

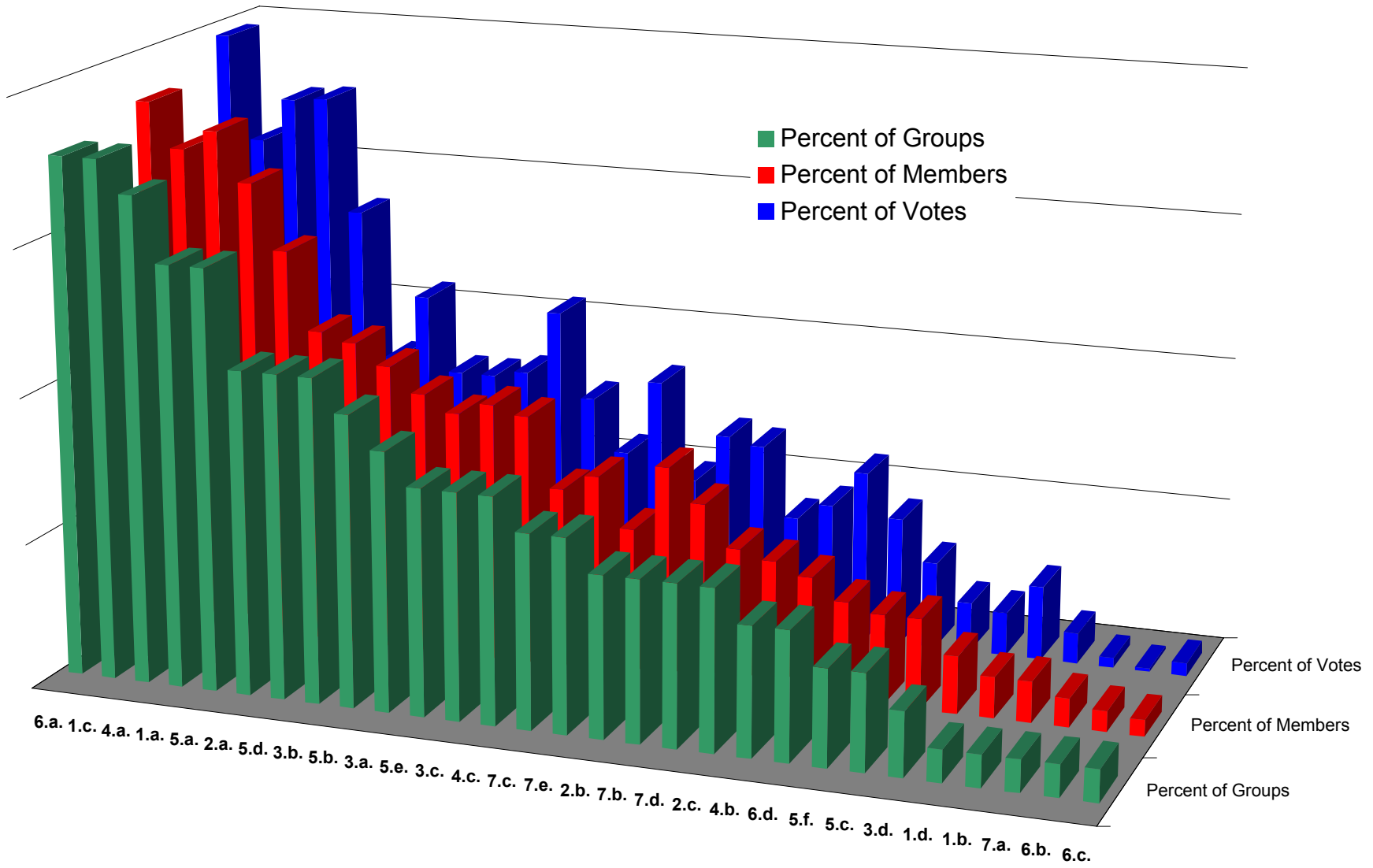
Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Analysis

Number of Groups	18
Number of Members	141
Number of Votes	112
Percent of Group Votes	600%

No.	Workshop - Group	Number of Groups	Groups Rank	Percent of Groups	Member-Weighted Score	Member-Weighted Rank	Percent of Members	Vote-Weighted Score	Vote-Weighted Rank	Percent of Votes
6.a.	Plan proactively for growth.	16	1	89%	130	1	92%	590	1	98%
1.c.	Build a new high school.	16	1	89%	119	3	84%	480	4	80%
4.a.	Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	15	3	83%	124	2	88%	526	3	88%
1.a.	Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all	13	4	72%	112	4	79%	529	2	88%
5.a.	Improve transportation options.	13	4	72%	96	5	68%	410	5	68%
2.a.	Improve communications with citizens.	10	6	56%	77	6	55%	253	9	42%
5.d.	Build a senior/community center in Natick Center.	10	6	56%	75	7	53%	323	6	54%
3.b.	Reduce impacts on the environment.	10	6	56%	70	8	50%	245	12	41%
5.b.	Improve traffic flows on major routes.	9	9	50%	64	9	45%	245	11	41%
3.a.	Increase open space and accessibility.	8	10	44%	60	12	43%	251	10	42%
5.e.	Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.	7	11	39%	63	10	45%	319	7	53%
3.c.	Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.	7	11	39%	61	11	43%	229	13	38%
4.c.	Increase economic development in Natick Center.	7	11	39%	44	15	31%	175	17	29%
7.c.	Increase the Town's operational efficiency	6	14	33%	48	14	34%	254	8	42%
7.e.	Work to change State tax policies and formulas	6	14	33%	36	17	26%	152	18	25%
2.b.	Increase citizen participation in Town government.	5	16	28%	52	13	37%	203	14	34%
7.b.	Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.	5	16	28%	44	15	31%	196	15	33%
7.d.	Expand the Town's tax base	5	16	28%	34	18	24%	122	21	20%
2.c.	Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.	5	16	28%	32	19	23%	140	19	23%
4.b.	Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.	4	20	22%	29	20	21%	178	16	30%
6.d.	Investigate opportunities for regionalization	4	20	22%	24	21	17%	133	20	22%
5.f.	Improve the management of Town capital investments.	3	22	17%	22	22	16%	90	22	15%
5.c.	Improve pedestrian access.	3	22	17%	22	22	16%	51	24	9%
3.d.	Increase access to health care and social services.	2	24	11%	14	24	10%	45	25	8%
1.d.	Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate	1	25	6%	10	25	7%	77	23	13%
1.b.	Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.	1	25	6%	10	25	7%	32	26	5%
7.a.	Improve the budget process.	1	25	6%	7	27	5%	10	28	2%
6.b.	Educate the public about growth issues.	1	25	6%	5	28	4%	3	29	1%
6.c.	Encourage population diversity.	1	25	6%	4	29	3%	13	27	2%

