

Draft Themes, Goals, Objectives, and Actions: Public Workshop 3

30 Year Vision Plan -

For this plan, what is a “theme”?

A recurring idea from the plan’s analysis and from community/stakeholder feedback.

For this plan, what is a “goal”?

A desired outcome. Simple, broad, high-reaching, yet specific enough to be meaningful. Goals should define the community’s hopes and dreams.

10 Year Action Plan -

For this plan, what is an “objective”?

A specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound act whose implementation will bring the municipality closer to achievement of a goal.

For this plan, what is an “action”?

A specific action that directly supports an objective. Specific and attainable, implementation actions are the steps that can be taken to reach the plan objectives.

1. Theme: Open and Engaged Communication

1.1. Goal: Build & Maintain Trust with the Community

1.1.1. Objective: Ensure that the Community Sees Tangible Results of their Participation in Planning Processes

- Issue an annual Comprehensive Plan update
- Create a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee.

1.1.2. Objective: Make Participation in Civic Life Clear and Accessible to All

- Increase the use of social media and invest in a professional website and consistent use of newsletter communications.
- Document and share the process for joining and responsibilities for each Board, Commission or Committee
- Provide annual training for Board/Committee members to overcome the barrier that one needs to be an “expert” to participate.

1.1.3. Objective: Continuously engage community groups, partners, and traditionally underrepresented groups in plan implementation.

- Maintain a community contacts database
- Develop engagement guidelines
- Offer communication training to residents and staff, including mediation training

- Track participation demographics in planning processes and Boards and focus on recruitment and engagement of those who are not yet “in the room.”
- Coordinate with other City Departments, such as Medford’s Office of Outreach and Prevention, and community groups to reach a wide range of individuals.
- Provide resources and funding to support community participation such as stipends, food, and childcare.
- Meet people where they are by expanding meetings and engagement opportunities beyond the walls of City Hall.

1.2. Goal: Implement the Plan According to a Clear Set of Community-Supported Priorities

1.2.1. Objective: Create Systems for Data Driven Decision Making

- Develop a list of data to measure implementation progress.
- Develop a central repository of data for Departments to promote cross-department use of information.

1.2.2. Objective: Identify Strategic Partnerships

- Identify institutions, nonprofits, and property owners who can help implement the recommendations of this plan.
- Develop outreach programs for identified partners, create a regular schedule of contacts, and clarify who is responsible for relationships.

1.3. Goal: Allocate Resources Effectively

1.3.1. Objective: Incorporate recommendations of this plan into the City’s budget.

- Require department heads to identify how their budgets will help implement the recommendations of this plan when requesting funding for new initiatives or capital needs.
- Require the use of data to show how new initiatives or capital requests make progress towards achieving the Plan.

1.3.2. *[More to come as Implementation is developed]*

2. Theme: Climate Resiliency

2.1. Goal: Achieve and Evolve the 2021 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

2.1.1. Objective: Adopt zoning changes identified by the plan and identify metrics to ensure that the new regulations have the anticipated impact.

- Adopt environmental performance standards for large projects.

