

ACTION PLAN

Each chapter within this Plan includes an action plan: a set of suggestions for how to put the Plan to work and begin transforming ideas into action. Each action plan identifies some of the **entities that are expected to have a key role in** achieving specific action items (town departments, committees/ commissions, outside organizations, etc.); a target timeframe to complete each action; and the types of resources that we anticipate may be needed for implementation (staff time, volunteer time, operating budget, capital improvement program, grants, etc.).

Action plans include:

- **Goals** that describe the outcomes our community hopes to achieve;
- **Strategies** for advancing each goal; and
- **Actions**—specific steps our community can take over the short term (before end of 2019), medium term (between 2020 and 2024) and long term (between 2025 and 2035) in support of each strategy.

Action plans are tools for focusing efforts and resources on the issues our community cares about most. The action plans will:

- Guide town officials as they continue to shape policies and allocate resources in the years to come;
- Refocus the efforts of town staff and committees as they work to advance community goals;
- Provide a foundation for developing annual budgets and workplans; and
- Evolve over time in response to new opportunities and circumstances.

Action plans set the agenda for our community’s many officials, volunteers, committee members and staff for the years ahead, and align their work with the community’s vision **but do not provide a guarantee that resources will be available to advance each action.** While these action plans are comprehensive in nature, they are not intended to preclude the Town from pursuing other actions as opportunities arise. **As additional actions and initiatives are contemplated, they should be evaluated with regard to how the action will help to advance the vision and goals** contained in the overall Plan.

Key of Abbreviations	
TOWN DEPARTMENTS & SERVICES	
Building & Housing Inspection	Town of Mansfield Department of Building & Housing Inspection
DPW	Town of Mansfield Department of Public Works
Facilities	Town of Mansfield Facilities Management Department
Finance	Town of Mansfield Finance Department
Fire	Division of Fire & Emergency Services / Office of the Fire Marshal
Fire Marshal	Office of the Fire Marshal
Human Services	Town of Mansfield Department of Human Services
Information Technology	Town of Mansfield Information Technology Department
Library	Town of Mansfield Public Library
Parks & Rec	Town of Mansfield Parks & Recreation Department
Planning	Town of Mansfield Planning & Zoning Office
Police	Mansfield Resident State Trooper’s Office
OTHER ABBREVIATIONS	
CT DEEP	State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
CT DPH	State of Connecticut Department of Public Health
EHHD	Eastern Highlands Health District
Emergency Management	Emergency Management Advisory Council
IWA	Inland Wetland Agency
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
Town/Gown	Town/University Relations Committee

CHAPTER 6: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY

Goal 6.1

Mansfield has balanced economic development efforts with sensitivity to preserving the town’s unique blend of rural character and college town amenities to create an attractive location for businesses, workers and residents.

Additional economic development will provide multiple benefits, including increasing the number and type of available jobs and helping the Town to offset the impact of continuing declines in state revenues on municipal operations, services and budgets. These objectives must be balanced with the desire to preserve and protect the rural character of residential areas of the community.

Measures of Effectiveness:

- Number of businesses locating on previously developed sites
- Increase in assessed value of taxable commercial and light industrial properties

Strategy A | Ensure Mansfield has sufficient resources and capacity for economic development.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Collaborate with local, state and regional entities to advance economic development efforts.</p> <p>Potential partners include Mansfield Downtown Partnership, UConn, MetroHartford Alliance, Small Business Development Center, DECD, CT Department of Agriculture, Northeast Connecticut Economic Alliance, and CTInnovations.</p>	<p>Economic Development Team Town Council</p>	Ongoing	Staff Time
<p>2. Expand economic development capacity of Town staff.</p> <p>Given their extensive other duties, it will be difficult for either the Town Manager or Director of Planning and Development to play a lead operating and staff role in economic development efforts. Consequently, if practicable, the Town should consider creating a staff position or contracting for these services. This expansion of service could be done independently or by partnering with neighboring towns to fund a joint position or contract.</p>	Town Council	Short Term	Operating Budget

SHORT TERM = 2015–2019

MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024

LONG TERM = 2025–2035

Strategy B | Continue to focus new commercial and light industrial development in the Four Corners, Storrs Center, Perkins Corner and Route 195/Route 6 areas to preserve rural character in other parts of the community (see Section 1.B of this chapter for more information on light industry as an option for Mansfield).