Cells highlighted in color represent:

- Green: Top ten number of groups selecting the item
- Pink: Top ten weighted by number of members of the groups selecting the item.
- Blue: Top ten weighted by votes for a group's plan.
- Yellow: Remaining items with a score of 25% or higher under any of the three analysis methods.



Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Summary

Workshop - Group	1-Or	1-Gr	1-Re	1-BI	1-Pu	1-Ye	1-Pi	2-BI	2-Re	2-Pu	3-Re	3-BI	4-Re	4-BI	5-Re	5-BI	5-Pu	6-Pu	Number of Groups	Member-Weighted Score	Vote-Weighted Score
																			18		
Number of Groups																			18		
Number of Members	6	7	7	4	5	5	5	8	10	9	10	10	8	5	8	10	9	15		141	
Number of Votes	2	3	6	4	8	1	6	6	8	11	3	10	5	3	3	8	10	15			112
Percent of Group Votes	7%	10%	20%	13%	27%	3%	20%	24%	32%	44%	23%	77%	63%	38%	14%	38%	48%	100%			600%
Strategic Options																					
5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options																					
5.a.	Improve transportation options.	Sht.		Sht.		Sht.	Med.	Sht.	Med.	Sht.			Med.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Med.	Sht.	13	96	410
5.b.	Improve traffic flows on major routes.	Sht.	Med.		Sht.	Sht.		Sht.	Med.		Sht.	Sht.	Med.						9	64	245
5.c.	Improve pedestrian access.		Med.				Sht.									Med.			3	22	51
5.d.	Build a senior/community center in Natick Center.	Med.			Sht.		Sht.				Med.	Med.	Sht.	Sht.	Med.	Med.	Med.		10	75	323
5.e.	Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park						Med.		Sht.			Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Med.			Sht.	7	63	319
5.f.	Improve the management of Town capital investments.		Med.				Med.					Sht.							3	22	90
6. Planning for Change and Managing Growth																					
6.a.	Plan proactively for growth.		Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.		Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	16	130	590
6.b.	Educate the public about growth issues.						Med.												1	5	3
6.c.	Encourage population diversity.				Sht.														1	4	13
6.d.	Investigate opportunities for regionalization	Sht.				Sht.							Sht.	Sht.					4	24	133
7. Town Financing Strategies																					
7.a.	Improve the budget process.		Sht.																1	7	10
7.b.	Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.						Sht.		Sht.	Sht.	Sht.	Sht.							5	44	196
7.c.	Increase the Town's operational efficiency		Med.				Sht.	Sht.					Sht.	Sht.				Sht.	6	48	254
7.d.	Expand the Town's tax base	Sht.			Sht.	Sht.				Sht.			Med.	Sht.					5	34	122
7.e.	Work to change State tax policies and formulas	Sht.		Sht.	Sht.	Sht.								Sht.			Sht.		6	36	152

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Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 1

Workshop - Group	1-Orange	1-Green	1-Red	1-Blue	1-Purple	1-Yellow	1-Pink	Member- Number of Groups	Member- Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score
Number of Groups								7		
Number of Members	6	7	7	4	5	5	5		39	
Number of Votes	2	3	6	4	8	1	6			30
Percent of Group Votes	7%	10%	20%	13%	27%	3%	20%			100%
Strategic Options										
1. Continuous Improvement of Public Education										
1.a. Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all levels.		Short	Short	Short				3	18	43
1.b. Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.										
1.c. Build a new high school.	Medium	Medium (1)		Short	Short (1)	Short	Medium	6	32	80
1.d. Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate										
2. Increasing Civic Engagement and Leadership										
2.a. Improve communications with citizens.		Short	Short (1)	Short		Short		4	23	47
2.b. Increase citizen participation in Town		Short						1	7	10
2.c. Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.	Short				Short		Short	3	16	53
3. Improving Natick's Environment, Health and Safety										
3.a. Increase open space and accessibility.	Medium (1)		Short				Short (1)	3	18	47
3.b. Reduce impacts on the environment.	Short	Short	Short	Short		Short		5	29	53
3.c. Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.					Medium	Short		2	10	30
3.d. Increase access to health care and social services.				Short (1)				1	4	13
4. Enlivening Natick Center										
4.a. Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	Short (2)		short	Short		Short	Short	5	27	63
4.b. Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.							Medium (2)	1	5	20
4.c. Increase economic development in Natick			Short	Short (2)	Short (2)	Short	Medium (2)	5	26	83

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Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 1

Workshop - Group	1-Orange	1-Green	1-Red	1-Blue	1-Purple	1-Yellow	1-Pink	Member- Number of Groups	Member- Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score
Number of Groups								7		
Number of Members	6	7	7	4	5	5	5		39	
Number of Votes	2	3	6	4	8	1	6			30
Percent of Group Votes	7%	10%	20%	13%	27%	3%	20%			100%

Strategic Options

5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options

5.a. Improve transportation options.	Short (3)		Short (2)		Short (3)	Medium	Short	5	28	77
5.b. Improve traffic flows on major routes.	Short	Medium (2)		Short	Short (4)		Short	5	27	77
5.c. Improve pedestrian access.		Medium (2)				Short		2	12	13
5.d. Build a senior/community center in Natick	Medium (4)			Short (3)		Short		3	15	23
5.e. Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.							Medium	1	5	20
5.f. Improve the management of Town capital investments.		Medium (3)				Medium		2	12	13

