



Gloucester, Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE



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Project Overview

The City of Gloucester, MA secured a Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant to evaluate the feasibility of creating a district management organization in downtown Gloucester. 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 Gloucester. These activities could include marketing and events, placemaking, business development, beautification and maintenance, hospitality, and advocacy. The goal of the MDI project was to determine the appropriate downtown management organization model for downtown Gloucester. Downtown Gloucester is supported by an active regional Chamber of Commerce and tourism organization, as well as a small downtown merchants association, but no formal downtown management organization is currently in place. The City of Gloucester and volunteer steering committee undertook this feasibility project. The approach included outreach, focus groups and community education to explore program priorities, financial sustainability, different organizational models, build consensus and find champions from both the private and public sector for the preferred district management model.

The development of a District Management Organization, specifically a Business Improvement District, was a priority project in the Local Rapid Recovery Plan (LRRP) for downtown Gloucester. The LRRP included the recommendation to establish a sustainable downtown organization to support the economic and social health of the downtown. The City of Gloucester spearheaded efforts to launch the process of community and property owner engagement to explore what model would be appropriate for downtown Gloucester.

This included:

- Identification of staff and financial resources
- Creating community outreach and engagement strategies
- Research to identify community priorities/recommendations
- Consensus building among stakeholders
- Transition of leadership to private sector

District Management Organizational Model Alternatives

The City of Gloucester had no predetermined organizational model at the outset of this MDI feasibility study. The city, steering committee, and consultant intended to lead an analysis of different models and reach consensus on the preferred model for Gloucester that had broad community and business support. The steering committee considered two organizational models for district management in downtown Gloucester. These were:

- **Voluntary District Management Organization** Voluntary District Management Organizations engage stakeholders to undertake a program that typically includes organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Participation is voluntary and funding is through donations, grants, and other voluntary stakeholder support.
- **Business Improvement Districts** A Business Improvement District (BID) is a legally designated area, within which property owners design, fund and manage an improvement plan for the district. BIDs are funded primarily by fees assessed to property owners. BID fees are supplemented by grants, sponsorships and other revenue generating opportunities. There is a legislative process to form a BID that requires the support by over 60% of property owners that represent 51% of the assessed value of the district and a vote by the elected body in the municipality. Once formed, participation by property owners is mandatory. BIDs are reauthorized every five years by the property owners within the district.

Community Outreach / Education Process

Staff and Funding The City of Gloucester received Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance funding for technical assistance support. Additionally, the City committed economic and community development staff to support the study. The City economic development staff, and other town departments were instrumental in launching and supporting this study by providing base line maps, a database of property owners, steering committee coordination, survey recommendations and management, and limited administrative support. With no existing downtown organization in place to lead this effort, the City has been the major champion at this phase in the project. Additionally, the regional Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Council has lent their strong support.

Steering Committee The engagement effort in Gloucester was inclusive and attempted to engage a range of property owners, businesses, arts and tourism organizations from throughout the district to participate in the process. A steering committee was formed to provide input and feedback. Several working sessions were held with the steering committee to discuss organizational model alternatives, financial models and the pros and cons of each alternative approach. The steering committee included residents, cultural organizations, nonprofits, retailers and commercial tenants, property owners, chamber, tourism organizations and City officials. Each participant brought their unique perspective to the type of organization they felt would be most sustainable for downtown Gloucester. The Steering committee supported the recommendation that a Business Improvement District should be the preferred model for downtown Gloucester.



Community Outreach and Engagement

The city of Gloucester and Steering committee was committed to an inclusive stakeholder engagement process. The goal of this process was two-fold - first to get input from businesses, citizens and other stakeholders about their aspirations and priorities for downtown Gloucester, and second, to educate these stakeholders on different organizational models that could implemented to help achieve those priorities.



- Surveys** Two surveys were created to obtain input from consumers and downtown businesses. The surveys are intended to be broadly circulated through the City website and social media channels, Chamber, businesses, and local organizations to gain feedback on a wide range of issues related to the downtown. The surveys were not executed during this phase of the project due to conflicting surveys that were underway at the same time. It is strongly recommended that the additional survey work be completed in the next phase of the project to gain more detailed information to develop the district management plan for downtown Gloucester. See surveys in the Addendum on page 13.
- Focus Groups** A series of focus groups were undertaken as part of the community engagement process. These included:
 - Nonprofits
 - Arts and cultural organizations
 - Small businesses
 - Property owners
 - Tourism related organizations /businesses
 - Residents

Focus Group Format/ Approach – Focus groups were held with specific stakeholders to gain their perceptions about downtown Gloucester and their specific needs and priorities. Focus group participants were asked to reflect on downtowns they have visited that resonated with them as socially and economically thriving destinations. Participants were asked to reflect on what characteristics these successful downtowns possessed that made them feel vibrant, fun, and welcoming. Next, participants were asked to reflect on downtown Gloucester and compare. What was working in downtown Gloucester, what was not working or could be improved. Each focus group had specific suggestions and observations that were unique to this group of downtown stakeholders. Consistent themes and recommendations emerged from the discussions and formed the basis to the priority program recommendations for the proposed district management organization.

