm- CSA, Bakery, Roadside Stand
- Dancing Greens-vegetables, pop up events
- Bracken Brae Farm-eggs and vegetables
- Lowland Farm- Maple syrup, Hay-Round Bales
- Blue Hill Farm- Dairy Products

Home-Based Business

A number of home-based businesses add to the character of the town and highlight the skills of contractors, artists, and professionals. The Monterey News is an excellent source of information regarding local businesses. Artists in town include a silversmith, a blacksmith, a baker, potters, and graphic designers. Professional services such as general contractors, dentists, and architects can be found in the town.

Economic Development Survey Results

Figure 48- Monterey Survey, Question 6: Infrastructure Priorities.



Economic Development Recommendations

Village (Town Center)

Extending approximately .6 miles on Route 23, from New Marlborough Road to the east and about 750 feet west of Fox Hill Road, the Business District includes the area of greatest housing density within Monterey. This area contains the majority of the town's buildings including Town Hall, the Post Office, the Library, the Congregational Church, and constitutes approximately 40 Parcels.

This area of town is assessed at the lowest base valuation in the entire town.

Survey respondents stated that they would support acquisition of town owned lands in the business district to promote additional downtown uses (54% to 46%). This could be for installation of town sidewalk or trail networks (along busy roadways or Konkapot River), for additional housing, or for major infrastructure projects such as additional well heads or wastewater treatment facilities. The Monterey Water Company reports that well capacity is sufficient for current customers and the cooperative is self-sufficient at current standards. Additional state requirements could impact the ability of the cooperative to provide services for the town and should be monitored.

Zoning in the town center allows for several “by right” businesses in the commercial district that are not allowed elsewhere in the town. These uses include public markets, institutional uses (municipal, educational, or religious), farm stands, health or exercise facilities, private clubs or lodges, restaurants, professional offices, hotel or motel, retail sales, and several other uses. The minimum lot size in the business district is .25 acres with 100 feet of frontage on a public way. The setback requirements are the smallest with 15-foot setbacks on all sides and a maximum lot coverage of 30%. Reducing setback requirements and/or increasing lot coverage allowances would allow for a greater variety of uses in the downtown area.

Restaurants/Bars

Town Residents would like to see options in the town center for more services. 75% of respondents wanted to see restaurants, bars, and cafés encouraged in the town. During the drafting of the Master Plan document, Gould Farm has brought proposals for Roadside 2.0 to the Planning Board for site plan review and received approval from the town’s Planning Board. Construction has begun on the site, with the old building demolished, construction begun and expected complete by spring of 2024. The return of this long-standing restaurant in the town would be welcomed by many of those who attended the forums and responded on the survey. The Monterey General store has been under renovation and its reopening would also be a relief to many townspeople. It became apparent during the forums and survey that residents would like more restaurant options in town and miss both these establishments. Respondents specifically mentioned needing a place for groceries/necessaries that also serves as a central gathering place for townspeople. Long time residents expressed nostalgia for the Monterey General Store. Parking for downtown businesses presents a problem due to the constraints of the Konkapot River and existing development. Creative solutions could include parking areas away from the town center with pedestrian networks to the town center.

Survey Results

Monterey is a community made up of both year-round residents, included in the US Census (1,095), and residents who live elsewhere but spend significant time in Monterey (approximately 1,000-1,500 individuals). Both groups participated in the community-wide survey and have unique perspectives on the town.

The town-wide survey (see appendix) was developed by the Planning Board in response to the series of public forums held during the summer and fall of 2022 and issues raised at those events. The survey's goal was a clear understanding of current residents' preferences and priorities in the town and to hear from as many diverse voices as possible from within the town. The survey was open from January 1, 2023, and closed on March 1, 2023.

A total of 385 total responses were received both through the SurveyMonkey website and paper copies available at various locations in the town (Library, Town Hall, distributed at Council on Aging meetings). Of this total, 230 respondents (21% of town) stated that they were year-round residents and 130 stated that they were either seasonal or weekend residents, 25 respondents skipped this question. The participation rate for the survey was excellent and the individual responses were generally constructive and supportive of the process as a whole. All responses have been reviewed by the Planning Board and will be attached to the appendix without identifying information. The Planning Board would like to thank all participants for their contributions.

Some notable differences existed between responses from year-round residents and seasonal residents. These groups might have slightly different priorities, though in most regards the two groups shared many similar preferences. Where differences between the two groups are noted, it is so that each constituency might take ownership of those goals and not create division between these resident groups.

Year-round residents' preferences:

- Keep Taxes Low
- Affordable Housing
- More Transportation services.
- More Home based-business.
- Sell Monterey School site.
- More supportive of expanding the business district.
- More supportive of revising zoning to support more diversity of housing
- More supportive of town shuttle services

Seasonal or Part-Time resident's preferences:

- More distinct town center
- More retail businesses
- More outdoor recreational activities
- Refurbish Monterey School site.

Demographics of Respondents

Survey responses were not compulsory to continue the survey. Some individuals skipped certain questions; 10 individuals skipped the first question. Some questions asked for personal information such as age, income, or location in Monterey. In these questions individuals were given the option to "prefer not to answer." Respondents that choose to answer these questions were:

Generally older- Age 60 and older: 56% of respondents

Live with one other individual: 50%

Own their home: 90%

Monterey is a rural community which is the reason most residents choose to live here. The top three reasons for living in Monterey given in the survey (Question 1) were nature, wildlife, and scenic beauty (77%), peace and quiet (43%), and small-town atmosphere/people and community (both at 34%). The results of Question 1 are presented in Figure 49.

Other reasons that survey respondents listed for living in Monterey include recreational activities (29%), relatives and families living nearby (17%), and even 3% who live here because of weather in the Winter.

