



SPECIAL TOPICS

Overview

This booklet was prepared as part of the process of formulating a Master Plan for Oak Bluffs. For the purposes of the Master Plan, this booklet includes:

- Southern Tier
- Inter-Municipal Dynamics
- Island Capacity / Community Capacity
- Implementation (Funding / Revenue, Staffing)

Southern Tier



Island Capacity



Overview

This “briefing booklet” has been prepared as part of the process of preparing an update to the 1998 Master Plan for Oak Bluffs.

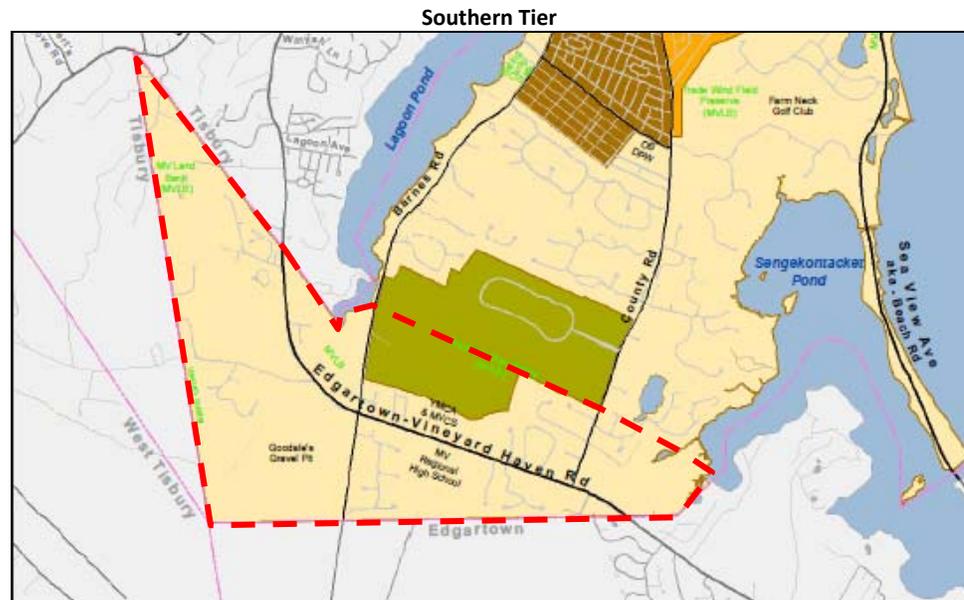
This booklet is intended to provide some context about this topic for the members of the Master Plan Update Committee and others.

Reference Materials

1. Martha's Vineyard Island Plan (MVC, 2010)
2. Oak Bluffs Master Plan (1998)
3. High School Corridor Land Use and Regulations Report (MVC, 2017)

Southern Tier

The “southern tier” of Oak Bluffs refers to the area of land located along the Edgartown – Vineyard Haven Road in the southern part of Oak Bluffs. Located away from the Downtown area, this area has evolved into a mixture of public and non-profit services, residential and commercial land uses, as well as significant amounts of undeveloped land.



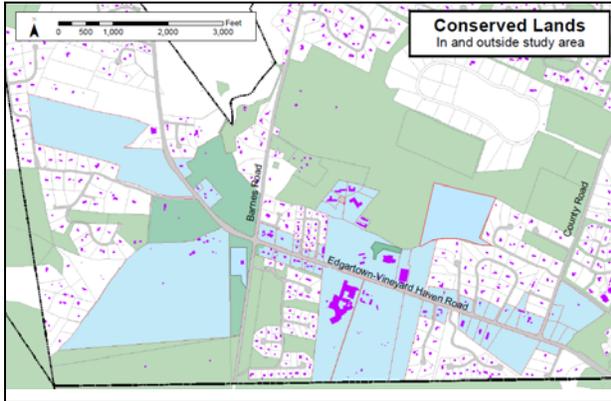
In 2017, the Oak Bluffs Planning Board engaged the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) to:

- assess the potential demand for development in this corridor, and
- assess the implications for zoning, public infrastructure and services.

