



Economic Development Strategy

Groton, CT

2019-2023



Strategy Report



www.camoinassociates.com

Volumes

- **Volume 1: Strategy Report**
- Volume 2: Implementation Matrix
- Volume 3: Playbook

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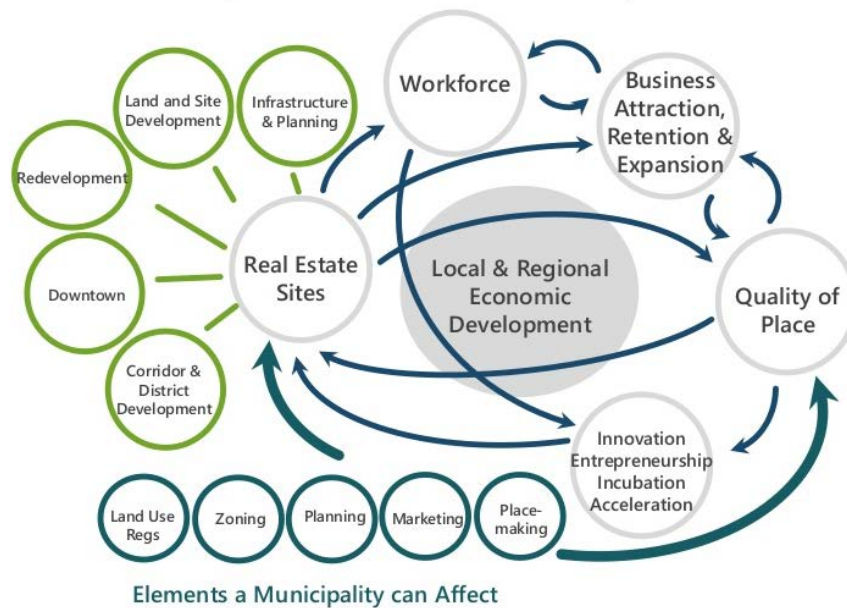
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Chapter 1: Why We Wrote a Joint Economic Development Strategy for the Town and City

Economic development is not just programs and organizations. It is about people and networks and, therefore, complex. Success requires a holistic approach. As illustrated in the image below, the Town and City have limited control over all the factors that influence the economy and local economic wellbeing. Therefore, they must work together, do what they can do well, and work with others to affect elements of the economic development network that is outside of their control. The economy is also rapidly changing based on demographics, culture, and technology. This means that the Town and City must be adaptive by promoting diverse opportunities, continually monitoring plans and implementation and adjusting accordingly.

Figure 1: Economic Development: A Holistic System



Source: *Futures Thinking for Economic Development, Presentation by Jim Damcis of Camoin 310*

How is this plan different? First and foremost, it is about people and the intersection of people with place. It is set out to address what makes people want to be in Groton, work in Groton, invest in Groton and stay in Groton. It assumes and builds on the framework for collaboration between the Town and City. It is holistic in that it goes beyond jobs and businesses to the factors that drive what motivates people and enables them to be and thrive in Groton – it therefore covers the economy, education, transportation, housing, and places including nodes and corridors.

Our Vision is for Groton to be...

The community of choice for businesses, residents, visitors, and employees. Its diverse economy is thriving and the innovation and economic activity it generates is leading regional economic transformation and shared prosperity. The Town and City work collaboratively to provide seamless economic development technical assistance and leadership.

Our Mission is...

To empower the Groton community to create an economic future that realizes our full potential. To do this, the City and Town of Groton will:

- Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.
- Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.
- Strengthen and diversify the transportation network to accommodate transformative growth.
- Promote and connect Groton's educational assets from early-education through higher education and lifelong learning and new career development.
- Grow and diversify emerging opportunities.
- Provide an environment that nurtures entrepreneurs and startup companies.
- Connect, communicate, and educate on economic development.

About the planning process

This is a bold plan for Groton that is designed to build on and accelerate the momentum achieved over the last several years. To guide the planning process, Groton retain the support of Camoin 310, a national economic development consulting firm that has supported the community with economic development services, starting in 2016 with an *Economic & Market Trends Analysis*. The process included a thorough analysis of Opportunities & Challenges as detailed in existing studies and reports for the Town, City, and region as well as observations by the planning team and their partners. This text was continuously reviewed, edited, expanded upon (see Attachment B). Economic Development partners were engaged early in the process during a strategy work session to identify challenges and opportunities, and design solutions around four core topic areas: communications and connections, housing, transportation and parking, and recreation and amenities (see Attachment A). Through a series of joint work-sessions with Town and City economic development and planning staff, a Vision, Mission, and goals were developed. The consultant team provided strategy design and project management support.

The resulting plan consists of three volumes:

- **Volume 1: Summary Report** – A presentation of the vision for Groton's economic development, supported by a summary of the goals and initiatives that Groton will employ to achieve its vision.
- **Volume 2: Implementation Matrix** – A detailed to-do list that provides Town and City staff, and their partners, the information necessary to implement the plan.
- **Volume 3: Playbook** – Additional technical information on how to implement some of the projects.

Building Groton's

Economic Development

Strategy

Groton has proactively engaged in a number of economic development endeavors over the last several years that have generated extensive knowledge and strengthened partnerships. The Economic Development Strategy is designed to leverage this work and strengthen networks to spur business development and job creation, and further diversify Groton's economy.

Economic Development Projects & Initiatives

The following initiatives created the foundation for strategic planning process.



Tax Increment Financing

- TIF Policy Approved
- Two TIF District Master Plans Approved

Incentive Programs

- Opportunity Zone Outreach
- Economic Assistance Fund Revised
- Revising Town-Wide Tax Incentive

Marketing for Economic Development

- Stand-Alone Website
- Cut Sheets and Presentation Folder
- Digital Media – Facebook/LinkedIn/Newsletter
- Promotion at ICSC Retail Conventions
- Business Testimonials Video Produced

Mystic Education Center

- Preferred Developer Selected - Approximately 800 residential units along with offices, coffee house, recreation, food market etc.

Groton Heights

- Preferred Developer Selected - Research and development plus corporate offices

Seely School

- Preferred Developer Selected - Multi-family housing development

Colonel Ledyard School

- Interviews Held with Potential Developers

Pleasant Valley School

- Marketing Property
- RFP to be Released in 2020

Wayfinding Signage

- Draft Plan Accepted by Town Council
- Funds Requested Through CIP

Development Process Improvements

- Zoning Regulation Complete, Rewrite Adopted
- Combining of Planning and Zoning Commissions to Streamline Process
- Creation of Doing Business Guide



Chapter 2: Groton's Economic Development Goals & Initiatives

Goal 1. Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.

The 2016 Economic & Market Trends Analysis for the Town of Groton noted that nearly 80% of Groton's workforce commutes from outside the town, living in other communities. The 2017 ACS Data suggests this number has decreased to about 75%,¹ which means as the local workforce in Groton is increasing, more people are choosing to live in Groton. This is a positive trend as more people living and working in Groton means more people will be invited in strengthening the community. Considering the large number of jobs becoming available, the Town has made it a priority to continue this trend and attract a larger portion of workers to both live and work in Groton by creating healthy neighborhoods and mixed-use commercial nodes that have quality housing and access to amenities and recreational resources.

Diversify, modernize, and grow the housing stock.

Housing creates community. It is the foundation of the built environment. To ensure the long-term wellbeing of the town, Groton must support a diverse, accessible housing stock that allows people, regardless of age, income, or life stage, the opportunity to live and work locally and take ownership of the community. A continued decline in household size, downsizing baby boomers, shift in housing preferences toward urban living, and growth of General Dynamics electric boat, is leaving Groton, and the southeastern Connecticut region, severely undersupplied with an appropriate mix of housing.² Groton's forward-looking approach to addressing the community's housing needs focuses on market intelligence, land use policy and maintenance, and finance.

Enhance access to amenities and recreational resources.

Access to amenities and recreational assets are critical for attracting the necessary talent to support Groton's future growth as well as retaining residents as they transition through different live-stages and supporting a vibrant tourism economy. Groton is rich with recreational resources and amenities; however, residents, the workforce, and visitors often lack awareness of the many options available to them. Strategies to enhance access to local recreational amenities and resources include projects and initiatives to communicate and build consciousness of the availability of recreational resources and strengthen connections between amenities.

¹ 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Commuting Characteristics by Sex, S0801

² Southeastern Connecticut Housing Needs Assessment, 2018

Goal 2. Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.

Places don't make themselves, people make places. 'Placemaking' is about creating a built-environment with the right architecture, infrastructure, and amenities that allows synergies and shared experiences among people to occur. It is those interactions that give a place energy. Groton is a patchwork of villages, hamlets, and districts, each with its own unique personality and charm. Its development is somewhat unique in that it does not contain a single centralized hub or downtown/village center, but is a web of dynamic nodes connected by vital corridors that facilitate the flow of people and products. Therefore, when we refer to 'places' in Groton that drive economic activity, we consider both nodes and corridors to be these places, which embody Groton's historical and future identity, and play a critical role in the community's economic development system.

The purpose of Goal 2 is to leverage the activity within Groton's built environment to generate economic value with a networked, systems approach that puts people and the human-experience first. Through Groton's strategic planning process, the following places have been identified as priority areas for focusing economic development and planning resources:

- Downtown Groton
- Mystic Education Center
- Thames Street/Bridge Street
- Mystic
- Route 12 Corridor
- Center Groton
- Route 184 Corridor
- Poquonnock Bridge
- 5-Corners District
- Naval Submarine Base/Crystal Lake Road
- Avery Point

Goal 3. Strengthen and diversify the transportation network to accommodate transformative growth.

An efficient multi-modal transportation system is the foundation of a high-functioning economy. It connects firms to markets and workers to employers and furthers economic growth. Groton is well served by highways and the Thames River, which together have supported fast, reliable access to national and international markets and provide people with access to the northeast region and major metropolitan areas. To accommodate and enable future business and residential growth, Groton will work to strengthen and diversify its transportation infrastructure internally and externally: roads and bridges, public transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and parking.

Grow alternative transportation options.

Historically, Groton's transportation infrastructure has supported its ability to attract a regional workforce as commuters can get in and out of the community easily. This trend is shifting as Groton continues to develop its commercial, mixed-use nodes into walkable, connected, and complete places that attract more people to both live and work in Groton. Within the southeastern Connecticut region, Groton has the opportunity to be a leader in shifting to a less car-dependent culture, as it has the greatest density of individuals who commute to work via walking in the Census tract encompassing the U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London, as well as the greatest density of individuals who commute via bike in the Census tract around General Dynamic Electric Boat.³

As these trends continue, the required transportation infrastructure will change. For example, new housing within the Town's economic nodes may not be entirely car-based and walkability and bike-ability as well as reliable transit service will be critical for connecting communities. To ensure Groton can adapt to this coming transformation in transportation, it will assess existing and future potential demands for traditional vehicles as well as new and emerging technologies and prepare a comprehensive, town wide multimodal study and secure funding for implementation of the plan.

Address parking in economic nodes.

Adequate parking for employees, customers, and residents is closely tied to the economic success of a place. Groton will proactively address future increased demand for parking through a series of parking management studies, and funded implementation plans, that address existing conditions and needs today and plan for growth in the community's commercial nodes.

³ Southeastern Connecticut Regional Bike & Pedestrian Plan, SCCOG, 2019, <https://bikewalksect.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bikewalk-SECT-Existing-Conditions-Final-w-Appendices.pdf>.

Goal 4. Promote and connect Groton’s educational assets from early-education through higher education and lifelong learning and new career development.

The exchange of knowledge and commitment to lifelong learning are the foundation of a vibrant, innovative economy. Quality of public schools is the top factor for young families’ locational decision when considering home purchases. To attract more people to live and work in Groton, it must promote its education assets. And, to retain its young talent, better connect young people to local businesses and career opportunities. Businesses making location decisions are looking for a pipeline of workers with a diversity of skills and experiences to pull from.

Tell the story about Groton’s great schools and the synergies between education and economic development.

Fitch Senior High School, Ella Grasso Southeastern Technical High School, and Marine Science Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut provide an extensive variety of high school programs. The Avery Point campus of the University of Connecticut provides undergraduate majors in American Studies, Marine Sciences and Maritime Studies as well as a range of undergraduate minors. The UCONN Department of Marine Sciences is also located at Avery Point. Groton offers outstanding educational opportunities for all ages, yet, a negative perception of Groton’s educational system persists. The strategy to bring greater awareness to these education assets is to partner with educators and realtors to communicate with their established networks of existing and potential future residents.

Connect with K-12 students and help them experience local career opportunities.

Many of today’s young people seek more than a job, they are looking for a place that ignites their creativity and aligns with their interests and desired lifestyle. Like most northeast communities outside of the major metros, Groton struggles to retain its young people as they pursue education and employment opportunities; but it intends to upset this trend. By partnering with local employers, guidance counselors, the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and others, Groton will elevate the social capital of its young people and strengthen their connections to Groton – the place.

Goal 5. Grow and diversify existing and emerging opportunities.

In economic development, supporting existing industry and businesses to thrive and grow as well as attracting new industry and businesses are both important initiatives. They are not exclusive and can be accomplished together through strategies and actions that create a welcoming business environment, a connected, amenity-driven place for residents and workers, support for education and workforce development, and housing opportunities. Both also require continued and coordinated communications between the Town, City, existing business, and business prospects.

Groton works with businesses from all industries to support economic growth while also paying attention to emerging opportunities in areas exhibiting a fit with local and regional strengths and assets. These include:

- Advanced & Emerging Manufacturing including Maritime Ship Building, Defense, and Wind
- Energy and Environment including Wind, and Emerging Energy and Environmental Technologies
- Marine, which includes anything at-near-on the waterfront, including aquaculture, recreation, boating, marine sciences and coastal sciences
- Visitation & Recreation; Food & Services - consumer-based (people)
- Healthcare Networks including Health Services and Biosciences

By working with both existing and potential new business and industry, Groton seeks to create a diversity of opportunities that allow it to adapt to increasingly rapid change in the economy. It also enables Groton to identify and support connections between sectors and opportunities not clearly defined by sectors.

Strengthen connections with existing business community.

The Town and City both have a formal business visitation program that is working well and will be continued. In doing so, Groton can both provide responsiveness to business needs as well as obtain valued intelligence for planning and implementation. The Town and City will continue to coordinate efforts and regularly share and assess results.

