

GRAFTON

COMMUNITY BRANDING & WAYFINDING PROJECT FINAL REPORT 2024

Prepared by Favermann Design

Funded by MA Downtown Initiative Program of:







Town Hall Bandstand

BACKGROUND

Located in Worcester County, the suburban/rural Town of Grafton, Massachusetts is part of the Blackstone Valley Region. Grafton is located 40 miles west of Boston and 5 miles (southeast of the City of Worcester. With a population of nearly 20,00, it is divided into three geographical areas--North Grafton, Grafton, and South Grafton.

Incorporated as a town in 1735, it has had a historically significant role in America's Industrial Revolution. In the following years, Grafton has continued to play a strategic part in America's progressive technology. product engineering, and science while sharing a rural setting.

Named for the 2nd Duke of Grafton, Charles Fitzroy, King Charles II's grandson, Grafton is set on a previous tribal land of the Nipnuc Tribe that was divided between English settlers and tribal members in 1727.



NIPMUC Nation

The original 40 proprietors of Grafton voted that four acres of land near the center of the plantation of Hassanamisco were to be set aside as common land and that a meetinghouse, burial ground, schoolhouse, and militia training field be situated there. Grafton continues today to be home to a Nipmuc village called the Hassagnamisco Reservation.

The present Grafton common was established in 1738. Today, various statues and monuments are set within the Grafton Common. The present bandstand was built in 1935 by Hollywood filmmakers MGM for a scene in the production of "Ah, Wilderness," which was filmed in Grafton.

Throughout its history, the Town of Grafton has played an outsized role in industrial and technological influence. In a way, it is where American Manufacturing was born. Initially textile mills were the main manufacturing sites of Grafton. For the workers, six villages were formed near manufacturing centers and were named Grafton (Center), New England Village (North Grafton), Centerville (Brigham Hill by the Quinsigamond River), Farnumsville, Fisherville, and Sandersville (South Grafton). All but Grafton Center were located by significant sources of waterpower.

All of the Town of Grafton Branding and Wayfinding meetings were held either on Zoom or in person or hybrid. and Saundersville (South Grafton). All but Grafton Center were located by significant waterpower. The homes that were built include many fine examples of Early American, Greek Revival, and Victorian architecture. Several still exist along nearby streets. Today, there are a variety of house types throughout Grafton.





Hassanamisco Festival

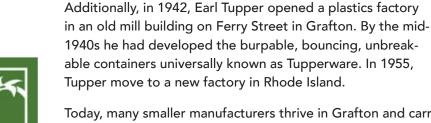
Willard House and Clock

Among its more prominent local companies, Grafton is the home of Washington Mills North Grafton, an international industrial abrasive maker; the Wyman-Gordon Company, founded in 1868, serves the marine, aerospace, power, fuel, and construction industries by using forging and huge extrusion presses; Hueson Wire and Cable, serves a variety of strategic industries with eco-friendly products; and Tufts University's Cummings Veterinary Medicine School, founded in 1978, it is the only college of veterinary medicine in New England.



Celebrated on Grafton Common with a bronze lifelike statue, locally born Jerome Wheelock (1834-1902) invented several mechanisms to improve the steam engine. His most famous invention was his refined valve system. Recognized internationally and recipient of many awards, at his death, Wheelock left \$100,000 to build Grafton's Free Public Library.

Jerome Wheelock









Major Grafton farms include Houlden Farm, Nourse Farm, Blackstone River Farm, Highfields Christmas Tree Farm, and Potter Hill Farm along with smaller farms produce a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, prepared foods, and flowers. Since 2009, the Grafton Farmers Market is held on Grafton Common from mid-June until the 2nd week in October yearly.

An important Grafton agricultural institution is the Community Harvest Project (CHP). It is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to addressing food insecurity through sustainable farming practices and community engagement. Since its establishment, it has been committed to the mission of engaging and educating volunteers to grow fresh fruits and vegetables for hunger relief.

Tupperware

Another part of Grafton's rural legacy is its equestrian stables and private horse boarding farms. Several horse facilities are resident in the community including Ridge Valley Stables, Highland Acres Equestrian Center, and Hillside Meadows Equestrian Center. It is not unusual to see someone on horseback on the country roads of Grafton.

