

TOWN OF SHELBURNE
2022 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

(2/15/22)

THE TOWN: Graced by the Deerfield River, Shelburne is located in northwestern Massachusetts. This quaint community is home to a population of 1,893 residents.

The town anticipates utilizing tax appropriations, Chapter 90, Green Communities, Mass. Library Commissioners Capital Program, CDBG, Community Preservation Act, and other state grant programs to achieve these goals.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

Natural Resources, Conservation and Open Space Goals: Maintain rural character of town, protect environmentally sensitive areas, monitor impacts of development, preserve open space, working lands and important habitats and provide recreational opportunities. Objectives include:

- Maintain and protect natural resources, including rivers and streams, public water supplies, wetlands, wildlife and their habitat areas, farmland, forests, and ponds.
- Establish communications between the town and land owners, with regard to preservation and conservation of open space.
- Educate town committees, landowners and the public about the impacts and value of conservation, open space preservation and the Wetlands Protection Act through the development of educational materials and training.
- Utilize APR program to maintain rural character, rich farming heritage and ongoing agricultural activity and develop strategies for funding APR town share of program and acquisition of open space.
- Participate in regional and state forums for smart development planning that maximizes wetlands protection.
- Continue maintenance and expansion of public recreation areas in town including riverfront trails along the Deerfield River.
- Update Shelburne Open Space and Recreation Plan and map and inventory parcels for preservation.
- Advocate for town participation in the Community Preservation Act to establish funding streams for open space and recreation, historic preservation, and expanded housing operations.
- Evaluate zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations on a regular basis to ensure consistency with Natural Resources, Conservation and Open Space goals.
- Continue participation in Green Communities Program and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to reduce energy consumption in all town buildings and vehicles. Priority Projects include: Cowell Gym Boiler Replacement, Memorial Hall Theater HVAC replacement, solar array at Highway Garage, and energy efficient streetlights.
- Develop, fund, and staff a plan to install, replace and maintain trees of appropriate size and species in the village area.
- Develop, fund, and staff a plan to maintain gardens and parks on town-owned or leased land in the village area to promote outdoor seating and walking areas for residents and visitors.
- Develop a plan for transitioning street lighting to LED using appropriate colors (in consultation with Buckland) and explore light shields to direct light where it is needed to avoid un-necessary night lighting. Include a plan for Holiday lights in the Village and on Mt. Massamet. Review the placement of the blue snow emergency lights and explore shielding the light from shining un-necessarily into Buckland.
- Encourage energy efficiency and use of renewables amongst commercial businesses and residential households

General Government Goals: To provide critical services to Shelburne residents. Objectives include:

- Provide municipal core services and equipment using limited local resources, volunteers, and grant funding, particularly for infrastructure improvements.
- Regionalize services whenever possible, coordinating with other towns, schools, FRCOG and Shelburne Falls Water District and Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Infrastructure, Highway and Transportation Goals: Maintain and upgrade town infrastructure and vehicle/equipment fleet while expanding transportation opportunities. Objectives include:

- Make improvements and update use policies to existing Downtown parking areas in order to optimize usage by visitors and residents.
- Continue upgrade of streets/sidewalks, bridges and culverts to provide safe travel for pedestrian & motor vehicle traffic and implement Shelburne's Hazard Mitigation Plan to address impacts of climate change on existing infrastructure. Priority projects include:
- Support the Shelburne Falls Water District and Shelburne Falls Sewer District in repair or replacement of aged water and sewer infrastructure in the Downtown, including the Bridge of Flowers. Priority Projects include: Continuation of the Bridge Street water main replacement; replace Route 2 iron pipe that serves the State Police Barracks, Davenport's Service Station and two houses; replace the iron pipe on Halligan Ave on the other side of Route 2 from South Maple and; replace the original 1912 cast iron pipe on Mechanic, High, Severance, and North Maple Streets.
- Upgrades to the Deerfield Ave. Pumping Station: repair or replacement of pumps, associated equipment, and fuel storage tank for standby power generation.
- Continue to replace sewer mains and manholes dating back to the early 1900's to improve reliability and also to reduce inflow/infiltration on to system.
- Maintain elderly demand response system.
- Research the siting and development of a bus shelter in front of Arms Library.
- Provide improved Veteran's and low income transportation services.

