

## CORE SERVICE: PROTECTION OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY

Protection of Persons and Property includes policies, programs and services related to public security, policing, and firefighting, provision of Emergency Medical Services, related regulation, and safe work environments. Progress toward achieving the goal of a safe place to live, work and raise families contributes to our citizens' quality of life.

### Acton will be a safe place to live, work and raise families

#### What it means

Citizens expect neighborhoods in which they can live and raise families in safety and security without fear of personal or property crime, victimization or discrimination. Effective protection of people and property from fire and harmful environmental events, and from natural, industrial, accidental and terrorist hazards is also an important part of this goal. Citizens rely on the Town to ensure buildings and systems are constructed and maintained to safe standards and workplaces that are healthy, fair, safe, and stable for employees and employers. Citizens also value effective education, enforcement and technology programs to increase safety on the community's roads.

#### Strategic focus

##### Improve Acton's Quality of Life

- **Inclusive Communities** – Foster equality, reduce discrimination and barriers to full participation in society; and help build welcoming and inclusive neighborhoods. This focus will be furthered by promoting more inclusive workplaces and emphasizing the inclusion and integration of new cultural and racial groups.

##### Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods

- **Reducing Crime and Supporting Safe Communities**– Meet with citizens and make recommendations on reducing crime, enhancing safety in our neighborhoods and improving public confidence in the Public Safety System.
- **Implement an Integrated Crime Reduction Strategy** – Work with partners and stakeholders to implement an integrated crime reduction strategy to achieve a future in which citizens will experience less crime, feel less fearful of crime and make their neighborhoods safer places to live and work.
- **Implement a traffic safety plan to reduce the number of accidents on Acton's roads** – Address the traffic safety issues related to altering driver habits and reducing collisions. Strategies will address community traffic safety; increase public education and awareness; promote research and evidence based decisions; sustain enforcement; and introduce engineering and infrastructure improvements.
- **Family Violence** – Improve family safety and improve access to family services when families become at-risk, through the establishment of an initiative to support the prevention of and effective intervention in family violence.
- **Work with Federal and State Governments on Changes to Criminal Statutes** – Partner with the local, state and federal governments to support efforts to implement effective programs and deterrents to crime.
- **Accelerate the Implementation of the Emergency Preparedness Initiative** – Enhance the Town's emergency management system through an increased focus on consolidated risk management leading to better prevention and mitigation strategies. Working with all stakeholders, cross-government coordination and strategic planning will focus on precluding emergency events from taking place, or minimizing the consequences to reduce response and recovery costs.
- **Ensure Information is Protected** – Promote a government-wide strategy to ensure information is protected and increase the privacy and security of personal and other information entrusted to government, within the confines of the Public Records Law.

- **Establish an Integrated and Coordinated Services Network** – Ensure effective coordination of federal, state and municipal enforcement and public safety agencies through the implementation of initiatives such as an integrated information and communications technology strategy.
- **Plan for the Future of Public Safety** – Ensure the continued efficient delivery of public safety, enabling a response to rapidly changing demographic patterns, and changing offender profiles. Help to ensure that Acton's Public Safety Services respond to current and anticipated legislated requirements and reflect best practice standards.

#### **Budget Proposal Highlights**

- **Construction of the North Acton Fire Station**
- **Addition of a Deputy Police Chief and the addition of one Police Officer**
- **Hayward Road and Main Street intersection improvements**
- **Crosswalk improvements**
- **Existing fire stations Renovation Needs Study**
- **Fire Apparatus – Replace the ladder truck, replace one pumper and add a second ambulance**
- **Develop a Family Violence Prevention and Anti-Bullying Initiative**
- **Continuation of the Safe Child Car Seat Initiative**
- **Continuation of Community Policing, Fire and EMS efforts**
- **MDT and GPS Units for Fire Apparatus**
- **Placement of Automatic Heart Defibrillator Devices in each Police Cruiser**
- **Food safety inspections**
- **Childcare facility inspections**
- **Building Code enforcement**
- **Hazardous Material Storage & Spill Response Initiatives**

## CORE SERVICE: HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

Human Services includes policies, programs, and social infrastructure services for people in need including preventive health programming, home health care, and the support for seniors and their caretakers. This area also includes tax relief for those less fortunate in our community, senior citizen services, income support for at-risk veterans, and community-based supports for persons with disabilities and victims of crime. Assistance is provided to individuals and families to be safe, healthy, resilient, and self-reliant by overcoming at-risk circumstances.

