



Rapid Recovery Plan

2021

Lawrence

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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Create a Canal Street/Union Street Gateway	
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- Develop a Vacant Storefronts Program
- Create storefront and signage improvements
- Support existing informal events, music festivals, and strong nightlife
- Increase municipal capacity and nurture partnerships with the business community
- Support a public/private program for planting and maintenance
- Build on and expand existing public visual and performing art program
- Explore the creation of a Cultural District that would connect existing cultural and historic resources

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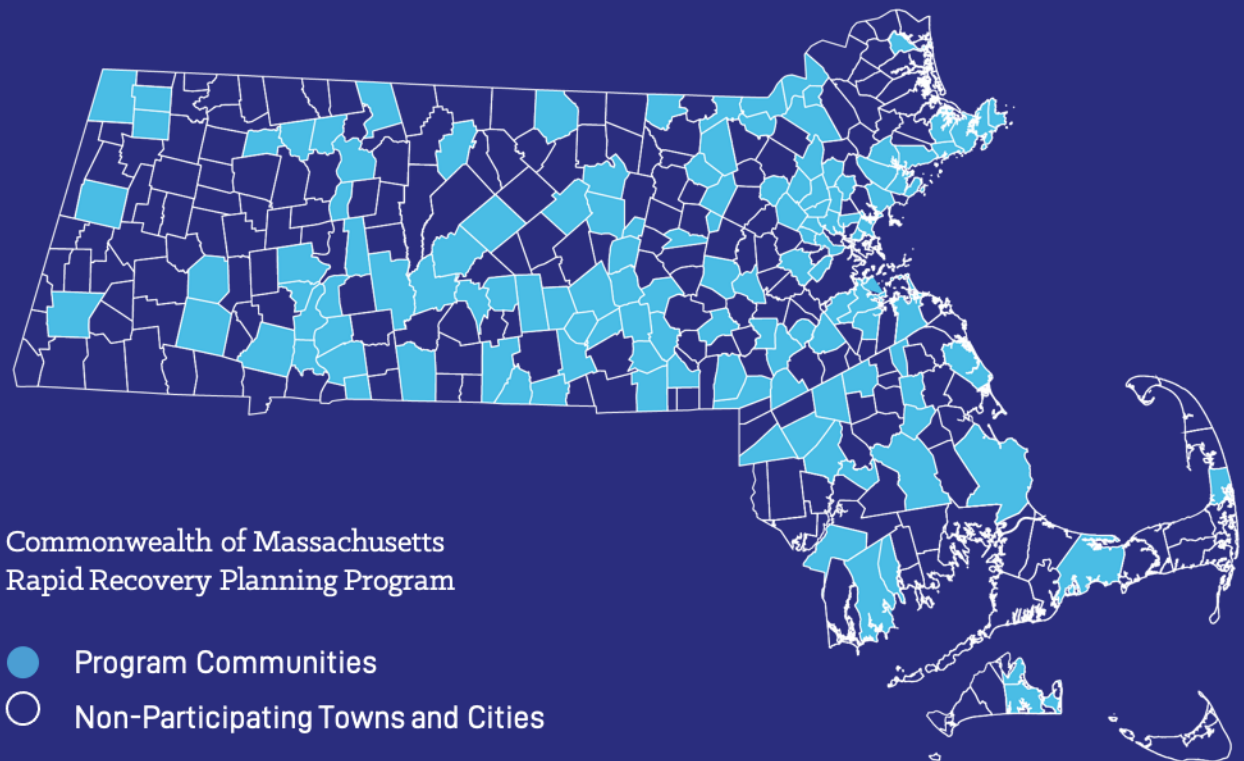
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Administrative-Capacity-Activating-Public-Space
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125 communities participated in the Rapid Recovery Plan Program

52 Small Communities
51 Medium Communities
16 Large Communities
6 Extra Large Communities

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



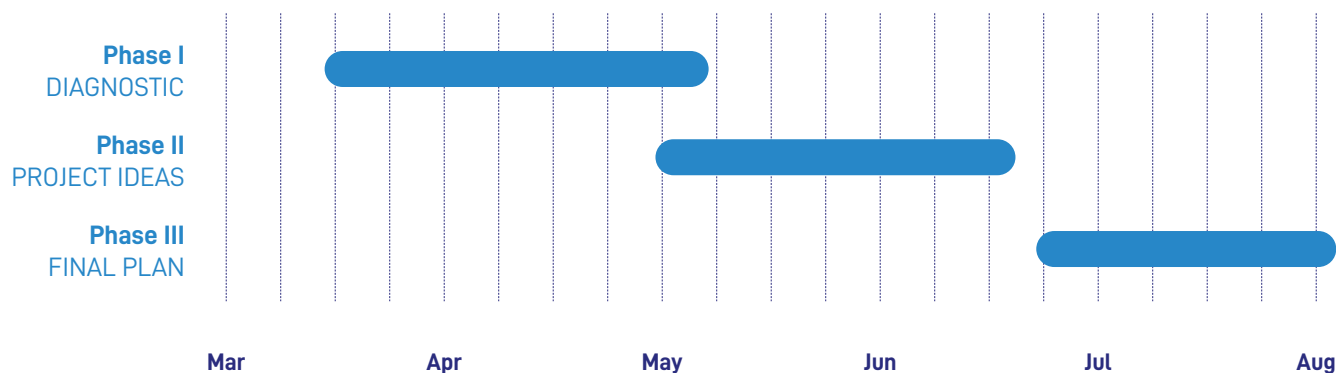
Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

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

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

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

Each Rapid Recovery Plan was developed across three phases between February-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.

Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework



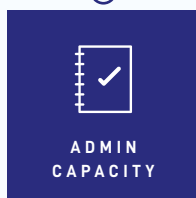
Who are the customers of businesses in the Study Area?



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



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



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

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



Public Realm



Private Realm



Tenant Mix



Revenue & Sales



Admin Capacity



Cultural/Arts



Other

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

A city that reinvented itself by reusing its beautiful collection of historic mill buildings

When approaching the City of Lawrence, MA from US 495, the first thing you notice is the city's distinctive architecture. There are visually imposing mills, picturesque five and six-story red brick buildings, that strikingly stretch into the distance along the Merrimack River. From the mid-19th Century until the early decades of the 20th Century, Lawrence was a world center for textile manufacturing. Lawrence was the last planned Industrial Revolution mill city. Thousands of textile jobs went overseas to primarily Asia manufacturers erasing New England's textile jobs. However, the City of Lawrence didn't tear down its vacant mills. So, over the last three decades, the City has been able to revitalize and restore many of these structures for both industrial use and living spaces.

A city where immigrants provide a diversity of shopping and dining options

Historically, Lawrence has been a magnet for immigrants representing various ethnicities including Irish, English, German, Italian, French Canadian, Polish, Lebanese and Lithuanians. In the 1980s, individuals started to immigrate from Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and South America as well as from Southeast Asia including Cambodian and Vietnamese. With a population of nearly 90,000. Lawrence's industries are much more diverse than the historical textile mills. There are many shops and restaurants that cater to the different cultural groups.

A city with a rich history to promote and share

Scores of prominent contributors to American society and culture have come from Lawrence including Poet Robert Frost, Composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein, Educator Jane Ellen "Bonnie Newman, Aerosmith Guitarist Joe Perry, Writer/Poet Ernest Thayer ("Casey at the Bat"), Singer Robert Goulet, Jazz Singer Irene Daye and former Massachusetts Governor Endicott Peabody. Lawrence the site of the 1912 Textile Strike, also referred to as The Bread and Roses Strike, was the first of many labor actions in large American metropolitan areas in the early part of the 20th Century.

A large Latin@ population injects positive energy into the City's street life, festivals, food and music

Today, the largest ethnic group in Lawrence are Latino with a large segment of the population from the Dominican Republic. Several City of Lawrence festival celebrate ethnic heritage.

COVID-19 disproportionately impacted the people and commerce of Lawrence

The effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic were strongly felt in Lawrence. The city was one of the major centers of outbreaks in the Commonwealth. During the Pandemic, retail stores, restaurants and services were severely effected. However, Lawrence is known for its resiliency and ability to strongly overcome adversity. In recent years, the city was suffered a terrible gas explosion as well as the public health issues of Covid-19. With much public state and federal as well as foundation support, the city has been able to refresh itself and build back. A plan by MassDevelopment, February 2020 Downtown Lawrence Action Plan, has helped to set the path for a Downtown Lawrence continued revitalization. The LRRP effort has taken a number of these points and developed and enhanced them to set them up as strategies and goals for the city of Lawrence.

Recovery will require simultaneously undertaking a number of initiatives

These programs, projects and plans include the following objectives and goals:

- formalize and make permanent a clear and streamlined process for using public space for **outdoor dining**
- develop a **wayfinding and branding system** to attract area residents and visitors and help them to navigate downtown
- make **Essex Street a great main street experience**—building on existing culinary scene and nightlife, improving pedestrian experience
- create feeling of destination with better curb management including plan for service and delivery access and hours, loading docks; investigate managed parking lanes (e.g. loading in the morning, parking in the afternoon), consider pedestrianizing on Sundays only (example Newbury Street, Boston in summer): and introduce parklets in some of the blocks near City Hall.
- Make connections to river/canal.
- develop a **branding/marketing thematic plan** for the Downtown. Consider using theme of bread and roses for social media, website, internal City Hall, and auxiliary buildings signage
- identify and review potential tactical **interventions that would help calm the traffic throughout the downtown**
- fund and promote a **Façade and Signage Program for Small Businesses/Landlords**
- identify ways of activating the currently 35+ vacant storefronts in both temporary and permanent ways
- **support existing informal events, music festivals, and strong nightlife** to help attract additional patrons
- increase municipal capacity and nurture partnerships with the business community, landlords and developers
- develop a mechanism for a **public/private program for plantings and maintenance**
- creatively build on and expand existing public visual and performing art program including public art and performances by encourage local and regional artists to participate;
- investigate establishing a Cultural District in Downtown Lawrence.



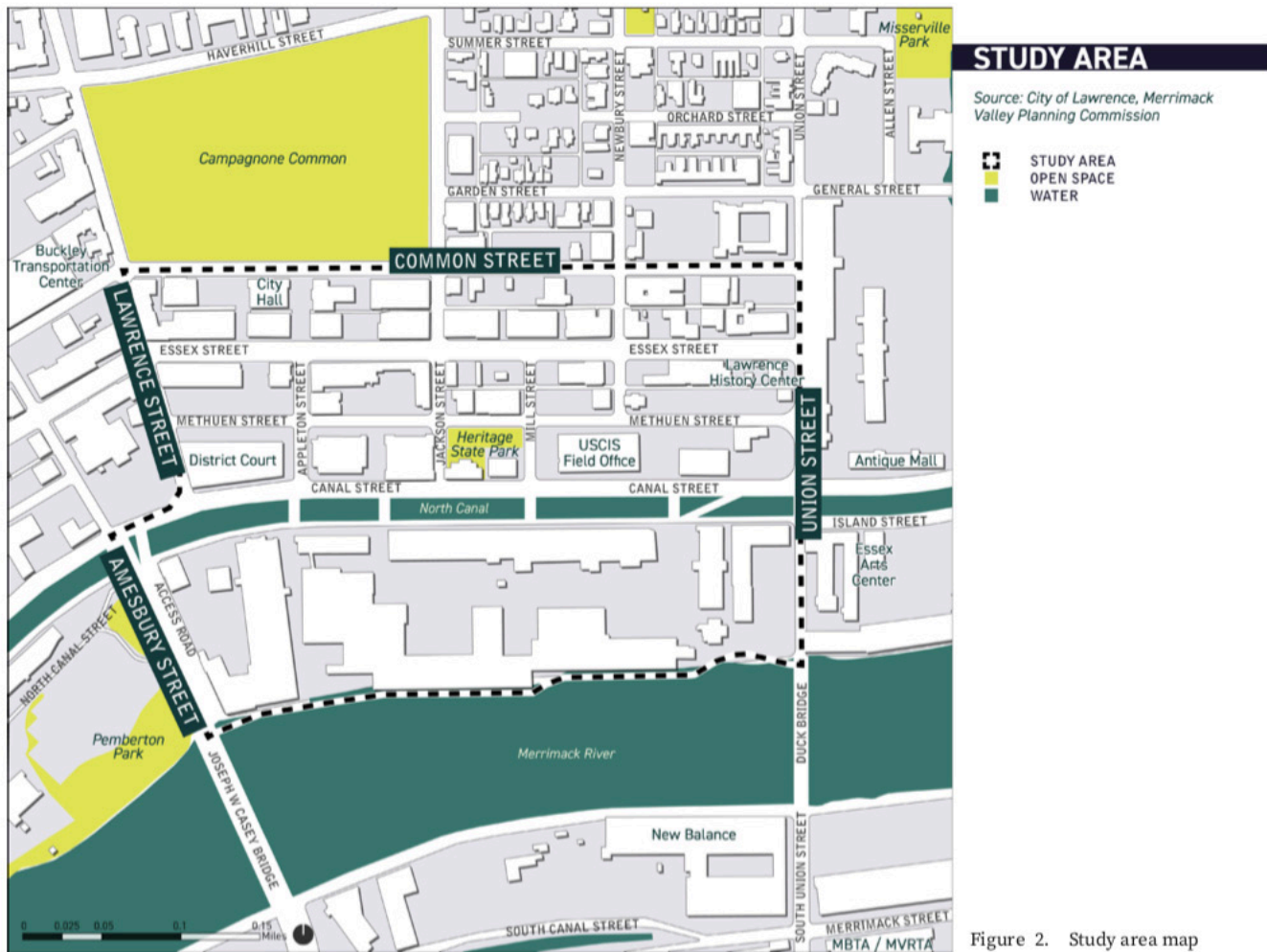


Figure 2. Study area map

Diagnostic

Key Findings



Who are the customers of businesses in the Study Area?

The majority of customers are young, Latin@ with low or moderate income.

LAWRENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION	
2010 Census	76,377
2021 Estimate	81,176
2026 Projection	83,168

HOUSEHOLDS	
2010 Census	25,181
2021 Estimate	26,747
2026 Projection	27,422

INCOME	
2021 Est. Average Household Income	\$63,007
2021 Est. Median Household Income	\$45,374
Per Capital Income (2021)	\$20,760

AGE	
Median Age	33.7
Age 35 – 64	35%
Age 65 – 85	20%

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	
2021 Est. Average Household size	3.0

EDUCATION (AGE 25+ 2021 ESTIMATE)	
At least some college or higher	36%

RACE	
White	36%
Black/African American	9%
Asian	2%
Latin@	86%



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

Site visits confirm the "good bones" of the downtown area. There seems to be much potential to increase patronage of area shops and restaurants by making the area feel safer and more appealing to pedestrians, especially women and children. Making improvements that would appeal to women and children would make the area more attractive to all. Pedestrian and bicycle safety will be key to this.

What Business Owners Had to Say. . . The majority of businesses were generally satisfied with the key features of the Business Area.

Opinions regarding satisfaction with various aspects of the business district ranged widely.

The population of Lawrence is projected to increase as are the number of households. The median household income (\$ 45,374) is significantly lower (almost half) than that of the State (\$85,843 in 2019). The majority of residents are of workforce age with a little over a third (36%) with at least some college education.

The large majority (86%) of residents are Latin@ and more than half (69%) of all residents speak Spanish at home. Additionally, 78.2% of all residents speak a language other than English at home (some of these residents are Vietnamese and Cambodian and may include business owners in the Study area).

The Latin@ community was disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, both in terms of morbidity and mortality rates. Additionally, while in other LRRP communities the majority of businesses reported being negatively impacted by the pandemic, in Lawrence, 100% report such impacts.

	DISSATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED
Condition of public spaces, streets & sidewalks.	50%	10%	40%
Condition of private buildings, facades & storefronts	40%	40%	20%
Access for customers & employees	20%	20%	60%
Safety & comfort of customers & employees	20%	30%	50%
Proximity to complementary businesses	30%	20%	50%



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?

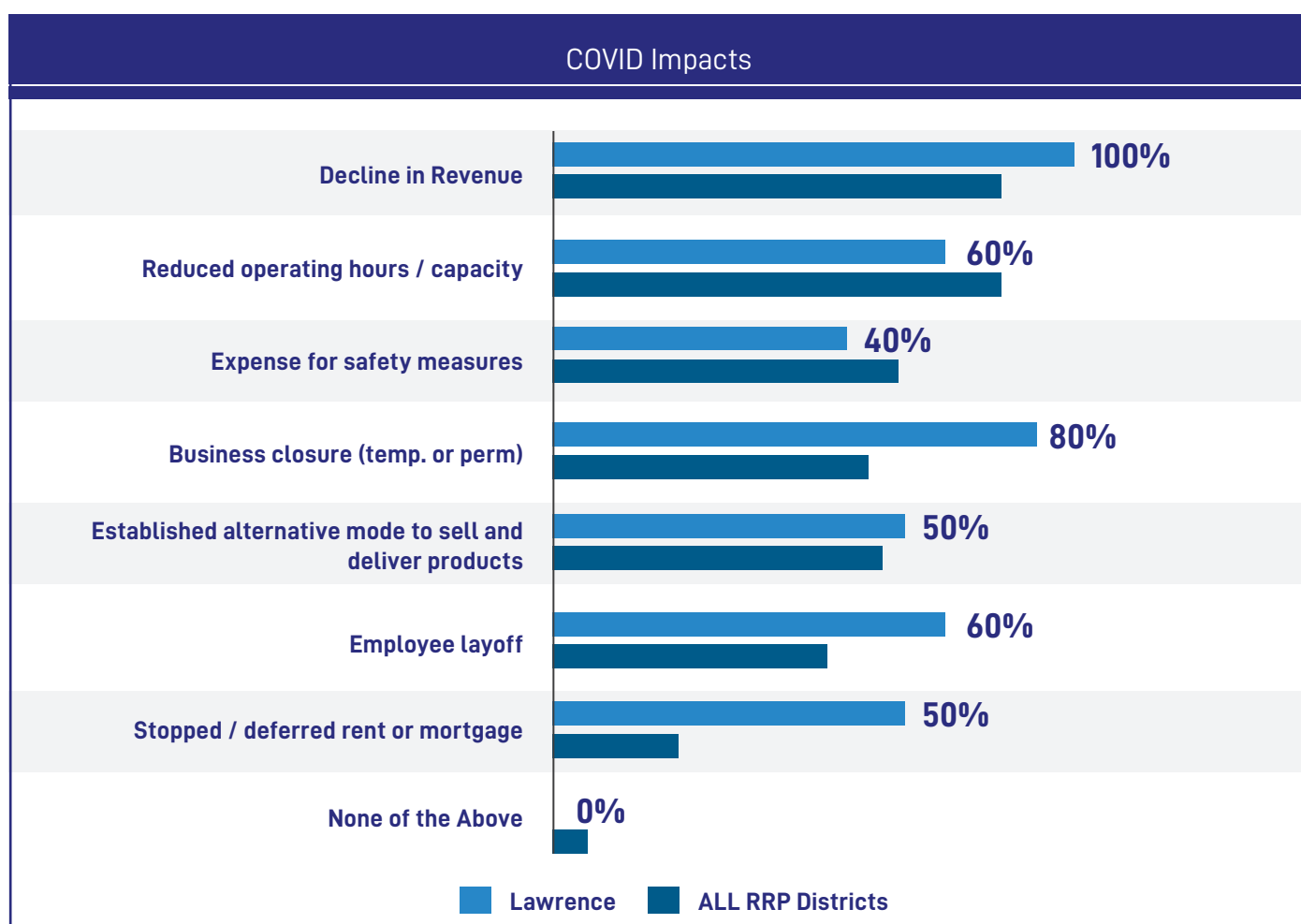
COVID impacts were widespread and significant among the businesses. In several respects, businesses in the Lawrence Target Area were hit harder than most businesses in RRP Districts.

100% of business survey respondents in the Lawrence Target Area reported impacts from COVID-19.

A majority of businesses reported a decline in revenue, business closure, employee layoff and reduced operating hours/capacity. In several categories, the rate of negative impacts reported by Lawrence Target Area businesses is higher than the rate among all businesses in RRP Districts.

Decline in Business District foot traffic was significant.

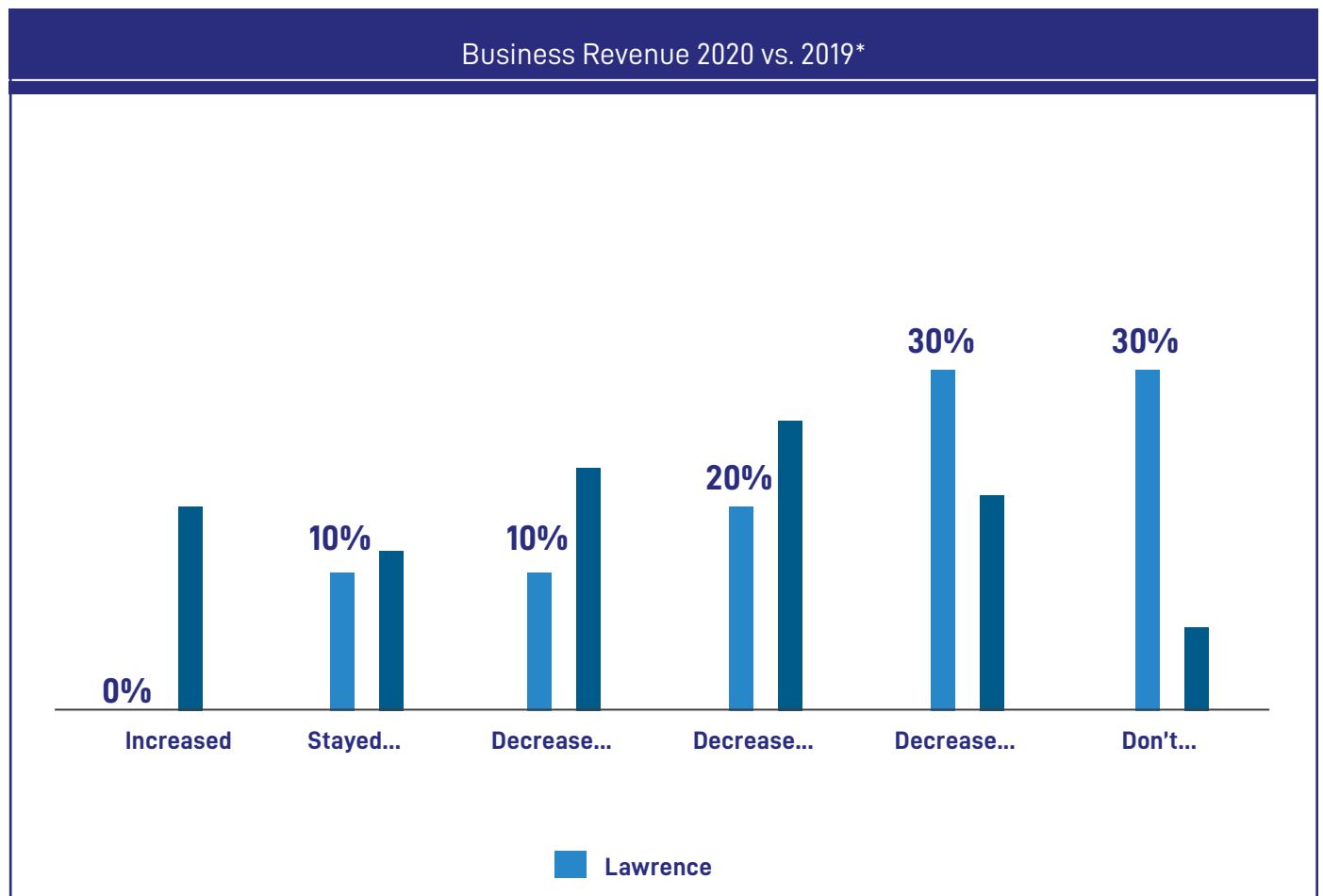
70% of businesses had less on-site customers in January and February of 2021 than before COVID.



Compared to all businesses in RRP Districts, the percentage of Lawrence businesses reporting a year-over-year revenue loss was fairly similar.

Loss of Revenue – 60% of Lawrence business respondents suffered a year-over-year revenue loss (compared to 68% of businesses in all RRP Districts). A significant portion responded “Don’t know/Not Applicable”.

On a positive note – 50% of businesses said they established alternative modes to sell or deliver products or services (which will likely help them retain and grow sales going forward).

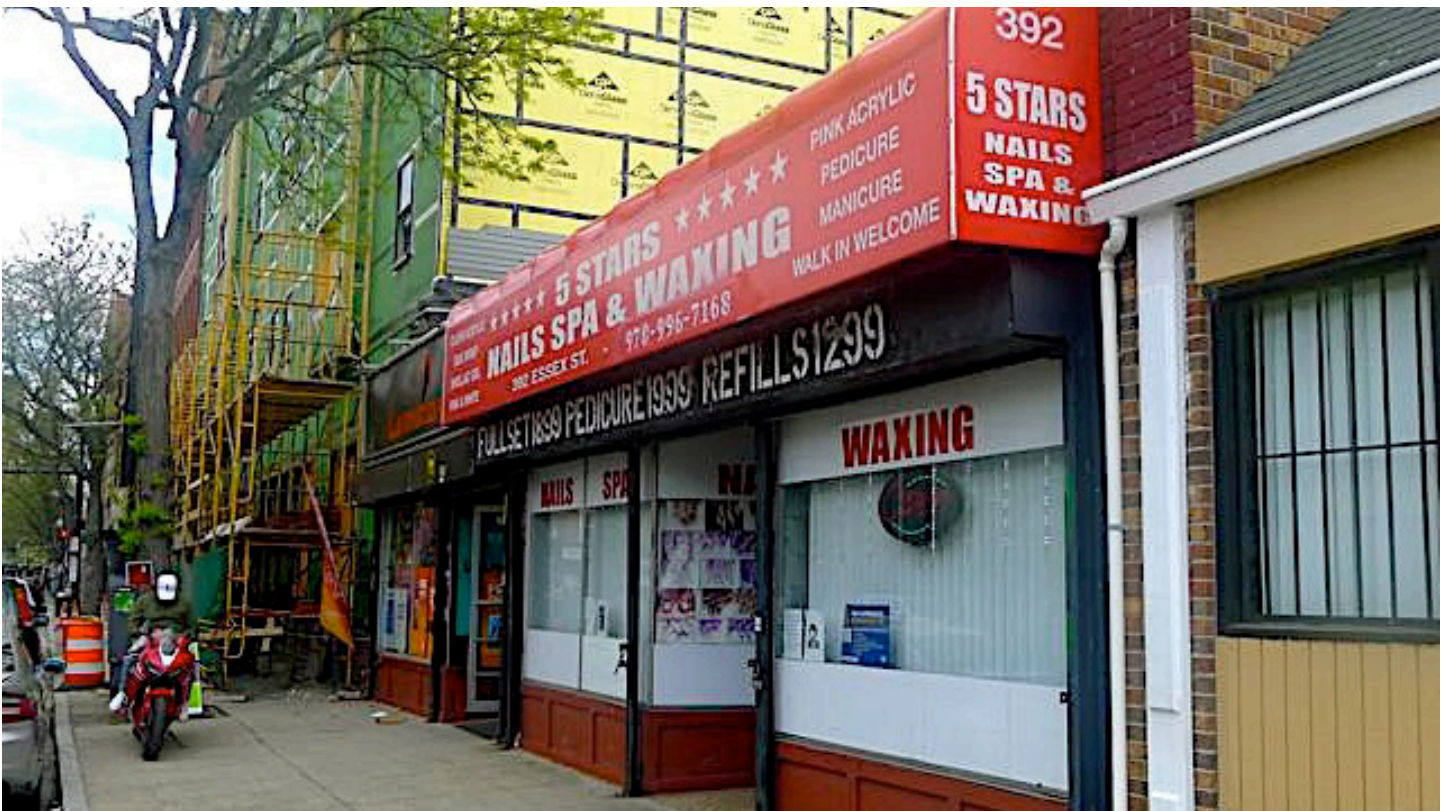
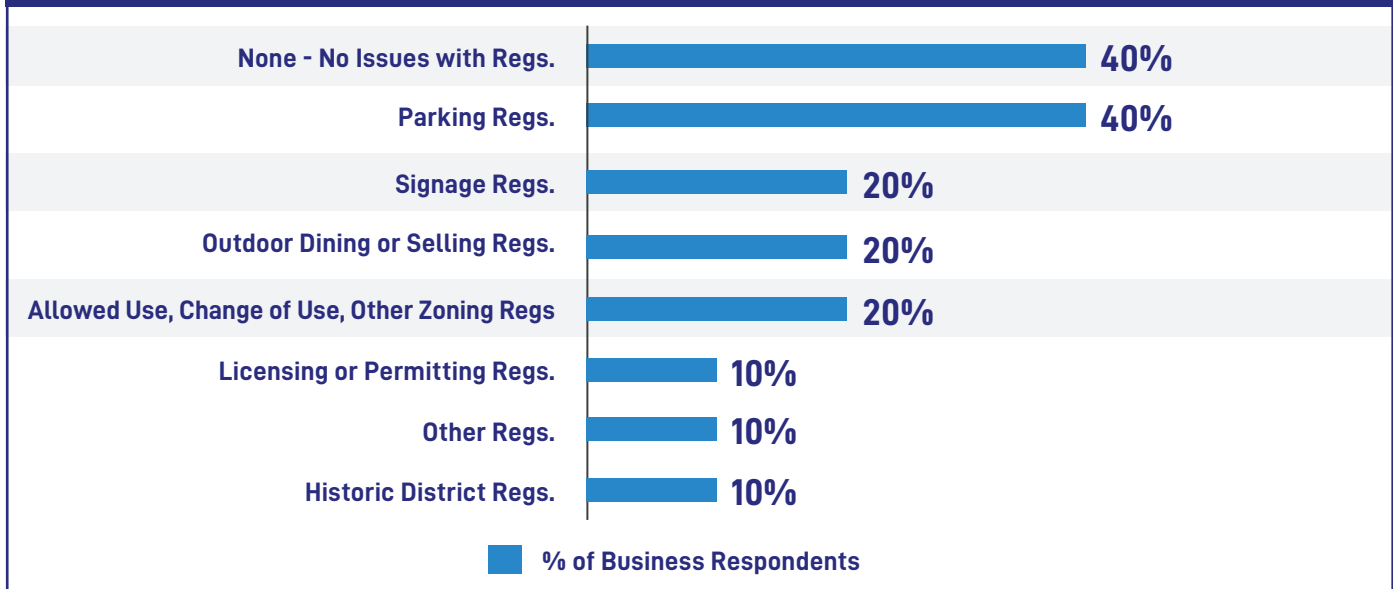


* figures have been rounded to nearest unit



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?