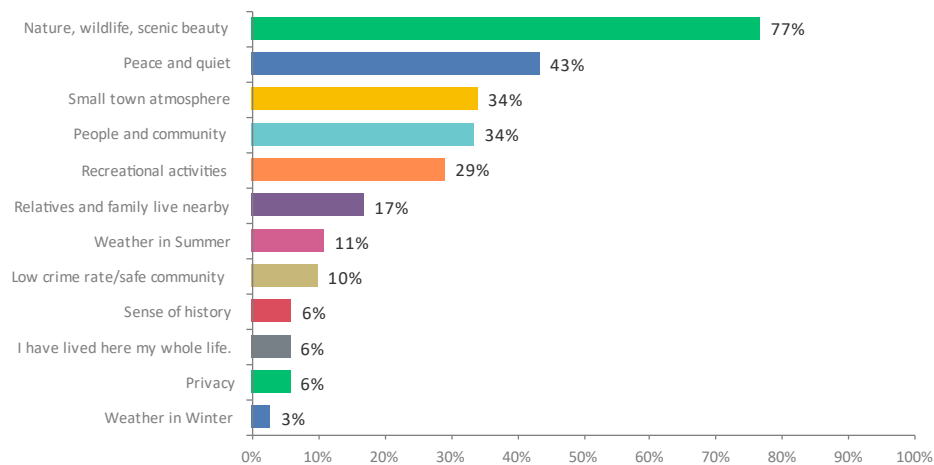
When asked to choose their top 5 priorities for Monterey in the coming 20 years, residents overwhelmingly stated that they would like to preserve the natural beauty (75%) and rural character of the town (58%). Monterey residents want to keep the strong sense of community that has been a long tradition in the town (44%), the taxes low (38%) but also foster a more distinct town center (43%) and allow for slow and controlled growth (39%). Affordable housing (27%) and transportation services (15%) were also higher priority items for some respondents.

Monterey residents love to be outside and support for increased outdoor recreational activities (16%) was within the top 10 choices. Almost 1 in 10 respondents supported additional business development (11%), senior housing (8%), and added services for senior citizens (8%). This information is presented graphically in figure 50.

Figure 49- Monterey Survey, Question 1: Reasons to live in Monterey.

Q1: What are the three top reasons that you choose to live in Monterey?

Answered: 375 Skipped: 10

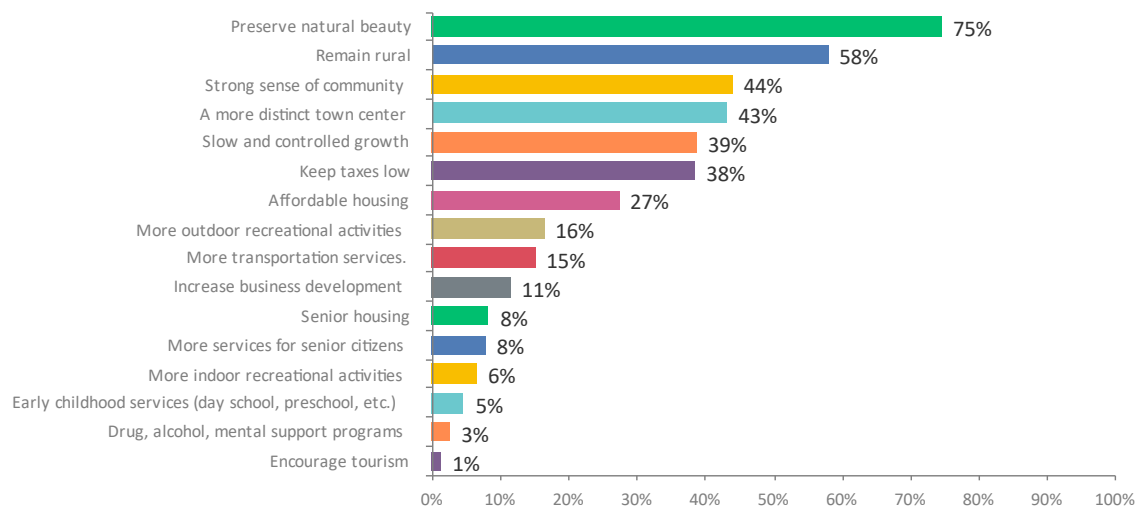


Powered by SurveyMonkey

Figure 50- Monterey Survey, Question 2: Monterey 20-year priorities.

Q2: What would you like to see for the town of Monterey for the next 20 years (Choose up to 5)?

