

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.

Housing

The big idea of the goals for Housing is to advance progress on making Dedham a place where more people can afford to live which would give long-time, new, and aspiring residents equal access to opportunities and position them to make greater social, cultural, and economic contributions.

Goals with Committee Feedback Integrated (5/25):

1. **Goal 1:** Support the creation and preservation of affordable housing for a range of incomes including deed-restricted, subsidized, and market-based units throughout Dedham
 - **Strategy 1.1:** Update the Dedham Zoning Bylaw to allow for and provide flexibility to build small and “missing middle” housing types that are more likely to be affordable in the marketplace due to their size or layout.¹
 - i. Townhouses, cottage housing/cluster development, small multifamily, and mixed-use housing should be permitted and incentivized near centers of economic activity (see Economic Development Chapter) to increase local spending power and provide housing options for those that work in these areas.
 - ii. The majority of the town is currently zoned single-family, each neighborhood should explore zoning modifications that respond to residents’ needs, such as exploring two and three-family homes as well as single-family home conversions and accessory dwelling units. Many of these housing types create downsizing options to support seniors as well as first-time home buying options for aspiring homeowners. These housing types are typically appropriate for lower density residential areas, but zoning modifications should be coupled with design guidelines to minimize the impact on the built environment.

¹ Further zoning recommendations are discussed under Goal 4.

- iii. Analyze processes and procedures of the Dedham Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to evaluate ways to improve the efficiency of the Town's permitting process to reduce permitting timelines specifically for small and missing middle housing types. The Town should also consider offering a special expedited permitting process with specific criteria to incentivize the development of desired housing types.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Leverage publicly owned land (excluding parks and protected open space) for deed-restricted Affordable Housing Development. This land should be provided at little or no cost to, the Dedham Housing Authority, community development corporations, groups interested in forming a community land trust (CLT) or other non-profit organizations to ensure housing built on this land will be affordable in perpetuity.
 - i. Use the spatial analysis included in this Master Plan and the 2019 Dedham Housing Study to identify suitable publicly owned sites for Affordable Housing development.
 - ii. Discuss future housing challenges and goals of the Dedham Housing Authority (DHA) and consider deeding the DHA public land for new Affordable Housing development. Additionally, evaluate opportunities to leverage DHA land for redevelopment that will replace and upgrade existing public housing units and provide additional Affordable Housing housing to a range of different income levels. Affordable Housing units managed by the DHA should be highly energy efficient to keep utility costs and the DHA's expenses low.
 - iii. Seek out new relationships with Affordable Housing developers and concentrate these efforts on establishing partnerships with developers working in nearby Boston neighborhoods. Discuss development opportunities on suitable sites with development partners and set RFP criteria that results in housing that is affordable to a range of households.
 - iv. Use the resources provided by the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network to expand upon ways to support the establishment of a CLT in Dedham.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Establish an Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) and consistent funding source for the trust to support the implementation of the Town's housing goals and strategies. The AHT should be comprised of community stakeholders and housing professionals appointed by Town officials. The Town should establish general guidelines for what AHT funds can be used for, but most importantly, the AHT should be able to deploy these funds as opportunities arise not requiring Town Meeting approval or a vote by an elected body.
 - i. Evaluate funding sources for the AHT including fee-in-lieu from inclusionary zoning requirements and parking requirements (Strategy 4.5), state and federal grants, and possibly a portion of

local revolving funds. The Town should also analyze why the community preservation act did not pass in past efforts and consider reinitiating efforts to pass this ballot measure to provide an additional funding source to support Affordable Housing.

- ii. Once an AHT is established, the Town may have the opportunity to set aside federal funds and use them strategically. This funding could support the implementation of several of the housing recommendations made in the Master Plan.
 - iii. The City of Boston has approved a home-rule petition to allow the City to adopt a real-estate transfer fee. If approved by the Massachusetts State Legislature, the fee will discourage property flipping and also generate revenue that the City can dedicate to its housing initiatives. If Boston's petition is approved, it may be easier for other communities to take similar measures. Dedham should evaluate adopting a real-estate transfer fee as a mid to long-term goal to help fund the proposed AHT.
- **Strategy 1.4:** Build upon the recent adoption of inclusionary zoning (IZ) requirements in November 2020 and expand their applicability from rental mixed-use and age-restricted housing development to a Town-wide policy that includes both rental and owner-occupied housing developments.
 - i. Evaluate how well the IZ requirements are working and make adjustments to this policy as needed. In this evaluation the Town should consider whether developers are working in the districts where these requirements are in place, whether developers are utilizing the density bonus incentive, and whether other incentives are needed to balance development costs.
 - ii. To expand opportunities for housing development that yields a greater number of Affordable Housing units through inclusionary zoning, the Town should adopt zoning changes that allow multifamily housing development at a variety of scales.
 - iii. To expand the IZ policy Town-wide and also apply it to owner-occupied housing developments, the Town should study development finance implications and local housing market conditions, possibly with the assistance of a consultant. During this process, the Town should interview and engage with local developers to inform updates to the policy.
 - iv. Partner with community groups that support housing initiatives such as Livable Dedham and hold community-engagement events to inform the public about the purpose and function of inclusionary zoning. Messaging should focus on the need to include incentives in an IZ policy to balance project costs and the acknowledgement that IZ is a good tool to meet housing needs but will not meet them all.
 - **Strategy 1.5:** Supplement a portion of incoming deed-restricted Affordable Housing that's being developed in Dedham, so these housing units are available for low to extremely-low-income households. Before an AHT is established and funds are allocated to the trust, the Town should

