



# Rapid Recovery Plan

**Downtown Revitalization  
Attleboro, MA**



# Acknowledgements

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The Local Rapid Recovery Planning (LRRP) program is a key part of the Baker-Polito Administration's Partnerships for Recovery Plan, the strategy established to help communities stabilize and grow the Massachusetts economy as a result of the economic impacts brought on by COVID-19. The plan invests \$774 million in efforts to get people back to work, support small businesses, foster innovation, revitalize downtowns, and keep people in stable housing.

In addition to the planning program, recovery efforts include a Small Business Relief Program administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. This program, which concluded in May 2021, provided more than \$687.2 million to over 15,000 businesses across the Commonwealth, with a focus on businesses located in Gateway Cities, among demographic priorities, or operating in sectors most impacted by the pandemic. Cities, towns, and non-profit entities are using Regional Pilot Project Grant Program funding for recovery solutions that seek to activate vacant storefronts, support regional supply chain resiliency, and create small business support networks. To promote recovery in the tourism industry and support the ongoing My Local MA marketing initiative encouraging residents to support their local economies by shopping, dining and staying local, another \$1.6 million in grants were awarded through the new Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant Pilot Program. Through April 2021, MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program has invested \$26.4 million in municipal Shared Streets projects to support public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce.

In support of the overall recovery strategy, the Administration made \$9.5 million in awards for 125 communities to create Local Rapid Recovery Plans, through the MA Downtown Initiative Program. These plans address the impacts of COVID-19 on local downtowns and small businesses by partnering with Plan Facilitators and Subject Matter Experts to pursue locally-driven, actionable strategies.

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## 125 communities participated in the Rapid Recovery Plan Program

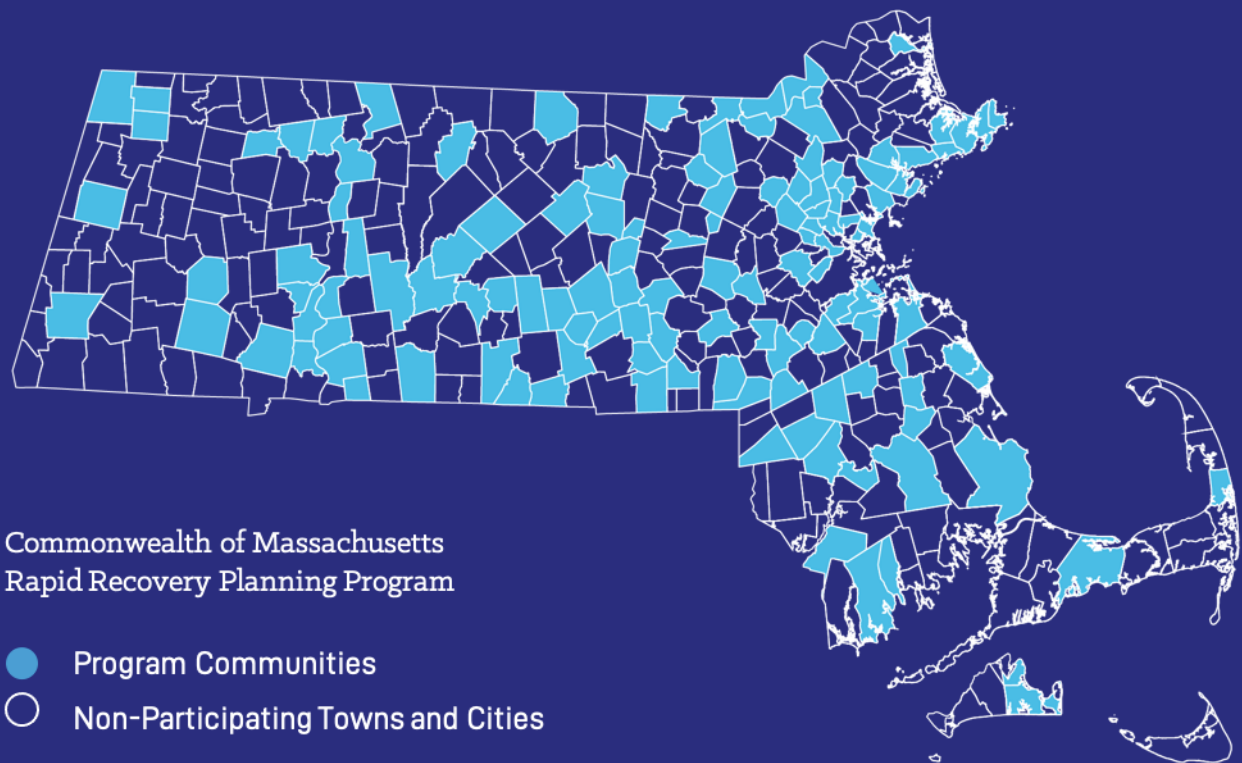
52 Small Communities

51 Medium Communities

16 Large Communities

6 Extra Large Communities

Mass Downtown Initiative distributed nearly \$10 million across 125 communities throughout the Commonwealth to assess impacts from COVID-19 and develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges in downtowns, town centers, and commercial districts.



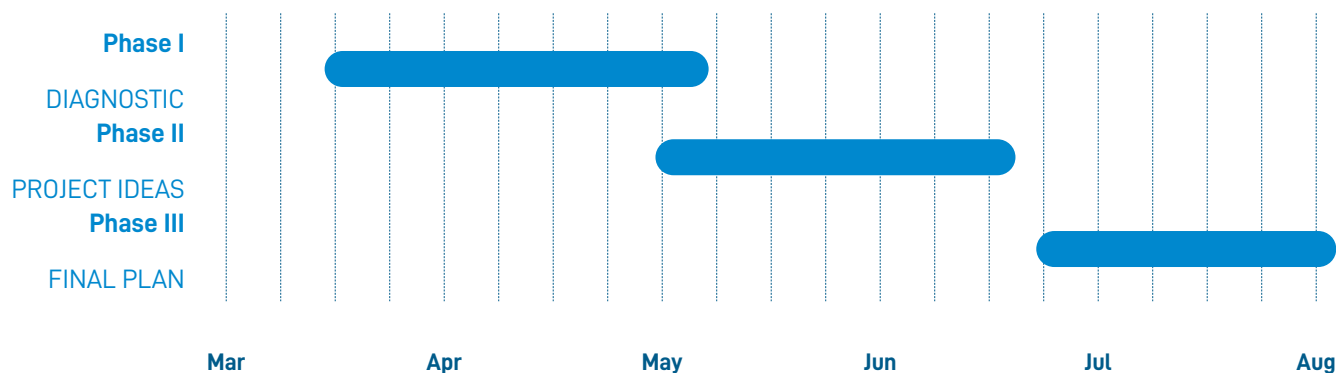
# Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

The Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program is intended to provide every municipality in Massachusetts the opportunity to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges and COVID-19 related impacts to downtowns, town centers, and commercial areas across the commonwealth.

The program provided technical assistance through Plan Facilitators assigned to each community applicant (e.g., city, town, or nonprofit entity) and Subject Matter Experts who supported the development of ideas for project recommendations and shared knowledge through best practice webinars and individual consultations.

Communities and Plan Facilitators were partnered through the program to assess COVID-19 impacts, convene community partners to solicit project ideas and provide feedback, and develop project recommendations. The following plan summarizes key findings from the diagnostic phase of the program and includes a range of priority project recommendations for the community.

Each Rapid Recovery Plan was developed across three phases between February and August 2021:  
Phase 1 - Diagnostic, Phase 2- Project Recommendations, and Phase 3 - Plan.



In Phase 1: Diagnostic, Plan Facilitators utilized the Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework that was adapted from the award-winning Commercial DNA approach as published by the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) in "Preparing a Commercial District Diagnostic" and authored by Larisa Ortiz, Managing Director, Streetsense (RRP Program Advisor).

The framework was designed to ensure methodical diagnosis of challenges and opportunities in each community, and to identify strategies and projects that aligned with the interests and priorities of each community. The framework looks at four areas of analysis: Physical Environment, Business Environment, Market Information, and Administrative Capacity — each equipped with guiding questions to direct research conducted by Plan Facilitators.

## Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework



Who are the customers of businesses in the Study Area?



How conducive is the physical environment to meeting the needs and expectations of both businesses and customers?



What are the impacts of COVID-19 on businesses in the Study Area? How well does the business mix meet the needs of various customer groups?



Who are the key stewards of the Study Area? Are they adequately staffed and resourced to support implementation of projects? Are the regulatory, zoning, and permitting processes an impediment to business activity?

Following the diagnostic in Phase 1, Plan Facilitators, in close coordination with communities, developed and refined a set of recommendations that address priority challenges and opportunities. These project recommendations are organized in clear and concise rubrics created specially for the Rapid Recovery Plan Program. Project recommendations are rooted in a set of essential and comprehensive improvements across six categories: Public Realm, Private Realm, Tenant Mix, Revenue & Sales, Administrative Capacity, Cultural/Arts, and Other.



Public Realm



Private Realm



Tenant Mix



Revenue & Sales



Admin Capacity



Cultural/Arts



Other

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## Executive Summary

# Executive Summary

## A Gateway City Focused on Downtown Revitalization and Transit-oriented Development

Attleboro is a gateway city of 46,461 people situated on the border of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Attleboro grew 6.6% over the past decade. Interstate I-95 and the MBTA commuter rail line connect Attleboro to Boston and nearby Providence. Once a center of the jewelry industry and manufacturing, Attleboro is redefining itself with a major focus on downtown revitalization and transit-oriented development. MassDevelopment's TDI — Transformational Development Initiative — has been working with the City to advance redevelopment Downtown.

Downtown Attleboro has many assets: museums; community theater; YMCA; strong government sector with City Hall, library, and courthouse; historic buildings; a commuter rail station; and long-standing businesses. Downtown is home to 149 businesses (as of spring 2021), and several new businesses have since opened. Downtown has 531,000 square feet of ground floor space with a total of 1.2 million sf of building space. There are 49 vacant storefronts with a 30.1% vacancy rate as to ground floor units.

The largest segment of ground floor space is dedicated to retail uses (31.5%), followed by other uses (29.9%), such as civic, nonprofit, and religious facilities. The leading uses as to number of businesses in Downtown Attleboro by industry sector are health care/social assistance, and professional and technical services, followed by retail. The largest sectors by employment are government, followed by the health care/social assistance sector.

The COVID pandemic significantly impacted Downtown Attleboro. Three-quarters of businesses lost revenue, with 62% of businesses losing more than 25% of their revenues. Half of Downtown businesses were forced to lay off staff. On-site shopping was greatly reduced. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of Downtown businesses reported fewer on-site customers. Half of businesses experienced a loss of over 25% of their on-site customers Downtown. These COVID-19 direct impacts prompted 44% of businesses to stop or defer paying their rent or mortgage payments, creating adverse ripple effects.

Citywide, Attleboro lost more than 1,100 jobs from 2019 to 2020 — 6.5% of all people working for businesses in Attleboro. The loss of jobs and presence of workers, particularly Downtown workers — a key customer base for Downtown — is a recovery challenge. Unemployment among Attleboro residents rose from a pre-pandemic annual rate of 3.3% in 2019 to a pandemic annual rate of 9.5% in 2020. In spring 2020, more than 4,600 Attleboro residents were unemployed, and the unemployment rate soared to 17.8%. Attleboro is recovering, but unemployment in summer 2021 still hovered around 5.4%, exceeding the pre-pandemic rate of 3.3% by two points.

Despite the significant pain, adversity, economic losses, and setbacks brought on by COVID, Downtown Attleboro is open, rebuilding, reinventing, and working to recover. New transit-oriented, multi-family residential construction projects are opening and in construction. Both market rate and affordable housing is being built. One Wall Street is opening and leasing 136 new units. 37 Union Street has started major rehab to create 59 units in an old mill building. More than 500 units of residential housing are in the development pipeline.

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## Marketing and Branding to Bring Residents and Visitors Downtown

Downtown Attleboro has benefited from “good bones” and quality, public investments by the City and the Attleboro Redevelopment Authority in streetscape, lighting, and green spaces — namely, Balfour Park, the Judith Robbins Riverfront Park, and the Ken Dumas Walkway over Ten Mile River. Cuddy Court, Downtown’s newest enhancement, added art, whimsy, and much-needed benches to Downtown. The public realm is good and could be further enhanced, particularly by wayfinding to make it easier for customers to get around, whether by car or foot. Downtown would benefit from more public art and placemaking.

Private reinvestment has lagged, with a number of privately-owned buildings throughout Downtown needing major rehab and renovation. Many buildings need refreshed facades, signage and windows. Despite the considerable public investments in the public realm, the perception of Downtown Attleboro as blighted and dreary lingers. The economic losses and impacts of COVID make it more challenging for small businesses to upgrade properties and storefronts. Yet, the need to upgrade and be visually attractive for customers today is even greater due to the pandemic.

Recruiting businesses and leasing spaces is difficult when nearby buildings look vacant or shuttered, or have peeling paint or decrepit awnings. Appearances matter. Just before COVID hit, the Attleboro Economic Development office was working to launch new start-up businesses Downtown. COVID delayed openings, but these seeds are bearing fruit. Several new micro businesses have recently opened in Downtown, including some by new immigrant entrepreneurs.

Downtown Attleboro’s customer market shrank due to the pandemic. Customers ceased coming because of COVID. The customer base is changing and becoming increasingly diverse with smaller households in Downtown. Downtown Attleboro needs to adjust and reintroduce itself to customers and new people who are moving to Attleboro and/or Downtown.

Recovery from COVID will take time and require persistence and investment. Along with Attleboro and the TDI Downtown Committee, the Local Rapid Recovery Program has developed recommendations to strengthen and speed Downtown Attleboro’s COVID recovery. The recommendations address key issues identified in the LRRP diagnostic and aim to:

**Enhance Downtown’s attractiveness and curb appeal** — sparking interest to come, stop, and spend time in Downtown Attleboro

**Entice people Downtown** — increase awareness, invite and delight

**Expand how Downtown does business** to better serve a changing customer base

**Enable a sustainable model of Downtown management** for COVID recovery and long-term vibrancy and prosperity in Downtown Attleboro.

Recommendations aimed at enhancing Downtown’s attractiveness and curb appeal target window display and signage (an allied TDI initiative), better wayfinding, art in crosswalks, and — in the long-term — lighting Downtown’s bridges. To entice people to Downtown Attleboro, an annual calendar of promotions and branding are needed. A welcome program to invite new residents to shop and patronize Downtown, along with eliminating spoilers like the one-foot rule parking tickets, which mar people’s Downtown experience. Expanding sales channels with helping Businesses Go Online will make Downtown businesses nimbler and more available to customers. COVID recovery and downtown revitalization require not only an updated Downtown website, but also a model for an effective public/private partnership in the years to come.

Although it will take time to rebuild and recover from COVID, Attleboro is positioned for change and recovery.

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## Diagnostic

# Diagnostic Key Findings

Downtown Attleboro was negatively impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Over 75% of Downtown businesses were closed at least temporarily as a result of COVID. Sales for most establishments were down. In-person shopping was curtailed. The federal PPP and Restaurant Revitalization Fund assisted a few Downtown Attleboro businesses, but not all. Construction on projects was delayed, adding costs and delaying benefits. Business openings by aspiring entrepreneurs were put on hold due to the uncertainty.

The Public Realm is generally good, but could definitely be enhanced.

Wayfinding as to places and to Downtown is largely non-existent. The edges of Downtown and the transitions from the commercial heart and residential areas, particularly as to the northern and eastern edges, could be improved. Better sidewalks, crosswalks, and street lighting to facilitate local residents' walking and using Downtown are needed at and near these transitions.

The Private Realm needs improvement.

Nearly every key block has a building in need of rehabilitation or façade and signage improvements. A large proportion of windows lack transparency and window display. Business owners identified storefronts and façades as the number one area where physical improvements are needed. The leading form of technical assistance desired by business owners was low-cost financing for storefront and façade improvements.

Downtown Attleboro has over a half-million square feet of ground floor space with a 30.6% vacancy rate.

Forty-nine (49) vacant storefronts were observed in spring 2021. Since spring 2021 and the lifting of the pandemic emergency order, several new businesses have opened at high visibility locations in Downtown. In total, Downtown Attleboro has 1.2 million SF of space and 149 businesses.

Health Care & Social Assistance, Professional/ Technical Services, and Retail are the top three industry sectors operating businesses in Downtown.

Downtown Attleboro is the civic center with City Hall and local government services. The Courthouse is on the perimeter of Downtown. Downtown has several museums and cultural attractions, including the Attleboro Art Museum, the Attleboro Area Industrial Museum, and Attleboro Community Theater. Cultural venues and the Courthouse were closed to the public because of COVID until June 2021, and some are still operating with reduced hours or operations.

Sales revenues decreased for 75% of Downtown businesses.

The number of customers visiting Downtown was severely reduced due to COVID. Customers shopping at businesses were down by at least 25% for half of Downtown businesses. Pre-pandemic, nearly eighteen hundred (1,798) persons worked in Downtown Attleboro, and many more passed through. Downtown traffic volumes were down 15% in 2020 from pre-pandemic volumes. Commuter rail ridership is still down over 70% from pre-pandemic levels, significantly reducing the number of people using the Attleboro commuter rail stop in Downtown. Downtown Attleboro businesses were hit hard by COVID, and they have not yet recovered.

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## Diagnostic Key Findings (continued)

### The customer market is changing.

Attleboro was among the top 20 cities and towns in the Commonwealth as to new home sales in summer 2021. More than 100 new apartments are scheduled to be ready for leasing this fall in Downtown.

### There are bright spots.

In the first few months of 2021, visitation at Capron Park Zoo was up 53.7% from 2020. The US Census reported that Attleboro's population grew citywide 6.6% from 2010, greater than Bristol County (5.6%), yet slightly behind the statewide growth rate of 7.4%. The estimated 2021 aggregate income of local residents per acre for Downtown Attleboro is \$348, 277, 2.6 times the Attleboro citywide income per acre overall.



*View of new housing in Downtown Attleboro from the walking trail along the Ten Mile River.*



**Attleboro; Downtown district outlined in blue**



Attleboro; Downtown district outlined in blue

Document Path: X:\Massachusetts\Databases\Fox Morabe\mocabr.mxd

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# Diagnostic Key Findings



## The Physical Environment

The physical environment creates the first impression for the shopper and visitor to Downtown Attleboro. It is the setting and environment where people work, shop, and spend time in Downtown. The two components of the physical environment are the public realm and the private realm. The public realm is comprised of elements typically owned, operated, and maintained by the public sector, such as streets, sidewalks, parking, streetscapes, street lights, street trees, open space, wayfinding, and amenities such as seating areas. The private realm includes building facades, storefront signs and awnings, window display, outdoor dining and seating areas, and sidewalk displays.

Downtown Attleboro's physical environment was assessed through a series of site visits primarily in spring 2021, with supplementary visits in the summer.

A welcoming and safe physical environment contributes to:

- A positive customer experience, where customers are more likely to linger and visit multiple businesses
- Enticing drivers, visitors and local residents to stop and explore Downtown
- A pleasant work environs that adds to the quality of life, making it is easier to recruit and retain workers in Downtown
- Attracting private investment and new businesses

In today's busy world, along with the concern and anxiety regarding the COVID pandemic, it is even more critical for Downtowns to be Alive, Comfortable and Easy (ACE) for customers and visitors. A welcoming and well-maintained physical environment contributes to the image of success. People want to spend time in positive, uplifting environments.

**Alive.** Downtowns need to be alive with people. People working. People shopping, eating, hanging out, and living. Downtowns feel alive when there is outdoor display, outdoor dining, people on the sidewalk, and events.

**Comfortable.** Downtowns need to be comfortable and welcoming. The physical environment determines the comfort of visitors and uses of downtown. A comfortable downtown has places to sit, places to eat or drink, some shade as well as sun, and amenities — benches, public art, trees, flowers, restrooms, and trash cans. Comfort includes friendly businesses with great customer service who are welcoming and appreciative of customers.

**Easy.** Ease and convenience are highly valued by customers today. Thriving Downtowns need to make life, access, patronizing a business, and shopping easy. Good wayfinding, signage, well-lit streets, sidewalks, and paths all help make downtown easy and convenient.

Getting around downtown, whether by foot, car or bus needs to be easy and convenient. It needs to be easy to find Downtown and easy to find one's final destination, whether it's a store, doctor's office, restaurant, art museum, or public service. Parking needs to be easy and hassle free, whether it is a car or a bike. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of easy and convenient pick-up and to-go and delivery, which needs to be accommodated Downtown.



Public Realm

## Physical Environment: The Public Realm

The Public Realm features in Downtown Attleboro assessed in the LRRP program were Sidewalks, Street Trees and Benches, Roadbed and Crosswalks, Street Lighting, and Wayfinding/Signage. A scorecard using the statewide framework for evaluation summarizes the findings below. The findings for Downtown Attleboro as to the public realm are detailed more fully over the next several pages.

Feature	Grade
Sidewalks	B
Street Trees & Benches	B
Lighting	A
Wayfinding & Signage	B
Crosswalks	B

### Public Realm Features of Successful Downtowns

- Seating areas and benches
- Sidewalks in good condition and continuous
- Street trees for shade and ambience
- Landscaping
- Clean and Safe
- Trash Cans
- Lighting for pedestrians and vehicles
- Event spaces, e.g. open spaces and plazas
- Public art
- Visible, clear signage and wayfinding
- Accessible to all
- Connectivity and access, with good crossings, transit, parking, curb side management, and gateways
- District branding — banners, signs, decals



Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### SIDEWALKS

*Guiding Principle:* Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate both the flow of customers and spillover retail/dining activity. In addition, sidewalks should be clean and well-maintained to ensure the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

#### GOOD QUALITY APPROACHES TO SIDEWALKS IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*Sidewalk along Park Street in Downtown.*



*The multi-use trail in Judith Robbins Riverfront Park along Riverfront Drive.*



*Sidewalk along the east side of Union Street by the Attleboro Area Industrial Museum.*



*Decorative streetscape and good sidewalks on Park Street.*



## Physical Environment

### SIDEWALKS AND PATHS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT: SOME EXAMPLES



(Left to right) Pathway to Art Museum parking area; Dunham Street at Pine looking west; Sanford Street



Overly narrow sidewalk on Mill Street.



Sanford Street sidewalk.

### DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S SIDEWALKS RATE A FOR THE PRIMARY DOWNTOWN STREETS AND B OVERALL.

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of sidewalks in the study area are cleaned, well-maintained and accessible to multiple users across different ages and abilities.	About 50% of sidewalks in the study area are cleaned and well-maintained.	More than 25% of sidewalks in the study area pose challenges to the pedestrian experience (including narrow sidewalks and lack of cleanliness/maintenance).	There are no sidewalks in the study area.



## Physical Environment

### STREET TREES AND BENCHES

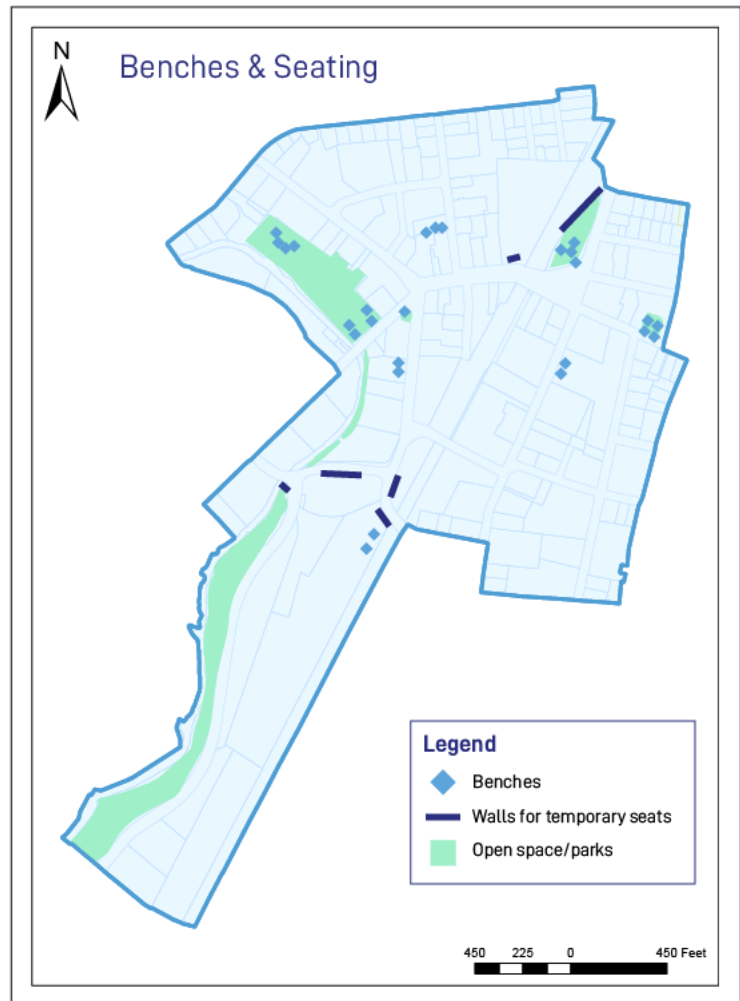
*Guiding Principle:* Sidewalks should facilitate a variety of activities, including resting, people-watching, and socializing. Street trees and benches are key amenities that support such activities and should be made available without disrupting the flow of pedestrians.

Downtown Attleboro has street trees along its major thoroughfares integrated into the streetscape. On the primary streets where there have been sidewalk upgrades, Attleboro has often planted street trees. However, some trees are missing and others need attention and protection. The flowering street trees along Park, North and South Main streets and County Street contribute beauty and an inviting atmosphere, especially in the spring.

Over the past 25, Attleboro has added parks and open space to the Downtown, notably Balfour Park, Riverfront Drive, the Judith H. Robbins Riverfront Park, and the Kevin J. Dumas Ten Mile River Walkway. This has resulted in better integration of Attleboro's two rivers and natural areas into Downtown's assets.

In Downtown Attleboro, one finds most of the benches and seating areas as features within the open space areas, such as Attleboro Common, Balfour Park, and adjacent to the Attleboro Art Museum. There are few benches and seating areas in the commercial areas of Downtown, with the exception of the Senior Center on South Main Street. The locations are depicted on the map on this page. The Cuddy Court project completed in September 2021 added three new benches to Downtown.

**Map of Benches and Outdoor Seating in Downtown Attleboro.**





Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### GOOD EXAMPLES OF STREET TREES IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*Clockwise from top left: Flowering street trees grace parts of North Main and County streets in the spring; Street trees along Park Street; Street trees along North Main Street provide shade from the summer sun by the Bronson Building.*

### ROOM FOR IMPROVING THE STREET TREES





Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### GOOD EXAMPLES OF BENCHES IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*The Attleboro Art Museum has benches with art in the green area along Park Street adjacent to the museum.*



*Benches in Attleboro's Veterans' Memorial Common, one along Pleasant Street and several by the war memorials.*



*Benches in front of the Senior Center on South Main Street.*



*(Left) As part of the Cuddy Court project, the City added three new benches to Downtown.*



Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### ROOM FOR SEATING IMPROVEMENTS



*Some people resort to sitting on the sidewalk due to a lack of convenient benches.*

### DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S STREET TREES AND BENCHES RATE C:

A	B	C	F
Street trees and benches are readily available throughout the study area. They are well-designed, well-maintained, and offer shade and comfort to pedestrians.	Although street trees and benches are available across the study area, these amenities have not been cleaned or well-maintained, and require improvements.	Limited availability of street trees and benches creating uncomfortable pedestrian experience.	There are no street trees and benches in the study area.



## Physical Environment

### LIGHTING

*Guiding Principle:* Street lighting improves pedestrian visibility and personal safety, as well as aiding in geographic orientation.

Downtown Attleboro provides a range of lighting. Street lights lighting both the street and sidewalk for vehicular traffic and pedestrians line most of the streets throughout Downtown Attleboro. On a few streets, there is also up-lighting at the street tree pits that adds both ambiance and pedestrian-scale lighting.

Overall, street lighting in Downtown is very good. There are fewer street lights on the edges of Downtown as it transitions to residential areas. Pedestrian lighting at the edge is important since this provides vital connections between Downtown and customers. Pedestrian-scale lighting is particularly important in late fall, winter, and early spring months when sunset is earlier. At the southern edge of Downtown, the Olive Street overpass, used in the evening by residents walking to and from the grocery store, totally lacks pedestrian lighting.

### GOOD EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC REALM LIGHTING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*Decorative street lights provide lighting for the major Downtown streets. A flag and banners promote the Attleboro Art Museum's Sign of the Times self-guided tour.*



*(Left) Ornamental street lights with municipal banners illuminate the walkway and street along Riverfront Drive.*



*(Right) Lights in the street tree pits add ambiance and enhance the perception of safety in Downtown Attleboro for pedestrians.*

### DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S LIGHTING RATES A:

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of the study area utilizes a range of lighting strategies to ensure safety of pedestrians and motorists, as well as highlight the identity and history of an area.	About 50% of the study area is serviced by street lighting that supports pedestrian visibility and safety.	Street lighting on the primary street in the study area does not support pedestrian visibility and safety.	There is no street lighting in the study area.



## Physical Environment

### WAYFINDING/ SIGNAGE

*Guiding Principle:* A wayfinding system supports overall accessibility of a commercial district. It benefits pedestrians and bicyclists and directs motorists to park and walk. Without clear visual cues, customers may find it difficult to park or may be less aware of local offerings.

Downtown Attleboro's existing wayfinding and directional signage is oriented to motor vehicles and roadway directions, as shown in the two images below. The focus is on roadways

and state numbered routes. Although there is directional signage for Sturdy Hospital, located one-half mile east of Downtown, there are no signs pointing to Downtown Attleboro. There are few, if any, signs for other civic and institutional downtown uses, such as City Hall, the Police Department, courthouse, library, Attleboro Art Museum, YMCA, and the community theater. Places need to be part of a wayfinding system. Wayfinding signage for municipal parking can be found on many Downtown Attleboro streets. The public parking lots are well marked.



*(Left) Directional and welcome sign in Downtown on South County Street near the commuter rail station.  
(Right) State road wayfinding on Park Street.*



*The standard blue public parking wayfinding sign that is used throughout Downtown.*



Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### WAYFINDING/ SIGNAGE



*Attleboro's municipal public parking lots had red parking signs in spring 2021.*



*By late summer, the signs had been upgraded to blue backgrounds. Use of the standard blue for parking helps people identify parking areas. Good wayfinding should use consistent colors and icons.*

### DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S WAYFINDING /SIGNAGE RATES B:

A	B	C	F
There is a comprehensive and cohesive wayfinding system that offers geographic orientation to pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Signage reflects the brand and identity of the area.	Wayfinding in the study area is primarily geared towards directing motorists across the study area. There is limited signage to identify key assets and destinations to pedestrians.	Limited to no signage available throughout the study area.	There is no wayfinding/ signage in the study area.



## Physical Environment

### ROADBED AND CROSSWALKS

*Guiding Principle:* Roads should be well maintained to ensure safety of drivers and pedestrians. Crosswalks that are unsafe or inconvenient to customers may undermine accessibility between stores and overall shopper experience.

The principal roadways traversing Downtown Attleboro are state numbered routes, Route 123, Route 152, and Route 118. These state numbered roads in Downtown Attleboro are designed primarily to move vehicles through Downtown Attleboro. In the 1990s, Attleboro undertook a massive streetscape project and upgraded many downtown streets and roadways. Since then, many communities have adopted a complete streets or green roads policy which encourages a more multi-modal approach to street design.

Pavement conditions of the primary streets in Downtown are good. There is some pavement distress, indicative of drainage and water issues, as on Dunham at Pine Street. Street pavements near the perimeter of Downtown tend to be in need of attention.

The quality and condition of crosswalks in Downtown vary, from excellent to non-existent. At the edges of Downtown near residential areas, there are less likely to be crosswalks.

The bar or "zebra" crosswalk depicted in the photos below is a high visibility crosswalk that a Transportation Research Board (TRB) study found reduced pedestrian-vehicle collisions by 37% to 45%. This is the preferred crosswalk marking style by transportation engineers and safety officials. The zebra or bar crosswalk is widely used in Downtown Attleboro. The city has also added signage for pedestrian crosswalks along South Main Street and County Street.

Downtown Attleboro features the Kevin J. Dumas Ten Mile River Walkway, with a multi-use path along Riverfront Drive, and the Judith Robbins Riverfront Park. This path is used by both bicyclists and walkers. The multi-use path extends approximately one mile. Links with other bike paths have not yet been developed but are part of City's Open Space & Recreation Plan. The few provisions for bicyclists in Downtown Attleboro, such as bike parking, are principally included as part of the park and open space system Downtown.

### WELL-MAINTAINED, GOOD, SAFE CROSSWALK DESIGN



*Good examples of well maintained, safe crosswalks in Downtown Attleboro.*



Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### CROSSWALKS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*(Clockwise from upper left) The bar or zebra crosswalk at Mill and South Main is significantly faded. This is a key crosswalk linking Downtown to the commuter rail and GATRA bus station. A faded outline of a crosswalk hampers pedestrian visibility at dusk. The crosswalk at the busy corner of County and Main Streets is showing signs of wear and needs re-painting. The intersection of Union, Mill and Dunham Streets lacks marked crosswalks. The yellow pedestrian signs help, but painted crosswalks should be added for better visibility.*

*(Left) A bicyclist in Downtown Attleboro traveling north on South Main Street.*



Public Realm

## Physical Environment

### DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S ROADBED AND CROSSWALKS RATE B:

A	B	C	F
Roads are designed to balance the needs of motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians and create a safe environment for all users.	Roads are designed primarily to move motor vehicles across the study area efficiently, with limited crosswalks for pedestrians.	Roads are hazardous to all users.	The study area is not connected by any major roads.



## Private Realm

# Physical Environment: The Private Realm

The private realm is comprised principally of the buildings that frame Downtown streets. Key elements of downtown buildings — windows, facades, signage, and building lighting — all contribute to the user's impression and experience of Downtown. The private realm plays a major role in creating a positive impression and experience for Downtown users. Well-maintained buildings, with transparent windows and good signage, create a positive impression that welcomes residents and visitors, indicating that Downtown is alive and ready for business.

The six Private Realm features in Downtown Attleboro assessed in the LRRP diagnostic were windows, outdoor display and outdoor dining, signage, awnings, facades, and lighting. These elements were reviewed using statewide criteria. The Downtown Attleboro Private Realm Scorecard offers a quick snapshot of the assessment. A more detailed discussion of the findings regarding the private realm follows.

Feature	Grade
Windows	C
Outdoor Display / Dining	F
Signage	C
Awnings	C
Facades	C
Lighting	C

## Private Realm Features of Successful Downtowns

**Windows** - transparent with interesting visual displays

**Outdoor Display / Dining** — spillover activity adds visibility

**Signage** — identifiable at a distance by both vehicles and pedestrians, conveys a visual brand to attract new customers

**Awnings** - add color, provide shade and protection from the weather

**Facades** — well maintained, handsome buildings add architectural detail and interest to Downtown and help create a sense of place

**Lighting** — external and interior building lighting



Private Realm

## Physical Environment

### WINDOWS

*Guiding Principle:* Storefronts that maintain a minimum of 70% transparency ensure clear lines of sight between the business and the sidewalk to enhance attractiveness of storefront, as well as improve safety for the business, customers, and pedestrians.



*These retailers have transparent windows displaying merchandise telling passers-by about their stores and inviting sales.*



*This retailer uses decorative paper elements to tell the story about her store products, adding cheer to the window.*



*The Attleboro High School Athletic Association provides a temporary solution to vacant storefronts with window wrap posters on Blue Pride and AHS School Store products. Although not transparent, this temporary solution is an improvement over vacant windows looking into a storefront with old fixtures, peeling paint, and leftovers from a former tenant.*



Private Realm

## Physical Environment

### WINDOWS WITH ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



*Solid shades in commercial windows create an image that a business is closed or the storefront is perhaps vacant.*



*Reflective film on storefront at-grade windows projects an image of nothingness, adding to the perception of vacancy.*

### DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S WINDOWS RATE C:

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of storefronts maintain windows with at least 70% transparency.	About 50% of storefronts maintain windows with at least 70% transparency.	More than 25% of storefronts have windows with limited transparency.	All storefronts are boarded up and/or have limited transparency.



Private Realm

## Physical Environment

### OUTDOOR DISPLAY/DINING

*Guiding Principle:* Attractive window displays and spillover retail/restaurant activity on sidewalks or adjacent parking spaces can help contribute to overall district vibrancy.

Examples of outdoor display, signage, flags, and plantings convey that these three businesses are open and welcoming to customers.



*Attleboro Jewelers, Dema Threading and Tex Barry's Coney Island Diner use flags, flowers, and a sandwich board to enliven the street and welcome customers.*

### OUTDOOR DINING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO

There is little visible outdoor dining in Downtown Attleboro. Morin's, one of Downtown's largest restaurants, has some outdoor patio space adjacent to its restaurant on its privately owned property, as depicted below. Skyroc Brewery is utilizing the outdoors for seating for tastings and snacks. Other Downtown restaurants, particularly on Park Street, have found that the ambulances en route to Sturdy Hospital along Park Street detract from the outdoor dining experience. Following the diagnostic assessment in spring 2021, Canova's Italian Bar and Grill has erected a large tent on its parking lot for outdoor dining.



*Morin's, one of Downtown's largest restaurants, has some outdoor patio space adjacent to its restaurant on its privately owned property.*



Private Realm

Physical Environment

OUTDOOR DISPLAY/DINING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



Eastern Supply entices customers with its outdoor display of merchandise and a small sandwich board sign.



Skyroc Brewery

OUTDOOR DISPLAY/ DINING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO RATES F:

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of storefronts feature an attractive window display and/or spillover merchandise and dining areas that align with the brand and identity of the district.	About 50% of storefronts maintain an attractive window display with limited spillover merchandise and/or dining areas.	More than 25% of storefronts have spillover merchandise display and outdoor dining that pose challenges to the pedestrian experience.	There is little to no spillover retail/ restaurant activity in the district. Less than 25% of storefronts have spillover activity or outdoor dining.



Private Realm

## Physical Environment

### SIGNAGE

*Guiding Principle:* Signage can help customers identify the location of storefronts and businesses from a distance. Signage should also reflect the visual brand and identity of tenants to help attract new customers.

### EXAMPLES OF GOOD SIGNAGE IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*(Above) Two examples of good signage within the sign band.*

*(Top) Kimochi, a new Downtown business, uses window graphics for signage.*

*(Bottom) Assisted living incorporates signage in the canopy's sign band.*



## Private Realm

### Physical Environment

#### SIGNAGE: ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



*Only a small piece of paper indicates the business in this building.*



*The sign band on this building provide an opportunity for signage that is visible to drivers as well as pedestrians.*

#### SIGNAGE IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S PRIVATE REALM RATES C:

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of storefront signs reflect the unique brand identity of tenants and can be easily seen from a distance of more than 10 feet.	About 50% of storefronts have clear signage that reflects basic business information and can easily be seen from adjacent sidewalks.	More than 25% of storefronts have signage that does not communicate names of businesses or types of products/services being offered.	Storefronts in the study area do not have signage.



Private Realm

Physical Environment

AWNINGS

*Guiding Principle:* Awnings can provide shade during warmer months, enabling comfortable outdoor dining arrangements for customers. However, they must be well-maintained and designed in coordination with other elements of the storefront.

