



## Annual Report: 2020 DEVENS ENTERPRISE COMMISSION

### The Commission:

The Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC) is the local regulatory and permitting authority for the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone (DREZ). It is empowered to act as the local planning board, conservation commission, board of health, zoning board of appeals, historic district commission and, in certain instances, as board of selectmen. The DEC carries out these duties in the context of a unique and innovative one-stop unified permitting system, which greatly streamlines the local regulatory process. The DEC consists of 12 gubernatorial appointees, six (6) of whom are nominated by the host communities of Ayer, Harvard and Shirley. Each host community and the Governor also nominate an alternate member. The Commission began operating on June 22, 1995.

DEC Commission members include Jim DeZutter (Harvard), William Marshall (Chairman, Regional), Paul Routhier (Regional), Marty Poutry (Ayer), William Castro (Shirley) who resigned during the fall, Robert Gardner (Regional), Melissa Fetterhoff (Regional), Chris Lilly (Regional), Jim Pinard (Ayer), Dix Davis (Regional), Duncan Chapman (Harvard) and Robert Markley (Shirley). The Ayer, Shirley, and Harvard alternate positions remain vacant as does Mr. Castro's Shirley position. Commissioner Castro served the DEC for over 17 years. His commitment, expertise, and institutional knowledge of Devens was invaluable to the Commission. Debra Rivera joined the Commission in 2020, filling a Regional Alternate vacancy.

DEC staff includes Director/Land Use Administrator Peter C. Lowitt, FAICP and Environmental Planner Neil Angus, AICP CEP, LFA, LEED AP. Director Lowitt oversees the day-to-day activities of the DEC and serves on numerous boards whose interests include planning, vegetated roofs, affordable housing, historic, natural and cultural resources, industrial ecology and eco-industrial development. Working under the supervision of the Director, Environmental Planner Neil Angus provides planning, operational and technical support to the DEC and the public on permitting and regulatory compliance in Devens.

Additional support staff for the Commission include Executive Assistant Kate Clisham and the following consultants on a contractual basis:

- Building and related inspectional services provided by Gabe Vellante (building), Phil Horgan (electrical), and Jim Bakun (plumbing and gas).



*DEC Commission members – front row from left to right: Chris Lilly, William Marshall, Robert Gardner. Back row from left to right: Marty Poutry, Melissa Fetterhoff, Paul Routhier, Robert Markley, and newly appointed Commissioner Debra Rivera. Missing from photo: Dix Davis, Duncan Chapman, Jim DeZutter, William Castro, and Jim Pinard.*

- Development review services provided by Nitsch Engineering Inc. (civil, stormwater and traffic engineering), IBI Group (landscape architecture) and Tech Environmental (industrial performance standards) LEC Environmental (wetland science), and Public Archeological Laboratory (historical/archeological services).
- Housing Monitoring services provided by Metro West Collaborative Development through the Town of Hudson, MA.
- Legal services provided by Lampke Law LLC and McGregor & Legere, P.C.
- Health inspectional and permitting services are provided by Nashoba Associated Boards of Health.
- Auditing services are provided by Giusti, Hingston and Company.

A complete description of the DEC Organizational Structure is available on-line at: <http://bit.ly/DECorg> .

**COVID-19 Pandemic Special Note:** Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and 2020, many Devens construction projects that were considered essential services continued to move forward in accordance with the Governors executive orders and MA Department of Public Health Guidance. The Devens Enterprise Commission, acting in its capacity as the local Board of Health for Devens, continued to work closely with our Health Agent (Nashoba Associated Boards of Health), MassDevelopment, and all businesses and construction projects to ensure proper health and safety measures were in place for the protection of all Devens residents, businesses, organizations and visitors. Our thanks goes out to the staff at the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health for their invaluable and continued assistance during this pandemic.

### **2020 Project Highlights:**

Throughout 2020, the Commission oversaw the continued construction of a number of ongoing projects and issued a number of permits for new and expanding facilities in Devens:

**105 Walker Road – Little Leaf Farms:** The third phase of Little Leaf’s greenhouse expansion was completed in 2020 and included a ~14,000 square foot office/production building expansion and a 165,000 sq.ft. greenhouse expansion. The greenhouse and office expansion are on an adjacent 12-acre parcel added to their existing facility. The expansion also included a second rainwater harvesting basin which collects roof runoff from the greenhouse and uses it to irrigate the lettuce. With this expansion, Little Leaf has more than 9 acres of greenhouse (>400,000 sq.ft.) for growing lettuce.



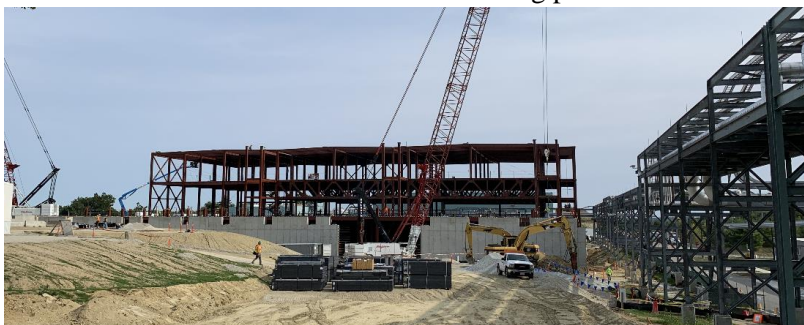
*Aerial view of Little Leaf Farms. Photo courtesy of Little Leaf Farms – June 2020*

The site was also connected to the nearby Devens wastewater treatment plant for both water and sewer service, so as to eliminate on-site septic systems and reduce water usage from the Town of Shirley. The informal trail that ran through this expansion parcel was relocated around this third phase and provides access from Walker Road (off the driveway entrance to the Devens Wastewater Treatment Plant) to other North Post trails on Devens and within the Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge.



**38 Jackson Road – Bristol Myers Squibb (BMS) Campus Projects:** BMS continued to develop new and expanded facilities on their 89+ acre campus. Projects included:

- Cell Therapy Facility:** On April 9, 2020 the DEC issued a Unified Permit to BMS for the construction of a +/- 80,000 square foot (240,000 gross sf), three-story new building to accommodate their new Cell Therapy Facility (CTF). This facility is part of a new form of cancer treatment that will be taking patients blood and genetically engineering cells to fight certain forms of cancer. The facility will consist of office, specialized processing suites, quality assurance/quality control facilities, packaging and storage space. In order to accommodate this building and CTF processes, the project was approved with a 32,310 sf (44,850 gross sf) expansion to the existing central warehouse building, and a 600-space, (3-5 story) parking garage. The CTF is expected to employ an additional 800 people. Construction began in early 2020 and as the design for the facility progressed, they realized they did not need as much parking as they had planned for so they came back to the DEC for an amendment to the previously approved parking garage component of the Cell Therapy Facility and changed it to 421 surface parking spaces, which were approved by the DEC in September.



*Structural Steel being erected for BMS's new Cell Therapy Facility - September 2020*

- Lab/Office/Cafeteria Expansion:** Construction continued throughout 2019 on a 26,500sf expansion of BMS's Lab/Office/Cafeteria (LOC) building. The Commission issued this Unified Permit on February 7, 2019 and the project was completed in 2020. This expansion provided BMS the ability to hold campus wide meetings of its employees, provided new gym and amenity space. A covered walkway connects the new addition to the parking garage and BMS expanded their on-



*Rear of BMS's new LOC building expansion (right). Existing LOC on the left – September 2020*

- campus trail/walkway network with a series of walkways/trails connecting the LOC and the Large Scale Cell Culture Facility as well as new outdoor patios on the east and west side of this new addition.
- Cryogenics Addition:** BMS brought an addition to its Cryogenic Storage facility before the Commission for approval in the Spring of 2019. This 13,000+ sf addition was approved in 46 days. The existing 5,700 sq.ft. Chemical Storage building, was converted to a Cryogenic Facility building in 2015. The Cryogenic Facility stores secured drug substances at refrigeration and freezing temperatures of -40°C and -60°C. This addition facilitates added storage of drug substance containers and acts as a facility for shipment, receiving, and preparation of drug substance materials by road or air transport. The expansion adds space for office, packing, loading dock and storage space as well. Construction of this addition was completed in August.



**7 Jackson Road – Bio-Techne Expansion:** Bio-Techne completed the construction of a 26,058 SF addition to their existing 40,872 SF bio-medical device manufacturing and support facility that was approved by the Commission in 2019. The addition included 2 new loading docks (for a total of 6) and the relocation of the existing recycling and waste management area. This project ended up having excess fill material so the Applicant worked with MassDevelopment to find a location adjacent to Lake George Street where there were existing erosion and drainage issues. The Applicant used the fill to re-shape the land adjacent to the road and fix the drainage so that it is now much more stable.

**Grant Road Housing – Emerson Green:** Construction continued on the second phase of this 124-unit mixed residential community, with the Grant Road housing units being completed in 2020. Construction began on the 12 units of housing on Bradley Circle near the end of 2020. This project consists of a mix of single-family, two-family and three-family housing units. A number of these units will be deed restricted to low and moderate-income individuals and families. This helps meet the Devens housing diversity and affordability goals in the Reuse Plan. These homes are highly energy efficient with Home Energy Rating Scale (HERS) scores in the 45-55 range which is 45-55% more efficient than a traditional home.



