

# Implementation Plan

## Introduction

The Implementation Plan is intended to guide Ayer through the next ten years as the Town transitions from its military and industrial roots to a modern community of eclectic businesses, affordable housing opportunities, and diverse recreation opportunities overseen by an efficient Town government. The purpose of the implementation plan is to create a blueprint to establish policies and actions that offer high quality municipal services and facilities that will serve the community's needs in upcoming years.

The goals and strategies listed in the Implementation Plan are derived from the three-year master plan process, commencing in 2015 by the Master Plan Steering Committee and municipal staff. The five Master Plan Goals are intended to be the framework for the goals and actions developed for each of the topical elements: Land Use, Housing, Resources (natural, cultural, open space, and recreation), Transportation, Infrastructure, and Municipal Services and Facilities. Note that some actions appear more than once under different elements as they may serve several different objectives.

Within this plan, there are a number of acronyms referring to responsible parties. Please refer to the table below for a complete list of responsible parties for each action.

Acronym	Name	Acronym	Name
BOS	Board of Selectmen	CC	Conservation Commission
TA	Town Administrator	CA	Conservation Agent
C&ED	Office of Com. & Economic Development	HC	Historical Commission
TP	Town Planner	CPC	Com. Preservation Committee
PB	Planning Board	FC	Finance Committee
DIR	Director of C&EH	LIB	Library
CDP	Com. Development Program Manager	APD	Ayer Police Department
DPW	Department of Public Works	AO	Assessor's Office
MART	Regional Transportation Planning	MRPC	Regional Planning Commission
HA	Housing Authority	COA	Council on Aging
REC	Parks and Recreation	IDFA	Industrial Development Financing Authority
CuCo	Cultural Council	BOH	Board of Health

## Master Plan Goals:

1. Increase the Town's ability to efficiently and effectively manage Ayer's services and facilities in a fiscally sustainable and environmentally responsible manner to encourage a high quality of life for residents and an advantageous environment in which businesses can prosper.
2. Actively protect, conserve, and preserve Ayer's natural resources, heritage, and supporting infrastructure to protect critical environmental habitats, drinking water supplies, recreational areas, and open spaces.
3. Encourage the comprehensive redevelopment of Downtown Ayer to better accommodate housing opportunities, for both renters and owners at all income levels, and to provide for a vibrant downtown through the creation of new high-quality public gathering places, increased pedestrian access, new commercial space, and an enhanced visitor experience.
4. Expand and upgrade equitable multimodal transportation opportunities, including sidewalks, paths, trails, and rails in addition to roadways, to ensure that residents, workers, and business transportation needs are efficiently met.
5. Enact creative strategies to actively and effectively engage Ayer residents of all ages and walks of life in the Ayer public realm.



## Land Use Goals:

<b>1. Actively protect, conserve, and preserve Ayer's natural resources and supporting infrastructure to protect critical environmental habitats, drinking water supplies, recreational areas, and open spaces.</b>		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Draft and adopt the Petapawag Overlay zoning district to reduce development potential and protect the remaining lands within the Petapawag ACEC.	High	CA, TP
b. Procure lands near wellheads when they become available and place permanent conservation restrictions on them to preclude future development and protect the water supply.	Ongoing	CPC, CC, TA, BOS
c. Continue to manage, monitor, and treat Ayer's ponds, streams, and open spaces for invasive species and other threats.	Ongoing	DPW, CC, CA
d. Remediate contamination on public lands. Perform soils test, studies, and seek grant funds as staff time permits.	Ongoing	BOS, TA, DPW, FC
e. Revisit the creation of a stormwater utility to fund long term maintenance and system upgrades needed to comply with the Department of Environmental Protection regulations, as well as protect Ayer's surface and ground waters.	Medium	DPW, TA, BOS
f. Modernize Stormwater regulations and make bylaw available on DPW's website.	High	DPW
g. Continue to implement Best Management Practices with additional rain gardens, bioswales, and bioretention cells to mitigate runoff, erosion, and the discharge of pollutants.	Ongoing	DPW, CC
Funding Sources: General Fund, Open Space Trust Fund, CPA Funds, Grants		

