



TOWN OF ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS

MUNICIPAL MONTHLY

MARCH 2021



The Town of Acton and Acton Housing Authority collaborated in early February to administer vaccines to the public. Pictured above are Acton Health Director Sheryl Ball and Health Secretary Weiyuan Sun.

COVID-19 INFORMATION CENTER

ACTON

TOWN SERVICES HOTLINE

DIAL

978-929-6600

HOTLINE HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Friday: 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

TOWN HALL AND HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING HOURS OF OPERATION

ALL TOWN BUILDINGS ARE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Sunday: Closed

Monday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 7:30 PM

Wednesday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Thursday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Saturday: Closed

CURBSIDE APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE

Call or email to make an appointment:

FINANCE

Assessor: 978-929-6621 - assessor@actonma.gov

Collector: 978-929-6622 - collector@actonma.gov

LAND USE

Building: 978-929-6633 - building@actonma.gov

Conservation: 978-929-6634 - nr@actonma.gov

Health: 978-929-6632 - health@actonma.gov

Planning: 978-929-6631 - planning@actonma.gov

Recreation: 978-929-6640 - recreation@actonma.gov

See Full Department Directory on Last Page

TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE

On March 1st, I introduced the Fiscal Year 2022 Recommended Budget to the Board of Selectmen. This budget is reflective of the goals established by the Board and is responsive to the needs of the community. The FY22 budget includes investments related to infrastructure and public safety, sustainability measures, creating new resources to support diversity and equity efforts, increasing resources to address mental health needs, economic development initiatives, continued funding towards Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability, and sustaining excellent service levels for residents. We're also providing necessary matching funds to support the Town's effort of seeking a grant to remove the hazardous portions of the dam located on River Street. I am pleased to announce the availability of several new features to improve transparency for residents to learn more about the budget, including enhanced departmental information with performance metrics, enhanced organizational charts, financial analysis, and a new Grant Tracker tool. To view the budget, please visit actonma.gov/townmanager.



We are also proud to announce the completion of a comprehensive 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan. This plan, developed from a \$25,000 Commonwealth Community Compact grant in partnership with the UMass Boston Collins Center, contains detailed information about infrastructure and recommended investments over the next ten years based on a townwide needs analysis, and will serve as a roadmap for future investment and be built upon in a long-term planning effort for the organization.

Last month, thanks to the efforts of Deputy Fire Chief Anita Arnum, Health Director Sheryl Ball, Nursing Director Heather York, and several other members of our COVID-19 Response team, the Town held another successful vaccination clinic at the RJ Grey Junior High School. More than 100 Acton residents received their first vaccination dose and will receive their second dose within the next several weeks. We continue to work closely with our regional and state partners to provide additional vaccination resources for the community. To stay up-to-date with all COVID-19 related information, please visit actonma.gov/COVID19.

On March 30th from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM, the Annual Town Election will be held at the RJ Grey Junior High School Gymnasium. The last day to register to vote for the Annual Town Election is Wednesday, March 10th. For more information related to all 2021 elections, please contact the Town Clerk's office or visit actonma.gov/election.

CONNECT WITH US!

Join our online community and stay in the know with exclusive news and updates on:

@ActonMAGov



Sign up for Town notifications, emergency alerts and general alerts - subscribe, unsubscribe or manage your subscriptions:

<https://www.actonma.gov/subscribe>

ON-DEMAND CURBSIDE PICKUP

Acton Memorial Library is offering on-demand curbside hold pickups. When you receive notice that your hold is available:

1. Come to the library during curbside pickup hours – **Monday through Saturday between 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday between 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
2. When you arrive at the library, call 978-929-6655, option 2
3. Tell us your last name and library card number
4. Wait outside and library staff will put your materials on the tables in front of the main entrance.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

All programs require registration at [ActonMemorialLibrary.org/Calendar](https://actonmemoriallibrary.org/Calendar)

Tuesdays at 10 AM - Lapsit Storytime on Zoom. Best for Ages 0-3 and their caregivers.

Thursdays at 10 AM - Preschool Storytime on Zoom. Best for ages 3-7 and their caregivers.