Answered: 383 Skipped: 2



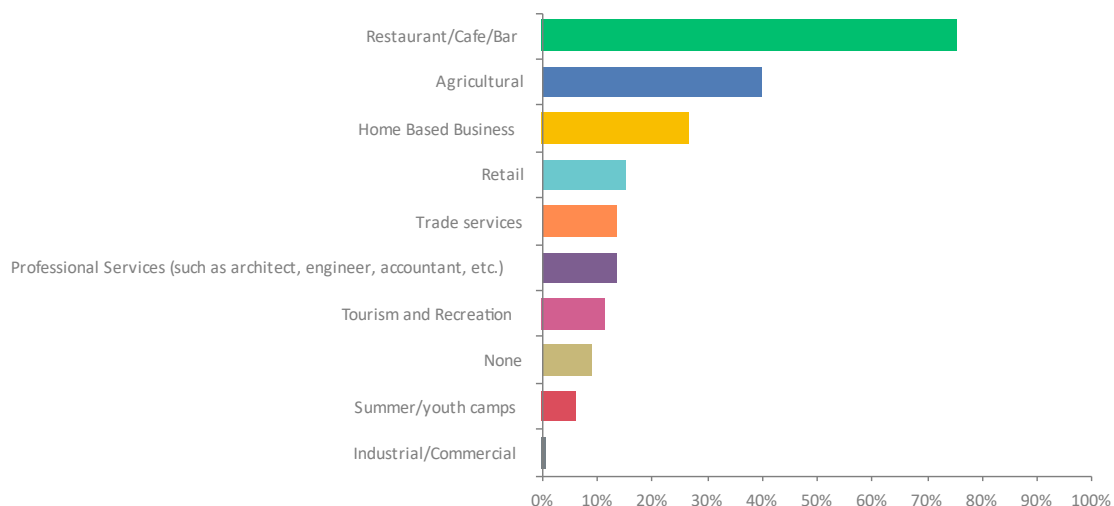
Powered by SurveyMonkey

All respondents supported business development in the restaurant/café/Bar area. Gould Farm has recently received site plan approval for their Roadside Restaurant, and it is hoped that the General Store will reopen at some point. Throughout both the forums and survey, Monterey residents demonstrated a “hunger” for food service options in Monterey- both grocery and prepared food options. Agricultural businesses are also supported by all residents. Monterey has a long history of agricultural production- developing succession plans for local farmers who wish to retire and encouraging new agricultural businesses are both priorities for the town.

Figure 51- Monterey Survey, Question 3: Business Preferences.

**Q3: Which types of business would you like to see encouraged in Monterey?
(Choose up to 3)**

Answered: 375 Skipped: 10



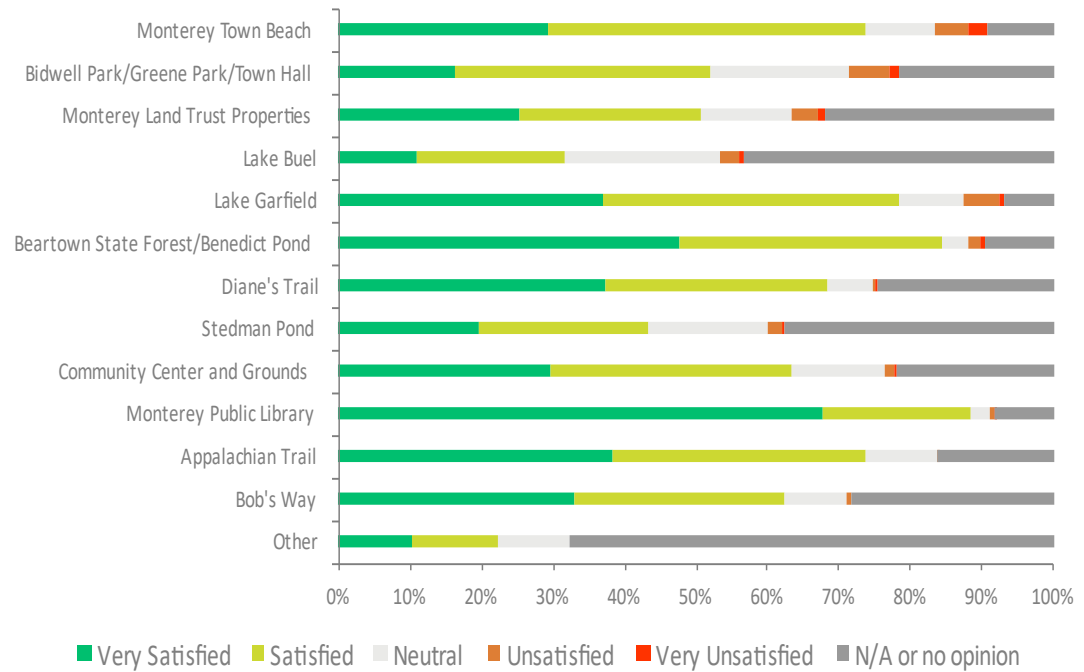
Powered by  SurveyMonkey

Survey respondents were generally satisfied with open spaces and facilities in the town. The library was the highest rated with 68% of respondents stating that they were very satisfied with the quality of the new facility and services. Other highly rated facilities included Beartown State Forest, Lake Garfield, and the Appalachian Trail. Monterey Town Beach was rated as very satisfactory or satisfactory by 75% of respondents but also had the highest dissatisfaction rating with 10 respondents (3%) very unsatisfied with the facilities. Survey respondents referred to the proximity of the boat ramp to the swimming area, the use of the beach by non-residents, and lack of parking as problematic. During the 2023 Town Meeting, the town voted to approve a town beach monitor which should address resident concerns.

Figure 52- Monterey Survey, Question 4: Recreation area satisfaction.

Q4: How satisfied are you with the following recreation areas in Monterey?

Answered: 381 Skipped: 4



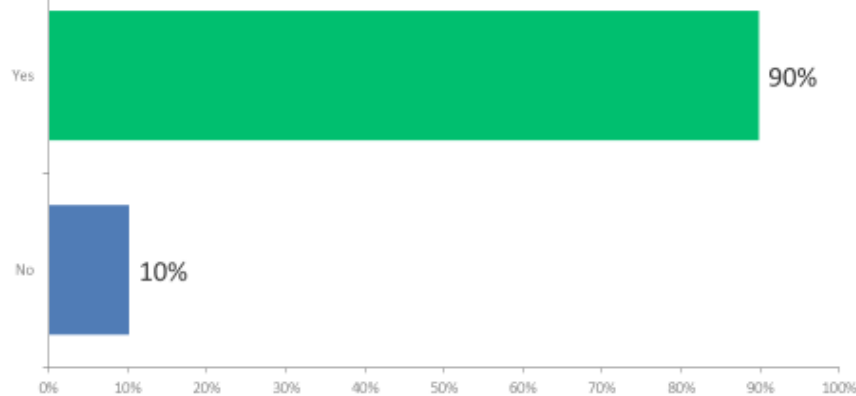
Powered by SurveyMonkey

Respondents support the replacement of the Route 23 Culvert at Town Hall at a rate of 9 to 1 (Figure 53).

