

Prioritization and Evaluation of Initiatives

Discuss Priorities BOS and ReOpen

Small or pressing – recreation, activities, health and safety, social service needs

Big – walkway/boardwalk; Norma Terris partnership

Achievement of Objectives

Prioritize and analyze potential project

Description/Summary of the project

Correlation to the POCD

Who benefits? Driver of economic activity?

Health and Safety Issue related to resilience? Other benefits during pandemic?

What players would need to be involved and approvals required, both internal (P&Z) or external (DEEP)

Cost and Funding Sources?

Timeframe for completion

Submit/present to BOS for discussion and referral to appropriate agencies

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT SECTION 6

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

Objective 1.1: Maintain the Village District as the economic, social and cultural hub of the community by supporting vibrant mixed-use development, appropriate design, community activity and civic uses.

Responsible Agency

Time- frame

Review the boundaries of, and permitted uses in, the Village District. Explore extending boundaries southeast along Main Street to Route 154. The scale of any development may be dependent on access to adequate infrastructure, and considering enabling building types/space needs for creative industries, such as live/work spaces, mill- or loft-style flexible spaces for creative manufacturing or incubator spaces.

PZC

Medium-Term

Pursue technological infrastructure (Wi-Fi, 5G) to support home-based business and creative technology sectors in the Village.

BOS, EDC

Ongoing

Priority attention should be given to ensuring adequate parking is available in the Village and throughout the Town.

BOS, BOF

Short-Term

Improve access to existing parking through signage, lighting, landscaping and promotion. Physical improvements to the Maple Street parking lot should be prioritized

BOS, BOF

Short-Term

Repurpose under-utilized/vacant properties for housing or economic initiatives, including municipally owned properties. Consider providing incentives for properties that have remained vacant for a long period. Incentives might include pre-development assistance such as environmental remediation assessment and clean-up, or post-development tax incentives

BOS, BOF, EDC

Ongoing

Work with Goodspeed Musicals to better integrate The Norma Terris Theater activities into the fabric of the Village through promotions, signage, and other means.

BOS, EDC

Ongoing

Continue to support community events within the Village, providing year-round programming that attracts residents and visitors

BOS, EDC, BOF

Ongoing

To the extent possible, locate or relocate municipal uses in or around the Village to promote community identity and activity.

BOS, BOF, PZC

Ongoing

Seek opportunities to make aesthetic improvements in the Village District that are respectful of existing character, such as burying utility lines.

BOS, BOF

Ongoing

Engage in intermunicipal and regional efforts to promote tourism.

EDC, BOS, BOF

Ongoing

Recreation Events and Activities – Overall objective 1.1 ongoing		
Mark social distancing/hula hoops		
Meeting House Green – yoga, tai chi, Collomore, plays, hot dish community meals		
North Quarter Park		
Drive in theater or movie in the park		
Chasing Squirrels app		
Town strolls		
Community garden		
Engage seniors/scholars tables		
Mini free libraries		
Virtual meet-ups and clubs		
Plein Air painting		
Corn hole or disc golf tournament NQP		
Removable dock for boat launch – Objective 1.4 long term		
Waterfront/river park – Objective 1.4 medium term		
Come Home to Chester/Oktoberfest – Objective 1.1 ongoing		
Town square / outdoor dining/ sidewalk sales – Objective 1.1 ongoing		
Valet service from parking lots		
Empty buildings – Objective 1.1 ongoing		
Norma Terris (also arts/culture) – Objective 1.1 ongoing		
Incubator space		
Chester Arts Center		
Film festival		
Partner w/restaurant		
Promote and enable tourism – regional focus – Objective 1.1 ongoing		
Transport partner w/RR station jitney – Objective 1.1 ongoing and 1.4 ongoing, Objective 2.2 ongoing		
Broadband or wi-fi in streetlamps – Objective 1.1 ongoing		
Parking Lot Firehouse – Objective 1.1 short term (already approved but not funded)		

