



June 2026

To the Select Board and Town Administrator,

In response to the charge given by the Selectboard, the Town of Otis Revitalization Committee is pleased to submit our Year One Final Report and Strategic Recommendations summarizing the committee's efforts, findings, and proposed path forward for the economic and community revitalization of the Town of Otis.

Over the past twelve months, the committee has undertaken a comprehensive assessment with grant support to inform the strategic actions presented here. The report outlines a framework centered around five strategic priorities that focus on rehabilitation and code enforcement, housing, communications and community engagement, tourism and recreation, and strengthening services and infrastructure through a sustainability and future-flexible lens.

While the committee has identified numerous opportunities for growth, one issue stands above all others: ***the blighted and abandoned properties in the center of town remain the cornerstone barrier to revitalization.***

These properties continue to negatively impact first impressions, suppress investor confidence, discourage business development, and erode resident morale. Throughout our engagement with community members and stakeholders, frustration with the lack of visible progress on these properties has been a consistent and urgent theme.

The committee strongly believes that decisive action from Town leadership is now required and respectfully urges direct ownership of the accompanying plan. The time has come to move from planning to execution.

We support you in your role as visible leadership and note that early successes in the next 6–12 months will be critical to encourage collaborative community investment, signaling to prospective businesses and investors that the Town of Otis is committed to renewal and growth.

We submit this report with confidence in Otis's future and with appreciation for the support of leadership, residents, business owners, and community partners.

Respectfully submitted,

Town of Otis Revitalization Committee

*As of 8/24/26, the Selectboard has not responded to the report or request for a joint meeting to review and discuss.

Town of Otis Revitalization

Strategic Plan & Implementation Timeline

June 2026

*A three-year framework anchored in the 2025 Needs Assessment,
SWOT/TOWS analysis, and Business Focus Group findings*

Prepared by the Revitalization Committee:

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Charge from the Board of Selectmen: *The Town of Otis Revitalization Committee is charged with exploring and developing a comprehensive strategy to revitalize the town including both town centers. This strategy should focus on enhancing the economic vitality, aesthetic appeal, and overall quality of life within the town. This strategy will assist the committee, community and Town leaders in coordinating planning and action efforts.*

Executive Summary

This strategic plan translates the Revitalization Committee's charge and responsibilities outlined in Appendix A and extensive discovery work: the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis and TOWS matrix, the 2025 Needs Assessment Survey, business focus groups, and seven working groups' activities framework based on six vitality categories (Social Cohesion/ Social Capital, Infrastructure, Services, Economic Opportunities, Environment, Ability to Adapt to Change) into a sequenced, resourced three-year roadmap.

The plan is built around a simple premise: Otis does not need a dramatic reinvention. It needs strong leadership and disciplined execution on a short list of things the community already agrees on, paired with a handful of structural investments that will determine the town's growth or decline.

The Strategic Picture & Data-driven Priorities for 2026-2029

The survey data reveals a significant agreement between voters (year-round residents) and non-voters (seasonal homeowners and visitors) along five priorities: cleaning up contaminated and abandoned properties, downtown beautification, expanding medical services, municipal action on the Terranova site, and early childhood services. Both groups strongly oppose a Route 8/23 roundabout. These five consensus items form the political foundation any strategic plan can stand on without fracturing the community. Consideration should also be given to tourism intensity and reservoir access where voters and non-voters diverge slightly.

At the same time, three structural problems cut across every vitality category and every working group. Housing is an economic development bottleneck. The town's official communication channels reach only half the stakeholder base. The existing business base cannot supply all that residents want.

This plan organizes all existing activity into five strategic priorities, each with Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) goals, sequenced actions, and identified funding paths:

- **Priority 1: Remediate and Reactivate the Downtown Core** — Terranova cleanup, Old Otis Inn rehabilitation, Harmony Hall adaptive reuse, code enforcement regarding health and safety risks of structurally unsound and abandoned properties, and downtown beautification.
- **Priority 2: Close the Housing Gap** — Seasonal Communities designation activation, ADU bylaw reform, Municipal Housing Trust, senior housing pathway.
- **Priority 3: Build a Unified Communications & Community Engagement System** — Community calendar, multi-channel reach strategy, seasonal homeowner engagement, volunteer pipeline.
- **Priority 4: Activate Tourism & Recreation Assets** — Businesses four-season programming, reservoir access strategy, Knox Trail development, expand trails & uses, destination marketing.
- **Priority 5: Strengthen Services & Infrastructure for a Resilient Town** — Childcare expansion, medical services expansion starting with community paramedicine feasibility, water and microgrid planning, wastewater expansion, walkability upgrades, grant capacity building.

A sixth interdepartmental workstream, Organizational Capacity & Governance, runs throughout: accountability for monitoring and evaluating progress, forming a business or trades association, and building the grant-writing infrastructure the plan depends on. Sustainable growth and future flexibility underpin the priorities set forth in the remainder of this document. Each detailed priority provides a suggested phased three-year timeline, maps early successes for 2026 momentum, identifies funding sources, defines measurement and governance, and recognizes risks with mitigations.

