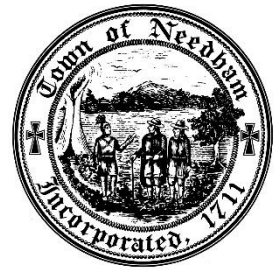


SELECT BOARD AGENDA

Special Meeting

9:00 a.m. July 26, 2025

Memorial Park Fieldhouse
92 Rosemary Street
Needham, MA 02492
&
Zoom



Pursuant to An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, meetings of public bodies may be conducted virtually provided that adequate access is provided to the public.

To listen and view this virtual meeting on a phone, computer, laptop, or tablet, download the “Zoom Cloud Meeting” app in any app store or at www.zoom.us. At the above date and time, click on “Join a Meeting” and enter the meeting or click the link below to join the webinar:

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<https://needham-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/82601013229?pwd=OE82V1MxQnJUZHVXZjFNbWJXRfJoQT09>

Webinar ID: 826 0101 3229

Passcode: 652800

One tap mobile: [+16469313860](tel:+16469313860).,82601013229#,,, *652800#

This is a public meeting of the Needham Select Board. The meeting is open to the public both in person and via Zoom. Residents are invited to provide comment during the public comment period (if set forth below) and for any item explicitly listed as a public hearing. Public comment is not available during other agenda items.

1.

9:00

Select Board Goal Setting

- a. Vision & Goals Statements Discussion
- b. FY2026-2027 Initiatives Discussion

CONSENT AGENDA

1.

Approve Executive Session Minutes of June 10, 2025

VISION: Needham is a safe and welcoming town that people are proud to call home, where neighbors care, respect differences, and contribute to the global community.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Select Board Goals is to effect positive change, set policy direction for Town government, and guide the development of the budget.

GOAL #1: Healthy and Socially Thriving – Needham residents enjoy plentiful recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in an environment that upholds human rights, celebrates diversity, and fosters a sense of connection among neighbors, thus strengthening their bond to the community they proudly call home. Needham:

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups;
- ~~Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members;~~
- Fosters inclusion, diversity, and equity in order to become a culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased community; and
- Values public art;-
- Encourages physical health and wellness amongst the whole community, including active lifestyles and community nutrition;
- Supports positive mental health throughout the community, including a range of behavioral health services and harm reduction strategies; and
- Provides guidance and support to assist residents as they access the social safety net, including SNAP, Medicaid enrollment, and other programs.

GOAL #2: Economically Vital – Needham welcomes investment in local businesses and has a thriving local economy that contributes to a growing local tax base to support desirable community amenities and programs. Needham:

- Has a growth mindset and encourages business development and redevelopment;
- Supports an environment for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship;
- Promotes a well-educated, skilled, and diverse work force that meets employers' needs;
- Fosters a collaborative and resource-rich regional business climate;
- Attracts, sustains, and retains a diverse mix of businesses, entrepreneurs and jobs that support the needs of all community members; and
- Supports financial security and economic opportunity.

GOAL #3: Livable– Needham values diversity and a broad spectrum of housing options. The community is supported by well-maintained public infrastructure and desirable amenities that accommodate a variety of community needs. Needham:

- Promotes and sustains a secure, clean, and attractive place to live, work and play;
- Supports an increase of housing, including a variety of types and price points;
- Provides high-performing, reliable, affordable public infrastructure and Town services;

- Encourages and appropriately regulates sustainable development; and
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability and accessibility for all members of the community.

GOAL #4: Accessible and Connected – In Needham, people can easily and affordably travel to their desired destinations without relying solely on cars. Needham:

- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion, and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections;
- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient, and clean mobility options;
- Applies Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety;
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable, affordable and efficient public transit;
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that enables people to connect with the natural and built environment; and
- Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community.

GOAL #5: Safe – Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety. Needham:

- Provides public safety in a manner consistent with community values;
- Provides comprehensive advanced life support level care and establishes Needham as a HeartSafe community;
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters;
- Fosters a climate of safety in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, schools, and public places; ~~and~~
- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety, and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive; and-
- Prioritizes emergency planning and training for Town staff and the community to increase our collective preparedness and resilience.

GOAL #6: Responsibly Governed – Needham has an open and accessible Town government that fosters community engagement and trust while providing excellent municipal services. Needham:

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the Town's financial, human, information, and physical assets;
- Invests in making Town-owned buildings safe, ~~and~~ functional, and accessible to all;
- Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for engagement and timely, reliable, and accurate data and analysis;
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality service in all municipal business;

- Supports, develops, and enhances relationships between the Town and community and regional partners;
- Proactively reviews and updates Town policies and regulations and ensures compliance;
- Promotes collaboration between boards and committees;
- Values the local government workforce;
- Identifies and implements strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization; and
- Prioritizes acquisition of strategic parcels.

GOAL #7: Environmentally Sustainable – Needham is a sustainable, thriving and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth’s resources; and cares for ecosystems. Needham:

- Combats the climate crisis;
- Prioritizes sustainability, including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy;
- Encourages the efficient use of natural resources; and
- Protects and enhances the biodiversity and vitality of ecological systems.



Select Board Goal Statement
Adopted August 13, 2024
July 2025 Update

VISION: Needham is a safe and welcoming town that people are proud to call home, where neighbors care, respect differences, and contribute to the global community.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Select Board Goals is to effect positive change, set policy direction for Town government, and guide the development of the budget.

GOAL #1: Healthy and Socially Thriving – Needham residents enjoy plentiful recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in an environment that upholds human rights, celebrates diversity, and fosters a sense of connection among neighbors, thus strengthening their bond to the community they proudly call home. Needham:

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups;
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members;
- Fosters inclusion, diversity, and equity in order to become a culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased community; and
- Values public art.

FY2025-2026 Initiatives	Description	Priority	Status July 2025
1	Develop and plan community celebration to take place on the Town Common.	Priority	Park & Recreation planned an event for all ages for May 3, 2025, which was cancelled due to rain. Staff will schedule for 2026.

2	Outreach to various identity network groups and ask to meet with them and attend events to understand the work they do and the community they serve.	Complete	Staff has identified and reached out to four community interest groups in March 2025.
3	Create an action plan for transitioning all Town Buildings to having all-gender bathrooms.	Regular	Staff planned to have an action plan with recommendations by Fall 2025 to inform the FY27 budget process. The Town Manager recommends revisiting this timeline during the Board's July goal setting retreat.
4	Establish clear guidelines for public art proposals for the Town of Needham, including an outline of the existing process for approval from the appropriate committees to develop a consistent public arts program to serve the Needham community.	Regular	Staff have inventoried existing Town policies and reviewed alternative models. Staff initially planned to draft policy options and a stakeholder engagement strategy with the goal of making recommendations to the Select Board by the end of CY2025. The Town Manager recommends revisiting this timeline during the Board's July goal setting retreat.
5	Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees, measure progress.	Complete	Demographic survey for Board members and applicants was rolled out in CY24. CY25 data for committee members has been gathered and data collection for applicants is current as of June 2025. OTM will continue to survey annually to understand which communities are relatively underrepresented to inform targeted recruitment efforts.
6	Complete the Equity Audit, clarify objectives, and determine next steps.	Operationalized	Racial Equity LLC has been actively engaging with each department to understand current practices and challenges in building an equity and inclusion roadmap. An employment disparity analysis based on the Town's staff demographics was completed in the Spring of 2025.

7 & 8	Conduct Board and Committee member orientation sessions to include the Town's race equity vision statement and NUARI principles.	Complete	A two-session Board and Committee orientation was held in October 2024 with positive feedback from attendees. Staff plan to run this again in FY2026.
9	Develop a plan for a community observance of Juneteenth.	Complete	Staff will organize an event similar to last year, including the Poet Laureate in the program.
10	Implement Valor Act and consider aligning the administrative process for both the Valor Act and the Senior Corps programs.	Operationalized	The Valor Act and Senior Tax Work-off Programs were adopted at the May 12, 2025, Special Town Meeting. Staff will recommend final program parameters to the Select Board in August 2025.
11	Convene NUARI to discuss progress on strategies for ensuring that all members of the community feel welcome as outlined in the NUARI vision statement and guiding principles.	Complete	Action on NUARI recommendations is reflected in Select Board goals 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

GOAL #2: Economically Vital – Needham welcomes investment in local businesses and has a thriving local economy that contributes to a growing local tax base to support desirable community amenities and programs. Needham:

- Has a growth mindset and encourages business development and redevelopment;
- Supports an environment for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship;
- Promotes a well-educated, skilled, and diverse work force that meets employers' needs;
- Fosters a collaborative and resource-rich regional business climate;
- Attracts, sustains, and retains a diverse mix of businesses, entrepreneurs and jobs that support the needs of all community members; and
- Supports financial security and economic opportunity.

FY2024-2025 Initiatives	Description	Priority	Status July 2025
13	Gather community data from Placer.ai to look at movement and time in location (duration) to target future businesses and amenities (parking lots, parks, etc.).	Operationalized	Procurement is complete. The Town can access data through December 2025. Staff in DPW, HHS, Planning, and Park & Recreation have been trained on the platform and are collecting data relative to departmental goals.

GOAL #3: Livable— Needham values diversity and a broad spectrum of housing options. The community is supported by well-maintained public infrastructure and desirable amenities that accommodate a variety of community needs. Needham:

- Promotes and sustains a secure, clean, and attractive place to live, work and play;
- Supports an increase of housing, including a variety of types and price points;
- Provides high-performing, reliable, affordable public infrastructure and Town services;
- Encourages and appropriately regulates sustainable development; and
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability and accessibility for all members of the community.

