



Merrimac Master Plan

Community Meeting #2 May 15, 2024



Agenda



Welcome & Introductions (~5 min)



Presentation (~20 min)



Breakout Groups (~45 min)



Report out & wrap-up (~10 min)

What is a master plan?

- **Existing Conditions**
 - Where are we now?
 - How did we get here?
 - Uses national, state, and local data to provide a snapshot of Merrimac today.
- **Key Issues**
 - What are Merrimac's biggest challenges? Opportunities?
- **Vision, Goals, Implementation**
 - Where do we want to be in 10-15 years?
 - Are we going in the right direction?
 - How do we get there?



Having a master plan matters!

Why?

- Opportunities for residents to learn more about their community and shape its future.
- Helps town boards set policies, rules, regulations aimed at common goals.
- Helps developers understand the rationale for a community's land use goals and policies.
- It sheds light on the community qualities that should be protected or changed.



Inventory & Assessment Elements

Housing

Existing housing stock, local real estate market, and affordable housing issues.

Open Space & Recreation

Publicly accessible recreation sites and programs.

Land Use

Assess existing development trends and settlement patterns.

Transportation

Focus on issues with traffic, circulation, and multimodal safety

Economic Development

Evaluates the potential for economic development, and constraints.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Review of protected and sensitive land; historic sites and resources.

Community Facilities & Services

Town-owned property or structures; public utilities; governmental budget.

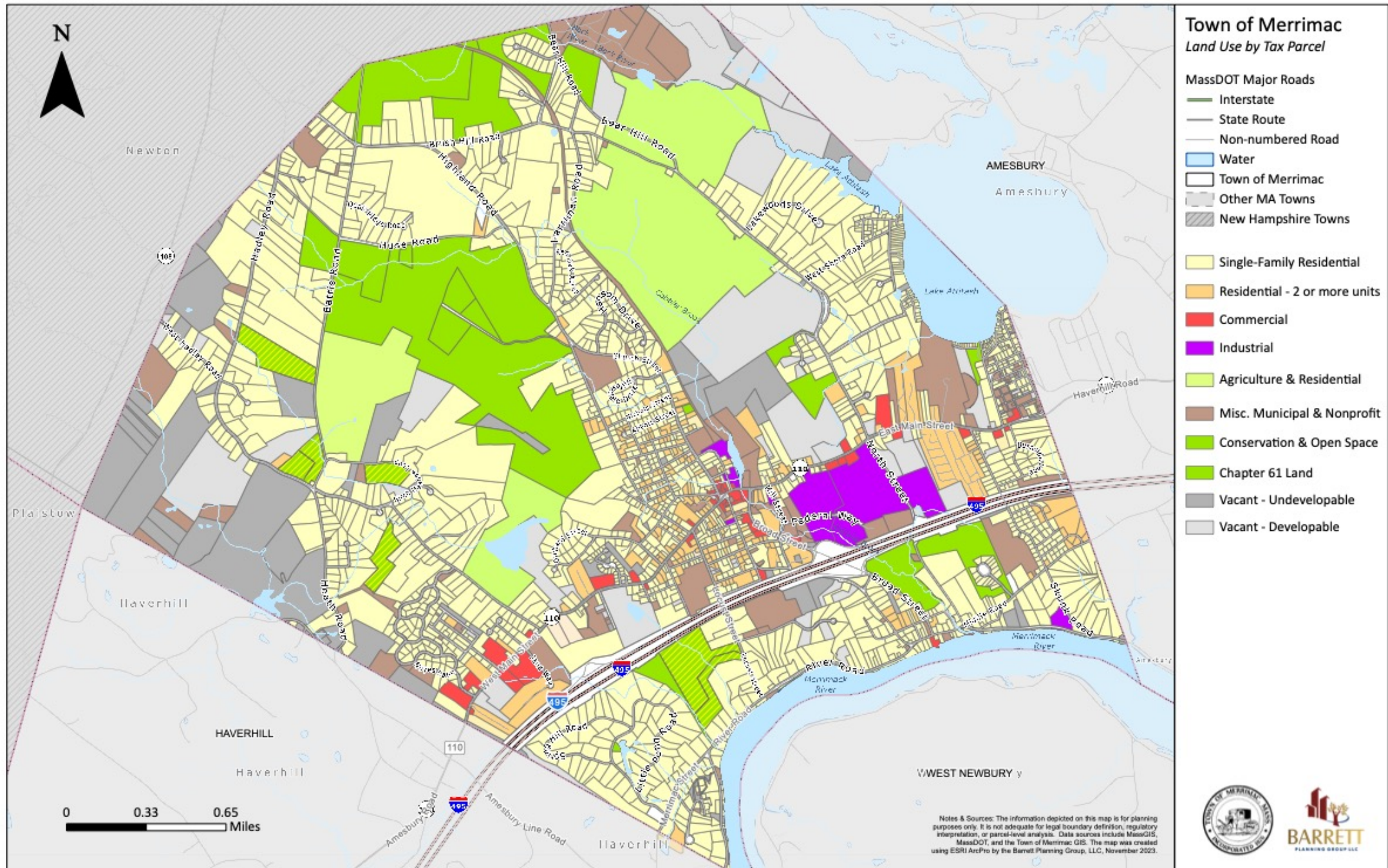




Inventory & Assessment

Key Findings

Land Use



Transportation

Figure 4.6.1 Modes of Commute
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
 Five-Year Estimates, 2021

