



Rapid Recovery Plan

2021

Newton, MA

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.

For more information, contact DHCD:
100 Cambridge St, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114
617-573-1100
mass.gov/DHCD

Acknowledgements



Newton, MA

Nicole Freedman, Director of Transportation Planning

Devra G. Bailin, Economic Development Director



Plan Facilitator

Heather Gould, AICP, Director of Planning



Subject Matter Expert: Placemaking

Jonathan Berk, Principal



Subject Matter Expert: Wayfinding

Jessica Finch, Principal



Subject Matter Expert:: Placemaking and
Special Events Permitting

Michael Aparicio, Principal Consultant

The Planning Team would also like to thank the following individuals for participating as key stakeholders throughout the planning process:

Newton Planning Department	Barney Heath, Zachery LeMel, Cat Kemmett, Nevena Pilipovic-Wengler
Newton Economic Development Commission	Joyce Plotkin
Newton Cultural Development	Paula Gannon, Danielle Moriarty
Newton Department of Public Works	Jason Sobel, Davis Koses
Newton City Council	Vicki Danberg, Alicia Bowman
The Thistle and Leek	Brendan Collins, Kaitlyn Smith

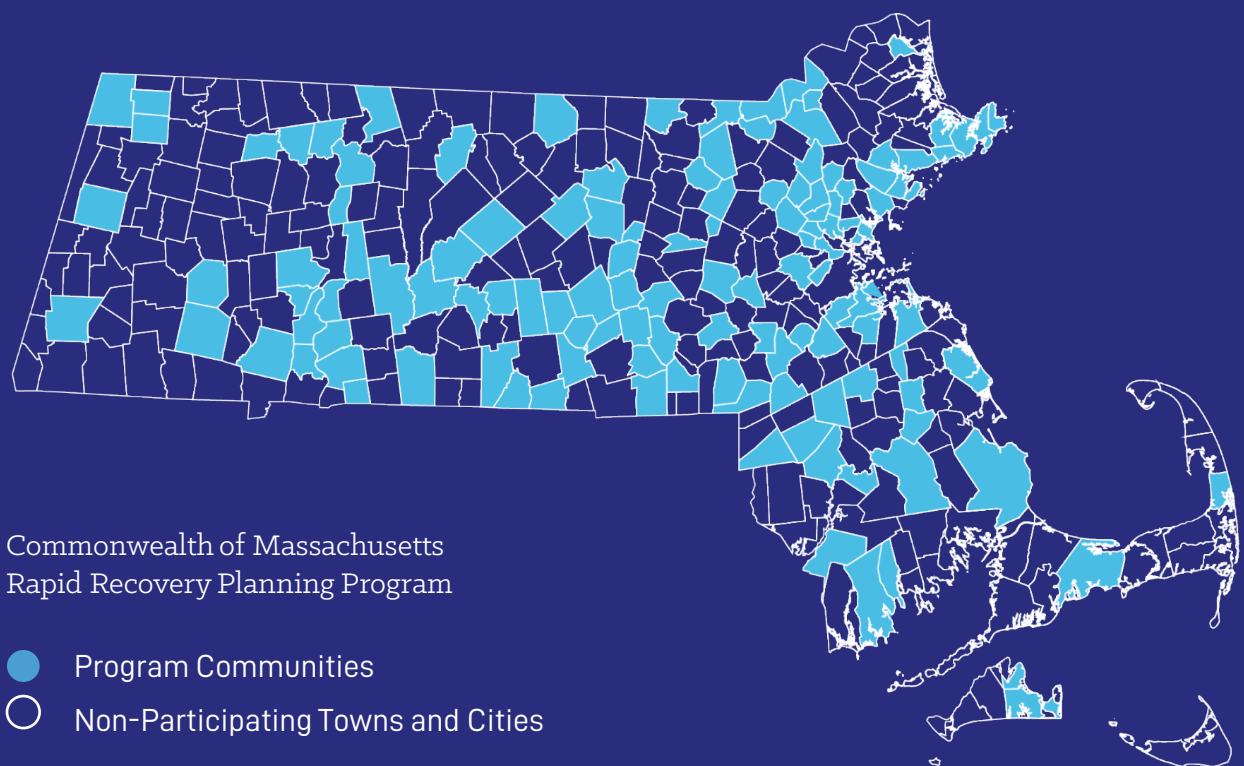
Table of Contents

Rapid Recovery Program	6
Introduction	7
Approach/Framework	8
Executive Summary	9
Diagnostic Key Findings	13
Physical Environment	14
Business Environment	14
Market Information	15
Administrative Capacity	15
Project Recommendations	20
Public Realm	21
Private Realm	34
Revenue and Sales	37
Administrative Capacity	41
Cultural/Arts Others	55
Appendix	62

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.



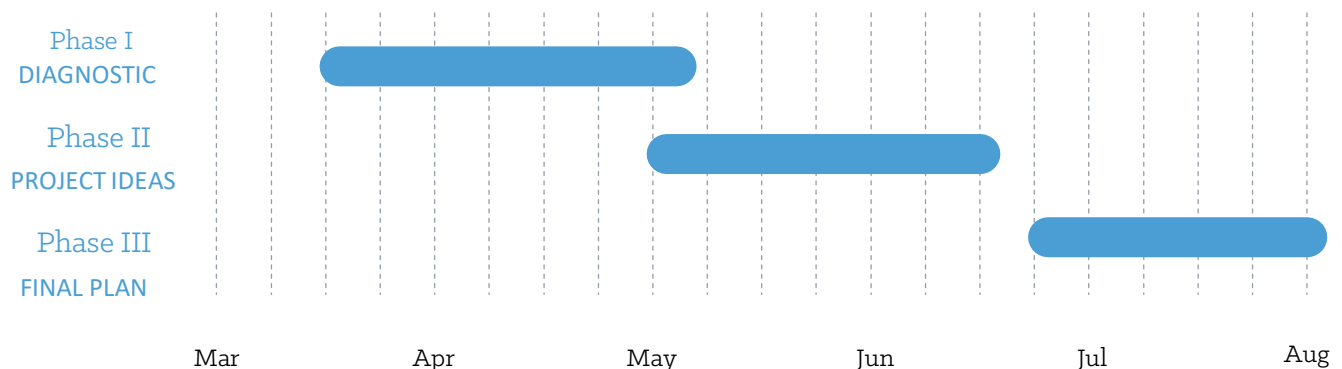
Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

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.

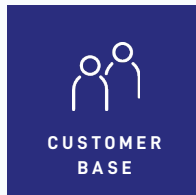
Each Rapid Recovery Plan was developed across three phases between February-August 2021. Phase 1 - Diagnostic, Phase 2- Project Recommendations, Phase 3 - Plan.



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 Vibrant, Dense Commercial Core

The City of Newton's Local Rapid Recovery Plan study area is focused on the village of Newton Centre, specifically those commercial buildings adjacent to Herrick Road and Union Street ("Union Street"). A small area, it is bounded by intersections at Beacon Street and Langley Road and runs approximately two-tenths of a mile in distance. It is one-way the entire length of the roadway. The MassDOT Road Inventory Database traffic count for Union Street is 1,154 vehicles per day.

The MBTA Green Line runs through the Newton Centre Station and is located on the south side of Union Street.

While only nine buildings are in the study area, Union Street is a vibrant, dense commercial district. Buildings are multi-story with retail/food service on the ground floor and offices above. There is small green space in the form of pathways from the surrounding the MBTA Newton Centre Station. Union Street is wide roadway, with on-street parking on both sides of the streets. There are wide sidewalks on both sides of Herrick Road and Union Street. There are also several lower-level storefronts on Herrick Road.

The area is pedestrian-friendly and walkable, with well-maintained storefronts and well-designed signage. While there is no district management entity or business association, one property owner owns most buildings in the Union Street corridor. Branded as "Piccadilly Square," a revamped signage and wayfinding system was installed in 2018.