- Offer incentives and technical assistance to help residents and owners navigate state programs and work with energy providers to achieve exceptional energy performance.
 - Update flood resilience guidelines for development.
 - Implement a benchmarking ordinance for large buildings and adopt performance standards for benchmarked buildings.
 - Adopt new landscape performance standards for heat mitigation, stormwater infiltration, and soil health.
 - Update zoning codes to support community health outcomes.
 - Adopt design and material standards for cooler surfaces.
- 2.1.2. Objective: Adopt other ordinance changes related to climate resilience and land use within the city.
- Develop a rental licensing ordinance with energy efficiency standards.
 - Update the city's stormwater regulations.
 - Update private hauler regulations and recycling requirements.
- 2.1.3. Objective: Raise community awareness about climate change effects in Medford
- Provide clear definitions and information to the community about threats and expected changes.
 - Partner with the Health Department and the Department of Public Works on communications strategies.
 - Work with community groups to implement the Resilience Hubs recommendations.
- 2.2. Goal: Preserve and Enhance Natural Resources
- 2.2.1. Objective: Reach a tree canopy ratio necessary to reduce urban heat island temperatures and reduce stormwater runoff citywide.
- Focus **public** tree investments in priority areas, including:
 - Areas where trees can provide comfort at bus stations and between MBTA stops and retail/job destinations,
 - Areas that currently have low tree canopy,
 - Areas that are prone to flooding where increased trees and tree canopy can both capture rainfall and improve the hydrologic capabilities of the soil, and
 - Areas of high heat vulnerability, and
 - Areas with higher proportions of BIPOC residents.
 - Introduce a tree protection ordinance for **private** land.
 - Create the resources needed to support tree health, including a completed digital tree inventory, community-supported tree canopy master plan, tree succession plans, partnerships with DCR, and an urban forest technical manual.
 - Include tree planting in every Complete Streets project.

- Expand staffing and funding capacity to support tree canopy efforts, including a tree fund, dedicated staff, and volunteer/ambassador programs.
- 2.2.2. Objective: Expand ecological function, green infrastructure and habitat areas.
 - Use parks, streets and passive open space areas for stormwater management to improve water quality and manage quantity.
 - Restore wetlands within the riverfront areas to create better ecological function and native habitat (OSRP 2019).
 - Implement recommendations in partnership with the Mystic River Watershed Initiative.
 - Introduce interpretive and educational signage along trails and in open spaces to educate and communicate about natural systems.
- 2.3. Goal: Support Community Health and Resilience
 - 2.3.1. Objective: Prioritize Environmental Justice Communities
 - Action: Draft actions in process with City-sponsored community liaisons.
 - 2.3.2. Objective: Continue to expand and innovate the City's recycling program.
 - Install permanent collection bins for residents and small businesses to recycle items that cannot be disposed of through the city's recycling.

3. Theme: Equitable Access

- 3.1. Goal: Connect Multimodal Networks
 - 3.1.1. Objective: Continue to implement the Complete Streets Policy to accommodate all road users by creating a road network that meets the needs of a variety of transportation modes and encourages sustainable mobility.
 - Ensure that all future design complies with Complete Streets Policy, focusing on early steps to create safe east-west bike routes through the City.
 - Develop and maintain a publicly-accessible comprehensive map and inventory of pedestrian and bike facility infrastructure to encourage public understanding of available network.
 - Prioritize infrastructure projects which reduce gaps in sidewalk and bicycle network, in coordination across multiple departments.
 - Implement the proposed short- and long-term improvements from the *2018 Medford Square Priority Roadways Improvement Study*.
 - Update design code and development permitting processes to integrate Complete Streets policy.
 - Develop performance measures to assess the rate, success, and effectiveness of Complete Streets implementation project.

- 3.1.2. Objective: Advocate and partner on changes to state or regional infrastructure (e.g. state roads).
 - Take advantage of DCR/MassDOT planning initiatives to push for coordinated improvements to shared roads and other transportation infrastructure.
 - Advocate for improvements to I-93 to reduce cut-through traffic
 - Support connectivity across I-93 via pedestrian crossings
 - Implement and prioritize the recommendations from recently completed Road Safety Audits (RSA), traffic studies, and MassDOT's ongoing Wellington Circle area study.
 - Advocate for the state to develop a consolidated infrastructure maintenance plan for all state-owned assets
- 3.1.3. Objective: Create a long-term plan for City roadway investment
 - Develop a city-wide street infrastructure rehabilitation plan to show funded plans for maintaining roadway assets equitably across the city over their entire useful life.
 - Determine how to best integrate currently unaccepted streets into City ownership to allow for development of safe, standardized sidewalks and bicycle routes.
 - Improve visibility and understanding of unaccepted roadways..
- 3.2. Goal: Coordinate Mobility & Development
 - 3.2.1. Objective: Increase the presence of residents, jobs, and destinations in areas with high transit access today or in coordination with plans for expanded multi-modal access.
 - Allow and promote increased density and mixed uses within walking distance of MBTA train stations and major bus hubs.
 - Promote transit-oriented mixed-use development along emerging corridors like Mystic Avenue and Mystic Valley Parkway.
 - Evaluate current density in transit-rich areas and consider increases that are compatible with areas of lower density.
 - Evaluate whether Medford's current zoning is consistent with the new housing requirements for MBTA communities and modify zoning to bring the City into compliance and preserve its right to access state grants.
 - Create design guidelines or studies to inform how areas of higher density can transition effectively to areas of lower density. Update zoning to address the uses, dimensional standards and development standards required.
 - Create policies to manage various demands on the curbside areas, from service vehicles and deliveries to rideshare vehicles.