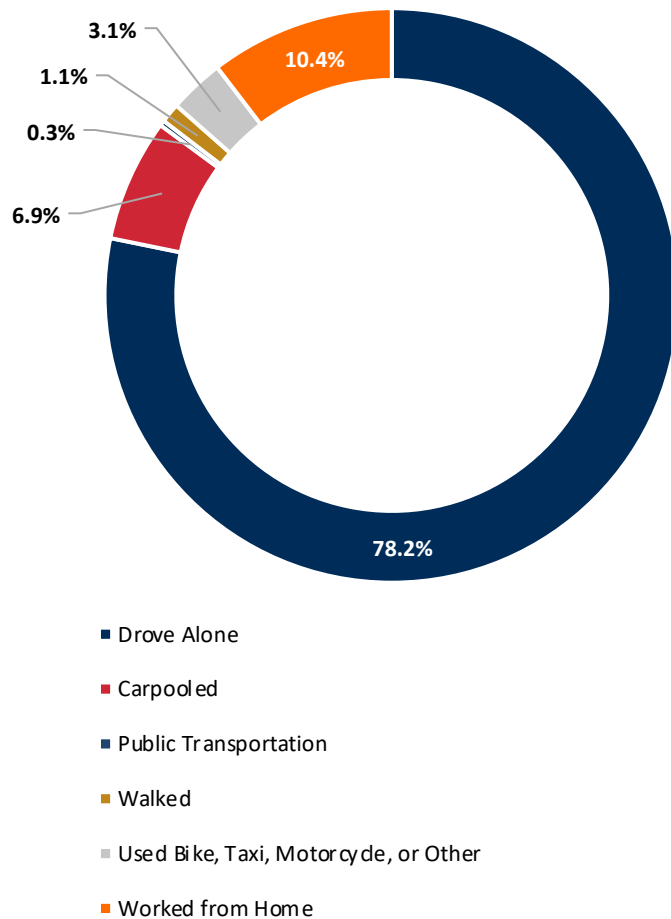


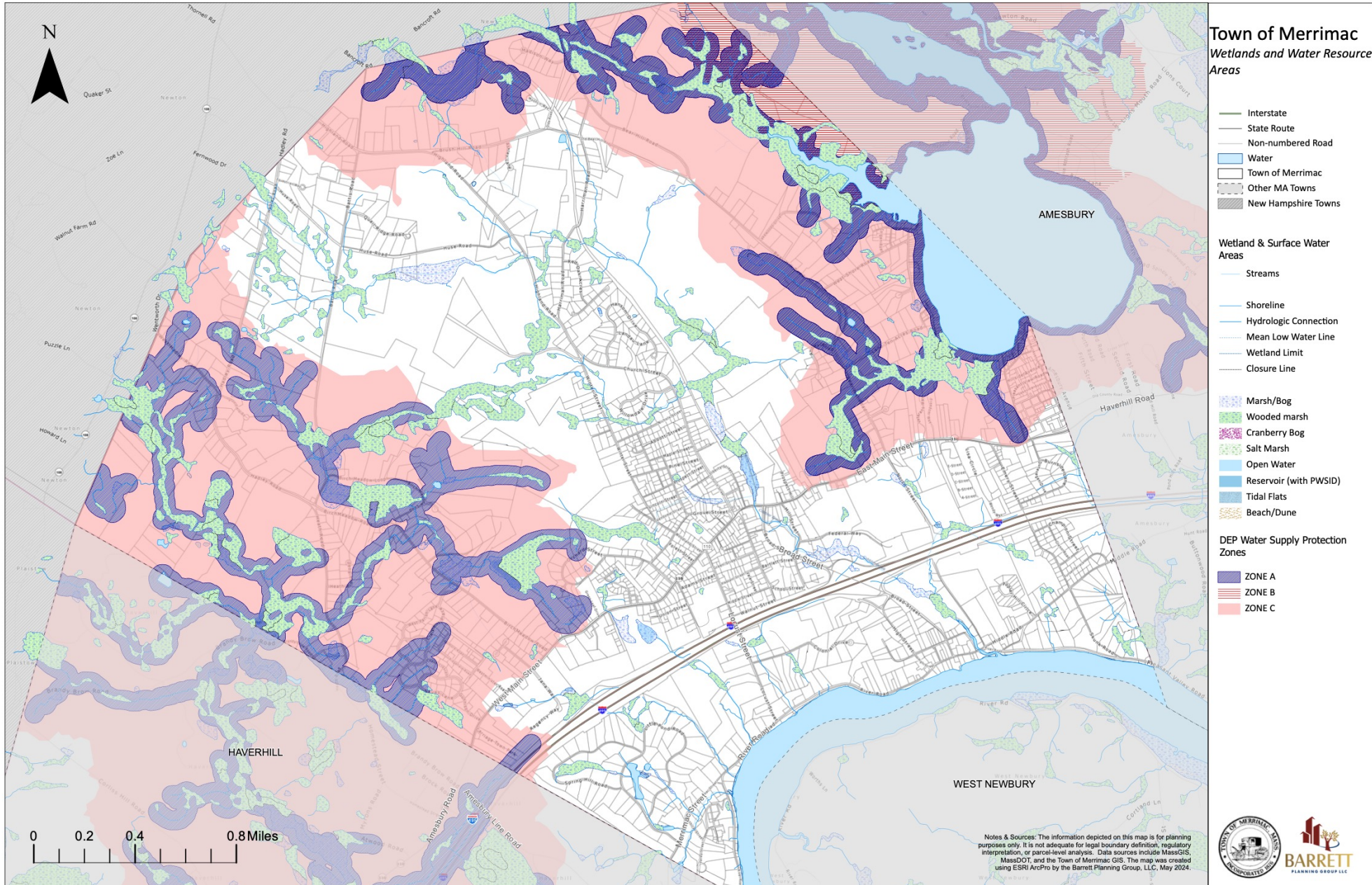
Table 4.6.2 Top 10 Roads by AADT in Merrimac