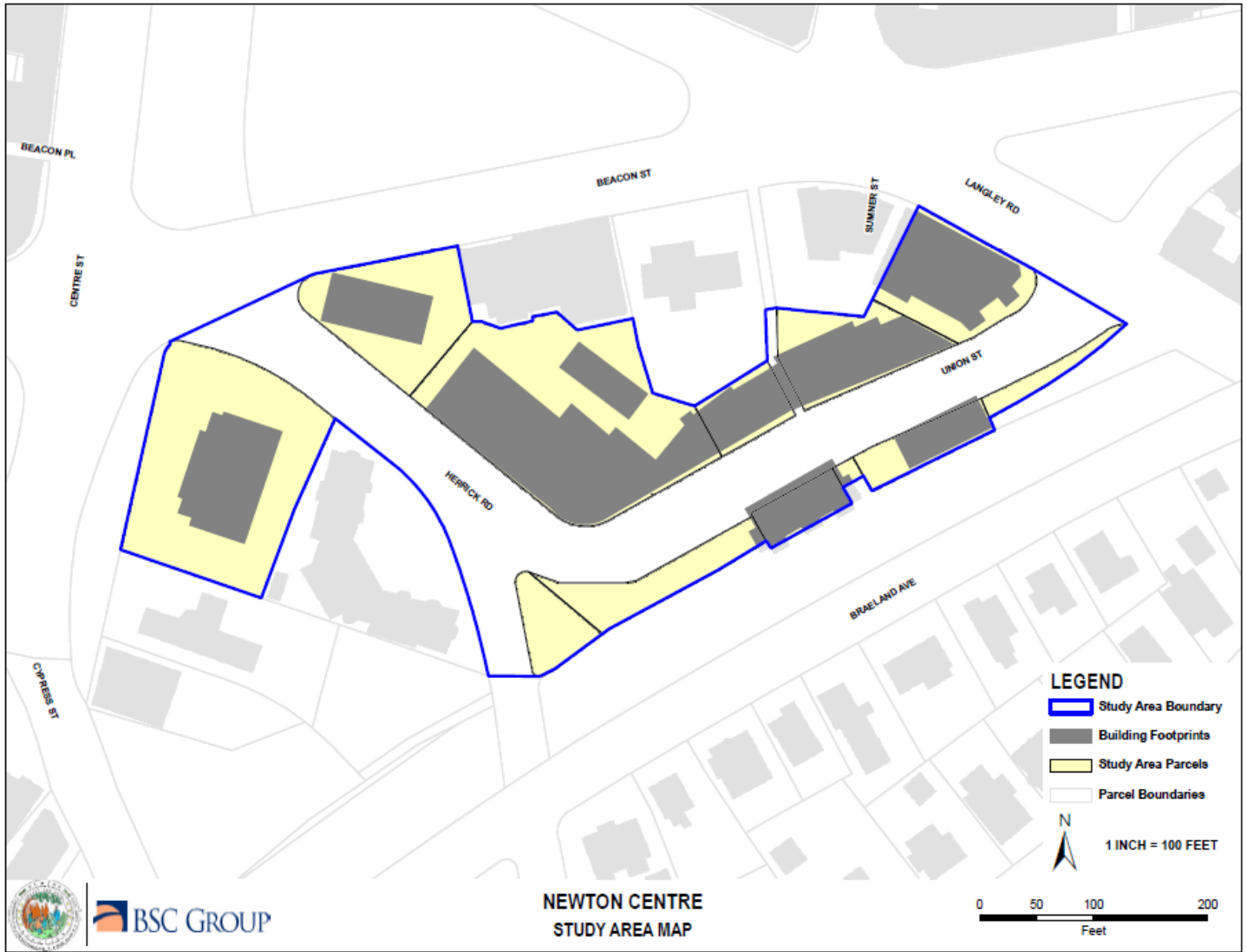
Beyond the on-street parking spaces, several City public parking lots are available within a ¼ mile buffer area. The Langley lot has approximately 150 parking spaces available. The City uses a pay-to-park system with meters, kiosks, and a parking app. There are also designated time limits in certain parking locations. While there is ample parking in Newton Centre, parking perception is a major concern to Union Street businesses.

According to the City Assessor's office, the study area has approximately 43,000 SF of ground floor retail and 12,000 SF of ground floor office. When including all commercial space (basement, ground, and upper-levels) there is a total square footage of 136,370.

There are approximately 44 storefronts, including retail, restaurant, bank, and office. At the time of site visits in spring 2021, there were three (3) vacant storefronts. Data collected in the field counted 120 total businesses. In terms of business mix, 53% were health care and social assistance, 15% were retail trade, 11% were accommodation and food services, and 10% were personal services (nail, lash, salon).

Overall ranking for private realm and public realm assessments was an A/B (out of A, B, C or F).

Finally, through the diagnostic phase of this project, a business survey was conducted to measure the impact of COVID-19 on business operations. One-hundred percent (100%) of the respondents to the survey reported being impacted by COVID. Respondents stated they suffered impacts such as a decline in revenue, reduced operating hours/capacity, business closures (temporary or permanent), incurred expenses to implement safety measures, established alternative modes to sell and deliver products, employee layoffs, and stopped/deferred rent or mortgage payments.



Newton Center Rapid Recovery Plan Study Area Map Source: BSC Group

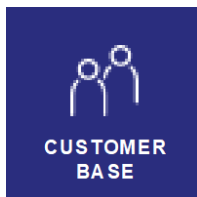
Recovery on Union Street will depend on a mix of enhancements to the public realm, strategies to boost the success of small businesses, and creatively incorporating public art into the environment

Based on the goals stated in the Create Newton Comprehensive Arts & Culture Plan, Economic Development Strategy, and the Comprehensive Master Plan, coupled with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the business community and the findings of the LRRP diagnostic phase, the ten (10) project recommendations listed below will be discussed in greater detail later in this report.

Recommendation	Project Category
1. Explore the temporary closure of Union Street for special events	Public Realm
2. Create a wayfinding and branding system for Newton Centre	Public Realm
3. Secure funding to support pop-up placemaking efforts in Newton Centre	Public Realm
4. Solve the perception that parking is a problem	Private Realm
5. Promote a Shop Local initiative	Private Realm
6. Create a district management entity/business organization	Revenue/Sales
7. Encourage the continuation of outdoor dining	Revenue/Sales
8. Streamline special events permitting and create a strategy guide for hosting community events	Administrative Capacity
9. Create a public art walk on pedestrian path between Beacon Street and Union Street	Cultural/Arts
10. Increase the use of public art in the district	Cultural/Arts

Diagnostic

Key Findings



A well-educated and diverse customer base

Newton is an inner suburb of Boston, located just a few miles west of downtown Boston, and home to 88,412 residents. The population is well-educated with nearly 80% of residents age 25+ having earned an bachelors degree or higher. Median household income is \$155,558 placing it among the most affluent communities in the Commonwealth. Being adjacent to Boston and with good public transit connections, Newton is accessible to residents and workers in nearby communities.

Twenty-six percent (26%) of the population is under age 20 and 20% is 65 years or older. The median age is 41.5, slightly higher than the state average. The town has also experienced an increase in the proportion of residents 65 and older as current residents continue to age. However, Newton is home to several colleges, the largest of which is Boston College. Total high school and college enrollment in Newton is estimated at over 21,000 students.

Source: ESRI Demographic Indicators, 2020; MA Department of Education; National Center for Education Statistics



A compact, village-like neighborhood feel

Newton Centre is one of 13 villages that make up the City of Newton. Beacon Street and Centre Street are the main arteries in Newton Centre. For the purpose the Newton's Local Rapid Recovery Project, the study area was focused on Union Street/Herrick Road between Beacon Street and Langley Road.

