



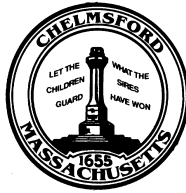
CHELMSFORD MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



TOWN OF CHELMSFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

October 2010

**Prepared by
Town of Chelmsford Master Plan Committee
and
The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments**



Town of Chelmsford

50 Billerica Road

Chelmsford, MA 01824-2777

www.townofchelmsford.us

To the Residents of Chelmsford,

The Master Plan Committee has developed the 2010 Master Plan to provide the town with guidance and direction over the next 10 years. The Committee has observed that since the 1996 Master Plan the town has become a more mature and built out suburb. We believe that if the town is not careful, and continues with current trends, there exists a significant potential for increased urbanization that will have a negative effect upon the town. This would likely result in a degradation of our community's quality of life, character, services and financial well being. We envision our town to be a suburban community with a diversity of people, financially stable, an education system that is one of the best in the state, and a town government that is open and accessible to all. We need to be cognizant that potential future development and over development could have adverse effects on our community. The Committee believes that the current quality of life and the services should be maintained or improved.

The 2010 Master Plan has identified limited new opportunities for housing and economic development in order to better manage current trends and create a balance in future growth. Since these new opportunities may differ from our recent philosophy for housing and economic development, the potential impact of both recent trends and these new opportunities must be acknowledged and fully understood before any implementation. It is likely that the intrinsic sustainable carrying capacity of the Town will be exceeded to the detriment of everyone. Consequently, we are recommending measures that should be taken to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate the combined potential impact.

During the development of the Master Plan, the Committee used the following principles as guidance when making decisions:

Recall fundamentals of the 1996 Master Plan:

- Maintain the suburban character of Chelmsford and recognize that unplanned and uncontrolled development of the industrial, commercial, and residential areas of the town may contribute to a poorer quality of life.
- Be cautious of the type of growth that will erode the remaining rural characteristics of the Town, increase traffic, increase parking requirements, and dramatically change the nature of the Town.
- Maintain sufficient natural areas so that open space, plant and wildlife species can be sustained.

Ensure that Chelmsford is Sustainable

Sustainability means that the town remains fiscally sound, services are maintained or improved, and schools maintain high academic standards. This also means that the water, sewer, transportation and telecommunications infrastructure is sufficient. Additionally we have the resources to protect our wetlands, recreation and open space, natural, cultural, and historic resources. It means we make an efficient use of our land and buildings based upon their intrinsic carrying capacity. In addition, it means we provide housing and economic opportunities for our residents.

Adopt a sensible and sustainable Land Use Policy

Chelmsford’s Land Use Policy should include prioritizing the reuse and redevelopment of existing structures rather than promoting new construction. It should include new zoning regulations that control and encourage redevelopment where there is zero net increase in building square footage. The land use policy should increase landscaping, improve Stormwater Management and create significant improvements in parking, transportation and traffic systems. Where additional building square footage is allowed site impacts should be fully mitigated.

Adopt zoning regulations for housing and economic development

Zoning regulations should be adopted that serve local needs while pursuing regional solutions and strategies; that encourage new housing and economic opportunities to complement other goals and objectives of the Master Plan; that prioritize opportunities to include reuse, rehabilitation, and retrofitting of existing structures; that require all new development and redevelopment fully mitigate any increased impact and that result in a net benefit to the Town and environment while protecting open space. We should discourage development for the sole purpose of “revenue chasing”. We recognize that Town-owned property might play an integral role in housing opportunities.

In the coming years, our community will face many challenges that will put pressure on maintaining the quality of life and level of services we currently enjoy. A balanced approach to development and redevelopment must take place in order to insure our community remains a suburban community. A review of our zoning bylaws needs to occur to make sure that we stay current with the ever-changing landscape of business. Our housing stock needs to maintain a balance so that the next generation will be able to be the future of Chelmsford.

In the Introduction Section, you will find our Vision for 2020, along with goals for the seven Sections of the Master Plan. The areas that were addressed include: Land Use and Zoning; Economic Development; Transportation; Housing; Open Space and Recreation; Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources; and Facilities and Services. During the process of developing the Master Plan, the Committee reached out to thirty different stakeholders in the community and held six public input sessions. We see this Master Plan as a guide to the future. It is a document that should be referred to by the Boards and Committees in Town and be used as they deliberate. It should continually be reviewed in order to keep the plan current.

We wish to thank Evan Belansky, Community Development Director; Vivian Merrill, Recording Secretary; and our consultant, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, for their support and ideas throughout the process. We would like to extend a special thanks to all those that provided input at our public and open sessions, along with the stakeholders that attended our meetings.

In closing, the Master Plan Committee’s work may end with this document, but what begins next is a period of implementation of the recommendations and bylaw review to bring the bylaws in line with the Master Plan.

Respectfully,

- James Lane, Chairman
- Philip Eliopoulos, Vice Chairman
- George Zaharoolis, Clerk
- Jackie Hoonjan
- David J. McLachlan
- Sheila Pichette
- Linda Prescott
- Peter Robson
- Judy Tavano

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan is comprehensive planning document that establishes long-term policy recommendations for a community’s physical development, and outlines implementation strategies that address land use issues, transportation, community facilities and services, the local economy, and the environment. Chapter 41, Section 81D of the Massachusetts General Laws states:

“A planning board established in any city or town under section eighty-one shall make a master plan of such city or town or such part or parts thereof as said board may deem advisable and from time to time may extend or perfect such plan. Such plan shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan shall be internally consistent in its policies, forecasts and standards.”

In general, communities use the Master Planning process to understand and manage future growth and development in remaining undeveloped areas. While limited areas of Chelmsford may be subject to such development pressure in the future, much of the town is built out. Therefore, Chelmsford’s 2010 Master Plan explores a broader range of issues focused on managing and guiding redevelopment over the next decade.

The Master Plan is one of the main policy tools utilized by the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Conservation Commission, and the Community Development Department, and other local decision-makers. It is important to note that the Master Plan does not replace other important policy documents prepared by the Town, such as the *Affordable Housing Production Plan* or the *Open Space and Recreation Plan*, but should be used to complement these planning documents.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In December 2008, the Planning Board appointed a Master Plan Committee, comprised of nine voting members, and the town’s Director of Community Development. The voting members of the Master Plan Committee are listed Table 1 on the following page, and the Committee’s advisors are listed in Table 2. The Committee includes representation from the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, Town Meeting, Community Preservation Committee, the business community and town residents at large.

**TABLE 1
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS, 2010**

Member Name	Represents
Judy Tavano	Zoning Board of Appeals
Philip Eliopoulos	Board of Selectmen
Jackie Hoonjan	Chelmsford Business Association
James Lane	Planning Board
David McLachlan	Conservation Commission
Sheila Pichette	Town Meeting Representative
Linda Prescott	Community Preservation Committee
Peter Robson	Town Resident
George Zaharoolis	Planning Board

**TABLE 2
MASTER PLAN ADVISORS**

Advisor	Affiliation
Evan Belansky	Community Development Director
Vivian Merrill	Recording Secretary
Jay Donovan	Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
Beverly Woods	Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

In January 2009, the Master Plan Committee began meeting bimonthly. As with previous editions of Chelmsford's Master Plan, this document was prepared with extensive input and feedback from many stakeholders living and working in the community. The Master Plan Committee spearheaded a rigorous public outreach campaign, and facilitated a participatory process that is summarized in Table 3 below. Six public input sessions were held, drawing the participation of well over 250 residents and business representatives from across the Town.

**TABLE 3
PUBLIC INPUT SESSIONS: MARCH 2009 – OCTOBER 2010**

Event	Date	Number of Participants
Initial Visioning Session	March 24, 2009	57
Business Visioning Session	May 6, 2009	25
Public Forum on Land Use/ Zoning, Economic Development, and Housing	June 3, 2009	60
Public Forum on Transportation	September 17, 2009	25
Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources	October 7, 2009	41
Public Input Session on the Draft Master Plan document	September 16, 2010	54

Source: NMCOC

In addition to the six public input sessions, the Master Plan Committee invited stakeholders to provide input during at their bimonthly meetings. The Committee conducted interviews with thirty (30) local stakeholder groups. In order to help focus the conversation, a list of discussion questions were provided to interviewees prior to the meeting. Stakeholders were also encouraged to submit written comments, participate in the various public input sessions, submit

comments electronically through the Town’s website, or speak during open session at any meeting of the Master Plan Committee. A list of the organizations interviewed as part of this public input process is provided below:

- ◆ Community Development Department
- ◆ Permanent Building Committee
- ◆ Fire Department
- ◆ Police Department
- ◆ School Committee
- ◆ School Superintendant
- ◆ Economic Development Commission
- ◆ Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA)
- ◆ Conservation Commission
- ◆ Historic Commission
- ◆ Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
- ◆ Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
- ◆ Planning Board
- ◆ Board of Selectmen
- ◆ Department of Public Works (DPW)
- ◆ Emergency Management Director
- ◆ Chelmsford Housing Authority
- ◆ Chelmsford Senior Center
- ◆ Chelmsford Public Library
- ◆ Chelmsford Open Space Land Stewards
- ◆ Chelmsford Center Water District
- ◆ Building Department
- ◆ Capital Planning Committee
- ◆ Zoning Board of Appeals
- ◆ Sewer Commission
- ◆ Assessors Department
- ◆ Board of Health
- ◆ Chelmsford Finance Committee
- ◆ Chelmsford Business Association
- ◆ Town Manager
- ◆ Slow Growth Initiative
- ◆ Affordable Housing Committee

The Master Plan Committee maintained a Master Plan blog, and offered a standardized public comment form on their website that interested parties could fill out and submit for review. All of the documents produced during the planning process were made available for public review and comment, via the NMCOG website.

ORGANIZATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE 2010 CHELMSFORD MASTER PLAN

This updated Master Plan for the Town of Chelmsford is organized into nine primary components. Section I contains a letter from the Master Plan Committee to the residents of Chelmsford. The introductory section (Section II) provides an overview of the master plan process, includes a discussion of the Vision Statement and Goals, and a brief demographic profile of the community.

Section III focuses on Land Use Planning and Zoning. In addition to a synopsis of past land use development patterns in Chelmsford, it offers a discussion of the Town’s existing Zoning Bylaw and the types of uses permitted under these regulations. The Land Use and Zoning chapter includes a presentation of the issues and opportunities inherent to land use planning and zoning, as well as a set of recommendations for how to best move forward in a way that promotes economic prosperity without sacrificing the natural, historical, and cultural integrity of the community.

Section IV relies heavily on demographic and industry data to assess the current state of Economic Development in Chelmsford. The chapter launches with a brief economic statistical profile of the community, followed by a discussion of existing economic and business conditions in Town—paying special mind to the current economic crisis of the past two years. From there, community assets and liabilities are presented, followed by an infrastructure analysis, and an examination of commercial and industrial activity. Another important element of this chapter is the discussion about striking a balance between economic development and quality of life - a central theme throughout this plan. Based on this discussion, a list of economic development opportunities, including potential economic redevelopment sites, is presented. The chapter concludes with an issues and opportunities discussion, coupled with a list of economic development recommendations.

Section V looks at Transportation Planning in Chelmsford. It includes a description of the existing transportation network within the community, including commuting patterns within the town, traffic volumes, crash statistics and the current state of the Town’s overall transportation infrastructure for all transportation modes (auto, transit, commuter rail, bicycle and pedestrian). A detailed operational and safety analysis is provided for fifteen key intersections and improvement recommendations are outlined to address deficiencies identified at each location. As with other sections of the Master Plan, issues and opportunities related to transportation are presented and discussed, and a comprehensive list of recommendations is provided.

Section VI assesses Housing issues in Chelmsford. It begins with an overview of the various neighborhoods in Town, and then moves into an analysis of the existing conditions of the housing stock and housing market. Topics covered within this analysis include housing development and sales trends; housing needs, as determined by demographic data available for the community; affordable housing efforts in Chelmsford; issues, opportunities, and recommendations for sustainable housing production in the community. One of the most important components of this chapter is the list of sites identified as potential housing sites developed through extensive conversations among the Master Plan Committee, Town staff, and other local stakeholders.

Section VII examines policy and planning issues related to Open Space and Recreation. Topics covered in this chapter include existing conditions, local capacity, open space and recreation planning efforts, and identified community needs. The chapter also includes an analysis of issues and opportunities, as well as a set of recommendations.

Section VIII focuses on the Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources of Chelmsford. It includes a discussion of existing environmental, historical and cultural assets, and an analysis of the issues and opportunities inherent to natural, historical and cultural protection and

preservation in Chelmsford. Finally, a set of recommendations about how best to conserve these important resources is presented.

The ninth section of the plan examines Municipal Facilities and Services. An inventory of existing town-owned facilities is provided and the physical characteristics and condition of each facility is assessed and described. Similarly, an inventory of town services is presented and opportunities for improving the efficiency and quality of service delivery are discussed. Similar to other sections, issues and opportunities regarding future facility and service needs is provided, along with a set of recommendations.

The final section of the Master Plan includes the Implementation Plan, which consists of a matrix containing each recommendation outlined in the Master Plan. The table identifies the town department, board, commission or committee with primary implementation responsibility for each specific recommendation. In addition, a timeframe for implementation is established.

THE MASTER PLAN VISION STATEMENT

Over the course of the master plan development process, the Master Plan Committee has worked to craft and refine the town's Vision for the Future, which is presented below. The Master Plan has been created with an eye toward guiding the community in a fashion that will ultimately achieve this vision:

“The Town is a vibrant, safe and pleasant place to live and work. Pride in the community is evident throughout Town. The educational system in town is known for its high standard of excellence, adding to the attractiveness of the Town. There are diverse and affordable housing opportunities for people of all income levels, lifestyles and age groups. Our Center Village contains a mix of business and residential uses and is an important cultural and economic asset to the community. The ongoing use of revitalized mill structures and the North Town Hall in Vinal Square is testimony to the Town's preservation and celebration of its historic resources. Town government is responsive to the needs of the community and has a high level of civic engagement. There is strong and open communication between town officials, citizens and the business community.

The Town's infrastructure and information architecture is adequate to meet the Town's current needs and to serve as the foundation of sustainable future growth. We enjoy the town-wide system of parks, open spaces and recreation areas that enhance our quality of life. The transportation system is safe and efficient, incorporating the needs of all residents through roadway improvements, enhanced transit service and facilities designed to accommodate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. Sewer and water service is available throughout town and the capacity of the system is sufficient to handle current and future demand.

The Town welcomes responsible redevelopment and new development that promotes sustainable development practices, broadens the community's tax base, provides employment opportunities and protects natural and historic resources. We encourage and support businesses through open communication with town government and a streamlined permitting process. The business community continues to show its commitment to the Town through its participation in and support of community activities and organizations."

PRINCIPAL GOALS OF THE MASTER PLAN

The following seven (7) goals are the principal goals that have been used to guide the Master Plan development process. A set of sub-goals have also been established and are enumerated on the first page of each section of the plan.

- 1. Land Use and Zoning:** Manage and direct growth, including redevelopment and new development projects, in a manner consistent with the community's character and ensure that the Town's zoning and land use policies and practices are consistent with the approved Master Plan.
- 2. Economic Development:** Establish an active economic development program to retain and attract "growth" businesses, which enhance the Town's tax base and create well-paying jobs in a manner that balances job creation with the quality of life.
- 3. Transportation:** Improve and enhance the community's established transportation network by promoting alternative transportation modes, expanding public transit options, and implementing traffic improvements and techniques that are directed at alleviating congestion and improving safety.
- 4. Housing:** Promote the development and maintenance of diverse and affordable housing opportunities for Chelmsford residents consistent with the community's character for all income levels, lifestyles and age groups.
- 5. Open Space and Recreation:** Manage, preserve and protect the open space and recreation resources and invest in the expansion of these areas in order to enhance the quality of life.
- 6. Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources:** Maintain, protect and preserve the natural, cultural and historic resources that provide the Town its unique identity and enhance the quality of life of its residents.
- 7. Facilities and Services:** Provide high quality, cost effective and accessible services to meet the changing needs of the Town's residents and businesses.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Each section of the Master Plan document contains a description of the relevant issues and opportunities within each subject area which the Town will need to address over the next ten years. This narrative outlines and summarizes the findings of the Master Plan Committee, and details the basis and rationale for the recommendations that follow.

