



February 18, 2022 | Technical Proposal  
**Town of Leverett**

RFP

# Town of Leverett

Comprehensive Master Plan: Phase One

February 18, 2022

Marjorie McGinnis  
Town Administrator  
Town of Leverett  
9 Montague Road  
Leverett, Massachusetts 01054

Re: Leverett Comprehensive Master Plan

Dear Ms. McGinnis:

With rich natural and cultural resources, an excellent local school system, and adjacency to UMass Amherst, the Town of Leverett is an attractive place to live and visit. To provide a guiding framework for future regulatory changes, policy development, and investment of capital and human resources, Leverett is embarking on a master planning initiative that will focus the efforts of Town departments, volunteer committees, and community organizations on solving salient community challenges. We are aware that Leverett is facing certain challenges, such as limited housing stock, constraints on new commercial development, and a need for a comprehensive review of current Town plans and zoning regulations. The Town is seeking a consultant to facilitate the first phase of a Comprehensive Master Plan that will set the stage for a participatory planning process. VHB is ready to leverage our extensive planning background and creativity to chart the Town on a path toward completing its Comprehensive Master Plan in an inclusive and transparent manner, with a solid understanding of its past, present, and projected future. Our Team offers:

- **The Right Skills.** Comprehensive master planning requires a team of technical professionals that come with a range of skill sets that cover the master plan elements (e.g., land use, natural and cultural resources, economic development, etc.). Our team brings these skills in depth in addition to the ability to integrate them through a systems thinking perspective—including with a regional focus.

- **Focused Implementation.** For a plan to be truly functional, it needs to set forth concrete action items and identify responsible parties and metrics for measuring success. VHB creates plans that produce results. It will be our goal to work with the Town of Leverett to effectively initiate its master plan efforts and establish the internal knowledge and resources to prepare for future phases of planning.
- **A Strong Track Record.** VHB's expanding planning and urban design practice has completed more than 20 comprehensive plans in New England alone—including communities large and small, urban and rural. Many of these projects have received recognition from the American Planning Association (APA) and its associated local chapters. This record of accomplishment, along with our focus on creative and meaningful public engagement, deep integration of sustainability/ resilience and healthy community design, and implementation, uniquely positions us to support the Town in this endeavor—and do so successfully.

VHB is excited to help the Town of Leverett shape its future. Should you need further information or have any questions, please contact Donny Goris-Kolb at 617.607.2140 or [dgoris-kolb@vhb.com](mailto:dgoris-kolb@vhb.com).



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**Engineers | Scientists | Planners | Designers**



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## Company Background

Making a positive impact on New England's cities and towns is a priority for VHB professionals. For more than 40 years, we have worked to improve mobility, enhance communities and economic vitality, and balance development and infrastructure needs with environmental stewardship. Together, our team of engineers, scientists, planners, and designers have helped revitalize downtown areas; construct safer streets for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and restore and protect our natural resources. As Massachusetts locals—people who live and work here, volunteer time to local causes, and participate in municipal boards or commissions—VHB professionals understand that no two communities are the same and neither are their project needs and goals. We will bring this mindset to Leverett's Comprehensive Master Plan.

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VHB's planning and urban design practice has completed **more than 20 comprehensive plans in New England alone**. Many of these projects have received recognition from the American Planning Association (APA) and its associated local chapters.

### VHB@a Glance



**1,600+**  
professionals  
companywide



**45+**  
AICP-accredited  
planners  
company-wide



**15**  
NCICS-certified  
meeting facilitators  
company-wide



**130+**  
LEED-accredited  
or Envision™ Sustainability  
Professionals  
company-wide

# VHB Integrated Services



## Planning and Urban Design

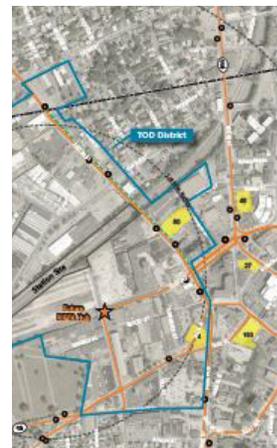
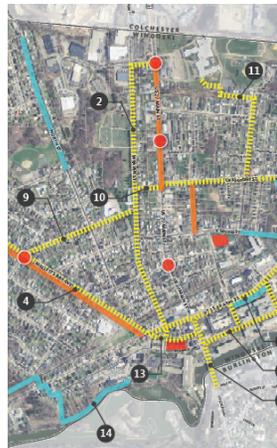
VHB's planning and urban design practice has worked with municipal and regional planning entities throughout New England. Our strong reputation for systems thinking, results-oriented planning, and sustainable/healthy community design has been recognized through numerous presentations at local and national conferences and the receipt of several awards from the American Planning Association (APA) and its affiliated organizations.

VHB's success in community planning is directly attributable to our small core of experienced professionals, whose individual areas of passion cover all aspects of a master plan. Our team has in depth experience in preparing master plans, open space & recreation plans, design guidelines, TOD master plans, and downtown plans.



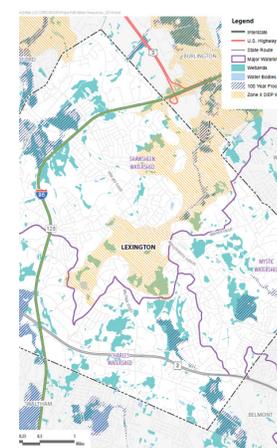
## Transportation Planning

Mobility is essential to maintaining and enhancing any community's economic prosperity, social connectivity, health, and overall quality of life. VHB's transportation professionals provide transportation planning services for a wide variety of private- and public-sector clients in both urban and suburban areas. Past projects have included identifying alternative modes analyses; multimodal access; congestion analyses; corridor studies; vehicular/ pedestrian conflict studies; transportation impact assessments; and downtown/village parking, circulation, and access studies. VHB offers the ability to develop and combine technical modeling procedures with pragmatic transportation planning and traffic operations applications.



## Environmental Resources

VHB has dedicated staff members from various environmental disciplines including water resources/green infrastructure, air quality, noise, hazardous waste and materials, historic preservation, and environmental permitting. Their wide-ranging knowledge and experience in integrating their respective services enable them to support the identification and evaluation of natural, cultural, and historic resources, which are invaluable and often irreplaceable, within the context of community needs and interests. VHB is adept at evaluating these resources with respect to potential threats to their preservation and protection from existing and future development or other land use changes (e.g., resulting from climate change) and concerning their intrinsic value and potential to support the sustainability of the community, including the health and well-being of its residents.





## Sustainability and Resiliency

VHB understands that community planning should be rooted in sustainability principles and approaches that promote a built environment with a high quality of life that exists in balance with natural ecosystems. As a result, our sustainability planners often play a large role in any comprehensive planning project we undertake—just as they will in the Leverett Comprehensive Master Plan.

VHB is a leader in incorporating innovative and cost-effective sustainable design practices into community planning, transportation, land development, and environmental engineering projects. We offer a wide range of sustainability consulting services, including municipal energy planning, project design support, and certification with respect to green rating systems and programs such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) and the Envision sustainable infrastructure rating system.

Within the last few years alone, VHB professionals have worked with clients to develop more than a dozen climate action and sustainability plans,

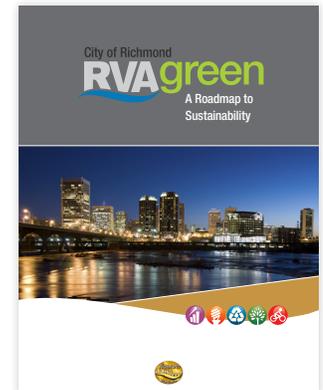
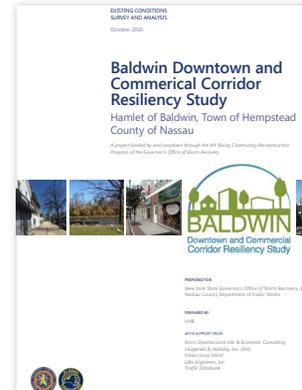
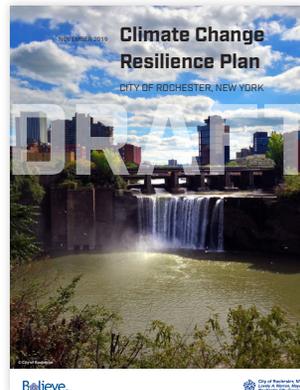
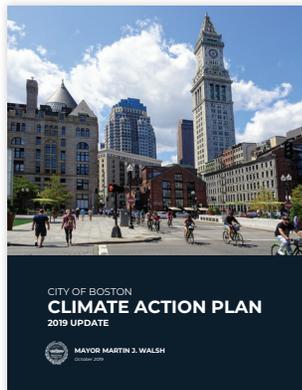
10 greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventories or energy baseline assessments, and numerous LEED®-certified and Envision®-certified projects with a data-driven approach. The VHB team has demonstrated experience in educating the public on climate and sustainability measures and has proven the ability to design and execute effective climate and sustainability planning processes, including activities such as goal setting, strategy identification and prioritization, and community engagement. We effectively communicate these concepts to general audiences through presentations, reports, and graphic materials.

VHB has been a national leader in developing data-driven, and actionable sustainability and resiliency plans for municipalities and public organizations across the U.S. Examples include the City of Boston Climate Action Plan; St. Petersburg, FL Integrated Sustainability Action Plan; City of Rochester, NY Climate Change Resilience Plan; and the Energy Plan for the City of Albany, NY. Some of these and other plans that VHB has led across the U.S. are illustrated below.

## Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness

It is more critical than ever to plan, design, and build projects that will endure the short- and long-term risks associated with extreme weather and changing climate conditions. The Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program provides grants and technical assistance to cities and towns who plan to complete vulnerability assessments and prioritize resiliency actions. Under this program, communities engage and collaborate with community stakeholders to assess potential impacts from climate change, identify the communities' vulnerabilities and strengths, and explore opportunities to reduce risk and enhance community sustainability and resiliency.

As a state-certified MVP provider, VHB works with communities across the state, such as the Towns of Dedham and Maynard, to secure grants, lead stakeholder engagement workshops, prepare vulnerability assessments, and develop resiliency/adaptation plans. Following the planning process, our technical professionals support the implementation of prioritized resiliency actions.

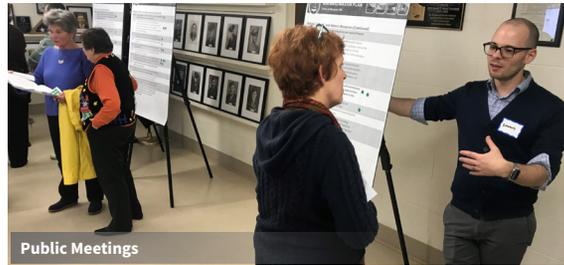




## Public Engagement

Each interaction with the public is an opportunity to enhance Leverett's reputation as a great place to live, work, and play. VHB has built a record of success by working with our clients to develop custom community outreach plans that apply creative approaches and effective communication tools to achieve meaningful public engagement. We have done so considering the diversity of each community and the range of needs that come with that—from individuals that routinely engage with the Town and its management to those that are often left out of the process for one reason or another, possibly related to socioeconomic factors such as minority status, income, age, disability, or English language proficiency. We believe that grasping this diversity and range of needs, as well as understanding how residents routinely interact, are first steps in identifying the opportunities to maximize public engagement.

