

# Ashby Sustainable Economic Development Plan



Prepared by:

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)

In collaboration with the Town of Ashby Economic Development Committee and  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Ashby's Sustainable Economic Development Plan identifies Ashby's vision, future goals and objectives for the economic development of the Town. It proactively focuses on the supporting local economy's ability to adapt to changing conditions. The Plan links goals for physical development of the Town with economic policies to ensure prosperity within the capabilities of the local government to shape its fiscal destiny. Ashby is affected by the larger regional, national and international forces beyond its control. Economic Development policies in this document have been considered within the context of Ashby's place in the region and nation.

The plan provides a framework to coordinate efforts to ease the effects of the larger economy and its cyclical upswings and downturns on the residents and businesses in Ashby. For Ashby to be more sustainable and self-reliant to buffer these effects, it also seeks to create a local economy that is more resilient and self-sufficient by building on existing strengths and developing economic sectors that fit in with the local culture and goals for how the community should develop and prosper. Such an economy must also provide a living wage for citizens and tread lightly on the natural environment so its bounty can sustain the community for the long term. The plan must establish a set of proactive policies that will directly address all of these objectives.

### **Structure of the Plan**

#### **Introduction and Historical Background**

This plan is structured similarly to traditional comprehensive plans with a brief historical sketch of the community noting its development from founding to the present day. This describes how the economy has progressed from an agricultural outpost far from the colonies through the present day as an agricultural community that also serves as a bedroom community to Fitchburg and Leominster.

#### **Citizen and Stakeholder Participation**

Citizen and stakeholder participation is important to any successful plan. In this case, it was critical to learn the needs, desires, and thoughts of citizens of Ashby plus other stakeholders such as business owners and property owners regarding the local economy. Throughout the process, both before and after data collection, we engaged the public by conducting a workshop and SWOT analysis and held several public meetings designed to elicit feedback to include in the development of goals, objectives and policies. We also conducted a paper and online survey designed to acquire even more detailed information about what participants thought was important for the plan to include.

#### **Current Conditions**

Description of current conditions assesses the economic and demographic information of the Town of Ashby including demographic data such as population, age structure, household composition, education, income, the labor force and travel to work. It also includes economic data such as an inventory of current businesses, a description of the tax base, and an analysis of market segmentation.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This plan is structured similarly to traditional comprehensive plans with a brief historical sketch of the community noting its development from founding to the present day. This describes how the economy has progressed from an agricultural outpost far from the colonies through the present day as an agricultural community that also serves as a bedroom community to Fitchburg and Leominster.

### **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

Current economic conditions, public participation and input, and the analysis and conclusions based upon these data led finally to the development of specific goals, objectives, and policies that are designed to implement the economic vision of the citizens of Ashby based on their needs and desires shaped by the current and predicted future market. The goals were based on the EO 418 economic development goals but updated and amended for current conditions as well as shaped by a filter of sustainable development.

### **Implementation Plan and Matrix**

The key to successful planning is the ability to implement a well-developed planning program. Implementation requires specificity in timing, assigning responsibility, and sources of funding. This plan therefore provides each of these criteria for each policy. Policies are assigned one of four time frames with a three-year short-term planning horizon and an additional long-term category. Policies that are most pressing or that have immediate resources available were assigned to Year 1 with other policies being assigned to years 2, 3 and long-term based on subsequent prioritization and availability of resources.

### **Funding**

Funding for this plan was made possible through the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program which is a grant program administered by regional planning agencies and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The DLTA program was established by Chapter 205 of the Acts of 2006, which enables staff of Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) such as MRPC to provide technical assistance to communities for “any subject within regional planning expertise.” The DLTA program provides this technical assistance at no cost to the Town of Ashby.

On December 8, 2010, The Town of Ashby submitted a request for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) service to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC). The MRPC awarded a DLTA grant to the Town of Ashby on December 30, 2010 to develop an economic development plan termed the Ashby Sustainable Economic Development Plan. The Town of Ashby contributed a significant amount of resources in the form of matching time from the consulting land use agent along with the time and efforts of the Economic Development Committee. The Economic Development Committee was formed by the Board of Selectmen to help guide the creation of an economic development plan with a sustainability foundation to create and implement a vision for the future economy of the town of Ashby that is in harmony with social and natural systems and establishes a steady state in which to enjoy the fruits of the vision in perpetuity.

## **Relationship to Other Local Planning and Policy Initiatives**

The Economic Development Plan is intended as an independent set of local policies to advance local economic development goals. But the plan will also be coordinated with existing and future planning efforts to assure consistency of vision and avoid duplication or contradiction of effort and resources. Currently, Ashby doesn't have a master plan for its Town, but does have a Community Development Plan completed in 2004. The plan covers Housing, Economic Development and Open Space, but doesn't cover the full range of elements usually found in a complete master plan. (A comprehensive master plan usually includes vision, goals and objectives, public participation, land use, housing, economic development, natural and culture resources, communities facilities and services, transportation and circulation and implementation.)

The Economic Development Element from the Ashby's Community Development Plan was reviewed in the development of this plan. This element included inventory and recommendations for economic development in Ashby. Town officials believed that the EO 418 recommendations were a good starting point for economic development planning—and many of these recommendations served as a foundation for goal development in this plan—but that a more robust, comprehensive, and structured program be developed that charted a clear and comprehensive course for Ashby to navigate.

Finally, this plan necessarily developed goals, objectives, and policies that included other local criteria, (i.e. transportation, open space, etc.) that are inextricably linked to economic development which allows the plan to function as an independent set of policies. However, the Town anticipates that this plan can also effectively function as the economic development element of a complete master plan, which can further develop local policy toward a sustainable future.

## **Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ashby Economic Development Commission in the development of this plan is the timely completion of a viable economic development plan that is relevant to the characteristics of the Town of Ashby and develops an implementable set of policies that are designed to create and maintain a sound and healthy local economy, resilient to external economic cyclicity; drawing upon local strengths and resources; and maintaining a democratic and civil society, clean and healthy environment, and an educated workforce earning a decent living.

### **Vision Statement**

The vision of the Economic Development Plan Committee is to create a comprehensive and sustainable economic development strategy to assist and support existing businesses, to encourage new businesses that contribute the community character that Ashby seeks to uphold, to promote and develop Ashby's agricultural and recreational attractions as well as the historic and cultural amenities that Ashby offers to its residents and visitors alike, and to develop and align a diversified and supportive business climate with the Town's community development goals.

The Committee will facilitate a planning program that will:

- Ensure that Ashby possesses a flourishing cultural community with events and destinations that attract a consistent draw of visitors that contribute to the tax base but do not detract from the local flavor of a small New England town;
- develop a diverse and comprehensive core of local businesses that will serve the needs of the local community and also capture dollars externally as the opportunity may present itself;
- develop a sustainable economy that is designed to provide for the needs of the current generation without compromising the future of our descendants;
- develop a partnership between business and the local educational school system to ensure a steady flow of skilled workers required by local businesses; and foremost
- develop a thriving local economy in Ashby that is largely self-sufficient and able to insulate itself from external economic conditions by building resilience.

### **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

#### *Definition of Goals, Objectives, and Policies*

Goals are the general aims of the community, in this case goals regarding how the community wishes to pursue local economic development. For example, a goal might be to support existing businesses in the community and encourage the expansion and relocation of desirable commercial and industrial uses. Objectives are more concrete, specific sub-elements of goals, usually providing measurable, mid-range strategies. An example might be to increase the number of farms or agricultural acreage in the community. Finally, policies, tasks, or actions are specific operational actions, usually with the purpose of relatively short-term implementation. An example could be to charge the Agricultural Committee with the task of conducting outreach to local farms to determine what their needs are and how the Committee and Town can assist. Policies are the elements of the plan that are tied to implementation with each policy associated with parties responsible for carrying it out, sources of funding identified so that it can be accomplished, and a specific timing determined to assure that it can fit into a policy framework and be carried out successfully.

### **Sustainability**

In order to develop an economic development plan for the Town of Ashby that had a foundation of sustainability, it was important to define what is meant by the term. A good working definition of sustainability was developed by Viederman<sup>1</sup> and “is a community’s control and prudent use of all forms of capital—nature’s capital, human capital, human-created capital, social capital, and cultural capital—to ensure, to the degree possible, that present and future generations can attain a high degree of economic security and achieve democracy while maintaining the integrity of the ecological systems upon which all life and all production depends.”

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<sup>1</sup> In “Building sustainable societies: a blueprint for a post-industrial world”; By Dennis Pirages

The purpose behind developing an economic development plan that has a sustainability component is to create a plan that is much more than merely a set of tools to seek growth, development, and economic activity that has no relationship to the history and culture of the community and its own vision for the future. This plan is designed to take a rational, pragmatic, and enlightened vision for the future and pair it with the desire to build in resiliency for the community so that Ashby can be more self-sufficient and weather risks generated by the global economy, rising energy prices and availability, and other economic variables over which Ashby does not have any control.

What Ashby does have control over is its own purchasing power and the ability to produce and buy local, the ability to grow food, generate local energy, and attract tourist dollars to buffer cyclical economic downturns. While many policies adopted as part of this plan have a sustainable component, the plan itself is a dynamic document that will adapt and change as circumstances dictate. This flexibility will allow it to be a dynamic tool to continually pursue the best policies that will help develop and sustain a clean, reliable, and culturally relevant economy in perpetuity.

### **General Principles Guiding Sustainable Economic Development in Ashby**

The following principles were established by the Committee to provide a connection between the vision and the goals, objectives and policies of the plan:

PRINCIPLE 1: To ensure that existing and future businesses in Ashby make a positive contribution to the community, tax base, and vision for the future.

PRINCIPLE 2: To ensure that the local economy provides jobs that pay a living wage and makes employment available for those who seek it.

PRINCIPLE 3: That the Town work toward the development of a local economy that is sustainable socially, economically, and ecologically.

PRINCIPLE 4: That the Town of Ashby develop an economic base that is more resilient, self-sufficient, and local so that it can more effectively weather the cyclicity of the global economy including the cost and availability of energy, the cost and availability of financial capital, and the fluctuation in demand for non-essential consumer goods.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

An essential element to any plan including this Economic Development Plan for Ashby is soliciting public input. Since the plan is designed for the benefit of current and future residents and businesses owners in Ashby, it is essential to understand their needs, hopes, and concerns regarding the local economy. To gather citizen and stakeholder input the MRPC, in collaboration with the Economic Development Committee, hosted a kick-off meeting for the plan, a visioning workshop, a paper and online survey and a Regional Small Town Rural Economic Development Workshop. For detailed information on these activities, read below.

## **Kick-off Meeting**

The Kick-off or initial public meeting was held at Ashby Town Hall on March 1, 2011. Alan Pease from the Ashby Planning Board and Christopher Ryan, the Ashby Land Use Agent, gave an introduction and spoke about the impetus for the plan. John Hume from MRPC discussed funding for the plan and Jennifer Siciliano presented the scope of services and some preliminary demographic data. See Appendix A for the meeting agenda and meeting notes.

## **SWOT/Visioning Meeting**

A SWOT<sup>2</sup>/Community Forum was held on Saturday, May 21, 2011 at 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M on the lower level of the Ashby Free Public Library. The Forum was designed to gain public input, insight, and ideas concerning any possible future economic development activities in the Town of Ashby. It was open to all community residents and businesses interested in providing input and bringing ideas into this document to make it more comprehensive and complete. The forum started off with introductory remarks, an outline of the process of the day, and then broke out into three smaller discussion groups. This was followed by the reconvening into the initial large group with presentations by group reporters, and a discussion of the “Next Steps”.

Each of the smaller breakout groups answered eight (8) questions. The questions for each group were identical. The answers were recorded on large sticker pads of lined newsprint paper supplied at the event. Each group was instructed to select a reporter to present the group’s work and results to the other groups when they reconvened. The participants gathered back into a larger group and discussed the answers together. After the presentations, a prioritization exercise was conducted; participants placed preference dots on the newsprint to express their preference for each of the news-printed lists presented by the reporters.

The following summarizes the public’s input at the forum. Each of the eight (8) questions posed are listed with answers discussed in the breakout sessions and large group session. Only issues prioritized by a minimum of at least one sticker dot are documented below. Numbers in parentheses represent relative importance assigned to each issue by participants using sticker dots during the prioritization exercise. In line with the purpose of a SWOT analysis, questions and responses were designed to elicit feedback on what citizens and stakeholders thought about strengths and weaknesses of the community as well as opportunities and threats that emanated externally. For complete documentation of the SWOT/Visioning meeting, see Appendix B.

**QUESTION #1:** What are Ashby’s Strengths? What characteristics of the Town of Ashby do you think are strong points, attractants, and features that bring people to town as visitors, attract people to move here or establish businesses here, or keep people here long term.

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<sup>2</sup> SWOT refers to the component of a strategic planning process that seeks to identify local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the community. In this case, they would be those impacting the local economy.

Priorities Concerning Ashby's greatest strengths:

- Rural Aspects (21)
- Mount Watatic – Pearl Hill State Park – Blood Hill State Park (7)
- Natural Resources (5)
- Horses and Livestock (3)
- Schools (i.e. class size/music program) (3)
- Town Center (3)
- Open Space (3)
- Scenic Rte. 119 Traffic Flow (1)
- Hiking, Snowmobiles, Recreational Opportunities (1)
- Band Concert at the Common (1)

Answers to this question clearly indicates residents overwhelming belief that the natural resources and rural character of Ashby is its greatest strength and that a local economic development plan should take this key aspect of community sentiment into consideration.

**QUESTION #2:** What are Ashby's challenges and how should they be addressed? What do you think, if any, are Ashby's key issues and challenges and how should they be addressed. What do you think the problems are, anything that makes work and life more difficult or demanding? This could be the lack of retail choices, municipal services, high (or low) taxes, excessive or loose regulations.

Priorities Concerning Ashby's Challenges:

- Tied to Nashoba Board of Health (38)
- Utilities – limited power for manufacturers – second highest utility cost in the country (9)
- Zoning restrictions – the town is not very encouraging (9)
- Not business friendly – difficult to establish businesses (8)
- Water/well issues (7)
- Help with the business process (3)
- Marketing – no communication with business, lack of information available (2)
- Regulations – more cooperation (2)

This question is designed to elicit opinions regarding what citizens believe are Ashby's greatest weaknesses or challenges. Many residents and businesses believe that the policies and practices of the Nashoba Board of Health in dealing with sanitary sewerage issues and other issues that the Board controls are a significant hindrance to economic activity. Other challenges relate to utility costs and land use restrictions.

**QUESTION #3:** How do you feel about growth and change in Ashby and what would you like to preserve or change? How do you feel about growth and change in Ashby and what would you like to preserve or

change. This could be growth in size/population, growth in commercial activity, growth in government, traffic or any way you want to define growth.

Priorities Concerning Growth, Change, and Preservation:

- Keep the rural Ashby flavor (20)
- Sprawl (17)
- Areas to display and sell residence goods (11)
- Zoning issues regarding growth (9)
- Need business growth to generate revenue to help with the tax base (8)
- Population should remain the same but encourage business so we don't have to drive so far (4)

The answer to this question confirms the strong desire on the part of local residents to retain the rural character and flavor of Ashby but that they would also like to remain closer or in town for work. This reduces the cost in money and time of commuting and creates additional opportunities for patronizing local businesses or establishing new businesses based on more residents remaining in town and needing products and services.

**QUESTION #4:** What kinds of municipal assets are missing that you would like to see in Ashby? What kinds of municipal or public assets are missing that you would like to see in Ashby? (e.g. sewers, second elementary school, more parks, town forest or farm, nature center, etc.).

Priorities Concerning Missing Municipal Assets:

- Open public meeting place for more regular events (17)
- Eateries – no place to stop and eat (15)
- Public water/utilities (12)
- Activities for kids/teens, in the summer particularly (11)
- Banking (9)
- Pubs – family friendly (7)
- Food and crafts (5)
- Green business (Ashburnham Country Store) (5)
- Newspaper or newsletter (3)
- Public transit (3)
- Promoting existing businesses (2)

This question also gets to the heart of what residents believe they lack—weaknesses in a sense. But it also hints at opportunities by identifying those activities, products, and services that are currently in short supply but in demand. Often these products and services are acquired elsewhere as the web-based survey below indicates.

**QUESTION #5:** Why is Ashby a good place to do business? What are the characteristics of the town that make establishing and/or running a business here in Ashby easy? What else makes the town a good place for business?

Priorities Concerning Why Ashby is a Good Place to do Business:

- Weekend tourists (10)
- Route 119 Accessibility, we don't take advantage of it (8)
- Home based business with low overhead (5)
- Farming, horses, sale of produce (4)
- Good network of people that communicate with someone (3)
- Little regulation of home based business, easy to get started (1)

This is another question that elicits citizen opinions regarding local strengths. In this case, residents identify the SR 119 corridor and the tourists that it brings through as a strength that the town is not taking full advantage of. Other business strengths include home-based businesses, agricultural and equestrian facilities, and the people in the area.

**QUESTION #6:** What makes it difficult to run a business in Ashby and how can the Town help? What could businesses do together to help? What makes it difficult to run a business in Ashby and how can the Town help? What could businesses do together to help? What kind of programs could help business? What kind of group or organization could businesses collaborate on to advance their needs and interests?

Priorities Concerning What Makes it Difficult to Run a Business in Ashby:

- Resistance in town (zoning) (17)
- Roads need work (11)
- No Banking (9)
- Few transportation options (9)
- More regular activities (fairs etc.) to bring people to Ashby (4)
- Parking issues (3)

Challenges to running a business in Ashby are a weakness in an economic development sense and residents identified local land use control as one significant impediment to conducting business. The Town should evaluate the zoning bylaw and other regulatory tools to see if there are opportunities to reduce unnecessary impediments to pursuing sustainable business opportunities.

**QUESTION #7:** Where do residents and businesses do their business? Where do people in the Town purchase everyday necessities (food, gas, etc.) and services (dry cleaning, etc). What kinds of businesses would you like to see in Ashby that aren't here and what is stopping these businesses from coming to Ashby?

Priorities Concerning where Residents and Businesses do their Business:

- No Group Responses to this question were prioritized by Sticker Dots.

Responses to this question identify both challenges and opportunities since residents purchasing goods and services out of Ashby are currently a challenge, resulting in leakage of local dollars. It is also an opportunity since those businesses being patronized by Ashby residents clearly indicate opportunities for entrepreneurs to establish those same businesses in Ashby.

**QUESTION #8:** Would you like to see festivals and events to increase tourism in town? Why? Would you like to see festivals and events to increase tourism in town? Why? What kind of events would be successful here?

Priorities Concerning Festivals and Events to Increase Tourism:

- Farmer's Market (16)
- Proper advertising is needed (10)
- Advertise and share locally through many communities (5)
- Networking and bringing community goods out (4)
- Great current festivals (3)
- Great current activities (3)

Festivals and other events that draw tourists and residents are an economic opportunity for the Town to attract external dollars and keep local dollars in town.

**Conclusions:** Based on public input prioritization during the Visioning Session documented above, Ashby's greatest strengths are its rural character and natural resources including Mount Watatic, Pearl Hill State Park, and Blood Hill State Park. In accordance with this, participants prioritized the need to retain this rural flavor and keep sprawl in check. But it was also indicated that Ashby needs some business growth to generate tax revenue.

Some participants stated that local challenges include both a strained relationship with the Nashoba Boards of Health resulting in adverse septic system permit procedures, board of health permit fees, and board of health regulations. Many residents are also upset by the inadequate/expensive services provided by Unitil which is an added obstacle for economic development. Zoning restrictions, difficulty establishing a business, and water/well issues were also prioritized relatively high. It was indicated that the town could improve upon its municipal assets if it had an open public meeting place for more regular events, a restaurant(s), better public water and utilities, activities for youths, and banking facilities.

Most participants thought that Ashby is good for businesses because of the weekend tourists, Route 119 accessibility (even in the winter months), and home based businesses can operate with little overhead. Some participants indicated ways to improve/facilitate business in Ashby such as more business friendly

zoning, road improvements, more transportation options, and even areas to display and sell residence goods. Overall, a farmers market was viewed as a good idea – a farmers market along with current festivals and activities should be widely advertised throughout the community and beyond town borders. With the acreage available for large events and farmers markets, Ashby could really benefit with proper, targeted marketing techniques.

## **Economic Development Survey**

Both an electronic and paper economic development survey were developed and executed to solicit additional input from Ashby residents and businesses owners. This survey was handed out after the visioning meeting, distributed at the library, posted online on Survey monkey™ and advertised on Ashby’s official Town Website. The survey had a total of 29 questions with 6 questions designed specifically to elicit responses from business owners. There were a total of 50 respondents. The survey was closed in August to tally results.

### **Results from Online Survey**

The first question asked: what do you think Ashby’s strengths are? Please choose all that apply. (There were 21 choices plus an “other” category with a place to comment. For complete results, comments included, see the Appendix C. The most prevalent response was that residents want to retain a small-town feeling followed closely by a classic New England town center and the presence of farms and orchards. The presence of natural assets was also a popular response with 28 respondents choosing plentiful open space, natural environment (27), nature-based recreation (26) and scenic roads and vistas (19). Other common responses included a low cost of living (23), historic homes and buildings (20) and independent, self-sufficient spirit of residents.

Question number 2 asked: what are Ashby’s challenges? Please choose all that apply. (There were 12 choices plus an “other” category with a place to comment.) Clearly, deteriorating roads and infrastructure was cited as the primary challenge. Other notable responses include employment opportunity for young residents and the sanitary facility situation.

Question number 3 was an open-ended question: How should Ashby’s challenges/problems be addressed? There were 26 different comments which can be read in the Ashby Economic Development Survey Report in the appendix.

Question number 4 asked: How do you feel about growth and change in Ashby? This could be growth in size/population, growth in commercial activity, growth in government, traffic or any way you want to define growth. The respondents could pick “very positive”, “somewhat positive”, “neutral”, “somewhat negative” or “very negative”. When asked about general feeling about growth most of the respondents put “somewhat positive” at 32.5% answering this way. When asked about commercial growth, the largest response was “somewhat negative” with 28.6%. Residential growth had slightly more “somewhat negative” with 29.3%. “Neutral” was the highest percentage (26.8%) in the question about Industrial growth. (All percentages can be found in appendix.)

Question number 5 was another an open-ended question: What would you like to preserve in the town? This could be the general feel of a rural New England village or more specific such as the building on the common or the Country Store. There were 29 different comments which can be read in the Ashby Economic Development Survey Report in the appendix.

Question number 7 was asked: What kinds of assets are missing now that you would like to have here? This could be anything from sewers and another elementary school to specific types of businesses, populations, buildings, services, etc. Provide as many choices as you wish up to eight and if more, please note in comments section at the end of the survey. (See list of full responses in the survey report in the appendix.) Responses that related directly to economic development were clear in advocating for a local restaurant or eating place. Nine people wanted to see a restaurant generally while others are looking for take-out food, a coffee shop, ice cream shop or donut shop. The response by one who indicated a need for gathering places fit into this category also. Eight respondents directly noted the need for water and sewer facilities while another noted the underground infrastructure needed to be addressed. These responses directly or indirectly connect to the desire for new businesses like restaurants that would need such utilities in order to be sited and begin operations. Other businesses seen as needed other than eating places included a plant nursery, drug store, gift shop, physician's office, artist studios or galleries, a tack shop, commercial kitchen, a general store and agriculture. A number of respondents specifically noted the need for small business, low-impact business, industry and more commercial uses in general. Some other responses were somewhat and not at all applicable to economic development, but are discussed in the survey report in the appendix.

Question number 8 asked: What makes Ashby a good place to do business? 22 open-ended comments are written in the survey report. Most of the responses stated that Ashby is not a good place to do business at all, however if there were some more small businesses around, residents would support it. This idea is attractive to many people in Ashby who want to keep the small New England charm. Some responses offered that access to route 119 and 31, being well traveled, give Ashby the potential to rebuild their Main Street in the future. Some residents identified that the problem with reconstruction on Main Street and other parts of town are a result of unproductive permitting processes.

Question number 9 was another open-ended question with 24 comments, which are in the appendix. The question asked was what makes Ashby a difficult place for business? What makes it difficult to run a business in Ashby and how can the Town help? What could businesses do together to help? What kind of programs could help business? What kind of group or organization could businesses collaborate on to advance their needs and interests? Residents had a variety of different ideas to offer on this topic. First, many believe that larger businesses would help the tax base but the current environment is hostile to business in general. There is partial consensus that the town needs to open up zoning in locations that are comfortable for the look and the feel of the town. The fact that there is no place to eat or gather in town makes organizing people in support of new business growth difficult. Of course, many people feel that the electrical utility *Unitil* is a huge problem, and it is very difficult to manage utility costs and find a location to balance small town

preservation and new business growth. A few people believe that the town government is trying to micro-manage every business coming to town and the permitting processes are too extreme. Lastly, as mentioned in the first section, the water and sewer challenges present a huge obstacle to business.

Question number 10 asked: Where do you shop or get services? Key response highlights include Fitchburg/Leominster “metroplex” and that for automobile repair, Ashby residents stay in Ashby. The Town may wish to consider some way of supporting this industry. Data results indicate that 71.4% of Ashby residents surveyed do their banking in Fitchburg and Leominster, 45% visit the doctor in Fitchburg and Leominster, 38.5% go to the dentist and 56.4 % go the pharmacy in Fitchburg and Leominster. 63.4% of residents however, utilize automobile repair services in Ashby, the strongest business sector for the town. (See full list of answers in appendix.)

Question 11 asked: What kinds of businesses would you like to see in Ashby that aren’t here or what business would you like to see more of? (There were 27 choices plus an “other” category with a place to comment.) The highest response was restaurant (80%), followed by breakfast (72.5%) and then coffee shop (70%). Other highly picked businesses were farm stand (65%), lunch counter (60%) and banking (57.5%). (See full list in appendix.) The businesses requested as favorable from the data would help to keep residents from traveling to Fitchburg and Leominster. These businesses, with proper placement and zoning could have a significant effect on the town. To summarize, most Ashby residents want a bank and greater food options.

Question number 12, 13 and 14 were all open-ended questions with comments listed in the survey report. Question number 12 was: Are there other businesses or industries that you would like to see in Ashby? There were 18 comments answering this question. Question number 13 asked: Are there types of businesses that you would like to keep out of Ashby? For example, an industrial scale chicken farm or a tar production plant. There were 27 comments for that question. Question number 14 asked: What do you see are the roadblocks or obstacles that stop the types of businesses that you want from coming to Ashby? Twenty eight people commented on this question.

Question number 15 asked: How do you feel about having festivals and event in the Town to increase tourism? The respondents could choose pick “very positive”, “somewhat positive”, “neutral”, “somewhat negative” or “very negative”. Most respondents answered “very positive” at 48.8%, second most answered with “somewhat positive” at 26.8%, 14.6% were “neutral” and only 7.3% were “somewhat negative” and 2.4% were “very negative”.

Question 16 asked about employment status. Forty two point nine (42.9%) responded that they were full-time wage or salary employees. A large percentage were self-employed (28.6%); 19% are retired, 7.1% are part-time wage or salary employees; 2.4% are unemployed not drawing unemployment; and none of the respondents are unemployed and drawing unemployment or students.

Question 17 asked if they were employed where they worked. They were given a choice of Ashby, Ashburnham, Winchendon, Townsend, Gardner, Westminster, Lunenburg, Fitchburg/Leominster, New Hampshire or other. Most of respondents answered “other” (34.4%). A considerable amount said they worked in Ashby (31.3%) and 18.8% said they worked in Fitchburg/Leominster (the closest cities to Ashby), 9.4% worked in New Hampshire and 6.3% worked in Townsend. All other places received zero responses.

Question 18 asked what mode of transportation to you use to get to work. Most people answered private car without carpooling (82.8%), 10.3 said they walked and 6.9% said they worked from home. Four people said other and these comments are in the survey report in the appendix.

Question 19 asked how long is your commute to work. The most common answer was tied between less than 5 minutes and between 45 to 59 minutes at 14.7%. The second highest answer was also tied between 25 to 29 minutes and 60 to 89 minutes. About a third (32.4%) of the respondents drives over 45 minutes to work.

Question 20 asked how many years have you lived in Ashby. The mean length of residence was 21.61 years; there was a good mix of long-time residents and newcomers in the survey. The highest was 75 years and all answers can be found in appendix.

Question 21 asked where do you live. All respondents answered that they own their own home. None of the respondents answered rent a private home, rent an apartment or live in a mobile home.

Question number 22 asked how many people are in your household and how many children. The average response was 2.38 people in their household and 0.84 children in their residence.

Question number 23 asked if the respondent is a business owner. Seventeen or 37.8% said yes and 28 (62.2%) said no.

The 24<sup>th</sup> question or the first question of the business owners asked what type of business do they have. Twelve people responded and the answers ranged from dance studio to construction. (All responses in appendix.)

Question 2 of business owners asked them to rate the business climate in Ashby. They were given a choice of “excellent”, “very good”, “good”, “moderate”, “poor”, “very poor” and “extremely bad”. Overall business climate was rated evenly between “good” and “moderate” (30.8%). Regulatory environment rated “moderate” (46.2%). Mix of businesses was rated “poor” (33.3%). Market for products and services rated “poor” (41.7%). (Other percentages are in appendix.)

Business-owner question number 3 asked: is there anything in Ashby that you need to run your business that is missing in town? There are 8 comments answering this question in the appendix. Three people answered “no”.

Business-owner question number 4 asked another open-ended question: are there any barriers or obstacles to expanding your business (i.e. tax, regulatory, utilities, etc.)? Please be as detailed as you wish. Nine people commented and of these four said “no”.

Business-owner question 5 asks: Is there anything that would help you run, expand or make your business more viable? (There were 12 choices plus an “other” category with a place to comment.) Seventy two point seven (72.7%) responded with marketing/advertising, 45.5% said a local business association and 36.4% said expedited or simpler permitting.

The last question of the survey and the last business-owner asked: Where do your customers come from? The list included Ashby, Ashburnham, Winchendon, Townsend, Gardner, Lunenburg, Fitchburg/Leominster, New Hampshire or other. Most of respondents answered “other” (49.83%). The next highest response was New Hampshire (21.38%), Ashby (14.5%) and Townsend (12.63%).

### **Regional Small Town Rural Economic Development Workshop**

Along with the SWOT/Visioning session and the survey, Ashby town residents were invited to a Region Wide Workshop on Small Town Rural Economic Development where they could ask questions, get information to enhance this study and provide information about ideas for economic development in small towns like Ashby. The Workshop was held at MRPC offices in Fitchburg as part of a Montachusett Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee meeting. Kathleen McCabe from McCabe Enterprises spoke; she specializes in economic development. (See Appendix D for agenda.)

