



SMALL TOWN, BIG PLANS

BLANDFORD

Bridge to **2030**
RESILIENT MASTER PLAN

Welcome to the Blandford Resilient Master Plan Visioning Session!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

VIRTUAL SESSION



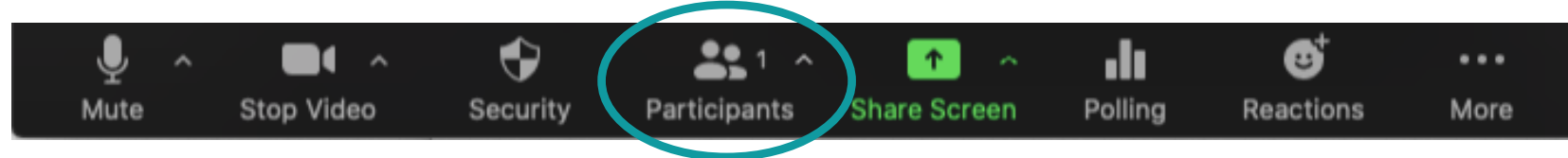
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Bridge to 2030
RESILIENT MASTER PLAN

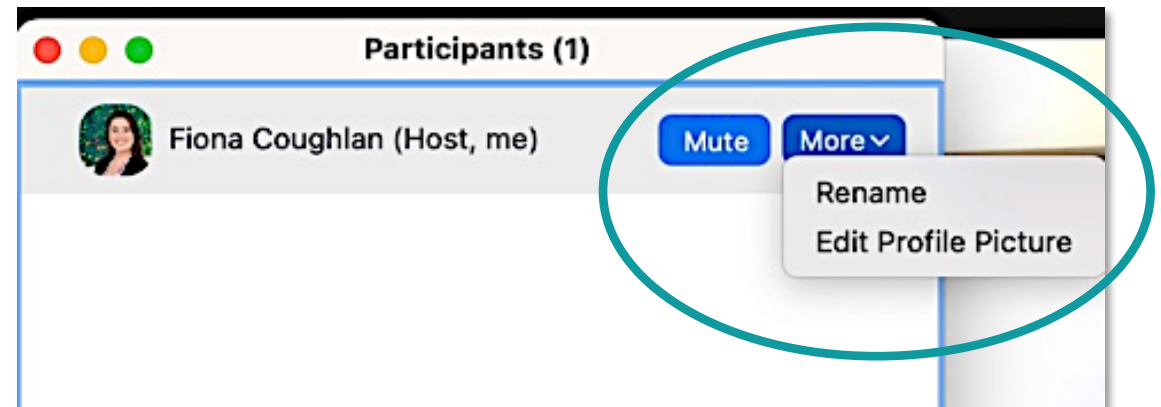
Welcome!

If possible, please update your Zoom name to include your first and last name and affiliation by clicking on the "Participants" tab on the bottom of your Zoom screen and selecting "More" by your name.



Examples:

- Susan Thomas, Resident
- Joshua Garcia, Town Administrator



TEAM INTRODUCTIONS

PROJECT MANAGERS

Kenneth Comia, AICP	Senior Land Use Planner	<i>Land Use/Zoning</i>
Catherine Ratté	Section Head	<i>Climate Adaptation/Sustainability</i>

ENGAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Alexis Lanzillotta	Project Analyst	<i>Engagement and Outreach</i>
Fiona Coughlan, AICP	Community Planner	<i>Engagement and Outreach</i>

CONTENT SPECIALISTS

Patty Gambarini	Section Head	<i>Economic Development</i>
Ted Harvey, AICP	Senior Community Development Planner	<i>Housing</i>
Gary Roux	Section Head	<i>Transportation</i>
Shannon Walsh	Historic Preservation Planner	<i>Historical and Cultural Resources</i>
Ray Centeno	Graphics/Website Designer	<i>Graphic Design and Website</i>
Jake Dolinger	GIS Specialist	<i>GIS Mapping and Data</i>
Douglas Hall, PhD	Data Manager & Analyst	<i>Data Manager</i>
Todd Zukowski	Section Head	<i>GIS/Data and Communications</i>
Andrew McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	<i>Transportation</i>

RMPC MEMBERS

David Hopson – School Superintendent and Town Moderator

Peter Langmore – Chair, Municipal Light Board

Pat Daviau – Member, Council on Aging

Mary Kronholm – Trustee, Library & Assistant Town Clerk

Doug Emo – Maintenance of Watson Memorial Park
Veteran, Lead Organizer for Annual Memorial Day
Ceremony

