

# **Mayor Stephanie M. Burke Transition Team**

## **Cultural Affairs and Recreation Committee Report**

### **Executive Summary**

Arts, culture, and recreation are vitally important to the social fabric of any community and the quality of life of all its residents. These are essential components of safe, healthy, resilient, and economically vibrant neighborhoods and districts. They have well-documented multiplier effects on local spending, create local jobs, attract small businesses, and increase civic participation. Fortunately for Medford, our city is rich in distinctive assets that form the basis for strong cultural and recreational programs, such as diversity of many kinds; a fascinating history; talented artists and eager supporters of the arts; an array of well-run community organizations; recreational venues that are both centrally located and distributed throughout the city; and ample open spaces. Such features often are cited as points of pride and reasons why people choose to live here.

What residents often find lacking, however, are adequate enabling and coordinating services by the city that would increase public access to these assets. In addition, insufficient or unpredictable funding inhibits their strategic development and the cultivation of shared responsibility for their stewardship. Medford is well served by numerous volunteer groups dedicated to arts and recreation, and these groups provide the vast majority of the city's cultural and recreational programs. However, they likely are approaching or have reached the limit of what they can accomplish absent a significant increase in support from our city government.

Public input collected in the last six months, as well as the informed views of many organizational leaders here, indicate that there are a variety of identifiable gaps in serving community needs relevant to the subject of this report. Many of these areas of need can only be addressed with strong leadership from the City of Medford, and this report itemizes specific steps that could be taken to help ignite progress in the near term.

New and substantial contributions of support by the city are required to fulfill mission-critical needs and to realize many opportunities to grow our arts, cultural, and recreational offerings so that they match those found in similarly sized cities with comparable levels of available resources. These contributions include:

- Public championing of Medford's cultural and recreational assets.
- New or upgraded infrastructure that only the city can provide.
- Dedicated city departments and staff.
- Additional budget line items for arts, culture, and recreation.
- Policy revisions that would elevate arts, culture, and recreation into all areas of city operations, especially planning.

Underpinning all of this effort should be a bold, inclusive vision that is derived from ongoing public input and that demonstrates a strategic approach to caring for and

leveraging the tremendous assets owned by the City of Medford. By taking on the leadership role, and leveraging the expertise of the many established volunteer groups along with willing and eager citizens, the City of Medford can truly be a “Partner in Progress.”

Our committee’s overarching recommendation is that the city needs to play a leading role, rather than an occasional supporting role, in providing, nourishing, and expanding arts, cultural, and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities. To make a lasting difference, municipal leadership needs to prioritize cultural affairs and recreation in City Hall, increase administrative capacity with new personnel who have appropriate skills and credentials, and embrace multilateral collaborations with the extraordinary volunteer talent found throughout Medford. This report outlines concrete recommendations for short-, medium- and long-term actions that the city administration can take to achieve this.

## **Committee Objectives**

Mayor Stephanie M. Burke appointed the Cultural Affairs and Recreation Committee in early December 2015 to highlight Medford’s diversity, growing cultural and arts community, and opportunities for year-round recreational activities, and to pinpoint ways that the city can provide additional support to advance and promote the arts, cultural and recreation activities in Medford.

To achieve this outcome, the committee:

- Evaluated existing arts, cultural, and recreation activities in the city.
- Sought input from stakeholder organizations, participants, residents, and patrons on the most important needs/areas for improvement.
- Determined ways in which the city could proactively enhance and promote arts, cultural, and recreation activities and opportunities, and what resources would be required.
- Created concrete recommendations for short-, medium- and long-term actions by which the city administration could support arts/culture and recreation in Medford.

## **Committee Process**

To achieve its objectives, the committee:

- Met seven times between December 2, 2015, and February 15, 2016 (one additional meeting was canceled due to snow). A total of 42 members of the public attended the committee meetings and contributed comments, ideas, and suggestions.
- Created a two-question survey, widely distributed online and in hard copy to organizations and to the public, seeking input on how the city can enhance and promote arts, cultural, and recreation activities and opportunities. The survey received 145 responses.
- Drew upon other community efforts and input processes, such as the 2015 Medford Arts and Culture Summit and the Community Input Survey by the Medford Arts Council, in assessing needs and fostering dialogue around a vision for the future.
- Quantified the current allocation of city resources to arts, culture, and recreation.

- Reviewed city and regional planning documents (Medford Open Space and Recreation Plan, Medford Square Master Plan, MIT Medford Square Study, DCR Mystic River Master Plan, Community Development CDBG Strategic Plan) for ideas previously identified but not implemented.
- Researched best practices for municipal support of arts, culture, and recreation, especially in cities with demographics comparable to Medford.
- Consulted studies on the economic impact of arts, culture, and recreation activities in communities, and the creative funding, promotion, and engagement mechanisms utilized successfully elsewhere.

## **Introduction/Background**

Arts, culture, and recreation are not “nice to have” amenities, but vital components of what makes Medford a great place to live, work, and play. They also should be integral components of any long-term planning effort to revitalize Medford Square and the other neighborhood business districts, and any long-term development effort that seeks to showcase our natural resources—particularly the Mystic River—in a responsible way.

The value of the arts and the humanities to economic development is unquestioned in policy circles. [In Massachusetts](#), nonprofit arts and cultural organizations support more than 45,000 jobs and generate \$2.5 billion of economic activity. [Nationally](#), arts and culture comprises 3.2 percent—or \$504 billion of our country’s gross domestic product (GDP). By contrast, travel and tourism accounts for just 2.8 percent of our GDP.

Locally in Medford, we have only just started to see the return on our community investments in cultural activities for the public. For example, the important initiatives run by the Coalition for Arts, Culture, and a Healthy Economy in Medford (a nonprofit volunteer organization known more familiarly as CACHE) include Circle the Square during the summer, and Arts Across Medford in the fall, both of which have established a new level of activity in our downtown area especially.

As we approach the 400th anniversary of Medford’s settlement, we find ourselves with a set of amazing opportunities to introduce new and innovative ways of serving public needs of many kinds. We can begin to define these opportunities by taking stock of what is changing in our city, and inventorying the enduring advantages that we enjoy, seek to preserve, and are obligated to make accessible to all our community members.

Ethnic and cultural diversity in Medford has never been greater than it is today, and the city should celebrate, welcome, and engage its many new residents of different backgrounds and nationalities. The city’s diversity is reflected in the Medford Public Schools, where 30 languages are spoken and the 2015-16 high school student body has members from 65 different birth countries. There are more than 30 houses of worship in Medford representing more than a dozen different faiths, from Christian to Jewish to Buddhist to Sikh. It is important for any contemporary cultural planning process that this increasing diversity be reflected in our investments in new communications, services, and infrastructure for arts, culture, and recreation.

Medford is extremely well served by a wealth of arts organizations and recreation organizations. Virtually all volunteer-run, they have proven track records of being effective, innovative, resourceful, and collaborative; they play a huge role in providing the arts, cultural, and recreational programs currently available in the city.

Medford also benefits from the presence and efforts of several well-established regional organizations and institutions in or adjacent to the city, including Tufts University (a top 25 U.S. college and top 200 global research university), the Mystic River Watershed Association, and the Friends of the Middlesex Fells.