Growth opportunities need to be matched with a supportive real estate development environment, which means businesses, developers, and investors need to be kept aware of site availability and development opportunities. Groton will take a more active role in providing timely information as well as matchmaking between businesses in the market looking for space and property owners.

Finally, communities and businesses are continually at risk due to potential natural disasters and this risk is increasing. Groton will support business resilience/continuity planning through promotion, use of seCTer as a resource, and following the guidelines provided by the Sustainable CT program.

Focus attraction efforts on targeted sectors.

While Groton works with all businesses and industries, due to resource constraints business attraction requires a focused and coordinated effort. Based on recent regional and local analyses the industry sectors that best lend themselves to business attraction and are therefore the initial focus areas are:

- Advanced Manufacturing including Defense
- Energy and Environment
- Bioscience
- Agriculture, Fishing & Food Production
- Maritime Industry

Groton will begin an attraction initiative by preparing targeted Industry profiles and keeping them regularly updated. The Town and City will take a coordinated effort for attraction working together as well as with regional partners. Groton will provide clear, coordinated information on the Town and City's incentives to alleviate any confusion about which incentives a business in the City or Town is eligible for. A detailed attraction initiative will be informed through completion of an initial intelligence and competitiveness tactical plan.

Align workforce needs to support existing and emerging opportunities.

Workforce continues to be the top issue for businesses. Finding and retaining workers with sufficient skills and talent remains a constraint to growth everywhere including Groton. Groton will take a proactive approach to workforce development partnering with the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board and other local and regional stakeholders. To provide the latest insight, Groton will conduct a workforce skills analysis to both support existing businesses and help identify businesses and industries to attract.

Goal 6. Provide an environment that nurtures entrepreneurs and startup companies.

Entrepreneurship empowers individuals, improves standards of living throughout a community, and creates jobs, wealth and innovation in the economy.⁴

A robust entrepreneurial ecosystem, built on a culture of collaboration and mutual trust, drives innovation and economic growth by creating a system where entrepreneurs and small businesses can access the resources and information they need to advance their ideas and innovations to launch and grow their business ventures. The Town and City's role in this system is to support entrepreneurship and small business growth with efficient regulatory processes and incentives, as well as build community and connections.

Adapt internal structures to better accommodate small business and entrepreneur needs.

Small business owners and entrepreneurs typically require extra support understanding and navigating municipal, state, and federal requirements for operating a business. By prioritizing business customer service, the Town and City of Groton will remove barriers to entry and systematic problems that obstruct the community's ability to grow and accelerate startups, main street and place-based businesses, ideas and innovation from creatives and makers, tech and other sector-based businesses, and home-based businesses. This 'wide tent' will attract more talent and diversity into the entrepreneurial ecosystem, thus creating more opportunities for the creation and exchange of new ideas.

Be champions, conveners, and connectors of local entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Entrepreneurs and small businesses need champions who can advocate for local entrepreneurs and their companies by telling their stories, bringing them together through events and communications to help them find collaborators, and creating space for more people to get involved in entrepreneurship and innovation. Groton will continue to cultivate a collaborative entrepreneurial culture by communicating about resources, spotlighting local businesses in communications to wider audiences, and seeking opportunities to support the development of places that promote the collision of ideas and information (coworking spaces, coffee shops, pitch events, main streets, etc.).

⁴ *Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0*, ESHIP SUMMIT, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, <https://www.kauffman.org/entrepreneurial-ecosystem-building-playbook-draft-3/introduction>

Goal 7. Connect, communicate, and educate on economic development.

Economic development is a team sport; as evidenced by the many partners listed in the Action Plan Matrix. No entity can do it alone – everyone is a member of the team and, like any team sports, a mistake by one person can affect the outcome of the game. Everything Groton does to advance economic development, from business retention and expansion to marketing and attraction, is done with the assistance of many individuals that represent an array of departments, entities, and agencies. The purpose of this goal is to build on the momentum of the region’s economic development ecosystem by bringing more people into the system to achieve greater outcomes.

Continue the momentum of the Town and City working together on economic development.

Groton’s economic development strategy is the game plan for success, and both the Town and City have integral roles toward achieving that success. Further opening lines of communication among the municipal economic development and planning staff will support greater collaboration and alignment on city-town projects as well as help to further establishing Groton’s overall brand as the economic engine in southeastern Connecticut.

Educate about economic development.

Economic Development is no longer just about preparing ‘shovel ready’ sites, incentives, and attracting business. While deals and incentives continue to be important, the field has expanded to include placemaking, entrepreneurship, data and analytics, and the need for rapid, continuous innovation. Today, economic development operates within a dynamic system of people, networks, and organizations and collaboration relies on meaningful interactions and trusted relationships. Acknowledging that there is a need for better communication and engagement by economic development staff, the strategies are designed to inform on, and build trust in, Groton’s economic development processes and strengthen relationships internally within Town and City Government, with economic development partners, and the community at-large. Tactics include developing and maintaining educational content, hosting educational events, and employing digital marketing tools to better communicate around projects, metrics for success, and real results.

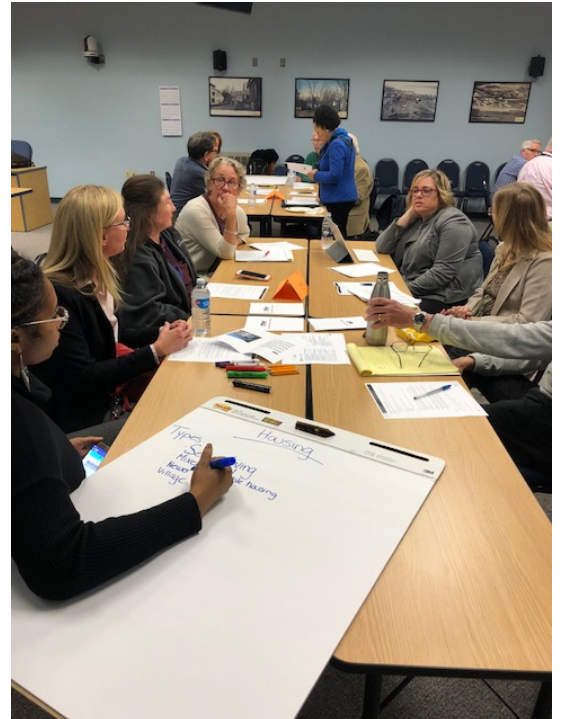
Attachment A: Notes from the Groton Economic Development Strategy Work Session

October 17, 2018

As part of Groton's strategic planning process, Camoin 310 facilitated a public meeting that asked participants to answer questions around four topic areas:

- Communication & Connections
- Housing
- Transportation & Parking
- Recreation & Amenities

What follows is a summary of the notes and themes that came out of these discussions, as well as photos of the working groups' notes. This information was used to develop strategies and initiatives for Groton's Economic Development Strategy.





Communication & Connections

Overall, the groups discussed the desire for easier communication. This includes both communication around "Explore More" branding and around economic development challenges/progress. For people to pay attention to communication around or participate in communication about either of these things, barriers to communication need to be removed and the information/forum needs to be easily accessible. Examples of making communication easier include mass branding (of "Explore More"), targeting Facebook/town events, and making all websites highly searchable (i.e. easy to use).

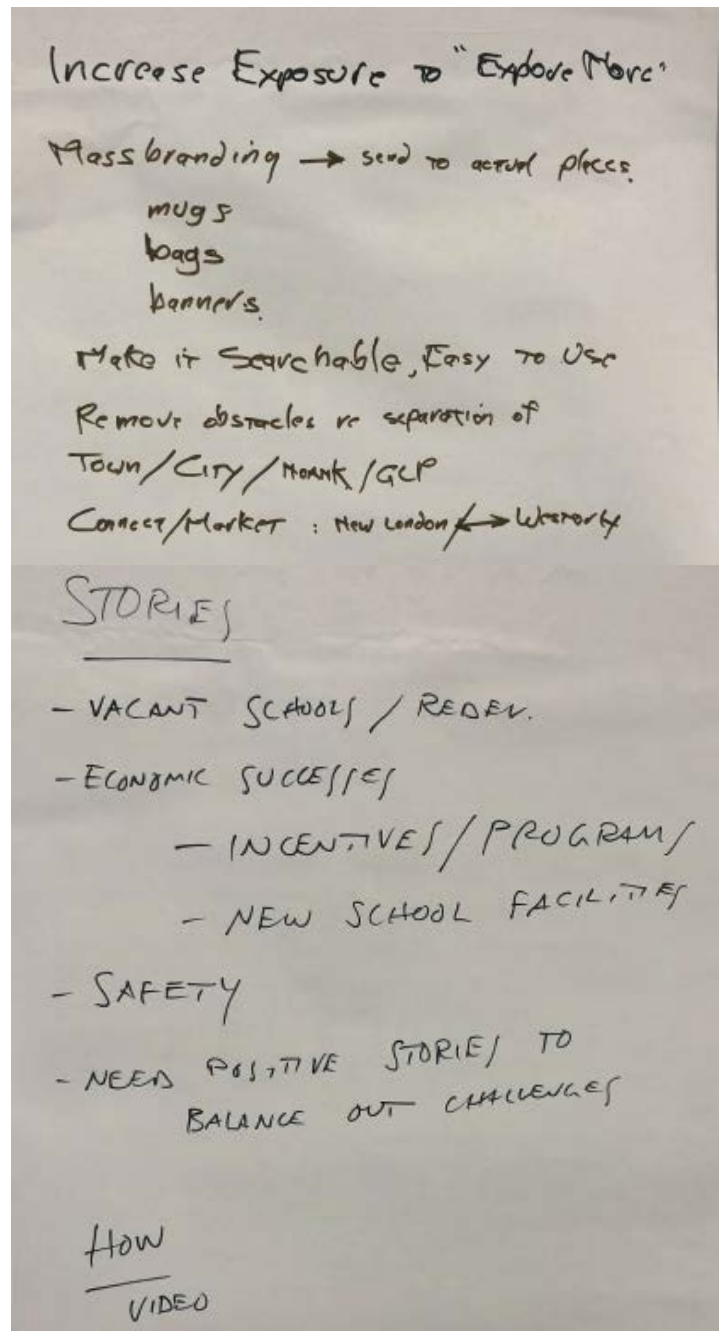
There is also a desire to focus on the successes/potential of economic development initiatives in communication, to balance out the challenges that the town faces.

How do we increase exposure of Groton's new "Explore More" brand?

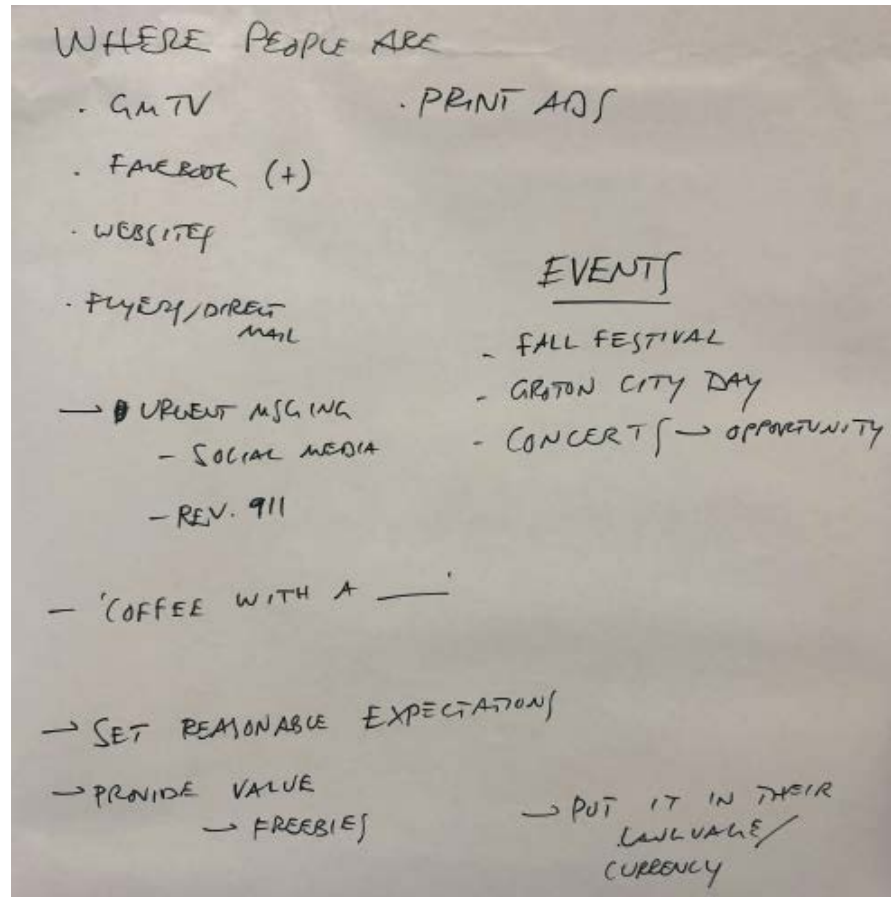
What stories to we need to tell?

To who?

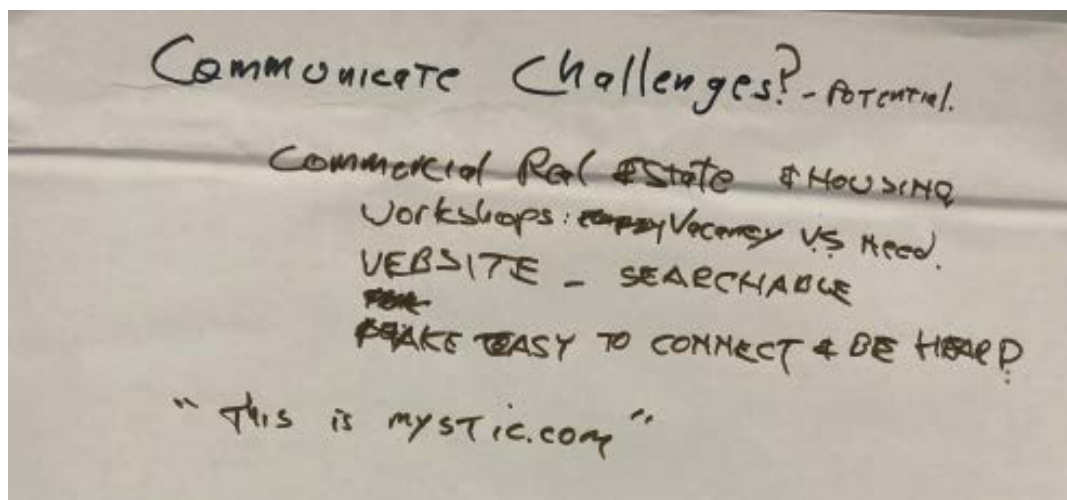
Why?