Regulation that Pose an Obstacle

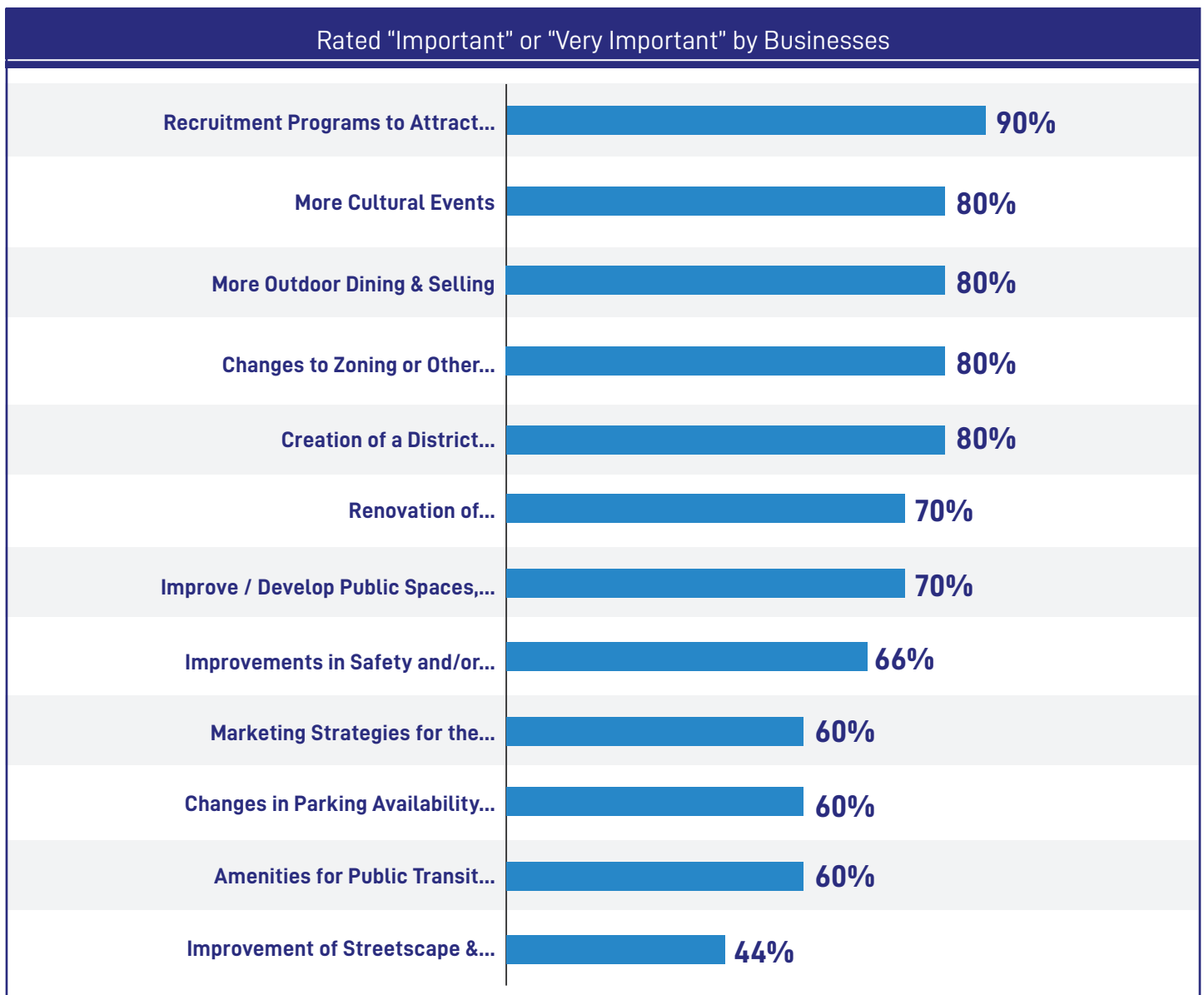


Private Sector Retail

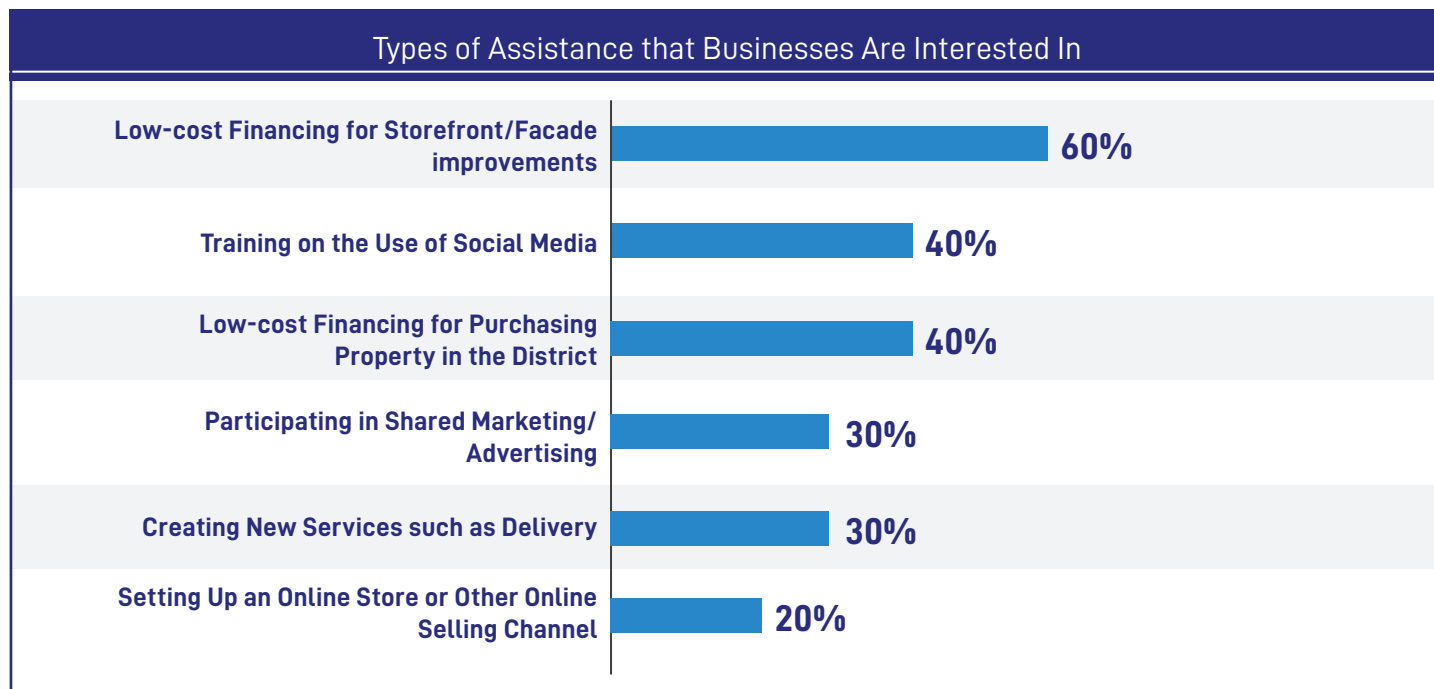
What Business Owners Had to Say... The strategies most important to Lawrence business respondents include business recruitment, more cultural events, more outdoor dining/selling opportunities, regulation changes and creation of a management entity.

Strategies Most Important to Businesses

1. Recruitment Programs to Attract Additional Businesses
2. More Cultural Events
3. More Outdoor Dining and Selling Opportunities
4. Changes to Zoning or Other Local Regulations
5. Creation of a District Management Entity
6. Renovation of Storefronts/Building Facades
7. Improve/Develop Public Spaces, Seating Areas



What Business Owners Had to Say... Low-cost financing for storefront or façade improvements is the top request among businesses (60%).





Highlights from the Physical Environment

A beautiful brick city

With its majestic brick mill buildings set on both sides of the Merrimack River, the view of the City of Lawrence from Interstate 495 is dramatically striking. Lawrence is considered by experts the finest 19th Century planned mill community in America. Lawrence was a great wool-processing center until that industry declined in the 1950s. The decline left Lawrence a struggling city. The population of Lawrence declined from over 80,000 residents in 1950 (and a high of 94,270 in 1920) to approximately 64,000 residents in 1980. Today, it has rebounded back to around 90,000.

Urban renewal scarred the city

Like many other northeastern cities that suffered from the effects of post-WWII industrial decline, Lawrence has made several efforts at urban revitalization. Some were bad choices, and some were controversial. Like many other wrong-headed redevelopment authorities, the Lawrence Redevelopment Authority and city officials utilized eminent domain for a perceived public benefit to attempt revitalize the city during the 1960s.

Under the title of urban renewal, large tracts of downtown Lawrence were razed in the 1970s, and replaced with large open stretches of parking lots. Also by destroying movie palaces of the 1920s and 30s, the historic Theater Row along Broadway was razed.

This destruction fundamentally changed the character of a large section of the center of Lawrence. Other attempted, but failed projects continued during the 1970s. However, recently, the focus of Lawrence's urban revitalization has shifted to preservation and creative, thoughtful reuse rather than demolition and misdirected uninspired redevelopment. As is said, "The bones of Lawrence are very good indeed!"

Reuse of the former mill buildings and a growing Latin@ population have injected life into the Downtown

Since the start of the 21st Century, massive private investment in former mill buildings along the Merrimack River has converted a number of structures into commercial, residential and education use.. Lawrence's downtown has seen a resurgence of business activity as Hispanic-owned businesses have opened along Essex Street, the historic shopping street

of Lawrence that had remained largely shuttered since the 1970s. Now it seems more apparent that innovative developers are appreciating what Lawrence physically offers.

The City's economy has suffered several setbacks including being disproportionately impacted by the pandemic

In the last few years, the resiliency of the City of Lawrence has been greatly tested. From a poor financial position exacerbated by the global recession to devastating mill fires to a terrible gas explosion to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Lawrence has taken punches and still gets up. Its downtown is on the rise with a mix of stores, institutions, residencies and food establishments.

However with growth and expansion, there are challenges. Among these are a need for a long overdue extensive wayfinding system that gives orientation and comfort to visitors and out of town deliveries. A strategic wayfinding system will make traffic access and flow allow visitors to easily "read" Lawrence.

The bones are certainly good, but a set of easy to follow storefront and facade design guidelines is greatly needed to upgrade the uneven and sometimes unprofessional store signage and windows of many Essex Street shops and dining establishments. These guidelines should be for both landlords and renters. Incentives in the form of grants and reimbursable need to be explored in depth to smooth implementation.

Traffic and parking challenges pose obstacles to businesses

There are a myriad of traffic and parking challenges as well. These include the need for traffic calming along Essex Street, better marked and appropriately signaled pedestrian crosswalks and ADA compliant step-downs, curb-cuts and street access. Also curb management is a vital set of needs—delivery times and spaces, pick-up and drop-off areas, customer parking and employee parking have to be thoughtfully addressed. Additionally better flow along Canal Street and better connections to nearby Essex Street need to be explored.

Highlights from the Business Environment

Many shops are owned and operated by Dominican and Puerto Rican immigrants

From a boarded up area to a vital shopping district decades later, Essex Street is the primary downtown boulevard in the City of Lawrence. There is a growing Dominican community in Lawrence that is now heavily involved in the commercial life of Essex Street. Many shops and restaurants are owned and operated by Dominican and Puerto Rican immigrants. This is also true of several restaurants, service providers and shops owned by members of the expanding Vietnamese and Cambodian communities as well. In some delicious cases, there is cuisine that is a fusion of various ethnicities. In fact, the city has become a place to try destination for foodies from Boston's North Shore and even New Hampshire. Now generally word of mouth, this suggests a cooperative marketing and regional attention efforts for Lawrence.

The pandemic exacerbated the conditions and constraints of small businesses many of which did not survive

Covid-19 brought focus to the needs of small and family owned businesses. Things like online menus, websites and internet ordering for pickup were integrated into a number of businesses. However, many did not have this capacity. There are local nonprofit social service agencies available to work with small business owners. Additionally, during Covid's darkest days, a number of stores closed, however a large number of shops did replace them.

Administrative capacity is limited

In a way, the City of Lawrence has become "a planning petrie dish" for colleges, universities, state agencies, Federal programs and charitable foundations to survey, research and explore different approaches to this urban community. Though there is certainly an upside in terms of potential project funding and resources, there is a downside as well in that the business community is rather surveyed-out and the administrative capacity limits the ability and timeframe of follow-ups and implementation.

A number of challenges will need to be overcome

Though there are many very positive things happening in the City of Lawrence's commercial area, there are still a number of challenges. The first challenge is how to create "The Essex Street Experience." Currently, traffic and parking considerations make trips there sometimes difficult and time-consuming. The European notion of making downtowns for mothers and families is an ideal for Lawrence as well. However, sidewalks and upgraded crosswalks have to be made more user-friendly with amenities, plantings, street furniture and kiosks. Traffic needs to be calmed. Encouragement of landlords and storeowners to upgrade, restore and renovate their facades and storefronts will certainly underscore this as well. Working with a strong city staff, there needs to be a strong and vibrant downtown business association made up of developers, landlords and merchants. All of these elements are vital to the success of Downtown Lawrence.



Essex Street

Project Recommendations

Public Realm



Formalize and make permanent a clear and streamlined process for using public space for **outdoor dining**.

Develop a **wayfinding and branding system** to attract visitors and help them to navigate the downtown establishments and other sites of interest.

Make **Essex Street a great main street experience**. Improve pedestrian experience. Create feeling of destination and provide experiences. Make the street feel safe for women and children.

Improve connection between the downtown and the North Canal District by enhancing the pedestrian experience on Appleton Street.

Create a **Canal Street/Union Street Gateway**

Create a **North Canal District** and connect to the **Methuen Rail Trail**.

Brand the **MRTA Route 85-Downtown Lawrence Shuttle Bus**

Provide **directional signage for Downtown Lawrence on I-95**.

Develop a **branding/ thematic wayfinding plan** for the Downtown. Also use brand on social media, website, internal City Hall and auxiliary buildings signage.

Fund and promote a **Façade and Signage Program for Small Businesses/Landlords**. Develop guidelines and grant program.

Develop a Vacant Storefronts Program. Identify ways of activating the currently 35 vacant storefronts in both temporary and permanent ways.

Private Realm



Make use of incentives to make **storefront and signage improvements**.

Revenue / Sales



Support existing informal events, music festivals, and strong nightlife to help attract additional patrons. Public/private shared expense.

Admin Capacity



Increase municipal capacity and nurture partnerships with the business community. Support area businesses and developers to form a Downtown Association or a Main Streets organization.

Support a **public/private program for planting and maintenance** (and continue to encourage the larger businesses and developers to fund it). Deployed large planters and contracted with landscape company.





Cultural / Arts



Build on and expand existing **public visual and performing art program**. Encourage local and regional artists to participate.

Explore the creation of a **Cultural District** that would connect existing cultural and historic resources. Capitalize on Latin@ population, public art, history of mills. Involve the Director of the Library who has expressed an interest. Develop around cultural ethnic groups including Dominican, Puerto Rican, South American, Vietnamese and Cambodian (Buddhist temple).

Make Essex Street a great main street experience.

Category		Public Realm
Location		Essex Street
Origin		Town Planner, Plan Facilitator/Transportation Planner DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020) 2018 DRAFT Parking Study Report by Nelson/Nygard
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k) The estimated cost of a traffic calming and parking implementation study is on the order of \$150,000. The funding sources for some of the measures on Essex Street could come from the proposed ~\$6 million for improvements on the corridor. Parking Meter installation and regulatory signage installation could be funded through operating budgets.
Timeframe		Short Term (approximately 9 months) for completion of Study Medium Term for implementation of relevant recommendations
Risk		Medium Risk. While the pedestrian improvements enjoy support on the part of many stakeholders, there may be some resistance to the idea of introducing metered parking.
Key Performance Indicators		Increased foot traffic on Essex Street. More women and children walking around Downtown. Positive feedback from the public and business owners.
Partners & Resources		City of Lawrence (Planning Department, DPW), business/property owners, Mass Development TDI Complete Streets Funding Program (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) Design guidelines do not have to be limited to the private realm. Creating consistency in a downtown, village, or corridor is an important part of defining its identity both within and beyond the community. As part of a Complete Streets Project, a municipality should identify the specific materials, street furniture, trees, and public signage (including wayfinding) that will be used in the target area. These choices can be incorporated into the overall design guidelines to address both public and private realms.



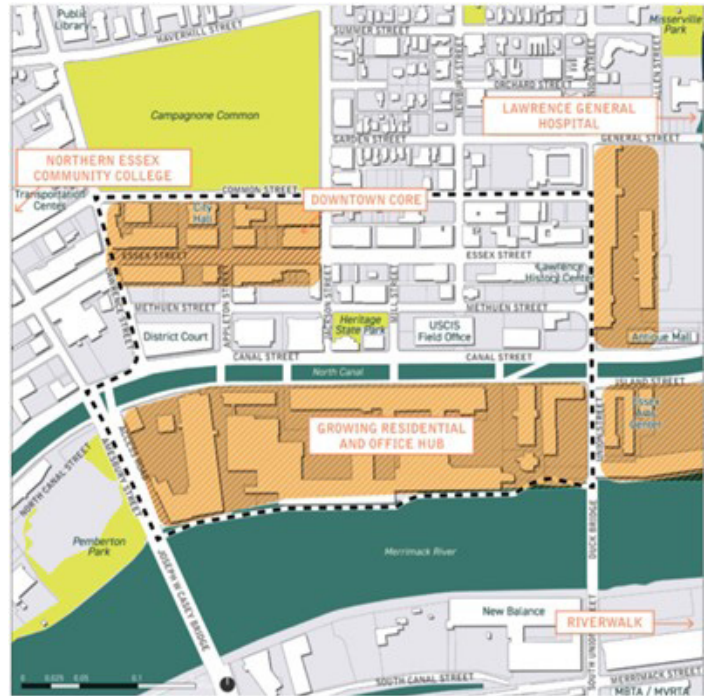
City Hall

Diagnostic

Decline in Business District foot traffic was significant. Almost three-quarters (70%) of businesses had less on-site customers in January and February of 2021 than before COVID. The area seems very auto-centric. Improvements to the pedestrian environment through traffic calming, widening sidewalks to accommodate amenities, and other pedestrian-oriented improvements will help to attract more patrons to the Downtown.

Essex Street is Lawrence's "Main Street". It has two travel lanes in the westbound direction and one in the eastbound direction. Speeding has been identified as a concern along this corridor. The City deploys temporary speed bumps to slow traffic. It is worth noting that there is no advanced signage associated with the installations. The street would benefit from a road diet to reduce the vehicular cross-section, emphasize pedestrian access and mobility, create opportunities to reallocate space within the corridor for other uses including parking, pedestrian space or bicycle accommodations and potentially increase the amount of on-street parking on the street.

The 2018 DRAFT Parking Study Report by Nelson/Nygard recommended that the City implement changes to improve the overall functionality of the parking supply. In addition to improving parking in the Downtown, the implementation of these recommendations could present an opportunity to identify corridors, such as Appleton Street, where parking could be removed to enhance pedestrian environment by widening sidewalks.



*Essex Street is Lawrence's Main Street
(from Downtown Lawrence Action and Engagement Plan/Estrategia De Acción Para El Centro De Lawrence, February 2020).*



Lawrence traffic on Essex Street



Looking north on Appleton Street at Essex Street: The lack of designated on-street loading zones contributes to illegal parking on Essex Street.

Action Item

Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in downtown. Make the street feel safe for women and children. Consider traffic calming methods such as reverse angled parking and other physical measures.

Implement existing recommendations from the Downtown Lawrence Action and Engagement Plan (2020) and the 2018 DRAFT Parking Study Report by Nelson/Nygard. Also the City should retain a consultant to complete a study to identify traffic calming measures and converting parking in the Downtown to metered parking. It would be beneficial to reduce the vehicular cross-section, emphasize pedestrian access and mobility, create opportunities to reallocate space within the corridor for other uses including parking, pedestrian space or bicycle accommodations and potentially increase the amount of on-street parking on the street.

This could be accomplished by eliminating one of the westbound traffic lanes and identify potential tactical and long-term interventions that would help calm traffic (and make the street feel more pedestrian-friendly e.g., curb extensions, raised intersections and crossing, new pedestrian crossings, etc.). This concept should be paired with a regulatory plan to reduce illegal and double parking (e.g., creating loading zones).

Process

Action Steps

1. ESTABLISH A TEAM

- Identify a Team and point person to guide the project
- Include relevant City Staff including individuals from DPW, Public Safety, Engineering

2. IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE LOCATIONS:

- Identify locations that can be prioritized for interventions
- Consider doing a few small projects to start to ensure feedback is adapted throughout a phased implementation plan
- Seek feedback from public safety and engineering departments on key areas with known safety challenges

3. PLAN AND DESIGN INTERVENTIONS:

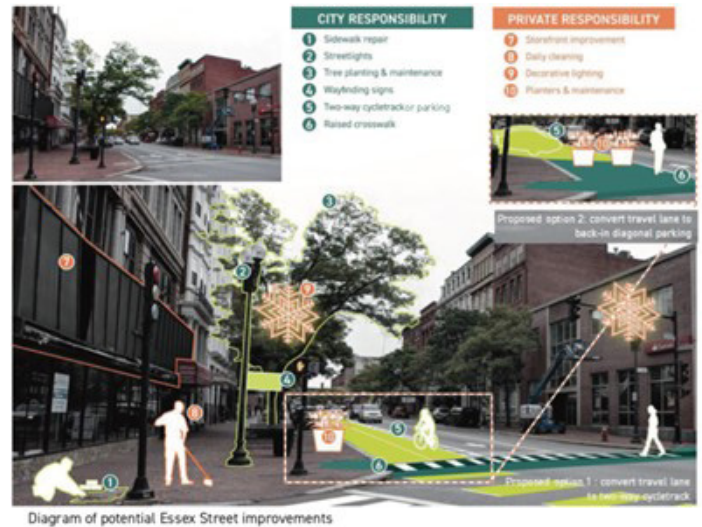
- Determine if additional design support is needed or if interventions can be designed in-house
- Consider a call for art for street murals
- Develop initial designs and budget for projects
- Ensure concerns from public safety and engineering departments are addressed

4. IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY AND APPEAL IN DOWNTOWN

- Consider pedestrianizing Essex St. (including plan for service and delivery access and hours, loading docks.).
- Consider managed parking lanes (e.g. loading in the morning, parking in the afternoon). Consider pedestrianizing on Sundays only (example Newbury Street, Boston this summer). Introduce parklets in some of the blocks near City Hall. Make connections to river/canal.
- Consider traffic calming methods such as reverse angled parking and other physical measures.
- Improve crosswalks, sidewalks, bike racks, ADA compliance, and other pedestrian amenities.
- See Stantec Study for recommendations regarding parking management strategies, re-striping and pilot tests.
- Consider speed tables after testing other traffic calming measures.
- Connect to bike trail a few blocks from Essex Street.

5. IMPLEMENT RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN (2020) INCLUDING:

- Improve attractiveness of the public realm and combine public services with contributions from the private sector for corridor-wide improvements. Strategies include: sidewalk repair, street lights, tree planting and maintenance targeting empty tree pits, daily cleaning, decorative lighting, planters and maintenance.
- Traffic calming and multimodal safety on Essex Street



from Downtown Lawrence Action and Engagement Plan/Estrategia De Acción Para El Centro De Lawrence, February 2020.

<https://5dec3ee3-4647-4911-b441-fdf86111df48.filesusr.com/ugd/2214b4c5dad5c5bd14ea5a1cec19237cc5ca3.pdf>

See Full Plan here: www.wearelawrence.org

Diagram of design principles and guidelines for Essex Street

BUILDINGS

1. Entrance awnings
2. Signage
3. Clear entranceways with minimal signage
4. Unobstructed frontage windows with high level transparency
5. Secondary frontage and upper floor window transparency
6. External lighting
7. Quality building materials

BUSINESS ZONE

8. Cafe seating
9. Outdoor vending display
10. A-frame signage
11. Planters

PEDESTRIAN ZONE

12. Pedestrian clearance

AMENITIES ZONE

13. Pedestrian-scaled street lighting
14. Benches
15. Bike racks
16. Street trees



from Downtown Lawrence Action and Engagement Plan/Estrategia De Acción Para El Centro De Lawrence, February 2020.

6. DEVELOP A PARKING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The City should retain consultant services to create an implementation Plan for developing new parking and loading regulations including the conversion of parking spaces in the Downtown to metered parking spaces consistent with recommendations in the 2018 Nelson/Nygard report. This plan should be refined based on other considerations to improve the Downtown, such as potential parking removal to improve the pedestrian environment. E.g. Before 10 AM and after 5 PM no need to pay.

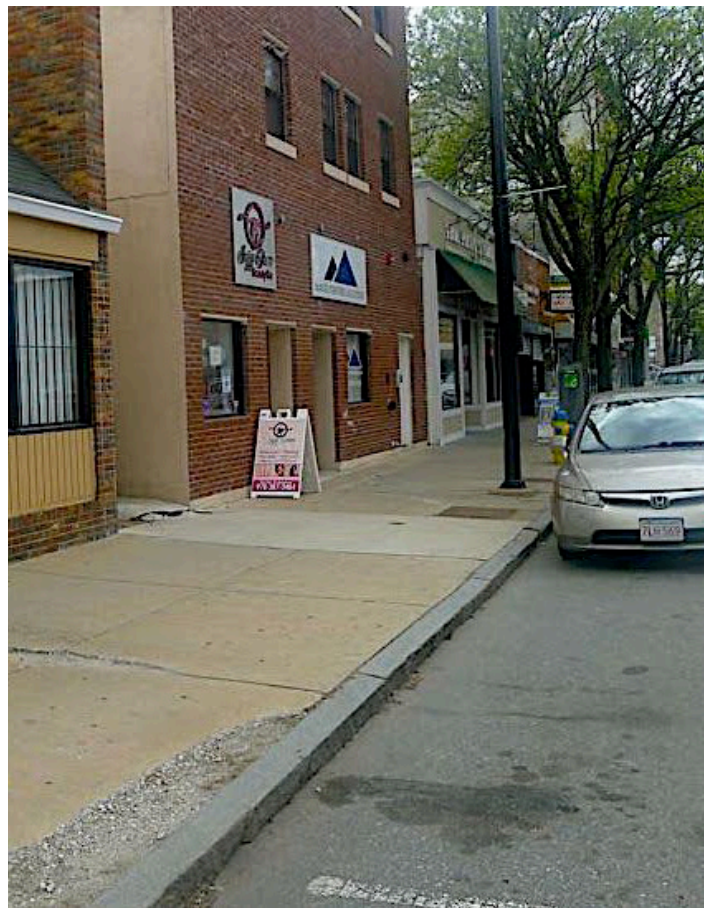
7. CONDUCT TRAFFIC CALMING STUDY

The City should retain consultant services to conduct a study to develop and evaluate appropriate near-term and long-term traffic calming measures. The study should evaluate the potential to eliminate one westbound traffic lane and identify potential tactical interventions that would help calm traffic and make the street feel more pedestrian-friendly. This concept should be paired with a regulatory plan to reduce illegal and double parking (e.g., creating loading zones). Potential measures could include:

- Shift the centerline to the north and a parking along the southern side of Essex Street between Lawrence Street and Appleton Street.
- Use plastic bollards to delineate curb extensions that could be made permanent after testing.
- Evaluate the feasibility of raised intersection at the Appleton Street intersection.
- Evaluate the feasibility of raised crossing at Pemberton Way.
- Introduce a new pedestrian crossing at Mill Street with appropriate safety signage; consider implementing a raised intersection at this location.
- Convert unregulated spaces on the north-south streets to metered parking to encourage parking turnover that would help offset site specific parking losses.
- Develop a plan for vehicle loading such as a managed curb with designated hours for loading and short-term parking.
- Communicate with and engage businesses and residents
- Perform in-person outreach to businesses regarding the interventions. Include flyers of draft designs.
- Include initial designs into Town communication channels. Be sure to speak to the temporary nature of the projects to gain support through the pilot phase
- Finalize design interventions • Finalize the intervention design
- Finalize the budget and materials costs
- Include a maintenance plan especially for flex posts as they will likely take some damage



Looking west on Methuen Street: Opportunities exist for new on-street metered spaces in the Downtown. The lack of parking on streets that are this wide creates a context for speeding on the Downtown streets.



8. IMPLEMENTATION

- Hire contractors to install the design or leverage DPW
- If pavement paint includes a creative design, consider a volunteer day to paint
- Installation could also be done through a call for art

9. FEEDBACK AND ITERATE

- Measure KPI. It may be necessary to track vehicle speeds prior to implementation
- Seek feedback from businesses and residents via survey and through conversations
- Incorporate feedback into future tactical interventions that ultimately can be adapted into a more permanent streetscape redesign.



Looking east on Essex Street towards Jackson Street intersection: A road diet would make the street feel more intimate, which helps slow vehicular travel speeds. A regulation plan is important to improve turnover at the curb and address parking and loading needs that contribute to double and illegal curb parking.