Thursdays at 4:30 PM - After School Craft on Zoom. Bags of this week's craft supplies are available to pick up outside of the library Monday – Wednesday 10:30 AM - 5:30 PM.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

AML Book Discussion Group meets on March 16 and is discussing *Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism* by Anne Case and Angus Deaton. Copies are available for you to reserve. You must register to get the link to the zoom meeting. You can do that at our website www.actonmemoriallibrary.org and clicking on the calendar.

Program called Organic Gardening for Everyone on March 17 at 7pm on Zoom. Join naturalist, John Root, as he will offer practical advice and inspiration to gardeners of all ages on growing vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers organically. You must register on our website to get the link to the Zoom meeting.

ALL OUR VOICES READING PROGRAM

We have launched a program called All Our Voices to encourage patrons of all ages to read materials that amplify underrepresented voices and authors with diverse backgrounds. Staff have created reading lists with recommendations for various age groups. Patrons can track their reading through a program called Beanstack and earn virtual badges. Visit www.actonmemoriallibrary.org/allourvoices.

DONATION UPDATE

We are unable to take book donations at this time, however the Friends of Acton Libraries are planning to schedule donation drop-off times across from the West Acton Citizens Library. The Friends will update their social media to reflect any scheduled times.

ACCESS THE LIBRARY FROM HOME!

AML has a lot of great digital content including e-books, audiobooks, video, music, and databases. You can use your library card number and password to access these resources. If you do not have a library card, or have lost your number or password please contact us.

Phone: 978-929-6543 | Email: reference@actonma.gov

Stay up-to-date with announcements and library info by following us on Facebook, Instagram (@ActonLibrary) and Twitter (@ActonMemLibrary), or by going to www.actonmemoriallibrary.org.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Recreation is in full swing for spring! We will not be mailing a printed program booklet this season; please go to www.actonrec.com to register online or for a printable registration form. Forms and payment can be mailed or placed in the Drop Box at the front of our 50 Audubon Drive Recreation Center. Checks are payable to Town of Acton. For assistance call us at 978.929.6640, or email recreation@actonma.gov.

Acton Recreation Education Enrichment Program

We are certified by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education to provide remote learning during the hybrid school year. Our tutors offer supervised study along with qualified child care. Enrichment activities include arts and crafts, games, music, outdoor adventure and more! All health and safety protocols are followed. Space is available for 1st through 6th grade, ages 6–12. 8:30am - 3:30pm.



April School Vacation Week: 4/20/2021 - 4/23/2021

Come play with us at our 50 Audubon Drive Recreation Center! We offer arts and crafts, active games, team building, music, outdoor adventure and more! Your choice of days: 9:00am-4:00pm. (Post-care option available.) Ages 5-12 years.

Online and In-Person classes available now!

Register now for new programs and returning favorites for all ages: birding hikes; family fun dance; photography lectures; soccer clinics; floral arranging workshops; American Red Cross CPR, First Aid and AED; Pokémon Go: Walk & Raid, and more!

2021 NARA Beach Memberships

NARA Beach memberships are available at Early Bird reduced rates until May 31. Printable form is available online. The Family Membership allows up to six people per visit. Other options include Individual, Adult Couple and Senior. Senior membership has been lowered to age 60.

NARA Summer Camp

Open now for your choice of 10 themed weeks, June 21 – August 23.

We recommend registering soon as space is limited due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. NARA Camp provides recreational opportunities for children through arts and crafts, swimming, sports, theater & music, nature, and more. The camp follows all state COVID-19 guidelines to provide a fun and safe summer for all campers.



Home Modification Loan Program

The Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) provides 0% interest loans up to \$50,000.00, or \$30,000 for mobile homes, to modify homes of elders and individuals with disabilities. Payments are deferred until the transfer of the property.

The mission is to enable a person with a disability to continue to live in his/her home, be as independent as possible and continue to play an active role in his/her community.

Eligibility Requirements

Loans are available to individual homeowners with incomes of up to 200% of median income.

The program is not based on credit worthiness. With a 0% deferred payment loan, there are no monthly payments and no added monthly financial burden.