PRELIMINARY FOCUS GROUP TAKEAWAYS

The following themes emerged from conversations with stakeholder groups.



Places That Work

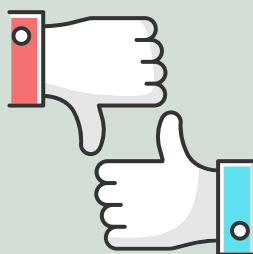
Focus group participants identified the following communities as successful in cultivating vibrancy and a sense of place.

Keene, NH	Kennebunkport, ME
Ogonquit ME	Salem, MA
Portland, ME	Ipswich, MA
Dublin, NH	Hudson, MA
Haverhill, MA	North Attleboro, MA
Burlington, VI	NewBern, NC
Portsmouth, NH	Montpelier, VT
Provincetown, MA	Beverly, MA
Nantucket, MA	

The following is a summary of findings from focus group discussions.

Common Elements For Success

- Walkability and ease of navigation
- Parking access and affordability
- Residents (range of housing opportunities)
- Variety of food choices/lots of outdoor dining
- Independent, interesting retail
- Feels alive/active
- Welcoming: attractive curb appeal and safety
- Green spaces to gather and relax
- Lighting for safety and aesthetics
- Reuse of historic architecture; historic attractions
- Communication/marketing - ease of finding out what's going on
- Visitor attractions



HOW DOES GLOUCESTER COMPARE

Common Concerns / Challenges

- Disconnected downtown and waterfront, no sense of destination
- Lack of coordination/ organization
- Events and themes need to be updated, “refreshed”
- Underutilization of vacant buildings
- Limited retail mix/ inconsistent store hours
- Lack of consistent schedule of events (lack of events for all demographics)/ arts and culture
- Lack of wayfinding and challenging traffic patterns
- Lack of parking; poor parking management; public transportation
- Harbor Walk /public space infrastructure repair (asset)
- Safety and comfort; public bathrooms
- Lack of marketing downtown
- Need to stretch shoulder season and programming for year round residents

Challenges

Overall, focus group participants believed that downtown Gloucester would benefit from programs and services that would improve the “curb appeal” for visitors and residents. Improvements to wayfinding, reinforcing the connection to the waterfront and general upgrades to visually enhance the downtown would send a positive message. Improvements included plantings and trees, upgraded storefronts and public gathering spaces and pedestrian connectors to downtown and waterfront. Participants felt that more could be done to take advantage of the authentic working waterfront and waterfront views if there was an organized and intentional approach to developing a plan.

Participants suggested a fresh approach to longstanding events and promotional themes to enliven the downtown with regularly scheduled events and increase programming. Events should be targeted to expand the customer base for residents and visitors through expanded shoulder season programming and marketing efforts to bring people to downtown Gloucester. Participants felt that Gloucester lacked the organizational bandwidth to consistently coordinate and execute these activities.

Additionally, participants were concerned about the tenant mix and significant vacancies in the downtown. There is a great deal of enthusiasm for several pending developments that are under construction or recently completed.

Opportunities

Downtown Gloucester has many positive attributes that were acknowledged by focus group participants. Generally speaking, residents and visitors felt the downtown was compact, walkable, safe and welcoming and a good place to visit or open a business. The downtown is already an established dining and entertainment destination, and new nightlife developments are poised to improve the offerings for entertainment.

Cultural nonprofits and tourism organizations work closely together to promote Gloucester to visitors. The waterfront views and working waterfront are tremendous assets for the downtown and there is the opportunity to make better connection between these two areas. The sense from focus group participants that the full potential of these cultural and natural assets have only begun to be realized. There were a number of recommendations including expansion of outdoor dining, expanded arts and cultural programming, and further exploitation of the authentic waterfront for residents, businesses and visitors.

What's Working In Downtown Gloucester:

- Adequate sense of safety
- Waterfront views and access
- Authenticity of downtown and marine activity
- Housing
- Destination restaurants /outdoor dining opportunities
- Proximity to Boston
- Feels like potential
- Strong, collaborative nonprofits /tourism
- Art/culture legacy
- Compact



Other Community Outreach - One on one conversations with key stakeholders

City staff, consultant and working committee members held individual conversations with key stakeholders and city officials. These meetings included larger property owners, new developers and investors, tourism attractions, nonprofits, and arts organizations. The purpose of these meetings with stakeholders was to identify their concerns, priorities and perceived opportunities that may be addressed by the proposed organization. Additionally, the one-on-one conversations were helpful in evaluating interest and potential leadership on the steering committee to form the district management organization.