Land Use and Zoning

The build-out analysis performed by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) clearly indicates that the Town of Chelmsford is nearly built out. With only 179 acres of developable land for commercial and industrial use remaining, future economic development opportunities in Town will, in large part, be in the form of redevelopment projects. It is evident that the town's zoning bylaw will need to be modified and strengthened to incentivize and control redevelopment activities. At a minimum, these modifications should include adjustments to the setback, landscaping and parking requirements outlined in the existing zoning bylaw. The need for these modifications to the zoning bylaw is further detailed in an April 1, 2010 technical memo prepared for the Town of Chelmsford by Concord Square Planning and Development, Inc.¹ A copy of the memorandum is included in Appendix C.

The Master Plan Committee has identified the following general areas as being suitable for redevelopment: Route 129 corridor (from Riverneck Road to Route 3), Vinal Square, Center Village, the Route 110 corridor between the town center² and I-495, and the Drum Hill area in the vicinity of Glenview Sand and Gravel. It is also recommended that the upper parking lots and the four commercially zoned parcels in front of the Chelmsford Mall be rezoned for neighborhood commercial type uses, thereby providing additional buffering and screening for abutters and protecting neighborhood character. Furthermore, the Master Plan Committee recommends that expedited permitting be established for projects within the Route 129 corridor. The concept of expedited permitting is discussed in greater detail within the Economic Development component of this Master Plan.

The Master Plan Committee recommends that the establishment of a mixed-use Redevelopment District along Route 110, from Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road, be further explored. Mixed-use development incorporates complementary residential, commercial, civic and business uses into a single building, parcel or development/redevelopment area. Mixed-use is a key

¹ Technical memorandum dated April 1, 2010 to Evan Belansky, Community Development Director from Karen Cullen, Concord Square Planning and Development, Inc.

² The town center geographic boundaries include Academy Street, both ends of Fletcher Street, Route 110 to just beyond Ginger Ale Plaza, Route 129 to Town Hall, Summer Street, and Route 4 to Summer Street.

component in many contemporary development trends and concepts such as Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), Livable Communities and Smart Growth. There are multiple benefits of mixed-used development, such as increased housing options for diverse household types, reduced auto dependence, and healthier lifestyles for residents living within a mixed-use district.

Currently, many features of the zoning bylaw work to separate land uses rather than encouraging mixed-use development in appropriate areas. Areas in which mixed-use development would be appropriate include the Town Center, Route 110 from the Town Center to Fletcher Street, Technology Drive, Vinal Square, and the mill complexes of North Chelmsford. Allowing residential uses above retail, offices or shops within the Town Center and Vinal Square would add vitality and additional foot traffic to these areas creating a more vibrant village community. The creation of design guidelines for mixed-use development and redevelopment projects within the Town Center and Vinal Square will ensure that future projects are consistent with the character of these areas and that the historic integrity of the villages is preserved and enhanced.

The establishment of a Mill Reuse Overlay District in North Chelmsford is a concept that the Town should pursue. Overlay zoning is designed to encourage additional uses not addressed in the base zoning. Creation of an overlay district maintains all of the uses allowed in the base zone, but provides greater flexibility in redeveloping or reusing existing structures, and in developing vacant parcels, and increases potential property values for current owners. Overlay zoning bylaws often focus on protecting historic resources or environmental resource areas. The purpose of a mill reuse overlay district is to:

- Protect the neighborhood from the loss of historic buildings, new construction not in character with the neighborhood, or alterations to existing buildings that would lessen their architectural significance;
- Facilitate and encourage the reuse of the North Chelmsford historic mill buildings should a vacancy occur;
- Promote diverse housing choices in the community; and
- Provide flexibility in meeting the town's housing and economic development goals.

Uses other than those allowed under the base zoning would require a Special Permit and Site Plan review, with the Planning Board serving as the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA). Design guidelines should be developed for projects undertaken through the overlay bylaw.

Providing that there is proper community input and adequate traffic mitigation in North Chelmsford and elsewhere, the Master Plan Committee is supportive of the extension of commuter rail service from Lowell to Nashua and Manchester, New Hampshire. Should this project go forward, the town has expressed an interest in establishing a commuter rail station within North Chelmsford. The addition of commuter rail service to the area creates future

opportunities for transit-oriented development. To ensure that the project benefits Chelmsford and its neighboring communities, the town should continue to work with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), MassDOT, the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), the Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA), and NMCOG to guide the progress of the commuter rail project by participating in the design and environmental review processes. Should a commuter rail station be established, the town will need to review the zoning in this area in order to take advantage of state funding opportunities for transit-oriented development programs, which promote moderate and high density mixed-use development within walking and bicycling distance of public transit facilities. The Town should also work with the LRTA to maximize transit access, particularly for residents with mobility issues.

The Route 129 Corridor is the town's principal technology corridor. Currently, the maximum building height allowed within this area is 45 feet or 4 stories. Based on conversations with local officials and input received from the public, the Master Plan Committee recommends that the zoning bylaw be amended to allow structures of four to six stories for lots abutting Route 129 in the area extending from the Billerica town line to Alpha Road, provided that these taller structures do not negatively impact abutting residences, while gaining a significant increase in open space exceeding our existing requirements. This may require some modifications to the town building and safety regulations. The Chelmsford Fire Department has indicated that they have the capability of providing sufficient fire protection to structures of this height.

It is further recommended that the zoning for this area of Route 129 be modified to allow for commercial uses that provide support services to the office park developments located along the corridor. Such uses would include restaurants, dry cleaners, personal and professional services, and similar retail establishments. In addition, the zoning bylaw should be modified to allow an extended stay facility on Billerica Road, either side of Route 3 between the town line and Mill Road, to serve the needs of corporate tenants and businesses located along the Route 129 corridor. The Planning Board should establish a reasonable size limit for service establishments to ensure the type of development constructed is what is desired in the area and to minimize the traffic impacts of such businesses. The intent of these recommendations is to encourage the reuse of existing vacant and underutilized properties, and to encourage businesses that complement the town's downtown area. Given that Route 129 is an important gateway to Chelmsford, design standards should be developed for this area, which address building form and materials, lighting, landscaping, parking, access control, and bicycle and pedestrian amenities.

The town could improve the visual quality of commercial and industrial development through the adoption of a design review process. The intent of creating design guidelines is to provide guidance and suggestions regarding the future development of retail, commercial, and industrial projects within the community. The guidelines provide a means by which the commercial and retail districts can thrive, the transportation network can function more efficiently, and the visual quality of the area can be improved. This represents an opportunity for the community to

improve the quality of future development and redevelopment, ensuring that the projects meet the visual and design standards that the community prefers.

Design guidelines would allow the Planning Board to consider factors beyond engineering and site design as outlined in the Zoning Bylaw. Generally, design guidelines address building massing, materials and articulation; reinforce the form and architecture to be compatible with the surrounding area; promote facade treatments that are in keeping with the overall context of the community; and provide appropriate signage, lighting and landscaping. Design review could begin as an advisory review coordinated within the town's existing approval process. The process could be activated by commercial and industrial projects of a certain size threshold, e.g. 10,000 square feet or more. Design guidelines are not intended to stifle creativity or to limit a property owner's opportunity to maximize the value of his or her property. Well written design guidelines recognize the value of diverse design, and in fact, encourage innovative and unique design solutions. The use of design guidelines helps to avoid the visual chaos and functional inefficiencies of design decisions that are made independent of the context in which the project is located.

Input received during the Master Plan development process indicated that residents and local officials generally feel that the town's zoning is not always consistent with neighborhood character. This is particularly true in the Westlands, including, but not limited to, Manahan Street, Morgan Drive and Maple Avenue, and in the areas around Freeman Lake and Heart Pond, where previous development generally occurred on smaller size lots and at a higher density than in other sections of town. The town's zoning requirements should focus on maintaining the existing character of its neighborhoods. The bylaw and zoning districts should be revised to encourage development that is consistent with the existing physical characteristics of the Westlands and lake neighborhoods.

There are obvious zoning and land use conflicts along the Route 40 corridor between Route 3 and the Westford town line, where some lots are split-zoned for industrial and commercial uses. The town has an opportunity to revise the zoning in this area to eliminate future land use conflicts in a way that benefits the neighborhood and the community overall. The use of transitional zoning should be further explored as a means of reducing existing and future conflicts between residential and industrial uses and districts. Transitional zoning districts allow for a set of land uses that will effectively create a transitional area between higher intensity commercial and industrial uses and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Transition zoning is used to ensure that new development and redevelopment projects are compatible with the scale and aesthetics of the surrounding area, and to provide appropriate buffering for residential neighborhoods.

The town's zoning bylaw currently makes it difficult for the town to attain the 10% affordable housing goal outlined in Chapter 40B. The current density bonus provision in the RM zones

provides for 10% affordability with a ten-year deed restriction. In order for affordable units to be included in the state's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), a deed restriction for each affordable unit must be in place for a minimum of thirty (30) years. The town should revise this portion of the zoning bylaw to require 25% affordability with a deed restriction in perpetuity on each affordable unit. In addition, the town should establish design guidelines for 40B development projects, similar to what is in place in Westford, to ensure compatibility with community character.

The Town should consider establishing an RM zoning overlay district for select parcels to allow for future multi-family housing opportunities within the limits of the town's carrying capacity, so that the town's resources are not strained and community character is not negatively impacted. According to a report prepared by Taintor and Associates, Inc.³ in July 2006, very few parcels of developable land remain in the RM zones. The current bylaw requires that new RM districts have 5 acres of land and 250 feet of frontage on a state highway, a right-of-way that is 60 feet wide or a right-of-way that carries 1,000 or more vehicles per day. These requirements limit the potential for new RM districts to be created. The zoning bylaw should be modified to establish much more reasonable and achievable criteria for creating districts for multi-family housing. The following parcels have been identified by the Master Plan Committee as potential candidates for rezoning within the RM district:

- 11 Cushing Place
- 51-57 and 61-63 Middlesex Street
- 100 Wotten Street
- 26 and 32 North Road
- 233, 235, and 241 Littleton Road.

To promote affordable housing in a way that provides additional units while having local regulatory control over the process, the town should consider adopting a comprehensive inclusionary zoning bylaw. The new bylaw must have a fair system of density bonuses or other cost offsets for on-site affordable units, and allow the option to provide equivalent housing through off-site units or through land donations to the Chelmsford Housing Authority. The bylaw should apply to multi-family development, as well as large-scale single-family subdivisions above a certain size threshold. In addition, the development of rental housing within the Center Village zoning district should be allowed by right. The town should also revisit the issue of in-law apartments with the objective of improving the permitting process and developing criteria that meet the needs of today's families.

Low Impact Development (LID) is an approach to environmentally friendly land use development that includes landscaping and design techniques that maintain the natural, pre-developed ability of a site to manage rainfall. The LID approach protects the natural ability of

³ Chelmsford Affordable Housing-Zoning Analysis and Options for Modification, Taintor and Associates, Inc., July 28, 2006.

the site to capture precipitation and allow it to recharge the local water table. This is achieved by applying a suite of tools including:

- Planning: preserve the site's natural features such as wetlands, native vegetation, flood plains, woodlands and soils to the greatest extent possible;
- Landscaping: plant native vegetation in buffer strips and in rain gardens (small planted depressions that can trap and filter runoff);
- Prevention: use vegetated areas to slow down runoff; maximizing infiltration and reducing contact with paved surfaces; and
- Innovating: reduce impervious surfaces wherever possible through alternative street design, such as omission of curbs and use of narrower streets, and through use of shared parking areas.

Presently, the town's subdivision regulations do not permit the use of low impact development techniques. The use of these techniques should be permitted and encouraged within the town's development regulations.

The special needs of agricultural uses are not considered within the current zoning bylaw. The zoning bylaw should be amended to address the unique needs of agricultural enterprises and operations, in order to encourage the preservation of the town's remaining agricultural lands, and to allow agricultural enterprises to remain economically viable.

The Town's Zoning Bylaw and development regulations should provide stronger incentives to encourage developers to contribute to the town's open space goals. As highlighted in the Open Space and Recreation of this Master Plan, the existing Planned Open Space Development zoning bylaw, Section 195-92, could be revised to specifically target the remaining large developable tracts of land by providing incentives such as density bonuses in exchange for providing open space.

The current condition of the University of Massachusetts Lowell West Campus off Princeton Boulevard is unacceptable to the Town of Chelmsford. The buildings are in a serious state of disrepair and the campus has not seen any significant reinvestment in decades. The Master Plan Committee recommends that a redevelopment master plan be prepared for the overall campus which strives to maintain the character of the area, preserves historic resources and structures, protects environmental resources and respects the concerns of the neighborhood and the abutters. The town will need to actively engage the neighborhood and the University and establish an open dialogue, in terms of the future disposition and use of this property.

A similar master planning effort is needed to address the future use(s) for the 66-acre Oak Hill parcel acquired by the Town in 1998. The Master Plan Committee feels that this parcel would be

best used for housing and active and passive recreation, or a combination thereof. . The majority of the property is currently zoned for industrial use, and therefore, rezoning may be required, depending on the outcome of the site master planning process.

During the Master Plan public input sessions, citizens and area business leaders noted that the town's budgetary challenges have led to the elimination of the zoning enforcement officer. Zoning enforcement is now the sole responsibility of the building inspector. Residents cited the fact that the town is not always timely in its response to resident complaints, given the other responsibilities and duties with which the building inspector is tasked. The lack of enforcement of the sign and lighting sections of the zoning bylaw were particularly noted. As the economy improves, reinstating the zoning enforcement officer position should be among the town's priorities. The reactivation or re-establishment of the Sign Advisory Committee should also be considered.

Overall, the town's zoning bylaw has not been significantly revised or rewritten in many years, with the last major update occurring in 1998. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the Town review all of its bylaws every five years. Town staff has indicated that the zoning bylaw is not user friendly, that many sections of the bylaw need to be clarified, that there are inconsistencies between the zoning map and the zoning bylaw, and, in general, the document needs to be better organized. Many of the dimensional requirements outlined in the zoning bylaw are unachievable as presently written.

The dated nature of the bylaw is evident in that more recent commercial businesses that have come into vogue, such as family entertainment complexes, are not addressed in the table of permitted uses or allowed under the current bylaw. In addition, it has been noted that the bylaw does not presently allow the town to regulate certain businesses, such as landscaping companies or soil/compost/bark mulch sales and distribution establishments. Many proposals do not require any public notification or regulatory review. Many of the conflicts that arise between these businesses and abutting residences are also due to the fact that the town does not presently require site plan review for all new businesses.

The current zoning bylaw allows for 4-story buildings within the Residential C zoning district. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the maximum building height in this district be consistent with the town's other residential zoning districts, therefore the zoning bylaw should be modified to reduce the height limit to three stories.

Currently, the town does not have any means of enforcing the overnight garaging of commercial vehicles in residential neighborhoods. This issue should be resolved either through revisions to the town's zoning bylaw or the town's municipal code. The Bylaw Review Committee should be reinstated and the zoning bylaw should be improved and modernized through a comprehensive review of the entire bylaw, including zoning districts, permitted uses, definitions

and dimensional requirements. The Planning Board and Community Development Department have identified the following sections of the Zoning Bylaw as being in need of updating and revision:

- Use and dimensional tables along with definitions.
- 195-6.1- Limited accessory apartment [In-Law Apartments]
- 195-7- Home Occupation
 - Antiquated, need to be updated to reflect current professions and work environment
 - Define Terms
- 195-8- Nonconforming Uses and Structures
- 195-17 -Minimum Parking Requirements
- 195-43- Property Lines
- 195-44 A,B, & C-Parking Areas
- Article XI-Major Business Complexes
- 195-55- Applicability
- 195-63-Density Bonus
- 195-100 -Administration and enforcement
- 195-101 -Violations
- Article XVII- Facilitated and Independent Living Facilities
- Article XVIII A- Center Village Zoning.