Medford's distinctive arts, cultural, and recreational assets—in a mere 8.6 square miles and just 5 miles from downtown Boston—are the envy of many communities. These include:

- One-third open space.
- The Mystic Lakes, Mystic River, and Malden River; Mystic River Reservation; Mystic Riverbend Park.
- Wright's Pond and Brooks Pond; Middlesex Fells; Shepherd Brooks Estate
- Chevalier Theatre (the sixth largest stage theater in the Boston area); Marsha Caron Theatre at Medford High School and two middle school auditoriums; Condon Band Shell.
- Strong arts and humanities departments at Tufts University, offering year-round programming in theater, music, and visual arts, much of which is free to the public.
- Royall House and Slave Quarters, Peter Tufts House, and Medford Historical Society and Museum.
- Medford Public Library, which serves as a vibrant “town center” providing access to numerous educational, technology, and community resources.
- 118 acres of parks (24 city parks and playgrounds, passive parks, 12 tot lots, 20 tennis courts, 12 basketball courts, 22 ball diamonds, two football fields and various soccer fields; Tufts Park outdoor swimming pool; Medford High School indoor swimming pool.
- Hormel Stadium (turf field, running track), Edgerly Complex (Field of Dreams, turf), DCR LoConte Ice Rink (city-managed) and DCR Flynn Ice Rink (privately managed).
- Street hockey rink; skateboard park (in disuse).
- A growing network of regional multi-use trails.
- West Medford Community Center, Willis Avenue Community Center, Medford Senior Center, Medford Boys & Girls Club.

This list, by no means exhaustive, suggests that there is significant potential to brand Medford as a remarkable “river city” where nature, history, arts and culture, recreation, and civic engagement come together in mutually reinforcing ways for the benefit of the city's residents and visitors, the local environment, and the regional economy. Many of the pieces are in place; what has been largely missing is a sustained plan to develop our assets toward this end.

An early part of a new strategic effort needs to be a considered process for determining the feasibility of committing at least 2% of the city's annual operating budget to its departments and programs that together are responsible for the library, parks and recreation, the city-owned historic buildings and grounds, and our public arts and culture activities. We currently fall short of that mark by a seemingly small fraction of a percentage, but the consequences of that shortfall are enormous for what can be accomplished.

### **FY16 City Budget/Staffing**

In fiscal 2016, the city allocated \$2,144,338 of its \$155.6 million budget to support arts, culture, and recreation. That represents less than 1.5% of the budget and about \$37 per resident. Of that, \$1.4 million was for the Medford Public Library. The remainder (\$751,790) represents 0.5% of the city budget, most of which (\$563,987) went to the Parks Division (\$334,677 for personnel, \$229,310 for ordinary expenses).

No staffing is provided for in the budget to support arts and culture, although the duties of an arts/culture/business liaison were included as part of an Executive Assistant position created in Mayor Burke's office in January 2016.

No full-time staff is provided in the budget for recreation. The budget for recreation in FY16 was \$87,100, which was used to provide summer programs at Wright's Pond, Tufts Pool, and four parks. The summer recreation program was supported by a \$10,000 corporate sponsorship. The city offers no recreation programming over the rest of the year except for that offered through the Community Schools (two programs currently are listed, gymnastics and Zumba). The budget also does not provide for a full-time director for the Community Schools program, with those duties also the responsibility of the athletic director.

The budget allocation for the 75-year-old Chevalier Auditorium complex—an 1,800-seat theater and a youth center that houses the Medford Boys & Girls Club—is \$60,000 (\$45,000 for utilities, \$15,000 for repairs). No line item appears in the budget for the Brooks Estate, the city's 54-acre property that features the historic Shepherd Brooks Manor and Carriage House. The Medford Historical Commission, a volunteer board charged with preserving and protecting the city's historic character and heritage, is allocated \$10,300. Under the "Executive" section of the FY16 budget, \$30,000 was allocated for the Medford Arts Council (an increase from \$15,000 in FY15). The city website, looked to as a primary resource for arts, culture, and recreation information, is allocated \$5,000 in the budget as a stipend for a part-time webmaster.

### **Analysis**

The vast majority of the arts, cultural and recreational programs offered in the city are provided due to the efforts of community organizations or independent associations/leagues; these groups serve the community extremely well within the constraints of the broader situation in Medford, and generate significant social and economic value for the city. They present events such as Circle the Square, Arts Across Medford, the Mystic River Celebration, Haines Square Festival, West Medford Open Studios,

Medford Farmers Market, and the former Doc Kountze Arts Festival; historical programs such as talks, plays, and walking and bicycle tours; classes and workshops; and youth sports activities that include baseball, basketball, football, hockey, lacrosse, rowing, and soccer. A citizen initiative also led to the creation of the Community Garden at Mystic Riverbend Park, and subsequent gardens on Winthrop Street near the Condon Shell and at McNally Park, with more planned. A citizen-led effort also prompted the creation of a Medford Bicycle Advisory Commission.

The city welcomes and encourages the work of these groups. It supports their efforts by granting free use of City Hall for certain events; publicizing event information it receives on the city website and social media outlets; arranging with Clear Channel for free advertising for community events on I-93 billboards; and providing city services such as DPW and Parks personnel for trash removal, and water hookups for community gardens. City-initiated events are infrequent, although the city did re-establish the annual Community Day event in 2014 and 2015, and for the past six years has presented the Harvest Your Energy Festival, in addition to annual Patriots Day and Memorial Day events and the December Holiday Celebration.

By and large, however, the numerous community groups and volunteers are largely left to their own devices and resources in terms of organization, scheduling, publicity, and fundraising. And while they have effectively gone about their missions for many years, they also likely are approaching or have reached the limit of what they can accomplish absent a significant increase in leadership and support from the city. The driving force behind the current model needs to change: the City of Medford needs to *lead* the effort, rather than *support* the effort of volunteer organizations.

While the city has in the last few years made investments in several of the athletics facilities it owns or manages (Hormel Stadium, Edgerly Complex, LoConte Rink, Medford High Pool, Condon Shell Park) and many city parks, similar capital investments in its arts, cultural, and recreational facilities have been lacking, in particular at the Brooks Estate, Medford Public Library, Chevalier Auditorium/Gene Mack Gym, and TV3. Consequently, these facilities—largely left to citizen volunteers for their oversight, fundraising, and advocacy—fall far short of providing their full benefit not only for residents, but also for the city and its businesses, both of which stand to gain from them economically.

The Brooks Estate and the Medford Public Library have the most urgent physical needs. Chevalier Auditorium has undergone significant physical improvements, but other needs remain; in addition, the facility lacks professional management of the complex, consistent programming, and related marketing. The city remains without a Community Access TV station, which went off the air in March 2013, although architectural plans have been submitted for a new station that is scheduled to open in September 2016 at the Vocational-Technical High School.