Public Safety Goals: Protect and serve the public and foster community relationships. Objectives include:

- Evaluate and update departmental procedures and policies and encourage professional development.
- Evaluate opportunities for regionalization with neighboring communities.
- Continue community policing program, including DARE participation and TRIAD.
- Conduct emergency preparedness training in accordance with national incident management systems as well as emergency training at local schools (Lockdown).
- Support upgrades to fire and safety facilities and equipment throughout town, including improvements to the Shelburne Falls Water District that will upgrade hydrant system to provide better firefighting flows.

Public Health Goals: Educate and protect the public. Objectives include:

- Participate in Title 5 Septic Loan program to maintain safe sewer service and conserve natural resources.
- Assist with costs of providing ongoing public health education, health screening for seniors, town-wide flu clinics and tick testing and information distribution.
- Continue health code enforcement, (i.e., rental units, food establishments)
- Make municipal buildings, downtown businesses, their services, and homes in Shelburne handicap accessible, allowing physically disabled individuals to remain in their homes.
- Expand network of walking trails in village area to provide opportunities for recreation and exercise to support healthy living.

Cultural Resources Goals: Support, maintain and encourage development of cultural, historic and knowledge resources for all residents, including library services and cultural enrichment: Objectives include:

- Continue to renovate and **preserve historic assets including Memorial Hall, Arms Library, Hill Cemetery, Arms Academy, Town Documents, and other historic assets.**
- Provide a stable environment for the preservation of library collections.
- Conduct a comprehensive Library Study to assess management structure of each library; determine infrastructure and budgetary needs; develop best possible means of providing services to community and meeting structural needs.
- Encourage and foster arts/artisans, performances, and events in Shelburne by supporting Massachusetts Cultural District Designation for Downtown and renovations to Memorial Hall Theater.
- Maintain inventory of historic assets including buildings, sites, and landscapes
- Encourage the use of tax incentive programs to preserve and/or develop historic properties.
- Gain town approval of Community Preservation Act to provide a stream of funding to address historic preservation opportunities.

Housing Goals: Provide more affordable housing options for families and seniors. Objectives include:

- Continue modernization projects at Highland Village, including property and site work (interior renovations, energy efficiency, power back-up system, and fire sprinkler protection).
- Utilize Housing Production Plan to develop action plan that will work to meet Chapter 40B goals over the next ten years.
- Evaluate zoning bylaws for consistency with Housing Production Plan, including mixed-use development in the Downtown.
- Support “weatherization and energy efficiency” program sponsored by FCAC providing low interest loans and/or grants for income qualified applicants.
- Support ongoing Housing Rehabilitation Programs offered by the FCRHRA.
- Research and propose bylaw provisions to allow non-conforming tax title land parcels to be developed as community housing that meets the state definition of affordable housing.
- Research and propose bylaw provisions limiting Air B&B rentals to owner-occupied dwellings.
- Work with non-profit development partners such as Pioneer Habitat for Humanity, Rural Developing, Inc. and the Franklin County Housing Trust to create and preserve affordable housing.
- Gain town approval of Community Preservation Act to provide a stream of funding to expand housing opportunities.

Economic Development Goals: Support sustained and expanded business and job development while maintaining the Town’s rural and historic character. Objectives include:

- Implement priorities of the Shelburne Falls Rapid Recovery Plan, including development of outdoor dining, selling, entertainment, and respite spaces.
- Build staff capacity for the Downtown for the purpose of Economic Development, project implementation, and enhanced communications.
- Support training programs and loan funds to encourage local businesses to foster job retention and creation; utilize services offered by Franklin County CDC, County CEDS committee and FCRHRA.
- Promote the glacial potholes as a tourist/educational attraction rather than a swimming area. Explore the development of a handicapped accessible interpretive walkway and observation deck along the northern edge of the Deerfield River.
- Upgrade existing public restroom facilities for ADA accessibility and construct additional public restroom facilities to improve visitor experience.
- Support regional tourism efforts, including website presence and brochures.

