



Mayor  
Charles C. Kokoros

**Department of Planning and Community Development**

Melissa M. SantucciRozzi, Director  
1 JFK Memorial Drive  
Braintree, Massachusetts 02184  
[msantucci@braintreema.gov](mailto:msantucci@braintreema.gov)  
Phone: 781-794-8234

**MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

Jennifer Wadland, Chair  
David Cunningham, Member  
Julia Flaherty, Member  
Denver, Gibbs, Member  
Peter C. Herbst, Member  
Justine Huang, Member  
Erin V. Joyce, Member  
Shelley North, Member  
Elizabeth Page, Member  
Joseph Reynolds, Member  
Rayna Rubin, Member

**APPROVED JUNE 22, 2023**

**MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday – March 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM**

**Location: Cahill Auditorium, Braintree Town Hall, 1 JFK Memorial Drive**

**Meeting came to order at 7:00 PM**

**Members Present:**

Jennifer Wadland, Chairperson  
David Cunningham, Resident  
Julia Flaherty, Town Councilor, District 1  
Denver Gibbs, Business Owner  
Peter Herbst, Business Owner  
Justine Huang, Resident  
Shelley North, Business Owner  
Elizabeth Page, Resident  
Joe Reynolds, Town Councilor, District 2 \*  
Rayna Rubin, Resident \*

\*arrives after attendance is taken

**Staff Present:**

Melissa SantucciRozzi, Director-PCD  
Connor Murphy, Assistant Director – PCD

**Consulting Firms**

Jenn Goldson  
Beverly Mesa-Zendt  
Eric Halvorsen , RKG Associates  
Chris Herlich, RKG Associates  
Juliet Walker, Kittelson Associates

**Members Absent:**

Erin Joyce, Planning Board Representative

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM and attendance was taken.

**MPSC Member and Staff Announcements:**

Chairwoman Wadland introduces the new member of the Steering Committee, Denver Gibbs, who is the President and CEO of Gibbs Software Solution in Braintree. Denver started the company in 2014, and he has been in Braintree from New York since 2009. The Committee is thrilled that Mr. Gibbs has joined them.

Chairwoman Wadland asks if there are any staff announcements. Director SantucciRozzi advises that they have prepared a lengthy packet this evening. She wants to bring everyone's attention to the schedule, as there have been some revisions to the schedule. The Technical Working Sessions have been pushed back to April 10<sup>th</sup> and April 13<sup>th</sup>. Those lists have been finalized and are in the packet. We will talk about them later in the agenda. Most importantly, there was a meeting scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup>, which is no longer going to be held.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 28, 2022**

Chairwoman Wadland asks for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 28, 2022. It is noted that Councilor Reynolds and Member Rubin are now in attendance.

Councilor Flaherty **MOTIONS** to approve the meeting minutes from the November 28, 2022, meeting; seconded by Member Rubin; voted 10:0:0.

### **Committee Organization – Election of Vice-Chair**

Chairwoman Wadland asks if there are any nominations for Vice Chair.

Member Page nominates Justine Huang for the position of Vice Chair. We have had the pleasure of serving with Justine on the Master Plan Steering Committee, and Justine is also a member of the Charter Review Committee. Member Page would also like to mention that Justine organized Braintree's first Lunar New Year Celebration, and from this wonderful event her group was able to donate \$1800 to the Senior Center and a \$1500 donation to the Marge Crispin Food Pantry. These donations are an expression of support for our community, and Member Page hopes members will join her and support Justine's nomination.

Councilor Flaherty would like to nominate Denver Gibbs. Councilor Flaherty thinks it is very wise to have a balance between residents and representatives of the business community in Braintree, and she thinks Denver is a great fit for that.

It is necessary to second each nomination. Member Liz Page nominates Justine Huang; Chairwoman Wadland steps down and seconds the nomination.

Councilor Julia Flaherty nominates Denver Gibbs; Member David Cunningham seconds this nomination.

Chairwoman Wadland confirms that both Justine Huang and Denver Gibbs consent to be nominated.

There are three votes for Justine Huang; there are seven votes for Denver Gibbs. Denver Gibbs is the new Vice Chair of the Master Plan Steering Committee.

### **Ideas and Strategies Discussion – RKG, Kittelson and JMGoldson**

Jenn Goldson begins the Strategies Discussion and explains that this is a very important night for the whole process. She will explain what we are doing tonight, why the whole team is here, and what will happen next. Then the team will be going through all the ideas that were provided to the committee a few weeks ago, and it will be a Question-and-Answer Session.

Jenn Goldson begins by explaining that we have this draft overall vision statement and then there are five core themes. Each of those Core Themes has a series of goals. The consulting team got together at the end of January to come up with some best planning practices that they could suggest as ideas for the Town to consider that would address every single goal contained. They looked at every goal for all the Core Themes and came up with options and ideas to consider. So, they have lots of ideas. The team has no expectation that, by the time the committee gets through this process where you have a short list of strategies, you will have the same list. There will probably be things that you add, change, or remove. That is how the process is designed. So, first we start with lots of ideas, and we go through a series of filtering mechanisms: technical working sessions where you dig into a subset of the longer list; road shows to local boards to share ideas and ask for their opinions where members of the public will also be encouraged to participate; department manager's working session where we try to figure out what is really feasible; where it all comes back to the Master Plan Steering Committee in the end.

You could also call each of these areas, checkpoints, where we are learning something and then we are checking in. By the end, you have a short list of strategies, and we want to make it a short list so that you can work to achieve them.

Councilor Flaherty asks how many Technical Working Sessions there are anticipated to be. Jenn Goldson explains that there will be one Technical Working Session for each of the five Core Themes. They will be grouped into two days, but there will be one separate working session on each Core Theme. Each group that participates will focus on that Core Theme. Councilor Flaherty confirms that each working session meets only once, and she asks for clarification on the small committees made up of members of the Master Plan Steering Committee different from these Technical Working Sessions and how their feedback gets filtered into this process. Jenn Goldson explains that the consultants have asked four members of the committee to volunteer to come to each of these. So, some members will need to come to more than one working session. Members have signed up, and they will go and facilitate. At each of the Technical Working Sessions there will be four Master Plan Steering Committee members, and we will break the larger group of 16 people into four groups, each facilitated by a committee member. The Roadshow is different, and it is committee members going out to as many committees, boards, and organizations as you are able to, including ones that you may already sit on, to talk about the different strategies that might concern that board. Councilor Flaherty asks how we determine what boards to appear before, and Ms. Goldson advises that Director SantucciRozzi has already put something together related to that. The Director advises that they need to look at the dates because the meetings were scheduled based on the old window of most of April into May. Now, the schedule has been changed a little bit; therefore, she will update that schedule. They have a full list of boards, committees, and commissions. Councilor Flaherty states that some of those bodies are subject to Open Meeting Law, and she asks if all the appearances before these boards are intended to be open to the public. Jenn Goldson says “correct”. Jenn Goldson brings up a good idea that was Member Page’s idea to encourage those boards and commissions to open for any public comment. Councilor Flaherty would like to understand, as we go into the Technical Working Sessions, as they will be open to the public, will the public be folded into each of the four groups or not. Ms. Goldson advises that the public would be welcome to observe, and they can make comments by email or in writing, but the groups are not open for public comment. The Director clarifies that the Technical Working Sessions will not be filmed. She had reached out to Wes Ray, BCAM Director; and he said that type of format isn’t good for taping, but he would be willing to do something like what we did for the Community Forum and have a one-on-one interview as a takeaway if we wanted to. They will not be taped by BCAM. The Director suggests having one of the Master Plan Steering Committee members or someone from the consulting team be designed to take some notes so that we can have meeting notes for each of those sessions.

Member Page asks, regarding the community input at the Technical Working Groups, where they are allowed to be there but they’re not able to participate in speaking, what is the rationale when the whole process is supposed to be open to the public. Member Page states that Ms. Goldson also made a comment that the public can submit comments in writing, so would that be prior to the meeting or after. Ms. Goldson says at any time through the process. Member Page doesn’t understand why the public cannot participate. Ms. Goldson explains that typically we do focus groups in other communities that are actually not public meetings. We do not have a quorum of committee members. We ask these focus groups for information and opinions on the strategies. We know that Braintree is very admirably interested in having a very transparent process, so instead, the consultants proposed that these working sessions be open to the public so that people can actually hear what people are saying about the pros and cons. The idea of these is not to gain public input at the technical working session. It is really to try to understand from folks that really work on these issues either as part of being on a board or commission or perhaps professionally. The Roadshows, which will be happening for six to eight weeks, are meant not just to talk with the boards and commissions but to ask for public feedback. It gives a smaller subset of the strategies that are pertinent to that specific board, commission, or group. It gives the information in bite-size pieces and asks the public to come out to the specific board or committee related to a subject that they are most interested in.

Member Page asks, on that same note, if members of the public are in attendance and they have comments or input that they want to make to the Planning Board regarding their feedback, how do they do that? Ms. Goldson states she liked Member Page's suggestion at our January meeting. Ms. Goldson points out that the Master Plan Steering Committee does not have the authority to tell the other Boards and Commissions how to run their meetings. However, you can – through the Chair's invitation – encourage them to take public comment, and hopefully they would all agree to do that as part of the process.

Ms. Goldson points out that we haven't talked about the Department Manager's Working Session being open to the public, but we are certainly open to that, as well. That would be another situation where members of the public would come and observe, but it is really for the department managers to really dig into what's feasible here and what capacity concerns they have.

Councilor Flaherty asks, when we do these Roadshows to a body that is specialized in nature, for example Sustainable Braintree, would we present to them all the strategies for all the areas or just the ones that are most applicable to their specialty. Jenn Goldson suggests providing them with the full list of ideas under consideration, which will be on the website and is public information, but focusing the presentation on a subset that you have predetermined they'll be most interested in. Of course, if they want to talk about others, you could be open to doing that during the meeting. Chairwoman Wadland suggests adding the Senior Center to the Roadshow, as the seniors do not always come out to these meetings, but they have a lot of great ideas. Director SantucciRozzi comments that initially the Roadshow was to include town-appointed regulatory boards, and now Councilor Flaherty suggests Sustainable Braintree and Chairwoman Wadland would like to add the Senior Center. The Director asks if we are going to branch out from what we originally had discussed? Chairwoman Wadland states that Ms. Goldson had mentioned "other groups", and she thought that was what she meant. The Director clarifies that these other groups might not have regularly scheduled meetings, and she wants to have an understanding so that she can reach out to them. Ms. Goldson thinks the broader we can go, including even neighborhood groups, the better it would be. The Director asks Chairwoman Wadland to ask board members if there are any other groups that should be included. Member Page suggests the North Braintree Civic Association.

Member Cunningham was hoping we could address how members go about appearing before these groups. Member Cunningham states that going through the list of recommendations, it is very clear that people making the recommendations do that for a living. He can go through half of the list and not be able to comprehend the jargon or the acronyms. He could not adequately conduct a meeting and answer anybody's question on some of these subjects, and he doubts anybody else on the committee could do the same.

Jenn Goldson is happy to address that, and states that is a great segway to what we are doing tonight. There are two parts to her answer. Councilor Reynolds would like to add the Braintree Chamber of Commerce to the Roadshow groups.

