



TOWN OF WINTHROP OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

Town Hall, 1 Metcalf Square, Winthrop, MA 02152 Telephone: 617-846-1077

Anthony Marino
Town Manager

February 13, 2025

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
Secretary, Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

Secretary Augustus,

Please accept the Winthrop Action Plan for MBTA Communities to be in compliance with the new regulations currently being promulgated by the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities. It is the full intention of Winthrop's Town Manager, Anthony Marino, to take the necessary actions to bring any zoning intended to comply with all requirements of G.L. c. 40A, Section 3A and 760 CMR 72 to a vote of the Winthrop Town Council in the timeframe described in this Action Plan, and to submit a District Compliance Application to EOHLC no later than July 14, 2025.

However, please keep in mind that the ultimate decision to approve zoning changes rests with the Winthrop Town Council as the legislative body for the Town, and I cannot guarantee that they will vote in the affirmative to approve zoning language for overlay districts that would ensure compliance with the MBTA Communities law. That being said, I have reviewed the schedule with the Winthrop Planning Board Chairperson, and they do plan to review the new regulations along with their previously recommended plan and make any necessary changes to resubmit to the Town Council for their consideration and vote.

Thank you for reviewing Winthrop's Action Plan. Please contact us should you require additional information or have questions.

Sincerely,

Anthony Marino
Winthrop Town Manager

MBTA Communities Action Plan for Winthrop (Due 2-13-25)

Section 1 – Identification

The Section 3A regulations establish zoning metrics that apply uniquely to each MBTA community based on its local transit stations, existing housing stock, population, and developable land. This section of the Action Plan helps to identify the transit stations that determined each community's category. The MBTA Community Categories and Requirements sheet lists each municipality's community category, minimum multi-family unit capacity, and other requirements.

Section 1.1 MBTA Community Name:

Winthrop

Section 1.2 Community Category

Adjacent Community

Section 1.3 Multifamily Unit Capacity Requirements

Zone for 882 Units

Section 1.4 Does Winthrop have MBTA Rapid Transit Stations

No

Section 1.5 Does Winthrop have any MBTA Commuter Rail Stations

No

Section 1.6 Does Winthrop have any other MBTA transit stations located outside its boundaries that may have a “developable station area” within them?

No

Section 1.7 Please provide the name of the person filing out the form:

Anthony Marino

Section 1.7a Title

Town Manager

Section 1.7b Email Address

amarino@winthropma.gov

Section 1.7c Phone Number

617-846-1705

Section 1.8 Please provide the name of the Municipal CEO

Anthony Marino – Town Manager

Section 1.8b Address of the Municipal CEO

One Metcalf Square

Winthrop MA 02152

Section 1.8c Email address of the Municipal CEO

amarino@winthropma.gov

Section 1.9 Please briefly describe other members of the core team developing the Multi-Family Zoning District

The core team members are the Winthrop Town Manager, Anthony Marino, the Assistant Town Manager in charge of Economic Development & Planning, Cheryl McCormick, and Town Attorney James Cipoletta. As we have already created a plan based on the previously approved Guidelines, we will have input from the Planning Board and the Winthrop Town Council. We will run any plans or changes to existing plans by our consultant, Erik Halvorsen, from RKG Associates. Winthrop's Planning Board has five members with a diverse knowledge of planning, construction, and zoning bylaws. Winthrop's Town Council consists of nine members with varying experience who have been actively involved in the prior process of creating an overlay district plan. Also, as stated above, Winthrop has the services of Eric Halvorsen and his team at RKG associates to assist in any changes from the previously approved guidelines and the anticipated promulgated regulations that EOHLC proposes. We are in the comment period as of the date that this action plan is being drafted.

Section 2 - Housing Overview

Section 2.1 To the best of your knowledge, does Winthrop have any existing zoning districts that allow multi-family housing, as of right, of at least 15 units per acre as measured in gross density?

No

Section 2.2 Does Winthrop have any established housing-related goals or strategies from municipal planning documents, such as a Housing Production Plan, Master Plan, or Economic Development Plan?

Yes

Section 2.3 Is Winthrop currently working on any other planning for housing?