Besides the beautiful natural scenery with stunning seasonal changes, other places of cultural interest in the Town of Grafton include The Willard House and Clock Museum in North Grafton, the Hassanamisco Native American Museum, Grafton Historical Society, and the Grafton Common in Grafton Center.



THE PROCESS

With all this previous background information as a preamble, the Town of Grafton was awarded a highly competitive Massachusetts Downtown Imitative (MDI) technical services grant to develop a community branding and an accessible town-wide wayfinding program. This report will layout the process and results of this grant.

The challenge for Grafton is to remain competitive, promoting interest in the community, and continuing to attract and retain business owners and residents. This following plan will encourage interest in the Town's industrial and rural history and the great legacy that lives on today. The project will also provide cohesive branding that will direct daytime and nighttime populations to important locations, events and sites, improving the local economies of our neighborhoods and the community at-large. Promoting walkability, connectivity, and a strong sense of direction will allow the Town to reach its full potential as a destination.

To facilitate this process, an Advisory Committee was appointed to oversee the branding and wayfinding grant process. The Town Planner Fiona Coughlan was the Advisory Committee director. The committee was tasked with overseeing the work being performed by Favermann Design, the MDI consultant on behalf of the Town. This work included a review and analysis of town-wide branding needs, including points of interest such as the Town Common, and promoting local historic, economic, and recreational resources.

The Grafton Branding and Wayfinding Committee included the following individuals:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Fiona Coughlan - Grant Management/Administration/Overall Staff Support

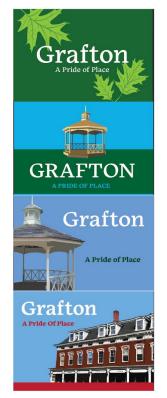
Dave Robbins - Planning Board Representative

Paul Scarlett - Historic District/Historic Commission/CPC Representative and project photographer

Adam Lapointe - Recreation Director

Evan Brassard - Town Administrator







MDI WAYFINDING DESIGN SURVEY

The Town of Grafton was awarded \$25K from the MA Downtown Initiative (MDI) Program to assist with a townwide wayfinding and branding plan. The MDI Wayfinding Grant Advisory Committee and Favermann Design are seeking feedback to help develop a style for this project. Scan the QR code to vote for your favorite design.







508.839.5335 x 1201

Grafton
A Pride of Place

Grafton
A Pride of Place

Grafton

A Pride of Place

Grafton

www.grafton-ma.gov/1032/MDI-Wayfinding-Grant-Advisory-Committee



MDI WAYFINDING IDEATION SURVEY

The Town of Grafton was awarded \$25K from the MA Downtown Initiative (MDI) Program through the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED) to assist with a town-wide wayfinding and branding plan. The MDI Wayfinding Grant Advisory Committee and Favermann Design are looking for feedback to help develop a strategy and design for this project. Please scan the QR code to share your thoughts.

https://forms.gle/brS6yC7kVfNsy2QY8





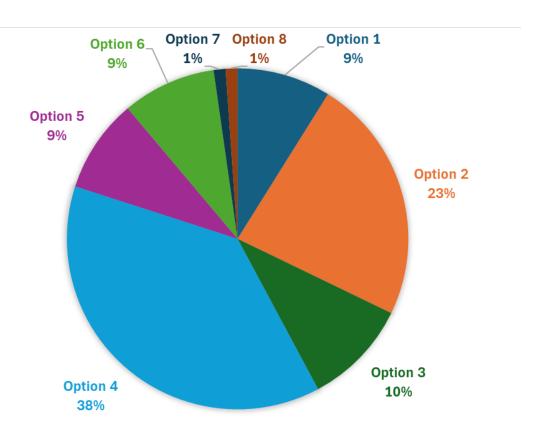
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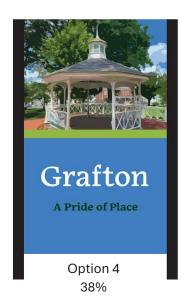


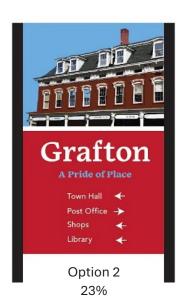
www.grafton-ma.gov/1032/MDI-Wayfinding-Grant-Advisory-Committee

