

Burke Transition Team – Cultural Affairs and Recreation Committee: Priority Recommendations

30 Days

Category	Action Item(s)
Communication	Begin to create and start implementing a comprehensive communication plan; include a social media strategy and ideas for encouraging organizations and citizens to interact; improve information sharing as widely as possible (web, newspapers, listservs, robocalls, city-managed calendar, government/schools/public access TV channels).
Chevalier Theatre	Focus on filling open part time position for in-house maintenance staff.
Brooks Estate	Present a new funding proposal to the City Council to initiate the emergency stabilization repairs needed for the Brooks Estate Carriage House.
City Hall	Begin discussions with MACI, Medford Arts Council, etc., about having a monthly art exhibition at City Hall, an ongoing art exhibit in City Hall, and additional activities reflecting the city’s cultural diversity, such as three seasonal festivals (spring, summer, fall) in addition to the winter Jingle Bell Festival.
Staffing	Appoint a liaison from the mayor’s office to the Recreation community, as was done in January for Arts and Culture, Business, and Community Relations.
Recreation	Begin to meet with neighboring communities that have recreation programs to discuss how they operate, fund, and staff their programs and offices, gathering best practices for the foundation of a Medford recreation department with year-round programming.
Library	Articulate the plan and timetable for hiring a replacement for the new library director. Consider appointing a search committee and/or a vehicle for community input in the process—and the future of the library—including library patrons, staff, trustees, Friends of Library, etc.
Wright’s Pond	Instruct Park Commission to begin evaluating how to improve Wright’s Pond pass program and other operations for 2016 season, including an expanded season and activities, and shared lifeguards with Malden YMCA.
Community Preservation Act	Support/ensure that the City Council passes an ordinance establishing a Community Preservation Commission with a carefully considered membership and process, as outlined in an informational memorandum provided to the Council by Preserve Medford (funding will support CAR activities).
Public Access TV	Articulate the administration’s plan and timetable for resurrecting the public access television channel (TV3), including the physical space and operations.
Dog Park	Submit letter of assurance to advocacy group Paws4Medford of city’s commitment to creating a dog park; meet with Paws4Medford to discuss additional funding options.
Arts Center	Continue collaborating with Medford Arts Center representatives and other stakeholders in a search for a permanent space for all city arts organizations, potentially in Medford Square, with Art satellite locations around the city.

3 Months

Category	Action Item(s)
Website	Solicit information from active nonprofit organizations in Medford and create a single, online portal for information, events, organizational links, calendar, etc., for all civic and nonprofit organizations, events, and activities available in Medford.
Chevalier Theatre	Meet with Chevalier Commission to join its process of creating a long-term business plan, which is being formulated following analysis of municipal auditorium operations in Lexington, Lynn and Lowell.
Recreation	Present a robust, comprehensive recreation website offering organizational contacts and information, year round recreation activities—not just summer—with more opportunities and updates on signups and tryouts for teams, a central place for all activities; link with outside organizations that provide summer activities; and resources for passive recreation venues and activities.
Brooks Estate	Review the Brooks Estate Master Plan and, in conjunction with the Medford City Council and Medford-Brooks Estate Land Trust, ascertain the best way to develop and revitalize this gem, and determine its best use so that it is a productive, self-sustaining asset for the city of Medford.
Arts Council	Commit to an annual line item for the Medford Arts Council in the city budget.
Recreation Director	Create a full-time position for Recreation and begin to build a department by taking small steps leading to the summer to start developing one-week programs all over the city. Essential to hire a full-time Recreation program director. Round out department with administrative and program assistants.
Recreation	Begin to add on to the Summer Programs we have in place (Summer Fun Program, Wright’s Pond, Park League and Tufts Pool). Add different sports and arts programs within those camps or create small one-week programs that are offered all around the city charging small fees to free programs; guitar lessons and instructional craft programs for seniors; free rides for Seniors to programs; more use of Condon Band Shell (concerts, movie nights, theater).
Schools	Examine how to expand funding for the Fine Arts departments at all levels—Medford schools lack a full-time Fine Arts Director many full time Art and Music teachers—and funds to support collaboration between professional artists/organizations and the schools.
Medford Square Master Plan	Re-establish a Medford Square Master Plan implementation effort, informed by the Business and Economic Development Committee’s recommendations, with an emphasis on connectivity to the Mystic River (including possible water taxi service) and on making Medford Square an arts/culture/recreation destination and potentially home to a new Medford arts center.
Active Transportation	Establish as a priority and dedicate resources to addressing active transportation/recreation improvements, including more connected running/walking/biking trails along the Mystic River and bike lanes; adopting a Complete Streets planning policy [one of three initiatives identified in the city’s Community Compact agreement with the Commonwealth]; and planning/implementing walkability/pedestrian safety concepts (e.g., combine art and pedestrian safety by instituting brightly colored crosswalk art, traffic calming measures, sidewalk repairs);

	continue dialogue with Complete Streets advocates and coordination with City Hall departments (DPW, Community Development) and look to support from the arts community via a Medford Arts Council grant.
Events/Festivals	Re-establish past successful programs like Neighborhood Arts Program, Arts in the Park, and Art in Windows; have juried arts exhibitions; hold arts events in refurbished parks like McNally; have food and arts festivals celebrating diversity (e.g., international food and film festival).
Promotion	Provide street pole hardware, banners, and installation to help organizations promote festivals and other large events in the city.

6 Months

Category	Action Item(s)
Staffing	Fund positions for full-time webmaster, Recreation director, Arts/Culture director in FY17 budget.
Brooks Estate	Commit to a restoration plan for the property, approved by the mayor, City Council and M-BELT, including a funding mechanism and completion timetable.
Library	Increase budget and seek additional outside funding for repairs, renovations, expansion, and modernization of the library.
Schools	Hire full-time Fine Arts Director at high school (8 years without) and additional music teachers (fewest among all contiguous communities but one).
Chevalier Theatre	Develop a priority list of building needs and cost estimates
Collaboration	Convene a Recreation Summit with all organizations that offer recreational programs in the city to discuss issues, procedures, facilities, working relationships/collaboration, and any other issues with or needs from the city.
Outreach	Create multicultural focus group to assess and recommend ways to make arts accessible to all; gather info/feedback from stakeholders to understand priorities, needs, goals, visions; continue collecting feedback from neighborhoods and community groups on their perceptions of where they live and improvements that they would like to see.
Website	Overhaul city website to be more user friendly; multi-lingual options; consider using CivicPlus (www.civicplus.com), in use by many municipalities.
Public Art Policy	Convene a group of experts, stakeholders, city officials and community artists to develop a policy and procedures for public art (approval, funding, installations) and outdoor cultural events.
Placemaking	Incorporate ideas for creating placemaking gathering spots, especially for seniors, as the Medford Square Master Plan is updated.
Welcome Wagon	Create and/or support a "Welcome Wagon" service for new residents that will disseminate information to new residents about Medford community events, organizations, businesses, and City departments.
Community Gardens	Streamline and clearly define process and procedures for working with city departments on community gardens.