FY2024-2025 Initiatives	Description	Priority	Status July 2025
14	Work with the Planning Board on next steps related to the MBTA Communities Act.	Complete	The 2025 Annual Town Meeting voted to adopt the Base Compliance Plan, which the Town has submitted to EOHLC requesting final compliance determination.
15	Evaluate next steps for use of the Stephen Palmer Building.	Top Priority	The Town engaged HousingToHome to create the tenant relocation plan. Procurement for the consultant to help with the visioning and land use effort will be complete in August. The Select Board has appointed all members to the Stephen Palmer Development Review Committee, which will launch in September.

16	Evaluate the role of the Affordable Housing Trust.	Priority	The Town Manager provided the Board with a list of recommendations on April 11, 2025, and the Trust held an initial discussion on May 6, 2025. The Select Board will discuss the future of the AHT during its goal setting process, including opportunities for restructuring the Trust and considering the use of loans. The Trust will seek technical assistance from Mass Housing Partnership.
17	Evaluate expansion of off-leash dog areas.	Priority	Public Works confirmed the feasibility of 3 options – Rosemary Trail, Mills Field and Hillside School - based on the Active Recreation Working Group recommendations. A joint meeting of the Select Board and Park & Recreation Commission was held on June 23, 2025, to hear from the public regarding a pilot at Rosemary Trail. The Select Board will discuss at its July 22 meeting.
18	Encourage and participate in the Planning Board's large house review.	Priority	The Large House Review Committee was launched and has begun its work. A listening session was held on June 9, 2025. A consultant has been engaged to assist the Committee in preparing 3D eye-level models of select single family houses under varying floor area ratio parameters. Selection of a consultant to review the fiscal impact of the modeled floor area ratio standards is planned for mid summer.
19	Explore renaming Hemlock Gorge to Nehoiden's Grant.	FY2026	This project is scheduled for FY2026.
20	Identify funding for School Master Plan projects and participate in the planning process.	Regular	Staff prepared a detailed facility financing plan that was presented to the Finance Committee and Select Board in April 2025. This will be updated as the feasibility study advances.
21	Evaluate RTS Service Delivery Model to guide long-term	Regular	The Town has contracted with TetraTech and conducted a survey. They are now investigating four different service

	investment and review operational efficiencies in the short-term.		delivery model options and the associated trade-offs that will be presented by the end of 2025.
22	Upgrade Town Seal to improve graphic quality and historical accuracy.	Regular	The Branding and Town Seal Committee has made recommended changes to the Town Seal which an illustrator is in the process of incorporating into a proposed redesign for review by the Select Board.
23	Identify opportunities for expanded active and passive recreation facilities including but not limited to an action sports park and pickleball.	Operationalized	Park & Recreation completed a feasibility study for a potential action sports park and pickleball courts. Claxton (including the quarry) were selected as the preferred site for both facilities. The 2025 Annual Town Meeting approved design funds for these projects.
24	Improve trailhead access to ensure clear and accessible access.	Operationalized	Funding for this project was approved at the 2025 Annual Town Meeting.

GOAL #4: Accessible and Connected – In Needham, people can easily and affordably travel to their desired destinations without relying solely on cars. Needham:

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- Applies Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety;
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable, and efficient public transit;
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that enables people to connect with the natural and built environment; and
- Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community.

FY2024-2025 Initiatives	Description	Priority	Status July 2025
25	Complete Quiet Zone feasibility and design and seek funding for	Top Priority	The Town has contracted with Tighe and Bond and Benesch to conduct the design phase of this project. A diagnostic

	noise reduction/Quiet Zone construction.		review meeting was held, and the consultant is working with the MBTA on the next steps in design. Cost estimates have been delayed until further information is provided by the MBTA.
26	Evaluate the feasibility of a shared use way between Needham Heights and the City of Newton.	Priority	The Town Manager recommends revisiting this timeline during the Board's July goal setting retreat before reaching out to the City of Newton regarding next steps.
27	Evaluate expansion of snow and ice removal efforts, including sidewalk plowing strategies.	Regular	The Director of Public Works presented to the Select Board ending the center snow removal pilot based on an inability to meet the demand from a staffing perspective. DPW will work with Economic Development to discuss with the business in the center to see if the Town can assist them in procuring their own services.
28	Update parking payment technologies to allow for credit card and/or app-based payments.	Regular	HotSpot has been secured as the Town's vendor and the Board updated the traffic regulations to allow for payment by app. Implementation has been delayed from Spring to Fall 2025 until integration between this app and the Town's parking enforcement software is completed.
29	Evaluate and make a final determination of the appropriate plan for Downtown Redesign Phase 2.	Regular	This project is on-going with a deeper analysis and community engagement anticipated over the next several months.

GOAL #5: Safe – Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety. Needham:

- Provides public safety in a manner consistent with community values;
- Provides comprehensive advanced life support level care;
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters;
- Fosters a climate of safety in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, schools, and public places; and
- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety, and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

GOAL #6: Responsibly Governed – Needham has an open and accessible Town government that fosters community engagement and trust while providing excellent municipal services. Needham:

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the Town’s financial, human, information, and physical assets;
- Invests in making Town-owned buildings safe and functional;
- Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for engagement and timely, reliable, and accurate data and analysis;
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality service in all municipal business;
- Supports, develops, and enhances relationships between the Town and community and regional partners;
- Proactively reviews and updates Town policies and regulations and ensures compliance;
- Promotes collaboration between boards and committees;
- Values the local government workforce;
- Identifies and implements strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization; and
- Prioritizes acquisition of strategic parcels.

FY2024-2025 Initiatives	Description	Priority	Status July 2025
30	Collaborate with the Finance Committee about the Town’s policies regarding the use of free cash and debt.	Complete	At its meeting on December 17, 2024, the Select Board reviewed policy updates for the CIP (now CEF), the CIF, and the DSSF. The Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance previously reviewed the policy proposals with the Select Board and Finance Committee. Policy updates were included in the FY2026-2030 CIP. The May 12, 2025 Special Town Meeting (article 14) approved the amendment to the AFIF by dedicating 40% of the Rosemary Pool receipts to the Fund starting July 1, 2025 (FY2026).
31	Evaluate the possibility of developing a Community Master Plan. Develop an inventory of Town long-range plans and identify overlaps and conflicts, including other Boards of jurisdictions.	Regular	Staff has started the process of identification and inventorying of long-range plans.

32	Capital Facilities: CATH upgrades (including additional parking).	Regular	The 2025 Annual Town Meeting voted to fund the design of the upgrades requested by the Council on Aging. The Town entered into a license agreement for 12 additional parking spaces in the MBTA lot along Hillside Avenue.
33	Evaluate ways to increase minority and women-owned business participation in construction, building maintenance projects, and other Town programs.	Regular	The Finance Department is reviewing potential strategies for increasing minority and women-owned business participation in the procurement process with the Town's Equity Audit consultant and are investigating a procurement platform. Recommendations will be made by the end of calendar year 2025.
34	Evaluate enhanced benefits to assist in the Town's recruitment and retention efforts.	Operationalized	The Human Resources department explores attractive benefits for both new recruits and current employees on an ongoing basis. Recent examples include the upfront payment of the Town's contribution to an employee Health's savings account to incentivize enrollment, and implementation of emotional wellness programs, changes to family and parental leave, expansion of the summer work hours schedule, and allowing employees to obtain stickers for the RTS on the same basis as residents.
35	Review and update the Sign Bylaw.	FY2026	This project is scheduled for FY2026.
36	Review and update Select Board policies as appropriate.	Regular	Updated Alcohol Regulations will be presented to the Select Board in August 2025. Additional licensing policies are under review by staff for modernization.
37	Evaluate options for enhanced data collection by Town Departments to assist the Board in reviewing and evaluating progress toward goals.	Operationalized	Staff piloted a new question added to the building permit application to gather data on public trees within 10 feet of proposed construction. This is intended to catch potential conflicts earlier in the development process.
38	Explore options for evaluating Town Counsel.	Complete	Town Counsel provided the Board with a review of the prior year on November 26, 2024.

39	DPW phased renovation/construction.	Regular	The 2025 Annual Town Meeting voted to approve funding for the addition to the Jack Cogswell Building to house the Fleet Division. Future phases remain pending.
40	Capital Facilities: Library phased renovations.	Regular	Funding for the renovation of the Young Adult area at the library was approved at the 2025 Annual Town Meeting. Construction will begin in September.
41	Implement successor agreements for expiring contracts.	Operationalized	Staff met with the Police Union to begin negotiations but did not reach agreement in time for the 2025 Annual Town Meeting. The Select Board approved the employment agreement for the next Town Manager at its meeting on May 13, 2025, and a successor contract for the Fire Chief at its meeting on May 27, 2025.

GOAL #7: Environmentally Sustainable – Needham is a sustainable, thriving and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth’s resources; and cares for ecosystems. Needham:

- Combats the climate crisis;
- Prioritizes sustainability, including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy;
- Encourages the efficient use of natural resources; and
- Protects and enhances the biodiversity and vitality of ecological systems.

