



# Rapid Recovery Plan

2021

Burlington

**This plan has been made possible through technical assistance provided by the Baker-Polito Administration's Local Rapid Recovery Planning program.**



The Local Rapid Recovery Planning (RRP) 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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# Acknowledgements



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**Burlington Economic Development Liaison Group**

Mike Runyan (Select Board)  
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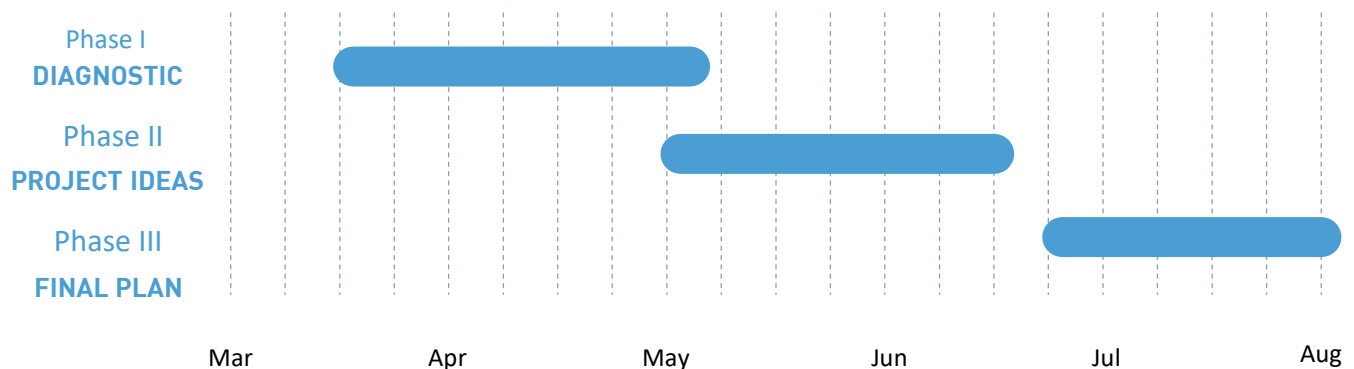
# Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

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-August 2021. Phase 1 - Diagnostic, Phase 2- Project Recommendations, Phase 3 - Plan.



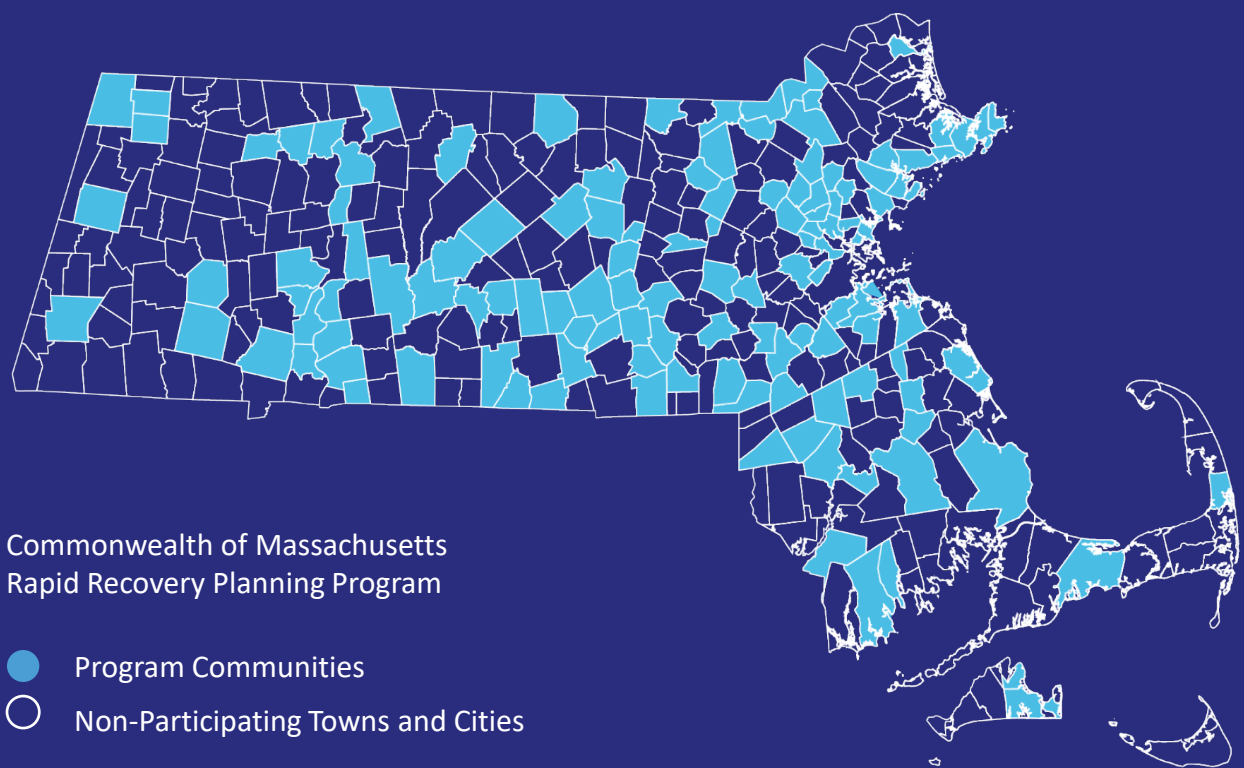
In Phase 1: Diagnostic, Plan Facilitators utilized the Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework that was adapted from the award-winning Commercial DNA approach as published by the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) in “Preparing a Commercial District Diagnostic”, and authored by Larisa Ortiz,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

## 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 Diagnostic Framework



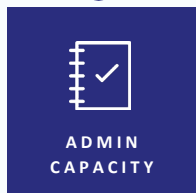
Who are the customers of businesses in the Study Area?



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, Nelson\Nygaard, 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, Revenue and Sales, Administrative Capacity, Tenant Mix, Cultural/Arts & Others.



Public Realm



Private Realm



Tenant Mix



Revenue/Sales



Admin Capacity



Cultural/Arts



Other



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## Executive Summary

# Executive Summary

## A linear shopping district catering to residents and small businesses

Burlington Town Center is a primarily local shopping district situated along the Cambridge Street (State Route 3A) corridor just north of the town common in the Town of Burlington, a suburban community located approximately 15 miles north of Boston. Characterized by a series of strip shopping centers, the Town Center serves as a vital local resource for small business and area residents. The area lacks cohesion or an overall identity however, and MassDOT's ownership and control of Cambridge Street is a potential barrier to knitting the district together. At the same time, because rents are far lower than in the southern part of Burlington close to Route 128, occupancy levels for retail spaces remain strong.

The work of the LRRP has focused on advancing a series of strategies that will support other efforts to strengthen economic activity in the Town Center while retaining its strong local character. The general study area runs along Cambridge Street from Skilton Lane to the north and to the new retail development opposite Simonds Park to the south. It also extends along Terry Avenue and Winn Street. Additional shops are located to the north of the study area for which many of the recommendations in this plan are applicable. See Figure.



Source: Nelson\Nygaard



Burlington Town Center: Source: Nelson\Nygaard, Google



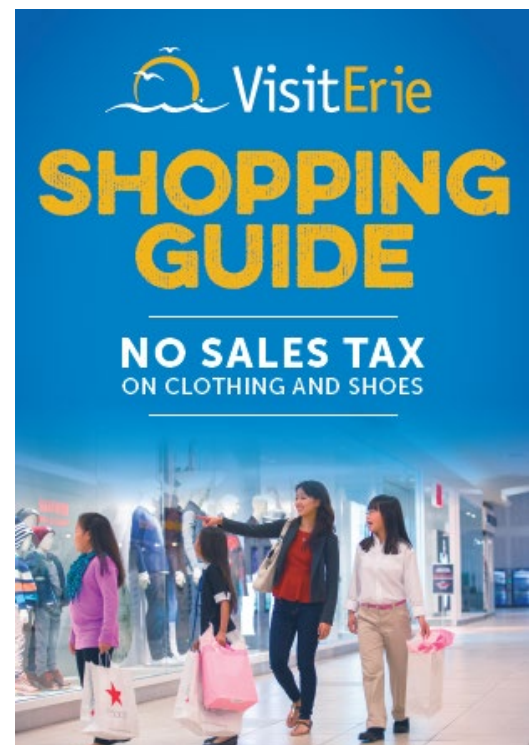
Economic growth and recovery in Burlington Town Center will result from formalizing business-support activities (including programming), by establishing an identify, brand, and wayfinding program, and by enhancing the pedestrian experience.

Several studies and plans have identified needs and proposed ideas for enhancing the visitor experience in Burlington Town Center. In addition, some new ideas are proposed from the LRRP process. Combined, these include:

- Reconstruct the Cambridge Street Corridor and the Winn St./Terry Ave. intersection based on Complete Streets Principles (2 projects combined)
- Develop Implementable Sign Bylaws to Support Economic Development
- Create a Comprehensive Marketing Strategy with Identity and Branding (2 projects combined)
- Improve Pedestrian and Motorist Wayfinding
- Develop a District Management Model
- Improve Driving and Walking Paths Within Private Parking Lots
- Program Pop-up and Other Events and Accommodate Outdoor Dining (2 projects combined)



Worcester's Innovation District. Source: Silbert Perkins Design



Visit Erie Brand. Source: Perch Advisors and [website](#).



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## Diagnostic

# Key Findings



## CUSTOMER BASE

### Burlington's customer base is reflected in its business tenant mix.

Burlington Town Center's commercial spaces include many local retail shops, small eating establishments, and service businesses. There are small office buildings and some national retailers (Shaw's Supermarket, CVS, Dollar Tree). Some industrial uses are situated along Terry Avenue. There are also several establishments selling or serving international foods, a reflection of Burlington's diversity.



## BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

### Town staff, property owners, and others are working to support further investment in the Town Center.

Burlington has a very strong retail base in the southern part of the town with substantial retail in the area of the Burlington Mall and along Middlesex Turnpike. The town has an economic development director whose mission includes promoting additional investment in the Town Center. In addition, local property owners in the Town Center and volunteer residents are looking to promote additional business activity.



## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### Storefronts and restaurants frequently have parking spaces located in front of entrances between building and Cambridge Street

Burlington Town Center is characterized by mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century strip shopping, many with large parking lots and elements that vary considerably, including signs, lighting, street furniture, and walkways, some of which are missing or old. Some lots have well maintained sidewalks and landscaping while others lack any curbing. There is no cohesive identity and navigating the district is difficult.



## ADMIN CAPACITY

### Local businesses collaborate on projects but don't have a formal association.

A DHCD-funded placemaking study undertaken prior to the LRRP program brought many business and property owners together to improve the Town Center. The Town will be implementing one of these placemaking ideas - a pocket park this fall. It will be a proof-of-concept project. But there is no formal business association or group to advocate for improvements.



Cambridge Street businesses. Source: Nelson\Nygaard





## Highlights from the Physical Environment

### CAMBRIDGE STREET CORRIDOR

Burlington Town Center is primarily situated along Cambridge Street (State Route 3A) a MassDOT-owned roadway. North of Winn Street, there are two wide travel lanes, sidewalks on both sides with some interruptions, and no bicycle accommodations. There are numerous driveways serving the different shopping centers, some of which are wider than necessary and others where the sidewalk is incorporated into the parking lot or not present. MassDOT has plans to repave the roadway and is looking to incorporate bicycle accommodations where feasible. Where bicycle lanes are not installed, the cross-section will remain excessively wide encouraging higher travel speeds.

The intersection of Cambridge Street and Winn Street is a candidate for improvements to enhance safety. This was the subject of a December 2020 Road Safety Audit completed for MassDOT and discussed later in the report.

### PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

The study area is highly variable in pedestrian amenities. While there are many hazard-free sidewalks, few are protected from the roadway by plantings or a furnishing zone, especially along Cambridge Street Route 3A. In contrast, the Winn Street sidewalk is far more pleasant. Concrete sidewalks and planting strips have been installed in newer developments, whereas in other areas there is no sidewalk as parking access overtakes the walk zone. This variability creates disruption in the pedestrian experience and may deter visitors from parking once to visit multiple services at a time.