Figure 53- Monterey Survey, Question 5, Culvert replacement on Route 23.

Q5: As part of Monterey's resilience planning for future flood events, do you support the replacement of the main culvert (next to Town Hall) on Route 23?

Answered: 353 Skipped: 32



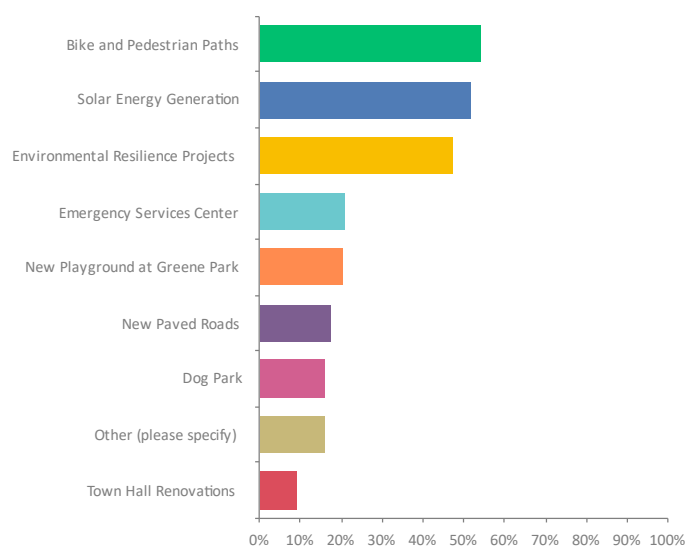
Powered by SurveyMonkey

Many respondents referred to planning for climate resilience as a high priority for the town, especially Solar Energy Generation and bike/pedestrian improvements.

Figure 54- Monterey Survey, Question 6, Infrastructure Improvements.

Q6: What infrastructure project or improvement do you think should be a priority in Monterey (Choose 3)?

Answered: 385 Skipped: 0

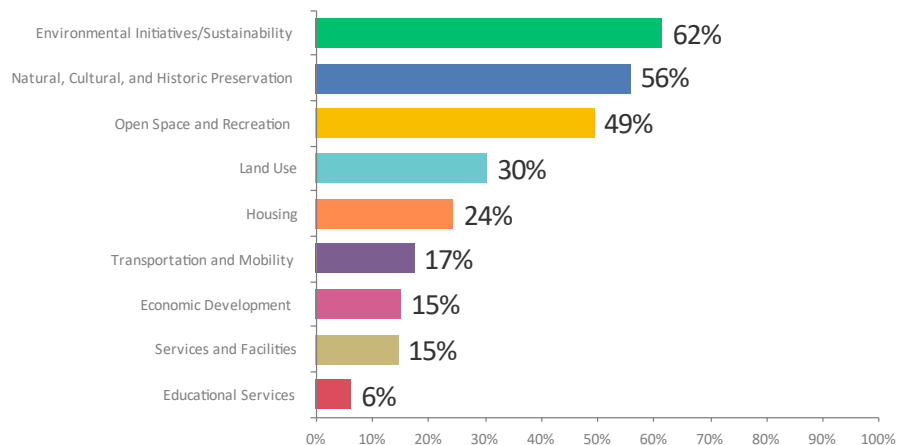


Powered by SurveyMonkey

Figure 55- Monterey Survey, Question 8, Master Plan Priorities.

Q8: Which of the following elements (included in the Master Plan) do you think should be top priority in the Monterey Master Plan? (Choose 3)

Answered: 385 Skipped: 0



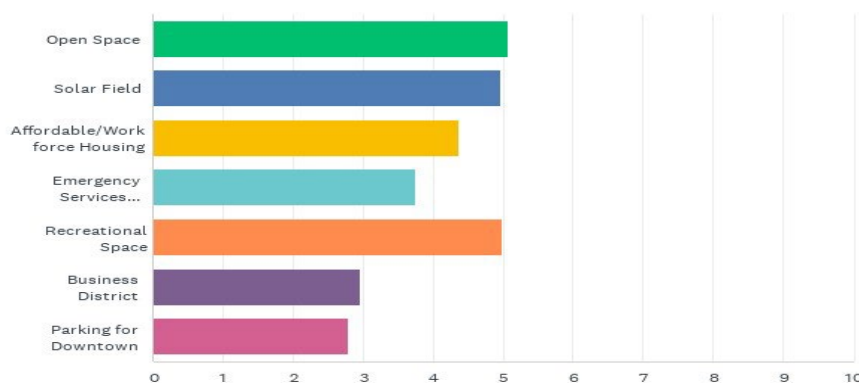
Powered by SurveyMonkey

Respondents were asked about the best use for the 11 acres of town owned land to the north/northwest of town hall/the fire station. It should be noted that many of the choices were not mutually exclusive of one another, with open space, solar field, and recreational space all equally ranked (see Figure 56)

Figure 56- Monterey Survey, Question 10, Development preferences for town land on Fox Hill Road.