The town will need to retain the services of a zoning and land use consultant to assist with the review and re-write of the zoning bylaw. Any revisions to the bylaw should incorporate the changes needed to better accommodate redevelopment projects through the creation of redevelopment zoning overlay districts, as outlined above.

Economic Development

The establishment of a public/private partnership through the initiatives of the Town of Chelmsford, the CEDC and the private sector will help fill vacant commercial space and redevelop industrial properties to the benefit of the tax base and local residents. The Town has demonstrated resiliency in redeveloping former restaurants at a time when the economy has been the worst in thirty years. The private market has determined that there is significant value in a Chelmsford location, principally due to its regional consumer market that has ready access through Route 3 and I-495. Over the last six years, the commercial/industrial portion of the Town's tax levy increased from 14.4% in FY2005 to 16.3% in FY 2010. While businesses and industries have increased their share of the tax levy, it has not increased enough to maintain the level of services for local residents. An increase in the commercial/industrial tax base to a level that does not negatively affect the quality of life in town through redevelopment projects will fund the level of services needed to support the community.

The establishment of the Chelmsford Economic Development Commission (CEDC) in 2009 provides a focus on economic development initiatives that did not exist previously. Designed to “assist in the recruitment, retention and expansion of businesses in the Town”, the CEDC will provide active support to the Town Manager and Community Development Director in the implementation of the town’s economic development policies. As an advocate for businesses and an advisor to the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager on economic development proposals, the CEDC will bring together the public and private sectors in order to create jobs in the community and assist in filling vacancies for commercial and industrial properties. Through its advocacy of expedited permitting processes for retail, commercial and industrial development, the CEDC will ensure that private development proposals are acted upon within 180 days consistent with the State’s expedited permitting process guidelines. The CEDC outlined its Chelmsford Brand Strategy in April 2010, which focused on the strengths of the community in order to attract small and medium-sized businesses to the community. The Town has also worked with the communities along Route 3 – Burlington, Bedford, Billerica and Lowell – to identify barriers to the development of priority development sites, as well as to develop a marketing brand for Route 3 that will benefit the region in attracting private investment. The Town needs to maintain and increase its Site Finder Database and update its annual survey of the Chelmsford business community.

The expedited permitting process should be adopted by the Town of Chelmsford to ensure that permitting decisions on industrial, commercial and residential applications are acted upon within the state’s 180-day guidelines. Specific procedures and processes for expedited permitting should be adopted by all boards and commissions involved in the land use permitting process to ensure that this timeframe is met. The Community Development Department should develop a Permit Streamlining Guide that summarizes the town’s policies and procedures in relation to the Best Practices Guide developed by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) in 2007 and identify improvements that can be made to expedite the current permitting process. In addition, the Town should develop a Permitting Manual that describes the permitting process to the public, summarizes the roles and responsibilities of each board, commission and department and identifies the local contact people for each board, commission and department. This Permitting Manual can be made available to the public online, as well as in hard copy at the Town Clerk’s Office or at the Community Development Office. The adoption of an expedited permitting process will ensure that the private sector recognizes that the Town of Chelmsford is interested in their business. The Master Plan Committee recommends streamlining and improving the Town’s development permitting process to encourage targeted commercial redevelopment activities, such as through expedited permitting along Route 129/Billerica Road.

The Town of Chelmsford must remain competitive with other communities in Massachusetts and New Hampshire in attracting and retaining businesses. In order to remain competitive, the Town

needs to have as many economic development tools available as possible. Currently, a portion of the Town falls within the City of Lowell's Economic Target Area (ETA) and tax incentives are available to businesses locating in this specific area. However, businesses located outside this area aren't offered similar incentives. In order to level the playing field, the ETA should be extended to include the entire community. Due to the limited economic distress criteria associated with the community, the Town should consider establishing a Regional Technology Center under subsection (j) of the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP). Designation of the entire community as an ETA would make these businesses eligible for Recovery Zone Bonds (RZBs) as well. Recently, the Town of Billerica received the first RZB in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in attracting Pharamlucence, a biotech company, to the community.

The future economic development opportunities within the community, based upon the build-out study completed by NMCOG, will be principally redevelopment opportunities. Consistent with the Land Use and Zoning section, the town's zoning bylaw will need to be modified and strengthened to manage, guide and incentivize redevelopment activities. The Master Plan Committee has identified the following areas as being suitable for redevelopment: Route 129 corridor (from Riverneck Road to the Billerica town line), Vinal Square, Center Village, the Route 110 corridor between the town center and I-495 and the Drum Hill area in the vicinity of Glenview Sand and Gravel and Drum Hill Road. The Master Plan Committee recommends the establishment of a mixed-use Redevelopment District along Route 110, from the Westford side of Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road. Other areas suitable for mixed-use redevelopment projects include Chelmsford Street from the Town Center to the Center side of Fletcher Street, Technology Drive and the mill complexes of North Chelmsford. The concept of a Mill Reuse Overlay District in North Chelmsford is consistent with the balanced growth philosophy of the Master Plan Committee.

The Board of Selectmen currently sets the tax rates annually to determine the proper balance in tax rates and tax burdens. Currently, the town has a flat tax rate that treats each tax classification equally.

Manufacturing continues to play a major role in the Greater Lowell region even though the number of businesses and employees has declined over the past few years. Yet, manufacturing still is a major contributor to wealth generation in northeastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire due its concentration of 1.5 to 2 times the manufacturing composition generally found in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and the United States. A large portion of the manufacturers in the region utilize sophisticated technologies in the areas of nanotechnology, robotics, sensors, biometrics, electro-optics and lasers according to the Asset Map for the Manufacturing Sector developed by Mt. Auburn Associates on behalf of the Greater Lowell and Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Boards and the New Hampshire Office of Workforce Opportunity. The Town of Chelmsford should work with the Greater Lowell Workforce

Investment Boards to focus on the employment needs of those sophisticated manufacturing firms that represent the region's economic future. The three emerging technologies identified in this report are nanotechnology, robotics and clean energy.

In assessing the infrastructure system related to sewer, water and telecommunications, the completion of the town-wide sewer system, the availability of water through the three water districts and the telecommunication options in the community place the town at a high level of infrastructure compared to other communities in the region. The major issue facing the community remains the sewer capacity issue and, to a lesser extent, the water capacity issue. Additional sewer capacity needs to be obtained through the renegotiation of the contract with the Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility or through an agreement with the Town of Billerica. The town has begun to explore the use of a "sewer bank" to promote more efficient use of the limited sewer and water resources. The water districts believe that there will be sufficient water resources in the future, but conservation initiatives have been started to ensure that the resources will be there. The town will need to work with NMCOG and the other communities in the region to address the need for additional sewer and water capacity on a regional basis.

In continuing to redevelop the Center Village and Vinal Square, the Town should actively pursue state and federal funding to implement critical projects in these areas. As a first step to applying for these funds, the Town needs to meet with the business owners and residents to discuss their vision for these town centers and to educate them on what other communities have done to increase economic activity, encourage redevelopment projects and maintained the historic nature of the two centers. Would a Business Improvement District (BID), which is designed to help the local businesses establish special assessments for supplemental services, work in either location? Should the Town apply for financing under the District Improvement Financing (DIF) program to fund public works, infrastructure and development projects through incremental tax revenues from the affected businesses? Should the Town apply for funds under the Community Development Action Grant (CDAG) program to improve the physical conditions in these two village centers or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to address a number of design issues in these areas? These are the types of discussions the Town should have with the business owners and residents to plan the future for these village centers.

In redeveloping its commercial centers, the Town should identify the types of businesses that would address a real need in the community. Working with the Economic Development Commission, the Chelmsford Business Association and the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, the Town could develop a survey for its residents and employees at local businesses to assess what the commercial needs are for the community. Once the survey results have been tabulated, the Economic Development Commission could then work with MassDevelopment and the Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development (MassEcon) to identify the specific businesses that would address these unmet needs. After these businesses are identified, the

Economic Development Commission could utilize the Site Finder Database to recommend specific locations in Chelmsford that would meet the property needs of these businesses.

The Chelmsford 2008 Economic Development Plan identified seven principal commercial and industrial development areas: Center Village/Chelmsford Street, the Route 129 Technology Corridor, Drum Hill/Technology Drive, Vinal Square/North Chelmsford Mill District, Route 3/Route 40 Interchange, Route 110/Littleton Road and Route 110/Route 3 Shopping District. The Master Plan Committee has identified the following general areas as being suitable for redevelopment: Route 129 corridor (from Riverneck Road to the Billerica town line), Vinal Square, Center Village, the Route 110 corridor between Village Center and I-495, and the Drum Hill area in the vicinity of Glenview Sand and Gravel. The Master Plan Committee recommends the establishment of a mixed-use Redevelopment District along Route 110 (the Westford side of Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road) and identifies the Center Village, Route 110 from the Center Village to the Center Village side of Fletcher Street, Technology Drive, Vinal Square and the mill complexes of North Chelmsford as appropriate areas for mixed-use development. These issues are discussed at greater length in the Land Use and Zoning section.

The Center Village/Chelmsford Street area provides extensive redevelopment and mixed-use opportunities. The future development of the Stop & Shop site for mixed-use development - would have an impact upon the economic vitality of the Center Village. The re-use of Old Town Hall will add to the activity in the Center Village, as would the redevelopment of 11 Cushing Place for housing. The re-use of the Odd Fellow's Building at 44 Central Square for housing would maintain the historic nature of the building, address the housing needs in the community and fill a vacant building with activity and the town should actively encourage this to occur.

The Route 129 Technology Corridor offers the best opportunity for industrial development through the redevelopment of existing complexes. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the height limits for buildings along Billerica Road from the Billerica town line to Alpha Road Route 3 be raised to allow structures of four to six stories. This area backs onto the heavily trafficked Routes 3 and 495 which are major transit routes to Boston, New Hampshire, Maine and Southern New England. The additional height will make these buildings visible from both Routes 3 and 495. This visibility, combined with the excellent access to Route 3, Interstate 495 and the Lowell Connector, make this a prime site for emerging medium-sized companies, consortia, industry groups and coalitions of technology-based research, development and manufacturing concerns that routinely emerge from efforts like the Commonwealth's investment in bio- and nano-technologies. Keeping to the MPC's goal of managed growth through redevelopment, a portion of the increase in useable floor space derived from the additional height will be offset by gaining a significant increase in open space exceeding our existing requirements. The resulting park-like complex has the potential to anchor a prestigious development that can generate higher tax revenues and in its success, could spawn secondary re-development in the neighboring office parks along Mill and Apollo Roads, which,

though lacking visibility, have excellent highway access. These neighboring office complexes would be excellent locations for start-up and spin-offs to begin operations. As a part of ensuring that vital commercial support services are available for businesses and employees while managing growth, the MPC recommends that ancillary support services be permitted from the Billerica town line to Riverneck Road. The development of an extended stay residence at Mill Road and Billerica Road would complement the business activities in the area.

The availability of TIF Agreements for these properties, as well as the development of a branding strategy for the Billerica Road area, will help encourage private investment in this area. This area could be designated as the Regional Technology Center under subsection (j) of the EDIP legislation that would ensure that the entire community is located within an Economic Target Area (ETA). The Master Plan Committee recommends that expedited permitting procedures be established for this area to convince private industry that the Town is serious about development. There are also some development parcels in this area that should be considered as well.

The Drum Hill/Technology Drive area is one of the major retail corridors in Chelmsford. The Town should begin by implementing the recommendations outlined in the Drum Hill Study conducted by NMCOG in 2008 to address traffic, design guidelines and streetscape issues. This area consists of the major retail operations at Drum Hill and the office/R & D buildings, medical center and specialized housing at Drum Hill Technology Park. Its close proximity to the UMass Lowell West Campus could provide additional development opportunities in the area depending on the future redevelopment of the campus site. The Master Plan Committee recommends that a redevelopment master plan be prepared for the overall Lowell West Campus. The 30-acre Glenview Sand and Gravel site at 152 Steadman Street offers a future development opportunity once the contamination issues are addressed with the assistance of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Development and redevelopment opportunities at 10 Technology Drive and Jean Avenue/Wesley Street were also identified in the Chelmsford 2008 Economic Development Plan.

The Vinal Square/North Chelmsford Mill District represents a mixed-use development area with tremendous potential. The Master Plan Committee is supportive of the extension of commuter rail service from Lowell to Nashua and Manchester and the Town has expressed an interest in establishing a commuter rail station within North Chelmsford, providing that there is proper community input and that adequate traffic mitigation is provided in North Chelmsford and elsewhere. The establishment of a Mill Reuse Overlay District in North Chelmsford is worth pursuing since it would protect the neighborhood from the loss of historic buildings, encourage the reuse of these buildings should a vacancy occur and add value to the properties. The re-use of North Chelmsford Town Hall will add economic vitality to Vinal Square. A District Revitalization program should be considered as part of the revitalization efforts.

The Route 3/Route 40 Interchange area has undeveloped, industrially zoned land adjacent to the Westford border north of Groton Road (Route 40) and adjacent to the Route 3/Route 40 interchange. Within the Land Use and Zoning section, the zoning and land use conflicts along the Route 40 corridor between Route 3 and the Westford town line are identified. It is recommended that the town revise the zoning in the area and use transitional zoning as a means to reduce these conflicts. Within the Housing section, the town-owned 66-acre Oak Hill Road parcel, the North Chelmsford Congregational Church parcel and the 19 acre Oak Hill Road parcel were recommended for housing and open space uses. There are additional properties in the area, such as 540 Groton Road, that could be developed for industrial purposes.

The Route 110/Littleton Road area extends from the Center Village to the Westford line. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the establishment of a mixed-use Redevelopment District along Route 110, from the Westford side of Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road, be further explored. This Redevelopment District would incorporate commercial and residential properties and ensure that land use or zoning conflicts created by industrial properties are minimized with the abutting residential areas. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the properties on Littleton Road from- Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road be addressed as part of the Redevelopment District.

The Route 110/Route 3 Shopping District has benefited from the Route 3 widening project. Due to its access to both Route 3 and I-495, this area has the potential to attract additional private investment. With the development of the Stop & Shop project at the former Chelmsford Cinema site, there will be increased incentive for businesses to locate in this area. The redevelopment of the town's only Chapter 43D site at 25-29 Katrina Road will help clean up the former Silicon Transistor Corporation property, generate property taxes for the Town and create new employment opportunities for Chelmsford residents. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the upper parking lots and four commercially zoned parcels in front of the Chelmsford Mall be rezoned for neighborhood commercial type uses with strict design guidelines, thereby creating transitional zoning, which would provide additional buffering and screening for abutters and protect the neighborhood character. Redevelopment opportunities in this area are likely to develop as the economy improves and major private investments are made. The Town should take advantage of these emerging opportunities.

In identifying potential economic redevelopment/development sites, the Chelmsford Master Plan Committee focused upon a handful of parcels – 29 Katrina Road, the Glenview Sand and Gravel site, the Stop & Shop Plaza on Boston Road and the former Route 3 Cinema site – and three redevelopment corridors – Route 129 (Riverneck Road to the Billerica town line), Route 110 (Center Village to Route 495), and Littleton Road (the Westford side of Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road). These potential economic redevelopment/development sites offer real opportunities to create jobs in the future.

Transportation and Circulation

The Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee provided extensive comments concerning the need to integrate bicycle and pedestrian considerations into all aspects of transportation planning and management. These recommendations were supported by the Master Plan Committee and have been further incorporated into the recommendations section that follows.