See Chapter 8 for additional information on why these areas have been identified as the primary commercial/business development focus areas. For strategies and actions related to expanding agricultural businesses and activities, see Goal 6.4.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Expand allowable uses in the four target areas to include Research and Development (R&D) and light industrial uses.</p> <p>See text box in Section 1.B of this chapter for a description of light industrial uses.</p>			
<p>2. Consider expanding R&D and light industrial uses to the UConn’s Depot Campus if the property transitions from State to private ownership.</p>			
<p>3. Allow for small-scale commercial businesses and development in the King Hill Road, Route 32/Route 195, Mansfield Depot and Mansfield Center areas.</p> <p>Development standards for each area should take into account surrounding context. For example, new development in the King Hill Road area may differ in form and scale (due to its location adjacent to the core UConn campus) from development in Mansfield Center, one of Mansfield’s historic villages.</p>			
<p>4. Support improvements to water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements, in the four commercial target areas to support business growth and redevelopment.</p> <p>Availability of public infrastructure is a critical component for economic and business development; this type of infrastructure allows for more compact development, reducing the amount of land needed for development. Two of the four target areas (Storrs Center and Route 195/Route 6 areas) currently have water and wastewater infrastructure. Water and sewer infrastructure for Four Corners are expected to be available in 2016. In the longer term, water and sewer service to Perkins Corner may be available through connections to Windham water and sewer services. See Goals 9.1 and 9.2 for more specific actions related to transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure.</p>	<p>Town Council PZC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CIP Grants Bonds Property owners Developers</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015–2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024	LONG TERM = 2025–2035
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Strategy C | Maintain and enhance community services and amenities that make Mansfield a great place to live and work. See Chapter 5 for related goals and strategies.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Promote continuing education and professional development programs available through UConn and ECSU. Include information on Town website and promote through Library and Mansfield Community Center publications.</p>	Parks & Rec Information Technology Library Economic Development	Ongoing	Staff Time
<p>2. Offer a wide variety of community enrichment services and programming. For information on existing services and additional strategies and actions, see Chapter 5.</p>	Parks & Rec Library Human Services	Ongoing	Staff Time Operating Budget
<p>3. Expand housing and transportation options.</p>	See Goals 7.4 and 9.1 for specific strategies and actions.		
<p>4. Increase diversity of available consumer goods and services.</p>	See Goals 6.2 and 6.3 for specific strategies and actions.		
<p>5. Collaborate with UConn and ECSU to help elementary, middle and high school students develop their knowledge, skills and talents. Potential areas for partnership/collaboration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer enrichment programs • Entrepreneurship programs for high school students • Enhancements to STEM education in public schools • Related Arts <p>For additional education strategies involving the Region 19 Board of Education and the Mansfield Board of Education (MBOE), see Goal 5.2.</p>	Region 19 Board of Education Mansfield Board of Education	Medium Term	Staff Time Operating Budget

SHORT TERM = 2015-2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020-2024	LONG TERM = 2025-2035
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Strategy D | Promote Mansfield’s assets and amenities.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Develop marketing materials showcasing Mansfield’s amenities and services for use by local realtors and UConn to encourage new employees to live in Mansfield.</p> <p>As UConn continues to expand faculty and staff, efforts should be made to encourage new employees to live in Mansfield. A ‘Welcome to Mansfield’ package could include information on schools, community services and amenities, neighborhoods, housing options and regional assets such as nature-based recreation activities and proximity to cities such as Hartford, Providence, Boston and New York. Information and collaterals could also be made available on the Town website. As these materials could also be helpful in attracting faculty and students, the Town should seek funding support from UConn.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>UConn</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Short Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>UConn</p>

Strategy E | Offer a welcoming environment to young professionals, entrepreneurs and innovators to attract and retain talent.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Enlist local and regional organizations to develop and implement a program of professional development and enrichment activities.</p> <p>Potential organizations include MetroHartford Alliance, Windham and Tolland Chambers of Commerce, UConn, Windham Arts, Innovation East, the Small Business Development Center, Mansfield Downtown Partnership and regional EDCs. Possible activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organizing networking events</i> • <i>Developing venues and events for showcasing talent</i> • <i>Professional development opportunities</i> • <i>Promoting cultural, entertainment and recreational events</i> • <i>Recognizing accomplishments of residents through local publications and events</i> 	<p>Economic Development Commission</p>	Medium Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015–2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024	LONG TERM = 2025–2035
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CHAPTER 6: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY

Goal 6.2

Mansfield has an entrepreneurial environment that supports business formation, expansion, and retention.

