



**Town of Acton**  
**Economic Development Committee**  
**Annual Report to the Town for 2010**

During 2010 the Economic Development Committee, along with Town staff members and others, including the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce, worked to implement the Committee’s 2010 goals relating to enhancing and promoting the business environment in Acton which were presented to the Board of Selectmen in October of 2009.

The Committee is organized around five “Teams” or subcommittees which are focused on separate challenges. The Teams consist of the following: Research and Demographics, Marketing, Supporting Existing Businesses in Acton, Seeking New Businesses in Acton, and development. The Committee developed mission statements for each Team and proceeded to successfully launch the first three Teams during the year.

In the meanwhile, the Committee has traditionally served as the place where businesses with proposals which might be placed before the Town can come and share their ideas and solicit suggestions for how best to proceed. That very important activity will continue unabated during 2011 as the Committee expects to have a voice in a number of economic development issues which can be expected to arise during the year.

In addition to the foregoing, the Committee will sometimes become involved where an issue before the Town has business overtones or would have the effect of altering our business development environment. This can involve the committee in discussions of zoning, development policy, signage, land use, etc. In those instances, the Committee is expected to coordinate with Town staff as well as other committees such as the Planning Board.

The Committee and its Team on Supporting Existing Businesses became involved in a dispute arising from the Town’s renewed enforcement of the signage portion of the Zoning Bylaw. During 2011 the group will participate in a review of the bylaw itself preparatory to proposing changes to the bylaw which can be presented at an upcoming Town Meeting. In addition the group will make recommendations for streamlining the enforcement process and educating the public as to the Town’s signage requirements.

Acton is currently pursuing the next phase of its Master Plan, and the Committee’s Demographics Team has coordinated its efforts to collect useful market data with the consultants working on data gathering for the Acton 2020 Master Plan process. This information, along with the results of the 2010 census will form the base of information

which we provide to prospective businesses who are analyzing business opportunities in Town.

The Committee's Marketing Team has closely coordinated its efforts with those of the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce and has worked with local merchants to launch and enhance a Buy Local campaign. During 2011 the Marketing Team will continue to develop specific programs targeted on enhancing the retail sales environment and making Acton's benefits to business more widely known.

The Committee's goals for 2011 relate to completing the set-up of the first three Teams and the launching of the fourth Team focused on Soliciting New Businesses for Acton. In addition, the Committee is seeking to deepen its relationship with the Chamber of Commerce and other business related groups in Town. A key goal for the new year is to enhance the 'customer friendliness' of town services in those departments likely to impact local businesses. In order to meet these goals the Committee will seek to expand its membership and develop leaders for the Teams.