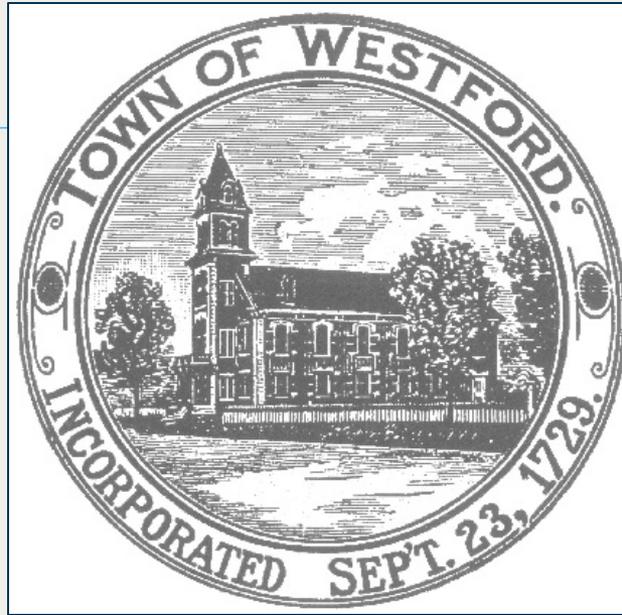


Town of Westford

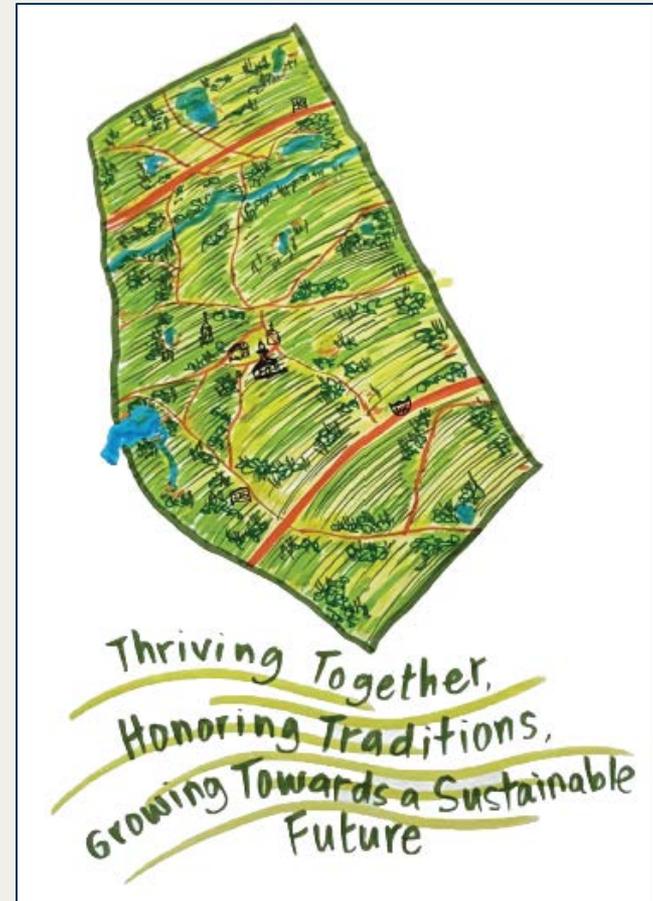


2025 5-Year Strategic Plan

Kristen Las
Town Manager
January 28, 2025

Overview

- Why create a Strategic Plan?
- Public Outreach/Feedback
- Setting the Stage
- Strategic Framework
- Strategic Outcome Areas
- Next Steps



Why Create a Strategic Plan?

- The Town of Westford initiated the strategic planning process to create a vision and roadmap for achieving long-term success.
- Identifying a clear strategic direction is important, as it serves as a guiding framework to align efforts and resources with long-term goals.
- A well-defined strategic plan provides clarity and purpose among team members. It creates a shared vision between the community and Town staff, which aligns organization efforts toward unified goals.
- Through strategic planning, the Town is positioned to address current challenges, seize emerging opportunities, and build a sustainable future for all.

Public Outreach/Feedback

What do we know to be true today?

