

Community & Economic Development Committee

October 28, 2025

Office of Community & Economic Development

EOHLC identified the following issues that must be resolved:

- The submitted compliance model did not capture the building footprint restriction in Section 9.8.6.5.4 of the Bridgewater Zoning Bylaw or the requirement of only one principal residential structure on a lot in Section 3.1.1.1. Taken together, these restrictions would reduce the estimated unit capacity below the minimum requirement. **In discussions with EOHLC, Town staff proposed the solution of allowing more than one principal residential structure on a lot in the District, and EOHLC agrees that this amendment would resolve the issue.**
- Section 9.9.4.2 limits residential density to 15 units per acre in the District. This restriction also reduces the District's estimated unit capacity below its minimum requirement. In discussions with EOHLC, Town staff clarified that the intent of this Section was to encourage development at a density of *at least* 15 units per acre, and not to serve as a cap on density. Town staff proposed removing the cap, and EOHLC agrees that its removal would resolve this issue.

CED Recommended Amendments to Meet Compliance Requirement

(Based on PB Comments(9/17/25) and Horsley Witten TC Presentation 10/7/25)

Section 3.1.1

- 1. No dwelling shall be erected except on a lot fronting on a street, and there shall be not more than one principal residential building on any lot.

to

- 1. No dwelling shall be erected except on a lot fronting on a street, and there shall be not more than one principal residential building on any lot (except for MBTA and Waterford Village Overlay Districts?)

Section 9.9.4.2

- Regardless of other standards in the underlying zoning, the allowable residential density for the two MBTACOD districts is 15 units per acre.

to

- Regardless of other standards in the underlying zoning, the allowable residential density for the two MBTACOD districts is: 18 units per acre in the MBTA - partial CBD subdistrict and 30 units per acre in the MBTA-Residential D district.

Section 3A of the Massachusetts Zoning Act ("Chapter 40A") Funding Opportunities

Grant Name	How Much?	What For?
MBTA Communities Catalyst Fund	\$250,000 – \$1,000,000	Infrastructure
Community Planning Grants	Up to \$150,000	Planning and Zoning
Housing Choice Community Grant	\$150,000 - \$500,000	Site Preparation, Buildings, Infrastructure, & Planning and Zoning
MassWorks Infrastructure Grant	\$100,000- \$5,000,000	Infrastructure & Predevelopment
Community One Stop for Growth	Varies	https://www.mass.gov/info-details/one-stop-for-growth-development-continuum
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning and Project Grants, EOEEA	Varies	Land Acquisition, Dam & Seawall Repair, Parkland Renovations, etc
Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, EOED	\$25,000 to \$30,000	Technical Assistance
Urban Agenda, EOED	Up to \$100,000	General operating support for innovative and collaborative community economic development projects.
Brownfields Redevelopment Fund, MassDevelopment	\$250,000 - \$2,000,000	Site Assesments & Site Remediation
Site Readiness Program, MassDevelopment	\$50,000 - \$500,000	Site Preparation and Predevelopment Activities
Underutilized Properties Program, MassDevelopment	\$50,000 - \$1,000,000	Capital Improvements and Pre-Development Activities
Real Estate Services Technical Assistance, MassDevelopment	Up to \$50,000	Technical Assistance
Commonwealth Places Programs, MassDevelopment	50% match on Crowdfunding	Public Spaces
Land Use Planning Grants, EOEEA	Varies	Infrastructure, Park, Acquisition of Property, & Planning
Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Grants	Up to \$450,000	Land Acquisition & Conservation Restrictions
Non-compliance = \$0		
Compliance = \$10,000,000+		

Town of Bridgewater			
			Actual Total Revenue Received
Grant/Agency/Name	Local State Federal	Award	Total Award/Revenue
EEA Damn & Seawall Exe Office Energy & Environm Affairs	State		\$1,000,000.00
EEA MVP Exe Office Energy & Environm Affairs	State		\$745,000.00
Community Compact Municipal Fiber Grant	State		\$269,466.00
Green Communities	State		\$692,550.11
EEA - Open Space & Recreation Plan	State		\$40,000.00
Complete Streets Funding Project	State		\$400,000.00
Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC)	State	\$500,000.00	\$11,834.97
EOHED Earmark - CED	State		\$267,857.15
EOHED Earmark - CED	State		\$70,000.00
MDOT-Earmark	State		\$150,000.00
MDOT -Earmark	State		\$120,000.00
MDOT-Earmark	State		\$43,982.48
Shared Streets with BSU PORTION Sidewalk - Pedistrian Improvements	State		\$234,456.25
Shared Streets with BSU Sidewalk - Pedistrian Improvements	State		\$450,000.00
HCI Grant - Curve St Extension	State		\$225,000.00
MAPC MA Development	State		\$40,000.00
Massworks Grant in 2020 for Elm Street \$3,000,000	State		\$2,835,000.00
Massworks Grant in 2020 for Elm Street \$3,000,000 - First St Betterment	State		\$165,000.00
Curve St Housing (HCI) Water Connection Grant/Water Main \$225k	State		\$225,000.00
McElwain School Project - 2019-2020 **Federal/State Investment Funding	State Federal Town		\$1,345,000.00

- Nine Massachusetts communities challenged the MBTA Communities Act in a lawsuit **that was dismissed** by a Superior Court judge in June 2025. The plaintiffs were Duxbury, Hamilton, Hanson, Holden, Marshfield, Middleton, Wenham, Weston, and Wrentham. They argued the law was an "unfunded mandate," but the court ruled against them.
- The lawsuit: The nine communities filed a lawsuit challenging the MBTA Communities Act, which requires certain cities and towns to adopt zoning that allows for multi-family housing near public transit.
- The argument: The towns argued that the act would force them to spend money on infrastructure without state funding, classifying it as an "unfunded mandate".
- The ruling: A Superior Court judge dismissed the lawsuit, ruling that the law is not an unfunded mandate. The judge found the potential costs were indirect and noted available grant programs.

- The Town received an extension for compliance until 12/31/25
- Failure to meet compliance deadline will have the Town identified as being in “Non-Compliance”
- Existing zoning remains unchanged from the Zoning Ordinance adopted by the Town Council in April 2024.