Our survey revealed a strong desire among Medford residents for diverse, robust, and distinctive arts, culture, and recreation experiences in Medford. They see—and often travel to take part in—the thriving arts and recreation programs in neighboring communities

such as Somerville, Arlington, Cambridge, and Malden. This raises expectations among Medford's residents for what can be created here with proper investments and planning, and also provides readily accessible sources of ideas and best practices for what Medford could do to reach their level. It is important to think about this regional context, and use it to identify what strategic opportunities exist for Medford to become distinctive within it.

Studies on how arts, culture, and recreation (ACR) impact the economy reveal this truism: Arts and recreation mean business. Unlike any other service provided by a municipality, spending money on all aspects of ACR boosts the local economy. A 2011 [study by the American for the Arts](#) revealed that "Arts and culture organizations—businesses in their own right—leverage significant event-related spending by their audiences that pumps vital revenue into restaurants, hotels, retail stores, parking garages, and other local merchants. This study puts to rest a common misconception that communities support arts and culture at the expense of local economic development." Similarly, at [2012 study by the Outdoor Industry Association](#) showed that "more than 140 million Americans make outdoor recreation a priority in their daily lives, proving it with their wallets by putting \$646 billion of their hard-earned dollars right back into the economy. Even better, this spending directly results in highly sought-after jobs for 6.1 million Americans." A 2002 [American Planning Association study](#) found that "Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits to our cities. They are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees. At the bottom line, parks are a good financial investment for a community."

Medford can reap all of these benefits and more by taking the lead in providing, nourishing, and expanding arts, cultural, and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities. This can be accomplished through:

- Consistent championing of the role of arts, culture, and recreation in our daily lives.
- Strategic approaches (rather than ad hoc) to developing the city's infrastructure and revising its master planning to incorporate creative place-making and forward-looking uses of open space, historic properties, and natural resources.
- Policy changes that make arts, culture, and recreation a high priority in all aspects of the city's operations, including planning and especially communications
- Additional full-time personnel in support of the arts, recreation (programs and facilities), and communication.
- Increased investment in and a capital improvement plan for city-owned or city-managed arts, culture, and recreational facilities, with a marketing plan to promote stewardship, pride, and innovation in programming.
- Seeking new or previously untapped sources of revenue for arts, culture, and recreation, including grants such as those through the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program [with which a site visit recently was held to discuss the 2016 grant schedule], and linkage moneys.

## Survey/Meeting Input

Committee meeting attendees and survey respondents consistently mentioned the need for increased leadership, direction, organization, and communication from the city as being of paramount importance to improve the arts, culture, and recreation offerings.

“The city’s arts/culture/history/recreation identity is fragmented because there is no unifying city authority,” said Barbara Kerr, Acting Director of the Medford Public Library and Director of Collections for the Medford Historical Society. “Having a person and a place at the center of the issue would be a great asset to the city. Create and staff a city arts and culture office, ideally within an arts center building, to centralize and coordinate the interaction of the city’s many organizations.”

Similar sentiment was expressed on the recreation side. Katie Martin, president of Medford Soccer, said that while Medford is well served by many excellent youth organizations, “we all exist in silos.” Operations are decentralized, and a lack of cohesive support and direction from the city creates challenges and barriers to success. As with arts and culture, Martin said having a single point of contact and communication would be a boon to all of the sports programs.

Tim Southwick of Medford Youth Basketball agreed: “Let’s put all the ‘Friends of’ organizations together, come out of our silos, put our energies together and have one conduit with the city. Some things the city does well, others aren’t done well. We see things in other communities that we can’t believe we don’t have here, but then we hear other communities say they wish they had the facilities we have. Everything needs some coordination.”

Resident Kelleyrobin Mulvihill said such a coordinated effort would eliminate the need for citizens to seek these activities elsewhere. “As an active community member with a family, the lack of organization applied to recreation and leisure services in a community this size is surprising to me,” she said. “There could be much better collaboration with regard to elder services, youth sports, community education, adult leagues, school field trips, leisure enrichment programs, early childhood programs, parks/playgrounds, etc. . . . Not to mention all of the organizations that operate to offer arts, cultural, and recreation programs. A comprehensive approach to these areas would better serve the people in the city [and] keep citizens from going outside of the community to have these needs met.”

Sharon Hepburn, owner of Mystic Coffee Roaster in Medford Square and a member of the Medford Community Coalition, said the job of promoting of the city’s arts, cultural, and recreation attractions starts at the top. “The mayor and the city need to be cheerleaders for Medford community organizations and businesses. Promote, promote, promote; communicate, communicate, communicate.”

Resident Bruce Kulik, a member of the Medford Bicycle Advisory Commission, noted that recreation goes beyond activities for children, and includes passive activities. He also noted

the importance of making transportation improvements to encourage and make it easier for people to recreate, for example, by bicycling and walking more.

Patrick Bibbins, also of the Medford Bicycle Advisory Commission, added: “Medford needs to brand itself as a creative, vibrant, and exciting city. We’ve got lots of things going on here, but there’s a perception that we’re unwelcoming and a confusing place to navigate once you are here. The right marketing is a critical part of getting people to come here, but we’ve got to make improvements to our public spaces to really deliver on our promise.”

Margaret Weigel, a member of the Chevalier Auditorium Commission, said the city’s commitment to the arts should be evident from the time a person arrives. “Visitors and residents alike should come into Medford and immediately understand [the importance placed on] the arts and values associated with arts — creativity, beauty, diversity, love of city buildings and streets, and a focus on life’s roses as well as its bread.”

Many people cited the Mystic River as a unique and valuable asset that should be a centerpiece for recreation and commerce. “The Mystic River is a vital and great resource for the City of Medford,” said Joe DiGirolamo of the Mystic Wellington Yacht Club. “The history of Medford was built along this body of water and yet it goes unnoticed or is not being utilized properly. The entire waterfront should better allow residents and visitors to enjoy and experience the city’s history. . . . Start with the city’s greatest resources we already have and build around them.”

## **Recommended Focus Areas**

The committee organized its priority recommendations into the following 12 focus areas:

**Communications:** Establishing a comprehensive communications strategy is essential, with a strong emphasis on two areas: 1) adding staff members at City Hall as the point of communication with arts, cultural, and recreation organizations, the public, other city departments, and outside agencies; and 2) improving the city’s website, including enhanced interactivity (such as fillable forms), more robust information related to arts, culture, recreation (including organizational information and resources), and related city board and commission agendas, minutes, and finances. Re-establishing the city’s community access television station—an important communications medium—is also essential.

**Staffing/Budget:** Devoting just an additional 0.25% in the FY17 budget (\$390,000, or about \$7 per resident) could fund full-time staff positions of an arts/culture director, recreation director, municipal facility manager (City Hall, Senior Center, Library, Chevalier), webmaster, and grant writer, and possibly shared administrative support. These positions would also offer an excellent opportunity for City Hall to diversify its leadership to better reflect the people being served. While nearly 25 percent of the city population is non-white, just 2 of 21 city department heads (9.5%) are non-white; overall, the percentage of non-white city employees, excluding the schools, is only about 5%.

**Recreation Department:** Establishing a Recreation Department with a full-time director is essential for the city to be able to offer consistent, quality, year-round programming for people of all ages and abilities; support the many independent organizations that conduct leagues and programs in the city; help manage and enhance playing fields, parks and other recreational facilities; identify and adopt best practices and policies to maximize participation; inform and encourage the public to participate; and build on partnerships with neighboring agencies such as the Malden YMCA and its programming expertise.

