



TOWN OF BOURNE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FY2011

INTRODUCTION

Bourne is approximately 41 square miles located 57 miles south east of Boston. Bourne is known as the gateway to Cape Cod since all vehicles must pass through Bourne to cross the Cape Cod Canal which bisects the community. The town is divided into eight small villages typical of New England communities. Approximately 42% of the town's total land area is north of the Cape Cod Canal, leaving 58% on the south side which is encompassed by 50% of the Massachusetts Military Reservation. The Massachusetts Maritime Academy and the Army Corps of Engineers facilities are also located in Bourne. While each of these significant public facilities bring benefits to the community, they also have unfavorable impacts such as the loss of taxable land, and the obligation of providing emergency services.

TARGET AREA DESCRIPTION:

The Target Area is located in the village of Buzzards Bay beginning at the Cohasset Narrows bridge running along Main Street to Lincoln Ave north to the intersection of Lincoln Ave and Puritan Road, then runs along the south side of Puritan Road to Head of the Bay Road south to Finch Lane, south on Route 25 to the Belmont Rotary east to the Bourne Bridge Approach, south along the right of way of the Bourne Bridge, then west along the bank of the Cape Cod Canal to Academy Drive then to Tower Lane, north along the shoreline, and back to the Cohasset Narrows Bridge. The target area includes the downtown core along Main Street, which at one time was a bustling retail area, however has had a significant decline due to the connection of Route 25 to Route 195 and the separation of the business district from the residential district by a bypass road that was built as a temporary solution, but has literally fenced off the residential neighborhood, leaving only one central connecting point. Also included in the target area are over 800 residential units with a majority located north of the Buzzards Bay bypass.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Bourne's Community Development Strategy (CDS) is based on a compilation of the goals and actions from a multitude of documents including the following: the Town's Local Comprehensive Plan (May 2008), the action items of which were adopted by unanimous vote of town meeting on May 15, 2006; the Housing and Needs Assessment and Action Plan, adopted by the Board of Selectmen on June 21, 2005 and approved by DHCD on January 18, 2006, with updated priorities by the Bourne Housing Partnership on September 15, 2010; the Town's ADA Study (Appendix 4 of the OSP); the Vision Plan for Bourne's Downtown (which won the American Planning Association – Massachusetts Chapter award for 2008 Outstanding Comprehensive Planning, prepared by Stantec Planning and Landscape Architects 2008); the Buzzards Bay Village Comprehensive Transportation Plan prepared for the Buzzards Bay Vitalization Group by Wesley Ewell, June 2007; Action Plan for Bourne's Downtown November 2008, prepared by Lipman Development Strategies, LLC.

The following items were identified in the Local Comprehensive Plan as goals to guide Bourne's planning strategies:

1. **Growth Management:** Manage the amount, location and pace of development
2. **Land Use:** Envisions an attractive community of low-density residential development, with a strong commercial base, mixed-use historic village centers.

3. **Open Space:** Preservation of undeveloped land as open space for recreation, resource protection, wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge.
4. **Recreation:** Provide a wide range of opportunities for active and passive recreation to meet the needs and desires of residents and visitors.
5. **Environmental Protection:** Restore and protect the natural environment to the greatest extent possible.
6. **Coastal Resources:** Protect the coast as well as rights for fishing, navigation and recreation; improve and preserve coastal areas to perpetuate their biological, economic, historic, maritime and aesthetic values; enhance and expand public access to the shoreline.
7. **Water Resources:** Assure adequate supply of quality drinking water, reverse degradation of water quality, restore the ecological integrity of surface waters.
8. **Cultural Heritage:** Protect and preserve the important historic and cultural features of the town's landscape, structures and community activities.
9. **Human Services:** Enhance the quality of living and meet the needs of the diverse population that includes children, teenagers, families and elderly.
10. **Affordable Housing:** Assure the availability of safe and satisfactory housing for sale or rent to town residents regardless of income or economic status.
11. **Transportation:** Create a system of transportation alternatives that allows Bourne residents and visitors to move safely, economically and efficiently.
12. **Economic Development:** Create a diverse business community that provides rewarding year-round employment to town residents at many levels of skill, education and experience.
13. **Capital Facilities:** Provide adequate community facilities to meet the town's current and projected needs, without placing undue burdens on its financial resources.
14. **Solid waste management:** Continue to maximize recycling and composting of solid waste.