*Looking north on Grant Road from the Chance Street intersection – October 2020*

Grant Road was re-opened to traffic in late 2020. This new portion of Grant Road has narrower road widths, on-street parking, street trees and sidewalks on both sides of the street, combined with a raised intersection at Chance and Grant – creating a much more pedestrian-oriented streetscape designed for multiple modes of transportation, not just cars. Like phase 1, the narrow pavement widths, coupled with the reduced lot sizes, minimal setbacks, and front porch designs help bring the homes closer to the street to help facilitate a safer, walkable, and more socially interactive community.



*Looking south on Grant Road. Completed Grant Road homes on the right and Bradley Circle homes under construction on the left. On-street parking and bike lanes being utilized – December 2020*

Construction on the two 20-unit multi-family apartment buildings is expected to begin in the spring of 2021 once financing is secured.



**Shirley Meadows Senior Housing:** The Women’s Institute finished construction on this 58 unit senior residential housing development at 27 Hospital Road in the Shirley Village Growth District at the corner of Hospital Road and Elliot Road. Occupancy began in July of 2020. This senior rental housing is restricted to individuals 62 years or older with incomes ranging from 60% Area Median Income (AMI) to 30% AMI and below.



*Rear view of Shirley Meadows – looking from the intersection of Hospital Road and Elliot Road – July 2020*

**84 Antietam Street - Clear Path for Veterans New England:** Work continued throughout 2020 on the renovation of this historic former military hospital that was sold to Clear Path for Veterans New England in 2019.

Improvements included a full interior gut rehab, the addition of an elevator and other ADA accessibility elements, removal of the loading docks to convert to an outdoor terrace, reduction in pavement and other low-impact stormwater management techniques, an exterior fenced dog training area, landscaping and redesign of the parking area. The project was nearing completion at the end of 2020 and is expected to be completed in early 2021. The preservation, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of this historic structure will preserve a cultural and historic part of former Fort Devens and provide a great service to our Veterans in need.



*New Main Entrance and ADA access ramp to Clear Path for Veterans facility at 84 Antietam Street – December 2020*

**112 Barnum Road Site work and loading dock:** A unified permit for new loading docks and an access drive was issued to AD Barnum, the owners of 112 Barnum Road. These new improvements will accommodate VulcanForms – a new tenant that will be occupying the second half of the building (~155,000 sf.). Jabil/Nypro, a medical device manufacturer currently occupies the other half of the building. The proposed improvements also include a new pervious pavement driveway leading to an existing roll-up door on the front (north) side of the building. VulcanForms is a metal additive manufacturing company that builds metal printing systems. VulcanForms has successfully designed, developed and commissioned a scalable metal additive printing

technology out of their existing research and development facility in Burlington, MA. This facility will allow them to scale up production. By the end of 2020, the loading dock was installed. This project is expected to be completed in early 2021.

**45 Jackson Road – Biomanufacturing Campus Master Plan and Core and Shell for building 1:** King Devens, LLP (aka King Street Properties) submitted a unified permit for the proposed construction of a 150,000sf +/- Research and Development/bio-manufacturing building and associated site improvements on an easterly 14 acre portion of the ~24 acre parcel of land known as 45 Jackson Road, including parking, utility and stormwater management infrastructure improvements. This building is the first of five buildings that are part of a larger \$500 million conceptual master plan the Applicant is proposing for approximately +/- 42 acres of land they have acquired (45, 57, 59, and 75 Jackson Road). These parcels lie west of Jackson Road, north of the Mount Wachusett Community College site, south of Givry Street and east of New England Studios, Northrup Grumman and an MassDevelopment stormwater management area. The Applicant/Owner will subdivide the 45 Jackson project parcel into three separate lots for two additional future buildings. The facility proposed for lot 1 is a core and shell building of 100,000 sf with the capability to increase to 150,000 based on the needs of an as yet unidentified future use.



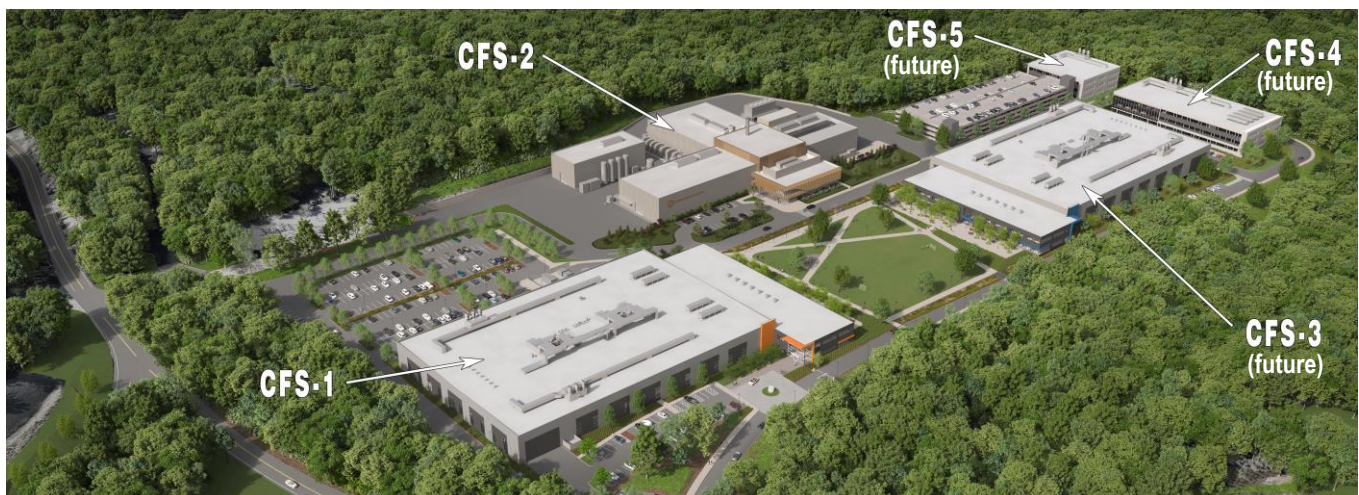
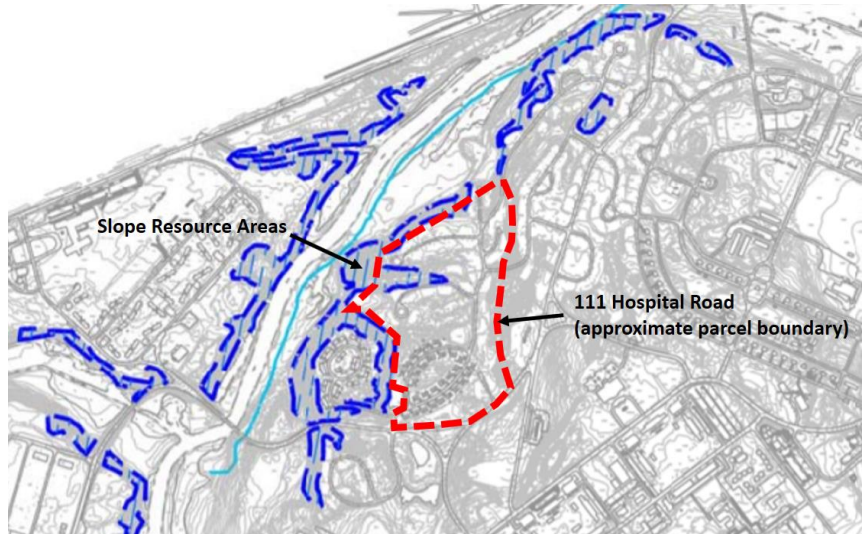
*Rendering of new 150,000 sf bio-manufacturing building proposed for lot 1.*

The proposed phasing/master plan approach is mainly for context purposes and any future development will need to come back before the commission for a Level 2 review. The unified permit for Building 1 on 45 Jackson is expected to be issued in early 2021 and construction is expected to commence shortly afterward.

**111 Hosptial Road – Commonwealth Fusion Systems (CFS):** CFS worked with MassDevelopment and the Devens Enterprise Commission throughout 2020 on plans for designing a campus to accommodate their proposed fusion energy project on a 44-acre previously developed site (former Oak and Maple Housing Area) at 111 Hospital Road in the Innovation and Technology Business Zoning District. The proposed campus would be home to a compact fusion device that will prove fusion can work as a clean, reliable power source. Fusion is the natural process that powers the sun and the stars. Scientists have been able to safely and cleanly create fusion in the laboratory using a device called a tokamak - a fully contained magnetic bottle that simulates the vaccum of space and uses magnets to confine a super-heated plasma in which fusion occurs. CFS is working collaboratively with MIT to propose building a tokamak research and development facility at Devens called SPARC (CFS-2) that will produce net positive energy from fusion for the first time in history. This project is being developed to enable the commercialization of fusion energy and help combat climate change - since fusion doesn't emit carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The project is a research and development facility (not a power plant), so it proposes to include equipment and instruments needed to operate, monitor and maintain the device. The project has involved multiple permitting and regulatory steps that took place throughout 2020 including the following:



- Determination of Use: CFS came before the Commission in January earlier this year for a Determination of Use to ensure that the planned uses were consistent with the development goals of this district. The DEC determined that the primary uses (Research and Development, light manufacturing, office) are allowed in the Innovation and Technology Business Zoning District.
- Slope Resource Area Determination: The site is adjacent to a series of steep slope areas along the Nashua River so in September, CFS came before the Commission to verify the limits of these slope areas so they could finalize their facility designs to avoid impacting these resource areas.
- Site Enabling Work: As the proposed site is a former Army housing area, there are a series of roads and infrastructure that still exist on site. In order to prepare the site for future anticipated development, the Applicant submitted a separate permit application to the DEC for preliminary site work on an 11-acre portion of the 44 acre parcel to remove and relocate utilities and infrastructure on-site to prepare it for any future development. This preliminary work was permitted by the DEC in November.
- CFS 1 Magnet facility: This project was filed in mid November to allow the development of a +/- 164,000 gross square foot manufacturing and office building, that would produce the advanced magnets that are the key component of Commonwealth Fusion Systems tokamak fusion reactor. The CFS-1 building includes 60,000 square feet of office space that will serve as CFS' corporate headquarters and the remaining 104,000 square feet will be dedicated to manufacturing space for producing the magnets. CFS-1 is expected to employ 416 people. The project is expected to be acted on by the DEC in early 2021.
- CFS 2 Research Facility and Campus: a separate Level 2 Unified Permit application was submitted in November for the development of the CFS-2 portion of the campus - a +/-147,000 sf fusion energy research and development facility. The application also sought conceptual approval for the overall campus master plan (general size, location and layout) for future development phases as well. CFS- 2 will be home to the compact fusion device (SPARC). This application was also submitted in late November and will be acted on in 2021.