6. Planning for Change and Managing Growth

6.a. Plan proactively for growth.		Short	Short	Short	Short		Short	5	28	90
6.b. Educate the public about growth issues.						Medium		1	5	3
6.c. Encourage population diversity.				Short				1	4	13
6.d. Investigate opportunities for regionalization	Short				Short			2	11	33

7. Town Financing Strategies

7.a. Improve the budget process.		Short						1	7	10
7.b. Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.							Short	1	5	20
7.c. Increase the Town's operational efficiency		Medium (2)					Short	2	12	30
7.d. Expand the Town's tax base	Short (5)				Short	Short		3	16	37
7.e. Work to change State tax policies and formulas	Short		Short	Short	Short			4	22	67

Orange Group Notes

- (1) At least maintain, or increase open space and accessibility.
- (2) Explore multiple funding options.
- (3) Include regionalization; plan in Short-term; implement in Medium-term.
- (4) Split between Short-term and Medium-term.
- (5) Expand the Town's tax base, including economic development of Natick Center.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 1

Workshop - Group	1-Orange	1-Green	1-Red	1-Blue	1-Purple	1-Yellow	1-Pink	Member- Number of Groups	Member- Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score
Number of Groups								7		
Number of Members	6	7	7	4	5	5	5		39	
Number of Votes	2	3	6	4	8	1	6			30
Percent of Group Votes	7%	10%	20%	13%	27%	3%	20%			100%

Strategic Options

Orange Group Parking Lot Notes

Difficult to prioritize; all are important; some are quick hits/low cost.
A number of options are intertwined

Green Group Notes

- (1) State funding limitations; partially underway?; applied for list; plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (2) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (3) Plan in Short-term; build in Long-term.

Green Group Parking Lot Notes

"We don't know about our Town!"
"I'm already in GIC; it's great."
2.a., 2.c. and 3.d.: Include / engage institutions, such as MetroWest and Walnut Hill School.
Educational excellence does not equal MCAS! We are losing gifted children.
Full-day Kindergarten should be free to all; equal access is essential to public education.
Demographics (aging population) will shift these priorities.

Green Group Write-In Issues

- 3.d. Promote MetroWest Hospital
- 3.d. Strengthen local health care availability
- 1.e. Involve Walnut Hill School
- 1.f. Build a new middle school; not a high school.
Mass Pike exit extended to Mall.

Red Group Notes

- (1) Include 1.b. school communications and 6.b. public education about growth issues.
- (2) Include 5.b. traffic flow improvements.

Red Group Write-In Issue

- 7.f. Increase revenue sources.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 1

Workshop - Group	1-Orange	1-Green	1-Red	1-Blue	1-Purple	1-Yellow	1-Pink	Member- Number of Groups	Member- Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score
Number of Groups								7		
Number of Members	6	7	7	4	5	5	5		39	
Number of Votes	2	3	6	4	8	1	6			30
Percent of Group Votes	7%	10%	20%	13%	27%	3%	20%			100%

Strategic Options

Blue Group Notes

- 3.d. Need more activities under this option; see Write-In Issues.
- 4.c. Such as restaurants; useful stores (not The Gap); places / stores that make you feel good to be there.
- 5.d. For whole community; not only Seniors.

Blue Group Write-In Issues

- 3.d. Develop a clearinghouse of information (or centralized place to learn about) services for youth, children and families.
- 6.a. Re-examine zoning to preserve green space; i.e., not all greenery, trees, etc., are removed; not every square foot is built upon.

Purple Group Notes

- (1) Group recommends option 3, using green building standards and including facilities for dual use; in Medium-term, the Group recommends option 4.
- (2) Group recommends options 1 (market Natick Center) and 2 (recruit businesses) for short term implementation, and option 3 (higher education institution) for Long-term implementation.
- (3) Group especially likes option 9 (MBTA garage at West Natick Station); Group recommends option 8 (make Natick Center Station accessible) for Long-term implementation.
- (4) Group especially likes option 8 (coordinate road work to ensure an open route).

Purple Group Parking Lot Note

- 3.c. Optimize public safety levels.

Yellow Group Write-In Issue

Split tax rate between business and homeowners, ASAP.

Pink Group Notes

- (1) Ongoing process; evolving.
- (2) Ongoing process.

Pink Group Write-In Issues

- Encourage affordable housing.
- 5 Develop transportation improvement plan.
- 5.e. Purchase CSX rail corridor for rail trail.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 2

	2-Blue	2-Red	2-Purple	Number of Groups	Member-Weighted Score	Vote-Weighted Score
Workshop - Group				3		
Number of Members	8	10	9		27	
Number of Votes	6	8	11			25
Percent of Group Votes	24%	32%	44%			100%
Strategic Options						
1. Continuous Improvement of Public Education						
1.a. Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all levels.	Short	Short	Short	3	27	100
1.b. Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.		Short		1	10	32
1.c. Build a new high school.	Medium (1)	Medium	Short (1)	3	27	100
1.d. Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate						
2. Increasing Civic Engagement and Leadership						
2.a. Improve communications with citizens.	Short	Short	Short	3	27	100
2.b. Increase citizen participation in Town government.		Short		1	27	32
2.c. Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.	Medium					
3. Improving Natick's Environment, Health and Safety						
3.a. Increase open space and accessibility.		Short	Short	2	27	76
3.b. Reduce impacts on the environment.	Short		Short	2	27	68
3.c. Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.	Medium					
3.d. Increase access to health care and social services.		Medium		1	27	32
4. Enlivening Natick Center						
4.a. Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	Short (2)	Short	Short (1)	3	27	100
4.b. Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.			Medium			
4.c. Increase economic development in Natick Center.						
5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options						
5.a. Improve transportation options.	Medium (1)	Short (1)		2	27	56
5.b. Improve traffic flows on major routes.	Medium (1)		Short (1)	2	27	68
5.c. Improve pedestrian access.						
5.d. Build a senior/community center in Natick Center.			Long (2)	1	27	44
5.e. Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.		Short				
5.f. Improve the management of Town capital investments.						
6. Planning for Change and Managing Growth						
6.a. Plan proactively for growth.	Short	Short	Short	3	27	100
6.b. Educate the public about growth issues.						
6.c. Encourage population diversity.			(3)			
6.d. Investigate opportunities for regionalization						
7. Town Financing Strategies						
7.a. Improve the budget process.						
7.b. Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.		Short (2)	Short	2	27	76
7.c. Increase the Town's operational efficiency	Short (3)			1	27	24
7.d. Expand the Town's tax base						
7.e. Work to change State tax policies and formulas						

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 2

Blue Group Notes

- (1) Split between Short-term and Medium-term.
- (2) Parking problem and alternative transportation. Not necessarily bldg. downtown lot.
- (3) ...and explore, expand opportunities for regionalization of service; see 6d.