Business Improvement District Program Priorities

Based on steering committee discussions, focus group findings and individual meetings with property owners, public officials, and other downtown stakeholders, a series of shared priorities have begun to emerge. These priorities will form the basis of the BID plan and will help the steering committee determine the BID budget. The priorities were grouped around efforts to make the district feel welcoming and attractive, supporting new and existing businesses, creating a destination and reasons for visitors and residents to visit downtown Gloucester.



Improve the Curb Appeal - Look Welcoming

Downtown Gloucester is blessed with beautiful water views, and attractive historic buildings. However, the connections between the waterfront and gateways, could be enhanced to visually make the downtown more appealing, connect the waterfront to Main Street and improve the overall “curb appeal” of the downtown for visitors and residents. Suggestions included general enhanced maintenance and landscaping, architectural lighting, improved public spaces and improved streetscapes that were consistent throughout the district. Attention to Rogers Street is needed to help make the connection from the waterfront to Main Street safer and more visually appealing, while keeping the necessary functionality of the street for the marine based businesses. The utilization of “ambassadors”, even seasonally, could make the district feel welcoming, particularly for visitors to downtown Gloucester.



Placemaking – Create the Vibe

Placemaking is a strategic set of activities and design to help establish a district as a destination. In addition to building a welcoming physical environment, activities, programming, outdoor dining, active gathering spaces all add to the sense of vitality for the downtown. Some of this activity is already happening. Stakeholders recommended the expansion of current events and festivals, and regularly scheduled art and entertainment programming in downtown locations to attract foot traffic and help establish downtown Gloucester as a destination that is fun, active and a destination for people of all ages to frequent. The expansion of popular art and murals programs will reinforce the district as a culturally and visually interesting destination.



Marketing – Reinforce the Brand

Downtown Gloucester enjoys its own unique brand as an authentic working seaport and waterfront. It also has a rich history of arts and culture. Stakeholders feel strongly the Gloucester should build on their unique brand to play to these strengths. This could be accomplished through an integrated marketing brand, signage, promotions, websites, social media and other activities that are consistently and sustainably implemented. There are particular opportunities to reinforce downtown Gloucester as a destination for year round regional residents and shoulder season visitors in addition to the summer tourist market.



Business Support and Development - Strengthen the Base

Downtown Gloucester businesses would like to broaden the customer base of residents and visitors on a year-round basis. Expanding the customer base will help existing businesses downtown and also attract new businesses who see this as an area poised for investment. Stakeholders are also interested in creating opportunities for the next generation of independent businesses that will add to an interesting retail and commercial mix in downtown Gloucester. Experiments with pop up retail have proven popular and could be expanded. Other priority programs included ideas to help connect and promote businesses on each of Main Street, Rogers Street and the waterfront, and programs to recruit a healthy tenant mix.



Advocacy – Strengthen Your Seat at the Table

A BID will help downtown stakeholders speak with a unified voice to express their priorities, concerns and recommendations for downtown Gloucester. A BID can be a useful tool to ensure good communication between businesses, property owners, institutions and the city to work on mutually beneficial programs and resolve challenges that are present in the downtown. This is an important and valuable role for the BID.



Big Ideas

Throughout the community engagement process and focus group discussions, the steering committee asked for the “BIG IDEA” that participants felt would be impactful for downtown Gloucester as it considers the formation of a BID. Some of these ideas will require time and resources to implement, but offer a vision of what might be possible working with the City of Gloucester and BID. These include:

- Experiment with closing main street for programming / outdoor dining (on weekends) – pilot
- Be proactive to solicit preferred development
- Invest in trees, benches, parks, gathering spaces
- Bury utilities on Roger Street / activate building backs
- Tie waterfront to Main Street – improve harbor walk and connections to main st
- Public bathrooms
- Strategic program to recruit businesses
- Create a full schedule of events to bring people to downtown
- Mural/ public art program throughout downtown and waterfront

District Analysis

Understanding the composition of the district helps the steering committee develop a deep knowledge of the ownership, land use, valuation and other characteristics of the district. This will inform the fee structure and signature campaign strategy for the successful passage of the petition to form a BID.

