

CHAPTER 11 IMPLEMENTATION

11.1 CRITERIA AND PRIORITIZATION

In order to guide the selection of priority action items, the committee started with a criteria that was based primarily on the key aspects of the Vision Statement for this plan (as articulated by members of the community at large). This resulted in a set of seven major themes to compare each goal and objective against.

- Protect the sense of Community: in the neighborhoods, in the small-town feel, in the scenic ways and in the volunteerism of the residents.
- Retain and enhance the natural resources and the open space of the Town.
- Provide housing for a diverse range of incomes and ages, while expanding the infrastructure necessary to support it.
- Generate a business-friendly atmosphere throughout the Town and initiate changes so as to create a more vibrant downtown.
- Maintain Reading's connections to the regional interstate/highway network and to public transportation, while promoting other necessary local road improvements and alternative means of transportation.
- Improve walking and bicycling within the Town, with a focus on safety and access of open/natural spaces.
- Protect the excellence of the Reading School System.

The previous 7 chapters identified a total of 149 Objectives. Although each of them is important within their own right, we recognized the need for selecting the most critical ones on which to focus our initial efforts. This Plan is intended to cover activities that may continue for some time, those that are not yet ready to begin, and even some that have been on-going but have yet to be fully completed. Objectives (and associated actions) that are already underway have not been identified as priority simply because the efforts have already been given a priority. An example of one such action is the Downtown Improvements (Economic Development Goal 1, Objective B) planned for completion in 2006. Objectives that were deemed lower priority may in fact be under consideration by some of the very committees, boards or organizations that provided input to the Master Plan. One such example is the Historical Commission's effort to

“Preserve the Town’s heritage found in historic documents, photos and other artifacts.” (Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources Goal 7, Objective D).

The committee set forth to validate its selections by surveying members of the community, various Town boards, staff, committees, Town meeting members, business owners, and other stakeholders using a questionnaire (See APPENDICES).

Survey Results

After selecting an initial list of 20 priority objectives (note an additional 4 priority objectives were selected from the modified Service and Facilities objectives after the survey was finalized), the questionnaire was developed and distributed throughout the community by a variety of methods, including media publication, web placement, Town and Public Meeting distribution, availability at numerous Town facilities, email circulation and Master Plan presentation distribution.

Approximately 110 questionnaires were returned as of November 30, 2005. The first 18 questions were intended to validate selection of the priority objectives. Without exception, when reviewing the positive responses (those marked strongly agree or agree), every question resulted in greater than a 50% positive response, with 13 of the questions yielding greater than 80%. The questions resulting in the most affirmative acceptance were #7, #5, and #8, corresponding to (1) protection of the historic village pattern of the Town, (2) promoting preservation and enhancement of Reading’s existing uplands and woodlands, and (3) creation of a path system connecting schools, open, space, and neighborhoods, respectively. It is interesting that these three objectives span goals found within Character and Identity, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Open Space. Conceptually they can be tied together by the underlying theme of Reading as a historic New England Village, with a diverse nature of uses, but one that must be respectful of the natural resources and preservation of its heritage.

Although no question resulted in an overwhelmingly negative reply, there were two questions that were identified as having between 20% and 25% negative responses (those marked strongly disagree or disagree). Those were questions #3 and #16, corresponding to (1) the construction of a multilevel parking structure in the municipal lot behind CVS, and (2) the issue of whether existing, renovated or newly built, single-family houses substantially larger in size than the Town’s traditional capes, ranches and colonials have a negative effect on the Town’s character.

The remainder of the questionnaire was focused on a number of diverse subjects. In question #19 the committee was interested in feedback for particular uses at the Addison Wesley site. With the exception of a clear dislike for the potential of a 40B, the results were mixed, showing that there was no one particular use that everyone could agree upon. In question 20, the respondents were asked to characterize Reading, and the majority of those surveyed (41%) defined Reading as a bedroom community, although another 44% characterized Reading as either having a “small town” or “New England village” feel. The last substantive question asked the respondents to rate the types of business in Town as either having the right amount, too many or too few in Town. In two cases, Fast Food Restaurants and Drug Stores, over 60% of the respondents indicated there were too many.

