



FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda & Meeting Packet

February 4, 2026

6:00 PM

Meeting will be held at the Franklin Municipal Building
355 East Central Street - 2nd Floor, Council Chambers

A NOTE TO RESIDENTS: All citizens are welcome to attend public meetings in person. To **view the live meeting remotely, citizens** are encouraged to watch the live stream on the [Franklin Town Hall TV YouTube channel](#) or the live broadcast on Comcast Channel 9 and Verizon Channel 29. To **listen to the meeting remotely** citizens may call-in using this number: 1-929-205-6099. To **participate in the meeting remotely** citizens may join a [Zoom Webinar](#) using the information provided below. Meetings are recorded and archived by Franklin TV on the [Franklin Town Hall TV YouTube channel](#) and shown on repeat on Comcast Channel 9 and Verizon Channel 29.

ZOOM WEBINAR DETAILS: ID #885 5431 3626 & Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88554313626>

- **Any participants who wish to speak** during the webinar must enter their **full name and email address** when joining the webinar.
- All participants will be automatically muted upon joining the webinar. In order to speak, participants will need to select the "Raise Hand" function to request to be unmuted.
- All speakers will be required to state their full name and street address before commenting.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

- a. *This meeting is being recorded by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast channel 9 and Verizon Channel 29. This meeting may be recorded by others.*
- b. *Chair to identify members participating remotely.*
- c. *Upcoming Town Sponsored Community Events.*

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- a. *Citizens are welcome to express their views for up to three minutes on a matter that is not on the agenda. In compliance with G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20 et seq, the Open Meeting Law, the Council cannot engage in a dialogue or comment on a matter raised during Citizen Comments. The Council may ask the Town Administrator to review the matter. Nothing herein shall prevent the Town Administrator from correcting a misstatement of fact.*

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. [December 17, 2025](#)

4. PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS - None Scheduled

5. APPOINTMENTS - None Scheduled

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS - 6:00 PM - None Scheduled

7. LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None Scheduled

8. PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSION

- a. Discussion: 2026-2027 Town Council-Town Administrator Goals
 - i. [Town Administrator Memo](#)
 - ii. [Draft Town Council-Town Administrator Preliminary List of Goals](#)

- iii. Discussion: Town and School Strategic Planning
 - 1. [Town of Wrentham Strategic Planning Presentation](#)
 - 2. Town of Westford Strategic Planning
 - a. [2025 Strategic Plan Document](#)
 - b. [Presentation](#)

9. LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- a. [Resolution 26-08: Adoption of Amendment to the Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council](#) (*Motion to Approve Resolution 26-08 - Majority Vote*)

10. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

11. SUBCOMMITTEE & AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13. COUNCIL COMMENTS

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION –

- a. *Exemption #6: Considering the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Public Body:*
 - i. *Former Davis-Thayer Elementary School*
 - ii. *Former Parmenter Elementary School*
 - iii. *“Other Property” potentially available for Town purchase/acquisition*

15. ADJOURN

Note: Two-Thirds Vote: requires 6 votes

Majority Vote: requires majority of members present and voting

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 17, 2025**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at the Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA. Councilors present: Jane Callaway-Tripp, Ted Cormier-Leger, Robert Dellorco, Gene Grella, Caroline Griffith (via Zoom), Michael LeBlanc, Stephen Malloy, Max Morrongiello, Kenneth Ojukwu. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney; Julie McCann, Operations Manager.

CALL TO ORDER: ► Chair Dellorco called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. He called for a moment of silence especially for the Brown University, Australia, and MIT incidents. All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR: ► Chair Dellorco reviewed the following as posted on the agenda. A Note to Residents: All citizens are welcome to attend public meetings in person. To view the live meeting remotely, citizens are encouraged to watch the live stream on the Franklin Town Hall TV YouTube channel or the live broadcast on Comcast Channel 9 and Verizon Channel 29. To listen to the meeting remotely citizens may call-in using the number on the agenda. To participate in the meeting remotely citizens may join a Zoom Webinar using the information provided on the agenda. Meetings are recorded and archived by Franklin TV on the Franklin Town Hall TV YouTube channel and shown on repeat on Comcast Channel 9 and Verizon Channel 29. Any participants who wish to speak during the webinar must enter their full name and email address when joining the webinar. All participants will be automatically muted upon joining the webinar. In order to speak, participants will need to select the “raise hand” function to request to be unmuted. All speakers will be required to state their full name and street address before commenting. This meeting is being recorded by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast channel 9 and Verizon Channel 29. This meeting may be recorded by others. ► He announced Councilor Griffith will be attending the meeting via Zoom. ► He announced upcoming events. Town Council office hours will be held December 18 at 8:30 AM at the Senior Center. ► School Committee Vice Chair David Callaghan, 30 Plain Street, gave an update from the Franklin School Committee. He stated at the last School Committee meeting they voted on the capital projects requests. He said the projects are focused on the three highest priorities and managing the financial realities of the community. He said they had a great presentation on special education in the Franklin schools. He said the biggest thing in special education is they are seeing a rise in the number of students requiring special education and with that an increased price tag to educate all public school students. He explained they have been building and growing special programs in district. He explained if a student’s needs are not met in the school system, they have to do an out-of-district tuition which is a significant cost. He said they are currently saving about \$7.8 million through the specialized program here instead of doing out-of-district spending. He said they had a great snapshot of enrollment numbers. October 1 is when the schools are reporting to the state. He said at K-8 the number of students going to outside programs including charter school is at a five-year low. He explained they saw the number of Franklin children going to Franklin schools has been increasing year over year.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: ► Mr. Mark Minnichelli, 31 Longfellow Drive, said at the first December meeting he talked about two bills in the Massachusetts legislature right now. He followed that up last week with an email with more information, and he has not heard back from any Town Council members. He asked the members to look at his emails, and if they have questions, please let him know. He will also provide information about a webinar with more information. ► Mr. Brian Young, 5 Berkeley Drive, said this is a follow-up to his conversation last month with the Town Council regarding transparency on billing to residents, specifically in this case the real estate tax bill. He said he is happy to report that there will be a calculator online that is going to be put up relatively soon that any resident can go to and see everything broken down by line item. He said this shows that the Town Council cannot do it alone, and they need help

from the residents. He said he thinks the Town Council should create a committee to look at the trust and transparency concerns that people have. He has some thoughts on how this committee would look. ► Mr. Jason Joyce, 80 Union Street, talked about a new organization in town called Franklin Fathers and their three pillars are community, wellness, and advocacy. He invited other dads, caregivers, and families to upcoming winter events. On December 30 they have Dads and Donuts at Downtown Sports from 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM. On January 16 they have Daddy Daughter Hair School at the Franklin Public Library. Every Sunday at 8 AM they meet for Run Club at the SNETT trail head and hope to see many of you there. ► Director of Veterans' Services Shannon Nisbett and Executive Assistant Debra Martin addressed the Town Council. Ms. Nisbett let Franklin veterans and their spouses know that they can provide assistance with bills through the town veterans' funds on a case-by-case basis. She explained what the Municipal Veterans Assistance Fund and other funds can be used for. She cannot guarantee coverage of the entire bill. She said later tonight they will thank the donors who make these funds available. She reviewed and explained Chapter 115 which is a needs-based benefit for veterans, surviving spouses and their dependents. She explained that her office is well-versed in helping people with CHAMP and HUD applications for subsidized housing, and they monitor the affordable housing options in the area. She said there are many ways her office can help. She encouraged any Franklin veteran or spouse to contact their office at 508-613-1315. ► Ms. Chandra Juncker, 39 Union Street, gave a shout-out to the Franklin Public Library and Ms. Caleigh Keating. She said she has four children. She explained dyslexia and said large print books help. Ms. Keating helped and was able to find and provide large print books for older children which are now available in the library. ► Ms. Kim Mu-Chow, 4 Briarwood Road, and a member of the Council on Aging, said last week they had the Winter Wonderland at the Senior Center. She reported over 500 people attended. She reviewed some of the activities. She thanked the Friends of Franklin Elders. She said another program is for homebound seniors, and they partner with the Charter School and do gift cards and notes. She reviewed an appreciative note back that was received and was very meaningful. She noted that there are still decorations available at the Senior Center. She thanked the community for their generosity regarding the second annual Franklin Community Coat Drive. She said over 600 coats were received. She explained that seniors and veterans were allowed to shop early. She said they helped 65 families with the coats. ► Ms. Ali Rheume, 47 Summer Street, said most people like free food, free drinks, and being welcomed into a space. She said on Saturday regarding their rise up social hour to connect the community with individuals who navigate disability, they will be welcoming anyone 18-plus from the community to join their holiday party. It is an open house at the Franklin United Methodist Church from 10 AM to 11 AM. You do not have to navigate disability to join. She announced she will be adding to the large print books at the library as an author with a large print accessible kids book in February.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: ► *November 12, 2025 & November 19, 2025.* ► **MOTION to Approve** the November 12, 2025 meeting minutes by **Cormier-Leger**. **SECOND** by **Morrongiello**. **No discussion.**

► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Callaway-Tripp-YES, Cormier-Leger-YES, Dellorco-YES, Grella-YES, Griffith-YES, LeBlanc-YES, Malloy-YES, Morrongiello-YES, Ojukwu-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

► **MOTION to Approve** the November 19, 2025 meeting minutes by **Cormier-Leger**. **SECOND** by **Grella**. **No discussion.** ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Callaway-Tripp-YES, Cormier-Leger-YES, Dellorco-YES, Grella-YES, Griffith-YES, LeBlanc-YES, Malloy-YES, Morrongiello-YES, Ojukwu-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: ► **8th Grade Franklin Panthers Football Team.** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger and Chair Dellorco presented the recognition for the 8th Grade Franklin Panthers Football Team achievements. Both Councilor Cormier-Leger and Chair Dellorco reviewed their history with sports and their children in Franklin. Councilor Cormier-Leger read aloud the proclamation recognizing the 2025 8th Grade Franklin Panthers Football Team in celebration of their championship winning 2025 season. He congratulated all for the team effort. ► **Franklin High School Cheerleading Team.** ► Councilor Morrongiello read aloud the proclamation recognizing the 2025 Franklin High School Cheerleading Team in celebration of their championship winning 2025 season. He congratulated the team. ► **Franklin High School**

Girls' Volleyball Team. ► Councilor Ojukwu read aloud the proclamation recognizing the 2025 Franklin High School Girls' Volleyball Team in celebration of their championship winning 2025 season. He congratulated the team.

Chair Dellorco called for a couple-minute break.

APPOINTMENTS: ► **Council on Aging - Christopher (Kit) Brady.** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger read the appointment. ► **MOTION** to ratify the appointment by the Town Administrator of Christopher Brady to serve as a Member of the Council on Aging with a term to expire on June 30, 2027, by **Cormier-Leger. SECOND** by **Grella. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen said Mr. Brady is on Zoom. ► Mr. Brady said it is his pleasure. ► Councilor Ojukwu said it was good to have someone with his background working with the Council on Aging. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Callaway-Tripp-YES, Cormier-Leger-YES, Dellorco-YES, Grella-YES, Griffith-YES, LeBlanc-YES, Malloy-YES, Morrongiello-YES, Ojukwu-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS - 6:00 PM: ► None.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: ► **Annual License Renewals (See attached "2026 Town of Franklin Alcohol License Renewals").** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger read the annual license renewals. ► **MOTION** to Approve the 2026 Alcohol License renewals by **Cormier-Leger. SECOND** by **Grella. No discussion.** ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Callaway-Tripp-YES, Cormier-Leger-YES, Dellorco-YES, Grella-YES, Griffith-YES, LeBlanc-YES, Malloy-YES, Morrongiello-YES, Ojukwu-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS: ► **Snow Presentation - Brutus Cantoreggi, DPW Director & Carlos Rebelo, Highway/Grounds Superintendent.** ► Mr. Cantoreggi and Mr. Rebelo addressed the Town Council. Mr. Cantoreggi narrated the Snow & Ice Removal Program slideshow which was provided in the meeting packet. He said the priorities are roadways, public buildings/schools, and the sidewalks. He reviewed their goals which included to be prepared, respond with the appropriate resources in a timely manner, and have all roadways cleared showing some asphalt with less than one inch of snow and ice within four hours of the conclusion of the storm. He said this is expensive, but it is what the Town Councils in the past and residents expect. He said in FY25 they had 16 events with 33 in. of snow. The total budget for last year was \$1.1 million, and we spent about \$362,000 just on salt. He said in FY26 the budget is \$1.4 million, and they anticipate spending \$500,000 on salt which is about 6,800 tons. He reviewed as shown on the provided slide for the past years the number of events and inches of snowfall. He discussed salting versus treating. He said they use 100 percent salt. He reviewed brine is less expensive and is a mixture of 80 percent salt brine and 20 percent beet juice. He discussed the five-truck route that he implemented years ago. Treating the whole town is about \$33,740 versus the five-truck route for \$10,440 which includes all main roads, schools, and town buildings. He said they do not do all the subdivisions; people should go slower in the subdivisions. He discussed environmental concerns which include the rising salt levels in the water supply. The recommended amount of salt in the drinking water is less than 20 ppm. In 2024 we are up to 69.6 ppm. He showed a short video about salt use in Franklin including the following: services that people expect in Franklin, how salt works on the roads, how much salt is used per storm, where the salt goes after the storm which is in the catch basins and eventually to a river or stream or becomes part of the groundwater, drinking water for Franklin comes from the ground, salt levels in the drinking water, salt pollution in wetlands and streams, the effects of salt on biodiversity, what can be done internally about this, do we have to salt the whole town at each event and can we just do the main roads, the need to calibrate the trucks so they distribute the proper amount of salt, the salt brine mixture, pretreatment, and education for the public such as reduce the speed or stay off the road, and that salt use has probably been reduced by one-third since he first came to Franklin, salt is a problem, and every storm is different. He discussed plowing and they have 35 pieces of equipment. He said they like to have about 60 pieces from outside contractors. It is getting difficult to do that. They are at about 55 this year. He said when town employees are plowing it is less than when they use