**Expanding Opportunities/Removing Barriers:** These recommendations run the gamut, from expanding the types of activities and length of season at Wright's Pond; to adding flexibility to the pond and pool permitting system; to providing free or reduced price tickets for senior citizens to arts and cultural events, and evaluating a revision to the city ordinance that would allow dogs in city parks during "off" times.

**Chevalier Theatre:** The city needs to work with the Chevalier Auditorium Commission to jointly identify building requirements and financial/operational needs in order for the theater to reach its full potential as a first-rate regional performing arts center, and an anchor institution and economic engine for Medford Square.

**Brooks Estate:** stewardship of the historic properties it owns is one of the city's primary civic responsibilities. The new city administration and new City Council must review the Brooks Estate Master Plan and, in conjunction with the 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.

**Medford Public Library:** Recent infrastructure problems have exposed the growing need for a large-scale renovation of the building to both improve safety, comfort, and user experience, and also to meet the needs of the 21st century society. The library's staff should also be involved in a new level of partnership, information sharing, and idea exchange with City Hall to ensure that best practices in contemporary library science and administration are helping to inform budgetary decisions regarding the library.

**Medford Public Schools:** Funding is needed to restore the personnel (dedicated fine arts director, teachers) and programs that have been cut over the last decade in order to provide a first-rate arts curriculum and experience for Medford students at all grade levels. New fundraising partners, such as the Medford Educational Foundation and Medford High Alumni Association, should be engaged.

**Community Preservation Act:** Approved by Medford voters in November 2015, the Community Preservation Act stands to inject an estimated \$1 million or more per year in available funding for open space and recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing. It is crucial that the CPA framework be fully established in a timely fashion in order for the city to begin to avail itself of these funds, and potentially leverage them for additional financial support from other sources.

**Medford Arts Council:** Doubling the city’s allocation to the Medford Arts Council in 2016 from \$15,000 to \$30,000 paid immediate and far-reaching dividends, as the average grant awarded by the Council this year increased by 35% (in all the Council gave out \$45,300 in grants for 62 projects and field trips). Continuing to support this city commission with budgetary resources and working with it to develop appropriate new policies and procedures for cultural planning and public art will be critical.

**Transportation Improvements:** Improving conditions for walking and bicycling—hallmarks of the Complete Streets approach to transportation planning—will enhance safety, promote healthy living, and re-establish a sense of community as people have more opportunities to interact with one another and visit our distinct neighborhoods and square. Combining these improvements with an artistic hand (e.g., colorfully and whimsically painted crosswalks/intersections) will showcase the cross-section between safety and art.

**Mystic River:** This natural resource—which is central in every sense of the word to Medford’s identity—is perhaps the single greatest strategic asset that we have yet to develop. Supporting the execution of the DCR Mystic River Master Plan and the city’s Medford Square Master Plan will benefit the community by accentuating the river as a central and uniting natural resource spanning the city. Improving access to the river and surrounding parklands not only will increase recreational opportunities, but also increase visitors and economic activity in nearby business districts and cultural attractions in our historic “river city,” including patrons of the forthcoming casino in Everett.

## Priority Recommendations

The committee identified these tasks as Priority Recommendations from the hundreds of ideas submitted:

### 30 Days

- **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

- **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

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. [A \$40,000 grant will fund an update of the Master Plan by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council starting this year.]
- **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 grant from the Medford Arts Council.
- **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

- **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](http://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.

Respectfully submitted,

### **Cultural Affairs and Recreation Committee**

Kelly Allen  
 Sarah Beardslee  
 Joan Cyr  
 Monique Y. Doherty  
 Susan Fairchild  
 Ken Krause  
 Anthony Petrelis  
 Gary Roberts  
 Paul Solano  
 Donna Sullivan

February 29, 2016

**Survey Recommendations Summary follows on next page.**

# Summary of Survey Recommendations (Number of responses in parenthesis)

## Communications/Outreach (30)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Designate liaisons at City Hall for Arts/Culture and for Recreation
30 days	Audit the rosters of all boards and commissions related to Arts, Culture and Recreation and advertise all vacancies
30 days	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)
30 days	Create a communication path between mayor/mayor's designee to engage with existing commissions and groups to discuss items for improvement (e.g., Medford Arts Council, Bicycle Advisory Commission, West Medford Community Center, MACI, CACHE, youth sports organizations, etc.).
30 days	Better utilize the Government Channel for "bulletin board" announcements on ACR activities (e.g., upcoming events at Chevalier, library, Historical Society, Royall House, WMOS; public skating, Mystic River winter bird walk; sports league sign-ups, etc.).
30 days	Convene an introductory meeting with liaisons and constituent organizations
30 days	Issue a call-out for a volunteer to assist with immediate content improvement of the city website for ACR, understanding there will be a plan for a paid, full-time webmaster for sustained maintenance of the website
30 days	Install neon signs throughout city to inform of various events (HS, Square events, elections, etc.)
3 months	Solicit event 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 events and activities available in Medford
3 months	Have an outreach/brainstorming session with the artists themselves on what is most needed from their perspective
3 months	Begin to evaluate how to improve/streamline the approval process for public art installations (could be tasked to the Arts/Culture liaison at City Hall and/or an ad hoc committee).
3 months	Institute a regular e-newsletter from the mayor's office on city initiatives, events, outreach
3 months	Institute an opt-in call service for announcements on city events (particularly for senior citizens who do not have computers or Internet access)
30 days	Create monthly arts, culture, recreation newsletter that could go out with the existing Senior Sounds monthly newsletter (sent to 4,000 individuals)
3 months	Update the information in the Welcome to Medford section on the city website, currently dated April 2008
6 months	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.
6 months	Provide outreach and information in multiple languages, and translators at citywide public/cultural events whenever possible.
6 months	Consider creating one cohesive organization working for the greater good of enhancing and

	promoting art/culture and for recreation
6 months	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
6 months	Install and utilize kiosks/bulletin boards in city parks
6 months	Create an Office of Volunteerism to harness talent and promote opportunities
QUOTE	"It's exciting that Mayor Muccini Burke is prioritizing clear and current communication between City Hall and its residents, businesses, organizations and employees. Posting meetings that affect the community at large well in advance, online and in an easy-to-use website that is intuitive and clear. Frequent press releases on what's happening at City Hall, keeping the community in the know so we all can be proactive vs. reactive. No more bulletin board announcements and antique website embedded documents – utilizing social media to its fullest extent to keep constituents informed and in the loop. The people of this city are very passionate and excited to know what's happening in our city, and working together towards positive change." – Melanie Raelin, Medford Community Coalition