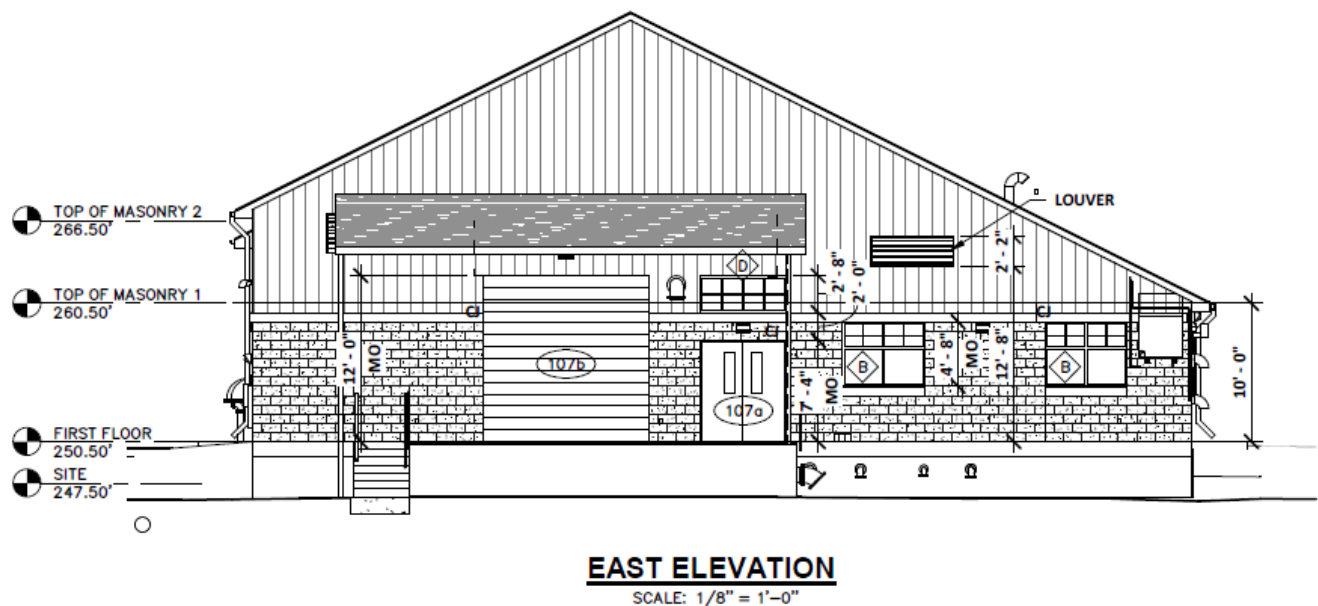


*Rendering of proposed CFS campus at 111 Hospital Road.*

Permitting is will continue through 2021, with construction on CFS-1 expected to continue in late spring.

**4 MacArthur Avenue - 55,000sf Light Industrial facility:** Toward the end of 2020, MacArthur Avenue LLC, submitted a Level 2 Unified Permit for the development of a +/-55,000 sf light manufacturing facility and associated site improvements on the grounds of the former Hodges Theatre which is to be demolished as part of this project. The proposed project is a light manufacturing facility for Nexius, a 5G distributor who proposes to conduct assembly and distribution services at this location, employing 70 people. This is an allowed use in the ITB district and is located on a lot with sufficient area and frontage to comply with the Devens Bylaws. The Project is located at the northeast corner of MacArthur and Givry Streets.. As of the writing of this report, the project is currently going through permitting and is expected to be acted on in early 2021.

**Devens Water Treatment Facilities:** As a follow-up to the temporary Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) treatment facilities installed at Patton, Shabokin, and MacPherson Well sites in 2019, the DEC issued three Unified Permits to Devens Utilities for the construction of new permanent water treatment facilities at the three active well locations in Devens. Construction on the new facility at 44 MacPherson Road is expected to commence in early 2021 and the new Patton Well facility is expected to begin construction in the fall of 2021. The new Sheridan Road Water treatment facility will follow in 2022. Construction of these wells will ensure that Devens continues to provide safe drinking water to all customers with non-detect levels of PFAS.



*Architectural elevation of Devens proposed permanent water treatment facility off of Sheridan Road (similar design for Patton well treatment facility)*

**New England Studios:** The studios remained active throughout 2020, although production activity did slow down considerably due to COVID-19. A new TV series began filming in late 2020 and the DEC continued to coordinate with Devens Public Works and the Devens Fire Chief/Public Safety Officer, administering and issuing filming permits for locations in Devens through 2020. These permits (issued in accordance with the Devens Filming Permit Guidelines) help ensure filming activities have the least impact on residents and businesses. As the studios are still busy, productions continued to lease extra space in other Devens buildings such as 78 Barnum Road (former Media News Building).

**Additional Project Highlights from 2020:** Other projects that were permitted and completed in 2020 included:

- Hospital Road Resurfacing, drainage improvements and sidewalk extension connecting to Shirley Municipal Center and the Ayer-Shirley Regional Middle School.
- Patton Road sidewalk extension from entrance of 85 Patton Road to entrance of Mirror Lake, providing a continuous sidewalk connection between Mirror Lake and all Devens residents and many businesses.
- Numerous Clean room fit outs at Devens life science businesses.



## **2020 Permitting Summary:**

<b>Permit Type</b>	<b>#issued in 2019</b>	<b># issued in 2020</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Level 2 Permits	7	12	+5
Reconsideration	1	0	-1
Level 1 Permits	83	68	-15
Wetland Request for Determination of Applicability	1	6	+5
Wetland Notice of Intent (Order of Conditions)	0	2	+2
Wetland Certificates of Compliance	0	0	=
Sign Permits	2	8	+6
Tent/Event Permits	18	7	-11
Demolition Permits	2	5	+3
Level 1 Lotting Plans	1	1	=
Septage Hauling Permits	13	8	-5
Certificates of Occupancy	18(3TCOs)	31 (5TCOs)	+13(2TCOs)
Electrical Permits	95	80	-15
Plumbing Permits	93	33	-60
Gas Permits	17	14	-3
Sheet Metal Permits (new in 2011)	10	10	=
Victualler's License	11	12	+1
Flammables License	6	5	-1
Liquor Permits	5	5	=
Pledge of Liquor License/Transfer of License	1	0	-1
1 Day Liquor Licenses	3	1	-2
Violation Notices	5	2	-3
Schools – Certificates of Inspection	4	2	-2
Filming Permits	24	2	-22
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>-106</b>

COVID impacted 2020 as we saw a drop off in total permits from 420 to 314. Despite this we handled a surge in Life Science activity as King Street Properties brought their Pathway BioMedical campus to Devens, and our Life Science industries geared up to combat the pandemic. 2020 saw an increase in, level two permits, Wetlands Request for Determinations and Orders of Conditions, demolition permits, victuallers' permits, occupancy permits and sign permits. There were decreases in electric, plumbing, gas, 1-day liquor licenses, film permits, school inspections, flammables permits, level 1 lotting plans, and tent permits. The Commission's record of average time to permit fell to 57 days from 61 days last year (still well below the statutory 75 day limit).

**Economic Impacts of Devens:** All of these projects contribute to the prosperity of the Devens region and the state as a whole, furthering the goals of the Devens Reuse Plan. In 2020, MassDevelopment commissioned the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute to prepare its fifth report on the economic impacts of Devens. The report, issued in June of 2020, found that Devens is home to over 100 businesses, nonprofits, and governmental organizations that employ more than 6,000 workers, and a total contribution of nearly \$3.8 billion to the Massachusetts economy in 2019. Read the full report here: <https://donahue.umass.edu/documents/Devens-Economic-Profile-and-Contribution-062020.pdf>.

### **Enforcement:**

The DEC continues to enforce the Devens Bylaws and Rules and Regulations to help avoid and minimize nuisance conditions ensure public health and safety within the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone. 2020 saw very few violations of the Devens Bylaws and Rules and Regulations. Enforcement actions throughout 2020 included:

***Lighting and Construction Noise:*** The DEC received occasional complaints about early morning construction noise as well excessive lighting coming from Little Leaf Farms. Both of these issues were specifically identified in the Unified Permit conditions of approval. Staff followed up with the owner and facility operators to ensure the violations were rectified immediately. Construction is complete and the loading docks for the facility have been relocated behind a 25' high landscaped berm that fully screens them from Walker Road. This should aid in preventing future complaints.