Highest Priority Issues

Wastewater

Public attention has recently focused on individual septic wastewater disposal systems and antiquated cesspools as a major collective source of pollution. Many houses in Bourne still use cesspools and the rest (except in portions of Buzzards Bay) use septic systems. As more and more of these houses are used year-round and expanded, the need for advanced septic systems, package treatment plants or other means of sewage treatment becomes crucial.

Revitalization of Buzzards Bay

After decades of experiencing a deteriorating downtown, the Town of Bourne has recently taken active steps to address the existing barriers to development in the Downtown area and initiate a revitalization of the commercial district. Revitalization of the downtown is dependent upon many factors, including the availability of wastewater infrastructure, financing, and market forces.

Water Quality

Bourne has wonderful water resources, and has taken steps to protect them, but pollution remains a major concern. New ways of treating sewage, by both individual systems and community facilities, will be needed. Public education needs to be increased to reduce the adverse affects of development, recreational boating, and street runoff.

Protection of Traditional Character

Enlargement of waterfront houses has also led to questions about Bourne's zoning bylaw and its adequacy to protect the traditional character of these neighborhoods. The rapid

suburbanization of Bournedale and North Sagamore, and the proliferation of new commercial development along MacArthur Boulevard have also raised zoning concerns.

Traffic / Transportation

The challenge facing Bourne is to keep all traffic moving safely, efficiently and conveniently.

Bourne also needs to expand travel choices for the growing number of Bourne residents who either cannot drive because of age, disability, economics or personal choice, or who now travel alone because there is no other way to commute or shop.

Affordable Housing

The predominant housing type in Bourne has been built since 1970 and is a fair condition and moderately sized, single-family detached structure. The remainder of the housing stock is older, and very modest, a good deal of it was constructed to meet the needs of military families, construction worker's and their families working on the Canal. Bourne has for many years had a housing authority that developed and managed housing for elderly and low-income persons. Housing is needed now not only for Bourne residents who are impoverished, but also for workers whose incomes are too low to afford prevailing market prices for housing.

PLANNING DOCUMENTS and ACTIVITIES

1. Local Comprehensive Plan – May 2008

The Local Comprehensive Plan was the result of more than four years of effort by Bourne's Local Comprehensive Plan Committee and is a sign of the Town's commitment to planning. The Committee began its work with a series of listening sessions in each of Bourne's eight villages. These meetings gave committee members a strong sense of the needs and desires of the townspeople, which were presented at an all-day public workshop in June 2003. The LCP Committee has strived to suggest actions that are realistic, affordable and achievable, however, should be used as guideposts for Bourne residents.

2. Open Space and Recreation Plan, Beals and Thomas, Inc. - 2008

The Town of Bourne updated its Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2008 to serve as a guide to the committees, boards, commissions and volunteer groups in the community. It was designed to encourage programs and policies that will have a lasting and constructive impact on the community. The plan illustrates how important it is to continue to protect and preserve existing sensitive environmental areas and it also provides an inventory of existing recreational facilities. Suggestions are provided throughout the Plan regarding what Bourne should think about protecting and adding how they can continue to make recreational opportunities available for both residents and visitors.

3. Vision Plan for Bourne's Downtown – Stantec 2008

The Vision Plan for Bourne's Downtown began with design workshops. Public participation was sought for the design and future development of the Downtown Area. The workshop was used to identify and illustrate opportunities for property rehabilitation and redevelopment, new development, filling market niches, infrastructure improvements, waterfront recreation and other amenities, neighborhood connections, roadway access improvements, and streetscape enhancements. The design workshop was also used to determine the community's desired scale, composition, and character of redevelopment and renovation/reuse projects in the downtown area. The results of public input through the workshops were integrated into the overall conceptual redevelopment plan for Downtown Buzzards Bay.

4. *Action Plan for Bourne’s Downtown, Lipman Development Strategies, LLC - November 2008*

The Action Plan describes the steps necessary to prepare Main Street in Buzzards Bay to be “investment ready.” It is the result of a thorough review of earlier planning studies and technical documents, with the goal of developing a comprehensive and coordinated action plan with a timeline. The document focuses on the most important actions and provides detail on how those actions can be achieved. It is intended to prioritize and sequence actions that are the most critical for successful revitalization efforts.

5. *Study of Flood Hazard Mitigation and Design for the Main Street Business District – Kennen Landscape Architecture - December 2007*

This study was to inventory the current flood hazards in the Main Street Business District in the Village of Buzzards Bay. The analysis considered what design opportunities exist to achieve two overall goals: 1) to mitigate flood hazards in the downtown area and 2) to revitalize and redevelop the Village of Buzzards Bay. This report concludes with a list of action items and funding sources the Town and its partners can pursue to reach the overall dual goals of flood mitigation and revitalization.