contractors. He said they get calls about sections of Rt. 140 which some areas are taken care of by MassDOT. I-495 is done by the state. He discussed challenges including schools and sidewalks. He noted that they do not plow sidewalks in the neighborhoods. He reviewed the time required to clear sidewalks. He noted that until the sidewalks are clear, the buses will pick up any student even if they are not a paying bus rider and take them to school. He discussed worker shortages for snow removal which is a big problem. He reviewed the provided slide and explained the why, the effect, and what have we done including improving the union contract rate and hours. He discussed that now to get a CDL license it costs about \$9,000 to \$12,000. The Town of Franklin is a certified trainer for CDL licenses. He noted if you do not have the plow people, it takes longer to clear the roads. This is an issue everywhere. He discussed that Franklin's plow rates are not that good anymore. He discussed the good equipment that they have and said his employees do come in and put in the hours. He noted improved technology and weather reporting and the cameras that are installed in the roads in Franklin. The cameras help them see what is going on. He explained what can affect response time includes but is not limited to duration of a storm, temperature changes, weather patterns, timing of the storm, and type of precipitation. He discussed how they prepare for a storm. He reviewed the town bylaw regarding that no person shall plow, push, deposit, throw, or pile snow or ice into or across any public street, sidewalk, or property, not direct not cause the same to be done unless in the employ of the Town. He said he can give warnings and then fine. He reviewed the winter storm parking ban bylaw. He discussed the rules to remember including clearing hydrants, salt is not available at the DPW, basketball hoops are not allowed in the public right of way, and the mailbox policy which is \$50. He reviewed the top 10 complaints that he gets. ► Town Council members asked questions and made comments. ► In response, Mr. Cantoreggi explained they have explored some shared service agreements. He said they still are doing the walkability to the train station. He explained the tiers that they do. He said they pay \$30 per hour for shovelers. He said regarding the policy of businesses being responsible to clear the areas in front of their business, the bylaw is out there, but it is not enforced. He talked about why the salt ppm is increasing. He said that if the town stopped using salt, the amount in the water would go down in two years. He agreed that the state contributes to the salt as they use salt on I-495, and commercial properties use salt also. He talked about the salt and said it is not required that they test it; he just tests it to know. ► Mr. Hellen explained that if they do not use all the snow and ice removal budget, it goes into a stabilization account so the town has a reserve if a bad winter arrives. There is about \$800,000 in that fund right now. ► Mr. Cantoreggi discussed and explained that the number for salt only was changed, and it is \$500,000, not the \$605,000 on the slide; the \$605,000 includes the brine. He responded to the possibility of sharing vehicles and plow services; he does not know any town that has enough people right now. He discussed that there are about 26 towns involved in the consortium for purchasing, and they do get better prices. He discussed that at the end of the year he fills the salt, so it always starts out full, and they continually fill it during the season as it is used. He asked that if you get any constituents with complaints, have them call Public Works, and we can see if we can take care of it.

► ***Social Equity Policy Discussion.*** ► Mr. Hellen said this item was requested by Councilor Malloy. This was a regulation we were required to do by the Cannabis Control Commission. He filed the policy after it was approved by the Town Council. He has not heard back from the state at all in two months. He noted that the House of Representatives has passed a reform bill of the Cannabis Control Commission. The Senate has done their own bill. He thinks by July they will do something. He explained that he does not believe the Cannabis Control Commission should even exist; it should be abolished. A lot of what they are doing is bureaucratic and a waste of time. ► Councilor Malloy said in addition to being bureaucratic, he is afraid that what they have asked us to do or what we have done ought to be illegal. He said the state Cannabis Control Commission has set a criterion out there that will prohibit anybody other than select applicants that they have defined from getting a marijuana license of any sort in Franklin and other municipalities. This is done in an effort to remediate what they perceived as an impact to certain applicants or people who lived in impacted areas where not narcotics but marijuana crimes were overly enforced. He provided an example of how the policy works and that people can get rejected from having a license if they do not meet the social equity applicant's requirements. ► Mr. Hellen explained the process for applicants. He said Franklin does not have an equity plan approved yet. He said he used a lot of the information from Shrewsbury that was already approved as he prepared Franklin's plan. He said Shrewsbury was five years. He explained that for two years

they would have to give exclusive access to a social equity applicant via this policy. ► Councilor Malloy said he does not know how they are going to do this. ► Mr. Hellen said if the Town Council would like to strip out that sentence and have Mr. Hellen refile this, he would be happy to do it. He will have to see if the state will approve anything less than what they approved in Shrewsbury. He said he asked the state for feedback before he brought it to the Town Council, and the state said no. He read aloud the sentence he thinks Councilor Malloy is referencing: Under the CCC program, Social Equity and Economic Empowerment applicants are eligible for exclusive access to marijuana establishment licensure for at least two years from October 29, 2025 through October 29, 2027. He discussed he was testing the state a little as no new licenses have come before us in a few years. He said there are currently two businesses in Franklin. He noted if recreational marijuana were to be banned, the town would lose \$.5 million in the budget. He suggested working with Representative Roy and Senator Rausch on this. ► Mr. Cerel explained that they have to put this in context and reviewed the history beginning with medical then recreational marijuana and that federally it has not legalized it. He said the recreational has fallen in the price. He further reviewed the social equity policy. ► Councilor Malloy discussed language that he did not like. He said he does not see how they can willfully exclude people from this. ► Mr. Hellen discussed how the regulations are formed. He noted the reforms that have already been done with the Cannabis Control Commission. He said you could amend the policy tonight, review it further, bring it back with other edits in January, wait a little longer to see if the state provides any feedback. ► Councilor Malloy said when he meets with Mr. Hellen, he would like to go over this. He said he does not feel we have done our best on this. He would like to vet it more thoroughly. ► Chair Dellorco confirmed other members felt this was a good idea. ► Discussion commenced on being a social equity applicant approved by the state, other applicants, starting a business, if the two-year window is a minimum, and that there has been no response from the state to Mr. Hellen's submittal. ► Mr. Cerel explained this is a policy. Legally there is a difference between a bylaw and policy guidelines. He explained one concern he has is that the legislature has just delegated wholesale all of this to the Cannabis Control Commission to promulgate extensive regulations and implement them with questionable effects so far. ► Mr. Hellen talked about host community agreement money when it was legal; they did get rid of host community agreements. He reviewed the money collected and what some of the benefits were for the community. ► Mr. Cerel explained that the legislature made it extremely onerous to impose fees in these host community agreements and put the burden on the municipalities to justify the fees. There is more downside than upside to this. ► Councilor Morrongiello discussed there are times for the government to provide social equity. He said the housing authority prioritizes seniors and veterans and disabled people as they have a greater need. He said this language is convoluted, but they are trying to address the need for justice for people who have been harmed, and he cautions throwing everything out without addressing that issue. ► Mr. Hellen said if anyone has any ideas, send him an email about this. ► Councilor Grella discussed what defines a social equity applicant, and it seems like it is based on marijuana drug related offenses, which seems like it is a diminishing population to draw from. ► Mr. Hellen talked about expunging people's records regarding if they were impacted or harmed by this. ► Chair Dellorco said we will get into this, and we may have to have Representative Roy and Senator Rausch in to further explain it to us.

► **Town Charter Presentation.** ► Mr. Hellen said at the request of some of the Councilor members, he is reviewing the Town Charter. He narrated the three slides provided in the meeting packet regarding the Town Charter overview. He reviewed the major milestones. In 1978 the Council-Administrator form of government was created. In 1984 there was a charter commission five-year review, and there was another review in 1995. From 2007 to 2014 there was a series of technical clarifications/updates from state laws. He discussed that it is very difficult to change a Town Charter. He reviewed procedures to alter the Town Charter amendment to a municipal charter is governed by MGL Chapter 43B. He reviewed the two provisions to alter the Town Charter: elected charter commission (formal) and ballot question or ad hoc subcommittee (informal) which this process has been used by Franklin for the past 30 years. He said Town Council members can run to be on a charter commission, but the Town Council members do not automatically get a seat. He said it would cost a couple \$100,000 to fund a charter commission. There is a lot more to this than meets the eye. There are statutory requirements with this. ► Mr. Cerel said once you elect a charter commission, they are autonomous. ► Mr. Hellen said if the charter commission puts something out that you do not like, you can only defeat it at

the ballot. He talked about if someone were to resign from a charter commission. He also reviewed that altering the Town Charter could be done by an ad hoc committee which he explained. He explained this process cannot include substantive changes to the form of government. Even if you set up an ad hoc committee, it still has to go to the ballot. He noted that you have to ask yourself what are you trying to achieve and what are you trying to fix. ► Town Council members asked questions and made comments. ► In response to questions, Mr. Cerel explained there is a statutory way to amend the charter. Discussion commenced regarding if there is a need to have 15 percent of voters sign a petition to establish a charter commission and the timing required to elect a charter commission in 2026. ► Mr. Hellen explained there it becomes an independence issue as the commission can commence at their own pace. ► Mr. Cerel explained why the every-two-year elections for Town Council members are not held on a presidential election year. ► Councilor Morrongiello said they should focus on the budget and trust with the community and focusing on the charter right now would be a sideshow from accomplishing those things. ► Mr. Hellen explained that several years ago the Town of Medway went to un-elect their town clerk. They sent a home rule to Beacon Hill and because of the division in the community over the question, the elected representatives on Beacon Hill sent it back to the local ballot. What you are seeing now from the legislature is that they do not want to get in the middle of local decisions. He said you can go through the home rule process where the council could take the charter commission report, put it into a home rule, file it in the legislature, and the legislature could approve it, but it has a microscopic probability of getting through. The way you have to do this if you want to do a wholesale thing is go all in and do the commission, elect the board, bake out four to six years, give it time and resources, and build community consensus. He said they have learned from the failed two overrides that you have to talk to people one-on-one at their houses and make sure the community is in favor of something so that when you go to the ballot it passes. He discussed home rule and said the council can file legislation with the state in the House of Representatives on any matter you want to do. He reviewed the liquor license for Dacey's was a home rule piece of legislation that was filed with the state. He explained a citizen can file their own legislation with the state. ► Discussion commenced on an ad hoc committee and what they can focus on and address with that regarding the charter and what they can change. ► Chair Dellorco said he kind of agrees with everyone. He said he thinks they put together an ad hoc committee and will work with Mr. Hellen to figure something out, and then get the list that they think they need to change. He said this is not now as he understands they need to get through the budget and everything like that, and we will get there and then decide if the changes are significant, and then decide if they should do the whole thing or do the small part of it. ► Mr. Hellen said he agrees with what everyone has said. He said we have to start somewhere and get some sort of short list of things. He discussed if the goal is that in 2026, they could get some ad hoc committee to report out by the end of the year the top 20 things. He discussed the process for ballot questions in a local election, and it does say 15 percent of voters. He said they can talk to Representative Roy and get some additional facts. He said once you get to January you are going to be all budget all the time, so he thinks this can be a side project through the summer. He responded to the suggestion about reorganizing current subcommittees and having new ones and talked about bandwidth in the TA office and empowering the council members to go and do more such as ribbon cuttings and other things.

► ***Citizen Satisfaction Survey: The Town Is Headed in the Wrong Direction.*** ► Mr. Hellen said Councilor Morrongiello requested to talk about this item. ► Councilor Morrongiello said there was a survey that went out earlier this year around citizen satisfaction. One issue brought up was that many residents thought the town was moving in the wrong direction. He said you have to identify the problem. He said we have talked about development and concerns about past override failures. He talked about over-development as an issue. He said people say this is not the town I grew up in. He said talking about how we feel as a town and how we feel about how the debate impacts us will help us better identify those core issues. He said he would ask his fellow colleagues to sort of explore the different issues that got you elected. He said what is the core emotion response between why we feel the way we do about the issues we care about. He said he wants to brainstorm as a group what do we feel this distrust is coming from so we could better tap into it, and by doing that better come up with solutions. ► Mr. Hellen said that is something for the Town Council members to comment on. ► Chair Dellorco said there is less building as there is less land to build on now. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger noted page 10 of a document talks about governance and discussed that the numbers are all over the place

and the data is a little confusing. He said the council could take each category and figure out ways to improve the scores and voter satisfaction. He said we cannot solely rely on the data from the last election because only 40 percent of the eligible voters showed up to vote. So, we cannot say the whole town is unhappy. He said for him the more concerning number is how to get the 60 percent who did not vote engaged, and he does not know the answer to that. ► Chair Dellorco said it is the same 50 to 100 people that are there all the time. They have to get more people engaged, but he does not know how. ► Councilor Grella talked about some of the issues he heard while campaigning with the biggest being communication and transparency and getting the word out. He noted the issue of a split tax rate and explaining what that means. He said that is the communication people want on all these issues; getting the communication out and educate the people is needed. ► Councilor Ojukwu said he thinks people are frustrated with the lack of information or misinformation that is out there. He said the Town Council could help with that by communicating in the same fashion with constituents and communities and be more transparent. He suggested a way to summarize the meetings and be more communicative with the Town of Franklin when thinking about goals and where we want to go and how we are going to get there. ► Chair Dellorco said he agrees with everyone and what has been said. ► Councilor Malloy agreed with getting the information out and the frustration that people feel. He said they need to find a way to engage and talk with people. People need to hear an answer and know they are listened to. ► Chair Dellorco noted Senior Center office hours are early in the morning and not all council members can attend. ► Mr. Hellen talked about a poll his office is sending out to the Town Council members to find out what their schedules are regarding other times and locations for office hours and what their ideas are to do outreach. He said you have to go to where people are and at those times. For instance, seniors are there at 8:30 AM to have coffee, not at 6:30 PM to have dinner. He said he is trying to convey you have to go to where people are. He said people are on Facebook. That may be something to be more explored. He talked about the challenges of outreach, the number of emails, and the Town Council members personal schedules. ► Councilor Callaway-Tripp talked about switching up the days at the Senior Center even if keeping the same time. ► Mr. Hellen said just go down yourself; go to the Senior Center, library, fire station, and have your own office hours. He said all nine Town Council members can just go and hang out with people and just get out there. ► Councilor Morrongiello talked about people should be nice. He talked about transparency as compared to other towns. He asked that the Town Council members think a little about what drove them to run and noted that if it drove you to run, that is probably why people voted for you.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

Note: Two-Thirds Vote requires six votes; Majority Vote requires majority of members present and voting.

