



Town Of Westford

Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth

Strategic Plan Implementation Workbook

Last Updated: 7/21/2025

Overview



This implementation plan outlines the specific action items required to advance each strategy effectively. Each action item is categorized by its completion timeframe: short-term, mid-term, and long-term. Short-term actions are those expected to be completed within the next 12 months, mid-term actions are those that should be achieved within 12- to 24-months, and long-term actions are those projected to take 24 months or more.

This structured approach ensures that progress is measurable and aligned with the Town's overarching objectives. Additionally, this implementation plan is designed to be a living document, continuously updated as tasks are completed, and new action items emerge. Regular reviews and adjustments will help maintain momentum and ensure that the strategic plan remains relevant and responsive to changing circumstances.

The Town of Westford's Strategic Plan identified the following 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**

For each of these outcome areas there are individual strategies and associated action items. Strategies are the specific projects, programs, or initiatives that the Town needs to undertake to make progress in each outcome area. Action items are the specific steps to advance each strategy.

Strategies

Strategies are the specific projects, programs, or initiatives that the Town needs to undertake in order to make progress in the Strategic Outcome Area. The strategies within the Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth outcome area are:

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



Strategy 1 - Identify Economic Development Locations

Identify and evaluate locations in the Town that are conducive to economic development

1 **Conduct Rte. 40 Corridor Study**

Responsible: Land Use Management Department ("LUMD")

Timeframe: Completed by June 2026 (per grant deadline)

Resources: Rte. 40 Advisory Committee support, public input, staff time, Housing Choice grant (\$106,000)

Reference: March 2023 Town Meeting Resolution

Notes: This plan will help identify those portions of Rte. 40 that may be appropriate for redevelopment.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.3 In FY2024, staff applied for a Housing Choice grant; this grant was awarded in FY2025 2nd Quarter. Staff completed the Request for Proposals for the Rte. 40 Corridor Study with a submission deadline of May 1.

FY2025 Qtr.4 Proposals were received and at the May 27 regular meeting, the Select Board approved a contract with Innis Associates for \$106,000 to conduct the corridor study. The contract is anticipated to be executed in FY2026 1st Quarter.

FY2026 Qtr.1 (in process) Contract has been executed and kickoff meeting is scheduled for July 22.

2 **Work with National Grid and State, Regional and Local Officials to Address Electric Grid Capacity and Stability Issues**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office, Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: Ongoing (multi-year)

Resources: Staff time, National Grid support, Elected and State Officials support

Reference: (links to Housing)

Notes: NMCOG is also collaborating with National Grid on behalf of the region on this action item.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.3 Town staff met with National Grid representatives in February to discuss (among other topics) grid capacity and interconnections for new projects. Staff is also working through state officials, with a joint letter sent to Governor Healey and engaging in conversations with Legislative Director, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, as well as holding a meeting with Rep. Arciero. Town Manager has spoken on this issue with NMCOG, 495/Metrowest Partnership and Middlesex 3 Coalition. Town submitted an Expression of Interest through the Community One Stop for Growth Program in March for a study to assess grid capacity issues related to MBTA projects in Westford, although EOHLC informed us they would need additional time to review this request. Staff is looking at opportunities to pair this with other funding requests for infrastructure projects/studies furthering housing goals.



Strategy 1 - Identify Economic Development Locations

FY2025 Qtr.4 Electrical capacity and stability concerns were included in the application submitted to Community One Stop for Growth Program in relation to the Rte. 110 Widening Project.

FY2026 Qtr.1 The developer of 219 Littleton Road (the former Regency property proposed for a 300-unit multi-family redevelopment) requested a Customer Load Study after being informed that National Grid lacked capacity to serve the development. The developer, RedGate, received the results of the study, which included a total project cost of \$21.13 million, with a developer share of approximately \$3.2 million. The improvements would provide substantial additional capacity throughout the Route 110 Corridor between Concord and Boston Roads, but it is unclear if National Grid will be able to complete the improvements in time for occupancy or if the developer will be able to move forward given the timeline and substantial cost. Staff will continue to work with the developer and National Grid. An additional meeting with National Grid is being scheduled in the coming months to continue to general discussion on grid capacity and stability.

3 Revitalization of the 12 North Main Street Property

Responsible: Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: 2 years

Resources: EDC, Consultants, Community Feedback, Town Meeting approval

Reference: FY2025 TM/SB Goal #14

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.3 The Town applied for and received an FY2024 Housing Choice grant for \$190,000. An RFP was issued and a RKG Associates (with Gamble Associates) to conduct a Market Study for 12 North Main property. Work on the study began in January 2025. This included robust stakeholder engagement. A second contract with Lombardo Associates to conduct a parallel Wastewater Study to assess onsite and offsite treatment options was also executed. Work is ongoing on both studies.

FY2025 Qtr.4 Both the Market Study and Wastewater Study were completed in June.

FY2026 Qtr.1 Staff is currently reviewing both studies and will share results with stakeholders. (in process) Results from both studies and direction from Select Board were used to apply for additional grants through Community One Stop for Growth Program to continue work on 12 North Main. Results expected in late October/early November.



Strategy 1 - Identify Economic Development Locations

4 Village Revitalization Studies

Responsible: Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Grants, staff time, stakeholder engagement

Reference: 2009 Comprehensive Master Plan

Notes: Explore the potential for village-specific zoning initiatives to promote additional economic development opportunities uniquely tailored to each individual village. The market study recently completed for 12 North Main St. recommended additional analysis for a larger area of study instead of a site-specific approach.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 4 LUMD applied for a Graniteville neighborhood study through the Community One Stop for Growth Program. Results from the grant submissions will be announced in late October/early November.