Q10: If the town was to develop land behind Town Hall/ on Fox Hill, what use would benefit the town the most? (Rank your choices)

Answered: 373 Skipped: 12



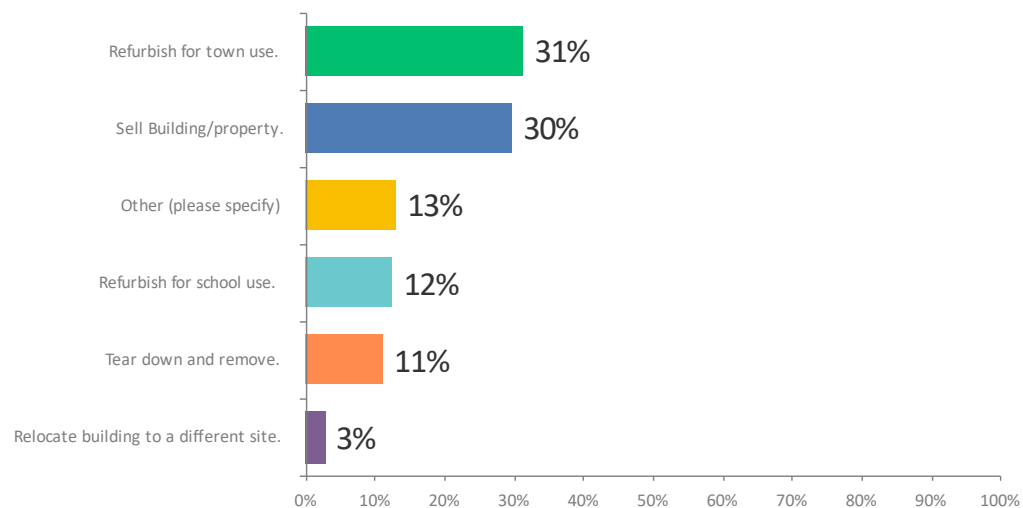
Powered by SurveyMonkey

Respondents were asked about the best use for the vacant Monterey School, with equal numbers advocating for refurbishing for town use or selling the property (see Figure 57)

Figure 57- Monterey Survey, Question 11: Preferences for Monterey School building use.

Q11: What would the best use for the vacant elementary school building?

Answered: 371 Skipped: 14



Powered by  SurveyMonkey

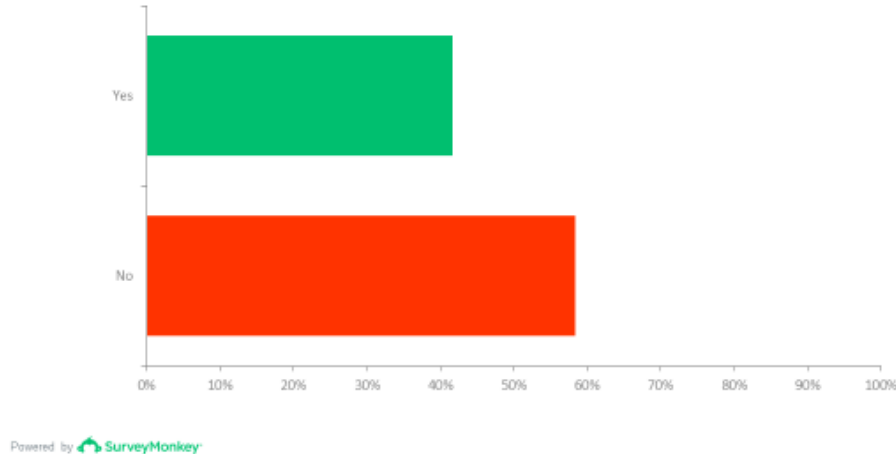
Additional Results of survey questions are featured in Figures 58 to 64.

When asked about expanding the business district to other parts of town, respondents were not in favor by a margin of 6 to 4.

Figure 58- Monterey Survey, Question 12: Business District Expansion.

Q12: Would you be in favor of expanding the area encompassed by the business district to other parts of town?

Answered: 370 Skipped: 15

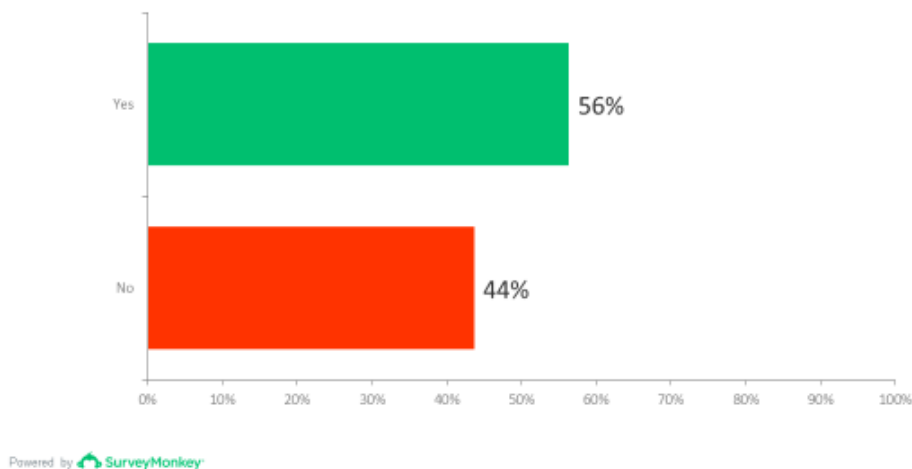


Respondents were also split on revising the zoning to enable more housing opportunities. While the opposite ratio applied to allowing more housing opportunities in the town (6 to 4),

Figure 59- Monterey Survey, Question 13: Revision of Zoning to allow more housing types.

Q13: Would you be in favor of revising the zoning bylaws in some sections of town to promote more housing opportunities/options?