<b>2. Encourage the expansion and continued redevelopment of Downtown Ayer to expand housing opportunities, for both renters and owners at all income levels, and promote a vibrant downtown through the creation of new public gathering places, increased pedestrian access, and new commercial space.</b>		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Adopt a Smart Growth Overlay District under M.G.L. Ch.40R.	High	TP, DIR
a. Formulate and adopt a Form Based Code for Park Street.	High	TP, DIR, MART
Funding Sources: General Fund, MART		



## Housing Goals:

1. Increase local capacity to plan, develop and manage housing units that meet local needs.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Form Housing Committee to maintain an inventory of Ayer's affordable housing options and administration to determine if it is meeting the needs and goals of Ayer's residents today.	High	C&ED
b. Formally coordinate meetings between the Housing Committee, COA, Housing Authority, Community & Economic Development Department, Planning Board, and Community Preservation Committee staff and committee chairs on a quarterly basis to discuss housing issues and opportunities to ensure information is being transmitted throughout Town Hall.	High	CDP
c. Increase the availability of information regarding housing assistance and request agency brochures to keep in Town Hall and links on the Town's website. (MassHousing loan programs, Section 8 application, private bank loans available to Low/Mod income households, etc.) Utilize the Town's social media to advertise new opportunities.	Medium	CDP
d. Track affordable developments listed on the SHI and proactively address expiring restrictions.	Ongoing	CDP, CPC
Funding Sources: General Fund, CPA Funds, Grants		

2. Increase housing opportunities for Ayer residents.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Work with the Planning Board to provide education on housing needs, particularly with respect to the types of housing needed, to ensure that new development is appropriately designed for and reviewed by the Town of Ayer.	High	PB, TP, CDP
b. Inventory affordable housing opportunities, both existing and in the development pipeline, and distribute between COA, HA, C&ED, CPCP to increase awareness of local housing opportunities.	Medium	CDP
c. Promote and advertise the Housing Rehab program to increase awareness.	Medium	CDP
d. Coordinate with Casa Manor, the Ayer Motor Lodge, and Pastor Wells, who are currently providing most emergency housing services, and local nonprofits to formalize and improve rapid rehousing in Ayer.	Low	CDP
e. Identify town-owned property and/or lower cost market rate to convert into affordable housing as Local Initiative Projects (LIP).	Ongoing	CDP, TA, BOS
Funding Sources: General Fund, CPA Funds, Grants		



<b>3. Encourage housing development that is sustainable, affordable, and serves all members of Ayer's population.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
a. Strengthen site plan review process and standards to ensure that new development will adequately serve its residents. Waivers for sidewalks and other design standards should be discouraged. Board level review should encourage floor plans for 3+ bedroom family apartments, starter homes, and housing appropriate for seniors.	High	C&ED, DPW
b. Adopt a Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning District around Downtown to encourage redevelopment that will generate additional housing units, including affordable units.	High	TP, DIR, PB
c. Increase infill development opportunities in existing residential areas to minimize the destruction of critical environmental habitats and drinking water supply areas. Incentives could include zoning amendments that allow for Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), minimum lot size reductions, shared driveway waivers, and accessory dwelling units.	High	TP, DIR, PB
d. Update subdivision bylaws to remove sections that encourage inefficient housing development (remove excessive roadway widths, ban cul-de-sacs and other roads that do not connect, mandate sidewalks, etc.).	High	DPW
Funding Sources: General Fund, MRPC, CPA Funds, Grants		

