

Summary Memo

Preliminary Results, Winter 2023 Community Engagement March 17, 2023

This document summarizes the preliminary results from public engagement for Suffolk 2045, that was conducted between late -January and early-March 2023. Online engagement will continue through the end of March. This report is intended to summarize input collected to date.

The memo includes the following components:

- 1. Purpose
- 2. Approach
- 3. Results

1. Purpose

A first round of engagement for Suffolk 2045 was held in Summer and Fall 2022 and designed to solicit big picture ideas from the public in an open-ended way. Based upon input gathered during that period, a number of topics emerged that the planning team believed warranted special attention in the plan. For this reason, the planning team felt it was important to take additional time and make the effort to learn more from the community with respect to these topics. A set of critical questions were asked to "dig deeper" in these areas. Drawing from the responses to these questions, and the technical analysis that is underway, the planning team will be developing preliminary ideas for the plan update that will be shared with the public for comment in Summer 2023.

2. Approach

Input has been gathered in the following ways:

- **Community Engagement Sessions** Eight meetings were broadly promoted and held in all boroughs throughout the City. After a brief presentation, community members had the opportunity to share comments on the six critical questions about the future of the City.
- **Online survey** The critical questions were made available online and community members were invited to provide responses.
- Paper survey Paper surveys with critical questions were made available at the

community engagement sessions so that attendees could share their input in writing, if desired, after the meeting.

3. Results

Over 1,200 different comments at meetings and through the paper on online survey were collected in response to the critical questions. Responses are summarized below with key takeaways and a word cloud, which displays commonly used words in responses with larger words representing the most used words.

1. How can we create inviting places in Suffolk where people feel comfortable and want to spend time?

Respondents want places that:

- Are safe, especially through increased lighting and an effective police force;
- Include opportunities to shop;
- Have restaurants to choose from;
- Are walkable, with parks and trails;
- Are clean, with less trash;
- Utilize the riverfront to their advantage;
- Are family-friendly and accessible to all.



2. What would you like to be able to do in Downtown or North Suffolk in the future that you are not able to do today?

People would like to be able to:

- Easily walk to more places;
- Drive and find parking more easily;
- Have a wide variety of restaurants and shops to go to;
- Have options for entertainment, such as movies, museums. and other familyfriendly options;
- Have good access to the beach and riverfront.



3. How can the City promote business growth while not negatively impacting day-to-day activities for residents?

The City can:

- Improve the downtown;
- Limit warehouses;
- Improve the roads;
- Increase jobs;
- Keep industry near train tracks;
- Invest in empty, vacant spaces;
- Use tax incentives to attract new businesses and support existing businesses.



4. How can we accommodate new housing and other development that is desired but still protect nature and agriculture?

New housing/development should:

- Retain aspects of the City's rural character;
- Improve road infrastructure to accommodate increased traffic:
- Keep farm and farm-adjacent land zoned as low-density, while high-density is located near existing centers;
- Maintain waterways and conservation areas;
- Improve growth strategies;
- Limit solar development;
- Invest in villages and their small-town feel.



5. What do you want the look and feel of the City's corridors to be?

The corridors should:

- Have less traffic, especially from trucks;
- Increase tree cover, landscaping, and greenspaces
- Not add many new warehouses;
- Increase housing options;
- Encourage businesses;
- Be attractive and inviting to all.



6. What kind of housing (size, style, price points) is most needed?

The types of housing needed are:

- Affordable housing for all incomes;
- Apartments;
- Single-family housing;
- Housing in neighborhoods with good community characteristics and schools;
- Housing of a variety of lot sizes for different needs.



7. Is there anything else you would like us to consider?

- Better public safety (more presence of first responders, etc.);
- More local food production (farms, etc.);
- Concern about warehouses;
- More open/green spaces;
- Less noise/light pollution;
- Too much traffic (especially Route 58);
- Improve school system (capacity, infrastructure);
- Improve existing areas before identifying new growth areas;
- Put tax money back into the community for beautification and development;
- Don't overdevelop.