1. Strategic Context

1.1 What the Data Tells Us

The discovery work now gives the committee a uniquely well-informed starting point. Three sources of evidence — the needs assessment survey, the business survey, and the qualitative business focus groups — largely agree with one another, which is unusual and strategically useful.

Consensus Priorities (Voters & Non-Voters Aligned)

Priority	Action
Action on Terranova Site	Top-tier priority: public health and visual identity issue
Clean up contaminated/abandoned properties	Top-tier priority: visual cornerstone of revitalization
Downtown beautification	Strong mandate: execute, don't re-litigate
Expand medical services	Consensus need: explore sustainable expansion options, revenue sources, regional partnerships
Tourism	Consensus need: leverage natural resources as economic opportunities such as trail expansion
Route 8/23 roundabout	Clearly dead on arrival — redirect that energy elsewhere

Where the Groups Diverge

- **Reservoir access.** Voters oppose visitor reservoir access at 52%; non-voters at 37%. While increased access for voters is desired. Any reservoir access strategy must be designed around this tension rather than papering over it.
- **Housing urgency.** Voters name specific housing types with high intensity (single-family 61%, first-time 48%, ADU 46%, senior 41%). Non-voters show more diffuse preferences. Housing policy design should be led by voter priorities — they're the ones facing the labor-and-affordability squeeze daily.
- **Communications footprint.** Voters use Town Website 38% vs. 17% for non-voters; town emails 32% vs. 17%. This is the single most actionable gap in the dataset.

What the Business Community is Saying

The DeLevie Group business focus groups found owners love operating in Otis. There is an affection for the town, appreciation for customers, loyalty from staff, and no reported obstruction from town government. The written survey, however, surfaced sharper critiques from a vocal minority (frustration with the Board of Selectmen, downtown condition described in strong terms). The two are not contradictory: the focus-group cohort self-selected toward engaged, positive owners; the written survey captured a wider distribution.

The signals that appear in both sources are the ones to act on:

- Staffing during summer is the operational pain point — housing is the root cause.
- A business association (Chamber of Commerce-like group) would be welcomed by engaged owners, but leadership should come from businesses themselves, not the town.
- The business base cannot currently supply all of what residents want — groceries, retail, dining, lodging. New business attraction is required, not just existing-business support.
- 33% of businesses plan to expand; 24% are contemplating closing, shrinking, or leaving. For roughly half of the departing group the reason is retirement (not policy-fixable).

1.2 Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles

Vision

Otis is a picturesque New England town where year-round residents, seasonal homeowners, businesses, and visitors share in a welcoming small-town atmosphere, thriving small businesses, and protected natural beauty — a place that has intentionally re-built what it once had while adapting to what it now needs.

Mission

To coordinate a coherent revitalization of Otis's economy, aesthetics, services, and community fabric — balancing development with environmental stewardship, restoring the character of the downtown core, strengthening existing assets, and expanding civic involvement without significant tax increases.

Guiding Principles

- **Anchor decisions in data and consensus.** Where voters and non-voters agree, move decisively. Where they diverge, design for both.
- **Early Successes create political capital for harder work.** Visible improvements in the first 12 months make the multi-year bets possible.
- **Leverage outside money.** Grants and partnerships are treated as a first-line funding source, not a last resort.
- **Committee as "grease and glue."** The Revitalization Committee convenes, coordinates, and advocates — it does not own execution. Ownership sits with existing boards, staff, partners, and volunteers.
- **Preserve what makes Otis Otis.** Scenic beauty, privacy, and small-town atmosphere are the #1 and #2 reasons residents are here. They are not negotiables.

2. The Five Strategic Priorities

Each priority is presented with a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) goal, the specific actions that constitute it, the lead and supporting parties, funding pathways, and measurement approach. The actions consolidate and sequence work already identified in the SWOT/TOWS, and the Early Successes and Priority project lists outlined in the working document.

2.1 Priority 1: Remediate and Reactivate the Downtown Core

Why this is Priority #1: the single largest consensus priority across all segments, a public-health issue on the Terranova site, the biggest drag on new-business attraction, and the most visible signal of whether revitalization is real.

SMART Goal

By end of 2028, complete environmental remediation of the Terranova site, return the Old Otis Inn building to usable condition, establish at least two new downtown tenants in previously vacant storefronts, and deliver a visibly improved streetscape including lighting, signage, planters, and at least three facade improvements.

