

## **INITIAL DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION**

*The following initial draft topic strategies have been prepared by MAPC for discussion with the Master Plan Committee. The initial strategies are based on community feedback through survey responses, community meetings, and committee input. The initial draft topic strategies will be edited, refined, and improved with discussion and input from the Master Plan Committee, stakeholders interested in the topic, and the community through meetings to be held in the fall of 2021.*

### **Economic Development**

The big idea of the goals in Economic development is to **invest and support the local business districts to create a town where most people can walk to some of the businesses and services they need.**

#### **Goals with Committee Feedback Integrated (5/25):**

1. **Goal 1:** Invest in neighborhood business districts with a focus on creating an environment for more independently owned businesses and improving pedestrian access
  - **Strategy 1.1:** Review the zoning in each neighborhood business district to ensure alignment with the goals for each district and to encourage investment
  - **Strategy 1.2:** Leverage town investments to support neighborhood business districts including public realm, sidewalk, and streetscape improvements and using town-owned property effectively to support the goals of the district.
  - **Strategy 1.3:** Host Town-organized events and programming series to activate districts. Work closely with local organizations that promote art and culture, such as Mother Brook Arts and Community Center in East Dedham
  - **Strategy 1.4:** Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to develop a brand identity for districts to attract new visitors, residents, and businesses
  - **Strategy 1.5:** Establish a wayfinding strategy and program to connect neighborhood business districts to pedestrian infrastructure and surrounding natural resources like Wigwam Pond and the Charles River
  - **Strategy 1.6:** Expand the capacity of businesses and create stronger connections to the public realm beyond storefronts through the increased use and activation of outdoor spaces
    - i. Establish public realm design guidelines that allow for businesses to expand capacity with outdoor dining and retail, as seasons allow.
    - ii. Establish regulation to allow for outdoor dining and retail beyond the emergency order in place

2. **Goal 2:** Strengthen support for small businesses that focuses on improving current systems and building additional capacity
- **Strategy 2.1:** Work with local community partners and business owners to undertake a detailed small business district assessment to better understand the specific conditions and challenges unique to the different areas of Dedham.
    - i. Based on the results of the assessment, develop formal organizations of business and/or property owners to have a collective voice of stakeholders present in economic development activity areas. This activity could complement or strengthen existing partners such as Dedham Square Circle or create new entities where needed. Organizations could take the form of a Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement District, Business Association, nonprofit groups, etc.
    - ii. Based on the results of the assessment, provide workshops or one-on-one assistance to small businesses to receive support to build capacity
      1. One on one assistance allows a business owner to receive support at a convenient time and in the context of their business.
      2. Workshops serve as a point of entry for many business owners and could represent a starting point for more comprehensive assistance
    - iii. Based on the results of the assessment, provide referrals to partner organizations to expand partnerships such as non-profit or private entities, banks, realtors, and other organizations
  - **Strategy 2.2:** Establish a small business liaison position within the community development department dedicated to supporting small business owners navigate the regulatory environment
  - **Strategy 2.3:** Define Dedham economic activity areas' competitive advantages and develop strategic marketing materials accordingly
3. **Goal 3:** Improve the ability for people who work in Dedham to live in Dedham by encouraging affordable housing, improving living wages, and attracting better paying employment opportunities
- **Strategy 3.1:** Integrate housing and economic development planning strategies to guide future housing production that is affordable to those who work in Dedham but are currently priced out of the community in industries like Accommodation and Food Services
  - **Strategy 3.2:** Establish a housing and economic development action committee dedicated to identifying intersections between housing and economic development goal implementation
  - **Strategy 3.3:** Encourage continued partnerships between the Blue Hill Technical Regional High School and other workforce development partners in the area to facilitate internship opportunities and in local industries
  - **Strategy 3.4:** Convene a working group composed of private sector, workforce development, and community development stakeholders to evaluate current industry strengths and challenges

- **Strategy 3.5:** Incentivize the construction of growing industries such as biotech, medical research
  - **Strategy 3.6:** Partner with property owners and developers to address current challenges to attracting businesses
- 4. Goal 4:** Retain a strategic balance and mix of uses across the town to respond to future economic trends in industrial or other uses and align growth and changes with the community's vision
- **Strategy 4.1:** Create a baseline assessment of industrial and commercial land use areas in the town today and define an approach or policy to these areas to retain future flexibility by reducing loss and encroachment by other uses.
    - i. Inventory current and future industrial land based on type of activity and size.
    - ii. Inventory by activity to take into account the demographics (POC, population with language barriers, population without high school diplomas) of those trained in the industry
    - iii. Inventory by size to preserve or strengthen industries that already exist
    - iv. Update zoning and allowed uses to reflect current real estate market and use classifications
    - v. Track changes and trends in the town's tax base and use this data to inform industrial and commercial zoning and policies
  - **Strategy 4.2:** Leverage workforce development programs currently underway and refocus on industrial job opportunities
  - **Strategy 4.3:** Establish "district" liaisons for specific economic development activity areas including industrial areas like Milton Industrial Corridor, Readville Industrial Area. Liaisons will be involved in future areas of planning work including site location, workforce development and beyond to make sure there is a collective voice that reflects stakeholders.
- 5. Goal 5:** Focus transformative growth and future redevelopment on the Providence Highway corridor including enhanced pedestrian and bicycle circulation and connections
- **Strategy 5.1:** Undertake a community and property owner visioning process to articulate the desired vision for future land use and development patterns to complement the vision for the street infrastructure. Incorporate results from the roadway redesign process and integrate any land that may be recovered from the redesigned roadway network.
  - **Strategy 5.2:** Conduct a susceptibility to change analysis to review characteristics of corridor parcels including ownership, use, building to land value ratio, year built, and tenant information to better understand each parcels susceptibility to change
    - i. Based on the susceptibility to change analysis, parcels identified as change likely – near term and change likely – long term should be investigated

further with a redevelopment vision that includes conceptual massing diagrams for redevelopment.

- **Strategy 5.3:** Conduct a market demand analysis to evaluate trends in industrial/commercial real estate in the study area and market subregion along with an assessment of current key indicators to create a baseline understanding of the market position of the study area
- **Strategy 5.4:** Conduct a suitability analysis to assess suitability of relevant parcels for redevelopment on the Providence Highway corridor for conversion according to several overarching criteria which should include pedestrian and bicycle circulation connection
- **Strategy 5.5:** Use these strategies to define public and private infrastructure and development needs to advance District Improvement Financing to catalyze envisioned economic development in the corridor in partnership with property owners and developers

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