The MBTA Newton Centre Green Line station is located on this block. 1,154 vehicles travel Union Street daily, on average (*MassDOT Road Inventory Database, 2019*). It is a single lane, one-way street with parking on both sides of the road. In a survey of Union Street businesses conducted in the spring of 2021, respondents indicated they were least satisfied with access for customers and employees. In line with that sentiment, parking regulations were identified as an obstacle for three-quarters of the businesses responding.

The physical realm is well-designed and maintained with wide sidewalks, benches, and street trees throughout supporting a safe and welcoming pedestrian experience. The road is popular for bicyclists continuing to the Green Line and into Boston; there is one bike rack at the MBTA station. Newton's Bikeability Assessment (2015) recommended installing a bike lane and additional bike parking in this area. Newton Department of Public Works is currently implementing these recommendations.

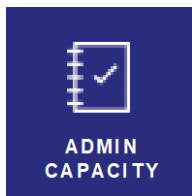


Active storefronts and outdoor dining opportunities

Union Street is a multi-story commercial district which includes 44 ground-floor storefronts including retail, restaurants, and banks; upper floors boast office and medical office space. This represents approximately 55,000 square feet of first floor commercial space according to the Town's Assessor's database. Three of the 44 storefronts were vacant during April 2021 site visits. There were no permanent business closures identified that were related to the impacts of COVID-19.

Approximately 120 businesses operate within the Union Street study area. Health Care and Social Assistance represent the highest proportion of businesses at 53% followed by retail trade (15%) professional accommodation and food service (11%), and other services such as salons (10%). Based on the 2021 business survey, many businesses experienced a decrease in revenue during the pandemic and 66% of respondents noted a reduction in foot traffic by more than half. As of April 2021, 67% of the businesses responding continued to operate at reduced capacity or hours. Businesses identified changes in public parking, renovation of storefronts/building facades, more cultural events/activities, attraction of additional businesses, and implementing marketing strategies among their top strategies for supporting the recovery of the Union Street business community's recovery.

During the COVID-19 state of emergency, the City allowed the temporary displacement of street parking spaces to create options for outdoor dining on Union Street. This has continued past the state of emergency with "Newton Al Fresco 2.0." At Union Street, this plan preserves much of the on-street parking spaces, allows for continuous traffic flow, and carves out special expanded dining areas for restaurants and communal dining.



The City is driving local recovery efforts

Newton has many active stakeholders including the City's Planning Department, Economic Development Commission, Office of Cultural Development, as well as several civic and cultural organizations. Together, these groups have completed several assessments and plans creating vision and action plans to support Newton's continued development. Some of these include Newton Comprehensive Plan (updated 2011), Parking Management Plan (2014), Bikeability Assessment (2015), Complete Streets Policy (2016), Newton Leads 2040: A Transportation Strategy (2017), Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan (2018), Create Newton Comprehensive Arts & Culture Plan (2019), Newton Open Space and Recreation Plan (2020).

Project Pop-Up and the MBTA are additional stakeholders to consider for COVID-19 recovery efforts. The MBTA is active in the neighborhood given the placement of the Newton Centre light rail station. Project Pop-Up, organized by UpNext in coordination with the City of Newton, supports social innovation and entrepreneurship by providing new brands support and temporary use of vacant storefronts. The project has been successful but sustaining funding remains a challenge.

Newton has an opportunity to tie together the findings and goals in the above planning documents, along with an understanding of the impacts COVID-19 has had on their business community, and numerous community partners to be poised to act as opportunities arise to fund recovery efforts.



Highlights from the Physical Environment

AN ATTRACTIVE STREETScape CREATES AN INVITING ENVIRONMENT

Union Street benefits from an attractive streetscape providing a welcoming environment for customers and employees. The area boasts decorative lighting, wide sidewalks, and many planters throughout.

During COVID-19, the neighborhood installed outdoor dining with public art decorating protective jersey barriers.

Finally, businesses and property owners along Union Street maintain attractive facades and signage contributing to an overall cohesive and attractive feeling.

This was confirmed in the business survey conducted as part of this project where businesses reported being very satisfied with the safety and comfort provided to customers and employees as well as the condition of private buildings, storefronts, and signs. Businesses were slightly less satisfied with the current condition of public spaces, streets, and sidewalks.

A MULTI-MODAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Access and mobility are key assets of the Union Street study area as well as current areas of discussion.

The one-way street is lined with on-street parking on both sides of the road. Although there is a perception that parking is in short supply, multiple parking studies have shown that adequate parking exists within and adjacent to the area. In addition to the on-street parking, there are public lots on nearby Pleasant and Pelham Streets and on Langley Road.

Customers have access to neighborhood businesses via the MBTA's Newton Centre green line station. In the 2021 business survey, amenity improvements for bike/transit users was the lowest priority for businesses perhaps due to recent improvements such as bike racks and Blue Bikes near the T station.

Sidewalks and street crossings make the area very walkable and connected to Newton's other villages. Still, when surveyed, businesses were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the condition of public spaces, streets, and sidewalks and were slightly dissatisfied with access for customers and employees.



Street trees and planters (above), Wide sidewalks, parking, and access to Blue Bikes along Union Street Source: BSC Group



Outdoor dining incorporating public art in Union Street Study Area Source: BSC Group

Making Use of the Outdoors during COVID-19 and Beyond

NEWTON AL FRESCO 2.0: OUTDOOR DINING

During 2020, Union Street's restaurants took advantage of state and local rule changes to accommodate more outdoor dining. Some restaurants made use of outdoor patios while others set up tables in on-street parking. In 2021, Newton introduced "Newton Al Fresco 2.0" to support continued vibrancy in its villages and help restaurants' recovery as many diners continue to prefer outdoor dining for both the atmosphere and health and safety reasons.

Newton Al Fresco 2.0 supports on-street dining space for restaurants, communal dining areas, as well as a special expanded dining area on Union Street. The expanded dining area preserves much of the on-street parking and supports continuous traffic flow while allowing for individual restaurants to provide outdoor dining as well as communal dining areas.

The City is currently evaluating with local stakeholders whether to make expanded dining on Union Street permanent as well as whether to close the street to vehicle traffic all together. This would not only support outdoor dining but also other events such as a Holiday Stroll.

Stakeholders have identified several factors to consider as these options are evaluated. If implemented there will be a permanent loss of parking. Further, dining in parking spaces is disruptive to retail customers. Some restauranteurs note that increased foot traffic due to outdoor dining will also bring customers to retail establishments, not all businesses in the neighborhood agree.

VILLAGE CONNECTIONS: GREEN SPACE

The Union Street study area focuses on a dense single block within the larger Newton Centre village. As discussed previously, Union Street has an attractive public realm including many street trees though open space is limited to small plazas and paths including those that provide pedestrian access to the Newton Centre T station.

However, Union Street is within walking distance to many green spaces including the Newton Centre Green at Beacon and Centre Streets and the Newton Centre Playground and athletic fields. These green spaces provide opportunities for passive recreation and planned events that bring people into and around the business district as well as connections to other Newton villages.



Outdoor Dining at BARaMOR, Union St., Newton Source: BSC Group



Newton Centre Playground Source: newtonma.gov



Highlights from the Business Environment

SMALL, INDEPENDENT OPERATORS: BUSINESS MIX

Union Street is characterized by a mix of small, independent, and local business owners. Independent health and medical practitioners (e.g., medspa, dentists, and counselors) make up the largest proportion of businesses along the block.

This is followed by a retail community boasting many local artisans. Food and dining establishments skew toward local, farm-to-table, and healthy offerings including a smoothie bar. Fitness and personal services round out the block.

This diverse group of businesses supports trip generation allowing individuals to come to the block, visit many businesses, and get a lot done in a single trip. This observation is supported by the business survey responses showing satisfaction among business owners regarding proximity to complementary business uses.

