



Town Of Westford

Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

Strategic Plan Implementation Workbook



Overview

This implementation plan outlines the specific action items required to advance each strategy effectively. Each action item is categorized by its completion timeframe: short-term, mid-term, and long-term. Short-term actions are those expected to be completed within the next 12 months, mid-term actions are those that should be achieved within 12- to 24-months, and long-term actions are those projected to take 24 months or more.

This structured approach ensures that progress is measurable and aligned with the Town's overarching objectives. Additionally, this implementation plan is designed to be a living document, continuously updated as tasks are completed, and new action items emerge. Regular reviews and adjustments will help maintain momentum and ensure that the strategic plan remains relevant and responsive to changing circumstances.

The Town of Westford's Strategic Plan identified the following Strategic Outcome Areas:

- Responsive and Responsible Town Government
- Caring and Engaged Community
- Opportunities for Recreation and Preservation of Open Space
- **Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action**
- Diverse and Attainable Housing Options
- Intentional and Appropriate Economic Growth
- Quality Educational Opportunities

For each of these outcome areas there are individual strategies and associated action items. Strategies are the specific projects, programs, or initiatives that the Town needs to undertake to make progress in each outcome area. Action items are the specific steps to advance each strategy.

Strategies

Strategies are the specific projects, programs, or initiatives that the Town needs to undertake in order to make progress in the Strategic Outcome Area. The strategies within the Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action outcome area are:

1. Create a Solar Siting Plan utilizing municipal and school properties
2. Conduct a portfolio-wide building energy audit and develop a prioritized implementation plan and funding strategy for energy efficient improvements to Town and School facilities
3. Develop a Fleet Transition Plan toward more energy efficient vehicles with supporting infrastructure
4. Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors

Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) measure and demonstrate progress in each of the Strategic Outcome Areas. They are measurable metrics used to evaluate success, providing a quantitative or qualitative way to assess performance and monitor progress. KPIs for Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action include:

Key Performance Indicator	Person(s) Responsible	Target	FY2024	Data Source	Frequency
Total renewable energy generated annually (kWh)	Town Manager	TBD	18,819	Mass Energy Insights/ Solren/Yaskawa	Annual
Reduction in energy use intensity for all Town buildings (total kBtu/total sqft)	Town Manager, Facilities	TBD	-1.66	Mass Energy Insights	Annual
Increase in annual fleet clean energy use (*metric being refined*)	Town Manager	TBD	TBD	This metric is being refined	Annual
Reduction in annual landfilled trash tons per household	Town Manager	TBD	-0.12	MassDEP ReTRAC Report (note this is calendar year)	Annual
Tons of waste diverted through curbside and residential recycling programs	Town Manager	TBD	1,939	MassDEP ReTRAC Report (note this is calendar year)	Annual

Baseline Assessments and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

To effectively measure progress and evaluate the success of each strategy, baseline assessments provide a starting point by documenting current conditions and performance metrics. These assessments establish a clear foundation for tracking changes over time, ensuring the town can monitor its achievements and make data-driven adjustments to its plans. See individual KPI tabs for trends and data.



Strategy 1 - Solar Siting Plan

Create a Solar Siting Plan utilizing municipal and school properties

Action Items

1 **Development of Draft Solar Siting Plan Document**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office

Timeframe: 2 Years

Resources: TBD

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 The Town is currently evaluating potential pathways for this effort. We will be meeting with National Grid to discuss what resources and support they can provide. We also can designate this as a specific project under the Task 3 of the NMCOG contract. We continue to work with Ameresco on Blanchard Roof and any facilities included in the original procurement.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 No update.

2 **Establish solar-friendly permitting policies and amend zoning to be solar-ready**

Responsible: Land Use Management Department

Timeframe: 1 year

Resources: NMCOG

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 Discussion with NMCOG on designating this as a special project under the Sustainability Support Services engagement.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 NMCOG is working on development of draft Ground-Mounted Solar (Small Scale) and Solar Battery Storage Zoning Bylaws under the Sustainability Support Services contract in collaboration with the Land Use Management Department.

3 **Work with National Grid to assist with transition and to understand capacity and interconnection obstacles**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office

Timeframe: Multi-year/ongoing

Resources: Staff time from multiple departments

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 Initial meeting set for February 4th with National Grid and staff to begin an ongoing dialogue on issues of mutual concern.



Strategy 1 - Solar Siting Plan

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Staff from Public Safety, DPW, TMO, LUMD, and Facilities met with staff from multiple divisions of National Grid on Feb. 4th to discuss myriad issues. While the principal topic was grid capacity specific to MBTA projects, interconnection was briefly discussed and follow-up is planned at a future meeting. Both parties agreed to continue meeting with a goal of once per quarter.

4 Complete Blanchard Middle School rooftop solar project

Responsible: Town Manager's Office/ School Facilities

Timeframe: TBD

Resources: Grants, incentives and potential future debt issuance

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 No update. Roof replacement, including making it solar-ready, was fully completed in the 1st Quarter.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Staff reengaged with Ameresco to discuss using the existing M.G.L. Ch.25A §11(i) procurement (performance contracting) as a potential vehicle for a solar array. A meeting is set for June to discuss specific projects to include in a revised project package.