*New concrete sidewalks along Skilton Lane. Source: Nelson\Nygaard*

### WAYFINDING

The study area lacks a distinct and cohesive identity provided through urban design, wayfinding signage, or town branding. Those passing through on 3A and other visitors to the area may not know that they have reached a robust commercial district in the Lower Town Center. Further, the Lower Town Center is very close to the Town Common and could benefit from a more pedestrian wayfinding to connect these two areas and draw visitors from one center to the other.

### LIGHTING

Lighting along this corridor is vehicle oriented, keeping Cambridge Street well lit, but neglecting side streets. Pedestrian oriented lighting that would make the walking experience more enjoyable is rare.



*Extended curb cut for head-in parking eliminates sidewalk along Cambridge Street. Source: Nelson\Nygaard*





## Highlights from the Business Environment

### NODES/CLUSTERS

Burlington Town Center is a linear corridor with a few nodes of activity:

- Cambridge Street between Winn Street and Skilton Lane and north to Pontos Avenue
- Terry Avenue industrial cluster
- Cambridge Street south of Winn Street, including the new Shoppes at Simonds Park

### TENANTS

Commercial businesses in the area are predominantly service-oriented offices, retail, and restaurants. At the time of April 2021 site visit, 52 commercial spaces were occupied, and 21 spaces were vacant, including all but two spaces in the Shoppes at Simonds Park. Most of the commercial spaces rent for less than in other parts of Burlington and this helps to sustain small businesses. Some larger commercial tenants anchor the district, including Shaw's, CVS, Dollar Store, and regional banks. There are several establishments selling or serving international food, including Middle Eastern, Asian, and South Asian cuisines.

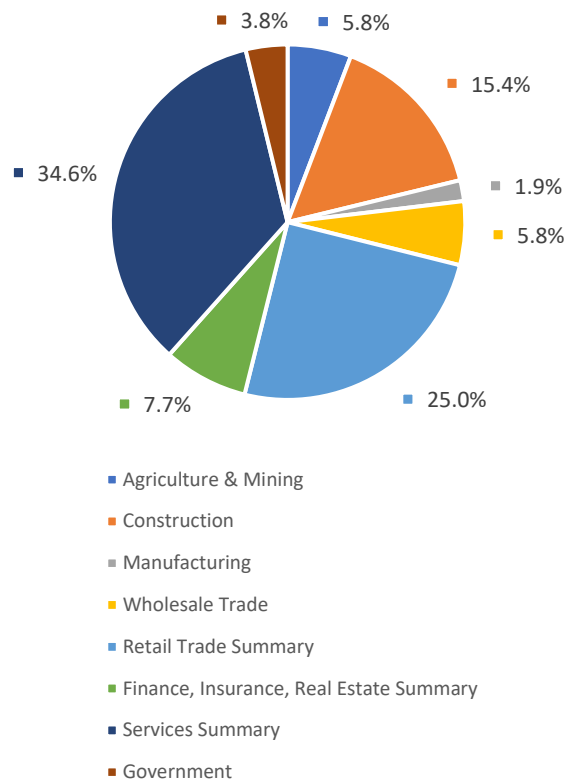
In March and April of 2021, Massachusetts DHCD conducted a survey of businesses as part of the Local Rapid Recovery Program. Burlington's 16 respondents reported business impacts from the pandemic. 88% of respondents noted a decrease in foot traffic of 25% or more and 75% were operating at a reduced capacity.

Except for the new development at the Shoppes at Simonds Park, the relatively low vacancy rate may reflect the relatively affordable commercial rates in the district, which were \$32 per square foot for retail space and \$13 per square foot for office space.

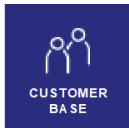


Town Center map from Placemaking Playbook. Source: Harriman & Innes Associates

### Business Mix



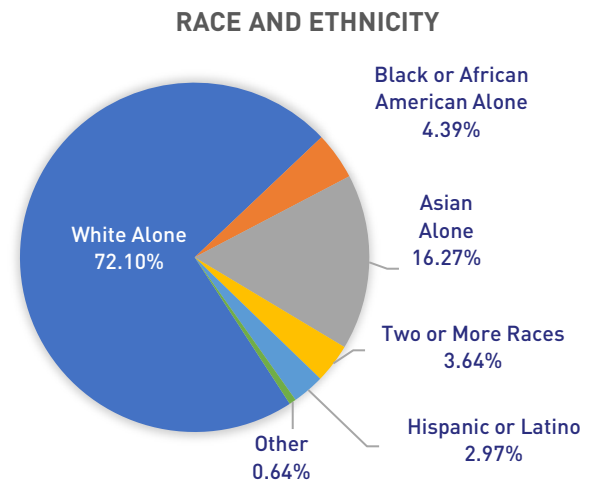
Mix of business by NAICS category. Source: US Census Bureau



## Highlights from the Customer Base

Burlington has a population of 27,650 and has grown 15% since 2010. The median age is 43.1 and there is an even distribution between those aged 25 to 64. Since 2016, Burlington's household median income has grown 7% and is estimated at \$118,721. This reflects Burlington's high proportion of college-educated residents (46%), proximity to Boston and to substantial employment in numerous key economic sectors.

Burlington's population is predominantly White (72.1%) followed by Asian (16.27%), Black (4.39%) and mixed race (3.64%). The Asian population is notable compared with other Boston suburbs.



## Administrative Capacity





The town has an economic development director whose mission includes promoting additional investment in the Town Center. In addition, local property owners in the Town Center and volunteer residents are looking to promote additional business activity. More staff resources may be needed to implement projects.

Local businesses collaborate on projects but don't have a formal business association. Having a formal organization can help with project implementation.

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## Project Recommendations

# Reconstruct the Cambridge Street Corridor and the Winn St./Terry Ave. intersection based on Complete Streets Principles

Category	 Public Realm
Location	Cambridge Street Corridor and intersection with Winn Street and Terry Avenue, Burlington
Origin	Town of Burlington, Nelson\Nygaard
Budget	 High Budget (\$200,000+)
Timeframe	 Short Term (less than 5 years)
Risk	 Medium Risk
Key Performance Indicators	Pedestrian volumes, crash data, pedestrian and vehicle delays
Partners & Resources	Town of Burlington Public Works, MassDOT Resources: Local funds, <a href="#">MassWorks Infrastructure Program</a> , <a href="#">Economic Adjustment Assistance</a> , Federal Transportation Improvement Program



Cambridge Street Cross section. Source: Nearmap



## Diagnostic

Burlington Town Center is primarily situated along Cambridge Street (State Route 3A) a MassDOT-owned roadway. North of Winn Street, there are two wide travel lanes, sidewalks on both sides with some interruptions, and no bicycle accommodations. MassDOT has plans to repave the roadway and is looking to incorporate bicycle accommodations where feasible. Where bicycle lanes are not installed, the cross-section will remain excessively wide encouraging higher travel speeds.

### Winn Street/Terry Avenue Intersection

The Winn/Terry/Cambridge intersection is a candidate for improvements to enhance safety. Consulting firm Howard Stein Hudson conducted a road safety audit (RSA) for MassDOT in December 2020. The intersection is a high-crash cluster location within MassDOT's Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP). The report identified the following seven categories of safety considerations:

1. Insufficient pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
2. Turning conflicts within the intersection
3. Antiquated intersection geometry
4. Inefficient traffic signal phasing and timing
5. Excessively wide curb cuts
6. Outdated signal equipment
7. Bus stops too closely spaced

For each category, the report suggests interventions that would require redesign and reconstruction of the intersection

The report also references a proposed resurfacing the Cambridge Street (Route 3A) corridor, a MassDOT maintenance project. Construction is slated for Spring 2022. MassDOT's project manager has indicated that pavement markings within the LRRP study area will strive to accommodate bicycles where feasible. This project will not address other needs along the corridor, however, including:

- Inconsistent cross sections (beyond those noted in the RSA)
- Excessively wide driveway openings, including some that serve shopping centers
- Bus stops lacking amenities
- Inconsistent sidewalks including varying widths and lack of separation from motor vehicles



*Aerial View of Terry/Wynn/Cambridge intersection. Photo Credit: Howard Stein Hudson*



*Aerial View of Cambridge Street near Skilton Lane. Photo Credit: Nearmap*

## Process

The process for implementing roadway improvement projects on MassDOT-owned roadways is well prescribed. MassDOT's 2006 Project Development and Design [Guide](#) (see figure at right) outlines the formal steps required. Since the publication of the design guide, the Commonwealth has developed and implemented a Complete Streets program (Burlington is a participant and funding recipient) and is now conducting pilot studies on road diets on state-owned roads.

For roads that MassDOT owns and controls, it is not uncommon for maintenance programs such as the proposed repaving of Cambridge Street to make limited improvements. To advance projects such as the road diet [pilot](#) on Route 28 in Reading (see figure at right), funding is necessary to advance concepts through the initial planning process and even more funding is needed to undertake construction.

For the Winn Street/Terry Avenue intersection with Cambridge Street, the Road Safety Audit completed in December 2020 outlines specific strategies to improve safety and walkability. The Town may wish to first pursue the recommended improvements at this location first while advancing proposals for the Cambridge Street corridor.

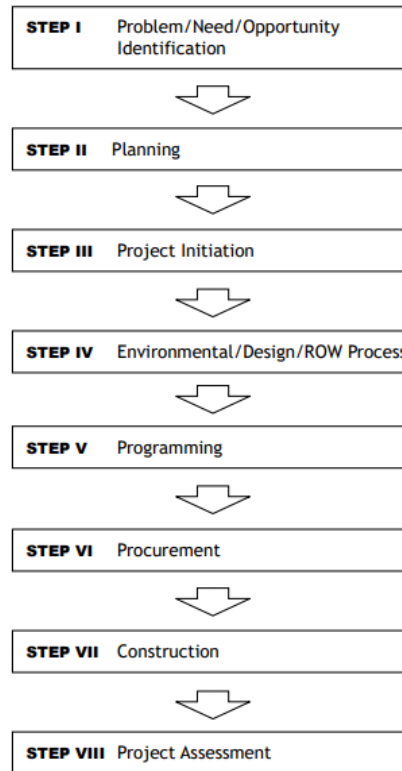
Town officials should meet with representatives from MassDOT District 4 to discuss MassDOT's plans for Cambridge Street, inquire about opportunities for other improvements, and discuss the Winn/Terry intersection. This interaction should lead to the identification of approximate construction costs, which is critical for determining how much funding is needed for planning and design and for seeking that funding through the federal Transportation Improvement Program ([TIP](#)).

If the Town currently works with an on-call roadway design consultant, their input will help to navigate this process. Many municipalities use local resources to fund the design process, and this may be necessary to advance the improvement projects.