Blue Group Write-in Issues

- 1.e. Increase ease of use and access to school facilities for community activities.

Red Group Notes

- (1) Include walking!
- (2) More strategic

Purple Group Notes

- (1) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (2) Delete "senior."
- (3) Lots of discussion.

Purple Group Parking Lot Notes

- 7.a. Concerns about financial situation & choice to employ stabilization funds (learned about situation from Friday night presentation).
- 5.d. Clarify "Senior" center / "community" center combined.
Lack of affordable housing: improve in and of itself, not just to fight off 40B.

Session Feedback

What I like about the ___ Group's priorities is...

Blue: That 7c is included: increase efficiencies now; concrete

Blue: The whole process: a nice mix of fresh faces and "veterans."

Red: The interdependencies and combinations recognized

Red: Emphasis on downtown connection: Natick does not equal Mall; interconnectedness

Red: Recognizing pre-steps to the High School

Red: Identified health care as a priority

Purple: Emphasis on communication: pivotal!

Purple: Clarification on senior/community center; focus on connections

Purple: Clarification on "affordable" housing to meet citizen needs.

How to...

Think about high school and community center as a single community resource.

Make access and opportunities in schools more open to Town.

Bring organizations together; see the space as organic; cross generational lines.

Ensure green building approaches are incorporated in any / all construction.

Access wellness grant money (\$29.5 million) through MetroWest Health Foundation.

Increase citizen awareness, publicize collaboration and regional alliances (watch out for loaded "regionalization").

Expand the discussion to include even more in community, without ugly / factional choices.

Ensure new School Superintendent and Town Administrator incorporate Natick 360 input and ideas.

Milk the metaphorical cow of our existing arts community; make this a deliberate choice.

Leverage tax bill mailings for improved "Did you know...?" communications.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 3

	3-Red	3-Blue	Number of Groups	Member-Weighted Score	Vote-Weighted Score
Workshop - Group Number of Groups			2		
Number of Members	10	10		20	
Number of Votes	3	10			13
Percent of Group Votes	23%	77%			100%
Strategic Options					
1. Continuous Improvement of Public Education					
1.a. Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all levels.	Short	Short	2	20	100
1.b. Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.					
1.c. Build a new high school.	Medium (1)	Medium (1)	2	20	100
1.d. Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate		Short	1	10	77
2. Increasing Civic Engagement and Leadership					
2.a. Improve communications with citizens.					
2.b. Increase citizen participation in Town	Short		1	10	23
2.c. Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.					
3. Improving Natick's Environment, Health and Safety					
3.a. Increase open space and accessibility.		Short (2)	1	10	77
3.b. Reduce impacts on the environment.					
3.c. Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.	Medium (2)		1	10	23
3.d. Increase access to health care and social services.					
4. Enlivening Natick Center					
4.a. Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	Short	Short (3)	2	20	100
4.b. Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.		Medium	1	10	77
4.c. Increase economic development in Natick Center.		Medium	1	10	77
5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options					
5.a. Improve transportation options.		Medium	1	10	77
5.b. Improve traffic flows on major routes.	Short (3)	Medium	2	20	100
5.c. Improve pedestrian access.					
5.d. Build a senior/community center in Natick	Medium	Medium (4)	2	20	100
5.e. Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.		Short	1	10	77
5.f. Improve the management of Town capital investments.		Short	1	10	77
6. Planning for Change and Managing Growth					
6.a. Plan proactively for growth.	Short	Short	2	20	100
6.b. Educate the public about growth issues.					
6.c. Encourage population diversity.					
6.d. Investigate opportunities for regionalization					
7. Town Financing Strategies					
7.a. Improve the budget process.					
7.b. Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.	Short	Short	2	20	100
7.c. Increase the Town's operational efficiency					
7.d. Expand the Town's tax base	Short		1	10	23
7.e. Work to change State tax policies and formulas					

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 3

Red Group Notes

- (1) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (2) Plan in Short-term; continue as an ongoing effort.
- (3) Including the Rail Trail to help traffic flows.

Red Group Write-In Issue

- 3.e. Expand health and social services after needs assessment.

Red Group Parking Lot Notes

- Choose separately items that cost money, and items that take time, and set priorities for each.
- How to and when to make sure public safety planning meets the growth?

Blue Group Notes

- (1) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (2) Start immediately, and continue as an ongoing effort.
- (3) Lots of discussion!
- (4) Combination? Need *vs.* want.

Blue Group Write-In Issues

- 5.d. Ensure that 5.d. (Senior/Community Center) is a joint/combined Senior plus Community Center.
Consider a High School (1.c.) plus Community and Senior Center (5.d.) combined!
- 1.a. "Outcomes" in 1.a. is not just test scores.
- 1.d. (Outside funding for schools) Agree, but not necessarily by hiring an other staff person.
- 3.a. (Increase open space...) Work to incorporate common sense and development while doing this. Balance!

Additional Input

Participant Martin Kessel provided a one-page memorandum to the Open Space Advisory Committee with comments regarding open space options not in the Strategic Options document. Mr. Kessel's complete comments are attached as an Appendix to this document. In summary, Mr. Kessel proposes several issues as "write-in issues:"

Open space appears to be de-emphasized from the "Visions and Values Statements."