MDI Wayfinding/Branding Design Survey Results

June 25, 2024







SCOPE OF SERVICE

Actions

Initial review and analysis of town-wide branding need including points of interest, particularly the Grafton Common, and promoting local historic, economic, and recreational resources. This will lead to the following steps:

- 1. Three to five Advisory Group meetings will be held spaced out every three to five weeks.
- 2. An initial presentation defining community branding.
- A presentation of case studies of other cities and towns with similar projects
- 4. An Ideation Workshop at the third meeting developing interactive exercise involving word "pictures" and community context for a Grafton civic brand.
- Responding to the Ideation Exercise, creation of intermediate and final designs.
- 2. Creation of a wayfinding sign and element hierarchy.
- 3. Assistance with creating a sign element placement map.
- 4. A Specifications Package for vendors and DPW.
- 5. Development of a final report for EOED.
- 6. Recommendations for placement and use of town brand on wayfinding elements and other social media and town communications applications (website, Facebook, etc.).
- 7. Using city maps, creation of sign element site placement by working with and led by the Wayfinding Advisory Working Group members.
- 8. QR codes will be developed and integrated into appropriate signs and markers as necessary.
- 9. A Final Report will be submitted to the Executive Office of Economic Development's EOED) Massachusetts Downtown Initiative program (MDI).
- 10. Site visits will take place as necessary by consultant.

SCHEDULE

There were to be monthly Wayfinding Advisory Working Group meetings to be scheduled every three to four weeks whether in person or virtual. The Select Board approval presentation was initially to take place in late May or early June 2024.

Note: Images and refinements will also be circulated to the Wayfinding Advisory Working Group digitally outside meetings for review and comments.





Grafton Public Library

How would you describe Grafton using one word?

Heart Villages Evolving Agricultural Animals Quintessential Historic Recreational Opportunistic Vast Mills Friendly Green Dynamic Multicultural Growing Tufts Hassanamesit Changing Tupperware Convenient Commnity Awesome Central

How would you describe Grafton using two words?

Commuter Rail Expanded library Historic homes Jerome Wheelock Shoe factories Boston accessible Bandstand Earl Tupper Family-oriented Blackstone Valley Small town ver school Open space Blackstone Canal Business-ready Beautiful center Hiking trails Perserving, growing Civically engaged Our home

Town Common
Environmentally conscious
Farmers Market
Good schools
Summer concerts
Gur nome
Family friendly
Historic, rural
Caring community
Bedroom community

Wildlife center Small town

Bald Eagles Growing community

Clock Museum Medium town

Growing quickly Good town Good bones

Quaint, community-focused

Over grown

Residentail, friendly



How would you describe Grafton with three words or a phrase?

History and innovation Welcoming, small town

Prepared to evolve Confluence of Quinsigamond and Blackstone rivers

Rural and suburban Getting too expensive

Charming historic villages Quiet suburban New England

Yesterday, today, and tomorrow Growing too fast

|ewel of the Blackstone Valley Good place to raise a family

Community of villages Isolated, bedroom community

Small town feel Not enough trees!

Adding new chapters to a rich history Quiet, friendly community

Keep it Grafton Great mix of smart caring people

An active community Small town living

Growing out of the traditional "town" Small town feel

What color or colors do you associate with Grafton?

Forest Green Copper

Blue (Waterways) Red (Bricks, Barns)

Fall Colors (Gold, Yellow) White

What symbol or symbols or landmark(s) do you associate with Grafton?

Gazebo/bandstand Depot St Mill Hassanamisco Reservation

Willard Clock Museum Old Town Hall Mill Villages Park
Nipmuc Homestead Grafton Inn Historic District

Community Harvest Project Grafton Historical Society Grafton Public Library

Tufts Veterinary School South Grafton Farms

Grafton Common Community House Native Landmarks
Silver Lake Highfields Golf Course South Street Homes

High School Campus Grafton Flea Market Clock Tower

Wyman Gordon Blackstone River Trees

Washington Mills Lake Ripple Botanical Images

Fire Station One

DESIGN OPTIONS

Once these ideas were collected, the consultant's team interpreted the words and statements into a series of image options to share with the Advisory Committee. After this discussion, Town Planner Fiona Coughlan created an online survey to gather feedback on the image options