Link to Application: <https://www.smoc.org/pdf/HMLP%202020%20Application.pdf>

Contact Information

Metrowest Area: Linda Hochen Phone: (508) 620-2682 Email: LHochen@smoc.org
345 Union Ave, Framingham, MA 01702

For More Information:

<https://www.smoc.org/home-modification-loan-program.php>

New Childcare Subsidy for Income-Eligible Local Families

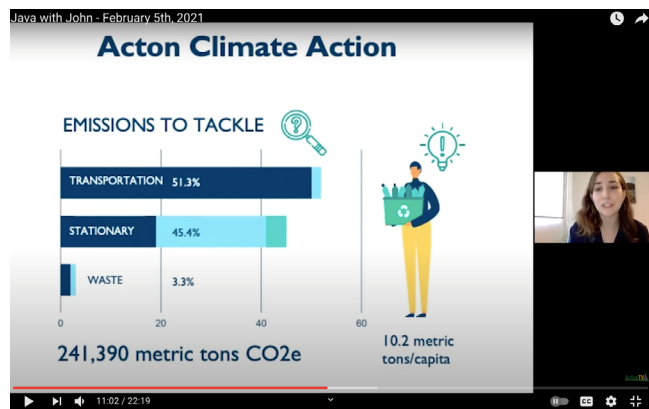
The Towns of Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Westford have been awarded funds from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development through a regional CARES ACT Community Development Block Grant Program to provide COVID-specific relief to local communities.

Childcare Subsidies are available for low to moderate-income families in all five towns. Participating families will receive \$3,000 for children preschool aged or younger and \$2,000 for children in Kindergarten to age 13 towards their daycare or after school costs so that parents and guardians may work, go to school or seek employment. Funds will be allocated to income qualified families on a first come, first serve basis by each Town using the income limits below with a maximum award during the grant year not to exceed \$5,000 per child. Please contact Community Services Coordinator, Laura Ducharme by phone (978-929-6651) or email (lducharme@actonma.gov) for more information on this program.

Household Size	Income Limits (Residents of Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, and Maynard)	Income Limits (Residents of Westford)
2	\$77,000	\$62,800
3	\$86,650	\$70,650
4	\$96,250	\$78,500
5	\$103,950	\$84,800
6	\$111,650	\$91,100
7	\$119,350	\$97,350
8	\$127,050	\$103,650

THIS MONTH IN SUSTAINABILITY

Actonians emit about 10.2 metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per capita. To put this number into context, this falls somewhere between Somerville and Cambridge, where per capita emissions are 8.2 and 13.8, respectively. Overall, per capita emissions in the U.S. are at 15.5 and the global average is about 4.8. While the context and infrastructure in Acton may be different than Somerville or other parts of the world, there is a lot Actonians can do to reduce their emissions. Here are two actions Actonians can take to “ActOn” Climate:



Sustainability Director Andrea Becerra featured on the February 5th episode of “Java with John”

1. Need a New Car? Consider Going Electric

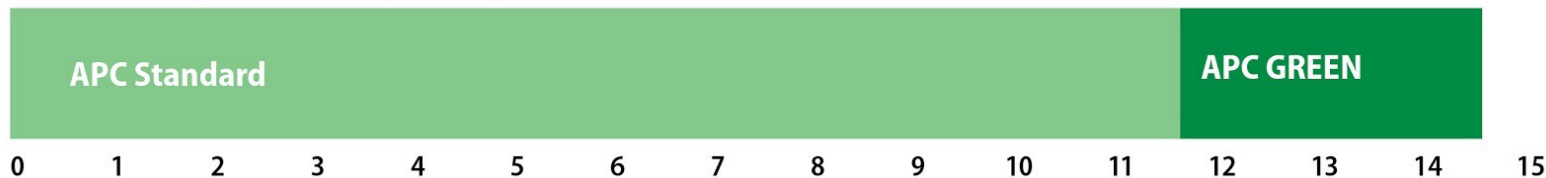
Just over half of Acton’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions come from the transportation sector—this is mostly from gas-powered vehicles on the road. The good news is that there are a lot of great choices on the market right now for Electric Vehicles (EVs), which release less GHG per mile driven than gasoline-powered cars and may be more affordable than you think. Combined federal and state tax credits can reduce purchase costs up to \$10,000 and EVs can save as much as \$1,200 per year in fuel costs according to the Department of Energy.