The last set of questions was aimed at understanding the demographics of the respondents. Ninety-two respondents were from Reading, and twenty-four respondents working within the Town. One interesting fact was that of those responding to question 25, nearly 30% of them indicated they worked from home at least 1 or more days per week. This particular trend reflects the changing business environment, acceptance of flexible work schedules, and infusion of enabling technologies. It is one that the Town will need to close watch as it continues to foster development of public and private infrastructure for business and residents alike.

11.2 PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

For each of the priority objectives, the following information was considered to form a more cohesive action plan.

- a. Identification of Person, Organization, Town Committee or Staff to be assigned responsibility for the Objective.
- b. Identification of the Action Steps required to implement objective
- c. Cost and/or resources required to implement
- d. Time frame – including how long to complete and a recommendation for target date.

This information forms the basis for each of the action strategies defined in the next section and will be used as a basis for tracking progress and ensuring the appropriate individuals and organizations are assigned and provided with the necessary resources to complete the efforts.

Character and Identity Action Strategies

Objective 1B: Protect the historical village pattern by the balance of its constituents: buildings, streets and natural elements. Promote this balance as a prerequisite for developments to a scale familiar and comfortable to the individual.

1. Update Design Standards & Guidelines
 - CPDC/Town Planner develop, adopt and apply design standards & guidelines for use in subdivision application process, site plan review and other special permit application processes. Where appropriate, revise internal CPDC policies and prepare zoning articles, to incorporate and reflect these standards & guidelines. This would be accomplished by involving the business community and using the public hearing process, as appropriate.
 - Town Planner places these standards & guidelines on Town web site. (July, 2006)
2. Create Scenic Road/Historic District
 - CPDC/Town Planner/Historical Commission considers other appropriate areas within Town for applications for “Scenic Road” designation and “Historic District” designation.
 - For Scenic Road designation, initiate dialogue with residents within the area and review applications for Scenic Road designation.

- CPDC conduct hearings relative to Scenic Road applications and prepare zoning articles for Town Meeting consideration.
- For Historic District designation, initiate dialogue with residents within the potential area and review petitions for Historic District designation (December, 2006)

Objective 2D: Promote the design of new construction to seamlessly connect with their receiving surroundings.

1. Develop Mansionization Zoning
 - CPDC to prepare “Mansionization” or other appropriate zoning article to address “tear-down-rebuild” and environmental issues.
 - Town Meeting to consider zoning article. (May, 2008)
2. Inventory Undeveloped Land
 - CPDC/Town Planner to inventory remaining undeveloped land within residential districts for consideration by Town for acquisition based on criteria set forth in the Town Open Space Plan.
 - Failing acquisition of such land by the Town, CPDC to consider PUD-R Overlay zone on undeveloped sites within residential districts. Prepare zoning article for Town Meeting consideration. (Initial Review, November, 2006)

Housing Action Strategies

Objective 1B. Pursue an Increase in Town Involvement and Investigate Additional Funding Vehicles to Achieve Housing Goals. Communicate Housing Goals to Residents.

1. Create New Housing Partnership (HP) with the Objective to Coordinate Housing Related Action Strategies under the Master Plan.
 - Town Manager to recommend Charter for HP
 - Board of Selectmen appoints HP members (June 2006)
2. Pursue Additional Funding for Housing Using the Community Preservation Act (CPA)
 - Board of Selectmen appoints new CPA Committee to not only prepare the recommendation for implementing the CPA but also to identify the programs to be funded by it (March, 2006)
 - Town Meeting considers CPA warrant article (November 2006)
 - If Town Meeting approves, ballot question to create and fund CPA is placed on the ballot for Town election (March 2007)
 - Submit CPA funding request to State (September, 2007)
3. Communicate Housing Goals

- HP continues to make Town residents aware of housing goals and initiatives (Ongoing, beginning November, 2006)

Objectives 2A and 2B. Encourage New Developments and the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Existing Buildings Consistent with the Town's Character and Identity and Meeting State Mandated Affordable Housing Goals.