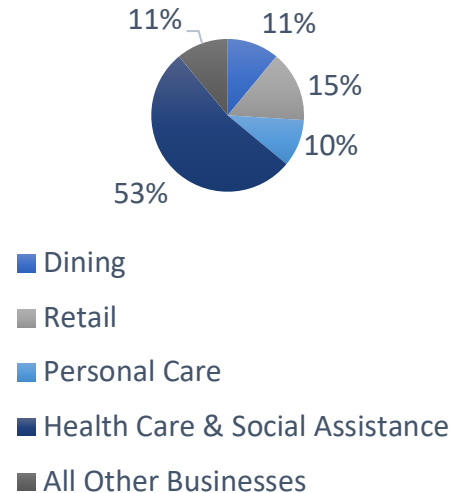
As small, independent operators, these businesses may benefit from shared capacity to accomplish common goals. For example, business survey respondents identified marketing strategies for the district, programs to attract additional businesses, and more cultural events and activities as their top three preferred strategies to attract and retain customers and businesses.

NEWTON CENTRE, UNION STREET, PICCADILLY SQUARE: DISTRICT BRANDING

Union Street refers to a specific block within the larger Newton Centre Village. The Union Street block features a majority property owner who has implemented "Piccadilly Square" branding across their properties. These include logos and painting on building walls, an "Instagrammable" site featuring an oversized chair, and a small garden.

While this promotes a sense of place along the block, it also creates mixed messaging among the village, the street, and the private properties. Finding ways to integrate this branding into the overall area would support further establishing Union Street as a destination within Newton Centre and the overall.

120 Total Businesses



Mix of business by NAICS category. Source: Field Data Collection, April 2021

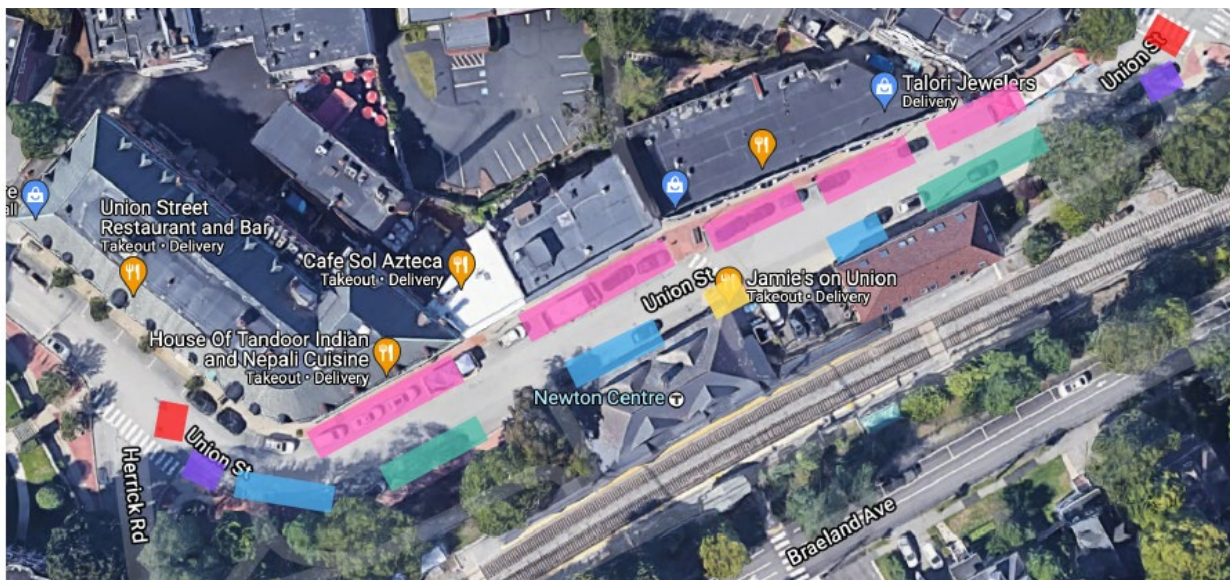


Piccadilly Square Branding on Union Street. Source: BSC Group

Project Recommendations

Explore the Temporary Closure of Union Street for Special Events

Category	 Public Realm
Location	Newton Centre/ Census Tract 3783
Origin	City of Newton and Stakeholder engagement
Budget	 Low to Medium – Funding: crowdfunding (e.g., through Patronicity)
Timeframe	 Short-Term – Pilot planning and implementation can occur within a few months
Risk	 Medium – Push back from service-based businesses over loss of parking, Concerns if pilots are too successful, could pull customers from nearby commercial streets, concerns from residents over access to parking
Key Performance Indicators	User Sentiment (Do users see Union Street as a place for a single errand or to spend time, do visitors consider it a destination); Businesses (Track sales, compare sales on special events days to previous Sundays, encourage businesses to wait out full pilot before casting judgement)
Partners & Resources	City of Newton, Union Street Businesses and Property Owners, Area Residents, Creatives, Private Sponsors/Funders



-  Stage
-  Barriers with signage signifying no cars, people and bikes welcome
-  Adirondack chairs or benches
-  Outdoor Retail & Dining
-  Public tables & chairs
-  Bike Parking

One option for Union Street Open Street Concept Source: Jonathan Berk, Bench Consulting/Patronicity

Diagnostic

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact to all types of businesses, causing them to think about ways to recover. One such way could be to hold special events to draw people back. Stakeholders would like to hold more special events in the district to increase the number of visitors to the area.

However, the events held need to work not only for the restaurants but also the retailers in the area. Union Street is a one-way street, with on-street parking on both sides, wide sidewalks, and a wide travel lane. The City would like to explore closing off Union Street to through traffic for special events, creating a pedestrian walkway, however, it would like to understand how other communities have successfully converted roadways to closed pedestrian ways (permanently or temporarily) to hold special events.

Reopen Asbury Park



Asbury Park, New Jersey closed a number of downtown streets during the pandemic to allow for social distancing and outdoor dining. In 2021 this program was tweaked, expanded and continued after hearing positive and constructive feedback from area residents and businesses. Some streets remain open streets 24/7 while others are only open on weekend evenings. On all streets programming and live music is allowed and retailers as well as restaurants are allowed to expand into the street.

Case Study: Asbury Park, NJ Source: Jonathan Berk, Bench Consulting/Patronicity

Action Item

Create a series of 3 open streets events on Union Street. Utilizing 3 consecutive weekends (most likely Sunday as to have the lowest interruption to service-based businesses but option should be available for evenings or even full weekends).

Host a minimally programmed open street event allowing area restaurants AND retail businesses to expand into designated spaces on the sidewalk while creating a "town square" type environment in the public space in the center and opposite side of the street to the retail establishments.

The extent of public programming would be to :

- 1) Provide seating and tables chairs for the public,
- 2) Provide a stage and coordinate with local performers,
- 3) Incorporate a wayfinding campaign to direct folks to available nearby parking lots and side streets with parking,
- 4) Develop a traditional and social media strategy so people are aware of the event AND know where to go for information and to leave feedback, and
- 5) Ensure coordination with area businesses so they know what they can do in the street and how much space they have.

Montreal's Open Streets Program



In 2020, Montreal experimented with a number of active transport routes and open streets to support restaurants and retail with indoor gathering restrictions. The program was so successful that businesses, neighborhood districts and resident groups petitioned the City for 13 open streets across the city that became hubs of social and economic life in 7 of the city's neighborhoods. Space was created for retailers to expand into the street, playground equipment to be installed on the street and public outdoor seating areas to encourage more passive gatherings.

Case Study: Montreal, Quebec Source: Jonathan Berk, Bench Consulting/Patronicity

KEYS TO SUCCESS



Early Engagement

Engage business owners, property owners, creatives and residents from the area early in this planning process so they can feel as much of the planning process as possible and are more likely to stay engaged throughout this first iteration and hopefully beyond.