*MassDOT Road Diet Pilot on State Route 28 Reading. Credit: Google*

### PROCESS







### OUTCOMES

1. Project Need Form (PNF)
2. Project Planning Report (If necessary)
3. Project Initiation Form (PIF)
3. Identification of Appropriate Funding
3. Definition of Appropriate Next Steps
3. Project Review Committee Action
4. Plans, Specs and Estimates (PS&E)
4. Environmental Studies and Permits
4. Right-of-Way Plans
4. Permits
5. Regional and State TIP
5. Programming of Funds
6. Construction Bids and Contractor Selection
7. Built Project

*Project Development Process: Source [MassDOT](#)*

# Develop Implementable Sign Bylaws to Support Economic Development

Category	 Private Realm
Location	Study Area
Origin	Town of Burlington, Sign Bylaw Committee
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000) if the town decides to fund a sign improvement grant program.
Timeframe	 Short Term: Bylaw update intended to be brought up in Town Meeting in January 2022. A sign improvement program could be a concentrated effort of 1-3 years or could run longer, if applied to other parts of Burlington
Risk	 Low Risk – This risk could be mitigated with an education campaign prior to Town Meeting to explain what a sign code is and how it would work.
Key Performance Indicators	Creation of the program; No. of signs improved within a specific timeframe; Maintenance of the improvements after 4 years; Increase in visitors; Increase in sales at the property/business improved and within the target area; Ability to extend the program to other commercial areas within the municipality (if appropriate); No. of local businesses remaining after 4 years
Partners & Resources	Municipal planning and economic development staff, building inspector, permitting boards, newly created business association (if established)
Sources of Funding	<p>In addition to municipal funds, the following are appropriate sources. See Appendix table for more information.</p> <p><b>Economic Adjustment Assistance through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).</b> Funds should cover assistance with the design of sign improvements when tied to a specific impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Creating or revising the sign code may be linked to a façade/storefront improvement program.</p> <p><b>Commonwealth of Massachusetts One Stop for Growth:</b> All communities are eligible to apply. Some funding is reserved for non-entitlement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) communities. MDI staff will assign a consultant to assist with the technical services, which would include developing the sign code. The MDI grant may be sufficient for the full project in Burlington unless a more extensive set of illustrations or a significant public engagement process is included.</p> <p><b>MA EOE Community Planning Grants:</b> A Community Planning Grant may be used for zoning review and updates, which could include the sign code if it is part of the municipality's zoning bylaws or ordinance.</p> <p><b>District Local Technical Assistance Grant:</b> Funds for this program are allocated to regional planning agencies, which for Burlington is MAPC. Funds may be used for planning projects. MAPC will work directly with the town; a separate consultant is not usually required.</p>



## Diagnostic

Most businesses understand that signage is critical to their business. However, many either go overboard and provide too many signs or do not update their signage when it deteriorates. Outdated signs may suggest that a business is no longer in operation. Signs in disrepair may be dangerous or may contribute to a perception that a business area is not safe, discouraging potential customers. Updating a sign code and combining the update with financial assistance to small businesses to bring their signs into compliance can help address negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Challenges include:

- A community's sign code is inconsistent with current best practices, new sign technology, or legal decisions related to signage regulations (ex. Reed v. Town of Gilbert).
- The approval process is perceived as onerous and/or arbitrary, especially for a small business.
- Enforcement has become an issue and/or sign permits are regularly approved with waivers.
- Sign code decisions are regularly appealed

The focus should be on working with businesses to improve their understanding of how signage processes work and offering technical assistance and/or implementation support to bring their signs up to the new standard.

The highest risk would be if the design guidelines become part of the zoning bylaws and municipal regulations have been controversial in the community. In general, experienced developers and builders like the predictability of a clear set of design guidelines that is consistently applied. Property owners with less development experience are likely to have more concerns.

A second risk is creating a sign code that is too restrictive. This sends a negative message to those who are considering investing or reinvesting in the Town Center. Overly subjective design guidelines can lead to uncertainty about how the guidelines might be applied.



Examples of existing business signage in Burlington Town Center.  
Photo Credit: Nelson\Nygaard

## Action Item

Key actions include the following:

- Understand why the sign code should be created/updated/replaced. What are the areas of greatest concern?
- Decide whether this effort requires outside expertise.
- Decide which funding source is appropriate and, if a grant program, apply for funds.
- Engage a consultant through traditional procurement channels.
- Identify the people/organizations who need to be part of this process.
- Develop an appropriate engagement and review/approval process.
- Once the code has been approved, consider a public education program to inform people on a regular basis about the code and its implications. Key targets for this campaign include business and property owners and commercial real estate brokers.
- Consider aligning the enforcement process with the new regulations to ensure the effort leads to the anticipated improvements.

Complimentary to developing a new sign code, the following actions should be completed:

- Hire someone (or find a volunteer) who can help with illustrations for the draft code.
- Hire someone (or find a volunteer) who can help with a pre-Town Meeting education campaign.
- Develop a post-approval education campaign to inform property and business owners and commercial brokers about the new rules.
- If the Town decides to pursue a sign improvement program, develop the program (see sheet for details) and work with property/business owners to take advantage of the program.

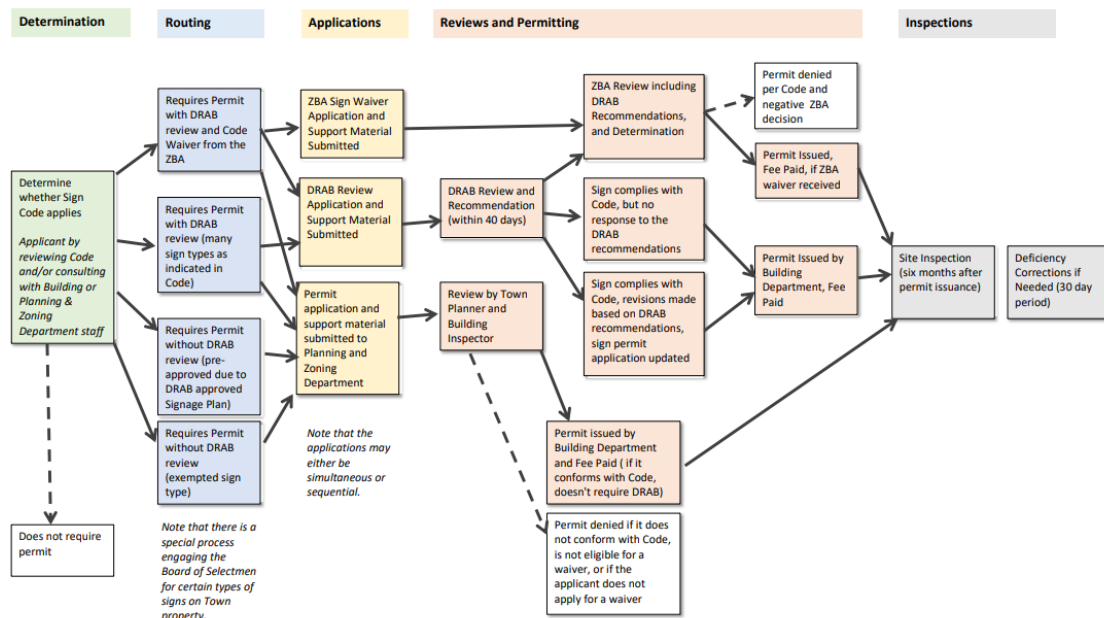


*Local retail signage. Source: Nelson\Nygaard*

## Process

- The timeframe will vary depending on whether the municipality has a city form of government or requires Town Meeting to approve bylaw changes. From the kick-off to entering the municipal approval process, the project should take 8-12 months.
- Months 1-2: Review existing code; develop sign inventory; interview municipal staff, boards with approval responsibility, former applicants, local land use lawyers, others with relevant experience and concerns.
- Months 3-4: Research appropriate precedents; develop public outreach/engagement program.
- Months 5-7: Engage with business/property owners and public on options and concerns; develop draft code; develop illustrations and decide whether illustrations are part of code or a separate document. Consider meetings with appropriate boards to introduce the draft code and receive feedback.
- Months 8-9: Revise the code to its final draft prior to the municipal approval process. Publicize the final draft prior to City Council/Town Meeting review and approval.

Dedham Sign Review and Permit Approval Process



Dedham Sign Review and Permit Approval Process. Source: Town of Dedham, Innes Associates, Harriman, and Steven Cecil Design & Planning





Lenox



Marblehead



Methuen

## Develop or update the municipality's sign code.



Provided by SME Consultant

Emily Keys Innes, AICP, LEED AP ND, Innes Associates Ltd.

Location

Any downtown, commercial corridor, or village center.

Origin	Innes Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Rapid Recovery Program sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts	
Budget	 Low (less than \$50,000)	 Medium (\$50,000-\$200,000)
Timeframe	 Short Term (1-5 years)	
Risk	 Medium	
Budget: Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs will include the consultant's time and legal review by the municipality's counsel.</li> <li>The range for the consultant's time is between \$35,000-\$60,000, depending on the level of public engagement and how illustrative the code is. Review by municipal counsel may be covered by the municipal on-call agreement or may need to be added to the cost of the project.</li> </ul>	

## Budget: Sources

In addition to municipal funds, the following are appropriate sources:

### American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Assistance to small businesses includes loans, grants, in-kind assistance, technical assistance, or other services. These funds should cover assistance with the design of façade, storefront, or site improvements when tied to a specific impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Creating or revising the sign code may be linked to a façade/storefront improvement program. Possible impacts are addressed in the sections on **Key Performance Indicators** and **Diagnostic**.

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts One Stop for Growth Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (project limit \$25,000) Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

All communities are eligible to apply. Some of the funding for this program is reserved for non-entitlement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) communities. MDI staff will assign a consultant to assist the community with the technical services, which would include developing the sign code. The MDI grant may be sufficient for the full project for a smaller community unless the community is looking for a more extensive set of illustrations or a significant public engagement process. A larger community may need additional funding.

### Community Planning Grants (project limit \$25,000-\$75,000) Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

A Community Planning Grant may be used for Zoning Review and Updates, which could include the sign code if it is part of the municipality's zoning bylaws or ordinance. All Massachusetts communities are eligible to apply for this grant.

### District Local Technical Assistance Grant Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) and DHCD

Funds for this program are allocated to the regional planning agencies. These funds may be used for planning projects. Each RPA has a different focus on how these funds may be used to meet the state's funding goals.

All municipalities are eligible to apply directly to their RPA. The RPA will work with the municipality on the program; a separate consultant is not usually required.

## Diagnostic

Updating a sign code and combining the update with financial assistance to small businesses to bring their signs into compliance can help address negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Signs are critical information to identify active businesses to customers. Outdated signs may suggest that a business is no longer in operation. Signs in disrepair may be dangerous or may contribute to a perception that a business area is not safe, discouraging potential customers.

Challenges across municipalities include the following:

- Existing signage is outdated, inconsistent, or in disrepair.
- The sign code is inconsistent with current best practices, new sign technology, or legal decisions related to signage regulations (ex. Reed v. Town of Gilbert).
- The approval process is perceived as onerous and/or arbitrary, especially for a small business.
- Enforcement has become an issue and/or sign permits are regularly approved with waivers.
- Sign code decisions are regularly appealed.

<p>Risk: Explanation</p>	<p>The risk for this project is in part dependent on the form of government and whether the design guidelines will be an advisory document or incorporated into the zoning bylaw/ordinance as specific standards.</p> <p>The highest risk would be a Town form of government in which the design guidelines become part of the zoning bylaws and municipal regulations have been controversial in the community.</p> <p>In general, experienced developers and builders like the predictability of a clear set of design guidelines which is consistently applied by a municipality. Property owners with less development experience are likely to have more concerns.</p> <p>A second risk category is creating a sign code that is too restrictive. This sends a negative message to those who are considering investing in the community. Guidelines for sign design that are too subjective send a similar negative message in that applicants cannot be certain as to how the guidelines will apply to them.</p>
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p>	<p>Sign codes are important for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visibility of businesses who wish to attract customers/clients.</li> <li>• Pedestrian and vehicular safety (reduce distractions).</li> <li>• Community aesthetics.</li> <li>• Reduction in light pollution.</li> </ul> <p>KPI for this project could include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful adoption of the new/updated code.</li> <li>• Compliance of code with legal precedents.</li> <li>• Implementation of streamlined process for approvals.</li> <li>• Number of noncomplying/ nonconforming signs replaced.</li> </ul> <p>If this project is accompanied by a façade/storefront improvement project, additional KPI related to the numbers of signs upgraded to meet the new code could be added. Without such a program, new applications will be dependent on changes in tenants or on enforcement of noncomplying/ nonconforming signs.</p>
<p>Partners &amp; Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal staff (planning and economic development, building and/or zoning inspector)</li> <li>• Municipal boards (City Council/Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Design Review Board, Economic Development Committee)</li> <li>• Property/business owners</li> <li>• Downtown organizations</li> </ul>

<p>Action Item</p>	<p>Key actions include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand why the sign code should be created/updated/replaced. What are the areas of greatest concern?</li> <li>• Decide whether this is a project that can be done in-house or requires a consultant with appropriate expertise.</li> <li>• Decide which funding source is appropriate and, if the source is a grant program, apply for funds.</li> <li>• If a consultant is deemed appropriate, go through the Commonwealth's procurement process (unless the grant program has an on-call consultant).</li> <li>• Identify the people/organizations who need to be part of this process.</li> <li>• Develop an engagement process appropriate for the municipality and the required approval process.</li> <li>• Once the code has been approved, consider a public education program to inform people on a regular basis about the code and its implications. Key targets for this campaign include business and property owners and commercial real estate brokers.</li> <li>• Consider aligning the enforcement process with the new regulations to ensure the effort leads to the anticipated improvements.</li> </ul>
<p>Process</p>	<p>The timeframe will vary depending on whether the municipality has a city form of government or requires Town Meeting to approve bylaw changes. From the kick-off to entering the municipal approval process, the project should take 8-12 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Months 1-2:</b> Review existing code; develop sign inventory; interview municipal staff, boards with approval responsibility, former applicants, local land use lawyers, others with relevant experience and concerns.</li> <li>• <b>Months 3-4:</b> Research appropriate precedents; develop public outreach/engagement program.</li> <li>• <b>Months 5-7:</b> Engage with business/property owners and public on options and concerns; develop draft code; develop illustrations and decide whether illustrations are part of code or a separate document. Consider meetings with appropriate boards to introduce the draft code and receive feedback.</li> <li>• <b>Months 8-9:</b> Revise the code to its final draft prior to the municipal approval process. Publicize the final draft prior to City Council/Town Meeting review and approval.</li> </ul>



## Example 1: Sign Code Bylaw Study

Dedham, Massachusetts

### Town Contact

Jeremy Rosenberger

Town Planner

[jrosenberger@dedham-ma.gov](mailto:jrosenberger@dedham-ma.gov)

### Consultant

Innes Associates Ltd., Harriman, and Steven Cecil Design & Planning

### Cost

<\$50,000

### Status

Draft code will go to Town Meeting in Fall 2021.

