



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 1/3/2018**

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## **Framingham Mayor Releases Transition Team Report**

**Framingham, MA** – On her second day in office, Mayor Yvonne Spicer is releasing her Transition Team’s Report. This document is comprised of recommendations made by the 12-person Transition Team appointed by the Mayor in early December to create a guide for operationalizing her Vision Plan. The diverse group of citizen volunteers worked tirelessly through the holidays to produce this report.

“I am so grateful to this talented Transition Team for the time and effort they invested in putting together this report which I feel is balanced, and offers insight and tangible suggestions on implementing my Vision Plan,” said Mayor Spicer. “There is a lot to be done as Framingham truly begins to function as a City, this report is a good first step in getting us there.”

The Transition Team focused on the areas identified by Mayor Spicer in her Vision Plan: 1. Smooth Transition to City Form of Government; 2. Excellence in Education and Schools; 3. Invigorating Our Economy: Planned Growth, Balanced Development; 4. Preservation of Assets, Resources and Quality of Life; and 5. Investing in Our People – to come up with a plan for executing her vision. Their suggestions include identifying key operational recommendations specified in the Framingham Charter, and those they feel should be implemented immediately for the Mayor to have the utmost success in her new role.

The Team states in their report, “These are our recommendations. It will be at the Mayor’s sole discretion to determine which ones to implement.” The Transition Team will not be making, or recommending, appointments for the Mayor’s administration as that is outside of the parameters of their role.

**Transition Team:**

Robert Berman, President, Boston Technology Advisors  
Virginia Betelli, Educator  
Adam Blumer, Former Charter Commissioner and School Committee Member  
Jessica DaSilva, Behavioral Health Care Coordinator, Advocates  
Isabel Martinez Famania, Senior Educational Specialist, Boston Scientific  
Michael Gatlin, Chair, Economic Development Industrial Company (EDIC)  
Dr. Adrian K. Haugabrook, Senior Vice President and University Chief of Staff, Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)  
Kristina Johnson, Assistant Director, Planning and Community Development, Town of Hudson  
Reverend J.A. Lloyd, Pastor, Greater Framingham Community Church  
Kenneth Miller, Assistant Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration  
Susan Nicholl, Executive Director MetroWest Visitors Bureau  
Reverend Dr. Sarai Rivera, Worcester City Councilor

**Mayor Spicer's City-wide Proposed Conversations  
12 – Month Calendar**

January	Small Business and economic development
February	Community Communication
March	Health and Public Safety – opioid crisis, safety and walkability, etc.
April	Affordability and taxes
May	Preserving open spaces
June	The way ahead: dealing with blighted plazas and code enforcement
July	Traffic and transportation
August	Neighborhood Services
September	Innovation Taskforce
October	Partnerships with businesses and our educational institutions
November	Social Justice: what does it mean to proactively care for those less advantaged?
December	Greener Framingham

Note: Topics are tentative and subject to change

**###**

Yvonne  
**Spicer**  
The People's Mayor

**Transition Team Report - January 2018**

**MAYOR YVONNE SPICER'S TRANSITION TEAM:**

- Robert Berman, President, Boston Technology Advisors
- Virginia Bertelli, Educator
- Adam Blumer, Former Charter Commissioner and School Committee Member
- Jessica DaSilva, Behavioral Health Care Coordinator, Advocates
- Isabel Martinez Famaia, Senior Educational Specialist, Boston Scientific
- Michael Gatlin, Chair, Economic Development Industrial Company (EDIC)
- Dr. Adrian K. Haugabrook, Senior Vice President and University Chief of Staff, Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)
- Kristina Johnson, AICP, Assistant Director, Planning and Community Development, Town of Hudson
- Reverend J.A. Lloyd, Pastor, Greater Framingham Community Church
- Kenneth S. Miller, P.E. Assistant Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
- Susan Nicholl, Executive Director MetroWest Visitors Bureau
- Reverend Dr. Sarai Rivera, Worcester City Councilor

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

### **Overview**

The Transition Team focused on the areas identified by the Mayor-Elect in her Vision Plan: 1. Smooth Transition to City Form of Government; 2. Excellence in Education and Schools; 3. Invigorating Our Economy: Planned Growth, Balanced Development; 4. Preservation of Assets, Resources and Quality of Life; and 5. Investing in Our People – to come up with a plan for executing her vision. These suggestions include identifying key operational recommendations specified in the Framingham Charter, and those we feel should be implemented immediately for the Mayor to have the utmost success in her new role. These are our recommendations. It will be at the Mayor's sole discretion to determine which ones to implement.