***Devens Designated Truck Route:*** Monitoring and enforcement of the designated truck route continued throughout 2020. The DEC received periodic complaints about trucks cutting through Buena Vista Street to access the Industrial Park. The State Police continue to assist in enforcement with the DEC to maximize outreach and effectiveness of enforcement. The DEC also recently partnered with MassDevelopment and sent a joint letter and map to all businesses located on Saratoga Boulevard and Independence Drive reminding them to continue to share this route with their drivers, suppliers, and visitors. DEC Staff also contacted numerous trucking and GPS companies to inform them of the Designated Truck Route as well as the "No Trucks" restrictions..

***Water Restrictions:*** Water use restrictions were enacted throughout the summer in Devens, in accordance with the Devens Water Management Act permit requirements and 974 CMR 8.09. No violations were reported.

***Clean Water Act Suit:*** Mediation continued throughout 2020 on the Clean Water Act suit filed by the Conservation Law Foundation against MassDevelopment and the DEC regarding unsubstantiated allegations of stormwater discharge violations. By the end of 2020, a settlement was reached and the DEC, through its legal counsel and special outside environmental counsel, will finalize the agreement in early 2021.

### **Public Health and Safety:**

***COVID-19:*** The Commission and staff had to shift gears and change to a new on-line virtual meeting world as we learned to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, we had one of our busiest years with Devens life science and innovation and technology sectors booming. The pandemic did have its casualties in Devens as the 2018 Unified Permit for McInnis Cement storage distribution facility expired, and the Applicant did not renew the permit. Devens also saw a significant drop in visitors and foot traffic in Devens that led to the closure of the Devens Grill and our weekly Farmers market. Thankfully, the number of reported COVID-19 cases in Devens remained very low.

In collaboration with the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health and the Devens Public Safety Officer, the DEC monitored construction projects to ensure compliance with COVID-19 Safety Guidelines. The DEC created and posted regular updates on the COVID-19 executive orders and guidelines issued by the Governor. The Commission monitored a number of small outbreaks in Devens businesses, worked very closely with our colleagues at the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, and coordinated with businesses on reported cases, protocols, and contact tracing efforts. Businesses and organizations adapted to the pandemic and stepped up to serve those in need in Devens and the surrounding region:

- Pizza Bella Outdoor patio expansion and Natural Café expanded outdoor eating area.
- Parker Charter outdoor tent classrooms.
- Clear Path for Veterans Food Service – During the pandemic converted the Bob Eisengrein Devens Community Center into a drive through for picking up food boxes for Veterans in need.
- Loaves and Fishes converted their on-site shopping services for clients, to a drive through pre-packed box pick-up for clients.

We are confident that with the vaccine rollout and continued social distancing, masking, and hand washing, 2021 will see an end to this pandemic and bring a renewed revival to the Devens region.



The DEC, acting in its capacity as the Board of Health for the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone, worked on a number of other public-health-related initiatives throughout 2020, including:

**PFAS:** In response to the Environmental Protection Agency and MA DEP’s 2018 Health Advisory alert regarding per and poly fluorinated compounds (PFAS) in drinking water, Devens Utilities completed the installation of interim water treatment facilities at the MacPherson, Patton, and Shabokin drinking water wells in Devens to filter out low levels of PFAS found in groundwater. Testing and verification was completed and these water treatment facilities are now delivering water with non-detectable levels of PFAS. The DEC approved new permanent water treatment facilities for the Sheridan, Patton Road, and MacPherson wells over the course of 2020 (see “Project Highlights” section of this report). These facilities are expected to be constructed in 2021 and 2022. Devens utilities continues to test and explore treatment options and other actions that may be necessary to ensure the ongoing health and safety of Devens drinking water.

The Army, EPA, MA DEP and MassDevelopment continued to provide regular PFAS updates to the general public through the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). The Army also completed a Final Community Involvement Plan (<http://bit.ly/PFASCIP>) to ensure open lines of communication throughout the on-going PFAS investigations. The Army has been updating their website with additional information on their activities and meetings: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/missions/projects-topics/former-fort-devens-environmental-cleanup/>

**Devens Farmers Market:** After the successful pilot launch of the Devens Farmers Market last fall, Dick’s Market Garden out of Lunenburg returned to Devens this summer for a weekly Farmers Market held every Wednesday on the Devens Common. Access to healthy foods is an important part of creating a healthy and sustainable community. Dragonfly Wellness Center, with the support of MassDevelopment, offered free yoga on Rogers Field prompting us to promote both activities as “Wellness Wednesdays” in Devens. The Devens Farmer’s Market brings together residents, employees and visitors to Devens and the surrounding communities, while supporting and raising awareness of the growing local and regional agricultural community surrounding Devens. This year, Maxant Industries, located on Barnum Road, supplied locally produced honey at our market as well. Despite the COVID19 pandemic, we were able to safely operate the market and provide access to affordable and healthy foods. Dick’s offered on-line ordering and payment foreasy , contactless pick up at the market, and masking and social distancing were enforced at all times. At the end of most of the markets, Dick’s donated left over produce to Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry. At our last market in August, a large donation of produce was made to both Clear Path for Veterans and Loaves and Fishes. Our sincere thanks to Dick’s Market Garden for their generosity!



*Devens Farmers Market on the Devens Common – July 2020.*

With limited activity at Devens due to the pandemic, attendance at the market was a little lower than expected. The market operated throughout July and August. We hope to bring the market back in 2021 and continue to support locally grown healthy food for everyone. Our thanks to Dick’s Market Garden, Devens Public Works, MassDevelopment Communications, and Devens Utilities for helping us promote this market!

**Other Health Alerts:** With climate change and global warming trends creating extended warmer weather conditions, ticks, West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis threats have been increasing in Massachusetts for much of the spring, summer, and fall. Working with MassDevelopment, the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, and the State Department of Public Health, the DEC published numerous health alerts to raise awareness and provide the public with tips and resources for protecting themselves and their loved ones from these serious viruses. The DEC also collaborated with the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health to provide access to flu clinics for all Devens residents and employees of Devens businesses.

***House Condemnation Order Lifted:*** in May of 2020, a residential hoarding case resurfaced after a fire. Luckily, no one was seriously injured; however, the fire and the condition of the house forced the DEC, acting in its capacity as the local Board of Health, to condemn the home. This home is one of the existing deed-restricted affordable units. DEC's legal team, Metrowest Collaborative housing, Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, Visiting Nurses and others were involved in counseling the owner and family members dealing with this difficult situation. In July of this year, the house was fully renovated and the condemnation order was lifted. By the end of 2020, the home had been sold to an income-qualified buyer and remains on Devens and Harvard's affordable housing inventory.

### **Transportation:**

The DEC and MassDevelopment continued to partner with Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART), Devens businesses and the Towns of Ayer and Shirley to operate shuttle service in the Devens region. COVID severely affected this service over the course of 2020. MART switched to an on-demand model wherein customers call their office to arrange pick-ups and returns to their Devens workplaces. The shuttle service, coupled with the improvements to the MBTA Fitchburg Line commuter rail, made a reverse transit commute from Boston to Devens possible – filling a huge gap in our sustainability picture for Devens. Changes proposed to be implemented in 2021 to commuter rail service will reduce service. We are monitoring these changes to ensure that the service can be restored and in place for the surge in new businesses locating at Devens. Mr. Lowitt continues to chair the Fitchburg Line Working Group, which serves as the model for the Communities Connected by Rail Coalition – a group of cities and towns serviced by commuter rail service. Mr. Lowitt attends these meetings on a regular basis.

***Advancing Complete Streets:*** Throughout 2020, there were a number of roadway improvement projects that helped improve accessibility and safety in Devens. The Devens Department of Public Works re-paved and re-striped the remaining portions of Grant Road outside of the Emerson Green Housing project (which already has dedicated bike lanes striped). The reduced lane widths will allow dedicated bike lanes to be installed, thereby helping to support slower traffic and safer streets. Once complete, this will bring our total linear miles of roadways with dedicated bike lanes up to 6 miles (12 miles if you count both sides of the road!). This work, coupled with all the recent sidewalk improvements, on Hospital Road and Patton Road (connection to Mirror Lake), furthers our complete streets goals and provides safe and accessible alternative transportation options for Devens residents, businesses and visitors. Devens Complete Streets plan can be found at: <http://bit.ly/DevensCSP>. This plan was accepted by Mass DOT, making Devens eligible for additional state funding to construct priority projects within the plan.

A main goal of the Devens Reuse Plan has been to re-connect Devens with the surrounding communities, and throughout 2020, Devens worked collaboratively with the Town of Ayer to successfully apply for a joint MassWorks grant that would help facilitate better connections between Ayer, Devens and Shirley. The grant will support infrastructure upgrades, including emergency water connections, as well as the construction of sidewalks and bike lanes from Grant Road to Jackson Road along West Main Street. The project also includes low-impact development stormwater management and additional street trees along West Main Street which will help support the 2020 Devens Forward Climate Action Plan goals as well as our Complete Streets goals.