1. Prepare zoning article which would allow cluster development (PRD) in all S-15 and S-20 zoning districts provided one in eight units is affordable and \$30,000/market unit is contributed to Housing Trust Fund for market units above/below eight.
 - CPDC prepares zoning article
 - Town Meeting considers zoning article (May, 2006)
2. Modify Section 4.3.2.8 (Accessory Apartments) of the Zoning Bylaws to remove the restriction that an accessory apartment must be occupied prior to 1982 in the portions of the residential districts adjacent to the Depot.
 - CPDC prepares zoning article
 - Town Meeting considers zoning article (May, 2006)

Objective 5A. Introduce Mixed Use Zoning in the Downtown and Around the Depot

1. Prepare a zoning article that would allow residential units on all floors except the street portion of the first floor of properties in the Business B zoning district.
 - CPDC drafts zoning article
 - CPDC reviews draft of article with Board of Selectmen
 - Town Meeting considers zoning article (November, 2005)

Economic Development Action Strategies

Objective 2A: Establish an Economic Development Commission

1. Determine structure of the Commission
 - Town Manager and Town Planner study the various options available under state law and recommend to the Board of Selectmen the type of Economic Development Commission (EDC) to best meet the Town's development needs and to leverage additional State and Federal developmental grants. (February 2006)
2. Establish the Commission
 - The Board of Selectmen takes the necessary steps to establish the EDC and appoint qualified and dedicated citizens to the commission. (November, 2006)

Objective 3A and B: Improve South Main St. Streetscape

1. Rezone along South Main Street Corridor
 - CPDC consider re-zoning along the South Main Street corridor as a means to improve the appearance with particular attention to setback requirements, visual buffering of parking areas, and expanded use of the PUD (B) overlay district. (Town Meeting, November, 2006)
2. Obtain funding for streetscape improvements.
 - Town Planner, supported by the Board of Selectmen, will pursue all possible State and Federal grants to hire consultants (landscape architects and traffic engineers) to generate detailed streetscape beautification plans for the area from Washington St. south to I95/128.
 - After completion of the initial plans, the Town Planner, supported by the Board of Selectmen, will pursue State and Federal funds to implement the plans (September, 2007)

Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources Action Strategies

Objective 1 A: Promote the preservation and enhancement of Reading's extent of existing upland and wooded areas and the extent of public accessibility to these areas, particularly in new developments through appropriate amendments to the Zoning By-Laws and Subdivision Regulations and other measures such as impact fees.

1. Review Bylaws/Subdivisions Regulations to Enhance Preservation.
 - CPDC and Town Planner review the existing zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations to improve the preservation and enhancement of Reading's natural resources. (November, 2007)
2. Explore Impact Fees to Fund Preservation
 - CPDC explores impact fees as a means of funding the preservation and enhancement of Reading's natural resources. (May, 2007)

Objective 2 B: Encourage the development of a regional resource protection plan (Aberjona, Saugus, and Ipswich River water-sheds, Cedar Swamp), and of regional efforts to reduce pollution of water, groundwater, and the air.

1. Address and Deal Effectively with Unmet Regional Needs.

- Conservation Administrator and Board of Selectmen establish new organizations (or expand the scope of appropriate existing organizations) for regional and /or Town-wide cooperation to address and effectively deal with unmet regional needs and problems. (Ongoing)

Objective 3A: Protect well fields and water recharge areas and strengthen and monitor the enforcement of the Aquifer Protection Zoning By-Laws.

1. Protect Wellfields by Amending/Strengthening the Town's Bylaws
 - Conservation Commission reviews and amends Town's bylaws to ensure protection of the Town's wellfields and water recharge areas. (Fran?)
2. Monitor Enforcement of Bylaws
 - Enforcement Officer and Conservation Commission ensure that the Town monitors enforcement of these provisions. (Ongoing)

Objective 7A: Maintain and add to the Town's Inventory of historical and architecturally significant buildings.

1. Hire Consultant to Expand Historical Inventory
 - Historical Commission uses inventory as the basis for Town's historic preservation planning.
 - Board of Selectmen secures funding to hire a consultant to assist the Town in identifying historically and architecturally significant buildings. (March, 2007)

Open Space Action Strategies

Objective 1C: Create path systems connecting schools, open space, and neighborhoods, e.g. develop walking/biking trails between open spaces

1. Review Open Space Plan
 - Town Planner reviews plan with School Committee, DPW, and Design Review Team (Annually, beginning in January, 2007)
2. Solicit Public Input
 - Town Planner solicits public input (Annually, beginning in July, 2006)
3. Identify Public/Private Easements for Connections
 - DRT identifies public and private easements that can be used for connections (Annually, quarterly, beginning in April, 2006)