Interactive project websites, innovative outreach events, a range of survey applications, and direct mail campaigns are just a few of the creative communication strategies we have used to deliver information to stakeholders and keep them engaged in an exciting planning process.



Public Meetings



Charrettes



Walking Tours and Community Discussions



Hands on Activities



Interactive Exercises



## Graphic Design and 3D Visualizations

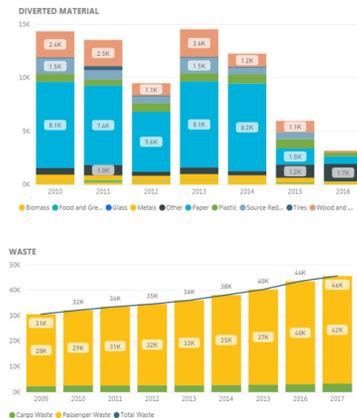
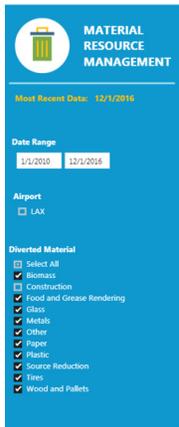
Increasingly, graphics play an integral role in how VHB approaches the project development process. They can be used in public outreach efforts, reports, and studies to generate excitement for a project through branding and marketing, to effectively communicate ideas and information, and to illustrate the potential the future holds. VHB's internal graphic design professionals enrich our projects using a range of techniques that translate complex concepts into compelling and helpful visuals that include mapping, charts/graphs, and infographics. In addition to software programs like ArcGIS, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Illustrator, tools like SketchUp, InfraWorks, LumenRT, and AutoDesk Revit enable us to quickly and efficiently create 3D and 4D simulations to help educate and inform stakeholders.





## Applied Technology

VHB's Applied Technology team proactively works to design and implement innovative solutions to improve the way we carry out our projects and efficiently and effectively meet the needs of our clients. These professionals use tools like ArcGIS to obtain real-time access to data collected in the field or to live-edit data in project meetings, as examples, which save time while keeping project participants informed and on the same page. The Applied Technology team has also created interactive, web-based dashboards and databases to help municipalities manage their data and their assets, as well as to offer transparency of its operations to its stakeholders and the public. Additionally, they also routinely use unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology to obtain visual information about the environment and infrastructure.

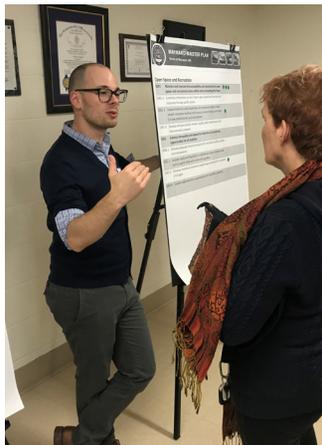


The table below provides an overview of VHB's experience on comprehensive master plans. Selected plans are described further in Appendix A—VHB Project Experience.

	PUBLIC OUTREACH	VISION STATEMENT	LAND USE	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION / CIRCULATION	OPEN SPACE	NATURAL RESOURCES	CULTURAL / HISTORIC RESOURCES	MUNICIPAL SERVICES / FACILITIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SUSTAINABILITY / CLIMATE CHANGE	PUBLIC HEALTH	IMPLEMENTATION	GIS
Adams			●	●	●				●	●			●	
Amesbury	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
Billerica	●	●	●		●		●	●	●					
Charlton	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	
Dighton	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
Fairhaven	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●
Greenfield	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Hudson	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Longmeadow	●		●	●	●	●			●	●			●	
Marshfield	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Maynard	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
New Bedford		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
North Attleborough	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●
Northborough	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Palmer	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Somerset	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Southborough	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
South Hadley	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Sterling (in progress)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	
Sturbridge	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Watertown	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Webster	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
Westborough	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Williamstown	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Bedford	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Merrimack	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●

## Project Understanding, Approach, and Schedule

### Philosophy



Laying the groundwork for a Comprehensive Master Plan for the Town of Leverett (“the Plan”) will require a team that can provide a full range of planning services and the capacity to integrate such services effectively and efficiently. VHB has significant experience in preparing town-wide master plans. Through this experience, we have learned that the Plan must fully leverage existing resources and assets to plan for grounded, implementable solutions focused on the key elements of (and the interconnections between) Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Natural and Cultural Resources, Open Space and Recreation, Public Services and Facilities, Transportation, and Sustainability/Resiliency. Additionally, developing a solid understanding of baseline conditions through a comprehensive due diligence assessment is a vital step for informing and preparing the community to craft and build consensus around a shared vision for the Town’s future.



North Leverett Saw Mill

Today, communities like the Town of Leverett must plan and build wisely. VHB is guided by an ethic to plan with a keen eye toward sustainability and healthy communities. Beyond smart growth principles and reducing urban sprawl, today’s issues require us to think more holistically to understand better how a community can respond to influences such as climate change—through both mitigation (i.e., reducing emissions that contribute to climate change) and adaptation (i.e., preparing for the

potential impacts of climate change) as well as to public health crises. These issues also require us to link decision-making and actions to larger regional and even global concerns.

At VHB, we view ourselves as facilitators of the planning process and as collaborators in making decisions. Our role will fluctuate between furnishing technical services responding directly to tasks or issues identified by the client—to serving as provocateurs, encouraging people to expand their thinking. We will work closely with the Town Leverett Planning Board and the yet formed Master Plan Working Group to which we will report regularly and present our findings for review and feedback. We anticipate and look forward to all the attributes of a great client, including wise direction, enthusiasm, a willingness to take on a challenge and to challenge us, high ambition for quality, sober reflection, and a rational and timely process for decision-making.

### Project Understanding

The Town of Leverett, located within 22.8 square miles in northwestern Massachusetts, is one of the southernmost towns in Franklin County and located just north of Amherst. With a rugged topography arising from the eastern side of the Connecticut River Valley, the Town has large areas of wooded land and approximately 16 percent of its land permanently protected from development. Leverett is primarily residential,

with a community that values the Town's rural character and supports small-scale, environmentally sensitive commercial development.



Leverett has a higher percentage of at-home workers compared to the County level and a significant number of home-based businesses.<sup>1</sup> However, the Town has limited internal employment and commercial development opportunities due to lack of infrastructure.

While Leverett remains a small town, its population has continued to grow over the past decades, with a current population of 1,865, an increase of 0.8 percent from the 2010 census. The Town's population is expected to grow through 2030, with a projected population of 2,044 persons at the end of the decade.<sup>2</sup>



Together, these considerations—along with external factors, such as the statewide housing shortage and climate change, underscore the need for Leverett to adopt a shared community vision and policy framework in the form of a Comprehensive Master Plan. The Town has recognized this need, having identified the preparation and approval of a Comprehensive Master Plan as a high priority.

In embarking upon this effort, the Town must establish a Master Plan Working Group representative of the community that will work collaboratively with the Planning Board to oversee the development of the Plan. It will be incumbent upon the Working Group to explore Leverett's existing and projected conditions to better understand its strengths (e.g., rich natural environment) and challenges (e.g., limited housing stock, lack of commercial development). As a partner in this effort, it will be important



for VHB to review and synthesize the Town's existing plans and other relevant data and information to enable the Working Group to possess this understanding and to proceed in the planning process.<sup>3</sup>

## Project Approach/Scope of Work

VHB will partner with the Town of Leverett, its Planning Board, and its yet formed Master Plan Working Group to begin the process of developing the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan in accordance with M.G.L. c. 41 §81D. Our proposed scope of work for Phase 1 of this planning process is described below. Please note that the tasks identified may differ from the ones outlined in the RFP.

## Project Assumptions

- This Scope of Work will be completed by June 30, 2022, unless extended by mutual agreement of the parties.
- VHB will rely upon information and documents provided by the Town of Leverett or unrelated third parties.
- To the extent available, the Town of Leverett will provide to VHB spatial data and any other non-publicly available background information that will be necessary to undertake the analyses identified in this scope of work.
- VHB assumes up to six meetings as described under Tasks 1 and 2 below. If additional meetings are required, VHB will prepare an amendment for approval.
- VHB assumes all meetings will be conducted virtually except for the Master Plan Working Group kick-off meeting and community tour, which shall be conducted in person. VHB will provide the virtual meeting platform (i.e., Zoom), as needed.

1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics*. American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates Data Profiles. Retrieved from: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=DP03%3A%20SELECTED%20ECONOMIC%20CHARACTERISTICS&g=0500000US25011860000US01054&tid=ACSDP5Y2019.DP03>.

2 Metropolitan Area Planning Council. *Housing Data Profile: Leverett*. [Housing, MA]. Retrieved from: <http://www.housing.ma/leverett/profile>

3 Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. (2009). *Leverett Reconnaissance Report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/leverett/download>.

- The Town of Leverett will be responsible for securing locations for in-person events and meetings, including any fees, provision of food, security, and other requirements.
- For any draft submissions identified in this scope of work, the Planning Board and/or Master Plan Working Group shall return one set of consolidated comments to VHB to be incorporated into the final versions.

### **Task 1: Establish a Master Plan Working Group, a Process for Transparency and Approval, and Initiate the Project**

#### *a. Establishing the Master Plan Working Group*

The Master Plan Working Group will provide important oversight and guidance on the development of the Town of Leverett's Comprehensive Master Plan. To initiate the planning process, VHB will hold an initial coordination meeting with the Town of Leverett and its Planning Board to identify and invite potential members of the Working Group (**Meeting #1 [virtual]**) to participate in the planning process. It is recommended that its membership consist of no more than 15 persons representing diverse backgrounds and experiences to ensure a variety of perspectives are brought into the planning process. Designees of the Planning Board and other Town Departments, Board, and Committees are typically included, along with at-large members representing residents, business owners, property owners, and/or non-profit groups with an interest in the Town.

#### *b. Project Kick-off, Community Immersion Tour, and Preliminary Stakeholder Interviews*

Once the Master Plan Working Group is established, VHB will facilitate a project kick-off meeting with the Planning Board and Working Group to review the master plan process (**Meeting #2 [in-person—as allowable and prudent]**). This discussion will review the purpose of a master plan, the general planning

process, and roles and responsibilities. It will also touch upon best practices for maintaining transparency and accountability and options the Town has for approving its master plan.

During the kick-off meeting, the scope of work will be confirmed to ensure it focuses on those items of highest importance to the community. Additionally, a project timeline (including anticipated dates for future Master Plan Working Group meetings and consultant deliverables) will be reviewed in support of meeting the Town's stated completion date for Phase 1 of June 30, 2022.

The project kick-off will be followed by a consultant tour of the community. It is assumed that this will be a guided tour, led by a member of the Planning Board or a knowledgeable designee. The community tour will focus on the Town's key assets and resources that reveal its strengths (e.g., rich natural environment, excellent school system) and challenges (e.g., lack of infrastructure, limited housing stock).

To delve deeper into the Town's strengths and challenges and to gain stakeholder perspectives early in the planning process, VHB will conduct up to six, one-hour interviews (virtual) with key stakeholders that are not already represented on the Master Plan Working Group. These interviews will be conducted either on a one-on-one basis or in a group setting. Stakeholders will be coordinated with the Master Plan Working Group and will be sent a questionnaire to be filled out prior to the interview to guide the conversation.

