

MASTER PLAN

Town of Otis, Massachusetts

Adopted by the Otis
Planning Board on
January 11, 2016

Prepared by:
The Otis Master Plan
Steering Committee &
The Berkshire Regional
Planning Commission

MASTER PLAN

Town of Otis, Massachusetts



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thanks to Those Who Provided Review, Comments, and Assistance Along the Way!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	iii
Executive Summary	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1-1
Welcome to Otis!	1-1
What does this plan address?	1-1
About master plans	1-2
What does the plan contain?	1-3
The planning process.....	1-3
Plan Overview	1-4
Chapter 2: Population and Demographics.....	2-1
Trends and Conditions	2-1
Key population issues.....	2-2
Chapter 3: Economy	3-1
Trends and conditions.....	3-2
Key economy issues	3-3
Economy goals, objectives, and actions.....	3-4
Chapter 4: Infrastructure.....	4-1
Trends and conditions	4-1
Key infrastructure issues	4-3
Infrastructure goals, objectives, and actions	4-4
Chapter 5: Public Services	5-1
Trends and conditions	5-1
Key public services issues.....	5-2
Public services goals, objectives, and actions	5-3
Chapter 6: Housing	6-1
Trends and conditions	6-1
Key housing issues.....	6-3
Housing goals, objectives, and actions.....	6-3
Chapter 7: Transportation	7-1
Trends and conditions	7-1
Key transportation issues.....	7-3
Transportation goals, objectives, and actions.....	7-3
Chapter 8: Land Use	8-1
Trends and conditions	8-1
Key land use Issues.....	8-4
Land use goals, policies, and actions.....	8-4



Chapter 9: Natural and Cultural Resources	9-1
Trends and conditions	9-1
Key natural and cultural resource issues	9-4
Natural and cultural resources goals, policies, and actions	9-5
Chapter 10: Open Space and Recreation	10-1
Trends and conditions	10-1
Key open space and recreation issues	10-3
Open space and recreation goals, policies, and actions	10-3
Chapter 11: Vision	11-1
Introduction	11-1
Vision	11-1
Chapter 12: Planning Process	12-1
Introduction	12-1
Planning process	12-1
Chapter 13: Implementation Strategy	13-1
Implementing the plan	13-1
Updating the plan	13-2
Action plan	13-4

APPENDICES

- A: Maps
- B: Key Issues
- C: Existing Conditions Summary
- D: MGL 41: Master Planning Law
- E: Public Survey Results

Executive Summary

During 2015, the Town of Otis developed a master plan, a strategic document that helps direct decision-making in the town for the next 10-20 years. A master plan considers all aspects of a community to create a consistent strategy for how each should progress in the future – including land use, housing, economy, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, services, infrastructure, and transportation.

Also produced concurrently during work on this master plan was an update to the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The State of Massachusetts requires this to be a separate stand alone document. Chapter 10 of this master plan is a summary of the OSRP and contains goals and objectives identical to those found within the larger OSRP.

The development of the master plan was the work of the Otis Master Plan Steering Committee. This group was comprised of members of other town boards, town staff, and interested citizens of Otis. The planning process also incorporated broad community input through the development of a public opinion survey and two public informational meetings or forums. This valuable input has helped to shape the content of the plan—thank you to all who devoted time to the creation of this plan for the town's future.

VISION

This plan creates a strategy to help the town achieve its vision for its desired future. Components of Otis' vision include additional comprehensive planning for East Otis, improved pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure in town, and potential future expansion of wastewater treatment in town.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our vision serves as the basis for a number of more-detailed goals and policies that define how the town will achieve its vision. In some cases, the successful achievement of the goals and policies depends on the collaboration of one or more other parties. Where

this is the case, the likely collaborators are identified in the implementation strategy (Chapter 13). The goals and policies are organized into chapters by topic, as described in the following sections.



Population and Demographics

The Town of Otis has a population of roughly 1,600 year-round residents as of the 2010 US Census. Between 1990 and 2010, the population of Otis increased by approximately 50%. Projections for the future population growth of Otis indicate that Otis could grow by an additional 300 or so year-round residents by 2030. Seasonal residents and second homeowners are a significant portion of the Otis population not accounted for in census figures. Data from the census and the town show that roughly 1/2 to 2/3 of all housing in the town is used by seasonal residents or second homeowners. Data compiled from the public opinion survey revealed that this seasonal population likely contributes to the year-round population as seasonal residents retire or move to the area; transitioning their seasonal residences into more permanent housing. Moreover, the year-round population of Otis is increasingly older. Between 2000 and 2010, the median age of an Otis resident increased by 6 years from 42.3 to 48.3.

Economy

The Otis economy is comprised primarily of small local businesses. Sixty-six businesses registered or renewed their "Doing Business As" (DBA) license in Otis between 2011 and 2014. Otis' location in the



Berkshire highlands, and its exquisite water resources, mean that recreation and tourism are key components of the economy, as indicated by the town's ski area, campgrounds, and summer camps. The Town of Otis seeks to work with and support its local business owners to help strengthen the Otis economy. Moreover the town seeks to create draws for future seasonal residents, tourists, and year-round residents.

Economy Goals

- Improve the Daily Life of Year-Round Residents and Increase Otis Attractions to Second Home-Owners and Seasonal Visitors.

Infrastructure

There are several components to Otis' infrastructure, including a sewer system and wastewater treatment plant that serves Otis Center Village, town buildings and facilities, and public drinking water wells. Otis has several ongoing infrastructure projects including work to install a wind energy turbine in the town, which was recently approved by voters.

Moreover, the town has invested significantly in town buildings through weatherization and other energy efficiency projects, and cost savings have been substantial. Additionally, the town has been moving forward with plans to develop broadband internet service, as have many Berkshire communities. The town recently approved a bond measure to further this effort, and hopes to expedite the creation of this service in town. The town hopes to continue and



expedite this ongoing work, as well as connect residents with programs to increase energy efficiency and save them money in the long term. Moreover, the town will work to expand sewer service in town by utilizing the excess capacity of the existing system and investigating the development of a green or ecological based wastewater treatment system in East Otis.

Infrastructure Goals

- Energy efficiency and self-sufficiency for public and private buildings in Otis.
- Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure.



Services

Otis offers many services to its residents including law enforcement, fire protection, road maintenance,

building and health inspection, a town website, and senior programs through the Council on Aging to name a few. The town will continue to provide efficient services that support the safety and health of the community. Moreover, the town will work to increase overall civic engagement and participation in town events and local government.

Services Goals

- Support a Safe and Healthy Community.
- Efficient and Fiscally Responsible Services.
- Increase Civic Engagement by Otis Residents.
- Meet the Needs of an Older Population.



Housing

Over 93% of housing in Otis is comprised of single family residences. As described previously, most housing in Otis is used seasonally. Since 2000, Otis has seen its median home sale price increase by 67% to \$260,000. While housing affordability impacts Otis, it is also a regional and national issue. Otis will work to address local housing needs, particularly those of its older residents, through participation in housing rehabilitation programs, and by working to connect residents to existing programs that support home ownership and affordability. The town will also explore homegrown efforts to address housing, such as the sale of town-owned lands to create affordable building lots.

Housing Goals

- Address Local Housing Needs.



Transportation

Transportation in Otis is primarily provided by automobiles and trucks. The region's public transportation provider, the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority, does not service the town, except to provide paratransit services to older residents. Otis' highway department provides road maintenance services, and works to prioritize and address local roadway needs. Otis benefits significantly from the fact that its two primary roadways, Route 8 and Route 23 are maintained by the state. The town will continue to provide a complete and well maintained system of roadways. The town will also explore potential enhancements to the bicycling and pedestrian environment in town.

Transportation Goals

- Provide a Complete and Well Maintained System of Roads.
- Increase Access to Public and Alternative Transportation in Otis.
- Enhance the Bicycle and Pedestrian Environment in Town.
- Address Wildlife Crossings in Future Roadway Projects.

Land Use

Otis is mostly forested, and the primary land use is residential, which far exceeds industrial, commercial, or institutional uses within the town. The town has two zoning districts, including a residential (R-40)



district which covers most of the town, and a village (V-1) district which regulates the areas around Otis Center and East Otis Villages. A floodplain overlay district regulates areas within the 100-year flood plain and other flood prone areas in the town. The Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) identified Otis's village centers as critical areas in town to be reexamined, particularly East Otis Village. East Otis village will be reexamined by the town to potentially include future wastewater treatment, incentivize the use of underutilized properties, such as the J&D Marina. The town will also work to address future land use issues, such as commercial solar energy.

Land Use Goals

- Revisit Otis' Village Centers.
- Research and Develop a Commercial Solar Energy By-law.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Otis has significant natural resources, including eight state listed "Great Ponds", extensive wetlands, forests, wildlife habitat, and vernal pools. Otis' water resources are a major draw for tourists and second homeowners. Regionally, Otis is located at the headwaters of the Farmington River, the drinking water supply for the City of Hartford, CT and many other municipalities in MA and CT. In total, the Farmington River is estimated to supply drinking water to 600,000 people. A portion of the watershed protection land that surrounds the Cobble Mountain Reservoir is also found in Otis. This reservoir supplies roughly 150,000 residents of the City of Springfield, MA.

The town also has significant cultural resources in the form of historic buildings, areas, and monuments, including a portion of the Knox Trail which passes through the area. The town's Historic Commission has been an active leader in promoting and developing the



Knox Trail, as well as other historic resources. Major goals of this section are to continue to protect existing water and natural resources and to continue efforts to promote and develop the town's historic resources, such as the Knox Trail.

Natural and Cultural Resource Goals

- Develop and Promote Otis' Cultural and Historic Resources.
- Protect Otis' Water and Natural Resources.

Open Space and Recreation

Open Space is defined as land that has not been developed for residential, commercial or industrial use. Otis has significant open space resources including three state owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and portions of three state forests. Open space can be either protected or unprotected. Protected lands include state forest or park land, properties owned by land trusts, or privately owned land protected by conservation restrictions. Roughly 27% of all land in Otis is permanently protected from development. Additionally, some Otis residents have chosen to participate in Chapter 61, a state program that lowers property taxes in exchange for conservation of land. Roughly 5% of all land in Otis is enrolled in Chapter 61. These open space areas create

significant space for recreation, especially in combination with the town’s ample water resources including Otis Reservoir, and Big Pond. Otis Reservoir is the largest recreational body of water in the state. The town also owns several recreation areas including a recreation center, a town beach, a skate park, and a



playground. The open space and recreation chapter of the Otis master plan is a summary of the town’s Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) a separate document.

Open Space and Recreation Goals

- Water Resources are Protected.
- Natural Resources are Protected.
- Residents and Visitors are Aware of Otis’ Open Space and Cultural Resources and Recreational Opportunities.
- The Town’s Recreation Opportunities Meet Community Needs.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The plan calls for numerous actions. To make implementation easier, the final chapter lists each action and assigns a relative time priority and who is responsible for initiating the implementation of the action. Ideally, the town will use this tool as it plans annual priorities from year-to-year.

APPENDICES

In addition to the plan for the town’s future, there are a number of appendices that highlight current

conditions at the time of the plan, legal considerations, and survey feedback received from the community.

- A. Maps
- B. Key issues
- C. Existing Conditions Summary
- D. MGL 41
- E. Survey Results



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan for the Town of Otis was developed in 2015 to guide growth, policy, and investment decisions for the next 10 to 20 years. This chapter provides background to the planning process and describes the content of different chapters of the plan for easy reference and use.

WELCOME TO OTIS!

Otis is a small town located in the beautiful Berkshire region of Massachusetts. Located in western Massachusetts, the Berkshires are renowned for their natural beauty, rich arts and culture scene, and small New England town charm. In this setting lies the town of Otis, nestled in the Berkshire Hills east of Great Barrington, one of the larger communities in the Berkshires. Otis is bordered by the towns of Becket to the North, Monterey and Tyringham to the West, Sandisfield and Tolland to South and Blandford to the East.

Otis is a town of approximately 1,612 year-round residents and a substantial number of seasonal residents and second homeowners (seasonal and second homes comprise approximately 55-68% of all housing in town). Otis was incorporated as a town on June 13, 1810. The town was named after Harrison Gray Otis, a speaker in the House of Representatives (Town of Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan 1991). Otis celebrated its bicentennial in 2010 (see figure 2.1 in Chapter 2).

WHAT DOES THIS PLAN ADDRESS?

This plan addresses a wide range of issues and priorities as expressed by the town through survey responses received at the start of the planning process. Some highlights, which illustrate recurring themes in the plan and its policies, include:

Character:

Residents value the peace and quiet and small town atmosphere of Otis. In addition, they value the natural and scenic beauty of the town's rural setting and the ability to be close to water and close to nature

and wildlife. However, residents disliked the town's distance from nearby services and amenities.

Economy:

Overall Otis residents and members of the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) felt that economic development should be encouraged. Additionally, survey respondents felt that the town lacked businesses and services. This plan includes steps that will be taken by the town to address economic development through outreach to and cooperation with the existing business community as well as greater promotion of the town.

Promotion:

The master plan makes several recommendations for more effective promotion of town events, open space and recreation areas, historic resources, and the town itself. The Otis MPSC feels that greater promotion of the town as a destination will help to draw new residents and visitors and help to boost the local economy. Moreover, increased promotion of local events and resources will help improve the quality of life for year-round residents.

Aging:

The aging of Otis residents is an issue that impacts many aspects of the master plan, including the economy, transportation, housing, and town services. Regionally, the Berkshires is aging at a faster rate than the state of Massachusetts as a whole. The town will work to implement several measures to support and meet the needs of its older population.

Infrastructure and Economic Development:

Otis has invested significantly in its infrastructure, particularly its buildings, in recent years. The town has also undertaken several infrastructure projects including the Otis Wind Energy Project, a shared space study, and the implementation of broadband internet service in town. These projects will help to provide a level of economic development, in addition to providing energy cost savings to the town over the long run. Moreover, proposed projects such as the expansion of wastewater treatment in Otis will also help to support local business, while simultaneously



Figure 1.1—The Town of Otis is a rural community in the southern Berkshires with a year-round population of around 1,600 residents as of the 2010 census. Otis is known regionally for its abundant water resources and recreation opportunities, which have earned it the reputation as the “outdoor playground of the Berkshires”. Image is taken along Route 23 looking east toward Otis Center Village. Photograph credit John Phelan. Image licensed under CC by 3.0.

helping to preserve existing open space and protecting the natural resources that Otis residents and visitors cherish.

Village Centers:

Otis’ villages are crucial economic and population centers. The Master Plan lays out several goals to support its village centers, including an examination of parking in its villages, possible design guidelines for future development, and creation of a comprehensive plan for East Otis Village.

Support of Ongoing Efforts and Projects:

The Master Plan does not discount ongoing projects and work by the town, but seeks to support and enhance these efforts. Ongoing work has been identified throughout the master plan and has been added to its goals, objectives, and action items.

ABOUT MASTER PLANS

A Master Plan is a document that sets a blueprint for town decision-makers to use in their day-to-day actions as part of managing the town. It is an advisory document not a regulatory document. The purpose of

this plan is to create an opportunity for the town to reflect and determine what it wants for its future and then chart out the preferred actions to achieve that vision. It is then the responsibility of the town’s elected and appointed officials to pursue the actions identified in the implementation chapter of this plan to gradually make the regulatory changes and priority investments needed to achieve the vision statement.

How does the Master Plan Relate to Other Town Plans and Documents?

The Master Plan takes precedence over other plans for the community such as transportation plans, open space and recreation plans, area plans, and other area- or topic-specific documents. The Master Plan is typically more general than more focused plan documents, but provides overarching guidance to the content of these plans in that they should be consistent with the policies established in the Master Plan.

An important function of the Master Plan is to ensure priorities and approaches in one area such as land use relate to another, such as transportation. Because all



Figure 1.2—The vision, goals, objectives, and action items of the plan. Together these establish the blueprint for what the town will work to achieve in the future.

of the topics are addressed within a single document, the policies in these different areas are developed to be consistent and supportive, thus safeguarding the potential danger of conflicting policies that can occur in a more fragmented planning approach. Other town plans can then use this framework to reach a finer level of detail in a particular subject area. For a list of

the topics required by Massachusetts law to be addressed in a Master Plan, see Appendix D.

While the Master Plan is not a regulatory document, it does set the policy for the town to develop new bylaws to regulate land use decisions. For more on how the plan impacts land use and bylaw decisions see Chapter 8: Land Use.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN CONTAIN?

Master Plan guidance is provided in a number of ways, including maps of current and desired conditions, illustrations of concepts, and policy language. The Vision provides the foundation for a number of goals and more specific policy and action statements. Together these establish the blueprint for what the town will do to achieve its vision and will serve as a guide for town policy and decision-makers for the life of the plan (see figure 1.2).

Vision

The vision is the “big picture” statement of where the town would like to be five, ten, or twenty years from now.

Goals

Goal statements go into greater detail on the different pieces that the town will need to pursue in order to make the vision a reality.

Objectives

These are the specific strategies that the town will pursue to achieve the goal.

Actions

Actions are the specific tasks that individuals or groups will need to do in order to achieve specific policy statements.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

This plan was developed through a planning process that included participation and feedback from the community:



Chapter 2: Population and Demographics

This chapter presents population and demographic trends in Otis and outlines key issues.

Chapter 3: Economy

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the key economic sectors present in the town and makes recommendations for how the town can support the retention and expansion of economic activity in the future.

Chapter 4: Infrastructure

Chapter 4 contains an overview of town infrastructure including sewer and communications and makes recommendations for future infrastructure improvement and development.

Chapter 5: Services

This section provides an overview of the fire, police, and other services provided in the town and sets goals and policies for the town to pursue to maintain and enhance services in the future.

Chapter 6: Housing

This element of the Master Plan provides an overview of housing supply and needs both now and in the future and then presents town goals and policies to address future housing in the town including options for young families and seniors.

Chapter 7: Transportation

This chapter highlights key features and issues with the current transportation system in the town and then establishes goals and policies for the town to pursue to maintain and enhance this system in the future.

Chapter 8: Land Use

This section contains a description of the current land use patterns and constraints, identifies goals and policies for future land use, and presents the future land use plan for the town.

Chapter 9: Natural and Cultural Resources

This chapter summarizes the natural environment, as well as cultural and historic attributes of the town and sets goals and objectives for the town to pursue.

Chapter 10: Open Space and Recreation

This chapter summarizes the open space and recreation elements of the town and sets goals and objectives for the town to pursue.

Chapter 11: Vision

Chapter 11 contains the vision for each section in the Master Plan. The vision is a concise statement of what residents want their town to be like in the future.

Chapter 12: Public Process

This chapter outlines the open and public process that was used to create the master plan.

Chapter 13: Implementation Strategy

The final section of the Master Plan contains an overview of the different types of actions that will be needed to implement the plan and the range of entities that will be involved in that process. Additionally, it includes the Implementation Strategy, which details the actions, responsible parties, relative priority, and potential funding sources for each action called for in the plan.

Appendices

- A. Maps
- B. Key issues
- C. Existing Conditions Summary
- D. MGL 41
- E. Survey Results

CHAPTER 2: POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Population

Otis is a small town in the Berkshires with a relatively low year-round population - 1,612 residents as of the 2010 census. However, Otis has experienced significant population growth over the past two decades. Census data indicates that the town population increased from 1,018 to 1,612 residents between 1990 and 2010. This amounts to a 50% increase in population over the 20 year period. Additionally, Otis is one of only a handful of Berkshire county towns projected to grow in the future. The Donahue Institute at UMass Amherst projects that Otis will grow by roughly 300 additional residents over the next two decades, reaching 1,980 year-round residents by 2030 (See Table C1 - Appendix C). Due to the high number of seasonal residents that come to Otis during summer months, it is unclear whether growth over past years has been comprised of newcomers to Otis, or of seasonal residents transitioning their second homes into their year round residences.

Seasonal Residents/Second Homeowners

Seasonal residents and second homeowners are a tremendous portion of the Otis population that are barely captured by census and other data. According to the 2010 census, 55% of all housing units in Otis are listed as seasonal. However, town assessor records place the percentage even higher, at 68% (Otis Town Assessor Records, 2015). Along with the towns of Becket, Stockbridge, and Lenox, Otis has one of the highest numbers of seasonal homes in the Berkshires. This seasonal population affects town services, infrastructure and housing. Additionally, they are likely a large contributor of new year-round residents to Otis. According to the survey results, 17 out of 79 year round residents (21%), indicated that they had at one time been seasonal residents or second homeowners. Additionally, 9 out of 50 seasonal residents or second homeowners (18%) reported that they were planning on becoming year round residents of Otis.

Age

Otis faces an increasingly older population. Between



POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS AT A GLANCE

Age

The median age of an Otis resident increased from 42.3 to 48.3 between 2000 and 2010.

Seasonal Residents

Seasonal residents are a major portion of Otis' population. Town of Otis records indicate 68% of all housing in the town is seasonal.

Diversity

The population of Hispanic and Latino residents increased between 2000 and 2010, while the population of other ethnic groups decreased.

Additional discussion of population and demographics may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 2.1—In 2010, Otis celebrated its bicentennial with festivities and a large parade. Photograph credit Town of Otis.

the 2000 and 2010 census, the number of Otis residents below the age of 45 decreased while the residents age 45 and older increased (See Table 2.1). The change was most pronounced in the 45-64 age group, which saw an increase of 7.95% during the “aughts” decade. Between these years, the median age of town residents increased by 6 years from 42.3 to 48.3. The aging population could have effects on town services as well as its housing and recreation needs among others.

At the other end of the spectrum, the decline in younger residents could have an effect on school enrollment and funding as well as future volunteers and town workers such as police and firefighters. Enrollment at the local elementary school, the Farmington River School, has decreased by about 25% since 2003 (see Table 2.2). Available data indicates that the number of school choice students and those from Sandisfield decreased the most. The number of school choice students enrolled at Farmington River has decreased from 35 to 24 students since 2007. Students attending from Sandisfield decreased from 43 to 26. However, the number of students from Otis increased slightly – by 7 students – since 2007.

Race, ethnicity, and Diversity

The population of several ethnic groups including African Americans and Asians fell between 2000 and 2010. The number of African Americans in Otis decreased from 8 persons to 2. The number of Asian Americans decreased from 12 to 9. However, the population of Hispanic and Latino residents in Otis increased from 4 to 18 between 2000 and 2010. Increasing diversity for Berkshire County as a whole is a trend that has been identified in regional planning work including the 2014 Sustainable Berkshires Plan.

KEY POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC ISSUES

An Older Populace

The increased number of older residents may affect the range of services the town wishes to provide as well as the range of housing options available. Additionally, it makes the need for accessibility to town buildings or amenities more important due to potential mobility impairment issues.



Table 2.1 - Change in Age Distribution in Otis 2000-2010

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census

Age	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
19 and under	23.81%	18.05%	-5.76%
20-44	31.72%	25.56%	-6.16%
45-64	30.33%	38.28%	+7.95%
65+	14.14%	18.11%	+3.97%

Seasonal Residents

Seasonal residents have a potentially large impact on town population, as well as town services and local housing.

Planning for Increased Diversity

The town may wish to consider potential language and cultural barriers that may be encountered in a potentially increasingly diverse town and county.

TABLE 2.2 - Farmington River School District Enrollment

*Source: Otis Annual Report 2007-2014, Massachusetts Dept. of Education**

Year	Total Enrollment	From Otis	From Sandisfield	School Choice Students
2003	178*	-	-	-
2004	188*	-	-	-
2005	190*	-	-	-
2006	171*	-	-	-
2007	153	75	43	35
2008	143	68	42	33
2009	147	77	42	28
2010	149	87	41	21
2011	144	86	37	21
2012	150	88	39	23
2013	149	87	37	25
2014	132	82	26	24

CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY

Otis had twenty-two operating mills in 1885, which helped support the town's growing lumber industry. While a few sawmills and logging operations exist today, the economy has changed drastically. This chapter reviews the composition of economic activity in the town and then details the goals, objectives and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision. Otis' vision for its economy includes working with and supporting its base of local independent businesses and improving the daily life of year-round residents.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Employment

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, the civilian labor force of Otis was 737 persons, representing approximately 59.4% of the population over the age of 16 (737 out of an estimated 1,421 residents) (see Table 3.1).

It is important to note that employment data is not calculated based on the entire population. Only persons over the age of 16 who are not members of the military, or institutionalized (such as in prison, in a nursing home or mental health facility) are used to calculate employment figures. Individuals who have received any payment for work are considered employed. Individuals who are laid off from work or are actively seeking employment are considered unemployed. Individuals who are not employed, laid off, or actively seeking employment are considered not in the labor force and are not used to calculate unemployment figures. Individuals in this category might include retirees, homemakers, students, the independently wealthy, or a person without a job who has stopped looking for work (perhaps temporarily). A person who is unemployed and has stopped looking for work is sometimes referred to as a "discouraged worker".

Unemployment has increased in Otis since 2000 (3.3%), to its 2013 value of approximately 6.1% of the labor force. This value is lower than the value of 7.1% for Berkshire County (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).



ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

Composition

Otis has a business base comprised of small local businesses.

Shift Towards Retail

Workers employed in the retail industry grew by 9% between 2000 and 2010, while those employed in manufacturing declined by roughly the same percentage. This trend has also been identified for Berkshire County.

Seasonal Recreation

A number of camps and campgrounds as well as a ski area do business in Otis. This points towards the importance of tourism and seasonal recreation to the local economy.

Additional discussion of economy may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Data from the 2009-2013 American Community Survey indicates that employment levels are highest for the 25-44 and 45-54 year old age groups (See Table C5 in Appendix C). The percentage of individuals not in the labor force, meaning they are not employed or actively seeking work, is highest in the 16-19 year old age group, and age groups over the age of 65. This likely includes many students or recent graduates that are not actively seeking employment. Additionally, in the older age group, it likely includes many retirees.

“Journey to work” commuting data available from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey indicates that 236, or 40% of, employed Otis residents work within the town. This figure includes commuters traveling to work within Otis, as well as self-employed workers and those that work from home. Another 37% travel to the towns of Lee, Great Barrington, Becket, and Tolland, as well as the cities of Pittsfield and Westfield. The remaining 22% travel to a variety of destinations in Massachusetts and Connecticut as well as major metropolitan areas such as New York City, NY and Philadelphia, PA (See Table C4-Employment Destinations of Otis Residents in Appendix C). Additional commuting data from the 2009-2013 American Community Survey indicates that the mean travel time to work for Otis residents was over half an hour (See Table 3.1—Otis Employment Statistics).

Between 2000 and 2013, the percentage of Otis workers employed in the manufacturing industry declined by 9.4%. The number of workers in retail increased by 9%. Similarly, the number of workers in the “arts, entertainment, accommodation and food service” sector increased by 3.1%. This trend has been identified at the county level as well. With the shift away from manufacturing, the economy has fewer living wage jobs or those that provide benefits such as insurance and retirement savings (See Table C3 in Appendix C for a breakdown of employment changes by sector between 2000 and 2013).

Income

Per capita income rose substantially from \$25,029 in 2000 (U.S. Census 2000) to \$45,492 in 2009 (U.S. Census ACS 2005-2009). However, since 2009, per capita income has declined to \$34,746 (U.S. Census ACS, 2009-2013). The median household income has also

Table 3.1 - Otis Employment Statistics 2000-2013

Source: 2000 US Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey

	2000	2013
Population 16 years and Over (Considered the population eligible to work)	1089 (100%)	1239(100%) (Estimate)
In Civilian Labor Force (employed and unemployed individuals)	738 (67.9%)	737 (59.4%)
Employed (full and part time workers, or anyone receiving payment for work)	702 (64.4%)	662 (53.4%)
Unemployed (Individuals who are laid off from a job or are actively looking for work)	36 (3.3%)	75 (6.1%)
Armed Forces	2 (1.8%)	0
Not In Labor Force (Individuals who are not employed, not laid off and not seeking employment)	349 (30.3%)	502 (40.5%)
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	31.3	33.2

fallen over the same period, from \$64,219 to \$59,271. Otis’s median household income was higher than the surrounding towns of Monterey, Sandisfield and Becket as well as that of Berkshire County. However, it was lower than neighboring Tyringham’s.

Local Business

Small local businesses dominate the business activity in Otis. Town Clerk records show that sixty-six businesses registered or renewed their “Doing Business As” (DBA) license in Otis between 2011 and 2014 (Otis Town Clerk Records, 2014). DBA records must be renewed every four years. These businesses fall into broad categories of construction and excavation, realty, childcare, restaurants, and a few farms. Business license data highlights another notable segment of the economy - seasonal and summer



Figure 3.1—The Otis Poultry Farm is an example of the one of the town’s small local businesses. Town records show that over 60 businesses registered with the town between 2011 and 2014. Photograph credit John Phelan. Image is licensed under CC by 3.0.

camp. These include Camp Bonnie Brae, Camp Overflow, Mountain-view, Camp Lenox and Berkshire Soccer Academy to name a few. Moreover, the town’s public and private campgrounds as well as a ski area contribute to the town’s well-known status as an outdoor recreation destination.

Previous Plans

In 1995, Land Use Inc. and Hammer Siler George Associates prepared an economic development plan for Otis. The plan identified as its goals that economic development efforts should increase employment opportunities and expand the range of entertainment and cultural activities as well as local choices for food and lodging.

KEY ECONOMY ISSUES

Business Growth and Economic Development

Otis has a business environment comprised of small, locally based businesses. In the past, there was an active business association in town. The Town of Otis will pursue economic development efforts only with the cooperation, partnership, and input of the Otis business community to ensure the success of any potential projects.

Aging / Changing Demographics

The Otis MPSC identified that many business owners in the town are becoming older, and there may not be younger employees, children, or other business owners in town willing or able to take over the operation of existing businesses once these owners retire. The town will explore efforts to help aging business owners with succession planning and other services to ensure that existing local business remains open in town.

Broadband Internet Development

Otis has been pursuing the development of high speed broadband internet for some time, and voted to fund such efforts in the Fall of 2015. The Otis MPSC feels that broadband internet service in town will allow for the expansion of home-based and other local businesses, and provide incentive for other businesses to move to the area. For more information on broadband internet in Otis, see Chapter 4: Infrastructure.



Figure 3.2—The Otis town flag was created to help celebrate the town’s bicentennial. The flag could be a component of branding and promoting the town, in conjunction with other economic development activities.

ECONOMY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Improve the daily life of year-round residents and increase Otis attractions to second home-owners and seasonal visitors

The Town of Otis will work to improve the daily life of residents through economic development, supporting and promoting existing businesses, and enhancing infrastructure. The town will also work to promote itself as a tourist and seasonal destination.

Objective: Business Outreach and Economic Development.

The Town will work to support and expand existing town businesses through business promotion and potential technical assistance. The town will work with existing business owners to strengthen the following actions and ensure success.

ACTION 1: PROMOTE EXISTING BUSINESSES AND EVENTS (THROUGH PRINT, RADIO, WEB, ETC).

ACTION 2: DEVELOP SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING IN VILLAGE CENTERS TO DIRECT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO BUSINESSES AND ATTRACTIONS.

ACTION 3: CONDUCT OUTREACH TO EXPLORE THE REFORMATION OF THE OTIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION.

ACTION 4: EXPLORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OTIS BUSINESSES.

ACTION 5: UPDATE AND RENAME THE OTIS DEVELOPMENT REVIEW MANUAL.

ACTION 6: UPDATE AND REPRINT THE OTIS BUSINESS DIRECTORY.

ACTION 7: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A “BUY LOCAL” CAMPAIGN.

ACTION 8: RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENT SUCCESSION PLANNING SERVICES FOR LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS.

ACTION 9: WORK ON A REGIONAL BASIS TO ENCOURAGE TRADESPEOPLE IN TOWN TO BECOME CERTIFIED IN THEIR FIELDS.

ACTION 10: ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN JOB APPRENTICESHIP AND MENTORING PROGRAMS.

ACTION 11: INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, SUCH AS BROADBAND INTERNET AND IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AS A FORM OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND A MEANS TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS.

Objective: Promote the Town as a Tourist and Seasonal Destination While Creating Draws for Future Year-Round Residents.

The Town will work to increase tourism and seasonal visitors as a mechanism for economic development. The town will also work to create draws for future year-round residents.

ACTION 1: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP A SIMPLIFIED TOWN LOGO.

ACTION 2: PROMOTE THE TOWN THROUGH THE EXISTING TOWN FLAG GRAPHIC.

ACTION 3: EXPAND AND DEVELOP PORTIONS OF THE TOWN WEBSITE THAT MARKET EXISTING BUSINESSES AND CONNECTS PEOPLE TO OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.

ACTION 4: EXPLORE THE CREATION OF DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR OTIS’ VILLAGE CENTERS.

ACTION 5: PROMOTE THE TOWN THROUGH A “SPEND A DAY IN OTIS” EVENT OR CAMPAIGN, WHICH CONNECTS VISITORS TO BUSINESSES AND ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.



ACTION 6: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THE HISTORIC KNOX TRAIL AS A VISITOR ATTRACTION.

ACTION 7: PROMOTE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AS POTENTIAL DRAWS FOR NEW RESIDENTS.

Objective: Support Local Agriculture

ACTION 1: INTEGRATE THE OTIS FARMER'S MARKET, FARMS AND FARMSTANDS, MAPLE SUGAR AND OTHER FOREST PRODUCT BUSINESSES INTO PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES.

CHAPTER 4: INFRASTRUCTURE

Otis has recently embarked on a variety of plans to reduce energy use and improve public facilities. Otis' vision for infrastructure includes energy efficiency and self-sufficiency for public and private buildings and continued improvement of town facilities and wastewater treatment.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Otis Wind Energy Project

Otis has been working on the development of a wind energy project at a site on Algeria Road. The site is close to an existing wind turbine that helps to power a privately owned quarry and its operations. The proposed wind turbine will be 1.7 MW in size (Larry Gould, Personal Communication, 2015). Town support for the project has been strong, and has been shown in votes at several special town meetings. Development of the wind turbine will allow for the town to sell energy credits to other municipalities or educational institutions and will help to generate income for town projects and reduce municipal energy costs (See Appendix C—Existing Conditions for more information). In the summer and Fall of 2015, the town voted to approve funding for the \$6.4 million project. The town hopes to have the turbine up and running the end of 2016.

Needs Update

Existing Facilities and Upgrades / Improvements

In partnership with the state Department of Energy Resources (DOER), Otis received a grant to perform energy audits on six town-owned buildings in 2008. Based on the results of the energy audit, the town began to upgrade municipal buildings and has seen great improvements in energy efficiency. Money saved from energy efficiency improvements will be used to fund other town projects.

Town Hall

Town hall houses the town assessor, town clerk, town police department, Council on Aging, town administrator and building inspector. Town Hall provides meeting space for town boards and committees. The building also contains a small gymnasium which is



INFRASTRUCTURE AT A GLANCE

Sewer

The town's wastewater treatment plant currently serves approximately 70 residences including town facilities.

Energy and Energy Efficiency

Otis has been moving forward with a wind energy project that will generate electricity which can then be sold to other municipalities or educational institutions. Additionally, energy use in town hall has decreased 60% since 2008 levels due to upgrades to lighting, heating and insulation.

Broadband Internet

Otis has been working to connect residents to broadband internet services.

Additional discussion of infrastructure may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 5.1—The Williams Stone quarry wind turbine helps to power quarry operations for this local business. The town has been moving forward with plans to install a wind turbine in the northeast corner of town, that would help to offset municipal energy costs and create a revenue source for the town.

used for town meetings and other gatherings.

The town hall lighting and heating system were also replaced in recent years. The building was also wrapped with insulated panels. These improvements achieved a 60% reduction in energy use since the 2008 audit (EECBG Grant Final Report, No Date)

Transfer Station

The transfer station provides a site for Otis residents to dispose of household waste and sort materials for recycling. The station also contains a building that houses that town's maintenance department. In 2010, the town built a weather-tight shell around the transfer station (Otis Annual Report, 2010).

Fire Station #1

Otis Fire Station #1 houses the Otis fire department and Rescue Squad. Energy upgrades were made to the main road firehouse in 2013. These upgrades in-

cluded roof replacement and the installation of insulated panels. The fire station now only uses 15% of the propane it previously consumed (EECBG Grant Final Report, No Date).

Police Garage

The police garage (formerly the maintenance garage) was renovated in 2012 to add an interview and booking room.

Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewer System

The wastewater treatment plant and town sewer system were constructed in 1998 and serve the area around Otis Center village. The plant treats wastewater from approximately 70 Otis homes as well as the fire department, town hall, elementary school and post office. See Map 12—Infrastructure for a map of the town's existing sewer line.

In recent years the town has replaced electronic and automated systems at the wastewater treatment plant. Additionally, it has insulated some of the treatment units to reduce energy costs.

Town Building Reuse / Shared Space Study

The town has been investigating the potential for shared space between town departments. Under current plans, the town would combine the highway and fire departments in a new facility that would replace the existing highway building. This plan would free up considerable space at the existing fire building. This would allow the town's recreation center to move from its current location in Harmony Hall to the existing fire station building. This could free up space for the library and town museum to use Harmony Hall as an annex. Moreover, the town has identified that Harmony Hall is in need of some upgrades as it is one of the town's oldest structures (Chris Morris, Personal Communication, 2015). It is important to note that at the time of this writing, these plans are preliminary and have not been finalized.

Potential Sewer Expansion

In 2013, Otis worked with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to map areas for potential sewer expansion. The Otis Ridge Ski area was one of the areas identified. In 2014, the town applied for a grant through



the Massworks infrastructure program to extend a sewer line to the ski area. This would have connected the ski area, its restaurant and two residential homes to the town sewer system. However, the grant was not chosen for funding.

As defined by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, public water systems are defined as those supplies having 15 or more connections, or regularly serving an average of at least 25 people daily, at least 60 days a year. Public water systems can be either Community Water Systems (CWS) or Non-Community Water systems (NCWS). Non-community water systems are either Transient Non-Community Systems (TNC), or Non Transient Non-Community Systems (NTNC). TNC Systems typically serve at least 25 different people, for at least 60 days a year, such as at a restaurant or campground. On the other hand, NTNC Systems serve at least 25 of the same people each day, at least 6 months a year, such as a workplace that provides water to its employees. All of the public water systems in Otis are of the TNC or NTNC type.

According to Mass. GIS, there are 43 public water supply wells in Otis (see Table C7). These wells serve town and public buildings, restaurants, and places of business. Additionally, they include many shared well systems around Big Pond and Otis Reservoir (see Map 6 –Water Resources). These public drinking water wells are all surrounded by interim well-head protection areas (IWPA), which provide a 500' buffer around the well-head for TNC systems and a 750' buffer around NTNC systems.

In the past, the town has experienced well contamination, primarily due to road salt used along Route 8. For more information, please refer to the transportation portion of this appendix or Chapter 7—Transportation.

BROADBAND INTERNET DEVELOPMENT

Otis has been working to provide broadband internet service to its residents. Otis was one of the first municipalities to join WiredWest, a cooperative of western Massachusetts towns striving to install the “last mile” of broadband internet service in the region. Otis recently left this cooperative, citing funding concerns

and the desire to provide broadband service without the need for a middleman and to maintain local control over this vital infrastructure component. The town voted to approve funding for broadband development in the fall of 2015.

ROADS

For discussion of roads and other transportation related infrastructure, see Chapter 7: transportation.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

Infrastructure as Economic Development

Wastewater treatment expansion and broadband internet could allow for increased economic development in Otis. Wastewater treatment expansion could attract business to its village center as well as help Otis to retain existing business like the Otis Ridge ski area. Broadband internet development could attract workers and businesses to the area based on the ability to work remotely.

Economics of Energy Efficiency and Self-Sufficiency

Major town initiatives have focused on reducing current energy use and improving the efficiency of existing buildings. Savings created by efficiency projects can be allocated for other purposes. In addition, the Otis Wind Energy Project is anticipated to produce enough energy to “zero out” municipal energy costs, and through sale of energy credits, create a revenue source for the town. The town will continue these ongoing projects and encourage residents to participate in energy efficiency and small scale energy production programs, such as Mass Saves and Solarize Mass. The town will emphasize the potential cost savings associated with these efforts, as well as the environmental benefits of such work.

INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Energy efficiency and self-sufficiency for public and private buildings in Otis.

Objective: Continue the ongoing Otis Wind Energy Project

ACTION 1: ADVANCE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE.

ACTION 2: FINALIZE TURBINE CONSTRUCTION.

Objective: Connect Otis residents with energy efficiency programs and small scale energy development programs

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO MAKE OTIS RESIDENTS AWARE OF PROGRAMS THROUGH MASS SAVES.

ACTION 2: INVESTIGATE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SOLARIZE MASS PROGRAM IN OTIS, POSSIBLY IN COMBINATION WITH SURROUNDING TOWNS.

Goal 2: Improve public facilities and infrastructure.

The town will work to improve public facilities and infrastructure to meet changing town needs and reduce energy costs. Additionally, the town will continue its ongoing work on the Otis Wind Energy Project, and its ongoing shared space study.

Objective: Integrate existing energy efficiency work, the Otis Wind Energy Project and the shared space study into a multi-year capital improvement plan (CIP)

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN THAT INCLUDES ALL TOWN DEPARTMENTS AND INTEGRATES ONGOING AND PROPOSED WORK, IS OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT AND IS APPROVED YEARLY AT TOWN MEETING.

Objective: Continue ongoing work to improve the energy efficiency of town buildings

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY, PRIORITIZE, AND IMPLEMENT ENERGY IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES.

Objective: Continue ongoing shared space study

ACTION 1: CONTINUE ONGOING SHARED SPACE STUDY TO

CREATE A COMBINED HIGHWAY AND FIRE DEPARTMENT BUILDING AND REUSE OTHER TOWN BUILDINGS.

ACTION 2: INVESTIGATE AND APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING AS APPROPRIATE TO IMPLEMENT THE SHARED SPACE STUDY.

ACTION 3: IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE SHARED SPACE STUDY.

Objective: Expand wastewater treatment in town

ACTION 1: RESUBMIT A MASSWORKS GRANT APPLICATION TO FUND THE EXPANSION OF SEWER SERVICE TO THE SKI AREA AND UTILIZE THE EXCESS CAPACITY OF THE TOWN'S EXISTING WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT.

ACTION 2: EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY IN EAST OTIS VILLAGE. EXAMINE POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE OR ECOLOGICAL TREATMENT METHODS. INTEGRATE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH OTHER PLANS FOR EAST OTIS (SEE CHAPTER 8: LAND USE).

ACTION 3: RESEARCH AND APPLY FOR OTHER FUNDING SOURCES TO PURSUE EXPANSION OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN OTIS.

Objective: Expedite broadband internet development in Otis.

The town will work to hasten the development of broadband internet which will provide a vital service to Otis residents and support and encourage the development of home-based and small businesses.

ACTION 1: ADVANCE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE.

ACTION 2: FINALIZE BROADBAND INSTALLATION.

CHAPTER 5: SERVICES

Otis' vision for services includes continuing to support a safe and healthy community and providing efficient and fiscally responsible services. Moreover, the town will work to increase civic engagement and will examine other services for its older residents. This chapter provides an overview of the services offered through the town. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives, and actions to achieve its vision for the services it provides.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Police

Otis operates a police force from town hall comprised of six officers and a police chief. The department actively trains with FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. The department has been active in outreach to younger Otis residents and families, developing a series of children's camps during school vacations to help children develop a rapport with officers.

Library

The Otis Library has been actively modernizing and is part of a library system that connects its catalog to over 100 others in the region. This system allows for digital download and inter-library loan. The library has also added to its digital collection, including audiobooks and DVD's.

Fire Department

The Otis Fire Department currently has 26 members and is staffed primarily by volunteers. The department trains actively with surrounding fire departments and at the Massachusetts Fire Academy. The department helped with the response to Hurricane Irene in 2011 and a tornado that damaged parts of Springfield, MA.

Rescue Squad

The Otis Rescue Squad currently has 13 members including two full time EMTs. In 2011, the squad purchased a new ambulance.



SERVICES AT A GLANCE

Police

Public safety services are provided through the Otis Police Department. The department includes 7 staff members.

Fire Department

The Otis Fire Department is a volunteer organization with 26 members.

Rescue

The Otis rescue squad is a 13 member team with two full time EMTs.

Library

The Library has a catalog of over 10,000 items including more than 500 DVDs.

Additional discussion of services may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary



Figure 5.1—The Otis Library loans books, DVDs, and audiobooks to town residents and provides public internet access through computer workstations. The library is also connected to the Central and Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CWMARS) interlibrary loan system, allowing users to access multiple library collections across the region. The building also houses the town’s museum. Photograph credit Hal Kobrin.

Recreation Center

The Otis Recreation center (located in Harmony Hall) contains two rooms of exercise equipment, pool tables and computers for use by Otis residents. The Rec. Center also provides passes to events and recreation areas. For additional discussion of the Rec. Center, see Chapter 10: Open Space and Recreation as well as Appendix C: Existing Conditions

Town Website

The town operates a website (<http://www.townofotisma.com>) that serves as a central location for town data. The website allows for access to board and committee meeting times, agendas, and minutes. An online mapping service allows users to access parcel data for the entire town as well as view wetlands, FEMA flood areas, and roads. Additionally, the website contains a calendar of local events and displays links to area businesses.

KEY SERVICE ISSUES

Budget Related

The town has a limited budget with which to provide services, which makes efficiency all the more important.

Public Participation and Civic Engagement

The first Master Plan public forum identified a need to increase public participation and civic engagement. Additionally, the town’s strong spirit of volunteerism and independence was discussed. The town will pursue several strategies to increase public participation and work to embrace the independent spirit of town residents to encourage initiatives from the “ground up”, rather than from the “top down”.

SERVICE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS



Goal 1: Support a Safe and Healthy Community

The town will continue to work individually and regionally to ensure residents are safe from natural and man-made hazards and emergencies.

Objective: Continue to Participate in Regional Emergency Preparedness Training

The town has been and will continue to be an active and supportive participant in regional emergency preparedness planning efforts. This effort addresses response needs for fire, police, and flood events, among others.

ACTION 1: PARTICIPATE IN HOMELAND SECURITY PLANS AND ACTIONS FOR THE REGION.

ACTION 2: ENSURE APPROPRIATE STAFF AND RESOURCES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS.

ACTION 3: MAINTAIN UP-TO-DATE HAZARD MITIGATION AND COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS.

Goal 2: Efficient and Fiscally Responsible Services

The town will work individually and regionally to plan and provide services including police, fire, rescue, recreation, and library among others.

Objective: Streamline Costs While Maintaining or Enhancing Levels of Service

The town will work on all levels to provide the highest level of service as efficiently as possible.

ACTION 1: EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL OF SHARED SERVICE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS.

ACTION 2: INCREASE THE USE OF REGIONAL GROUP PURCHASING PROGRAM.

Objective: Improve the Town Website

ACTION 1: IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL CONTENT OR FEATURES TO BE PROVIDED ON THE TOWN WEBSITE.

Goal 3: Increase Civic Engagement by Otis Residents

The Town of Otis will work to increase civic engagement by its residents, increase civic pride and promote Otis's spirit of volunteerism.

Objective: Increase Participation in Town Boards, Committees, and Other Town Events.

ACTION 1: WORK TO IDENTIFY AND OVERCOME POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

ACTION 2: WORK TO "CROSS PROMOTE" EVENTS ACROSS TOWN EMAIL LIST SERVES AND THROUGH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS.

ACTION 3: EXPLORE THE AUTHORIZATION OF "REMOTE PARTICIPATION" ON TOWN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES.

ACTION 4: DEVELOP A SYSTEM TO GET REGULAR FEEDBACK ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MASTER PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS, SUCH AS A "CHECK IN" AT TOWN MEETING, POLLING, OR OTHER MEANS.

ACTION 5: POLL TOWN NEWS LIST SERVE USERS TO DETERMINE WHO IS USING THE SERVICE AND MORE EFFECTIVELY TARGET FUTURE EVENT PROMOTION AND NEWS DISTRIBUTION.

Objective: Develop a "Send In Your Ideas" Campaign

The town will work to develop a "send in your ideas" campaign that solicits ideas for future town projects and other efforts and implements a few ideas each year. This program will help to spur efforts by local community groups and engage Otis' spirit of volunteerism to support community led initiatives.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A "SEND IN YOUR IDEAS" CAMPAIGN WITH INPUT FROM TOWN BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND THE PUBLIC.

ACTION 2: SOLICIT IDEAS FROM OTIS RESIDENTS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND BUSINESSES THROUGH A MAILING OR THROUGH THE TOWN WEBSITE.

ACTION 3: VOTE TO IMPLEMENT THE TOP IDEAS AT TOWN MEETING OR A SIMILAR FORUM.

Goal 4: Meet the Needs of an Older Population.

The Town of Otis will work to meet the needs of its older population by examining services to support the independence and healthy “aging in place” of Otis residents. The town will also participate in regional efforts to address aging, such as the Age Friendly Communities Task Force.

ACTION 1: PARTICIPATE IN THE REGIONAL AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH OLDER RESIDENTS AND THE COUNCIL ON AGING TO EXAMINE NEEDS FOR HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, HEALTH, AND OTHER SERVICES.

CHAPTER 6: HOUSING

Otis' vision for housing includes supporting its residents through participation in housing rehabilitation programs and connecting residents with existing tools that promote affordable home-ownership and aging in place. This chapter describes key trends and issues in the area of housing. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives and actions to achieve its vision for housing and community.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Housing Stock

According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey Otis has an estimated 1,666 housing units. Of these housing units, 1,564, or 93.9% of housing units in Otis are of the 1-unit detached type. Another 51 units, or 3.1% of housing, are in structures containing 2-units or more (as in multiple apartments that share a common roof). Mobile homes comprise 45 units, or 2.7% of all housing units. Finally, 4 units, or .2% of all housing is of the 1-unit attached type. These housing units consist of structures with one or more shared wall such as in a townhouse or row house.

Otis was identified in the regional Sustainable Berkshires plan as having a high number of seasonal homes. Along with the towns of Becket, Stockbridge and Lenox, Otis has one of the highest numbers of seasonal homes in the Berkshires. The most recent available information on seasonal housing comes from the 2010 U.S. Census. According to the 2010 census, Otis had 938 (out of 1,701 total housing units) listed "for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use". This amounts to 55% of all housing units within the town. Estimates by the town assessor are even higher. Each year, the assessor mails a questionnaire to Otis households which includes a question about whether they are second homeowners or not. The assessor's data indicates that 68% of all homes in Otis belong to second homeowners. Moreover, the percentage of rental units in Otis remained nearly constant over the period from 2000 to 2010 (See Table C8—Housing Occupancy in Otis 1990-2010 in Appendix C). Otis contains no units of affordable or low-income housing.



HOUSING AT A GLANCE

Housing Stock

Nearly 94% of the current housing stock is comprised of single-family residences. 3% of housing contains two or more units.

Housing Prices

The median sales price of a home in Otis increased by 67% between 2000 and 2014 to \$260,000. In comparison, the median sales price for a home in Berkshire county in 2014 was \$184,500.

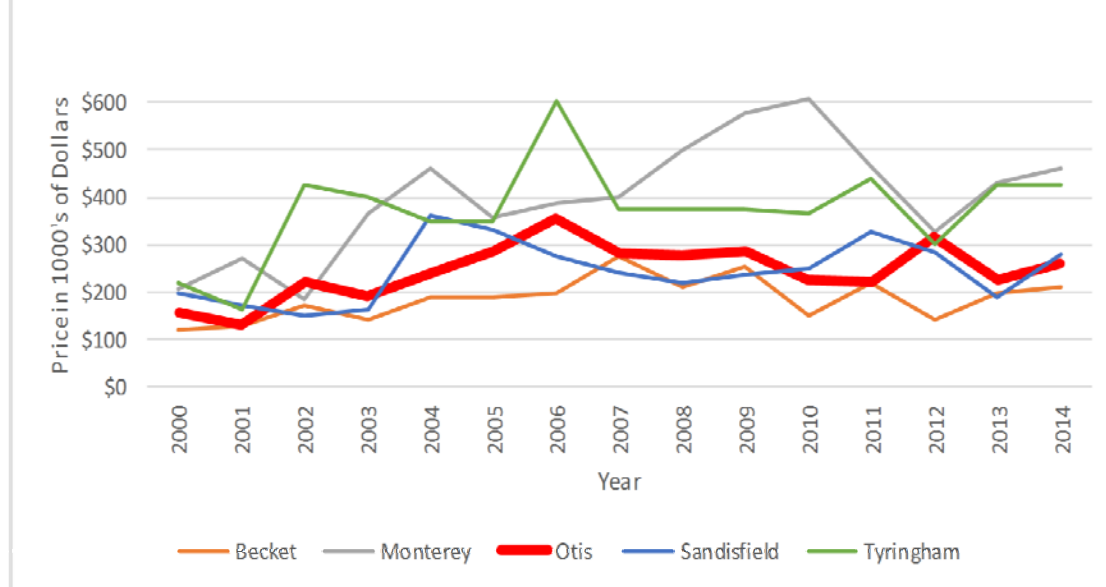
Age

Nearly 50% of homes in Otis were built in 1960 or earlier.

Additional discussion of housing may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Figure 6.1- Single Family Median Sale Price 2000 - 2014

Source: Banker and Tradesman Online, 2015



Home Prices

Since 2000, Otis has seen its median home sale price increase by 67.7% to \$260,000. In comparison, the median sale price for a home in Berkshire county in 2014 was \$184,500 (Banker and Tradesman Online, 2015). Housing affordability has been identified as an issue in all Berkshire County communities for both renters and owners.

Housing Affordability

Data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicates that based on income levels determined from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, approximately 100, or 18% of households in Otis earn between 50 and 80% of the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI). HAMFI for Otis in 2011 was \$71,500. In the town of Otis, an estimated 224 households, or 40% of households earn less than 80% of the HAMFI, meaning income for these households is less than \$57,200 per year. HUD defines these households as having low income.

Additionally, HUD data indicates that as many as 135 households, or 24% of households, have 1 of 4 possible housing problems (see Table C9 in Appendix C). These can include incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than 1 person per room, or cost burden greater than 30%. Cost burden is defined as the ratio of housing costs to household income. When housing costs are equal to

or greater than 30% of income, a household is considered “housing burdened”. Within the Town of Otis, an estimated 130, or 23% of households are considered housing burdened, with the majority of these housing burdened households having a cost burden above 50%.

Housing and Town Zoning

Otis has two major zoning districts, a village (V-1) district and a residential (R-40) district. The village district allows for greater housing density than the residential district due to its smaller allowable lot size. Multi-family dwellings are allowed in the V-1 district with a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Additionally, Otis has established bylaws for the creation of townhouses, which allows development of multi-unit housing on parcels greater than 20 acres within either zoning district. Moreover, townhouse development requires that 30% of the parcel remain as contiguous open space. Otis also has bylaws allowing accessory apartment creation of up to 800 square feet. Accessory apartments help to increase the number of affordable rental units for residents. For a more in depth discussion of zoning, see Chapter 8: Land Use.

Previous Planning and Assessment

A 2004 Community Development Plan produced by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission identified the need for affordable housing within Otis.



Figure 6.1—View of Otis Center Village from the driveway of Otis Town Hall. Most housing in the town is of the single unit detached type, or single family residences. The town also has many seasonal and second homes.

Additionally, the plan identified the increasing age of homes as a potential barrier to preserving the quality and character of the community. There are also other implications for the town regarding affordable housing. Without meeting the minimum affordable housing standard (10% of housing stock), a developer is authorized to obtain a single comprehensive permit under Mass. General Law (MGL) Chapter 40B for construction of subsidized low- or moderate income housing. In addition to the simplified process, if the town denies the permit, the developer can appeal the decision to the state.

While the need for affordable housing is region wide, Otis' rural location and small population size make it a low priority for new affordable housing development, as the 2014 Sustainable Berkshires Plan identified. This plan classified Otis as needing "scaled production" of affordable housing. These communities are encouraged to increase their housing mix through duplex or accessory dwelling unit options.

KEY HOUSING ISSUES

Aging Population / Changing Demographics

The Town of Otis has an increasingly older population. Recent survey data from BRPC indicates that most older Berkshire residents want to remain in their own

homes as they age, rather than transitioning to other housing or into assisted living facilities. The town will work with existing business to examine potential services to support the housing needs of this population. Moreover, the town will participate in programs to address the housing needs of all its residents, and work to connect these residents to existing tools that support affordable home ownership and enable older residents to live within their residences as long as they choose.

HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Address Local Housing Needs.

Otis will work to address its housing needs, with particular emphasis on the needs of its senior citizens and young families.

Objective: Participate in Housing Rehabilitation Programs.

Otis will work to support its residents' housing needs through participation in housing rehabilitation programs. These programs will help to improve existing housing stock and will support older residents who wish to stay in their homes as they age.

ACTION 1: WORK WITH APPROPRIATE AGENCIES TO APPLY FOR CDBG FUNDS FOR REHABILITATION GRANTS AND LOANS.

ACTION 2: PURSUE NEW REHABILITATION FUNDS, WHICH MAY BECOME AVAILABLE.

ACTION 3: WORK WITH HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS DHCD AND CONSTRUCT INC. TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR GRANT PROGRAMS AND OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ALL HOUSEHOLDS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH ELDERLY RESIDENTS. IF A NEED IS IDENTIFIED, LOCATE SOURCES OF GRANT FUNDING TO ADDRESS LOCAL NEEDS.

Objective: Consider options for the development of affordable home ownership.

The town will work to consider other options to increase affordability, such as low cost models like habitat for humanity, or through the creation of affordable building lots from the sale of town lands.

ACTION 1: ENSURE LOCAL BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN MASSHOUSING'S LENDING PROGRAMS.

ACTION 2: CONSIDER OTHER LOW-COST MODELS SUCH AS WORKING WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OR PURSUING DEVELOPMENT WITH LOCAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

ACTION 3: CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL SALE OF TOWN OWNED LANDS TO CREATE AFFORDABLE BUILDING LOTS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Objective: Connect residents with programs, incentives, and contractors to address housing needs.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO MAKE LOCAL RESIDENTS AWARE OF MASSHOUSING'S SEPTIC REPAIR LOAN PROGRAM AND THE LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP).

ACTION 2: CONNECT CITIZENS WITH PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAMS SUCH AS THOSE AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTS 70 YEARS AND OLDER.

ACTION 3: DEVELOP A LIST OF PREQUALIFIED CONTRACTORS TO ASSIST OLDER OTIS RESIDENTS WITH HOUSING NEEDS.

Objective: Investigate funding sources and bylaw changes to address housing needs.

ACTION 1: INVESTIGATE DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCES FOR HOUSING, INCLUDING POSSIBLE RE-EXPLORATION OF THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT IN OTIS.

ACTION 2: EXPLORE POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE ACCESSORY APARTMENT BYLAW TO INCENTIVIZE CREATION AND USE.

CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION

Otis' vision for transportation includes continuing to provide a well maintained system of roadways and enhancing the bicycle and pedestrian environment in town. This chapter describes key trends and issues in the area of transportation. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives and actions to achieve its vision for transportation.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Regional Roadways

Otis is served by two major roadways: Route 8 and Route 23. A portion of Interstate 90 runs through the northeast corner of town. These roadways are maintained by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). A MassDOT maintenance garage is located just north of Otis Center along Route 8. In total, MassDOT maintains 23.52 miles of roadway within Otis, or 21.39% of all roads. The 2013 Road Condition Report prepared by BRPC notes that in comparison to other Berkshire towns, Otis benefits from the fact that its major arterial roadways (Routes 8 and 23) are maintained by the state. Other communities that must maintain portions of their arterials face significant annual costs because these roads carry the most traffic and can deteriorate the fastest.

Local Roadways

Otis is a rural community, and as such, the predominant form of transportation is by automobiles or trucks. The town has many private roads, some of



TRANSPORTATION AT A GLANCE

Roads

Cars and trucks are the primary mode of transportation.

Air

Large international airports are located in Hartford, CT or Albany, NY.

Bus

The town does not have bus service and is not located on regional public transportation routes.

Elderly or Disabled Transport

Transportation services through the BRTA or SBETC are available for elderly or disabled residents.

Pedestrian

Route 8 in Otis center is served by sidewalks.

Additional discussion of transportation may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Table 7.1- Road Maintenance Demand by Entity

Source: BRPC Town of Otis Road Condition Report, 2013

Maintained by	Road Miles	% of Total
Commonwealth (MassDOT and DCR)	23.52	21.39%
Town of Otis	43.91	39.94%
Privately Maintained	42.5	38.47%
Total	109.93	100%

which serve Otis’s private communities (See Table 7.1 for road maintenance demand by entity and Map 14—Road maintenance) Private roads rely on private contractors for maintenance and snow plowing needs. The Otis Highway Department maintains 43.91 miles or 39.94% of roads within town. These roadways include Tyringham Road, Becket Road, Lee Westfield Road, Reservoir Road, Tolland Road, and West Center Road, to name a few (See Table C10 in Appendix C for a list of town maintained roads). Private contractors maintain the remainder of Otis’s roadways. These roads total 42.5 miles or 38.47% of all roads in town.

Public Transportation

Public transportation in Otis is available for elderly and disabled residents and is provided through two organizations, the Berkshire Regional Transportation Agency (BRTA) Paratransit and the Southern Berkshires Elderly Transportation Corporation (SBETC). These organizations provide on demand transportation for elderly and disabled residents for a small fee.

Road Jurisdiction and Maintenance

The Town of Otis has an active highway department that is responsible for road maintenance, culvert repair and snow plowing. Recent roadway projects include the repaving of 1.8 miles of Reservoir Road, and the repaving of Kibbe Road and a portion of Tolland Road.

During its research for the Master Plan, and to prepare the 2013 Road Condition Report and 2005 Status of Roads and Official Map Report, BRPC noted discrepancies in some road data available for the Town of Otis. In particular, it was noted that the miles of town maintained roadways measured by the town is slightly greater than list of town maintained roadways available through the state’s Road Inventory File (RIF). This file is used to help calculate yearly Chapter 90 funding. Chapter 90 is a state roadway funding program that provides money to the town in the form of a reimbursable grant. Additionally, it was noted that the town has ongoing issues of road jurisdiction, with several town owned roads maintained by private entities, and several private roads maintained by the town.

Complete Streets

“Complete streets” is a transportation concept that examines the design of roadways to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation (automobile, bicycle, or by foot). Complete streets is a kit of parts and possible solutions that can be applied to any roadway to help improve and promote walking and travel by bicycle as well as make the roadway safer for all users.

Within Otis, some minor changes to the roadway, such as increased signage and pavement markings, as well as restriping and recoloring sidewalks could help to enhance safety. These measures could also help to calm or slow traffic in the village center.

Recent and Upcoming Roadway Work

Recently completed roadway work includes the repaving of 1.8 miles of Reservoir Road with hot mix asphalt (HMA). Additionally, Kibbe Road, as well as 3,840 feet of Tolland Road were recently reclaimed and topped with HMA. The town is also in the process of replacing several culverts.

Roadway Needs

The following summarizes priority roadway needs for the town and was provided by Derek Poirier, superintendent of the Otis highway department.

Priority Asphalt Roads to be Repaired:

Pine Road
Tyringham Road
West Center Road (1 mile portion from Monterey Road intersection)
Pearl Road
Town Hill Road

Recent TIP Requests (for full depth road reclamation):

Old Blandford Road
Cold Spring Road South
Cold Spring Road West
North Blandford Road

Bridges in Need of Repair:

Gibbs Road Bridge



Tannery Road Bridge
Cold Spring South Road Bridge

Transportation and the Environment

Road Salt and Well Contamination

In the 1990's, Otis experienced issues with well contamination due to road salt. Several rounds of testing led to the replacement of a few wells, including the well that serviced the MassDOT maintenance garage along Route 8. While levels of salt contamination were for the most part reduced by the most recent round of testing in 2001, there are still some ongoing contamination issues. The well that serves the town recreation center, library and the Congregational church was recently replaced due to the salt contamination.

Unpaved Roads and Non-Point Source Pollution

Unpaved or dirt roads are a major source of non-point source pollution such as sediment, or soil particles that are suspended in water. Sediment from unpaved roads is one of the main contributors to water quality problems in the Farmington River Watershed in Massachusetts. (BRPC 1997).

Sediment can cause water quality issues for both humans and wildlife. Sediment can affect the aesthetic quality of recreation areas, as well as accumulate in drainage structures, causing them to fail. Moreover, sediment pollution and the related process of erosion can destroy critical infrastructure such as roads and culverts.

Proper maintenance of unpaved roads can help to address issues of NPS pollution by sediment. Many of the possible maintenance actions include those that are already performed by the town as part of routine road maintenance to prevent road failure or to address issues such as dust.

Public Survey Results

The Master Plan public survey included a section with questions related to transportation. Otis residents were asked about road maintenance and elderly and disabled transportation services, as well as support for possible public transportation options. Roads identified as most in need of improvement were West Cen-

ter Road with 11 out of 67 or 16% of responses, Route 23, Kibbe Road and Pine Road. East Otis was also mentioned in 4 of 65 responses with no specific roads mentioned. Overall, 64% of survey respondents said they would support or highly support a public transportation route. The top three reasons for potential use included shopping or errands, access other regional transportation, or attend cultural events. In regards to potential expansion of elderly or disabled transportation services, 44% of respondents said to expand services, 39% said they did not now, and 15% said to keep the same.

KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Road Maintenance

Road maintenance needs are a major town expense.

Lack of Public Transportation or Transportation Alternatives

The Town of Otis is not served by regional public transportation services available to the general public. Only services for elderly or disabled adults provide public transportation within the town of Otis. Moreover, the town should explore alternative transportation methods, such as ride sharing or carpooling, which could help to reduce individual transportation costs and the environmental impacts of transportation.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Provide a Complete and Well-Maintained System of Roads.

The Town of Otis will work to provide a complete system of roadways—from arterials to rural roads—that are safe and well-maintained.

Objective: Increase the Town's Access to Chapter 90 Funding.

The Town of Otis will develop and implement a multi-year plan for roadway spending that enables the town to fully utilize the state funding allocated for it yearly.

Moreover, the plan will account for potential preventative maintenance costs that will help to delay more costly road repair and replacements.

ACTION 1: WORK WITH MASSDOT TO UPDATE THE LIST OF TOWN MAINTAINED ROADS TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL CHAPTER 90 FUNDING.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP A MULTI-YEAR SPENDING PLAN TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF YEARLY CHAPTER 90 FUNDING. INTEGRATE THIS EFFORT WITH LARGER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING.

Objective: Continue to Place Eligible Road Maintenance Needs on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ensure that eligible road maintenance needs are included in the regional TIP so that they have the potential for federal financing.

Objective: Work to Resolve Road Jurisdiction and Maintenance Responsibility Issues.

The town will work to reexamine the status and maintenance responsibility of roads based on its current maintenance demands and previous transportation studies.

ACTION 1: REVISIT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2005 BRPC TOWN OF OTIS STATUS OF ROADS AND OFFICIAL MAP REPORT WITH THE TOWN HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, TOWN COUNSEL, THE PLANNING BOARD AND THE SELECT BOARD.

ACTION 2: REVISE RECOMMENDATIONS AS NECESSARY BASED ON NEW FINDINGS AND EXISTING CONDITIONS.

Objective: Plan for and Address Future Needs.

The town will ensure that future roadway work accounts for the impacts of extreme weather events and is coordinated with potential infrastructure projects, such as sewer expansion. These efforts will help to reduce project costs and mitigate future risks.

ACTION 1: AS EXISTING CULVERTS AND BRIDGES NEED RE-

PLACEMENT, ENSURE THAT REPLACEMENT COMPONENTS ARE ADEQUATE TO ACCOMMODATE EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS.

ACTION 2: WORK TO COORDINATE FUTURE ROADWAY PROJECTS WITH POTENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, SUCH AS SEWER EXPANSION IN TOWN.

Goal 2: Increase Access to Public and Alternative Transportation in Otis.

The Town of Otis will work to increase access to existing elderly and disabled public transportation and investigate the potential of a public bus route through town.

Objective: Work with Berkshire Regional Transportation Agency (BRTA) and Other Towns to Provide a Public Bus Stop in Otis.

ACTION 1: INVESTIGATE THE FEASIBILITY OF A PUBLIC BUS ROUTE WITH A STOP IN OTIS. ADDRESS THE ROUTE'S LOCATION, THE NUMBER OF POTENTIAL STOPS, AND THE POTENTIAL DEMAND WITHIN THE TOWN.

Objective: Investigate Options for Alternative Transportation in Town.

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN ONLINE CAR SHARING OR CARPOOLING RESOURCES. LINK TO THESE RESOURCES ON THE TOWN WEBSITE.

Objective: Work with the Council on Aging to Better Connect Elderly and Disabled Otis Residents with Transportation Services.

ACTION 1: IMPROVE CONNECTIONS TO AVAILABLE ELDERLY AND DISABLED TRANSPORTATION, PROMOTE OPTIONS THROUGH THE TOWN WEBSITE AND IN TOWN MAILINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

ACTION 2: INVESTIGATE A POSSIBLE APPLICATION TO THE MASSDOT AND BRTA COMMUNITY TRANSIT GRANT PROGRAM, THAT COULD HELP FUND A VEHICLE FOR USE BY THE



COUNCIL ON AGING.

Goal 3: Enhance the Bicycle and Pedestrian Environment in Town.

The Town will work to enhance the safety of and opportunity for bicycle and pedestrian transportation within town. These potential improvements will improve the health, safety, and quality of life of citizens and visitors.

Objective: Adopt a “Complete Streets” Approach to Future Roadway Projects.

The Town of Otis will ensure that future roadway projects integrate measures to increase use by pedestrians and cyclists, when and where applicable. The Town will coordinate with MassDOT and other agencies to ensure that potential pedestrian and cycling improvements are included in larger projects.

Objective: Enhance Warning Signage and Markings on Roads Frequented by Pedestrians and Cyclists.

The Town of Otis will explore and implement potential signage additions and alterations that will aid in promoting use by pedestrians and cyclists, especially in its village centers.

ACTION 1: COORDINATE WITH MASSDOT AND OTHER AGENCIES TO ENSURE THAT POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING IMPROVEMENTS ARE INCLUDED IN LARGER PROJECTS AND IN NEW CONSTRUCTION ALONG STATE OWNED ROADWAYS.

ACTION 2: REQUEST THAT MASSDOT EXAMINE OPTIONS FOR TRAFFIC CALMING TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IN VILLAGE CENTERS.

ACTION 3: WORK WITH MASSDOT TO INSTALL SHARED LANE MARKINGS OR “SHARROWS” AND “SHARE THE ROAD” SIGNAGE ON ROADS FREQUENTED BY CYCLISTS.

ACTION 4: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ROAD RESTRIPIING AND LANE NARROWING THAT COULD HELP TO WIDEN THE ROAD SHOULDER AVAILABLE FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS.

ACTION 5: IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLING IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT TOWN.

Objective: Establish A “Walking Loop” in Otis Center.

The town will install signage to mark a 1/2 mile and 1 mile walking loop in the Village Center that provides a safe and level walking surface for people of all ages and abilities. The signage will also help connect walkers to other recreational resources such as the Otis Recreation Center and the Farmington River Walk.

ACTION 1: INSTALL SIGNAGE THAT MARKS A 1/2 MILE AND 1-MILE WALKING LOOP IN OTIS CENTER VILLAGE AND DIRECTS PEDESTRIANS TO THE FARMINGTON RIVER WALK AND OTIS RECREATION CENTER.

ACTION 2: PROMOTE THE WALKING LOOP THROUGH THE COUNCIL ON AGING AND THE TOWN WEBSITE.

Goal 4: Address Wildlife Crossings in Future Roadway Projects.

The town will investigate enhancements that will reduce conflicts between transportation users, roadways, and wildlife.