3.2.2. Objective: Right-size parking across all commercial centers.

- Prioritize and implement the recommendations from the *March 2021 Parking Policy and Enforcement Commission Report*.
- Determine needed parking volume in each commercial square and perform inventory of spaces.
- Perform a citywide safety audit of parking, with the aim of removing angled parking.
- Standardize parking payment methods and values in each commercial square. (Recommend 2 hour metered parking with the first 15 minutes free.)
- Integrate a public garage into future redevelopment in Medford Square. (Require the garage be open for parking at the same rate as on-street meters, with a specific pass program for business owners/staff, and to accommodate evening events.)
- Add sustainability features to commercial center parking such as solar arrays, stormwater management, and/or electric vehicle charging.

3.2.3. Objective: Simplify the residential parking program.

- Prioritize and implement the recommendations from the *March 2021 Parking Policy and Enforcement Commission Report*.
- Pilot installation of EV charging stations curbside in residential areas.
- Create a zoned parking program by neighborhood with permits for on-street parking. (Create specific regulations by neighborhood based on the prevalence of driveways, proximity to transit, and impact of unaccepted roadways. Ensure there is a nominal cost for on-street parking permits, and a mechanism for visitor passes.)

3.3. Goal: Support an improved experience for all methods and levels of mobility.

3.3.1. Objective: Improve the pedestrian and biking experience.

- Perform an audit of pedestrian crossings and school-adjacent pedestrian routes for safe crossings.
- Prioritize quick-build fixes for dangerous pedestrian areas.
- Create an equity-driven city-wide sidewalk rehabilitation/creation plan to achieve a sidewalk on every street by 2050.
- Prioritize and implement recommendations from the *2016 Bicycle Infrastructure Master Plan* to create safer bike lanes, more bike parking and off-street bike paths that link to regional bike paths.
- Develop and implement consistent signage and street markings for shared streets.
- Add Blue Bike Stations and bicycle repair stations at key destinations.
- Update bicycle and motor vehicle parking requirements.

- Apply universal design principles to ensure existing and future parks and trails are accessible to all regardless of age or ability.
- 3.3.2. Objective: Create a best-in-class transit experience to service existing and new development.
- Partner to create a Medford Square bus hub for seamless, comfortable, safe, and coordinated transfers.
 - Advocate for additional bus service by the MBTA, including connections to the Green Line Extension, Orange Line, and downtown Boston; coverage linking Medford Square to all City neighborhoods; and crosstown service from Malden to Arlington.
 - Explore providing expanded local bus service via a local provider.
 - Request the MBTA undertake a design process to make West Medford Station accessible to people with disabilities and better integrated into the surrounding community.
 - Review the MBTA's bus stop inventory to prioritize sidewalk and crosswalk improvements.