How do we bring communications to where people are?



How do we better communicate some of our economic development challenges?

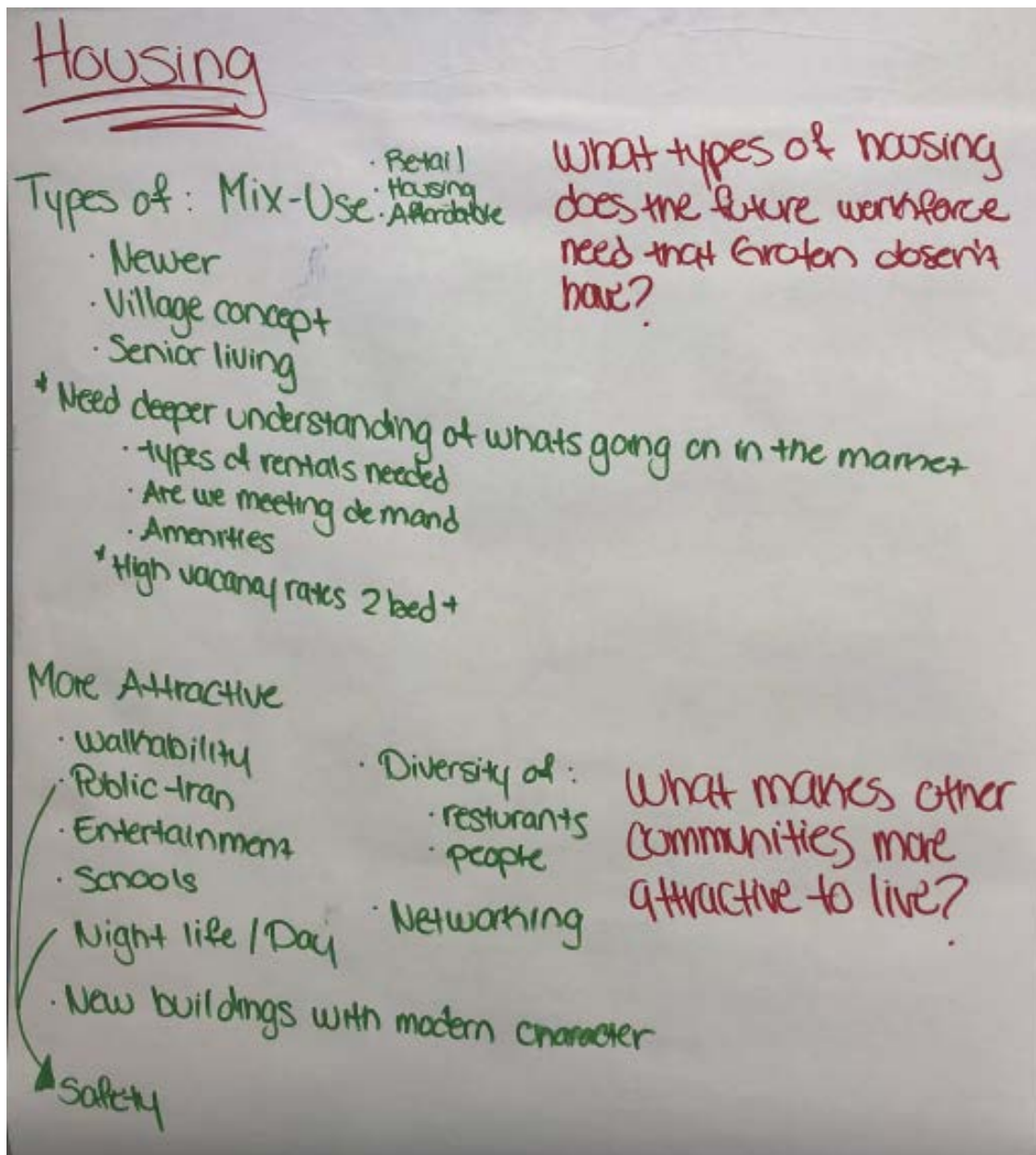


Housing

Groups discussed focusing on the development of the downtown area and adding mixed-use housing as important issues for Groton to be able to compete with neighboring areas in attracting residents and in helping to transform Groton's workforce growth into resident growth. Ensuring an availability of diverse amenities will also make the town more appealing.

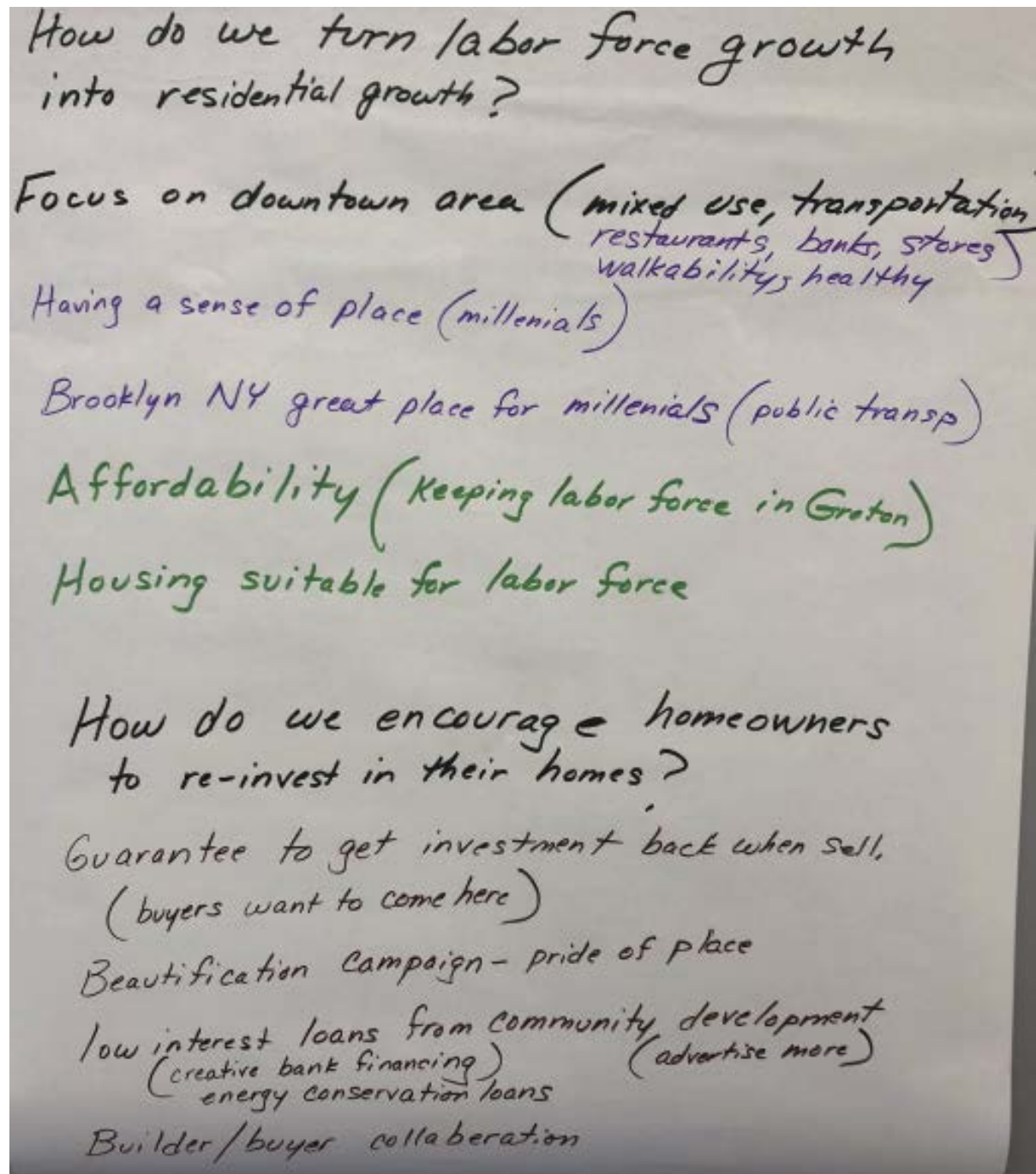
What types of housing does the future workforce need that Groton doesn't have?

What makes other communities more attractive to live?



How do we turn labor force growth into residential growth?

How do we encourage homeowners to re-invest in their homes?

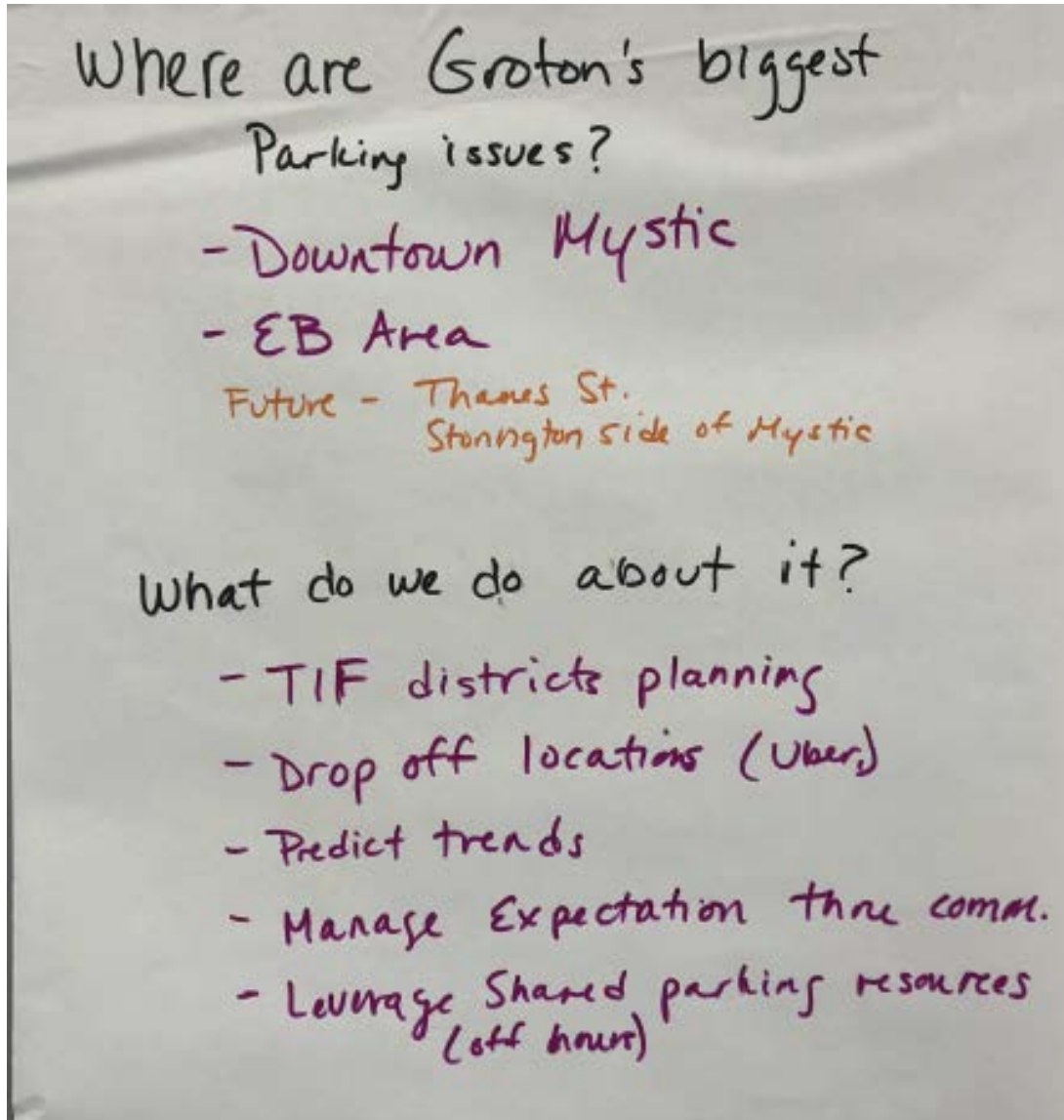


Transportation & Parking

There is a desire for more transportation options in Groton, specifically in parking and train access. The digital transformation in transportation could potentially help solve some of these issues. For example, the bus app could help increase the usability of the bus system and the creation of Uber drop off areas might help reduce dependence on parking availability.

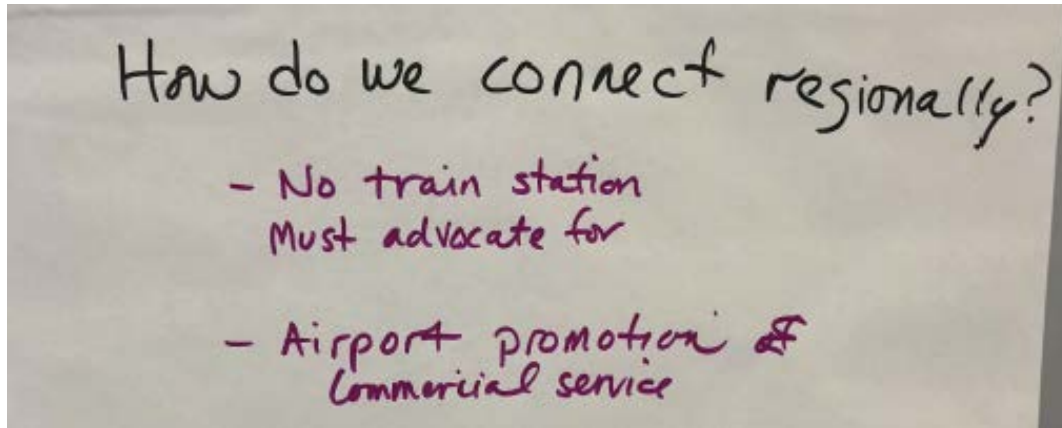
Where are Groton's biggest parking issues?