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

To understand the current conditions of Ashby, where it’s going and its relationship to the town’s surrounding it and in its region, various demographic statics were gathered and analyzed. The surrounding Town’s (Ashburnham, Hubbardston, Royalston and Townsend) were chosen for comparison at the plan’s kick-off meeting. ***All current data are from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey Estimates unless otherwise noted in a footnote.***

### **Population**

Ashby’s population growth has gone through some fluctuations in the past (1960 to 1970 and 1980 to 1990), but since the 1990s growth has been relatively steady. Comparable Towns’ growth rate (see Table 2) in the Montachusett Region is greatly varied from a high of 12.1% (Hubbardston) to a low of -3.0% (Townsend). Ashby is one of the towns that continues to grow and is projected to continue to grow. See Tables 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 1: Ashby's Population over Time<sup>3</sup>**

Year	Population	% Change
<b>1960</b>	1,883	N/A
<b>1970</b>	2,274	20.8%
<b>1980</b>	2,311	1.6%
<b>1990</b>	2,717	17.6%
<b>2000</b>	2,845	4.7%
<b>2010</b>	3,074	8.0%

**Table 2: Population over Time in Ashby and in Comparable Towns<sup>4</sup>**

Community	Population				Change			Percent Change		
	1980	1990	2000	2010	80-90	90-00	00-10	80 - 90	90 - 00	00 - 10
<b>Ashby</b>	<b>2,311</b>	<b>2,717</b>	<b>2,845</b>	<b>3,074</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>
Ashburnham	4,075	5,433	5,546	6,081	1,358	113	535	33.3%	2.1%	9.6%
Hubbardston	1,797	2,797	3,909	4,382	1,000	1,112	473	55.6%	39.8%	12.1%
Royalston	955	1,147	1,254	1,258	192	107	4	20.1%	9.3%	0.3%
Townsend	7,201	8,496	9,198	8,926	1,295	702	-272	18.0%	8.3%	-3.0%

**Table 3: Population Projections for Ashby and its Comparable Towns**

Community	Population				
	2000	2020	2025	2030	2035
<b>Ashby</b>	<b>2,845</b>	<b>3160</b>	<b>3210</b>	<b>3260</b>	<b>3310</b>
Ashburnham	5,546	6250	6350	6450	6560
Hubbardston	3,909	4500	4580	4650	4730
Royalston	1,254	1300	1320	1350	1370
Townsend	9,198	9170	9320	9470	9630

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce Census Bureau

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce Census Bureau

## Age

Over time Ashby's median age has risen like the rest of the state and nation. This may be explained at least in part by advances in health care, as residents are now living longer lives. It is currently at 39.3 years, which is slightly higher than the state as a whole (38.5 years). Yet, it is lower than some comparable towns in the region: Hubbardston (42.3) and Royalston (47.9). See table 4.

**Table 4: Median Age in Ashby and its Comparable Towns<sup>5</sup>**

Median Age						
	Ashby	Ashburnham	Hubbardston	Royalston	Townsend	State
<b>1980</b>	<b>29.7</b>	30.4	28.5	*	27.7	31.1
<b>1990</b>	<b>33.4</b>	32.9	32	33.7	31.3	33.5
<b>2000</b>	<b>38.2</b>	37.3	35.9	38	35.4	36.5
<b>2009<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>39.3</b>	38.8	42.3	47.9	39.3	38.5

Comparing Ashby to the rest of the State, there is a higher percentage of children in Ashby and a lower percentage of 20 to 45 year-olds. There are fewer 20 and 30-somethings in Ashby. At the same time, the percentage of 45 to 54 is very significant making up 21.2% of the population. See table 5.

**Table 5: Ashby Age Range Compared to the State**

Age Range	Ashby		Massachusetts	
	Amount	% of Population	Amount	% of Population
Under 5 years	198	6.50%	385,553	5.90%
5 to 9 years	212	6.90%	388,565	6.00%
10 to 14 years	282	9.20%	412,096	6.30%
15 to 19 years	295	9.60%	467,542	7.20%
20 to 24 years	128	4.20%	441,285	6.80%
25 to 34 years	296	9.70%	839,719	12.90%
35 to 44 years	384	12.60%	975,711	15.00%
45 to 54 years	650	21.20%	997,328	15.30%
55 to 59 years	189	6.20%	408,077	6.30%
60 to 64 years	147	4.80%	325,590	5.00%
65 to 74 years	156	5.10%	425,377	6.50%
75 to 84 years	112	3.70%	307,100	4.70%
85 and over	10	0.30%	137,233	2.10%

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce Census Bureau

<sup>6</sup> Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The estimates are based on data collected over a 5-year time period from 2005 to 2009.

Ashby has a higher percentage of children (29.6%) than the rest of the state (22.3%). It also has a higher percentage of preschool age children (6.5%) compared to the state (5.9%). In contrast, Ashby has a lower percentage of senior citizens over 65 (9.1%) than the state rate of 13.4%. See table 6.

**Table 6: Ashby Age Children and Senior Citizens Compared to the State**

Age	Ashby	Massachusetts
Under 5	6.5%	5.9%
Under 18	29.6%	22.3%
65 and over	9.1%	13.4%

### Household Makeup

Ashby has an estimated total of 980 households. The average household size (3.12) is significantly larger than the state's (2.54) and the comparable towns. The percentage of households with children in Ashby (41.5%) is significantly higher than the state (29.8%) and comparable towns indicating that Ashby is a desirable place to raise a family. See table 7.

**Table 7: Household Make-Up in Ashby, its Comparable Towns and the State**

Household Make - Up 2009						
	Ashby	Ashburnham	Hubbardston	Royalston	Townsend	State
Total	980	2,157	1,557	560	3,266	2,465,654
w/ Children	41.5%	36.8%	31.5%	22.0%	36.2%	29.8%
Size of Household	3.12	2.78	2.79	2.4	2.91	2.54

### Education

Ashby's over-25-year-old population has a greater percentage of high school graduates (34.7%) and associates degrees (8.35%) than the state (27.2%, 7.6%, respectively). Ashby has a lower percentage of persons that have a bachelor's (18.7%) or graduate (15.2%) degree than the state (21.7%, 16.1%, respectively) and a lower percentage of people with bachelor's degrees in all comparable towns except Royalston. More people in Ashby have a Graduate Degree than comparable towns but it is still less than the state rate. Higher education and vocational training in Ashby should continue to be a priority. See table 8.

**Table 8: Education in Ashby, its Comparable Towns and the State**

Amount of School	Ashby	Ashburnham	Hubbardston	Royalston	Townsend	State
High School	34.7%	31.7%	34.3%	35.1%	34.9%	27.2%
Associates	8.3%	10.5%	11.8%	8.2%	8.5%	7.6%
Bachelor	18.7%	20.3%	21.5%	17.1%	21.5%	21.7%
Graduate	15.2%	14.3%	7.9%	10.2%	7.7%	16.1%

At the Economic Development Plan Kick-off meeting, the public expressed interest in enrollment of Ashby students at Montachusett Regional Vocation Technical School (Monty Tech) . Ashby has 13.6% of 15 to 19 year-old residents attending Monty Tech (see table below). A larger percentage of the 15-19 year olds from Hubbardston and Royalston attend Monty Tech. In Ashburnham, a lower percentage attend this trade school. There is no enrollment from Townsend.

**Table 9: Enrollment at Montachusett Regional Vocation Technical School<sup>7</sup>**

CITY/TOWN ENROLLMENT BY GRADE AS OF 03/07/11							
US Census 2005-2009 estimates							
CITY/TOWN	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	TOTAL	Age 15 -19	% of Age Group
Hubbardston	17	12	10	14	53	259	20.5%
Royalston	7	6	6	0	19	113	16.8%
Gardner	57	50	50	33	190	1205	15.8%
Templeton	36	31	19	17	103	673	15.3%
Athol	26	34	20	35	115	772	14.9%
Winchendon	29	27	25	33	114	777	14.7%
<b>Ashby</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>13.6%</b>
Lunenburg	18	15	13	14	60	470	12.8%
Phillipston	5	3	4	7	19	168	11.3%
Ashburnham	14	14	8	9	45	417	10.8%
Fitchburg	83	106	111	79	379	3584	10.6%
Sterling	15	18	11	6	50	580	8.6%
Petersham	0	3	1	2	6	74	8.1%
Westminster	19	12	14	12	57	782	7.3%
Barre	12	7	9	7	35	566	6.2%
Princeton	2	2	3	7	14	251	5.6%
Holden	14	11	13	8	46	1292	3.6%
Hardwick	0	1	1	0	2	229	0.9%
Orange	0	1	1	2	4	578	0.7%
Leominster	0	4	4	4	12	2272	0.5%
Harvard	0	2	1	0	3	583	0.5%
Lancaster	0	0	1	0	1	698	0.1%
Townsend	0	0	1	0	1	761	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>1368</b>		

<sup>7</sup> MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

## Income

Per capita income is the total income divided by the total population. Ashby's per capita income (\$28,787) is lower than the state's (\$33,460). This deficit could be explained by the higher percentage of children in Ashby households than the state. Supporting this is Ashby's median household (\$78,750) and family (\$83,008) income both of which are higher than the state rates of \$64,496 and \$80,822, respectively. Ashby also has a lower percentage of people below poverty (5%) than the state as a whole (10.1%). See table 10.

**Table 10: Income for Ashby, Comparable Towns, and the State**

Community	Per Capita	Median Household	Median Family	Below Poverty
<b>Ashby</b>	<b>\$28,787</b>	<b>\$78,750</b>	<b>\$83,008</b>	<b>5.0%</b>
Ashburnham	\$30,665	\$82,654	\$95,542	4.4%
Hubbardston	\$30,329	\$76,440	\$90,514	9.8%
Royalston	\$29,955	\$60,000	\$77,778	4.2%
Townsend	\$29,140	\$75,174	\$86,218	5.1%
State	\$33,460	\$64,496	\$80,822	10.1%

**Table 11: Household Income Range in Ashby, Comparable Towns, and the State**

	Ashby		Ashburnham		Hubbardston		Royalston		Townsend		State	
Less than \$10,000	7	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	1.3%	33	1.3%	55,272	3.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3	0.4%	41	2.5%	18	1.5%	6	1.5%	50	2.0%	41,170	2.6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14	1.8%	0	0.0%	88	7.1%	28	7.1%	21	0.8%	89,765	5.7%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	77	10.1%	40	2.5%	53	4.3%	19	4.8%	108	4.3%	104,090	6.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	42	5.5%	174	10.8%	53	4.3%	68	17.2%	239	9.4%	159,320	10.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	197	25.8%	267	16.5%	255	20.6%	67	16.9%	612	24.1%	274,786	17.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	130	17.0%	367	22.7%	288	23.3%	80	20.2%	489	19.3%	250,243	15.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	211	27.7%	612	37.8%	319	25.8%	95	24.0%	679	26.8%	323,641	20.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	56	7.3%	102	6.3%	117	9.5%	20	5.1%	244	9.6%	139,042	8.8%
\$200,000 or more	26	3.4%	14	0.9%	47	3.8%	8	2.0%	60	2.4%	137,201	8.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>763</b>		<b>1,617</b>		<b>1,238</b>		<b>396</b>		<b>2,535</b>		<b>1,574,530</b>	

According to Table 11, the highest percentage of household income range is \$100,000 to \$149,999 in Ashby at 27.7%. This is very similar to the comparable towns and the state.

## Labor Force

Ashby's unemployment rate in 2010 was 9.7% which is slightly up from last year's rate of 9.5%. Ashby's unemployment rate is consistently higher than the state's overall rate. This has been a trend since 2002. See table 12. While the economy continues to be in recession, as indicated earlier, higher education and vocational training in Ashby should continue to be a priority.

**Table 12: Ashby Labor Force, Employment Numbers and Unemployment Rate over Time versus the Unemployment Rate for the State<sup>8</sup>**

	Labor Force	Ashby Employed	Ashby Unemployed	Ashby Unemployment Rate	State Unemployment Rate
2010	1,655	1,495	160	9.7%	8.5%
2009	1,661	1,503	158	9.5%	8.2%
2008	1,588	1,495	93	5.9%	5.3%
2007	1,605	1,524	81	5.0%	4.5%
2006	1,602	1,514	88	5.5%	4.8%
2005	1,579	1,494	85	5.4%	4.8%
2004	1,605	1,509	96	6.0%	5.2%
2003	1,612	1,513	99	6.1%	5.8%
2002	1,609	1,521	88	5.5%	5.3%
2001	1,593	1,537	56	3.5%	3.7%
2000	1,593	1,552	41	2.6%	2.7%

As shown on Table 13 (see following page), there are a total of 77 public and private business establishments in Ashby. Between the years 2001 and 2006 business establishments steadily increased, and has leveled off since then. On average, they employ 285 people, weekly, providing an average weekly salary of \$638, which has steadily risen since 2001. Construction companies employ the most people in Ashby (62 people on average). The wholesale trade in Ashby provides, on average, only 7 jobs, but pays the highest wages (\$1388 weekly) according to the MA Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

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<sup>8</sup> MA Department of Labor and Workforce Development

**Table 13: Ashby Business Establishments and Average Monthly Workers from 2001 to 2009<sup>9</sup>**

Year	All - Private and Public			Average Monthly Workers								
	Total Annual Payroll	Average Annual Weekly Wage	# of Establishments	All Industries	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Transportation and Warehousing	Professional and Technical Services	Administrative and Waste Services	Other Services, Ex. Public Admin
2009	\$9,450,207	\$638	77	285	62	12	7	10	11	14	11	19
2008	\$9,282,774	\$640	76	279	60	16	7	12	13	17	10	17
2007	\$9,432,599	\$589	78	308	75	17	4	14	14	14	8	19
2006	\$9,190,697	\$589	77	300	66	17	3	20	8	23	6	20
2005	\$7,947,730	\$570	71	268	56	18	5	20	7	18	6	14
2004	\$8,017,757	\$572	70	270	49	18	6	18	11	18	NA	18
2003	\$7,486,807	\$574	64	251	50	16	9	23	11	13	NA	9
2002	\$7,484,496	\$556	59	259	47	15	10	30	6	13	NA	10
2001	\$6,728,816	\$544	57	238	41	14	14	22	6	NA	NA	6

According to Table 14 on the following page, Ashby’s average weekly salary is within the same range as comparable towns except for Royalston, which is much lower. Even though Ashby has a similar amount of establishments as Hubbardston, it doesn’t employ as many people. Hubbardston employs 501 workers versus Ashby’s 285. Ashby employs the smallest number of workers per establishment compared to other towns.

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<sup>9</sup> MA Department of Labor and Workforce Development

**Table 14: Number of Establishments, Average Monthly Workers and Salaries by Industry in Ashby and Comparable Towns - 2009<sup>10</sup>**

All - Private and Public		Average Monthly Workers															
Community	Total Annual Payroll	Average Annual Weekly Wage	# of Establishments	All Industries	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Transportation and Warehousing	Finance and Insurance	Professional and Technical Services	Administrative and Waste Services	Educational Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Accommodation and Food Services	Other Services, Ex. Public Admin
<b>Ashby</b>	\$9,450,207	\$638	77	285	62	12	7	10	11	NA	14	11	NA	NA	NA	NA	19
Ashburnham	\$40,201,384	\$764	121	1012	42	53	16	127	NA	13	12	9	NA	68	NA	NA	38
Hubbardston	\$15,932,062	\$612	68	501	44	52	NA	42	NA	NA	18	8	NA	63	NA	NA	23
Royalston	\$2,459,180	\$397	19	119	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Townsend	\$78,034,243	\$706	189	2127	76	576	37	283	107	22	25	42	67	58	30	206	76

<sup>10</sup> MA Department of Labor and Workforce Development

## Work Travel

A higher percentage of people from Ashby drive alone to work (85.1%) than the rest of the state (72.7%). Fewer people in Ashby carpool (5.2%), use public transportation (.9%) or walk (1.3%) to work than the rest of the state (8.4%, 9.0%, 4.5%, respectively). There is little incentive to carpool where busy schedules and scattered destination points prevail. It takes longer for residents of Ashby to get to work (31.6 minutes) than the state (27.1 minutes). This is attributable to Ashby’s rural surroundings and distance from commercial and industrial centers. However, it is interesting to note that a higher percentage of people work at home (7.2%) than people do in the state (3.9%). Ashby could expand on home businesses by keeping up with technical advances (high-speed data systems/cellular telephone services, etc.) for telecommuters and home businesses.

Ashby modes of travel are similar to comparable towns. See table 15.

**Table 15: Work Travel Data for Ashby, its Comparable Towns and the State**

Community	Drove Alone	Carpooled	Public Transportation	Walked	Other Means	Worked at Home	Mean Travel Time (minutes)
<b>Ashby</b>	85.1%	5.2%	0.9%	1.3%	0.4%	7.2%	31.6
Ashburnham	92.0%	4.6%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	2.0%	33.0
Hubbardston	86.6%	7.0%	0.6%	1.6%	0.0%	4.2%	32.6
Royalston	83.5%	8.7%	0.0%	1.1%	1.7%	5.0%	32.5
Townsend	86.1%	5.6%	0.7%	1.3%	1.1%	5.2%	34.5
State	72.7%	8.4%	9.0%	4.5%	1.5%	3.9%	27.1

## Business Inventory

Ashby has 205 locally owned independent businesses listed in the town’s business certificate program and/or its commercial tax program. Below is a description of the prominent business categories that establishes a business profile of the community. Please see Appendix E for a list of businesses by specific NAICS code.

## Farming

Twelve (12) businesses are explicitly farming operations with three where it cannot be established what their specialization is. Nine (9) specialize in one or more commodity such as maple syrup, apples, cut

flowers, trees, and livestock. Two (2) additional businesses note a primary business other than agriculture with agriculture secondary. This includes a trucking business and a farm stand.

## **Construction**

A total of 31 businesses in Ashby are in construction, contracting, carpentry, or building as they variously are referred to while an additional eight businesses are involved in a specialty such as plastering, painting or foundations. In addition, eight (8) businesses are involved in excavation, land clearing, and demolition; six (6) businesses are electricians or similar businesses; six (6) businesses are in plumbing, heating, or ventilation. This means that 59 of 205 businesses in Ashby or 29% are involved in some phase of the construction process.

## **Manufacturing**

Twelve Ashby businesses are involved in manufacturing including four (4) involved in some textile activity and the remaining eight (8) manufacture products ranging from paint and monuments to furniture, cabinets, and audio speakers.

## **Retail Sales**

There are 19 retailing establishments in Ashby with four (4) explicitly engaged in internet sales while the remaining 15 include two (2) farm stands, two (2) used car sales businesses, two (2) convenience stores plus one (1) general store, and a variety of other miscellaneous businesses such as antique tool sales, truck part sales, and gifts.

## **Transportation**

There are five (5) trucking operations in Ashby plus an additional trucking concern that also operates a farm. One trucking firm also conducts landscaping services while another transports construction materials.

## **Services**

Over ninety businesses (44%) in Ashby offer some form of service. The most prolific of these businesses include recreation (12) which includes equestrian training, day camps, softball clubs, and a firing range; automobile repair (8); landscaping or lawn care (7); web or graphic design (6); health services (5); kennel or dog grooming (5); and hairdressers (4).

Other services include day care, education, dance training, furniture repair, and many others.

## **Analysis of Existing Businesses**

Ashby is a community of multiple-business households and addresses. A number of businesses show as being located at the same address. Ashby also has a number of in-home occupations, which require lower overhead and few demands in local services and infrastructure. On the other hand, they pay a business tax but their property tax remains residential and they do not lease from local building and property owners.

In-home occupations are often largely trades such as construction and related businesses such as electricians, plumbers, roofers, and so on. They are also small manufacturers such as furniture makers. Finally, they are a variety of service businesses such as web design, dog grooming, hairdressers, and internet sales. Businesses that reside on commercially zoned property include automobile repair shops, trucking firms, and agricultural operations including equestrian facilities.

Many of these businesses align with the rural type of community that Ashby is and suggest the type of business activity that should be encouraged going forward.

## Tax Base

The tax rate for Ashby is \$14.90. Comparable towns range from a low of \$9.28 in Royalston to \$17.15 in Ashburnham. In each of the towns, there is no difference in tax rates for residential, commercial, industrial or personal property. See table 16.

**Table 16: Tax Rate Ashby and Comparable Towns by Dollars/1000<sup>11</sup>**

Municipality	Residential	Open Space	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property
<b>ASHBY</b>	<b>\$14.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$14.90</b>	<b>\$14.90</b>	<b>\$14.90</b>
ASHBURNHAM	\$17.15	0.00	\$17.15	\$17.15	\$17.15
HUBBARDSTON	\$11.33	0.00	\$11.33	\$11.33	\$11.33
ROYALSTON	\$9.28	0.00	\$9.28	\$9.28	\$9.28
TOWNSEND	\$15.74	0.00	\$15.74	\$15.74	\$15.74

Ashby received \$4,353,805 last year in all tax categories. This is less than all comparable towns with the exception of Royalston. See table 17. For a list of all parcels in Ashby and their assessed value, see appendix F.

**Table 17: Taxes Levied By Class in Ashby and Comparable Towns 2010<sup>12</sup>**

Municipality	Residential	Open Space	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property	Total
<b>ASHBY</b>	<b>\$4,133,547</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$122,014</b>	<b>\$13,745</b>	<b>\$84,499</b>	<b>\$4,353,805</b>
ASHBURNHAM	\$9,699,773	\$0	\$234,085	\$79,905	\$120,997	\$10,134,760
HUBBARDSTON	\$4,801,444	\$0	\$179,593	\$165,389	\$107,780	\$5,254,206
ROYALSTON	\$1,238,281	\$0	\$13,142	\$1,441	\$46,499	\$1,299,363
TOWNSEND	\$12,074,589	\$0	\$559,799	\$290,518	\$294,366	\$13,219,272

<sup>11</sup> Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section, Fiscal Year 2011 Tax Rates by Class

<sup>12</sup> Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section, Fiscal Year 2010 Levies by Class

## **Market Population**

### **Market Segmentation**

Market segmentation is defined as the classification of consumers according to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, lifestyles, and product preferences. It is based on the concept that “birds of a feather flock together”; that is, people with similar taste, lifestyles, and behaviors naturally gravitate toward each other and into the communities in which they live. Segmentation analytical systems allow companies to better understand their customers or prospects, develop effective strategies that attract customers to their stores, and select products suited to customer preferences and lifestyles.

Developed by ESRI Business Information Systems, Community Tapestry categorize U.S. neighborhoods into 65 market segments, each reflecting a range of opportunities and influences. Neighborhoods are analyzed and sorted by a variety of demographic and socioeconomic attributes as well as other determinants of consumer behavior.<sup>13</sup>

Households in the Town of Ashby have been grouped into Tapestry market segments as summarized below. The descriptions reflect the propensity of households within that segment to exhibit certain characteristics and preferences relative to the general population. Each segment tends to paint a slightly different “picture” of the trade market area, but there can be common features. According to ESRI, Ashby’s segments fits into 2 categories: Green Acres and Sophisticated Squires which are described below.

#### **Green Acres Demographic**

Seventy-one percent of the households in Green Acres neighborhoods are married couples with and without children. Many families are blue-collar Baby Boomers, many with children aged 6-17 years. With more than 10 million people, green Acres represents Tapestry Segmentation’s third largest segment, currently more than 3 percent of the US population and growing by 1.92 percent annually. The median age is 41 years. This segment is not ethnically diverse; 92 percent of the residents are white.

#### **Socioeconomic**

Education and hard-working, more than one-fourth of Green Acres residents hold a bachelor’s or graduate degree; more than half have attended college. Labor force participation is 67.5 percent, with higher employment concentration in the manufacturing, construction, health care and retail trade industry sectors. Occupation distributions are similar to those of the United States. Seventeen percent

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<sup>13</sup> Excerpt from ESRI Business Systems

of the households earn income from self-employment ventures. The median household income is \$63,430; the median net worth is \$174,417.

### **Residential**

Although Green Acres neighborhoods are located throughout the country, they are found primarily in the Midwest and South, with the highest concentrations in Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania. A “little bit country,” these residents live in pastoral settings of developing suburban fringe areas. Home ownership is at 86 percent, and median home value is \$179,073. Typical of rural residents, Green Acres households own multiple vehicles; 78 percent own two or more vehicles.

### **Preferences**

Country living describes the lifestyle of Green Acres residents. Pet dogs or cats are considered part of the family. These do-it-yourselfers maintain and remodel their homes; projects include roofing and installing carpet or insulation. They own all the necessary power tools, including routers, welders, sanders, and various saws, to finish their projects. Residents also have the right tools to maintain their lawns, flowers garden, and vegetable gardens. They own riding lawn mowers, garden tillers, tractors, and even separate home freezers for the harvest. Continuing the do-it-yourself mode, it is not surprising that Green Acres is the top market for owning a sewing machine. A favorite pastime is using their ice cream maker to produce homemade ice cream. They prefer motorcycles and full-size pickup trucks.

For exercise, Green Acres residents ride their mountain bikes and go fishing, canoeing and kayaking. They also ride horseback and go power boating, bird watching, target shooting, hunting, motorcycling, and bowling. They listen to auto racing and country music on the radio and read fishing and hunting magazines. Many own satellite dishes so they can watch news programs, the Speed Channel, and auto racing on TV. A favorite channel is Country Music Television.

### **Sophisticated Squires Demographic**

Residents of Sophisticated Squires neighborhoods enjoy cultured country life on the urban fringe. These city escapees accept longer commutes to live near fewer neighbors. Mostly married couple families; more than 40 percent of the households are married couples with children that range from toddlers to young adults. The median age is 38.4 years. Most are Baby Boomers and are aged between 35 and 54 years. This segment is not ethnically diverse; most residents are white.

### **Socioeconomic**

These residents are education; more than one third of the population aged 25 years or older holds a bachelor's or graduate degree; another third has attended college. Labor force participation rates are high; occupations range from management to unskilled labor positions. Most work in white-collar jobs. The median household income is \$85,144. Nearly 90 percent of the households earn wage or salary

income; nearly half supplement their wages and salaries with interest, dividends or rental income. The median net worth is \$287,727.

### **Residential**

Sophisticated Squires live in less densely populated areas concentrated along the Atlantic coast and around the Great Lakes. Approximately 90 percent of the housing is single-family homes; the median home value is \$230,333. Seventy-four percent of the housing was built before 1990; 55 percent was built between 1970 and 1989. More than 80 percent of the households own at least two vehicles. They prefer compact SUVs; however, many drive minivans or full-size SUVs.

### **Preferences**

Do-it-yourselfers, Sophisticated Squires residents take care of their lawns and landscaping; home improvements; and remodeling projects such as bathroom remodeling, installing new light fixtures, painting home interiors, staining decks, and cleaning carpets with their steam cleaners. They like to barbecue on their gas grills and make bread with their bread-making machines. Many households own a motorcycle. A typical household will own three or more cell phones. Looking toward the future, many residents own stocks, bonds, and large life insurance policies. When dieting, they go on Weight Watchers; many own a treadmill or stationary bike to stay fit.

They go power boating, play board and word games, do woodworking projects, and attend football and baseball games. Adults also take photos, play golf and ride their motorcycles. Children play games on the home personal computer and typically own a video game system. Residents listen to soft adult contemporary music; classic hits; news; all-talk; and sports radio, including broadcasts of professional games. Although many households have four or more TVs, residents watch as much television as typical US households. Favorite programs include news, comedies, dramas, and programs on Home & Garden Television.

While the Town of Ashby is far more diverse and complex than these two categorizations, describing these two groups helps us in developing the plan to assess how policies might appeal to specific demographic sectors in developing greater local economic resiliency. For example, “green acres” residents typically are among the most-self-sufficient people with their ownership of tools and their use of them for home repair and improvement, furniture building, and other mechanical and building activities. This sector may be ideal to provide local leadership in practical skill building, establishing apprenticeship programs, and creating networks of trades and similar economic activities. This demographic could be considered a local “strength” to be built upon.

See the Appendix G for full breakdown of retail goods and services expenditures in Ashby.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Ashby's history and growth as a community has always kept it anchored as a hard working agricultural and rural activity center that has been more vibrant in the past but is now significantly dependent on the businesses in other surrounding towns for groceries, hardware, personal and business services, and other everyday needs. Locally, residents can engage Ashby businesses for automotive repair and used cars, construction, landscape architectural services, farm products, and a few other non-essentials. The Ashby Market does serve the area with a moderate range of grocery and convenience goods, hardware, and a delicatessen. There are two other convenience stores in town as well.

However, a significant portion of Ashby's dollars "leak" to other communities and one key to developing greater local resilience is to encourage more essential products and services to be sold in the community. Yet due to the inherently small size of the community, this would have to be developed carefully and strategically and also connect with tourism opportunities as well to insure success. This is shown where data indicates that commercial tax receipts for Ashby are low, even compared to other towns in the region; even while tax rates are neither high nor low for the region. This leaves the residential tax base largely supporting the municipal budget and local services. It would serve Ashby to facilitate the establishment of additional commercial properties where possible to increase commercial tax receipts, relieve the burden on residences, and allow for additional public service provision.

Public comment from citizens and other stakeholders overwhelmingly want Ashby to remain rural and natural as they see the agricultural lands, forests, and other characteristics of a traditional rural New England community as their heritage and culture and policies should be established to develop the economy and leave this character in place. This will require innovative policies to attract business and industry to Ashby on a very selective basis while necessarily excluding a wide range of other businesses. In line with these preferences, residents and business owners also seek relief from what they see as onerous land use regulations and how these regulations are applied. While these two elements may seem contradictory at first glance—desiring to remain undeveloped and rural while seeking regulatory relief—they can be accommodated by conducting an analysis and audit of local regulations and other land use control mechanisms such as the Board of Health regulations to insure that they fit the character and resources of the community. Many land use regulations and processes are borrowed from other communities and may not necessarily fit the circumstances of the borrowing community. Ashby may also wish to create specialized zoning tools and techniques to allow for additional opportunities to establish commercial enterprises in the town center and other strategic locations.

Of course, establishing new commercial businesses is also dependent on the infrastructure required to adequately serve these businesses. This is most clearly evidenced by the lack of sanitary sewage facilities in the town center, which not only limits new businesses but has also driven existing businesses out of the community. While challenging, Ashby must work closely with regional agencies and other parties to develop innovative and cost effective strategies for sewage treatment or necessary commercial growth will not occur. Other infrastructure and related challenges relate to the high local cost of electricity, the aging road system, the zone 2 package delivery penalty, lack of sufficient high-speed internet for the area, and poor cellular telephone service in the area generally. Each of these challenges must be addressed in order to enhance the local business climate in Ashby.

Ashby residents also supported bringing more events and festivals to Ashby. To help plan for these events and possibly capture tourist traveling through Ashby on Route 119, there is a list of past and upcoming events in a 50 mile radius around Ashby. See Appendix H.

As previously stated, the Town of Ashby needs a place for residents to meet casually to discuss future development. Results from the SWOT survey indicated many people feel that the lack of a meeting place is acting as a barrier toward progress and collaboration between residents. This should be one of the first issues addressed. Without a proper shared space for town meetings, residents may feel un-involved and un-important in the planning process. These feelings may lead to apathy in regards to the future of Ashby, resulting in an atmosphere that is against any and all forms of evolution for the town.

For Ashby to gain revenue through their local economy, the town must be innovative and decide from a regional perspective what it is that makes Ashby unique. Ashby has a great opportunity to plan interesting events and festivals that can be promoted and marketed through regional publications. As the historic New England character of Ashby is very appealing to residents and guests, the town may want to consider small tourism approaches like a bed and breakfast, which will not change the atmosphere of the small town. For the short term, Ashby may want to spend some money to revitalize the general store downtown to provide more options for residents and travelers. A list of funding opportunities and assistance to build support for business can be found in Appendix I (Ashby Assistance Opportunities Report). Moreover, the following goals, objectives, and policies address Ashby's challenges and are designed to take advantage of opportunities that Ashby should seek.

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

### **GOAL 1: To provide the necessary infrastructure for a successful sustainable economy.**

Objective 1.1: To maintain and improve local transportation infrastructure to serve local mobility needs.

Policy 1.1.1: Develop a local transportation plan to serve the Town's needs over the next 20 years and to serve as a policy and programming document for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Such a plan should be cognizant of increasing scarcity and cost of energy, changing patterns of mobility, and focus on alternative modes locally to supplement the private car.