Key Actions & Sequencing

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Complete Brownfield baseline assessment at Terranova (UConn)	2025	Revitalization Committee, UCONN	UConn Technical Assistance to Brownfields
MA Economic Development Real Estate TA Grant execution (already awarded)	2025–2026	Revitalization Committee, MassDev consultant	Grant in hand
Terranova contamination testing	2025–2026	Property Owner, MA DEP	MA DEP 21J program
Secure EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant; execute remediation	2027–2028	Property owner, Town Admin, BOS, environmental contractor	EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant
Old Otis Inn: tear down or mold abatement, interior renovation, tenant recruitment	2026–2027	Property owner, Revitalization Committee, MassDev consultant, BRPC, 1Berkshire	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), MA Downtown Initiative, private
Harmony Hall: repair or tear down, adaptive reuse plan, tenant recruitment	2026–2028	Town Admin, BOS, Revitalization Committee, MassDev consultant, BRPC	MassWorks, CDBG, private
Notice Otis business recruitment tour & establish Business Welcoming Committee (Fall 2026, with 1Berkshire)	2026	Revitalization Committee, 1Berkshire, BRPC	1Berkshire, BRPC DLTA Grant
Streetscape Phase 1: planters, banners, benches, bike racks, repainting	2026	Cultural Council, Maintenance, Highway	MA Cultural Council, Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Capital Program (MDI), local sponsorship
Streetscape Phase 2: decorative lighting, consistent signage, street trees, sidewalk upgrades	2026–2028	Highway, Planning, Maintenance	MassWorks Infrastructure Program, MA Downtown Initiative

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Facade Improvement Program: matching grants/loans for 5+ downtown buildings	2027–2028	Planning, Revit. Committee, BRPC	CDBG, revolving fund, matching private
Review and revise zoning/bylaws to encourage rehabilitation and mixed-use; investigate tax incentives	2026–2027	Planning Board, BOS	BRPC DLTA, MA Business Tax Credits

Measurement

- Terranova site cleanup phase completed (yes/no, milestone dates)
- Old Otis Inn and Harmony Hall: occupancy status (vacant / under renovation / occupied)
- Number of new downtown tenants signed
- Number of facade improvements completed
- Streetscape element inventory (planters, banners, benches, lampposts installed)

2.2 Priority 2: Close the Housing Gap

Why this matters: housing is the single largest barrier to hiring, to keeping young families, to bringing businesses back, and to stabilizing school enrollment. This is the priority whose success or failure will most determine Otis's trajectory over the next decade.

SMART Goal

By end of 2028, activate Otis's Seasonal Communities designation tools after carefully crafting bylaws that reflect a unified approach across primary and second homeowners, adopt a revised ADU bylaw that incentivizes creation, establish a Municipal Housing Trust, and produce at least one funded plan for a senior/first-time homebuyer housing development pathway.

Key Actions & Sequencing

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Formal adoption/activation of Seasonal Communities designation tools & bylaw	2027	BOS, Planning, EOHLC	State program — no local cost
Revise ADU bylaw to incentivize creation (remove barriers, clarify process)	2026	Planning Board, Smart Growth	BRPC technical assistance
Establish Municipal Housing Trust	2026–2027	BOS, Town Admin, MA Housing, Planning	Community Preservation Act (CPA) (if adopted), grants, town seed
Re-explore Community Preservation Act adoption (outstanding item from 2015 Master Plan)	2027–2028	Planning, BOS, residents	Ballot question

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Engage Habitat for Humanity, Construct Inc., MA Housing for pilot first-time-home project	2026–2028	BOS, Housing Trust	Partner resources; state grants; MA tax incentives
Assess town-owned lands potentially suitable for residential development	2026	BOS, Planning, Town Admin	Staff time
Seek developer partner for senior/retirement community concept	2027–2028	Planning, COA, BOS	Developer investment + TIF
Connect residents with existing housing rehab programs (septic loans, LIHEAP, pre-qualified contractors list)	Ongoing 2026+	Staff, COA, Revitalization Committee	Existing state programs

Measurement

- Seasonal Communities designation: active / inactive
- ADU bylaw revision: adopted (yes/no); number of ADU permits issued annually
- Municipal Housing Trust: established (yes/no); trust balance
- Units in planning/construction by type (single-family, first-time, ADU, senior)

2.3 Priority 3: Build a Unified Communications & Engagement System

Why this matters: no initiative in this plan will succeed politically if seasonal homeowners and less-engaged residents feel blindsided. The current two-tier communications infrastructure creates that risk structurally. Stakeholders rely almost exclusively on Facebook groups and word of mouth which are not always accurate because the information is not officially sourced

SMART Goal

By end of 2026, operate a coordinated communications system that reaches at least 60% of year-round residents and at least 50% of seasonal homeowners monthly through a combination of owned and partner channels, and that includes a unified community events calendar.

Key Actions & Sequencing

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Launch unified town-wide community events calendar (web + social + Otis Observer layer)	2026-2027	Town Clerk, Cultural Council	Staff & Volunteer time; modest subscription cost
Monthly municipal Otis Observer article series	Ongoing	Town Admin, Clerk, Boards & Committees	Staff & Volunteer time
Share official posts to existing Otis Facebook pages and cross-group posting protocol	Ongoing	Town Admin, Clerk, Boards & Committees	Staff & Volunteer time

