SOMERSET MA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

ACTION PLAN

140 Wood Street
Somerset, MA 02726
508-646-2300
somersetecd@town.somerset.ma.us
www.townofsomerset.org/economic-development-committee
Mission Statement

The Somerset MA Economic Development Committee is responsible for advising the Somerset Selectmen regarding cultivation of a diverse economy while recognizing the need to maintain a balance between attracting new investment to increase the local tax base, encouraging and supporting local businesses, fostering local entrepreneurship, and strengthening Somerset’s key businesses and industries.

The committee is responsible for developing and recommending policies, procedures, organizations, and ordinances to the Somerset Selectmen for adoption that promote economic health and vitality, quality of life and pride of place for the community. The committee will provide businesses with an atmosphere to locate, innovate, grow, and prosper within our community.

Key Measures of Success

- Added town revenue through tax revenue growth from new business and grant awards
- Increased local businesses
- Increased local jobs
- Improved quality of life factors obtained from the convenience provided by more local jobs, retail establishments, medical and professional facilities and recreational / entertainment venues
The Town of Somerset must be a place where opportunity abounds for all of its residents. These guiding principles between the Town and the private & public partners who invest here ensure that expectations of both parties are clear and that economic opportunities are available for all Somerset companies and workers. We believe we can accomplish these goals through good faith, clear communication and mutual expectations.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INVESTMENT IN SOMERSET

Trust: The Town of Somerset seeks to be a trusted and effective partner to the private and public entities that invest and do business in the town.

Local Benefit: The Town seeks to connect the maximum amount of Somerset businesses and workers to the economic opportunities occurring across the town, creating more local jobs and enhancing the community wide benefits of economic investments.

Equal Opportunity: The Town of Somerset is committed to ensuring that a system is in place for all Somerset companies and workers to competitively and transparently compete for economic opportunities.

Collaboration: The Town of Somerset is committed to these guiding principles as a shared framework to guide investors to hire locally, spend locally and be good corporate citizens, while creating a platform for working with local companies and workers to compete, innovate and benefit from economic activities occurring in the town.

THE TOWN OF SOMERSET’S COMMITMENT TO INVESTMENT PARTNERS

• Clearly communicate the expectations of the town to its partners through forums and outreach
• Provide public sector services to economic development partners in a timely, professional and highly effective manner
• Provide each partner with access to a clearing house of information on Somerset companies and workers who can compete for contracts and employment opportunities.

INVESTMENT PARTNERS COMMITMENT TO THE TOWN OF SOMERSET

• Pledge their best efforts to create opportunities for and hire qualified residents for job openings in the town.
• Pledge their best efforts to contract qualified Somerset companies for services that can be delivered at a high level of quality, on time and on budget.
• Pledge to be transparent and open with the town about project timelines as well as local spending and local goals.
• Pledge to support local causes and organizations whenever possible and to be a good corporate citizen interested in the future growth of the Town of Somerset.
The Somerset Economic Development Committee goals are aligned with the Somerset Master Plan
Master Plan Economic Development Goal 1: Retain existing businesses

Become a resource for the small businesses

- Somerset MA Economic Development Committee Facebook page created – 1,990 people reached; 220 post engagement actions; 73 page likes; 172 Followers – 46% Male 54% Female
- EDC page updated on town website
- EDC Website to be developed
- Email contact list to promote EDC to businesses under development – 600+ businesses identified, mailer sent
- Plans for newsletter, town forums and other forms of communication
- Recognition program developed

Support the expansion of current businesses

- Key contacts being identified for outreach and needs determination
Greetings Somerset Business Owners:

Last fall the Town of Somerset reconvened the Economic Development Committee ("EDC"). As was done in the past we will be driving efforts for further development and growth for the Town, with a shared focus on organic growth of existing businesses such as yours as well as new development.

Towards that end, we will soon be implementing an e-newsletter, to be issued quarterly or as needed, to communicate to town businesses current EDC actions as well as opportunities such as training, grant availability, and other opportunities for you to promote and showcase your business. More on this subject will be shared across various public town social media pages in the coming weeks; you can also follow us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/Somerset EDC.

