

Melrose *Forward*

A Community Vision and Master Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



JUNE 2017



Acknowledgments

Thank you to all the community members who provided input to ensure the success of this plan. This plan was developed over two years by the Melrose Office of Planning and Community Development, with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the regional planning agency for Greater Boston, as its consultant.

City of Melrose

Many City of Melrose staff and officials provided input for **Melrose Forward: A Community Vision and Master Plan**. The following contributed substantially to research, writing, editing, promotion, and coordination as the plan was developed.

Mayor's Office

Mayor Robert J. Dolan

Brigid Alverson, Assistant to the Mayor

Office of Planning and Community Development

Denise Gaffey, Director and City Planner

Erin Heacock Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP, Assistant Planning Director

Martha Grover, Energy Efficiency Manager

Lori Massa, AICP, Planning Coordinator

Jane Pitts, GIS Analyst and Office Manager

Department of Public Works

John Scenna, Director

Elena Proakis-Ellis, City Engineer

Sadie Brown, Solid Waste + Recycling Coordinator

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Master Plan Advisory Committee

Anne DeSouza Ward, Chair, Planning Board Member

Joan Cassidy, Housing Authority Commissioner

Christopher Cinella, Chamber of Commerce President

Margaret Driscoll, School Committee Chairman

Ryan Fuller, Business Community Member

Lauren Grymek, Community At Large

Gail Infurna, Ward 5 Alderman

Elizabeth Moroney, Community At Large

Dorothy Travis, Melrose Cultural Council Member

Aaron Weieneth, Conservation Commission Member



Participants at the final Melrose Forward forum in March 2017 at Memorial Hall.

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Manisha G. Bewtra, AICP, Analytical Services Manager

Emma Schnur, Regional Land Use Planner

Amanda Chisholm, AICP, Chief Economic Development Planner

Sarah Kurpiel Lee, Assistant Director of Transportation

Christine Madore, AICP, Regional Planner

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Data Sources and Images

Data sources and images are cited as captions and endnotes throughout the full plan.

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A Note from Melrose City Hall

June 26, 2017

Dear Melrose Community Members,



Melrose Forward: A Community Vision and Master Plan kicked off at the September 2015 Victorian Fair, and since then, the Office of Planning and Community Development, the Master Plan Advisory Committee, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council have worked with our community to identify our community's needs and wishes for the coming decade. Melrose Forward will serve as a guiding policy document for all future decisions on growth and preservation in the City in the years to come. It is our pleasure to present this plan for our City's future.

A few of the plan's findings include:



Housing: Melrose is in high demand – it has been featured as the “hottest ZIP code” in the United States, one of the “Best Small Cities in America,” and was recently featured on WCVB's *Chronicle*, which highlighted many reasons why the community is so desirable. Being a “hot” city has its perks, but also its challenges: local realtors, faced with bidding wars and not enough inventory, have noted that our housing market is not at its healthiest. Even when adjusted for inflation, recent home sales prices are close to what they were in 2005, which, as you know, preceded a nationwide housing market crash. The Greater Boston Region faces a housing crisis, with a need for substantial housing production in order to stem rising prices, address low inventory, and retain a strong economic position. Here in Melrose, as more of our Baby Boomer residents approach retirement, it will be harder to find affordable places to live. Young families looking to become homeowners will be faced with a small number of options at a relatively high price tag within Melrose. Options for renters and homeowners alike are limited, and according to the Commonwealth's standards for affordable housing, we are falling short on the amount of subsidized housing we have available as well. In order to maintain both our desirability and our accessibility, we need to look at options for increasing housing production and ways to reduce barriers to creating new housing units.



Economic Development: Melrose's Downtown and our neighborhood commercial districts are part of what attract people to this community. Additionally, Melrose-Wakefield Hospital, Hallmark Health, and the healthcare industry in general contribute to the City's economic base. Keeping our commercial areas strong and keeping these jobs in Melrose must be a priority.



Transportation: Melrosians have identified the ability to get around by a variety of modes of transportation as one of the best parts of living in this City. Transit, including the Commuter Rail, access to the Orange Line, and MBTA buses, are the lifeblood of our community. Our compact city design make biking and walking attractive, whether for exercise or to get from place to place. We are improving accommodations for the many ways people use our streets and sidewalks, following the Complete Streets Policy we adopted in 2016. Additionally, we will continue to advocate for strong MBTA service.



