

Town Council Goals & Objectives for the 2020-2022 Term



Town Council Mission Statement

The purpose of local government is to help create and maintain the conditions that make it possible for people to pursue their own interests and happiness while respecting the rights of others to do the same. Accordingly, the programs and operations of the government of the Town of South Kingstown are designed to promote equal justice, security, and the wellbeing of all town residents. The Town Council’s mission is to monitor the needs of the community and adjust local policies and practices when necessary to preserve peace and prosperity. The Town Council strives to provide high-quality municipal services while maintaining affordable fees and taxes.

Town Council Goals & Objectives

The Town Council’s Goals and Objectives for the 2020-2022 term are organized and detailed within fourteen priority areas as identified in the table below. These fourteen priority areas are referenced within Town documents using the acronyms listed in the right-hand column.

Town Council Goals & Objectives Main Topics	Acronym
Taxes, Budget, and Fiscal Management	TBF
Education and Training	ET
Facilities and Infrastructure	FI
Land Use	LU
Housing	H
Sustainability and Natural Resources	SNR
Cultural Priorities	CP
Economic Structure	ES
Transportation and Traffic Safety	TTS
Supporting Vulnerable and Underserved Residents	VUR
University of Rhode Island	URI
South County Hospital	SCH
Policing and Public Safety	PPS
Civic Engagement and Public Participation	CEPP

I. Taxes, Budget, and Fiscal Management

GOALS

- Town fees and taxes should be affordable for all residents. The Town’s fee and tax structures should consider each resident’s ability to pay and should be designed to ensure equitable access to all town services and resources; no resident should be denied access to town services or public resources.
- In order to maintain the quality of public services, property tax increases should reflect inflationary influences and should address needs as identified by the Town Council.
- Public participation and the assessment of the public needs and interests should inform the Town’s budget at every phase of the process, from development to execution.

OBJECTIVES

- Public participation and the assessment of the public needs and interests will inform the Town’s budget at every phase of the process, from development to execution.
- The Recreation Department will develop updated registration fee structure for all youth programs based on household income to better serve all families in our community.



II. Education and Training

GOALS

- All SK Schools should be rated as 5-Star Schools.
- Zero Gap: there should be no statistical distinction subgroup members and the general student population. Those with special needs should get the services they require.
- The District should exceed state and federal special education mandates.
- SK School should be truly equitable: So, for example, suspension practices should be nondiscriminatory and school officials should pay attention to high-risk students.
- Bottom-up, student-centered, programming: Every student is different and the district's approach to teaching must start from a recognition of individual needs.
- Faculty- and staff-to-student ratios should be appropriate to ensure high-quality education services at a sustainable cost. While every community is different, decisions about South Kingstown's ratios should be informed by comparisons to other similar communities.
- School District and other municipal programs (the Guild, the Senior Center, and the Recreation Department) should provide residents with relevant and engaging opportunities for learning appropriate for residents of all ages.
- To ensure competent and innovative municipal services, town employees should be provided with routine and meaningful opportunities for job-related training and professional development.

OBJECTIVES

- By January 1, 2022, the Town will institute an Individual Development Plan for every full-time municipal employee.
- By August 1, 2022, the Town Manager will publish a town wide policy on conference participation that encourages employee to attend conferences only when they are presenting or when specific training that meets their IDP will be provided.
- In its collective bargaining agreements, the Town will established the procedures for temporary job swaps or rotations to promote cross-training of employees, which will increase the acquisition of skills and increase job mobility.
- By January 2022, Parks and Recreation Department employees will participate in a minimum of two professional or safety related courses or trainings to expand professional skillset for ensuring and/or improving job performance.
- The library will conduct a minimum 12 informational, cultural or educational programs per year.
- The library will offer at least 5 yearly education opportunities to library staff related to library services.