Additionally, we plan to build out the current Town website shortly to include an improved, more visible Business Directory, as well as an Event Calendar and other enhancements. We encourage all town businesses to participate in this effort, as we will likewise encourage residents to visit the site and use the Directory as their needs arise as well as encouraging them to "shop local". You can enroll in the Business Directory online at the Town website at www.townofsomerset.org, just select Business Directory in the list and click on the link "Want to submit your business listing? Click here." which will bring you to the Business Account Request Form. If you prefer, we can handle this for you; simply provide the necessary contact information below and return in the envelope provided, and a member of our committee will reach out to you. Please note that you must have a Business Certificate to be listed; more on this below.

We look forward to collaborating with all town businesses to assist with and support growth and continued success. Please reach out to the EDC with any comments, questions or suggestions at somersetedc@town.somerset.ma.us.

Regards,

Economic Development Committee
Town of Somerset, MA

**Please note that if you are a home-based business (you do not have a physical location in town outside of your residence), the Town requires that you have a Business Certificate to be included in the Directory. Please visit the Town website at www.townofsomerset.org to see if this applies to you. From the drop-down, select "Resources & Documents", scroll down to "Zoning Board of Appeals" and review both "Home OCCUPATIONAL USES..." and "Home Occupation Checklist". If you need a permit, you do not already have a Business Certificate, there is a $50 fee as well as the completed Home Occupation Checklist form that must be returned to the Town. Fill in the Town Click to begin the process, which submits a copy of some of the most recent employee hours on the 10th Thursday each month. Applications must be submitted no later than 12:00 noon on the last Thursday of the month for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting following receipt.**
Business Recognition Program

- Recognition of New Business Openings/New Openings
- Recognition of Anniversary Milestones
- Recognition for Community Service, Giving, Excellence, Beautification
- Other Activities Deemed Worthy of Recognition
Master Plan Economic Development Goal 2: Expand businesses based on strengths and expand the tax base through the creation of new businesses and market sectors

Plan for and support the expansion of the following industries:

- Healthcare
- Marine related businesses
- Restaurants, bars and taverns
- Modern manufacturing – Prysmian Group subsea cable manufacturing plant

Develop and execute a tourism program based on the uniqueness of Somerset

Focus energies on helping expand industries that have high tax and low impact development:

- Energy
  - Mayflower Wind – transmission cable landfall, onshore HVDC Converter station

Contacts have been established with Mayflower Wind, Bristol Community College and the National Offshore Wind Institute (NOWI - New Bedford, MA)

- Back offices
- Data centers, etc.
Brayton Point Commerce Center

Proposed Concept

Subsea Cable Manufacturing - $300MM

HVDC Converter Station - $100MM

Onshore Terminal Connection - $?MM

Making the Offshore to Onshore Connection
Master Plan Economic Development Goal 3: Develop successful branding and community building to showcase the Town’s assets and opportunities

- Develop a branding program that demonstrates the Town is open for business and coincides with efforts to increase tourism
  - SOAM returned to Somerset
- Continue support for key community events
  - Create / Update town website / EDC Facebook page for an events calendar
- Create a plan that is designed to increase investment in the community, tourism and community building
- Identify and develop visual improvement programs or guidelines to help strengthen the visual appeal of the Town’s business districts
- Investigate grants or other sources of funding to develop a façade improvement program
- Utilize the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative that provides services and technical assistance to communities for revitalizing their downtowns
Sign & Facade
RAPID RECOVERY PROGRAM TOOLKIT

MA Downtown Initiative
Technical Assistance Program

Program Information and Guidelines
FY2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Charles D. Baker, Governor | Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor | Mike Kennealy, Secretary
Route 138 Visual Improvements
Improve Building Facades and Signage
Route 138 Visual Improvements
Develop Creative Signage / Banners
Route 138 Visual Improvements
Add Additional Landscaping
Master Plan Economic Development Goal 4: Unlock the development potential in existing business corridors and clusters

Projects involving town owned land need to follow a specific track:

- **Proposal**
  - Develop proposal and present to the Board of Selectmen

- **Public Input**
  - Raise public awareness by holding town forums to allow for discussion, feedback and modification

- **Zoning**
  - If necessary, present article(s) to change zoning as needed at town meeting

- **Article**
  - Present article(s) to declare the land surplus at town meeting (concurrent?)