Policy 1.1.2: Support the development of a pedestrian and bicycle plan to establish non-motorized routes to serve bicycles and pedestrians as an alternative mode of travel for residents and visitors.

Policy 1.1.3: Consider the establishment of a Public Infrastructure Committee to oversee the prioritization of recommendations for transportation, waste management,

storm water and wastewater/sewage, telecommunications, and other local public infrastructure (include parks).

Policy 1.1.4: Continue to apply for Community Development Block Grants and other grants such as the Mass Works Infrastructure Program for road reclamation and other infrastructure projects.

Policy 1.1.5: Work with Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) to develop opportunities for additional public transportation. Routes could connect to high demand locations such as Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) and Fitchburg State University (FSU).

Objective 1.2: To establish facilities and infrastructure to better serve existing and potential future businesses.

Policy 1.2.1: Rehabilitate the Grange Building to build a community center for the Town residents to use and hold continuing education classes and showcase local artists and businesses.

Policy 1.2.2: To establish a commercial kitchen in Ashby (or a shared facility in an adjoining community) to process and package local fruits and vegetables as well as prepared meals.

Policy 1.2.3: To site an information kiosk or stand that could include a local map, list of points of interest, and brochures for local businesses and other attractions.

Policy 1.2.4: Develop a Public Water Feasibility Study to provide alternatives for water service in the Town Center. The availability of public water supply will provide the opportunity to bring in desired businesses such as restaurants to the center of Town.

Policy 1.2.5: Consider funding a Project Engineering Report (PER) to develop a decentralized wastewater treatment system in the Town Center following the first recommendation from Ashby Village Public Sewer Feasibility Study. This is the first step needed to apply for the Massachusetts Clean Water State Revolving Fund to create a Town Center Public Sewer System.

Objective 1.3: To encourage all forms of alternative energy for residential, commercial, and public purposes to move toward greater energy self-sufficiency and resilience.

Policy 1.3.1: Continue to work with the MRPC energy task force to identify regional opportunities for alternative energy. Such opportunities should consider municipal facilities as well as individual installations for businesses and residents.

Policy 1.3.2: Consider partnership with Ashburnham Power and Light as a potential alternative to UNITIL.

Policy 1.3.3 Consider becoming a Green Community. There are potential grants for municipal governments to install renewable energy systems that could save the Town money to power their buildings.

Policy 1.3.4: Develop and implement as needed targeted educational resource materials regarding energy conservation, efficiency and the installation of small-scale and large-scale renewable energy systems for both residents and local businesses and other organizations.

Policy 1.3.5: Consider encouraging small-scale local wind turbines to save on future costs of energy, increase energy independence, and lower carbon footprint.

**GOAL 2: To proactively meet local labor and training needs for current and future businesses.**

Objective 2.1: Develop a local educational and labor training network to supply the Town with sufficient well-trained labor for a sustainable economy.

Policy 2.1.1: To include in a survey of local businesses what type of labor and training they need for their specific business so that educational and training programs can be calibrated to current and future projected local needs.

Policy 2.1.2: To promote the establishment of a formal apprenticeship program in both the North Middlesex Regional High School and the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School matched to the current and anticipated needs of local businesses. Such a program should include a formal relationship between the schools and a local business liaison.

Objective 2.2: To develop formal and informal mechanisms to match workers and businesses.

Policy 2.2.1: To establish a local labor registry to match local businesses with people seeking work.

Objective 2.3: Local economic development policy should encourage businesses that meet local economic development goals.

Policy 2.3.1: To encourage the creation of local living-wage jobs with benefits.

Policy 2.3.2: To seek new businesses and support existing businesses that meet local sustainable economic development criteria and avoid businesses that clearly do not fit local goals.

**GOAL 3: To develop a sustainable local economic base that provides essential products and services to local residents and captures external dollars as a supplement to local revenue but not establish a fiscal dependency.**

Objective 3.1: To develop a local artisanal industrial, trade, and service sector that serves both export and local markets.

Policy 3.1.1: Identify existing artisanal industries, trades, and services, determine their needs, and establish policies and programs to support them, and identify additional business types that will complement and extend this economic sector locally.

Policy 3.1.2: Develop a Cultural/Creative Plan for Ashby to strategize for nurturing and expanding the Town's creative assets.

Objective 3.2: To facilitate the establishment and growth of local businesses that meets the stated principles of this plan.

Policy 3.2.1: Investigate the potential of establishing a small business incubator facility in Ashby proper (or a shared regional facility) in order to cultivate the types of small businesses desired in the community. The incubator should encourage innovation, practical problem-solving, and local needs. Refer to Project Brief 1 after the implementation matrix.

Policy 3.2.2: Consider the Grange Building or Maya Hall for a potential low-impact small business incubator facility.

Policy 3.2.3: Investigate needs of equine and farm businesses to support their continued existence to encourage more of these types of businesses. Encourage development of businesses to support their needs. These types of business help maintain Ashby's rural feel.

Objective 3.3: To establish a plan for growing a tourism sector of the local economy that brings in external dollars but does not become a dependency nor disruptive of the local small-town feel.

Policy 3.3.1: Develop connections to tour busses and other organized tourism programs that visit or pass through Ashby.

Policy 3.3.2: Create an arts/food festival that showcases local artists.

Policy 3.3.3: Develop a unique one-of-a-kind festival to bring people from all parts of the region to increase tourism and bring in external dollars.

**GOAL 4: To strategically use public policy to improve the economic development climate and foster a sustainable economy.**

Objective 4.1: Develop and improve local land use regulations that encourage the sustainable land uses and patterns of development desired by local residents.

Policy 4.1.1: To establish a village center zoning district that creates a village center that is the focus of community activity, commerce, entertainment, and residential living. See Appendix J for Ashby's Existing Zoning Map.

Policy 4.1.2: To develop form-based code for the village center to support the look and feel of a small New England Town.

Policy 4.1.3: Decrease off-street parking setbacks in the Town Center to create pedestrian friendly design by encouraging businesses and homes to be developed closer to the street which fits in with currently non-conforming buildings in the Town Center.

Policy 4.1.4: Conduct a complete evaluation of the zoning bylaws to determine if there are other potential amendments that can be pursued that will make it easier to conduct business in Ashby.

Objective 4.2: Consider the establishment of specific roles in local government that will enhance economic development opportunities and improve the overall business climate

Policy 4.2.1: Establish an economic development role in local government in conjunction either with the land use agent or the town administrator.

Policy 4.2.2: Consider retaining the Ashby Economic Development Plan Committee as an ongoing economic development committee charged with carrying out the implementation of the plan and for other purposes.

Policy 4.2.3: Develop a unified permitting program that allows for greater ease of handling complex or multi-board development applications.

Policy 4.2.4: Develop a comprehensive development permitting guide that will assist all customers with projects of any type and scale or that need to obtain any permit. Also develop separate handouts for more substantive processes that require additional detail or guidance.

Policy 4.2.5: Consider the identification of a development liaison or one-stop permitting role in Town Hall to walk customers through the process and serve as a point of contact for questions and progress.

Policy 4.2.6: Consider multi-jurisdictional (inter-municipal) partnerships to implement staffing or other resource obstacles to development review and permitting.

Policy 4.2.7: Consider entering into a dialogue with the Nashoba Board of Health to determine ways in which the issues identified by residents as impediments to conducting business can be overcome.

Objective 4.3: To evaluate local fiscal policies to determine if there are any adjustments or changes that could support sustainable economic development.

Policy 4.3.1: Consider a fiscal analysis that would seek efficiencies and opportunities to assist residents and businesses in establishing sustainable practices.

Objective 4.4: To establish a grant seeking role in local government.

Policy 4.4.1: Assign the responsibility of grant seeking, application, and administration to a paid role in local government such as the land use agent or town administrator. Grants should lead to self-sustenance of the grants administration role in no more than two (2) years from formal date of establishment.

**GOAL 5: To develop tools and resources to better market, organize, and seek assistance for Ashby businesses.**

Objective 5.1: Develop tools for local business advocacy.

Policy 5.1.1: Encourage the establishment of a peer-to-peer organization such as a local chamber of commerce, village center merchants association, or similar to engage in marketing, outreach, event planning, organization and lobbying, and other activities seen as useful to local businesses.

Policy 5.1.2: Encourage the establishment of a local newsletter or newspaper that provides advertising for local businesses and a listing of businesses plus local news of general interest.

Policy 5.1.3: Develop a handout for start-up businesses to navigate local and state regulations.

Objective 5.2: Develop marketing materials for Ashby businesses and local economy.

Policy 5.2.1: Develop a tri-fold brochure marketing Ashby's assets.

Policy 5.2.2: Create a newspaper or magazine advertisement for Ashby.

Policy 5.2.3: Establish a kiosk for placing brochures about Ashby and local Ashby businesses. Consider a stand-alone kiosk on the common or consider a niche in conjunction with another building such as the Market or Grange.

Policy 5.2.4: Extend the vision for sustainable economic development into a local brand for the Town of Ashby including phrases, images, and selling points and use this in marketing efforts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<b>GOAL 1: To provide the necessary infrastructure for a successful sustainable economy</b>						
<b>Objective 1.1: To maintain and improve local transportation infrastructure to serve local mobility needs</b>						
<i>Policy 1.1.1: Develop a local transportation plan to serve the Town's needs over the next 20 years and to serve as a policy and programming document for the TIP and LRTP. Such a plan should be cognizant of increasing scarcity and cost of energy, changing patterns of mobility, and focus on alternative modes locally to supplement the private car.</i>	Appoint members to MPO and MJTC.  Comment on TIP.  Review Regional Transportation Plan.	BOS, Planning & Highway meeting jointly to establish transportation goals.			Ashby Planning Board Ashby Board of Selectmen Department of Public Works Ashby Police	Possibly DLTA Funding to do a regional transportation plan with Ashburnham
<i>Policy 1.1.2: Support the development of a pedestrian and bicycle plan to establish non-motorized routes to serve bicycles and pedestrians as an alternative mode of travel for residents and visitors.</i>		Part of the above. Involve interested private parties.			Ashby Planning Board MRPC	Transportation funding. Encourage participation in MPO and MJTC.
<i>Policy 1.1.3: Consider the establishment of a Public Infrastructure Committee to oversee spending and prioritization recommendations for transportation, waste management, storm water and wastewater/sewage, telecommunications, and other local public infrastructure (include parks?)</i>	BOS holds public meeting to facilitate discussion.				Ashby Board of Selectmen	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 1.1.4: Continue to apply for Community Development Block Grants and other grants such as the Mass Works Infrastructure Program for road reclamation and other infrastructure projects.</i>	<b>O N G O I N G</b>					

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<i>Policy 1.1.5: Work with Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) to develop opportunities for additional public transportation. Routes could connect to high demand locations such as Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) and Fitchburg State University (FSU).</i>	<b>O N G O I N G</b>					
<b>Objective 1.2:</b> To establish facilities to better serve existing and potential future businesses.						
<i>Policy 1.2.1: Rehabilitate the Grange Building to build a community center for the Town residents to use and hold continuing education classes and showcase local artists and businesses.</i>	Review any documentation about building. Informal evaluation.	Plan possible uses and funding sources.	Seek qualified users.		Local volunteer group with Town assistance	Mass Historic Funding/CDBG
<i>Policy 1.2.2: To establish a commercial kitchen in Ashby (or a shared facility in an adjoining community) to process and package local fruits and vegetables as well as prepared meals.</i>	Review existing establishment and requirements	Recommend suitable locations in Ashby or area. Establish a plan and seek funding.	Establish a committee to follow through.		Agricultural Committee	
<i>Policy 1.2.3: To site an information kiosk or stand that could include a local map, list of points of interest, and brochures for local businesses and other attractions.</i>	Locate site. Seek funding.				Board of Selectmen and Historic Society	Local funding.
<i>Policy 1.2.4: Develop a Public Water Feasibility Study to provide alternatives for water service in the Town Center. The availability of public water supply will provide the opportunity to bring in desired businesses such as restaurants to the center of Town.</i>	Contact stakeholder to assess interest.	Seek funding, see 1.2.4				District Technical Local Assistance
<i>Policy 1.2.5: Consider funding a Project Engineering Report (PER) to develop a decentralized wastewater treatment system in the Town Center following the first recommendation from Ashby Village Public Sewer Feasibility Study. Needed to apply for</i>	Contact stakeholder to assess interest.	Seek funding through Mass Clean Water Revolving Fund.	Seek funding through Mass Clean Water Revolving Fund.		Board of Selectmen Planning Board	Economic Development funding, CDBG, USDA

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<i>the Massachusetts Clean Water State Revolving Fun.</i>						
<b>Objective 1.3:</b> To encourage all forms of alternative energy for residential, commercial, and public purposes to move toward greater energy self-sufficiency and resilience						
<i>Policy 1.3.1: Continue to work with the MRPC energy task force to identify regional opportunities for alternative energy. Such opportunities should consider municipal facilities as well as individual installations for businesses and residents.</i>	<b>O N G O I N G</b>				Ashby Energy Committee MRPC	Department of Energy Resources
<i>Policy 1.3.2: Consider partnership with the Ashburnham municipal energy program as a potential alternative to the local provider (UNITIL). Determine what the Green Communities Act and other state law allow regarding such partnerships.</i>	Evaluate interests from Ashburnham and Unitil. Appoint committee to talk to Unitil and AMPL.				Ashby Board of Selectmen Ashby Energy Committee Town of Ashburnham	Local funding as needed.
<i>Policy 1.3.3: Consider becoming a Green Community. There are potential grants for municipal governments to install renewable energy systems that could save the Town money to power municipal buildings.</i>	Bring stretch code to vote at town meeting.					No funding needed.
<i>Policy 1.3.4: Develop and implement as needed targeted educational resource materials regarding energy conservation, efficiency and the installation of small-scale and large-scale renewable energy systems for both residents and local businesses and other organizations.</i>	Ongoing, use website, Facebook and educational events				Ashby Energy Committee	Department of Energy Resources.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<i>Policy 1.3.5: Consider encouraging small-scale local wind turbines to save on future costs of energy, increase energy independence, and lower carbon footprint.</i>		Use 1.3.4 above to inform citizens of programs available.			Ashby Energy Committee	
<b>GOAL 2: To proactively meet local labor and training needs for current and future businesses</b>						
<u>Objective 2.1:</u> Develop a local educational and labor training network to supply the Town with sufficient well-trained labor for a sustainable economy						
<i>Policy 2.1.2: To include in a survey of local businesses what type of labor and training they need for their specific business so that educational and training programs can be calibrated to current and future projected local needs.</i>		Conduct survey.			Local schools and a local business group or Economic Development Committee	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 2.1.1: To promote the establishment of a formal apprenticeship program in both the North Middlesex Regional High School and the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School matched to the current and anticipated needs of local businesses. Such a program should include a formal relationship between the schools and a local business liaison.</i>		Work with school committee member to discuss curriculum, intern programs etc.	Recruit within existing programs. Contact Fitchburg State University for appropriate programs.		Ashby Land Use Agent or Economic Development Specialist	Local funding if needed.
<u>Objective 2.2:</u> To develop formal and informal mechanisms to match workers and businesses						
<i>Policy 2.2.1: To establish a local labor registry to match local businesses with people seeking work.</i>			Work with DET to promote local business needs.		Economic Development Specialist	Local funding if needed.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<b>Objective 2.3:</b> To pursue economic security with the creation of local living-wage jobs with benefits to move toward economic self-sufficiency for households						
<i>Policy 2.3.1: To encourage and pursue the creation of local living-wage jobs with benefits.</i>	O N G O I N G					Fund through economic development activities.
<i>Policy 2.3.2: To seek new businesses and support existing businesses that meet local sustainable economic development criteria and avoid businesses that clearly do not fit local goals.</i>	O N G O I N G					Fund through economic development activities.
<b>GOAL 3: To develop a sustainable local economic base that provides essential products and services to local residents and captures external dollars as a supplement to local revenue but not establish a fiscal dependency.</b>						
<b>Objective 3.1:</b> To develop a local artisanal industrial, trade, and service sector that serves both export and local markets.						
<i>Policy 3.1.1: Identify existing artisanal industries, trades, and services, determine their needs, and establish policies and programs to support them, and identify additional business types that will complement and extend this economic sector locally.</i>		Review business list and contact appropriate businesses and assess needs.			Economic Development Specialist	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 3.1.2: Develop a Cultural/Creative Plan for Ashby to strategize for nurturing and expanding the Town's creative assets.</i>			Develop plan to promote creative businesses.			District Local Technical Assistance.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<b>Objective 3.2:</b> To facilitate the establishment and growth of local businesses that meets the stated principles of this plan.						
<i>Policy 3.2.1: Investigate the potential of establishing a small business incubator facility in Ashby proper (or a shared regional facility) in order to cultivate the types of small businesses desired in the community. The incubator should encourage innovation, practical problem-solving, and local needs. Refer to Project Brief 1 after the implementation matrix.</i>		Investigate existing resources in area.	Depending on result, promote existing facility or seek funding for regional one.		Economic development role	Economic development funding.
<i>Policy 3.2.2: Consider the Grange Building or Maya Hall for a potential low-impact small business incubator facility.</i>			Review existing buildings for above.			Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 3.2.3: Investigate needs of equine and farm businesses to support their continued existence to encourage more of these types of businesses. Encourage development of businesses to support their needs. These types of business help maintain Ashby's rural feel.</i>	Encourage architectural committee.	Collect data on needs.	Generate a list of local actions to promote farms and farm income		Agricultural Committee and Economic Development Role	Local funding if needed.
<b>Objective 3.3:</b> To establish a plan for growing a tourism sector of the local economy that brings in external dollars but does not become a dependency nor disruptive of the local small-town feel.						
<i>Policy 3.3.1: Develop connections to tour busses and other organized tourism programs that visit or pass through Ashby.</i>	Contact tour companies and assess needs.	Develop plan to attract bus tourists back.				Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 3.3.2: Create an arts/food festival that showcases local artists.</i>		Work with existing festivals to expand them.	Assess need of additional festivals.			Local funding if needed. Private Non-profit funding.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<i>Policy 3.3.3: Develop a unique one-of-a-kind festival to bring people from all parts of the region to increase tourism and bring in external dollars.</i>				See 3.3.2 above		Local funding if needed. Private non-profit funding.
<b>GOAL 4: To strategically use public policy to improve the economic development climate and foster a sustainable economy.</b>						
<u>Objective 4.1:</u> Develop and improve local land use regulations that encourage the sustainable land uses and patterns of development desired by local residents.						
<i>Policy 4.1.1: To establish a village center zoning district that creates a village center that is the focus of community activity, commerce, entertainment, and residential living. See Appendix J for Ashby's Existing Zoning Map.</i>	Bring before Town Meeting.				Planning Board Economic Development Specialist	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.1.2: To develop form-based code for the village center to support the look and feel of a small New England Town.</i>		Educate citizens on form based codes.	Review impact of form based code on town center		Planning Board	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.1.3: Decrease off-street parking setbacks in the Town Center to create pedestrian friendly design by encouraging businesses and homes to be developed closer to the street which fits in with currently non-conforming buildings in the Town Center.</i>		Review setbacks for appropriateness to district.			Planning Board	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.1.4: Conduct a complete evaluation of the zoning bylaws to determine if there are other potential amendments that can be pursued that will make it easier to conduct business in Ashby.</i>			Review zoning bylaw.		Planning Board	To be identified.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<b>Objective 4.2:</b> Consider the establishment of specific roles in local government that will enhance economic development opportunities and improve the overall business climate						
<i>Policy 4.2.1: Establish an economic development role in local government in conjunction either with the land use agent or the town administrator.</i>	Assign the role				Board of Selectmen	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.2.2: Consider retaining the Ashby Economic Development Plan Committee as an ongoing economic development committee charged with carrying out the implementation of the plan and for other purposes.</i>	Re-appoint Committee to implement ED Plan.				Board of Selectmen	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.2.3: Develop a unified permitting program that allows for greater ease of handling complex or multi-board development applications.</i>		Continue with basis already established.			Land Use Agent and multiple boards	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.2.4: Develop a comprehensive development permitting guide that will assist all customers with projects of any type and scale or that need to obtain any permit. Also develop separate handouts for more substantive processes that require additional detail or guidance.</i>	Continue with existing guide.				Land Use Agent	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.2.5: Consider the identification of a development liaison or one-stop permitting role in Town Hall to walk customers through the process and serve as a point of contact for questions and progress.</i>			Review effectiveness.		Board of Selectmen	Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 4.2.6: Consider multi-jurisdictional (inter-municipal) partnerships to implement staffing or other resource obstacles to development review and permitting.</i>	Consider regionalizing some permitting positions.					Local funding if needed.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<i>Policy 4.2.7: Consider entering into a dialogue with the Nashoba Board of Health to determine ways in which the issues identified by residents as impediments to conducting business can be overcome.</i>	Review Objections.				Land Use Agent	Local funding if needed.
<b>Objective 4.3:</b> To evaluate local fiscal policies to determine if there are any adjustments or changes that could support sustainable economic development.						
<i>Policy 4.3.1: Consider a fiscal analysis that would seek efficiencies and opportunities to assist residents and businesses in establishing sustainable practices.</i>		Review sustainable business practices.	Educate business on sustainable practices.		Economic Development Specialist	Economic Development Funding.
<b>Objective 4.4:</b> To establish a grant seeking role in local government.						
<i>Policy 4.4.1: Assign the responsibility of grant seeking, application, and administration to a paid role in local government such as the land use agent or town administrator. Grants should lead to self-sustenance of the grants administration role in no more than two (2) years from formal date of establishment.</i>		Assess practicality and assign implementation.			Board of Selectmen	Local funding if needed.
<b>GOAL 5: To develop tools and resources to better market, organize, and seek assistance for Ashby businesses.</b>						
<b>Objective 5.1: Develop tools for local business advocacy.</b>						
<i>Policy 5.1.1: Encourage the establishment of a peer-to-peer organization such as a local chamber of commerce, village center merchants association, or similar to engage in marketing, outreach, event planning, organization and lobbying, and other activities seen as useful to local businesses.</i>		Contact businesses to assess interest.	Assist with establishment.		Ashby Planning Board	Local funding if needed. Private funding.
<i>Policy 5.1.2: Encourage the establishment of a local newsletter or newspaper that provides advertising for local businesses and a listing of businesses plus local news of general interest.</i>	Contact local reporter about assisting with establishment.				TBD	Private funding.

Goal, Objective, Policy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Long Term	Responsible Agencies	Funding Source(s)
<i>Policy 5.1.3: Develop a handout for start-up businesses to navigate local and state regulations.</i>		Develop handout. Coordinate with 4.2.4 and 4.2.5.			Land Use Agent and/or local economic development role	Local funding if needed.
<b>Objective 5.2: Develop marketing materials for Ashby businesses and local economy.</b>						
<i>Policy 5.2.1: Develop a tri-fold brochure marketing Ashby's assets.</i>	Economic Development Committee lead, encourage involvement of others both public and private				Multiple Boards	Local funding if needed. Private funding.
<i>Policy 5.2.2: Create a newspaper or magazine advertisement for Ashby.</i>	Create list of publications and websites.	Seek Economic Development funding for advertising.			Economic Development Specialist/ Economic Development Committee	Economic Development Funding.
<i>Policy 5.2.3: Establish a kiosk for placing brochures about Ashby and local Ashby businesses. Consider a stand-alone kiosk on the common or consider a niche in conjunction with another building such as the Market or Grange.</i>	Economic Development Committee and private input					Local funding if needed.
<i>Policy 5.2.4: Extend the vision for sustainable economic development into a local brand for the Town of Ashby including phrases, images, and selling points and use this in marketing efforts.</i>		Economic Development Committee with private support.		This is an ongoing effort.	Economic Development Committee.	Local funding if needed.

## **Appendices**

### **A.Kick-Off Meeting Agenda and Minutes**

**Town of Ashby**  
**Sustainable Economic Development Plan**  
**Kick-Off Meeting**



**TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2011**  
**7 pm at**  
**Ashby Town Hall**

**Please join us! We want to hear from you!**

**Agenda**

- Introduction to the Plan – *Alan Pease, Ashby Planning Board & Chris Ryan, Ashby Land Use Agent*
- District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program - *John Hume, Planning & Development Director, MRPC*
- Scope of Services for Ashby Sustainable Economic Development Plan – *Jennifer Siciliano, Regional Planner, MRPC*
- Demographic Data for Ashby – *Jennifer Siciliano, Regional Planner, MRPC*
- Comments and Questions – *You*



For more information, please contact Jennifer Siciliano, Regional Planner with the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, at (978) 345-7376 ext. 318, or [jsiciliano@mrpc.org](mailto:jsiciliano@mrpc.org) or Chris Ryan, Ashby Land Use Agent, at [christopher@relocalizations.com](mailto:christopher@relocalizations.com).

- 5) Provide assistance to the Community with the following analysis tasks:
- 6) Recommend sustainable implementation actions for economic development based on results of the inventory, research and analysis.
- 7) Prepare Draft of the Sustainable Economic Development Plan and Policy Plan for the Community to review and comment
- 8) Complete a final report including improvements and edits as provided by the Community by the contract's deadline.

## **Meetings**

- 1) MRPC will prepare for and attend a kick-off meeting with appropriate Town Officials and the general public at the outset of the project to explain the purposes of Sustainable Economic Development Plan and Policy Document and to gather information from the community for the Plan.
- 2) MRPC will prepare for and attend a meeting of the Economic Development Planning Committee.
- 3) MRPC will prepare for and attend either a Planning Board or a Board of Selectmen meeting to conduct a SWOT analysis and progress report.
- 4) MRPC will schedule a Region Wide Workshop on Small Town Rural Economic Development to enhance this study. The Workshop will be held as part of a Montachusett Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee meeting.
- 5) MRPC shall prepare for and attend a Public Meeting to present the Final Draft Sustainable Economic Development Plan and Policy Document.

C. Ryan commented that whatever goals, objectives, and tasks are put in a plan, they must be tied to 1. who is going to do it, 2. who is going to pay for it, and 3. when is it going to happen. If it is not then it almost never happens. We have to be specific and creative. We want to make sure that whatever we put in the plan is reasonable.

J. Hume stated that a SWOT analysis is accomplished by a Charrette to gain public input from the residents to find out what they want.

## **Demographic Data for Ashby – Jennifer Siciliano, Regional Planner, MRPC**

J. Siciliano reviewed the demographic data for the town of Ashby (see handout for tables).

- Ashby's Population has gone through some fluctuations in the past (1960 to 1970 and 1980 to 1990), but since the 1990s growth has been relatively steady. Ashby's rate of population growth from 2000 to 2009 (7.5%) is higher than the Montachusett Region as a whole (6.5%).
- Over time Ashby's median age has gone up like the rest of the state and nation. This may be explained at least in part by advances in health care, as residents are now living longer lives. It is currently at 39.3 years, which is slightly higher than the state as a whole (38.5 years).
- Ashby has a higher percentage of children (29.6%) than the rest of the state (22.3%) and it also has a higher percentage of very young preschool age children (6.5%) than the state (5.9%). On the other hand, Ashby has a lower percentage of senior citizens over 65 (9.15%) than the state (13.4%).

**MINUTES  
Town of Ashby  
Sustainable Economic Development Plan  
Kick-Off Meeting**

**March 1, 2011**

Present:

J. Hume opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Introduction to the Plan – Alan Pease, Ashby Planning Board & Chris Ryan, Ashby Land Use Agent**

A. Pease commented that we are here today to discuss the Sustainable Economic Development Plan formulation. This is the start off meeting to see what services MRPC as to offer and what the Town is expected to do.

C. Ryan stated that this Economic Development Plan is a great opportunity. Not many communities do a stand alone Economic Development Plan; they usually do it as part of a bigger Master Plan. The Town does not have its own Master Plan. There is an earlier Community Development Plan. The Town thought it was a good idea to take the economic development goals from the Community Development Plan and really bring them forward to create a complete plan for the economic future of the Town. This is an opportunity to look at all phases of the economy and put a vision together for the future and to develop the goals that will reach that vision. The key is implementation. We need realistic goals and the resources to achieve the goals. We need an economic development plan that will make the Town more self-sufficient.

**District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program – John Hume, Planning & Development Director, MRPC**

J. Hume stated that MRPC has received funding through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to fund our DLTA program and to provide staff assistance to our regions communities. Over the past two years MRPC has completed 24 DLTA projects within our region.

In October 2010, MRPC sent out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for communities to apply for MRPC staff assistance. We received 15 applications and awarded 13. Ashby put together a very well written application.

**Scope of Services for Ashby Sustainable Economic Development Plan – Jennifer Siciliano, Regional Planner, MRPC**

J. Siciliano reviewed the Scope of Services summarized below (see handout for complete scope and schedule).

- 1) Review the Town's EO418 Community Development Plan and Zoning Bylaws.
- 2) Assist in the development of an Economic Development Planning Committee
- 3) Provide assistance to the Community with the following inventory/data gathering tasks:
- 4) Provide research regarding possible economic development initiatives:

- Ashby has an estimated total of 980 households. The average household size (3.12) is larger than the state's (2.54). There is a much higher percentage of households with children in Ashby (41.5%) than the state (29.8%) as a whole. Since the majority of more rural/suburban communities are usually made up of single-family homes, they tend to have a higher percentage of family households.
- Ashby's over-25-year-old population has a higher percentage of high school graduates (34.7%) and people with associate degrees (8.35%) than the state (27.2%, 7.6%, respectively). Yet, it has a lower percentage of people age 25 years or older that have a bachelor's (18.7%) or graduate (15.2%) degree than the state (21.7%, 16.1%, respectively).
- Ashby's per capita income (\$28,787) is lower than the state's (\$33,460) - per capita income is the total income divided by the total population. This might be due to the higher percentage of children in Ashby households than the state. Yet, Ashby's median household (\$78,750) and family (\$83,008) income is higher than the state's (\$64,496, \$80,822, respectively). Median family income is defined as an annual income figure for which there are as many families with incomes below that level as there are above that level. Ashby also has a lower percentage of people below poverty (5%) than the state as a whole (10.1%).
- Ashby's current unemployment rate in December 2010 is at 8%, down from 9.1% from a year ago. Ashby's unemployment rate is better than the state's overall rate (9.1%), but following the same lowering trend.
- There are a total of 77 public and private business establishments in Ashby. On average, they employ 285 people, weekly, providing an average weekly salary of \$638. Construction companies employ the most people in Ashby (62 people on average) at 23 businesses. The wholesale trade in Ashby provides, on average, 7 jobs, but pays the highest wages of \$1,388 weekly salary. (To protect the anonymity of certain businesses, the MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development does not provide specific data sets on companies with low numbers of establishments within a town.)
- A higher percentage of people drive alone in Ashby (85.1%) than the state as a whole (72.7%). Less percentage of people in Ashby carpool (5.2%), use public transportation (.9%) or walk (1.3%) to work than the rest of the state (8.4%, 9.0%, 4.5%, respectively). There is little incentive to carpool where busy schedules and scattered destination points prevail. People in Ashby take longer to get to work (31.6 minutes) than the state (27.1 minutes). This is attributable to Ashby's rural surroundings and distance from commercial and industrial centers. However, it is interesting to note that a higher percentage of people work at home in Ashby (7.2%) than people do in the state (3.9%).

There was some discussion on what the Town would like to see for demographic information.

### **Questions & Comments**

What does the town wanted to see for themselves in regards to growth?

- The market speaks for itself.
- We have been through the largest real estate boom in the country and have not grown that much. We will probably decrease.
- Ashby also has transportation and location limitations.

