

I AMESBURY
2030
MASSACHUSETTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The City of Amesbury has historically kept up with the ever changing economy and demands. From the first mills in 1668, creating carriages, nails and textiles, to today's landscape of cannabis, solar roofing and dehumidifiers, Amesbury evolves while maintaining a strong economy. As we look towards the future, the City of Amesbury will continue to maintain our robust makers market, as well as connect existing businesses to build stronger relationships and pass these relationships off to residents with increasing affordable housing and creating a thriving community.



"Most of the people of Amesbury belong to the productive class, very few are raised above the necessity of personal exertion. All are active and industrious, readily find employment, and command good wages."

-James B. Newell, 1836. From The Essex Memorial - a guide to towns in Essex County, MA.

I AMesbury 2030

Mayor Cassandra Gove created the I AMesbury 2030 Task Force to help our community plan for the future. This group is spending two years (2021-2022) gathering community feedback, evaluating our strengths and weaknesses and helping to determine where we collectively want Amesbury to be in the next 10 years.

I AMesbury 2030 is looking at every aspect of our community to make sure that we're moving forward with one vision. They are looking at eight elements: open space and recreation, learning, arts and culture, mobility, infrastructure, economic development, housing, and operations. They are considering each of these elements with three lenses top of mind: equity, health, and resilience / sustainability. These three key areas are an important consideration to incorporate into every aspect of the 2030 plan.

As the Task Force completes an element, they release a short document to share some background, research and goals. These short documents reflect the work and findings that will be found in the complete, comprehensive document, which will be released at the end of this process in 2023.

We hope this document sheds light on the work of the Task Force, with the understanding that this document will not have all the answers. We look forward to sharing the full, comprehensive plan with you in 2023!



I AMesbury 2030 Task Force

Mary Chatigny, Co-Chair

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Our Vision for Economic Development

Amesbury will be a vibrant community with a diverse tax base that protects and improves the quality of life while respecting the existing culture and community character. Planned economic development will keep Amesbury affordable and provide community-oriented services in the downtown. A varied and ecologically sound economic base will include retail, restaurant, commercial, light industry, as well as using culture and the arts to stimulate economic growth. We will balance downtown development to provide goods and services for Amesbury residents and encourage industrial development in appropriate areas to enhance the tax base. We will highlight our natural, cultural, and historic resources to promote tourism and ecotourism in Amesbury, complementing regional attractions.

For the purpose of this plan and in support of our vision we are defining economic development as focusing municipal services and resources to improve our standard of living through maintaining existing and creating new jobs, encouragement of innovation and new ideas, and supporting overall fiscal sustainability.

GOAL: Increase and improve communication with the business community specific to resources and current happenings.



We heard from many businesses and residents that the permitting process in Amesbury was difficult and not streamlined. By 2030 we will ensure a more efficient process for business permitting and clear communication about new permitting tools.

Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:

- Review Council Bill 2014-116 regarding Special Event Permits on an annual basis including communication to the business community regarding impacts.
- Create clear processes and efficient tools for business interactions with city entities for licenses and permits with training and education for city staff to best assist our businesses.
- Dedicate a staff liaison to take business inquiries and assist with navigating city processes.
- Adopt a city-wide CRM (customer relationship management system) to provide a personalized and highly effective service experience.
- Continue to create and maintain communications (i.e., newsletters, webpage, Makers' Highlight) for Doing Business in Amesbury.

GOAL: Promote Amesbury as an attractive, supportive, and business friendly community.

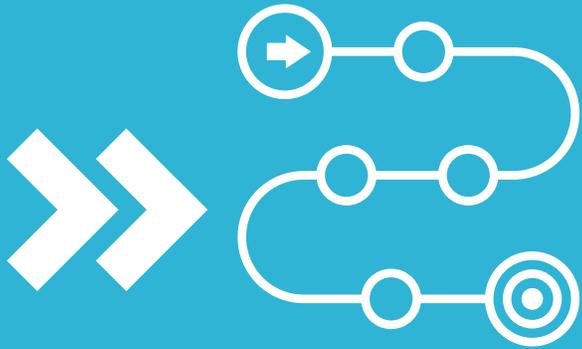


In 2023, a Boards, Commissions, and Committees Review Board was established to review the purpose and need for each appointed board, commission and committee of the city and to issue a report to the mayor and the city council containing any recommendations for changes deemed advisable by said special committee of the city and shall report any findings and recommendations

Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:

- Review and update city ordinances that impact the business community, with stakeholder involvement, for relevance (i.e. signage).
- Encourage boards and commissions to create a welcoming and supportive environment at their meetings.
- Leadership staff will engage in best practices to develop relationships with current and potential large employers and innovators within the city.
- Work with employers, community-based partners, schools, technical institutes and training providers to improve and increase the workforce through lifetime training and education.

GOAL: Develop the Lower Millyard District to complement adjacent land uses and enhance the tax base.