- Individual interviews with members of the Select Board
- A focus group with Chairs (or their designees) of Town Boards and Committees
- Zencity Online Community Survey with over 800 responses
- Workshops with the Town's leadership team and members of the Select Board
- An online survey distributed to Town staff that generated 132 responses





Public Outreach & Feedback

Establishing the Vision and the Outcome Areas

- A resident survey on draft framework that generated a total of 626 responses
- Ten in-person engagements throughout the community
- A dedicated strategic plan website operated by the Town

Strategic Framework

Thriving Together, Honoring Tradition, Growing Towards a Sustainable Future

Vision

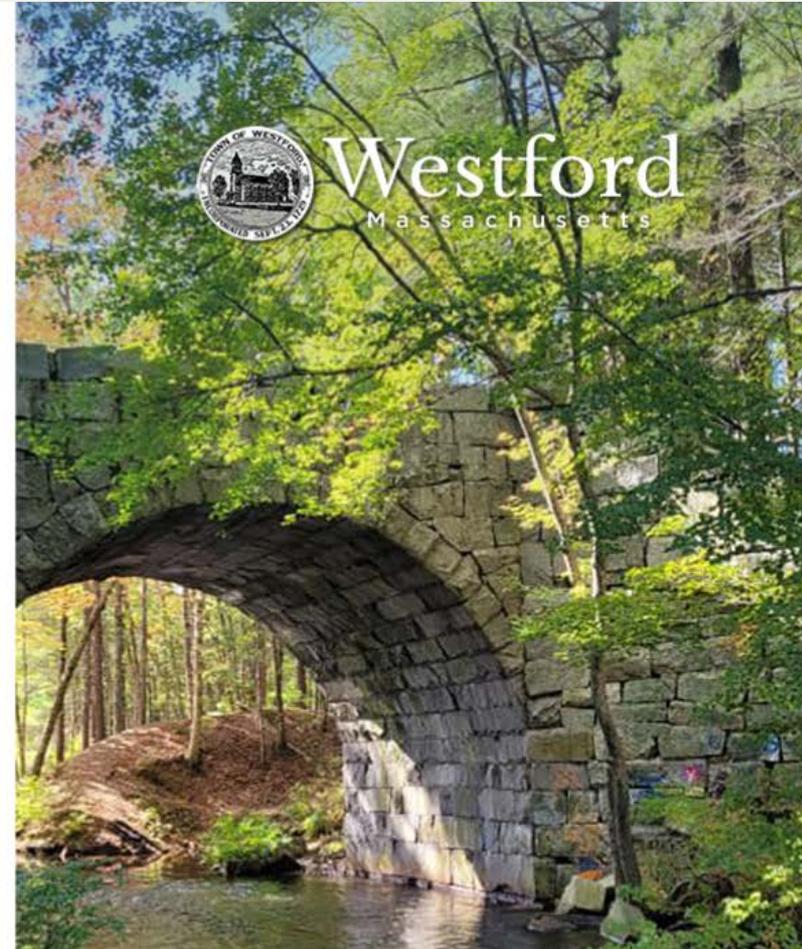
Westford strives to be a welcoming and inclusive community that honors its history and traditions. We are driven towards innovation and progress, balancing growth with preservation and a commitment to creating a sustainable future.

Mission

We are a team of dedicated professionals that take pride in fostering a vibrant community by delivering excellent public service.

Values

Professionalism | Dedication | Collaboration
Accountability | Service-Oriented



Developing the Framework

Strategy development - how do we get there?

- Members of Town staff met to develop specific strategies and key performance metrics (KPIs) for each outcome area.
- These strategies set the organizational priorities for advancing progress across each Strategic Outcome Area. This resulted in a comprehensive strategic framework that connects community priorities with organizational goals and performance metrics.



Strategic Outcome Areas

- Responsive and Responsible Town Government
- Caring and Engaged Community
- Opportunities for Recreation and Preservation of Open Space
- Quality Educational Opportunities
- Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action
- Diverse and Attainable Housing Options
- Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth

Responsive and Responsible Town Government



Westford's municipal services are delivered by dedicated, professional staff who are responsible stewards of Town resources and responsive to community concerns. Core services are prioritized and balanced against other community demands.

Strategies:

- Prioritize Town and school needs for capital planning while considering limited resources and space needs
- Develop and retain employees
- Establish a framework for identifying and prioritizing core services

KPIs

- Percentage of capital projects completed on time
- Average time to complete maintenance requests
- Annual retention rate
- Operating budget-to-actual variance
- Percentage of community survey respondents who are satisfied with the statement "overall quality of services provided by Westford"
- Percentage reduction in storage space

Caring and Engaged Community



Westford is a community that cares for its neighbors and takes pride in local festivals and unique cultural events that celebrate the Town's diversity and history. The Town prioritizes community engagement and promotes volunteerism. Westford is committed to effectively communicating with our residents through a variety of media.