Visit Green Energy Consumers to learn more about the electric and hybrid vehicle options near you:
<https://www.greenenergyconsumers.org/drivegreen>

2. Opt-up to Acton Power Choice GREEN

Buildings are the second largest contributor to GHG in Acton. One of the quickest and easiest ways to reduce emissions from this sector is by choosing Acton Power Choice (APC) GREEN, which supports the development of new renewable energy projects right here in New England. APC GREEN offers a fixed electricity supply price through September 2022 and makes it easy for residents or businesses to change program options (or to opt out) at any time and at no cost. The APC program has kept 14.5 million pounds of CO₂ kept out of atmosphere to date! GREEN accounts (3% of all APC accounts) have saved 20% of those 14.5 million pounds. **To learn more visit:** <https://masspowerchoice.com/acton/opt-up>

CO₂ avoided (in millions of pounds)



Tune in Thursday, March 18, 2021, 7:00 - 8:15 PM: Are you confused about what should go in your trash barrel and what should go in your recycling bin? Join Keep Massachusetts Beautiful and the Town of Acton for a free Zoom presentation and discussion of ways we can all reduce waste and improve recycling. Register here: <http://bit.ly/3uKtLIy>

In case you missed it: The Acton Area League of Women Voters and Green Acton hosted a panel discussion on plastic “Recycle, Reuse, Refuse,” which included a conversation with Acton’s Green Advisory Board Chair, Eric Hudson, who spoke as Founder & CEO of Preserve, which offers consumers a range of household products made from 100% recycled plastic. To watch the recorded event visit: <http://bit.ly/3q39WJ5>

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Connect Powder Mill Road - Second Virtual Public Forum

A Collaboration between the Towns of Acton and Maynard

Connecting Maynard, Acton and West Concord, the Powder Mill Road Corridor consists of approximately one mile in Maynard and a half mile in Acton. At our second virtual forum we will talk about what we learned from the first forum and recommendations for future use on the corridor.

The second virtual forum will be hosted by the staff and Economic Development Committees of Acton and Maynard and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council on **April 8, 2021 at 6:00 PM**.

RSVP for the zoom link here: <http://mapc.ma/powdermill>

Learn more about the project here: http://bit.ly/powdermill_corridor

Call in number for the meeting is +1-646-876-9923 enter meeting ID 914 9628 6278

If you have any questions about the forum please contact Jennifer Kaplan, Economic Development Planner at jkaplan@mapc.org.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Sukhjinder (Sam) Bajwa – Planning Board

I moved to Acton in 1978 shortly after joining Digital in Maynard. Digital's rapid expansion resulted in my moving to New Hampshire in 1982. After retiring I moved back to Acton in 2007. All of our 3 children graduated from AB and my wife, Komal, was an ESL teacher's assistant in town for several years. Even during the 1978-82 stay in Acton I wanted to volunteer but never got around to doing it because of my busy schedule. Having an engineering background and also having spearheaded the construction of the Sikh temple in Westborough as the chairperson of the building committee I felt I could contribute by volunteering for the town's planning board.



Catherine Usoff - Economic Development Committee

I am grateful to be in a position to give back to the community that has given our family so much for 27 years. After many years as a business professor and dean, I look forward to helping the town continue to thrive. I have always enjoyed supporting local businesses and am excited to work with other EDC members to ensure their future success.

**Seeking New
Volunteers!**

Do you want to get involved in making Acton a better place to live? There are more than 40 Boards and Committees in town run by volunteers and many need new members. This is your chance to make a difference! Ad Hoc and Standing Committee slots are available. Examples including the Nursing Advisory Committee and Historic District Commission. There is sure to be a board that can use your knowledge and skills! For a full list of openings and to complete an application, please visit actonma.gov/jobs.

SENIOR CENTER/COUNCIL ON AGING

The Acton Senior Center/Council on Aging continues to offer programs virtually and as drive-through events. COA staff can be reached by telephone at 978-929-6652 and email seniorcenter@actonma.gov. Like us on Facebook, @actoncoa, to keep up with the latest COA news! Town Manager John Mangiaratti's weekly show "Java with John" Fridays at 10 a.m. is a terrific way to keep up with what is going on in town (Acton Radio WAEM 94.9 FM and www.youtube.com/actonTV1). If you would like to receive weekly or monthly phone calls from staff or volunteers to touch base, please give us a call.

