

**TOWN OF FRAMINGHAM  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION  
FISCAL YEAR 2007 PLAN**

**Purpose of EDIC**

The purpose of the Framingham Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) is to create a pro-active capacity within the Town of Framingham's governmental structure, and to plan for and carry out economic development where it is most critically needed. The EDIC assists the Town in its efforts to broaden the tax base, enhance long-term economic vitality, improve the quality of life of residents, and improve the business climate by encouraging investment that will create employment and economic opportunity, and attract other private investment and improvements.

**Need for EDIC's Annual Work Plan**

The Town of Framingham through the Division of Planning and Economic Development has developed various economic development related planning documents, including, the Downtown Framingham Economic Development Strategic Plan (1998), and the economic development strategy outlined in the Framingham Community Development Plan (2004).

This document is EDIC's plan for the 2007 fiscal year, and serves to prioritize the potential actions within existing planning documents. In addition, the document is a way to update and re-focus the Town's Economic Development related projects and programs. With the staff assistance of Division of Planning and Economic Development personnel, the EDIC implements as many projects as possible. Many of the projects are ongoing efforts being implemented by the Division of Planning and Economic Development, others are one time projects.

**Framingham's Economic Development Priorities**

Below are short summaries of the goals outlined in the Town of Framingham's most recent and relevant economic development planning documents.

**Town of Framingham - Community Development Plan (2004)**

**Economic Development Goal Statement**

Establish Downtown Framingham as a center of business and cultural activity that is functionally vibrant and active, and perceived to be an attractive destination visited by residents throughout Framingham and surrounding communities. Framingham seeks to revitalize and redevelop its village and commercial areas to create more vibrant and aesthetically pleasing focal points that combine business, housing and cultural venues. Priority for redevelopment will be given to locations where increased density can be supported by adequate infrastructure.

**Downtown Framingham – Economic Development Strategic Plan (1998)**

The community wants to see an attractive, vibrant and pedestrian-friendly commercial district that serves the surrounding diverse neighborhood and meet business needs while attracting shoppers from the rest of Framingham and elsewhere through physical improvements, greater variety in retail offerings, and improvement in traffic flow and parking options. It is also important to improve the business mix by recruiting businesses that can serve diverse markets; expand the neighborhoods market population, enhance night-time market opportunities, retain and support existing business, promote downtown businesses to existing employees, and recruit new businesses for empty office and light industrial space.

**Review of Recent Economic Development Activities**

For the last four years, the EDIC has formally made the downtown its primary focus and has worked to improve the downtown in a variety of ways including examining properties that are

available for redevelopment, working with property owners engaged in renovations and redevelopment activities, and reviewing funding sources and zoning, tax and fiscal issues that affect downtown redevelopment.

Recent EDIC accomplishments:

- Began a business outreach campaign utilizing postcard mailings to publicize economic development programs available to Framingham businesses.
- With the Division of Planning and Economic Development, initiated a series of workshops and informational meetings on topics of interest to small business owners.
- Completed an extensive tour of sites for potential redevelopment in Framingham and developed a list of priority areas for redevelopment.
- Launched the Business Visitation Program in partnership with Mass Development and the Planning and Economic Development Division to make small and medium sized businesses in Framingham aware of Mass Development programs and to raise awareness of the EDIC and the Planning and Economic Development Division as a resource for Framingham-based businesses.
- Provided technical assistance to the Arcade development project and supported commercial and housing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreements between the Town and the Arcade building owner, Framingham Acquisition, LLC.
- As a member of the Cultural Triangle Partnership, assisted with grant writing to obtain funding for cultural programming in Framingham.
- Served on the 126/135 Task Force, which is looking at solutions to the traffic bottleneck at the intersection of Routes 126 and 135 in downtown Framingham.
- Served as administrator of the Town's Affordable Housing Trust Fund

### Major Goals of Current EDIC

Framingham EDIC has made the following goals its top priorities for FY07:

1. Continue to implement projects and programs that will bring to life the following vision for Downtown Framingham:  
*Establish Downtown Framingham as a center of business and cultural activity that is functionally vibrant and active, and perceived to be an attractive destination visited by residents throughout Framingham and surrounding communities.*
2. Work to develop (or redevelop) vacant or underutilized properties
3. Work to retain and expand current Framingham businesses by identifying technical and financial resources that can be made available to further their development
4. Provide a forum for discussion of town-wide economic development issues and the formulation of goals, objectives, and action plans

### Implementation of FY07 EDIC Work Plan

The EDIC will meet monthly to discuss implementation of its FY07 Plan, review the status of ongoing projects and programs, assign tasks to members, discuss current economic development priorities and issues, and guide and assist Planning and Economic Development Division staff with implementation of various economic development programs and projects.