Many stores in Downtown use awnings as form of signage. There are few retractable awnings, but many awnings do have the style of retractable awnings, angled away from the building, providing shade and an overhang.

GOOD EXAMPLES OF AWNINGS



These awnings have dual functions: signage and shade.

AWNINGS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT



The awning framework remains, needing a new material cover or removal.

AWNINGS IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO’S PRIVATE REALM RATE C:

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of properties in the study area have retractable awnings that have been well-maintained and cleaned.	About 50% of properties in the study area have functioning awnings that have been well-maintained and cleaned.	More than 25% of properties in the study area do not have awnings and/or have awnings that are unusable or have not been cleaned and maintained.	Storefronts in the study area are not equipped with awnings.



## Private Realm

# Physical Environment

## FACADES

*Guiding Principle:* Storefronts that use high quality and durable building materials, as well as paint and color to differentiate from other businesses, can dramatically improve the appearance of the commercial district to potential customers.

### EXAMPLES OF WELL-MAINTAINED BUILDING FACADES



*The Bronson building at County Street and North Main.*



*The Sanford Building on Park Street and South Main Street.*

### FACADES NEEDING IMPROVEMENT



*The building façade at Union and Dunham streets, depicted in these two photos, is an opportunity for improvement.*



*This building on South County Street requires rehab and façade improvements.*

### FACADES IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S PRIVATE REALM RATE C:

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of properties have well-maintained façades. Limited structural enhancements are required.	Although most properties in the study area have clean and well-maintained façades, there is at least one significant property requiring structural façade improvements.	More than 25% of properties require significant building façades improvements, including power washing, painting, and structural enhancements.	All properties in the study area require significant façade improvements.



## Private Realm

# Physical Environment

## LIGHTING

*Guiding Principle:* Storefront interior lighting after business hours helps enliven the corridor and boost security on the street.

### EXAMPLES OF GOOD BUSINESS LIGHTING



*The Ashley Building's exterior lighting in the sign band highlights the business and provides ambient light for pedestrians.*



*Bandidos Restaurant has interior lighting in the storefront as well as the body of the restaurant that adds sparkle and light to draw in passers-by.*

### LIGHTING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO'S PRIVATE REALM RATES C.

A	B	C	F
More than 75% of storefronts have lighting that helps illuminate sidewalks.	About 50% of storefronts have some interior lighting that helps illuminate sidewalks.	More than 25% of storefronts do not have lighting.	All storefronts in the study area are shuttered and dark at night.

# Diagnostic Key Findings



Downtown Attleboro has a strong core and many assets, yet COVID hit hard.

Downtown Attleboro is open, re-inventing, and rebuilding.

The LRRP review of the Downtown Attleboro business environment examined the tenant/business mix in Downtown, local anchors and destinations, and business vacancies. A business survey was conducted in March-April to gauge businesses' experience with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to obtain local business owners' opinions on needs and issues, with sixteen businesses responding. The complete survey results can be found in the Appendix. The survey was augmented by interviews and conversations with local businesses and stakeholders.

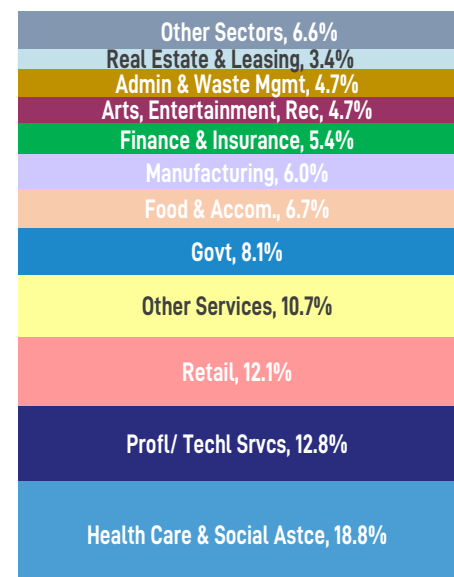
## BUSINESS MIX

In spring 2021, there were 149 businesses operating in Downtown Attleboro, approximately one in every eight businesses in Attleboro overall. The leading business sectors in Downtown are Health Care and Social Assistance (18.8%); Professional and Technical Services (12.8%); Retail (12.1%); Other Services (10.7%); and Government (8.1%). The Food Services and Accommodations sector ranks sixth and comprises 6.7% of the businesses in Downtown.

The leading business sectors in Downtown Attleboro compared with Attleboro citywide are depicted in the table on page 42, *Leading Business Sectors as to Establishments — Downtown and Citywide*. Health Care and Social Assistance has the largest number of business establishments both in Downtown and citywide. Nearly one in every four business establishments citywide are in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector. There are also high concentrations of businesses in the Professional and Technical Services, the second largest business sector Downtown, with 12.8% of all businesses.

Three business sectors — Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing, and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation — while small, have higher concentrations of businesses in Downtown than citywide. Although restaurants are often a key sector in downtowns, only 6.7% of Downtown business are in the Food Services and Accommodations sector, slightly less than the Food Services and Accommodations citywide share of 7.3%.

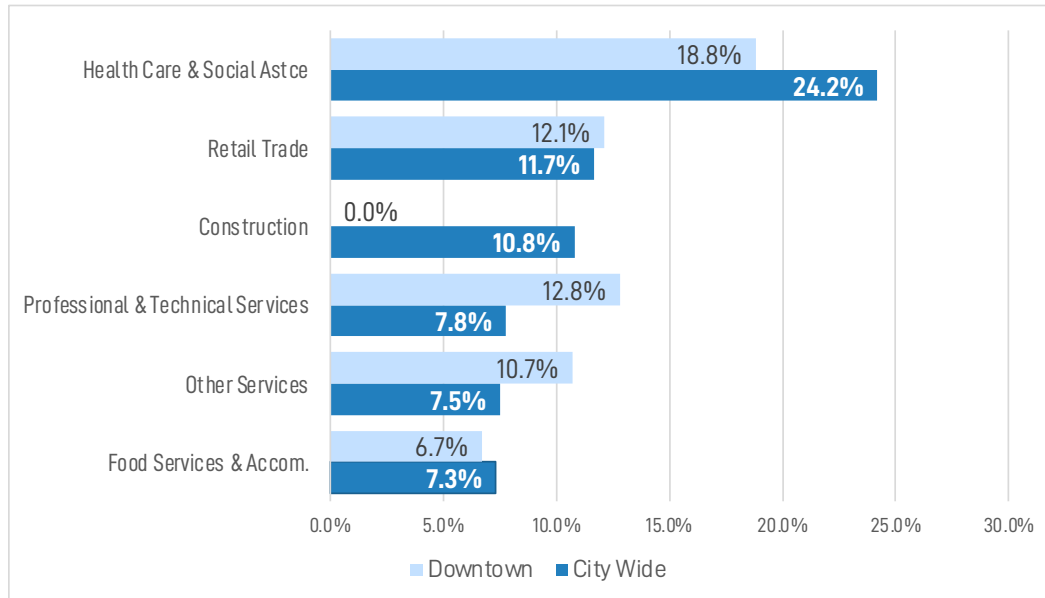
**Downtown Attleboro Business Establishment Mix by NAICS Codes**



Source: McCabe Enterprises, Spring 2021.



### Leading Business Sectors as to Establishments — Downtown and Citywide



*Source: ES202, 2020 annual data for city-wide data and a spring 2021 field survey of Downtown by McCabe Enterprises.*

### DOWNTOWN ANCHORS

Downtown Attleboro is fortunate to have a strong civic and governmental presence Downtown. City Hall, the police and fire departments, and the MA Registry of Motor Vehicles Service Center are located on the eastern side of Downtown. The Attleboro Public Library on North Main Street is undergoing renovation. In 2018, the Attleboro Library hosted 2,240 meetings and events, drawing people to Downtown. The Attleboro District Court, located at 88 North Main Street, is an anchor institution. Downtown's proximity to the courthouse attracts law offices to locate in Downtown.

In addition to governmental entities, Downtown Attleboro has nonprofit, institutional anchors such as the Attleboro YMCA's main facility and the Attleboro Art Museum. Morin's Hometown Bar & Grille, a century-old private business located on South Main and one of Attleboro's larger private employers, is an "institution" and Downtown anchor.

### COMMUTER RAIL & TRANSIT — A DOWNTOWN ANCHOR

Downtown Attleboro is fortunate to have a major MBTA commuter rail station right in its Downtown, as well as a GATRA (Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority) transit center adjacent to the commuter rail station on South Main Street. Situated on the Providence-

Stoughton commuter train line, downtown Boston is a one-hour train ride from Attleboro, with 20 round trips daily from 4:30 am to 11 pm, Monday thru Friday. Weekend service is also available, with nine inbound and nine outbound trips per day. The MBTA station has a parking lot with 780 spaces.

Downtown Attleboro is transit rich. GATRA operates six bus lines that stop in Downtown Attleboro. However, COVID has caused many riders, especially commuter rail users, to pull back. In summer 2021, commuter rail ridership was only 28% per cent of pre-pandemic ridership levels.



*Downtown Attleboro is a busy stop in the MBTA commuter rail system. However, ridership in summer 2021 is only 28% of pre-pandemic levels.*



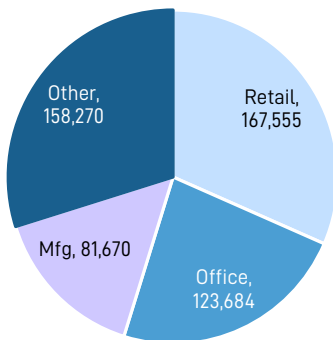
## VACANCIES AND BUSINESS CLOSURES

In spring 2021, there were 49 vacant storefronts. The vacancy rate in Downtown Attleboro was 30.6%. Some vacancies pre-date the coronavirus pandemic. Six business closures are attributable to the pandemic (March 2020 to Spring 2021).

## GROUND FLOOR USES

Downtown Attleboro has 531,179 SF — over a half-million square feet — of ground floor space. Overall, there are just over 1.2 million square feet of building space in Downtown Attleboro. Retail is the largest ground floor use in Downtown, with 31.5% of all ground floor space. Other Services is the second largest category, consisting of recreational uses such as the YMCA, institutional uses such as museums, residential, and religious uses. The other category comprises 29.8% of ground floor uses. Office uses amount to just under a quarter of ground floor space, with 23.3% of all space. Although the presence of manufacturing in Downtown Attleboro has significantly diminished over the past three decades, manufacturing still accounts for 15.4% of ground floor uses.

**Downtown Attleboro's Ground Floor Uses by Square Foot**



■ Retail ■ Office ■ Mfg ■ Other

Source: McCabe Enterprises, spring 2021 field survey.

## ASKING RENTS

The asking rents in spring 2021 for retail spaces in Downtown Attleboro ranged from \$12/ sf to \$18/ sf. Asking rents for office uses ranged from \$18 to \$21 NNN. Some owners indicated an interest in changing uses from office or retail, perceiving a strong market with higher rents per square foot based on interviews with real estate brokers, property owners, city staff, and a review of Co-Star and Loop-Net listings.

## IMPACT OF COVID ON THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

A survey of Downtown businesses was conducted in March-April 2021 to assess the impacts of COVID and to get input from businesses as to needs and preferred approaches to addressing Downtown recovery. In short, Downtown Attleboro businesses lost revenue, experienced higher expenses, had fewer customers, deferred payments, laid off staff or closed temporarily, and made changes in sales and delivery models.



**Reduced Business Hours.** 63% of Downtown businesses had reduced operating hours or capacity as of April 2021.



**Business Revenue.** 75% of Downtown businesses lost revenue. Lost revenue exceeded 25% of annual revenues for 62% of businesses.



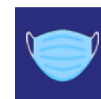
**On-Site Shopping.** 63% of Downtown businesses had fewer on-site customers. Over 50% of Downtown businesses had a 25% or greater reduction of on-site customers.



**Layoffs and Closures.** 50% of Downtown businesses had reduced staff. 50% of Downtown businesses closed temporarily.



**Deferred Rent or Mortgage Payment.** 44% of Downtown businesses reported that they had stopped paying or had deferred rent and mortgage payments.



**Higher Costs.** 69% of Downtown businesses reported that they incurred more expense due to COVID-19 safety measures.



**Alternative Sales and Delivery.** 63% of Downtown Businesses started using new sales and delivery models.

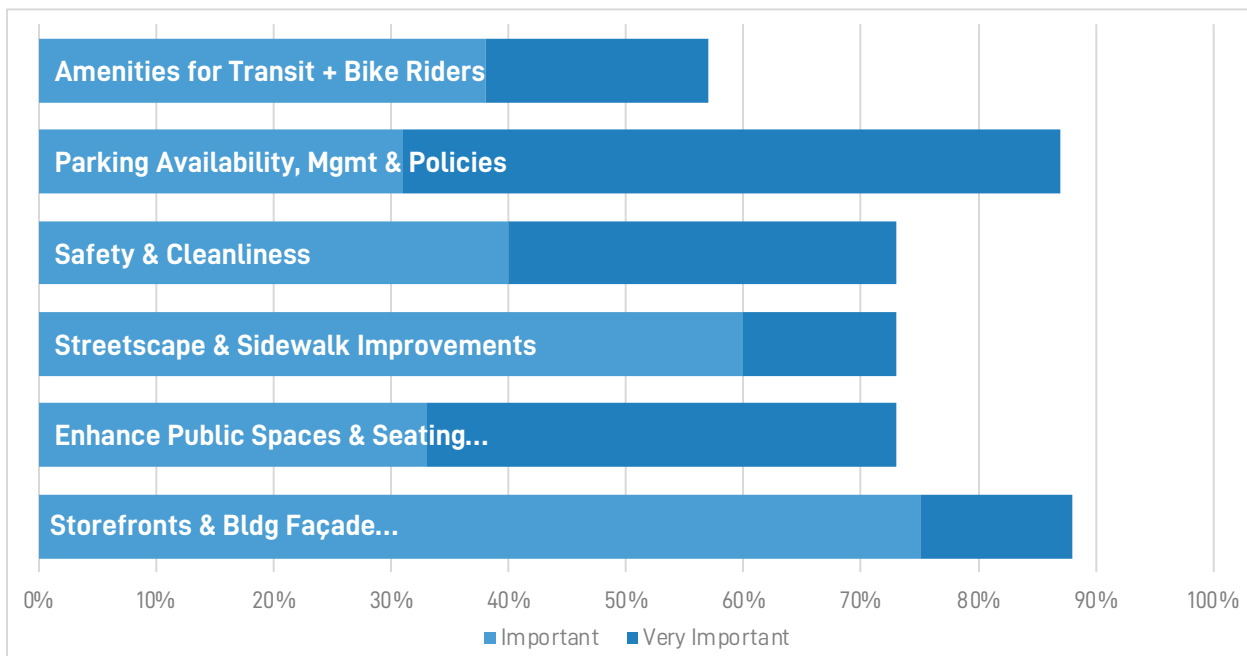


## IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Downtown business owners were asked about what approaches and strategies would better the Downtown Attleboro physical business environment. The need to improve storefronts and facades was a strategy that 88% of businesses identified as very important or important. Improving parking availability, management, and policies was rated as either very important or important by 87% of

businesses. Parking availability, management, and policies was the physical environment strategy that received the highest "very important" rating (56%), followed by enhancing public spaces and seating areas, for which 40% of businesses indicated this was very important. Business owner responses as to "important" and "very important" physical environment strategies is summarized in the table below.

Business-Preferred Physical Environment Improvement Strategies



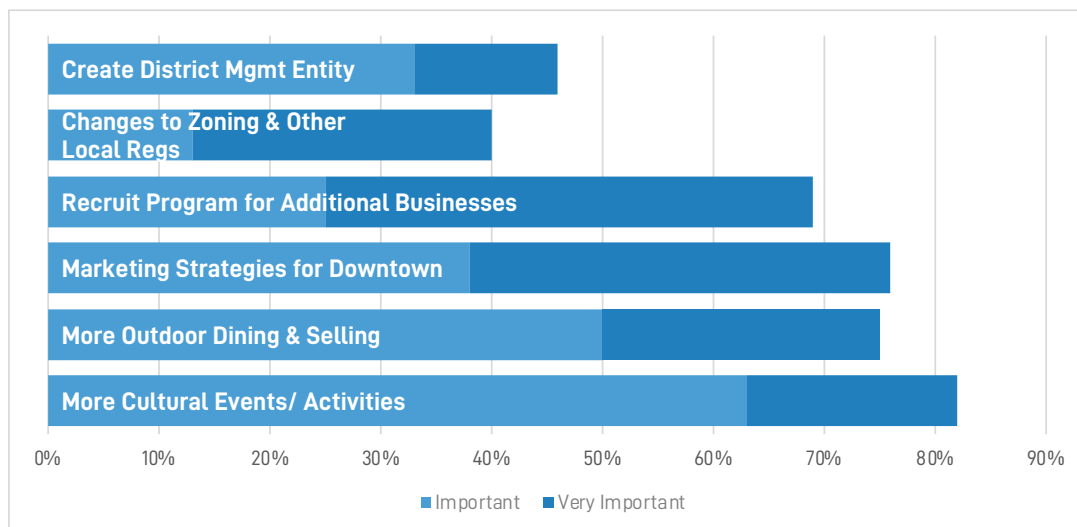
Source: Spring 2021 LRRP survey of Downtown Attleboro businesses.



## ATTRACTING & RETAINING CUSTOMERS

The LRRP spring 2021 survey asked business owners about six approaches to attracting and retaining customers in Downtown Attleboro. Increasing the offerings of cultural events and activities was the most favored response, with 82% of respondents rating it as important or very important. Three-quarters (76%) of businesses rated marketing strategies for Downtown as very important or important, followed by 75% ranking more outdoor dining and selling as very important or important. When examining the strategies identified as very important by Downtown Attleboro businesses, a recruitment program for additional businesses was the highest ranked, with 44% stating this is very important.

### Strategies to Attract and Retain Customers



Source: Spring 2021 LRRP survey of Downtown Attleboro businesses

## BUSINESS SUPPORT

Three-quarters of the businesses expressed an interest in receiving some type of assistance. The top three types of assistance desired by businesses were:

- Low-cost financing for storefront and façade improvements (50%)
- Low-cost financing for purchasing property in Downtown (31%)
- Participating in shared marketing/advertising (31%).



*Attleboro Jewelers, a long-time business on County Street, has a welcoming appearance which greets people as they approach the center of Downtown.*

## SATISFACTION WITH EXISTING CONDITIONS

Business owners were asked about their level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction as to conditions in Downtown Attleboro. Approximately half of respondents registered a neutral response. Fifty-four percent (54%) of business owners indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied as to the safety and comfort of customers and employees in Downtown Attleboro. Forty-four percent (44%) were very satisfied or satisfied with the condition of public spaces, streets, and sidewalks. One-third (34%) of business owners were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied with the condition of private buildings, facades, storefronts, and signage Downtown.

## BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

Sixty-five percent (65%) of the businesses responding are microbusinesses, meaning that they are businesses with five employees or fewer. The vast majority, 81%, of businesses, rent their spaces. Businesses were asked about their revenue trends for the three years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fifty percent (50%) indicated that business revenues were increasing. Retailers and restaurants were the principal respondents to the survey. Business owners in the fields of personal care, arts, entertainment, and fitness, as well as non-profits, responded.

# Diagnostic Key Findings



Attleboro's & Downtown's population is growing and becoming more diverse, with smaller household sizes Downtown.

The number of workers locally has shrunk 6.5% due to COVID, a key customer base for Downtown.

Downtown Attleboro needs to re-introduce itself and re-connect with customers: residents, workers, and visitors.

Attleboro is a gateway city in southeastern Massachusetts on the Massachusetts and Rhode Island border spanning 27.8 square miles and home to 46,461 people as of 2020. Route 1 and Interstate 95 traverse Attleboro. Downtown is in the heart of Attleboro at the intersection of Routes 151 and 123 and the Boston-Providence rail line. The MBTA commuter rail line stops in Downtown Attleboro with direct connections to Boston, Providence and TF Green Airport in Rhode Island. Attleboro was known as the Jewelry City, since it was a major center of jewelry manufacturing.

The customer base for a commercial district typically has three components — local residents, local workers, and visitors. A successful Downtown needs to pay attention to all three components of its customer base in terms of marketing and outreach. Understanding the customer base can help local businesses select the right products and price points and target customers. Municipalities and Downtown committees can support marketing and outreach efforts making it easier for Downtown to be accessed and patronized by a wide range of customers — residents, workers and visitors.

## RESIDENTS

The residential market is an important and growing base of customers for Downtown Attleboro. The US Census reports that the 2020 population of Attleboro is 46,461 people, an increase of 6.6% over the past decade. Demographers had pegged the 2021 estimated City population to be 45,713. The Census count exceeded estimates. Attleboro has 17,927 households with an average household size of 2.52 people.

In the next few years, the number of persons living Downtown is expected to grow. In fall 2021, One Wall Street, a mixed-use project with 136 market-rate rental apartments is opening in Downtown as a transit-oriented-development project. Over 500 residential units are in the development pipeline. A gut rehab of an older mill building on Union Street is now underway. These projects will increase the population of Downtown Attleboro and likely change the demographics.

Sales of single-family and condominium homes in Attleboro in the first eight months of 2021 has been slower than the pre-pandemic first eight months of 2019, per the Massachusetts Association of Realtors. Nonetheless, there were 335 home sales (single family and condominium) from January to August 2021. In 2020 there was a total of 564 closed sales for the year. In July 2021, Attleboro ranked in the top twenty municipalities in the Commonwealth as to the number of closed single-family and condominium home sales.

Overall, the population of Attleboro today is White (81.2%) and is becoming increasingly diverse. The largest minority group in Attleboro are Hispanics, who comprise 9.8% of the population citywide. Citywide Blacks comprise 4.6% of all residents; Asians 5.9%; and persons identifying as some other race or of two or more races comprises 7.8% of Attleboro residents.



Downtown Attleboro is more diverse than the City as a whole. Seventy-two percent of Downtown residents are White. Hispanics are 19.8% of Downtown's population, twice the citywide share. Blacks comprise 6.6% and Asians comprise 6.2% of Downtown residents. Persons identifying as some other race or of two or more races compose 14.6% of Downtown Attleboro residents.

Downtown Attleboro is physically smaller in comparison to the City covering 116.2 acres with a population of 1,250 residents in 567 households. The average household size is 2.20 people, smaller than citywide average household size of 2.52 people.

Examining the median age of Downtown residents compared to citywide in Attleboro tells only part of the story as to age in Downtown and citywide. See page 53, *Age Cohorts: Citywide and Downtown*. The median age for persons living in Downtown is 39.8 years. Citywide the median age is 41.6 years. The median age of Downtown residents is close to the state-wide median age of 39.7 years in Massachusetts. There are substantially more younger people, ages 21 through 34 living in Downtown, than overall in the City. The share of 21 to 24-year-old residents is 9.9% higher Downtown than Attleboro citywide. The number of younger adults ages 25 to 34 years older is 5.4% higher in Downtown than citywide. The age cohort of 35 to 44 years old living Downtown is only 1% higher than citywide. There are substantially fewer seniors, ages 65–85, as well as 55+ adults living in Downtown than citywide in Attleboro. Due to the Christopher Heights assisted living facility in Downtown, the share of 85+ year old residents far exceeds the citywide share. This also contributes to the high median age in Downtown Attleboro.

Downtown residents have less formal education than Attleboro residents overall. Over half (55.3%) of Downtown residents have only a high school degree or less, compared to citywide, which is 39.7%. The citywide educational attainment rate for persons who have some college or an Associate's degree is 28.7%, just edging out the Downtown rate of 27.4%. The proportion of citywide residents in Attleboro that have a bachelor's degree or more is 31.6%. In Downtown the educational attainment rate for a college bachelor's degree or better is 17.3%.

The lower educational attainment rates amongst Downtown residents may be attributable to the youthfulness of the Downtown residents, who are at an age where they are in the process of studying and earning educational credentials. There is also a large immigrant population in Downtown Attleboro who have arrived with less formal education and are working to raise their families and establish themselves. Many immigrants have not yet had the opportunity to complete high school or acquire post-secondary education.

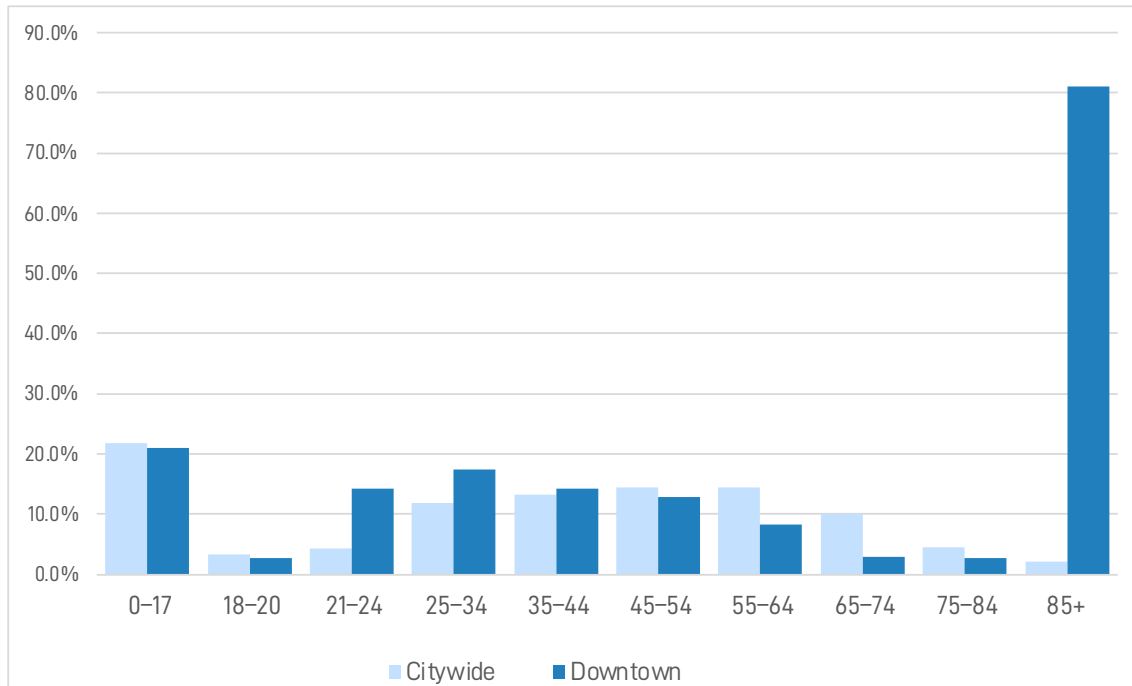
The median household income for Attleboro residents citywide is \$81,617 for 2021. The Downtown median household income is lower and is \$55,974 annually in 2021. Although the household income of Downtown is lower, the aggregate income per acre is 2.6 times higher in the Downtown than citywide in Attleboro. Downtown Attleboro benefits from many households being in nearby walking distance.

	Aggregate Income	Aggregate Income Per Acre
Attleboro Citywide	\$ 1,924,355,888	\$ 132,040
Downtown Attleboro	\$40,463,955	\$348,227

Source: Claritas 2021 and McCabe Enterprises

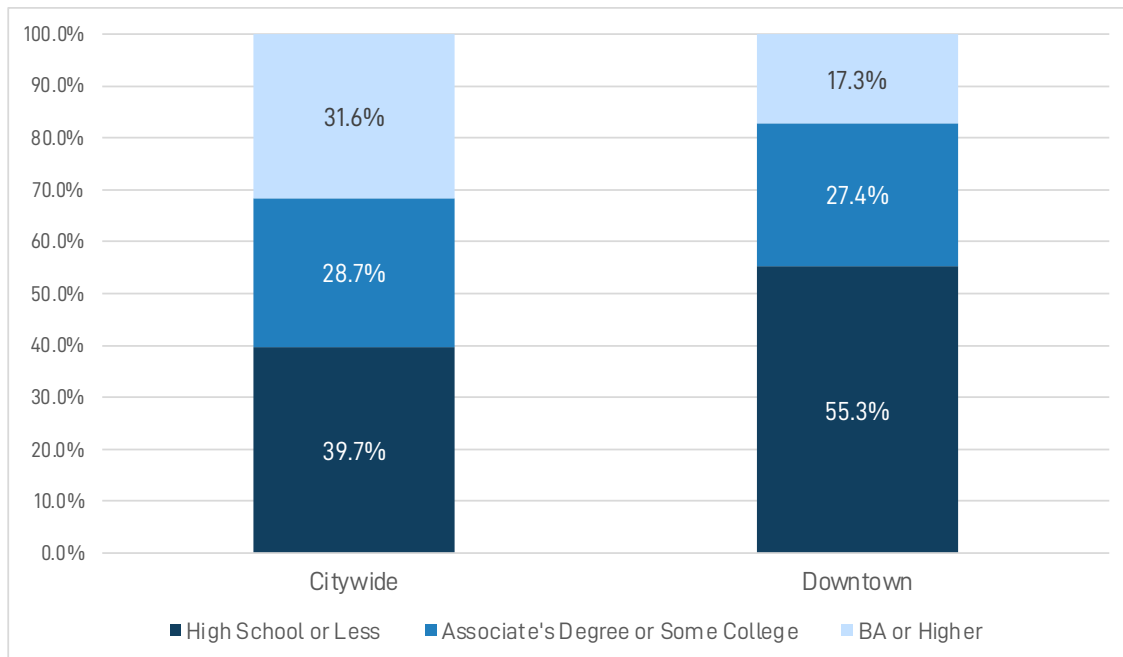


### Age Cohorts: Citywide and Downtown Attleboro



Source: Claritas 2021 and McCabe Enterprises

### Educational Attainment



Source: Claritas 2021 and McCabe Enterprises



## DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO RESIDENTIAL TRADE AREA DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

### 5-Minute, 10-Minute, and 15-Minute Drive Time

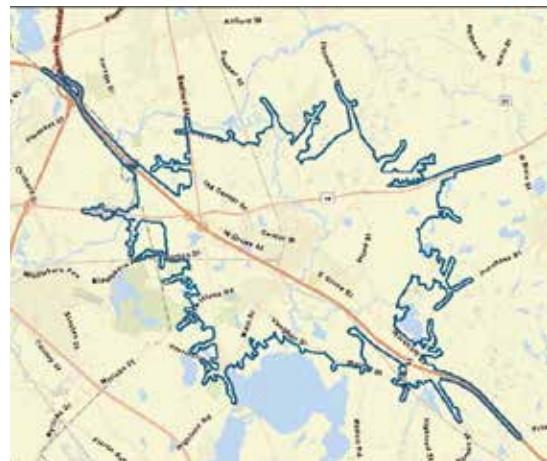
#### Downtown Attleboro: 5 Minute Drive Time

Population: 9,683  
Households: 3,205  
Family Households: 66%  
Average Household Size: 2.53  
Median Age: 40.6 years  
Race: 91.3% White; 3.5% Hispanic  
Tenure: 58% own; 42% rent  
Average Household Income: \$106,954  
Median Household Income: \$79,248



#### Downtown Attleboro: 10 Minute Drive Time

Population: 18,448  
Households: 6,962  
Family Households: 70%  
Average Household Size: 2.62  
Median Age: 42.3  
Race: 92.6% White; 3% Hispanic  
Tenure: 71% own; 29% rent  
Average Household Income: \$116,697  
Median Household Income: \$89,335



#### Downtown Attleboro: 15 Minute Drive Time

Population: 46,116  
Households: 16,252  
Family Households: 74%  
Average Household Size: 2.68  
Median Age: 44.4  
Race: 91.6% White; Black 3.6%; Asian 1.25%; Hispanic 3.6%  
Tenure: 81% own; 19% rent  
Average Household Income: \$126,759  
Median Household Income: \$100,988



Source: Claritas. All data is for 2021.



## AREA WORKERS

Pre-pandemic, there were 18,471 persons employed and working in Attleboro. This included an inflow of 14,637 workers living beyond Attleboro and commuting to work. Persons who work in the community are potential customers, whether it is to buy lunch, stop for gas and groceries, use professional services, go out for drinks or dinner after work, and to shop. Local workers have been an important part of Downtown Attleboro's customer base.

The pandemic has changed commuting and employment patterns. At the end of 2020, the average number of persons working and employed by Attleboro businesses was 16,527 people. This was a 6.5% reduction of persons working in Attleboro at the end of 2020 from the previous year. This reduction is largely attributable to the COVID pandemic. During some months of 2020, the workforce reduction was significantly greater than for the year overall. Depending upon the type of job, people were opting not to commute in 2020 and to work remotely, whether it was office workers or educators. The number of people actually working in Attleboro in 2020 may be less than the 16,527 persons employed, due to COVID-induced remote work. However, it is also likely that some city residents who commuted prior to COVID became remote workers at home in Attleboro during a portion of the pandemic, as well.

In 2020, the annualized wages paid to people working in Attleboro was \$923 million. Depending upon employer and the type of job annualized average wages ranged from a low of \$7,228/year to a high of \$270,504/year per worker. The mean average annualized wages paid to a worker in Attleboro was \$55,848 and the median annualized average wage was \$50,960 per job. (Note: wage data includes jobs with only part-time wages.) People working in Attleboro are good potential customers for Downtown.

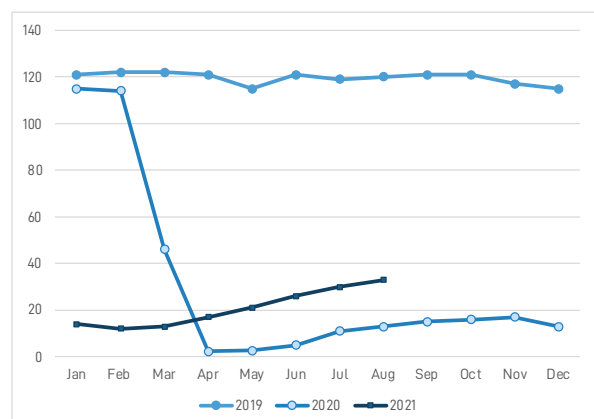
There are 1,803 people who worked in Downtown Attleboro pre-pandemic. There are also several places of employment on the perimeter of Downtown where there are potential customers for Downtown Attleboro businesses, namely the Courthouse and Sturdy Memorial Hospital.

The Courthouse was closed for most of 2020 and the first half of 2021 due to the COVID pandemic and emergency orders closing public facilities. Sturdy Memorial Hospital is one-half mile east of Downtown and employs over 2,000 people on Park Street.

## COMMUTER RAIL RIDERS

Attleboro is a major stop in the MBTA commuter rail system. The Downtown Attleboro train stop has 780 parking spaces. Pre-COVID the parking area was typically full. Today, the parking area is about one-quarter to one-third full. Ridership on the MBTA commuter rail system fell dramatically in March 2020 when COVID pandemic first hit. In August 2021, ridership on the commuter rail remains 72.5% of pre-pandemic 2019 ridership levels for the same time period. Ridership levels since spring 2021 has edged upwards slowly. The sudden drop of train riders precipitated the permanent business closure of a Downtown coffee shop serving commuters. Train passengers come from not just Attleboro but other nearby communities, including Rhode Island to commute by train typically to Boston. Commuter rail service and riders are an important part of Downtown Attleboro's rebuilding strategy and the use of Transit-Oriented-Development to strengthen Downtown. Commuter rail users are residents, downtown workers, as well part of Downtown Attleboro's customer base. Supporting increased rail ridership and returning riders into customers for local Downtown business services will be important going forward.

### MBTA Commuter Rail Ridership Systemwide



Source: MBTA.



## VISITORS AND ATTRACTIONS

Attleboro has several regional attractions within the city that attract visitors from near and far.

**Attleboro Area Industrial Museum** (*top*) is located on Union Street in Downtown Attleboro. It is open two-days a week (post-COVID hours) and hosts school groups about Attleboro's industrial history.

**Attleboro Art Museum** (*middle*) is located Downtown on Park Street operating a 3,500 sf museum that draws over 20,000 visitors (pre-COVID) annually to the museum.

**Attleboro Community Theater** (ACT) typically produces four major productions annually at the 150-seat theater the former Ezekiel Bates Masonic Lodge in Downtown drawing a regional audience. Each seasonal production would have approximately eight to ten shows. ACT was shuttered due to COVID. It is reopening in October 2021.

**Capron Park and Zoo** is a 40-acre public park jewel in Attleboro located less than a mile west of Downtown. The Capron Zoo had 104,037 visitors in CY2019, and 48,521 visitors in CY2020 due to the pandemic. In the first 4 months of 2021, the Zoo had 24,679 visitors, a 53.7% increase over the same period in 2019.

**National Shrine of Our Lady of LaSalette** (*bottom*) and its retreat and conference center draw visitors from around the world. The Shrine is open year-round. From Thanksgiving to Christmas, the grounds of the LaSalette Shrine are lighted with holiday lights. There is also a Reindeer Barn and a display of nativity creches from around the globe. This Christmas light display pre-COVID drew over 250,000 visitors to see the lights between 5 pm and 9 pm in the evening. To see the lights at LaSalette, most cars and buses travel thru Downtown creating a holiday traffic jam on their way to LaSalette.

**Oak Knoll Wildlife Sanctuary** operated by MassAudubon is a 75-acre outdoor area with native forests on Lake Talauega with trails and a nature center. Oak Knoll also has conference rooms and can host events up to 500 people. Mass Audubon also hosts summer camps for youth at Oak Knoll. It is a mile-and-a-half from Downtown Attleboro.

These cultural destinations, parks and open spaces add a richness to life in Attleboro and attract visitors from the region and beyond to the city. The museums and theater are situated in Downtown. Capron Zoo, LaSalette, and Oak Knoll are each very close to Downtown Attleboro. Visitors to the museums and area attractions can be a source of patrons for Downtown Attleboro businesses. This is a market segment waiting to be tapped.

In summary, the COVID pandemic adversely impacted Downtown Attleboro's customer base. The number of persons working in Attleboro was reduced by over six percent. The museums, ACT, and public facilities, such as the Courthouse, were closed, reducing foot traffic downtown. Active outreach is needed to rebuild these elements of Downtown's customer base, and to entice people who drive through Downtown to actually stop, park, eat, play and shop in Downtown.



# Diagnostic Key Findings



## Downtown Attleboro has strong supporters, but no formal administrative capacity dedicated to Downtown.

The revitalization and COVID-recovery response of Downtown Attleboro is supported by the City of Attleboro, primarily through its Economic Development Department. Catherine Feerick heads up the one-person department and had citywide responsibilities for economic development. Attleboro has several business districts and industrial parks, as well as the Route 1 and 1A commercial corridor for which the Economic Development Director is responsible.

MassDevelopment in 2019 selected Attleboro to participate in the TDI (Transformational Development Initiative) that provides a shared TDI Fellow who serves three southeastern Massachusetts gateway cities. In Attleboro, the TDI fellow, George Duarte, is focused on Downtown. TDI has brought added staffing, development expertise, and resources that are helping to advance the development pipeline, particularly transit-oriented development projects, in Downtown Attleboro. MassDevelopment's commitment for a TDI Fellow is for three years, ending in 2022.

With the TDI initiative, a TDI Downtown Working Committee has been established which regularly meets, plans, and advocates for Downtown. It is comprised of twelve people representing business, property owners, nonprofits, and the City of Attleboro. There is no formal Downtown business or residents organization. The United Regional Chamber of Commerce serves Attleboro and fifteen other communities. The United Regional Chamber participates in the TDI Downtown Committee.