The most notable deficiency in terms of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is the lack of a connected system throughout town. Future planning initiatives should focus on closing the gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network, with particular attention for connecting the Town's parks, historic sites and conservation land. Toward this end, the Town should develop a comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan with a focus on connectivity, including establishing linkages to the LRTA system and to any future MBTA commuter rail service in North Chelmsford. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan should also emphasize safety and accommodate users of all abilities. The Plan should include an implementation plan that outlines the steps and strategies for moving forward, and identifies potential funding sources. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan should be updated every five years to reflect changing conditions, needs and priorities.

Chelmsford's roadways currently have no dedicated bicycle routes or lanes. These types of facilities are particularly needed around commercial centers, office parks and schools. MassDOT requires that bicycle and pedestrian accommodations be considered in state funded roadway improvements, wherever feasible. The Town should consider adopting the same policy for roadways that are being reconstructed using local funding.

The town currently finances transportation improvements through developer contributions in the form of 53G funds, whereby a fee of \$100 per new parking space is levied. The Master Plan Committee believes that this fee should be increased and that, as part of any development or redevelopment project, developers should be responsible for installing or repairing sidewalks along the project's frontage or in the immediate vicinity of the project.

Bicycle and pedestrian safety cannot be facilitated simply by improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The establishment of programs geared to bicyclist, pedestrian, and motorist safety education is essential. Giving special attention to the needs of children is especially important, since walking and bicycling are their only independent modes of transportation and they lack the experience of an adult. This education effort should be conducted cooperatively by the School Department and public safety officials. The Town should also continue to participate in the state's Safe Routes to School program.

While parking has been identified as a significant issue within the Town Center and Vinal Square, additional study is needed to determine the magnitude of the problem. A study of the

town's parking requirements, as specified in the zoning bylaw, as well as an examination of parking demand, utilization and turnover in both locations, is essential in order to assess and quantify parking needs. NMCOG will evaluate the parking issues within Vinal Square as part of the traffic study that is now underway, and can also provide similar assistance for the Town with regard to the Center area, as a future task within the region's Unified Planning Work Program.

The lack of parking for users of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail was repeatedly cited during the public involvement process. Additional parking will be provided at Lewis Farm following completion of the permitting process. Furthermore, designated rail trail parking is planned as part of the Stop and Shop construction project. The Town is also studying the possibility of creating fifteen to twenty additional parking spaces within the rail trail right-of-way near Ginger Ale Plaza. Furthermore, the Master Plan Committee suggests that the Katrina Road property be considered as an area for providing additional parking for rail trail users, and that a possible agreement for off-season use of the Little League parking area be investigated. In addition, the possibility of improving the Town-owned dirt lot located adjacent to the Wilson Street senior housing should be explored. Earlier studies have shown that this area could accommodate up to forty-five vehicles.

The Master Plan Committee is supportive of the extension of commuter rail service from Lowell to Nashua/Manchester, Hampshire. The Town should continue to monitor the progress of the Lowell to Nashua/Manchester commuter rail extension project, and position the community to take advantage of transit-oriented development opportunities should the extension project go forward. While the LRTA currently provides fixed route transit service to many areas of the town, the Master Plan Committee would like to see this service expanded in the future. Additional access into Westford via the Route 110 route would be beneficial, as would more frequent service along Chelmsford's major roadways such as Route 129, Route 110, Route 4 and Route 27. Expanded service that links the High School to Route 129, Route 110 and Riverneck Road would provide access to after-school jobs for students. More service is also needed between the Senior Center and elderly housing, and between the town's larger neighborhoods and its business and retail centers. The LRTA should create a transit hub within Chelmsford (possibly in the Town Center or North Chelmsford) with shelter and seating. In addition, LRTA should provide clearly marked bus stops with shelters, posted route maps and schedules should be located along all bus routes. The hours of service should be extended later into the evening to accommodate medical services, retail workers and other non-discretionary trips. The Committee supports the ongoing door-to-door service for citizens with special needs.

During the public involvement process, residents identified a need to address traffic management and traffic calming within the residential neighborhoods. Traffic calming measures that are used to slow and manage traffic within a neighborhood include diverters, speed humps, raised crosswalks, roundabouts and signage. A traffic calming program should include objective criteria for evaluating neighborhood traffic problems, such as traffic volumes, pedestrian and

bicycle accident rates, and vehicle speeds, especially in areas where children and seniors are concentrated. The use of traffic calming devices should be carefully considered and traffic calming proposals should be reviewed by the Fire and Police Departments, to ensure that any proposed changes will not significantly increase emergency response times or hinder effective evacuation of an area in the event of an emergency.

A Transportation Advisory Committee should be established to provide input on transportation related issues, and to outline a clear process for addressing citizen concerns. This committee should have representation from Planning, the Police Department, Fire Department, Engineering, DPW, BPAC, and the town's ADA compliance official.

As discussed previously in this chapter of the Master Plan, the I-495 Corridor Study conducted by MassDOT resulted in a number of recommendations, including the addition of left-turn lanes and traffic signals on Chelmsford Street at the Exit 34 ramps. There appears to be general agreement that these improvements are beneficial and should go forward. The corridor study also recommended that signals be installed at the intersection of the Exit 33 ramp with North Road. Opinion on the future of Exit 33 is divided. Many feel that this exit should be closed, while others oppose this idea, due to concern that the closing of Exit 33 would result in overburdening traffic operations at Exit 34. Additional study is needed to assess the impact of an Exit 33 closure on overall traffic operations at Exit 34 and to evaluate impacts to the Town Center.

Accident analysis performed by NMCOG has identified three high crash intersections: Route 110/Route 4/ Route 129 (the Center); Route 4 and Route 129; and Route 110 and Stedman Street. Each of these locations should be studied further to pinpoint the causes of the crashes and to identify mitigating strategies. NMCOG also examined bicycle and pedestrian crashes over a three-year period and found that, of the 18 bicycle/pedestrian related crashes, seven occurred along Chelmsford Street. The opening of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, which parallels Chelmsford Street, offers a much safer alternative for bicyclists and pedestrians. The crash statistics for this roadway should be monitored for the next few years to verify that bicycle and pedestrian related crashes decline due to the rail trail.

Some existing traffic signs located throughout Town do not comply with current standards and requirements of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The Town should develop a plan to replace and upgrade traffic signage over time, in order to comply with current state and federal standards. A sign inventory program that documents the location, type and condition of each sign would be helpful in this regard.

NMCOG has studied fifteen key intersections identified by the Master Plan Committee and made recommendations for improvements to address traffic safety concerns at each location.

Table 4 below outlines the deficiencies that have been identified at each location and summarizes improvement recommendations for mitigating any operational or safety issues that were found.

**TABLE 4
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY INTERSECTIONS**

Intersection	Issues/Deficiencies	Recommendations
Route 27 (Acton Road) at Byam Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sight distance/turning radius are inadequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Given the very low traffic volumes, no change is recommended at this time.
Mill Road at Turnpike Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sight distance deficiencies ◆ Pavement markings and signage are lacking or faded missing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Improve signage and upgrade/maintain pavement markings ◆ Increase the number of mowings per year to keep shrubs and grass from obstructing drivers' views of oncoming traffic.
Westford Street at Pine Hill Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Insufficient turning radius ◆ Excessive width/lack of channelization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Update pavement markings ◆ Improve signage ◆ Stripe left-turn lane for westbound Westford Street ◆ Over the long term, correct turning radius deficiency
Route 3A (Gorham Street) at Brick Kiln/Carlisle Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Faded and missing pavement markings ◆ Deteriorated pavement condition ◆ Lack of signage on Carlisle Road; lack of warning signs ◆ Sidewalk is not ADA compliant and is in poor condition ◆ Higher than average crash rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Upgrade/install signage and pavement markings ◆ Improve and restore sidewalk to address ADA compliance ◆ Resurface roadway ◆ Implement three-way stop control, as currently planned by the Town ◆ Following completion of improvements, re-evaluate crash rate to determine if existing safety measures are needed
Brick Kiln Road at Moore Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Utility pole is located in sight distance triangle ◆ Turning radius from Moore Street to Brick Kiln Road is inadequate ◆ Lack of pavement markings on the Moore Street approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Relocate the utility pole away from the sight triangle ◆ Install pavement markings on Moore Street
Byam Road at Locust Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Grade issues and geometric challenges impact sight distances for vehicles turning from Locust Avenue ◆ Split legs of Locust Avenue are too narrow to accommodate vehicles traveling in opposite directions ◆ Pavement markings and signage are lacking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Short-term: install pavement markings and stop sign ◆ Long-term: design and construct geometric improvements to correct sight distance issues
Route 27 (Acton Road) at Barton Hill Road/Park Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sight distance deficiencies on Park Road looking south ◆ No stop line on Park Road approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Periodically trim brush along south side of ◆ Route 27

TABLE 4 (Cont'd)
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY INTERSECTIONS

Intersection	Issues/Deficiencies	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Higher than average crash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Install stop line on Park Road approach ◆ Install “Intersection Ahead” warning signs
Parkerville Road at Garrison Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lack of pavement markings ◆ Lack of stop sign on Garrison Road approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Upgrade pavement markings ◆ Install stop sign on Garrison Road approach
Maple Road at Parkerville Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Landscaping at intersection partially obstructs sight distances ◆ Numerous conflicting turning movements ◆ Lack of sidewalks along Maple Road and Parkerville Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conduct a detailed study to determine if a roundabout is feasible at this location ◆ Update signage ◆ Modify landscaping to improve intersection sight distances
Middlesex Street at Quigley Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pavement markings are faded ◆ Poor placement of “No left turn” sign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Relocate “No left turn” sign on westbound Middlesex Street approach ◆ Repaint pavement markings
Route 3A (Princeton Street) at Richardson Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overgrown brush on west side of intersection obstruct signage ◆ Unacceptable delays and insufficient gaps during the morning peak period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Trim overgrown brush ◆ Design and install traffic signals
Davis Road at Locke Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Inadequate sight distance from the Davis Road eastbound approach ◆ Insufficient turning radius for vehicles turning left from Locke Road to Davis Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Install “Intersection Ahead” warning sign
Old Westford Road at Davis Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sight distance deficiencies for Davis Road motorists looking south ◆ Significantly higher than average crash rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Install four-way stop control ◆ Install “Intersection Ahead” warning signs in advance of the intersection
Route 129 (Billerica Road) at Riverneck Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Failing level of service during both the A.M. and P.M. peak travel periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design and install a fully-actuated traffic signal
Route 4 (Boston Road) at Concord Road/Parker Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Marginal sight distance looking northbound along Route 4 ◆ Signage lacking along Route 4 southbound and on Parker Road ◆ Lack of intersection channelization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design and construction geometric improvements that include channelization, striping and signage ◆ Install a fully-actuated traffic signal

Housing

The Town of Chelmsford should provide affordable housing for its residents who wish to remain in Chelmsford. Affordable housing means housing that is priced consistent with the economic capabilities of individuals and their families and is not intended to encompass only housing that

could be developed under Chapter 40B. A diversity of affordable housing at all price ranges provides a vibrant and dynamic community and best meets the needs of its inhabitants.

The Town of Chelmsford enjoys one of the best relationships with its Housing Authority that any community can have. With the Chelmsford Housing Authority as an active partner, the Town can successfully develop, maintain and manage a level and diversity of housing units that addresses the housing needs of its residents. The Town is in the process of updating its *2005 Affordable Housing Plan* and will build upon this section of the Master Plan to begin its work. While the focus of the Affordable Housing Plan is to generate strategies that address the affordable housing production issues established under Chapter 40B, the purpose of this Housing section of the Master Plan is to highlight the housing needs of the community and to make recommendations on how the Town can address all housing issues facing the community during the next ten years.

In addressing Chapter 40B, which established a goal that 10% of housing in Chelmsford be affordable to families and individuals at 80% or less of the median household income, the Town, in partnership with the Chelmsford Housing Authority (“CHA”), should adopt a proactive approach to increase the level and diversity of Affordable Housing in the community, consistent with the resources of the Town and consistent with the needs of its residents. A proactive approach ensures that Affordable Housing will be designed and located in areas that will not adversely affect the character and nature of the traditional neighborhoods in the Town. By working with the CHA, the Town can ensure that the proposed housing addresses the needs of seniors, young families and special needs populations, in a manner that is consistent with the neighborhood characteristics. This partnership will be critical to avoiding the development of any “unfriendly” Chapter 40B projects.

The Town should explore opportunities to purchase available property and to continue its longstanding relationship with the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). With the \$ 214,740 in unallocated community housing balances as of February 2, 2009 and the availability of a minimum of \$ 118,000 in FY’2010 funds for community housing, the Town, CHA and CPC can move ahead to address housing supply needs. The Town should target the potential housing opportunities identified by the Master Plan Committee in Table 5 on the following page to meet local housing needs.

**TABLE 5
CHELMSFORD POTENTIAL HOUSING SITES**

Address	Parcel ID	Acreage	Total Assessed Value	Zoning	Current Status	Future Use
16-20 Boston Road	84-334-17	8.45	\$8,861,800	CA	Stop and Shop Plaza	Mixed-Use
11 Cushing Place	84-336-5	5.00	\$1,020,600	CD	Center along BFRT behind Village Grill	Housing
233 Littleton Road	91-378-15	0.92	\$339,900	CB	Vacant Land	RM Overlay
235 Littleton Road	91-378-11	6.06	\$715,100	CB	Apartments	
241 Littleton Road	100-378-8	0.92	\$340,000	CB	Vacant Land	
51-57 Middlesex Street	13-36-1	6.10	\$3,242,700	IA	Manufacturing Building	
61-63 Middlesex Street	13-36-3	1.45	\$138,700	IA	Industrial Warehouse-Heavy Industry	
Off Dunstable Road	11-4-1	66.37	\$57,700	IS	Vacant Land	Housing/Open Space
100 Wotten Street	9-6-3	12.53	\$1,069,500	IA	Manufacturing Building	RM Overlay
26 North Road	73-315-3	0.99	\$202,000	RB	Vacant Land	
32 North Road	73-315-1	0.37	\$668,200	RB	Apartment Building (8+)/Vacant Land	

These properties have been identified as potential housing sites that can be developed either as a combination of housing and open space, such as in the case of the Oak Hill properties, mixed-use developments (housing and commercial) or as part of a Mill Reuse Overlay District that will bring increased value to the property, while maintaining its historical significance in the development of more affordable rental units. The focus upon these groups can be attained through the three strategies – preservation, regulatory and production – outlined in the current Plan. However, the updated Affordable Housing Production Plan needs to be completed by July 9, 2010, at which time the current *Affordable Housing Plan* expires. The updated document will need to address the new requirements established by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

To address issues related to the condition and age of structures, federal and state grant opportunities in the area of housing should be explored further. The utilization of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, for instance, to address the renovation of older homes for low and moderate-income residents through a rehab program, would improve the condition of the housing stock in the community. The CHA has aggressively pursued federal, state and non-profit funds and utilized Community Preservation funds as financial leverage. According to the FY 2010 Annual Report by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), Town Meeting approved \$ 687,000 in Community Preservation funds for affordable

housing projects, which leveraged an additional \$ 14.6 million in federal, state and private funding sources. The Community Development Department should actively pursue other federal and state funds and continue to work in concert with the CHA. Furthermore, the Town should explore the development of an Affordable Housing Trust to supplement the current resources made available through Community Preservation funds.

The UMass West Campus has deteriorated to the point where it has negatively impacted the newer residential neighborhood developments. The Town, working in conjunction with UMass Lowell, should develop a Master Plan for the UMass West Campus that takes into consideration mixed-use options for the property, including housing. Consideration should be given to the use of design guidelines for this property, as well, to ensure that whatever is developed is consistent with the neighborhood characteristics.

The future of housing in Chelmsford does not appear to be directly impacted by the infrastructure systems, such as sewer or water, but more by the level of available capacity. With the expiration of the agreement with the Regional Sewer facility in Lowell, the Town will need to negotiate for additional capacity in order to accommodate new housing developments or redevelopment projects. These negotiations are likely to require the Town to help the City of Lowell address some of their environmental issues related to their facility. Without addressing this issue, the Town will be unable to meet its specific housing needs in the future.