### Economic Development Goals:

<b>1. Position Downtown Ayer as a regional destination for specialty retail shopping, dining, entertainment, special events, heritage tourism, and services within a high-quality public space experience.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
a. Perform outreach to local businesses to inform them of IDFA loans, state and federal resources, technical assistance and events through the Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce, and employee training programs offered through the Job Corps, Nashua Valley Technical School, and Mount Wachusett Community College.	Medium	DIR, IDFA
b. Continue to support and advocate for Ayer's transportation needs at the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) to expand the current bus service from the MBTA Commuter Rail Station to Devens to include the Nashoba Valley Medical Center and Nemco Way Industrial Park address first/last mile transportation issues facing Ayer business employees.	High	DIR, TA, BOS
c. Maintain and promote an inventory of available commercial properties on the Town's Economic Development homepage.	Ongoing	DIR
d. Continue to support and fund an economic development advocacy position in Town government to oversee attraction and retention, coordinate IDFA activities, provide representation for Ayer at regional and state organizations, and to provide an interface between the business community and Town government.	High	BOS, TA, FC
e. Adopt design standards and guidelines as part of the Town's Zoning Bylaws and the Planning Board's rules and procedures to ensure that new commercial development in Ayer's gateways, corridors, and industrial areas contribute positively to Ayer's streetscape and increases the Town's "curb appeal".	High	DIR, TP, PB
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		



<b>2. Strengthen Ayer's downtown to serve as a destination for retail, entertainment, and professional and personal services.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
a. Adopt a MGL Ch.40R Smart Growth overlay district to incentivize new, mixed use development and the increased production of housing that is affordable to Ayer's residents and business employees. Adoption of a 40R Smart Growth district will make the Town eligible for funding from the State's Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund to subsidize development.	High	DIR, TP, PB
b. As part of the Smart Growth District, develop uniform design standards and guidelines for Downtown to ensure new development is complementary to Ayer's built form and promotes current "best practices" for the design of inclusive and vibrant downtown spaces.	High	DIR, TP, PB
c. Incentivize redevelopment of underutilized properties downtown by increasing development potential through zoning.	Medium	DIR, TP, PB
d. Commit to providing a high-quality public realm by installing benches, banners, bike racks, and other streetscape amenities that encourage visitors to spend time in Downtown.	Ongoing	DIR, DPW, FC
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		

<b>3. Strengthen Ayer's regional economic competitiveness.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
a. Review Ayer's property taxation policies and consider the adoption of a Small Businesses Exemption under MGL Ch. 59 Section 51 to ease the tax burden on small local businesses.	High	BOS, TA, FC
b. Upgrade zoning and site plan review standards to ensure that reasonable buffers between residential and commercial (especially industrial) properties are maintained to mitigate impacts, and that performance standards with respect to stormwater management, energy efficiency, and climate resiliency are commensurate with current best practices.	High	TP, PB
c. Provide sufficient training and education opportunities for local leaders, board members, and commissioners to ensure that projects are sufficiently reviewed for conformance to zoning, subdivision, and general bylaws and that financial tools such as TIFs and grants are used as effectively and fairly as possible.	High	TA
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		



## Resources Goals:

1. Protect Ayer's natural resources, including surface and ground water, habitats, and unique landscapes.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Advocate for clean-up of MGL Ch. 21e sites by seeking remediation funds, incentivizing private investment for projects involving clean-up of contaminated sites, and raising awareness of pollution in Ayer's soils, aquifers, and waterways.	High	TA, DPW, C&ED
b. Prioritize open space acquisition that will serve to protect sensitive natural resources, such as parcels adjacent to existing protected open spaces and drinking water supply areas, as well as lands reverting from the MGL Ch. 61 program.	Ongoing	CC, CA, CPC
c. Coordinate volunteer efforts to enhance stewardship of open spaces. Hikers, boaters, bird watchers, hunters, fishers, and other outdoor recreation enthusiasts can help identify and monitor concerns, as well as participate in habitat restoration projects and the removal of invasive plants.	Medium	CC, CA, REC
d. Encourage qualifying property owners to utilize the MGL Ch. 61 program and work with landowners in sensitive natural resource areas to consider Conservation Restrictions on their properties.	Low	Assessor, CA
e. Coordinate with both Watershed Associations, MassDevelopment, US Fish & Wildlife, Mass Fisheries & Wildlife, Mass Audubon, and the Town of Groton to support conservation initiatives within or adjacent to Ayer.	Medium	CA, CA
f. Explore formation of a land trust or partnership with a regional land trust to help facilitate timely acquisition of open space.	Low	CA, CC, BOS
g. Employ best practices to ensure that zoning and subdivision regulations and DPW specifications adequately protect Ayer's natural resources from contamination or erosion and encourage the protection of priority open spaces.	High	DPW, TP, PB
Funding Sources: General Fund, Open Space Trust Fund, CPA Funds, Grants		