focus on using state and federal funds made available in response to the pandemic to supplement Affordable Housing development. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has provided significant funding that could be leveraged to increase the affordability of new Affordable Housing in Town. Once an AHT is established, the trust should make strategic decisions about which developments to supplement. Affordable Housing created by mission-based developers and through the Town's inclusionary zoning policy should be considered for supplemental funding.

- **Strategy 1.6:** Build capacity for a residential property acquisition program that removes housing from the speculative marketplace and places a deed-restriction on these housing units to ensure they are affordable in perpetuity.
 - i. The Town should work to convene the Dedham Housing Authority (DHA), mission-based lenders, community development corporations, and other non-profit organizations to establish a housing coalition with the goal to implement a residential property acquisition program. The Town should have a representative on the coalition to provide data or technical assistance as the group pursues properties to acquire.
 - ii. The coalition should pool their funds and leverage external funding to acquire residential properties that are currently affordable in the marketplace due to size, age, or condition and place deed-restrictions on these properties, so they are affordable in perpetuity. Several residential buildings will need to be renovated or redeveloped. State and federal funds can support these needs.
- **Strategy 1.7:** Ensure the preservation of all existing deed-restricted Affordable Housing in Dedham by building capacity to monitor these housing units.
 - i. Hire a monitoring agent to track the Town's existing deed-restricted Affordable Housing units to ensure they do not expire. As an alternative to hiring a staff member, the Town could consider joining an existing Shared Housing Service Office (SHSO) to expand its capacity to monitor expiring Affordable Housing units. the Dedham Housing Authority (DHA) currently coordinates with the Needham Housing Authority on housing administrative matters and so this could be a good starting point for pursuing shared housing services.
 - ii. This staff member should coordinate with the subsidizing agencies for these respective housing units to ensure those that have expiring deed-restrictions have their affordability renewed. State funding may also be needed to ensure these housing units remain affordable.
- 2. **Goal 2:** Promote equitable development that includes all incomes, races, ethnicities, family sizes, and life stages to support fair housing and racial equity
 - **Strategy 2.1:** Adopt affirmatively fair housing (AFFH) requirements into Dedham's zoning bylaws: Add fair housing requirements into Dedham's

should be located in Dedham, but program recipients should be able to seek a home in whichever Dedham neighborhood they choose.

- **Strategy 2.5:** Increase diverse representation on Dedham's boards by reaching out to people of color that may be interested in serving on these boards. Promote training opportunities provided by the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) and other programs and pay for any costs associated with board member participation. Training should also focus on fair housing laws and how to uphold them in planning review processes.

3. Goal 3: Provide policy and program support for vulnerable households that may be at risk of eviction, foreclosure, or other housing insecurities

- **Strategy 3.1:** Explore establishing a local emergency rental and mortgage assistance program with the goal of assisting cost-burdened households pay for rent, mortgage, and/or utility costs. Funding should be flexible and easy for the Town to access as needs arise and should be distributed through the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) proposed in Strategy 1.3.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Use federal funding to add supportive housing services to existing or incoming Affordable Housing. Supportive services can be offered as an option for tenants who face physical or emotional health issues, financial stress, or need assistance for their family. Support staff can also play a role as an intermediary between the tenant, legal counsel, and the landlord to help prevent evictions.
- **Strategy 3.3:** Refer households at risk of being displaced to resources that support tenants such as tenant associations, legal counsel, and advocacy organizations.
- **Strategy 3.4:** Consider adopting a local eviction and foreclosure moratorium to continue to protect vulnerable households after the federal moratorium is lifted.
- **Strategy 3.5:** Join other communities in efforts to lobby the state to allow municipalities to implement local rent-control/stabilization policies that cap increases in rent over a specific time period.