Ms. Goldson explains that the consulting team is all here to try to help everyone understand. Sometimes we can't get away from jargon in terms of these technical ideas. This is a group of experts here to answer any questions that the committee may have. The team wants the committee to walk out of this meeting having clarity about what these ideas are. The second part of the answer is that she will be presenting a PowerPoint that will have modules. They will group the strategies by the Core Themes, but they can also provide some more specialized modules. They can also categorize the modules/strategies in different ways other than the Core Themes – to be more related to the specific group you are meeting with. Ms. Goldson is happy to talk with members one-on-one if they have specific questions when they are getting ready to present. The team also tried to provide links to other resources throughout. Ms. Goldson introduces the list of ideas that they came up with, and it is categorized by those Core Themes. This document is entitled: **Braintree Master Plan Strategy Worksheet**, and it is incorporated into these minutes by reference.

Ms. Goldson wants to be clear that these are not recommendations; they are a list of options that are worth considering because the team believes they will help address the goals in the Vision. Ms. Goldson reminds that this is an iterative process, and at the end of Phase III when we come up with that short list of strategies, we will go back to the Vision and Goals, and we may need to tweak them because some of the ideas may not be feasible. This is all part of the process; they do the best they can by figuring out what strategies address the vision and goals. At the end of Phase III the committee needs to go back to the Vision and Goals to see if anything needs to change to reflect the strategies.

Ms. Goldson states that tonight we will be learning, and that is why they have made the whole consulting team available. We are also adding suggestions to include on this initial list. We are not formulating opinions about this yet, as we don't have all the information yet. Ms. Goldson advises that, after this meeting, she is going to send out a survey to MPSC members and she is going to make each individual's results available on the website. This will not be an anonymous survey for reasons of transparency. The point of this survey is to figure out which are the, up to ten, ideas that would be helpful to have the Technical Working Groups dig into deeper. She would consider which ideas are the most complex, the most likely to have unintended consequences, the most impactful, or the most controversial. If it is a "no brainer" she wouldn't bother giving it to the Working Session, but if it's something you're not sure about or that is complicated, she would want the Working Session to really dig into the pros and cons to better understand it. The Working Sessions are not making any decisions for the MPSC. They are simply vetting them in a very deep way and giving the committee more information on the pros and cons that they see and things to think about.

Ms. Goldson explains the survey further stating it will give members a list of all the strategies plus any that you add tonight. The survey will ask you to choose the ten strategies for each of the Core Themes that you think warrant deeper discussion at the Technical Working Session. You are not eliminating anything; they will all still be there. Then the consultants will look for consensus on where the highest marked ideas are for discussion and pick those ten. Member Cunningham asks, in the process of arriving at the ten, will we be prioritizing one through ten or just creating a list of ten. Ms. Goldson advises that we will not be prioritizing, and she explains that the only reason we're doing ten is because, when we have given Working Sessions 20 or 18, it is very difficult for them to get through in 2 ½ hours of a working session. We want to give the working sessions the ideas that are the most controversial or the most complex, especially the ones you don't understand well.

Next, we are going to have a member of the team give a very brief overview of the strategy ideas for each Core Theme. We will let you know how we came up with these ideas and what direction we are trying to go in. Then, we will open the discussion for Questions and Answers. We will answer questions and provide clarifications so that when committee members leave this room, you have a better understanding of these ideas than when you walked in. At that point, if you want to add something, we will add it. You are not making any decisions or trying to reach consensus or agreeing on anything tonight.

Member Page asks if we will be removing or modifying any ideas. Ms. Goldson states they don't suggest that you remove or modify, but we can add alternative ones as an additional idea. Chairwoman Wadland confirms that we will have discussion after each Core Theme presentation. Ms. Goldson states they will be taking notes on the committee's additions. Chairwoman Wadland asks when the survey is due. Ms. Mesa-Zendt advises that they will get it out by late Wednesday and would like to have it back before the following Monday.

### **Discuss Technical Working Sessions**

Ms. Goldson advises that the first Core Theme is Conservation, Preservation and Sustainability, and Beverly Mesa-Zendt will provide a very brief overview, and then we can do questions and answers.

### **Core Theme 1: Conservation, Preservation and Sustainability – Beverly Mesa-Zendt:**

Ms. Mesa-Zendt advises that Core Theme 1 focuses on conservation, natural resource protection, preservation, and sustainability. Several strategies were informed by the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan, which is due for an update, but was still valuable in understanding existing conditions and goals of the community. Attention was paid to all the goals with particular attention to protecting existing open space and increasing open space. Examples would be identifying locations for land acquisition to increase conservation land area or acquiring vacant, underutilized parcels to establish pocket parks throughout Braintree. Recreation strategies were introduced focusing on adding amenities and improvements to existing facilities. Examples would be added amenities and recreation opportunities at existing open spaces such as Braintree Dam, Braintree Town Forest, and Sunset Lake; identify a location for municipal dog park; conduct a Monatiquot River master planning process to determine a use of shore lands for outdoor recreation and gathering. Other strategies focused on implementation and support for carbon reduction goals, efficiency, and sustainable development, particularly on the municipal side. Examples would be recommendations for solar canopies in municipal parking lots, creating a co-generation plant as part of BELD, establishing a solid waste advisory committee, investing in Green Infrastructure, and fleet conversion to electric vehicles. Other strategies build on increasing awareness, support and partnerships for goals related to sustainability including identifying locations to plant native pollination gardens, facilitate an adopt-an-island program, and curbside composting. These are all recommendations to engage the community in private partnerships and increase awareness within the community. Lastly, there were goals related to historic preservation and appreciation of the town's historic and cultural resources including working with the Braintree local cultural council to establish a list of local priorities for grants, develop a cultural brochure and a landing page on the town website, and consider amending the demolition delay ordinance to extend the delay period from four months to 24 months. Ms. Mesa-Zendt concludes that these are just a sampling of the strategy ideas the team has identified.

### **Core Theme 1: Conservation, Preservation and Sustainability – Questions and Comments:**

Chairwoman Wadland opens the discussion to committee members and asks them to bring forward items that would like to add or modify. Ms. Goldson also suggests asking questions or requesting clarification if there is something you want more information about.

Member Herbst states, from the feedback from a public hearing in the fall, one of the components is not just protecting and restoring but also “enhancing public access” to some of these resources that are already there. Some don't have adequate parking to access them.

Member Cunningham asks for clarification under Item Q, Redmond Zoning Code. Chairwoman Wadland clarifies that it is a link to that document. He also mentions the line under Item M referencing South Hadley, MA. It is clarified that most of them are links that are sometimes examples used in other jurisdictions and sometimes they are guiding documents that might be resources available online.

Member North liked what Member Herbst said about parking; she states we also mentioned signage, and she states there are a lot of places around town that people don't know about because there is no signage. Member North asks for clarification on what a Demolition Delay Ordinance is. Ms. Goldson explains that it essentially is applying to Historic resources. Many towns have this, and Braintree has a Demolition Delay, but it is shorter than what is being recommended. What a Demolition Delay Ordinance does is, if a historic resource over a certain age, even if it's not in a local historic district or protected in any other way, if someone goes to apply for demolition either to build something else or clear the site, if it triggered this delay because the resource was of a certain age, they would need to get reviewed by the Historical Commission to see if the resource is significant enough to impose a delay – meaning the property owner would not be able to demolish that building for a certain period of time. Currently Braintree's Demolition Delay Ordinance only gives a delay of four months, which is very short.

You may say that's great – that's pro-development – it is, but if you're looking to preserve historic resources, then we would recommend extending to potentially two years that so that it is more powerful because you would have more negotiating power to find another use that preserves the building, you could initiate a sale, maybe use CPA funds to buy it, or perhaps you could negotiate moving the building to clear the way for use of the property. When you only have four months, you have very little power to preserve that historic resource. Member North asks about the placement under Sustainability or is it under Historic; Ms. Goldson clarifies that the way they wrote the Vision it mixed things in, but if there are more appropriate places to put things later, we can sort through it again.

Councilor Flaherty has one suggestion; there is a mention here about considering increasing the Community Preservation Act surcharge, and she thinks that one thing that could benefit from our Community Preservation is having its own Master Plan – a prioritized set of goals that can be achieved with Community Preservation funding. That is not in place right now, and Councilor Flaherty thinks it would be an improvement if we had it.

Ms. Mesa-Zendt suggests that she read everyone's additions at the end of this Core Theme to ensure everything is included.

Member Denver Gibbs has a question related to Braintree Community Arts Center, and he asks if that includes music with the Arts. Director SantucciRozzi doesn't believe it includes music. Member Gibbs asks if we could possibly include a music program.

Chairwoman Wadland refers to Item Q that mentions density considerations/relief for projects that propose Green Building standards and asks for clarification. Ms. Mesa-Zendt explains that you can offer density incentives to essentially incentivize other types of public amenities such as green building structures, affordable housing, public amenities including pedestrian connections and open space. Essentially, it is using different kinds of relief incentives to get developers to give you something that the community needs or a public benefit. Chairwoman Wadland notes that it references "green building standards", and Ms. Mesa-Zendt clarifies that in this case, if the developer used green building standards, they might get a special dimensional relief or something else. Chairwoman Wadland asks if we can define the requirement for the "green development" piece. Ms. Mesa-Zendt states we can introduce language that is more specific. Ms. Goldson clarifies that it is up to the town, when they go to adopt these requirements, to figure out how to interpret that, and that is why the recommendations don't get very specific.

Councilor Reynolds knows that there are building codes out there for promoting more efficient energy use. That is one of the areas that is of interest. He knows that the Town of Braintree has implemented the Stretch Energy Code. Councilor Reynolds thinks that would be a helpful consideration. Councilor Reynolds would like to create a public user option for a non-potable water distribution source. Water conservation is very important. Potable water retention and how we preserve that is very important. This could be cost prohibitive, but he thinks it is important to have a discussion on how we might be able to use non-potable water in our own homes, in industry, in business, and in municipalities.

Member Rubin does not have any additions or questions at this time.

Member Page refers to Item G, which discusses the conversion of the municipal fleet to electric and/or hybrid. She thinks this is a great idea, but it would be good to add in the phrase "when economically feasible" because the cost to do this all at once might be overwhelming. In addition, Member Page suggests that we should have new equipment for the Braintree Fire Department to put out fires that are generated by electric vehicles, as the fires are very difficult to put out.

Member Huang references the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and she mentions that she would like to include the extension of that plan because that is a seven-year plan, and we only have three more years, while our Master Plan is a ten-year plan. She also mentions under Item B, we had wanted to remove specific locations, but this area references Braintree Dam, Braintree Town Forest, and Sunset Lake. She would like to say “existing open spaces outlined in the 2018 Open Space Plan and prioritize based on the list from 2018 shown on page 57 and prioritized based on residents accessibility and protects nature habitats and wildlife.” Ms. Goldson asks for clarification and thinks that the Open Space Plan would already identify those parcels or is Member Huang saying above and beyond what is identified. Member Huang explains that when we identify open space and we are trying to utilize it, it depends on the location and what wildlife may exist there. Ms. Goldson states we can defer to whatever the new Open Space Plan says. Member Huang wonders if they have enough expertise to make a recommendation regarding an alternative energy plan under Item H that refers to “cogeneration plant”. The consulting team will check that item, and Ms. Goldson states anybody who is affected by these strategies should be included. Member Huang would like to make an inventory of the town’s public facilities regarding energy savings. Ms. Goldson thinks, as a green community, you may already be doing that work. The Director will check this item. Councilor Reynolds states that Braintree is currently a Green Certified Community. It receives State Environmental Grants. Member Huang would like to add “educate Braintree residents and business owners about sustainability practices.