What do we do about it?



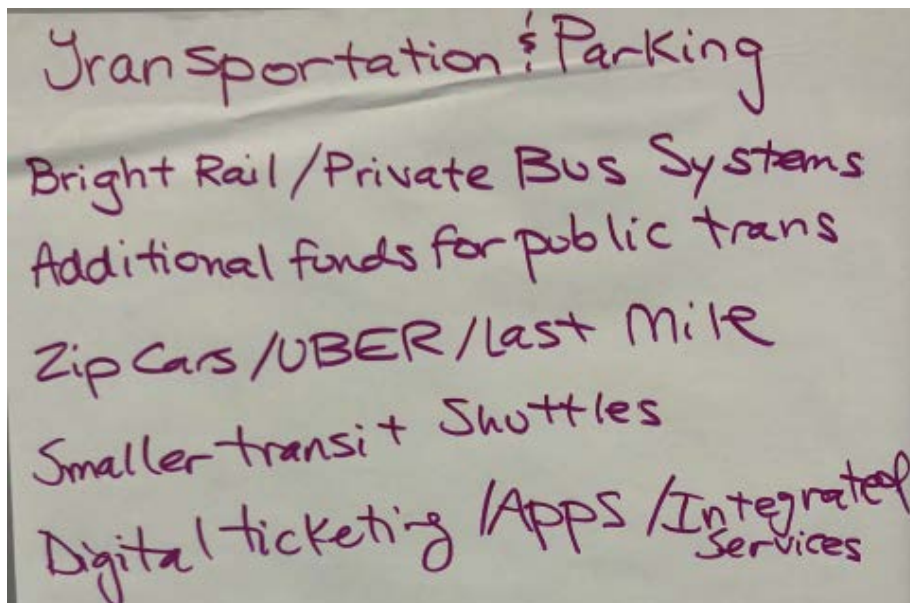
How do we connect regionally?

What's Groton's future role in the transportation network?

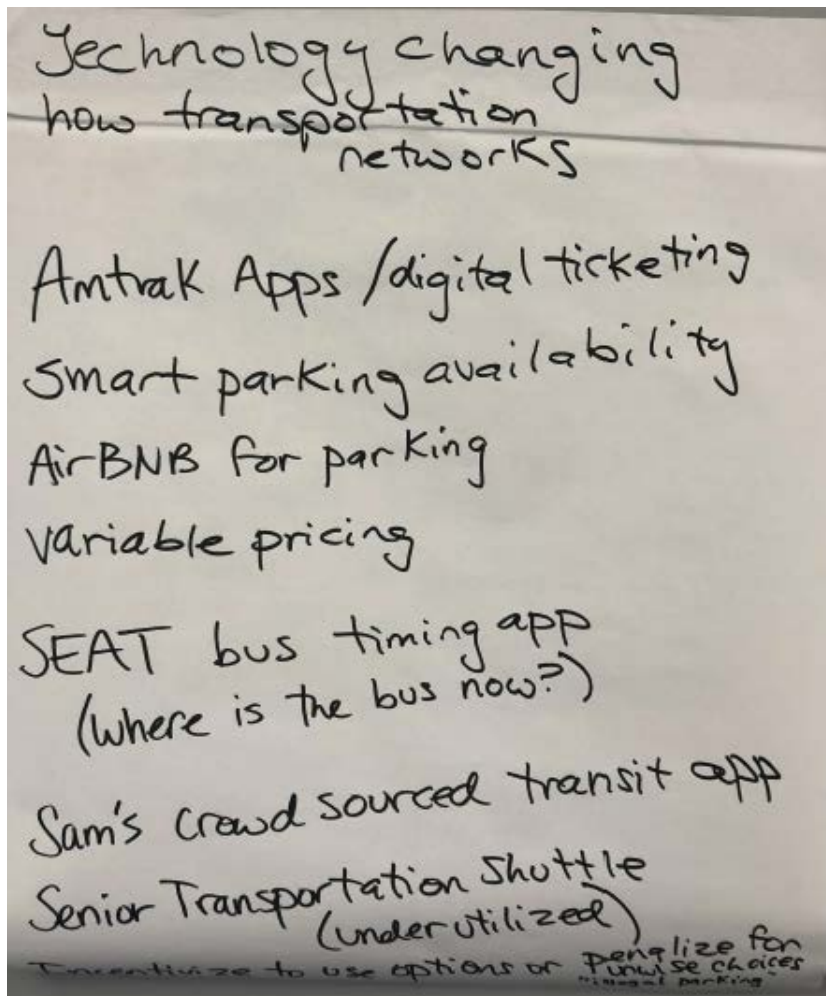


How will the future workforce get to work?

What can Groton do to prepare?



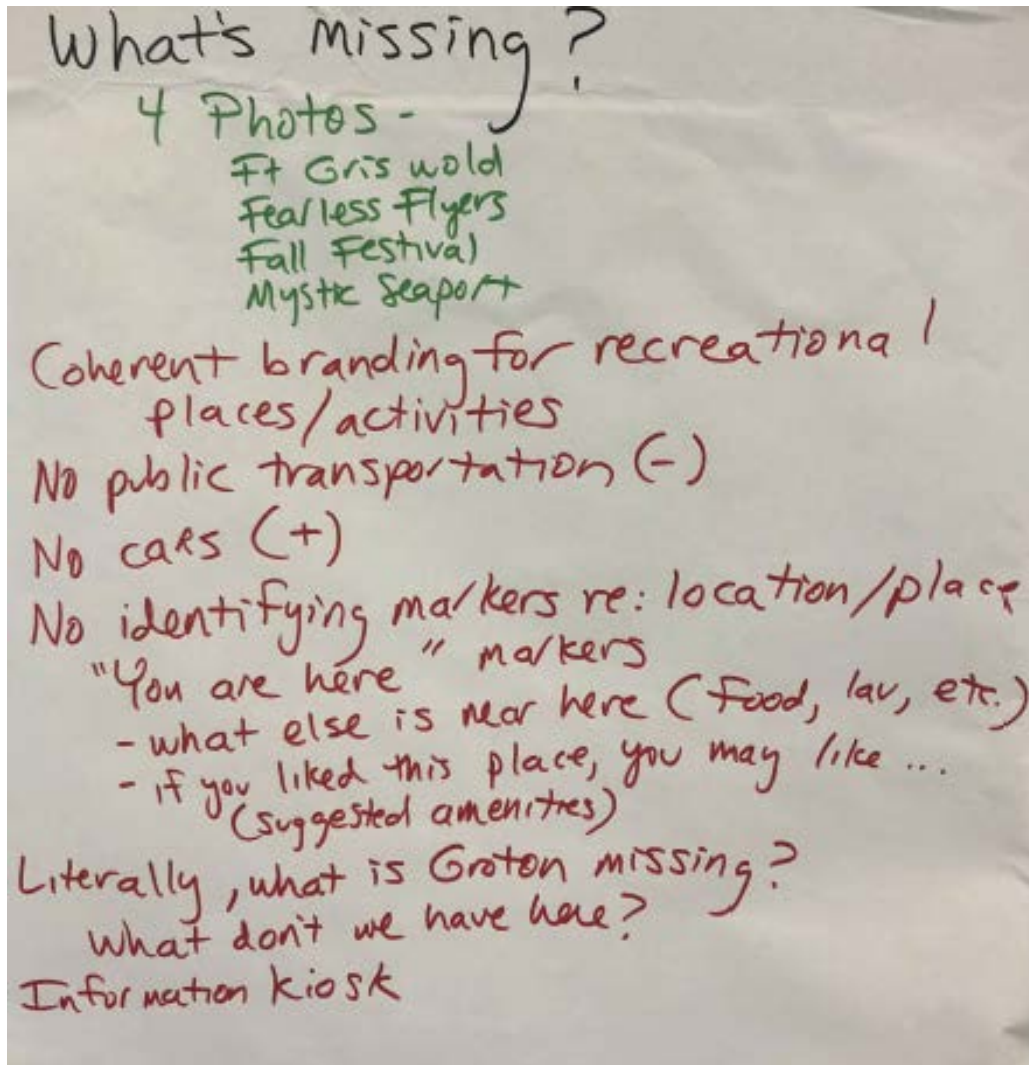
How is technology changing the way Groton's transportation networks operate?



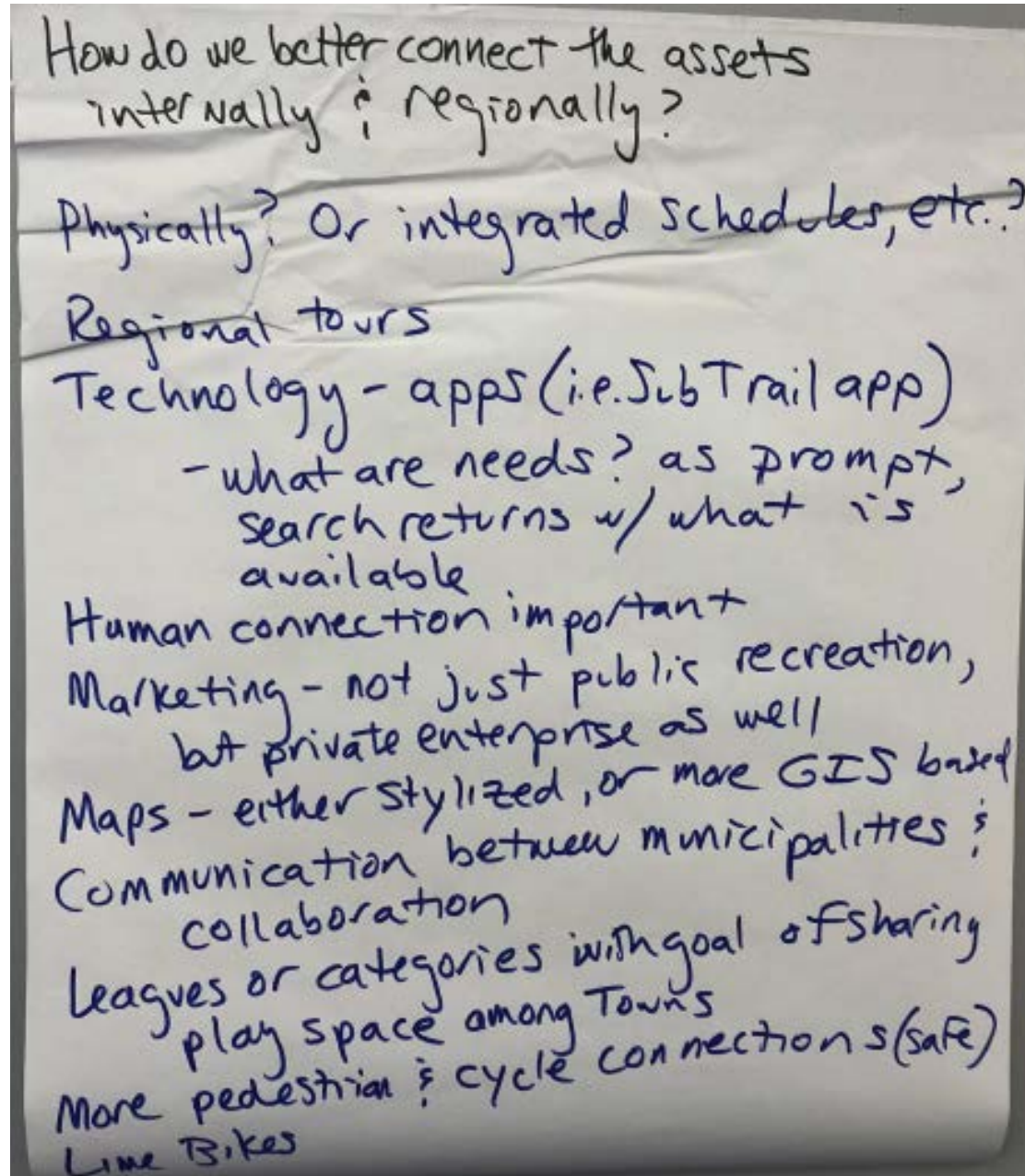
Recreation & Amenities

Recreation challenges and desires tie into themes that came across in other categories (communication, housing, and transportation). There is a need to improve the distribution of information about recreation options, and how to access them. Moving forward, technology should be used for branding efforts and for improving access to existing amenities. The development of new amenities should also be technology focused (ex. WIFI) and should contribute to creating a sense of place that is desirable for people to live in.