Edna Wilander – Vice Chair, Planning Board

Paul Martin – Treasurer, Planning Board

Chips Norcross – Member, Historical Society

Bob Kidd – Member, Historical Society

Jen Girard – Member, Board of Health

Rene Senecal – Highway Superintendent

Gordon Avery – Water Superintendent

Margit Mikuski – Director, Council on Aging

Linda Barnard – Member, Historical Society & Historical
Commission

Cara Letendre – Chair, Select Board

David Mottor – Fire Chief

Judith MacKinnon – Chair, Council on Aging

Nicole Daviau – Library Director

Joann Martin – Member, Recreation Committee
Town Administrator Assistant

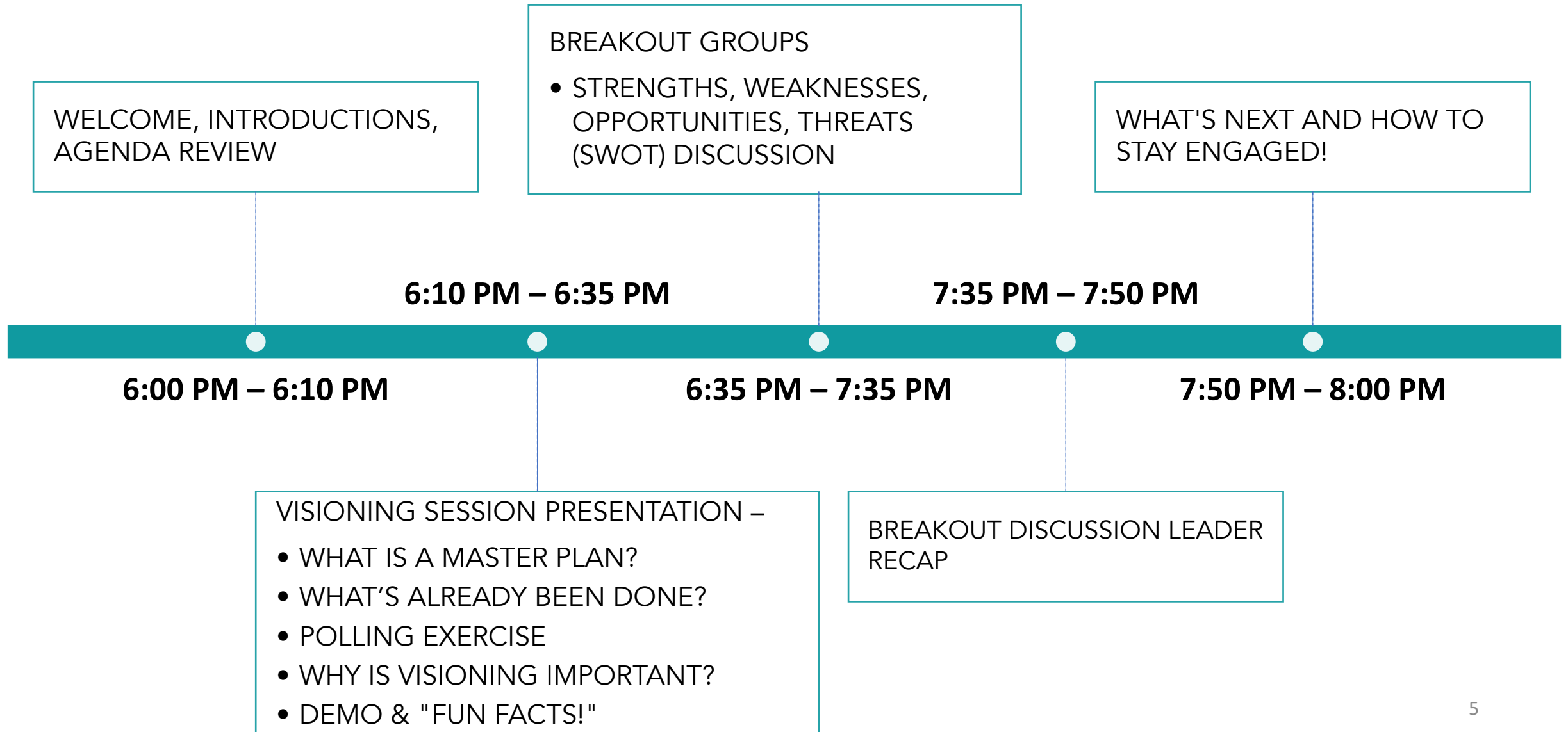
Tj Cousineau – Cemetery Commissioner

Sonja Hutchins – Zoning Board of Appeals Member

Joshua A. Garcia – Town Administrator

THANK YOU!