Objective 1.2: Enable mixed-use development in appropriate nodes along Route 154		
Conduct a study of the entire corridor to identify development and/or redevelopment opportunity sites and appropriate nodes for targeting new development.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Opportunity sites should consist of properties with minimal development constraints	PZC	
Consider the length and depth of development nodes and the interceding areas to avoid strip development.		
Consider that mixed uses could include additional and/or expanded light industrial uses.		
Creation of an overlay or new mixed-use zoning district will best achieve the Town's vision for Route 154.		
Consider some flexibility in uses to enhance market viability and attractiveness of future developments.		
Accommodate various housing types: single-family, duplex, townhouse, multi-family.		
Accommodate varied commercial uses.		
Consider design standards and visual guides to ensure appropriate architectural scale and character.		
Distinguish development types to establish its own character.		
Evaluate whether the current Town Hall is the highest and best use of a potential commercial or mixed-use building. If the current site, coupled with adjacent properties or other properties along Route 154 has greater potential for economic development, seek an alternative location for Town Hall, ideally in or around the Village District.	PZC, BOS, BOF	Short-Term
St Josephs Parish hall? – Objective 1.2 short term		
Objective 1.3: Expand industrial and office development potential.		
Work with existing manufacturing/light industrial sector businesses to identify opportunities for supply and support services or complimentary industry.	BOS, EDC	Short-Term
Explore expansion of the Controlled Development District (CDD) zone on Inspiration Lane to partial areas of adjacent residential Wig Hill Road lots.	PZC, EDC	Short-Term
Cooperate in intermunicipal and regional efforts to promote infill of light-industrial uses, including the Research & Light Manufacturing (RLM) zone.	PZC, BOS, EDC	Ongoing
Support continued operation of the airport.	BOS, EDC	Ongoing

Objective 1.4: Support water-based, recreation and tourism uses along the riverfront.		
Chester’s waterfront development may be limited in scale by the lack of public water and sewer infrastructure. Enabling some additional uses in the Waterfront Design District could help support existing marinas and businesses, while enhancing opportunities to connect the waterfront to the Village.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Consider enabling additional permitted uses in the Waterfront Design District, such as restaurants and retail.	PZC	Medium Term
Explore with neighboring communities and tourism industries ways to establish regular shuttle-type connections from marinas to the Village District and other destinations in the region.	EDC, BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Explore the potential for a public mooring area and water taxi to promote tourism.	EDC, Harbor Mgt. Comm.	Long-Term
Improve Chester Overlook, the small parking and decked area at the end of Railroad Avenue. Consider a public/private partnership with the adjacent landowner to expand the passive recreation area.	BOS, BOF, CC	Medium Term
Actively monitor and pursue control and management of invasive species throughout the town.	BOS, CC	Long-Term
Invasive species/LT maintenance plan – Objective 1.4 long term; objective 4.1 ongoing		
Objective 1.5: Support existing Life Care developments.		
Because these communities are large employers and land holders within Chester, it is important to maintain a working relationship and open communications.		
Support the needs of existing or potentially expanded Life Care developments.	EDC, BOS	Ongoing
Consider the need for a new continuing care/life care zoning regulation to support senior housing and medical uses with ancillary commercial facilities	PZC	Ongoing
Evaluate the possible need for sewer expansion on Route 148 to the Route 9, Exit 6 interchange area.	WPCA, BOS, PZC	Ongoing

Section 2, Goal 2: Increase pedestrian, bicycle and transit connectivity in the town and the region to enhance quality of life, enable active lifestyles and promote natural resource appreciation.		
Objective 2.1: Prioritize target areas for safe pedestrian and bicycle connections.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Pursue opportunities to provide pedestrian walkways and bicycle infrastructure	BOS	Ongoing
Enhance connections to active recreational areas, including State forests and parks, the Connecticut River, Cedar Lake, Chester Elementary School and North Quarter Park.	BOS, CC	Ongoing
Consider revising zoning and subdivision regulations to require pedestrian walkway installation in prioritized areas or under certain conditions.	BOS, PZC, Parks & Rec.	Medium-Term
Connect the Village with other nearby community assets.	BOS	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to create trail connections with Ferry Road and Dock Road.	BOS	Ongoing
Work with Chester Land Trust to enable access to open space properties,	BOS, CC	Ongoing
Develop maps to promote Chester's trail networks online and in print.	BOS, EDC	Ongoing
Work regionally to encourage promotion of safe bicycle routes, provide bicycle lanes and/or signage.	BOS, EDC	Ongoing
Ensure that State bridge and roadway projects consider the need for safe pedestrian and/or bicycle access.	BOS	Ongoing
Promote connections to recreational properties and trail systems through signage, mapping, promotion and accessible bicycle and pedestrian routes.	BOS, EDC, CC	Ongoing
Improve connections to Town-owned facilities.	BOS	Ongoing
Evaluate designation of selected section(s) of Route 148 as a State Scenic Road.	BOS, EDC, CC	Medium-Term