Messaging

Don't make this a surprise for anyone, particularly those area stakeholders. Ensure every businesses in the area is aware of the details to head off any day of surprises. In addition, assure theres ample time to market the event (2-weeks should be enough) to ensure people are aware and also aware that this will be part of a series.



Feedback

Have an online survey always open combined with in person surveys of attendees to events and users of the space as well as direct outreach to abutting residents and businesses. This will cut down on the ability for negative responses to overpower positive by more passive sentiment.



Public Seating

I know it sounds over simplified but, in other open streets initiatives without public seating available, it encouraged more of a continuous flow of people through the event without as much "stopping and staying." Providing ample public seating; tables, chairs and Adirondack style chairs facing the crowds will encourage more people to stay longer and also provide more of a comfortable, human scale environment for other visitors.

Keys to Success for Union Street Open Street Events

Source: Jonathan Berk, Bench Consulting/Patronicity

Process

Initial Planning

- Secure funding for pilot. May include ARPA funding, crowdsourcing, or private sponsors.
- Address any potential permitting issues to ensure that restaurants and businesses can interact with participants (e.g., Allowing use of sidewalk chalk, sandwich boards, or street games to attract potential customers).
- Develop street closure layout placing infrastructure appropriately on the street (see potential concept on cover page). Include public seating elements throughout to enable people to stop and stay and be a part of the energy on the street. Locate a stage on the street where area musicians can play as people walk the street.

Engage Businesses

- Develop risk mitigation strategies to minimize impact including clear direction to available nearby parking, additional handicap parking nearby, clearly communicate temporary/pilot nature of these events (only 3 days).
- Fully engage businesses and explain risk mitigation strategies.
- Encourage businesses to give input into the planning of the layout. The more invested businesses are in planning, the more supportive they will be.
- Provide sales tracking tools to accurately measure the impact on local businesses.

Day Of

- Heavy staffing/policing shouldn't be necessary, but it is helpful to have people assist with setup/breakdown and surveying during the day.
- Monitor street entrances and ensure businesses have a point of contact or cell phone to call with any immediate issues.

Feedback

An oft-overlooked step that is one of the single most important to ensure success.

- Establish a constructive outlet where stakeholders can leave positive or negative, but constructive, feedback through in-person surveying at events and an online forum. Intercept surveys will be one of the best ways to combat negative comments that tend to be more vocal than people who enjoyed the event.

Economic Impacts: By the Numbers

70.6% of businesses felt participation in Open Streets was worthwhile. ⁴	Fort Collins, CO
84% of respondents shopped or purchased food and said they would return to the neighborhood ³	San Diego, CA
73% of participants spent money at a store or restaurant; 68% of participants became aware of a new store/restaurant ⁵	St. Louis, MO
82% of respondents spent money, with over half spending more than \$10.00 ⁶	St. Louis, MO
Nearly 82% of the Open Streets participants anticipated spending \$10.00 USD or more at Atlanta Streets Alive. ⁷	Atlanta, GA
The net increase in average revenue on an Open Streets Sunday compared to a non-open streets Sunday was \$466 ²	San Francisco, CA

Economic Impacts from Open Streets projects across the US. Source: Healthiest Practice Open Streets, 880 Cities, <http://www.880cities.org/images/openstreets-template/pdf/open-streets-local-economies.pdf>



Open Street at Newbury Street, Boston, MA Photo: Jonathan Berk, Bench Consulting/Patronicity



Stroget, Copenhagen – Before and After

Best Practice

Open Streets Case Studies



Location

Stroget, Copenhagen; Wichita, KS

Pedestrian Only Streets: Stroget, Copenhagen

More information:

<https://globaldesigningcities.org/publication/global-street-design-guide/streets/pedestrian-priority-spaces/pedestrian-only-streets/pedestrian-streets-case-study-stroget-copenhagen/>

An Evaluation of Kansan Open Streets Event's Impact on Businesses: Wichita, KS

More information:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8343606/> and <https://openstreetsict.com/>

A 0.7 mile stretch of Copenhagen's main street, Stroget, was converted to pedestrian only in 1962 as an experiment. The project was met with much debate with one concern expressed: "No cars means no customers. No customers means no business." The street was incrementally improved over time allowing time for the city to develop the space and for people to change their patterns of driving and parking. Results included increases in revenue for local retailers, pedestrian volumes, outdoor café seating, and stopping and staying activities.





A study was conducted to evaluate the Open Streets 2019 event's impact on adjacent businesses. 102 surveys (42% response rate) were completed.

Key findings:

- Most businesses (56%) reported being open during Open Streets
- Many businesses (72%) reporting have more visitors compared to a typical Sunday.
- More than half (54%) experience new and regular visitors
- Most businesses (64%) reported a positive financial impact

Open Streets increased sales and the number of visitors among businesses. Respondents reported they plan to participate in the 2020 Open Streets, and if Open Streets was offered twice a year. Finally, most participating businesses reported they recommend that other businesses participate in Open Streets.

Create a wayfinding and branding system for Newton Centre

Category	 Public Realm
Location	Newton Centre/Census Tract 3738
Origin	Site Visits
Budget	 Medium to Large Budget – Depending on scope of project and cost of signage fabrication/installation, budget may range from \$80,000 - >\$200,000. See “process” for additional cost estimates.
Timeframe	 Short-Term
Risk	 Medium – Risks include political will, community interest/partners, and financing limitations; some risks exist with signage fabrication (e.g., ability to fabricate as designed, material costs) and installation (e.g., planning for electric/interactive signage).
Key Performance Indicators	Level of ownership of brand by stakeholders/constituents; Installation and use of signage; Public surveys on satisfaction with chosen brand, usefulness of wayfinding; Longevity of brand/wayfinding system
Partners & Resources	Planning Department, DPW, property owners, City Council, local merchants Funding: Mass. Cultural Council, Mass. Office of Travel & Tourism, ARPA Travel, Tourism, & Outdoor Recreation, National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program, MassDevelopment, Patronicity (crowdfunding)
Diagnostic	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on the way in which a community interacts in the public realm. There is no signage or district branding in the public realm that helps to promote the user experience and create that "destination" feel. By doing so, the intent is to attract more attention to the businesses in the study area to help them financially recover faster from the negative impacts of COVID.</p> <p>While Newton Centre may be accessible for those who are familiar with it, customers passing through may not be aware of local offerings from retailers that lack a visible location or adequate signage. Also, customers might find it difficult to park, not because there is insufficient parking but because inadequate wayfinding makes finding spots a challenge. Addressing these visual impediments to accessibility is often a critical component of district revitalization efforts. Following the impacts of COVID, including loss of businesses in the downtown, shifts to remote work, and economic hardship for businesses, establishing district branding and wayfinding will help attract new customers and businesses.</p> <p>Newton Centre aims to create an easy-to-recognize system to direct vehicles to possible parking opportunities that may include signage or an app and include walking time/distance from public parking to common areas.</p>

Action Items

Develop the District Brand – Wayfinding should be based upon a unique brand identity for the district. This effort may seek to integrate with existing branding for the City or be a fresh start. Given the many villages that comprise Newton, branding should consider an overall theme that each village can tie in to. See “Branding Basics” below for detail on the branding process.

Conduct Asset Mapping – Assess current branding and wayfinding in the district, examine how the larger Newton Centre village and the more localized Piccadilly Square brands can be utilized. Note that when the term “wayfinding” is attached to signage, it means the messaging on the sign is directing the viewer towards a destination. This step also includes reviewing maps for current wayfinding systems and master planning documents that outline goals for the city/district, as well as assembling a list of points of interest.