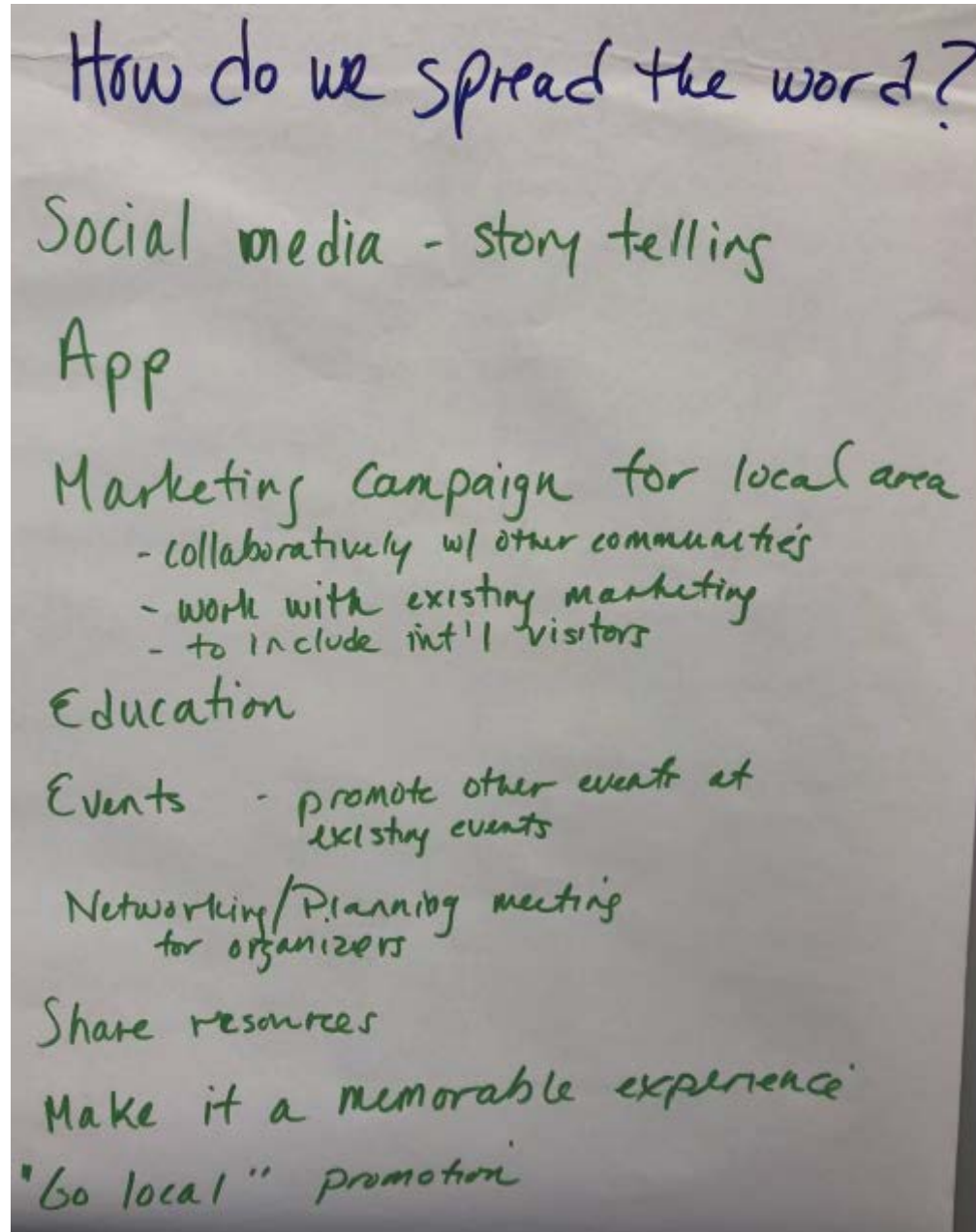
What's missing?



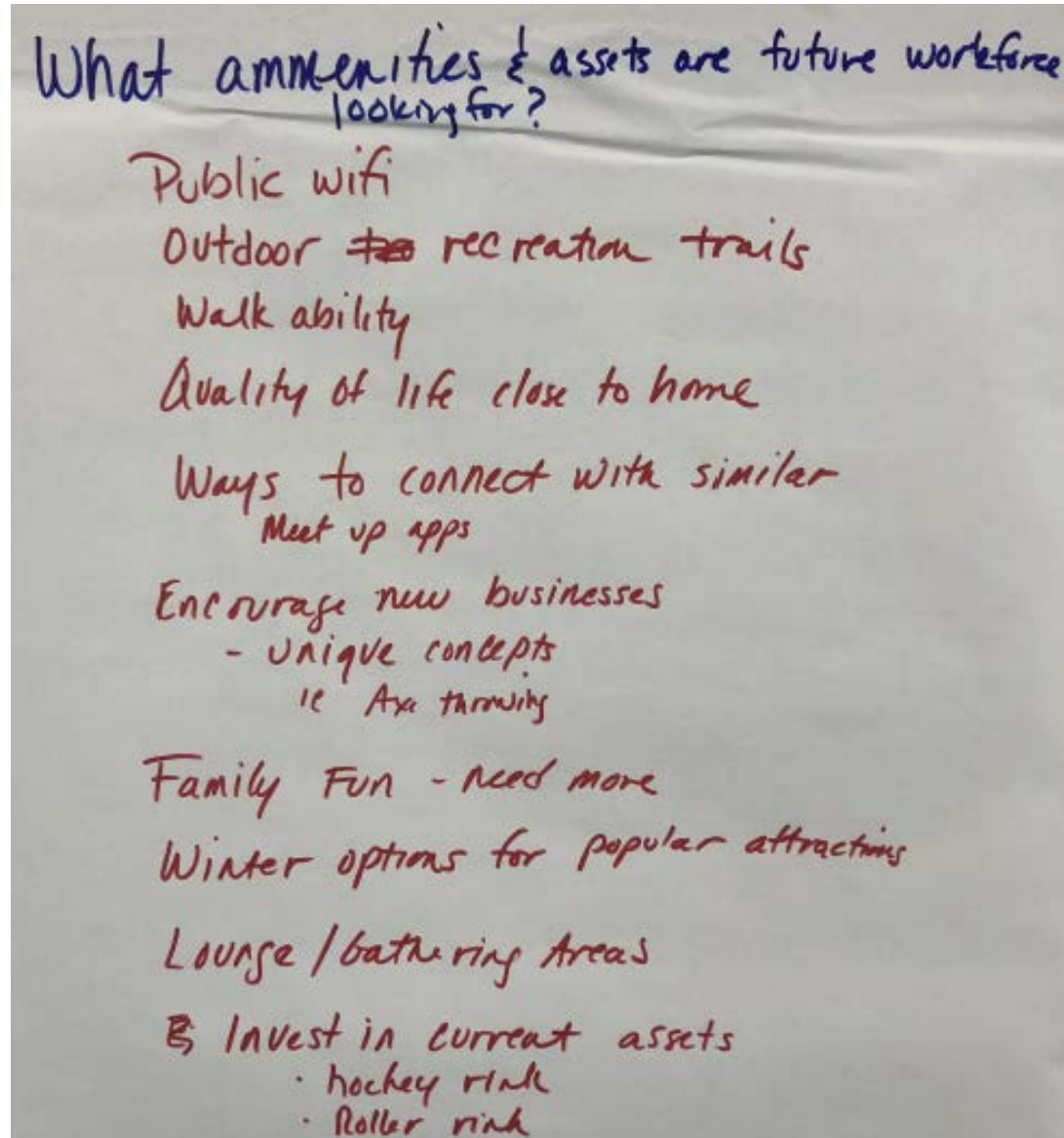
How do we better connect the assets internally and regionally?



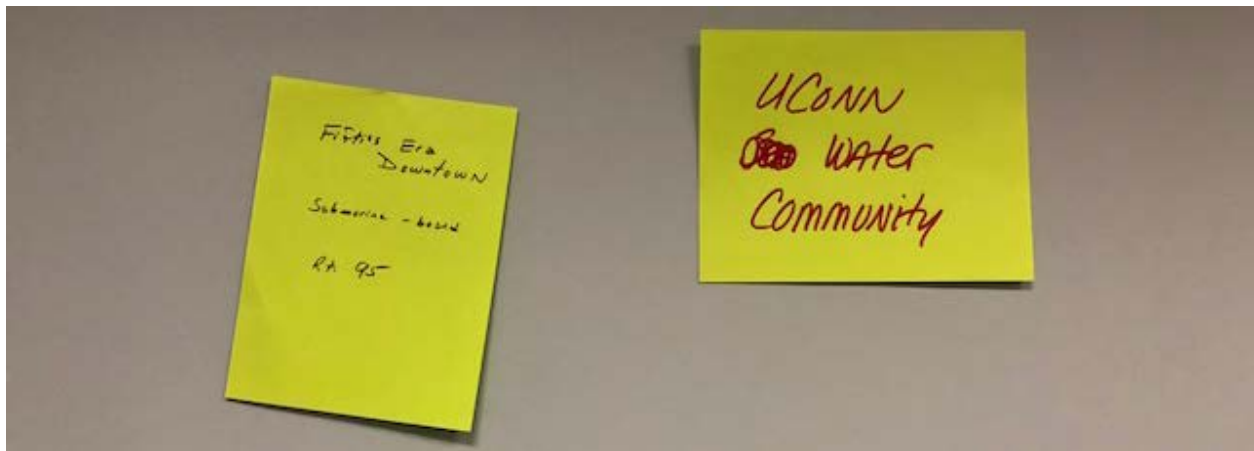
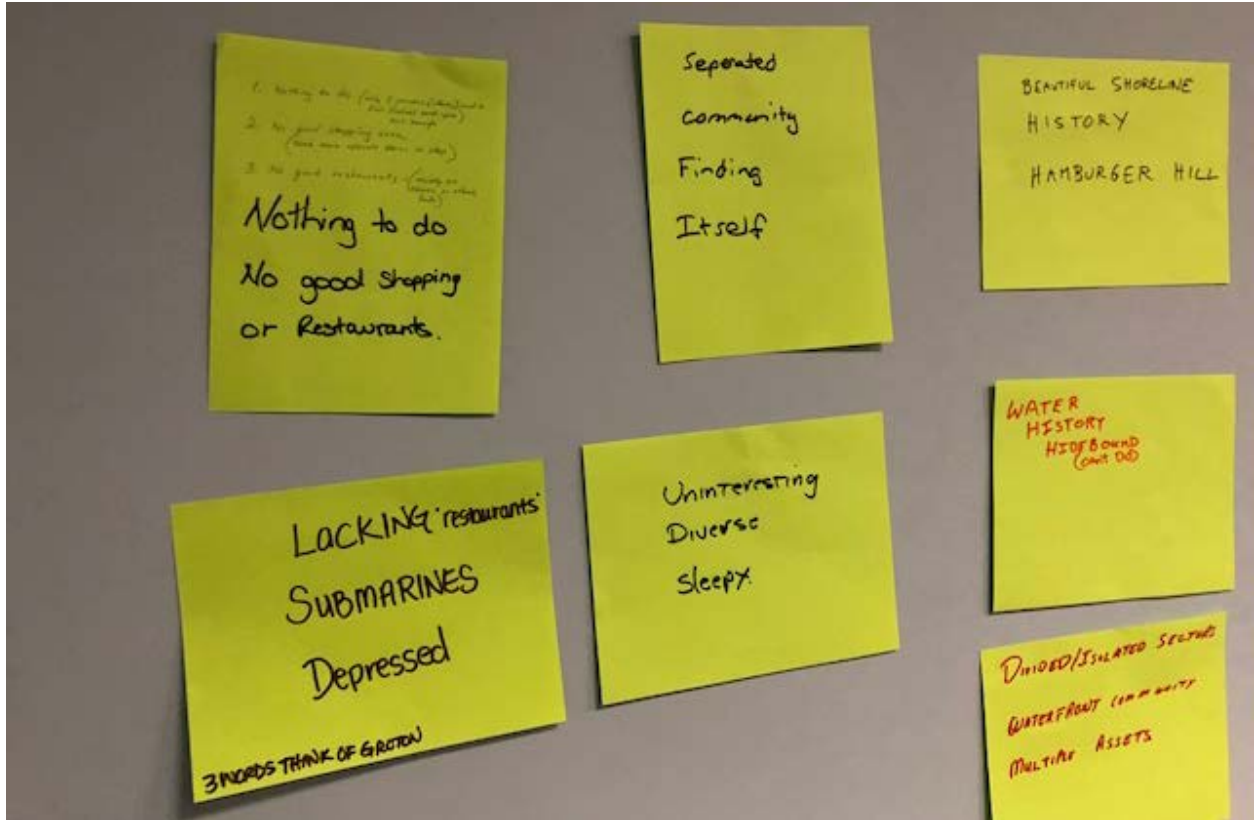
How do we spread the word about Groton's recreational and tourism assets?



What amenities and assets are the future workforce looking for?



Write a few words that describe Groton today on the green piece of paper. On the orange paper, write the headline for a future NY Times Article about Groton if we achieve our goals.



Attachment B:

Groton's Opportunities & Challenges

This strategic planning process began with a thorough review of existing studies and reports for the Town and City of Groton, as well as relevant regional reports. Key findings were organized into opportunities and challenges around the following themes:

- General Economic Development
- Communication & Connections
- Housing
- Transportation & Parking
- Recreation & Amenities
- Economic Real Estate Stock
- Education

Observations by the project team were also added to this inventory, which served as a reference throughout the strategic planning process. The results of this analysis are summarized in the following pages.

General Economic Development

Opportunities to Realize

- About 26% of Groton businesses predicted expansion plans in the near future, about 67% predicted they'd expand in Groton ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- Businesses want to see more arts and entertainment, and restaurants to increase patronage ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- TIF Policy and TIF Plans (Camoin Observation)
- Regional focus on manufacturing – seCTer specifically ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Small-scale manufacturing ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Support entrepreneurs and innovative businesses – small to medium size ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Largest industries in Groton are Manufacturing, Government, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- 2005-14 saw significant growth in Accommodation & Food Services, Manufacturing, and Health Care and Social Assistance (change in jobs). ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Wind power businesses – Deep Water Wind in RI is increasing work in CT – opportunity to grow local supply chain for this industry (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- High wage manufacturing jobs are being replaced with lower-paying service jobs ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- With the exception of growth driven by Electric Boat, regional economy is slow-growing (less than 1% job growth in last 10-years). ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Lack of economic diversity, and resiliency, continues ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Perception of statewide economic condition (Camoin Observation)
- Large businesses in ship and boat building and pharmaceuticals can easily disrupt the real estate markets by purchasing or selling property for prices outside of market trends, giving some property owners a false sense of value ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- East coast small and mid-sized ports are seeing an uptick, while CT declined 80% in cargo volume due to the recession and lack of focus on this industry. ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Marine Recreation - Resiliency is an issue; the increasing intensity and frequency of large storms driving up costs. ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- EB's Role – Their priority is workforce retention and they can be engaged in related initiatives; but, they can't lead Groton's transformation (Camoin Observation)
- 80% of the people who work in Groton today, live outside of town ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Getting the word out about available incentives (Staff Comment)

Communication & Connections

Opportunities to Realize

- TRIP strategy has sparked collaboration between Groton & New London ([TRIP, 2016](#))
- New logo, brand, and digital media presence (Camoin Observation)
- New business visitation program (Camoin Observation)
- Future infrastructure investments to physically connect people: Roads, Rivers, Airports, Tunnels, Gondola? (Camoin Observation)
- Ongoing investments into public education systems (Staff Comment)
- Public property redevelopment (ongoing) (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Communication could be better overall between different parties. Increasing communication between SUBASE and municipalities, with property owners and municipalities, etc.
 - Example: Only 33.7% of businesses interviewed were aware of tax incentives ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- Community feels economic development should focus on 'management of tax rates' ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#)) Also, internally within Groton's govt (city-town) - growing the grand list. (Staff Comment)
- Municipalities in the region historically haven't worked together very often but are learning to more recently, this project being one example, the TRIP study a second. (Camoin Observation)
- The 'Many Grotons' (town, city, neighborhoods) (Camoin Observation)
- Visitors are generally isolated from the rest of Groton and vice-versa ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Communicating some of the challenges – like housing. Public tends to think we have plenty; you don't realize it is an issue until you are in the market looking. (Staff Comment)
- Educating business leaders on the different type of housing types the younger workforce is looking for (i.e. not single-family homes). (Staff Comment)