Encouraging Conservation Restrictions and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (not necessarily costing the Town significant money, since the landowners receive benefits).

Preserving unprotected land already owned by the Town, as well as by State and Federal governments (Note: preserving the Community Farm was mentioned frequently at the 2/15/07 public meeting).

Zoning and land use regulation, such as cluster zoning.

Developing walking trails (this generated a lot of interest at the 2/15/07 public meeting).

Developing playing fields.

Increasing public awareness of open space.

Session Feedback

What I like about the ___ Group's priorities is...

- Red: Re: 2.b. Increased participation leads to reduced contentiousness.
- Red: The greater focus on public safety.
- Red: Overlap!
- Blue: Agreement: educational outcomes is not simply test scores.
- Blue: Focus on open space.
- Blue: I like the "green" subtext.

How to...

- Accomplish 1.d. (outside funding for education) without adding staff?
- Think about integrating / combining Senior Center and Community Center? High School too?
- Find other funding sources of High School and other facilities? Corporate partnerships?
- Find space for energy audits and increased "green" activities?
- Separate tactics that take time and tactics that take money.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 4

				Member- Number Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score	
Workshop - Group	4-Red	4-Blue	Number of Groups			
Number of Groups			2			
Number of Members	8	5		13		
Number of Votes	5	3			8	
Percent of Group Votes	63%	38%			100%	
Strategic Options						
1. Continuous Improvement of Public Education						
1.a.	Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all levels.	Short	Short (1)	2	13	100
1.b.	Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.					
1.c.	Build a new high school.	Medium	Medium (2)	2	13	100
1.d.	Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate					
2. Increasing Civic Engagement and Leadership						
2.a.	Improve communications with citizens.					
2.b.	Increase citizen participation in Town government.					
2.c.	Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.	Short		1	8	63
3. Improving Natick's Environment, Health and Safety						
3.a.	Increase open space and accessibility.		Short (1)	1	5	38
3.b.	Reduce impacts on the environment.		Short (1)	1	5	38
3.c.	Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.					
3.d.	Increase access to health care and social services.					
4. Enlivening Natick Center						
4.a.	Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	Short		1	8	63
4.b.	Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.		Short	1	5	38
4.c.	Increase economic development in Natick Center.					
5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options						
5.a.	Improve transportation options.	Short	Short (1)	2	13	100
5.b.	Improve traffic flows on major routes.					
5.c.	Improve pedestrian access.					
5.d.	Build a senior/community center in Natick Center.	Short	Short (2)	2	13	100
5.e.	Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.		Short (2)	1	5	38
5.f.	Improve the management of Town capital investments.					
6. Planning for Change and Managing Growth						
6.a.	Plan proactively for growth.	Short	Short (1)	2	13	100
6.b.	Educate the public about growth issues.					
6.c.	Encourage population diversity.					
6.d.	Investigate opportunities for regionalization	Short	Short (3)	2	13	100
7. Town Financing Strategies						
7.a.	Improve the budget process.					
7.b.	Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.					
7.c.	Increase the Town's operational efficiency	Short	Short (1)	2	13	100
7.d.	Expand the Town's tax base	Medium		1	8	63
7.e.	Work to change State tax policies and formulas		Short (1)	1	5	38

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 4

Blue Group Notes

- (1) Start immediately, and continue as an ongoing effort.
- (2) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (3) 6.d. (Regionalization) Use transportation as a pilot test; start immediately, and continue as an ongoing effort.

Blue Group Write-In Issues

- 4.a. Loosen parking requirements downtown.
- 3.b. Retain Environmental Compliance Officer
Consider coordinated/integrated High School (3.c.), Senior/Community Center (5.d.); see Globe article last Thursday; this is linked to improving transportation options.

Session Feedback

What I like about the ___ Group's priorities is...

Focus on regionalization as a way to "get more for less," leverage.

How to...

Encourage development (jobs, taxes, business engagement) to buoy our tax base.

Watch carefully the progress on regional transportation (case study).

How to avoid jeopardizing/delaying High School efforts (State-mandated process) by overlaying Senior/Community Center (and vice-versa).

Increase awareness of what's happening; e-newsletter, etc. (reference: web site is in place); could be more user-friendly, too.

Be more customer-friendly at Town Hall; information flow.

Increase civic involvement: add information to tax bills; quarterly newsletter on colored paper.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 5

	5-Red	5-Blue	5-Purple	Number of Groups	Member-Weighted Score	Vote-Weighted Score
Workshop - Group				3		
Number of Groups						
Number of Members	8	10	9		27	
Number of Votes	3	8	10			21
Percent of Group Votes	14%	38%	48%			100%
Strategic Options						
1. Continuous Improvement of Public Education						
1.a. Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all levels.		Short (1)	Short (1)	2	19	86
1.b. Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.						
1.c. Build a new high school.	Medium (1)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	3	27	100
1.d. Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate						
2. Increasing Civic Engagement and Leadership						
2.a. Improve communications with citizens.	Short	Short	Short	3	27	100
2.b. Increase citizen participation in Town government.		Short		1	27	38
2.c. Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.						
3. Improving Natick's Environment, Health and Safety						
3.a. Increase open space and accessibility.	Short (Opt. 1) Medium (Opt. 3) Note (2)			1	27	14
3.b. Reduce impacts on the environment.		Short (1)	Short (3)	2	27	86
3.c. Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.	Short	Short		2	27	52
3.d. Increase access to health care and social services.						
4. Enlivening Natick Center						
4.a. Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	Short (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	3	27	100
4.b. Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.						
4.c. Increase economic development in Natick Center.	Short			1	27	14
5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options						
5.a. Improve transportation options.	Short	Medium (2)	Short (3)	3	27	100
5.b. Improve traffic flows on major routes.						
5.c. Improve pedestrian access.		Medium		1	27	38
5.d. Build a senior/community center in Natick Center.	Medium (4)	Medium (2)	Medium (2)	3	27	100
5.e. Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.	Short (5)	Medium (2)		2	27	52
5.f. Improve the management of Town capital investments.						
6. Planning for Change and Managing Growth						
6.a. Plan proactively for growth.	Short	Short	Short (3)	3	27	100
6.b. Educate the public about growth issues.						
6.c. Encourage population diversity.						
6.d. Investigate opportunities for regionalization						
7. Town Financing Strategies						
7.a. Improve the budget process.						
7.b. Improve the capital planning and budgeting process.						
7.c. Increase the Town's operational efficiency						
7.d. Expand the Town's tax base						
7.e. Work to change State tax policies and formulas			Short (3)	1	27	48