### Characteristics

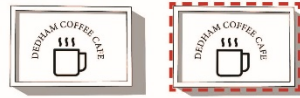
- Sign Code is part of the General Bylaws.
- Code is text-based and will be hosted on eCode
- Illustrations are in a separate document.

## Illustrations of Selected Sign Standards in the Dedham Signage Code

To assist in understanding some of the specific standards within the Dedham Signage Code, these illustrations indicate how typical circumstances may be applied. As illustrations, they are not intended to replace or alter the design standards or their interpretation; in every instance, the text of the Signage Code and its interpretation by the Town will govern reviews and approvals.

1. Calculating the Area of Individual Signs
2. Calculating the Maximum Area for Window Signs
3. Calculating the Maximum Sign Area: Length of Principal Facades along Streets
4. Calculating the Maximum Sign Area: Length of Tertiary Frontages along Parking Areas or Private Ways
5. Identifying and Using Sign Bands
6. Awning Sign Area Standards
7. Incorporating Wall Signs within Parapets and Facade Architecture
8. Awnings: Exempt Signs

### 1. CALCULATING THE AREA OF INDIVIDUAL SIGNS



For signs with borders or backing surface integral to the sign, the sign area is calculated by including them.

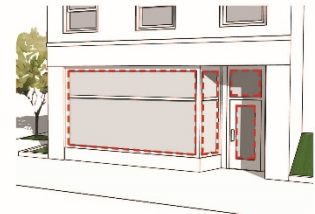
**Dedham Coffee Cafe**

For signs with individual letters, the calculation is based on an outline that encompasses them.



For complex sign shapes, the sign area is calculated by adding together the areas of simple geometries that encompass the sign text and graphics.

### 2. CALCULATING THE MAXIMUM AREA FOR WINDOW SIGNS



The maximum area of window signs may not exceed 25% of the total window and door glazing area of a business or establishment. The total window area is the sum of the glazing of the components of a storefront.

For any business or establishment and as part of this maximum sign area, one window sign may consist of a Digital Display Sign or Edge Lit Sign up to a maximum area of 2 square feet, or 1 Neon-Type Sign with a maximum area of 6 square feet.

Courtesy of the Town of Dedham, Innes Associates, Harriman, and Steven Cecil Design & Planning

## Example 2: Sign Regulations Update

Arlington, Massachusetts

### Town Contact

Jenny Raitt

Director

Department of Planning and Community Development

[jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us)

### Consultant

Lisa Wise Consulting, San Luis Obispo, CA

### Cost

<\$50,000

### Status

Bylaw adopted by Town Meeting in 2019.

### Characteristics

- Sign Code is part of the Zoning Bylaws.
- Code is primarily text-based but includes illustrations.
- The Zoning Bylaws are provided in a stand-alone PDF.

### 6-10 / STANDARDS

D. Standards for All Permanent Building-Mounted Sign Types. The following sign types are allowed, subject to the criteria listed under each sign type.

- (1) Awning Sign. Awning signs must comply with the standards provided in the table below.

Awning Sign Standards	
Standard	Requirements
Sign Area <sup>1</sup>	1 sq. ft. of sign area per linear foot of awning width.
Mounting Height	Min. of 8 ft. from the bottom of the awning to the sidewalk.
Sign Placement	Only above the doors and windows of the ground or second floor of a building. Must not project above, below, or beyond the edges of the face of the building wall or architectural element on which it is located. Sign width shall not be greater than 60% of the width of the awning face or valance or which it is displayed.
Setback from back of curb	Min. 2 ft.
Illumination	Non-Illuminated or Illumination under the awning.
Permitting	Sign permit required. See Section 6.2.2(A).
End Notes: <sup>1</sup> If an awning is placed on multiple store fronts, each business is allowed signage no greater than 60% of the width of the store front.	



This diagram is included for illustrative purposes only. It is not part of the Arlington Zoning Bylaw.

- (2) Bracket Sign. Bracket signs must comply with the standards provided in the table below.

Bracket Sign Standards	
Standard	Requirements
Number of Signs	Max. 1 per business.
Sign Area	Max. 12 sq. ft.
Mounting Height	Min. of 8 ft. from the bottom of the sign to the sidewalk. Must be mounted perpendicular to the building face or corner of the building.
Sign Placement	If mounted below the underside of a walkway or overhead structure, must not extend beyond the edge of the structure on which it is located.
Sign Projection	Max. 2 feet from the building facade.
Illumination	Non-Illuminated or externally illuminated. See Section 6.2.4(C).
Permitting	Sign permit required. See Section 6.2.2(A).



This diagram is included for illustrative purposes only. It is not part of the Arlington Zoning Bylaw.

Town of Arlington Zoning Bylaw

Courtesy of the Town of Arlington and Lisa Wise Consulting

### Example 3: Sign Audit & Recommendations Report

Portland, Maine

#### City Contact

Christine Grimando, AICP  
Director, Planning & Urban  
Development Department  
[cdg@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:cdg@portlandmaine.gov)

#### Consultant

ReCode and Lisa Wise Consulting, Inc.

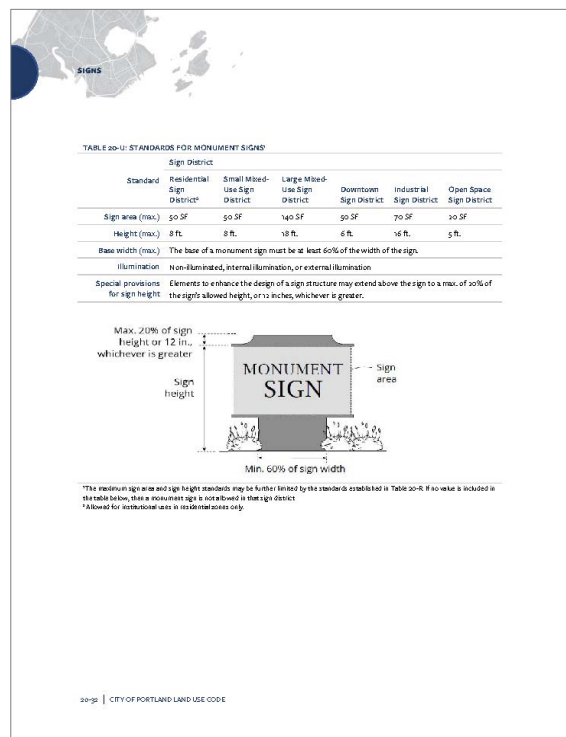
#### Cost

\$50,000

#### Characteristics

- Sign Code is part of the Zoning Bylaws.
- Code is primarily text-based but includes illustrations.
- The Zoning Bylaws are provided in a stand-alone PDF.

#### Selected Resources



Courtesy of the Town of Dedham and Gamble Associates

Signage Foundation, Inc. ([the signagefoundation.org](http://www.signagefoundation.org)) has a great research library of articles. Some of the links are broken, but you may be able to search for the articles on another search engine.

These non-Massachusetts model sign codes are helpful but should be reviewed by municipal counsel first to make sure the provisions are compatible with Massachusetts General Laws.

- The Pennsylvania chapter of the APA has a model sign code. The current link is <https://planningpa.org/wp-content/uploads/Model-Sign-Plan-2.pdf>
- Also in Pennsylvania is the Model Sign Ordinance from the Montgomery County Planning Commission (Pennsylvania), 2014. The current link is <http://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/7070>
- Scenic Michigan produced the Michigan Sign Guidebook: The Local Planning and Regulation of Signs. The second edition, published in 2021, is available here: <https://scenicmichigan.org/sign-regulation-guidebook/>

# Create a Comprehensive Marketing Strategy with Identity and Branding

Category	 Revenue/Sales
Location	Study Area
Origin	Town of Burlington, Harriman/Innes Associates Placemaking Project, Nelson\Nygaard
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000) - with brand deployment
Timeframe	 Short Term (within 1 year)
Risk	 Low Risk – stakeholders seek improved identity and brand for Town Center
Key Performance Indicators	Social media tags, total No. of survey responses, No. of stakeholder groups engaged, No. of district banners/signs installed, consistency of logos in business marketing
Partners & Resources	Partners: Town staff, Select Board, Town Meeting, Property and Business Owners Resources: Local funds, <a href="#">Hometown Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">ARPA Economic Adjustment Assistance</a> , <a href="#">District Local Technical Assistance</a> . See Appendix table.



Worcester's Innovation District. Source: Silbert Perkins Design

## Diagnostic

A consistent visual identity for Burlington Town Center can help create a sense of coherence and community that maximizes the value of marketing – customers think about Burlington Town Center as a whole, rather than a collection of individual businesses.

Starting simple with a unified color scheme, font, or other common visual identity can set the district on the right path before building support and funding for a large-scale branding effort with slogans and proper signage or marketing campaigns.

Balance is needed between engaging stakeholders and being seen as legitimate with a need to maintain momentum. A simple logo and color scheme can be used more easily across different media and sizes than a complex visual identity.

A long-term branding/ visioning effort is best started with simple, easy wins that help get stakeholders on board.

Hire a designer if funds are available. If not, will art or marketing students be willing or available to partner on a project? Alternatively, websites like Fivver or Upwork can be a source of freelance designers, but due diligence on quality assurance is necessary.

## Action Item

### *Information Gathering*

- Begin with prior surveys completed for the placemaking study and the LRRP to summarize how participants feel about the area to lead to a relevant brand identity. Identify and convene stakeholders to discuss responses and build consensus around the project.

### *Market Analysis*

- Balance the need to have merchants feel heard and engaged with the need to keep forward momentum. Take advantage of this process to identify merchants who can be a part of future organizing.

### *Peer Research*

- Evaluate neighboring or peer municipalities' brand identities for ideas and preferred elements.