Proposed Boundaries

The proposed boundaries of the Business Improvement District include the working harbor and waterfront, major visitor attractions and historic Main Street. This approach helps reinforce the potential for visitors and residents to consider downtown Gloucester a destination. It also reiterates efforts outlined in the Local Rapid Recovery Plan and other plans to help connect the waterfront to the downtown area.

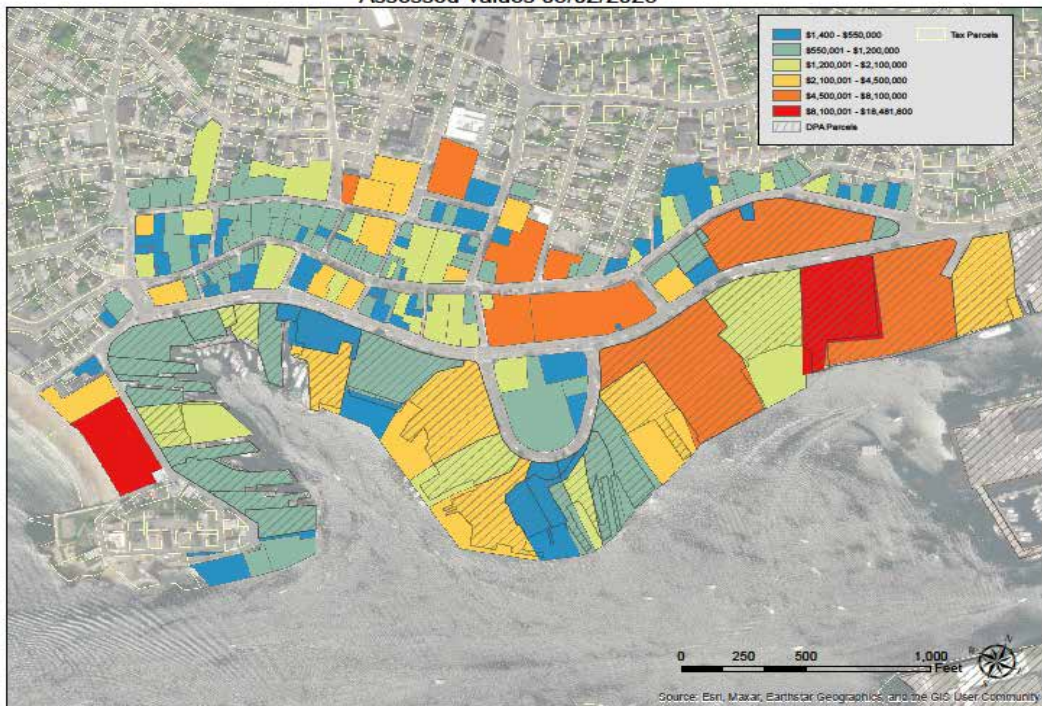


Assessed Valuation of District

There are 217 parcels within the proposed district with a total valuation of \$266,877,900.00. 163 parcels or 75% of properties in the district have an assessed value of under \$1.2 million dollars. 19.8% of the district / 43 have an assessed value of \$1.2 million to \$4.5 million dollars. This is an important consideration as organizers develop a fee structure that is fair and equitable for the smaller property owners as well as the handful of larger property owners within the district.

Brackets	Counts	Percentage	Value
\$0-\$550,000	71	33%	\$21,004,900
\$550,001-\$1,200,000	92	42%	\$74,434,800
\$1,200,001-\$2,100,000	27	12%	\$42,806,400
\$2,100,001-\$4,500,000	16	7%	\$48,414,000
\$4,500,001-\$8,100,000	9	4%	\$53,365,500
\$8,100,001-\$18,481,800	2	1%	\$26,852,300
Total	217	100%	\$266,877,900