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 5

Red Group Notes

- (1) Prefer Option 3 (school with green standards and dual use facilities; question timing of capital exclusion override vote in concert with Senior Center (see 5.d. and note 4); plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (2) Prefer Short-term implementation for Option 1 (purchase or secure land for open space...); prefer Medium-term implementation for Option 3 (Propose the Community Preservation Act...).
- (3) Prefer only Option 2 (private development of garage).
- (4) Question timing of capital exclusion override vote in concert with High School (see 1.c. and note 1); plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (5) Acquire land in Short-term; develop in Medium-term.

Red Group Write-In Issue

- 3.e. Increase welfare, health care and accommodations for senior citizens.

Blue Group Notes

- (1) Start immediately, and continue as an ongoing effort.
- (2) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.

Blue Group Parking Lot Notes

- 4.a. Parking log is a means to an end; 4.a. leads to 4 (lots to be resolved here).
- 5.a. Include a wide array of alternatives: bike, hike, walk,...
- 5.c. Highlight quick hits for pedestrian access points.
- 5.d. Good to see this near the Center.
- 5.d. Senior/community center: what linkages to Library?; intergenerational.

Purple Group Notes

- (1) Change "outcomes" to "opportunities;" start immediately and continue as an ongoing effort.
- (2) Plan in Short-term; build in Medium-term.
- (3) Start immediately, and continue as an ongoing effort.

Purple Group Write-In Issues

Include volunteers in disaster planning (Medical Reserve Corps).

Consider combining Senior/Community Center with new High School: one architect, one override, one builder; recognize State will not pay for Senior/Community Center.

10th priority: Allocate dollars for capital improvements commensurate with capital needs (gained four stars).

Green building regulations?

Other sources of revenues.

Session Feedback

What I like about the ___ Group's priorities is...

Red: Provides specific, Short- and Long-term direction.

Red: That High School is prioritized.

Blue: Managing proactively for growth.

Purple: Consensus of proactive planning for growth

Purple: Rewording of capital allocation item.

Purple: Language linking High School with Senior/Community Center (much agreement from participants).

Purple: Flexibility regarding write-in language.

How to...

Red: Fund the Rail Trail; in addition to High School and Senior/Community Center overrides

Red: Ensure High School teachers will be attracted and retained, if we haven't prioritized 1.a.

Red: Stagger these projects so we can afford them.

Blue: Find the funds & resources to increase our ability to plan for growth.

Blue: Pay for everything! Especially with such light prioritization of Sec. 7 (finances).

Blue: Find ways to influence State-level funding decisions, short-term.

Purple: How to accomplish planning for growth and maintain good corporation/business relationships.

Purple: Ensure we capture the "at an affordable price" provisions on Rail Trail and parking garage.

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 6

		6-Purple	Number of Groups	Member- Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score
	Workshop - Group		1		
	Number of Groups				
	Number of Members	15		15	
	Number of Votes	15			15
	Percent of Group Votes	100%			100%
Strategic Options					
1. Continuous Improvement of Public Education					
1.a.	Continue to improve educational outcomes for students of all abilities at all levels.	Short (1)	1	15	100
1.b.	Increase the communication and collaboration between the school district and the community.				
1.c.	Build a new high school.	Medium (2)	1	15	100
1.d.	Facilitate efforts to secure outside funding for educational enhancements where appropriate				
2. Increasing Civic Engagement and Leadership					
2.a.	Improve communications with citizens.				
2.b.	Increase citizen participation in Town government.	Short	1	15	100
2.c.	Integrate residents of new developments and Rte. 9 business community more fully into the Natick community.				
3. Improving Natick's Environment, Health and Safety					
3.a.	Increase open space and accessibility.				
3.b.	Reduce impacts on the environment.				
3.c.	Maintain public safety commensurate with population growth.	Short (1)	1	15	100
3.d.	Increase access to health care and social services.				
4. Enlivening Natick Center					
4.a.	Provide downtown parking for shoppers, visitors, commuters and employees.	Short (3)	1	15	100
4.b.	Increase diversity and vibrancy of people and activities downtown.				
4.c.	Increase economic development in Natick Center.				
5. Improving the Town's Infrastructure and Transportation Options					
5.a.	Improve transportation options.	Medium (4)	1	15	100
5.b.	Improve traffic flows on major routes.	Medium (1)	1	15	100
5.c.	Improve pedestrian access.				
5.d.	Build a senior/community center in Natick Center.	Medium (2)	1	15	100
5.e.	Build the Rail Trail connecting Cochituate State Park and Natick Center.	Short	1	15	100
5.f.	Improve the management of Town capital investments.				

Strategic Choices Workshops Report - Session 6

	Workshop - Group	6-Purple	Number of Groups	Member- Weighted Score	Vote- Weighted Score
	Number of Groups		1		
	Number of Members	15		15	
	Number of Votes	15			15
	Percent of Group Votes	100%			100%
6.	Planning for Change and Managing Growth				
6.a.	Plan proactively for growth.	Short (1)	1	15	100
6.b.	Educate the public about growth issues.				
6.c.	Encourage population diversity.				
6.d.	Investigate opportunities for regionalization				
7.	Town Financing Strategies				
7.a.	Improve the budget process.				
7.b.	Improve the capital planning and budgeting				
7.c.	Increase the Town's operational efficiency	Short (1)	1	15	100
7.d.	Expand the Town's tax base				
7.e.	Work to change State tax policies and formulas				

Purple Group Notes

- (1) Start immediately, and continue as an ongoing effort.
- (2) Plan in Short-term, and build in Medium-term.
- (3) Prefer Option 2, a private developer.
- (4) Plan in Short-term, implement in Medium-term, and continue as an ongoing effort.

