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MEMORANDUM

September 29, 2017

TO: Land Use and Zoning and Planning Committees of the City Council
Planning & Development Board

FROM: Barney Heath, Director of Planning & Development
James Freas, Deputy Director of Planning & Development
Jennifer Caira, Chief Planner
Rachel Blatt, Long Range Planner

SUBJECT: Needham Street Area Vision Plan

Please find attached a brief overview of the process to be undertaken by the Planning Department to develop a Vision Plan for the Needham Street Area over the next 6 months. The Department is well-suited and equipped to lead this effort and looks forward to engaging with the community.

Needham Street Area Vision Plan

September, 2017

I. Why a Vision Plan?

The Needham Street Corridor is an important commercial gateway to the City of Newton. It also is situated amongst important residential neighborhoods. Recent development activity and proposals for future investment have reinforced the community need to develop a collaborative vision for the area.

II. Community Engagement

To be reflective of the community desires, the development of a Vision Plan must involve a multitude of stakeholders with varied interests. Designing a collaborative process which provides for substantive stakeholder involvement is critical to an authentic vision. The Planning Department is committed to an open and transparent process involving the community.

III. Potential Scope

The range of topics for consideration in developing a Vision Plan list could include:

- Review of Past Studies
- Examination of Current Conditions
- Neighborhood Interests
- Transportation
- Public Realm, Open Space and Sustainability
- Land Use Mix
- Economic Development
- Urban Design
- Fiscal Considerations
- Zoning

IV. Timeframe

It is anticipated that the Planning Department should be able to complete the community engagement and Vision Plan development in 6 months, beginning in November of 2017.