4. Theme: Vibrant Places

4.1. Goal: Live and Work in Medford (Land Use, Economic Development)

4.1.1. Objective: Create more live-work opportunities in Medford's business districts.

- Undertake corridor or commercial center studies to allow an appropriate mix of uses and land use controls for cohesive development along corridors and within village centers. (Near term projects include Mystic Valley Parkway corridor and Medford Square).
- Rezone appropriate emerging corridors, such as Mystic Avenue and Mystic Valley Parkway, to create zoning responsive to the desired land uses for each corridor.
- Rezone to allow mixed-use in "village centers" as-of-right in smaller nodes outside the traditional commercial squares, such as Salem Avenue.
- Partner with developers to attract mixed-use development in underutilized sites in Medford's business districts.

4.1.2. Objective: Make development and regulations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's overall vision for land use within the City, considering squares, corridors, open spaces, and areas that are primarily residential.

- Balance as-of-right uses with appropriate land use controls.

- Address inconsistencies between current and past land use and the current zoning ordinance, including the proposed Office 2 district.
 - Review process for site plan/special permit approval and consider whether the process can be streamlined.
 - Communicate with residents about development economics.
- 4.1.3. Objective: Create equitable development strategies to ensure that future changes are inclusive and beneficial to all.
- Develop a toolkit to prevent displacement as a result of investment that increases housing costs and/or commercial rents.
 - Review linkage requirements and fees and consider how to appropriately spread benefits from development.
- 4.1.4. Objective: Increase job opportunities for residents within Medford.
- Attract companies that provide well-paying jobs to residents and enable them to work in Medford.
 - Create new educational and workforce development opportunities for local residents to prepare them for growing job sectors.
 - Update zoning code to create incentives for new types of industry that can mix with other land uses.
- 4.1.5. Objective: Leverage historic and cultural institutions, open space, and recreation assets as assets to employers looking to attract employees with a desire for a higher quality of life.
- Better integrate the Chevalier Theatre with the economic and cultural life of the rest of the city. (ex. work with restaurant owners to provide pre- and post-show dinner reservations).
- 4.1.6. Objective: Incentivize regular upgrades to facades and storefronts.
- Continue to promote and expand the City's new facade and storefront improvement program.
 - Update zoning codes to include appropriate design guidelines for commercial centers that include guidelines for storefronts and signage design that reinforce the unique identity of each commercial center.
- 4.1.7. Objective: Create commercial centers that meet residents' shopping needs.
- Develop relationships with property owners and create a joint City/property owner marketing campaign to attract preferred businesses/business types.
 - Develop a palette of streetscape materials and furniture for public improvements that is flexible enough to reinforce the specific identity of each center while presenting a consistent Medford identity throughout the city.
- 4.1.8. Objective: Alleviate restrictions on land use and new construction that currently limit developer investment.

- Reduce zoning barriers to multifamily and mixed-use housing development.
 - Create development standards/design guidelines for new construction and significant rehabilitation/additions and tie them to a Design Review Board to maintain consistency in the review process.
 - Reduce parking requirements where possible based on demand audits to allow for more flexible development proposals. (Also see recommendations from *2021 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan*.)
 - Update allowable uses under existing zoning codes, such as permitting life sciences and/or breweries within commercial and industrial districts.
 - Create bonuses for additional density, height, parking waivers, etc. tied to community benefits related to energy efficiency, climate adaptation, active ground floor spaces (indoor or outdoor), or other amenities. Consider a menu of options rather than strict requirements.
 - Evaluate permitting and review process to reduce the time from application to approval.
 - Allow desired uses in specific areas as of right or with a reduced permitting process (ex. site plan review instead of special permit.).
- 4.2. Goal: Encourage Balanced Growth
- 4.2.1. Objective: Enable growth through regulatory and policy changes.
- Review and revise zoning and permitting processes to encourage appropriate development within neighborhoods, including small-scale neighborhood retail and services, and neighborhood /commercial center and comprehensive plan goals.
 - Revise zoning to allow for redevelopment of non-conforming lots for smaller housing types in neighborhoods.
 - Support small business and the arts by reviewing relevant policies, such as the Review liquor license policy, and food truck policies.
 - Review special permit requirements for live music in restaurants.
- 4.2.2. Objective: Develop underutilized parcels to meet specific needs, including different housing types/affordability, commercial development, and climate mitigation.
- Leverage centrally located City-owned sites to promote and develop multi-family residential properties.
 - Capitalize on city-owned properties and air rights to Wellington parking lots to support new job growth.
 - Consider a redevelopment authority and redevelopment plan to create incentives to address underutilized parcels in key areas.
- 4.3. Goal: Support Workforce and Business Support (Economic Development)