FY2024-2025 Initiatives	Description	Priority	Status July 2025
42	Identify and implement strategies to protect the Town’s tree canopy.	Priority	The Tree Preservation Planning Committee has begun its work and held a listening session on June 4, 2025.
43	Develop Town Zero Emission First policy.	Complete	The Select Board approved the Zero Emission Vehicle First Policy at its meeting on November 12, 2024.
44	Explore the option of enabling Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program through MassDevelopment	Regular	Town staff are preparing draft PACE adoption language and an accompanying memo for Select Board review by early Fall 2025. The program was presented to the Board of

	Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.		Assessors and did not have any concerns regarding implementation.
45	Strengthen the Town's Stormwater By-Law and prioritize efforts to improve stormwater quality and capacity.	Regular	The Select Board created a Stormwater By-law Working Group to make recommendations to the Board. The Working Group will present to the Board in July.
46	Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.	FY2026	This project is scheduled for FY26. The Town submitted application materials for the state Climate Leader Communities certification in June 2025 and if approved, will be required to implement at least one climate community engagement best practice each year. Best practices for this certification will inform Climate Communications Strategy development.
47	Establish regulations to prohibit non-electric vehicles parking in EV charging spots.	Complete	The Select Board approved the update to the Traffic Rules and Regulations at its meeting on November 26, 2024.
48	Recommend community energy aggregation	Complete	Needham Power Choice launched on March 1, 2025. To date, enrollments in the program have been slightly above average as compared to typical communities, with 94% of eligible accounts enrolled in the program.

The Select Board also identified these initiatives to begin in 2026 or later:

Initiatives to Begin in 18-36 months:

- Healthy and Socially Thriving
 - Launch a Civics Academy to introduce Needham residents to all facets of local government
- Accessible and Connected
 - Pilot converting some on-street parking spaces for more active curb use (e.g., short customer visits, active loading areas).

- Update the Town's parking regulations and permit program (including permit rules, time/day regulations, and pricing).
- Evaluate funding options for the Rail Trail extension from High Rock Street to Needham Junction.
- Environmentally Sustainable
 - Consider further opportunities for reducing plastic use in Needham.

Initiatives to Begin in 36+ months

- Economically Vital
 - Evaluate Chestnut Street redevelopment.

FY26-27 Select Board Goal Setting
07/26/2025

Idea #	FY25-26 Goal #	Status	Item	Origin
1	1		Develop and plan community celebration to take place on the Town Common.	FY25-26 Goals
2	2	Completed	Outreach to various identity network groups and ask to meet with them and attend events to understand the work they do and the community they serve.	FY25-26 Goals
3	3		Create an action plan for transitioning all Town Buildings to having all-gender bathrooms.	FY25-26 Goals
4	4		Establish clear guidelines for public art proposals for the Town of Needham, including an outline of the existing process for approval from the appropriate committees to develop a consistent public arts program to serve the Needham community.	FY25-26 Goals
5	5	Completed	Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees, measure progress.	FY25-26 Goals
6	6	Operationalized	Complete the Equity Audit, clarify objectives, and determine next steps.	FY25-26 Goals
7	7	Completed	Conduct Board and Committee member orientation sessions to include the Town's race equity vision statement.	FY25-26 Goals
8	9	Completed	Develop a plan for a community observance of Juneteenth.	FY25-26 Goals
9	10	Operationalized	Implement Valor Act and consider aligning the administrative process for both the Valor Act and the Senior Corps programs.	FY25-26 Goals
10	11	Completed	Convene NUARI to discuss progress on strategies for ensuring that all members of the community feel welcome as outlined in the NUARI vision statement and guiding principles.	FY25-26 Goals
11	13	Operationalized	Gather community data from Placer.ai to look at movement and time in location (duration) to target future businesses and amenities (parking lots, parks, etc.).	FY25-26 Goals
12	14	Completed	Work with the Planning Board on next steps related to the MBTA Communities Act.	FY25-26 Goals
13	15		Evaluate next steps for use of the Stephen Palmer Building.	FY25-26 Goals
14	16		Evaluate the role of the Affordable Housing Trust.	FY25-26 Goals
15	17		Evaluate expansion of off-leash dog areas.	FY25-26 Goals
16	18		Encourage and participate in the Planning Board's large house review.	FY25-26 Goals
17	19		Explore renaming Hemlock Gorge to Nehoiden's Grant.	FY25-26 Goals
18	20		Identify funding for School Master Plan projects and participate in the planning process.	FY25-26 Goals
19	21		Evaluate RTS Service Delivery Model to guide long-term investment and review operational efficiencies in the short-term.	FY25-26 Goals
20	22		Upgrade Town Seal to improve graphic quality and historical accuracy.	FY25-26 Goals
21	23	Operationalized	Identify opportunities for expanded active and passive recreation facilities including but not limited to an action sports park and pickleball.	FY25-26 Goals
22	24	Operationalized	Improve trailhead access to ensure clear and accessible access.	FY25-26 Goals
23	25		Complete Quiet Zone feasibility and design and seek funding for noise reduction/Quiet Zone construction.	FY25-26 Goals
24	26		Evaluate the feasibility of a shared use way between Needham Heights and the City of Newton.	FY25-26 Goals
25	27		Evaluate expansion of snow and ice removal efforts, including sidewalk plowing strategies.	FY25-26 Goals
26	28		Update parking payment technologies to allow for credit card and/or app-based payments.	FY25-26 Goals

FY26-27 Select Board Goal Setting
07/26/2025

Idea #	FY25-26 Goal #	Status	Item	Origin
27	29		Evaluate and make a final determination of the appropriate plan for Downtown Redesign Phase 2.	FY25-26 Goals
28	30	Completed	Collaborate with the Finance Committee about the Town's policies regarding the use of free cash and debt.	FY25-26 Goals
29	31		Evaluate the possibility of developing a Community Master Plan. Develop an inventory of Town long-range plans and identify overlaps and conflicts, including other Boards of jurisdictions.	FY25-26 Goals
30	32		Capital Facilities: CATH upgrades (including additional parking).	FY25-26 Goals
31	33		Evaluate ways to increase minority and women-owned business participation in construction, building maintenance projects, and other Town programs.	FY25-26 Goals
32	34	Operationalized	Evaluate enhanced benefits to assist in the Town's recruitment and retention efforts.	FY25-26 Goals
33	35		Review and update the Sign Bylaw.	FY25-26 Goals
34	36		Review and update Select Board policies as appropriate.	FY25-26 Goals
35	37	Operationalized	Evaluate options for enhanced data collection by Town Departments to assist the Board in reviewing and evaluating progress toward goals.	FY25-26 Goals
36	38	Completed	Explore options for evaluating Town Counsel.	FY25-26 Goals
37	39		DPW phased renovation/construction.	FY25-26 Goals
38	40		Capital Facilities: Library phased renovations.	FY25-26 Goals
39	41	Operationalized	Implement successor agreements for expiring contracts.	FY25-26 Goals
40	42		Identify and implement strategies to protect the Town's tree canopy.	FY25-26 Goals
41	43	Completed	Develop Town Zero Emission First policy.	FY25-26 Goals
42	44		Explore the option of enabling Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program through MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.	FY25-26 Goals
43	45		Strengthen the Town's Stormwater By-Law and prioritize efforts to improve stormwater quality and capacity.	FY25-26 Goals
44	46		Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.	FY25-26 Goals
45	47	Completed	Establish regulations to prohibit non-electric vehicles parking in EV charging spots.	FY25-26 Goals
46	48	Completed	Recommend community energy aggregation	FY25-26 Goals
47	18-36 months		Launch a Civics Academy to introduce Needham residents to all facets of local government	FY25-26 Goals
48	18-36 months		Pilot converting some on-street parking spaces for more active curb use (e.g., short customer visits, active loading areas).	FY25-26 Goals
49	18-36 months		Update the Town's parking regulations and permit program (including permit rules, time/day regulations, and pricing).	FY25-26 Goals
50	18-36 months		Evaluate funding options for the Rail Trail extension from High Rock Street to Needham Junction.	FY25-26 Goals
51	18-36 months		Consider further opportunities for reducing plastic use in Needham.	FY25-26 Goals
52	36+ months		Evaluate Chestnut Street redevelopment.	FY25-26 Goals
53	New		Review and advance recommendations from the General Bylaw Review Committee.	Town Staff

FY26-27 Select Board Goal Setting
07/26/2025

Idea #	FY25-26 Goal #	Status	Item	Origin
54	New		Implement the ITC Strategic Plan, including cybersecurity initiatives.	Town Staff
55	New		Maintain equitable ambulance rates in Needham in alignment with regional standards and consistent with comparable municipalities.	Town Staff
56	New		Achieve compliance with website accessibility requirements by April 2027.	Town Staff
57	Operationalize		Successfully implement enterprise-wide financial applications software.	Town Staff
58	Operationalize		Continue staff recruitment and retention efforts, including analyses of staffing levels and classification/compensation system.	Town Staff
59	New		Update the Town's 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan to inform decision-making about community resilience, public safety, and infrastructure development.	Town Staff
60	New		Conduct active threat drills in all Town facilities, develop After-Action Reports and Improvement Plans to inform future maintenance plans.	Town Staff
61	New		Review the Town's Accessibility Self-Audit and develop a process to prioritize the recommendations provided, to inform future plans.	Town Staff
62	New		Expand training and technical assistance about composting to food service establishments and encourage voluntary compliance with the state's food waste diversion goals.	Town Staff
63	New		Explore alternative facilities planning for DPW if DeFazio is selected as the site for Pollard construction.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
64	New		Create an economic development strategic plan for the Town.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
65	New		Add additional public parking options through public/private agreements and partnerships and partnering with the MBTA.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
66	New		Analyze the considerations if the Town were to issue bonds and/or loans for Needham Housing Authority capital projects and make recommendations for future action.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
67	New		Provide trainings for the Select Board: deescalation, emergency management.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
68	New		Reduce Inflow & Infiltration by tackling illegal sewer/drain hookups.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
69	New		Update Needham's friendly 40B guidelines. https://needhamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8166/40B-Guidelines-FINAL?bidId=	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
70	New		Advance the Highland Avenue roadway project onto the TIP.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
71	New		Partner closely with the Needham Public Schools and MSBA to advance the Pollard construction project, including community engagement efforts.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
72	New		Increase staff capacity for communications and community engagement responsibilities.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff
73	New		Create a communications/community engagement toolkit for Town projects, including a matrix for categorizing projects by levels of engagement, pairing each category with relevant strategies and templates, and providing guidance to staff and boards/committees on setting project timelines and milestones.	Select Board Member(s), Town Staff