### **Becoming a New City... Implementation of the Framingham Charter**

The 19-page report begins by advising the Mayor-Elect on composition of the Mayor's Office as part of a smooth transition to city government. The Charter directs the Mayor to hire three positions: Citizen Participations Officer, Solicitor, and Chief Operating Officer. The Transition Team believes the Mayor should have a Communications Director, and an Executive Assistant or Scheduler. Other recommendations include determining the flow of communication to and from the Mayor, internally and externally, day-to-day, and in times of crisis; identifying a timeline for Charter-mandated appointments as well as outside appointments; recommendations on staying connected to the people of the City; and, a budget timeline for her first fiscal year in office.

### **Framingham: Where Every Student Achieves Educational Excellence**

The Transition Team addresses advancing the Mayor-Elect's vision for educational excellence by suggesting that discernable indicators and measures of success which align with, and influences and informs the City's investments in learning and innovation. We also recommend understanding today's students and tomorrow's learners as part of this. Focus on partnerships in education and business serve as a foundation for improving education opportunities. Among new ideas is the suggestion for a budget summit to be led by the Mayor and the Superintendent, with input from the School Committee and the City Council, to identify and articulate the Framingham Public School budget strengths and challenges as part of the overall municipal budget proposal due in April.

## **Good Planning and Balanced Development**

The report finds that the long-term viability of Framingham is contingent upon good planning, stream-lined regulatory review processes, and new mechanisms for input from the business and higher education sectors. It states that it is imperative that a diversity of voices within the business community work together with the Mayor to shape future economic policy and investments for Framingham. The Transition Team suggests changes in government structure such as merging the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission staffing and administration to form a new Planning and Community Development Division described in the Charter. This is something that would occur in the first six months, and be connected to the April budget process. Other recommendations include hosting monthly roundtables with business community members at City Hall, and appointing a Business Ombudsperson as the “go-to” individual to work with any business wanting to locate or relocate to Framingham, expand in Framingham, or looking to be connected to associations in Framingham.

## **Preserving and Leveraging our Community Assets**

When it comes to preserving assets, resources and quality of life in Framingham, the Transition Team recommends an equitable, district-wide approach to municipal investments along with an economic and cultural re-imagining of Village Commercial Centers to position the City to achieve long-term livability and economic viability. To do this effectively, recommendations include coordinating members of the arts community, focusing on visibility of and preventative actions around public safety, finding a proactive way to share information about public health resources, and leveraging the relationships between neighborhood groups and mental health professionals.

In regard to investing in Framingham’s people, the Transition Team stipulates that the Mayor will need to provide strong leadership in setting a context for, and definition of, diversity and inclusion for the City. We suggest all municipal Boards and Committees appointed by the Mayor reflect and represent the diversity of the City. They also suggest the development and implementation of a Diversity and Inclusion Vision Statement, and the establishment a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer reporting directly to the Mayor.

## **Success for Framingham**

The recommendations made in the Transition Team’s report focus on the Mayor’s first year in office, and are intended as a guide for operationalizing her Vision Plan. Suggestions for changes in Framingham’s governmental organization chart, creation of new positions, and other recommendations which require funding are all contingent on a balanced budget. The Mayor made a promise to be the “People’s Mayor” and is sharing the Transition Team findings to keep the people of Framingham informed every step of the way as our new city government takes effect. Her goal is to make Framingham the hub of Metrowest, but first and foremost to make Framingham a great city for all who live and work here.

## **SMOOTH TRANSITION TO A CITY FORM OF GOVERNMENT**

As directed by the Charter, the Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer of the City. Not only will the Mayor serve as the political face of the City, the Mayor is responsible for the daily operations of the City. Mayor Spicer has identified her desire to achieve a smooth transition to a city form of government in her Vision Plan. Accordingly, the Transition Team believes that this component of her vision encompasses the operational and managerial responsibilities of the Mayor's position, the nuts and bolts of running the government, as well as to ensure the successful implementation of the new Framingham Charter. Outlined herein are important organizational and management considerations for Mayor Spicer as she assumes office on January 1, 2018. We, by no means, are dictating the appropriate mechanisms for how Mayor Spicer should organize herself, her immediate staff, or how she should run city government, as there are different management philosophies for achieving a smooth transition. The Team, however, identifies key operational recommendations that are either specified in the Charter, or are significant for Mayor Spicer to be effective and collaborative immediately.

### **Mayor's Office Organization**

#### **Composition of the Mayor's Office**

The Charter directs the Mayor to hire three positions: Citizen Participation Officer, Solicitor, and Chief Operating Officer (COO).

- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer consider appointing an interim COO for six months and work with him/her to establish a process for recruiting and vetting candidates. The Charter gives specific guidance on the COO's job description. Once a COO is hired, Mayor Spicer will have to decide upon supervisory and reporting lines.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer consider hiring a solicitor within the first six weeks.