Councilor Flaherty mentions that at times in this document specific items are listed for focusing, and it is not always clear whether that is meant to be a comprehensive list or just a “for example” list. She refers to Item B where Braintree Dam, Braintree Town Forest and Sunset Lake are listed. Councilor Flaherty agrees that we should invest in those locations, but she wonders are they provided as a “such as” or as an exclusive list of only these three locations. Ms. Goldson clarifies that it is an example list, and we can add “in addition to others” to make it clear that it is an example list. Chairwoman Wadland mentions that Braintree Dam is not owned by Braintree.

Ms. Mesa-Zendt quickly reads the additions proposed by committee members to ensure nothing was missed.

### **Core Theme 2: Economic Growth – Chris Herlich, RKG Associates:**

Chris Herlich begins by stating that Core Theme 2 is focused very much on economic development. The entire team believes that economic development cuts across many different topic areas. The purpose of economic development is to serve the quality of life for the community. As much as we talk about real estate development, we think it’s important to keep in mind that there are very close relationships between economic development and all these other core themes. Mr. Herlich explains that they proposed different strategy ideas with the context of the existing conditions in mind, understanding that Braintree is a growing place and a place that people and businesses want to be, while understanding the opportunities within town that you may be interested in taking advantage of. A lot of the strategy ideas are related to zoning and related to development processes – both streamlining certain ones and making others higher standard. Some strategy ideas related to investing in certain properties, investing in certain positions within town government, and specific initiatives within town government to help spread the word about the opportunities that are in Braintree. We are very focused policy-wise on real estate development, but always in the service of improved quality of life across the town. Mr. Herlich opens discussion for questions and comments.

### **Core Theme 2: Economic Growth – Questions and Comments:**

Peter Herbst refers to Item B and states that he doesn’t remember limiting those concepts to East Braintree Square. He would expand that to include Braintree Square and South Braintree Square, as they are equally deserving of streetscape improvements and beautification. He would highlight some of the parking issues in Items X and Y, and he would elevate them in importance; they could probably be their own subcategory.

Member Cunningham thinks that Item B should be expanded to not only invest in streetscape improvements and beautification, but also the creation of additional parking to allow the squares to thrive. Right now, there is no public parking in The Landing whatsoever, and it's a problem. The other two squares have inadequate public parking. Member Cunningham expresses that it would be nice to enhance each of the squares, but he would suspect that the business owners would love to see additional parking for their customers and employees. With respect to additions, Member Cunningham doesn't see anything there mentioning South Shore Plaza, which is the biggest business in the town. He is referred to Item Q. Mr. Herlich also mentions that the higher-level goal associated with this theme also mentions "developing strategic community supported economic growth plans for areas of the town that is appropriate for increased development such as Ivory Street corridor, South Shore Plaza, etc." Ms. Goldson asks Member Cunningham if he would want to add anything else besides Item Q about South Shore Plaza. Member Cunningham would like to add "explore transportation services for arriving at the South Shore Plaza through public transportation". He discusses the possibility of there being direct access from the nearest T Station, which is Quincy Adams.

Ms. Goldson asks Member Herbst for clarification on his request to "elevate parking issues under Items X and Y". Member Herbst recognizes that they are using the same subcategories for each Core Theme, so adding a parking subcategory probably wouldn't fit, but it bleeds into every single issue. He suggests pulling them up a level. Ms. Goldson advises that we shouldn't worry about the categories just yet, as we can talk about how to group these things. Ms. Goldson suggests pulling the sub-bullets out from under Item Y; they will each get their own strategy and stand out individually.

Member Cunningham states he is not sure who came up with the idea of relocating the transfer station and partnering with a private sector to develop the site, but he would be interested in hearing more about the subject. Mr. Herlich advises that was something they heard from several different people at the public forum, and he could provide a little more detail on what that might entail. Member Cunningham asks if there was any discussion with respect to where it would be relocated to. Most people would like to see it go, and the consulting team understands that it is a private company leasing that site, and eventually their lease will expire.

Member North is looking for some clarification on language. She refers to Item D where it references "industrial users", and she asks what an industrial user would be? Mr. Herlich advises that they were referring to some of the larger footprint tenants that are getting squeezed out of the denser parts of the urban core. These industrial users may be manufacturing, light or heavy manufacturing, depending on the town's preferences. Some may be related to Life Sciences, but it could also be something far simpler and less technically complex. Member North references Item G where it mentions the "Easthampton, MA strategy", and she asks if we could get a link to what that is. Mr. Herlich says "absolutely". Under Item M, what would be a "Blue Economy" business? Mr. Herlich advises "Blue Economy" is a category of industry that is focused on taking advantage of access to the ocean. It might be boat repair or boat manufacturing. It could be aquaculture, such as an oyster farm, and some are more research oriented. Member North confirms utilizing the access that we have to the ocean that we under utilize now. Member North references Item Z "Hire a dedicated economic development staff member", which she thinks is a fabulous idea, but she did have a question. She asks who is the person in the town currently that would be doing this? Director SantucciRozzi clarifies that the duties are found within the Planning and Community Development office and the mayor's office.

Councilor Flaherty states she thinks Braintree has a problem with underutilized and vacant properties, which is identified in the Core Theme, but what's not there is to incentivize redevelopment, hire a consultant, or conduct a study. She is not sure if there are specific strategies that are clear to the experts but not to her on how to incentivize. It seems to her that there are reluctant landowners in Braintree, and she doesn't understand why they hold on to properties without developing them for profit. Councilor Flaherty would be very interested to know what we could do to motivate those property owners to do better. Mr. Herlich states some of the strategy ideas are very focused on zoning, and he thinks that is a strong tool to begin incentivizing change in land use.

There may be landowners that are impervious to that type of convincing, but it can make it much more alluring to either redevelop it themselves because they can gain more economic benefit or to sell it to someone who is more motivated to transform a property. There are other tools such as eminent domain, but that can come at a cost both politically and fiscally for the town itself. One of the less direct ways to approach this as a municipality is to establish a very clear vision for what a specific area of your town can be. It can help that landowner or other landowners to understand exactly what you want to see, and it takes a little bit of the risk out of the development process. Councilor Flaherty is going to suggest that we develop strategies to incentivize redevelopment in underutilized and vacant properties, and a related but somewhat separate issue is that there are properties in Braintree that are just outmoded because we have a changing retail environment where those properties are not as successful as they once were. There are several examples, and she would like to also identify strategies to motivate properties that need redevelopment to be economically vibrant and modern. Lastly, Councilor Flaherty refers to Item I, where it references “Create an arts and culture plan, including a study of existing public and vacant commercial space.” She asks if the team means a study of space that could be transformed to be used for the arts. Mr. Herlich states “precisely”. Councilor Flaherty asks if we could add that. Councilor Flaherty references Item W, where we talk about the connection between housing and commercial and industrial development, in a separate item we specifically talk about Life Science and because Life Science is something that Braintree wants but it is very competitive, she thinks it is worth calling it out specifically in Item W.

Member Gibbs refers to Item U and asks for clarification on 21<sup>st</sup> century tenants. Mr. Herlich explains that in many towns in the greater Boston area, the zoning codes include Use Tables that are restrictive in that they don’t specifically address industries that exist today that didn’t exist 50, 60, or 70 years ago when those zoning codes were first adopted. Because they are not expressly called out, it can make the development process geared towards those tenants more onerous, and the developer proposing a project has to get a little more creative and get a little more convincing of a Planning Board or a Zoning Board of Appeals that their desired use is in agreement with an existing zoning code. We have not yet identified specific instances, but they had Life Sciences in mind. There are a whole subset of Life Science users out there, and just saying specifically in the zoning code that a good manufacturing practice facility is an allowable use in a district can go a long way towards simplifying the development process.

Chairwoman Wadland has an addition. She asks, in the spirit of partnership, especially if the property owner is coming for modifications on their existing permits, can we ask large corporations that are in Braintree to submit a five-year plan. We say, “plan for the transformation of South Shore Plaza”, but we cannot plan for that because they won’t tell us what they want to do. Director SantucciRozzi explains there is no requirement in the state law when you rezone a property to even say what you’re going to do with it tomorrow – never mind in five years. Braintree has created this pattern where people show plans so that people can get comfortable about what they’re going to do, but there is no requirement for them to follow that plan or to adhere to that plan. Chairwoman Wadland states that a lot of these things are not required by law, but we hope in the spirit of partnership that they will communicate with the community. The Director states a rezone is an actual action that is laid out in state law, but a lot of these things are just ideas and things that communities are doing around hot topics. Placing a requirement on a statutory process that is laid out in state law gets a little dicey. Chairwoman Wadland asks for an example of a community that has hired a successful Economic Development strategic plan, and what does that plan look like? What are the key components of that plan?

Eric Halvorsen , RKG Associates, asks to add something about the Chairwoman’s question about the partnership with the mall because he thinks it is a good question. The consultants worked on a plan for Framingham and Natick at the Golden Triangle where the Natick Mall is and the area around that. While the mall owner was not the one who stepped forward to put the plan in place, it was driven by the City of Framingham and the Town of Natick through a grant that they got from MassDOT. The consultants were part of the team that created a big look at the whole area that did include the mall, and that look thought about modernizing zoning and major

transportation improvements. Mr. Halvorsen advises that it was initiated by the two communities but included the mall as a key partner, and he just saw Mass Development just funded a study for the Burlington Mall looking at the same thing. How could the Burlington Mall think about modernizing over time, particularly parking may not be as needed as it once was as the mall goes through changes. Even though the South Shore Plaza may not initiate that five-year plan in the spirit of partnership, maybe there is a way that the town could get a grant or approach the mall and say “if we got a grant, would you be interested in working with us on thinking through what this place could look like in 5, 10 or 15 years. There are examples of that happening, but they are often municipally driven. Mr. Halvorsen advises that typically it’s a master plan on existing conditions, but it is heavily focused on the town’s workforce and labor force, the town’s businesses and industry base, the town’s regulations and incentive program, the skills of the town’s workforce, and a real estate analysis. They take all that information and come up with a Target Industry Analysis, which takes a whole host of factors and suggests target industries and a detailed set of implementation steps. Mr. Halvorsen states the reason they included that is because there are so many opportunities in Braintree. Member Huang acknowledges that we cannot require a five-year plan from businesses, but for a Special Permit is it possible to require it. The Director advises that what they described was frontloading it with the study versus somebody wanting to do something and then you ask them to tell us what they want to do for the next five years. A Special Permit is a regulatory document that’s issued for a specific use as requested at a specific place. The Director understands what people are asking and why they are asking it, and that is something that the town could do as part of an economic plan or a strategic plan. Communities do those all the time. The town that the Director lives in has one, and that is how they go about development. As far as putting that on the requirement of a developer or property owner, when you put a requirement on a Special Permit there needs to be a connection between what you’re asking them to do or the condition and what they are asking you for.

Member Rubin refers to phased development for a large property or overlay district, where you would require a real plan for the development. She has seen it with large educational institutions.