Minuteman Senior Services offers weekday carry-out meals as well as Meals on Wheels delivery, and the COA distributes Open Table meals by request. The COA is offering a drive-through lunch with a St. Patrick's Day twist this month.

Programs taking place via Zoom this month include: District Attorney Marian Ryan will discuss safety and wellbeing for seniors, History of Political Cartoons in the US, continuation of American Writers series, Poets of Tin Pan Alley, trivia, coping with knee pain, real estate seminar, History of the House of Hanover, support group for people with early stage memory loss, and a new session of Words Galore.

Presentations funded by a CHNA grant to address issues of isolation and loneliness are offered as a joint effort between the Acton Board of Health and the COA: The New Normal New England Road Trip (no mask or gas required!) with Chronicle's Ted Reinstein and Creating Your Psychological First Aid Kit for Surviving Coronavirus. Thank you to the Friends of the Acton Council on Aging for supporting so many of our programs!

Regularly occurring groups/classes continue to meet via Zoom: Terri's Tips, Computer Club, book group, chess lessons, and Laugh for Your Health. Sculpture and watercolor classes wrap up this month. A variety of exercise and movement classes taught by COA instructors is available through ActonTV's cable and YouTube channels www.youtube.com/actonTV1.

Ask the Lawyer appointments take place this month with an elder law attorney via phone or Zoom. AARP volunteer tax preparers will not be offering this service in Acton because of the pandemic. For information on preparing your own taxes see https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/ and <https://www.irs.gov/>.

The state has extended the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (aka SMOC) application deadline to May 28 (which assists with energy expenses through April 30). If you are age 60 plus, contact COA Senior Services Coordinator Beverly Hutchings for more information: 978-929-6652 or bhutchings@actonma.gov.

If you are interested in being notified in the event the Town of Acton receives additional COVID-19 vaccine to offer local clinics, please fill out a Vaccine Interest Form accessible from www.actonma.gov on the COVID-19 page. If you are unable to access the internet, call the COA for assistance. At press time it was unknown whether the state will provide the town with additional vaccine, so please continue to look for other options using the state's website <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/> or calling the helpline at 2-1-1. Please notify us if after submitting an Interest Form you receive a vaccine elsewhere.



Acton Police Department service dog Zane and Det. Jon Stackhouse accompany Council on Aging staff distributing meals and lifting spirits at Windsor Green

DIRECTORY OF TOWN DEPARTMENTS

ACTON TOWN SERVICES HOTLINE - 978-929-6600

<u>Department</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>E-Mail</u>
Acton Nursing Services	978-929-6650	nursing@actonma.gov
Assessors	978-929-6621	assessor@actonma.gov
Building Division	978-929-6633	building@actonma.gov
Cemetery Division	978-929-6642	cemetery@actonma.gov
Citizens' Library	978-929-6654	wacl@actonma.gov
Collector/Treasurer	978-929-6622	collector@actonma.gov
Community Resources	978-929-6651	lducharme@actonma.gov
Council on Aging	978-929-6652	seniorcenter@actonma.gov
Engineering Department	978-929-6630	engineering@actonma.gov
Fire Department	978-929-7722	fire@actonma.gov
Health Division	978-929-6632	health@actonma.gov
Highway Department Transfer Station	978-929-7740 978-929-7742	highway@actonma.gov
Human Resources	978-929-6613	hr@actonma.gov
Information Technology	978-929-6612	it@actonma.gov
Memorial Library	978-929-6655	Visit: actonmemoriallibrary.org
Municipal Properties	978-929-7744	mpo@actonma.gov
Natural Resources Division	978-929-6634	NR@actonma.gov
Planning Division	978-929-6631	planning@actonma.gov
Police Department	978-929-7711	police@actonma.gov
Public Facilities	978-929-7744	mpo@actonma.gov
Public Works	978-929-7740	highway@actonma.gov
Recreation Department	978-929-6640	recreation@actonma.gov
Town Clerk	978-929-6620	clerk@actonma.gov
Town Manager	978-929-6611	manager@actonma.gov
Veterans' Services	978-929-6614	vso@actonma.gov
Water District	978-263-9107	Visit: www.actonwater.com