Objective 2D: Acquire more land for playing fields, a family picnic areas and pocket parks

1. Provide Funding
 - Town Manager, DRT and Recreation Committee include funding in the Capital Plan/operating budget (Annually, beginning in May, 2007)
2. Develop School Land
 - Superintendent, Town Manager and DRT develop and use school land more intensively for multi-purpose recreation (Annually, beginning in August, 2006)

Objective 3C: Make public aware of the importance of public and private conservation land and open space

1. Evaluate Conservation Land for Trails
 - Conservation Committee and Town Forest Committee evaluate conservation areas for self-guided trails (Annually, beginning in January, 2007)
2. Develop Interpretive Programs
 - Open Space Plan Committee develops interpretive programs based on 2006 Open Space Plan update (January, 2007)
3. Improve Mapping
 - GIS Administrator improves mapping (Ongoing)
4. Conduct Public Education
 - Superintendent and School Committee conduct public education with schools and youth groups via speakers, displays in the Spring/Fall, curriculum studies (Annually, beginning in May, 2007)
5. Create "Guide to Reading's Open Space"
 - Consultant, GIS Coordinator and Town Forest Committee create a "Guide to Reading's Open Space," including better scaled maps, and using new aerial photos and history (May, 2007)
6. Support Public Awareness Events
 - Selectmen and Recreation Committee support events such as Earth Day and Town Forest Day (Annually, beginning in May, 2006)

Objective 5A: Re-consider the Community Preservation Act

1. Appoint Ad Hoc CPA Committee
 - Selectmen, CPDC and Finance Committee develop and appoint Ad Hoc Community Preservation Act Committee (March, 2006)

Objective 5B: Develop new sources of recreation funding, apply for grants and self-help funds and create a Friends or Stewardship program to help maintain open spaces

1. Implement Developer Impact Fees
 - Recreation Committee, Finance Committee and Selectmen develop and implement a developer impact fee program for financing improvements and additions to recreational facilities (May, 2007)
2. Create Recreation al Funding Endowment
 - Recreation Committee creates recreation funding endowment or “friends” groups (Annually, ongoing)
3. Recruit Volunteers for Fund Raising
 - Recreation Committee and Selectmen recruit volunteers for fund-raising (Every two years, beginning March, 2007)
4. Solicit Letters/News Articles for Programs
 - Recreation Committee solicits letters and news articles for programs (Annually, Ongoing)

Services and Facilities

Objective 1(D): Develop an impact fee bylaw consistent with State legislation and the Town’s Master Plan goals to apply to new developments of mid- to large-scale.

1. Review impact fee practices.
 - Town Planner/Town Counsel gather State laws, regulations, case law and practices by other Massachusetts communities related to impact fees
 - CPDC reviews the gathered information in light of the Master Plan objectives and evaluated benefits and drawbacks to the Town. (May, 2007)
2. Develop impact fee bylaw
 - CPDC/Town Planner develops impact fee bylaw through a series of workshops inviting the public and interested developers
 - Town Meeting considers the bylaw (November, 2007)

Objective 2 (A): Create and maintain appropriate Town-wide disaster, security and/or health outbreak plans and ensure Town services, departments and nonprofits and other service providers are trained and prepared.

1. Develop and maintain Public Health Emergency Response Plan
 - To establish Memorandum of Understanding with surrounding town public health professionals

- To maintain written public health emergency plan (Annually, Ongoing)
- To continue training of public health staff with Homeland Security and Health Alert Network for notification from state and CDC on outbreaks
- To plan physical operation of Emergency Dispensing Site/Treatment (EDS) clinics to treat the entire Town population
- To secure facilities for Town wide immunization and or treatment in preparation for outbreak, epidemic or pandemic.
- To secure physician orders referring to the 15 most likely disease outbreak scenarios
- To continue to training and credential medical response volunteers
- To secure medical supplies such as 24,000 syringes, screens, vaccine, medications, bandages, etc.
- To establish a team of trained volunteers to work at clinic site
- To establish and exercise response time and operation Emergency Medical Dispensing Sites
- To maintain communication with Town departments fire, police, DPW for support and cooperation

Objective 5(A): Develop strategies to disseminate information from Town Government to residents and businesses in the most effective manner.