Facilities and Infrastructure, Energy: In the past decade, the City has employed many new technologies that have helped to identify infrastructure spending priorities, increase energy efficiency, reduce waste, and save money. We have streamlined facilities management staffing by bringing custodial, maintenance, and facility management responsibilities for our schools under the umbrella of DPW, allowing School Administration to focus on well-rounded educational excellence and curriculum. We have built new facilities such as the Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School and have continued to upgrade existing facilities, including Melrose High School and Milano Center, among others. As a designated Green Community, we have substantially reduced the City's energy use and have taken a

proactive stance on climate adaptation. All of these investments have been needed, but our ability to proactively address our facilities and infrastructure is limited. We will need to continue to find ways to address our capital improvement needs as well as keep up with money-saving technologies to keep us agile and responsive as a city government.

History, Culture, Open Space, Land Use: Melrosians value the community's historical character as a "streetcar suburb" largely developed during the early 20th century, with Victorian architecture, a tight-knit development pattern that makes walking, biking, and taking public transportation feasible, green spaces at the periphery of the city as well as neighborhood parks throughout. Additionally, Melrosians enjoy a strong sense of community, which is supported by our arts, culture, and civic organizations. Melrosians value the city motto as "One Community, Open to All." As we look forward, we want to encourage both development and preservation, maintaining ties and strong physical reminders of the city's historical roots while also serving the needs of a 21st century populace. City zoning and other policies will be updated to reflect this balance.

This plan will guide local decision-making over the next decade.

Following a thorough analysis of current conditions and forecasted trends, **Melrose Forward: A Community Vision and Master Plan** concludes with a practical implementation plan that outlines goals, strategies, and actions, along with clearly defined responsibilities and timeframes for each action.

Let's work together to move Melrose Forward!

With warmest regards,



Mayor Robert J. Dolan
City of Melrose

Denise Gaffey
Director, Melrose Office of Planning &
Community Development



The Melrose Vision

As community members in 2017 look to the City's future, the following vision reflects communitywide values and aspirations for Melrose in the coming decade. These statements are a set of desired characteristics for what Melrosians endeavor the City to become. The goals and recommended policies in **Melrose Forward: A Community Vision and Master Plan** identify benchmarks by which to evaluate success and are intended to transform this vision into achievable action steps.

Melrose Community Aspirations

- The physical character of Melrose reflects a balanced approach to planning and development, with the protection and enhancement of the City's historical, cultural, recreational, and natural resources. The City represents a blend of urban and suburban design true to its roots as a community largely developed as a streetcar suburb during the Victorian era.
- It is convenient and safe to travel within Melrose as well as to access destinations outside the City via a multimodal transportation network, including the ability to get around by rail, bus, bicycle, walking, and driving, making it an attractive location within the Greater Boston Region.
- Melrose is an inclusive and welcoming community and provides equal access and opportunities that contribute to the wellbeing of all its residents.
- Melrose City government is approachable and responsive to the evolving needs of residents, businesses, schools, and institutions.
- Melrose is recognized as a great place to do business and enjoys a vital economic climate. Boasting a vibrant downtown and charming neighborhood commercial areas, Melrose supports a wide variety of business opportunities, from small, independent shops to large institutions that provide employment options and community services. These amenities enhance the quality of life for residents while also making Melrose a destination for surrounding communities.
- All students have the opportunity to achieve excellence in the Melrose Public Schools.
- Melrose is a regional leader in energy efficiency, renewable energy development, climate resilience planning, and communitywide sustainability initiatives.
- People of all income levels and ages, including families as well as non-family households, can find suitable and affordable housing in Melrose.
- City infrastructure and publicly-owned properties are well-supported with continued investment, maintenance, and enhancements.
- Melrosians enjoy a strong sense of community thanks to their active civic participation and spirit of volunteerism.



Melrose Today

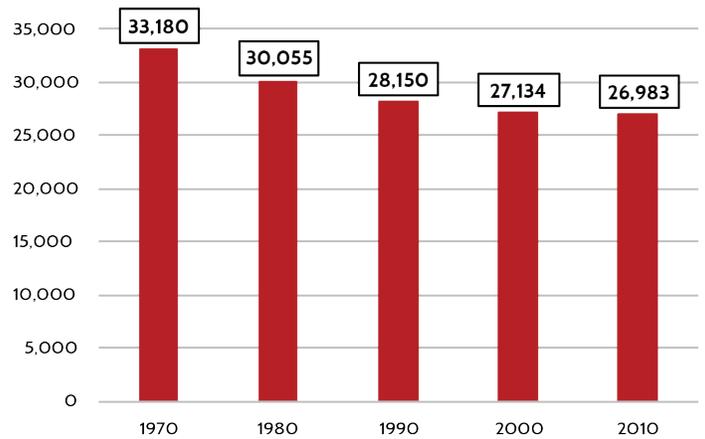
Melrose is a small-sized City with about 28,000 residents located in the Metro Boston Inner Core, seven miles north of Boston at the end of the MBTA Orange Line Subway and along the Haverhill Commuter Rail Line, between Interstate 93 and Route 1. Most residents of working age travel outside Melrose for their jobs. While the City is predominantly residential, its business districts offer shopping, dining, and services, and residents and visitors alike can enjoy easy access to parks, open space, recreational facilities, and community spaces, making many activities possible within the City's boundaries.