4. Goal 4: Improve zoning to better align with the improvement, preservation, and diversification of the Town's housing stock while requiring linked community benefits and mitigation of community impacts

- **Strategy 4.1:** Update zoning regulations to align with current built conditions and reduce the number of non-conforming residential lots.
 - i. Use the analysis and recommendations included in the 2019 Dedham Housing Study and further GIS analysis of the Town's residential parcels to change minimum lot size, setbacks, and other dimensional requirements that bring the zoning into alignment with current land use conditions.
 - ii. Establish new regulations that allow owners of non-conforming properties to make improvements or additions to their site without needing a variance. Criteria should encourage making site

improvements while also providing adequate protections to abutting property owners.

- **Strategy 4.2:** Modify the Town's planned unit development/residential cluster and open space bylaws to better match the goals of the town to leverage the development to increase community benefits and reduce negative impacts.
 - **Strategy 4.3:** Due to housing needs for smaller households, supporting aging in place, and significant public interest in accessory dwelling units received throughout the planning process the Town should consider revamping its accessory dwelling unit bylaw. The Town should work with the Dedham Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to evaluate possible updates to the bylaw that encourage ADU development through more flexible requirements coupled with design guidelines that ensure ADU development aligns with the built environment.
 - **Strategy 4.5:** Form-based code or hybrid zoning with a greater emphasis on building form may help to increase understanding of potential residential development and build support for housing density in appropriate locations. The Town should evaluate areas where this type of zoning would be appropriate and advantageous based on the spatial analysis included in the Master Plan.
 - **Strategy 4.6:** Create a list of community benefits that board members can request and negotiate for when developments are reviewed. Benefits could include: the construction of sidewalks, provision of open space, access to public parks and amenities (when applicable), and other contributions that are proportional to the development being proposed. Define the community benefits and thresholds for compliance clearly as part of future zoning modifications.
 - i. Utilize community benefits and other resources to better connect existing and new housing (particularly Affordable Housing) to public transit with enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections. For example, Affordable Housing residents near the Dedham Corporate Center Commuter Rail Station cannot access this station easily due to fencing and other physical constraints. Community benefits and strategic contributions by the Town should ensure new development provides access to resources and amenities and creates a welcoming environment for all.
 - **Strategy 4.7:** Reduce minimum parking requirements or offer a fee-in-lieu option to pay for public parking to reduce housing development costs, avoid negative impacts of large surface parking areas, and generate funding for shared public parking spaces.
5. **Goal 5:** Leverage mixed-use and multifamily residential development for areas that would benefit from redevelopment and investment including existing retail centers and near transit stops
- **Strategy 5.1:** Comply with new state Housing Choice legislation requiring by-right multifamily zoning near train stations.

- **Strategy 5.2:** Encourage mixed-use and multifamily development in centers of economic activity with a large retail footprint, particularly if persistent vacancies are present as defined in the Economic Development Chapter. This type of housing would be particularly impactful in transforming areas of the Providence Highway Corridor to be more pedestrian friendly.
 - i. Refer to MAPC's retrofitting suburbia study for recommendations and suggestions for redeveloping strip malls and auto-oriented areas.
 - ii. Meet with property owners in these areas to better understand current challenges and future goals.
 - iii. Work with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) or another organization or consultant to facilitate a design charette to reimagine these spaces.
 - iv. Change local zoning regulations to better facilitate this development.
 - v. Strip malls and other auto-oriented areas may not be desirable places to live and will need to be enhanced with access to public transit, pedestrian infrastructure, and open space. District Increment Financing (DIF) funds should be used to make these improvements. The Town could also apply for MassWorks funding or other state grants to finance infrastructure upgrades.
 - **Strategy 5.3:** Evaluate adopting a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD) to facilitate mixed-use development and Affordable Housing development in centers of economic activity or near transit. 40R is a state tool to permit this type of housing in areas that meet state criteria for smart growth. If a SGOD is adopted, the state will provide Dedham with funding to support capital improvements in this area. This funding can be used to upgrade deteriorating sidewalks, make new bike and pedestrian connections, expand sewer and water capacity, and to undertake similar upgrades.
6. **Goal 6:** Promote strategic community engagement to alleviate misconceptions about housing and build support for the actions needed to address local housing needs
- **Strategy 6.1:** Facilitate community engagement events with those who are supportive or neutral in meeting local housing needs. Provide these residents and groups such as Livable Dedham with data and information they can use to advocate for action to address housing needs. Work with other housing advocate organizations to engage around housing needs in the community.
 - **Strategy 6.2:** Hire a marketing consultant to create a marketing campaign that includes public service announcement videos and other engaging content to describe housing issues in Dedham and solutions that require public support preceding strategic moments, such as town meeting vote on zoning changes. The campaign should advance a new set of housing terms that better describe various forms of affordable and mixed-income housing and alleviate misconceptions about this housing. New housing terms should

emphasize the importance of housing in supporting the Town's culture, economy, and other assets. Examples of new housing terms could include "need-based housing and workforce housing."

DRAFT