FY26-27 Select Board Goal Setting
07/26/2025

Idea #	FY25-26 Goal #	Status	Item	Origin
74	New		Advance a Home Rule Petition to allow for digital posting of legal notices in place of newspaper publication.	Select Board Member(s)
75	New		Revisit the recommendations for Town action from the NUARI Focus groups.	Select Board Member(s)
76	New		Explore building a parking garage in the Chapel Street lot through a public/private partnership.	Select Board Member(s)
77	New		Study the results of a voluntary initiative by landscapers to trial electric equipment. Discuss need for full or partial ban of gas leafblowers.	Select Board Member(s)
78	New		Develop a communications protocol for the Select Board. (e.g. statements vs. announcements; when from Board, Chair, or Town Manager; when to endorse statements of others)	Select Board Member(s)
79	New		Update the Town's Noise Bylaw.	Select Board Member(s)
80	New		Review the Select Board's committee appointment policy.	Select Board Member(s)
81	New		Consider goals and strategies for undergrounding wires and eliminating poles.	Select Board Member(s)
82	New		Identify enforcement options for Grant of Location violations and create a policy for implementation, if necessary.	Select Board Member(s)
83	New		Review and adjust Select Board stipends.	Select Board Member(s)
84	New		Review number and structure of Select Board committees and make recommendations for potential consolidation, reduction, or reassignment to Select Board designees.	Select Board Member(s)
85	New		Implementing guidelines for staff to respond to ad-hoc queries from residents. This may include the person who should be responding (which may not necessarily be the same person to whom a query is addressed) and the timeframe for a response.	Select Board Member(s)
86	New		Review voting locations	Select Board Member(s)
87	New		Consider adoption of M.G.L Chapter 41 §§69C-69F (Board of Public Works)	Select Board Member(s)
88	New		Do a walk-by of properties that are vacant on Street Listing to verify that they are still vacant and otherwise update for census.	Other Board/Committee, Town Staff
89	New		Review Street Listing and Voter Registration and develop a methodology to better capture rental unit turnover in apartment buildings in Needham.	Other Board/Committee, Town Staff
90	New		Provide training and technical assistance to food service establishments, with appropriate language translation and interpretation, to assist those establishments in meeting ever-evolving food safety practices.	Other Board/Committee, Town Staff
91	New		Expand access to safe and healthy food to members of the community, and invest in nutrition programs specifically targeted for seniors, the disabled, and those residents with the most limited resources.	Other Board/Committee, Town Staff
92	New		Expand availability of pre-rental housing inspections to ensure that housing units in Needham meet the state Housing Code.	Other Board/Committee, Town Staff
93	New		Re-activate the Town's Hoarding Task Force and identify strategies to assist residents with housing and mental health challenges.	Other Board/Committee, Town Staff
94	New		Identify and implement strategies to preserve both historic and smaller houses.	Other Board/Committee
95	New		Update the Town's Preservation Plan.	Other Board/Committee
96	New		Recommend an increase in the Older Citizens Tax Deferral (Clause 41A) income cap.	Other Board/Committee

FY26-27 Select Board Goal Setting
07/26/2025

Idea #	FY25-26 Goal #	Status	Item	Origin
97	New		Establish a new committee to explore community programming through the summer & fall months around town.	Community Member
98	New		Create greater awareness in town about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).	Community Member
99	New		Advance zoning reforms (in addition to the MBTA Communities Act) to promote development of multifamily housing.	Community Member
100	New		Advocate to MassDOT to change the nomenclature on 128 exit signs to Needham Crossing.	Community Member
101	New		Add weatherproof Town message boards/glass cases (digital or print) at key locations around town and actively manage and update messaging in them at least monthly.	Community Member

Katie King

From: Selectboard
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2025 12:09 PM
To: Heidi Frail; Catherine Dowd; Joshua Levy; Marianne Cooley; Kevin Keane
Cc: Marianne B. Cooley; Kate Fitzpatrick; Katie King; Dave Davison; Amy Haelsen; Carol Hintz; Joshua Levy
Subject: FW: Proposal for new Town Committee

Good Afternoon,

Please see the below email sent to the org box re: a proposal for a new committee/organization.



Myles Tucker
He/Him/His
Support Services Manager
Town of Needham
Needham Town Hall
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02492
www.needhamma.gov
Office: (781) 455-7500 ext. 204

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From: Avery Newton [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 11:06 AM
To: Selectboard <Selectboard@needhamma.gov>
Subject: Proposal for new Town Committee

Good morning members of the Select Board,

I have enjoyed serving on various town committees over the last ~6 years and love that there are so many opportunities for citizens to engage in local goings-on and decision making. Given some of the conversations I've been having around town as well as the increased engagement re: the Envision project, I was wondering about the process for establishing a new committee to explore community programming through the summer & fall months around town. This might include:

- local musicians
- food trucks / local restaurants
- kid and teen entertainment
- showcase of local volunteer opportunities for those interested
- local businesses open late for one pre-determined day

There are plenty of examples of this type of event locally (e.g., Concord's Third Thursdays, Natick's Natick Nights) and Needham is well positioned in terms of existing community/gathering space on the town common. Furthermore I anticipate there would be solid volunteer interest in town to help keep some of the costs down.

If this is something that you believe is worth exploring, I would be happy to write up a formal proposal (is there a template for this?). This initiative could kick off in the Fall in preparation for the following summer, in partnership with Park & Rec and Arts & Culture among others.

I appreciate your consideration and welcome your recommendation(s) for next steps! Sincerely,

Avery

Avery Danforth Deisz Newton, Ph.D.

E [REDACTED]

W [REDACTED]



June 6, 2025

Heidi Frail, Needham Select Board Chair
Catherine Reid Dowd, Needham Select Board Vice Chair
Needham Town Hall
1471 Highland Ave
Needham, MA 02492

Re: Climate Action Committee Recommended Priorities for FY26

Dear Chair Frail and Vice Chair Dowd:

The Climate Action Committee recognizes that the Town of Needham has already made significant progress on several key priorities from the Climate Action Roadmap. Recognizing that many of the activities required to accomplish these priorities are on-going, rather than recommending new priorities for FY26, the Climate Action Committee would like to reiterate the importance of completing the priorities that are in progress. These include:

Develop and enact a Tree Preservation Bylaw covering the removal and restoration of trees on private land.

Needham's tree cover is a substantial asset to the Town, currently sequestering 18,681 MTCO₂e per year, or roughly 5% of the CO₂ that the Town produces each year. We recommend that the Town prioritize the protection of this resource. We appreciate the formation of the Tree Preservation Planning Committee and look forward to regular updates and the implementation of their recommendations. (Climate Action Roadmap NA.1.1.A)

Enable Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) by opting into MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.

This action is focused on helping commercial property owners secure financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on private property. PACE allows property owners to tie debt incurred for the investment in efficiency or renewable energy to the property instead of the owner. Under PACE, this debt can be transferred along with the property when it is sold. There are modest requirements of Town staff, specifically related to the recording of betterment assessments as they occur. PACE would potentially remove a disincentive to private property owners to pursue decarbonization projects. Town staff have begun discussions with MassDevelopment to understand the implementation requirements and presented on the topic to

the Board of Assessors. We support the efforts of Town staff on this effort and look forward to the presentation of this topic to the Select Board in the near future. (Climate Action Roadmap BU.1.1.B)

Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.

A Climate Communications Strategy will tie together several other items in the Roadmap, including promoting solar PV installation (EN.1.2.B); promoting building efficiency programs (BU.1.2.B); decarbonizing transportation (TR.1.1.B), heating of buildings (BU.1.2.C), and electricity (EN.1.1.B); waste reduction (NA.2.1.A). Since the success of these measures depends on substantial community outreach and education, a cohesive outreach program would be well suited to address each of these topics. We appreciate that Town staff are beginning to shape this program and look forward to the launch of these outreach efforts in the coming year. (Climate Action Roadmap GO.1.2.A)

These three priority items are in addition to the many sustainability-related efforts that are being planned and implemented by staff in a number of Town Departments. The Climate Action Committee appreciates the continued progress that is being made towards these Climate Action Roadmap priorities and asks that these measures continue to receive the support of the Select Board.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Hill, Climate Action Committee Chair
Paul Molta, Climate Action Committee Vice-Chair

Myles Tucker

From: Tyler Gabrielski <tgabrielski@needhamma.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 4, 2025 5:35 PM
To: Allen, Duncan
Subject: Re: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

Thank you Duncan. I understand what you are saying. I will share your note with Katie.

Tyler Gabrielski

Director of Streets & Transportation
Department of Public Works
Town of Needham
[Tel: \(781\) 455-7550](tel:(781)455-7550) Ext: 72345
Cell: (781) 760-8530
Email: tgabrielski@needhamma.gov

From: Allen, Duncan [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 8:39 PM
To: Tyler Gabrielski <tgabrielski@needhamma.gov>
Subject: RE: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

Hello, Tyler,

There's not really anything to take exception to here – a pretty broad spectrum of goals. I do sense that the overall package is a bit light on balancing attainment of these objectives with cost-effectiveness and affordability. Is there room for developing some metrics for the town government's productivity and efficiency, say \$/capita for starters? Can performance indicators of measures of effectiveness be established for some of the goals?

