Richmond is a beautiful place to live, and is located in a region rich in recreational and cultural opportunities. Like other communities in New England and Berkshire County, Richmond is home to a declining population of full-time residents, and rapidly growing older. This affects various components of community functionality, including:
- Governance
- Service Provision
- Financial sustainability

Richmond actively markets itself to prospective residents. Richmond enhances housing & community opportunities in order to facilitate entry for younger residents with families who would support the school and participate in town programming, government and town service provision.

Richmond places priority on multi-generational programming & service provision: Richmond actively identifies and addresses issues that would be cross-cutting in nature—benefiting young and old current residents while also attracting new residents.

Richmond addresses aging in place: Richmond can expand existing programs and services, while recognizing gaps that could enhance challenges for vulnerable populations to stay in Richmond. Some of the resulting decisions are related to land use, while others are related to Town services.

Richmond enhances challenges related to aging in place, such as promoting smaller unit and lot sizes. It will need to decide if it wants to expand meal and health services for older residents. It will need to decide if it wants to provide paid, daytime coverage of EMS and fire services, expanding existing coverage to meet potential, increased demand from an increasingly vulnerable population.

Richmond diversifies community in terms of age groups. Multi-generational communities are desirable and create rich opportunity for social and cultural interaction. Richmond could permit greater commercial opportunity in-town, to attract younger residents who tend to prefer compact convenience when seeking new communities, and to also maintain services which facilitate aging in-place.

Richmond actively markets itself as a destination with families to the community, and to also maintain services which facilitate aging in-place.

Richmond will need to decide if it is comfortable in promoting in-town commercial development, or if it prefers a largely residential and rural feel to their community.

Richmond will need to decide what types of commercial or other activities it wants to permit in-town—which types of businesses, services and amenities they feel confident and comfortable in hosting.

Richmond will need to identify other services or infrastructure which would create greater appeal for residents, such as sidewalks in the more compact neighborhoods or designated walking loops for residents.

Richmond actively identifies and addresses issues that are cross-cutting, multi-dimensional and community oriented. Certain decisions are repeated, indicating key decisions to be addressed and contemplated by the community. These are decisions likely to have impacts on service costs, service needs, and population trends. Certain decisions are repeated, indicating that they perhaps offer cross-cutting, multi-lateral resolutions to identified challenges.

Richmond places priority on multi-generational programming & service provision: Richmond actively identifies and addresses issues that would be cross-cutting in nature—benefiting young and old current residents while also attracting new residents.

Richmond places priority on multi-generational programming & service provision: Richmond actively identifies and addresses issues that would be cross-cutting in nature—benefiting young and old current residents while also attracting new residents.

Richmond enhances challenges related to aging in place, such as promoting smaller unit and lot sizes. It will need to decide if it wants to expand meal and health services for older residents. It will need to decide if it wants to provide paid, daytime coverage of EMS and fire services, expanding existing coverage to meet potential, increased demand from an increasingly vulnerable population.

Richmond recognizes and embraces current trends of a declining total population of full-time residents and an increasing proportion of second-home owners. Increasing numbers of seasonal residents will impact availability and distribution of services, and will also impact how the Town markets itself to prospective residents.
### Observations:

**Observation #1:** The Richmond School has long been an important and valued asset in the Town, while also presenting fiscal challenges. As school costs increase, enrollment has decreased. Because it is such a well-recognized school, many of the students elect to attend from out-of-district, via School Choice, which, while providing a base revenue to support a critical number of personnel, ultimately costs Richmond additional expense.

**Observation #2:** While Richmond has great property wealth, and levies a substantial portion of its revenue from local taxes, Richmond's tax base is very homogenous and has not experienced substantial growth in recent years.

### Options:

**Option 1:** Provide a glimpse at various scenarios that could influence cost of services in Richmond as well as socio-demographic and socio-economic trends.

**Option 2:** Cross-cutting, multi-lateral resolutions to repeated, indicating that they perhaps offer community input via two community feedback sessions held in the Fall of 2012.

### Decisions:

**Decision 1:** Each option precipitates key decisions to be addressed and contemplated by the community. These are decisions likely to have impacts on service costs, service needs, and population trends. Certain decisions are repeated, indicating that they perhaps offer cross-cutting, multi-lateral resolutions to identified challenges.