III. Facilities and Infrastructure

GOALS

- The Town government will provide uninterrupted essential municipal services, including:
 - elementary and secondary public education,
 - police, fire and emergency medical services,
 - road, bridge, harbor and waterway safety enforcement,
 - water, refuse, recycling and wastewater management,
- The Town government will provide uninterrupted beneficial public access to municipal facilities, including:
 - school buildings,
 - libraries,

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- public parks, beaches, walking trails and playing fields,
- indoor recreational facilities (Neighborhood Guild and Recreation Center) and
- civic spaces (Senior Center, Public Safety Complex, Town Hall).
- The Town government will ensure the serviceable condition of critical infrastructure, including:
 - public roads, bridges, piers, docks and boat launches,
 - water, wastewater and solid waste/recycling facilities,
 - police, fire, emergency medical and public works buildings,
 - public communication towers and equipment.

OBJECTIVES

- Complete construction of the Phase 2 Matunuck Beach Road sheet pile wall protection system from its current terminus, westerly toward the Matunuck Trailer Park property in order to further protect infrastructure from ongoing coastal erosion
- Determine the future need and feasibility of extending this protective system easterly along Matunuck Beach Road toward Matunuck Point
- Continue working with all stakeholders including local businesses regarding the Mary Carpenter 'relic wall' construction efforts
- Planned infrastructure improvements to the Neighborhood Guild will begin by March 2022.
- Marina Park Ramp reconstruction will be completed by December 31, 2021
- By June 2022 Recycling receptacles will be expanded to all 17 municipal parks
- In 2022 a comprehensive master plan for Old Mountain Field will be completed; it will include a tree management and replacement plan
- Development of a new trail network at the Noyes Farm property will begin in Spring 2022
- The Town Beach pavilion and gate entrance will be equipped with internet access for scanning of parking passes and credit card payment capability in 2022; for customer convenience and overall efficiency in revenue management.
- Saugatucket Park Improvements including replacement of walking path, sport court and fencing, will be completed by August 2022.
- Complete implementation of the Fire Alarm Radio Box conversion project, and coordinate with local business owners regarding the transition to the new platform; decommission old copper wire system. Full conversion to be completed over the next five years.
- On or before January 1, 2022, the Town Facilities Division will prepare a Town-wide facilities condition report documenting the current deficiencies in Town-owned buildings.
- On or before September 1, 2021, the Town Engineer will presents a preliminary town-wide report on the condition and performance of Town roads, including an assessment of bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns.
- By May 2021 the library will provide socially distance outdoor programming.
- By July 2021 the library will resume normal hours of operation at all three locations.

IV. Land Use

GOALS

- The people of South Kingstown recognize that the Town is one of the few places along the New England shoreline that has been able to maintain a rural, small-town, character; the Town's abundant open spaces, uncluttered beachfront, and well-preserved villages are valued resources, not only for local residents, but for all Rhode Islanders and visitors from through the Northeastern

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United States. The Town is committed to a pattern of careful, measured and purposeful land-use development that preserves the cherished qualities of the community, acknowledges the Town's historic villages, promotes environmental stewardship, preserves open space and agricultural land, sustains a vibrant tourism sector and enhances the wellbeing of our residents and visitors.

- The Town will continue to be home to working farms and appropriately scaled aquaculture facilities.
- Each village will have plentiful public open spaces available to all town residents.
- Public points of access to the coast and recreational waterways for a wide variety of activities will be abundant.

OBJECTIVES

- The Comprehensive Community Plan will be presented to the Town Council for its review on or before March 1, 2021.
- The Route 1 Scenic Roadway Committee will develop and recommend to the Town Council a Stewardship Plan for the Route 1 corridor in South Kingstown.
- The Planning Board will make recommendations to the Town Council relative to reevaluating the zoning in the Route 108 Special Management District and along Old Tower Hill Road to include a mixed use model at village scale supported by green infrastructure.
- In 2021 the municipal inventory of Public shoreline Access points will be inspected, assessed, and recommendations for improvements issued; and to be incorporated as reference appendix in the updated Harbor Management Plan.
- By March 2023, a community-wide survey will be undertaken, seeking input for future development/redevelopment of park and recreation programs and facilities to meet the current and future recreational needs of the community.
- Revise the subdivision and land use regulations concerning landscaping requirements to utilize native plants and species to provide shade and tree canopy, avian and pollinator habitats.