*Existing view of West Main Street in Ayer..*

*What West Main Street could look like with these improvements.*



### **Open Space and Recreation:**

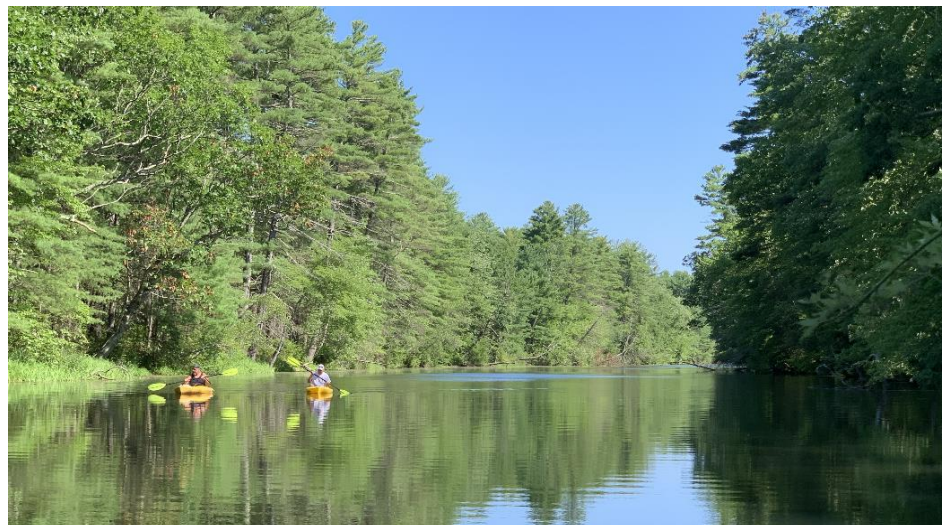
As of 2020, the total amount of land in Devens that has been permanently protected remains at over 1,400 acres. The key focus of the 2008-2013 Devens Reuse Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan was the permanent protection of more than 33% (1,446 acres) of land in Devens. Throughout 2020, MassDevelopment and the DEC continued to work on protecting the remaining additional lands identified for protection along Cold Spring Brook, Willow Brook and Grove Pond. This effort took a back burner due to the pandemic however, by the end of 2020, DEC Staff, along with MassDevelopment, worked with the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to finalize a Draft Conservation Restriction (CR) for the Willow Brook parcels that were identified for permanent protection in the 2008-2013 Devens Plan. Both MassDevelopment Board of Directors and the Devens Enterprise Commission approved the CR and it is expected to be finalized in early 2021. Grove Pond and Cold Spring Brook will follow.

Phase 1 of the Grant Road (Emerson Green) housing project required the developer to transfer just over 4 acres of land surrounding the phase 1 development to the DEC for permanent open space protection. These open spaces are set aside for natural habitat and passive recreation uses (including the potential for community gardens) for the benefit of the public. Future phases of this project will include a central active park space with a playground, trails and lawn areas for active and passive recreation. In addition to the 4 acres of open space as part of Emerson Green, the DEC also oversees the Conservation Restrictions (CR) for the Sheply Hill Open Space areas behind Parker Charter School. This CR and the Emerson Green public open spaces were marked in the field with the DEC's new open space markers (pictured to the right). The markers direct people to the DEC website where we have posted information and general guidelines for using and protecting these valuable resources: <https://www.devensec.com/news/Open-Space-CR-memo.pdf>



The DEC continued to work with the Nashua River Watershed Association on the implementation of the Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Plan and assisted with a series of shoreline surveys to inventory existing conditions and adjacent land uses. These surveys will allow the Council to assess the health of the river and establish a baseline that will help the Council develop an action plan for maintaining and improving the river and its riparian buffer. The full plan and details of the study and committee activities is available at:

<https://www.wildandscenicnashuaivers.org/>. Mr. Angus served as a volunteer on the implementation committee throughout 2020 and in late 2020, the Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Wild and Scenic Rivers



*Looking north on the Nashua River in Devens – just south of Hospital Road – September 2020.*

Stewardship Council voted unanimously to invite the DEC to join the Council as a full voting member. The DEC appointed Neil Angus as their representative, and Peter Lowitt as the alternate.

## **Devens Sustainability Initiatives:**

***Devens Eco-Efficiency Center 2020 Highlights:*** This year marked the 15<sup>th</sup> year the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center and former EcoStar program have provided education, technical assistance and partnership opportunities to help facilities make efficient use of resources and improve the sustainability of operations. The Devens Enterprise Commission provides funding for this non-profit to support its activities that facilitate sustainable business practices in Devens and the surrounding towns.

Participation in the Center's programs and services demonstrated strong growth compared to 2019 early in the year, until the COVID-19 virus required mass closures. Activities were cancelled for four months and held in a limited fashion during five months of the year. In 2020, services benefited 132 commercial and industrial firms, municipal departments, not-for-profits, and schools, a decrease of almost 50% of the engagement in 2019.

***Waste Prevention, Reuse:*** The Great Exchange prevents the waste of items that commercial, industrial and service entities cannot use internally and makes the items available for savings to schools, non-profits, municipal entities and small businesses. Marketing tools were created in 2020 to increase awareness and engagement in this program, including a new logo, brochures and an improved TheGreatExchangeDevens Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/TheGreatExchangeDevens/>



During the early months of COVID, the Eco-Efficiency Center pursued opportunities to donate 350 pounds of supplies. Gloves, masks and hand sanitizer went to MEPA for distribution to front-line workers across the state. Boxes of school supplies benefited families in Shirley and Lowell that needed assistance with home-school materials and hundreds of shopping bags supported meal distribution programs in Ayer, Fitchburg and Lowell.

The pandemic made it difficult for The Great Exchange to gain and repurpose materials for six months of the year; the weight of recovered resources decreased by 78% and participation was down 50% compared to 2019. Still, over 100 small businesses and not-for-profits benefited from the arts and crafts items, classroom resources, janitorial, kitchen, office and shipping supplies, bulletin and white boards, and small furniture items.

The Great Exchange reopened with new safety-focused operating procedures and the option to receive curbside service or visit by appointment three days a week. Compared to last year's routine of two days per month, the new hours make it much easier for institutions to repurpose its extensive inventory and will remain in place.

***Education:*** The EHS Roundtable provided five educational forums for professionals who have environmental, health, and/or safety related responsibilities in 2020. The number of events was reduced by 50% because of the pandemic. Peers shared strategies to strengthen Corporate Sustainability, an industry expert led a discussion of ways to energize health and safety trainings, and representatives of Federal and State-sponsored programs shared information on OSHA trends, EPA's Toxic Release Inventory program priorities and inspection trends, and sources for grants, free training and consultation.



***Learn More:*** More information about how the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center contributes to the sustainable redevelopment of Devens and enables environmental, social and economic benefits can be found at [www.tinyurl.com/DevensEEC](http://www.tinyurl.com/DevensEEC) or obtained by emailing [donaneely@ecostardevens.com](mailto:donaneely@ecostardevens.com).



**STAR and LEED for Cities and Communities:** Building off our original STAR sustainable community certification in 2018 and our designation as a LEED certified community in 2019 (after the STAR Community Rating System integrated into USGBC’s new LEED for Cities and Communities third-party sustainability rating system) the DEC continued to implement, monitor, track and prioritize actions that to further the sustainable redevelopment goals of the Devens Reuse Plan. These certification programs identified our redevelopment strengths, as well as weaknesses, and the DEC has used these ratings as a roadmap to become even more sustainable. Since certification, the DEC, in collaboration with MassDevelopment, has undertaken a Greenhouse Gas Inventory, developed a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan, a Climate Action Plan, a farmers market, and continued to integrate more green infrastructure into redevelopment in Devens. Our most recent collaboration with the towns of Bolton and Harvard will explore regional opportunities to integrate more nature-based solutions into our communities and create a more resilient network of green infrastructure that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while making us more adaptable to a changing climate.



**Devens Forward: Devens Climate Action and Resiliency Plan:** After more than a year of planning and community outreach, the Devens Enterprise Commission in collaboration with our consultant KLA Associates officially released the new “Devens Forward” Climate Action and Resilience Plan. Devens Forward serves as a roadmap to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and prepare Devens for the impacts of climate change that we are already experiencing, as well as those 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.

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, the Devens Forward plan will ensure we protect and enhance these assets. The Plan builds off 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. It also incorporates our recent Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan (MVP) and Greenhouse Gas

### Net Zero Energy Buildings

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, a Net Zero Energy (NZE) building is “an energy-efficient building where, on a source energy basis, the actual annual delivered energy is less than or equal to the on-site renewable exported energy.”<sup>1</sup>

1. [https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/09/f26/bto-common\\_definition\\_zero\\_energy\\_buildings\\_083015.pdf](https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/09/f26/bto-common_definition_zero_energy_buildings_083015.pdf) p.4

Bristol-Myers Squibb, the biologics manufacturing facility, has a LEED Gold certified laboratory/administrative building, a LEED Silver certified cell culture manufacturing facility, a LEED Silver Biologics Development Building, and a LEED Certified Clinical Manufacturing Building, totaling over 640,000 square feet of certified green buildings on their Devens campus.

#### Working Towards Net Zero Energy

The Devens Enterprise Commission has been working closely with the State and other communities in the region to develop a Net Zero Energy (NZE) Stretch Code—an opportunity to require higher energy performance standards for new buildings.

#### Cleaning Up Our Energy Supply

Approximately 10% (12MW) of Devens’ total power supply is provided from renewable sources, including more than 10 MW of local solar generation as well as purchased wind energy from Saddleback Ridge Wind Farm in Maine.