- **RFP**
  - Develop timetable for RFP if necessary zoning and surplus land designation are successful
Master Plan Economic Development Goal 4: Unlock the development potential in existing business corridors and clusters (continued)

- Explore ways to catalyze development in Slade’s Ferry District (and surrounding areas)
- Advance a development concept for the Town-owned Wilbur Avenue parcel
- Redevelopment of the Brayton Point Commerce Center – previously discussed
- Conduct outreach to understand market potential and development interests for the Indian Spring Plaza commercial area
- Develop / Redevelop multiple underutilized or vacant parcels
- Work with the owners of Montaup property to repurpose / redevelop
Somerset Has An Information Superhighway Right Down Its Middle…

...But No Access Ramps!

The high speed fiber optic cable comes across from Fall River where the big NGrid pylons are in the Taunton River, goes up Brayton Ave to Bednarik Boots, goes up old GAR Highway to where that old road turns left into the Spinelli neighborhood. The cable then crosses new Route 6 to the north side of the highway and then continues on Route 6 westward toward Providence.
Transformation of Slades Ferry
Concept for Mixed Use Development in Slades Ferry
Concept for Mixed Use Development in Slades Ferry
Secondary Town Properties for Development in Slades Ferry
Secondary Town Properties for Development in Slades Ferry
Concepts For Development of the Wilbur Avenue Parcel
Indian Spring Plaza
Other Underutilized or Vacant Parcels
Montaup Power Plant Site

Business / Commercial?

Industrial?
Master Plan Economic Development Goal 5: Develop a framework where the Town establishes itself to be business friendly

- Update pamphlet that provides an overview of the land development approval process – previously completed
- Recommend updates to the Town’s Zoning Bylaw that support desired business sectors and development types
- Enhance the permitting process
  
  Town administrator pursuing permitting software; EDC to work with planning and town administrator.
- Become knowledgeable about local, state and federal business incentive programs
- Give public recognition and/or monetary incentives to businesses who maintain and beautify their properties – previously discussed
- Create a property owner guide on low-cost, high impact practices towards commercial property improvements
- Build relationships and coordinate with other towns in the South Coast region
One Cloud Solution to Power Every Permitting and Licensing Workflow

- Building Permits
- Business Licenses
- Health Permits
- Planning and Zoning
- Grants Management
- Pet Licenses
- Code Enforcement
- Outdoor Dining
- Fire and Safety
- Public Works
- Cannabis Licensing
- Police
Questions?
APPENDIX
## Economic Development (ED)

**Goal ED1:** Retain existing businesses. The Town currently has several businesses that provide integral services to the Town’s residents, surrounding communities and other businesses. This stability in the workforce will reinforce that Somerset is a Town worth investing in.

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<tr>
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<th>Recommendations/Actions</th>
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<th>Implementation Leadership</th>
<th>Implementation Partners</th>
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<th>OOM Cost Estimate</th>
<th>Potential Funding Sources</th>
<th>Priority</th>
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<tr>
<td>ED1-1</td>
<td>Become a resource for the small businesses by understanding these programs and their potential to assist small businesses.</td>
<td>BOS, TA, TP</td>
<td>EOEHD, Chamber of Commerce, SRPDED, UMass Public Policy</td>
<td>Mid-term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>SRPDED</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
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<td>ED1-2</td>
<td>Support the expansion of current businesses with the assistance of the Town’s Planning Department. The Planning Department should become the point of contact for all existing businesses looking to expand by streamlining the process to help businesses understand and navigate the development approval process until the time they are ready to pull a building permit.</td>
<td>LU</td>
<td>BOS, TA, TP</td>
<td>PB, ZBA, Consultant, EOHED</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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**Goal ED2:** Expand businesses based on strengths and expand the tax base through the creation of new business and market sectors. The Town's many strengths, as well as current regional market conditions, will drive the identification of the businesses and industries that would be beneficial to strengthening Somerset’s tax base and helping to offset the residential tax burden.

