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### Devens Releases “Devens Forward” Climate Action and Resilience Plan *Embracing the past, transforming the future*



**Devens, Mass.** – The Devens Enterprise Commission in coordination with MassDevelopment recently released the new [Devens Forward Climate Action and Resilience Plan](#). Devens Forward will serve as a roadmap to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and holistically prepare our community as we consider the impacts of climate change that we expect to see in the coming years and decades. It includes more than 70 actions along with detailed implementation plans for more than 20 actions and a [Climate Action Toolkit for Businesses](#) to help us quickly pursue our goals.

You can check out the plan on the just-launched Devens Forward website, an interactive “Dashboard” where you can navigate all aspects of the plan, check our progress, and find out how you can take action. Visit <https://devensforward.com/home>. A new video also captures the highlights of Devens Forward and features several local businesses. Watch it at: <https://vimeo.com/436601832>

The plan’s tagline -- *“Embracing the past, transforming the future”* – recognizes Devens history as a military base, our approach to redeveloping that base in a sustainable manner, our status as a world-class destination for businesses, a growing residential community, and a leading destination for sports and recreation. With nearly 100 businesses and organizations that collectively employ more than 6,000 workers and over 2,100 acres of recreational land, Devens is a desirable place to live, work, learn, and play – and Devens Forward will ensure we protect and enhance these assets.

The Plan builds off of our 4-Star STAR rating for sustainability, our LEED for Cities and Communities certification, and our status as the premier eco-industrial park in the United States, and the integration of sustainable development into every aspect of the reuse of the base. It also incorporates our recent Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan (MVP) and Greenhouse Gas Inventory which recognizes the changing weather patterns that climate change is already bringing to the region. Devens—like the rest of Massachusetts—is already experiencing the effects of climate change in the form of increased precipitation and flooding, severe storm events, extreme heat, and increased risk of wildfires. In addition to taking steps to reduce its emissions, Devens must prepare to adapt to changing conditions.

To achieve our sustainability goals, the Plan outlines 73 ambitious and achievable actions across seven planning elements that will both reduce our environmental impact and improve our community's resilience in the face of climate change. These are:

- Climate and Energy
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Natural Resources
- Public Health and Safety
- Transportation and Land Use

Of the 73 actions, we have developed detailed implementation blueprints for 22 of them to support the immediate start to implementing this plan and making progress towards our goals. These actions include:

- *Climate and Energy*: Support energy efficiency upgrades in residential and commercial buildings.
- *Infrastructure*: Continue to improve stormwater management by reducing impervious surfaces, and incentivizing and regulating green infrastructure.
- *Economic Development*: Collaborate with industries to reduce waste through by-product exchanges (circular economy: reducing purchasing and disposal costs as well as landfilling).
- *Housing*: Support diverse housing options for seniors, local workforce, veterans, low/mid income levels, and people with disabilities.
- *Natural Resources*: Maintain the health of the tree canopy and protect the functioning of its ecosystem-services.
- *Public Health and Safety*: Invest in resilient energy systems at critical facilities.
- *Transportation and Land Use*: Expand low-carbon transportation options

This plan illustrates the importance of community stakeholder participation and incorporates the ideas and feedback derived from surveys, meetings, and interviews—conducted both in-person and virtually over the past year. Devens Forward also reflects our overall approach to resilience -- how we prepare Devens for the current and future impacts of climate change and public health crises like the current COVID-19 pandemic. In May of 2019, the Devens Enterprise Commission helped dedicate a memorial in Devens to the doctors, nurses, soldiers, and civilians who dealt with the 1918 Spanish Influenza pandemic. Learn the lessons of the past and apply them to the future.

The Devens Enterprise Commission looks forward to continuing its collaboration with MassDevelopment—as well as our stakeholders, businesses, and citizens—on the sustainable redevelopment of Devens, as we implement this plan and transform our community's future in a way that benefits all of those who live, work, learn, or play at Devens now and in the future.

<https://devensforward.com/home>

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***About the Devens Enterprise Commission:***

*The Devens Enterprise Commission acts as the regulatory and permitting authority for the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone. Its role is to administer and enforce the reuse plan, by-laws, regulations and sustainability vision within the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone. It functions as a board of health, conservation commission, zoning board of appeals, historic district commission and planning board. More information can be found at: <https://www.devensec.com/index.html> or you can follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/devensec>.*