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Seasonal homeowner outreach: opt-in email list, spring/fall mailing	2026–2027	Town Admin, Assessor, Clerk	Mailing costs grant eligible
Install prominent signage in East Otis and downtown for event/calendar promotion	2026–2027	Maintenance, Highway	MA Cultural Council, Downtown Initiative
Quarterly public listening session & all Boards meeting	Quarterly	Town Admin, Clerk, Boards & Committees	None
Launch grant-writing workshop series with Library	2026	Revitalization Committee, Library	Berkshire Funding Focus; Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires; MA state departments
Solicit ongoing volunteer pipeline (survey already included volunteer question)	Ongoing	Revitalization Committee, Town Clerk	Staff & Volunteer time
Reestablish the Celebration Committee and expand scope to cover welcome committee & town baby shower committee	2026–2027	BOS, Town Admin, Revitalization Committee, Celebration Committee	Volunteer time & donations

Measurement

- Community calendar launched (yes/no); monthly active users
- Facebook page reach/engagement quarterly
- Seasonal homeowner email list size; open rate
- Survey re-administered in 2028 to measure communications-channel reach change
- Volunteer roster size; new volunteers recruited per quarter
- New homeowners reached
- New parents reached

2.4 Priority 4: Activate Tourism & Recreation Assets

Why this matters: tourism is the single largest lever to grow revenue for businesses and the town without increasing local taxes — but it must be designed around the voter/non-voter tension on tourism intensity.

SMART Goal

By end of 2028, establish Otis Ridge year-round programming in partnership with ownership, expand reservoir access through managed amenities, complete the Knox Trail development milestones, plan for trail connections and expansions, and launch a destination marketing identity and platform for Otis.

Key Actions & Sequencing

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Explore partnership agreement framework with businesses such as Otis Ridge for year-round programming	2027	Revitalization Committee, Otis business ownership	Private + public-private match
Launch Otis Community Day, fishing derby, and duck race as annual signature events	2026–2027	Celebration & Revitalization Committee, Cultural Council & Recreation Department	Volunteer Time, Sponsorships, entry fees
Host Food Truck Nights with music	2026+	Rec Dept, Cultural Council, private businesses	Vendor fees, MCC grants, private
Reservoir access strategy: managed access points balancing voter/non-voter concerns	2026–2027	Revitalization Committee, Planning, BOS, DCR, ORPA	MassWorks, DCR partnership
Knox Trail: continue National Register work, install markers/milestones, develop self-guided tour	2026–2028	Historical Commission, OPT, Rec Dept	MA Cultural Council, MHC, private, grants
Historic homes/buildings tour program (seasonal)	2027	Historical Commission, Cultural Council	MCC, ticket revenue
Attract one national Bass fishing or water-ski tournament as stretch goal	2027–2028	Revitalization Committee, Marina, tournament orgs, ORPA	Sponsorship-driven
Launch Otis destination marketing identity: tourism website, social channels, regional tie-ins	2026–2027	Revit. Committee, 1Berkshire, Berkshires Visitors Bureau	MA Downtown Initiative (MDI), Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT), regional partnerships
Develop updated 100-Acre Park concept plan (public forum → recommendations)	2026–2027	Planning, Rec Dept., BOS, Revitalization Committee	Open space grants, DCR, private

Measurement

- Annual signature events executed (attendance, revenue)
- Business year-round programming days/year and revenue change
- Knox Trail milestones completed
- Trails expanded or connected
- Destination marketing site traffic; referral traffic to local businesses
- Visitor satisfaction sampling (through businesses)

2.5 Priority 5: Strengthen Services & Infrastructure

Why this matters: the 2015 Master Plan appendix shows how many structural items remain open. Several are not glamorous but set the ceiling on everything else — wastewater capacity, road walkability, healthcare access, childcare, and grid resilience. Recent municipal capital improvements addressing deferred maintenance and increased, or changing building needs have been voted down, necessitating a comprehensive, sustainable, and future-flexible approach.

SMART Goal

By end of 2028, expand childcare capacity in Otis, establish a medical service expansion plan such as community paramedicine or regionalized EMT pathway, complete water, wastewater and microgrid feasibility plans, engage a community information schedule covering short and long-term municipal capital needs, deliver initial walkability improvements on Routes 8 and 23, and establish a grant-writing volunteer corps sustaining a documented annual grant-application pipeline.

Key Actions & Sequencing

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Childcare expansion: school partnership and pre-K pathway (research underway)	2026–2027	School, Revitalization Committee	EEC grants, Rural Schools funding
Municipal Capital Needs: community engagement	2026–2027	Finance, BOS	BPRC DTLA
Community Paramedicine / regionalized EMT pilot feasibility and decision	2027–2028	EMS, BOS, regional partners	HRSA Rural Health, state grants, Blue Cross & Blue Shield grant
Water for downtown village district: feasibility study	2027–2029	Planning, Smart Growth, BRPC	MassWorks, USDA Rural Dev.
Wastewater: expansion feasibility study (including ski area and East Otis)	2027–2029	Planning, Smart Growth, BRPC	National Associations offering pro bono work; MassWorks, USDA Rural Dev.
Microgrid/alternative energy town-wide assessment	2027–2029	Energy Committee, Planning	DOER grants, green bank
Public EV charger installation 2+	2027–2029	Energy Committee, Maintenance	MassEVIP, utility programs
Walkability improvements: paving, lane restriping, shoulder widening	2027–2028	Highway, BOS, MassDOT	Complete Streets, Chapter 90
Establish Otis Center walking loop (1/2 mile + 1 mile, from 2015 Master Plan)	2027	Maintenance, Rec Dept, OHC, COA	Low-cost
Speed limit enforcement and truck traffic advocacy on Route 8	Ongoing	Police, BOS, MassDOT	None direct