- a. Resolution 25-83: Gift Acceptance - Veterans Services Dept. (\$91,072.88), Senior Center (21,725.73) (Motion to Approve Resolution 25-83 - Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 25-83: Gift Acceptance - Veterans Services Dept. (\$91,072.88), Senior Center (21,725.73) by Grella. SECOND by Cormier-Leger. Discussion:** ► Director of Veterans' Services Shannon Nisbett and Executive Assistant Debra Martin addressed the Town Council. Ms. Nisbett expressed her deepest gratitude to the late Mr. Robert Catalano and his estate administrators for the extremely generous donation to the Veterans Gift Fund in the amount of \$86,258.42. This donation reflects Mr. Catalano's generosity and compassion as well as his patriotism and dedication to veterans and the local community. She explained the Veterans Office will be careful custodians of these funds and use them wisely. They are deeply grateful for the donation. She gave a shout-out to the Fletcher Hospital Corporation whose donation of \$3,500 is also on this resolution. They are annual donors, and we appreciate their support. She thanked all organizations and individuals who have donated to the veterans' funds. ► Chair Dellorco talked about Mr. Catalano and how he loved the town. He reviewed that Mr. Catalano was a war hero and a great person. ► Councilor Grella talked about Mr. Catalano being at St. Mary's Church and noted the generous donation. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger said these are truly extraordinary gifts left to the town. He cautioned and gave advice about where funds should go or be invested. He thinks these entities need to look at what is the best use for this money. He said there may be some long-term needs to be looked at with this money and gifts of this size. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Callaway-Tripp-YES,

Cormier-Leger-YES, Dellorco-YES, Grella-YES, Griffith-YES, LeBlanc-YES, Malloy-YES, Morrongiello-YES, Ojukwu-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► Mr. Hellen announced January 14 will be the next Finance Committee meeting, and they will be discussing the economics of development; department heads will be there. At the February 4 Town Council meeting he anticipates an updated FY27 budget model to include the local aid numbers from the governor and looking at some of the capital requests for FY26 as well. He wished all a happy holiday season. He noted Mr. Catalano gave an incredible Memorial Day speech about four years ago. He said Franklin has one surviving World War II veteran. He said maybe over the new year, we can think about and reflect on Mr. Catalano's gift and the role of the WWII generation as inspiration of their incredible pride in our country and community.

SUBCOMMITTEE & AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS: ► None.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Councilor Cormier-Leger said he would like to revisit the conversation about the staffing concerns in the TA office. He asked Mr. Hellen if they can look at town investments and where the funds are going similar to what Medford just did.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Councilor Malloy thanked Ms. Keri Bertone for her work helping the resident on the tax calculation piece, and she came up with a great solution with the calculator. He wished all a great holiday season. ► Councilor Ojukwu noted Mr. Minnichelli's reminder about the Massachusetts bills and it makes sense to look at it. He gave a shout-out to veterans' services. He gave respect to the community coat drive and the number of coats produced. He noted the Franklin Fathers group and said it was not mentioned that at an event from last week the Franklin Fathers' wreath won first place; he gave them a shout-out. ► Councilor LeBlanc said happy holidays to all. ► Councilor Morrongiello talked about events he has attended: the newly elected councilor training hosted by Massachusetts Municipals Association, menorah lighting at the Town Common, Wreath of Franklin event which he gave a shout-out to Ms. Cory Shea and the Downtown Partnership and others, Franklin Fathers storytime event where he was the festive sweater judge, he joined the Franklin Freedom Team, Senior Winter Wonderland at the Senior Center, the train exhibit at the Historical Museum which runs through January. He urged all to get out and participate in the community. ► Councilor Griffith said this time of year we see the best of people and the best of the town. She noted community events and said it is wonderful to see that and participate in. ► Councilor Callaway-Tripp talked about concerns about the ZBA meeting and the technical difficulties. She said her concerns were not with the technical difficulties but the responses given when people were upset. It goes along with the whole thing about why people have trust issues. She discussed she was watching the meeting on TV and also trying to Zoom in. The ZBA chair did not seem concerned at all. She noted not everyone is on cable, and the YouTube link was down. She said when it was stated that it was a Zoom only agenda meeting and you could Zoom in to be part of it, that indicates that all people are let into the meeting. She said the chair's attitude was wrong. She said dismissing concerns of the residents was disrespectful. She discussed that mistrust does not come from resident's asking valid questions. She discussed that the correct response should have included saying sorry for the inconvenience as well as other language and not blaming the residents for the lack of trust. She said she will be asking hard questions and holding people accountable. She discussed how trust is built and transparency. She said the community is strongest when every voice is heard, every concern is respected, and every resident feels that they belong in the conversation. She said on a positive note, she went to the Senior Center party, and the Elvis was amazing. She wished all happy holidays. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger congratulated all tonight's athletes, coaches, and parents. He thanked all involved in the coat drive. He noted the Winter Wonderland event and thanked Ms. Shea, the Cultural District, Cultural Council, and all businesses involved in the Wreath for Franklin event. He noted the Menorah lighting and wished Happy Hanukkah. He gave a shout-out to the Franklin Food Pantry and noted the good work they do. He wished all happy holidays. ► Councilor Grella talked about the ZBA meeting and if the meeting is Zoom only, everyone needs to come into the meeting. He said if we need to retrain people on public meeting rules, let's do that. He noted how great the sports teams are in Franklin and noted the coaches as well. He wished all happy

holidays. ► Chair Dellorco said everything has been said. He talked about sports for children and team members have a bond. He talked about his time coaching. He noted Mr. Robert Catalano and said they were the greatest generation; that generation cared about other people first. He wished all happy holidays.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: ► None.

ADJOURN: ► **MOTION to Adjourn** by **Cormier-Leger. SECOND** by **Ojukwu. No Discussion.**
► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Callaway-Tripp-YES, Cormier-Leger-YES, Dellorco-YES, Grella-YES, Griffith-YES, LeBlanc-YES, Malloy-YES, Morrongiello-YES, Ojukwu-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary



**TOWN
ADMINISTRATOR**
TOWN of FRANKLIN

MEMORANDUM

January 30, 2026

To: Town Council
From: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator

RE: 2026–27 Town Council/Town Administration Goals Setting Session

Tonight is a discussion and input session to develop a preliminary list of goals for the Town Council and Town Administrator for 2026–27. There is no vote to ratify the goals this evening.

Depending on the strategy of how to develop this session's work plan, I would recommend a second meeting to finalize goals on March 4th or another date preferred by the Council. (Note February 11th Council meeting will be an updated FY27 budget model and capital plan review.)

The provided list

The attached draft list of proposed goals (not in any particular order) by the Town Administrator to the Town Council for the 2026–2027 session. This list is generated from the issues that are part of the regular course of work that needs to be accomplished, current projects, issues that have been on the docket from the previous Council and goals that have already been identified by the current Council over the past few months. The Council can remove and/or add anything from this list.

Contractual obligation

The Council's contract with the Town Administrator provides a requirement to jointly develop "mutually agreed upon" goals for the two years, which is the basis of the annual professional evaluation. Goals are also to be "generally" attainable within time and fiscal realities. In other words, we cannot accomplish everything everyone desires. Here is the contractual language:

"SECTION 6 – PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

1. The Council shall establish mutually agreed upon goals for the Town Council and Hellen to achieve during any two year legislative session. Said goals may be added to or deleted from as the Council and Hellen determine from time to time.
2. The Council shall review and evaluate Hellen's progress toward meeting the Council's goals on an annual basis. Said annual review and evaluation shall be in accordance with the goals developed jointly between the Council and Hellen. The Council shall establish an Ad Hoc Subcommittee of Town Council membership to perform said annual review and evaluation. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee shall report said annual review and evaluation to the full Council. The Council shall review and provide Hellen with a written summary statement of the findings. The Council shall provide adequate opportunity for Hellen to discuss his evaluation with the Council.
3. Goals shall generally be attainable within the time limitations as specified in Section 7, within the annual operating budget and capital budgets and appropriations provided by the Council.
4. In effecting the provisions of this Section, the Council and Hellen mutually agree to abide by the provisions of applicable law."

Approach to finalizing goals and/or strategic planning exercise

The Town Council and Town Administrator could:

- Choice #1: Agree on a goals list for 2026-27, as provided, or amended, and not conduct a strategic planning visioning exercise.
- Choice #2: The Town Council and Town Administrator could conduct a 3-6 month strategic planning process with the School Committee and other town boards and committees and finalize a list of goals as a goal of the visioning process.
- Choice #3: Perform both an annual list of goals to start the year with, as well as conduct a visioning process to help guide the planning for the next five years.

If the Council desires to take on such a planning effort, I would estimate it could be completed by late summer or fall. I have provided two recent examples of a 3-5 years strategic planning effort completed by the towns of [Westford](#) and [Wrentham](#). An effort like this can range from \$15,000-\$35,000 and I would highly suggest including the School Committee/School Department.

A strategic planning visioning exercise is supported by the Superintendent of Schools as a potential way to elevate the community into a mission and purpose based exercise to help find common ground and unity. We have met with one consultant team, which is local to the area and are familiar

with the local geography. We could begin a public discussion on this concept as early as the March meetings when final goals are developed.

I would recommend conducting our usual goals development exercise (tonight and March 4th) and finalizing a draft list to give the staff some guidance of this Council's priorities. Meanwhile, take the 3-6 month strategic planning exercise and let it be a part of our work through Summer and fall in an effort to unify the community on a common set of values, purpose and vision for the future. It could serve as a way to educate and unify the public. It also gives staff more efficient and clear guidance.

This is a worthwhile exercise for the Town Council and School Committee to lead, rather than the staff to lead. We would suggest including other elected and non-elected boards, including but not limited to, the Planning Board, Council on Aging, Library Board of Directors, and Recreation Advisory Committee. Interviews and input will be completed by all town department heads, senior school staff (such athletics) and school principals.

The Town has also already approved many long term strategic plans and conducted a scientific survey of the community on town services. I firmly believe the public has been engaged, they have spoken their voice on so many issues, via many platforms over many years. The next step is for the elected and appointed officials in this community to agree on a clean, efficient work plan for town staff. The set of plans on the books are:

1. [National Community Survey](#) – A paramount data set of citizen feedback. Highlights include:
 - a. Only 1% of respondents replied the quality of life is poor; thus 99% believe the quality of life is good, great or excellent, which is very high.
 - b. Town services, schools, police/fire, library, recreation, trash removal, recycling, customer service, Franklin TV and town staff all score VERY high. It is clear residents deeply value the services they get at a very high level.
 - c. Trust, communication and honesty appear to be the only significant liabilities.
2. Franklin Public School [District Improvement Plan \(DIP\)](#).
3. The [2025 Townwide Master Plan](#) was adopted last year and represents a comprehensive set of priorities in many areas of the community, including strategies from the following plans:
 - a. [The 2022 Housing Production Plan](#) was adopted to strategize on housing production.
 - b. [The 2023 Open Space & Recreation Plan](#) was adopted to prioritize open space and recreation.
4. The [FY26 Capital Plan](#), which includes five to ten year outlooks at capital requests (of investments we know of today, other issues may come up.).

2026-2027 Town Council and Town Administration Goals

Last updated: _____ 2026

General Government

- Conduct a town and schoolwide short term strategic planning exercise, which will focus on a common vision, purpose and what are the town and school priorities staff should focus on for the next 3-5 years.
- Approve an updated Rules of Procedure for the Town Council.
- Support the [250th Town Anniversary Committee](#).
- Evaluate alternatives to liquor licensing before the Town Council.
- Decide on formalizing Town Council Subcommittees and/or Liaisons.
- Review [Chapter 82 Town Fees](#), including, but not limited to ambulance receipts, town department requests and parking and traffic enforcement. (Anticipated May/June)
- Approve an Ad Hoc Town Charter subcommittee and review committee recommendations.

Finance

Finance goals take up approximately 25%-50% of all annual Town Council meeting time.

- Review & approve Town Finance Policies. [Last adopted 2024](#). Finance Committee to review on March 11th.
- Review annual financial audit and OPEB actuarial at public meetings. (Anticipated May 13, 2026)
- Approve annual capital budget for FY26 and FY27.
- Approve annual operating budget for FY27 and FY28.
- Approve annual CPA Annual budget and projects recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for FY27 and FY28.

- Develop a strategy and/or policy to stabilize the town operating budget through the Joint Budget Subcommittee.
- Conduct a tax rate workshop prior to the annual tax rate setting hearing on a split tax rate and property tax exemptions.