1. Define types of information to be communicated
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager survey Town Departments, Boards and Committees to identify various types of information that is communicated and who the target audience is for each. Also identify underlying reason for communication (legal req't, health/safety, general info, etc.)
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager survey residents and businesses regarding the effectiveness of communication and solicit feedback at Town functions, board/committee meetings, and at local organizational meetings
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager review results of surveys and develop definition of information types and priorities (November, 2006)
2. Define communication means and methods available for communication and segregate by priority, intrusiveness, cost, etc.
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager review various technologies and communications means both currently being used by the Town and those available or potentially applicable for use by the Town.
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager create assessments of each communication means to define the communication priority it could represent, how intrusive or available to the community, the cost of the method, and other factors deemed appropriate. (November, 2006)
3. Identify Strategies to couple information needs with communication methods

- Board of Selectmen/Town Manager create draft communication plan based on the information defined in Actions 1 and 2. Objective should be to create Community “Communication” Guide
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager: Solicit input from all stakeholders on “Guide” (May, 2007)
4. Implement Communication Plan
- Board of Selectmen/Town Manager ensure all defined communication means are available and in place, and appropriate training performed for Stakeholders on how to utilize guide (Web based Q&A, local meetings, etc.)
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager: Monitor implementation; obtain feedback and update plans and guide on-going. (November, 2007)

Objective 6B: Develop and conduct a comprehensive customer service survey

1. Explore methodologies for measuring customer satisfaction with Town services.
 - *Town Manager* to review scale of customer interaction in the various Town departments (May 2006)
 - *Board of Selectmen* reviews methods of citizen input and customer surveys in place in Reading and other cities and towns in the Commonwealth (May 2006)
2. Determine approach to and proceed with measuring customer satisfaction
 - *Board of Selectmen and Town Manager* determine if scale of customer interaction justifies hiring consultant or managing the function with Town resources. (August 2006)
 - *Board of Selectmen and Town Manager* implement survey (November 2006)
 - *Board of Selectmen and Town Manager* publicize customer survey process to the Town (November 2006)
 - *Board of Selectmen and Town Manager* compile results and report to the community (February 2006/2007)
3. Analysis of results and future actions
 - *Board of Selectmen and Town Manager* identify opportunities to change Town processes and procedures based on survey input (Ongoing, beginning February 2006/2007)
 - *Board of Selectmen and Town Manager* determine how to build customer satisfaction measurement into ongoing Town operations such as through comment page on website, periodic random surveys, comment cards at Town Hall, etc... (November 2006)

Transportation Action Strategies

Objective 1B: Develop a comprehensive Town-wide Parking Plan to address satellite employee parking, alternative locations for garages in Downtown with respective zoning amendments and revisit public parking regulations.

1. Initiate a Town-Based Transit Non-Profit (TNP) in Collaboration with Other Adjacent Bedroom Communities
 - Town Planner to attempt a joint meeting with Town Planners from Stoneham, North Reading, Wakefield, Wilmington, Woburn (June, 2007)
 - Town Manager/Town Planner to investigate interest by those communities to participate in the transit non-profit. (September, 2007)
 - Town Manager/Town Planner to recommend Scope for TNP (November, 2007)
 - Board of Selectmen to appoint TNP members (January, 2008)
2. Identify Parking Concepts for Downtown.
 - Board of Selectmen/Town Manager to review the current parking regulations in Downtown (September, 2006)
 - When formed, Economic Development Commission to hold joint meeting with the BOS to map out potential areas for new municipal garages/lots and calculate their capacity (January, 2007)

Objective 4B: Develop a sidewalk improvement priority list, complete all needed sidewalk extensions and improve crossings in areas where safety is a concern.

1. Form a Town-Wide Parking and Traffic Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee (PATAC) Town Engineer to provide sidewalk improvement prioritization criteria (December 2005)
 - Town Manager to recommend Scope for PATAC (May 2006)
 - Board of Selectmen appoints PATAC members (June 2006)
2. Explore an Impact-Fee Bylaw for Sidewalk Improvements.
 - Town Planner to monitor State Legislation update process (May, 2007)

Objective 6C: Develop a Town and/or a regional transportation organization to address increased transportation needs via car pooling, van pooling, HOV/transit dedicated highway lanes and other forms of local/regional commuting measures.