Action	Timing	Lead / Partners	Funding Path
Industrial compost station feasibility	2027–2028	BOH, Planning, Maintenance	MassDEP Recycling grants
Master Plan update	2026–2028	Planning Board, BRPC	Grant received
Grant-writing volunteer corps: recruit and train 3+ grant writers	2026	Revitalization Committee, Library	Berkshire Funding Focus, volunteer time

Measurement

- Childcare seats added (baseline → target)
- Community paramedicine decision reached (yes/no); pilot launched
- Wastewater, water, microgrid, industrial compost feasibility studies delivered
- Walkability improvements completed (linear feet, intersections)
- EV chargers operational
- Grants applied for / awarded / dollar amount (annual)

2.6 Interdepartmental Organizational Capacity & Governance

Three enabling capabilities run through everything:

- **Business Association.** The DeLevie focus groups surfaced authentic interest in a Chamber-like group — appropriately owned by businesses themselves, not the town. The committee's role is catalytic: convene, provide space for initial meetings, step back.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation.** Assign one or two committee members to own the tracking system. Quarterly updates to the full committee; annual plan refresh; bi-annual survey to re-measure resident sentiment.
- **Grant Infrastructure.** The grant-writing workshop (upcoming) is a capacity-building investment that pays back across every priority. Treat it that way in sequencing and resourcing.

3. Three-Year Implementation Timeline

The timeline organizes all actions into phased quarters. Items in this first year (2026) emphasize visible progress, grant capture windows, and foundational structural decisions. Years 2 and 3 execute the harder infrastructure and housing work that flows from 2026 groundwork.

Town of Otis Revitalization Strategic Plan – RACI Matrix					
Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
Phase I: Foundation & Early Successes (2026)					
I. a	Adopt this strategic plan; confirm working group assignments against the five priorities.	BOS, Revitalization	Revitalization Chair, BOS, Town Admin	Planning Board; Public; MassDev Consultants	Public; All Boards & Committees; Staff
I. b	Complete and analyze the Needs Assessment Survey; publish key findings publicly.	Revitalization	BOS	Clerk, Town Admin, BOS, Public	Public; All Boards & Committees; Staff
I. c	Execute MA Economic Development Real Estate TA Grant work on downtown area.	Revitalization; MassDev Consultants	Revitalization Chair	BOS, Zoning Enforcement, Planning, Town Admin	Public; All Boards & Committees; Staff
I. d	Launch unified community events calendar expanding on existing Town website.	Town Clerk	Town Clerk	Town Admin, All Boards & Committees, Staff	Public; All Boards & Committees; Staff; local businesses & organizations
I. e	Form Business Welcome Committee & Host Notice Otis tour with 1Berkshire.	Revitalization, 1 Berkshire, BRPC	Revitalization Chair, local business leaders	BOS, Zoning Enforcement, Planning, Town Admin; MassDev Consultants	Businesses

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
I. f	Recreation Department host Otis Clean • Otis Green community cleanup day.	Parks & Rec Dept; Highway; Maintenance	Parks & Rec Dept.; Highway	BOS, Town Admin, Clerk	Past volunteers
I. g	Streetscape Phase 1: planters, banners, bench additions.	Cultural Council; Celebration Committee	Cultural Council Chair; Celebration Committee Chair	Town Admin; BOS; Revitalization; Maintenance	Owners at the locations where improvements are made
I. h	Launch annual Otis Community Day, fishing derby and duck race; Food Truck Nights.	Celebration Committee; Cultural Council; Revitalization Committee; local businesses	Celebration Committee Chair; Cultural Council Chair; Revitalization Committee Chair, business owners	BOS, DCR, ORPA, Town Admin, Clerk, Conservation Commission; Parks & Rec Dept, Board of Health	Businesses; All Boards & Committees; Staff
I. i	Terranova submit EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant application.	Terranova owners	Terranova owners; Revitalization	Town Admin; BOS; Planning; Zoning	Adjacent owners
I. j	Write and revise property-condition bylaws; enforcement pathways	Planning; Zoning	Planning Chair	Town Admin; BOS; Building Inspector; neighboring towns; Board of Health; Public	Public
I. k	Begin writing Bylaw & Activate Seasonal Communities designation tools.	Planning	Planning Chair	Town Admin; BOS; Building Inspector; Zoning; model bylaw from the state; Public	Public; local builders; Grant writing team