5 Revitalization of the Office Building Market

Responsible: Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: 2 years

Resources: EDC, Consultants, Community Feedback, Town Meeting approval

Reference:

Notes: During the planning process to develop an MBTA Communities Bylaw, office market vacancy within town was consistently identified as a concern and area to address. In addition to MCMOD areas, there may be additional redevelopment potential that does not include housing.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.4 The ED Consultant (Troast Advisory Services) has been providing the EDC with vacancy updates in office/commercial properties.

FY2026 Qtr.1 See Action Item #5 for update relative to Gutierrez properties. LUMD and the (in process) Economic Development Committee will work with regional partners to identify best practices and success stories from other communities that have repurposed vacant/underutilized office space.



Strategy 1 - Identify Economic Development Locations

6 Targeted Zoning Amendments for Commercial Development and Redevelopment

Responsible: Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Land Use Management Department, Developers, Planning Board

Reference:

Notes: As new redevelopment opportunities arise, staff needs to be able to work with developers and property owners to propose adjustments to facilitate changes on a case-by case basis. This action item allows for tracking of these efforts.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 4 Staff made recommendations to Planning Board and Zoning Board to consider additional special permits to provide options for unique cases and expand business opportunities in more locations.

FY2026 Qtr.1 The Gutierrez Company owns several properties in Westford, most notably (in process) properties located in Tech Park East and Tech Park West. Currently, three parcels in the area of Tech Park East are included in the MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD). As the Gutierrez Company has evaluated the market and has a more clear understanding of their tenant mix over the next several years, they would like to move forward with the inclusion of a residential component in the overall portfolio of Tech Park East. They have asked the Planning Board to sponsor an amendment that would allow for the overlay district to be modified so that one parcel is added to the district while two are removed (please see the attached graphic). The change would result in a small reduction in the overall district area, and would allow for Gutierrez to proceed with a mixed-use development that would produce approximately 80 condominium units as well as new restaurant/ brew pub space within Tech Park East.



Strategy 2 - Review Town Policies

Review Town policies to identify opportunities to become more business-friendly

Action Items

1

Develop & Implement Recommendations for Economic Development & Required Resources

Responsible: Town Manager's Office; Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources:

Reference:

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.3 Using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, Troast Advisory Services was engaged in Quarter 2 to provide limited economic development support and develop a branding/marketing strategy. On March 14 (Pi Day), the Discover Westford initiative was launched, providing branding guidance and next steps to support business recruitment and retention efforts.

FY2025 Qtr.4 Troast continued work on implementation of Discover Westford, including developing draft resource guides, dedicated webpage, and database of existing business and commercial properties. These resources are all anticipated to be completed in the 4th quarter. Also included in Troast's scope of work is to provide a series of recommendations to build the necessary organizational infrastructure to sustain the Town's economic development goals.

2 Develop and Implement Tiered Site Plan Review

Responsible: Land Use Management Department, Planning Board

Timeframe: 6 Months

Resources: NMCOG support (funded), staff time, Town Meeting support

Reference: Section 9.4 of Zoning Bylaw

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.4 NMCOG engaged to work with staff to develop proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment.

FY2026 Qtr.1 With technical assistance from NMCOG, LUMD has put together a proposed (in process) amendment to Section 9.4: Site Plan Review to create a three-tiered review process to replace the single-level review process that exists today with the goal to make the permitting process more efficient and less burdensome for smaller projects.



Strategy 2 - Review Town Policies

3 **Revamp the Building Permit system to reduce paper processes and streamline application and review process**

Responsible: Building Department; Technology Department

Timeframe: 1 Year

Resources: Staff time

Reference:

Notes: Focus is on making changes within the limitations of existing software platform. The short-term goal is to modify the current system to allow 2-3 years of continued use and plan for replacement with a more modern and purpose-built permitting software.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.4 Building department staff developed several proposed changes to online forms for residential building permits and sign permit applications. This effort will be limited by Technology staff capacity.

4 **Pedestrian Master Plan**

Responsible: Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: June 30, 2026 (per grant agreement)

Resources: MBTA Communities Catalyst Grant (\$300,000); Pedestrian Safety Committee; Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Committee (pending)

Reference:

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.3 In Quarter 2 FY2025, staff applied for the MBTA Communities Catalyst Grant. This grant was awarded in February 2025. Staff develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) with proposals due March 26th.

FY2025 Qtr.4 On May 9th, the Select Board approved a contract with Dodson and Flinker to develop this plan. At this time, existing conditions analysis and preliminary GIS work has been completed. In July, a Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Committee will be chartered, and stakeholder engagement will begin.



Strategy 4 - Explore Tax Incentive Programs

Explore tax incentive programs and promote existing programs for taxpayers

Action Items

- 1 ***Develop an inventory of Tax Incentive Programs that the Town may offer and/or educate new/expanding businesses***

Responsible: Land Use Management Department, EDC

Timeframe: FY2026

Resources:

Reference:

Notes: EDC, Troast Advisory Services (EDC Consultant) and LUMD will explore tax incentives programs (through the Mass Office of Business Development or otherwise) to identify which program(s) are most appropriate for Westford to leverage and attract new businesses.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr.1 No Update; this will be an FY2026 initiative.