2. Expand access to recreational opportunities for all residents.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Prioritize the expansion of open space and/or public access easements around ponds and streams in Ayer to facilitate public access for recreational use such as kayaking launches and hiking trails.	High	CC, REC
b. Expand the network of trails where appropriate, particularly where they can connect recreational, cultural, and neighborhood amenities, as well as regional open space resources. Ensure that trails will remain in existence by seeking public access easements where trails currently traverse privately owned land.	Medium	REC, TA, BOS, TOWN COUNSEL
c. Identify opportunities to create neighborhood parks within neighborhoods that are not currently walkable to, or served by, a public park. Parks should be designed with input from prospective users and should consider the needs of users of all of ages and abilities.	Medium	C&ED, REC, DPW



d. Address and budget for the need for indoor recreation space by finding or a creating a suitable indoor space to allow for youth sports and adult recreation (including seniors) to be adequately served.	High	REC, TA, BOS, COA
e. Identify a location that could accommodate the space needs of the Senior Center to expand capacity for services and programs.	High	COA, TA, BOS
f. Provide wayfinding signage, maps, and online information about the location of Ayer's parks, trails, and recreational assets, including water access for boating and fishing.	Low	REC, CC, C&ED
Funding Sources: General Fund, Open Space Trust Fund, CPA Funds, Grants, User Fees		

3. Highlight and promote Ayer's historical, cultural, and natural assets that embody the Town's heritage.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Utilize CPA funds to create a Historic Preservation Plan to identify historic resources, local needs and priorities, and to create a long-term strategy to ensure that Ayer's heritage endures and is documented, preserved, and promoted.	High	CPC, HC, LIB
b. Develop a strategy for completing Ayer's inventory of historic objects, landscapes, and structures for submission to the Massachusetts Historic Commission.	High	CPC, HC, CUCO
c. Identify funding and regulatory incentives to encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings.	Medium	C&ED
d. Install interpretive elements, such as signs, markers, and monuments to highlight important stories and features in Ayer's landscape.	Low	HC, LIB, CUCO
e. Continue to archive, preserve, and digitize artifacts and records that document Ayer's history through the Nutting Room at the Library or other publicly accessible facilities	Ongoing	LIB, HC, CPC
f. Investigate the adoption of a Local Historic District or Neighborhood Conservation District to ensure sensitive historic resources are preserved.	Low	HC
Funding Sources: General Fund, CPA Funds, Grants		

4. Increase organizational capacity and awareness of Ayer's recreational and cultural programming.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Increase coordination between Schools, Community Education Program, Library, Senior Center, Recreation Department, Cultural Council, Freedom's Way Heritage National Heritage Area, and other entities that offer cultural, educational, and recreational programs, to facilitate cross-marketing and broaden awareness of what is happening in town.	Medium	ASRSD, LIB, CUCO, REC, COA, Freedom's Way
b. Increase the amount of part-time staff time available through adequate funds to coordinate outreach efforts for volunteer-based activities.	Medium	LIB, FC, TA
c. Maintain the volunteer coordination web page to alert people to volunteer opportunities, as well as open seats on Town Boards and Commissions.	High	TA



d. Connect with local businesses and nonprofit groups to cross-market and invite sponsorship of recreation and cultural events.	Low	C&ED, REC
e. Utilize display space in public buildings for art, historic artifacts, or other cultural exhibits.	Medium	LIB, COA, TA, HC, CUCO
f. Explore opportunities to develop a Community Center to address insufficient indoor recreation facilities for youth sports and recreation as well as senior recreation and services offered through the Council on Aging.	High	COA, TA, BOS, FC, REC
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		