Melrose was first incorporated as a Town in 1850, shortly after the arrival of rail, and became a City in 1900. It grew from under 1,300 residents in 1850 to close to 17,000 in 1915. The City's population peaked in 1970 at 33,180, and in the decades since, has declined; the 2010 population was 26,983. The 2016 Census Population Estimate indicates a slight gain in population to 27,928. In the coming decade, the City's population is expected to hold steady or grow at a relatively slow rate. The number of households, on the other hand, has been growing at a much faster pace due to fewer people per household; total households increased by 2% from 2000-2010 and are projected to increase by another 10% between 2010-2030. The population is aging; by 2030, the group of householders aged 60 to 74 is expected to grow the most, from 2,396 to 3,370 households.

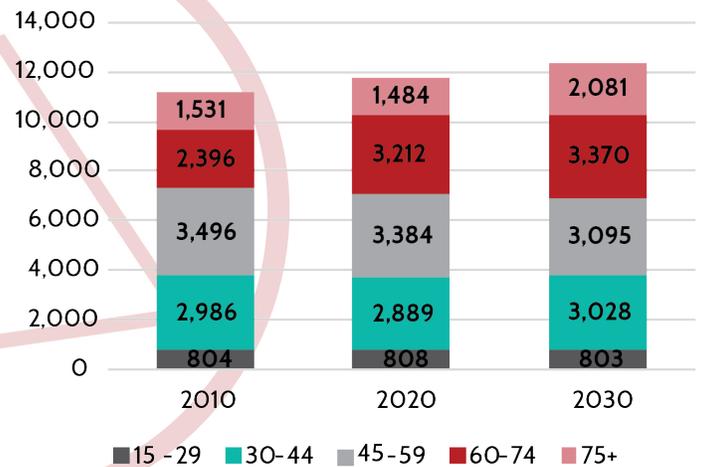
Melrose residents are well educated, with 62% of the population having completed at least an Associate Degree, compared to 48% of Massachusetts residents. The City of Melrose is more affluent than the rest of Middlesex County and the State. The median household income in Melrose is \$85,521, compared to \$85,118 in Middlesex County and \$68,563 in Massachusetts. Over half of Melrose's population works in management, business, science, and arts occupations. About a quarter works in sales and office occupations.

Overall, Melrose is less racially and ethnically diverse than Massachusetts, as almost 90% of its population is White Non-Hispanic, compared to about 64% of the Massachusetts population. However, Melrose is becoming more diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, the White Non-Hispanic population declined from 95%, while all other races and ethnicities increased during that decade. According to American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, approximately 15% of Melrose residents speak a language other than English at home and 13% are foreign born.

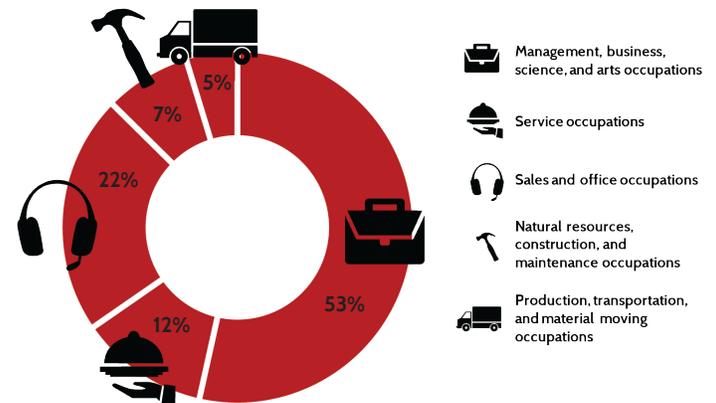
Total Population, 1970 to 2010



Household Projections by Age, 1990 to 2030



Occupation of Melrose Residents



Sources: U.S. Census; American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates; and Metro Boston Population and Housing Demand Projections, Stronger Region Scenario, MAPC 2014

Making the Plan

Extensive public input was essential to the success of **Melrose Forward: A Community Vision and Master Plan**. The community was engaged in a myriad of ways, including monthly Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) Meetings, two public forums, focus groups with stakeholders, and a booth at the Melrose Victorian Fair. The Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) met with the Melrose Energy Commission, the Conservation Commission, Sustainable Melrose, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the Rotary Club, and other groups to gather input on the plan. In addition, OPCD staff and MPAC members attended the Melrose Human Rights Commission's International Welcome Reception in November 2015.