V. Housing

GOALS

- The Town Council believes that clean, safe and affordable housing is a human right. Responsibility for protection of this right is shared by individuals, the community and municipal, state and federal government agencies. Consistent with its purposeful-growth land use model, South Kingstown will maintain an adequate inventory of low- and moderate-income housing.
- The Town will meet the state statutory requirement for year-round housing stock that will be deemed restricted as low- or moderate-income housing. This effort will be made in the context of appropriately scaled density that will be supported by environmentally controlled standards.
- Housing types should be varied, aesthetically pleasing and suitable to the villages and neighborhoods where they are located.

OBJECTIVES

- The Planning Department will present a draft "Cottage Zoning" regulation to the Town Council for its review on or before March 8, 2021.
- The Town will update its affordable housing plan.
- The Town Council will meet at least annually with the South Kingstown Public Housing Authority.
- The Town Manager will present a draft tax abatement ordinance to support the development of Accessory Dwelling Units on or before March 22, 2021.

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- A comprehensive draft proposal for amendments and changes to the Zoning Ordinance to support the development of affordable and mixed-use housing types at appropriate scale will be presented to the Town on or about August 23, 2021. The proposal will be developed by the Planning Department in collaboration with a consultant, Horsley Witten Group.
- On or before February 1, 2022, the Finance Director will publish a request for qualifications (RFQ) to identify nonprofit organizations capable of developing or rehabbing housing for low- moderate-income households.
- On or before April 15, 2022, an ordinance establishing a “fee in lieu of construction” regulation will be presented to the Town Council to support the recapitalization of the Town Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The Planning Department and the Finance Director will develop the proposal.
- On or before November 15, 2021, the Finance Director and Town Manager will meet with at least two local banks to discuss the possibility of developing a “shared-appreciation” loan program.

VI. Sustainability and Natural Resources

GOALS

- The Town of South Kingstown will maintain the density of tree canopy throughout town; when trees must be removed in one place, they will be replaced in another.
- All fresh water bodies in South Kingstown will be clean and safe for swimming.
- All saltwater bodies will be clean and safe for the production of shellfish suitable for human consumption.
- All ground water sources will be clean and free from anthropogenic contaminants.
- All of the Town’s municipal building and transportation energy will come from renewable sources.
- The Town’s carbon footprint will be “net zero.”

OBJECTIVES

- By March 2022 – assess and identify all compromised trees in municipal park settings and develop a prioritized plan for selective pruning, removal and replacement within a two year period.
- By December 2021, 25% of all gas-powered park maintenance handheld equipment will be replaced with rechargeable battery-operated equipment.

VII. Cultural Priorities

GOALS

- South Kingstown will continue to be home to thriving communities of performing, visual and musical artists.
- South Kingstown will embrace and celebrate its indigenous people and Native American history and traditions.
- South Kingstown will preserve and celebrate its New England farming, fishing and maritime customs.
- The current inventory of historic structures will be preserved for future generations.
- South Kingstown will embrace and celebrate its diversity and with feel inviting and inclusive to everyone.
- South Kingstown will embrace its “whole history,” recognizing all who have lived here and acknowledging the errors of the past.
- The Town will be guided by the principle that we will always honor our past but govern for the living.

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- Racism will not be tolerated in South Kingstown.

OBJECTIVES

- Each year, on or before May 1, the Town, through the Town Manager, shall invite the Narragansett Tribal Council to attend a joint meeting at a time and place convenient to the Tribal Council.
- In 2022 the Recreation Department will develop a program series focused on South Kingstown's unique history, tapping community members with knowledge and generational connection in South Kingstown, to present and facilitate various sessions.
- The library will support equity, diversity and inclusion by having at least 1 staff member participate in any EDI opportunities provided by Ocean State Libraries and the Office of Library and Information Services.
- The library will continue to add content to its local history page that represents a true reflection of our past.
- The library will conduct a minimum 12 informational, cultural or educational programs per year.

VIII. Economic Structure

GOALS

- South Kingstown's economy will continue to be broad and diversified.
- Our economy will support the development of research-oriented firms associated with the University of Rhode Island.
- South Kingstown will be regarded as a desirable "college community" and will be a place where URI students want to stay after earning their degrees.
- Our economy will support tourism and hospitality.
- Our economy will support a vibrant arts and crafts sector.
- Our economy will support skilled tradespeople and knowledge workers.
- The Town's proximity to Providence will ensure that a significant number of our residents will continue to commute to offices and operations in the Providence area.
- The Town will support working farms and aquaculture.