**Decision 2:** Richmond needs to decide whether or not it is fully committed to operating a K-8 school.

**Decision 3:** Richmond will need to decide if it wants to market the school as a reason for residents to move to Richmond.

**Decision 4:** Richmond will need to decide if it wants to actively recruit School Choice students (or other out-of-district students, paying via tuition agreements or other arrangements) and serve as a local and regional magnet school.

**Decision 5:** Richmond will need to decide if the costs of operating a small but successful school are worth the benefits, and if it wishes to continue subsidizing School Choice (receiving) costs while also paying out of pocket tuition costs for Richmond high school students attending out-of-district schools.

**Decision 6:** Richmond needs to decide if school operation outweighs any benefits of closing the school, and if so, if the Town wants to continue maintaining the school as a competitive and successful educational asset for itself and for other communities. Richmond will need to decide if it in fact wants to diversify housing opportunity, in an effort to attract families and younger residents.

**Decision 7:** Richmond needs to decide whether or not it is the right time to phase out educational service.

**Decision 8:** Richmond will need to decide whether there are sufficient students to sustain the School Choice Program or if the Town will need to decide which expenditures could be more efficiently utilized or allocated.

**Decision 9:** Richmond needs to decide which services can be shared with neighboring communities.

**Decision 10:** Richmond needs to decide which services are inefficient or ineffective, and re-allocate services or programming that are more effective use of Town resources.

**Decision 11:** Richmond needs to decide if it is comfortable in promoting in-town commercial development, or if it prefers a largely residential and rural feel to the community. Or, how it can promote a balance between current character & growth.

**Decision 12:** Richmond needs to decide what types of commercial or other activities to permit in-town—which types of businesses, services and amenities it feels confident and comfortable in hosting.

### Financial Sustainability

**Topic Area:** Long Term Financial Sustainability

**Observation:** Richmond’s long-term sustainability, as presented by data and compounded by community input via two community feedback sessions held in the Fall of 2012.

**Options:** Provide a glimpse at various scenarios that could influence cost of services in Richmond as well as socio-demographic and socio-economic trends.

**Decisions:** Each option precipitates key decisions to be addressed and contemplated by the community. These are decisions likely to have impacts on service costs, service needs, and population trends. Certain decisions are repeated, indicating that they perhaps offer cross-cutting, multi-lateral resolutions to identified challenges.

**Identify Richmond School as a priority community asset to maintain and enhance:** Richmond could continue to promote the school to maintain its high quality, and dedicate resources to recruiting School Choice students, or students who would attend via tuition agreements.

**Reduce School Services:** Consolidating to offer only elementary or early childhood grades. Richmond could then use the building for other uses as well as education, including town offices, community programs and services, or a senior center.

**Close School:** Richmond could close the Richmond Consolidated School and use the building for alternative uses such as a community center. With this option, Richmond would either need to join a larger school district or enter into tuition agreements for all of its resident students, Pre-K through high school aged.

**Increase & Diversify Tax Base:** Richmond could diversify its tax base by permitting greater commercial opportunity in town.

**Reduce Costs:** Richmond could identify services or programming that are inefficient or ineffective, and re-allocate funds to other services or programs.

**Reduce School Services:**

1. Richmond needs to decide whether or not it is fully committed to operating a K-8 school.
2. Richmond will need to decide if it wants to market the school as a reason for residents to move to Richmond.
3. Richmond will need to decide if it wants to actively recruit School Choice students (or other out-of-district students, paying via tuition agreements or other arrangements) and serve as a local and regional magnet school.
4. Richmond will need to decide if the costs of operating a small but successful school are worth the benefits, and if it wishes to continue subsidizing School Choice (receiving) costs while also paying out of pocket tuition costs for Richmond high school students attending out-of-district schools.
5. Richmond needs to decide if school operation outweighs any benefits of closing the school, and if so, if the Town wants to continue maintaining the school as a competitive and successful educational asset for itself and for other communities. Richmond will need to decide if it in fact wants to diversify housing opportunity, in an effort to attract families and younger residents.