### c. Review Existing Documents

As referenced in the RFP, the Town of Leverett has a robust inventory of existing planning studies and reports. We understand these at minimum to include:

- Zoning By-Laws (2020)
- Subdivision Rules and Regulations
- Assessor's Property Maps
- Community Development Plan and Maps (2004)
- Open Space and Recreation Plan (2019)
- Community Preservation Report and Plan (2020)
- Community Development Strategy (2016)
- Affordable Housing Trust Documents
- Capital Planning Documents
- Council on Aging Documents (including the Age-Friendly Project [LifePath])
- Revenue Committee Documents
- Social Justice Committee Documents

In addition, VHB recommends referencing the Town's 2020/2021 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Resiliency Plan, 2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan, Emergency Action Plans, 2018 ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan, Green Communities Energy Reduction Plan, and 2010 Forest Management Plan. These resources will enable a deeper level of integration of sustainability and resiliency considerations into the Town's future vision and policy guide than typical.

Several regional planning studies and reports, such as the 2020-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Five-Year Plan for Franklin County, MA, the Franklin County Regional Housing Study (2014), and Sustainable Franklin County (2013), may also contain relevant information that can

be leveraged to inform the Town of Leverett's Comprehensive Master Plan. Use of regional plans, studies, and policies can support consistency in planning efforts as they concern cross-border issues (e.g., transportation, housing) and can also assist in identifying synergies (e.g., cost sharing) for action implementation.

As part of this task, VHB will review and assess the above mentioned resources based on their present-day applicability and implications for short- and long-term planning initiatives. This review will allow us and the Master Plan Working Group to move ahead efficiently in laying the groundwork for the existing conditions analysis (Task 2). VHB will present a summary of our review and assessment to the Master Plan Working Group (**Meeting #3 [virtual]**).



### Task 1 Deliverables

- One, two-hour virtual Town Administration/Planning Board introductory meeting to coordinate on Master Plan Working Group membership to be attended by up to two VHB staff, along with the associated agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and meeting notes (**Meeting #1**)
- Suggested membership (at the departmental/organizational level) for the Master Plan Working Group for Town Administration/Planning Board consideration
- Draft and final invitation to join the Master Plan Working Group (to be sent out by the Town Administration or Planning Board)
- One, two-hour in-person (as allowable and prudent) Master Plan Working Group kick-off meeting to be attended by up to two VHB staff, along with the associated agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and meeting notes (**Meeting #2**)

- Inventory and repository of existing reports, plans, and studies
- One, two-hour virtual Master Plan Working Group coordination meeting on existing resources to be attended by up to two VHB staff, along with the associated agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and meeting notes (**Meeting #3**)
- Draft and final stakeholder questionnaire
- Up to six, one-hour preliminary stakeholder interviews to be attended by up to two VHB staff
- Consolidated summary of preliminary stakeholder interviews

## Task 2: Existing Conditions

### a. Baseline Understanding of Existing Conditions

Building off the work prepared under Task 1, VHB will continue to lay the foundations for the Master Plan Working Group to develop a baseline understanding of the Town of Leverett's past, current, and projected conditions. This baseline understanding will align with the subject-based elements of the Comprehensive Master Plan to be developed further under Phase 2 of the project. These elements are expected to include:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural & Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Services and Facilities (Municipal and Capital)
- Circulation (Transportation)

Additionally, the following topics will be either be integrated into the above-listed elements or treated as separate elements.

- Climate Adaptation and Sustainability
- Social and Economic Equity
- Energy
- Regionalization of Town Services

To facilitate this baseline understanding, VHB will develop a list of relevant indicators/metrics (quantitative and qualitative) by subject-based element. These indicators will give the Working Group a sense of how the Town compares relative to its past and future, surrounding communities, and the region (i.e., Franklin County and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts), revealing its strengths and challenges. The list of indicators will be reviewed, refined, and confirmed with the Master Plan Working Group at **Meeting #4 (virtual)**, and will be informed by a review of current master plans developed for communities state-wide (including those prepared by VHB) and reporting standards, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>).

Examples of potential indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Historical and projected population
- Percent of households that are cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened
- Percent of total population identifying as a minority by race/ethnicity
- Acres of vacant land by zoning district
- Poverty rate (%)
- Educational attainment

- Percentage estimates of individuals experiencing food insecurity
- Percent of labor force by occupation
- Acres of open space per capita
- Acres of Prime Farmland
- Listing of designated historic resources
- Miles of Town-owned roads/sidewalks
- Number of deaths/injuries due to road collisions
- Percentage of commuters 16 and over using public transport, bicycles, carpooling, or walking to work
- Prevalence of obesity (% of total population)
- Bridges by ownership and condition
- Total municipal energy consumption (mmBtu)
- Percent of households with broadband access
- Top climate hazards
- Number of solar photovoltaic installations and their total generating capacity

Once the indicators are confirmed, VHB will develop a list of relevant data needs and work with the Master Plan Working Group to collect all available Town-controlled data, including geospatial/geographic information systems (GIS) data. VHB will collect other relevant and readily available sources of data, including those from federal (e.g., U.S. Census Bureau), state (e.g., MassGIS, Housing MA), and other local/regional sources (e.g., Franklin Regional Council of Governments), as well as private entities (e.g., Esri's Community/Business Analyst).

An outcome of this task will be a singular Excel spreadsheet and accompanying findings memorandum that provides all relevant data and information, organized into tables and charts, to be incorporated into an existing conditions narrative to be

developed under Phase 2. Additionally, VHB will develop a series of supporting GIS format maps. These materials will be reviewed with the Master Plan Working Group at **Meeting #5 (virtual)**.

### *b. Planning for the Visioning Process*

One of the key components of any master plan is the establishment of a collective vision that describes the preferred future state of a community—determined by consensus through engagement with the community's stakeholders (i.e., residents, persons employed in the community, business, and property owners, etc.). Master plan vision statements capture existing traits of a community that its stakeholders wish to remain unchanged or to augment, as well as aspects of the community that they believe could be improved or are missing entirely.

The visioning process is a crucial step in any master planning process, setting the stage for the identification of goals, and supporting actions that will provide direction for local decision- and policymaking. It is imperative that the vision statement for the Town of Leverett Comprehensive Master Plan be the result of wide-spread and inclusive public involvement that garners the support of and buy-in from stakeholders. In this way, they become advocates for the master planning process and its implementation.

Under this task, VHB will work with the Master Plan Working Group to develop a plan for the visioning process that will be implemented under Phase 2. From our experience, this process will likely involve one or more of the following engagement touchpoints to maximize public input and build the necessary level of consensus.

- **Community “Coffee Talks”** – where stakeholders engage directly with members of the Master Plan Working Group, and perhaps its consultant, to discuss what opportunities they believe could be capitalized upon to support a high

quality of life for the Town's residents and generate value for its business and property owners.

- **“Greatest Wish” Boards** – where stakeholders are asked to post one or two wishes they hold for the Town's future by writing them directly on a poster board or using sticky notes.
- **Visioning Forum** – where the public is invited to view a live, interactive presentation providing an overview of the master planning process, along with the findings of the existing conditions analysis. Afterwards, they would engage with the Master Plan Working Group, and perhaps its consultant, as well as with each other in working sessions designed to tease out the community's priorities.
- **Community Survey** – where the same questions posed during the working group sessions at the Visioning Forum are solicited via online and hardcopy surveys, to obtain wider public feedback than a single public forum typically provides.

Altogether, the information obtained through the above listed public engagements would be consolidated into a draft vision statement that reflects the broad ambitions of the community for the next 10 to 15 years. The draft vision statement would then go before the public for confirmation.

VHB will discuss the visioning process, including the previously described engagement touchpoints, with the Master Plan Working Group (**Meeting #6 [virtual]**). A formal recommended plan for the visioning process will be prepared and shared with the Master Plan Working Group based on the outcomes of this discussion.



## Task 2 Deliverables

- List of relevant indicators by subject-based element (e.g., Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, etc.)
- One, two-hour virtual Master Plan Working Group meeting to review and confirm the indicators to be analyzed for the existing conditions analysis to be attended by up to two VHB staff, along with the associated agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and meeting notes (**Meeting #4**)
- One version of an Excel spreadsheet populating qualitative and quantitative data by confirmed indicator, along with an accompanying findings memorandum (up to 10 pages)
- One, two-hour virtual Master Plan Working Group meeting to review the data analysis provided in the Excel spreadsheet and findings memorandum to be attended by up to two VHB staff, along with the associated agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and meeting notes (**Meeting #5**)
- One, two-hour virtual Master Plan Working Group meeting to discuss the visioning process to be attended by up to two VHB staff, along with the associated agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and meeting notes (**Meeting #6**)
- One version of a memorandum describing the proposed visioning process to be implemented under Phase 2

## The VHB Team

Project success depends on more than merely having the technical abilities needed to deliver great ideas and viable solutions. It also depends on people—their energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to achieving agreed-upon goals and their ability to integrate their technical disciplines to identify potential conflicts and synergistic opportunities across the Plan Elements. VHB kept this in mind when assembling our proposed team for Leverett’s Comprehensive Master Plan. As seen in the accompanying organization chart, our Team will be led by Principal-in-Charge Ken Schwartz and Project Manager Donny Goris-Kolb supported by a team of focused VHB professionals who have extensive experience in developing planning strategies for Massachusetts communities. Together, the VHB Team offers:

- A strong **understanding of the community** that will inform our approach to this project;
- The **capacity and resources** needed to lead the planning process, minimizing the managerial burden for Town staff;
- The ability to **engage with diverse stakeholders** in a creative and dynamic way;
- The comprehensive approach needed to devise **realistic, implementable solutions** that will benefit the Town for decades to come; and
- Ability to design and execute **effective climate and sustainability planning processes**, including activities such as goal setting, strategy identification and prioritization, and community engagement.



## References

Client satisfaction is at the forefront of any project VHB undertakes, and we are pleased to have strong relationships with our clients, including the references below. We encourage the Town of Leverett to contact these individuals; their comments will reinforce our record of outstanding performance.

CLIENT	CONTACT INFORMATION
<p><b>Town of Palmer</b></p>	<p>Linda Leduc                      Town Planner/Economic Development Director                      413.283.2605                      lleduc@townofpalmer.com</p>
<p><b>Town of Westborough</b></p>	<p>Jim Robbins                      Town Planner                      508.366.3055                      planning@town.westborough.ma.us</p>
<p><b>Town of Maynard</b></p>	<p>Bill Nemser                      Town Planner                      978.897.1329                      bnemser@townofmaynard.net</p>
<p><b>Town of Sterling</b></p>	<p>Patty Page                      Administrator for the ZBA and Planning Board                      978.422.8111 x2301                      ppage@sterling-ma.gov</p>

## VHB Project Experience

VHB's expanding planning and urban design practice has worked with numerous municipal and regional planning entities throughout New England to frame land use and transportation planning challenges and to develop implementable solutions to achieve a shared vision. Key to this is our in-depth understanding and experience in the public process. We will tap into our previous municipal planning experiences, summarized in the table on page 6 and discussed further here, to bring creative and innovative solutions to Leverett.