Regards,

Duncan Allen

From: Tyler Gabrielski <tgabrielski@needhamma.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 1:40 PM
To: Barry McNeilly [REDACTED]; Dale Michaud <[REDACTED]> Donna Mullin <[REDACTED]> Guus Driessen <[REDACTED]> John McGrath <jmcgrath@needhamma.gov> Justin McCullen <jmccullen@gmail.com> Rebecca Tarantino <[REDACTED]> Robert Wilson <RWilson@needhamma.gov> Thomas Ryder <tryder@needhamma.gov> Alexandra Clee <aclee@needhamma.gov> Allen, Duncan [REDACTED] Carys Lustig <clustig@needhamma.gov> Guus Driessen [REDACTED] James Goldstein [REDACTED] Justin McCullen <[REDACTED]> Shane Mark <smark@needhamma.gov> Stephen Anthony Frail <[REDACTED]> Tim Bulger <tbulger@needhamma.gov>
Subject: Fw: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

Arcadis Warning: Exercise caution with email messages from external sources such as this message. Always verify the sender and avoid clicking on links or scanning QR codes unless certain of their authenticity.

Hi folks,

Please see Katie King's message below regarding FY26/FY27 Select Board goals. The Board is looking for feedback and suggestions on the current goals and what could be added as well.

Feel free to send me your comments and I will forward them along to the Town Manager's Office.

Thanks,

Tyler Gabrielski

Director of Streets & Transportation

Department of Public Works

Town of Needham

Tel: (781) 455-7550 Ext: 72345

Cell: (781) 760-8530

Email: tgabrielski@needhamma.gov

From: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>

Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:36 PM

To: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>

Cc: Myles Tucker <mtucker@needhamma.gov>

Subject: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

This message is being sent to all Department Managers, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons.

Hi All:

We have begun the process of reviewing and updating Select Board goals for FY2026 and FY2027. The Board is interested in hearing feedback from department managers and board and committee members about their priorities, thoughts about items that are on the current goal list ([here](#) and attached) that should stay or be removed, or anything new that they would like the Select Board to consider adding.

I would appreciate you sharing this message and the goals with any board, committee, or commission that you work with. Please send any feedback to me and Myles by June 30th.

Thank you,

Katie

Katie King

She/Her/Hers

Deputy Town Manager

Town of Needham

1471 Highland Avenue

Needham, MA 02492

(781) 455-7500 ext. 233
kking@needhamma.gov

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Fire Department: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals

Keep: Goal #5

Goal #5: Safe Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety. Needham:

- Provides public safety in a manner consistent with community values;
- Provides comprehensive advanced life support level care;
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and response to emergencies and natural disasters

ADD;

1. Prioritizes emergency planning and training for Town staff and the community to increase our collective preparedness and resilience.

- This is important with the unknown of FEMA and the availability of grants to be sure the Needham community and staff are well prepared for any emergencies (natural, man-made, etc.)

2. Maintain equitable ambulance rates in Needham in alignment with regional standards and consistent with comparable municipalities.

3. Conduct a comprehensive staffing analysis to identify and address personnel needs in response to the town's continue growth and development.

Myles Tucker

From: Gabrielle Queenan
Sent: Wednesday, June 18, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Katie King
Cc: Myles Tucker
Subject: RE: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

Hi Katie and Myles,

For the Select Board goals, I think we should remove the following items since they are completed:

- Develop Town Zero Emission First policy.
- Establish regulations to prohibit non-electric vehicles parking in EV charging spots.
- Recommend community energy aggregation

And then I am in support of keeping the below items which are in process:

- Explore the option of enabling Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program through MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.
- Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap

If you have any questions on the above, just let me know.

Best,

Gabby



Gabby Queenan (she/her)

Sustainability Manager
Town of Needham
Needham Town Hall
500 Dedham Ave
Needham, MA 02492
Office: (781) 455-7550 ext 72351
Mobile: (339) 213-2634
www.needhamma.gov



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From: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:36 PM
To: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>
Cc: Myles Tucker <mtucker@needhamma.gov>
Subject: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

This message is being sent to all Department Managers, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons.

Hi All:

We have begun the process of reviewing and updating Select Board goals for FY2026 and FY2027. The Board is interested in hearing feedback from department managers and board and committee members about their priorities, thoughts about items that are on the current goal list ([here](#) and attached) that should stay or be removed, or anything new that they would like the Select Board to consider adding.

I would appreciate you sharing this message and the goals with any board, committee, or commission that you work with. Please send any feedback to me and Myles by June 30th.

Thank you,
Katie

Katie King
She/Her/Hers
Deputy Town Manager
Town of Needham
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02492
(781) 455-7500 ext. 233
kking@needhamma.gov

FY 2025-2026 Goals

Goal #1: Healthy and Socially Thriving

Needham residents enjoy plentiful recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in an environment that upholds human rights, celebrates diversity, and fosters a sense of connection among neighbors, thus strengthening their bond to the community they proudly call home. Needham:

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups;
 - ~~Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members;~~
 - Fosters inclusion, diversity, and equity in order to become a culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased community; and
 - Values public art.
- Encourages physical health and wellness amongst the whole community, including active lifestyles and community nutrition.
 - Supports positive mental health throughout the community, including an expanded range of behavioral health services and harm reduction strategies.
 - In response to shrinking social safety net and the increased administrative burden for individuals attempting to access those services, Needham will increase guidance and support to assist residents as they access the social safety net including SNAP and Medicaid enrollment amongst other programs.

Commented [TM1]: Have a suggestion for revised goal language....splitting physical and mental health into their own bullets, and adding a bullet about accessing the social safety net.

Formatted: List Paragraph, Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"

Goal #2: Economically Vital

Suggest new initiatives under the first bullet in Goal #2, "Has a growth mindset and encourages business development and redevelopment."

- ❖ Provide training and technical assistance to food service establishments, with appropriate language translation and interpretation, to assist those establishments in meeting ever-evolving food safety practices.

Goal #3: Livable

Commented [TM2]: Suggested two new initiatives under Goal #3 Livable

Needham values diversity and a broad spectrum of housing options. The community is supported by well-maintained public infrastructure and desirable amenities that accommodate a variety of community needs. Needham:

- Promotes and sustains a secure, clean, and attractive place to live, work and play;
- Supports an increase of housing, including a variety of types and price points;
- Provides high-performing, reliable, affordable public infrastructure and Town services;
- Encourages and appropriately regulates sustainable development; and
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability and accessibility for all members of the community.

- ❖ As a resource both to renters and to landlords, expand availability of pre-rental housing inspections which will ensure that all housing units in Needham meet every facet of the state Housing Code.
- ❖ Expand access to safe and healthy food to members of the community, and invest in nutrition programs specifically targeted for seniors, the disabled, and those residents with the most limited resources.

Goal #4: Accessible and Connected

In Needham, people can easily and affordably travel to their desired destinations without relying solely on cars. Needham:

- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion, and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections;
- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient, and clean mobility options;
- Applies Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety;
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable, ~~affordable,~~ and efficient public transit;
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that enables people to connect with the natural and built environment; and
- Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community.

Commented [TM3]: Suggest adding a single word into the text of one bullet

Goal #5: Safe

Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety. Needham:

- Provides public safety in a manner consistent with community values;
- Provides comprehensive advanced life support level care and make Needham a HeartSafe community;
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters;
- Fosters a climate of safety in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, schools, and public places; and
- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety, and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

- ❖ Re-activate the Town's Hoarding Task Force and expand active assistance to residents with housing and mental health challenges;
- ❖ Invest in the development of an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan to inform decision-making about community resilience, public safety, and infrastructure development.
- ❖ Prioritize emergency planning and trainings for Town staff and the community to increase our collective preparedness and resilience.

Commented [TM4]: Suggestions for three new initiatives under Goal #5 Safe

Goal #6: Responsibly Governed

Needham has an open and accessible Town government that fosters community engagement and trust while providing excellent municipal services. Needham:

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the Town's financial, human, information, and physical assets;
 - Invests in making Town-owned buildings safe, ~~and functional~~, and accessible to all;
 - Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for engagement and timely, reliable, and accurate data and analysis;
 - Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality service in all municipal business;
 - Supports, develops, and enhances relationships between the Town and community and regional partners;
 - Proactively reviews and updates Town policies and regulations and ensures compliance;
 - Promotes collaboration between boards and committees;
 - Values the local government workforce;
 - Identifies and implements strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization; and
 - Prioritizes acquisition of strategic parcels.
-
- ❖ Conduct active threat drills in all Town facilities, develop After-Action Reports and Improvement Plans, and incorporates those improvements into future year maintenance plans;
 - ❖ Review and publicize the results of the Town's Accessibility Self-Audit, develop a process to prioritize the recommendations provided, and work to incorporate those recommendations into future year maintenance plans;
 - ❖ In an effort to improve customer service and cut down on calls transferred to the wrong departments, create a short training and a simple infographic for the admin staff and volunteers to understand the responsibilities of each department.

Commented [TMS]: Three new initiatives suggested under Goal #6 Responsibly Governed, plus one edit to the bullet text

Goal #7: Environmentally Sustainable

Needham is a sustainable, thriving, and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth's resources; and cares for ecosystems. Needham:

- Combats the climate crisis;
 - Prioritizes sustainability, including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy;
 - Encourages the efficient use of natural resources; and
 - Protects and enhances the biodiversity and vitality of ecological systems.
- ❖ Expanding training and technical assistance about composting to food service establishments and encourage voluntary compliance with the state's food waste diversion goals.