ACTION 1: COMMUNICATE WITH MASSDOT TO ENSURE THAT WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY ENHANCEMENT IS INCLUDED IN FUTURE STATE ROADWAY WORK.

ACTION 2: EXAMINE OPTIONS TO ENHANCE WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY IN FUTURE ROADWAY PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY BRIDGE AND CULVERT WORK.

ACTION 3: EXAMINE OPTIONS TO ENHANCE WARNING SIGNAGE IN WILDLIFE CROSSING AREAS OR IN AREAS WHERE COLLISIONS WITH WILDLIFE ARE FREQUENT.

CHAPTER 8: LAND USE

Otis' vision for land use includes reexamining its crucial village centers, particularly East Otis Village to examine features such as underutilized properties and potential wastewater treatment that will help to protect its important water resources. Additionally, the town will examine the possible creation of a commercial solar bylaw, and possible design guidelines for Otis Center Village. This chapter describes key trends and issues in the area of land use. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives and actions to achieve its vision for land use.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Land Use Change 1971-1999

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has land use data for the town of Otis for a 28 year period from 1971-1999. While 1999 data is fairly dated, it does allow for a picture of land use change within the town to be developed. Between 1971 and 1999, residential acreage increased more than any other land use category, growing from 890.44 acres (3.65% of all land) to 1,439.01 acres (5.91% of all land) (see Table C11 for Otis land use 1971-1999). Institutional (which includes schools, town owned land and cemeteries), commercial, and industrial land uses also increased. However, they occupy minimal acreage within the town. Agricultural acreage decreased the most over the 28 year period from 1971-1999, changing from 333.19 to 267.65 acres, or a decrease of 19.67%.

Land Use 2005

Land use was also analyzed by the Commonwealth in 2005; however a change in methodology makes comparison with the 1971-1999 data statistically impossible (See Appendix C for a description of differences between 1971-1999 and 2005 land use data). The 2005 data shows that Otis is mostly forested (18,533 acres or 76.14% of the town). Water covers 6.14%, or 1,493.78 acres of Otis, while wetlands occupy another 2,773.14, or 11.39% of town. Of "man-made" land uses, residential land acreage is the greatest, extending across 824.76 acres or 3.39% of the town (See Map 9—Current Land Use and Table 8.1).



LAND USE AT A GLANCE

Forest

As of 2005, forest covers over 18,500 acres or 76% of the town.

Residential Land Use

Residential land use extends across 824 acres of 3.4% of the town as of 2005, far exceeding the acreage devoted to commercial, industrial, or institutional uses.

Land Use Change

Between 1971 and 1999, residential land use increased the most, along with smaller increases in commercial, industrial and institutional land. Agricultural land decreased the most.

Zoning

The town has three zoning districts; a village district, a residential district, and a floodplain overlay district.

Additional discussion of land use may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Table 8.1 - Otis Land Use 2005		
<i>Source: Mass GIS Land Use, 2005</i>		
Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Land
Agriculture	234.66	0.96%
Commercial	49.46	0.20%
Forest	18533.84	76.14%
Industrial	6.26	0.03%
Institutional*	17.73	0.07%
Mining / Waste Disposal	55.46	0.23%
Recreation	112.48	0.46%
Residential	824.76	3.39%
Transportation	55.43	0.23%
Vacant**	185.74	0.76%
Water	1493.78	6.14%
Wetland***	2773.14	11.39%
Total	24342.73	100.00%
*Institutional category includes town owned facilities as well as cemeteries.		
**Vacant category includes abandoned agriculture, areas like power lines and areas of no vegetation, as well as brushland and successional environments not dense enough to be classified as forest.		
***Wetland category includes both forested and non-forested wetlands.		

Development Trend

Available state data showing the construction date of buildings within the Town of Otis allows for a picture of development trends to emerge. These data show the last available construction date for a given building, so do not capture earlier structures that may have existing on a given parcel and been replaced. These data are based on assessor's information current as of 2011.

The earliest structures in the Town of Otis, built prior to the year 1900, were located primarily in Otis Center Village, with additional pockets of development around West Otis and a few structures around Otis

Reservoir and Big Pond.

From 1901-1975, extensive construction or reconstruction of existing structures can be seen around Otis' water resources, including Otis Reservoir, Big Pond and Benton Pond.

From 1976 onward, there is a visible shift away from development near Otis' water resources. This can be seen in extensive development along areas such as Dimmock Road, Stebbins Road, West Center Road, Judd Road, Harrington Road and the Otis Woodlands (See Map 10—Development Trend).

Zoning

Otis currently has three zoning districts. For a map of current zoning, please see Map 3—Zoning.

Residential (R-40) District

Minimum lot size: 1 Acre

Minimum Road Frontage: 150 Feet

Front Setback: 35 Feet

Side and Rear: 25 Feet

Village (V-1) District

Minimum lot size: 20,000 Square Feet (can be minimum of 10,000 Square Feet if the lot is serviced by the Otis sewer district).

Minimum Road Frontage: 100 feet for residential use, 60 feet for non residential

Front Setback: 35 Feet

Side and Rear: 25 Feet

Floodplain Overlay District (FPOD)

This overlay district is based on the Otis flood hazard boundary map issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the 100 year regulatory floodplain.

Existing homes and structures within the floodplain are permitted; however, new development is restricted.

Other Zoning Provisions

Nonconforming Single and Two Family Residential Structures

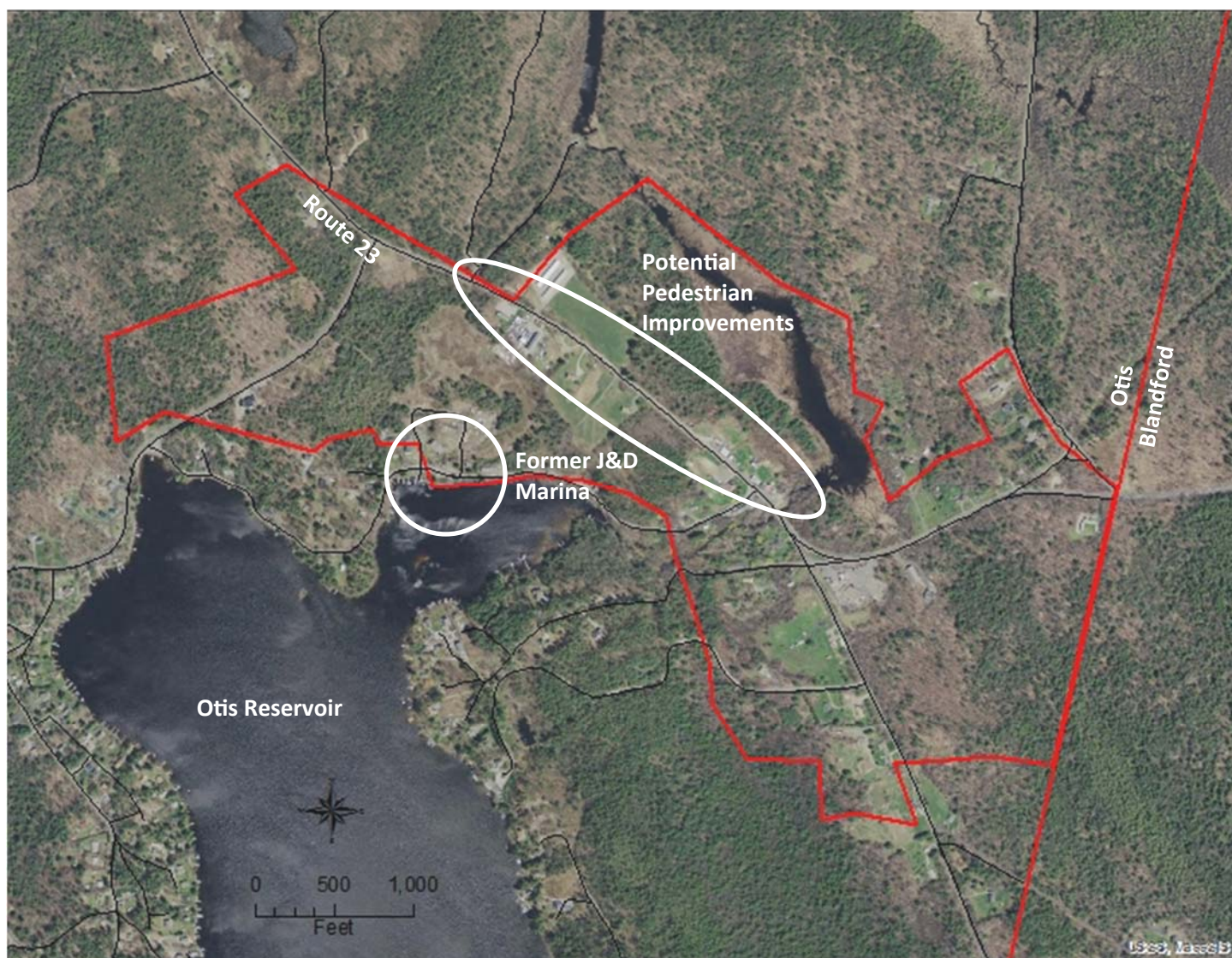


Figure 8.1—East Otis. Village District (V-1) boundaries are indicated by the red line. The town hopes to pursue additional planning in this area related to underutilized properties, such as the former J&D marina. The town will also examine potential wastewater treatment in this area through an ecological or alternative system.

Many parcels, particularly those located around Otis' ponds and water bodies, were created prior to the adoption of zoning regulations. They are usually of a small size and do not meet the requirements for minimum lot size or setbacks.

The town amended its bylaws to create smaller setback requirements for construction on existing non-conforming structures. Additionally, reconstruction, replacement and renovation of existing non-conforming structures within the same building footprint and height are allowed.

Townhouse Development

Otis' Townhouse Development provision allows for any parcel larger than 20 acres to pursue townhouse development through special permit by the planning board. 30% of land in the proposed townhouse development must remain as open space.

Remaining Buildable Land

An analysis of remaining buildable land within the Town of Otis can be created by subtracting areas that have already been developed, permanently protected state and other conservation lands, wetlands (100 foot buffer around all wetland areas), river protection

areas (200 foot buffer around rivers), and slopes greater than 25%. What remains are areas that could be used for new construction. Based on this analysis, 7,150.8 acres (29.34%) of buildable land remain within the town. Another 2,297 acres (9.42%) remain on land that is partially constrained for development, and include areas located in floodplain or on slopes between 15 and 25% (see Map 11—Buildable Land). This analysis only estimates remaining buildable acreage. It does not examine remaining buildable road frontage which would be needed to access these areas or account for new road construction and extensive subdivision that would be needed for development within these areas.

KEY LAND USE ISSUES

Village Centers

Otis' village centers are important economic and population centers, as well as gateways into the community. The town will examine options to expand parking in both its village centers as well as examine design guidelines for Otis Center Village.

Members of the Otis MPSC also identified East Otis as an area to be explored for future redevelopment. East Otis is the smaller of Otis's two village centers. Additionally, the areas around Big Pond and Otis Reservoir contain some of the town's largest neighborhoods. The committee identified several possible topics to examine in East Otis including the need for wastewater treatment to protect natural resources, additional infrastructure, and underutilized properties (See figure 8.1).

DRAFT LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS (NOT FINAL)

Goal 1: Revisit Otis' Village Centers

Otis will examine the possible adoption of architectural design guidelines for Otis Center Village and develop a plan for potential wastewater, infrastructure, and underutilized properties in East Otis. The town will

also examine options to expand day to day and event parking in its village centers.

Objective: Create a Redevelopment Plan for East Otis.

The Town of Otis will create a redevelopment plan for East Otis Village and the areas around Otis Reservoir to assist in this area becoming a small economic center and address concerns about water resources. The plan will address wastewater infrastructure, including a potential ecological wastewater treatment system and sewer expansion around Big Pond and Otis Reservoir. The ecological wastewater treatment system could also serve as a draw for visitors and a showcase for town sustainability practices. The plan will also address current plans for underutilized properties such as the former J&D marina. Moreover, the plan will examine basic improvements, such as sidewalks and lighting, that were included in the 1998 Clough, Harbour & Associates Plan for East Otis.

ACTION 1: REVISIT THE 1998 CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES MASTER PLAN FOR THE EAST OTIS VILLAGE AREA, AS A BASIS FOR CURRENT EFFORTS.

ACTION 2: ENGAGE IN A PUBLIC PROCESS ON THE NEEDS OF EAST OTIS TO INFORM THE PLANNING PROCESS.

ACTION 3: EXAMINE TAX INCENTIVE FINANCING (TIF) AND OTHER FUNDING INCENTIVE OPTIONS TO SPUR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES SUCH AS THE J&D MARINA.

ACTION 4: EXAMINE POSSIBLE ECOLOGICAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR EAST OTIS, SUCH AS THROUGH A LIVING MACHINE OR SIMILAR SYSTEM, WHICH COULD ALSO SERVE AS AN ATTRACTION TO THE AREA. DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR SITING AND FUNDING THE SYSTEM.

ACTION 5: DRAFT, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE AREA.



Objective: Examine implementation of design guidelines for Otis Center Village.

The Town of Otis will work to create clear guidance to those wishing to develop in village centers as to how new development or significant modifications can be designed to best retain the character of the center while still allowing for new development and change over time.

ACTION 1: RESEARCH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTED IN OTHER RURAL NEW ENGLAND COMMUNITIES.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STRATEGY FOR DESIGN GUIDELINES IN VILLAGE CENTERS.

Objective: Examine options for increased day to day and event parking in village centers.

ACTION 1: CONDUCT A STUDY OF EXISTING PARKING AREAS AND CAPACITY IN BOTH VILLAGE CENTERS AND ASSESS FUTURE PARKING NEEDS.

ACTION 2: RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENT OPTIONS TO EXPAND PARKING IN VILLAGE CENTERS.

Goal 2: Research and Develop a Commercial Solar Energy Bylaw.

The Town will examine the possible implementation of a commercial solar bylaw, for the purposes of regulating possible future commercial solar energy development in the Town.

ACTION1: RESEARCH, DEVELOP, AND VOTE TO IMPLEMENT A POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL SOLAR BYLAW.

CHAPTER 9: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Otis' vision for its natural and cultural resources includes promoting and developing its historic areas, such as the Knox Trail and working to protect its cherished water and natural resources so that all residents in this rural community can remain close to water, nature, and wildlife. This chapter describes key trends and issues in the areas of natural and cultural resources. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives and actions to achieve its vision for these aspects of the town.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Historic and Cultural Resources

History of the Community

The Town of Otis was primarily shaped by two forces, its proximity to the Great Road, also known as the Knox Trail or Boston-Albany Turnpike and its location along the West Branch of the Farmington River. Both of these forces allowed the creation of mills and industry and the free flow of goods and services in and out of the town.

Farming and lumbering, especially of pine and hemlock, were the town's major industries before shifting to the seasonal and tourism-based economy that exists today. The West Branch of the Farmington River provided an important source of waterpower to run the wheels of early mills, and later, for a couple of factories. The number of mills in Otis grew from four in 1829 to 22 in 1885 (Otis OSRP 1991).

Mills and industry also helped to shape Otis Reservoir, which was originally composed of three ponds. The outlet of these ponds was dammed by the Collins Company in 1867 and provided a steady source of water to power the company's metal forging operations in Connecticut. The dam raised the level of water 26 feet above the original elevation in the ponds.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AT A GLANCE

Historic Resources

Otis has 88 buildings, monuments, other historic areas and resources listed in the state's MACRIS database.

Knox Trail

A portion of the historic Knox Trail passes through Otis. This historic road played a key role in events that shaped the creation of the United States.

Natural Resources

Otis has a wealth of natural resources, including 8 state listed "Great Ponds", extensive wetlands and over 5,000 acres of "Core Habitat" according the state BioMap2 project.

Additional discussion of Natural and Cultural Resources may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Database

The Massachusetts Cultural Information Resource System (MACRIS) is a database maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) that lists historic structures, areas, objects and burial grounds recognized at the local, state, and national level. Within Otis, the MACRIS database lists 88 records comprising mostly historic buildings. However, the records also include the town green in front of the Congregational Church, Otis Center Village, Otis Reservoir, and Otis Reservoir Dam just to name a few places (See Map 8—Historic Resources and Table C14).

East Otis Schoolhouse and Meetinghouse

The East Otis Schoolhouse and Meeting House are two town-owned buildings located on a single lot in East Otis at the corner of Pike Road and Old Blandford Road near the Papa's Healthy Food and Fuel gas station. The East Otis Schoolhouse is a small one and half story structure that served as the "one room schoolhouse" for the area. The MACRIS database lists the building as the "East Otis Center School" and places the date of construction in 1850 (See Table C14, this appendix). The East Otis Meetinghouse, also known as the East Otis Church or East Otis Baptist Church, has functioned as both a public meetinghouse and church in the past and has been abandoned since the 1980's. Both structures are in disrepair, with damage to the Meetinghouse considerably greater than that of the Schoolhouse. Plans for the Meetinghouse (including possible demolition or reuse) have generated significant debate within town.

The town's Selectboard considers the Meeting House to be public safety hazard and potential liability and has advocated for the building's demolition (Town Of Otis Select Board, 2013). The Selectboard has also discussed the possibility of repurposing the lot as a playground and picnic area. In this scheme, the East Otis Schoolhouse would remain and be repurposed for use by the town.

The Otis Planning Board and Historical Commission have advocated for the renovation or replication of the buildings and the designation of the parcel around them as a one lot historic district. A study committee

was formed by the town to examine the creation of a potential historic district. The creation of this historic district around the School House and Meeting House would allow the town to potentially access funds from the MHC for renovation or replication of the buildings and would require a match from the town. The opportunity for this funding would dissolve if the structures were demolished (Harold Kobrin, Personal Communication 2015). Renovations to the church have been estimated to cost up to \$300,000 (Sakata 2012). Once renovated, both the Schoolhouse and Meetinghouse could be repurposed for use by the town. Some suggested uses for the structures include housing the town's museum (currently located in the Library), records storage, a town hall annex, additional meeting space, or an information center (Harold Kobrin Personal Communication 2015).

Current plans for the two structures are as follows. The Selectboard has decided to invest in the Schoolhouse building over time, through gradual and incremental repairs (Larry Gould Personal Communication 2015). The building would remain and be utilized by the town, perhaps as a restored historic building. Due to the deteriorating nature of the East Otis Meetinghouse, the Selectboard has determined that the structure should be removed and the lot be repurposed by the town.

Knox Trail or Great Road

The Town of Otis developed along the historic route known as the Knox Trail, or Great Road, that connected Boston and Albany. The town's location along this route was critical to accessing trade and for the flow of goods and services into and out of the town. The route is most famous for its use by General Henry Knox as he worked during the winter of 1775-1776 to move cannons from Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain to Boston, Massachusetts. These cannons were used to support General George Washington during the siege of Boston by the British army. The relocation of the cannons from Ticonderoga was critical to American victory. Once deployed on the Dorchester heights, with a commanding view of Boston harbor, the cannons prompted the British fleet to relocate from Boston to Halifax, Nova Scotia. The abandonment of Boston harbor by the British fleet was a turning point in



Figure 9.1—The Knox Trail Marker in East Otis near the intersection of Route 23 and Ray Hubbard Rd, East Otis, MA . These markers were placed in 56 locations in New York and Massachusetts beginning in the late 1920's and trace the route of General Henry Knox. Image by Wikimedia commons user ToddC4176. Image licensed under CC by 3.0.

the American Revolutionary War.

Beginning in the late 1920's, monuments were commissioned for every town in Massachusetts that General Knox passed through to provide a permanent marker to the events that helped shape the creation of the United States. The Knox Trail monument for the town of Otis is located near Benton Pond (see Figure 9.1). Additionally, a statue of General Knox is located on the Town Hall driveway.

The route of the Knox Trail crosses into Otis near Algerie Road in East Otis. It then moves west across the



Figure 9.2—Mile marker reading "65 Mile to Albany" along the Knox Trail near Algerie Road in Otis. This mile marker was recently identified by the Otis Historic Commission and granite posts were installed to protect it from potential damage.

town passing just north of Otis Reservoir. Beyond this point, the Knox Trail passes through portions of Otis State Forest where it then moves into Sandisfield. After moving just south of Upper Spectacle Pond, the Trail then crosses back into Otis near Cold Spring Road.

Much of the trail is currently used during the winter by Snowmobilers and the local snowmobile club, the Knox Trail Sno-riders. Members of the Otis Historic Commission have been active in identifying landmarks, markers (see Figure 9.2), tavern sites, and other historic resources along the trail. The Historic Commission has also secured permission to develop the trail through portions of state owned land like Otis State Forest.

Other Unique Features

For a map of unique features in the Town of Otis, including historic and natural resources, please refer to Map 5—Unique Features.

Natural Resources

Watersheds

Otis lies within three watersheds, the Farmington River Watershed (FRW), the Housatonic River Watershed (HRW) and the Westfield River Watershed (WRW).

The majority of the town lies within the FRW. The northeast corner of the town is located within the WRW and the eastern portion of town is located within the HRW. Otis's position at the headwaters of the Farmington River is regionally important. The Farmington River is the primary water supply for Hartford, Connecticut and other towns within the Farmington River Valley. The Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), the non-profit group that helps to address issues of water quality within the watershed, estimates that the river supplies drinking water to 600,000 people (FRWA 2003).

Surface Waters

The town has spectacular water resources including eight "Great Ponds". Great Ponds are a state water body designation related to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 91 "The Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act". A Great Pond is defined as "any pond or lake that contained more than 10 acres in its natural state" (Mass DEP, 2015). Ponds which at one point in time were larger than 10 acres, but are now smaller are still considered to be great ponds.

Wetlands

Otis has extensive wetland areas totaling over 2,700 acres (See Table C12). Wetlands perform important functions for both humans and wildlife. Wetlands are the most productive ecosystems on the planet, measured by the amount of biomass or living biological tissue they help to produce. Wetlands serve as habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species and often function as critical nursery and breeding areas. Wetlands also provide functions for humans. The benefits to humans provided by wetlands and other natural environments are sometimes referred to as "ecosystem services". Valuable ecosystem services provided by wetlands include water purification, flood storage and control, and shoreline stabilization.

Seven types of wetland exist in Otis. Data included in Table C12 in Appendix C is derived from the interpretation of aerial photography which is then field checked by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). These data come from the most recent wetlands update which was performed in 2009.

Wooded coniferous swamps extend across 875 acres and comprise 31.63% of wetland areas within the town. Bog areas in Otis have the least acreage (122 acres) and comprise 4.44% of all wetlands in the town (See Table C12 in Appendix C).

Wildlife Habitat

The Commonwealth's BioMap2 study provides the best assessment of wildlife habitat within the Town of Otis.

BioMap2 combines 30 years of rare species and natural community data from the Mass. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) with wildlife species and habitat assessments that were conducted as part of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's 2005 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Additionally, BioMap2 data integrates the Nature Conservancy's assessment of large, connected and intact ecosystems across the state. (NHESP, 2012).

BioMap 2 has two primary components, Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape. Core Habitat includes "areas that are critical for the long term persistence of rare species and other species of conservation concern" (NHESP, 2012).

Critical Natural Landscape identifies large contiguous landscape blocks that have been minimally impacted by development. The BioMap2 report for the Town of Otis notes that "if protected, these areas will provide habitat for wide-ranging native species, support intact ecological processes, maintain connectivity among habitats, and enhance ecological resilience to natural and anthropogenic disturbances in a rapidly changing world" (NHESP, 2012). Critical natural landscape comprises 15,535 acres or 63% of all land within the town.

Large areas of core habitat have been identified around Long and Kingsbury Mountain on the western side of town. A portion of this area of core habitat is permanently protected as part of the Long Mountain Wildlife Management Area. Additional core habitat follows the length of the Farmington River corridor as it flows through town. Smaller areas extend around Whiting pond and in low lying areas near Church Hill



Figure 9.3—Wetland area in autumn near Stebbins Road. Photograph copyright Harold Kobrin.

Pond south to Dimmock Brook Pond. Additionally a large area of core habitat coincides with the extensive wetland areas north of Big Pond. Core habitat areas within Otis encompass 5,115 acres, or 21% of all land within the town. Core habitat areas are not mutually exclusive from areas of critical natural landscape. In general, core habitats are located within areas of critical natural landscape. For mapped critical natural landscape and core habitat areas, see Map 13 Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife.

KEY NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE ISSUES

Water Quality

As mentioned in previous chapters, water quality is an important issue in Otis. Water quality impacts human health, and Otis' water resources are major draws to

the town that impact the local economy. The town will address water quality through ongoing testing and by working to both expand wastewater treatment at its existing WWTP near Otis Center Village and by working to develop a potential new wastewater treatment system in East Otis Village.

Inventory, Documentation and Planning of Town Historic Resources

The town's Historic Commission has taken the lead on promoting the town's historic resources, including significant work to make the Knox Trail a four-season multi-use trail. The town will continue its ongoing work to develop and promote this trail, as well as update the inventory of the town's historic buildings and other resources. These historic resources create a potential draw for economically important tourists and other visitors.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Develop and Promote Otis's Cultural and Historic Resources.

The town will work to develop and promote its cultural and historic resources. The town will work update its inventory of historic resources and will work to promote these resources.

Objective: Identify and Nominate Town Historic Resources for State and National Recognition.

The town will continue its ongoing efforts to identify and nominate town historic and cultural resources for state and national recognition. These resources will help to create draws to the town for visitors and potential residents.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO WORK WITH PROPERTY OWNERS AND THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION TO UPDATE THE TOWN'S LISTING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE ONGOING WORK TO LIST THE KNOX TRAIL ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.

ACTION 3: WORK TO NOMINATE OTHER HISTORIC TOWN RESOURCES FOR STATE AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION.

Objective: Promote The Town's Historic Resources.

The town will more effectively promote its historic and cultural resources, particularly through the town website.

ACTION 1: ORGANIZE A WALKING OR DRIVING TOUR OF OTIS' HISTORIC RESOURCES.

ACTION 2: PROMOTE OTIS' HISTORIC RESOURCES THROUGH THE TOWN WEBSITE.

Objective: Continue the Ongoing Process to Develop the Knox Trail as a Four-season Multi-use Trail.

The town will continue its work to develop and promote the Knox Trail. This effort will help to add to

town recreation areas, as well as improve its historic resources.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO WORK WITH PROPERTY OWNERS AND USER GROUPS TO DEVELOP EASEMENTS AND OTHER PERMISSIONS FOR TRAIL ACCESS.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC RESOURCES AND OTHER SITES ALONG THE KNOX TRAIL.

ACTION 3: INVEST IN THE "65 MILE TO ALBANY" MILESTONE WAY, NEAR ALGERIE ROAD, AS A TOWN RECREATION AREA AND HISTORIC RESOURCE.

Goal 2: Protect Otis' Water and Natural Resources.

The town will protect its crucial water and natural resources through continued enforcement of existing regulations, and through possible future sewer expansion and development in town.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE ONGOING SEPTIC AND WATER QUALITY TESTING BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH AND OTHERS TO EXAMINE WATER QUALITY IN OTIS.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE TO ENFORCE EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER RESOURCES.

ACTION 3: INVESTIGATE SEWER EXPANSION IN OTIS CENTER VILLAGE TO UTILIZE THE EXCESS CAPACITY IN THE WWTP. INVESTIGATE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM IN EAST OTIS.

CHAPTER 10: OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Otis' vision for its open space and recreation includes protecting its treasured open spaces and maintaining the natural and scenic beauty of the town. The town will also work to better promote its existing recreation areas. This chapter describes key trends and issues in the areas of open space and recreation. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, objectives and actions to achieve its vision for these aspects of the town. The creation of Otis's Master Plan was completed concurrently with an update to its Open Space and Recreation Plan. For additional information, please see the full text of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Open Space

Open space is defined as land that has not been developed for residential, commercial or industrial uses and includes publicly and privately owned land. Open space often has particular interest to conservation or recreation and includes:

1. Land which contributes to the public water supply
2. Forests, fields, and agricultural lands
3. Wetlands
4. Rivers, streams, and lakes
5. Parks and other recreation lands
6. Wildlife or animal habitats
7. Land which preserves scenic views or town character

As described in previous chapters, Otis has an abundance of natural resources including forest, as well as wetlands, water resources and wildlife habitat (See Chapter 9-Natural and Cultural Resources, as well as the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan). Moreover the town has a wealth of recreation opportunities that are created by its abundant natural resources, which has led the town to be called the "outdoor playground of the Berkshires" by some.



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION AT A GLANCE

Open Space

In total, protected open space areas in the Town of Otis extend across 8,114.16 acres, or 33.3%, of all land.

Public and Non-Profit Parcels

Public and non-profit lands cover 6,541 acres, or 26.8%, of all land within the town.

Privately Owned Parcels

Privately owned conservation lands in Otis with permanent levels of protection comprise 211.88 acres, or 0.87%, of all land within the town.

Recreation

Otis boasts two major state forests and three wildlife management areas (WMA), a ski area, extensive trails, three camping areas, and a town Recreation Center.

Additional discussion of open space and recreation may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary and the full text of the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan.



Figure 10.1—Otis’ many water bodies are important areas for recreation.

In total, protected lands in the town of Otis extend across 8,114.16 acres, or 33.3% of all land within the town (see Table C15 in Chapter 10 and Map 7 Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest).

Privately Owned Parcels

Privately owned conservation lands in Otis with permanent levels of protection comprise 211.88 acres or 0.87% of all land within the town. These include three privately owned parcels with conservation restrictions held by the Berkshire Natural Resource Council. It should be noted, that unless otherwise stated, private parcels should be considered off limits to public access.

Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B Lands

Chapter 61 is a state program that allows private landowners to manage their properties for forestry (Chapter 61), agricultural (Chapter 61A), or recreational purposes (Chapter 61B) in exchange for reduced taxes.

Chapter 61 properties in Otis total 1,360.79 acres, or

5.58% of all land in Otis (See Table C15). While these properties certainly contribute to the town’s rural character and scenic beauty, they currently offer no public access or recreation opportunities.

Public and Non-Profit Parcels

Public and non-profit lands contribute significantly to the open space and recreation opportunities within town. In total, these areas cover 6,541 acres, or 26.8% of all land within the town.

Municipally Owned Parcels

Municipally owned parcels of conservation or recreation interest total 511.65 acres in Otis, or 2.1% of all land within the town. This includes 245 acres of land owned by the City of Springfield in the northeast corner of town which is held to protect the public drinking water supply to Cobble Mountain Reservoir located in the towns of Russell and Blandford (Slate, 2008). There is no public access to these drinking water protection lands.

Town of Otis Owned Parcels

The remaining 266.65 acres of municipally owned land



are controlled by the Town of Otis. These include 139.39 acres in 3 parcels between Route 23 and West Center Road near Otis Center Village. In the past, the town has had plans to develop these parcels as “100-Acre Park”. Recent planning by the Otis Parks and Recreation Commission has centered on the development of trails throughout the parcels and the possible integration of benches, accessible pathways and other features to make the park (or a portion of it) focused on the needs of Otis’ older residents (Robert Rosen, Personal Communication 2015).

Funding for the creation of 100-Acre park was going to be appropriated from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. The CPA is an optional surcharge on property taxes of 1-3% that can be used by towns to fund projects in the areas of affordable housing, historic preservation, or open space and recreation. However, the adoption of the CPA failed to pass at the 2014 Otis town meeting.

Additionally, the town owns 111.79 acres north of Great Woods Road. These parcels were acquired by tax lien and were originally part of a proposed housing subdivision. Some parcels in this area have already been auctioned off by the town. There has been some talk of possibly using this area as a town park, due to the proximity of these parcels to the town beach; however, there has been no formal planning (Chris Morris, Personal Communication, 2015). Additionally, the town has discussed the possible sale or auction of these lots to create affordable or low cost residential lots for families in town.

State Owned Parcels

State owned parcels comprise 5,788 acres of land within Otis, or 23.75% of all land within the town (see Table C15).

Recreation

Otis’ open space areas create a wealth of opportunities for recreation.

State Owned Recreation Areas

Farmington River WMA
Otis WMA
Long Mountain WMA

Otis State Forest
Tolland State Forest
Beartown State Forest (no access from Otis)

Other Recreation Areas

Town Hall Park
Firehouse Park
Farmington River Walk
Big Pond Town Beach
Otis Recreation Center (Harmony Hall)
Otis Ridge Ski Area

KEY OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ISSUES

Water Quality

Water quality is an issue that impacts the health of Otis’ residents and visitors. Moreover, Otis’s high water quality and water recreation opportunities are an important draw for seasonal residents, which is crucial to the local economy. The town will pursue future expansion of sewer in Otis Center Village at its existing WWTP. Additionally, the town will pursue development of a second wastewater treatment system in East Otis, where the town’s major water bodies are located, with an emphasis on possible alternative or ecological wastewater treatment systems for this area.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Water Resources are Protected.

The Town will continue its ongoing work to protect its important water resources, and examine future projects that will enhance water quality. Moreover, the town will reach out to local organizations to examine potential issues in its bodies of water.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE ONGOING SEPTIC AND WATER QUALITY TESTING BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH AND OTHERS TO EXAMINE WATER QUALITY IN OTIS.

ACTION 2: CONTINUE TO ENFORCE EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER RESOURCES.

ACTION 3: INVESTIGATE SEWER EXPANSION IN OTIS CENTER VILLAGE TO UTILIZE THE EXCESS CAPACITY IN THE WWTP. INVESTIGATE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM IN EAST OTIS. EXAMINE POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE OR ECOLOGICAL TREATMENT SYSTEMS.

ACTION 4: REACH OUT TO LOCAL CONSERVATION AND WATER BODY GROUPS (WATSON POND ASSOCIATION, ORPOA, BIG POND ASSOCIATION, ETC.) TO INVESTIGATE POTENTIAL ISSUES SUCH AS INVASIVE SPECIES AND BOATING, ETC.

Goal 2: Natural Resources are Protected.

The Town will continue its ongoing work to protect its natural resources.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE TO ENFORCE EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS TO PROTECT OTIS' NATURAL RESOURCES.

Goal 3: Residents and Visitors are Aware of Otis' Open Space and Cultural Resources and Recreational Opportunities.

Objective: Promote Otis' Open Space and Recreation areas.

The Town will work to better promote its existing open space and recreation areas through its website and through collaborative efforts with local organizations and the state.

ACTION 1: IMPROVE THE PORTION OF THE WEBSITE DEDICATED TO PROMOTING OTIS' OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION AREAS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS, VOLUNTEERS, AND THE STATE TO MARK AND REESTABLISH TRAIL SYSTEMS IN TOWN.

ACTION 3: ORGANIZE AND PROMOTE GUIDED AND INTERPRETIVE TRAIL WALKS, TOURS, AND SIMILAR EVENTS AT TOWN RECREATION AREAS.

Goal 4: The Town's Recreation Opportunities Meet Community Needs.

The Town will continue to examine needs and improvements at town parks and beaches.

Objective: Continue to Provide High Quality Recreation Programming Through the Otis Recreation Center.

The Town will continue to provide high quality programming through its recreation center at Harmony Hall, by polling its users about future needs and working to recruit additional volunteer staff.

ACTION 1: POLL REC. CENTER USERS ABOUT POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS TO REC. CENTER PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES.

ACTION 2: WORK TO RECRUIT ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS TO MANAGE RECREATION PROGRAMS.

Objective: Investigate the Possible Creation of "100-Acre Park" on Town-Owned Land Between Route 8 and West Center Road.

The Town will reexamine its past planning efforts related to the possible creation of "100-Acre Park". The town will engage in a public process to re-evaluate its needs for the park and work to implement recommendations from this process if they are identified.

ACTION 1: HOLD A PUBLIC FORUM / WORKSHOP ON THE POSSIBLE CREATION OF 100-ACRE PARK.

ACTION 2: WORK TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FORUM IF IDENTIFIED.

Objective: Continue to Improve Town Parks.

The town will examine possible improvements to and continue to invest in Town Hall Park. The town will also continue ongoing work to establish a playground in the East Otis area.



ACTION 1: REPAVE THE SKATE PARK.

ACTION 2: EXAMINE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEMPORARY ICE SKATING RINK ON THE SKATE PARK.

ACTION 3: INSTALL HORSESHOE PITS AT TOWN HALL PARK. INSTALL PICNIC TABLES, AND BENCHES AT TOWN HALL PARK. IMPROVE LANDSCAPING.

ACTION 4: IDENTIFY A LOCATION FOR AND ESTABLISH A PLAYGROUND AREA IN EAST OTIS.

ACTION 5: IMPROVE ADA ACCESSIBILITY AT TOWN HALL PARK.

Objective: Continue to Improve the Big Pond Town Beach.

The town will examine possible improvements at the Big Pond Town Beach including enhancing accessibility and possible restrooms and changing facilities. The town will also investigate other future improvements.

ACTION 1: IMPROVE ADA ACCESSIBILITY AT THE TOWN BEACH.

ACTION 2: EXAMINE INSTALLATION OF PERMANENT RESTROOMS AND CHANGING FACILITIES AT THE TOWN BEACH.

ACTION 3: IDENTIFY AND INSTALL IMPROVEMENTS AT THE TOWN BEACH.

Objective: Continue the Ongoing Process to Develop the Knox Trail as a Four-Season Multi-Use Trail.

The town will continue its ongoing work to develop and establish the Knox Trail as a four-season multi-use Trail.

ACTION 1: CONTINUE ONGOING WORK TO DEVELOP THE KNOX TRAIL THROUGH WORK WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.



CHAPTER 11: VISION

INTRODUCTION

The vision statement is a concise description of the Town's desired future. This may include both those qualities of the town that residents would like to keep and attributes the town would like to see added or changed in the future. The vision serves as the basis for the creation of goals and objectives in the plan for the town to pursue in the future. A short vision statement was developed for each topic area of the master plan, based on the goals and objectives identified for each chapter.

VISION

Economy

Otis's vision for the economy includes improving the daily life of year round residents and supporting its economic base of small local businesses through economic development efforts. Moreover Otis will work to increase attractions and draws for seasonal residents, visitors and future year-round residents that will help to strengthen the local economy.

Infrastructure

The town's vision for infrastructure includes energy efficiency and self-sufficiency for public and private buildings and continued improvement of town facilities and wastewater treatment.

Services

Otis' vision for services includes continuing to support a safe and healthy community and providing efficient and fiscally responsible services. Moreover, the town will work to increase civic engagement and will examine other services for its older residents.

Housing

Otis' vision for housing includes supporting its residents through participation in housing rehabilitation programs and connecting residents with existing tools that promote affordable home-ownership and aging in place.

Transportation

Otis' vision for transportation includes continuing to provide a well maintained system of roadways.

Land Use

Otis' vision for land use includes reexamining its crucial village centers, particularly East Otis Village to examine features such as underutilized properties and potential wastewater treatment that will help to protect its important water resources. Additionally, the town will examine possible creation of a commercial solar by-law, and possible design guidelines for Otis Center Village.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Otis' vision for its natural and cultural resources includes promoting and developing its historic areas, such as the Knox Trail and working to protect its cherished water and natural resources so that all residents in this rural community can remain close to water, nature, and wildlife.

Open Space and Recreation

Otis' vision for its open space and recreation includes protecting its treasured open spaces and maintaining the natural and scenic beauty of the town. Moreover, the town will continue to invest in its parks and the town beach.

CHAPTER 12: PLANNING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The Otis Master Plan was developed by the Otis Master Plan Steering Committee. Work on the Master Plan was also performed concurrently with an update of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) which is summarized in Chapter 10 of this plan. These efforts engaged members of the community in a robust public process.

PLANNING PROCESS

Otis Master Plan Steering Committee

The Otis Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) met 11 times from March until December 2015. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, based in Pittsfield, was hired by the town to work with the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) on plan development. Committee members were appointed by the Otis Select Board in February 2015. These members included:

Terry Cook (Planning Board)

Geoff Geane (Zoning Board of Appeals)

Larry Gould (Building Inspector, Chair of Energy Committee, Smart Growth Committee)

Terry Gould (Chair of Zoning Board of Appeals, Finance Board, Smart Growth Committee)

Jim Kauffman (Zoning Board of Appeals)

Harold Kobrin (MPSC Chair and Chair of Planning Board)

Edward Partyka (Zoning Board of Appeals)

Charles Schwartz

Craig Westcott

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission staff:

Thomas Matuszko (Assistant Director)

Eammon Coughlin (Planner)

Stakeholder Interviews

To inform the master plan and open space and recreation plan process and its goals, several town staff members and representatives of local



PLANNING PROCESS AT A GLANCE

Public Opinion Survey

A public opinion was developed early in the process. The survey was available online and at Town Hall from 4/25/15 until 6/1/15. Due to popular demand, the survey was reopened online from 6/9/15 to 6/16/15. The survey received 179 total responses.

Public Forums/ Informational Meetings

Two public forums were held in Town Hall. The first was held on 6/18/15 and the second was held on 11/9/15.

Stakeholder Interviews

Representatives of several stakeholder groups and town staff and board members, were interviewed to inform the master plan.

MPSC Meetings

Members of the Otis MPSC met 11 times from March until December 2015 to review draft material.

organizations were interviewed.

Those interviewed included:

Harold Kobrin, Chair of the Otis Planning Board

Larry Gould, Building Inspector, Chair of Energy Committee, Smart Growth Committee

James Crandall, Maintenance Superintendent

Christopher Morris, Town Administrator

Lisa D’Orazio, Secretary of Board of Selectmen and Planning Board

Lee Marcella, Former Otis Principal Assessor

Robert Rosen, Chair of Otis Parks and Recreation Commission

Patricia Richard, Otis Recreation Center staff member and Otis Parks and Recreation Commission

Thomas Ragusa, Chair of Otis Historical Commission

Paul Adams, Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, Southern District

Robert Mellace, Former Regional Director of Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation

Mark Amanti, President of Otis Reservoir Property Owners Association (ORPOA)

Rich Gallup, President of Big Pond Association

Jeff Gemelli, President of Knox Trail Sno-Riders

Public Opinion Survey

A public survey was developed early on in the planning process to help gauge opinion on a variety of topics. The survey was made available online, through the website Surveymonkey.com and as hardcopies in Town Hall from April 25th, 2015, until June 1st, 2015. A local home owner asked that the survey be reopened and committee made the survey available online for an additional week, from June 9th, 2015 until June 16th, 2015. The survey received 11 additional responses during this time. In total, there were 179 responses to the survey, with most

responses coming from the online survey rather than paper hardcopies. A copy of the survey results are included as appendix E of the master plan.

Public Forums/Informational Meetings

The Otis MPSC held two public forums or informational meetings on June 18th, 2015 and November 9th, 2015. The first public forum presented general information about the master plan including survey results and initial findings and included an open discussion of the town’s needs and desires.

The second public forum was held once draft goals and objectives had been developed, and reviewed these with members of the public. After a presentation, public forum participants were asked to identify what they felt were the most important goals, objectives, and action items of the draft plan by marking them with a sticker dot. This activity could aid the town in identifying which areas the plan are most important, as well as which specific actions are a high priority for implementation

The results of the prioritization activity revealed that the infrastructure and transportation sections of the plan were important to public forum participants.

Economy— Three total dots.

Infrastructure— 11 total dots, Items related to wastewater, the Otis Wind Energy Project, and expediting broadband were the most supported elements.

Services— Three total dots.

Housing—Seven total dots, connecting residents with existing housing programs had 5 dots in total.

Transportation—14 total dots, The goal relating to improving the bicycle and pedestrian environment in town had eight of the 14 dots.

Land Use—Seven total dots, exploration of potential Tax Increment Financing and Wastewater for East Otis were the most supported items.

Natural and Cultural Resources—One dot

Open Space and Recreation—Five dots in total.



CHAPTER 13: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This chapter describes the types of actions that will be needed to implement this plan, who will be responsible for taking action on each item, and the relative priority for timing of implementation. It also describes the procedure for amending and updating the plan over time.

Implementation Actions

This plan will be implemented primarily through five types of actions:

- 1) Day-to-Day Policy Decisions
- 2) Regulatory Changes
- 3) Plans and Programs
- 4) Regional Coordination
- 5) Collaborative Action

Each of these actions will likely involve more than one group or individual in the town and region. Specific responsibilities will be detailed for each action in the next sections of this chapter.

Day to Day Policy Decisions

The town administration, boards, commissions, and departments will be responsible for many of the day-to-day decisions that will cumulatively help implement this plan. Many of these decisions will be made by the Select Board in the form of policy creation and support and task delegation.

Regulatory Changes

A number of recommendations of this plan are directly or indirectly related to the development of new regulations to govern growth and land use in the town. The Planning Board will be responsible for the initiation of the efforts to draft new bylaw language but it will take a united effort on the part of the town to conduct appropriate outreach to achieve a successful and appropriate bylaw product that meets the needs of the town.

Plans and Programs

The goals, policies, and actions of this plan impact other plans and programs of the town in a few ways. Future updates to other plans, such as the Open Space and Recreation Plan, will need to be in compliance with this plan. New programs called for in this plan will need to be systematically pursued and implemented by the responsible entity as resources allow – such as economic development activities and infrastructure planning and implementation.

Regional Governmental Coordination

In many cases, the implementation of this plan can and should involve other municipalities, the state, or the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. The town will need to take the first step of starting a dialogue on items where collaborative planning or action is needed or where technical assistance is needed or desired.

Collaborative Action

At a very basic level, successful implementation of this plan will require collaborative action outside of the realm of formal government. Residents, various pond and watershed associations, recreation groups, state agencies, local business owners, and others will need to actively engage in the implementation of this plan – through both direct action and through support and participation with town-led implementations actions. This plan is working to achieve a shared vision of the town's future – achieving that will take a whole-town effort.

Who Will Implement the Plan?

This plan will be implemented through the collaborative and individual effort of a number of organizations, agencies, and individuals. The action plan uses the abbreviations listed at the bottom of each page to identify the parties that will likely be involved in the achievement of the corresponding action. The town may wish to consider appointing an implementation committee that would help to organize efforts to implement the

plan. This committee could be especially important in working to organizing and manage volunteers to help with implementation activities. The committee could also serve as an advocate for the plan and work with other town boards and committees on strategies for plan implementation. Moreover, it could work to “roll out” Master Plan implementation activities through integration into its regular all boards meetings.

The action plan has been developed to span a period of five years after the Master Plan’s initial adoption. Actions were categorized based on several likely periods for implementation. Items listed as “ongoing” in the schedule are actions that the town is already in the process of implementing and will likely continue to work on in the future. Actions listed as “immediate and ongoing” are items that can be implemented on an ongoing basis by the town, or integrated into other activities, but are not yet being acted on by the town. Finally, other actions are divided between three broad time periods; 1-3 years, 3-5 years, and 5+ years. Some actions, particularly those in the 1-3 year time period may reoccur regularly or continuously after initial implementation. It will be up to the town to evaluate its successes and determine if these actions occur once, or are implemented regularly.

Some items on the action plan can be completed within this five year period, while many others will not. It is recommended that the town reevaluate the action plan after this five year period to reflect on its successes and review its priorities. The town will likely not choose to pursue a full update of the Master Plan at this point, but may revise the action plan to more effectively implement the plan.

Additionally, it should be noted that some items in the action plan are redundant. These include items related to the expansion of wastewater treatment in town among others. As development of potential wastewater treatment is an infrastructure project, it was first developed in the accompanying infrastructure chapter and its set of goals and objectives. However, as this action impacts water quality and land use it was mentioned concurrently in the actions for these subjects. This was intentional, and attempts to make the plan actions supporting and reinforcing, and to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of many of the

items to be acted on by the town. Moreover, as the Open Space and Recreation Plan that was developed concurrently with this Master Plan will be a stand alone document, an effort was made to ensure natural resources related actions were redundant between the two plans. This effort was made because natural resources in Otis are discussed thoroughly in the Open Space and Recreation Plan, in addition to the two subjects mentioned in its name. Thus a reader would find all subjects discussed in the OSRP addressed its goals, with no “loose ends.”

UPDATING THE PLAN

A Master Plan looks far into the future and establishes a roadmap of goals, policies, and actions for the town to implement over time. In order for the plan to remain a relevant document, however, periodic updates will be necessary. Updates can occur in two general ways: plan amendments and a full plan update.

Plan Amendments

The town may, from time to time, encounter changing conditions, new laws or programs, or other circumstances that it wishes to reflect or respond to through the Master Plan document. The plan amendment process is fairly simple (see below) and allows the planning board to make small but important changes to the document over time to keep pace with changing circumstances.

Plan Update

Eventually, conditions will shift to a degree that a minor amendment is insufficient to achieve a document that provides meaningful and forward-thinking guidance to the town. At this time, typically 10-15 years from initial adoption of a new or fully updated plan, municipalities can go through a plan update process. At this time, the community initiates a full new planning process to rethink or reaffirm the vision and chart out new policy directions and carry forward any relevant directions from the prior document.

Amendment and Update Procedure

MGL 41 S81D (Appendix D) describes the practice and procedure for amending and updating an adopted Master Plan.



Vote:

An amendment of the Master Plan may be made through a formal majority vote of the planning board and recorded for public record.

Filing:

The planning board must supply a copy of the amended or updated plan to the Department of Housing and Community Development. In the case of an amendment, a good practice would be to include a cover memo highlighting the amendment that was made.

ACTION PLAN

The action plan details each implementation action contained in the prior chapters of the Master Plan, the proposed timing for the action to be taken, potential leadership, and other interested parties responsible for implementing the action.

Economy		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Improve the daily life of year-round residents and increase Otis attractions to second home-owners and seasonal visitors				
Objective: Business outreach and economic development.				
Promote existing businesses and events (through print, radio, web, etc).		Staff	Vol.	Ongoing
Invest in infrastructure projects, such as broadband internet and improving energy efficiency, as a form of economic development and a means to support local business.		Staff	BOS, Vol.	Ongoing
Work on a regional basis to encourage tradespeople in town to become certified in their fields.		Staff	BOS, Vol.	Immediate & Ongoing
Encourage participation in job apprenticeship and mentoring programs.		Staff	BOS, Vol.	Immediate & Ongoing
Conduct outreach to explore the reformation of the Otis Business Association.		Admin.	BOS, Staff	1-3 Years
Update and reprint the Otis business directory.		Vol.	Staff, BOS	1-3 Years
Develop and implement a “buy local” campaign.		Cul. Co.	Vol.	1-3 Years
Develop signage and wayfinding in village centers to direct residents and visitors to businesses and attractions.		Maint.	Highway	3-5 Years
Explore the development of a grant program to provide technical assistance to Otis businesses.		Smart Growth	Vol.	3-5 Years
Update and rename the Otis development review manual.		Planning	Smart Growth	3-5 Years
Research and implement succession planning services for local business owners.		Staff	Vol., COA	3-5 Years
Objective: Promote the town as a tourist and seasonal destination while creating draws for future year-round residents.				
Promote the town through the existing town flag graphic.		Staff	BOS	Ongoing
Continue to develop the historic Knox Trail as a visitor attraction.		Hist. Com.	Parks, BOS	Ongoing
Promote the quality of life and Farmington River elementary school as potential draws for new residents.		School	Staff, BOS	Ongoing
Expand and develop portions of the town website that market existing businesses and connects people to outdoor activities.		Staff	BOS, Parks, Vol.	1-3 Years
Explore the creation of design guidelines for Otis’s village centers.		Planning	BOS	1-3 Years
Promote the town through a “spend a day in Otis” event or campaign, which connects visitors to businesses and activities throughout the year.		Cul. Co.	Vol.	1-3 Years
Engage the community to develop a simplified town logo.		Cul. Co.	Vol.	1-3 Years
Objective: Support local agriculture.				
Integrate the Otis farmer’s market, farms and farm stands, maple sugar and other forest product businesses into promotional activities.		Staff, Vol.	BOS, Cul. Co.	Ongoing

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation						Schedule	
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

INFRASTRUCTURE		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Energy efficiency and self-sufficiency for public and private buildings in Otis.				
Objective: Continue the ongoing Otis Wind Energy Project				
Advance design and construction phase.		Staff	Energy	1-3 Years
Finalize turbine construction.		Staff	Energy	1-3 Years
Objective: Connect Otis residents with energy efficiency programs and small scale energy development programs.				
Continue to make Otis residents aware of programs through Mass Saves.		Energy	Planning, BOS	Ongoing
Investigate implementation of a Solarize Mass program in Otis, possibly in combination with surrounding towns.		Energy	Planning, BOS	3-5 Years
Goal 2: Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure.				
Objective: Integrate existing energy efficiency work, the Otis Wind Energy Project and the shared space study into a multi-year capital improvement plan (CIP).				
Develop a capital improvement plan that includes all town departments and integrates on-going and proposed work, is open to public comment, and is approved yearly at town meeting.		Finance	BOS	1-3 Years
Objective: Continue ongoing work to improve the energy efficiency of town buildings.				
Continue to identify, prioritize, and implement energy improvements to existing facilities.		Energy	BOS, Staff	Ongoing
Objective: Continue ongoing shared space study.				
Continue ongoing shared space study to create a combined Highway and Fire Department building and reuse other town buildings.		Energy	Staff	Ongoing
Investigate and apply for grant funding as appropriate to implement the shared space study.		Energy	Staff	Ongoing
Implement the recommendations of the energy subcommittee shared space study.		Energy	Staff	5+ Years
Objective: Expand wastewater treatment in town.				
Research and apply for other funding sources to pursue expansion of wastewater treatment in Otis.		Planning	Smart Growth	Ongoing
Resubmit a MassWorks Grant application to fund the expansion of sewer service to the ski area and utilize the excess capacity of the town's existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.		Planning	BOS, BRPC	1-3 Years
Examine the development of an additional wastewater treatment facility in East Otis Village. Examine potential alternative or ecological treatment methods. Integrate recommendations with other plans for East Otis. (See also goals for natural & cultural resources, land use and open space and recreation chapters)		Smart Growth	Planning, BOS, Vol.	5+ Years
Objective: Expedite broadband internet development in Otis.				
Advance design and construction phase.		Tech.	Staff	1-3 Years
Finalize broadband installation.		Tech.	Staff	1-3 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation						Schedule	
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
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BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

SERVICES		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Support a Safe and Healthy Community				
Objective: Continue to participate in regional emergency preparedness training.				
Participate in Homeland Security Plans and Actions for the region.		EMD	BOS	Ongoing
Ensure appropriate staff and resources for emergency response teams.		EMD	BOS, Police, Fire	Ongoing
Maintain up-to-date hazard mitigation and comprehensive emergency management plans.		EMD	BOS, BRPC	Ongoing
Goal 2: Efficient and Fiscally Responsible Services				
Objective: Streamline costs while maintaining or enhancing levels of service.				
Explore the potential of shared service delivery arrangements.		Admin.	Staff	Ongoing
Increase the use of regional group purchasing program.		Admin.	Staff	Ongoing
Objective: Improve the town website.				
Identify additional content or features to be provided on the town website.		Staff	BOS	1-3 Years
Goal 3: Increase Civic Engagement by Otis Residents				
Objective: Increase participation in town boards, committees, and other town events.				
Work to identify and overcome potential barriers to public participation.		All	Vol.	Ongoing
Work to “cross promote” events across town email list serves and through local organizations.		Staff	Vol.	1-3 Years
Explore the authorization of “remote participation” on town boards and committees.		BOS		1-3 Years
Develop a system to get regular feedback on the implementation of master plan goals, objectives and actions, such as a “check in” at town meeting, polling, or other means.		BOS	Vol.	1-3 Years
Poll town news list serve users to determine who is using the service and more effectively target future event promotion and news distribution.		Staff	Vol., Cul. Co.	1-3 Years
Objective: Develop a “Send In Your Ideas” campaign.				
Develop a “send in your ideas” campaign with input from town boards, committees and the public.		Cul. Co.	Vol.	1-3 Years
Solicit ideas from Otis residents, community groups and businesses through a mailing or through the town website.		BOS	Staff	1-3 Years
Vote to implement the top ideas at town meeting or a similar forum.		BOS		1-3 Years
Objective: Meet the needs of an older population.				
Work with older residents and the Council on Aging to examine needs for housing, transportation, health, and other services.		COA	BOS	Ongoing
Participate in the regional Age-friendly Communities task force.		COA	BOS, BRPC	1-3 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation						Schedule	
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All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

HOUSING		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Address Local Housing Needs.				
Objective: Participate in housing rehabilitation programs.				
Work with housing organizations such as DHCD and Construct Inc. to determine the need for grant programs and or technical assistance for all households, especially those with elderly residents. If a need is identified, locate sources of grant funding to address local needs.		Admin.	Staff., BOS	Ongoing
Pursue new rehabilitation funds, which may become available.		Admin.	Staff., BOS	Ongoing
Work with appropriate agencies to apply for CDBG funds for rehabilitation grants and loans.		Admin.	Staff., BOS	3-5 Years
Objective: Consider options for the development of affordable home ownership.				
Ensure local banks and credit unions continue to participate in Masshousing's lending programs.		Staff	Admin.	Ongoing
Consider the potential sale of town-owned lands to create affordable building lots for residential development.		BOS	Staff	1-3 Years
Consider other low-cost models such as working with Habitat for Humanity or pursuing development with local vocational school programs.		BOS	Admin.	3-5 Years
Objective: Connect residents with programs, incentives, and contractors to address housing needs.				
Continue to make local residents aware of MassHousing's Septic Repair Loan Program and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).		Staff	Vol.	1-3 Years
Connect citizens with property tax abatement programs such as those available for residents 70 years and older.		Staff	Vol.	1-3 Years
Develop a list of prequalified contractors to assist older Otis residents with housing needs.		Staff	Vol.	1-3 Years
Objective: Investigate funding sources and bylaw changes to address housing needs.				
Investigate dedicated funding sources for housing, including possible re-exploration of the Community Preservation Act in Otis.		Planning	Smart Growth, BOS	1-3 Years
Explore possible changes to the accessory apartment bylaw to incentivize creation and use.		Planning	Smart Growth, BOS	1-3 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation						Schedule	
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

TRANSPORTATION		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Provide a Complete and Well-Maintained System of Roads.				
Objective: Increase the Town's Access to Chapter 90 Funding.				
Work with MassDOT to update the list of town maintained roads to receive additional Chapter 90 funding.		Highway	Admin.	1-3 Years
Develop a multi-year spending plan to take full advantage of yearly chapter 90 funding. Integrate this effort with larger capital improvement planning.		Finance	Highway, BOS	3-5 Years
Objective: Continue to place eligible road maintenance needs on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).				
Objective: Work to resolve road jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility issues.				
Revisit the Recommendations of the 2005 BRPC Town of Otis Status of Roads and Official Map Report with the Town Highway Superintendent, Town Administrator, Town Counsel, the Planning Board and the Select Board.		BOS	Highway, Admin., Planning	3-5 Years
Revise Recommendations as necessary based on new findings and existing conditions.		BOS	Highway, Admin., Planning	3-5 Years
Objective: Plan for and Address Future Needs.				
As existing culverts and bridges need replacement, ensure that replacement components are adequate to accommodate anticipated future storms.		Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing
Work to coordinate future roadway projects with potential infrastructure development, such as sewer expansion in Town.		Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing
Goal 2: Increase Access to Public and Alternative Transportation in Otis.				
Objective: Work with Berkshire Regional Transportation Agency (BRTA) and other towns to provide a public bus stop in Otis.				
Investigate the feasibility of a public bus route with a stop in Otis. Address the route's location, the number of potential stops, and the potential demand within the town.		Planning	BOS	3-5 Years
Objective: Investigate Options for Alternative Transportation in Town.				
Encourage residents to participate in online car sharing or carpooling resources. Link to these resources on the town website.		Staff		1-3 Years
Objective: Work with the Council on Aging to better connect elderly and disabled Otis residents with transportation services.				
Improve connections to available elderly and disabled transportation, promote options through the town website and in town mailings and communications.		Staff	COA	1-3 Years
Investigate a possible application to the MassDOT and BRTA community transit grant program, that could help fund a vehicle for use by the Council on Aging.		BOS	COA	1-3 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation						Schedule	
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

Goal 3: Enhance the Bicycle and Pedestrian Environment in Town.

Objective: Adopt a “Complete Streets” approach to future roadway projects.

Objective: Enhance warning signage and markings on roads frequented by pedestrians and cyclists.

Identify potential road restriping and lane narrowing that could help to widen the road shoulder available for pedestrians and cyclists.	Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing
Identify and implement pedestrian and bicycling improvements throughout town.	Highway	BOS	Immediate & Ongoing
Coordinate with MassDOT and other agencies to ensure that potential pedestrian and cycling improvements are included in larger projects and in new construction along state-owned roadways.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	1-3 Years
Request that MassDOT examine options for traffic calming to enhance pedestrian safety in village centers.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	1-3 Years
Work with MassDOT to install shared lane markings or “sharrows” and “share the Road” signage on roads frequented by cyclists.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	3-5 Years

Objective: Establish a “walking loop” in Otis Center.

Install signage that marks a 1/2 mile and 1-mile walking loop in Otis Center Village and directs pedestrians to the Farmington River Walk and Otis Recreation center.	Maint.	Parks, Vol.	1-3 Years
Promote the walking loop through the Council on Aging and the town website.	COA	Staff	1-3 Years

Goal 4: Address Wildlife Crossings in Future Roadway Projects.