Once the survey results were in, the Branding and Wayfinding Advisory Committee wanted the consultant to refine the ideas down to fewer options. It was recommended that a darker green be used when green was a color. Significantly, the Bandstand image had traction. The committee wanted it more distinct, however. What was strategically needed was an optional choice different and more distinct from the earlier design options. So, the Favermann Team created a series of revised and new options. This design exercise led to a more abstracted image. This design attempted to underscore the more rural and farm-connected aspects of Grafton. The survey also showed that no slogan or tagline was necessary to the residents and business community of Grafton.

After circulating the 2 design options (the simplified Bandstand and the more abstracted rural one) along with consistent hierarchical Family of Elements for each one to the members of the Advisory Committee, approval was given to share them with the Town of Grafton's Select Board.

Final Designs

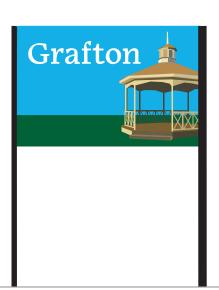
At the Select Board meeting on October 1, 2024, after a thorough and thoughtful discussion about the merits and demerits of each design option and with great appreciation expressed by several Select Board members for the created effort put forth, the Town of Grafton's Select Board voted 5-0 in favor of the Bandstand design. Using a specification package that Favermann Design developed, cost estimates for sign elements and a list of Massachusetts experienced fabricators/installers provided by the consultant, the Town of Grafton will be able to implement the branded wayfinding program.

Notably after the design was approved at the Select Board Meeting, the Chair, Ann-Marie Foley, mentioned that she would love to have the "bandstand" as a brand on her communications materials. Favermann Design created a number of branded element concepts.

Due to the meticulous efforts of the Town Planner, Advisory Committee and staff in collaboration with the MDI consultant, a strong strategic design and sign element locational map were developed, created and adopted by the Town of Grafton.

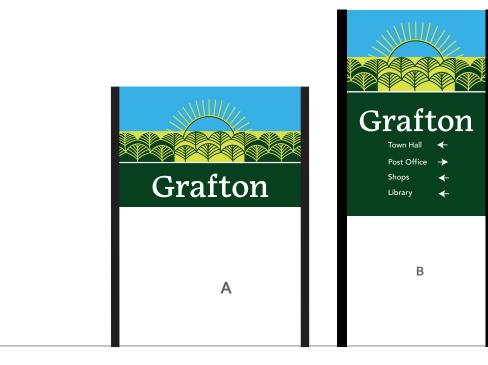
OPTION A

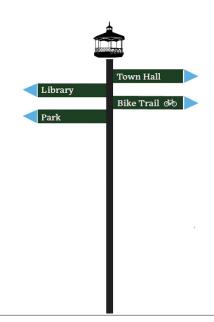
Based on the Bandstand (Chosen design)





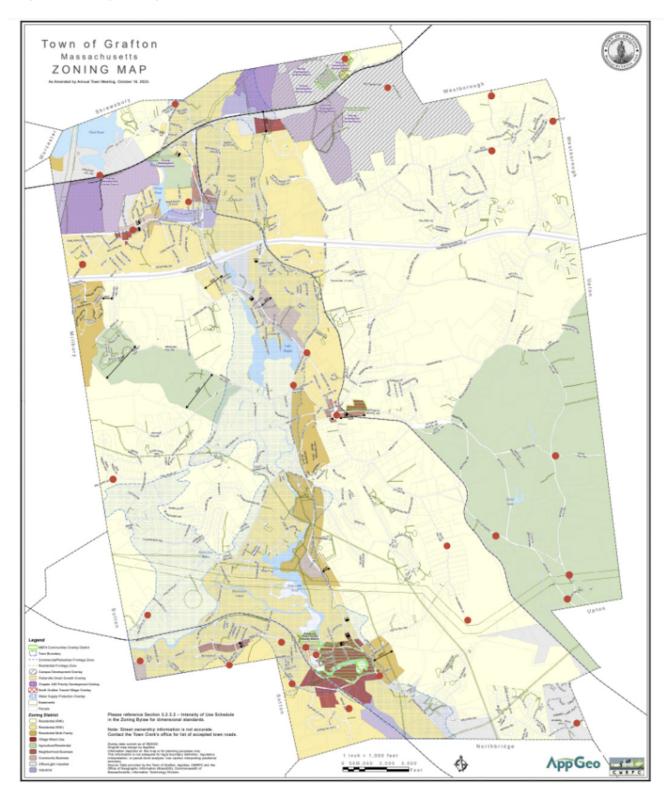
OPTION B
Based on Abstracted Rural/Farm Symbols