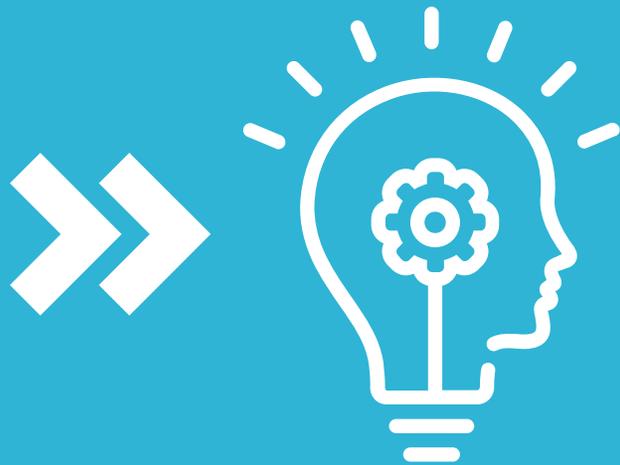


In the 2022 Neighborhood Economic Resilience Assessment of Amesbury Downtown & Lower Millyard District, 85% of businesses surveyed agreed that their current location in the Lower Millyard helped them make business connections that supported their business growth.

Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:

- Take action on recommendations from existing plans and studies by leveraging private development.
- Improve parking in the Water Street area that supports the surrounding commercial uses and enhances the streetscape.
- Institute improvements to public spaces, such as widening sidewalks, improving street lighting, and traffic control measures to improve the connections between Upper and Lower Millyard.

GOAL: Build upon the unique cultural resources within Amesbury as an economic development catalyst and a source of community identity, making Amesbury a regional destination for entrepreneurs and consumers.

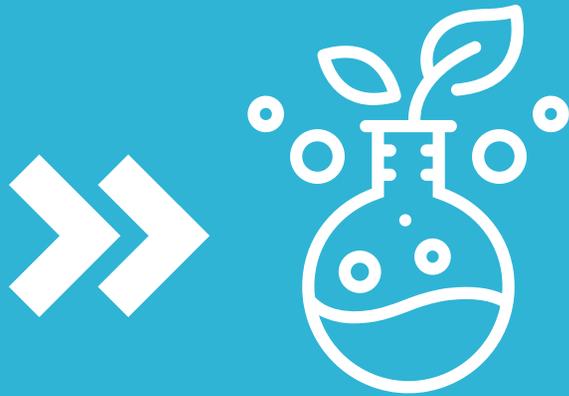


Amesbury's rich history and diverse geography allow for abundant opportunities for economic development. Beyond our vibrant downtown, Amesbury boasts over 20 museums, historical sites and homes as well as one of the most beautiful farms in the world, Cider Hill Farm. Optimizing our cultural resources as various economic opportunities will allow for continued growth of our city.

An action item to help us achieve this goal will include:

- Investigate the creation of a cultural district.
- Establish and/or improve wayfinding and topical (e.g., historical) signage in the district to better ensure that the fascinating history becomes better known to residents and visitors.
- Explore targeted marketing promotions for targeted visitor groups (e.g., summertime coastal New England vacationers; historical professionals, students, and hobbyists).

- **GOAL:** Prioritize emerging industries, including life-sciences and bio-tech, for city owned and commercial properties that will be prepared for new development in the next 10 years.

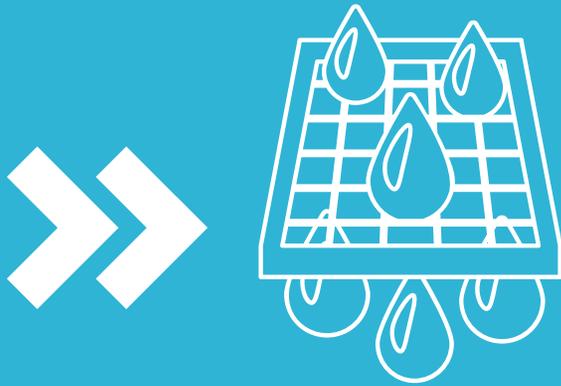


Massachusetts’ “life sciences sector grew its employment based by 14.6% between 2019 and 2022, compared to just 9.4% nationally”. Spaces like Trader Alan’s Truck Stop have potential to contribute to the growing biotech or life sciences sectors while supporting our current business owners already in these areas of development.

Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:

- Ensure regional and state partners are aware of our interest and available space for these industries.
- Inventory and champion existing businesses in our community that are in emerging industries.
- Develop relationships between city leadership and commercial landlords to collaborate on a shared vision and future commercial growth.

- **GOAL: Work with developers to ensure new projects and redevelopments are sustainable and resilient.**



The EPA says that approximately 30 percent of pollutants in our waters result from stormwater runoff. Reducing stormwater runoff helps to reduce stress on water treatment plants and decreases the bacterial counts in our lakes and waterways. Some ways Amesbury can implement stormwater runoff measures includes installing permeable surfaces, eliminating fertilizers and planting trees

Some action items to help us achieve this goal will include:

- Use Low Impact Development techniques to reduce impervious surface and address stormwater runoff.
- Incorporate resilient infrastructure into the Capital Improvement Planning process.
- Encourage developments to build structures that are LEED or equivalent green building rating system through structural or financial incentives.
- Coordinate with appropriate departments and boards to ensure sites are electric vehicle ready.
- Improve public access from new and existing developments to open spaces/trails.

Resources and Existing Plans

- [2004 Master Plan](#)
- [Amesbury Technical Assistance Panel \(TAP\) Report](#)
- [MA Economic Growth and Challenges in the Age of Covid-19](#)
- [Amesbury Downtown and Lower Millyard District Economic Resilience Assessment](#)
- [Amesbury Downtown and Lower Millyard District Economic Resilience Assessment - Data Resources](#)

Community Input

- [Why Amesbury Survey Results](#)

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