AGENDA



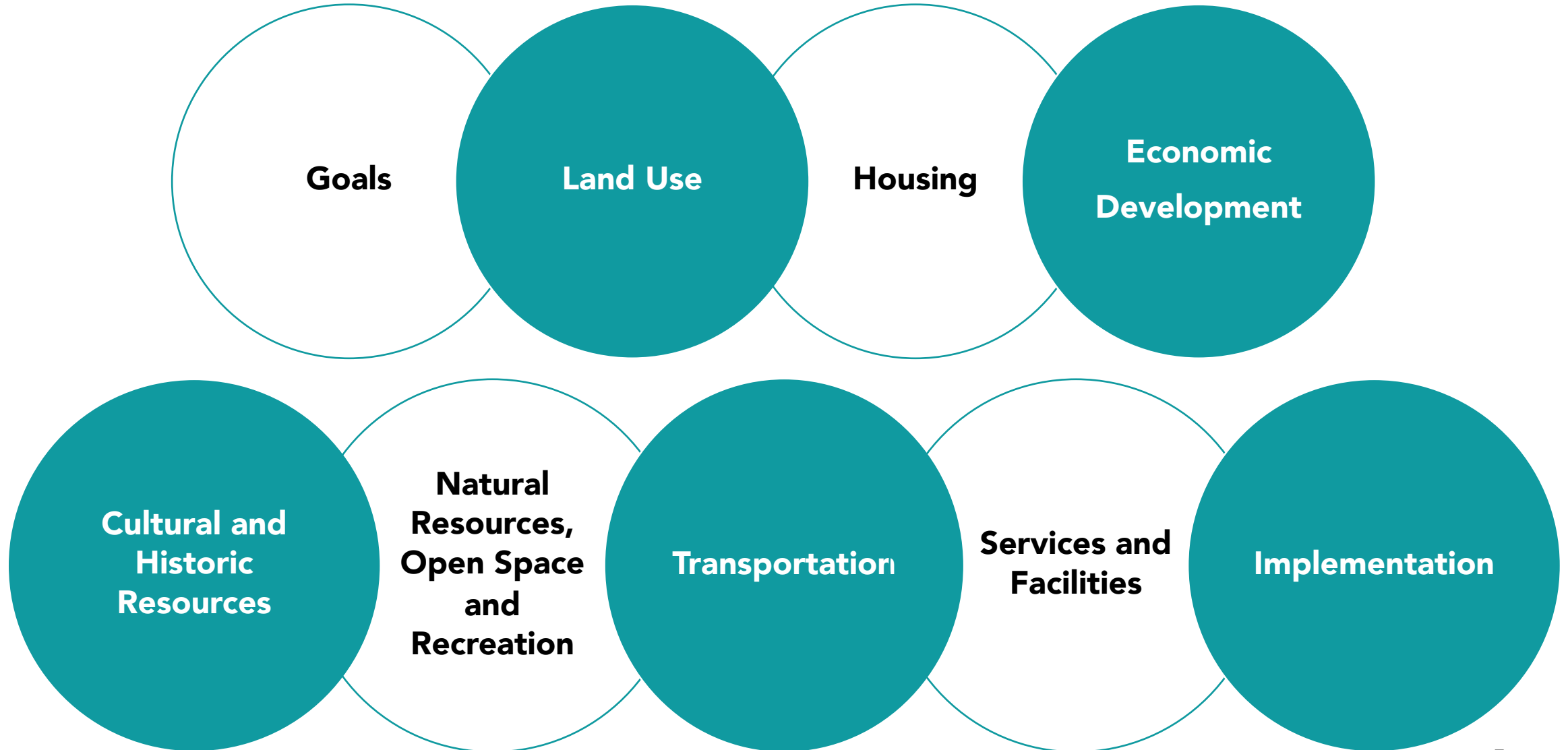


WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

- ☐ Guided by MGL c. 41, §81D – must follow legal framework
- ☐ Blueprint for the future
- ☐ Describes a long-term vision and how to achieve it
- ☐ Guides zoning changes, capital improvements budgeting, general decision-making/policy implementation
- ☐ Covers a time frame of 10-20 years

****A Master Plan is not a zoning bylaw, subdivision regulation, Capital Improvement Program, or other regulatory document!***

ELEMENTS OF A MASTER PLAN



PROCESS

- ❑ **Review** existing conditions to identify issues, challenges and needs.
- ❑ **Distill public input** gained via survey, the Visioning Session, MPC meetings, and future public forums into Guiding Principles that will help us develop Goals.
- ❑ **Develop strategies** to achieve goals.
- ❑ **Implementation**

IMPLEMENTATION

- ❑ The Resilient Master Plan is a **policy guidance** document—not law.
- ❑ The town's **legislative and executive bodies** implement the Plan's recommendations., i.e., Town Meeting, Planning Board, etc.
- ❑ Boards/Commissions should use the Master Plan to **guide decision-making** processes such as permitting decisions and governance by the Select Board.

WHAT'S ALREADY BEEN DONE?

- ❑ A lot has been done for a small town!
- ❑ Community Development Plan (2003)
- ❑ Open Space and Recreation Plan (2004)
- ❑ Housing Needs and Assessment Plan (2012)
- ❑ Hazard Mitigation Plan (2016)
- ❑ Vulnerability Preparedness and Resiliency Building Workshop (2019)
- ❑ Currently updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan

However... Blandford has **NEVER** had a Master Plan!

ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

HILL CEMETERY & CHURCH LOOP - EASY
 Park your car in the lot across from the Blandford Historical Society to begin this walk through history! Cross North St. and follow the uphill path through the tall pine grove. Look to the east at the top of the hill, and on a clear day you will see Springfield. Notice the oak tree surrounded by a metal fence, planted in 1935 in commemoration of the 200th anniversary. Loop through the Hill Cemetery, cross the road, and circle around The White Church of Blandford, owned by the Blandford Historical Society. 2022 is the 200th anniversary.

WATSON MEMORIAL PARK LOOP - MODERATE
 Park on the side of the paved road just inside the park gate. For a gradual ascent, take the left as the fork. Following the direction provides an initial steep climb.

KADLIN RD LOOP - EASY
 This route includes a paved sidewalk followed by a lightly trafficked road that passes the library, store, and other community spots.

HERRICK RD ROUTE - MODERATE
 Park at the trailhead for the Knittel Conservation area and enjoy this pleasant country walk with a minor hill that links to the center of town. Please be aware not to park at the gate at the dead-end of Herrick Rd; this is a Springfield Sewer and Water access point.