Housing

Opportunities to Realize

- Demand is likely to come from young, newly forming households and retirees looking to stay in the region: low-cost rentals and single-family homes ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#)) ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Young households tend to rent in their twenties but purchase in their thirties. ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Homes that appeal to younger buyers: affordable, closer to work and amenities than in the past ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Seniors will represent 19% of the population but 30% of the households by 2030 - while most prefer to stay in-home as long as possible, when they do buy they are more likely to go for a townhouse, condo, or other non-single family home style ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Median home value is lower than adjacent communities ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Groton is one of the concentrations of deed-restricted assisted or other cost-subsidized housing in the region, with New London, Norwich, and Windham ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- Recommendation: Modify land use regs to allow new products ([Groton POCD, 2016](#))
- Offer new housing options not currently in the market ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Strong interest in new mixed-use projects, high-demand (Staff Comment)
- Directly connect with new EB hires to attract to town (Staff Comment)
- Uptick in single-family subdivisions (Staff Comment)
- Multi-unit housing – growing interest, being built w/o incentives (Staff comment)
- Incentives to attract new employs to purchase homes? (Younger employees typically have large student loan dept and put off home purchases) (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Southeastern CT Region is undersupplied with appropriate housing ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
 - Trend: Continued decline in average household size means need for housing will grow faster than population
 - Trend: Baby boomers downsizing
 - Trend: Shift in housing preferences toward urban by younger residents
 - Trend: General Dynamics Electric Boat Growth
- Affordability challenges increasing for renters and owners - 29,000 households living in houses they can't afford in the region - demand for low-income housing is increasing ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
 - 48% renters cost-burdened
 - 30% owners cost-burdened
- Lack of sewer limits development ([SE CT Housing Needs Assessment, 2018](#))
- 55.1% of existing residents feel that there are enough condos/apartments in Groton ([Town of Groton, CT Community Survey, 2016](#))
- Absentee landlords and property owners ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Housing does not yet offer a ROI without incentives. Might be challenged shortly (Camoin & Staff Observation)
- Disinvestment in existing stock, esp. single-family - lack of character, lack of sense of place (Staff Comment)
- Gentrification? (Camoin Observation)

Transportation & Parking

Opportunities to Realize

- Well served by highway (Camoin Observation)
- Thames River offers water-travel options for passenger and freight (Camoin Observation)
- Recommendation: 'Mobility Hub' for bus stop ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Recommendation: Bike share at EB and SUBASE ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Groton – New London Airport (KGON) & Airport Development Zone (preliminary approval) ([SECTER CEDS, 2017](#)) Possible new connections to D.C. or Philly (Staff Comment)
- Water Taxi Service (Camoin Observation)
- Off-road bike paths being developed, opportunity to expand (Staff comment)
- Better wayfinding and signage – Town is wrapping up a wayfinding plan, which may eventually cross over to the City (Staff Comment)
- Streets in the city are wide, opportunity for bike lanes (Staff Comment)
- Dedicated parking for scooters? (Staff comment)
- Parking Garage in Thames St. Area? (Staff Comment)
- Transportation study is kicking off shortly for EB area (Staff Comment)
- Shuttle with New London for EB workforce (Staff Comment)
- Multi-use path over Gold Star Bridge - TRIP Work will explore this (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Amtrak stops in Mystic, but no other commuter rail in Town (Staff Comment)
- Lack of transit around the SUBASE ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Growth of EB is going to create traffic and parking challenged in the Route 12 region, and within EB itself ([SUBASE New London Joint Land Use Study, 2017](#))
- Congestion on I-95 (Camoin Observation)
- Walkability is sporadic and need improvement throughout (Camoin Observation)
- Driving culture (Camoin Observation)
- Downtown is purely car-centric (Camoin Observation)
- Oceans of parking around EB = under utilized, high-quality property (Staff Comment)
- Perceived parking issues (Staff Comment)
- Connecting Groton & New London (Camoin Observation)

Recreation & Amenities

Opportunities to Realize

- Growing private sector recreation industry –become a tourism a hub? (Staff Comment)
- Supply chain opportunities? (Camoin Question)
- Hotels? (Camoin Question)
- Technology-based businesses (bike share)? (Camoin Question)
- Increase recreational access to the waterfront (Camoin Observation)

Challenges to Overcome

- Groton, outside of Mystic, isn't well-known as a place for recreation and tourism outside of the region (Camoin Observation)
- Tourists & Residents tend to patronize different amenities – tourists visit Mystic where residents shop downtown (Camoin Observation)
- Dated structures for some of the retail and services spaces that cater to visitors (Camoin Observation)

Economic Real Estate Stock

Opportunities to Realize

- Industries driving demand for space include tourism, health care, business professional services, and manufacturing. ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- TIF Policy and TIF Plans (Camoin Observation)

Challenges to Overcome

- Many absentee owners unwilling to sell or re-invest in their properties (Camoin Observation)
- Quality of place is easily overlooked during periods of growth ([Camoin Analysis, 2016](#))
- Property owners over-valuing properties (Staff comment)
- Traditional separation of uses strong in culture (Camoin Observation)
- Lack of hotel rooms (Staff Comment)
- Lack of commercial building inventory/shell buildings 30,000 – 50,000 SF, losing opportunities (Staff Comment)
- Existing stock is old and tired, in-need of re-investment (Staff Comment)
- Accommodating business expansion on land-locked sites (Staff Comment)
- Overcoming perception of zoning and land use environment once new zoning is in-place (Staff Comment)

Education

Opportunities to Realize

- Ongoing investment into the school system for the town and state schools in Groton (Staff Comment)

Challenges to Overcome

- Negative perception of Groton's public schools (Camoin Observation)
- Community does not realize the great education system they have (Staff Comment)

52	Medium	Mid	38
33	Low	Long	32
		Ongoing	

Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
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1. Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.

A. Diversify, modernize, and grow the housing stock.

1	Monitor the housing market	Each quarter, check MLS and local providers of housing market trends. Reach out to local realtors and property managers to get the "Word on the street" about what prospective residents are looking for in the market.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Local Realtors	Staff time, Subscribe to service	High	Ongoing			
2	Incorporate actions of ongoing regional housing study into this plan.	As appropriate.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	COG	Staff Time	Medium	Mid			
3	Evaluate Groton's housing market intelligence needs	Once regional housing study is complete, determine the need for further research into Groton's specific housing market opportunities and emerging housing trends regarding product type, price points, etc.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff time, Potential funding for study	Medium	Mid			
4	Create marketing materials about housing to explain market opportunities	To explain market opportunities to developers, property owners, realtors, and others. Inform with stories and housing market intelligence. Tell the EB story about their growth.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Developers, Local Realtors	Staff Time	Medium	Ongoing			
5	Educate realtors and developers about housing initiatives	Inform housing realtors about actions and initiatives Groton is taking to increase the housing stock.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Realtors & Developers	Staff Time	High	Mid			
6	Host a Groton Housing Forum	Team up with Electric Boat (EB) and have workers expressing needs/wants for housing and neighborhoods to developers, banks (matching needs event), data driven by consumer (this was suggested by an EB employee.) Coordinate help with financing mechanisms, potentially student loan forgiveness incentives for relocating to Groton.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Electric Boat, Pfizer, Submarine Base, secTer	Sponsors, Staff Time, Marketing	Medium	Mid			
7	Host a Regional Housing Forum	Build on the Groton housing forum and invite regional partners to participate.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Electric Boat, Pfizer, Submarine Base, secTer	Sponsors, Staff Time, Marketing	Medium	Long			
8	Elevate housing expertise of local leadership and decision makers	Raise awareness about how housing is integral to workforce and workforce is integral to Economic Development. Show the financial benefit of multi-family housing. Look at top tax payers in the town. Take the Route 1 fiscal impact analysis data on this and make marketing sheet (infographic). Place someone with housing expertise on the economic development commission. Work more closely with Housing Authority. Share information between Town and City.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff Time	High	Short			

Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
9	Diversify housing stock using TIF	Continue to support mixed-use development through Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Utilize the Town's newly created TIF policy and, when appropriate, integrate housing development into the TIF District Master Plans, including using TIF revenues to support infrastructure and amenities that support housing development in the market. And, when appropriate, provide incentives to developers and property owners through credit enhancement agreement, for the development of new housing stock.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	EDC/TIF Advisory Committee	Staff time, Consultant time	High	Short			Policy for City and Town developed. Review and approval in process.
10	Educate development community about the Opportunity Zone and utilize as a tool.	There are opportunities here for mixed-use housing development in the Zone. Launch a match making initiative to align developers with investors.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff time	Low	Short			
11	Inventory the financial incentives available to support housing	Put all of this information in one place and organize based on user (resident, property owner, developer, etc.) and make available to the public, market the inventory. Identify any gaps, and develop programs with partners to fill gaps.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	TBD Based on gaps identified	Staff time	Medium	Mid			
12	Identify re-investment areas in the Town for multi-family development	Talk to property owners to understand their goals and objectives. Align targeted reinvestment areas with nodes below.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff Time	Medium	Mid			
13	Integrate design flexibility within land use plans and policy to create diversity	To allow for and demonstrate different types of housing and development design, including accessory apartments and accessory buildings, pocket neighborhoods, multi-family, smaller units, etc. <i>officiaries after the 10th every 6 months.</i>	Town & City Planning	Planning & Zoning Commission, CDG	Staff time, Potential consulting, CDG	High	Ongoing		Going to be adopting new Zoning Regs. Before July 31.	
14	Review capital improvement projects related to streetscapes and align with target opportunities for housing	Work with other town/city departments to focus improvements in streets, sidewalks, sewer, and other infrastructure to areas where ongoing or planned investments in housing are being made. Keep lines of communication open to communicate needs. City is establishing those relationships.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Public Works, Planning, Parks & Rec, and Highway - City	Staff Time	High - City Low - Town - TIF areas are a high priority	Ongoing			Doing this now - Community development coordinating with Public Works.
15	Establish streetscape maintenance schedule priorities that align with targeted opportunity areas for housing	Focus maintenance priorities on targeted areas for housing development.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Public Works, Planning, Parks & Rec, and Highway - City	Staff Time	Medium	Ongoing			
16	Advance the concierge's project	Facilitate distribution of video and materials developed by the Eastern Chamber of CT. Use for new hires and families moving into the region to quickly connect new employees and their families to Groton as a place and as a community.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff time	Medium	Mid			

52	Medium	Mid	38
33	Low	Long	32
		Ongoing	31

Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
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B. Enhance access to amenities and recreational resources.

1	Conduct tourism market research	Understand tactics other communities are doing to attract and retain visitors. Design marketing strategies based on what is learned.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff time	Medium	Long			
2	Market ecotourism, hiking, biking, and open space as an amenity in Groton	Promote Groton's diverse recreational amenities both internally to existing residents and employers as well as externally to visitors.	Town & City Economic Development Staff, Parks & Rec		Staff Time, Paid Advertising	Medium	Mid			
3	Partner with State to market Bluff Point	There are many different types of recreational amenities along the last remaining significant piece of undeveloped land along Connecticut's coastline. Hiking, Mountain Biking, Kayaking, Saltwater Fishing, and Shell Fishing. Put in newsletter, "A day at Bluff Point" -- Insert a kiosk or other physical marketing at Bluff Point.	Town Economic Development Staff, Parks & Rec	State	Staff time	Low	Long			
4	Connect tourism-related businesses in Mystic with others throughout Groton to cross promote to visitors once they are in the area	Create packaged deals with businesses throughout the Groton community designed to extend the stays of visitors. Use the "Explore More" Theme to create packages. "Explore more food in Groton" "Explore more history in Groton" etc.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Mystic Chamber - Downtown Mystic Merchants	Staff time	Medium	Mid			
5	Create packages between various businesses	Mystic Indoor sports, volleyball, growing recreational indoor-outdoor, private recreation --- package these together, put together a weekend. Maybe get some of those business owners together in the same room. Create a weekend package. Bring in food.	Parks & Rec	Chamber	Staff time	Medium	Mid			
6	Support projects and initiatives to connect and increase access to amenities throughout Groton	There are many individuals and organizations working to build new trails throughout Groton. Play the 'connector' and support these efforts. Boat access, bike trails, kayaks, etc. Market these initiatives. Explore the Mystic coastal access trail	Parks & Rec	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Low	Ongoing			
7	Use TIF to facilitate recreational resources	Integrate improvements and additions to recreation amenities within TIF master plans.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	EDC/TIF Advisory Committee	Staff time, Consultant time	High	Short			Policy for City and Town developed. Review and approval in process.
8	Implement wayfinding signage program	Town of Groton has a masterplan and has been contacted by Stonington, Thames River Heritage Park (who has spoken to New London), and the City of Groton also interested in some form of wayfinding signage	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Parks & Rec, Public Works - City & Town	Staff time, CIP & Grants, Fundraising	High	Short			
9	Grow water-based recreation activity	Support through marketing and communications. Engage businesses to understand their needs. Work to increase the number of marinas.	Town & City Economic Development Staff			Low	Long			

52	Medium	Mid	38
33	Low	High	32
		Ongoing	31

Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
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2. Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.