Create Calm Street Pilots and Pop-Up Curbside

“Streeteries”

Natick, MA

Overly-large intersections and wide travel lanes were contributing to higher speeds of travel through the heart of Natick's pedestrian core. In order to create a more comfortable and attractive walking and biking environment, lane and intersection diets could be deployed to achieve safer operations while sustaining the same vehicle throughput.

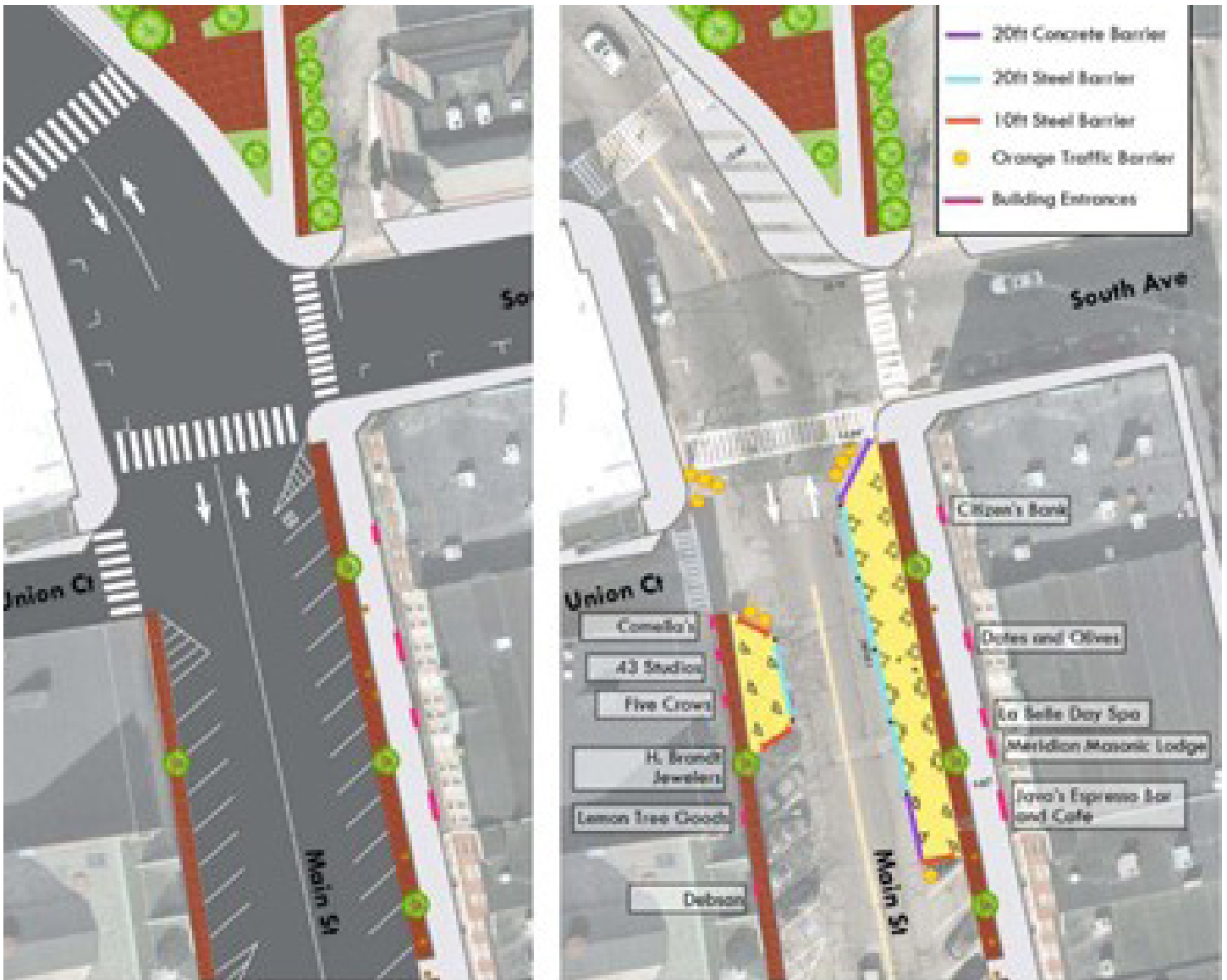
As communities grappled with strategies to restart local businesses – especially those that rely on foot traffic and shared spaces (i.e., retail and restaurants) – providing a safe environment that reinforces recommended COVID-19 physical distancing measures, is paramount. Given the need to provide more outdoor space for businesses to serve customers, and sidewalks unable to accommodate both business activity and pedestrian accommodation, communities like Natick were looking to repurpose streets to provide additional space so that both may be safely accommodated.

KEY ACTIONS INCLUDED:

- A kickoff meeting with all department officials to confirm project goals
- Site analysis and issues identification
- Business owner outreach
- Design concept development
- Stakeholder presentations and tactical event promotion
- Traffic calming testing in the field
- Confirming longer-term trial design and installing materials
- Processing feedback and engagement







PC: Nelson / Nygard



Layout plan of before and after conditions for traffic calming and in-street outdoor dining on Main Street, Natick, MA
SEE APPENDIX for a more detailed description of the project.

PC: Nelson/Nygard

Improve connection between Downtown and the North Canal District by enhancing the pedestrian experience on Appleton Street

Category		Public Realm
Location		Appleton Street
Origin		City Planner, Plan Facilitator/Transportation Planner DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020)
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k) The estimated cost of this study is on the order of \$50,000. Implementation of recommended measures could come from the City or mitigation funds from new developments.
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years). Study could be completed within a few months time.
Risk		Medium Risk. There may be some resistance to eliminating some of the on-street parking.
Key Performance Indicators		An increase in pedestrian traffic on Appleton Street to the Downtown.
Partners & Resources		City Planner, DPW

Diagnostic

Along with Essex Street, Appleton Street comprise the heart of the Downtown, however, pedestrian connections are not ideal.

- The 2020 Downtown Lawrence Action & Engagement Plan identified Appleton Street as a potential strong pedestrian connection between the North Canal District and Essex Street. It connects multiple destinations and has visual elements like the Pacific Mills tower to the south and the City Hall cupola and steeple of the Iglesia Cristiana Fuente De Salvacion to the north that provide orientational landmarks.
- The corridor is three blocks long between Common Street and Canal Street with a pedestrian plaza between Essex Street and Common Street, next to City Hall.
- The Pacific Mills tower to the south and the City Hall cupola and steeple of the Iglesia Cristiana Fuente De Salvacion to the north provide orientational landmarks.
- The city's parking garage and the Fenton Judicial Center are located on the street.
- Sidewalks are minimum dimensions except for the section next to the Fenton Judicial Center and there are no curb extensions at intersections.
- There are driveways at the parking garage, the parking lot at the corner of Appleton Street and Methuen Street, and Empire Street.
- There are a few trees planted at irregular intervals.



Looking south on Appleton Street: The Pacific Mills tower is a visual queue for the North Canal District.

Action Item

The City should retain consultant services to conduct a study to develop measures to transform Appleton Street into a link between Downtown and the North Canal District consistent with the 2020 Downtown Lawrence Action & Engagement Plan. Consideration should also be given to the Common Street pedestrian crossings to Campagnone Park.

Process

Write and release an RFP for a Consultant to conduct a study focusing on improving the pedestrian environment on Appleton Street. The study should consider:

- Eliminating on-street parking to create additional sidewalk width or provide bicycle accommodations between the North Canal District and Essex Street. This concept should be considered in tandem with potential expansions of Downtown metered parking and traffic calming measures on Essex Street.
- Enhancements to the pedestrian crossing at Common Street including a raised crossing to the entrance of Campagnone Park.



Outdoor Dining Feature



Mill Buildings

Create a Canal Street/Union Street Gateway

Category		Public Realm
Location		Intersection of Canal Street and Union Street
Origin		Town Planner, Plan Facilitator/Transportation Planner DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020)
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k) The estimated cost of this study is on the order of \$50,000. Implementation funds could come from State and Federal funding sources.
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		Improved visibility of existing signage and clear guidance to motorists directing them to the Downtown.
Partners & Resources		City of Lawrence Planning Department, DPW

Diagnostic

The intersection of Canal Street and Union Street is an important Downtown gateway that functions as a transitional nexus between the higher speed arterial street network that connects with I-495 and the lower speed streets of the Downtown. The only directional signage at the intersection identifies Canal Street eastbound as a route to I-495.

Guiding motorists to Downtown should help promote the Downtown as a destination.



Looking north on Union Street: I-495 directional sign at the intersection of Canal Street and Union Street.

Action Item

The City should retain consultant services to conduct a study to identify measures to slow traffic as it enters the Downtown street grid. Develop a plan to expand the existing directional signage to cover the Canal Street/Union Street intersection to guide motorists to Downtown locations. Identify locations where signage has poor visibility and recommend actions to address these conditions. Consider public art as a way to indicate arrival. Once directional signage has been installed, Canal Street can be transformed into a fitness and heritage trail by providing amenities, programming, and creating an esplanade along the canal. Work with owner of canal to clean up.



Looking West on Canal Street between Union Street and Mill Street: The amount of pavement on the street reinforces the idea that the area is auto-oriented. Note that there is no sidewalk on the north side of the street (right side of the picture).



Looking north on Union Street: Essex Street directional sign is obscured by a tree that needs pruning at the intersection of Essex Street Union Street. It would be desirable to mount a street name sign on the mast-arm if possible.

Process

1. The City should retain consultant services to conduct a study to identify measures to slow traffic as it enters the Downtown street grid.

The study should examine geometric changes to curb radii, potential elimination of the right-turn lane from Canal Street westbound to Union Street, directional signage to local destinations and other improvements to the Canal Street/Union Street Gateway intersection and, as appropriate, to adjacent streets and intersections including Canal Street/Marston Street corridor and the intersection of Essex Street and Union Street.

2. Develop a plan to expand the existing directional signage to cover the Canal Street/Union Street intersection to guide motorists to Downtown locations. This plan should also include a review of advance signage before the intersection and signage needs between the intersection and the destination. Candidate destinations include:
 - Essex Street retail
 - Lawrence Heritage State Park
 - The City's parking garage on Appleton Street
3. The review should also identify locations where signage has poor visibility and recommend actions to address these conditions. For example, trees obscure directional signage at Essex Street and the parking sign on Canal east of Appleton is partially obscured by a streetlight.
4. In addition to Essex Street, other streets in the Downtown street grid could benefit from interventions that would reinforce the idea that motorists are entering into and traveling through a pedestrian area and should travel at low

speeds. The study should identify and review potential tactical interventions that would help calm traffic throughout the downtown. Examples for consideration include:

- Evaluate the potential to eliminate the westbound right-turn lane on Canal Street at Union Street and reduce the turning radii at the Canal Street/Union Street intersection.
- Evaluate the need for the parking lane on the north side of Canal Street between Union Street and Mill Street and whether this space could be used to widen the sidewalk/path on the south side of the street, add a sidewalk on the north side of the street or implement some other Complete Street measure.





- Evaluate parking and road diet options for Methuen Street (infrastructure work done in past 6 months, needs to be paved so opportunity)
- Assess opportunities for curb extensions at intersections to emphasize the area as a pedestrian zone

5. Consider public art as a way to indicate arrival
6. Once directional signage has been installed, Canal Street can be transformed into a **fitness and heritage trail** by providing amenities, programming, and creating an esplanade along the canal. Work with owner of canal to clean up. See: Placemaking in the North Canal District Plan (2012) and Downtown Lawrence Action and Engagement Plan (2020):
 - https://5dec3ee3-4647-4911-b441-fdf86111df48.filesusr.com/ugd/2214b4_af770b93b42c4ffd-9667210fa6461afd.pdf



Looking west on Canal Street next to City parking garage: For visibility purposes, it would be beneficial to move this sign further to the west before the next streetlight pole.

Create a North Canal District and connect to the Methuen Rail Trail

Category		Public Realm
Location		North Canal Area of City of Lawrence
Origin		Plan Facilitator/Transportation Planner DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020)
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k). The estimated cost of the study is approximately \$100,000. Implementation of recommended measures could come from the City or mitigation funds from new developments.
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years). The study can be completed in less than a year. Implementation will take longer.
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		Increased pedestrian traffic to the downtown using the improved pedestrian connections.
Partners & Resources		City of Lawrence (Planning Department, DPW), mill building owners, owners of canal, Methuen Rail Trail

Diagnostic

The North Canal was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. The canal is bordered by Canal Street on the north side and mill buildings on the south side. The mill buildings are set back approximately 20 feet from the canal on the south side. The canal is spanned by eleven bridges.

Downtown, which is two blocks from the canal, would benefit from improvements to the canal and adjacent streets. These improvements would strengthen connections between the Downtown and the North Canal District that would include the new residential, retail, cultural and recreational resources on East Island. Increased foot traffic to the canal and opportunities for events along the canal would help bring more people to the Downtown.

In addition to strengthening the Appleton Street Corridor, there are other actions that would help to advance improvements to the canal to make it a formative element of the North Canal District, including connecting it to the Methuen Rail Trail.

Action Item

Create a pleasant, safe and attractive pedestrian connection to the downtown by conducting a study focused on identifying strategies that accomplish this.



Looking west on Canal Street between Union Street and Mill Street: Reducing the width of Canal Street would create opportunities for a better pedestrian and bicycle environment. A shared street concept is worth pursuing but should also consider impacts to vehicular access to the garage on Appleton Street.



Lawrence Canal and Pedestrian Path on Canal St.



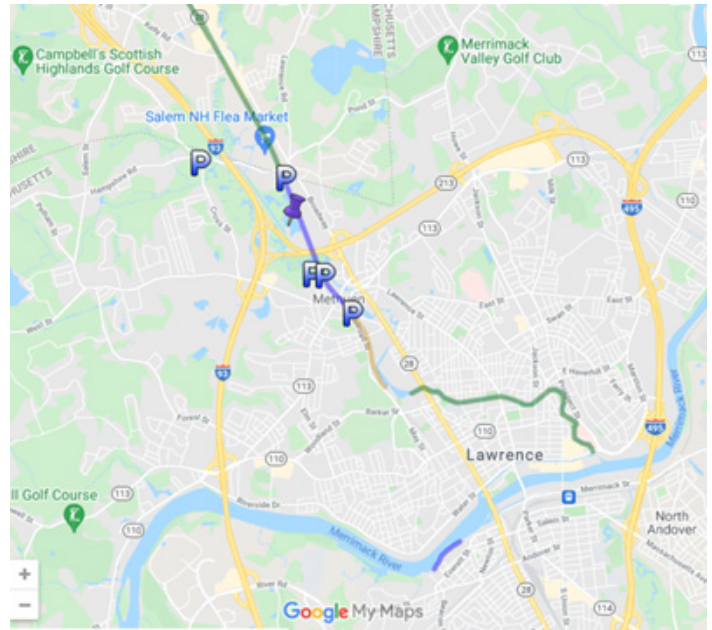
Context of North Canal Street, Lawrence, MA

Process

The City should retain consultant services to conduct a study to:

- Evaluate the structural integrity of the canal walls, including their capacity to accommodate widened pathways up to the edge of the wall.
- Analyze opportunities to reduce the width of Canal Street in some sections and/or create a shared street that could be closed at times.
- Consider the creation of a path along the southern side of the canal on East Island.
- Assess improvements to pedestrian crossings at the intersections with the bridge crossings.

Improve bicycle connectivity to the Methuen Rail Trail extension. The Methuen Rail Trail opened in November 2019, connecting Lawrence with Methuen and Salem New Hampshire. An extension of the trail will be constructed from its current termination point at Manchester Street Park to the south bank of the Merrimack River. The extension will provide a significant new gateway opportunity for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to Downtown Lawrence and the North Canal District. Evaluate measures to encourage linkages between the trail and retail activity along Essex Street and the North Canal including signage and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections on Essex Street and in the North Canal District. The study should develop measures to encourage linkages between the trail and retail activity along Essex Street and the North Canal including signage and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections on Essex Street and in the North Canal District.



Methuen Rail Trail



Methuen Rail Trail Volunteers cleaning the trail on Earth Day, 2017. Improving pedestrian connections to the Downtown may help to increase foot traffic to the Downtown.



Looking east on the North Canal: Improvements to the canal and its bridges would be a linchpin in efforts to activate this area



Looking east on the North Canal: Creation of path on the south side of the canal would improve circulation and mobility in the North Canal District.

Minuteman Bikeway and Rail Trail



Public Realm

The Minuteman Bikeway is one of the most popular and successful rail-trails in the United States, enjoyed for both healthy recreation and transportation.

The bikeway has become a new type of "Main Street" where neighbors and strangers alike come together while riding, walking, or skating on the path. Connecting to the Alewife "T" Station in Cambridge, the bikeway provides an easy way for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel to and from subway and bus lines, serving to reduce automobile traffic in the area.

The bikeway is collectively managed and maintained by the four communities it passes through: Bedford, Lexington, Arlington, and Cambridge. Currently, as part of the LRRP program, the Towns of Bedford, Lexington and Arlington are looking at ways of attracting bikeway/railway traffic to the area's commercial districts.







<http://minutemanbikeway.org>



Jogger on Minuteman Bikeway

Brand the MRTA Route 85 – Downtown

Category		Public Realm
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Plan Facilitator/Transportation Planner
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k)
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		<p>Increased ridership.</p> <p>PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND FEEDBACK ²</p> <p>As with any branding initiative, it is critical to conduct ongoing assessment of the implementation and performance to ensure that the brand remains relevant and is consistently communicated.</p> <p>Obtain feedback both from employees and the public and ridership. Feedback can be collected through formal tools such as online surveys, onboard surveys or telephone interviews, as well as informal, directional input obtained via customer comments and complaints.</p> <p>Additionally, monitoring metrics such as new versus repeat customers, customer loyalty, employee retention, ridership increases and revenue growth can be useful in ongoing planning initiatives and communication strategies.</p>
Partners & Resources		City of Lawrence, MVRTA

²https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-BTS-BRT-RP-001-10_Rev1.pdf

Diagnostic

The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) runs a free shuttle loop, Route 85 – Lawrence Downtown Shuttle, connecting neighborhoods and senior centers with the Downtown and other destinations. Route 85 runs in an eastbound direction on Essex Street from Broadway to Union Street.

The MVRTA schedule indicates that buses run every 30 minutes from 7:00 AM to 7 PM on weekdays and hourly from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturdays. There is no Sunday service. The schedule also indicates a 20-minute runtime start-to-finish for the loop.

The MVRTA website indicates that Route 85 “buses may be flagged along route except in no-stop zones.” The website also identifies thirteen stop locations. There are no signs identifying the bus stops on Essex Street and parking is allowed in many stop locations.

Making it easier to understand when and where the bus can be accessed will help to increase ridership to the Downtown.

Action Item

Conduct a study to review route 85 – Lawrence Downtown Shuttle.

Process

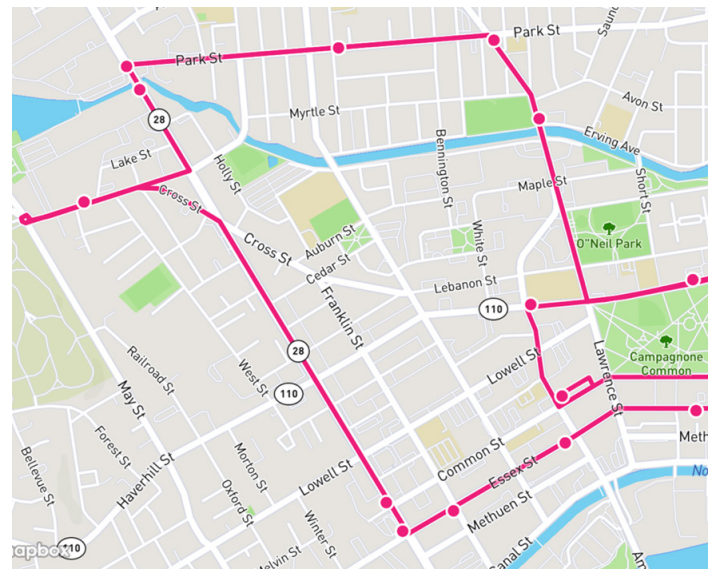
Conduct a study to review route 85 – Lawrence Downtown Shuttle. Options for consideration should include:

- Branding the service at stops with signage and other amenities.
- Implementing no parking regulations at designated bus stops to ensure that buses can pull to the curb.

Bus wraps that call attention to the buses and are designed to relate to the signage and bus stop design can also help to brand the buses.



Google Streetview (November 2020) looking north at the City of Lawrence Senior Center on Haverhill Street: This stop has a shelter, bench, and a trash receptacle. The stop is signed with a generic bus stop sign.



Merrimack Valley Transit Authority route map for the Route 85 – Lawrence Downtown Shuttle.



Best Practice

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Recommended Practice



Public Realm

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Recommended Practice "Bus Rapid Transit Branding, Imaging and Marketing" contains a more in-depth discussion of BRT system branding practices.

SEE: https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-BTS-BRT-RP-001-10_Rev1.pdf

"A branding strategy for a bus service gives transit agencies the opportunity to proactively define the way people think and feel about the service. The branding strategy can create a targeted brand experience for customers and allow them to form relationships with the brand."

THERE ARE FOUR STEPS IN DEVELOPING A BRANDING STRATEGY:

- **Who:** Identify and characterize the target audiences.
- **What:** Determine the "brand promise" to be made to the audiences.
- **How:** Determine how all the audience "touch points" will communicate the brand.
- **Why:** Determine why audiences should care about the brand.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION PROVIDES GUIDELINES FOR THE BRANDING OF BUS STATIONS AND STOPS.

"Branding gives a service or product a distinct identity that results in clear and positive public recognition of the service. The continuation of the brand on all individual station elements should emphasize a clear and consistent message about the service. Elements of station branding can be included within the actual design of the station components (e.g., shapes and sizes) or included on all structures, customer information panels and amenities at the station with colors, logos or graphics. Attention to small details sends an important message. A unique branding feature for consideration could be the inclusion of an "iconic" marker or monument sign at each station."

https://apta.com/wp-content/uploads/Standards_Documents/APTA-BTS-BRT-RP-002-10.pdf

GUIDELINES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

Architectural treatments

Architectural treatments such as specially designed canopies or shelters help to make stations more visible and can help in developing a brand identity for the BRT system. Creative approaches to designing fencing, stairs and ramps will help to create community support for the BRT system and will add to the riding experience. Station art also may be able to be incorporated into fencing, walkways and shelters.

Visual and aesthetic impacts

While concerns may arise about visual and aesthetic impacts of a station, the planning process provides an opportunity to engage the public in developing a station that would be a source of community pride. This may be done through design workshops, charrettes and involving the community in decisions concerning architecture, colors, finishing materials, signage and pedestrian access. Installation of art would further enhance the appeal of a new station for residents and businesses.

Environmentally sustainable materials and practices
The design phase of a new station offers opportunities to introduce environmentally sensitive materials and practices into its construction and operation. Assessment of energy usage typically is performed for the overall project to determine

the energy conservation benefits of a BRT system. However, architects also can consider energy conservation measures for BRT stations, such as designs that make use of natural lighting and low-power-consuming lighting, use of solar panels and incorporation of recycled materials in building construction. Transit operators pursuing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for BRT stations may see the added benefit of reduced operating costs and local grants for "green" projects.

Universal design

Incorporating elements of universal design improves accessibility of stations, improving accessibility for disabled people as well as other transit patrons, such as travelers with luggage. Some BRT systems require the implementation of these elements at stations, either due to an extended platform length or to the need for platform boarding to accommodate BRT vehicles.

U.S. disability advocates Easter Seals and Project Action provide guidance on the concepts of universal design in the following document: http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/DocServer/06BSTK_Complete_Toolkit.pdf?docID=21443.



Branded bus stop in Curacao, Brazil

Formalize and make permanent a clear and streamlined process for using public space for **outdoor dining**.

Category		Public Realm
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Town Planner, area restaurants
Budget		Low Budget (Under \$50k)
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		Continued and increased use of public (and private) space for outdoor dining.
Partners & Resources		Downtown Lawrence businesses and restaurants. Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program.

Action Item

Use the Outdoor Dining Toolkit to develop a streamlined process.

Process

1. Adapt the Outdoor Dining Toolkit to streamline the process of permitting for outdoor dining and selling of merchandise.
2. Consider expanding the sidewalks to double width in front of restaurants to accommodate outdoor dining. See Easton example: <https://beverly.wickedlocal.com/news/20160619/farmers-daughter-restaurant-looks-to-add-outdoor-seating-in-easton>
3. Create a checklist : "How to use public space for outdoor dining"





Outdoor Dining

Lawrence, KS

The Outdoor Dining/Retail Community Toolkit addresses issues regarding enacting permanent ordinances, providing clear design guidelines, offering assistance on use of materials and bulk purchasing, compliance with ADA, and navigating local and state regulations:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/outdoor-dining-retail-toolkit/download>

³<https://www2.ijworld.com/news/2021/sep/20/city-of-lawrence-asks-downtown-visitors-and-businesses-if-they-want-outdoor-dining-setup-to-be-a-permanent-option/>





The city recently launched an online survey to collect feedback from downtown visitors and business owners about making outdoor dining permanent and will be hosting three public meetings in the first week of October. Both the survey and meetings are opportunities for the City to establish degree of support, but also what concerns visitors, residents, and business owners have and what they would like a long-term program, making outdoor dining more or less permanent, to address.

The program has allowed downtown businesses to repurpose sidewalks and parking stalls directly in front of or alongside their storefronts for outdoor dining or other uses. About 20 restaurants or bars have a permit to repurpose the space, and many have built wooden or brick patios to provide a space for their customers to be served outdoors.



The "parklet" patio of Papa Keno's Pizzeria, 837 Massachusetts St., Lawrence, Kansas is pictured on Sept. 18, 2021.

Explore the creation of a **Cultural District**

Category		Cultural/Arts
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Town Planner, Plan Facilitators
Budget		Low Budget (Under \$50k) Expenses include creating materials to promote the Cultural District and to make physical connections (such as through plaques, QR codes, etc.)
Timeframe		Medium Term (5-10 years). Will need time to set up the District, conduct outreach to partners, etc.
Risk		Low Risk There is a low probability that some of the expected partners will not be interested in participating.
Key Performance Indicators		Connecting existing cultural and historic resources in physical and other ways is expected to make Lawrence more attractive to visitors. It is also intended to provide more of a visitor itinerary resulting in their spending more time in the City in the hope that they patronize shops and restaurants in the Downtown. An increase in the number of visitors and patrons is a Key Performance Indicator.
Partners & Resources		Mass Cultural Council, City Planner, We Are / Somos Lawrence, Lawrence Arts Collective (Elevated Thought (youth arts nonprofit), Essex Art Center (nonprofit art center), 599 Studios (artist workspace), El Taller Cafe & Bookstore (cafe, bookstore, literary hub), Ateneo Dominicano de Nueva Inglaterra (Dominican cultural group), Merrimack River Watershed Council (river environmental nonprofit), and the Lawrence Public Library, including Little Library (supporting City department for the collective), Iluminación Lawrence

Diagnostic

Attracting non-resident patrons has been a challenge for Lawrence businesses. Connecting historic and cultural assets by way of a Cultural District may help to establish Lawrence's credibility as a place worthy of a visit.

Action Item

Apply to Mass Cultural Council for Cultural District designation. Outreach to potential partners and develop a plan to connect existing cultural and historic resources. Capitalize on Latin@ population, public art, history of mills. Involve the Director of the Library who has expressed an interest. Develop around cultural ethnic groups including Dominican, Puerto Rican, South American, Vietnamese and Cambodian (Buddhist temple).



Mill buildings, Lawrence, MA

Process

Connect historic and cultural features through public art, interpretation, walking/biking tours, organizing events that celebrate the City's culture and history (e.g. Latin@ culture, music and food; Vietnamese and Cambodian culture, music, and food; public art; history of mills, Strike of the Bread and Roses, etc.)

1. Identify potential participants
2. Establish a partnership of stakeholders
3. Develop a clear vision, goals, and marketing and management plan for the district.
4. Apply to Mass Cultural Council for designation.
5. Create ways of connecting locations, stories and events.
6. Develop marketing materials and disseminate.

62%

of foreign-born residents in Lawrence come from the Dominican Republic.