### *Northborough Master Plan | Northborough, MA*

VHB worked with the Town of Northborough on its Master Plan, which will serve as a basis for decision-making about land use planning and redevelopment, budget preparation and capital improvement planning for public facilities and services, and economic development for the Town's future. To be consistent with the community's vision, the Master Plan includes a diverse range of public participation at all stages of planning and VHB is working closely with the Town to provide an open and inclusive process. In addition to community engagement, VHB has reviewed relevant planning reports, studies, and other pertinent documentation; toured the Town with key stakeholders; and analyzed administrative, social, and physical conditions. This approach has allowed us to develop a comprehensive understanding of Northborough's demographics, economics, land and building use, regulations, development opportunities and constraints, transportation and parking, and utility infrastructure issues that are essential in preparing a fully integrated and realistic Master Plan. Since the adoption of the master plan, VHB has been working with the Town of Northborough to provide as-needed implementation support.



### *Southborough Master Plan | Southborough, MA*

For this plan, VHB leveraged stakeholder meetings, a web page on the Town's website, and three community-wide forums. The Master Plan addresses land use; housing; open space and recreation; economic development; natural, cultural, and historic resources; transportation; community services; and a separate chapter on the Town's four villages. VHB's recommendations included retaining the Town's historic character, while exploring development potential along select major corridors.

The final study was winner of the 2009 Distinguished Project Award by the American Planning Association of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors.



### *Maynard Master Plan | Maynard, MA*

VHB prepared a Master Plan for the Town of Maynard that will preserve the small-town character and respect the natural topography and protected areas, while considering future development needs. VHB crafted an extensive public participation program specific to the community to inform and garner the support of Maynard residents. This plan included using innovative outreach tools and techniques (e.g., the use of business cards to raise awareness of the plan), online and hardcopy surveys, a "Community Immersion Day" that included a tour of key resources, facilities and neighborhoods, and a series of one-on-one and group interviews with members of the community to gather input on key issues facing the Town.

NH Planners  
Association (NHPA)  
“Plan of the Year”  
2017



### *Downtown Lebanon Vision Plan and Tunnel Assessment Lebanon, NH*

Since 1964, when a raging fire devastated much of its main street, restoring and reinvesting in Lebanon’s historically vibrant downtown area has been a key objective for the City. The Downtown Vision Plan and Tunnel Assessment is the community’s latest effort to accomplish this. VHB led this multidisciplinary effort, including spearheading the planning, transportation, cultural/environmental resources, and public outreach components of the project—as well as guiding a team of subconsultants specializing in urban design, economic analysis, and branding. The team carefully assessed several alternatives to incorporate a deteriorating railway tunnel; this included various potential treatments of the structure based on cost, pedestrian connectivity, parking and plaza functionality, safety, future maintenance, and compatibility with the Visioning concepts. Throughout the process, engaging with the public remained a priority. To this end, the team kept the public involved through outreach surveys, local stakeholder meetings, and online discussion groups. Stakeholders with different backgrounds also participated in a variety of public outreach events such as interviews, public forums, and surveys.

### *Watertown Comprehensive Master Plan | Watertown, MA*

Established in 1630, Watertown has a rich history. The Town retained VHB to prepare a Comprehensive Master Plan that preserves its historic and cultural resources for the benefit of residents and tourists, while also providing opportunities for Town growth and economic development. Key aspects of the Master Plan include reinforcing major corridors and commercial districts, enhancing the Town’s transportation system, analyzing land use, and promoting energy efficiency and sustainability. VHB worked with the Town to execute an extensive public participation program, including one-on-one stakeholder interviews, community visioning workshops, and public forums.



Lebanon, NH

An exhibit was installed at the Town library aimed at gaining input from the community via a drop-box. The public process also included use of online social media tools. To move the plan into action, VHB developed a phased action plan to execute the recommended programs and policies for each Element of the Master Plan. To date, at least a half-dozen recommendations have been implemented.

### *Hudson Comprehensive Master Plan | Hudson, MA*

Seeking to balance growth with the preservation of its character and natural landscapes, and become a regional leader in promoting a healthy community, the Town engaged VHB to



Greenfield, MA

prepare a Comprehensive Master Plan. VHB worked with the Town to develop a Plan that provides a roadmap to enhancing the quality of life for residents, including goals such as better public infrastructure services; more opportunities for biking, walking, and exercising; and enhanced support of Hudson’s youth, aged, and disabled population. The Plan not only addressed standard planning trends, such as land use, housing, and natural resources, but also considered aspects previously thought to be outside the realm of traditional land-use planning such as energy, public health, and social services. We used a thorough and inclusive outreach program to engage stakeholders and residents, including seven public forums, where electronic polling was used to gauge opinions on issues and opportunities, and social media. [The completed study received an award for Comprehensive Planning Award by the American Planning Association of Massachusetts.](#)



#### [Merrimack 2012 Master Plan Update | Merrimack, NH](#)

To help address recent developments in the community, including significant population growth and substantial commercial, industrial, and residential development, the Town retained VHB to undertake this update to its master plan. The process began with an open and collaborative public outreach effort. A goal-setting public meeting was held to engage residents and develop a vision for Merrimack’s land use in the foreseeable future. From there, VHB worked with Town officials, a Master Plan Steering Committee, and other key stakeholders to develop a baseline conditions and trends analysis to establish a baseline to help frame the analysis of the various Master Plan Elements. The Implementation Plan was finalized as a “Living Master Plan” that can be reviewed and updated easily.



Marshfield, MA

#### [Greenfield Comprehensive Sustainable Master Plan | Greenfield, MA](#)

VHB was retained by the Town of Greenfield to develop its first-ever Comprehensive Sustainable Master Plan. Each of the Elements of the plan balance social, economic, and environmental resources to create strategies that meet the needs of current and future generations in Greenfield without compromising the systems on which they depend. Key aspects of the plan include analyzing existing and historic land use patterns, local development regulations and policies, and priority sites for redevelopment opportunities; preparing a Housing Element that addresses the Town’s current and future housing challenges; and addressing ways to strengthen Greenfield’s economic base. To celebrate the actions and strategies in the draft plan, VHB organized and facilitated a Fall Gathering - a public, farmer’s market-style event where residents and stakeholders met with Town staff and VHB representatives to outline and vote on implementation actions for the future.

#### [Marshfield Master Plan | Marshfield, MA](#)

Building upon prior related planning projects, VHB worked with the Town to update its Master Plan. Key aspects of the Master Plan included analyzing land use patterns; enhancing transportation; developing an economic development strategy; analyzing municipal facilities and utilities; updating the demographic and housing supply and demand analysis; increasing efficiency, energy conservation, and sustainability; and incorporating the Town’s natural and historic resources. VHB worked with the Town to develop an implementable, phased action plan to execute the recommended programs and policies for each Element of the Master Plan. In addition to developing a final plan, VHB prepared an Executive Summary brochure that included an overview of the Plan’s goals and policies, as well as an implementation matrix. Throughout the



process, VHB worked with the Planning Board; additional key municipal departments, boards, and committees; and other stakeholders, including facilitating public forums and community meetings.

#### *Charlton Master Plan Update | Charlton, MA*

With extensive public input, VHB's plan update included Elements on land use; housing and population; open space and recreation; economic development; natural, cultural, and historic resources; transportation; and Charlton Center. A detailed implementation program was prepared that addresses priority action items, the party responsible for implementation, a timetable, and identification of potential funding sources. [The final study was winner of the 2009 Comprehensive Planning Award from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.](#)



#### *2010 Bedford Master Plan Update | Bedford, NH*

The Town of Bedford selected VHB to assist in updating the Town's Master Plan by facilitating creative and sustainable master planning. As part of the project, VHB analyzed existing and historical land use patterns, reviewed local development regulations and policies, identified priority sites for redevelopment opportunities, and developed community goals for future growth and development; took a comprehensive look at all modes of transportation; and inventoried significant cultural, historic, and natural resources in order to develop strategies for their protection. As part of the project, VHB used visualization techniques and TurningPoint technology in public meetings. [The completed study was named "Plan of the Year" by the NHPA.](#)



#### *Somerset Master Plan | Somerset, MA*

VHB helped the Town of Somerset create an innovative and comprehensive plan that achieves long-term objectives and enhances the quality of life for the town. VHB worked closely with the community to identify existing challenges and land use strategies to develop holistic solutions that will benefit the community for decades to follow. To provide an open and inclusive process, we used a variety of communication channels, including a series of on-site stakeholder interviews, focused work sessions, and public forums.

#### *Green Works 2018 Community Action Plan | Orlando, FL*

Four years after the adoption of the Green Works 2013 Community Action Plan, Mayor Buddy Dyer once again challenged the Orlando community to develop a plan that would continue to transform the City, within a generation, into one of the most environmentally-friendly, economically, and socially vibrant communities in the nation. To identify innovative ideas and create the Green Works Orlando Community Action Plan, the community used a variety of engagement media to answer "How Do You Green?" VHB led stakeholder and public outreach for this project which included multiple round table forums with regional experts on each focus area and the creation of numerous graphics and boards for participants to interact with and provide feedback on. Public engagement included online surveys, targeted social media posts, facilitated round table meetings with subject matter experts, and a series of public workshops with engaging activities such as a visioning station to illustrate what resident's goals are for the future.

For the 2018 Community Action Plan, the City of Orlando retained VHB to assist in the development of a revised plan that contains measurable long-term goals, intermediate objectives, and policy recommendations to promote environmental, social, and economic sustainability and



vitality within the Orlando community. The 2018 plan also included engaging graphics and analytics on performance and successes from the baseline assessment. VHB assisted with the development of long-term goals, short-term action items, indicators to track success, public outreach, social media interaction, visual materials, technical input (including national best management practices), meeting preparation and support, task force meeting facilitation, and preparation of written plans and documents. At the request of the City, VHB also aligned the City’s goals with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s), following the ISO 31720 standard data metrics for “Sustainable Cities and Communities.” In addition to providing a framework to track progress among the six focus areas of Energy & Green Buildings, Local Food Systems, Livability, Solid Waste, Transportation and Water, the VHB assisted the City in adding the new guiding themes of social equity, climate resiliency and smart technology and innovation.

*St. Petersburg Integrated Sustainability Action Plan | St. Petersburg, Florida*

St. Petersburg was the first city in Florida and the 20th in the United States to commit to becoming completely reliant on sustainable energy sources. It’s also one of over 57 U.S. cities to sign the Chicago Charter, a commitment to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The city has also pledged to become more resilient to the effects of climate change, such as sea level rise and extreme weather.

As a means towards those ambitious goals, the City of St. Petersburg retained VHB to develop their Integrated Sustainability Action Plan as a blueprint for advancing the city’s sustainability and resiliency goals. As the lead consultant, VHB completed a local government and community scale GHG inventory and identifying strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, addressing the effects of climate change, and developing a 100 percent clean energy plan, as well as

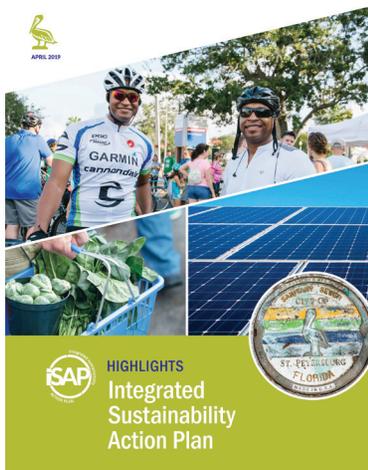
recommending measurable performance targets. VHB also lead an extensive outreach and engagement process with the community stakeholders to inform the goals and strategies for the city’s sustainability and resiliency plan.