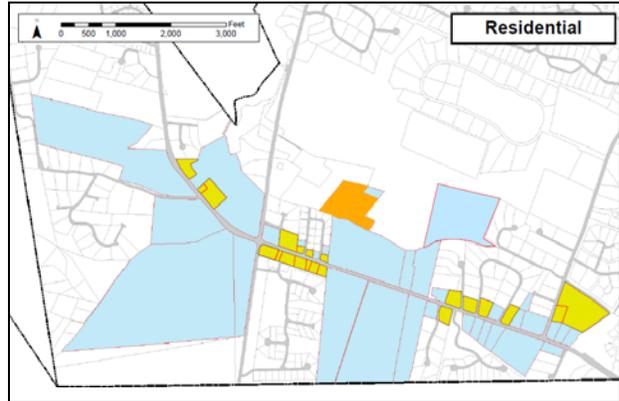
MVC prepared an inventory of maps and regulations for the area and recommended evaluation of at least three issues:

- Quantify the existing ***water and sewer usage*** and the potential demand for these public services,
- Examine improving ***safe circulation of pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and motorists*** in acknowledgement that this is a primary transportation corridor for Martha's Vineyard,
- Evaluate the ***fiscal implications*** of expanded or improved public infrastructure and effects on the study area's tax base.

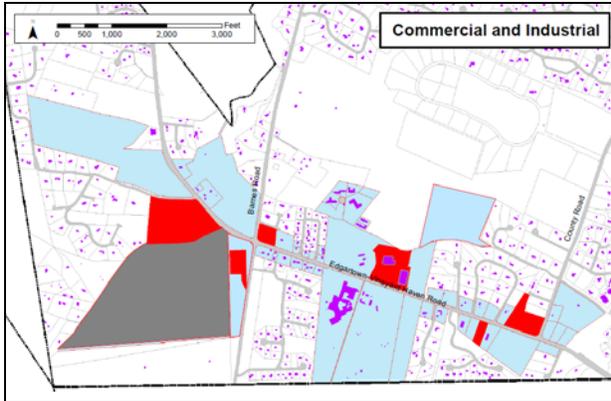
Conserved Lands



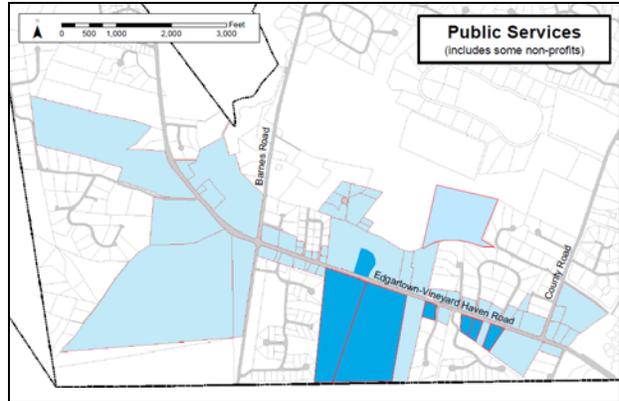
Residential Uses



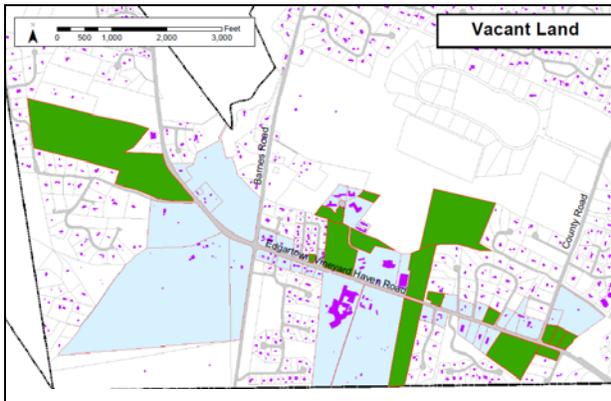
Commercial / Industrial Uses



Public Services



Vacant Land



Future Land Uses

Most of this area is zoned R-3 or R-4 Residential at the present time.