### Chevalier Theatre (18)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Fill the recently advertised facilities staff position
30 days	Meet with Chevalier Commission to review options for retaining a professional event management/marketing company to help with programming for the next 18 months, and discuss a longer-term business plan, which is being formulated following analysis of municipal auditorium operations in Lexington, Lynn and Lowell.
30 days	Establish a clearer path of communication and better working relationship/protocols between city departments (Building, DPW) and Chevalier Commission so that regular maintenance and improvement items can be accomplished more efficiently/effectively
30 days	Create a page on the city website showcasing Chevalier Theatre, including rental opportunities.
30 days	Attend an event at Chevalier Theatre
3 months	Develop a priority list of building needs and cost estimates.
3 months	Work on creating signs in Medford Square for Chevalier parking
6 months	Pursue additional funding in FY2017 budget for Chevalier facility management, programming and marketing
QUOTE	"Develop Chevalier Auditorium to attract quality year-round programming for all age levels." – Dottie Palladino

### Promote/Champion (16)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Formally support and endorse Medford Conversations project.
30 days	Actively promote/publicize West Medford Open Studios (website; banners; trolley?)
30 days – ongoing	Attend events at library, Chevalier, WMCC, WMOS, schools, Medford Community Coalition. Promote festivals, events, performance opportunities, Chevalier events, school events.
30 days – ongoing	Promote Medford programs and successes in Medford and beyond. Medford needs to brand itself as a creative, vibrant and exciting city. Medford desperately needs to market its assets to the community. Make immediate impression on visitors and residents the importance of and value placed on arts (creativity, beauty, diversity, love of city buildings and streets).

30 days – ongoing	Improve communication/promotion of arts events at Tufts.
3 months – ongoing	Make the arts more public, both more publicity and public art.
30 days – 3 months	Contact local colleges (Babson, Suffolk, Tufts) to propose a graduate-level semester (or longer) project studying the economic impact of the arts in Medford, something that never has been quantified but can be valuable in marketing the city and its arts/cultural attractions and organizations.
3 months	Install flags on lamp posts to promote arts and cultural events
3 months – 6 months	Commit to serious and meaningful cultural planning as integral part of large-scale city planning, particularly for Medford Square and implementation of Community Preservation Act, but also other long-term infrastructure and policy developments
6 months – ongoing	Continue granting use of City Hall for Jingle Bell festival.
QUOTE	“I believe the most important thing Mayor Burke and her administration can do is to be a continual and consistent visionary promoter and cheerleader, incessantly making opportunities to stand up publicly to remind many constituencies of the remarkable benefits a community reaps from its support of culture, art and artists. The experience of several nearby communities serves to illustrate how fostering culture and arts enlivens communal life while powerfully attracting people to want to live, work, and travel/spend time there. The constituencies who need to hear this message from our Mayor – on every opportunity, as one of our city’s key priorities – include Medford resident citizens, civic groups, our landlords and business community, our education establishment from elementary and high schools on to our premier higher education neighbor, Tufts University.” – Jim Smith, MACI

## Budget/Funding (16)

Time Band	Action Item
3 months	Fund emergency repairs for Brooks Estate Carriage House
6 months	Fund design work for the access drive at the Brooks Estate, including the drive, utilities, and associated infrastructure
6 months	Increase FY17 budget allocation for Chevalier Theatre maintenance/programming
6 months	Fund position of full-time city webmaster in FY17 budget
6 months	Fund position of Arts/Culture Director in FY17 budget
6 months	Fund position of Recreation Director in FY17 budget
6 months	Fund a position in the FY17 budget as a building/maintenance supervisor for City Hall, the Senior Center, Chevalier Theatre and Medford Public Library
6 months	Fund full-time Fine Arts Director position and additional music teacher in FY17 school budget
6 months	Fund a full-time grant writer position in the Office of Community Development
6 months	Increase FY17 budget allocation for Medford Arts Council
6 months	Consider FY17 budget allocations to affiliated nonprofit institutions: Medford Historical Society, West Medford Community Center, CACHE, MACI
6 months	Commit to 1% of FY17 budget for Medford Public Library
6 months	Explore opportunities for Mass. Cultural Facilities Fund grant application
QUOTE	“Put some actual city money behind the arts. Start with \$100,000 per year and let the groups compete for the funds with events at Chevalier and Circle the Square and others. Medford has never put any serious money into some of its resources that are arts-focused.

	Non-profits can only do so much with volunteers; put some city funds down to directly support or match arts, cultural events, concerts, and other recreational activities.” – Doug Carr, M-BELT
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## Meet With Organizations (16)

Time Band	Action Item
6-12 months	Meet or have liaison honor requests to meet with: Chamber of Commerce, Chevalier Auditorium Commission, Commission for Persons With Disabilities, Medford Community Housing, Medford Conversations project, Library Staff, Friends of the Library board, Medford Boys & Girls Club, Medford Community Coalition, Paws4Medford, Special Ed Parents Council, Titus, PTOs, WalkMedford, West Medford Community Center, West Medford Open Studios
6 months	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

## Website/Directory/Calendar (15)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Provide simple links to Arts, Culture, and Recreation community organizations websites and/or Facebook pages, e.g. Mystic River recreational map produced by Mystic River Watershed Association, MACI, Medford Arts Council, West Medford Studios, Medford Bike Commission, Medford Walking Trails, Middlesex Fells recreation maps
30 days	Create single site for all organizations and a comprehensive calendar of events; all groups to post their own events, check with conflicts with other groups; allow people to submit their contact info to be shared with select organizations; Host a master calendar of ACR events on the website, or have a prominent link to the CACHE Arts and Culture Calendar; investigate linking multiple calendars through “the hub” ( <a href="http://www.hubapp.com/">http://www.hubapp.com/</a> )
30 days	List “snow shovelers” on Medford Website
30 days	Post a weekly “this week in the arts” posting on the home page
30 days-3 months	Publicize volunteer opportunities for adults and students, and special needs volunteer opportunities (e.g., a “community action classified” page); seek volunteers for website content management, programming, and other needs; Code for Boston ( <a href="http://www.meetup.com/Code-for-Boston">www.meetup.com/Code-for-Boston</a> ) is a volunteer organization of developers, designers, urban planners, and researchers who focus on solving civic and social problems through use of creative technology; possibly use Tufts intern for website work; be “Partners in Progress”
30 days	Create “World is at Home in Medford” mapping display; publicize it on website
30 days	Investigate getting website “Medford.info” from Jay Campbell (possibly willing to turn it over to the City of Medford)
30 days	Reorganize the website so that info can be found within 2-3 clicks; include email addresses and phone numbers on website of all city employees
3 months	Have robust website offering year round recreation activities - not just summer – with more opportunities and updates on signups and tryouts or city teams, a central place for all activities; link with outside organizations who provide summer activities
3 months	Update the information in the Welcome to Medford section on the city website, currently dated April 2008
3-6 months	Offer option to submit requests and to conduct business with City Hall remotely, and more easily on the website

3-6 months	Have page on Medford website where constituents can continue to provide feedback after the Transition Team period of service
3 months	Determine what other languages are prominent in Medford and in what languages besides English the information on the website should appear; begin to provide multilingual information on website
6 months+	Overhaul city website to be more user friendly; multi-lingual options; possibly consider using CivicPlus ( <a href="http://www.civicplus.com">www.civicplus.com</a> ) - in use by many municipalities
3 months	Make purchasing Wright's Pond and Tufts Pool passes easier and more flexible (e.g., add a daily guest pass option for visitors accompanied by Medford residents)
QUOTE	"Create an online calendar for arts, culture, and recreational activities and have someone monitor it so it's up-to-date. This would help all the groups plan times that would not conflict with other programs and events. Announcements could perhaps be generated from the calendar to help the public be aware of what's happening and encourage them to participate." – Dorothy Emerson