**Close School:**

1. Richmond will need to decide whether or not it wants to phase out educational service.
2. It will need to identify penalties or additional costs to using the existing school building for non-educational uses.
3. Join an existing regional district. This would reduce its payments to out-of-district schools, as high school aged students would attend as in-district rather than via School Choice or tuition-agreement students. It would also likely reduce Richmond's autonomy in school-related decision making.
4. Richmond will need to decide whether or not it is committed to retaining full autonomy in education decision making for its residents. OR, Richmond will need to decide if it is committed to enhancing long term fiscal sustainability and efficiency.

**Increase & Diversify Tax Base:**

1. Richmond could diversify its tax base by permitting greater commercial opportunity in town.

**Reduce Costs:**

1. Richmond could identify services or programming that are inefficient or ineffective, and re-allocate funds to other services or programs.
2. Richmond will need to decide whether or not it is committed to retaining full autonomy in education decision making for its residents.
3. Richmond will need to decide what types of commercial or other activities to permit in-town—which types of businesses, services and amenities it feels confident and comfortable in hosting.
4. Richmond needs to decide what types of other services it wants to reduce or eliminate certain services.
5. Richmond will need to decide if there are certain services that might better serve the community and represent a more effective use of Town expenditures.
**Topic Area: Next Steps**

**OBSERVATIONS:** Indicates the challenges to Richmond’s long-term sustainability, as presented by data and compounded by community input via two community feedback sessions held in the Fall of 2012. (Read across)

Richmond has been presented with a very large amount of information, and just started what could be a very valuable community wide conversation—about issues which affect quality of life, cost of living, and community character. It is up to the community to collectively decide to what extent they pursue a continued long-term planning initiative and how they want to do so. Already, there have been creative and straightforward suggestions to maintaining open dialogue between Town officials and residents, serving as an example of different ways the community can move forward.

**OPTIONS:** Provide a glimpse at various scenarios that could influence cost of services in Richmond as well as socio-demographic and socio-economic trends. (Read across)

Town officials continue to engage residents in long-term planning and visioning initiatives

Richmond will need to identify which products or tools they hope to gain from their long-range planning efforts. Richmond will need to decide how to most effectively use these advisory committees, and they will want to decide which challenges they most want to address with advisory committees.

Richmond pursues no further long-term planning efforts

Richmond will need to decide how much time they want to commit to continued long-range planning efforts, and when they want to specific deliverables completed.

Richmond will need to decide how much time they want to commit to continued long-range planning efforts, and when they want to specific deliverables completed.

Richmond will need to identify feasible objectives for its long-range planning efforts.

Richmond will need to identify what time frame they are planning for:
- For the next 5 years?
- For the next 8 years?
- For the next 10 years?
- For the next 15 years?
- For the next 25+ years?

Richmond will need to form working groups to address issues of interest: education, fire/EMS services, aging in place, community branding/marketing, growth, etc.

They will also want to identify exactly what time frame they are planning for:
- For the next 5 years?
- For the next 8 years?
- For the next 10 years?
- For the next 15 years?
- For the next 25+ years?

**DECISIONS:** Each option precipitates key decisions to be addressed and contemplated by the community. These are decisions likely to have impacts on service costs, service needs, and population trends. Certain decisions are repeated, indicating that they perhaps offer cross-cutting, multi-lateral resolutions to identified challenges. (Read down)

Richmond will need to identify which products or tools they hope to gain from their long-range planning efforts.

Richmond will need to decide how to most effectively use these advisory committees, and they will want to decide which challenges they most want to address with advisory committees.

Richmond will need to decide how much time they want to commit to continued long-range planning efforts, and when they want to specific deliverables completed.

Richmond will need to identify feasible objectives for its long-range planning efforts.

Richmond will need to form working groups to address issues of interest: education, fire/EMS services, aging in place, community branding/marketing, growth, etc.

They will also want to identify exactly what time frame they are planning for:
- For the next 5 years?
- For the next 8 years?
- For the next 10 years?
- For the next 15 years?
- For the next 25+ years?

**The community will need to collectively agree that there is no need for policy modification or continued dialogue and planning.**

**The community will need to agree to accept changes as they come and to take little or no action to address impacts or consequences.**

**The community will need to agree to accept changes as they come and to take little or no action to address impacts or consequences.**