*Visit Erie Brand. Source: Perch Advisors and [website](#).*

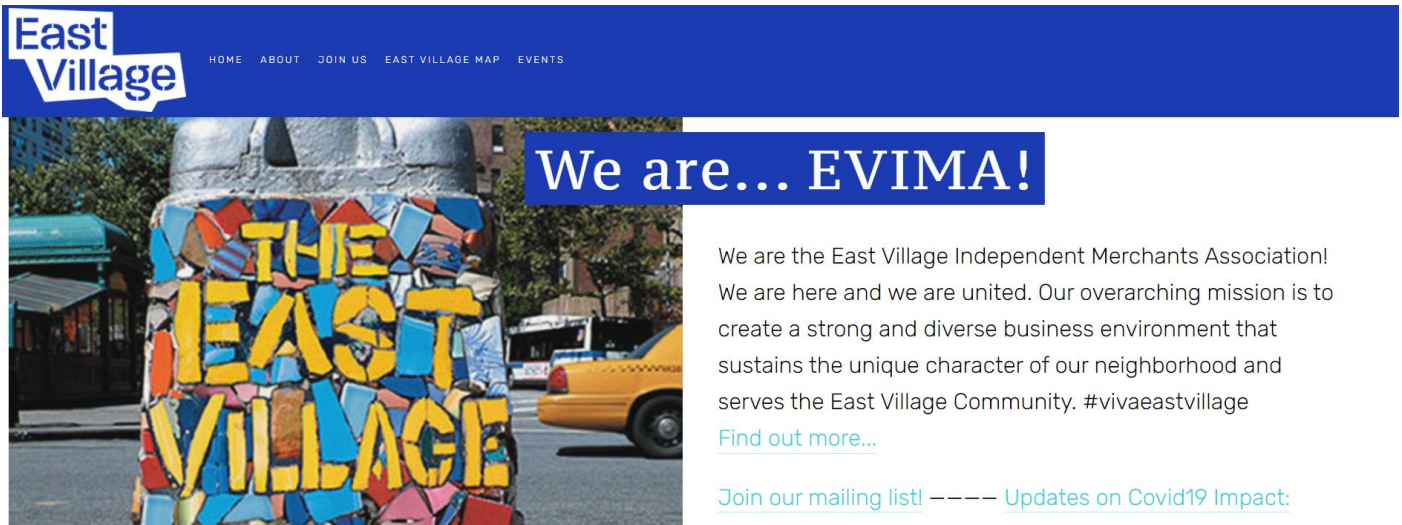


### *Create Branding Campaign*

- Identify key imagery and tone based on resident/visitor engagement and asset identification.
- Work with designer/branding agency to create a few draft options of a logo, color scheme, and font.
- Create a short list of possible options and circulate for feedback/voting. Set a timeline for responses.
- Identify assets and placement opportunities
  - Physical signage -- banners, trash can wraps
  - Digital
  - Social media

### *Create Outreach Strategy + Templates for Branding*

- A dynamic visual brand is only effective if it reaches its target audience. Give consideration for how many ways to use the logo/brand and whether they require different layouts (i.e., a street banner vs. a social media icon).
- Identify all potential uses of the branding (signs, banners, swag/giveaways, website, etc.) to ensure needed deliverables.
- Identify assets and placement opportunities in the district (such as signs or posters in windows)
- Create a digital media toolkit with files that can be downloaded for use on social media, on posters, in newsletters, etc.
- Create templates of needed materials with branding -posters/flyers, letterheads, business cards, etc. to ensure consistent use.
- Update all social media to use correct colors & logos. Use across website.



*Example Branding for East Village, New York; Source Perch Advisor, [EVIMA website](#)*

## Process

### Information Gathering

- Create a database of all businesses and property owners along the corridor, with contact information. Consider if all businesses or just public-facing businesses are included.
- Create a unified guide for categorizing businesses. Consider who has access to the database and how frequently it should be updated.
- Consider public-facing uses for information on flyers, digital directory, ads, etc.

### Social Media Presence

- Establishing an online presence through social media channels dedicated to the whole commercial corridor will allow for communication directly to consumers and area stakeholders.
- Determine best platforms for messaging and create accounts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn). Consider which platforms have the most use for visitors and which are already in use by area businesses. Aim for consistent account names across platforms. Claim related or similar handles to avoid confusion.
- Create a plan and calendar for posting content regularly. Decide who manages the account and have a clear reason for the choice. Engage all businesses equally to avoid feelings of favoritism.
- Follow relevant accounts (area businesses, media outlets, local food bloggers, tourism agencies, cultural institutions, local sports teams, etc.) and follow accounts that follow you.
- Explore and select a scheduling tool like [hootsuite](#), [buffer](#), or [contentcal](#) to consolidate accounts and enable scheduling of future posts. Service typically costs \$15-30/month.
- Follow all district merchants and repost when appropriate.
- Set up auto-reposting for specific hashtags. (e.g., [#shopburlingtonTownCenter](#))

### Create Town Center District Website

- A website establishes the legitimacy of an organization, serves as a key point of contact with the public, and can function as a centralized source of information. Start simple and use social media plug-ins to keep the site updated with content.
- Purchase relevant and potentially related domains through a site like [godaddy](#) or [bluehost](#).
- Use a website template like [squarespace](#) or [wix](#) to create a simple 2-3 page website with social feed plugins, general background information, and links out to relevant websites.
- Share website with relevant agencies and partners to be linked on their website. Be sure to link those sites on your page.

### Create Turnkey, Short-term Marketing

- Consider how campaigns are promoted: on town website, in local paper, in email newsletter, on social media. Find a corporate partner who can underwrite incentivizing a purchase, [American Express provides marketing material for Shop Small Saturday](#), sports teams and cultural institutions may have tickets or other items you can request for giveaways.
- Take advantage of holidays and already-existing marketing opportunities (ex: Valentine's Day, Small Business Saturday). Create a calendar of events to create content about and build an outreach plan around it.
- Consider promoting groups of businesses in conjunction with national "days" (aka "national ice cream day," "national coffee day," etc.)
- Pair up businesses to co-brand, (aka "swing by after your workout at Orange Theory for 10% off a smoothie")
- Use regular hashtags to promote the district ([#shopburlington](#)) and/or structure recurring content ([#foodiefriday](#))
- Gather info from businesses for interviews, spotlights, and profiles.
- Create an email account where businesses can submit information to be published
- Create a list of emails to local publications and email them biweekly or monthly about upcoming events. Include larger regional outlets, as well.

### Create and Distribute Collateral (Brochures/Maps)

- Print collateral is a simple and well-established means of raising awareness and spreading information about the district. Starting with smaller runs will help information be less stale over time. Partner with wayfinding strategy to include the district map.
- Use Burlington Town Center brand identity and business database to develop a brochure or other marketing asset advertising local businesses. Can be sorted by business type (places to eat, places to stay, etc.).
- Include a calendar of local events.
- Consider selling ad space or charging businesses for highlighted listings. Balance the need to pay for this project against the need to engage businesses and not have them feel like this is cost. Ad sales may have to wait for future printings. Make sure you have a source of funds before you start. Selling ads will require a fiscal sponsor to accept the money.
- Distribute collateral at businesses and other locations around the district.
- Identify other areas beyond the district where you can place collateral. Consider the scope of physical distribution and locations that have better visibility than others.



Map for Uptown Charlotte, NC. Source Perch Advisors, Uptown Charlotte [website](#)



# Coordinated Social Media Marketing



**REVENUES  
& SALES**

Provided by SME Consultant

Cepheid Solutions

Location

Online

Origin	If you JUST build it, they will NOT come! Our Marketplace project benefits from a coordinated communications campaign to increase visibility and awareness. However, these tools and strategies will benefit any community project or initiative.
Budget	 <p>The human assets are probably already in place for most communities. The new costs will involve training (and practice), a strategic guide, and the time dedicated to organize and implement an effective program.</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Training is an ongoing activity, but initial training can be completed in 30 days. Organizing and creating a strategic guide can be completed in 30 days, as well. Implementation is also an ongoing activity.</p>
Risk	 <p>There are few downside risks, except poor organization and implementation. Must be sensitive to messaging, opt-out, and privacy issues.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Message impressions, followers (media dependent), responses, reach
Partners & Resources	<p>Community administration, Departments of Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, Business Community, Sources of Training, the traditional media (Radio/TV/Newspapers)</p> <p>The strength of this project is not in creating a single powerful marketing group, but in leveraging the combined strength of many voices to create a unified and effective communication eco-system. So, more voices and more participation is better.</p>



<p><b>Diagnostic</b></p>	<p>In context to the Local-search eCommerce Marketplace project, the initial objective is to create awareness and engagement with the project. Going forward, the goal is to create a coordinated and integrated marketing effort that encourages shopping with the local retail community – both online and in-store.</p> <p>The three dimensions of success in this arena are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Skills competency – does each constituency understand the tools they have to work with, and is proficient in their use</li> <li>2.Activity and Deployment – are each of the tools fully put to use</li> <li>3.Integration and Coordination – are the different constituencies collaborating towards a common goal</li> </ol> <p>The final measure in effectiveness will be the change in Total Local Retail Sales. An effective program will see awareness and engagement with the marketplace.</p> <p>Beyond the Marketplace project, these tools and skills</p>
<p><b>Action Item</b></p>	<p>Initial planning session (1hr – one time)</p> <p>Training (ongoing – but i2.5 hour initial self-paced training course)</p> <p>Interview Stakeholder(s) (1hr – one time)</p> <p>Setup Social Media Accounts (3 hrs one time)</p> <p>Content Development (1-10 hrs monthly)</p> <p>Operate Program (4hrs monthly - assuming weekly posts)</p> <p>Planning &amp; Coordination (1 hr weekly)</p> <p>Program Reporting (1 hr monthly)</p>
<p><b>Process</b></p>	<p>Launching this project requires an initial planning session in which the constituency groups and their key spokesmen are identified, along with the initial timeline and objectives.</p> <p>Focus of activities for each group are identified and dates to complete initial training (ongoing training needs can be identified at 6 week point).</p> <p>Selection of a point person to coordinate.</p> <p>Establish weekly, monthly quarterly goals, and adjust accordingly.</p> <p>In the Marketplace project, two of the constituencies (The State Govt and Traditional Media) will not be actively involved. However, the coordinator can obtain editorial calendars, position papers, etc. that can be used by the other groups to coordinate with.</p>

# Rapid Website Development






Provided by SME Consultant

Cambridge Retail Advisors

Location

Boston, MA

Origin	Established in 2019, the Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative has piloted, vetted, and implemented its mission in partnership with Boston Main Streets Foundation, the City of Boston, and Citizens Bank. During the COVID-19 crisis we have quantified the significant impact of our program and are proud to promote the great diversity of participants.	
Budget		\$1,000-\$2,000 per site to design and build
Timeframe		1-2 weeks for a website to be designed and built depending on complexity
Risk		<p><u>Participant Limitations</u> – Project timelines are dependent on participant involvement. We use our screening process to make sure those chosen have the time and ability to commit.</p> <p><u>Language Barriers</u> – Language can present a challenge, but we have invested in translation services to keep our program available to businesses owners of different races and creeds.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Development time, online ordering/eCommerce integration, website traffic	
Partners & Resources	<p><u>Cambridge Retail Advisors</u> – Website design and development</p> <p><u>Erin of Boston Photography, LLC</u> – Photography services</p>	
Diagnostic	Websites are a pivotal gateway for businesses to reach out to the world, often serving as a centralized hub of activity. As part of this process, we provide expertise that has been refined through hundreds of builds. Our Rapid Website Development is honed and proven to deliver immediate digital transformation.	
Action	Our website development program provides a fast and effective web presence for retailers or restaurants. We alleviate the major pain points of including technological hurdles and costs, and in less than 2 weeks create a platform to promote from and sell on. Websites not only serve as the face of an organization, but they also serve as a pivot point for most operations including marketing and sales. We're proud to offer this service and have many success stories from small businesses throughout Boston.	

## Process

### Onboarding Phase

1. Explain the simple design process and benefits of the end website
2. Purchase the desired domain name
3. Set manageable goals with clear timeframes

### Discovery Phase

4. Gather content and determine look/feel for the website
5. Collect media such as photos and video *(Schedule photographer if required)*
6. Link Social Media *(if applicable)*
7. Link online selling platforms *(if applicable)*

### Review/Finalization Phase

8. Review website with business owner prior to publishing live
9. Publish site and encourage business owner to incorporate their new website into their marketing plan
10. Handoff website to business owner and encourage frequent edits!