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
I. l	Begin ADU bylaw revision process at Planning Board.	Planning	Planning Chair	BOS, Zoning, Town Admin; Public	Public
I. m	Town begins quarterly public listening sessions.	All Boards & Committees; Town Admin	BOS; Town Admin	Staff	Public
I. n	Grant-writing workshop series with Library — recruit and train 3+ volunteers.	Revitalization; Library	Revitalization Chair	Town Admin; BOS	All Boards & Committees
I. o	Publish Potential New Business webpage and Otis Facts Sheet.	Revitalization; Town Clerk; Business Association	Town Clerk	Town Admin; BOS; Zoning; Planning	All Boards & Committees
I. p	Begin Knox Trail marker installation and self-guided tour development.	Historical Commission; Cultural Council	Historical Commission Chair	BOS; Revitalization; Parks & Rec Dept; Property Owners	Conservation Commission; State Registries
I. q	Municipal Housing Trust established.	Planning; Revitalization; BOS	Planning Chair	Town Admin; Zoning	Public
I. r	EV charger siting and grant applications.	BOS; Town Admin; Energy Committee	BOS Chair; Energy Committee Chair	Maintenance; Highway; Fire; Police	Public
I. s	Two villages (Otis Center & East Otis) walking loops designed & signage installed.	Revitalization; Parks & Rec; Cultural Council	Parks & Rec Chair	BOS; Town Admin; Maintenance; Highway; Library	Downtown businesses and organizations
I. t	Childcare expansion planning with school.	School District; Planning	Superintendent, School Committee	Parents, Caregivers, Grant writing team	Public

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
I. u	Convene initial exploratory meeting for business association (BY businesses, not FOR).	Revitalization; Business owners	Revitalization Chair	1Berkshire; business owners; Kiwanians; Clerk	BOS, Town Admin; Public
I. v	Speed limit and truck advocacy continues on Route 8.	BOS; Police; Town Admin	BOS Chair	Revitalization; Fire & EMS	Residents along Rte 8 corridor
I. w	Submit Master Plan update grant application.	Planning	Planning Chair	Revitalization; Grant writing team; BOS; Town Admin	Public; MassDev Consultants
I. x	Launch seasonal homeowner opt-in email list + first mailing.	Town Clerk; ORPA, Revitalization; OWL	Town Clerk	Town Admin; BOS	OWL; ORPA
I. y	Hold a series of public informational sessions about short & long-term municipal capital needs and planned financing methods or send mailers.	Finance Committee; BOS; Town Admin	Finance Chair	Planning; Revitalization	Public; All Boards & Committees; Staff
Phase II — Structural Execution (2027)					
II. a	Town-owned lands assessment for reuse and potential housing suitability.	Housing Trust; BOS; Planning; Zoning; Revitalization	Housing Trust Chair; Planning Chair	Town Admin; Conservation Commission; Highway; EMS & Fire; BOH	Neighboring property owners
II. b	ADU bylaw adopted at Town Meeting	Planning	Planning Chair	BOS; Zoning; Town Admin	Public
II. c	CPA re-exploration as it relates to housing — ballot question preparation.	Planning; Revitalization	Planning Chair	BOS; Zoning; Town Admin; Housing Trust	Public
II. d	Terranova cleanup work initiated following grant award.	Terranova owners	Terranova owners; Zoning	Revitalization; Planning; Town Admin; BOS	Businesses; Public
II. e	Old Otis Inn mold abatement and interior renovation or demolish and rebuild plans.	Old Otis Inn owners	Old Otis Inn owners; Zoning; BOH	BOS; Town Admin; Revitalization	Business community; Public

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
II. f	Streetscape Phase 2 begins: decorative lighting, signage, street trees.	BOS; Revitalization	BOS Chair	Town Admin; MASS DoT; Highway; Police; Fire; Maintenance	Downtown businesses and owners
II. g	Destination marketing identity launched: tourism website, social channels.	Revitalization; Town Clerk	Revitalization Chair	BOS; Town Admin; Business Association	Business owners
II. h	Community paramedicine feasibility study and revenue model review.	EMS; Planning	Planning Chair	BOS; Town Admin; Board of Health; Fire; Revitalization Committee; Insurance & State guidelines	Public; neighboring EMS
II. i	Wastewater expansion feasibility study.	Wastewater Treatment Plant; Planning	Wastewater Supervisor	National water & wastewater engineer associations; BRPC; MA state-level departments; owners affected	Public
II. j	100-Acre Park public forum and concept plan.	Planning; Parks & Rec Dept	Planning Chair	Conservation Commission; BOS; Town Admin; Revitalization; BNRC; Greenagers	Public
II. k	Revitalize Otis destination package piloted with nearby towns.	Revitalization	Revitalization Chair	BOS; Planning; Clerk; Town Admin	1Berkshire; Chambers of Commerce
II. l	First facade improvement grants awarded to downtown properties.	Revitalization; Planning	Revitalization Chair	Zoning, BOS, Town Admin; property owners	Highway, Fire, EMS, Police
II. m	Terranova building tear-down (post-remediation).	Terranova owners	Terranova owners; Revitalization	Fire; Zoning; Town Admin	Planning; BOS