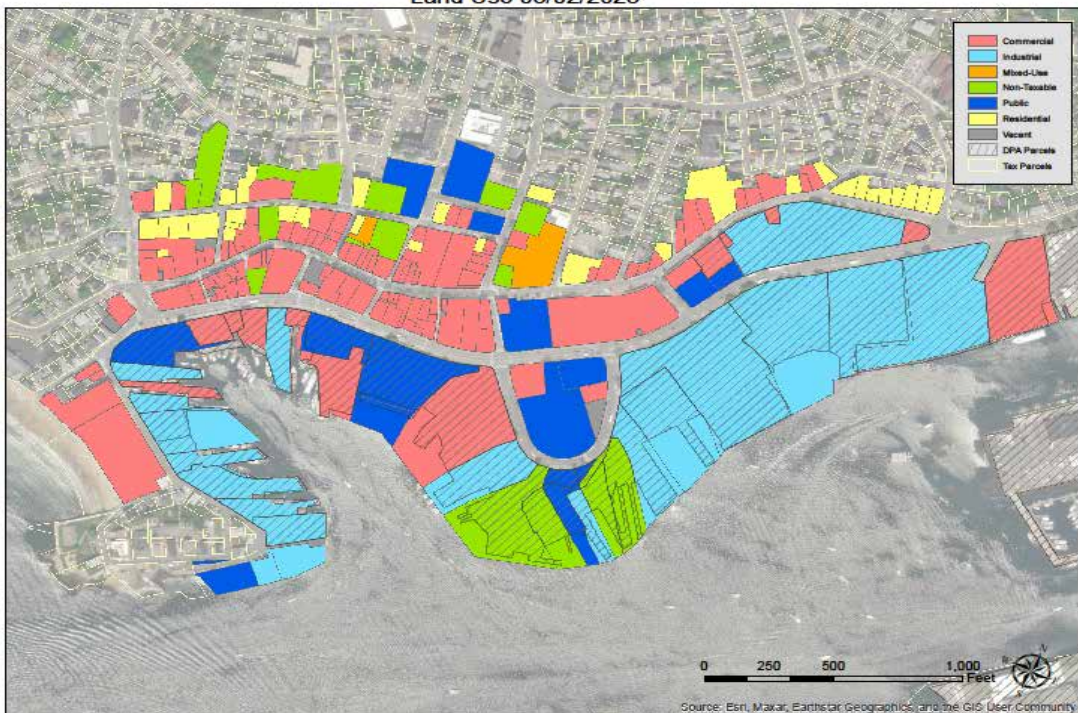
Assessed Values 03/02/2023



Land Use

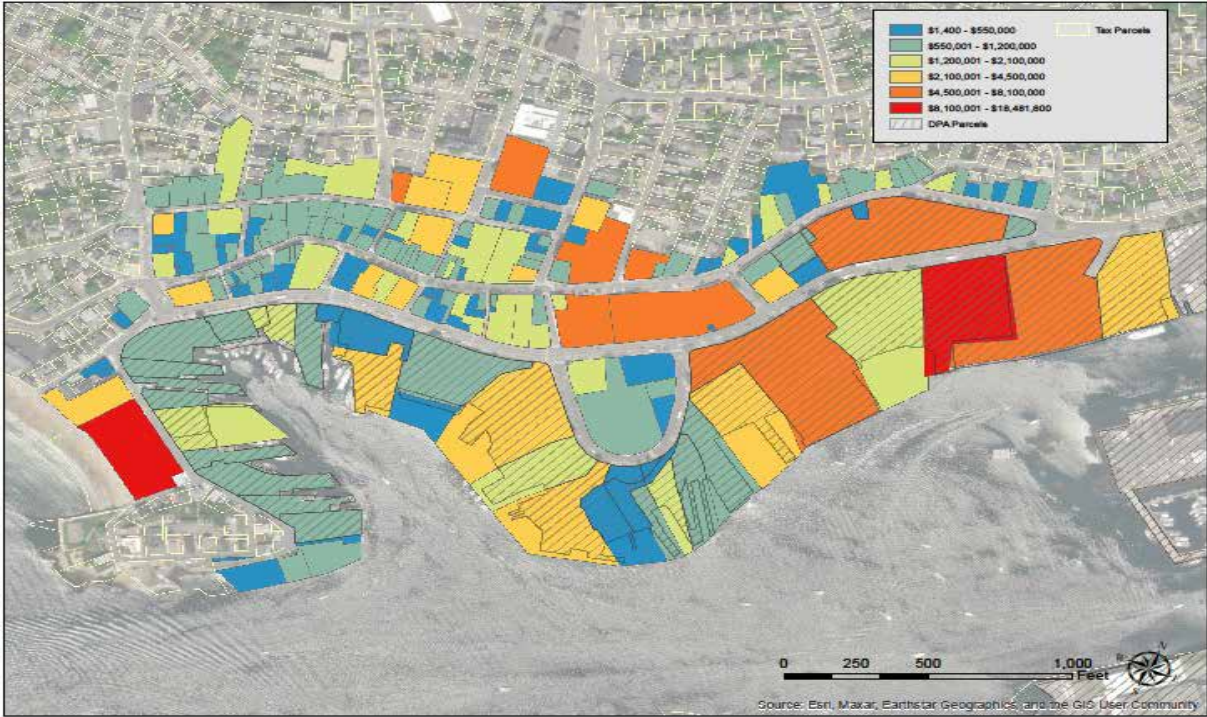
The steering committee also analyzed the land use within the proposed district. 49% of the district is commercial in nature. 3% is mixed use, and 17% is industrial. The relatively large amount of industrial land use in the area is reflected in the working waterfront that is a unique attraction in downtown Gloucester. There is a strong desire to maintain the authenticity of the working waterfront for marine based businesses as well as the opportunity to capitalize on its attraction to the visitor community and residents. The proposed district has a limited amount of non-taxable properties or public property.