Strategy 2 - Town & School Energy Efficiency Projects

Conduct a portfolio-wide building energy audit and develop a prioritized implementation plan and funding strategy for energy efficient improvements to Town and School facilities

Action Items

1 Complete Investment Grade Audit (IGA) with Ameresco to use as foundation for capital improvement plan (CIP) as it applies to facilities.

Responsible: Town Manager's Office; Facilities Department

Timeframe: By end of FY2025

Resources: Staff time

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 Draft report received. Transmitted to Tecton as part of space needs assessment; currently being used to guide immediate project needs based on available incentives under Ch. 25A §4 procurements.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Staff met with Ameresco representatives in January to discuss revisions to the project selection sheet and a potential project focusing on selected projects that cannot be pursued under Ch. 25A §14. Staff has been actively working with Beacon (our consultant for this project) to pursue a potential project including Blanchard Solar, Building Management Systems (BMS), and Cameron Senior Center HVAC. Meetings are scheduled with National Grid in May and Ameresco in June.

2 Develop a Prioritization and Implementation Plan

Responsible: Town Manager's Office; Facilities Department

Timeframe: By Spring 2026 ATM

Resources: Staff time

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 See update for Action Item 1. Currently using this to aggressively pursue short-term incentives with National Grid per Action Item #4.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Tecton Architects is wrapping up the Space Needs Assessment project and has delivered draft needs assessment. Currently working on recommendations and draft CIP document, which will include most Town buildings. Final Department Head Workshop planned for Qtr. 4. The final deliverable will include a scalable Excel workbook that will include buildings under study. Staff will use this workbook to add in other data from other studies and capital and maintenance plans for a comprehensive CIP. A major component will be energy efficiency projects, either stand-alone or integrated into larger project scopes.



Strategy 2 - Town & School Energy Efficiency Projects

3 **Develop a funding strategy for energy-efficiency projects**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office; Finance Department

Timeframe: Spring 2025 ATM

Resources: Staff time

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 The Annual Town Meeting Warrant will include an article authorizing the creation of a fund or account in which rebates, grants, incentives and net energy savings can be transferred for use in funding Town and School energy efficiency project opportunities that arise due to the availability of short-term incentives, grants and other programs.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Article 4 was passed by Annual Town Meeting on March 22, 2025. Work continues on short-term projects (see Action Items #1 and #4). Staff is evaluating use of a significant leveraging of existing net metering credits (NMC) for FY2025 and FY2026 projects, as well as reallocation of future credits (Schedule Z) generated by the 2013-2014 solar purchase and sale agreements with NexAmp (Hubbarston and Charlton facilities) to fund future projects.

4 **Fast-track energy efficiency projects based on incentive and funding opportunities as they arise with a goal of completing at least one major slate of projects per fiscal year.**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office; Finance Department; Facilities Department

Timeframe: Annual, ongoing

Resources: Staff time, Incentives, Green Communities grants, and NMC.

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 We currently have active on lighting projects at 2 buildings and weatherization projects on 8 buildings. Total project costs are \$860,305, with rebates for \$504,542 and additional on-bill financing for total incentives of \$767,700, resulting in a net year 1 cost of \$92,605 and a leverage ratio of 89%. These projects will generate a positive cash flow immediately upon completion and after repayment an estimated \$68,000 annually at current rates. We are currently evaluating additional lighting and transformer replacement projects on 16 buildings and the full electrification of the Abbot WWTP (currently heated with oil) for the FY2025-FY2026 projects.



Strategy 2 - Town & School Energy Efficiency Projects

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Abbot WWTP Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP)/Electrification Project under contract with Guardian Energy Management as the first project to utilize net metering credits (NMC) as a funding source. Using incentives and NMC, the project will fully electrify this facility at no out-of-pocket costs to the Town, replacing one of two remaining fuel oil systems in our inventory. Work is ongoing on a large package (>\$1.5M) in LED retrofits at up to ten Town and School facilities. An application was submitted for FY25 Green Communities Round 3 grant to fund transformer replacements at 5 Town and School facilities. If approved, this project will be fully funded with the grant, incentives and on-bill repayment, with no out-of-pocket costs and a short payback period.



Strategy 4 - Fleet Transition Plan

Develop a Fleet Transition Plan towards more energy efficient vehicles with supporting infrastructure.

Action Items

1 **Transition full fleet inventory to Brightly software platform**

Responsible: Town Manager, Fire, Police and DPW

Timeframe: Summer, 2025

Resources:

Notes: Includes developing a fleet numbering system and SOP's for maintaining inventory.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 All DPW and Facilities vehicles in Brightly. Fire Department vehicles will be entered in Qtr. 4.

FY2025 Qtr. 2 No update.

2 **Work with Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee (CEASC) and Town departments to evaluate operational and cost impacts of Zero-Emission Vehicle First Policy.**

Responsible: TMO, DPW, CEASC

Timeframe: 1 Year

Resources: Staff time

Notes:

Requirement #5 for Climate Leader Community program states "All Departments in the municipality must purchase only zero-emission vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable."