KNITTEL TRAILS: A parking area for access to these trails is on the right side of Herrick Rd, about halfway down. This trail system includes a main trail loop that is approximately 1.8 miles in length that straddles Herrick Rd. The western side of the trail is flatter and easier than the western side. For complete information, see townofblandford.com.

KNITTEL WESTERN TRAIL - MODERATE
 The western trail travels through some steeper terrain, near a beaver pond, power lines, and dense Mountain Laurel. A side trail runs directly along the shore of the beaver pond where you can often observe beavers swimming at dusk, nesting great blue herons and other wildlife. Another trail that runs to the west and terminates at the boundary of the Knittel property is a great place to take in sunsets.

KNITTEL EASTERN TRAIL - MODERATE
 This part of the trail takes you through fields with a great view to the south, by a small pond (including several foot bridges), and runs along unique bedrock outcroppings.

COBBLE MOUNTAIN RD LOOP - EASY
 This is an easy route, half on a lightly traveled paved road and dirt road on the return. Park at the intersection of Cobble Mountain Rd and Birch Hill Rd on the west side next to the chain-link fence.

SANDERSON BROOK FALLS TRAIL - EASY TO MODERATE
 There is a very small parking area where the trail begins. The walk itself is well cleared wide enough for 2-3 walkers side by side with a gradual decline and a nice sturdy bridge over a stream. No access to Sanderson Brook Falls as the bridge is still being repaired, but you can hear the water from this point.

CHESTER BLANDFORD STATE FOREST TRAILS
 Park on Beulah Land Rd either on the left near #16 (do not block driveway or road) or drive down the narrow road and park near the gate.

DYNAMITE BOX TRAIL - MODERATE
 Near the gate, notice a marker and map for the trail. Proceeding Brook, and at the junction of trails, look for a stone chimney and remains of a lodge. Hiking is moderate up and down, on rock and great footing.

OBSERVATION HILL TRAIL - MODERATE
 Follow Beulah Land Rd. northward, enjoying a wide and well-cleared trail on a gravel road. Take a right onto Observation Hill Rd. for wide but steeper terrain. At the "T" take a left onto Mica Mine Rd, which brings you to Observation Hill. Walk around this beautiful area for a view of neighboring mountains.

TIPS FOR YOUR WALK
 WASH-UP AND S-T-R-E-T-C-H: Before starting any exercise, move around to warm up your muscles (walk in place, etc.).
 REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING as you are prepared for any change of plans or weather:
 1. Water, food or snack
 2. Sunscreen or hat
 3. Bring an extra layer (jacket, etc.) and wear comfortable, supportive shoes
 4. Weather map
 5. Call phone, emergency numbers
 COOL DOWN - Slow your pace towards the end of the walk. Stretch your legs and arms.
 BE SAFE!
 • Wear bright, reflective clothing

TICK WARNING
 Check your body and clothing for ticks. Use insect repellent. Seek medical attention if rash or fever occurs.

MEET MEMA standards for the Town Hall's back-up generator.
Explore solar electricity generation and b
Meet DPH standards for the Town Hall to medicine, vaccines, and medical treatme
Develop an actionable plan to use EMS s medication/conducting tele-visits with d
Create an opt-in list of seniors/disabled r emergency/institute an "Are You Okay" c
Continue the application process to beco
Identify a funding source for maintenanc
Encourage the Land's End neighborhood emergency response and communication
Improve Town outreach and communica
improved communication channels to res
higher-risk properties for emergency res
Conduct a marketing campaign to de-stig
broader population.
Investigate grants to help support contin
Support existing social programming services at library/town store/transfer station and work to adapt to

FIGURE 1. BLANDFORD POPULATION BY DECADE: 1930 TO 2010

Decade	Population
1776	772
1880	1,778
1890	1,590
1930	1,036
1940	623
1950	545
1960	479
1970	597
1980	636
1990	863
2000	1,038
2010	1,187
2020	1,214
2030	1,233

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

TABLE 2. BLANDFORD AND COMPARATIVE REGIONAL POPULATION TRENDS: 1990-2010

Geography	1990	2000	2010	Numeric Change 1990 to 2010	Percent Change 1990 to 2010
Blandford	1,187	1,214	1,233	46	4%
Cheney	1,280	1,308	1,337	57	4%
Granville	1,403	1,521	1,566	163	12%
Huntington	1,987	2,174	2,180	193	10%
Russell	1,594	1,657	1,775	181	11%
Tolland	289	426	485	196	68%
Becket	1,481	1,755	1,779	298	20%
Otis	1,073	1,365	1,612	539	50%
Pioneer Valley	602,878	608,479	621,570	18,692	3%
Massachusetts	6,016,425	6,349,097	6,547,629	531,204	9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 1990, 2000, 2010

PAST PLANS POLL:

Goal from the 2016 Hazard Mitigation Plan:

Create low-cost and preventative mitigation measures against natural hazards that are likely to increase in intensity as the effects of climate change grow.

Should this goal or a similar goal be in the 2030 Resilient Master Plan?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure



Polling 1: Polling Questions

1.What is your favorite color?