Session Feedback

What I like about the Purple Group's priorities is...

Something from each category

Interrelatedness; not either/or

Good job!!

Idea of connecting Senior and Community center to High School: add a pool to improve finances and to provide swimming.

Combine the Recreation Department with the Senior Center.

The reframings!

How to...

Find "growth" and "small town" compatible.

Work with neighbors on 7.e. (Work to change State tax policies and formulas) regionally.

Incorporate Recreation Department needs in this process? Space, etc.

DRAFT

**Strategic Choices Workshops Report
Write-In Issues Compilation**

Ref.	Write-In Issues	Source
1.a.	"Outcomes" in 1.a. is <u>not</u> just test scores.	3-Blue
1.c.	Consider a High School (1.c.) plus Community and Senior Center (5.d.) combined!	3-Blue
1.c.	Consider coordinated/integrated High School (3.c.), Senior/Community Center (5.d.); see Globe article last Thursday; this is linked to improving transportation options.	4-Blue
1.c.	Consider combining Senior/Community Center with new High School: one architect, one override, one builder; recognize State will not pay for Senior/Community Center.	5-Purple
1.d.	(Outside funding for schools) Agree, but not necessarily by hiring an other staff person.	3-Blue
1.e.	Involve Walnut Hill School	1-Green
1.e.	Increase ease of use and access to school facilities for community activities.	2-Blue
1.f.	Build a new middle school; not a high school.	1-Green
2.b.	Include volunteers in disaster planning (Medical Reserve Corps).	5-Purple
3.a.	(Increase open space...) Work to incorporate common sense and development while doing this. Balance!	3-Blue
3.a.	Open space appears to be de-emphasized from the "Visions and Values Statements."	3-Add'l
3.a.	Encouraging Conservation Restrictions and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (not necessarily costing the Town significant money, since the landowners receive benefits).	3-Add'l
3.a.	Preserving unprotected land already owned by the Town, as well as by State and Federal governments (Note: preserving the Community Farm was mentioned frequently at the 2/15/07 public meeting).	3-Add'l
3.a.	Zoning and land use regulation, such as cluster zoning.	3-Add'l
3.a.	Developing playing fields.	3-Add'l
3.a.	Increasing public awareness of open space.	3-Add'l
3.b.	Retain Environmental Compliance Officer	4-Blue
3.b.	Green building regulations?	5-Purple
3.d.	Promote MetroWest Hospital	1-Green
3.d.	Strengthen local health care availability	1-Green
3.d.	Develop a clearinghouse of information (or centralized place to learn about) services for youth, children and families.	1-Blue
3.e.	Expand health and social services after needs assessment.	3-Red
3.e.	Increase welfare, health care and accommodations for senior citizens.	5-Red
4.a.	Loosen parking requirements downtown.	4-Blue
5.a.	Develop transportation improvement <u>plan</u> .	1-Pink
5.b.	Mass Pike exit extended to Mall.	1-Green
5.c.	Developing walking trails (this generated a lot of interest at the 2/15/07 public meeting).	3-Add'l
5.d.	Ensure that 5.d. (Senior/Community Center) is a joint/combined Senior plus Community Center.	3-Blue
5.e.	Purchase CSX rail corridor for rail trail.	1-Pink
6.a.	Re-examine zoning to preserve green space; i.e., not all greenery, trees, etc., are removed; not every square foot is built upon.	1-Blue
6.c.	Encourage affordable housing.	1-Pink
7.b.	10th priority: Allocate dollars for capital improvements commensurate with capital needs (gained four stars).	5-Purple
7.e.	Other sources of revenues.	5-Purple
7.e.	Increase revenue sources.	1-Red
7.f.	Split tax rate between business and homeowners, ASAP.	1-Yellow

Strategic Choices Workshops Report Balancing the Budget Questionnaire

At the June 9-10, 2007, Strategic Choices Workshops, participants received some background information about challenges to balancing the Natick Town budget. This information summarized a presentation on June 8 by the Acting Town Administrator, showing that the Town is projected to continue having a gap between ongoing tax revenue and ongoing expenditures, with fewer funds in savings or reserve accounts to finance that gap. Participants received a one-item questionnaire to address their thoughts about the tradeoff between higher taxes and reducing Town services as approaches to balancing the Town budget.

The question asked is in the following box:

Please take a moment to think about the following questions and give us your response. This is not a binding vote – it is merely information that is being gathered to inform your elected officials.

- I would rather cut Town services than increase property taxes.

OR

- I would rather increase property taxes than cut Town services.

OR

- I would rather cut some Town services and increase property taxes somewhat (please circle the balance you feel would be appropriate):

Don't reduce services	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	Reduce services
Raise property taxes	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0	Don't raise property taxes

The first answer, “I would rather cut Town services than increase property taxes,” is equivalent to the answer 100-0 on the far right of the scale in the third answer. Similarly, the second answer, “I would rather increase property taxes than cut Town services,” is equivalent to the answer 0-100 on the far left of the third answer scale.

135 responses to the Balancing the Budget questionnaire were received from the 141 documented attendees. These responses represent a “volunteer sample,” not a “random sample;” therefore, they are representative of the group of people who attended the Strategic Choices Weekend Workshops and submitted a questionnaire. They are not representative of the entire population of Natick.

