

SHREWSBURY SECTION 3A “MBTA COMMUNITIES ACT” FACT SHEET

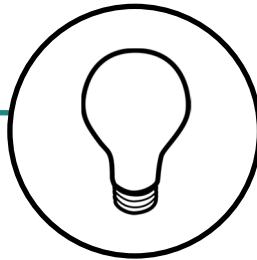
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLE #44



WHAT IS SECTION 3A?

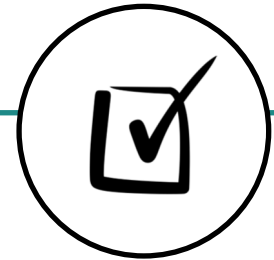
Section 3A (MBTA Communities Act) is a new MA law that requires MBTA transit stop and adjacent non transit stop communities to adopt a zoning bylaw which allows multi-family housing **as of right** in at least one district of **reasonable** size.

As of right means development may proceed without the need for discretionary process or zoning approval in an approved 3A district.



HOW DOES THIS IMPACT YOU?

There’s no doubt the housing market in parts of Massachusetts are currently imbalanced, contributing to affordability challenges. Economic issues are **no excuse** to allow the state to take control of zoning which is local by nature. Government overreach disenfranchises voters by not allowing them to make decisions about what is best for their communities.



WHAT IS THE TOWN PROPOSING?

Shrewsbury is classified as an adjacent community and is proposing a 173 acre overlay district. This consists of a minimum of 1,497 new housing units. This required 10% increase will put undue strain on our existing school budget, infrastructure and town services. Increasing our population and consumption by 10% is not sustainable or climate friendly.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY VOICE HEARD?



Learn the truth about Section 3A.



Spread the word—inform your neighbors and fellow residents about Section 3A.



Ask Town Meeting Members to vote **NO** on Article 44

<https://shrewsburyma.gov/370/Town-Meeting-Members>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does the MBTA Communities Act (3A) Actually Say?

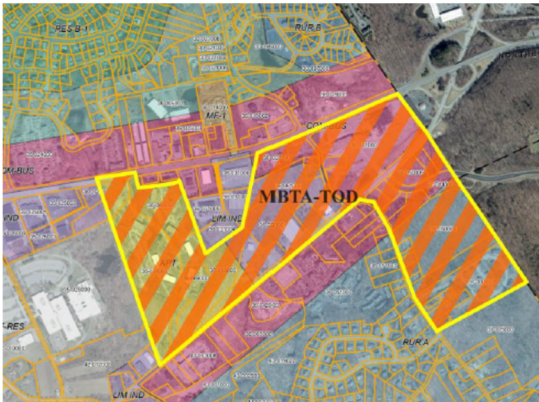
The Act on its face is relatively modest. It requires designated MBTA communities to zone at least “one district of reasonable size” in which multi-family housing is permitted **as of right**. The district should have a minimum density of 15 units per acre and be located no more than 0.5 miles from a commuter rail, subway, ferry or bus station if applicable. Non-compliance makes a community ineligible for funds from 4 specific grants. This is not affordable housing! The EOHLIC guidance states that affordable housing, green and sustainable development is cost prohibitive for developers. Age requirements are not allowed squashing hopes for affordable senior housing.

What about the guidelines? Are guidelines law?

The unelected Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) took its mandate to develop guidelines for compliance and vastly inflated its own authority. The statute is focused on housing density with a compact district of **reasonable** size. Their guidelines dictate a percentage of a community’s entire housing stock must be zoned for multi-family housing **as of right**. The EOHLC guidelines were not voted on by our elected leaders and are subject to change in the future.

Where is the proposed 3A district located?

The only proposal being considered is 173 acres surrounding the old Christmas Tree Shops Plaza, as well as significant portions of Rte 20, Rte 9 and Walnut St. This area will be zoned for a **minimum** of 1,497 multi-family **as of right** housing units. This number represents 10% of Shrewsbury’s current housing stock. This location abuts Northboro’s proposed 3A district adding 500 more multi-family housing units in the area.



SHREWSBURY (TOD) DISTRICT



NORTHBORO (TOD) DISTRICT

What happens if Town Meeting Members Vote NO on 3A?

Shrewsbury would lose access to 4 grant programs. In 7 years, we received \$4.35M, mainly for Rte. 20 work to support Edgemere Crossing. Relying on grants for town budget is like basing your home budget on winning the lottery! This project would negatively impact existing infrastructure, school capacity and town services. The increase in students equates to an additional \$8.6 million to Shrewsbury’s strained school budget. What will this do to our taxes? If this passes and the Mass SJC case decides this is unconstitutional, Shrewsbury **cannot** reverse course.

Are neighboring communities subject to this law? How many said NO!

177 towns and cities are subject to this law. Milton is being sued by the AG’s Office for non-compliance. The MA Supreme Judicial Court will hear the case in October 2024. Holden chose not to comply. Several other communities are banding together to say **NO!** Boston, home to many MBTA services, is exempt from 3A. **JUST SAY NO SHREWSBURY!**