Road Name	Peak AADT
Interstate 495	67,016
East Main Street	8,335
West Main Street	7,758
Broad Street	7,273
Church Street	3,550
River Road	3,366
Merrimac Street	2,765
Bear Hill Road	2,684
Highland Road	2,104

Source: MassDOT



Natural & Cultural Resource Areas



Areas



Housing

Figure 4.4.6 Median Sales Price of Homes in Merrimac

Source: Banker & Tradesman, Town Stats, 2023

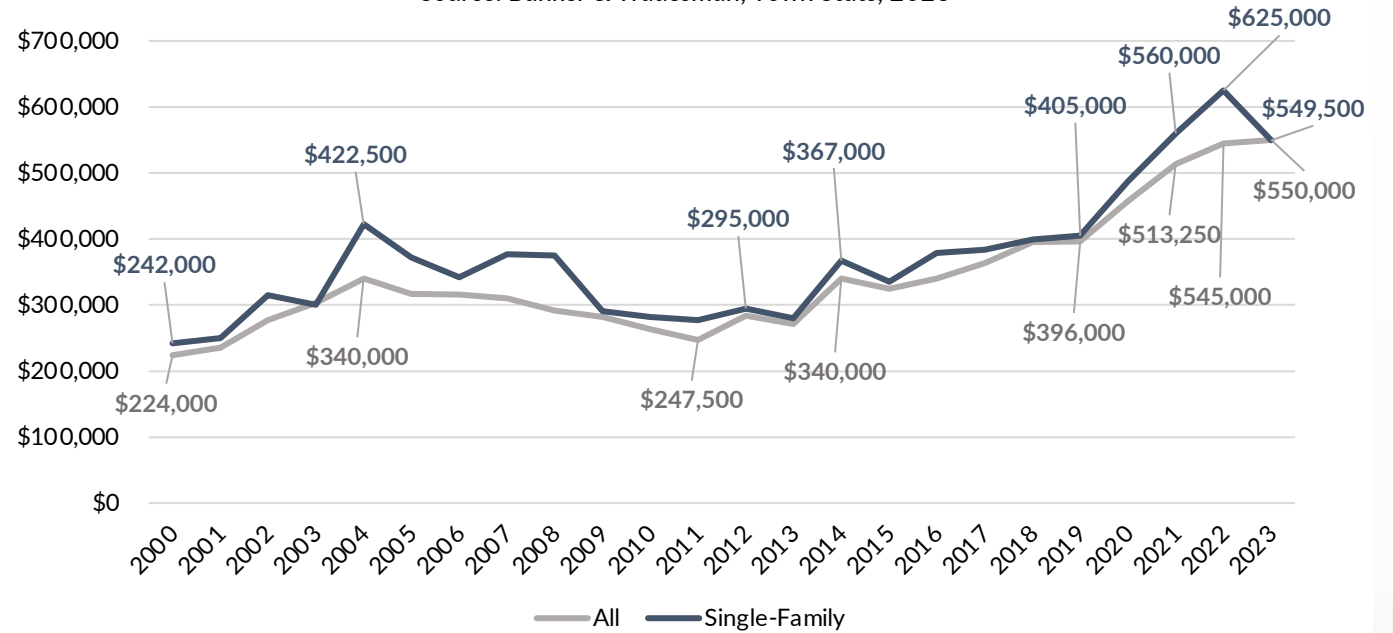
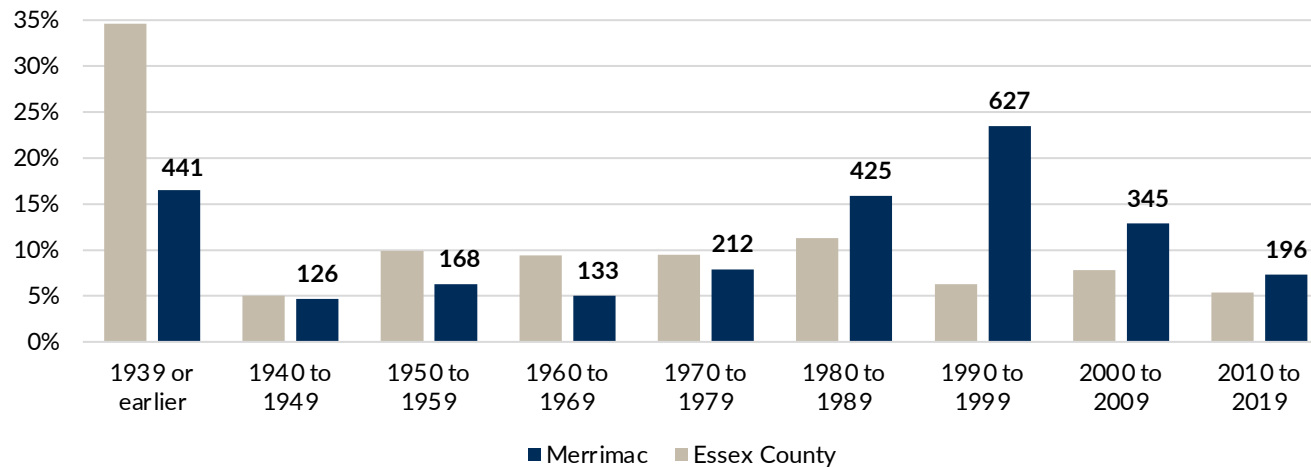