Examine options to enhance wildlife connectivity in future roadway projects, particularly bridge and culvert work.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	Immediate & Ongoing
Examine options to enhance warning signage in wildlife crossing areas or in areas where collisions with wildlife are frequent.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	Immediate & Ongoing
Communicate with MassDOT to ensure that wildlife connectivity enhancement is included in future state roadway work.	Highway	BOS, MassDOT	1-3 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule		
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

LAND USE	Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Revisit Otis' Village Centers			
Objective: Create a redevelopment plan for East Otis			
Revisit the 1998 Clough, Harbour & Associates Master Plan for the East Otis Village Area, as a basis for current efforts.	BOS	Planning, Smart Growth	1-3 Years
Engage in a public process on the needs of East Otis to inform the planning process.	Planning	Smart Growth, Vol.	1-3 Years
Examine Tax Incentive Financing (TIF) and other funding incentive options to spur the redevelopment of underutilized properties such as the J&D marina.	Finance	Planning, BOS	1-3 Years
Examine possible ecological wastewater treatment options for East Otis, such as through a living machine or similar system, which could also serve as an attraction to the area. Develop strategies for siting and funding the system. (See also goals for infrastructure, natural & cultural resources, and open space and recreation chapters)	Smart Growth	Energy	3-5 Years
Draft, adopt, and implement a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the area.	BOS	Planning	5+ Years
Examine implementation of design guidelines for Otis Center Village.			
Research architectural design guidelines implemented in other rural New England communities.	Planning	BOS, Vol.	1-3 Years
Develop and implement a strategy for design guidelines in village centers.	Planning	BOS, Vol.	3-5 Years
Examine options for increased day to day and event parking in village centers.			
Conduct a study of existing parking areas and capacity in both village centers and assess future parking needs.	Smart Growth	Maint., Highway	1-3 Years
Research and implement options to expand parking in village centers.	Smart Growth	BOS, Highway	5+ Years
Goal 2: Research and Develop a Commercial Solar Energy Bylaw.			
Research, develop, and vote to implement a potential commercial solar bylaw.	Planning	BOS	1-3 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation						Schedule	
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
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BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Develop and Promote Otis's Cultural and Historic Resources.				
Objective: Identify and nominate town historic resources for state and national Recognition.				
Continue to work with property owners and the historical commission to update the town's listing of historic properties.		Hist. Com.	Vol.	Ongoing
Continue ongoing work to list the Knox Trail on the National Register of Historic places.		Hist. Com.	Parks, Vol.	Ongoing
Work to nominate other historic town resources for state and national recognition.		Hist. Com.	Vol.	Ongoing
Objective: Promote the town's historic resources.				
Organize a walking or driving tour of Otis' historic resources.		Hist. Com.	Vol.	1-3 Years
Promote Otis' historic resources through the town website.		Staff	Hist. Com.	1-3 Years
Objective: Continue the ongoing process to develop the Knox Trail as a four-season multi-use trail.				
Continue to work with property owners and user groups to develop easements and other permissions for trail access.		Hist. Com.	Vol.	Ongoing
Continue to identify significant historic resources and other sites along the Knox Trail.		Hist. Com.	Vol.	Ongoing
Invest in the "65 Mile to Albany" Milestone Way, near Algeria road, as a town recreation area and historic resource.		Hist. Com.	BOS	Ongoing
Goal 2: Protect Otis' Water and Natural Resources.				
Continue ongoing septic and water quality testing by the Board of Health and others to examine water quality in Otis.		BOH	BOS	Ongoing
Continue to enforce existing environmental regulations to protect drinking water resources.		BOH	Con. Com., BOS	Ongoing
Investigate sewer expansion in Otis Center Village to utilize the excess capacity in the WWTP. Investigate development of a new wastewater treatment system in East Otis. (See also goals for open space and recreation, land use, and natural & cultural resource chapters)		Smart Growth	Planning	5+ Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule		
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION		Suggested Leadership	Other Participants	Schedule
Goal 1: Water Resources are Protected.				
Continue ongoing septic and water quality testing by the Board of Health and others to examine water quality in Otis.		BOH	Con. Com.	Ongoing
Continue to enforce existing environmental regulations to protect drinking water resources.		Con. Com.	BOH, BOS	Ongoing
Reach out to local conservation and water body groups (Watson Pond Association, ORPOA, Big Pond Association, etc.) to investigate potential issues such as invasive species and boating, etc.		Con. Com.	BOS	1-3 Years
Investigate sewer expansion in Otis Village Center to utilize the excess capacity in the WWTP. Investigate development of a new wastewater treatment system in East Otis. Examine potential alternative or ecological treatment systems. (See also goals for infrastructure, land use, and natural & cultural resource chapters)		Smart Growth	Planning	5+ Years
Goal 2: Natural Resources are Protected.				
Continue to enforce existing environmental regulations to protect Otis' natural resources.		Con. Com.	BOS	Ongoing
Goal 3: Residents and Visitors are Aware of Otis' Open Space and Cultural Resources and Recreational Opportunities.				
Objective: Promote Otis' open space and recreation areas.				
Improve the portion of the website dedicated to promoting Otis' open space and recreation areas and opportunities.		Staff	Parks	1-3 Years
Work with existing organizations, volunteers, and the state to mark and reestablish trail systems in town.		Parks	DCR, Vol.	1-3 Years
Organize and promote guided and interpretive trail walks, tours, and similar events at town recreation areas.		Parks	DCR, Vol.	1-3 Years
Goal 4: The Town's Recreation Opportunities Meet Community Needs.				
Objective: Continue to provide high quality recreation programming through the Otis Recreation Center.				
Work to recruit additional volunteers to manage recreation programs.		Parks	Vol.	Ongoing
Poll Rec. Center users about possible improvements to Rec. center programs and amenities.		Parks	Vol.	1-3 Years
Objective: Investigate the possible creation of "100-Acre Park" on town-owned land between Route 8 and West Center Road.				
Hold a public forum / workshop on the possible creation of 100-Acre Park.		Parks	BOS	1-3 Years
Work to implement recommendations from the forum if identified.		Parks	BOS	3-5 Years

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule		
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
BOH	Board of Health	EMD	Emergency Management Director	Highway	Highway Department	1-3 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 1-3 year time frame
BOS	Board of Selectmen	School	Farmington River School	Maint.	Maintenance	3-5 Years	Projects to be implemented within a 3-5 year time frame
Cul. Co.	Otis Cultural Council	Planning	Planning Board	Parks	Parks and Recreation Commission	5+ Years	Projects likely requiring 5 or more years for implementation
Staff	Town Staff	Vol.	Volunteers (residents, local businesses, etc.)	ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals	Tech.	Technology Committee
BRPC	Berkshire Regional Planning Commission	DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation	Police, Fire, etc.	Other town departments	COA	Council on Aging
MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

Objective: Continue to improve town parks.			
Examine development of a temporary ice skating rink on the Skate Park.	Parks	Maint.	1-3 Years
Identify a location for and establish a playground area in East Otis.	Parks	BOS	1-3 Years
Repave the Skate Park.	Maint.	Parks	3-5 Years
Install horseshoe pits at Town Hall Park. Install picnic tables, and benches at Town Hall Park. Improve landscaping.	Parks	Maint.	3-5 Years
Improve ADA accessibility at Town Hall Park.	Parks	Maint.	3-5 Years
Objective: Continue to improve the Big Pond town beach.			
Identify and install improvements at the town beach.	Parks	Maint.	Ongoing
Improve ADA accessibility at the town beach.	Parks	Maint.	3-5 Years
Examine installation of permanent restrooms and changing facilities at the town beach.	Parks	BOS, Maint.	5+ Years
Objective: Continue the ongoing process to develop the Knox Trail as a four-season multi-use trail.			
Continue ongoing work to develop the Knox Trail through work with public and private landowners.	Hist. Com.	Vol.	Ongoing

Parties Involved in Plan Implementation					Schedule		
Admin.	Town Administrator	Con. Com.	Conservation Commission	Finance	Finance Committee	Ongoing	Actions already in progress by the town
All	All Boards, Committees, and Staff	Energy	Energy Committee	Hist. Com.	Historical Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Actions that can be acted on immediately and integrated throughout implementation
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MassDOT	Mass. Dept. of Transportation	Smart Growth	Smart Growth Committee				

MASTER PLAN

Town of Otis, Massachusetts

APPENDICES TO THE MASTER PLAN

Town of Otis,
Massachusetts

A: MAPS

B: KEY ISSUES

C: EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

D: MGL 41: MASTER PLANNING LAW

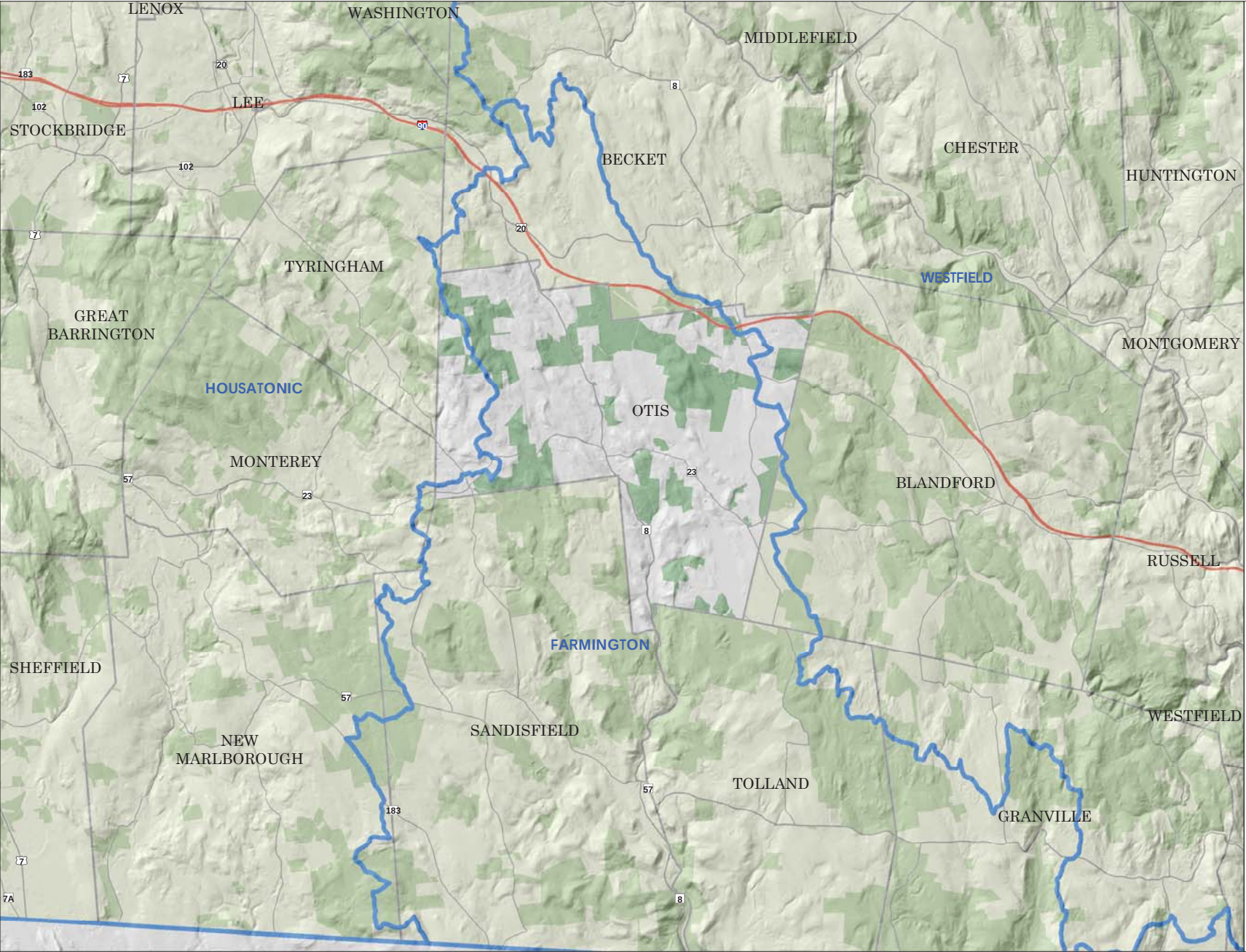
E: PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Prepared by:
The Otis Master Plan
Steering Committee &
The Berkshire Regional
Planning Commission

APPENDIX A: MAPS

LIST OF MAPS:

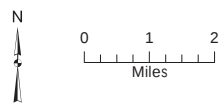
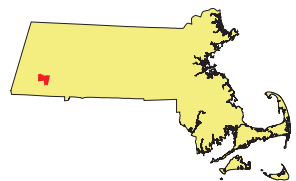
- Map 1—Regional Context
 - Map 2—Environmental Justice
 - Map 3—Zoning
 - Map 4—Soils and Geologic Features
 - Map 5—Unique Features
 - Map 6—Water Resources
 - Map 7—Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest
 - Map 8—Historic Resources
 - Map 9—Current Land Use
 - Map 10—Development Trend
 - Map 11—Buildable Land
 - Map 12—Infrastructure
 - Map 13—Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife
 - Map 14—Road Maintenance
-



Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 1: Regional Context

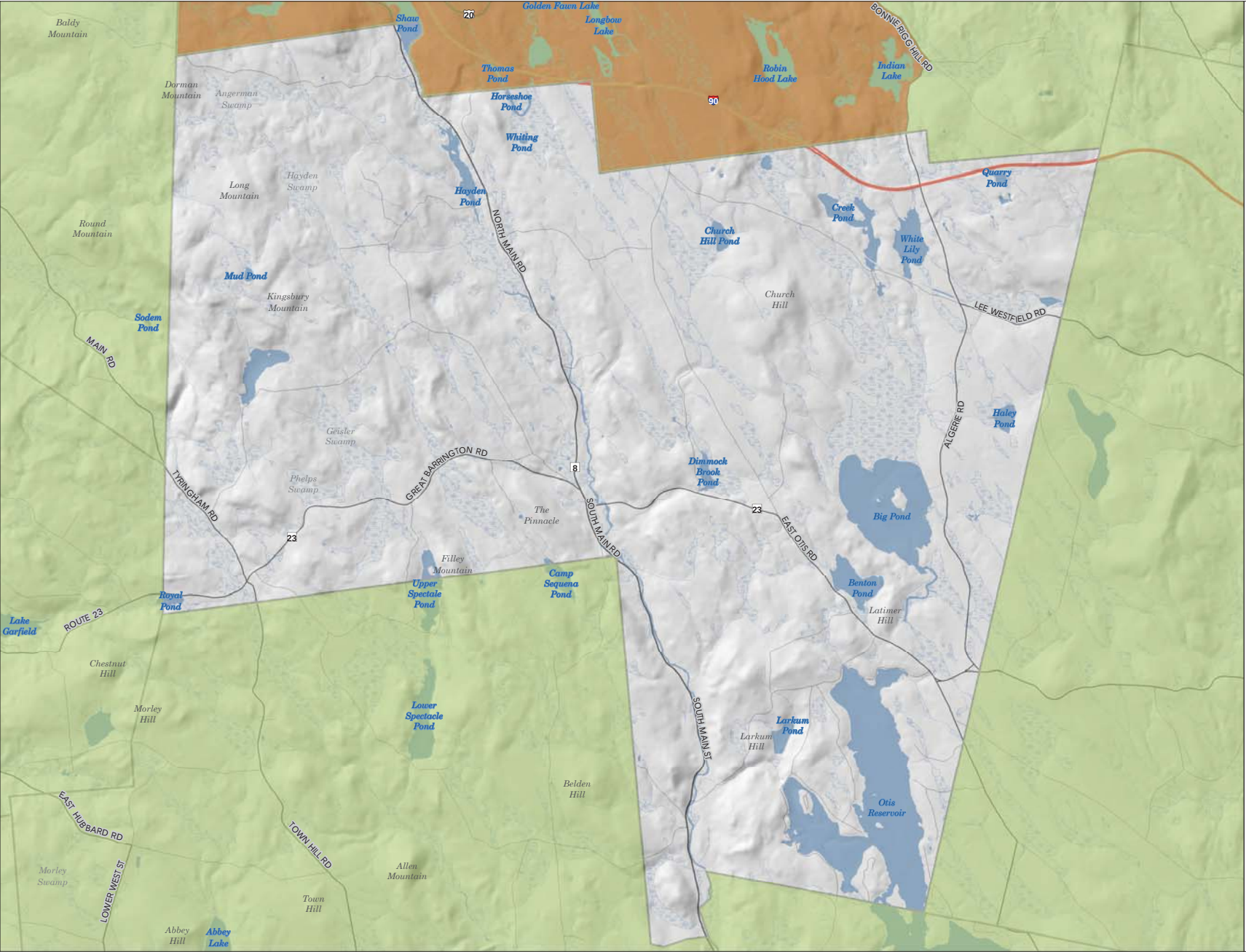
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Major Watersheds
- Protected Land



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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 2: Environmental Justice Populations



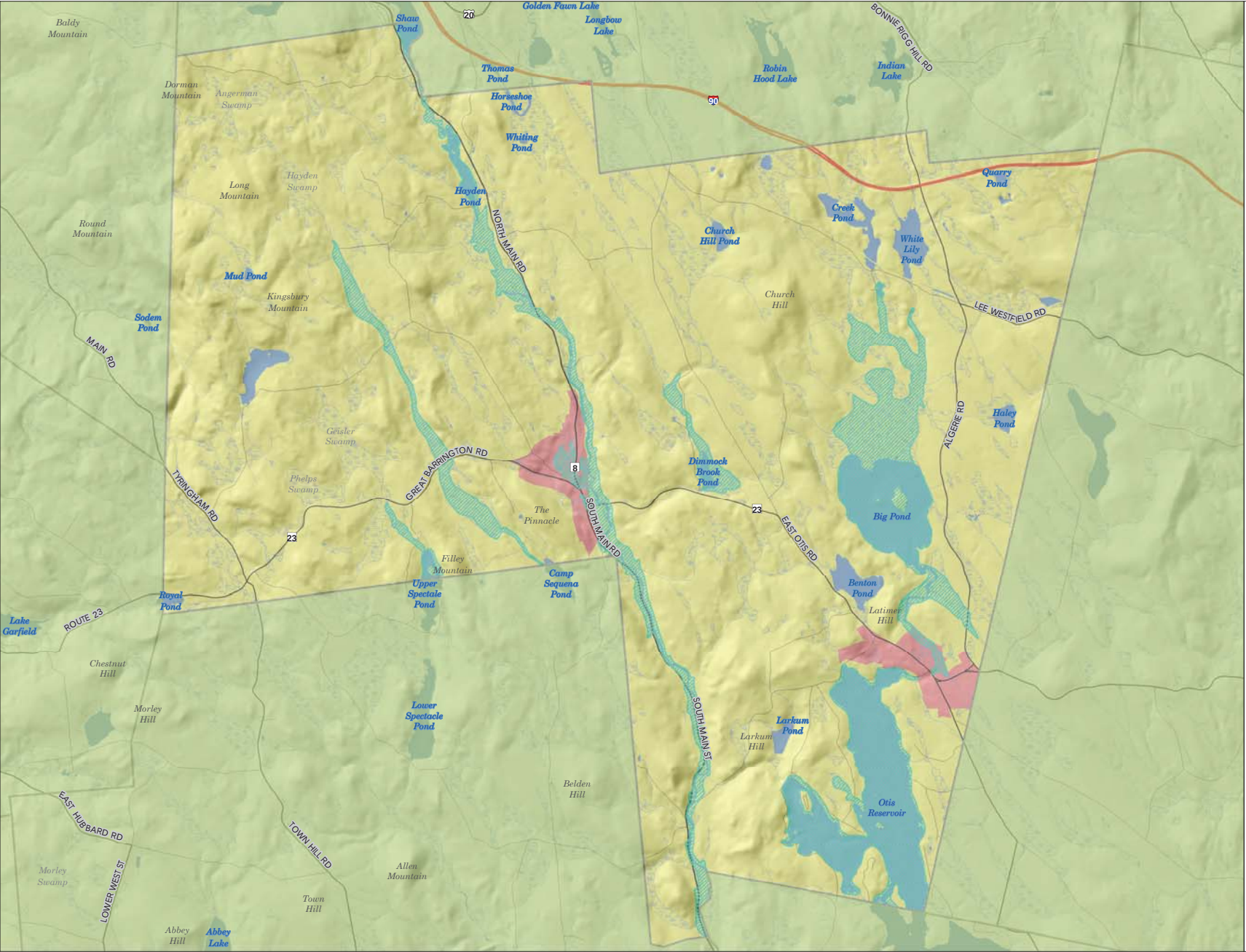
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water
- Environmental Justice



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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 3: Zoning



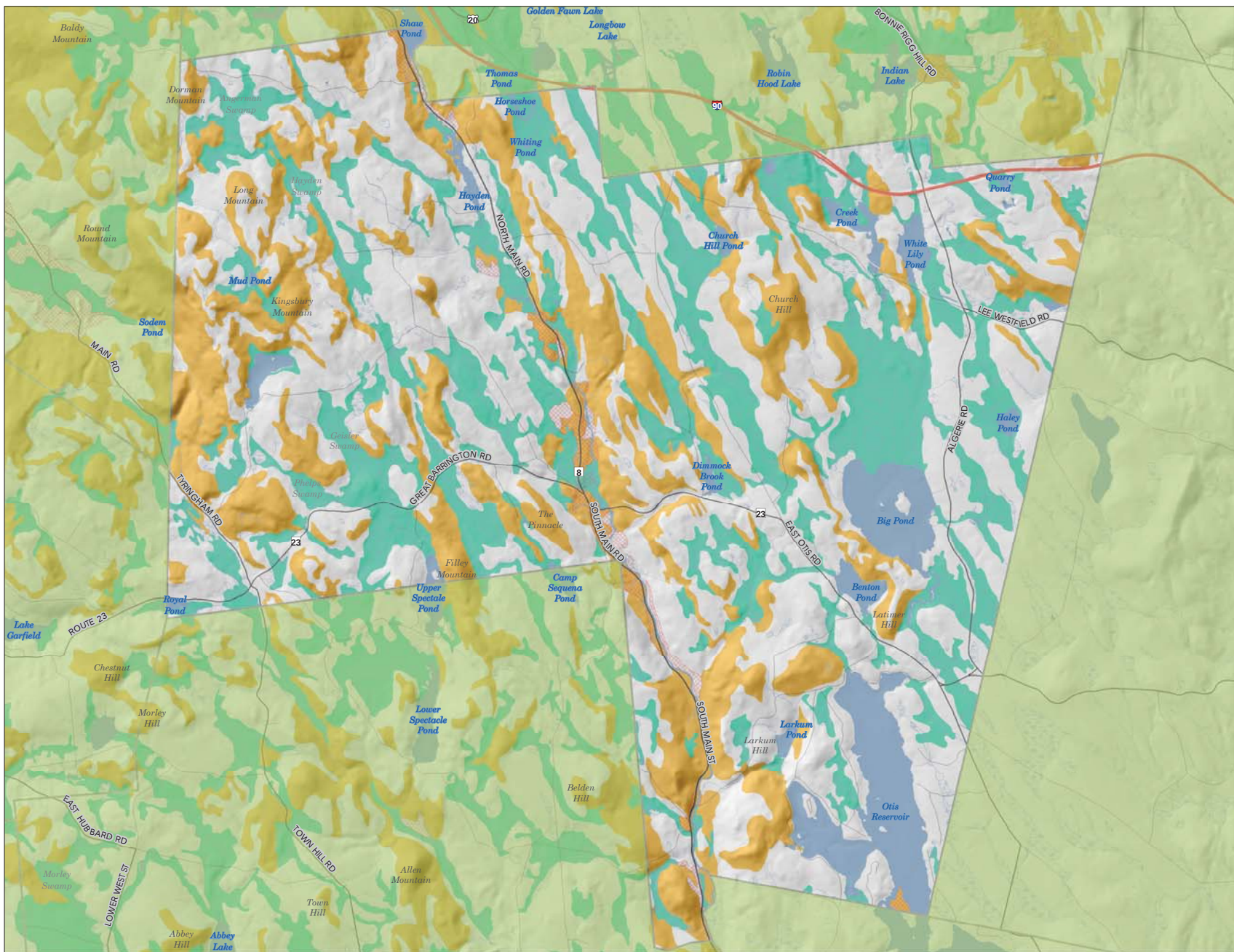
- Zoning**
- R-40
 - V-1
 - Floodplain Overlay District
 - Towns
 - Interstate
 - Major Road
 - Minor Road
 - Local Road
 - Stream
 - Wetland
 - Open Water



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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 4: Soils and Geologic Features Map



- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Excessively Drained Soils
- Poorly Drained Soils
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water

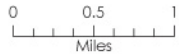


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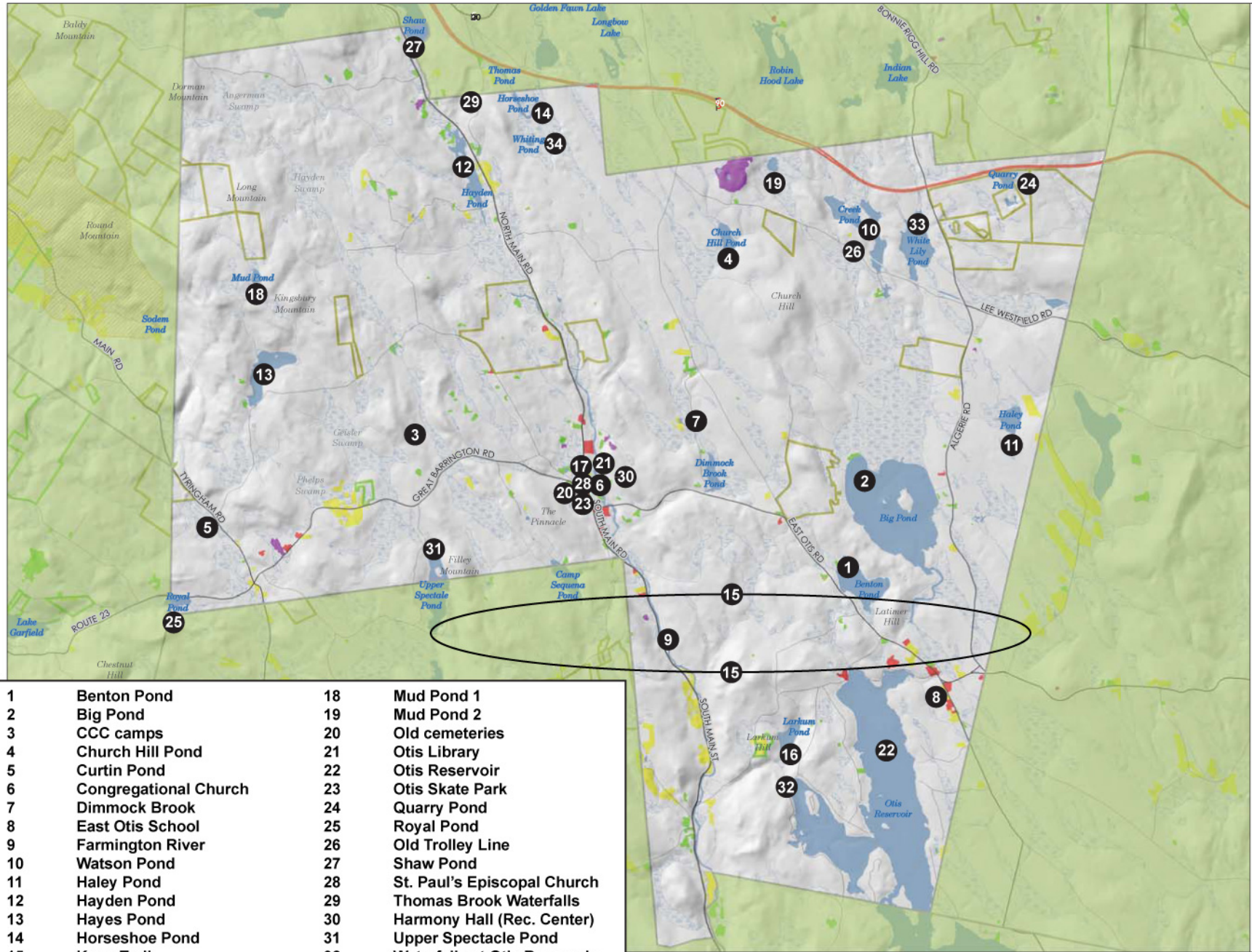
Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 5: Unique Features Map

- Chapter 61
- Chapter 61A
- DCR Scenic Landscapes
- Open Land
- Agricultural Land
- Commercial Land
- Industrial Land
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



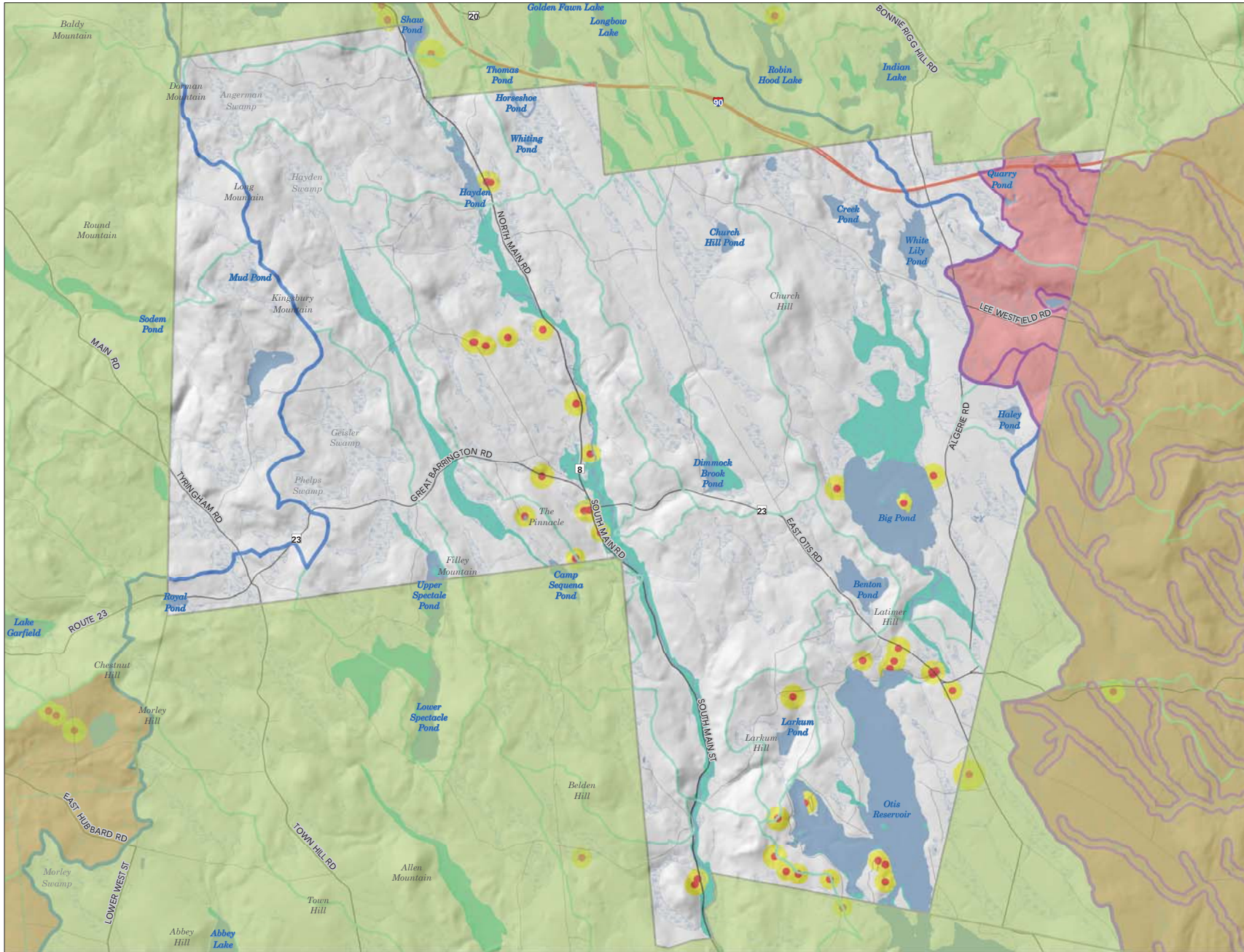
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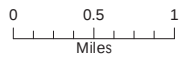
1	Benton Pond	18	Mud Pond 1
2	Big Pond	19	Mud Pond 2
3	CCC camps	20	Old cemeteries
4	Church Hill Pond	21	Otis Library
5	Curtin Pond	22	Otis Reservoir
6	Congregational Church	23	Otis Skate Park
7	Dimmock Brook	24	Quarry Pond
8	East Otis School	25	Royal Pond
9	Farmington River	26	Old Trolley Line
10	Watson Pond	27	Shaw Pond
11	Haley Pond	28	St. Paul's Episcopal Church
12	Hayden Pond	29	Thomas Brook Waterfalls
13	Hayes Pond	30	Harmony Hall (Rec. Center)
14	Horseshoe Pond	31	Upper Spectacle Pond
15	Knox Trail	32	Waterfalls at Otis Reservoir
16	Larkum Pond	33	White Lily Pond
17	McManus Store	34	Whiting Pond

Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 6: Water Resources



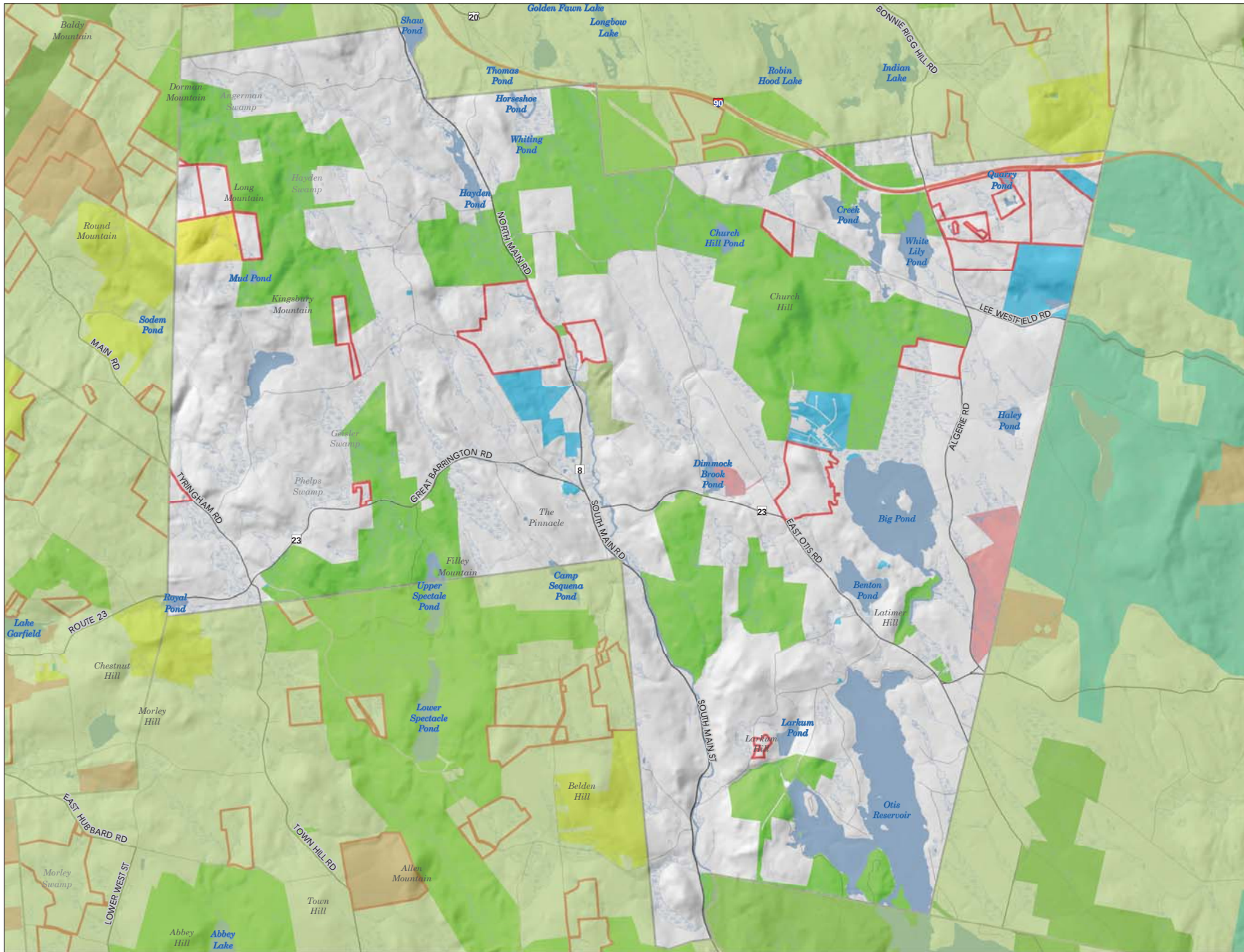
- PWS
- Interim Wellhead Protection Area
- Surface Water Protection Zone
- Outstanding Resource Waters
- FEMA 100yr Floodplain
- Watersheds
- Subwatersheds
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



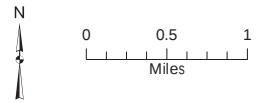
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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 7: Inventory of Land
of Conservation and
Recreation Interest



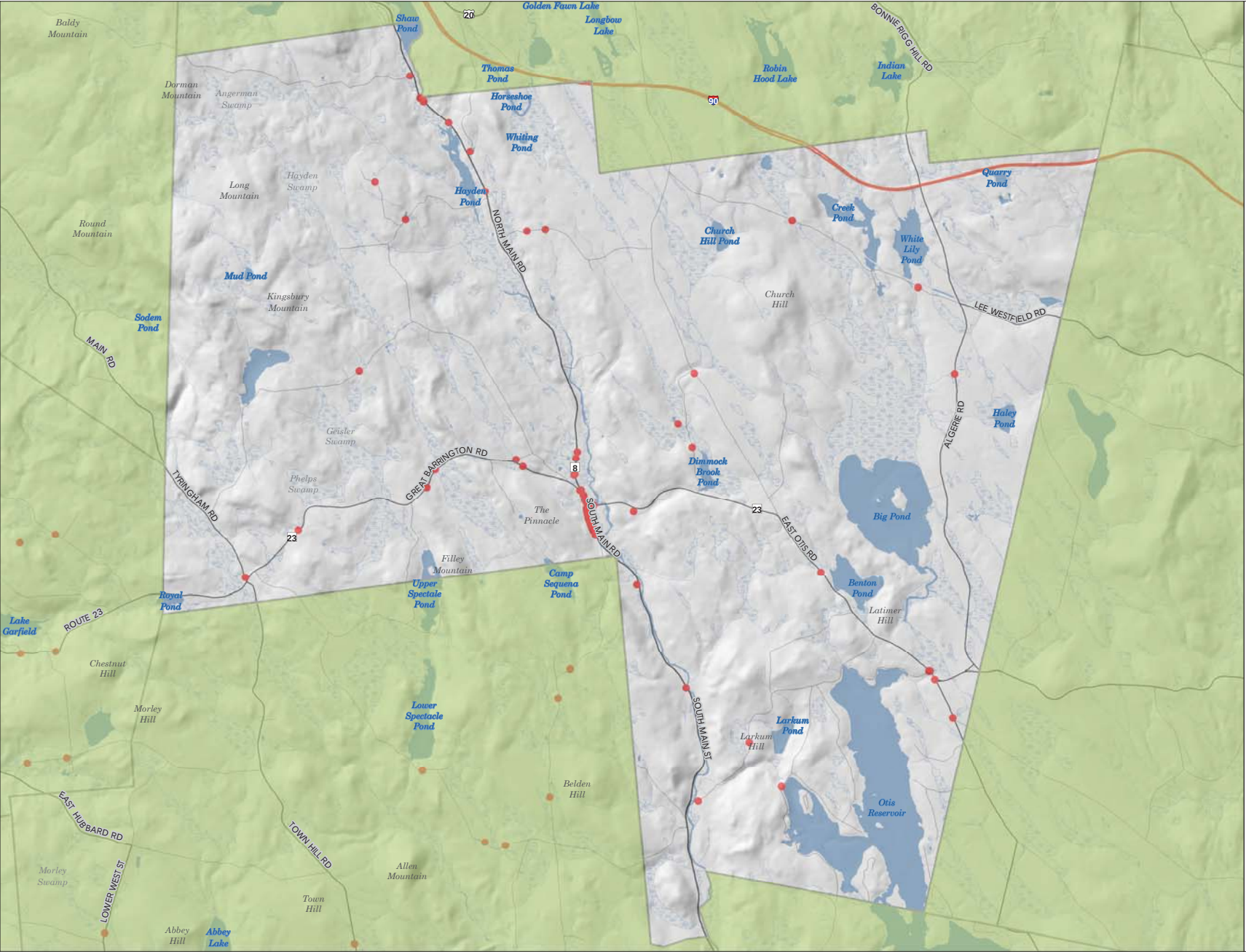
- Federal
- State
- Municipality
- Conservation Organization
- Land Trust
- Private
- Chapter 61, 61A, 61B
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 8: Historic Resources



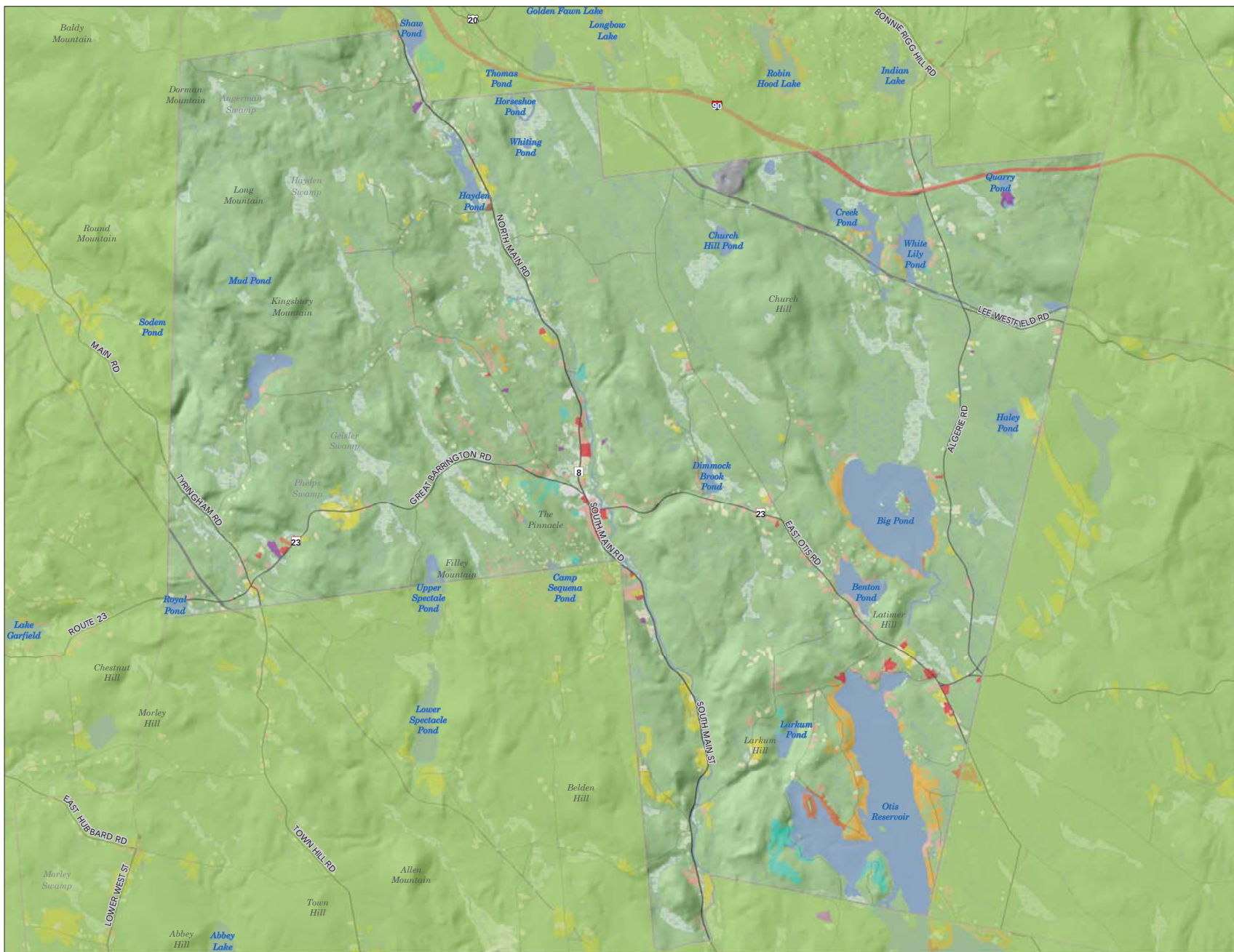
- Historic Properties (MACRIS)
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



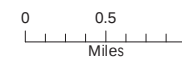
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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 9: Current Land Use (2005)



- Agriculture
- Forest
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Mining
- Multi-Family Residential
- High Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Very Low Density Residential
- Recreation
- Open Land
- Urban Public/Institutional
- Utilities / Transportation
- Water
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



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Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 10:
Development Trend

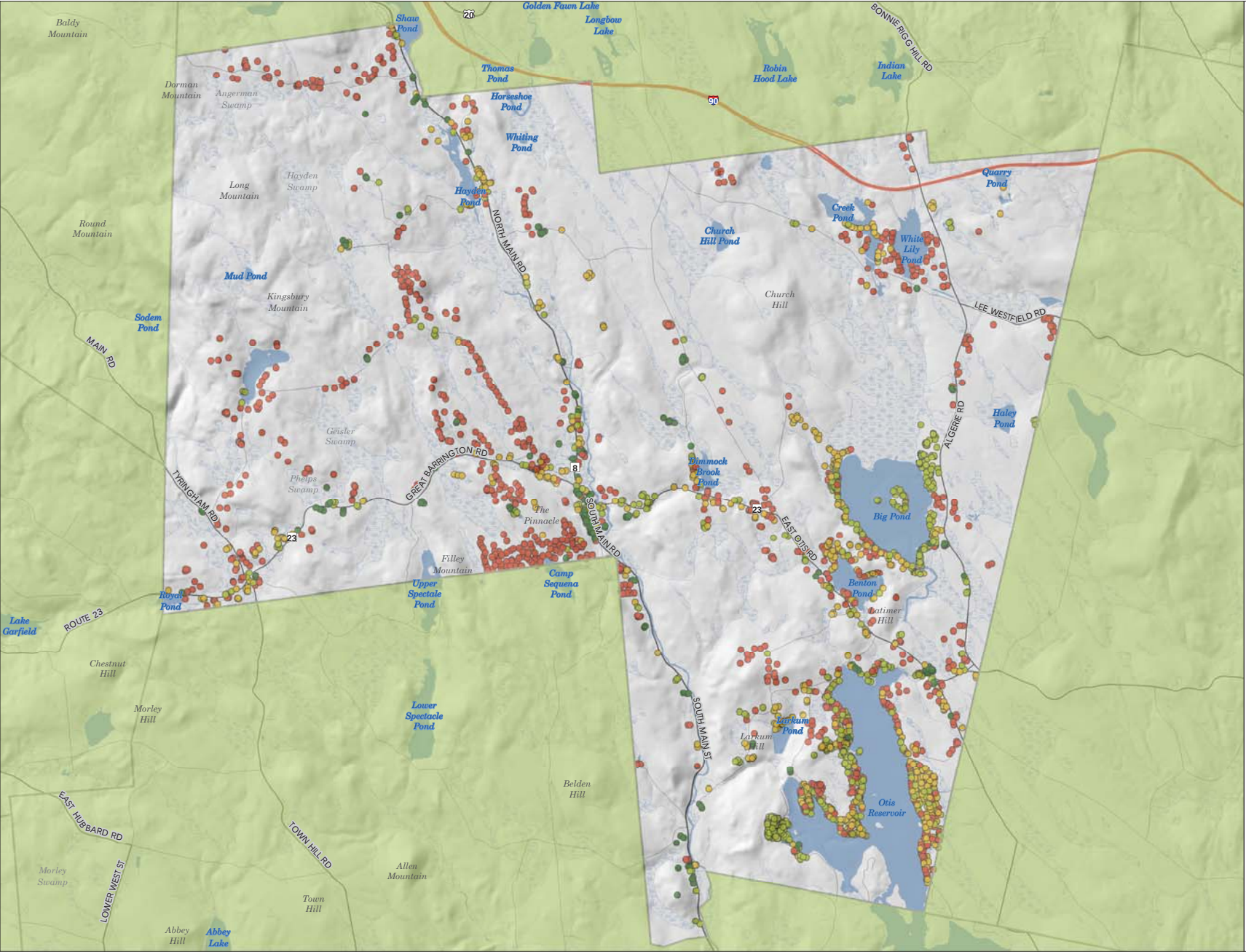
Year Building Built

- Pre 1900
- 1901 - 1950
- 1951 - 1975
- Post 1976

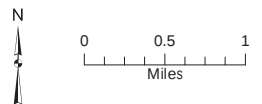
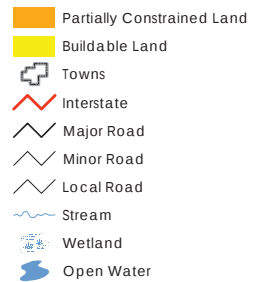
- ⬜ Towns
- ▬ Interstate
- ▬ Major Road
- ▬ Minor Road
- ▬ Local Road
- ▬ Stream
- ▬ Wetland
- ▬ Open Water



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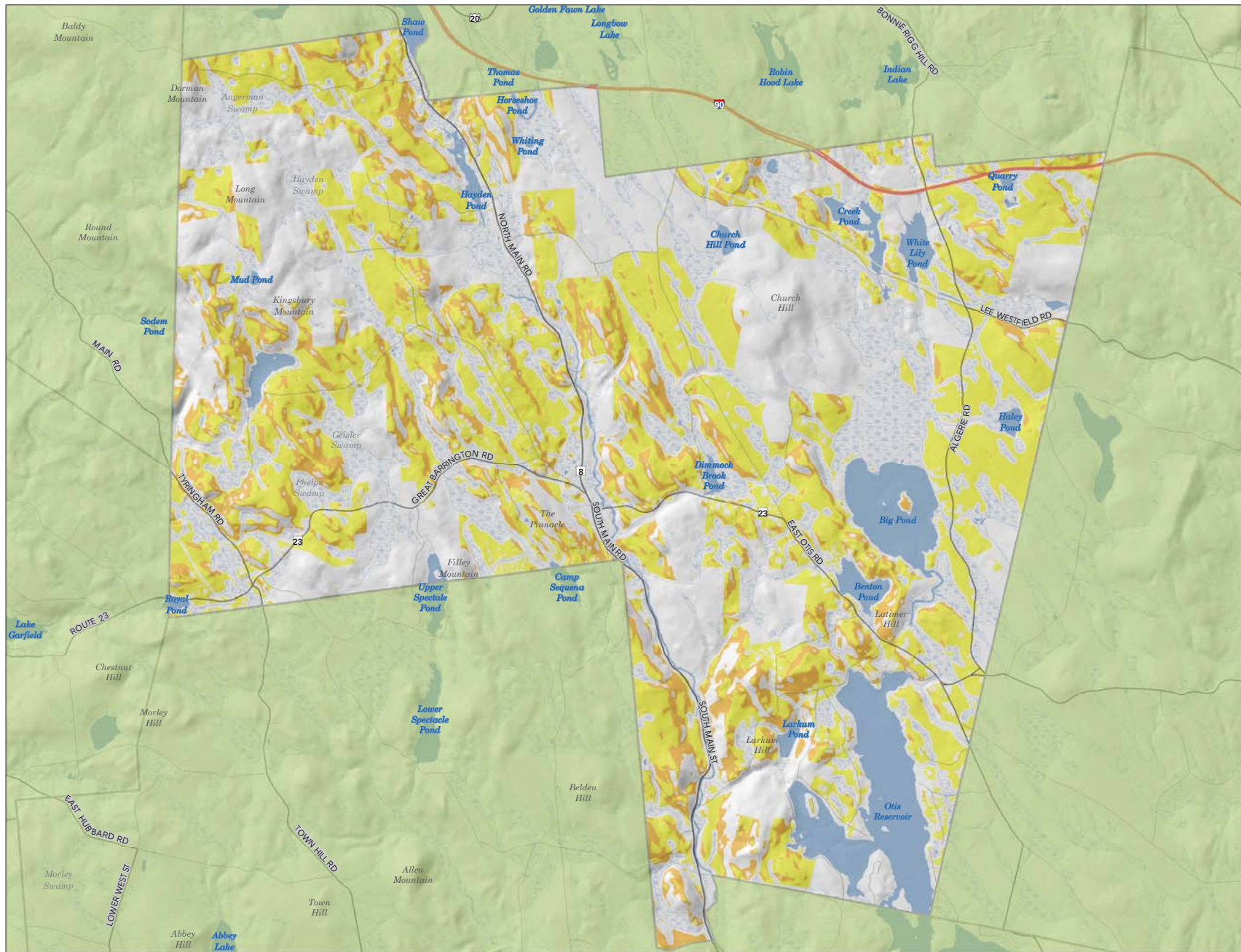


Town of Otis
Master Plan
Map 11:
Buildable Land



Berkshire
Regional
Planning
Commission

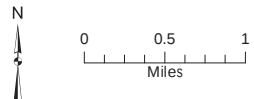
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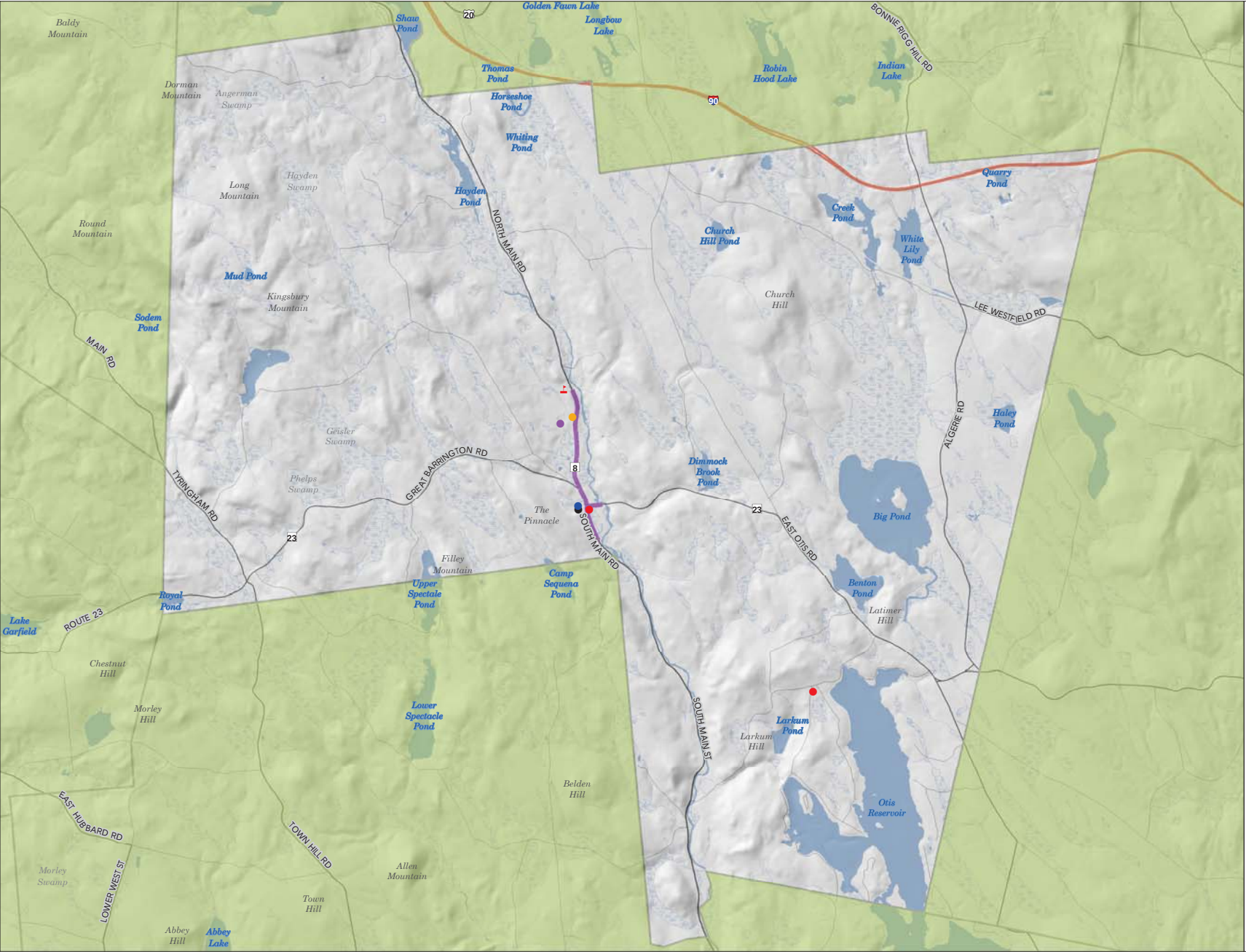
Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 12:
Infrastructure

- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- School
- Town Office
- Town Garage
- Wastewater
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



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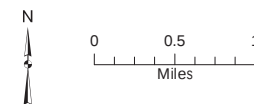


Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 13: Vegetation and Fisheries and Wildlife



- Certified Vernal Pool
- Potential Vernal Pool
- NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- BioMap2 Core Habitat
- Natural Communities
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Towns
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Local Road
- Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water

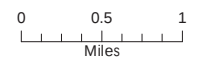


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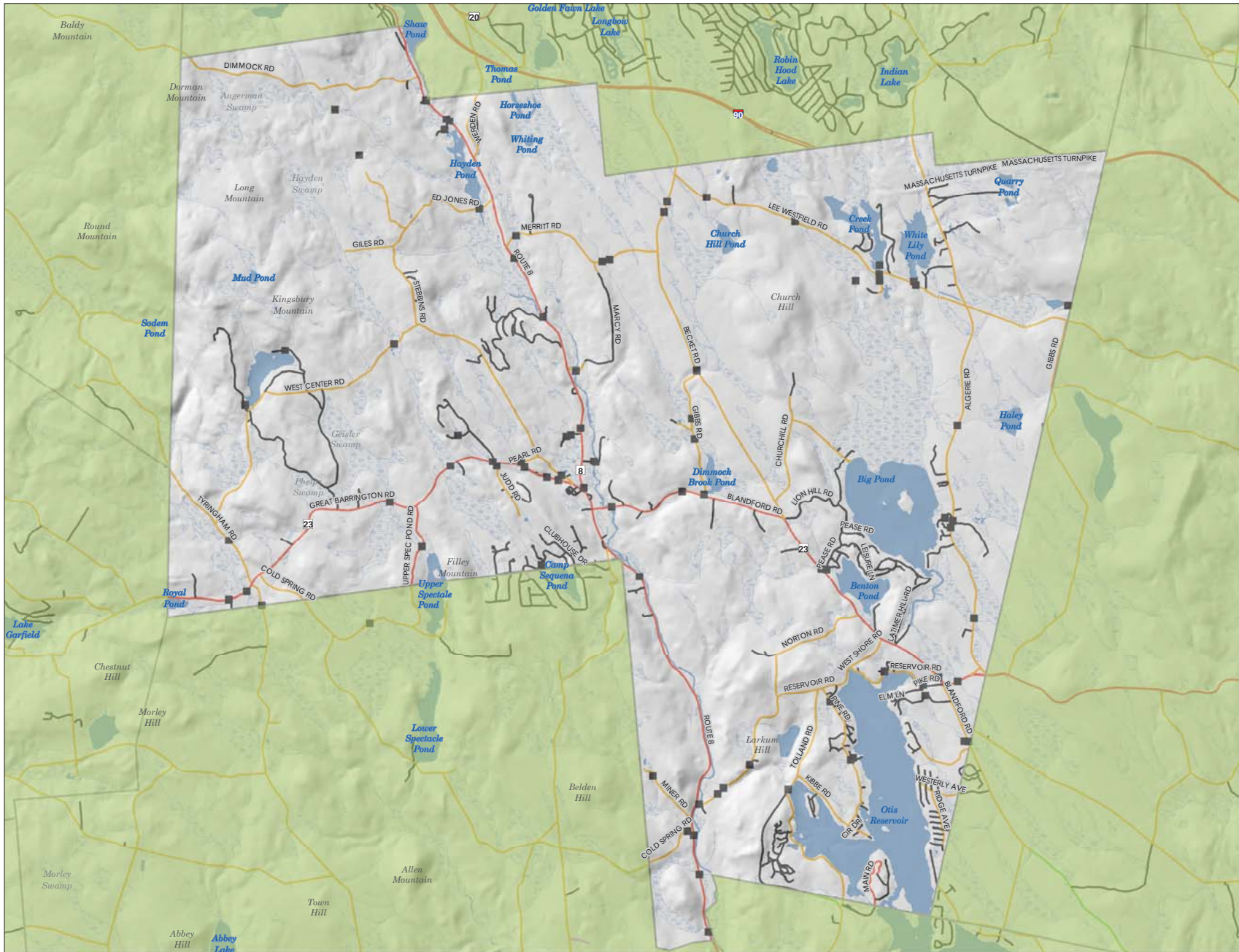
Town of Otis Master Plan

Map 14: Road Maintenance and Culvert Locations

- Culverts
- ▬ MassDOT Maintained
- ▬ Town Maintained
- ▬ Other Roads
- Towns
- ~ Stream
- Wetland
- Open Water



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APPENDIX B: KEY ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

This appendix summarizes the key issues identified in the planning process that formed the basis for the goals, policies, and priorities established in the plan. These issues were identified through an inventory of existing conditions, feedback from Town Master Plan Steering Committee members, input from public forums / informational meetings, the public survey, and stakeholder interviews.

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

An Older Populace

The increased number of older residents may affect the range of services the town wishes to provide as well as the range of housing options available. Additionally, it makes the need for accessibility to town buildings or amenities more important due to potential mobility impairment issues.

Seasonal Residents

Seasonal residents have a potentially large impact on town population, as well as town services and local housing.

Planning for Increased Diversity

The town may wish to consider potential language and cultural barriers that may be encountered in a potentially increasingly diverse town and county.

ECONOMY

Business Growth and Economic Development

Otis has a business environment comprised of small locally based businesses. In the past, there was an active business association in town. The Town of Otis will pursue economic development efforts only with the cooperation, partnership and input of the Otis business community to ensure the success of any potential projects.

Aging / Changing Demographics

The Otis MPSC identified that many business owners in the town are becoming older, and there may not be

younger employees, children, or other business owners in town willing or able to take over the operation of existing businesses once these owners retire. The town will explore efforts to help aging business owners with succession planning and other services to ensure that existing local business remains open in town.

Broadband Internet Development

Otis has been pursuing the development of high speed broadband internet for some time, and voted to fund such efforts in the Fall of 2015. The Otis MPSC feels that broadband internet service in town will allow for the expansion of home-based and other local business, and provide incentive for others business to move to the area. For more information on broadband internet in Otis, see Chapter 4: Infrastructure.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure as Economic Development

Wastewater treatment expansion and broadband internet could allow for increased economic development in Otis. Wastewater treatment expansion could attract business to its village center as well as help Otis to retain existing business like the Otis Ridge ski area. Broadband internet development could attract workers and businesses to the area based on the ability to work remotely.

Economics of Energy Efficiency and Self-Sufficiency

Major town initiatives have focused on reducing current energy use and improving the efficiency of existing buildings. Savings created by efficiency projects can be allocated for other purposes. In addition, the Otis Wind Energy Project is anticipated to produce enough energy to “zero out” municipal energy costs, and through sale of energy credits, create a revenue source for the town. The town will continue these ongoing projects and encourage residents to participate in energy efficiency and small scale energy production programs, such as Mass Saves and Solarize Mass. The town will emphasize the

potential cost savings associated with these efforts, as well as the environmental benefits of such work.

SERVICES

Budget Related

The town has a limited budget with which to provide services, which makes efficiency all the more important.

Public Participation and Civic Engagement

The first Master Plan public forum identified a need to increase public participation and civic engagement. Additionally, the town's strong spirit of volunteerism and independence was discussed. The town will pursue several strategies to increase public participation and work to embrace the independent spirit of town residents to encourage initiatives from the "ground up", rather than from the "top down".

HOUSING

Aging Population / Changing Demographics

The Town of Otis has an increasingly older population. Recent survey data from BRPC indicates that most older Berkshire residents want to remain in their own homes as they age, rather than transitioning to other housing or into assisted living facilities. The town will work with existing business to examine potential services to support the housing needs of this population. Moreover, the town will participate in programs to address the housing needs of all its residents, and work to connect these residents to existing tools that support affordable home ownership and enable older residents to live within their residences as long as they choose.

TRANSPORTATION

Road Maintenance

Road maintenance needs are a major town expense.

Lack of Public Transportation

The town of Otis is not served by regional public transportation services available to the general public.

Only services for elderly or disabled adults provide public transportation within the town of Otis.

LAND USE

Village Centers

Otis' village centers are important economic and population centers, as well as gateways into the community. The town will examine options to expand parking in both its village centers as well as examine design guidelines for Otis Center Village.

Members of the Otis MPSC also identified East Otis as an area to be explored for future redevelopment. East Otis is the smaller of Otis' two village centers. Additionally, the areas around Big Pond and Otis Reservoir contain some of the town's largest neighborhoods. The committee identified several possible topics to examine in East Otis including the need for wastewater treatment to protect natural resources, additional infrastructure, and underutilized properties.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Water Quality

As mentioned in previous chapters, water quality is an important issue in Otis. Water quality impacts human health, and Otis' water resources are major draws to the town that impact the local economy. The town will address water quality through ongoing testing and by working to both expand wastewater treatment at its existing WWTP near Otis Center Village and by working to develop a potential new wastewater treatment system in East Otis Village.

Inventory, Documentation and Planning of Town Historic Resources

The town's Historic Commission has taken the lead on promoting the town's historic resources, including significant work to make the Knox Trail a four-season multi-use trail. The town will continue its ongoing work to develop and promote this trail, as well as update the inventory of the town's historic buildings



and other resources. These historic resources create a potential draw for economically important tourists and other visitors.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Water Quality

Water quality is an issue that impacts the health of Otis' residents and visitors. Moreover, Otis' high water quality and water recreation opportunities are an important draw for seasonal residents, which is crucial to the local economy. The town will pursue future expansion of sewer in Otis Center Village at its existing WWTP. Additionally, the town will pursue development of a second wastewater treatment system in East Otis, where the town's major water bodies are located, with an emphasis on possible alternative or ecological wastewater treatment systems for this area.

APPENDIX C: EXISTING CONDITIONS

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Historic and Projected Growth Rates

The year-round 2010 population of Otis was estimated at 1,612, up 18% from 2000 (1,365) and 58% from 1990 (1,018). Growth in the town beyond 1990 exceeded the previous town population peak reached in 1850 (1,224). From this peak, population in Otis decreased to a 1950 low of 359 residents. Population has been steadily increasing since that time to its current levels. Growth in Otis was greatest during the 1960-1970 decade in which population in the town nearly doubled.

Additionally, Otis is one of only a handful of Berkshire county towns projected to grow in the future. The Donahue Institute at UMass Amherst projects that Otis will grow by roughly 300 additional residents over the next two decades, reaching 1,980 year-round residents by 2030 (See Table C1 - this appendix).

Population Composition

The population of Otis is predominantly white (97.58%), with a median age of 48 years (2010). Between 2000 and 2010, the population of residents older than 44 increased, while those younger than 44 decreased. Those in the 45-65 age bracket increased the most at 7.95% (See Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 demographic changes between 2010 and Figure C2 for a current population breakdown by age). Some of the increase and loss may be attributable to the aging of existing town residents as well as young people who move away to pursue jobs or educational opportunities. However, some is likely due to new residents moving to the area or seasonal residents who decide to make Otis their year-round residence.

The decreasing number of younger residents and increasing number of older residents is a trend that has been identified in regional county wide planning.

This trend also reveals itself in enrollment data from Otis’s Farmington River School district. Otis is part of the combined Farmington River School District, which also receives students from Sandisfield as well as school choice students. This elementary school contains pre-school through 6th grade classes. Beyond 6th grade, students can attend regional middle and high schools in Great Barrington or Lee. Since 2003, enrollment at the school has declined by about 25%. Available data indicates that the number of school choice students and those from Sandisfield decreased the most. The number of school choice students enrolled at Farmington River has decreased from 35 to 24 students since 2007. Students attending from Sandisfield decreased from 43 to 26. However, the number of students from Otis increased slightly – by 7 students – since 2007.

Seasonal Residents/Second Homeowners

Seasonal residents and second homeowners are a tremendous portion of the Otis population that are barely captured by census and other data. According to the 2010 census, 55% of all housing units in Otis are listed as seasonal. However, town assessor records place the percentage even higher, at 68% (Otis Town Assessor Records, 2015).

Along with the towns of Becket, Stockbridge and Lenox, Otis has one of the highest numbers of seasonal homes in the Berkshires. This seasonal population affects town services, infrastructure and housing. Additionally, they are likely a large contributor of new year-round residents to Otis.

A demographics question related to seasonal residents and second homeowners was included on the public survey that was developed as part of the Master Plan process. According to the survey results, 17 out of 79

Table C1 - Projected Population Growth in Otis from 2010 to 2030						
Source: Donahue Institute, University of Massachusetts - Amherst						
Year	U.S. Census 2010	Projection 2015	Projection 2020	Projection 2025	Projection 2030	Projected 2010-2030 Change
Population	1612	1726	1829	1914	1980	368



year round residents (21%), indicated that they had at one time been seasonal residents or second homeowners. Additionally, 9 out of 50 seasonal residents or second homeowners (18%) reported that they were planning on becoming year round residents of Otis. For the complete results of the public survey, refer to appendix E.

this population in Becket is based on income, meaning that 25% or more of households within one area of the community earn 65% or less than the Massachusetts median household income.

Race, Ethnicity and Diversity

The population of several ethnic groups including African Americans and Asians fell between 2000 and 2010. The number of African Americans in Otis decreased from 8 persons to 2. The number of Asian Americans decreased from 12 to 9. However, the population of Hispanic and Latino residents in Otis increased from 4 to 18 between 2000 and 2010. (See Figure C1 for a breakdown of Otis residents by race and ethnicity as of the 2010 census).

Context and Demographics of Environmental Justice Populations

Environmental justice is “based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental pollution, and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment “ (Mass. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, 2015). Conceptually, environmental justice recognizes that some of the most highly polluted and undesirable areas to live have tended to contain populations of low-income, minority, foreign-born, and non-English speaking residents. Additionally, these populations have tended to have reduced or limited access to open space. In Massachusetts, these populations have been mapped in each municipality based on census information. Because these populations have historically been underserved in terms of open space and recreation access and opportunities, they should be a crucial factor in future decision-making regarding these issues.

Currently there are no environmental justice populations within the town of Otis (see Map 2—Environmental Justice Populations). However, there is an environmental justice population within the town of Becket, immediately to the north. The designation of

Figure C1 - Population Ethnic Distribution in Otis
Source: 2010 U.S. Census

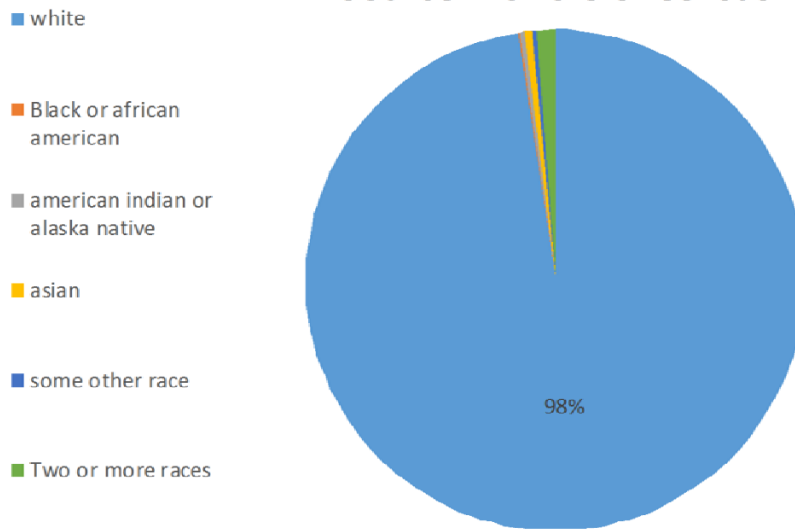
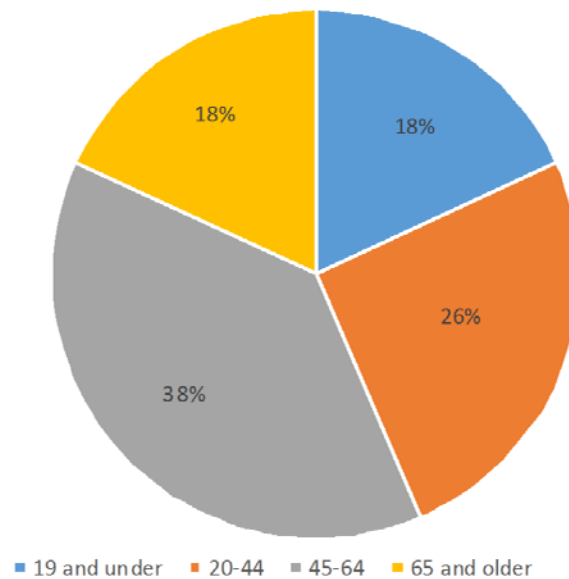


Figure C2- Population Age Distribution of Otis Residents
Source: 2010 U.S. Census





ECONOMY

Composition and Employment

As of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, the civilian labor force of Otis was 737 persons, representing approximately 59.4% of the population over the age of 16 or 51.8% of the total population (737 out of an estimated 1,421 residents). This percentage of individuals considered “in the labor force” has decreased since 2000 levels (67.9%), and might indicate an increase in older or retired residents who are not actively employed or seeking work. Unfortunately, a detailed breakdown of labor force status by age is not available from the 2000 Census for comparison.

The unemployment rate has increased since 2000 (3.3%), with approximately 6.1% of the population 16 and older listed as unemployed as of 2013 (See Chapter 3—Table 3.1). This value is lower than the value for the county (7.1% according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics). Otis’ unemployment rate is higher than that of surrounding Tyngsboro (2.5%) and Monterey (3.9%), but lower than that of Becket (7.2%).

It is important to note how employment figures are calculated. Only persons over the age of 16 who are not members of the military, or institutionalized (such as in prison, in a nursing home or mental health facility) are used to calculate employment figures. This population of individuals over the age of 16 is considered the population that is eligible to work. Employed and unemployed individuals are combined to estimate what is considered the “civilian labor force”. Individuals who have received any payment for work are considered employed. Individuals who are laid off from work or are actively seeking employment are considered unemployed. Individuals who are not employed, laid off, or actively seeking employment are

Table C3 - Otis Occupation by Industry 2000-2013

Source: 2000 Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey

	2000 Employed	2013 Employed	Percent change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	14 (2%)	9 (1.4%)	-0.6%
Construction	111 (15.8%)	94 (14.2%)	-1.6%
Manufacturing	95 (13.5%)	27 (4.1%)	-9.4%
Wholesale trade	20 (2.8%)	14 (2.1%)	-0.7%
Retail trade	64 (9.1%)	120 (18.1%)	9.0%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	25 (3.6%)	29 (4.4%)	0.8%
Information	17 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	-2.4%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	49 (7%)	19 (2.9%)	-4.1%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	48 (6.8%)	67 (10.1%)	3.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	147 (20.9%)	137 (20.7%)	-0.2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	59 (8.4%)	76 (11.5%)	3.1%
Other services, except public administration	29 (4.1%)	56 (8.5%)	4.4%
Public administration	24 (3.4%)	14 (2.1%)	-1.3%

Table C2 - Otis “Doing Business As” Records 2011-2014

Source: Otis Town Clerk, 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
New	8	5	10	8	31
Renewal	8	7	14	6	35

Table C4 - Employment Destinations of Otis Residents*Source: U.S. Census ACS 2006-2010 Journey to Work*

Employment Destination	Estimated Number of Employees	Percent
Otis, MA	236	40%
Lee, MA	68	12%
Great Barrington, MA	52	9%
Pittsfield, MA	34	6%
Becket, MA	23	4%
Westfield, MA	23	4%
Tolland, MA	22	4%
Lenox, MA	15	3%
Sheffield, MA	15	3%
Winchester, CT	12	2%
New Canaan, CT	10	2%
Windsor, CT	10	2%
North Adams, MA	9	2%
Sandisfield, MA	8	1%
Cheshire, MA	6	1%
New York County, NY	6	1%
Torrington, CT	5	1%
Hartford, CT	4	1%
Holyoke, MA	4	1%
Ludlow, MA	4	1%
West Springfield, MA	4	1%
Essex County, NY	4	1%
Suffolk County, NY	4	1%
Montgomery County, PA	4	1%
Philadelphia County, PA	4	1%
Tyringham, MA	3	1%
Total	589	100%

considered not in the labor force. Individuals in this category might include retirees, homemakers, students, the independently wealthy, or a person without a job who has stopped looking for work (perhaps temporarily). A person in this last category is sometimes referred to as a “discouraged worker”.

The 2009-2013 American Community Survey is able to provide a breakdown of employment status by age

within the town of Otis (see Table C5, this appendix). Only an estimated 10 individuals (17.5%) of the 16-19 year old age group are considered employed, with 47 individuals, or 82.5% ,of this age group considered not in the labor force. This high percentage of individuals not in the labor force might represent high school or college students who are attending school and do not have a job or recent graduates that have not yet begun to look for work. The percentage of employed individuals is highest in the 25-44 age group with 93.9% of 201 people employed. Unemployment is greatest in the 55-64 year age group with an estimated 47, or 17.3% , of individuals in this age group either laid off from work or actively seeking employment.

Beyond the age of 65, the number and percentage of individuals not in the labor force increases to over 80% for these age groups. This likely includes retired individuals who are no longer working or seeking work. The estimated number of individuals aged 65 or older who are not in the labor force is 286. When compared to the entire estimated population of Otis, MA from the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (an estimated 1,421 residents), this amounts to 20.1% of the population. While this percentage includes individuals who are no longer in the labor force, it also might include individuals who have never worked, such as an individual who has been financially independent their entire life, or homemakers who never received pay for work.. Additionally, this number would not include individuals who are retired but are younger than the age of 65.

“Journey to work” commuting data available from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey indicates that as many as 236, or 40% of, employed Otis residents work within the town. This figure includes workers who commute within the town as well as those who are self-employed or work from home. Another 222, or 38%, travel to the towns of Lee, Great Barrington, Becket and Tolland, as well as the cities of Pittsfield and Westfield for employment. The remaining 131 workers, or 22%, travel to a variety of destinations in Massachusetts, Connecticut and metropolitan areas such as New York City, NY and Philadelphia, PA (See Table C4—Employment Destinations of Otis Residents). Additional data on commuting is available

**Table C5 - Town of Otis Employment Data by Age***Source: 2009-2013 Census American Community Survey*

		In Civilian Labor Force (employed and unemployed individuals) (59.4% of population over the age of 16)		
Age	Number of individuals	Employed	Unemployed (laid off or looking for work)	Individuals Not in Labor Force (not employed, laid off or looking for work)
16 to 19 years	57	10 (17.5%)	0	47 (82.5%)
20 to 24 years	45	26 (57.8%)	5 (11.1%)	14 (31.1%)
25 to 44 years	214	201 (93.9%)	6 (2.8%)	7 (3.3%)
45 to 54 years	322	227 (70.5%)	17 (5.2%)	78 (24.2%)
55 to 64 years	271	154 (56.8%)	47 (17.3%)	70 (25.8%)
65 to 74 years	193	24 (12.4%)	0	169 (87.6%)
75 years and over	137	20 (14.6%)	0	117 (85.4%)
Total	1239	662 (53.4%)	75 (6.1%)	502 (40.5%)

from the 2009-2013 U.S. Census American Community Survey, which shows that the mean travel time to work for Otis residents is over half an hour (See Table 3.1 - Otis Employment Statistics in Chapter 3).

Between 2000 and 2013, the percentage of workers in Otis who worked in manufacturing declined by 9.4%. The number of workers in retail increased by 9%. Similarly, the number of workers in the “arts, entertainment, accommodation and food service” sector increased by 3.1%. This trend has been identified at the county level as well. With the shift away from manufacturing, the economy has fewer living wage jobs or those that provide benefits such as insurance and retirement savings (See Table C3 in Appendix C for a breakdown of employment changes by sector between 2000 and 2013).

Local Business

Small local businesses dominate the business activity in Otis. Town Clerk records show that sixty-six businesses registered or renewed their “Doing Business As” (DBA) in Otis between 2011 and 2014 (Otis Town Clerk Records, 2015) (see Table C2). DBA records must be renewed every four years. These businesses fall into broad categories of construction and excavation, realty, childcare, restaurants, and a few farms. Business license data highlights another notable segment of the economy - seasonal and summer camps. These include

Camp Bonnie Brae, Camp Overflow, Mountain-view, Camp Lenox and Berkshire Soccer Academy to name a few. Moreover, the town’s public and private campgrounds as well as the ski area contribute the town’s well-known status as an outdoor recreation destination.

Public Survey Results

Based on the results of the public survey, Otis residents generally supported the encouragement of business development within the town. Farming was the top business type that residents wished to encourage (76%), followed by professional services such as architects, engineers and accountants (74%) and personal services like hairdressers and personal trainers (69%).

Local Business Resources

There are two very active economic resource and business marketing groups in southern Berkshire County: the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce and Berkshire Grown.

Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce

Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce is an active network of businesses in the southern Berkshire region, which consists of the towns of Alford, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Sandisfield and Sheffield.

Berkshire Grown

Berkshire Grown is a not-for-profit organization working to promote local farms and the local businesses that support them.

Member Organizations Located in Otis:

Otis Farmer's Market



INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing Town Infrastructure

Otis currently owns 14 major buildings, including town hall, the Recreation Center at Harmony Hall and the town transfer station and highway department garage to name a few. The town also owns the Erbe building, a rental property immediately north of town hall (See Table C6, this appendix for a list of town owned buildings). These buildings provide the infrastructure that the town uses to provide services to residents such as fire and police protection, governance and road maintenance. The Otis Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and its sewer system serves much of Otis Center Village. The treatment plant and the sewer form the basis for the town's wastewater infrastructure. In recent years, the town has engaged in building upgrades and improvements, aimed at reducing energy costs as well as investing and developing municipal energy and communications infrastructure in the form of a wind energy project and development of high speed internet network in town .