The EDIC will work with Planning and Economic Development Division staff in the planning and implementation of new economic development initiatives as well as the management and coordination of existing programs to insure that the maximum benefit is realized for the Town. EDIC will work to attain the above major goals by implementing the objectives and actions outlined in the work plan below.

**FY07 EDIC Work Plan**

EDIC's FY07 Work Plan is a combination of ongoing, long term, and short term action strategies, and will have long lasting impacts on the economic viability of Downtown Framingham and other key commercial districts in Framingham. Positive long term results will be obtained through the coordination and continuing efforts of the EDIC, Framingham Division of Planning and Economic Development staff, other Town departments, commissions, and boards, Framingham Downtown Renaissance organizations, and the Town's many business leaders.

**Goal 1.** Continue to implement projects and programs that will bring to life our Downtown Framingham vision.

Objective 1-A: Continue to sponsor and promote Framingham Downtown Renaissance (FDR)		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Develop FDR meeting agendas, and chair meetings.	Monthly	EDIC member appointed as FDR Chair; staff support provided by Division of Planning and Economic Development (DPED).
Implementation of FDR Work Plan.	Ongoing, See FDR Work Plan.	FDR Chair, with assistance from DPED staff and FDR organizations

Objective 1-B: Support the Framingham START Partnership in efforts to create cultural economic development opportunities in Framingham		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Identify funding sources to support the START Partnership.	Nov. 2006, & Ongoing	DPED Staff, EDIC member appointed to START Partnership
Assist with grant preparation.	Ongoing.	DPED Staff, EDIC as needed

Objective 1-C: Continue towards creation, enhancement, promotion, and funding of the Cultural Triangle in Downtown Framingham		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Identify grants and other funding sources for physical improvements in the Cultural Triangle, including Nevins Hall, Danforth Museum, and streetscape improvements.	Feb. & March 2006, and ongoing	DPED Staff, EDIC members as needed
Identify grants and other funding sources for programming that will promote cultural economic development in the Cultural Triangle	Ongoing	DPED Staff, EDIC members as needed
Assist with grant preparation.	Ongoing.	DPED Staff, EDIC as needed

Objective 1-D: Continue to encourage mixed-use development in Downtown Framingham		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Continue to assist with the Arcade development project and similar projects in Downtown Framingham	Ongoing	DPED Staff, EDIC members as needed
Market Downtown Framingham to potential developers	March 2007, & Ongoing	DPED Staff, EDIC members as needed

Identify and seek funding for Transportation Orientated Development	July – Dec 2006	DPED Staff
Objective 1-E: Assure the railroad crossing at Routes 126 and 135 and related traffic problems are properly addressed, and a plan to solve problems are implemented		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Serve on the Downtown Railroad Crossing Committee, and Steering Committee	Ongoing	EDIC appointed member

**Goal 2.** Work to develop (or redevelop) vacant or underutilized properties

Objective 2-A. Identify all vacant and underutilized industrial and commercially zoned properties and assess potential future uses.		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Identify, map, and assess industrial and commercially zoned properties with highest potential for reuse/redevelopment.	August – Sep. 2006	DPED Staff
Contact owners of key properties and inquire about future plans for property.	Oct. – Dec. 2006	DPED Staff

Objective 2-B: Identify Brownfields needing redevelopment		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Review EOE/DEP Brownfield Inventory	March 2006, & Quarterly	DPED Staff
Identify, map, and assess brownfield properties that could be redeveloped	April – May 2006	DPED Staff
Identify funding sources that could be used to assess and clean brownfields.	April 2006	DPED Staff
Contact owners of key properties and inquire about future plans for property.	July- Sep 2006, & ongoing	DPED Assistant Director, EDIC
Develop partnership with property owners and appropriate government agencies to assure clean up and redevelopment of sites.	Oct. – Dec 2006, & ongoing	DPED, EDIC