Commented [TM6]: One suggested new initiative under Goal #7 Environmentally Sustainable

Responsibly Governed

- **Collaborate with the Finance Committee about the Town's**
- **policies regarding the use of free cash and debt.**
- Evaluate the possibility of developing a Community Master Plan. Develop an inventory of Town long-range plans and identify overlaps and conflicts, including other Boards of jurisdictions.
- **Capital Facilities: CATH upgrades (including additional parking).**
- Evaluate ways to increase minority and women-owned business participation in construction, building maintenance projects, and other Town programs.
- Evaluate enhanced benefits to assist in the Town's recruitment and retention efforts.
- Review and update the Sign Bylaw.
- Review and update Select Board policies as appropriate.
- **Evaluate options for enhanced data collection by Town Departments to assist the Board in reviewing and evaluating progress toward goals.**
- Explore options for evaluating Town Counsel.
- *DPW phased renovation/construction.*
- *Capital Facilities: Library phased renovations.*
- *Implement successor agreements for expiring contracts.*

Commented [TM7]: Maybe revise and expand the language to include developing a phasing plan for CATH improvements to ensure the minimum level of service interruption

Commented [TM8]: A Comprehensive Community Health Survey would fit nicely as part of this initiative.

Myles Tucker

From: Taylor Donaldson Jhurani
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2025 1:03 PM
To: Katie King
Cc: Myles Tucker
Subject: RE: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

Good afternoon Katie and Myles,

The Human Rights Committee met last week (6.12) and reviewed these goals, providing the following feedback ([in blue](#)):

FY 25-26 Initiatives: Health & Socially Thriving

- Bullet point #2: *“Outreach to various identity network groups and ask to meet with them and attend events to understand the work they do and the community they serve.”*
 - [HRC welcomes this and is curious to learn how/when this will be implemented. They feel this is currently done in a more reactive way wherein Select Board members are invited to events vs. proactively reaching out about what events, meetings, and gatherings are upcoming. They look forward to more direct outreach to their various identity groups/networks.](#)
- Bullet point #5: *“Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees, measure progress.”*
 - [HRC is curious to learn more about how this is happening currently and where there are plans to expand these efforts.](#)
- Overall feedback for this section: [these are great ideas and HRC appreciates hearing about these initiatives currently underway and planned for the upcoming year.](#)

Initiatives to Begin: Next 18-36 months, Healthy & Socially Thriving

- [HRC feels the Civics Academy is a great idea and look forward to hearing more about this and spreading the word about this learning opportunity.](#)

I hope this feedback is helpful and please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or to clarify anything here.

All the best,
Taylor

Taylor Donaldson Jhurani, MTS ([she/her/hers](#)) | Assistant Director of Human Resources

[Schedule Time to Meet with Me](#)

Phone: 781.455.7500 x 295 | Email: tjhurani@needhamma.gov



Town of Needham
Town Hall, Suite 140
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02492
www.needhamma.gov

Please be advised that the Massachusetts Secretary of State Office has determined that email may be considered a public record.

From: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:36 PM
To: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>
Cc: Myles Tucker <mtucker@needhamma.gov>
Subject: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

This message is being sent to all Department Managers, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons.

Hi All:

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Thank you,
Katie

Katie King
She/Her/Hers
Deputy Town Manager
Town of Needham
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02492
(781) 455-7500 ext. 233
kking@needhamma.gov

June 30, 2025

Heidi Frail, Chair
Cathy Dowd, Vice-Chair
Josh Levy, Clerk
Marianne Cooley
Kevin Keane

Needham Select Board
Needham Town Hall
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492

Re: Library Board of Trustees Feedback on Select Board Goals FY26 & FY27

Dear Members of the Needham Select Board:

On behalf of the Trustees of the Needham Free Public Library, I submit this letter to provide you with feedback on the priorities for the FY26 and FY27 Select Board Goals. The Select Board has strongly supported the Library in the past, including your recent recommendation to Town Meeting to fund the first of four planned phases of our space renovations. We appreciate that many of the Select Board's goals justify the Town's investment in the Library to "support an environment for creativity" that "enhances neighborhood livability" and "values public art." With strong alignment between current goals and the Library's 2023–2027 Strategic Plan, we anticipate your continued support for the Library to be a natural fit moving forward.

Healthy and Socially Thriving. Goal #1 currently calls for cultivating "a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups." During our strategic planning and space planning over the past two years, we found significant need for enhancing cultural and educational services for young children, emerging adults, and aging residents. Our renovation plan calls for work on our tween and teen space, which is currently underway, and our children's room in its first two phases. We request your support in advancing the capital requests for design and construction of Phase 2 over the coming years. This will enable us to proceed to the third and fourth phases of the renovation, which will benefit other groups of patrons.

Responsibly Governed. We are pleased to see “Library phased renovations” included under the Responsibly Governed (Goal #6) section of the FY2025–2026 Initiatives to Begin: Now (0–18 months). The decision to phase our renovation plans reflects our commitment to responsible governance of the Town’s attention and finances. Moreover, the renovations respond to the need to ensure our Library’s spaces are fit for the purpose of serving our current and future residents, representing a direct “[Investment] in making Town-owned buildings safe and functional,” in Goal #6’s definition. In addition to our core functions, we believe the Library is an economic asset to Needham (Goal #2) because research has consistently shown that every dollar invested in public libraries produces, on average, five dollars in economic value.¹

Accessible and Connected. We commend the Select Board’s emphasis on accessibility and connectedness in Goal #4, especially expanding multimodal transportation throughout the town, and ensuring it is safe for pedestrians and cyclists as they go to and from the Library (Goal #5). The Library looks forward to serving the new patrons resulting from the anticipated expansion of affordable and commuter-friendly housing. As a municipal building and municipal service located between Needham Center and Needham Heights, we hope the Library will be viewed as a key part of the development plans and a key partner in the enhancement of relevant public works. Our Library patrons would also benefit from improvements to Highland Avenue, including bicycle lanes, which would better connect Needham Center to Needham Heights and enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety. We are fortunate to have an MBTA bus stop across from our Highland Avenue entrance. However, our parking spaces for cars and access and parking for bicycles are currently limited.

Valuing the Local Government Workforce. Library staff have benefited from recent initiatives by the Town’s HR department to create employee resource groups and develop new policies for paid leave. We applaud this work. Supporting our staff is critical to supporting the Library’s mission and to helping to ensure “Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community,” as Goal #5 states.

Inclusiveness is at the core of the Library’s mission, and is accomplished through its collection, programming, and physical resources, a commitment we are expanding as a key part of our 2023–2027 Strategic Plan. Inclusion is necessary for safety (Goal #5) and encourages collaboration. Our Strategic Plan specifically calls for increasing the Library’s visibility and position as a community partner, which is a goal the Library administration has made progress toward during fiscal year 2025 and will continue to work on during fiscal year 2026.

¹ <https://www.irs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/return-on-investment/recent-studies/>

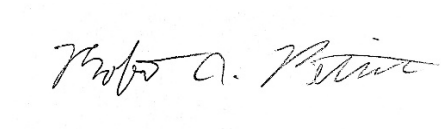
Needham Select Board

June 30, 2025

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We are looking forward to continuing to partner with the Select Board and the Town on achieving the FY26 and FY27 goals. Working together across boards and departments, we can achieve amazing results for the betterment of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Petitt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert A. Petitt

Chair, Board of Trustees of the Needham Free Public Library

Katie King

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2025 5:01 PM
To: Katie King
Subject: Communication on Issues - Going forward

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi, Katie —

I want to reach out to clarify if and how we might continue to collaborate on important town issues. As a part of the Needham Housing Coalition (NHC) for the past two years, and with my experience as an architect and planner, I am sharing a short list of local housing concerns that I, and NHC, will be advocating for and which we humbly ask you to monitor and to provide leadership and/or support when you can. We hope you will keep these initiatives in mind as you and the Select Board begin this year's goal-setting process. As you know, all of these issues are suggested in the 2022 Housing Plan.

1. **Zoning reform** to follow the implementation of the MBTA Base Plan in order to promote multifamily housing opportunities. It still makes sense to focus attention on the same transit and mixed-use commercial areas included in the Base Plan because they are logical locations for adding “walkable” gentle density and a variety of housing types, and these can now be amended without MBTA restrictions. Our Needham Center, Chestnut Street, and Needham Heights overlay districts also need fine-tuning to better incentivize development close to our shops to provide support and vitality for our business community.
2. The execution of a newly structured **Affordable Housing (AHT)**, including a new Board of Trustees composition, to carry on the initiatives of the 2022 Housing Plan, which needs a permanent and experienced “housing-focused town board/committee” to monitor and guide housing growth, to incentivize/partner with developers on town-wide housing goals and to address needs for some special housing communities that are unlikely to be solved through private development—efforts like housing for our children with special needs who age out of state programs but want to live in town, and need a range of support services. Another powerful role for the AHT is to pursue bonding capabilities (used by other town AHTs) to leverage larger funding capacity for town housing and other CPC-related building initiatives. These AHT initiatives could use your leadership to keep it on the front burner for the Select Board, CPC and, FinCom.
3. Create greater awareness in town about **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** as a small but important housing type to serve many in our community. I am aware of a current homeowner issue with our Needham Building Commissioner, who is requiring residents/builders/architects to refer to the Multifamily Building Code instead of the One- and Two-Family Building Code. This is imposing higher levels of fire-separation construction and fire control systems than are actually required, making it harder rather than easier to build an ADU. I will be clarifying at the state level what is being conveyed to cities and towns about applicability and interpretation of the Massachusetts Building Code and will then discuss it with Joe Prondak.

We now know, from the disappointing referendum vote in January, that we need to be even more respectful and inclusive of all town perspectives as we advocate for the additional housing we need. From recent discussions with Select Board and Planning Board members, I have also learned that, because of busy dockets and limited board bandwidth, some important town issues need external preparation and advocacy by residents to then be brought to the town boards, or to Town Meeting, for deliberation and action. The Needham Housing Coalition is in the process of updating our website and are committed to maintaining current information—we want to be known as a reliable source of knowledge for Needham residents. When you have a chance, please check out our website www.needhamhousingcoalition.org.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. I am always available to talk or email with you on any questions, thoughts, or suggestions you may have. All the best in your new position.