Objective 2.2: Expand transit opportunities and alternatives for connecting economic development areas.		
Work with RiverCOG and 9-Town Transit to expand services and integration of transit services (Shore Line East, CT Transit, 9-Town Transit, etc.).	BOS, RiverCOG	Ongoing
Support improvements to Shore Line East commuter rail service.	BOS, RiverCOG	Ongoing
Support continued maintenance and operation of the historic Chester/Hadlyme Ferry.	BOS, RiverCOG	Ongoing
Support continued operation of Valley Railroad. Explore additional uses for residents, and/or connecting tourist excursions to the Village District.	BOS, RiverCOG	Ongoing
Explore with neighboring communities and tourism industries ways to establish regular shuttle-type connections from the riverfront to the Village District and other destinations in the region.	BOS, RiverCOG	Ongoing

Section 2, Goal 3. Diversify Chester's housing stock while protecting existings neighborhoods and community character.		
Objective 3.1: Promote housing development within and adjacent to the Village District and in mixed-use nodes along Route 154.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Encourage development of diverse housing types, scale and densities in close proximity to commercial areas and public facilities, when available.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Objective 3.2: Increase regulatory flexibility to enable a range of housing opportunities.		
Assess the ability of rural areas to support neighborhood-scale housing development in terms of character, land capacity, transportation infrastructure and soil suitability and the availability of public water and/or sewer connections.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Consider modifications to the PRD regulations. Work with the Health District to understand whether a maximum bedroom yield per acre is necessary and/or whether the unit yield per acre can be increased. Consider providing an increased unit yield with public sewer and water connections. Consider a density bonus for a set-aside of affordable units.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Consider modifications to accessory apartment regulations.	PZC	Ongoing
Consider changes to minimum lot size requirements and permitting duplexes or attached housing units in rural residential zones.	PZC	Ongoing
Brooks factory - Objective 3.2 ongoing		
Objective 3.3: Establish programs and partnerships to expand opportunities for increasing the number of affordable, attainable and sustainable housing units.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Formulate regulations that require 10% of lots and built homes in future subdivisions of ten lots and over to be deed-restricted, affordable housing.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Encourage construction or conversion of secondary housing units (carriage houses, in-law apartments, etc.) on existing lots where sanitary disposal conditions can be achieved.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Designate incentive housing where a higher density of mixed housing options could be achieved, of which 30% or more would be affordable. Such areas should, wherever possible, be located near public transit, the Village District and other services, and built in tandem with sustainable practices listed in other sections of this document (e.g., community gardens, artisan shops/workshops), and alternative technology sewer systems.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing

Educate the community on the need for diverse housing options to create a sustainable community through interaction and cooperation with non-profit and advocacy organizations and others addressing housing needs.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Collaborate with housing developers to identify potential sites, plan for and build projects that generate additional opportunities for moderate- and lower-income households with a goal to serve community members who are elderly, disabled or ALICE (asset limited, income restrained, employed).	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Pursue regional efforts to share resources, administer programs and activities that promote housing opportunities and workforce housing development.	PZC, BOS	Ongoing
Explore establishment of programs that assist property owners in maintaining and rehabilitating aging housing units, developing accessory apartments, and/or increasing energy efficiency of current housing stock.	PZC, BOS	Short-Term
Explore regulatory opportunities to promote affordable, attainable housing, such as offering density bonuses for income-restricted units in certain types of development, such as mixed-use or multi-family.	PZC, BOS	Short-Term
Establish a Housing Committee to regularly evaluate different types of housing and community needs and initiate actions to address established, unfilled needs.	PZC, BOS	Short-Term
Affordable housing – Objective 3.3 ongoing		