Measures of Effectiveness:

- Increase in total number of businesses

Strategy A | Establish a business retention and expansion (BRE) program.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Develop a business visitation program using surveys or structured interviews to assess business status and identify outstanding or potential issues.</p> <p>Items for consideration/inclusion in the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying target businesses based on criteria such as size, location, growth potential, and possibility of the business relocating out of Mansfield due to existing concerns • Developing mechanisms to address issues identified in visits, either directly or through referral to other organizations, and follow-up to ensure that issues are resolved • Developing protocols for visits, tracking, and follow-up • Identifying key issues and business needs based on surveys/interviews • Identifying volunteers with business knowledge to conduct surveys and interviews • Providing training for staff and volunteers to ensure consistency and program effectiveness • Involving regional chambers of commerce in helping to recruit volunteers 	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>
<p>2. Include agricultural enterprises in BRE activities.</p> <p>The Agriculture Committee can assist in targeting farm businesses for BRE outreach.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>3. Prepare a Business Retention and Expansion plan with more specific strategies to foster entrepreneurship, small business development and talent retention.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p>	Medium Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015-2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020-2024	LONG TERM = 2025-2035
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Strategy B | Connect businesses with information and resources.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Strengthen relationships with state and regional business organizations to expand knowledge of and access to business assistance resources.</p> <p>Examples include CT Small Business Development Center, Northeast CT Economic Alliance, MetroHartford Alliance, CT Department of Economic and Community Development, CT Department of Agriculture, UConn Cooperative Extension</p>	Economic Development Team	Ongoing	Staff Time
<p>2. Provide opportunities for businesses to connect with one-another.</p>	Economic Development Commission Agriculture Committee Economic Development Team	Ongoing	Staff Time Operating Budget
<p>3. Expand and periodically update the business and agriculture sections of the Town website.</p> <p>The pages should be clearly accessible from the homepage and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community profile</i> • <i>Information on how to locate a business in Mansfield</i> • <i>Information on permitting process with links to key pages</i> • <i>Information on assistance programs</i> • <i>Information on available sites</i> • <i>Testimonials from existing businesses and farmers</i> • <i>Links to local, state and regional organizations, organized by type with a brief description of each</i> • <i>Primary point of contact</i> 	Economic Development Commission Agriculture Committee Information Technology Economic Development Team	Short Term	Staff Time Volunteer Time
<p>4. Identify available commercial and agricultural properties for sale/lease and market through sites such as CERC's Site Finder website (www.ctsitefinder.com), www.farm-link.uconn.edu, and www.newenglandfarmlandfinder.org.</p>	Economic Development Team	Short Term	Staff Time Operating Budget
<p>5. Partner with area organizations and nearby communities to host informational events on topics of interest to local businesses.</p> <p>Coventry has an existing program in place; the Town should explore partnering on future programs of common interest to businesses in both communities.</p>	Economic Development Commission Agriculture Committee	Short Term	Staff Time Volunteer Time Operating Budget

SHORT TERM = 2015-2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020-2024	LONG TERM = 2025-2035
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Strategy C | Reduce regulatory barriers to business growth. *For recommended changes to zoning regulations, see Goal 6.5.*

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
1. Improve the permitting process by providing clear information, streamlining review and providing on-line service.	<i>See Goal 6.5 for specific recommendations.</i>		
2. Periodically evaluate and update permit fee structure to ensure that it is not a barrier to economic development. As part of any review, the Town should review fees in comparable communities to remain competitive.	Economic Development Team Town Council	Ongoing	Staff Time
3. Work with state and regional organizations and other communities to advocate for regulatory change at the state level to make Connecticut a more business-friendly state. Potential partners include the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, Windham and Tolland Chambers of Commerce, Capitol Region Council of Governments, MetroHartford Alliance and CERC.	Economic Development Team	Ongoing	Staff Time

Strategy D | Promote local businesses and celebrate their success.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
1. Work with area businesses to reinvigorate the Mansfield Business and Professionals Association (MBPA).	Economic Development Commission Economic Development Team Windham Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing	Staff Time Volunteer Time
2. Update the Town’s website to include business and agricultural portals that showcase local businesses, farms and products. Information can include business listings, highlights of local products and experiences, and recognition of local business success stories, such as chamber awards.	Economic Development Commission Agriculture Committee Economic Development Team Information Technology	Short Term	Staff Time Volunteer Time



ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>3. Include articles and features in the Town newsletter spotlighting local businesses and agricultural/forestry enterprises.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>4. Develop local business and agriculture guides.</p> <p>A local business guide and map can help inform residents about the variety of goods and services available in the community.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Short-Medium	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>Ad/Sponsors</p>
<p>5. Continue to encourage residents and businesses to buy local.</p> <p>Past efforts have focused on holiday shopping events. The program could be expanded to have a more year-round focus.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Medium Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>

Strategy E | Expand local business assistance programs.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Seek funding for capital improvement projects that will support local business growth consistent with Town objectives.</p> <p>Possible funding sources include the Connecticut Small Town Assistance Program and Small Cities grants.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Grants</p> <p>CIP</p>
<p>2. Consider developing local small business programs.</p> <p>Revolving loan and grant programs can help small businesses and farms finance improvements needed to help them succeed and grow. Funding for these types of programs may be available through state and federal grants, including the Department of Housing’s Small Cities program.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Town Council</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Medium-Long	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Grants</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015–2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024	LONG TERM = 2025–2035
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CHAPTER 6: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY

Goal 6.3

Mansfield has a growing and diversified economy that helps to maintain the high-quality services desired by residents.