Housing includes housing of seniors, individuals, and families with low and moderate incomes and those with special needs. Progress toward achieving the goal of supporting independent living in quality housing contributes to the community's overall quality of life

### All citizens will be guaranteed the opportunity to remain independent and our children will be well cared for

#### What it means

Families are the foundation to nurture the development of children and youth. Ensuring that children and youth are physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually healthy and safe will reduce future strains on the social infrastructure. Although parents have primary responsibility in raising their children, communities, organizations, schools, churches, businesses and governments all have supporting roles to play in helping to ensure that our youth reach their maximum potential and contribute fully to society.

Similarly, families, community organizations, and governments all have roles in ensuring citizens who are facing challenges such as disabilities, lower incomes, and other special needs have the supports they need to fully participate in society. Facilitating the participation of all citizens leads to a stronger and more inclusive society for everyone. These supports, along with human resource development, help citizens to be as independent as possible. We also have a responsibility to provide support and protection to vulnerable citizens, individuals unable to protect their financial interests and individuals who are victims of crime, all of which are essential to building a stronger Acton.

Acton, like the rest of country, is aging. The rising number of seniors is contributing to a diverse population of individuals with a wide range of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Strategies and supports aimed at facilitating seniors' continued participation in our community will benefit all.

Diversity in housing builds a stronger and more vibrant community.

#### Strategic focus

##### Manage Growth Pressures

- **Develop a plan to increase the availability of affordable housing** – Support the recommendations of the “To Live in Acton” Study and the efforts of the Acton Community Housing Corporation in developing an updated action plan, including specific implementation recommendations.

##### Improve Acton’s Quality of Life

- **Improve supports and services for persons with disabilities through better coordination and integration of programs** – Work with individuals and their families, community organizations, and other levels of government to align and coordinate programs and policies for persons with disabilities. Continue to create awareness of barriers and to identify strategies that enable all seniors and persons with disabilities to participate in all aspects of society.
- **Work with the Council on Aging to provide analysis and proposals to prepare for the needs of an aging population and ensure facilities and supports are available to seniors.** - A Senior Center Expansion Committee has been established to support the town’s

efforts in planning and preparing for an aging population. As part of this strategic priority, the Town will improve its capacity to identify and forecast the needs of future seniors. This will contribute to the Town's ability to develop strategies that encourage future seniors to plan for self-reliance and independence.

### **Build a Stronger Acton**

- **Improve collaborative partnerships and community programs** – Continue to build collaborative partnerships on initiatives to review and improve the social infrastructure and engage in collaborative decision-making as it relates to providing better outcomes for children, individuals and families.

### **Budget Proposal Highlights**

- **Continued support for Visiting Nursing**
- **Senior Center Expansion Study**
- **Senior and Disabled Citizen Tax Relief**
- **Addition of a full-time Social Worker**
- **At-Risk Veterans' income support**
- **Continued support of ACHC**

## CORE SERVICE: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Planning and Development includes policies, programs and services related to community and regional development including planning and zoning.

### Acton will have strong and effective neighborhoods and village centers

#### What it means

Community and regional development, including public building projects, beautification projects and neighborhood protection programs are key to sustainability and the quality of life for our citizens. Through strengthening relationships, The Town is committed to increasing the participation of all citizens in the social fabric and economic life of Acton. Increased participation will result in improved quality of life and contribute to the community's long-term vision of Acton as a place where our citizens' property rights and values are protected.