Councilor Reynolds acknowledges that this has been a great conversation, as we identify what are the realities and what are the parameters legally that we have to deal with, the rights of property owners, the rights of communities/municipalities, and how they fit together. Councilor Reynolds states there are several items in this Core Theme for Economic Growth that lend itself to a good faith on the part of the town to work with business owners and neighborhoods, to incentivize a collaboration of a vision. The Councilor would like to see us create a more robust and proactive public/private partnership incentive program, with the word “incentive” really being emphasized. In this case, there are a number of needs that the town has that we cannot afford at the moment or maybe even into the future. He could list all kinds of challenges the town has right now from a financial and infrastructure standpoint, and it is overwhelming. Being a bit more creative and collaborative, with a clear and reasonable give and take that the community can get behind, might allow us to take advantage of assets that some of our private industries or businesses have that are in town.

Member Rubin refers to Item J, where we talk about establishing a technical assistance program to help retailers, she asks to add some examples and some types of programs that are typical for this. She also refers to Item L, which talks about outreach to commercial space owners to inquire about vacancies, she would like to expand that and ask commercial space owners what would help them, so that we can determine what role the town could have or what might be some incentives be to make the space better utilized.

Member Page refers to Item S and asks for an explanation of the meaning to “Eliminate all instances of split zoning to encourage redevelopment of existing underused parcels”. Mr. Halvorsen explains that, when they were looking at zoning and when they had the initial Economic Development Focus Group, there was a big focus on how zoning was potentially limiting the re-use or redevelopment of mostly the industrial properties in town. He gives an example of properties off a major roadway corridor a certain number of feet, you might have industrial and on the same parcel of land because of the depth of the parcel, it might then change to residential. So, what

you can do on the front portion is very different than what you can do on the back, which ends up creating use conflicts. Member Page states this is a subject that is very near and dear to her with some issues in town, and what she sees as a problem with that is she thinks special attention needs to be taken to protecting the residential zoning. She would like to see something added there that the buffer be enhanced. She mentions as they have talked about the vision statement, the big priority has been to protect our existing residential neighborhoods. She thinks we want to increase buffer zones, and that might be one area where we might want to do that. Member Page asks for clarification on the phrase “create neighborhood plans” under Item V. Mr. Halvorsen clarifies that those areas referenced are very unique and defined commercial centers. The team was thinking that the master plan would have higher level strategies or recommendations for these areas, but, given some of the things they have heard tonight and through the public process like where do we park, how do we enhance the streetscape, do we change the zoning to either incentivize or disincentivize, how do we fill vacant spaces or vacant storefronts, those kinds of more detailed plans for the squares would help the town and surrounding neighborhoods and residents get more into the details than what a master plan will get to.

Councilor Reynolds refers to the first point that Member Page raised and states that he would agree that there are opportunities to enhance and increase buffer zones between zone uses, but he thinks it is important that we clarify that this point is about a split zone for one lot. Councilor Reynolds refers to a situation on Front Street where there was one plot, it was a single-family home, half of the lot was commercial, and the other half was Residential B. Those lots create tough problems. Councilor Reynolds would support what Member Page said related to the buffer zone, but it is important to make the distinction that this split zoning has to do with an individual lot.

Member Huang refers to Item J and mentions that there are some areas where it is recommended to hire someone, she is not sure if funding is available. As a small business owner, she utilizes a lot of Small Business Administration funds and training programs. She would like to see how we could educate local small businesses to utilize these resources. Member Huang also asks for clarification on the term “retailers and other ground floor occupants”. She also suggests putting Item J under Item N as a subcategory. Lastly, Member Huang mentions that there is a lot of reference related to living where you work, for her and live/work balance, she doesn’t want to live next to her co-worker, so she doesn’t know how important that is for the Master Plan. Mr. Halverson clarifies that what they meant in Item O is, when they looked at the jobs in Braintree and compared it to the jobs that Braintree residents actually hold, there was a mismatch there. A lot of Braintree residents are headed out to other places because the jobs that they hold aren’t really available in Braintree in high percentages. Their idea was to create a better balance of jobs in the future so that not as many Braintree residents have to commute out. It makes their commute shorter, they save more money on commuting, and it makes their quality of life better. Mr. Herlich states it was focused more on creating commercial space that was a better fit for current Braintree residents.

Ms. Mesa-Zendt quickly reads the additions proposed by committee members for Core Theme 2’s Strategy Ideas to ensure nothing was missed, and Committee members clarify where necessary.

Ms. Goldson asks, to save time, could we skip the introductory presentation for the remaining Core Theme Strategy Ideas and just go to questions and comments? Chairwoman Wadland agrees.

### **Core Theme 3: Transportation – Questions and Comments:**

Ms. Goldson states that the next Core Theme is Transportation. Juliet Walker from Kittelson Associates is here to answer questions.

Member Herbst states under the “Planning, Policies and Zoning Strategies” section, should there be something similar to modernized use tables such as modernized parking requirements.

Member Cunningham asks what is “way finding”? Ms. Walker states that way-finding is basically a fancy way of describing the types of signage and other things that help you get around your community. It helps you find your way. Member Cunningham would like to add “partner with the MBTA to prioritize services to business locations from local train stations”. Also with respect to Item F, in addition to having bicycle parking, Member Cunningham thinks we need to address how you get from Point A to Point B on a bicycle in the Town of Braintree without getting killed, whether it is bike lanes or bike paths.

Member North likes the idea of working more closely with the MBTA for more consistent bussing or schedules. The only other comment she has is related to Item D “critical maintenance needs for sidewalks”, and she wonders if we can add something about the consistent look in the materials used. She notes that there are some new sidewalks in the Highlands area. One side of the street has a concrete curbing with asphalt, and the other side has just asphalt. She thinks a consistent look on both sides would be preferred.

Councilor Flaherty’s main comment is that she would like to see a robust presence of a focus on ADA improvements in Braintree. She notes that they have been working for some time with the Institute for Human Centered Design. They have been helping to develop a very comprehensive ADA transition plan. She notes in this portion of the document we are talking about transportation and not the interior of buildings. She thinks the place to put this could be under Item D, to add a subcategory letter “c” beneath D that suggests that we implement design changes to improve ADA accessibility on sidewalks, in crossings and in parking lots.

Member Gibbs has no questions or comments.

Chairwoman Wadland she agrees with the comments related to the MBTA, but she also thinks that is a failing system. She has noticed in different communities, like Burlington, they have private buses from their different office parks to the T Station. Chairwoman Wadland thinks it would be great to have a private/public partnership with transportation.

Councilor Reynolds states, related to Items S and U, design and implement a public/private partnership program to create on-demand bus and shuttle services between public transit centers and commercial/industrial business centers. Councilor Reynolds refers to the requirement for some Planning Board applicants to contribute to a fund for traffic mitigation. Director SantucciRozzi clarifies when projects aren’t large enough to rise to the level of their own individual impact and they have a whole mitigation plan associated with that, in order to capture those incremental increases, we do have a fund for traffic mitigation purposes. Councilor Reynolds states, in the spirit of that program, you evolve that into a public transportation on-demand shuttle type of service. Councilor Reynolds states that he and Councilor Flaherty are part of the South Shore Transportation Coalition working with MAPC and the communities on the South Shore. We are sharing various solutions of how communities provide shuttle services for seniors, on-demand shuttle services around town, how they have partnered with the state for creating alternative means of commuting, etc. At a local level, we have a great opportunity, and Councilor Reynolds agrees with Mr. Halvorsen that there are a lot of opportunities to be able to take advantage of the economics around us to create and enhance our quality of life by taking traffic off the road through public/private partnerships. Councilor Reynolds acknowledges that Member Cunningham made a good point, and the councilor notes that some private businesses run shuttle services, but it is specifically for their company.

Member Rubin doesn’t have anything to add or any questions at this time.

Member Page just has one item related to what Director SantucciRozzi was talking about. She thinks there needs to be overall management of the major intersections to be monitored and managed on a regular basis. When an intersection is a Level D or below, she thinks red flags need to go up and we need to start doing something, whether that be we need to redesign it or recalibrate it or be mindful of what type of development goes there. She thinks there needs to be standards set for the levels of service at these intersections and be monitored regularly.

Member Huang questions when there is a big development proposed and the development only does a traffic study that impacts their area of commute, but not a study that impacts the whole town. She also suggests doing a study of impacts for the whole year versus only 60% of the standard traffic practice. She asks what happens after the mall – like at the Five Corners location – as it is not required or being looked at. She also mentions that residents ask about holiday traffic, and that is not being looked at. She would like to add a statement saying any traffic studies need to look at the town as a whole and not one general area, as it impacts the other.

Juliet Walker from Kittelson Associates quickly reads the additions proposed by committee members for Core Theme 3's Strategy Ideas to ensure nothing was missed, and Committee members clarify where necessary.

#### **Core Theme 4: Housing – Questions and Comments:**

We are skipping the introductory presentation for this Core Theme's Strategy Ideas and just going to questions and comments from Committee Members.

Member Herbst asks for an explanation of Item P "Take advantage of the MBTA 3A district requirements....", and he asks if that is related to Transit Oriented Development. Ms. Goldson explains that they are really looking to describe housing that is near the trains. They are searching for ways to describe housing that is near train stations. They looked at transit accessible and transit supportive. Ms. Mesa-Zendt explains that "transit supportive" was a term that she was familiar with in her former employ working in Seattle, Washington. They did focus on not just providing housing, but also providing a mix of uses within a reasonable distance of the transit station to create a vibrancy all day long and create utilization of that investment. It introduces a mix of uses and is a little bit broader than just residential and talks about a mix of uses that creates 24/7 utilization of transit. Member Herbst asks why do we want to take advantage of that? Ms. Goldson explains that they were mostly looking at the vision that talks about housing near train stations and looking at how to support that housing. It was making it more neighborhood oriented rather than isolated.

Member Cunningham states that he lives within a five minutes' walk of 500 apartments. Some are in Braintree; some are in Weymouth, but they are very nearby. They happen to be near a train station, and they happen to be near two bus lines. The Town of Braintree and the Town of Weymouth incentivized local property owners, about 10+ years ago, to improve their properties. There are about five to six apartment buildings that have been built in The Landing in less than ten years, and there is still at least one big one underway. Member Cunningham is not against it, and he thinks he is probably the only person on the committee not against it. However, with some of this, there hasn't been any mitigation, and he is trying to figure out where to address mitigation. Should it be in the economic development section or in the housing section? He is leaning towards the housing section because that seems to be where the development is going to be taking place or forced upon the town depending on how things happen in the State of Massachusetts. Ms. Goldson asks for clarification on "mitigation". Member Cunningham is thinking about situations where a developer wants to propose 500 apartments and is making promises in the process about all the good things that might happen if those apartments get built. Everybody will agree that if you put up a big project wherever it's located, it's going to have an impact in the surrounding area. Member Cunningham is thinking about, when Gillette Stadium was built, the Town of Foxborough got a mitigation package that addressed what they thought would be traffic problems on Route 1, and a lot of changes occurred on Route 1 to address what probably would have been big traffic jams for all those events at Gillette Stadium. Member Cunningham hasn't heard that being discussed, but we know there will be impacts from a development, whether it's the one being discussed right now at South Shore Plaza or whether it's development that the state requires be done near the train stations. It's going to have an impact, and the developers are only going to do these projects if they can make money. If they know they can make money, why wouldn't we build some type of public policy within the Town of Braintree to seek mitigation for potential impacts for the town.