No

Section 2.4 Has Winthrop's legislative ever voted on whether to adopt a zoning district intended to comply with Section 3A?

Yes

Section 2.5 Has Winthrop received state funding or consultant assistance from Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) for technical assistance to support compliance with Section 3A?

Yes

Section 3 - Preliminary Zoning Strategies

Section 3.1 To the best of your knowledge, which of the following zoning strategies will Winthrop most likely use for compliance?

- a. An Existing zoning district or districts that might already comply with the Section 3A Guidelines
- b. An Existing zoning district or districts that must be amended to comply with the Section 3A Guidelines
- c. A new 40R or other overlay zoning District**
- d. A new base Zoning District or Districts
- e. Other Zoning Strategy**

Answer to question above – Options C & E. (Bolded above)

What non-housing characteristics are important for the community to consider in its 3A Zoning District?

Winthrop is a peninsula prone to coastal flooding. Winthrop is one of the highest housing density towns in the commonwealth and has made zoning changes over the years to allow housing development in its commercial downtown (Center Business District), Waterfront Properties (Waterfront Districts), and two-family homes are allowed as a matter of right in all other residential districts. Currently, Winthrop has approximately 158 units in various stages of approval for construction, which will only add to our already high housing density.

The original plan brought forward by the Planning Board for consideration by the Winthrop Town Council included two overlay districts at Seal Harbor Road (Seal Harbor 1 & 3 and Fort Heath Apartments) and Governors Park Condos located off of Revere Street. This plan also included taking approximately 220 offset units from our CBD district to acknowledge the development that has already occurred and potential future development. Lastly, it included a change to the CBD zoning language parking section that removed a special permit requirement and allowed that section to be reviewed during the site plan review by the Planning Board. The Town Council voted at their meeting on November 19, 2024, 4-3, with one abstention and one recusal to not approve the Planning Board's recommended plan. The reason for the abstention was that the Councilor wanted to wait for the verdict in the Town of Milton vs. the Attorney General's Office before they voted. It is anticipated that a new vote on the regulations will be different than the Town Council vote taken on November 19, 2025.

It is assumed that the newly promulgated regulations will be similar to the previously approved guidelines if not precisely the same. However, Winthrop will submit suggested language during the public comment period to include a density exemption in the new regulations and is hopeful that the EOHLC and Secretary Augustus will give this fair consideration for all of

the abovementioned reasons. In addition to the reasons listed above, it should also be mentioned that as of 2020, Winthrop has 5669 multi-family units, which is 64% of its housing stock, and 3239 Single-family structures, which is 36% of its housing stock. The housing density listed above, along with our current rate of development, proximity to the MWRA Sewage Treatment facility located at Deer Island and Logan Airport, and all of the flooding concerns, easily make the case for a density exemption being added to the new regulations.

Winthrop has already worked to create new housing units long before MBTA Communities/3A zoning was being considered and a density exemption that acknowledges that work should be added to the new regulations before they are approved.

Section 4 – Action Plan Timeline

This section creates a framework to input preliminary plans for a zoning adoption process. In the table below, please use Column 1 (from the left) to describe a task, Column 2 to input a start date, and Column 3 to input a finish date. Every community must provide a timeline for the tasks listed below. Additional space is provided for any other tasks that a community wishes to list. EOHLC will review proposed timelines for feasibility before approving an Action Plan.

- Public outreach
- Developing zoning
- Applying EOHLC's compliance model to test for density and unit capacity
- Holding planning board hearings
- Holding legislative sessions and adopt compliant zoning
- Submit District Compliance application to EOHLC

Task

Start

Finish

Short Answer – Public Outreach

March 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025

Short Answer – Develop Zoning (Assuming Regulations are similar to Guidelines)

April 1, 2025 – April 30, 2025

Short Answer – Applying EOHLIC’s compliance model to test for density and unit capacity

May 1, 2025 – May 15, 2025

Short Answer – Holding Planning Board Meetings

May 16, 2025 – June 16, 2025

Short Answer – Holding Legislative Sessions and Town Council considers adopting compliant zoning.

June 17, 2025 – July 11, 2025

Short Answer – Submit District Compliance Application to EOHLIC if approved by the Legislative Body (Town Council)

July 14, 2025