#### Strategic focus

##### Manage Growth Pressures

- **Consult with abutting communities on regional planning issues and dispute resolution mechanisms** – Consult with neighboring communities, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, municipal associations and other stakeholders to develop guidelines for resolving regional planning issues. Build on the success of current regional efforts such as MAGIC and the ARC of Innovation, and develop other initiatives as required, to promote cooperation and help resolve growth-related conflicts between neighboring municipalities.
- **Address Growth and Capacity Issues** – Evaluate the impact of growth on neighborhoods, including infrastructure, land use, services, and revenue needs in order to help affected neighborhoods address capacity issues and improve the coordination of the responses to growth-related challenges. New pro-active programs will be incorporated into a neighborhood preservation system to provide growing areas with the tools they need to incorporate growth risk assessment into their planning.

##### Build a Stronger Acton

- **Establishing Recommendations and New Long-term Sustainable Initiatives** – Work with the neighborhoods to address sustainability issues associated with the quality of life of their residents.

##### Specific Budget Proposals

- **Development of a Comprehensive Community Plan**
- **Addition of an Assistant Planner/Zoning Enforcement Officer**

## CORE SERVICE: LIBRARY SERVICES, RECREATION AND CULTURE

Library Services, Recreation and Culture includes policies, programs and services related to recreation, sport, culture, historical artifacts and sites, libraries, and playgrounds. Progress toward achieving the goal of creating opportunities for all citizens to recreate and enjoy the Town's natural, historical and cultural resources also contributes to the overall quality of life.

### Citizens desire the opportunity to find refuge from the pressures of today's fast pace society by recreating and enjoying the Town's natural, historical and cultural resources

#### What it means

Participation in community and cultural activities and enjoyment of the Town's historical resources and playgrounds are essential to our citizens' high quality of life. Supporting the non-profit/ voluntary sector, libraries, sport and recreation programs, the arts, and heritage programs fosters a culturally vibrant community, enhances the quality of life for all citizens and attracts the creative highly skilled citizens Acton needs to ensure its continued economic prosperity. The preservation of Acton's natural heritage and historical resources is realized through a network of protected lands, opportunities for outdoor recreation, and heritage appreciation programs.

#### Strategic focus

#### Improve Citizens' Quality of Life

- **Building a Culturally Vibrant Community** – Lead the development of a policy encompassing Acton's cultural, historical and natural heritage. This will be furthered by working with the Recreation Committee, Acton Historical Society and the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council to realize the importance of culture in shaping public policy and program development. Community resources will be strengthened with an emphasis on sport, recreation and the arts.
- **Infrastructure Renewal** – Implement the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Create additional and improved recreation areas to accommodate user growth. Repair or replace aging and deteriorating playgrounds and facilities.

**Libraries** – Are more than public warehouses of books and materials. They represent community centers that provide safe environments for children, facilitate integration of new ethnic and racial groups into our community, expand our understanding of local, national and world events, display historical and cultural exhibits, facilitate life-long learning and provide meeting space for community groups.

#### Budget Proposal Highlights

- **Continued support for Memorial Library operations**
- **Continued support for West Acton Citizen Library operations and renovation of its exterior**
- **Continued support for Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council**
- **Establishment of a Sister City program**
- **Renovations at Elm Street playground**
- **Trail Through Time's Historical Preservation Project**
- **NARA Improvements**

## CORE SERVICE: MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

### Provide safe and efficient infrastructure and facilities

#### What it means

The Town is responsible for managing the preservation and ongoing maintenance of municipal infrastructure, including roadways, sidewalks, bike trails and facilities. The Town plays a key role in ensuring the health and safety needs of occupants and visitors at Town facilities are met, including barrier-free access, emergency and safety plans and adhering to leading environmental practices. The Town monitors the energy efficiency and operating costs of Town facilities to identify cost-effective solutions and consider environmental implications when planning and developing infrastructure improvements. The Town continues to monitor and evaluate the condition of Town facilities and transportation systems to identify preservation and replacement needs.