The all-volunteer Attleboro Redevelopment Authority has a major focus on Downtown Attleboro. The ARA relies on the City of Attleboro for staffing, primarily the Economic Development Director and the City Planner. Attleboro is fortunate to have a mayor, Paul Heroux, who has a strong commitment to the Downtown. Mayors in Attleboro serve two-year terms.

In short, there is a lot of enthusiasm and personal commitment to Downtown Attleboro. However, there is no formal organization with a sustaining source of revenue to implement and operate desired revitalization and COVID-recovery programs and initiatives, or to coordinate and support volunteer efforts for Downtown Attleboro.



*Think Outside the Box is adding new whimsy to Downtown Attleboro, a project of the Attleboro Art Museum working with the City and the TDI Committee*

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## Project Recommendations

# Project Recommendations




				
Revenue & Sales	Private Realm	Public Realm	Arts & Culture	Admin Capacity
Annual Promotions Calendar	Be Bold, Look Alive	Parking Enforcement	Art in Crosswalks	Downtown Website
Branding	Signage (TDI)	Wayfinding		Downtown Management for Attleboro's Future
Businesses Going Online		Lighting Bridges		
Welcome Project				



*This former mill complex is home to a variety of small businesses.*



## Create and maintain a year-round Promotional Calendar

PROJECT TITLE		CREATE A YEAR-ROUND PROMOTIONAL CALENDAR
Origin		<p>The need and benefits of a year-round promotional calendar for Downtown Attleboro was Identified through discussions in anticipation of the Attleboro Economic Development Office hiring a new part-time marketing/ civic engagement assistant.</p> <p><i>Project Champion:</i> Catherine Feerick</p>
Location/Census Tract		<p>The 2020 decennial census map breaks Downtown Attleboro into two census tracts, CT 5423.01 and CT 5423.02. The 2010 tract was split in two due to population and housing unit growth in Attleboro.</p>
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Low	<p>Low budget: less than \$10,000.</p> <p>The major cost of creating and maintaining an annual promotional calendar is the staff and volunteer time to maintain it. Promotional activities sponsored by the City, Downtown Improvement Committee, local businesses and community organizations will each have their own separate operating costs and budgets. Establishing and maintaining the calendar itself would cost less than \$10,000 annually.</p> <p>Initially the calendar could be maintained through a basic word document or excel spreadsheet. Adding a calendar plug-in to the Downtown Attleboro website would enable other organizations to submit information about events and programs that are occurring in and around Downtown. This would require a very small investment in software to automate.</p>
Timeframe	 Short	<p>Creating a promotional calendar for the balance of 2021 and for 2022 should start immediately — within the next 60 days.</p>
Risks	 Low	<p>Establishing an annual promotional calendar is a low risk activity. The biggest challenge will likely be setting aside the time to strategically plan.</p>
Key Performance Indicators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and maintenance of an annual promotional calendar for Downtown Attleboro.</li> <li>At least one promotional event per quarter focused on Downtown.</li> <li>A mix of type of promotional events, including at minimum one or more retail / businesses sale / promotion events; an image-building event for Downtown; and a special event.</li> <li>Increased foot traffic and customer patronage in Downtown Attleboro.</li> </ul>
Partners & Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TDI Downtown Committee</li> <li>Local Merchants and Businesspeople</li> <li>United Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>The City of Attleboro's IT Department could assist with adding a calendar listing widget to the website opening up participation on creating and maintaining a promotional calendar, or this can be included as part of the planned upgrade in the Downtown Attleboro website.</li> </ul>



## Revenue & Sales

### Create and maintain a year-round Promotional Calendar (continued)

#### DIAGNOSTIC/ COVID-19 IMPACTS

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly two-thirds (63%) of Downtown Attleboro businesses experienced a loss of on-site customers and shoppers. Half of all businesses experienced over a 25% reduction in the number of on-site customers. This resulted in over 75% of businesses losing revenue because of COVID. Half (50%) of Downtown Attleboro businesses experienced a revenue loss of 25% or greater of their annual revenues as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This loss of on-site customers and revenue, has caused a loss of jobs Downtown — at least 50% of businesses laid off staff. Nearly half (44%) of businesses stopped or deferred rental and mortgage payments, creating many adverse ripple effects. Attleboro's commuter rail station is a source of customers. However, with the pandemic MBTA commuter rail ridership systemwide is down 72.5% from pre-pandemic levels. There is a clear need to bring back customers to Downtown as part of COVID recovery.

In addition, Attleboro has been engaged in on an approved urban renewal plan where to transform Downtown by increasing residential and mixed-use development and take advantage of Downtown's proximity to the commuter rail station. The pandemic caused delays in construction and slow downs in the development process. Nonetheless, One Wall Street, a mixed-use development, with 136 residential units is opening fall 2021 and has been actively leasing. Another former mill building has started a gut rehab project for more housing. There are 500 residential units in the development pipeline for Downtown. In July, Attleboro was amongst the top twenty communities in the Commonwealth as to residential single family and condominium home sales.



*Jewelry City Steampunk Festival, 2019*

As part of COVID recovery, it is essential for Downtown Attleboro to re-introduce itself to its customer base and new residents.

Although there have been well-attended special events, such as the Jewelry City Steampunk Festival in Downtown, this and other events were suspended due to COVID in 2020 and much of 2021. Recovery from the COVID pandemic requires rebuilding foot traffic in Downtown and business sales. Using an annual promotional calendar will help create a consistent and strategic year-round promotion and outreach as part of business and Downtown recovery.

Downtown Attleboro does not have a singular entity coordinating and promoting Downtown and local businesses. Special events are initiated by a range of organizations, ad hoc groups and entities in Attleboro. This void, combined with the significant adverse impacts of COVID on small Downtown businesses, is prompting the need for the City and city staff to take on a more active role in Downtown promotion.



## Create and maintain a year-round Promotional Calendar (continued)

### Actions

- Create and maintain an annual promotional calendar for Downtown Attleboro for the next fifteen months — October 2021 through December 2023.
- Begin with an internal annual promotional event calendar to develop a promotional work plan.
- Identify existing events by type — sales, image-building, special events.
- Assess the need for additional promotional events — gaps in the calendar or in type of events, e.g., all special events and few, if any, events aimed at directly promoting business and business sales.
- Develop needed promotional events by working with partners.
- Apply a strategic lens to promotion. Identify the purpose of each promotion — the goals, target audience, potential benefits and costs of each promotion, and success measures.
- Assess the potential for creation of retail tie-ins to existing community events in Attleboro, particularly events that occur in or near Downtown. What is the potential, if any, for Downtown businesses to create retail tie-ins and take advantage of large numbers of people participating in events, such as the Jewelry City Steam Punk Festival, re-opening of the Attleboro Community Theater and other cultural institutions downtown, Wednesday night markets, Hike Attleboro Day, and LaSalette Christmas Lights, etc.
- Use the annual promotional calendar as an internal planning tool, including the scheduling of advertising, marketing, news releases, and social media postings.
- Share an external version of the Annual Calendar with Downtown businesses, enabling owners to incorporate the calendar into their own marketing and business planning.
- Develop a version of the annual promotions calendar that can be posted on the web and shared with the general public.
- Invite other organizations and entities to list their events on a public version of the annual calendar.
- Evaluate annually past promotions and plan for next year.
- Repeat annual promotion calendar-making process on an annual basis for successive years.

### PROCESS

Creating an Annual Promotions Calendar is a process of developing a year-long work plan aimed at helping with COVID recovery, but also creating a flourishing Downtown. Promotions help draw people, increase awareness of Downtown, and connect residents, local workers, and visitors with Downtown businesses.

Creation of an annual promotions calendar initially is an internal planning tool to foster a consistent series of promotions that benefit Downtown throughout the entire year. A good promotions calendar includes events that are directly aimed at promoting business sales and making cash registers sing, as well as special events to draw people Downtown, or events to enhance the image of Downtown Attleboro.



## Create and maintain a year-round Promotional Calendar (continued)

**Sales promotions do not need to be events centered around discounts.** Promotional sales events can focus on various target audiences, such as new home buyers, outdoors people, couples such as a Valentine Day's through promotion, district-wide window display themes, etc. Some promotional sales focus on creating experiences for people, so a promotional event centered around the culinary diversity of downtown restaurants can draw people and create an experience and relationship. In-store or in-restaurant workshops and tastings can be successful type of promotions,

**Image building promotions** for Downtown Attleboro can help Attleboro let local and regional residents of the changes and improvements occurring in Attleboro. Image building events can also be targeted to property owners and investors.

**Special events focus on drawing people and animating Downtown.** People like to gather and be part of vibrant places. Special events add vibrancy. Successful special events include music, food, overlapping activities, and something for people of all of ages. Giveaways, such as a balloon, memento, or free door prize or raffle, add to a special event's success.

**The creation of an annual promotions calendar enables more effective planning for shared advertising and marketing.** An external version of annual calendar distributed to all Downtown businesses allows businesses owners to participate. Business owners can then be prepared to participate with the right product mix in-store and strategically use their own limited marketing dollars and staff time to take advantage of downtown promotions to increase sales.

**An external version of the annual promotions calendar helps invite others to participate and come Downtown.** In some communities, the public annual Downtown promotions calendar becomes the community calendar with organizations contributing information on their event plans. This helps Downtown. Businesses may not be aware of events, for example, planned by local community groups, area museums, the Parks Department, arts and environmental groups, youth and the faith community in the Downtown. By adding all of these events into one public annual calendar, people can become more aware of Downtown and its many offerings. Use of a calendar plug-in as part of the Downtown Attleboro website can help automate some of this function.

The annual calendar can grow into a solid community information tool which people regularly check. This will help think of Downtown Attleboro as the community center and trusted source of information about what's happening in Downtown. The long-term by-product is increase numbers of people coming to downtown and more partners for promotion.

### RESOURCES




National Main Street Center,  
[www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org)

Regional Tourism Boards are useful examples on maintaining and publicizing an annual calendar of events.

Cambridge Office of Tourism has a very user-friendly calendar.  
<https://www.cambridgeusa.org/events>



## Create a Downtown Attleboro Brand

PROJECT TITLE		BRANDING DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO
Origin		<p>Contributors: The need for branding Downtown Attleboro was identified by several key stakeholders, including the Mayor, Economic Development Director, Planning Director, TDI Fellow, and downtown property owners and businesses in several interviews and meetings. There is broad support for branding Downtown Attleboro.</p> <p>Project Champion will be Catherine Feerick, Attleboro Economic Development Director. In the next few months, Feerick will be hiring a part-time marketing assistant, who will help contribute to communications that can augment branding for Downtown Attleboro.</p>
Location/Census Tract		Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial Census tracts).
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Medium	<p>Budget: \$80,000 to \$200,000 for full-scale branding study \$20,000 for basic logo development with tag line and colors</p> <p>Potential Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ MDI</li><li>■ TDI</li><li>■ City</li><li>■ Possibly American Rescue Plan</li><li>■ Local business and development partners</li><li>■ Local Foundations and private philanthropy</li><li>■ Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)</li></ul> <p>Funding sources could include opportunities linked to particular sectors such as: arts &amp; culture, business development, open space.</p>
Timeframe	 Short	<p>Need: Immediate</p> <p>Could commence branding study after securing funding: estimate 6 months advance</p> <p>Branding Study: 3 to 6 months.</p>
Risks	 Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Branding is a long-term strategy.</li><li>2. Branding is often thought-of as visual elements, such as logo and color, but it is more. The risk is that people will think it is only a logo and colors.</li><li>3. Another risk is that key players may not fully embrace the imaging and brand identity developed.</li><li>4. Sustaining a comprehensive, integrated strategy over time is implicitly risky. Good branding requires continuous, multi-layered and multi-channel strategy to effectively establish brand awareness, brand consideration and brand action.</li></ol>
Key Performance Indicators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Increase awareness of the "new" Downtown Attleboro</li><li>■ An identity and brand image (logo, colors, image) that is widely embraced and adopted by Attleboro</li></ul>



## Create a Downtown Attleboro Brand (continued)

<b>Partners &amp; Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Economic Development Office, City of Attleboro</li><li>■ MassDevelopment TDI</li><li>■ TDI Committee (de facto Downtown Committee)</li><li>■ Planning Department</li><li>■ Mayor's Office</li><li>■ United Chamber of Commerce</li><li>■ Attleboro Redevelopment Authority</li><li>■ Businesses and Institutions</li></ul>
<b>Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts</b>	<p>Per the LRRP Business Survey, 76% of businesses desire a market strategy and marketing of Downtown. In part, this desire for increase marketing is a response to COVID, the desire of businesses to generate more customers to help with recovery. In Downtown Attleboro 75% of businesses lost revenue due to COVID. 62% of business revenue losses exceeded 25% of their typical annual sales. 63% of businesses had fewer on-site, in-person customers as a result of COVID. The need to rebrand and re-introduce customers to Downtown Attleboro is clear.</p>

### ACTIONS

- Secure funding for branding study and implementation.
- The creation and development of branding for Downtown Attleboro should consider 3 high level steps:
  1. Create a position/committee;
  2. Conduct a pre-branding process;
  3. Proceed to a branding implementation process with support by a marketing and branding agency.

### PROCESS

Secure funding for branding study and implementation .

#### CREATE A POSITION OR COMMITTEE TO LEAD THROUGH PRE-BRANDING ACTIVITIES

The City of Attleboro is creating a new part-time position in the Economic Development Department to focus on marketing. Possible Job Titles for this position could include:

1. Community Engagement Coordinator
2. Community Engagement Manager
3. Community Engagement Director

### Job Descriptions Examples:

- <https://charlestonpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Community-Engagement-Program-Manager-Job-Description-FINAL.pdf>
- <http://apps.mesaaz.gov/jobdescriptions/documents/JobDescriptions/cs4648.pdf>
- <https://jobs.smartrecruiters.com/CityofPhiladelphia/743999719105758-community-engagement-director>
- [https://www.rochesternh.net/sites/g/files/vyhlif1131/f/pages/public\\_information\\_community\\_engagement\\_manager\\_-\\_final\\_draft\\_6-8-2020.pdf](https://www.rochesternh.net/sites/g/files/vyhlif1131/f/pages/public_information_community_engagement_manager_-_final_draft_6-8-2020.pdf)

Formation of a branding committee to assist with pre-branding activities can build a core of understanding and support for the branding study. Involvement of a branding committee throughout the process often aids implementation and community-wide embracing of branding.



## Create a Downtown Attleboro Brand (continued)

### PRE-BRANDING

1. Assessment of 2011/2012 City Plan
2. Comprehensive survey of business owners & customer, residents
3. Mapping of businesses & resources
4. Listing of events and festivals
5. Key priorities for the downtown area
6. Notable arts, cultural, and historic elements (outdoor)
7. Notable parks and open space

As part of pre-branding, determine whether the City and its partners wish to undertake a full-scale branding study with interviews focus groups, and extensive public process and input to develop a brand image and strategy that helps Downtown Attleboro communication and target customers. Alternatively, a more compressed process with input from key stakeholders, staff, and the TDI Downtown Committee (which includes representatives of downtown business, property owners, and nonprofits) could also be undertaken.

### BRANDING FIRM SPECIFIC SUPPORT

#### A. Develop and issue Requests for Proposals (RFP).

Some samples of local public sector branding requests for proposals can be found at:

- <https://1elrsd35mlri2z7zmm3qkz2t-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/7591-RFP-for-Marketing-Branding-Campaign-Development-Strategic-Planning-Services-08-04-2020.pdf>
- <https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/DocumentCenter/View/14675/REQUEST-FOR-PROPOSALS-Destination-Marketing-Campaign-FINAL?bidId=>
- <https://www.coachella.org/home/showpublisheddocument/4510/635932019822230000>

- <https://www.newrochelleny.com/DocumentCenter/View/3221/RFP-NR-5004-Marking-and-Branding-Suite?bidId=>

Products and deliverables that the City should specify include developing a positioning statement for Downtown Attleboro, development of a logo, tag line, color palette, story and key themes for Downtown Attleboro. The City could opt to do a more compressed process with input from key stakeholders, staff, the TDI Downtown Committee (which includes representatives of Downtown businesses, property owners and nonprofits).

Brand implementation is a critical and essential part of successful place branding for Downtown. The City may wish to include working with the branding consultant on implementation activities.

As part of the results and deliverables of the branding study for Downtown Attleboro, the City should receive recommendations as to preferred brand image, positioning statement, tag line and colors as developed by the branding consultant. The City and the Downtown Committee should receive as final products a series of brand images, in jpeg and png formats (high resolution) that are in the adopted color palette, black and white, and clear backgrounds for subsequent use. The branding should also include a positioning statement, a tag line (which may or may not be part of the logo), as well as a color palette (with specifications as to Pantone colors, CMYK, RGB and HEX formats). The brand consultant should also provide the name and information about the preferred fonts, as well.

The results of a good branding study enable the City and Downtown to more effectively tell the story of Downtown Attleboro, understand and reinforce the desired positioning of Downtown in the marketplace, as well as key themes and messages. Consistent and effective brand implementation can increase customer awareness of Downtown and lead to greater sales.



## Create a Downtown Attleboro Brand (continued)

### B. Examples of city branding and marketing materials:



03-04-20

### Exclusive: Chicago's new brand identity could save the city \$10 million a year

Chicago wants you to make its brand your own.



[Image: City of Chicago, Pedro Lastra/Unsplash]

- <https://www.san-marcos.net/home/showdocument?id=20401>
- <https://bellweather.agency/case-studies/visit-baltimore-campaign-city-branding/>
- <https://bellweather.agency/case-studies/napa-valley-website/>
- <https://bellweather.agency/case-studies/danville-california-destination-marketing/>
- <https://www.unioncity.org/DocumentCenter/View/1375/Union-City-Style-Guide---Digital?bidId=>
- <https://www.boston.gov/departments/innovation-and-technology/brand-guidelines>



## Create a Downtown Attleboro Brand (continued)

### RESOURCES

Branding studies and strategies require a local investment. The following resources review public investment in place branding.

- <https://www.governing.com/archive/gov-municipal-branding-campaigns-worth-price.html>
- *Fast Company: Chicago's new brand identity could save the city \$10 million a year.*  
<https://www.fastcompany.com/90471389/exclusive-chicagos-new-brand-identity-could-save-the-city-10-million-a-year>
- *Forbes: Why Cities Should Value Their Brands, Just As Businesses Do*  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/petesaunders1/2018/03/21/the-value-of-city-branding/?sh=7b992c652ec>
- <https://medium.com/the-urban-condition/the-effects-and-ethics-of-city-branding-1a7ca3bb58e5>
- <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-02-12/city-branding-and-the-urban-identity-crisis>
- <https://placebrandobserver.com/top-5-city-branding-case-studies-examples/>

Wayfinding often incorporates the results of a branding study. These three LRRP Best Practices, while focused on wayfinding, offer insights into effective brand implementation. They can be found in the Resources section of the LRRP website.





<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program#resources> :

- Mark Favermann Design: Create a wayfinding system to help reinforce the downtown experience
- Selbert Perkins Design: Integrate Brand & Art into Your Wayfinding System
- Mark Favermann Design: Create a wayfinding theme based on the community's seaside location.



## Revenue & Sales

# Businesses Going Online

PROJECT TITLE		BUSINESSES GOING ONLINE		
Origin	Helping small Downtown Attleboro businesses develop an online presence and widening opportunities for sales was part of discussions with the TDI Downtown Committee and the LRRP public meeting. The key stakeholders identified online sales technical assistance as a priority area.  Project Champion: Catherine Feerick, Economic Development Director			
Location/Census Tract	Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial Census tracts).			
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Low	Budget: Low to Medium. \$26,750 to \$53,500 (depending upon the number of businesses to be assisted and the extent of cost-sharing as to website and POS fees) for Businesses Going Online one-on-one technical assistance and training. Additional training programs and initiatives will add one-time and annual costs. AEDO staffing costs related to program operations and outreach are not included in this estimate. As a major new Initiative, launching the Businesses Going Online Program could require one-quarter to one-third of a staff person's time during the Initial phases.		
	 Medium		Low (5 businesses aided)	High (10 businesses aided)
		TA Provider for One-on-One Assistance	10,000	20,000
		Equipment (iPad, cash drawer, scanner, receipt printer)	10,000	20,000
		First Year POS Subscription Fees	6,000	12,000
		Program Operations	750	1,500
		SUB-TOTAL	\$ 26,750	\$ 53,500
		Additional Training Programs	3,500	10,000
		TOTAL	\$30,250	\$ 63,500
		Potential Funding Sources include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ MDI — Mass Downtown Initiative</li><li>■ American Rescue Plan funding</li><li>■ CDBG — possibly</li><li>■ TDI, MassDevelopment</li><li>■ Cost-sharing with the Business</li></ul>		
Timeframe	 Short	Start-up within six months		
Risks	 Low	This is a low-risk project. Language issues with some business owners could be a challenge. Technical assistance will be provided to businesses who request it.		

## Businesses Going Online (continued)

PROJECT TITLE	BUSINESSES GOING ONLINE
<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of Downtown Attleboro businesses who claim Google map and Yelp listings.</li> <li>Increased presence of Downtown Attleboro businesses on Google Maps</li> <li>Establishment of local business websites</li> <li>Development of online ordering/sales/scheduling channels</li> <li>Web analytics, metrics, and testimonials as to number and profitability of online sales</li> </ul>
<b>Partners &amp; Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local businesses</li> <li>City of Attleboro</li> <li>United Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>TDI MassDevelopment</li> <li>Double ACS — Attleboro Area Cable System</li> <li>Providers of online services, such as Square, Toast, Lightspeed, and others.</li> <li>SCORE for business mentorship re: online sales.</li> <li>Other options could be Harbor One &amp;/or SEED, or use of students from Bridgewater University's Attleboro campus. (Bridgewater has a management program based at the Attleboro campus and offers marketing at the main site.) Bristol Community College also has a nearby satellite campus.</li> </ul>
<b>Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts</b>	<p>Per the LRRP Business Survey of Downtown Attleboro businesses, 75% of businesses lost revenue during the pandemic. 62% of businesses experienced revenue losses greater than 25%. As of April 2021, 63% of businesses had reduced hours or capacity. The loss of face-to-face sales and reduced operating hours underscores the clear need for Downtown Attleboro businesses to develop additional sales channels, like online, to survive and thrive.</p> <p>A review of the presence of Downtown Attleboro restaurants websites indicated that some only had a Facebook presence, and others had cumbersome or no online ordering options. Only one restaurant appeared to have a user-friendly online ordering process that allows for pick-up or delivery. A second relied solely on DoorDash for online orders (which only allows for deliveries). Few small businesses in the personal care sector downtown have online appointment functionality on their websites or Facebook pages, if they have an online presence. The need to help businesses go online is a critical part of COVID recovery and business resiliency.</p>

### ACTIONS

1. Develop and introduce a Business Technical Assistance Program helping Businesses Go Online and add an online presence and sales channel.
2. Training and orientation to establishing a basic web presence, businesses going online, e- and mobile-commerce, social media, and advance topics.
3. Technical Assistance to five or more businesses to establish a website, or to add online sales channels to existing website.
4. Pairing businesses with a business mentor/web coach specializing in online sales channels to support and launch an online sales channel.
5. Six-month and one-year follow-up evaluation with businesses



## Businesses Going Online (continued)

### PROCESS

The goals of the Downtown Attleboro Businesses Going Online program are two-fold. First, increase the number of businesses in Downtown Attleboro with an effective online presence, including a web page and sales channel. Second, enhancing Downtown Attleboro businesses capacity to sell and generate revenue (thus responding to and trying to recover from the Coronavirus pandemic) with more channels for generating revenue and sales. A key feature of the Businesses Going Online program is the one-on-one specialized technology technical assistance to help businesses quickly get online and generate sales and revenue.

There are five phases to Businesses Going Online program. They are:

1. Program Development — setting up & Introducing the Business TA Program: Businesses Going Online
2. Providing Training and Orientation for Businesses Going Online — get on the map, orientation and web basics, advanced topics
3. Providing Businesses Going Online Technical Assistance
4. Business Mentoring & Online Marketing & Sales Coaching, and
5. Evaluation.

Each of the phases are detailed next.

### Phase I: Program Development — Setting Up & Introducing the Business TA Program: Businesses Going Online

Program development and start-up of the Businesses Going Online technical assistance program is aimed at increasing the number of Downtown Attleboro businesses with effective online presence and sales channel. The eight program development elements are:

- Organizing, recruiting, and selecting team members, partners, and vendors
- Securing funding
- Formulating program policies and procedures
- Designing the application process
- Selecting businesses to participate
- Matching TA vendors with businesses
- Executing Technical Assistance Agreement
- Launching the Businesses Going Online program

**Organizing the Team and Vendors.** At the start of any successful project, it is important to take the time to reach out, create partnerships, and organize the sponsoring team, including selection of vendors. Potential partners include the City, local businesses, TDI MassDevelopment, and United Chamber of Commerce.

In addition, local providers (if any) of Point of Sale (POS) and online services and equipment could be a resource, as well as a potential vendor. One of the program elements includes follow-up business mentoring and coaching of businesses assisted through this program. This could likely entail collaboration with SCORE, or another business mentoring and support program such as the Center for Women & Enterprise.

Another potential approach would be to involve Bridgewater State University at Attleboro



## Businesses Going Online (continued)

(BWU-A) students to provide additional assistance to businesses beginning to use an online sales channel to help local businesses. BWU-A offers a management degree at the Attleboro campus, and the marketing curriculum is based at the main campus. Use of students would likely require additional orientation program for interns about Businesses Going Online. DoubleACS could assist by recording training sessions for subsequent viewing.

It will be important to select a vendor(s) or vendor team to provide technical assistance and services to Downtown Attleboro businesses to develop an online presence/ website, institute an online ordering, sales, and payment channels online. This will likely require a procurement process entailing a request for proposals and preparation of the RFP. Vendors who have experience working with small and micro-businesses and providing turn-key technical assistance are ideal. Vendor references should be checked.

**Securing Funding.** Funding to provide retain a trusted and knowledgeable technical assistance provider is essential for the success of the Downtown Attleboro Businesses Going Online program. The number of businesses to be assisted will depend upon available funding, as well as local interest.

**Formulating Policies & Procedures.** Program policies and procedures include determining cost-sharing policy with prospective business beneficiaries. There are initial set-up costs and subscription fees for point of sale (POS) payments and hardware. In addition, online sales generally require credit card processing, which entails a fee. The Attleboro Economic Development Office in consultation with its funders and possibly the TDI Downtown Committee should establish expectations as to the extent of financial assistance to private businesses attempting to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Some programs have paid

for the front-end expenses and subscription fees for the first year. These fees depending upon the business could be cost-shared. In some cases, the City may wish to waive the fees, due to financial hardship, economic need, or perhaps because the business is a start-up, such as the recently spawned new businesses from the Downtown Attleboro Start-Up competition. In any case, a clear policy and guideline on cost sharing needs to be considered and committed to writing.

Since the City of Attleboro will be likely sponsoring this program through the AEDO, it may be prudent to include a hold harmless clause for the City regarding technical assistance provided to Downtown businesses. The City solicitor should be consulted.

Another policy issue is the collection and sharing of evaluation data from specific businesses. It is important to be able to strike a balance at protecting a businesses' proprietary data and collecting information to evaluate and document impact. Collecting some basic data with businesses providing responses within ranges may be a useful approach, along with qualitative feedback.

**Designing the Application.** An application for technical assistance should be developed which can be distributed and accessed online as well as paper versions for local businesses. Use of a Google form may simplify the application process. The application can be simple and straight-forward and include the name of the business, address, phone number, business owner, key contact person, information as to current presence on web and social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), website address and any handles. A few questions should be posed as to the business' reasons for applying; their aspirations for an online presence and business channel; and securing a commitment to invest the staff or business owner's time and resources to successfully



## Businesses Going Online (continued)

implement the recommendations of the Business Going Online TA provider.

Before commencing the application, consideration should be given as to selection criteria in the event more businesses apply for assistance, exceeding available resources. If demand for Businesses Going Online is high a second round of technical assistance should be considered. This will enable the City to have time to garner additional resources and work with partners.

**Selecting Businesses to Participate.** Ideally the Businesses Going Online program can begin with assisting five-to-ten businesses in Downtown. The exact number will depend upon available funding and resources. The Economic Development Office should anticipate that there will need to be a good deal of outreach to interest businesses to apply for Businesses Going Online. With the pandemic and staffing shortages, business owners are often tired and over-extended, so it may be easy to miss a single program announcement. After receipt of applications, the Downtown Attleboro team should select businesses to assist. As a new program venture, it will be important to identify candidate businesses who are poised to succeed, willing to make the necessary time commitment, and have the support and endorsement of the business owner.

### **Matching TA vendors with businesses.**

Businesses Going Online program should match TA vendor(s) with businesses. An introductory letter/email and perhaps video-call (or in-person visit) establishing clear expectations as to the scope and nature of the Businesses Going Online TA assignment and introducing the TA provider to the business would create an auspicious start.

### **Executing a Technical Assistance Agreement.**

A short, written agreement that is signed off by the business, the TA provider, and the City stating the nature and scope of the TA assignment should be developed and executed.

Agreements are a beneficial tool at the outset of any TA assignment. The agreement should define the Businesses Going Online scope of the technical assistance assignment (what it is and what it is not); the schedule, including key meetings or milestones; and the responsibilities of each partner — what the business is expected to do, what the TA provider will do, as well as what the City will do as a part of Businesses Going Online.

This is also an opportune time to state and review the expectations that the business will participate in program evaluation and share key metrics, such as revenue generated (within ranges), number of sales, and number of visitors to the website. It may also be advantageous for the City to include a disclaimer within the agreement, indicating that the City is providing funding and managing the program, but bears no responsibility as to the end products — website and POS equipment and services. The City may wish to have its Solicitor review the agreement.

**Launching Businesses Going Online.** When each of the elements needed to operate Businesses Going Online are in place, it will be time to launch and announce the Businesses Going Online program and invite applications. Launching Businesses Going Online should include more traditional outreach methods, such as word-of-mouth, news releases and print outreach, such as flyers and postcards, personal invitations, and phone calls, as well as email newsletters and blasts. A cheekier approach to outreach could entail using social media to ask customers who wish they could order or shop online from some of their favorite Downtown Attleboro establishments to stop in and encourage business owners to apply for Businesses Going Online assistance. Some owners may not realize that their customers would use or even desire an online option.



## Businesses Going Online (continued)

### Phase II: Training and Orientation

Downtown Attleboro has a business community with varying levels of digital marketing understanding and expertise. To effectively coach local businesses; a multi-level digital marketing training program would benefit the business community. Training and orientation sessions should be scheduled at a time when businesspeople can attend, either early in the day before stores open or evening. Workshops ideally be held in close proximity to businesses. A hybrid format may be helpful to increasing business participation. Although some hands-on workshops will likely require an in-person format. Sessions should be recorded for reuse. AEDO and the TDI Committee will need to allocate time to publicize the Business Going Online trainings and to distribute outreach materials to businesses to encourage participation. Participation in the Business Going Online training program should be a prerequisite for receipt of one-on-one assistance in establishing a web presence.

The local business education and training program could entail:

- Get On the Map interactive workshop
- Businesses Going Online orientation and initial training.
- Business Going Online — follow-up
- Businesses Going Online continuing education and advanced topics.

Get On the Map interactive workshop will be a hands-on workshop in a nearby computer lab to help businesses get their businesses listed and identified on Google Map, and to help businesses claim their businesses on Yelp. This will be designed as a 60- to 90-minute how-to session. Business people will leave with an increased presence on the web.

Businesses Going Online orientation and initial training will review why digital marketing is important; the time and level of effort

requirements for successful digital marketing; and measures of success. The do-it-yourself model and hiring a vendor to launch or operate a digital marketing program model will both be reviewed. The initial training for participants in the one-on-one technical assistance phase of Businesses Going Online will review program requirements and expectations, and will address the basics of establishing a web presence. The training will review how a business can determine the best platform for one's business, including examining the Facebook/ Google My Business; Simple Google website; Word Press, Wix; and Square Space options. The training will discuss the needed time and frequency of content updates and how to manage leads, appointments, and online orders.

Depending upon level of interest, a Google My Business (GMB) specific training session could be offered. This would include profile set-up and optimization; posting schedules and content; and responding to ratings and reviews.

**Business Going Online — Follow-up.** An education training session focusing on analytics and social media is suggested. Social media issues to be addressed include determining which social media platforms are important; setting up a profile on social media; posting schedules; and responding to customer postings — ratings and reviews.

Businesses Going Online continuing education and advanced topics. As a part of Businesses Going Online, it would be smart to institute a continuing program of sixty- to ninety-minute programs on technology and businesses going online. Technology changes rapidly and periodic refreshers and advance topics geared to small businesses is needed. Topics could include Search Engine Optimization (SEO); advertising and promotion; video development and promotion including creation and editing software; and advanced social media with a discussion of benefits and time/level of effort



## Businesses Going Online (continued)

requirements. Advertising and promotion channels could include Google ads, Facebook post boosts, display advertising, and local digital options such as the Sun Chronicle or Patch. Advanced social media training could cover Facebook; YouTube; Instagram; TikTok; and Twitter.

### **Phase III: Providing Businesses Going Online Technical Assistance**

During this phase, the selected technology TA providers will work directly with Downtown Attleboro businesses. The Economic Development office's role will be to periodically monitor and ensure TA services are going smoothly and occurring on schedule.

Technical Assistance vendors should be working one-on-one with business owners, explaining the benefits of desired website; securing domain name(s) for the business (as may be needed); working with the business to gather and develop content, including photography; getting input as to the desired "look and feel" of the website; linking social media (if applicable); and integrating and linking online sales, ordering, scheduling and payment platforms (as applicable or appropriate).

Prior to publishing the website, the TA provider should review the website with the business owner, make any necessary edits, and secure final approvals prior to website launch and publishing. In addition, the TA provider should (1) review the importance of integrating the website into the businesses marketing plans; and (2) demonstrate to the business owner and key staff how to update and edit the website. A written tip sheet on editing and using the website customized for each business would be a helpful resource to leave with the owner.

To help boost awareness of the new online shopping channels and websites for Downtown Attleboro businesses, it may be helpful to feature each business in various newsletters, email blasts and news releases. This could profile the Businesses Going Online program and feature specific Downtown businesses and the new websites. Social media postings about would also be helpful.

During this period, it may be useful to document TA efforts with occasional photography. Before and after screen shots of websites are another helpful form of documentation.

### **Phase IV: Business Mentoring & Online Marketing & Sales Coaching**

Change is always challenging, especially adopting new ways of selling and outreach. Incorporating a business mentor and online marketing and sales coaching to assist and support the business as it adapts and incorporates online sales as part of its business repertoire. A business mentor /online marketing and sales coach could also help small business owners anticipate and think through the changes in both store and business operations as it relates to staffing, processing and shipping orders, addressing returns, adapting to online scheduling, as well as the need for keeping websites current and fresh.

SCORE or other business assistance programs may be a good partner and source of business mentors. Student interns may be more suited for helping businesses keeping businesses current and fresh.



## Businesses Going Online (continued)

### Phase V: Evaluation

Evaluation is an important part of any program, but particularly useful in technical assistance programs. Getting feedback six months and one-year following the launch of new websites and sales channels would help the City finetune the Businesses Going Online program and aid in reporting feedback to funders and allied partners. The evaluation findings could also highlight needed training updates and new or advanced topics in online marketing, sales and services that could be a focus of future programs or technical assistance initiatives. The evaluation should include reporting on sales and web analytics; assessing the business owners' comfort and use of online sales channels; and information on how Businesses Going Online has helped with COVID-19 recovery.

In addition to examining the specific impacts, changes, and benefits to individual participating Downtown businesses in the Businesses Going Online program, it is prudent to reflect and assess the effects of more local Downtown Attleboro businesses going online and increasing online sales on Downtown itself. Is there more need for curbside pick-up and delivery? Should an online marketplace for Downtown Attleboro be created to further promote Downtown? As the dual channels of online shopping and in-person bricks-and-mortar shopping develop, these are questions to consider.

### RESOURCES

*LRRP Best Practices.* These can be found in the Resources section of the LRRP website in Best Practices for the Revenue & Sales Compendium and in the Tenant Mix Compendium.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program#resources>

*Cambridge Retail Advisors:* LRRP Best Practice: Rapid Website Development

*Cambridge Retail Advisors:* LRRP Best Practice: Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative

*Mondofoza:* LRRP Best Practice: Local Commerce Marketplace

*Revby:* LRRP Best Practice — ReLaunch — A Collaborative Small Business Technical Assistance Effort to Drive Business Resilience and Opportunity to Diverse Communities



## Technology Overview for Establishing a Basic Small Business Online Presence

The starting point for most businesses — retail and service — to become “internet ready” is the creation of a company web presence. Once upon a time, a company would set up a website which was just the company brochure laid out on an HTML document with a company-specific URL (internet address).

Today, a business's online presence — whether a website, a Facebook page, or a Google My Business account — should provide some actual business functionality. Business functionality features include:

- allowing a business to be searched for online (SEO)
- providing clients a way to contact them (email)
- performing online transactions (product purchase, ordering, payment and/ or appointment-making)
- creating customer relationship (CRM), and possibly
- enabling direct interaction (chat)

Today, attractive, high-functioning websites are reasonably quick and easy to create. For those businesses that do not yet have an online presence, there are three approaches to creating a quick and appropriate solution: Facebook; Google My Business (GMB); or more professional and business-looking websites with content management features customized for the business.

### FACEBOOK

At the “easiest & fastest” level, the initial solution is often likely to be in the form of a Facebook Business Page. Basic accounts are free and can be created in less than an hour. Additionally, businesses can add many of the previously mentioned functions (appointments, events, live streaming, online transactions, etc.) to create a simple and easy to manage online presence. Facebook also has built-in advertising capabilities, allowing the business to target ads to specific audiences (for a cost). A nice feature is the “chat” window, which allows customers to dialog with the business online.

*Tex Barry's Coney Island Diner's Facebook page is an example of a Downtown Attleboro's online business presence using Facebook.*



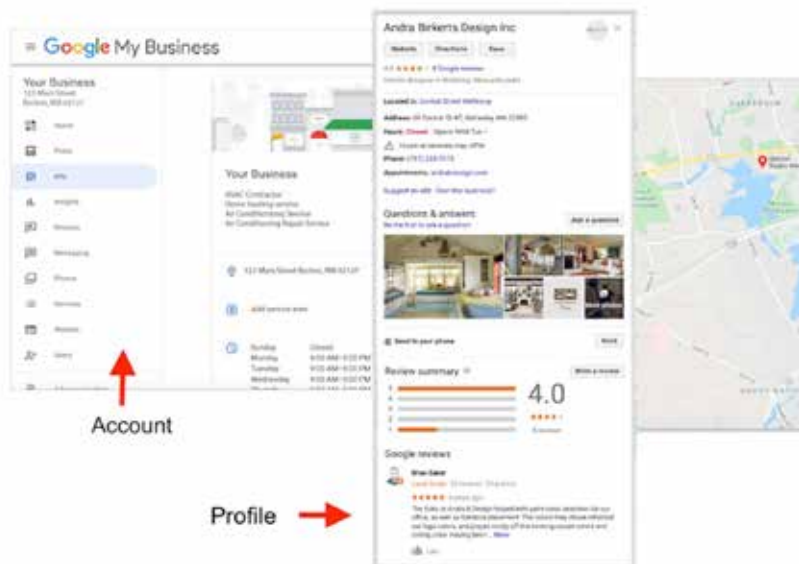


## Technology Overview for Establishing a Basic Small Business Online Presence

### GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

Google My Business (GMB) provides an effective way to create a business listing on Google. Creating a Google My Business account also adds an identified landmark on Google Maps along with a map-based company profile, business hours, and contact information (Figure 2). It also provides the means to directly engage with customers via reviews and business responses and direct messaging, and to set up associated alerts.

