Zoning Bylaw Amendment Checklist

1. Initiation of Zoning Amendment

* Proposal initiated by one of the following:
  + Select Board
  + Planning Board
  + Zoning Board of Appeals
  + Regional Planning Agency
  + Property owner(s)
  + Ten (10) or more registered voters (petition under M.G.L. c. 40A, §5)

2. Pre-Filing Coordination

* Meet with Planning Department for guidance
* Obtain editable Word or Excel versions of affected zoning bylaw sections or zoning map
* Review consistency with the Master Plan or other strategic plans
* Discuss voting threshold (2/3 vs. majority) with Planning Department or Town Counsel

3. Submission Requirements

* Draft text or zoning map amendment
* Cover memo or summary of intent and rationale
* Citizen petition form (if applicable), with 10+ certified signatures
* Submit to Town Clerk in accordance with local deadlines

4. Planning Board Review

* Planning Board schedules public hearing within 65 days of submittal
* Legal notice published twice in a newspaper (first at least 14 days before hearing)
* Required notices sent to:
  + Planning Boards of abutting towns
  + Regional Planning Agency & EOHLC
  + Select Board and Town Clerk
* Planning Board holds hearing and issues recommendation before Town Meeting

5. Town Meeting Action

* Article placed on Town Meeting warrant
* Present proposed bylaw and Planning Board recommendation
* Determine required vote threshold:
  + Simple majority (per M.G.L. c. 40A, §5, para. 5) for:
    - Multi-family or mixed-use development by-right
    - Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
    - Reduction of parking requirements
    - Increased housing density or lot coverage
  + Two-thirds majority for all other zoning amendments
* Town Meeting votes
* If defeated:
  + Same or substantially similar article cannot return for 2 years unless the Planning Board recommends reconsideration in their hearing report

6. Post-Town Meeting – Attorney General Submission

If Adopted:

* Submit to the Attorney General within 30 days of Town Meeting:
  + Certified vote
  + Final adopted text or map
  + Public hearing notice
  + Completed Form 7 (Zoning Bylaw Amendment Submission Form)
* Await AG decision (within 90 days)

7. Implementation & Recordkeeping

* Bylaw becomes effective on the date of Town Meeting vote or AG approval, whichever is later (unless otherwise specified)
* Update zoning bylaw documents and maps
* Distribute updates to:
  + Building Department
  + Assessor / GIS Coordinator
  + Planning Board
* Archive all submission materials and AG approval letter