Land Use 03/02/2023



Property Type	Total Value	Percentage
Commercial	\$ 131,839,100	49%
Residential	\$ 35,044,500	13%
Industrial	\$ 46,128,600	17%
Mixed-Use	\$ 8,685,800	3%
Non-Taxable	\$ 22,966,100	%
Public	\$20,847,500	8%
Vacant	\$ 1,366,300	1%
Total	\$ 266,877,900	100%

Assessed Values 03/02/2023



Valuation Summary		
	Total Commercial, Industrial Valuation	\$186,653,500
	Total Residential Valuation	\$35,044,500
	Total Exempt Valuation - nonprofit & Public	\$45,179,900
	Total Property Valuation	\$266,877,900

District Management Organizational Model for Downtown Gloucester Recommendation


BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The process to evaluate the feasibility of various organizational models created the opportunity to build consensus and leadership around a preferred approach for downtown Gloucester. The steering committee reached consensus to recommend a Business Improvement District be formed for the downtown. The committee made this recommendation for the following reasons:

- **Consensus of committee**- The committee represented a cross section of stakeholders including property owners, tenants, nonprofits, tourism, and city officials. Each of these groups brought their perspective to the process. The committee reached a consensus that a Business Improvement District was the most sustainable and preferred organizational model for downtown Gloucester.
- **Interest of larger property owners/developers** - Larger mixed-use developers expressed interest in and support for the development of a BID, or at a minimum being involved in the next phase of the planning process. Three larger property owners expressed interest in joining the existing steering committee in the next phase of the BID formation planning process.
- **Interest from anchor tenants** - Key anchor tenants and destination drivers for the downtown expressed support for the BID. These businesses felt a BID would provide the best vehicle to provide supplemental programs and services that would enhance their businesses and the downtown community.
- **Financial sustainability of district management organizational model** - The steering committee concurred that the BID model provided the most financial sustainability for the organization to support the desired supplemental programs and services to be offered to downtown Gloucester. During the feasibility stage of the project, the team analyzed the property ownership and value of the district, as well as basic criteria to verify that the proposed district met the requirements to form a BID. The district has the appropriate land use and value to support the development of a BID in Gloucester.
- **Support for steering committee for implementation**- Key business and property owners indicated a willingness to serve on a steering committee to undertake the process of forming a BID in downtown Gloucester. The ability to recruit support for this process was critical to move to the next step in the planning process.
- **Ongoing municipal support** - The City of Gloucester committed ongoing support for the planning process through the economic development offices.

BID Formation Process

To form a Business Improvement District, stakeholders will develop a petition that will include a map of boundaries, BID Plan, Budget, fee structure and the signatures of 60% of the property owners that represent 51% of the assessed value in the district. The petition will be submitted to the city of Gloucester, a public hearing will be held and a vote to establish the BID will be taken by the City Council. The details of the plan, budget, fee structure and petition process will be developed in the next phase of this project.



Threshold Needed for BID Approval*

- Approval requires the signature of 60% of the parcels that represent 51% of the assessed within the district
- Total Parcels - 217
- Total Signatures needed - **131**
- Total Assessed Value - \$266,877,900
- Total Assessed Value needed - **\$138,938,950**

*Budget, fee structure and the signatures of 60% of the property owners that represent 51% of the assessed value in the district.

Next Steps

The City and steering committee have recommended that a Business Improvement District is the preferred organizational model for downtown Gloucester. The second phase of the BID project will be the petition phase of the project. This phase will include the following steps:

- Transition from city led effort to steering committee comprised of property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders to lead organizational effort to form a BID
- City staff will provide continued staff support and secure additional grant support for the planning/petition process.
- Further development of the BID steering committee
- Finalize BID improvement plan
- Finalize boundaries
- Create fee structure
- Develop memorandum of understanding with city and other stakeholders
- Design petition components
- Develop marketing materials for signature campaign
- Develop signature petition campaign and timeline for legislative approval
- Execute signature petition campaign
- Execute legislative authorization approval process
- Launch BID

Addendum

- 1. Business Survey**
- 2. Consumer Survey**



CITY OF GLOUCESTER

Online Survey

Business Improvement District | Questions for Businesses

We need your help!

This questionnaire will only take about 10 minutes.

Gloucester has received a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to explore the needs of business owners in downtown Gloucester.

We will use the results of this and other surveys to identify ways we can work together to create a more vibrant downtown.