Public Works

These goals are based off the most immediate needs and projects before the DPW:

- Support the closeout of the [Beaver Street Interceptor Project](#) through 2027.
- Approve a water rate increase in effective FY28 Implement the Water Tank Improvements Master Plan (Approximately \$15 million worth of improvements).
- Approve and finance a new 5-year Water Main replacement plan through FY30.
- Develop a strategy to prioritize and finance town infrastructure investments, including roads, sidewalks, grounds, parks, stormwater, sewer, water, recycling and open space and recreation.
- Develop a strategy for the Beaver Street Recycling Center landfill cap, design and financing.
- Continue to fund and accept public ways. The Town has about 100-110 remaining public ways, which residents desire to have these legal matters resolved. We usually accomplish 1-4 every two years.

Public Property and Facilities

Finalize strategies and decisions (or postpone) for the following public property projects that are at varying phases:

- Prioritize and fund rebuilding the Senior Center sprinkler system.
- Finalize a site, design and strategy for the [Police Station Building Project](#) and/or other associated uses with the former Davis-Thayer and Parmenter school parcels.
- Evaluate the reuse or sale of the Davis-Thayer School parcel by following the committee's work, including a possible Request For Proposals (RFP), conducting a

second property appraisal based on altering zoning assumptions and/or any other ideas that the Council decides.

- Hire an OPM and begin design of the Remington–Jefferson renovation.
- Support the King Street Memorial Park rehabilitation through Phase 1 and future phases.
- TBD: Potential goals on land use from executive session.

Master Plan Implementation & Economic Development

- A house cleanup zoning bylaw – a technical cleanup of some Zoning Use Regulations Schedule and outdated information in zoning bylaws.
 - A subset of this is a house cleaning update to the town’s wireless communications zoning bylaws to reflect federal and state laws.
- Develop a master plan and design for the town–owned SNETT parcel with the state [Department of Conservation and Recreation](#).
- Implement the preliminary phases of the approved master plans for [Schmidt Farm and Maple Hill](#) open space parcels.
- Marketing & Branding Phase 2 w/ Wayfinding signs. The town completed its [Phase 1](#) of the approved Marketing and Branding master plan and can pause or move forward.
- Establish [Master Plan](#) priorities given the financial realities and staff bandwidth.



**CAPITAL
STRATEGIC
SOLUTIONS**

A Women-Owned Business Enterprise



TOWN OF
Wrentham
MASSACHUSETTS

Wrentham Strategic Planning Process

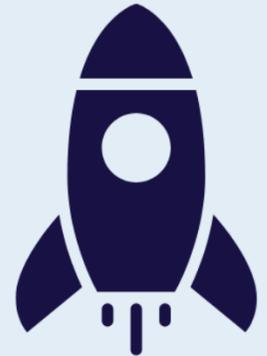
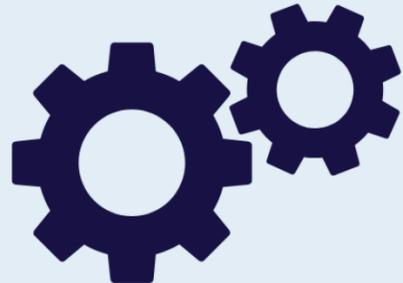
Bill Keegan | Senior Project Manager
Capital Strategic Solutions

Why Does Wrentham Need a Strategic Plan?

- Provides internal alignment on shared priorities for the Town
- Defines the Town's Mission and Vision Statements, and Core Values and helps the Town become more Mission Driven
- Encourages "Solution Thinking" between Department Heads, Town Administration & Select Board
- Establishes short and long-term strategic goals for the Town
- Establishes a work plan for achieving those goals

Town of Wrentham

Mission & Vision Statements



TOWN OF
Wrentham
MASSACHUSETTS

Wrentham's Mission Statement

"It is the established Mission of the Town of Wrentham to provide high-quality, transparent, and fiscally responsible services to the community that supports public safety, education, businesses and recreational opportunities while preserving Wrentham's small-town character by planning responsibly and actively engaging with our residents."

Wrentham's Vision Statement

“The Town of Wrentham aspires to be a welcoming, resilient, and connected community with a strong small-town character that provides economic opportunities for all, while maintaining a modern infrastructure. We are a place where voices matter and all generations thrive.”

Wrentham's Core Values

➤ **Transparent**

➤ **Accountable**

➤ **Professional**

➤ **Quality-Focused**

➤ **Responsive**

➤ **Fiscally Responsible**

➤ **Collaborative**

➤ **Responsible Stewards**

Eight Key Outcome Areas

- **Governance & Communication**
- **Technology & Innovation**
- **Facilities & Capital Infrastructure**
- **Housing Options**
- **Budget & Fiscal Health**
- **Economic Development**
- **Personnel, Staffing & Culture**
- **Performance & Accountability**

Governance & Communication Priorities

The process of enhancing the delivery of public services by improving internal and external communication capabilities. This is accomplished through increased community outreach and engagement, proactive internal communication leading to the strengthening of interdepartmental coordination and taking all necessary steps to ensure transparency and accountability in the Town's actions. A strong emphasis is placed on professionalism in all interactions with our customers.

Short-term (0 - 1 Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicate the Strategic Plan to all departments, boards and the community at large. ➤ Identify key personnel who are currently responsible for internal and external communications. ➤ Evaluate all current methods of communicating with the staff and with the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set goals to meet bi-annually to review the Strategic Plan with all Departments, Boards and the community at large. ➤ Develop a Communications Strategy for the Town. ➤ Assign communications responsibilities to individuals/areas throughout the organization to help strengthen communication internally and externally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set new strategic goals and priorities every three years as needed. Continue to work toward completion of all previous goals. Reprioritize specific goals as needed. ➤ Perform an Organizational and Governance review for efficiency and identify new best practices for communication

Facilities & Capital Infrastructure Priorities

This reflects a continued focus on facility improvements while proactively supporting building maintenance. It includes actively pursuing a variety of infrastructure improvements, with a strong emphasis on road maintenance and sidewalk improvements. It includes a commitment to work with the Disabilities Commission to actively meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Short-term (0 - 1 Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Initiate Construction for the DPW building improvements ➤ Identify HVAC priority improvements ➤ Funding and construction of road and sidewalk improvements (on-going for the next three years until the existing pavement management and sidewalk program goals are met) ➤ Pursue ADA access improvements (on-going for the next three years until the goals of the ADA plan are met) ➤ Complete design of Rice Complex improvements ➤ Initiate construction of new well identified in the Water Master Plan ➤ Pursue funding for the Roderick Elementary School, work with MSBA for State funding commitment ➤ Identify all underutilized Town properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue construction toward completion of DPW building improvements, adjust construction schedule as needed ➤ Seek funding and construct HVAC improvement priorities ➤ Evaluate Fire Station 2 staffing and any additional building needs ➤ Update the pavement management and sidewalk plans and pursue funding options ➤ Seek funding for Rice Complex improvements ➤ Continue to execute improvement priorities identified in the Water Master Plan ➤ If funded, pursue architectural documents for Roderick Elementary School ➤ Formulate a study group and recommend how to repurpose underutilized town properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transition into the new DPW building areas ➤ Continue to fund and construct HVAC improvement priorities in various town facilities ➤ Strategize a funding program, implement (if fiscally feasible) for Fire Station 2 staffing and building improvements ➤ Execute any new updates in the pavement management and sidewalk plans ➤ Continue to execute improvement priorities in the Water Master Plan, identify new priorities as needed ➤ If funded, initiate construction plans for the Roderick Elementary School ➤ Consider/Enact study group recommendations to town boards and committees' recommendation(s) to repurpose Town land / building options to relocate the Building Department.

Budget & Fiscal Health Priorities

The Town is committed to operating financially responsible with a strong emphasis on long-term sustainability. This includes consistently identifying new and realistic funding pathways while supporting operational needs to the greatest extent possible, remaining fiscally nimble, by addressing both short- and long-term funding needs of the community, while always remaining focused on being strong stewards of the taxpayers' dollars.

Short-term (0 - 1 Year)	Mid-term (1 – 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plan for a balanced operation budget each fiscal year utilizing sustainable funding sources (reducing or eliminating the use of free cash in the operating budget) ➤ Continue to achieve GFOA Budget Award (Annually) ➤ Continue to shift retired debt to within budget capital outlay per the Town's Financial Policy ➤ Pursue Triple A Bond Rating for the Town by following the Towns financial policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify areas of the budget where non-property tax funding sources should be evaluated or adjusted to account for inflation ➤ Take a more advanced look into the debt schedule and plan for projects that have been identified as future funding priorities. Consider use of debt exclusion for debt service payments in appropriate instances ➤ Determine what actions are needed to reach a Triple A rating and initiate steps toward reaching that goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Utilize GFOA best practices for building fiscal year operating budgets and capital plans on an annual basis ➤ Explore the option of paying for debt service within the funding capacity of the operating budget without the use of a debt exclusion ➤ Meet with Standard and Poor's and take steps to achieve a Triple A rating for the Town

Personnel Culture and Staffing Priorities

The process of maintaining high-quality services in the community by defining a staffing plan that is both efficient and realistic toward supporting daily operations. This includes strong emphasis on best practices in recruitment, hiring, and retention, a high level of focus on staff training and professional development, leading to strategic alignment with succession planning.

Short-term (0 - 1 Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify staffing needs in all Town operations ➤ Evaluate and update recruitment and retention policies and incorporate industry best practices. ➤ Evaluate existing training and professional development plans in all departments ➤ Identify succession planning opportunities throughout the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a strategic staffing plan ➤ Implement updated recruitment and retention policies ➤ Provide funding that supports and expands training and professional development opportunities at all levels of the organization ➤ Require that all departments establish staffing succession plans for their operations by creating operation guidebooks for all positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Budgetarily establish staffing priorities, fill, or redefine positions as affordable ➤ Review recruitment and retention policies every three years to make sure that the most effective polices are being practiced ➤ Continue to support training and professional development as a long-term staff strategy with the goal of making this a cultural norm in the organization ➤ Annually evaluate operation guidebooks in all departments to make sure they are relevant and up to date

Technology & Innovation Priorities

There is an organizational commitment toward being technologically and innovatively driven in our work. We consistently utilize technology to enhance work efficiency and for the development of transparent information to benefit the public. This requires continuously modernizing software and hardware. We recognize the benefit of pursuing the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve efficiency and to further pursue the alignment of internal systems.

Short-term (0 -1 Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluate all technology needs annually and develop an on-going replacement program ➤ Evaluate the use of Artificial Intelligence in municipal operations. Identify options for short and long-term implementation ➤ Utilize technology to increase access to operational data that will help keep the community informed and support operational improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a strategic technology plan for all operations ➤ Evaluate AI options with town departments. identify priority applications, begin implementation wherever possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluate the results of the strategic technology plan. Implement recommendations of the plan based on financial ability ➤ Incorporate AI into the operating structure or town departments as much as possible to help streamline workflows and to increase productivity ➤ Continue to automate information for the public to provide additional transparency and confidence in local government decisions

Housing Options

Are achieved by encouraging housing development that exhibits controlled and responsible growth. We strive to balance the Town's housing needs with existing conservation plans. We support housing plans that do not overburden Town services, and we respect the small-town nature of this community. We acknowledge the need to develop long range housing options for both older and younger segments of our population.

Short-term (0 -1 Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify existing housing needs in the community (Utilizing local and regional planning agency data) ➤ Evaluate existing projects that are already planned or permitted and determine how these projects will soon have an influence on the housing needs in the Community ➤ Work with the Planning Board to help implement the recommendations of the Master Plan; particularly any recommendations that relate to developing housing options for the Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify key issues from the Housing Production Plan that is being developed in 2026 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement a long-term Housing Strategy based on the findings of the Housing Production Plan. This strategy respect protected land areas (Conservation Land) while not significantly impacting local services. Most of importantly, this Strategy should respect the small-town nature of the Community

Economic Development Priorities

The Town is committed to strengthening its tax base for the purpose of providing financial resources to support high-quality services for this community. This includes pursuing new developments that will be sustainable over the long term. We have a strategic focus on Route 1 corridor development, downtown revitalization, and we support small businesses.

Short-term (0 - 1 Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with the Planning Board to implement recommendations of the Master Plan that supports the concept of "Village Development" ➤ Work with the Economic Development Committee to set a clear charge and set of responsibilities for the Committee ➤ Prioritize funding to hire outside assistance to help create a branding and marketing plan for Wrentham. This could be an out take of the existing regional marketing plan for Plainville, Wrentham, and Foxborough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct visioning sessions with the Community to help assist the Planning Board in developing carefully crafted zoning changes in the community ➤ Work with existing small business group(s) to identify their needs and ways the Community can support them. See if they will develop an on-going meeting mechanism to help support each other while helping to grow their businesses. Work with the Planning Department to solicit ideas and seek funding options for Downtown Revitalization plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on growing Route 1 business by identifying and cataloging critical parcels and land-owners. Consider development of a marketing plan for this area. Identify infrastructure needs and develop a feasibility plan for improving the infrastructure needs of this corridor.

Performance & Accountability Priorities

There is a commitment to performing the organization's duties and responsibilities through a data-driven, decision-making process. This includes measuring service quality by establishing clear and definable benchmarks and by utilizing municipally based key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure our performance across all departments.

Short-term (0 - 1Year)	Mid-term (1 - 2 Years)	Long-term (2+ Years)
<p>➤ Work with departments to identify operating benchmarks and key performance indicators (KPIs). This does not have to be difficult as every department can identify transactions and actions that are being performed throughout the year. These can serve as an indicator of how well the department is performing. Incorporate such benchmarks and KPI's into operational goals for next Fiscal Year (2027).</p>	<p>➤ Evaluate performance measurements as part of the Fiscal 2028 budget process and as part of the department's performance evaluations.</p>	<p>➤ Set as a goal to make performance measurements a standard operating procedure for the budget and performance evaluation process each year. Moreover, the results of such performance measures should be highlighted annually before the Select Board and be included in the Annual Town Report</p>

Work the Plan

Work the plan that we have presented to the Town. CSS respected the Board's desire to focus on short and long-term priorities with the longest term for a priority to be 2 to 3 years. Each priority is assigned to someone or a group of individuals. The results of those assignments should be reviewed annually. Priorities should be reviewed annually for adjustments.