<p>| ED2-1 | Plan for and support the expansion of the following industries and other businesses through implementation of active recruitment and zoning changes as necessary: • Health care • Marine-dependent businesses • Restaurants, bars and taverns and • Medical manufacturing | LU               | TA TP            | BOS, PB, ZBA, EOEHD, UMass – Blue Economy, Chamber of Commerce, SRPDED, REED | Ongoing Process | $ | Town, State, Federal Funds | High |
| ED2-3 | Develop and oversee a Rental program based on the Town's tax incentives, the Residential Rental Stabilization Program to protect the local economy by bringing in money | NCH              | BOS TA         | TR, CV, JC, Chamber of Commerce, Mortgage Bankers | Mid-term | $ | Federal Council, Massachusetts, Tourism, Local | Moderate |</p>
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<td></td>
<td>from outside of the local community, while at the same time improving retail and cultural experiences of local residents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Local Volunteers, School Department</td>
<td>Short-Mid-term</td>
<td>$-$$</td>
<td>Alliance, Wild and Scenic; State and Federal</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED2-3</td>
<td>Focus energies on helping expand industries that have high tax and low impact developments such as manufacturing, energy, back offices, data centers, or other similar industries. Potential strategies include tax incentives, grant programs, industry recruitment, marketing, and expected permitting, etc.</td>
<td>LU BOS, TA</td>
<td>TP, EOHED, Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State and Federal</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Goal ED3: Develop successful branding and community building to showcase the Town’s assets and opportunities.</strong></td>
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<td>ED3-1</td>
<td>Look towards developing a branding program that would not only demonstrate it is open for business but coincide with efforts to increase tourism.</td>
<td>NCH BOS, TA</td>
<td>TP, CC, NC, Tourism Center, Chamber of Commerce, businesses</td>
<td>Mid-term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>ED3-2</td>
<td>Continue to support key community events.</td>
<td>NCH All</td>
<td>CC, HC, BD, RO, Library, COA, Police, Fire, School Department, COA, Non-profit, Regional Non-profit, businesses</td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town, State, Non-profit</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED3-3</td>
<td>Create a plan that is designed to increase, investment in the community, tourism and community building.</td>
<td>LU TP</td>
<td>All Departments, Nonprofit, Regional Cultural Council, Residents, businesses</td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town, State, Non-profit, Cultural Council</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>ED3-4</td>
<td>Identify and develop visual improvement programs or guidelines to help strengthen the visual appeal of the Town’s business districts.</td>
<td>LU TP BO</td>
<td>Zip, PB, Redevelopment Program Owners, Commercial Association</td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Trade, DRPTED</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
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<td>ED3-4</td>
<td>Investigate grants or other sources of funding to develop a façade improvement program.</td>
<td>LU</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Businesses, ZBA, PB, Property Owners</td>
<td>Mid-term</td>
<td>TBO</td>
<td>State Grants</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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**Goal ED4: Unlock the development potential in existing business corridors and clusters.** The Somerset Economic Development Plan identified eight sites/areas to focus economic development efforts. They include: Route 6 Commercial Corridor, Wilbur Avenue Property, Maritime Development District, Slade’s Ferry Mixed-Use Area, Montauk Site, Route 138 South (Center of Town), Route 138 North (Indian Springs), and the Village. Strategic plans for these sites will ensure that they are developed in a manner that benefits the Town and its residents. See map on next page for locations of these business areas.

<p>| ED4-1 | Conduct market/feasibility analysis and advance a development concept plan for the Town-owned Wilbur Avenue parcel. Consider zoning amendment as appropriate to enable desired mix of uses and building form and massing for this site. | LU | TP | EOHED, PB, ZBA, Working Committee | Short-term | $ | EOHED | High |
| ED4-2 | Actively engage in and support the redevelopement of the Brayton Point Commerce Center at the local and state level to stimulate local economy and growth. Encourage complementary industries and services in business zones outside of, but economically linked to, Brayton Point Commerce Center. | LU | BOS | TP, TA, EOHED, EOCERA, Port Authorities, Harbormaster, UMass Public Policy – Blue Economy | Short-Mid-Long-term | $ | Private | Moderate |
| ED4-3 | Conduct a market and outreach to understand market potential and development interests for the Indian Springs commercial area and other sites. Examine and update zoning accordingly to ensure desired redevelopment types are enacted. | LU | TP | PB, SRPDED, Consultant, Businesses, Property Owners | Mid-Lang-Term | $ | Town, State Grant | Moderate |
| ED4-4 | Take advantage of the Department of Housing and Community Development’s Massachusetts Downzoning Initiative that provides conversion of non-conventional dwellings on existing housing that meet standards for downsizing. | LU | TP | EOHED, SRPDED, Real Estate Developers, Corporation of Concerns to Transportation | Short-term | NO | State | Increase |
| ED5-3 | Make positive steps toward improving the pedestrian environment in the Village by incorporating naturalized and constructed pedestrian pathways. | LU | TP | | Short-Mid-Term | $ | Town | Moderate |</p>
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<td>ED4-6</td>
<td>Explore ways to catalyze development in Stade’s Ferry District, including investment in the streetscape and public realm, encouraging businesses to improve the look and feel of their establishments, and achieving a greater consistency of signage and wayfinding.</td>
<td>LU</td>
<td>TP, SFRC</td>
<td>Businesses, Property Owners, BD, PB, ZBA</td>
<td>Short-Mid-Term</td>
<td>$-$$$</td>
<td>Private, Town</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>ED4-7</td>
<td>While the Village is almost entirely developed, the Town should focus on preserving historic structures where appropriate, branding the history through signage and wayfinding, and incentivizing strategic infill where possible.</td>
<td>NCH</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>PB, ZBA, Historic Non-profit, MassHistorical, Property Owners</td>
<td>Mid-Long-Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>State, Local, Non-profit</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>ED4-8</td>
<td>Cooperate regionally to improve multi-modal links between businesses in Somerset and major regional transportation systems.</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td></td>
<td>MassDOT, SRPDDO, South Coast Bikeway, SOR, SRTA</td>
<td>Mid-Long-Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>State, Federal</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>ED4-9</td>
<td>Cooperate regionally to improve telecommunication systems.</td>
<td>LU, PFS</td>
<td>BOS</td>
<td>TP, TA</td>
<td>Mid-Long-Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>State, Federal</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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**Goal ED5:** Develop a framework where the Town establishes itself to be business friendly.