- It all depends on how aggressively the town wants to go after tourists or how much the town wants to develop the industrial/commercial properties.
- Surveys that have been taken all indicate that Ashby wants to maintain its rural theme and character. The opportunities for economic development have to fall under that umbrella.
- Ashby needs to be more accommodating to the older population that Ashby seems to be drawing, especially in the center of the town. There needs to be a change in our zoning bylaws to allow for a more vibrant center of the town.
- How practical is it to think Ashby can get more industrial/manufacturing businesses. We are competing with Fitchburg and Leominster, who both have lots of infrastructure, natural gas, cheap electricity, roads that are good. There are no buildings here or any good infrastructure. Is it even reasonable to waste our time going down that road when there are so many other things to explore? We should explore retirement community, housing, and homes for single professionals, and developments somewhat near the center.
- It is probably not reasonable on a large scale but there may be some targeted "craft" level industries that might find the town a good place to be located, something that would be more of a size that is accommodated by our economy.
- It is also important to tie it into the educational structure.
- Is the point of growing the businesses by trying to get people to move here or by people that graduate from our schools or already live in the area? C. Ryan replied both.
- Getting people to move here is not going to happen. Why would they move here when they can move a little "up the road" and be in a more business friendly climate and have the internet and UPS services, it doesn't matter that your out a little further.
- There are a lot of things Ashby has to offer that the other places don't. It has character, a traditional town center and some people may want to be in that type of environment.
- Working with the City of Fitchburg, since they are now the restriction zone (Northern Watershed Area) there are trails that are now usable and so the overall amenity of the area is going to be improved, connections to the Mid-State Trail from several different locations, additional fishing and hunting; those are key features in terms of amenity.

J. Siciliano stated that it's really looking at your assets and building on them.

- It seems like we are just a little away from having enough money to get our town services back up to where they should be. Any business's we get we have to be thinking of how they can give us revenue.
- looking at the town center and the possibility of increasing economic activity there and all the other areas that have commercial and industrial zoning and the infrastructure needs to be able to facilitate any new development in those areas and making sure the development stays within the character of the town. There are many land use tools that could be used to make sure that the development that took place stays within character. If the tools are in place we can take advantage of opportunities but right now things need to be worked out.

J. Siciliano stated that the SWOT meeting will be very helpful.

- A lot by lot inventory should be done to see what the opportunities are.

J. Siciliano asked if there were any other towns in the region that Ashby could model after.

- Royalston, Townsend, and Hubbardston were suggested
- We almost have to resign ourselves to making Ashby what we want it to be because if we try to emulate other towns we will not get any where.

- Absolutely, Ashby wants to definitely be itself. A lot of times there are ideas from other towns that can be looked at but they will not solve every situation.
- There are opportunities out there for shared facilities.
- When Ashby has functions there needs to be a special permit from the Board of Health.
- There may be a possibility of developing a small service incubator. Very much like growing jobs internally, taking people from the local population who may not have an opportunity or to rent space, have secretarial services or even how to run a small business. The incubator teaches basic business skills and allows you space to germinate your business. The idea is that they pay a nominal amount of rent and the amount they pay gradually gets higher as their business grows and when they are viable they move on and someone else is brought in. We need ideas from the public.
- What is the possibility of extending sewer?

J. Siciliano stated that when Ashby's feasibility study was done just to do the town center was \$2.4 million. We even looked at tying it into Fitchburg and that was even more expensive. There is funding available from the state, mostly loans.

- Another thing that we can look into in regards to sewer is public/private partnership that would get the developer sharing the costs of infrastructure improvements.
- Another idea is to do absolutely nothing. This town has been going along for the past 50 years just fine and anytime you introduce new commercial interests you run the risk of increasing costs.
- One of the keys to this plan is to make sure that it is something that is sustainable in a community and economic sense. Making sure that whatever is put in place is something that can be maintained long term. You want an economy that you can rely on in the future and something that serves your population going forward.
- Bed and Breakfasts should be looked at.

J. Siciliano stated that the zoning is by special permit.

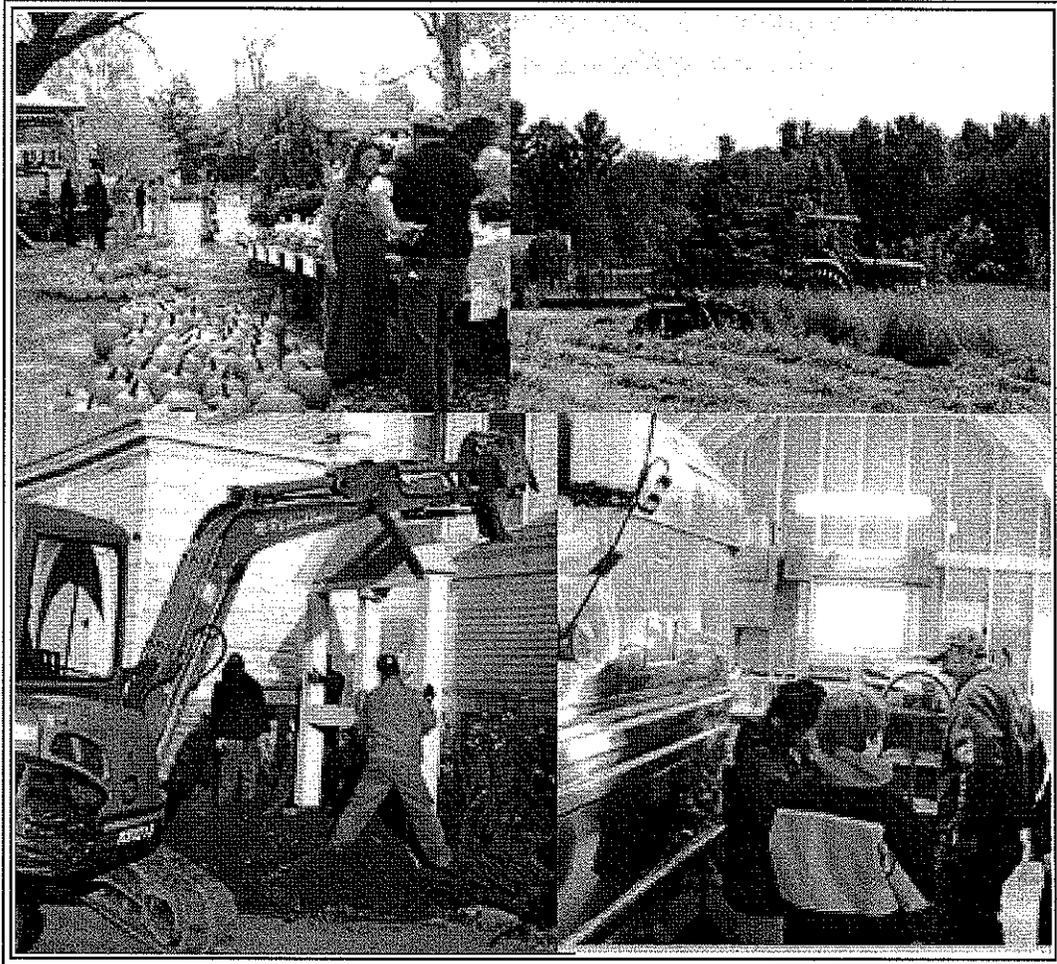
- A lot of people blame the infrastructure government for things that are actually state controlled.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

**B. Ashby Sustainable Rural Economic Development Plan Public Visioning  
Session Report**

**Ashby Sustainable Rural Economic Development  
Plan Public Visioning Session  
May 21, 2011**



Prepared by the  
Montachusett Regional  
Planning Commission  
For  
**THE ASHBY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE  
AND  
THE TOWN OF ASHBY, MA**

## Introduction

In February 2011, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) executed a contract with the Town of Ashby to assist the Town and its newly formed Economic Development Committee to develop a Sustainable Economic Development Plan through MRPC's District Local Technical Assistance Program at no cost to the community (funds provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts). Public input was deemed a critical part of this study by the Town and as part of this contract MRPC conducted a Community Forum with residents and business representatives. The Community Forum was held on May 21, 2011.

In March, the Economic Development Committee, with assistance from MRPC, began the necessary preparations. The purpose of the Community Forum was to solicit public input to identify Ashby's key issues for the Planning Team to address in the Ashby Sustainable Economic Development Plan to be completed in November 2011.

It was determined that public involvement would be critical if the Community Forum was to be a successful one. The widely publicized event was open to the general public; everyone with an interest in Economic Development in Ashby was highly

encouraged to attend including citizens, local and officials, business owners and others.

On Saturday, May 21 at 9 AM interested parties met in the lower level of the Ashby Free Public Library. The weather was pleasantly warm and sunny that morning – a welcome change from the cool rainy pattern of early/mid May. Open, uninhibited conversation and dialog was the order of the day.

The collective energy of the participants was used to weld together their ideas with a highly-charged spirit to plant the seeds of implementation to make measurable, consistent, and appropriate improvements to economic development in Ashby. To enhance factual knowledge and generate ideas, large scale color coded zoning maps of the town were available for viewing throughout the duration of the event.

This part of the sustainable rural economic plan has been completed with the intention of respecting, reflecting, and documenting the day's events, methodology, and all of the recorded input provided by the participants to complement other planning efforts.

that an objective of the Forum was to identify those things that are most important to the residents of Ashby.

John Hume, Planning and Development Director at MRPC, provided a description of what the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission is and the services it provides. The Montachusett Region consists of 22 communities. Services range from economic development planning and promotion to writing grant proposals and facilitating both regional and community plans in a wide range of planning areas: economic development, transportation and transit, environment and land use, Geographic Information System mapping, and community development.

Mr. Hume indicated that he will serve as a small group facilitator today along with two other MRPC staff members and the Ashby Land Use Consultant (See Appendix B – Moderators). He underscored the importance of positive attitude and mutual respect. The successful outcome of the public forum hinged on this: all ideas are welcome from all attendees; all participants have equal status; provide input and let your neighbor speak, and; there is no such thing as a bad idea.

It was indicated that we would be breaking out into smaller groups. Each group would answer eight (8)

questions – the questions for each group were identical. The groups would reconvene later and report findings.



Mr. Hume randomly designated each participant a number between one and three. Participants were then divided into three groups depending on the number assigned. There was one facilitator and one volunteer recorder per group, along with a newspaper sheet. Large sticker pads of lined newspaper paper were also provided to record participant responses. All groups were instructed by facilitators that:

A. As a group, participants should discuss, and then answer each individual question on the newspaper.

B. Each group was instructed to select a reporter to present the group's work and results to the other Groups when they reconvened.

In the next part of the process, participants returned to reconvene in the large group for further discussion

## Summary of Findings Based Upon Prioritization

Comments made by the forum's participants have been documented and categorized by Eight (8) questions posed for the three breakout groups. Numbers in parentheses represent relative importance assigned to each issue by participants using sticker dots during the prioritization exercise previously described. *Only issues prioritized by a minimum of at least one sticker dot are documented below* - full group responses to all questions that were also presented by a representative of each group when the participants reconvened into the larger group can be found in Appendix C. It should be noted that while the participants of this Forum prioritized some issues over others, those issues with a lesser priority may have equal or greater importance during future planning efforts.

**QUESTION #1: What are Ashby's Strengths?** What characteristics of the Town of Ashby do you think are strong points, attractants, and features that bring people to town as visitors, attract people to move here or establish businesses here, or keep people here long term.

### Priorities Concerning Ashby's greatest strengths:

- Rural Aspects (21)
- Mount Watatic - Pearl Hill State Park – Blood Hill State Park (7)
- Natural Resources (5)
- Horses and Livestock (3)

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- Schools (i.e. class size/music program) (3)
- Town Center (3)
- Open Space (3)
- Scenic Rte. 119 Traffic Flow (1)
- Hiking, Snowmobiles, Recreational Opportunities (1)
- Band Concert at the Common (1)

- Areas to display and sell residence goods (11)
- Zoning issues regarding growth (9)
- Need business growth to generate revenue to help with the tax base (8)
- Population should remain the same but encourage business so we don't have to drive so far (4)

**QUESTION #4: What kinds of municipal assets are missing that you would like to see in Ashby?** What kinds of municipal or public assets are missing that you would like to see in Ashby? (e.g. sewers, second elementary school, more parks, town forest or farm, nature center, etc.).

Priorities Concerning Missing Municipal Assets:

- Open public meeting place for more regular events (17)
  - Eateries – no place to stop and eat (15)
  - Public water/utilities (12)
  - Activities for kids/teens, in the summer particularly (11)
  - Banking (9)
  - Pubs – family friendly (7)
- 
- Food and crafts (5)
  - Green business (Ashburnham Country Store) (5)
  - Newspaper or newsletter (3)
  - Public transit (3)
  - Promoting existing businesses (2)

**QUESTION #7: Where do residents and businesses do *their* business? Where do people in the Town purchase everyday necessities (food, gas, etc.) and services (dry cleaning, etc). What kinds of businesses would you like to see in Ashby that aren't here and what is stopping these businesses from coming to Ashby?**

Priorities Concerning where Residents and Businesses do their Business:

- No Group Responses to this question were prioritized by Sticker Dots.

**QUESTION #8: Would you like to see festivals and events to increase tourism in town? Why? Would you like to see festivals and events to increase tourism in town? Why? What kind of events would be successful here?**

Priorities Concerning Festivals and Events to Increase Tourism:

- Farmer's Market (16)
- Proper advertising is needed (10)
- Advertise and share locally through many communities (5)
- Networking and bringing community goods out (4)
- Great current festivals (3)
- Great current activities (3)

**Conclusions:** Based on public input prioritization during the Visioning Session documented above, Ashby's greatest strengths are its rural character and natural resources including Mount Watatic, Pearl Hill State Park, and Blood Hill State Park. In accordance with this, participants prioritized the need to retain this rural flavor and keep sprawl in check. But it was also indicated that Ashby needs some business growth to generate tax revenue.

APPENDIX C – Full Group Responses to all  
Questions

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Comments Received on this Question from **Group 3** are as Follows:

- Home based businesses
- Off the beaten path
- Rural Charm
- Natural Resources (5)
- Parks
- Town Center (3)
- Diversity – willingness to accept people with different ideas and views
- A lot of parcels – the intent to have connecting trails
- Open Space (3)

**QUESTION #2: What are Ashby’s challenges and how should they be addressed?** What do you think, if any, are Ashby’s key issues and challenges and how should they be addressed. What do you think the problems are, anything that makes work and life more difficult or demanding. This could be the lack of retail choices, municipal services, high (or low) taxes, excessive or loose regulations

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 1** are as Follows:

- Not business friendly – difficult to establish businesses (8)
- Water/well issues (7)
- Regulations – more cooperation (2)
- Perceptions of the weather – making Ashby inaccessible
- Sense of community is not what it could be – find a way to bring people closer together
- No community kitchen – including classes

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 2** are as Follows:

- Utilities - limited power for manufacturers – second highest utility cost in the country (9)
- No public water and sewer source

- Zoning issues regarding growth (9)
- Deteriorated building that should be restored and used as businesses
- Town information accessibility
- Sprawl (17)

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 2** are as Follows:

- Population should remain the same but encourage business so we don't have to drive so far (4)
- Types of businesses – want them on Main St.
- We have to go out of town to do banking – need a bank in town – encourage local borrowing
- Network to keep businesses communicating – jobs for teens

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 3** are as Follows:

- Town needs to be more active in seeking growth
- Concern about sprawl – inadvertently destroying the character of the town
- Zoning – focus on the center of town

**QUESTION #4: What kinds of municipal assets are missing that you would like to see in Ashby?** What kinds of municipal or public assets are missing that you would like to see in Ashby? (e.g. sewers, second elementary school, more parks, town forest or farm, nature center, etc.).

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 1** are as Follows:

- Visitors Center – to show what Ashby has to offer
- Eateries – no place to stop and eat (15)
- Open public meeting place for more regular events (17)
- Pubs – family friendly (7)
- Newspaper or newsletter (3)

- Good network of people that communicate with someone (3)
- Location (Rte. 119)
- Community based support of local businesses
- Weekend tourists (10)

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 3** are as Follows:

- Home based business with low overhead (5)
- Little regulation of home based business, easy to get started (1)

**QUESTION #6: What makes it difficult to run a business in Ashby and how can the Town help? What could businesses do together to help?**

What makes it difficult to run a business in Ashby and how can the Town help? What could businesses do together to help? What kind of programs could help business? What kind of group or organization could businesses collaborate on to advance their needs and interests?

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 1** are as Follows:

- Resistance in town (zoning) (17)
- Need to be more helpful in helping businesses grow
- More business zoning with appropriate guidelines
- More regular activities (fairs etc.) to bring people to Ashby (4)
- Parking issues (3)
- Ashby is not a destination but a drive through town

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 2** are as Follows:

- Restrictive Zoning
- No Banking (9)
- Water/Sewer Issues
- Lack of business association, lack of a support team

**QUESTION #8: Would you like to see festivals and events to increase tourism in town? Why? Would you like to see festivals and events to increase tourism in town? Why? What kind of events would be successful here?**

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 1** are as Follows:

- Advertise and share locally through many communities (5)

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 2** are as Follows:

- Networking and bringing community goods out (4)
- Farmer's Market (16)
- Great current festivals (3)
- Proper advertising is needed (10)

Comments Received on this Question from **Group 3** are as Follows:

- Great current activities (3)
- Nature viewing
- Farmers market
- More local crafts

**C. Ashby Economic Development Survey Report**

# **Ashby Economic Development Survey**

**Spring/Summer 2011**

presence of natural assets was also a popular response with 28 respondents choosing plentiful open space, natural environment (27), nature-based recreation (26), low density (26), and scenic roads and vistas (19).

Other common responses include a low cost of living (23), historic homes and buildings (20), and independent, self-sufficient spirit of residents.

Other

1. lower property taxes (see surrounding towns)
2. Many activities and programs for children, sports scouts

**Question 2: What are Ashby's challenges? Please choose all that apply.**

2. What are Ashby's challenges? Please choose all that apply.		Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of public transportation		31.7%	13
Difficult for young people to remain in town, lack of opportunity		51.2%	21
Cost of solid waste removal		17.1%	7
Too many new homes being developed		17.1%	7
Increase in school-aged children and associated costs		14.6%	6
Need for affordable senior housing		24.4%	10
Tax burden disproportionately on residential base		41.5%	17
Dependence on septic systems and associated problems/lack of development opportunity		43.9%	18
Small population/market share for growing a retail or business base		39.0%	16
Unsafe pedestrian or bicycle conditions		12.2%	5
Deteriorating roadways and public infrastructure		75.6%	31
Potential contamination of old landfill		14.6%	6
Other (please specify)		24.4%	10
answered question			41
skipped question			14

Clearly, deteriorating roads and infrastructure was cited as the primary challenge. Other notable responses include local employment opportunity for young residents and the sanitary facility situation.

meditation retreat, spa, school, holistic health center. There are lots of these types of business springing up and that property would be an ideal location for them.

10. Perhaps a newsletter would help.
11. Attract more business development
12. You can't get services without paying for them. Increase taxes judiciously. Give critical services (police) a proper home and a decent wage.
13. Need to create an open discussion of the problems and stop trying to solve them with consultants' views of what we should do
14. Grants, State Aid, Louder representative in the state/federal level
15. By keeping low costs--taxes etc. for persons on limited income
16. Transportation: look at what the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative does (see <http://www.nashuarpc.org/> ). Great way for (seniors and others) residents to get non-emergency medical transportation (and other destinations) within surrounding communities. [www.RideBigBlue.com](http://www.RideBigBlue.com) This has been a great success for the past few years in southern NH.
17. Support for new businesses to address the deficits
18. Allow more commercial interests
19. Find other people to run the town. Who actually care about the town and the peoples needs instead of putting money where it is not needed like their own pockets
20. Strong leadership interested in Ashby growing and becoming a place young people can raise a family, need banks, places to eat and socialize
21. Open minds to new things.
22. Combination of town officials and townspeople coming together to decide what zoning rules need changing.
23. With an emphasis on sustainability and value for the town.
24. The town government needs to actually function and make decisions. Governing requires a willingness to make decisions that, though unpopular with some, will be better for the town in the long term. Businesses must be allowed to enter town and grow without being barricaded.
25. Pursue water/sewer options for downtown - utilize federal grants etc better sidewalks, fix roads
26. Community education

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**Question 4:** How do you feel about growth and change in Ashby? This could be growth in size/population, growth in commercial activity, growth in government, traffic or any way you want to define growth.

For example, if you choose "Very Positive," then you might feel that Ashby should grow aggressively by adding a lot more commercial developments and more housing subdivisions.

"countryside" integrity Keep the 2 acre minimum for residential development...also enforce this bylaw more strictly, not allowing contractors to come up with clever ploys to get around the rule

5. The town center.
6. Historic buildings, much farm land
7. Farms, village center
8. The rural identity is what brought my wife and me to Ashby twenty years ago. We had lived over twenty years in a small rural town, Westford MA. It was Westford's uncontrolled growth that brought us to Ashby. I would not want to see the rural N.E. charm of Ashby be smothered by the uncontrolled construction that devoured charming Westford turning it into an over populated bedroom community burdened with large commercial development and rush hour traffic problems that cause longer commute times and endanger children waiting for school buses.
9. The rural feeling with a careful eye towards avoiding sprawl. This is accomplished by careful zoning.
10. Have a historical district, and implement that any changes in that area must be similar to the appearance of structures around it
11. Love the look of the library and post office wish all houses on main street had that "clean New England" look
12. It's a 19th century town. That's what lends such character to Main Street and other areas of town where old buildings are preserved and new ones are built with a sensitivity to fitting in. I'd prefer businesses to be agricultural in nature or at least based on the nature of the land as opposed to industrial in nature - displacing or insulting the nature of the land. Alternative energy research and experimentation I would welcome
13. All of the above
14. Ashby is not the buildings; it's the people. We need to preserve the diversity that made Ashby independent.
15. The rural country feel and scenery
16. Preserve the character and history and feel of a New England Village but allow for modern commerce that appreciates the rural nature of the town. More opportunity for small businesses and farms to sell their product on a scale that fits them and Ashby.
17. All existing buildings with very limited growth--water and sewer extremely limited
18. Maintain municipal and other old/historical buildings!!! Keep the small, rural character of the town while developing small-scale businesses and retail stores.
19. New business w/o the large logo signage.
20. The Common is pretty.
21. Small town feeling, if developed must retain look and feel
22. The farm land and open areas
23. Keep small town feel like the common and band concerts in the summertime. Preserve nature; don't destroy forest areas if it is not needed.
24. The School
25. The rural atmosphere, the low density, the town center, the look of the main street.
26. Sanity.
27. Historical Buildings in town
28. Preserve town common but allow small businesses to enhance utilization of downtown. Worry about road traffic

24. I would like to see the town adopt more energy efficient options such as solar or wind power there's plenty of open space for such things. I'd like to change the fact that people running the town have way to much power or think they do and they will not allow change they just want to keep raising taxes that people cant afford
25. Would like a coffee shop, bank, You shouldn't have to go out of town for everything you need
26. Better maintenance of town buildings, better maintenance of town roads, a little livelier town center with a few more shops.
27. I want what our neighbors have but don't want to pay for it, and N.I.M.B.Y. mentality.
28. More business, this will provide better access to services and create jobs within the town. New Police Station. Lower residential taxes by promoting commercial development and commercial tax base.
29. Fix old town owned buildings or sell them..
30. Positive community involvement in the town and its government

**Question 7: What kinds of assets are missing now that you would like to have here? This could be anything from sewers and another elementary school to specific types of businesses, populations, buildings, services, etc.**

**Provide as many choices as you wish up to eight (8) and if more, please note in comments section at the end of the survey.**

7. What kinds of assets are missing now that you would like to have here? This could be anything from sewers and another elementary school to specific types of businesses, populations, buildings, services, etc. Provide as many choices as you wish up to eight (8) and if more, please note in comments section at the end of the survey.		Response Percent	Response Count
Asset 1		100.0%	28
Asset 2		89.3%	25
Asset 3		75.0%	21
Asset 4		50.0%	14
Asset 5		25.0%	7
Asset 6		17.9%	5
answered question			28
skipped question			17

Increase in bldg. would increase taxes (19)  
Police department (1)  
Town sewer (7)  
Farmers market (12)  
Pizza shop something where people can order out (23)  
Restaurant (9)  
New police station (1)  
Gift shop (24)  
Better management of town resources (25)  
New police station (1)  
Upscale store/coffee (26)  
Town hall repairs (14)

Asset 3 (x 4)

Need some more business (8) and industry (27)  
Upgrade Utilities (28)  
Well insulated public buildings (18)  
A defined plan which is future minded (28)  
We don't need sewers, but a BOH that allows newer septic designs without owner burden (29)  
Cell phone service (30)  
Information booth at entrance to town, maybe at the Willard Brook park station (31)  
Drug store (32)  
More appealing Town Hall (painted it at least) -- (14)  
Coffee shop (9)  
Regionalize many town services (33)  
Elementary School - instead of a new one, fix it! and redo the outside to give it a new/fresh look (34)  
A helpful, welcoming attitude (35)  
A real general store (36)  
A better police station (1)  
Dunkin Donuts (37)  
More businesses (8)  
Bank (5)  
Guarantee of 24 hour police coverage (16)  
After school programs for 8 -14 year olds non existent (38)  
Positive public attitude (35)

Asset 4 (x 3)

Increased agriculture (39)  
Defined image (we think we are a certain way?) - (40)  
Sewers would nearly bankrupt people, due to the low population.  
Craft shops, etc. (41)  
More town events (42)  
Ice-cream shop (43)

6. Restaurant – 6+6+6+6+6+6+5+5+5=51
7. More small businesses – 6+5=11
8. Farmers Market – 6+5=11
9. Grocery Store, Affordable – 6=6
10. Need gathering places – 5=5
11. Commercial Kitchen – 5=5
12. More Building Activity (Tax Revenue) – 5=5
13. Take-Out Food (i.e. pizza, ) – 5+3=8
14. Gift Shop – 5=5
15. Upscale Store 5=5
16. Coffee Shop – 6+6+5+4+3=24
17. Need industry – 4+1=5
18. Upgrade utilities – 4=4
19. A defined plan for the future – 4=4
20. Greater septic tank flexibility/creativity – 4=4
21. Better Cell Phone Service – 4=4
22. Information Booths – 4=4
23. Drug Store – 4=4
24. Helpful, welcoming attitude, positive public attitude – 4+4=8
25. A Real General Store – 4=4
26. Donut Shop (i.e. Dunkin Donuts) – 4+3=7
27. Increased Agriculture – 3=3
28. A defined community image – 3=3
29. No Sewers Due to Fiscal Impact – 3=3
30. Craft Shops – 3=3
31. Need community activities , events– 5+3=8
32. Ice Cream Shop – 3=3
33. Low-Impact Commercial Business – 3=3
34. Active outreach to businesses who might employ locally – 3=3
35. Natural Store (Foods?) – 2=2
36. Horse or Tack Shop – 2=2
37. Need more flexible zoning for business – 2=2
38. More health-care providers – 1=1
39. Plant Nursery – 1=1
40. Artist Studios or Galleries – 1=1
41. Focus on local transportation. Seek collaboration with other towns – 1=1

### Eating Places

Responses in the primary category of assets needed directly to serve economic development were clear in advocating for a local restaurant or eating place. Nine people want to see a restaurant generally while others are looking for take-out food, a coffee shop, ice cream shop, or donut shop. The response by one who indicated a need for gathering places fit into this category also

### Water & Sewer

While the above nine responses had little if any applicability to the issue of economic development, they are concerns of citizens and should be passed along to the Board of Selectmen for consideration.

**Question 8: What makes Ashby a good place to do business?**

1. It is not.
2. Laissez faire attitude
3. The question should "What would make Ashby a good place to do business?"
4. Nearly nothing. The town government and committees have not been welcoming to either in-town businesses, nor out of town ones. The BOH has too much power to wreck people's home equity and businesses' ability to run. Sewers are not the problem. The unjust and out of date BOH and Conservation Commission is the problem.
5. It's not
6. Ease of home based business.
7. I don't think it is a "good place to do business" and I don't know that I want it to become that. As I mentioned before Westford became an attractive business location and lost it's small town charm. I'm not sure that a trade I'm willing to make.
8. Mostly friendly population.
9. Nothing, but maybe the traffic flow.
10. Ashby is a word of mouth community, a great business will have loyal customers
11. You must go a fair distance to shop, so small convenience stores can do well.
12. It isn't. Nor should it be.
13. Good New England customers...nothing really in town now
14. Intelligent, motivated, self-sufficient people
15. Close to larger towns/cities. Still available spaces/land to be developed for business/mixed use (Village plan). Accessibility.
16. Is it? I question this assumption.
17. It's a small town. A lot of people need to drive though to get from point A to point B if there were business people may actually stop and buy something.
18. The residents support a local business
19. Nothing right now.
20. Route 119 is well traveled. There are many recreational opportunities that could attract a lot of people that would then become customers for a shop, restaurant, etc while they were here.
21. Its proximity to larger populations and access from Rt. 31 and 119.
22. Ashby is not a good place to do business and should not even try. Spending tax dollars to attract business is a fool's errand, if there is a market, business will show up. Isn't there a stripmall already going in? Support actual businesses instead of dreaming up ways to attract imaginary ones.

**Question 9: What makes Ashby a difficult place for business? What makes it difficult to run a business in Ashby and how can the Town help? What could businesses do together to help? What kind of programs could help business? What kind of group or organization could businesses collaborate on to advance their needs and interests?**

19. UNITIL makes it expensive. Advertising Mt. Watatic, Willard Brook Park, Trap Falls, etc to people in the cities looking for recreation.
20. Some of the things that make the town a great place to live and for small and home based business at the same time make it slightly hostile to large business. The small town feel is a great thing to have in our town, but allowances need to be made if people really want more goods and services near them. Ashby has a fair amount of through traffic everyday on a couple major roads. These would be the logical place for starting a real business environment in the town. Most of this traffic is on its way to or from the "urban centers". If the option to fill their need is closer to home being in Ashby people will stop. So the problem to me is still which sections of town make sense to be made more attractive to certain businesses. It seems the tendency has been toward regulating out business. Both currently and over the last twenty years. It's entirely possible to maintain a small town environment and have small business districts that give more than they detract from the community. Like someone said "Location! Location! Location! Choosing the locations to balance small town and successful business should be of primary importance.
21. Ashby is difficult for business because the town government tries to micromanage every aspect of any business wanting to enter town. The permitting process needs to be made much more efficient. The town government needs to realize that just because someone has been in town for 40 years does not mean that they know everything or know what is best for the town. These people generally block any business that is interested in developing in Ashby.
22. Government should do nothing other than spend tax dollars wisely.
23. No water sewer, No population,
24. Sewer and water

**Question 10: Where do you shop or get services?**

Please note that the table below for question 10 is difficult to read at 100% scale. You will need to increase your magnification to 200% to properly view it. This was one reason why the survey results could not be printed in summary form from the surveymonkey.com web site. Key highlights include that most respondents get most of their good and services from Fitchburg/Leominster "metroplex" and that for automobile repair, Ashby residents stay in Ashby. The town may wish to consider some way of supporting this industry although again the key is water/wastewater.