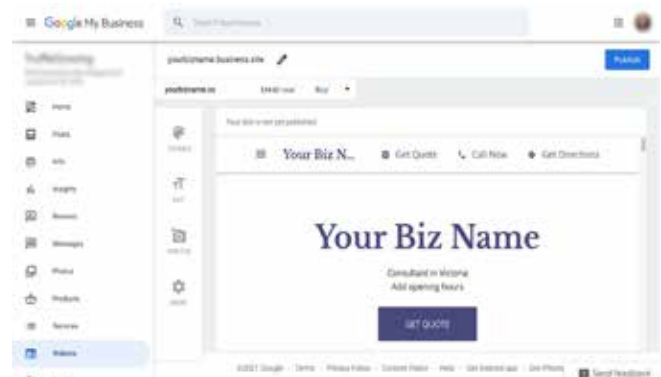
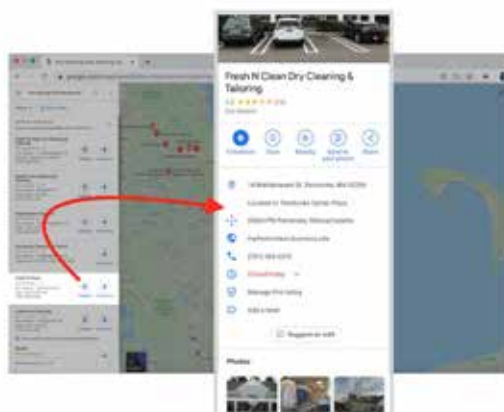
As the dominant search engine, Google has a primary focus on search engine optimization (SEO). The tie between Google My Business (GMB) and Google Search is probably its strongest feature. Less obvious, but a natural result of this SEO connection, is the data-driven business insights that Google provides. This includes a breakdown of actions taken on your listing, how your photos are performing compared to other profiles in your category, and ways to track clicks from a Business Profile and Google Analytics. GMB also has the ability to create Google Ads to target audiences. Combined with Google Analytics, this can be a powerful tool. Using a fully completed Google My Business account, a business can create a website for the business with the built-in GMB Website Builder.



(Left) Google My Business Account and Profile views.

(Below left) Business Profile on Google Maps

(Below right) Google My Business (GMB) Website Builder





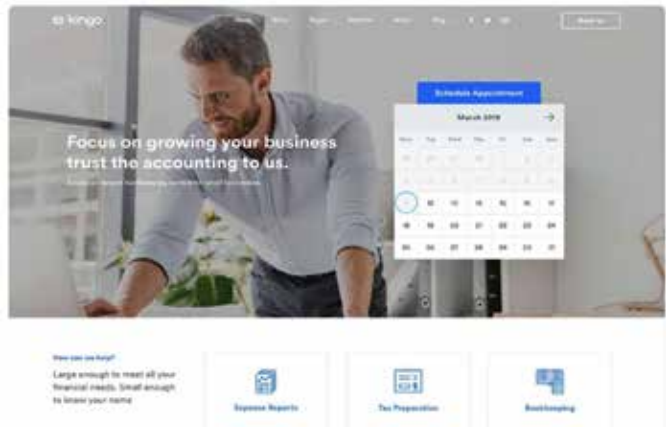
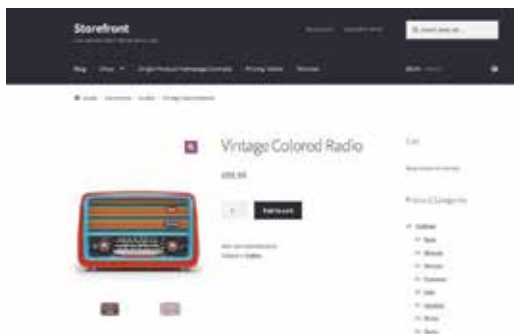
## Technology Overview for Establishing a Basic Small Business Online Presence

### CONVENTIONAL WEBSITES/CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (CMS)

Template-driven content management system (CMS) approaches to website development offer a more polished and professional appearance. Businesses desiring greater functionality, more creative design, and/or integration with additional platforms may wish to consider a template-driven content management system (CMS) approach. The broad availability of capable website developers, and an extensive catalog of functional plugins, can make these a cost-effective approach for any business to have a custom designed online presence. Customization, quality, and cost-containment are all possible using a defined scope of service with a CMS-enabled template and a finite set of function-enhancing add-ons. The leading Content Management Systems for establishing a website are:

- WordPress
- Squarespace
- Wix

**Word Press** is the CMS preferred by many website developers who are agile with technology. Word Press is a robust platform and has the largest installed base of business usage. Experienced developers are plentiful and reasonably priced. Its large catalog of plugins add functionality easily and inexpensively and are a great way to create engagement with customers. Word Press plug-ins can enable integration with other websites and services, such as marketplaces, blogs, and news sites, among others. Word Press can easily scale to handle online business growth and expansion. However, non-tech users note challenges with Word Press's non-intuitive interface and layers of plug-ins.



*Example of template-based website development*



*(Left) Example of a WordPress appointment plug-in  
(Top) Example of an E-Commerce plug-in  
(Bottom) Example of a Forms plug-in (contact form, survey, registration, etc.)*



#### Revenue & Sales




## Technology Overview for Establishing a Basic Small Business Online Presence

**Squarespace** is the CMS often preferred for its wide range of aesthetically pleasing, easy to use templates. Squarespace relies on a structured editor format to enable users to customize the look and features of the website. Squarespace is known to be an exceptionally good platform for blogging and has a built-in search engine optimization function. Squarespace provides the needed business functionality for e-commerce, mobile commerce, appointments, and events as part of its platform and/or through plug-ins. Squarespace, like Wix, is considered user-friendly and is competitively ranked with Wix.

**Wix** is the CMS that uses drag and drop features, providing the web user/designer maximum flexibility. Wix provides a wide range of pre-designed template choices and includes basic business functionality — search, online business transactions, appointment-making, and ticketing for events — as part of its platform. Wix relies less on plug-ins. As a consequence, there are fewer third-party plug-ins for Wix. Wix is considered very user-friendly and is competitively ranked and similarly priced to Squarespace (although Squarespace is slightly less as of this writing).



## Welcome new residents with the Welcome Project

PROJECT TITLE		THE WELCOME PROJECT
Origin		<p>Generated from interviews and discussions regarding the pipeline of new residential development in Downtown Attleboro.</p> <p>Project Champion: Attleboro Economic Development Office (AEDO)</p>
Location/Census Tract		<p>Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial Census tracts).</p>
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Low	<p>There are two components to the Welcome Project. Downtown Attleboro could undertake. The periodic welcoming event or the welcome new resident gift package.</p> <p>The budget line items for the Welcome Event are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Mailing list purchase</li><li>■ Invites (design, print, mail)</li><li>■ Event and office supplies</li><li>■ Space rental, if needed</li><li>■ Refreshments</li><li>■ Info handouts or gifts</li><li>■ Signage — sponsor thank you and info displays</li></ul> <p>The budget line items for the Welcome Package component are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Gift packaging (envelope, box, or bag)</li><li>■ Graphic design</li><li>■ Office Supplies</li><li>■ Printing</li><li>■ Mailing lists purchases</li><li>■ Delivery/shipping costs</li></ul> <p>Downtown Attleboro would need approximately 550 to 750 gift packages per year based on current residential sales and move data. Delivery and distribution costs are a key consideration for welcome gifts.</p>
Timeframe	 Short	<p>The Welcome Project can start at any time. The Attleboro Economic Development Office is anticipating hiring a part-time Marketing/ Civic Engagement staffer. The Welcome Project would begin following the onboarding of the new staffer — within approximately six months.</p>
Risks	 Low	<p>This is a low risk project. The risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Poor mailing list of new residents to Attleboro.</li><li>■ Low participation of Downtown Attleboro businesses in coupons and incentives for new residents.</li></ul>

## The Welcome Project (continued)

<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<p>Welcome Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of new residents who come to Welcome Events</li> <li>■ Participation by Downtown businesses in Welcome Events, both in-person participation, and participation with welcome incentives for new residents.</li> </ul> <p>Welcome Gift</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of packets distributed to new residents.</li> <li>■ Number of participating businesses with coupons or mailers.</li> <li>■ Redemption of coupons and visits to Downtown Attleboro businesses by new residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Partners &amp; Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ City of Attleboro</li> <li>■ United Chamber of Commerce (potentially)</li> <li>■ Downtown Businesses and Nonprofit Organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts</b>	<p>Downtown Attleboro businesses reported a 50% reduction in customers and a 63% reported fewer on-site customers. This indicates a need to draw customers to downtown.</p> <p>The pandemic prompted many people to move, some seeking communities with more green space and less density. Public health measures, especially social distancing, have inhibited many community welcoming actions, neighborliness, and civic-building activities, prompting a need to more systematically introduce/ re-introduce Downtown Attleboro businesses and nonprofits to residents.</p> <p>The COVID pandemic impacts on the office and retail real estate markets are prompting some Downtown Attleboro property owners to re-assess building Downtown Attleboro businesses reported a 50% reduction in customers and a 63% reported fewer on-site customers. This indicates a need to draw customers to downtown.</p> <p>The pandemic prompted many people to move, some seeking communities with more green space and less density. Public health measures, especially social distancing, have inhibited many community welcoming actions, neighborliness, and civic-building activities, prompting a need to more systematically introduce/ re-introduce Downtown Attleboro businesses and nonprofits to residents.</p> <p>The COVID pandemic impacts on the office and retail real estate markets are prompting some Downtown Attleboro property owners to re-assess building uses and consider rehabbing properties for residential use Downtown. As a consequence, connecting and welcoming new residents will be needed.</p> <p>Sales of single-family and condominium homes in Attleboro in the first eight months of 2021 has been slower than the pre-pandemic first eight months of 2019. Nonetheless, there were 335 home sales (single family and condominium) from January to August 2021. In 2020 there was a total of 564 closed sales for the year.</p> <p>Attleboro over the past 2 1/2 years has averaged 540 to 575 single family and condo home sales per year. There are an estimated 200 moves annually of tenants in the three Downtown census tracts. In addition, new housing is opening in Downtown Attleboro.</p>
<b>Components</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Periodic welcoming events for new residents in Downtown Attleboro with distribution of resource materials for new Attleboro residents at the welcome event.</li> <li>2. A welcome packet and resource material for new Attleboro residents.</li> </ol> <p>Downtown Attleboro could opt to do one or both components.</p>



## Host Periodic Downtown Welcoming Events

The periodic welcoming event creates an opportunity for new residents to meet civic leaders, find out about local businesses and nonprofits, and meet other new residents. Some communities, such as Ithaca, New York have a regular monthly Welcome Home Wednesday events, while others host an annual or semi-annual welcoming event.

### ACTIONS

The steps in organizing and hosting a welcome new resident event in Downtown Attleboro includes:

- Identifying and inviting new residents
- Establishing a date and place
- Recruiting sponsors (underwriters)
- Planning the program and refreshments
- Preparing handouts or displays, if any
- Hosting the event
- Thank yous, evaluation and follow-up.

### PROCESS

#### Identifying and Inviting New Residents.

Purchase of new homeowner or new mover mailing lists is the easiest way to identify new residents. Referrals from major property management entities about new residents who are renters can also be a helpful source. Some communities publicize the event in the local newspaper and enable people to self-identify, as well. Invitation should be mailed and emailed (if email addresses are available) to all new residents inviting them to the event. A specially-designed invite (whether paper or digital) can catch people's eye and entice participation. It is often helpful to ask invitees to RSVP to get a better head count as attendees, but also to confirm contact information. Some communities invite not only new residents, but also new businesspeople in the Downtown, as well.

**Establish a Date and Place.** Identify a location in Downtown Attleboro to host the welcoming event. Some communities use a local restaurant on a weekday or weekend afternoon. Others hosts welcoming events at various institutions, such as the Library or a local museum. Ideally the dates and places for the next year, whether is a monthly, quarterly or semi-annual event, are confirmed to facilitate planning and preparations. It will be helpful to check calendars so that a welcoming event does not conflict with major school events or school vacations; major civic or downtown events; holidays, or the schedules of key leaders.

**Recruit Sponsors.** Welcoming events for new residents are an opportunity for one or two organizations to sponsor and help underwrite the costs and gain visibility with new residents. Health care institutions and banks are often good candidates to sponsor a Welcoming event. Sponsors could be one-time or the annual sponsors, if multiple events are planned.

#### Plan the Welcoming Event Program and Refreshments.

Welcoming events should encourage mingling and conversation. A short formal program is often very helpful to setting the tone, encouraging mixing, and providing a welcome, key information and answering questions. Civic, business and nonprofit leaders can all participate and speak briefly about Attleboro and Downtown and ways to get involved, volunteer and meet people. A few exhibits or displays can offer a place to mingle and talk about new things happening in Downtown. Food and beverages are important ingredients to a successful event. Some organizations provide limited refreshments with a no-host bar or one-drink ticket. It is helpful to develop an internal working agenda, identify speakers, specify time slots, and develop any ice-breakers to help the conversation ahead of time. The need for a microphone should also be considered. Welcoming events can be of any duration, and many are receptions where people can drop by within a one- to two-hour window.



## Host Periodic Downtown Welcoming Events (continued)

**Displays and Handouts.** The welcoming event provides an opportunity to share display boards about new projects and plans in Downtown Attleboro. Displays can prompt interest and discussion. Handouts about Downtown, information from Downtown businesses and nonprofits could also be featured.

**Hosting the Event.** It is helpful to have a host team in addition to the speakers, participate in the event, welcome new residents. The host team could be identified by a button or different color name tag. The host team should be encouraged to mingle, greet and engage with new residents. It is important to record who comes, and gather names and email addresses for follow-up. Document the event with photographs and video that can be posted to social media and the Downtown Attleboro website afterwards. As with any event, there needs to be set-up and clean-up crews.

**Thank Yous, Evaluation and Follow-Up.** It helps to collect names and contact information to thank new residents for coming to the Welcome to Attleboro/ Welcome to Downtown event, and reinforce local hospitality. This also provides a way to document the number of participants and provides a means of evaluation. After each event, it is always helpful to identify the two-to-three things that went exceptionally well and what could have been better, as part of evaluation and continuous improvement. Documentation is also important to sponsors. A thank you to the program speakers, the host team, set-up and clean-up crew volunteers, and sponsors with perhaps a picture or two of the event(s) is always appropriate and a best practice.

## Create Welcome Packages for New Residents

### ACTIONS

The welcome package component to the Welcome Project includes eight steps. They are:

- Determine basic approach, format and fee structure of the welcome package.
- Secure participation from Downtown businesses, nonprofits, and civic offices.
- Generate new residents contact lists.
- Design and organize the new welcome package.
- Assemble the welcome gift package.
- Produce the welcome package.
- Distribute welcome packages to new residents.
- Track impacts.

### PROCESS

The process for creating welcome to Downtown Attleboro packages for the city's new residents is detailed here:

#### **Determine basic approach, format and fee structure of the welcome package.**

Communities throughout the country, often as part of a chamber of commerce, distribute welcome packets, welcome boxes or welcome bags to new residents in the community. They are typically filled with welcoming materials, product samples, small promotional gifts such as pens, refrigerator magnets with the logos of local businesses, coupons and incentives for a new resident to visit a store often with a deep incentive like 25% off a product or other large incentive. Various programs ask participating businesses to provide a specific number of promotional items, typically at least 100 or 200, and then provide additional gifts/ promotional items as the need arises.



## Revenue & Sales

### Create Welcome Packages for New Residents (continued)

Some programs accept local welcoming ads and coupons and print themselves for a fee. While most programs request businesses provide the pre-printed coupons, brochures and promotional items.

Other organizations with a welcoming program often support the operations through participation fees to local businesses. Some programs waive the fee for member businesses or have differential rates for members/ non-members. This is a local choice.

**Secure participation from Downtown businesses, nonprofits and civic offices.** This requires that participating businesses and organization provide a marketing incentive/ welcome coupon for new residents. Each entity can develop their own coupon or welcome brochure. The Attleboro Economic Development Office or TDI program could opt to have each participating entity provide 750 to 800 copies of the coupon. In the alternative the AEDO could request participating businesses provide camera-ready copy for a coupon or material, pay a fee, and the AEDO could coordinate printing materials. To start it might be easier to ask local businesses to provide the materials. Based on the last three years of sales data for the City of Attleboro from the MA Association of Realtors

(single family and condominium homes), there are 540 to 575 sales annually. In addition, an estimated 200 rental units within the three Downtown Attleboro census tracts are occupied by new residents each year

**Generate New Resident Contact Lists.** The easiest way to generate a contract list for new residents, particularly residents who are purchasing new homes is to purchase a list from a direct mail firm. Pricing varies based on length of subscription and the number of names. Direct mail firms typically offer mailing lists for new homeowners or new moves. The new moves list is often generated through persons using moving companies. Since Attleboro Economic Development is in frequent contact with developers and major property owners in the Downtown area, it may be possible to set up a system where property managers of rental properties provide AEDO with a list of names and contact information for inclusion in the Welcome Project.

**Design and Organize the Welcome Package.** The Welcome Package should be cheerful and helpful to new residents as a way to introduce new Attleboro residents to Downtown. If a good contact list with email addresses can be secured, a digital online version of a



*Work on rehabbing 37 Union Street will create 59 new housing units in Downtown Attleboro.*

*Rendering the future look of 37 Union Street by Davis Square Architects.*



## Create Welcome Packages for New Residents (continued)

Welcome Packet may be possible. Otherwise, a graphically-pleasing, hard-copy print version should be developed. It could range from a simple basic welcoming letter with a few coupons and perhaps a one-pager on tips for new residents. Or, it could also be more elaborate with a folder and handouts on City Services and Programs for new residents, coupons and incentives for Downtown Attleboro businesses and museums, refrigerator magnets, as well as info guides and tips for new residents. A standard welcome package should be developed for the year and updated as businesses sign-up to participate. Seasonal announcements could also be incorporated.

Welcome Packages could be an envelope or folder; a Welcome Box, or Welcome Bags (with the bag serving as a future tote or shopping bag. Welcome packages, whether a packet, folder, box or bag, are typically branded with logo, colors and imaging for Downtown. Since Downtown Attleboro is also considering undertaking a branding initiative which will take some time before the results are available. Initially, the Welcome Program can start perhaps relying on "Blue Pride" and a limited first-time order of packets/boxes or bags, enough for perhaps the first year. Using a large sticker is another alternative that can be applied to folders, paper shopping bags or boxes. As the program continues, upgrades and finetuning can be incorporated, including a Downtown Attleboro logo and tag line.

**Produce the Welcome Package.** The basic welcome package — welcoming letter to Attleboro, information about Downtown; business and nonprofit incentives/ coupons, and new resident tips should be printed and assembled. This could be done with a local designer and printer.

**Assemble the Welcome Package.** Welcome packages need assembly — welcome letters, resource guides, business incentives and promotional mementoes all need to be

assembled and placed into individual gift packets, boxes, or bags. High school students serving as interns or community service volunteers could help collate and assemble welcome packages. The welcoming package is then ready to distribute on a monthly or quarterly basis.

**Distribute Welcome Packages.** The method of distributing welcome packages to new residents will depend upon the size, style and weight of the welcome package. Welcome packages come in all sizes and shapes, ranging from large envelopes, boxes that can be mailed or delivered; as well as totes and bags that can be reused. Envelopes and bags can easily be mailed or shipped. Welcome bags typically require some form of personal delivery or pick-up. Some welcome programs send out postcards inviting new residents to stop by the office and pick up the welcome bag. Others distribute welcome bags at the periodic welcoming event. An additional approach entails personal delivery of welcome bags or boxes by community volunteers. The latter approach provides a personal touch of hospitality. However, public health guidance should be followed while the COVID pandemic is still present. Use of volunteers will also requires volunteer recruitment, training and orientation so that volunteers can be effective representatives of the Downtown community.

**Track Impacts.** It will be important to collect data and track the impact of the welcome package. At minimum, the following data points should be collected: number of welcome packets mailed as to date; frequency of mailing welcome packets (for example: monthly, quarterly, semi-annually); number of participating Downtown businesses and programs by type; and feedback from businesses as to redemption and incentives following mailings. Business feedback could be formal or informal, but it should be tracked by AEDO. Tracking impacts will enable program evaluation and fine tuning.



## Revenue & Sales

### Welcome Packages: Best Practices

**Ithaca, New York** sponsors a standing monthly welcoming event, Welcome Home Wednesdays, open to new residents to drop in at any time with children and significant others during their first year of moving to Ithaca. Local elected officials, business people and non-profit representatives participate in monthly Welcoming Wednesdays with a short program, time for questions and discussion. New residents get acquainted with the business community, learn about volunteer opportunities and meet other new residents.

During the pandemic, Welcome Home Wednesdays were switched from an in-person event to a virtual event. To enliven the virtual event, a Welcome Home Wednesday events as a virtual wine tasting was featured.

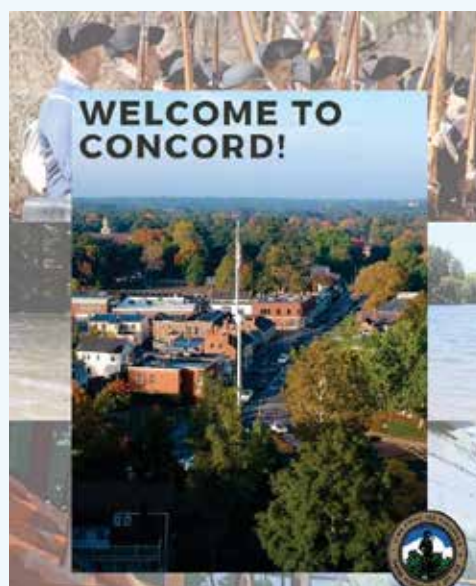
The Tompkins County Chamber sponsors and organizes Welcome Wednesdays. Business sponsors underwrite event costs.



**The Town of Concord, Mass.** developed a handsome welcome handbook for new residents. This includes information about municipal services and schools, phone numbers and local social media links and hashtags, the local business districts, utility information recycling, outdoor conservation and recreation, human services, arts and culture and community events.

The Welcome to Concord handbook is a best practice model. It can be accessed at: <https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/28537/Welcome-to-Concord-Packet>



Concord also has a welcome page as part of the Town's website and a welcome video. The Welcome Website is: <https://concordma.gov/1258/Welcome-to-Concord>






Private Realm

## Host a Window Display Workshop and Aid Businesses on Improving Window Display

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>BE BOLD, LOOK ALIVE: ENTICING WINDOWS FOR CUSTOMER SALES AND ACTIVATING DOWNTOWN</b>																			
	Be Bold, Look Alive will host a window display/ visual merchandising workshop for Downtown Attleboro businesses and institute a one-on-one technical assistance program on window display.																			
<b>Origin</b>	<p>The LRRP diagnostic identified the poor appearances of storefront windows in Downtown Attleboro creates a perception of vacancies and blight. This was discussed during the June community meeting and stakeholders identified windows as a priority issue.</p> <p>Project Champion: Catherine Feerick, Economic Development Director and the TDI Downtown Committee</p>																			
<b>Location/Census Tract</b>	Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct Census Tracts in Bristol County, MA. They are Census Tracts: 6314; 6315; and 6316 in Bristol County (2020 decennial tracts).																			
<b>Budget &amp; Sources of Funding</b>	 Low	<p>Budget with estimated ranges for program components:</p> <table><tr><td>Program Start-up</td><td>\$200</td><td>\$500</td></tr><tr><td>Window Display Workshop</td><td>\$2,000</td><td>\$3,500</td></tr><tr><td>One-on-One TA (10 businesses)</td><td>\$8,000</td><td>\$12,000</td></tr><tr><td>Financial Incentives &amp; Assistance for Window Display TA Implementation</td><td>\$10,000</td><td>\$20,000</td></tr><tr><td>Awards</td><td>\$500</td><td>\$1,500</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL Estimated Budget</td><td>\$20,700</td><td>\$37,500</td></tr></table> <p>Assumes In-kind support and staff assistance for Be Bold, Look Alive program.</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)</li><li>■ TDI</li><li>■ American Rescue Plan Act assistance</li><li>■ CDBG</li><li>■ Sponsors/private donors</li></ul>	Program Start-up	\$200	\$500	Window Display Workshop	\$2,000	\$3,500	One-on-One TA (10 businesses)	\$8,000	\$12,000	Financial Incentives & Assistance for Window Display TA Implementation	\$10,000	\$20,000	Awards	\$500	\$1,500	TOTAL Estimated Budget	\$20,700	\$37,500
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TOTAL Estimated Budget	\$20,700	\$37,500																		
<b>Timeframe</b>	 Short	<p>Initiate within 6 months.</p> <p>The elements of the Window Display Workshop and One-on-One Technical Assistance can occur within a 3- to 6-month period. The awards program and /or contest is a subsequent initiative that would occur over an eight-week period.</p>																		

## Window Display (continued)

PROJECT TITLE		BE BOLD, LOOK ALIVE: ENTICING WINDOWS FOR CUSTOMER SALES AND ACTIVATING DOWNTOWN
Risks	 <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business and Property Owner Cooperation</li> <li>Language barriers with Immigrant Owned Businesses</li> </ul>
Key Performance Indicators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of participating businesses In Window Display Workshop</li> <li>Changes in window appearances</li> <li>Upgrades in window display</li> <li>Fewer "blank" window/walls</li> <li>Changing perceptions as to liveliness and attractiveness of Downtown Attleboro.</li> </ul>
Partners & Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attleboro Art Museum</li> <li>Area colleges, such as Rhode Island School of Design, with a new Community Partnership program and Johnson &amp; Wales, that offers visual merchandising classes.</li> <li>TDI Committee</li> <li>DoubleACS — Attleboro Access Cable System</li> <li>Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>TDI / Mass Development</li> <li>Local businesses (tenants) and property owners</li> </ul>

### DIAGNOSTIC/ COVID-19 IMPACTS

Half of Downtown Attleboro businesses closed temporarily as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. In April 2021, 63% of Downtown Attleboro still had reduced hours. Traffic volumes in the center of Downtown Attleboro at County Street and North Main (the intersection of two state roads) was down 13.2% during the pandemic in 2020 from 2019. The MBTA commuter rail stops in Downtown Attleboro. Commuter rail ridership systemwide in August 2021 was down 72.5% from January 2020 attributable to the pandemic.

In-store patronage at Downtown Attleboro stores is down. Over 50% of downtown business report a 25% or more reduction in in-store patronage as a result of the pandemic.

Exterior appearances, particularly windows, which are seen by both pedestrians and motorists, significantly influence whether a

person will opt to stop and visit a local store. COVID has significantly reduced the number of people downtown. Recovery from these losses requires better appearances to entice customers to return and interest others. 88% of the businesses responding to the LRRP survey indicated that physical improvements, such as storefronts and building façade renovations were needed In Downtown Attleboro, making it the top priority. Windows and window display are the key elements of storefronts.

The windows of businesses and storefronts in downtown Attleboro need improvement. The LRRP diagnostic score for Private Realm — Window Display was C Indicating that more than 25% of the storefronts In Downtown Attleboro had limited window transparency. Some are covered with materials to block visibility into the business (e.g., offices, health care services). This creates an image of vacant storefronts.



## Window Display (continued)

### ACTION

*Be Bold — Look Alive* is a multi-faceted program to upgrade appearances of businesses and create a more attractive Downtown Attleboro. The components the *Be Bold — Look Alive* Window Display Workshop and One-on One Technical Assistance program are:

1. Build the Resource Team
2. Recruit Business Participation — Identify Your Target Audience
3. Technical Assistance Workshop on Window Display for all Downtown Attleboro businesses
4. One-on-One Assistance for Local Businesses
5. Financial Incentives
6. Window Display/ Visual Merchandising Tool Box
7. Annual Recognition.

### PROCESS

**Build the Resource Team.** Starting the overall program will require assembling a team of people and resources who can offer technical assistance and expertise to businesses — retailers, service businesses, health care providers and office users, as well as property owners and managers about window display, visual appearances and first impressions. This will most likely require procuring a consultant or series of consultants and resource people to participate at various program stages.

The Local Rapid Recovery Program and MassDevelopment's TDI program have identified consultants with expertise in visual merchandising and window display. Additional resources could include partnerships with nearby schools such as Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and Johnson & Wales University (JWU). RISD has just launched a new community partnership initiative and is looking to partner with area communities. JWU features a class on visual merchandising in its fashion design and retail department at the Providence campus.

Building the resource team may likely require issuing an RFP to select a consultant(s) to conduct the window display workshop and to subsequently meet in-store with local businesses on how to enhance and improve their visual merchandising.

**Identify Expert Presenter(s) on Windows and Window Display.** This could be someone that is retained as a consultant or guest speaker that is part of the Downtown Attleboro resource team for *Be Bold — Look Alive*. The presenter(s) needs to be an effective public speaker that can connect with small businesses, in addition to being knowledgeable about windows and visual merchandising. The workshop could be augmented with resource tables with Attleboro area vendors that could assist businesses with window display and visual merchandising, such as a local sign painter, graphic designers, and/or an architect.

**Recruit and Involve Business Participation — Identify Your Target Audience.** The target audience for window display workshop includes business owners, store managers, display staff, site supervisors, and building owners. The person responsible at each business for the windows varies. In some cases, if a business has a staff person with an artistic bent, window display and merchandising may be relegated to a staffer who may have shown interest or initiative. Sometimes no one has responsibility and windows are an after-thought. Identifying the right person at each Downtown Attleboro business may take multiple communications as well as personal contacts. For health care services and offices, there may be no one responsible for windows, or the person is part of a facilities management team and is off-site. Real estate agents who lease spaces locally may be another part of the target audience. Upgrading the mailing and contact lists of businesses and property owners incorporating the broader range of potential participants would be beneficial.

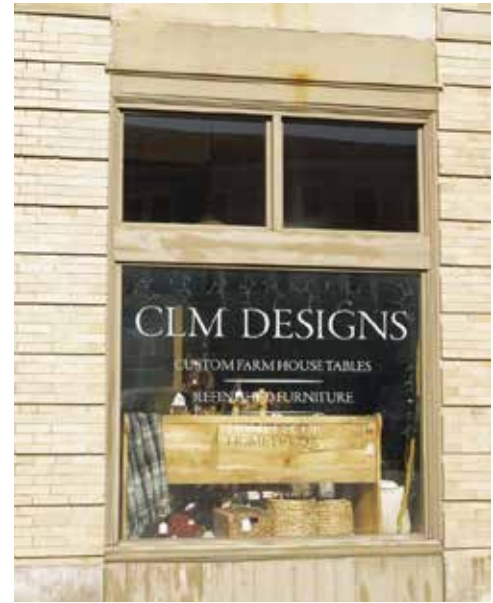


## Window Display (continued)

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP ON WINDOWS & WINDOW DISPLAY

The Be Bold — Look Alive program can be kicked-off with a Workshop on Windows and Window Display for business owners, store managers, and staff along with property owners and facility managers. Participation in the Window Display/Visual Merchandising Workshop should be a pre-requisite for any business receiving one-on-one window display/ visual merchandising technical assistance. Recipients of funding from the City of Attleboro for sign and façade improvements should be strongly urged to attend and participate, as well. The steps in offering a workshop on windows and window display include:

- **Date, Time, Place.** Select a date and time that is good for your audience and speakers. Early meeting times on a Tuesday or Wednesday, such as 7:30 am or 8 am in the morning for a 60- to 90-minute workshop will enable most retailers to return to work prior to opening their shops. After hours at 6 pm, may be another option. Early morning and after-work workshops will likely need refreshments — coffee and a snack. Allow at least six weeks for marketing and outreach to make sure there is enough time to get the word out and people come. Consider holding the workshop at a central location in Downtown Attleboro with audio/visual capabilities where people can easily gather and return to work on-time; select vendors could have resource tables; and slides can be shown. Ideally, offering the workshop in a hybrid format (virtual and In-person) could facilitate maximum participation. The workshop should be recorded and posted on the Downtown Attleboro web site to enable later viewing by interested Downtown businesses. It may be worthwhile to request Double ACS to videotape the workshop, thereby creating a higher quality video recording for future use.
- **Marketing & Outreach.** Create and post flier about the window display workshop and why people should attend. Some of the businesses with the most egregious windows may think that window display is not for them. Outreach and marketing efforts will need to break through these perception barriers and convey that good window display can assist businesses of all types, not just retailers. The carrot of free one-on-one technical assistance and financial Incentives may be another Inducement for businesses to participate in the window display/ visual merchandising workshop. The value proposition for good window display and visual merchandising will need to be conveyed.



*Transparent windows with a simple, uncluttered arrangement of products create an attractive display inviting customers in.*



*A hair salon uses a low-cost, simple paper banner greeting to add color and seasonal change to the storefront window which perks up the street and storefronts for passers-by.*



## Window Display (continued)

Send announcements and email blasts to local businesses and property owners. Spread the word about the Windows Workshop on social media and through local media, such as the Sun Chronicle with news releases and calendar listings. Utilize business networks and small business resources, like the United Chamber of Commerce, Harbor One University, SEED, and Center for Women & Enterprise to help spread the word. The TDI Downtown Committee can also be instrumental in encouraging businesses to participate and attend. Announcements about the Window Display Workshop should be featured on the Downtown Attleboro web site, as well as the City's web site, and related social media/ Facebook / Instagram pages.

- **Window Display Workshop.** Host the window display workshop. Record the workshop and keep a list of participants. Consider creating a brief one-page evaluation to get feedback on the workshop from attendees. At the workshop the Attleboro Economic Development Office could announce further details about upcoming elements of the Be Bold—Look Alive program for businesses, including the application for one-on-one window display and visual merchandising technical assistance; financial incentives for capital improvements regarding windows and window display; and the upcoming Window Briefs tip sheets (to be created by a related recommendation and initiative) and the Window Display Tool Box.
- **Post-Workshop Follow-Up.** Publicizing the key take-aways from the Window Display Workshop in a news story in the Sun Chronicle, a blog post for the Downtown Attleboro web site, and an email blast to local businesses and property owners helps reinforce the Importance of good window display and heightens awareness.

### ONE-ON-ONE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR WINDOW DISPLAY & VISUAL MERCHANDISING

One-on-One Technical Assistance (TA) on visual merchandising and window display enables a small business to receive in-store assistance tailored to their unique needs and helps convey the principles of good window display into changes viewed from the street. One-on-One TA also helps accelerate change. The One-on-One TA component utilizes the expertise and time of the visual merchandising / window display consultant and resource team identified and procured at the outset of the Be Bold—Look Alive program.

At the commencement on the One-on-One TA visit, a short, written agreement that is signed off by the business, the TA provider and the City stating the nature and scope of the TA assignment should be developed and executed. Agreements are a beneficial tool at the outset of any TA assignment. The agreement should define the scope of the Be Bold—Look Alive Window Display/ Visual Merchandising technical assistance assignment (what it is and what it is not); the schedule, including key meetings or milestones; and the responsibilities of each partner — what the business is expected to do, what the TA provider will do, as well as what the City will do as a part of Be Bold—Look Alive.

- **Application and Selection of One-on-One TA Participants.** One-on-One TA requires creating and distributing an application for businesses to request assistance regarding windows and visual merchandising. The application should be straight-forward and fairly simple with basic information about the business, location, and tax compliance. Plus, the willingness of the business to dedicate sufficient time and resources to participate in the One-on-One TA and implement the recommended action steps should be indicated in the application. Applicants should be asked as to their interest, motivation and expectations



## Window Display (continued)

for window and visual merchandising improvements. A commitment to participate in post-assistance evaluation and documentation should also be secured from applicant businesses. At and following the Window Display Workshop, applications for One-on-One TA should be solicited. Applications should be reviewed and selected as to available funds and program priorities.

It is suggested that five-to-ten businesses be assisted. The specific number of businesses will depend upon available funding and business interest. Priority should be given to businesses who are interested and motivated, businesses in high visibility locations; and in Downtown Attleboro's priority area — the Triangle area and Landmark Intersection area depicted in Figure 1.



*The Triangle Priority Area for Downtown Attleboro. Map and diagram courtesy of Stantec.*

- **One-on-One TA Preparation.** As part of the preparing for the One-on-One Site Visit program, the selected consultant should work with the Attleboro Economic Development office to identify and develop some basic metrics that small businesses can apply to demonstrate the effects of window display and visual merchandising. These metrics need to be simple and easy to measure. Review of the metrics should be incorporated into the site visit and follow-up written report.
- **Technical Assistance Visit & Recommendations.** Following selection of program participants, one-on-one meetings with on-site visits with the retailers and

small businesses should be scheduled by the selected consultant(s). The existing conditions of participating businesses' windows should be photographed and documented prior to or during the site visit. The One-on-One TA should include a brief written report highlighting recommendations and suggestions made during the site visit, as to how to improve and upgrade window display and visual merchandising within one week of the site visit. Participating businesses should be requested to begin implementing program recommendations within four-to-eight weeks of receiving written recommendations. Participating businesses



## Window Display (continued)

should also receive priority for financial incentives to implement capital programs to improve window display areas, if applicable and funds are available.

- **Documentation and Evaluation.** The Attleboro Economic Development office should photograph and document changes in window display and appearances resulting from the One-on-One TA component. Before and after photographs can help tell the story of change and improvements.

As part of the One-on-One TA program, participants should be asked to document and share metrics discussed during the One-on-One TA session as to the cost of window display changes and the impacts of these changes on their business. A three-month or six-month, as well as a one-year post survey of participating business could secure helpful data and information as to benefits of visual merchandising.

### FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND ASSISTANCE

Window display/ visual merchandising implementation funding could be provided as additional Incentive. Typical costs for window display implementation funds per business can range from \$500 to \$1,000. In some cases where incorporating good window display may require lighting, window cases, and perhaps removal of reflective film, costs may be higher.

The City of Attleboro is planning to offer a TDI pilot storefront and signage improvement program that could be utilized to assist businesses with capital-related improvements to upgrade lighting, remove metal grates, and enhance the functioning and transparency of windows in Downtown storefronts. Highlighting usage of the Storefront and Signage Program for windows and other financial incentives could reinforce and expand the number of Downtown Attleboro businesses using best practices for window display. It may be helpful to target financial incentives for local businesses

participating in the one-on-one technical assistance for window display and visual merchandising. Financial incentives will depend upon available funding and could be connected with the annual recognition program.

### WINDOW DISPLAY & VISUAL MERCHANDISING TOOL BOX

Several of the components the Be Bold — Look Alive program for Enticing Windows for Customer Sales and Activating Downtown can be packaged as a Window Display & Visual Merchandising Tool Box that can be continuously used as a resource by small businesses in Downtown Attleboro. The elements of the Tool Box would include:

- *Video recording* and clips from the Window Display Workshop
- *Window briefs* on key issues and for varying audiences. (Window Briefs are being developed through a separate related LRRP recommendation.)
- *Before and after photographs* of Downtown Attleboro businesses implementing recommended window and window display improvements
- *Highlights and metrics* as to the Impacts of Window Display and Visual Merchandising and Improvements in Downtown Attleboro
- *List of vendors and resources* for window display and visual merchandising.