### Brooks Estate (13)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Present a new funding proposal to the City Council to initiate the emergency stabilization repairs needed for the Carriage House
30 days	Attend a Medford-Brooks Estate Land Trust board meeting
3 months	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.
3 months	Explore use of manor house in existing condition for community meeting rooms, lectures, classes
6 months	Commit to a restoration plan for the property, approved by the mayor, City Council and M-BELT, including a funding mechanism and completion timetable
6 months	Fund the design work for the access drive, including utilities, and associated infrastructure
6 months	Explore a partnership with the Trustees of Reservations to manage the site as a center for sustainable/environmental nature study
6 months	Consider community-based programs such as those offered through Habitat in Belmont (summer camps, nature education, arts education) and Wright Locke Farm in Winchester (camps, after-school programs, educational classes)
QUOTE	"The most important thing the Burke administration can do is to lend full and active support to the Medford-Brooks Estate renovation plan. This historic site belongs to the city, yet receives almost no financial support. The mansion and carriage house could be a real resource for arts organizations and generate income for the city, if only the carriage house can be saved. Please take the lead on this! Thanks." – Ellen Epstein

### Recreation Department/Programs (13)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Begin to meet with neighboring communities that have recreation programs to discuss how they operate, fund and staff their programs and offices
30 days	Have an outreach brainstorming method on how to set up a meeting with all fall, winter, and spring coaches up at the high school to run and develop one week sports camps over the city. Seniors and a coach or coaches oversee the program, while charging children \$20-

	\$25 per child. This will better help promote the high school sports teams and develop a relationship between the high school teams and the corresponding youth programs.
30 days	Meet with leaders of existing city programs (Summer Fun and Park League and hear their ideas for the future.) Summer Fun is a self-sufficient, 8-week program that makes over \$30,000 profit consistently every year.
30 days	Meet with Malden YMCA director about the organization's desire to become more of a regional facility, which would benefit Medford residents through additional programs
3 months	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
3 months	Begin talks with local businesses to establish one week programs during the year to hold workshops for children (karate, fitness, art classes, etc.)
3 months	Begin to think how to better utilize the facilities in Medford by having vans that can transport children from sight to sight to utilize the city's facilities.
3 months	Evaluate opening the track at Hormel Stadium for public use (especially important with the closing of Meadow Glen Mall to walkers)
6 months	Create a full-time position for Parks and 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 parks and recreation program director. Round out department with administrative and program assistants.
6 months-1 yr	Have a full-time location for the parks and recreation program, whether that be City Hall, Community Schools or a Medford Square location.
QUOTE	"As a family living in Medford, I would love to see more focus on the children living in Medford. We are the only local city that does not have a centralized recreation department for sports and camps. In addition, the city is filled with trash, litter, empty bottles and drug paraphernalia. We need to make the city safe and offer sports and camps through the city that can be accessed through a recreation department." – Tara Hurley

## Staffing (13)

Time Band	Action Item
6 months	Fund position of full-time city webmaster in FY17 budget
6 months	Fund position of Arts/Culture Director in FY17 budget
6 months	Fund position of Recreation Director in FY17 budget
6 months	Fund a position in the FY17 budget as a building/maintenance supervisor for City Hall, the Senior Center, Chevalier Theatre and Medford Public Library
6 months	Fund a full-time grant writer position in the Office of Community Development
6 months	Fund full-time Fine Arts Director position and additional music teacher in FY17 school budget
6 months	Restore staffing levels at library, schools (especially for arts, languages. school libraries, after school clubs
QUOTE	"A few years ago, we conducted a poll of all of the communities contiguous to Medford, as well as other area cities and towns. With the exception of Stoneham, Medford employed the fewest number of music teachers in their school system. Even more striking is that many of these communities have no string programs or other programs that Medford provides. During the school year, we hold a minimum of 14 major concerts in the evening – far more than other systems that squeeze all of their groups onto one or two nights. We are now in

	our 8th year without a full-time Fine Arts Director. It is my hope that the Mayor, as head of the School Committee, can support us in our quest to provide the best music education experience to our students in the years ahead.”- Tony Szykniej, Lead Teacher - Fine Arts/Music Medford Public Schools
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### Maintenance/Trash Collection/Beautification (13)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Enforce code violations (overflowing trash bins, etc.)
3 months	Charge dog registration fee and use funds to pick up bags of dog waste left in parks;
6 months	Increase number of trash cans (including Big Belly solar compactors) along all parks and paths and collect trash at least weekly, in squares, and at places such as the library;
6 months	Take control of and better manage adopt-a-site beautification sites and standardize signs
3-6 months	Arrange for prison labor for trash collection

### Events/Festivals (12)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Work with existing groups to create new and promote current events
30 days	Rotate a visual arts gallery in City Hall, other municipal buildings
3 months	Schedule outdoor entertainment for summer: movies and music in parks, arts-based festivals and events; summer and early fall festivals in the city
3 months	Install flags on lamp posts to promote arts and cultural events
6 months	Re-establish successful programs such as the Neighborhood Arts Program (previously funded through CETA), Art in the Park, & Art in Windows
3-6 months	Works with businesses to sponsor senior trips to ACR places (e.g., MFA, Symphony Hall, plays in Boston, Museum of Science/other museums, Tufts noontime concerts and art gallery; picnics to the Charles with box lunch, etc.
3-6 months	Work with company “Best of Times” travel company to plan overnight/day trips; city gets commission
6 months	Create juried exhibitions of artists
6 months	Hold art events in refurbished parks such as McNally
6 months	Use City Hall as a venue for more cultural programming
6-12 months	Celebrate diverse cultures through food and arts (for example, an international food/film festival)
6 months	Present art and activity in Tufts Park – it’s perfect for murals, sculptures, community garden; a mural at the Harvard Street bridge would make for a more welcoming gateway to Medford