1. Advocate Reading's Transportation Interests in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the North Suburban Planning Council and the MBTA Advisory Board
 - Representatives to these organizations to report bi-yearly to the Board of Selectmen.
 - Continue active participation to the Task Force of the I93-I95 Interchange Planning Initiative by the Massachusetts Highway Department.

- Staff to monitor updates of the State Transportation Plan, the Metropolitan Planning Organization studies that CTPS performs and reports on short- and long-term issues effecting Reading and the NSPC sub-region to Town Manager. (Ongoing)

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES TIMELINE

Chapter	Obj/Action No	Action	Responsible Party	Due Date
Char & Identity	1B/1	Update Design Standards & Guidelines	CPDC/Town Planner	2006-September
Char & Identity	1B/1	Update Design Standards & Guidelines	CPDC/Town Planner	2006-July
Char & Identity	1B/2	Create Scenic Road/Historic District	CPDC/TP/Historical Comm.	2006-December
Char & Identity	2D/1	Develop Mansionization Zoning	CPDC	2008-May
Char & Identity	2D/2	Inventory Undeveloped Land (initial review)	CPDC/Town Planner	2006-November
Housing	1B/1	Create New Housing Partnership	Town Manager/Board of Selectmen	2006-June
Housing	1B/2	Persue Add'l Funding for Housing Using CPA	Board of Selectmen	2007-September
Housing	1B/3	Communicate Housing Goals	Housing Partnership	2006-November
Housing	2A-B/1	Prepare Zoning Article to Allow Cluster Devlpmnt (PRD)	CPDC	2006-May
Housing	2A-B/2	Modify Sec 4.3.2.8 (Accessory Apts) of the Zoning Bylaw	CPDC	2006-May
Housing	5A/1	Introduce Mixed Use Zoning in Downtown/Depot	CPDC	2005-November
Econ Development	2A/1	Determine Structure of Econ Devlp Commission	Town Manager/Town Planner	2006-February
Econ Development	2A/2	Establish Econ Develop Commission	Board of Selectmen	2006-November
Econ Development	3A-B/1	Rezone along South Main Street Corridor	CPDC	2006-November
Econ Development	3A-B/2	Obtain Funding for Streetscape Improvements	Town Planner/Board of Selectmen	2007-September
Natural Resources	1A/1	Review Bylaws/Subdivision Regs to Enhance Preservation	CPDC/Town Planner	2007-November
Natural Resources	1A/2	Explore Impact Fees to Fund Preservation	CPDC	2007-May
Natural Resources	2B	Address and Deal Effectively with Unmet Regional Needs	Conservation Administrator/Selectmen	Ongoing
Natural Resources	3A/1	Protect Wellfields by Amending/Strengthening Bylaws	Conservation Commission	2007-May
Natural Resources	3A/2	Monitor Enforcement of Bylaws	Conservation Comm./Enforcement Officer	Ongoing
Natural Resources	7A/1	Hire Consultant to Expand Historical Inventory	Historical Commission/Board of Selectmen	2007-March
Open Space	1C/1	Review of Open Space Plan (annually)	Town Planner	2007-January
Open Space	1C/2	Solicit Public Input (annually)	Town Planner	2006-July
Open Space	1C/3	Identify Pub/Priv Easements for Connection (quarterly)	DRT	2006-April
Open Space	2D/1	Provide Funding for Land for Fields/PicAreas/Parks(annly)	Town Manager/DRT/Recreation Comm.	2007-May
Open Space	2D/2	Develop School Land for Multi-purpose Recreation(annly)	Superintendent/Town Manager/DRT	2006-August
Open Space	3C/1	Evaluate Conservation Land for Trails (annually)	Conservation Comm./Town Forest Comm.	2007-January
Open Space	3C/2	Develop Interpretive Programs	Open Space Comm./Historical Comm.	2007-January
Open Space	3C/3	Improve Mapping for Open Space	GIS Administrator	Ongoing
Open Space	3C/4	Conduct Public Education for Schools/Youth Groups(annl)	Superintendent/School Comm.	2007-May
Open Space	3C/5	Create "Guide to Reading's Open Space"	Consultant/GIS Coord/Town Forest Comm.	2007-May
Open Space	3C/6	Support Public Awareness Events (annually)	Board of Selectmen/Recreation Comm.	2006-May
Open Space	5A/1	Appoint Ad-Hoc CPA Committee	Board of Selectmen/CPDC/Fin Comm.	2006-March
Open Space	5B/1	Implement Developer Impact Fees for Recreation	Recreation Comm./Fin Comm/BOS	2007-May
Open Space	5B/2	Create Recreation Funding Endowment (annually)	Recreation Committee	Ongoing
Open Space	5B/3	Recruit Volunteers for Fund Raising (ever two years)	Recreation Committee/BOS	2007-March
Open Space	5B/4	Solicit Letters/News Articles for Programs (annually)	Recreation Committee	Ongoing
Services&Facilities	1D/1	Review Impact Fee Practices	Town Planner/Town Counsel	2007-May
Services&Facilities	1D/2	Develop Impact Fee Bylaw	CPDC/Town Planner	2007-November
Services&Facilities	2A/1	Develop/maintain Public Health Emergency Response Plan	Board of Health	Ongoing
Services&Facilities	5A/1	Define Types of Information to be Communicated	Board of Selectmen/Town Manager	2006-November
Services&Facilities	5A/2	Define Communication Means and Methods	Board of Selectmen/Town Manager	2006-November
Services&Facilities	5A/3	Identify Strategies to Couple Information Needs/Methods	Board of Selectmen/Town Manager	2007-May
Services&Facilities	5A/4	Implement Communications Plan	Board of Selectmen/Town Manager	2007-November
Services&Facilities	6B2	Measure customer satisfaction with Town services.	Board of Selectmen/Town Manager	2007-May
Transportation	1B/1	Initiate Town-Based Transit Non-Profit	Town Planner/Town Manager/BOS	2008-January
Transportation	1B/2	Identify Parking Concepts for Downtown	BOS/Town Mgr/Econ Devlp Comm.	2007-January
Transportation	4B/1	Form Town-Wide Parking/Traffic Ad-Hoc Adv Comm.	Town Manager/Board of Selectmen	2006-June