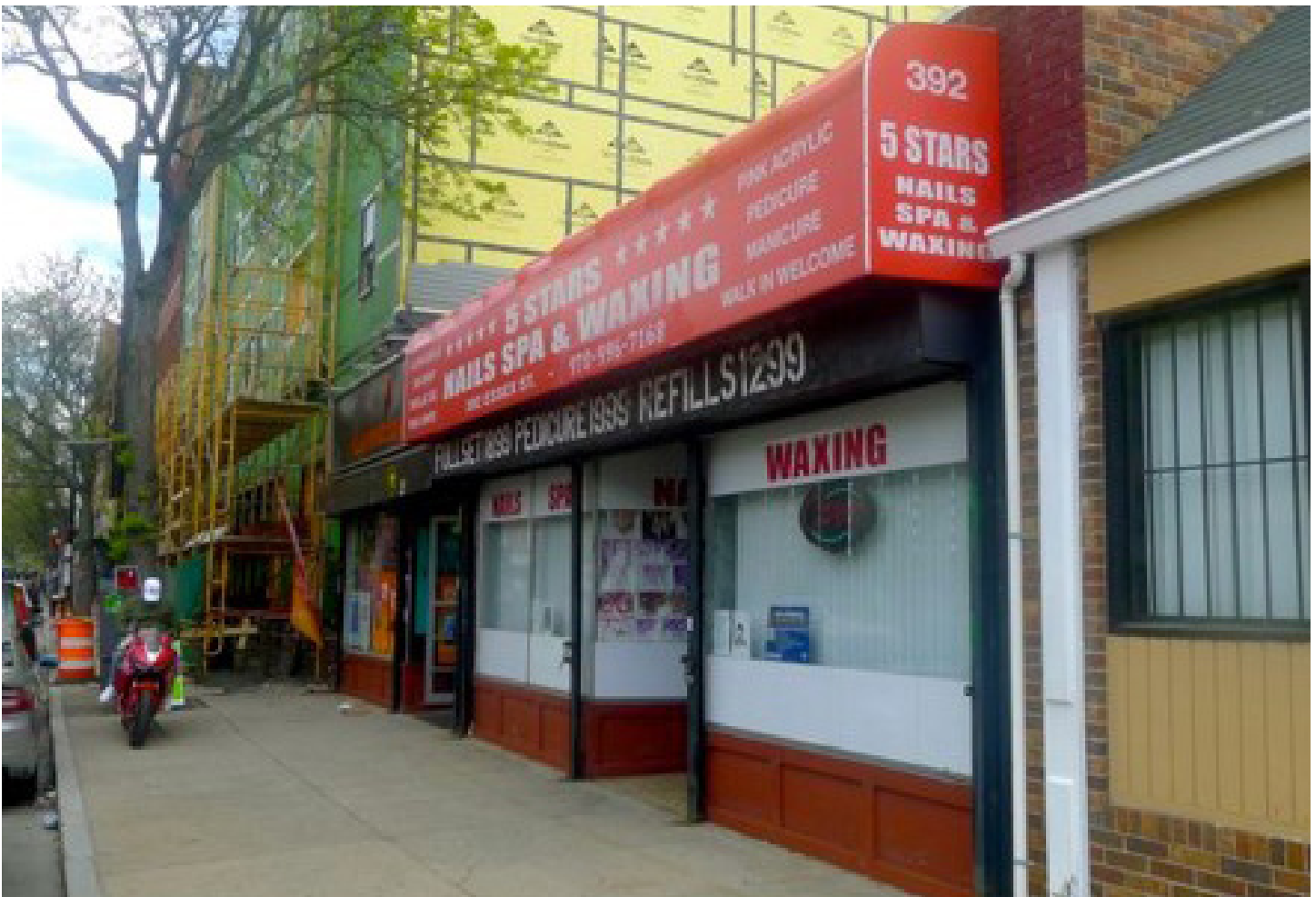
OTHER RESIDENTS COME FROM:

(27%) Puerto Rico

(5%) Central America

(1%) Mexico

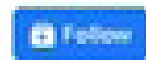
(5%) Other countries in South America / the Caribbean





Boston's Latin Quarter

1,304 followers • 265 following



Best Practice

Boston's Latin Quarter

Boston, MA



Cultural/Arts

APPLICATION PROCESS:

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/application-process/>

Launched in 2011 by an act of the state legislature, Cultural Districts drive economic growth, strengthen our distinctive local character, and improve the quality of life of families across Massachusetts. By supporting arts, humanities, and science organizations, Cultural Districts attract tourists and entrepreneurs, which in turn help communities foster their cultural sector and expand their tax base.

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/>

As defined in the *Massachusetts Cultural Districts Initiative* legislation, a **cultural district** is "a specific geographical area in a city or town that has a concentration of cultural facilities, activities, and assets. It is a walkable, compact area that is easily identifiable to visitors and residents and serves as a center of cultural, artistic, and economic activity."

THE LAW THAT CREATED CULTURAL DISTRICTS HAS SPECIFIC GOALS. THEY ARE:

1. Attract artists and cultural enterprises
2. Encourage business and job development
3. Establish the district as a tourist destination
4. Preserve and reuse historic buildings
5. Enhance property values
6. Foster local cultural development.

<https://www.facebook.com/BostonsLatinQuarter/>

The designation (2018) aims to "preserve and uplift the decades of rich history and contributions of Latinx immigrants who have made our neighborhood what it is today. In Boston's Latin Quarter, experience bright murals and sculptures, cuisine from many Latino culture⁴."

SEE short documentary of how a Cultural District can support residents to re-make their home as immigrants:

<https://youtu.be/uxnlu7tou10>

SEE HERE for a List of Massachusetts designated Cultural Districts: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/designated-cultural-districts/>

⁴ https://www.hydesquare.org/bostons-latin-quarter/?fbclid=IwAR1gyiHY00pvq-iNvKE17GJZNMup5HDrC6YYccOB_HFK8UJHB40ETaE9o48



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Resources

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/resources/>

Glossary:






<https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/glossary/>

Application Process:

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/cultural-districts/application-process/>



Develop a **branding thematic wayfinding plan** for the Downtown.

Category		Public Realm
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Town Planner, Mayor, Plan Facilitator DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020)
Budget	 	Low to high budget for Implementation (\$20,000-\$150,000) See page 31 for more information on costs. Potential Funding Sources/Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Streets and Spaces Program (MassDOT) • Future BID Budget • Massachusetts Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant Program (only non-profits can apply) • ARPA Funding
Timeframe		Short Term (2-4 months) for fabrication & installation
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		The Number of wayfinding elements installed , Foot-traffic increase observed by merchants, Positive community feedback & press-media coverage, number of entities that choose to use or relate to the branding in some way.
Partners & Resources		Town Planner, DPW, local financial institutions, designers and contractors

Diagnostic

A lack of a cohesive system of signage and other elements that would help to create a better sense of place is evident in the Downtown.

Action Item

Develop a branding thematic wayfinding plan for the Downtown. Apply branding theme to social media, website, internal City Hall and auxiliary buildings signage.

Create a wayfinding and branding system to help emphasize the features that make Lawrence unique and to connect the Downtown to adjacent areas, better integrating the Downtown with these. To create a wayfinding & branding program for Downtown that will better direct users to their destination but also create a sense of place for the commercial nodes corridor. The project will involve:

- Creation of a Team to guide the project
- Review of relevant project limits, points of interest, destinations and businesses
- Design of a brand theme, logo and optional tagline
- Identification of locations for wayfinding elements
- Implementation of wayfinding and branding element



Process

The Downtown 2020 Action Plan identified the need to strengthen the identity of the Downtown with new signage. Three main types of signage were identified:

- Wayfinding with a map of Downtown and attractions can help visitors navigate the area.
- Heritage trail signs are a great way to highlight Lawrence history. The existing The Path/El Sendero signs can be refreshed and expanded upon.
- Parking signs as part of a Downtown parking strategy will help improve the visitor experience.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a Wayfinding and Branding Advisory Committee to coordinate the project. This group will guide the project and ensure concerns within each Department are met early on in the process
 - Review relevant project limits, points of interest, designations and businesses.
2. The team should review project limits, points of interest, destinations, and businesses
 - Design a brand theme, logo and optional tagline . Select a theme (consider Bread and Roses).
 - Consider bilingual or multi-lingual signage
3. The team would work to ideate themes around Downtown Lawrence as it relates to community branding which would support strategic placemaking:
 - Review any historical experiences, local symbols both physical and non-physical, and aspirations for the corridor
 - Translate potential themes into branding and wayfinding concepts along with optional tagline
 - The team would then select a final brand design and optional tagline
 - Develop a final Family of Elements which would identify wayfinding
 - Identify locations for wayfinding elements
4. The team will work to identify location for wayfinding elements. (see opportunities next page)
 - Create a sign schedule identifying the location of the signs and quantity needed
 - Create a map that identifies the sign locations
5. Implementation
 - Fabricate and install the wayfinding elements
 - Consider phasing implementation if financial resources are limited
 - Translate the branding across other City applications such as City Letter Head, logo, newsletters, etc. to begin telling the brand story City-wide.



Wayfinding Signage System

Reading, MA



Public Realm






BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE: Reading, MA

The map identifies some opportunities for wayfinding elements. During the process, the Team would want to refine these locations, taking into account sight lines and visibility factors.



Reading, MA Wayfinding Elements
SEE APPENDIX FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Develop a Vacant Storefronts Program.

Category		Private Realm
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Town Planner, Mass Development
Budget	 	Low Budget (Under \$50k) - Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k), depending on degree of involvement of local artists and others. Could promote advertising as a way of covering expenses.
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years). It is important to start on the program soon as the vacancies are having a negative impact on COVID recovery.
Risk		Low Risk. Some property owners may not be interested initially. It may take a few examples to demonstrate the usefulness of getting involved in the program.
Key Performance Indicators		The number of property owners that participate in the Program, the number of artists that participate, the number of popup businesses that, after testing out their business idea, set up "shop."
Partners & Resources		Town Planner, DPW, Mass Development, local business/property owners, local artists, small business owners

Diagnostic

There are currently 35 vacancies in the Downtown Study area. These not only unattractive creating a sense of the "missing tooth in a smile," but they also can make a downtown feel abandoned and unsafe. Creating a program for temporary uses and/or exterior treatment of these vacant storefronts can help to activate the street.

Action Item

Develop a Vacant Storefronts Program

Identify ways of activating the currently 35 vacant storefronts in both temporary and permanent ways.

- Think of the empty storefront as an opportunity for creative artistic expression to energize a storefront, block or commercial area.
- This allows the commercial building or district to take a negative and make it into a positive through visual enhancement while generating provocative conversation or even by creating a temporary art gallery.
- Partners are necessary so that collaboration can take place smoothly between the community agencies, business and arts communities.
- Publicize the activity. This draws community interest, reinforces artists' involvement and attracts potential landlord participants.



Empty storefronts in a beautiful commercial block is like the missing tooth in the beautiful smile.

Diagnostic

Action Steps:

- Document the empty storefronts in the Downtown Study area.
- Select focus areas, for example, focus could be on clusters of greatest concentration of stores and empty storefronts.
- Continue to identify landlords and reach out to landlords through cold calls, e-mails, and online and print publications. Persistence in reaching out seemed to payoff the most.
- Discuss and agree with landlords on the organization's approach to the empty storefront. Individual property managers made final decisions about what went where.
- Develop an approach to the installations or create an inventory of existing artwork by local artists.
- Publicize the successful projects to encourage more landlord/building owner involvement.
- In addition to improving the exterior of vacant storefronts, the City could:
 - Consider allowing small retailers to access vacant storefronts at a significantly reduced cost. This will give small businesses an opportunity to "test" their business prior to making significant investments.
 - Consider monthly vendor fairs and popups for vendors to test their business ideas. Expand on Mass Development's Transformative Development Initiative "Imagina Essex" Storefront Activation Program, Popup support and monthly vendor fairs for those not ready for brick and mortar: <https://www.imaginaessex.com>
 - Wrap facades to demonstrate what the storefront could look like.
 - Create temporary gallery settings for local artists in vacant storefronts.





Best Practice

Newton Storefronts

Newton, MA



Private Realm

SEE APPENDIX for more Best Practice Examples

- To augment the "Call for Interested Landlords," Newton Community Pride used local media through press releases including The Boston Globe, local online publications, social media and their own website to communicate the program.
- In Newton's case, the artwork already existed and had been used as part of the previously funded Newton Community Pride program, FenceArt. FenceArt produced a juried "call to artist" that generated an inventory of artwork.
- All art was previously printed on vinyl banners, and this allowed for an easy installation behind storefront windows.
- The results of the initial effort were disappointing to the organization who desired much more landlord participation. However, the lessons learned here allow for future project application.

Increase municipal capacity and nurture partnerships with the business community.

Category		Administrative Capacity
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		City Planner, Plan Facilitator, local business/property owners
Budget		Low Budget (Under \$50k). Consultant Fee to help develop and run the process for exploring different models.
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years). Work with Consultant to explore and select most appropriate model for Lawrence's businesses to work together with one another and with the City.
Risk		Medium Risk. Some risk of a lack of interest on the part of some businesses to participate and difficulty maintaining funding.
Key Performance Indicators		<p>A vibrant Downtown Association can organize and host events, promote a buy local campaign and co-marketing across local businesses. It can also support joint beautification efforts. This will help the Downtown be more of a destination and help attract visitors.</p> <p>KPIs include the number of businesses that participate in the Association and the events it organizes. Additionally, any increase in sales and revenue that can be directly related to these efforts would be an important KPI.</p>
Partners & Resources		<p>City of Lawrence, Economic Development Team, Mass Development TDI, local business and property owners, Essex Street Business Association, Small Business Coalition</p> <p>AARP Funding</p>



Diagnostic

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.

100% of business survey respondents in the Lawrence Target Area reported impacts from COVID-19.

7. A majority of businesses reported a decline in revenue, business closure, employee layoff and reduced operating hours/capacity.
8. **Decline in Business District foot traffic** was significant. Almost three-quarter (70%) of businesses had less on-site customers in January and February of 2021 than before COVID.
9. In several categories, the rate of negative impacts reported by Lawrence Target Area businesses is higher than the rate among all businesses in RRP Districts.

A Google search discovered that many of the web links for Downtown Lawrence, Shopping in Downtown Lawrence, etc. are broken.

Action Item

Increase municipal capacity and nurture partnerships with the business community.

Build on efforts with Small Business Coalition, City's restaurant initiative, and activities undertaken by area non-profit organizations. Support area developers to form a Downtown Association or a Main Streets organization.

Process

There have been some recent efforts and much interest expressed on the part of some businesses to form a management entity to better work together and with the City. That is, there is interest in increasing the capacity of businesses to provide better coordination and pooled funding to support businesses and the Downtown in COVID recovery and ongoing programming. Additionally, the municipality hopes to engage a loosely formed merchants group to develop an approach to forming a sustainable downtown organizational model. Organizers will undertake a phased and iterative process to evaluate which organizational model will work best in Lawrence.

Existing efforts to build on include the recently formed Small Business Coalition, the City's restaurant initiative developed during COVID, and activities undertaken by area non-profit organizations. Area developers have already raised \$40,000+.

In beginning to create a sustainable management entity for Downtown Lawrence, consider the following:

1. Getting Started - Identify Startup Resources
2. Develop the Value Proposition
3. Stakeholder Engagement
4. Create a Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy
5. Identify Downtown Priorities
6. Evaluating Organizational Models
7. Resources for Sustainability

GETTING STARTED

Canton may initiate this project by creating a working partnership between the municipality and downtown stakeholders such as businesses, chamber, nonprofits, media, civic leaders, property owners and active residents. The municipality has spearheaded the LRRP planning process. The opportunity may exist to use the LRRP planning process as a launching point for stakeholder engagement.

DEVELOP THE VALUE PROPOSITION

It will be essential to develop the value proposition for investing human capital and the financial resources into a downtown organization and communicate to the municipality and private stakeholders the impact of their investment. The goal of any downtown organization is to build a destination that is attractive to potential businesses, residents, and visitors. A successful district management effort can result in 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 talking points include:

- Ability to collectively and cost effectively purchase priority programs and services to achieve impact /scale
- Provide a unified voice / "seat at the table" for district priorities
- Professional management and staff dedicated to implementing programs and services in the district.
- Ability to respond to crisis - COVID
- Leverage resources and collaborations

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/ LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

The municipality may engage key property and business owners, and civic leaders to launch the conversation about forming a downtown management entity and begin discussions on which model is the most sustainable for Canton. The goal of this effort would be to form a steering committee to develop a sustainable district management model for Canton. The municipality may initiate this effort but should transition to a private sector led working 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 the downtown. This work has begun through the LRRP process but will need to continue to execute proposed LRRP projects. Additionally, 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 - Executive Directors from downtown management entities other successful communities
- Visits to other communities with downtown entities to see programs in action
- Surveys of needs and priorities (although this has recently been done through the LRRP process but could include a broader distribution to other stakeholders).
- Websites/social media

EVALUATE ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

Once organizers have established the downtown priorities/ proposed programs and budget, it will be important to determine the most appropriate district management organizational model for Canton. Two of the most common models are a voluntary nonprofit " Main St" type organization or a more formal Business Improvement District. Organizers must consider an approach to financial sustainability and governance for each model under consideration. The steering committee may evaluate different organizational models through site visits, peer learning from Executive directors of downtown organizations, online research, or other TA.

RESOURCES FOR STARTUP AND SUSTAINABILITY

Seed money is required to start a district management organization. Sources include TA through the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, or ARPA funds (if the development of the organization is tied to implementing COVID recovery activities). Additionally, local Institutions, foundations and key stakeholders/Individual contributors may be sources for seed money to launch an effort to form a downtown management entity. Careful attention 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 downtown organization should strive to secure multiple year commitments from funders (if forming a voluntary based nonprofit). If the municipality approves the formation of a BID, property owners will reauthorize the organization every 5 years.

ACTION STEPS⁵

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

- Create a downtown partnership with the Municipality, key property owners, key local destination businesses, and chamber of commerce to launch effort. Conduct outreach to Discover Canton, Neponset Regional Chamber of Commerce and other area businesses to determine degree of appetite for forming a formal and dynamic organization to organize events, conduct fundraising etc.
- Form a broad-based Downtown Business Advisory Committee to provide input and feedback and to act as a liaison to the Town for programming of events.
- Secure seed funding for TA to explore district management models through Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (now part of the One Stop), ARPA, Foundations and other stakeholder support
- Create community outreach events, widely distribute surveys and other engagement tools to develop program priorities
- Hold Community forums on different management district models
- One on one conversations with stakeholders to secure support and engagement in process
- Consensus building with stakeholders on preferred models /programming / budget
- Organizers may consider executing a demonstration project that could "show" potential programs and services provided to the Town Center through a district management organization.

⁵ Based on input from SME Anne Burke

**Process
(Continued)**

- Formal creation of selected management entity model. Explore different models including Friends of Canton Center, Main Streets, Business Improvement District, etc.; also explore creating a Cultural District as an organizing entity.
 - a. Friends of Canton Center - form as a non-profit, identify major players, Library, property owners and key investors
 - b. Main Streets Program
 - c. Parking Benefits District
 - d. Business Improvement District

BASIC OUTLINE OF BASELINE REQUIREMENTS OF TWO COMMON DISTRICT MANAGEMENT MODELS:

Business Improvement District - Petition process to secure support of 60% of property owners representing 51% of the assessed valuation of the district; public hearing and formal vote to establish the BID. 501c3 filing and approval of bylaw, articles of organization and establishment of a Board of Directors. Reauthorization by property owners every 5 years. Funding through a Fee Structure approved in petition. BIDS will require the formation of a 501 c3 organization and approval of bylaws, articles of organization, and establishment of a Board of Directors.

Voluntary Main St type Organization - Formation as a 501 c3 organization and approval of bylaws, articles of organization, and establishment of a board of Directors. Funding commitments from stakeholders and other sources will need to be determined to establish a sustainable financial structure for the organization.

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



Everett Mill in Lawrence

Downtown Management Models



Admin Capacity

The mission of Beverly Main Streets is to promote and enhance Beverly's downtown economic vitality, cultural and historic resources and quality of life.

<https://www.facebook.com/BevMainStreets/>

The mission of Salem Main Street is to help plan and direct those activities that preserve, develop and enhance the economic, social and cultural quality of downtown Salem.

<http://www.salemmainstreets.org/test/index.html>

PROGRAM AREAS AT HUDSON DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

- Cultural placemaking began in the Downtown District with the addition of physical improvements and seasonal arts and cultural events, and overall marketing to create a sustainable, vibrant, welcoming and economically healthy destination for residents, Business owners and visitors.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.causeiq.com/organizations/udson-downtown-business-improvement-district,823849965/>



Downtown Management Organization



Admin Capacity

Reading, MA

“The creation of a 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.

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.

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:

- Identification of staff and financial resources
- Creating a Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy Research to identify community priorities / recommendations Peer learning from other communities
- Consensus building among stakeholders
- Transition of leadership to private sector
- The Town of Reading secured Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance funding and committed staff to initiate and support
- A large broad-based community advisory/ working group was formed to provide input and feedback
- A survey was widely distributed to community residents, businesses and other stakeholders - 1600 response were received providing insight into program priorities and community preferences
- 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 How to Form a BID In Massachusetts

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/2020-revised-business-improvement-district-manual/download>

Support existing informal events, music festivals, and strong nightlife to help attract additional patrons.

Category		Public Realm
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		City Planner
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$200k)
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Low Risk.
Key Performance Indicators	The number of events, festivals, and informal activities taking place Downtown Lawrence. The number of people participating and enjoying these. An increase in the number of patrons in area retail and restaurants as a result of attracting more foot traffic in order to attend events and programs.	
Partners & Resources	City Planner, Economic Development Team, We Are / Somos Lawrence, Lawrence Arts Collective (Elevated Thought (youth arts nonprofit), Essex Art Center (nonprofit art center), 599 Studios (artist workspace), El Taller Cafe & Bookstore (cafe, bookstore, literary hub), Ateneo Dominicano de Nueva Inglaterra (Dominican cultural group), Merrimack River Watershed Council (river environmental nonprofit), and the Lawrence Public Library, including Little Library (supporting City department for the collective), Iluminación Lawrence	



City Hall, Lawrence, MA

Diagnostic

A feature of Latin@ cultural heritage is a tradition of informal lively street life. The City should support these informal activities and strong nightlife that includes musical events as it will help to bring people back to the Downtown as well as attract additional patrons.

Action Item

Support existing informal events, music festivals, and strong nightlife to help attract additional patrons. Support Mass Development and Boston Architectural College efforts to **advance events and programming**. Public/private shared expense.

Process

ACTION STEPS:

1. Encourage local merchants to form a Downtown Management entity (separate recommendation)
2. Establish a Team that includes representatives of the local business community and local performing artists.
3. Encourage the participation of regional performing artists
4. Conduct outreach to and encourage the participation of performers of a diverse ethnic, racial and linguistic backgrounds
5. Support Mass Development and Boston Architectural College efforts to advance events and programming
6. Build on existing events and programs
7. Develop a model for shared public/private funding
8. Collect market information (e.g. estimate number of participants and ask merchants to report any increase in sales on days/nights of events)
9. Develop marketing campaign including the use of social media to promote the events calendar. Centralize information regarding the events on a website.





Best Practice

Project for Public Spaces



Public Realm

"Civic institutions, like museums, public galleries, community art organizations, performing art institutions, arts councils and public arts organizations have a rare opportunity to lead significant change by engaging specific groups to help devise and carry out creative community-building neighborhood programs."





Excerpt from the book **The Creative Community Builder's Handbook: How to Transform Communities Using Local Assets, Arts and Culture** (2007 Fieldstone Alliance)

5 WAYS ART PROJECTS CAN IMPROVE STRUGGLING COMMUNITIES

1. Promote Interaction in Public Space
2. Increase Civic Participation Through Celebrations
3. Engage Youth in Community
4. Promote the Power and Preservation of Place
5. Broaden Participation in the Civic Agenda

Visit here for examples of how art, including performing arts, can accomplish these: <https://www.pps.org/article/artsprojects>

Develop and Fund a Storefront and Signage Improvement Program

Category		Private Realm
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Town Planner, Mass Development DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020)
Budget		Low Budget (\$35- \$50k) for design fee and program set up and any subsidy improvements.
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Medium Risk. Some property owners may not want to participate. Medium Risk. Some establishments may not feel the urgency or want to spend the money to use the Storefront Design Guidelines to improve their properties. Early engagement with property and business owners will likely reduce any concerns and help to encourage business participation. For smaller businesses with limited capacity, any paperwork can become a cumbersome process. Applicants can benefit from a streamlined and easy application process, as well as any assistance by the funder that can be provided at various stages of the process.
Key Performance Indicators		The number of businesses/property owners that participate. The number of storefronts that improve. Increase in the number of visitors to the Study Area.
Partners & Resources		<p>City of Lawrence staff (planning and economic development, building and/or zoning inspector), Municipal boards (City Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development Committee, Economic Development Team , Mass Development, local business and property owners, the just being formed Downtown merchant's association.</p> <p>Potential funding sources include: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)</p> <p>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 design guidelines may be linked to a façade/storefront improvement program. Possible impacts are addressed in the sections on Key Performance Indicators and Diagnostic.</p>

Partners & Resources (Continued)

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 design guidelines. The MDI grant should 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 design guidelines if it is part of the municipality's zoning bylaws or ordinance. In 2021, the priorities for this grant included mitigation of climate change through zoning and other regulations; design guidelines and standards integrated into the municipality's zoning and incorporating elements to reduce the impact of climate change would qualify.

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.

SURVEY AND PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

Massachusetts Historical Commission

This grant is a 50/50 matching program that support planning activities that help preserve significant historic resources. For communities, whose target area contains significant resources, this source may help fund design guidelines that include specific requirements for the preservation of significant historic resources. Interested communities are encouraged to reach out to the Massachusetts Historic Commission directly about this grant; it may be tied to the creation of a local historic district.

COMPLETE STREETS FUNDING PROGRAM

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Design guidelines do not have to be limited to the private realm. Creating consistency in a downtown, village, or corridor is an important part of defining its identity both within and beyond the community. As part of a Complete Streets Project, a municipality should identify the specific materials, street furniture, trees, and public signage (including wayfinding) that will be used in the target area. These choices can be incorporated into the overall design guidelines to address both public and private realms.

Diagnostic

Site visits confirmed that while the Downtown has a lot of potential, many storefronts and signage could use refreshing or upgrading. This could help to attract more patrons.

Creating or updating design guidelines and combining the update with financial assistance to property owners to update buildings and sites to be consistent with the new guidelines addresses several negative economic impacts of the COVID -19 pandemic. Design guidelines that are responsive to community identity will reinforce a revitalized, vibrant area. Design guidelines can also address accessibility for people with physical disabilities by requiring appropriate access that is well-integrated into the building and the site.

Action Item

Fund and promote a Façade and Signage Program for Small Businesses/Landlords. Develop and encourage the use of guidelines and grant program. For example, have 3-4 designers under contract familiar with the guidelines and offer small business owners this service with a suggested list of fabricators. Develop an easy and accessible process. Provide subsidies.

Process



Essex Street Retail

BENEFITS OF A STOREFRONT AND FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM⁷ :

- Strengthen locally owned businesses – Increase business sales and attract new business and customers
- Contribute to area revitalization – Increase property values and higher tax base, improve marketability of a space, motivate other property owners/businesses to make improvements, prevent building deterioration
- Contribute to a sense of community/Enhance character of a community – Improve the public realm, increase in safety, accessibility, pedestrian comfort
- Provide more attractive retail environment/commercial corridor and stimulate additional private investment

Key questions to consider:

- Who runs the program?
- What is the program budget and how much can an applicant receive?
- What improvements are eligible?
- Who can apply?
- What is the application process?
- What is the approval process?
- How and when do applicants receive funding?
- How do you get community support/buy-in for the program?
- How will the program be advertised, implemented, and evaluated?
- Are there design guidelines in place to set expectations and ensure a level of consistency and quality to storefronts and facades?

Most programs are created by a city or town, and are funded by such. Some programs like Worcester for example, use CDBG funding. There are a few examples of TIF funded programs, Chamber of Commerce run programs, or Great Streets programs. ARPA funding can be used to create a façade program as well as fund a position related to that.

Process should include the following:

1. Develop an RFP for a consultant to update the Storefront Guidelines
2. Hire a Consultant and work together to update.
3. Conduct outreach to property owners and residents for their input.
4. Have Consultant update the Storefront and Signage Guidelines.
5. Create a funding process.
6. Target a specific type of business (e.g. those who own versus those who rent)
7. Use funding for one-on-one help with façade improvements and work in clusters (one or two blocks at a time).

⁷Based on SME: BSC Group

Process (Continued)

8. Consider expanding micro-enterprise program set up during COVID. Recipients must meet eligibility requirements.
9. Encourage businesses to upgrade their signage. Consider offering matching funds and updating the Signage by-law to provide more specific guidance as to what is desired.
10. ADA compliance becomes required after a specific threshold is reached and thus increases the cost of refreshing storefronts.

FUNDING STRUCTURE

Depending on the source of funding, the program can be structured as a grant or a loan. There are various options, including:

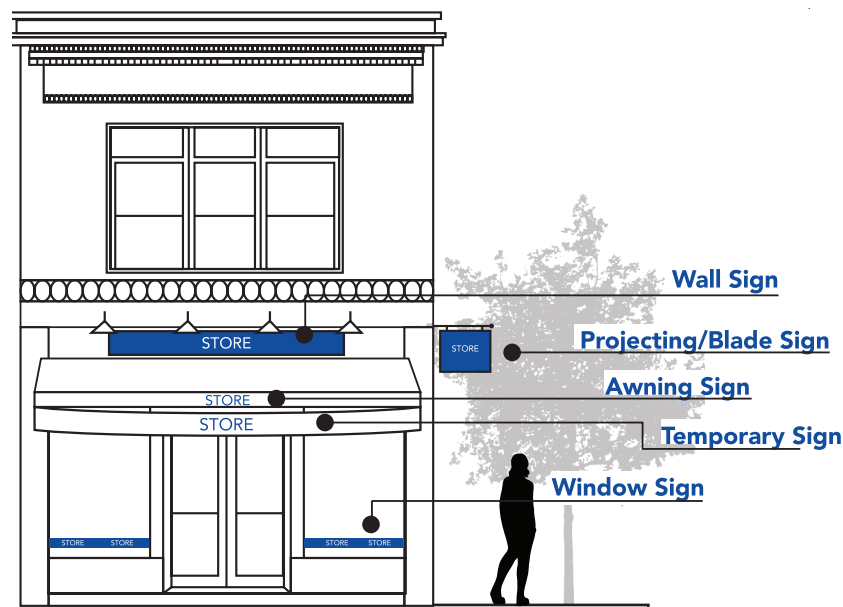
- Matching Grant – Applicant receives a certain percent of the investment through a grant, to a set maximum (For instance, a 1:1 grant is a dollar-for-dollar match)
 - Grant with a Set Dollar Amount per Improvement (e.g., \$1,000 allowance for signage)
 - Loan (low-interest, zero-interest) – Revolving fund enables future funding cycles upon payback
 - Loan (forgivable) – Creates an incentive for improvements to be maintained over time
11. Mixed-Funding option Funding Amounts – Amounts vary based on program, but programs researched ranged from \$2,500 - \$35,000 dependent upon use, location, planned improvements, funding available, and level of private investment.

ELIGIBILITY/REQUIREMENTS

- Eligibility requirements vary by program and priorities, but include consideration of location, age of building, use, priority business preferences (minority and women-owned businesses, low-moderate income status, job creation, etc.), ownership (business owner needing property owner sign-off), lease arrangements (above a certain amount of time left on a lease), and type of improvement.