6. *Housing and Needs Assessment and Action Plan – January 2006 with updated priorities September 2010*

The Housing Needs Assessment Plan provides an overview of the current housing situation in the town of Bourne providing the context within which a responsive set of strategies can be developed to address housing needs. Key findings in regard to household characteristics, housing characteristics, and housing affordability in Bourne are summarized. The strategies outlined in the plan are based on the context established by the Housing Needs Assessment, previous plans and studies, and the experience of other comparable localities on Cape Cod and throughout the Commonwealth.

7. *Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Wesley Ewell – June 2007*

The plan seeks to optimize access to and within the Village of Buzzards Bay from all points in the town and region, and by all means of transportation, with the intent of making the village a more accessible destination both for town residents and for visitors. This study looks at travel to and from areas outside the region, within the region, and between the villages of Bourne. The purpose of this study was to identify all transportation-related issues facing the village, to analyze each of those issues, and to develop a plan of actions that might be taken to address those issues.

8. *Wastewater Management Study, Tighe and Bond – October 2007*

The purpose of the Bourne Wastewater Management Study is to identify wastewater management solutions that will facilitate the revitalization of Main Street Buzzards Bay and provide a framework for long-term wastewater management in greater Bourne. Prudent planning includes developing a wastewater management solution that addresses the imperative wastewater needs of the Buzzards Bay Area while providing adequate flexibility to adapt to evolving future Town wastewater needs.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The FY 2011 Community Development Strategy (CDS) expands the prior FY2003 strategy, the prior strategy focused strictly on the Downtown area this CDS confirms commitment to a larger target area to include the residential community across the dividing bypass road. A market study revealed that residential is a very important component for the revitalization of the downtown. Although we are not creating new stock, this program will enable existing homeowners to

upgrade their properties that contribute to the slum and blight of the target area. In addition, the Housing authority will contribute to the revitalization efforts by the rehabilitation of the Continental Apartments through the use of these funds and \$100,000 from the Community Preservation Funds Housing has and economic revitalization in the Target Area coupled with the other program elements creates a vibrant “smart growth” district where affordable housing, job opportunities and services can exist in a setting served by existing infrastructure. The successful completion of this strategy will result in a sustainable community with more economic and housing opportunities.

1. Wastewater Disposal

As stated earlier, a wastewater treatment facility is the lynchpin for redevelopment. Without a town plant, there is too little capacity left in the current system to allow for significant redevelopment and infill.

- Develop a comprehensive strategy for pursuing wastewater treatment for Buzzards Bay.
- Propose funding and permitting strategy with a timeline
- Coordinate with Buzzards Bay Water District on long-term water supply issues
- Explore potential recovery of gray-water for non-potable use both on-site and system wide
- Examine local revenue generating mechanisms, including DIF and SRF
- Consider designating a Wastewater Management Task Force

2. Revitalization of Buzzards Bay

The goal of the Town is to work with private developers and local organizations to revitalize Main Street in Buzzards Bay, in accordance with an accepted comprehensive plan by implementing the following actions:

- Adopt a Form-Based Code bylaw for downtown (*Completed*)
- Develop and adopt design guidelines for downtown redevelopment (*Completed*)
- Incorporate streetscape and signage design standards (*Completed*)
- Form a design review advisory committee to review project, make recommendations to Planning Board on formal design review bylaw
- Adopt a Development Agreement bylaw (*Completed*)
- Seek Growth Incentive Zone designation for downtown (*Pending*)
- Designate a DIF district boundary for all of Buzzards Bay and apply to the state for participation in the DIF program
- Designate a Priority Development Site for part or all of downtown Buzzards Bay (*Completed*)
- Consider a 40R/40S designation for Buzzards Bay (*Completed 40R*)
- Focus on areas where housing production is desired (*Completed*)

3. Water Quality

- Support programs that evaluate the health of coastal waters, including the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts Estuaries Project, Buzzards Bay Project and others, to determine the extent of the problem and identify solutions.
- Remediate, treat or contain all sources of pollution in coastal embayments and estuaries in order to attain established Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL).
- Create a comprehensive wastewater management plan to upgrade public and private wastewater treatment facilities and methods in appropriate areas, especially in densely developed neighborhoods.