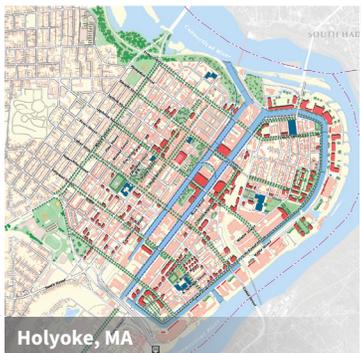
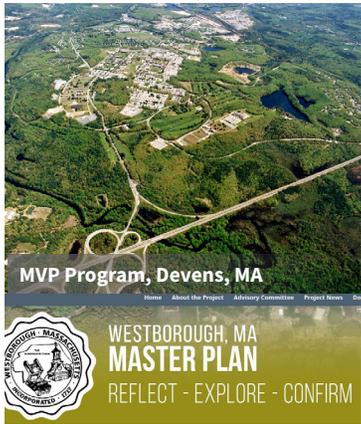
As an extension of our work within the ISAP contract, VHB was engaged to document innovative infrastructure guidance for the redevelopment of the Tropicana Field site that would make the area financially attractive for redevelopment while also meeting the City’s sustainability and resiliency goals, including the commitment to 100% clean energy. A focus on innovation at the earliest stages of infrastructure planning will help to integrate sustainability into site redevelopment. The infrastructure roadmap provides a menu of best practices and the infrastructure needed for investment focused economic development, health, energy, digital and transportation.

*Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Services | Dedham and Devens, Massachusetts*

The Town of Dedham and Devens Regional Enterprise Zone (formerly known as Fort Devens) were selected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to participate in the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program to assess with potential climate change impacts, vulnerabilities, and to prioritize actions for enhanced short- and long-term community sustainability and resiliency.

As a state-certified MVP provider, VHB assisted with the MVP planning efforts and hosted Community Resilience Building (CRB) workshops. Following the completion of the CRB workshops, VHB developed Summary of Findings Report that includes detailed descriptions of the workshop outcomes, identified strengths and vulnerabilities of Devens’ critical assets and infrastructure, and prioritization of recommended strategies to enhance resilience in these municipalities.





**View the publicly available reports at:**



**Devens:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2017-2018-mvp-planning-grant-report-devens/download>



**Dedham:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/dedham-report-part-1-of-5/download>

***Town of Westborough Master Plan | Westborough, MA***

VHB worked with the Town of Westborough on its Master Plan, which will serve as a basis for decision-making about land use planning and redevelopment, budget preparation and capital improvement planning for public facilities and services, and economic development for the Town’s future. To be consistent with the community’s vision, the Master Plan included a diverse range of public participation at all stages of planning and VHB worked closely with the Town to provide an open and inclusive process. For example, to expand the traditional reach of public engagement, the VHB Team set up an Advisory Committee “Ambassador” program, which asks Advisory Committee members (30 in total) to take responsibility for and periodically engage certain community members/organizational leaders that hold broader social networks—particularly those that include underserved populations.

In addition to community engagement, the VHB Team toured the Town with key stakeholders; reviewed relevant planning reports, studies, and other pertinent documentation; and analyzed administrative, social, and physical conditions. This approach allowed us to develop a comprehensive understanding of Westborough’s demographics, economics, land and building use, regulations, development opportunities and constraints, transportation and parking, and utility infrastructure issues that are essential in preparing a fully integrated and realistic Master Plan.

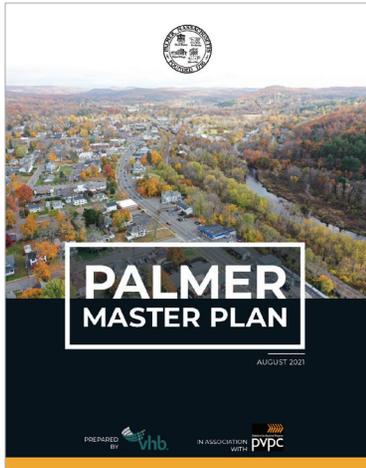
Other unique aspects of this Master Plan included the breakdown of the Advisory Committee into Sub-Committees organized by topic area for the purpose of providing strategic feedback, and the inclusion of sustainability and climate change and public health as subject-focused plan elements. Additionally, this project employed a robust public engagement platform (EngagementHQ - <https://www.bangthetable.com/engagementhq-community-software/>) and scenario planning tool (UrbanFootprint - <https://urbanfootprint.com/>).

***Palmer Master Plan | Palmer, MA***

VHB worked with the The Town of Palmer to develop of a Comprehensive Master Plan. The Town’s existing Master Plan was severely outdated as it was last completed in 1975—prior to the adoption of the Town’s first zoning bylaw in 1980. The Master Plan stresses sustainability and climate resilience across all elements including those specific to Energy, Climate Adaptation, and Sustainability. VHB served in a facilitator role—soliciting and summarizing the community’s thoughts and desires for the Town today and tomorrow. VHB worked with the Palmer Master Plan Steering Committee, the Town’s Planning and Economic Development Department, and Planning Board to complete the Master Plan, which was unanimously adopted by the Planning Board on August 2, 2021.

***Sterling Master Plan | Sterling, MA***

VHB is working with the Town of Sterling on its Master Plan, initially revisiting the vision for the community to establish the Town’s collective priorities and chart a roadmap for implementation. VHB is helping the Town develop a Master Plan that will shape the Sterling’s future, setting community priorities and guiding actions to carry out these priorities over the next 10 to 15 years.



### *Center City Vision Plan | Holyoke, Massachusetts*

The City of Holyoke used funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development’s (DHCD) Gateway Plus Action Grant program to help develop a plan to revitalize the four lower census tracts of the Center City. The City has many goals for the redevelopment, including increasing home ownership opportunities, creating a variety of housing options, provoking private investment, creating jobs, enhancing transportation access, maintaining green space, improving cultural and entertainment venues, and encouraging green energy. The City selected VHB to develop a comprehensive Vision Plan for the target area.

VHB’s study of the target area included data collection and analysis, and identification of key parcels for housing, commercial, and industrial development. The project also included an extensive public outreach program. During the process VHB worked with organizations and community groups to encourage community collaboration. The Vision Plan lays the groundwork for an Urban Renewal Plan.

### *South Coast Rail Commuter Rail Extension | Southeastern, Massachusetts*

The MBTA is restoring commuter rail service from Boston’s South Station to the South Coast of Massachusetts. The MBTA has relied on VHB to lead the 52-mile project’s permitting, planning, and engineering services. VHB coordinated the project with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies and public and private stakeholders. The project connects 31 communities with its 75.3 miles of new track, 37 bridges, 45 grade crossings, two new layover facilities, and 12 new and rehabilitated stations. The electric traction power system and rolling stock will make SCR

the MBTA’s first electrified commuter rail line. VHB has been the Commonwealth’s prime partner from project planning through design and construction.

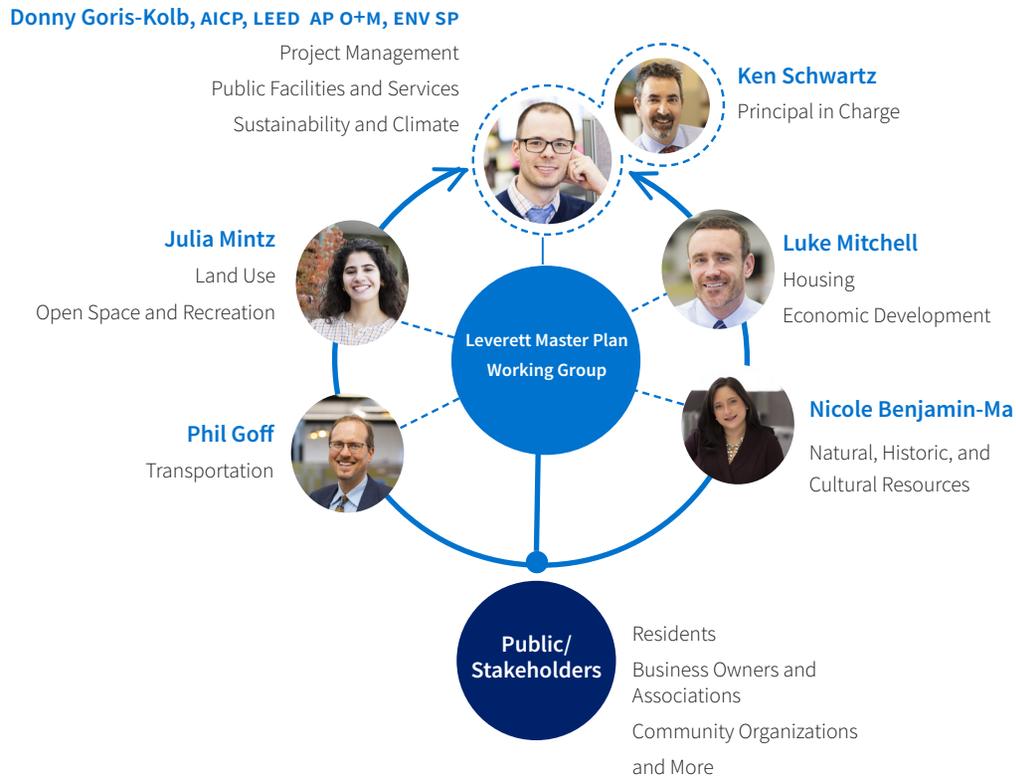
VHB is working on the following elements to ready SCR for future service:

- Support of MBTA project management, stakeholder coordination, coordination with Owner’s Representative and Independent Cost Estimators, program cost and schedule development and tracking, and project controls
- Developing commuter rail design standards and criteria for the program elements, including track, layover facilities, railroad signal and communications, bridges, and culverts
- Design criteria for center and side platform stations, vertical circulation design (elevators and ramps), resilient building material selection criteria, code compliance evaluation, accessibility, urban design principals and connections to the broader community, and sustainable site and structure designs
- Advancing engineering designs for track, stations, grade crossings, bridges, and traction power
- Advancing signals and communication through Final Design
- Refining the operating plan and coordinating refinement of the ridership estimates and evaluating fleet requirements and current technologies.
- VHB is providing technical assistance in support of Transit-oriented Development Planning at several of the future stations.



## Appendix A—Resumes

This section contains resumes for the following VHB Team members:





## Ken Schwartz, AICP, NCICS

Principal in Charge

**Ken is the Senior Vice President and Corporate Practice Leader for Planning at VHB. He directs the firm’s planning, design, land use, and public outreach efforts throughout the east coast, including comprehensive planning studies, economic revitalization programs, and creating redevelopment strategies and initiatives through the visioning processes. He is an award-winning NCI Charrette Planner® and has worked with dozens of cities and towns, public agencies, institutions, and private developers, to lead projects through the community process while building a shared vision and consensus. Ken is a member of the Urban Land Institute’s National Healthy Corridors Working Group comprised of 30 planning, design, real estate and health care professionals that are working together to investigate best practices to reinvent under-performing suburban and urban arterials in health-promoting ways.**

*36 years of professional experience*

### Education

MA, Urban and Environmental Policy, Tufts University, 1985

BA, Geography, Clark University, 1982

### Registrations/Certifications

American Institute of Certified Planners

National Charrette Institute Charrette System™ Certificate

### Affiliations/Memberships

American Planning Association, 1987

Urban Land Institute, Boston, 2000

### Amesbury Master Plan, Amesbury, MA

Ken was Project Director for preparation of a master plan for the Town of Amesbury. He oversaw land planning, utility and open space planning, historic preservation strategies, and environmental services to create a master plan consisting of seven elements. The plan includes extensive recommendations related to the Town’s goals, objectives, and concerns for growth management, including methods to mitigate impacts for future land use, housing, economic development needs, infrastructure, educational needs, and other municipal services.