Mayor Spicer will have to consider what additional positions should be established in her office. These are the Team's recommendations:

- Communications Director
- Government Affairs/Policy Director: responsible for interfacing and maintaining collaborative relationships with local, state, and federal elected officials
- Executive Assistant or Scheduler

- Mayor Spicer’s Vision Plan indicates her desire to hire a Director of Neighborhood Services. The Charter directs the Mayor to hire a Citizens Participation Officer. Mayor Spicer must determine if these positions are the same or different, and where within the government structure does she envisions this position(s) will be located. For example, will the position(s) fall under the Mayor’s Office umbrella?
- Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer; see recommendations for Mayor’s Vision for Investing in Our People.

### **Operational Logistics of the Mayor’s Office**

Mayor Spicer will have to decide how her office will run day-to-day. Will Mayor Spicer conduct regular cabinet meetings? Will Mayor Spicer delegate senior staff meeting to the COO?

- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer establish a communication and social media policy. Does Mayor Spicer want Department heads responding to the media, or will all media inquiries be routed through the Mayor’s Office? It is the Team’s recommendation that, within the first four-to-six weeks, Mayor Spicer have all media inquiries handled directly by her office.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer decide how she wants to receive information such as briefings, emails, and face-to-face meetings. Furthermore, it is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer determine how she will interact with staff on a daily basis – via an open-door policy with City staff, or by appointment only.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer decide how she desires to be notified about emergencies and by whom. The Transition Team recommends that Mayor Spicer consider convening a meeting with first responders and the School Superintendent to discuss policies about communicating information during emergencies.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer establish a winter communication policy with the School Superintendent, Department of Public Works, and the Chief of Police regarding snow emergencies, snow removal, and school closings.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer decide how she wants to get around the City; a city vehicle or her personal one, and that she consider an accompanying security detail.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer decide if she desires her immediate staff, and other Departments, to identify press opportunities (ribbon cuttings, project groundbreakings, etc.) on a regular basis.

## **Appointments**

### **Charter- Mandated Appointments**

- The Charter states that the Planning Board, Vocational Technical, Housing Authority, and the City Clerk serve out the remainder of their respective terms.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer develop a process for recruiting and vetting Board and Committee appointments. As indicated in her Vision Plan, diversity and geographical representation are important considerations for appointments. Mayor Spicer will need to work with the City Clerk's Office to establish staggered terms of office for all new appointments.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer focus on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and Conservation Commission (ConCom) appointments. Both ConCom and ZBA are regulatory boards with an important function within the development/permitting process.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer request that the newly elected City Council draft an ordinance prohibiting Councilors from being appointed to other municipal Boards and Committees. The Framingham Charter does not address this issue.

### **Outside Appointments**

Framingham holds voting seats, and provides members, to important Committees and Boards such as the Metrowest Transit Authority (MWRTA), the Boston Region Metropolitan Organization (MPO: responsible for the programming of federal transportation funding), the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the regional Planning Agency that serves 101 communities in Metropolitan Boston region, the 495 Partnership, and the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA). Only one such committee currently has a City employee serving out a term.

- Mayor Spicer will become the default representative for the above-referenced boards. For the sake of continuity, it is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer consider designating staff, particularly from the Planning Department, to represent the City on these Boards. Planning staff have a breadth and depth of institutional knowledge about Framingham's participation and roles on these Boards and Committees.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer investigate the process for becoming a member of the MMA Mayor's Association.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer request that each Department within the City produce a list of all boards, committees, associations, and professional membership organizations in which staff are members, or are paying dues.

## **Communication and Relationship Building**

### **Introduction to Staff**

Framingham employees thousands of workers engaged in a wide-range of municipal jobs related to public safety, operations and management, policy and strategic plan development, municipal finance and budgeting, and, regulatory and permitting to name a few. It is the Team's understanding that Mayor Spicer has been introduced to, or has met with, several Department heads since the election. To foster a team-building environment and develop a constructive working relationship between leadership and staff, it is critical that Mayor Spicer employ her collaborative spirit to set a positive tone from the onset.

- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer develop an Entry Plan for each Department. It is the Team's belief that an Entry Plan will allow Mayor Spicer to formalize her introduction to staff while obtaining a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of Department Heads and staff roles and responsibilities. For example, an Entry Plan for Emergency Response, or Public Works, personnel may look different than an Entry Plan for Departments engaged in strategic planning, or regulatory and permitting roles.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer coordinate closely with the Interim COO, and thereafter, the permanent COO, to successfully execute the Entry Plan for each Department.
- It is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer begin to develop a positive, collaborative relationship with the employee collective bargaining units.