Some people think that the potential apartments that might go up at South Shore Plaza would have an impact on the school system. Member Cunningham discusses where other developments in other locations in town might impact the school system, and he thinks maybe we should try to package mitigation as part of that process. If it's a developer who is acting in good faith and wants to invest in the town, they should do something about the potential impacts. Member Cunningham discusses the impacts of traffic on major highways and how that may affect Braintree's economy. He wonders whether developers would have success in dealing with some of these impacts, but he doesn't expect one developer to pay for a redesign of the Braintree rotary for example. However, if a developer has some "juice" with the state that wants all these apartments to be built, maybe in the process we can request mitigation that will redesign some of these big problems we have in town.

Ms. Goldson asks Director SantucciRozzi to briefly describe what the town already does to negotiate particularly traffic mitigation. The Director advises that, as the person that is often tasked with coming up with mitigation plans and is often told that's too much, she thinks this town has done themselves a disadvantage by not pushing the mitigation envelope a lot further than they currently do. The Director is not the final call on that. She thinks trying to raise the bar or make that more transparent to developers when they come into town is a good idea. She knows some communities do basic formulas based on number of cars, and you create fees up front. The Director advises that it goes back to one of the comments she made in reference to the traffic fund. When somebody isn't at that level and making improvements, we try to ask them for some money. It is not perfected in a uniform way. The Director thinks that the town and all public officials need to understand that the only person we are hurting is ourselves. The Director refers to Burlington, where she worked previously, and explains that Burlington looks the way it does and functions the way it does because they are all about mitigation. The mitigation packages Burlington was getting 20 years ago, when she worked there, exceed the mitigation that Braintree is getting on projects here today. The Director is all about mitigation, and she thinks we are not pushing as much as we should. She thinks that it should be more perfected and uniform in the form of a policy so that it applies to everyone.

Member North refers to Item C where it refers to "work with Housing Authority and affordable housing developers", and she asks if that would be like a Habitat for Humanity? Ms. Goldson states it could be, and it depends on what the parcels are. This is an idea to have the town use its own funds, like CPA funds, to acquire private property that is vacant and underutilized. It is an expensive idea. You might work with Habitat for Humanity on a smaller property, but for a larger property or building, you might want a different scale developer. Member North refers to Item I regarding the MBTA zoning requirements, and she asks what date we have to comply with that by. Eric Halvorsen clarifies that Rapid Transit Communities are at the end of this year. Member North refers to Item W "review and track available workforce housing", and she asks what the percentages mean. Ms. Goldson explains that there are different levels of affordability, and when you are talking about affordable housing that counts towards your 10%, it is lower than this. It is 80% of the Area Median Income and less. This is talking about a higher income bracket, and in Massachusetts this range is a common definition of what workforce housing means. It is a higher income up to 120% of the Area Median Income. The Director clarifies that currently it goes up to about \$150,000.

Councilor Flaherty refers to Item D, "Explore opportunities to restore green space and/or otherwise seek to increase walkable access to outdoor recreation for the affected neighborhoods", and she is not clear on what the affected neighborhoods are. She asks if they mean the ones that don't have green space. Ms. Mesa-Zendt clarifies that it would be the neighborhoods that lack those opportunities. Councilor Flaherty asks for this item to be reworded to make it clearer and perhaps say: "for neighborhoods that lack green space or walkable access to outdoor recreation". Ms. Mesa-Zendt would consider that an improvement. Councilor Flaherty feels that Item H is very wordy, and she is trying to understand what it means. She asks if it means "assess ways to regulate accessory dwelling units better"? Ms. Goldson thinks it is dealing more with design, and she thinks they could separate this into two items so it's looking at public improvements, which should go in our capital improvements section, and then the second piece would be regulatory that would look at design of new construction and how accessory dwellings are dealt with.

Ms. Goldson states we could also give more examples because she thinks they are also talking about infill development like if there is another housing option built in an existing neighborhood to really look very carefully at design and how that fits in with the existing neighborhood context in terms of the massing, the architecture, the style, and the materials. Ms. Goldson clarifies that it is really looking at design and design guidelines or development standards that would apply to anything new. Councilor Flaherty thinks that is what it should say, and Ms. Goldson agrees. Councilor Flaherty assumes that the strikeouts show in Item K are going to be deleted. Councilor Flaherty refers to Item N and asks what is a public improvement special permit process? Ms. Goldson thinks this is getting at looking at some incentive zoning, but she thinks it's really talking about private development and not "town owned developments". It would be incentivizing different public improvements as part of a private development where you would provide greater density, for example, or other kinds of incentives. Director SantucciRozzi states one of the examples would be that we have similar language in the Braintree/Weymouth Landing District. Another example is the Riverwalk at 44 Allen Street, where we are working with the developer to deed back over about an acre of land, including that Riverwalk, to the town when they're done with the development. It's part of the development, but it is a public amenity that will be given back to the town as part of that. Ms. Mesa-Zendt states this item was added by one of their staff, and she does think that is exactly what it means. It means using incentives and relief to get public benefits. Councilor Flaherty states it is important to her that these strategies be described in a very clear and concise way so that residents can understand them when they read them, and she thinks that is an area that we can edit to be clearer. The Director clarifies that this is now contained in our zoning, and it provides for relief on several things including height, density, setbacks if the developer does certain things. Councilor Flaherty suggests we add an example for better understanding. The Councilor mentions that Item V talks about a neighborhood plan, which is referenced in a few places in the document, and she is not clear on what a neighborhood plan is. She thinks she has seen this related to traffic calming, but she asks what a good neighborhood plan looks like and what is the process used to get there? Ms. Mesa-Zendt states there was an example provided and explains that there may be communities that have strong concerns for neighborhood integrity or if there may be something special and different about each of the neighborhoods and there is concern about preserving that. Active citizens will engage in neighborhood planning, usually staff supports it, and there will be neighborhood committees where they essentially develop their own neighborhood plans, which they present to council. They make recommendations for improvements and address concerns that they have. Town council would work on these improvements or concerns with the staff member and those committee members. Ms. Mesa-Zendt advises that it is a "big lift", but she knows there is a lot of concern about neighborhood integrity, preserving neighborhoods, and improving neighborhoods. This is a way, at a very granular level, for the community to become empowered to articulate what the neighborhood needs are. Councilor Flaherty thinks residents would tremendously appreciate that.

Member Gibbs refers to Item G and asks if an example can be added here.

Chairwoman Wadland refers to Item A and asks to add "and increase buffer size between incompatible land uses or uses of different zones". Under Item C, she would like to add "that are compatibly scaled projects and provide additional buffers for incompatible land uses". She would also add: "neighborhoods that abut potential developments must be protected through increased neighborhood buffers, limited public access to established neighborhoods, and size and scale considerations that do not detract from an already established neighborhood".

Councilor Reynolds suggests "Enhance the municipal impact mitigation standards across all development applications before either the Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals". Councilor Reynolds thinks that the example cited by Director SantucciRozzi regarding Burlington was spot on, and he feels it doesn't hurt us to push the envelope on that.

Member Rubin refers to Item K, which is considered community supported refinement zoning, and she would like to expand the ending phrase to include "and location among other factors". Under Item O, she asks to spell

out ADU = Accessory Dwelling Unit. Member Rubin has an overall comment on the fact that there are several references to “study veterans housing and several other little pieces”. She suggests we say, “study housing” and list them all together. She is also wondering if this calls for a bigger housing study. She states that in the existing conditions we started by looking at the current stock and the residents. Maybe we need to take that to the next step in terms of demand and how do we work in all these other kinds of housing that we think we want to do. She suggests we look at it in a more holistic way.

Member Page refers to Item O and would like to have “by right in Residence A and B Districts” stricken from this statement because this is weakening the zoning in the residential neighborhoods by doing this. The Director provides a point of information that you can do an in-law in your house currently with a Building Permit. Member Page suggests that “detached” be deleted because this means that we could increase the density of Residence A and B neighborhoods by two or 50%, and Member Page states we are getting away from the information that we have from the residents about what they want the town to look like and the way they want to see their residential neighborhoods protected. Residents don’t want added density, so she would really like to see that stricken. Member Page explains that when we talked about small scale housing options, people were referring more to starter homes not to adding additional housing options onto existing housing lots. She thinks that needs to be modified. Ms. Goldson asks for clarification on wording, and Member Page explains she thinks we need to remove “detached units” and maybe encourage more small-scale housing options for development on undeveloped parcels rather than on already developed neighborhood lots. Ms. Goldson wants to offer two suggestions. First, she knows we are not making judgments on these today, so we can do edits for clarification, or we can add new ideas, and she suggests that we add one that talks about the infill idea that Member Page mentioned. “Look to encourage small scale housing options on existing vacant parcels. Member Page agrees, but she thinks when you have certain things that directly impact a residential neighborhood, as she believes this does, she thinks it needs to be removed. Ms. Goldson explains that this is what the pros and cons discussion will be all about. When you are looking for what to do with your short list, that is when we will start to remove stuff. Member Page states, just for the record, she doesn’t think that’s right. She thinks, when something is blatantly against what we have looked into, it shouldn’t be there in the first place. Member Page states the MBTA housing is something that the town is definitely going to have to examine, and that was in our Vision Statement to carefully consider. Member Page would like to add a list of questions to be added that the town should look into and have studies done to help them understand and make the right decisions when and if this type of policy is adopted. Member Page reads a list of questions. Ms. Goldson asks for clarification then explains that, although they didn’t make this very clear when they wrote this, but the town is required to comply regarding MBTA Communities by the end of this calendar year, and this Master Plan will basically be done around the same time. So, it’s not even going to be in the plan. You are going to decide that outside of this planning effort for the Master Plan. You are going to decide that in a whole other forum. Member Page asks, if that is the case, why did we include it in the Vision Statement. Ms. Goldson thinks it was a mistake to include it because it’s going to be decided one way or the other; however, she thinks we can still talk about development near transit, but we don’t have to cite the MBTA. Ms. Goldson states that a decision will be made on MBTA development by the time the committee finishes this plan.

Member Huang states she is looking at things from the environmental perspective, and she asks for an explanation on how a Dark Sky Ordinance, referenced under Item L, would apply to Braintree. Ms. Mesa-Zendt explains that essentially Dark Sky recommendations are to help reduce the impact of light pollution, and there are a host of regulatory options you can adopt that helps reduce the impacts of light in the night. The list includes: lighting zones for different land use types; different districts; minimum requirements in terms of offsite impacts of the lights; different types of light shields that make sure the light doesn’t escape anywhere beyond the property. There are a whole host of regulations that can be introduced for jurisdiction to reduce the impact of glare and mitigate the impact of light off the property. There is a Dark Sky organization that has recommendations, model ordinances and ideas that the town can consider. Member Huang refers to Item M where it mentions “multi-story development property to serve as noise shields”. Being in Berlin twice, she doesn’t know if that would apply to the Town of Braintree. She would like to change it, and instead of “multi-story development” it would be “a green wall and

tree coverage”. She mentions that, looking at Braintree, there is a lack of space to stick a multi-story building in between residence and highway. Member Huang asks, under Item Q, what is “employment districts”? Ms. Mesa-Zendt takes that to mean commercial or industrial areas where essentially people’s jobs are concentrated. Director SantucciRozzi would describe the full length of Granite Street as an employment district. You have Braintree Hill Office Park, Wood Road, South Shore Place, Forbes Road into Brooks Road, and all along Granite Street, as there is a lot of employment along that area from the Quincy line to the Randolph line. Ms. Goldson confirms that it is not related to a zoning district; it is related to what uses are there. Member Huang refers to Item X where it references “include a representative range of community members...”, and she asks if that means, when we are trying to change our zoning or regulations, public comments are important? Ms. Goldson states we didn’t clarify exactly how that would happen, and she thinks we can look at different models. She asks how are we doing development review now, and are there ways that you can include community members in a more direct way? It’s not maintaining the status quo; the idea is to work with community members when you’re looking at zoning changes and other things. The idea is to really include community members in a deeper way than is the norm in most communities. What the consulting team heard is that the town wants community members to be included in these decisions before it gets to a regular public comment process. Ms. Goldson states they can clarify that.