Master Plan Advisory Committee

The Master Plan Advisory Committee was selected to work with staff from OPCD and the City's consultants

from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) on all elements of the master planning process. In addition to brainstorming and assisting with community outreach, the Master Plan Advisory Committee met monthly from August 2015 to May 2017 to review and inform Melrose Forward's Vision Statement, provide input on plan chapters, and develop the implementation plan. The Master Plan Advisory Committee represented a broad array of local stakeholders with expertise and interest in various topics covered in the Master Plan, and they represent a variety of community decision makers and constituencies within the City of Melrose.

Focus Groups

In June 2016, MAPC held two focus groups in Melrose with assistance from the City's Office of Planning and Community Development, one with a group of seniors, and another with a group of real estate professionals

Melrose Victorian Fair

Melrose Forward had its own booth at the Melrose Victorian Fair on September 13, 2015. Hundreds of community members stopped by the booth to weigh in on what they love about Melrose and which community attributes were most important to them, and to provide their ideas for Melrose Forward.





Melrose Forward Visioning Forum

On February 10, 2016, over 75 people came together at the Milano Center for the Melrose Forward Visioning Forum. This open house event gave residents the opportunity to learn about existing conditions in the City, help draft “The Melrose Vision,” and share their ideas about the next decade in Melrose.

working in the City. The aim of the first focus group was to identify and discuss the major barriers faced by older adults living in Melrose, as well as the ways the City is already “age friendly.” The goal of the second focus group was to understand overall how the commercial and residential real estate markets are doing in the City.

Melrose Forward Goals and Strategies Forum

On March 30, 2017, the City of Melrose and MAPC held a final public forum for the Melrose Forward planning process at Memorial Hall. This well-attended event purposely coincided with the release of the draft Melrose Forward document and the start of the public comment period. After a presentation by MAPC on Melrose Forward’s process and major findings, attendees were asked to spend the rest of the evening offering their feedback on the goals and strategies proposed in the draft plan. Just as feedback from other community engagement activities informed the draft plan, feedback from the Goals and Strategies Forum was incorporated into the text and recommendations of the final plan.

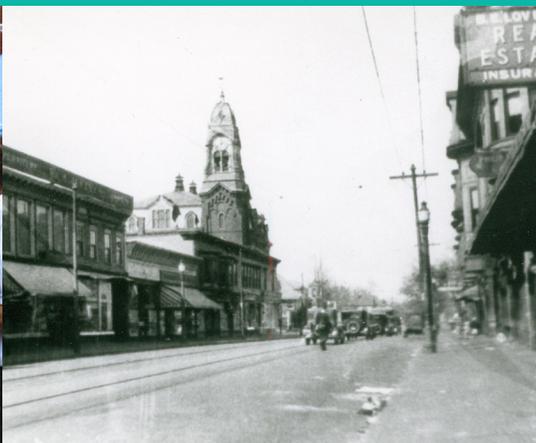
Comment Period

The final public forum kicked off a three-week comment period that concluded on April 23, 2017. During that time, OPCD received written feedback on the draft plan. Each of the comments was cataloged and OPCD, MAPC, and the Master Plan Advisory Committee met on April 27 to discuss the comments and how to address them. Many of the comments helped to refine the plan’s recommendations and content.

Planning Board Adoption

OPCD presented the draft plan and updated recommendations to the Planning Board on May 22. The plan was adopted by the Planning Board at its meeting on June 26, 2017.

Historic and Cultural Resources



From its historic Victorian-era downtown to the popular Melrose Symphony Orchestra concerts, Melrose has much to contribute to the region. Participants at the March 2017 Public Forum echoed this feeling, and made it known that the City should prioritize historic preservation in downtown Melrose in addition to supporting the local arts and cultural resources in the community. This includes continuing to fund the sign and façade improvement grant programs offered by the Office of Planning and Community Development and seeking funds to support the historically appropriate renovations of public buildings like the Melrose Public Library, Memorial Hall, and Central Fire Station. As it relates to supporting the local arts community, the participants indicated that increased awareness of cultural events in Melrose, support of funding streams for arts and cultural resources, and maintenance and enhancement of spaces for use by local arts and cultural groups are priorities for the City. The following recommendations will enable the City to respond to these priorities in addition to protect, enhance, and promote historic resources in Melrose.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Preserve and protect historic Downtown Melrose.

Strategy 1.1: Maintain and support the Historic District Commission.

Strategy 1.2: Provide resources to preserve downtown buildings.

Goal 2: Publicize and promote historic resources.

Strategy 2.1: Increase historic district designations in Melrose.

Strategy 2.2: Augment records and educational materials regarding historic resources.

Strategy 2.3: Review historic resources for possible additions to the National Register of Historic Places.

Goal 3: Protect and enhance historic resources.

Strategy 3.1: Prevent the incremental loss of historic structures.

Strategy 3.2: Seek funding to preserve historic resources.

Goal 4: Support local arts and cultural resources.