<p>| ED5-1 | Create a plan that provides an overview of the land development approval process. In addition to describing the approval process, the plan should provide frequently asked questions for businesses from various departments, such as the Planning, Building, Conservation, Highway, and Water and Sewer. | LU, CFS           | TP, ConCom, BD, HD, WaterSewer | PB, ZBA, Input from Businesses, SRPDDO, Chamber of Commerce, Consultant | Short-Term | $               | Town, Community, Compact                | Moderate |
| ED5-2 | Conduct a comprehensive update of the Town's Zoning Bylaw to ensure desired business sectors and development types are encouraged. In appropriate locations, as rezoned under goals ED1 through ED4, mixed-use, mixed-use commercial, and mixed-use residential will be allowed within the zone boundaries. | LU               | TP, BC                     | PB, ZBA, Consultant                                         | Short-Term | $               | Town, Planning                          | High     |</p>
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<tr>
<td>E5-3</td>
<td>Streamline permitting process to ensure business expansion and/or growth of new business sectors are encouraged and expedited when possible.</td>
<td>LU</td>
<td>TP, BD</td>
<td>PB, ZBA</td>
<td>Short-Mid Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5-4</td>
<td>Become knowledgeable about local, state and federal business incentive programs and help new businesses and developers to use these programs and incentives to promote investment and growth.</td>
<td>TP, BD</td>
<td>PB, ZBA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-Mid Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5-5</td>
<td>Give public recognition and/or monetary incentives to businesses who maintain and beautify their properties and/or make other contributions to the quality of life in town.</td>
<td>BOS, TA</td>
<td>BOS, TA, TP</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Town, Private</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>E5-6</td>
<td>Create and make available a property owner guide on low-cost, high-impact practices and techniques towards commercial property improvements.</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>BD, PB, ZBA, MassDevelopment, Chamber of Commerce, Business Owners</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-Mid Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town, Community Compact</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
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<td>E5-7</td>
<td>Build relationship and coordinate with other towns in the South Coast region to promote Somerset as business friendly in the region.</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Center, SSPEDD, UISteer, EDC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town, Regional, State</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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**Housing (H)**

**Goal H1**: Facilitate the development of more diverse housing in strategically designated areas, supported by infrastructure and services, to accommodate future growth and improve housing choices and affordability for people and families of varied socio-economic status.

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<tr>
<td>H1-1</td>
<td>Ensure mixed-use residential development in key commercial areas in town, such as Central, West town, commercial area, State’s Ferry Crossing, Willow Spring, Prima, Ridge business center, and others throughout town, to promote smaller, multi-family, more affordable market-rate housing units for working professionals and starting families.</td>
<td>LU, ED, TP</td>
<td>BD, PB, ZBA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>H1-2</td>
<td>Consider creating “General Residential” funding mechanism, which transitional areas for town, supporting development.</td>
<td>LU, TP</td>
<td>BC, ZBA, PB</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>High</td>
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