(see table next page)

**Question 11: What kinds of businesses would you like to see in Ashby that aren't here or what business would you like to see more of?**

11. What kinds of businesses would you like to see in Ashby that aren't here or what business would you like to see more of?		Response Percent	Response Count
Banking		57.5%	23
Lawyer		10.0%	4
Doctors/Dentist		20.0%	8
Pharmacy		27.5%	11
Automotive Repair		5.0%	2
Gas Stations		7.5%	3
Tailors/Dry Cleaners		10.0%	4
Package Shipment (UPS, FEDEX)		7.5%	3
Salon/Beauty		7.5%	3
Child Care		12.5%	5
Clothing Store		5.0%	2
Hardware/General Store		35.0%	14
Department Store		2.5%	1
Food Co-Op		22.5%	9
Local Food Processing Facility		22.5%	9
Small Crafts/Artisan Gallery		47.5%	19
Florist		20.0%	8
Plant Nursery		47.5%	19
Farm Stand		65.0%	26
Liquor or Wine Shop		10.0%	4
Bar, Tavern, or Pub		35.0%	14
Book Store		15.0%	6
Newspaper/Candy Store		7.5%	3
Restaurant		80.0%	32
Breakfast		72.5%	29
Coffee Shop		70.0%	28
Lunch Counter		50.0%	24
Other (please specify)			9
Unanswered question			40
Skipped question			15

3. Industrial scale chicken farm, tar production plant, heavy water using industries, polluting industries
4. Industry that produces hazardous byproducts for their processes. Business that promotes an unwholesome environment (Bars / Clubs etc.) Large industrial housed in unsightly poorly designed building(s)
5. Pollutants and meat processing.
6. Industrial-sized businesses
7. Anything that smells, creates pollution
8. Any large mfg plant or processing plant. Waste disposal etc.
9. Ack! By all means keep out those examples.
10. Anything that would take away from the rural character of the town.
11. Fertilizer processing, waste management
12. No strip malls, no factories
13. Anything that generates traffic noise or waste
14. Industrial of any kind. Large scale farming or feed lots. Slaughter houses. Gambling parlors.
15. Rehab centers. Industrial sites.
16. Industrial scale anything
17. Anything that would have an impact on the environment such as industries that uses a lot of water. NO Junkyard!!!! No storage of petroleum related products - NO fast food / drive through restaurant!
18. Environmentally dangerous businesses
19. Rehab
20. Anything stinky or polluting.
21. anything that would cause a great amount of pollution.
22. None
23. Franchise restaurants, large scale offensive operations (smelly, smoky, etc.) We should be careful that Ashby does not start to look like just any other town. One of our strengths is that this is an unusual place because it is still small and rural and it's main street does not look like every other main street...with fast food and franchise stores lining it.
24. That's a lot of tar and feathers. Think of the festival we could have!
25. The Town should explore ANY opportunity to have businesses in town.
26. Nuclear power
27. No

Question 14: What do you see are the roadblocks or obstacles that stop the types of businesses that you want from coming to Ashby?

1. Lack of infrastructure.
2. Board of Health, State Regulations
3. Small town thinking!!!
4. The town wants to keep the land open space, instead of wisely developing some green uses for it that would share some of the tax burden.
5. Septic & water issues, lack of willingness for the town to change
6. Low population and location

15. How do you feel about having festivals and events in the Town to increase tourism?

Create Chart Download

		Response Percent	Response Count
Very Positive		48.8%	20
Somewhat Positive		26.6%	11
Neutral		14.6%	6
Somewhat Negative		7.3%	3
Very Negative		2.4%	1
		answered question	41
		skipped question	4

Question 16: What is your employment status?

16. What is your employment status?

Create Chart Download

		Response Percent	Response Count
Full-Time Wage or Salary Employee		42.9%	18
Part-Time Wage or Salary Employee		7.1%	3
Self-Employed		28.6%	12
Unemployed (Drawing Unemployment)		0.0%	0
Unemployed (Not Drawing Unemployment)		2.4%	1
Retired		19.0%	8
Student		0.0%	0
		answered question	42
		skipped question	3

Other

1. Combination private car, rail bicycle, work at home
2. My work is predominantly off-site so I travel out of town often
3. Chelmsford
4. Truck

**Question 19: How long is your commute to work?**

19. How long is your commute to work?		Create Chart	Download
		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5 minutes		14.7%	5
5 to 9 minutes		2.9%	1
10 to 14 minutes		5.9%	2
15 to 19 minutes		8.8%	3
20 to 24 minutes		8.8%	3
25 to 29 minutes		11.8%	4
30 to 34 minutes		2.9%	1
35 to 39 minutes		2.9%	1
40 to 44 minutes		2.9%	1
45 to 59 minutes		14.7%	5
60 to 89 minutes		11.8%	4
90 or more minutes		5.9%	2
Work at home		5.9%	2
		answered question	34
		skipped question	11

**Question 20: How many years have you lived in Ashby? Please use a whole number**

While the mean length of residence was 21.61, there were a good mix of long-time residents and newcomers in this survey.

13  
15

**Question 21: Where do you live?**

21. Where do you live?		Create Chart	Download
		Response Percent	Response Count
Own private home		100.0%	41
Rent private home		0.0%	0
Rent apartment or two-family		0.0%	0
Mobile home		0.0%	0
Other (please specify)			0
		answered question	41
		skipped question	0

**Question 22: How many people are in your household? How many children?**

22. How many people live in your household? How many children?		Create Chart	Download	
		Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Number of people in residence:		2.38	85	40
Number of children in residence:		0.84	21	25
		answered question		40
		skipped question		0

**Question 23: Are you a business owner in Ashby?**

23. Are you a business owner in Ashby?		Create Chart	Download
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		37.5%	17
No		62.5%	28
		answered question	45
		skipped question	0

8. I use many services to run my business, but would not necessarily want all of them in Ashby. It is more important to me that Ashby retain its character and I will go out of town to a city for some of the things I need rather than turn Ashby into a city.

**Question 4: Are there any barriers or obstacles to expanding your business (i.e., tax, regulatory, utilities, etc.)? Please be as detailed as you wish.**

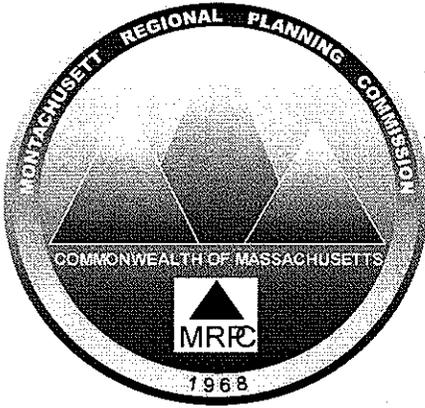
1. No
2. No 3 phase power
3. Regulatory; If I ever expand as the business is designed...the current environment would almost certainly force me to move the business out of town
4. People perceive Ashby as being "podunk". I routinely get asked, "Why would I want to go to Ashby" from prospective clients
5. Zoning
6. No.
7. Money
8. Not for me
9. No.

**Question 5: Is there anything that would help you run, expand or make your business more viable?**

Is there anything that would help you run, expand, or make your business more viable?	Response Percent	Response Count
Technical Assistance	0.0%	0
Business Assistance	10.2%	2
Energy Audit/Assistance	0.0%	0
Government Grants	0.0%	0
Government Loans	0.0%	0
Tax Abatement	0.0%	0
Infrastructure Assistance	0.0%	0
Trained Labor Force	0.0%	0
Local Business Association	45.6%	9
Local Educational Programs	0.0%	0
Marketing/Advertising	72.7%	14
Expedited or Simpler Permitting	36.4%	7
Other (Please Specify)		1
Unanswered question		1
Skipped question		2

Other

**D. Regional Small Town Rural Economic Development Workshop Agenda**



# MONTACHUSETT

## REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

1427R Water Street Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420  
(978) 345-7376 FAX (978) 348-2490 Email: [mrpc@mrpc.org](mailto:mrpc@mrpc.org)

### Agenda

Sustainable Rural Economic Development: How it can work for the  
Montachusett Region and our communities!

**JOINT MEETING OF THE MONTACHUSETT REGION COMPREHENSIVE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE (MRCEDS), THE  
MONTACHUSETT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (MEDD), AND  
THE SMALL TOWNS**

*THURSDAY, June 2, 2011*

*5:00 PM*

(A Light Dinner will be served!)

at

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC) OFFICES  
1427R WATER STREET,  
FITCHBURG, MA 01420**

- |               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| 5:00 -5:05 PM | • | Introductions and Welcome: Victor Koivumaki, Chairman, MRPC   |
| 5:05 -5:10 PM | • | Approval of Minutes: February 10, 2011  |
| 5:10- 5:15 PM | • | Status Report on the development of the Montachusett Region Energy Plan currently underway.   |
|               | • | <b>GUEST SPEAKER &amp; DISCUSSION PERIOD</b>  |
| 5:15-6:25 PM  |   | Sustainable Rural Economic Development. Presented by Kathleen McCabe, McCabe Enterprises. Kathleen will present on promoting rural economic development. This will also include regional approaches where rural communities work together for success with urban communities. |
| 6:25-6:30 PM  | • | Administrative Matters  |
| 6:30          | • | Adjournment   |

RSVP to John Hume at [jhume@mrpc.org](mailto:jhume@mrpc.org) or (978) 345-7376 x302.

CC: City and Town Clerks: Please post this pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25.

**E. List of Businesses in Ashby with NAICS Code**

Business Name	NAICS Code	Code 2	Prop. Code	Certif.	DBA	Description of Business
LASZLO FAMILY FARM	11			YES	LASZLO FAMILY FARM	Farm with Grain-fed Animals - All ntrl farm products
TROTTING WINDS FARM	11			YES	TROTTING WINDS FARM	Kennel, farm
	11		101	YES	APPLE MEADOW FARM	Farm
	44			YES	THE SUPERIOR WORK	Retail
PLANET EARTH MATERIALS	4249			YES	PLANET EARTH MATERIALS	Sand and earth materials
PHOTO AD PLACEMENT - KONO ENTERPRISES	5418			YES	PHOTO AD PLACEMENT - KONO ENTE	Advertising, Public Relations, and Related Services
ASHBY CONSULTING ASSOCIATES, INC	54121				ASHBY CONSULTING ASSOC, INC	Accounting
	111331		101	YES	ASHBY APPLES/PAULA'S PANTRY	Orchard
	111421			YES	JUNIPER HILL FARM	Tree farm
NEW ENGLAND CUT EVERGREEN	111421			YES	NEW ENGLAND CUT EVERGREEN	Tree farm?
	111422			YES	HYDRO HARVEST	Greenhouse cut flowers
DAVES SUGAR HOUSE	111998			YES	DAVES SUGAR HOUSE	Maple sugar
	111998			YES	SOUTH VILLAGE SUGARHOUSE	Maple syrup farm
	112340	112420		YES	JCA (JUST CHECKING AROUND) FARM	Poultry and goat farm
PRINCE MEADOWS	112990				NATIVITY FARM	Livestock
SILVER OAK FARM	112990	448140		YES	SILVER OAK FARM	Alpaca Farm, woolens retail
EMEC AMERICAS	221310			YES	EMEC AMERICAS	Water treatment, distribution, manufacturing
ALL AMERICAN CONSTRUCTION	236115		131	YES	ALL AMERICAN CONSTRUCTION	Home Builder
CORNER LOT CONSTRUCTION	236115			YES	CORNER LOT CONSTRUCTION	Cement work and light construction
CUSTOM CUT CONSTRUCTION	236115			YES	CUSTOM CUT CONSTRUCTION	Custom Build homes and design
DWM & SON CONSTRUCTION	236115			YES	DWM & SON CONSTRUCTION	Construction
GODIN CONSTRUCTION	236115				GODIN CONSTRUCTION	Construction
HARRIS CONSTRUCTION	236115				HARRIS CONSTRUCTION	Construction
HERB CHAPMAN BUILDERS	236115				HERB CHAPMAN BUILDERS	Construction
J.A. MARBLE ASSOCIATES LLC	236115			YES	J.A. MARBLE ASSOCIATES LLC	Construction
MARTIN & SON CONSTRUCTION	236115			YES	MARTIN & SON CONSTRUCTION	Construction
NORTH-ASH CONSTRUCTION	236115			YES	NORTH-ASH CONSTRUCTION	Construction
NORTHERN MASS BUILDERS LLC	236115				NORTHERN MASS BUILDERS LLC	Construction
P M CONSTRUCTION	236115				PM CONSTRUCTION	Construction
REGGIO CONSTRUCTION	236115				REGGIO CONSTRUCTION	Construction
S FORS CONSTRUCTION	236115			YES	S FORS CONSTRUCTION	Construction
STACY CONSTRUCTION	236115			NO	STACY CONSTRUCTION	Construction
STANDARD BUILDING & REMODELING	236115			NO	STANDARD BUILDING & REMODELING	Remodeling
ADAMS CONSTRUCTION	236115		130		ADAMS CONSTRUCTION	Construction
DGL CONTRACTING CORPORATION	236115				D.G.L. CONTRACTING CORPORATION	Construction
DESIGN & BUILD CONSTRUCTION, INC	236115			YES	DESIGN & BUILD CONSTRUCTION, INC.	Construction
	236115			YES	DLT CONSTRUCTION	Construction
	236115			YES	WATSON ENTERPRISES	Construction
J R KINCAID	236115				J R KINCAID	Builder
TSR CONTRACTING	236115				TSR CONTRACTING	Builder
DELUXE HOME REMODELING	236118			YES	DELUXE HOME REMODELING	Remodeling

	236118		YES	DUMONT REMODELING	Construction, remodeling
ODDS N ENDS	236118		YES	ODDS N ENDS	Home repair
SMALL CHANGES	236118		YES	SMALL CHANGES	Construction and remodeling
TRAVELING outhouse	237110		YES	THE TRAVELING outhouse	Portable sanitation
ASHBY FINE GRADING	237310	013		ASHBY FINE GRADING	Heavy equipment, excavation
	238130	236118	YES	THE WOOD CELLAR	Carpentry and remodeling
PEG & BEAM, INC	238130		YES	PEG & BEAM, INC	Construction
BEDARD ROOFING	238160	316		BEDARD ROOFING	Roofing contractor
	238190		YES	SHATTUCK METAL WORKS	Welding
DATA CABLE	238210		YES	DATA CABLE	Data wiring
ERS ELECTRICAL SERVICES INC	238210		YES	ERS ELECTRICAL SERVICES INC	Electrician
	238210		YES	HAROLD JOHNSON ELECTRICAL CONTRA	Electrical contractor
SCOTT BOUDREAU ELECTRIC	238210			SCOTT BOUDREAU ELECTRIC	Electrical contractor
	238210		YES	WARREN ELECTRIC	Electrical
	238210		YES	SLATTERY'S TELEPHONE TECHNOLOGY	Telecom contractor
BOYARSKY PLUMBING & HEATING	238220	101		BOYARSKY PLUMBING & HEATING	Plumbing and heating
DW LAMMI PLUMBING AND HEATING	238220		YES	DW LAMMI PLUMBING AND HEATING	Plumbing and Heating
HYDROTECH PUMP CO	238220		YES	HYDROTECH PUMP CO	Well pumps sales and installation
NORTHERN COMFORT	238220		YES	NORTHERN COMFORT	Home heating
	238220		YES	O & W HEATING	Home heating
RH ORDWAY SERVICES	238220			RH ORDWAY SERVICES	Heating and ventilation
JERRY RIGGING CORP	238290			JERRY RIGGING CORP	Rigging and moving
	238310	238350	YES	NEW PLASTERING	Plastering, construction
EMS PAINTING & SAND BLASTING	238320	238990		EMS PAINTING & SAND BLASTING	Painting, sand blasting
	238320		YES	DOW PAINTING	Painting
HONKALA CONST CO., INC	238350			HONKALA CONST CO., INC	Foundations
LANGILLE CONSTRUCTION	238350		YES	LANGILLE CONSTRUCTION	Carpentry
STEPHEN B SPARKES: CARPENTRY AND CABINET	238350		NO	STEPHEN B SPARKES: CARPENTRY A	Carpentry
	238390		YES	DR. DAMPPROOF	Foundation dampproofing
GRIFFIN LOGGING AND LAND CLEARING	238910			GRIFFIN LOGGING AND LAND CLEAR	Excavating and land clearing
GROUNDHOG EXCAVATION	238910			GROUNDHOG EXCAVATION	Excavating
HJELM EXCAVATION, INC	238910			HJELM EXCAVATION, INC	Excavating
MURRAY EXCAVATING	238910			MURRAY EXCAVATING	Excavating, landscaping
	238910			MURRAY SITE SOLUTIONS	Demolition and excavation/ Land Clearing
RAYMOND HEYWOOD EXCAVATING, INC	238910			RAYMOND HEYWOOD EXCAVATING, IN	Excavating
SELECT LOGGING	238910		YES	SELECT LOGGING	Land clearing
COUNTRY WEAVER, THE	313111	448140	YES	THE COUNTRY WEAVER	Woolens manufacture, retail
	313210		YES	PIECEMAKER STUDIO	Textile
QUILT STORIES	314399		YES	QUILT STORIES	Quilt maker
GLORY BEE	314999	811490	YES	GLORY BEE DESIGN	sewing, quilting
	323110	132	YES	ASHBY PRINTING COMPANY	Manufacture printing
	325510		YES	GALLAGHER'S MILK PAINT	Paint and Coating Manufacturing

ANGEL MEMORIALS & THE ETCHING SHED  
 MURRAY MACHINE & FABRICATING  
 LASORSA TOOL COMPANY  
 TARGET LIMITED / SKYE ACOUSTICS  
 COUNTRY BED SHOP, INC  
 WOOD CELLAR  
 P 7 S TRUCKS AND PARTS INC  
 SUPERIOR WORKS  
 B & Z ENTERPRISES  
 TIP TOP MOTORS  
 LUTZ STONE SHOP  
 ASHBY MARKET, INC  
 31 STORE  
 MR MIKES MINI MART  
  
 LAUREL RIDGE FARM  
 NORTHEAST EQUESTRIAN PRODUCTS  
  
 LEEWARD INTERIOR GIFTS  
 CREATE A SPECIAL GIFT  
  
 AMERIGAS EAGLE PROPANE LP  
 DJF FARMS  
 G R GRIFFIN TRUCKING, INC  
 E PERNA TRANSPORTATION, INC  
  
 MID STATE LINE  
  
 WILDBLUE COMMUNICATIONS, INC  
  
 BANK OF THE WEST  
 CARON REAL ESTATE  
 CHARRON REAL ESTATE  
 TAVERN REALTY TRUST  
 LAW OFFICE OF SUSAN J MAHAN  
 HAYNES, LIENECK, AND SMITH, INC  
 SHAPING LANDSCAPES, LLC  
  
 PROJECT CONSULTING

327991		101	YES	ANGEL MEMORIALS & THE ETCHING SHED	Monuments
332710			YES	MURRAY MACHINE & FABRICATING	Machine shop
333515				LASORSA TOOL COMPANY	Tool and die making
334310			YES	TARGET LIMITED / SKYE ACOUSTICS	Audio speaker manufacture
337122				COUNTRY BED SHOP, INC	Furniture manufacture
337122				WOOD CELLAR	Cabinet maker
423140			YES	P & S TRUCKS AND PARTS INC	Truck parts & sales
423710			NO	SUPERIOR WORKS	Antique tool sales
441120		130	YES	B & Z ENTERPRISES	Automobile sales and service (Used)
441120			YES	TIP TOP MOTORS	Automobile sales
444190				LUTZ STONE SHOP	Masonry materials
445110			YES	ASHBY MARKET, INC	general store
445120			YES	31 STORE	convenience store
445120	447110		YES	MR MIKES MINI MART	Convenience store and gasoline
445230		101	YES	ASHBY ORGANICS AT THREE CORNER F	Farm stand
445230	11		YES	LAUREL RIDGE FARM	Farm, farmstand?
451110				NORTHEAST EQUESTRIAN PRODUCTS	harness and tack manufacture
451320			YES	SUE'S COUNTRYSIDE SEWING	Sewing, needlework, and piecegoods
453220				LEEWARD INTERIOR GIFTS	gift items
454111				CREATE A SPECIAL GIFT	Internet sales
454111			YES	NATIONAL COMPUTER DIRECT	Internet computer sales
454111			YES	THE JORDAN COMPANY	Mail order internet sales
454111			YES	YUPPERS ON LINE GIFTS	Mail order internet sales
454312				Amerigas Propane LP	Propane gas sales
484110	11		YES	DJF (Falter) FARMS	Farming and trucking
484110				G R GRIFFIN TRUCKING, INC	MOTOR FREIGHT: Trucking
484220	581730			E PERNA TRANSPORTATION, INC	Trucking, construction materials
484220	581730		YES	J.C. LYONS INC	Trucking and landscaping
484220			YES	MID STATE LINES	Trucking
488410		101	YES	CAMEL TOWING	Vehicle towing
517919				WILDBLUE COMMUNICATIONS, INC	ISP and equipment leasing
519130			YES	RAW FOOD SOURCES	Online web directory
522220				BANK OF THE WEST	Equipment leasing
531210		132	YES	CARON REAL ESTATE	Real estate
531210		013		CHARRON REAL ESTATE	Real Estate broker
531210			NO	TAVERN REALTY TRUST	property management
541110				LAW OFFICE OF SUSAN J MAHAN	lawyer
541310				HAYNES, LIENECK, AND SMITH, IN	architect
541320		018		A T LEONARD & ASSOCIATES	Landscape architect
541320			YES	SHAPING LANDSCAPES LLC	Landscape Architect
541330				PROJECT CONSULTING	Building consulting
541350			YES	JEM ASSOCIATES/D&J BUILDING CONSU	Building consulting

JAMES AROMAA DESIGN & ADVERTISING

ELEGANT TWININGS

DAPPER MAPPER

STEEPLECOM INC.

BROADVIEW SECURITY DBA: BROADVIEW SECURITY,

CIK MOBILE VETERINARY ULTRASOUND

SUZANNE STILLMAN

TRM COPY CENTERS LLC

ADT SECURITY SERVICES, INC

ALTERNATIVE LOCKSMITH

DOMESTIC & PHYSICAL ENGINEERING BY CATHE

CURTIS TREE SERVICE

DE BETTENCOURT PLOWING & SANDING

HEDGEHOG LANDSCAPING

MP'S LAWN & LANDSCAPE

MURRAY & SONS WASTE

541430				JAMES AROMAA DESIGN & ADVERTIS	Graphic Design
541511			YES	CONCORD WEB SOLUTIONS	Web design and marketing
541511			YES	ELEGANT TWININGS	Web design
541512				DAPPER MAPPER	Mapping software
541512			YES	JWC CONSULTING	Computer consulting
541519			YES	NORTHEAST CREATIVE MEDIA	Multimedia production
541618			NO	STEEPLECOM	Cell tower placement consulting
541690				BROADVIEW SECURITY, INC	Security
541840			YES	LOCAL BIZ	Advertising
541921			YES	PROPHOTOGRAPHIX	Photography, restoration
541940			YES	CIK MOBILE VETERINARY ULTRASOUND	Veternary specialty
541940			YES	LARGE ANIMAL VETERNARY ASSOC.	Veternarians
541940			NO	SUZANNE STILLMAN	Veternarians
561439				TRM COPY CENTERS (USA) CORPORA	Copying
561621				ADT SECURITY SERVICES, INC	Residential Security
561622			YES	THE ALTERNATIVE LOCKSMITH	Locksmith
561720				CLEANING BY CATHERINE	Home cleaning service
561720			YES	DOMESTIC & PHYSICAL ENGINEERING	House cleaning
561730			YES	CURTIS TREE SERVICE	tree trimming & removal
561730				DE BETTENCOURT PLOWING & SANDI	plowing
561730				HEDGEHOG LANDSCAPING	Landscaping
561730			YES	M.P.S. LAWN & LANDSCAPING INC.	Landscape contractor
561730				MP'S LAWN & LANDSCAPE	Lawn Maintenance
561730			YES	OLDE HOUSE & LANDSCAPE	Landscape and Restoration
561730				LAWN And LANDSCAPE LLC	Andy's Lawn Service, Organic Lawn Services, Kapps Lawn Service, L
562111			YES	MURRAY & SONS WASTE	Trash hauling

SHELDON FARMS SEPTIC TANK  
 DANCE REVELATIONS  
 FLYING IRISH, LLC  
 ASHBY SPORTS CAMP  
 EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS  
 ROLAND F GREENE, CHIROPRACTOR  
 TAKES TWO  
 ALWAYS THERE HOME CARE INC.  
  
 CENTER FOR COUNSELING  
 CHILDREN'S GARDEN NURSERY SCHOOL  
 TOGETHER WE GROW  
 HANDS ON DESIGN  
 KINGDOM COME CREATIONS  
 BELLEWETHER, LLC  
 CAMP MISH MASH  
 CROSSROADS FOR KIDS  
  
 FITCHBURG ROD AND GUN CLUB  
 HAT CREEK OUTFIT RANCH  
  
 SOUHEGAN FARM, LLC  
 CAMP MIDDLESEX  
  
 PINES CAMPGROUNDS  
  
 ERIC'S AUTO REPAIR  
 EUGENE J BARRETTE  
 FANELLI AUTO REPAIR  
 G & M AUTOMOTIVE  
 PETE'S AUTO SERVICE  
 KELLY'S AUTO BODY  
 JJ'S CUSTOM FINISH  
 ASHBY CLOCKS  
 PRECISION REFRIGERATION  
 SMALL ENGINE SALES & SERVICE  
 KING UPHOLSTERY  
 YANKEE CHAIR CANING  
 BOULDER BIKES  
 ELLIS, ALICIA

562991				SHELDON FARMS SEPTIC TANK SERV	Septic tanks
611610			YES	DANCE REVELATIONS	Ballet training
611610			YES	FLYING IRISH, LLC	Dance studio
611620				ASHBY SPORTS CAMP	Ashby Elementary Summer Sports
611710			YES	EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS	Education
621310			YES	ROLAND F GREENE, CHIROPRACTOR	Chiropractic Medicine - Board Eligible
621399			YES	TAKES TWO	Contract nursing services
621610				HELPING HAND HOME CARE	adult home care
621610			YES	INTEGRATIVE HEALING CENTER OF CMA	Health care
624190		101		CENTER FOR COUNSELING	Therapy
624410		101		CHILDREN'S GARDEN NURSERY	Day care
624410			YES	TOGETHER WE GROW	Day care
711510	541511		YES	HANDS ON DESIGN	Crafts, web design
711510			YES	KINGDOM COME CREATIONS	Artisan
713990	115210			BELLEWETHER, LLC	Stable, dressage training
713990		101	YES	CAMP MISH MASH	Elementary School summer camp
713990				CROSSROADS FOR KIDS	Camp
713990			YES	FIRECRACKER HOT SHOTS	Softball team
713990				FITCHBURG ROD AND GUN CLUB	Fish Hatchery/Preserve/ Firing Range
713990			YES	HAT CREEK OUTFIT RANCH	Civil & Social Organizations
713990				POLAR CRUSH SOFTBALL	Youth softball club
713990	115210			SOUHEGAN FARM, LLC	Stable, dressage training
713990				MIDDLESEX COUNTY FND DBA CAMP	Youth day camp
721191	112990		YES	WOODSIDE FARM	Bed & Breakfast/ Animal Farm
721211				THE PINES CAMPGROUNDS	RV park
721214			YES	MICHAELMASS FARM	Farm and educational center
722330		132	YES	AMERICAN GRILLE	Diner/Food Service
811111			YES	BELL WIN MOTORS	Automobile repair
811111			YES	ERIC'S AUTO REPAIR	Auto Repair and Service
811111				EUGENE J BARRETTE	Automobile repair
811111			YES	FANELLI AUTO REPAIR	Automobile repair
811111			YES	G & M AUTOMOTIVE	auto repair & sales
811111			YES	PETE'S AUTO SERVICE	Auto Repair
811121			YES	KELLY'S AUTO BODY	Auto repair
811121				JJ'S CUSTOM FINISH	Auto body shop
811219		101	YES	ASHBY CLOCKS	clock repair
811310			YES	PRECISION REFRIGERATION & HEATING	Heating and AC service
811411			YES	SMALL ENGINE SALES & SERVICE	Farm Equipment repair/ Parts (tractors etc)
811420				KING UPHOLSTERY	Upholstery
811420				YANKEE CHAIR CANING	chair caning
811490		101	YES	BOULDER BIKES	Bicycle repair
812112				ELLIS, ALICIA	Hairstresser



## **F. List of Parcels in Ashby with Valuation**

**SORT BY PARCEL COUNT**

<b>PARCEL COUNT</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>STATE_USE_CD</b>	<b>FINAL_VALUE</b>	<b>BLDG_VALUE</b>
1072	101 Residences, Single-Family		\$242,906,500	\$156,402,900
186	132 Undevelopable Land		\$2,276,200	\$0
118	131 Potentially Developable Land		\$11,030,400	\$0
40	130 Developable Land		\$3,616,400	\$2,700
27	930 Municipal, Vacant		\$2,221,900	\$153,500
26	601 Chapter 61 Lands		\$141,200	\$0
23	16 Residential, Chapter 61		\$5,485,300	\$3,565,100
23	910 DCR, State Parks & Recreation		\$4,728,200	\$2,000
20	13 Multiple-Use, Primarily Residential		\$5,242,900	\$3,259,600
18	17 Residential, Chapter 61A		\$7,070,500	\$5,636,000
18	911 DFW, Environmental Law Enforcement		\$5,029,500	\$0
17	106 Residences, Accessory Land w/ Improvements		\$592,000	\$123,700
17	980 Public Land Owned by Other City/Town (Vacant)		\$2,072,100	\$0
14	713 Field Crops		\$32,800	\$0
13	104 Residences, Two-Family		\$3,079,800	\$2,076,600
12	18 Residential, Chapter 61B		\$4,531,000	\$3,130,600
12	109 Multiple Houses on One Parcel		\$2,422,400	\$1,460,200
10	803 Nature Study		\$283,700	\$0
9	103 Residences, Mobile Home		\$950,100	\$272,000
8	957 Charitable Services		\$1,431,000	\$49,000
7	901 Public Service Properties, Other		\$1,713,000	\$157,100
6	31 Multiple-Use, Primarily Commercial		\$2,043,300	\$1,489,000
6	718 Pasture		\$4,400	\$0
5	316 Other Storage, Warehouse, & Distribution		\$809,000	\$413,300
5	351 Educational Properties		\$4,371,000	\$2,685,000
5	931 Municipal, Improved		\$471,600	\$124,800
3	325 Small Retail & Services		\$518,900	\$319,600
3	602 Christmas Trees		26,400	0
3	932 Municipal, Conservation/Vacant		\$237,200	\$1,000
3	935 Municipal, Public Safety/Improved		\$2,760,500	\$2,470,300
3	936 Municipal, Vacant/Tax Title		\$6,700	\$0
2	105 Residences, Three-Family		\$716,100	\$521,500
2	340 General Office Buildings		\$893,200	\$713,900
2	392 Undevelopable (AC) Land		\$10,000	\$1,900
2	400 Buildings for Manufacturing Operations		\$770,700	\$446,600
2	430 Telephone Exchange Stations		\$181,500	\$78,400
2	953 Cemeteries		\$111,100	\$0
2	954 Fraternal Organizations and Facilities		\$240,500	\$125,700
2	960 Church/House of Worship		\$471,300	\$352,600
1	111 Apartments, Four to Eight Units		\$243,800	\$174,500
1	326 Eating & Drinking Establishments		\$86,400	\$6,600
1	330 Automotive, Vehicles Sales and Service		\$206,500	\$134,000