Strategy 4.1: Increase awareness of cultural events in Melrose.

Strategy 4.2: Support funding streams for arts and cultural resources.

Goal 5: Provide adequate space for community events and meetings.

Strategy 5.1: Maintain and enhance space for community groups, cultural groups, and community functions, and provide space at a cost within reach of these groups.



Open Space and Recreation



Melrose's natural environment, open spaces, and recreational resources add tremendous value to quality of life in the City. In 2015, the City released an update to its Open Space and Recreation Plan, which delves deeper into topics around open space and recreation in Melrose. Given its recent publication, this Master Plan carries over many of the recommendations of the 2015 plan to be implemented by the departments, commissions, and advocacy groups mentioned in this section. During the public process on the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the City was directed to expand programming, continue upgrading facilities, encourage greater stewardship, and preserve open space. Many of these same priorities were expressed during the public process for this Master Planning effort, and expanded upon to include further stewardship of the ponds in the City. In addressing these priorities, the recommendations direct the City to be more assertive in funding by adopting the Community Preservation Act and creating a stormwater utility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Satisfy the active and passive recreation needs of present and future residents.

Strategy 1.1: Provide a variety of recreational activities throughout the City that can be enjoyed by a broad cross-section of residents, regardless of age, gender, ability, or interests.

Strategy 1.2: Ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and undertake improvements that advance accessibility.

Strategy 1.3: Ensure that the need for regional facilities is addressed.

Strategy 1.4: Generate new and innovative ways to finance open space and recreation development and maintenance.

Goal 2: Improve, repair, and maintain existing park, playground, and trail facilities.

Strategy 2.1: Continue to improve the ongoing maintenance program.

Strategy 2.2: Enhance existing playing fields and parks to increase usability and longevity.

Strategy 2.3: Improve opportunities for trail use.

Goal 3: Preserve existing and acquire new open space, scenic areas, and environmentally sensitive lands.

Strategy 3.1: Protect conservation lands.

Strategy 3.2: Acquire critical unprotected parcels.

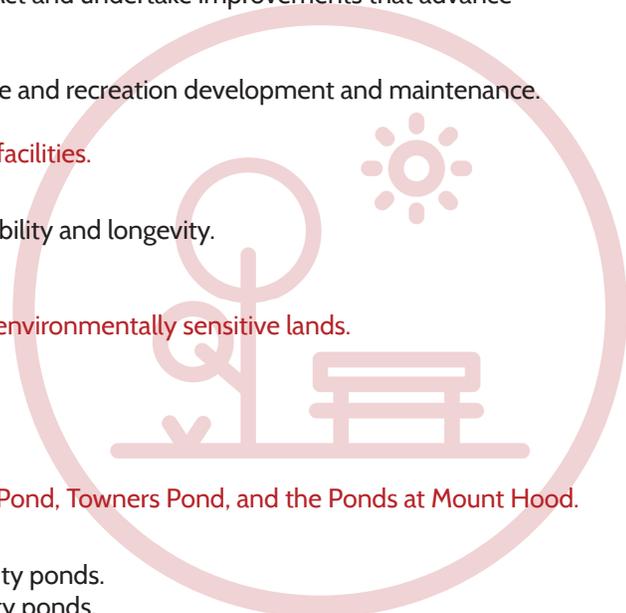
Strategy 3.3: Protect and improve the urban tree canopy.

Goal 4: Protect and improve water resources, including Ell Pond, Swains Pond, Towners Pond, and the Ponds at Mount Hood.

Strategy 4.1: Assess water quality at City ponds.

Strategy 4.2: Develop measures to protect against eutrophication at City ponds.

Strategy 4.3: Increase educational and recreational opportunities at City ponds.



Housing



Melrose has benefited greatly from recent accolades. The City continues to be recognized as a desirable place to live; but with these recognitions comes difficulties in keeping up with demand and maintaining affordability in a City that is loved by longtime residents and newer residents alike. This sentiment was present throughout development of this Master Plan. The analysis included in this chapter highlights the fact that there is very little inventory available at all price points to meet the respective demand, in particular for those households that are low-income or cost-burdened. In addition to maintaining a strong pipeline of new housing construction, the City of Melrose needs to take a more creative approach to creating and retaining a variety of housing types that promote diversity and equal access. Recommendations that follow prioritize creation and retention in ways that will maximize development options in a dense community by allowing new types of housing to be built for all Melrose residents regardless of age and income.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Encourage the creation of housing units that are affordable to a broad range of incomes.

Strategy 1.1: Promote regulations that permit a variety of residential types, ensuring Melrose residents of all ages and incomes can remain in Melrose.

Strategy 1.2: Identify opportunities where the City will encourage new housing affordable to a broad range of incomes.