Otis Wind Energy Project

Otis has been moving forward with plans to complete a wind energy project at a site near Interstate 90 on Algeria Road. An existing wind turbine on the nearby William's Stone quarry property has been providing electrical power to manufacturing facilities there since 2009. The town's wind energy project was conceived as a way to make the town more energy independent and pass energy savings on to town residents. Work has been spearheaded by the town's Energy Committee. In 2011, approval for a wind power feasibility study was secured at a special town meeting. The study was supported by a grant from the Massachusetts's Commonwealth Energy Center (CEC) which covered nearly the entire cost of the study.

In 2012, Sustainable Energy Developments Inc. finalized the feasibility study for the wind energy project. The study results showed that a wind energy project was both technically and financially viable (Sustainable Energy Developments, 2012). Based on its recommendations, the town formed its own energy cooperative (municipal light plant) that would allow it to extend benefits produced by the turbine project back to the

town. Municipal light plants are regulated under Mass. General Law 164 and can be established for the purpose of electric and telecommunications for a town. Originally, the project would have fed power back into the regional grid allowing for resident's power bills to be reduced. However, recent state policy changes have created a credit system in which Otis can only sell its power to other municipalities or to education institutions (Larry Gould Personal Communication, 2015). Otis has recently made plans to sell excess power produced by the turbine project to the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative, a group of seven school districts who pool resources and students from their member areas.

The Otis Wind Energy Project has now entered the design and construction phase. The town recently finalized an interconnection study that will allow for the wind project to tie into transmission lines and the regional power grid after a lengthy process with the regional utility Eversource (formerly Western Massachusetts Electric Company or WMECO). The project has seen much support in the town as shown by the consistency in funding approvals. Additionally, the proposed project has a limited view shed which has helped it to limit controversy. The turbine itself would only be visible from a small area in town.

In town meetings held in August and September of 2015, Otis voters authorized a \$6.4 million 20 year bond to pay for the purchase, design, construction and installation of the wind turbine. Once constructed, the turbine is expected to produce around 6.2 million kilowatt hours. The turbine will be much larger than the existing one at the Williams Stone quarry, and once constructed will stand roughly 400' in height. The town will use around 5% of the energy produced by the turbine, with the remainder of the energy to be purchased by the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative. The turbine is predicted to save the town up to \$100,000 a year in energy costs and pay for itself with the revenue generated from the energy sales. Additionally, a federal Certified Renewable Energy Bond will cover 70% of the interest reducing the total interest from 4.7% to 1.4%. In November of 2015, the town voted to exclude funding for the project from proposition 2 1/2, which will allow the town to increase its tax levy to fund the turbine project over the duration of the bond. The town hopes to have the



Figure C3—Harmony Hall is located at 70 North Main Road. Harmony Hall is the town’s original town hall building and currently houses the town’s recreation center.

turbine up and running by the summer or fall of 2016.

Town Building and Energy Upgrades / Improvements

Otis currently owns 14 major buildings (See Table C6—this appendix). The following section describes some of the major buildings and facilities and recent work and planning that has been done to improve them.

In partnership with the state Department of Energy Resources (DOER), an energy audit of six municipal buildings was performed in 2008. Buildings studied included the town hall, two fire stations, the wastewater treatment plant, community center (Harmony Hall) and highway garage. The study concluded that the town hall and highway garage were most in need of energy conservation measures.

Town Hall

Otis Town Hall is located at 1 North Main Road, at the intersection of Route 23 and Route 8. Town hall currently houses the town assessor, town clerk, town ad-

ministrator, building inspector, Police department and council on aging. The building also contains meeting space for town boards and committees and a gymnasium which is used for town meeting as well as for some recreation center activities.

The town began implementing some of the recommendations of the energy audit almost immediately by replacing light ballast and changing light scheduling in town hall. This brought immediate energy savings of 15%. The town then embarked on additional energy saving measures for town hall identified in the energy audit.

In 2010, the work helped to “wrap” the town hall with additional insulation in the form of structural insulated panels (SIP). These panels included five and half inches of extruded polystyrene insulation and add an additional R-value of 27.5 to the exterior walls of town hall. The panels have significantly improved the insulating qualities of the existing cinder block structure. Further improvements to town hall replaced exterior doors and windows to improve energy savings. Additionally,



the town installed a new gas boiler, ventilation (HVAC) system, thermostats and a tankless instant water heater. As part of this work, the underground fuel oil storage tank was removed by the town. The town has seen significant energy savings as a result of this work. Overall electricity use is down 60% from its 2008 levels.

Transfer Station

The town transfer station is located on North Main Road and provides an area for Otis residents to drop off trash and recycling materials. The station also contains the town maintenance garage. In 2010, the town constructed a weather tight shell around the transfer station building to reduce energy costs.

Main Road Firehouse

The Main Road Firehouse is located at 15 South Main Road, near the intersection of Routes 8 and 23. The main road firehouse houses the town fire department and Rescue Squad.

Energy upgrades were made to the Main Road Firehouse in 2013. The fire station roof was removed and replaced. As with town hall, structural insulated panels were added to exterior walls as well as the fire station roof. Doors were also replaced. As part of this work, the town extended the exterior wall of the building to accommodate a standard sized fire engine. This allowed the town to purchase a fire engine that was not a custom size at a significant cost savings. Town maintenance and highway staff performed much of the fire station work which allowed for a 30% cost savings. In addition to the cost savings in labor, building energy consumption has decreased. The fire station now uses only 15% of the propane that it consumed in previous years.

Recreation Center (Harmony Hall)

Harmony Hall is the former town hall constructed in the 1800's and is located at 70 North Main Road (See Figure C3). Currently the building houses the Otis Recreation Center. The center is a well used public asset and includes a gym with weight lifting equipment, a cardio room (including treadmills) and a large second floor which contains pool tables and computers for use by Otis residents.

Table C6 - Town-Owned Buildings in Otis

Source: James Crandall, Personal Communication, 2015

Name	Address
Town Hall	1 North Main Road
Harmony Hall (Rec. Center)	70 North Main Road
Library and Museum	48 North Main Road
Transfer Station	536 West Center Road
Maintenance Garage	537 West Center Road
Police Garage	1 North Main Road
Cemetery Garage	41 Monterey Road
Otis Fire Station #1	15 South Main Road
East Otis Fire Station #2	10 Pine Road
Wastewater Treatment Plant	320 North Main Road
Highway Dept. Garage	417 North Main Road
East Otis Schoolhouse	Old Blandford Road
East Otis Meetinghouse	Old Blandford Road
Erbe Building - Town Owned Rental Property	7 North Main Road
<i>Note: List includes major buildings only. Does not include storage sheds or other outbuildings.</i>	

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Sewer System

In 1998, the town constructed a waste water treatment plant and sewer system. The facility utilizes Bioclere trickling filter units to provide wastewater treatment (WWTP). Treated wastewater is allowed to percolate into the ground, much like a conventional septic system. The WWTP and sewer system currently serves about 70 residences, 8-10 commercial users, as well as the Farmington River School building, town hall, fire department and post office. The plant has a maximum

Table C7 - Public Drinking Water Wells in Otis, MA		
Source: Mass GIS Public Water Supplies 2014		
SOURCE_ID	SITE_NAME	TYPE
1225006-01G	KNOX TRAIL INN LLC	TNC
1225011-01G	OLDE OTIS INN	TNC
1225012-03G	BERKSHIRE SPORTS ACADEMY	TNC
1225028-01G	OTIS MUNICIPAL BUILDING	TNC
1225017-05G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225022-01G	DCR TOLLAND STATE FOREST	TNC
1225014-02G	MOUNTAIN VIEW CAMPGROUND INC.	TNC
1225043-01G	LION HILL ROAD ASSOCIATION	TNC
1225022-05G	DCR TOLLAND STATE FOREST	TNC
1225017-01G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225009-02G	CAMP OVERFLOW	TNC
1225031-01G	GATE ISLAND WATER SUPPLY	TNC
1225017-06G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225009-05G	CAMP OVERFLOW	TNC
1225014-01G	MOUNTAIN VIEW CAMPGROUND INC.	TNC
1225014-03G	MOUNTAIN VIEW CAMPGROUND INC.	TNC
1225029-01G	J & D MARINA & CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225039-01G	BERKSHIRE HILLBILLIES	TNC
1225003-01G	LAUREL RIDGE CAMPING AREA	TNC
1225022-02G	DCR TOLLAND STATE FOREST	TNC
1225046-01G	MAPLEWOOD 1850 HOUSE	TNC
1225009-03G	CAMP OVERFLOW	TNC
1225007-01G	COZY SPRUCE RESTAURANT	TNC
1225034-01G	OTIS POULTRY FARM INC.	TNC
1225029-02G	J & D MARINA & CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225041-01G	KATIES COUNTRY STORE	TNC
1225017-02G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225040-01G	FARMINGTON RIVER REG. ELEM. SCHOOL	NTNC
1225022-03G	DCR TOLLAND STATE FOREST	TNC
1225013-01G	OTIS RIDGE SKI AREA	TNC

Table C7 - Public Drinking Water Wells in Otis, MA—Continued		
1225013-01G	OTIS RIDGE SKI AREA	TNC
1225034-02G	OTIS POULTRY FARM INC.	TNC
1225045-01G	OTIS WOODLANDS CLUB, INC.	TNC
1225042-01G	WESTFIELD CAMPING CLUB	TNC
1225017-03G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225033-01G	HALLS STORE	TNC
1225019-01G	OTIS RIDGE SKI CAMP	TNC
1225017-07G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225036-01G	FARMINGTON RIVER DINER	TNC
1225044-01G	PAPAS HEALTHY FOOD AND FUEL	TNC
1225017-04G	KLONDIKE CAMPGROUND	TNC
1225009-04G	CAMP OVERFLOW	TNC
1225016-01G	CAMP BONNIE BRAE	TNC
TNC = Transient Non-Community Well, serve fewer than 25 people daily, such as at a camp or restaurant NTNC = Non-Transient Non-community Well, regularly serves more than 25 people daily for more than 6 months of the year Note: Public well data is from 2014. Business names and well ownership may have changed.		

capacity of 30,000 gallons per day (GPD). Average daily flows in 2014 were approximately 7,800 gallons per day (GPD) (Keith O'Neill, Personal Communication, 2015). For a map of the existing sewer system, please refer to Map 12—Infrastructure.

As part of energy upgrades, some of the Bioclere filtration units were wrapped with insulation. The wastewater must be heated to provide for efficient treatment, and this is a significant energy cost, particularly in winter months. Additionally, new wiring and automation systems were added to the treatment plant during 2013-2014. An alarm system was also installed to notify operators of equipment and hardware issues, which means that the facility does not require full time staffing.

The town has hired a full time WWTP operator and maintenance staff members are working on obtaining



the necessary certifications so that they can fill in as operators. This has helped to reduce the operating costs of the WWTP by eliminating the need for outside contractors.

Potential Sewer Expansion

In recent years, the town has seen the WWTP as a vehicle for economic development. A 2014 grant, prepared in cooperation with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission sought funds from the MassWorks infrastructure Program for a sewer line extension that would have connected the Otis Ridge Ski Area and two residences to the WWTP. The ski area was selected as part of a 2013 direct local technical assistance (DLTA) project that identified suitable priority areas for sewer expansion. In addition to the ski area, its associated restaurant, the Grouse House, would have been connected to sewer as well.

The benefits of sewer expansion identified by the grant proposal included attracting development investment, the creation and retention of jobs, as well as environmental and public health protections. Currently, the sewer system only serves users along Route 8 in Otis. The proposed project would have extended the line along the Route 23 right of way. Additionally, it would have allowed the ski area to consider higher density housing around the resource in the future. A letter of support from the WWTP's chief operator noted that the sewer extension would have benefited the treatment plant by filling needed capacity. The additional effluent would have helped to support a more stable and effective treatment process. Unfortunately, the grant was not chosen for funding. Currently, the wastewater treatment plant still has excess capacity. However, due to the high costs associated with sewer construction, expansion would not be possible without outside funding.

Public Drinking Water Wells

As defined by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, public water systems are defined as those supplies having 15 or more connections, or regularly serving an average of at least 25 people daily, at least 60 days a year. Public water systems can be either Community Water Systems (CWS) or Non-Community Water systems (NCWS). Non-community

water systems are either Transient Non-Community Systems (TNC), or Non Transient Non-Community Systems (NTNC). TNC Systems typically serve at least 25 different people, for at least 60 days a year, such as at a restaurant or campground. On the other hand, NTNC Systems serve at least 25 of the same people each day, at least 6 months a year, such as a workplace that provides water to its employees. All of the public water systems in Otis are of the TNC or NTNC type.

According to Mass. GIS, there are 43 public water supply wells in Otis (see Table C7). These wells serve town and public buildings, restaurants, and places of business. Additionally, they include shared well systems around Big Pond and Otis Reservoir (see Map 6 –Water Resources). These public drinking water wells are all surrounded by interim well-head protection areas (IWPA), which provide a 500' buffer around the well-head for TNC systems and a 750' buffer around NTNC systems.

In the past, the town has experienced well contamination, primarily due to road salt used along Route 8. For more information, please refer to the transportation portion of this appendix or Chapter 7—Transportation.

Broadband Internet Development

One of the programs of the American Investment and Recovery act of 2009 included significant federal funding for broadband internet expansion. In Massachusetts, state legislation created the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI). This organization was tasked with installation of the "middle mile" which connects the internet network's core to local distribution hubs. In February 2014, MBI announced that it had completed work on the middle mile installation. However, significant work and funding is required before many individual users will see high speed internet.

In 2011, a group of towns formed a cooperative called WiredWest to help advance installation of the "last mile", in which broadband internet connections are established for individual homes and users. Otis was one of the original member towns that signed the organization's charter. As with Otis's wind energy project, the formation of a municipal light plant (essentially creating a public utility) was key to Wired-

West's plans for broadband expansion. WiredWest functions as a cooperative of individual municipal light plants or individual public utilities. The town created the municipal light plant during a unanimous vote in December, 2010 (Otis Annual Report, 2010). A second town vote supporting WiredWest passed by a wide margin in 2011. However, WiredWest is not the only entity working to connect communities to broadband internet. Communities such as Alford and Leverett have chosen to pursue broadband development directly through MBI, rather than relying on the cooperative formed through WiredWest as a "middle man".

The cost of broad-band installation in each of the 32 WiredWest member towns is estimated to be as much as \$120 million. Currently, state funding will cover 40% of these costs, leaving the towns with around \$79 million in final costs (WiredWest, 2015). For the Town of Otis, the total cost of installing a broadband internet network is estimated at \$5.5 million dollars, with the state contributing \$1.8 million. This leaves a net cost of \$3.7 million to the Town of Otis.

During its meeting on August 11th, the Otis Board of Selectmen voted to withdraw from the WiredWest cooperative, citing concurring opinions with the town's Technology Committee and Finance Board to pursue development of its broadband network with MBI instead. Among the reasons cited by the town for the withdrawal from WiredWest were a desire for the town to own and control its broadband network. Additionally, leaving the cooperative would allow the town to choose its own network operatives and internet service providers on a short term competitive basis.

Moreover, the Select Board cited economy of scale benefits in design and construction that would be realized through a partnership with MBI that would not be possible with WiredWest. Furthermore, the Board cited several financial issues with WiredWest including high staffing costs and expected repayment of debt services incurred by the town. The Select Board cited high costs associated with WiredWest's business plan, particularly sales and marketing staff and other officers amounting to a payroll in excess of \$1.5 million per year. Additionally, it stated that it does not anticipate that WiredWest will be able to generate enough reve-

nue to repay the Town of Otis for the debt it takes on to establish its broadband network.

A special town meeting was held on October 6th 2015, in which the town voted to appropriate funds for the creation of its broadband network. The warrant article authorizing funding passed by a vote of 132 to 16. A subsequent town meeting will vote on whether to exempt these costs from Proposition 2 1/2.



SERVICES

Police

The Otis Police Department is a seven member force that currently operates from town hall. Staff includes six officers and a police Chief.

The department has seen an increase in calls over the past few years with a 400% increase (to 626) in the number of calls seen between 2009 and 2010. Between 2010 and 2011, calls increased another 50% (to 942). According to annual town reports, the department saw an increase in arrests and criminal complaint applications during 2010-2011, as well as calls for burglar alarms, medical calls, mutual aid, and firearms complaints. However, during that same time, the number of domestic disturbance and motor vehicle accidents decreased (Otis Annual report, 2011). Since 2011, calls have decreased slightly.

The Police Department has been actively engaged in training including coursework in defensive tactics, domestic violence, underage drinking prevention, and firearms training. Moreover, the department has participated in specialized training with FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security involving hazardous materials, suicide prevention, and cyber crime. Additionally, the town has received grants in recent years to upgrade its facilities, including the construction of an interview and booking room in the police garage. In 2012, the Otis Police received a grant from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency for digital tablets and cameras. (Otis Annual report, 2012).

The department has conducted a significant amount of outreach including the development of a camp program during April school vacation to help children develop a rapport with officers. The department also holds similar events during August and for Halloween. The department has received grant funding as well as many private donations to develop these programs.

Rescue Squad

The Otis Rescue Squad provides rescue, ambulance and emergency medical service to the town. The squad currently has 13 members. With the exception of two full time EMT's, the staff are volunteers. In 2013, the

squad responded to 171 rescue calls, which was a slight decrease from 2012 (190 calls). In 2011, the squad purchased a new ambulance through donations and previous funds that were set up for the large expense. Additionally, it purchased a power stretcher with donations. In 2013, the squad transitioned to electronic run reporting to meet state requirements. The rescue squad has certified CPR instructors and has teamed up with the Otis Recreation Center to teach CPR classes. The squad will also take blood pressures for those who stop by the firehouse.

Fire Department

The Otis Fire Department is staffed primarily by volunteers and operates from two firehouses in Otis Center and East Otis. The department currently has 26 members.

The Otis fire department responded to 88 calls in 2013 which was a slight decrease from the 93 calls it responded to in 2012. The department actively trains with surrounding towns and at the Massachusetts Fire Academy.

In 2011, the fire department helped with the response to Hurricane Irene as well as a tornado that damaged portions of Springfield, Ma. The state disaster team requested support from Otis and the department sent 5 members and a truck to help with search and rescue operations both in Springfield and Brimfield.

Library

The Otis Library connects residents to a collection of over 10,000 books, audiobooks, DVD's and other media. The library contains five computers for public use and has subscriptions to online services allowing users to explore their genealogy. Moreover, the library works to obtain passes to events, museums, and other area attractions.

In 2010, the Otis Library joined the Central and Western Automated Resource and Sharing system (C/WMARS). This allows the library catalog, as well as the catalog of over 100 other Massachusetts libraries to be available through an inter-library loan system (Otis Annual Report, 2010). Patrons can select books and

other resources from any one of the member libraries and have it delivered to their local library. In 2012, the library estimated that circulation increased 35%.

The library has also added many audiobooks and DVDs in recent years. Additionally, it has five computers for public use as well as digital E-Readers (Otis Annual Report, 2012). The library is active in seeking out local authors to present their work and hosts events throughout the year. Also, it has partnered with the Recreation Center to hold classes in genealogy and knitting.

Recreation Center (Harmony Hall)

The Otis Recreation Center provides weight lifting, cardio-aerobic and other exercise equipment for use by town residents.

The Rec. Center also has several computers for public use as well as pool tables. The center offers numerous exercise and craft classes and offers space for groups such as the local quilting club. For more information about the Otis Rec. Center see Appendix C—Existing Conditions section on open space and recreation, as well as Chapter 10: Open Space and Recreation.

Town Website

The town operates a website (<http://www.townofotisma.com>) that serves as a central location for town data. The website allows for access to board and committee meeting times, agendas, and minutes. An online mapping service allows users to access parcel data for the entire town as well as view wetlands, FEMA flood areas, and roads. Additionally, the website contains a calendar of local events and displays links to area businesses.

Public Survey Results

The results of the public survey showed that most survey respondents wished to keep existing town services the same. For the complete results of the public survey, see Appendix E.

HOUSING

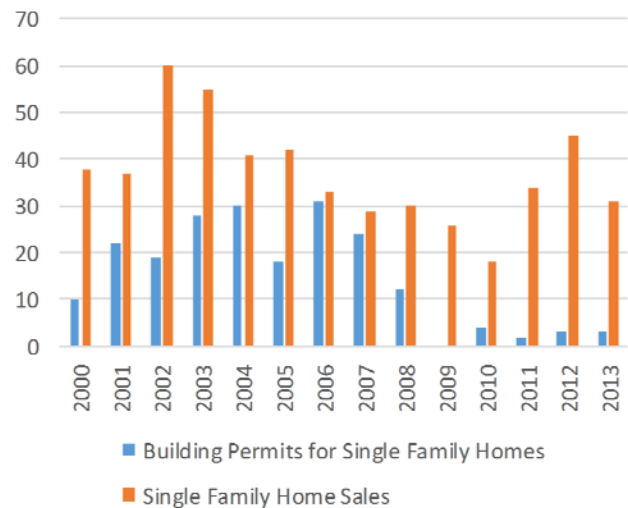
Housing Supply

According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, the vast majority (1,564 units or 93.9%) of housing stock was of the 1-unit detached (single family) type. This figure is from an estimated total of 1,666 housing units. There is little multi-family housing in the town. Only 3.1%, or 53 units, are in structures containing 2 or more units of housing. Additionally, there were no building permits issued for multi-unit housing between 2000 and 2013. An estimated 2.7%, or 45 units, of housing are mobile homes. Finally, 4 units, or .2% of all housing, is of the 1-unit attached type. These housing units consist of structures with one or more shared wall such as in a townhouse or row house.

None of the town's housing units are listed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) as Chapter 40B qualifying units (DHCD, 2014). "Chapter 40B Units" are units considered affordable by low- and moderate-income households with long-term restrictions that ensure that it will continue to be affordable. Low income is defined as income equal to or less than 80% of the median income for the area. Moderate income is defined as income between 80 and 95% of the median income for the area. Chapter

Figure C5- Otis Building Permits and Single Family Home Sales 2000-2013

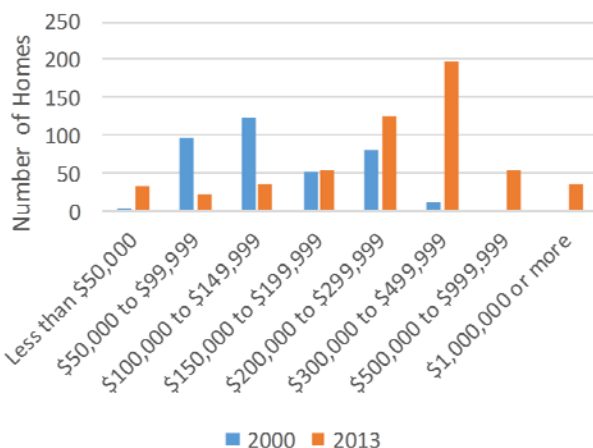
Source: Banker and Tradesman Online, 2015 and U.S. Census Bureau



40B authorizes a housing agency or developer to obtain a single comprehensive permit for the construction of subsidized low- or moderate-income housing. If a community, in which less than 10% of its total year-round housing stock is subsidized low- or moderate-income housing, denies a comprehensive permit, or imposes conditions that make the project economically unviable, the developer may appeal to the state Housing Appeals Committee for review of the local action.

Figure C4- Otis Home Values Comparison 2000 vs. 2013

Source: 2010 U.S. Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey



Home Value Trends

In 2000, the median sale price of a home in Otis was \$155,000, while by 2014 it had increased 67.7% to \$260,000 (Banker and Tradesman Online, 2015). Compared with neighboring towns, Otis is more affordable than Monterey or Tyngsboro. However, home prices are more expensive in Otis than in Becket (See Figure 6.1—Chapter 6). As of 2014, home sale prices are comparable to Sandisfield. Home prices are still less affordable than the overall county (median of \$184,500 in 2014). In 2000, the majority of homes were in the \$50,000 to \$149,999 price range. However, by 2013,

Table C8 - Housing Occupancy in Otis 1990-2010*Source: Community Development Plan 2004, 2010 U.S. Census*

	Number in 1990	% of Total, 1990	Number in 2000	% of total, 2000	% Change 1990-2000	Number in 2010	% of Total, 2010	% Change 2000-2010
Seasonal	961	68%	972	62%	-6%	938	55%	-7%
Year Round	315	22%	476	30%	+ 8%	611	36%	+ 6%
Rental	85	6%	91	6%	0%	97	6%	0
Vacant Units	63	4%	33	2%	-2%	55	3%	+ 1%
Vacant Units For Rent	—	—	7	0.45%	—	7	0.41%	<-1%
Vacant Units for Sale	—	—	10	0.64%	—	11	0.65%	<1%
Total Housing Stock:	1,424		1,572		+ 10.4%	1,701		+ 8.2%

most homes in Otis were valued at \$200,000 to \$499,999, with an estimated 37 homes valued at \$1,000,000 or more.

Home Sales Vs. New Construction

Sales of single family homes in Otis fell from a 2002 high to a 2010 low. Sales have increased since 2010, but seen fluctuations. Additionally, the number of building permits for construction of new single family homes began to fall in 2006, with no building permits for new single family residences issued in 2009. Since 2009, the yearly issuance of building permits for new homes have remained in the single digits. Town officials have indicated that there has been a shift in recent years away from construction of new homes towards more renovations and additions to existing homes (Larry Gould, Personal Communication, 2015).

Housing Ownership and Occupancy

The town has a predominantly single-family housing stock with most being owner occupied. Since 1990, the percentage of seasonal housing units has been declining. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of seasonal housing units declined by 7%. However, the number of year-round residences increased by 6% over the same time period. This increase could be due to second homeowners transitioning into their summer homes into their year-round residences.

However, this downward trend should not discount

the impact that seasonal housing has on the town. Otis's location in the southern Berkshires makes it strongly impacted by the seasonal rental and second home markets from major cities such as New York City and Boston.

As of the 2010 Census, seasonal housing is estimated to comprise 55% of all housing units within the town. Estimates by the town assessor are even higher. Questionnaires sent by the assessor to households ask if they are second homeowners or not. Data based on these questionnaires indicates that the percentage of second homes in town is 68%. Seasonal residents have a huge potential impact on town businesses, roads and infrastructure, as well as the overall population.

Housing Affordability

Data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicates that based on income levels determined from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, approximately 100, or 18% of households in Otis earn between 50 and 80% of the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI). HAMFI for Otis in 2011 was \$71,500. This value is derived from the Census American Community Survey median income value for the town and is adjusted for inflation and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). In the town of Otis, an estimated 224 households, or 40% of households earn less than 80% of the HAMFI, meaning income for these

**Table C9 - Housing Issues in Otis, MA**

Source: HUD, 2015 based on the 2007-2011 Census American Survey

Income Distribution	Owner	Renter	Total
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI**	70	10	80 (14%)
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMFI	40	4	44 (8%)
Household Income >50% to <=80% HAMFI	100	0	100 (18%)
Household Income >80% to <=100% HAMFI	40	4	44 (8%)
Household Income >100% HAMFI	275	20	295 (52%)
Total	530	40	570 (100%)
Housing Problems	Owner	Renter	Total
Household has 1 of 4 Housing Problems*	115	20	135 (24%)
Household has none of 4 Housing Problems	395	20	415 (73%)
Cost Burden not available	20	0	20 (3%)
Total	530	40	570 (100%)
Housing Cost Burden***	Owner	Renter	Total
Cost Burden <=30%	399	24	423 (74%)
Cost Burden >30% to <=50%	23	4	27 (5%)
Cost Burden >50%	89	14	103 (18%)
Cost Burden not available	20	0	20 (3%)
Total	530	40	570 (100%)
**HAMFI stands for "HUD Area Median Family Income". For the year 2011, HAMFI in the town of Otis was equal to \$71,500. HUD calculates its own income values differently from those reported in Census information. Census data for income is adjusted based on the consumer price index (CPI) and inflation trends. Finally the value is rounded to the nearest \$100.			
*The four housing problems are: incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than 1 person per room, and cost burden greater than 30%.			
***Cost burden is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs", which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.			
Note: All data is by household. HUD household totals have been rounded to the nearest 10.			

households is less than \$57,200 per year. HUD defines these households as having low income.

Additionally, HUD data indicates that as many as 135 households, or 24% of households, have 1 of 4 possible housing problems. These can include incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than 1 person per room, or cost burden greater than 30%. Cost burden is defined as the ratio of housing costs to household income. When housing costs are equal to or greater than 30% of income, a household is

considered "housing burdened". Within the Town of Otis, an estimated 130, or 23% of households are considered housing burdened, with the majority of these housing burdened households having a cost burden above 50% (see Table C9)

TRANSPORTATION

Regional Roadways

Two major roadways serve Otis: Route 8 and Route 23. Route 8 runs north from the border with Clarksburg, VT south to Sandisfield and the Connecticut state line. Route 23 runs east to west. It begins in Egremont, MA and terminates in Russell. Route 23 is known as the “Knox Trail” as it follows the approximate route of General Knox as he brought cannons from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. The 2013 Road Condition Report prepared by BRPC notes that in comparison to other Berkshire towns, Otis benefits from the fact that its major arterial roadways (Routes 8 and 23) are maintained by the state. Other communities that must maintain portions of their arterials face significant annual costs because these roads carry the most traffic and can deteriorate the fastest.

A portion of Interstate 90 (I-90) runs through the northeast corner of Otis. The nearest I-90 exits are located to the west, at exit #2 in the Town of Lee or to the east at exit #3 in the City of Westfield. The Town of Lee interstate access is roughly a 20 minute drive from Otis Center village. The City of Westfield I-90 access is slightly farther, roughly a 30 minute drive from Otis Center. Maintenance of I-90, as well as Routes 8 and 23, is the responsibility of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). A MassDOT maintenance garage is located just north of Otis Center on Route 8. State maintained roadways comprise 23.52 miles of roadway in Otis, or 21.39% of all roads (See Table 7.1 in Chapter 7—Transportation).

Local Roadways

Otis is a rural community, and as such, the predominant form of transportation is by automobiles or trucks. The town has many private roads, some of which serve Otis’s private communities (See Table 7.1 for a list of road maintenance demand by entity) Private roads rely on private contractors for maintenance and snow plowing needs. The Otis Highway Department maintains 43.91 miles or 39.94% of roads within town. These roadways include Tyringham Road, Becket Road, Lee Westfield Road, Reservoir Road, Tolland Road, and West Center Road, to name a few (See Table C10 in this appendix for a list

of town maintained roads). Private contractors maintain the remainder of Otis’s roadways. These roads total 42.5 miles or 38.47% of all roads in town.

Rail

Passenger rail service is available from stations located in the Cities of Pittsfield or Springfield, Ma. Pittsfield is approximately 40 minutes from Otis Center Village by car. Springfield is slightly farther, approximately a 1-hour drive from the Town of Otis.

Airports

Major airports for commercial travel include Bradley International in Hartford, CT and Albany International Airport in Albany, NY. Both airports are approximately a 1-hour drive from Otis Center village.

Bus Transit

Within Berkshire County, bus transit service is provided throughout the county by Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). No bus line currently serves the town. The closest BRTA stop is in Great Barrington, about a half hour drive from the Town of Otis.

Elderly and Disabled Transportation

Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation (SBETC) and Berkshire Regional Transportation Agency (BRTA) Paratransit provide transportation services for elderly and disabled residents in Otis.

SBETC is based out of Great Barrington and serves the towns of Great Barrington, Egremont, Alford, Sheffield, Sandisfield, Otis, Monterey and New Marlborough. Service from SBETC is on-demand and picks passengers up at their homes for a small fee. Passengers must place a reservation in advance of travel, requesting a pick up and listing the local destination they wish to travel.

BRTA paratransit is a county wide on-demand ride service. A small fee for rides is charged, and a reservation must be made in advance. Unlike SBETC, BRTA paratransit passengers must fill out an application before being approved to use the service.



Pedestrian Transportation

Sidewalks extend roughly a half mile through most of Otis Center, along Route 8. Sidewalk begins north of Town Hall near the Otis cemetery and extending south to just beyond Witter Rd.

The Farmington River Walk, a recreational trail, is also located in Otis center, with its only access point located behind the parking lot of St. Mary of the Lakes Church. For more information on walking and hiking trails within Otis, please see Chapter 10—Open Space and Recreation of the full text of the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Transportation and Roadway Funding

Federal Funding

In Massachusetts, towns may nominate potential road repairs and improvements to their Regional Planning Agencies as part of the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This program helps to designate federal funding towards eligible road projects. Otis may nominate projects to the TIP program administered through the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Only roadways designated as “arterial” or “collector” are eligible for funding through the TIP. Additionally, the town has a representative that serves on the regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC helps to prioritize projects nominated by the TIP program.

State Funding

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides additional roadway funding through its Chapter 90 reimbursement program. This program provides funding for other roadway projects not eligible for the TIP program and is allocated based on population, employment level, and miles of roadway within town. However, as a reimbursement program, the town must fully fund any roadway project before it can be compensated by state funding. Yearly Chapter 90 funding for Otis is around \$180,000.

Town Funding

Yearly town highway funding is around \$100,000 (Chris Morris, Personal Communication 2015). The 2013 Road Condition Report noted that Otis spends around \$50,000 per year on gravel and chipseal and

\$10,000 of additional funds on other materials to repair and patch roads, signs and culverts (BRPC, 2012). The town’s highway department includes a supervisor and three laborers. The town makes repairs to roadways throughout the year, plans for larger projects requiring chapter 90 funding and works on snow removal and winter maintenance needs.

Road Jurisdiction Issues

During its drafting of the Master Plan, in preparation of the 2005 Town of Otis Status of Roads and Official Map Report, and in the 2013 Road Condition Report, BRPC discovered some discrepancies in road jurisdiction and maintenance data available for the town of Otis.

Firstly, BRPC discovered that several roads (Great Woods Road, a portion of Old Quarry Road, Chandler Road, Kibbe Point Road, Laurel Drive and Lincoln Road) are maintained by the town and are not included in the town’s list of Chapter 90 funded roadways. The 2013 Road Condition Report notes that nearly three miles of roads maintained by the town are not accounted for in the Commonwealth’s Road Inventory File (RIF) which is used as the basis for the Chapter 90 funding formula. Thus, potential state funding for these roadways is lost and the town’s overall Chapter 90 funding (which could be used for other roadways) is reduced.

Secondly, data available from the MassDOT Road Inventory File (RIF) shows roads owned and maintained by state agencies (MassDOT and DCR) and the town. However, all other roads in the town are labeled as “unknown”. While these “unknown” roads are most likely comprised of privately owned and maintained roads, some roads owned and/or maintained by the town are likely included. BRPC had also conducted extensive research for the Town of Otis in 2005 to develop an official map (which was never adopted). As part of the research for the creation of the official map, BRPC developed a Status of Roads and Official Map Report which documented all roads within the town and listed both the right of way owner and the maintenance/legal responsibility. The report made recommendations for potential future actions by the town, such as voting to discontinue roads, to discontinue maintenance or to designate roads as

Table C10 - Roads Maintained by the Town of Otis, MA*Source: BRPC Town of Otis Road Condition Report*

	Segment	Type	Name	Segment	Type
Algerie Road	Old Barrington Road To Becket Town Line	Collector	Marcy Road	Merritt Road to Dead End	Local
Algerie Road Extension	Old Barrington Road To Algerie Road	Local	Merritt Road	Route 8 to Becket Road	Local
Becket Road	Becket Town Line To Blandford Road	Collector	Miller Swamp Road	Blandford Road to Blandford Town Line	Local
North Blandford Road		Local	Miner Road	Route 8 - Dead End	Local
Old Blandford Road		Local	New Hollywood Boulevard	Blandford Road to Dead End	Local
Chandler Road	Lee Westfield Road To Dead End	Local	Norton Road	Reservoir Road to Blandford Road	Local
Churchill Road	Becket Road To Dead End	Local	Old Quarry Road		Local
Cold Spring Road	Great Barrington Road To Sandisfield Town Line And Route 8 To Sandisfield Town Line	Local	Beech Plain Road	Route 8 to Sandisfield Town Line	Local
Dimmock Road	Route 8 To Becket Town Line	Local	Pearl Road	Great Barrington Road to West Center Road	Local
Ed Jones Road	Route 8 - Stebbins Road	Local	Pine Road	Reservoir Road to Kibbe Road	Local
Gibbs Road	Blandford Road To Becket Road	Local	Reservoir Road	Route 8 to Blandford Road	Local
Gibbs Road Extension	Gibbs Road - Dead End	Local	Ridge Avenue	Westerly A Venue to Dead End	Local
Giles Road	Stebbins Road - Dead End	Local	Stebbins Road	West Center Road to Dimmock Road (not maintained beyond gravel portion of road)	Local
Great Woods Road		Local	Tannery Road	Route 8 to Dead End	Local
Jones Road	Route 8 to Becket Town Line	Local	Tolland Road	Tolland Town Line to Reservoir Road	Local
Judd Road	Great Barrington Road to Dead End	Local	Town Hill Road	Great Barrington Road to Sandisfield Town Line	Local
Kibbe Road	Tolland Road - Dead End	Local	Tyringham Road	Great Barrington Road to Tyringham Town Line	Local
Kibbe Point Road		Local	West Center Road	Great Barrington Road to Tyringham Road	Local
Laurel Drive		Local	West Shore Road	Great Barrington Road to Tyringham Road	Local
Lee Westfield Road	Blandford Town Line to Becket Road	Collector	Westerly Road	Blandford Town Line to Dead End	Local



statutory public ways. These actions would allow the town to end legal liability and maintenance responsibility, as in the case of roads that are owned by, but not actively maintained by the town.

The status of roads has important ramifications for development, as Approval Not Required (ANR) subdivision is generally not allowed on private roads or Statutory Private Ways. Subdivision on these types of roadways must follow the full subdivision review process.

The adoption of an Official Map by the town would create a legal document that would resolve any issues of road maintenance or responsibility. However, the town would then become responsible for continuous monitoring of road status changes, which entails corresponding updates to the Official Map and reporting of the updates to the Registry of Deeds, MassDOT and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

Options for Altering Legal Road Statuses

In order to resolve the road status inconsistencies or questions that have been identified in the 2005 status of roads and official map report, BRPC generally recommends that towns pursue one of three possible actions including road discontinuance, discontinuance of maintenance, and designation of roads as statutory private ways. Many of these actions must be taken up by the Select Board and some may need to be approved by Town Meeting vote. Typically the actions requiring approval at Town Meeting can be laid out in a series of articles in the Town Warrant.

Discontinuance

Discontinuance of a road must be approved by Town Meeting vote under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 21 completely ends the public right of passage along a road or way: the Town ends all legal responsibility for the road's maintenance and its liability for use. In most cases, the discontinued road can no longer serve as frontage or access for development of land abutting the discontinued road, including strip or frontage development and Approval Not Required (ANR) development under the Subdivision Control Law (Chap. 41, Sec 81K- 81GG). Depending on the Town's

zoning by-laws and subdivision regulations, new development can only occur along land abutting a discontinued road via the full subdivision approval process, which gives the Town much greater control over the proposed development. Discontinuance is thus an important tool in controlling 1) legal responsibility and liability and 2) growth management.

Discontinuance of Maintenance

Discontinuance of maintenance is authorized under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 32A and results in the cessation of the Town's responsibility for maintenance and liability for use of the road (so long as the road is adequately posted as not maintained), but the road remains a public way with a public right of passage, and with the potential for strip and ANR development. Discontinuance of maintenance in Section 32A is a Select Board action intended for roads that have become "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel and that the common convenience and necessity no longer requires said town way...to be maintained in a condition reasonably safe and convenient for travel...."

Statutory Private Ways

Statutory Private Ways are unique to Massachusetts. They are actually public roads, with public right of passage, but no responsibility by the Town for maintenance. Maintenance is provided by the abutters. This is a good option for the Select Board if it is unclear that the road in question meets the "unused for ordinary travel" requirements of M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 32A but the Town wants to end maintenance and legal liability obligations for the road. In practice, the Select Board can recommend discontinuing the road in question by Town Meeting vote, and then lay it out as a Statutory Private Way and recommend the Town vote to accept it as such at the same Town Meeting. According to a Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling (*Casagrande v. Town of Harvard*, 1979), Statutory Private Ways are not considered sufficient for public access under the Subdivision Control Act, and therefore cannot be used as frontage for ANR lots or strip development. It is up to local interpretation of Town zoning and subdivision regulations to determine whether Statutory Private Ways meet the public access requirements for the full subdivision approval process. In some cases, Statutory Private Ways may

have to be laid out again and accepted at Town Meeting as full-fledged Town roads, with public right of passage and maintenance. Statutory Private Ways differ from private roads in that public access is allowed on a Statutory Private Way, where it can be restricted on a private road.

Road Maintenance and Recent and Upcoming Roadway Work

In 2013, BRPC completed a road condition report for the Town of Otis. This report evaluated all roads maintained by the town using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) scale to determine which roads were most in need of repair and help to prioritize future roadway projects. Tyringham Road, in the southwest corner of the town, was rated the most deficient asphalt road. Additionally, the report identified Algerie Road and Reservoir Road (recently repaired) as projects that would require significant Chapter 90 funds, but were in need of rehabilitation. Priority unpaved road projects include Becket Road, Merritt Road and Lee Westfield Road.

Recently completed roadway work includes the repaving of 1.8 miles of Reservoir Road with hot mix asphalt (HMA), and the repaving of Kibbe Road. Additionally, 3,840 feet of Tolland Road was recently repaved. The town is also in the process of replacing several culverts.

Roadway Needs

The following summarizes priority roadway needs for the town and was provided by Derek Poirier, superintendent of the Otis highway department.

Priority Asphalt Roads to be Repaired:

Pine Road
Tyringham Road
West Center Road (1 mile portion from Monterey Road intersection)
Pearl Road
Town Hill Road

Recent TIP Requests (for full depth road reclamation):

Old Blandford Road
Cold Spring Road South

Cold Spring Road West
North Blandford Road

Bridges in Need of Repair:

Gibbs Road Bridge
Tannery Road Bridge
Cold Spring South Road Bridge

Complete Streets

“Complete Streets” is a transportation concept that examines the design of roadways to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation (automobile, bicycle, or on foot). Complete Streets is not a “one size fits all” solution, but rather a kit of parts and possible solutions that can be applied to any street or roadway. Complete streets also connects with issues of public health, by improving safety for all roadway users and encouraging exercise through walking and cycling. Within Otis, small changes to the roadway, such as increased marking and signage, as well as restriping and recoloring crosswalks, could do much to enhance safety and increase travel by pedestrian and cyclists. These measures could also help to calm or slow traffic in the village center.

Outside of village centers, measures such as shoulder widening or roadside pathways (in addition to increased signage) could improve safety for walkers and cyclists. These changes to the roadway could be as simple as narrowing lanes for vehicle traffic during routine restriping work to increase the shoulder width available for pedestrians and cyclists.

Walking Loops

Several Berkshire towns have identified “walking loops” in town centers and on quiet rural roads. These walking loops help to encourage pedestrian use and exercise, especially for elderly residents. Walking loops should be well marked and located on relatively flat terrain to enable use by residents of any age.

A walking loop could be easily established on existing sidewalks in Otis center. Signage could mark a 1/2 and 1-mile walking loop and could also direct residents to the Recreation Center in Harmony Hall and Farmington River Walk Trail. The walking loop could also extend



through the paved roadway of the Otis Cemetery.

Transportation and the Environment

Road Salt and Well Contamination

Road Salt (Sodium Chloride or NaCl) can be a major contaminant of groundwater due its use as a de-icer for roadways. Drinking water contaminated by Sodium Chloride can exacerbate high blood pressure (hypertension) and damage organs. Additionally, high levels can harm fish, amphibians, and other aquatic species. However, road salt is not the only potential contributor of Sodium Chloride to drinking water. Septic systems, as well as water softening systems can both lead to elevated Sodium Chloride concentrations in drinking water.

Prior to 1993, Sodium Chloride was a regulated contaminant with a maximum level of 20 milligrams/Liter (mg/L) established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After 1993, the EPA stopped regulating Sodium Chloride as a contaminant. Today the EPA lists Sodium Chloride on its “contaminant candidate list”, which includes chemicals that are not subject to any current drinking water regulations. The EPA issues non-enforceable guidance levels for the level of Sodium Chloride in water at the level of 20mg/L, which was developed based on individuals with restricted sodium intake. Additionally it recommends that levels not exceed 30-60mg/L. Around this concentration level, water becomes noticeably salty in taste.

Beginning in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s, some Otis residents began to notice problems with elevated sodium concentrations in public and private wells along Route 8. Testing was conducted on approximately 20 wells at the request of the town’s Planning Board. Many of the wells were found to have sodium chloride concentrations in excess of 20 mg/l. In 1991, the town began working with the Massachusetts Highway Department (Now MassDOT) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to address issues of potential well contamination.

Based on information provided by the town, the Mass.

Highway Department (MHD) decided to conduct an in depth investigation. However, the investigation was limited to wells that belonged to residents with a documented sodium restricted diet, or wells that had contamination levels in excess of 250mg/L. Most of the wells were never replaced by MHD due to the presence of bacterial contamination, and potential contamination from the municipal salt storage area. In the end, only two of the seven wells tested were replaced by MHD in 1994, which included MHD’s own well at their maintenance facility and the well of a resident on a sodium restricted diet. Another well was replaced by a resident without funding or reimbursement by MHD. Additional testing of wells along Route 8 was most recently completed in 2001 (Mattos, 2002). For the most part, testing in 2001 revealed that Sodium levels had declined significantly since the first round of testing in the early 1990’s.

Salt contamination remains an ongoing issue for the town. The drinking water well that currently serves the town Recreation Center, Library, and the Otis Congregational Church, is planned to be replaced due to salt contamination. As of the time of this writing, the town is coordinating with state agencies to negotiate the new well’s location.

MassDOT has had policies in place for some time to address potential well contamination. MassDOT will conduct an investigation of a private water supply if:

- A resident is on a documented sodium restricted diet of less than 1,000 mg/d and the sodium concentration in the water supply exceeds 20 mg/l, or;
- A resident is on a documented sodium restricted diet of less than 2,000 mg/d and the sodium concentration in the water supply exceeds 40 mg/l, or;
- The chloride concentration in a domestic supply well exceeds 250 mg/l.

Possible actions based on the investigation include:

- Construction of a replacement well
- Connection to a public water supply

-
- Installation of a water treatment system
 - Denial of the salt complaint
 - Highway drainage modifications or improvements
 - Designation of a reduced salt zone (typically reserved for Municipal Water Supplies)

Possible reasons for denial of the complaint include:

- The water is not potable due to non-highway related contamination,
- It is determined that poor well construction allows surface contamination to readily enter the well,
- MassDOT is not the primary source of salt contamination to the water supply, or
- The well is located too close to a septic system, as outlined in the state's Title V code.

For additional information on well contamination in Otis, please refer to the Farmington River Watershed Road Salt Review, prepared by Michael Mattos for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

For additional information on potential contaminated well replacement, please refer to the MassDOT Salt Remediation program, available at <https://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/SaltRemediationProgram/PrivateWells.aspx>.

Unpaved Roads and Non-Point Source Pollution

Unpaved or dirt roads are a major source of non-point source pollution such as sediment, or soil particles that are suspended in water. Sediment from unpaved roads is one of the main contributors to water quality problems in the Farmington River Watershed in Massachusetts. (BRPC 1997). Non-point source pollution is distinguished from point source pollution, which refers to pollution that has a particular entry site such as a factory's smokestack or pipe. With the decline of point source pollution problems due to the Clean Water Act of 1972, nonpoint source pollution has become a growing concern. Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, unlike pollution from sewage treatment plants and industrial discharge pipes, comes from many diffuse sources.

Sediment can cause water quality issues for both humans and wildlife. Sediment can affect the aesthetic quality of recreation areas, as well as accumulate in drainage structures, causing them to fail. Moreover, sediment pollution and the related process of erosion can destroy critical infrastructure such as roads and culverts. Additionally, sedimentation can cause dams and reservoirs to fill in at an accelerated rate. In aquatic habitats, sediment can cause harm to fish gills and cause spawning areas to fill in. Small organisms that live in stream and lake beds may be suffocated as sediment accumulates over them. This can lead to a breakdown in the aquatic food chain (BRPC 2004).

Proper maintenance of unpaved roads can help to address issues of NPS pollution by sediment. Many of the possible maintenance actions include those that are already performed by the town as part of routine road maintenance to prevent road failure or to address issues such as dust. In general, communities wishing to address sediment pollution should work to fix existing drainage and erosion problems on their unpaved roads, such as managing ditches to ensure they have adequate gravel or vegetative cover or installing check dams to reduce water velocity. Road grading and shaping, which are usually performed yearly by towns, can also help to maintain the road crown which can reduce erosion and therefore sediment pollution. While these routine maintenance activities can help to address sediment pollution, implementation of BMP's specific to sediment reduction can provide extra water quality protections particularly in ecologically sensitive areas or where sediment issues could degrade recreational water resources.

BRPC has been involved with several studies of the Farmington River Watershed, including the development of a watershed wide action plan in 1997 to address issues of non-point source pollution, the creation of a system of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for unpaved roads in 2001, and community level assessments of possible improvements to address sediment pollution from unpaved roads in



2004. This last report included a 5-year action plan for the Town of Otis with recommendations for yearly ditch inspection and preventative maintenance, dust control, and potential road rehabilitation.

Climate Change Adaptation

In Massachusetts and New England, climate change is expected to increase storms and precipitation. Since 1970, annual temperatures have increased by 2° Fahrenheit (F) and winter temperatures have increased 4°F. Regionally, most winter precipitation now falls as rain, not snow (U.S. EPA, 2015). Existing roadway infrastructure, such as culverts and bridges, may be undersized and unable to accommodate the greater amount of water anticipated with climate change, leading to a higher likelihood of damage to the roadway requiring costly replacement. Simple climate adaptation measures could take the form of increasing the size of culverts and bridges during replacement. Additionally, the amount of gravel or stone armoring around these pieces of infrastructure could be increased to help reduce scour and erosion caused by larger and more frequent storms.

Public Survey Results

The Master Plan public survey included a section with questions related to transportation. Otis residents were asked about road maintenance and elderly and disabled transportation services, as well as support for possible public transportation options. Roads identified as most in need of improvement were West Center Road with 11 out of 67 or 16% of responses, Route 23, Kibbe Road and Pine Road. East Otis was also mentioned in 4 of 65 responses with no specific roads mentioned. Overall, 64% of survey respondents said they would support or highly support a public transportation route. The top three reasons for potential use included shopping or errands, access other regional transportation, or attend cultural events. In regards to potential expansion of elderly or disabled transportation services, 44% of respondents said to expand services, 39% said they did not know, and 15% said to keep the same

LAND USE

Location and Context

The Town of Otis is an area of 38 square miles (approximately 24,000 acres), located in the southern portion of Berkshire County in Western Massachusetts. Otis is bordered by the towns of Becket to the North, Monterey and Tyringham to the West, Sandisfield and Tolland to South and Blandford to the East. (See Map 1-Regional Context).

Land Use

State Aerial Photography Analysis

The state, via the University of Massachusetts - Amherst's Resource Mapping - Land Information Systems Lab in the Department of Natural Resources Conservation, conducted an aerial photography analysis of land use in 1971, 1985, and 1999. While 1999 data is fairly dated at this point, this analysis still presents the best picture of the development footprint of Otis and how it has changed over that 28 year period.

Additionally, it is important to note that a similar land use inventory was conducted by the state in 2005. However, a change in methodology makes comparison of the 2005 data with the 1971-1999 data statistically impossible. Prior to 2005, land use data was derived manually, from analysis of aerial photography. After 2005, these processes became automated. Additionally, the state began to integrate existing data sets into its analysis. Land use from 1971-1999 as well as the 2005 analysis have been included in this report. However, these data sets should not be compared in such a way to determine land use trends between 1999-2005. For example, 1999 land use data indicates 1078 acres of wetland, while 2005 data indicates 2773 acres of wetland. In reality, those additional wetland acres always existed within Otis, but were previously classified as forest. In 2005, wetland extents determined from on the ground field work were integrated into land use data. Previously, wetland extents were mapped from aerial photography, which made the determination of forested wetland areas difficult.

Land Use Change 1971-1999

Between 1971 and 1999, residential acreage increased more than any other land use category, growing from 890.44 acres (3.65% of all land) to 1,439.01 acres

(5.91% of all land), See Table C11 for Otis land use 1971-1999. Institutional uses, which includes town owned properties and buildings, as well as schools and cemeteries increased from 17.31 to 34.06 acres (an increase of 96.74%). Industrial uses increased from 2.67 acres to 8.33 acres, a minimal acreage increase but amounting to a change of 211.59%. Agricultural acreage decreased the most over the 28 year period from 1971-1999, changing from 333.19 to 267.65 acres, or a decrease of 19.67%.

Land Use 2005

While available land use data from 2005 should not be compared with earlier data to determine trends, it does provide the most recent "snapshot" of land use within Otis. The 2005 data does not paint a substantially different portrait of the town that earlier data provides. Forest cover remains the prevalent land use, extending across 18,533.84 acres or 76.14% of the town. The 1,493.78 acres (6.14%) of water and 2,773.14 acres (11.39%) of wetland that cover the town speaks to the extent of Otis's amazing water and natural resources. Residential land use remains the primary "man-made" use within the town at 824.76 acres or 3.39% of all land (See Table 8.1—Chapter 8 Land Use for 2005 Land Use and Map 9—Current Land Use). Commercial uses cover 49.46 acres, or .2%, of all land within the town. These areas include town businesses. Additionally, BRPC cross checked this land use with aerial photography. The town highway garage, as well as the MassDOT maintenance garage have been classified under the commercial category, likely a result of the automated land use classification process. Finally, industrial land use is the smallest of any "man-made" category. Industrial land use covers just 6.26 acres, or .03%, of all land within the town. BRPC checked these use areas against aerial photography. The majority of these areas appear to be sand pits or contractor staging and equipment storage areas. These are cleared areas with heavy equipment clearly visible. Additionally, an area that now appears to be a small trailer park along Route 23 was classified as industrial. In 2005 aerial photography, this area was cleared and heavy equipment was visible.

**Table C11 - Otis Land Use 1971-1999***Source: Mass. GIS Land Use 1951-1999, 2015*

Category	1971 (Acres)	% of Total Acres	1985 (Acres)	% of Total Acres	1999 (Acres)	% of Total Acres	% Change in acres (1971-1999)
Agriculture	333.19	1.37%	329.71	1.35%	267.65	1.10%	-19.67%
Commercial	40.62	0.17%	48.74	0.20%	50.12	0.21%	23.39%
Forest	20078.26	82.40%	19692.52	80.81%	19433.45	79.75%	-3.21%
Industrial	2.67	0.01%	5.923	0.02%	8.33	0.03%	211.59%
Institutional	17.31	0.07%	35.854	0.15%	34.06	0.14%	96.74%
Mining / Waste Disposal	37.19	0.15%	37.84	0.16%	49.15	0.20%	32.14%
Recreation	185.22	0.76%	202.32	0.83%	206.21	0.85%	11.33%
Residential	890.44	3.65%	1224.26	5.02%	1439.01	5.91%	61.61%
Transportation*	82.85	0.34%	84.217	0.35%	84.22	0.35%	1.64%
Vacant**	199.31	0.82%	205.70	0.84%	278.56	1.14%	39.77%
Water	1439.11	5.91%	1439.11	5.91%	1438.80	5.90%	-0.02%
Wetland	1061.63	4.36%	1061.62	4.36%	1078.24	4.42%	1.57%
Total	24367.83	100.00%	24367.83	100.00%	24367.84	100.00%	

*Transportation category includes large divided highways or areas like airports and docks. Smaller roadways have not been calculated.

**Vacant land category includes abandoned agriculture, areas like power lines, or areas of no vegetation, as well as brushland and successional environments not dense enough to be classified as forest.

Development Trends and Future Development Capacity

The density of development around the town's water resources (Big Pond, Otis Reservoir, etc.) has historically been the highest. Additionally, housing development in Otis' two village centers has historically been relatively dense. However, new development in the village centers has been minimal. In recent years, development has been almost exclusively focused on residential parcels with relatively large lot sizes that are located away from Otis' ponds, shoreline areas, and village centers.

Since 2009, the number of building permits for new residential structures has slowed (See Figure C5 in this appendix). Anecdotally, there has been a shift away from new construction, with increased focus on renovations, additions, and other alterations to existing structures (Larry Gould, Personal Communication, 2015).

Development Trends

Available state data showing the construction date of buildings within the Town of Otis allows for a picture of development trends to emerge. These data show the last available construction date for a given building, so do not capture earlier structures that may have existing on a given parcel and been replaced. These data are based on assessor's information current as of 2011.

The earliest structures in the town of Otis, built prior to the year 1900, were located primarily in Otis Center Village, with additional pockets of development around West Otis and a few structures around Otis Reservoir and Big Pond.

From 1901-1950, new building or reconstruction takes place at the edges and extends the size of Otis Center Village. At this time, extensive construction around the shorelines of Otis Reservoir, Big Pond, and Benton Pond begins.

From 1950-1975 new building or reconstruction of existing buildings continues around Otis Reservoir, Big Pond and Benton Pond. Additionally, pockets of construction can be seen around Creek Pond, along the northwest shoreline of Big Pond and Great Woods Road and scattered along Routes 8 and 23.

From 1976 and on, new building or reconstruction is still visible around Otis Reservoir, Big Pond and Benton Pond. However, there is additional development during this period around White Lily Pond and Hayes Pond. Moreover, a shift toward greater development away from the town's water resource areas can be seen in extensive development along areas such as Dimmock Road, Stebbins Road, West Center Road, Judd Road, Harrington Road and the Otis Woodlands (See Map 10—Development Trend).

Remaining Buildable Land

An analysis of remaining buildable land within the town of Otis can be created by subtracting areas that have already been developed, permanently protected state and other conservation lands, wetlands (100 foot buffer around all wetland areas), river protection areas (200 foot buffer around rivers), and slopes greater than 25%. What remains are areas that could be used for new construction. Based on this analysis, 7,150.8 acres (29.34%) of buildable land remain within the town. Another 2,297 acres (9.42%) remain on land that is partially constrained for development, and include areas located in floodplain or on slopes between 15 and 25%. This analysis only estimates remaining buildable acreage. It does not examine remaining buildable road frontage which would be needed to access these areas or account for new road construction and extensive subdivision that would be needed for development within these areas.

Zoning

Otis currently has three zoning districts. The allowed uses and densities for each district are summarized below. For a map of current zoning, please refer to Map 3—Zoning.

Residential (R-40) District

Minimum Lot Size: 1 Acre

Minimum Road Frontage: 150 Feet

Front Setback: 35 Feet

Side and Rear: 25 Feet

Allowed Uses:

By right:

One or two family dwelling

Conversion of a one family dwelling into a two family dwelling

Bed and breakfast establishment or homestay

Childcare facility

Family day care, small

Agriculture

Facilities for sale of wine and dairy products

Educational use

Land and structures for religious purposes

Municipal or governmental use

By Special Permit:

Many uses require a special permit from either the planning board, zoning board of appeals (ZBA) or the Select Board. Refer to the Otis zoning bylaws for a complete listing.

Village (V-1) District

Minimum Lot Size: 20,000 Square Feet (can be minimum of 10,000 Square Feet if the lot is serviced by the Otis sewer district).

Minimum Road Frontage: 100 feet for residential use, 60 feet for non residential

Front Setback: 35 Feet

Side and Rear: 25 Feet

Allowed Uses:

By Right:

One or two family dwelling

Conversion of a one family dwelling into a two family dwelling

Agriculture

Facilities for sale of wine and dairy products

Educational Use

Land and structures for religious purposes

Municipal or governmental use

Child care facility

Land and structures for horticulture or floriculture

Business or Professional Office, Bank

Personal Service Establishment

General Service Establishment

Motor vehicle service station or repair shop

Specialized retail



Bed or Breakfast Establishment or Homestay
Family day care, small

By Special Permit:

Many uses require a special permit from either the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) or the Select Board. Refer to the Otis Zoning Bylaws for a complete listing.

Floodplain Overlay District (FPOD)

This overlay district is based on the Otis flood hazard boundary map issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the 100 year regulatory floodplain. This district helps to limit development within the floodplain, however, buildings existing within the floodplain prior to the adoption of the FPOD are “grandfathered” in.

The Berkshire County Hazard Mitigation Plan, prepared for the Town of Otis and other Berkshire County towns in 2012 notes that there are a total of 2,395.9 acres of 100- year floodplain within the town. This amounts to 9.8% of the total town. Based on additional analysis, 56.7 acres (2.3%) of the floodplain are developed. This leaves 2,339.2 acres that are potentially developable under current zoning. Currently, there are 8 commercial buildings (22.2%) and 167 residential buildings (11.1 %) within the floodplain.

Permitted Uses:

Agriculture
Forestry and Nursery
Outdoor Recreation
Conservation of water, wildlife, and plants
Wildlife management areas, pathways
Temporary non-residential structures
Buildings lawfully existing prior to the floodplain district creation

Other Zoning Provisions

Nonconforming Single and Two Family Residential Structures

Many parcels, particularly those located around Otis’ ponds and water bodies, were created prior to the adoption of zoning regulations. They are usually of a small size and do not meet the requirements for mini-

mum lot size or setbacks. The town recognized that this condition had been created and took measures to help address it (Larry Gould Personal Communication, 2015). The town amended its bylaws to create smaller setback requirements for construction on existing non-conforming structures. In the new language, front setbacks were reduced from 35 to 25 feet and side and rear setbacks were changed from 25 to 15 feet. Additionally, reconstruction, replacement and renovation of existing non-conforming structures within the same building footprint and height are allowed.

Townhouse Development

Otis’ Townhouse Development provision allows for any parcel larger than 20 acres to pursue townhouse development through a special permit by the planning board. The provision allows for a maximum number of bedrooms on the parcel that is equal to two and a half times the number of lots which would reasonably be expected to be developed upon that parcel under a conventional plan. Additionally, at least 30% of the parcel must reserved as contiguous open space. As of 2015, this form of development has not been implemented within the town.

Survey Results

The Master Plan public survey included several questions about land use, asking survey respondents their opinion about the rate of housing development, and where future housing and development should be located relative to Otis’ village centers, residential areas, water resource areas and recreation areas (i.e. near the ski area).

Village Centers

Respondents wanted to encourage small business, senior housing, sidewalks, single-family housing, and land conservation. Respondents wanted to discourage commercial or industrial uses, and multi-family housing .

Residential Areas

Respondents wanted to encourage single family housing, land conservation, senior housing and second homes. Respondents wanted to discourage small business, multi-family housing and commercial and indus-

trial uses

Water Resource Areas

Respondents wanted to encourage land conservation. Respondents wanted to discourage multi-family housing, low income housing, and commercial and industrial uses.

Recreation Areas:

Respondents wanted to encourage land conservation, small business, and second homes. Respondents wanted to discourage multi-family housing, low income housing, and commercial and industrial uses.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

History of the Community

Otis was incorporated as a town in June 13, 1810. The town was named after Harrison Gray Otis, who was a speaker of the House of Representatives and known as the “Urban Federalist” (Town of Otis OSRP 1991). In 1838, common and previously unincorporated land, known as the “East Eleven Thousand Acres”, was added to the original territory that comprised the town. The original settlement was mainly influenced by the “Great Road”, the Boston- Albany turnpike, also known as Knox Trail, or Indian Trail.

Farming and lumbering, especially pine and hemlock, had been the town’s major industry before shifting to a seasonal and tourism-based economy. The West Branch of the Farmington River had provided an important source of waterpower to run the wheels of early mills, and later, for a couple of factories. The number of mills in Otis grew from four in 1829 to 22 in 1885 (Town of Otis OSRP 1991).

The creation of Otis’s mills and industry shaped not only the town’s economy, but the landscape we see today. In particular, the creation of Otis Reservoir (which is almost a history unto itself) remade large portions of the town to suit industrial needs. Samuel Watkins Collins and the Collins Company were based in what is now Canton, Connecticut. The Collins Company was a major producer of high quality metal goods during the American Civil War. During the Civil War, the company was hindered by difficulties in finding workers as well as low water flows from the Farmington River that impacted the company’s metal forging operations. After the war ended, the company decided to examine the creation of a dam and reservoir that would help to ensure year-round water flows needed for its industrial operations.

After extensive surveying and study, it was determined that the area around three existing ponds; Rand Pond, Messenger Pond, and Little Pond had the appropriate topography for construction of a dam. Water from these ponds flowed into the Fall River, as it does from Otis Reservoir today.

The Collins Company purchased land around what is now the Otis Reservoir and created a separate organi-

zation, the Farmington River Water Power Company, to manage this land as well as the dam. The dam raised the water level 26 feet above the original elevation of the ponds and allowed for greater control of the amount of water flowing into the West Branch of the Farmington River. When more water was needed by the Collins Company’s operations in Connecticut, they would send a telegraph to the dam operator who would use a horse to raise gates to release more water into the Fall River. Control of the dam was maintained by the Farmington River Water Power Company until 1966.

Beyond the creation of the Otis Reservoir, many of the town’s buildings, particularly around the town’s village centers, provided Otis with the small town New England atmosphere, still visible and enjoyed by residents and visitors alike today. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission completed an inventory in 1983 that identified local structures of historic value. Structures inventoried include the Congregational Church, the St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Harmony Hall (currently the town’s Recreation Center), Otis Library, the Knox Trail Inn, a number of old cemeteries, and a variety of landmarks along the Knox Trail, among other significant buildings (BRPC 1979).

The Otis Congregational Church is located on Route 23 & Route 8. This building is presently owned by the Town of Otis Church Society. Dating back to 1813—1814, it conserves the original design of a federal meetinghouse. The construction of this building accompanied the unification of the towns of Loudon and Bethlehem, into what was later named Otis. On June 5, 1810, members of the church from both towns met, and voted to consider all members of each as members of a United Church (BRPC 1979).

The St Paul’s Episcopal Church is located on Route 23 & Route 8. Owned by the Protestant Episcopal Society of Otis, it dates back to 1828- 1829. According to historic records, this building was one of the earliest churches of the Anglican Faith in the County. It is unique, as it is the earliest surviving gothic revival building in the Berkshires. It is rendered in wood with Gothic arched windows, designed to have the look of leaded glass (BRPC 1979).

Similarly, the Original Otis Town Hall, or Harmony Hall, dates back to 1849. This is a two and a half story Greek Revival style public building that fulfilled the need for a new school and a community meeting place in one building. At that time, the Center School District had decided to buy land and build a new school house. In the meantime, a group of citizens submitted a proposal to combine the two projects. Finally, in November 3rd, 1849, the School District voted to approve this last idea, and later gave birth to this building, originally named “Harmony Hall” (BRPC 1979).

Among other historic buildings, the Knox Trail Inn, supplements the structures mentioned above. Originally named the East Otis Hotel, this structure dates back to 1820. Located on Route 23 in East Otis, this is a one and a half story Federal House, with a symmetrical nine window front. Examples of similar historic value are illustrated by the Ida Hall House and Store, Squire Seymour’s Store, and S. H. Norton’s Store, among other buildings (BCRPC 1979).

Beyond these architectural structures, the Knox Trail stands as one of the most important historic landmarks in town. A marker was built in June 30th, 1928, on the East side of Route 23. As inscribed on the monument, General Henry Knox passed through this place in the winter of 1775- 1776 to deliver the train of artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to General George Washington in Cambridge (BRPC 1979). According to historic records, travel was difficult through this territory. The first highway was opened by General Amherst’s army when it marched from Boston to Albany in 1759 (Humason 1974.) Nevertheless, the main road between Boston and Albany began as a foot path used by the early explorers in the late 1600’s. This was the earliest roadway laid to travel between the two states, and has been also referred to as the “Barrington Road” (Town of Otis OSRP 1991).

Among other sites of historic value, it is important to consider the Civilian Conservation Camps (CCC) located in West Otis. This facility hosted over 100 men during the Depression Era (Wingate 2004).

Otis’s spectacular water resources attracted significant



Figure C6—The East Otis Schoolhouse. This structure is a one and half story greek revival style building that was the one room schoolhouse for the East Otis area. This building is located adjacent to the East Otis Meetinghouse.

development during the 20th century as locations for homes, camps, and cabins. Development has historically been greatest around Big Pond, Otis Reservoir, and Benton Pond. However, there are many other bodies of water in the town (see Table C13). In total, there are eight state listed “Great Ponds” within the town, more than any other town in Berkshire County. Additionally, Otis Reservoir is the county’s largest recreational body of water.

Otis’ ponds and the Otis Reservoir, combined with the supply of state-owned recreation land, including 2 state parks (and a small portion of a third) and 3 wildlife management areas, have helped to earn Otis the reputation of being the “outdoor playground of the Berkshires” (Otis Conservation Commission, 2015).

Historic and Cultural Resources

Otis Historic Commission

The Town of Otis has an active historic commission that has worked hard to develop and promote Otis’ historic and cultural resources. The commission has helped to identify historic mile markers along the route of the Knox Trail or Great Road and worked to restore monuments in town, such as the Wolcott Grant marker near Becket Road.



Knox Trail or Great Road

The Town of Otis developed along the historic route known as the Knox Trail, or Great Road, that connected Boston and Albany. The town's location along this route was critical to accessing trade and for the flow of goods and services into and out of the town. The route is most famous for its use by General Henry Knox as he worked during the winter of 1775-1776 to move cannons from Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain to Boston, Massachusetts. These cannons were used to support General George Washington during the siege of Boston by the British army. The relocation of the cannons from Ticonderoga was critical to American victory. Once deployed on the Dorchester heights, with a commanding view of Boston harbor, the cannons prompted the British fleet to relocate from Boston to Halifax, Nova Scotia. The abandonment of Boston harbor by the British fleet was a turning point in the American Revolutionary War.

In the late 1920's, monuments were commissioned for every town in Massachusetts that General Knox passed through to provide a permanent marker to the events that helped shape the creation of the United States. The Knox Trail monument for the town of Otis is located near Benton Pond. Additionally, a statue of General Knox is located on the Town Hall driveway.

The route of the Knox Trail crosses into Otis near Algeria Road in East Otis. It then moves west across the town passing just north of Otis Reservoir. Beyond this point, the Knox Trail passes through portions of Otis State Forest where it then moves into Sandisfield. After moving just south of Upper Spectacle Pond, the Trail then crosses back into Otis near Cold Spring Road.

Much of the trail is currently used during the winter by Snowmobilers and the local snowmobile club, the Knox Trail Sno-riders. Members of the Otis Historic Commission have been active in identifying landmarks, markers, tavern sites, and other historic resources along the trail. The Historic Commission has also secured permission to develop the trail through portions of state owned land like Otis State Forest.

Recently, the Historic Commission has identified a mile marker along the Knox Trail that reads "65 mile to Albany (See Figure 9.1 in Chapter 9). Due to the marker's proximity to Algeria Road, the Commission has been working to make the area around the marker a trailhead and historic site. The town Highway Department recently installed gravel to create a small parking area near the mile marker and the town Select Board voted in 2009 to designate the area as "65 Mile to Albany" Milestone Way as a Scenic Road for the use of foot traffic only. Work continues on the area around the mile marker, with granite posts erected near the mile stone to protect it from potential damage.

The Historic Commission has also been working with local landowners to help secure year round access to portions of the trail with the end goal of developing the trail as a multi-use path that can be used in both summer and winter. Additionally, the Historic Commission has been working towards having the Knox Trail designated as National Historic Landmark.

