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Action Plan for MBTA Communities
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Action Plan for MBTA Communities

Description Area

Please read the Section 3A Guidelines before attempting to complete this form. Please note: Action Plan Forms must be submitted by a municipal official with authority to act on behalf of the municipality on matters of zoning, such as the municipal CEO or planning director.

Section 1: Identification

Description Area

The Section 3A Guidelines establish zoning metrics that apply uniquely to each MBTA community based on its local transit stations, existing housing stock, population, and developable land. This section of the Action Plan helps to identify the transit stations that determined each community's category. Appendix 1 of the Section 3A Guidelines lists each community's category and minimum multi-family unit capacity requirement.

1.1 MBTA Community Name

Bellingham

1.2. Community Category

Adjacent community

1.3. Multifamily Unit Capacity Requirement

750

1.4. Does this municipality have any MBTA rapid transit stations within its boundaries?

No

1.5. Does this municipality have any MBTA commuter rail stations within its boundaries?

No

1.6. Does this municipality have any other MBTA transit stations that are located outside of its municipal boundaries that may have "developable station area" within them?

No

1.7. Please provide the name of the person filling out this form

Denis Fraine

1.7a. Title

Town Administrator

1.7b. Email Address

dfraine@bellinghamma.org

1.7c. Phone Number	(508) 657-2892
1.8 Please provide the name of the municipal CEO	Donald Martinis
1.8b Mailing address of municipal CEO	10 Mechanic Street Bellingham, MA 02019
1.8c Email address of municipal CEO	DFRAINE@BELLINGHAMMA.ORG
1.9. Please briefly describe other members of the core team developing the multi-family zoning district.	Town Administrator, Building Commissioner, DPW Director, Selectboard, Planning Board, and Planning Staff

Section 2: Housing Overview

2.1. Does this municipality have any established housing related goals or strategies from municipal planning documents, such as a Housing Production Plan, Master Plan, or Economic Development Plan?	Yes
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2.1a. Please briefly describe any relevant strategies, goals, or objectives, and the work that has been done to date.

Housing Production Plan, 2019

- Manage growth appropriately to maintain character and vitality and avoid negative consequences with respect to traffic, utilities, services, and environmental impacts.
- Continue to offer a cohesive sense of place with a range of living environments, reflecting its three villages and suburban and semi-rural areas.
- Provide diverse housing styles for a full range of income levels and variety of population needs, recognizing in particular a growing population of seniors and smaller households.
- Protect natural and cultural resources.
- Promote healthy lifestyles that encourage walking, bicycling and other activities.

2020 Master Plan

Update zoning to create opportunities to encourage diversity in housing options.

Bellingham shall implement this goal through:

1. Seek to align inclusionary zoning requirements with local market conditions to allow for potential density bonuses.
2. Explore adding fixed locations for multifamily development.
3. Explore ways to add multifamily housing through adaptive reuse of existing inventory through a special permit process.
4. Incentivize creation of affordable units in Overlay Districts.
5. Reduce dimensional requirements for townhouse development.
6. Eliminate bedroom restrictions on multifamily housing.
7. Ensure that parking requirements are commensurate with the size and type of units and seek ways to reduce impervious surface.
8. Enable infill development on substandard vacant or underutilized properties.

Meet and Maintain M.G.L. 40B10% Affordable Housing Requirement.

Bellingham shall implement this goal through:

1. Identify sites for creation of affordable housing through new development, redevelopment, or preservation. Publicly- and privately-owned properties: explore or facilitate housing on sites such as:
 - Housing Authority-owned property on Center Street
 - Clark Property on Rt 140, Assessors Map and Parcel 51-4
 - 55+ Overlay District / New England Country Club

Encourage Transit-Oriented Development Projects.
Bellingham shall implement this goal through:

1. New construction that encourages taking advantage of the nearby mass-transit systems will help with congestion.
2. Housing opportunities should include promoting healthy lifestyles that encourage walking, bicycling and other activities.
3. Exploring opportunities to extend commuter rail service into Bellingham to reduce through traffic from the west and south and promote multimodal transit options.

Review zoning initiatives that would allow greater housing densities and options for the senior population.

Bellingham shall implement this goal through:

1. Promote mixed-income housing developments that provide a range of housing types and prices to support a continuum of care.
2. Promote walkable dense housing near services and retail.
3. Explore zoning regulations to accommodate more innovative and flexible density and uses through evaluation of lot area, building height, lot line, lot shape, parking, and setbacks.

2.2. Is this municipality currently working on any other planning for housing?

No

Section 3: Preliminary Zoning Strategies

3.1. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following zoning strategies is this community most likely to use for compliance? (Select all that apply)

c. A new 40R or other overlay zoning district

3.1c. Please briefly describe the potential district and location. Optional: Attach any supporting documents that show planning work the community has already done for this district(s).

There are a number of locations that have had preliminary discussions for an overlay district to support the new legislation. Many land owners have requested consideration. No locations has been prioritized to date.

3.2. What non-housing characteristics are important for this community to consider in its 3A zoning district?

At this stage only preliminary discussions have occurred, however with all new growth Bellingham seeks to blend development with the existing neighborhood character, provide transportation modes for all users, support the existing commercial base, and not over burden the existing roadway network as Bellingham is already a cut through community for the sprawling growth that seeks to reach the Forge Park Commuter Rail in the neighboring town.

Section 4: Action Plan Timeline

Description Area

This section creates a framework to input preliminary plans for a zoning adoption process. On the table below, please use Column 1 (from the left) to describe a task, Column 2 to input a start date, and Column 3 to input a finish date. Every community must provide a timeline for the below-listed tasks. Additional space is provided for any other tasks that a community wishes to list. DHCD will review proposed timelines for feasibility before approving an Action Plan. Public outreach
Developing zoning
Applying DHCD's compliance model to test for density and unit capacity
Holding planning board hearings
Holding legislative sessions and adopt compliant zoning
Submit District Compliance application to DHCD

Description Area

Task

Description Area

Start

Description Area

Finish

Short Answer

Public Outreach

Jan 01, 2024

Mar 01, 2024

Short Answer

Developing Zoning based on Outreach and Analysis

Mar 01, 2024

May 01, 2024

Short Answer

Further Outreach once Draft Zoning Designed

May 01, 2024

Jun 01, 2024

Short Answer

Planning Board Hearings

Jun 01, 2024

Sep 30, 2024

Short Answer

Draft Zoning Available for Review by Public

Oct 01, 2024

Nov 12, 2024

Short Answer

Town Meeting Vote to Adopt Zoning

Nov 13, 2024

Nov 13, 2024