Strategy 1.3: Support the efforts of community groups and nonprofit organizations to pursue funding for affordable housing.

Strategy 1.4: Promote programs that lower the cost of housing.

Goal 2: Encourage the creation and retention of housing that promotes diversity and equal access.

Strategy 2.1: Provide a range of housing for the entire life cycle.

Strategy 2.2: Provide a range of housing that promotes economic and housing type diversity.



Economic Development



Melrose's downtown, as a retail and restaurant destination, attracts visitors from across the Greater Boston region. Many participants in this process have identified the downtown as a reason why they love Melrose. Participants at the March 2017 public forum prioritized support for downtown Melrose and the other business districts by retaining current businesses and continuing to attract new ones. Opportunities for new business development may exist in the Rail Corridor Overlay District and on Route 99, and the participants at the public forum recommended that the City have a more proactive approach to these areas. In addition, the analysis in this section shows that the healthcare industry is one that could grow in Melrose, especially with the anchor of Melrose-Wakefield Hospital. The following goals, strategies, and actions will enable the City to respond to these priorities within the timeframe of the Melrose Forward Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Support all of Melrose's business districts to enhance neighborhoods and provide new business opportunities.

Strategy 1.1: Maintain and improve Downtown Melrose as a regional shopping and dining destination and community hub for services and gathering.

Strategy 1.2: Work to retain and attract additional business activity and mixed use development in Melrose.

Strategy 1.3: Enhance the customer and visitor experience in all of Melrose's business districts.

Goal 2: Support local and small businesses.

Strategy 2.1: Connect with local businesses in the City to understand their needs.

Goal 3: Promote economic development and increase the tax base by encouraging business development and redevelopment.

Strategy 3.1: Ensure zoning districts encourage economic development.

Strategy 3.2: Identify optimal land uses for the Route 99 area and adjust zoning to encourage preferred redevelopment.



Infrastructure and Facilities



Management of the City's infrastructure and facilities has made strides since the 2004 Master Plan. The use of data-driven tools will enable the City to effectively assess projects to make the best use of limited funding. Challenges that the City is facing now include funding upgrades to the wastewater conveyance system as well as maintaining and upgrading public buildings to meet current and future needs. One of the most critical challenges facing the City is the I/I flow within the wastewater conveyance system. While capital improvements have been completed and an aggressive new program is being implemented, I/I removal is a constant funding challenge. On the public facilities side, the challenges presented in the next ten years include the increasing elementary school enrollment and the need for comprehensive renovations to the fire and police stations, Memorial Hall, and the public library. These challenges are top priorities of those who have participated in the public process, and the following recommendations will address these challenges and the continued proactive approach to infrastructure and public facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Create an organized, deliberate, and holistic approach to community-wide infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 1.1: Finalize planning tools for each infrastructure system.

Strategy 1.2: Achieve high standards across private developments and public works projects.

Strategy 1.3: Upgrade infrastructure to ensure that delivery of services is achieved.

Strategy 1.4: Continue to remove barriers to waste reduction and diversion.

Goal 2: Provide adequate funding for infrastructure and public facility improvements on an annual basis.

Strategy 2.1: Fund water and sewer capital projects.

Strategy 2.2: Fund the removal of Infiltration and Inflow (I/I).

Strategy 2.3: Provide sufficient funding for road and sidewalk repairs.

Strategy 2.4: Fund stormwater improvements.

Strategy 2.5: Utilize the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process for all non-water and sewer projects, including school facilities.

Strategy 2.6: Pursue funding for critical building projects.



Transportation and Circulation



Melrose's access to MBTA transit as well as its proximity to major highways make it attractive to commuters. The ability to get around the City and to easily travel to surrounding communities using active modes of transportation such as bicycling and walking was identified as a top priority by the community during the development of Melrose Forward. The City recently pivoted toward broad consideration of all modes of transportation in roadway projects following the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy in 2016. During the 2017 public forum, participants indicated their preference to fund projects for walking, biking, and transit users over automobile users, creating a supportive environment to encourage more walking and biking, and strong advocacy in regard to the MBTA services and facilities. Additionally, there is public support behind implementing traffic calming strategies without further impacting the flow of traffic within the community. The following recommendations will guide the City as it improves upon its valuable transportation assets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Promote active transportation, including walking and biking.

Strategy 1.1: Increase active transportation and recreation options by increasing facilities for bicycles and pedestrians.

Strategy 1.2: Create a more supportive environment to encourage walking and biking.

Strategy 1.3: Prioritize funding for amenities for walking, biking, and transit users over funding that primarily benefits personal automobiles.

Strategy 1.4: Support regional off-road trail networks.

Goal 2: Advocate for continued MBTA Commuter Rail, Orange Line, Bus, and "The Ride" services and encourage use of MBTA transit.