A. Plan for and promote placemaking throughout Groton.

1	Conduct a buildout analysis of the town	Work with planning staff and other resources to conduct a buildout analysis of the town to understand where new growth and development can happen with the new zoning. Look at open space vs. protected land and determine the right amount for Groton. Concentrate planning and economic resources in the areas that have been identified for commercial/industrial development, where possible, to create density as well as long corridors that connect these nodes of activity. Focus development opportunities on commercial development and multi-family zoning. Concentrate development in areas where there are utilities (water and sewer).	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff, City Economic Development & Planning Staff	Staff time	medium	long			
2	Promote the projects that are being proposed in the identified development destinations to current and future employers and existing and future residents	There is a role of the Town to market the units as they are improved and going through the construction phase. Address the 80%. Help get the word out. Regional news papers. 2,000 housing units are needed.	Town & City Economic Development Staff	Groton business association	Staff time	Medium	Long			

B. Thames Street/Bridge Street

1	Facilitate Thames River Redevelopment	Implement TRR Strategy from Ninigret partners. Continue to support ongoing work and seek out redevelopment opportunities along Thames River.	City Planning Staff	City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	High	Ongoing	Yes		
2	Review zoning regulation	Review regulations as it pertains to density, parking minimums, and land use (Class A office space, Bio Science Incubator stage 2 facilities, light manufacturing, warehouse/ equipment storage).	City Planning Staff	City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	High	Short			
3	Prepare redevelopment plans for municipal parcels	Create redevelopment plans for Mother Bailey House and Upper Costa property.	City Planning Staff	City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Ongoing			
4	Implement park improvements	Implements park improvements at 342-343 Thames Street.	City Planning Staff	City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	High	Short			
5	Create programming for Thames Street Waterfront	Establish programming for use of 342-343 Thames Street.	City Economic Development Staff, Parks & Rec	City EDC & Beach and Parks	Staff time	Medium	Mid			
6	Engage property owners	Educate and engage property owners to facilitate reinvestment.	City Economic Development Staff	Property owners	Staff time	High	Ongoing			

52	Medium	Mid	38
33	Low	Low	32
		Ongoing	31

Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
	7	Leverage TIF to create connected places	Streetscape, infrastructure, ped. Etc.	City Planning & Economic Development Staff	Development partners	Staff time	Medium	Mid		

C. 5-Corners District

	1	Review Zoning Regulations	Evaluate and enforce private parking as a principle use. Explore new multifamily housing regulations.	City Planning Staff	City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	High	Mid		
	2	Engage property owners	Educate and engage property owners to facilitate reinvestment.	City Economic Development Staff	Property owners	Staff time	High	Ongoing		
	3	Prepare a Master Plan for a Village Center	Prepare a dynamic long-term planning document that provides a conceptual layout to guide future growth and development. Make the connection between buildings, the surrounding environment, and how people interact with the place.	City Planning Staff	City Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid		
	4	Create redevelopment plans for municipal owned parcels	Work with developers on redevelopment plans for Coronel Ledyard.	Town & City Planning Staff	Property owners	Staff time	Low	Long		
	5	Leverage TIF to create connected places	Streetscape, infrastructure, pedestrian access, etc.	City Planning & Economic Development Staff	Developers and Property owners	Staff time	High	Mid		

D. Downtown Groton

	1	Prepare a land use Master Plan for the district	Prepare a dynamic long-term planning document that provides a conceptual layout to guide future growth and development. Make the connection between buildings, the surrounding environment, and how people interact with the place.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid		
	2	Fund the planning and implementation effort	Fund planning through the currently proposed downtown TIF.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid		
	3	Continue to work with existing property owners on redevelopment efforts	Educate land owners within the district about the ability to utilize TIF in their redevelopment efforts.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid		
	4	Leverage the TIF to help create connected places	Streetscape, infrastructure, ped. Etc.	Town Economic Development Staff	Town Planning Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid		
	5	Develop a street scape/corridor plan for the Downtown and allow case funding to implement this plan	Identify road and pedestrian and bikeways to direct bike, ped, automobile traffic. Existing roads, new roads, how they can be configured.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid		
	6	Study the feasibility of a Transit HUB	A transit hub is a place where people are exchanged between different modes of transportation (car, train, bike, bus, etc)	Town Planning Staff		Staff time	Medium	Mid		

52	Medium	Mid	38
33	Low	Long	32
		Ongoing	31

Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
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E. Center Groton

1	Develop a TIF District master plan	This is contingent on a proposed mixed-use development. Prepare a dynamic long-term planning document that provides a conceptual layout to guide future growth and development.	Town Economic Development Staff	Developer	Staff time	High	Short			
2	Fund the planning and implementation efforts	Fund planning through the currently proposed downtown TIF.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	High	Mid			
3	Continue to work with existing property owners on redevelopment efforts	Educate land owners within the district about the ability to utilize TIF in their redevelopment efforts.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	High	Mid			
4	Leverage the TIF to help create connected places	Streetscape, infrastructure, ped. Etc.	Town Economic Development Staff	Town Planning Staff	Staff time	High	Mid			
5	Develop a street scape/corridor plan for the Downtown and allow case funding to implement this plan	Identify road and pedestrian and bikeways to direct bike, ped, automobile traffic. Existing roads, new roads, how they can be configured.	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid			
6	Study the feasibility of a Transit HUB	A transit hub is a place where people are exchanged between different modes of transportation (car, train, bike, bus, etc.)	Town Planning Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Low	Long			

F. Avery Point

1	Engage Avery Point to expand R&D in Groton	Work with UConn Avery Point, private sector, and public officials to better incorporate campus research and development with local economic development efforts. The goal is to create an environment for talent and ideas to mature to fruition. Support Avery Point in expanding their offerings; advocate for a business school program expansion in connection with incubator spaces.	City Economic Development Staff	Town Economic Development Staff	Staff time	Medium	Mid			
2	Identify and communicate the UConn housing need	Engage in conversations with UConn to understand what, if any, needs they have for public OR privately sponsored housing for students. Facilitate conversations with UConn and interested developers. Evaluate how planned growth and any construction will affect local housing stock.	City Planning & Economic Development Staff	UConn	Staff time	Low	Ongoing			

G. Naval Submarine Base/Crystal Lake Road

52	Medium	Mid	38
33	Low	Low	32

	Ongoing		33
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Initiative	Project	Description	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority	Timeline	Playbook	Status	Notes
1	Re-zone land through the JLUS project	Encourage land uses that not only support the base but the larger regional economy. Consider re-use of properties that Navy may divest from in the future.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff time	Low	Ongoing			
2	Continue planning for military housing needs	Continue to work with the SBASE on understanding opportunities for off-base housing and military needs on and off the base.	Town & City Economic Development Staff		Staff time	Medium	Ongoing			

H. Mystic

1	Continue to support projects in Mystic	Continue to encourage development and redevelopment properties in Mystic to support regional hub of live-work-play.	Town Economic Development Staff	Town Planning Staff	Staff time	Medium	Ongoing			
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Economic Development Strategy

Groton, CT

2019-2023



Playbook



www.camoinassociates.com

What is the Playbook?

Simply put, the Playbook was created to act as a reference to support Groton's economic development team plan and strategize tactics that will ultimately bring success. The following pages contain additional technical information on how to implement some of the projects and initiatives listed in the Implementation Matrix.

The following goals and initiatives are detailed in the Playbook:

Goal 1. Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.

A. Diversify, modernize, and grow the housing stock.

Goal 2. Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.

B. Thames Street: Promenade Report

Goal 5. Grow and diversify existing and emerging opportunities.

A. Strengthen connections with existing business community.

B. Focus attraction efforts on targeted sectors.

Goal 1. Increase the percentage of people who both live and work in Groton.

The Town has made it a priority to attract a larger portion of workers to both live and work in Groton by creating healthy neighborhoods and mixed-use commercial nodes that have quality housing and access to amenities and recreational resources. The following provides step-by-step tactics for planning and implementing a strategy to achieve this goal.

A. Diversify, modernize, and grow the housing stock.

Housing creates community. It is the foundation of the built environment. To ensure the long-term wellbeing of the town, Groton must support a diverse, accessible housing stock that allows people, regardless of age, income, or life stage, the opportunity to live and work locally and take ownership of the community.

Current trends forecast increased demand for housing in Groton and the surrounding region, due in particular to ongoing hiring at Electric Boat. In addition, continued declines in average household size means demand for housing units will grow faster than the population. Dominated by single-family homes, Groton currently lacks appropriate housing to meet the specific demands anticipated based on emerging trends.

Young adult and senior demographic segments are expected to represent the majority of new demand for housing units, creating a distinct challenge. Young households tend to rent in their twenties but purchase in their thirties. Housing units that appeal to younger renters and buyers should be affordable, closer to work and have more amenities than in the past. Seniors who downsize are likely seeking a townhouse, condo, or other non-single-family home style. The following steps are intended to facilitate development of new housing options that are not currently in the market.

Task Area 1 - Collect and Document Housing Market Intelligence

Using the regional housing study as a baseline, determine what additional research needs to be conducted into Groton's specific housing market opportunities and emerging housing trends, including product types, price points, etc.

On a quarterly basis, check MLS and local providers of housing market trend data. Reach out to local realtors and property managers to collect anecdotal feedback about what prospective residents are looking for in the market.

Task Area 2 - Identify Key Multi-Family Development Areas

Create a list of properties that are candidates for multi-family development or re-development. Talk to property owners to understand their goals and objectives.

Identify neighborhoods and nodes that are candidates for multi-family housing development. Review the zoning in those areas to ensure they allow for different types of housing and development design; including accessory apartments and accessory buildings, pocket neighborhoods, multi-family, smaller units, efficiencies, etc.

Task Area 3 - Educate and Engage Local Stakeholders and the Development Community

Create marketing materials about housing to explain market opportunities to developers, property owners, realtors, and others. Inform with stories and housing market intelligence. Tell the story of Electric Boat growth. Inform realtors about initiatives underway to increase the housing stock.

Elevate housing expertise of local leadership and decision makers. Raise awareness about how housing is integral to workforce and workforce is integral to Economic Development. Show the fiscal benefit of multi-family housing and create a promotional infographic. Place someone with housing expertise on the economic development commission. Work more closely with Housing Authority. Share information between Town and City.

Host a Housing Forum to facilitate collaboration among major employers, financial institutions, and the development community. Invite regional partners to participate as appropriate.

Goal 2. Shape Groton's pockets of economic activity into places where people connect.

B. Thames Street

Promenade Report - Overview

Completed in 2019, The Thames Street Promenade Report is a redevelopment analysis of the Thames Street/ Bridge Street neighborhood in the City of Groton. This high level, policy- oriented document will continue to assist in guiding City staff and leadership to further redevelopment activities in the neighborhood. The report provides a plan of action including conceptual-level strategies for strengthening the sense of place and vitality of the area as well as an outline of real estate and physical improvement recommendations to serve as a guide for future investment.

Historically, Thames Street has served as the downtown for the City of Groton, offering a collection shops and small businesses. However, changing lifestyles, demographics, and a multitude of other dynamics have caused the City's historic core to suffer from disinvestment. Despite disinvestment, the Thames Street/ Bridge Street neighborhood has maintained strong foundational elements. City staff and leadership seek to reinvigorate the neighborhood through a focused effort of preserving and enhancing the neighborhoods potential through a series of targeted interventions.

To re-energize Thames Street as a vibrant, active coastal neighborhood City of Groton staff seek to:

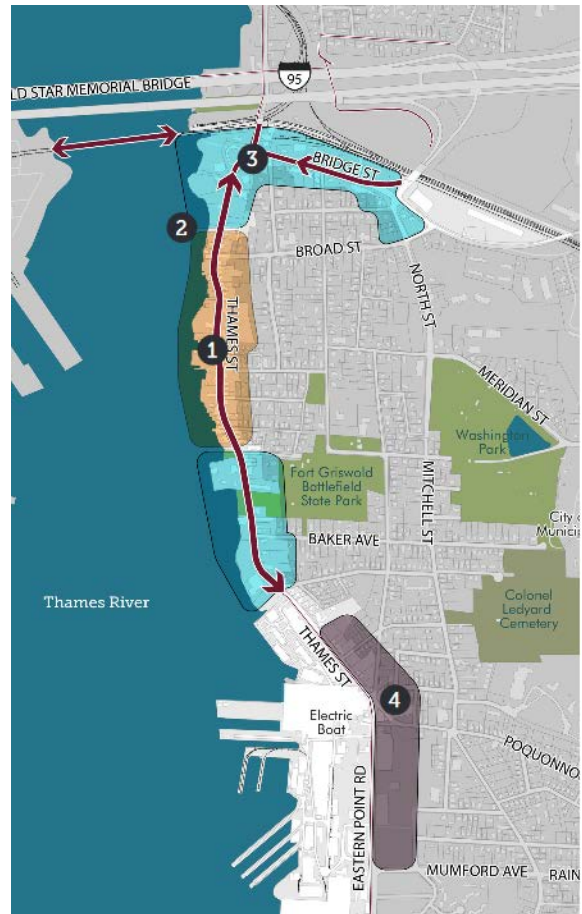
- ◆ Update approaches to development regulations specifically density and parking to encourage redevelopment.
 - Zoning change considerations:
 - Multi Family: Current zoning does not support mid-density apartment developments. Due to lower height restrictions (25'- 35') current zoning favors lower density, detached building, with fewer units per building. In addition, buildings cannot exceed 160 ft. long, nor a density of one unit per 4,000 sq. ft. per site area.
 - Parking Regulations: During the analysis the City's parking requirements were noted as an inhibitor to development. Specifically:
 - Minimum parking requirements are high.
 - Using a shared parking model requires a permanent deed restriction (see 7.1.C.2)
 - Design Considerations: Standards are broadly defined which creates some flexibility regarding how it is interpreted architecturally. However, it also creates a dynamic of uncertainty regarding community reaction to a design concept.
- ◆ Engage with local businesses and property owners about development tools and community activities.
- ◆ Actively pursue avenues to increase access to the Thames Street waterfront

Strategies

To strength, sense of place and vitality of the area include:

1. Leveraging Thames Center to maximize its value as a walkable historic coastal village

- ◆ Groton's Historic Downtown; Designation on the National Register of Historic Places (Groton Bank)
- ◆ Strategies:
 - Preserve the historic character and scale of the Center
 - Focus on activating the vacant properties and empty buildings by working with property owners on pop-up activates that can serve as a draw.
 - Experiment with parking options:
 - Allow shared parking arrangements
 - Create some on-street parking
 - Develop public parking on the edges of the Center.
 - Bury power line (Long term)
- ◆ Improvements:
 - Create additional public parking: There's potential for approximately 15 additional on-street parking spaces along Thames Street from Puffins Restaurant to Latham Street.
 - Thames Street re-stripping of on-street parking spaces, center lines, edge lines, and stop bars.
 - Improvements to enhance walkability and clam traffic include pedestrian crossing islands and curb extensions.