The Window Display & Visual Merchandising Tool Box can be a small business resource and made available as a web page on the Downtown Attleboro web site.

### ANNUAL RECOGNITION

To reinforce and support local businesses efforts to improve windows and use better visual merchandising techniques, Downtown Attleboro and the City should annually recognize outstanding Downtown window display and most improved windows. A People's Choice Award for Best Downtown Window Display could also be



## Private Realm

### Window Display (continued)

developed to foster more public and customer involvement and promote patronage and foot traffic Downtown.

A window display contest would require announcement of the contest to local businesses approximately 4- to 5-weeks prior to the day when new window displays should be on view. A one- to two-week period for a jury or people's choice award viewing time will be needed. Announcement of the winners should include publicity allowing time to invite more people to come Downtown and see the award-winning windows.

To institute an annual Window Recognition program the following is required:

- Award Sponsor (optional)
- Award/ Recognition Categories, and tiers (Best, Honorable Mention, etc.) and Guidelines
- Formation of a Selection Committee or Jury
- Decision as to whether an application for the award is required or it will be measured by familiarity with Downtown Attleboro and overall changes
- Decision as to the timing of the annual award. Recognition could coincide with the calendar year or other annual event involving the Downtown Attleboro business community
- Decision as to what awardees will be receiving: a certificate, a trophy, plaque or other similar acknowledgment, and/ or a prize.
- Award presentation and recognition entail presentation of certificates or plaques by the Mayor. A photograph and story on the City's and Downtown Attleboro's web page, as well as in the Sun Chronicle about the annual recognition

It is important to make sure the annual Window Display Award and Recognition is not just a one-off event, but truly becomes an annual recognition. This will help keep the importance and value of window display and visual merchandising in the forefront.

### RESOURCES

There is one LRRP Best Practices which addresses windows, which can be found in the Resources section of the LRRP website. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program#resources-> . It is:

Mark Favermann Design: Creative empty storefront treatments, by Newton Community Pride's Window Art.

Morgan, Tony. Visual Merchandising, 3rd Edition: Windows and In-Store Display for Retail. 2016. Laurence King, Publisher.



*A colorful flower prop and spring flowers in a matching color draw attention to health and beauty goods at this shop and create a cheerful spring window.*  
Source: RealRacine






*This window display highlights products and tells a story that engages the customer and lets you know the hardware store has a broom for every need.*  
Source: Cole Hardware



Private Realm

## Create Window Briefs:

### Guides for Improving Storefront & Business Windows

PROJECT TITLE		Be Bold, Look Alive: Window Briefs for Enticing Windows for Customer Sales and Activating Downtown										
		Be Bold, Look Alive will develop short technical one-to-three-page briefs targeted to business owners and their staff and property owners on various elements of good window display and visual merchandising, including challenges for specific industry sectors and building types will be developed.										
Origin		<p>The LRRP diagnostic identified the poor appearances of storefront windows in Downtown Attleboro creates a perception of vacancies and blight. This was discussed during the June community meeting and stakeholders identified windows as a priority issue.</p> <p>Project Champion: Catherine Feerick, Economic Development Director and the TDI Downtown Committee</p>										
Location/Census Tract		Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct Census Tracts in Bristol County, MA They are Census Tracts: 6314; 6315; and 6316 in Bristol County (2020 decennial tracts).										
Budget & Sources of Funding	<div> Low</div>	<p>Budget with estimated ranges for program components:</p> <table><tr><td>Program Start-up</td><td>\$100</td></tr><tr><td>Window Briefs (6 to 7 briefs)</td><td>\$10,000</td></tr><tr><td>Graphic Design</td><td>\$3,900</td></tr><tr><td>Translation of Window Briefs (one language)</td><td>\$2,500</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL Estimated Budget</td><td>\$16,500</td></tr></table> <p>Assumes In-kind support and staff assistance for Be Bold, Look Alive program.</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)</li><li>■ TDI</li><li>■ American Rescue Plan Act assistance</li><li>■ CDBG</li><li>■ Private foundations or donors</li></ul>	Program Start-up	\$100	Window Briefs (6 to 7 briefs)	\$10,000	Graphic Design	\$3,900	Translation of Window Briefs (one language)	\$2,500	TOTAL Estimated Budget	\$16,500
Program Start-up	\$100											
Window Briefs (6 to 7 briefs)	\$10,000											
Graphic Design	\$3,900											
Translation of Window Briefs (one language)	\$2,500											
TOTAL Estimated Budget	\$16,500											
Timeframe		<div> Short</div> <p>Initiate within 6 to 9 months. The process for developing, publishing and distributing Window Briefs is estimated to take approximately 5 to 6 months.</p>										
Risks	<div> Low</div>	<p>Business and Property Owner Cooperation</p> <p>Language barriers with immigrant owned businesses. This can be overcome in part by translating materials and providing culturally relevant examples.</p>										

## Create Window Briefs (continued)

<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ # of Window Briefs distributed to local businesses &amp; downtown property owners</li> <li>■ Web analytics as to downloads of window briefs</li> <li>■ Changes in window appearances</li> <li>■ Upgrades in window display</li> <li>■ Fewer "blank" window/walls</li> <li>■ Changing perceptions as to liveliness and attractiveness of Downtown Attleboro.</li> </ul>
<b>Partners &amp; Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Attleboro Art Museum</li> <li>■ Area colleges, such as Rhode Island School of Design, with a new Community Partnership program and Johnson &amp; Wales, that offers visual merchandising classes.</li> <li>■ TDI Committee</li> <li>■ Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>■ TDI / Mass Development</li> <li>■ Local businesses (tenants) and property owners</li> </ul>
<b>Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts</b>	<p>Half of Downtown Attleboro businesses closed temporarily as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. In April 2021, 63% of Downtown Attleboro still had reduced hours. Traffic volumes in the center of Downtown Attleboro at County Street and North Main (the intersection of two state roads) was down 13.2% during the pandemic in 2020 from 2019. The MBTA commuter rail stops in Downtown Attleboro. Commuter rail ridership systemwide in April 2021 was down 85% from January 2020 attributable to the pandemic.</p> <p>In-store patronage at Downtown Attleboro stores is down. Over 50% of downtown business report a 25% or more reduction in in-store patronage as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>Exterior appearances, particularly windows, which are seen by both pedestrians and motorists, significantly influence whether a person will opt to stop and visit a local store. COVID has significantly reduced the number of persons downtown, whether it is working, traveling through, or shopping. Recovery from these losses requires better appearances to entice customers to return and interest others. 88% of the businesses responding to the LRRP survey indicated that physical improvements, such as storefronts and building façade renovations were needed in Downtown Attleboro, making it the top priority. Windows and window display are the key elements of storefronts.</p>

### ACTIONS

- Select Window Brief priority topics to be prepared by the content team.
- Procure needed expertise to write, design & publish
- Work with content developers and designer to prepare technical window display briefs
- Translate Window Briefs
- Publish online and in print (PDF) Window Briefs.
- Publicize and distribute.

### PROCESS

Window Briefs are short tip sheets, one to three pages in length, that are easy-to-read guides and instruction tackling common issues and challenges related to windows, window display, and visual merchandising for businesses in Downtown Attleboro. Window briefs will offer tips and technical information in both narrative and graphic format with appropriate diagrams. Window Briefs are a resource for local businesses that can be used to help upgrade the overall quality of window display in Downtown



## Create Window Briefs (continued)

Attleboro. Window Briefs will extend the impacts and benefits of the Be Bold- Look Alive Window Display and One-on-One TA program (subject of a related recommendation). Window Briefs will be tools for new businesses, for new staff at existing businesses, and references for businesses and property owners who may belatedly focusing on window display and visual merchandising.

**Select Window Brief topics.** Good topics for Window Briefs include:

- Window and Visual Merchandising 101
- Lighting for Store and Business Windows
- Windows — Safety & Security Considerations
- Window Cases — Construction and Use for Display
- Window Display for Health Care Providers
- Windows Display and Visual Merchandising for Restaurants
- Window Display for Offices
- Vacancies & Windows — Strategies for Property Owners
- Addressing Sun and Glare Issues
- Businesses with Upper Story Windows
- Art in Windows
- Promoting Online Options for Your Business with Window Display.

Each Window Brief would address seven points. They are:

1. Issues and challenges
2. Any applicable regulatory considerations pertinent to Attleboro
3. Principles and best practices
4. Illustrative examples
5. Low cost and easy ways to effect improvements
6. Business benefits
7. Additional resources.

### **Procure Needed Expertise to Write & Publish.**

Procure expert assistance on windows, window display and visual merchandising for Window Briefs. This may include the solicitation of a graphic designer to design the online and print (PDF) versions of Window Briefs, or a separate solicitation.

Work with content developers and design consultant team as they develop Window Briefs, including written content, photographs and diagrams. Provide needed feedback to assure briefs are relevant and easy to use, and addresses the key issues in Downtown Attleboro.

**Translate Window Briefs.** Window Briefs should be designed so that they are accessible in both digital and print formats. To broaden the usage of Window Briefs, they can be translated and made available in Spanish or other languages for local businesses, as well. Identify desired and needed language(s). Work with translator and graphic designer to produce the briefs into Spanish and other desired languages with a similar look and feel as the English version for both the web and print (PDF) channels.

### **Publish online and in print (PDF) Window Briefs.**

The Window Briefs can be used as a monthly tip on how to enhance windows in Downtown Attleboro and be a feature in monthly email newsletters to Downtown businesses or blog posts on the Downtown Attleboro website. This provides a means of continuous encouragement and awareness as to the importance of window display and visual merchandising. The Window Briefs will become a helpful resource for businesses moving to and opening in Downtown Attleboro. Window Briefs can become part of the Window Display Tool Kit (see allied recommendation for Window Display Workshop and One-on-One TA), as well as a resource for businesses opening and relocating to Downtown Attleboro.



Private Realm

## Create Window Briefs (continued)

**Publicize and Distribute.** With the online publication of Window Briefs, copies should be shared (print or digital) with local businesses, especially participants in the Be Bold, Look Alive Window Display Workshop. In addition to local distribution amongst Downtown Attleboro businesses, the City should announce the development of Window Briefs and secure some local media coverage on the entire window display improvement effort in Downtown Attleboro. Media coverage about the Briefs will enhance awareness of the resource, and highlight the importance of window display — a form of "peer pressure" to think about windows and window display.

"Visual merchandising is the silent sales team that is always working to impact the bottom line... always on the clock, and never takes breaks."

Michael Guajardo, VA Museum of Fine Arts from Association of Cultural Enterprises.

### RESOURCES

Preservation Briefs published by the National Park Service were an inspiration for the concept of Windows Briefs. See: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>. These are technical, easy-to-read with illustrations, and have become a key preservation resource that has served the test of time. There is no comparable resource for windows and window display. Preservation Briefs are available in an online format and as separate downloadable PDF for use.




Downtown Beatrice Façade Guidelines have simple guidance points with "To Do's" and "Don'ts" on various elements of building façades. <https://www.mainstreetbeatrice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Beatrice-Design-Guidelines-for-website.pdf>

The City of Philadelphia's Design Guidelines handbook provides another model that has a larger focus, but includes relevant examples. [http://www.mtairybid.com/uploads/3/7/7/9/37799711/city\\_of\\_philadelphia\\_design\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.mtairybid.com/uploads/3/7/7/9/37799711/city_of_philadelphia_design_guidelines.pdf)

Morgan, Tony. Visual Merchandising, 3rd Edition: Windows and In-Store Display for Retail. 2016. Laurence King Publisher.



## Make Downtown Friendlier: Eliminate the One-foot Rule Problem

PROJECT TITLE		ELIMINATE THE ONE-FOOT RULE PROBLEM
Origin		<p>Discussions with merchants and TDI Committee elicited a strong response and interest in resolving the problem of parking tickets stemming from misunderstandings regarding pavement markings and the one-foot rule in Downtown Attleboro.</p> <p>Project Champion: Catherine Feerick, Economic Development Director</p>
Location/Census Tract		<p>Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial Census tracts).</p>
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Low	<p>Budget: The estimated cost to eliminate pavement markings by paint is less than \$6,000.</p> <p>Potential Funding Sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Municipal appropriation</li><li>■ Chapter 90 funds from MassHighway</li><li>■ American Rescue Plan funding</li><li>■ Crowd-funded focusing on Downtown business contributions</li></ul>
Timeframe	 Short	<p>Initiate within six months.</p>
Risks	 Low	<p>The risks are low. The potential risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Adherence to good on-street parking practice by motorists continue to park close to the curb to maintain adequate space for traffic flow on Downtown streets.</li><li>■ Loss of parking ticket revenue.</li></ul>
Key Performance Indicators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Change in parking enforcement policies, or</li><li>■ Change in pavement markings</li></ul>
Partners & Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Attleboro Economic Development Office</li><li>■ Parking Office</li><li>■ Police Department</li><li>■ Public Works Department</li><li>■ TDI Downtown Committee</li><li>■ United Chamber of Commerce</li></ul>
Diagnostic/COVID-19 Impacts		<p>Per the LRRP Business Survey of Downtown Attleboro businesses, 75% of businesses lost revenue during the pandemic. 62% of businesses experienced revenue losses greater than 25%. As of April 2021, 63% of businesses still had reduced hours or capacity. The loss of face-to-face/on-site sales was experienced by nearly two-thirds of Downtown businesses (62%). Half of Downtown Attleboro businesses indicated that they lost at least a quarter or more of on-site, face-to-face sales. As part of COVID recovery, Downtown Attleboro needs to regain customers and be welcoming. Sour experiences with parking tickets due to the one-foot rule can negate efforts to recover from COVID</p>



## Eliminate the One-foot Parking Rule (continued)

### ACTIONS

- Determine preferred strategy to address one-foot rule problem
- Collect data
- Convene discussion with key city agency staff
- Advance resolution by repainting external boundaries and eliminating the cap of the "T" in on-street parking space markings.
- Advance resolution by amending City ordinance. Draft amendments. Secure Council and mayoral support.
- Publicize resolution to local businesses.

### PROCESS

**Determine preferred strategy to address the one-foot rule problem.** The TDI Downtown Committee should discuss and develop a preferred solution to the "one-foot" rule parking ticket problem that aggravates drivers who perceive they are legally parked since they are parked wholly within a designated parking space. Most on-street parking spaces in Downtown Attleboro have "T" style pavement markings. These delineate the length of the space, and the cap of the "T" designates the external boundary of the parking space that is within the roadway and adjacent to the vehicular travel lane. See photograph. Potential solutions include:

- Relax parking enforcement policy. This can provide a temporary workable solution.
- Eliminate the markings for the "external boundary" of the parking space, addressing the perception that one is parked within the designated parking space and that a legal external boundary exists.
- Change the policy and city ordinance.



*Parking pavement markings delineate the length and width of a parking space on South Main Street.*



*Pavement stripes in the form of a "T" mark the length of the parking space and the boundary between the parking area and the travel lane on Park Street.*



## Eliminate the One-foot Parking Rule (continued)

### **Collect data from businesses as to experiences and customer issues with one-foot rule.**

When working on any policy issue, it is helpful to collect both qualitative and quantitative data about the problem. Getting input and stories from Downtown businesspeople will help illustrate the extent of the problem. Informal conversations with the city finance department indicate that the parking enforcement of the one-foot rule is not a revenue generation strategy. It may be useful to check with the local ambulance companies to see to what extent, if any, double-parking or poorly parked vehicles along the main route to Sturdy Hospital is a problem for ambulances making emergency runs.

### **Convene discussion with key city agency staff to approach resolution based on the preferred solution identified by the TDI Downtown Committee.**

A discussion amongst key agency heads and staff people with the City regarding enforcement policies and the one-foot rule should be convened. The goals are to convey how enforcement of this rule hinders small business recovery from the pandemic and creates an unwelcoming atmosphere for Downtown. Furthermore, the goal includes seeking and implementing a mutually agreeable solution. The agency staff meeting can also be an opportunity to learn about the origin of the one-foot rule and/ or concerns other departments may have regarding the one-foot rule policy, as well.

**Advance resolution by repainting external boundaries and eliminating the cap of the "T" in on-street parking space.** One solution is to eliminate the perception that a parker is legally parked if they are wholly within a delineated parking space. This could be remedied by painting all the caps of the "T" parking space pavement markings black. Estimated cost to remove the markings on 588 on-street parking spaces is less than \$1,500 based on MassDOT's bid documentation regarding recent unit costs for pavement markings in MassHighway District 5. Applying statewide unit costs for pavement

markings, the cost could be in the \$3,000 range or less.

Utilizing this approach to resolving the one-foot rule, a work order or request for quotes will need to be issued to remove the external boundary or cap of the "T" to a pavement striping firm to repaint the external boundary black on Downtown's 588 on-street parking spaces. The City of Attleboro could also opt to use existing Public Works staff to execute if staff resources allow. Funding for this small task would need to be found in the municipal budget or crowd funded. This task could possibly be included as part of an existing planned street paving project, or perhaps utilize Chapter 90 state money allocated to Attleboro for capital street and road maintenance.

**Advance resolution by amending of existing City Ordinance regarding one-foot rule.** The one-foot rule dilemma for Downtown parking could be also eliminated by amending the City ordinance and provide an exception to the one-foot rule when a motor vehicle is parked wholly within a parking space with a clearly delineated boundary between the parking space and travel lane. This would require drafting the text of the proposed amendment with a review by legal counsel. It will also require identifying a City Council champion who will sponsor the amendment and sufficient support amongst City Councilors and the Mayor for an amendment. Amending the City ordinance will likely be a six month or longer process. The TDI Downtown Committee will need to be actively involved in advocating for the amendment with City Councilors. Once enacted, it would be a permanent policy solution.

**Publicize the Resolution.** Once the final resolution of the One-Foot Parking rule dilemma is achieved, AEDO and the TDI Downtown Committee should publicize the successful solution with Downtown business owners and property owners.



## The One-Foot Rule Parking Dilemma

The City of Attleboro has well defined on-street parking delineated by white striping indicating the length of each space. A "T" style marking is used, where the cap of the "T" indicates the boundary between the parking space and the travel lane. Some drivers who park wholly within the designated parking space perceive that they have legally parked. They are surprised to find a parking ticket upon return to the vehicle. Parking enforcement of the one-foot rule in Downtown Attleboro has gained notoriety, causing frustration and anger by Downtown customers.

### Attleboro Ordinances 10-5.1(e). Parking Requirements

No person shall park a vehicle in any of the following places: Upon a roadway where parking is permitted. Unless both wheels on the right side of the vehicle are within twelve (12) inches of the curb or edge of the roadway, except upon those streets which are designated as one-way streets. On such one-way streets vehicles shall be parked in the direction in which said vehicle is moving and with both wheels within twelve (12) inches of the curb.

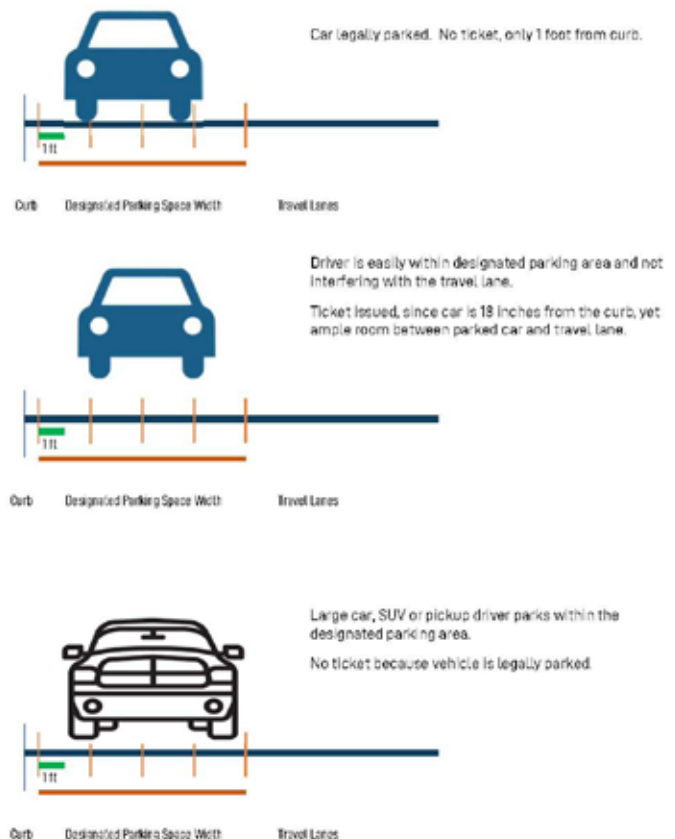
It is standard practice to encourage vehicles to park close to the curb to avoid interference with travel lanes. Requiring vehicles to be parked within 12 inches of the curb is a common policy. Clear travel lanes are important in Downtown Attleboro because the emergency route for ambulances goes through the heart of Downtown en route to Sturdy Hospital. The vigorous enforcement of the one-foot rule, combined with the marking of the "external" boundary of the parking space with the "T" style pavement markings, creates confusion and high levels of frustration.

Standard on-street parking spaces in Downtown are eight feet in width. This enables a mid-size vehicle, which is typically 70 to 73 inches wide, or six feet, to comfortably park in an eight-foot-wide parking space. A person who skillfully parallel parks and can get the car parked exactly center would have one foot available on each side and be in full compliance with Attleboro's ordinances. However, if the person leaves 15 inches, 18 inches, 21 inches or more on the curb-side, the parker will be in violation and receive a ticket, even though they perceive and visually see that they are wholly within the designated parking area. Compact and sub-compact cars can be as narrow as five feet wide. A person parking a compact vehicle exactly centered in the marked parking space would

violate the one-foot rule and be issued a parking violation ticket.


The anger and frustration from prospective Downtown customers stem in large part from the visual expectation that one is legally parked, and surprise that the car is still ticketed for the one-foot rule. People think they are following the law and perceive a "got-cha" situation, creating ill will and a negative experience coming Downtown. Shoppers have choices, and negative experiences such as surprise parking tickets prompt people to make different choices and perhaps not revisit Downtown.

The one-foot rule parking dilemma is depicted in the parking diagram. The middle option receives a ticket, even though the car is not approaching the travel lane or interfering with travel.





## Wayfinding

PROJECT TITLE		DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO WAYFINDING INITIATIVE
Origin		<p><i>Contributors:</i> The need for wayfinding in Downtown Attleboro was identified by several key stakeholders, property owners, and businesses in several interviews and meetings. The Mobility Strategies study prepared in 2020 by Nelson Nygard for Downtown Attleboro as part of TDI (Transformational Development Initiative) identifies the need for improved wayfinding.</p> <p><i>Project Champions:</i> Catherine Feerick, Attleboro Economic Development Director, and George Duarte, TDI Fellow.</p>
Location/Census Tract		Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314, 6315, and 6316 (2020 decennial tracts).
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Medium	<p>Medium budget for wayfinding signage and the number of signs fabricated and installed. The cost of regional wayfinding with state road systems and MBTA/GATRA commuter rail signage may possibly be absorbed by state and regional agency partners.</p> <p>The wayfinding signage initiative is separated into two components: (1) developing/ designing a wayfinding system for Downtown Attleboro, and (2) fabrication and installation of the wayfinding system.</p> <p>The budget for the design of a wayfinding system and signage can range from \$15,000 to \$35,000.</p> <p>The budget for the fabrication and installation of wayfinding signs will vary as to the number and type of signage. The more elaborate signs depicted in the Salem and Littleton examples are in the \$75,000 to \$125,000 range. For example, 100 new Downtown Attleboro banners would cost approximately \$6,500-\$7,500 plus installation.</p> <p>There are different scales of wayfinding: one for vehicles and motorists and one for pedestrians and bicyclists. Some areas develop separate wayfinding for bicyclists.</p> <p>There are also different geographic scales — regional wayfinding, local and district wayfinding, and place wayfinding for points of interest (e.g., City Hall, library, museum). A wayfinding system for Downtown Attleboro needs to address all scales. The costs and sources of funding for each of these scales may differ.</p>

## Wayfinding (continued)

PROJECT TITLE		DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO WAYFINDING INITIATIVE
Budget & Sources of Funding (continued)		Sources of funding:
	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Municipal appropriation</li> <li>■ Mass Development grants — TDI Catalyst</li> <li>■ MassDOT, Shared Streets and Ways Program</li> <li>■ CDBG (possibly). CDBG funds may be used if the wayfinding system also advances universal access issues and could contribute elements of wayfinding, determined on a case by case basis</li> <li>■ MassDOT operations for regional roadway signs</li> <li>■ GATRA</li> <li>■ American Rescue Plan Act</li> <li>■ Build Back Better</li> <li>■ Private fundraising</li> </ul> <p>Some funding programs can contribute a proportionate share of funds to wayfinding when their mission and goals are being addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Travel &amp; Tourism funding from MOTT or Regional Tourism Board</li> <li>■ Preservation funding, such as Massachusetts Historical Commission</li> <li>■ EOEA and DCR for parks and open space elements</li> <li>■ Mass Cultural Council and the Attleboro Local Cultural Council for arts and culture-related wayfinding</li> </ul>
Timeframe		Ideally, branding and logo development precede a major wayfinding initiative. Wayfinding is a highly visible, early-action step to embed a new brand. Some communities have combined branding and wayfinding into one initiative with separate phases. Downtown Attleboro is considering a branding study, which could be completed in mid to end of 2022.
Risks		The risks for developing and implementing a Downtown Attleboro wayfinding program include timely completion of a brand image for Downtown and supply chain/ construction issues, highlighted below.
	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Developing an image/logo for Downtown Attleboro prior to wayfinding. Design and fabrication of wayfinding sign system best follows branding (a separate LRRP recommendation to be completed as an early action item) to enable the results to be integrated into wayfinding. Alternatively, branding and wayfinding can become a combined initiative. In the event that the branding study is delayed, some elements of the wayfinding program can proceed with implementation, such as regional signage and collaboration with MassDOT, MBTA, and GATRA.</li> <li>■ Supply chain issues exist within the construction industry, affecting lumber and metals. This could affect the implementation timeline for fabrication and installation.</li> </ul>
Key Performance Indicators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased awareness of Downtown Attleboro and its businesses, resources, assets, and parking, leading to higher traffic and sales</li> <li>■ Increased utilization of off-street parking spaces</li> <li>■ Increased number of visitors to local businesses, museums, and points of interest</li> <li>■ Increased awareness of the Downtown Attleboro brand</li> </ul>

## Wayfinding (continued)

PROJECT TITLE	DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO WAYFINDING INITIATIVE
Partners & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ City of Attleboro</li><li>■ TDI Downtown Committee</li><li>■ Attleboro DPW</li><li>■ MassDOT</li><li>■ MOBD — can be an ally in obtaining signage updates with MassDOT</li><li>■ MBTA</li><li>■ GATRA</li><li>■ MassDevelopment</li></ul>

### DIAGNOSTIC / COVID-19 IMPACTS

Downtown Attleboro needs a multi-faceted wayfinding program to direct customers and visitors to the Downtown area. This includes directional signage to Downtown, within Downtown to key locations and public parking, from the regional roadways, and from the commuter rail station. The Downtown Attleboro Wayfinding Initiative will build upon the completion of the recommended branding study for Downtown and the results of the Mobility Study conducted in 2020.

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a significant loss of on-site customers in Downtown. Three quarters of Downtown businesses reported fewer on-site customers, and nearly two-thirds (62%) reported on-site customer losses greater than 25%. To recover, Downtown Attleboro businesses need to increase visibility and make it easier to find Downtown. The Covid pandemic prompted people to move and re-locate. In July 2021, Attleboro was amongst the top 20 municipalities in MA with new single-family and condominium sales, indicating a high number of new residents who are less familiar with Attleboro. Moreover, Downtown Attleboro has new housing developments opening, plus a pipeline of 500+ new housing units. Wayfinding can help enable Downtown businesses adversely impacted by Covid to be more easily discovered by new residents. The Capron Zoo just a mile west of Downtown reported that increased visitation spurred in part from Covid from visitors throughout the greater Attleboro region.

Regional residents need to be able to easily find Downtown Attleboro. Downtown is not readily

accessible from I-95, the primary north/south travel corridor. There are two exits: Exit 4 (north and south bound) — Route 123 and Exit 7 — Route 152 that offer the more “direct” access. Each is over two miles away from Downtown and requires a motorist to turn multiple times to get to Downtown. There is no wayfinding signage on either of these routes explicitly for Downtown.

Wayfinding for Downtown Attleboro on a pedestrian and vehicular scale is needed, as recommended in the Downtown Attleboro Mobility Strategies Study in 2020. The LRRP Diagnostic for Downtown Attleboro found:

- Existing wayfinding in Downtown is vehicular-oriented and focuses on identifying public parking spaces or the commuter rail station. Green state roadway directional signs exist at key intersections. Signage for public parking lots is plentiful. The primary wayfinding sign on South Main Street at Mill Street advises motorists of how to reach destinations beyond Downtown.
- Few directional/wayfinding signs exist for Downtown Attleboro, and what does exist is chiefly vehicular oriented and not specific for Downtown Attleboro. Sturdy Hospital is the de facto surrogate sign for Downtown Attleboro, and the hospital is not Downtown.
- Banner signage is used to mark the arrival and extent of Downtown Attleboro. Blue municipal banners are primarily displayed on the handsome decorative street light fixtures Downtown.



## Wayfinding (continued)

### ACTIONS

1. Identify and organize the City team lead and key individuals to work on Downtown wayfinding
2. Determine best approach to incorporating branding with wayfinding
3. Secure funding and resources
4. Procure consultant for wayfinding system
5. Develop a Downtown Attleboro wayfinding system serving motorists and pedestrians
6. Consult with TDI Committee and public participation
7. Develop installation strategy
8. Fabricate and install

### PROCESS

**Identify and organize the City team lead and key individual to work on Downtown wayfinding.** Wayfinding projects often require an inter-departmental approach involving Economic Development, Planning, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, and other offices to successfully implement. For Downtown Attleboro, it will be important to also involve the TDI Downtown Committee to incorporate the voice of business people, property owners, and nonprofits. Identifying the lead point person for development of the wayfinding system is a crucial part of kicking off the project. As the project moves into implementation, the team lead may change from planning and development to a more operational/construction focus.

**Determine best approach to incorporating branding with wayfinding for Downtown Attleboro.** A related LRRP recommendation is a branding study for Downtown Attleboro, which ideally precedes development of a wayfinding system. Branding and wayfinding could be combined into a larger project with using a multi-disciplinary consultant team. The AEDO and City should determine the best

approach for Attleboro, based on available funding and desired quality outcomes. Some cities opt to undertake two different studies, while select one consultant team to address both branding and wayfinding. It is a local choice. The illustrative wayfinding signs from Littleton, CO (population 45,652) found later in this recommendation incorporated the findings and elements of a branding study, including community engagement during the development of wayfinding.

**Secure funding and resources.** The City should pursue securing resources for the design of the wayfinding system and for fabrication and installation of signage. This can be two different steps and can tap into different funding sources. The number of signs needed and the budget will be developed during the design phase. Fabrication and installation can be phased, although there are often economies of scale with a single fabrication order.

**Procure consultant for wayfinding system.** Procuring a consultant for Downtown Attleboro's development and design of the wayfinding system is the initial phase and typically includes a wayfinding audit, design of a family of wayfinding signage, such as arrival signs at the border of Attleboro and/or Downtown, regional directional signage, specific district and attraction signage, interpretative and business directory sign(s), parking signs, and point of interest signs. A wayfinding system addresses wayfinding for both pedestrians and motorists. Some wayfinding systems also serve bicyclists. The development of the wayfinding system includes assessment and identification of sign locations.

**Design of the wayfinding system is the first phase.** The second phase is fabrication and installation along with related construction. This may be two separate procurements. There are some firms that are design/fabrication/install. The City may opt to examine both alternatives in the design of the Request for Proposals.



## Wayfinding (continued)

**Develop a Downtown Attleboro wayfinding system serving motorists and pedestrians.** The Downtown Attleboro Wayfinding System should address the following issues and opportunities for wayfinding to make it easier for residents, visitors and customers to find and patronize businesses and nonprofits in Downtown Attleboro whether traveling by car, transit, bicycle or foot.

Vehicular/Motorist Wayfinding signage needs to be addressed on the regional highway and state road system; directional and arrival signage pointing to Downtown Attleboro on routes 152 and 123, especially from the approaches off I-95, but also from the north and south, and along Route 118; parking signage within Downtown; and directional signage within Downtown for key points of interest and at commuter rail/transit center.

Pedestrian scale signage is needed at the Downtown Attleboro commuter rail station platform, current parking lot, and any future public parking structures; wayfinding and informational signage about Downtown Attleboro and points of interest at the GATRA Multi-Modal Center; municipal parking lots and the parking structure; and other key directions signage points that will be identified with the wayfinding consultant.

The 2020 Downtown Mobility Study Strategies did an initial audit identifying some of the existing wayfinding-related signage in Downtown, as displayed in the map on page 107.

**Consultation with TDI Committee and public participation.** Public participation and engagement provide valuable feedback and aids successful implementation. During the work with the wayfinding consultant, the TDI Downtown Committee and the general public should be involved at key points to provide feedback. One community surveyed the public

on design alternatives to select the preferred wayfinding signs, as way to get more public buy-in and support.

**Installation strategy.** The installation strategy for wayfinding signage should detail location, purpose of the wayfinding sign, sign style, and ownership information as to location. It is assumed that most installations of wayfinding signage will be within the public rights-of-way. However, there may be some situations where an easement may be needed. Identifying and clarifying ownership issues in advance will be needed.

Each site location for a sign needs to be visited and ADA accessibility issues must be considered. At some locations there are state road directional signs, traffic lights, a street sign, parking signs, light poles, plus an occasional mail box or utility box. A small sidewalk area can become cluttered. This makes it more difficult for walkers, people with strollers or persons using wheel chairs to get around. The abundance of signs, while each well-intentioned, can be distracting making it difficult for the viewer to focus and see the message. The installation strategy for wayfinding needs to address both ADA and risks related to visual clutter. Ideally, wayfinding sighting will result in needed accessibility, better visibility and more effective messaging via signs.

**Fabrication and installation.** Once the preferred wayfinding signage system is selected and specific site locations identified and approved, a construction/fabrication ready sign design plan can be prepared. The City can then issue a request for proposal with bid specifications for the desired number and mix of signs. If a design/fabricate/build firm was selected for the wayfinding system design, the City can approve the fabrication plan and issue a notice to proceed with fabrication.



## Wayfinding (continued)

### Fabrication & installation (continued)

Installation of the wayfinding signs can be done by the fabricator or a sub-contractor. To save money, some municipalities use force account labor from city work crews for some or all of the wayfinding signs. Responsibility for installation should be identified prior to authorizing fabrication. Detailed instructions for installation should be specified by the wayfinding designer. Upon receipt and acceptance of the fabricated signs, installation commences.

Installation of the wayfinding signs is an opportunity for media coverage announcing the new wayfinding system to the public. Updates on the Downtown Attleboro web page, Facebook, and social media can help spread the word about the new wayfinding system.

### The basic process of wayfinding involves four stages:

1. **Orientation** is the attempt to determine one's location in relation to objects that may be nearby and the desired destination.
2. **Route decision** is the selection of a course of direction to the destination.
3. **Route monitoring** is checking to make sure that the selected route is heading towards the destination.
4. **Destination** recognition is when the destination is recognized.

*Credit: Lidwell, William; Holden, Kritina; Butler, Jill (2010), "Wayfinding"*



**Wayfinding & Signage in Downtown Attleboro.** Source: *Mobility Factbook — Strategies prepared by Nelson Nygard, 2020.*



## Wayfinding (continued)

### WAYFINDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOWNTOWN AT THE COMMUTER RAIL STATION

The Downtown Attleboro commuter rail station is an opportunity to let commuters learn more about Downtown and orient people who are coming to Attleboro. Other commuter rail stations in the MBTA systems illustrate some best practices as to wayfinding and transit that should be applied at the Downtown Attleboro station.

#### Existing Platform Signage at MBTA Stations with Local Area Map

The two images below are examples of best practice station signage with permanent local area maps. The Back Bay station is a commuter rail station. The second image is an MBTA subway station. Each station has a system map and a local map orienting commuters to nearby points of interest. These signs are located on the train platform and can be viewed as people wait for the train or as they deboard. Including signage on the Attleboro commuter rail platform would further capture the attention of rail commuters as they wait for the train. A captive environment with a long dwell-time is ideal from an advertiser's perspective.



*Commuter rail system map and local area maps at commuter train stations for wayfinding orientation to the local area*

#### Existing Platform Signage at MBTA Commuter Rail Stations Featuring Local History

The photos below show existing commuter rail platform signage depicting local history at Blue Hills Station and Morton Street Station on the Fairmount line and the Greenbush Station on the Greenbush line. Similar interpretative signage would be informative, more welcoming, and enhance arrival to Downtown Attleboro.



*Commuter rail platform signage*



## Wayfinding (continued)

### Local Area Maps at the GATRA Multi-Modal Center

The following photographs depict the existing signage at the Downtown Attleboro multi-modal center operated by the regional transit agency, GATRA. The maps are found on a kiosk near the pedestrian entrance to the bus and commuter rail area. These examples could be strengthened with better notation of Downtown Attleboro and key points of interest. The two information cases are an opportunity for Downtown Attleboro to install local wayfinding information and perhaps a business directory.



*Wayfinding maps at a kiosk at the Transit Center adjacent to the Attleboro Commuter Rail Station. This is a missed opportunity for highlighting Downtown Attleboro's many assets.*

### EXISTING WAYFINDING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*The primary wayfinding sign in Downtown Attleboro on South Main Street.*



*A wayfinding sign at a pedestrian scale in Downtown Attleboro.*



*An interpretative sign in Balfour Park.*



Public Realm

## Wayfinding (continued)

### EXISTING WAYFINDING IN DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO



*(Above) Banner signs announcing arrival to Downtown Attleboro are seen throughout Downtown.*

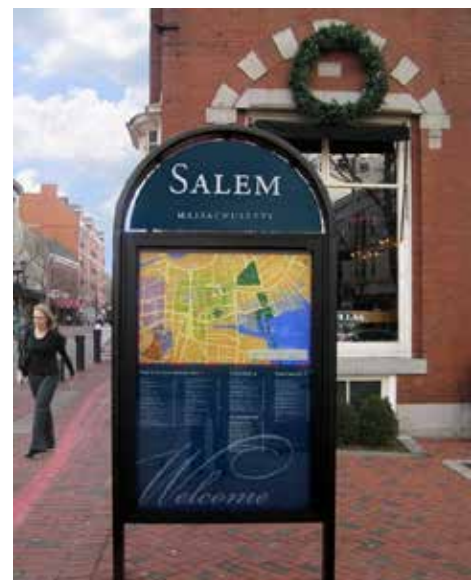
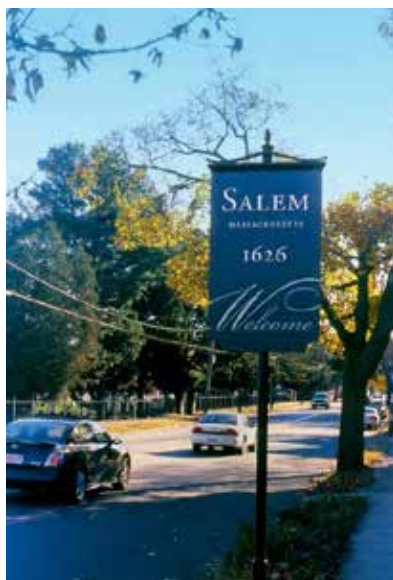
*(Above) Wayfinding for public parking lots are visible throughout Downtown*



## Wayfinding (continued)

### BEST PRACTICES & ILLUSTRATIONS OF WAYFINDING SYSTEMS

**Salem, Massachusetts.** The City of Salem developed and installed wayfinding system that includes arrival signs, wayfinding and interpretation that has a common long and feel and advances the City's brand.