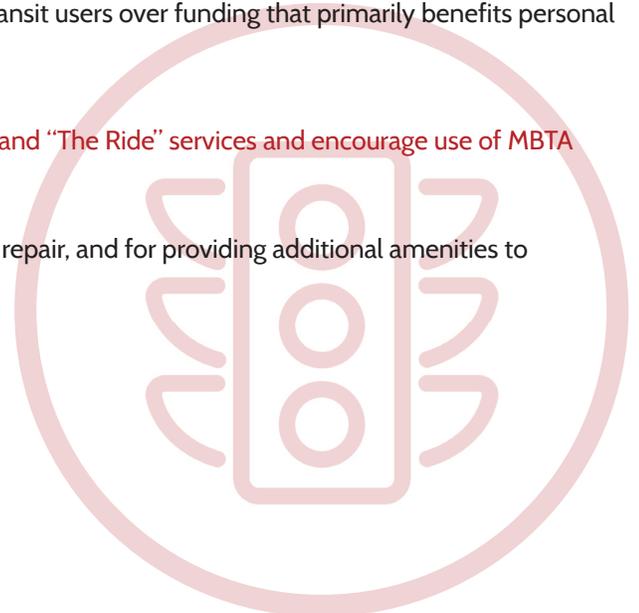
Strategy 2.1: Maintain a strong presence on the MBTA Advisory Board.

Strategy 2.2: Advocate for maintaining station area amenities in good repair, and for providing additional amenities to facilitate increased transit use.

Goal 3: Facilitate the efficient and safe flow of traffic

Strategy 3.1: Update signal equipment.

Strategy 3.2: Address speeding concerns on area roads.



Energy and Sustainability



The City of Melrose has been a leader in energy efficiency efforts. As one of the first 35 communities to be designated a Green Community in 2010 and since then, the City has leveraged more than \$1.6 million in state and utility funds to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy use. The City has been forward-thinking in having an Energy Efficiency Manager to make sustainability efforts a priority. More efforts can be made in the municipal and school buildings to ensure that energy use reductions are continually achieved over the long-term, which was identified as an important need by the participants at the March 2017 public forum. Further, the City of Melrose, in coordination with the Melrose Energy Commission, has a strong commitment to outreach and education for residential energy customers. In addition to continuing to support residential customers, the City was directed to extend efforts to commercial energy customers in Melrose. The following goals, strategies, and actions will enable the City to respond to these priorities within the timeframe of this Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Reduce municipal sector energy use.

Strategy 1.1: Create a robust program of regularly scheduled preventative building maintenance and ongoing commissioning.

Strategy 1.2: Target the largest energy users for further energy reduction measures.

Strategy 1.3: Secure funding to support municipal energy reduction efforts.

Strategy 1.4: Reduce street light, parking lot, and park lighting energy usage beyond the already-achieved reduction from LED conversions.

Strategy 1.5: Continue to reduce municipal fleet fuel use.

Strategy 1.6: Increase demand for renewable energy.

Goal 2: Continue to work with residents to reduce residential energy usage.

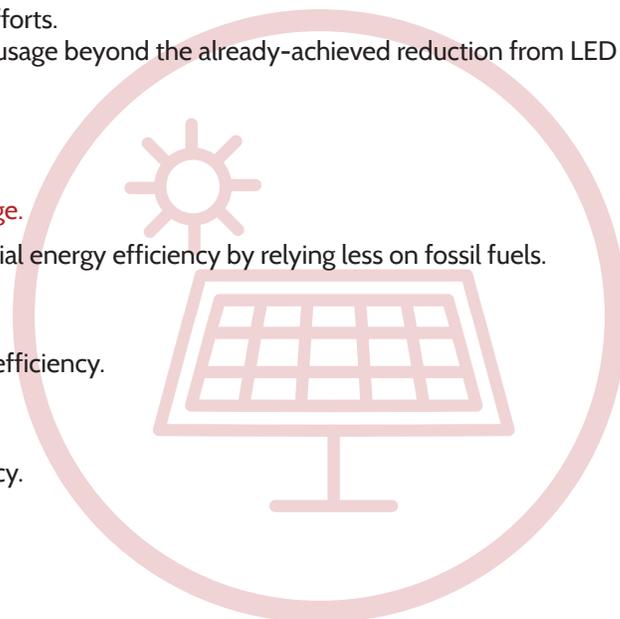
Strategy 2.1: Continue to provide opportunities that promote residential energy efficiency by relying less on fossil fuels.

Goal 3: Reduce commercial sector energy use.

Strategy 3.1: Provide opportunities that promote commercial energy efficiency.

Goal 4: Position the City of Melrose to be prepared for climate change.

Strategy 4.1: Advance initiatives on climate preparedness and resiliency.