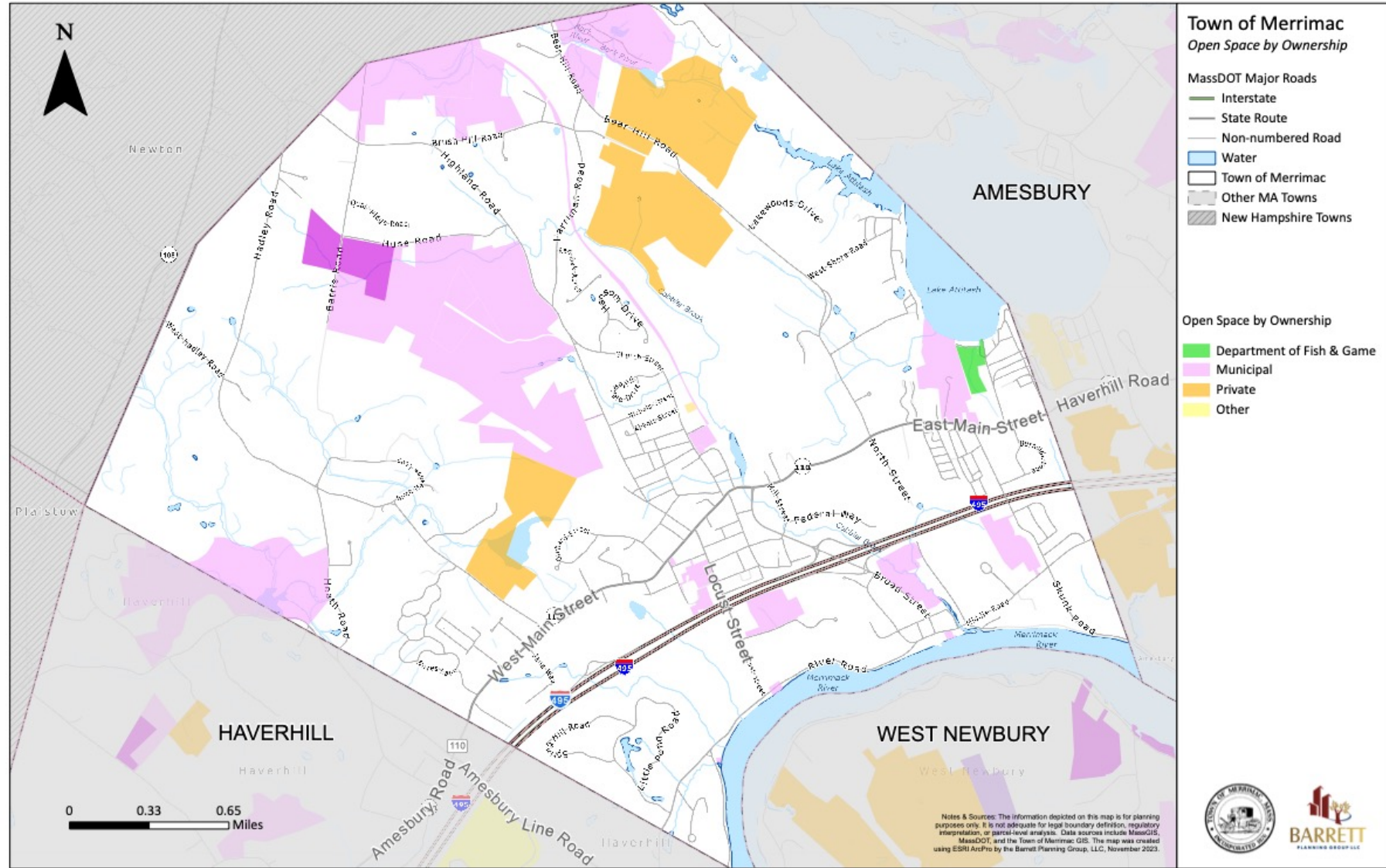
Figure 4.4.1 Number of Units Built by Period