5. Make Ayer more sustainable by promoting the concept of a local food system and increase access to local food		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Identify leadership to be responsible for coordinating the return of the Ayer Farmer's Market. A committee of interested residents, Town staff, representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, local artisans, crafters, farmers, and other parties could be established to coordinate vendors and promotion.	Medium	CUCO, BOH, BOS, TA
b. Identify a location to establish a community garden with plots available to residents, particularly those who do not have access to private open space, to provide planting areas with clean soils, varied sun exposure, and a water source.	Low	DPW
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		





## Transportation and Circulation Goals:

1. Adequately fund and maintain roadways, trails, sidewalks, public parking, and commuter facilities to ensure universal access and reasonable transportation choices for residents, workers, and businesses.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Continue to monitor the state of available road funds through Massachusetts Chapter 90 and other DOT programs to provide funding for the annual Capital Improvement Plan, and implementation of the Complete Streets Plan.	High	FC, DPW
a. Develop a prioritization matrix to prioritize roadwork projects to maximize positive impacts on quality of life by addressing congestion, improving safety, and managing train and school related peak traffic volumes.	Medium	DPW
b. Obtain funds to complete upgrades to pedestrian facilities to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	Medium	DPW, TA, Building Dept
c. Explore the potential to upgrade the MBTA commuter rail station facilities to include bike racks, pick up and drop off area, upgraded waiting facilities, improve pedestrian crossings to public parking, and restrooms.	Medium	DPW, MART, MBTA, TA
d. Work with PanAm to ensure that the needs of businesses relying on freight transit are being reasonably accommodated with respect to upgrades to signalization and shared rail service.	High	C&ED
e. Continue to explore public-private partnership with MART to operate a shuttle from the Commuter Rail station to Devens, Nashoba Valley Medical Center, and other key employment centers within Ayer.	Medium	C&ED, MART
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		

2. Ensure new transportation facilities including roads, trails, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas, and multimodal hubs are designed to meet current best practices and future needs.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Update subdivision bylaw regulations regarding sidewalk installation, roadway geometry, and roadway specifications to meet modern standards.	High	DPW, TP
b. Consider the needs of future transportation technologies (such as ride sharing, ride hailing, driverless cars/Automated Vehicles (AVs)) by designing more efficient roadways and exploring opportunities for the location of pick-up and drop-off areas in key locations through Ayer to accommodate future changes to modes of transportation, including MART bus service and evolving transportation technologies.	Medium	DPW
c. Update zoning bylaws to consider the adoption of flexible dimensional standards for new residential and mixed-use developments to decrease the amount of roadways, curbcuts, and other paved roadways necessary to serve a development.	High	TP, PB
d. Update zoning bylaws to ensure that new developments are served by sidewalks, oriented around multimodal transportation networks (e.g. 40R Smart Growth Zoning adjacent to MBTA commuter rail station) and employment centers to reduce auto dependency.	High	TP, PB



e. Create a test-street program to pilot experimental low-cost transportation policies; e.g. shared bike lanes, crosswalks signalizations and paint, alterations to parking programs; to determine the appropriateness of such policies, programs, or designs for Ayer.	Low	DPW
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		