Inventory. To achieve our Devens Forward goals, the Plan outlines 73 ambitious and achievable actions across seven planning elements that will both reduce environmental impacts and improve our community's resilience in the face of climate change. Here is a few examples from each of the seven planning elements:

- **Climate and Energy:** Supporting 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 its ecosystem-services.
- **Public Health and Safety:** Invest in resilient energy systems at critical facilities.
- **Transportation and Land Use:** Expand low-carbon transportation options

The plan includes detailed implementation blueprints for 22 of these actions across the seven planning elements. In-depth community stakeholder engagement and participation played a key role in developing this plan and the resulting goals and actions. We undertook a number of surveys, meetings, and interviews—conducted both in-person and virtually over the past year to get this feedback.

This Climate Action Plan will keep Devens leading by example and serve as a model to assist the region and the state in meeting the goals of the Global Warming Solutions Act by comprehensively addressing climate change on a local and regional level. The full plan is available at: <https://devensforward.com/action-plan> along with an interactive “Dashboard” at <https://devensforward.com/home> where you can navigate all aspects of the plan, check our progress, and find out how you can take action. The plan includes a Climate Action Toolkit for Businesses to assist businesses in Devens and the region with implementing their own actions to contribute towards their own sustainability objectives and the Devens region: <http://bit.ly/DECCAT>

## With This Toolkit You Can Make Progress Towards:

- Reducing your business' greenhouse gas emissions
- Preparing your business for disasters and ease recovery
- Helping your community prepare for climate change
- Conserving natural resources
- Finding funding and support for your business to take climate action

With the support of KLA Associates, the DEC has been sharing this plan with the community and has used various methods to promote the plan via blogs, social media, word of mouth, and even a short video highlighting the key goals and objectives of Devens Forward, featuring several local personalities and businesses: <https://vimeo.com/436601832>.

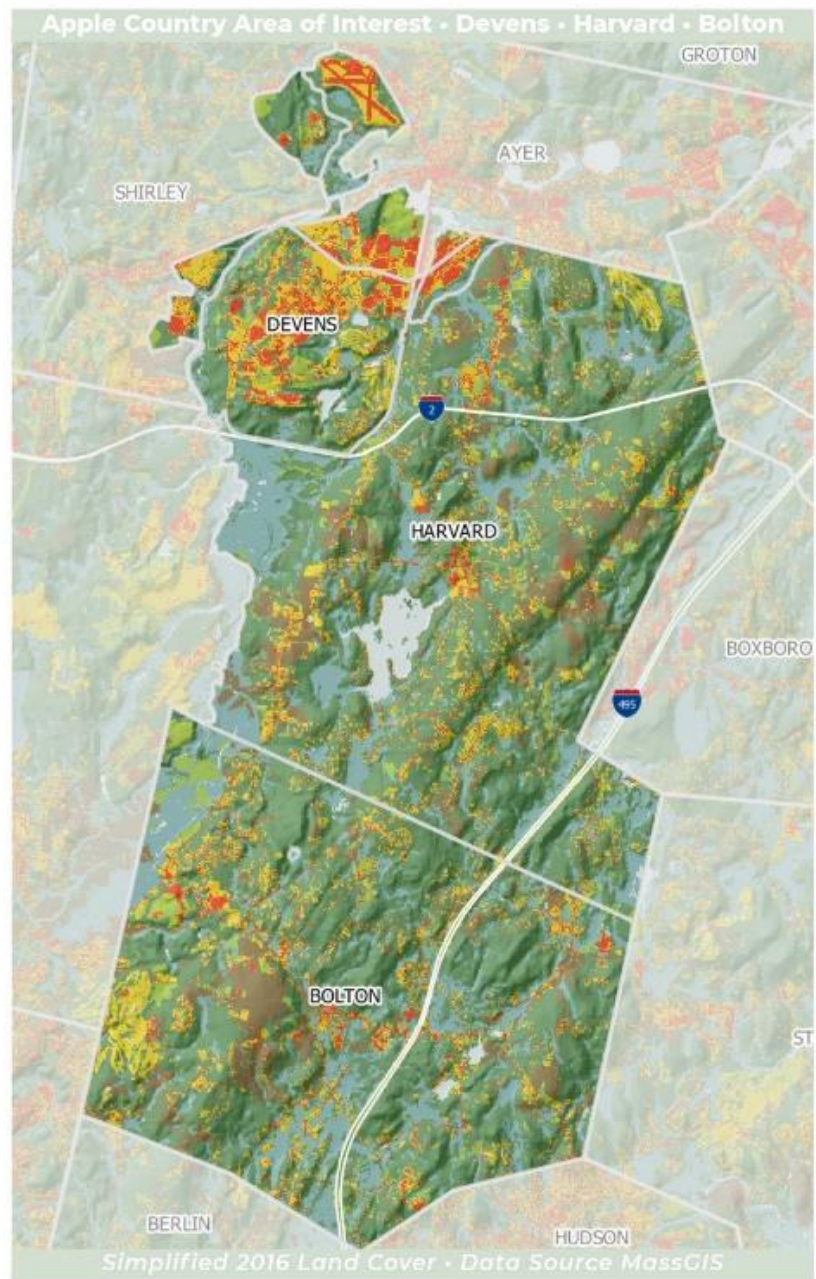


***Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grant Collaboration with Harvard and Bolton:*** The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs recently awarded a \$250,000 grant to the partnership of Bolton, Harvard and Devens to conduct the Apple Country Ecological Climate Resiliency and Carbon Planning and Assessment. The goal of this project is to implement Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) that will increase the resilience and adaptive capacity of the region's ecological, economic, and physical infrastructure utilizing natural resource assets, including soils, farmland, forests, wetlands and other ecosystems. These natural resources are being evaluated on their climate vulnerability/resiliency, carbon storage/sequestration and their capacity to support the ecological climate resiliency and carbon conservation goals of the three communities.

The Town of Bolton is the coordinator through its Conservation Agent, Rebecca Longvall in the partnership with the Town of Harvard's Economic Development Director, Chris Ryan, DEC Director, Peter Lowitt and Environmental Planner, Neil Angus. Consultants working on this project include Gillian Davies of BSC Group, Inc., Jim Newman of Linnean Solutions, Keith Zaltzberg of Regenerative Design Group and Richard Birdsey of the Woodwell Climate Research Center.

The project has engaged the public in virtual tours and workshops visiting different natural and man-made systems throughout the region, including Rogers Field, Red Tail Golf Course, and various low impact development sites throughout Devens that highlight the benefits of using natural systems to help manage the impacts of climate change.

Full details are at: <https://climateresilient.wixsite.com/applecountry>



## APPLE COUNTRY Natural Climate Solutions Project

BOLTON • DEVENS • HARVARD

Home	Story Map	Project Data Viewer	Educational Resources	Online Survey	Contact	Project Team
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**Devens Street Tree Replacement Program:** The DEC and MassDevelopment Devens Public Works continued to work on maintaining and improving the tree canopy cover in Devens through the street tree replacement program. In 2020, the DEC consulted with our Peer Review Landscape Architects (IBI Group) to develop a specific street tree replacement program for Auman and Bates Streets. The street trees along these streets were planted by the Army all around the same time and they consist of mostly Norway Maples –an invasive species in New England. A number of street trees along Auman Street are in various stages of decline. While these trees provide a public

benefit and are considered part of the public infrastructure, many are on private property. In order to remove and replace these trees; we require permission from the homeowner. To avoid removal of all street trees at the same time, the DEC's Landscape Architect evaluated the existing conditions and developed a replacement planting plan so that as dead/damaged trees are removed, they can be replaced with native species to replicate the existing conditions and maintain the historic



*Street trees lining the Historic Auman Street in Devens*

character of the streetscape (large canopy shade trees). The replacement planting plan included a greater diversity of tree species which will help reduce the likelihood of a large number of street trees having to be removed and replaced at the same time in the future. The DEC hosted a virtual public meeting in October with Auman and Bates Street residents to finalize this plan. Residents were generally enthusiastic and supportive of the plan. As damaged trees are removed, the DEC will purchase the street trees out of its Street Tree fund. Homeowners will be asked to help ensure their survival by assisting with occasional watering using Devens DPW watering bags that make this very easy. The Auman-Bates Street Tree Replacement Plan is available on the DEC website at: <https://www.devensec.com/residents/Auman-Bates%20Street%20Tree%20Plan%2020190918.pdf>. The DEC continues to help educate businesses and residents about the triple bottom-line impacts of street trees in Devens and created an informational brochure that is posted on the DEC website: <https://bit.ly/2WnvmTL>.

**Biometrics of Design:** During 2020, the DEC continued to collaborate with Tufts University Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning on innovative research on the biometrics of design - to better understand the 'Unconscious' Human Experience of the built environment at Devens. Our latest work expands on our Phase 2 study from 2019 and explored three key research questions using Devens redevelopment as our study area:

- How can we evaluate how people get around in a new place (wayfinding) and how is this measured?
- How do people perceive and navigate the built environment?
- What design interventions enhance the attention of drivers and pedestrians?

This study looked at how pedestrians and drivers experience Devens and how successfully signs, sidewalks and crosswalks guide them through the streets. We used 3M's Visual Attention Software (VAS); algorithmic software that predicts how people take in a scene at-a-glance, before our conscious thinking comes on line, to forecast how and where people will look initially, which in turn directs their actions and conscious behaviors in their surroundings. The study looked at streetscapes, wayfinding, commercial signage through Devens, and the importance of sign placement. The study found the color and design of sidewalks and visibility of signage that is nearby influences pedestrian movement and interest. In terms of walkability, the results that suggest that sidewalk patterns matter and can direct attention, making it more likely people will actually use them. *Pre-attentive* habits, what our brain gets us to look at without our conscious awareness, are important for walkability as our previous Devens research showed (reported in CNU blog: <https://bit.ly/3jCSsSp>). Patterned sidewalks, made of contrasting colored pavers, can make the brain look at a walkway that it would otherwise ignore. This work has received national attention and was published in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health (<http://bit.ly/Biometrics3>). This research is helping planners, designers and developers plan more functional development that promotes health and wellbeing – not only physically, but also mentally, emotionally, and subconsciously.