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2021

Table B25034



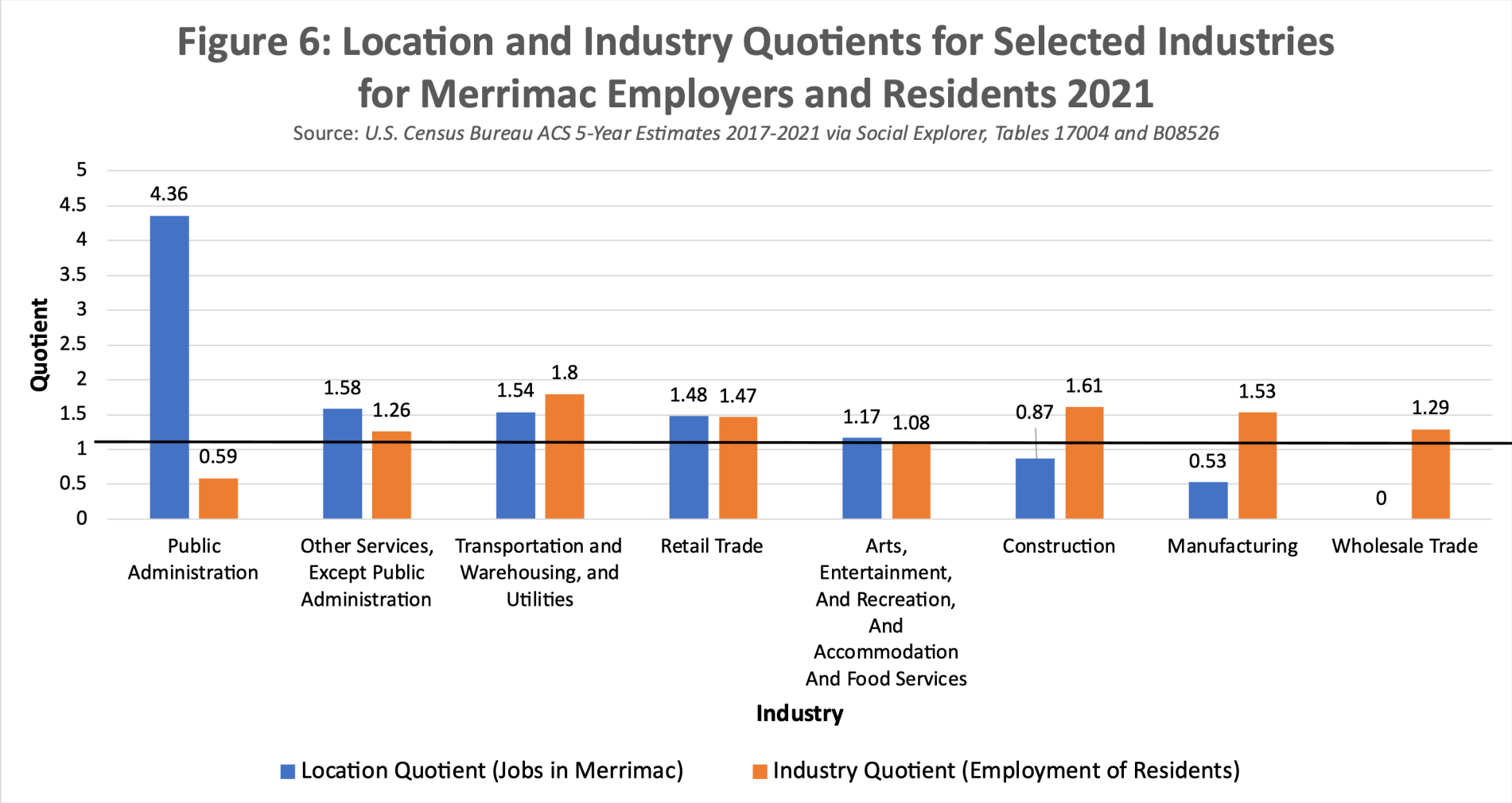
Open Space & Recreation



Economic Development

Figure 6: Location and Industry Quotients for Selected Industries for Merrimac Employers and Residents 2021

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2021 via Social Explorer, Tables 17004 and B08526