### Devens (Formerly Fort Devens) Disposition Planning, Devens, MA

Ken worked with the Devens Disposition Executive Board, which is comprised of representatives of MassDevelopment and the three neighboring towns (Harvard, Ayer and Shirley) in developing a framework for making decisions regarding the future of the Devens community, located on the site of the former Fort Devens.

### Longmeadow Master Plan, Longmeadow, MA

Ken was Project Manager for the preparation of a vision framework plan for the Longmeadow Long Range Planning Committee. The initial planning phase established issues, assessments, and potential action items for a range of elements including land use and conservation, transportation, open space and resource protection, housing, economic development, town services and facilities, and quality of life.

### Master Plan Update, North Attleborough, MA

Ken assisted with a master plan update for the Town of North Attleborough to develop a long-term vision for the future, enhance economic strength of the Town, and improve the quality of life for its residents. Built upon extensive public outreach process, the Master Plan includes elements on land use; natural and cultural resources; open space and recreation; services and facilities; and transportation, while it incorporates and updates recent housing and economic development plans. In addition, an Implementation Plan will be designed to help the Town meet its planning goals and objectives. Ken conducted stakeholder interviews and participated in site reconnaissance to identify planning issues and opportunities.

**New Bedford Citywide Master Plan, New Bedford, MA**

Ken was Principal-in-Charge and Task Manager for public outreach for a major effort to develop a citywide master plan and to identify strengths and opportunities, evaluate and integrate previous planning efforts, and help plan the next steps in making New Bedford a popular destination for residents, businesses, and visitors. (2009 – 2010)

**Parramore Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan, Orlando, FL**

Downtown Orlando is experiencing tremendous change and much of that change is occurring in the Parramore neighborhood, a historic African-American community located just west of Orlando’s Central Business District. Changing conditions include anew SunRail commuter rail service, expanded free bus rapid transit service, a new performing arts center, and a new high-tech mixed-use “Creative Village” that will include the University of Central Florida and Valencia College. VHB prepared a Neighborhood Plan that was based on the principles of Healthy Community Design. The HUD grant-sponsored project evaluated market conditions and potential catalytic reinvestment sites, as well as mobility enhancements to create a healthy and sustainable community. Intended to balance the preservation of cultural heritage with the need for economic development, the Parramore Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan used Healthy Community Design principles as a guide to revitalize the community and address critical issues such as chronic diseases, homelessness, crime, low educational achievement, and residential displacement. The Plan was formally adopted by the Orlando City Council and received an “Award of Excellence” from the APA Florida Chapter in 2015.

**Salisbury Beach Vision Plan, Salisbury, MA**

Ken managed planning tasks associated with the development of a vision plan and rezoning for 40 acres of oceanfront property along Salisbury Beach. Working for a coalition of property owners and developers, Mr. Schwarz led a team to achieve consensus on a future redevelopment program including an upgraded streetscape,

boardwalk, and beachfront plazas. In addition, Ken drafted a mixed-use overlay zoning district bylaw and assisted in illustrating future development plans and renderings. He participated in various aspects of project strategy that led to approval at Town Meeting.

**South Hadley Master Plan, South Hadley, MA**

Ken was Principal-in-Charge and Public Outreach Task Manager for preparation of master plan for Town of South Hadley, including facilitation of public forums and preparation of project website. The comprehensive master plan builds upon and updates several recent land use planning initiatives. Ken explored new opportunities to diversify land use and help promote economic development, while continuing to heighten interest and invest in the protection and enhancement of the Town’s natural and historical resources.

**Watertown Comprehensive Master Plan, Watertown, MA**

Ken was Principal-in-Charge for the preparation of a master plan for the Town of Watertown, focusing on reinforcing major corridors and commercial districts; enhancing the Town’s transportation, circulation, and parking; preserving and capitalizing upon the Town’s historical, cultural, and natural resources; and promoting energy efficiency and sustainability within the Town. He directed an extensive public participation component, including conducting one-on-one stakeholder interviews, facilitating a community visioning workshop, and public forums, using a variety of online social media tools.

**Williamstown Comprehensive Master Plan, Williamstown, MA**

Ken worked with the Town of Williamstown and the Williamstown Master Planning Committee to help prepare a comprehensive town-wide master plan for Williamstown. He directed land planning, transportation, utility, and environmental services to create a framework for future town development, including interaction and partnership opportunities with Williams College and the Clark Art Institute.



## Donny Goris-Kolb, AICP, LEED AP O+M, ENV SP, TRUE ADVISOR

Project Manager; Public Facilities and Services; Sustainability and Climate

**Donny is a certified planner, LEED Accredited Professional, and Envision Specialist with experience in environmental consulting, sustainable development, and urban and regional planning. He has worked on a broad spectrum of projects serving public and private sector clients. Areas of focus include community and airport master planning, green building design and operations, climate mitigation and adaptation, waste management, social equity and environmental justice, environmental permitting, and public outreach/engagement.**

*14 years of professional experience*

### Education

ALM, Sustainability, Harvard University Extension School

MUP, Urban and Regional Planning, University of Buffalo

BA, Sociology, Binghamton University

### Registrations/Certifications

American Institute of Certified Planners, 12/2021 (reg# 023095)

LEED Accredited Professional for Existing Buildings Operation & Maintenance, 2020 (reg# 10695494)

Envision™ Sustainability Professional

TRUE Advisor

### Affiliations/Memberships

American Planning Association, Sustainable Communities

### Hanover Sustainability Master Plan, Hanover, NH

VHB is guiding the Town of Hanover in revisiting its vision for the future and creating a policy framework centered on sustainability and climate resilience that offers guidance to 2030 and beyond. Donny is managing the VHB Team in helping town officials, residents, and other community stakeholders—including Dartmouth College—to review and evaluate the Town’s major challenges and opportunities (related to land use, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, public facilities and services, transportation and mobility, public health, and energy) and to identify creative and innovative actions to address them.

### Westborough Master Plan, Westborough, MA

Donny was Project Manager, supporting the VHB Team in creating a Master Plan for the Town of Westborough. The Town embarked on year-long planning process to update its town-wide Master Plan. Working with the Town, VHB assisted with the public engagement process where residents, businesses owners, and local stakeholders will help shape the ideas and recommendations in the Plan.

### Palmer Master Plan, Palmer, MA

As Project Manager, Donny guided the Town of Palmer in its effort to update its town-wide Master Plan. This project, which was partially funded through Massachusetts’ Municipal

Vulnerability Preparedness Program Action Grant program, incorporates a dedicated element covering sustainability/resiliency, as well as a public health addendum provided by the town’s regional planning commission, in addition to the traditional elements required by M.G.L. c. 41, §81D. Working with the Town, VHB led a virtual public engagement process where residents, businesses owners, and local stakeholders helped to shape an overall vision, goals, and supporting strategies.

### Somerset Master Plan. Somerset, MA

Donny was a Project Planner, supporting the VHB Team in creating an innovative and comprehensive Master Plan for the Town of Somerset that achieves long-term objectives and enhances the quality of life for the Town. The VHB Team worked closely with the community to identify existing challenges and strategies to develop holistic solutions that will benefit their community for decades to follow. Donny was specifically responsible for the development of the Plan’s Sustainability Element, which includes baseline conditions analysis, goal setting, and recommendations development focused on Energy, Waste Management and Recycling, Community Health and Well-Being, and Hazard Mitigation and Climate Change.

### Northborough Master Plan, Northborough, MA

Donny was the Deputy Project Manager working with the Town on its Master plan, which will serve as a basis for decision-

making about land use planning and redevelopment, budget preparation and capital improvement planning for public facilities and services, and economic development. To be consistent with the community’s vision, the Master Plan included a diverse range of public participation at all stages of planning. Donny is currently Project Manager, working with the Town of Northborough in the implementation of its Master Plan .

**Maynard Master Plan, Maynard, MA**

Donny was the Deputy Project Manager in preparing a Master Plan for Maynard that will preserve its small-town character and respect the natural topography and protected areas, while considering future development needs. The VHB Team developed an extensive public participation program to garner the support of Maynard residents. The plan includes using innovative outreach tools and techniques, surveys, a “Community Immersion Day” that involved a tour of key resources, facilities and neighborhoods, and a series of one-on-one and group interviews with members of the community to gather input on key issues facing the Town.

**Watertown Comprehensive Master Plan, Watertown, MA**

For the Town of Watertown, Donny was a Project Planner who assisted in the development of a new master plan that created a common vision for the Town’s future focused on improving the quality of life of its residents. Donny supported the development of existing conditions, goals, and strategies, as well as implementation actions.

**Comprehensive Master Plan Update, Fairhaven, MA**

Donny was a Project Planner responsible for integrating sustainability and resiliency into the Town’s Comprehensive Plan Update. For the baseline analysis, Donny reviewed existing conditions related to priority sustainability topics (i.e., energy, waste management and recycling, water quality and consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions), documented and applied regional climate projections, and coordinated with the Town’s concurrent hazard mitigation planning process. Building

upon this baseline information, Donny worked with the Town and its stakeholders to identify related issues and opportunities that were then translated into goals and recommendations, which were integrated into an implementation plan tied to the Town’s budget and capital planning process.

**Maynard Municipal Vulnerability Assessment, Maynard, MA**

Donny managed a vulnerability assessment for the Town of Maynard under the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. As part of this effort, he worked with key stakeholders on understanding the town’s critical infrastructural, societal, and environmental assets, along with their vulnerabilities and strengths under known and projected climate stressors. This study culminate in the identification of actions to improve the town’s resilience under a changing climate. As part of this effort, Donny also supported the town in its grant submission and award.

**City of Rochester Climate Vulnerability Assessment, Rochester, NY**

As part of the City of Rochester’s planning efforts to become a more sustainable and resilient community, Donny was part of a team working with the City to conduct a Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA). The CVA will provide the City and stakeholders a better understanding of its exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity to potential climate impacts, which will subsequently help inform the City’s decision-making, planning prioritization, and resource allocation. Key elements of the CVA included facilitating stakeholder engagement workshops, assessing vulnerability and adaptive capacity of the City’s critical assets and operations, and preparing a final report to communicate findings to the community. Notably, Donny supported the identification and engagement of vulnerable populations based on select socio-economic factors.