Consider Vehicular vs. Pedestrian-Oriented Wayfinding – Consistency with MA’s green signage with white type is effective for directing vehicles. Consider how to direct vehicles to parking before the arrive in the district. Once on foot, pedestrian level signage, located at popular parking lots, the MBTA station, or other points of entry has an opportunity to feature the Town’s visual brand identity (colors, fonts, styles). Viewers are more likely to instinctually trust signage and wayfinding that they recognize as town signage. Directories, with walking distance to destinations are highly used and sought after.

Branding Basics

Key Players:

- Design firm contracted to complete the work
- Brand project manager from the City who will manage the project and maintain the brand standards after project completion
- Stakeholders from the community or City who will have input at decision points
- Constituents including residents and other community members, who are considered throughout the process and are invited for opinion at key milestones.

Phases:

- Research & discovery – This phase sets the stage providing the design firm with the right information, project team, communications standards, and recent reports/plans. Cities that would like a more public process will need more time/budget in this phase to accommodate.
- Concept direction – When the design firm shared a very basic idea of the potential direction and asks for validation. Feedback is very important in this phase. Don’t hold back.
- Visual language – Include development of the accessories to the logo – color, image style, copy tone/voice.
- Logo design & refinement – The design firm should present a set number of options reflected in their proposal. The concept that has the most potential should be selected for refinement.
- User testing & refinement – This phase should share the concept with stakeholders and asking for commentary of which will be reviewed for integrity/relevance. The design team will revise the concept accordingly and share another presentation of their findings.



Integration of art into Worcester’s branding and wayfinding program Source: Selbert Perkins Design

Products:

- Request for Proposals – This document serves as an important baseline for the project, including timeline, budget, stakeholders, goals, and deliverables.
- Brand guide – This document is organic and will develop over time but should include standards for how and when the brand is used. It will include logo in color, B&W, color details, applications of the logo being used appropriately/inappropriately, and more.
- Incorporate Art - Any new branding/signage effort can include art. Pairing up with local high schools and artists to create specific panels in directories is a great way to make new signs feel like they’ve been there all long and show visitors to Newton what the town is about. Using a local artist to illustrate a map of Newton’s villages would be a unique way to tackle a map effort.

Process

Branding

- 1) Assemble key players & develop RFP. Consider whether design firm will also complete wayfinding design and construction administration or whether these will be separate tasks/vendors.
- 2) Select design firm.
- 3) Work through phases identified in “branding basics.” Consider specific action items identified including asset mapping, artist engagement and tie in to City/other villages.
- 4) Finalize brand and brand guide. Ensure City staff person (ideally brand project manager) is in place to maintain brand standards on an ongoing basis.

Wayfinding

- 1) Assemble team & develop RFP. (Project team and design firm may carryover from branding task.)
- 2) Complete wayfinding analysis and design tasks including stakeholder and public engagement, concept design, and others.

Fabrication & Installation

- 1) Complete bidding & negotiation for fabrication.
- 2) Fabricate signage.
- 3) Determine construction administrator (City or design firm) and oversee installation.

Monitoring and Future Improvements

- 1) Projects should monitor public perception and use and utilize these data for future improvements
- 2) Many wayfinding projects add new features as time progresses. For example, Somerville’s Neighborways project incorporated wayfinding and designated walking/biking routes to connect residential areas to commercial district (see Best Practice sheet).



*Example of pedestrian scale wayfinding signage for multiple neighborhoods
Source: Harriman for City of Brockton*

For budgets related to signage and wayfinding, we advise to expect a range in cost. The budget will fluctuate based on the experience of the design firm, needs of the client, scale of the signage program, the schedule for the deliverables and the cost of fabrication and installation.

Wayfinding Design \$ 25K - \$150K+

- o Stakeholder engagement (interviews) \$5 – 15K
- o Public Engagement (survey – online or in person) \$10K – \$20K
- o Wayfinding Analysis (Circulation Plans, Sign Location Plans, etc.) \$8K – \$18K
- o Signage Standards or Master Plan Document (plus above services) \$10K – \$25K
- o Concept Design \$15K - \$30K
- o Design Development \$15K - \$30K
- o Design Intent \$10K - \$20K
- o Bidding + Negotiation \$5K – \$10K
- o Construction Administration \$10K – \$25K

Fabrication \$75 – \$500K

- o Simple metal or vinyl signage \$5k – \$25K
- o Illuminated pylons/gateways \$50K - \$200K each
- o Non-illuminated, freestanding signage \$25K- \$50K (each)
- o General Conditions and Installation \$20 – 175K
- o Digital directories \$25K- \$100K
- o Mapping \$5K - \$25K

Wayfinding budget estimates by task Source: Selbert Perkins Design



Best Practice

Branding and Wayfinding Examples



Location

Worcester, MA; Somerville, MA

Integrate Brand and Art Into Your Wayfinding System

More info:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-realm-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download> (page. 55)

Connect Neighborhood to Business Districts via Neighborways

More info:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-realm-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download> (page. 95)

Worcester, MA undertook an effort to increase awareness and tourism, and to improve the overall image of the City by creating an iconic brand and functional wayfinding system for visitors and residents. As a large city, it was important to create consistency but also provide distinctions between districts to help people navigate and understand the unique character and stories of each area. Tasks included:

- City-wide logo
- District identities
- Storytelling and interpretive elements
- Signage design
- Art opportunities

Neighborways, also known as neighborhood greenways or bicycle boulevards, are low stress, comfortable, designated biking and walking routes. They are typically local roadways that connect neighborhoods and destinations such as downtown business districts, transit stops, schools, and employment centers. Somerville, MA is the Boston Region's first Neighborway network which began in 2014 as student projects. The evolution of the program has grown each year to span 2+ miles of connected streets. The City developed guidelines for treatments based on research, testing, and implementing tactical traffic calming treatments.

Process:

- Project initiation & planning
- Community design process
- Implementation
- Ongoing monitoring/maintenance
- Evaluation

Branding Project Resources



Location

Various

A potential hurdle to implementing municipal branding campaigns can be initial stakeholder buy-in. Being able to describe the costs, benefits, and process can help projects get the green-light to proceed. The following links are intended to provide context and examples from other municipal branding efforts.

Sample Municipal Branding Project Budget

Franklin, Wisconsin

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/communities/south/news/franklin/2019/04/17/franklin-rebranding-project-cost-city-officials-81-000/3176620002/>

Item	Cost
Logo design	\$7,500
Surveys, Audits, Benchmarking	\$28,000
Brand Profile, Look & Feel, Brand Usage Guide	\$44,500
Marketing Plan	\$9,000
Total	\$81,500

RFP Examples





Puyallup Branding and Destination Marketing Campaign, Puyallup, WA, \$40,000 Budget <https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/DocumentCenter/View/14675/REQUEST-FOR-PROPOSALS-Destination-Marketing-Campaign-FINAL?bidId=>

Economic Development Marketing Campaign, New Rochelle, NY, \$30,000 Budget <https://www.newrochelleny.com/DocumentCenter/View/3221/RFP-NR-5004-Marking-and-Branding-Suite?bidId=>

Article

Are Municipal Branding Campaigns Worth the Price?, Governing, November 29, 2012. <https://www.governing.com/archive/gov-municipal-branding-campaigns-worth-price.html>