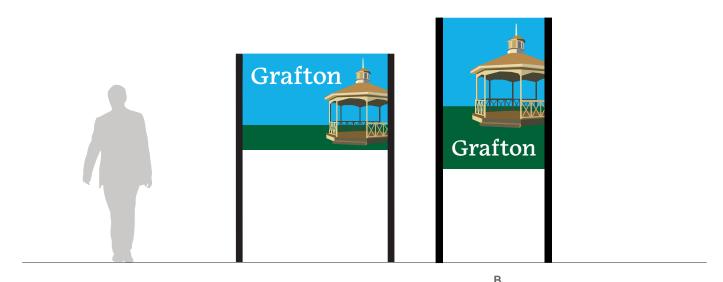


Concept for a directional Sign with Bandstand on Top

Sign Element Placement Map. Advisory Committee wanted to do sign element signs readability testing before fabrication.



GRAFTON FAMILY OF ELEMENTS



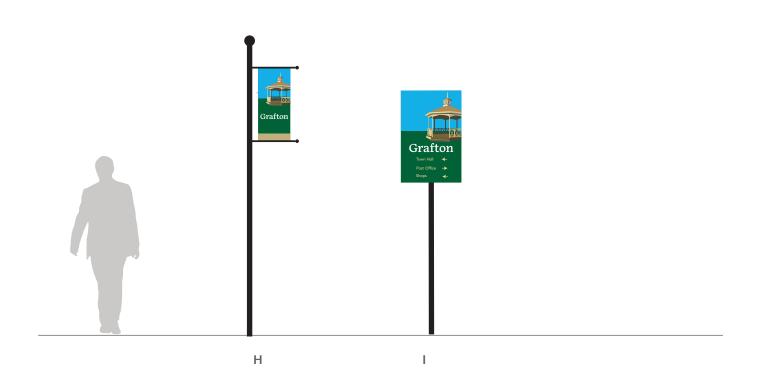
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D2

Grafton Cı C2







Examples of Grafton town brand communications tools for internet and print.



TOWN OF GRAFTON

GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER 30 PROVIDENCE ROAD GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519 (508) 839-5335 ext. 1400 h FAX (508) 839-4602 planningdept@grafton-ma.gov www.grafton-ma.gov

PLANNING BOARD	planningdept@grafton-ma.gov www.grafton-ma.gov
	MEMORANDUM
TO:	
FROM:	
DATE:	
SUBJECT:	



TOWN OF GRAFTON

GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER 30 PROVIDENCE ROAD Grafton (508) 839-5335 • FAX (508) 839-4602

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ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION (AAC) (Regular Meeting) AGENDA / MEETING NOTICE

September 10, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.

Zoom Conference Link to join the webinar: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83640182486

Or Phone: 301-715-8592 Webinar ID: 836 4018 2486

International numbers available: https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kefoBpFYTm

A copy of the Grafton Public Meeting Remote Participation Guidelines, dated March 24, 2020 (and subsequent extensions) is attached to this agenda for reference. Please review the guidelines prior to joining the remote public meeting. We will be fielding questions via Chat feature. Also, written comments may be directed to disabilitycommission@grafton-ma.gov.

1. Announcements

a. Tracy Sharky, Grafton Interim Inspector of Buildings, will be the new representative from the Town to the AAC

2. External Correspondence

- Email from Aaron Fill regarding AAC vacancy
- b. Email from David Robbins re: article on Gym Accessibility (see new business)
- c. Email from Roger Trahan re: MOD Summer Bulletin (see new business)
- 3. Meeting Minutes August 12, 2024

4. Old Business

a. Concern about accessibility at Norcross Park