Chairwoman Wadland suggests they skip the summary and go on to Core Theme 5.

### **Core Theme 5: Capital Improvement Strategies – Questions and Comments:**

Member Herbst has a quick comment on Item N; he doesn’t understand why that is such an important item, and maybe it should be added as a bullet item to LL. He doesn’t remember that issue ever coming out of the survey. Eric Halvorsen clarifies that it shouldn’t say “BELD documents”; it is meant to use BELD as a resource to digitize town documents. This way all the departments and their documents are digitized, archived, and stored in a very consistent manner.

Member Cunningham mentions that for a while he thought that gentrification was taking place in Boston and forcing people from the city into the suburbs. He is wondering whether the consulting team has observed that Braintree is going through some form of gentrification that is consistent with what we have seen in big cities. Ms. Goldson states she doesn’t see that; she sees that the median income is lower than the area median income. She doesn’t see that Braintree is gentrifying. Braintree may be gaining residents who are displaced, but she doesn’t see that it is gentrifying. Member Cunningham was wondering because of all the concern with the impact of development on the town. Is it because people are going to be forced out of the town? He was just curious because it seems like there is so much fear for development in the town. He saw it in Boston where whole neighborhoods changed over the course of thirty years, where only rich people can afford to live there. He doesn’t see that happening in Braintree soon. For purposes of addressing capital improvement strategies, we can talk all we want, but unless we get more state and federal money, we don’t have capital improvement strategies. He thinks the strategies need to include aggressively seeking more state and federal money to address all the things that go on in the town. We haven’t built schools or updated public buildings, and we don’t have the money to do it. We cannot improve our infrastructure the way we would like to if some of the development that might take place in the town actually does take place. Member Cunningham states we haven’t figured out what to do with hazardous waste. For purposes of capital strategies, Member Cunningham thinks that should be something we take into consideration. Member Cunningham discusses the need to update the sewer system, especially to deal with development. Our water supply has been a question for a long time, and if we cannot deal with these major issues, Member Cunningham doesn’t think we can come up with strategies – other than to get more federal and state dollars. Developers will not pay for everything. Member Cunningham states if we are going to improve our capital situation, it’s going to require more work to get money from other sources than the residents of the town. Ms. Goldson confirms he wants to say, “more aggressive federal and state funding”. Member Cunningham thinks it should become the public policy of the town.

Ms. Goldson asks that, given the late hour and the long commute that some of the consulting team has, committee members provide clear direction about what they want changed or added.

Member North clarifies that we are still dreaming and not worried about where the money is coming from. Ms. Goldson confirms. Member North refers to Item E, **Identify the preferred pathway for addressing the space needs and deficiencies at Braintree High School**. She feels we need a new high school. Member North refers to Items FF, MM, and OO that address strategies related to the police department, and she wonders if they would be served better if they were grouped together. Member North discusses grouping items related to the same area together.

Councilor Flaherty refers to Item K, where it states “INI”, and she thinks it should be “I/I”, which means “infiltration and inflow”. Councilor Flaherty clarifies that we already have See-Click-Fix, as referenced under Item P. The consulting team will delete Item P. Councilor Flaherty refers to Item Z, thinks this strategy is very extensive, and she asks if the component about climate change should be pulled out and placed over in the section on Sustainability. The Councilor refers to Item GG, where it references “School Dude”, she notes that we have something called “Facilities Dude”, which is designed to help the Department of Public Works (DPW) track all the needs of the schools, particularly the ones that have been most newly constructed. Mr. Halvorsen states they can fix that. Councilor Flaherty states, while we are in the process of identifying funding, she has some things that we should be identifying funding for, such as: to restore school program cuts that were made during the pandemic; to restore program cuts that were made to the Municipal Licenses and Inspection Department; to improve IT solutions in our schools; and to improve our senior center to meet the needs of our seniors better. Mr. Halvorsen thinks that the senior center is already referenced. Councilor Flaherty would like to specifically call it out.

Member Gibbs doesn’t have any comments on this Core Theme.

Chairwoman Wadland would like to see the Senior Center improved; she thinks it is the best and most amazing thing we’ve got going in town, but it is in a bit of a dumpy location. She suggests looking at a new space. Chairwoman Wadland points out that one of the themes from the Vision Statement was “Ensuring town officials, including elected and appointed board members and committee members and town employees are results oriented, practice transparency, and respect community input.” So, Chairwoman Wadland would really like to see a community checkpoint, and she would like to add something that says, “a community checkpoint to gauge how the community is feeling about the transparency of the elected, appointed and town officials”. The Director thinks there was something in the strategies that stated this. (See Item L.) Chairwoman Wadland suggests adding committee members to this evaluation. The Director clarifies “appointed and elected leaders”.

Member Gibbs asks if there is a way to include reporting so that you can report on the performance of some of these initiatives and strategies. He asks if that is included. Ms. Goldson explains that at one of the earlier meetings this year we talked about metrics so that you can actually measure how well you’re performing against the goals and if the strategies you adopted work. That will be part of the plan in terms of recommendations for types of metrics to include. The team will also recommend that the town establishes an implementation committee for the Master Plan that is tracking, and they usually recommend that it is a transparent way with a running list on the website that provides the status of every strategy that gets into the plan, what is the status of your progress towards these metrics, and then have a regular reporting, probably to your Town Council.

Councilor Reynolds has one idea to add, and that would be to strengthen the town’s capability to increase Public Safety impact mitigation for East Braintree residents in the Fore River Basin Industrial Area.

Member Rubin doesn’t have anything to add, but she had a similar thought as Member North related to consolidating and grouping together things that had to do with budget and funding, either with a list or sub-

categories, as it would be easier to see how comprehensive it is. Ms. Goldson states they can look at the way they are organizing it. They may not do that for this round because they want to make sure to get the survey out. There are probably a dozen ways to organize this information, and she thinks we can talk about how to organize it once we come up with the short list.

Member Page agrees with everything that everybody has said, and she adds “thank you”.

Member Huang refers to Item N, where it discusses documentation, she would like to add “to improve communication to residents related to newer systems with multiple platforms”. She thinks that most of the town’s citizens do not know how to navigate the town’s platforms – for example: meeting minutes; media alerts. She mentions that we sometimes get a call; we sometimes get a letter. She is looking for more uniform communication to residents. Member Huang refers to Item O, “**Identify funding to continue programs to reduce language barriers....**” she suggests adding “and technology barrier for older adults”. She would also like to add “Identify fund to support multicultural enrichment”. Member Huang doesn’t see anywhere where we address Emergency Management. She acknowledges that the town has it, but from what she learned from the East Braintree events, it is not up to date. She would like to add an item that updates the emergency management process and system. There is no single platform to look up the procedure. Member Huang states, as a corporate employee we all have performance reviews and review our return on investment; she doesn’t know if there is such a thing for all town departments to have performance metrics to make them accountable. Member Huang would also like to add funding to continue support of special needs programs to ensure the town will continue to provide all inclusive program to residents that need it.

Director SantucciRozzi had a note related to Core Theme 1. She would like to propose to add for the town “to explore a private entity that is a friend’s group that can hold restrictions on open space in this town”. When we purchase open space with Community Preservation Funds, we have to put restrictions on it, and we have a very difficult time finding people to hold those restrictions. The town owns the land, so that town cannot actually hold the restriction. So, a lot of different communities, such as Lincoln and Concord, use a friend’s group. We need to look at something like that because we are going to be faced with the inability to properly hold these restrictions in the future. In looking at some of the initiatives that the committee would like to see, especially regarding purchasing things in residential neighborhoods, these groups are not interested in holding a restriction on 10,000 square feet to make sure there is some open space between a neighborhood and Washington Street. They are looking at large tracks of open space with much broader conservation purposes. The Director states, if it is okay with the committee, she would like to suggest we explore looking at a Friends of Braintree organization to hold open space restrictions. Member Huang thinks it could be added to the Charter Review. The Director explains it wouldn’t be town staff or a government function; it needs to be separate from government – that’s the whole requirement; it would be a private, non-profit organization.

Ms. Goldson states that committee members will see this survey by Wednesday, and the idea is just which are the most controversial or the most complicated that you really want the “deep dive” input from the Technical Working Sessions. Nothing will be taken off the table; it will just be information. Member Gibbs refers to the Workforce Development, which he believes highlighted life science, and he asks if other industries can be included.

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by Councilor Reynolds to adjourn the meeting; **SECONDED** by Member Gibbs; voted 8:0:0. The meeting adjourned at

Respectfully Submitted,  
Louise F. Quinlan, Office Manager, Planning and Community Development

## BRAINTREE MASTER PLAN STRATEGY WORKSHEET

**\*DRAFT\*** Strategies Prepared for Master Plan Steering Committee Review

Prepared by JM Goldson, Kittelson & Associates, and RKG Associates

***"Strategy is not the consequence of planning, but the opposite: it's starting point." - Dr. Henry Mintzberg OC OQ FRSC, Canadian Academic***

Our team generated a list of strategy ideas based on the Core Themes you wrote in collaboration with the Braintree community in Phase II.

The ideas found in this packet are not recommendations – rather, they are possibilities to consider. We encourage you to refine and develop strategies that you think will best advance the goals and vision and to include strategies that you want to test with the subject matter experts at the technical review sessions.

Following the technical working sessions we will collaboratively develop and finalize strategies for each Core Theme.

Strategy ideas are listed by core theme and separated into four categories: 1) Capital Improvements; 2) Local Initiatives & Programming; 3) Planning, Policies, and Zoning; and 4) Capacity, Education, & Coordination.

We have ***bolded and italicized*** the ten strategies within each theme we recommend be moved forward for deeper consideration at the technical working sessions.

### AHEAD OF OUR NEXT MEETING:

1. Please read through and familiarize yourself with these strategy notes and make note of any questions you might have.
2. Jot down any additional strategies you would like to recommend be discussed at the technical working sessions and submit those to the JM Goldson team in advance of the meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Be prepared to describe how your strategy relates to the adopted vision and goal statements.