#### Strategic focus

#### **Improve Acton's Quality of Life**

Continue to manage construction and rehabilitation programs in a financially and environmentally sound manner.

Work with partners and stakeholders in developing strategies to improve access for seniors and persons with disabilities, including transportation facilities and buildings and ensure barrier-free access in all planned infrastructure construction projects.

Ensure accessibility needs for persons with disabilities continue to be fully considered in building design standards, policies, programs and projects.

#### **Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods**

Continue to identify and implement leading practices to operate the Fort Pond Brook Treatment facility in a safe and efficient manner.

Implement approaches identified to minimize deterioration of roadways, to reduce the amount of major maintenance required, such as new rehabilitation materials and methods, enforcement of road restrictions and bans, and revised load weights and dimension regulations.

Continue to focus on non-motor vehicle transportation systems to link neighborhoods, such as sidewalks and bike paths.

Apply environmental management and remediation initiatives to address identified concerns at municipal facilities.

Continue with implementation of physical building and site security for municipal facilities, which will initially focus on the higher risk facilities by installing new or replacing and expanding obsolete security systems.

#### **Budget Proposal Highlights**

- **Continuation of the sidewalk construction efforts**
- **Sewer system expansion**
- **Bridge repair**
- **Replace one Bobcat**
- **Repave approximately 1.6 miles of roadways and the Transfer Station's driveway.**
- **Upgrade the treatment plant's lab and remote facility notification system**
- **Upgrade sidewalk snow and ice removal efforts**
- **Replace the roadway snow blower**
- **Implement a streetlight conversion program**
- **Complete phase 2 of the Community Shuttle Study**
- **Complete a reuse study of 17 Woodbury Lane**

## CORE SERVICE: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Environment includes policies, programs and services related to sustainable environmental management, ensuring safe and adequate supplies of water, actions taken on climate change and protection of the land.

### The high quality of Acton's environment will be sustained

#### What it means

Our citizens enjoy many benefits from the environment. Clean air, water and land are fundamental to our health, economy, and quality of life. Citizens rely on Town Government and its partners to ensure a safe and sustainable water supply, manage air quality changes, adapt to climate change, conserve biological diversity, and manage natural resource development in a sustainable way. Citizens require our environment to be managed and protected as a legacy for future generations.

#### Strategic focus

##### Manage Growth Pressures

- **Climate Change Plan** – Develop an updated action plan to outline how the Town will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate.
- **Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management** – Develop integrated sustainable resource and environmental management policies and regulatory processes; improve coordination and integration of inter-departmental operations.
- **New Environment and Resource Management Regulatory Framework** – Develop a regulatory framework to collaboratively define and implement environmental outcomes that address the regional cumulative impact of multiple developments on air, water, land and biodiversity. Develop and implement a comprehensive framework that integrates environmental management into strategic decision-making, priority setting and operational and policy responses.
- **Water Table Protection** – With our partners, continue to drive the vision and implementation, while working with the Acton Water District, to identify adjustments to short-, medium- and long-term strategies. Protection will particularly focus on building capacity with our partners, addressing the increasing pressures on groundwater as a result of resource development and urbanization. Implement groundwater protection and management across the Town in identified areas and sectors requiring enhanced groundwater management.
- **Biodiversity Strategy** – Develop a Biodiversity Strategy to conserve biological diversity and enable sound management of Acton's natural resources on a sustainable basis.

##### Budget Proposal Highlights

- **Engage an Energy Services Company to review energy systems in all municipal buildings and to pay for all necessary improvements in exchange for energy cost savings (ESCO)**
- **Purchase Renewable Energy Certificates to offset Greenhouse Gas emissions**
- **Hire a Director of Community Sustainability**
- **Conduct a study of town government as a Green Power Aggregator**
- **Complete the next phase of Storm Water Runoff Mitigation Measures**
- **Install a composting restroom at Camp Acton.**
- **Replace three tradition vehicles with hybrid vehicles**
- **Purchase composting equipment**
- **Establish an Environmental Investment Trust Fund**