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 No update. This is planned for FY2026.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 No update. This is planned for FY2026.

2 **Develop comprehensive fuel tracking across all platforms and departments.**

Responsible: TMO, DPW

Timeframe: 1 Year

Resources: Staff time

Notes:



Strategy 4 - Fleet Transition Plan

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 DPW fuel system replaced in early FY2025, and all vehicles have moved over to centralized fueling. This will allow full access to department/vehicle level fuel consumption and fuel efficiency. Individual cards were issued for all EV's using Town chargers to allow tracking of power consumption, which was not contemplated when the chargers were initially deployed. This will allow the Town to track EV charging costs moving forward.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 DPW fuel system replaced in early FY2025, and all vehicles have moved over to centralized fueling. This will allow full access to department/vehicle level fuel consumption and fuel efficiency.

3 Work with Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee (CEASC) and Town departments to evaluate operational and cost impacts of Zero-Emission Vehicle First Policy.

Responsible: TMO, DPW, CEASC

Timeframe: 1 Year

Resources: Staff time

Notes:

Requirement #5 for Climate Leader Community program states "All Departments in the municipality must purchase only zero-emission vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable."

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 No update. This is planned for FY2026.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 No update. This is planned for FY2026.



Strategy 4 - Comprehensive Waste Reduction

Reduce waste generation and increase recycling rates to promote environmental sustainability and cost efficiency in waste management

Action Items

- 1 Develop SharePoint site to provide hub for managing collection and disposal contracts (in collaboration with WRC) and tracking/reporting data and trends.**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office

Timeframe: 1 year (complete by FY2026 Quarter 1 end)

Resources: TMO and IT staff time

Notes: MassDEP ReTrac reporting (CY basis) provides benchmarking and standardized reporting data.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 WRC completed MassDEP CY2024 ReTrac reporting, which will provide standardized benchmarking data. Assessor's office completed initial work on developing accurate data on eligible households, which is the foundational piece of several critical metrics.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 TMO centralized collection of all collection and disposal contract data, including invoices from EL Harvey and ReWorld, and other required reports. Still working on deploying a shared file location in recently migrated Office 365 platform, but still using emails currently to share information with WRC to review invoices and enforce contract terms.

- 2 Develop a comprehensive waste reduction strategy to include residential and municipal sectors.**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office

Timeframe: 1 year

Resources: Westford Recycling Commission, TMO staff time, NMCOG

Notes: MassDEP ReTrac reporting (CY basis) provides benchmarking and standardized reporting data.

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 No update.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 WRC designated a working group to assist TMO with developing a plan. NMCOG will take lead in developing plan document in collaboration with WRC and TMO. PAYT and an Enterprise Fund will be foundational elements of the plan.



Strategy 4 - Comprehensive Waste Reduction

- 3 Develop processes to allow more complete and disciplined management of existing solid waste and recycling contracts to optimize performance and minimize costs in order to redirect existing budgets to additional waste diversion efforts through an Enterprise Fund.**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office

Timeframe: 6 months

Resources: Westford Recycling Commission, TMO staff time

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 TMO, working with Town Counsel, settled a claim against Waste Management for \$110,000 for contract violations for the contract ending in FY2024. As part of the groundwork, internal control processes were developed to better monitor contract performance, providing a solid foundation to monitor and enforce compliance with the Town's current hauler, EL Harvey. Enforcement began in this quarter of volume limits on residential collection; these limits had been in place since 2019 but had not been enforced under prior contracts.

FY2025 Qtr. 2 TMO, using data and analysis conducted by Westford Recycling Commission members, successfully challenged the blended value rate being charged by EL Harvey, resulting in a credit of \$18,000 and improved oversight on invoices moving forward. WRC continues to take the lead in monthly review and verification of commodities pricing being used to determine recycling revenues.

FY2025 Qtr. 3 WRC continues to conduct monthly reviews and approvals of recycling commodities pricing.

- 4 Implement Pay-As-You-Throw curbside collection**

Responsible: Town Manager's Office; Finance Department

Timeframe: 1 Year

Resources: Staff time, program revenue, MassDEP grants

Notes:

Updates/Status:

FY2025 Qtr. 2 Options for program structure presented to Select Board based on staff research and resident survey. Guidance from Board was to further evaluate Hybrid PAYT program (35-gallon cart(s) and fee-based overflow bags). Additional research underway.



Strategy 4 - Comprehensive Waste Reduction

FY2025 Qtr. 3 Staff solicited further recommendations from WRC on program design and conducted additional research. Resulting recommendations will be provided in the 4th quarter on a program designed around a "basic" service with automated carts under existing tax levy with fee-based collection of amounts in excess of basic service. Staff is working with vendors to finalize program costs, revenue projections and other details. Final recommendation expected early 1st Quarter FY2026. Application for MassDEP Technical Assistance Grant, a prerequisite for implementation grant funding, will be submitted this quarter.