# Improve Pedestrian and Motorist Wayfinding

Category	 Public Realm
Location	Study Area, focused on Cambridge Street
Origin	Nelson\Nygaard, Town of Burlington
Budget	 High Budget (greater than \$200,000)
Timeframe	 Short Term (less than 5 years)
Risk	 Low Risk – previous studies indicate need to improve visibility of Town Center destinations for drivers and pedestrians. Stakeholder engagement and coordination of responsibilities between town departments is critical, as well as coordination along Cambridge Street (SR-3).
Key Performance Indicators	Installation of wayfinding signage, increased foot traffic to local businesses
Partners & Resources	Partners: Town staff, Select Board, Town Meeting, Property and Business Owners Resources: Local funds, <a href="#">Hometown Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">ARPA Economic Adjustment Assistance</a> , <a href="#">District Local Technical Assistance</a> . See Appendix table.



Typical motorist view on Cambridge Street. Source: Nelson\Nygaard



## Diagnostic

Burlington Town Center has a variety of diverse businesses ranging from local restaurants and services to larger retail, including a bookstore and supermarket chain. While these establishments are well-known to residents, visitors driving along Cambridge Street may not realize they are passing through a town center or know what small businesses are available.

There is an opportunity to develop a pedestrian and vehicle wayfinding system to overcome the following challenges to elevating the town center retail area:

- Shops are set back from the street and not easily visible to drivers
- Retail segmented across a series of linear shopping areas each with surface parking lots, limiting pedestrian connectivity and a sense of place
- Lack of clear sense of arrival or identity in the town center
- Shopping areas along Cambridge Street between Wynn Street and Kinney Avenue feel disconnected from Simonds Park and the Town Common to the south

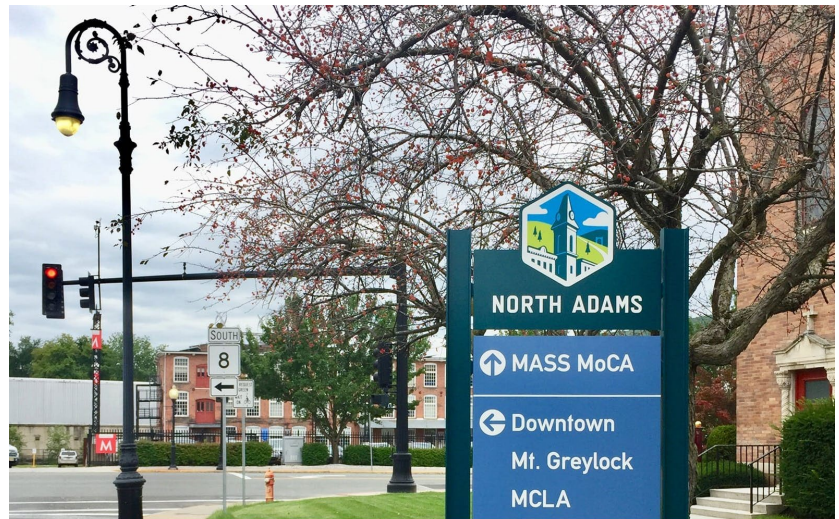
## Action Items

Develop a pedestrian and vehicle wayfinding system that includes the following:

- Town Center gateway identification from the north, south, and east
- Town Center banners that extend from the retail area south to Simonds Park and Burlington Town Hall
- Directional signs to and from key destinations including the local retail area (Winn to Kinney) Simonds Park, Town Hall, Town Common, Burlington Public Library, parking, etc.
- Possible directional signage south along Winn Street and Cambridge Street to capture motorists exiting from 128/I-95
- Pedestrian signage to include walk time or distance
- Consideration of additional signs along pedestrian paths next to retail storefronts where walkways are present encourage walking between shopping areas and to identify local businesses
- Directory signs should be easy to update as local businesses change, with a plan in place for maintenance responsibilities
- Leverage the new Burlington Town Center brand identity (see prior project description)



*Retail often set back or hidden from Cambridge Street. Source: Google*



*North Adams brand identity and wayfinding. Source: Stoltz Design*

## Process

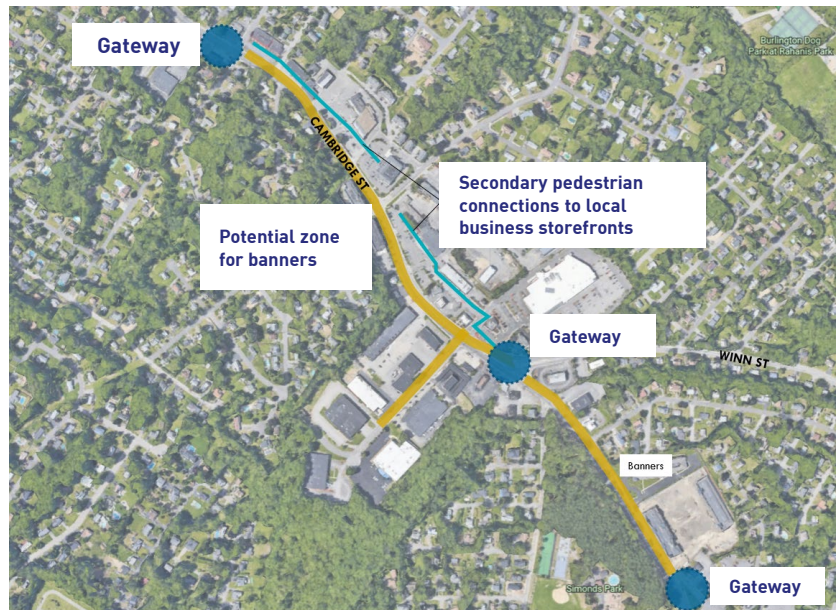
Town of Burlington to issue an RFP to develop a wayfinding system to include:

- Audit of existing signage
- Establishment of clear wayfinding goals and objectives, and agreement on town center and project boundaries
- User identification and journey mapping
- A family of wayfinding sign types
- Key destinations to be included in the sign program
- A sign location plan
- A signage message schedule with consistent nomenclature
- Conceptual and final sign design concepts
- Materials and mounting recommendations
- A design intent bid package that can be issued to signage fabricators for pricing and installation
- Sign fabrication and installation oversight (review shop drawings, answer RFIs, develop punch lists, etc.)

In advance or in coordination with this work, the town should establish a brand identity led by a graphic design and/or wayfinding firm, working with local community stakeholders. (See prior project) This should include creating clear design standards and guidelines for colors, fonts and graphics that can be leveraged for the signage program.

Bid package to sign fabricators should include developing and installing prototype signage at one or two locations before rollout of the full system.

Develop an agreement outlining who will be responsible for installation, maintenance and periodic updating of sign system.



Conceptual opportunities for wayfinding and placemaking. Source: Nelson\Nygaard



Conceptual family of wayfinding signs. Source: Nelson\Nygaard





# Integrate Brand and Art into your Wayfinding System

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Provided by SME Consultant

Selbert Perkins Design

Location

Worcester, MA

# Integrate Brand and Art into your Wayfinding System



Provided by SME Consultant

Selbert Perkins Design

Location

Worcester, MA

Origin	City of Worcester, MA
Budget	 High Budget (\$200k+) - with full build-out
Timeframe	 Medium Term (5-10 years)
Risk	 Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators	Ownership and longevity of brand/system, amount of development/investment
Partners & Resources	Mayors, City Planning Departments, Marketing & Communications Departments
Diagnostic	<p>SPD created a unified brand identity and wayfinding master plan for the City of Worcester, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City-wide Logo</li><li>• District Identity</li><li>• Storytelling and Interpretive Elements</li><li>• Signage Design</li><li>• Art Opportunities</li></ul> <p>SPD collaborated with the project team to increase awareness and tourism, and to improve the overall image of the City by creating an iconic brand and functional wayfinding system for visitors and residents.</p>



## Diagnostic (continued)

As a large City, it was important to create consistency but also provide distinctions between districts to help people navigate and understand the unique character and stories of each area.

The brand reflects the colors of each district and creates a scalable kit-of-parts still in use some 15 years later. Worcester implemented a sampling of signs and landmarks to raise capital for the larger system, which is being installed now.

## Action Item

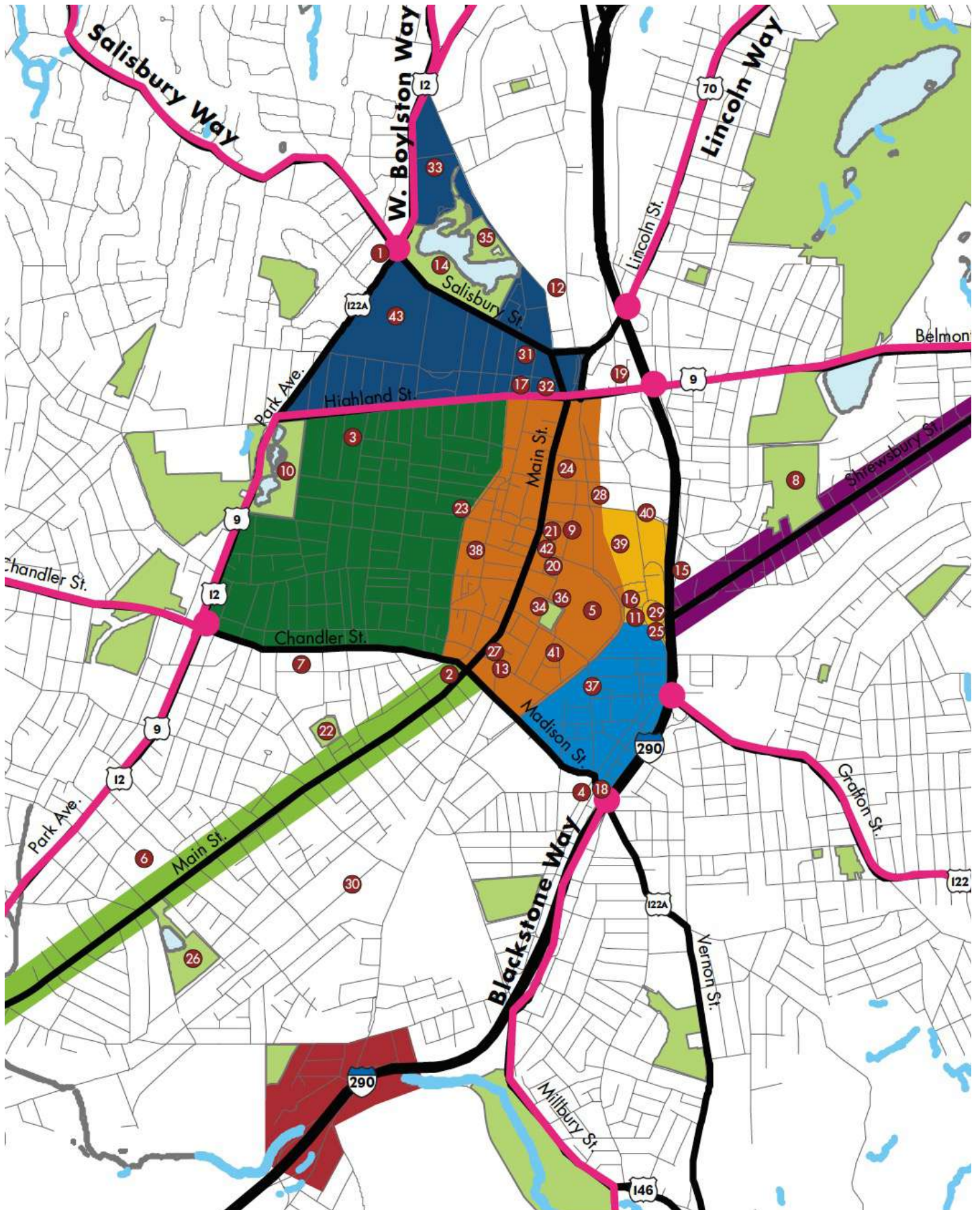
As this project continues to roll out it will be important to look at it in light of current development, updating locations and messages as-needed.