Answered: 362 Skipped: 23



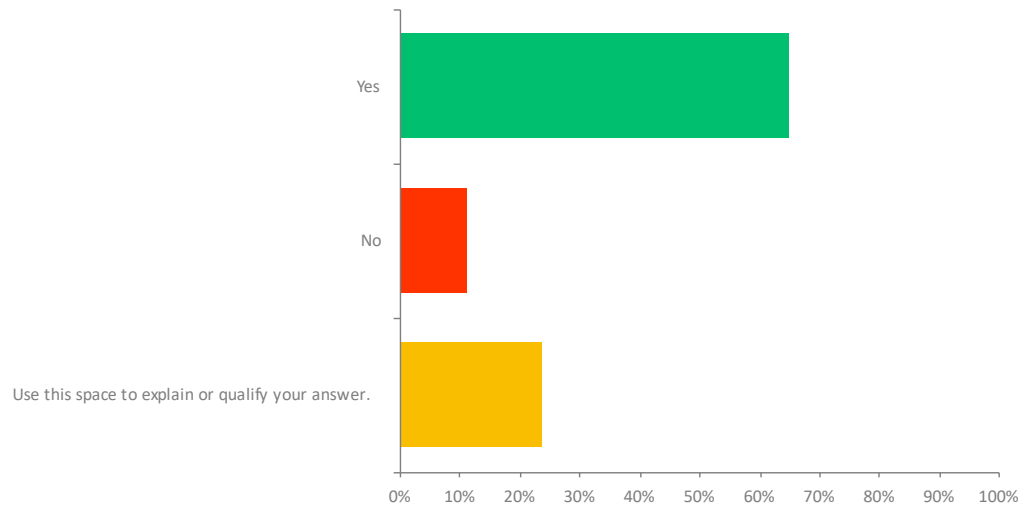
Siting
of a
solar
facility
in

Monterey is supported by 65% of respondents, with 24% qualifying their answer (avoiding greenfield development, losing agricultural land, siting facility out of view), and 11% not supporting.

Figure 60- Monterey Survey, Question 14: Support for Solar projects in Monterey.

Q14: Do you support the siting of a solar facility in Monterey?

Answered: 372 Skipped: 13



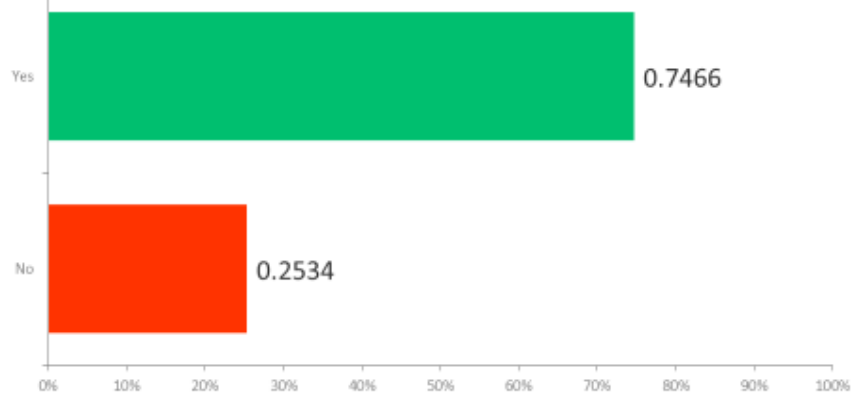
Powered by  SurveyMonkey

Adding a Dark Sky bylaw is supported by 75% of the respondents with 25% opposed.

Figure 61- Monterey Survey, Question 15: Support for Dark Sky bylaw.

Q15: Would you support making Monterey a "Dark Sky" community? (This bylaw would limit light pollution by requiring directed/screened lighting in building codes.)

Answered: 367 Skipped: 18

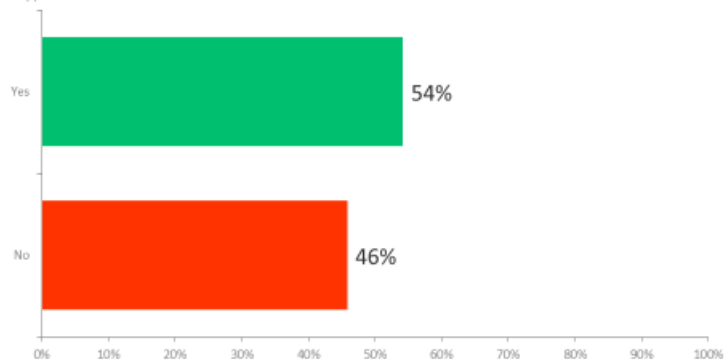


Powered by SurveyMonkey

Figure 62- Monterey Survey, Question 16: Promotion of Business District.

Q16: Would you be in favor of the town raising or appropriating money to obtain land in the downtown area to promote the business district?

Answered: 371 Skipped: 14



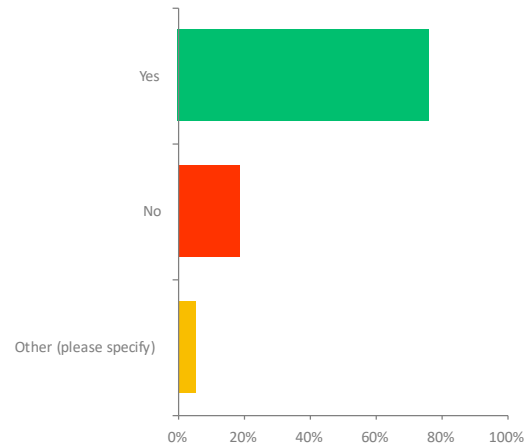
Powered by SurveyMonkey

Respondents were nearly equally split when asked about obtaining land downtown to promote the business district, with slightly more in support.

Respondents overwhelmingly supported the adoption of the Community Preservation Act, with 75% in support.

Figure 63- Monterey Survey, Question 17. Support of CPA adoption.