### **External Communication and Relationships**

Mayor Spicer's Vision Plan clearly articulates that as "the People's Mayor" she will be highly engaged with the Community on a regular basis, she will hold quarterly citywide conversations in various neighborhoods, and that she will work to formalize neighborhood associations. In addition to being highly engaged with community members, a strong working relationship with the newly elected City Council is imperative for policy development and agenda setting for the City. Furthermore, it is the Team's recommendation that Mayor Spicer, within the first six months, work to develop positive collaborative relationships with a wide-range of officials, entities, institutions, stakeholders as outlined below.

### **Government Relationships**

- State and Federal Legislators; a Governmental Affairs or Policy Director could be deputized to develop, foster, and manage relationships with state and federal legislators.

- State Government Agencies such as the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation; existing working relationships may already be place at the City’s departmental staff levels.
- Neighboring local governments; establish working relationships with other Mayors and Town Administrators.

**Business and Economic Relationships**

- MetroWest Chamber of Commerce
- Local business associations
- Framingham Economic Development Industrial Company (EDIC)
- Local financial and lending institutions

**Institutional Relationships**

- Framingham State University
- Massachusetts Bay Community College
- MetroWest Medical Center and other medical arts institutions

**Community and Social Service Provider Relationships**

- South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC)
- Interfaith Clergy Association
- Partnership for Skilled Workforces
- Community health providers
- Community Organizations (SMILES, Brazilian Association, etc.)

**Media Relationships**

- Boston Globe and Boston Herald
- Boston television stations and national television networks
- Metrowest Daily News, Framingham Patch, and Framingham Source
- Regular appearances on Framingham Access Television Station, and the Framingham Government Channel

**Budgeting**

Article VI, Section 4 of the Charter requires the Mayor to submit a budget no later than 60 days before the start of the new fiscal year that contains budget message, proposed operating budget, and supporting documentation. The Board of Selectmen have set the Tax Rate for FY 2019.

- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer work closely with Municipal Finance staff to review budget timelines and projections with all Departments.

- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer work collaboratively with all collective bargaining units to develop an understanding of existing contractual obligations identifying those contracts that will be up for re-negotiation.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer develop a budget for the Mayor’s Office to account for any newly created positions as well as those stipulated in the Charter.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer develop a budget for any new offices and positions created outside of the Mayor’s Office in addition to those stipulated in the Charter.
- It is the Team’s recommendation that Mayor Spicer work closely with the Information Technology Department to obtain pricing quotations and develop a budget for the implementation of a 311 System.

**Smooth Transition to City Government: Key Benchmarks for Implementation**

<b>Operational Recommendation</b>	<b>Proposed Timeline</b>	<b>Additional Consideration</b>
Determine dates and locations for quarterly citywide conversations. Publicize dates in multiple venues.	January/February 2018	Deputize Director of Neighborhood Services/ Citizens Participation Officer to plan logistics.
Commence process to identify, vet, and hire a Chief Operating Officer. Consider appointing an interim COO for six months.	January 2018	The Charter provides direction on the roles and responsibilities of the COO. It is the Team’s recommendation that a hiring a COO in the immediate term with extensive municipal management experience will help maintain continuity within the City’s government organizational structure.
Establish process to recruit, vet, and appoint members to Boards and Committees.	Within Six months	Work with the City Clerk’s office to develop staggered terms of appointments.
Start process to identify, vet, and hire a Director of Neighborhood Services.	February 2018	It is the Team’s understanding that the Director of Neighborhood Services will perform the duties as outlined in the Charter.
Work with City Council to develop an ordinance that would prohibit Councilors from serving on other City Boards such as the Planning Board, or Zoning Board of Appeals.	January/February 2018	It is the Team’s understanding that this measure was contemplated by the Charter.
Begin procurement process for Mayor’s 311 service with the goal of a Fall 2018 launch.	March 2018	Deputize the Director of Neighborhood Services to work with the Information/Technology Department to develop a 311 architecture and oversee costs.
Begin procurement process for hiring firm to put all ordinances and by-laws online with searchable functions.	April/May 2018	Work with the City Council Information/ Technology Department to develop optimal format for online research.

## **EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS**

As directed by the Charter, the Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer of the City and is accountable for our City's educational outcomes and has responsibility for providing sufficient funding for our schools and our students to thrive. Mayor Spicer will need to work boldly and collaboratively with the Framingham Public Schools (FPS) Superintendent, School Committee, City Council and an array of leaders, advocates, and other stakeholders to secure and sustain a vision for learning and education. The Mayor serves as an Ex-Officio member of the School Committee and will need to forge trusting relationships across the district to develop, implement and continually assess the direction of an education vision and platform. Attributes of this vision should include, but not be limited to, embracing the diversity of learners across our community; access to high quality educational opportunities; actionable and measurable outcomes; equitable, reliable and sustainable funding; and, chances to spur innovation to address current, emerging and future needs for our City, the Metrowest region and the Commonwealth.