## Wayfinding (continued)

### BEST PRACTICES & ILLUSTRATIONS OF WAYFINDING SYSTEMS

**Littleton, Colorado.** Littleton instituted a citywide wayfinding system using a very contemporary look and approach, which include regional gateway signs as well as downtown wayfinding and interpretative signs for pedestrians. This wayfinding design was chosen with public consultation and citizen surveys on preferred design alternatives. Elements of their comprehensive system are shown below.

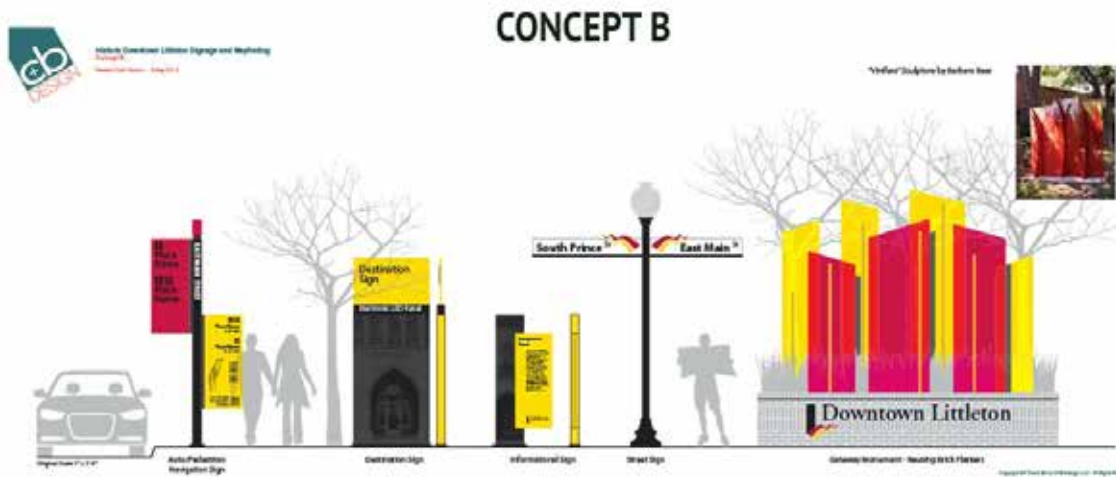




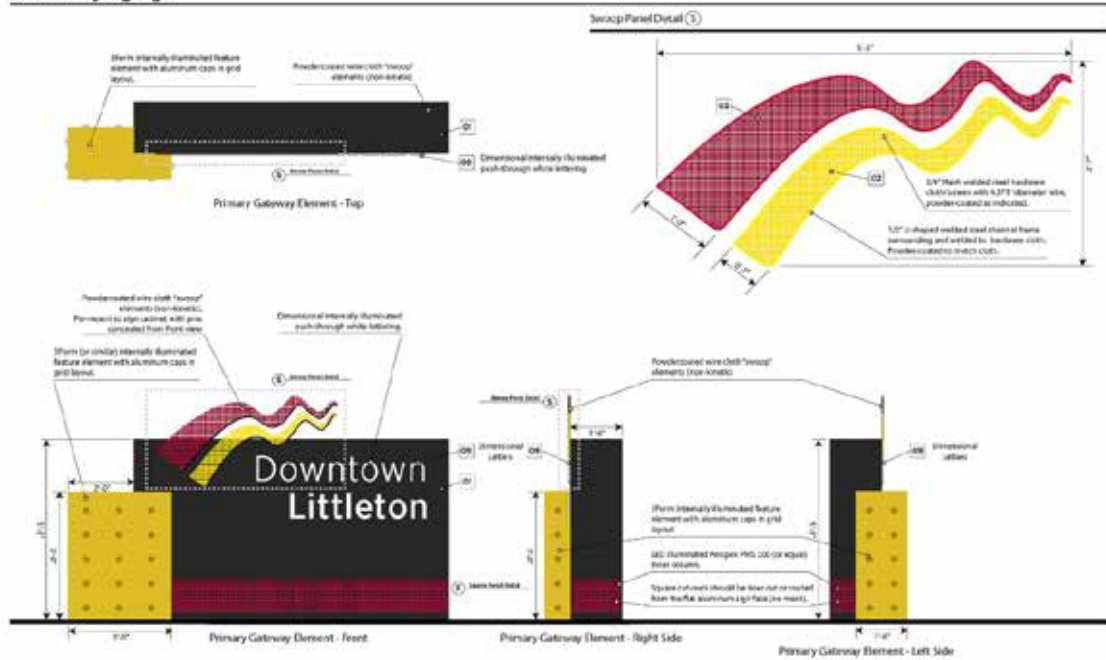
## Wayfinding (continued)

### BEST PRACTICES & ILLUSTRATIONS OF WAYFINDING SYSTEMS

#### Littleton, Colorado (continued)



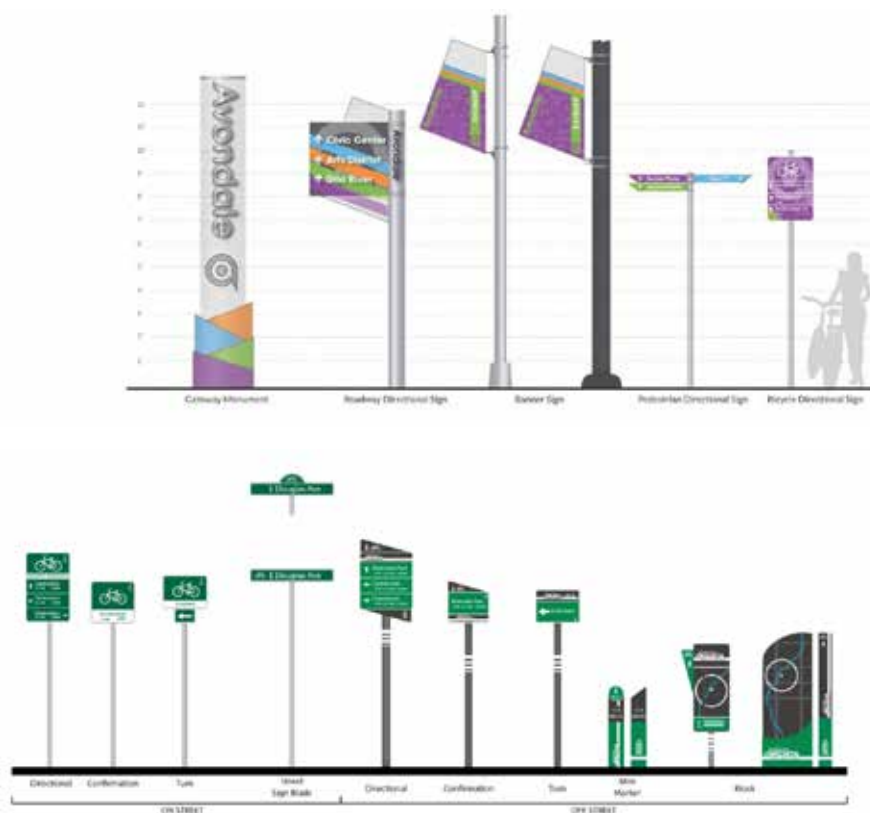
#### A Gateway Signage





## Wayfinding (continued)

### BEST PRACTICES: OTHER EXAMPLES OF WAYFINDING SIGNAGE SYSTEMS




Source: Alta Planning as sourced by Goman+York.

### RESOURCES


- LRRP Best Practices. These can be found in the Resources section of the LRRP website in Best Practices for the Public Realm Compendium. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program#resources->
  - ▶ Mark Favermann Design: Create a wayfinding theme based on the community's seaside location.
  - ▶ Mark Favermann Design: Create a wayfinding system to help reinforce the downtown experience.
  - ▶ Selbert, Perkins Design: Integrate Brand and Art Into your Wayfinding System.
- Lidwell, William; Holden, Kritina; Butler, Jill (2010). "Wayfinding". The Pocket Universal Principles of Design: 125 Ways to Enhance Usability, Influence Perception, Increase Appeal, Make Better Design Decisions, and Teach through Design. Rockport Publishers. p. 260. ISBN 9781610580656 — via Google Books.
- Littleton, CO developed wayfinding based on branding, see: <https://www.littletongov.org/Home/Components/News/News/790/> and <https://www.littletongov.org/city-services/city-departments/communications/the-littleton-brand>



## Lighting the Bridges

PROJECT TITLE	LIGHTING THE BRIDGES
Origin	Discussions with the staff team. Informally, there is interest and informally people say, yes it would be nice to light the bridges. However, people are daunted by cost and how to proceed.
Location/Census Tract	<p>Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial census tracts).</p> <p>There are four historic stone bridges in/near Downtown Attleboro. Three are in the central commercial area of Downtown at Park Street, Mill Street, and South Main and Capron Streets.</p> <p>The rail bridge over Park Street is located in Census Tract 6314, as is the rail bridge over Mill Street.</p> <p>The rail bridge over South Main and Capron Streets is at the junction of the border of all three Downtown census tracts: CT-6314; CT-6315; and CT-6316.</p>
Budget & Sources of Funding	<div><p>Low</p></div> <p>Concept Plan: Lighting Design Conceptual Plan budget is estimated to range from a low \$40,000 to a high of \$175,000 for all three downtown bridges combined. The cost differential is based on whether the plan will be for off-bridge lighting or on-bridge lighting, and the time needed regarding initial permitting, as well as time for public engagement. The estimate range includes preliminary consultation work on permitting issues.</p> <p>Funding Sources for Concept Plan to Lighting the Bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ ARPA funds</li><li>■ Foundations and Private Philanthropy, including the Barr Foundation</li><li>■ Developer and Corporate Donations</li><li>■ MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places</li><li>■ Mass Cultural Council, feasibility grant</li><li>■ Massachusetts Historical Commission: Mass Preservation Projects Fund</li><li>■ Pro Bono Services</li></ul>

## Lighting the Bridges (continued)

PROJECT TITLE	LIGHTING THE BRIDGES	
<b>Budget &amp; Sources of Funding (continued)</b>	 Medium	<p><b>Installation.</b> The order-of-magnitude high-level cost estimates for lighting all three bridges using an off-bridge strategy could range upwards to \$1.55 million and with an on-bridge lighting strategy, lighting installation costs could be in the \$3.8 million range. The high-level, order-of-magnitude cost estimate range for lighting only the Park Street Bridge could range upward in the \$720,000 range with an off-bridge lighting approach, and could be approximately \$1.8 million with an on-bridge lighting installation approach.</p> <p>Potential Sources for Installation Funding to Lighting the Bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ARPA funds</li> <li>■ MassDevelopment</li> <li>■ Mass Cultural Council</li> <li>■ Mass Historical Commission</li> <li>■ Private philanthropy</li> <li>■ Corporate and Developer Donations</li> <li>■ Crowd-source funding and individual contributors</li> <li>■ Pro Bono and in-kind services and equipment</li> <li>■ Electrical student interns from local vocational program</li> <li>■ Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding in the event the Attleboro authorizes enactment of CPA.</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	 Medium	<p>Medium Term for developing a Lighting Design Concept Plan.            Long Term for Installation — raising funds and lighting the bridges.</p>
<b>Risks</b>	 Low	<p><b>Concept Plan.</b> Preparation of a concept plan for Lighting the Bridges is considered Low-to-Medium Risk due to the expense of developing and preparing the conceptual plan. Many of the risks can be managed through thoughtful communications. The risks related to preparing a concept plan for Lighting the Bridges include: securing funds for a concept plan; deciding not to implement a concept plan after the expenditure of funds for a concept plan; addressing naysayer commentators during concept plan development; and the risk of public comments from public officials discouraging development of a concept plan. A risk management strategy will be needed to manage, mitigate and avert the risks in developing a concept plan for Lighting the bridges.</p> <p><b>Installation.</b> The first step in mitigating implementation risks is development of a Concept Plan for Lighting the Bridges. The concept plan can provide guidance as to how to minimize and mitigate risks, and more clearly characterize the actual risks and challenges. The implementation risks to be considered in lighting the rail bridges in Downtown Attleboro are:</p> <p><b>Permitting Risk.</b> The MBTA will need to be consulted and issue permits, if lighting is installed on the bridge. This is an active commuter rail line with MBTA commuter trains operating seven days a week from 4:30 am to midnight. Amtrak trains travel along this route, as well. This risk may be minimized by developing a lighting design which requires no on-site installation. Although the latter approach would not require MBTA permitting, it would be prudent to advise the MBTA of the City's intent to do off-site lighting of the bridges. If on-bridge installation is required, the Federal Railroad Authority would also need to be consulted.</p>

## Lighting the Bridges (continued)

PROJECT TITLE	LIGHTING THE BRIDGES
<p><b>Risks (continued)</b></p> <div data-bbox="370 352 456 436"></div> <p><b>High</b></p>	<p>The bridges in Downtown Attleboro are considered historic. Although the bridges are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, they are in the state's inventory of historic properties. Early consultation with the Attleboro Historic Commission and Massachusetts Historical Commission during the concept planning process is advisable to identify what, if any, specific concerns AHC or MHC may have.</p> <p><b>Financing Risk:</b> Lighting rail bridges can be expensive. Considerable fundraising is often needed, especially with the private sector. Fundraising and grant writing take time and could delay installation. Delays in installation could affect cost.</p> <p><b>Cost &amp; Technology Risk:</b> Construction costs are rapidly escalating. The technology of lighting design is advancing and changing. The delay between developing a lighting concept plan and actual installation may require fine-tuning of the design as well as effect budget.</p> <p><b>Timing Risk.</b> This is a multi-year project. Attleboro's elected officials are elected every two-years and priorities may change, affecting multi-year projects.</p>
<p><b>Key Performance Indicators</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Decision to pursue developing a concept plan for Lighting the Bridges</li> <li>■ Risk Management Plan for Mitigating/Averting Risks related to development of a Concept Plan.</li> <li>■ Issue an RFP for a Lighting the Bridges Concept Plan</li> <li>■ Completion of a Lighting Concept Plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partners &amp; Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ TDI Downtown Committee</li> <li>■ MassDevelopment</li> <li>■ Attleboro Art Museum</li> <li>■ MBTA</li> <li>■ Attleboro Historical Commission</li> <li>■ Massachusetts Historical Commission</li> <li>■ Organizations and community groups throughout Attleboro</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 has made people more aware of their environment, seeking outdoor spaces and especially spaces and events that delight, add cheer, and make one feel good amidst the malaise, COVID-fatigue and worry.</p> <p>In addition to the more generalized impacts of COVID, Downtown Attleboro and its small businesses have especially suffered. Half of Downtown Attleboro businesses closed temporarily as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. In April 2021, 63% of Downtown Attleboro still had reduced hours. In-store patronage at Downtown Attleboro stores is down. Over 50% of downtown business report a 25% or more reduction in in-store patronage as a result of the pandemic. There is a clear need to bring people back to Downtown Attleboro.</p> <p>Lighting the historic bridges in Downtown Attleboro would encourage people to come Downtown and see the bridges and colored lights.</p>



## Lighting the Bridges (continued)

### ACTIONS

**Create the Plan to Light Attleboro's Downtown Bridges.** The actions required to create a plan for lighting Attleboro's downtown bridges entails the following action steps:

1. Secure funding
2. Engage the MBTA
3. Develop a communications risk management plan
4. Issue an RFP
5. Select consultant team
6. Work with lighting consultant to develop conceptual plan for lighting bridges
7. Examine permitting issues and consult with permitting agencies
8. Engage the MBTA, abutters and public in development of the concept plan
9. Finalize plan and proceed to installation phase.

### Implementation/ Installation Phase.

The following actions are required to Implement and Install lighting for Attleboro's historic downtown rail bridges. The actions steps below are broadly defined and will be fine-tuned based on the work and findings of the lighting concept plan.

- Develop funding strategy and communications plan
- Raise funds
- Advance concept plans to 100% construction/ installation plans
- Secure needed permissions rights-of-way, if needed, for lighting -related installations
- Secure permits
- Develop operations plan for lighting bridges
- Issue construction/installation RFP for lighting one or more bridges
- Award bid and proceed with construction/ installation
- Orientation and training for Lighting the Bridges operations team
- Inaugural lighting of the bridge(s) and Celebration.



*The Stone Rail Bridge at Park Street in Downtown Attleboro*



## Lighting the Bridges (continued)

### PROCESS

**Secure funding.** Securing the necessary funding for the creation and development for Lighting Downtown Attleboro's historic rail bridges is the first step. This will likely require several grant applications to secure the desired funding. Use of ARPA funds allocated to Attleboro for some or all of the cost of the lighting the bridge conceptual design and installation plan. The amount of funds required for the conceptual plan will depend in part as to whether the City wishes to pursue an off-bridge lighting strategy or an on-bridge lighting strategy. The latter will require more resources. The City and AEDO should have early conversations with prospective funding and grant sources to identify issues and concerns, so that they can more adequately be addressed in the formal application. This will enable AEDO to more effectively submit a competitive funding application.

**Engage the MBTA.** The City should provide the MBTA, as the owner and chief user of the rail bridges a courtesy notification regarding the local desire and intent to develop a conceptual plan for lighting the historic rail bridges in Downtown. This should occur at a high-level, likely involving the Mayor or state delegation.

**Develop a communications risk management plan.** Many of the risks related to creating a plan for lighting Downtown Attleboro's historic bridges entails addressing communications issues and being prepared for naysayers' comments, especially if after the conceptual planning effort, a "no go" decision is made by the City. Although this eventuality may not be desired, a communications plan should consider and be prepared for all options. The communications plan should identify key parties to update on a regular basis including the MBTA, abutters, other key parties (such as funders), and the general public. The communications plan should also forecast key times and points during the planning process when outreach

communications will be needed. It is useful to gather background information and contact names, emails and phone numbers of people, organizations and contact persons who should be kept informed along the way. A good communications plan helps with securing funding, building project support, and addressing issues as they may arise. The communications plan should be reviewed and updated every six months.

**Issue an RFP.** To solicit the services of a lighting designer or lighting artist to prepare a concept plan for lighting Downtown Attleboro's historic rail bridges, an RFP must be drafted and issued. A link to the Boston Planning & Development Agency's RFP for Lighting the Congress Street Bridge can be found in the resources section, and provides an example of how once Massachusetts municipality procured lighting design services. A major consideration is providing sufficient time to Issue the RFP, announce and send notices regarding the availability of the RFP, enabling proposers to visit all three locations, and time to write and prepare a thoughtful response. It is reasonable to provide a minimum six-week window from release of the RFP to the deadline for submissions.

**Select consultant team.** The City and AEDO should review submissions. It may be useful to invite key partners to participate in the review and Interviews of prospective lighting design teams. A lighting design team should be selected and a contract issued.

**Work with lighting consultant to develop conceptual plan for lighting bridges.** The City, AEDO, and the TDI Downtown Committee should work closely with the lighting consultant team on the development of the conceptual plan. This will likely involve several meetings at key points to discuss the lighting design, and it will be important to convey stakeholders' aspirations and desire, as well as to address technical design and siting issues.



## Lighting the Bridges (continued)

**Examine permitting issues and consult with permitting agencies.** An important part of the conceptual design process will be identifying needed permits and engaging in substantive early discussion with permitting agencies, especially the MBTA and the Massachusetts Historical Commission to identify key issues, develop a preferred plan, and minimize permitting risks.

**Engage the MBTA, abutters and public in development of the concept plan.** The success of the Lighting the Bridges project will require the support and cooperation of the MBTA, abutters and involvement of the public. Public support and excitement for the public will be a factor in raising funds for the final installation of the preferred lighting design.

**Finalize plan and proceed to installation phase.** Once a preferred plan is created, the conceptual plan should be finalized including preparation of color renderings of the plan. This will help support fundraising and build public support. Plans for releasing the Lighting the Bridges conceptual plan should include a news conference and gathering. The release of the Lighting the Bridges Conceptual Plan becomes the first step in implementation and setting the stage for fundraising.

### RESOURCES

**Boston, MA.** Sample RFP from Boston Planning & Development Agency for a Lighting Designer for the Congress Street Bridge: <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/768e6aef-7144-4bbc-99e2-d9c503168b1f>

**Johnstown, PA.** The Johnstown Area Heritage Association after raising funds lit its historic stone bridge. JAHA works with the City and manages lighting operations and request for lighting changes. See: <https://www.jaha.org/attractions/the-stone-bridge/about-the-bridge/>

**Lynn, MA.** In Lynn, MassDevelopment's TDI program worked with the City and the nonprofit, Beyond Walls, to light three underpasses in 2018. See: <https://www.beyond-walls.org/lynnlights>

**Portland, OR.** The City of Portland in collaboration with the Willamette Light Brigade installed lighting architectural colored lighting of the Morrison Bridge, one of bridges leading to Downtown Portland through a collaborative effort involving the local electrical contractors' association and IBEW. The Willamette Light Brigade manages special color lighting requests for celebrations and special events. See: <https://www.lightthebridges.org/bridges/morrison/>

**Tampa, FL** issued an artist's call for lighting five downtown bridges in 2012. See: <https://www.tampa.gov/art-programs/Info/bridge-lighting> Lights on Tampa has annually added lighting installations in the City. See: <http://lightsontampa.org/lights-on-tampa-2021/>






*Morrison Bridge, Portland, OR*




*Historic stone bridge, Johnstown, PA*



## Enliven the Streets & Create Art in Crosswalks

PROJECT TITLE		ART IN CROSSWALKS
Origin		<p>Discussions with TDI Committee and the desire to enhance placemaking in Downtown Attleboro and increase the visibility of cultural institutions.</p> <p>Project Champions: Mim Brooks Fawcett, Director, Attleboro Art Museum, and Catherine Feerick, Economic Development Director</p>
Location/Census Tract		<p>Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial census tracts).</p>
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Low	<p>The budget to develop, create and paint art in crosswalks at five different locations entailing 29 crosswalks + a walkway is approximately \$50,000 plus the cost of staffing and police details. Art in Crosswalks could be implemented incrementally with one or two crosswalk projects annually. Costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Paint supplies (artist-grade acrylic paint, primer, and finish top coats to extend longevity)</li><li>■ Equipment (tape, stencils, brushes, rollers, buckets, tarps)</li><li>■ Paint day supplies (water, amenities)</li><li>■ Community building, outreach &amp; engagement supplies</li><li>■ Marketing and publicity</li><li>■ Artist fees</li></ul> <p>Other program costs not included in the base cost are staff time to organize and coordinate; police details; maintenance and stewardship; and administrative costs. Police details could range upwards to \$16,500 for all five locations, depending upon requirements.</p> <p>Potential funding sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Barr Foundation</li><li>■ Solomon Foundation</li><li>■ MassDOT Shared Streets &amp; Spaces Program</li><li>■ MDI — Mass Downtown Initiative</li><li>■ American Rescue Plan Act funding</li><li>■ TDI, MassDevelopment</li><li>■ City of Attleboro — In-kind services</li><li>■ CDBG</li></ul>
	 Medium	
Timeframe		 Short

## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

PROJECT TITLE	ART IN CROSSWALKS
Risks	 <p>Medium</p> <p>Creating Art in Crosswalks entails work in the public realm within the streets. The proposed locations include state numbered routes, and art in crosswalks on the primary ambulance route to Sturdy Hospital. This increases the risk level and the required steps to mitigate and manage the risk to ambulance routes. It will also likely require the use of police details, which increases the cost of installation. Some proposed art in crosswalk areas are lower risk and could be a pilot location to more ably assess safety issues regarding installation prior to creating art in crosswalks on Park Street, the major ambulance route.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of crosswalks with art</li> <li>■ Visibility of cultural resources and institutions as measured by news media mentions and social media postings as to crosswalks with art</li> <li>■ Community engagement and participation</li> <li>■ Visitor rates at cultural institutions with art in crosswalks</li> <li>■ Qualitative data, including comments about art in crosswalks by visitors and users to cultural institutions following installation</li> </ul>
Partners & Resources	<p>Attleboro Art Museum</p> <p>City of Attleboro:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development Office</li> <li>Parks &amp; Recreation Department</li> <li>Police Department</li> <li>Public Works Department</li> </ul> <p>TDI Downtown Committee</p> <p>Possibly other cultural and environmental organizations in Attleboro, such as the Attleboro Community Theater, Attleboro Library, YMCA, the MassHire Career Center, and the WIC office run by Citizens for Citizens</p>
Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts	<p>Per the LRRP Business Survey of Downtown Attleboro businesses, 75% of businesses lost revenue during the pandemic. 62% of businesses experienced revenue losses greater than 25%. As of April 2021, 63% of businesses had reduced hours or capacity. Half of Downtown businesses had to close to visitors and customers during the height of the pandemic, including the Attleboro Art Museum and other cultural institutions. Nearly two-thirds of Downtown businesses (62%) experienced loss of on-site customers and patrons. Half of Downtown businesses indicated that the loss of on-site customers and patrons was 25% or greater.</p> <p>Creating Art in the Crosswalks will increase the visibility of cultural institutions and enliven the streets in Downtown Attleboro, piquing interest and creating another reason for people to visit Downtown. Moreover, this helps COVID recovery by increasing the numbers of people visiting and safely walking Downtown.</p>



## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

### ACTION

- Organize Art in Crosswalks team and project start-up
- Site visits
- Secure funding
- Work with Attleboro Police, Planning, Public Works on permit and installation protocols
- Community outreach and engagement
- Issue call to artists
- Select artists and proposed design concepts
- Create Art in Crosswalks
- Celebrate and publicize
- Document, evaluate, maintain, and create more Art in Crosswalks.

### PROCESS

Attleboro has been creating public art in its Downtown as part of its overall activation and revitalization strategy. In summer 2021, the utility boxes were transformed with Think Outside the Box spearheaded in part by the Attleboro Arts Museum. Cuddy Court was transformed through a MassDOT Shared Streets and Space grant from a back alley to a lovely place to sit with shade and whimsical art pieces that delight young and old.

Art in Crosswalks will install new pieces of public art, facilitating wayfinding and identifying the approaches and entrances to cultural institutions such as the Attleboro Art Museum and others, including perhaps the Attleboro Community Theater, the soon-to-be-reopened Attleboro Library, and other museums and outdoor spaces. Art in Crosswalks also will strengthen the visibility and connectivity within Downtown Attleboro, particularly Balfour

Riverwalk Park, the Ken Dumas Multi-Use Path, and the Judith Robbins Riverfront Park. Eventually, Art in Crosswalks could connect Downtown's open spaces with Attleboro's premier Capron Park and Zoo, which is only one mile from Downtown.

The potential locations for the early rounds of Art in Crosswalks include:

- Park Street crosswalk – the entrance to the Attleboro Art Museum — 1 crosswalk
- Crosswalks in the block around the Attleboro Art Museum, Park Street, Morey Street, Emory Street, and Pleasant Street, including Gilbert Square – 1 block with 12 crosswalks
- Crosswalks in the blocks for the Attleboro Free Library, the Attleboro Community Theater (which is directly opposite the Library on N. Main Street), and the YMCA – 3 to 5 crosswalks
- Crosswalks connecting Downtown's open spaces – Balfour Riverwalk Park, the Ken Dumas Multi-Use Path, and the Judith Robbins Riverfront Park – 3 crosswalks and an access walkway to Balfour Riverwalk Park from North Main Street through the municipal public parking lot
- The area by the Armory on Pine Street with the MassHire Career Center and community services, such as WIC operated by Citizens for Citizens and other community support activities might be another opportunity to add art in crosswalks with community building – 2 intersections with 8 crosswalks total or possibly on-site pavement art.

Art in Crosswalks can occur incrementally, enabling the program to build capacity, involve different artists, and engage the community and public as part of the process.



## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

**Organize Art in Crosswalks team and project start-up.** As part of initiating the Arts in Crosswalks project, a broad team of proponents needs to be assembled, including potential partners, organizations located at or near prospective project locations, city departments, and arts and community advocates. For the green connections, environmentalists and the Attleboro Parks Department should be involved as well. Undertaking some extensive groundwork at the front end will help build support for Art in Crosswalks, help with funding, and involve volunteers and artists. Art in Crosswalks will not only add public art to Downtown Attleboro, it will foster placemaking and community engagement that contribute to the longer term vibrancy of Downtown.

AEDO and the Attleboro Arts Museum are co-champions of this project. A project lead needs to be determined. Undertaking the required organization, outreach, fundraising, issuing calls/ invites to artists, addressing permitting, safety and contracting issues, coordination of community volunteers to help with paint days, and celebrating new public art in Downtown takes work. It is reasonable to consider that the equivalent of a quarter of a full-time staff person's

time may be needed to successfully launch Art in Crosswalks and complete the first project. Resources for staff time will likely need to be a part of grant writing and fundraising requests.

**Site visits.** As part of start-up, it is important to undertake a site visit to examine and photo-document existing conditions of crosswalks. Areas of puddling or ponding by the curb in the crosswalk area could contribute to faster deterioration of the public art piece. Potholes, if any, will need repair. Photo-documentation will also help with before and after pictures.

**Secure Funding.** The City and the Attleboro Arts Museum should work to secure funding, including grant proposals to both public and private philanthropic requests. The Barr Foundation and Solomon Foundation have been funding placemaking and projects related to creating walks and trails. Art in Crosswalks could enhance and highlight the connectivity of Downtown Attleboro's green spaces. Art in Crosswalks could connect neighborhoods with vital services and create connections Downtown. Considered individually, each of the five areas could be termed as a small project, but collectively there is significant impact and need for resources. It might be useful to anticipate



*Adding art and color to the crosswalk by the Attleboro Art Museum would enhance visibility of the arts and cultural institutions Downtown, thus aiding in COVID recovery.*



*The connection between Balfour Riverwalk Park and the Ken Dumas Multi-Use Path could be greatly enhanced with art and color, adding to pedestrian safety at this mid-block crosswalk on County Street.*



## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

undertaking one or perhaps two projects a year to build capacity and more easily access financial resources. Often small grants can help pay for paint and installation materials and artists' honorariums or fees. It is reasonable to anticipate taking six to eight months to secure needed resources for Art in Crosswalks.

The cost for just paint supplies for 350 to 400 SF of crosswalk ranges from \$900 to \$1,500, depending upon the design and surface conditions. During fundraising, it is also useful to consider raising funds for a small set-aside for stewardship and future maintenance of the art piece.

**Work with Attleboro Police, Planning, and Public Works on permit and installation protocols.** Since the Art in Crosswalks will be working in the public realm on city streets, it is important to consult with key city departments early on to get their support and guidance. The proposed projects will work on major Downtown streets that are also state numbered roads and ambulance routes. Attleboro Public Works has jurisdiction over the maintenance of roadways and crosswalks. They have upgraded a number of crosswalks which are marked with white stripe bars (or zebra stripes) that increase pedestrian safety. Some communities require retention of the white zebra stripes as a design parameter, particularly on streets with higher traffic volumes and speeds. Art in Crosswalks will need to work with Public Works as to what design requirements may be needed to maintain and promote safety. Public Works may also be helpful in preparing the street area for paint with minor repairs, if needed, and street cleaning. Issues regarding long term maintenance of art in crosswalks should be explored with Public Works.

Police cooperation is vital. It is likely the Art in Crosswalks will need to use police details during painting and installation. Meetings with city agencies should also identify what permits or design review process may be needed and the time needed for review and processing.

**Community outreach and engagement.** Art in Crosswalks is an opportunity to engage long-time and new Downtown area and city residents. Residents may have ideas and suggestions as to design, specific crosswalks or intersections, and wish to get involved. The community engagement aspect of Art in Crosswalks, while time consuming, is an important element because it builds commitment to Downtown Attleboro and brings people to Downtown. Community outreach should be fun and include celebrations, especially at the installation of Art in Crosswalks. It is also important to reach out to nearby businesses to let them know about Art in Crosswalks and to advise them of any changes of traffic patterns and access issues on paint days.

**Call for artists.** Art in Crosswalks should issue a call for artists or an invitation to smaller potential group of participating artists. With the potential of five different projects, multiple artists can easily be involved. An artists' call or invitation should be issued with ample time to respond. It should specify whether it is a request for qualifications or a location-specific design concept proposal. If design concepts are requested, it might be useful to incorporate community concerns and comments as part of the call/invite.

**Select artists and proposed design concepts.** The selection of artists can easily involve and engage Downtown businesspeople, neighbors, and community members. Outlining the selection process in advance will yield better results and



## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

avoid misunderstandings. Community involvement in the selection of artists can take a number of different forms. These could include active participation on the selection committee or jury and/or a presentation of artist quals or concepts to the community, providing an opportunity for comments and questions, followed with a pulse poll on preferred artists or concepts. Design concepts can be publicly presented or displayed as well. If the Arts in Crosswalks leadership prefers a juried selection, community members can still be provided with opportunities to comment and question and learn about each of the proposed design concepts. This can provide helpful feedback and insights for the jury.

Once an artist is selected, a written agreement should be executed outlining roles and responsibilities, fees (honoraria and reimbursable expenses), schedule, artists' and sponsors' rights regarding use; ownership of the art work; artist attribution credits; insurance; and safety protocols as to installation. Maintenance-related issues for the future of the art piece in the crosswalk should also be addressed in the artist agreement.

Following selection of artists, there may be additional need to refine the design as well as work to advance the design for installation.

**Create Art in Crosswalks.** Art installation or painting day can be fun and a celebration. Advanced organization is the key to success. Work is required to ensure needed permits are in place, protocols are being followed as to safety, and supplies are on hand, along with volunteers and the artist.

Selection of paint days should consider low traffic volume days, such as weekends, when major streets are less busy and community volunteers are available. Rain date contingencies need to be planned. Painting supplies and equipment should be on hand along with a first aid kit, water, and places to rest in the shade if it is a hot, sunny day. The street surface and curb area should be cleaned and prepped the morning of, or day earlier. Ideally, street cleaning will include power-washing and removal of any debris in the curb area. A primer coat will be needed at the front end, as well as a varnish coat at the end. Using primer and a sealant-type finish as a top coat will increase color retention and longevity of the Art in Crosswalks. Durability and color vibrancy requires the use of high-grade artist paints. Successful application of pastel colors often requires a base coat of white paint. Existing pavement surface conditions will vary and affect the amount of paint required. Newer surfaces often need more paint.



*Creating art in the crosswalk at Wall Street could highlight the Riverwalk paths in Downtown Attleboro.*



*The visibility and access of the Balfour Riverwalk Park from County Street by the library could be enhanced with a colorful art walkway through the municipal parking lot.*



## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

Celebrate and publicize. Paint days can be fun and celebratory. Music and food after painting contribute to a festive atmosphere when officially "opening" the crosswalk. The paint day and opening are opportunities for media coverage. Photo documenting and videotaping portions of the day can create a useful record that can aid future fundraising, stewardship, and maintenance, and help tell the story of Downtown Attleboro's comeback and recovery from COVID.

Document, evaluate, maintain, and create more Art in Crosswalks. As part of creating and maintaining art, it is important to document the process. Photo documentation and the detailed list of materials by brand and specific colors can inform long-term maintenance and gauge the extent of fading over time. It is also important to evaluate the process, noting what went well and what could be done better, to incorporate in the next Art in Crosswalks project. A semi-annual site visit to Art in Crosswalk projects to assess conditions and wear is a good practice. A post-winter visit is particularly useful to assess effects of the weather, ice, and snow plowing on the crosswalk art piece.

### RESOURCES

LRRP Best Practices can be found in the Resources section of the LRRP website in Best Practices for the Public Realm Compendium.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program#resources->

Civic Space Collaborative: Gove Street Crossing: Pop Up Park & Plaza.

Bloomberg Associates: Asphalt Art Guide at <https://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/asphalt-art-guide>

Street Painting FAQ by the Street Repair Project, Portland, OR: <https://cityrepair.org/street-painting-faq>



## Art in Crosswalks (continued)

### BEST PRACTICES: EXAMPLES FROM OTHER CITIES



*(Top left) The City of Northampton, MA sponsored the creation of a colorful painted crosswalk in the center of Downtown on Route 9.*

*(Top right) Durham, NC added art in crosswalks to highlight a crosswalk connecting portions of Central Park on the approach to Downtown.*




*(Middle left) Artist's concept for a colorful crosswalk from Durham, NC.*

*(Middle right) Pavement art from Duluth, MN.*

*(Bottom) Art in crosswalks can create a design for an entire intersection. This example is from Lancaster, CA.*



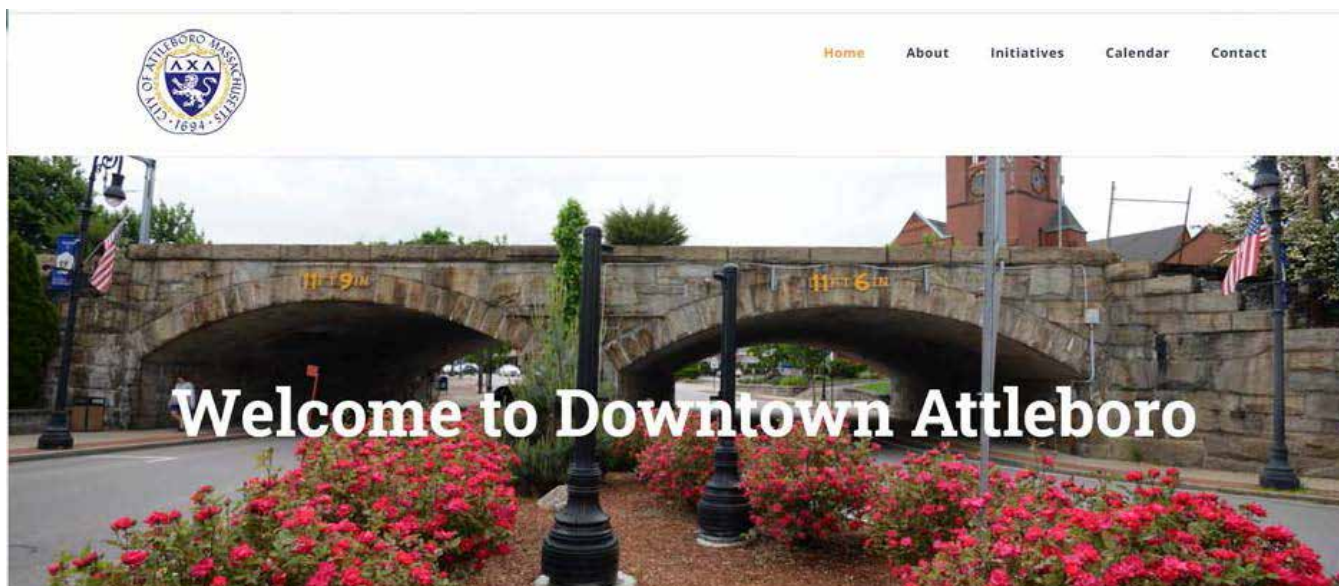
## Update Downtown Attleboro Website

PROJECT TITLE		UPDATE DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO WEBSITE
Location/Census Tracts		Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct Census Tracts in Bristol County, MA. They are Census Tracts: 6314; 6315; and 6316 in Bristol County (2020 decennial Census tracts).
Origin		Discussions with AEDO Director Catherine Feerick and TDI Committee.
Budget & Sources of Funding	 Low	Low Cost: Less than \$5,000
Timeframe	 Short	Immediate / Short-Term
Risk	 Low	There is essentially no risk in changing the platform for the Downtown Attleboro website to enable staff to update it and use it. The risk is in not upgrading the Downtown Attleboro web site to a user-friendly platform.
Key Performance Indicators		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Completion of the web site platform upgrade.</li><li>■ AEDO staff is regularly updating the web site.</li></ul>
Partners and Resources		This is a recommendation for web site operations and the underlying platform. As such, the Attleboro Economic Development Office is the sole entity operating the site.
Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts		The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated reliance on digital communications and the use of web sites as key information sources. Downtown Attleboro has an attractive-looking web site, which AEDO has been unable to update since the onset of the pandemic, greatly hindering communications regarding Downtown Attleboro.