Q17: Would you support the town's adoption of the Community Preservation Act, or CPA, to facilitate projects in open space, historical preservation, and affordable housing? (CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum. This enables towns to leverage state money to finance projects in open space protection/outdoor recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing. (<https://www.communitypreservation.org>))



Answered: 367 Skipped: 18

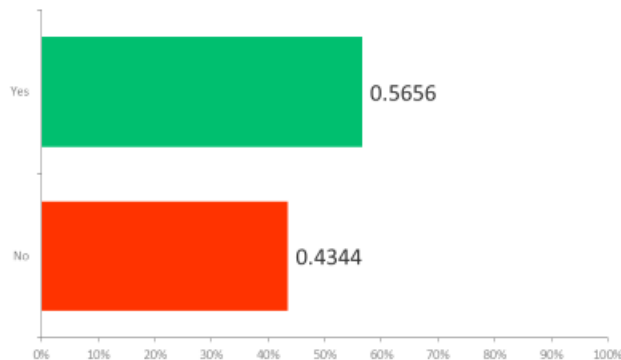
Powered by SurveyMonkey

Lastly, respondents were slightly more supportive than opposed to funding a town shuttle service (either through grants or taxation).

Figure 64- Monterey Survey, Question 18. Support for town van or shuttle service.

Q18: Would you be in favor of funding (through grants or taxation) a town shuttle service?

Answered: 366 Skipped: 19



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Monterey's Future: Implementing Our Master Plan

This Master Planning process has illuminated the importance that town residents place on the rural character of our community and its continued sustainability in lieu of demographic, economic, and environmental shifts.

This planning process has also outlined interest in transportation improvements, especially for pedestrians and connections between the town beach and town center. The needs of older and ageing residents must be considered, especially as the town's population continues to get older.

From a financial point of view, planning for facilities and buildings suggests the importance of an ongoing and comprehensive capital planning process that can anticipate financial expenditures for those needs.

The importance of the town remaining rural is a core characteristic of the Town that a large majority of the residents agree on. The challenge of remaining rural in the face of the recent exodus from cities, improved Internet access, and the search for a more meaningful connected community means the Town will need to review its zoning bylaws to ensure long term residents can continue to afford to live in the town. Examining regulations to ensure that development does not overtake the rural landscape, while encouraging a diversity of housing types and development in the downtown will be important to guiding growth in Monterey in the coming 20 years.

What follows are the Planning Boards recommendations for actions to be taken by the Town in response to this planning process. Table 3 indicates what the actions are and who might be best suited to undertake these action steps and is organized by preference of survey respondents. It specifies which actions should be prioritized, the estimated cost and timeframe, funding sources and committee, board, or department responsible for the actions. It is recommended that oversight of this implementation process be coordinated between the Planning Board and Select Board. Collaboration with the various boards and departments responsible for the actions will be coordinated by the Town Administrator. Local town governance, resident preferences, current conditions and State and Federal opportunities will also influence the implementation of the plan. Ultimately, implementation of the Master Plan's recommendations will be the responsibility of all Monterey residents. It is recommended that this implementation table be updated on an annual basis, with the status of each item noted, and adjustments made as needed. A Master Plan chapter in the Town's Annual Report could include the updated table as well.

Table 3: Monterey Master Plan Implementation Table

Goal 1: Promote open space projects throughout the town.								
	Recommendation	Category	Magnitude of Cost (\$,\$\$,,\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$)	Responsible Party	Priority (1-5 Stars)	Time	Funding Avenues	Notes
1.1	Apply for CPA membership (Community Preservation act) to allow for funding of Open Spaces projects.	Open Space/ Parks	\$	Town Residents, SB, PB, Parks Committee	****	Medium	Town passage of CPA Bylaw.	
1.2	Develop a town committee or plan for maintenance of Town trails	Open Space/ Parks	\$	New committee or Parks Committee	***	ongoing	Mass PARC Grant, (Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities)	
1.3	Support efforts of open space organizations in Monterey and Berkshire County.	Open Space/ Parks	\$	Various town departments and Non-Profits (both local and regional)	***	ongoing	Various Federal, State, Local and Non Profit Sources.	
1.4	Support efforts of Parks Committee improvements at Green, Bidwell, and other town parks.	Open Space/ Parks	\$-\$\$\$	PB, SB, Town Residents	****	ongoing	Mass PARC Grant, (Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities)	

Goal 2: Promote Environmental Resilience and Sustainability.								
	Recommendation	Category	Magnitude of Cost (\$,\$\$,,\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$)	Responsible Party	Priority (1-5 Stars)	Time	Funding Avenues	Notes
2.1	Provide support to environmental/sustainability initiatives with existing town groups.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$	Various	****	ongoing	Conservation Assistance for Small Communities Grant Program, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Office of Grants and Technical Assistance, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program,	
2.2	Continue to encourage and support Solar development in town.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$	SWG, PB	****	ongoing	Conservation Assistance for Small Communities Grant Program, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Office of Grants and Technical Assistance, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program,	
2.3	Continue to pursue the Route 23 culvert project to protect from flooding.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$\$	SB, Cons Com	****	short	Funding Obtained	
2.4	Support and encourage native plants and pollinator-friendly activities.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$	Citizens, NPWG	***	ongoing	MASS PARC Grant	
2.5	Finalize the requirements for Massachusetts Green Communities designation.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$	SB, Various	**	medium	Green Communities Grant	
2.6	Adopt Dark Sky Community bylaw.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$	PB	***	medium	DLTA, Planning Assistance Grant	
2.7	Evaluate roads/stormwater needs in light of increased runoff and heavier rains.	Environmental/Sustainability	\$\$	SB, Hwy. Dept, Private Road Owners and Abutters	***	ongoing	Municipal Vulnerability Program	

