
Objective #4: Acushnet Avenue

Strengthen Acushnet Avenue as a vital commercial corridor.

Short Term Actions

- Consider establishing an Acushnet Avenue BID or Main Street form of organization (either as a stand-alone organization or the offshoot of an existing organization) to serve as an advocate for neighborhood businesses and to encourage collaboration between businesses for joint marketing and improvements. Seek grant funding to offset start-up costs with the medium-term goal of making the entity a dues collecting, self-sustaining non-profit. A key goal of the association should be to support businesses that will help expand employment options for local residents.

Lead Role.....Office of Housing & Community Development (OHCD)

Estimated Cost.....N/A

- Commission a planning-level corridor study for Acushnet Avenue, focusing on streetscape improvements (paving, curb treatments, street lighting, seating, open space areas, etc.), façade improvements, and potential strategies to provide additional parking. The study should identify one or more optimal locations for new public parking areas. Streetscape and façade design guidelines should emphasize the “international market” concept, should it be embraced by the business community.

Lead Role.....NBEDC and Planning Department

Estimated Cost.....\$40,000

- Work with the City of New Bedford’s Community Development Department to implement the City’s existing façade improvement program for commercial and mixed-use buildings in the neighborhood, with a focus on the historic buildings between Eugenia Street and Davis Street.

Lead Role.....OHCD

Estimated Cost.....N/A

- Coordinate with the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) to provide enhanced bus service to and along the Acushnet Avenue corridor with potential connections direct to the downtown, better serving residents, customers, and employees.

Lead Role.....Planning Department

Estimated Cost.....N/A

- Prepare zoning language requiring the provision of a majority of on-site parking behind and along side new buildings, instead of in large lots along the frontage, thereby preserving a high-quality pedestrian environment. Encourage connections between rear lots to provide for secondary circulation.
Lead Role..... Planning Department
Estimated Cost..... N/A

Medium Term Actions

- Secure funding for the construction of streetscape improvements and new parking area(s) described in the Acushnet Avenue Corridor Study through existing programs such as Public Works ED, Community Development Action Grants, or the Economic Development Agency.
Lead Role..... Planning Department
Estimated Cost..... N/A
- Commission construction documents for streetscape improvements and new parking area(s). Secure necessary permits and approvals.
Lead Role..... Planning Department
Estimated Cost..... \$340,000
- Bid construction of the streetscape improvements and new parking area(s). If not already owned by the City of New Bedford, secure control of land proposed for new parking lots in the Acushnet Avenue Corridor Study.
Lead Role..... Planning Department
Estimated Cost..... \$3,400,000 (exclusive of land costs)

Long Term Actions

- Transition the BID or Main Street organization to a full-time, professionally-managed, self-sustaining non-profit entity (potentially a Business Improvement District). Broaden scope of activities in response to neighborhood needs.
Lead Role..... NBEDC
Estimated Cost..... TBD
- Depending on needs, identify locations for additional parking areas.
Lead Role..... TBD
Estimated Cost..... TBD