The Transition Team recommends the following:

### **Advancing a Vision**

- Establish a long-term vision for educational excellence through the engagement of a variety of stakeholders to include: Superintendent, School Committee, City Council, parents and families, educational and youth advocates, higher education leaders, and business and civic leaders, to consider a long-term vision for our students.
- Develop and implement a vision that has discernable indicators and measures of success that align and will influence and inform our investments in learning and innovation.
- Develop and implement a vision that fully addresses the needs of our students today and also aims to understand our future learners and their needs.

### **Promoting Collaboration, Partnership and Relationships**

- Establish a regular meeting and communication cycle with the Superintendent and the School Committee to ensure strong collaboration and feedback systems. Consider effective engagement and communication strategies for other educational stakeholders such as teachers and educators; parents and families; and, legislative, business and civic leaders.
- Meet with the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School to understand what it means for Framingham to be the host city, how the budgeting process works and what the benefits and costs are to Framingham.

- Meet with the Superintendent and the Chair of Keefe Regional Technical High School Committee. Learn what it means for Framingham to be the host city, how the budgeting process works, and what the benefits and costs are to Framingham. As the Charter requires, negotiate an amendment to our regional school agreement with Keefe for Framingham’s representatives to be appointed, rather than elected.
- Work with higher education partners, such as Massachusetts Bay Community College and Framingham State University, as well as the Metrowest business community, to explore a comprehensive and sustainable post-secondary and workforce readiness agenda.
- Work with private and public Early Childhood Education providers to identify available services and to encourage efforts to increase the availability of pre-kindergarten education in the City. Possibly tap into the Neighborhood Center Proposal (in each District).

### **Investing in Learning and Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility**

- Meet with School Department leadership to discuss areas of need as well as to understand the school budget process.
- Coordinate with school leadership and City department heads to begin discussions on efficiencies through the identification of areas of overlap between City and schools. Identify potential efficiencies in areas such as purchasing and procurement, technology solutions, services and programs and human capital.
- Create a budget summit led by the Mayor and the Superintendent with the School Committee and the City Council, as well as key municipal officials. The immediate goal of the summit would be to identify and articulate FPS budget strengths and challenges as part of the overall municipal budget proposal.
- Work with the FPS School Superintendent and the School Committee to conduct district-wide assessment of technology needs to support learning, curriculum and instruction, and professional development.
- Identify state education leaders to meet with, and discuss inequality in funding formulas, needs for future with growing population, and identify what the state can do to help.
- Continue to identify and pursue business and education partnerships in the area that may assist in building stable fiscal resources and enhance educational and developmental opportunities for all students.

**Excellence in Education and Schools: Key Benchmarks for Implementation**

Operational Recommendation	Proposed Timeline	Additional Consideration
Meet with incoming School Committee Members individually. Begin building bridges of understanding to ensure a collaborative working relationship	January 2018	
<p>Meet with School Department leadership to discuss priorities for upcoming fiscal year, and develop an understanding and appreciation of the budgeting process.</p> <p>Hold a budget summit led by Mayor Spicer and the Superintendent with the School Committee and the City Council, as well as key municipal officials such as the CFO in order to publicize FPS budget strengths and challenges as part of the overall municipal budget proposal.</p> <p>Coordinate with School Department and pertinent City department heads to identify cost savings and areas of overlap. Investigate the feasibility of a combined, streamlined purchasing process.</p>	January-March 2018	As outlined in the Charter, connect the recommendations to the City budgeting timeline, as outlined.
<p>Meet with the Superintendent and the Chair of Keefe School Committee to develop an understanding of the mechanics, budget, and cost/benefits of being a host City.</p> <p>As the Charter requires, negotiate an amendment to our regional school agreement with Keefe for Framingham’s representatives to be appointed, rather than elected.</p>	March/April 2018	
Meet with Executive Director and Board of Trustees Members of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School. Meet with the Superintendent and the Chair of Keefe School Committee to develop an understanding of the mechanics, budget, and cost/benefits of being a host City.	March/April 2018	
Work with Early Childhood Education providers (private and public) to identify available services and to encourage efforts to increase the availability of pre-kindergarten education in the City. Possibly tap into the Neighborhood Center Proposal (in each District).	Within six months-ongoing effort	
Meet with key state education leaders to address potential inequality in funding formulas, and articulate Framingham’s educational needs for the future based on projected population increases.	May/June 2018	

## **INVIGORATING OUR ECONOMY: Planned Growth and Balanced Development**

Mayor Spicer has the opportunity to reframe and reshape the conversation with respect to economic development; to reinvigorate the collaboration between Government, the Business Community, and higher education institutions. The long-term economic viability of Framingham is contingent upon good planning, streamlined regulatory review processes, and new mechanisms for input from the business and higher education sectors. It is imperative that Mayor Spicer work hand-in-hand with a diversity of voices within the business community from tiny “mom and pop” stores and small technology incubators, to our largest employers to shape future economic policy and investments for Framingham.