11.3 FISCAL REALITIES

The Master Plan introduces a wide range of action items aimed at controlling the Town's growth and protecting the Town's assets, strategies that require the expenditure of time and resources. In effect, there exist several methods of public policy and of development tactics that can augment and improve a Town's capabilities to control and protect. A few of the methods that are closer to New England's reality are examined below, as to whether they can provide opportunities for proactive planning.

The State

While the State has delegated the power of zoning to local authorities through Chapter 40A, the yearly 2.5% cap of tax revenue increase is a true limitation for a broad-base proactive land use planning by the Town. Long-term local planning for the type of growth, the preservation and the environmental protection is not publicly funded at a local level. Frequently the only alternative left to the Town is to advance limited short-term planning agendas with an impact on the Town's resources and Board/Committee time. Even if the Town found a quick and efficient way to adjust its zoning regulations against pressures for abrupt growth, the requirement for a two-thirds Town meeting majority to authorize zoning changes makes local proactive planning very cumbersome.

The Private Sector

Many municipalities have used tax waivers and impact fees to encourage or discourage particular types of development. In this manner, towns can tap on new funding mechanisms originating in the private sector and streamline specific planning activities and projects of high-priority. Compared to these municipalities, however, Reading is much smaller in size, in proportion of commercial/industrial land uses and in potential for new-developments. Furthermore, given the limited amount of undeveloped land in Reading, the method of having proactive planning conducted as part of alliances with the private sector is unlikely to occur while the potential for large-scale projects is diminished. Redevelopment projects can require limited planning and raise awareness and solicit public involvement for only a certain period of time.

The Community Preservation Act

In effect, the Town has been utilizing the existing planning tools found in the zoning bylaws, the district overlays, the public processes and the impact mitigation efforts to protect its assets. The task of proactive planning, however, lies beyond the resources and fiscal abilities as they exist today. Realizing this impasse, the State instituted the Community Preservation Act in 1999 as a local funding mechanism for proactive planning and for the protection of the Town's assets. In light of its near passage a few years ago, building public support for a new CPA referendum will require a substantial grass-roots effort in that task.