Assign Responsibilities	Evaluate Progress	Priority Review
The plan contemplates assignment of priorities to an individual or group of individuals. This assignment means that they are the ones responsible to complete the work associated with that particular-priority.	A bi-annual and annual progress review should be conducted prior to the start of next budget planning cycle to determine how the work is progressing on each priority.	As assignments get completed or if the progress on a priority is delayed for any unforeseeable reason, the Town, as part of the Bi-Annual or Annual Review cycle, should determine if any priorities should be revisited.

THANK YOU!

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Westford
Massachusetts

2025

Strategic Plan



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Board Members



J. Scott Hazelton
Chair



G. Thomas Clay
Vice Chair



Chris Barrett
Clerk



John H. Cunningham
Board Member



Andrea Peraner-Sweet
Board Member



Message from the Town Manager

On behalf of the Westford Select Board and Town Staff, I am excited to announce the launch of the 2025 Strategic Plan, a comprehensive framework that reflects our community's collective voice and aspirations. Westford is a charming New England community that celebrates its rich history, and cultural and ethnic diversity. This Town has great public services, award-winning schools, and an ideal location, all of which makes it a desirable community to live, raise a family, recreate, and work. This plan is the result of extensive feedback gathered from residents and staff over the past year, and it encapsulates our commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive community that honors its history and traditions. The Westford Strategic Plan is the Town's vision and goals for the future — both achievable and aspirational.

The Strategic Plan aims to align what the community wants Westford to be in the next five to ten years with the work of local leadership and government. Most importantly the Strategic Plan builds upon the qualities residents love about Westford today, while shaping an even brighter and more thriving future.

Community engagement and feedback were a focal point for the development of this plan. The Westford Strategic Plan kicked off in the winter of 2024 through initial engagement with Town Staff and various Board and Committee members. These engagement sessions helped facilitate conversations on the strengths and challenges the Town faces and goals each of these groups have for the Town in the future. In February through April of 2024, the Town participated in the Zencity Community Survey, which asked questions of the community on certain service and topic areas to be later tied into the development of the Strategic Plan. During the late spring, Town Management developed Mission and Values statements for the Town as an organization, crafted from a survey sent to employees earlier in

the year, while the Westford Select Board developed the draft Strategic Outcome Areas. Over the summer these were taken back for further community feedback and engagement. Throughout June, July, and August 2024, the Town issued another survey to residents and Staff volunteers met with various community groups to gather feedback for the Strategic Plan Outcome Areas. The volunteers met with over 85 individuals across 10 different community groups and we received 626 responses from the survey. The Town utilized other methods to engage with residents on the draft Strategic Plan including attending community events like the Farmers' Market and hosting drop-in hours.

The 2025 Strategic Plan is centered around seven key outcome areas, each designed to address the unique needs and values of our community. These outcome areas are: Responsive and Responsible Town Government, Caring and Engaged Community, Opportunities for Recreation and Preservation of Open Space, Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action, Diverse and Attainable Housing Options, Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth, and Quality Educational Opportunities. These Outcome Areas are paired with various specific goals that will help the Town and the community achieve its vision for Westford. The Strategic Plan will also guide the yearly budget process and individual goals of employees to exceed the needs and meet the priorities of Westford residents. I extend my thanks to the residents of Westford, Town Staff, and the Select Board for their participation and engagement in the strategic planning process. This plan represents our shared vision for Westford, and I encourage all residents to engage with us as we implement these strategies over the coming years. Together, we can create a Westford that is not only responsive to today's challenges but also equipped for tomorrow's opportunities.

Kristen Las
TOWN MANAGER

About the Westford Community



Westford offers something for everyone, with a unique blend of past and present in a community that values both tradition and progress.

Incorporated in 1729, Westford is a unique New England town that has a rich history and a strong commitment to preserving its heritage, balanced with modern growth.

The Town is ideally located on the I-495/Route 3 highway network, just 35 miles north of Boston and near the New Hampshire border. Westford's early economy was driven by agriculture, with mills and farms dotting the landscape. During the Industrial Revolution, the Town saw the rise of granite quarries and apple orchards, which became significant local industries.

Today, the Town has evolved from a primarily agricultural settlement into a picturesque suburb with many historic sites and colonial-era buildings still present. In recent years, Westford has become known for its burgeoning tech industry, thanks to its proximity to Boston and Cambridge. This has attracted professionals in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, further developing a highly skilled workforce within the Town.

With a population of 24,543, Westford offers a mix of amenities, cultural experiences, and economic opportunities that make it a great place to live, work, learn, and enjoy. The Town's population is diverse, with 23% identifying as Asian and approximately 20% of residents born outside the U.S., contributing to the Town's multicultural community.

Westford maintains a small-town feel with a strong community spirit. Residents enjoy close-knit neighborhoods and a variety of community events throughout the year. The Town's Apple Blossom Festival is a beloved annual tradition that celebrates Westford's agricultural heritage. The Strawberry Festival is another long-

standing celebration that has taken place for more than 40 years, bringing community members together through food, crafts, and entertainment.

One of the hallmarks of Westford is its highly regarded public school system that is amongst the best in the Commonwealth. Westford Academy, one of the oldest public secondary schools in the United States, is known for its academic excellence. U.S. News & World Report recently ranked Westford Academy as the 25th best high school in Massachusetts and in 2021, Boston Magazine ranked the school as #13 on their list of "Best Public High Schools in Boston." More recently, Westford Public Schools received a 2023-2024 District of Distinction designation from Imagine Nation.

Westford has numerous natural and recreational amenities and offers easy access to Boston, Cape Cod, and New Hampshire's White Mountains. Local offerings range from hiking and biking along scenic trails to enjoying the waters of Nahnasset Lake. The Recreation Department operates two public Town Beaches in the summer as well as a host of activities and programs all year long. The Town has over 4,500 acres of protected open space and over 30 trails available for year-round enjoyment, providing opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Community Demographics



POPULATION:

24,543



TOTAL AREA:

30.2 square miles



MEDIAN AGE:

42.4



RESIDENTS WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER:

72%



MEDIAN HOME VALUE:

\$796,600*



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME:

\$174,424



HOMES OCCUPIED BY OWNERS:

88%



HOUSEHOLDS THAT SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME:

25.4%

*Average single family home value for FY 2025, from Assessors Tax Classification

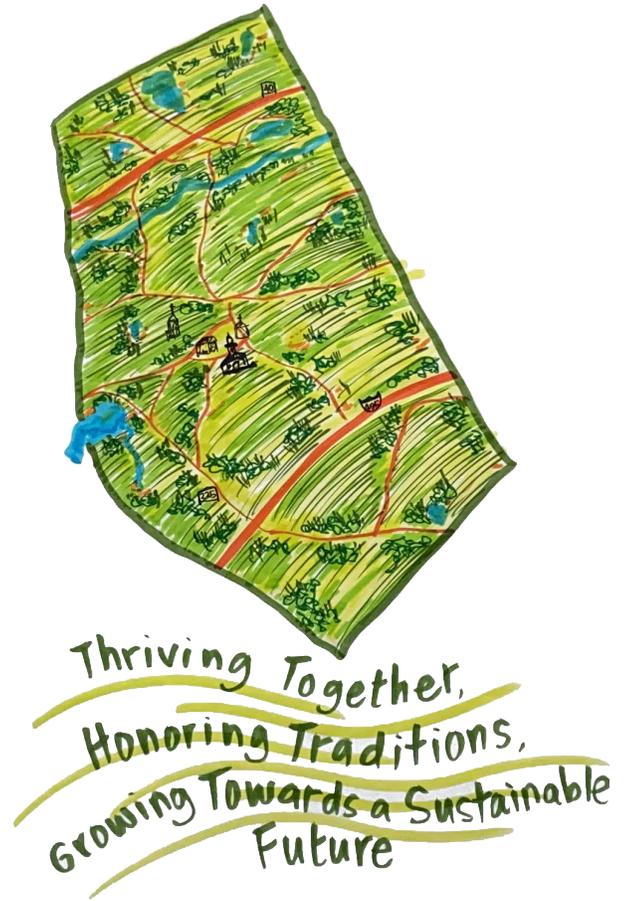


Strategic Planning Process

The strategic framework presented in this document will help guide decision-making, inform resource allocation, and track progress within the Strategic Outcome Areas.

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.

The strategic planning process included robust involvement from internal and external contributors. The Town recognizes the pivotal role that community input and engagement play in developing a townwide strategic plan. By actively seeking involvement from various community members, the Town ensured that the plan reflects the diverse needs and desires of those who call Westford home. Embracing this collaborative approach not only fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among community members but also cultivates a strategic vision that is both comprehensive and forward-thinking.





Steps in the strategic planning process included:

» COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The first question when developing a strategic plan is “what do we know to be true today?” To answer this question the strategic plan development began with community and employee engagement. These efforts provided feedback on the Town’s purpose, strengths, opportunities, and critical issues to inform the development of a Strategic Plan Framework. Town employees also weighed in on the organizational mission and values that guide their work. The Select Board and Town staff sought to ensure community input would serve as the basis for strategic plan development efforts. Input was received through the following engagement opportunities:

- Individual interviews with members of the Select Board
- A focus group with Chairs (or their designees) of Town Boards and Committees
- Workshops with the Town’s leadership team and members of the Select Board
- Workshops with the Town’s leadership team, department heads, and members of the Select Board

» DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

Drawing from the engagement results, Select Board members and Town staff convened to craft the organization’s vision and identify Strategic Outcome Areas. Establishing a long-term vision and developing outcome areas that resonate with community priorities establishes a framework to manage the evolving needs of the organization and community. The initial draft framework was then shared back with the community before finalizing. Community members were able to offer feedback on the framework through the following channels:

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

» STRATEGY WORKSHOP AND SELECT BOARD REVIEW

Members of Town staff met to develop specific strategies and initial brainstorming of performance metrics 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. The Select Board reviewed and adopted a comprehensive strategic plan in February 2025.

» IMPLEMENTATION

Once adopted, strategic plan implementation work begins. 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.

Westford Strategic Plan

The Town of Westford's vision, mission, and values are as follows:

Vision

A vision statement is aspirational, intended to reflect what the Town hopes to achieve in the future. It captures the desires of the community and provides forward-looking perspective on where the Town aims to be in the long-term.

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

While the vision statement provides a forward-looking perspective on where the community aims to be in the future, a mission statement grounds the organization in its purpose, guiding day-to-day operations and decision-making to achieve the vision.

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

Values

An organization's values embody its core principles and guide the way that the organization operates and serves the community. The Town of Westford's values are:

- Professionalism
- Dedication
- Collaboration
- Accountability
- Service-Oriented

*Westford: thriving together, honoring tradition,
growing towards a sustainable future*

Strategic Outcome Areas

Strategic Outcome Areas represent the essential components to realizing the community's vision.

Strategic Outcome Areas serve a foundational role for the Strategic Plan. Within each of these outcome areas lies organizational strategies by which progress can be measured. Achieving success within each outcome area leads to realizing the Town's aspirational vision.





Responsive and Reponsible 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
- Develop and implement a digital records retention policy



» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Space Utilization and Facilities Assessment

The Town recognizes the importance of responsible use of limited resources in delivering quality services to our residents. Our most critical resource, our employees, rely on a number of other important assets to serve Westford, paramount among these being our buildings and facilities. To get the most from our spaces, it is important to not only take good care of them, but to plan appropriately for their maintenance and upkeep and, when appropriate, replacement, renovation, or disposition to best suit the needs of the community.

In 2023, Westford Public Schools completed a Comprehensive Facilities Assessment to lay out a long-term vision for the community's capital investment in our campuses. To build on this effort, Town buildings and operations launched a Space Needs and Facilities Assessment in 2024 to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of most Town buildings. This effort includes completing an inventory of departmental space needs and developing a plan to ensure staff has the most effective and efficient space in which to provide services to the public.

A key outcome of this effort will be the creation of an expanded Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for our facilities that can eventually be scaled to provide a comprehensive, long-term foundation for ensuring the availability and reliability of mission-critical assets (infrastructure, fleet, technology, and equipment). Having a long-term CIP that prioritizes the maintenance and replacement of essential and mission-critical assets will be an important tool to aid the community in making decisions about future capital investments.



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

» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Westford Police Department's Community Event Team

Through collaborative efforts and partnerships, the Westford Police Department's Community Event Team promotes activities within a positive environment to increase public trust and confidence that fosters stronger community-police relationships. By hosting and participating in personalized, informal meetings, opportunities are created for the Community Event Team to interact with members of the public in a positive, non-enforcement manner. These interactions help to break down personal barriers and allow valuable partnerships to be formed and information shared.



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 the Open Space and Recreation plan
- Develop, promote, and enhance recreational opportunities for all generations

» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Rehabilitation of the Jack Walsh Courts

As part of Westford's commitment to enhancing recreational opportunities and preserving open space, the rehabilitation of the Jack Walsh Courts and access to the park along Carlisle Road represents a significant investment in our community's well-being. This project will revitalize a popular recreational facility, providing upgraded spaces for tennis, pickleball, basketball, and other activities that serve residents of all ages. The courts' improvements will ensure long-term usability, supporting Westford's goal of fostering multi-generational recreation while maintaining the Town's rural character and promoting active lifestyles through well-maintained, accessible outdoor spaces. The project also includes improvements at the intersection of the park at Carlisle and Texas Roads including the relocation of the driveway, enhancing the pedestrian crossing, and installing a rectangular rapid flashing beacon.