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Database

The Massachusetts Cultural Information Resource System (MACRIS) is a database maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) that lists historic structures, areas, objects and burial grounds recognized at the local, state, and national level. Within Otis, the MACRIS database lists 88 records comprising mostly historic buildings. However, the records also include the town green in front of the Congregational Church, Otis Center Village, Otis Reservoir, and Otis Reservoir Dam just to name a few places.

It is important to note that the MACRIS records identified in this plan are likely incomplete, as listings available online are part of ongoing digitization efforts by the state. Moreover, most of the MACRIS records for the Town of Otis were collected from an inventory of historic properties completed by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission in 1983. MACRIS records available online for the town of Otis list no state or nationally listed historic properties. A cross reference of online databases available through National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places and National

Register of Historic Landmarks returned no results for Otis (See Map 8—Historic Resources for mapped buildings and areas from the MACRIS database).

East Otis Schoolhouse and Meeting House

The East Otis Schoolhouse and Meeting House are two town-owned buildings located on a single lot in East Otis at the corner of Pike Road and Old Blandford Road near the Papa's Healthy Food and Fuel gas station. The East Otis Schoolhouse is a small one and half story structure that served as the "one room schoolhouse" for the area. The MACRIS database lists the building as the "East Otis Center School" and places the date of construction in 1850 (See Table C14, this appendix). The East Otis Meetinghouse, also known as the East Otis Church or East Otis Baptist Church, has functioned as both a public meetinghouse and church in the past and has been abandoned since the 1980's. Both structures are in disrepair, with damage to the Meetinghouse considerably greater than that of the Schoolhouse. Plans for the Meetinghouse (including possible demolition or reuse) have generated significant debate within town.

The town's Selectboard considers the Meeting House to be public safety hazard and potential liability and has advocated for the building's demolition (Town Of Otis Select Board, 2013). The Selectboard has also discussed the possibility of repurposing the lot as a playground and picnic area. In this scheme, the East Otis Schoolhouse would remain and be repurposed for use by the town.

The Otis Planning Board and Historical Commission have advocated for the renovation or replication of the buildings and the designation of the parcel around them as a one lot historic district. A study committee was formed by the town to examine the creation of a potential historic district. The creation of this historic district around the School House and Meeting House would allow the town to potentially access funds from the MHC for renovation or replication of the buildings and would require a match from the town. The opportunity for this funding would dissolve if the structures were demolished (Harold Kobrin, Personal Communication 2015). Renovations to the church have been estimated to cost up to \$300,000 (Sakata 2012). Once

renovated, both the Schoolhouse and Meetinghouse could be repurposed for use by the town. Some suggested uses for the structures include housing the town's museum (currently located in the Library), records storage, a town hall annex, additional meeting space, or an information center (Harold Kobrin Personal Communication 2015).

Current plans for the two structures are as follows. The Selectboard has decided to invest in the Schoolhouse building over time, through gradual and incremental repairs (Larry Gould Personal Communication 2015). The building would remain and be utilized by the town, perhaps as a restored historic building. Due to the deteriorating nature of the East Otis Meetinghouse, the Selectboard has determined that the structure should be removed and the lot be repurposed by the town.

Additional Historic Sites

Information provided by Thomas Ragusa, chair of the Otis Historical Commission indicates that there are additional historic sites and monuments that should be identified as locally significant historic sites and added to the MACRIS database. These include (among others):

West Otis Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camps

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a national public work relief program created as part of President Roosevelt's "New Deal" during the Great Depression. The program helped to provide jobs for unemployed men and was focused around activities such as road building, erosion control and recreation improvements. Within Otis, the CCC helped to construct much of Otis State Forest.

Wolcott Grant Marker

This marker commemorates the Wolcott land grants, which helped to resolve a series of land disputes between Massachusetts and Connecticut that began in the 1700's. The marker base was replaced in 2012 and reset at its original location on Becket Road.



Natural Resources

Otis has a wealth of natural resources including surface water, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. Natural resources are summarized here. For more information on natural resources in the town of Otis, see the full text of the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Soils and Geology

General soil associations determine a unique natural landscape, having a distinct pattern of soils, relief, and drainage. Typically, an association consists of one or more major soils and some minor soils (Soil Conservation Service 1988). According to the Soil Survey completed for Berkshire County in 1988 by the Soil Conservation Service, Turnbridge- Lyman- Peru is the predominant major association soil type in Otis; this is true also for 51% of the total area of the county. This association is defined by the survey as being “moderately deep, shallow and very deep, well drained, gently sloping to very steep, loamy soils formed in glacial till derived from schist, gneiss, and granite (Soil Conservation Service 1988). For a map of general soil conditions, see Map 4—Soils and Geology.

Other Unique Features

The Town of Otis hosts an important system of natural resources and recreational opportunities. Topographic features like the sequence of high hills that develop throughout the town, the Farmington River Valley, and a great variety of streams and ponds. Natural waterfalls provide a dynamic sequence of scenic quality. The different ecosystems that develop throughout these lands host an important amount of core habitat and supporting natural landscape for a great variety of plant and animal communities.

These natural resources are combined with an important list of historic sites. Structures like the Congregational Church, St Paul’s Episcopal Church, the previous Town Hall (currently the recreation center), the McManus Store, the Otis Library, or the East Otis School, represent unique landmarks of important community value (BCRPC 1979). Other historic sites, like the portion of the Knox Trail that passes through Otis, CCC camps, rail road foundations along the Farmington River, the trolley line, and several old cemeteries, constitute a unique opportunity to develop an exten-

sive system of both educational and recreational activities. Please refer to Map 5 - Unique Features and to Table 4.5- Unique features located in the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Water Resources

For a map of water resources including ponds, rivers and watersheds, please see Map 6—Water Resources.

Watersheds

Otis lies within three watersheds, the Farmington River Watershed (FRW), the Housatonic River Watershed (HRW) and the Westfield River Watershed (WRW). The majority of the town lies within the FRW. The northeast corner of the town is located within the WRW and the western portion of town is located within the HRW. Otis’s position at the headwaters of the Farmington River is regionally important. The Farmington River is the primary water supply for Hartford, Connecticut and other towns within the Farmington River Valley. The Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), the non-profit group that helps to address issues of water quality within the watershed, estimates that the river supplies drinking water to 600,000 people (FRWA 2003).

Surface Waters

The town has spectacular water resources including eight “Great Ponds” (see Table C13). Great Ponds are a state water body designation related to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 91 “The Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act”. A Great Pond is defined as “any pond or lake that contained more than 10 acres in its natural state” (Mass DEP, 2015). Ponds which at one point in time were larger than 10 acres, but are now smaller are still considered to be great ponds.

In addition to being natural resources, Otis’s ponds have attracted development and help to create the town’s recreational and seasonally focused economy. Development has historically been greatest around Big Pond, Benton Pond, and Otis Reservoir.

Big Pond

Big Pond is the second largest body of water in Otis at 331 acres. The shoreline of Big Pond is some of the most densely settled in Otis. Large wetland areas ex-

tend around the northern edge of the pond and are listed as core habitat by the BioMap2 project. Big Pond is also home to the Otis Town Beach, which is located at the end of Great Woods Road. As of 2012, Big Pond is listed on the EPA’s 303(d) list of impaired waters due to the presence of Mercury (Hg) in fish tissue and low dissolved oxygen levels. The publicly accessible boat launch on Big Pond is located at the end of Latimer Hill Road in Otis. A local group known as the Big Pond Association acts as an advocate for the pond and the residents around it.

As with many lakes and ponds in Massachusetts, water levels are controlled via a dam which was constructed by the Commonwealth in 1974. Boards located within the dam are removable and allow the water level in the pond to be lowered or raised by up to 18”. A yearly drawdown of the pond occurs in October and is approved via an order of conditions from the Town of Otis.

Big Pond and the homeowners and residents that surround it are represented by the Big Pond Association whose mission is to “preserve, protect, monitor, maintain and enhance the environmental, aesthetic, recreational and economic values of Big Pond and its watershed and to provide education with respect thereto.” the Big Pond Association participates in a variety of management activities including funding yearly testing for water quality, and management and monitoring of invasive species.

The Big Pond Association conducts yearly water quality testing, and in 2004 received a \$50,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to conduct a diagnostic and feasibility study that comprehensively examined water quality within the lake. The Big Pond Association has partnered with DCR on its “Weed Watcher” program. Weed Watcher works to educate volunteers to monitor water bodies for invasive species. Additionally the Big Pond Association has a active and dedicated group of volunteers who monitor the public boat launch and work with recreational boaters to ensure that invasive species don’t make their way into the pond. Luckily, Big Pond has thus far avoided colonization by invasive species such as Zebra Mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*)

Table C12 - Wetlands in Otis, Ma		
Source: Source: Mass. GIS Wetlands 2009		
Wetland Type	Acres	% of all wetlands
Bog	122.87	4.44%
Deep Marsh	231.89	8.37%
Shallow Marsh		
Meadow of Fen	483.11	17.44%
Shrub Swamp	489.77	17.68%
Wooded Swamp		
Coniferous	875.98	31.63%
Wooded Swamp		
Deciduous	292.49	10.56%
Wooded Swamp		
Mixed Trees	273.76	9.88%
Total	2769.87	100.00%

and Eurasian Milfoil (*Myriophyllum Spicatum*). However, some invasive species such as Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) have been noted around the shoreline of the pond. The Big Pond Association organizes regular volunteer events to remove this species and others from the shoreline.

Otis Reservoir

The Reservoir is located within the boundaries of the Towns of Otis, Tolland and small portion of Blandford. Otis Reservoir is the Commonwealth’s largest recreational body of water at over 1,000 acres in size. The Reservoir was created in the 1800’s by the construction of a dam on the Fall River to provide additional flow during low river volumes. This helped to support mills and industry along the nearby Farmington River (see Section 3B: History of the Community). Beginning in the early 20th century, the Reservoir became a destination for seasonal and summer residents who built cottages along the shore. Today, the neighborhoods around Otis Reservoir are the densest in town, especially along the western shore. Otis Reservoir is currently listed on the EPA’s 303(d) list of impaired water ways due to high levels of Mercury (Hg) in fish tissue.



Water levels are controlled in the Reservoir by the dam that leads to Fall River. An annual draw down of the Reservoir occurs during October. Water levels in the reservoir are lowered by approximately 10 feet. This drawdown is thought to help control invasive species in the lake, particularly aquatic plants such as Eurasian Milfoil (*Myriophyllum Spicatum*), which is exposed to freezing temperatures during the drawdown.

Additionally, the drawdown has some recreation benefits, as it means that many dock owners do not need to remove their docks from the Reservoir during winter for fear of ice damage. The conservation commissions of the towns of Otis, Tolland and Blandford review and approve the order of conditions for the yearly drawdown of the reservoir, which is performed by DCR.

Otis Reservoir and the property owners that surround it are represented by the Otis Reservoir Property Owners Association (ORPOA). ORPOA conducts regular water quality testing in Otis Reservoir, funded through dues it collects from members. Additionally, ORPOA conducts management activities, such as the removal of invasive species.

Much of Otis Reservoir is contained within Tolland State Forest. This area contains the public boat launch for Otis Reservoir. Boat launching is also available through Camp Overflow, a private campground on the western shore of the reservoir. However, the launch is only available to campground guests. As much of the land surrounding Otis Reservoir is owned by DCR, this organization conducts active management around the reservoir. In the Fall of 2015, DCR will begin implementing a treatment plan to control *Phragmites australis* (also known as Common Reed) on approximately 40 sites (2.39 acres in total) around the reservoir.

In the mid-2000's BRPC was also involved with several projects on Otis Reservoir as part of the Otis Reservoir Lake and Watershed Protection Initiative. This project was a collaboration between BRPC, the Town of Otis, ORPOA, the Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA) and the Big Pond Association. The project examined the feasibility of installation of a boat washing station and subsurface screen (to prevent fish loss) at

Otis Reservoir. Additionally, the project successfully implemented improvements to the public boat launch at Big Pond through the installation of pre-cast concrete planks to replace the existing gravel launch. Additionally, BRPC established two vegetative buffers comprised of native plantings at private residences on Otis Reservoir. Vegetative buffers are plantings of shrubs, trees and perennials that intercept stormwater runoff and help to reduce soil erosion. Vegetative buffers are recommended as a Best Management Practice (BMP) to minimize the impacts of development near water bodies and replace existing lawns. Additionally, they provide more potential wildlife habitat than mowed grass or lawn.

Aquifer Recharge Areas

Otis' groundwater resources are located in the gneissic bedrock beneath the town along existing fault lines. The Town's 1986 Land Use Plan (prepared by BRPC) explains how most wells will yield only enough for domestic supplies, while they could yield from 50 to 100 gallons per minute near these fault lines (BRPC 1986). In a geological survey of the Eastern Berkshires completed by Emerson in 1968, two major faults were identified in Otis. One of them runs along Tyringham Road in West Otis down to the Clam River in Sandisfield, and another one is located near the center of town. Formations of water soluble limestone offer another potential source of large drinking water yields. Caverns located near Otis Center and Shaw Pond are an indicator of potential groundwater from recharge areas of this type.

The other primary ground water resource is beneath the Farmington River Valley. These are shallow deposits, approximately 60 feet, which are probably connected to both the river and the water in the underlying bedrock. As stated before, these deposits might be vulnerable to pollution associated with road salt or other contaminants such as from buried gas tanks (BRPC 1986).

As stated in the 1986 Land Use Plan, predicting recharge areas is very difficult without a detailed hydrological study. In the case of Otis, recharge might be happening from water infiltration in the upland areas of its three watersheds. In unconfined aquifers, re-

Table C13 - Water Resources in Otis, MA

Source: Mass GIS MassDEP List of Integrated Waters, 2012

Name	Approximate Acreage	Impairment Status (Y/N)	Cause of Impairment
1. Benton Pond*	63.00	Y	Eurasian Water Milfoil, <i>Myriophyllum Spicatum</i>
2. Big Pond*	331.00	Y	Dissolved Oxygen Mercury in Fish Tissue
3 Church Hill Pond	20.00	N	
4. Watson Pond* (Also known as Creek Pond)	49.00	Not Assessed	
5. Curtin Pond	4.00	N	
6. Dimmock Brook Pond	62.00	Not Assessed	
7. West Haley Pond* (Also known as Tucker-Haley Pond or Haley Pond)	17.00	N	
8. Hayden Pond	36.00	Not Assessed	
9. Hayes Pond*	49.00	Not Assessed	
10. Horseshoe Pond	13.00	N	
11. Larkum Pond*	19.00	N	
12. Mud Pond 1 (near Long Mountain WMA)	5.00	N	
13. Mud Pond 2 (South of I-90)	5.00	N	
14. Otis Reservoir*	1065.00	Y	Mercury in Fish Tissue
15. Quarry Pond	6.00	N	
16. Royal Pond	8.00	N	
16. Shaw Pond	23.00	Y	Dissolved Oxygen Eurasian Water Milfoil
17. Upper Spectacle Pond	72.00	Y	Dissolved Oxygen
18. White Lily Pond*	27.00	Not Assessed	
19. Whiting Pond	5.00	N	
*Denotes state designated "Great Pond". It is not known why other ponds in Otis larger than 10 acres in size are not listed as Great Ponds.			

Table C13 - Water Resources in Otis, MA—Continued

Source: Mass GIS MassDEP List of Integrated Waters, 2012

Stream Name	Approximate Length (Miles)	Impairment Status (Y/N)	Cause of Impairment
1. Cone Brook	1.75	N	
2. West Branch Farmington River	10.15	Y	Lack of a Coldwater Assemblage
3. Benton Brook	4.00	N	
4. Stream on Curtin Pond	1.66	N	
5. Stream from Hayes Pond	1.83	N	
6. Spectacle Pond Brook	1.54	N	
7. Dimmock Brook	6.18	Not Assessed	
8. Wheeler Brook	1.40	N	
9. Fall River	.88	N	

charge occurs through water entering the unconsolidated deposits, via the streams and wetlands near them (BRPC 1986).

Flood Hazard Areas

Flooding occurs when the volume of water within a given stream or river exceeds the channel's capacity. The flood plain is considered the land area adjacent to a waterbody that is subject to recurring inundation. Flooding often occurs in the spring, due to snow melt and during large storm events. Floods often occur at predictable intervals. The frequency with which a flood of a given size occurs is called the "recurrence interval". For example, the "100-year flood" is the flood event that has a 1% chance of happening within a given year. The 10-year flood is the flooding event that has a 10% chance of recurrence in a given year.

Otis has extensive areas of 100-year floodplain, which are labeled as "Zone A" on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate maps. Beginning in the west of town, areas of the 100-year floodplain extend around Spectacle Pond Brook and the portion of Upper Spectacle Pond located within



the town. The area of the 100-year floodplain begins just south of Route 23 or Great Barrington Road. Another area of 100-year flood plain encompasses the length of Benton Brook, beginning near Giles Road and extending south to the town boundary with Sandisfield.

The 100-year flood plain extends along the entire length of the West Branch of the Farmington River in Otis, from Shaw Pond in the north, through Otis Center and south to Sandisfield.

Further east, a small portion of 100-year flood plain extends around Dimmock Brook, from just near the intersection of Becket and Gibbs Road south to near the intersection of Gibbs Road and Blandford Road / Route 23.

Finally, in the eastern portion of town, the 100-year floodplain extends around wetland areas north of Big Pond near Lee-Westfield Road and moves south around the entirety of Big Pond and its outlet. The floodplain ends near an area just north of Old Blandford Road / Route 23 and Reservoir Road. Immediately south of this intersection, the floodplain begins again and encircles the area around Otis Reservoir south to the town's boundary with Tolland (See Map 6—Water Resources).

It is important to note that Otis has a Floodplain Overlay District as a component of its zoning. The Otis' FPOD helps to regulate development within the 100-year floodplain. Allowed uses include forestry, agriculture, and outdoor recreation. Buildings existing prior to the adoption of the FPOD are also allowed.

Wetlands

Otis has extensive wetland areas totaling over 2,700 acres (See Table C12—this appendix). Wetlands perform important functions for both humans and wildlife. Wetlands are the most productive ecosystems on the planet, measured by the amount of biomass or living biological tissue they help to produce. Wetlands serve as habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species and often function as critical nursery and breeding areas. Wetlands also provide functions for humans. The benefits to humans provided by wet-

lands and other natural environments are sometimes referred to as "ecosystem services". Valuable ecosystem services provided by wetlands include water purification, flood storage and control, and shoreline stabilization. Water speed and flow is greatly reduced in a wetland compared to the open water of a stream or river. This causes suspended sediments to fall out of the water column, thus enhancing downstream water quality. Wetlands also help to remove harmful pollutants as well as nutrient pollution from water resources. During flooding, wetlands act as a "sponge" that helps to absorb excess water. Wetlands also help to reduce erosion by acting as a buffer that helps to protect the shorelines of rivers, lakes and other bodies of water.

Seven types of wetland exist in Otis. Data include in Table C12 in this appendix is derived from the interpretation of aerial photography which is then field checked by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). These data come from the most recent wetlands update which was performed in 2009.

Wooded coniferous swamps extend across 875 acres and comprise 31.63% of wetland areas within the town. Coniferous swamps in Otis are most likely the Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) or Red Spruce (*Picea rubens*) type. Bog areas in Otis have the least acreage (122 acres) and comprise 4.44% of all wetlands in the town. Bogs are a type of wetland characterized by acidic waters, peat deposits and sphagnum moss. Due to the extreme acidic nature of bog environments, bogs are often home to many unique plant and animal species such as pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*). The majority of Otis' wetland areas are located immediately north of Big Pond. Other large wetland areas include the area immediately south of Church Hill Pond, around Dimmock Brook Pond, and south of Hayden Pond. For a map of Otis' wetland areas, please refer to Map 13—Vegetation, Fisheries, and Wildlife.

Wildlife Habitat

The Commonwealth's BioMap2 study provides the best assessment of wildlife habitat within the Town of Otis.

BioMap2 combines 30 years of rare species and natural community data from the NHESP with wildlife species and habitat assessments that were conducted as part of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's 2005 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Additionally, BioMap2 data integrates the Nature Conservancy's assessment of large, connected and intact ecosystems across the state. (NHESP, 2012).

BioMap 2 has two primary components, Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape. Core Habitat includes "areas that are critical for the long term persistence of rare species and other species of conservation concern" (NHESP, 2012).

Critical Natural Landscape identifies large contiguous landscape blocks that have been minimally impacted by development. The BioMap2 report for the Town of Otis notes that "if protected, these areas will provide habitat for wide-ranging native species, support intact ecological processes, maintain connectivity among habitats, and enhance ecological resilience to natural and anthropogenic disturbances in a rapidly changing world" (NHESP, 2012). Critical natural landscape comprises 15,535 acres or 63% of all land within the town.

Large areas of core habitat have been identified around Long and Kingsbury Mountain on the western side of town. A portion of this area of core habitat is permanently protected as part of the Long Mountain Wildlife Management Area. Additional core habitat follows the length of the Farmington River corridor as it flows through town. Smaller areas extend around Whiting pond and in low lying areas near Church Hill Pond south to Dimmock Brook Pond. Additionally a large area of core habitat coincides with the extensive wetland areas north of Big Pond. Core habitat areas with Otis comprise 5,115 acres, or 21% of all land within the town. Core habitat areas are not mutually exclusive from areas of critical natural landscape. In general, core habitats are located within areas of critical natural landscape.

Priority Natural Communities

Level Bog

Level bog natural communities are found in Mud Pond (just south of I-90) in Otis. Level bogs are primarily

dominated by shrubs and are highly acidic environments. Some small stunted coniferous trees, such as tamarack (*Larix laricina*) and black spruce (*Picea mariana*) may occur throughout them. Level bogs usually receive little or no streamflow. Carnivorous plant species such as Pitcher plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) and Sundews (*Drosera rotundifolia* and *D. intermedia*) are often found in these environments. Additionally, these bog communities may be home to rare insect and animal species such as the Jefferson Salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*) and the Ebony Boghaunter dragonfly (*Williamsonia fletcheri*) (NHESP, 1999 Level Bog Fact Sheet).

Acidic Shrub Fen

Acidic shrub fen natural communities are acidic, shrub dominated peatlands. They are generally less acidic and therefore less nutrient deprived than shrub fens. They are typically found along the margins of ponds. In Otis, this natural community is found along the edge of Horseshoe Pond, and is the second largest example of this natural community in the state. Some rare species associated with Acidic shrub fens include Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*) and several rare insect species (NHESP, 1999 Acid shrub fen Fact Sheet).

High Energy Riverbank

These natural communities are located near fast moving water, where the land is constantly disturbed by erosion and sedimentation. They are usually sandy or rocky and have sparse vegetation that can include prairie grasses, low shrubs or small perennials. These environments may provide habitat for migrating shorebirds such as Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) or Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), and also provide breeding habitat for some rare insect species (NHESP, 2006).

Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are a unique type of wetland and wildlife habitat, and are sometimes known as autumnal or ephemeral pool or temporary woodland ponds. Vernal pools are shallow depressions that are seasonally flooded with water. They can vary greatly in size. During summer months, vernal pools are usually dry. However, spring snow melt and rain transform these



areas into rich wildlife habitat. Vernal pools are protected by the Wetlands Protection Act. However, they must be certified prior to gaining protected status. Not every depression that fills with water can be considered a vernal pool.

Vernal pools are certified by the state Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP). Certification involves the documentation of the potential vernal pool's physical characteristics, including the lack of a permanently flowing outlet for water and evidence that the pool dries out during the year. Additionally, certification involves the documentation of wildlife species that commonly use vernal pools. While the NHESP uses aerial photography to help identify vernal pools, they also rely extensively on reporting of potential vernal pools from citizens and landowners.

Due to the fact that vernal pools dry partially or completely during the summer months, fish are prevented from permanently establishing themselves. This makes vernal pools important breeding habitat for amphibian and invertebrate species that would otherwise face extensive predation from fish species. Species that rely on vernal pools for breeding habitat include frogs, salamanders, toads, as well as some insect species, such as dragonflies or small fairy shrimp (NHESP, 2015)

Within Otis, there are 10 certified vernal pools, and another 36 areas that have been identified as potential vernal pools, but have not been certified as such (See Map 13, Vegetation, Fisheries and Wildlife).

Table C14 - Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Records for the Town of Otis*Source: MACRIS Database, 2015*

Property Name	Street	Year
Otis Center		
Tolland State Forest - Peninsula Area		
Old Boston and Albany Road Mile Stone Marker	Algerie Rd	1764
Phelps, Starling and Issaic House	1325 Algerie Rd	c 1790
Jackson, J. C. House	701 Becket Rd	r 1765
Knox, Gen. Henry Trail Marker	Blandford Rd	1927
East Cemetery, New	Blandford Rd	
Free Meeting House Burial Ground	Cold Spring Rd	1807
Davison, John Farm	40 Davison Rd	c 1789
Broga House	9 Dimmock Rd	r 1836
Helena Hall	11 East Otis Rd	1868
Hunt, Lucy - Jackson, John C. House	29 East Otis Rd	c 1858
Benton, A. S. Farm	1234 East Otis Rd	c 1835
East Otis Hotel	1898 East Otis Rd	1820
Hunt - Clark - Brown House	1923 East Otis Rd	c 1825
Jones, Adonejah House	470 Ed Jones Rd	1770
Dimmock, T. D. House	215 Gibbs Rd	1817
Hugins, Salome House	195 Lee-Westfield Rd	r 1833
Kibbee, Alanson House	837-855 Lee-Westfield Rd	r 1829
Huckleberry Trolley Line	Massachusetts Tpk	c 1911
Merritt, John Farm	197 Merritt Rd	1786
Haskell, George House	200 Merritt Rd	1840
Pearsley, Calvin House	284 Monterey Rd	r 1825
Smith, Rev. I. W. House	692 Monterey Rd	r 1859
Cornwell, Chester R. House	853 Monterey Rd	c 1830
Oles, H. V. House	1488 Monterey Rd	1815
Saint Paul's Episcopal Church	North Main Rd	1829
Otis Town Green	North Main Rd	1820
Cornwell, Chester R. House	14 North Main Rd	1830
Day, Moses - Crittendon, A. William H. House	22 North Main Rd	1790
Seymour, Squire Store	27 North Main Rd	1790
Otis Congregational Church	46 North Main Rd	1814
Otis Library and Museum	48 North Main Rd	1949
Filley, Lester House	69 North Main Rd	r 1815
Osborne - Beach House	69 North Main Rd	r 1828
Harmony Hall	70 North Main Rd	1849
Fireman's Hall	72 North Main Rd	1927
	137 North Main Rd	c 1904
Waters - Clark House	144 North Main Rd	r 1843
Millard - Thomas Farm	225 North Main Rd	r 1836
Jones - Stowe - Barton House	266 North Main Rd	c 1858
Bates - Waters - Hayden House	1525 North Main Rd	1840
Bushnell - Jones House	1892 North Main Rd	1780
Baird - Broga - Bristol House	2015 North Main Rd	r 1785
Baird - Dorman - Westover House	2034 North Main Rd	r 1816
Tillotson, Samuel House	2051 North Main Rd	1790

**Table C14 - Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Records for the Town of Otis - Continued**

Norton Road Cemetery	Norton Rd	1785
Old Albany Road - Knox Trail	Old Albany Rd	1764
East Otis Center School	2 Old Blandford Rd	1850
Humason, Arthur House	18 Old Blandford Rd	1840
Gibbs - Pelton, Samuel - Pelton, Ephraim House	75 Old Quarry Rd	r 1782
Pearl, Richard - Lee, Rev. Jonathan House	23 Pearl Rd	r 1795
Strickland, Hiram House	26 Reservoir Rd	c 1840
Larkom, Paul House	390 Reservoir Rd	1760
Hunter, Robert House	Route 8	r 1830
Harrington, Thomas House	Route 8 North	1820
Flint, Loren House	Route 8 South	1828
Palmer, Enoch House	10 Ryan Ln	1800
Waters, Joseph Grocery Store and Post Office	South Main Rd	1840
Porter - Carter - Crittendon Cabinet Shop	South Main Rd	r 1838
Day's Hotel	8 South Main Rd	1815
Pickett and Sears Store	14 South Main Rd	r 1821
Jackson, John House	20 South Main Rd	r 1843
Marshell House Blacksmith Shop	27 South Main Rd	1830
Congregational Parsonage	32 South Main Rd	1910
Jackson Wagon Shop	33 South Main Rd	1833
Spear, John House	46 South Main Rd	r 1805
Calvin - Barker House	60 South Main Rd	1826
Strickland, L. J. House	70 South Main Rd	1829
Porter, H. W. House	73 South Main Rd	1834
Carter, C. J. House	78 South Main Rd	1837
Crittendon, Alanson House	87 South Main Rd	1838
Spelman - Fenn House	92 South Main Rd	r 1856
Kenyon, N. J. House	102 South Main Rd	r 1863
Norton, George J. House	120 South Main Rd	1841
Strickland, Daniel House	998 South Main Rd	r 1807
Gulf Bridge Cemetery	State Forest Rd	1840
West Center Cemetery	Stebbins Rd	1790
Breakenridge, James House	802 Stebbins Rd	1782
Otis Reservoir	Tolland Rd	1867
Otis Reservoir Dam	Tolland Rd	1866
Otis Reservoir Gatekeeper's House	410 Tolland Rd	c 1850
Tolland State Forest - Upper Peninsula Bath House	Tolland State Forest	c 1933
West Otis School House	12 Tyringham Rd	r 1839
Jones, Arthur House	13 Werden Rd	r 1784
Alford, Case House	West Center Rd	1820
Alford, Capt. Roman House	1340 West Center Rd	r 1805
Otis Center Cemetery	West Otis Rd	1777

c=circa construction date estimate r=range construction date estimate. For more detailed construction date information refer to individual MACRIS inventory records for each property available at <http://mhc-macris.net/index.htm>

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Information contained in this portion of Appendix C and in Chapter 10—Open Space and Recreation, has been adapted from the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan. Please see the full text of the Open Space and Recreation Plan for additional information.

Open Space

Open space is defined as land that has not been developed for residential, commercial or industrial uses and includes publicly and privately owned land. Open space often has particular interest to conservation or recreation and includes:

1. Land which contributes to the public water supply
2. Forests, fields, and agricultural lands
3. Wetlands
4. Rivers, streams, and lakes
5. Parks and other recreation lands
6. Wildlife corridors or animal habitats
7. Land which preserves scenic views or town character

As described in previous chapters, Otis has an abundance of natural resources including forest, as well as wetlands, water resources and wildlife habitat (See Chapter 9-Natural and Cultural Resources, as well as the Otis Open Space and Recreation Plan). Moreover the town has a wealth of recreation opportunities that are created by its abundant natural resources, which has led the town to be called the “outdoor playground of the Berkshires” by some.

In total, protected lands in the town of Otis extend across 8,114.16 acres, or 33.3% of all land within the town (see Table C15—Protected Land in Otis, MA).

Land in Otis is protected in a variety of ways and with varying degrees of protection. Conservation and recreation lands in the Town of Otis are protected by four entities, the town, the commonwealth of Massachusetts, local land trusts and private landowners.

Land is considered under permanent protection if it is owned by the state or a local land trust. It may also be permanently protected if the land is subject to a conservation restriction. Within the Town of Otis, many privately owned properties are considered to be under

permanent protection due to conservation restrictions held by local land trusts.

Areas under limited protection include other town-owned parcels such as town owned lands between Route 8 and West Center Road that have been considered as site for the creation of the town’s “100-Acre Park”. Additionally, the town owns a number of undeveloped parcels off Great Woods Road. These parcels were acquired by tax lien and were originally part of a proposed housing subdivision that never came to fruition.

Areas under Chapter 61 (A, or B) tax reduction programs are considered to have temporary protections, as they are privately owned.

All privately owned lands without conservation restrictions or not enrolled in Chapter 61 are considered to be unprotected. For a map of open space parcels and Chapter 61 lands in Otis, please refer to Map 7 inventory of lands of conservation and recreation interest.

Privately Owned Parcels

Privately owned conservation lands in Otis with permanent levels of protection comprise 211.88 acres or 0.87% of all land within the town. These include three privately owned parcels with conservation restrictions held by the Berkshire Natural Resource Council. It should be noted, that unless otherwise stated, private parcels should be considered off limits to public access.

Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B Lands

Chapter 61 is a state program that allows private landowners to manage their properties for forestry (Chapter 61), agricultural (Chapter 61A), or recreational purposes (Chapter 61B) in exchange for reduced taxes. Parcels in the program for the purposes of forestry must be at least 10 acres in size and must have an approved 10-year management plan in place. Once enrolled in chapter 61, the town where the property is located acquires a right of first refusal should the land be put up for sale. This right of first refusal can also be assigned by the town to a land trust or state agency. Chapter 61 lands are not considered permanently pro-

**Table C15 - Protected Land in Otis, MA**

Source: MASS GIS, 2015

Protected Land Category	Acres	% of Protected Land	% of Total Land (24367.91 Acres)
Conservation Organization	93.29	1.15%	0.38%
Municipal			
<i>Town of Otis</i>	266.65	3.29%	1.09%
<i>City of Springfield</i>	245.00	3.02%	1.01%
Land Trust	148.31	1.83%	0.61%
Private	211.88	2.61%	0.87%
State	5788.24	71.34%	23.75%
Subtotal	6753.37	83.23%	27.71%
Chapter 61 lands	1360.79	16.77%	5.58%
Total	8114.16	100.00%	33.30%

tected, as landowners can remove their property from the program at any time. However, the owner must pay a penalty tax if the property is withdrawn from Chapter 61. Chapter 61 properties are privately owned and should be considered off limits to public access without the landowner's permission. Chapter 61 properties in Otis total 1360.79 acres, or 5.58% of all land in Otis (See Table C15). While these properties certainly contribute to the town's rural character and scenic beauty, they currently offer no public access or recreation opportunities.

Public and Non-Profit Parcels

Public and non-profit lands contribute significantly to the open space and recreation opportunities within town. In total, these areas cover 6,541 acres, or 26.8% of all land within the town.

State Owned Parcels

State owned parcels comprise 5,788 acres of land within Otis, or 23.75% of all land within the town. These parcels are composed of two major state forests, (Otis State Forest and Tolland State Forest) and a

portion of a third (Beartown State Forest). However, there is no access to Beartown State Forest from Otis. The nearest access is in Monterey. Additionally, Otis is home to three state owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). These areas are managed by the Department of Fish and Game primarily as wildlife habitat and public access is allowed.

Otis State Forest

Recreation opportunities at Otis State Forest include multiuse trails, hunting, and fishing along streams and at Upper Spectacle Pond. Otis State Forest is comprised of several large blocks scattered through out town. Access to the large tract near Upper Spectacle Pond is available from Route 23. The large block in the eastern side of town can be accessed from Church Hill Road. Otis State forest land houses the public boat launch for Upper Spectacle Pond (although it is located within the town of Sandisfield). Additionally, a small portion of Otis State Forest included the public boat launch for Big Pond, located near Latimer Hill Road in Otis.

Tolland State Forest

Tolland State Forest is one of the major public access points for Otis Reservoir. Recreation opportunities include several multi-use trails, a beach area and public boat launch, day-use area, campground, hunting, and fishing. Off-highway motorcycle use is also allowed in Tolland State Forest.

Long Mountain WMA

This WMA is located between Dimmock and West Center Road and West of Stebbins Road. This is one of the Commonwealth's most recently created WMAs and was purchased by the state from the Lyme Northern Timber Fund in 2013. Much of this WMA is located within land identified in the BioMap2 project as "core habitat" and is considered valuable wildlife habitat for both rare species and other species of special concern.

Otis and Farmington River WMAs

Otis and Farmington River WMAs are used primarily for hunting, fishing and other passive activities such as birdwatching, walking and hiking. Portions of the Farmington River WMA cover both banks of the Farm-



Figure C9—The Otis Skate Park is located immediately behind Town Hall at 1 North Main Road. The Skate Park is paved and offers several ramps, rails and quarter pipes. The Police Garage and Erbe building are visible in the background.

ington River just south of Hayden Pond near Route 8, providing pristine conditions for fishing. Informal walking and hiking trails are located throughout both WMA areas. Access is available from pull-off areas on Route 8, as well as Ed Jones, Merritt, and Johnson Roads.

Conservation Organization Owned Parcels **Izaak Walton Field**

Izaak Walton field is permanently protected 93.29 acre parcel located north of Otis Center Village along Route 8. Access is from Tannery Road. The property is owned by the Izaak Walton League of America, a conservation organization with a focus on water quality and access for fishing. Izaak Walton was an English writer best known for his book “The Compleat Angler”, considered to be one of the first guides on the art

and science of fishing or “angling”. The property abuts the eastern bank of the Farmington River. The property also contains a small baseball diamond. During the summer, concerts and other town events are held at Izaak Walton Field.

Municipally Owned Parcels

Municipally owned parcels of conservation or recreation interest total 511.65 acres in Otis, or 2.1% of all land within the town. This includes 245 acres of land owned by the City of Springfield in the northeast corner of town which is held to protect the public drinking water supply to Cobble Mountain Reservoir located in the towns of Russel and Blandford (Slate, 2008). There is no public access to these drinking water protection lands.



Town of Otis Owned Parcels

The remaining 266.65 acres of municipally owned land are controlled by the Town of Otis. These include 139.39 acres in 3 parcels between Route 23 and West Center Road near Otis Center Village. In the past, the town has had plans to develop these parcels as “100-Acre Park”. Recent planning the Otis Parks and Recreation Commission has centered on the development of trails throughout the parcels and the possible integration of benches, accessible pathways and other features to make the park (or a portion of it) focused on the needs of Otis’ older residents (Robert Rosen, Personal Communication 2015).

The adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) by the town was intended as the funding mechanism by which the town would begin to create 100-Acre Park. The CPA is an optional surcharge on property taxes of 1-3% that can be used by towns to fund projects in the areas of affordable housing, historic preservation, or open space and recreation. However, the adoption of the CPA failed to pass at the 2014 Otis town meeting.

Additionally, the town owns 111.79 acres in 71 parcels north of Great Woods Road. These parcels were acquired by tax lien and were originally part of a proposed housing subdivision. Some parcels in this area have already been auctioned off by the town. There has been some talk of possibly using this area as a town park, due to the proximity of these parcels to the town beach; however, there has been no formal planning (Chris Morris, Personal Communication, 2015).

Town Cemeteries

The Town of Otis owns and manages 8 cemeteries scattered through out town that total 9.8 acres. Six of these cemeteries are listed in the MHC’s MACRIS database (See Table C14 in this appendix for a full list of buildings and areas with historical significance to the town). The largest cemetery is the Otis Center Cemetery located near the intersection of Routes 23 and 8 in Otis Center. While the terrain of this cemetery is steep, it contains paved roadways, and could be used to extend a possible walking loop through the village center.

Big Pond Town Beach

The Otis Town Beach is located at the end of Great Woods Road along the northwest shore of Big Pond. Creation of the town beach was one of the major objectives of the town’s 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The beach is open to Otis Residents and their guests only. Town transfer station permits function as town beach parking permits. Canoes and kayaks may be launched from the town beach; however, launching of power boats is not allowed. Conversations with the Otis Parks and Recreation Commission indicated that while the town beach is well used, many residents simply aren’t aware of it. The Parks and Recreation Commission indicated a need to promote the town beach more thoroughly and possibly install directional signage to guide people to it from Route 23 (Robert Rosen Personal Communication, 2015). For more information on the town beach and beach regulations, please visit: http://www.townofotisma.com/Pages/OtisMA_Rec/townbeach

Other Recreation Areas and Facilities

Town Hall Park

Town Hall Park is located immediately behind Town Hall at 1 North Main Road in Otis. This area contains a gazebo, shade structure, playground equipment, and the town’s skate park. The Otis Skate Park is paved and contains several ramps, rails and quarter pipes that can be used by skateboarders, inline skaters, or BMX bikes. Safety equipment, including helmets and pads, is required of all Skate Park users. For more information on the Otis Skate Park, please visit: http://www.townofotisma.com/Pages/OtisMA_Rec/PLAYGROUNDS/skatepark

Firehouse Park

This small park area is located adjacent to the Main Road Fire Station and was constructed during improvements to Otis Center Village that included the installation of sidewalks. The park contains benches, pathways, and tree and shrub plantings.

Farmington River Walk

Access to this short walking path is located behind the Saint Mary of the Lakes Church (72 North Main Road in Otis) immediately north of the Otis Recreation Center

in Harmony Hall. This path is approximately 1/4 of a mile long and is comprised of a loop that begins at the church parking lot, runs along the bank of the Farmington River and connects back to the parking lot (See Figure C11, this page).

Otis Recreation Center (Harmony Hall)

The Otis Recreation Center is located in Harmony Hall. The center is a well used public asset and includes a gym with weight lifting equipment, a cardio room (including treadmills) and a large second floor which contains pool tables and computers for use by Otis residents. The center holds many classes and programs for Otis residents. Non-residents can use the Recreation Center facilities and attend classes for a small fee.

Current Recreation Center Activities and Programs:

Bingo
Chair Yoga
CPR Training
Golf Clinic
Health Screening
Swing Dance
Letterboxing
Movie night
Pilates
Qi Gong
Tai Chi
Volleyball
Yoga
Passes to area attractions

Otis Ridge Ski Area

The Otis Ridge Ski Area is a private 9-run ski area located northwest of Otis Center Village along Route 23. Otis Ridge has been operating since 1946. Otis Ridge is home to the Grouse House, a restaurant, and in the warmer months sells flowers.

Camp Overflow

Camp Overflow is a privately owned campground located on the western shore of Otis Reservoir. Camp Overflow also contains walking trail, horseshoe pits, a volleyball court, a basketball court, and two playground areas. A boat launch is available to campground guests.

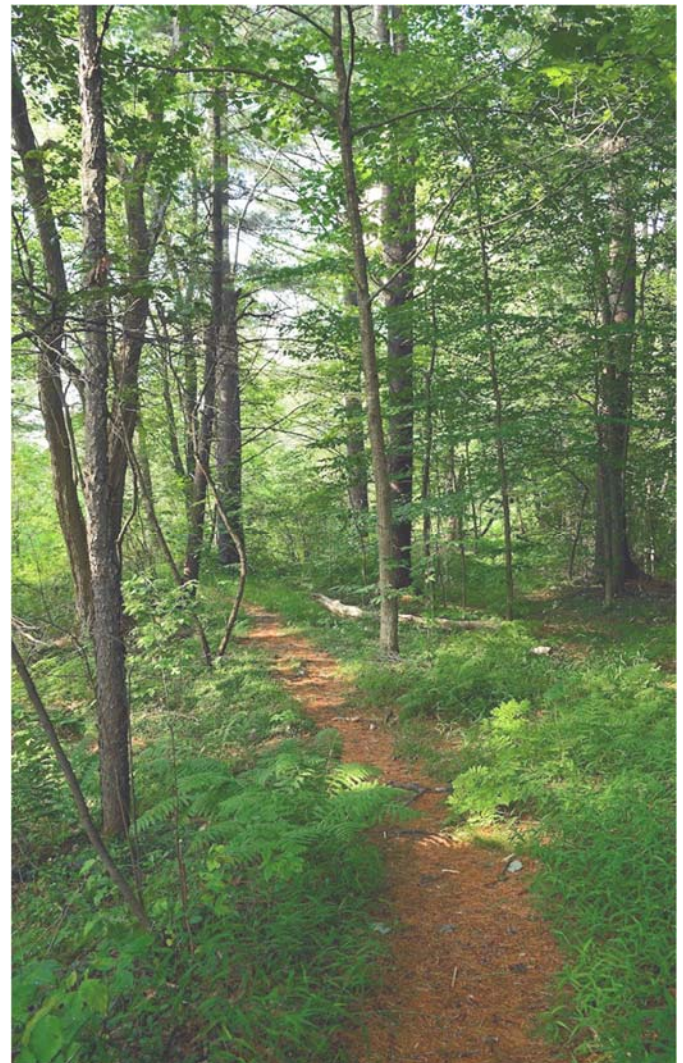


Figure C11—The Farmington River Walk is a short walking path that can be accessed from the parking lot behind the Saint Mary of the Lakes Church at 72 North Main Road in Otis.

Mountain View Campground

Mountain View Campground is a privately owned campground located south of Otis Center Village along Route 8. The campground contains camping areas for RV's and tents and has a swimming pool for guests.

Survey Results

Survey respondents were generally in favor of preserving various types of open space, with forests being the type of open space that respondents said was



most important to protect. Overall, respondents were satisfied with existing recreation areas in town. The top recreation activities of Otis survey respondents, based on a response of “frequently” or “very frequently” were walking (73%), swimming (56%), gardening (55%), boating (52%), canoeing / kayaking (39%).

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APPENDIX D: MGL 41S81D

PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

TITLE VII. CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS

CHAPTER 41. OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS IMPROVED METHOD OF MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Chapter 41: Section 81D. Master plan; economic development supplement

Section 81D. A planning board established in any city or town under section eighty-one A shall make a master plan of such city or town or such part or parts thereof as said board may deem advisable and from time to time may extend or perfect such plan.

Such plan shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan shall be internally consistent in its policies, forecasts and standards, and shall include the following elements:

(1) Goals and policies statement which identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values, goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals.

(2) Land use plan element which identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.

(3) Housing element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives

including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.

(4) Economic development element which identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.

(5) Natural and cultural resources element which provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural and historic resource areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.

(6) Open space and recreation element which provides an inventory of recreational and resources and open space areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas.

(7) Services and facilities element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.

(8) Circulation element which provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.

(9) Implementation program element which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality's regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.

Such plan shall be made, and may be added to or changed from time to time, by a majority vote of such planning board and shall be public record. The planning board shall, upon completion of any plan or report, or any change or amendment to a plan or



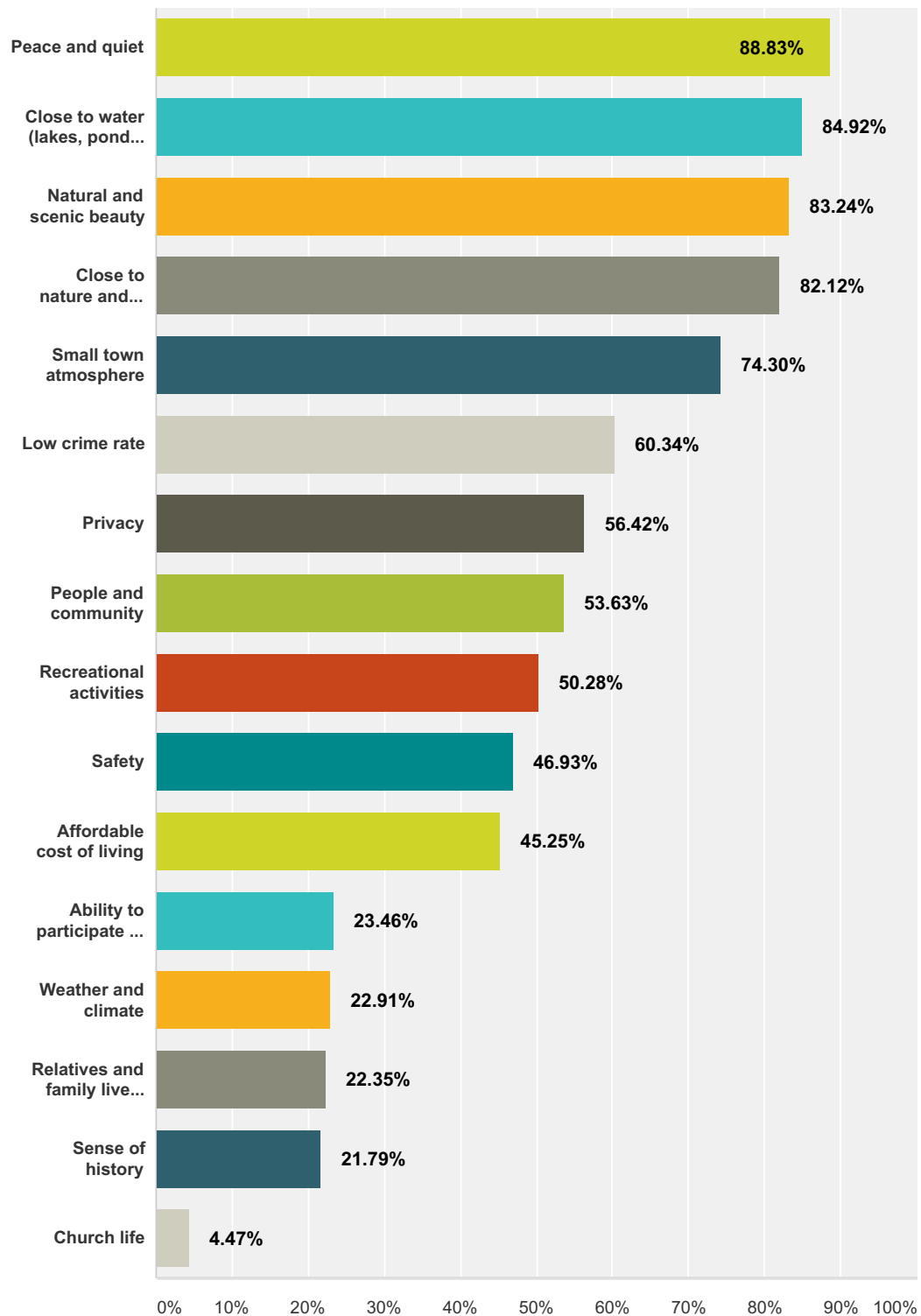
report produced under this section, furnish a copy of such plan or report or amendment thereto, to the department of housing and community development.

A city or town which has an established master or study plan under section eighty-one A and applies for a state grant from the commonwealth shall prepare and keep on file within such city or town an economic development supplement; provided, however, that such city or town shall not be required to prepare such supplement if such city or town has a supplement on file. Such supplement shall be at least one page in length and shall contain the goals of the city or town with respect to industrial or commercial development, affordable housing, and preservation of parks and open space.

APPENDIX E: PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Q1 What aspects of life in Otis do you like the most? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 179 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices

Responses

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Peace and quiet	88.83%	159
Close to water (lakes, ponds, etc)	84.92%	152
Natural and scenic beauty	83.24%	149
Close to nature and wildlife	82.12%	147
Small town atmosphere	74.30%	133
Low crime rate	60.34%	108
Privacy	56.42%	101
People and community	53.63%	96
Recreational activities	50.28%	90
Safety	46.93%	84
Affordable cost of living	45.25%	81
Ability to participate in town government	23.46%	42
Weather and climate	22.91%	41
Relatives and family live nearby	22.35%	40
Sense of history	21.79%	39
Church life	4.47%	8
Total Respondents: 179		

Q2 What is the single greatest aspect of living in Otis? (List only one)

Answered: 164 Skipped: 15

#	Responses	Date
1	Peace and Quiet Peace and Quiet	6/11/2015 1:33 PM
2	Peace and Quiet Peace	6/11/2015 11:18 AM
3	Nature and Wildlife Close to nature and wildlife	6/10/2015 9:32 AM
4	Otis Reservoir The lake	6/10/2015 8:40 AM
5	Natural and Scenic Beauty Beauty	6/10/2015 5:34 AM
6	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	6/9/2015 8:43 PM
7	Natural and Scenic Beauty Recreation Opportunity Natural beauty and recreational possibilities.	6/9/2015 7:16 PM
8	Otis Reservoir Otis Reservoir	6/9/2015 5:55 PM
9	Community It's nice to know everyone	6/9/2015 10:19 AM
10	Natural and Scenic Beauty Natural and scenic beauty	6/9/2015 8:43 AM
11	Access to Water close to water	6/3/2015 11:05 AM
12	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	6/3/2015 10:58 AM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

13	Small Town Feel small town charm	6/3/2015 10:48 AM
14	Access to Water close to water	6/3/2015 10:25 AM
15	Other affordable cost of living	6/3/2015 9:23 AM
16	Access to Water close to water	6/3/2015 9:15 AM
17	Community knowing your neighbor	6/3/2015 9:07 AM
18	Peace and Quiet Small Town Feel quiet small town atmosphere	6/3/2015 8:56 AM
19	Other dont know	6/3/2015 8:48 AM
20	Community Friendships "4 eva"	5/30/2015 11:24 AM
21	Being in the Country Community Rural community	5/30/2015 11:15 AM
22	Peace and Quiet Peace and Quiet	5/30/2015 11:09 AM
23	Small Town Feel smallness	5/30/2015 11:01 AM
24	Nature and Wildlife nature and wildlife	5/30/2015 10:51 AM
25	Community people	5/30/2015 10:40 AM
26	Small Town Feel small town atmosphere	5/30/2015 9:09 AM
27	Natural and Scenic Beauty beauty	5/30/2015 6:20 AM
28	Nature and Wildlife close to nature	5/28/2015 9:09 AM
29	Nature and Wildlife the wildlife	5/27/2015 2:08 PM
30	Nature and Wildlife Peace and Quiet	5/27/2015 9:30 AM
31	Otis Reservoir The reservoir!	5/25/2015 9:15 PM
32	Peace and Quiet Peace and quiet. The relaxing atmosphere.	5/24/2015 9:50 AM
33	Natural and Scenic Beauty Natural & Scenic Beauty	5/23/2015 3:53 PM
34	Affordable Affordable	5/23/2015 11:47 AM
35	Recreation Opportunity recreation	5/21/2015 9:12 PM
36	Natural and Scenic Beauty natural and scenic beauty	5/20/2015 5:21 PM
37	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	5/19/2015 1:43 PM
38	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	5/18/2015 9:28 PM
39	Other Don't know--I've never lived anywhere else.	5/18/2015 7:34 PM
40	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	5/17/2015 9:05 AM
41	Privacy Private	5/15/2015 8:31 PM
42	Nature and Wildlife Close to nature	5/15/2015 7:44 PM
43	Affordable Cost of Living	5/15/2015 3:38 PM
44	Otis Reservoir Clean reservoir	5/14/2015 8:47 PM
45	Peace and Quiet It's Quiet	5/14/2015 8:34 PM
46	Access to Water The Lake	5/13/2015 5:35 PM
47	Natural and Scenic Beauty natural and scenic beauty	5/12/2015 6:12 PM
48	Peace and Quiet Peace and quiet	5/12/2015 5:16 PM
49	Natural and Scenic Beauty Natural and scenic beauty	5/12/2015 10:29 AM
50	Low Taxes Low tax rate	5/11/2015 2:18 PM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

51	Nature and Wildlife Nature and Wildlife	5/11/2015 11:13 AM
52	Access to Water Close to Water	5/11/2015 10:13 AM
53	Nature and Wildlife close to nature	5/10/2015 3:04 PM
54	Low Taxes Low real estate tax rate	5/10/2015 1:35 PM
55	Small Town Feel Small town	5/9/2015 8:35 PM
56	Location Rural without being "remote". In 10 miles you can be where you need to be!	5/8/2015 6:30 PM
57	Other Jacobs pillow, quiet, not snobbish	5/8/2015 5:11 PM
58	Privacy Privacy	5/8/2015 11:49 AM
59	Natural and Scenic Beauty Natural beauty	5/7/2015 9:49 AM
60	Access to Water access to water	5/6/2015 7:08 PM
61	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	5/6/2015 1:28 PM
62	Community People and community	5/6/2015 9:08 AM
63	Being in the Country rural setting	5/5/2015 12:54 PM
64	Access to Water The Lake	5/4/2015 9:32 AM
65	Natural and Scenic Beauty Beauty of the environment	5/2/2015 5:29 PM
66	Natural and Scenic Beauty scenic beauty	5/2/2015 10:44 AM
67	Being in the Country Open Space	5/2/2015 9:01 AM
68	Affordable affordable cost of living	5/2/2015 9:01 AM
69	Small Town Feel Small town atmosphere	5/1/2015 10:55 PM
70	Community the Wood Lands	5/1/2015 6:40 PM
71	Nature and Wildlife Nature and wildlife.	5/1/2015 5:47 PM
72	Community people and community	5/1/2015 5:13 PM
73	Natural and Scenic Beauty beauty	5/1/2015 12:29 PM
74	Being in the Country country	5/1/2015 11:52 AM
75	Being in the Country Nature and Wildlife Being close to the great outdoors.	5/1/2015 11:16 AM
76	Nature and Wildlife Close to nature and wildlife	5/1/2015 9:01 AM
77	Peace and Quiet Serenity	4/30/2015 4:36 PM
78	Close to Family relatives and family nearby	4/30/2015 2:12 PM
79	Small Town Feel Small town atmosphere	4/30/2015 2:04 PM
80	Escape from everyday NYC life	4/30/2015 11:42 AM
81	Small Town Feel Small town atmosphere	4/30/2015 11:36 AM
82	church life	4/29/2015 4:57 PM
83	Peace and Quiet My Log Home in a quiet place	4/29/2015 4:31 PM
84	Access to Water Close to water (lakes, ponds, etc)	4/29/2015 4:20 PM
85	Peace and Quiet Peace and quiet	4/28/2015 1:10 PM
86	Quality of Life Quality of life. Relaxation without stress	4/28/2015 7:50 AM
87	ability to participate in town government.	4/27/2015 11:25 PM
88	Low Taxes Low taxes	4/27/2015 7:28 PM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

89	Small Town Feel Small town atmosphere	4/27/2015 6:39 PM
90	Access to Water Lakes/Streams	4/27/2015 6:18 PM
91	Small Town Feel small town feel	4/27/2015 6:04 PM
92	weather and climate	4/27/2015 3:24 PM
93	Natural and Scenic Beauty Otis Reservoir natural and scenic beauty and the reservoir	4/27/2015 2:03 PM
94	Community Community	4/27/2015 1:14 PM
95	Nature and Wildlife open spaces nature & wildlife	4/27/2015 12:46 PM
96	Nature and Wildlife Mother Nature	4/27/2015 8:53 AM
97	Access to Water Recreation Opportunity Recreational activities on the lake and state forest	4/27/2015 8:47 AM
98	Natural and Scenic Beauty Beauty of the area	4/26/2015 5:48 PM
99	Recreation Opportunity skiing	4/26/2015 2:59 PM
100	Peace and Quiet Quite	4/26/2015 11:52 AM
101	Peace and Quiet Peace and quiet	4/26/2015 8:55 AM
102	Community Friendliness of citizens.	4/25/2015 9:57 PM
103	Community Great community	4/25/2015 8:20 PM
104	Peace and Quiet It is a quiet safe place to live	4/25/2015 7:46 PM
105	Privacy Privacy	4/25/2015 6:28 PM
106	Access to Water Close to water	4/25/2015 1:16 PM
107	Natural and Scenic Beauty Peace and Quiet A great getaway for peace, quiet, and relaxation amid woods, lakes, and hills.	4/25/2015 10:28 AM
108	Nature and Wildlife nature	4/25/2015 10:13 AM
109	Low Taxes reasonable tax rate	4/24/2015 6:09 PM
110	Otis Reservoir Otis Reservoir	4/24/2015 5:18 PM
111	Being in the Country being in the country	4/24/2015 12:59 PM
112	Small Town Feel Small town atmosphere	4/24/2015 9:59 AM
113	Nature and Wildlife Open spaces and woods	4/24/2015 8:53 AM
114	Nature and Wildlife Close to nature	4/24/2015 8:50 AM
115	Community summer community	4/23/2015 7:16 PM
116	Quality of Life Quality of life	4/23/2015 6:17 PM
117	Small Town Feel small town atmosphere	4/23/2015 5:48 PM
118	Otis Reservoir The reservoir	4/23/2015 5:44 PM
119	Small Town Feel Small town atmosphere	4/23/2015 5:32 PM
120	Other less big government	4/23/2015 4:56 PM
121	Other Very little light pollution.	4/23/2015 4:27 PM
122	Small Town Feel sparsely populated	4/23/2015 4:21 PM
123	Otis Reservoir Otis Reservoir	4/23/2015 4:20 PM
124	Privacy anonymity	4/23/2015 3:39 PM
125	Peace and Quiet peace and quiet	4/23/2015 3:12 PM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

126	Access to Water Lakes and ponds	4/23/2015 2:15 PM
127	Peace and Quiet peaceful	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
128	Otis Reservoir Otis Reservoir	4/23/2015 1:51 PM
129	Access to Water Water	4/23/2015 1:48 PM
130	Otis Reservoir Otis reservoir	4/23/2015 1:47 PM
131	Otis Reservoir The reservoir	4/23/2015 1:47 PM
132	Nature and Wildlife The best flora and fauna!	4/23/2015 1:32 PM
133	Natural and Scenic Beauty Small Town Feel The natural beauty and small town feel.	4/23/2015 1:30 PM
134	Community People and Community	4/23/2015 1:29 PM
135	Otis Reservoir We're on Otis Reservoir.	4/23/2015 1:27 PM
136	Natural and Scenic Beauty natural and scenic beauty	4/23/2015 1:09 PM
137	Community Community	4/23/2015 10:48 AM
138	Other The Berkshires, my home in Otis Woodlands	4/23/2015 8:38 AM
139	Otis Reservoir Otis Reservoir	4/23/2015 8:11 AM
140	Recreation Opportunity Recreation	4/23/2015 7:57 AM
141	Location location	4/23/2015 6:37 AM
142	Privacy privacy	4/23/2015 4:48 AM
143	Access to Water Close to water	4/22/2015 11:33 PM
144	Otis Reservoir the reservoir	4/22/2015 11:19 PM
145	Close to Family My family	4/22/2015 10:57 PM
146	Otis Reservoir The Reservoir	4/22/2015 10:48 PM
147	Access to Water The lake	4/22/2015 9:50 PM
148	Access to Water lakes	4/22/2015 8:22 PM
149	Peace and Quiet Peace	4/22/2015 8:16 PM
150	Otis Reservoir The reservoir	4/22/2015 8:01 PM
151	Small Town Feel Small town	4/22/2015 7:57 PM
152	Access to Water Close to lake	4/22/2015 7:48 PM
153	Peace and Quiet peace and quite	4/22/2015 7:37 PM
154	Access to Water The Lake	4/22/2015 7:17 PM
155	Peace and Quiet Peace and quiet	4/22/2015 6:58 PM
156	Close to Family Family	4/22/2015 5:21 PM
157	Other Away from Florida heat and near children	4/22/2015 4:58 PM
158	Peace and Quiet Peace and quiet	4/22/2015 4:25 PM
159	Peace and Quiet peace and tranquility	4/22/2015 3:46 PM
160	Otis Reservoir Otis Reservoir	4/22/2015 2:57 PM
161	Nature and Wildlife Nature	4/22/2015 2:48 PM
162	Small Town Feel Small town feel	4/22/2015 2:45 PM
163	Access to Water The Lake	4/22/2015 2:45 PM

164	Access to Water The Lake	4/22/2015 2:39 PM
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Q3 What do you like least about living in Otis? (List as many items as you like)

Answered: 154 Skipped: 25

#	Responses	Date
1	Nothing None	6/11/2015 1:33 PM
2	Lack of Business/Restaur. grocery store	6/11/2015 11:18 AM
3	Lack of Business/Restaur. Lack of good restaurants nearby	6/10/2015 9:32 AM
4	Lack of Town Services dispose of garbage	6/10/2015 8:40 AM
5	Lack of Town Services Limited recreational programs particularly for children	6/10/2015 5:34 AM
6	Lack of / Bad Internet Infrastructure (need broadband) and some regulations re land use.	6/9/2015 7:16 PM
7	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Otis reservoir not filled by May 1st, distant from a major supermarket	6/9/2015 5:55 PM
8	Climate / Weather Weather	6/9/2015 10:19 AM
9	Lack of Business/Restaur. In the center of town, the closing of Terranova's General Store and the closing of the hardware store has been a big disappointment for locals and visitors alike. It has left quite a void and now many feel that Otis has much less of a town center. Further, the recent conversion of the hardware store to storage units is a poor realization of a vacant space.	6/9/2015 8:43 AM
10	Too remote distance to grocery store	6/3/2015 11:05 AM
11	Change to Town too many people trying to change otis to look like the place where they came from	6/3/2015 10:58 AM
12	Change to Town people trying to change otis into something it is not	6/3/2015 10:48 AM
13	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote lack of restaurants/bars lack of retail shopping emergency health care too far away	6/3/2015 10:25 AM
14	Lack of Business/Restaur. no otis general store. some residents who do not understand the basics of small town basics like community spirit and togetherness. income levels should not be used for actions.	6/3/2015 9:23 AM
15	Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of good shopping	6/3/2015 9:15 AM
16	Too remote distance to grocery store	6/3/2015 9:07 AM
17	Change to Town the push to try to make the town something more than the local (not vacation) people can afford	6/3/2015 8:56 AM
18	Change to Town every so often the local government wants to make this town into a city	6/3/2015 8:48 AM
19	No Privacy Everybody knows your business	5/30/2015 11:24 AM
20	Change to Town People trying to change small town life	5/30/2015 11:15 AM
21	Mosquitos/Biting Insects Black Flies	5/30/2015 11:09 AM
22	Town Government too many things get started and funded just to find out it wont work or its not really what people want	5/30/2015 11:01 AM
23	Town Government politics	5/30/2015 10:40 AM
24	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of affordable high speed internet	5/30/2015 9:09 AM
25	Lack of / Bad Internet lack of technology	5/30/2015 6:20 AM
26	Taxes rising real estate taxes without representation	5/28/2015 9:09 AM
27	Lack of / Bad Internet lack of high speed broadband	5/27/2015 2:08 PM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

28	Taxes Paying taxes and not being able to vote for reforms and being treated as a second class citizen by town officials because I am seasonal resident.	5/27/2015 9:30 AM
29	Lack of Business/Restaur. Lack of community feel for weekenders and descent restaurants!!	5/25/2015 9:15 PM
30	Lack of / Bad Internet Poor internet access; but hoping to see town sign on or Wired West.	5/24/2015 9:50 AM
31	People People	5/23/2015 3:53 PM
32	Other town park, a waste of time and money. A real eyesore	5/23/2015 11:47 AM
33	People crime	5/21/2015 9:12 PM
34	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of internet service lack of restaurants	5/20/2015 5:21 PM
35	Noise / Crowds noise, esp. jetskis, and drunks on jetskis	5/19/2015 1:43 PM
36	Too remote distance to work	5/18/2015 9:28 PM
37	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote All the stores, theaters, doctors, hospitals, and most everything else is at least 1/2hr away. Otis does not do enough for its middle class citizens and provide affordable entertainment for its elderly.	5/18/2015 7:34 PM
38	Nothing none	5/17/2015 9:05 AM
39	Too remote Far from major towns	5/15/2015 8:31 PM
40	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of high speed internet.	5/15/2015 7:44 PM
41	Bad Looking Yards/Homes Some very run down properties	5/14/2015 8:47 PM
42	Too remote Driving so far to get anywhere	5/14/2015 8:34 PM
43	Noise / Crowds constant gunfire and traffic	5/12/2015 6:12 PM
44	Nothing Leaving Otis!	5/12/2015 5:16 PM
45	Lack of Business/Restaur. Lack of amenities	5/12/2015 10:29 AM
46	Climate / Weather weather	5/11/2015 2:18 PM
47	People Contractors	5/11/2015 11:13 AM
48	Lack of Business/Restaur. Not enough commercial establishments	5/11/2015 10:13 AM
49	Nothing none	5/10/2015 3:04 PM
50	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of technological infrastructure and access to high speed internet	5/10/2015 1:35 PM
51	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of technological infrastructure and access to high speed internet	5/10/2015 1:34 PM
52	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Broadband	5/9/2015 8:35 PM
53	Cliques/Clans/Good Ol Boy The "Old Boys Club" . . . however, I will state that this seems to be diminishing as more people (especially younger) are getting involved in town politics, etc.	5/8/2015 6:30 PM
54	Mosquitos/Biting Insects Nothing, black flies	5/8/2015 5:11 PM
55	Lack of / Bad Internet Satellite tv and internet	5/8/2015 11:49 AM
56	People People seem to disregard the leash law simply because we are out in the country. I have had unleashed dogs poop on my property, come up on my porch, and once one came at me when I walking on a street.	5/7/2015 9:49 AM
57	Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of food shopping,	5/6/2015 7:08 PM
58	Lack of Town Services town dump---they require you to recycle but dont supply a recycling bin to take home to collect your items to recycle-	5/6/2015 1:28 PM
59	Climate / Weather weather and climate	5/6/2015 9:08 AM
60	Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of supermarket	5/5/2015 12:54 PM
61	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote To far from shopping	5/4/2015 9:32 AM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

62	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Distance from supermarket and other needed services	5/2/2015 5:29 PM
63	Climate / Weather Not Affordable cost of living weather and climate	5/2/2015 10:44 AM
64	Lack of Business/Restaur. Lack of fine dining	5/2/2015 9:01 AM
65	People people in community	5/2/2015 9:01 AM
66	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Isolated, far from stores,	5/1/2015 10:55 PM
67	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote too far from stores and services.	5/1/2015 6:40 PM
68	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Distance needed to travel for supermarket shopping.	5/1/2015 5:47 PM
69	Too remote isolation	5/1/2015 5:13 PM
70	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote drive to grocery	5/1/2015 12:29 PM
71	Traffic truck traffic thru town	5/1/2015 11:52 AM
72	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Distance to amenities (i.e. Drug Store, Healthcare, Church, etc.)	5/1/2015 11:16 AM
73	Traffic Speeding cars	5/1/2015 9:01 AM
74	Nothing It is a beautiful small town	4/30/2015 4:36 PM
75	Bad Roads Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. internet service choices roads in disrepair lack of restaurants	4/30/2015 2:12 PM
76	Bad Roads Lack of / Bad Internet internet service choices roads in disrepair	4/30/2015 2:04 PM
77	Other As a part time resident, not being treated as equal member of the community and town government	4/30/2015 11:42 AM
78	Nothing Can't think of anything	4/30/2015 11:36 AM
79	Nothing not sure as yet	4/29/2015 4:57 PM
80	Too remote Distance from shopping	4/29/2015 4:31 PM
81	Bad Roads The disrepair and pot holes in the surrounding roads.	4/29/2015 4:20 PM
82	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Lack of proximity to stores, lack of businesses in the Town	4/28/2015 1:10 PM
83	Other Wood furnaces	4/27/2015 7:28 PM
84	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Distance from shopping	4/27/2015 6:39 PM
85	Not Affordable cost of daily food	4/27/2015 6:20 PM
86	Cliques/Clans/Good Ol Boy Clannishness of long time residents / absence of diversity	4/27/2015 6:18 PM
87	Lack of Business/Restaur. few shops, stores, resturantes	4/27/2015 6:04 PM
88	Nothing love all of otis just like it is	4/27/2015 3:24 PM
89	Nothing none	4/27/2015 2:03 PM
90	Cliques/Clans/Good Ol Boy Good Old Boys	4/27/2015 1:14 PM
91	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. no high speed internet, no public transportation, lack of businesses & eateries	4/27/2015 12:46 PM
92	Lack of Business/Restaur. No Jobs It's not easy getting to necessary shopping & I had to travel to get to a decent job.	4/27/2015 8:53 AM
93	Too remote Distant from stores.	4/27/2015 8:47 AM
94	Nothing Beauty, friendly people, small town attitude	4/26/2015 5:48 PM
95	Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of shopping	4/26/2015 2:59 PM
96	Lack of Business/Restaur. Not enough stores and resturants	4/26/2015 11:52 AM
97	Lack of Business/Restaur. Lack of restaurants	4/26/2015 8:55 AM

Otis Master Plan Survey

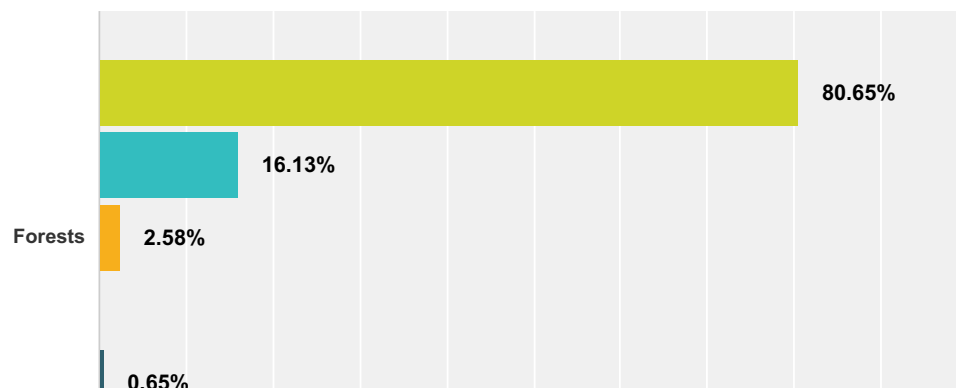
All Survey Responses

98	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of high speed internet	4/25/2015 9:57 PM
99	Town Government Lack of communication between Town Hall and the community	4/25/2015 8:20 PM
100	Taxes No return for the amount of taxes	4/25/2015 6:28 PM
101	Bad Looking Yards/Homes No town regulations. Unregistered rusted out vehicles/ trash in yards, brings down my property value.	4/25/2015 1:16 PM
102	Lack of Business/Restaur. Limited availability of nearby restaurants, convenience stores (esp. off-season)	4/25/2015 10:28 AM
103	Too remote Distance required to travel to Pharmacy, Supemarket, etc.	4/24/2015 6:09 PM
104	Too remote Distance from stores, etc.	4/24/2015 5:18 PM
105	Lack of / Bad Internet no affordable internet, nor any cell phone access at all, where we live	4/24/2015 12:59 PM
106	Not Affordable Otis is not an affordable place to live, especially if you are just out of school or elderly...AND there is no affordable housing.	4/24/2015 9:59 AM
107	Other Church signs on the green	4/24/2015 8:53 AM
108	Noise / Crowds Abundance of motorized noisy recreational toys	4/24/2015 8:50 AM
109	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of internet and cable TV access	4/23/2015 7:16 PM
110	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. No high speed internet! Lack of restaurants near by. Lack of drug store type accessories close by.	4/23/2015 6:17 PM
111	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. No internet, little shopping, poor restaurants, access to the mass. pike	4/23/2015 5:44 PM
112	Too remote Nothing really. Perhaps the distance we need to travel to larger cities/locations. (i.e. it takes 45 minutes to get anywhere. However, we view that as a "high quality problem!"	4/23/2015 5:32 PM
113	No Jobs not enough jobs	4/23/2015 4:56 PM
114	Too remote Long bus rides for schooling.	4/23/2015 4:27 PM
115	Climate / Weather harsh winter, tourists, hunters	4/23/2015 4:21 PM
116	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of DSL/CABLE.	4/23/2015 4:20 PM
117	Other solitude & WILD animals	4/23/2015 3:39 PM
118	Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of services	4/23/2015 3:12 PM
119	Lack of / Bad Internet Crappy internet	4/23/2015 2:15 PM
120	Too remote distance to town	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
121	Lack of / Bad Internet No high speed internet	4/23/2015 1:51 PM
122	Lack of Business/Restaur. No nightlife in town	4/23/2015 1:48 PM
123	Taxes As a part-time resident I feel I pay a disproportionate amount of taxes based on services received. The inability to rid the community of abandoned buildings and other eyesores.	4/23/2015 1:47 PM
124	Taxes Taxes are higher than should be based on services and home is taxed as year round when it is not. Only seasonal cottage.	4/23/2015 1:47 PM
125	Climate / Weather The weather.	4/23/2015 1:32 PM
126	Too remote A bit far from "city" activities (I can't have it both ways).	4/23/2015 1:30 PM
127	Change to Town Changing from a small town to a more urban environment	4/23/2015 1:29 PM
128	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Few services and restaurants. Need to go to Lee, Great Barrington, or Lenox to shop, go to a well-equipped gym, a drug store I get very very tired of the constant driving back and forth.	4/23/2015 1:27 PM
129	Small Town Gossip small town gossip	4/23/2015 1:09 PM
130	Lack of Business/Restaur. Lack of shopping	4/23/2015 10:48 AM

131	Too remote Distances to travel but the rides are beautiful and no traffic hassles	4/23/2015 8:38 AM
132	Bad Roads Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. Poor convenience of goods and services Digital wasteland bad roads	4/23/2015 8:11 AM
133	Lack of Business/Restaur. To far from shopping malls	4/23/2015 7:57 AM
134	Mosquitos/Biting Insects Mail delivery, lack of. Mosquitoes, may flies	4/23/2015 6:37 AM
135	Climate / Weather weather and climate	4/23/2015 4:48 AM
136	Too remote Distance from everything makes things challenging.	4/22/2015 11:33 PM
137	No Privacy everybody knows your business	4/22/2015 11:19 PM
138	Lack of / Bad Internet Small Town Gossip Too remote Driving. Small town political gossip, bs & thinking. Long waits for what shouldn't be. no internet or a bill for "internet service" that is equal to a mortgage payment.	4/22/2015 10:57 PM
139	Lack of Town Services Taking trash to dump	4/22/2015 10:48 PM
140	Climate / Weather Snow	4/22/2015 8:22 PM
141	Lack of Business/Restaur. Too remote Rough winters and far from shopping	4/22/2015 8:16 PM
142	Taxes High taxes and no benefits (such as trash pick up)	4/22/2015 8:01 PM
143	Too remote too far from civilization	4/22/2015 7:57 PM
144	Bad Roads roads are in disarray should get out and fix them!!!! police department that only works part time!	4/22/2015 7:37 PM
145	Other People from Ny	4/22/2015 7:17 PM
146	Too remote Far from major grocery store	4/22/2015 6:58 PM
147	Lack of / Bad Internet No cable/ internet	4/22/2015 6:53 PM
148	Bad Looking Yards/Homes The way people keep their yards and homes. Disgraceful dump is cleaner and neater. Junk all over the place. It costs nothing to keep your yRd clean and neat	4/22/2015 5:50 PM
149	Climate / Weather weather and climate in winter	4/22/2015 4:58 PM
150	Other Not all property owners have water rites	4/22/2015 4:25 PM
151	Lack of / Bad Internet Lack of Business/Restaur. lack of resources: cable TV, internet, grocery stores, restaurants.	4/22/2015 3:46 PM
152	Noise / Crowds Jetskis, lake congestion, pollution, snow mobiles.	4/22/2015 2:48 PM
153	Lack of / Bad Internet No affordable home internet	4/22/2015 2:45 PM
154	Lack of Business/Restaur. Not much - wish there was a way to help small business thrive.	4/22/2015 2:39 PM

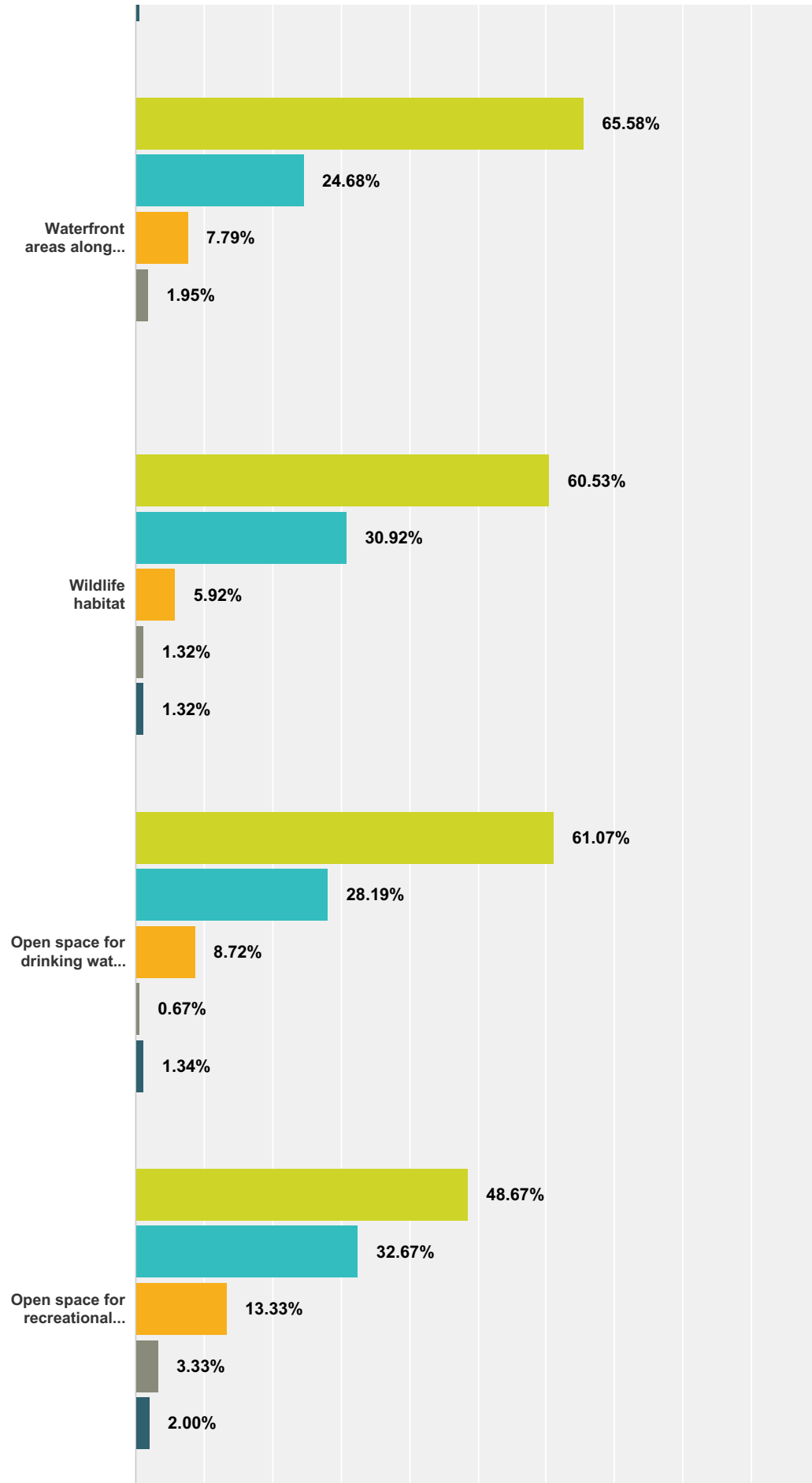
Q4 How important is it to conserve the following types of open space?