☐ Red

☐ Green

☐ Blue

***You should see the Poll appear on your screen, like the image above.**

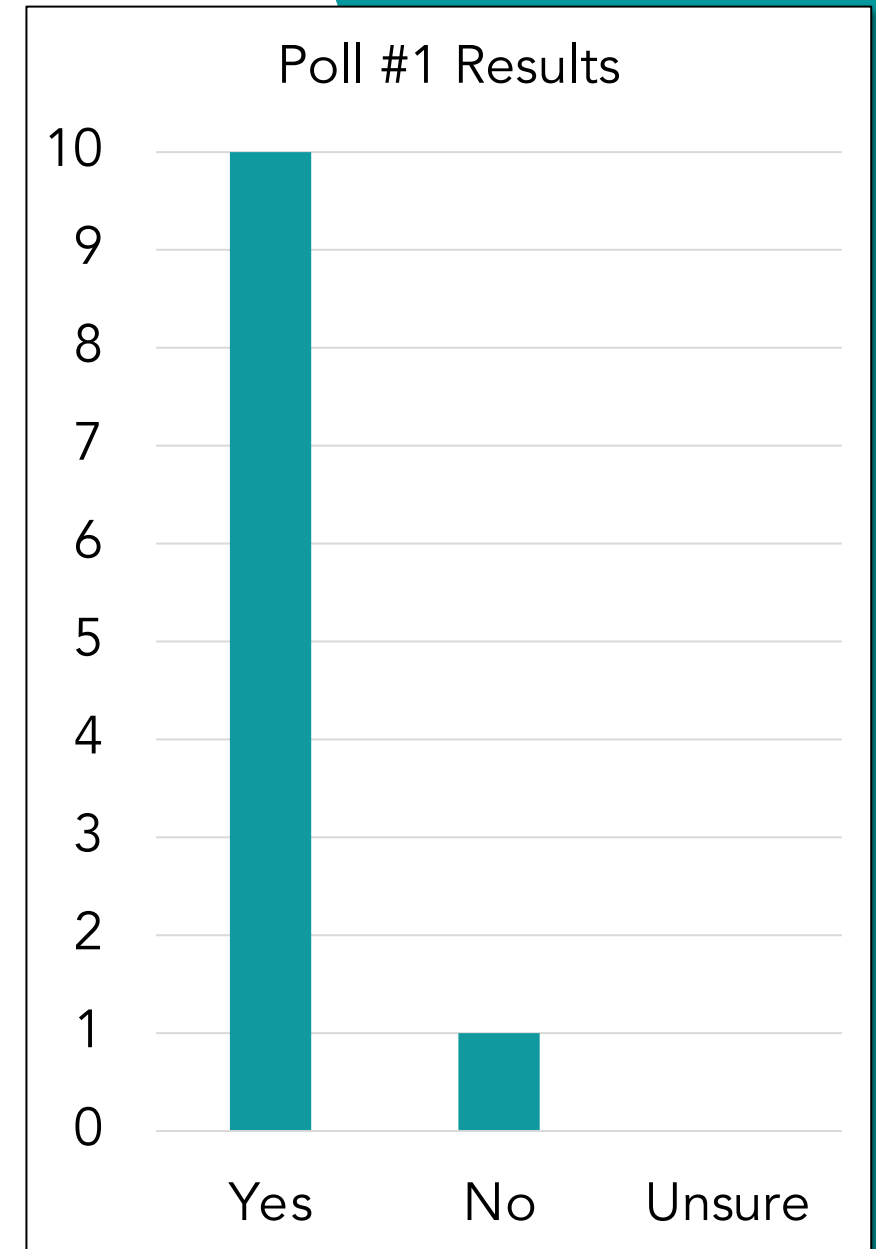
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PAST PLANS POLL:

Goal from the 2012 Housing Needs and Assessment Plan:

Make Blandford a more inclusive and viable location to live while retaining the rural quality of the Town.