OBJECTIVES

- Child daycare
- Agricultural supply
- Food cooperatives
- Strengthen small-scale retail
- A comprehensive draft proposal for amendments and changes to the Zoning Ordinance to support the development of mixed-use housing and retail at village scale will be presented to the Town on or about August 23, 2021. The proposal will be developed by the Planning Department and the Planning Board in collaboration with a consultant, Horsley Witten Group.
- On or before December 1, 2022 a long term master plan for Saugatucket Park will be established to support Main Street economy by linking attractive green space along the Saugatucket River and outdoor recreational and cultural opportunities, with downtown Wakefield.

IX. Transportation and Traffic Safety

GOALS

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- Public transit services should be frequent enough and conveniently located so residents and visitors can access essential services, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, medical offices and central business districts.
- All roads in South Kingstown should be free from unsafe conditions, including poor pavement qualities, road design and geometry deficiencies, speeding and travel-mode conflicts to the greatest extent possible and as funding permits.
- All roads should be safe, inviting, and attractive for users of all modes of transportation to the greatest extent possible and as funding permits.
- The URI campus will be the southern hub of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority network and intraregional bus service will be abundant.

OBJECTIVES

- By January 2022 Senior Services will resume Transportation services to residents 60 years or older, to the Senior Center and to local stores, Monday through Friday, throughout the year. A fee of \$1 per trip will be charged for locations other than the Center. Inability to pay will not keep anyone from using the transportation program.

X. Supporting Vulnerable and Underserved Residents

GOALS

- To ensure the effective provision of needed services, the South Kingstown Town government will know the names and address of the Town vulnerable residents and will know what type of assistance each resident needs.
- The Town government will foster familiarity and a sense of belonging by regularly and consistently engaging our most vulnerable residents
- The Town will provide relevant services tailored to the specific needs of our veterans, seniors, children in poverty, and historically-underserved residents.

OBJECTIVES

- In March 2020, the Town Council will adjust the elderly tax abatement program by increasing the income eligibility brackets by five percent to begin accounting for inflationary impacts since 2007.
- In March 2021, the Town Council will again adjust the elderly tax abatement program by increasing the income eligibility brackets by another five percent to further account for inflationary impacts since 2007.
- Prior to the tax roll being certified in June of each year, the Tax Assessor will conduct a state-wide survey to determine if South Kingstown's Veterans tax credits meet the State-wide average.
- In FY 2021-2022 Senior Services will identify and assist Veterans in accessing services and benefits through monthly appointments.
- In FY 2021-2022 Senior Services will expand outreach to senior housing, church groups, civic organizations and other groups to help identify residents whose basic needs are unmet.
- By December 2021, the Town will partner with a licensed third party care provider to re-open the Adult Day Services Center in Wakefield and resume this community-based care program for frail elders in the community
- In FY 2021-2022, the Senior Center will provide a minimum of one remote/virtual program offering a month, for homebound seniors or those unable to attend the senior center in person.

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- Each month the Police Department Traffic Division will convene and chair a meeting with the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee to address public safety concerns and discuss ideas to improve road infrastructure.
- The police department will partner with the RI Department of Transportation Highway Safety Office to establish grant funding opportunities that will promote safe roadways through DUI/Impaired Driving Enforcement, Speed Enforcement, Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Programs, Seat Belt Safety, Distracted Driving and Child Car Seat Safety.
- The library will conduct a minimum of 12 pop-up libraries at locations specific to vulnerable residents.

XI. University of Rhode Island

GOALS

- The Town and the University will enjoy strong institutional relationships at every level of operations, including public safety, public works, policy-making and strategic planning
- The Town and University will maintain seamless linkages between on-campus and off-campus transportation, traffic, and public safety systems.
- The housing and business development policies and programs of the Town and University will be well integrated and complementary.
- Maintain a strong working relationship between the University and the South Kingstown School District

OBJECTIVES

- On or before April 15 of each year, the Town Council and town department heads will meet with the University of Rhode Island President and administrative leadership.
- On or before July 2021, Senior Services will coordinate with URI Departments of Pharmacy, Nursing, Gerontology and Nutrition to provide experiential opportunities for students and intergenerational programs to benefit older adults.
- On or before August 15th of each year, the South Kingstown Police and EMS will meet with representatives from the University of Rhode Island Public Safety Administration to discuss any public safety concerns prior to the upcoming calendar school year.
- Develop a mentorship between URI and the School District.
- The library will continue to develop a community partnership with URI Graduate Library program by offering 1 Professional Field Experience opportunity for library students per year.