TYPES OF IMPROVEMENTS

Most programs allow for improvements to signage, lighting, windows, doors, entryways, roof, awning/canopy, and paint. Other eligible improvements may include design fees, landscaping, and parking lot improvements. HVAC, interior renovation, non-permanent fixtures, security systems, and equipment purchases are generally considered ineligible. Some funding programs allocate additional monies for improvements to historic restoration.



Restore Program, Boston



Private Realm

Boston, MA

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/small-business-development/storefront-improvements>

SEE APPENDIX FOR BEST PRACTICE:

Develop a façade/storefront/site improvement program

Boston's Façade Improvement Program has a dedicated Design Services unit for business and property owners. They provide help with improving storefront, signs, business logos, and website. This includes access to architects and graphic designers.





The Design Services unit supports businesses with:

- Concept development
- Review and approval at the City's various landmark and historic commissions, and
- the development of graphic representations that will help them grow and thrive.



Essex Street Retail

13. Build on Existing and Expand to create a Public Art Program

Category		Cultural/Arts
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		Plan Facilitator DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE ACTIVATION PLAN PLAN ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL CENTRO DE LAWRENCE (2020)
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50k - \$75k) to create the Plan
Timeframe		Short Term (3-5 months)
Risk		Low Risk.
Key Performance Indicators		Community acceptance, quality of projects and programs implemented, ability to fundraise, positive public relations (e.g. press, social media, etc.), the number and range of public art installations, the number of locations where temporary and permanent art installations are installed.
Partners & Resources		<p>City Planner, City Engineer, Lawrence Arts Collective, Essex Art Center (nonprofit art center), 599 Studios (artist workspace), El Taller Cafe & Bookstore (cafe, bookstore, literary hub), Ateneo Dominicano de Nueva Inglaterra (Dominican cultural group), Lawrence Public Library, including Little Library, Elevated Thought (youth arts nonprofit, We Are / Somos Lawrence</p> <p>POTENTIAL FUNDING STRATEGIES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town or City self-funding as part of its capital expenditure budget 2. Corporate support by local businesses, banks, utilities, etc. 3. Foundation and public support both private and public including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. National Endowment of the Arts B. Massachusetts Cultural Council C. New England Foundation for the Arts D. Private and Family Foundations (often locally directed) E. Percentage of construction costs of new or expanding developments F. Individual donors G. Crowd-sourcing

Diagnostic

While there is some public art sprinkled throughout the Downtown, the City's history as well as ethnic and cultural assets provide additional potential to create a much larger impact on the Downtown, attracting visitors who may then patronize restaurants and retail.

Public art can foster a sense of place that help people make meaning from their surroundings. The actual act of generating artwork can build community relationships. Integrating public art into civic projects can generate community engagement and enrich the final results of a project. Incorporating public art into the planning and development process can keep the public engaged and assist with reinforcement of project momentum.

Action Item

Build on and expand existing public visual and performing art program. Encourage local and regional artists to participate.

Public art is any type of art intended for public spaces or the public realm. It is typically created by artists who endeavor to generate dialogue with the community and at times it reflects the issues central to their lives. Public art can be reflective of and responsive to social political, and historical issues, cultures, and human experiences. It energizes and activates people and places, and it can enhance a community's vitality, social life, and livability.

Process

Public art is very different from studio art. The artist is not creating art for themselves, but expressly creating work for the public with particular attention to the environment where it will be placed. All of the issues of formal design generated by architecture and engineering come into play with public art.

In recent decades, public art has morphed into two distinct formats. The first takes a traditional direction, such as monuments, memorials, and civic statuary. It features conventional representation: the war memorial, symbolic soldiers, likenesses of famous people and historical or metaphorical figures. Abstract forms strongly strive for the self-consciously poetic. Permanent public art of this type is constructed of durable, easily maintained, and resilient materials meant to withstand the worst effects of nature (wind, rain, snow, extreme heat, etc.) as well as very human vandalism.

The second type of art is often temporary or even ephemeral. It is often highly interactive (changes due to viewer movement or action) or is dedicated to reflecting a specific community and its particular space. This approach encompasses a wide range of electronic or digital art, including performance art, video, animation, specialized lighting, video, projection art, augmented reality, virtual reality, music, and sound. Often several media forms are interwoven together.

Steeped in technology, nontraditional public art is about sparking conversations about visuals as well as playing with contemporary aesthetic perspectives. This is art that comes from not only trained fine artists, but from technology engineers, software developers, and curators.

A subset of temporary or ephemeral art is the mural. Though a traditional form in public buildings and residences, murals as street art became visual part of the social and cultural consciousness. Starting in the late 60s and early 70s, they were not only statements of protest, politics and empathy, but they also became monumental reflections of ethnicity and antiracism. Today, murals are almost civically ubiquitous and share aspects of community history as well as primarily beautification. Mural festivals have been found to increase revenues for restaurants and retail in the municipality the festivals take place.

Process (Continued)

ACTION STEPS:

Public art plans should include the following:

1. An inventory of current works of art including:
 - A. Information on year, location, artist(s), and materials
 - B. A cleaning or maintenance schedule or plan
2. Development of a public art map.
3. A commission process for the creation of new works
 - A. Calls to artists
 - B. Selection processes.
 - (1) Open call
 - (2) Selected call
 - (3) Direct commissions (artist-generated public art)
 - C. Request for Qualifications (RFQ)*
 - D. Request for Proposals (RFP)**
4. Plans for funding public art
 - A. A percent-for-art program
 - B. A designated public art fund that addresses public art needs.
3. Public Relations

In order to invite artist participation the City needs to commission new works:

EXAMPLE: Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

This is a call for qualified candidates to submit an application (including resume, statement of interest and images of past work) for consideration by a selection panel. The RFQ outlines the project location, budget, scope, theme, timeline, and other specifics relevant to the project, and offers applicants instructions for submitting. A selection committee made up of key stakeholders is usually established to review submissions and narrow the pool of applicants to a smaller number of finalists who are then contracted to produce proposals. Finalists are given adequate time to develop proposals and then submit them for final review, often in an interview setting. An RFQ can be widely distributed or sent to only a select number of artists, depending on restrictions that may be imposed by the funding source, the budget and the administrative time available for the project. "Invitational RFQs" are RFQs that are sent to a pre-selected, qualified pool of artists, and not broadcast to all artists.

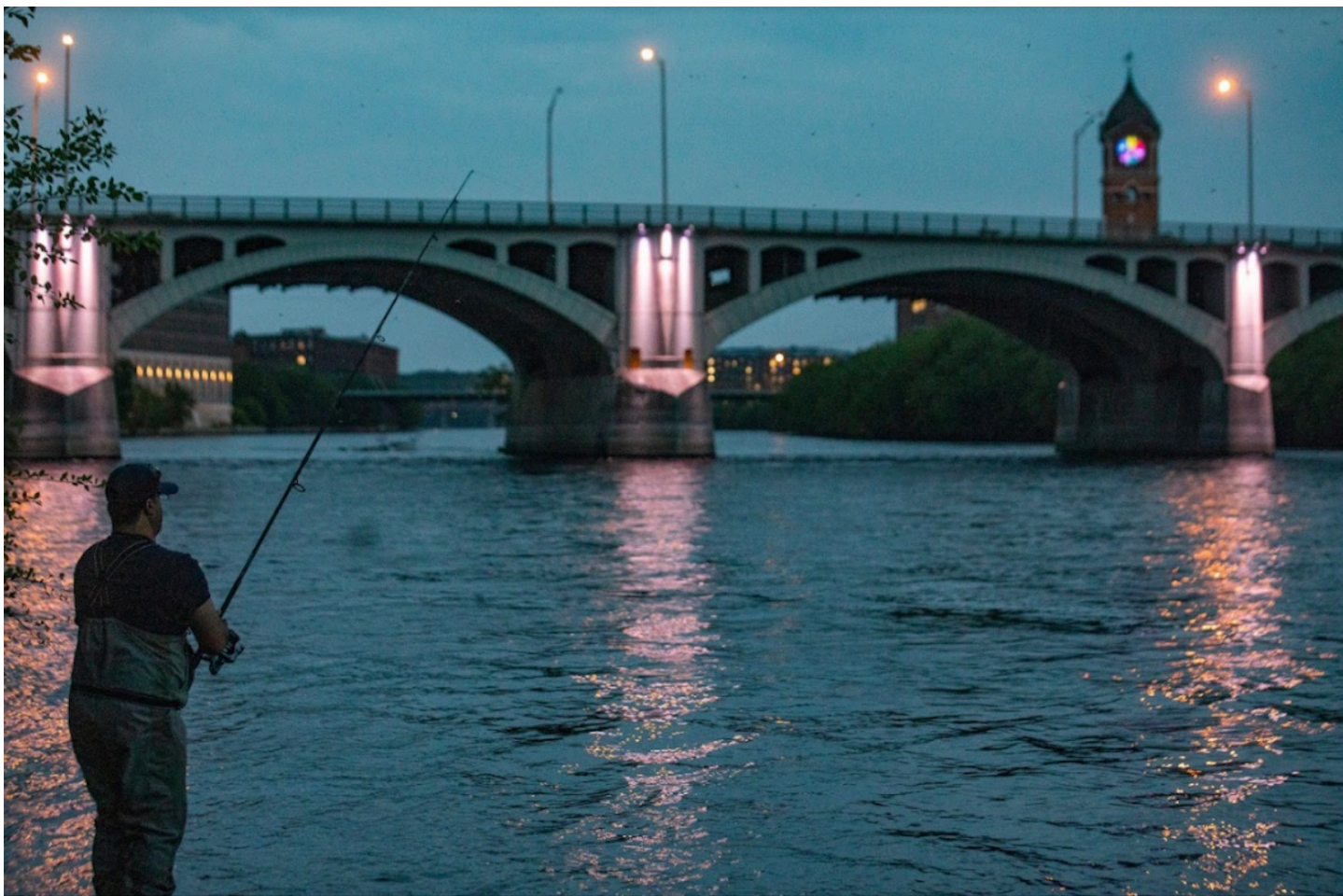
(Source: MAPC Public Art Tool Kit)

EXAMPLE: Request for Proposals (RFP)

This is a call for artists to submit a full project proposal for a specific project. The project is outlined and general direction and client desires are included. There are two ways to conduct an RFP process: ask all applicants to include their proposal in the application materials; or select finalists based on the application process and then pay each finalists to develop proposals. An RFP might be issued in a limited invitational call. Proposals are usually requested from finalists after the selection panel has met for the first time. This approach can work out well if you have a specific project in mind and access to a small number of competent artists that you believe are qualified for the job.(Source: MAPC Public Art Tool Kit)

Key Ingredients for Success

1. Public Support
2. Political Will
3. Community Involvement
4. Program Transparency
5. Process Updates
6. Secured Funding Sources



Illuminated Bridge in Lawrence, MA



Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Cultural/Arts

Location

Watertown, MA

METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL DEVELOPED A PUBLIC ART TOOLKIT

"Cool It with Art: A How-To Guide for Tackling Rising Temperatures with Art in Our Communities" is a guide for local governments, community-based organizations, and artists interested in working together to promote creative approaches to address climate-driven extreme heat impacts and to promote healthy, climate resilient communities.

The Guide contains information, resources, and practical guidance to increase awareness of heat risks and precedents for creative heat resilience interventions and to help support implementation of these types of projects.

<https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Cool-it-with-Art-Final-Report-07132021.pdf>

The Town of Watertown, MA Public Arts Master Plan was officially adopted by the Watertown Town Council on February 23, 2021.

https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/WPAMP_Report-Final_2020.12.09_optimized.pdf

THE MASTER PLAN:

- Articulates a vision for the ways in which the arts may be infused into the public realm in Watertown
- Inventories public arts assets and opportunity areas
- Makes recommendations for the creation of a management structure to guide the public art selection process and mechanisms for securing consistent funding streams for the development, construction, and maintenance of commissioned projects.

VISION

The mission of the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Program is to integrate creative expressions and ideas into a variety of public settings for the benefit of the people of Watertown and visitors to the community.

This plan envisions a program that leverages artists' unique abilities to act as connectors across generations, cultures, and geographies. It aims to support artists in pursuit of inclusive and collaborative projects that nurture the creative potential—and honor and engage the cultural experiences—of Watertown diverse residents, and in which all residents are empowered to take an active role in shaping Watertown's public cultural life.

GUIDING VALUES

- Foster diversity and inclusion
- Bolster creativity in community life
- Center local context and identities in engaging with Watertown's past, present, and future
- Make connections to nature and sustainability
- Solidify commitments to the public arts through stable funding investments and partnerships

IMPLEMENTATION DURING COVID

The Watertown Public Arts Plan makes the following statement regarding implementing during COVID. "These implementation strategies for launching a Watertown Public Arts and Culture Program were developed and refined prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the pandemic has caused significant disruption to municipal governance and civic life, initial steps toward plan implementation are still possible and encouraged. The need for shared meaning and connections among residents has grown under the constraints of social distancing. Increasing coordination among the Town and local arts and culture anchor organizations through implementation strategies three, four, and five below will ensure that the arts and culture assets in Watertown remain strong and viable throughout the pandemic⁸."

⁸https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/WPAMP_Report-Final_2020.12.09_optimized.pdf

CORE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Integrate arts into planning and community development
- Establish policies and metrics that align with program values
- Build lasting partnerships among municipal and civic stakeholders
- Support and strengthen community ties
- Ensure a variety of funding sources for arts and culture

USING PUBLIC ART TO PROMOTE EQUITY

- Reimagining: Envisioning anti-racist futures for Metro Boston: <https://www.mapc.org/planning101/arts-and-equity-at-mapc-reimagining-the-region/>

WHAT ELSE IS IN THE PLAN?

The rest of the plan includes guidance on:

- Program administration for a public arts authority
- Project and site selection
- Artist and artistic concept selection
- Case studies
- Collections management
- Program funding
- Policy Considerations
- Implementation



WATERTOWN CULTURAL COUNCIL



Fresh Paint Springfield, Music Festival

Cultural/Arts

Springfield, MA

FRESH PAINT SPRINGFIELD: MURAL
FESTIVAL, SPRINGFIELD, MA

<https://www.freshpaintspringfield.com>

During FPS2021, all of the murals were created using a special process where community members gave input into the design of the murals, the murals were turned into giant paint-by-numbers on special mural fabric, and outdoor COVID-safe paint parties were held every day so over 1000 people could help paint, and then the murals were permanently installed on the walls.

Most of the murals were clustered in and around Mason Square, and added to the murals downtown. Professional murals attract new investment in the neighborhood, increase walkability and pedestrian traffic, and improve perceptions of Springfield.



Springfield, MA Mural Festival, 2021



Murals, Springfield, MA

Support a **public/private program** for planting and maintenance

Category	 	Public and Private Realms
Location		Downtown Lawrence
Origin		City Planner, Mass Development
Budget		Low Budget (Under \$50k) Funding from: Lawrence General Hospital (Community Benefits Funding), New Balance, Northern Essex Community College (all within half a mile of the study area), other large businesses and developers
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		The number of planters installed, the number of plantings are well maintained, the number of businesses and funders that participate.
Partners & Resources		The City of Lawrence, Downtown business and property owners, Lawrence General Hospital (Community Benefits Funding), New Balance, Northern Essex Community College (all within half a mile of the study area), other large businesses and developers.
Diagnostic		There is no consistent planter/planting in the Downtown. Some small businesses took it upon themselves to purchase planters and did not buy commercial grade so they soon deteriorated. Additionally, maintenance has been an issue.

Action Item

Support a **public/private program for planting and maintenance** (and continue to encourage the larger businesses and developers to fund it).

Process

1. Continue to do outreach to potential funders (larger businesses and developers).
2. Deploy planters and contract with local landscape company to plant and maintain.
3. Conduct sporadic site visits to ensure plantings are changed seasonally and are well maintained.



Adopt-A-Box Flower Program

Greenville, OH



Public Realm





Private Realm

In 2007, Main Street Greenville created the Adopt-A-Box Flower Program in downtown Greenville. Since then, more than 70 flower boxes and pots are funded and planted each Spring by individuals and businesses located in the community.

See: <https://www.mainstreetgreenville.org/downtown-planting-day>



Provide Directional signage for Downtown Lawrence on I-495

Category		Public
Location		I-495
Origin		Transportation Planner/Plan Facilitator
Budget		N/A
Timeframe		Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk		Low Risk.
Key Performance Indicators	Additional visitors to Downtown as a result of directional signage, although difficult to measure, could have a significant impact on patronage of downtown businesses.	
Partners & Resources	City of Lawrence, MassHighway Department District 4	



Ayer Mills Clock Tower Lawrence, MA

Diagnostic

Northbound highway access to Downtown Lawrence from I-495 is provided via Exit 45B – Marston Street / I-495 South / Merrimack Street. This ramp is part of a complex interchange with three shortly spaced ramps that exit from a common exit point south of the Merrimack River. South bound access is provided via Exit 103 B – Marston Street / Lawrence. This ramp and a second ramp to Marston Street / Methuen exit together from I-495 before splitting. There are no signs on I-495 that indicate that either of these two exits leads provides access to Downtown Lawrence.

Action Item

Petition MassHighway Department District 4 to provide stand-alone signs on I-495 to indicate that these exist provide access to Downtown Lawrence.

Process

Petition MassHighway Department District 4 to provide stand-alone signs on I-495 to indicate that these exist provide access to Downtown Lawrence.

HIGHWAY DISTRICT 4 OFFICE

Address

Paul Stedman, District Highway Director
519 Appleton Street, Arlington, MA 02476

Directions

Phone

(857) 368-4000

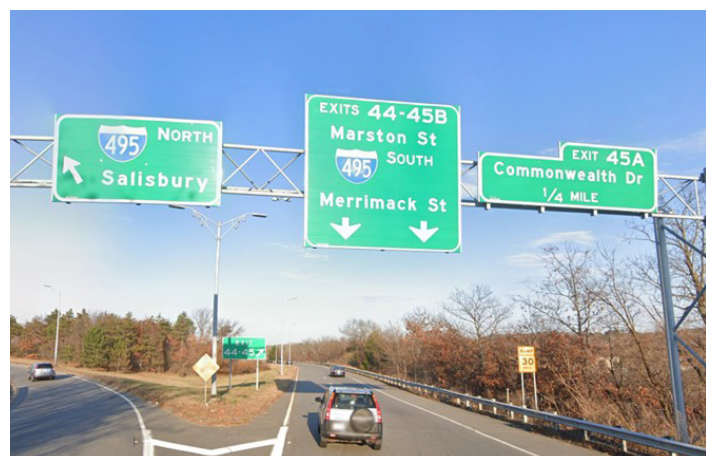
<https://www.mass.gov/locations/highway-district-4-office>



Google Streetview (November 2020) looking south on I-495 exit to Marston Street. There are no highway signs indicating that this is the exit for Downtown Lawrence.



Google Streetview (November 2020) looking north on I-495 exit to Marston Street. There are no highway signs indicating that this is the exit for Downtown Lawrence.



Google Streetview (November 2020) looking north on I-495 exit to Marston Street. There are no highway signs indicating that this is the exit for Downtown Lawrence.

Additional Proposed Projects

Additional Proposed Projects

The Town's recovery from COVID-impacts will depend on both public and private actions. It will be helpful to coordinate these actions so that they have a more significant impact.

The following additional projects will help to reinforce the priority projects described in the previous pages.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSED PROJECT	COMMENTS
Support the expansion of the Iluminación Program . https://www.wearelawrence.org/iluminacion	Boston Architectural College.



Potential Funding Sources

GENERAL INFORMATION ON FUNDING LRRP PROJECTS

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds will be a primary source of funding opportunity for LRRP projects.

- <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>
- <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-federal-funds> <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/covid-related-federal-funds-in-massachusetts-cities-and-towns>

LRRP projects will most likely need to be funded by a "mosaic" of funding sources. Not likely that there will be a "one-stop shop" sourcing at the state level due to recent decisions on how to distribute state level ARPA funds. Local ARPA funding is likely the place for municipalities to look to as a first, primary source. Downtown / Main Street organizations will need to coordinate with their city leaders.

The rules for ARPA funds are that the projects are data-driven, Covid-impact projects.

There are also other (non-ARPA) state programs available.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (REDO) GRANT PROGRAM

The goal of Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) is to support businesses seeking help from the state. Working with the Office of Business Development, these organizations facilitate regional projects that grow businesses and the Massachusetts economy. Their successes attract new employers and foster existing businesses. REDOs have recently received funding that could potentially be used to support LRRP efforts in participating communities. Lawrence is one of these.

SHARED STREETS AND SPACE GRANT PROGRAM

The State of MA's Shared Streets and Spaces grant program has supported 143 communities—from cities to small towns—in testing ideas to improve local outdoor spaces so that people can safely be in public together during the pandemic. The Shared Streets and Spaces Grants Program can be used for outdoor seating, to pilot a road diet or for bike racks. At this stage of the program, extra points are awarded during the scoring process for projects that provide better access and opportunities for school children and elders, to open space and public transit, and in Environmental Justice and 'COVID-19 red' communities

Project Types Eligible for Funding Five types of projects are eligible for the Shared Winter Streets and Spaces grant program⁹:

- **Main Streets**—Making investments in local downtowns and villages by repurposing streets, plazas, sidewalks, curbs, and parking areas to facilitate people-centric activities and community programming¹⁰.
- **Reimagined Streets**—Prioritizing safe space for people walking and biking by implementing low-speed streets, "shared streets," new sidewalks, new protected bike lanes, new off-road trails, new bicycle parking, new crosswalks, traffic-calming measures, and ADA-compliant ramps.
- **Better Buses**—Improving bus riders' commutes through establishing new facilities for buses, including dedicated bus lanes, traffic-signal priority equipment, and bus shelters
- **Shared Mobility**—Supporting the capital costs of new bikeshare equipment to support more people trying cycling.
- **Investments in the Future**—Converting temporary/ pilot Shared Streets projects—including those not funded by MassDOT—to permanent facilities to benefit community members over the long-term.

⁹ Emmy Hahn, DHCD

¹⁰ <https://www.mass.gov/regional-economic-development-organization-grant-program-redo#:~:text=The%20goal%20of%20Regional%20Economic%20Development%20Organization%20%28REDO%29,successes%20attract%20new%20employers%20and%20foster%20existing%20businesses.>

Potential Funding

MOST UP TO DATE LISTING CAN BE FOUND HERE FOR:

Public Realm: <https://airtable.com/embed/shrh5rVQMbVbpYLKF/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie>

Private Realm: <https://airtable.com/embed/shrhYPjzJxaDNAnLd/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie>

Tenant Mix: <https://airtable.com/embed/shrRjd2TKWvkesvB8/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie>

Revenue / Sales: <https://airtable.com/embed/shrGwkcX0Je00UwDW/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie>

Administrative Capacity: <https://airtable.com/embed/shrlcJ9EmP9PAW6JD/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie>

Arts / Culture: <https://airtable.com/embed/shrGt0Q6HzMWergit/tblk00qQMPM2JPpie>

Examples

Planning Assistance Grants

NAME OF FUND

Planning Assistance Grants

AVAILABLE FOR RRP PROJECTS

Yes

FUNDING SECTOR

Public

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE GRANT AMOUNT PER APPLICANT

\$125,000

MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE LOAN AMOUNT PER APPLICANT**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Municipalities and Regional Planning Agencies

DESCRIPTION/ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

To fund technical assistance and help communities undertake public process associated with creating plans and adopting land use regulations consistent with the Baker-Polito Administration's land conservation and development objectives including reduction of land, energy, and natural resource consumption, provision of sufficient and diverse housing, and mitigation of/ preparation for climate change.

Regional Pilot Project Grant Program

NAME OF FUND

Regional Pilot Project Grant Program

AVAILABLE FOR RRP PROJECTS

Yes

FUNDING SECTOR

Public

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Office of Business Development

MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE GRANT AMOUNT PER APPLICANT

\$250,000

MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE LOAN AMOUNT PER APPLICANT**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Partnerships of municipalities, public entities, or 501(c) organizations

DESCRIPTION/ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

To fund projects that support businesses and communities in stabilizing/growing their regional economy with one or more of the recovery efforts under Partnerships for recovery. no capital-related projects will be funded.

MassWorks Infrastructure Program

NAME OF FUND

MassWorks Infrastructure Program

AVAILABLE FOR RRP PROJECTS

Yes

FUNDING SECTOR

Public

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE GRANT AMOUNT PER APPLICANT**MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE LOAN AMOUNT PER APPLICANT****ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Municipalities

DESCRIPTION/ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

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.



GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Biz-M-Power crowdfunding matching grant program offers small businesses in Massachusetts financial assistance with their acquisition, expansion, improvement or lease of a facility, purchase or lease of equipment, or with meeting other capital needs for the business. Eligible applicants will be empowered to advance their business with an innovative approach to obtaining capital. Through crowdfunding campaigns, these businesses connect with their local residents and stakeholders to advance projects that support economic success and transformation for their business and in their communities. This program is funded by the Commonwealth's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2021.

Preference shall be given to low to moderate (LMI) brick-and-mortar small businesses owned by women, minorities, immigrants, non-native English speakers, U.S. military veterans, disabled individuals, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and businesses operating in Massachusetts Gateway Cities.

<https://www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org/bizmpower>

Appendix

RAPID RECOVERY PLANNING

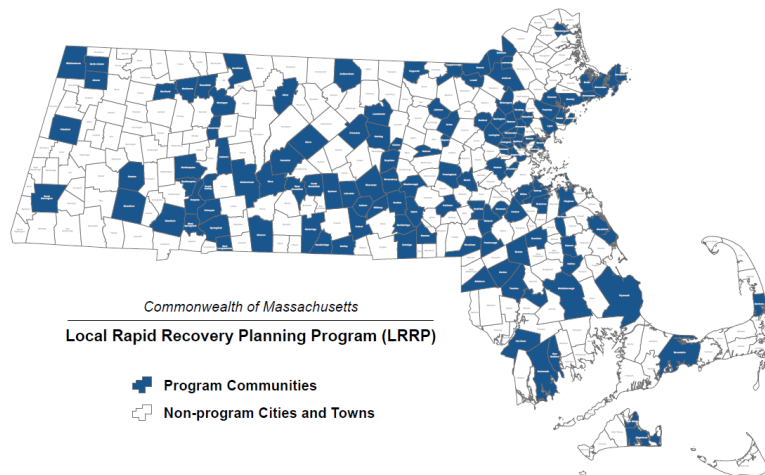
For the City of Lawrence, MA



7/19/21

Presented by Favermann Design

Program Description



- The Local Rapid Recovery Plan (LRRP) Program is a project of the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI).
- There are 125 Massachusetts communities participating in the program.
- It provides municipalities in the Commonwealth with 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.
- Included are analysis and exploration of challenges, barriers, strategies, and actions, with a focus on developing tactical and strategic project recommendations to help communities achieve their recovery goals.
- The effort will culminate in plans that summarize the diagnostic findings and offer clear, tactical project recommendations by the middle of September 2021.

3 Phases of LRRP

- *Phase 1 – April – May--*Data Gathering and Diagnostics*
- *Phase 2 – June – July--*Analysis and Project(s) Recommendations*
- *Phase 3 – July – September--*Final Plan*



Advisory Committee:

- * Pedro Soto, Lawrence City Planning Director
- * Esther Encarnacion, Lawrence Business & Economic Development Director
- * Eddie Rosa, Community Engagement Director, Groundwork Lawrence
Member of Lawrence Redevelopment Authority
- * Jessica Martinez, Lawrence MassDevelopment TDI



2021 Local Rapid Recovery Map



Figure 2. Study area map

Massachusetts DHCD Rapid Recovery Plan Program
BUSINESS SURVEY REPORT



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

Lawrence

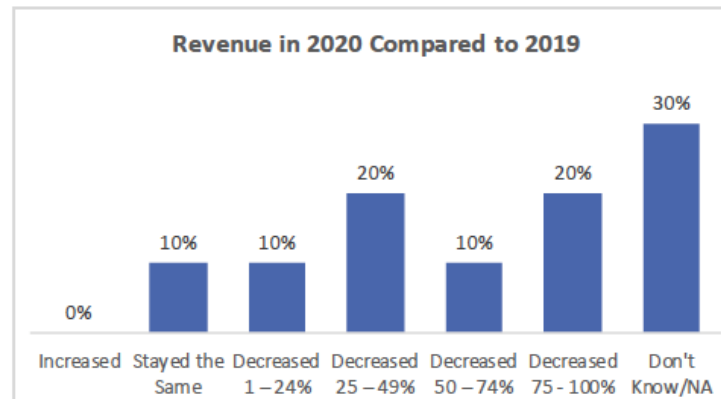
Targeted Commercial Area

Responses: 10

Impacts of COVID-19

Decline in Business Revenue

60% of businesses generated less revenue in 2020 than they did in 2019.
For 50% of businesses, revenue declined by 25% or more.