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





» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Construction of Library Expansion

The J.V. Fletcher Library is currently being designed for a renovation and expansion that will begin construction in early 2025. The library expansion will make the building 50% larger. Specifically, the current building has 22,456 square feet, and was constructed in 1895, with renovations in 1963, 1969, and 1988. The expansion will increase the space to 35,159 square feet. The total projected cost of the expanded and renovated library is \$32.5 million. Of that, the library will receive a construction grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) for \$7.9 million. In addition, when the library project meets certain critical benchmarks during construction, the project is slated to receive an additional \$829,263 in grant funding from the MBLC. The J.V. Fletcher Library Foundation is committed to raising \$1.5 million of the total cost. The remaining funding – approximately \$22 million – will be funded by the Town through a debt exclusion approved in 2022. In addition, the library project may be eligible for Community Preservation Act funds, which in part, focus on historic preservation.

The J.V. Fletcher Library is a space where all Westford residents can enjoy and further their education. While more and more information is available online, consumers of that information still need help making sense of it, and that's where the library staff members come in. Patrons of all ages benefit from a dedicated, knowledgeable staff. Residents also need and want adequate, comfortable spaces to gather.

While more people now work from home, residents value having a space to take a break, enjoy a change of scenery, or work alone or in a collaborative environment. Students need safe, public places in which to study. Older residents may rely on the library as either a cooling or warming station, and many residents come to the library to charge devices in the event of a power outage.

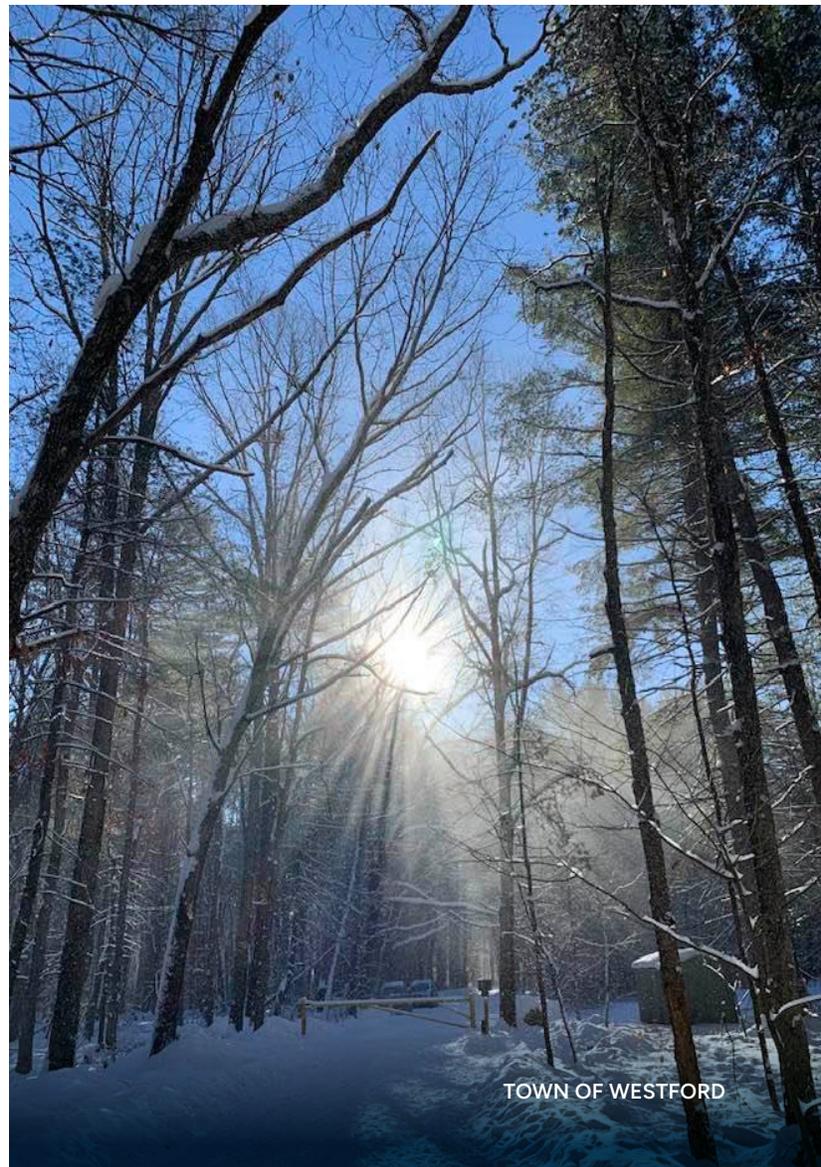
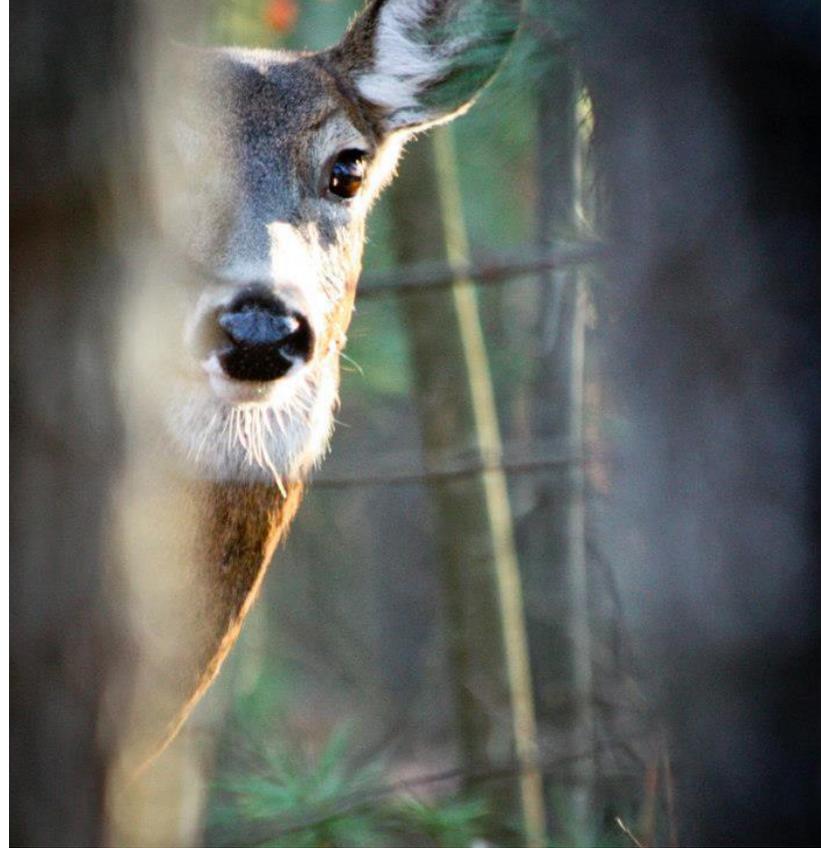


Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

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 toward more energy efficient vehicles with supporting infrastructure
- Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors





» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Building Energy Efficiencies Projects

The Town continues to pursue cost-effective capital investments in energy efficiency and make progress towards climate goals in incremental steps. To maximize our returns, staff developed a strategy of targeting utility rebates, incentives, and grants for smaller projects over a shorter timeframe allowing the Town to realize the maximum return on investments and still make measurable progress towards our objectives. In FY2024, the Town completed three significant weatherization and energy efficiency projects at Westford Academy, Rita Miller Elementary School, and the Westford Police Department. Using a combination of utility incentives and grants, the Town was able to complete over \$360,000 in work for just over \$85,000. These projects, taken together, will generate almost \$16,000 in annual savings, resulting in a leverage ratio of 75% and a payback in under six years.

We continue to use this strategy in FY2025, as we begin major lighting retrofit projects at Westford Academy and Rita Miller Elementary School. For these projects, staff not only leveraged significant short-term incentives, but also took advantage of another incentive program for 0%

financing on-bill repayment. Due to the rapid response of staff to take advantage of promotional incentives, the Town will complete over \$525,000 in lighting retrofits with no out-of-pocket costs and a positive cash flow after energy cost savings. Further, by using a streamlined Ch. 25A §14 procurement process, the Town will save over 330,000 kWh each year with projects that will go from concept to completion in roughly six months with virtually no disruption to our school operations.

Our FY2025 energy efficiency plan also includes weatherization projects at eight Town and School buildings, which will generate additional energy and cost savings. In keeping with our strategy, staff selected projects to optimize incentives and rebates and minimize payback periods. The full portfolio of FY2025 projects total \$860,000 for an out-of-pocket cost of just over \$90,000 while reducing carbon emissions by over 300 tons annually.

Staff are already working on a slate of projects for FY2026 to continue building on this momentum. Residents will be asked to consider a revolving account at the Spring 2025 Annual Town Meeting to allow reinvestment of cost savings into even greater efficiencies.



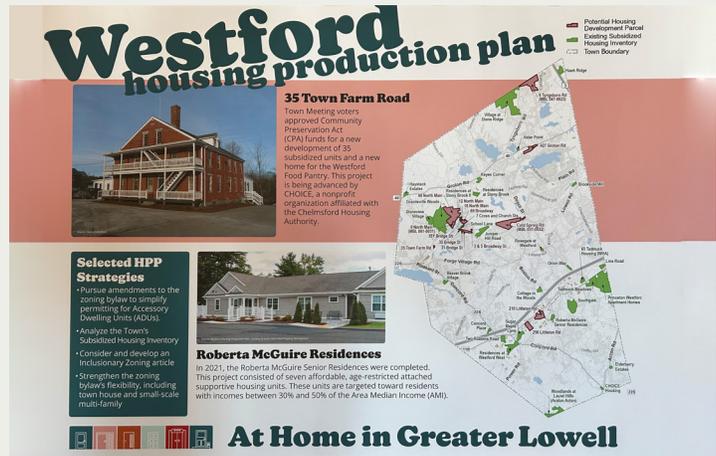
Diverse and Attainable Housing Options

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
- Review zoning laws and propose changes that support Town housing goals
- Support the development of affordable housing opportunities for future and current residents
- Organize a housing summit
- Develop tax incentives for builders and owners to promote small-home building

Westford strives to be a community where people both want to and can afford to live.



» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Zoning Outreach and Adoption

In January of 2021, the Town of Westford was designated an MBTA Adjacent Community. At the Town's Strategic Planning Retreat in 2022, the Land Use Management Department initiated a robust planning process together with the Select Board, Planning Board, and the MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing Advisory Committee to not just fulfill the requirements of the new Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A Section 3A ("MBTA Communities") but take the opportunity to engage with residents and property owners to identify housing types and features that are currently lacking but needed within the Westford community. The new MBTA Communities Multi-Family Overlay District (MCMOD) will support the creation of new housing in locations that are already developed but currently underutilized. With over 80% of Town Meeting attendees voting to support the MCMOD in April of 2024, the future housing options created within the district will go towards fulfilling Westford's housing needs while also supporting the Town's existing business community by putting more potential customers within close proximity of local retail and dining options.

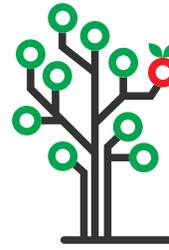


Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth

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 taxpayers



DISCOVER WESTFORD

A **HUB** for Growth

A **HOME** for Success

» PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Route 40 (Groton Road) Corridor Study

At the 2023 Annual Town Meeting, a resolution was passed by attendees to conduct a study of the Route 40 area.

This resolution was presented following two zoning map change requests – one at the 2022 Annual Town Meeting and one at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting. Since that time, the Town through the Land Use Management Department has sought grants to hire a consultant team to assist with this planning effort. In October 2024, the Town obtained a Housing Choice Grant through the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) for a Route 40 Corridor Master Plan. With EOHLC's financial support, the Town will be able to proceed with this important work and engage with area residents and business owners to identify the kinds of development that make sense to promote while simultaneously preserving and enhancing the character along this important corridor.

Strategic Plan Framework

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

*Thriving together,
honoring tradition,
growing towards a
sustainable future*

Strategic Outcome Areas



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



Westford
Massachusetts

Strategies

- Prioritize Town and School needs for capital planning while considering limited resources and space requirements
- Develop and retain employees
- Establish a framework for identifying and prioritizing core services
- Develop and implement a digital records retention policy



- 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



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



- 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



- 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 toward more energy efficient vehicles with supporting infrastructure
- Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors



- Identify infrastructure upgrades that will support housing needs
- Review zoning laws and propose changes that support Town housing goals
- Support the development of affordable housing opportunities for future and current residents
- Organize a housing summit
- Develop tax incentives for builders and owners to promote small-home building



- Identify and evaluate locations within 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 preferences and balance growth with preservation
- Explore tax incentive programs and promote existing opportunities for taxpayers





Realizing the Vision

The outcome areas and strategies within this plan contain a roadmap that will move the Town of Westford toward achieving its vision. Town staff will develop an organizational work plan that prioritizes the strategies within each outcome area and begin to track progress. They will also work with the Board to finalize performance metrics for each outcome area that monitor success. Employees will be essential in carrying out these plans, contributing their expertise and dedication to drive meaningful progress and effective implementation.

The Town is grateful to all the individuals who took the time to provide input during this strategic planning process, and we look forward to sharing our success as we work to achieve our shared goals.