Is that our desired plan for this area?

What should the Master Plan approach be with regard to the "southern tier"?

Inter-Municipal / Regional Dynamics

Possible Regional Burdens

In the past, there have been discussions that Oak Bluffs bears a higher burden than some other Island communities with regard to the following facilities / services that serve the entire Island:

Facilities / Services	Possible Higher Burdens	Possible Benefits
Martha's Vineyard Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response (police, fire) • Loss of taxable land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity for services
Steamship Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic congestion • Emergency response (police, fire, medical) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Embarkation fee
Other Ferries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harbor / dock space • Emergency response (police, fire, medical) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism
Martha's Vineyard Regional High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response (police, fire, medical) • Dedication of sewer capacity • Loss of taxable land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity for events, activities, services
YMCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response (police, fire, medical) • Dedication of sewer capacity • Loss of taxable land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity for events, activities, services
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response (police, fire, medical) • Loss of taxable land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity for events, activities, services

What should the Master Plan approach be with regard to possible regional burdens?

Are there any other issues associated with possible regional burdens that should be considered in the Master Plan?

Possible Inter-Municipal / Regional Opportunities

There are six municipalities on Martha's Vineyard occupying a total of about 87 square miles of land area. The island is only reachable by sea or by air so all the communities are tied together by this geographic fact.

Most services on the Island are provided by the individual Island municipalities to the residents and properties within their borders including (but not limited to) the following:

- Public safety (police, fire, emergency medical, etc.)
- Public works (road maintenance, drainage, etc.)
- Elementary school education
- Library
- Park and recreation
- General government

There is some level of inter-municipal cooperation including (but not limited to) the following facilities / services:

- Secondary school education (Martha's Vineyard Regional High School)
- Mutual aid fire response
- Public safety communications / dispatch
- Water supply interconnections
- Affordable housing

Some services are provided by state and regional organizations such as:

- State Police
- Dukes County (courthouse, etc.)
- Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority
- Martha's Vineyard Commission
- Martha's Vineyard Land Bank
- Many other volunteer and non-profit agencies serving the Island as a whole.

Possible Opportunities

Opportunities for enhanced inter-municipal or regional cooperation might include such things as:

- Trash collection
- Recycling
- Trash disposal
- Water supply
- Sewage disposal
- Internet capacity
- Beach management
- Public safety services (police, fire, medical)
- Harbor management
- Emergency communication
- Affordable housing

What should the Master Plan approach be with regard to possible inter-municipal / regional opportunities?

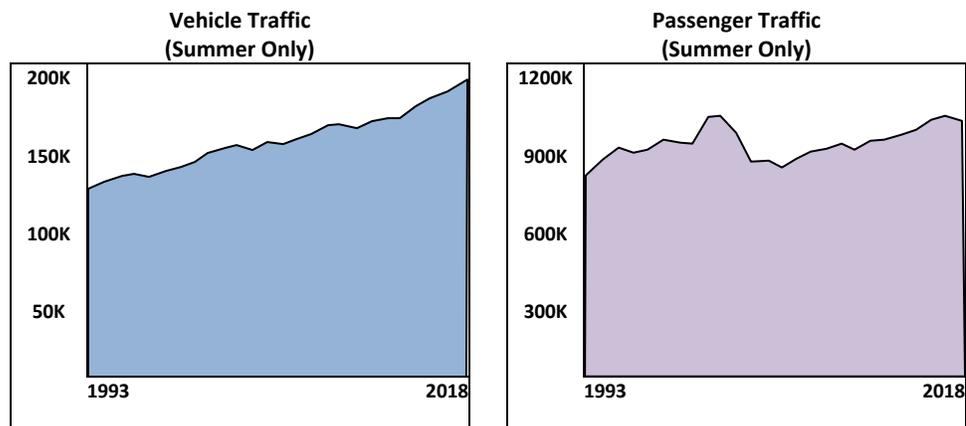
Are there any other issues associated with possible inter-municipal / regional opportunities that should be considered in the Master Plan?