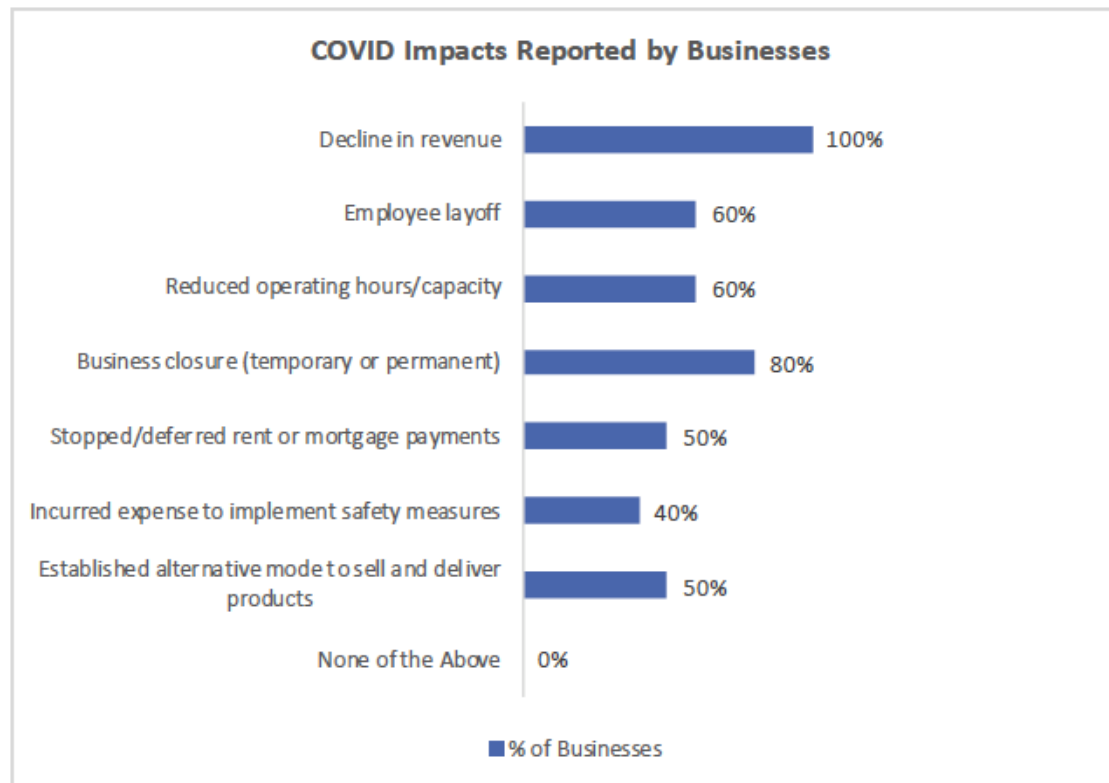
Less Foot Traffic in Commercial Area

70% of businesses had less on-site customers in January and February of 2021 than before COVID.
60% of businesses reported a reduction in on-site customers of 25% or more.

Impacts of COVID-19 (cont'd)

Reported Impacts

100% of businesses reported being impacted by COVID.

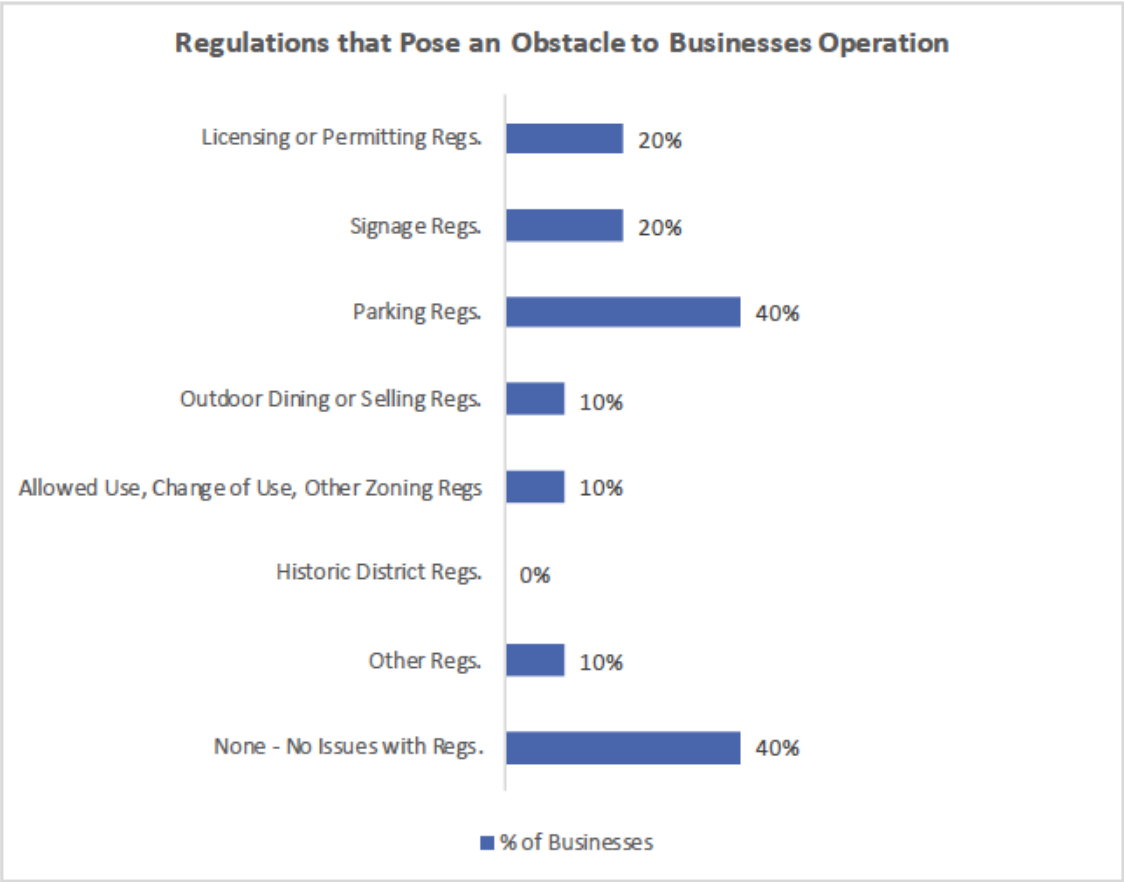


Operating Status

At the time of the survey, 70% of businesses reported they were operating at reduced hours/capacity or closed.

Regulatory Environment

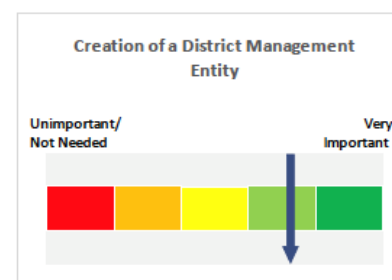
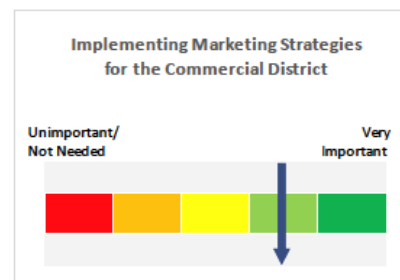
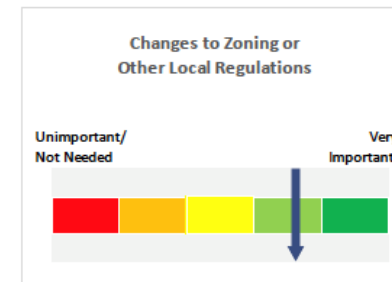
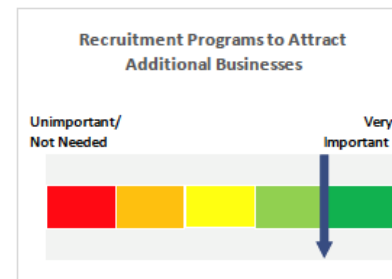
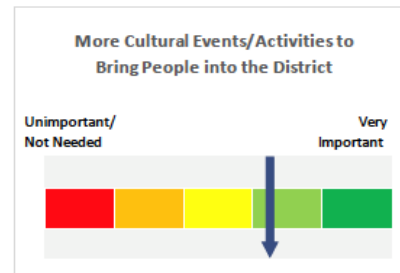
60% of businesses indicated that the regulatory environment poses an obstacle to business operation.



Business Input Related to Possible Strategies (cont'd)

Attraction/Retention of Customers and Businesses

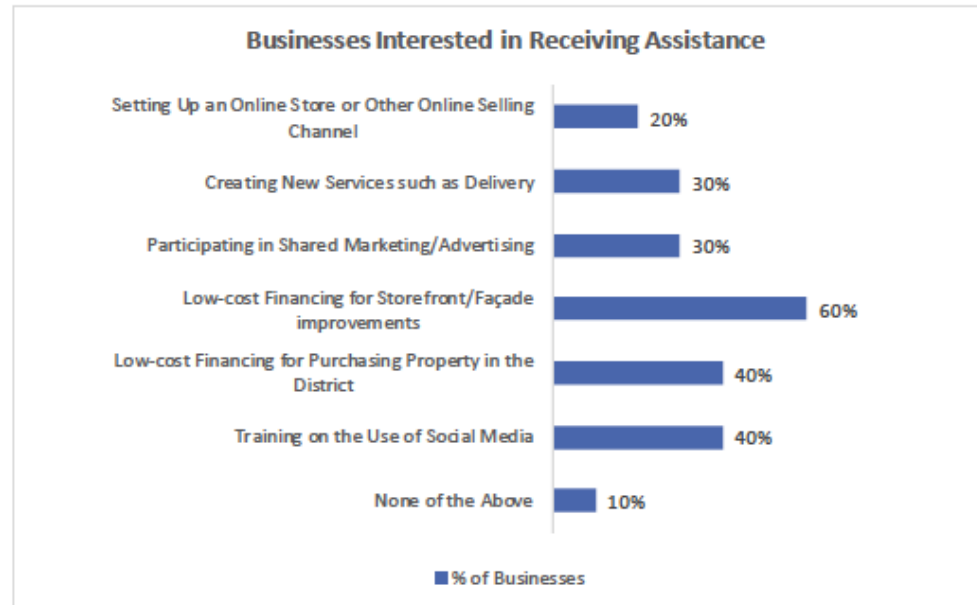
The charts below illustrate the average rating among respondents regarding importance of various strategies.



Business Input Related to Possible Strategies (cont'd)

Businesses Support

90% of businesses expressed interest in receiving some kind of assistance.



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

Condition of public spaces, streets, sidewalks

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	5	50%
Neutral	1	10%
Satisfied	3	30%
Very Satisfied	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Condition of Private Buildings, Facades, Storefronts, Signage

Very Dissatisfied	1	10%
Dissatisfied	3	30%
Neutral	4	40%
Satisfied	1	10%
Very Satisfied	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Access for Customers & Employees

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	2	20%
Neutral	2	20%
Satisfied	5	50%
Very Satisfied	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Safety and Comfort of Customers & Employees

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	2	20%
Neutral	3	30%
Satisfied	4	40%
Very Satisfied	1	10%
Total	10	100%

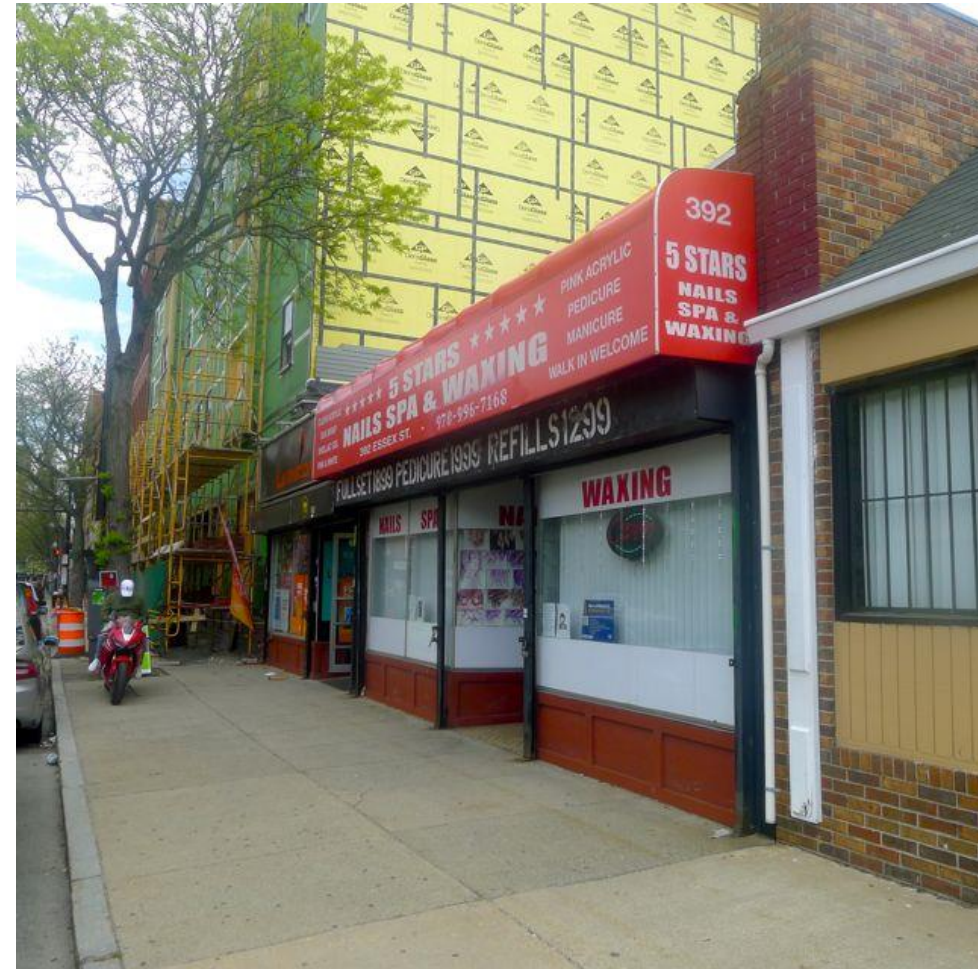
Proximity to Complementary Businesses or Uses

Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	3	30%
Neutral	2	20%
Satisfied	4	40%
Very Satisfied	1	10%
Total	10	100%



CONTEXT

- 90% of businesses generated less revenue in 2020 than they had in 2019
- 60% had reduced operating hours/capacity
- 80% temporarily closed their business
- 90% had decrease in the number of customers than before COVID
- 40% want better parking availability and management
- 50% of businesses stopped/deferred rent payment
- 50% established new or alternative modes of business (online, delivery, pickup, etc.)
- These trends are supported by previous ongoing studies and conversations with business owners



NEXT STEPS – PHASE III - STRATEGIC INTERVENTION IDEAS

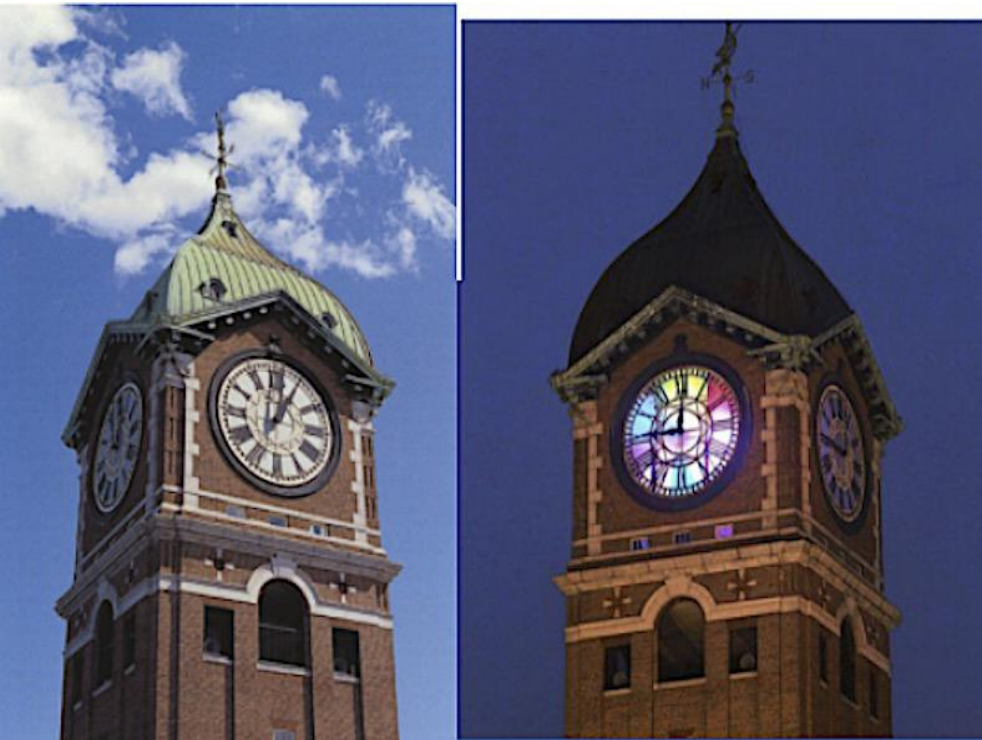
Business ideas

- Shared marketing and advertising
- Training on use of social media
- Storefront/façade improvement programs
- A way for businesses to come together to pool resources and coordinate efforts
- Additional parking and/or parking agreements, improved parking management of existing spaces

Public realm/City of Lawrence & Downtown

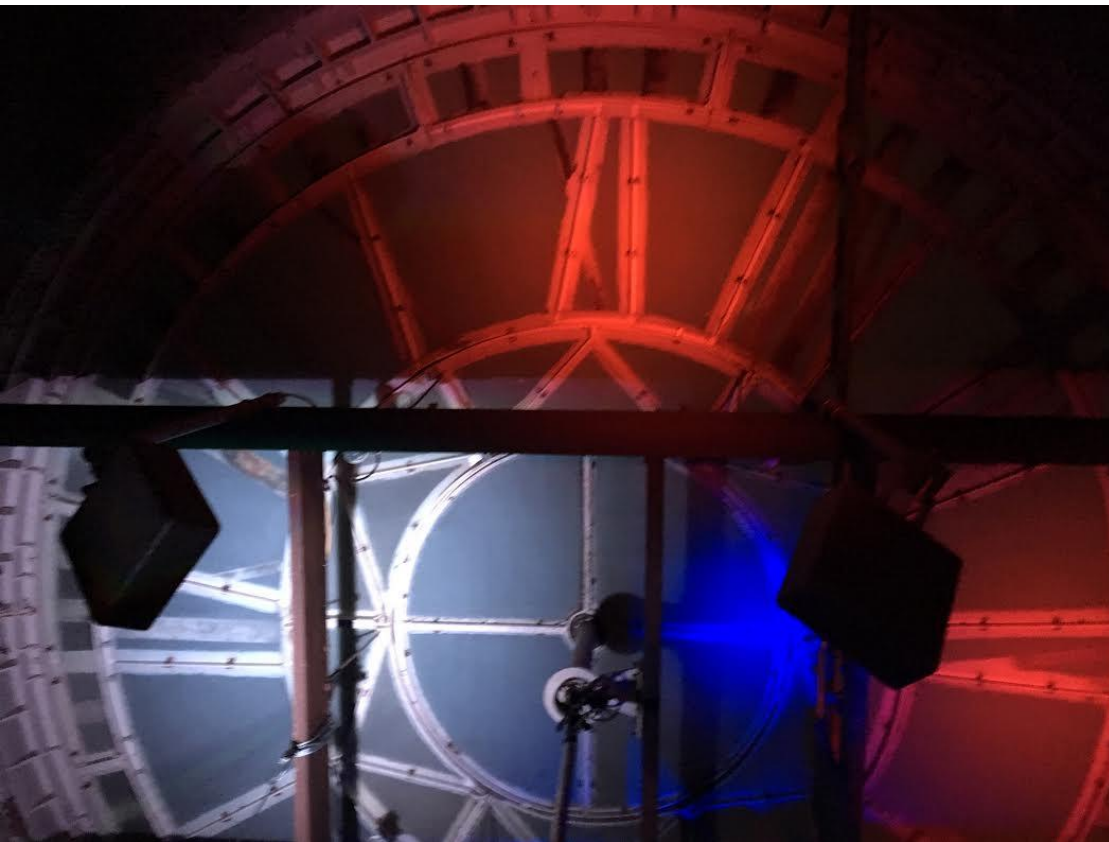
- A strategic Wayfinding system
- More outdoor seating areas and shared public spaces
- Amenity improvements for public transit users and bike riders
- Additional cultural events and activities to attract patrons, such as “A Taste of Lawrence” to showcase local restaurants, businesses, etc.
- Thoughtfully restart earlier strategic initiatives that were Covid interrupted





Lawrence's COVID recovery goals for Downtown Target Area:

- Create a design and a plan for strategic branding and wayfinding system for the Downtown.
- Develop Strategies to attract residents and customers to downtown in a manner in which they feel safe and welcome.
- Create easily to follow storefront façade guidelines for all retail entities in Lawrence. Incorporate the guidelines as part of the City's building code.
- Analyze existing conditions and create designs and develop a strategic plan for streetscape enhancement for downtown. This would include outdoor seating options, street furniture, plantings, kiosks, crosswalk, etc.
- Develop a plan to investigate and to eventually enhance the Canal as a promenade.
- Develop a plan to utilize artistic contributions from community-based artists in Lawrence to enhance the Downtown.
- Restart plans for a series of cultural and marketing events to stimulate Downtown revitalization.
- Work up budgets and potential funding sources for designated projects and programs.



YOUR FEEDBACK- STRATEGIC INTERVENTION IDEAS

- Consideration of development of greater capacity—both public and private.
- Facilitating local marketing efforts and business assistance/educational programs? Social media?
- A focused local grants program for sign or façade improvements to both tenants and landlords.
- Facilitating shared parking agreements/parking maps.
- Guidelines for historic properties to access funding for preservation and/or restoration.
- Consideration of a plan for temporary and permanent public art by regional artists to be placed along Essex Street and other adjacent streets.
- Consideration of creating a Cultural District certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?
- Other suggestions?

Note: In the final plan, due September 15th, we will make reference to and synthesize all previous and ongoing relevant studies—both internal and external.





Strategy Guide for Activating Public Spaces



Provided by SME Consultant

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission

Location

Worcester, MA

Origin	CMRPC
Budget	 Medium
Timeframe	 Medium Term
Risk	 Medium Risk
Key Performance Indicators	Communities will have realistic action plan for easily permitting commercial and community activity on a range of public spaces
Partners & Resources	Regional Planning Agency, Municipal Planning Boards and Staff

Action Items

1.0 Background and Baseline Research

- 1.1 Inventory of public spaces (public and private): Identify the location and basic characteristics of all public spaces within the study area, including access, ownership and suitability for public activities
- 1.2 Inventory of existing permitted activities and processes : Review all processes for issuing of permits for public and privately organized events within public spaces
- 1.3 Stakeholder Identification and Outreach: Identify and solicit feedback from organizations, companies and individuals that have in the past held public events or showed interest in holding public events within the town or study area
- 1.4 SWOT Analysis : Analyze potential opportunities and challenges around utilization of public spaces
- 1.5 Case Studies and Resources: Research similar communities in the state and region and create a catalogue of realistic, achievable activities

2.0 Community Input

- 2.1 Municipal Listening Session(s): Solicit feedback on existing processes, paying special attention to what has worked, where friction points may be
- 2.2 Community / Stakeholder Listening Session(s): Solicit feedback from community stakeholders on opportunities and challenges
- 2.3 Summary of Community Feedback: Summarize all community feedback and develop recommendations for reducing friction points

3.0 Strategy Guide Development and Review

- 3.1 Summary and analysis of existing processes
- 3.2 Opportunities and Challenges
- 3.3 Case Studies
- 3.4 Recommendations for streamlining the permitting process
- 3.5 Review all recommendations with municipality and incorporate recommended edits

Process

1. Outreach and background research
2. Develop draft materials and visuals
3. Municipal review and revision

Streamlining Special Event Permitting






Provided by SME Consultant

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Location

Osceola County, Florida

Origin	Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies, Osceola County (FL) Board of County Commissioners Community Development Department
Budget	 Low-cost, municipal staff engagement
Timeframe	 Short-term, may require changes to municipal review processes
Risk	 Low risk
Key Performance Indicators	Number of permits reviewed and issued, length of permitting and approval process
Partners & Resources	Municipal departments, to include, but not limited to Planning, Police, Fire, Building, DPW, and Health, and Town/City Administration; DLTA funding to assess permitting
Diagnostic	<p>The COVID pandemic has unleashed creativity and permissiveness in municipal special events permitting that cities and towns want to hold onto as society opens up. Elements to be retained include easing the burden of applying for permits and making sure costs reflect the amount of effort necessary to process the permits and do not result in inequitable access by different groups.</p> <p>More efficient and easier permitting processes can lead to quicker turn-around and peace of mind for those organizing these events for the community. Streamlining event permitting can help agencies organizing events to use their resources more efficiently and will result in better events when permitted on a singular parcel as zoning dictates.</p> <p>The following example is a regulatory process taken from Osceola County in Florida that employs best practices for special event permitting: a central repository for application with the ability to submit electronically and follow the permit review process via electronic permitting. Review processes are done transparently and discussed at routinely scheduled meetings in conformance with the local government's regulatory codes.</p>

Action Item

In order to streamline your permitting process, the municipality should review its permitting powers: who reviews and approves, how much does the permit cost, is there an appeal procedure, etc.

The following Best Practices can be used to improve communication between stakeholders and the community about the local permitting process for special events. For this best practice, the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners utilizes these techniques to ensure an expedient, open permitting process for their special events.

- Single Point of Contact
- Users' Guide to Permitting with Permitting Flow Charts & Checklists
- Clear Submittal Requirements
- Concurrent Applications
- Combined Public Hearings, if needed
- Pre-Application Process
- Development Review Committee (DRC)
- Regularly scheduled inter-departmental meetings
- Physical proximity of professional staff to review

These best practices apply to streamlining special event applications that are allowed in specific areas of a community. In most cases, the zoning district would dictate the type of uses allowed in a community. This particular example permits special events as a type of use in commercially zoned areas and have a limitation of occurrences per calendar year.

Process

As listed above, streamlined permitting can be realized if a municipality explores the concepts below. Not only has COVID maybe expedited these processes, but it has likely created a more permanent change in the ways municipalities interact with special events.


1. Single Point of Contact. The Community Development Department was the repository for the initial application and would determine if requirements were met leading to the scheduling of a Development Review Committee Meeting.
2. Users' Guide to Permitting and Permitting Flow Charts and Checklists. If a community already has a product like this, the process for permitting for special events can be incorporated into the existing guide. As the government provided an electronic permitting system, following the flow of the permit was easy for the applicant to see what either was missing or if a staff review had occurred.
3. Clear Submittal Requirements. Special event permit applications required documented permission from the property owner, site plan, photos, proof of insurance, and a narrative description of the event. Other documents would be required if necessary.
4. Concurrent Applications. Other required application permits, and their approvals, would need to be furnished as part of the permit approval process. The communication internally would be to ensure those permit approvals were occurring with the County Health Department or Public Safety, if necessary.
5. Combined Public Hearings, if needed. This was not a likely occurrence due to the local regulation, however, concurrent approvals would occur at a designated meeting of the local Development Review Committee.
6. Pre-Application Process. The point of contact for the process was the specific department staff person who would be able to address outstanding issues and questions regarding the permit requirements.

Process (Continued)

Development Review Committee. The administrative approval of the DRC would occur either through a consent agenda or if pulled to be addressed publicly. The DRC included DPW, Buildings, and Planning/Zoning. The Departments of Public Safety and Health and the School District are often attendees at these meetings.

Regularly scheduled inter-departmental meetings. These meetings kept the issues of the specific special event permit in the County's pipeline of coordinated reviews.

Physical proximity of professional staff to review. The County Administration Building housed all departments. The housing of all departments in the building allowed for a One-Stop shop of sorts. Like with other permitting, increased the ability of interdepartmental staff communications with applicants and each other.

	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Osceola County</h3> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Special Event Application</h3>
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>Osceola County Board of County Commissioners Community Development Department 1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1400 Kissimmee, FL 34741 Phone: (407)742-0200 Specialpermits@osceola.org</p> </div> <div> <p>Application No.: _____ Date Received: _____</p> </div> </div>
<p><u>Submittal Checklist</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Property Owner Authorization <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Description <input type="checkbox"/> Narrative describing the event in detail. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds which will project beyond the property lines. • Vehicular Traffic and parking <input type="checkbox"/> Site plan <u>showing</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lot Dimensions, • Location of Special Event (with all details of set-up), Setbacks of set-up from property and right-of-way lines, Driveways, identifying parking and access, roads, tents, signs, portable toilets, and any other structures and setbacks from property lines and any other existing site improvements <input type="checkbox"/> Application Fees \$620.00 	<p>In accordance with Chapter 3, Article 3.8, Section 3.8.1.O of the Osceola County Land Development Code, authorization for a Special Event is issued to:</p> <p><u>Applicant</u></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Agent/Lessee: _____ Tax ID# _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Email: _____ Phone: _____</p> <p><u>Event Details</u></p> <p>Address of Event: _____</p> <p>Parcel Number: _____</p> <p>Dates of Event: _____ Hours: _____</p> <p>Event on County property? Yes (<input type="checkbox"/>) No (<input type="checkbox"/>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">If yes provide liability Insurance. The insurance shall have a limit not less than \$1 million per occurrence for the general aggregate.</p> <p>Details of Event: (a narrative may be attached to describe the event in detail.)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

An application like this existed both as a fillable paper version and electronically at the county's permitting website.



Developing storefront guidelines to energize downtown





Provided by SME Consultant

Mark Favermann, Favermann Design

Location

Everett, MA

Origin	Mayor, City of Everett
Budget	 Low - \$35,000 for design fee + program to subsidize implementation for \$25,000
Timeframe	 Short- 10 -12 months
Risk	 Low
Key Performance Indicators	Level of participation by landlords and merchants
Partners & Resources	City of Everett, Everett Building Department and Community Development Department, and landlords and merchants.

Diagnostic

The City of Everett is a primarily working class community just north of Boston. It has a large share of Brazilian, Latino and Italian first- and second-generation residents.

In the last few years, a very large casino has located there that gives the city some needed donations and fees for public improvements. There are two major retail enclaves in Everett: Everett Square and Glendale Square.

Everett Square, the larger of the two, is the traditional downtown where the public library and City Hall and many amenities are located.

Stores and restaurants are primarily locally-owned, family enterprises. Only a minority of Everett's business are national or regional chains.

In a bid to encourage the appeal of Everett's downtown to outside visitors, the year before the Pandemic, the Mayor directed the Community Development Director to create a framework to better guide merchants in enhancing their storefronts. A subsidy grant program was being developed to encourage merchant and landlord participation.

The Mayor also felt that a more restricted approach to storefront design be adhered to with similar sign details and limited awning colors. A study was commissioned to develop Guidelines for Signage and Storefronts. Following this, the guidelines were to be translated into the City of Everett's Building Code.