Measures of Effectiveness:

- Increase in number of businesses in sectors identified as potential local and regional growth sectors
- Number of businesses related to UConn R&D or faculty expertise establishing operations in Mansfield
- Increases in, improvements to, or expanded access to tourism venues
- Number and square footage of new office, R&D, and light industry establishments
- Increase in assessed value of taxable commercial, industrial and agricultural properties
- Increase in number and diversity of job opportunities

Strategy A | Establish a regional business marketing program.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Collaborate with nearby towns on regional marketing efforts.</p> <p>Potential activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Joint grant applications for economic development activities including marketing and shared staff</i> • <i>Development of regional marketing materials</i> • <i>Development of informal collaborative efforts such as cross-referrals of prospects that are not a good fit with the initial contact community.</i> 	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>UConn</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>Grants</p>
<p>2. Conduct outreach to commercial property developers that specialize in businesses aligned with the Town's marketing and development objectives.</p> <p>Lab space and multi-tenant space for early stage technology firms are potential targets for discussion.</p>	<p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Economic Development Commission</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>3. Target businesses in economic sectors that are strong and growing regionally, technology businesses related to UConn, agricultural-related businesses and businesses providing underrepresented consumer goods and services.</p> <p>Initial efforts should focus on firms that are well-matched to current commercial property inventory; targeting can be broadened as more specialized facilities (e.g. with lab space) are developed. <i>See Strategy B for additional actions related to UConn-related businesses.</i></p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>UConn</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Medium Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015-2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020-2024	LONG TERM = 2025-2035
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ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>4. Strengthen relationship with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to encourage referrals of firms and site selection consultants seeking a location in Connecticut for businesses consistent with target economic sectors.</p>	Economic Development Team	Ongoing	Staff Time
<p>5. Pursue state and federal funding to support economic development activities and projects.</p> <p>Potential sources include Small Cities CDBG grants, US Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants, US Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant and loan programs.</p>	Economic Development Team	Ongoing	Staff Time Operating Budget CIP (If match required)
<p>6. Organize familiarization tours for businesses, site selectors, and commercial property developers to highlight available properties and the Town’s assets and amenities.</p> <p>Tours could involve Town officials, real estate professionals, business leaders and university representatives, as appropriate.</p>	Economic Development Commission Economic Development Team	Short–Medium	Staff Time Volunteer Time Operating Budget
<p>7. Develop a menu of state and local incentives to support development of businesses and properties aligned with Town objectives.</p> <p>Potential incentives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providing local Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) to finance public improvements associated with desired development projects, potentially in conjunction with a state TIF for large-scale projects through Connecticut Innovations</i> • <i>Fixing the assessment of privately developed and owned buildings for up to seven years</i> • <i>Offering funding to reduce the development costs of incubators or other multi-tenant facilities (potential funding sources include Small Cities and STEAP grants)</i> • <i>Supporting funding applications to Connecticut Innovations Bioscience Facility Fund</i> • <i>Working with developers to obtain brownfields remediation funding</i> • <i>Acquiring and land-banking property</i> 	Town Council Economic Development Commission Economic Development Team	Short–Medium	Staff Time Operating Budget Grants CIP

SHORT TERM = 2015–2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024	LONG TERM = 2025–2035
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ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>8. Work with the Town of Windham and the CT Department of Economic and Community Development to explore creation of an Airport Development Zone for the Windham airport.</p> <p>Airport development zones provide local property tax and state corporate tax incentives to businesses engaged in manufacturing, R&D related to manufacturing and other services related to the airport.</p>	<p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>Town Council</p>	Short–Medium	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>

Strategy B | Collaborate with UConn to maximize the local economic benefits of the University's presence.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Increase efforts to capture businesses graduating from UConn's Technology Incubation Program (TIP) in Mansfield.</p> <p>These firms often need small scale R&D and office space with special fit-up for wet or dry lab space; however, demand has been insufficient for private developers or property owners to develop space involving the additional costs generated by fit-up requirements. Possible activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quantifying demand, both existing and previous, through documentation of TIP graduates that moved to other communities due to lack of space</i> • <i>Updating zoning regulations to expand areas where R&D businesses are allowed and streamlining review procedures (See Goal 6.5, Strategy C for specific recommendations)</i> • <i>Identifying potential funding sources and partners for a small-scale R&D start-up/incubator facility. The Axis901 project in Manchester (coworking space owned by the Town and developed through a partnership with Manchester Community College and First Niagara Bank) could be a potential model.</i> 	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>Grants</p>