Answered: 156 Skipped: 23



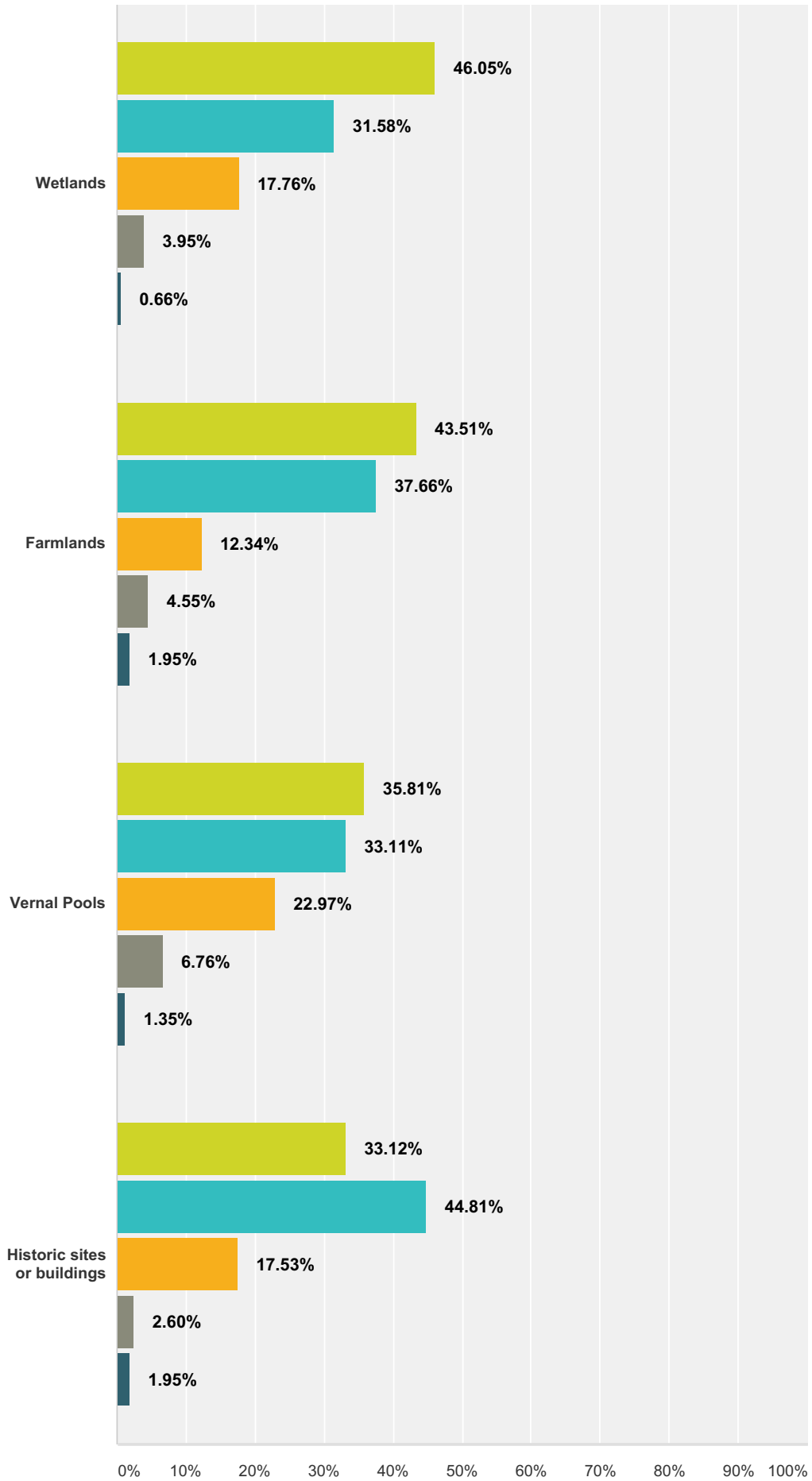
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

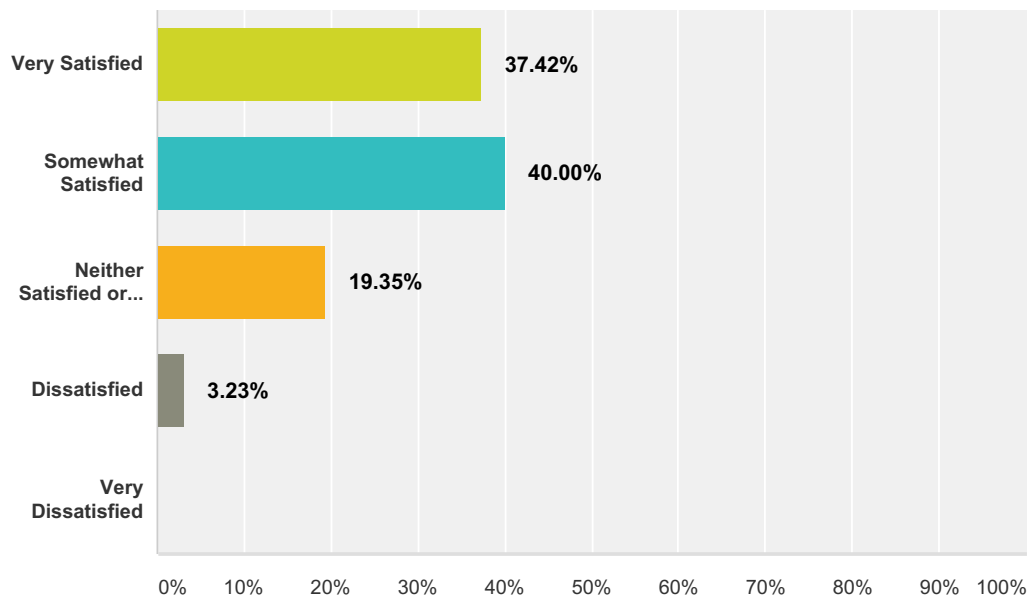
All Survey Responses

■ Most important
 ■ Somewhat important
 ■ Neither important or unimportant
 ■ Somewhat unimportant
 ■ Not important at all

	Most important	Somewhat important	Neither important or unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Not important at all	Total
Forests	80.65% 125	16.13% 25	2.58% 4	0.00% 0	0.65% 1	155
Waterfront areas along rivers, ponds and lakes	65.58% 101	24.68% 38	7.79% 12	1.95% 3	0.00% 0	154
Wildlife habitat	60.53% 92	30.92% 47	5.92% 9	1.32% 2	1.32% 2	152
Open space for drinking water needs	61.07% 91	28.19% 42	8.72% 13	0.67% 1	1.34% 2	149
Open space for recreational needs	48.67% 73	32.67% 49	13.33% 20	3.33% 5	2.00% 3	150
Wetlands	46.05% 70	31.58% 48	17.76% 27	3.95% 6	0.66% 1	152
Farmlands	43.51% 67	37.66% 58	12.34% 19	4.55% 7	1.95% 3	154
Vernal Pools	35.81% 53	33.11% 49	22.97% 34	6.76% 10	1.35% 2	148
Historic sites or buildings	33.12% 51	44.81% 69	17.53% 27	2.60% 4	1.95% 3	154

Q5 How satisfied are you with existing recreation areas in Otis?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 24



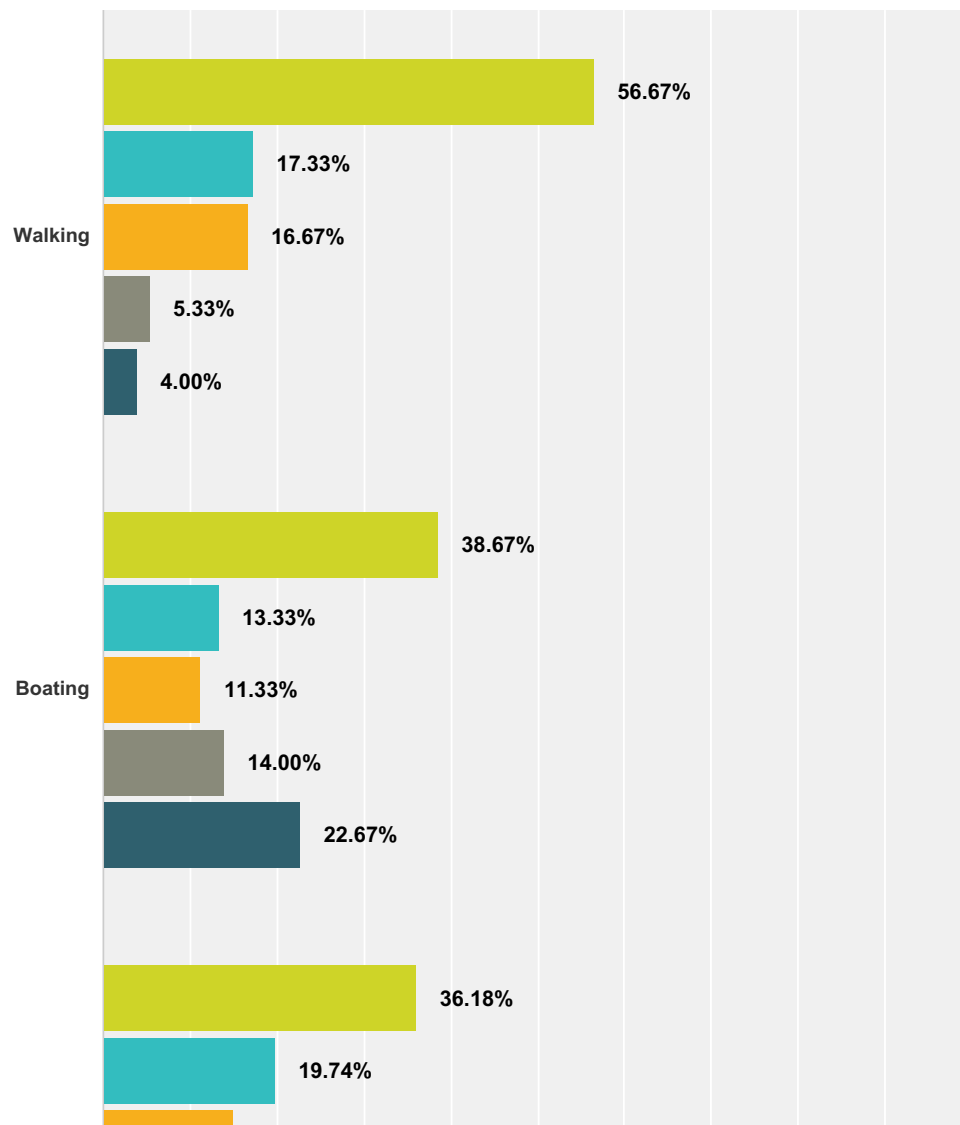
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Satisfied	37.42%	58
Somewhat Satisfied	40.00%	62
Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	19.35%	30
Dissatisfied	3.23%	5
Very Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Total		155

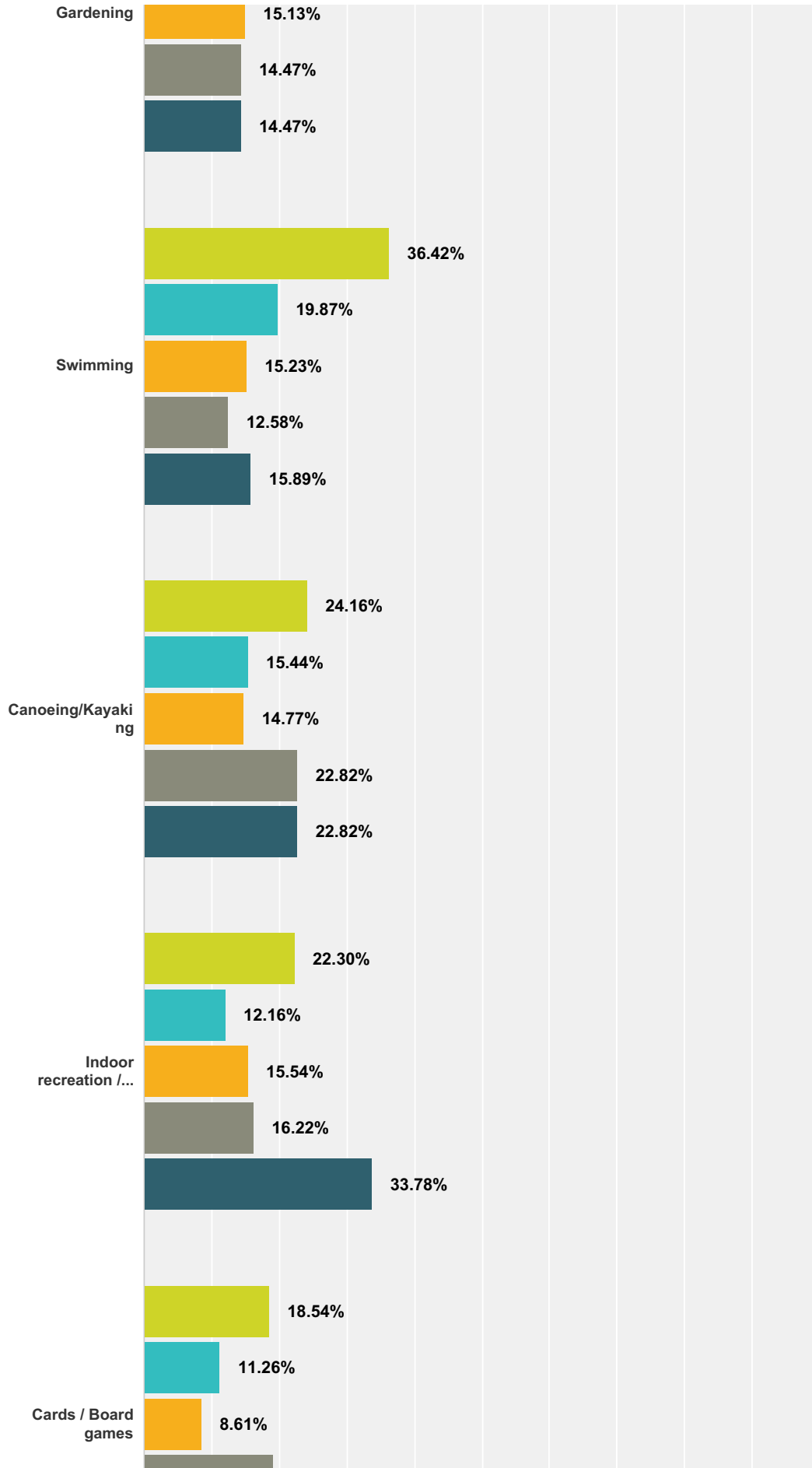
Q6 How often do you participate in each of these recreational activities in Otis per year? For winter or summer activities, please indicate the number of times per season that you participate. (Answer all items)

Answered: 156 Skipped: 23



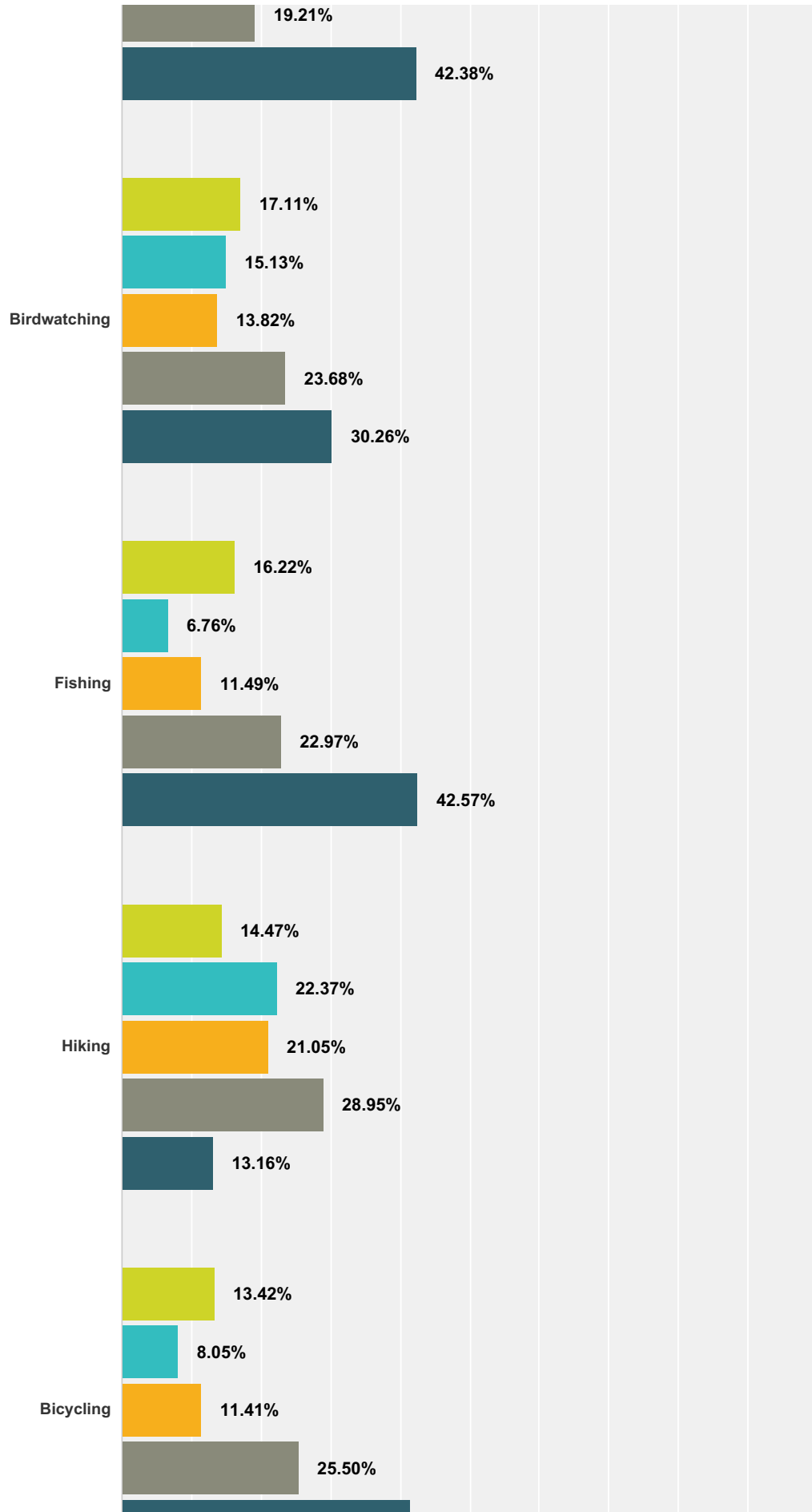
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



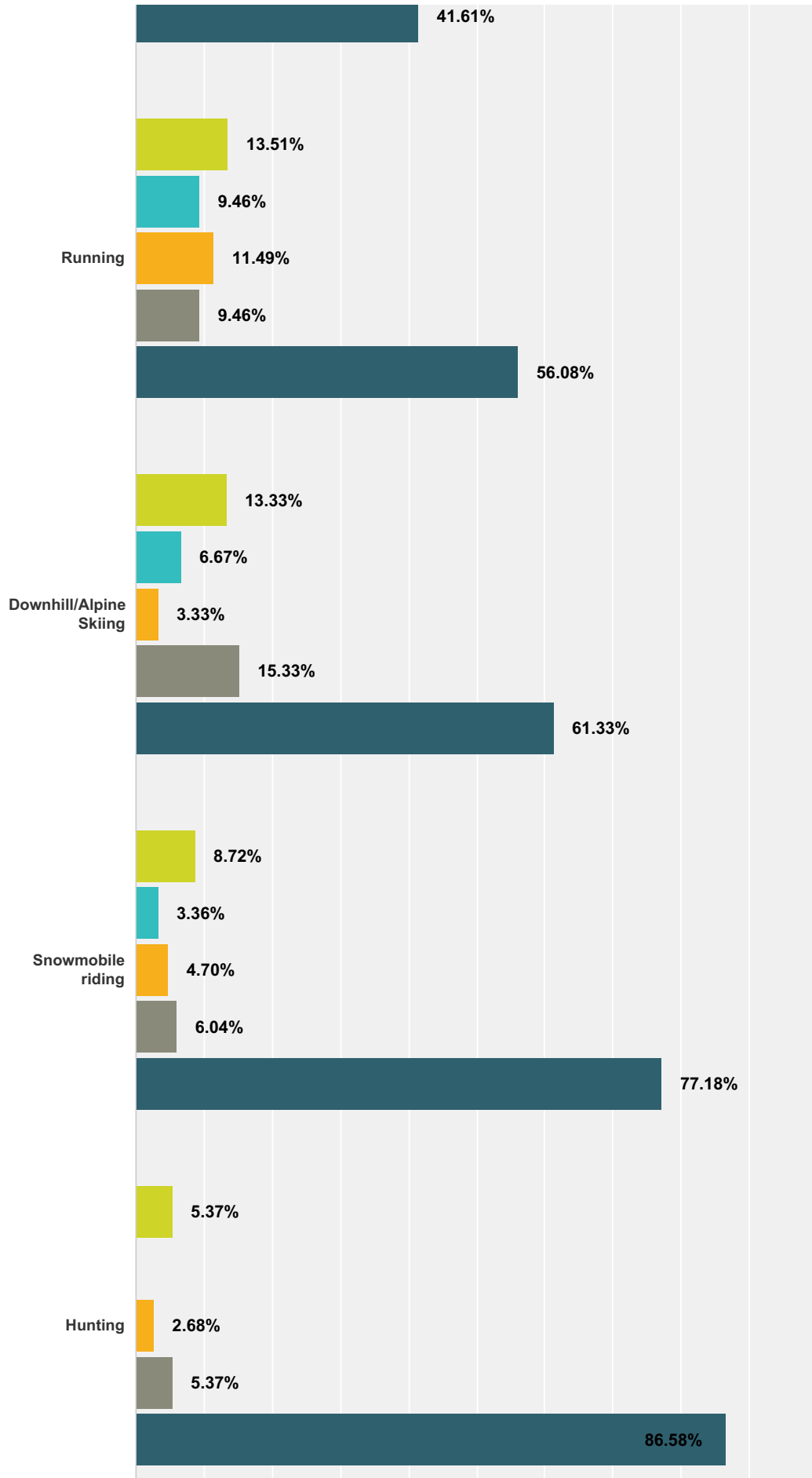
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



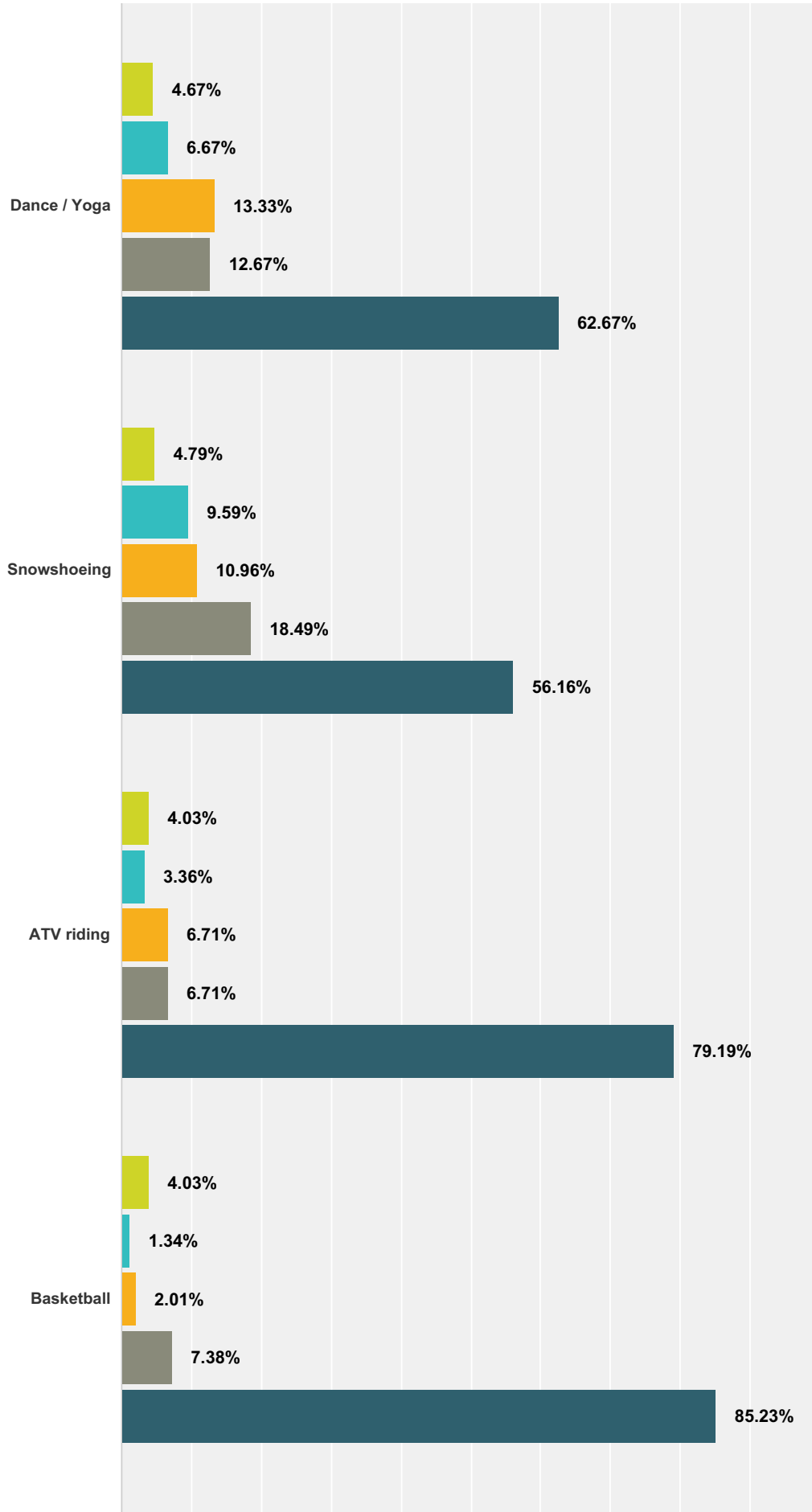
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



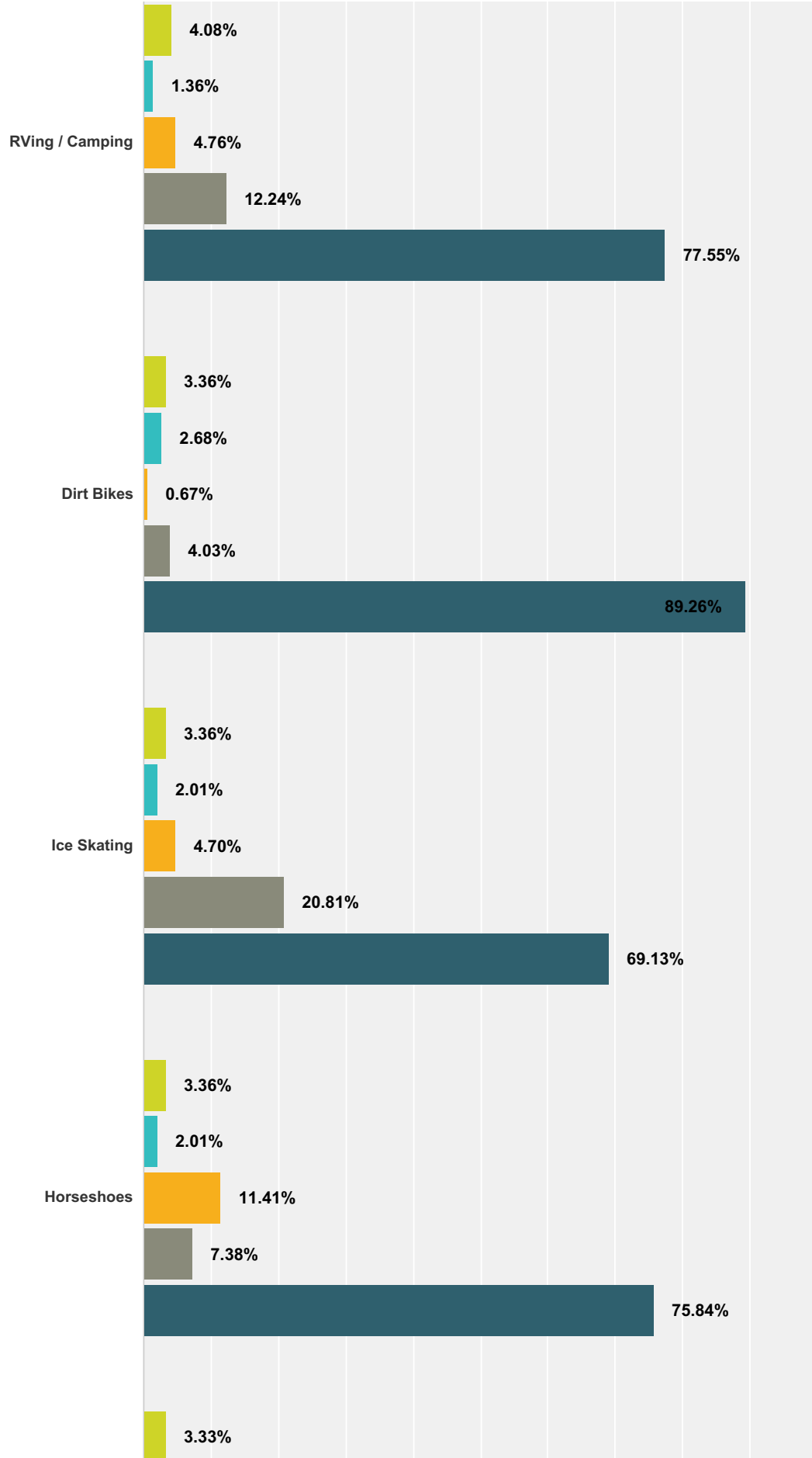
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



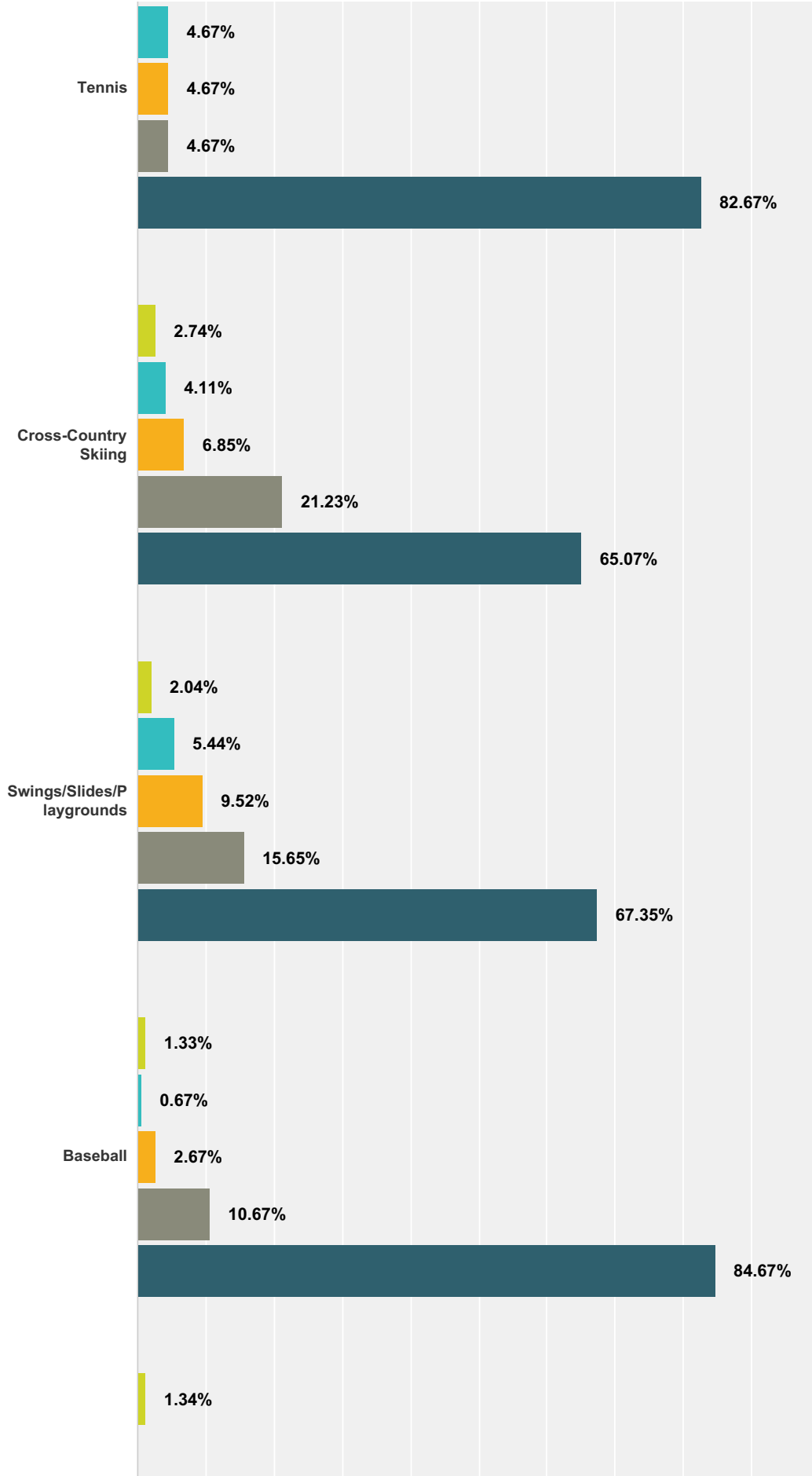
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



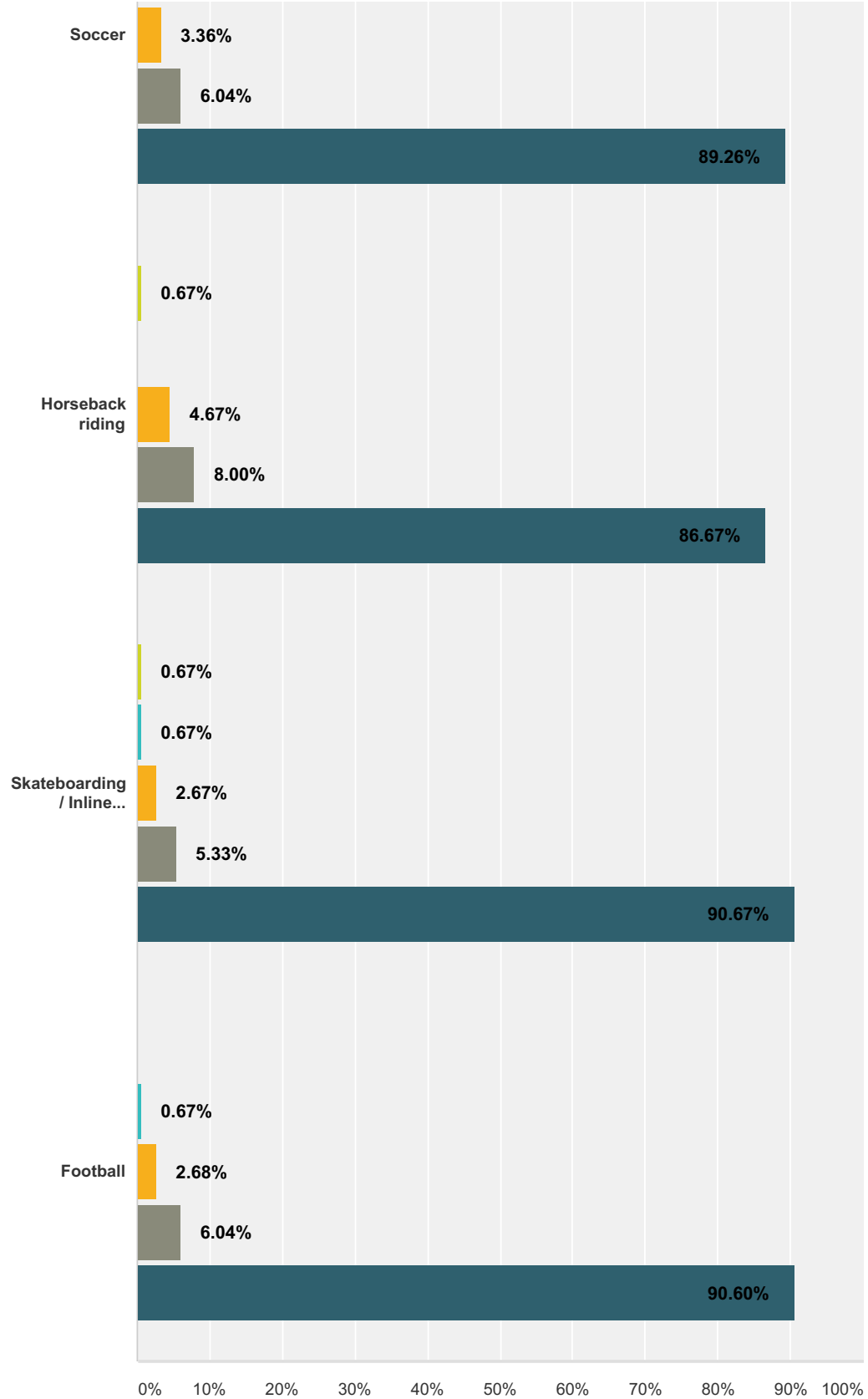
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All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



■ Very Frequently (16+ times per season/year)
 ■ Frequently (11-15 times per season/year)
 ■ Occasionally (6-10 times per season/year)
 ■ Sometimes (1-5 times per season/year)
 ■ Never

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

	Very Frequently (16+ times per season/year)	Frequently (11-15 times per season/year)	Occasionally (6-10 times per season/year)	Sometimes (1-5 times per season/year)	Never	Total
Walking	56.67% 85	17.33% 26	16.67% 25	5.33% 8	4.00% 6	150
Boating	38.67% 58	13.33% 20	11.33% 17	14.00% 21	22.67% 34	150
Gardening	36.18% 55	19.74% 30	15.13% 23	14.47% 22	14.47% 22	152
Swimming	36.42% 55	19.87% 30	15.23% 23	12.58% 19	15.89% 24	151
Canoeing/Kayaking	24.16% 36	15.44% 23	14.77% 22	22.82% 34	22.82% 34	149
Indoor recreation / Fitness activities	22.30% 33	12.16% 18	15.54% 23	16.22% 24	33.78% 50	148
Cards / Board games	18.54% 28	11.26% 17	8.61% 13	19.21% 29	42.38% 64	151
Birdwatching	17.11% 26	15.13% 23	13.82% 21	23.68% 36	30.26% 46	152
Fishing	16.22% 24	6.76% 10	11.49% 17	22.97% 34	42.57% 63	148
Hiking	14.47% 22	22.37% 34	21.05% 32	28.95% 44	13.16% 20	152
Bicycling	13.42% 20	8.05% 12	11.41% 17	25.50% 38	41.61% 62	149
Running	13.51% 20	9.46% 14	11.49% 17	9.46% 14	56.08% 83	148
Downhill/Alpine Skiing	13.33% 20	6.67% 10	3.33% 5	15.33% 23	61.33% 92	150
Snowmobile riding	8.72% 13	3.36% 5	4.70% 7	6.04% 9	77.18% 115	149
Hunting	5.37% 8	0.00% 0	2.68% 4	5.37% 8	86.58% 129	149
Dance / Yoga	4.67% 7	6.67% 10	13.33% 20	12.67% 19	62.67% 94	150
Snowshoeing	4.79% 7	9.59% 14	10.96% 16	18.49% 27	56.16% 82	146
ATV riding	4.03% 6	3.36% 5	6.71% 10	6.71% 10	79.19% 118	149
Basketball	4.03% 6	1.34% 2	2.01% 3	7.38% 11	85.23% 127	149
RVing / Camping	4.08% 6	1.36% 2	4.76% 7	12.24% 18	77.55% 114	147
Dirt Bikes	3.36% 5	2.68% 4	0.67% 1	4.03% 6	89.26% 133	149
Ice Skating	3.36% 5	2.01% 3	4.70% 7	20.81% 31	69.13% 103	149

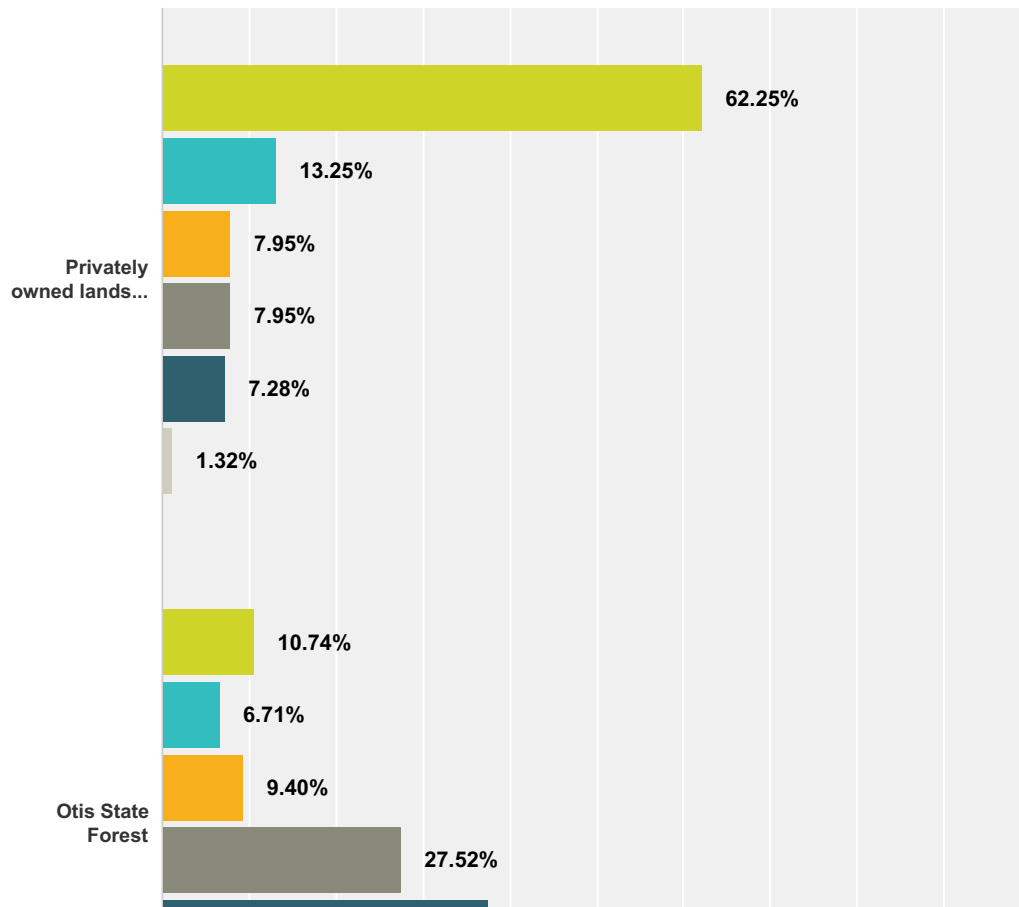
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Horseshoes	3.36% 5	2.01% 3	11.41% 17	7.38% 11	75.84% 113	149
Tennis	3.33% 5	4.67% 7	4.67% 7	4.67% 7	82.67% 124	150
Cross-Country Skiing	2.74% 4	4.11% 6	6.85% 10	21.23% 31	65.07% 95	146
Swings/Slides/Playgrounds	2.04% 3	5.44% 8	9.52% 14	15.65% 23	67.35% 99	147
Baseball	1.33% 2	0.67% 1	2.67% 4	10.67% 16	84.67% 127	150
Soccer	1.34% 2	0.00% 0	3.36% 5	6.04% 9	89.26% 133	149
Horseback riding	0.67% 1	0.00% 0	4.67% 7	8.00% 12	86.67% 130	150
Skateboarding / Inline Skating / Rollerblading	0.67% 1	0.67% 1	2.67% 4	5.33% 8	90.67% 136	150
Football	0.00% 0	0.67% 1	2.68% 4	6.04% 9	90.60% 135	149

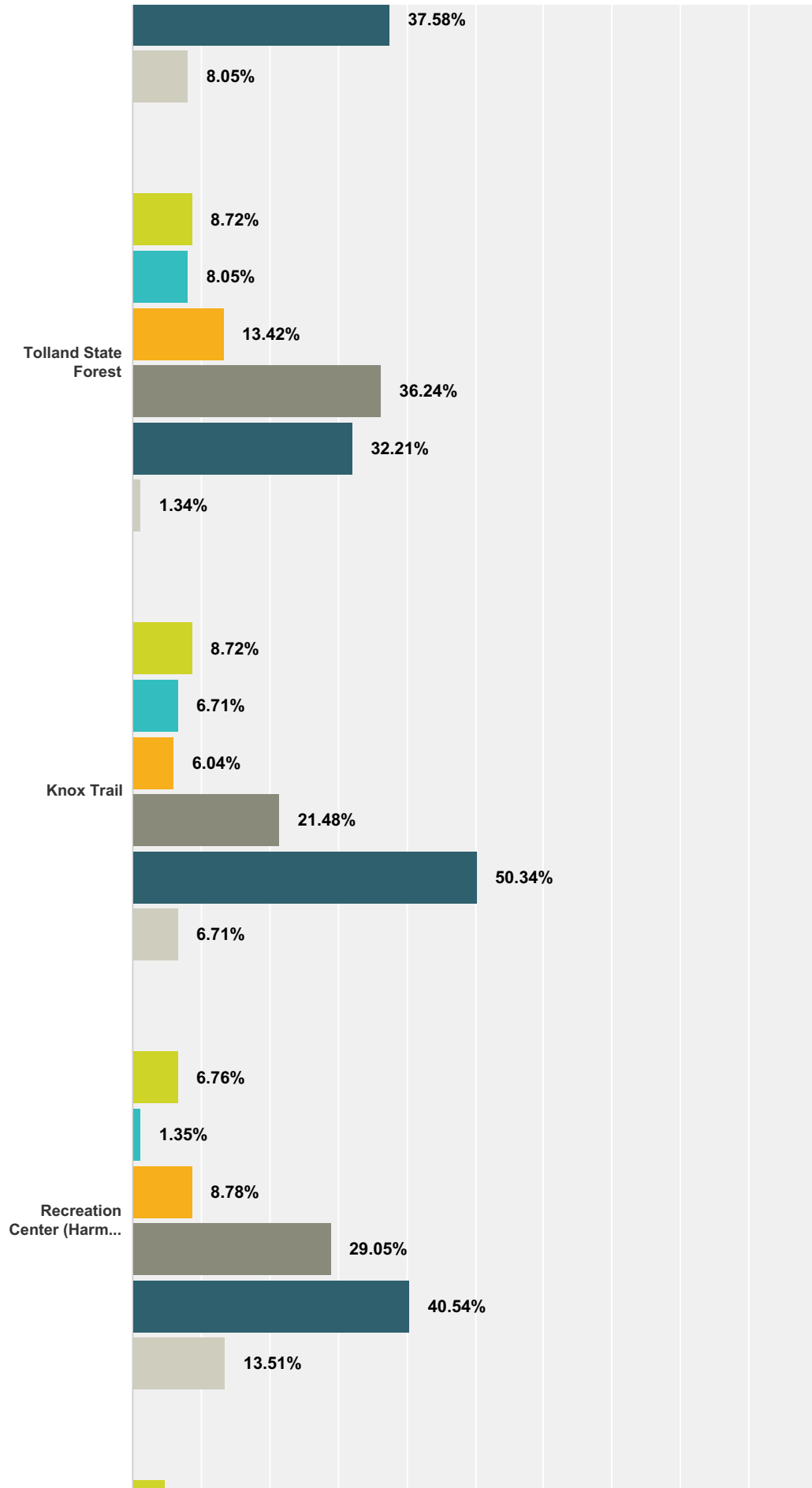
Q7 How often do you use the following recreation areas / amenities per year? (Answer all items)

Answered: 155 Skipped: 24



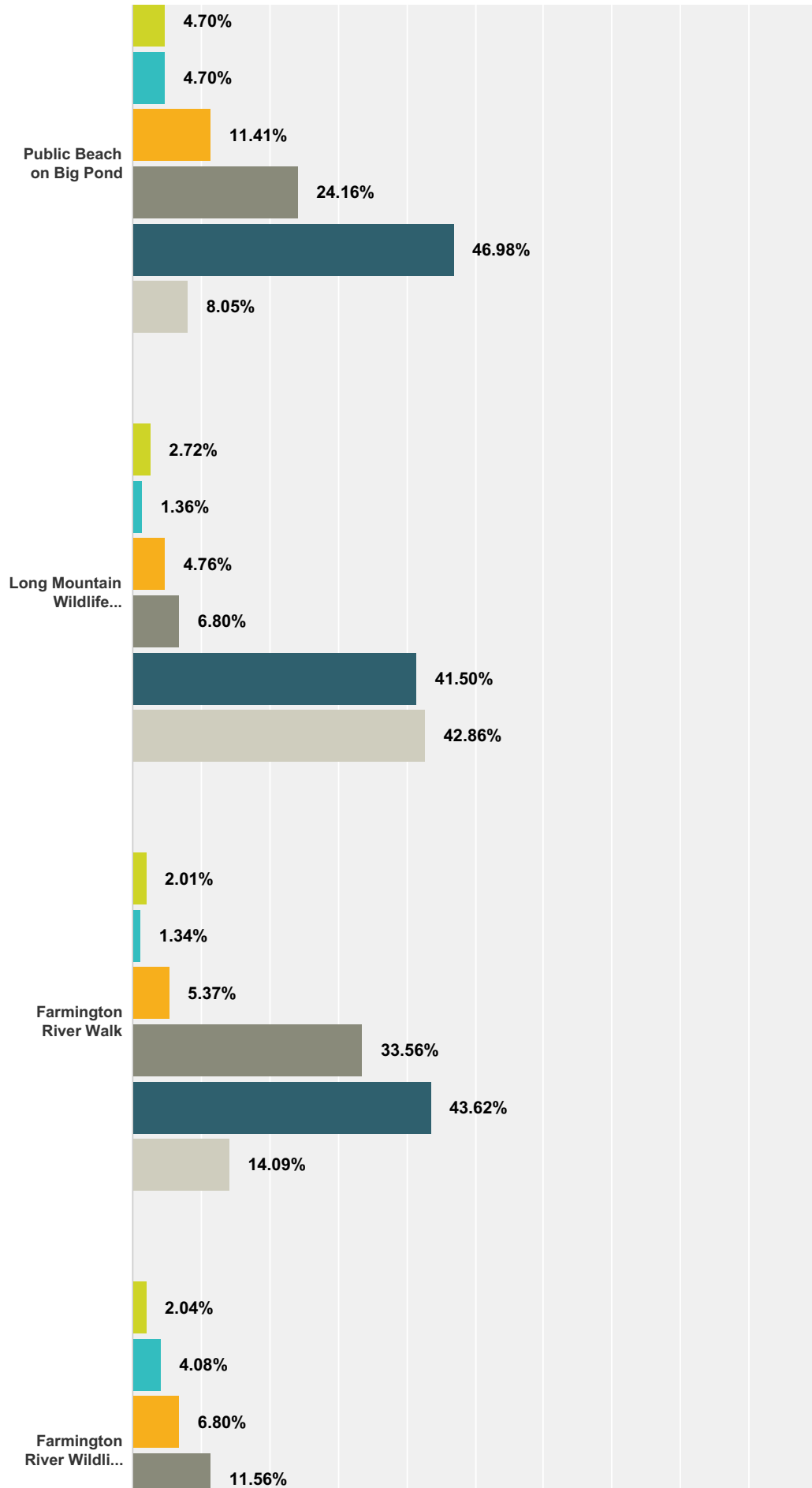
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



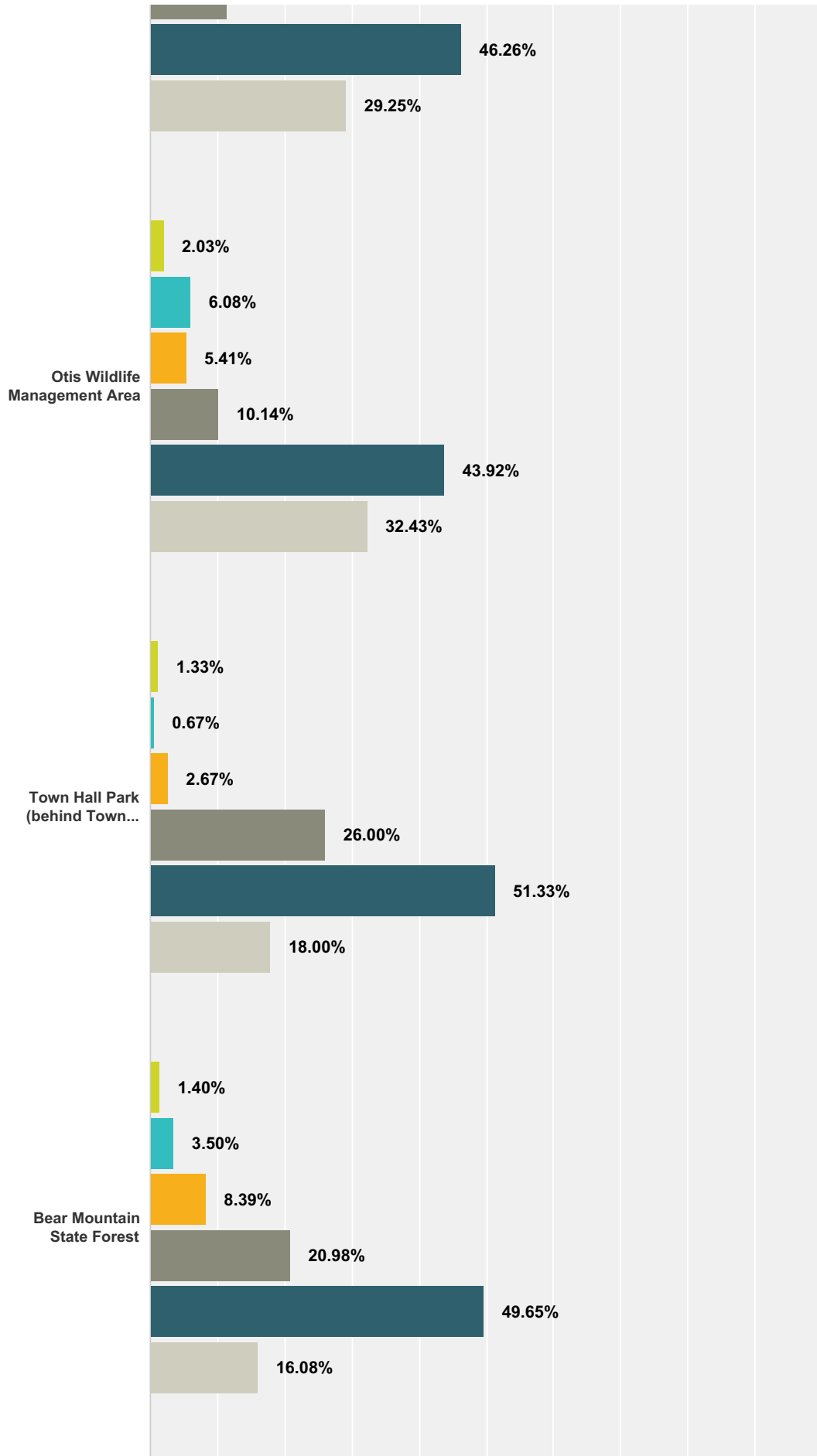
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



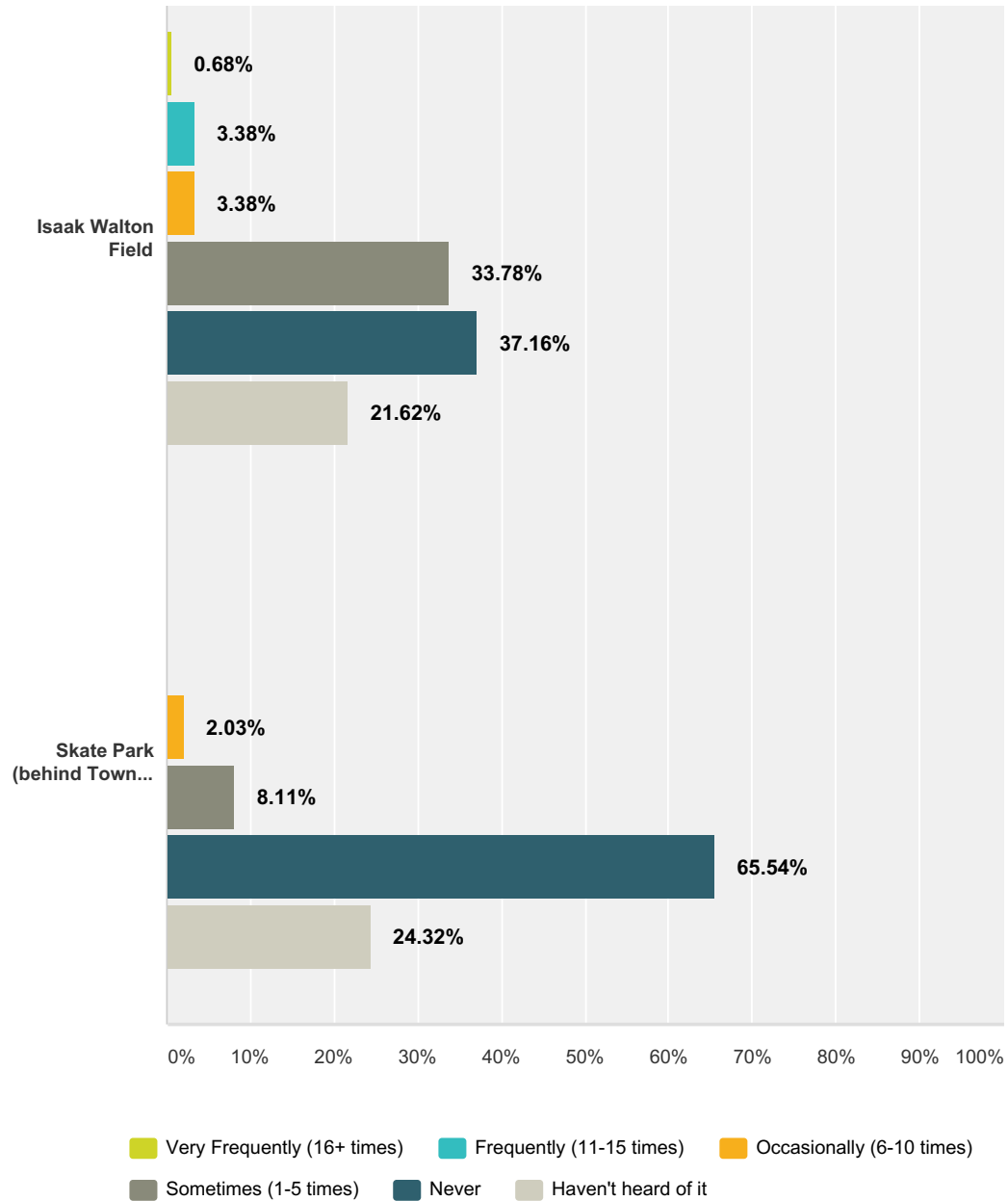
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



	Very Frequently (16+ times)	Frequently (11-15 times)	Occasionally (6-10 times)	Sometimes (1-5 times)	Never	Haven't heard of it	Total
Privately owned lands (your land or a friend, neighbor, or relative's land)	62.25% 94	13.25% 20	7.95% 12	7.95% 12	7.28% 11	1.32% 2	151
Otis State Forest	10.74% 16	6.71% 10	9.40% 14	27.52% 41	37.58% 56	8.05% 12	149
Tolland State Forest	8.72% 13	8.05% 12	13.42% 20	36.24% 54	32.21% 48	1.34% 2	149
Knox Trail	8.72% 13	6.71% 10	6.04% 9	21.48% 32	50.34% 75	6.71% 10	149
Recreation Center (Harmony Hall)	6.76% 10	1.35% 2	8.78% 13	29.05% 43	40.54% 60	13.51% 20	148
Public Beach on Big Pond	4.70% 7	4.70% 7	11.41% 17	24.16% 36	46.98% 70	8.05% 12	149