## Admin Capacity

### Update Downtown Attleboro Website (continued)



#### ACTIONS

- Assess internal needs as to ease of use of a web platform and the platform's functionality.
- Review potential web site platforms.
- Select preferred platform.
- Procure services for upgrading the web site and purchase platform subscription. This may require a request for quotes or RFP.
- Upgrade Downtown Attleboro web site including AEDO staff orientation.
- Begin using the updated Downtown Attleboro web site as a communication tool.

#### PROCESS

Assess internal needs as to ease of use of a web platform and the platform's functionality. Ease of use is a critical criterion. A platform that is intuitive for staff adding information updates, updating business names and address, event calendar announcements is a key functionality for an updated web site.

Review potential web site platforms as to the appropriateness for Downtown Attleboro as to feature and ease of use.

Three widely used platforms for small business and nonprofit web sites are: Wix, Square Space, and Word Press. Word Press is a popular program amongst web designers and is considered a very powerful platform that can become more robust and versatile with extensive plug-ins (many levying an additional user fee). It is the current platform for the Downtown Attleboro web site. As such, it is viewed as not meeting the ease of use/ functionality criterion.



## Admin Capacity

### Update Downtown Attleboro Website (continued)

Square Space is known for its attractive, professional looking templates and having very good blogging tools. For events, Square Space requires integration with the Eventbrite, where Wix has ticketing and events as part of its platform. Wix is known for its drag and drop functionality which is very user friendly with the ability to easily customize. Square Space has a drag and drop functionality using a structured editor. Both platforms receive reviews rating them favorably and are very comparable.

For a basic business account, Square Space is \$18/month with an annual subscription, and Wix is \$23/month with an annual subscription.

**Select preferred platform.** After assessing internal needs as to user-friendliness and needed functionalities, and comparing needs with the characteristics of alternative web platforms, a decision as to the preferred platform must be made.

**Procure web designer services and purchase subscription.** Prepare a request for quotes based on the preferred platform the Downtown Attleboro's web site. Solicit quotes. Review proposals and issue a contract/ purchase order for services.

**Upgrade website.** The Attleboro Economic Development Office will need to work closely with the web designer to specify desired features and provide content. Part of the Downtown web site upgrade should include orientation and training of AEDO staff on the use of the selected platform.




**Begin using and updating the Downtown Attleboro web site.** Once the web site platform is upgraded, AEDO staff should begin using its features and regularly posting. Ideally, new postings and updates should occur weekly, or at minimum once every two weeks. Regularly updating web content attracts people to the site and enhances Downtown Attleboro web site's performance with search engines. It may be necessary to advise Downtown Attleboro supporters and the public through email blasts and social media of the web site upgrade.

#### RESOURCES

- Square Space, [www.squarespace.com](http://www.squarespace.com)
- WIX, [www.wix.com](http://www.wix.com)
- Word Press, [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)



# Downtown Management Models

PROJECT TITLE		EVALUATE DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT MODELS, INCLUDING BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS FOR DOWNTOWN ATTLEBORO
Location/Census Tracts		Downtown Attleboro is located within three distinct census tracts in Bristol County, MA: 6314; 6315; and 6316 (2020 decennial census tracts).
Origin		<p>The need for a sustainable Downtown Management model and the potential of creating a Business Improvement District has been discussed by TDI and Economic Development staff.</p> <p>Project Champions: George Duarte and Catherine Feerick</p>
Budget & Sources of Funding	<div><p>Low</p></div>	<p>Budget: TBD, preliminary estimate \$10,000 to \$15,000 plus staff support and engagement.</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ TDI — MassDevelopment (potential, currently working with Downtown Attleboro)</li><li>■ MDI — Mass Downtown Initiative grant</li><li>■ American Rescue Plan (possibly)</li></ul>
Timeframe	<div><p>Short</p></div>	<p>Strategy and Approach for evaluating downtown management modes, such as a BID, voluntary Main Street organization, parking benefit district, or other strategy to increase administrative capacity for Downtown Attleboro: 6 to 8 months.</p> <p>Creation of a BID District: 18 to 24+ months, thereafter</p>
Risk	<div><p>Medium</p></div>	<p>Political risks. Support from property owners, business owners, community stakeholders, and civic leaders is required to successfully organize a Business Improvement District.</p> <p>Perception that raising revenues could compete with and drain revenue from other organizations.</p>
Key Performance Indicators		<p>Greater understanding of the strengths of alternative models including what a BID is and how BIDs can support and advance revitalization.</p> <p>Development of a strategy to approach formation of a BID or other downtown management entity embraced by TDI Downtown Committee and key stakeholders.</p> <p>Formation and adoption of a sustainable business model for downtown management for Attleboro.</p>

## Downtown Management Models (continued)

<b>Partners &amp; Resources</b>	City of Attleboro MassDevelopment TDI Downtown Working Committee
<b>Diagnostic/ COVID-19 Impacts</b>	<p>Creating a district management entity was identified as a needed strategy amongst 46% of the LRRP Business Survey respondents. This strategy ranked fifth amongst six options to attract and retain customers. The need for a downtown organization is acknowledged, however there is no downtown-specific or local business association in Attleboro. The Economic Development Office has one professional staff person whose responsibilities are citywide for a city of 45,000 people, encompassing 27 square miles with multiple business districts. The Attleboro Economic Development Office is very focused on Downtown Attleboro, particularly supporting and accelerating new investment and development around Downtown's train station. The need for additional staff resources is tacitly noted, but municipal budgets are stretched.</p> <p>Statewide, business districts fared better than Downtown and were more able to support and assist businesses to survive and thrive in the wake of the pandemic and the resulting shutdowns.</p>
<b>Action Items</b>	<p>Action items to consider when developing a project to create a sustainable Downtown Attleboro district management entity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Getting Started — Identify startup resources</li><li>■ Develop the Value Proposition/ Communication Tools</li><li>■ Stakeholder Engagement</li><li>■ Create a Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy</li><li>■ Identify Downtown Priorities</li><li>■ Evaluate Organizational Models</li><li>■ Secure Resources for Sustainability</li></ul>

### GETTING STARTED

Attleboro municipal leaders could initiate this project by creating a working partnership between the City, TDI and downtown stakeholders such as businesses, nonprofits, media, property owners, tenants, and residents. Use the LRRP planning process and the project recommendation to form a downtown district management entity as the launching point for stakeholder engagement.



*Attleboro created Cuddy Court with a MassDOT Shared Streets & Spaces grant that helped transform an alley connecting the parking garage with Downtown businesses. Cuddy Court officially opened on September 30, 2021.*



## Downtown Management Models (continued)

### Develop the Value Proposition/Communication

It will be essential to develop the value proposition for investing human capital and financial resources into a Downtown district management organization and communicate to the City and private stakeholders the impact of their investment. The long-term goal of a Downtown district management organization is to build a destination that is attractive to potential developers, businesses, residents, and visitors. In the near term, a Downtown district management organization can play an important role in COVID recovery. A successful organization can help achieve increased property values, improved sales and meals taxes, stronger tenancy, a vibrant cultural scene, and a destination where people want to shop, locate a business, dine, and live. A well-managed and sustainable organization will undertake strategic supplemental programs and services that will help achieve that goal. Key talking points include:

- Ability to collectively and cost-effectively purchase priority supplemental programs and services to achieve impact/scale
- Provide a unified voice / "seat at the table" for district priorities
- Professional management and staff dedicated to implementing programs and services in the district
- Produce and execute cultural and event programming
- Ability to respond to crisis such as COVID
- Support new and existing businesses
- Leverage resources and build collaborations
- Stakeholder Engagement/ Leadership and Partnerships

Launching the organizational efforts to form a district management organization in Attleboro should be an intentionally inclusive process that welcomes new as well as long term property and business owners, volunteer organizations, City, and other key downtown stakeholders to develop the organizational and leadership infrastructure to be successful. The goal of this effort would be to form a strong, diverse,

and inclusive steering committee to guide the development of a sustainable district management organization, identify key champions, and build a solid coalition around the preferred concept. The city may convene this effort but should quickly transition to a private sector-led Steering Committee, with strong public sector-led support. The clear demonstration of a public/private partnership will help move this effort forward.

### Create a Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy

The Steering Committee should undertake efforts to engage media, businesses, property owners, nonprofits, cultural organizations, visitor attractions, volunteer groups, and interested residents to continue to identify and refine needs and priorities for the downtown. This work will be used to inform the work plan for a district management entity. Additionally, these outreach efforts provide the opportunity to educate stakeholders on various organizational models and identify needs, opportunities, and potential leadership. Community engagement can happen in a variety of ways, including:

- Community Forums — fun, engaging and informational visioning sessions held in accessible, approachable locations such as a local business, restaurant, park, libraries, or community gather space
- Peer Learning Panels — Invite Executive Directors from downtown district management entities in similar communities to present on the impact of their organizations on their downtowns
- Visits to other communities with active downtown district management organizations to see programs in action
- Surveys to a broad cross section of downtown stakeholders to identify needs and priorities
- Focus groups with key interest groups
- One on one conversations with key stakeholders
- Websites/social media



## Admin Capacity

# Downtown Management Models (continued)

## Evaluate Organizational Models

Once organizers have established the downtown priorities/ proposed supplemental programs and budget, it will be important to identify the most appropriate organizational model for Attleboro. Two of the most common models are a voluntary nonprofit "Main St." type organization or a more formal Business Improvement District.

Organizers must consider an approach to financial sustainability and governance for each model under consideration and weigh the pros and cons. BIDs require more up-front effort to secure support from property owners and other stakeholders, but once established provide a sustainable revenue stream for at least 5 years.

Voluntary organizations may require less up-front organizational effort but require a clear commitment for stakeholder financial support and a plan for ongoing fundraising activities to be sustainable. The steering committee may evaluate different organizational models through site visits, peer learning from executive directors of downtown district management organizations, online research, or other TA. Once the preferred model is determined, organizers should seek support letters / statements from key stakeholders like neighborhood associations, merchant groups, Chamber of commerce, volunteer organizations involved in the downtown, City, and other important groups.

## Resources for Startup and Sustainability



*Kimochi opened in Downtown Attleboro in summer 2021 with picture windows enabling customers to watch the street as they enjoy a bubble tea.*

Seed money is required to start a district management organization. Sources include TA through the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, MassDevelopment Real Estate Technical Assistance Program, or ARPA funds (if the development of the organization is tied to implementing COVID recovery activities).

Additionally, local Institutions, foundations, and key stakeholders/individual contributors may be sources for seed money to launch the effort.

Careful attention should be given to developing a realistic budget and a variety of revenue opportunities for the organization. If a BID is selected, BID fees may provide a sustainable funding base that can be augmented by additional sources to leverage BID revenue. Sources may include sponsorships, event revenue, grants or contracts, foundations, and individual giving. If the Municipality approves the formation of a BID, property owners will reauthorize the organization every 5 years. A voluntary based "Main St" model will have a funding base that includes sponsorships, event revenue, grants or contracts, foundations, memberships, in-kind services or other partnerships or collaborations.

Attleboro may also consider forming a Parking Benefit District (PBD) to fund some activities of a downtown district management entity. A PBD would allow the City to earmark some or all the parking revenue generated (after expenses) to a downtown management entity to support eligible programs and services in the district.

## PROCESS

With no active downtown organization in place, Attleboro may consider the following process to building support for a downtown management entity and determining the best model for their community:

- Establish property owner and business databases using information provided by the City as the official property owner database for organizational purposes and to establish boundaries.
- Create a downtown partnership with City, key property owners, new developers, key businesses, cultural and tourist destinations, residential groups, nonprofit, and Chamber of Commerce to launch the effort. Create list of potential steering committee members



## Admin Capacity

### Downtown Management Models (continued)

- Form a broad-based advisory committee to provide input and feedback
- Secure seed funding for TA for district management formation through Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (now part of the One Stop), Mass Development Real Estate TA program, ARPA, Urban Agenda program, Foundations, and other stakeholder support.
- Create community outreach events, widely distribute surveys, and utilize other engagement tools to develop program priorities.
- Hold Community forums on different district management models.
- Initiate one on one conversations with stakeholders to secure support and engagement in process.

- Consensus building with stakeholders on preferred model /programming/budget/sustainable revenue structure

#### Create communication/marketing materials

Consider executing a demonstration project that could "show" potential programs and services provided to the downtown through a downtown management entity. Possible funding sources may include Mass Development Commonwealth Places, foundations, ARPA, or other key stakeholder support.

The formal creation of selected management model will require these following steps:

#### Business Improvement District

- Develop the BID Petition components
- Develop MOU with City to define relationship with the BID, baseline services and support for the BID
- Develop petition signature campaign strategy, timelines, and benchmarks
- Undertake a petition process under direction of the Steering Committee to secure support of 60% of property owners, representing 51% of the assessed valuation of the district

The petition will include:

- ▶ Map and legal description of BID boundaries
- ▶ BID improvement Plan - programs and services
- ▶ Fee structure
- ▶ Budget
- ▶ Hardship provisions
- ▶ ID management
- ▶ Property owner signatures of support
- Formal local legislative approval: public hearing and formal vote by City Council to establish the BID
- Complete 501c3 and Articles of Organization filings
- Approval of bylaws

- Establishment of a Board of Directors; hire staff
- Create RFP and secure contracted services if required
- Initiation of supplemental services
- Reauthorization by property owners every 5 years.

#### Voluntary Based Downtown Organization

- Formation as 501c3
- Approval of bylaws
- File articles of organization
- Establish board of directors
- Secure funding commitments from stakeholders, City, and other sources to establish a sustainable financial model for the organization.
- Develop MOU with City or other partners to define relationship, roles, and support
- Hire staff
- Prepare RFP and secure contracted services if required.
- Initiation of supplemental services

**Timeframe:** Organizers should be able to form a district management organization in 18-24 months or sooner for a district of this size.



*Aerial view of One Wall Street, a mixed-use development opening in Downtown Attleboro in fall 2021.*

## RESOURCES

How to Form a BID In Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2020-revised-business-improvement-district-manual/download>

Best practice rubric -Forming a BID in Hudson

Best Practice Rubric - Determining Downtown District Management Models in Reading MA

Case Studies [https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID\\_2020\\_CaseStudy\\_Hudson.pdf](https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_Hudson.pdf)

[https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID\\_2020\\_CaseStudy\\_CentralSquare.pdf](https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_CentralSquare.pdf)

[https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID\\_2020\\_CaseStudy\\_Hyannis.pdf](https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_Hyannis.pdf)

Sample communities with downtown district management models to consider:

- BIDs in Massachusetts: Hyannis, Worcester, Hudson, Springfield, Boston, Central Square Cambridge, Taunton, Amherst
- Main Street communities: Beverly, Somerville

Parking Benefit Districts - <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/parking-benefit-districts>

Commonwealth Places - <https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/commonwealth-places/>

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative - <https://www.mass.gov/services-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi>

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## Other Initiatives

Implementation of these recommendations will strengthen Downtown Attleboro's recovery from COVID and increase its future resiliency. The City is working closely with MassDevelopment's Transformational Development Initiative (TDI) and has several concurrent projects and initiatives that with further Downtown Attleboro's recovery from the pandemic. These projects include:

- Signage assistance and small grants for Downtown businesses
- Completion of the Downtown Plan now underway
- Advancing the development pipeline for 500+ new units of housing and mixed-use development for Downtown
- Working with GATRA and the MBTA to move forward with development of a parking structure to enable the desired housing development Downtown.

In addition to these initiatives, the Attleboro Economic Development Office is continuing its work and support of new business start-ups in Downtown spawned by the 2020 Downtown Start-up Business Competition contest funded by an Urban Action Agenda grant. Business openings are just beginning after delays attributable to COVID.

The combined impact of the development focus of the City's efforts with the TDI program, combined with the implementation of the Local Rapid Recovery Program's recommendations, will be powerful. The LRRP recommendations are designed to increase small businesses' nimbleness and prosperity with Business Going Online; alter the image of Downtown and local businesses with effective window display and visual merchandising, art in crosswalks, and lighting bridges; draw people and customers to Downtown and Downtown businesses; foster placemaking; and sustain Attleboro's efforts to revitalize and effectively support and manage its Downtown with a public-private partnership.

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# Appendix

## Business Survey Report

### Massachusetts DHCD Rapid Recovery Plan Program BUSINESS SURVEY REPORT



This report provides the results of a business survey conducted during March and April of 2021. The survey is part of a program launched by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to help communities develop Rapid Recovery Plans for downtowns and commercial districts. The survey was directed to owners or other appropriate representatives of business establishments located in the targeted commercial areas. (For Data Tables, see page 9.)

#### Attleboro

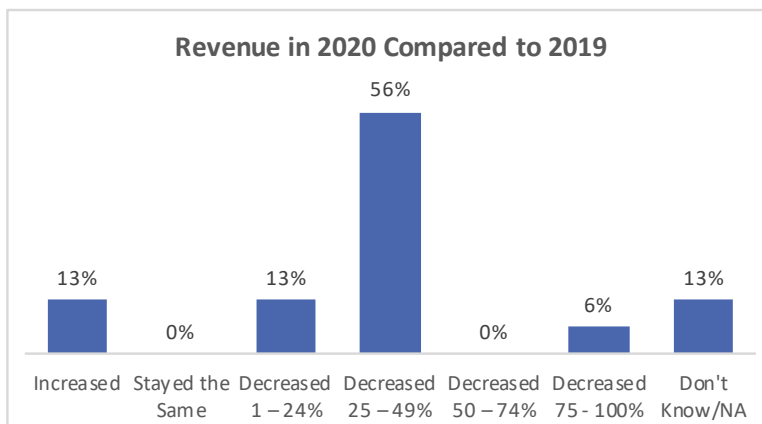
Downtown Attleboro

Responses: 16

### Impacts of COVID-19

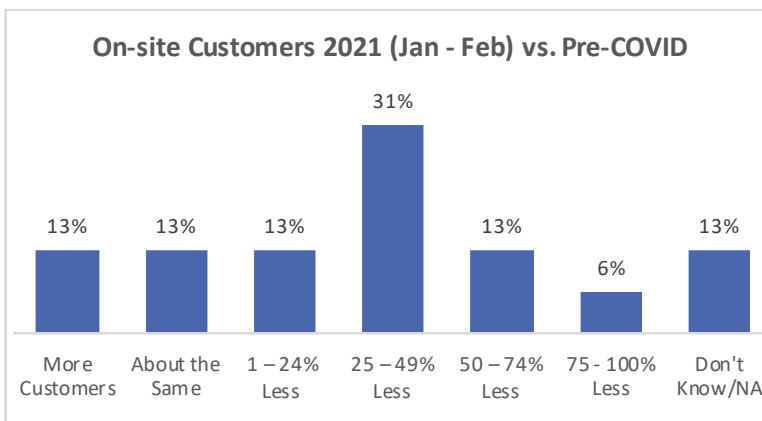
#### Decline in Business Revenue

75% of businesses generated less revenue in 2020 than they did in 2019.  
For 62% of businesses, revenue declined by 25% or more.



#### Less Foot Traffic in Commercial Area

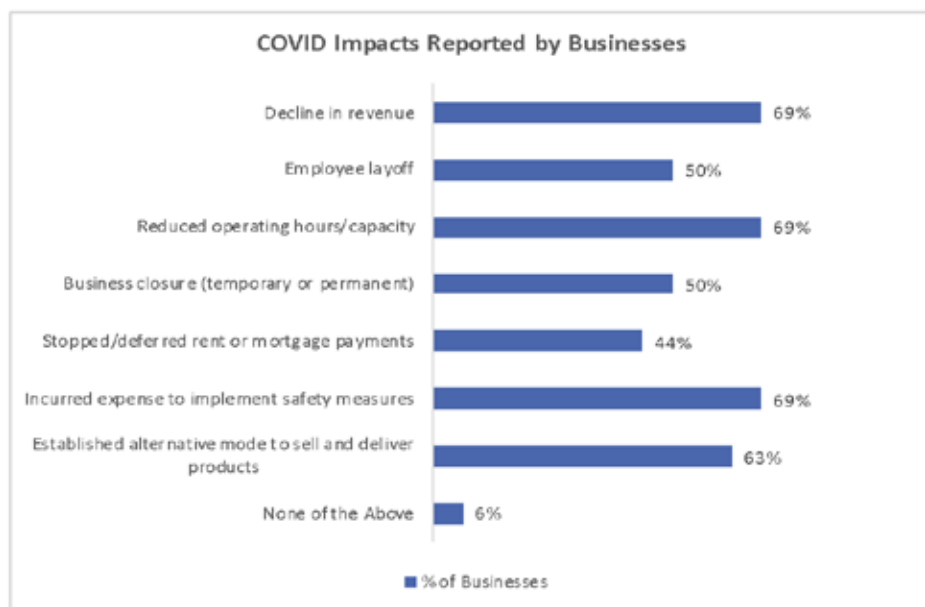
63% of businesses had less on-site customers in January and February of 2021 than before COVID.  
50% of businesses reported a reduction in on-site customers of 25% or more.



## Impacts of COVID-19 (cont'd)

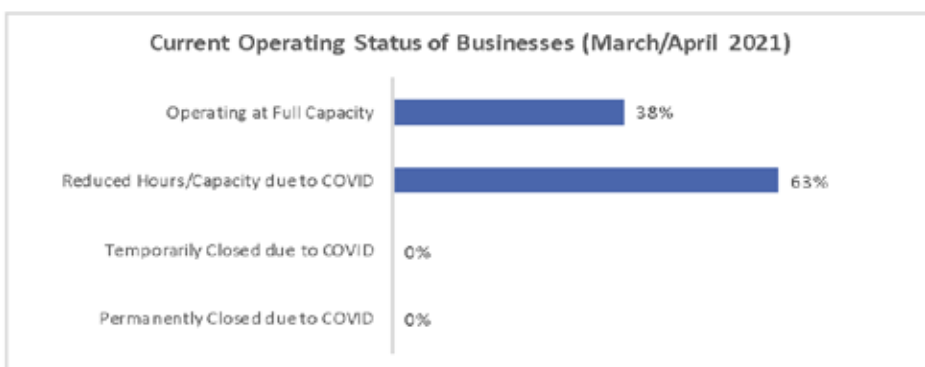
### Reported Impacts

94% of businesses reported being impacted by COVID.



### Operating Status

At the time of the survey, 63% of businesses reported they were operating at reduced hours/capacity or closed.



## Business Satisfaction with Commercial District

The charts below illustrate the average satisfaction rating among respondents regarding various elements.



## Business Satisfaction with Commercial District (cont'd)

### Regulatory Environment

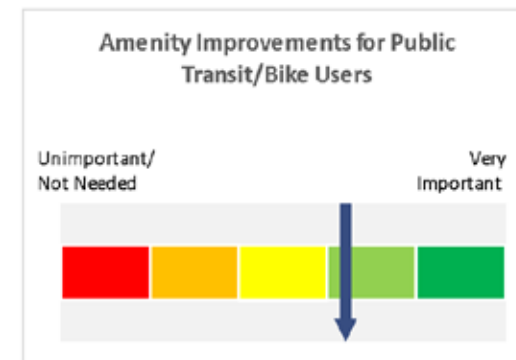
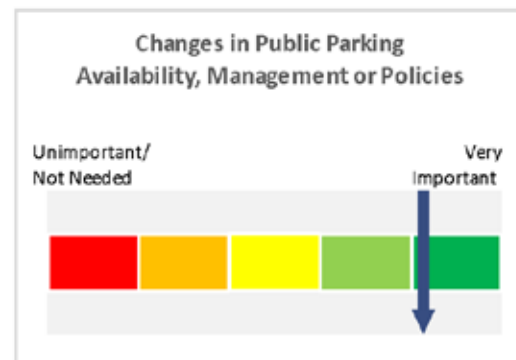
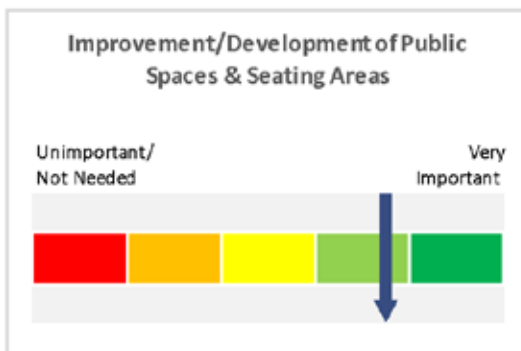
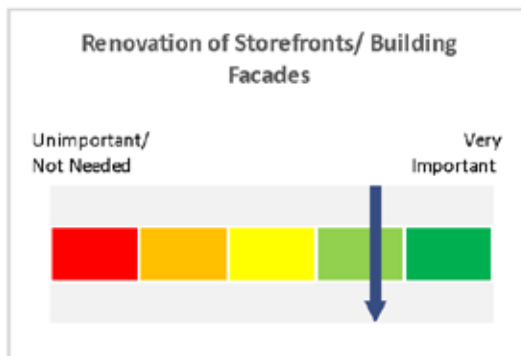
53% of businesses indicated that the regulatory environment poses an obstacle to business operation.



## Business Input Related to Possible Strategies

### Physical Environment, Atmosphere and Access

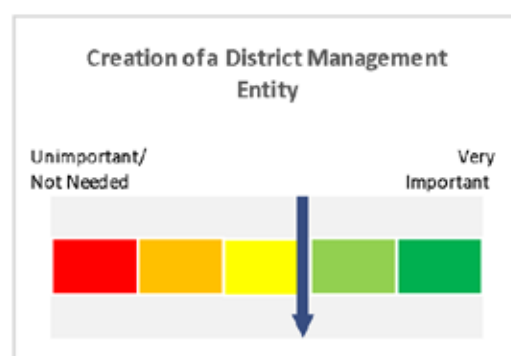
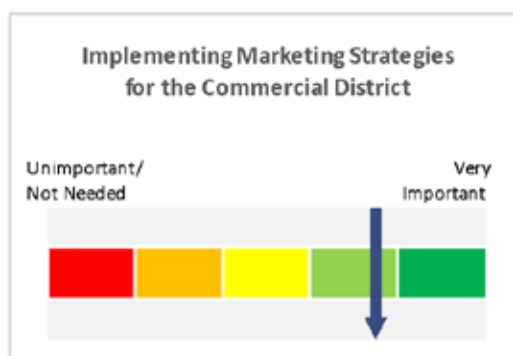
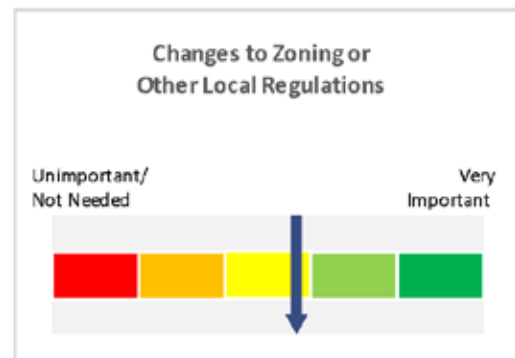
The charts below illustrate the average rating among respondents regarding importance of various strategies.



## Business Input Related to Possible Strategies (cont'd)

### Attraction/Retention of Customers and Businesses

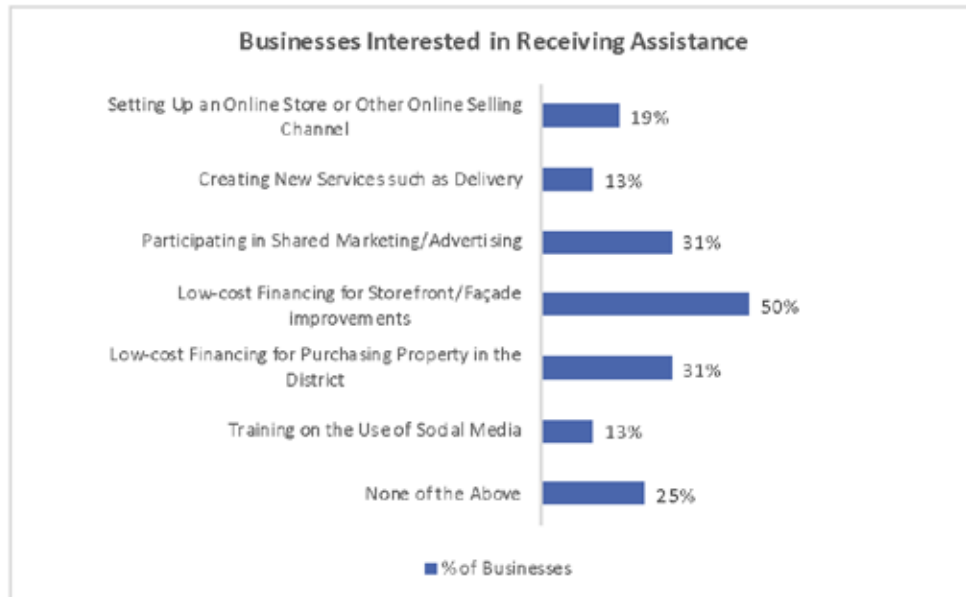
The charts below illustrate the average rating among respondents regarding importance of various strategies.



### Business Input Related to Possible Strategies (cont'd)

#### Businesses Support

75% of businesses expressed interest in receiving some kind of assistance.

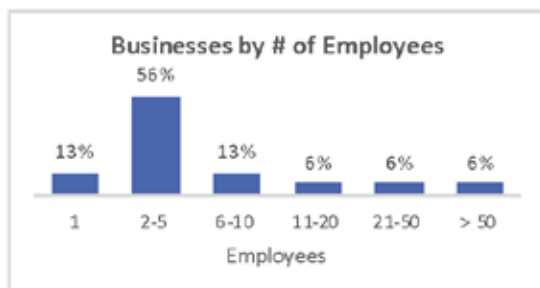


# Business Survey Report

## Business Characteristics

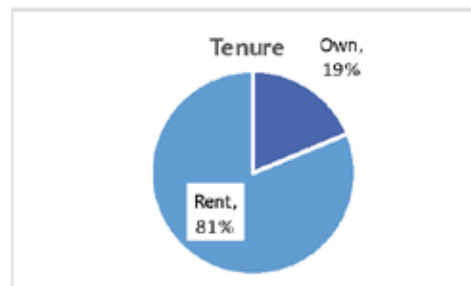
### Business Size

69% of businesses are microenterprises ( $\leq 5$  employees).



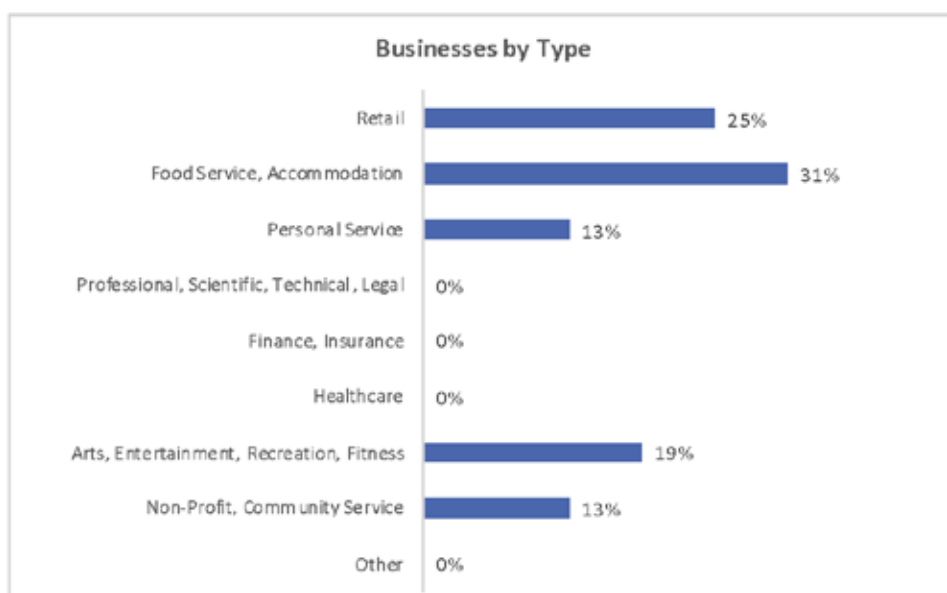
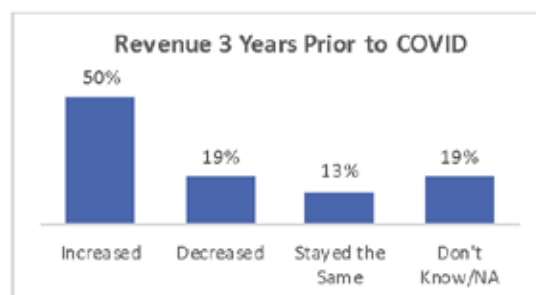
### Business Tenure

81% of businesses rent their space.



### Revenue Trend Prior to COVID

50% of businesses reported increase in revenue during the 3 years prior to COVID.



## Business Survey Results - Data Tables

### Community Where Targeted Downtown or Commercial District is Located

1. Please select the community where your business is located.

Attleboro	16
-----------	----

### Business Characteristics & Satisfaction with Commercial Area

2. Including yourself, how many people did your business employ prior to COVID (February 2020), including both full-time and part-time?

1	2	13%
2 to 5	9	56%
6 to 10	2	13%
11 to 20	1	6%
21 to 50	1	6%
More than 50	1	6%
Total	16	100%

3. Does your business own or rent the space where it operates?

Own	3	19%
Rent	13	81%
Total	16	100%

4. During the 3 years prior to COVID, had your business revenue . . . ?

Increased	8	50%
Decreased	3	19%
Stayed about the Same	2	13%
Don't Know/Not Applicable	3	19%
Total	16	100%

5. Please select the category that best fits your business.

Retail (NAICS 44-45)	4	25%
Food Service (restaurants, bars), Accommodation (NAICS 72)	5	31%
Personal Service (hair, skin, nails, dry cleaning) (NAICS 81)	2	13%
Professional Scientific, Technical, Legal (NAICS 54)	0	0%
Finance, Insurance (NAICS 52)	0	0%
Healthcare (medical, dental, other health practitioners) (NAICS 62)	0	0%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Fitness (NAICS 71)	3	19%
Non-Profit, Community Services	2	13%
Other	0	0%
Total	16	100%

**6. Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of the Downtown or Commercial District where your business is located.**

**Condition of public spaces, streets, sidewalks**

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	2	13%
Neutral	7	44%
Satisfied	5	31%
Very Satisfied	2	13%
Total	16	100%

**Condition of Private Buildings, Facades, Storefronts, Signage**

Very Dissatisfied	1	7%
Dissatisfied	4	27%
Neutral	7	47%
Satisfied	2	13%
Very Satisfied	1	7%
Total	15	100%

**Access for Customers & Employees**

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	2	14%
Neutral	7	50%
Satisfied	4	29%
Very Satisfied	1	7%
Total	14	100%

**Safety and Comfort of Customers & Employees**

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Neutral	7	47%
Satisfied	7	47%
Very Satisfied	1	7%
Total	15	100%

**Proximity to Complementary Businesses or Uses**

Very Dissatisfied	1	7%
Dissatisfied	1	7%
Neutral	8	53%
Satisfied	5	33%
Very Satisfied	0	0%
Total	15	100%

### 7. Do any local regulations (not related to COVID) pose an obstacle to your business operation?

Licensing or permitting regulations	2	13%
Signage regulations	2	13%
Parking regulations	7	47%
Outdoor dining or selling regulations	2	13%
Allowed uses, change of use or other zoning regulations	0	0%
Historic District regulations	1	7%
Other regulations (not related to COVID)	2	13%
None - No Issues with regulations	7	47%

### Impacts of COVID

### 8. Did your business experience any of the following due to COVID? Select All that apply.

Decline in revenue	11	69%
Employee layoff	8	50%
Reduced operating hours/capacity	11	69%
Business closure (temporary or permanent)	8	50%
Stopped/deferred rent or mortgage payments	7	44%
Incurred expense to implement safety measures	11	69%
Established alternative mode to sell and deliver products (on-line platforms, delivery, etc.)	10	63%
None of the Above	1	6%

### 9. How did your 2020 business revenue compare to your 2019 revenue?

Increased compared to 2019	2	13%
Stayed about the same as 2019	0	0%
Decreased 1 – 24% compared to 2019	2	13%
Decreased 25 – 49% compared to 2019	9	56%
Decreased 75 – 100% compared to 2019	0	0%
Decreased 50 – 74% compared to 2019	1	6%
Don't Know/Not Applicable	2	13%
Total	16	100%

### 10. Please estimate how the number of customers that physically came to your business in January and February 2021 compares to before COVID.

More customers than before COVID	2	13%
About the same number as before COVID	2	13%
1 – 24% less customers than before COVID	2	13%
25 – 49% less customers than before COVID	5	31%
50 – 74% less customers than before COVID	2	13%
75 – 100% less customers than before COVID	1	6%
Don't Know/Not Applicable	2	13%
Total	16	100%

### 11. At the current time, what is the status of your business operation?

Operating at full capacity	6	38%
Operating at reduced hours/capacity due to COVID	10	63%
Temporarily closed due to COVID	0	0%
Permanently closed due to COVID	0	0%
Total	16	100%

### Strategies for Supporting Businesses and Improving the Commercial District

12. A few approaches to address Physical Environment, Atmosphere and Access in commercial districts are listed below. Considering the conditions in your commercial area, in your opinion, how important are each of the following strategies?

#### Renovation of Storefronts/Building Facades

Unimportant/Not Needed	0	0%
Of Little Importance or Need	1	6%
Moderately Important	1	6%
Important	12	75%
Very Important	2	13%
Total	16	100%

#### Improvement/Development of Public Spaces & Seating Areas

Unimportant/Not Needed	0	0%
Of Little Importance or Need	2	13%
Moderately Important	2	13%
Important	5	33%
Very Important	6	40%
Total	15	100%

#### Improvement of Streetscape & Sidewalks

Unimportant/Not Needed	2	13%
Of Little Importance or Need	0	0%
Moderately Important	2	13%
Important	9	60%
Very Important	2	13%
Total	15	100%

#### Improvements in Safety and/or Cleanliness

Unimportant/Not Needed	1	7%
Of Little Importance or Need	0	0%
Moderately Important	3	20%
Important	6	40%
Very Important	5	33%
Total	15	100%

### Changes in Public Parking Availability, Management or Policies

Unimportant/Not Needed	1	6%
Of Little Importance or Need	0	0%
Moderately Important	1	6%
Important	5	31%
Very Important	9	56%
Total	16	100%

### Amenity Improvements for Public Transit Users and/or Bike Riders

Unimportant/Not Needed	1	6%
Of Little Importance or Need	1	6%
Moderately Important	5	31%
Important	6	38%
Very Important	3	19%
Total	16	100%

13. A few approaches to address Attraction and Retention of Customers and Businesses in commercial districts are listed below. Considering the conditions in your commercial area, in your opinion, how important are each of the following strategies?