Objective 3.4: Support and maintain households at various life-cycle stages		
Continue to provide for and work with organizations that provide high quality services and programs.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Implement and support a variety of educational, recreational and cultural programming through Senior and Social Services, Parks & Recreation, the Library and other area organizations and initiatives.	BOS, BOF, Parks & Rec., Social Services, Library	Ongoing
Seek opportunities to enhance services through regional cooperation and service sharing.	BOS, BOF, Parks & Rec., Social Services, Library	Ongoing
Health and Safety – Overall Object 3.4 ongoing		
Municipal sourcing of PPE		
Handwashing		
Public Bathrooms		
Concierge Service/Shopify		
Support social service needs – jobs, food, resources - Objective 3.4 ongoing		
Promote and support groups and agencies that provide a variety of recreational programs.	PZC, CC	Ongoing

Section 2, Goal 4: Preserve the rural character and natural features that make Chester unique.		
Chester’s character is dictated, in part, by the significant amount of preserved land held privately, as well as publicly owned forestland and significant open spaces within its borders.		
Objective 4.1: Maintain high quality open spaces for recreation and natural resource value.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Update the 1999 Open Space Plan to identify key criteria and/or parcels for protection and public improvements; pursue conservation easements and deed restrictions for priority parcels; consider whether the Town should re-commit to funding an open space acquisition fund.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Promote and maintain the Public Act 490 assessment program to encourage preservation of land as open space.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Work with the Chester Land Trust to increase accessibility of riverfront open space.	PZC, BOS, CC, Land Trust	Ongoing
Manage invasive species by supporting the efforts of the Cedar Lake Watershed Commission, regional and State partners.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Promote long-term watershed management to maintain the quality of Cedar Lake, the Connecticut River and all waterbodies of Chester.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Encourage proper management of private and publicly owned forests and the maintenance of wooded linkages between large tracts of forestland in Chester and surrounding municipalities with the cooperation of appropriate and involved agencies and groups.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing

Objective 4.2: Maintain high quality surface and sub-surface waters.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Preserve the natural, scenic and recreational qualities of Chester's waterbodies and waterways.	BOS, RiverCOG,	Ongoing
Incorporate low impact development techniques into zoning, subdivision and road design regulations, as well as with any public project.	BOS, Harbor Mgt, RiverCOG, CC	Ongoing
Regularly clean storm drains and provide corrective action for siltation and damage to Town roads.	BOS, EDC, RiverCOG, Land Trust, CC	Ongoing
Ensure that the State regularly cleans catch basins on State highways.	BOS, RiverCOG, CC	Ongoing
Promote the use of non-chemical fertilizers and pesticides.	BOS, RiverCOG, CC	Ongoing
Monitor and maintain all other town-owned dams.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to assist private dam owners in the maintenance of dams.	PZC, BOF, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Seek to implement the recommendations of the 2013 Harbor Management Plan.	PZC, BOS, RiverCOG, CC	Ongoing
Educate landowners on water quality issues and techniques for protecting water quality; removal of invasive species; maintenance or creation of vegetated buffer strips along lakes and streams; use of non-chemical fertilizers and pesticides; and proper septic design and maintenance through the activities of and promulgation of materials by local agencies as well as the resources of state and federal entities.	PZC, BOS, RiverCOG, Cedar Lake Watershed, CC	Ongoing

