

FY2021-FY2022 Select Board Goals
Adopted: December 22, 2020

Temporary Goal – Manage the Town’s Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, including:

- Collaborating with the Needham Public Schools to open and keep the schools open if it is safe to do so, with a particular emphasis on the importance of supporting building maintenance and HVAC efforts and resources.
- Reviewing options for public meetings to be held in-person and in-person/Zoom hybrid models when safe to do so.
- In collaboration with the Town Moderator, review options for holding the 2021 Annual Town Meeting.
- In collaboration with the Council on Aging, Department of Health & Human Services and the Library Trustees, support the phased re-opening of those facilities when it is safe to do so.
- Prepare for re-opening of other Town facilities at the appropriate time.
- Provide support for local businesses and reimagine use of parking lots and public spaces for this purpose.
- Monitor the impact of the pandemic on the Town budget.
- Ensure adequate staffing for the Town’s pandemic response and protection of residents, with a particular focus on our most vulnerable populations.
- Prepare for community-wide Covid-19 vaccine distribution.

Foster a productive dialogue about racism in Needham and produce actionable strategies to ensure Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community, and that all residents of Needham are safe and free from racism, discrimination and hate.

- Establish the Needham Unite Against Racism Initiative Working Group, ensuring that the work is informed by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), and others who have been marginalized due to their race or ethnicity.
- Review Town policies, programs, and practices and identify changes to address any that contribute to systemic racism, including specifically policing, housing, & education.
- Reschedule Over Zero Needham Response/Resiliency Network Workshop.
- Collect data on the experiences of those who live and work in Needham to inform future actions.
- Consider establishing a discrimination complaint process.
- Promote website pages that summarizes all Board, Commission, and Committee vacancies and how to apply.
- Act to diversify the candidate pool for Boards, Commissions and Committees.

- Work with the Human Rights Committee to review the charge, roles, and responsibilities of the Committee.

Maximize the use of Town assets and ensure that Town and School services are housed in buildings that provide suitable and effective environments.

Continuing Strategies Tier 1

- Determine the future use or disposition of Ridge Hill buildings.
- Evaluate options for funding a DPW facility on Dedham Avenue.

Continuing Strategies Tier 2

- Conduct an environmental assessment to facilitate discussion about the future use of Ridge Hill/Nike.

Monitoring & Oversight

- Monitor Progress of Public Safety Building and Fire Station #2.

Ensure appropriate Regulation and Assessment of, and Investment in Infrastructure.

Continuing Strategies Tier 2

- Evaluate the feasibility of creating a shared use path from Needham Heights to Wexford Street.
- Develop options for refreshing landscaping at public facilities.
- In conjunction with the Transportation Committee, review bus routes in Needham Crossing.
- In conjunction with the MBTA, explore options for increasing commuter parking.
- Develop a plan for NPDES compliance including Stormwater Regulations and a Stormwater Stabilization Fund.

New Initiatives

- Work with utility companies to improve coordination of Town construction and utility improvements and expansion.

Monitoring & Oversight

- In conjunction with the City of Newton and MassDOT, monitor progress toward the renovation of Highland Avenue from Webster Street to the Charles River.

Maintain and improve the vitality and economic success of the Town.

Continuing Strategies Tier 1

- In conjunction with the Planning Board, evaluate options for the redevelopment of the Industrial Zones along Route 128.
- Work with the CEA to develop priorities for economic development.

Continuing Strategies Tier 2

- In conjunction with the Planning Board, evaluate options for the redevelopment of Chestnut Street.

New Initiatives

- Work to keep local businesses open and attract new businesses considering the pandemic.

Expand energy efficient and environmentally sound operations for the Town and its residents and businesses.

Continuing Initiatives Tier 2

- Develop a report of the Town's climate resiliency efforts and discuss next steps.
- Evaluate options for solar installation in parking lots.

New Initiatives

- Explore the option of implementing an organics recycling program for the community

Maintain and develop amenities that contribute to the desirability of Needham as a place to live and work.

Continuing Strategies Tier 1

- In conjunction with stakeholders develop an overall strategy for review of housing projects that are proposed.
- Consider the merits of a tree preservation by-law.

Continuing Strategies Tier 2

- Evaluate ways to improve parking at the Needham Center Post Office, on Hillside Avenue, and at other locations.
- Work with the Park & Recreation Commission to create recreational opportunities in the downtown.
- Establish fishing areas at ponds and on the Charles River.
- Explore opportunities for increasing the amount and diversity of public art.
- In conjunction with the Park & Recreation Commission, evaluate options for creating a park ranger program.

- In conjunction with the Park & Recreation Commission, explore options for improving access to the Rosemary Camp property.
- Explore the possibility of sponsoring a summer beer garden event.

Monitoring & Oversight

- Discuss multi-modal transportation on the greenway between Newton and Needham.

Maintain and enhance the Town's Financial Sustainability.

Continuing Strategies Tier 1

- Discuss the impact of annual tax levy increases.
- Evaluate local option means-tested senior property tax relief programs.

Evaluate Town Operations and Administration.

Continuing Strategies Tier 1

- Develop and implement a policy guiding the use of banners.
- The Board will establish a schedule of meeting with appointed and elected boards on a regular basis.

Continuing Strategies Tier 2

- Consider criteria for reviewing proposed zoning changes.
- The Board will meet regularly with community stakeholders.
- Review liquor license regulations with respect to compliance issues.

New Initiatives

- Discuss oversight and reports needed from public safety
- Review the composition, structure and charge of two to three committees.
- Review operations and long-term service delivery model at the RTS.

In developing its statement of goals for the coming fiscal years, the Board identified both initiatives that may be addressed in future years, and general guiding principles that guide the goal setting process. This list will continue to be updated and refined:

Future Initiatives

- Work with the Planning Board to consider a street naming policy.
- Consider a plan for snow removal in the business districts.
- Evaluate the concept of constructing a hockey rink in a public/private partnership.
- Evaluate options for locating alternative transportation options (e.g. ZipCar and bike share services) in Needham.

- Evaluate options for locating information kiosks in Needham Center.

Guiding Principles

- Targeted options for property acquisition will be explored.
- The Town will work to develop a consensus with Newton regarding transportation options along the Highland Avenue/Needham Street corridor.
- Appropriate coordination of all the major road projects affecting the Town is a priority.
- Town policies and regulations will be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis.
- The Town will prioritize the reconstruction and repair of existing sidewalks before embarking on new sidewalk construction. The construction of new sidewalks will be offset by the removal of old, under-used sidewalks.
- Opportunities to install community art will be explored.
- The Town should be an age friendly community.
- The number of pedestrian accidents is concerning and should be addressed.
- The Town will conduct a Capital Facility Summit on a regular biennial basis.
- Emergency preparation and planning is a high priority.
- Opportunities for departmental consolidation and efficiency improvement will be identified and implemented.
- Opportunities to enhance communication with the public will always be considered.
- Opportunities to collaborate on additional programs and services that will benefit Needham's veterans will be explored and implemented.
- Opportunities for streamlining the permitting process will be explored and implemented.
- Opportunities to expand the distribution of notices of public hearing will be explored and implemented.
- Opportunities to address trash concerns Town-wide will be explored and implemented.
- The Town will work to keep the pools at Rosemary Recreation Complex open for the longest period possible between Memorial Day and Labor Day.
- The Board will continue to review the policy implication of the allocation of liquor licenses.