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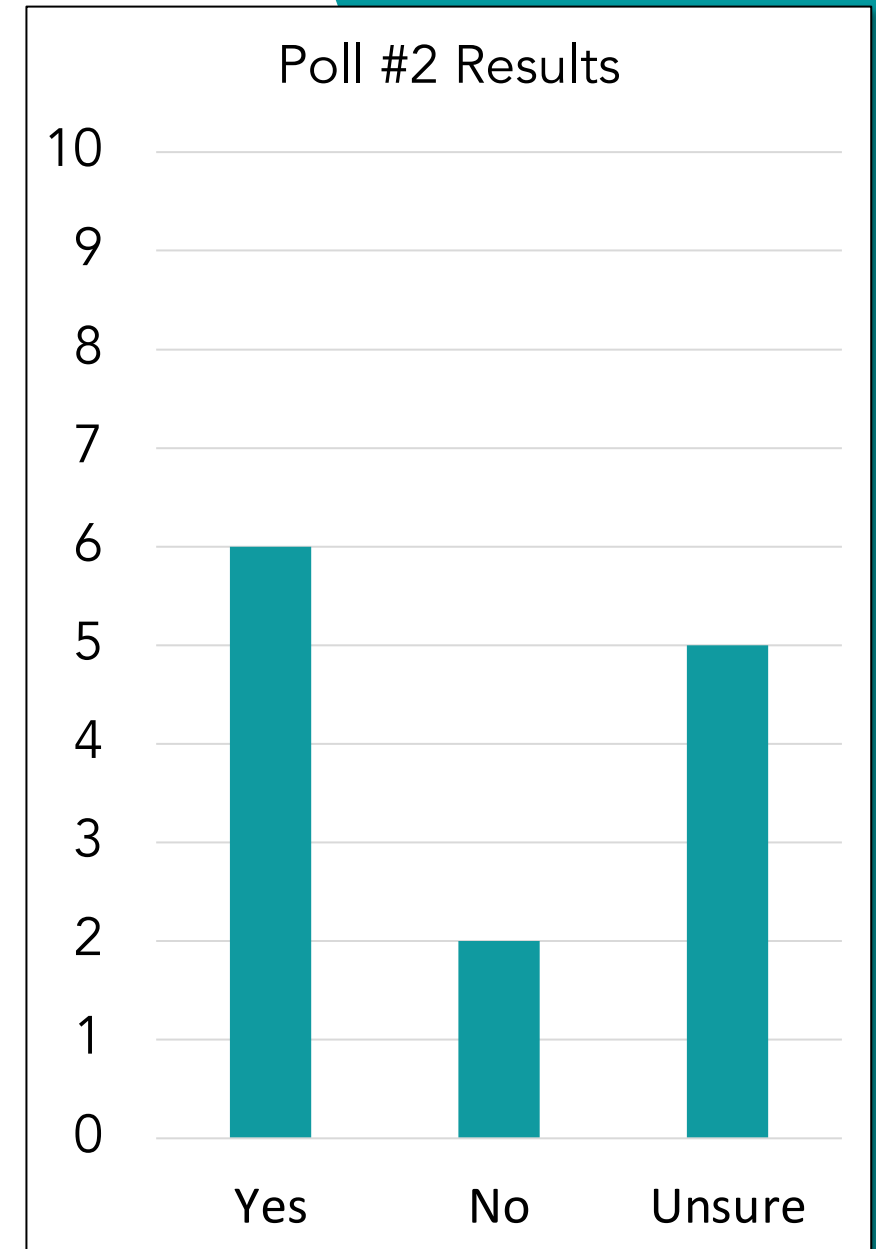
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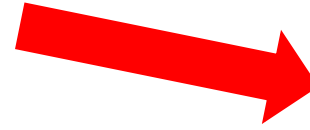
PAST PLANS POLL:

Action Items from the 2004 Open Space and Recreation Plan:

Preserve and protect watersheds, establish scenic roads, and continue communication with Springfield Water and Sewer.

Should these action items or similar items be in the 2030 Resilient Master Plan?

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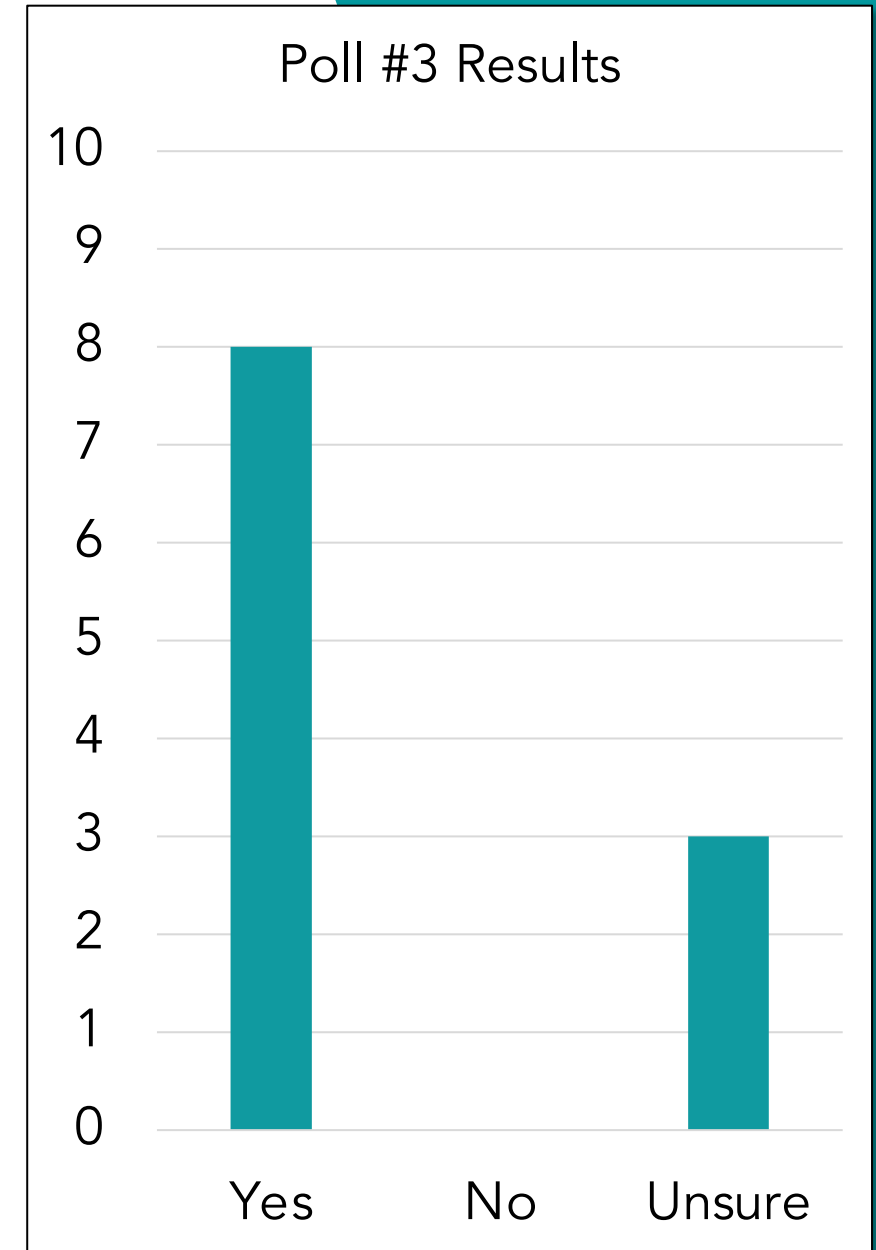
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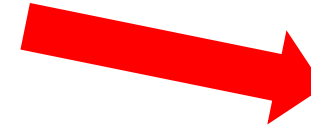
PAST PLANS POLL:

Action Items from the 2003 Community Development Plan:

Create a Mixed-Use Development Bylaw (try again), prepare an Affordable Housing Zoning Bylaw, and promote Blandford for vacations, retirement and recreation.

Should these action items or similar items be in the 2030 Resilient Master Plan?

- ☐ Yes
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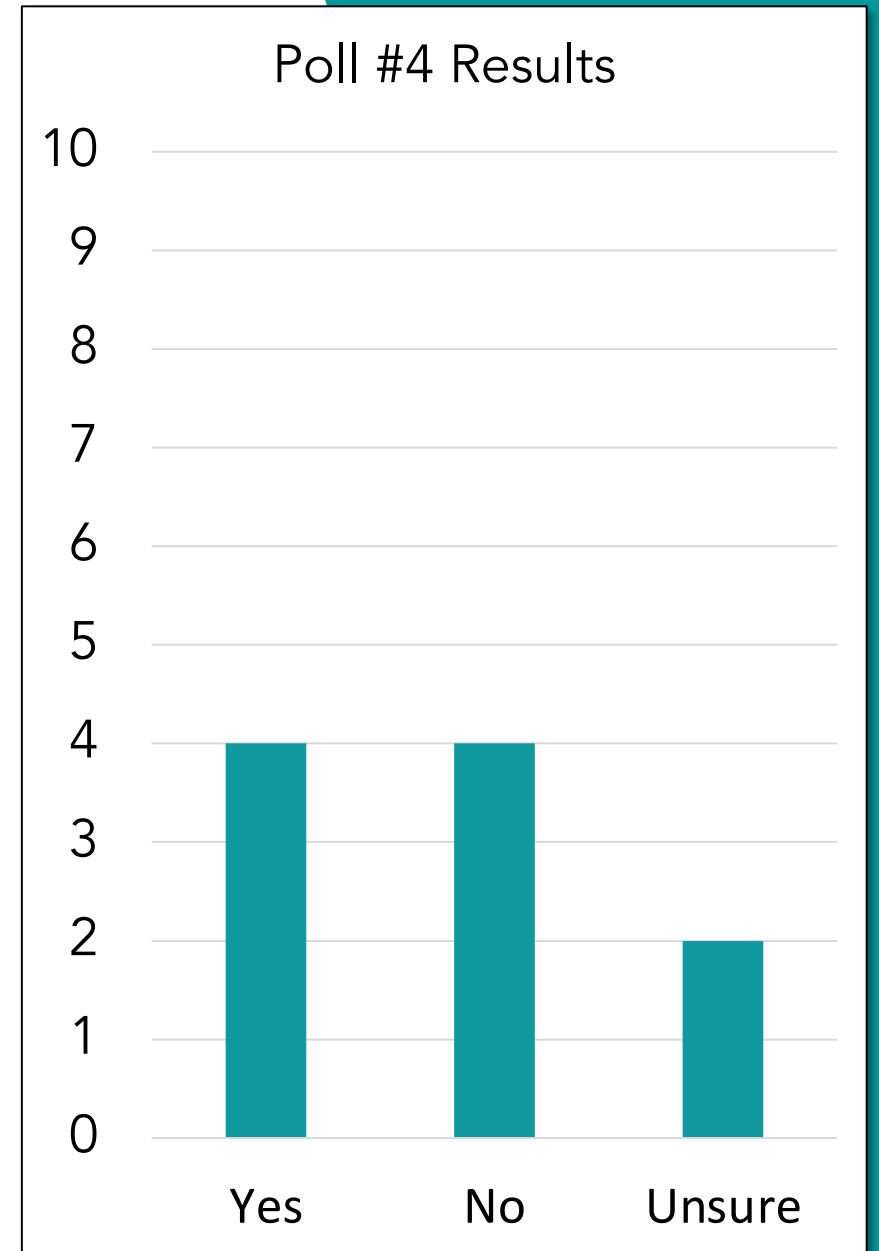
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SO, WHY IS VISIONING IMPORTANT?