Sincerely,
Oscar Mertz

Dear Select Board,

Thank you for setting clear and forward thinking goals and initiatives, I have been encouraged to see these priorities reflected in your vision. I continue to ask for selectboard support on all of the general initiatives under goal # 4: Accessible and connected.

- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion, and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections;
- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient, and clean mobility options;
- Applies Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety;
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable, and efficient public transit;
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that enables people to connect with the natural and built environment; and
- Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community.

The mobility planning and coordination committee has been working hard on these initiatives since its formation and we need the Selectboards continued engagement and backing to move these initiatives forward. Thank you for your leadership and for helping build a safer, more accessible community. Please reach out to discuss and provide more insight on any topics.

Below you will find my notes on specific goals.

Best,

Tim Bulger
Chair of Mobility Planning and Coordination Committee
Chair of Envision Needham Center

FY2025-2026 Initiatives

Accessible and Connected

- **Evaluate the feasibility of a shared use way between Needham Heights and the City of Newton.**

Continue the next steps as outlined in the feasibility study.

a. The Town of Needham, with Newton's support, should consider requesting that the MBTA (as both the regional transit provider and the primary property owner) be asked to assert or disclaim its interest in improved higher-tier transit over the right of way and/or along the Needham Street/Highland Avenue corridor.

b. Initiate a process with MassDOT to assess its support for a shared use path, and request that MassDOT (as owner of the right of way over I-95) participate as a proponent for that portion of the project that is on its property.

- Evaluate expansion of snow and ice removal efforts, including sidewalk plowing strategies.
 - **The MPCC could help with the planning for this. Currently the sidewalks are plowed based on school routes to school. If there is a desire to expand this network, there should be criteria/guidelines that are met to warrant new sidewalk plowing and a clear understanding of where the major gaps are in sidewalk plowing.**
- *Evaluate and make a final determination of the appropriate plan for Downtown Redesign Phase 2.*
 - **Change is always uncomfortable, but good leadership can look past short term discomfort to build something better for the future. Cities and towns all over the world have shown that**

road diets work, calm traffic, improve safety and often increase business for local shops. This project is a smart investment in our communities future, don't let temporary resistance derail long term progress. The selectboard was correct to take a second look at this project and our town deserves safer streets and a main street that works for everyone.

- Responsibly Governed

- Evaluate the possibility of developing a Community Master Plan. Develop an inventory of Town long-range plans and identify overlaps and conflicts, including other Boards of jurisdictions.

- **Long term comprehensive transportation planning would be vital for this master plan. Already working on some elements of the Needham Street Design Guide, Sidewalk Prioritization plans, Bike Network plan..etc,**

- Environmentally Sustainable

- **Identify and implement strategies to protect the Town's tree canopy.**
- **Something I have noticed in bearing witness to a few major street renovation projects is that there doesn't seem to be a policy or guidance about incorporation and planting *new* trees renovation projects. The street renovation/reconstruction process offers a unique opportunity to plant new trees. I understand the desire to preserve what we have, but also think we should be targeting spaces to plant new trees. The street design guide in development may offer an opportunity to make suggestions on this. Street trees are good for traffic calming, good for pedestrians, and good for stormwater. Other municipalities have public tree planting programs to beautify and reforest.**

Initiatives to Begin: Next (18-36 months)

Accessible and Connected

- Pilot converting some on-street parking spaces for more active curb use (e.g., short customer visits, active loading areas).
- Update the Town's parking regulations and permit program (including permit rules, time/day regulations, and pricing).
- **Evaluate the usage of current permit parking spaces, (on street spaces on highland @ 100 west are under utilized....) Include an upgrade to street signage to help make parking lots more visible (lincoln st, garden, needham center, Dedham ave heights...etc). Continue to review and follow up on the parking study that was completed in 2023. Start prioritizing these regardless of envision Needham Center and other projects.**
- **Does there need to be a formal process or oversight into changing parking use on public right of ways or lots? (Residential, commercial...etc)**
- Evaluate funding options for the Rail Trail extension from High Rock Street to Needham Junction.
- **Continue to prioritize this project, Evaluate with MBTA to find access to the linden street development if possible. This project is an investment that will help bring more people to chestnut street and connect residents to nature.**

Initiatives to Begin: Near (36+ months)

- Economically Vital
 - Evaluate Chestnut Street redevelopment.
 - Consider the long term goal of redesigning the street from junction to GPA to encourage development. Sidewalks are in desperate need of an upgrade, consider adding on street parking to improve sidewalk conditions and appearance in front of some businesses, and integrate with the rail trail extension that enables people to connect with the natural environment.

Select Board Goals

FY 2025-26

August 13, 2024

FY 2025-2026 Goals

Goal #1: Healthy and Socially Thriving

Needham residents enjoy plentiful recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in an environment that upholds human rights, celebrates diversity, and fosters a sense of connection among neighbors, thus strengthening their bond to the community they proudly call home. Needham:

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all socioeconomic and age groups;
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members;
- Fosters inclusion, diversity, and equity in order to become a culturally responsive, anti-racist, and anti-biased community; and
- Values public art.

Goal #2: Economically Vital

Needham welcomes investment in local businesses and has a thriving local economy that contributes to a growing local tax base to support desirable community amenities and programs. Needham:

- Has a growth mindset and encourages business development and redevelopment;
- Supports an environment for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship;
- Promotes a well-educated, skilled, and diverse work force that meets employers' needs;
- Fosters a collaborative and resource-rich regional business climate;
- Attracts, sustains, and retains a diverse mix of businesses, entrepreneurs and jobs that support the needs of all community members; and
- Supports financial security and economic opportunity.

Goal #3: Livable

Needham values diversity and a broad spectrum of housing options. The community is supported by well-maintained public infrastructure and desirable amenities that accommodate a variety of community needs. Needham:

- Promotes and sustains a secure, clean, and attractive place to live, work and play;
- Supports an increase of housing, including a variety of types and price points;
- Provides high-performing, reliable, affordable public infrastructure and Town services;
- Encourages and appropriately regulates sustainable development; and
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability and accessibility for all members of the community.

Goal #4: Accessible and Connected

In Needham, people can easily and affordably travel to their desired destinations without relying solely on cars. Needham:

- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion, and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections;
- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient, and clean mobility options;
- Applies Complete Street principles to evaluate and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety;
- Coordinates with state and federal leaders to ensure access to safe, reliable, and efficient public transit;
- Provides effective infrastructure and services that enables people to connect with the natural and built environment; and
- Promotes transportation options to remain an age-friendly community.

Goal #5: Safe

Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters personal and community safety. Needham:

- Provides public safety in a manner consistent with community values;
- Provides comprehensive advanced life support level care;
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely and effective services and responses to emergencies and natural disasters;
- Fosters a climate of safety in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, schools, and public places; and
- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety, and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

Goal #6: Responsibly Governed

Needham has an open and accessible Town government that fosters community engagement and trust while providing excellent municipal services. Needham:

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the Town's financial, human, information, and physical assets;
- Invests in making Town-owned buildings safe and functional;
- Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for engagement and timely, reliable, and accurate data and analysis;
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality service in all municipal business;
- Supports, develops, and enhances relationships between the Town and community and regional partners;
- Proactively reviews and updates Town policies and regulations and ensures compliance;

- Promotes collaboration between boards and committees;
- Values the local government workforce;
- Identifies and implements strategies to hire, support and retain diverse staff at every level of the organization; and
- Prioritizes acquisition of strategic parcels.

Goal #7: Environmentally Sustainable

Needham is a sustainable, thriving, and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth's resources; and cares for ecosystems. Needham:

- Combats the climate crisis;
- Prioritizes sustainability, including transitioning from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy;
- Encourages the efficient use of natural resources; and
- Protects and enhances the biodiversity and vitality of ecological systems.

FY2025-2026 Initiatives

Legend:

Top Priority

Select Board Identified Priorities

Currently Operationalized

Initiatives to Begin Now & Currently Operationalized (0-18 months)

- Healthy and Socially Thriving
 - **Develop and plan community celebration to take place on the Town Common.**
 - Outreach to various identity network groups and ask to meet with them and attend events to understand the work they do and the community they serve.
 - Create an action plan for transitioning all Town Buildings to having all-gender bathrooms.
 - Establish clear guidelines for public art proposals for the Town of Needham, including an outline of the existing process for approval from the appropriate committees to develop a consistent public arts program to serve the Needham community.
 - Make intentional efforts and identify creative ideas for community outreach to diversify the candidate pool for all appointed Boards and Committees, measure progress.
 - Complete the Equity Audit, clarify objectives, and determine next steps.
 - Conduct Board and Committee member orientation sessions to include the Town's race equity vision statement and NUARI principles.

Commented [LM1]: I think that we should relook at how we approach diversity and inclusion as well as conversations about the same. I don't know what an identity network group is, but my experience is that Americans tend to be very limited in their view of diversity, approaching it as something that can externally be recognized rather than something that might be cultural and internal.

Commented [LM2]: I would strongly oppose having all-gender bathrooms for every bathroom. I think that having some bathrooms that are all-gender is fine, but the amount of space that would need to be dedicated to bathrooms makes very little sense.

Commented [LM3]: Same comment as before. Diversity is defined superficially rather than culturally. If it were defined ethnically and culturally, it would bring a greater depth of thinking to the Town government.

Commented [LM4]: Same comment about race. Identifying people's races rather than their abilities is completely racist.