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
II. n	Harmony Hall tenant recruitment & redevelopment planning active.	BOS; Town Admin	BOS Chair	Planning; Revitalization; Historical Commission; neighbors	Public
II. o	Historic homes tour program inaugural season.	Historical Commission; Cultural Council	Historical Commission Chair	Property Owners; Highway; Parks & Rec; Cultural Council	Public
II. p	Microgrid/alternative energy/ energy storage assessment complete.	Energy Committee; Planning; Zoning	Energy Committee Chair	BOS; Town Admin; Maintenance	Public
II. q	Business (i.e. Otis Ridge) formal year-round programming partnership signed.	Revitalization; Business owners	Revitalization Chair; Business owners	Town Admin; BOS; Zoning	Planning; Clerk
II. r	Reservoir managed access pilot to allow increased local use.	Parks & Rec Dept; DCR	Parks & Rec Chair	Maintenance; Highway; Fire; Police; BOS; Town Admin	ORPA, Public
II. s	Childcare pilot launches.	School; Planning	Superintendent	Revitalization; Planning; Town Admin; BOS; Parents	Public; Parents
II. t	Walkability improvements (restriping, shoulder widening) begin.	Highway; Planning; Town Admin	Highway Super; Town Admin	Revitalization; BOS; Conservation Commission; Maintenance	Public
II. u	Re-run Needs Assessment pulse survey to measure directional change.	Planning; Revitalization	Planning Chair	Town Admin; BOS	Public, All Boards & Committees; Staff
Phase III — Scaling & Institutionalization (2028)					
III. a	Complete at least two new downtown tenant placements.	Housing Trust	Housing Trust Chair	BOS; Zoning; Town Admin	Public

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
III. b	Three facade improvement projects underway.	Revitalization; Planning	Revitalization Chair	Zoning, BOS, Town Admin; property owners	Highway, Fire, EMS, Police
III. c	Master Plan update near completion.	Planning	Planning Chair	All Boards & Committees; Staff; Public	Public
III. d	Senior housing developer partnership advances to planning.	Housing Trust	Housing Trust Chair	Planning; Revitalization; BOS; Town Admin; Zoning	Public
III. e	Alternative Energy production/ Industrial compost station pilot decision.	Energy Committee; Maintenance; BOS	Energy Committee Chair	Zoning; BOS; Planning	Public
III. f	Knox Trail self-guided tour fully operational; first reenactment event.	Historical Commission; Cultural Council; Parks & Rec Dept	Historical Commission Chair	Celebration Committee; BOS	Public
III. g	Otis national fishing or water-ski tournament — first hosting attempt.	Celebration Committee; Cultural Council; Revitalization Committee; Parks & Rec	Celebration Committee Chair; Cultural Council Chair; Revitalization Committee Chair	ORPA, Dept of Fish & Wildlife, National Hatchery; BOS; Marina	Public
III. h	Community paramedicine/EMS expansion operational or contracted through region.	EMS; Planning; Town Admin; BOS	EMS Chief	COA, Revitalization, neighboring towns' EMS, Insurance billables; State level agencies	Public

Action Step	Description	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
III. i	Completion of Terranova remediation and initial site redevelopment plan.	Terranova owners	Terranova owners; Planning	Revitalization; business association; BOS; Planning; Town Admin; 1Berkshire	Public
III. j	Old Otis Inn fully re-tenanted.	Old Otis Inn owners	Old Otis Inn owners; Zoning; Board of Health	Revitalization; Housing Trust	Public
III. k	Streetscape Phase 2 complete.	Highway; Maintenance; Planning; Town Admin	Town Admin	Zoning, BOS, property owners	Public
III. l	Comprehensive annual report: three-year accomplishments, metrics vs. targets.	Revitalization; Planning; Town Admin	Revitalization Chair	All Boards & Committees; Staff	Public
III. m	Strategic plan refresh / 2029–2031 planning cycle launch.	Planning; BOS; Town Admin	Planning Chair	All Boards & Committees; Staff	Public
III. n	Institutionalize Revitalization Committee into longer-term form (sunset or continue).	BOS	BOS Chair	Town Admin; All Boards & Committees; Staff	Public
KEY:	Early Successes		Complete or ongoing		

4. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability

4.1 Governance Model

The Revitalization Committee continues to operate as "the grease and the glue" — convening, coordinating, advocating. Actual execution stays with existing boards, town staff, committees, partners, and volunteer leads as shown in the action tables. This division prevents the committee from becoming an execution bottleneck and keeps work embedded in the existing governance structure.

4.2 Measurement Cadence

- **Quarterly:** Each working group reports progress against its workstream goals at a full committee meeting. Metrics reviewed, roadblocks surfaced, adjustments made.
- **Quarterly:** Public listening session and written update to the community (Otis Observer, Facebook page, town website).
- **Annual:** Formal plan review. Accomplishments reported. Metrics compared to targets. Plan refreshed for next year.
- **Bi-annual (2027):** Pulse survey re-measuring a subset of needs-assessment questions to track sentiment and awareness change.

