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## **EDIC Offers Beautification Grants**

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**Agency Applauds Town of Framingham for  
Helping Make Their Return Possible**

Larry Gordon founded his  
company in Framingham 25  
years ago but for the last five

Corporation (EDIC) has [announced](#) it is allocating \$35,000 to assist business and property owners in Framingham who wish to improve their storefronts. While the funds are currently targeted for the Nobsco and Saxonville areas, businesses in other areas of Town are also eligible for consideration.

The purpose of Framingham's Beautification Program is to encourage visual improvements to businesses, which will serve as a catalyst for further investment in the general area. These physical improvements generally include upgrades to signs, facades, surface parking lots, planters, and landscaping but may include other enhancements as well.

The program is open to all businesses in Framingham, but targeted to properties located in visible or high-traffic areas. In focusing on Nobsco and Saxonville, the Town is following a recommendation laid out in the [Strategic Economic Development Plan](#) for the Villages calling for improvements in those neighborhoods. For more information or to see if your business qualifies for one of these beautification grants, please visit the Town's [Beautification Program](#) page.

## Smart Growth America Names Framingham as Top Ten in Complete Streets Policies

[Smart Growth America](#), a coalition that advocates for smart growth solutions to support thriving businesses and jobs, has come out with its annual ranking of Best Complete Street Policies implemented in communities across the country. Framingham, who passed its [Complete Streets](#) policy in 2015, was among the [top ten](#) of the 82 policies analyzed.



Larry Gordon of First Financial Resources

years, [First Financial Resources](#) was headquartered in Natick. But it was clear that the business was expanding and needed more space, and Gordon wanted to return to Framingham. So when his real estate agent found an empty site at One Clark's Hill, he eagerly signed a five year lease and started preparing the company for the January 2016 move. There was one catch - they did not realize that

the building did not have access to the Internet.

"Our business runs on having access to the Internet, so the fact that the cable and phone companies were telling us they couldn't get into the building was a problem," said Gordon, the owner and president of First Financial Resources. The 15 person company works with healthcare, education, financial, and legal agencies to gather outstanding commercial and private debts.

According to representatives from XFinity, they were willing to come into the building but they were concerned that Town of Framingham regulations would prevent them from being able to wire up the property. Namely, XFinity was not sure they would be able to dig up the property to install the necessary cables, since it was January and town by-laws don't allow for such activity on public property during the winter months.

"My real estate agent, Eric Brosler of [Metrowest Commercial Real Estate](#), knew just who to call within Town Hall. Art Robert of the Community and Economic Development office worked with XFinity and let them know that they could do what they needed to do because the ground wasn't frozen yet and they were on private property," Gordon said.

The installation was completed within a week and by the time the company was ready to move in, First Financial was ready to do business once again in Framingham. "It was a rough couple of days for my business manager and me, but thanks to the Town, we got through it," said Gordon.

## Garden in the Woods Opens Its 2016 Season

New England Wild Flower Society, the nation's oldest plant conservation organization, is headquartered in Framingham. Its crowning jewel, [Garden in the Woods](#), opened the 2016 season on April 16th. At the 45-acre botanic garden, visitors will find in-the-ground displays of native plants, including many rare species, in a dramatic natural setting that includes ridges and steep valleys, a pond, a stream, and a swamp. Visitors come from far afield to learn more about New England's plants and to enjoy the serene gardens.

The Society was founded in 1900 to preserve the region's wild plants and moved its headquarters to Framingham in 1972, a few years after landscape architect Will Curtis donated his

According to the organization, "A Complete Streets approach creates an integrated transportation system that supports safe travel for people of all ages and abilities. This approach redefines what a transportation network looks like, which goals a public agency sets out to meet, and how communities prioritize their transportation spending."

Framingham tied with Lynn, Massachusetts and Portage, Michigan to rank 9th among the policies analyzed. In their announcement of the top ten, Smart Growth America said, "these policies are a model for communities across the country."

private garden to the society on his 89th birthday. Curtis's vision for the garden was one that looked like nature. He wanted to "paint a living picture here...a peaceful picture of our land as nature intended it," according to Debbi Edelstein, the executive director of New England Wild Flower Society.

Visitors will see how a public garden evolves, as two areas are undergoing a revival. The historic Woodland Garden is in the second year of a major redesign, which emphasizes the land forms, triples the planting area, and offers more opportunity to linger and explore the plants. Last year, the Society added about 22,000 new plants - mostly grown at its nursery in Western Massachusetts - and an equal amount will go in this season. Elsewhere, the old meadow, destroyed when a 110-foot pine tree came down in a storm, is being redone as an early forest, as called for in the new master plan. That plan, which will shape the Garden for the next 40 years, is grounded in the ecology of the site and also envisions new amenities for the thousands of individuals who travel from across the country and around the world to see the garden.

"Garden in the Woods is a really amazing place, where people from across the country and all over the world visit. It's a real destination for so many," said Edelstein, and "more people who live in Framingham should come visit!" She notes that the Society and the Town have a good working relationship - now she'd like to invite more residents to explore this great asset in their own backyard.



Trillium Week is May 9 - 15 at  
Garden in the Woods

Garden in the Woods is open daily from 10 am to 5 pm, including holidays, until October 15. Today, April 30, the Society is offering the first 500 visitors a free tree in honor of Arbor Day. Upcoming events include National Public Gardens Day on May 6, with free admission for those who bring a coupon in the Society's name from the website of [American Public Gardens Association](#), and [Trillium Week](#) during May 9-15, which celebrates the 21 species of trillium in the collection. That week has activities for kids, workshops for adults, a special lecture, and Society-grown trilliums for sale. Admission to the Garden is \$12 for adults, \$9 for seniors, and \$6 for kids, with children under 3 admitted free. Additionally, the Society participates in the library pass program.

Framingham EDIC

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The [Framingham Economic Development and Industrial Corporation \(EDIC\)](#) was established in 1995 to stimulate economic development and expand employment opportunities in the Town of Framingham in accordance with the town's approved economic development plans.