1	332 Auto Repair Facilities	\$173,800	\$105,100
1	334 Gasoline Service Stations, w/ Repair	\$211,400	\$136,400
1	352 Day Care Centers, Adult	\$285,400	\$210,100
1	385 Fish and Game Clubs	\$154,600	\$35,600
1	386 Camping Facilities	\$221,300	\$135,600
1	391 Potentially Developable (Commercial) Land	\$37,500	\$0
1	712 Truck Crops, Vegetables	\$1,000	\$0
1	714 Orchards	\$55,200	\$0
1	717 Productive Woodland/Woodlot	\$400	\$0
1	720 Non-Productive, Wet, Scrub, Rock	\$400	\$0
1	722 Other Non-Productive	\$36,000	\$32,100
1	956 Libraries, Museums	\$766,000	\$690,200
1	981 Public Land Owned by Other City/Town (Improved)	\$72,700	\$0
1	997 Other	\$11,200	\$0
<b>1765</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>\$324,063,900</b>	<b>\$187,694,800</b>

\* NOTE: Tax receipts based on \$14.90 per \$1000 valuation applied uniformly (no split ta

**SORT BY PARCEL CLASS AGGREGATE VALUE**

PARCEL COUNT	CLASS	STATE_USE_CD	FINAL_VALUE	BLDG_VALUE
1072	101 Residences, Single-Family		\$242,906,500	\$156,402,900
118	131 Potentially Developable Land		\$11,030,400	\$0
18	17 Residential, Chapter 61A		\$7,070,500	\$5,636,000
23	16 Residential, Chapter 61		\$5,485,300	\$3,565,100
20	13 Multiple-Use, Primarily Residential		\$5,242,900	\$3,259,600
18	911 DFW, Environmental Law Enforcement		\$5,029,500	\$0
23	910 DCR, State Parks & Recreation		\$4,728,200	\$2,000
12	18 Residential, Chapter 61B		\$4,531,000	\$3,130,600
5	351 Educational Properties		\$4,371,000	\$2,685,000
40	130 Developable Land		\$3,616,400	\$2,700
13	104 Residences, Two-Family		\$3,079,800	\$2,076,600
3	935 Municipal, Public Safety/Improved		\$2,760,500	\$2,470,300
12	109 Multiple Houses on One Parcel		\$2,422,400	\$1,460,200
186	132 Undevelopable Land		\$2,276,200	\$0
27	930 Municipal, Vacant		\$2,221,900	\$153,500
17	980 Public Land Owned by Other City/Town (Vacant)		\$2,072,100	\$0
6	31 Multiple-Use, Primarily Commercial		\$2,043,300	\$1,489,000
7	901 Public Service Properties, Other		\$1,713,000	\$157,100
8	957 Charitable Services		\$1,431,000	\$49,000
9	103 Residences, Mobile Home		\$950,100	\$272,000
2	340 General Office Buildings		\$893,200	\$713,900
5	316 Other Storage, Warehouse, & Distribution		\$809,000	\$413,300
2	400 Buildings for Manufacturing Operations		\$770,700	\$446,600
1	956 Libraries, Museums		\$766,000	\$690,200

2	105 Residences, Three-Family	\$716,100	\$521,500
17	106 Residences, Accessory Land w/ Improvements	\$592,000	\$123,700
3	325 Small Retail & Services	\$518,900	\$319,600
5	931 Municipal, Improved	\$471,600	\$124,800
2	960 Church/House of Worship	\$471,300	\$352,600
1	352 Day Care Centers, Adult	\$285,400	\$210,100
10	803 Nature Study	\$283,700	\$0
1	111 Apartments, Four to Eight Units	\$243,800	\$174,500
2	954 Fraternal Organizations and Facilities	\$240,500	\$125,700
3	932 Municipal, Conservation/Vacant	\$237,200	\$1,000
1	386 Camping Facilities	\$221,300	\$135,600
1	334 Gasoline Service Stations, w/ Repair	\$211,400	\$136,400
1	330 Automotive, Vehicles Sales and Service	\$206,500	\$134,000
2	430 Telephone Exchange Stations	\$181,500	\$78,400
1	332 Auto Repair Facilities	\$173,800	\$105,100
1	385 Fish and Game Clubs	\$154,600	\$35,600
26	601 Chapter 61 Lands	\$141,200	\$0
2	953 Cemeteries	\$111,100	\$0
1	326 Eating & Drinking Establishments	\$86,400	\$6,600
1	981 Public Land Owned by Other City/Town (Improved)	\$72,700	\$0
1	714 Orchards	\$55,200	\$0
1	391 Potentially Developable (Commercial) Land	\$37,500	\$0
1	722 Other Non-Productive	\$36,000	\$32,100
14	713 Field Crops	\$32,800	\$0
3	602 Christmas Trees	26,400	0
1	997 Other	\$11,200	\$0
2	392 Undevelopable (AC) Land	\$10,000	\$1,900
3	936 Municipal, Vacant/Tax Title	\$6,700	\$0
6	718 Pasture	\$4,400	\$0
1	712 Truck Crops, Vegetables	\$1,000	\$0
1	717 Productive Woodland/Woodlot	\$400	\$0
1	720 Non-Productive, Wet, Scrub, Rock	\$400	\$0
<b>1765</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>\$324,063,900</b>	<b>\$187,694,800</b>

**SORT BY AVG. PARCEL VALUE/CLASS**

PARCEL COUNT	CLASS	STATE_USE_CD	FINAL_VALUE	BLDG_VALUE
3	935 Municipal, Public Safety/Improved		\$2,760,500	\$2,470,300
5	351 Educational Properties		\$4,371,000	\$2,685,000
1	956 Libraries, Museums		\$766,000	\$690,200
2	340 General Office Buildings		\$893,200	\$713,900
18	17 Residential, Chapter 61A		\$7,070,500	\$5,636,000

2	400 Buildings for Manufacturing Operations	\$770,700	\$446,600
12	18 Residential, Chapter 61B	\$4,531,000	\$3,130,600
2	105 Residences, Three-Family	\$716,100	\$521,500
6	31 Multiple-Use, Primarily Commercial	\$2,043,300	\$1,489,000
1	352 Day Care Centers, Adult	\$285,400	\$210,100
18	911 DFW, Environmental Law Enforcement	\$5,029,500	\$0
20	13 Multiple-Use, Primarily Residential	\$5,242,900	\$3,259,600
7	901 Public Service Properties, Other	\$1,713,000	\$157,100
1	111 Apartments, Four to Eight Units	\$243,800	\$174,500
23	16 Residential, Chapter 61	\$5,485,300	\$3,565,100
13	104 Residences, Two-Family	\$3,079,800	\$2,076,600
2	960 Church/House of Worship	\$471,300	\$352,600
1072	101 Residences, Single-Family	\$242,906,500	\$156,402,900
1	386 Camping Facilities	\$221,300	\$135,600
1	334 Gasoline Service Stations, w/ Repair	\$211,400	\$136,400
1	330 Automotive, Vehicles Sales and Service	\$206,500	\$134,000
23	910 DCR, State Parks & Recreation	\$4,728,200	\$2,000
12	109 Multiple Houses on One Parcel	\$2,422,400	\$1,460,200
8	957 Charitable Services	\$1,431,000	\$49,000
1	332 Auto Repair Facilities	\$173,800	\$105,100
3	325 Small Retail & Services	\$518,900	\$319,600
5	316 Other Storage, Warehouse, & Distribution	\$809,000	\$413,300
1	385 Fish and Game Clubs	\$154,600	\$35,600
17	980 Public Land Owned by Other City/Town (Vacant)	\$2,072,100	\$0
2	954 Fraternal Organizations and Facilities	\$240,500	\$125,700
9	103 Residences, Mobile Home	\$950,100	\$272,000
5	931 Municipal, Improved	\$471,600	\$124,800
118	131 Potentially Developable Land	\$11,030,400	\$0
2	430 Telephone Exchange Stations	\$181,500	\$78,400
40	130 Developable Land	\$3,616,400	\$2,700
1	326 Eating & Drinking Establishments	\$86,400	\$6,600
27	930 Municipal, Vacant	\$2,221,900	\$153,500
3	932 Municipal, Conservation/Vacant	\$237,200	\$1,000
1	981 Public Land Owned by Other City/Town (Improved)	\$72,700	\$0
2	953 Cemeteries	\$111,100	\$0
1	714 Orchards	\$55,200	\$0
1	391 Potentially Developable (Commercial) Land	\$37,500	\$0
1	722 Other Non-Productive	\$36,000	\$32,100
17	106 Residences, Accessory Land w/ Improvements	\$592,000	\$123,700
10	803 Nature Study	\$283,700	\$0
186	132 Undevelopable Land	\$2,276,200	\$0
1	997 Other	\$11,200	\$0
3	602 Christmas Trees	26,400	0
26	601 Chapter 61 Lands	\$141,200	\$0
2	392 Undevelopable (AC) Land	\$10,000	\$1,900
14	713 Field Crops	\$32,800	\$0
3	936 Municipal, Vacant/Tax Title	\$6,700	\$0
1	712 Truck Crops, Vegetables	\$1,000	\$0
6	718 Pasture	\$4,400	\$0
1	717 Productive Woodland/Woodlot	\$400	\$0
1	720 Non-Productive, Wet, Scrub, Rock	\$400	\$0
<b>1765</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>\$324,063,900</b>	<b>\$187,694,800</b>

LAND_VALUE	AVG_PARCEL_VALUE	TAXABLE VALUE	TAX_RECEIPTS*
\$86,503,600	\$226,591.88	\$242,906,500	\$3,619,307
\$2,276,200	\$12,237.63	\$2,276,200	\$33,915
\$11,030,400	\$93,477.97	\$11,030,400	\$164,353
\$3,613,700	\$90,410.00	\$3,616,400	\$53,884
\$2,068,400	\$82,292.59	\$0	\$0
\$141,200	\$5,430.77	\$141,200	\$2,104
\$1,920,200	\$238,491.30	\$0	\$0
\$4,726,200	\$205,573.91	\$0	\$0
\$1,983,300	\$262,145.00	\$5,242,900	\$78,119
\$1,434,500	\$392,805.56	\$0	\$0
\$5,029,500	\$279,416.67	\$0	\$0
\$468,300	\$34,823.53	\$592,000	\$8,821
\$2,072,100	\$121,888.24	\$0	\$0
\$32,800	\$2,342.86	\$32,800	\$489
\$1,003,200	\$236,907.69	\$3,079,800	\$45,889
\$1,400,400	\$377,583.33	\$0	\$0
\$962,200	\$201,866.67	\$2,422,400	\$36,094
\$283,700	\$28,370.00	\$283,700	\$4,227
\$678,100	\$105,566.67	\$950,100	\$14,156
\$1,382,000	\$178,875.00	\$0	\$0
\$1,555,900	\$244,714.29	\$0	\$0
\$554,300	\$340,550.00	\$2,043,300	\$30,445
\$4,400	\$733.33	\$4,400	\$66
\$395,700	\$161,800.00	\$809,000	\$12,054
\$1,686,000	\$874,200.00	\$4,371,000	\$65,128
\$346,800	\$94,320.00	\$0	\$0
\$199,300	\$172,966.67	\$518,900	\$7,732
26,400	\$8,800.00	\$26,400	\$393
\$236,200	\$79,066.67	\$0	\$0
\$290,200	\$920,166.67	\$0	\$0
\$6,700	\$2,233.33	\$0	\$0
\$194,600	\$358,050.00	\$716,100	\$10,670
\$179,300	\$446,600.00	\$893,200	\$13,309
\$8,100	\$5,000.00	\$10,000	\$149
\$324,100	\$385,350.00	\$770,700	\$11,483
\$103,100	\$90,750.00	\$181,500	\$2,704
\$111,100	\$55,550.00	\$0	\$0
\$114,800	\$120,250.00	\$240,500	\$3,583
\$118,700	\$235,650.00	\$471,300	\$7,022
\$69,300	\$243,800.00	\$243,800	\$3,633
\$79,800	\$86,400.00	\$86,400	\$1,287
\$72,500	\$206,500.00	\$206,500	\$3,077

\$68,700	\$173,800.00	\$173,800	\$2,590
\$75,000	\$211,400.00	\$211,400	\$3,150
\$75,300	\$285,400.00	\$285,400	\$4,252
\$119,000	\$154,600.00	\$154,600	\$2,304
\$85,700	\$221,300.00	\$221,300	\$3,297
\$37,500	\$37,500.00	\$37,500	\$559
\$1,000	\$1,000.00	\$1,000	\$15
\$55,200	\$55,200.00	\$55,200	\$822
\$400	\$400.00	\$400	\$6
\$400	\$400.00	\$400	\$6
\$3,900	\$36,000.00	\$36,000	\$536
\$75,800	\$766,000.00	\$0	\$0
\$72,700	\$72,700.00	\$0	\$0
\$11,200	\$11,200.00	\$0	\$0
<b>\$136,369,100</b>	<b>\$183,605.61</b>	<b>\$285,344,400</b>	<b>\$4,251,632</b>

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LAND_VALUE	AVG_PARCEL_VALUE
\$86,503,600	\$226,591.88
\$11,030,400	\$93,477.97
\$1,434,500	\$392,805.56
\$1,920,200	\$238,491.30
\$1,983,300	\$262,145.00
\$5,029,500	\$279,416.67
\$4,726,200	\$205,573.91
\$1,400,400	\$377,583.33
\$1,686,000	\$874,200.00
\$3,613,700	\$90,410.00
\$1,003,200	\$236,907.69
\$290,200	\$920,166.67
\$962,200	\$201,866.67
\$2,276,200	\$12,237.63
\$2,068,400	\$82,292.59
\$2,072,100	\$121,888.24
\$554,300	\$340,550.00
\$1,555,900	\$244,714.29
\$1,382,000	\$178,875.00
\$678,100	\$105,566.67
\$179,300	\$446,600.00
\$395,700	\$161,800.00
\$324,100	\$385,350.00
\$75,800	\$766,000.00

\$194,600	\$358,050.00
\$468,300	\$34,823.53
\$199,300	\$172,966.67
\$346,800	\$94,320.00
\$118,700	\$235,650.00
\$75,300	\$285,400.00
\$283,700	\$28,370.00
\$69,300	\$243,800.00
\$114,800	\$120,250.00
\$236,200	\$79,066.67
\$85,700	\$221,300.00
\$75,000	\$211,400.00
\$72,500	\$206,500.00
\$103,100	\$90,750.00
\$68,700	\$173,800.00
\$119,000	\$154,600.00
\$141,200	\$5,430.77
\$111,100	\$55,550.00
\$79,800	\$86,400.00
\$72,700	\$72,700.00
\$55,200	\$55,200.00
\$37,500	\$37,500.00
\$3,900	\$36,000.00
\$32,800	\$2,342.86
26,400	\$8,800.00
\$11,200	\$11,200.00
\$8,100	\$5,000.00
\$6,700	\$2,233.33
\$4,400	\$733.33
\$1,000	\$1,000.00
\$400	\$400.00
\$400	\$400.00
<b>\$136,369,100</b>	<b>\$183,605.61</b>

<b>LAND_VALUE</b>	<b>AVG_PARCEL_VALUE</b>
\$290,200	\$920,166.67
\$1,686,000	\$874,200.00
\$75,800	\$766,000.00
\$179,300	\$446,600.00
\$1,434,500	\$392,805.56

\$324,100	\$385,350.00
\$1,400,400	\$377,583.33
\$194,600	\$358,050.00
\$554,300	\$340,550.00
\$75,300	\$285,400.00
\$5,029,500	\$279,416.67
\$1,983,300	\$262,145.00
\$1,555,900	\$244,714.29
\$69,300	\$243,800.00
\$1,920,200	\$238,491.30
\$1,003,200	\$236,907.69
\$118,700	\$235,650.00
\$86,503,600	\$226,591.88
\$85,700	\$221,300.00
\$75,000	\$211,400.00
\$72,500	\$206,500.00
\$4,726,200	\$205,573.91
\$962,200	\$201,866.67
\$1,382,000	\$178,875.00
\$68,700	\$173,800.00
\$199,300	\$172,966.67
\$395,700	\$161,800.00
\$119,000	\$154,600.00
\$2,072,100	\$121,888.24
\$114,800	\$120,250.00
\$678,100	\$105,566.67
\$346,800	\$94,320.00
\$11,030,400	\$93,477.97
\$103,100	\$90,750.00
\$3,613,700	\$90,410.00
\$79,800	\$86,400.00
\$2,068,400	\$82,292.59
\$236,200	\$79,066.67
\$72,700	\$72,700.00
\$111,100	\$55,550.00
\$55,200	\$55,200.00
\$37,500	\$37,500.00
\$3,900	\$36,000.00
\$468,300	\$34,823.53
\$283,700	\$28,370.00
\$2,276,200	\$12,237.63
\$11,200	\$11,200.00
26,400	\$8,800.00
\$141,200	\$5,430.77
\$8,100	\$5,000.00
\$32,800	\$2,342.86
\$6,700	\$2,233.33
\$1,000	\$1,000.00
\$4,400	\$733.33
\$400	\$400.00
\$400	\$400.00
<b>\$136,369,100</b>	<b>\$183,605.61</b>

TOTAL PROPERTIES	1765
Non-Taxable	172
Undevelopable Res.	186
Undevelopable Com.	2
Non-Productive	2
Total Low/No Tax	<b>362</b>

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**G. ESRI Retail Goods and Services Expenditures**



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

01431 (Ashby)  
 01431 (Ashby, MA)  
 Geography: ZIP Code

Top Tapestry Segments:		Demographic Summary		2010	2015
Green Acres	54.3%	Population		3,039	3,130
Sophisticated Squires	45.7%	Households		1,053	1,088
		Families		838	865
		Median Age		41.8	42.1
		Median Household Income		\$78,868	\$85,033

	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Apparel and Services</b>	86	\$2,056.43	\$2,165,416
Men's	81	\$373.79	\$393,601
Women's	78	\$646.36	\$680,621
Children's	92	\$367.92	\$387,420
Footwear	59	\$245.45	\$258,456
Watches & Jewelry	127	\$247.19	\$260,286
Apparel Products and Services <sup>1</sup>	188	\$175.72	\$185,031
<b>Computer</b>			
Computers and Hardware for Home Use	125	\$239.02	\$251,693
Software and Accessories for Home Use	126	\$35.96	\$37,870
<b>Entertainment &amp; Recreation</b>	130	\$4,179.26	\$4,400,760
<b>Fees and Admissions</b>	138	\$852.86	\$898,063
Membership Fees for Clubs <sup>2</sup>	137	\$224.97	\$236,893
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips	135	\$144.51	\$152,173
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet	129	\$195.00	\$205,338
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips	142	\$84.34	\$88,814
Fees for Recreational Lessons	149	\$203.21	\$213,975
Dating Services	108	\$0.83	\$870
<b>TV/Video/Audio</b>	120	\$1,493.53	\$1,572,692
Community Antenna or Cable TV	118	\$851.64	\$896,772
Televisions	128	\$246.76	\$259,842
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players	121	\$24.60	\$25,903
Video Cassettes and DVDs	117	\$61.54	\$64,806
Video and Computer Game Hardware and Software	132	\$73.51	\$77,408
Satellite Dishes	128	\$1.61	\$1,698
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs	123	\$50.50	\$53,175
Streaming/Downloaded Video	128	\$1.79	\$1,881
Audio <sup>3</sup>	118	\$172.75	\$181,908
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Audio	116	\$8.83	\$9,300
Pets	157	\$676.86	\$712,736
Toys and Games <sup>4</sup>	125	\$182.49	\$192,167
Recreational Vehicles and Fees <sup>5</sup>	128	\$412.28	\$434,129
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment <sup>6</sup>	104	\$188.12	\$198,092
Photo Equipment and Supplies <sup>7</sup>	133	\$137.20	\$144,476
Reading <sup>8</sup>	130	\$200.58	\$211,210
Catered Affairs <sup>9</sup>	143	\$35.32	\$37,196
<b>Food</b>	121	\$9,308.48	\$9,801,829
<b>Food at Home</b>	120	\$5,347.90	\$5,631,339
Bakery and Cereal Products	121	\$720.40	\$758,578
Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs	118	\$1,227.54	\$1,292,604
Dairy Products	120	\$596.70	\$628,327
Fruit and Vegetables	119	\$934.31	\$983,827
Snacks and Other Food at Home <sup>10</sup>	120	\$1,868.95	\$1,968,003
<b>Food Away from Home</b>	123	\$3,960.58	\$4,170,490
Alcoholic Beverages	124	\$705.82	\$743,224
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home	118	\$518.45	\$545,930



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

01431 (Ashby)  
 01431 (Ashby, MA)  
 Geography: ZIP Code

	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Financial</b>			
Investments	127	\$2,212.32	\$2,329,570
Vehicle Loans	122	\$6,020.44	\$6,339,522
<b>Health</b>			
Nonprescription Drugs	116	\$119.66	\$126,001
Prescription Drugs	119	\$592.39	\$623,790
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	134	\$102.74	\$108,188
<b>Home</b>			
Mortgage Payment and Basics <sup>11</sup>	145	\$13,538.79	\$14,256,348
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	143	\$2,845.05	\$2,995,837
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials <sup>12</sup>	137	\$510.63	\$537,695
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	122	\$5,511.97	\$5,804,104
<b>Household Furnishings and Equipment</b>			
Household Textiles <sup>13</sup>	127	\$168.73	\$177,672
Furniture	128	\$767.60	\$808,284
Floor Coverings	141	\$105.48	\$111,066
Major Appliances <sup>14</sup>	129	\$390.58	\$411,278
Housewares <sup>15</sup>	108	\$93.25	\$98,195
Small Appliances	124	\$40.57	\$42,719
Luggage	137	\$12.69	\$13,362
Telephones and Accessories	81	\$34.49	\$36,314
<b>Household Operations</b>			
Child Care	131	\$606.75	\$638,912
Lawn and Garden <sup>16</sup>	133	\$555.65	\$585,102
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	108	\$65.53	\$69,007
Housekeeping Supplies <sup>17</sup>	123	\$861.10	\$906,740
<b>Insurance</b>			
Owners and Renters Insurance	134	\$621.01	\$653,921
Vehicle Insurance	123	\$1,431.50	\$1,507,370
Life/Other Insurance	137	\$571.82	\$602,123
Health Insurance	122	\$2,360.59	\$2,485,706
Personal Care Products <sup>18</sup>	122	\$486.51	\$512,299
School Books and Supplies <sup>19</sup>	118	\$125.41	\$132,052
Smoking Products	109	\$465.68	\$490,357
<b>Transportation</b>			
Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay) <sup>20</sup>	124	\$5,430.13	\$5,717,925
Gasoline and Motor Oil	121	\$3,462.23	\$3,645,723
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	124	\$1,167.77	\$1,229,661
<b>Travel</b>			
Airline Fares	134	\$613.31	\$645,811
Lodging on Trips	137	\$598.23	\$629,940
Auto/Truck/Van Rental on Trips	139	\$51.23	\$53,945
Food and Drink on Trips	132	\$575.86	\$606,383

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2010 and 2015; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2006 and 2007 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

01431 (Ashby)

01431 (Ashby, MA)

Geography: ZIP Code

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<sup>1</sup>**Apparel Products and Services** includes material for making clothes, sewing patterns and notions, shoe repair and other shoe services, apparel laundry and dry cleaning, alteration, repair and tailoring of apparel, clothing rental and storage, and watch and jewelry repair.

<sup>2</sup>**Membership Fees for Clubs** includes membership fees for social, recreational, and civic clubs.

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<sup>4</sup>**Toys and Games** includes toys, games, arts and crafts, tricycles, playground equipment, arcade games, and online entertainment and games.

<sup>5</sup>**Recreational Vehicles & Fees** includes docking and landing fees for boats and planes, purchase and rental of RVs or boats, and camp fees.

<sup>6</sup>**Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment** includes exercise equipment and gear, game tables, bicycles, camping equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, winter sports equipment, water sports equipment, other sports equipment, and rental/repair of sports/recreation/exercise equipment.

<sup>7</sup>**Photo Equipment and Supplies** includes film, film processing, photographic equipment, rental and repair of photo equipment, and photographer fees.

<sup>8</sup>**Reading** includes magazine and newspaper subscriptions, single copies of magazines and newspapers, and books.

<sup>9</sup>**Catered Affairs** includes expenses associated with live entertainment and rental of party supplies.

<sup>10</sup>**Snacks and Other Food at Home** includes candy, chewing gum, sugar, artificial sweeteners, jam, jelly, preserves, margarine, fat, oil, salad dressing, nondairy cream and milk, peanut butter, frozen prepared food, potato chips, nuts, salt, spices, seasonings, olives, pickles, relishes, sauces, gravy, other condiments, soup, prepared salad, prepared dessert, baby food, miscellaneous prepared food, and nonalcoholic beverages.

<sup>11</sup>**Mortgage Payment and Basics** includes mortgage interest, mortgage principal, property taxes, homeowners insurance, and ground rent.

<sup>12</sup>**Maintenance and Remodeling Materials** includes supplies/tools/equipment for painting and wallpapering, plumbing supplies and equipment, electrical/heating/AC supplies, materials for hard surface flooring, materials for roofing/gutters, materials for plaster/panel/siding, materials for patio/fence/brick work, landscaping materials, and insulation materials for owned homes.

<sup>13</sup>**Household Textiles** includes bathroom linens, bedroom linens, kitchen linens, dining room linens, other linens, curtains, draperies, slipcovers, decorative pillows, and materials for slipcovers and curtains.

<sup>14</sup>**Major Appliances** includes dishwashers, disposals, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, window air conditioners, electric floor cleaning equipment, sewing machines, and miscellaneous appliances.

<sup>15</sup>**Housewares** includes plastic dinnerware, china, flatware, glassware, serving pieces, nonelectric cookware, and tableware.

<sup>16</sup>**Lawn and Garden** includes lawn and garden supplies, equipment and care service, indoor plants, fresh flowers, and repair/rental of lawn and garden equipment.

<sup>17</sup>**Housekeeping Supplies** includes soaps and laundry detergents, cleaning products, toilet tissue, paper towels, napkins, paper/plastic/foil products, stationery, giftwrap supplies, postage, and delivery services.

<sup>18</sup>**Personal Care Products** includes hair care products, nonelectric articles for hair, wigs, hairpieces, oral hygiene products, shaving needs, perfume, cosmetics, skincare, bath products, nail products, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, and personal care appliances.

<sup>19</sup>**School Books and Supplies** includes school books and supplies for college, elementary school, high school, and preschool.

<sup>20</sup>**Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay)** includes net outlay for new and used cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, and motor scooters.



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

01431 (Ashby)  
 01431 (Ashby, MA)  
 Geography: ZIP Code

Top Tapestry Segments:		Demographic Summary		
Green Acres	54.3%	Population	2010	2015
Sophisticated Squires	45.7%	Households	3,039	3,130
		Families	1,053	1,088
		Median Age	838	865
		Median Household Income	41.8	42.1
			\$78,868	\$85,033

	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Apparel and Services</b>	86	\$2,056.43	\$2,165,416
Men's	81	\$373.79	\$393,601
Women's	78	\$646.36	\$680,621
Children's	92	\$367.92	\$387,420
Footwear	59	\$245.45	\$258,456
Watches & Jewelry	127	\$247.19	\$260,286
Apparel Products and Services <sup>1</sup>	188	\$175.72	\$185,031
<b>Computer</b>			
Computers and Hardware for Home Use	125	\$239.02	\$251,693
Software and Accessories for Home Use	126	\$35.96	\$37,870
<b>Entertainment &amp; Recreation</b>	130	\$4,179.26	\$4,400,760
<b>Fees and Admissions</b>	138	\$852.86	\$898,063
Membership Fees for Clubs <sup>2</sup>	137	\$224.97	\$236,893
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips	135	\$144.51	\$152,173
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet	129	\$195.00	\$205,338
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips	142	\$84.34	\$88,814
Fees for Recreational Lessons	149	\$203.21	\$213,975
Dating Services	108	\$0.83	\$870
<b>TV/Video/Audio</b>	120	\$1,493.53	\$1,572,692
Community Antenna or Cable TV	118	\$851.64	\$896,772
Televisions	128	\$246.76	\$259,842
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players	121	\$24.60	\$25,903
Video Cassettes and DVDs	117	\$61.54	\$64,806
Video and Computer Game Hardware and Software	132	\$73.51	\$77,408
Satellite Dishes	128	\$1.61	\$1,698
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs	123	\$50.50	\$53,175
Streaming/Downloaded Video	128	\$1.79	\$1,881
Audio <sup>3</sup>	118	\$172.75	\$181,908
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Audio	116	\$8.83	\$9,300
Pets	157	\$676.86	\$712,736
Toys and Games <sup>4</sup>	125	\$182.49	\$192,167
Recreational Vehicles and Fees <sup>5</sup>	128	\$412.28	\$434,129
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment <sup>6</sup>	104	\$188.12	\$198,092
Photo Equipment and Supplies <sup>7</sup>	133	\$137.20	\$144,476
Reading <sup>8</sup>	130	\$200.58	\$211,210
Catered Affairs <sup>9</sup>	143	\$35.32	\$37,196
<b>Food</b>	121	\$9,308.48	\$9,801,829
<b>Food at Home</b>	120	\$5,347.90	\$5,631,339
Bakery and Cereal Products	121	\$720.40	\$758,578
Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs	118	\$1,227.54	\$1,292,604
Dairy Products	120	\$596.70	\$628,327
Fruit and Vegetables	119	\$934.31	\$983,827
Snacks and Other Food at Home <sup>10</sup>	120	\$1,868.95	\$1,968,003
<b>Food Away from Home</b>	123	\$3,960.58	\$4,170,490
Alcoholic Beverages	124	\$705.82	\$743,224
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home	118	\$518.45	\$545,930



## Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

01431 (Ashby)  
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	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Financial</b>			
Investments	127	\$2,212.32	\$2,329,570
Vehicle Loans	122	\$6,020.44	\$6,339,522
<b>Health</b>			
Nonprescription Drugs	116	\$119.66	\$126,001
Prescription Drugs	119	\$592.39	\$623,790
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	134	\$102.74	\$108,188
<b>Home</b>			
Mortgage Payment and Basics <sup>11</sup>	145	\$13,538.79	\$14,256,348
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	143	\$2,845.05	\$2,995,837
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials <sup>12</sup>	137	\$510.63	\$537,695
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	122	\$5,511.97	\$5,804,104
<b>Household Furnishings and Equipment</b>			
Household Textiles <sup>13</sup>	127	\$168.73	\$177,672
Furniture	128	\$767.60	\$808,284
Floor Coverings	141	\$105.48	\$111,066
Major Appliances <sup>14</sup>	129	\$390.58	\$411,278
Housewares <sup>15</sup>	108	\$93.25	\$98,195
Small Appliances	124	\$40.57	\$42,719
Luggage	137	\$12.69	\$13,362
Telephones and Accessories	81	\$34.49	\$36,314
<b>Household Operations</b>			
Child Care	131	\$606.75	\$638,912
Lawn and Garden <sup>16</sup>	133	\$555.65	\$585,102
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	108	\$65.53	\$69,007
Housekeeping Supplies <sup>17</sup>	123	\$861.10	\$906,740
<b>Insurance</b>			
Owners and Renters Insurance	134	\$621.01	\$653,921
Vehicle Insurance	123	\$1,431.50	\$1,507,370
Life/Other Insurance	137	\$571.82	\$602,123
Health Insurance	122	\$2,360.59	\$2,485,706
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## Trade/Market Population/Make-Up

### Market Segmentation

*Market segmentation* is defined as the classification of consumers according to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, lifestyles, and product preferences. It is based on the concept that “birds of a feather flock together”: that is, people with similar taste, lifestyles, and behaviors naturally gravitate toward each other and into the communities in which they live. Segmentation systems allow companies to better understand their customers or prospects, develop effective strategies that attract customers to their stores, and select products suited to customer preferences and lifestyles.