## CORE THEME 1: CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION, & SUSTAINABILITY

### STRATEGY IDEAS

#### Capital Improvement Strategies

- A. Identify locations for land acquisition to increase conservation land area, particularly in East and North Braintree as outlined in the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- B. Invest in added amenities and recreation opportunities at existing open spaces such as Braintree Dam, Braintree Town Forest, and Sunset Lake.
- C. Acquire vacant or underutilized parcels and use placemaking and universal design principles to establish pocket parks across Braintree.
  - a. [National Recreation and Park Association Pocket-Parks Issue Brief](#)
- D. Consider installing solar canopies in municipal parking lots to extend BELD Community Solar capabilities.
  - a. Potential to explore public-private partnerships to install solar canopies at South Shore Plaza.
- E. Prioritize LEED certification or other green building certifications as funds are appropriated for new municipal facilities.
- F. Invest in Green Infrastructure Configurations such as bioretention and biofiltration systems, permeable pavement options, and stormwater medians to reduce flooding and remove pollutants from stormwater runoff in strategic locations around Braintree.
  - a. [Massachusetts Clean Water Toolkit Bioretention Areas & Rain Gardens](#)
  - b. [Stormwater Elements | National Association of City Transportation Officials](#)
- G. Explore municipal fleet conversion to electric and/or hybrid as existing vehicles come offline per Braintree's 2020 Energy Reduction Plan.
- H. Explore converting BELD into a cogeneration plant.
  - a. [What is cogeneration system and how does it work | Enel X.](#)
- I. Identify a location for a municipal dog park, ideally within East or North Braintree to complement the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan's goals.

#### Local Initiatives & Programmatic Strategies

- J. Work with the Braintree Historic Society to expand the existing walkBoston Historic Walking Route and Map to include visible trail markings as well as an online platform to host self-guided audio tours and additional information on historic resources.
  - a. [Methuen Magical History Tour \(nevinslibrary.org\)](#)
- K. Work with the Conservation Commission to identify locations and strategically plant native pollination gardens and micro-forests around Town.
  - a. [How to build a pollinator garden | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)
  - b. [Why 'tiny forests' are popping up in big cities](#)
- L. Consider a public-private partnership with a curbside composting service like BlackEarth Compost to offer an opt-in composting program in Braintree.
  - a. [Municipalities | Black Earth Compost](#)

- M. Facilitate an "Adopt an Island" program to boost community ownership of public spaces and increase carbon sequestration in high-traffic areas.
  - a. [Adopt An Island Program | South Hadley, MA - Official Website](#)
- N. Work with Braintree Community Arts Center to increase programming and identify locations and opportunities to increase public art in Town.
- O. Identify locations across Town to install community gardens, allowing residents to rent out plots to grow their own food.
  - a. [Community Gardens | Salem Community Gardens | United States](#)
- P. Explore hosting open street days in Braintree Square and South Braintree Square, or permanently closing the roads to traffic one day per week.
  - a. [Open Streets Project | The Movement For Open Streets](#)

#### Planning, Policies, & Zoning Strategies

- Q. Identify density considerations/relief for projects that propose green building standards or that provide other public benefits including civic space, pedestrian connections, plazas, open space etc. (This could be a tiered point system where points are accrued for particular standard relief).
  - a. [21.12.170 OV Incentive Program | Redmond Zoning Code](#)
- R. Consider amending the Demolition Delay Ordinance (Chapter 5.700) to extend the delay period from four months to 24 months and the enforcement of non-compliance period from eight months to 48 months.
- S. Consider adopting a zoning amendment to add a Historic Preservation Special Permit process to offer flexibility in use and/or dimensional requirements to incentivize the preservation of historic resources.
  - a. [City of Methuen Historic Preservation Special Permit Zoning Ordinance](#)
- T. Consider adopting a native plant ordinance to require new plantings on Town-owned land be composed of plant species native to the area to promote biodiversity and restore native habitat loss.
  - a. [Native Planting Ordinance Language | Somerville, MA](#)
- U. Conduct a Public Space Study to further the goals of the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan and to catalog and evaluate all open and public spaces on physical accessibility, walkable access to open space by neighborhood, and age-friendliness.
- V. Consider increasing the Community Preservation Act surcharge to fund the Town's open space, recreation, historic preservation, and community housing goals.
  - a. [CPA Communities by Surcharge Level](#)
- W. Conduct a Monaquot River Master Planning process to determine future use of shorelands for outdoor recreation and/or public gathering spaces.

#### Capacity, Education, & Coordination Strategies

- X. Consider expanding the Planning and Community Development Department to include a Sustainability Director and Historic Preservation Planner to advance the Town's environmental and historic preservation goals.

- Y. Establish a Solid Waste Advisory Committee to explore municipal programs for reducing solid waste.
  - a. [Solid Waste Advisory Committee | Brookline, MA - Official Website \(brooklinema.gov\)](#)
- Z. Create a landing page for the Braintree Local Cultural Council and better market grant application process to encourage additional arts and culture-based programming in Town.
  - a. [Lexington Council for the Arts - Home \(lexartscouncil.org\)](#)
- AA. Work with the Braintree Local Cultural Council (BLCC) to establish a list of local priorities for grant applications to further the Town's public art interests.
  - a. [Burlington - Mass Cultural Council](#)
- BB. Develop an Arts & Culture Brochure and landing page on the Town Website to increase awareness of community organizations.
  - a. [Culture Brochure \(slideshare.net\)](#)
- CC. Work with BELD to develop a marketing strategy to increase public awareness of their Community Solar, Braintree Drives Electric, and Braintree Re-Leaf programs.
- DD. Improve the catalog of all public & privately owned open spaces as established in the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan to create a more comprehensive inventory.
- EE. Work with Sustainable Braintree to update Braintree's Energy Reduction Plan which outlines actions through FY2023 and establish a reasonable net-zero goal.

## CORE THEME 2: ECONOMIC GROWTH

### STRATEGY IDEAS

#### Capital Improvement Strategies

- A. Relocate transfer station and partner with private sector to redevelop site.
- B. Invest in streetscape improvements and beautification that enhance East Braintree Square's/the Landing's role as a gateway to the city.

#### Local Initiatives & Programmatic Strategies

- C. Attract life sciences tenants through workforce development programs (Mass Life Science? Schools?), flexible lab and GMP zoning, and becoming a Platinum BioReady community (w/in 3 years).
- D. Target industrial users being priced out of Boston/Cambridge/Somerville.
- E. Proactively market city's resources to desired industry sectors: land inventory/site readiness, demog/employment pipeline, infrastructure, clarity of development/ business permitting processes.
- F. Track underutilized and/or vacant properties for ED opportunities.
- G. Create a tracking mechanism w/ business metrics to understand vacancies/turnover (look at Easthampton, MA strategy).
- H. Consider a "1% for the Arts" requirement for new development.
- I. Create an arts and culture plan, including a study of existing public and vacant commercial space.
- J. Establish a technical assistance program to help retailers and other ground floor occupants enhance their operations.
- K. Create square-specific identities via landscape, infrastructure, and branding - support creation of Main Streets orgs or BIDs?
- L. Conduct outreach to commercial space owners to understand why vacancies persist.
- M. Take advantage of Braintree Landing's harbor access to encourage Blue Economy businesses to locate there (outreach, zoning, infrastructure).

#### Planning, Policies, & Zoning Strategies

- N. Hire consultant to complete an Economic Development Strategic Plan (identify business targets and needs to attract, increase commercial tax base).
- O. Encourage the creation of spaces for the kinds of industries in which residents are currently employed to reduce the need for long commutes and diversify C/I base.
- P. Create small business supportive zoning, limiting the proliferation of formula retail.
- Q. Plan for transformation of South Shore Plaza site by establishing priorities for new/redevelopment - Healthcare? Bio incubator? (work with owner).
- R. Create a transportation demand management plan for commercial centers.
- S. Eliminate all instances of split zoning to encourage redevelopment of existing underused parcels.
- T. Focus on form and performance in zoning for districts where mixed-use is desired.
- U. Modernize use tables to address the needs of 21st century tenants.

- V. Create neighborhood plans for Braintree Square, South Braintree Square, Five Corners, & East Braintree/the Landing.
- W. Conduct a study to understand Braintree's ability to attract new commercial and industrial development with attention to workforce housing needs.
- X. Develop a current parking inventory to identify underutilized and overutilized parking areas.
- Y. Develop a parking management plan with specific strategies, potentially including:
  - a. Establish designated parking for employees of area businesses.
  - b. Adopt a bylaw for shared parking agreements with private lot operators
  - c. Install attractive and helpful wayfinding, including directions to underutilized public parking options
  - d. Enforce parking and curb regulations to incentivize compliance.
  - e. Offer an employee permit for employees of businesses in the area that do not have off-street parking.
  - f. Provide safe pedestrian facilities so that people feel more comfortable walking in the area and/or parking further from their destination.
  - g. Provide safe bicycle facilities and bicycle parking to incentivize customers to travel by bike rather than car.

#### Capacity, Education, & Coordination Strategies

- Z. Hire a dedicated economic development staff member.
- AA. Create a robust design review process for districts across the city to enhance quality of development in village centers.

## CORE THEME 3: TRANSPORTATION

### STRATEGY IDEAS

#### Capital Improvement Strategies

- A. Implement community-wide wayfinding to direct traffic to key destinations without routing through residential neighborhoods.
- B. Develop criteria for prioritizing capital investments for bicycle and pedestrian facilities including safe routes to school and first/last mile connections to transit stops.
- C. Implement design changes to residential streets to discourage cut-through traffic such as turn restrictions, diverter islands, partial closures.
- D. Expand and reinvigorate the “100-roads” program to include annual street and sidewalk maintenance with targeted funding to restore town-maintained streets and sidewalks with the most critical maintenance needs (e.g., “fair” pavement conditions).
  - a. To understand critical maintenance needs for sidewalks, develop and maintain a record of sidewalk condition data, similar to the Town’s existing record of pavement condition data.
  - b. For MassDOT-owned streets, track when these streets are slated for repaving, restriping, and restoration or reconstruction projects, and collaborate with MassDOT to achieve the Town’s desired street upgrades.
  - c. Example: [Fairfax, VA Paving and Restriping Program](#)
- E. Complete evaluation of town-owned signals to identify maintenance needs and required upgrades, and create an annual signal maintenance plan with targeted funding to upgrade traffic signals with the most critical needs (e.g., missing Accessible Pedestrian Signals).
  - a. Create opportunity in the development review process for developers to make improvements to nearby signals based on the signal maintenance plan.
- F. Add or expand existing bicycle parking at all municipal buildings in Braintree.
  - a. Consider creating a bicycle parking program where local businesses and community groups can submit a request for a Town-funded and installed bike rack. (Example: [Town of Arlington, MA](#))

#### Local Initiatives & Programmatic Strategies

- G. Undertake traffic study to analyze cut-through traffic patterns on residential streets and identify appropriate mitigation strategies.
  - a. Example: [Concord MA Cut-Through Traffic Study](#)
- H. Develop traffic calming toolkit that identifies traffic calming measures to implement based on street type and context.
  - b. Examples: [Burlington VT Traffic Calming Manual](#), [NACTO Street Design Guide](#), [Boston Street Safety Toolkit](#)
- I. Create a local Traffic Enforcement Division in the Police Department and allocate budget for programs that support education about and compliance with traffic regulations.
- J. Improve accuracy and completeness of local reporting of roadway crash investigations to help identify causes and inform safety countermeasures required.
- K. See MassDOT [Statewide Highway Safety Plan](#) for further explanation and funding goals.