Island Capacity / Community Capacity

Island Capacity

For many years, there has been discussion about the capacity of Martha's Vineyard to accommodate all those who want to come here.

This discussion may continue due to the reporting that 2018 broke the record for the number of cars and trucks transported to the Vineyard. The following charts illustrate the growth in vehicle traffic and passenger traffic in the "summer months" (June 1 to August 31) since 1993 according to data recently shared with local media outlets by the Steamship Authority (SSA). This data does not include other ferry services (Island Queen, Hy-Line, Seastreak, etc.).



For the summer of 2018 " (June 1 to August 31), the SSA carried:

- 157,114 cars (an average of about 870 trips/day each way),
- 38,792 trucks (about 220 trucks/day each way), and
- 1,034,008 passengers.

According to the SSA, the increase in vehicle traffic resulted from capacity they added by scheduling the freight ferry *Sankaty* for an additional 15 trips per week due to "demand." The SSA reported they did not have places to berth more vessels beyond this.

According to the *Vineyard Gazette* (September 13, 2018):

Historically, growth in ferry traffic and capacity on ferries has been a sticking point for Islanders. In 1997, voters in every Island town passed a nonbinding referendum to restrict cars carried on SSA ferries to 1995 levels. Numbers released this week show that 368,539 cars were carried that year [for the entire calendar year, not just the three summer months].

In 2003 the topic surfaced again when the boat line began planning for the replacement of [a] ferry ... with ... a vessel with more carrying capacity (76 cars compared to 50 ...). At the time, [SSA] assured residents that the authority would remove other vessels from the route to keep carrying capacity the same.

What eventually happened was different. [SSA] said this week that every year from 2010 to 2017 the SSA added more trips on the Vineyard route ... [1,200 additional trips] to accommodate demand.

Community Capacity

During the summer months, half of the 22 scheduled trips between Woods Hole and Martha's Vineyard are to Oak Bluffs (there are 22 return trips also). Since some trips can be diverted to Vineyard Haven due to weather, the actual number of trips to Oak Bluffs is less than half.

However, assuming that Oak Bluffs gets half the vehicles and passengers, this could mean an influx of:

- over 78,000 **vehicles** arriving and departing in the summer months (an average of about 870 vehicles per day with about 40 vehicles per arriving and departing ferry, and
- almost 520,000 passengers arriving and departing in the summer months (an average of about 260 passengers per arriving and departing ferry).

This level of activity supports the local economy and is part of what makes Oak Bluffs unique but it also can have impacts on the community.

What should the Master Plan approach be with regard to Island capacity / community capacity?

Are there any other issues associated with Island capacity / community capacity that should be considered in the Master Plan?

Implementation (Funding, Revenue, Staffing)

Implementation of the master Plan is a key part of the overall process. Planning is most effective if:

- policies are implemented,
- action steps are taken, and
- results are achieved.

Implementation could include the following:

Regulation Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Board (and/or other entities) could adopt regulations to accomplish important strategies
Municipal Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Board (and/or other entities) could seek to accomplish strategies when approving local activities
Operating Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town and Town Meeting could dedicate funds in the operating budget to accomplishing Plan strategies
Capital Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town and Town Meeting could dedicate funds in the capital budget to Plan strategies
Revenue Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town could seek additional revenue sources to accomplish Plan strategies (embarkation fee, etc.)
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town and Town Meeting could provide for staffing to accomplish Plan strategies (Town Planner, etc.)
Implementation Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Board and/or Board of Selectmen could oversee and guide Plan implementation

What should the Master Plan approach be with regard to Plan implementation?

Are there any other issues associated with Plan implementation that should be considered in the Master Plan?