The establishment of a Redevelopment District along Route 110 will promote mixed-use development that will provide additional housing opportunities. The specific area for this Redevelopment District is further described in the Economic Development section of this Master Plan.

Open Space and Recreation

While the Town has successfully preserved open space, there are still large tracts of land that remain unprotected. The current economic climate, fiscal challenges and eventual limitations on Community Preservation funds can make it difficult to purchase additional land parcels, however, alternative methods of land conservation could be pursued. Restrictions and easements can limit the future use of land by restricting or prohibiting development. However, the land continues to be owned and operated by a private owner. If the restriction on development is in perpetuity, it provides as much protection for land as outright acquisition. In addition, it can cost less than outright acquisition, offers more flexibility to meet the needs of the landowner, and allows the property to stay on the tax rolls. In addition, grant funding is available from various state programs, including the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program, which purchases easements from farmers to restrict future development.

In the future, the Town could work with an interested landowner to create a limited development project. In a limited development project, a conservation group (usually a nonprofit but sometimes a governmental body) purchases a piece of land they are interested in conserving. A portion of the site that is less important for conservation purposes is carved off and developed, and the proceeds from the development are used to repay the money borrowed for the land purchase or used to fund future conservation efforts.

Bylaws and development regulations should include stronger incentives for developers to contribute to open space goals, such as creating linkages between existing conservation parcels or adding to the Town's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. For example, the existing Planned Open Space Development zoning bylaw, section 195-92, could be revised to specifically target the remaining large developable tracts of land by providing incentives such as density bonuses in exchange for increased open space. Furthermore, there are many parcels of open space owned by the Town that are not permanently protected through a deed restriction or other legally binding mechanism. Such parcels include the golf course and many of the school properties. Future attention should be paid to protecting some of these areas, as well as agricultural lands, historic properties and resources, forested lands, riverfront areas, water resources, and wildlife habitat.

During the public input process, it was noted that the Town does not have a formal process by which all Town departments and local conservation organizations are notified when a property owner seeks to remove a property from Chapter 61 status. As required by law, notice is presently sent to the Board of Selectmen and Conservation Commission. The Town Manager also sends notification to the Community Preservation Committee. However, there is no formal process for notifying other parties that may be interested in the property should the Town choose not to exercise its right-of-first-refusal. The Town should periodically review its inventory of Chapter 61 parcels to determine appropriate measures for conserving these parcels should they become available in the future.

While the Conservation Commission currently holds 800 acres of reservation property, there are no criteria utilized on a Town-wide basis to determine whether a specific property should be placed under the care and custody of the Conservation Commission or another Town entity. The Conservation Commission has also noted that there are hundreds of parcels, primarily consisting of tax title properties, located throughout Town for which there is no specific management entity identified. Therefore by default, the Board of Selectmen is the management entity.

The Town's 2003 Open Space and Recreation Plan identified a need for improving linkages between areas of open space. This need was confirmed through the input received during the Visioning Session for this Master Plan Update. Much of the Town's open space and recreation land is fragmented and isolated. Establishing linkages and connections between these parcels

should be a priority for the Town. Acquisition and protection of parcels adjacent to existing conservation and recreation lands is critical. As the Town updates its Open Space and Recreation Plan, particular attention should be paid to identifying possible trail systems and linkages between parcels of open space, and on identifying missing links in the existing network of trails. Continued expansion of the Town's trail network, and efforts to make these trails more accessible to residents is important. The following steps should be initiated:

- Examine and map the existing trail and pedestrian circulation system;
- Identify the missing links and pursue opportunities for easements to provide linkages, where appropriate and practical;
- Distribute Town-wide trail maps to increase public knowledge and awareness, as well as use of the Town's trails and open spaces;
- As part of the development review process, seek permanent trail easements, parking, and linkages, where appropriate; and
- Coordinate trail planning and maintenance efforts with bordering communities to ensure regional connectivity.

A need for additional recreational opportunities for adults was expressed by residents during the public input process. In addition, members of the School Committee identified a need for additional soccer fields and track facilities, as well as another Skateboard Park. Accommodating conservation and recreation interests will be important in the future as maintaining a balance between protecting land for conservation purposes and developing additional recreation facilities continues to be a subject of debate in Town. Competing and increased demand for playing fields was identified as problematic during the public input sessions. Such demand does not allow sufficient time for rest and recovery of the turf or allow for rotation of the fields. Some field maintenance is performed by volunteer youth sports organizations. While this assistance is helpful and appreciated, it does not allow for a coordinated maintenance and management effort.

The establishment of an Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee should be explored to assist the Town with management and maintenance of existing facilities and in identifying future open space and recreation needs. The Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee would also assist the Town in establishing use regulations where they currently do not exist.

While Chelmsford residents support protecting open space, the Town recognizes that it needs to focus on appropriately managing the properties that it already owns. Sometimes communities view open space acquisition as an end objective that requires no further action or investment. However, the absence of a management plan leaves open space properties vulnerable to vandalism and abuse, vegetation overgrowth, and eventually, a loss of public access. The best way to protect open space is to assure that residents use it properly, and, to encourage public use the property must be maintained.

While the Conservation Commission has a single set of regulations, referred to as the Reservation Use Restrictions, which pertain to the use of all its lands, the town should consider developing site-specific management plans for key parcels that would include such issues as allowed uses and activities, trail and facilities maintenance, and habitat management. The School Department has a set of use regulations for its recreational facilities.

It was noted during the public process that there is no maintenance funding provided for properties under the care and custody of the Board of Selectmen. Residents also voiced concern over the level of maintenance for athletic fields and facilities. The expansion of the Open Space Stewardship program or establishment of a similar entity should be explored to provide supplemental support to the Town for maintenance of recreation facilities and miscellaneous properties under the custody of the Board of Selectmen.

The Chelmsford Open Space Stewardship (COSS) provides an invaluable service to the community through their diligent efforts to maintain certain open space and conservation properties. All of its funds are from private contributions. While the use of volunteers is extremely important and helpful, over the long-term the Town needs to develop a long-term management plan to ensure the continued viability and stability of the COSS program.

During the Master Plan Committee meetings, the Fire Department indicated that emergency response for incidents occurring on conservation land can be difficult, due to the lack of location and address information. The Department is actively working to erect signage at these locations that will assign an address to each site. The Fire Department also noted that access to some of these areas, such as Deep Brook Reservation and the Russell Mill Town Forest, is difficult for emergency vehicles and personnel. The presence of the Chelmsford Open Space Stewardship program volunteers in these areas has significantly reduced the incidence of illegal burning, according to Fire Department officials. In responding to these concerns, the public has indicated that there is a need to improve parking and access at many of these properties, and that a methodology is needed for calculating the number of parking spaces that are needed at each location. Throughout the Master Planning process, residents and officials noted the need for additional parking to accommodate those using the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

In summary, the Master Planning process has shown that the Town needs to maintain and care for the land and facilities it already owns, gradually acquiring additional holdings to connect open space where possible, and use its regulatory powers to assure high-quality open space in development and redevelopment projects. A comprehensive open space system requires criteria for evaluating open space parcels, zoning and non-zoning bylaws that can help meet open space goals, and dedicated funding to acquire, improve and manage these lands.

Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources

Natural resources are closely linked with the Town's identity and sense of place, and preserving these resources is critical to the quality of life for the town's residents. Although fiscal conditions present one of the greatest challenges to future conservation efforts, the Master Plan Committee recommends that Community Preservation funds be used to purchase land or deed restrictions for properties containing natural resources such as aquifers, water resources and wildlife habitat.

While the Master Plan Committee finds that the Town's zoning bylaw and other development regulations are effective in protecting natural and cultural resources, the Town could still do more to encourage or require development practices that will further preserve and protect these resources. For example, the town's subdivision regulations presently prohibit the use of many low impact development (LID) measures for managing storm water. The Land Use and Zoning section of the Master Plan provides more detailed information on LID techniques and recommends that the Town modify its subdivision regulations to allow and encourage the use of Low Impact Development techniques, as a means of improving water quality while reducing maintenance costs.

Eleven streams within the Town of Chelmsford suffer from some form of impairment. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the town implement a program to minimize the application of road deicing chemicals and lawn fertilizers to the extent feasible. In addition, the Town should require the preparation of an Integrated Pest Management Program for sizable projects that come before the Planning Board and/or Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission should work with DEP, surrounding communities, environmental organizations and neighborhood residents to develop a program to improve environmental conditions and water quality these waterway.

The Town should develop education and awareness programs to encourage the protection of natural resources. Such programs should include the Conservation Commission, the Water Districts, the Town Engineer, and the School Department, as well as private non-profit and volunteer organizations such as the Open Space Stewards and the Chelmsford Land Trust. The town should also tap into existing state and federal public education programs and materials provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

In 2004, the Chelmsford Board of Selectmen adopted a policy requiring one-to one replacement for tree removal occurring on town-owned land. In addition, the Chelmsford Open Space Stewards have worked with Jones Farm to open a town nursery at Sunny Meadow Farm to cultivate trees for this purpose. The town needs to build upon these efforts by developing a forestry management plan for the community's remaining forested lands. Such a plan typically

covers a ten-year period and outlines goals and objectives, provides a detailed property description and resources inventory, and contains a list of management recommendations with an implementation schedule. The stewardship section of the plan addresses other issues such as wildlife and recreation. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) administers a competitive grant program to fund the development of such plans. In addition to this proactive program, the town should establish a policy to address tree protection, tree maintenance, and tree replacement for new development and redevelopment proposals undergoing site plan review.

The Town should develop and implement an invasive species management plan. Invasive and exotic species such as multiflora rose, oriental bittersweet, and purple loosestrife, are commonly found in many areas of town. The implementation of this management plan will involve the participation of the Conservation Commission, Highway Department and volunteers from non-profit organizations.

The citizens of Chelmsford recognize the importance of preserving the remnants of the Town's agricultural heritage, as evidenced by the formation of the Agricultural Commission in 2009. The majority of remaining farmlands in town are not permanently protected and the Town needs to work to preserve these enterprises through a variety of mechanisms. The Town should actively encourage property owners to consider measures to conserve their land in perpetuity. When land is proposed for development, the Town should work with property owner to explore other options, such as the Agricultural Preservation Restriction program, or the Town may want to consider purchasing the development rights or purchasing the property in fee, using Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, as has been done in the past.

The public process for preparing this Master Plan has made it evident that the Town clearly values its historic resources. The Town should prepare a Historic and Cultural Resources Preservation Plan to inventory these resources and to outline a strategy to maintain, preserve, protect and promote these resources. The town needs to promote the town's rich cultural and historic fabric and charm in a way that builds awareness and support for its preservation, while at the same time promoting tourism and benefiting the local economy. In this regard, an information booth and/or board on the Town Common and or in the Old Town Hall should be established.

Town officials, boards and commissions need to work more closely with the Historic Commission to preserve historic features such as stone walls, facades and historic foundations by incorporating the preservation of these assets into the Town's existing bylaws and regulations. The land use and zoning section of this Master Plan recommends the creation of design guidelines for select areas throughout town. These design guidelines should emphasize that preservation of these historic features is a priority for the community. In addition, the Town's

subdivision regulations and zoning bylaw should provide guidance for the development community relative to this issue.

The Town should participate in the Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative administered by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Under this program, DCR will assist the community in undertaking a reconnaissance survey to help develop an integrated and proactive planning approach for heritage landscape preservation.

The Master Plan Committee has found that the Town needs to improve its efforts to maintain town-owned historical buildings, as evidenced by the condition of the two historic town halls. A maintenance plan is needed for all of the Town's structures, including the historic properties. The Master Plan Committee believes that the preservation and maintenance of Chelmsford's historic public buildings should be a priority for the allocation of Community Preservation funds.

Resources should be made available to provide support to several boards and commissions, including the Historical District Commission, Historical Committee, Community Preservation Committee, and Agricultural Commission. This should include assistance in applying for grant money. The Town should also establish a program that provides low-interest loans to finance facade improvements for private properties located within a designated historic district or on a scenic roadway. These low interest loans would be provided in exchange for a preservation restriction on the property. In general, the Master Plan Committee believes that a covenant or preservation restriction in perpetuity should be required for all historic preservation projects receiving Community Preservation loans.

The Master Plan Committee finds that the Town needs to improve the level of protection and storage facilities for the town's historical documents and archives. Documents stored at Town Hall and at the Library are vulnerable to theft, vandalism, and damage from fire, insects, rodents and moisture. The Historical Society and the Library have begun to scan many of these documents, but the handling and storage of the original materials needs to be adequately addressed. The Town needs to institute procedures to train staff in accessioning, storing, and preserving historical record and documents. The Town should also consider constructing an Archives Center to stabilize and preserve Chelmsford's historic records.

The Town currently has several roadways that are designated as scenic roads, however, most local officials and residents are unfamiliar with the designation, and do not know whether there are procedures in place to administer or enforce the scenic roadway bylaw. Although Town Meeting has designated historic roads on three separate occasions, there is no mention of MGL statute, the designated roads, or a bylaw within the Town Code. The Town should review the bylaw and the administrative procedures to determine whether they are practical, consistent with the operating procedures of the Town, enforceable, and up-to-date. Local boards, committees

and residents should be educated as to the significance of the designation, and should become familiar with the permitting procedures that are to be followed.

The North Chelmsford/Vinal Square area contains an impressive number of mill era structures, most of which are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Clearly, this area is appropriate for the creation of a national or local historic district. However, during the public involvement process, some residents expressed concern regarding the political challenges of creating a formal historic district, and instead, suggested that the area be designated an “honorific” historic district. The concept of establishing an historic district of some sort should be further explored through a series of meetings and conversations with neighborhood residents and businesses. The possibility of creating an historic district in South Chelmsford should also be explored. An educational process should be initiated so that citizens understand the significance, restrictions and impact of creating either a National Register district or a local historic district.

Facilities

- **Town Offices** - Currently and moving forward it will be more pronounced, the building will have excess capacity. Initial plans contemplate using the top floor as dedicated meeting rooms and consolidating town offices into the 1st and lower levels.
- **Center and North Town Halls** -The recently approved historic preservation projects will commence. This project is anticipated to be a 2 year process with design taking place in 2010 and construction complete in 2011.

The Town is currently using a revolving fund, from rental receipts, to pay for the operating costs of the town hall buildings. However, there is not sufficient revenue that can be raised to pay for significant capital reinvestment in these facilities.

It should be noted that the parking deficiency at the North Town hall will be addressed with the construction of 40 new spaces at the existing North Fire Station, located directly across the street.

- **Archive Storage Facility** - A number of Town Departments, specifically the Town Clerk, have requested space suitable for archive storage. The existing vault space at the Center Town Hall will be evaluated to determine if it may be usable. The option of leasing off-site storage space will be investigated.
- **Fire Department** - As discussed in section 5.1, consensus on how to move forward with addressing the future needs remains. The short term major building deficiency for the Center Station is related to the structural issues with the apparatus floor. Thirteen large support columns have been installed. However, this is only a temporary fix.

The Center Fire Station also has the following long term building deficiencies: building code, outdated technology, lack of storage, poor living quarters and undersized apparatus bays. In addition, site deficiencies include the size of the lot being too small to accommodate an expansion.

Operational deficiencies are minimal or in many cases non-existent training spaces, decontamination support spaces, medical supply storage, hazardous material support space, administrative space, conference space, walk-in treatment, gear storage, living quarters and apparatus storage space.

- **DPW** - As discussed in Section 5.2, the April 2010, vote to authorized spending up to \$4.6 million to acquire four parcels, containing a total of 16.97 acres, and an existing 92,844 sq. ft. building located at 9 Alpha Road and to fund the redevelopment of the land and building into a Department of Public Works facility. This project will provide the Town with a long term solution and plan for many of the existing building deficiencies as outlined in Section 5.2.1

This project is anticipated to take three years. Year one is design; year two is construction and year three (2012) will be occupancy of the DPW Administration, Engineering Division, Highway Division, Parks Division, Public Facilities Administration and Recycling and Solid waste Administration.