- L. Develop a quick-build program to investigate and address safety issues identified through the Town's [SeeClickFix dashboard](#).
- M. Incorporate community feedback on traffic issues identified through the Town's [SeeClickFix dashboard](#) into annual signal maintenance plan (see Capital Improvement Strategies).

Planning, Policies, & Zoning Strategies

- N. Develop a list of approved Transportation Demand Management strategies for consideration during development approval process as well as to guide town-wide projects and initiatives.
  - a. Examples: [City of Everett, MA](#); [City of Austin, TX](#)
- O. Designate truck routes to reduce truck traffic through residential neighborhoods.
- P. Implement regulations to discourage cut-through traffic such as closing roads to local traffic only and changing direction of travel to one-way only.
- Q. Revise sidewalk clearing policy in Town Code to require snow removal on all sidewalks that are adjacent to public streets.
  - a. Keeping sidewalks clear of snow gives pedestrians, especially school children, a safe place to walk, keeping them out of the street following a snowfall.
  - b. Examples: [Loudoun County, VA](#); [Boston, MA](#)
- R. Establish a working group to review and select best practice Measures of Effectiveness for use in Town transportation planning (e.g., intersection and corridor study projects) and land development review (e.g., transportation impact assessments) processes. These additional measures can expand on motor vehicle peak hour level of service and queuing to include safety-related metrics for people traveling by all modes, and metrics that consider all-day operations for motor vehicles.
  - a. Example: [City of Cambridge, MA](#)
- S. Revise Town development review process to include a financial set-aside (e.g., escrow) for post-implementation evaluation of multimodal traffic counts and annual employee or resident surveys to determine accuracy of mode share estimates for development.
  - a. Example: [Cambridge, MA Parking and Transportation Demand Management Ordinance](#)
- T. Develop Safety Action Plan to support a Safe System Approach to capital investments and position the Town for federal grant funding through grant programs such as [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#).
  - a. Example: [Everett, MA Safety Action Plan](#)
- U. Complete a feasibility study for expanding / modifying existing on-demand bus service.
- V. Develop a Safe Routes to School Action Plan to expand on and support Town Schools that are [SRTS Partners](#), and increase awareness and learning opportunities for children and motorists alike.
- W. Complete a Town-wide feasibility study to investigate reducing speed limits and speeding (expand on the Town's use of [25 mph statutory speed limits](#) in thickly settled areas and business districts)

- a. Guidance for setting default speed limits, designating slow zones, and setting corridor speed limits: [NACTO City Limits](#)
- X. Update the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and develop a supporting implementation plan. (Example: [Springfield, MA Complete Streets Plan](#))

## CORE THEME 4: HOUSING

### STRATEGY IDEAS

#### Capital Improvement Strategies

- A. Explore the acquisition of wooded areas in residential neighborhoods to preserve buffers from incompatible uses.
- B. Invest in streetscape projects that improve walkability from neighborhoods to commercial centers, specifically sidewalks, crosswalks, and street trees.
- C. Seek opportunities to acquire underdeveloped or vacant parcels for the purpose of affordable/ workforce housing. Work with Housing Authority and affordable housing developers.
  - a. [Developing Affordable Housing on Public Land: A Guide for Massachusetts Communities](#)
  - b. [Issue a RFP & Choose a Developer - Housing Toolbox](#)
  - c. [Private Housing Development Partners Contact Listing | Mass.gov](#)

#### Local Initiatives & Programmatic Strategies

- D. Explore opportunities to restore green space and/or otherwise seek to increase walkable access to outdoor recreation for the affected neighborhoods.
- E. Track affordable units that might be coming to the end of their affordability period and work with Housing Authority and local non-profit housing developers to identify strategies/funding sources to preserve affordable units including community preservation funds, CDBG funding, federal HOME funds, and consider inclusionary fee-in-lieu options.
  - a. [About Local Housing Solutions](#)
  - b. [Inclusionary Housing Payment-in-lieu Option](#)
- F. Identify opportunities to support housing specifically for Veterans in Braintree.
  - a. [Veterans Build | Habitat for Humanity](#)
- G. Implement strategies for work-force housing production. (See above Economic Development study strategy idea in Core Theme 2)
- H. Create customized neighborhood plans that identify neighborhood public improvements and inform regulatory amendments related to design and development standards for new construction including accessory dwelling units, with the goal of maintaining integrity of the neighborhoods.

#### Planning, Policies, and Zoning Strategies

- I. Refine Ivory St Corridor plan to align with Town's goals to comply with MBTA zoning requirements
- J. Update the neighborhood/ corridor plan for Ivory St/Grossman Dr and rezone the area to facilitate its redevelopment
- K. ~~Remove zoning and permitting barriers to infill development – residential and mixed-use zoning~~ Consider community supported refinements to the Zoning Bylaw to promote residential and mixed-use zoning - ~~in particular should~~ refinements should recognize reality of parcel sizes and site access
- L. Consider a zoning amendment to add a Dark Sky Ordinance to minimize the impacts of light pollution in Town.
  - a. [MA Towns with Outdoor-Lighting Ordinances – IDA Massachusetts Chapter](#)
- M. Explore ways to reduce noise pollution in Braintree including enforcement of Article XI of the Zoning Ordinance, orienting multi-story development properly to serve as noise shields, and engaging in a robust tree planting program.
  - a. [Quieter Cities for the Future | CAETS Noise Control Technology Committee](#)
- N. Consider a zoning amendment to adopt a Public Improvement Special Permit process to offer flexibility in use and/or dimensional requirements for Town owned developments that create public gathering spaces for the Braintree community at-large.
- O. Encourage more small-scale housing options and create opportunities for multi-generational housing by allowing attached and detached accessory dwelling units by right in Residence A and B Districts subject to design and development standards. (Notes: owner occupied requirement; max ADU façade facing the street; ADU must present as a single family, on-site parking etc.)
  - a. [ZONING ORDINANCE - Section 10.814](#))
- P. Take advantage of the MBTA 3A district requirements to encourage transit-accessible housing/ transit-supportive development that provides a mix of retail services, jobs, housing, and other uses.
  - a. [Benefits of Transit-Supportive Development | FTA](#)
- Q. Encourage development of new housing within walking distance of new commercial and industrial uses and/or employment districts.
- R. Amend the Zoning Bylaw to increase buffering requirements for uses not compatible with residential uses.
- S. Identify and consider amendments to the Zoning Bylaw that facilitate continuing care retirement communities and senior assisted living developments.

#### Capacity, Education, & Coordination Strategies

- T. Collaborate with MassDOT to increase participation in MassDOT's [Type II Noise Abatement Program](#) to support implementation of sound barriers in residential neighborhoods near highways.
- U. Advocate for sound barriers along state and federal roads to reduce noise impacts on Braintree residents. Consider sound barriers as potential locations for public art.
  - a. [Walls of Fame | FHWA](#)

- V. Identify neighborhood planning areas and identify a short- and long-range schedule for neighborhood planning initiatives supported by staff and neighborhood resident committees. Neighborhood plans should address neighborhood issues and concerns and include recommendations for public improvements.
  - a. [Bouldin Creek - Neighborhood Plan](#)
- W. Review and track available workforce housing ( $\geq$  80% AMI to 120%AMI)
  - a. [Consolidated Planning/CHAS Data | HUD USER](#)
- X. When developing housing regulations, policies, or programs, include a representative range of community members particularly those most impacted by the decision-making process.
  - a. [Equity in Housing Policy](#)

## CORE THEME 5:

### Capital Improvement Strategies

- A. Conduct facility needs assessments for all applicable town-owned buildings to identify all capital needs including ADA, deferred maintenance, and a prioritized schedule for improvements.
- B. Complete a space needs study to identify ways to accommodate more flexible event/program space and remove visual barriers for safety of all patrons.
- C. Continue to expand foreign language materials to meet the demands of the town's residents.
- D. Following a decision on elementary school consolidation, begin applying for funding to renovate, expand, or build new elementary schools.
- E. Identify the preferred pathway for addressing the space needs and deficiencies at Braintree High School.
- F. Continue to ensure all system replacements and upgrades are considering future electric demands as more homes, businesses, and vehicle fleets move toward electrification.
- G. Conduct a space needs analysis for Elder Affairs to identify ways to expand program space, larger kitchen, equipment storage, etc.
- H. Conduct a feasibility study to locate and construct a new police station.
- I. Fund the construction of a new consolidated DPW facility as envisioned by the feasibility study developed for the department.
- J. Implement a fleet management /replacement plan for vehicles as part of the CIP/annual budget process.
- K. Continue to address INI issues across the sewer system with particular attention to addressing issues in East Braintree.

### Local Initiatives & Programmatic Strategies

- L. Conduct an annual community satisfaction survey to gauge resident satisfaction with public facilities, services, and the responsiveness and accountability of staff and elected leaders.
- M. Survey library patrons and town residents to ensure programming and media match the wants and needs of the changing demographics.
- N. Create a plan to digitize and archive all BELD documents to ensure consistency in methods, storage, and security.
- O. Identify funding to continue programs that reduce language barriers for older adults where English is not their primary language.
- P. Explore platforms like See-Click-Fix for resident reporting of public work's needs.

### Planning, Policies, and Zoning Strategies

- Y. Study the fiscal impact of the removal of the transfer station and what revenue would need to be replaced on an annual basis.
- Z. Adopt new local policy to consider 10-year projections for new growth potential, changes in population and employment, and the impacts of climate change for all public facilities and schools.

- AA. Create a Master Plan Implementation Committee responsible for assisting with and tracking the implementation of the town's master plan. The Committee can also assist with implementation by liaising with town boards and commissions to ensure commitments to implementing the plan alongside their annual strategic and work plan activities.
- BB. Evaluate the impacts of consolidating neighborhood schools on budgets, capacity, facilities, and educational outcomes.
- CC. BELD staff and town staff should work together to develop a cooperative agreement for implementing technology protocols, coordinated software, security, and systems.
- DD. Designate Braintree as an age-friendly and dementia friendly community.
- EE. Conduct a water capital study to identify issues across the entire water delivery system. Identify dedicated annual funding to address issues such as lead pipe connections across the town.
- FF. Continue to evaluate the impact of new development on the ability of police and fire services to effectively respond to incidents.

#### Capacity, Education, & Coordination Strategies

- GG. As facility assessments are completed, utilize a tool such as School Dude to prioritize and budget for facility projects annually and through a multi-year CIP process.
- HH. Implement hiring practices for school and town staff that encourage a more diverse set of applicants to more closely reflect school and Town demographics.
- II. Consider hiring a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator to assist with workforce diversity, language access, and cultural competency programs.
- JJ. Evaluate salaries and benefits for staff positions across different departments to ensure competitiveness with similar sized and resourced communities in Massachusetts.
- KK. Ensure staffing is adequate to return the library to full operating hours including during the summer.
- LL. Work with the town to create a staff position that serves as a liaison between BELD IT staff and town departments to ensure continuity in protocols, software, and technology rollouts.
- MM. Identify funding to expand police department staff including full-time officers and school resource officers.
- NN. Evaluate the budget implications of reinstating a traffic unit within the police department.
- OO. Identify funding opportunities to continue the mental health clinician co-responder model with the police department.
- PP. Ensure adequate staffing, facilities, and transportation services as Braintree's older adult population increases over time.