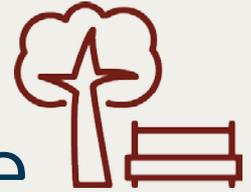
Strategies:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan
- Provide outreach to Boards and Committees on the Town's strategic outcomes to ensure their energy and efforts support key goals and priorities

KPIs

- Average number of Board and Committee memberships
- Engagement or click-through rate
- Percentage increase of community survey respondents satisfied with the availability of a variety of art and cultural events from the previous survey year
- Percentage increase of community survey respondents who are satisfied with the sense of community among residents from the previous survey year

Opportunities for Recreation and Preservation of Open Space



Westford is committed to preserving open space as part of maintaining the Town's rural character. The Town is focused on improving connectivity by developing and maintaining safe routes for walking and cycling. Westford supports a variety of multi-generational recreational opportunities.

Strategies:

- Create a sidewalk and trail master plan and needs assessment
- Update Open Space and Recreation plan
- Develop, promote, and enhance recreational opportunities for all generations

KPIs

- Percent of land dedicated/preserved as open space
- Utilization rate for recreational facilities (actual utilization/total capacity)
- Percentage of program offerings by age group: children (0-12), teens (13-18), adults (19-64), and Seniors (65+)

Quality Educational Opportunities



Westford is committed to quality educational opportunities. The Town supports its exceptional public and regional school systems and encourages opportunities that support a life-long endeavor to enrich, grow, and expand residents' knowledge.

Strategies:

- Schedule and prioritize recurring collaboration among educational partners to showcase offerings
- Create event opportunities that meet the arc of publicly supported life-long learning
- Optimize shared resources between the Town and Westford Public Schools

KPIs

- Annual increase in joint events held by schools, Town, the Senior Center, and external community partners (non-profits)
- Percentage of annual Town General Fund operating budget appropriated to the school's department
- Annual growth in educational programming attendance

Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action



Environmental sustainability goals as envisioned in the Westford Climate Roadmap will guide investments in clean energy and zero waste initiatives. The Town's efforts to address climate change will consider the need to balance fiscal, operational, and environmental objectives.

Strategies:

- Create a solar siting plan utilizing municipal and school properties.
- Conduct a portfolio-wide building energy audit and develop a prioritized implementation plan and funding strategy for energy efficiency improvements to Town and School facilities.
- Develop a Fleet Transition Plan towards more energy efficient vehicles with supporting infrastructure.
- Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors.

KPIs

- Total renewable energy generated annually (kWh)
 - Reduction in energy use intensity for all Town buildings (total kBtu/total sqft)
 - Increase in annual fleet clean energy use
 - Reduction in annual landfilled trash tons per household
 - Tons of waste diverted through curbside and residential recycling program

Diverse and Attainable Housing Options



Westford encourages and promotes the development of diverse housing options that meet a broad range of income levels and life stages of our current and future residents. Westford strives to be a community where people both want to and can afford to live.

Strategies:

- Identify infrastructure upgrades that will support housing needs (i.e., sewer/water)
- Review zoning laws and propose changes that support Town housing goals
- Develop affordable housing opportunities for future and current residents
- Organize a housing summit
- Develop tax incentives for builders and owners to promote small-home building

KPIs

- Percentage mix of housing stock by square footage
- Percentage of housing that are rental units versus owner-occupied
- Ratio of median home price to median household income
- Percentage decrease of residents who are housing cost burdened (>35% of income spent on housing)

Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth



Westford is a traditional New England town that preserves its historic Town Center and neighborhood villages. The Town is committed to promoting an environment along our commercial corridors where unique and local businesses can thrive. Westford encourages economic growth and a diverse tax base.

Strategies:

- Identify and evaluate locations in the Town that are conducive to economic development
- Review Town policies to identify opportunities to become more business-friendly
- Develop an engagement plan to understand resident preference and balance between growth and preservation
- Explore tax incentive programs and promote existing programs for commercial and residential taxpayers

KPIs

- Year-over-year growth in commercial tax revenue
- Percentage increase of community survey respondents satisfied with the pace of economic growth compared to the previous survey year
- Annual growth in small businesses (based on Small Business Administration SBA or other federal agency data)

Next Steps - Implementation

Town staff will champion key strategies and priorities alongside the existing daily operations and service delivery expectations.

Organizational work planning* helps to ensure adequate capacity to meet current service demands and advance the goals, programs, and initiatives that contribute to progress in each of the Strategic Outcome Areas.

Town leadership will use the Strategic Plan to develop performance expectations and organizational goals. This helps ensure Town staff understand and take ownership in the success of the community-driven Strategic Plan.

*link to the Climate Action Work Plan here for example



Questions/Vote for Adoption