Developed by ESRI Business Information Systems, Community Tapestry categories U.S. neighborhoods into 65 market segments, each reflecting a range of opportunities and influences. Neighborhoods are analyzed and sorted by a variety of demographic and socioeconomic attributes as well as other determinants of consumer behavior.

Households in the Town of Shirley, plus the Shirley Village Center and North Shirley Village Trade Areas have been grouped into Tapestry market segments as summarized below. The descriptions reflect the propensity of households within that segment to exhibit certain characteristics and preferences relative to the general population. Each segment tend to paints a slightly difference “picture” of the trade market area, but there can be common features. It is interesting that Main Street USA is the most prominent in both the Shirley Village and North Shirley Village Trade Areas as well as for the Town of Shirley households. A description of the Top 5 Market Segment in each Trade Area as well as Townwide is provided below.

Regional Trends

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## **H. List of Past and Upcoming Festivals in the Surrounding 50 Mile Radius around Ashby**

## July 2011

### July 2

**Pepperell**, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration- 12:20 pm- Main Street – Fireworks 9:30  
[www.pepperell4thofjuly.org](http://www.pepperell4thofjuly.org).

### July 2-4

**Fitchburg MA**- Civic Days Celebration in downtown Fitchburg. For details, visit [www.ci.fitchburg.ma](http://www.ci.fitchburg.ma).

### July 3

**Fitchburg**- The 52nd Longsjo Classic bicycle race in downtown Fitchburg. The Fitchburg Longsjo Classic is returning to its roots as a one day criterion. The event, which is the second oldest bicycle race in America, features eight different categories of riders from all over the United States including professional men and women. There are food vendors, events for kids, and some of the greatest cycling action in the nation. Celebrate the holiday weekend in historic downtown Fitchburg. Visit [www.longsjo.com](http://www.longsjo.com).

**Petersham**- 7:30 PM Concert on Petersham Town Common, Route 32. The Petersham Brass Band performs. Free admission.

### July 4

**Templeton**- . Reading of the Declaration of Independence at First Church on Templeton Common

### July 7-10

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**\*\*\*Hillsboro NH**- Hillsboro Balloon Festival - When more than 30,000 people come to a town the size of Hillsborough, their presence is a major economic impact and residents of Hillsborough, the surrounding communities, and across New England have a weekend full of fun for the whole family.

**Barre** --Saturday 7:30 pm: Sunday 2 pm- Jolly Roger and The Pirate Queen, summer youth theater comedy at Barre Players Theater, 64 Common St., Barre. Tickets \$14, \$12 seniors, \$10 students, \$7 children 12 and under. Call 978-355-2096

## July 9

**Gardner-** 6:00 pm Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring the Amoskeag Strummers, a good old-time banjo band. Free admission. Rain date, July 13.

## July 9-10

**Sterling-** 11 am- 3 pm- Rainforest Reptiles at Davis Farmland, 145 Redstone Hill Road, Sterling. If you love creepy crawly creatures, then slither your way to Davis' Farmland for the Rainforest Reptiles shows this weekend! Michael is back with all his reptile and amphibian friends! Hop on in to see gators, lizards, snakes, frogs and even a giant tortoise! Call 978-422-MOOO.

## July 10

**Templeton-** 3 pm- Narragansett Community Band Concert on Templeton Common, Routes 2A and 101. Free.

**Petersham-** 7:30 pm Concert on Petersham Town Common, Route 32, Petersham. The Petersham Brass Band performs on Sunday evenings. Free admission

## July 16

**Templeton-** Saturday, 10 am–3 pm. Summer Festival at the Otter River Sportsman's Club, Lord Road, Otter River. St. Martin's Church sponsors a fun-filled family day, complete with barbecue chicken dinner, raffles, games of chance and skill. For dinner tickets, call 978-939-5588.

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**Gardner-** Saturday, 6 pm. Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring the Mark 6 Polka Band. Free admission. Rain date, July 20.

## July 16-17

**Sterling-** Saturday & Sunday, 11 am–3 pm. Flippo the Clown at Davis Farmland, 145 Redstone Hill Rd., Sterling. Farmland's favorite clown is back. You'll be amazed as Flippo performs boggling feats of balance and makes a balloon creation just for you! You don't want to miss this high energy, hilarious performance. Call 978-422-MOOO.

## July 17

**Winchendon** -Massachusetts State Triathlon at Lake Dennison Recreation Area, 275 Baldwinville State Rd., Winchendon. Races include swim 0.33 miles, bike 11.5 miles, run 3.1 miles on rural and park roads with rolling terrain. The race was selected by USAT as Massachusetts Club Championship and will boast some of the best age group and elite triathletes in the state. Visit [www.race360.com](http://www.race360.com).

**Petersham**- 9 am–3 pm. Annual Garden Tour. Visit the gardens of Petersham with the Athol Bird and Nature Club and North Quabbin Garden Club. Tickets (\$5/person, \$15 carload) available at local businesses including North Quabbin Woods in Orange and Bruce's Browser in Athol. Garden plants and blueberries for sale. Visit [www.millersriver.net](http://www.millersriver.net).

**Fitchburg** -2 pm. Maverick Street Band Concert at Coggshall Park, off Electric Avenue, Fitchburg.

**Petersham**- 7:30 pm. Concert on Petersham Town Common, Route 32, Petersham. The Petersham Brass Band performs on Sunday evenings. Free admission.

## July 19

**Leominster** -7:30 pm. The Leominster Colonial Band performs in Carter Park, Route 12, Leominster. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy this free concert!

## July 22

**Bolton**- 7 pm- Nocturnal Night at the Animal Adventures, 336 Sugar Rd., Bolton. A unique opportunity to explore the world of nocturnal animals. Meet the sloth, watch an owl spread its wings, and watch the kinkajous play. Included will be a snake and alligator feeding and hands-on fun. Reservations required; space limited. \$12. Call 978-779-8988 or visit [www.animaladventures.net](http://www.animaladventures.net).

## July 23

**Athol**- 9–11 am. July in the Park, Athol. Join expert birders Joan and Larry Duprey and amateur botanist Christine Beckert Long in a stroll through the Alan E. Rich Environmental Park and Cass Meadow near 50 Main St. in Athol to discover the nature of an environmental park and the long-term vision for the area. Info: Chris Long, 978-249-0246.

**Gardner**- 6 pm. Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring Rhythm, playing pops, blues and country music. Free. Rain date, July 27.

## July 24

**Templeton-** 3 pm- Narragansett Community Band Concert on Templeton Common, Routes 2A and 101. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket, relax and enjoy the music at the bandstand. Free admission.

**Petersham-** 7:30 pm -Concert on Petersham Town Common, Route 32, Petersham. The Petersham Brass Band performs on Sunday evenings. Free admission.

## July 26

**Leominster-** 7:30 pm- The Leominster Colonial Band performs in Carter Park, Route 12, Leominster. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy this free concert!

## July 30

**Charlemont-** 6:00 pm - Deerfield River Fest – Join Zoar Outdoor in a celebration of whitewater paddling on the Deerfield River with vendor booths, games, food and music. Visit [www.americanwhitewater.org](http://www.americanwhitewater.org) for details and directions.

**Gardner-** 6:00 pm- Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring Southern Rail, playing bluegrass music. Free admission; sponsored by the City of Gardner. Rain date, August 3

**Petersham-** 7:30 pm- Concert on Petersham Town Common, Route 32, Petersham. The Petersham Brass Band performs on Sunday evenings. Free admission.

**Hampstead, NH-** Hampstead Town Green -Saint Anne's Summer Festival, Live music and entertainment

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## August 2011

### August 2

**Leominster-** 7:30 pm- The Leominster Colonial Band performs in Carter Park, Route 12, Leominster. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy this free concert!

### August 3

**Harvard-** 7:00 pm- Family Concert Series: BalletRox at the Fruitlands outdoor amphitheater, Fruitlands Museum, 102 Prospect Hill Rd., Harvard. BalletRox is a Boston-based non-profit dance company created to serve Boston's underserved youth. \$15 per carload. (rain date August 4)

### August 5- 6

**Gardner- *Friday/Saturday*** -Experience Gardner summer festival and sidewalk sale in downtown Gardner. Downtown turns into a pedestrian mall filled with vendors, entertainers, raffles, games for the kids and more.

**Gardner-** 6:00 pm – *Saturday* Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring Boothill Express, a country folk & southern rock band. Free admission; sponsored by the City of Gardner. Rain date, August 10.

**Winchendon-** 11am-4pm *Saturday* - The Beast of the East' Massachusetts State Chili Cook-off at Bentley Field, Winchendon, sponsored by the Winchendon Kiwanis Club. cooks from across the nation compete for the state title to qualify for entry into the world chili championship. Enjoy chili tastings, music, kids' games and family fun. Adults 6, ages 12 and under \$1. To enter, call Bruce Cloutier at 978-297-1815.

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**Lunenburg-** 5:00 pm- *Saturday* . Cardboard Boat Race on Lake Whalom, Lunenburg. Watch the locals float — or not — in their boats made of cardboard. Will they make it across the finish line before the paper dissolves? The Friends of the Lunenburg Public Library sponsor this fun-to-watch event. Contact librarian Karen Kemp, 978-582-4140. Rain date Aug. 8.

**Greenfield NH-** Oak Park in Greenfield New Hampshire will host a stage of music, 100 plus visitors to this annual event.

## August 7

**Templeton-** 3 pm- Narragansett Community Band Concert on Templeton Common, Routes 2A and 101. This week's program features the popular "Puppy Promenade" — pooches welcome! Free admission.

**Rindge, NH-** Summer Craft Fair, Meeting House Lawn, Rindge NH

## August 9

**Leominster-** 7:30 pm- The Leominster Colonial Band performs in Carter Park, Route 12, Leominster. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy this free concert!

## August 10

**Harvard-** 7:00 pm- Family Concert Series: Odds Bodkins presents Romeo & Juliet at the Fruitlands outdoor amphitheater, Fruitlands Museum, 102 Prospect Hill Rd., Harvard. Join master story-teller Odds Bodkins while he performs Romeo & Juliet by himself! \$15 per carload.

## August 11- 14

**Lancaster** *Thursday & Friday, -noon-9 pm Saturday -9 am-9 pm Sunday - 9 am-6 p:* Bolton Fair at the Fairgrounds at Lancaster, 318 Seven Bridge Rd., Lancaster. Traditional New England fair with animal exhibits and shows, crafts, artisans, entertainers, a midway and farmer's market. Midway-only preview Wednesday, Aug. 10, from 5-10 pm. For admission prices and details, visit [www.boltonfair.org](http://www.boltonfair.org).

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## August 12-14

**Barre-** *Friday & Saturday, 7:30 pm; Sunday 2 pm-* The Winter's Tale, a classic drama by William Shakespeare, presented by the Summer Youth Theater at the Barre Players Theater, 64 Common St., Barre. Tickets \$14, \$12 seniors, \$10 students, \$7 children 12 and under. Call 978-355-2096

**Swanzey NH-** Eighth Richmond Blueberry Fiddle Festival, Cheshire Fairgrounds Swanzey, NH

### **August 13**

**Gardner-** 6:00 pm- Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring Pointn' Swing Bid Band, a 19 piece band. Free admission; sponsored by the City of Gardner. Rain date, August 17.

**Templeton-** 2- 7:00 pm- Terrapinn Fest 2011 will be August 13th from 2 to 11p.m. at the Otter River Sportsmen Club, Lord Road in Templeton, Massachusetts!! Details to Come!!! Stay Tuned and suggest us to your Friends!

### **August 16**

**Leominster-** 7:30 pm- The Leominster Colonial Band performs in Carter Park, Route 12, Leominster. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy this free concert!

**Harvard-** 7:00 pm- Family Concert Series: BalletRox at the Fruitlands outdoor amphitheater, Fruitlands Museum, 102 Prospect Hill Rd., Harvard. BalletRox is a Boston-based non-profit dance company created to serve Boston's underserved youth. \$15 per carload. (rain date August 18)

### **August 18**

**Leominster-** 5:00- 9:00 pm- Ladies Night Out in downtown Leominster and beyond. Over 30 businesses open their doors for this event, followed by a fashion show at City Hall, raffle, more. Visit [www.leominsterevents.com](http://www.leominsterevents.com).

### **August 18- August 21**

**Manchester- New Hampshire-** Radisson Center of New Hampshire - Manchester will host the New England – World Quilt Show

### **August 19- 20**

**Gardner-** 8:00 pm- Rent, the musical, at Theatre at the Mount, 444 Green St., Gardner. Based on Puccini's opera La Boheme, Rent tells the story of a group of impoverished young artists and musicians struggling to survive and create in New York's Lower East Side in the thriving days of Bohemian Alphabet City. Recommended for mature audiences only. \$20 adults, \$10 children 16 and under. Call 978-632-2403. Repeats August 26-28.

## August 20

**Gardner-** 6 pm -Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring Playin' Possum, purveyors of fine country music. Free admission; sponsored by the City of Gardner. Rain date, August 24.

## August 20-21

**Gardner-** New England Jet Rally at the Gardner Municipal Airport, Route 2A. The Wachusett Barnstormers radio-controlled aircraft flying club event features dozens of model aircraft in a high-tech jet air show. Visit [www.wachusettbarnstormers.org](http://www.wachusettbarnstormers.org).

**Templeton-** *Saturday, 10 am–5 pm & Sunday, 10 am–4 pm.* Templeton Arts and Crafts Festival on the Common, Routes 2A and 101, Templeton. The 37th annual Templeton Arts and Crafts Festival features over 100 artists, craftspeople and vendors, along with entertainment, food and more.

## August 21

**Westminster-** *Sunday, 10 am.* Wachusett Valley Folk Festival at the Wachusett Village Inn, 9 Village Inn Rd., Westminster. Bring the entire family and enjoy a day filled with music, food and local artisans — rated one of the top 25 events to attend in Massachusetts by Yankee magazine! Performers include Danielle Miraglia, Swing Steaks, Lori Diamond and Fred Abatella, Pesky J. Nixon, David Wilcox and Mary Gauthier. \$25 general admission/\$30 at the door. \$15 for kids 6 to 10, under 6, free. Call 978-874-2000 for tickets.

**Fitchburg-** 2:00 pm New Pond Fondle Concert at Coggshall Park, off Electric Avenue, Fitchburg.

**Templeton-** 3:00 pm- Narragansett Community Band Concert on Templeton Common, Routes 2A and 101. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket, relax and enjoy the music at the bandstand. Free admission.

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## August 24

**Harvard-** 7:00 pm Family Concert Series: Bill Harley at the outdoor amphitheater, Fruitlands Museum, 102 Prospect Hill Rd., Harvard. Join Grammy award winner Bill Harley for this concert of children's songs. \$15 per carload.

## August 26- 28

**Gardner-** *Friday & Saturday, 8 pm, Sunday, 2 pm.* Rent, the musical, at Theatre at the Mount, on the campus of Mt. Wachusett Community College, 444 Green St., Gardner. See Aug. 19-20 listing. Recommended for mature audiences only. Call 978-632-2403.

**Manchester, New Hampshire-** Art in the Park- Veterans Park –

## August 27

**Westminster-** 10 am–4 pm- Yankee Street Fair at First Congregational Church, 138 Main St., Westminster. Held for the past 66 years, the Yankee Street Fair offers food, games, a silent auction, bargains, entertainment and the always-popular strawberry shortcake. Call 978-874-5790 mornings.

**Fitchburg-** The fourth annual Nashua River Brewers Festival will be held on Saturday, August 27, 2011 at Riverfront Park in historic downtown Fitchburg along the banks of the Nashua River. This festival features dozens of local craft brewers serving seasonal beers with a free collectible tasting glass upon admission. There will also be a wine table available to those preferring wine. Live music all day featuring the great local music. This is a 21 event.

**Leominster-** 2:00- 5:00 pm- Kids Day in downtown Leominster. Enjoy this chance to get kids together before school begins! Entertainment and fun for all, including a bouncy house, games, arts and crafts, and even a Bed Parade! For details, call 978-534-7500.

**Gardner-** 6:00 pm- Concert at Monument Park on Central Street, Gardner, featuring Marty's Reminisce Orchestra, a 16-piece swing band. Free admission; sponsored by the City of Gardner. Rain date, August 30.

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**Sterling-** *Saturday & Sunday, 11 am–3 pm* Mike the Music Man at Davis Farmland, 145 Redstone Hill Rd., Sterling. There are lots of stories, singing, dancing and silliness at Davis' Farmland this weekend with Mike the Music Man performing silly versions of kids' favorite standards along with some of his own original songs. Call 978-422-MOOO

# September 2011

## September 2-5

**Spencer-** Spencer Fair at the Spencer Fairgrounds, Smithfield Road, Spencer. The Spencer Agricultural Association presents this annual fair that includes a carnival, demo derbies, truck pull, horse and oxen pulls, dairy cows and beef cattle, entertainment, food, fun. Call 508-248-5963 or visit [www.spencerfair.org](http://www.spencerfair.org) for details.

## September 3

**Keene, NH-** Keene Music Festival-, with over 12 stages lining the streets and 15 + musical genres, this event is one of southern New Hampshire's most popular

## September 16-18

**Fitchburg** -The Great New England Steampunk Exhibition (TGNESE) will be held September 16 to 18, 2011. The Courtyard Fitchburg and Central Massachusetts Expo Center serve as the setting for the 3-day steampunk extravaganza. Abney Park, based in Seattle, will be the headlining Musical Guest of Honor. In addition to Abney Park, TGNESE plans to host a wide selection of bands and performers, sponsor a Maker's Contest, conduct panels and workshops and showcase some of the most popular merchants and artists in the industry

## September 17

**Westminster-** 10:00 am- 7:00 pm- St. Edward's Fall Festival at St. Edward the Confessor Church, 10 Church St., Westminster. Annual fall festival including attic treasures, flea market, games for children and adults, cash raffle, silent auction, crafts, plants, entertainment and more. Free admission. Contact Kathryn Thibeault 978-874-2362

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## September 25

**Merrimack, NH-** Merrimack Town Hall Center- with three stages and many exciting live acts, this festival draws 100- 200 people each year

## September 29

**Fitchburg, MA-** Fitchburg CultureFest: in Riverfront Park, over a hundred vendors, a full night of live music and entertainment!

## **October 2011**

### **October 1-3**

**Manchester, NH-** Firefest: World's Championship Chili Cookoff- 100 + people attend the annual world championship chili cookoff!

### **October 22**

**Keene, NH-** Keene's annual pumpkin fest. Travelers come from all parts of the region to experience the amazing pumpkin/ jack lantern display- one of the largest in the world!

### **November-**

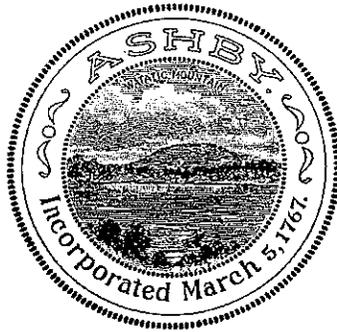
**New England Craft and Specialty Food Fair**  
**11/11 to 11/13 2011**  
**Rockingham Park Racetrack - Salem, NH**

**Lil' Iguana's Fall Festival and Raffle**  
**11/12 to 11/12 2011**  
**Crowne Plaza Hotel - Nashua, NH**

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## **I. The Ashby Assistance Opportunities Report**

# Ashby Assistance Opportunities Report



**August 2011**

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED)

#### 1. Business Improvement Districts (BID)

##### *Program Description*

Business Improvement Districts (BID) are special assessment districts in which property owners vote to initiate, manage and finance supplemental services or enhancements above and beyond the baseline of services already provided by their local city or town governments. A special assessment, or common area fee, is levied only on property within the district. The assessments are collected and expended within the district for a range of services and/or programs, including marketing and public relations, improving the downtown marketplace or city/town center, capital improvements, public safety enhancements, and special events. A BID creates a stable local management structure that provides a sustainable funding source for the revitalization and long-term maintenance of downtowns and city/town centers. The goal of a BID is to improve a specific commercial area by attracting customers, clients, shoppers and other businesses.

##### *Establishing A BID*

Communities are authorized to establish BIDs under M.G.L. Chapter 400. A BID must be a contiguous geographic area in which at least 75% of the land is zoned or used for commercial, retail, industrial or mixed uses. A BID is established through a local petition and public hearing process. The petition must be signed by the owners of at least 60% of the real property and at least 51% of the assessed valuation of the real property within the proposed BID. The petition must also include delineation of the BID boundaries, a proposed improvement plan, budget and assessment/fee structure.

##### *Eligible Activities*

A BID is authorized to perform a wide variety of management, administrative, marketing and economic development activities, including:

- District Management – management entity with staff
- Maintenance – street cleaning, snow removal, litter & graffiti removal, washing sidewalks, tourist guides

- Promotion and Marketing – identification of market niche, special events, brochures, advertising, newsletters
- Business Services – business recruitment and retention, sign & façade programs
- Capital/Physical Improvements – streetscape improvements, management of parking garage, maintaining parking shelters, historic preservation

#### *Additional Program Information*

DHCD will provide technical assistance to communities considering the establishment of a BID in order to support their downtown revitalization activities and to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. The BID petition must be forwarded by the municipality to DHCD.

#### *Contact*

For additional information, please call the Division of Community Services at 617-573-1400.

**Comments and Recommendations:** A local BID would potentially be a valuable tool to establish an organization or entity that would manage the village center commercial area, to keep the area clean, to provide a visitor center or area where visitor information was available, to market the area and the town generally, to provide business services, and to make physical improvements to the area. The question is whether the fee would be acceptable.

## 2. Chapter 40R

### *Program Description*

The Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District Act, Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004, codified as M.G.L. chapter 40R (the Act), encourages communities to create dense residential or mixed-use smart growth zoning districts, including a high percentage of affordable housing units, to be located near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development such as existing city and town centers, and in other highly suitable locations. Projects must be developable under the community's smart growth zoning adopted under Chapter 40R, either as-of-right or through a limited plan review process akin to site plan review. Upon state review and approval of a local overlay district, communities become eligible for payments from a Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund, as well as other financial incentives. Chapter 40R seeks to substantially

increase the supply of housing and decrease its cost, by increasing the amount of land zoned for dense housing. It targets the shortfall in housing for low- and moderate-income households, by requiring the inclusion of affordable units in most private projects.

*Contact Information*

William Reyelt at 617-573-1355, or  
[William.Reyelt@State.MA.US](mailto:William.Reyelt@State.MA.US)

Elaine Wijnja at 617-573-1360  
[Elaine.Wijnja@State.MA.US](mailto:Elaine.Wijnja@State.MA.US)

**Comments and Recommendations:** The 40R program would only be applicable if the town were willing to accept additional affordable housing in the village center. This could be done sensitively and selectively with small apartments over shops or in the rear of commercial or existing residential buildings or in outbuildings like carriage houses that would all be in keeping with the physical character of the village center.

3. Commercial Area Revitalization District (CARD)

*Program Description*

The Commercial Area Revitalization District program (CARD) assists communities with older downtowns or commercial centers to channel private and public investment into these targeted areas in order to redress the economic decline and physical deterioration that accompanies disinvestment. The Division of Community Services approves and helps municipalities develop and implement CARD plans.

*Eligible Applicants*

All Massachusetts municipalities that contain one or more older commercial centers that are able to demonstrate that these areas are experiencing disinvestment are eligible to apply to DHCD for a CARD designation for one or more of these areas.

*Eligible Activities*

Municipalities use the CARD designation to channel private and public investment into targeted areas in order to redress the economic decline and physical deterioration that accompanies disinvestment.

DHCD provides no direct funding for the CARD Program.

### *Selection Criteria*

A CARD application must include evidence of commercial disinvestment, strategies to reverse this disinvestment, evidence that the area is predominantly commercial, evidence that plan development was publicized and that the business community was involved in the process and is committed to its implementation, consistency with other local plans, identification of a local implementing agency and adoption of the plan by the local governing body.

### *How to Apply*

Communities interested in obtaining a CARD designation must submit a CARD application to DHCD.

### *Contact*

For additional information, please call the Division of Community Services at 617-573-1400.

**Comments and Recommendations:** The CARD program is a reach because the Ashby village center has not deteriorated since it really hasn't been optimized as a commercial center as yet. But this program could potentially be tapped since some commercial entities have closed or relocated and the impact of their leaving has been disproportionately large.

## **MassDevelopment**

MassDevelopment is the state's finance and development authority. Both a lender and developer, the Agency works with private- and public-sector clients to stimulate economic growth by eliminating blight, preparing key sites for development, creating jobs, and increasing the state's housing supply. Programs and services include:

- Bond financing, loans and guarantees, Brownfields redevelopment funds, community service loans, emerging technology funds, MA cultural facilities funds, small farm loan program and others.
- Real estate development services including expedited permitting, planning and development, and real estate marketing.
- Contact is Kelly Arvidson, VP Business Development at 978-784-2901 or via e-mail at [karvidson@massdevelopment.com](mailto:karvidson@massdevelopment.com)
- Also check out their web sites: <http://www.devenscommunity.com/> and <http://www.massdevelopment.com/>

### **Massachusetts Office of Business Development**

The Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD), which falls under the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, facilitates access to governmental and non-governmental business resources and incentive programs that help businesses thrive in Massachusetts. Housed within MOBD, the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) is a tax incentive program designed to foster full-time job creation and stimulate business growth throughout the Commonwealth. Participating companies may receive state and local tax incentives in exchange for full-time job creation, retention, and private investment commitments.

- Check out their regional profile for the North Central region which includes Ashby where they provide useful links to area chambers of commerce and economic development agencies, industry clusters, and other useful information.
- The Economic Development Incentive Program for large and small firms.
- Contact Rosemary Scrivens, Regional Director for Central/North Central at 508-792-7506 or [rosemary.scrivens@state.ma.us](mailto:rosemary.scrivens@state.ma.us)

### **Small Business Development Center Network**

- Contact them at <http://www.msbdc.org/> for a variety of services and training for small businesses.

### **Office of Small Business & Entrepreneurship (OSBE)**

The mission is to create policies and programs to support small businesses & entrepreneurs across the Commonwealth of MA. OSBE is the most valuable resource for Small Business Community, and utilizes the following business development tools:

- Small Business Assistance Advisory Council
- FY 2008 Governor's Budget:
- Technical Assistance Grants & Office
- MA Small Business Development Centers

Contact Andre Porter, Executive Director of OSBE at 617-973-8543 or [andre.porter@state.ma.us](mailto:andre.porter@state.ma.us)

#### **Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce**

- Access to free Small Business Planning Assistance by Michael Holbrook of Clark University
- Other membership benefits, networking, etc.
- Townsend is a member. Ashby is eligible.
- Contact Chamber Staff at 978-772-6976 or [director@nvcoc.com](mailto:director@nvcoc.com)

#### **North Central Massachusetts Development Council (NCMDC)**

- Regional Revolving Micro-loan Fund
- Access to Small Business Administration (SBA) Financing
- Contact Bruce Larson, Loan Officer, at 978-840-4300 or [Larson@massweb.org](mailto:Larson@massweb.org)

#### **Farmland Preservation Programs and Tools**

4. Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program  
<http://www.mass.gov/agr/landuse/APR/index.htm>
5. Farm Viability Enhancement Program  
<http://www.mass.gov/agr/programs/farmviability/index.htm>
6. Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B

7. EO 193 and Agricultural Lands Mitigation Policy  
<http://www.mass.gov/agr/landuse/mepa.htm>

#### **State Office of Minority & Women Business Assistance**

- Promotes development of business enterprises and non-profit organizations owned or operated by minorities and women
- Contact: 617-973-8692 or [www.state.ma.us/somwba](http://www.state.ma.us/somwba)

#### **Johnny Appleseed Trail of North Central Massachusetts**

This is a tourism organization promoting the trail and the communities in the region. Opportunities exist for advertising and synergistic relationships with local businesses:  
<http://www.appleseed.org/>

#### **US Department of Commerce**

##### *FY 2011 Public Works, Economic Adjustment, and GCCMIF Programs Opportunity*

This U.S. Department of Commerce grant program supports projects that foster economic competitiveness while enhancing environmental quality. These funds will be used to advance the green economy by supporting projects that create jobs through—and increase—private capital investment in initiatives to limit the nation's dependence on fossil fuels, enhance energy efficiency, curb greenhouse gas emissions, and protect natural systems. Available funding is likely to be near \$25 million.

Application Due: September 15, 2011

Go to: <http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&opId=58457>

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#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

8. Sustainable Community Challenge Planning Grant – US Department of Housing & Urban Development

*Overview*

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's \$28 million Community Challenge Planning Grant Program fosters reform and reduces barriers to achieving affordable, economically vital, and sustainable communities. Such efforts may include amending or replacing local master plans, zoning codes, and building codes, either on a jurisdiction-wide basis or in a specific neighborhood, district, corridor, or sector to promote mixed-use development, affordable housing, the reuse of older buildings and structures for new purposes, and similar activities with the goal of promoting sustainability at the local or neighborhood level. This Program also supports the development of affordable housing through the development and adoption of inclusionary zoning ordinances and other activities to support planning implementation.

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is being initiated in close coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), co-leaders with HUD in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

Applications must be submitted by **September 9, 2011** at 11:59:59 p.m. EDT to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

OSHC staff will hold a webcast on **August 11th** from 3:30-4:30pm EDT to give an overview of the FY2011 Community Challenge Planning Grant NOFA. There will be opportunity for questions following the presentation. Please visit [www.hud.gov/sustainability](http://www.hud.gov/sustainability) on that day for a link to the webcast.

**Comments and Recommendations:** This grant could be applicable to fully fund a form-based code for Ashby or a complete comprehensive plan for the town.

9. Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant - US Department of Housing & Urban Development

*Overview*

The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program supports metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: (1) economic competitiveness and revitalization;

(2) social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; (3) energy use and climate change; and (4) public health and environmental impact. The Program places a priority on investing in partnerships, including nontraditional partnerships (e.g., arts and culture, recreation, public health, food systems, regional planning agencies and public education entities) that translate the Federal Livability Principles into strategies that direct long-term development and reinvestment, demonstrate a commitment to addressing issues of regional significance, use data to set and monitor progress toward performance goals, and engage stakeholders and residents in meaningful decision-making roles.

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is being initiated in close coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), co-leaders with HUD in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

Pre-applications must be submitted by **August 25, 2011** at 11:59:59 p.m. EDT to Grants.gov.

OSHC staff will hold a webcast on **August 12th** from 1-2 pm EDT to give an overview of the FY2011 Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant NOFA. There will be opportunity for questions following the presentation. Please visit [www.hud.gov/sustainability](http://www.hud.gov/sustainability) on that day for a link to the webcast.

**Comments and Recommendations:** The regional grant would be useful with region-wide economic opportunities such as an energy center, an incubator, a cultural collaborative program, regionwide governmental economic cooperation, or food systems including a commercial kitchen.

#### 10. Community Preservation Act (CPA) – Administered by the Community Preservation Coalition

CPA is a smart growth tool that helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA also helps strengthen the state and local economies by expanding housing opportunities and construction jobs for the Commonwealth's workforce, and by supporting the tourism industry through preservation of the Commonwealth's historic and natural resources.

CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum. (View a map of all CPA communities; learn more about CPA adoption.)

The CPA statute also creates a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Revenue (DOR), which provides distributions each October to communities that have adopted CPA. These annual disbursements serve as an incentive for communities to pass CPA. (Learn more about the distribution amounts received to date by CPA communities.)

Each CPA community creates a local Community Preservation Committee (CPC) upon adoption of the Act, and this five-to-nine member board makes recommendations on CPA projects to the community's legislative body. To explore CPA projects completed to date, visit our CPA Projects Database.