- 4.3.1. Objective: Create workforce development programs for under-resourced populations.
 - Create educational and workforce development programs to support local youths' professional development, including trade and technical career paths, in line with emerging industries in Medford including life sciences.
 - Pursue partnership opportunities with Tufts University for educational and workforce development programs focused on youth, low-income residents, and residents of color.
- 4.3.2. Objective: Create small business support programs for under-resourced populations.
 - Designate an MWBE contact within the City and develop a City-operated MWBE directory and resources webpage.
 - Establish a target MWBE utilization rate for municipal contracts. Provide support and technical assistance to MWBE firms looking to contract with the City.
 - Create technical support programs for small businesses and members of the workforce to improve digital literacy.
- 4.4. Goal: Increase Access and Enjoyment of Major Natural Resources
 - 4.4.1. Objective: Continue progress towards continuous trail access along the Mystic and Malden Rivers.
 - Improve and expand open space opportunities along the Mystic and Malden Rivers, including programmed linear park spaces connected by accessible multi-use paths.
 - Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and car-free connections between parks and open spaces within Medford and in the region, focusing on major resources such as the Middlesex Fells and Wright's Pond.
 - Work with DCR to improve/restore the pedestrian bridge and the park between the pedestrian bridge and Main Street.
 - Collaborate with DCR to implement existing connectivity plans and projects, such as their Mystic River Master Plan and Parkways Master Plan.
 - 4.4.2. Objective: Expand the public use and programming of Medford's rivers.
 - Collaborate with private developers on riverfront or adjacent sites to expand pedestrian access and ensure compatible development patterns with the riverfront location.
 - Collaborate to promote and advance projects promoted by DCR and MyRWA including the Clippership Connector, South Medford Connector, MacDonald Park, Mystic Lakes Linear Park, Wellington Greenway, Wellington Connector, and Condon Shell.
 - Manage invasive plants along the riverbanks to create more open water views.

5. Theme: Welcoming and Supportive Neighborhoods

5.1. Goal: Honor History in Neighborhoods (History, Arts, and Cultures)

5.1.1. Objective: Preserve historical structures and foster an appreciation for Medford's many histories.

- Expand the marketing program for small businesses to include historic and cultural assets (Royall House and Slave Quarters, Brooks Estate, Chevalier Theater, etc.) that can act as draws for tourists - local and beyond.
- Hire a City liaison to work with historic, cultural, and arts groups and help more organizations and artists access City resources through a single point in City government (including permits and licenses for events.)
- Implement the recommendations of the Brooks Estate Master Plan.
- Evaluate City-owned properties for eligibility to be listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places and CPA funding for restoration.
- Improve accessibility for people who have physical disabilities to the Brooks Estate and the Royall House and Slave Quarters.
- Support the preservation of historic documents, artifacts, and records.
- Make historic documents, artifacts, and records available to the public, including researchers and artists. Draw on written records, photographs, and artifacts for display throughout the City either of originals or reproductions as components of public art.
- Evaluate historic structures for risk of damage by flooding (ex. Chevalier Theater) and consider this risk factor in targeting additional structures or areas for designation.

5.1.2. Objective: Incorporate the history of the City and its neighborhoods, the cultures of its residents, and the arts into day-to-day life.