In order to achieve full consolidation into the new DPW headquarters, it is anticipated that a Phase II and Phase III will be required. Phase II will move the Sewer Commission, currently renting space at Kidder Road, in 2012 using Sewer Enterprise funds, and Phase III will move the Vehicle Maintenance Division between 2013-2017, using additional capital funding.

- **Libraries** - Current deficiencies are operational rather than building related. Specifically, there is a need for additional on-site parking and book storage space. Currently, the existing historic Dutton House is utilized for book storage, as the Adams Library does not have excess space to accommodate this need.

Originally the Dutton House property was acquired as part of the renovation and expansion of the Adams Library with the intent that the Dutton House would be relocated from the site along with another house that was subsequently relocated to a subdivision known as Anne's Way. However, no interested party was identified for the Dutton House. Over this time period, the Dutton House has never served any municipal purpose and has only been utilized to store books for the Friends of the Library book sale. As discussed in section 2.1, the Dutton House requires \$121,800 in capital investment to address building deficiencies. An additional \$195,000 is estimated to address ADA accessibility deficiencies. Even if the

above deficiencies were addressed, the interior layout of the Dutton House, as a two story single family home, is not conducive or effective for library or municipal operations.

Based upon the above, the Library has expressed an interest in a new storage building. There does not appear to be a municipal use for the existing Dutton House. In addition, allocating over \$300,000 in capital funding does not appear likely.

As the Dutton House is dated 1896, it is subject to the Town's demolition delay bylaw. As such consideration should be given to exploring options for its preservation, specifically its relocation to another municipal or private site and the potential use of CPC funds to provide financial assistance.

- **Schools** - Although the \$31 million school improvement project has been completed there remain significant Capital needs within the schools. Many of the project components defeated in the \$110 million and \$86 million proposals were not including in the \$31 million project and therefore still exist today. These include infrastructure improvements for essential upgrades and replacements in order to provide a healthy and safe environment for students and staff in all eight schools; enrollment and instructional space improvements for essential facility improvements required to maintain adequate class size for a basic educational program; high priority instructional space improvements that enhance educational programming; and , instructional / administrative facility improvements to support the schools and building enhancements and improvements designed to provide a better functioning school environment.

This includes full ADA compliance and accessibility, SBA standards related to classroom size and new science rooms as well as items not completed as part of the \$31 million project. Since the \$31 million project was funded with a debt exemption, this allowed the Town to spend six years of capital funds totaling \$5.4 million on the Elementary schools. It appears as though the needs of the elementary schools will be able to be serviced through capital funding. However, the needs of the High School and the two Middle Schools will exceed the Town's ability to complete the needed improvements within the existing constraints of the capital budget.

Therefore, in order to address the full spectrum of needs in the school, it is anticipated that a school building project will be necessary around 2020. In the meantime, the Town will continue to utilize capital funds along with rebates and programs from National Grid to carry on the work on the facilities.

According to the Director of Facilities, all of the elementary schools have an inadequate number of parking spaces to serve the needs, particularly during special events such as parent / teacher conferences.

- **Recreational Facilities** - Existing recreational facilities appear to be serving the majority of community needs. However, according the Facilities Department there is a need for more general / multi-use fields, girls’ softball fields and soccer fields.

The recent consolidation of the former Recreation Department into the Community Education Department and Facilities Department has been viewed successfully from a management and operations perspective.

Although the Parks Division staff has been reduced, general field maintenance and annual capital improvements have continued to provide viable recreational facilities.

Moving forward, a comprehensive assessment and needs analysis of recreational facilities and the planning and implementation of future facilities will be needed. During the public input sessions there was a need for more fields expressed. There has been a request for more girls’ softball fields.

- **Management and Operations** - The challenges that exist are not viewed as management related, but are attributable to insufficient funding (see pages 41 to 42 for more discussion).

The Permanent Building Committee continues to develop maps and an inventory of Town owned property. Buildable town owned parcels of property are in the process of being identified. CAD drawings of town owned buildings are being developed which include architectural floor plans and elevations of the buildings. The PBC has discussed working with Nashoba Valley Technical High School to provide this deliverable.

In May 2010, as part of the Green Communities Act, the Town was designated a Green Community in which the Town committed to reducing energy use by 20% over a five year period. This will be accomplished via fuel efficient vehicle replacement, lighting, boiler and hot water pump replacements and solar projects.

The following energy projects are planned, as shown in Table 6 below.

**TABLE 6
PLANNED ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECTS**

Project Name	Location	Description of Project	Project Status	Project Cost	Avoided Energy Volume	Avoided Energy Expenditures
Light Sensors	All Town and School Buildings	Install wall sensors and power packs	Shovel Ready	\$80,000	\$1,698,756	\$40,065
Univents	Byam Elementary School	Univent, Air Handling Replacement and DDC Control System	Shovel Ready	\$480,000	\$202,049	\$8,800
Univents	Chelmsford High School	Univent, Air Handling Replacement and DDC Control System	Shovel Ready	\$950,000	\$1,451,890	\$63,810

TABLE 6 (Cont'd)
PLANNED ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECTS

Project Name	Location	Description of Project	Project Status	Project Cost	Avoided Energy Volume	Avoided Energy Expenditures
Window Replacement	Chelmsford High School	Install energy efficient window system	Shovel Ready	\$1,700,000	\$1,310,800	\$29,859
Univents	Harrington Elementary School	Univent, Air Handling Replacement and DDC Control System	Shovel Ready	\$480,000	\$209,804	\$9,220
Univents	Parker Middle School	Univent, Air Handling Replacement and DDC Control System	Shovel Ready	\$600,000	\$492,127	\$21,629
Gym and Restroom Renovation	Town Offices	Install new energy efficient windows, replace heater, renovate walls, stage and restrooms	Shovel Ready	\$160,000	\$3,429	\$900
Univents	Cultural Center (Westlands School)	Univent, Air Handling Replacement and DDC Control System	Shovel Ready	\$450,000	\$203,428	\$8,940
Solar Photovoltaic	All Schools and Senior Center	Install Solar PV System on Rooftops	Not on Capital	--	--	--

- **Capital Planning** - A review of the 10 year capital plan, from 2011-2020, indicates a total of \$48.8 million of capital improvements of which \$29 million is programmed for town related facilities and the remaining \$20 million programmed for school related facilities (see Appendix K for more detail).

It should be noted that of the \$29 million for town facilities, \$28 million is programmed for major capital projects such as \$12 million for the Center Fire station, \$10.6 million for the new DPW facility and \$5.4 million for the two town halls. This leaves approximately \$1 million for general maintenance items such as building and utility systems.

Of the \$20 million programmed for school facilities, \$6.4 million is programmed for the elementary schools as follows; \$2 million for the Byam, \$1.8 million for the Harrington, \$1.6 million for the Cultural Center (Westlands School) and \$1 million for the South Row School.

The Parker Middle School is programmed for \$2.7 million, the McCarthy Middle School for \$3.2 million. The High School is programmed for \$5.8 million and the school administration building is programmed for \$121,800.

Although an annual appropriation is typically included in the general fund (operating) budget for capital expenditures, the single largest source of financing for capital projects is borrowing. As mentioned previously, an annual bonding target of \$2.5 million has been

maintained in recent years. However, based upon an annual bonding target of \$2.5 million and a \$48.7 million capital plan over the next ten years, this equates to an annual average of \$4.8 million in capital improvement spending.

It should be noted that the funding for the \$5.4M for the two Town halls has been secured from the Community Preservation Fund. In addition, debt exclusions will be required for the fire station and for the next major school project.

This clearly indicates that there is a funding constraint. This continued funding constraint often results in the Town having to defer maintenance resulting in increased costs in the long term. Consideration should be given to increasing the annual \$2.5 million bonding target to reflect inflation or passage of debt exclusions that would keep the tax impact neutral as the Town pays down the excluded debt for the sewer and school projects and /or increasing the general maintenance operating budget to adequately fund preventative maintenance.

Services

The recent economic recession has taken its toll on the community as cuts in local aid and declining tax revenues have necessitated some reductions in the services provided by the Town. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), also known as the Economic Stimulus Bill, has provided limited additional federal funding which has offset some of the local aid cuts made by the Massachusetts legislature. In addition, the State has provided municipalities with the option of imposing a local option tax on meals and lodging which the town has adopted. This tax will generate approximately \$400,000 in additional tax revenues annually, based on current estimates. While these additional revenues are helpful, further reductions in service may be needed in the future to address anticipated reductions in local aid and declining tax revenues.

During FY 2009, local receipts were impacted by a 33% decline in interest income, and a 4% decline in Motor Vehicle Excise revenues created by declines in new vehicle sales due to rising unemployment and tighter credit standards. In addition, assessed valuation (AV) declined 3.4% in FY 2009, due to softening of the real estate market. Fortunately, the Town's tax collection rate has remained strong at 98.7%.⁴ During FY 2009, 46 full-time equivalent positions were eliminated town-wide, which accounted for a 5% reduction in town personnel.

Over the past year, personnel reductions have occurred within the Assessor's Office, Tax Collector's Office and the Town Clerk's Office. In addition, police and fire positions have been eliminated and overtime expenditures have been reduced, resulting in fewer police officers on patrol and the closure of one of the town's fire stations. In addition, Library positions, materials

⁴ Town of Chelmsford, FY 2009 Annual Report.

and hours of operation were impacted. The School Department eliminated three central administration positions, reduced expenditures for textbooks, supplies and technology, cutback custodial services, and eliminated fourteen other positions. Local revenues are forecast to remain sluggish during the upcoming fiscal year, limiting the funding available to support town operations and services.

Today, town departments are under considerable pressure to reduce costs, generate revenue and generally do more with less. In an era of shrinking budgets, many municipal officials across the country are reassessing the basic ways in which services are being delivered. Traditionally, most services have been delivered by municipalities using their own workforce. Many communities are now considering the use of alternative service delivery approaches to increase service efficiency, reduce costs and provide higher quality services for residents. Alternatives include contracting with other units of government, contracting with private firms or nonprofits, regionalization and increased reliance on volunteers.

Chelmsford already receives some services through inter-municipal agreements and partnerships. The town has regionalized its Sealer of Weights and Measures through the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG). In addition, Chelmsford is actively exploring the regionalization of other services through NMCOG, including 9-1-1 dispatch services, animal control services, and the procurement of DPW supplies and services, and property revaluation services. Chelmsford's wastewater is treated at the Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility and the town library is part of the Merrimack Valley Consortium. There are also mutual aid agreements in place for public safety agencies. In addition, the town has chosen to privatize some services, such as cleaning services and the school lunch program.

The Town should explore additional opportunities to regionalize services as a means of improving efficiency, reducing costs and delivering the highest quality of service possible. Legislation was recently enacted to allow for mutual aid agreements for Public Works service, similar to the mutual aid agreements now in place for public safety agencies. The Town should consider entering into a public works mutual aid compact as a means of providing improved service to residents in times of emergency.

Many of the town's fees have not been adjusted in several years. The town has an opportunity to review its fee schedule for certain town services, in the interest of achieving full cost recovery, to the extent feasible. The Master Plan Committee acknowledges that revising fees would be politically difficult in a depressed economy. However, over the long-term as the economy recovers, the Town should review its fee structure and revise the fees for certain services as warranted.

The Master Plan Committee recommends that the Town streamline its permitting process to improve efficiency and coordination across town departments. The town should prepare a

Permitting Guide that would be posted on the town's website and made available to all residents and businesses needing such services. In addition, regular inter-departmental meetings and joint board meetings would be helpful in improving communication between the various permitting entities in town, and in facilitating a greater in-depth understanding of the issues related to each project and permit application. The town is currently investigating various technology improvements which will also be helpful in terms of tracking permits, etc.

During the Master Plan public input process, residents and officials expressed concern regarding the need for additional sewer capacity within the next ten years, once all sewer connections are made. This lack of available excess capacity is seen as an impediment to attracting future economic development initiatives, as has been discussed in greater detail in the economic development section of this Master Plan. To address this issue, the Town should explore any opportunities as they arise, including future opportunities to work with the City of Lowell and/or the Town of Billerica. The Town's Inter-municipal Agreement with the City of Lowell is up for renewal within the next few years, so this issue should be treated as a priority for the Town.

Unlike most towns, Chelmsford's water supply is controlled by three separate, independent water districts. Several comments were received during the public input process relative to the consolidation of these three districts or indicating that the water supply should be put under the control of the Town. The Master Plan Committee recommends that the issue be studied further. A feasibility analysis should be undertaken examining three options: leaving the existing arrangement in place, consolidating the three districts into one, and having the town assume control of the water supply and distribution system.

While cable television, telephone service and internet access are provided privately through Comcast and Verizon, comments have been received indicating that having additional telecommunication providers would create additional competition, thereby allowing for more competitive pricing and higher quality service for the town's residents and businesses. The Master Plan Committee recommends that this be explored as opportunities arise. As a goal, the Town should provide a minimum level of internet access for every resident through the libraries, schools, the Senior Center and Town government. Minimum level access would guarantee each resident visibility into the Town's operations and access to its leadership, and reasonable access to library-controlled educational and recreational materials. Access assistance should be need-based and focused on providing access to mobility-challenged and financially-challenged residents. The Town could explore the use of volunteers in cases where residents cannot leave their home. Wi-Fi should be encouraged and provided where practical.

Hours of operation for the Library have been reduced due to budgetary considerations. Several residents have indicated that the reduction in hours has been difficult for young families, particularly for those using the McKay Library. During these difficult times, other communities

have restored library hours and services by soliciting donations and sponsorships from the business community and residents. This option could be explored in Chelmsford as well.

The Town of Chelmsford is fortunate to have many volunteers who are generous with their time. The Library has established a website (www.chelmsfordvolunteer.com) to provide information relative to volunteer work and volunteer opportunities town-wide. During the public input sessions, the Library Director suggested that the town designate a volunteer coordinator to recruit volunteers when needed, maximize the impact of current volunteers, and to coordinate volunteer schedules. The Master Plan Committee is sensitive to the fiscal constraints impacting town government, but suggests that the Town consider recruiting 2-3 community-minded individuals to serve as a Volunteer Coordinating Committee.

The Town Clerk and others have indicated that the Town does not have an adequate climate-controlled storage facility for town records and artifacts which is properly sized to meet the town's current and future needs. Given that the Department of Public Works (including engineering, recycling, and facilities) will be relocating to Alpha Road, additional space for such a storage facility may become available within the Town Hall.

As the economy improves, the Town should consider restoring the public safety and school personnel lost through the budget cutting process. If possible, the South Fire Station should be reopened in order to improve response times and the safety of residents and firefighters. In addition, restoring the Economic Development Director position would be highly beneficial to the Town, as this person would be responsible for business outreach and coordination, thereby helping to recruit businesses to locate in town and concentrating on retaining those business that are already here.

The Chelmsford Department of Public Works operates with far less staff than most public works departments in communities of comparable size. The Department Director is also the Town Engineer, which is highly unusual, and the department does not have its own business manager. As the town's budgetary situation improves, consideration should be given to separating the DPW Director and Town Engineer positions. In addition, the hiring of a business manager should also be considered.

Chelmsford is the only town of its size in the region without an Assistant Town Manager. This position was eliminated in the past as a budget reduction measure. The town has chosen to decentralize its government in these lean times, which means that there is less collaboration between departments and much of the decision-making takes place within individual departments rather than being centralized within a specific administrative office of Town Hall. Adding an Assistant Town Manager would provide additional capacity to coordinate these efforts on a town-wide basis. To the greatest extent possible the sharing of resources among town departments, including the School Department should be encouraged. For example, the

centralized procurement program that includes the School Department, DPW and other town departments would benefit the town overall.