Goal 3: Enhance business opportunities in the downtown.								
	Recommendation	Category	Magnitude of Cost (\$,\$\$,,\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$\$)	Responsible Party	Priority (1-5 Stars)	Time	Funding Avenues	Notes
3.1	Develop a Downtown Revitalization Committee.	Business	\$	SB	*	Medium	Town Volunteers	
3.2	Hire a consultant to do an evaluation of the Downtown area.	Business	\$\$\$	SB, PB	****	Short	Planning Assistance Grant, Community Ones Stop for Growth, Community Compact Grant	
3.3	Facilitate a farmers market at the Community Center or other location.	Business	\$	SB, CC, Ag Com	**	Medium	Mass in Motion Municipal Wellness and Leadership Initiative, Office of Local and Regional Health Grants	
3.4	Evaluate the tax rate for businesses to see if that might attract investment.	Business	\$	SB, PB	*	Long	Community Compact, One Stop for Growth	
3.5	Evaluate ways to attract Restaurant/Store businesses to town.	Business	\$\$	SB, PB	****	Short	Planning Assistance Grant, Community Ones Stop for Growth, Community Compact Grant	
3.6	Evaluate ways to improve parking in the downtown area.	Business	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	SB, PB, Hwy Dept.	****	Short	Planning Assistance Grant, Community Ones Stop for Growth, Community Compact Grant	
3.7	Continue to support Historic District application.	Business	\$	Hist. Society, PB	****	Short	DLTA, CPA, Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program, Preservation Projects Fund	
3.8	Evaluate uses for the old school building that might enhance the downtown area.	Business	\$-\$\$\$	SB, PB	***	Medium	DLTA, Efficiency and Regionalization Program	

Goal 4: Enhance facilities and transportation in the town.								
	Recommendation	Category	Magnitude of Cost (\$,\$\$,,\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$\$)	Responsible Party	Priority (1-5 Stars)	Time	Funding Avenues	Notes
4.1	Hire a consultant to evaluate complete streets opportunities in the downtown area (sidewalks and paths)	Transportation	\$-\$\$\$	SB,PB	****	Short	Planning Assistance Grant,	
4.2	Work with the neighboring communities to provide additional van transport in town.	Transportation	\$	SB,PB, COA	***	Ongoing	Community Transit Grant Program, Helping Hands Mini-grants, Complete Streets, Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Program, Mass Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds,	
4.3	Evaluate the road suitability for heavy use by Hume camp on Chestnut Hill/Cronk roads	Transportation	\$	SB, Highway, Hume Camp	***	Short	N/A	
4.4	Apply for Complete Streets designation by Massachusetts.	Transportation	\$	SB, PB, Highway	****	Short	MassDOT Complete Streets Funding	
4.5	Evaluate possibility of trail connection between town beach and town center.	Transportation	\$-\$\$\$	SB, PB, Highway	***	Ongoing	Shared Streets Program, Transportation Improvement Program, Complete Streets Funding	
4.6	Evaluate pedestrian improvements on Route 23, especially in the downtown area.	Transportation	\$-\$\$\$	SB, PB, Highway	***	Ongoing	Shared Streets Program, Transportation Improvement Program, Complete Streets Funding	
4.7	Evaluate town hall improvements for record storage and town government.	Facilities	\$-\$\$\$	SB, Various Town Departments	**	Medium	Community Compact, One Stop for Growth	
4.8	Evaluate the suitability of town emergency services for the future, including ambulance service.	Facilities	\$-\$\$\$	SB, Police, Fire, and Emergency Services	*	Ongoing	Community Compact, One Stop for Growth, Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Program	
4.9	Consider a cooperative emergency/disaster response plan with Hume and Gould Farm and the town.	Facilities	\$	SB, Police, Fire, and Emergency Services, Hume, and Gould Farm	**	Medium	N/A	
4.11	Create a mechanism for town acceptance/denial of private ways as public ways-define conditional requirements and consider adoption of official map.	Facilities	\$	SB, Highway Department, Police, Fire, and Emergency Services.	*	Long	N/A	See Massachusetts Streets and Ways for Surveyors, F. Sydney Smithers, 2011.

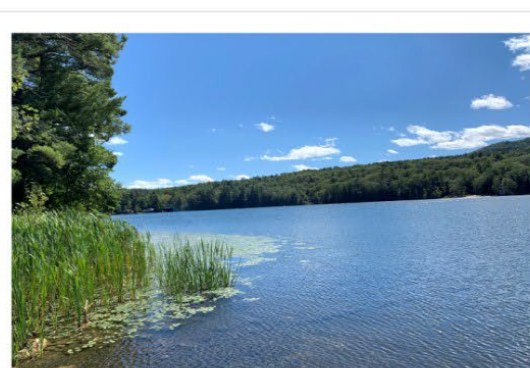


Photo Credit, Clockwise from Top Left: Roger Tryon, Seth Jenkins (4), Melissa Noe??, Monterey Volunteer Fire Department ???

Appendix

Relevant Studies and Reference Materials

- Monterey Master Plan Public Forums Mentimeter Presentations
- Forum Synopsis Document
- Monterey News Articles
- Monterey Stakeholder Meetings
- Monterey Master Plan Survey Results
- Monterey Survey- Open Responses
- Monterey Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2020)
- Summary- Monterey Solar Energy Report
- Summary of Capital Improvement Plan
- List of inventoried properties on Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission

ⁱ (Berkshire Regional Planning Commision, 2003)

ⁱⁱ (Town Committee/Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 2020)

- ⁱⁱⁱ (Monterey, 2021)

^{iv} (Bellow, 2016)

^v (Carroll, 2021)