XII. Healthcare

GOALS

- A wide range of high-quality healthcare services will continue to be readily available in town through a network of hospital-affiliated medical professionals.
- The local hospital (South County Hospital) will continue as the center of our community healthcare delivery model.
- Mental health services will available in town and will be accessible to all residents.

OBJECTIVES

- To support the South County Hospital's continued viability, the Town will complete its application for a land swap with the hospital.



XIII. Policing and Public Safety

GOALS

- The Town's police and public safety personnel will maintain the highest levels of professionalism, integrity and service-commitment.
- The Town's police and public safety personnel will be approachable and trusted
- Mental Health will be a core element of all the town's public safety programs and initiatives
- The Town will maintain a robust volunteer fire service

OBJECTIVES

- The Town will work with Narragansett and the Union Fire District to address the inequity associated with tax-free provision of fire services to the Jerusalem section of Narragansett.
- In an online public survey of South Kingstown residents, at least 95% of respondents will agree or strongly agree with the statement "I feel safe and comfortable when being approached by South Kingstown police officers."
- In a drop box survey of South Kingstown Public Housing residents, at least 95% of respondents will agree or strongly agree with the statement "I feel safe and comfortable when being approached by South Kingstown police officers."
- On a weekly basis the police department will work directly with a certified police mental health clinician and offer assistance to residents that have been experiencing a mental health crisis.
- On an annual basis all police officers will receive and participate in Implicit Bias Training and Mental Health/Crisis Intervention Training.
- The Police Department will maintain its accreditation.
- Before December 31, 2021, the Police Department will develop and initiate no fewer than three community-based programs that offer community members the opportunity to regularly engage police officers and departmental leaders.
- The Town and Union Fire District will work cooperatively to incorporate a section about the UFD /recruitment on the Town's smart phone application
- Maintain South Kingstown Firefighter Scholarship program as a joint effort between the Town and the fire districts to improve retention of members
- On or before May 1, 2021, The Recreation Department in cooperation with the Finance Department will develop a proposal to a limited number of free beach passes to be available to firefighters as an incentive to retain volunteers. The Proposal will be reviewed by the Recreation Commission and potentially adopted by the Town Council.
- Implement town-wide radio system to ensure seamless communication between all departments, including police, fire, ems, highway, schools



XIV. Civic Engagement and Public Participation

GOALS

- The Town's municipal leaders and employees set the tone for civic engagement. Municipal officials and employees will be honest, helpful and courteous.
- All voices should be heard and respected.
- South Kingstown will appreciate and celebrate its volunteers.
- The Town will be a model of modern E-government principles, practices and tools.
- South Kingstown will be regarded as a community with a strong volunteer spirit.
- Maintain extraordinary community participation through the Town's network of boards and committees.

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize and celebrate the 300th anniversary of the incorporation of the town.
- Promote increased registration by residents and businesses in the Town's Emergency Notification System CodeRED as a communication tool for sending emergency notifications (storms, etc.)
- At least one public service announcement will be published by each department each week.
- On or before January 1, 2022, the Town smart phone app will have been installed on at least 2,500 (approximately 10% of the adult population) phones.
- For every meeting of the Town Council or any Town board or commission, the Town Clerk's office will provide paper copies of meeting agendas and notices to the public at points outside of Town buildings where public access is restricted
- On or before December 31, 2021, the Town Clerk, Information Technology Department and Town Manager will implement an online Boards and Commissions volunteers recruitment program to make information and applications more readily available to the public.
- On or before January 1, 2022, the library smart phone app will have been installed on at least 2,500 (approximately 10% of the adult population) phones.
- The library will create and post new digital content on a bi-weekly basis.