The recreational needs of the Town appear to be underserved. The Town has merged Recreation with Community Education and the newly created department seems to be more focused on education than on recreation. For a community of its size, the Town does not offer a recreation program with the variety and depth that one would expect. For example, there are no summer programs for youth. While paying for these programs is a challenge, additional initiatives are needed that specifically target the town's youngsters. These programs could be based out of the Community Education facility and could be fee-based, with perhaps some subsidy through business sponsorship and through grant programs.

The Open Space and Recreation Committee is currently preparing an inventory of all town-owned property. It is recommended that the Town establish a committee comprised of a representative of the Conservation Commission, Affordable Housing Committee, Community Preservation Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Economic Development Commission to review this list and make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting relative to appropriate use of these properties.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The final section of the Master Plan contains a multiple-page table outlining the specific recommendations detailed in the Master Plan document and is directed toward advancing the goals, policies and actions articulated throughout the document. For each specific recommendation, the primary responsibility for implementation is identified. Most often the primary responsibility will rest with the Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, Planning Board, Community Development Department, Community Preservation Committee, Conservation Commission or the Historical Commission. It is important to note, however, that many town departments, boards, committees and commissions will play a supportive role in the actual implementation and advancement of the various recommendations.

The Implementation table also provides a timeframe for implementation of the recommendations over the next decade. Four timeframes have been considered, based on the priority and urgency of the recommendation, the resources available, and the time required to initiate implementation. The implementation of some recommendations may be immediate, while others may be implemented on a short-term (1-3 years), intermediate (4-6 years) or long-term basis (7-10 years).

To promote timely implementation, the Town should appoint a Master Plan Implementation Steering Committee. The suggested Steering Committee membership is as follows:

- Two Planning Board representatives (Chairman and additional member elected by the Planning Board);
- Town Manager;
- Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman or designee;
- Conservation Commission Chairman or designee;
- Board of Selectmen Chairman or designee;
- Community Preservation Committee Chairman or designee;
- One Town Meeting Member; and
- One Citizen's Representative.

The Planning Board would solicit appointments from the various boards and commissions. The Town Manager would appoint the town meeting member and the citizen's representative. The Planning Board would then inform the Town Manager of the names of the appointees, and the Board of Selectmen would confirm the final appointments.

The Master Plan Implementation Steering Committee's role is to serve as a facilitator and coordinator of the implementation process, to advocate for the implementation of the recommendations, and to report annually to Town Meeting regarding the Town's progress in implementing the recommendations. In addition, the Steering Committee would assist the Planning Board with any amendments that may be needed to either the Master Plan document or the Implementation table over time.

NEXT STEPS

The Master Plan Committee will review the draft document in light of the input received this evening. The final draft Master Plan will then be presented to the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen and to Town Meeting. Upon acceptance of the final document by the Planning Board, the Master Plan Implementation Steering Committee will be formed and the implementation process will be initiated.

IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAMES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
1. Modify and revise the town’s Zoning Bylaw and subdivision regulations to better accommodate and encourage redevelopment projects. At a minimum, revisions should include allowing for reduced setbacks and providing greater flexibility in terms of parking and landscaping requirements. The Special Permitting process should also be modified to require the issuance of one consolidated special permit for a redevelopment that is not allowed by right. Redevelopment projects should be designed to provide significant improvement in the non-conforming nature of a property, where applicable.	Land Use	Short Term	Planning Board
2. Establish a Redevelopment District along Route 110, from Hunt Road to Chamberlain Road. Regulations for this area should promote mixed-use development that provides additional economic development and housing opportunities for the community.	Land Use, Economic Development, Housing	Short Term	Planning Board
3. Implement expedited permitting for projects located within the Route 129 corridor.	Land Use, Economic Development	Short Term	Community Development
4. Target the following areas for redevelopment and streamlined permitting: the Route 129 corridor, Vinal Square, Center Village, the Route 110 corridor between the Center and I-495, and the Drum Hill area, including the vicinity of Glenview Sand and Gravel.	Land Use, Economic Development	Short Term	Community Development
5. Rezone the upper parking lots and four commercially zoned parcels in front of the Chelmsford Mall to allow neighborhood commercial uses with strict design guidelines thereby creating transitional zoning, which would provide additional buffering and screening for abutting residences, thereby preserving the character of the neighborhood. Furthermore, any future development on the even-numbered (northerly) side of Chelmsford Street, from Steadman Street to the East Gate Plaza, should remain residential.	Land Use, Economic Development	Immediate	Planning Board
6. Create mixed-use overlay zoning districts in the following areas: Vinal Square, the mill complexes of North Chelmsford, the Town Center, Route 110 from the Center to Fletcher Street, and Technology Drive.	Land Use, Economic Development	Intermediate	Planning Board
7. Create design guidelines for mixed-use development and redevelopment projects within the Town Center and Vinal Square to ensure consistency with the character and historic integrity of these villages.	Land Use	Immediate	Planning Board
8. Establish a Mill Reuse Overlay District and Bylaw for the mill complexes in North Chelmsford to provide greater flexibility in redeveloping or reusing the existing structures, to add value to the properties, to protect the area’s historic resources, and to provide flexibility in meeting the town’s housing and economic development goals.	Land Use, Economic Development, Housing	Intermediate	Planning Board
9. Modify the current zoning bylaw to allow residential uses with retail, offices and shops within the Town Center and Vinal Square.	Land Use, Economic Development	Short Term	Planning Board
10. Continue to monitor the progress of the Lowell to Nashua/Manchester commuter rail extension project, and position the community to take advantage of transit-oriented development opportunities should the extension project go forward.	Land Use, Transportation	Immediate	Board of Selectmen

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
11. Revise the town’s zoning bylaw to allow the construction of four to six story buildings for lots abutting the Route 129 corridor in the area extending from the Billerica town line to Alpha Road, provided that such structures do not negatively impact abutting residences, while gaining a significant increase in open space exceeding our existing requirements. Design standards should also be developed for this area that address architecture, lighting, landscaping, parking, signage, etc.	Land Use	Short Term	Planning Board
12. Modify the zoning along the Route 129 corridor to provide support services for the office park developments located along the corridor. Desired support businesses include restaurants, dry cleaners, personal and professional services, and similar retail establishments.	Land Use, Economic Development	Immediate	Planning Board
13. Modify the zoning bylaw to allow for the development of an extended stay facility on Billerica Road, either side of Route 3 between the town line and Mill Road, in order to serve the needs of corporate tenants and businesses located along the Route 129 corridor.	Land Use, Economic Development	Short Term	Planning Board
14. Adopt a design review process that includes design guidelines for retail, commercial and industrial projects. Initiate design review as an advisory review coordinated within the town’s existing approval process.	Land Use, Facilities and Services	Short Term	Planning Board
15. Modify the town’s current zoning bylaw to enhance and reflect the existing character of its neighborhoods. Particular attention should be paid to modifying the zoning requirements for the Westlands, including, but not limited to, Manahan Street, Morgan Drive and Maple Avenue, and for the neighborhoods surrounding Heart Pond and Freeman Lake, where development has occurred at a much higher density than in other areas of town.	Land Use	Short Term	Planning Board
16. Address the land use and zoning conflicts that exist along the Route 40 corridor between Route 3 and the Westford town line. The Zoning Bylaw Review Committee should be reconvened and work with the neighborhood and the Planning Board to resolve these conflicts in a fashion that is amenable to the residents and beneficial to the community overall. The use of transitional zoning should be explored as a means of reducing existing and future conflicts between residential and commercial/industrial uses.	Land Use, Economic Development	Immediate	Planning Board
17. Implement revisions to the zoning bylaw that promote the creation of additional units of housing to meet local needs. In the RM zoning district, increase the affordability requirement from 10% to 25% and require a deed restriction in perpetuity for each affordable unit. In addition, establish an RM overlay zoning district for select parcels to provide future opportunities for multi-family housing. Modify the restrictions outlined in the RM zoning bylaw to include more reasonable criteria for establishing RM districts.	Land Use, Housing	Short Term	Planning Board
18. Adopt a comprehensive inclusionary zoning bylaw with a fair system of density bonuses or other cost offsets for on-site affordable units, and provide the option of creating equivalent housing through off-site units or through land donations to the Chelmsford Housing Authority.	Land Use, Housing	Short Term	Planning Board
19. Revise the zoning bylaw to allow the development of rental housing by right within the Village Center zoning district.	Land Use	Short Term	Planning Board
20. Review the in-law apartment regulations to improve the permitting process and to update the regulations to reflect the needs of today’s families.	Land Use	Immediate	Zoning Board of Appeals

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
21. Amend the town’s subdivision regulations to allow for and encourage the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques for managing storm water.	Land Use; Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Immediate	Planning Board
22. Amend the zoning bylaw to address the unique needs of agricultural enterprises and operations, in order to encourage the preservation of the town’s remaining agricultural lands, and to allow agricultural enterprises to remain economically viable.	Land Use	Short Term	Planning Board
23. Develop a master plan for the University of Massachusetts Lowell West Campus, working collaboratively with the University and the neighborhood. The Master Plan should consider the town’s open space and housing needs, and recommendations should be respectful of neighborhood character.	Land Use, Economic Development, Open Space and Recreation, Housing	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
24. Develop a master plan for the 66-acre Oak Hill parcel, which was acquired by the town in 1998. The Master Plan should include an open space and housing component.	Land Use, Open Space and Recreation, Housing	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
25. Revise the Planned Open Space Development zoning bylaw (Section 195-92) to provide stronger incentives for developers to contribute to the Town’s open space goals.	Land Use	Immediate	Planning Board
26. Reinstate the position of the zoning enforcement officer.	Land Use	Immediate	Town Manager
27. Update and revise the entire zoning bylaw to improve readability, add clarity and make the overall document more user-friendly. The bylaw also needs to be modernized in terms of the table of uses, dimensional requirements, definitions, and provisions for dealing with commercial vehicle storage, etc.	Land Use	Immediate	Planning Board
28. Establish design guidelines for 40B projects to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood and to maintain the community’s character.	Land Use	Immediate	Zoning Board of Appeals
29. Review and update all municipal bylaws every five years.	Land Use	Immediate	Town Manager
30. Reduce the maximum building height allowed in the Residential C district from 4 stories (45 feet) to three stories (35 feet).	Land Use	Immediate	Planning Board
31. Support the efforts of the Chelmsford Economic Development Commission (CEDC) in recruiting, retaining and expanding businesses for the community. Tie together the efforts of the CEDC with the Community Development Department to maintain and increase the Site Finder Database and update the annual survey of the Chelmsford business community.	Economic Development	Immediate	Town Manager
32. Build upon the Chelmsford Brand Strategy developed by the CEDC in April 2010 by incorporating it within the regional “brand strategy” being developed for the Route 3 corridor from Route 128 to I-495. Work with the state economic development agencies to promote the adopted brand strategy for Route 3.	Economic Development	Immediate	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
33. Streamline the permitting process. Adopt the specific procedures and processes for expedited permitting to ensure that permitting decisions for industrial, commercial and mixed-use applications are acted upon within the state’s 180-day guidelines. The Community Development Department should develop a Permit Streamlining Guide and a Permitting Manual, as recommended in the Chelmsford 2008 Economic Development Plan. The Permitting Manual should be made available on line and through the Town Clerk’s Office and the Community Development Department.	Economic Development, Land Use, Services	Short Term	Community Development
34. Extend the benefits of the EDIP program to the entire community by expanding the current Economic Target Area (ETA) through the establishment of a Regional Technology Center. Work with local businesses to apply for Recovery Zone Bonds (RZB) from the Commonwealth.	Economic Development	Immediate	Community Development
35. Prioritize redevelopment initiatives along the Route 129 corridor (from Riverneck Road to Route 3), in the Center Village and Vinal Square, in the Drum Hill area in the vicinity of Glenview Sand and Gravel and along the Route 110 corridor between the Center Village and I-495.	Economic Development	Immediate	Community Development
36. The Board of Selectmen should continue to review tax policy on an annual basis, as a means to determine the proper balance in terms of tax rates and tax burdens.	Economic Development	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
37. Work with the Greater Lowell Workforce Investment Board (GLWIB) to focus on the employment needs of those manufacturing industries with sophisticated technologies in the areas of nanotechnology, robotics, sensors, biometrics, electro-optics, lasers and clean energy.	Economic Development	Immediate	Community Development
38. Expand the public/private partnership initiated by the CEDC by working with the private sector to fill vacant commercial space and redevelop industrial properties. Through the utilization of the Site Finder Database, the Town can provide updated property information for prospective tenants and businesses.	Economic Development	Immediate	Community Development
39. Develop strategies to increase the capacity of the sewer and water systems to meet the growing demands of the business community and local residents. Renegotiate the contract with the Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility and/or develop an agreement with the Town of Billerica to increase sewer capacity for the future. Work with NMCOG and the other communities in the region to address infrastructure issues that impact future economic development initiatives.	Economic Development	Immediate	Town Manager
40. Direct the CEDC to host regular visioning sessions for the residents and business owners in Center Village and Vinal Square to hear their vision for these town centers and to educate them on what other communities have done to revitalize their town centers. Explore funding opportunities under the Business Improvement District (BID), District Improvement Financing (DIF), Community Development Action Grants (CDAG) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs in order to assist in the revitalization of these town centers.	Economic Development	Immediate	Town Manager
41. Working with the CEDC, the Chelmsford Business Association and the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, the Town should develop a survey for its residents and employees at local businesses to assess what the commercial needs are for the community. The CEDC and Community Development Director could then work with MassDevelopment and the Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development (MassEcon) to identify specific businesses that would address these needs.	Economic Development	Short Term	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
42. Focus on the extensive redevelopment and mixed-use opportunities in the Center Village/ Chelmsford Street area. The area between the Center Village and I-495 should be the focus of redevelopment activities, while mixed-use development should be targeted for the area from Village Center to Fletcher Street.	Economic Development	Immediate	Community Development
43. Encourage industrial development in the Route 129 Technology Corridor through the redevelopment of existing buildings and zoning changes related to the maximum building height and commercial support services. Utilize expedited permitting procedures for economic development projects in this area.	Economic Development, Land Use	Immediate	Community Development
44. Implement the recommendations in the Drum Hill Study conducted by NMCOG in 2008 to address traffic, design guidelines and streetscape issues. Identify development opportunities related to the Glenview Sand and Gravel site. Implement development and redevelopment opportunities at 10 Technology Drive and Jean Avenue/Wesley Street.	Economic Development, Transportation	Short Term	Town Manager
45. Support the extension of commuter rail service from Lowell to Nashua and Manchester and establish a commuter rail station with North Chelmsford, providing that there is proper community input and that adequate traffic mitigation is provided in North Chelmsford and elsewhere. Implement a District Revitalization program as part of the overall revitalization efforts in Vinal Square.	Economic Development, Transportation	Immediate	Board of Selectmen
46. Build upon the redevelopment opportunities in the Route 110/Route 3 Shopping District principally through the Stop & Shop project at the former Chelmsford Cinema site and the Chapter 43D site at 25-29 Katrina Road. These development projects will attract additional private investment to this area.	Economic Development	Immediate	Community Development
47. Prioritize the Potential Economic Development Sites for the CEDC and Community Development Department to implement.	Economic Development	Immediate	Town Manager
48. Identify and prioritize open space and potential recreation parcels to be targeted for future acquisition and protection.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Community Preservation Committee
49. Construct a playground at the Pond Street Beach property, and lay out and define an adequate parking area at this facility.	Open Space and Recreation	Short Term	Town Manager
50. Pursue alternative methods of land conservation, through easements, participation in the Agricultural Preservation Program, and the use of limited development projects.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Town Manager
51. Strengthen conservation and preservation incentives with the Town bylaws and regulations.	Open Space and Recreation	Short term	Planning Board
52. Maintain a current inventory of Chapter 61, Chapter 61A and Chapter 61B parcels and create a formal notification process to be utilized when a property owner seeks to remove a property from Chapter 61 status. This process should include notifying non-profit entities should the Town choose not to exercise its right-of-first-refusal.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Town Manager
53. Develop criteria to determine the appropriate control, protection and management entity for Town-owned parcels that are presently undesignated, as well as for future properties that the town may acquire.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
54. Identify possible future linkages between open parcels and identify missing links within the town’s trail network. This can be accomplished through GIS mapping.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Conservation Commission
55. Promote a trail network that provides connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, recreation facilities, and conservation land.	Open Space and Recreation	Short Term	Conservation Commission
56. Seek trail easements through the development review process, where appropriate.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Planning Board
57. Promote a regional approach to open space and recreation planning through outreach and cooperation with bordering communities.	Open Space and Recreation	Intermediate	Planning Board
58. Distribute Town-wide trail and conservation land maps to enhance awareness and increase the use of the town’s trails and open spaces.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Conservation Commission
59. Production of the Town-wide trail and conservation land maps could be sponsored by the business community or other community groups in exchange for advertising.	Open Space and Recreation	Short Term	Conservation Commission
60. Develop an overall management and maintenance plan for the Town’s open space and recreation properties. Site-specific management plans for key parcels should be developed that address such issues as allowed uses and activities, trail and facilities maintenance, and habitat management.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Town Manager
61. As indicated during the public involvement process, the Town will need to create additional active recreation areas. The establishment of an Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee, as outlined in M.G.L. c. 45, Section 2, would assist in providing additional direction and guidance in the future.	Open Space and Recreation	Short Term	Town Manager
62. Improve access to open space and recreation facilities for those with disabilities.	Open Space and Recreation	Immediate	Town Manager
63. Create additional parking for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and for other open space and recreational areas, as appropriate.	Open Space and Recreation	Short Term	Town Manager
64. Seek additional resources, support and monetary assistance for the Chelmsford Open Space Stewardship.	Open Space and Recreation	Short Term	Conservation Commission
65. The use of deicing chemicals and lawn fertilizers should be minimized, and the town should require an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program for sizable development proposals. In addition, an IPM program should be utilized for addressing turf maintenance issues at the golf course and at the town’s playing fields by the appropriate board or department.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Planning Board/Town Manager
66. A public education and awareness program that encourages the protection of natural resources should be established for town residents and the schools. The town should emphasize the importance of educating its youth and the community regarding the significance of the town’s history. The town should also tap into existing state and federal public education programs.	Natural , Historical and Cultural Resources	Intermediate	Conservation Commission