**Devens 20/20: Advancing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:** LEED for Cities and Communities and the STAR Community Rating system helped us prove that Devens redevelopment efforts are making a difference locally, regionally, and nationally. However, to understand how these efforts contribute to global sustainability

goals, the DEC undertook an analysis of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and how Devens redevelopment is contributing to their advancement. This report took a closer look at each of the 17 SDG's in relation to the sustainable redevelopment efforts in Devens over the past 20 years and looks at how Devens is contributing to these global goals. The report also identifies where we might be able to improve our efforts to foster even more sustainable development. The full report is available at:

<http://bit.ly/DevensSDGs> . It is

often said “you can't manage what you don't measure” and this report, coupled with our LEED for Cities and Communities certification and our STAR Community Rating, are helping us do just that and continuing to advance sustainable growth in the Devens region.



### DEC Operations:

In 2020 the DEC and Devens Eco-Efficiency Center staff continued implementing voluntary initiatives to green our own office environment, including reducing vehicle miles traveled through telecommuting, and continued use of an electric assist bicycle and personal hybrid and electric cars for site inspections and local DEC business. These efforts were magnified with the onset of COVID-19 and the closure of the DEC office to the public. While the office remained closed to the public, we continued to keep the office staffed on an daily basis and continued permitting, site inspections, and operations in a remote manner. In 2020, these initiatives resulted in significant triple-bottom line savings (see chart on next page).

Year	Reduced Gas VMT (miles)	Energy savings (kWh)	Waste diverted from landfill (lbs.)	CO2 equiv. reductions (tons)	Savings
2015	8,214	1,918	933	8.195	\$1,659
2016	11,588	3,496	458	9.193	\$1,798
2017	11,698	3,364	460	9.293	\$1,809
2018	20,047	3,364	458	11.793	\$2,803
2019	24,161	3,364	458	13.193	\$2,959
<b>2020*</b>	<b>36,677</b>	<b>12,088</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>22.286</b>	<b>\$4,680</b>

\*COVID-19 Pandemic year

The DEC and Devens Eco-Efficiency Center employees significantly reduced vehicle miles travelled (VMT) due to remote work from home and still utilizing bikes and electric vehicles for site inspections and work travel. The average price per gallon of gas remained at \$2.60 in 2020 but even so, the increase in the reduction of VMT increased our carbon reductions substantially. The DEC continues to require full digital copies of all Unified Permit submissions and we distribute correspondence to Commissioners electronically to further reduce copying costs and paper usage. The DEC continued to scan all existing paper files in an effort to streamline efficiency, reduce paper usage, and maximize office space. This is not only saving the DEC in operational, storage and processing costs, but it is also saving Applicants time and money by reducing the amount of paper copies of applications, plans and supporting materials they need to provide. The global pandemic has proven that remote work is possible and the DEC will likely continue working remotely to some degree to help further reduce greenhouse gas impacts, while still providing the highest level of quality service.

## Five Year Review Update:

The Devens By-Laws (Article V.A.) and Chapter 498 require the DEC to conduct progress reviews of the status of Devens redevelopment every five years. These include an analysis of District by District development over the past five years and comparing actual development with the goals set forth in the Reuse Plan and By-Laws. The latest report (2011-2015) can be found at <https://bit.ly/2Scfwfr>. As part of this review, the DEC identified a number of areas that it would focus on throughout 2016-2020 to ensure its actions and decisions continue to further the goals and objectives of Chapter 498 and the Reuse Plan. The following chart provides a status update on those efforts as of December 2020.

### Five Year Review: Status Update – 2020\*

\*Annual Reports from 2016-2019 show yearly progress towards each area of focus. These reports can be viewed [here](#).

Area of Focus	2020 Status
Working with existing and new Homeowners and Condo Associations to streamline residential permitting consistent with new Residential Regulations as well as Historic District requirements.	<b>Accomplished/Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working closely with the developer and new residents of Grant Road to iron out residential permitting issues before they surface.</li> <li>Street tree replacement program for Auman and Bates Streets.</li> </ul>
Sustainable Indicators Report – measurement and verification of sustainable development.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compared Devens redevelopment and sustainability elements to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.</li> </ul>
Continued support and growth of the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center (DEEC) as a strategy for sustainable redevelopment and a value-added feature for business and industry locating at Devens.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEC continues to support the DEEC (majority of DEC Commissioners and staff make up the Board).</li> <li>Annual funding support increase from \$75,000 to \$100,000/year.</li> </ul>
Regional efforts: Develop Regional Affordable Housing Coordinator to oversee and manage new and existing and affordable housing units in Devens and surrounding communities to ensure they remain affordable in perpetuity	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract with Metro West Collaborative Development to provide affordable housing monitoring services for the DREZ.</li> <li>The Town of Harvard joined the collaborative in 2020.</li> <li>Held virtual meeting on senior housing issues in 2020.</li> <li>Renewed regional contract and brought Lancaster into the collaborative, now known as Assabet Regional Housing Collaborative.</li> <li>State Auditors office performed a qualitative audit of our goal to monitor deed-restricted units and found we were achieving our goal.</li> <li>Worked with Harvard to maintain affordable status of an existing affordable unit on Devens that was for sale.</li> </ul>
Working with MassDevelopment, local businesses and surrounding communities to support regional transportation plans and establish additional commuter options for businesses and residents to and from Shirley, Devens, Ayer and Littleton. Work on implementation of 2015 MART Transportation Plan and fixed route bus service between the train stations in Ayer and Shirley via Devens. Continue to support Fitchburg Line reverse commute early morning service to foster diverse commute options to Devens.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COVID caused a switch to on call or on demand services over the course of 2020.</li> <li>State Auditor's office performed a qualitative audit of our goal to create a shuttle service during 2019 and 2020 and found we were achieving our goal. Joint MassWorks Grant awarded to Devens and the Town of Ayer to improve universal connectivity between Devens, Ayer and Shirley through shared-use paths, sidewalks and bike lanes, plus a Devens Shuttle stop in Ayer.</li> <li>MBTA Fitchburg Line Commuter Rail upgrades allowing for a viable reverse commute to Devens. Expect COVID to impact service in 2021.</li> </ul>
Working with MassDevelopment and the Devens Open Space and Recreation Committee on updating the Devens Open Space and Recreation Plan (for 2020-2025 and permanent protection of identified properties.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEC met with the Devens Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee in 2017 to move forward with updating the plan.</li> <li>Conservation Restrictions for Grove Pond and Willow Brook parcels were drafted in 2019 and are being reviewed by the state.</li> <li>The Committee met in 2020 to provide input on the Devens Climate Action Plan.</li> <li>Willow Brook Conservation Restriction finalized and approved by DEC and MassDevelopment. Will be finalized in early 2021.</li> </ul>
Maintain expedited permitting process (75 days max.) as a model for the Commonwealth.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Averaged 57 days to permit 12 Unified Permits.</li> </ul>
Continue to maintain fiscal independence.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020 was another productive and profitable year for the Commission. Audit is on-going.</li> </ul>