### More Cultural Events/Activities to Bring People into the District

Unimportant/Not Needed	0	0%
Of Little Importance or Need	0	0%
Moderately Important	3	19%
Important	10	63%
Very Important	3	19%
Total	16	100%

### More Opportunities for Outdoor Dining and Selling

Unimportant/Not Needed	0	0%
Of Little Importance or Need	1	6%
Moderately Important	3	19%
Important	8	50%
Very Important	4	25%
Total	16	100%

### Implementing Marketing Strategies for the Commercial District

Unimportant/Not Needed	1	6%
Of Little Importance or Need	0	0%
Moderately Important	3	19%
Important	6	38%
Very Important	6	38%
Total	16	100%

## Business Survey Report

### Recruitment Programs to Attract Additional Businesses

Unimportant/Not Needed	0	0%
Of Little Importance or Need	0	0%
Moderately Important	5	31%
Important	4	25%
Very Important	7	44%
Total	16	100%

### Changes to Zoning or Other Local Regulations (not related to COVID)

Unimportant/Not Needed	1	7%
Of Little Importance or Need	4	27%
Moderately Important	4	27%
Important	2	13%
Very Important	4	27%
Total	15	100%

### Creation of a District Management Entity (Business Improvement District or other organization)

Unimportant/Not Needed	1	7%
Of Little Importance or Need	2	13%
Moderately Important	5	33%
Important	5	33%
Very Important	2	13%
Total	15	100%

### 14. Are you interested in receiving assistance for your business in any of the following areas? Select All that Apply.

Setting up an online store or other online selling channel	3	19%
Creating new services such as delivery	2	13%
Participating in shared marketing/advertising	5	31%
Low-cost financing for storefront/façade improvements	8	50%
Low-cost financing for purchasing property in the commercial district	5	31%
Training on the use of social media	2	13%
None of the above	4	25%

**15. Please list any specific suggestions or ideas for possible projects, programs or actions that could help support businesses and improve the commercial district. (Optional)**

**Comments**

—
More positive attention to small business owners
Community base events, events like expressive arts. Have S.O.M Vibes Studio, LLC for all the communities arts and entertainment
To be honest, I'm not really sure and will have to give that some more thought!
—
—
—
Outdoor Market, Farmers Markets should be downtown, closing off streets - markets should tie in business already existing; Pay MBTA for free parking at their site for customers coming into downtown
—
Additional green space
—
Addressing the lack of parking available and the overly aggressive parking tickets...parking on a line, having to put change in a meter these are barriers for people WANTING to do business downtown
—
—
Let Stores and Restaurants use the sidewalks, for sales and dining, without having to get a permit. Establish rules and let the business adhere to them
—

# Attleboro

Local Rapid Recovery Program

McCabe Enterprises





## The Local Rapid Recovery Program





CUSTOMER  
BASE



PHYSICAL  
ENVIRONMENT



BUSINESS  
ENVIRONMENT



ADMIN  
CAPACITY



Revenue & Sales



Public Realm



Private Realm



Tenant Mix



Cultural/Arts

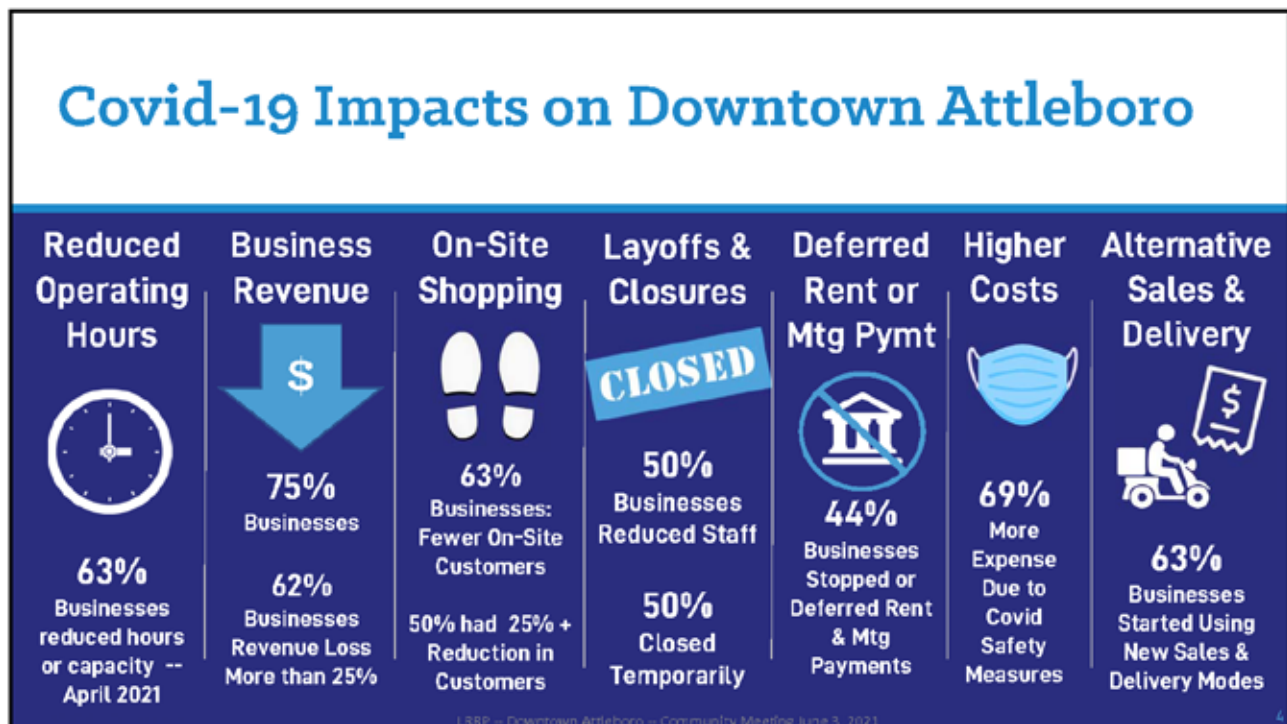
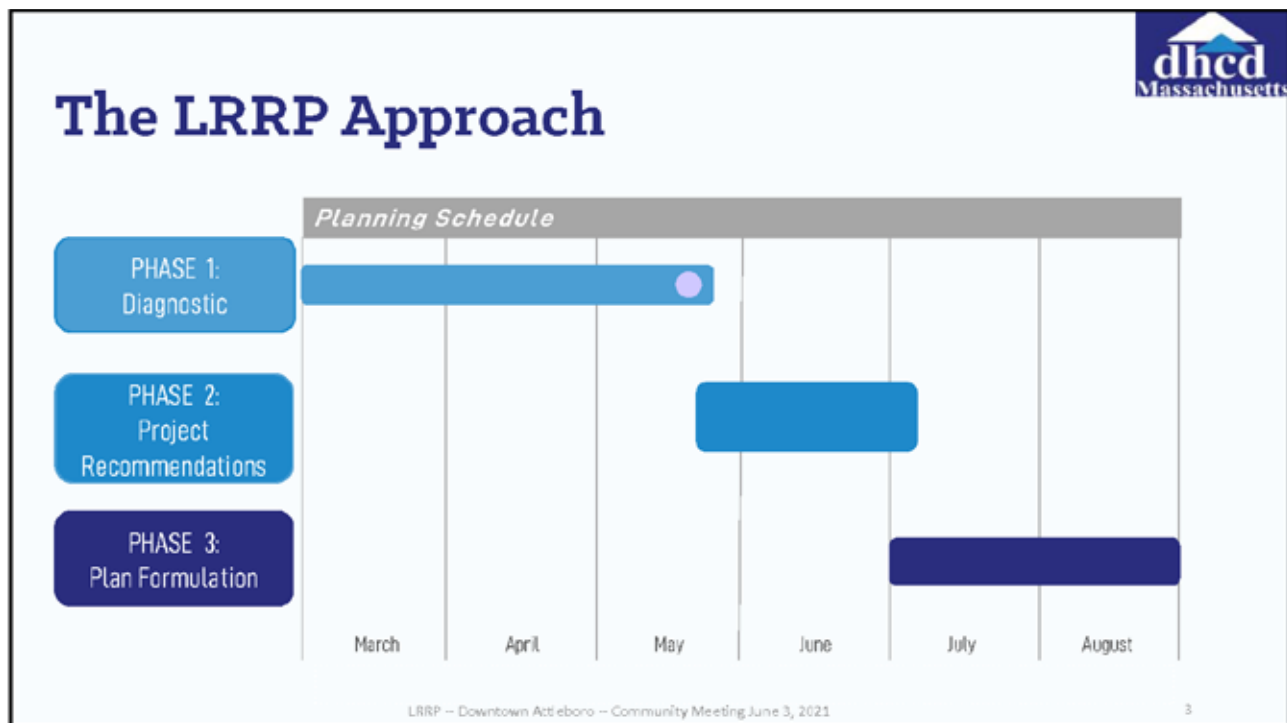


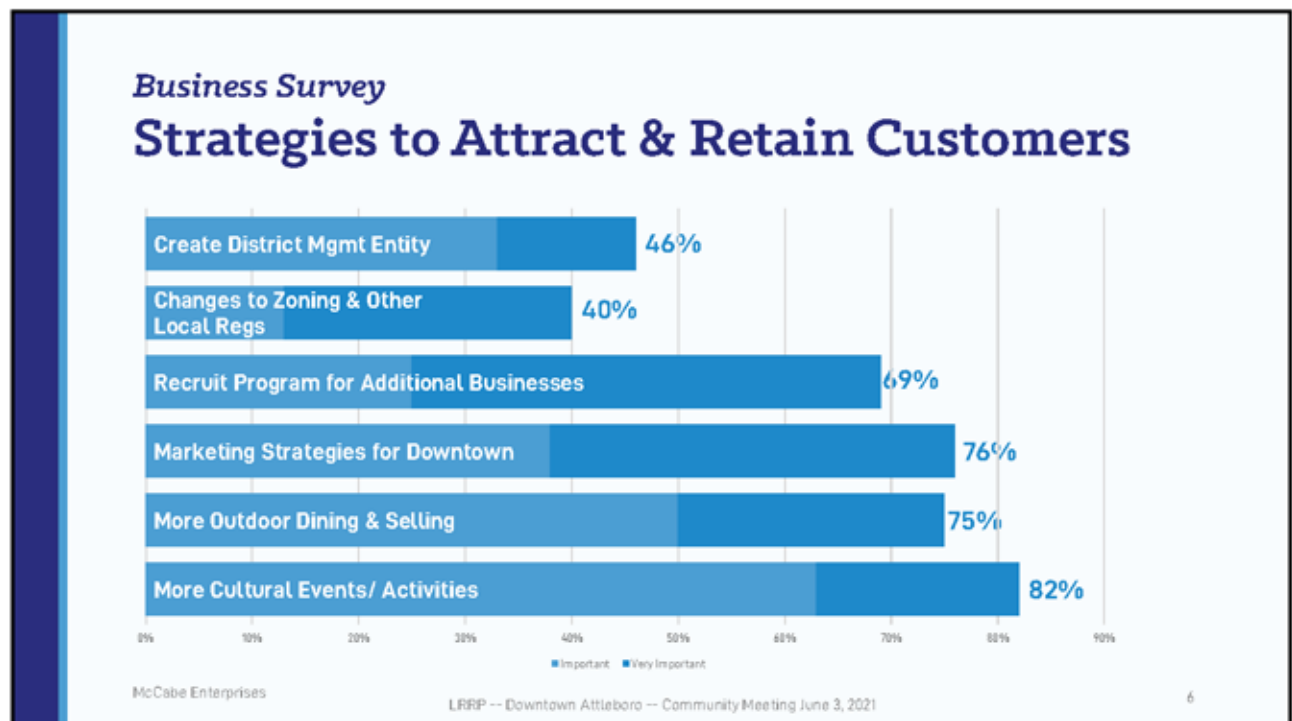
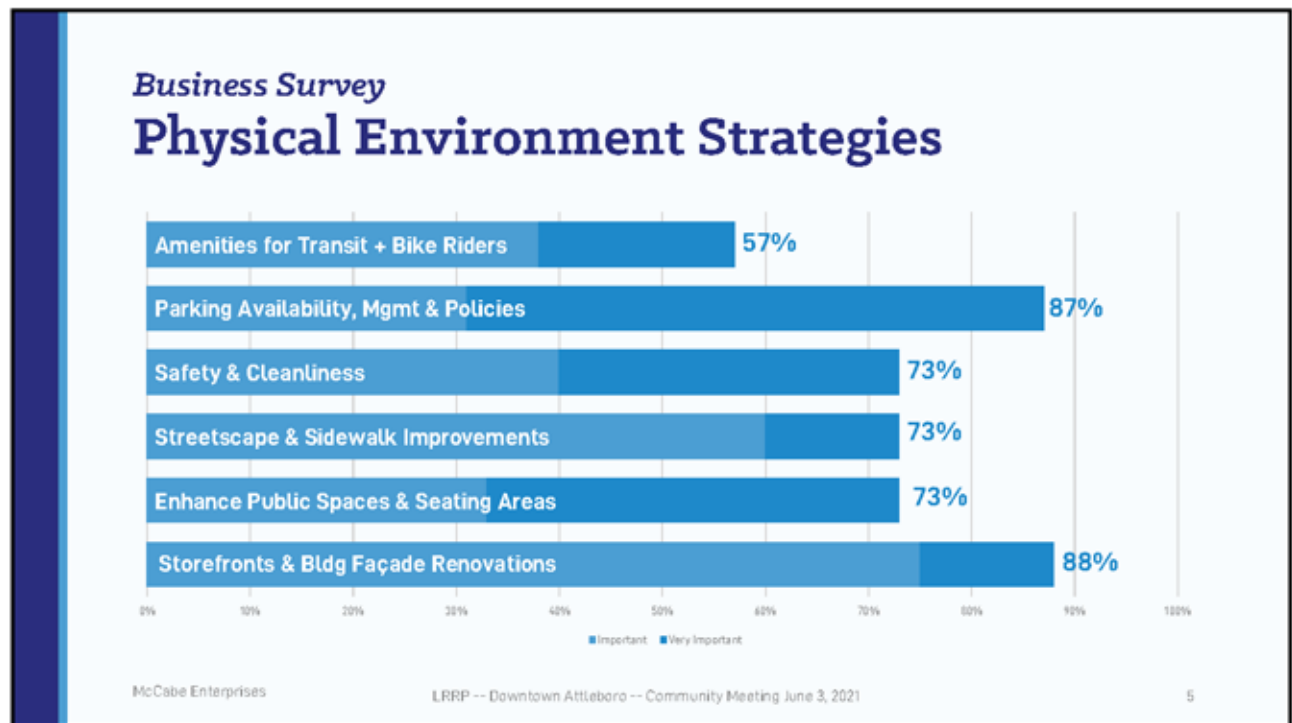
Admin Capacity

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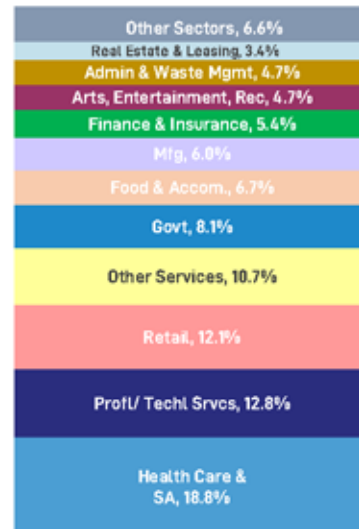




## Businesses in Downtown Attleboro

- 149 Businesses
- 160 Storefronts
- 30.6% Vacancy Rate as to units
- 167,555 sf of ground floor retail
- 123,684 sf of ground floor office
- 81,670 sf of ground floor mfg.

Downtown  
Attleboro  
Business  
Mix  
By  
NAICS  
Code



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## Customer Base Components

### 1 Residents

- 1,250 Downtown Residents
- 45,713 city residents

### 2 Workers

- 1,803 Downtown Workers
- 18,471 people work in Attleboro

### 3 Visitors

- **Capron Zoo**
  - Over 104,000 visitors (pre-pandemic)
  - Visitation up 53.7% in 2021 over 2019
- **LaSalette**
  - 60,000 to 100,000 visitors for Holiday Lights
- **Museum Patrons**
  - 2 museums Downtown

### 4 People in & near Downtown

- 1,762 daily MBTA commuters
- 1,400 daily GATRA riders
- 11,579 drivers pass-thru daily (2019 County & N. Main)
- 2,240 meetings/ events at Library annually (2018)
- 70,000+ library patron visits annually (2018)

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## Attracting Customers

- Awareness
- Marketing & Promotion --
  - Sales Events and
  - Downtown Promotion Events
- Convenience
  - Outdoor Dining & Sales
  - Curb Side Pick-Up
- Integrating New Approaches
  - Online; Mobile Ordering;
  - Curb-side Pick-Up
- Desired Businesses & Uses

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## Importance of Visual & Welcoming Environment



**Better, More Inviting Windows with a Sign & Outdoor Display welcoming customers.**

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## Downtowns are Becoming Social Districts

- Food
- Entertainment
- Gathering Spaces
- Open Space
- Fitness
- Arts, Culture, Creativity

*Attleboro has many of these elements, but needs to let people know!*



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## Transit-Oriented Development -- Good Companion Commercial Uses

- Food –
    - Coffee Shops
    - Quick, Casual Eating with To-Go
  - Convenience/ Sundries
  - Child Care
  - Dry Cleaning
  - ATMs
- Plus: Wayfinding**



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## Just the Facts

	Attleboro City Wide	Downtown Attleboro
Size	17,741 Acres	116 Acres
Residents	45,713	1,250
Households	17,927	567
Aggregate HH Income	\$1.9 Billion	\$40.5 Million
Employees	18,471	1,803
Public Parking On & Off Street (Non-MBTA)		1,152
Average Rents Per SF		Retail: \$12-\$18 Office: \$18-\$20 NNN



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Thank You.

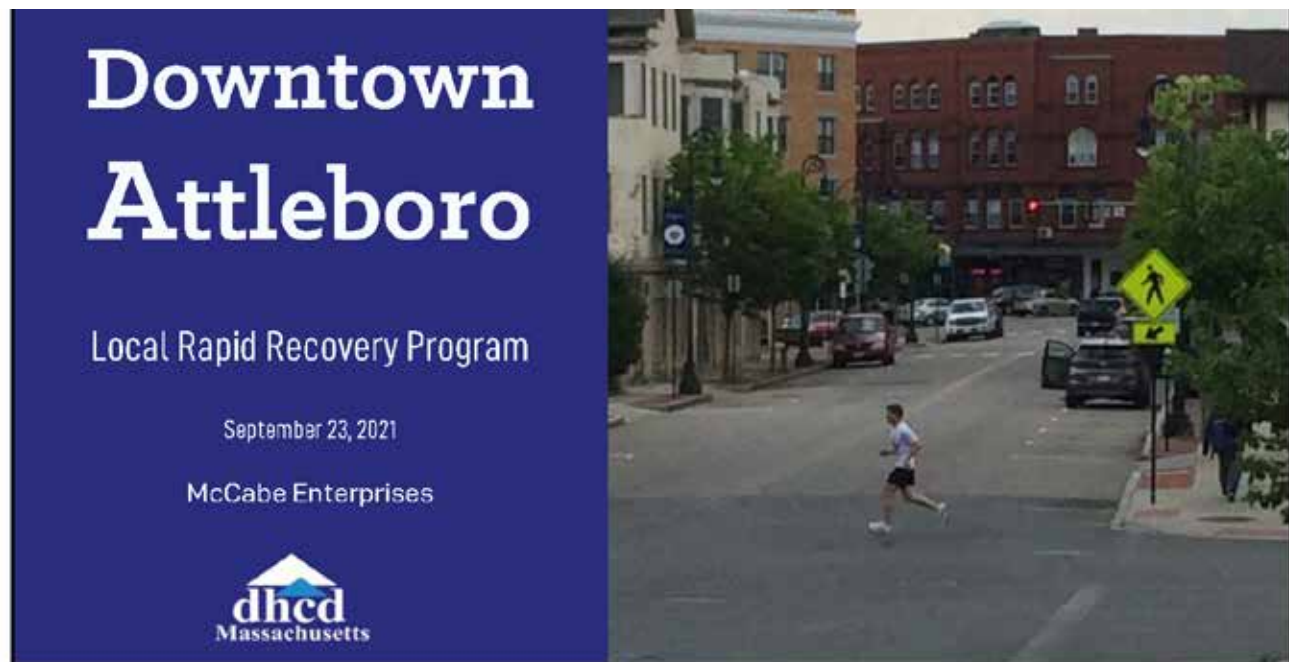
Please Add Questions to the Chat

Discussion will follow.

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## Local Rapid Recovery Program Aims

- Support & Facilitate Recovery
- Ready Communities for Using ARPA Funds
- Strengthen Commercial Districts
- Enhance Downtown's Resiliency

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## Covid-19 Impacts on Downtown Attleboro

### Reduced Operating Hours



**63%**  
Businesses reduced hours or capacity -- April 2021

### Business Revenue



**75%**  
Businesses  
**62%**  
Businesses Revenue Loss More than 25%

### On-Site Shopping



**63%**  
Businesses: Fewer On-Site Customers  
**50%** had **25%+** Reduction in Customers

### Layoffs & Closures



**50%**  
Businesses Reduced Staff  
**50%**  
Closed Temporarily

### Deferred Rent or Mtg Pymt



**44%**  
Businesses Stopped or Deferred Rent & Mtg Payments

### Higher Costs



**69%**  
More Expense Due to Covid Safety Measures

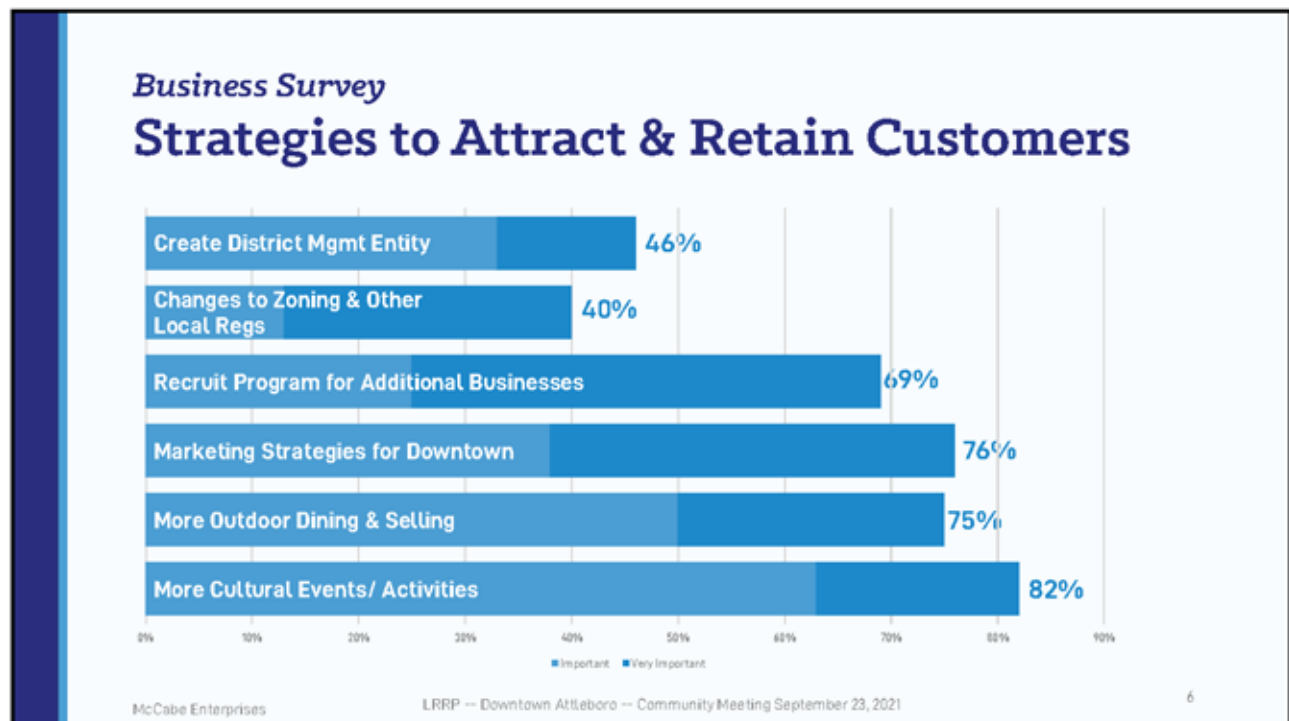
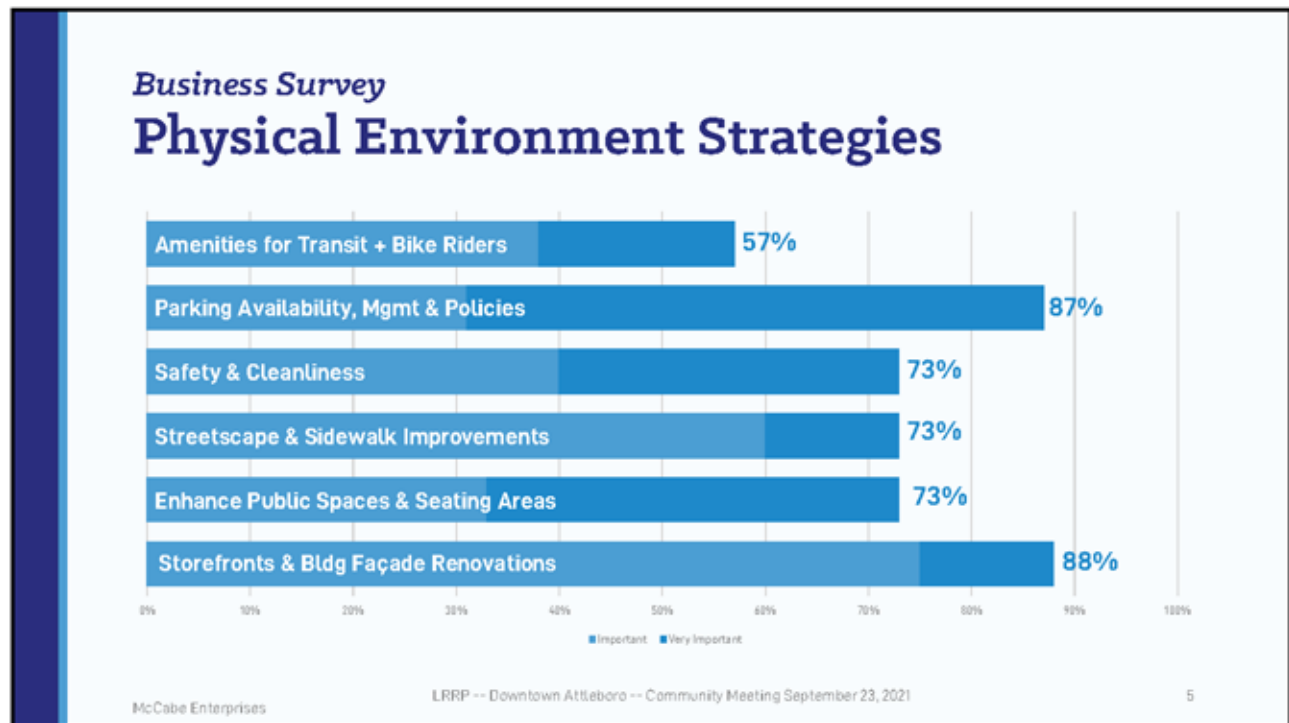
### Alternative Sales & Delivery



**63%**  
Businesses Started Using New Sales & Delivery Modes

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## Downtown Attleboro Is Re-Inventing & Recovering

- **At least 2 new businesses**
  - Burgundian
  - Total Modesty
- **New Housing in Downtown is Under Construction and in the Pipeline**
- **Traffic is Back, but not All Customers**



## LRRP Actions & Initiatives

				
<b>Admin Capacity</b>	<b>Revenue &amp; Sales</b>	<b>Private Realm</b>	<b>Public Realm</b>	<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>
Downtown Website	Annual Promotions Calendar	Be Bold, Look Alive	Parking Enforcement	Art in Crosswalks
Downtown Mgmt for Attleboro's Future	Branding	Signage (TDI)	Wayfinding	
	Businesses Going Online		Lighting Bridges	
	Welcome Project			

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## Upgrade Downtown Web Site



- Updating Platform for Easier Administration in next 90 days
- Facilitates Downtown Web Site for Regular Communication

Welcome to Downtown Attleboro

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## Sustaining the Downtown Attleboro's Revitalization

**Downtowns with Business Improvement Districts pivoted faster and are recovering faster than other commercial areas**

- Amherst BID raised \$400,000 local to support small biz & procured \$20,000 of bulk PPE and distributed to local businesses
- Hudson BID hired an accountant to help all businesses file PPP applications and secured loans and funding

**Healthy Downtowns typically have some form of Public-Private Partnership with a sustainable form of revenue to implement and manage desired programming and services.**

- Business Improvement Districts
- Main Street Districts -- voluntary
- Parking Benefit Districts



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## Steps for Creating A Sustainable Approach for Downtown Attleboro Stewardship

- Get Started - Identify Start-up Resources
- Develop the Value Proposition/ Communication Tools
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Create a Community Outreach & Engagement Strategy
- Identify Downtown Priorities
- Evaluate Organizational Models
- Secure Resources for Sustainability



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## Businesses Going Online

- E-Commerce retail sales increased 57 % since 2019
- E-Commerce Retail Sales grew 1.4 times faster than bricks'n'mortar retail over since pre-pandemic
- Mobile is 25% of all e-commerce sales
- Covid accelerated use of online and mobile platforms
- Many Downtown businesses have no or limited web presence
- Most Downtown Personal Care Biz have no online scheduling option

E-Commerce Retail Sales, 2017 – 2021 Q2



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## Businesses Going Online

**NEED** Street facades & Digital Facades

**PROGRAM**

- Web Basics for Business Workshop
- One-on-One Technical Assistance for Web Sites
- Periodic Follow-Up Workshops & Peer Support for E-Commerce, M-Commerce, & Social Media for Downtown Businesses

**BENEFITS**

- Sales channel to increase revenue
- Online ordering and scheduling increases customers and Downtown foot traffic
- Enhances business resiliency & sales



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## Making the Cash Register Sing Annual Promotion Calendar

**3 Types of Promotion**

- Image Building & Marketing / Branding
- Retail Sales
- Special Events & Festivals



**Annual Calendar Enables Planning, Collaboration & Retail Tie-Ins**

Quarter	Promotion/ Event	Promo Goals	Retail Tie- Ins
Jan - Mar	Winter Fest		
Apr - Jun			
Jul - Sept	Wednesday Night Markets Hike Attleboro Day		
Oct - Dec	Jewelry City Steam Punk Festival LaSalette Christmas Lights		

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## Branding Downtown

### Why Branding

- Communicates identity & story of Downtown / City
- Distinguishes Downtown from its competition
- Needs to be authentic, rooted, as well as aspirational
- Memorable

### Next Steps

- Pre-Branding
- Determine Focus – Downtown / City-wide
- Secure Funding
- Develop RFP & Engage Branding Consultant
- Branding Study
- Implement Branding Program – Consistently & Continuously



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## Welcome Project

### NEED

- 540 new home owners annually
- 180 new tenants in Downtown vicinity
- Moving prompts new buying & relationships
- Opportunity to create new customers & introduce Downtown

### PROGRAM


- Welcoming Events for New Residents
- Welcome Bags/ Packets



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## Importance of Visual & Welcoming Environment



Business Name?

Windows should be inviting & tell a story



**Good Signage & Better, More Inviting Windows with Outdoor Display welcomes customers! The business looks open & ready for business.**

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## Windows & Visual Merchandising

### Be Bold – Look Alive

#### Challenge & Opportunity

- Windows are highly visible and contribute to Downtown's image
- Window Display is a low priority for most businesses
- Windows can drive customers & generate sales
- Many uses, like offices, banks, health services have "blank" windows

#### Window Display: Be Bold – Look Alive Program

- Window Display Workshop
- One-on-One Technical Assistance to Businesses on Window Display
- Window Briefs – Tip Sheets on Display and Key Challenges
- Possibly Window Display Contest and Involve Customers

**Signage Help is Coming for Downtown Businesses**

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## Parking: Eliminate 1-foot Rule



"T" space markings suggest an external parking space boundary.



T markings seem to indicate a parking lane on the street.



### THE PROBLEM

- Source of Frustration & Customer Anger
- Creates a Negative Experience and is Unwelcoming
- Car widths range from 5.4 feet to 8 feet for a Full Pick-up
- Downtown Parking Spaces are typically 8 feet wide
- Confusion regarding "T" Parking Space Markings

### SOLUTIONS

- Eliminate 1-Foot Rule
- Remove the "cap" of the "T", so there is no external parking space boundary

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## Wayfinding

### Help Customers Find Downtown & Get Around

- **Regional Directional Signs for Roads** -- Well Marked
- **Regional Directional Signs for Places** -- Could Be Better
- **Vehicular Direction Signage** -- Fairly Good
- **Public Parking Areas** -- Business Directory Signage can be helpful at parking lots
- **Downtown Institutions** -- Good for Study Hospital; Spotty for others
- **Pedestrian -- Level Signage** -- Room for Improvement
- **Commuter Rail & Bus** -- Needs Improvement

### Design Wayfinding Program for Various Scales

### Incrementally Implement & Monitor



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## Wayfinding -- Examples



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## Wayfinding and Parking



- Help Customers Find Parking
- Approach to Parking Structure from Academy Needs Signage
- Parking lots are an Opportunity to Orient People to Downtown

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## Long-Term: Light the Bridges

### OPPORTUNITY

- 4 Historic Stone Rail Bridges (3 in Downtown)
- At-Grade Light for Pedestrians is Fair to Good
- Architectural Lighting Can Add Excitement & Interest
- Lighting can help Celebrate Community Events

### CHALLENGE

- Any Work on Rail Bridges Is Expensive
- In Attleboro, the Bridge locations enable Lighting Technology which is Off-Bridge, but Lights the Bridge(s)





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## Bridge Lighting Strategies



### Stone Bridge, Johnstown, PA

- Lit for 3 hours every evening
- \$1.2 million project
- Lighting colors can be requested
- Johnstown Historical Assn coordinated lighting color requests.



### Morrison Bridge, Portland, OR


- Lighted for Special Events
- Nonprofit Willamette Light Brigade advocated for lighting & coordinates lights with fee schedule (\$150 to \$1100)
- IBEW and Electrical Contractors Assn. pro bono lighting work.



### Downtown Bridges, Tampa, FL

- Tampa has 5 Downtown bridges in its lighting program
- City commissioned lighting artist to design lighting designs for all 5 bridges
- Incrementally installed lighting.
- Lighting bridges program expanded to include FL DOT Skyway bridge.

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## Art in the Crosswalks

### Opportunity

- Highlights & Interprets Key Crosswalks
- Adds color, interest, and emphasis to pathways
- Reinforces Downtown as a Place of Art, Culture, Fun
- Supports Placemaking & Traffic Calming

### Art in Crosswalks

- Identify Key Crosswalks (2 to 3/yr)
- Secure Funding
- Call to Artists
- Create Art in Crosswalks
- Partnership with Arts, Culture and DPW



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## LRRP for Downtown Attleboro -- Re-inventing, Revitalizing & Recovering

Thank You.

Please Add Questions to the Chat

Discussion.



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# About McCabe Enterprises and the LRRP team for Attleboro

**McCabe Enterprises** are downtown experts. We provide strategic solutions in public financing, community planning, and economic development to public and private sector clients with innovative and award-winning work with downtowns, town centers, and neighborhood commercial centers. As director of Roslindale Village Main Street (RVMS), McCabe received the National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the first "Main Street" program so honored. The Rudy Bruner Foundation recognized RVMS as second for its prestigious national Excellence in Urban Environment Award.

A wholly woman-owned consulting firm founded by Kathleen McCabe, FAICP, McCabe Enterprises works with clients to develop customized solutions addressing the unique needs of each client and community. Our approach encompasses planning and economic analysis, financing, community consultation, with a focus on implementation and community engagement. Our work includes market analysis, feasibility studies, downtown revitalization, COVID recovery, public financing, sustainability and resiliency, neighborhood planning, brownfields re-use planning and redevelopment.

**Kathleen "Kathy" McCabe** served as the Downtown Expert and Plan Facilitator for the Downtown Attleboro Local Rapid Recovery Program assignment. Four Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) firms reviewed and assisted with key recommendations. The Attleboro LRRP team members include Kathleen McCabe, FAICP, of McCabe Enterprises and:

**Ann McFarland Burke, Consultant.** Ann Burke specializes in helping communities develop sustainable district management organizations to create economically and socially vibrant downtowns. Ann contributed to the section on approaches to downtown management and Business Improvement Districts. [www.linkedin.com/in/ann-burke-5295a5a/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ann-burke-5295a5a/)

**Anita Morson-Matra and Michael Aparicio, Revby.** Revby provides technical assistance, coaching, and consulting services to small business owners. Revby provides technical assistance services with organizations and municipalities that share a mission to support small business economic development, particularly in urban, diverse, moderate to lower income, or otherwise economically distressed neighborhoods. Revby contributed to the section on branding. [www.revby.co](http://www.revby.co)

**Chris Moynihan, Retail Visioning.** RetailVisioning works with storefront businesses to help them be the very best they can be. We provide strategic consulting and technical assistance to individual merchants as well as to commercial district management. Most of our work is around best practices in visual presentations, brand positioning and marketing. Our mission is to improve business one store at a time, as we improve downtowns store by store by store. Christine Moynihan is principal of RetailVisioning, and may be contacted at [www.retailvisioningonline.com](http://www.retailvisioningonline.com). Chris contributed to the section on window display.

**Dion Kenney and Gregg Stewart, Mondoforma.** [Mondoforma.com](http://Mondoforma.com) is a local-search, multi-vendor eCommerce marketplace whose mission is to provide local retailers a no-cost eCommerce platform to help consumers shop local and find what they are looking for in their own communities. [www.mondoforma.com](http://www.mondoforma.com)

**Eileen Riestra, Depict Brands.** Eileen regularly works with McCabe Enterprises providing graphic and design assistance. Eileen often works with small businesses providing one-on-one technical assistance, website development, business marketing and social media strategies. Eileen has worked extensively with the Boston Main Streets program, including serving on the Board of East Boston Main Streets. Eileen established Depict Brands, a M/WBE firm focusing on branding development and offers a wide array of design related services that cater to the American and Hispanic Market. [www.depictbrands.com](http://www.depictbrands.com)

**Beverly Kunze Photography** contributed photographs of Downtown Attleboro for this report and project.

**Massachusetts Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP)** has a wealth of resources and reference materials for commercial districts and communities responding to COVID and seeking to strengthen and revitalize their downtowns. [www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/rapid-recovery-plan-rrp-program)

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*Vibrant downtowns,  
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