2. Enhancing the waterfront to become an amenity that can draw people to Thames Street.

- ◆ Groton's waterfront and historic core are the area's best assets from an amenity perspective. Enhanced access could serve as an important draw. Moreover, several waterfront businesses may benefit from the ability to leverage their location and should be encouraged to do so.
- ◆ Strategies:
 - Perform a more detailed analysis to determine feasibility of a "boardwalk" along the riverfront. The boardwalk may need to loop down to the water and return to the sidewalk from time to time.
 - Leverage planned build-out of Thames View Park for enhanced public access to the waterfront through creation of piers, floating docks, and other temporary structures to experiment.

- Encourage local businesses to activate their waterfronts using info sharing sessions and meetings to provide ideas and examples
- Acquire some additional water access/ parcels to build out more public access points through easements, incentives, and selected acquisitions.
- Consider creating public access requirements on new developments that are not single family. Offer development incentives for enhanced public access

3. Concentrating denser development at Upper Thames Street/ Bridge Street to take advantage of the topography, parcel sizes, and limited flood zone issues.

- ◆ Residential growth is vital. Given the demographics of the neighborhood, it should be a priority to create denser housing to support more households to sustain a vibrant street.
- ◆ Upper Thames and Bridge Street make the most sense for a variety of reasons:
 - Larger parcels and reduced flood risk make the area more amenable to development
 - Higher vacancy and underutilized parcels present opportunity for redevelopment
 - The topography is such that taller buildings can be built without obstructing view corridors.
- ◆ Strategies:
 - Rezone the area to support a mix of residential and commercial uses
 - Create a gateway to the area:
 - The intersection of Bridge Street and I-95 on/off ramps provides an opportune site for a gateway.
 - The creation of a gateway welcoming visitors to the area will enhance the sense of place.
 - Improve general walkability and bike ability in the area
 - Create a public plaza to create sense of place.

4. Creating a buffer area around Electric Boar to enhance security and create a potential expansion zone for suppliers and EB itself.

- ◆ EB is a critical component of the region's economy. Reducing potential conflicts and expansion options are an important planning consideration.
- ◆ A buffer strategy is a typical approach to reduce conflict between marine industrial uses and others.
- ◆ This approach also lessens security risk by providing some separation between the facility and non-EB related development.
- ◆ Strategies:
 - A zoning overlay that limits heights of buildings surrounding the EB facility to less than 50ft
 - A special permit requirement related to any new development within a set distance.
 - Examination of development capacity along Poquonnock Rd to see if additional density can be supported.

Recommendations

For real estate and physical improvements, include:

Near Term

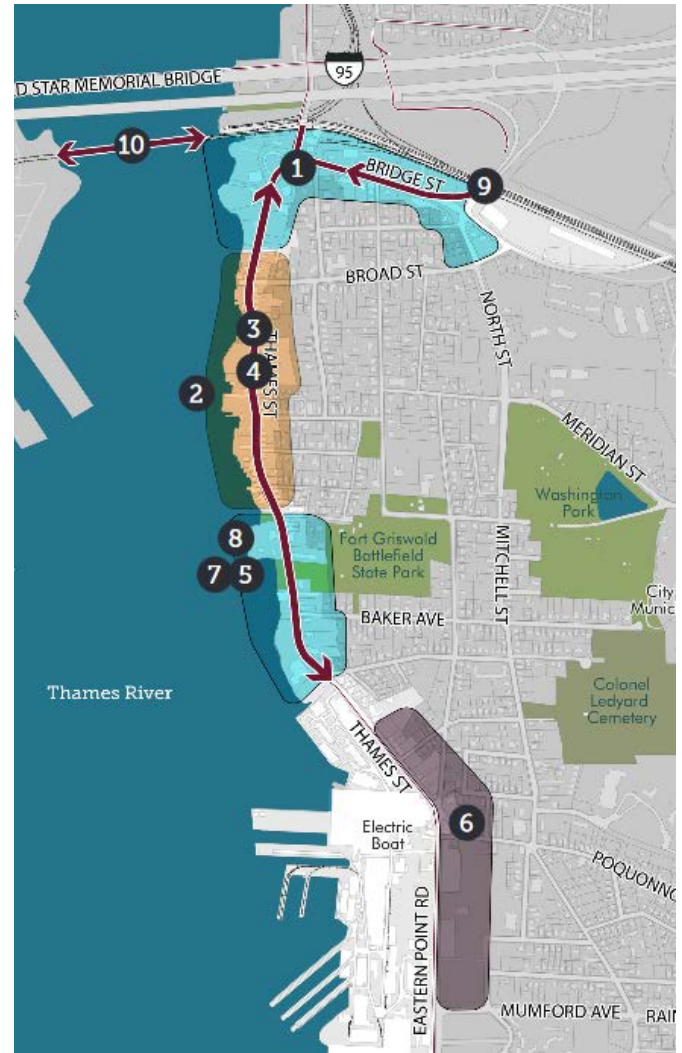
1. Best development opportunity based on parcel size, site control, flood zone (requires re-zoning)
2. Potential floating boardwalk or docks, will require coordination with DEEP
3. Area for historic preservation, storefronts, pedestrian-friendly attractions, select infill development, and water access
4. On-street parking option, paint cross walks
5. Create municipal parking lot as a transitional strategy.
6. Create buffer zone around EB through zoning mechanism

Long Term

1. City-own land could be opened up to stronger development opportunity if item 8 occurs
2. Relocate water treatment plant out of flood hazard and sea level rise zones
3. Improve gateway into district & bike access to Gold Start Bridge Path.
4. Create cantilevered bike path beside rail bridge

To read the full report please visit:

<http://cityofgroton.com/ped/trr/>



Goal 5. Grow and diversify existing and emerging opportunities.

A. Strengthen connections with existing business community.

Task Area 1 - Continue the Town and City's Business Visitation Programs and regularly share and assess findings

The following provides background and detailed tactics for continued implementation of a business visitation program. This aligns with and provides more detailed action plan to *Goal 5 - Grow and diversify existing and emerging opportunities* and more specifically 5A. *Strengthen connections with existing business community.*

The Town and City both have formal business visitation programs which are working well. They also are both working on coordinating efforts and sharing findings to learn more about the business environment in both the Town and City as well as coordinate follow-up responses and actions as appropriate.

City Business Visitation Program

Business retention and expansion goals include:

- ◆ Establishing strong relationships between City businesses, economic development staff and commission
- ◆ Better connections between City businesses, the community and economic development efforts
- ◆ Collect and analysis data to better understand current and projected needs
- ◆ Provide business and development friendly websites
- ◆ Support and host community events.

Business visitation goals include:

- ◆ Provide City businesses with a convenient and personalized opportunity to be introduced to tools that can assist in business growth.
- ◆ Discover areas of strength and weakness in our local economy.
- ◆ Educate on current or upcoming plans and projects.
- ◆ Stakeholder engagement and participation.

The City of Groton launched their Business Visitation Program in 2019 with an introductory letter through its Economic Development Commission. City businesses are visited by the City's newly established Economic Development Specialist, who serves as their point of contact at City Hall.

Town Business Visitation Program

History of the Groton Business Outreach Program

- ◆ 2016 - Two of the recommended priority initiatives per the Economic and Market Trends Analysis for the Town were a) Create a stand-alone economic development website for marketing Groton; and b) Start a formal business visitation program.
- ◆ 2017 - Town Economic Development Commission initiated business outreach visits to support the work of the Office of Planning and Development Services (OPDS)
- ◆ 2018 - OPDS launched its new website - www.exploremoregroton.com and new digital monthly newsletter - Groton Economic Development Update.
- ◆ 2019 - EDC began the Card-for-Card approach to streamline the process and accomplish a fourfold increase in the number of business outreach visits.

Purpose of the Business Outreach Program

"Business Outreach is about building relationships and conversations with our local businesses. It is the best mechanism for checking the pulse of the business community." Paige Bronk - Manager of Economic and Community Development, OPDS.

Tools for Business Outreach Card-for-Card Program

- ◆ POST CARD called 'EXPLORE MORE FOR YOUR BUSINESS'
- ◆ BUSINESS OUTREACH VISIT REPORT FORM (available in digital and printed format)
- ◆ NOTEBOOK to jot reminder notes of each visit for reference when completing the report form (optional)
- ◆ NOTECARD w/ Envelope to mail a personalized follow-up thank you to businesses (optional)

Card-For-Card Program Steps

- ◆ Select the businesses you want to visit from the available list by contacting Lauren Post of OPDS at lpost@groton-ct.gov or by phone 860.446.5960
- ◆ While presenting the Post Card, spend a few minutes at each business talking with the owner/manager/supervisor or other employee to explain about the Town's new website and value of joining the digital newsletter mailing list. If possible, have a two-way conversation to obtain information helpful to OPDS as outlined on the Business Outreach Visit Report Form. The key to success is to conduct each visit in a way which suits the business situation and your personal style.
- ◆ Obtain a Business Card from each business visited.
- ◆ Complete as much information as you can on a Business Outreach Visit Report Form. Submit it with their Business Card to Lauren Post.
- ◆ When you are ready for more supplies, contact Lauren Post.
- ◆ Need other help? Ask OPDS - Paige Bronk (pbronk@groton-ct.gov) or Sam Eisenbeiser (seisenbeiser@groton-ct.gov) and EDC - Catherine Young (cyoung@grotonctedc@gmail.com)

B. Focus attraction efforts on targeted sectors.

The following provides step by step tactics for planning and implementing a strategy to attract businesses to the Town and City of Groton. This aligns with and provides more detailed action plan to *Goal 5 - Grow and diversify existing and emerging opportunities* and more specifically *5A - Focus attraction efforts on targeted sectors*.

Task Area 1 - Focus Targeted Industries

Understand and prioritize targeted Industry sectors, sub-sectors, cross-sectors – This task area has already completed through past and recent market analyses for the Town of Groton and the Region.

From 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for The Southeastern Connecticut Economic Development District - www.secter.org/ceds/

- ◆ Tourism Industry
- ◆ Healthcare Services Industry
- ◆ Defense Industry
- ◆ Energy and Environment Industry
- ◆ Bioscience Industry
- ◆ Agriculture, Fishing & Food Production
66
- ◆ Creative Industry
- ◆ Advanced Manufacturing Industry
- ◆ Maritime Industry

From 2016 VHB/Camoin Economic & Market Trends Analysis, Town of Groton, CT

- ◆ Tourism-Based (accommodations, retail, food services, entertainment and recreation)
- ◆ Health Care
- ◆ Business and Professional Services (finance, insurance, real estate, and professional services)
- ◆ Manufacturing

Taken together and to insure alignment, those that best lend themselves to business attraction and are therefore the initial focus areas are:

- ◆ Advanced Manufacturing including Defense
- ◆ Energy and Environment
- ◆ Bioscience
- ◆ Agriculture, Fishing, & Food Production
- ◆ Maritime Industry

Industry trends change rapidly, and these should be tracked and reported on annually and adjusted as warranted.

Task Area 2 - Prepare Targeted Industry Profiles

Using data, information, analysis - summarize advantages and opportunities for each target group - make the case for why to invest in Groton. Focus on what sets you apart? Specific recommended marketing materials include the following (some of which are already in place).

Create web pages to provide overview and opportunities for business and economic development in Groton. This should provide clear, updated, and easily accessible information on:

- ◆ Overview of Town and City, key and districts
- ◆ Businesses and testimonials from existing businesses – why they like being there
- ◆ Available properties
- ◆ Amities, infrastructure, and utilities
- ◆ Comparative tax rates
- ◆ Support programs and incentives
- ◆ Regional and local labor market
- ◆ Maps and visuals
- ◆ How to contact

Provide updates on activities and opportunities on social media including Twitter and LinkedIn.

Produce a marketing packet with information cut sheets on each of the targeted industry sectors.

Keep site and property information updated on CERC SiteFinder.

Task Area 7 - Conduct Initial Intelligence and Competitiveness Campaign and Detailed Attraction Tactical Plan

Conduct Initial Intelligence and Competitiveness Campaign - Design and conduct digital survey and phone interviews with sample of site locators and businesses within potential targets to further understand and test market potential and asses competitiveness in the market.

Business Attraction Tactical Plan - Based on Initial Intelligence and Competitiveness Campaign create a tactical plan to:

- ◆ Refine and prioritize industry targets
- ◆ Prioritize geographic areas to attract from (states, regions, country)
- ◆ Specifies and prioritizes tactics to implement among:
 - Trade shows
 - Lead generation
 - Other marketing channels and tactics

If warranted by the Intelligence Campaign, Develop Qualified Business Leads (business information including contact information for businesses potentially interested in making a move such as relocation or expansion).

For each industry target group identify and prioritize geographic areas (country, state, region) of where you want to draw businesses from. This should be based on data regarding investment and employment trends and needs of targeted industry/subindustry/cross-section. It must be tied to the Groton business case.

For each industry target group identify and prioritize trade shows to attend and conduct meetings.

Develop list and database of "qualified" leads. Note would likely require services of lead generation firm and or partnership with state or regional attraction agency. It requires access to quality and updated industry databases as well as business intelligence gathered over time. As an output for this process this task provides contact info and business intelligence of companies seeking or likely to consider relocation, expansion, location.

Implement Attraction Campaign

- ◆ Conduct call campaign to connect to prioritized leads and set up meetings. Meeting can be phone, site visit, and meetings at trade sector events.
- ◆ Track all intelligence and communications in CRM database.
- ◆ Follow up with leads - occasional check in for status or additional information needed.
- ◆ Keep marketing materials and channels up to date with data, information, cases, stories: web site, cut sheets, etc.
- ◆ Note: best practices indicate these efforts are most successful when coordinated with state and regional partners.

Budget Range for Major Items

The following is a rough estimate of what such efforts would cost for a modest campaign.

- ◆ Task Area 1 - Targeted Industry Assessment – completed based on existing plans and studies
- ◆ Task Area 2 – Update and Prepare Marketing Material – staff time plus \$15-\$20K for initial costs plus \$6-\$10K annually after year one for updates and maintenance
- ◆ Task Area 3 - Conduct Initial Intelligence and Competitiveness Campaign and Task Area 4 – Business Attraction Tactical Plan –\$25-\$30K depending on number of geographies to draw from and industries; would need to be conducted annually for several years