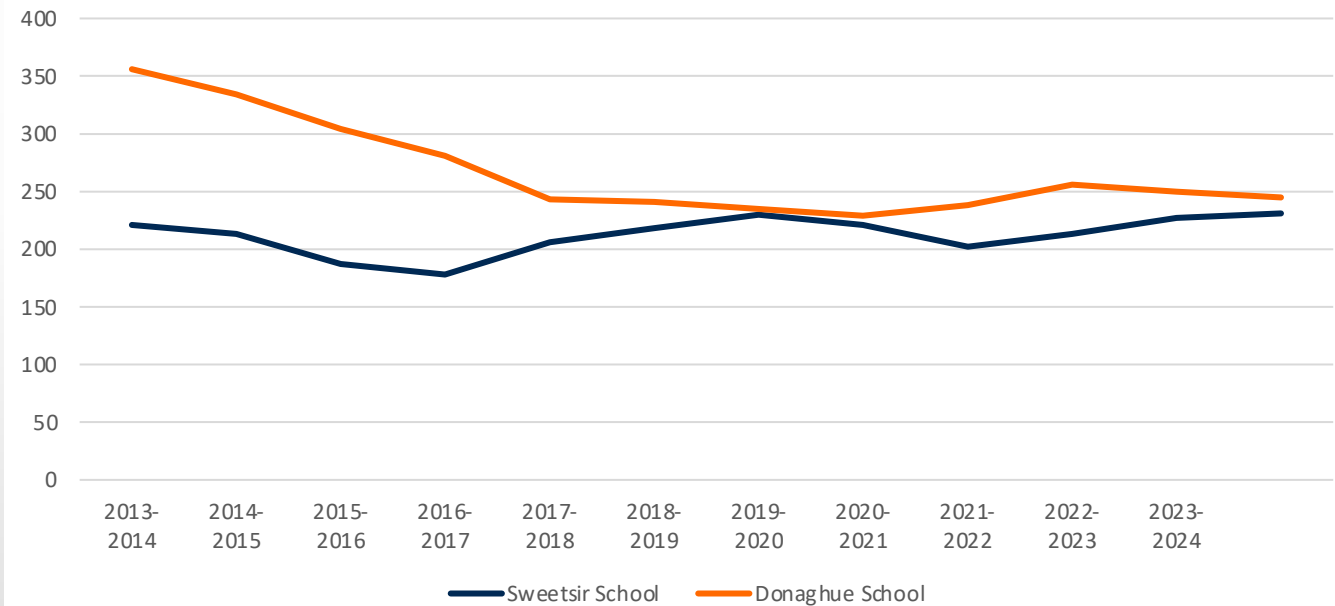
Community Facilities & Services

Merrimac Municipal Expenditures (Fiscal Year 2023)		
Spending Category	\$	% of expenditures
General Government	1,488,067	7.3%
Public Safety	2,456,694	12.0%
Education	11,969,913	58.5%
Public Works	1,444,498	7.1%
Human Services	446,379	2.2%
Culture & Recreation	328,672	1.6%
Fixed Costs	1,301,881	6.4%
Intergovernmental Assessments	115,027	0.6%
Debt Service	898,721	4.4%
Other	7,880	0.0%
Total	20,457,732	100.0%

Source: Municipal Databank, MA Dept. of Revenue, Division of Local Services

Figure 4.7.1: Enrollment in Merrimac's Public Schools

Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, School and District Profiles 2024





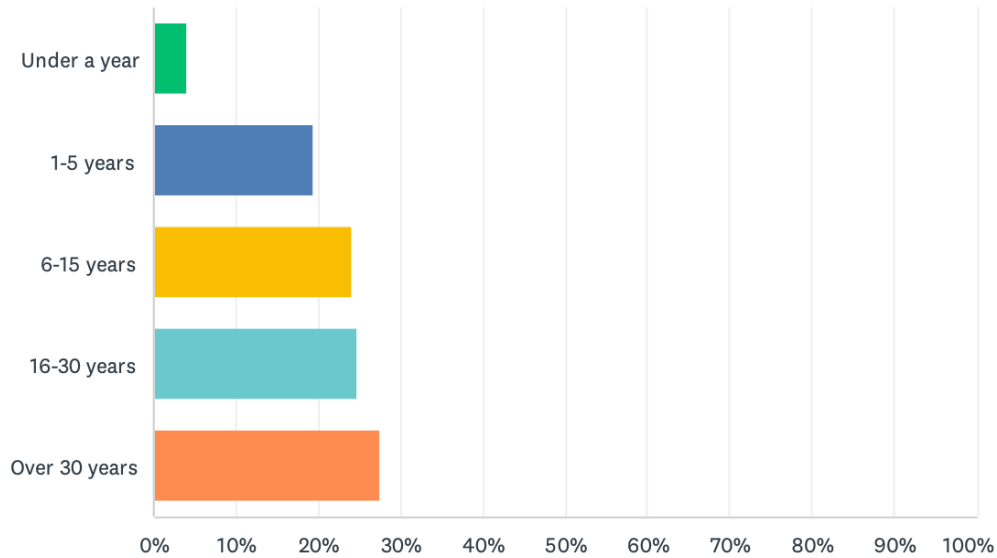
Questions?

SURVEY RESULTS

- Survey open from x/x/x-x/x/x
- Advertised via Town website, social media, etc.
- ~500 total responses

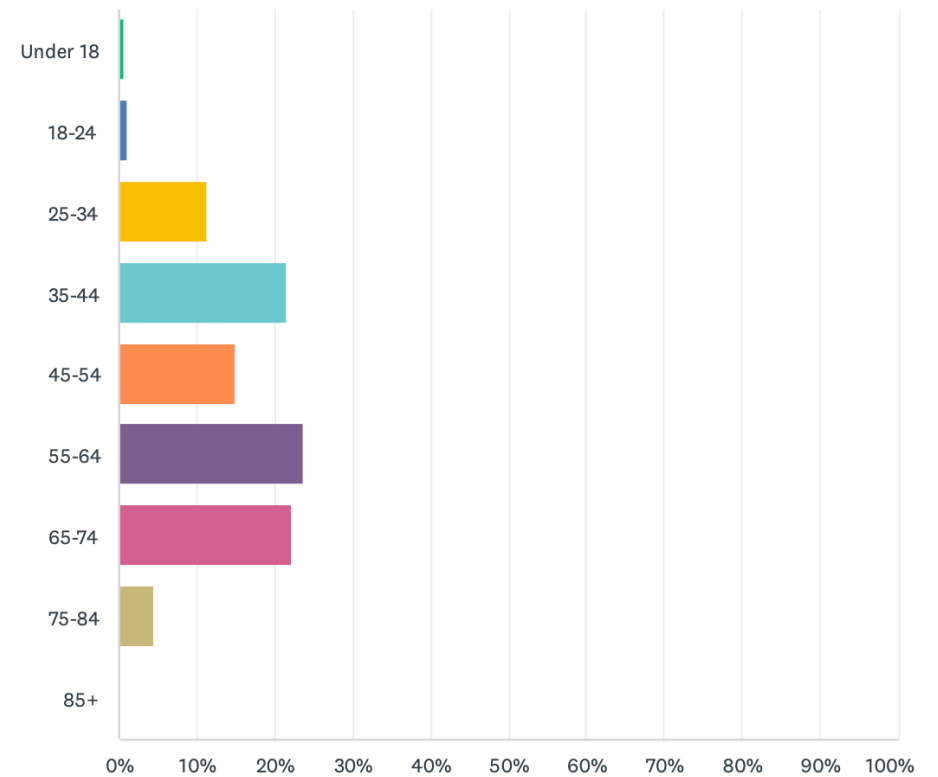
Q4 How long have you lived in Merrimac?