### **Invigorating our Economy: Key Benchmarks for Implementation**

<b>Operational Recommendation</b>	<b>Proposed Timeline</b>	<b>Additional Consideration</b>
<p>Merge Planning Board and Conservation Commission staffing and administration with the new Planning and Community Development Division described in the Charter.</p> <p>Direct new Planning and Development Division to conduct an implementation audit of the Master Plan, neighborhood plans, economic development plans, parking studies, open space and preservation plans, and work to develop a timeframe and a process to begin the development of a new City Master Plan per the Charter.</p>	Within Six months	Connect this with the budgeting process in April to develop a cost and scope for a new Master Plan, or an update to the existing one.
<p>Strengthen internal development review practices and protocols. Identify ways to streamline the regulatory review and inspections process.</p> <p>Empower the new Planning and Development Division Director and staff to manage a coordinated and collaborative development review process with all pertinent Departments at the table including Inspectional Services, Public Safety, Department of Public Works, Public Health, and, Parks and Recreation.</p>	Within three months	Most likely there is an existing review process in place. Mayor Spicer can work with staff to strengthen that process for better planning and a more predictable, streamlined development review.
<p>Consider establishing regular interactions and communications with the business community by hosting a monthly roundtable session. Consider empowering the existing EDIC to facilitate this process and ensure that all voices within the business community are recognized and heard.</p>	Within six months	
<p>Appoint a Business Ombudsperson to serve as the “go-to” individual assisting with all business-related inquiries such as: 1. businesses looking to locate/relocate the Framingham; 2. businesses looking to expand in Framingham; and, 3. businesses looking to be connected with various associations and organizations in Framingham.</p>	Within Six months	<p>It is the Team’s recommendation that an existing Economic Development staff person step into this role.</p> <p>It is the Team’s recommendation that function be located under the Planning and Community Development Division umbrella.</p>
<p>Capitalize on existing assets and build positive</p>	Within six	

relationships with higher education institutions, medical institutions, and the arts community.	months-ongoing effort	
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## INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

Mayor Spicer will take the helm of a city that is recognized for the growing diversity of people. Often referred to as the “hub” of the Metrowest region, the City of Framingham has witnessed tremendous growth in diversity relative to the racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, immigrant communities as well as age, abilities, socioeconomic and veteran status. The richness of this diversity is an asset to the community and the Mayor will want to ensure that every Framingham resident will be represented by, and have access to, local governmental programs, services and resources. As a community, we will want to leverage this diversity for the collective good of the entire City, and the region.

The Transition Team recommends the following to Mayor Spicer:

### **I. Commitment and Accountability to Diversity and Inclusion**

- a. Ensure that all appointments to municipal Boards and Committees made by the Mayor reflect the representational diversity of the City. This includes standing, ad-hoc, advisory, formal and informal boards and committees.
- b. Develop, implement, and continually assess a Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Strategy for the City. The strategy would include: an accountability index in which all City departments and services could measure their own progress toward agreed upon goals/metrics. This dashboard would be made available to the public.
- c. Develop and assess effective strategies and approaches to recognize and actively engage immigrant communities within Framingham.
- d. Strategically work with local and regional businesses as well as higher education partners to establish high-quality and sustainable programs, services and resources that assist in facilitating the short- and long-term aims of the Mayor’s vision for diversity and inclusion.
- e. Examine the efficacy of establishing an Office of Diversity and Inclusion that could be led by a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer. This officer would report directly to the Mayor and would have responsibilities that include:
  - i. Lead and facilitate the implementation and assessment of a citywide diversity and inclusion strategy.
  - ii. Assist the Mayor and City Departments in ensuring diversity within appointments and personnel hires.
  - iii. Advise the Mayor, City Council and other public and private stakeholders, on the current, emerging and trending issues within the City, region and the Commonwealth that may affect policy, practice and programs. Provide recommendations that will continue to guide Framingham’s climate for diversity and inclusion.
  - iv. Work collaboratively with the Office of Neighborhood Services to actualize the City’s vision for diversity and inclusion.
  - v. Lead, or assist, in the establishment of a comprehensive and robust community outreach program.