If your business has **multiple locations**, please answer these questions as they pertain only to the establishment **located in downtown Gloucester**.

Business Characteristics

* In which area of downtown Gloucester is your business located?

- Main Street, EAST of Pleasant Street
- Main Street, WEST of Pleasant Street

- Middle Street
- Abutting the Waterfront
- Rogers Street, NOT on the Waterfront
- Commercial Street, NOT on the Waterfront
- Other (*Please describe.*)

*** Which category best describes your business?**

- Retail
- Food Service (restaurant, bar, coffee shop, etc.)
- Personal Service (hair, skin, nails, laundry, dry cleaning, etc.)
- Professional, Scientific & Technical, Legal, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Health Care
- Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Fitness
- Non-profit, Community/Social Services
- Marine / Fishing
- Tourist / Hospitality
- Other (*Please describe.*)

*** Including yourself, how many people does your business employ including both full-time and part-time?**

- 1
- 2 to 5
- 6 to 10

- 11 to 20
- 21 to 50
- More than 50

* What is your current position in the business?

- Owner or co-owner
- CEO
- Principal
- Manager
- Executive Director
- Other (*Please describe.*)

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

- Own
- Rent / Lease

Satisfaction with Downtown Gloucester

* Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of the **neighborhood** where your business is located.

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Physical appearance / appeal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessibility for customers and employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Safety and comfort of customers and employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to complementary businesses or organizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visibility of your business to potential customers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* How likely are you to recommend downtown Gloucester as a business location to a friend or colleague?

	Not likely at all					Extremely likely					
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Rating:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please describe why you **would** or **would not** recommend downtown Gloucester as a business location.

Strategies for Supporting Businesses and Improving Downtown Gloucester

* A few approaches to address the **physical environment and economic vitality** in downtown Gloucester are listed below.

How important are each of the following strategies in creating a thriving downtown?

	Unimportant	Somewhat important	Very important
Renovation of storefronts/building facades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improvements to or development of public space or seating areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improvements to streetscape and sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Improvement to safety and/or cleanliness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Amenity improvements for public transit and/or bicycle riders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* A few approaches to address **attraction and retention of customers and business** in downtown Gloucester are listed below.

Considering the conditions in your commercial area, in your opinion, how important are each of the following strategies?

	Unimportant	Somewhat important	Very important
More cultural events/activities to bring people to the commercial district	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More opportunities for outdoor dining and selling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Implementing marketing strategies for commercial district	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruitment programs to attract additional business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assistance with licensing, permitting, or other city regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creation of a downtown organization to spearhead/manage activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Are you interested in receiving assistance for your business in any of the following areas?

Please select one or more.

- Setting up an online store or other online selling channels
- Creating new services, such as delivery
- Participating in shared marketing/advertising
- Low-cost financing for storefront/facade improvements
- Low-cost financing for purchasing property in the commercial district
- Training on the use of social media

I'm not interested in receiving any assistance

Other (Please describe.)

* Please rank your most urgent needs, with the most urgent being ranked as #1:

Rent / Utilities

-- Select --



Marketing / Communication to customers

-- Select --



Help understanding city guidelines or regulations

-- Select --



Inventory

-- Select --



Delivery service or curbside support

-- Select --



Employee recruitment

-- Select --



Help building e-commerce website or social media

-- Select --



Help securing funding (loans, SBA, grants, etc.)

-- Select --



Other (Please describe.)

-- Select --



What is the "other" urgent need?

*

If you had access to a small grant, how would you use it?

- Rent / Utilities
- Renovations
- Marketing / Communications
- E-commerce or social media
- Inventory
- Hiring employees
- Other (*Please describe.*)

Please list any specific suggestions or ideas for projects, programs or actions that could help support your business and improve downtown Gloucester.

* We have set up a **separate form** where you can provide the **name of your business** without having it connected to your survey responses.

Providing your business name will help us know which businesses respond, but will maintain your confidentiality since we will not know which responses are yours.

Would you be comfortable providing your **business name in a **separate** online form?**

(If you select yes, your responses will be submitted and you'll be redirected to the separate form.)

- Yes
- No



CITY OF GLOUCESTER

Online Survey

Business Improvement District | Questions for Customers

We need your help!

This questionnaire will only take about 10 minutes.

Gloucester has received a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to explore the needs of business owners in downtown Gloucester.

We will use the results of this and other surveys to identify ways we can work together to create a more vibrant downtown.

* Do you **live** in Gloucester?

Yes

No

* Do you **work** in Gloucester?

Yes

No

* In general, how often do you visit downtown Gloucester?

- Every day or most days
- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year
- Never

* In the last 12 months, which of the following activities have brought you to downtown Gloucester?