Solve the Perception that Parking is a Problem

Category	 Public Realm
Location	Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Diagnostic Phase – Parking is the loudest complaint from area businesses
Budget	 Medium / Numerous traffic studies have assessed this concern Funding Sources: marketing, municipal, parking benefits district, ARPA, Shared Streets and Spaces
Timeframe	 Short-Term – Planning can begin immediately; however, funding and management of the messaging is an ongoing process
Risk	 Political will, community support, criticism despite efforts
Key Performance Indicators	Less complaints about parking,
Partners & Resources	Planning Department, Public Works, City Council, property owners, local merchants including retailers, designers, artists and food purveyors, residents
Diagnostic	<p>Parking is perhaps the largest criticism of the vibrant Union Street corridor. Prior to COVID-19, parking was one of the most studied components of Union Street. Businesses and property owners have been vocal about customers not being able to find an on-street parking space outside of their establishments, about being ticketed for meter enforcement, and about the length of time allowed to park on-street. Another issue is MBTA Green Line users taking up valuable on-street parking all day instead of parking at lots farther away and walking to the station.</p> <p>As COVID-19 impacted business operations, parking demand was reduced, and the City replaced parking spaces on the north side of Union Street and east side of Herrick Road with outdoor dining opportunities. As businesses have re-opened, the parking issues remain unresolved. Restaurant patrons enjoy outdoor dining, but other businesses have customers that rely on that on-street parking. A well-run downtown parking program supports economic well-being by maximizing availability and convenience for downtown visitors, residents, and employees. A wayfinding and marketing program surrounding the availability of nearby parking and colorful fun strategies to encourage multi-modal strategies could go a long way to helping the City work its way through this perceived/real problem.</p>

Action

Assess. Complete a holistic assessment of the area, focusing on parking spaces, locations, regulations, cost, etc.

Strategize. As a continuous complaint, “do nothing” is not an open.

Some strategies to consider include:

- Create a marketing campaign surrounding parking.
- Consider a centralized parking garage for Newton Centre
- Reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements
- Establish flexible parking requirements/arrangements
- Provide incentives for walkers/bikers
- Study Best Practices and lessons learned

Use the Data.

- Make parking fit better with a pedestrian environment
- Educate parkers to understand location and proximity compared to other places.
- Provide safe, convenient, and comfortable walkways to access parking lots.
- Create wayfinding signage that is fun and incorporates distances.
- Identify key locations for directional signage.

Engage the public.

- Seek to understand the constant complaints from businesses and customers and solicit feedback on solutions and how to address.

Process

1. Create a steering committee. This should consist of representatives from DPW and Planning as well as business owners, employees, and interested citizens.
2. Combine all the data available and collect into one holistic document for the committee to review and discuss.
3. Work together to create strategies to solve the problem. These could be educational marketing programs, constructing a garage in a central location, modifications to roadways and on-street parking, etc.
4. Engage the public. Present strategies and collect feedback.
5. Create recommendations and a plan of action.
6. Secure funding to implement.
7. Take action to implement.



• WAYFINDING EXAMPLE

- Directional sign system for a historic downtown (Santa Barbara, CA).
- The system:
 - Reflects a unique visual identity that separates the waterfront from the downtown
 - Design themes based on local architecture
 - Includes pedestrian maps and parking signage
- Source: Hunt Design
- More at: <https://www.huntdesign.com/projects/signage-wayfinding/cities/santa-barbara-signage-wayfinding/>
- Photo Credit: Matt Givot Photography.

Creating a “Park Once” District



Location

Various

Strategies developed by MAPC - <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/creating-a-park-once-district/>

LESS DRIVING, MORE WALKING

Even in places where most people drive to their destinations, the most successful downtowns will feature sidewalks full of pedestrians, walking between the barber and the bank, the doctor's office and the post office, stopping for lunch and doing some shopping. Many trips but only one parking space. This is sometimes called a “park once” district, because people are encouraged to park in one place and then make stops on foot rather than driving from one destination to another within the district, as you would with a car-oriented strip mall area. Creating the type of environment where it's easy for people to walk between destinations involves both good urban design and parking policies. If each destination is required to provide its own off-street parking, and each building may have parking on all sides, dead zones of surface parking lots are created between destinations that make walking distances longer and walking experiences less pleasant, so that people have every incentive to get back in the car to go a few stores down.

Strategies

Reduce scattered surface parking lots:

- Centralize parking facilities by allowing or requiring developers to pay into a fund to be used for building public parking rather than providing their own on-site parking (see fees-in-lieu).
- Allow redevelopment of surface parking lots if the spaces are not needed or if developers / property owners pay into a fund to be used for building public parking in the future (see fees-in-lieu).
- Reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements for some or all uses downtown.
- Count on-street parking towards minimum parking requirements (see flexible minimum requirements).
- Establish maximum allowances for how much parking may be built by use and/or by neighborhood (see parking maximums).
- Establish flexible parking requirements based on:
 - alternative mode access (especially proximity of transit, but also pedestrian and bicycle facilities)
 - expected demographics of residential developments (age, income, other auto-ownership factors)
- parking studies providing data to support requests to reduce or increase parking
- implementation of programs to reduce the need for parking spaces, such as parking cash out, un-bundled parking, shared parking, priority parking for carpools, or car sharing (see parking and transportation demand management)
- Make parking fit better with a pedestrian environment:
- Prohibit developers from siting parking between the building and the street (see locating parking strategically).
- Build parking structures combined with retail or other commercial uses on the ground floor (see wrapping parking structures in active uses).
- Limit curb cuts so that there are fewer places where cars are crossing the sidewalk.
- Provide safe, convenient, and comfortable walkways to access parking facilities.
- Set a high standard for pedestrian protection where vehicles from parking structures exit onto the street.
- Require screening and/or landscaping in any surface parking lots visible from pedestrian-oriented streets (see landscaping for shade and air quality).

Improve the pedestrian environment generally:

- Invest in street trees, benches, landscaping, etc.
- Establish design standards for buildings in the district.
- Keep streets and sidewalks free of litter.
- Provide adequate lighting and police / security that people feel safe walking on the street at any time while stores are open.

Secure funding to support pop-up placemaking efforts in Newton Centre

Category	 Private Realm
Location	Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Create Newton (2019) and conversations with City of Newton
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000 - \$200,000) – Financial Resources: MA Office of Business Development Pilot Project Program; ARPA Travel, Tourism, & Outdoor Recreation, municipal, special incentives/donations, BID, cultural district funding
Timeframe	 Short-Term – Planning can begin immediately; however, funding and management of the pop-up program is an ongoing process
Risk	 Low – The temporary nature of pop-ups provides a low-risk environment
Key Performance Indicators	Number of businesses supported/accessing popup space; temporary commercial vacancy reduction; business increase in sales
Partners & Resources	Planning Department, City Council, property owners, local merchants including retailers, designers, artists and food purveyors



Logo Source: <https://poppingupnext.com/projectpopup>

Diagnostic

COVID-19 impacted small business' ability to sell goods/services. Project: Pop-Up is a partnership between the City of Newton and Town of Needham powered by UpNext to support local innovation and entrepreneurship. This grant-funded initiative was created to revitalize village centers such as Newton Centre as we emerge from the pandemic, to attract patrons to new and existing local businesses throughout the summer season. The City recognizes the need to continue this popup placemaking effort in order to strengthen the community's ability to bounce back from the pandemic. However, ongoing funding is an issue moving forward.



1280 Centre Street Pop-Up

Source: <https://www.evensi.us/piccadilly-pop-grand-opening-weekend-centre-st-1280-street/410840997>

Action Item

The Pop-Up program should **consider its intent and beneficiaries to explore diverse funding sources**. For example, pop-ups can prioritize a variety of areas including arts & culture, small business development, creative placemaking, and health equity. With these foci, they can assist in meeting needs including food access, small business incubation, community education, public health, etc.

It's important that programs **engage a diverse group of supporters, sponsors, and collaborating partners**. Community-based organizations that have a vested interest in supporting residents that will benefit from Pop-Ups should be identified early. Some grant programs may only provide awards to certain recipients (governments, non-profits, arts organizations, etc.). A broad base of partners opens the door to more funding streams.

Consider where partners from **other sectors typically find funding**. Individual and corporate support, or private investors, may be an untapped resource.