3. Improve and enhance Ayer's Gateways, pedestrian, and bicycle access throughout Ayer by providing a safe, scenic, interconnected system of roads, sidewalks and trails.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Implement key components of the Complete Streets plan to ensure safe pedestrian crossings, shared usage of roadways, and safe sight lines at intersections.	High	DPW
b. Provide safety and operational improvements at Park Street/Main Street intersection.	Medium	DPW, APD
c. Create additional access points to the Nashua River Rail Trail from residential neighborhoods through property acquisitions, easements, and site plan reviews of new development to create safe routes to local schools and athletic fields.	Ongoing	C&ED, REC, BOS, Town Counsel
d. Install critical missing sidewalk segments: along Groton-Harvard Road and Washington Street to accommodate pedestrian traffic to the Paige Hilltop School and the Ayer Shirley Regional High School; as well as along Fitchburg Road connecting to Park Street to provide access to the Shop N Save.	High	DPW
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		

4. Provide and manage downtown parking facilities to meet the needs of residents, shoppers, business owners and employees, commuters and visitors.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Support the construction of a parking deck to accommodate commuter rail parking. Adequately support the neighborhoods and businesses abutting the MBTA and MART facilities by ensuring that a construction management plan to manage impacts during the construction process as well the development and implementation of a parking management and enforcement program are in place prior to the commencement of construction.	High	TA, BOS, C&ED, DPW
b. Complete and implement recommendations of Downtown Parking Study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Wayfinding signs</li> <li>ii. Smart pricing – meters, pay lots, and parking restrictions and enforcement.</li> <li>iii. Resident/employee permit program</li> </ul>	High	DPW, APD, BOS
c. Revise zoning bylaws and site plan standard to protect and enhance the streetscape by encouraging buildings rather parking areas to be sited in such a way as to interact and contribute to the streetscape.	High	TP, PB
Funding Sources: General Fund, Parking Revenues, MRPC, Grants		



5. Provide a safe, efficient roadway network that meets the distribution and workforce transportation needs of Ayer's industrial employers and also protects neighborhoods from residential-industrial use conflicts.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Work with MART and local employers to address connectivity issues between the MBTA commuter rail station and employment centers to address issues with transit options for the first and last mile of local trips.	Ongoing	C&ED
b. Work with MART and the Ayer Council on Aging to continue to support the Council on Aging's transportation services.	Ongoing	COA, MART, TA
c. Work with leaders in Lowell, Fitchburg, and Leominster as well as MART to explore regional transportation solutions from regional residential centers that house many Ayer workers to Ayer businesses; and from Ayer to social service providers in neighboring communities.	Ongoing	C&ED, TA
d. Provide signage and roadway improvements to manage heavy truck traffic through Ayer to mitigate impacts on residential neighborhoods.	Medium	DPW
Funding Sources: General Fund, MART, Grants, User Fees		

## Infrastructure Goals:

1. Continue to provide a safe and reliable drinking water supply to Ayer residents and businesses.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Construct additional wells at Spectacle Pond to ensure the Town's continued access to safe, potable water.	High	DPW
b. Continue to fund and improve water treatment facilities to ensure that Ayer's system will remain compliant as regulations evolve and require the monitoring and treatment of additional contaminants.	High	DPW, FC, BOS
c. Adequately fund the annual water main improvement budget, budgeted at approximately \$250,000 a year, to replace aging water mains throughout Ayer and keep up with maintenance needs.	High	DPW, FC, BOS
d. Complete installation of new water meters in private buildings to improve efficiency and mitigate illegal connections, abate leaks, and prevent infiltration.	Medium	DPW
e. Implement water conservation measures and provide public education regarding ways to reduce water consumption.	Medium	DPW, BOS
f. Ensure long term protection of Ayer's public water supply by acquiring open space near wellheads and continuing to look for new water sources (e.g. connections with Devens or a new well at Moore Airfield).	Ongoing	DPW, CPC, BOS
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants, User Fees		



