

# FAQ for proposed Minimum Property Maintenance Standards By-law

## 1. Why is a property maintenance by-law being proposed now?

*With the Economic Development Committee (EDC) as a catalyst, the Town is responding to ongoing comments, concerns, and complaints going back more than five years. This was recently reinforced in EDC meetings with local business owners, and mentioned prominently in the 2019 Master Plan community surveys. A recurring theme was that the poor condition of some properties sends the wrong message about Maynard's business environment. Poor property conditions have been shown to negatively affect some communities, which is unfair to those that have invested in the Town. The proposed by-laws are a direct response to these concerns expressed by both residents and businesses. They will provide Town Administration with a set of standards for maintenance and public safety, as well as tools to encourage, and if necessary, enforce, the provisions of the by-law. The net effect should improve the overall economic vitality of our community.*

## 2. How is the Town helping to address conditions the by-law is trying to correct?

*For the last three years, the Town has engaged in a number of efforts designed to help businesses improve their exteriors. This includes the Business Enhancement Improvement Program (BEEP) grants and the EDC's coordination with the Maynard Business Alliance, the Cultural Council, and other organizations to help local businesses identify any needs that the Town can potentially help address. A recent example is the purchase and installation of bike racks by the Town that will benefit both customers and businesses.*

## 3. Will the minimum property standard apply to residential properties?

*This is limited to commercial/industrial/municipal properties. However, a multi-family residential rental development having 4 or more units is considered commercial. Residential units with three units or less, as well as condos, are not affected.*

## 4. Who will enforce the By-laws or regulation?

*Town staff, residents and business owners can all bring substandard conditions to the attention of the Compliance Agent through Town Hall. Depending on the condition or issue, the Building Commissioner, the Health Department, or the Police/Fire Chiefs may have jurisdiction.*

## 5. What if I don't own the property that is in violation of property maintenance standards?

*The responsibility to correct the issue will fall on the actual party in charge of the property, be it the landlord, owner, lease holder, etc.*

## 6. What if my landlord raises my rent?

*While the Town has no role in suggesting appropriate rents, the Town will proactively communicate that cooperation and collaboration in compliance with the by-law is important to the economic sustainability of the businesses in downtown. One of the goals of the bylaw is to proactively identify deficiencies early on so that costs will be minimized, helping to prevent a more costly situation later on.*

## 7. Will the by-laws result in higher overall rental rate?

*Nothing resulting from complying with the requirements of this by-law should cause a landlord to raise the rent unless it is a derelict property or already a code violation. The Town has no authority to dictate rental rates. It is important to keep in mind that landlords can raise the rents now without making any improvements. If the downtown becomes more vibrant and business increases as a result, then any increase in rent would probably be offset by increased revenue,*

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*thereby increasing the overall profit for the business. We all understand that increases are possible at any time, but the tradeoff seems reasonable and beneficial.*

8. Why would these By-laws benefit my business?

*Every business benefits when we maintain a collective image that attracts business from surrounding areas. We need to make sure we have a high level "curb appeal". Additionally, it protects businesses that have invested in the Town and helps assure that Maynard is a wise investment for the future.*

9. Will this by law apply to Town properties?

*Yes.*

10. Who is on the Maynard Economic Development Committee that helped to craft these by-laws?

*The committee is composed of residents, business owners, representative of the Chamber of Commerce, and Town Staff.*

11. Who collects any revenue generated by either of these by-laws?

*Any revenue generated will be collected by the Town. The money will be dedicated strictly for maintaining and improving Town prosperity, such as potentially funding the BEEP program. The intent of the by-law is not to raise revenue as evidenced by Section 5 (which allows waivers in specific cases), but rather to encourage compliance.*