Property taxes traditionally fund the day-to-day operating needs of safety, health, schools, roads, maintenance, and more. But until CPA was enacted, there was no steady funding source for preserving and improving a community's character and quality of life. The Community Preservation Act gives a community the funds needed to control its future.

**Comments and Recommendations:** The CPA would be potentially beneficial for projects such as rehabilitating the Grange building or other historic preservation projects. However, the State match must be still a reasonable amount.

### Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

11. Expedited Permitting Program (Chapter 43D) – This program is most applicable where a minimum 50,000 square foot site is available to be developed or redeveloped. This would not include the Town of Ashby at the present time.

**Comments and Recommendations:** However, an expedited permitting program patterned after the 43-D process would be feasible and would make the community more business-friendly. The permitting guidebook that has recently been drafted is one

example of how this could be done in the town.

12. Brownfield Site Assessments – Industrial and commercial redevelopment of existing brownfields is not a significant concern for the town of Ashby at present. However, this program could be useful for developing former gas stations or auto repair facilities.

13. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program – A federally funded, antipoverty program that was created in 1964 to promote and provide an array of services and activities to encourage self-sufficiency and to make permanent improvements in the lives of low-income families and individuals.

This program funds Community Action Agencies that provide services, programs, and activities that promote self-sufficiency for low-income residents.

#### *Eligible Applicants*

CSBG provides core funding to 24 existing duly designated Community Action Agencies (CAAs). Each CAA is a private non-profit entity operated by a tripartite board representing private and public sectors and low-income people who reside or work in the designated service area.

#### *Eligible Activities and Funding Requirements*

Services provided by CAAs include, but are not limited to:

- Employment and job skills training
- Food and nutrition assistance
- Child development programs, including Head Start and center-based day care
- Individual and family self-sufficiency initiatives
- Youth development
- Fuel and energy assistance
- Domestic violence counseling and emergency assistance
- Emergency assistance such as, temporary shelter, hunger, medical assistance, clothing, conflict resolution, etc.
- Affordable housing and homeownership opportunities
- Assistance to homeless and “at-risk” families and individuals
- Transportation assistance

### *Funding Limits*

CSBG funding is distributed to the 24 designated CAAs based on a historical formula.

### *Selection Criteria*

Each designated CAA is eligible for funding through an annual application process. In addition, CAAs are required to submit a Community Action Plan every three years and utilize the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) process for the overall planning and service delivery process. CAAs are monitored throughout the year through both in-house and on-site assessments.

### *How To Apply*

The annual application is restricted to designated CAAs. (Ashby would fall under the authority of the MOC)<sup>1</sup>

**Comments and Recommendations:** If Ashby would not be eligible to join the MOC, this program would be irrelevant. However, if it were admitted, it could benefit from a range of activities such as job skills training, youth development, fuel and energy assistance, and transportation assistance.

14. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program (MRPC) – Eligible CDBG projects include but are not limited to housing rehabilitation or development, micro-enterprise or other business assistance, infrastructure, community/public facilities, public social services, planning, removal of architectural barriers to allow access by persons with disabilities, and downtown or area revitalization. Applications can be submitted by individual communities or regionally by multiple communities with one lead community.

The Economic Development Fund (EDF) is a component of the CDBG program. The Economic Development Fund (EDF) finances projects and programs that create and/or retain jobs, improve the local and/or regional tax base, or otherwise enhance the quality of life in the community. EDF gives

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<sup>1</sup> Montachusett Opportunity Council, Inc. (MOC); 133 Prichard Street; Fitchburg, MA 01420; 978-342-7013; 978-345-8626; [kmcdermott@mocinc.org](mailto:kmcdermott@mocinc.org), Ms. Kathleen J. McDermott

priority assistance for physical improvements in support of job creating/retention. Historically, EDF has funded a range of economic and community development projects. Currently, program funding is more limited and the following categories of assistance will be considered.

### *Eligible Applicants*

Of the 351 municipalities incorporated in Massachusetts, any of the 314 cities or towns not designated as “entitlement communities” by the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) may apply for and receive Massachusetts Economic Development Fund grants. Currently, 37 cities and towns are designated as entitlement communities and are not eligible for the EDF program.

### *Selection Criteria*

Applications will be reviewed for completeness, documentation of application/project thresholds, and responses to project-specific questions and comments (project conditions) included in DHCD’s letter of invitation. To be considered for funding, a proposed activity must meet all thresholds, and must address all project conditions to the satisfaction of DHCD.

In the event there are insufficient funds for all eligible applications, DHCD reserves the right to consider Economic Development Fund applications out of order of receipt based upon a review of the number of jobs to be created or retained, the impact of a project on the local tax base, such as increase in tax revenues, sudden job loss, levels of matching or leveraged funds, or other compelling circumstances.

### *How to Apply*

EDF applicants will be evaluated according to a two-stage process. Online application through Mass CDBG/EDF web-based application. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, based on funding availability. Contact program staff for assistance at 617-573-1400.

**Comments and Recommendations:** The relevance of the EDF program for Ashby community and economic development includes job creation and retention projects, improving the local tax base, and improving overall quality of life.

15. Community Development Block Grant Recovery Act (CDBG-R) program (MRPC) – For infrastructure and public facilities projects not funded by CDBG. DHCD focused on infrastructure improvements, job creation, readiness to proceed and assisting low and moderate income populations most affected by the recession in the development of the proposed list of projects.

**Comments and Recommendations:** The CDBG-R is not likely a key tool for Ashby but given its scope of projects that include infrastructure, it shouldn't be completely discounted.

16. MassWorks Infrastructure Program – The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides a one-stop shop for municipalities and other eligible public entities seeking public infrastructure funding to support economic development and job creation. The Program represents an administrative consolidation of six former grant programs:

- a. Public Works Economic Development (PWED)
- b. Community Development Action Grant (CDAG)
- c. Growth Districts Initiative (GDI) Grant Program
- d. Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion Program (MORE)
- e. Small Town Rural Assistance Program (STRAP)
- f. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Program

The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides public infrastructure grants that support four project types:

- o Housing development at density of at least 4 units to the acre (both market and affordable units)
- o Transportation improvements to enhance safety in small, rural communities
- o Community revitalization and sustainable development
- o Economic development and job creation and retention

**Comments and Recommendations:** The relevance of this program for Ashby community and economic development includes the transportation improvements category, which is focused on small, rural communities. It also provides funds for communities that seek community revitalization and sustainable development that, arguably, Ashby is now seeking with its sustainable economic development plan. Finally, it funds economic

development and job creation and retention. This should be a key program for Ashby to consider applying to.

Another point to consider here is that programs that communities previously relied on for infrastructure improvements such as PWED and STRAP were rolled into MassWorks and thus this program should be considered a catch-all for local infrastructure, including transportation projects.

## 17. Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)

### *Program Description*

DHCD's Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) offers a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns. The primary mission of the MDI is to make downtown revitalization an integral part of community development in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. MDI's guiding principles are that the most effective approach to downtown revitalization is a holistic one; that it addresses economic and community development needs; and that it provides a framework of interrelated activities that promote positive change in a downtown to keep it healthy and prosperous.

Successful downtown revitalization is comprehensive and includes a well-balanced community strategy composed of seven downtown building blocks:

- a. Encouraging Community Involvement & Ownership;
- b. Preserving & Enhancing Downtown Character;
- c. Ensuring Economic Vitality;
- d. Promoting Downtown Assets;
- e. Getting Into & Around Downtown;
- f. Living Downtown; and,
- g. Keeping Downtown Safe.

### *Activities*

Currently, MDI provides assistance through the following components:

“Desktop” Technical Assistance

Ongoing technical assistance on downtown-related issues is provided by staff via

telephone, fax, and written materials based on requests from communities as well as referrals from DHCD staff. Recent requests have included how to develop business recruitment programs, upper story spaces, and downtown organizational bylaws.

#### *TA Site Visit Program*

The MDI Technical Assistance Site Visit Program provides assistance to communities, through consultant services, targeting specific issues related to a community's downtown revitalization efforts. The goal of this technical assistance is to address and overcome obstacles to a community's downtown revitalization efforts. The TA Site Visit Program is limited to non-entitlement CDBG communities.

#### *Education and Training*

MDI is charged with development of downtown education and training opportunities that meet the needs of communities at various stages of downtown revitalization. A series of workshops is held each year on topics such as business recruitment and retention, design issues, creating a business improvement district, or upper-story housing.

#### *Eligible Applicants*

Eligibility requirements vary among program components and restrictions may apply. The TA Site Visit Program is restricted to non-entitlement CDBG communities.

#### *Contact*

For additional information, please call the Division of Community Services at 617-573-1400.

**Comments and Recommendations:** Another program for non-entitlement communities, the MDI appears to be a good program for assisting in the revitalization of Ashby's town center area. The key to taking advantage of this program would be to determine the range of tasks that the town seeks which would allow an application to specify the products and services needed.

#### 18. Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Program

### *Program Description*

The Division of Community Services provides small grants to CDBG non-entitlement communities for short-term problem solving or technical assistance projects. Municipalities may apply for grants of up to \$1000 to pay for up to 30 hours (\$900) of technical assistance and up to \$100 for reimbursement of travel, photocopying and/or the cost of incidental materials.

The Program focuses on technical assistance related to community development and capacity building related to community development at the local level. All communities are encouraged to apply for funding, as described below. However, because funds are limited and a rolling application process is being used, applications will be funded on a first-come, first-served basis. The Peer-to-Peer Program is funded with Massachusetts' CDBG technical assistance funds.

### *Rolling Application Process*

- a. A municipality's Board of Selectmen or chief executive writes a letter describing a problem or issue that can be addressed or solved by the short-term technical assistance of an official in another community.
- b. A board, commission or department may also submit a request for assistance. Such a request must include a vote of the Board of Selectmen or letter of support from the Mayor or City Manager approving the request.
- c. A community may recommend a specific individual to serve as its Peer in its request letter or solicit DHCD's assistance in finding a suitable Peer.
- d. Send the request letter and, if appropriate, the required vote or letter of support to:

#### **DHCD Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Program**

attn: David Haynes, Regional Services Representative  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300, Boston, MA 02114.

### *DHCD's Review Process*

The request is reviewed to ensure that it meets the following requirements:

1. It does not give an unfair advantage to one community over another in a competitive situation, i.e., preparing a grant application or recruiting a specific business;
2. It does not propose as a Peer either a municipal official who is an elected or appointed official or an employee of the community making the request.

If the letter suggests a Peer, DHCD reviews its list to see if this Peer is on the current list. If the Peer is not on the list, DHCD contacts the proposed Peer to see if she/he is willing to complete an application to serve as a Peer. If no Peer is suggested, DHCD identifies a suitable Peer from its list of applications on file.

DHCD discusses the project with both the requesting community and the Peer to ensure that they are willing to work together and that the project, as described, is achievable for the available funding.

All eligible requests will be funded provided funding is available and there is sufficient time between the award date and the end of the fiscal year to complete the project.

Once an award is made, a grant contract between DHCD and the municipality is prepared. It includes a scope of services based on the request letter that directs the municipality to hire the designated Peer to do the project as described.

#### *Municipal Responsibilities*

- 
- e. ~~Designate a local contract manager.~~
  - f. Sign and return the contract to DHCD. Wait until a fully executed copy of the contract is returned from DHCD before implementing the project.
  - g. Contact the Peer and set up a work schedule and, if desired, a work agreement that includes the contract scope of services. Carry out tasks agreed upon with the Peer to undertake the project.
  - h. Request a contract amendment if modifications are needed in the scope of services.

- i. Implement the project. Upon project completion, the Peer prepares a final report for the municipality and submits an invoice that details the number of hours worked and incidental expenses incurred.
- j. Submit a copy of the Peer report, a copy of the invoice, a Peer-to-Peer Program Evaluation Form and a letter requesting the payment covered by the invoice to DHCD.
- k. When all required reporting information is submitted and complete, DHCD pays the municipality. The municipality subsequently forwards payment to the Peer.

*Sample Projects Include:*

- l. Grant start-up and record keeping processes
- m. Developing guidelines for housing rehabilitation programs
- n. Developing guidelines for commercial rehabilitation programs
- o. Economic development plan for enterprise community and criteria for certification of businesses
- p. Downtown revitalization
- q. Establishing micro-enterprise assistance programs
- r. Preparing for a GIS needs assessment
- s. Developing policies for economic development, septic system betterment programs, revolving loan funds, etc.
- t. Community development-related management capacity study
- u. Historic preservation

*Contact*

If you have any questions about the Peer-to-Peer Program, would like to discuss a proposed application, or are a locally elected or appointed official with expertise you could share as a Peer Consultant, contact David Haynes, Regional Services Representative, at (617) 573-1336 or [David.Haynes@state.ma.us](mailto:David.Haynes@state.ma.us)

**Comments and Recommendations:** The Peer-to-Peer program would seem useful to a town such as Ashby where resources are scarce and challenges not too unique. Specifically, some of the sample projects that could be similar to what Ashby needs include downtown revitalization, establishing micro-enterprise assistance programs, developing policies for economic development, and septic system betterment programs.

However, Ashby could conceptualize a different problem and submit it for consideration.

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## TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

### 19. Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Program

Section 5311 of the Federal Transit Act provides funds for planning, capital, operating and administrative assistance to state agencies, local public bodies, private nonprofit organizations, Indian Tribes and groups, and operators of public transportation services. The goals of the program are to enhance the access of people in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and recreation; to assist in maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in rural and small urban areas; to encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all Federal funds used to provide passenger transportation in non-urbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services; to assist the development and support of intercity bus transportation; and to provide for the participation of private transportation providers in non-urbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible. To learn more about Section 5311, contact:

Joanne Champa  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116  
[joanne.champa@state.ma.us](mailto:joanne.champa@state.ma.us)

**Comments and Recommendations:** Given the focus on mobility in non-urbanized areas, the Federal 5311 program might have some relevance for Ashby, if not alone, perhaps in the form of a partnership with neighboring communities. Also consider the 5311(f) program that connects non-urbanized areas with urban transit systems.

### 20. TIGER Grants (US DOT)

The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the U.S. Department of Transportation to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve

critical national objectives. Congress dedicated \$1.5 billion for TIGER I and \$600 million for TIGER II to fund projects that have a significant impact on the Nation, a region or a metropolitan area. TIGER's highly competitive process, galvanized by tremendous applicant interest, allowed DOT to fund 51 innovative capital projects in TIGER I, and an additional 42 capital projects in TIGER II. TIGER II also featured a new Planning Grant category and 33 planning projects were also funded through TIGER II. Each project is multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional or otherwise challenging to fund through existing programs.

The TIGER program enables DOT to use a rigorous process to select projects with exceptional benefits, explore ways to deliver projects faster and save on construction costs, and make investments in our Nation's infrastructure that make communities more livable and sustainable.

**Comments and Recommendations:** TIGER grants seem more focused on larger projects and regions but it would be useful to check on the applicability of this program through MRPC.

#### 21. Federal Transit Administration Section 3037

Section 3037, the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program, has two major goals: to provide transportation services in urban, suburban, and rural areas to assist welfare recipients and other low-income individuals in accessing employment opportunities, and to increase collaboration among the regional transportation providers, human service agencies and related service providers, employers, metropolitan planning organizations, the state, and affected communities and individuals.

To learn more contact

Joanne Champa  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116  
[joanne.champa@state.ma.us](mailto:joanne.champa@state.ma.us)

**Comments and Recommendations:** This program may or may not be relevant given the current population, the need for employment, and where that employment is.

#### 22. Communities Count

The DHCD's Communities Count Initiative is the coordination of federal and state funds and resources to assist communities with their local priorities in restoring and revitalizing valuable community assets, including housing, community development and related infrastructure such as streets, roads and park improvements. The South End of Springfield and the Main South/Piedmont/Chandler area in Worcester are DHCD's first two Communities Count Initiatives sites.

The goals of the Initiative include:

- Ensuring the Patrick-Murray Administration's responsiveness to community-driven plans for revitalization;
- Partnering with the supporting communities in implementing those plans and creating an immediate impact on community restoration;
- Supporting youth participation in the community's improvement projects; and
- Putting stimulus money to work in a community creating jobs, assisting homeowners, reclaiming abandoned and foreclosed housing and repairing infrastructure.

**Comments and Recommendations:** This program includes a focus on infrastructure, which could include roads.

## SERVICE

### Massachusetts Service Alliance

The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA) invests in community-based organizations and institutions that rely upon volunteers and people engaged in service to meet their community's needs. Through investing, convening, advocating, and building capacity, MSA develops and supports initiatives that incorporate service and volunteerism as effective strategies to address the pressing needs in the Commonwealth.

#### *Impact areas:*

1. Disaster Relief Disaster Relief
2. Education
3. Environment
4. Health
5. Mentoring
6. Unmet Human Needs
7. Veterans

#### *Specific opportunities are available for:*

- Youth
- Older Adults
- National Days of Service

#### *Contact Information:*

100 N. Washington St., 3rd Floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
617.542.2544  
[www.mass-service.org](http://www.mass-service.org)

**Comments and Recommendations:** This program includes a focus on education which might be applicable to job training or establishing an apprenticeship program.

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## ENERGY

## General

### 23. DOE SunShot Initiative: Rooftop Solar Challenge to Induce Market Transformation

This funding opportunity aims to achieve measurable improvements in market conditions for rooftop photovoltaics across the U.S. An emphasis will be placed on streamlined and standardized permitting and interconnection processes. DOE anticipates providing up to \$12.5 million in up to 25 grants. Applicants must represent a total population of 500,000 or greater.

Application Due: **August 31, 2011**

More information: <http://1.usa.gov/qnWNeV>

**Comments and Recommendations:** This program might be applicable regionally or super-regionally.

## Residential Programs

### 24. Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

The Low Income Weatherization Assistance Program provides eligible households with full-scale home energy conservation services.

The program is administered by a network of local agencies, in many areas the same agency that administers the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP or Fuel Assistance) program. See the "How to Apply" section below to find the local weatherization agency.

#### *Eligible Applicants*

Households that are eligible for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP or Fuel Assistance) are eligible for weatherization services. Eligibility is based on a maximum gross annual income not to exceed 60% of the Estimated State Median Income. Priority of service is given to those households with elderly, disabled, children (6 and under), LIHEAP high-energy users, and Native Americans. Homeowners and tenants with their landlord's permission are eligible.

Typical weatherization activities include:

- Air sealing to reduce infiltration
- Attic Insulation
- Sidewall Insulation
- Floor Insulation
- Pipe and/or Duct insulation
- Limited Energy Related Repairs.

Homes also receive a thorough evaluation of the heating system as well as health and safety testing of all combustion appliances. Local licensed and insured private-sector weatherization contractors complete the work at no cost to the residents. The local agency inspects all completed work to be certain that the authorized work was completed in a satisfactory manner.

#### *Funding Limits*

An average grant of \$5,500 in weatherization funds is awarded for each home for installed energy efficiency measures. Households may also be eligible for a variety of utility funded energy efficiency programs that vary by utility service area.

#### *Selection Criteria*

Households must be eligible for the LIHEAP (Fuel Assistance) program. Priority of service is given to those households with elderly, disabled, children (6 and under), LIHEAP high-energy users, and Native Americans. Applicants may contact their local weatherization agency to express interest in the program.

#### *How To Apply*

The application for the Fuel Assistance Program (LIHEAP) also serves as the application for the Weatherization Assistance Program; it must be completed at the Fuel Assistance Agency Service Locator . You may also contact the HEATLINE at 1-800-632-8175 to learn where to apply. Please call ahead for an appointment to fill out the application with an intake worker. Households will be required to verify their income, household characteristics, and address.

#### *Applications Guidelines*

Households with a gross annual income that does not exceed 60% of the Estimated State Median Income may be eligible for weatherization services. Additionally

households in which a member receives Supplemental Social Security (SSI) or TAFDC benefits are also eligible.

### *Contact*

For additional information about Weatherization, the Fuel Assistance Program or HEARTWAP, please call the HEATLINE at 1-800-632-8175.

### *Other Programs for Home Energy Assistance:*

DOE Weatherization Assistance Program - <http://www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/>

Energy Star - <http://www.energystar.gov/>

Home Energy Saver - <http://homeenergysaver.lbl.gov/>

US DHHS LIHEAP - <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/liheap/>

Gas Utility Funded Energy Efficiency Programs - <http://www.gasnetworks.com/>

UNITIL - <http://www.unitil.com/>

## 24. Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)

### *Program Description*

Known commonly as Fuel Assistance, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides eligible households with help in paying a portion of winter heating bills.

### *Eligible Applicants*

Homeowners and renters including households whose cost of heat is included in the rent can apply at the agency in their area. ~~Click here for an agency listing by town.~~ Eligibility is based on household size and the gross annual income of every household member, 18 years of age or older. Household income cannot exceed 60% of estimated State Median Income (see chart below).

### *Eligible Activities and Funding Requirements*

This program provides assistance through a fixed benefit amount for the cost of the primary source of heat with includes, but is not limited to:

- Oil
- Electricity

- Natural gas
- Propane
- Kerosene
- Wood
- Coal

If eligible, discounts are automatically given on:

- Electric bills for investor owned electric utilities
- Gas bills for investor-owned gas utilities
- Telephone bills

Payments for actual usage or fuel delivery are made directly to the heating vendor for primary energy needs from November 1st to April 30th except when the cost of heating is included in the rent.

#### *Funding Limits*

The benefit levels are dependent on the funding allocated to Massachusetts by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Housing subsidies will also determine the specific benefit level.

#### *Selection Criteria*

- Household size
- Gross annual income for all household members, 18 years or older
- Selection criteria takes into account households with housing subsidies and those whose cost of heat is included in the rent.

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#### *How to Apply*

First-time applicants must apply in person at the fuel assistance agency in their area. Households must apply each year; applications are mailed to households after the first year. Households can apply from November 1st to April 30th of the program year. Applicants who are denied assistance have the right to appeal through the local fuel assistance agency.

#### *Contact*

For additional information about LIHEAP, Weatherization, or HEARTWAP, please call the HEATLINE at 1-800-632-8175.

## 25. Heating System Repair & Replacement Program (HEARTWAP)

### *Program Description*

Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Weatherization Assistance Program (HEARTWAP) provides heating system repair and replacement services to low-income households.

The program is administered by a network of local agencies, in most areas the same agency that administers the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP or Fuel Assistance) program. See the “Where to Apply” link to contact the local agency. HEARTWAP contracts with heating system service companies to complete the work for eligible households.

### *Eligible Applicants*

Households that are eligible for LIHEAP with a gross annual income that does not exceed 60% of the Estimated State Median Income are eligible for HEARTWAP services. The program is designed primarily to serve homeowners. Landlords are required to maintain the heating system for their tenants under the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code.

### *Eligible Activities and Funding Requirements*

Through the heating season, the program is primarily an emergency-based heating system repair program that helps eligible homeowners pay to repair or replace defective or unsafe heating systems. If sufficient funds are available after the heating season, HEARTWAP will complete maintenance work (clean and tunes) and replace heating systems that are in poor condition and not worth repairing. Funds are also available for asbestos abatement only as needed to enable heating system repairs or replacements to be completed safely.

### *Funding Limits*

There are maximum allowable expenditure limits for different types of heating system activities. In some instances households may be required to provide a co-payment. Local agencies attempt to utilize all available utility funds for system replacements in an effort to minimize the need for client contributions.

### *Selection Criteria*

Households are served based on need. Typically, a LIHEAP (Fuel Assistance) eligible homeowner who has a no-heat or unsafe heating system situation will call the local agency. The agency contracts with licensed and insured heating repair technicians to fix the problem. To the greatest extent possible local agencies will work with the customer's service dealer of record.

### *How To Apply*

Eligibility for HEARTWAP services is based on eligibility for the current year's LIHEAP (Fuel Assistance program). Interested households should contact their local Fuel Assistance agency for application information. Households will be required to verify their income, household characteristics, address and home ownership.

### *Application Guidelines*

Households that are eligible for LIHEAP with a gross annual income that does not exceed 60% of the Estimated State Median Income are eligible for HEARTWAP services.

### *Contact*

For additional information about HEARTWAP, the Fuel Assistance Program or Weatherization, please call the HEATLINE at 1-800-632-8175.

### **Commercial Programs**

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~~Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA)~~

Green business development resources including:

- Contact for environmental technology developers: Linda Benevides at 617-626-1197 or [Linda.Benevides@state.ma.us](mailto:Linda.Benevides@state.ma.us)
- Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust provides funding for renewable energy projects. Call 617-315-9355 or visit <http://www.masscec.com>
- Some other green business and community development links below:

- *Advanced Technology and Manufacturing Center* (UMass–Dartmouth) – The goal of the ATMC is to provide advanced technology and manufacturing solutions, through industry and university partnerships, to meet current and future business needs. Go here: <http://www.atmc.umassd.edu/>
- *Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy* (UMass–Amherst) – The Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (CEERE) provides technological and economic solutions to environmental problems resulting from energy production, industrial, manufacturing, and commercial activities, and land use practices. Go here: <http://www.ceere.org/>
- *Massachusetts Clean Energy Center*: <http://www.masscec.com/>
- *National Environmental Technology Institute* (UMass–Amherst) – NETI promotes and funds long–term research to minimize or eliminate pollution from industrial processes. Go here: <http://www.umass.edu/tei/neti/index.html>
- *Smart Communities Network, Green Development Resources*. Resources found here: <http://www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/greendev/gdintro.shtml>
- *The Natural Step for Business* here: <http://www.naturalstep.org/en/the-natural-step-business>
- *Devens Eco–Efficiency Center* helps businesses reduce operating costs and increase efficiency: [http://www.ecostardevens.com/index\\_files/Page2800.htm](http://www.ecostardevens.com/index_files/Page2800.htm)

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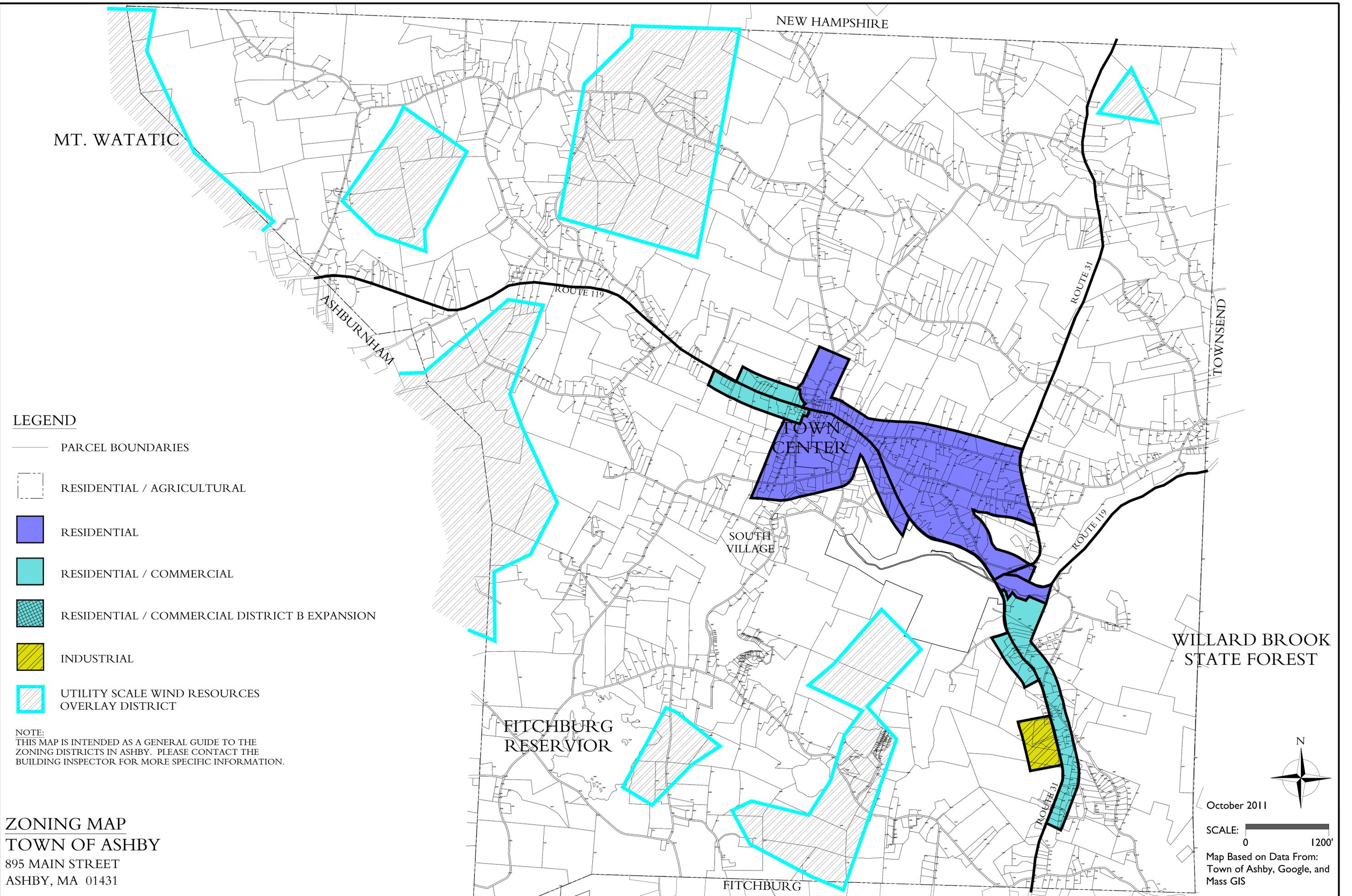
## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The programs and agencies outlined in this guide are not comprehensive but are a work in progress as a resource for the Town of Ashby to seek grant funds, loans, and other products and services for economic and community development enhancement. Many of these tools will address a sustainability factor that complements the sustainable economic development plan (in progress) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Sustainable Development Principles. The most applicable programs to seek funds from depend on the town’s prioritization of projects. As a few examples, the following programs would seem to be a good fit for some of the town’s goals and objectives:

- If rehabilitation of buildings such as the Grange is a high priority, then the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** should be given strong consideration.
- If developing a strong form-based zoning bylaw for the village center is a goal, I would suggest pursuit of a **Sustainable Community Challenge Planning Grant**.
- The **Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)** would appear to be a very useful program for creating or supporting a village center business association and all of the tasks that are needed for a viable town center that attracts tourism.
- To support economic development planning, the **Peer-to-Peer program** could be applicable to determine what programs and policies other small towns are doing to advance sustainable economic development.

I would suggest that the key to pursuit of one or more of the grants or resources listed in this guide is clear prioritization within the goals and objectives of the sustainable economic development plan (with the exception of Peer-to-Peer which could contribute to those goals and objectives).

## **J. Ashby's Existing Zoning Map**



NEW HAMPSHIRE

MT. WATATIC

ASHBURNHAM

ROUTE 119

ROUTE 31

TOWNSEND

TOWN CENTER

SOUTH VILLAGE

ROUTE 119

WILLARD BROOK STATE FOREST

FITCHBURG RESERVIOR

FITCHBURG

**LEGEND**

-  PARCEL BOUNDARIES
-  RESIDENTIAL / AGRICULTURAL
-  RESIDENTIAL
-  RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL
-  RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL DISTRICT B EXPANSION
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  UTILITY SCALE WIND RESOURCES OVERLAY DISTRICT

NOTE:  
THIS MAP IS INTENDED AS A GENERAL GUIDE TO THE ZONING DISTRICTS IN ASHBY. PLEASE CONTACT THE BUILDING INSPECTOR FOR MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

**ZONING MAP**  
**TOWN OF ASHBY**  
895 MAIN STREET  
ASHBY, MA 01431



October 2011

SCALE:  0 1200'

Map Based on Data From:  
Town of Ashby, Google, and  
Mass GIS