- Support the preservation of farmland and the ‘grow/buy local’ movement, advocate for active farming as a means to advance economic development in the town and make Downtown Farmers Market more visible and accessible.
- Encourage redevelopment of sites in Shelburne, by offering local assistance, Tax Incentive Programs, and through infrastructure and other improvements.
- Establish a Master Plan Committee to revise the town Master Plan and improve the Economic Development section of the plan.

Social Service Goals: Provide support for initiatives that assist residents in need to maintain safe and healthy lives. Objectives include:

- Partner with County Social Services Agencies, such as Community Action, in supporting outreach programs for Shelburne Low and Moderate Income residents; particularly the Food Pantry and West County Youth Program.
 - Support the Shelburne Senior Center in meeting its need for improved facilities, either renovation of the existing Center that includes removal of architectural barriers to accessibility or relocation to an existing or new building.
- Become an Age and Dementia Friendly Community: develop and implement an action plan based on an assessment of needs identified as a result of community engagement activities.

Energy Conservation:

Promote the installation of energy efficiency measures in all Town owned buildings (including the MTRSD): HVAC systems, solar, lighting, and weatherization upgrades.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

1. Make improvements and update use policies to existing Downtown parking areas in order to optimize usage by visitors and residents.
2. Green Communities Program: implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to reduce energy consumption in all town buildings and vehicles.
3. Revitalize the downtown including local town and business support, staff capacity for project implementation and development, support ongoing efforts to upgrade infrastructure and to provide additional cultural and recreational activities in the downtown.
4. Provide municipal core services and equipment using limited local resources, volunteers, and grant funding, particularly for infrastructure improvements.
5. Provide social services to income eligible population of the town, particularly the Food Pantry Seniors and schools.
6. Regionalize services whenever possible, coordinating with other towns, schools, FRCOG and Shelburne Falls Water District and Wastewater Treatment Facility.
7. Make all town buildings and services handicap accessible and address areas that no longer meet compliance standards. Make downtown businesses, their services, and homes in Shelburne handicap accessible, including the Senior Center.
8. Support the Shelburne Senior Center in meeting its need for improved facilities, either renovation of the existing Center that includes removal of architectural barriers to accessibility or relocation to an existing or new building.
9. Maintain the town’s rural character thru land preservation, zoning and economic development initiatives that support the town’s rich agricultural heritage.
10. Adopt the Community Preservation Act to provide financing on an ongoing basis for open space, recreation, historic preservation and housing projects.
11. Encourage the continuation of the regional economic development loan program managed by the Franklin County CDC to help businesses in the town to retain or create new jobs.
12. Provide affordable housing opportunities for all residents, through septic system upgrades, housing rehabilitation loans, modernization activities at Highland Village, including property and

- site work (interior renovations, energy efficiency, power back-up system, and fire sprinkler protection), land use planning, and affordable housing goals. Planning Board – zoning changes
13. Support the development of the walkway along the Deerfield River; and construct additional public restroom facilities.

APPENDIX

The following reports were either referenced or used by the town in preparing this document.

- Shelburne and Buckland Master Plan – 2001
- 2008 Franklin Regional Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Franklin County Economic Target Area (ETA)
- Shelburne Zoning Bylaw
- Shelburne Community Action Statement
- Shelburne 504 Transition Plan
- Franklin County Area Wide Housing Opportunity Plan
- Shelburne Open Space and Recreation Plan
- Town meeting action 2005 to create Open Space Committee town meeting action 2005 to create a Right to Farm Bylaw Town Meeting action; 2006 to create Agricultural Commission
- Town Meeting action 2006 to create Open Space Donation Account
- DEP & town's Visioning Report – 2007
- Shelburne Housing Study (2017 Draft)
- Nelson/Nygaard Parking Study (2017)