Objective 2-C: Assess Tax Title Properties		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Review current and future tax title listings	Quarterly	DPED Staff, EDIC members as needed
Work with Tax Foreclosure Committee to identify properties ideal for commercial and industrial development	Annually	DPED Staff, EDIC

**Goal 3.** Work to retain and expand current small businesses by identifying technical and financial resources that can be made available to further their development

Objective 3-A. Continue to support CDBG managed small business assistance programs		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Façade Improvement Program	Ongoing	DPED Staff (CDBG)
Sign Improvement Program	Ongoing	DPED Staff (CDBG)
Micro-enterprise Loan Program	Ongoing	DPED Staff (CDBG)

Objective 3-B: Continue to support Downtown merchant outreach		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Review New Business Listings (DBA certificates)	Weekly	DPED staff
Review of Commercial Development Activity	Monthly	EDIC, DPED staff
Door to door distribution of Merchant Outreach Packets	Ongoing	DPED staff
Post card and letter/brochure distribution	Every 5 to 7 weeks	DPED staff
Workshops for small businesses	Every 5 to 7 weeks	DPED staff

Objective 3-C: Implement the MassDevelopment Business Visitation Program		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Research Framingham businesses that could benefit from MassDevelopment programs.	Quarterly	DPED staff
Contact (letters, phone calls) business owners or upper management to inform them of MassDevelopment programs and to arrange meetings.	Quarterly & ongoing	DPED staff
Visit businesses to introduce MassDevelopment programs and discuss economic development issues impacting Framingham's business community.	Ongoing	DPED Assistant Director, MassDevelopment Senior Vice President, and EDIC

Objective 3-D: Educate and inform the public about the EDIC and related economic development issues.		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Improve EDIC Web Page	Jan. - March 2006	DPED staff, EDIC review and editing
Develop FDR Web Page	Feb. - April 2006	DPED staff, EDIC review and editing
Edit Downtown Framingham Business Web Site, and link to EDIC and FDR web pages	April – May 2006	DPED staff, FDR review and editing
Improve Planning and Economic Development Web Site	Feb. - March 2006	DPED staff

**2006 Annual Town Meeting**

Link economic development and business assistance web resources to above mention web pages	May – July 2006	DPED staff, EDIC review and editing
Update EDIC and DPED related web pages	Ongoing, Quarterly review	DPED staff, EDIC and FDR review and editing as necessary

**Objective 3-E:** Develop informational documents and other activities that will attract new business and guide new businesses through the development and permitting process.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Edit and reprint “Start Smart” Business Guide to Local Permits	May – July 2006	DPED staff, other Town departments to provide input
Add “Start Smart” Business Guide to Town web sites	July 2006	DPED staff
Develop Permitting Handbook	August – Oct. 2006	DPED staff
Add Permitting Handbook to Town web sites	Oct. 2006	DPED staff
Develop Development Incentives Brochure/Package	Jan. – March 2007	DPED staff
Create and implement Public Relations program to attract corporations to Framingham.	March – June 2007	DPED staff

**Goal 4.** Provide a forum for discussion of town-wide economic development issues and the formulation of goals, objectives, and action plans

**Objective 4-A.** Obtain input from organizations and general public regarding economic development issues

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Obtain input on EDIC Work Plan	March & April of each year	EDIC Members

**Objective 4-B:** Undertake continued economic development project planning, and keep EDIC goals and objectives current and representative of Framingham’s needs and desires.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Review current EDIC Work Plan and implement stated actions.	Ongoing	EDIC members, DPED staff
Review EDIC work plan status and assure goals and objectives current and representative of Framingham's needs and desires	July & October 2006	EDIC members, DPED staff
Update EDIC Work Plan	Jan. – Feb. 2007	EDIC members, DPED staff

Objective 4-C: Provide Input into Master Planning Process		
Actions	Timeline	Responsible Party
Develop draft concepts to be included in the scope of services for the Town's master planning process.	March – April 2006	EDIC members
Develop draft Economic Development policies for consideration during Master Planning Process.	April 2006	EDIC members
Develop strategies to focus economic development and housing at transportation hubs (e.g., Transportation Orientated Development)	First quarter FY07	EDIC members, DPED staff
Pursue rezoning of mill village centers and other important underutilized commercial centers.	Second quarter of FY07	EDIC members, DPED staff
Pursue rezoning of manufacturing zones in southeast Framingham to better reflect current uses.	Second quarter of FY07	EDIC members, DPED staff