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
67. A forestry management and stewardship program should be developed for the community’s remaining forested lands. In addition, the town should establish policies for tree protection, tree maintenance, and tree replacement for new development and redevelopment proposals undergoing site plan review.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Intermediate	Conservation Commission
68. The public should also be made aware of the Board of Selectmen’s tree protection and replacement policy.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Long Term	Conservation Commission
69. The town should develop and implement an invasive species management plan.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Intermediate	Conservation Commission
70. The town should work with property owners to preserve the town’s remaining agricultural lands. The town should also consider purchasing development rights for these agricultural properties or purchasing the properties in fee, where feasible and appropriate.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Immediate	Community Preservation Commission
71. A Historic and Cultural Resources Preservation Plan should be prepared to inventory resources, and outline a strategy to maintain, preserve, protect and promote the historic and cultural assets of the community.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Historical Commission/Town Manager
72. An information booth should be established on the Town Common and/or in the Old Town Hall to promote tourism and benefit the local cultural economy. In addition, the Town should encourage the State to reopen the Visitor’s Center at the rest area on I-495 northbound in Chelmsford.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Town Manager
73. Design guidelines established for areas throughout the community should emphasize the importance of historic preservation.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Historical Commission
74. The town’s subdivision regulations and zoning bylaw should be modified to provide the development community with guidance relative to the preservation of historic resources.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Planning Board
75. The town should participate in DCR’s Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative, in order to develop an integrated and proactive approach to heritage landscape preservation.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Historical Commission
76. Efforts to routinely maintain town-owned historic structures must be improved. A maintenance plan is needed for all town-owned buildings, including its historic properties. The need for improved maintenance of these structures should be reflected in the funding priorities of the Community Preservation Committee.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Immediate	Town Manager
77. Resources should be made available to provide support to several boards and commissions, including the Historical District Commission, Historical Committee and Agricultural Commission. This should include assistance in applying for grants.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short Term	Town Manager
78. The town should establish a program that provides low-interest loans for façade improvements for private properties located in a designated historic district or along a scenic roadway. These funds should be provided in exchange for a preservation restriction or covenant in perpetuity.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Immediate	Community Preservation Commission

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
79. The town should institute procedures and train staff in acquiring, storing, and preserving historical records and documents. The town should also consider constructing an Archives Center to stabilize and preserve its historic records.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Intermediate	Town Manager
80. The town’s Scenic Roads Bylaw and administrative procedures should be reviewed to determine whether they are practical, enforceable, up-to-date, and consistent with the practices and operating procedures of the town. Town staff, boards and commissions should be educated in terms of the significance of the bylaw and the permitting procedures that are to be followed.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Short term	Planning Board
81. The concept of establishing historic districts in North Chelmsford and in South Chelmsford should be further explored. An educational process should be initiated so that citizens understand the significance, restrictions and impact of creating a National Register district vs. a local historic district.	Natural , Historical and Cultural Resources	Long Term	Historical Commission
82. The Town should work with DEP, neighboring communities, residents and environmental organizations to improve environmental conditions and water quality along the town’s waterways.	Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources	Intermediate	Conservation Commission
83. Establish an ongoing bicycle and pedestrian safety program as a joint effort between the School Department and the Police Department, in conjunction with the Department of Public Works.	Transportation	Immediate	Town Manager
84. Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	Transportation	Short Term	Town Manager
85. Provide wider shoulders on town roads, where possible, to better accommodate bicycles.	Transportation	Long Term	Town Manager
86. Perform more frequent street sweeping to remove sand and other materials from the shoulders and sidewalks throughout town.	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager
87. Provide erosion control along roadways where flooding conditions can deposit debris, creating a hazard for cyclists and pedestrians.	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager
88. Incorporate audible signals at signalized intersections, and ensure that all new traffic signals are pedestrian/bicycle actuated.	Transportation	Long Term	Town Manager
89. Erect bike route and “share the road” signs, where appropriate.	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager
90. Monitor bicycle/pedestrian crash rates for Chelmsford Street/Route 110.	Transportation	Immediate	Town Manager
91. Continue to participate in the Safe Routes to School Program.	Transportation	Immediate	Town Manager
92. Enhance snow removal on priority sidewalks and enforce the town’s snow removal bylaw.	Transportation	Short term	Town Manager
93. Increase the number of bike racks throughout town.	Transportation	Short Term	Town Manager
94. Create additional municipal parking, including designated parking for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
95. Require bike racks and sidewalks for new commercial and industrial development projects, where appropriate.	Transportation	Immediate	Planning Board
96. The following provisions should be considered as part of the regulatory review process, or through incorporation into newly created design guidelines for development and redevelopment projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require developers to provide sidewalks and streetscape amenities (lighting, bicycle parking, benches, etc.) through the project permitting and approval process; • Encourage traffic calming (physical street features that control vehicle speeds); • Provide bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on new or reconstructed local roads; • Require bike lanes and shared use paths, where feasible, practical and safe; • Provide for access management by limiting curb cuts (consolidating driveways); • Require strong landscaping plans that enhance the pedestrian experience; • While maintaining consistency with the parking requirements under the town’s zoning bylaw, limit the size of individual parking areas, breaking large lots into smaller, more pedestrian-friendly landscaped areas with sidewalks and walkways; and • Require adequate internal bicycle and pedestrian site circulation and connectivity to adjacent sites. 	Transportation	Short Term	Planning Board
97. Improve maintenance of line painting, striping and pavement markings, where the Town is responsible.	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager
98. Strongly promote traffic calming measures, in select areas, using objective criteria.	Transportation	Long Term	Town Manager
99. Provide additional resources for increased enforcement of motor vehicle and pedestrian safety laws.	Transportation	Short Term	Town Manager
100. Address traffic congestion issues, as needed.	Transportation	Long Term	Town Manager
101. Develop a pavement management and asset management program that considers all transportation modes to ensure that street maintenance and repair occur in a timely manner, thereby reducing the need to perform more costly reconstruction.	Transportation	Immediate	Town Manager
102. Inventory traffic signs and upgrade signage to comply with the requirements of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager
103. Work through NMCOG and MassDOT to address safety issues at high crash locations, to implement the recommendations for Exit 34 outlined in the I-495 Corridor Study, and to study the potential impacts of closing Exit 33 on I-495.	Transportation	Long Term	Planning Board
104. Implement the recommendations for the fifteen special study/ key intersections which are contained in Table 3.30 on page 104 of this document.	Transportation	Intermediate	Town Manager
105. Work with NMCOG to conduct a parking utilization and demand study in the Town Center and Vinal Square.	Transportation	Short Term	Town Manager
106. Update the parking requirements within the town’s zoning bylaw to be consistent with current industry standards.	Transportation	Short Term	Planning Board

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
107. Increase the developer contribution requirements for new parking space additions under Section 53G.	Transportation	Immediate	Planning Board
108. The town should work with the LRTA on the following transit service initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase transit access into Westford via the Route 110 route; • Provide more frequent transit service along the town’s major roadways including Route 110, Route 4, Route 129 and Route 27; • Expand transit service between the High School and Route 110, Route 129 and Riverneck Road to provide improved access to after-school jobs for students; • Provide additional transit access between the Senior Center and elderly housing; • Provide increased transit service between the town’s larger neighborhoods and its major retail and business areas; • Create a transit hub within Chelmsford with shelter and seating; • Establish clearly marked bus stops with shelters, posted route maps and schedules along all bus routes; and • Extend hours of operation later into the evening. 	Transportation	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
109. Establish a Transportation Advisory Committee to provide input on transportation- related issues, and to outline a clear process for addressing citizen concerns (<i>Other section</i>)	Transportation	Immediate	Town Manager
110. Ensure the continued and timely maintenance of all town and school facilities.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
111. Ensure the continued use of a dedicated fund for the purpose of future capital improvements to the Center and North Town Halls.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
112. Continue to seek options to reduce energy costs and usage such as LED Street Lights and parking lot lighting and Performance Contracting.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
113. Plan for a school building project in 2020.	Facilities	Long Term	Town Manager
114. Identify and implement a long term solution for the Center Fire Station.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
115. Ensure that the new DPW facility is completed on time and on budget.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
116. Plan for Phase II and III of the new DPW facility.	Facilities	Intermediate	Town Manager
117. Plan for the re-use of the existing Richardson Road DPW facility.	Facilities	Intermediate	Town Manager
118. Plan for the relocation of the Dutton House.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
119. Expand the role of the existing permanent Building Committee or create an ad-hoc committee to assist with a comprehensive assessment and needs analysis of recreational facilities and the planning and implementation of future facilities.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
120. Continue to utilize the Permanent Building Committee to evaluate space needs for the town, building condition assessments and equipment life cycle analysis to determine long range financial planning of major equipment replacement and large building Capital Expenditures.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
121. Continue to maximize the asset management software to enable a comprehensive predictive maintenance program for the town and to assist with capital planning projections.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
122. Continually look to integrate modernized recreational fields and facilities to reduce potential injuries to school age children.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
123. Consider a full-time grant writer for the town to maximize state and federal funding for the purposes of improving building needs, energy initiatives and infrastructure.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
124. Fully fund the Facilities and DPW departments in order to insure that the maintenance of building and grounds.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
125. Continue to be proactive in the capital planning process. Continue with the capital planning process of allocating a minimum of \$2.5 million per year for capital projects.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
126. Consider increasing the \$2.5 million annual capital improvement budget to reflect a funding level more in line with the current needs and inflation.	Facilities	Short Term	Town Manager
127. Identify options to increase annual funding for preventative maintenance.	Facilities	Immediate	Town Manager
128. The Town should explore future opportunities to obtain additional sewer capacity as they arise, including potential opportunities to work with the City of Lowell and/or the Town of Billerica.	Services, Housing, Economic Development	Intermediate	Town Manager
129. Undertake a study to determine the feasibility of consolidating and managing the water supply and distribution system within Chelmsford.	Services	Intermediate	Board of Selectmen
130. When feasible, the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen should consider regionalizing additional services in partnership with other communities or NMCOG.	Services	Immediate	Town Manager
131. Consolidate municipal and school functions to the extent feasible, as long as current service levels are not negatively impacted.	Services	Short Term	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
132. Continue to improve inter-departmental communication and efficiency through technology enhancements and upgrades.	Services	Immediate	Town Manager
133. Every two years, evaluate the adequacy of fees charged for municipal services, and where appropriate, base fees on a full cost recovery analysis. Develop a policy to guide fee waiver decisions.	Services	Immediate	Town Manager
134. Periodically review the status, need and charge of all appointed committees, including those with ongoing responsibilities. Committees that have completed their charge should be abolished. Other committees may be reorganized or merged, if appropriate.	Services	Immediate	Town Manager
135. Provide manuals and training, as needed, for standing boards, commissions, and committees to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to carry out their responsibilities in compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations.	Services	Short Term	Town Manager
136. Periodically conduct all boards and joint boards meetings to improve coordination and cooperation, streamline the permitting process and to review the state of the town.	Services	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
137. Participate in mutual aid agreements for Public Works, as allowed by recently enacted legislation.	Services	Short Term	Town Manager
138. Recruit 2-3 community-minded individuals to serve as a Volunteer Coordinating Committee to recruit volunteers when needed, maximize the impact of current volunteers, and to coordinate volunteer schedules.	Services	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
139. If the economy and town finances improve, the Town should examine which services can be provided or restored.	Services	Short Term	Town Manager
140. Establish a committee to formulate recommendations for appropriate use of surplus town-owned land.	Services	Immediate	Town Manager
141. Expand and improve recreation programs for town residents, especially for the town's youth. Pursue alternative funding sources and corporate sponsorship as a means of expanding the town's recreation program, and provide an emphasis on offerings for the town's youth. Programs should be structured to take advantage of new technology in order to prevent injuries to sports participants.	Services	Short Term	Town Manager
142. Encourage additional telecommunication and utility providers to offer service to the town, in order to create price competition and improve the variety and quality of services available to residents and businesses.	Services	Short Term	Town Manager
143. Explore the feasibility and cost of providing a guaranteed minimum level of internet access for all town residents.	Services	Intermediate	Town Manager
144. Provide a properly sized, climate-controlled storage facility for town records and artifacts.	Facilities and Services	Intermediate	Town Manager

Recommendation	Applicable Master Plan Elements	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility
145. Build upon the partnership with the Chelmsford Housing Authority to create housing through a proactive approach that maintains and increases the supply and diversity of housing in the community.	Housing	Short Term-Intermediate	Board of Selectmen
146. Explore opportunities for the Town to continue to purchase available property and/or utilize funds from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to address the community’s housing needs. Identify available town-owned properties for potential housing development to meet local needs.	Housing	Immediate	Community Preservation Committee
147. Target the identified Potential Housing sites for development.	Housing	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
148. Develop design guidelines for housing development projects to ensure that the projects are consistent with the neighborhood characteristics.	Housing	Short Term	Planning Board
149. Preserve affordable housing through the retention of expiring affordable use properties where financially feasible.	Housing	Immediate	Community Preservation Commission
150. Prioritize mixed-use redevelopment projects that support the business community and the town’s housing goals, and that are consistent with current neighborhood standards.	Housing	Intermediate	Community Development
151. Increase the availability of rental units in the community to address the growing needs of the elderly, young families and special needs populations.	Housing	Intermediate	Community Development
152. Utilize federal and state housing incentives, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Chapter 40R and Chapter 40S programs, to expand the availability of housing in the community to meet local needs, Participate in housing rehab programs to support the renovation of older residences.	Housing	Short Term	Town Manager
153. Explore the development of an Affordable Housing Trust to supplement the current resources made available through CPA funds.	Housing	Short Term	Board of Selectmen
154. Update the Town’s Affordable Housing Production Plan to be consistent with the new regulations from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).	Housing	Short Term	Board of Selectmen