## **II. Commitment and Accountability to Seniors and Military Veterans**

- a. Conduct a needs assessment for seniors and military veterans that may result in the enhancement, or expansion, of programs and services geared toward improving quality of life by improving access to municipal, state, and federal information and services.
- b. Explore leveraging the economic development strategy to increase the stock of affordable senior housing. Priority of this housing should be given to Framingham residents.
- c. Strategically work with local and regional businesses as well as higher education partners to establish high-quality and sustainable programs, services and resources that support the short- and long-term aims of the Mayor's vision for seniors and veterans.

## **III. Commitment and Accountability to Women and Families**

- a. Conduct a review of the City's policies to ensure that all implications for women and families are sufficiently considered.
- b. Organize regular meeting/communication schedule with local businesses, employers and unions to ensure effective advocacy that promote employee and family rights and needs.
- c. Examine policies, programs and services aimed at enhancing education and workforce development for women in general and women with families and women who became mothers at a young age in particular.
- d. Strategically work with local and regional businesses as well as higher education partners to establish high-quality and sustainable programs, services and resources that assist in facilitating the short- and long-term aims of the Mayor's vision for women and families.

## **IV. Commitment and Accountability to our Immigrant Community**

- a. Effectively utilize the Offices of the Mayor, Neighborhood Services and Diversity and Inclusion to ensure access to high-quality programs and services for Framingham's immigrant communities.
- b. Develop and assess effective strategies and approaches to recognize and actively engage immigrant communities within Framingham.
- c. Ensure the representation of immigrant communities on citywide and neighborhood boards and committees.
- d. Consider the establishment of a centralized, and dedicated, resource to support the City's commitment to our immigrant communities. For example, consider the establishment of a Framingham Center for New Americans that could provide services in areas such as education, employment support, civic engagement, citizenship and immigration.
- e. Strategically work with local and regional businesses as well as higher education partners to establish high-quality and sustainable programs, services, and resources that support the short- and long-term aims of the Mayor's vision for our immigrant community.

**Investing in our People: Key Benchmarks for Implementation**

Operational Recommendation	Proposed Timeline	Additional Consideration
<p>Create an Office of Diversity and Inclusion to ensure access to government employment and services for Seniors, Veterans, and Immigrants, and connect them to educational resources (FSU, MassBay, etc.), social service resources.</p> <p>Work with Human Resources department to create a Chief Diversity Officer to: 1. help develop a City Diversity and Inclusion Policy Plan; 2. work with local educational institutions to connect the community to appropriate programming and opportunities; 3. develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy - accountability index to quantify the effectiveness of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan; and, 4. investigate private funding opportunities to implement the Diversity and Inclusion Plan and the Inclusion Strategy.</p>	<p>Within six months</p> <p>Within six months to hire the CDO; within eight months to develop a plan; within one year to develop accountability index.</p>	<p>Make sure this is connected to the budget process in April.</p>
<p>Develop strong relationships with local childcare providers. Direct Planning and Development Division to investigate the use of Community Development Block Grant funds for childcare vouchers.</p>	<p>Within six months—ongoing effort</p>	<p>Framingham is a U.S. Department of HUD entitlement community that receives an annual Community Development Block Grant allocation.</p>
<p>Assemble an advisory group of non-elected officials to provide input relative to diversity and inclusion efforts by the City.</p>	<p>Within six-eight months</p>	
<p>Investigate the diversity and inclusion strategies and plans of other municipalities (Manchester, NH for an example with respect to immigrants).</p>	<p>Within six months—ongoing effort</p>	<p>Empower the CDO to conduct this research and meet with other municipalities.</p>

**PRESERVATION OF ASSETS, RESOURCES AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

The City of Framingham is a diverse community—both in geography and its people; and most notable, is asset rich. Mayor Spicer can leverage the diversity of the community and its assets (such as the arts, higher education institutions, small businesses, and public transportation) to ensure a healthy, happy, and affordable Framingham for all. An equitable, district-wide approach to municipal investments along with the economic and cultural re-imagining of village commercial centers will help posture Framingham for long-term livability and economic viability. Mayor Spicer will need to employ creative strategies and collaborate with a wide-range of municipal partners, and community stakeholders, to support basic safety needs, preserve open space and recreational resources, improve public health outcomes, and to bolster community pride and spirit.