- Beautify the commercial centers and nodes by working with local artists to showcase neighborhood history and culture(s). This could include vacant storefronts and privately-owned public spaces.
- Develop a program for pop-up shops or art installations in empty ground floor space of commercial or mixed-use buildings.
- Use a portion of the funding from the Medford Arts Council to support public art by local artists.
- Create an outreach program to educate new artists about the support available from the Medford Arts Council.
- Encourage a permanent location for the arts in a place that is easily accessible for residents.

- Support cross-collaboration among historic, arts, and cultural groups, including developing and supporting a central calendar of all historic, arts, and cultural events in the city.
 - Tie the history of the Royall House and Slave Museum and the Brooks Estate to the history of the City by adding them to the marketing plan and showcasing the impact of the history of Black communities to the City in public art and historical references.
 - Engage students in the history, arts, and cultures of Medford, including youth and Tufts University groups.
 - Consider creating one or more cultural districts in Medford (Medford Square, West Medford).
- 5.2. Goal: Ensure Affordable Housing for All
- 5.2.1. Objective: Create, expand, and protect mixed-income housing options throughout the city to create a minimum of 120 homes annually or 600 units by FY2025 as called for in the 2021 Housing Production Plan.
- Update zoning to allow for multifamily dwellings.
 - Actively pursue mixed-income and mixed-use residential development opportunities for vacant and underutilized lots in Medford's business districts, such as parking lots in Medford Square and the MBTA bus lot in Haines Square.
 - Identify appropriate housing types between four-family and the more recent large developments to address a missing segment of housing size and affordability.
 - Consider allowing smaller, infill housing on nonconforming lots to add to housing stock.
 - Review impact of inclusionary housing ordinance and consider changes, such as cash-in-lieu for units or partial units.
 - Enable smaller and more diverse housing options through zoning updates.
 - Update zoning to foster affordable infill development.
 - Continue to foster partnerships and relationships with mission-driven and non-profit developers to amplify the work of the City, Housing Authority, and existing local housing organizations.
 - Create neighborhood or area specific design guidelines for the Planning Board to use at site plan review that consider history/development patterns.
- 5.3. Goal: Enliven Open Space and Community Facilities
- 5.3.1. Objective: Diversify the character and use of parks, facilities, and open spaces.
- Incorporate arts programs including dance, music, and spoken word into events in these facilities.
 - Reduce fees to attend events to promote inclusivity.

- Use future capital improvements to expand amenities such as adventure play, community gardens, restrooms and support for events (electrical hook-ups, etc) at the city's larger neighborhood parks.
 - Track and respond to enduring trends that reach a range of ages such as pickleball, skate parks, cricket, and trails.
 - Invest in splash pads with shade and benches within walking distance of all neighborhoods.
 - Improve signage, wayfinding, and interpretation in Medford parks, trails, and plazas.
- 5.3.2. Continue to work toward completion of regular and deferred maintenance needs.
- Develop a system for park facility management / maintenance.
 - Address the need for dedicated, focused, and specialized facilities management personnel and operations.
 - Address capital needs at Medford High School, fire department facilities, and public grounds and park facilities.
 - Address capital needs for street and sidewalk repairs and replacement of water mains.
 - Retrofit existing facilities for universal accessibility.
- 5.3.3. Objective: Provide activities and spaces to gather for all ages and abilities.
- Support activities at the Senior Center that will engage younger seniors such as classes in computers, technology, poetry, and writing memoirs.
 - Promote the different spaces in the new Medford Library widely and ensure that resources are available to train people of different ages, abilities, and languages on available equipment (tech, maker, and programming space).
 - Support more performance space throughout the city, especially smaller scale performance spaces. (Note: this could include restaurants which currently require a special permit, Tufts, the Royall House, or other spaces).
 - Create a program to encourage and support neighborhood block parties or citywide celebrations like nearby Porch Fests.
 - Continue the partnership with schools for use of active sports fields, and improve operations by:
 - Streamlining and coordinating the field permit process.
 - Make field use and bookings publicly accessible to promote informal use during gap times.
 - Design/create universal design park spaces.