Action Items

- Photo-documentation of all commercial blocks and stores in both Everett Square and Glendale Square.
- Creating a panoramic view each block showing "existing" and "proposed."
- Thorough review of existing storefront improvement programs throughout the United States and Canada to recognize applicable precedents and best practices.
- Development of a City of Everett Guidelines format while exploring various cases for refinement and review.
- Drafting distinct pages referencing individual aspects of storefronts. These included wall signs, blade signs, awnings and window treatments.
- Review the drafted pages with Everett's planning staff, Building Department and representatives of the Mayor's office.
- Final approval of Storefront Guidelines.



Everett Square

Applicable Commercial Areas

The Everett Storefront Sign and Design Guidelines are applicable to any storefront located in the Everett Square neighborhood and the Glendale Square Neighborhood.

Everett Square

Everett Square is a prominent commercial corridor in the city center running along Broadway Street between Hancock Street in the north and Revere Beach Parkway in the south. The center of Everett Square is at the intersection of Broadway and Chelsea/Norwood streets.



The high number of vacant storefronts contributed to lack of vibrancy downtown.

Process

- Extensive research of other cities and towns' guidelines and procedures.
- Based on best practices, create easily understandable illustrated storefront component pages that reference City of Everett regulations.
- Establish storefront element criteria through including specifically referenced dimensions, materials and placement.
- Photo-document good and bad examples of storefront elements.
- Create a City of Everett color pallet.
- Show by illustration approved and not approved ways of applying storefront elements.
- Circulate among town staff the drafts individual guideline pages for review and refinement.
- Organize whole Storefront Guidelines set of pages.
- After completion of Storefront Guidelines, during the Covid-19 shutdown, work with the Building Commission to rewrite Everett's Building Code to reflect the clearer storefront criteria.
- Others involved in the rewriting of Building Code include the city attorney and community development director.
- This sentence by sentence intense exercise gave focus to the Building Code while doing away with unnecessary zoning code criteria
- This Collaboration made a tedious set of tasks quite reasonable to complete.
- This process allowed an opportunity to address sign issues throughout the City such as non-conforming uses, public/private garages, etc..

Signs

Signs

Business signage is a very critical element to the storefront. Not only does it provide a first impression to customers, but it also helps convey the business' brand and character.

Signs should clearly communicate the business name, but not be overwhelming. The average person can only process four to seven words while passing by. Therefore keeping text and graphics to a minimum will make the most impact.



City Ordinance/Regulation:
Section 15.546 of the City Ordinance further regulates the number and size of signs. See Technical Requirements for more information.

24

Signs and Technical Requirements

Awnings

Awnings can be a great addition to a storefront. Not only can they provide an area for signage, but they also help provide a visual cue on where the entrance is located. Awnings also provide shelter for customers in inclement weather and also provide shade for store items being displayed in the window.

City Ordinance/Regulation:
City Council Rule 74.B further regulates awnings. Awning signs are also further regulated in City Ordinance Section 12A.



Awning Signs - Material

Awnings should be a solid color and made from a fabric or canvas material. Shiny, high gloss or translucent materials should be avoided.

Lettering and material should be consistent for all awnings on the same building.



This fabric awning is NOT shiny, high gloss or translucent. The awning frame also matches the black fabric.

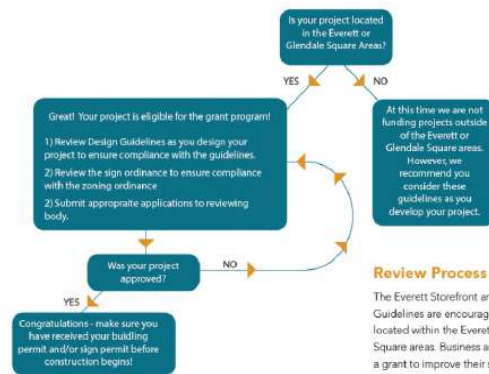


This awning is made of shiny vinyl and is not encouraged.

The block party was a near-term, easy action item in the overall implementation plan and was intended to support a good image for this area of the downtown and set up for larger and longer-term action items such as building redevelopment, wayfinding, and business recruitment for ground floor spaces.

Process- Strategic Decisions

- City of Everett deciding to create storefront guidelines
- Building Commission desiring to match new guidelines to City's Building code.
- Creation of a digital set of storefront criteria for use by merchants, landlords and fabricator/installers.
- Use of panoramic photo-montage to establish existing conditions.
- Use of photo-montages to act as baseline show proposed conditions using new storefront criteria.
- Collaboration between strategic City departments for ownership of the guidelines and shared development of the review process for design and grant applications.
- Creation of easily understandable and illustrated storefront criteria.



Review Process and Grant Application

Everett Square

Before



After

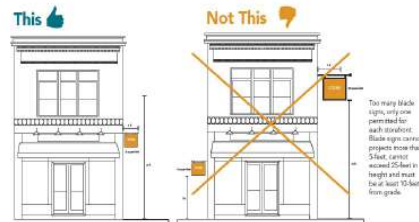




Projecting/Blade Signs

Projecting/blade signs should be limited one to a business entrance and should not contain more than two faces. To maintain the pedestrian feel of the corridor, projecting blade signs cannot project more than 5 feet from the building or be larger than 8 square feet. The sign should also

not be placed higher than the following (whichever is the lowest): 25 feet above grade; the top of the sills of the first level of windows above the first story; or the height of the building at the building line.



Signs and Technical Requirements

Wall Signs

Wall Signs - Height

The top of wall signs should be higher than any of the following, whichever is lowest:

- 25 ft above grade;
- top of sills of the first level of windows above the first story; or
- the height of a building at the building line.

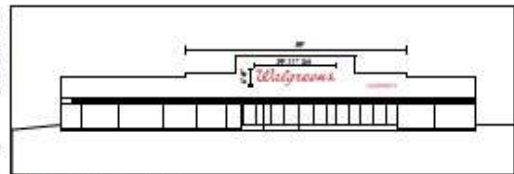


Everett MA Signage Case Study

The following depicts how signage is applied based on current and proposed regulations. The proposed regulations are depicted in Example 2. However, two additional renderings were provided to show alternative sign sizes.

Example 1
Allowed Under Current Regulations
Based on Sign Permit Documentation
Max Sign Size = 395 (158ft x 2.5 = 395, per sign permit)

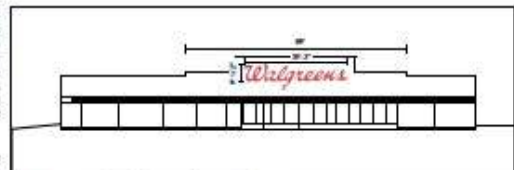
Main Sign As Shown = 199.77sf



Note - square footage is split up between the two signs "Walgreens" & "Pharmacy"

Example 2
Proposed Regulations
4 square ft per linear foot of wall which pertains to the sign, for facades set back more than 100-feet from the centerline of the road
Max Sign Size = 356 sf

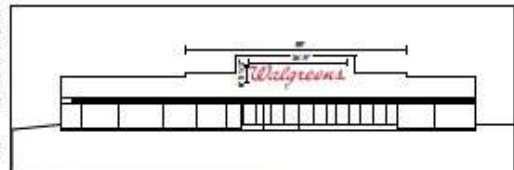
As shown = ~ 354 sf
Dimensions = 39.25' x 9.04'



Note - proposed regulations would not permit two wall signs on the same facade, therefore this example using all allotted sign size to the single wall sign.

Example 3
Comparison
3.5 sf per linear foot of wall which pertains to the sign, for facades set back from than 100-feet from the centerline of the road.
Max Sign Size = 311.5sf

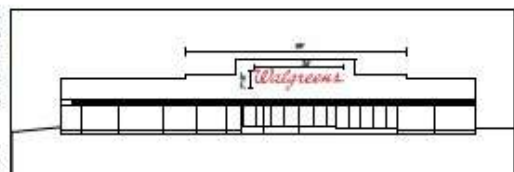
As shown = ~311.12sf
Dimensions = 36.75' x 8.47'



Note - proposed regulations would not permit two wall signs on the same facade, therefore this example using all allotted sign size to the single wall sign.

Example 4
Comparison
3 sf per linear foot of wall which pertains to the sign, for facades set back from than 100-feet from the centerline of the road.
Max Sign Size = 257sf

As shown = ~266.30'
Dimensions = 34' x 7.83'



Note - proposed regulations would not permit two wall signs on the same facade, therefore this example using all allotted sign size to the single wall sign.

FAVERMANN DESIGN | DECEMBER 2019

Examples of City of Everett's Storefront Guideline Pages.

Case Study of Walgreen's non-conforming storefront signage on set-back shopping strip façade.

Event Branding: Taste Fall River



Provided by SME Consultant

Zapalac Advisors

Location

Boston, MA

Origin	The Fall River TDI partnership, supported by Laurie A Zapalac, PhD working as a technical advisor to MassDevelopment's TDI program and the partnership
Budget	 Low (Less than \$30,000)
Timeframe	 Short Term (Less than 1 year)
Risk	 Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators	Number of event tickets sold, direct feedback from the community including participating restaurants and ticket buyers, social media response and press coverage
Partners & Resources	Mass Development, The TDI Fall River Partnership, People Inc., Alexandra's, City of Fall River, Bank Five and Rockland Trust
Diagnostic	<p>In 2017 Fall River launched a new "brand" for the city, <i>Make it Here</i>, drawing from the city's textile heritage and celebrating its potential as an environment for Makers.</p> <p>Fall River had applied to the MassDevelopment's Transformative Development Initiative and in 2018, MassDevelopment wanted to ensure that critical public sector, private sector and institutional partners on the ground were ready to make the commitment to support the two to three-year technical assistant program to drive transformative change on Main Street.</p> <p>Just as planning was underway, negative headlines about Fall River started appearing in the press in relationship to the indictment of the current mayor. This led to broader discussion about the need to drive key narratives about Fall River that put a spotlight on positive things in the community</p> <p>In 2019, planning begun on the creation of a "first initiative," intended to give the partners experience collaborating with one another while addressing the need to amplify an existing city brand and find new things to celebrate.</p>

Diagnostic (continued)

The partnership had enough institutional memory to know that a similar event had been carried out in Fall River in years past – and had been relatively successful – but not sustained due to relying heavily on volunteers, so one goal was to strengthen cross-sector collaboration and work toward a sustainable operating model.

Among the Main Street businesses there were traditional, well known Portuguese and Portuguese-influenced restaurants – something for which Fall River is recognized – as well as number of newer additions expanding offerings in downtown.

While Main Street had maintained an interesting mix of uses, there were deficiencies in building management and some properties were vacant. So one goal was to raise the “brand” of Main Street by showing it’s potential and a vibrant and activated streetscape.

As the *Taste Fall River* idea emerged, there were two interrelated concerns from certain members of the partnership: 1) Would anyone from beyond Fall River be interested in this event and 2) Were online ticket sales even necessary? – reflecting an “everyone uses cash” mindset. The partnership discussed both and pressed forward with the idea that if they worked to assemble a top-notch event, there would be interest from Fall River – as well as other markets. That then confirmed that investing the time and money in developing a website and Eventbrite posting for the event would be necessary and worthwhile.

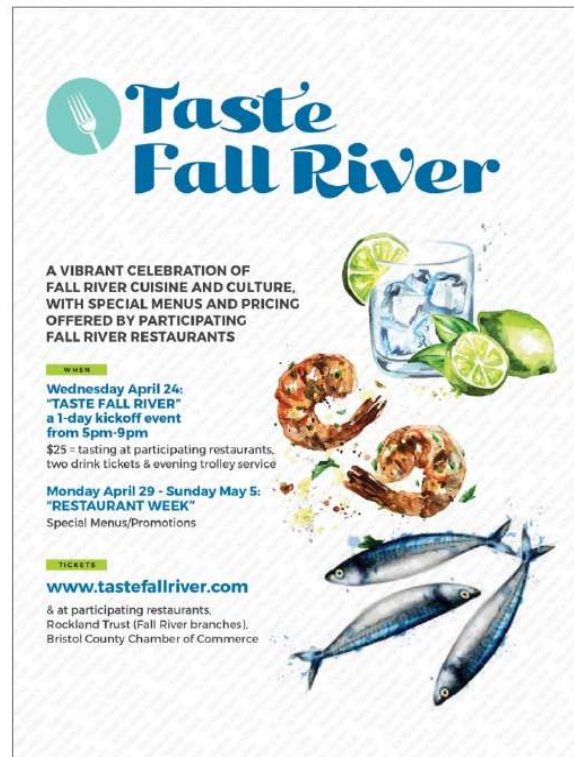
Action Item

The relevance of this project for thinking about Covid rapid recovery includes:

- Bringing together a set of partners to collaborate on a response to drive economic development and direct narratives towards shared values and aspiration.
- The actual event included Taste Fall River – a one evening dining event – and Fall River Restaurant Week – a weeklong program of discounts offered by participating businesses.
- In tandem, the partnership developed an information “kit” that included a topline narrative that elaborates on the core “Make it Here” brand, while also including practical information for any party interest in investing or developing along Main Street. We gathered cut sheets for all property listed for sale or lease and summarized this information, making all of it available as part of the information kit.

Process (for Covid pivots)

- **Event conceptualization led by the partnership**, including event co-chairs who organized schedule, recruited restaurants to participate, other “node” locations to be open, and managed ticket sales by all partners. Other partners played key roles including securing sponsorships and lining up musicians who played at key locations throughout the evening.
- **Coordination led by the City of Fall River representative on the partnership** – including securing trolley, permitting, police detail, etc.
- **Website Design and Social Media Campaign.** The lead consultant worked closely with one of the event co-chairs to launch an event website. Another partner member set up the Eventbrite for online ticket sales (and acted as the fiscal representative for the project). Another partner worked with an in-house graphic designer to develop the event poster. We found ways to message creative and strategic tie-ins between the Make it Here and Taste Fall River concepts, “Make it a girls’ night, make it a date night ... etc.”
- Any social media coverage for a new event starts small – so it was important to not let a low number of “likes” discourage efforts. Training and encouragement were necessary to drive home the importance of liking/sharing/posting – but we felt this was worthwhile overall to encourage businesses to support one another.
- We aligned with a relevant social media influencer active on Instagram (and Facebook) to push out the message to her audience and provide some specialty photography. On the day of the event, we posted restaurant owners preparing (“pre-game”), during the event, as well as as the event wrapped and an after-party at one of the participating restaurants was underway.
- A partner member with marketing and social media experience was instrumental in deploying a press release and managing a social media campaign.
- **Information Kit and Real Estate Data.** Was created by the lead consultant, with input from local commercial real estate brokers.
- 2019 Taste Fall River proved to be a fun and successful event, helping Main Street businesses built stronger relationships, prove the vitality of the district, showcase a unique range of dining offerings, and inspire confidence in all partners as well as the broader community about what is possible in Fall river’s future.
- Having access to analytics from the event website, Eventbrite, Facebook and Social Instagram gave us clear feedback about what messages resonated and hard data about interest in Fall River from the broader regional market.
- The partnership surpassed the goal of selling 400 tickets, and the profit was donated to the City of Fall River to be put towards the purchase of an ADA-accessible trolley.



Taste Fall River – Fall River, MA



Creative empty storefront treatments by Newton Community Pride's WindowArt



Provided by SME Consultant

Mark Favermann, Favermann Design

Location

City of Newton (in two Villages)

Origin	Community group, artists collaborating with landlords to revitalize store closures due to impacts of COVID-19
Budget	 Low (<\$50,000)—utilization of existing artwork
Timeframe	 Medium-term – planning and implementation took 6 months
Risk	 Low Risk for project execution. However, connecting with absentee landlords will present difficulties.
Key Performance Indicators	Perceived street enhancements; No. of potential tenants engaged; No. of tenants signing leases
Partners & Resources	Town Administrators, City Departments of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts—including the Cultural Division, the Planning and Economic Development Department and the Department of Public Works, local landlords, potential tenants, arts organizations and artists

Diagnostic

Though the Covid-19 Pandemic more finely focused on the dilemma of empty storefronts, this is a continuous, if sometimes only temporary, negative situation in downtowns and commercial districts. Vacant stores are a glaring or at least front and center visible loss to a commercial area, block or building. And most landlords do the least effort to re-lease—simple signs, ads or word of mouth to existing tenants.

The issue is how to combine the needs of the commercial district to the resources available to be creative and commercially reinforcing. One thoughtful solution was by Newton Community Pride, a non-profit organization building community for all to enjoy through arts and culture programming.

The Newton Community Pride staff and board recognized the empty storefront needs of the City of Newton commercial districts. They also had an inventory of artwork by local resident artists.

They wanted to install artwork in as many empty storefronts as possible. However, it was challenging to ascertain landlord ownership especially with absentee landlords, as a they are a subgroup of landlords with less incentive to visually enhance their empty properties. They focused on identifying and working with various owners that they could,

After a short few weeks, Newton Community Pride installed a number empty storefronts with art.

Context

- No matter how beautiful or historic a façade is, an empty storefront makes it an eyesore.
- Empty Storefronts are distractions from a vital commercial area or downtown.
- With no rent, revenue or relief, unless enlightened or visionary, a landlord usually does the least expensive solution like just paper in the windows, standard for lease signs, etc.
- Arts organizations, student artists and community artists have all assisted to make the empty stores more visually appealing.



Vacant ground floor uses were mapped and space characteristics noted.



The vacant storefronts contributed to lack of vibrancy in the City of Newton's commercial districts.

Action Items/Process

- Document the empty storefronts in a particular commercial area. In the City of Newton's case, there are 13 separate villages with some commercial district located in eight (8) of them.
- Select focus areas. In Newton's case, focus was centered upon the greatest concentration of stores and empty storefronts.
- Identify landlords and reach out to landlords through cold calls, e-mails, and online and print publications. Persistence in reaching out seemed to payoff the most.
- To augment the "Call for Interested Landlords," Newton Community Pride used local media through press releases including [The Boston Globe](#), local online publications, social media and their own website to communicate the program.
- Discuss and agree with landlords on the organization's approach to the empty storefront. Individual property managers made final decisions about what went where.
- Develop an approach to the installations or create an inventory of existing artwork by local artists. In this case, the artwork already existed and had been used as part of the previously funded Newton Community Pride program, FenceArt. FenceArt produced a juried "call to artist" that generated an inventory of artwork.
- All art was previously printed on vinyl banners, and this allowed for an easy installation behind storefront windows..
- The results of the initial effort were disappointing to the organization who desired much more landlord participation. However, the lessons learned here allow for future project application.



Even the most beautiful block architecturally with wonderful historic detailing looks bad when the empty storefronts are empty.



Empty storefronts in a beautiful commercial block is like the missing tooth in the beautiful smile.

Process – Strategic Decisions

- Establishment of a collaborative network to discuss and share resources.
- Decide who are the key decision-makers of each project be they landlords, business associations, arts organizations, city agency, etc.
- Think innovatively, out of the box. In this case, the decision to utilize existing and available artwork allowed for several steps to be skipped in the process.
- Learning from this experience, in the future it would be desirable to have a City of Newton official agency to identify landlord ownership. In-turn, this would facilitate greater numbers of cooperating storefronts.
- Publicizing the successful projects to encourage more landlord/building owner involvement.
- Decision that the installed program should have a time limit for elements to be replaced.
- It was determined that this WindowArt Project was a part of the overall Covid-19 Program titled “Newton Al Fresco” that also included artist-decorated Jersey barriers, painted cable spools as side tables for benches for outdoor eating and individual murals.
- A related project to WindowArt and another creative Covid-19 response is an innovative new pilot program partnered by the City of Newton, the Town of Needham and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Project: Pop-Up*.
 - This will allow small retailers to access 1-3 storefronts in Needham and 4-5 storefronts in Newton at a significantly reduced cost.
 - The retailers, many of whom are currently operating primarily online, will have access to the commercial space for 2-3 months to introduce their businesses to a wider audience and will have access to a wide range of support services.



Newton Community Pride Artwork Installation in Empty Storefronts



Newton Community Pride energizing empty storefronts with artists' work (above); Articles about the program (below).

Community Corner

WindowART To Fill Vacant Windows Around Newton

Newton Community Pride is trying something a little different this year and repurposing its FenceArt project.

Jenna Fisher, Patch Staff
Posted Tue, Apr 20, 2021 at 10:09 am ET | Updated Tue, Apr 20, 2021 at 12:46 pm ET

Like 15 Share

Reply

Newton Community Pride is trying something a little different this year and repurposing its FenceArt project. (Gloria Gavris, courtesy)

NEWTON, MA — If you've ever walked past a vacant storefront and felt a little hopeful about the potential that space has, you're not alone.

Newton Community Pride, a nonprofit volunteer group with a mission that includes beautification projects that support the community, decided to fill vacant windows with art.

Summary

- Think of the empty storefront as an opportunity for creative artistic expression to energize a storefront, block or commercial area.
- This allows the commercial building or district to take a negative and make it into a positive through visual enhancement while generating provocative conversation or even by creating a temporary art gallery.
- Partners are necessary so that collaboration can take place smoothly between the community agencies, business and arts communities.
- Publicize the activity. This draws community interest, reinforces artists' involvement and attracts potential landlord participants.

NEWTON-TAB

Newton Community Pride announces WindowART to fill vacant windows

COURTESY OF NEWTON COMMUNITY PRIDE

Published 9:11 a.m. ET Apr. 16, 2021

Facebook Twitter Email Print



Newton Community Pride will host WindowART, a public art initiative to bring art to Newton's commercial districts.

THE HEIGHTS

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Home » Newton Community Pride Fills Vacant Storefronts With Artwork



Newton Community Pride Fills Vacant Storefronts With Artwork

By Julia Rensick

April 25, 2021 Updated April 25, 2021 at 11:39 pm

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Print

A photograph of a vibrant red artwork in Mexico next to a red "For rent" sign draws public attention to an otherwise empty Newton storefront window. As a part of a new public art initiative sponsored by Newton Community Pride, vacant Newton storefronts will display professional artwork in an effort to beautify the city.

"It's a lovely opportunity to have shoppers and diners and pedestrians stroll across a beautiful piece of artwork, as opposed to brown paper cardboard or a for lease sign, so it makes a nice addition to our village," Gloria Gavris, board chair of Newton Community Pride, said.

The project, called WindowART, incorporates the pieces from Newton Community Pride's annual FenceART project, including local artist Howard Fleeman's "Nested Arches, Mexico." This public art initiative is a submission-based competition that displays winning artists' work on fences throughout Newton, such as at the Newton Free Library and the Newton Senior Center. A jury of professional artists selects 20 submissions to be printed on vinyl banners and displayed throughout the year.

Newton Community Pride raises the art among five Newton fences every 10 weeks, beginning in October and November, Gavris said. Submissions to the competition were open to artists who reside, work, or participate in art classes in Newton.



Create a way-finding system to help reinforce the downtown experience



Provided by SME Consultant

Mark Favermann, Favermann Design

Location

Wakefield, MA

Origin	Town of Wakefield
Budget	 Medium – approximately \$80,000 (kiosk only; additional elements to cost \$30,000)
Timeframe	 Short – planning and implementation in 3-1/2 months
Risk	 Medium --political will, lightning caused devastating fire, unjustified NIMBYism and lack of community transparency
Key Performance Indicators	Continued use by visitors and residents
Partners & Resources	Wakefield Main Streets, Town of Wakefield, Mass Legislature, Wakefield Police Department, Wakefield Public Library, Wakefield Historical Commission and Wakefield DPW

Diagnostic

The Town of Wakefield is a north of Boston middle-income suburban community. Most residents work outside of Wakefield and commute to work. There are two MBTA Commuter rail stations in Wakefield—Wakefield Center and Greenwood.

There was no universally accepted brand or wayfinding system for the Town of Wakefield.

On the edge of Wakefield Center, Lake Quannapowitt is a popular setting for walkers, joggers, bikers, and in-line skaters off Route 128 in Middlesex County. It is the site of many organized races from 5Ks to Ultra Marathons. However, rarely do outside visitors travel beyond the lakeside the 200 yards to the Town of Wakefield's Downtown. This is a lost opportunity to support restaurants and shops in the Downtown.

With a vital mix of restaurants, goods and services, the downtown appeared robust. However, things could be improved by an effort for better direction and more on-street communication. Here was an opportunity to build on the downtown's commercial base and solidify Wakefield as a Northshore destination.

The Town's administration allotted funding to design a branding and wayfinding system. Seven months later a Massachusetts Legislative Earmark was granted to the Wakefield Main Streets Program for the design and fabrication of informational kiosks.

Action Item

The two overlapping programs took two different paths.

- Over an eight-month period, the branding and wayfinding design process went through a series of group meetings with a large Advisory Group of 24 representatives.
 - A month after the town landscape-based brand was approved by the Advisory Committee and presented in the local daily newspaper and to the Town Council, a devastating lightning-induced fire burned down the majestic church steeple. The loss of the church set back the discussion of whether or not the approved image should be brought forward as a historical image or changed to reflect the current conditions.
 - The designs and branding and wayfinding program were put on hold.
- Overseen by the Wakefield Main Streets Board of Directors and invited Town officials, the kiosk design program was mandated to have only 3.5 months to complete design, design review, put out for bidding and start implementation.
 - The kiosk program went fully ahead.
 - However, some community members felt left out of the design and placement of the project elements. Their concerns had to be integrated.



Joggers and runners around Crystal Lake, a target audience of non-residents as potential patrons to the downtown.



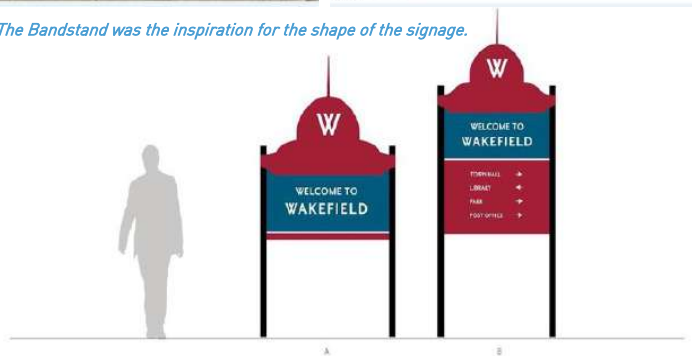
Old Band Stand adjacent to Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield, MA

Process

- After a number of kiosk design alternatives were presented to the Wakefield Main Streets Board, one design was chosen to develop, locate and specify.
- Three (3) of the kiosks were to be two-sided and analog; the fourth was to be digital and four-sided. The digital one would be set closest to the lake.
- Historical town images and commentary was developed to fit around as a border around a business directory for one side of the directory.
- Set in an airtight locked Plexiglas window, this information could be easily changeable on the two-sided kiosks. On the opposite side was space for timely event posters and community announcements.
- The digital kiosk was designed to have a screen/monitor that was programmable from the town hall.
- There was much criticism around the placement and look of the digital kiosk. The town council eventually addressed the public and took a stand that the location, size and look of the kiosk was the best possible solution.
- Kiosk-opposing residents were invited to an expanded Branding and Wayfinding meeting to assist with eventual sign element placement on maps.
- Favermann Design was then hired by the Town administration to create a style guideline to reflect the iconic kiosk toppers.
- After a period of about four months the guidelines have resulted in the establishment of a consistent Town of Wakefield visual brand for internal communication, the official website, e-mails, business cards, interior town hall signage, newsletters and even drop boxes.
- These guidelines were in place during the Covid-19 pandemic, and further thought was given to the on-hold wayfinding program. It was decided that a new approach should be taken that abandoned the problematic landscape and instead visually reflected the kiosk and style of the Town of Wakefield.
- Utilizing the new design approach, plans are going ahead for a new directional sign for the Greenwood neighborhood. A test will take place during the Summer of 2021 to see how wayfinding can connect the Lake with downtown.



The Bandstand was the inspiration for the shape of the signage.



Besides interested citizens, town officials including the Town Planner, Police Officer, City Counselor, and Main Street board member are making decisions regarding locations.

Local Press Coverage of Controversial Town Council Meetings Occurred due to Kiosks

- Though carefully announced by the Main streets Board, controversy was caused by residents feeling left out of the process.
- Several Town council meetings addressed the size, content and location of the kiosks, especially the proposed digital one adjacent to the lake.
- All kiosk locations are on Town property and are at the best decision-point locations possible.
- The "waters" were eventually calmed and the process continued until a successful implementation of the program.

Previous Historical Landscape Design for Wakefield's Branding and Wayfinding Shelved

- Below is an image of the previous design that was affected by the destructive church fire.
- The "new" simpler design has found favor in the community.
- The Town of Wakefield is now creating a fully consistent "look" for all its official elements.



See our 2018 Wakefield Memorial High graduation supplement

WAKEFIELD ITEM HOURS
Monday - Thursday 7:30 - 4:00
Friday 7:30 - 3:00

RECYCLE COLOR: Blue • Tuesday, June 5, 2018 • 36 Pages

the Wakefield DAILY ITEM

Family-owned publication serving Wakefield for 124 years • 75c Newsstand, 00c Home delivery www.wakefielditem.com

Sailboat with cherries

A BLACK CHERRY tree (according to the Audubon Field Guide: New England) along the shore of Lake Quannapowitt. (Robert Puskas Photo)

Kiosks coming to downtown

Town Council notebook

By MARK SARDELLA

WAKEFIELD — As part of the ongoing effort to revitalize the downtown area, four new kiosks will be installed at various locations offering "way-finding" and other useful information for visitors and residents. The Town Council approved the installation of the signs, one of which will have a digital component, at their meeting last week.

Bob Mailhot, president of Wakefield Main Streets, appeared before the Town Council along with Mark Faverman of Faverman Design to discuss the project. The kiosks will be paid for by Wakefield Main Streets through their private fundraising efforts. Faverman Design has been retained by the town to develop a branding and wayfinding program for the town's business districts.

Two of the free-standing, two-sided kiosks will be located on sidewalks in the Square and will be placed at Main and Water streets and Main and Albion streets. A third two-sided kiosk will be placed near Veterans Field on North Avenue. The digital kiosk will be three-sided and will be placed at the southern end of the Lower Common, near the corner of Common Street and Lake Avenue. One side of this kiosk will be digital and have a changeable screen.