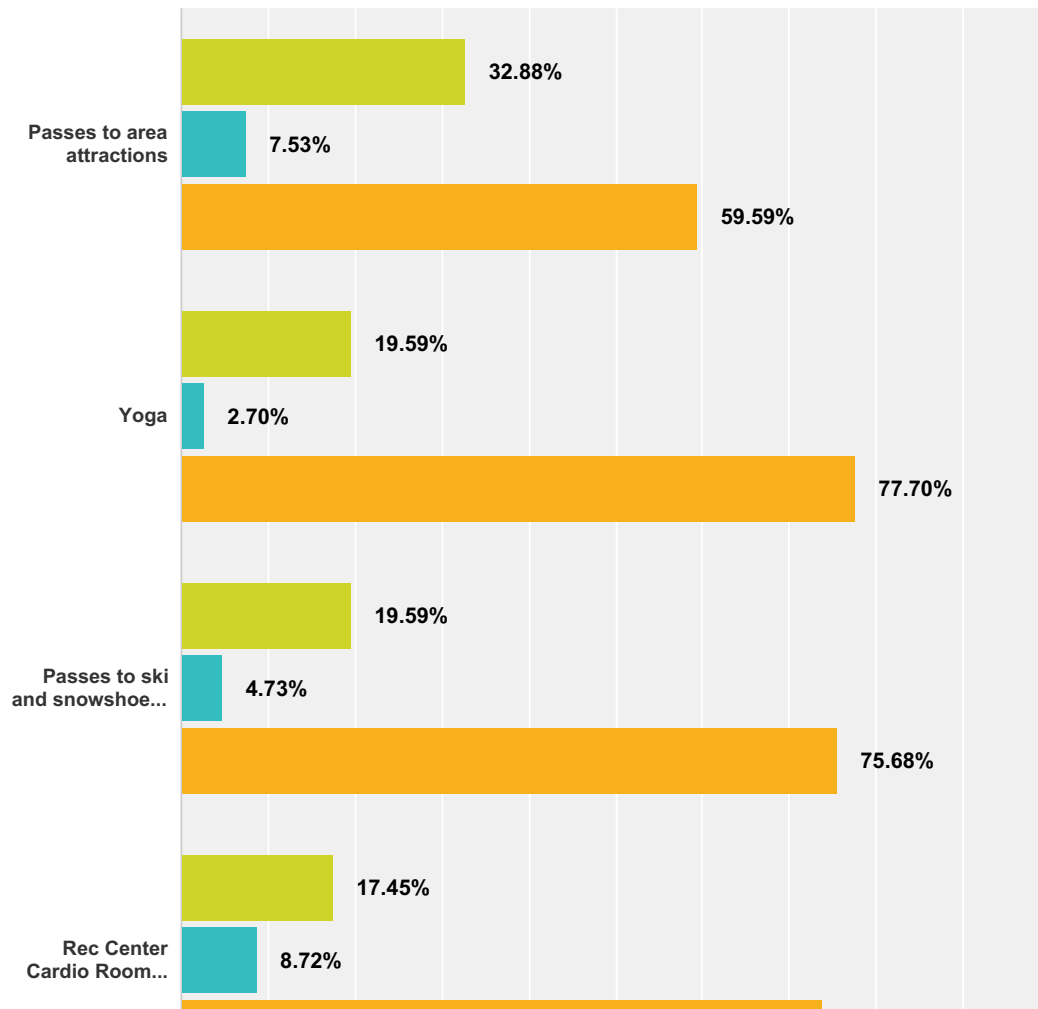
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Long Mountain Wildlife Management Area	2.72% 4	1.36% 2	4.76% 7	6.80% 10	41.50% 61	42.86% 63	147
Farmington River Walk	2.01% 3	1.34% 2	5.37% 8	33.56% 50	43.62% 65	14.09% 21	149
Farmington River Wildlife Management Area	2.04% 3	4.08% 6	6.80% 10	11.56% 17	46.26% 68	29.25% 43	147
Otis Wildlife Management Area	2.03% 3	6.08% 9	5.41% 8	10.14% 15	43.92% 65	32.43% 48	148
Town Hall Park (behind Town Hall)	1.33% 2	0.67% 1	2.67% 4	26.00% 39	51.33% 77	18.00% 27	150
Bear Mountain State Forest	1.40% 2	3.50% 5	8.39% 12	20.98% 30	49.65% 71	16.08% 23	143
Isaak Walton Field	0.68% 1	3.38% 5	3.38% 5	33.78% 50	37.16% 55	21.62% 32	148
Skate Park (behind Town Hall)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2.03% 3	8.11% 12	65.54% 97	24.32% 36	148

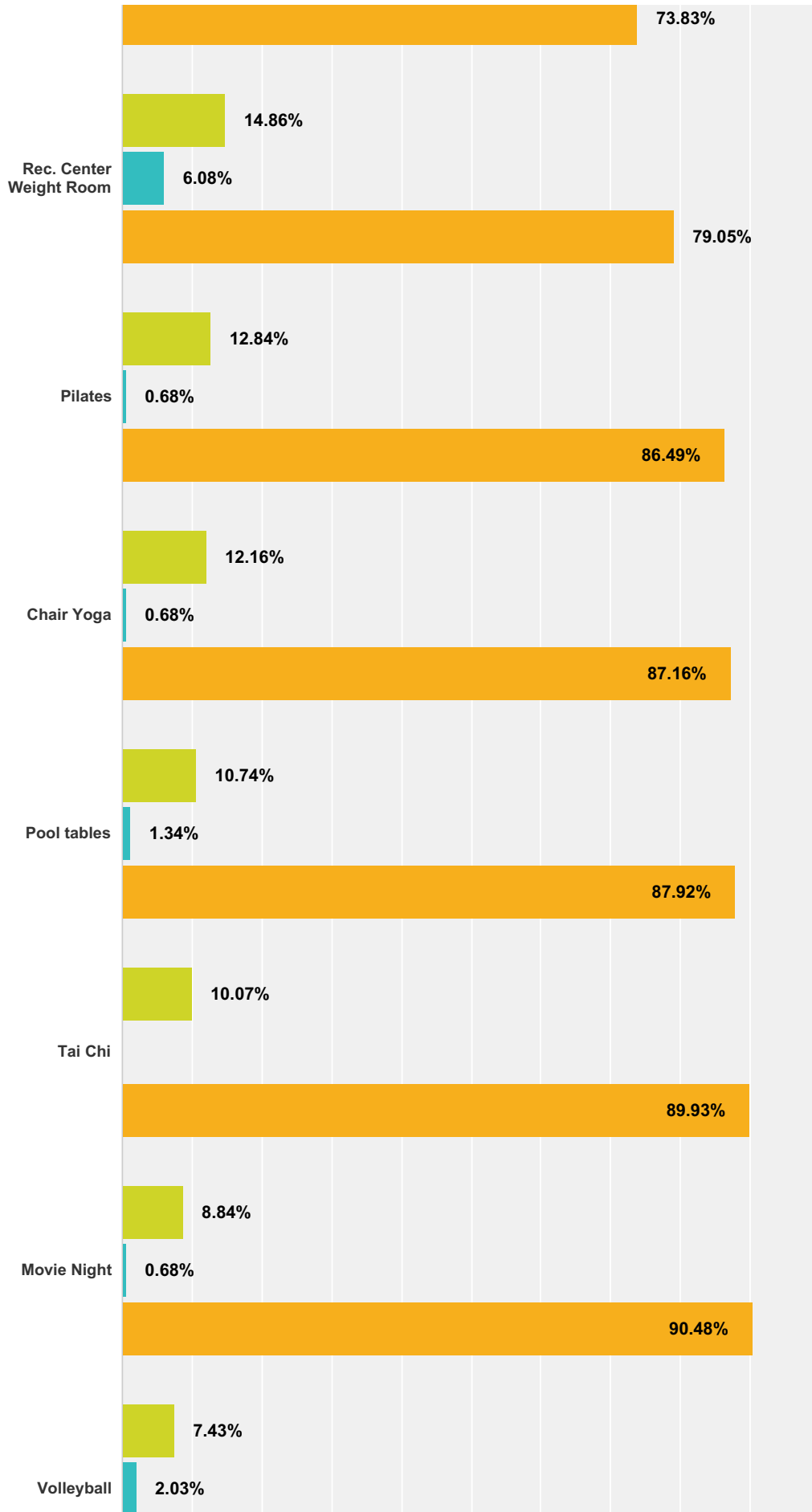
Q8 How would you rate the following programs offered by the Otis recreation center (Harmony Hall)? (Answer all items)

Answered: 152 Skipped: 27



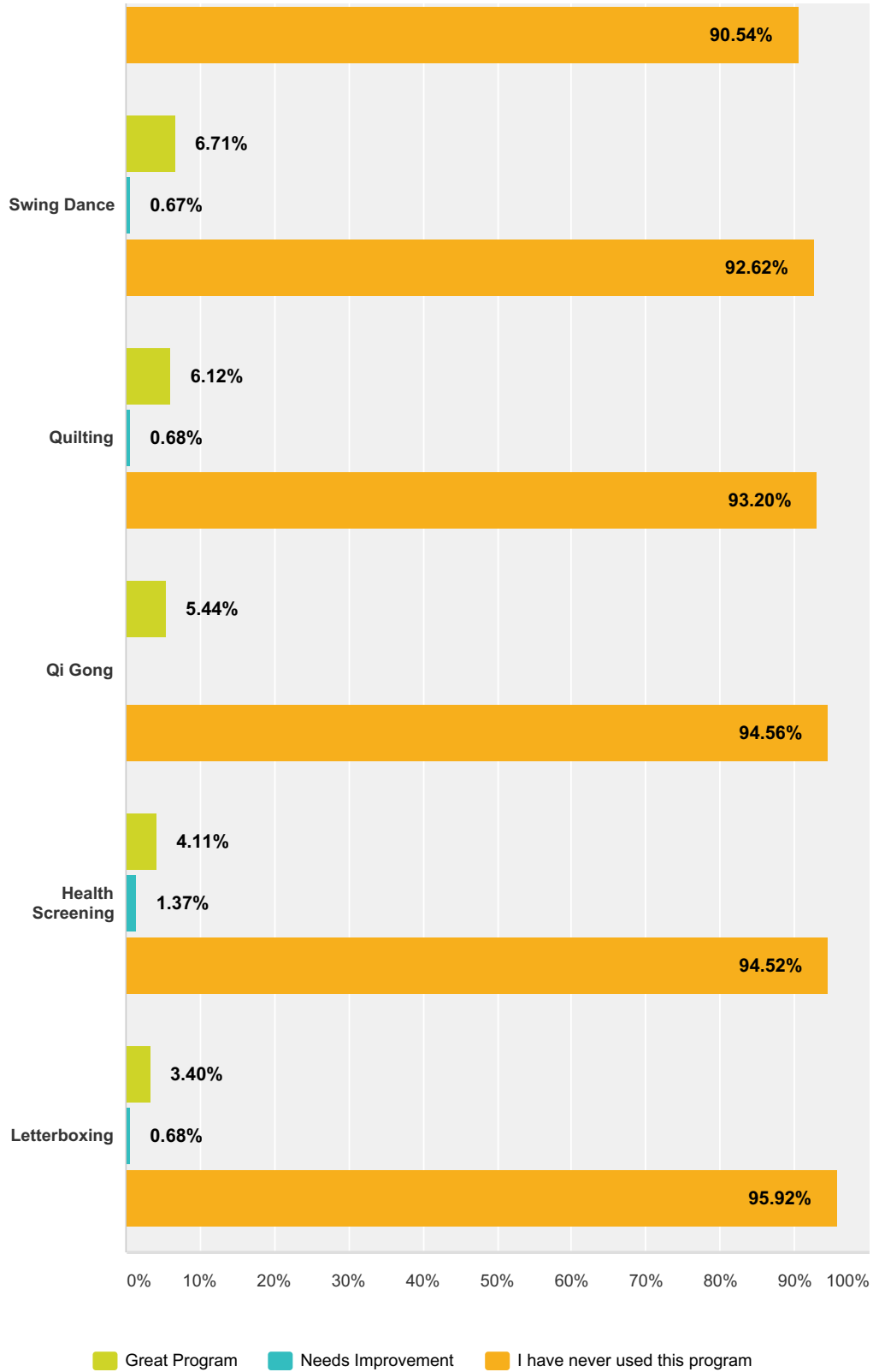
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



	Great Program	Needs Improvement	I have never used this program	Total
Passes to area attractions	32.88% 48	7.53% 11	59.59% 87	146
Yoga	19.59% 29	2.70% 4	77.70% 115	148

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Passes to ski and snowshoe areas	19.59% 29	4.73% 7	75.68% 112	148
Rec Center Cardio Room (treadmills, etc)	17.45% 26	8.72% 13	73.83% 110	149
Rec. Center Weight Room	14.86% 22	6.08% 9	79.05% 117	148
Pilates	12.84% 19	0.68% 1	86.49% 128	148
Chair Yoga	12.16% 18	0.68% 1	87.16% 129	148
Pool tables	10.74% 16	1.34% 2	87.92% 131	149
Tai Chi	10.07% 15	0.00% 0	89.93% 134	149
Movie Night	8.84% 13	0.68% 1	90.48% 133	147
Volleyball	7.43% 11	2.03% 3	90.54% 134	148
Swing Dance	6.71% 10	0.67% 1	92.62% 138	149
Quilting	6.12% 9	0.68% 1	93.20% 137	147
Qi Gong	5.44% 8	0.00% 0	94.56% 139	147
Health Screening	4.11% 6	1.37% 2	94.52% 138	146
Letterboxing	3.40% 5	0.68% 1	95.92% 141	147

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Not generally available when up on weekends	6/10/2015 5:44 AM
2	fine the way it is	6/3/2015 10:50 AM
3	Restore Basketball nets behind rec center	5/30/2015 11:28 AM
4	library	5/17/2015 9:11 AM
5	I didn't know the passes were available - perhaps more advertising?	5/7/2015 9:57 AM
6	weight room could use a universal weight machine	5/5/2015 1:03 PM
7	I learned MJ	4/29/2015 4:26 PM
8	Gingerbread House Workshop	4/27/2015 1:19 PM
9	I like the various workshops they offer	4/27/2015 9:02 AM
10	Did Zumba for a year loved it , miss it	4/26/2015 11:58 AM
11	clarrk museum	4/22/2015 5:03 PM

Q9 What additional programs would you like to see offered at the Otis Recreation Center (Harmony Hall)?

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Answered: 61 Skipped: 118

#	Responses	Date
1	Children nature education programs, clinics for group sports so there is more community interaction- from poker to ice hockey	6/10/2015 5:44 AM
2	Tennis Courts, ice skating rink	6/9/2015 6:01 PM
3	The following would be great: a self defense course, a martial arts class, mixed martial arts. The yoga tends to be geared toward a lower-impact style - a higher-intensity class would be appreciated.	6/9/2015 9:14 AM
4	i do not participate	6/3/2015 11:01 AM
5	none	6/3/2015 10:50 AM
6	none for me	6/3/2015 10:29 AM
7	hours when open to be posted town wide (not just electronically, not everyone is so equipped.)	6/3/2015 9:25 AM
8	none / computer classes for novice	6/3/2015 9:00 AM
9	save money	6/3/2015 8:51 AM
10	Tennis	5/30/2015 11:28 AM
11	None	5/30/2015 11:17 AM
12	more yoga	5/28/2015 9:13 AM
13	lectures	5/27/2015 2:13 PM
14	less	5/23/2015 2:00 PM
15	Spin class	5/15/2015 8:38 PM
16	Horseshoes competition outdoor concerts	5/14/2015 8:57 PM
17	Ping pong tables, martial arts	5/14/2015 8:46 PM
18	Many programs I didn't know about. Pool tables are great.	5/12/2015 6:24 PM
19	None	5/11/2015 11:21 AM
20	none	5/11/2015 10:18 AM
21	Better publicity to seasonal residents	5/8/2015 5:21 PM
22	A class on Rebounders	5/7/2015 9:57 AM
23	acting	5/6/2015 1:33 PM
24	stretching class	5/5/2015 1:03 PM
25	Aerobics class	5/2/2015 5:33 PM
26	More elipticals and other working equipment in the Cardio Room; and possibly a place that isn't a pass through - so that if you are really working up a sweat, people aren't walking through the room to gawk at you	5/2/2015 10:50 AM
27	none	5/1/2015 5:54 PM
28	Golf class, oil painting class	5/1/2015 12:35 PM
29	non exercise programs	5/1/2015 11:58 AM
30	more weight machines	4/30/2015 11:48 AM
31	None that I can think of	4/30/2015 11:41 AM
32	Never tried, but should try exercise equipment	4/29/2015 4:46 PM
33	I have not been, but will go after taking this survey.	4/28/2015 1:13 PM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

34	Book club	4/28/2015 8:01 AM
35	dinner socials	4/27/2015 3:31 PM
36	senior exercise in summer, beginner level	4/27/2015 2:12 PM
37	Don't know	4/27/2015 9:02 AM
38	Exercise	4/26/2015 5:52 PM
39	contra dancing	4/26/2015 3:06 PM
40	Zumba	4/26/2015 11:58 AM
41	Bridge instruction for intermediate players Conversational Spanish group	4/25/2015 8:30 PM
42	Dancing	4/25/2015 6:37 PM
43	I would like to see Pilates as a permanent program	4/25/2015 1:24 PM
44	n/a	4/25/2015 10:29 AM
45	Yoga that is more suitable for middle-aged people with an instructor whose classes are not challenging to the point of painful.	4/24/2015 1:08 PM
46	Personal trainer and a certified person to show how to properly use equipment.	4/24/2015 10:06 AM
47	Ballroom dancing	4/23/2015 6:24 PM
48	Massage clinic	4/23/2015 4:35 PM
49	0	4/23/2015 4:28 PM
50	water skiing on Otis Reservoir	4/23/2015 4:25 PM
51	watercolor painting writing	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
52	Arts and crafts. Mosaics, stained glass, basket making, etc.	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
53	More one day workshops	4/23/2015 1:35 PM
54	More art classes. Different yoga style	4/23/2015 1:31 PM
55	I think there are too many programs that are geared toward summer residents....	4/23/2015 1:14 PM
56	Young adult programs to meet people	4/23/2015 6:32 AM
57	None	4/22/2015 10:53 PM
58	Kickboxing	4/22/2015 8:12 PM
59	None	4/22/2015 8:05 PM
60	Better marketing and letting people know about it	4/22/2015 7:53 PM
61	n/a	4/22/2015 5:03 PM

Q10 What is Otis' single greatest open space need? (List only one)

Answered: 67 Skipped: 112

#	Responses	Date
1	Other Dog Park	6/15/2015 4:48 PM
2	Other grocery store	6/11/2015 11:22 AM
3	Other Recreational activities	6/10/2015 5:44 AM
4	Water Issues otis resvoir	6/9/2015 6:01 PM

5	Athletic Fields Full court basketball court	6/9/2015 10:26 AM
6	Nothing to be left alone	6/3/2015 11:01 AM
7	Other none	6/3/2015 10:50 AM
8	Other tennis / town pool	6/3/2015 10:29 AM
9	Other more seating	6/3/2015 9:17 AM
10	Nothing doesnt need more, keep the town small	6/3/2015 9:00 AM
11	Other save money	6/3/2015 8:51 AM
12	Other Low Cost Housing	5/30/2015 11:28 AM
13	Other To be left alone	5/30/2015 11:17 AM
14	Nothing none	5/28/2015 9:13 AM
15	Farmington River Walk extending the Farmington River Walkway	5/27/2015 2:13 PM
16	Water Issues Spectical Pond Area	5/23/2015 3:58 PM
17	Nothing None	5/23/2015 2:00 PM
18	Biking / Improvements Bike trails	5/15/2015 8:38 PM
19	Water Issues more patrol on water	5/14/2015 8:57 PM
20	Hiking / Trails More hiking trails with scenic views	5/14/2015 8:46 PM
21	Other Away from the water, more space between properties.	5/12/2015 6:24 PM
22	Hiking / Trails Marked Trails	5/12/2015 10:34 AM
23	Maintain Existing Undeveloped for wildlife	5/11/2015 11:21 AM
24	Water Issues a good marina	5/11/2015 10:18 AM
25	Park / Town Green Dog play park	5/8/2015 5:21 PM
26	Maintain Existing Keep the current open spaces undeveloped	5/7/2015 9:57 AM
27	Water Issues protect rivers, streams , lakes and ponds	5/6/2015 7:21 PM
28	Park / Town Green town green	5/6/2015 1:33 PM
29	Don't Know I do not know	5/5/2015 1:03 PM
30	Otis Reservoir town beach access on the reservoir	5/2/2015 10:50 AM
31	Hiking / Trails trail work	5/2/2015 9:06 AM
32	Biking / Improvements bike trails, but the terrain is not conducive to a good, FLAT trail	5/2/2015 9:06 AM
33	Don't Know don't know	5/1/2015 5:54 PM
34	Nothing there is no need for additional open space	5/1/2015 5:18 PM
35	Park / Town Green Playscape or Children.	5/1/2015 11:25 AM
36	Hiking / Trails more trails	4/30/2015 11:48 AM
37	Don't Know ?	4/30/2015 11:41 AM
38	Hiking / Trails Public park with walking trails and outdoor fields for sports.	4/28/2015 8:01 AM
39	Nothing otis is fine like it is	4/27/2015 3:31 PM
40	More Open Space preserve open space (woods , farms, etc	4/27/2015 2:12 PM
41	Park / Town Green A Pavillion for weddings, parties, craft fairs etc.	4/27/2015 1:19 PM

42	Don't Know Don't know	4/27/2015 9:02 AM
43	Park / Town Green parks	4/27/2015 8:54 AM
44	Forests Forest for wildlife	4/26/2015 11:58 AM
45	Park / Town Green Town green opposite post office	4/25/2015 10:04 PM
46	Athletic Fields running/walking track	4/25/2015 8:30 PM
47	Water Issues canoe/kayak access to lakes	4/25/2015 10:29 AM
48	Hiking / Trails marked walking/hiking trail paths	4/24/2015 1:08 PM
49	Hiking / Trails Trails	4/24/2015 10:06 AM
50	Water Issues Enforcement of speed limits on lake	4/24/2015 8:55 AM
51	Prevent Clearcutting Not clear cutting land of trees	4/23/2015 7:26 PM
52	Otis Reservoir Water Issues Preserve the purity of the Reservoir	4/23/2015 6:24 PM
53	Farmington River Walk cleared/maintained river walk trail	4/23/2015 4:35 PM
54	Water Issues drinking water	4/23/2015 4:28 PM
55	Don't Know do not know	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
56	Don't Know ?	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
57	Otis Reservoir Preservation of Otis Reservoir	4/23/2015 1:53 PM
58	Park / Town Green An actual town center open air structure	4/23/2015 1:40 PM
59	Forests State Forests	4/23/2015 1:35 PM
60	Maintain Existing keep what we have working	4/23/2015 1:14 PM
61	Park / Town Green 100 acre park	4/23/2015 8:42 AM
62	Forests forest	4/23/2015 6:44 AM
63	Hunting hunting areas	4/22/2015 11:23 PM
64	Water Issues Free boat launching for residents	4/22/2015 8:12 PM
65	Nothing nothing	4/22/2015 8:05 PM
66	Nothing n/a	4/22/2015 5:03 PM
67	Water Issues Property owners water rites	4/22/2015 4:36 PM

Q11 What is Otis' single greatest recreation need? (List only one)

Answered: 80 Skipped: 99

#	Responses	Date
1	Biking / Improvements Bike Lanes	6/15/2015 4:48 PM
2	other ice rink	6/11/2015 11:22 AM
3	other Programs to use our open areas while interacting with our fellow residents	6/10/2015 5:44 AM
4	Water Issues Otis reservoir filled by May 1st, Tennis Courts	6/9/2015 6:01 PM
5	other Sports teams	6/9/2015 10:26 AM
6	Water Issues A town beach for residents on Otis Reservoir.	6/9/2015 9:14 AM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

7	Biking / Improvements bike trail	6/3/2015 11:07 AM
8	Don't Know / Nothing good as is	6/3/2015 11:01 AM
9	Tennis Courts tennis	6/3/2015 10:29 AM
10	Mini-Golf mini golf and go carts	6/3/2015 9:00 AM
11	Don't Know / Nothing save money	6/3/2015 8:51 AM
12	Don't Know / Nothing none	5/30/2015 11:17 AM
13	Don't Know / Nothing none	5/28/2015 9:13 AM
14	Don't Know / Nothing no response	5/27/2015 2:13 PM
15	Water Issues A full reservoir	5/25/2015 9:56 PM
16	Hiking / Improvements More Walking trails	5/23/2015 3:58 PM
17	Don't Know / Nothing nothing	5/23/2015 2:00 PM
18	Biking / Improvements a bike path and/or sidewalks	5/20/2015 5:29 PM
19	Tennis Courts tennis court	5/18/2015 9:33 PM
20	Hiking / Improvements More hiking trails	5/15/2015 8:38 PM
21	Playgrounds A swing set	5/14/2015 8:46 PM
22	Don't Know / Nothing I don't know.	5/12/2015 6:24 PM
23	Don't Know / Nothing Don't know	5/11/2015 11:21 AM
24	Water Issues a good marina	5/11/2015 10:18 AM
25	Biking / Improvements An easily accessible trail which could be paved or crushed stone, which would be easy for walking, biking (not on the street) and wheelchair access. If it was paved, it would be perfect for rollerblading. currently drive all the way to the Mall, to use the Ashiwilituck Trail.	5/8/2015 6:37 PM
26	Water Issues Canoe/kayak water access	5/8/2015 5:21 PM
27	Don't Know / Nothing none that I can think of	5/7/2015 9:57 AM
28	Athletic Fields/Facility athletic center for children and adults	5/6/2015 7:21 PM
29	Water Issues water	5/6/2015 1:33 PM
30	Tennis Courts Tennis Court	5/6/2015 9:12 AM
31	Playgrounds better playground	5/5/2015 1:03 PM
32	Water Issues town beach access with boat launch on the reservoir	5/2/2015 10:50 AM
33	Athletic Fields/Facility soccer fields/facility	5/2/2015 9:06 AM
34	Park / Gathering Area permanent meeting , concert spot	5/1/2015 6:44 PM
35	Don't Know / Nothing don't know	5/1/2015 5:54 PM
36	Don't Know / Nothing there is no need	5/1/2015 5:18 PM
37	Water Issues more public access to waterways	5/1/2015 11:58 AM
38	Athletic Fields/Facility Youth sports opportunities.	5/1/2015 11:25 AM
39	Water Issues J and D	5/1/2015 9:06 AM
40	Tennis Courts tennis court	4/30/2015 4:43 PM
41	Tennis Courts tennis court	4/30/2015 11:48 AM
42	Don't Know / Nothing None.	4/30/2015 11:41 AM
43	Walking / Improvements Safe places to walk/ W.Center Rd needs work	4/29/2015 4:46 PM

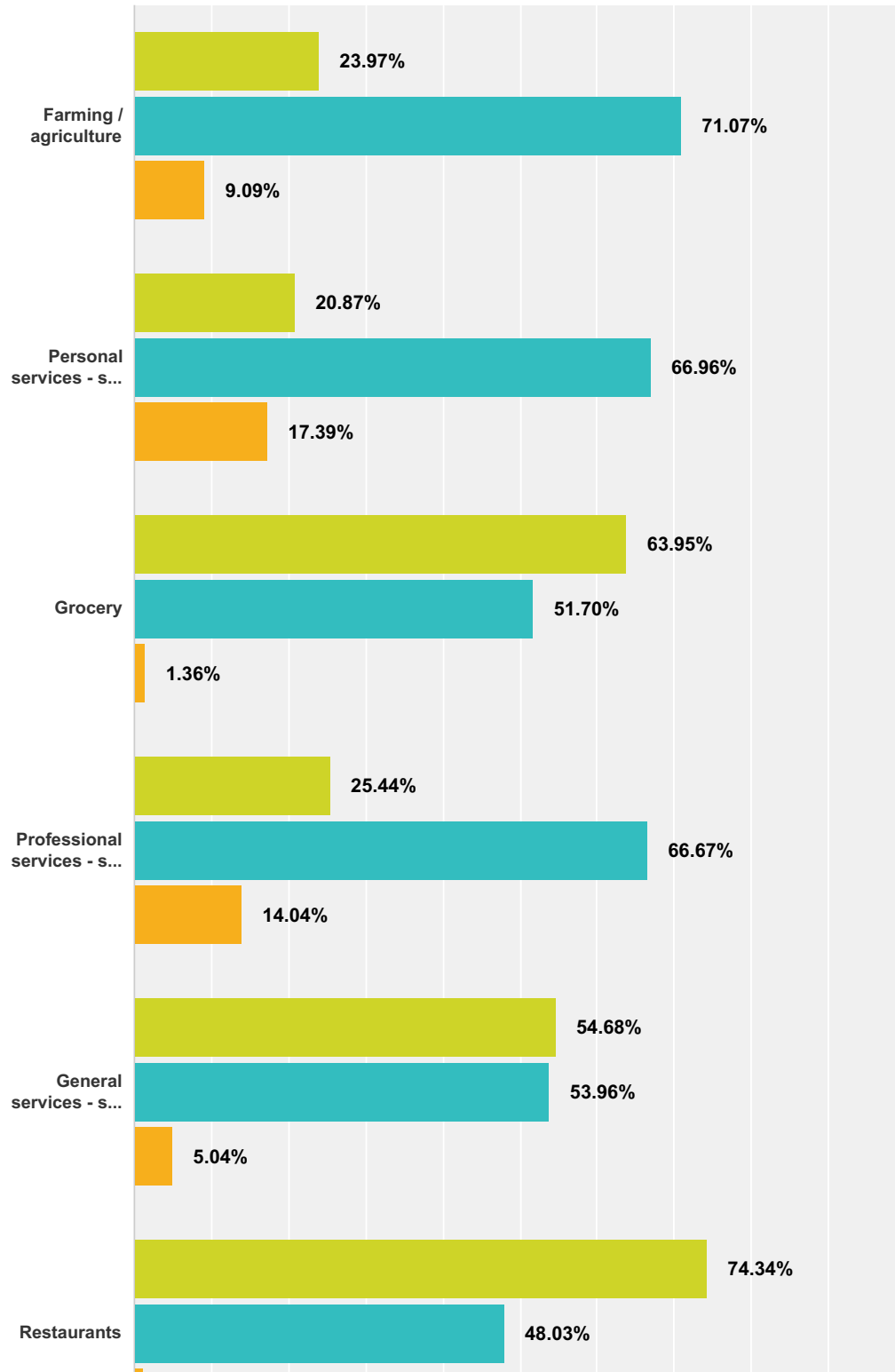
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

44	Skiing skiing	4/27/2015 3:31 PM
45	Water Issues ban personal watercraft " sea-doos" from reservoir	4/27/2015 2:12 PM
46	Accessibility Issues Hiking / Improvements Walking / Improvements Senior / challenged persons walking-hiking trails	4/27/2015 1:42 PM
47	Biking / Improvements Bike Paths	4/27/2015 1:19 PM
48	Hiking / Improvements Hiking Trails	4/27/2015 9:02 AM
49	More Maintenance help cleaning parks and trails	4/27/2015 8:54 AM
50	Tennis Courts tennis courts	4/26/2015 3:06 PM
51	Indoor Rec. Activities Indoor activities for the long winters	4/26/2015 11:58 AM
52	Water Issues Limit power boats on reservoir	4/25/2015 10:04 PM
53	Biking / Improvements safe bike trail	4/25/2015 8:30 PM
54	Biking / Improvements Safe biking treiles	4/25/2015 6:37 PM
55	Don't Know / Nothing n/a	4/25/2015 10:29 AM
56	Indoor Rec. Activities restorative yoga and/or more dance movement classes	4/24/2015 1:08 PM
57	Indoor Rec. Activities An appropriate Rec Center.	4/24/2015 10:06 AM
58	Tennis Courts Public tennis court	4/24/2015 8:55 AM
59	Water Issues Regulation of day users and residents on the Reservoir	4/23/2015 6:24 PM
60	Restaurants restaurants	4/23/2015 5:48 PM
61	Biking / Improvements bike path	4/23/2015 4:35 PM
62	Don't Know / Nothing 0	4/23/2015 4:28 PM
63	Indoor Rec. Activities Pool indoor/outdoor swimming pool	4/23/2015 3:44 PM
64	Water Issues More affordable dock space and easier lake access.	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
65	Water Issues The Reservoir. Would like to see stocked with more fish.	4/23/2015 2:01 PM
66	Water Issues Preservation of Otis Reservoir	4/23/2015 1:53 PM
67	Education / Interpretive Birdwatching, foraging, tree & plant identification and other walking groups	4/23/2015 1:40 PM
68	Indoor Rec. Activities Larger Indoor Fitness Area's	4/23/2015 1:35 PM
69	Indoor Rec. Activities A real gym	4/23/2015 1:31 PM
70	simplify what we are offering	4/23/2015 1:14 PM
71	Park / Gathering Area 100 acre park	4/23/2015 8:42 AM
72	Indoor Rec. Activities more snowmobile trails	4/23/2015 6:44 AM
73	Park / Gathering Area a new spraypark/playground for kids	4/22/2015 11:42 PM
74	Water Issues Limit boats on Reservoir	4/22/2015 10:53 PM
75	Pool Community pool	4/22/2015 8:12 PM
76	Don't Know / Nothing nothing	4/22/2015 8:05 PM
77	Water Issues harbor master	4/22/2015 7:43 PM
78	Mini-Golf Mini golf	4/22/2015 6:59 PM
79	Don't Know / Nothing n/a	4/22/2015 5:03 PM
80	Water Issues Property owners water rites	4/22/2015 4:36 PM

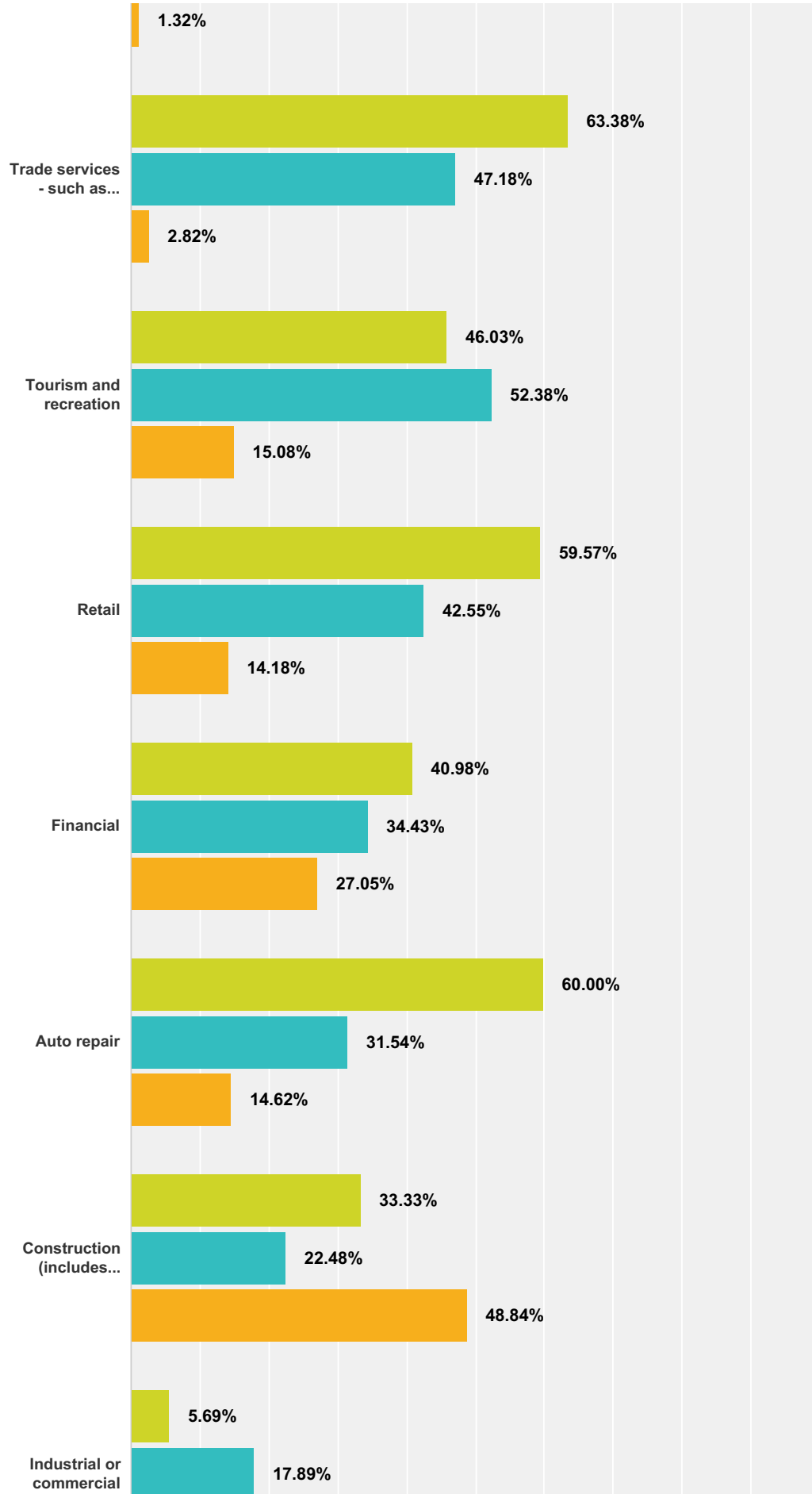
Q12 Which types of business do you currently use in Otis versus elsewhere in Berkshire County? What types of business would you like to see encouraged or discouraged in Otis? (Answer all items)

Answered: 153 Skipped: 26



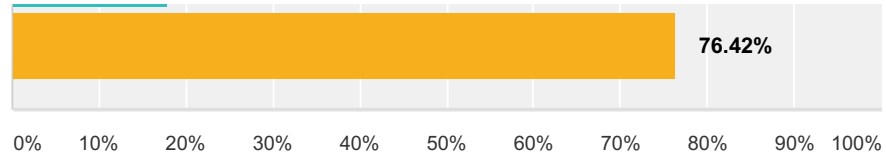
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



■ Currently use Otis business
 ■ Business to encourage
 ■ Business to discourage

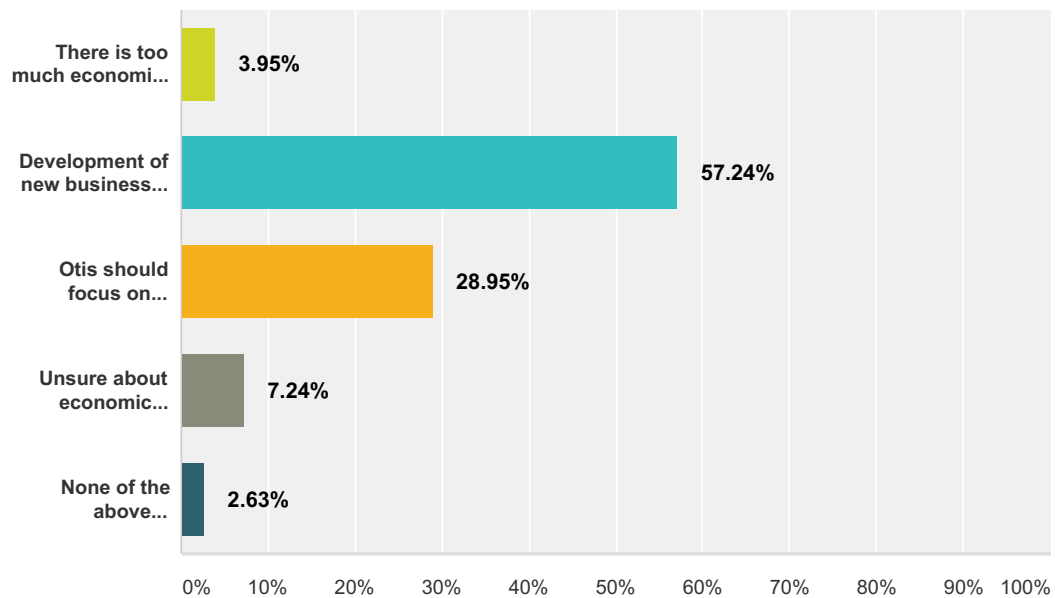
	Currently use Otis business	Business to encourage	Business to discourage	Total Respondents
Farming / agriculture	23.97% 29	71.07% 86	9.09% 11	121
Personal services - such as hairdressers or fitness trainers	20.87% 24	66.96% 77	17.39% 20	115
Grocery	63.95% 94	51.70% 76	1.36% 2	147
Professional services - such as architects, engineers, or accountants	25.44% 29	66.67% 76	14.04% 16	114
General services - such as landscapers or handymen	54.68% 76	53.96% 75	5.04% 7	139
Restaurants	74.34% 113	48.03% 73	1.32% 2	152
Trade services - such as plumbers or electricians	63.38% 90	47.18% 67	2.82% 4	142
Tourism and recreation	46.03% 58	52.38% 66	15.08% 19	126
Retail	59.57% 84	42.55% 60	14.18% 20	141
Financial	40.98% 50	34.43% 42	27.05% 33	122
Auto repair	60.00% 78	31.54% 41	14.62% 19	130
Construction (includes trucking and hauling)	33.33% 43	22.48% 29	48.84% 63	129
Industrial or commercial	5.69% 7	17.89% 22	76.42% 94	123

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Bakery and coffee shop	6/9/2015 9:17 AM
2	entertainment	6/3/2015 10:29 AM
3	airport transportation, general transportation	6/3/2015 10:10 AM
4	need grocery store convenients in town not east otis!	6/3/2015 9:01 AM
5	Otis Business Assoc. and Kiwanis were great! Fairs allowed on town church green!	5/30/2015 11:30 AM
6	Otis has enough business to sustain itself	5/30/2015 11:18 AM
7	This question is confusing. There are few businesses I feel we should not encourage, I just don't care to see more of those.	5/25/2015 10:05 PM

8	Pharmacy	5/23/2015 2:02 PM
9	Pharmacy	4/24/2015 6:17 PM
10	Urgently need internet/cell service for those homes like ours that will still be left out if not enough people sign up for Wired West	4/24/2015 1:13 PM
11	Would love to see a local farm/stand open year round...produce, bakery, etc like TAFT FARMS!	4/24/2015 10:11 AM
12	Drug store, restaurants	4/23/2015 6:27 PM
13	beauticians that can deal with Afro- American kinky hair	4/23/2015 3:46 PM

Q13 Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about economic development in the town of Otis? (Select only one)

Answered: 152 Skipped: 27



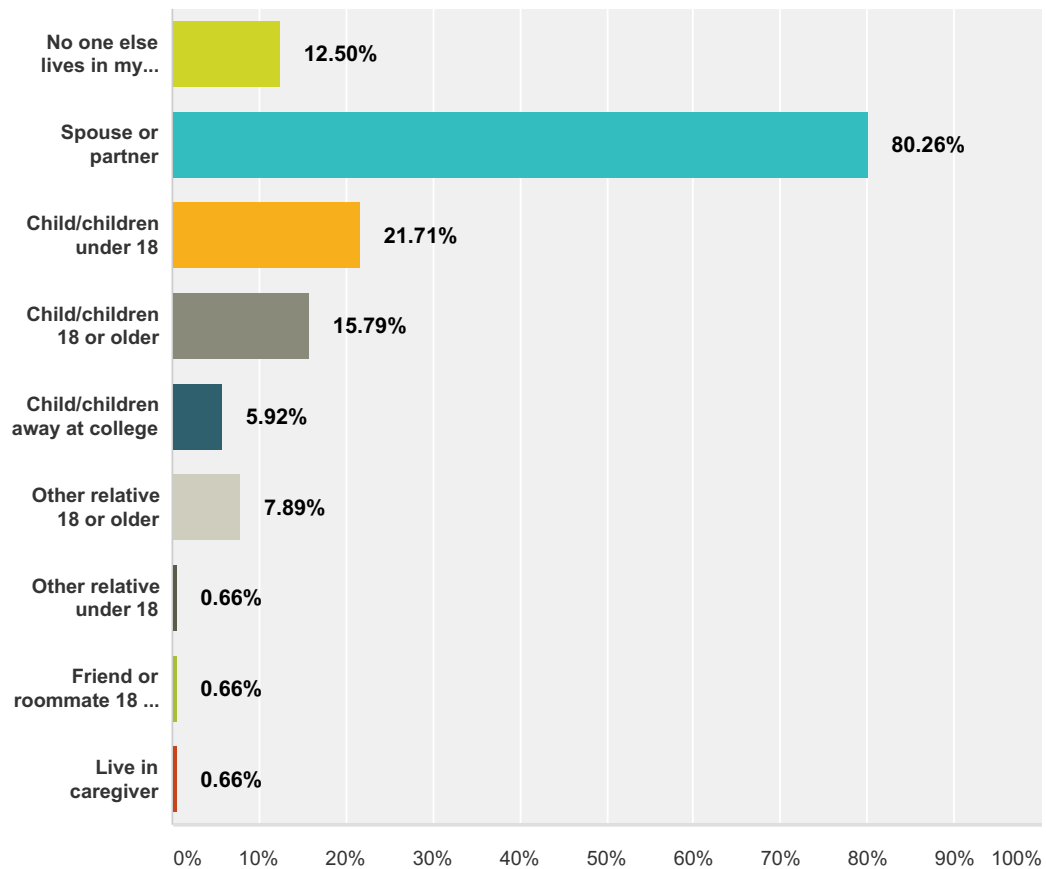
Answer Choices	Responses
There is too much economic development in Otis and we should discourage it.	3.95% 6
Development of new businesses and services is good for the local economy, we should encourage it.	57.24% 87
Otis should focus on retaining and supporting existing business, rather than encouraging more.	28.95% 44
Unsure about economic development in Otis.	7.24% 11
None of the above statements describe my opinion.	2.63% 4
Total	152

#	If you answered "none" to the question above or have additional comments, please explain.	Date
1	Low Cost Housing	5/30/2015 11:30 AM
2	calls for work such as heating and plumbing are not returned	5/30/2015 11:04 AM

3	Unfortunately, we feel we need to go to surrounding towns for many things, like restaurants and retail.	5/25/2015 10:05 PM
4	I agree with #3 to focus on retaining and supporting existing business, but would like to see a general store in Otis Center.	4/30/2015 11:44 AM
5	Improve appearance of Main St. in town center	4/25/2015 10:33 AM
6	Agree with focusing on retaining & supporting BUT some specific areas could use improvement/growth.	4/24/2015 10:11 AM
7	While it would be best to retain and support existing businesses, we have a lot of certain types, many of which are not very healthy, and we're missing other options. So a mix of supporting existing and attracting new options would be great.	4/23/2015 1:44 PM

Q14 In addition to you, who else lives in your home? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 152 Skipped: 27



Answer Choices	Responses
No one else lives in my house	12.50% 19
Spouse or partner	80.26% 122
Child/children under 18	21.71% 33
Child/children 18 or older	15.79% 24
Child/children away at college	5.92% 9
Other relative 18 or older	7.89% 12

Otis Master Plan Survey

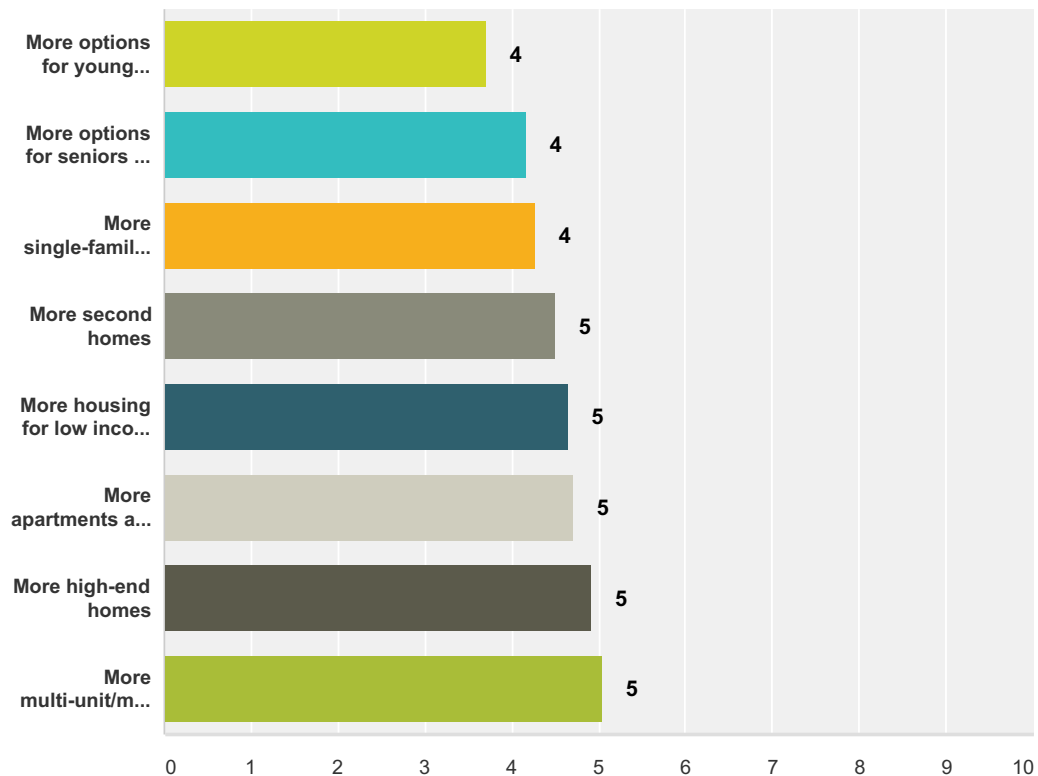
All Survey Responses

Other relative under 18	0.66%	1
Friend or roommate 18 or older	0.66%	1
Live in caregiver	0.66%	1
Total Respondents: 152		

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	extended family summer	6/3/2015 10:30 AM
2	college age child and relatives visits often	5/25/2015 10:09 PM
3	visiting grandchildren 5-8	5/19/2015 1:51 PM
4	My kids cme visit often	5/13/2015 5:46 PM
5	dog	5/2/2015 9:09 AM
6	Tenant in addition	4/29/2015 4:54 PM
7	children /relatives listed above are here on visits of a week or so or on weekends-we are here for summer season only	4/27/2015 2:18 PM
8	lots of guests	4/23/2015 2:09 PM
9	Lots of guests all summer long!	4/23/2015 2:08 PM

Q15 What are your housing priorities? Please rank the following items with 8 being the most important and 1 being the least.

Answered: 130 Skipped: 49



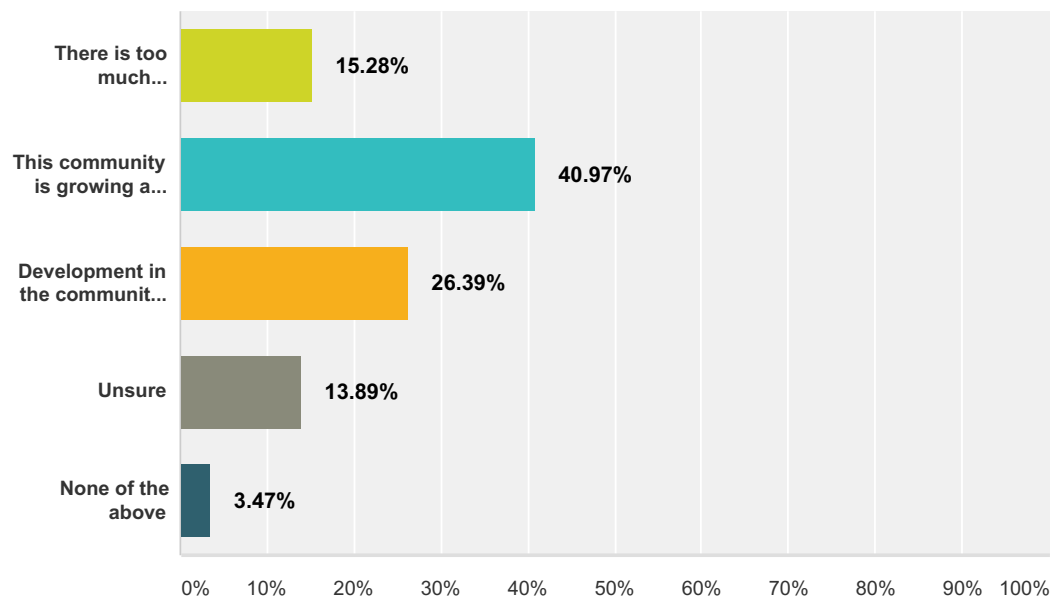
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	Score
More options for young families (starter homes)	9.23% 12	7.69% 10	7.69% 10	12.31% 16	11.54% 15	10.77% 14	17.69% 23	23.08% 30	130	3.72
More options for seniors / elderly (single story or assisted living)	10.00% 13	9.23% 12	10.77% 14	13.85% 18	15.38% 20	10.00% 13	16.92% 22	13.85% 18	130	4.18
More single-family homes	9.23% 12	10.77% 14	12.31% 16	13.08% 17	10.77% 14	22.31% 29	8.46% 11	13.08% 17	130	4.28
More second homes	10.00% 13	14.62% 19	12.31% 16	12.31% 16	15.38% 20	10.00% 13	15.38% 20	10.00% 13	130	4.50
More housing for low income families	20.00% 26	6.92% 9	14.62% 19	10.77% 14	10.00% 13	13.08% 17	10.77% 14	13.85% 18	130	4.65
More apartments and rental units	5.38% 7	21.54% 28	13.85% 18	12.31% 16	16.92% 22	12.31% 16	10.00% 13	7.69% 10	130	4.71
More high-end homes	20.00% 26	13.08% 17	12.31% 16	12.31% 16	11.54% 15	10.00% 13	9.23% 12	11.54% 15	130	4.93
More multi-unit/multi-family housing	16.28% 21	16.28% 21	16.28% 21	13.18% 17	8.53% 11	11.63% 15	11.63% 15	6.20% 8	129	5.06

Q16 Which of the following statements describes how you feel about housing development in Otis? (Select only one)

Answered: 144 Skipped: 35



Answer Choices	Responses
There is too much development in the community, we should do everything we can to discourage more development.	15.28% 22
This community is growing at an appropriate rate, we should keep it at the same rate it has been at.	40.97% 59
Development in the community is good for the economy, we should do everything we can to encourage it.	26.39% 38
Unsure	13.89% 20

None of the above	3.47%	5
Total		144

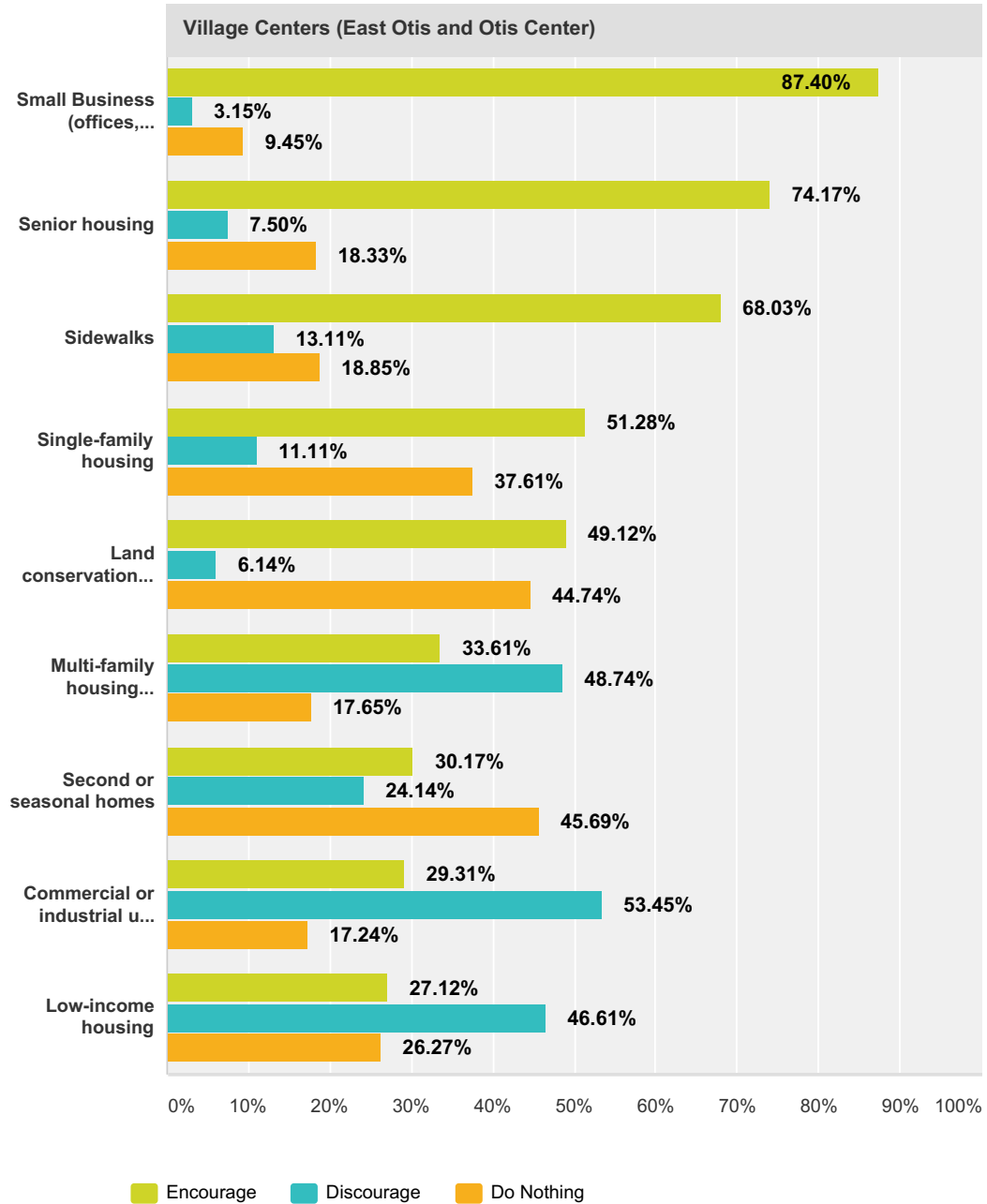
#	If you answered none to the question above or have additional comments, please explain.	Date
1	The right development is always good. Development needs to address the changing needs of our community- the world never stands still	6/10/2015 5:56 AM
2	Build at J&D marina restaurant and community facilities for families to congregate. Need a social fabric for weekend homeowners.	6/9/2015 6:10 PM
3	It seems that there are plenty of homes for sale presently. New development at the expense of losing forest is unfavorable to the town and local communities.	6/9/2015 9:25 AM
4	senior housing 40%+ are seniors in otis	6/3/2015 9:28 AM
5	keep the town a small town. if i wanted big i'd move to the citys. enough already trying to make this a small city.	6/3/2015 9:04 AM
6	Somewhere between #2 and #3. While development is good for the economy, I would NOT like to see large scale development such as condos or multi-units, such as was suggested for the large tracts by Otis Reservoir and Poultry Farm land.	5/8/2015 7:20 PM
7	Development of the community is good but not at the expense of our fixed income seniors.	4/27/2015 9:17 AM
8	Development should be concentrated on AFFORDABLE housing, as we do not have any and people are forced to move out of Otis (not necessarily only low income housing). We need affordable housing (and transportation) for all ages. I feel we do not need more development in the sense of people building overly large, extravagant housing. FOCUS needs to be on AFFORDABLE housing because we will not have any upcoming generations to actually be involved in our Town Government/development.	4/24/2015 10:23 AM
9	There are plenty of homes available for sale as it is.	4/23/2015 4:58 PM
10	Development is currently happening by mixed private efforts. Would be really smart to have a town plan so that the development was directed rather than reactive.	4/23/2015 1:57 PM
11	You can' answer 15	4/22/2015 10:58 PM

**Q17 In which areas should the town encourage or discourage certain uses?
Please fill out all boxes with either encourage, discourage, or do nothing.**

Answered: 131 Skipped: 48

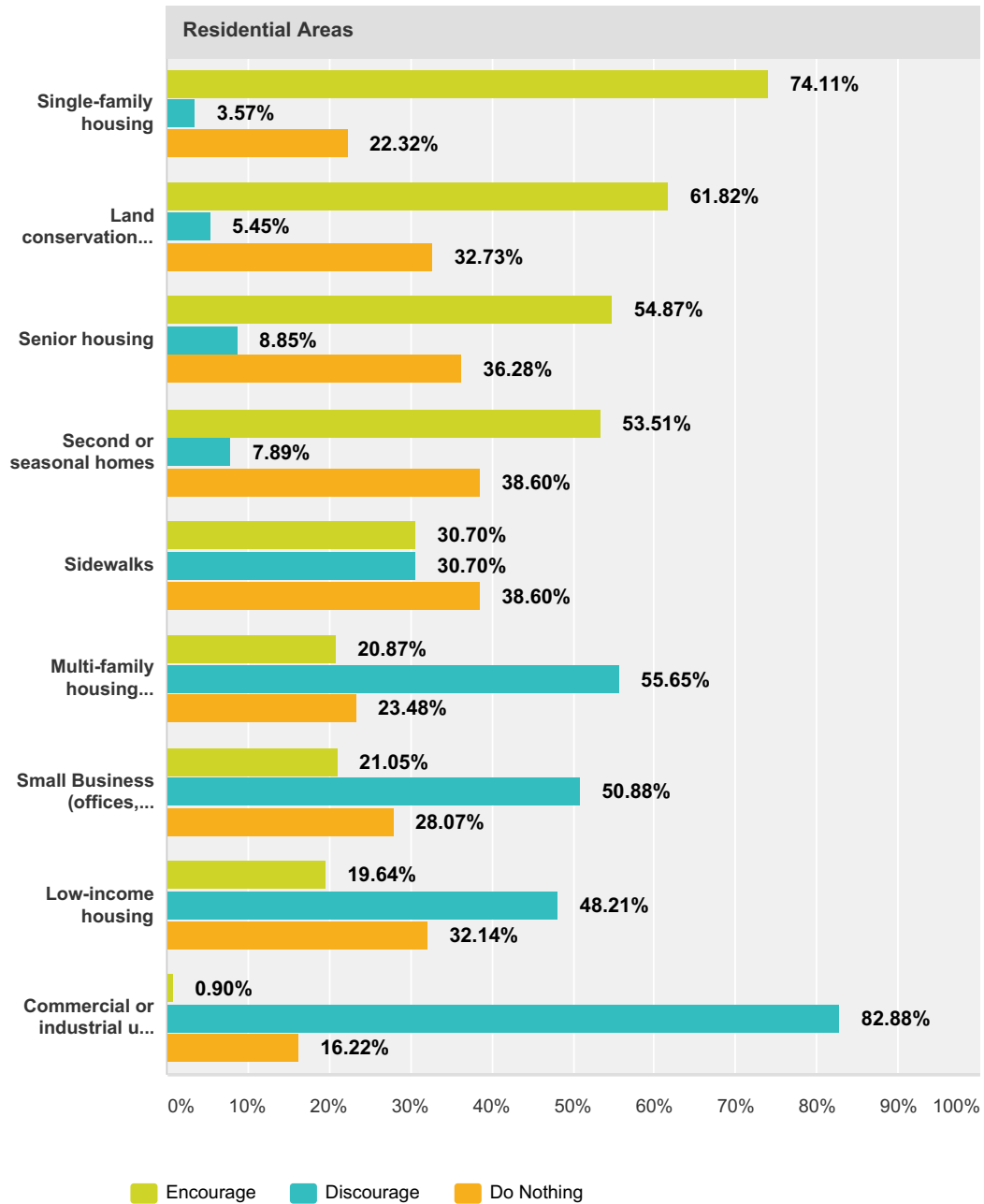
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



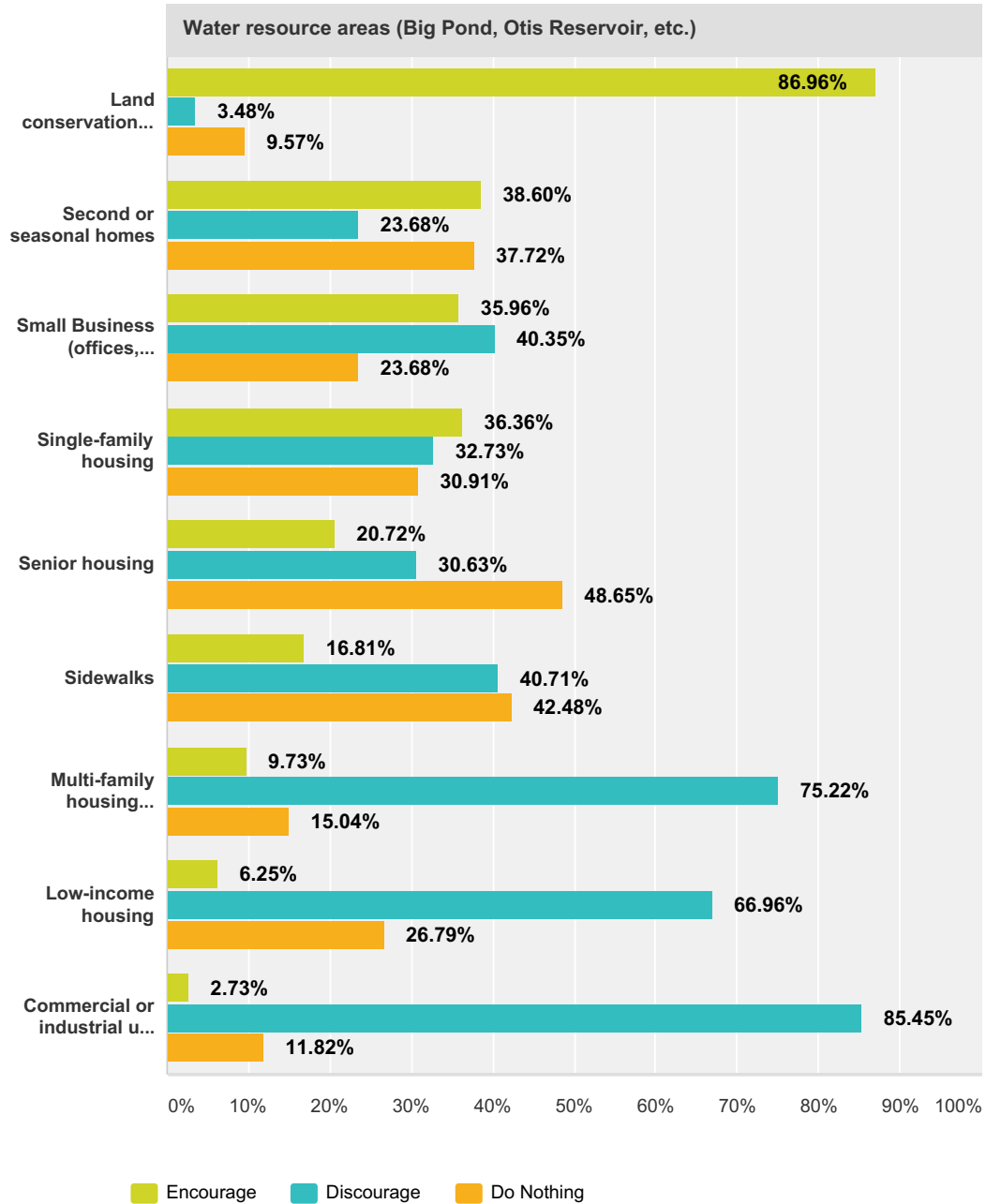
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



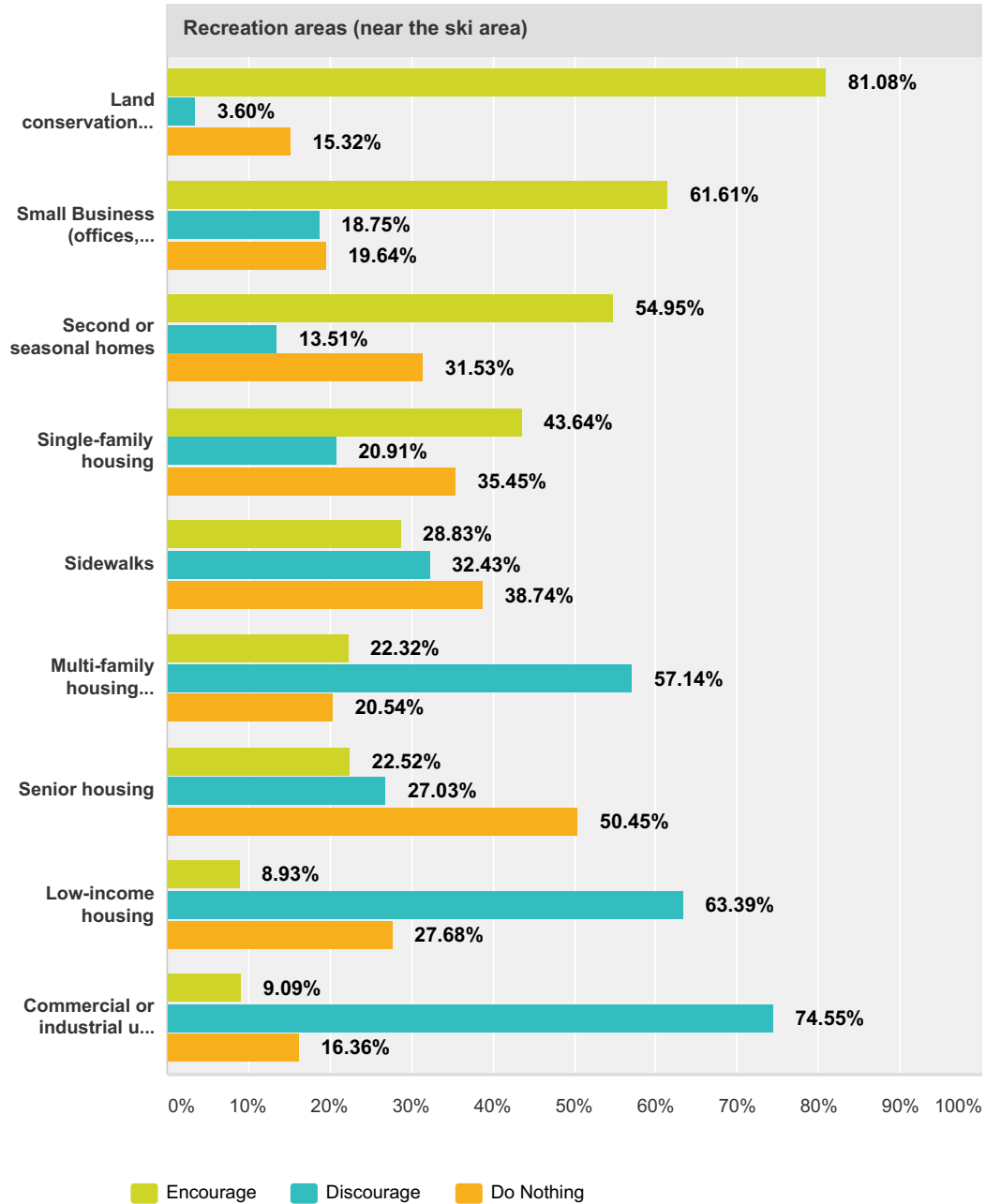
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Village Centers (East Otis and Otis Center)				
	Encourage	Discourage	Do Nothing	Total
Small Business (offices, restaurants, retail stores and shops, etc)	87.40% 111	3.15% 4	9.45% 12	127
Senior housing	74.17% 89	7.50% 9	18.33% 22	120
Sidewalks	68.03% 83	13.11% 16	18.85% 23	122
Single-family housing	51.28% 60	11.11% 13	37.61% 44	117
Land conservation for recreation or habitat value	49.12% 56	6.14% 7	44.74% 51	114

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Multi-family housing (apartments, rental units or townhouses)	33.61% 40	48.74% 58	17.65% 21	119
Second or seasonal homes	30.17% 35	24.14% 28	45.69% 53	116
Commercial or industrial uses (manufacturing, etc)	29.31% 34	53.45% 62	17.24% 20	116
Low-income housing	27.12% 32	46.61% 55	26.27% 31	118
Residential Areas				
	Encourage	Discourage	Do Nothing	Total
Single-family housing	74.11% 83	3.57% 4	22.32% 25	112
Land conservation for recreation or habitat value	61.82% 68	5.45% 6	32.73% 36	110
Senior housing	54.87% 62	8.85% 10	36.28% 41	113
Second or seasonal homes	53.51% 61	7.89% 9	38.60% 44	114
Sidewalks	30.70% 35	30.70% 35	38.60% 44	114
Multi-family housing (apartments, rental units or townhouses)	20.87% 24	55.65% 64	23.48% 27	115
Small Business (offices, restaurants, retail stores and shops, etc)	21.05% 24	50.88% 58	28.07% 32	114
Low-income housing	19.64% 22	48.21% 54	32.14% 36	112
Commercial or industrial uses (manufacturing, etc)	0.90% 1	82.88% 92	16.22% 18	111
Water resource areas (Big Pond, Otis Reservoir, etc.)				
	Encourage	Discourage	Do Nothing	Total
Land conservation for recreation or habitat value	86.96% 100	3.48% 4	9.57% 11	115
Second or seasonal homes	38.60% 44	23.68% 27	37.72% 43	114
Small Business (offices, restaurants, retail stores and shops, etc)	35.96% 41	40.35% 46	23.68% 27	114
Single-family housing	36.36% 40	32.73% 36	30.91% 34	110
Senior housing	20.72% 23	30.63% 34	48.65% 54	111
Sidewalks	16.81% 19	40.71% 46	42.48% 48	113
Multi-family housing (apartments, rental units or townhouses)	9.73% 11	75.22% 85	15.04% 17	113
Low-income housing	6.25% 7	66.96% 75	26.79% 30	112