### Parks and Playgrounds (12)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Start to open line of communication with Tufts University and meet with an Art department rep who would be willing to work with children in Spring and Summer to paint beautiful designs and murals at the Medford Parks to show off the beautiful artists we have in the city.
30 days	Host a survey on the website seeking community input on Medford parks that need maintenance, and specifically what maintenance is needed; categorize feedback into things

	that the DPW can do immediately (e.g., repair equipment), within 3 months (painting, field repairs), within 6 months (field overhauls)
3 months	Begin to look at our park league program and see how we could better develop the program or combine the program with the Summer Fun Program.
3 months	Look into having shuttles that travel from park to park and take children to one centralized park for an organized activity, game, or event 3-5 days a week.
3 months	Begin to utilize the Condon band shell to host community events every Friday and Saturday night. Doing a movie night every Friday (Disney and Pixar movies) and Saturday live music or concerts. Talk to local restaurants and business to set up food tents to sell food and merchandise at these events to promote the local businesses.
3 months	Support dog park proposal with “letter of assurance” and look for additional funding sources;
3 months	Start Dugger Park renovations this spring.
3-6 months	Include “natural” playscapes in parks (2)
3-6 months	More use of public parks across city; outdoor programs with free parking for residents; “outdoor” movies at Condon Shell (e.g. free Friday flicks at the mini hatch shell)
6 months	Evaluate the condition of all grass soccer fields in the city and determine a rotation schedule to “rest” the fields to let them recover and maintain their condition for quality and safety
6+ months	Consider installing splash park equipment in all Medford Parks
6 months	Create an inclusive playground area where children of all abilities can interact with community members, elders, the arts.
3-6 months	Consider a dog park at Tufts Park
6 months	Create parklets in small business districts
6 months	Present art and activity in Tufts Park – it’s perfect for murals, sculptures, community garden; a mural at the Harvard Street bridge would make for a more welcoming gateway to Medford;
6-9 months	Rehab the full size baseball diamonds, including adding lights to Monboquette Field at Playstead Park; repair/install foul ball nets; add covered dugouts at Barry, Morrison and Hickey baseball fields

## Transportation Improvements (12)

Time Band	Action Item
3 months	Publicly commit to Complete Streets concept, then begin to implement, starting with traffic calming in Medford Square, West Medford, North Medford, South Medford; would make Medford a better place to walk, bike, and get around. (3 recommendations)
3 months	Adopt Medford Bicycle Commission draft master plan.
3 months	Make streets and sidewalks safe first – a “culture of concern”
6 months	Repair sidewalks, especially in South Medford;
6 months	Institute traffic calming and truck bans where appropriate;
6 months	Paint crosswalks on a regular schedule
6 months	Create safe pedestrian walkways to Medford Square and other squares from surrounding neighborhoods
6 months	Add bike lanes and street markings (sharrows) to improve safe travel for commuting, recreation, and to and from arts/recreation destinations

QUOTE	“Pedestrian and biker safety! The city is not bike- or pedestrian-friendly. Without effective measures to promote a more walkable and bikeable city, Medford is severely handicapping any efforts to promote recreation opportunities in the area.” – Tom Scudder
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### Mystic River Paths (11)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Champion Clippership Connector and Mystic Greenways projects
30 days	Appoint a city representative to be involved with the Emerald Network and Greenway Links initiatives, which will help fill the gaps in the multi-use trail network in Medford
6-12 months	Install additional benches, kiosks
6-12 months	Create self-guided river walking tours available on smartphones (could also be created city-wide with focus on history, culture, etc.)
12-36 months	Complete running/walking/biking trails along the river, connecting parks

### Library (11)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	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 including library patrons, staff, trustees, Friends of Library, etc.
30 days	Bolster Trustees of Library.
30 days	Explore grant opportunities through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners fund
3 months	Increase funding for repairs, renovations, expansion, modernization
3 months	Clean grounds, meeting areas, and space used by Friends of Library
3 months	Offer workshops/classes to learn basic computer skills; promote use of tablets; more poetry and prose published throughout city
3 months	better use of public buildings for cultural programs,
6 months	Make second floor accessible and better utilize the space, including for arts events.
Ongoing	Attend 2016 fundraising events
QUOTE	“The library needs more funding, particularly for repairs. Our library is a great place, but many people go to other towns because they say, “It’s so ugly, it’s run down, I just don’t like being there.” That is a shame. So many times MPL has the books I am looking for, it has wonderful helpful staff and great programming. But it is an eyesore. At the very least fix what needs fixing; better yet, upgrade and renovate.” – Kim DeAndrade

### Medford Public Schools (10)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Add funding for and support collaboration between professional artists/organizations and schools
30 days	Engage students in Medford schools for their input/participation in arts, culture and recreation (community service credit potential for high school students)

30 days	Meet with all After School Program coordinators and begin to ask them what kinds of programs they would like to see offered to their children. Possible will partner up with Full Time Recreation Director once a department is established.
30 days	Meet with all Principals of Elementary Schools to see what offerings can be given to the children before and after school. (Sports, Arts, Drama etc.)
30 days	Talk to Superintendent about offering late buses for Elementary aged schools to give those children who are not able to attend these after school activities the ability to participate in the programs and have transportation.
30 days	Begin to talk to all the PTOs at every school and see how the city could help put all the schools on the same playing field as far as equal funding availability.
30 days	Talk with Medford Educational Foundation and have them come to each individual school and talk to teaching staffs about who they are and how they can help the schools with grants and other opportunities.
3 months	See how we can expand funding for the fine arts departments at all levels. Medford lacks many full time Art and Music teachers.
3 months	Pair HS technology students with Seniors to learn basic computer skills
6 months	Increase funding for art, music, language, cultural immersion
3 months	Fulfill commitments to Medford Educational Foundation to promote innovation in classroom and create public arts installation at Columbus School.
6 months	Expand/promote community education programs
6 months	Expand access to in-school and extracurricular programs to homeschooled children
6 months	Hire full-time Fine Arts Director at high school (8 years without) and additional music teachers (fewest among all contiguous communities but one)
QUOTE	“Support the arts, culture and recreation in the public schools, through funding for music programs, international cultural experiences (including broad support for learning languages through cultural immersion), involving students in learning about and creating art in many medias and encouraging a diverse training program in active sports. It is through our children that Medford will develop.” – Rinah Yamamoto

## Medford Square (8)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Don't charge for parking in Medford Square on days of cultural events
3 months	Undertake a plan to redevelop square, making a destination for arts, culture, recreation
	Capitalize on Mystic River and waterfront; study potential for water taxi service to Boston ports and beyond including Everett casino
3 months	Seek out and use the creativity of organizations such as the Historical Society, MACI, Royall House to revitalize downtown area;
3-6 Months	Incorporate ideas for creating placemaking gathering spots, especially for seniors, as the

	Medford Square Master Plan is updated
6 months	Explore attracting a movie theater in the square (5 recommendations)
6-12 months	Plant more trees to increase visual appeal, shade/comfort, air quality
QUOTE	“The best way to foster arts is to redevelop Medford square. The downtown river area is an untapped resource! The river could offer great walking areas, and trendy businesses. Medford Square could become a fun place for people to hang out, which encourages arts and culture there.” – Jane Marcus

### Arts Center/Space/MACI home (8)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Begin discussions with MACI, Medford Arts Council, etc., about having a monthly art exhibition at City Hall & an ongoing art exhibit in City Hall
3-6 months	Help find new space for MACI & other arts organizations and activities (art shows, receptions, small arts & crafts classes, meetings, films, readings, lectures, workshops, makerspace, conducting business)
3-6 months	Explore acquisition or use of Springstep and utilizing long-term vacant storefronts for arts space (6 recommendations)
3-6 months	Examine feasibility of a modest arts building - perhaps a glass building like exists at Faneuil Hall in Boston - on the city-owned land where the Medford Farmers Market is held, which would complement the Krystal Campbell Peace Garden across the street
3-6 months	Give the arts and community groups a permanent home to meet, conduct business, share ideas, and host arts and cultural activities
QUOTE	“It would be nice to have an art center that all of the arts organizations could use and call upon to promote the arts in Medford. There are lot of artists that are working in Medford. Also, a local arts center or artists studio spaces would be nice (examples are Vernon Street Studios, Arlington Center for the Arts, Cambridge Adult Ed, etc.). Maybe the mayor’s office could give building owners a tax discount for housing artists at an affordable rate. The Springstep building or another space that isn’t being used, could house artists, TV3, and the Arts Council. This would localize and could promote the arts in Medford.” – Earl Howard, West Medford Open Studios