Westford
Massachusetts

Town of Westford

55 MAIN STREET

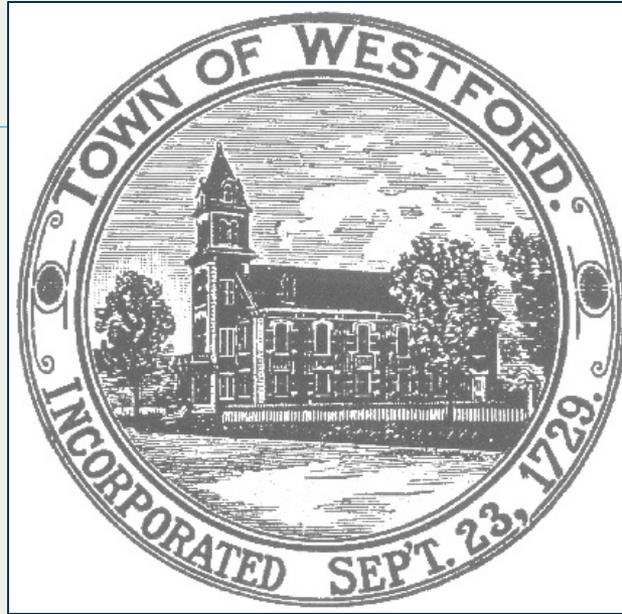
WESTFORD, MA 01886

This plan was facilitated by:



WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Town of Westford

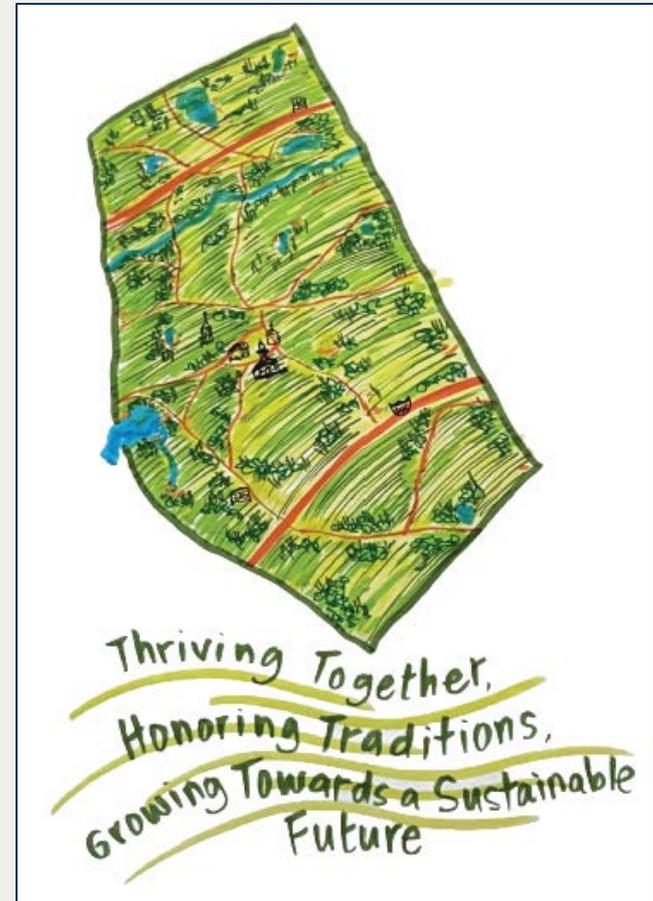


2025 5-Year Strategic Plan

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

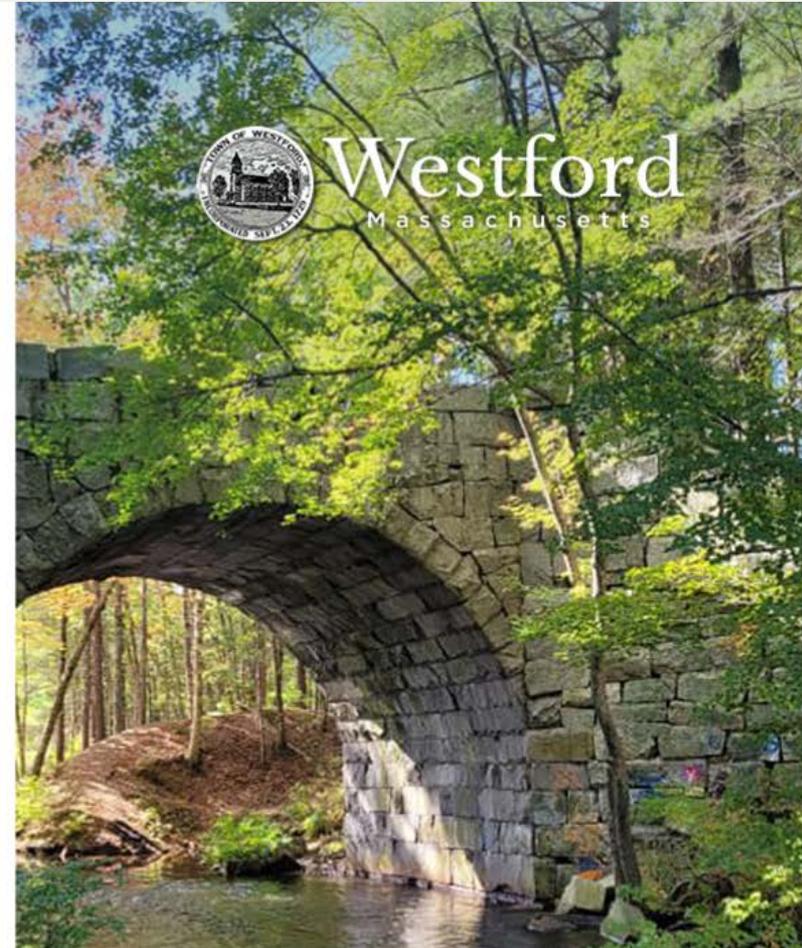
Westford strives to be a welcoming and inclusive community that honors its history and traditions. We are driven towards innovation and progress, balancing growth with preservation and a commitment to creating a sustainable future.

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.

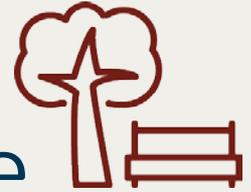
Strategies:

- 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



**TOWN
ADMINISTRATOR**
TOWN *of* FRANKLIN

MEMORANDUM

January 30, 2026

To: Town Council
From: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator

RE: Resolution 26-08: 2026-27 Rules of Procedure

The Council will consider ratifying the Rules of Procedure for the Town Council. They were last updated in February 2024.

Chair Dellorco appointed Councilor Malloy as a liaison to the Town Attorney and myself. After receiving feedback from several Councilors, we met a couple of weeks ago to incorporate the feedback. The product of that meeting is attached in a track changes and comments version.

If approved this evening, the February 11th meeting will be the first with an altered agenda sequence!



**TOWN OF FRANKLIN
RESOLUTION 26-08**

**ADOPTION OF AMENDMENT TO THE PROCEDURES
MANUAL OF THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, The Town Council of the Town of Franklin, by Resolution 25-82, adopted the Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council, dated February 2, 2022; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council now wishes to amend the Procedures Manual, said amendments being set out in "Exhibit A" attached hereto;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town Council of the Town of Franklin hereby amends the Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council dated February 2, 2022 by voting to adopt the amendments thereto set out in "Exhibit A" attached hereto.

DATED: _____, 2026

VOTED: _____

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

UNANIMOUS: _____

YES: _____ **NO:** _____

ABSTAIN: _____ **ABSENT:** _____

RECUSED: _____

**Nancy Danello, CMC
Town Clerk**

**Ted Cormier-Leger, Clerk
Franklin Town Council**

EXHIBIT A



PROCEDURES MANUAL

OF THE

FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL

Revised: February ~~4~~², 202~~6~~²

INTRODUCTION

“Where there is no law, but every man does what is right
in his own eyes, there is the least of liberty.”
--- General Henry M. Robert

In order for the Franklin Town Council to function in an orderly fashion, it must be able to meet, discuss, deliberate, debate and vote on the issues that are brought before it. These group discussions and group actions, like group games, require rules, guidelines and procedures that allow for the free and orderly flow of discussion and deliberation. *The Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council* was developed to provide such direction to the Council in its deliberations.

The Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council has important bearing on the rights, duties, and obligation of the members of the Town Council, as well as on the degree to which the Council membership is to maintain control of the business of the Council. The members of the Council, attending one if is regular or properly called meetings, have full and sole power to act for the entire Council, and do so by majority vote, unless dictated otherwise by *Massachusetts General Law*, *the Franklin Town Charter*, or *The Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council*.

By adoption of *The Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council* by the Franklin Town Council, the rules within it, together with *Massachusetts General Law* and the *Franklin Town Charter*, are binding upon the Council and constitute the Franklin Town Council’s rules of order.

Because no deliberative assembly should attempt to transact business without having adopted some standard manual on the subject of its authority in all cases not covered by its own special rules, The Franklin Town Council adopts *Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised* as its standard manual of parliamentary procedure.

ROLE OF THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL

1. A member of the Council, in relation to his or her community should:

- a. Realize that his or her basic function is to make policy, with administration delegated to the Town Administrator.
- b. Realize that he or she is one of a team and should abide by, and carry out, all Council decisions once they are made.
- c. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Council member on both local and state levels.
- d. Remember that he or she represents the entire community at all times.
- e. Accept the office as a means of unselfish service, not benefit personally or politically from his or her Council activities.
- f. In all appointments, avoid political patronage by judging all candidates on merit, experience, and qualifications only.
- g. Abide by the ethics established by the State and not use the position to obtain inside information on matters, which may benefit someone personally.

2. A member of the Council, in his or her relations with the Administrator, should:

- a. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies that will direct and support the administration for the benefit of the people of the community.
- b. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
- c. Give the Administrator full responsibility for discharging his or her disposition and solution.

3. A member of the Council, in his or her relations with fellow Council members, should:

- a. Recognize that action at official legal meetings is binding and that he or she alone cannot bind the Council outside of such meetings.
- b. Not make any statements or promises of how he or she will vote on matters that will not come before the Council until he or she had an opportunity to hear the pros and cons of the issue during a Council meeting.
- c. Uphold the intent of executive session and respect the privileged communication that exists in executive session.

4. **A member of the Council, in his or her public relations with members of the public, community stakeholders, town boards and committees, elected officials and fellow Councilors, should:**

- a. Lead by example in promoting civility and respect for all residents and businesses within the Town of Franklin when utilizing any means of contact with the general public, including but not limited to in-person constituent services, social media channels, as well as while conducting official town business as outlined in the Franklin Home Rule Charter and *Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council*.
- b. Recognize that our community is proud to stand as a welcoming and accepting community to all and will act in appropriate ways to implement that standard across our community.
- c. Encourage all residents and visitors to celebrate and practice civility, and to respect the diversity of each other's backgrounds and to learn from one another.
- d. Value all members of this community, including all religions and faiths, ancestries, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, disabilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities.
- e. Reject not only discrimination, harassment, bullying and any hate-based acts, but also reject prejudice and bigotry in all forms, and take this opportunity to reinforce our commitment to being a diverse, supportive, and inclusive community.

PROCEDURES MANUAL OF THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL

1. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The Council shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order Revised in all questions of parliamentary practice not provided for, either within this document or by special rules or orders.

2. COUNCIL MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Council shall be held in the Council Chamber (Municipal Building) at least once each month, as voted by the Council, or as scheduled by the Council's Chair; regular meetings shall commence at 67:00 PM; [See also Charter: 2-5-1]. Meetings shall also not go beyond the hour of 10:00 PM, unless a minimum of six councilors vote in the affirmative to proceed past the hour of 10:00 PM. Special meetings shall commence at the time designated by Chair.

3. QUORUM

A quorum of the Town Council shall consist of a majority of its members [Charter: 2-5-2]. If at any time a meeting is called to order, or, if during a meeting it appears to Chair or another member that less than a quorum is present, the Chair shall declare a recess of not more than twenty (20) minutes, after which time, if a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be adjourned.

4. PUBLIC POSTINGS

Public notices of all Council meetings, except in emergencies, must be filed with and posted by the Town Clerk a minimum of 48 hours before any meeting, as provided in the Open Meeting Law G.L. Ch. 30A, §§18-25 and the Attorney-General's Regulations. Notices shall also be posted on Town's website.

5. MINUTES

A written record of each Council meeting is required by law and becomes part of the public record. Minutes must contain the information required by the Open Meeting Law and Attorney-General Regulations, including a record of all votes of the Council. Minutes must be formally accepted by the Council. Minutes of all Council meetings must be placed on file in the office of the Town Clerk where they will be available for public inspection upon request; minutes shall also be posted on Town's website.

6. THE CHAIR -- POWERS AND DUTIES

The Chair, or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair, shall take the Chair at the hour appointed for the Council to meet and shall immediately call the members to order. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall assume the role of Chair pro tem. In the event both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent, the Council Members present shall vote to designate one of their members to act as Chair.

7. PRESERVATION OF DECORUM AND ORDER AND APPEALS FROM DECISION OF THE CHAIR.

The Chair shall preserve decorum and order, may speak to points of order in preference to other members, and shall decide all questions of order.

8. THROUGH CHAIR

All remarks and questions shall be addressed to the Council as a whole through the Chair and not to any member thereof. No person shall enter into discussion either directly or through a member of the Council without permission of the Chair.

9. RECESS

The Chair may at any time, during debate or otherwise, declare a recess of not more than ten minutes, and such action shall not be subject to appeal, nor shall any motions apply thereto.

10. ADDRESSING THE CHAIR

Every member speaking to a question or making a motion shall address the Chair as "Mr./Madame Chair," who shall thereupon pronounce the name of the member entitled to the floor. Members addressing the Council shall confine themselves to the question under debate and avoid personalities; nor shall there be any conversation among the members while a question is being stated, while a member is speaking, or a paper is being read.