<p>2. Work with UConn to explore the potential for public-private partnerships to redevelop under-utilized state-owned land such UConn's Depot Campus and the Bergin Correctional Facility for mixed public and private use.</p> <p>Possible actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Working with the Town and other stakeholders to explore reuse options.</i> • <i>Conducting site and feasibility studies, including potential for adaptive reuse of historic buildings</i> • <i>Exploring potential for brownfields assessment and remediation grants to address possible contamination</i> 	<p>UConn</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Medium Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>UConn</p> <p>Private funds</p>
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SHORT TERM = 2015–2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024	LONG TERM = 2025–2035
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Strategy C | Promote Mansfield as a tourism destination.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Collaborate with nearby communities and The Last Green Valley to develop joint marketing efforts and promote more effective and targeted marketing of northeast Connecticut by Mystic Country and the Connecticut Office of Culture and Tourism.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>2. Support UConn in developing additional summer adult and youth summer learning programs, using empty dormitory rooms for lodging.</p>	Town Council	Ongoing	Staff Time
<p>3. Supplement and enhance regional tourism development and marketing activities, with a particular emphasis on summer tourism.</p> <p>Expanding summertime activity to achieve a greater balance with other seasons will help provide a more stable market for businesses serving local consumers and visitors and increase year-round job opportunities.</p>	<p>Tourism-related businesses</p> <p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Short-Medium	<p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>
<p>4. Develop a local tourism promotion organization.</p> <p>Other small communities with significant tourism assets have developed marketing efforts to supplement regional efforts. Activities could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of a visitor website and packages</i> • <i>Organization of special events</i> • <i>Development of theme trails</i> • <i>Installation of wayfinding signage</i> • <i>Operation of a visitor kiosk in Storrs Center</i> • <i>Promotion of additional tourism infrastructure (such as more lodging rooms)</i> 	<p>Tourism-related businesses</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Mansfield Downtown Partnership</p>	Short-Medium	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>Grants</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015–2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020–2024	LONG TERM = 2025–2035
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Strategy D | Collaborate with surrounding communities to generate mutually desirable economic activity.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Work with surrounding communities to convene periodic joint meetings of Economic Development Commissions to discuss economic activity, challenges and opportunities and potential collaborations.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time Operating Budget</p>
<p>2. Participate in efforts to update the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).</p>	<p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p>
<p>3. Explore potential for partnering with one or more nearby municipalities on a joint economic development project.</p> <p>Connecticut General Statutes allow for municipalities to partner on joint development projects, whereby municipalities can share in both the costs and revenues of a project. Regional projects can be more competitive in obtaining state and federal grants. Potential projects that may benefit from such an approach include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Technology incubator/start-up space</i> • <i>Development of regional value-added processing, aggregation and distribution facilities (such as meat processing) that would support local agricultural enterprises</i> <p>See Goal 6.3, Strategy B, Action 1 and Goal 6.4, Strategy F for more information on these projects/needs.</p>	<p>Economic Development Commission Town Council Economic Development Team Agriculture Committee</p>	Medium-Long	<p>Staff Time Operating Budget CIP Grants</p>

CHAPTER 6: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY

Goal 6.4

Agriculture is valued by the community and expanding with increased acreage, higher production and growing market opportunities.

In addition to being an economic development asset, agricultural lands and open spaces also provide ecosystem and revenue benefits to the Town. See Goal 10.3, Strategy B, Action 4 for specific recommendations on how the Town can continue to preserve and enhance open space and agricultural lands.

Measures of Effectiveness:

- Increase in agricultural acreage, managed forests, production and distribution
- Increase in average farm income
- Increase in number of full-time farmers
- Number of Mansfield farms supplying products to local schools, businesses and institutions

Strategy A | Increase visibility of agriculture to strengthen the agricultural identity of the town and region. See Goal 5.4 for additional strategies related to increasing access to local food.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Promote food production by non-farming residents and private, non-commercial agricultural activities.</p> <p>Connect residents with programs and resources for growing their own food at home or in community gardens. See Goal 5.4, Strategy A, Action 1 and Goal 5.6, Strategy A, Action 3 for specific actions on increasing the availability of community gardens.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Parks & Rec</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>
<p>2. Feature local products at community events.</p>	All Departments	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>
<p>3. Preserve scenic vistas of working agriculture.</p> <p>See related action under Goal 3.4, Strategy A.</p>	<p>PZC</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Town Council</p>	Ongoing	Staff Time
<p>4. Develop a program to recognize local farmers who are making a contribution to agriculture and forestry.</p>	Agriculture Committee	Short Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p>

SHORT TERM = 2015-2019	MEDIUM TERM = 2020-2024	LONG TERM = 2025-2035
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ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>5. Identify Mansfield as an agricultural community through signs.</p> <p>Post signs at town gateways showing support for agriculture; develop signage to identify preserved agricultural lands; increase the visibility of agricultural producers through directional signs, both permanent and temporary/seasonal.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee DPW</p>	Short Term	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time Operating Budget</p>
<p>6. Encourage schools to promote agriculture.</p> <p>Highlight local foods on school menus; incorporate nutritional and agriculture-based curriculum, and provide students with experiential learning opportunities through farm visits, taste tests and composting.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee Mansfield Board of Education Region 19 Board of Education UConn</p>	Short–Medium	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time Operating Budget</p>

Strategy B | Promote agricultural experiences for the public.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Encourage UConn to strengthen connections with local farms through events, trips to farms and other agri-tourism sites, purchasing food from local farms, etc.</p>	Agriculture Committee	Ongoing	<p>Volunteer Time Staff Time</p>
<p>2. Support and encourage agricultural education and activities for youth, including 4-H program and Region 19’s Agri-Science Program.</p> <p>Potential activities include a recognition program for youth achievements in agriculture.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee Mansfield Board of Education Region 19</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>3. Organize events on farms, forest lands and at the Storrs Farmers Market.</p>	Agriculture Committee	Ongoing	<p>Volunteer Time Operating Budget</p>
<p>4. Work with other communities, regional organizations and the state to develop and brand an ‘Agricultural Trail’ to showcase local agri-tourism activities.</p> <p>Leverage the success of UConn’s Dairy Bar to encourage visits to local farms and help connect interested farmers to other local and regional agri-tourism destinations, activities and initiatives. <i>See Goal 6.5, Strategy B, Action 2 for strategies to reduce regulatory barriers to agri-tourism in Mansfield.</i></p>	<p>Agriculture Committee Economic Development Commission Economic Development Team</p>	Short-Medium	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time Operating Budget</p>

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Strategy C | Continue to connect farmers with resources. See Goal 6.2 for related strategies and actions.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Connect farmers with state programs and resources at the CT Department of Agriculture such as Farm-to-School, Farm-to-Chef, and Farm Viability Grants.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>2. Conduct outreach to farmers to ensure that they are aware of available local tax incentives.</p> <p>Examples include PA 490, abatements and exemptions unique to agricultural activities, and other business tax incentives such as those identified in <i>Goal 6.3, Strategy A, Action 7</i> as may be adopted by the Town Council.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>3. Include a representative from the UConn School of Agriculture and Natural Resources as a member of the Agriculture Committee.</p>	<p>Town Council</p> <p>UConn</p>	Short Term	Volunteer Time
<p>4. Support the development of a local farmers network to enhance opportunities for collaborating and sharing information.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Nearby Towns</p>	Short Term	Volunteer Time
<p>5. Partner with UConn to make information about upcoming speakers, events and research related to agriculture more easily accessible to farmers and the public.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Short Term	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>6. Work with nearby communities to develop an annual or semi-annual event that brings together regional farmers and people from relevant support organizations.</p> <p>Potential topics include education on marketing channel selection and exploring the potential for a regional cooperative to facilitate sales to institutions, restaurants and grocery stores.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Short–Medium	<p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Operating Budget</p> <p>Sponsors</p>

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Strategy D | Ensure that Town officials and the public understand the value of agriculture and forestry to Mansfield.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Identify the full range of benefits related to agriculture and forestry and communicate to officials and the community.</p> <p>This will help communicate why agriculture is important to people with different priorities, such as contributions to sustainability, community character, economic development and climate change mitigation.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Open Space Preservation Committee</p> <p>Conservation Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>2. Provide ongoing education to Town employees and commission/committee members on the importance of agriculture in the community, contributions to the community, and why it is the Town’s policy to support agriculture.</p> <p>Identify potential impacts for each department, board and commission on agricultural viability and educate staff accordingly.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>3. Recruit farmers to serve on all relevant Town committees, commissions and boards to ensure that challenges and opportunities related to agriculture can be brought to the table.</p> <p>In addition to the Agriculture Committee, important groups include the Conservation Commission, Economic Development Commission, Open Space Preservation Committee, Sustainability Committee and Town/University Relations Committee.</p>	<p>Town Council</p> <p>Town Democratic and Republican Town Committees</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>4. Ask Town boards and committees to identify any actions related to agriculture within annual reports.</p>	Town Manager	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>

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Strategy E | Support legislation, policies and regulations that increase farm viability.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Advocate for changes to state legislation and policies to support farming and expanding markets.</p> <p>Potential issues include enabling legislation for agricultural tax incentives, health regulations related to production and processing of food, and coordinating regulations between states, such as weight of trucks.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Commission</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>2. Conduct annual outreach with farmers to review existing regulations and identify impacts on the viability of their operations.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>

Strategy F | Support the expansion of agricultural operations and agriculture-related businesses. *See Goal 3.2 for strategies and actions related to increasing available agricultural land.*

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Incubate and retain new farm operations.</p> <p><i>See related business strategies under Goal 6.2, Strategy A and Goal 6.2, Strategy B.</i></p>	Agriculture Committee	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>2. Encourage UConn to include representatives from the Town to ensure that new agricultural initiatives meet the needs of local and regional farmers.</p>	<p>Economic Development Team</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Volunteer Time</p> <p>Staff Time</p>
<p>3. Support food processing and agricultural product distribution initiatives.</p> <p>The Last Green Valley calls for a regional food hub to process and distribute food, such as Willimantic's Commercially Licensed Cooperative Kitchen (CLiCK). Additional regional initiatives include a mobile slaughtering unit and multi-processing centers for meat, poultry, fruits and vegetables.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p> <p>Economic Development Commission</p>	Ongoing	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>4. Consider establishing a small grant program to assist farmers in growing their business.</p> <p>Examples of potential projects include but are not limited to creation of a CSA, signs, marketing materials, and organic certification.</p>	<p>Town Council</p> <p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Short-Medium	<p>Operating Budget</p> <p>CIP</p> <p>Grants</p>

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Strategy G | Support new market channels for local agricultural products.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Increase the volume of local foods in public and private institutions (i.e. school food service, child care and pre-k programs, hospitals, correctional facilities, etc.). <i>See related action under Goal 6.4, Strategy C.</i></p>	<p>Agriculture Committee Mansfield Board of Education Region 19 Board of Education</p>	Ongoing	<p>Volunteer Time Operating Budget</p>
<p>2. Work with UConn Dining Services to continue their programs to purchase local food. UConn has demonstrated commitment to procuring local foods whenever possible and is active in efforts to change procurement guidelines for State institutions to make it easier to buy local food. There are tentative plans to move UConn’s production kitchens to a new facility at the Bergin campus which would allow more processing (cut, cook, chill, freeze) and make it easier for Dining Services to contract directly with local farmers.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Volunteer Time Staff Time</p>
<p>3. Help make connections between farmers and new restaurants, stores and the distributors that supply them. The public school system already participates in the Connecticut Farm to School program by receiving fruits, corn, pumpkins and squash from an orchard in Killingly. The Farm to School program is actively recruiting farms. Restaurants can connect with local farmers by participating in a similar state Farm to Chef program.</p>	<p>Agriculture Committee Economic Development Team</p>	Ongoing	<p>Volunteer Time Staff Time</p>
<p>4. Incorporate SNAP EBT payment programs at the Storrs Farmers Market.</p>	<p><i>See Goal 5.4, Strategy A, Action 3 for specific recommendations.</i></p>		

Strategy H | Support marketing of agricultural products and agriculture-related businesses.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Identify projects for marketing local agriculture and apply for funds from the Connecticut Farm Viability Program. Potential projects include a ‘Grown in Mansfield’ brand and signage programs as identified in <i>Goal 6.4, Strategy A, Action 5.</i></p>	<p>Agriculture Committee</p>	Short Term	<p>Staff Time Operating Budget Grants</p>
<p>2. Promote local farms and products on the Town website and at community events.</p>	<p><i>See related strategies under Goal 6.2, Strategy D and Goal 6.4, Strategy A.</i></p>		

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CHAPTER 6: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY

Goal 6.5

Mansfield’s land use regulations are farm-friendly and support business retention and expansion efforts while protecting community character.

Measures of Effectiveness:

- Increase in non-residential grand list
- Increase in number of new businesses
- Increase in agricultural production and distribution
- Increase in number and square footage of new office, R&D and light industry businesses on redeveloped sites

Strategy A | Reduce barriers to business growth in Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Revise subdivision process and requirements to distinguish between single-family subdivisions and non-residential/multi-family residential subdivisions.</p> <p>As the subdivision process is the sole opportunity to review single-family subdivisions, the standards and requirements are extensive. However, many of these requirements are duplicative or not applicable to multi-family residential and non-residential projects as these are either located in developed areas, are subject to another review process such as site plan review or special permit, or have detailed design and performance standards identified in the Zoning Regulations.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Planning Grant
<p>2. Reduce the number of business uses needing special permit approval by including more robust development standards for specific uses to ensure quality development.</p> <p>Development review processes can also be a tool to direct businesses and uses to the four business target areas identified in <i>Goal 6.1, Strategy B</i>. Items to be considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Locations—approvals through site plan and/or zoning permit review may be more appropriate in major commercial areas than smaller neighborhood/village business areas which have residential neighborhoods in close proximity</i> • <i>Areas/situations where certain uses may not be appropriate in all locations, necessitating special permit review</i> • <i>Thresholds for requiring PZC site plan approval</i> • <i>Thresholds for administrative review and approval through zoning permit process</i> • <i>Specific standards and requirements for uses, site and building development</i> 	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant

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ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>3. Refine existing provisions regarding non-conforming uses.</p> <p>Regulations for non-conforming uses, particularly commercial and higher density residential uses, should allow for continuation and potential limited expansions. Significant intensification inconsistent with the goals of this plan should be discouraged.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant
<p>4. Update sign regulations to improve usability and allow for adequate business marketing while minimizing sign clutter and maintaining high aesthetic standards.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant

Strategy B | Support growth of agriculture and agri-tourism through changes to regulations.

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Update Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to remove barriers to farm viability.</p> <p>Issues to be reviewed/addressed include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Keeping of livestock</i> • <i>Compatible farm businesses</i> • <i>Signage</i> • <i>Parking</i> • <i>Farm worker housing</i> • <i>Hoop houses or other growing structures</i> • <i>Horticulture</i> • <i>Farm-energy opportunities</i> • <i>Agricultural activities on small residential lots</i> • <i>Buffers as part of new residential developments locating next to existing farms</i> <p>Potential resources for model regulations include: Eastern RC&D's Guidance and Recommendations for Connecticut Municipal Zoning Regulations and Ordinances for Livestock (2012) and RIDEM's Community Guidance for Maintaining Working Farms and Forests (2012).</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant
<p>2. Review and revise Zoning Regulations to reduce barriers to agri-tourism activities.</p> <p>Agri-tourism can include pick-your-own programs, mazes and hayrides, farm-to-table events, weddings, fishing events, and other types of agriculture and natural resource tourism. Issues to be reviewed/addressed include design standards, signage, parking and review procedures.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant

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ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>3. Update Zoning Regulations to enable development of infrastructure that would support agriculture-related businesses, such as inputs, food waste, aggregation, processing, distribution, etc.</p> <p>Some of these activities may be water/wastewater intensive, requiring a location with access to public water and sewers.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant

Strategy C | Support expansion of Research and Development (R&D) and light industrial uses in appropriate locations. See *Map 8.3: Future Land Use for locations of proposed Mixed Use Centers and Commercial areas.*

ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>1. Update zoning regulations for areas designated as Mixed Use Centers and Commercial in the Future Land Use Plan to allow R&D uses.</p> <p>There are many different types of R&D uses, some of which require dry lab space (such as computers, electronics, robotics labs), wet lab space (where chemicals, drugs, other materials are handled), and biolabs (labs dealing with biological materials). Regulations should be updated to identify development standards and review procedures specific to R&D uses. Appropriate areas for consideration include Four Corners, Storrs Center, Route 6/Route 195/Pleasant Valley area in southern Mansfield and Perkins Corner. Issues to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas/situations where certain uses may not be appropriate in all locations, necessitating special permit review • Thresholds for requiring PZC site plan approval • Thresholds for administrative review and approval through zoning permit process • Specific standards and requirements for uses, site and building development (See Goal 6.5, Strategy C, Action 4). • Environmental performance standards • Transportation connections • Wastewater disposal 	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant

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ACTIONS	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
<p>2. Limit R&D businesses with biological laboratories to labs that meet the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) criteria for Biosafety Levels 1 and 2 until additional research is done to determine whether there are any areas where a Biosafety Level 3 lab could be located with appropriate safeguards and review procedures. Biosafety Level 4 labs should not be allowed.</p> <p>R&D businesses with biolabs should only be allowed with special permit approval; review criteria should include requirements for monitoring procedures to ensure conformance with federal safety standards.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant
<p>3. Update zoning regulations for areas designated as Mixed Use Center and Commercial to allow light industrial uses.</p> <p>Light industrial uses include uses such as warehouses, wholesale facilities, and limited assembly production activities. Regulations should identify appropriate locations where such uses could be allowed. Areas and items to be considered include those identified above under <i>Goal 6.5, Strategy C, Action 1</i> as well as appropriate size/scale. Some areas may need size limitations to ensure compatibility with surrounding development.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant
<p>4. Develop design standards and guidelines for R&D and light industrial uses, as well as appropriate industrial performance standards.</p> <p>Performance standards for industry involve measurable limits on noise, lighting, emissions and similar issues. Modern R&D and light industrial uses often have no external impacts. Design standards and guidelines will ensure compatibility with surrounding areas in terms of heights, massing, landscaping, character visible from the road, location of parking and similar issues.</p>	PZC	Short Term	Staff Time Community Challenge Grant

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