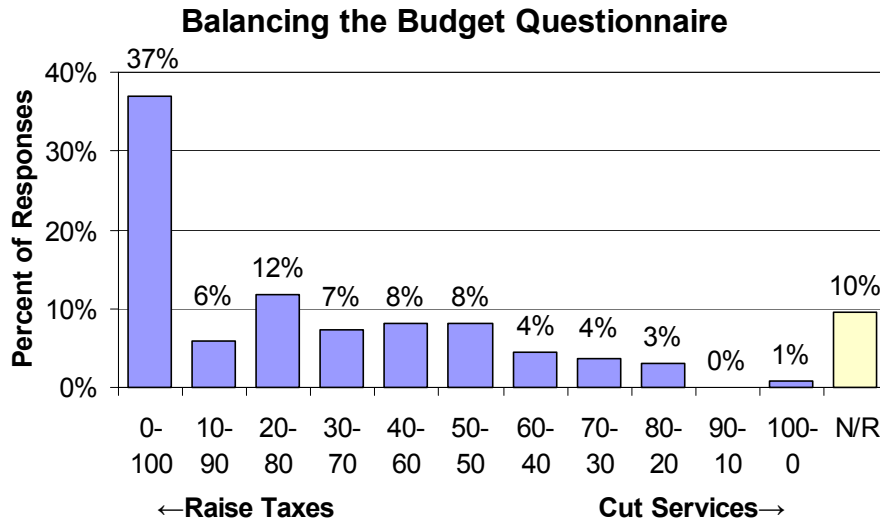
DRAFT

Here is the distribution of answers received:

Scale	0-100	10-90	20-80	30-70	40-60	50-50	60-40	70-30	80-20	90-10	100-0	N/R
Number	50	8	16	10	11	11	6	5	4	0	1	13
Percent	37%	6%	12%	7%	8%	8%	4%	4%	3%	0%	1%	10%

In the last column, N/R stands for “non-responsive.” These 13 questionnaires (10%) could not be scored because the respondent did not follow the instructions, or made up an alternative answer.

As the graph below shows, the results indicate a pronounced preference among the respondents for raising taxes, rather than for cutting services, as a way to balance the Town budget. Over 1/3 of the respondents (50, or 37%) would prefer no cut in service at all, using higher taxes solely to balance the budget. Seven in ten respondents (95, or 70%) would emphasize taxes over services cuts by a 40-60 ratio or less, while just one in eight (16, or 12%) would emphasize service cuts over taxes by a 60-40 ratio or more.



In addition, 16 respondents (12%) wrote comments on the questionnaire, even though the questionnaire did not request comments. Those comments are reported verbatim on the following page. Of the 16 comments:

- Four (highlighted in yellow) addressed the topic of splitting the property tax rate, so that businesses pay a higher rate than residences. Three of these respondents were in the same small group.
- Three (green) addressed the topic of new revenue sources, such as restaurant or hotel taxes. All of these respondents were in the same session, but it cannot be determined if the respondents were in the same small group (“R/P” means Red or Purple group; the questionnaires for these two groups were not labeled separately).
- Two respondents (pink) suggested increasing efficiency of Town services before other strategies are attempted.

DRAFT

Session	Small Group	Comment
1	Purple	I would pay for an override for the high school. It's my #1 priority.
1	Red	I believe they need to restructure retirement & health benefits for retirees.
1	Yellow	Split the tax rate allowing the residential tax rate to decrease, leaving room for an override and not impacting the total paid by residents.
1	Yellow	Split residential/business/commercial
1	Yellow	Split tax rate to lower residence tax & increase business taxes -- create override to accomplish capital investments
2	Red	Get more state & federal \$; work better with state & fed gov; better representation at state and federal gov
2	Red	Nondiscretionary services must be included in cuts. Frankly they are more important to reduce than discretionary costs!! This may require Legislative changes!!
3	Red	<u>But</u> enact state legislation to enable us to vary taxes based on income.
4	Blue	I would like to feel more confident that our Town services are being provided efficiently .
4	Red	Increase efficiency before cutting any services; address health/pension costs.
5	R/P	Split rates
5	R/P	New sources of revenue .
5	R/P	Develop new sources of revenue plus increase property taxes
5	R/P	Continue to put pressure on state to provide revenue sources other than property taxes
5	R/P	New sources of revenue : restaurant, hotel
6	Purple	Sorry; how much more can you bleed us?

Appendix A – Written Input by Martin Kessel (Session 3)

TO: Open Space Advisory Committee
FROM: Martin Kessel
DATE: June 6, 2007
SUBJECT: Comments on Natick 360 “Strategic Options” Draft

I have reviewed the Natick 360 "Strategic Options" draft dated June 4, and have several concerns regarding open space. The following are my quick comments. Since final approval by two of the sponsoring boards is scheduled for today, it may be too late to change this document, but I hope these issues can be considered at some point in the process.

1. In the Strategic Options document, open space appears to be de-emphasized from the “Visions and Values Statements.” Open space and natural resources were listed as one of six basic “Values” and one of seven major “Visions.” In the Strategic Options listing, open space is one of four *subtopics* within one of seven focus areas. I don't know whether this was an intentional “downgrading” of the issue, or just an accident of document organization.

One particular open space issue, the Cochituate Rail Trail does receive its proper emphasis, as it is broken out as a separate subtopic under Infrastructure and Transportation. This properly reflects the importance placed on this issue by participants in the various meetings.

2. The goal of “Increasing Open Space” lists only possible actions that the document itself describes as very expensive (purchasing open space or APRs), along with one action (passage of the CPA) that has shown to be politically challenging. Not listed are a number of other possible actions that were enumerated in the 2002 Open Space & Recreation Plan, and which were, in some fashion, mentioned in notes from Natick 360's various Stage III meetings:
 - a. Encouraging Conservation Restrictions and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (not necessarily costing the Town significant money, since the landowners receive benefits).
 - b. Preserving unprotected land already owned by the Town, as well as by State and Federal governments. (Note: preserving the Community Farm was mentioned frequently at the 2/15/07 public meeting.)
 - c. Zoning and land use regulation, such as cluster zoning.
3. The Strategic Options document neglects to mention several additional top-level goals of The Open Space & Recreation Plan, although these were mentioned at various Stage III meetings and at the Vision for the Future workshops:
 - d. Developing walking trails (this generated a lot of interest at the 2/15/07 public , meeting)
 - e. Developing playing fields
 - f. Increasing public awareness of open space.

I hope a way can be found to include this material within the Strategic Options process,