

WORK

Canton will foster equitable economic prosperity and stability by retaining and expanding businesses of all sizes in collaboration with the business community.

Canton residents love their community for its high quality of life, diverse residential neighborhoods, and abundant recreational opportunities, but beyond being a great place to live, Canton is home to numerous businesses and employment opportunities. In fact, many are surprised to learn that Canton actually has more jobs than it has residents. Canton's varied range of industries and businesses contributes to the economic vitality of the town while providing a range of job opportunities close to residents and also bolstering the tax base. Continuing to support a diverse and competitive local economy makes the Town an attractive place for employers and residents alike.

Businesses in Canton rely on the Town to foster a business-friendly climate, provide critical services and infrastructure, maintain accessibility through roads and sidewalks, ensure that employees and customers have safe places to live, and provide high-quality education. Likewise, the Town relies on businesses to create employment opportunities, provide goods and services to its residents, and support the Town's fiscal health through taxes.

WORK focuses on the relationship between the Town and the business community.

Create Mixed-Use Environments that Attract Businesses

The Town should work toward creating amenity-rich mixed-use environments that increase competitiveness for attracting businesses and commercial development. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Focus on redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and infill redevelopment around existing transit nodes, including Downtown Canton and Canton Junction. Integrate employment-generating uses and amenities. [See FOCUS AREAS Downtown and Canton Junction.]
2. Encourage a mix of uses in the town's suburban-style business parks, including restaurants, retail, services, entertainment, recreation, etc. to increase market competitiveness. This includes standalone uses as well as adding amenities to existing office buildings. Adjust zoning as needed.
3. Undertake aesthetic improvements to streetscapes and façades along commercial corridors to create cohesive districts, including Route 138, Neponset Street, and Washington Street.

Support Business Growth and Viability

The Town recognizes that in order for the local business community to be successful, it must support the startup, growth, stability, and viability of businesses and entrepreneurs in Canton. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Regularly communicate with businesses to understand and address needs. Implement a business visitation program that ensures regular dialogue between the town and its businesses.
2. Identify funding sources for businesses and property owners to address needs and increase awareness of opportunities.
3. Partner with Canton Association of Business and Industry (CABI) and work together to pursue joint goals.
4. Open lines of communication with business owners and implement policies to support small retailers and improve their ability to remain viable.

Target Properties with Opportunity

The Town recognizes that there are key vacant and underutilized sites for development and redevelopment. The Town can identify these opportunities and support property owners and businesses through the development process. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Identify underutilized and/or vacant sites, work with property owners to recognize challenges and barriers to development, and provide informational resources and potential funding sources.
2. Assist with marketing of properties with commercial development potential, including listings on the town economic development website and state site selection websites, such as MassEcon.

Market Canton as "Open for Business"

Being proactive by expanding business recruitment efforts and marketing Canton as "open for business" can spotlight the Town ahead of other communities. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Continue to offer economic incentives to encourage strategic commercial growth and development in Canton. Use tools such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to attract commercial development that aligns with town goals and strategies .
2. Target regional growth sectors, including professional and technical services, bio and life sciences, health technology, and information technology.
3. Target businesses that support the Town's goals for arts and culture and sustainability.
4. Attract more retail shops and restaurants to serve the needs of residents and employees.
5. Expand external marketing efforts, including a professional economic development website. Include resources for businesses interested in locating in Canton, highlighting information about available sites and utilities infrastructure, workforce availability for key industry sectors, demographic information for retail businesses, relevant approval and permitting processes, and available incentives.

Support Workforce Needs

The Town recognizes that the workforce of local businesses has training, transportation, and housing needs, which can be supported locally. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Partner with Massasoit Community College, Blue Hills Regional Vocational Technical School, and Canton High School, among other technical schools and training institutions, to connect businesses with local talent.
2. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing that ensures Canton workers can live in the community if they so choose.
3. Better connect businesses to nearby shopping, dining, recreation, and housing by increasing walking and biking amenities and accessibility .
4. Partner with employers to make first/last mile connections between commuter rail stations and businesses. See [CONNECT](#).

What's missing?