Goals, Objectives and Strategies	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Section 2, Goal 5: Provide high quality recreational services and facilities to support quality of life.		
Objective 5.1: Provide high quality recreational amenities		
Plan for improvements at Cedar Lake and North Quarter Park's recreational facilities to meet the needs of all ages.	BOS	Ongoing
Provide improved facilities and storage for Parks & Recreation programs.	BOS	Ongoing
Monitor and identify potential improvements to programs for sports fields and facilities.	BOS	Ongoing
Seek opportunities to enhance programs for all ages, especially youth, teens and seniors, independently as well as in cooperation with neighboring communities.	BOS	Ongoing
Objective 5.2: Provide facilities that enhance livability, enrich learning opportunities and cultural awareness, and cultivate social interaction.	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Continue to preserve the Meeting House and enhance community use of the facility.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Promote engagement with Regional School District #4 to maintain high quality educational programs and facilities that are fundamental community resources.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Continue to maintain Chester Elementary School and seek ways to improve community use of the building and fields for additional programming and/or recreational uses.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Support and maintain the quality and condition of public safety facilities and equipment.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Ensure quality maintenance and improvements of Town facilities and infrastructure.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Work with private providers to implement sustainable technologies, utilities and infrastructure.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Investigate possible improvements or modifications for the Library, considering alternatives that might include inter-town coordination.	PZC, BOF, BOS	Ongoing

Section 2, Goal 6: Support and promote sustainability and resiliency		
Objective 6.1: Increase use of renewable energies	Responsible Agency	Time- frame
Continue to support community efforts to increase public and private use of renewable energies.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Continue energy audits and programs to implement energy conservation at all Town facilities.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Install photovoltaic or other renewable energy systems on all public buildings, as feasible.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Expand the streetlight conversion program to parking areas.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Promote and support alternative and clean-fuel technologies for public fleets, as feasible.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Promote energy conservation techniques for the design and construction of public improvements and infrastructure.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Explore installation of electric vehicle charging stations in municipal parking areas.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Promote energy conservation improvements for private homes, industries and other properties.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing
Objective 6.2: Reduce Waste	Responsible	Time- frame
Continue to educate residents on waste reduction.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Encourage the reduction/elimination of use of single-use containers, plastic bags and other non-recyclable materials	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Support product stewardship or Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) initiatives.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Increase use of electronic files in municipal operations and business transactions, including the permitting process.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Continue to support regional recycling, household hazardous waste and electronics disposal.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
- Overall Goal 6 Sustainability and Resiliency - ongoing		
Environmental/Trash		

Local Recycling		
Recycling bins downtown/ dog watering		
Composting / trash corral		
Pay as you throw		
Invasive species/LT maintenance plan – Objective 1.4 long term; objective 4.1 ongoing		
Pollinator gardens – Objective 4.1 ongoing		
Solar on the firehouse – Objective 6.1 ongoing		
Objective 6.3: Implement and Maintain Stormwater Management Plan		
Continue to implement and maintain the Town’s Stormwater Management Plan.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Objective 6.4: Continue participation in the CT Sustainable Communities Program		
Create a sustainability committee to pursue and maintain certification.	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Regularly look to the program for ideas and inspiration, as approved actions and supporting documentation from certified municipalities are made available at sustainablect.org .	BOS, BOF	Ongoing
Objective 6.5: Continue active participation with the Connecticut River Gateway Commission		
Support the Gateway Commission’s standards.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Continue to support efforts to acquire endangered natural areas within the Gateway Zone.	PZC, BOS, CC	Ongoing
Objective 6.6: Improve Chester’s resilience to natural hazards		
Implement the recommendations of the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, including pursuing acquisition of land in flood hazard zones, prioritizing road construction projects to lower risk through raising roadbeds and replacing inadequate bridges and culverts.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing
Support maintenance of the regional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing
Avoid construction of new structures in areas prone to flooding.		
Require that new tree plantings include a variety of species to avoid monoculture stands that are susceptible to disease and insects.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing
Establish a town-wide urban forestry program to monitor, maintain and replant street trees and other trees on town property.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing

Ensure that Chester's Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan complies with the sea-level-rise change scenario as required by Connecticut Public Act 18-82 and is in accordance with the most recent sea-level-change scenario as updated pursuant to Subsection (b) of Section 25-68o, as amended.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing
Work with neighboring communities and public utility companies to seek efficient approaches to the clearing of potentially hazardous trees, street tree maintenance and re-planting.	BOS, BOF, CC	Ongoing

Explore installation of touchless public restrooms in Chester Center

Secure and implement plan for a purchasing program for PPE to use at Cedar Lake, downtown businesses, NQP

Investigate the possibility of creating a Makers Market in the center of town

Investigate closing Main Street at certain times to create an

Fiscal sponsor - community foundation