<b>2. Maintain and protect Ayer's wastewater system to ensure that current and future development can be supported in a manner that is safe, sanitary, and protects the public health.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
a. Continue to implement the 2015 Wastewater Treatment Plant Evaluation and Capital Improvement Program.	High	DPW
b. Complete and implement recommendations resulting from the Inflow and Infiltration Study, to reduce waste, leakage, and infiltration into the Town's sanitary sewer system.	High	DPW
c. Continue policy to evaluate underground infrastructure, including sewer lines, prior to making roadway improvements to ensure pipes will not collapse and fail, and reduce needs for repaving.	Ongoing	DPW
d. Fund and implement recommendations found in the Sewer System Operations and Maintenance Plan.	High	DPW, FC, BOS
e. Seek regional solution to wastewater sludge disposal to reduce costs and increase reliability for sludge removal.	High	DPW, BOS
f. Begin negotiations with Devens regarding Ayer's wastewater disposal agreement which is set to expire in 2021. This agreement is necessary for Ayer's wastewater system to meet permitting requirements with respect to capacity.	High	DPW, BOS, TA
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants, User Fees		

### Municipal Services and Facilities Goals:

<b>1. Address municipal facilities needs for recreation and social services programming, an improved senior center, and adequate storage and meeting space.</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
a. Perform a needs analysis for services and facilities in Ayer to determine what type of programming, services, and facilities are needed and/or wanted by Ayer residents.	High	TA
b. Conduct feasibility analysis for the construction of a community center to determine if all facilities needs could potentially be accommodated by one facility, or if separate facilities for a senior center, community center, and Town Hall Annex would be most appropriate.	High	TA, BOS
c. Identify a potential site and if new construction or rehabilitation of an existing building will be required.	Medium	TA, BOS
d. Identify potential funding sources and grant opportunities for construction and programming.	Ongoing	TA, BOS, COA
Funding Sources: General Fund, CPA Funds, Grants, User Fees		



2. Recruit and increase civic involvement on local boards, commissions, and committees to improve civic engagement, expand institutional knowledge and memory, and address succession planning issues as current staff and volunteers approach retirement.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Maintain online portal advertising boards openings and volunteer opportunities, applications, and other important resources for Town Opportunities.	Ongoing	TA
b. Engage with the Ayer-Shirley Regional School district to expand the Town's youth volunteer and work opportunities in the Department of Public Work and the Recreation Department. The Town may also expand membership of local boards and commission to include non-voting student members.	Medium	Ayer-Shirley Regional School District, DPW, REC
c. Advocate for the implementation of junior level staffing positions in single-person departments, as well as in the Police and Fire Departments to help offset impacts from departing and retiring personnel.	Medium	TA, BOS, FC
d. Ensure that boards are staffed by qualified professionals with proper credentials rather than by political appointees. For example, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is typically served by a Town Planner rather than the Town Manager's office as a Town Planner is trained in such matters, typically at a graduate level of education. Failure to assign appropriate staff is a significant liability to the Town.	High	TA, BOS
Funding Sources: General Fund, Grants		

3. Increase the Town's ability to efficiently and effectively manage Ayer's services and facilities in a fiscally sustainable and environmentally responsible manner to encourage a high quality of life for residents and an attractive environment in which businesses can operate.		
Action	Priority	Responsibility
a. Adequately fund and maintain roadways, trails, sidewalks, public parking, and commuter facilities to ensure universal access and reasonable transportation choices for residents, workers, and businesses.	High	CA, TP
b. Procure lands near wellheads when they become available and place permanent conservation restrictions on them to preclude future development and protect the water supply.	Ongoing	CPC, CC, TA, BOS
c. Work with MART and local employers to address connectivity issues between the MBTA commuter rail station and employment centers to address issues with transit options for the first and last mile of local trips.	High	DPW, CC, CA
d. Work with MART and the Ayer Council on Aging to continue to support the Council on Aging's transportation services.	Ongoing	BOS, TA, DPW, FC
Funding Sources: General Fund, Open Space Trust Fund, CPA Funds, Grants		

Please see the **Appendix for Implementation Checklists** for each department to monitor implementation progress on an annual basis as part of the Capital Improvement Plan and the Budgetary Processes.