Please select one or more.

- Shopping
- Dining / Take-Out
- Medical, banking, legal, or other professional services
- Salon, spa, fitness, or other personal services
- Private events or classes
- Public events or festivals
- Government services (City Hall, library, post office)
- Outdoor activities (walking, running, biking, etc.)
- Business trips
- I have not visited downtown Gloucester in the last year
- Other (Please describe.)

* About how much time do you spend on an average trip to downtown Gloucester?

- Less than an hour
- Between 1 and 2 hours
- Between 2 and 4 hours
- Between 4 and 6 hours
- More than 6 hours

* In the last 12 months, how often did you visit downtown Gloucester to **shop**?

- Every day or most days
- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year

* In the last 12 months, how often did you visit downtown Gloucester to **dine** or get **take-out food or beverages**?

- Every day or most days
- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year

* In the last 12 months, how often did you visit downtown Gloucester to receive **personal services**, such as salon, spa, or fitness services?

- Every day or most days

- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year

* In the last 12 months, how often did you visit downtown Gloucester to receive **professional services**, such as medical, banking, or legal services?

- Every day or most days
- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year

* In the last 12 months, how often did you visit downtown Gloucester to attend **classes or events**, such as book club, trivia night, or a concert?

- Every day or most days
- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year

* How do you feel about the number of opportunities for each of the following in downtown Gloucester?

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Not nearly
enough | A little less than
needed | About the right
amount | More than
enough |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|

Places to eat, drink, or get take-out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Places to shop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offices or workspace options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Daytime entertainment or recreation options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public events or festivals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parking and transportation options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nighttime entertainment or recreation options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** In the last 12 months, how did you get to downtown Gloucester?**

Please select one or more.

- Walk
- Bicycle
- In my own vehicle
- Bus
- Commuter rail
- Rideshare service (e.g. Uber, Lyft)
- In the vehicle of friends or family
- Other (Please describe.)

*** How would you prefer to get to downtown Gloucester?**

Please select one or more.

- Walk
- Bicycle
- In my own vehicle

- Bus
- Commuter rail
- Rideshare service (e.g. Uber, Lyft)
- In the vehicle of friends or family
- Other (Please describe.)

* In the last 12 months, how **easy or difficult** was it for you to **get to** downtown Gloucester?

- Very difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Somewhat easy
- Very easy

* In the last 12 months, how **easy or difficult** was it for you to **move around** once you got to downtown Gloucester?

- Very difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Somewhat easy
- Very easy

* How often do you use **websites** or mobile phone **apps** to do the following activities?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Order food from local businesses for pick-up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Order food from local businesses for delivery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchase retail items	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Many communities have **shared space** for rent to individuals, small business, and business start-ups.

If the following types of shared space were available in Gloucester for reasonable prices and under good management, **how likely is it that you would make use of them?**

	Definitely would not	Possibly would	Almost certainly would
Co-working office space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commercial kitchen space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate event space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community "maker" space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Do you think downtown Gloucester needs **more** of any of the following **food and beverage** businesses?

Please select one or more.

- Full-service restaurant
- Grocery store
- Brewery with tasting room
- Healthy fast-food
- Cafe or coffee shop
- Lunch spot
- Tavern or Pub
- Nothing new is needed
- Something else (Please describe.)

What is your favorite food and beverage business in another city or town that you would like to see in downtown Gloucester?

* Do you think downtown Gloucester needs **more** of any of the following **retail businesses**?

Please select one or more.

- Kitchen or cooking wares
- Furniture or housewares
- Consignment shop
- Clothing store
- Game or toy store
- Bookstore
- Nothing new is needed
- Something else (Please describe.)

* Do you think downtown Gloucester needs **more** of any of the following **entertainment** options?

Please select one or more.

- Performing arts
- Live Music
- Movies
- Bowling or candlepin
- Ice skating
- Oversized outdoor games (chess, checkers, cornhole, etc.)
- Historical site

- Nothing new is needed
- Something else (Please describe.)

* Do you think downtown Gloucester needs **more** of any of the following **public events**?

Please select one or more.

- Flea market
- Artist or artisan market
- Restaurant Week
- Downtown stroll
- Discount shopping even
- Music festival
- Film or movie festival
- Pop-up events (food trucks, beer garden, live music, etc.)
- Nothing new is needed
- Something else (Please describe.)

Please tell us about any additional businesses or events you would like to see in downtown Gloucester.

What is your current age?

Under 25

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 to 54

55 to 64

65 to 74

75 or older

*** Would you like to join our email list to learn about other ways to support downtown Gloucester?**

(If you select yes, you'll be redirected to a separate form to collect your contact information.)

Yes

No

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