Land Use and Zoning

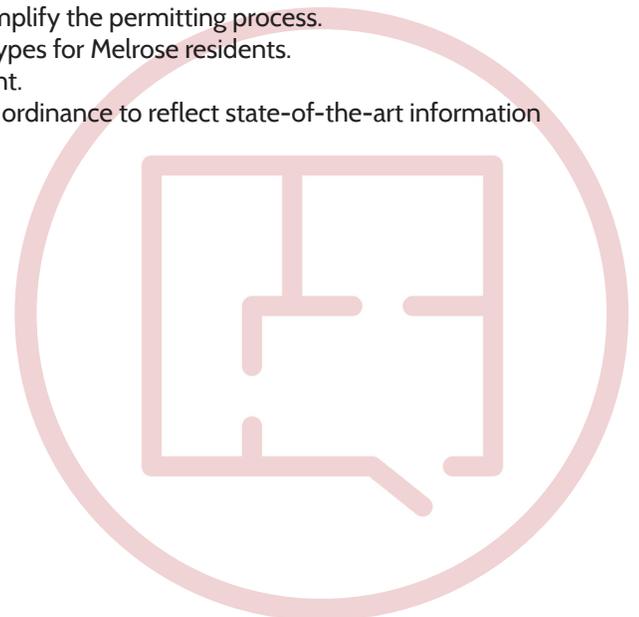


At its core, Melrose Forward is a land use plan, and this effort is a chance to update land use and zoning goals in line with the community's vision. The analysis in this chapter shows that there are many aspects of the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Rules and Regulations that should be evaluated to ensure that development is consistent with the character of Melrose. Not only does this theme apply to land use and zoning, but also to implementing actions that promote the goals outlined in the Housing chapter and Economic Development chapter. The public process also placed a high priority in ensuring that the recommendations of this Master Plan do not compromise the character of Melrose's natural, scenic, and built environment, and the following recommendations will promote this objective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Maintain the character of Melrose's natural, scenic, and built environment.

- Strategy 1.1:** Perform a thorough review of the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to ensure all new development is consistent with the character of Melrose.
- Strategy 1.2:** Remove common barriers in the Zoning Ordinance to simplify the permitting process.
- Strategy 1.3:** Promote regulations that permit a variety of residential types for Melrose residents.
- Strategy 1.4:** Ensure zoning districts encourage economic development.
- Strategy 1.5:** Update and maintain the City's land use data and zoning ordinance to reflect state-of-the-art information management and decision-making capabilities.



Implementation Plan

Implementation is key to any successful planning process, and it is the phase in which the recommendations laid out in a plan become a reality. The City of Melrose implemented many of the recommendations detailed in its 2004 Master Plan, and for almost 13 years, the document served as a guide for decisions related to development, zoning, updates to aging infrastructure, and more.

Implementing **Melrose Forward: A Community Vision and Master Plan** will be no different, and it will be bolstered by an Implementation Committee appointed by the Mayor. This committee will have a similar composition to the Master Plan Advisory Committee in that it will represent the various stakeholder groups in Melrose. The group will have annual check-ins and produce progress reports to show the status of Melrose Forward's implementation. The Implementation Committee will help communicate the plan to City residents for years to come and motivate City Boards and Committees to be conscientious in pursuing their respective action items.

The **Melrose Forward Implementation Plan** includes a series of recommendations that will help achieve **The Melrose Vision**. In the full plan document, recommendations are organized by chapter/topic and include Goals, Strategies, and Actions. Responsible parties and timeframes are assigned to each action.

Goals: What do we want to achieve?

At the Goal level, the Implementation Plan moves from the Melrose Vision toward the specifics of how to realize this vision over the next several years.

Strategies: How do we get there?

Strategies break down the Goals into tasks that help accomplish each goal.

Actions: What specific steps do we need to take?

Actions are specific activities assigned to one or more City department, board, commission, committee, or when appropriate, private organization. Each action includes a recommended timeframe.

Timeframe

These symbols are used to indicate the anticipated timeframe for each action:



Example

Goal 2: Publicize and promote historic resources.

Strategy 2.1: Increase historic district designations in Melrose.

Action 2.1.1: Expand the Downtown Historic District.

Responsibility: OPCD, HDC

Timeframe:

Action 2.2.2: Explore creating additional Local Historic Districts in Melrose.

Responsibility: OPCD, HDC, HC

Timeframe:

Strategy 2.2: Augment records and educational materials regarding historic resources.

Action 2.2.1: Complete the comprehensive inventory of historic homes and other buildings.

Responsibility: HC

Timeframe:

Action 2.2.2: Maintain historic markers, memorial tablets, and memorial square markers.

Responsibility: DPW

Timeframe:

Action Plan Map

Site-specific action items in the Implementation Plan are identified on the following map:

