

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

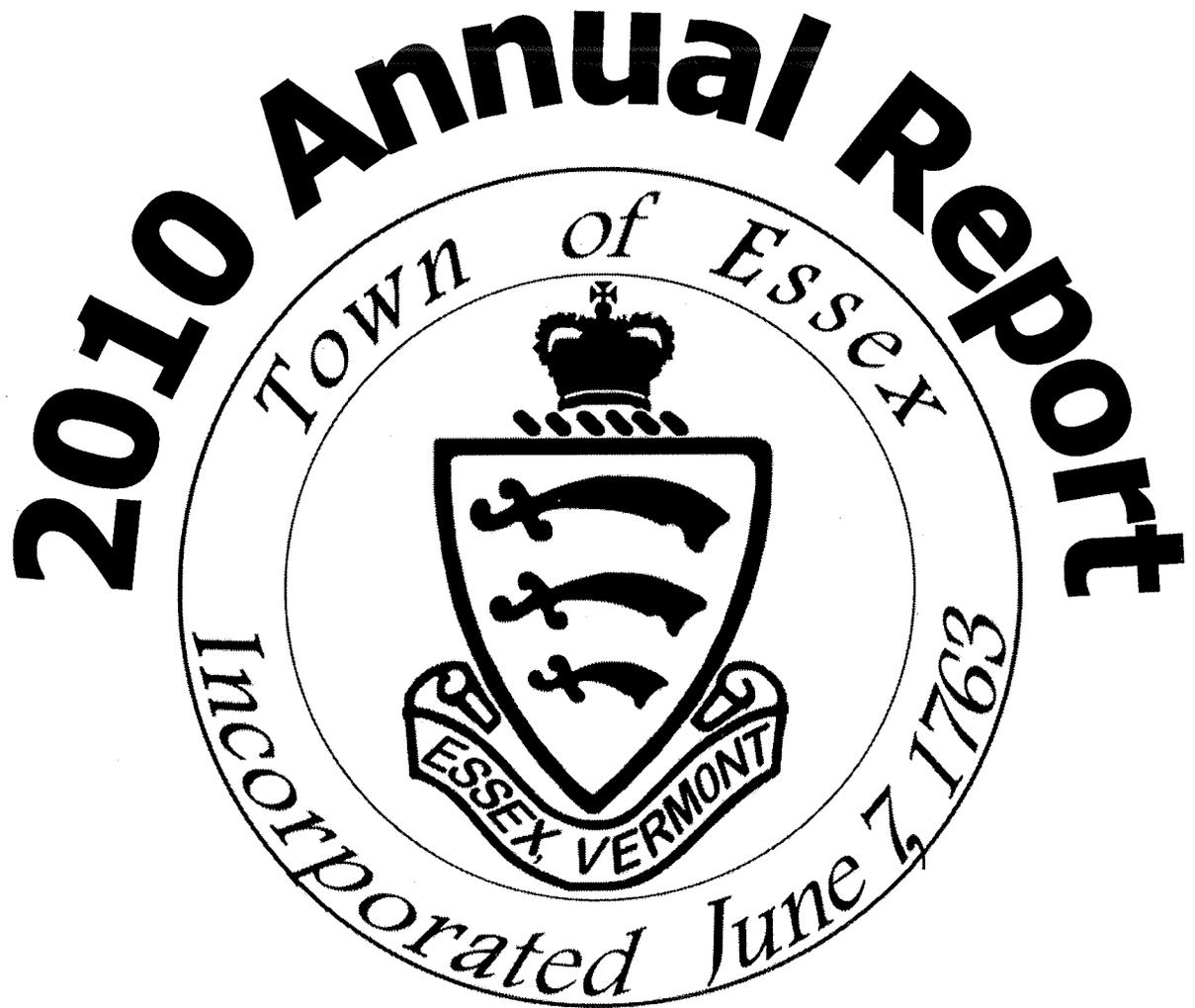
Greg Morgan, Chair

The delivery of the economic development and diversification report in May kicked off a furious period of analysis, discussion, and prioritization. With so many strategies suggested and so few local resources, the Economic Development Committee's challenge was steep, and the goal lofty: ensure that the report is analyzed and translated in a way that also ensures that the goal of a diverse, vibrant and sustainable local economy is met.

The 13 strategies in the BBPA report were deconstructed and reconstructed prior to a review process that eventually resulted in the ascribing of priority rankings. The list below shows the strategies from the report in priority order, from highest to lowest.

1. **Major Roadway Improvements** – advocate for upgrades such as completion of the Circ Highway, Route 15 corridor improvements, and Route 117 improvements, along with the Crescent Connector.
2. **Strategic Industrial Park Evaluation** – evaluate and create a better understanding of what is working, what is not, and what might be next.
3. **Government Service Retention and Expansion** – work actively to retain current government services while seeking to attract and expand Federal and State government services as employment providers.
4. **Regional Multi-Modal Improvements** – actively support and encourage multi-modal projects that improve both the economic climate and the quality of life in Essex.
5. **Marketing Program** – define an Essex brand, determine the modes to present that brand, and identify niches the Town seeks to occupy (such as outdoor recreation, “green businesses,” food commerce, and technology).
6. **IBM Site Initiative** – maintain and seek to systematize communications with IBM site management that better enable the Town to understand site opportunities and future plans.
7. **Infill Development** – facilitate infill development where appropriate.
8. **Business Visit/Assistance Team** – establish a pilot program to test the value of reaching out to existing businesses on a regular basis.
9. **Business Development Data Center** – develop a system and compile and maintain data that provides information for businesses seeking to expand in or relocate to Essex. The dataset could include available properties and inventory of available commercial space.
10. **Freight Rail Service Expansion** – seek freight rail infrastructure investments that can have a positive effect the Town's ability to attract business, as well as providing opportunities for expanded passenger rail access and service.
11. **Local Education Resource Promotion** – promote the quality and value of the Essex school system.
12. **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** – remain vigilant in the search for TOD opportunities and flexible in response.
13. **Green Entrepreneurial Center** – create a green technologies incubator space.

Housing, particularly affordable housing, is a critical component of an economic development strategy and was not included in or attached to any of the 13 implementation strategies identified by BBPA.



**Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2010**