- Support the Pond and Lake Stewardship (PALS) program to compile a biological, chemical and physical profile of each fresh water pond and waterway, and continually monitor all fresh water areas for changes in the profile.
- Develop and implement a management plan to maintain or restore fresh water environments to suitably clean condition.
- Establish appropriate development set-back distances from ponds and lakes to limit nutrient impacts from on-site septic systems, lawn fertilizers and stormwater runoff.

4. *Protection of Traditional Character*

- Adopt design standards and design review procedures that improve the visual quality of developments in villages, along highways and in business parks.
- Add provisions to the zoning bylaw to better control the size, mass and setbacks of residential buildings relative to their lot sizes and neighboring structures.
- Support planned development and improvement of Main Street in Buzzards Bay as Bourne's government and downtown commercial core, and as a regional center for marine-related education, research and entertainment.

5. *Traffic / Transportation*

- Replace the Bourne Bridge Rotary with a conventional highway interchange, funded by State and Federal programs
- Reconstruct Sandwich Road between the canal bridges into a divided parkway, funded by State and Federal programs
- Revive the plan to build a new northbound MacArthur Boulevard and convert the existing southbound lane to a two-way local service road, funded by State and Federal programs
- Improve on-demand shuttle services, especially for elderly and handicapped residents, possible State and Federal funding.
- Institute scheduled bus service between Bourne's villages and popular destinations such as shopping centers, hospitals and other medical facilities, possible State and Federal funding
- Promote construction of more park and ride lots near the Canal bridges, funded by State and Federal programs
- Install a median barrier the full length of Scenic Highway along the canal, funded by State and Federal programs
- Build dedicated bicycle paths connecting village centers with outlying neighborhoods and connecting the Falmouth rail trail to the canal, funding from private sources and state grants
- Encourage expanded and improved ferryboat services between off-Cape locations and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.
- Promote extension of passenger rail service to Buzzards Bay, funding primarily Federal, State and private investment
- Develop a multimodal transportation center at the railroad station in Buzzards Bay or in a planned business park north of the Canal. Federal and State aid available

6. *Affordable Housing*

- Actively carry out the provisions of Bourne's Affordable Housing Action Plan to create affordable housing throughout the town and to attain the plan's goal to raise the share of affordable housing to at least ten percent of year-round resident households by 2015.
- Promote private development of affordable housing through regulatory incentives and tools such as the Local Initiative Program.
- Include affordable housing requirements within the zoning bylaw for large developments.

- Facilitate development of rental housing units in areas with adequate utilities, road access and services.
- Revise zoning bylaw to encourage development of “in-law” or guest accessory apartments in single-family residential districts.
- Provide an amnesty program to legalize existing accessory apartments, bring them up to code, and restrict them by deed to affordable rents.
- Institute a program to salvage houses that might otherwise be demolished, and move them for restoration as affordable housing.
- Encourage homeowners who do not have heirs to adopt deed restrictions that would keep their houses affordable in perpetuity.
- Explore conversion of vacant and underutilized schools and other government or commercial structures to residential use.
- Create a program to acquire and rehabilitate foreclosed properties as affordable housing.
- Develop educational programs to promote creation of affordable housing and instruct those who qualify of how to gain access to it.

The Town of Bourne is committed to funding these action items through various funding sources, such as the local budget, capital outlay, grants including county state and federal sources, Community Preservation Funds, and private investment.

Sustainable Development Principles

The Town of Bourne strives and encourages sustainable Development principles. In October of 2008 a form code based bylaw was adopted for the Downtown which included greater density, mixed use development, smaller lot sizes for compact development, and provided density bonuses for affordable housing. The past town meeting a Wind Energy bylaw was approved to not only permit small residential turbines, but larger commercial turbines also.

List of Community Development Priority Projects

1. Rehabilitate older housing stock in need of code compliance and energy conservation by continuing the Housing Rehab Program
2. Promote affordable housing and smart growth
3. Storm Drainage improvements
4. Sidewalk reconstruction and roadways including ADA compliant sidewalk improvements
5. Acquire/reuse Brownfield properties for future use
6. Construct new police station and department of public works facility
7. Systematic replacement of outdated sewer pipes and distribution system
8. Create additional affordable housing through use of accessory apartments and non-conforming lots
9. Create more attractive pedestrian environment in the Downtown
10. Develop a Storefront and Sign Improvement Program
11. Transportation options for low and moderate income residents
12. Rehabilitation of the senior housing complex “Continental Apartments”