Things to consider adding in the future:

- Dynamic signage
- Walking distances
- Sculptural landmarks
- Integrated elements to reinforce District stories
- Revenue generation





## Process

- Understand who the stakeholders and decision-makers will be.
- Visit site to audit of existing conditions.
- Conduct a Wayfinding Analysis including; multi-modal circulation, main decision points, key destinations, etc.
- Identify opportunities for art/placemaking
- Research the history of the place, uncover stories that might inspire the design.
- Engage with stakeholders and the public to understand needs and perceptions. If possible, create a survey to get feedback from a larger cross-section of people.
- Develop project goals and a positioning statement to guide design efforts.
- Design concepts for brand and wayfinding elements.
- Develop the preferred design into a family of sign types with materials, colors, etc.
- Provide a sign location plan and message schedule.
- Create Design Intent drawings and a bid document to solicit pricing from fabricators
- Update the budget and project schedule
- Assist with communication between the fabricator and municipality.
- Provide Construction Administration, Site Visits, and Punch List as-needed.
- Celebrate!



Districts and Wayfinding analysis

# Develop a District Management Model

Category	 Administrative Capacity
Location	Study Area
Origin	Town of Burlington, Anne Burke, Innes Associates
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000)
Timeframe	 Short Term (An effort to organize a district management organization could be accomplished in 18 months)
Risk	 Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators	Staffing, initiation of services, average length of membership tenure
Partners & Resources	Partners: Town staff, Select Board, Town Meeting, Property and Business Owners Resources: Local funds, <a href="#">Hometown Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">ARPA Economic Adjustment Assistance</a> , <a href="#">District Local Technical Assistance</a> . See Appendix table.
Diagnostic	<p>The COVID pandemic significantly impacted downtown businesses. Business surveys have verified that most downtown small businesses, dining, cultural attractions, residential developments, and tourist destinations experienced loss of employment, revenue, customer base and foot traffic. Downtowns with active downtown organizations demonstrated their ability to pivot and respond to this crisis to help their small businesses weather the storm. Many downtowns have realized that a sustainable district management entity or similar organization is positioned to help downtowns recover from COVID and prepare for the future.</p> <p>Burlington's Town Center can benefit from creating a sustainable organizational model to support businesses in COVID recovery and ongoing programming to create a socially and economically healthy district. The composition of the district is a series of shopping centers and a variety of smaller local retailers. As part of the prior placemaking study, there is interest from landlords to pilot ideas such as food trucks and other events. There is also interest in programming such as marketing, website development, and branding and wayfinding, but no organization to implement these concepts. (See previous projects)</p>



## Action Item

**Getting Started:** Many communities initiate forming a district management entity by creating a working partnership between the municipality and district stakeholders such as businesses, chambers, nonprofits, media, civic leaders, property owners and active residents. This is particularly true in communities with no active existing organization. Burlington has spearheaded the LRRP planning process as well as the prior placemaking project. These processes can be a launching point for stakeholder engagement and other partnerships.

**Develop the Value Proposition:** It will be essential to develop the value proposition for investing human capital and the financial resources into a Town Center organization and communicate to the municipality and private stakeholders the impact of their investment. Ultimately the goal of any district organization is to build a destination that is attractive to potential businesses, residents, and visitors. If it is successful, this effort is translated into increased property values, 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 programs and services that will help achieve that goal. Key points include:

- Ability to collectively and cost effectively purchase priority programs and services to achieve impact /scale
- A unified voice / "seat at the table" for district priorities
- Professional management and staff dedicated to implementing programs and services in the district.
- Ability to respond to crises
- Resources and collaborations

**Stakeholder Engagement/ Leadership and Partnerships:** Burlington may engage key property and business owners, and civic leaders to launch the conversation about forming a Town Center management entity. The goal would be to form a working partnership and to develop a sustainable district management model for Burlington. This effort may be initiated by the town but should transition to a private sector-led steering committee with strong public sector 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 businesses, property owners and interested residents to continue to identify needs and priorities for Burlington Town Center. Some of this work was done through the prior placemaking project but will need to continue to execute proposed LRRP projects. In addition, this provides the opportunity to provide community education on organizational models, identify needs and opportunities as well as potential leadership. This could happen in a variety of ways including:

- Community forums - fun, engaging and Informational visioning sessions
- Peer learning panels – leaders from downtown management entities in other successful communities
- Visits to other communities with downtown entities to see programs in action
- Additional surveys if needed
- Websites/social media etc. (See prior project)

**Evaluate Organizational Models -** Once organizers have established the priorities/ proposed programs and budget, it will be important to determine the most appropriate district management organizational model for Burlington. Two of the most common models are a voluntary nonprofit " Main St" type organizations or a more formal business improvement district (BID). Regardless of what model is chosen, organizers must consider an approach to financial sustainability and governance. The steering committee may evaluate different organizational models through site visits, peer learning from directors of downtown organizations, online research or other technical assistance.

**Resources for Startup and Sustainability:** Some seed money will be required to start a district management organization. In addition to the funding sources cited in this project rubric, local Institutions, foundations and key stakeholders/individuals may be sources for seed money to launch an effort to form a district management entity.

Careful consideration should be given to developing a realistic budget, and a variety of revenue opportunities for the organization. Depending on the selected organizational model this may include assessment/fees, sponsorships, event revenue, grants or contracts, foundation, and individual giving. If possible, the district organization should strive to secure multiple year commitments from funders (if forming a voluntary based nonprofit). If a BID is formed, property owners will reauthorize the organization every five years.



Word Cloud from Placemaking Study Visioning. Source: Harriman, Innes Associates



## Process

With no active district organization in place, Burlington may consider the following steps to begin the process of building support for a management entity and determining the best model.

- Create a partnership among the town, key property owners, key local businesses, and the chamber of commerce.
- Form a broad-based advisory committee to provide input and feedback
- Secure seed funding for technical assistance to explore district management models
- Program identified strategies from the placemaking playbook and engage participants
- Hold community forums on different management district models
- Hold conversations with stakeholders to secure support and engagement
- Build consensus building with stakeholders on preferred models /programming /budget
- Create a formal management model



*Placemaking Concept for Moran Ave. at Cambridge St. Source: Harriman & Innes Associates*



# Determining a District Management Model for Downtown Reading, MA



Provided by SME Consultant

Ann McFarland Burke, Downtown Consultant

Location

Reading, MA

Origin	Town of Reading, MA
Budget	 <p>A Massachusetts Downtown Initiative grant provided Technical Assistance. The Town provided staff support and early coordination.</p>
Timeframe	 <p>The process took approximately 18 months. This timeframe was expanded due to the pandemic and extensive community education undertaken as part of the process.</p>
Risk	 <p>Political, property owner, tenant and other stakeholder consensus for preferred organization model is required to successfully establish a downtown organization</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Establishment of a sustainable downtown organizations with a defined program, sustainability model and appropriate staff support.
Partners & Resources	Town of Reading, downtown advisory and steering committee and other downtown stakeholders

<p><b>Diagnostic</b></p>	<p>The creation of a new downtown management organization was intended to establish a dedicated organization that would provide supplemental programs, services and advocacy for the downtown. The downtown organization would undertake activities to attract businesses, investment, customers and residents to downtown. These could include marketing, placemaking, business development and advocacy.</p> <p>Determining the appropriate downtown management organization model was a unique process for the Reading community, downtown property owners and businesses. The process included extensive outreach and community education to explore program priorities, financial sustainability, organizational models and champions from both the private and public sector.</p>
<p><b>Action Item</b></p>	<p>Economic development plans for downtown Reading had included the recommendation to establish a sustainable downtown organization to support the economic and social health of the downtown. The Town of Reading spearheaded activity to launch the process of community and property owner engagement to explore what model would be appropriate for downtown Reading. This included :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of staff and financial resources</li> <li>• Creating a community outreach and engagement strategy</li> <li>• Research to identify community priorities / recommendations</li> <li>• Peer learning from other communities</li> <li>• Consensus building among stakeholders</li> <li>• Transition of leadership to private sector</li> </ul>
<p><b>Process</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Town of Reading secured Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance funding and committed staff to initiate and support</li> <li>• A broad-based community advisory/ working group was formed to provide input and feedback</li> <li>• A survey was widely distributed to community residents, businesses and other stakeholders – 1,600 responses were received providing insight into program priorities and community preferences</li> </ul>



### Process continued

- **Community Outreach Event** - a Pizza/ Ice Cream Social brought over 150 residents to provide input
- **3 Community Forums** - Panels featuring executive directors of different types of downtown organizations described their programs , challenges and models.
- **Working sessions with advisory committee** to discuss specific model alternatives / cost and benefits
- **One-on-one conversations** with key stakeholders
- **Consensus building** with stakeholders and recommendation of preferred model and next steps
- **Transition from city-led effort to Steering committee** comprised of property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders to lead organizational effort. City staff continued staff support. TA support continued through additional MDI grant.
- **BID Steering Committee.** BID organizational process underway

Town of Reading Sponsored Pop-Up Event

## ReImagine Reading Pizza and Ice Cream Social



September 18th from 6 pm to 8pm  
Pleasant Street Center  
49 Pleasant Street

A pop-up public event to help launch a downtown organization  
Featuring local businesses, free pizza, ice cream, photo booth and more  
Please RSVP on Eventbrite by 9/16: [https://ice\\_cream\\_social.eventbrite.com](https://ice_cream_social.eventbrite.com)

ALL ARE WELCOME!

For more information, please contact Andrew MacNichol, Staff Planner at [amacnichol@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:amacnichol@ci.reading.ma.us)



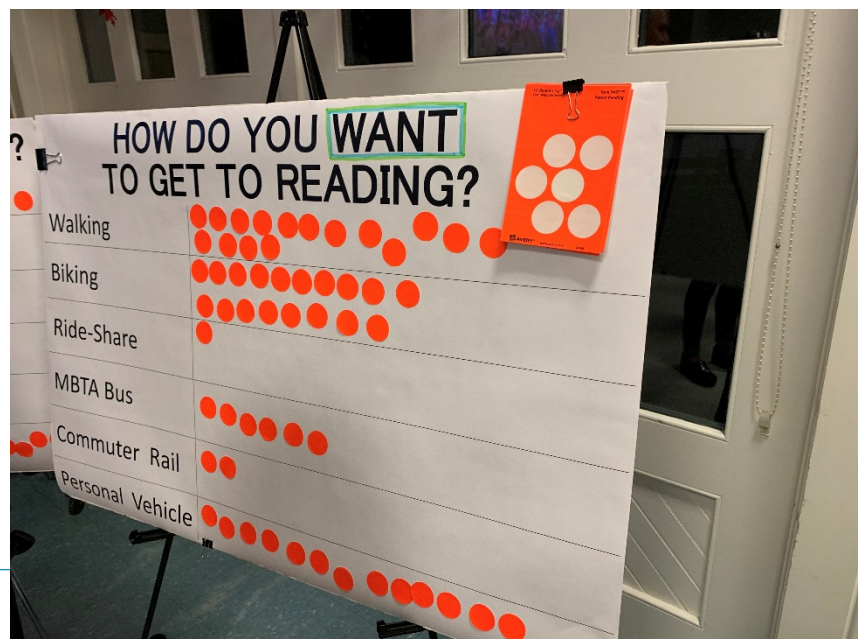
## ReImagine Reading SURVEY!



Or by web: <https://www.readingma.gov/reimagine-reading>

Scan QR Code with your phone  
camera to take the survey

More Info on back 





# Improve Driving and Walking Paths Within Private Parking Lots

Category	 Public Realm
Location	North of Winn St and Cambridge Street
Origin	Nelson\Nygaard
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000)
Timeframe	 Long Term (more than 10 years)
Risk	 High Risk – involves private property owner approvals and potential investments
Key Performance Indicators	Implementation of projects, increased pedestrian activity, increased retail sales
Partners & Resources	Town staff, Select Board, Town Meeting, private property owners, local merchants Resources: Private funds, <a href="#">Hometown Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">ARPA Economic Adjustment Assistance</a> , <a href="#">District Local Technical Assistance</a> . See Appendix table.



*Town Center and Area of Focus for Enhanced Pedestrian Connections (Shaded). Source: Google, Nelson\Nygaard*

## Diagnostic

For private parking lots that have poorly defined or missing walkways, better delineating vehicle and walking areas can improve safety while also enhancing the user experience.