Answered: 463 Skipped: 27



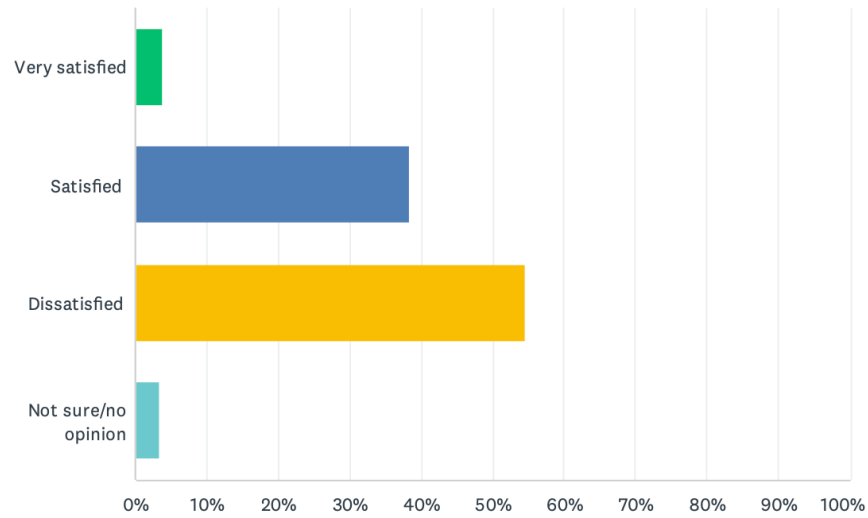
Q5 What is your age?

Answered: 483 Skipped: 7



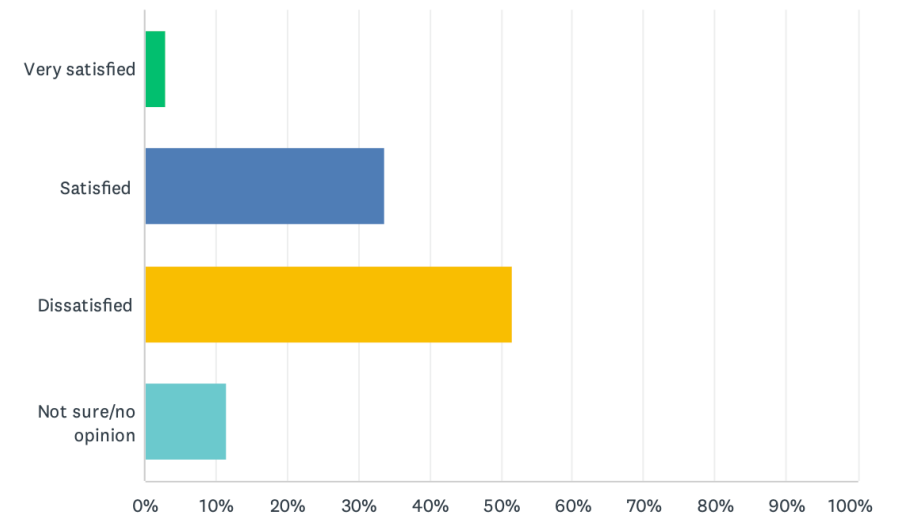
Q9 How satisfied are you with the quality and conditions of the roads in Merrimac?

Answered: 453 Skipped: 37



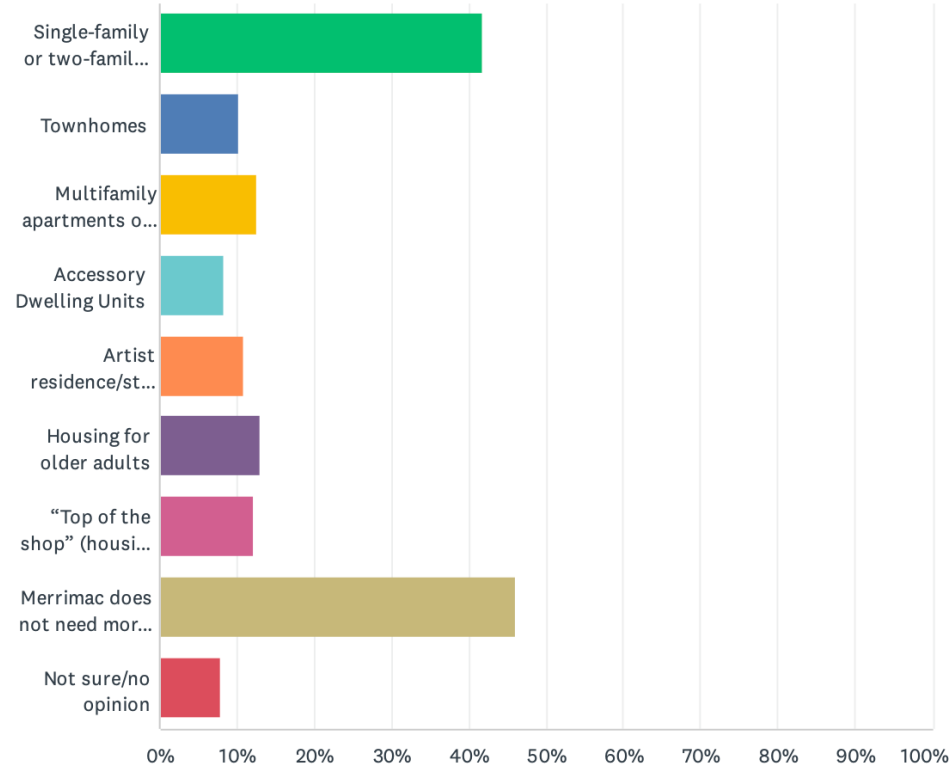
Q11 How satisfied are you with the quality and condition of the sidewalks in Merrimac?