### Buildings/Infrastructure (7)

Time Band	Action Item
6 months	Thoroughly inspect and address maintenance issues of schools, library, City Hall, Chevalier Theatre/Gene Mack Gym, Wright’s Pond, Community Centers, police station, and create a long-term plan to improve all infrastructure
6 months	Explore applying for a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (requires city match) for eligible municipal properties such as Chevalier Theatre, Brooks Estate
6 months	Fund a position in the FY17 budget as a building/maintenance supervisor for City Hall, the

	Senior Center, Chevalier Theatre and Medford Public Library
6-9 months	look for Community Development Block Grant funds for building improvements, as were recently allocated for the Senior Center
Future	Locate a facility and open a recreation center
Ongoing	As municipal buildings are built or enhanced, consider opportunities for including community spaces for groups to use, particularly on nights and weekends
Ongoing	Explore creating a community art gallery space (such as in Taunton)

### Medford Arts Council (7)

Time Band	Action Item
3 months	Commit to an annual line item for the MAC in the city budget.
3–6 months	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.
3–6 months	Meet or appoint a representative to meet with the Medford Arts Council to review information from its recent Arts Summit and survey on what arts-related activities and improvements the community wants and how to achieve them (Arts Council is hiring a cultural planner to consult on execution).
3–6 months	Add full-time cultural affairs person to City Hall staff
QUOTE	“When the lottery was established, it was called the Arts Lottery. As soon as the state and the municipalities saw the astounding amounts of money that the lottery was garnering, the arts were given a much smaller portion of the proceeds. At that time the cities were directed to give an office to the Arts Council in each city. Gene Brune, the mayor of Somerville at that time, did so. Ever since, the art community has thrived in Somerville, where citizens have learned to take the arts seriously.” – Adele Travisano

### Businesses/Chamber of Commerce (7)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Establish direct link between City Hall and Chamber
30 days	Reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to discuss the Chamber's current involvement within the City, regarding business development.
30 days	Work together to maintain current businesses and develop new ones, and to revitalize the squares;
3 months	Display art and historic items from Medford businesses in City Hall, Council Chambers
3 months	Help local businesses to support the arts by encouraging live music, dinner theater and art galleries within the businesses themselves;
3 months	Encourage Chamber to offer discounts to students on certain days/nights to attract them to the various squares and promote commerce
6 months	Involve the businesses for wide range planning for future cultural events
6 months	Bring in family friendly businesses and attractions, art galleries/studios, affordable restaurants, music venues, maker spaces.

### Wright's Pond (6)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Allow dogs access to Pond off hours and off season (consider fee/permit system for dog

	use)
30 days	Add trash cans to Wright's Pond year-round
30 days-3 months	Wright's Pond season is too short; extend season by opening/closing earlier, adding partial weeks or weekends
30 days-3 months	Investigate sharing of lifeguards with Malden YMCA
30 days-3 months	Instruct Park Commission to begin evaluating how to improve Wright's Pond pass program and other operations for 2016 season: Stickers purchased should be replaced with hang tags so they can be moved from car to car; also allows for resident to enter with guests' car/rental car; allow resident to get an online "day pass" so resident with sticker/hang tag can purchase a day pass for visitor; resident must accompany visitor into the pond, showing day pass and license with Medford address; Permit second pass purchase at a discount for 2-car families
30 days-3 months	Explore a variety of events besides swimming, such as art exhibits/festivals, food trucks, farmers' market, yoga/tai chi classes
6+ months	Hold a polar plunge on New Year's Day
6+ months	Consider opening Wright's Pond to non-Medford residents; charge higher fee for entry
3-6 months	Hire a FT City Recreation Director to develop four-season recreation program and enhance the summer program, including at Wright's Pond; collaborate with Medford organizations (e.g., Medford Family Network)

### Parking Program (6)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Don't charge for parking in Medford Square on days of cultural events
30 days	Revisit program for Medford Square
30 days	Lessen the parking restrictions on the parking; consider the first 30 minutes free. School zone areas should be free the hour before school and the hour at the end of the school day. Anything to promote user friendlier continuation of the parking meters
30 days	Free parking for seniors throughout city, especially at the senior center (19 responses from Senior Center)
30 days	Free parking hangtags for home healthcare workers
30 days	Annual Resident parking sticker (small fee) for Medford residents to be able to park throughout the city
30 days -3 months	Improve visibility/operation of parking kiosks

### Public Access TV Station/Government, Educational Channels (5)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Articulate the administration's plan and timetable for resurrecting the Public Access Channel (TV3), including the physical space and operations.
30 days	Better utilize the Government Channel for "bulletin board" announcements on ACR activities
30 days	Improve coverage of city council meetings on Ch. 22/43; often can't see/hear speaker (need professionals)
3 months	Better utilize the Educational Channel to showcase arts activities in the schools.
3 months	Look at other cities as models for working with high schools (Brookline Interactive Group,

	Arlington, Malden) and stations in Stoneham, Somerville, Boston.
6 months	Create easy way for community organizations to make and get messages out
6-12 months	Establish public media resource center (TV, social media, education)

### Community Preservation Act (5)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	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)

### Community Gardens (5)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Affirm policy in the city's 2011 Open Space and Recreation Plan that any park renovation would include community garden, if an appropriate space exists
3 months	Support the creation of more community gardens
3 months	Streamline and clearly define process and procedures for working with city departments on community gardens
3 months	Secure a commitment from Eversource to construct a natural playscape at the Winthrop Street Community Garden as mitigation for construction work at the garden to install an electric transmission line
	Utilize vacant state properties, such as large tract on Fountain and Webster streets, for community garden
6 months	Consider Tufts Park as a site for a Community Garden
	Study the large number of sports facilities in Medford's parks to determine how frequently they are used; build community gardens on underutilized sports fields

### Artist Live/Work Spaces (4)

Time Band	Action Item
6 months	Begin to seek appropriate, affordable artist studio space in the city; look at other communities that have been successful (Malden, Somerville, Cambridge, Boston);
6 months	Establish a committee with a good cross-section of artists on it to develop a plan; work to find places for studio space rentals (Brooks Estate?)

### Dog Parks (3)

Time Band	Action Item
30 days	Provide an update/timetable on the proposed Off-Leash Dog Park at Mystic Riverbend Park; assist in removing any roadblocks and helping the process to completion this summer
30-60 days	Submit letter of assurance to advocacy group Paws4Medford of city's commitment to dog park; meet with Paws4Medford to discuss additional funding options;
3-6 months	Consider a dog park at Tufts Park in South Medford.
3 months	Allow dogs access to Wright's Pond off-hours and off-season; (consider fee/permit system for dog use)