The separated commercial strips set back from Cambridge Street by parking lots-and sometimes by pad site commercial buildings- are accessible via duplicative curb cuts. Unfortunately, these separations enhance the disconnected nature of the Town Center district and isolate nodes of activity from one another, discouraging visitors to patronize multiple locations in one visit.

While some shopping areas have walkways adjacent to store entrances, connections from parking to the stores is not well defined. Further, streets like Moran Avenue lack sidewalks and are wider than necessary given their function.

Some of the recommendations developed for the placemaking study look to remedy these challenges by activating paved spaces at least seasonally.

Defined pedestrian connections are needed to encourage more walking activity.



*197-207 Cambridge Street Parking Area. Source: Google*



*Moran Avenue. Source: Google*

## Action Items

- Work with property owners and town staff to identify roadway, sidewalk, accessibility, and landscaping features to clarify areas of focus.
- If applicable, work with hired wayfinding expert to clarify and confirm pedestrian desire lines.
- In conjunction with placemaking efforts, develop a priority list of improvement projects for implementation.



## Process

- Reestablish sidewalks and pavement markings along Moran Avenue and consider narrowing the intersection opening at Cambridge Street.
- Allocate funds to engage a design consultant to develop conceptual plans for landscaping, lighting, and other physical improvements.
- Obtain grants to initiate pilot projects on public space and work with private property owners to pursue site improvements.
- As part of redesign of Cambridge Street (if advanced) evaluate all driveway openings and sidewalks along the corridor to identify possible consolidations and improvements.
- Add paint to improve delineation where formal construction projects cannot be advanced immediately.







*Internal pedestrian walkway, Shoppes at Simonds Park. Source: Nelson\Nygaard*



*Santander Bank near Winn Street with well-defined pedestrian areas. Source: Nelson\Nygaard*

# Program Pop-up and Other Events and Accommodate Outdoor Dining

Category	 Public Realm
Location	Study Area
Origin	Town of Burlington, Harriman, Innes Associates
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000)
Timeframe	 Short Term (less than 5 years)
Risk	 Medium Risk – involves private property owner approvals and supportive materials
Key Performance Indicators	Number of events and spaces repurposed, increased pedestrian activity, increased retail sales
Partners & Resources	Town staff, Select Board, Town Meeting, private property owners, local merchants Resources: Private funds, <a href="#">Hometown Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">ARPA Economic Adjustment Assistance</a> . See Appendix table.



Burlington Town Center Placemaking Playbook [Report](#) Cover Photo. Source: Harriman, Innes Associates



## Diagnostic

The Town of Burlington received a grant from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative to create a placemaking playbook for the Burlington Town Center. This diagnostic derives from that report.

In addition to its many active businesses, serving the local community, [Burlington Town Center] has another significant asset – large parking lots. Most community activities to date have occurred near the Town Common. The lots in the Lower Town Center could be used to support parking for events such as the Diwali Festival and events sponsored by Burlington's Parks and Recreation including a concert series, Spooktacular, or Silly Walks.

Events could be stretched into Simonds Park, taking advantage of trails from Cambridge Street into the park and connecting to the Town Common.

The parking lots in the [Town Center] represent a more interesting opportunity: one that can build community and directly support local businesses.

Key goals of the placemaking in [Burlington Town Center] are to:

- Foster community and connections between people by engaging local businesses and residents.
- Build a sense of ownership and place for residents and local businesses.
- Identify physical interventions and potential events to enliven the area and increase business traffic.

## Action Items

- Set up a dedicated committee to build excitement and stewardship, guide event programming, and identify grants and volunteers. Find community champions!
- Consider one or two test sites: two options are shown in this Playbook. Sites should transition easily to winter strategies. Test sites should begin with short-term strategies, such as seating and fire pits. Longer-term strategies, such as markets or directional signage, will require more intensive efforts and are less suitable for a test.
- Identify local and area businesses for markets (food, crafts, entertainment)
- Develop partnership between the Town's Department of Public Works and local business/property owners to address maintenance.
- Hold community discussions with MassDOT on traffic concerns. Many respondents to the public survey indicated concerns about the volume and speed of traffic on Route 3A. Such concerns are outside of this study but are important for the Town to address when considering economic development strategies for this area. (See Cambridge Street project)



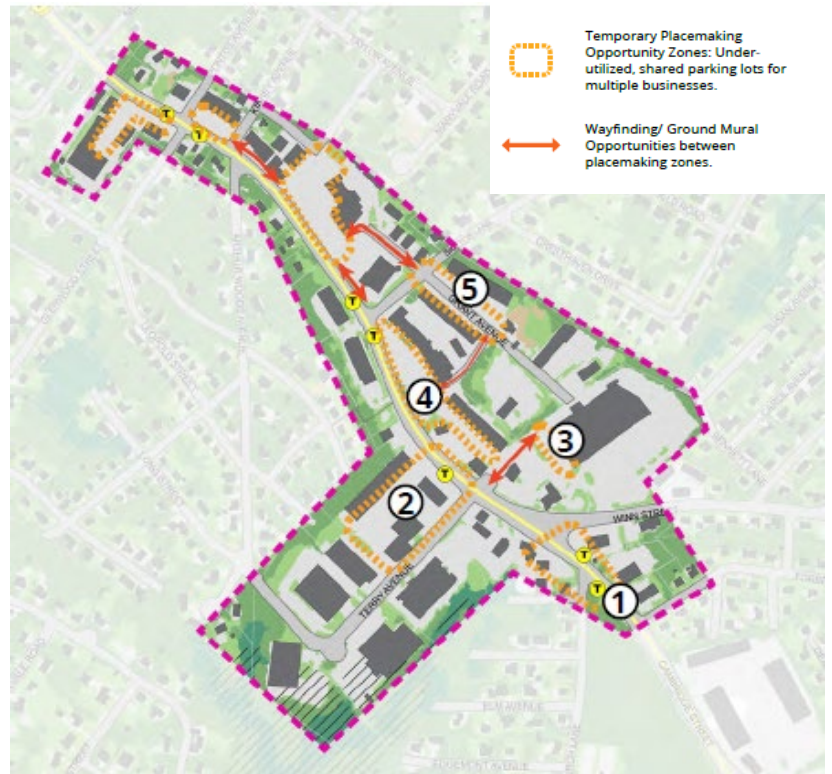
2020 Silly Walks. Source: Harriman, Innes Associates



2014 Spooktacular in Burlington. Source: Burlington Parks & Recreation

## Process

- The areas identified in the map to the right are the primary areas for future temporary placemaking actions. The public survey tested options for each area; the primary and secondary preferences and priorities are incorporated into this playbook.
- In addition to the five specific areas, corridor-wide options are also included. For two strategies, weekend/seasonal markets and pocket parks, winter options are identified. The three highest preferences identified by the community survey were:
- Area-wide directory signage (See wayfinding strategy)
- Weekend/seasonal/winter market
- Outdoor dining and vendor space
- The combination of the weekend/seasonal/winter market was the community's highest priority.

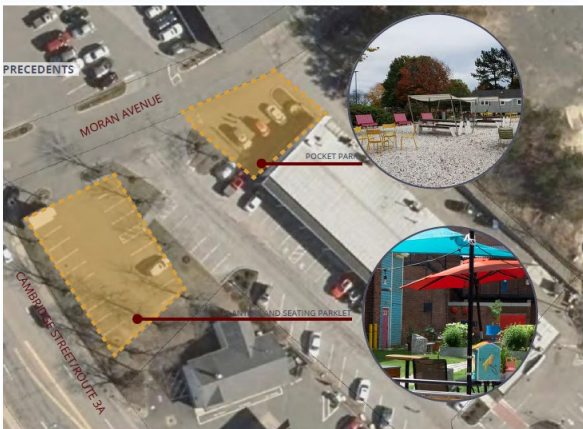


### HIGHEST PREFERENCE/PRIORITY

Image	Strategy	Page #	Area
	Directory Map	13	① Cambridge Street MBTA Bus Stops
			Corridor-wide
	Weekend Market	14/26/30	② Cambridge Street & Terry Street Parking Lot
	Seasonal Market	14/26/30	③ Shaw's Wall and Adjacent Parking Area
	Winter Market	14/26/30	⑤ Grant Avenue Loading Areas
			Area-wide Winter Strategies
	Outdoor Dining and Vendor Space	15/26/28	④ Cambridge Street and Moran Ave Parking Lots

### SECONDARY PREFERENCE/PRIORITY

Image	Strategy	Page #	Area
	Benches, Picnic Tables	16/26/28	① Cambridge Street MBTA Bus Stops
	Temporary Park	17/30	② Cambridge Street & Terry Street Parking Lot
	Planters and Seating Parklet	18/26/28	③ Shaw's Wall and Adjacent Parking Area
	Pocket Parks	19/26/28	④ Cambridge Street and Moran Ave Parking Lots
	Fire Pits or other Heated Spaces		Area-wide Winter Strategies
	Seasonal Event or Festival Space	20/30	⑤ Grant Avenue Loading Areas
	Public Art Installations	21/32	Corridor-wide



Test sites for outdoor seating and pocket parks. Source: Harriman, Innes Associates

Priority and Secondary Preference Table. Source: Harriman, Innes Associates

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## Appendix

## Possible Funding Resources Cited in Report

Name of Fund	Agency/ Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Description/ Allowable Use of Funds	Link
Commonwealth Places	MassDevelopment	\$300,000	To help community partners prepare public spaces and commercial districts to best serve their population during COVID-19 social distancing and the phased reopening of the economy, including improvements to sidewalks, curbs, streets, on-street parking spaces and off-street parking lots in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce in their communities. This program complements the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Shared Streets & Spaces.	<a href="https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/commonwealth-places/">https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/commonwealth-places/</a>
Shared Streets and Spaces	MassDOT	\$200,000	To support the repurposing of streets, plazas, sidewalks, curbs, and parking areas to facilitate outdoor activities and community programming, including but not limited to facilities for eating, shopping, play, and community events and spaces for all ages.	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/service-details/eligible-and-ineligible-projects-shared-streets-and-spaces-grant-program">https://www.mass.gov/service-details/eligible-and-ineligible-projects-shared-streets-and-spaces-grant-program</a>
Economic Adjustment Assistance	U.S. Economic Development Administration	\$10,000,000	EDA's ARPA EAA NOFO is designed to provide a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions as they respond to, and recover from, the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, including long-term recovery and resilience to future economic disasters. Under this announcement, EDA solicits applications under the authority of the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which is flexible and responsive to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders. This is the broadest NOFO EDA is publishing under ARPA and any eligible applicant from any EDA Region may apply.	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=334743">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=334743</a>
Hometown Grant Program (Private)	T-Mobile	\$50,000	To build/rebuild/refresh community spaces that help foster local connections in town.	<a href="https://www.t-mobile.com/brand/hometown-grants">https://www.t-mobile.com/brand/hometown-grants</a>
MassWorks Infrastructure Program	MA Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development		The most flexible source of capital funds to municipalities and other eligible public entities primarily for public infrastructure projects that support and accelerate housing production, spur private development, and create jobs - particularly for production of multi-family housing in appropriately located walkable, mixed-use districts.	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworks-infrastructure-program">https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworks-infrastructure-program</a>
Planning Assistance Grants	MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs	\$75,000	Grants are available to municipalities and regional planning agencies acting on their behalf to support efforts to plan, regulate (zone), and act to conserve and develop land consistent with Massachusetts' Sustainable Development Principles.	<a href="https://www.mass.gov/service-details/planning-assistance-grants">https://www.mass.gov/service-details/planning-assistance-grants</a>
District Local Technical Assistance Grant	Metropolitan Area Planning Council		The MAPC Technical Assistance Program (TAP) is a funding program that enables and assists municipalities in implementing projects that are beneficial to the community. Municipalities are invited to submit project concepts for work to be undertaken by MAPC through our Technical Assistance Program (TAP).	<a href="https://www.mapc.org/about-mapc/funding-opportunities/">https://www.mapc.org/about-mapc/funding-opportunities/</a>