*Five Year Review: Status Update – 2020 continued...*

Area of Focus	Status (2020)
Implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs collectively as well as on a project-by-project basis, recognizing the Fitchburg Line improvements and opportunities it will create to reduce VMT for Devens employees and residents (reverse commute options).	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to promote and require TDM as part of our development reviews and assure that such measures are implemented and enforced.</li> <li>Promote Fitchburg Line schedule, Devens shuttle bus circular and the opportunities these transit options creates.</li> <li>Seeking ongoing support of Devens Shuttle from MassDevelopment as part of any future TIF agreements.</li> <li>Coordinating with applicants and existing businesses to support funding and raise awareness and demand for shuttle service.</li> </ul>
Continue integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation into all development and conservation projects and build on creating a network of more resilient Green Infrastructure that can better adapt to changing weather patterns.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed Devens Forward Climate Action and Resilience Plan.</li> <li>Continued to assure that climate change mitigation was considered as part of the development review process and supported the use of our Green Infrastructure Guidelines to the development community.</li> <li>Joined with the Towns of Harvard and Bolton on a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness action grant utilizing Nature-Based Solutions to combat climate change in the regions – with a special emphasis on soil and forest carbon sequestration.</li> </ul>
Improving safety, accessibility and connectivity in Devens, surrounding communities through new trails, sidewalks and bike lanes, and working with MassDevelopment to adopt a Complete Streets Policy and continue to ensure all modes of transportation and accessibility are taken into account on all development projects that impact the right-of-way.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant Road bike lanes added.</li> <li>Shared use bike pavement markings on Hospital Road.</li> <li>New sidewalks connecting new Shirley Meadows housing development with the Shirley Municipal Center and Ayer-Shirley Middle school, as well as the Shirley MBTA commuter rail station.</li> <li>Working with Ayer on regional MassWorks grant to connect to their Complete Streets project on West Main Street.</li> <li>Sidewalk connection to Mirror Lake completed in 2020 providing full sidewalk connection from all residential areas in Devens to Mirror Lake.</li> <li>Joined the Landline group with Littleton, Ayer, Acton and Harvard and began the formation of the Nashoba Greenways Coalition – a regional organization that will be working with towns in the region to connect pedestrian and cycling routes through our region, connecting to Metro Boston as well.</li> </ul>
Coordination with railroad, MassDevelopment and new projects within the Rail-Industrial Trade Related Uses (RIT) District to incorporate important rail connections in the RIT to help further reduce local traffic impacts and facilitate noise reduction efforts	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary discussions with MA DEP and Republic (new owners of Devens Recycling) on additional rail spurs to improve rail operations and reduce truck traffic.</li> </ul>
End point to Chapter 498 and process to reach it	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEC participating in the Devens Jurisdiction meetings being conducted with the Towns of Ayer, Harvard and Shirley along with MassDevelopment and citizens and businesses from Devens. Paused during 2020 by Pandemic.</li> </ul>
Development and Implementation of a strategic planning effort to help prioritize ongoing sustainable redevelopment initiatives of the DEC.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed Devens Forward Climate Action and Resiliency Plan</li> </ul>
Manage Conservation Restrictions held by the DEC as the Devens Conservation Commission.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually walk properties for which we hold Conservation Restrictions and enforce them as needed.</li> <li>Portions of Emerson Green Open Space protected.</li> <li>Emerson Green open space parcels (Phase 1) and Shepley Hill Conservation Restriction boundary markers installed.</li> <li>Open Space education and awareness information posted on DEC website and mailed to homeowners abutting open spaces.</li> </ul>
Continue integrating public health criteria into all decisions (healthy communities declaration)	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly Devens Farmers Market as part of Wellness Wednesdays with Dragonfly Wellness Center and MassDevelopment.</li> <li>Coordinated with NABHaround COVID, the Flu, and other community health related issues</li> </ul>

*Five Year Review: Status Update – 2020 continued...*

Area of Focus	Status (2020)
Forge new, mutually beneficial partnerships with organizations that share similar mission and vision as the DEC and Devens.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial/technical support to Devens Eco-Efficiency Center.</li> <li>Supported NRWA Wild and Scenic Rivers planning efforts.</li> <li>Became voting member of the Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council.</li> <li>Joined the Landline Working Group (Nashoba Greenways Coalition) to support regional bike and pedestrian connections.</li> </ul>
File management and organization to improve efficiency and service to the public and meet MA Records Retention laws.	<b>Ongoing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued record digitization and paper reduction efforts.</li> </ul>

An updated 2016-2020 report will be produced in 2021.

### **Communications and Outreach:**

**DEC Website:** The DEC web site, [www.devensec.com](http://www.devensec.com) continues to be a major source of information on the Commission and its activities in Devens. Agendas, annual audits and staff reports provide a wealth of information to the community and public. Quarterly development updates also help keep the public current with ongoing projects and commission business. Throughout 2020, the DEC updated its website with meeting and public hearing notices, staff reports, important community news and events information, monthly army noise reports, and other general information on living, working and developing in Devens <http://www.devensec.com/news.html>. The website was also utilized quite heavily in 2020 as the Commission transitioned to all virtual meetings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. All application and meeting materials were posted on the website to ensure the public was still able to access information. Additional information on low-impact development/green infrastructure and stormwater management were also added to the DEC website to comply with the new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit that was issued to Devens by the EPA in 2020. The [Devens Sustainability page](#) was also updated to highlight many of Devens success stories (STAR/LEED for Cities and Communities, GHG Inventory and Climate Action Planning, Green Infrastructure Guideline's, Net Zero and Energy Positive housing).

**Social Media:** The DEC Facebook page continues to help inform the public on the work of the Commission and supplements the DEC website by providing an additional social media resource for residents, businesses and interested parties to stay up to date on projects, meeting announcements and notices from the DEC. With the ongoing work and eventual launch of our Devens Forward Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, we utilized [Facebook](#) a great deal more than in 2019 and as a result, were able to reach a broader audience. In 2020, we expanded our social media presence and joined Twitter: <https://twitter.com/devensec> to help us share important information with a larger audience.

Find us on 

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**Community Cable Access:** As the DEC switched to all remote/virtual meetings using Zoom, we have continued to record all meetings and rebroadcast on the local access cable television channels in our host communities. We look forward to the end of this pandemic and the ability to again host public hearings and regular meetings in person.

**Additional Outreach:** DEC Staff continued to promote and raise awareness of Devens role as an eco-industrial park and model of sustainable development. In May, DEC Director Peter Lowitt presented via zoom on Devens to a class on Sustainable Management from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. In 2020, Mr. Lowitt continued to serve on the Future Shape Research team for APA, helping to set a research agenda for Planning for the next ten years. Both Mr. Lowitt and Mr. Angus volunteered with APA to share their experience with climate mitigation and adaptation planning at Devens to help draft the 2020 update to the American Planning Association's Policy Guide on Climate Change. Mr. Angus also presented virtually to the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program as part of the Blackstone Watershed Needs Assessment project on our work at Devens educating, incentivizing and regulating green infrastructure. He also collaborated with Mass Audubon to present green infrastructure in Devens as part of their Saving Land, Water, and Money With Smart Local Land Use Regulations program. Neil also created an on-line green infrastructure course for Green Roofs for Healthy Cities Living Architecture Academy featuring our work at Devens on Health Impact Assessments and Street trees: <http://bit.ly/Devenstreets>. All of these efforts continue to bring a raised awareness of the sustainable redevelopment efforts being implemented in Devens and help us lead by example and assist other communities in implementing similar initiatives.



### **Financial and Performance audits:**

2020 was another fiscally responsible and sustainable year for the DEC. Our financial audit will be posted on the DEC web site at: <http://www.devensec.com/meetings.html>. The State Auditor's office wrapped up a qualitative audit of two of the Commission's five year goals: oversight and management of new and existing affordable housing in Devens, as well as our partnership with MassDevelopment, local businesses, and surrounding communities to establish, support, and improve commuter options for the Devens region. The audit revealed no significant instances of noncompliance and is available at: <http://www.devensec.com/meetings.html>.

### **Outlook for 2021:**

In 2021 the DEC expects to continue focusing on the review of development projects while supporting the eco-industrial efforts of the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center, improved transportation choice, as well as healthy, sustainable, and climate-friendly planning processes. New and on-going projects for 2021 include:

- Amending the Complete Streets Plan to be a Green and Complete Streets Plan.
- Updating DEC's Rules and Regulations consistent with the Devens MS4 permit.
- Assist the Nashoba Regional Greenway Coalition in providing multi-modal connections between towns.
- Continue implementing and tracking Devens Forward Climate Action and Resilience Plan progress.
- Complete the Devens, Bolton, and Harvard Apple Country Natural Climate Solutions Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Project and explore regional partnerships on implementation projects.
- Work with the Town of Ayer and Shirley on Complete Streets connections through the joint MassWorks grant received with Ayer in 2020, including the installation of Bus Shelters and bike racks.
- Continue working with Nashoba Associated Boards of Health on COVID-19 pandemic response; support regional vaccination efforts and wellness of Devens residents, organizations and employees.
- Continued support for the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center growth and expansion of service offerings.
- Expanding regional collaboration and equitable access to locally grown, healthy food options through relaunching the Devens Farmers Market.
- More street tree planting, development of a Street Tree inventory, and formal replacement planting program.
- Build Devens social media presence and create blog posts to better share our efforts with a broader audience.
- Revamp the DEC Website to make it compatible with our Devens Forward Climate Action Plan Website.
- Finalize Conservation Restrictions for Cold Spring Brook, Grove Pond, and Willow Brook parcels to permanently protect these resource areas in accordance with the Devens Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Continue working with MassDevelopment and the Army on PFAS monitoring and remediation.
- Focusing on unified permitting of existing and new projects, including, but not limited to:
  - Phase 2 and 3 of Devens Village Green on Grant Road (Apartment Building);
  - Commonwealth Fusion Systems permitting and build out at 111 Hospital Road;
  - King Devens, LLC Pathway Life Science biomanufacturing campus at 45 Jackson Road;
  - Redevelopment of the Bulge Road neighborhood for a life science manufacturer;
  - 5G light assembly space at former Hodges Theatre site off MacArthur Ave.;
  - Flex space light industrial facility along Barnum Road;
  - Mushroom grow space along Barnum Road;
  - Small light industrial and manufacturing facilities along Lake George;
  - Restructure green building incentive program to encourage utilization and support more sustainable forms of development consistent with the Devens Reuse Plan;
  - Additional upgrades to Devens Utilities systems for PFAS removal and improved water treatment;
  - US Fish and Wildlife Service ADA improvements to existing canoe launch.

Devens streamlined Unified Permitting process and business friendly environment balanced with a commitment to sustainable development remains a key to attracting and retaining these businesses. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 proved to be one of the DEC's busiest years and the outlook for 2021 remains strong.

### **Respectfully submitted by DEC Commissioners:**

<i>William P. Marshall</i>	<i>James DeZutter</i>	<i>Duncan Chapman</i>	<i>Debra Rivera</i>
<i>Marty Poutry</i>	<i>Melissa Fetterhoff</i>	<i>Jim Pinard</i>	<i>Paul Routhier</i>
<i>Dix Davis</i>	<i>Chris Lilly</i>	<i>Robert Gardner</i>	<i>Robert Markley</i>