11. CHAIR MAY SPEAK

The Chair may participate fully in all Council deliberations; the Chair may speak in favor of, or in opposition to, any motion and will be bound by the same rules as those which are applied to other speakers; i.e., speaking once for no more than three minutes, and not to speak again until all others who wish to speak have spoken once.

12. POINT OF ORDER

Any Councilor on being called to a point of order shall cease debate until the point of order is decided, unless allowed by the Chair to explain.

13. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Council Officers shall be elected at the first Council meeting following a regular town election, as provided in Town Charter Section 2.3.1 and at the first Council Meeting in November in a non-election year. A majority vote of all members elected to the Council (5) shall be required to elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk.

14. MANNER OF VOTING

All questions shall be stated and put forth by the Chair. In any matter requiring more than a simple majority vote for passage, either: a unanimous voice vote shall be required and the Chair

shall so declare or a roll call vote shall be taken. In case of a roll call vote, the Chair shall declare the result, after the Clerk has announced the number voting on each side. The results of voice votes shall be declared by the Chair without reference to the Clerk. Where the result of a voice vote is in doubt, the Chair may, and on demand of any member, take a roll call vote. It shall not be in order for members to explain their votes during the call of the roll.

15. VOTE REQUIREMENTS

All votes on by-laws shall be by roll call [Charter: 2-6-5].

All action taken by the Town Council requiring a vote will be by a simple majority (majority of Councilors present and voting) unless otherwise provided for in the Massachusetts General Laws, Home Rule Charter, By-laws, or by Rules set forth in the *Procedures Manual of the Franklin Town Council*.

Resolutions require a simple majority.

In case of a tie in votes on proposed legislation, the proposed legislation shall be considered defeated.

Passage of a General Town By-law requires a majority vote of the full Council (5). Vote is by roll call [Charter: 2-6-4 and 2-6-5].

Passage of a Zoning By-law generally requires two-thirds vote of the full Council (6), except as stated in statute (e.g. multi-family housing). Vote is by roll call [MGL Ch. 40A, Sec.5].

A properly protested* Zoning By-law requires a three-quarters vote (7) of the full Council. Vote is by roll call. (*Properly protested = written protest filed by owners of at least 20% of affected land area; or, of adjacent land 300 feet therefrom: [MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 5]).

An Emergency By-law requires a two-thirds vote of the full Council (6). Vote is by roll call [Charter: 2-6-3]. Two votes are needed: One on the emergency [2/3 vote of the full Council (6)], and one on the By-law [2/3 vote of the full Council (6)].

To take money from the Stabilization Fund for any municipal expenditure requires a two-thirds vote of the Council membership (6) [MGL Ch. 40, Sec. 5b].

Unpaid bills require 2/3 vote (Councilors present and voting) [MGL Ch. 44, Sec. 64].

Other business may be conducted if the Council has a quorum, and may be passed by a majority of the quorum [Charter: 2-5-2].

Any Rule, Regulation, or other local legislation which provides for the imposition of any fine or penalty shall be provided for by the adoption of a By-law.

The Chair may require that a vote be taken on any item before the Council if failure to do so would make the item illegal to adopt because of the expiration of a federal or state mandated time limit or similar circumstance.

16. READINGS

Every By-law, unless rejected, shall have two separate readings and shall be voted only after two separate readings; the second of said readings and votes will not be less than fourteen days after the first, except in cases in which a shorter period is authorized by law. Any order rescinding or amending a By-law shall require the same number of readings and of votes as was required for the passage of the original By-law.

In order to expedite the Council's deliberations when considering lengthy proposed By-laws, when the reading of said proposed By-laws has been waived, in order to inform the public of the subject matter, a brief summary of the substance of the proposed By-law will be provided by Town Administrator, a Council Member, or bylaw's sponsor.

17. RESUBMISSION

When any legislation for action has been finally rejected by the Council, no motion embodying substantially the same subject shall be presented to the Council within six months of its previous writing for resubmission, unless resubmission is approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the full Council or as otherwise provided by the Charter or Massachusetts General Law; this procedure may be employed once per measure per legislative session.

A Zoning By-law which is voted down may not be reconsidered within two years unless the Planning Board makes a recommendation to do so, [MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 5].

18. SPONSOR ABSENCE

In the event that the sponsoring member of any order, resolution, or other matter is not present when the Clerk reads said matter, the Chair may instruct the Clerk to withdraw said matter from consideration at that meeting.

19. MOTIONS

The order of precedence of motions shall be as follows:

- a. Motion to recess
- b. Raise a question of privilege
- c. Lay on the table
- d. Suspend the rules (two-thirds vote)
- e. Previous question (two-thirds vote)
- f. Limit or extend limits of debate (two-thirds vote)
- g. Postpone to a certain time
- h. Commit or refer
- i. Amend
- j. Postpone indefinitely
- k. Main Motion

The highest in rank being at the head of the list and the lowest in rank at the last of the list. When any one of them is immediately pending, the motions before it on the said list are in order and shall be acted upon first, and those below are out of order.

The following motions shall be non-debatable:

- a. To adjourn
- b. To recess (when privileged)
- c. To raise a question of privilege
- d. To lay on the table
- e. To suspend the rules
- f. Previous question (two-thirds vote)
- g. To limit or to extend limits of debate (two-thirds vote)

The following motions only can be amended:

- a. To recess
- b. To postpone to a certain time
- c. To commit or refer
- d. To amend
- e. Main motion
- f. A motion to adjourn shall be in order at any time except upon immediate repetition.

20. WRITTEN PROPOSALS

All proposed By-laws, Orders, and Resolutions shall be in writing. [Adopted 9-2-98]

21. PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

The right of a member to address the Council on a question of personal privilege shall be limited to cases in which his or her integrity, character, or motives are assailed, questioned, or impugned.

22. ORDER OF BUSINESS AND AGENDA

At every meeting of the Council the standard order of business shall be as follows:

- a. Announcements from the Chair
- b. Citizen Comments
- c. Councilor Comments
- d. Subcommittee & Ad-Hoc Committee Reports
- e. Town Administrator's Report
- f. Proclamations / Recognitions
- g. Approval of Minutes
- h. Appointments
- i. Hearings
- j. License Transactions
- k. Presentations / Discussions
- l. Legislation for Action
- m. Future Agenda Items
- n. Executive Session
- o. Adjourn

The above order shall not be changed except by a vote of a majority of all the members of the Council; and upon the motion to change the order, no debate shall be allowed. Additions to this order may be made by the Chair and/or Town Administrator when setting the agenda (Example: Committee Reports).

The Chair may take Legislation for Action out of order if the legislation relates to a Hearing or License Transaction.

All items for the agenda, including any relevant communications and reports from the Town Administrator, other town officers and town boards, shall be submitted to the Town Administrator's office no later than 10:00 AM on Thursday preceding the regular Council meeting.

Copies of said reports and agenda shall be delivered to the Town Council members no later than Friday preceding the regular Council meeting.

The agenda will be prepared by the Town Administrator with input from and approval by the Council Chair, or, in their absence, the Vice Chair of the Council, and then prepared for presentation by the Town Administrator's office staff.

During "Citizens Comments" the Franklin Town Council encourages citizens to attend its meetings and welcomes their views on matters of local governance. Anyone may comment at this time for up to three (3) minutes. The Council will not engage in dialogue with the audience. However, the Council will give your remarks appropriate consideration. [The Council encourages all residents to raise issues of concern through other means, such as direct communication via email, phone, or personal meetings, with councilors or town staff, to assist in the efficient use of meeting time. All individual contact information is located on the town website or town council@franklinma.gov to email contact all nine councilors.](#)

In the Chair's sound discretion, citizens present who wish to speak on an agenda item may do so after all Councilors who wish to speak on the item have spoken. Those citizens who wish to speak shall be limited to one three-minute response. [SEE ALSO CHARTER: 2-5-3].

During "Councilor Comments", Council members shall not discuss any matter not included on the meeting agenda, except that an individual Council member may make statements and comments on topics that are in the general community interest or announce community events and activities of community interest. A Council member may also request action or an answer from the Town Administrator on a matter brought to their attention by a resident or stakeholder in Franklin. The Council and Town Administrator shall not engage in any dialogue in order to prevent an infraction of the Open Meeting Law.

During "Future Agenda Items", the Council shall consider only those matters that relate to or concern potential legislation. If a "simple majority as required by charter" of the Councilors present during "Future Agenda Items" so determine, such matters will be included on a future agenda for consideration by the Council. Debate during "Future Agenda Items" shall be limited to whether the matter raised shall be included on an agenda in the future and each Councilor shall be limited to three minutes.

23. HEARINGS

All public hearings before the Council shall have a 7:00 PM posted hearing time. The Chair shall declare a public hearing “open” on, or after, the posted hearing time when the hearing is to begin. In all hearings before the Council, the case of the petitioner shall be first submitted, except where the Chair of the Council rules otherwise.

Public hearing format (after petitioner’s presentation):

- a. General questions from public
- b. Public speaking in favor
- c. Public speaking in opposition
- d. Questions from Town Councilors

When the Chair is satisfied that the matter has received a full hearing, the Chair may declare the hearing closed, in the absence of opposition thereto; otherwise, the Chair shall call for a motion to close the public hearing and the Council shall act thereon.

This format shall not apply during public hearings to consider the annual budget, when normal Council budget format is followed, or to any adjudicatory proceeding to address a violation of an alcoholic beverage license or violation of any local By-law or regulation or of any condition of any license, permit, or approval.

24. SUB-COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

Sub-committees shall be authorized by majority vote of the Council. Members of any sub-committee, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, shall be appointed by the Chair of the Council in consultation with the Town Administrator. Appointed individuals shall receive notification of their appointment from the Chair prior to the public announcement of the makeup of the committee. Notice and conduct of all sub-committee meetings must adhere to MGL C 30A, Sections 18-25 (Open Meeting Law).

25. AD HOC COMMITTEES

Ad Hoc Committees may be established, as needed, by majority vote of the Council. The members of any ad hoc committee, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, shall be appointed by the Chair of the Council in consultation with the Town Administrator. The Council shall dissolve any ad hoc committee, by majority vote, when the Council determines that its mission or purpose has been completed.

26. COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND QUORUM

A committee shall meet on the call of the Committee Chair, or a majority of its members. A majority of the members of a committee shall constitute a quorum.

27. SUB-COMMITTEE & AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair or Vice-Chair of a sub-committee or ad-hoc committee may give reports on the activity of a committee to the full Council at a Town Council meeting as provided on said meeting's agenda.

28. MOTIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION

After a motion has been passed or defeated, any member voting with the prevailing side may move for reconsideration, which shall be open to debate. A motion to reconsider a vote shall be in order at the same or the regular meeting next succeeding that at which the vote was passed, provided a motion "to reconsider and enter into the minutes" is made at the meeting at which the vote was taken. No more than one motion for reconsideration of any vote shall be entertained. In the case of a question decided by a tie vote, the prevailing side shall be considered to be the one in whose favor the question was decided.

29. DEBATE DECORUM

Every member when about to speak shall address the Chair and wait until recognized by the Chair. No member shall be recognized if not seated. In speaking, the member shall be confined to the question, shall not use unbecoming, abusive, or unparliamentary language, and shall avoid personalities. Any member who, in debate, Council related correspondence or otherwise, indulges in personalities or makes charges reflecting upon the character of another member, or of citizens, shall make an apology in open session at the meeting at which the offense is committed or at the next succeeding regular meeting and, failing to do so, shall be named by the Chair or held in contempt and suspended from further participation in debate until said apology is made.

30. DEBATE LIMITATION

No member shall speak more than once on a question when another member who has not spoken claims the floor, and no member speaking shall, without his or her consent, be interrupted by another, except on a point of order. A member may speak upon a matter for no more than three (3) minutes at a time. A councilor may yield all or part of his or her time to another councilor. A member who has not spoken on a matter shall have priority and recognition by the Chair.

The Clerk of the Council shall inform the Chair whenever a member has spoken longer than three minutes.

31. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

G.L. Ch. 268A, the conflict of interest statute, provides that no member shall participate in any matters, or serve on any committee, where the member's individual or immediate family interest will conflict with the public's interest in a way that is violative of the statute; for further details of legal requirements, refer directly to statute.

32. OPEN MEETING LAW

M.G.L. Ch. 30A, Section 18-25, the Open Meeting Law, provides that deliberations, including meetings, of a public body, shall take place in public, unless the matter to be discussed falls

within one of the statutory exceptions which permits the public body to meet in executive session; for further details of legal requirements, refer directly to statute and Attorney General's Regulations.

By statute, any votes taken in Executive Session must be by roll call.

33. SPECTATOR DECORUM

Guests will be allowed in the gallery of the Council chamber when the Council is in session. No demonstrations of approval or disapproval from guests shall be permitted, and if such demonstrations are made, the individual(s) may be ordered to be removed from the gallery by the Chair.

34. REMOTE PARTICIPATION POLICY

Per Attorney General's Regulations, remote participation is based upon the Chair's determination that requesting member's physical attendance would be unreasonably difficult.

Remote participation shall:

- a. Be available to four (4) members per meeting, on a first come first serve basis, provided that a minimum quorum of five (5) members will be physically present.
- b. Require a two (2) hour notice be given to the Chair and Town Administrator's Office, or as soon as practicable.
- c. Be limited to use in the Council Chambers and the Municipal Building 3rd Floor Training Room.

If technical problems interrupt remote participation, the chair will wait up to five (5) minutes to allow for the reconnection prior to resuming the meeting. If the member is disconnected, the fact and time shall be noted in the minutes. If the party reconnects, the fact and time shall be noted in the minutes.

35. AMENDMENT AND REPEAL

None of the foregoing rules and orders shall be amended or repealed at any meeting unless a simple majority of those members present and voting consent thereto and a motion for that purpose shall not be made and acted upon at the same meeting.