## Julia Mintz

Land Use; Open Space and Recreation

**Julia is an urban planner, certified WEDG Associate and permaculture designer, and trained geographer with experience in applied sustainability and urban planning and design. She has worked on a range of projects conducting land use assessments and spatial analysis, focusing on collaborating with communities to advance viable and integrative solutions to pressing urban and environmental challenges and foster greater economic and social equity.**

### Education

Masters Degree, City Planning,  
Boston University Metropolitan  
College (MET), 2021

Graduate Certificate, Applied  
Sustainability, Boston University  
Metropolitan College (MET), 2021

BA, State University of New York  
at Geneseo, Geography, 2019

### Affiliations

Board Member, Green  
Cambridge, Inc., November 2021  
to present

### *1 year of professional experience*

#### **Route 128 Corridor Land Use and Transportation Study, Rt. 128, MA**

Route 128, between Interstate 90 and Route 2, is one of Massachusetts' most active development hubs for commercial office space and R&D. Working with Karp Strategies, VHB is preparing an assessment of existing conditions along this corridor and preparing recommendations to strengthen the corridor for future development. Julia evaluated challenges and opportunities for the study area through an assessment of existing economic, zoning, and land use conditions and assisted in developing VHB's final findings report.

#### **Allen House Redevelopment, Pittsfield, MA**

VHB prepared a due diligence memorandum for the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) that identifies the development constraints and opportunities of the Allen House site. DCAMM is exploring potential opportunities for disposition and subsequent redevelopment/reuse of the Allen House. This historic structure was originally constructed in 1886. It has been vacant for over forty years and will require significant repairs and upgrades. Julia evaluated site constraints and opportunities through an assessment of existing conditions, including zoning, land use, infrastructure, utilities, historical/cultural context, and local and regional connectivity factors. Julia also assisted in stakeholder engagement and in developing VHB's final findings report.

#### **Boy Scouts Paxton Land Due Diligence**

VHB is helping the Boy Scouts of America assess site constraints and opportunities in an effort to assist the in determining a site development program potential and limitations. Julia conducted existing conditions research and evaluated site constraints and opportunities for new development.

#### **Hanover Sustainability Master Plan, Hanover, NH**

VHB is guiding the Town of Hanover in revisiting its vision for the future and creating a policy framework centered on sustainability and climate resilience that offers guidance to 2030 and beyond. The VHB team is helping town officials, residents, and other community stakeholders—including Dartmouth College—to review and evaluate the Town's major challenges and opportunities (related to land use, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, public facilities and services, transportation and mobility, public health, and energy) and to identify creative and innovative actions to address them. Julia is assisting with existing conditions research, assessing current economic conditions, challenges, and opportunities utilizing US Census data and CoStar.



**Education**

MA, City Planning, University of Pennsylvania, 2010

BS, Geography and Sociology, Vassar College, 2002

## Luke A. Mitchell

Housing; Economic Development

**Luke is a planner and project manager with skills and experience across various services. His project management experience includes comprehensive planning, land use and zoning, market analysis, economic development strategy, and public-private partnerships. Luke has significant experience building financial models to perform scenario-testing on behalf of project sponsors. Luke’s focus is on strengthening his clients’ ability to access funds, mobilize urban projects, and transform communities.**

*18 years of professional experience*

### **Westborough Master Plan, Westborough, MA**

Luke supported the VHB Team in creating a Master Plan for the Town of Westborough. The Town embarked on year-long planning process to update its town-wide Master Plan. Working with the Town, VHB assisted with the public engagement process where residents, businesses owners, and local stakeholders help shape the ideas and recommendations in the Plan.

### **Somerset Master Plan. Somerset, MA**

Luke assisted the Town of Somerset with the creation of an innovative and comprehensive plan that achieves long-term objectives and enhances the quality of life for the town. The VHB Team worked closely with the community to identify existing challenges and land use strategies to develop holistic solutions that will benefit their community for decades to follow. To provide an open and inclusive process, we used a variety of communication channels, including a series of on-site stakeholder interviews, focused work sessions, and public forums.

### **Public Realm Improvements, Middleborough, MA**

The Town of Middleborough will be significantly impacted by the introduction of a new train station, as part of the South Coast Rail megaproject. Luke is working with the Town to develop strategies to mitigate this impact. The team is focusing on

roadways, sidewalks, signals, and other infrastructure to support a safe and efficient multimodal environment surrounding the new station that smooths the transition and encourages visitors to spend time in the Town’s historic center.

### **Route 128 Corridor Land Use and Transportation Study, Rt. 128, MA**

Route 128, between Interstate 90 and Route 2, is one of Massachusetts’ most active development hubs for commercial office space and R&D. Working with Karp Strategies, VHB is preparing an assessment of existing conditions along this corridor and preparing recommendations to strengthen the corridor for future development. Luke is leading the Land Use and Economic Development assessments and will develop a series of short-term and long-term recommendations for the five towns constituting the regional study area.

### **Institutional Site Planning, Wayland, MA**

An institutional owner recently purchased over 100 acres of land west of Boston. Luke led a team of specialists to explore the site’s development history, assess environmental conditions, identify the location and extent of wetlands, and determine constraints on new construction. Based on this analysis, VHB worked with the owner to verify the project vision and generate multiple site planning options, including infrastructure, roadways, parking, and building footprints.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Route Planning, South Portland, ME**

The city of South Portland is home to an international jetport, a large retail district, and a historic suburban neighborhood; but until recent years, the planning process did not accommodate infrastructure of pedestrians and bicyclists. Luke worked with the Mayor's office and local agencies to update the city's multimodal transportation strategy. This work was done prior to joining VHB.

**The Penang Project, Penang, Malaysia**

The Penang region has the second largest metropolitan population in Malaysia, and it is anticipated that this population will grow by one million within a decade. Luke worked closely with local think tank Think City, to conduct research and organize community feedback sessions throughout Penang. The assignment was to create a conceptual framework for coordinated regional development, to manage growth and attract investment. This framework achieved a functional integration of urban centers throughout the region, calling for increased options for alternative transportation, protection of mangroves and other fragile ecosystems, preservation and enhancement of historic neighborhoods, and economic development hubs. This work was done prior to joining VHB.

**Ocean Eco City Master Plan, Xiamen, China**

The City of Xiamen, located on the coast of Fujian Province, has made land available for large-scale master development. Luke and the project team worked for a Singapore-based developer to design a sustainable, high-density, mixed-use urban district. The plan preserves the site's existing system of agricultural canals and adapts them for urban use. The canals are lined with pedestrian and bicycle connectors, weaving adjacent districts together. The full project occupies 170 hectares, with a restored mangrove ecosystem buffering development from the shoreline. Luke's role was to maintain a presence on the site, provide guidance to the design team, and engage with partners and

stakeholders in Singapore and China. This work was done prior to joining VHB.

**UMass Student Experience Master Plan, Amherst, MA**

Luke contributed community outreach, technical analysis, planning, and design to this significant undertaking at the UMass system's flagship campus. The project team performed a conditions assessment of the entire residential inventory (including over 13,000 beds) as well as student life spaces throughout campus, and set forth a series of campus planning recommendations in order to optimize the student experience, and strengthen both retention and recruitment. This work was done prior to joining VHB.

**New England Institute of Technology, East Greenwich, RI**

In 2012, the leadership of the New England Institute of Technology announced that the school would be making an institutional shift, from a commuter school to a 24/7 residential campus. In the role of project manager, Luke conducted market analysis and determined a space program for a new 415-bed residence hall. He then led a design-build team competition, engaged the preferred CM and architect, and represented the Owner throughout design and construction. This work was done prior to joining VHB.

**University of Massachusetts Student Experience Master Plan, Amherst, MA**

Luke contributed community outreach, technical analysis, planning, and design to this significant undertaking at the UMass system's flagship campus. The project team performed a conditions assessment of the entire residential inventory (including over 13,000 beds) as well as student life spaces throughout campus, and set forth a series of campus planning recommendations in order to optimize the student experience, and strengthen both retention and recruitment. This work was done prior to joining VHB.



## Nicole Benjamin-Ma

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

**Nicole is a Preservation Planner with specialized knowledge of architectural history and local, state, and federal historic compliance regulations. Her skillsets include architectural survey, project impact assessments, municipal preservation plans, state and federal documentation, historical research, and interpretive planning. She meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural Historian (36 CFR 61).**

### Education

MA, Historic Preservation,  
Goucher College, (In Progress)

BA, Anthropology,  
Rutgers University, 1998

### Affiliations/ Memberships

Boston Preservation Alliance,  
Young Advisors Board Secretary

Boston Society of Architects,  
Historic Resources Committee

National Trust for Historic  
Preservation

Vernacular Architecture Forum  
Society of Architectural Historians

### *8 years of professional experience*

#### **Westborough Master Plan, Westborough, MA**

Nicole supported the VHB Team in creating a Master Plan for the Town of Westborough. The Town is embarking on year-long planning process to update its town-wide Master Plan. Working with the Town, VHB assisted with the public engagement process where residents, businesses owners, and local stakeholders will help shape the ideas and recommendations in the Plan.

#### **Palmer Master Plan, Palmer, MA**

As part of the VHB developing the Palmer Master Plan, Nicole worked with the Historical Commission to identify historic resource-related by-laws and ordinances to better integrate the Commission into the Town’s planning and design processes. To accomplish this, Nicole helped establish connections between the Historical Commission and state-wide and regional resources developed specifically for local entities. Other concerns included finding a permanent home for the Commission’s growing collection of documents, ephemera, and artifacts, utilizing crowdsourcing platforms to widen community engagement, and expanding programming for STEAM education.

#### **Somerset Master Plan. Somerset, MA**

The VHB Team worked closely with the community to identify existing challenges and strategies to develop holistic

solutions that will benefit their community for decades to follow. Nicole worked with the team to develop goals centered around leveraging the central historic district for economic development; creating a more holistic approach to design review; exploring the reuse potential of Town-owned buildings; and nurturing its fast-developing arts community into a year-round, regional cultural hub.

#### **Maynard Master Plan, Maynard, MA**

To assist the Town of Maynard in developing their recent master plan, Nicole and the VHB Team developed an extensive public participation program to garner the support of Maynard residents. The plan included using innovative outreach tools and techniques, surveys, a “Community Immersion Day” that teamed VHB with the Master Plan stakeholders for a tour of key resources, facilities and neighborhoods; creating a presence at major community events, and conducting a series of one-on-one and group interviews with members of the community. Part of Nicole’s role was developing goals for the newly-designated Cultural District and advancing Maynard’s growing identity as a cultural destination.

#### **Northborough Town-wide Master Plan, Northborough, MA**

Nicole prepared the historic and cultural resources components of the master plan update for the Town of Northborough. The Town-wide Master Plan will define a community-based vision

based upon broad based public participation. The scope of the Plan will contain a range of elements with specific emphasis on land use, facilities and economic development.

**Master Plan Update, Billerica, MA**

Nicole prepared the historic and cultural resources components of the master plan update for the Town of Billerica.

Responsibilities included gathering, organizing, and prioritizing data regarding documented historic properties, analysis of local historic resource by-laws and practices, and coordinating with town committees and staff to identify ways to make internal processes more effective. Nicole also worked with residents and other local stakeholders to understand historic preservation successes and concerns that have occurred since the last master planning process, identify previously undocumented properties of historic importance, and to establish meaningful and achievable goals promoting historic preservation that capitalize on residents’ interests.

**Comprehensive Master Plan Update, Fairhaven, MA**

Nicole prepared the historic and cultural resources components of the master plan update for the Town of Fairhaven. The update to Fairhaven’s 1996 Master Plan, focused on guiding the coastal community through the next 10-15 years to preserve and enhance its unique history and built and natural characteristics. Key elements of the Master Plan included analyzing land use patterns; enhancing transportation; developing an economic development strategy; analyzing municipal facilities and utilities; updating the demographic and housing supply and demand analysis; increasing efficiency, energy conservation, resiliency, and sustainability; and incorporating the Town’s natural and historical resources.