4.3 Key Performance Indicators

Three tiers of metrics are tracked:

Tier 1 — Outcome Metrics (What Actually Changed)

- Downtown commercial vacancy rate (baseline → annual)
- New business formations in Otis (annual)
- Building permits for housing (single-family, first-time, ADU, senior)
- School enrollment trend
- Year-round population trend
- Total grant dollars secured annually

Tier 2 — Output Metrics (What We Delivered)

- Streetscape elements installed
- Facade improvements completed
- Events hosted and attendance
- EV chargers and walkability features installed
- Bylaws revised / policies adopted
- Grant applications submitted / awarded

Tier 3 — Engagement Metrics (Community Health)

- Survey respondent counts and mix (voter/non-voter/business)

- Community calendar subscribers; social media reach
- Volunteer pipeline size
- Seasonal homeowner outreach open/engagement rates

4.4 Rating System for Course Correction

At each quarterly review, working groups rate each active action on a 3-color scale:

- **Green** — on track; no change needed.
- **Yellow** — at risk; surface the issue, identify mitigation, continue monitoring.
- **Red** — blocked or off-track; escalate to committee for re-scoping, re-assignment, or removal from the plan.

One or two committee members own the tracking dashboard and present status at each full committee meeting. Projects in red for two consecutive quarters are formally re-scoped or retired — the plan stays honest about what is moving and what is not.

5. Risks and Mitigations

The discovery work surfaced real risks. Treating them openly improves the plan's credibility and makes community members more willing to support the harder decisions.

Risk	Signal in the Data	Mitigation
Tax-increase resistance blocks major initiatives	Survey comments explicitly cite fiscal restraint; committee's own vision includes "without significant tax increases"	Grant-first funding strategy; CPA as optional dedicated source; private partnerships; transparent cost-per-benefit reporting
Seasonal homeowners feel decisions are made without them	2× gap in official communications reach; historical tension on tourism	Priority 3 communications overhaul; explicit seasonal homeowner outreach; design the reservoir-access strategy to preserve their interests
Volunteer burnout	Several SWOT/TOWS entries call out limited volunteer capacity	Volunteer pipeline as an explicit priority; distribute workload across 7 working groups; avoid same leaders on all projects
Opposition to change ("if it ain't broke, don't fix it" and "it is the way we've always done it")	Named in SWOT weaknesses	Lead with early successes and consensus priorities; public milestones; respect the "preserve what makes Otis Otis" principle
Grant timing risk — EPA/state cycles don't match internal timelines	Multi-year, cyclical application windows	Grant coordinator role; standing opportunities log; local reserve for critical non-grant-eligible steps
Private property barriers (Old Otis Inn, Terranova's)	Town does not own the key downtown buildings	Direct owner engagement; tax incentives for rehab; technical assistance grants; patient public-private negotiation

Risk	Signal in the Data	Mitigation
Business attrition (24% contemplating closure/move/shrink)	Business survey direct data	Business association formation; active support (not just listening); attraction of new categories to replace retirees; governance-frustration channel for honest dialogue
Downtown private-property condition / hoarding	SWOT weakness; survey open-text	Revise property-condition bylaws; enforcement pathways; facade grants as carrot paired with stick
Demographic headwind (aging population, shrinking school)	SWOT threat; 70% of voters are 53+	Priority 2 (housing) is the core response; childcare and early-childhood services to retain young families; first-time-buyer programs

— End of Strategic Plan —

Appendix A:

Revitalization Committee Charge Statement & Specific Responsibilities

Committee Charge Statement

Committee Name: Town of Otis Revitalization Committee

Charge: The Town of Otis Revitalization Committee is charged with exploring and developing a comprehensive strategy to revitalize the town including both town centers. This strategy should focus on enhancing the economic vitality, aesthetic appeal, and overall quality of life within the town. This strategy will assist the committee, community and Town leaders in coordinating planning and action efforts.

Specific Responsibilities:

1. Conduct a Comprehensive Assessment:

- o Analyze the current state of the town, including its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- o Identify key challenges and opportunities for revitalization.
- o Assess the needs and preferences of local businesses, residents, and visitors.

2. Develop a Revitalization Plan:

- o Create a vision for the future of the town that aligns with the community's goals and values.
- o Develop a strategic plan outlining specific actions and initiatives to achieve the vision.
- o Prioritize projects and initiatives based on their potential impact and feasibility.

3. Implement Revitalization Strategies:

- o Secure necessary funding and resources to implement the revitalization plan.
- o Collaborate with local businesses, property owners, and community organizations to implement projects and initiatives.
- o Monitor progress and adjust the plan as needed.

4. Promote the Town Centers:

- o Develop marketing and branding strategies to attract visitors and businesses to the town centers.
- o Organize events and activities to create a vibrant and engaging atmosphere.
- o Promote the town centers through social media, local newspapers, and other channels.

5. Foster Partnerships:

- o Build strong relationships with local businesses, property owners, and community organizations.
- o Collaborate with town officials and other stakeholders to ensure alignment with broader community goals.
- o Seek input and feedback from the community throughout the revitalization process.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, the committee will contribute to the long-term success and prosperity of the town.