- ☐ Ties together **what has been done** and what **needs to be done**.
- ☐ Is an opportunity for **community participation** in the planning process.
- ☐ Provides feedback for a **long-term vision** for Blandford.
- ☐ Is a **cohesive** statement crafted by **YOU!** A successful Visioning Session results in a **shared sense of purpose**.
- ☐ Feedback will **influence the Plan's goals and implementation strategies** that make the vision a reality!
- ☐ Helps meet Blandford's specific needs and values **today**. What worked in the past may not work now!
- ☐ Will be crafted **throughout** the planning process; will not be finalizing the Vision Statement today.



BLANDFORD SNAPSHOT

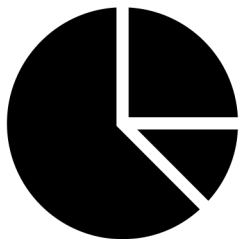
****Data is an essential component of a Master Plan! Data of current conditions and trends strongly affect the VISION, as well as the goals, recommendations and implementation of the plan.***



Blandford's tax base is 82% residential, 13% personal property, 4% commercial, and 1% industrial.



Blandford's population is projected to grow by only 47 people between 2020 and 2040.



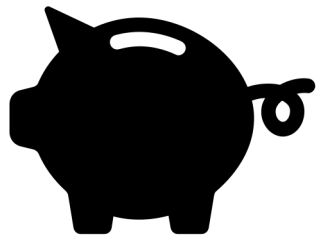
Blandford's senior population grew 16% from 2010 to 2019.



Most of Blandford's workers live in Russell. Most of Blandford's residents work in Westfield.



97% of Blandford's housing is single-unit detached homes. 48% of housing units are 60+ years old.



Blandford's median household income was \$76,083 in 2019.

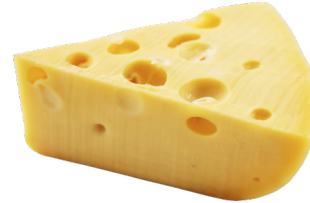
Sectors Employing Blandford Workers	Share
Public Administration	33%
Retail Trade	18%
Construction	14%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	13%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	10%

FUN FACTS!

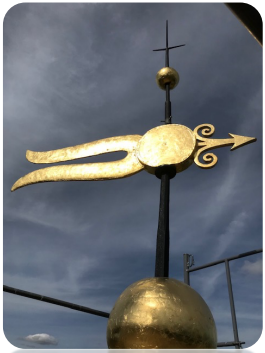
Statistics are great and all...but tell me some cool facts!



The Glasgow Lands Scottish Festival started in Blandford in 1994. It was here for 5 years. The festival is in its 27th year and is the only Scottish Festival in Massachusetts.



Blandford had the highest producing cheese value in the county (\$7,681) in 1845. By 1865, Diamond Cheese Factory was producing 30% of Hampden County's cheese at a value of \$17,161. Two hundred dairy farms in Blandford employed over 256 people at the time.



Blandford was originally granted to settlers of Suffield, CT. Residents petitioned for the land and renamed it "New Glasgow." The then-governor later changed the name to Blandford (in 1741), after the ship that brought him to America.



Blandford provided men and material throughout the Revolutionary War. When the first alarm came from Lexington, MA in 1775, 36 men from Blandford and Chester set out under command of Captain John Ferguson of Blandford.

Charles Taggart of Blandford, born in 1843, served during the Civil War as a private in the 37th Massachusetts Infantry. At the Battle of Sayler's Creek in 1865, he captured a battle flag. For this action, he was awarded the Medal of Honor.



IT'S TIME FOR OUR SWOT EXERCISE!

(But what is a SWOT?)



Strengths



Weaknesses



Opportunities



Threats

A SWOT helps determine what is working, what isn't working, what could be improved, and what can be left behind as Blandford looks to 2030!

We will now break into smaller groups for one hour to discuss! Further directions will be provided by your Discussion Leader.

SWOT RECAP FROM DISCUSSION LEADERS



- ☐ ***What were the recurring topics of conversation?***
- ☐ ***What were some key ideas? Recurring themes?***
- ☐ ***What did your group want to see the most over the next 10 years?***
- ☐ ***What did you learn?***
- ☐ ***Final conclusions?***
- ☐ ***Any last thoughts?***

STAY ENGAGED!

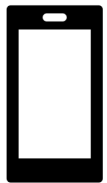
Scan me or visit
the URL to the left!



Visit the **PROJECT WEBSITE** to learn more
about Blandford's Master Plan update
<http://blandfordmasterplan.pvpc.org>



Participate in our **ONLINE VISIONING
SURVEY** until 2/15/21
www.tinyurl.com/BlandfordSurvey



We are on **TIKTOK!**
Videos will be posted to the Town website:
<https://townofblandford.com/> AND the Project Website

Thank you for attending the Blandford
Resilient Master Plan Visioning Session!

SEND US YOUR IDEAS BY EMAILING OR CALLING:

Catherine Ratté, cratte@pvpc.org

(P): 413-285-1174

Ken Comia, kcomia@pvpc.org

(P): 413-285-1175

Joshua Garcia, administrator@townofblandford.com

(P): 413-848-4279