- Conduct Board and Committee member orientation sessions to include the Town's race equity vision statement.
 - Develop a plan for a community observance of Juneteenth.
 - Implement Valor Act and consider aligning the administrative process for both the Valor Act and the Senior Corps programs.
 - Convene NUARI to discuss progress on strategies for ensuring that all members of the community feel welcome as outlined in the NUARI vision statement and guiding principles.
- **Economically Vital**
 - Gather community data from Placer.ai to look at movement and time in location (duration) to target future businesses and amenities (parking lots, parks, etc.).
- **Livable**
 - **Work with the Planning Board on next steps related to the MBTA Communities Act.**
 - **Evaluate next steps for use of the Stephen Palmer Building.**
 - Evaluate the role of the Affordable Housing Trust.
 - Evaluate expansion of off-leash dog areas.
 - Encourage and participate in the Planning Board's large house review.
 - Explore renaming Hemlock Gorge to Nehoiden's Grant.
 - Identify funding for School Master Plan projects and participate in the planning process.
 - Evaluate RTS Service Delivery Model to guide long-term investment and review operational efficiencies in the short-term.
 - Upgrade Town Seal to improve graphic quality and historical accuracy.
 - Identify opportunities for expanded active and passive recreation facilities including but not limited to an action sports park and pickleball.
 - Improve trailhead access to ensure clear and accessible access.
- **Accessible and Connected**
 - **Complete Quiet Zone feasibility and design and seek funding for noise reduction/Quiet Zone construction.**
 - **Evaluate the feasibility of a shared use way between Needham Heights and the City of Newton.**
 - Evaluate expansion of snow and ice removal efforts, including sidewalk plowing strategies.
 - Update parking payment technologies to allow for credit card and/or app-based payments.
 - Evaluate and make a final determination of the appropriate plan for Downtown Redesign Phase 2.

Commented [LM5]: Both of these programs need to be expanded and improved.

Commented [LM6]: Don't know what this means. Traffic in downtown is pretty awful especially during evening rush hour. The lights are not timed properly nor are they timed to deal with the pedestrian light cycles, which should be coordinated at all intersections.

Commented [LM7]: This is a terrible idea. We should instead have a real dog park that dogs can be allowed to use off-leash. Children, the elderly, wildlife are not equipped to deal with off-leash dogs, as much as the owners of the dogs may think so. Having had dogs myself, all I can say is that dogs behave like dogs and off-leash can be problematic.

Commented [LM8]: This is not a Select Board function. A committee of Town Meeting should be proposed for this project.

Commented [LM9]: This should be put on hold. Too many other priorities and financial demands on the Town.

- **Responsibly Governed**

- **Collaborate with the Finance Committee about the Town's policies regarding the use of free cash and debt.**
- Evaluate the possibility of developing a Community Master Plan. Develop an inventory of Town long-range plans and identify overlaps and conflicts, including other Boards of jurisdictions.
- Capital Facilities: CATH upgrades (including additional parking).
- Evaluate ways to increase minority and women-owned business participation in construction, building maintenance projects, and other Town programs.
- Evaluate enhanced benefits to assist in the Town's recruitment and retention efforts.
- Review and update the Sign Bylaw.
- Review and update Select Board policies as appropriate.
- Evaluate options for enhanced data collection by Town Departments to assist the Board in reviewing and evaluating progress toward goals.
- Explore options for evaluating Town Counsel.
- *DPW phased renovation/construction.*
- *Capital Facilities: Library phased renovations.*
- *Implement successor agreements for expiring contracts.*

Commented [LM10]: For construction projects, state law dictates minority and women-owned business participation. I would point out that I am aware of a women-owned civil engineering firm that submitted proposals to be included on the on-call engineering list. They are a premier civil engineering firm. They were not selected. Instead the Town went with the usual engineering firms that it has done business with. The problem is that the Town uses having done business with the Town as one of the criteria that cannot be met by newer firms.

- **Environmentally Sustainable**

- **Identify and implement strategies to protect the Town's tree canopy.**
- **Develop Town Zero Emission First policy.**
- **Explore the option of enabling Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program through MassDevelopment Program and develop supporting programs to drive participation.**
- **Strengthen the Town's Stormwater By-Law and prioritize efforts to improve stormwater quality and capacity.**
- Establish a comprehensive Climate Communications Strategy to engage community members and organizations in the implementation of climate actions and continuous evolution of the Climate Action Roadmap.
- Establish regulations to prohibit non-electric vehicles parking in EV charging spots.
- *Recommend community energy aggregation*

Commented [LM11]: Even a quick google search will show that Needham has not tree canopy issue. Protection needs to be approached carefully so as not to stifle private property ownership.

Commented [LM12]: I think resilience is much more important as well as backup plans. Zero emission relies on limited sources of energy and is not a good option for government that needs to be able to operate 24/7.

Commented [LM13]: We should absolutely not do that. We would essentially become a bank for projects that do not benefit the Town directly. Taxpayer monies belong to the taxpayer and should be used for initiative that maintain schools, infrastructure, and programming to support schools, infrastructure, public safety, and administration of the Town's services.

Commented [LM14]: The Town should try to do this - not transfer responsibility to private property owners.

Commented [LM15]: All good so long as we understand that we are not going to affect climate change, since that is a natural phenomenon that has occurred for billions of years.

Initiatives to Begin: Next (18-36 months)

- **Healthy and Socially Thriving**

- Launch a Civics Academy to introduce Needham residents to all facets of local government

Commented [LM16]: So long as all facets are represented.

- Accessible and Connected
 - Pilot converting some on-street parking spaces for more active curb use (e.g., short customer visits, active loading areas).
 - Update the Town's parking regulations and permit program (including permit rules, time/day regulations, and pricing).
 - Evaluate funding options for the Rail Trail extension from High Rock Street to Needham Junction.
- Environmentally Sustainable
 - Consider further opportunities for reducing plastic use in Needham.

Initiatives to Begin: Near (36+ months)

- Economically Vital
 - Evaluate Chestnut Street redevelopment.

Commented [LM17]: Terrible idea. There is already limited parking. We should not be changing anything without some report on who would benefit and who would be harmed by this.

To: Heidi Frail, Chair, Needham Select Board

From: Gloria Greis, Chair, Needham Historical Commission

Date: 19 June 2025

At its regular meeting of 16 June 2025, the Needham Historical Commission offered the following comments on the Select Board's FY2025-2026 Goals. We noted that, unlike the goals outlined in recent years, this draft made no mention of historic preservation. We are ready to assist with these goals, as needed.

1. **Re. Goals 1 and 3:** A socially-thriving, diverse, and livable town included strategies to preserve both historic and smaller houses (these categories are not equivalent, but they do overlap). Historic houses anchor a community's shared identity and studies have also shown that a preservation plan that safeguards historic structures is an economic positive for the town, including by providing neighborhood stability, and benefits to both home values and civic commitment. Among the 'broad spectrum' of housing options, there should be a place for the historic houses that give the town its character, and reflect the rich history of Needham and its ongoing impact on the town and region.
2. **Re. Goal 7:** Old houses, both as standing and renovated, are more sustainable than new construction. They have a much lower carbon footprint, fewer toxic inclusions, and renovations require fewer new materials.
3. **Re. the list of Priority Initiatives:**
 - a. Healthy and Socially Thriving/Public Art – We commend the recent efforts by entities producing public art (the NCRTF and NCAC) to include historic themes in their projects, and their willingness to discuss possible inclusion of historic information and images
 - b. Livable –
 - i. The Affordable Housing Trust and the Large House Study Group have interests in common with the Historical Commission, because it is often historic homes that are targeted for tear-downs because of their age and larger lot sizes
 - ii. Nehoiden's Grant – this property is on the Needham Historic Inventory (form #D-2) and the MA Inventory of Historic Places. We look forward to working with the Town and DCR on considering the name change
 - iii. Town Seal – in progress, with representatives from the NHC and the Needham History Center
 - c. Responsibly Governed/Community Master Plan – We ask that included in this would be the long-overdue update of the town's Preservation Plan, incorporating the preservation of historic structures into the town's overall development goals

Myles Tucker

From: Rebecca Tarantino [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 4, 2025 10:59 AM
To: Tyler Gabrielski
Subject: Re: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

i think this is great but i also think it's a lot for 1 year. I'd love to see this as a realistic set of 3 year goals with specific objectives for each year. This to me reads like a strategic plan...

On Jun 3, 2025, at 1:40 PM, Tyler Gabrielski <tgabrielski@needhamma.gov> wrote:

Hi folks,

Please see Katie King's message below regarding FY26/FY27 Select Board goals. The Board is looking for feedback and suggestions on the current goals and what could be added as well.

Feel free to send me your comments and I will forward them along to the Town Manager's Office.

Thanks,

Tyler Gabrielski

Director of Streets & Transportation
Department of Public Works
Town of Needham
Tel: (781) 455-7550 Ext: 72345
Cell: (781) 760-8530
Email: tgabrielski@needhamma.gov

From: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:36 PM
To: Katie King <kking@needhamma.gov>
Cc: Myles Tucker <mtucker@needhamma.gov>
Subject: Select Board FY2026-27 Goals: Request for Feedback

This message is being sent to all Department Managers, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons.

Hi All:

We have begun the process of reviewing and updating Select Board goals for FY2026 and FY2027. The Board is interested in hearing feedback from department managers and board and committee members about their priorities, thoughts about items that are on the current goal list ([here](#) and attached) that should stay or be removed, or anything new that they would like the Select Board to consider adding.

I would appreciate you sharing this message and the goals with any board, committee, or commission that you work with. Please send any feedback to me and Myles by June 30th.

Thank you,
Katie

Katie King
She/Her/Hers
Deputy Town Manager
Town of Needham
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02492
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kking@needhamma.gov

<Needham Goals and Initiatives List_8.13 SB Meeting_V2 Clean.pdf>