**Rumney Historic Visioning Project, Rumney, NH**

For Iberdrola, Nicole worked with the Town of Rumney to identify effective practices and tools to promote the preservation and use of historic properties in the Town. The project was a

mitigation measure for the adverse visual effects to Rumney’s central village caused by the Groton Wind Farm in central New Hampshire. The visioning process involved public meetings and discussions with individual stakeholders to discuss needs and ideas, and the development of an implementable plan.

**Article 80 Large Project Review, Boston, MA**

Nicole has worked on the Article 80 process for over two dozen projects, a process used by the Boston Redevelopment Authority to evaluate proposed project impacts. Responsibilities have included background research, field photography, participation in agency scoping meetings, presentations at public meetings, and authoring the historic resources chapter for the final deliverable.

**NHDOT, I-293 Exit 6&7 Feasibility Study and Section 106, Manchester, NH**

For NHDOT, Nicole compiled principal information about a variety of historic properties as part of a study report to establish the purpose and need and recommend conceptual alternatives for improving a stretch of I-293 through Manchester. She is overseeing the preparation of Section 106 documents through the design phase of the project, and coordinating with NHDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on Section 106 consultation. Nicole was the primary author of the Project Area Form for the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR), requiring field reconnaissance survey, establishment and justification of the suggested Area of Potential Effects, creating and maintaining a dynamic inventory of previously identified or potentially historic properties, researching and presenting historic contexts for the project area, and making recommendations for future inventory and evaluation. Nicole will be continuing her coordination with state and federal agencies for the assessment of effects for each alternative, and preparing individual and district inventory forms for potentially National Register-eligible properties.



## Phil Goff, LEED AP

Transportation

**Phil brings over 20 years of multimodal network planning, pedestrian/bicycle facility design, and urban design experience to VHB. He merges his passion for active transportation planning and streetscape design with his keen ability to effectively manage a diverse set of complex projects. Phil uses his design, planning, and bicycle-advocacy background to manage complete streets network-planning, roadway-corridor, and urban design projects for regions, cities, and towns, throughout New England. His sincere passion for making communities more lively, equitable, and sustainable places represents a common theme in his work.**

### Education

MLA, Urban Design, University of Oregon, 1998

Architecture, Syracuse University, 1991

### Affiliations/Memberships

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire (Board, 2016–2019)

Everywhere Arlington Livable Streets Coalition (current Chair)

LivableStreets Alliance (Board, 2005–2009)

### *22 years of professional experience*

#### **Hartwell Avenue Build-out Analysis and Urban Design Plan, Lexington, MA**

Phil is currently leading the build-out analysis for the Hartwell Avenue corridor in Lexington. His work is in conjunction with a larger, VHB-led redesign of the avenue and three other nearby streets. Phil's build-out analysis and urban design work is intended to help the team better understand overall transportation needs, vehicle capacity, and desired pedestrian/bicycle links. When the analysis and planning is complete, Phil will leverage ideas and concepts from the general public and develop concept-level designs for the active transportation facilities throughout the study area.

#### **Framingham Traffic Calming and Crosswalk Policy and Guidelines, MA**

As part of VHB's Transportation Master Plan team for the City of Framingham, Phil is the Task Manager for the pedestrian and bicycle component. This includes his role revising the City's current Traffic Calming Policy and Crosswalk Design Guidelines. The work features an analysis of the current policy and guidelines, and drafting revised policy language, a more-robust toolkit of potential safety counter measures and design guidance for an array of streetscape elements intended to

enhance mobility and safety for people walking, bicycling, or using mobility devices. Phil is also overseeing enhancements to the network of trails, sidewalks, and on-street bicycle facilities throughout Framingham.

#### **MaineDOT Statewide Active Transportation Plan, ME**

As the Project Manager for MaineDOT's first Statewide Active Transportation (AT) Plan, Phil is laying out a series of policy, program, and infrastructure project recommendations to improve active transportation in Maine. One key goal is to ensure that communities throughout the state can enjoy the recreational, public health, safety, transportation, and economic benefits that enhanced walking and bicycling facilities can bring. Phil is currently overseeing 1) an inventory of current AT programs, 2) definition of AT needs, 3) a statewide Vision for AT in Maine, 4) performance measures for future evaluation, 5) an assessment of inactive rail corridors for potential trail use, and 6) an analysis of HCP 3 & 4 state highways to target and prioritize funding for shoulder widening projects.

**Northampton Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, Northampton, MA**

Phil is currently overseeing the development of a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan update for the City of Northampton's Planning and Sustainability Department. The resulting plan will be a prioritized list of 15–20 projects eligible for MassDOT Tier 3 implementation funding to improve walking, bicycling and transit conditions in the City. Phil's work will include a analysis and prioritization of dozens of additional complete streets projects identified during the planning work (beyond the 15-20 for MassDOT).

**Northampton Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Northampton, MA**

Prior to joining VHB, Phil led the development of a citywide pedestrian and bicycle master plan for the City of Northampton. The year-long planning effort is being used to guide investments in trails, complete streets infrastructure, and walk/bike programs for the next 20 years. The contract included a Complete Street conceptual redesign of Main Street downtown, and development of the Hampshire County Urban, Suburban, and Rural Complete Streets Design Guide.

**Main Street Complete Street Redesign, Northampton, MA**

Prior to joining VHB, Phil led the conceptual-design plan for Main Street in Northampton. The intent was to create an implementable preliminary design that improves pedestrian and bicycle safety, transit access, and the sense-of-place downtown. Design work included the re-channelization of the wide roadway into a two-lane street with turn lanes, a sidewalk-grade separated bike lane, improved sidewalks and crosswalks, and various landscape/streetscape enhancements. The City of Northampton is currently seeking state and federal funding for final design and engineering, and implementation.

**MassDOT, Charles River Basin Connectivity Plan, MA**

Prior to joining VHB, Phil worked with the MassDOT and DCR to develop a plan that addresses the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists along an eight-mile stretch of the Charles River Basin in Boston, Cambridge, and Watertown. The multi-year effort included recommendations for new paths along the river, in addition to enhanced pedestrian and bike connections to the adjacent neighborhoods and ten bridges across the Charles River. Since adoption, the Connectivity Study has been used by DCR and adjacent communities to improve the path and bridge network along the river in multiple locations including the Charlesgate interface, Greenough Blvd. (designed by VHB), and intersection improvements at the Boston end of the River Street and Western Avenue bridges.

**Community Path Extension Connectivity Study, Somerville/Cambridge, MA**

Prior to joining VHB, Phil served as the project manager for a trail connectivity study to recommend links between the Somerville Community Path extension with the Grand Junction Path in Cambridge, and the Mystic River Path in Somerville's Assembly Square. Significant challenges of the study related to finding opportunities to provide walking/bicycling connections through industrial areas where significant barriers exist, including an elevated highway, multiple freight and commuter rail lines, and a tangled mix of property ownership and state/local jurisdictions. The resulting recommendations included evaluation of multiple options based on impacts to safety, connectivity, property ownership/ROW issues, cost, permitting, and community support.

## Appendix B—Required Forms

This section contains the following completed and executed forms:

- Affidavit of Clerk of Corporation Vendor (Attachment B)
- Revenue Enforcement and Protection Certification (RESAP) (Attachment C)
- Non-Bribery and Collusion By-Law Affidavit (Attachment D)

**Attachment B: Affidavit of Clerk of Corporation Vendor**

I, Robert M. Dubinsky certify as follows:

1. I am the Clerk of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. which is duly organized and incorporated under the laws of Massachusetts.
2. That the names, residential addresses and title of the officers of the above-named corporation are as follows:
 

President: Michael Carragher

Address: 17 Cumberland Street Unit 1 Boston, MA 02115

Vice President: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: Eric Hartmann

Address: 39 Nichols Street Swampscott, MA 01907

Resident Agent: Robert M. Dubinsky

Address: 80 Hayward Street, Hopkinton, MA 01748
3. That the above-named corporation was incorporated on September 2, 1986
4. That the Corporation's Federal Tax Identification Number is 04-2931679
5. That the above-named corporation is in good standing with the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the Secretary of the State of Massachusetts \_\_\_\_\_ (if incorporated in another state)
6. That I, Robert M. Dubinsky have been authorized by a Corporate Vote, a copy of which is attached, to sign as agent for said corporation.

SIGNED UNDER THE PAINS AND PENALTIES OF PERJURY THIS 8 DAY OF  
February, 2022, 2021 

Clerk

# VANASSE HANGEN BRUSTLIN, INC.

## Certificate of Vote

I, Robert M. Dubinsky, hereby certify that I am the duly elected Clerk of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

I hereby certify the following is a true copy of a Vote taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Corporation, duly called and held on January 26, 2022, at which a quorum of the Board was present and voting.

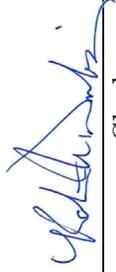
**VOTED:**

*That Robert M. Dubinsky is Clerk of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. and is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents of every name and nature, unlimited as to subject matter or dollar amount, in the name and on behalf of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. and to affix its corporate seal thereto, and any such document so executed shall be valid and binding upon Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.*

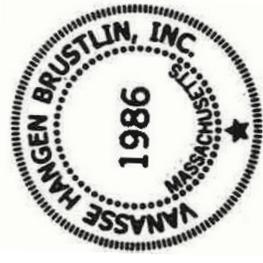
I hereby certify that said vote has not been amended or repealed and remains in full force and effect as of this date.

ATTEST:

Date: February 8, 2022



Clerk



**Attachment C: Revenue Enforcement and Protection Certification (REAP)**

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 62C, §49A, I certify under the penalties of perjury that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the company, corporation, partnership or entity named below is in compliance with all laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relating to taxes, reporting of employees and contractors, and withholding and remitting child support.

ENTITY NAME: VHB

By:  \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized signature

February 9, 2022

Date

Ken Schwartz, AICP, NCICS

Name of person signing above (type/print)

101 Walnut Street, Watertown, MA

Business address

617-924-1770

Telephone Number

**Attachment D: Non-Bribery and Collusion Affidavit**

I, Ken Schwartz, AICP, NCICS, on oath depose and state that  
(name of person signing proposal)  
neither I nor any employees, officers or directors of VHB  
(name of vendor)

have been convicted of any violations described as follows:

- a) Bribery or attempting to bribe a public officer or employee of the Town of Leverett, the State of Massachusetts, or any other public entity, including but not limited to the Government of the United States, any state, any local government authority in the United States in that officer's or employee's capacity, or
- b) An agreement or collusion among bidders or prospective bidders in restraint of freedom of competition by agreement to bid a fixed price or otherwise.

I further state that neither I nor any employees, officers or directors of VHB  
(name of vendor) have made an admission of guilt of such conduct in paragraphs (a) or (b) above, which is a matter of record, but has been prosecuted for conduct, has made an admission of guilt or such conduct which term shall be construed to include a plea of nolo contendere.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person signing proposal

This affidavit in the case of a business entity shall be executed by, in the case of partnership, the general partner(s), and in the case of a corporation, the president.

Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury this 9th day of February, 2022.



[www.vhb.com](http://www.vhb.com)