Faverman talked about the design of the kiosks, which will incorporate the look of the iconic Bandstand, including a red top that

Community Meeting and Open House: Hurd School future options

WAKEFIELD — The Town Council and Town Administrator Site-evaluated the Hurd School location and the public is invited to a second Open House and Community Meeting.

The first Open House was held at the Hurd School on Wednesday, June 20 at 6:15 p.m. The Town Administrator will lead the discussion and provide updates to the ongoing evaluation followed by a question and answer session about the building's future.

"After hearing from the public at our first meeting and evaluating our swing space and other needs, it is time to re-engage the neighborhood and community to discuss the best use of the building moving forward," according to the Town Administrator.

The Hurd School was declared excess property in 2005 by the Wakefield School Committee and

Stolen credit cards reported

WAKEFIELD — A Winsip Drive woman called police at about 11 a.m. yesterday to report that her credit cards had been stolen.

The woman noticed that the cards were missing over the weekend but was not sure when they were taken.

Police said that fraudulent charges were made using the credit cards at Home Depot in Danvers and Target in Stoneham. The cards have been canceled.

About 3 p.m. yesterday, a caller reported that a UPS truck took down some wires at the corner of Oak Street and Orchard Avenue. Police confirmed that they were cable wires and made sure they

Kiosks like this one will be installed at four key locations around town to help promote the downtown area. Conceived by Faverman Design, the kiosks will incorporate the look of the iconic Bandstand.

KIOSKS Page 7

the Wakefield DAILY ITEM

Family-owned publication serving Wakefield since 1894

Kiosks before Council tonight

WAKEFIELD — A group of residents who have been working to help the town with the kiosks will be at the Town Council meeting tonight to discuss the kiosks and the location of the kiosks.

The kiosks will be placed at four key locations around town to help promote the downtown area. Conceived by Faverman Design, the kiosks will incorporate the look of the iconic Bandstand.

The kiosks will be placed at four key locations around town to help promote the downtown area. Conceived by Faverman Design, the kiosks will incorporate the look of the iconic Bandstand.

Kiosk Debate Dominates Town Council Meeting

WAKEFIELD — A debate over the location of the kiosks dominated the Town Council meeting tonight.

The kiosks will be placed at four key locations around town to help promote the downtown area. Conceived by Faverman Design, the kiosks will incorporate the look of the iconic Bandstand.

The kiosks will be placed at four key locations around town to help promote the downtown area. Conceived by Faverman Design, the kiosks will incorporate the look of the iconic Bandstand.



**TOWN OF
WAKEFIELD**

STYLEGUIDE



**TOWN OF
WAKEFIELD**



WINTER 2021

UPGRADED DROP BOXES AT TOWN HALL



With safety a top priority for Town Hall employees and guests, residents are strongly encouraged to conduct their Town transactions virtually. Payments can be made online at www.wakefield.ma.us/online-payments for many services, including taxes, water bills, white-goods stickers, refuse bags, cemetery services, and more. Many forms and applications can also be accessed on the Town's website www.wakefield.ma.us.

Town Hall has installed new drop boxes to make submitting documents to staff quick and easy. These boxes are clearly marked and located near the accessible parking spaces and sidewalk ramp, to the left of the Town Hall entrance.

DATES TO NOTE

Tax Collector

Third-quarter actual real estate bill due:
February 1, 2021

Third-quarter actual personal property bill due:
February 1, 2021

2021 motor vehicle excise bill commitment #1
Issued **February 4, 2021** | Due **March 8, 2021**

Assessing Department

Abatement applications due:
February 1, 2021

Statutory exemptions due:
April 1, 2021



In 2015, Wakefield lifted its December-to-April on-street parking ban and now enforces parking limitations on an emergency basis.

When preparing for a snow event, the Town often initiates a temporary restriction of on-street parking. This allows plowing crews and public safety vehicles to safely access the roads and perform curb-to-curb cleanup. Parking ban announcements and other emergency notifications are made via our CodeRED e-alert system.

All parked cars must be removed from the roadways during a parking ban. If your residence does not have a driveway, connect with your landlord for parking options or coordinate with a neighbor who has extra driveway space. Vehicles that interfere with snow operations or emergency-vehicle access may be towed.

1 Lafayette Street Wakefield, MA 01880 | wakefield.ma.us

The Town of Wakefield “branded” elements and strictly adhered to style guidelines demonstrate how programs can build upon and even improve each other to reinforce a sense of place, a sense of arrival and a sense of shared experience.



Establish a Business Recovery Task Force



REVENUES
& SALES

Provided by SME Consultant

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Location

Lowell, MA

Origin	City of Lowell Economic Development Office, Entrepreneurship Center at CTI, Entrepreneurship for All, Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, Lowell Plan/Lowell Development Finance Corporation
Budget	 <p>Low – The Task Force did not have a budget. Participating partners participated as part of their regular jobs or donated time. Resources provided to the businesses were allocated through existing local, state and federal grant programs.</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Short-term – The Task Force was established informally within one month from when the need was identified. It has met on a monthly basis over the past year, with membership gradually increasing over time.</p>
Risk	 <p>Low – lack of coordination between the agencies and organizations assisting businesses; diminishing interest on the part of businesses as the recovery takes hold</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Number of employees retained, annual revenues, number of customers/clients served, number of vacancies, number of visitors in the area
Partners & Resources	City of Lowell Economic Development Office, Entrepreneurship Center at CTI, Entrepreneurship for All, Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, Lowell Plan/Lowell Development Finance Corporation, MassHire/Lowell Career Center, SBA, UMass Lowell, Greater Lowell Community Foundation, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lowell National Historical Park, Working Cities Lowell, Mill City Community Investments, Enterprise Bank, several local businesses, state legislative delegation, Congresswoman Trahan's office

Diagnostic

During the pandemic, many Lowell businesses have struggled to survive. A clear need for support, technical assistance, and enhanced communication, in multiple languages and across various platforms, was identified by the Lowell Economic Development Office and its partners. It became evident that many business owners and managers did not have the resources or capacity to track and interpret the state and federal guidelines that were issued on a continual basis. In addition, the emergency stay at home order had a detrimental impact on their revenues. Several businesses shuttered their operations, reduced hours, or went into hibernation.

A diverse cross-collaborative effort was needed to facilitate a meaningful recovery during this crisis. The Lowell Business Recovery Task Force came together to spearhead local interventions, assisting businesses with accessing working capital and personal protective equipment for employees, improving business presence on social media, and assisting restaurants in pivoting their business models to take-out and curbside service. The goal of the task force was to ensure that all businesses in Lowell had the support that they needed to survive during this unprecedented period.

Action Items

The Lowell Economic Development organized the Lowell Business Recovery Task Force to centralize resources for businesses and to provide assistance during the pandemic. The Task Force launched a web page to document their work and provide information on available assistance and programs. Language assistance in Spanish, Portuguese and Khmer was made available to ensure that the program was widely available to all City businesses.

To assist restaurants, the Task Force developed the *Creative Restaurant Marketing during COVID-19* program. In partnership with Susu Wong of Tomo360, they hosted two free webinars on Creative Restaurant Marketing in 2020 that focused on online marketing and social media:

[4/1/2020 - Creative Restaurant Marketing - Online Marketing](#)

[4/1/2020 - Creative Restaurant Marketing - Social Media](#)

The City also created a marketing grant program available to Lowell's small, independently owned businesses that were most significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Grant awards of up to \$2,000 were available to eligible businesses.



Action Items (continued)

In addition, the City of Lowell implemented a special Restaurant Curbside Pickup Parking space allocation initiative. Restaurants can apply for a meter bag and sign indicating the space has been allocated for customer curbside pickup only.

The Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the City of Lowell's Economic Development Office, Lowell TeleMedia Center (LTC), the Lowell Plan, EforAll and the Entrepreneurship Center at CTI, launched the Lowell Shopping Network (LSN)!, airing two-minute videos created by Lowell businesses (and edited by LTC) on channels 8 and 95 and on Facebook. Members of the community were asked to become active members of the group to provide other consumers with information about the wonderful items, artwork, food, etc. that Lowell has to offer. They were also asked to give local businesses support by providing social smiles, posting photos of purchases, providing a review and sharing an idea.

Process

- Identify the needs of the business community.
- Establish the Business Recovery Task Force utilizing the partnerships and resources appropriate for meeting identified needs.
- Create a web page and communication strategy using multiple platforms and languages to effectively reach businesses in need of assistance.
- Provide training to local businesses owners and managers on social media and online marketing.
- Leverage local government and business partnerships to meet unprecedented business needs relative to outdoor dining, curbside pickup and implementation of public health measures.
- Use local cable television resources to market local businesses through videos launched on a local shopping network.
- Advertise available resources, such as local, state and federal grant programs and assistance available from area financial institutions, to struggling businesses. Assist businesses with the application process.



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>Diagnostic</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"> 1.Skills competency – does each constituency understand the tools they have to work with, and is proficient in their use 2.Activity and Deployment – are each of the tools fully put to use 3.Integration and Coordination – are the different constituencies collaborating towards a common goal <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>Action Item</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 & Coordination (1 hr weekly)</p> <p>Program Reporting (1 hr monthly)</p>
<p>Process</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>

MASSACHUSETTS PLANNING

A publication of the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association



American Planning Association
Massachusetts Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

Fall 2021

The Success of the Shared Streets and Spaces Program

page 3

Topsfield, MA

Plus: *The History of MPOs...6 / SNEAPA 2021...7 / News From CPM (new name!)...9*

Planning for People: The Success of Massachusetts' Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program



Downtown Belmont, MA transformed into a Shared Street for people, public transit, retail, and dining during COVID-19.

Credit: Solomon Foundation

Even as communities approach widespread vaccination, we know life will never be the same as before. One program in Massachusetts gives us a glimpse into the meaningful quality of life improvements we can take with us into the future if we continue to design healthy, fun, safe and affordable ways for people to get around and within our communities.

The Bay State's **Shared Streets and Spaces** grant program has supported 143 communities—from cities to small towns—in testing ideas to improve local outdoor spaces so that people can safely be in public together during the pandemic. Administered by the [Massachusetts Department of Transportation](#) (MassDOT) with support from the [Barr Foundation](#), the [Solomon Foundation](#), and the [Metropolitan Area Planning Council](#) (MAPC), and other nonprofit partners, the program has empowered [municipalities across Massachusetts](#) to implement changes to make their streets, sidewalks, and other public spaces more equitable, inclusive, and accessible.

While these projects may look simple—setting up a few chairs for strangers to have small talk, slowing down traffic so kids can play, adding a bus stop for essential workers—all strengthen community bonds and combat loneliness, keep downtowns buzzing, and remind all of us that we're in this together.

The Shared Streets and Spaces grant program has been successful in piloting projects and policies that in many cases will now be made permanent. So, how does it work, and what lessons does the program provide other cities around the country?

How Does it Work?

■ Grantmaking

The Shared Streets and Spaces grant program was formed in June 2020 in response to COVID-19 and has so far invested \$21.6 million in 194 projects, with 60% in designated Environmental Justice communities. All municipalities and public transportation authorities are eligible to apply for grants ranging from \$5,000-\$500,000, depending on project type, through an application process that is entirely online and is intentionally simple to complete.

Applications are reviewed and grants are made as quickly and seamlessly as possible deliver funding and support to communities fast. At this stage of the program, extra points are awarded during the scoring process for projects that provide better access and opportunities for school children and elders, to open space and public transit, and in Environmental Justice and 'COVID-19 red' communities. Finally, pro

continued next page

Shared Streets and Spaces *cont'd*

bono technical assistance is available to all municipalities, funded by the Barr Foundation, for assistance in developing applications. Another unique aspect of this program is that grants are paid in full and upfront, unlike other grant programs which are paid through reimbursement and electronically transferred to municipal Chapter 90 accounts (Chapter 90 funds are for capital improvements such as highway construction, preservation and improvement projects).

■ Project Types Eligible for Funding

Five types of projects are eligible for the Shared Winter Streets and Spaces grant program:

- **Main Streets**—Making investments in local downtowns and villages by repurposing streets, plazas, sidewalks, curbs, and parking areas to facilitate people-centric activities and community programming
- **Reimagined Streets**—Prioritizing safe space for people walking and biking by implementing low-speed streets, “shared streets,” new sidewalks, new protected bike lanes, new off-road trails, new bicycle parking, new crosswalks, traffic-calming measures, and ADA-compliant ramps
- **Better Buses**—Improving bus riders’ commutes through establishing new facilities for buses, including dedicated bus lanes, traffic-signal priority equipment, and bus shelters
- **Shared Mobility**—Supporting the capital costs of new bikeshare equipment to support more people trying cycling
- **Investments in the Future**—Converting temporary/pilot Shared Streets projects—including those not funded by MassDOT—to permanent facilities to benefit community members over the long-term

Transformational and Successful

Whether through **more vibrant Main Streets and greenspaces**, safer routes to school or work, warmer places to safely **gather** or wait for the bus, people and communities alike benefit from the Shared Streets and Spaces grant program that continues to create increased space for people to move around safely, engage in commerce, recreate, and participate in civic life. Communities that have seen successful adoption of shared streets projects have also found opportunity to lay the ground work for adoption of regulatory change in areas like three season dining or expedited permitting processes.

Here are some examples of the variety of projects that have emerged through the program:

■ Main Streets

- **Great Barrington**—Temporary barriers on Railroad Street created space for outdoor dining, commerce, community gathering, and entertainment, supporting residents and local business owners
- **New Bedford**—Multiple new outdoor dining destinations and safe pedestrian spaces within the city

■ Reimagined Streets

- **Belchertown**—New safe, child-friendly neighborhood walking and biking trail that connects to schools and other essential destinations and workplaces
- **Chelsea**—New crossings at the Chelsea Elementary School and Brown Middle School make the walk to school safer for kids



New Bedford, MA

Credit: Amber Vallancourt (MassDOT)

continued next page

Credit: Amber Vallancourt (MassDOT)



Left: Outdoor dining parklets in repurposed on-street parking spaces in New Bedford, MA. Right: Shared Streets signage on Broadway in Everett, MA.



Credit: Solomon Foundation

Shared Streets and Spaces *cont'd*

■ Better Buses

- **Brockton**—Installation of 10 new bus shelters with heaters to give dignity and comfort to bus riders
- **Lynn**—New bidirectional, curb-running shared bus/ bike lanes and two transit signal priority treatments to speed up trips for bus riders and cyclists
- **Somerville**—New transit priority treatments, with additional benefits to bicyclists and pedestrian safety on Washington Street at McGrath Highway

■ Shared Mobility

- **Boston**—New bikeshare stations for residents in East Boston, Mattapan, Dorchester, and Roslindale
- **Newton**—Four new bikeshare stations with both electric-assist and pedal-powered bikes

Additional Shared Streets images are available on the [Shared Streets and Spaces Photo Library](#) on Flickr.

Shaping the Future of Municipalities through Continuing to Invest in Shared Spaces

Cities are at an inflection point with an opportunity to build back better than before by [investing](#) in our shared future as we recover from the pandemic and confront other existential challenges like climate change and inequality. Giving people more options to be outside and be connected to their communities helps to prevent the spread of the virus while also supporting our community's mental health and helping to create more fun and livable cities over the long run.

Additional Resources:

- [A Better City's Tactical Public Realm Case Studies](#)
- [Bench Consulting's Winter Places Guide](#)
- [The Better Block Foundation](#)
- [MAPC's COVID-19 Resources — Shared Streets Website](#)
- Mass Healthy Aging Collaborative's [Age-Friendly Winter Spaces Ideas for Municipalities to Embrace Winter](#) and [corresponding resources](#)
- [National Association of City and Transportation Officials — Streets for Pandemic Response and Recovery](#)
- [Neighborhoodways](#)
- [New York Times: How New Yorkers Want to Change the Streetscape for Good, December 18, 2020](#)
- [Open Streets Project](#)
- [Toole Design's Ensuring an Equitable Approach to Rebalancing Streets](#)




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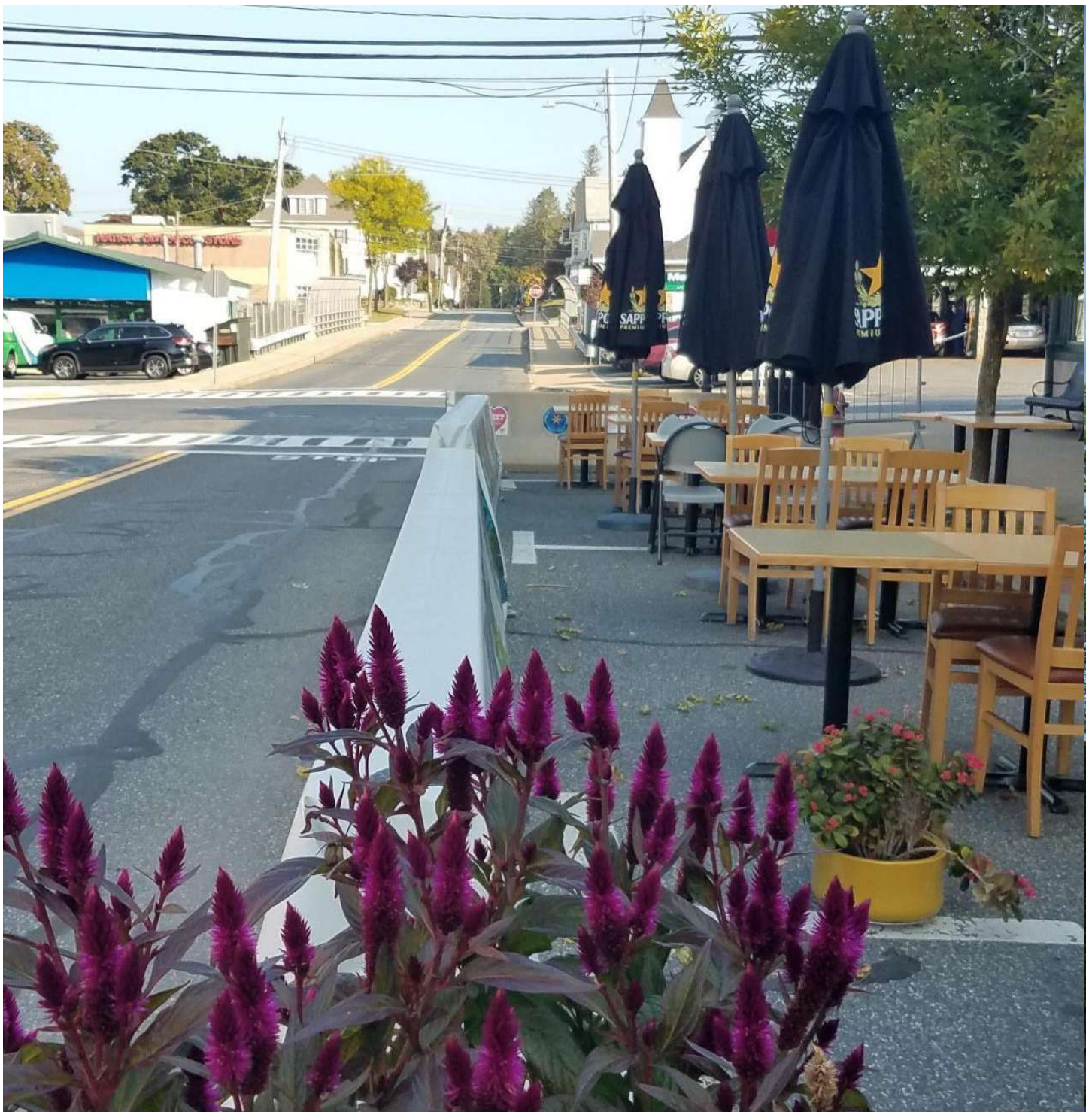


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Create Calm Street Pilots and Pop-Up Curbside “Streeteries”



Provided by SME Consultant

Nelson\Nygaard

Location

Natick, MA

Origin	Town of Natick, Natick Center Cultural District
Budget	 Low Budget (Under \$50k)
Timeframe	 Short Term (Less than 5 years)
Risk	 Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators	Create an Inviting Pedestrian Retail Environment (Measures: Speed of Cars Before and After, Number of Crashes, Perception Survey), Support Social-Distance-Safe Local Dining and Spending (Measures: Number of Seats Added, Sales)
Partners & Resources	MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, A Greener Greater Boston (AGGB) program of the Solomon Foundation and Barr Foundation
Diagnostic	<p>Overly-large intersections and wide travel lanes were contributing to higher speeds of travel through the heart of Natick's pedestrian core. In order to create a more comfortable and attractive walking and biking environment, lane and intersection diets could be deployed to achieve safer operations while sustaining the same vehicle throughput.</p> <p>The team worked to design solutions working with majority already-owned materials, with limited purchases for temporary and safety materials.</p> <p>In early pandemic social distancing, while indoor dining was unsafe, the Town was seeking quick solutions to help local businesses continue serving and attracting customers. Retrofitting on-street parking spaces for outdoor dining could help create interim options for safer dining and company.</p> <p>Natick Center Cultural District also found ways to engage creative placemaking elements into the process in order to support local artists during the economic struggles of the pandemic.</p>
Action Item	<p>As communities grappled with strategies to restart local businesses – especially those that rely on foot traffic and shared spaces (i.e., retail and restaurants) – providing a safe environment that reinforces recommended COVID-19 physical distancing measures, is paramount. Given the need to provide more outdoor space for businesses to serve customers, and sidewalks unable to accommodate both business activity and pedestrian accommodation, communities like Natick were looking to repurpose streets to provide additional space so that both may be safely accommodated.</p> <p>A rapid response was necessary to help businesses recover quickly as COVID-related restrictions begin to relax and allow for non-essential business activity to resume. At the same time, ensuring the safety of restaurant users, as well as those in vehicles and on bicycles, was critical. A focus on low-cost, rapid implementation was critical to serving safety and business vitality needs. All programs and projects were designed to be flexibly modified.</p>

Action Items (Continued)

Key actions included:

- A kickoff meeting with all department officials to confirm project goals
- Site analysis and issues identification
- Business owner outreach
- Design concept development
- Stakeholder presentations and tactical event promotion
- Traffic calming testing in the field
- Confirming longer-term trial design and installing materials
- Processing feedback and engagement

Process

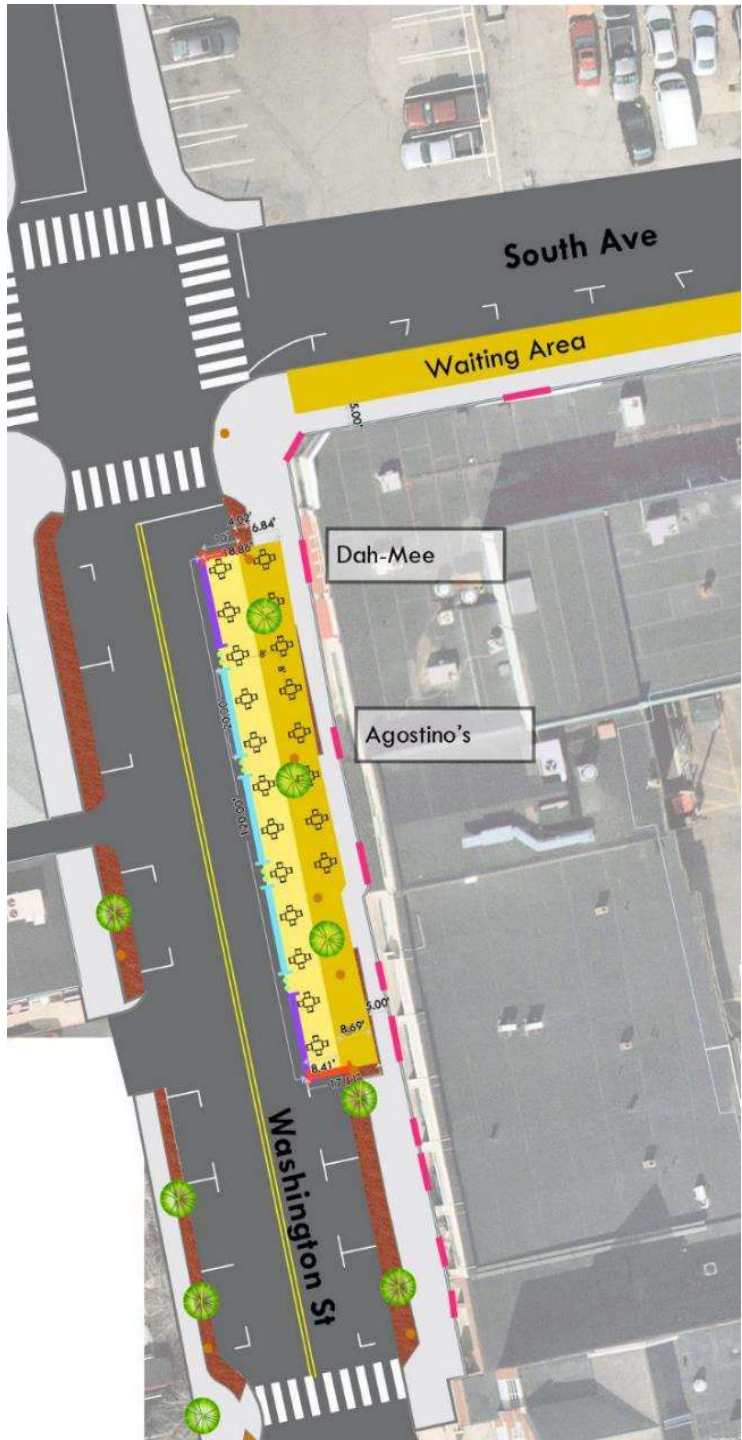
- Discuss Need for Intervention
- Field Visits and Observations, Counts, Documentation
- Measure Key Dimensions
- Create Design Alternatives
- Present to Stakeholders for Feedback
- Plan Installation Date and Timeline
- Promote Event through Fliers, Social Media, and Town-wide Announcements
- Design Business and Citizen Engagement Survey
- Create Materials List, Budget, Order Supplies, and Plan for Deliveries
- Optional: Post Virtual Messaging Signs on Approaches to Announce Upcoming Changes
- Decide on Police Detail and Oversight Needs, Cover Liability Needs
- Optional: Plan for Street Sweeping
- Create Hour-by-Hour Install Schedule and Steps for Install Day
- Day of: Measure and Lay Down Materials, Observe and Tweak As-Needed, Document through Photos and Videos, Consider Intercept Surveys and Programming around Event
- After Day of Testing, Install More Permanent Seasonal Materials
- Optional: Consider Local Art Enhancements



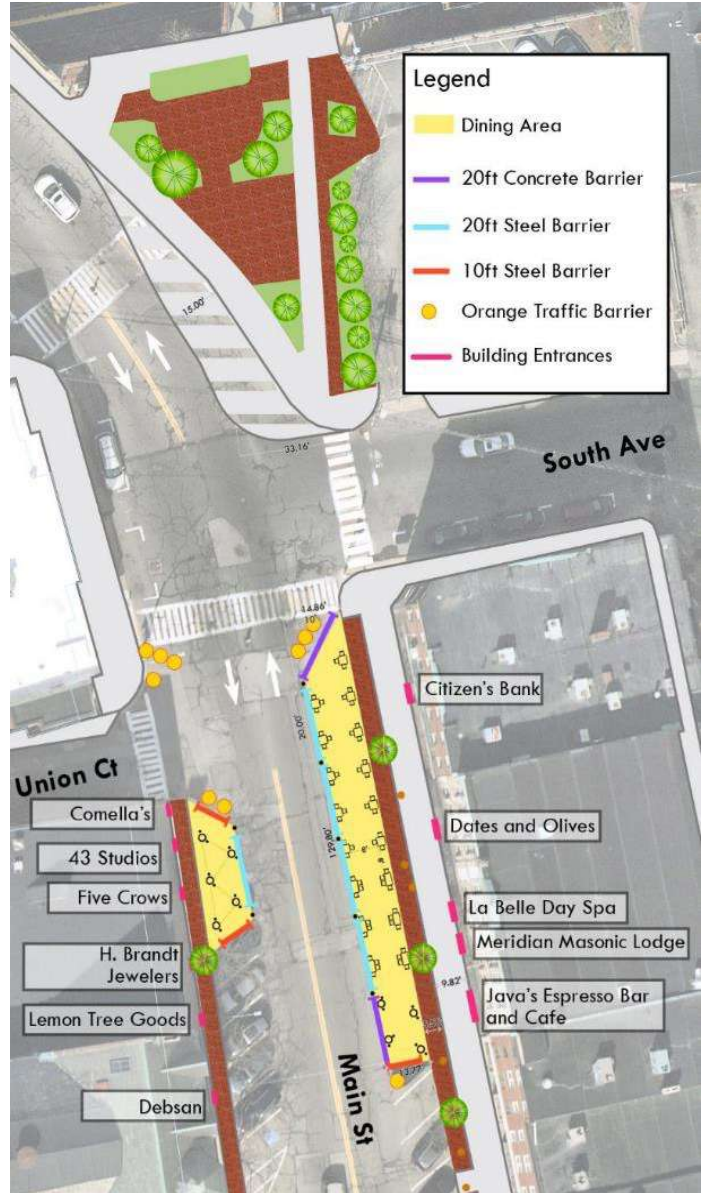
Image of Tactical Testing Before Striping and Adding Bollards



Image of Washington Street Eatery As Installed



Layout Plan of Washington Street Eatery In On-Street Parking Lane



Layout pLan of before and after conditions for traffic calming and in-street outdoor dining on Main Street



Images of jersey barriers with reflective tape and artist mosaics and of temporary chalk art in tactical curb extensions – will receive art murals long-term. Credit: Ted Fields



Increase Outdoor Dining and Safe Bike/Pedestrian Connections



Provided by SME Consultant

Stantec Consulting, Inc.

Location

North and South Pleasant Streets- Town of Amherst, Massachusetts