Answered: 453 Skipped: 37



Q14 What kinds of housing does Merrimac need more of? Choose up to three.

Answered: 455 Skipped: 35

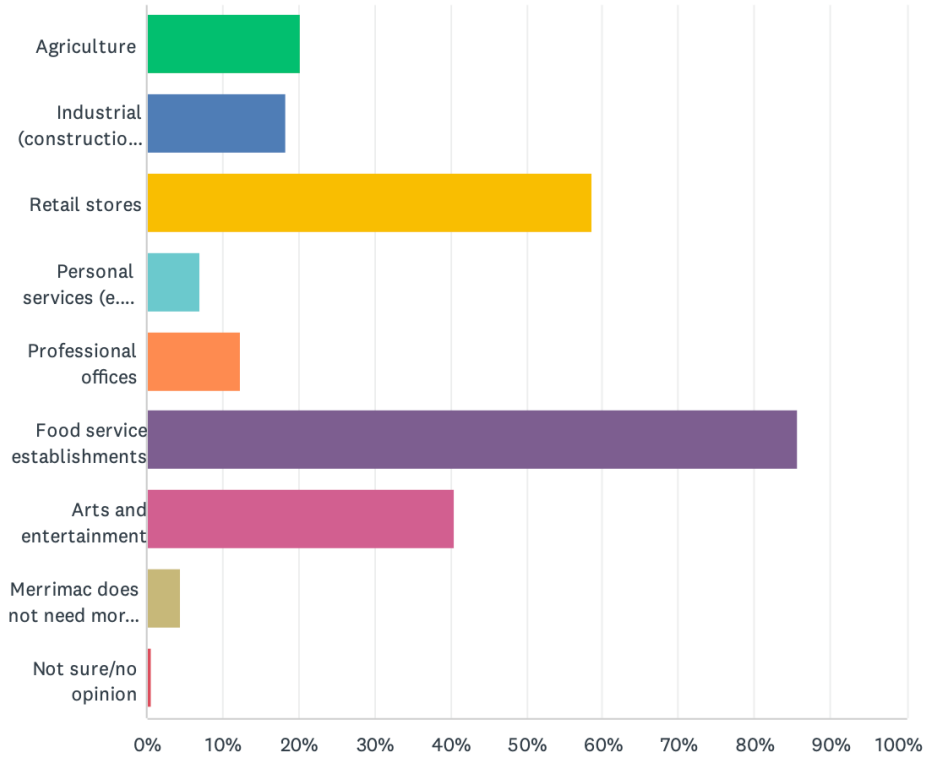


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single-family or two-family homes	41.76%	190
Townhomes	10.33%	47
Multifamily apartments or condominiums	12.53%	57
Accessory Dwelling Units	8.35%	38
Artist residence/studio Units	10.77%	49
Housing for older adults	12.97%	59
"Top of the shop" (housing units above businesses)	12.09%	55
Merrimac does not need more housing	46.15%	210
Not sure/no opinion	7.91%	36



Q15 What kinds of business does Merrimac need more of? Choose up to three.

Answered: 455 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Agriculture	20.22%	92
Industrial (construction, manufacturing, warehousing, etc.)	18.24%	83
Retail stores	58.68%	267
Personal services (e.g., salons, dry cleaners, etc.)	7.03%	32
Professional offices	12.31%	56
Food service establishments	85.71%	390
Arts and entertainment	40.44%	184
Merrimac does not need more businesses	4.40%	20
Not sure/no opinion	0.66%	3



Broader, widely applicable

VISION

Aspirational statement- where we want the Town to be at the end of the plan's lifespan.

GOALS

Specific milestones the Town wants to achieve for each element.

More specific benchmarks

KEY ISSUES

Most significant challenges the plan needs to address.

Achieving goals will bring the Town closer to its vision and help address key issues.



Small Group Discussion

45 minutes, ~15 minutes per set of goals

Help formulate goals by reviewing the goals from the 2002 Master Plan, sorted into 3 batches.

The questions we're asking for each set of goals are:

- 1. Have we lived up to/accomplished these goals?**
- 2. Are these goals still relevant, or not? How could they be made more relevant?**
- 3. What is missing?**



What's next?

- Draft Vision & Goals: May-June
- Implementation Plan: specific recommended actions: June-July
- One final community meeting-date TBD
- Full draft plan by August or September