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

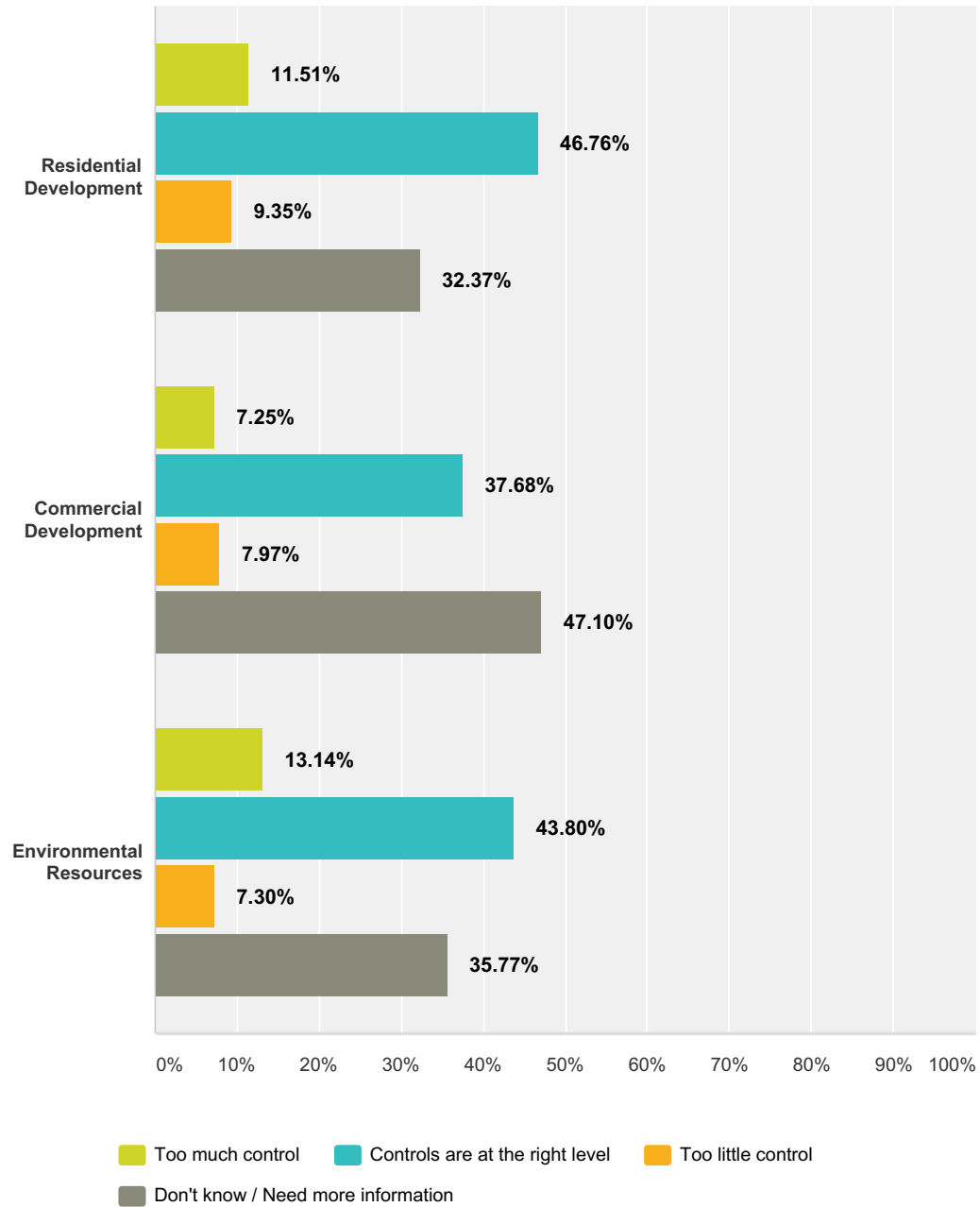
Commercial or industrial uses (manufacturing, etc)	2.73% 3	85.45% 94	11.82% 13	110
Recreation areas (near the ski area)				
	Encourage	Discourage	Do Nothing	Total
Land conservation for recreation or habitat value	81.08% 90	3.60% 4	15.32% 17	111
Small Business (offices, restaurants, retail stores and shops, etc)	61.61% 69	18.75% 21	19.64% 22	112
Second or seasonal homes	54.95% 61	13.51% 15	31.53% 35	111
Single-family housing	43.64% 48	20.91% 23	35.45% 39	110
Sidewalks	28.83% 32	32.43% 36	38.74% 43	111
Multi-family housing (apartments, rental units or townhouses)	22.32% 25	57.14% 64	20.54% 23	112
Senior housing	22.52% 25	27.03% 30	50.45% 56	111
Low-income housing	8.93% 10	63.39% 71	27.68% 31	112
Commercial or industrial uses (manufacturing, etc)	9.09% 10	74.55% 82	16.36% 18	110

Q18 Towns can take certain steps to manage or control development, such as through zoning, wetlands permitting, etc. Please rate the current level of control for the following uses or resources in Otis. (Answer all items)

Answered: 139 Skipped: 40

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



	Too much control	Controls are at the right level	Too little control	Don't know / Need more information	Total
Residential Development	11.51% 16	46.76% 65	9.35% 13	32.37% 45	139
Commercial Development	7.25% 10	37.68% 52	7.97% 11	47.10% 65	138
Environmental Resources	13.14% 18	43.80% 60	7.30% 10	35.77% 49	137

Q19 If you have any additional comments about land use regulation, please include them below.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 164

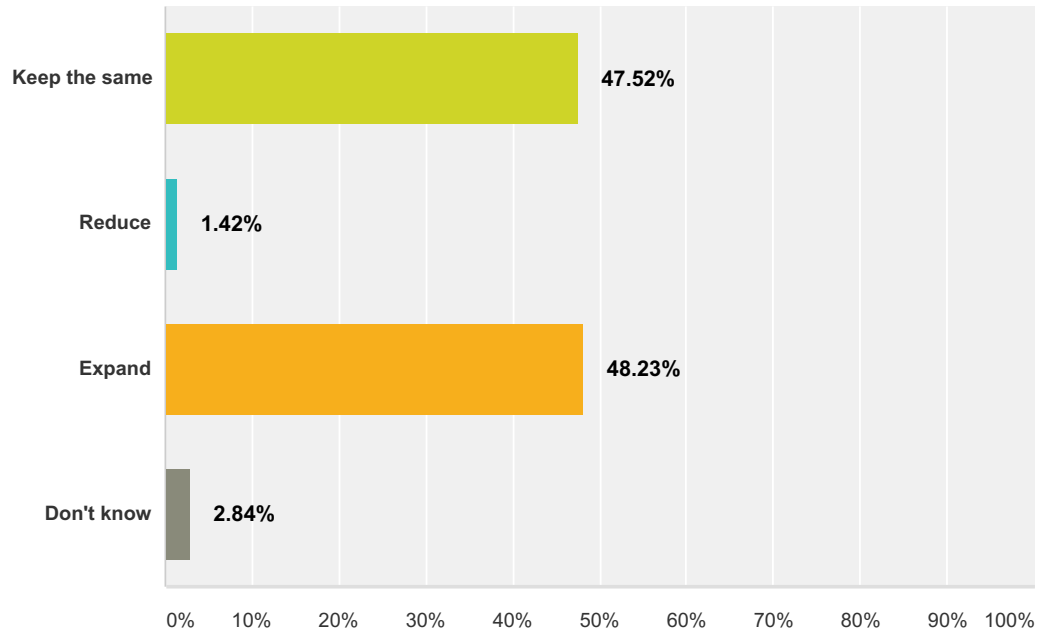
#	Responses	Date
1	Not about too much or too little but how that control is executed	6/10/2015 5:56 AM
2	what are otis comments about expanding natural gas pipelines in west otis and sandisfield and threat of serious problems (fire, health, air, etc) similar or worse that happened some years ago??	6/3/2015 9:28 AM
3	leave well enough alone! stop expanding and wasting the money on thing that are not a priority.	6/3/2015 9:04 AM
4	Main area of concern should be the reservoir	5/30/2015 11:34 AM
5	Sometimes it feels like there is not enough oversight on wetland restrictions - gets pushed through if you are part of the Old Boys Network. Same thing with variances for road frontage.	5/8/2015 7:20 PM
6	Maintain adequate public access to ponds, lakes, rivers, etc	5/8/2015 5:36 PM
7	Town bylaws for waterfront structures, moorings and "floats." Paid PROFESSIONAL (i.e. qualified) commissioners and committee members on standing committees which have oversight responsibility for Zoning and Wetlands Protection Act	4/27/2015 6:27 PM
8	I think we need to expand recreational and water access to seniors and low income families.	4/27/2015 9:17 AM
9	Conservation committee should follow state laws. They have more expertise then committee members. This comment is regarding weed control.	4/25/2015 1:34 PM
10	n/a	4/25/2015 10:42 AM
11	Love Otis!	4/24/2015 9:03 AM
12	halt the harvesting of trees	4/23/2015 4:41 PM
13	I approve of 1 acre limit on residential homes unless grandfathered.	4/23/2015 2:20 PM
14	The Otis conservation commission has been allowed to have excessive power over the years.	4/23/2015 12:04 AM
15	It is a joke your commissioners are clueless	4/22/2015 10:58 PM

Q20 Should the level of road maintenance in Otis be kept the same, reduced or expanded?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 38

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Answer Choices	Responses
Keep the same	47.52% 67
Reduce	1.42% 2
Expand	48.23% 68
Don't know	2.84% 4
Total	141

Q21 If you support road improvements, what road, or section of road, would be most important to improve? (List only one)

Answered: 67 Skipped: 112

#	Responses	Date
1	Route 8	6/15/2015 4:50 PM
2	Pearl Road West Center Road Pearl Road/West Center Road - considering ALL use transfer station	6/9/2015 9:31 AM
3	Pine Road pine road	6/3/2015 10:33 AM
4	?	6/3/2015 9:28 AM
5	West Center Road west center road	6/3/2015 9:13 AM
6	the cracked pot holed ones	6/3/2015 9:04 AM
7	Roads in East Otis East Otis (Miller Swamp) Area	5/30/2015 11:35 AM
8	Ed Jones Road Stebbins Ed Jones / Stebbins	5/30/2015 11:13 AM
9	West Center Road west center	5/30/2015 11:07 AM
10	West Center Road west center	5/30/2015 10:48 AM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

11	Old Blandford Road Old Blandford Road	5/30/2015 9:24 AM
12	Dimmock Road dimmock road	5/30/2015 6:33 AM
13	Pine Road Pine Rd	5/27/2015 9:50 AM
14	Algerie Road Algerie Road	5/23/2015 4:09 PM
15	Pond Boulevard pond blvd	5/19/2015 1:59 PM
16	All Roads all roads	5/18/2015 7:51 PM
17	Route 23 Route 23. All of it.	5/15/2015 8:48 PM
18	All Roads all	5/13/2015 5:52 PM
19	Route 23 Route 23	5/12/2015 10:42 AM
20	Moreau Road moreau	5/11/2015 10:36 AM
21	Werden Werden rd	5/8/2015 5:39 PM
22	Old Blandford Road Old Blanford is a bit rough right now	5/7/2015 10:07 AM
23	West Center Road West Center Road	5/2/2015 9:15 AM
24	repaving	5/1/2015 5:30 PM
25	West Center Road W. Center	5/1/2015 11:42 AM
26	Kibbe Road Kibbe RD	4/30/2015 2:55 PM
27	Pease Road Pease Road and connecting roads	4/30/2015 11:58 AM
28	West Center Road West Center Road	4/29/2015 5:10 PM
29	Route 23 Route 23	4/29/2015 4:38 PM
30	West Center Road West Center Road	4/28/2015 8:23 AM
31	West Center Road West Center Road	4/27/2015 7:38 PM
32	Properly engineered road reconstruction - cold patch and simple resurfacing is a total waste of tax money - do it right and then o it less often !!!!	4/27/2015 6:29 PM
33	Stebbins Stebbins	4/27/2015 1:54 PM
34	Pearl Road Pearl Road	4/27/2015 1:26 PM
35	Keep the current public roads accessible.	4/27/2015 9:20 AM
36	Roads near Reservoir around the lake and villange center	4/27/2015 9:08 AM
37	Reservoir Road Lake rds	4/26/2015 12:11 PM
38	Ed Jones Road Ed Jones Rd	4/25/2015 10:17 PM
39	Roads in East Otis East Otis plowing needs to be improved	4/25/2015 7:58 PM
40	Roads in East Otis better plowing in east Otis	4/25/2015 6:50 PM
41	Lee Westfield Road Pave all of Lee Westfield road	4/25/2015 1:37 PM
42	Route 23 West Center Road state roads, West Center St (Rt. 8 to Compactor Station)	4/25/2015 10:48 AM
43	Curtis Hill Road curtis hall rd.	4/24/2015 6:27 PM
44	Becket Road Reservoir Road Roads leading to the Town Beach, all of BECKET ROAD AND the strip of Reservoir Road which was not paved within the last couple years.	4/24/2015 10:41 AM
45	Route 23 Route 23	4/24/2015 9:07 AM
46	Pine Road Pine Road	4/23/2015 7:42 PM
47	Kibbe Road Kibbe Road and Kibbe Point Road	4/23/2015 6:38 PM

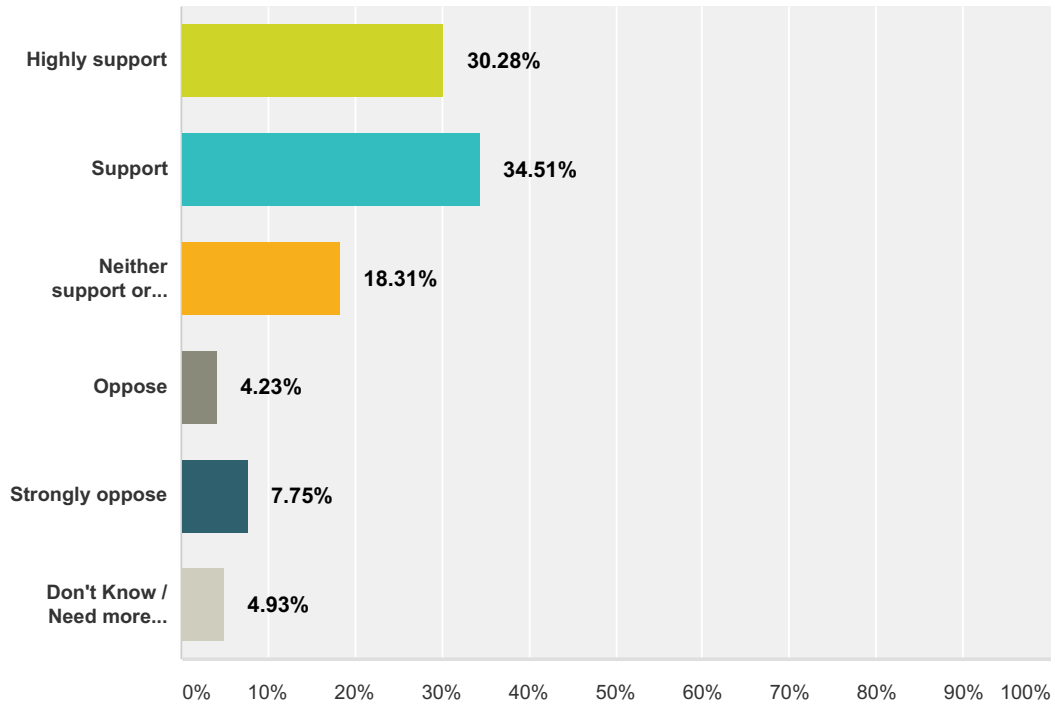
48	Pike Road pike road	4/23/2015 5:55 PM
49	i think they do a WONDERFUL JOB	4/23/2015 5:31 PM
50	Roads in East Otis improve the plowing in east otis	4/23/2015 5:02 PM
51	West Center Road west center road	4/23/2015 4:45 PM
52	School House Road Pave School House Road	4/23/2015 4:33 PM
53	Tyringham Road Tyringham road, otis	4/23/2015 3:55 PM
54	Churchill Road Churchill Rd	4/23/2015 3:25 PM
55	Back roads	4/23/2015 3:14 PM
56	Otis Tolland Road Otis-tolland rd	4/23/2015 2:25 PM
57	Otis Tolland Road Otis-Tolland Road	4/23/2015 2:24 PM
58	Kibbe Road Kibbe Road	4/23/2015 1:58 PM
59	We have a 1/2 mile gravel road to our home that is not maintained by the town!	4/23/2015 1:37 PM
60	School House Road School house	4/23/2015 8:13 AM
61	Route 23 rt 23	4/23/2015 6:56 AM
62	Kibbe Road Kibbe Road	4/23/2015 12:08 AM
63	Kibbe Road Tolland Road tolland and kibbe	4/22/2015 11:00 PM
64	Pine Road Pine road	4/22/2015 8:12 PM
65	Pine Road pine rd.	4/22/2015 7:53 PM
66	Kibbe Road Kibbe Road	4/22/2015 4:55 PM
67	Pine Road Pine rd	4/22/2015 3:02 PM

Q22 Please indicate your level of support for the possible creation of a public transportation route through Otis. A possible public transportation route might include a stop in Otis along a route that served several area towns and could bring riders to places like Lee, Great Barrington, or Pittsfield.

Answered: 142 Skipped: 37

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



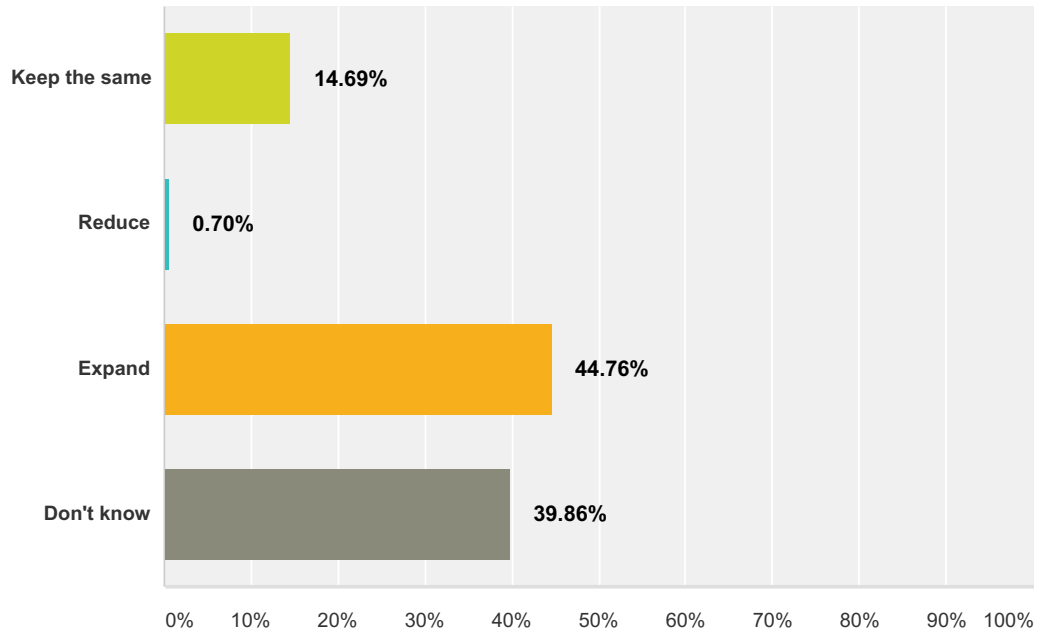
Answer Choices	Responses	
Highly support	30.28%	43
Support	34.51%	49
Neither support or oppose	18.31%	26
Oppose	4.23%	6
Strongly oppose	7.75%	11
Don't Know / Need more information	4.93%	7
Total		142

Q23 Should transportation services for elderly or disabled Otis residents (such as those provided through BRTA paratransit or Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation) be kept the same, reduced or expanded?

Answered: 143 Skipped: 36

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



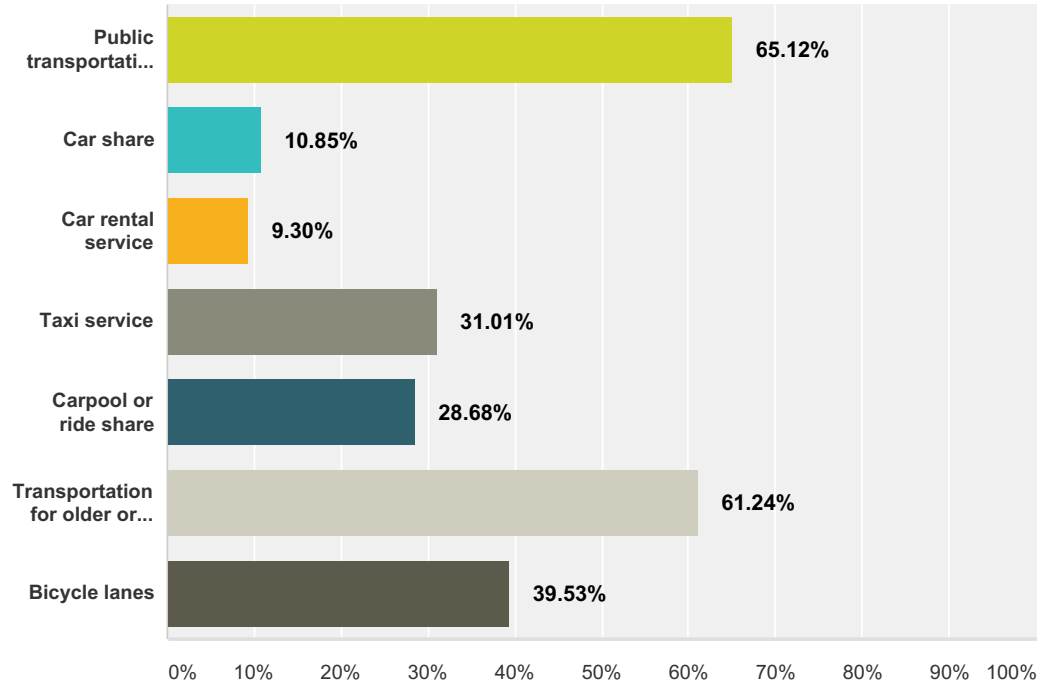
Answer Choices	Responses
Keep the same	14.69% 21
Reduce	0.70% 1
Expand	44.76% 64
Don't know	39.86% 57
Total	143

Q24 If you had an option for alternative transportation in Otis (other than your own vehicle), what form should it take? (Please select the 3 most important forms of alternative transportation you would like to see in town)

Answered: 129 Skipped: 50

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Answer Choices	Responses
Public transportation route through Otis	65.12% 84
Car share	10.85% 14
Car rental service	9.30% 12
Taxi service	31.01% 40
Carpool or ride share	28.68% 37
Transportation for older or disabled residents	61.24% 79
Bicycle lanes	39.53% 51
Total Respondents: 129	

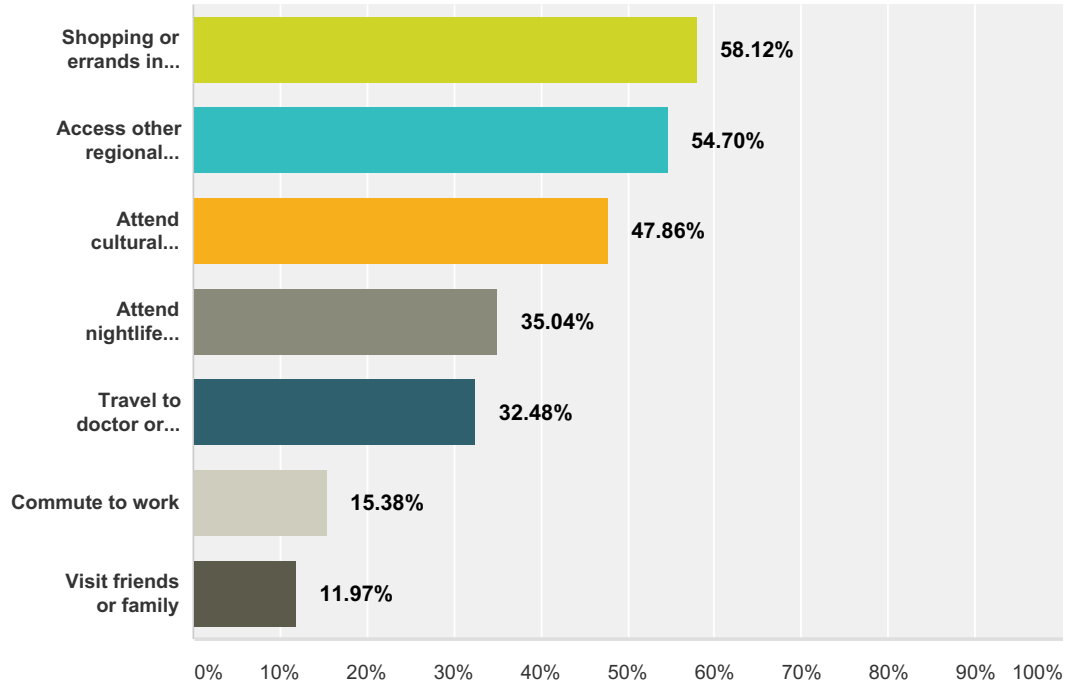
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	dont know	6/3/2015 9:28 AM
2	Trolley From Becket	5/30/2015 11:35 AM
3	We currently have SBETC but not too many seniors use it because the service timing is inconvenient.	4/27/2015 9:20 AM

Q25 If you were to use public transportation or any of the alternative transportation services listed in the previous question, what would be your reasons for doing so? (Please choose your top 3 reasons)

Answered: 117 Skipped: 62

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Answer Choices	Responses
Shopping or errands in surrounding towns	58.12% 68
Access other regional transportation, such as airports, train stations or bus terminals	54.70% 64
Attend cultural events, such as concerts or plays	47.86% 56
Attend nightlife activities, such as bars, restaurants, or movie theaters	35.04% 41
Travel to doctor or dentist appointment	32.48% 38
Commute to work	15.38% 18
Visit friends or family	11.97% 14
Total Respondents: 117	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Bike riding for exercise	6/11/2015 1:47 PM
2	Because we Can't drive anymore to do any of these	5/11/2015 2:39 PM
3	use of bike lanes on more main roads	5/1/2015 6:04 PM

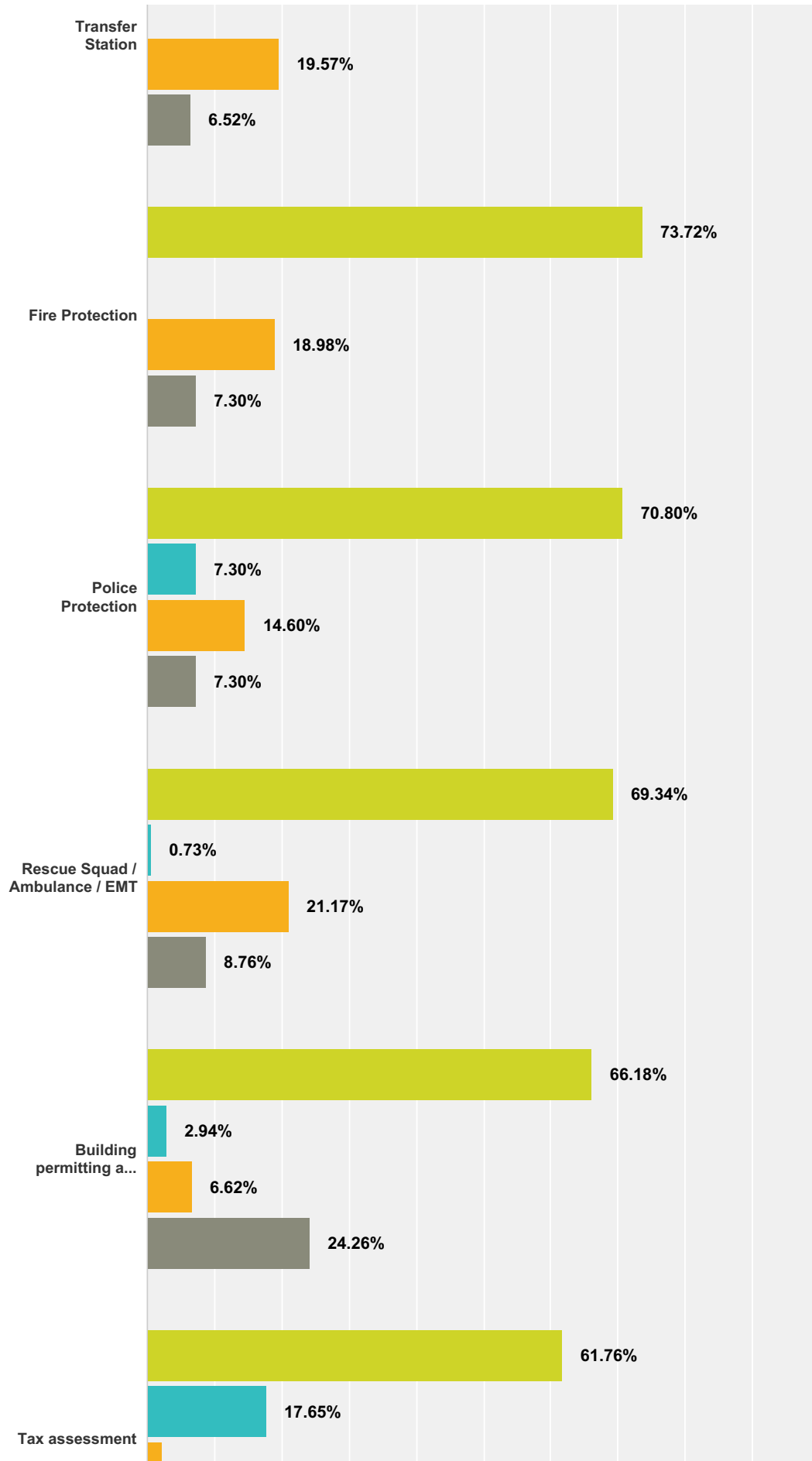
Q26 What town services do you believe need to be kept the same, reduced, or expanded?

Answered: 139 Skipped: 40



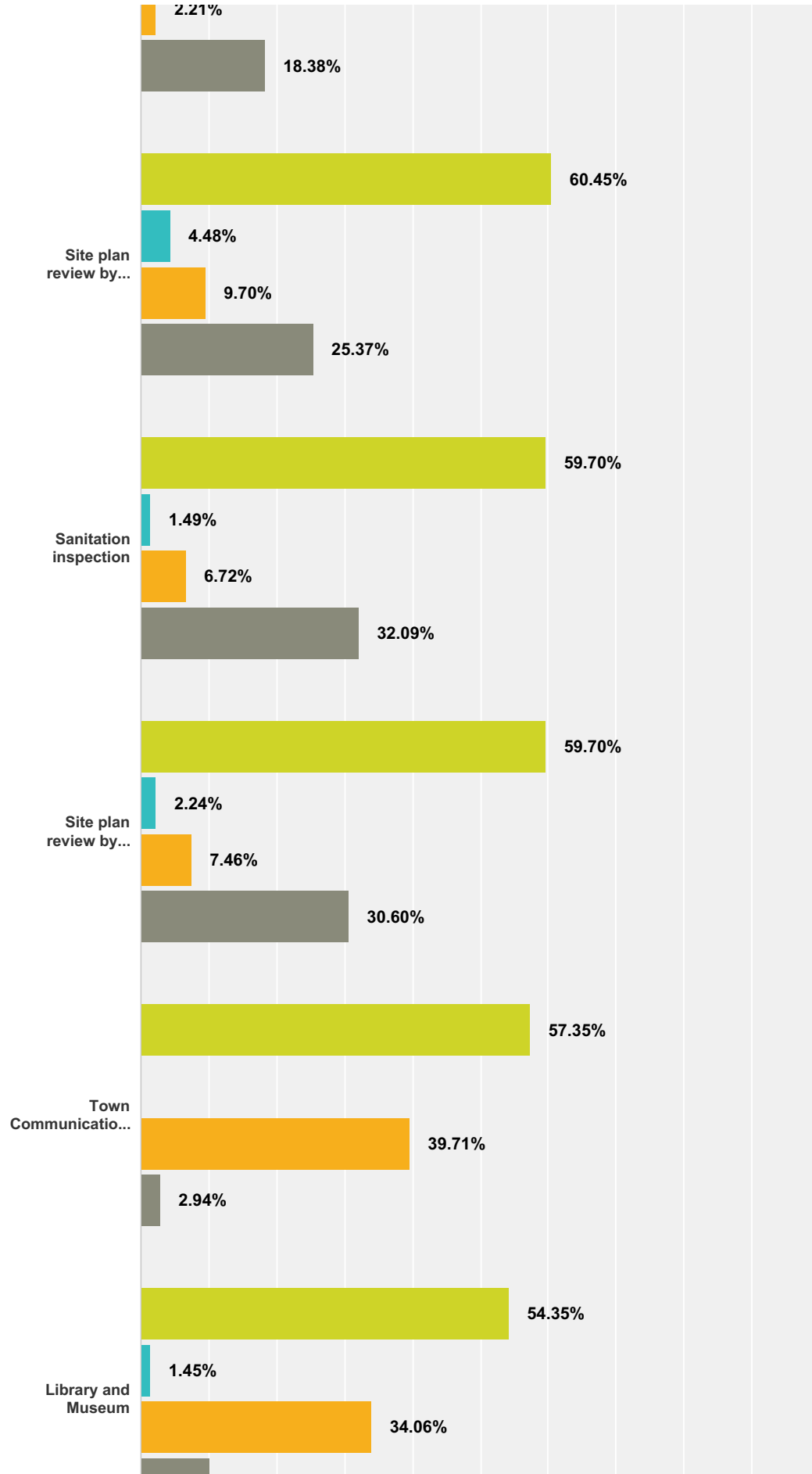
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



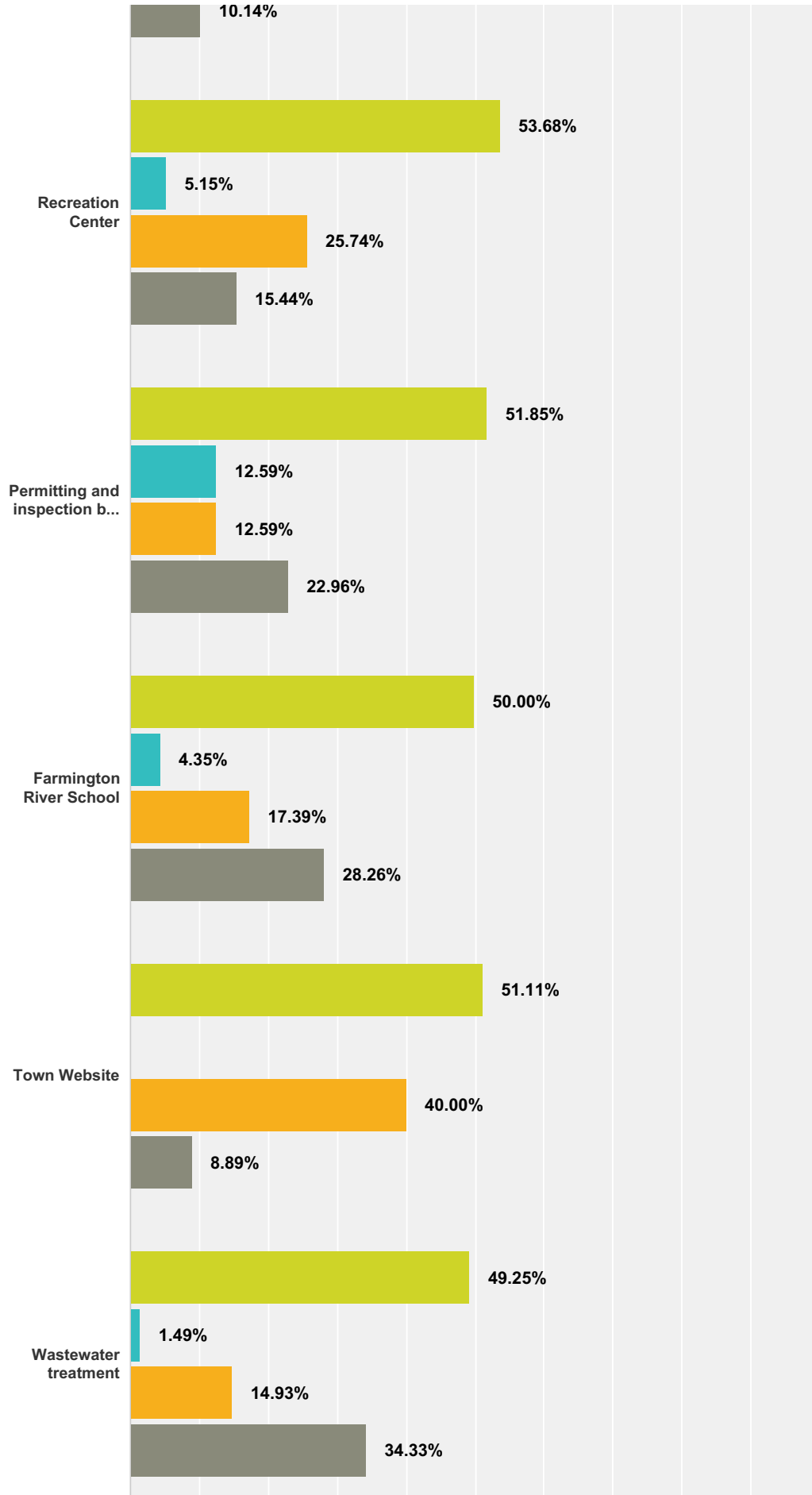
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Keep service the same Reduce service Expand service Don't Know

	Keep service the same	Reduce service	Expand service	Don't Know	Total
Transfer Station	73.91% 102	0.00% 0	19.57% 27	6.52% 9	138
Fire Protection	73.72% 101	0.00% 0	18.98% 26	7.30% 10	137
Police Protection	70.80% 97	7.30% 10	14.60% 20	7.30% 10	137
Rescue Squad / Ambulance / EMT	69.34% 95	0.73% 1	21.17% 29	8.76% 12	137
Building permitting and inspection	66.18% 90	2.94% 4	6.62% 9	24.26% 33	136
Tax assessment	61.76% 84	17.65% 24	2.21% 3	18.38% 25	136
Site plan review by Zoning Board of Appeals	60.45% 81	4.48% 6	9.70% 13	25.37% 34	134
Sanitation inspection	59.70% 80	1.49% 2	6.72% 9	32.09% 43	134
Site plan review by Planning Board	59.70% 80	2.24% 3	7.46% 10	30.60% 41	134
Town Communications to the Public	57.35% 78	0.00% 0	39.71% 54	2.94% 4	136
Library and Museum	54.35% 75	1.45% 2	34.06% 47	10.14% 14	138
Recreation Center	53.68% 73	5.15% 7	25.74% 35	15.44% 21	136
Permitting and inspection by Conservation Commission	51.85% 70	12.59% 17	12.59% 17	22.96% 31	135
Farmington River School	50.00% 69	4.35% 6	17.39% 24	28.26% 39	138
Town Website	51.11% 69	0.00% 0	40.00% 54	8.89% 12	135
Wastewater treatment	49.25% 66	1.49% 2	14.93% 20	34.33% 46	134

Q27 What services not on this list do you believe need to reduced or expanded?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 149

#	Responses	Date
1	Recreational resources like tennis, skating the lake in winter etc	6/10/2015 6:02 AM

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

2	Otis reservoir community services	6/9/2015 6:15 PM
3	otis residents should have access to natural gas - since the gas line already runs through otis.	6/3/2015 11:04 AM
4	wind power will be very expensive. natural gas would be a great help to the people of its a substation could be installed since there is a gas line running through our town already. electricity is very costly and wood resources are getting scarce.	6/3/2015 10:56 AM
5	communications re: events and services	6/3/2015 9:30 AM
6	Expand Role of Historic Commisison	5/30/2015 11:37 AM
7	natural gas heating	5/30/2015 11:23 AM
8	notices in newspaper need to be expanded	5/30/2015 11:08 AM
9	We need FIBEROPTICS !!!!!	5/30/2015 6:37 AM
10	establish free book exchange at transfer station, this would involve another small building	5/1/2015 12:09 PM
11	None that I can think of	4/30/2015 12:00 PM
12	none	4/27/2015 3:47 PM
13	Expand road maintenance	4/27/2015 1:58 PM
14	Don't know	4/27/2015 9:24 AM
15	Five day a week access to the Town Hall offices	4/25/2015 8:52 PM
16	Limiting trash/unregistered vehicles on property	4/25/2015 1:42 PM
17	n/a	4/25/2015 10:49 AM
18	Council on Aging services/hours should be EXPANDED.	4/24/2015 10:48 AM
19	Need bike lanes on all roads	4/24/2015 9:07 AM
20	high speed internet	4/23/2015 5:34 PM
21	0	4/23/2015 4:51 PM
22	technology needs to be expanded - the 'wired west' needs to be a very important initiative.	4/23/2015 4:36 PM
23	none	4/23/2015 3:17 PM
24	Take over the road maintenance of the main roads at Brookman A Association	4/23/2015 2:34 PM
25	Take over more private roads for maintenance.	4/23/2015 2:34 PM
26	Can we get mail delivery???	4/23/2015 1:40 PM
27	rec dept	4/23/2015 1:25 PM
28	Conservation commission	4/23/2015 12:15 AM
29	n/a	4/22/2015 5:13 PM
30	?	4/22/2015 5:02 PM

Q28 If you have additional comments about services provided by the town, please explain below.

Answered: 14 Skipped: 165

#	Responses	Date
1	Add tennis courts and possible ice rink in the winter	6/9/2015 6:15 PM

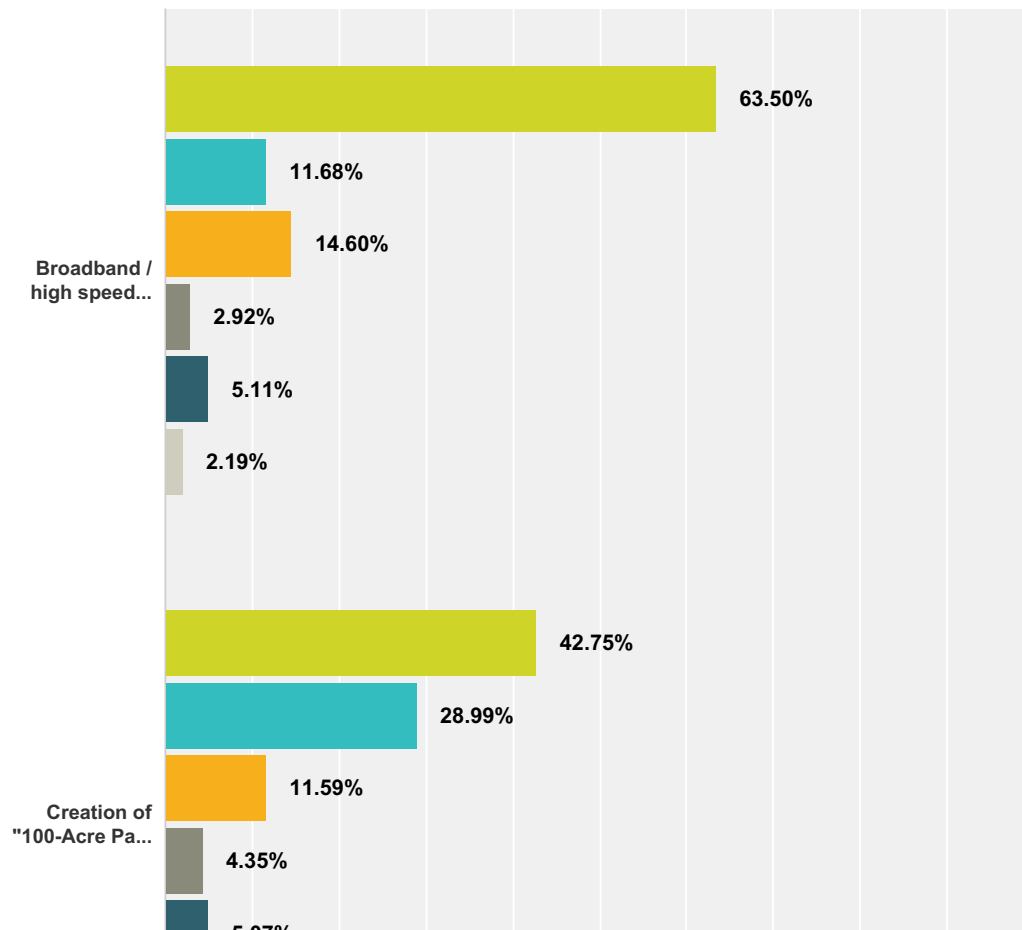
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

2	add electronic books to library, improve fitness equipment, and tv in fitness center (especially elliptical)	6/3/2015 10:13 AM
3	?	6/3/2015 9:30 AM
4	keep nepotism out of Otis !	5/30/2015 6:37 AM
5	None.	4/30/2015 12:00 PM
6	The Town Hall should be open 5 days. There should be a time clock also ! Employees are not there when they should be.	4/28/2015 10:25 AM
7	none	4/27/2015 3:47 PM
8	None	4/27/2015 9:24 AM
9	n/a	4/25/2015 10:49 AM
10	Town Administrator needs to communicate better/more with Selectmen and the community. Still do not understand the "job study" which was done a few years ago for Town employees, no update to the community.	4/24/2015 10:48 AM
11	Conservation commission oversight needed. Sometimes it Seems they are too strict almost as if it is a power trip to deny some common sense solution to a problem.	4/23/2015 6:47 PM
12	0	4/23/2015 4:51 PM
13	We need to have sewer services in East Otis. Septic tanks are antiquated and are likely responsible for pollution of water.	4/23/2015 12:15 AM
14	n/a	4/22/2015 5:13 PM

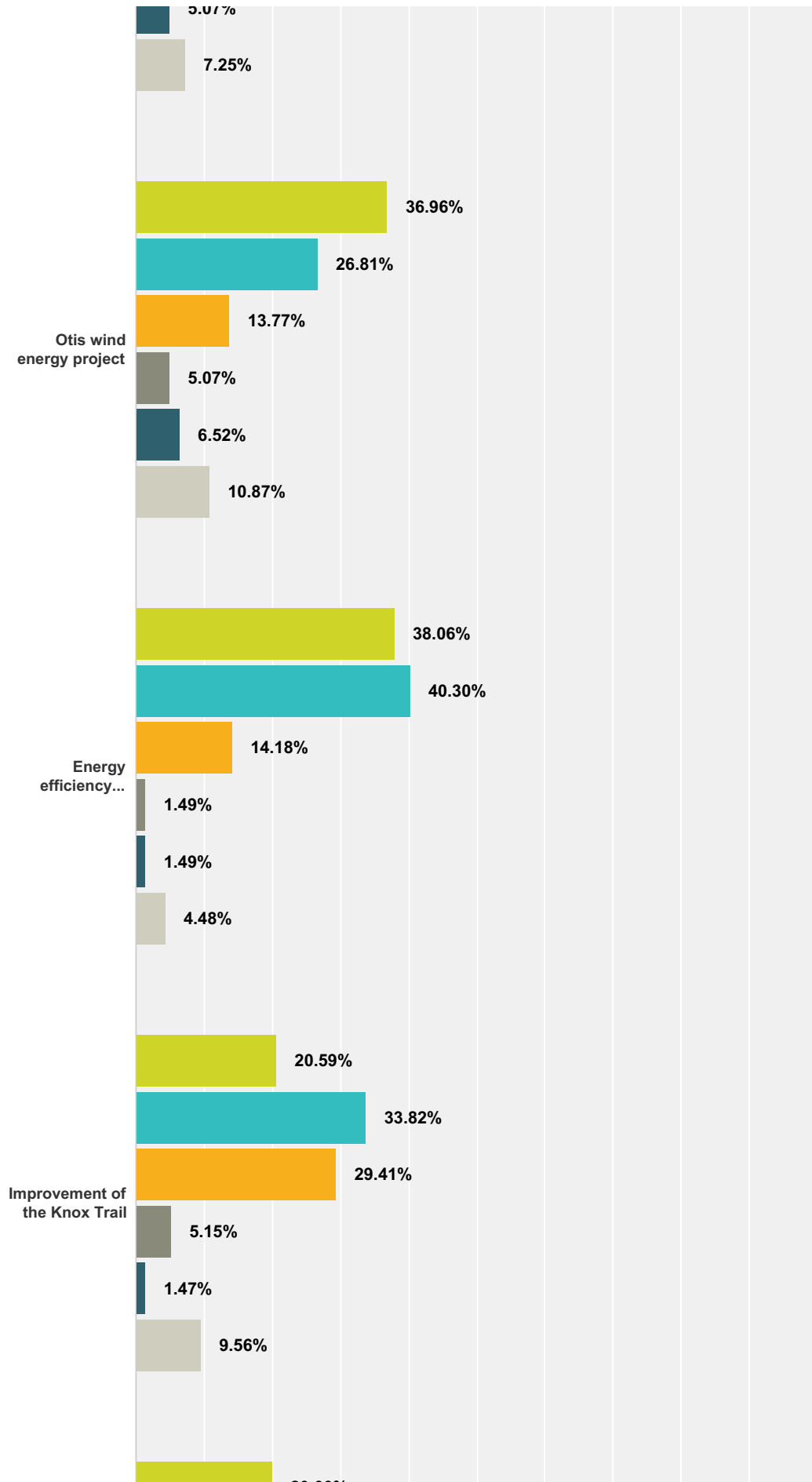
Q29 Please indicate your level of support for the following town initiatives.

Answered: 138 Skipped: 41



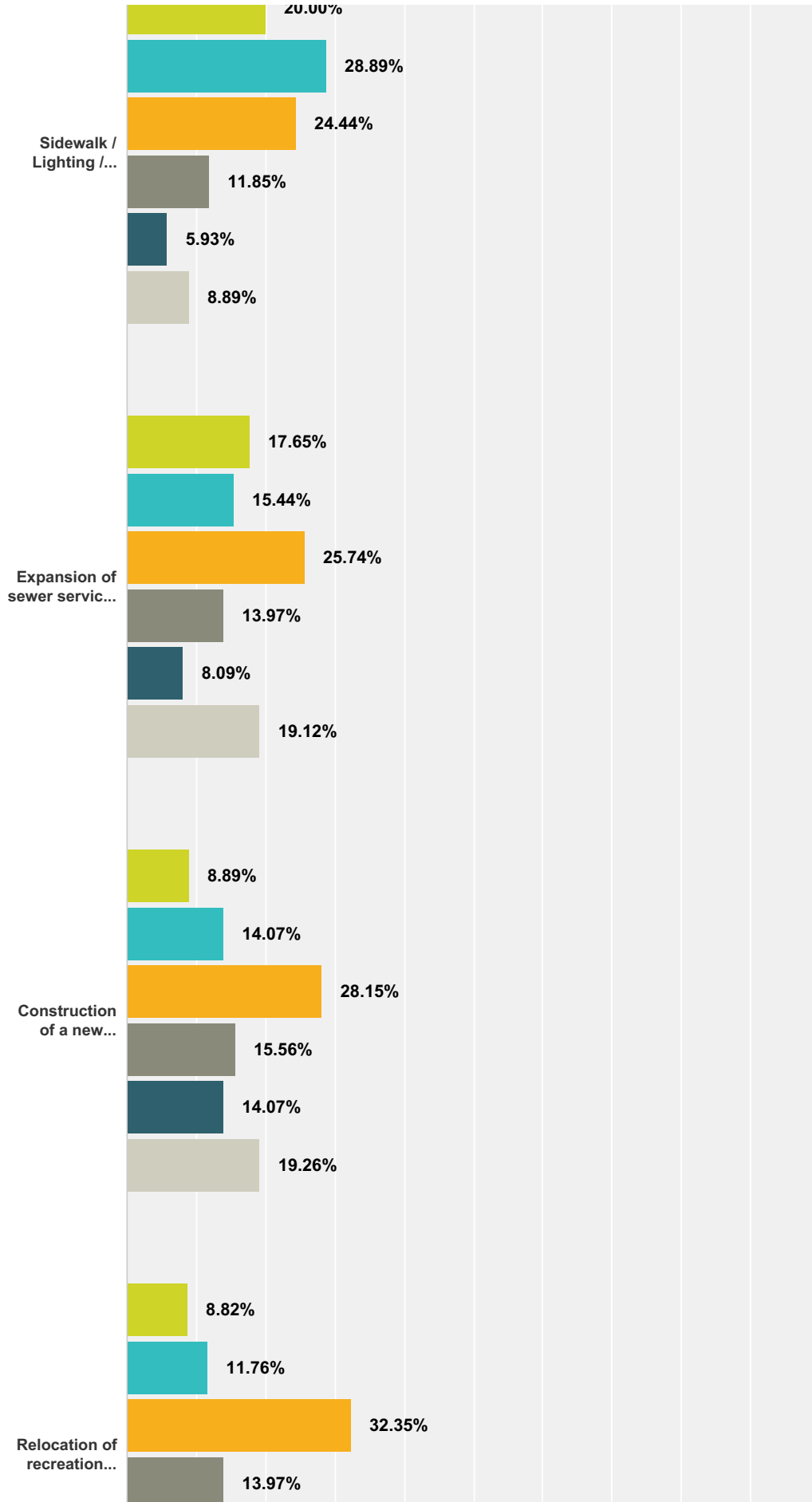
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



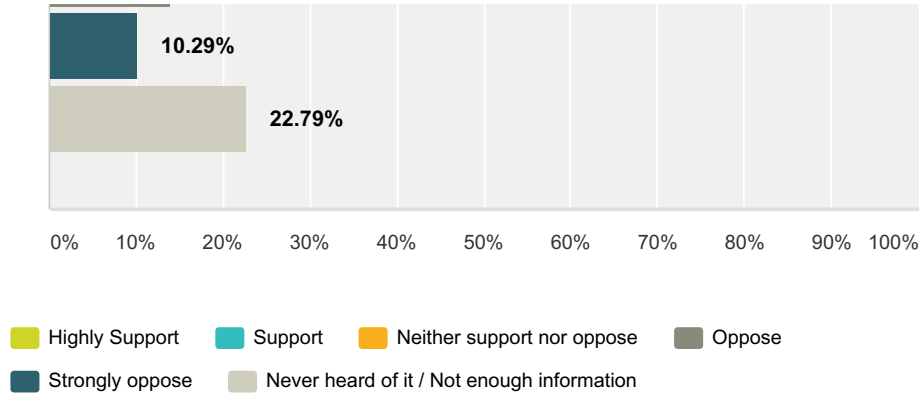
Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



	Highly Support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Never heard of it / Not enough information	Total
Broadband / high speed internet service from WiredWest	63.50% 87	11.68% 16	14.60% 20	2.92% 4	5.11% 7	2.19% 3	137
Creation of "100-Acre Park" on town-owned land between Route 8 and West Center Road with trails, benches, and some elements designed for seniors or elderly residents.	42.75% 59	28.99% 40	11.59% 16	4.35% 6	5.07% 7	7.25% 10	138
Otis wind energy project	36.96% 51	26.81% 37	13.77% 19	5.07% 7	6.52% 9	10.87% 15	138
Energy efficiency upgrades to existing town buildings	38.06% 51	40.30% 54	14.18% 19	1.49% 2	1.49% 2	4.48% 6	134
Improvement of the Knox Trail	20.59% 28	33.82% 46	29.41% 40	5.15% 7	1.47% 2	9.56% 13	136
Sidewalk / Lighting / Signage Improvements to East Otis village	20.00% 27	28.89% 39	24.44% 33	11.85% 16	5.93% 8	8.89% 12	135
Expansion of sewer service to include other areas of town	17.65% 24	15.44% 21	25.74% 35	13.97% 19	8.09% 11	19.12% 26	136
Construction of a new combined Highway/Fire Department building	8.89% 12	14.07% 19	28.15% 38	15.56% 21	14.07% 19	19.26% 26	135
Relocation of recreation center activities to the existing fire station	8.82% 12	11.76% 16	32.35% 44	13.97% 19	10.29% 14	22.79% 31	136

Q30 Currently, the sewer system services roughly 70 private residences, the school, and town facilities along Rte. 8 in Otis Center. If you support sewer expansion to other areas of town, what area do you think would be the most important to expand to? (List only one)

Answered: 46 Skipped: 133

#	Responses	Date
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Otis Master Plan Survey

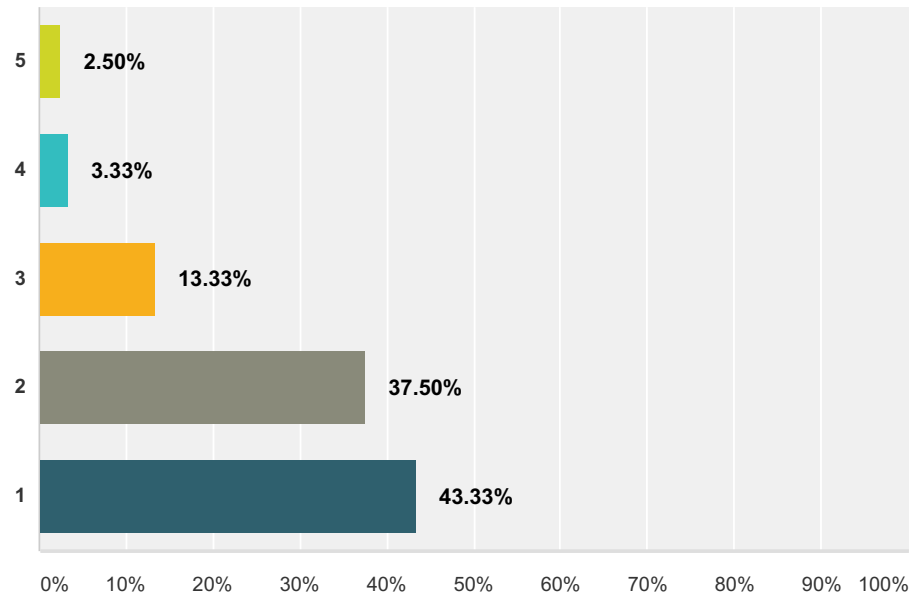
All Survey Responses

1	West Center Road West Center Road	6/9/2015 9:41 AM
2	Ski Area otis ridge ski area	6/3/2015 11:12 AM
3	Nowhere sewer system costs have gone up each year!	6/3/2015 11:04 AM
4	Nowhere town promised that costs would go down for sewer system users. the costs have been rising instead! we cannot afford these initiatives. if the costs keep rising, long time residents will be forced to sell and move out.	6/3/2015 10:56 AM
5	most densely populated full time residents	6/3/2015 10:34 AM
6	Nowhere forget it - too costly	6/3/2015 9:30 AM
7	Nowhere Didnt support the first one!	5/30/2015 11:23 AM
8	Everywhere everywhere	5/30/2015 11:08 AM
9	Ski Area Otis Ski Ridge	5/30/2015 6:37 AM
10	Don't Know don't know	5/27/2015 2:29 PM
11	Reservoir / Ponds The heavy population areas around the Otis resevoir and big pond.	5/27/2015 9:54 AM
12	Ski Area Route 23 from center of town toward Otis Ridge	5/18/2015 7:55 PM
13	Route 8 Along route 8	5/15/2015 7:57 PM
14	Reservoir / Ponds the lakes	5/13/2015 5:55 PM
15	East Otis Rate 23 east	5/11/2015 2:42 PM
16	Reservoir / Ponds All around the reservior	5/7/2015 10:10 AM
17	Ski Area Otis Ridge, West Center Road	5/2/2015 9:20 AM
18	Reservoir / Ponds around the Otis Reservoir	5/1/2015 12:09 PM
19	East Otis Rt. 23 towards E. Otis	5/1/2015 11:49 AM
20	Reservoir / Ponds areas around the reservoir	4/30/2015 3:04 PM
21	Reservoir / Ponds Otis Reservoir	4/29/2015 4:40 PM
22	East Otis East Otis	4/28/2015 1:20 PM
23	Ski Area Otis Ridge	4/28/2015 10:25 AM
24	Ski Area Otis Ridge Ski Area	4/28/2015 8:23 AM
25	Don't Know don't know	4/27/2015 3:47 PM
26	Ski Area West along Rt 23 to ski area	4/27/2015 1:58 PM
27	Reservoir / Ponds Otis Reservoir	4/27/2015 9:24 AM
28	Reservoir / Ponds Lake houses	4/26/2015 12:12 PM
29	West Otis Rte. 23 in West Otis	4/25/2015 8:52 PM
30	Nowhere n/a	4/25/2015 10:49 AM
31	Reservoir / Ponds areas around reservoir	4/24/2015 6:30 PM
32	Nowhere I do not feel this is a good fit for Otis, the existing system or any new proposals. I question the affordability for these residents and the equipment seems to fail pretty regularly.	4/24/2015 10:48 AM
33	Reservoir / Ponds Otis Reservoir- eliminate septic systems	4/23/2015 5:57 PM
34	East Otis east otis	4/23/2015 4:51 PM
35	Reservoir / Ponds near big pond	4/23/2015 3:27 PM
36	Otis Woodlands Otis Wood Lands	4/23/2015 3:17 PM
37	West Otis along Rte 23 west	4/23/2015 2:12 PM

38	Reservoir / Ponds Reservoir	4/23/2015 2:03 PM
39	Reservoir / Ponds Otis Woodlands, Otis Reservoir, Big Pond	4/23/2015 1:47 PM
40	Ski Area otis ridge	4/23/2015 1:25 PM
41	Don't Know don't know	4/23/2015 7:00 AM
42	Reservoir / Ponds Kibbe road and areas around the reservoir	4/23/2015 12:15 AM
43	East Otis East otis	4/22/2015 7:22 PM
44	Don't Know dont know	4/22/2015 5:13 PM
45	Don't Know ?	4/22/2015 5:02 PM
46	Ski Area Route 23 to the ski area	4/22/2015 3:05 PM

Q31 Please rate how serious you feel the level of crime is in Otis. (5 is very serious, 1 is not serious at all)

Answered: 120 Skipped: 59



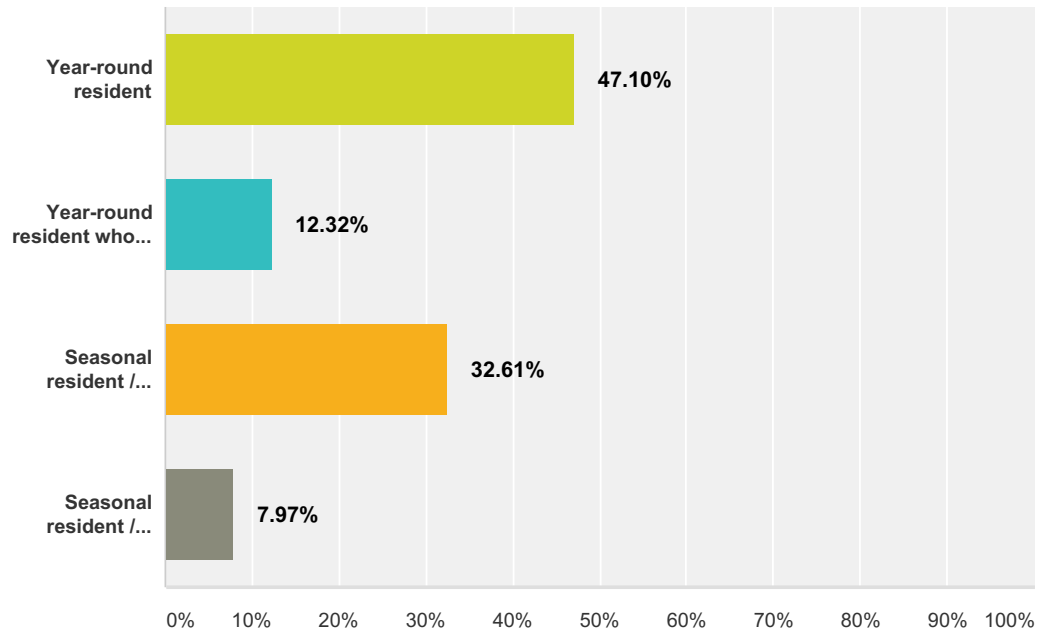
Answer Choices	Responses	
5	2.50%	3
4	3.33%	4
3	13.33%	16
2	37.50%	45
1	43.33%	52
Total		120

Q32 Are you a year-round or seasonal resident/second homeowner of Otis?

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses

Answered: 138 Skipped: 41



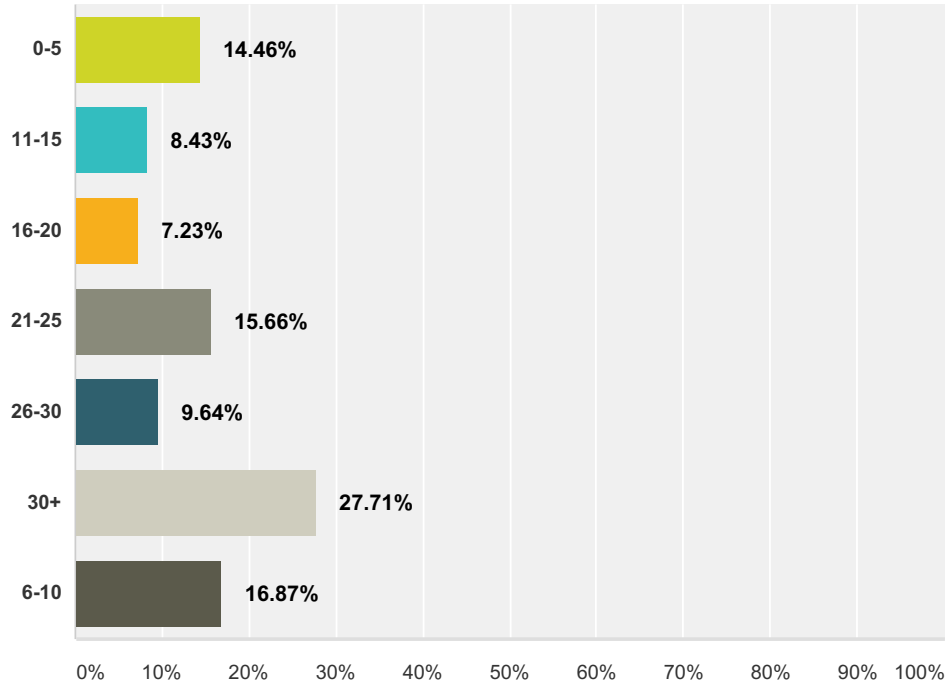
Answer Choices	Responses	
Year-round resident	47.10%	65
Year-round resident who used to be a seasonal resident or second homeowner	12.32%	17
Seasonal resident / second homeowner	32.61%	45
Seasonal resident / second homeowner who is planning on becoming a year-round resident	7.97%	11
Total		138

Q33 If you are a year-round resident, how many years have you lived in Otis?

Answered: 83 Skipped: 96

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



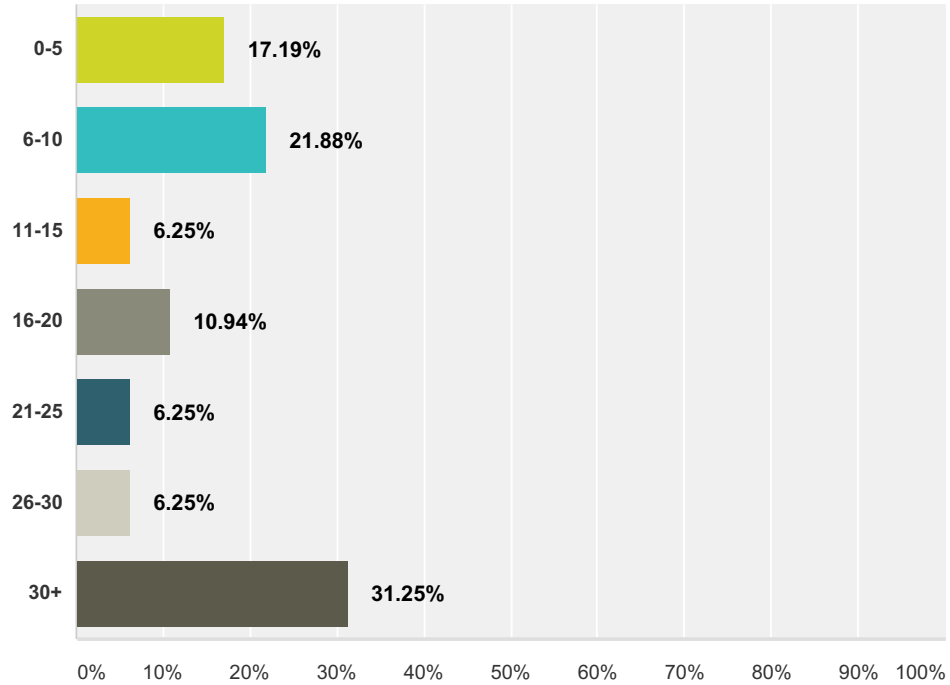
Answer Choices	Responses
0-5	14.46% 12
11-15	8.43% 7
16-20	7.23% 6
21-25	15.66% 13
26-30	9.64% 8
30+	27.71% 23
6-10	16.87% 14
Total	83

Q34 If you are a seasonal resident or second homeowner, how many years have you lived in Otis?

Answered: 64 Skipped: 115

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



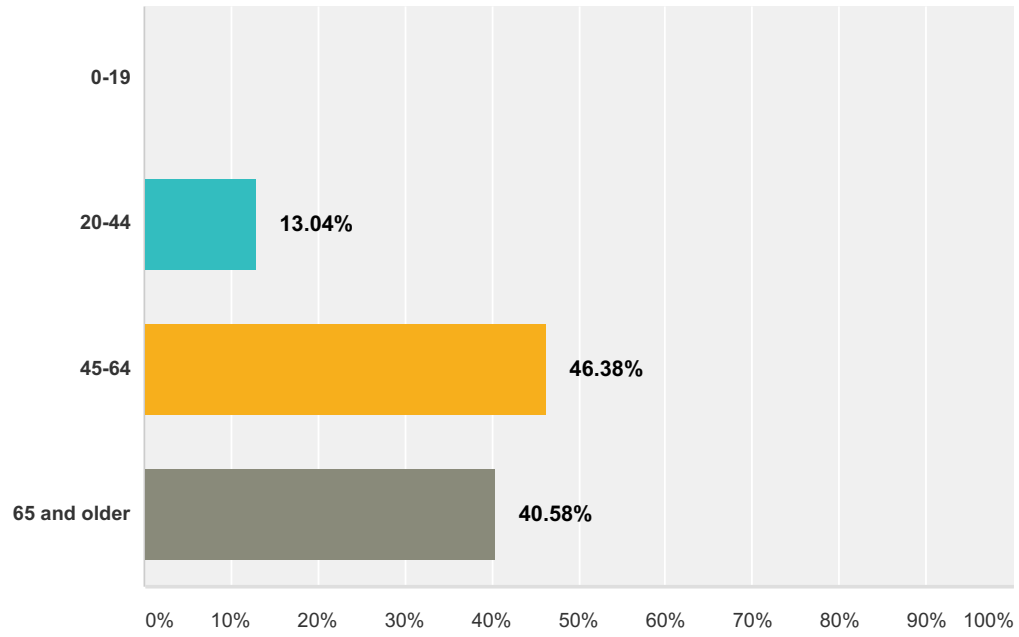
Answer Choices	Responses	
0-5	17.19%	11
6-10	21.88%	14
11-15	6.25%	4
16-20	10.94%	7
21-25	6.25%	4
26-30	6.25%	4
30+	31.25%	20
Total		64

Q35 What is your age?

Answered: 138 Skipped: 41

Otis Master Plan Survey

All Survey Responses



Answer Choices	Responses
0-19	0.00% 0
20-44	13.04% 18
45-64	46.38% 64
65 and older	40.58% 56
Total	138