**Preserving and Leveraging our Assets: Key Benchmarks for Implementation**

<b>Operational Recommendation</b>	<b>Proposed Timeline</b>	<b>Additional Consideration</b>
<p><b>Asset Type: Arts Community</b>            Designate a community arts liaison /advocate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide artists/arts groups with more visibility.</li> <li>• Coordinate arts, arts organizations, and venues.</li> <li>• Assess space needs (work with Economic Development Office).</li> <li>• Ascertain and address barriers for artists and arts organization from being more integrated into the community fabric.</li> <li>• Develop effective marketing strategies to successfully promote a multicultural arts festival that will be well-attended by the community.</li> </ul>	<p>Within six months designate a community arts liaison.</p> <p>Within 12 months plan a multicultural arts festival.</p>	<p>It is the Team’s recommendation that the community arts liaison work with the following groups/organizations: emerging Framingham Centre Cultural District, Framingham Cultural Council, 6 START partners, artists’ cooperatives (such as Howard, Saxonville), Downtown Framingham Inc.</p>
<p><b>Asset Type: Downtown Viability</b>            Develop a multi-faceted approach to strengthen downtown viability and safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor’s Office Work collaboratively with public safety officials to develop sensible, proactive downtown policing strategies.</li> <li>• Establish a collaborative relationship between City Hall, Public Safety officials, and social service agencies; and, supportive housing providers in the vicinity of downtown.</li> <li>• Further empower Planning and Development Division (as staff to the development permitting boards) by investigating enhanced lighting design, safe parking opportunities, and appropriate locations for trash/dumpsters. Code Enforcement officials to work with property owners to address long-standing code violations.</li> </ul>	<p>Within three-six months</p>	<p>It is the Team’s recommendation that the continued visibility, proactive nature, support, and friendliness of public safety is critical to our citizens feeling valued and to citizens wanting to patronize businesses. In turn, this patronage will drive economic development and support business owners.</p>

<p><b>Asset Type: Recreation Opportunities and Access to Open Space</b> Empower the Park and Recreation Department to develop a more comprehensive marketing and promotion strategy for all recreational and open space resources. Strategy should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Social Media campaigns</li> <li>• Outreach to low-moderate-income populations</li> <li>• Ensure all promotional material is multi-lingual</li> </ul> <p>Direct the Park and Recreation Department (in collaboration with the Planning and Development Division) to conduct an audit of existing Open Space and Recreation Plan.</p> <p>Direct the Park and Recreation Department to continue exploring mechanisms for funding/acquiring open space.</p>	<p>Within three-six months</p> <p>Within eight to 12 months</p> <p>Within six months—ongoing effort</p>	<p>It is the Team’s Recommendation that City can leverage its wealth of recreation and open space resources to enhance neighborhood livability and overall quality of life. Furthermore, the Team believes that improving access to both passive and active recreation opportunities will have a positive impact on the City’s public health outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Asset Type: Human Service Resources</b> Appoint a Human Services Policy Coordinator (or empower an existing City staff person to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the availability of all community services including: family and behavioral health providers, supportive housing, homeless intervention, rental assistance, etc.</li> <li>• Serve as the liaison to the City’s (and the region’s) human service providers.</li> <li>• Serve as “go to” individual for financial and program resources.</li> </ul>	<p>Within six-eight months</p>	<p>It is the Team’s recommendation that enhancing the relationship between the human service providers and the City will reduce the stigma for residents who need access to services, and improve public health outcomes and quality of life for our most vulnerable populations.</p>
<p><b>Asset Type: Strong Neighborhood Fabric</b> Formalize existing neighborhood groups and organizations such as Brazilian-American Association at St. Tarsicius Church and Friends of Saxonville; and, create formal neighborhood associations that meet regularly.</p> <p>Direct the new Director of Neighborhood Services to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the formation of new neighborhood associations to establish mission statements, board of directors, and regular meeting schedules.</li> <li>• Attend all neighborhood association meetings.</li> <li>• Work with all neighborhood associations in setting up quarterly citywide conversations.</li> <li>• Work with neighborhood associations to develop social programming and block parties.</li> </ul>	<p>Within eight to 12 months.</p> <p>Within three-six months</p>	<p>It is the Team’s understanding the Director of Neighborhood Services will fulfill the same roles and responsibilities as the Citizen Participation Officer, described in the Charter,</p> <p>It is the Team’s recommendation that a formalized relationship between the Director of Neighborhood Services and the existing Boards/Committees that are active in neighborhoods, such as the Human Relations Committee.</p>

<p><b>Asset: Neighborhood Groups Recommendation</b>  <b>Additional recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at City of Newton model</li> <li>• Determine if this person is also the Citizens Participation Director</li> <li>• They should form strong relationship with Framingham Community Partners</li> </ul>		<p>What is the relationship between this new Director of Neighborhood Services and the Human Relations Commission? What should this commission's purview be going forward?</p>
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## Summary

All recommendations made in this document are just that, recommendations. This report is intended only as a guide on how to operationalize the Mayor's Vision Plan. It will be at the sole discretion of Mayor Spicer which suggestions to follow, which plans to implement, which positions to create, and ultimately, she alone will determine the best way to move forward as she begins her term as the City's first mayor.