Keep in mind that **crowdfunding**, although challenging, can be a way to show that a variety of community members and stakeholders have a vested interest in the Pop-Ups' success. Crowdfunding can be used as a standalone source of funding or used to produce matching funds for grants.



1280 Centre Street Pop-Up

Source: project-pop-up.com

Process

- 1) Meet with stakeholders (city, property owners, merchants, entrepreneurs, creatives, community-based organizations, other major donors) to discuss pop-up program intent and desired beneficiaries. Assess appetite for expansion (e.g., more arts/culture) to open up additional funding streams. Form partnerships, as needed, to open eligible funding streams.
- 2) Consider assigning a staff position to oversee Pop-Up program on the city's behalf to maintain relationships with stakeholders, funders, and seek and manage program funding. If ARPA is used as a source of funding for the Pop-Up program, payroll for a temporary staff person would be eligible as a cost of administering an ARPA project.
- 3) Pursue funding sources that align with program intent and beneficiaries. See list of potential sources next page.

Potential Funding Sources

For General Small Business Assistance

Patronicity provides a crowdfunding platform for small businesses. Multiple options are available to fundraise as sole businesses, with many businesses, or to match grant funds. Patronicity offers coaches as well as [Strategies and Best Practices](#).

More info: <https://www.patronicity.com/small-biz>.

American Rescue Plan Act has multiple priorities that may fit Pop-Up funding. ARPA's **Economic Adjustment Assistance** funds are available for any project that will create jobs or contribute to a community's or region's economic recovery. Projects must end by 5/31/27. **State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds** allow governments to aid impacted industries, disproportionately impacted populations, and provide small business assistance. Expenses must be obligated by 12/31/24.

More info: [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-resources-and-guidance-for-municipal-officials#american-recovery-plan-act-\(arpa\)](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-resources-and-guidance-for-municipal-officials#american-recovery-plan-act-(arpa))

For Pop-Ups that Highlight the Arts

National Endowment for the Arts - These grants support projects that use the arts to unite and heal in response to current events; celebrate our creativity and cultural heritage; invite mutual respect for differing beliefs and values; and enrich humanity. Various grants with individual amounts and deadlines are available.

More info: <https://www.arts.gov/grants/grants-for-arts-projects>

Massachusetts Cultural Council – Supports Local Cultural Councils, festival organizers, Cultural Districts, and artists and nonprofit cultural organizations to deliver powerful cultural experiences to everyone in our communities.

More info: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/>

Additional Resources and Technical Assistance

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Funding for Creative Placemaking Technical Assistance

More info: <https://www.lisc.org/our-initiatives/creative-placemaking/main/creative-placemaking-toolkit/funding/>

Project for Public Spaces Technical Assistance

More info: <https://www.pps.org/services>



SMALL BUSINESS

One Business - One Crowdfunding Campaign

You're a small business in need of operating or expansion funds, and you want to engage your community for support - your way with your team. Raise emergency funds to support business expenses like rent, salaries and other overhead costs during COVID associated shutdowns

Who You Are: Any small business or non-profit organization located in the US or Canada

- ✓ No Fees or Cost to Campaign
- ✓ Quick Access to Funds
- ✓ Dedicated Campaign Coach
- ✓ Easy, Quick Start Process



MAIN STREET / BUSINESS DISTRICT

Many Businesses - One Crowdfunding Campaign

You are a community-based group that wants to push and promote a SINGLE campaign on behalf of your community businesses and will distribute crowdfunded dollars by allowing multiple, individual businesses to apply for emergency support.

Who You Are: Main Street organizations, associations, non-profits, foundations, community organizations.

- ✓ Pool Community Resources
- ✓ Unified Message & Outreach
- ✓ Dedicated Campaign Coach
- ✓ Easy, Quick Start Process



SPONSOR

Matching Funds + Many Crowdfunding Campaigns

You're using grant dollars to make a huge impact on small businesses in a region or district. Use crowdfunding to double financial resources while getting consensus within the community to validate and support each business individually.

Who You Are: Economic/community development orgs, foundations, corporations and philanthropic orgs working for better communities.

- ✓ Amplify Existing Grant Dollars
- ✓ Program Mgt & Reporting
- ✓ 96% Campaign Successes
- ✓ Streamlined Approval Process





Crowdfunding Small Business Programs through Patronicity

Source: <https://www.patronicity.com/small-biz>



Piccadilly Square Source: BSC Group

Promote a Shop Local Initiative

Category	 Revenue/Sales
Location	Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Business Survey
Budget	 Low Budget (<\$50,000) – Est. \$2,000 - \$20,000 depending on quantity/types of printing, advertising, and gifts/prizes. Seek local sponsors (e.g., local bank) for funding, businesses may contribute prizes.
Timeframe	 Short-term – Campaign can be launched in weeks to a few months to coincide with holiday shopping season. Program can iterate and grow over time.
Risk	 Low Risk – Given low costs and materials coupled with potential upside, risk is very low.
Key Performance Indicators	Change in sales, increase in new customers, customer mentions of shop local campaign, participation in pledges/raffles
Partners & Resources	Local businesses including a project champion, Local business sponsor, Charles River Regional Chamber of Commerce, Newton Economic Development



DINE LOCAL

SHOP LOCAL

GIVE LOCAL

BANK LOCAL

 **MEMBERS**

Find It Local campaign from Charles River Regional Chamber. The campaign includes an online directory to help customers find local gifts, special offers, dining, and outdoor dining. Source: <https://www.charlesriverchamber.com/find-it-local/>

Diagnostic

COVID's negative impact on Newton Centre business' revenue, foot traffic, and capacity is highlighted throughout this plan. When surveyed, 93% of Newton Centre's business respondents felt that Implementing marketing strategies for the commercial district was important to their COVID recovery.

Numerous studies have shown that buy local campaigns not only increase sales for local businesses but increase customers' awareness of the importance of shopping local and can create behavior change. Additionally, local businesses recirculate a greater share of every dollar in the local economy, employ more people per sales unit, and retain more employees during economic downturns compared to large retailers and chains. Implementing a successful shop local initiative is an important way to support individual businesses and the local economy.



Mission 3/65: A component of Portland, ME's Buy Local initiative. It challenges customers to pledge to pick 3 businesses and spend \$65 at them over the course of a month. Source: <https://www.portlandbuylocal.org/mission-3-65/>

Action Items

Assemble a Team – Without an existing BID, the campaign is likely to be managed by a team of local businesses. The Charles River Regional Chamber manages a "Find it Local" campaign and the Newton initiative may be able to partner with the Chamber for some aspects of the project. 5-15 people is recommended for the project team.

Engage Businesses – Get businesses on-board and brainstorm what they can contribute to the initiative. Special offers, extended hours, cross marketing on their social media and webpages, and participation in events are some ideas. Talk with businesses about tracking metrics to measure the initiative's impact.

Prepare and Launch Promotions – This includes picking a theme or tag line, developing a logo, creating and managing social media accounts and hashtags (e.g., #shoplocalnewton), and developing print materials (window signs, yard signs, banners). Locate signs or banners in the commercial district and high-traffic parts of town.

Create a pledge or incentive – Many successful initiatives give customers a concrete activity or pledge that motivates them to shop local. See examples at right. Campaign sponsored passports, checklists, and punch cards can be effective.

Kick off with events and media – Hosting a weekend of special promotions or launching the campaign during a special event can help build momentum. Make sure the initiative gets local media coverage and those stories are reposted through social media.

Measure impact – Work with local businesses to measure sales and foot traffic. Consider seeking customer feedback as well via online or in-person questionnaires. Suggested survey questions are on the next page.



Reading, MA "Shop the Block Thursdays" with extended hours and weekly raffles. One ticket is provided with each purchase and additional tickets are available for social media posting. Source: <https://www.facebook.com/shoptheblock01867/>



Amherst, MA created a pledge campaign to incentivize people to shop local over a two-month period. A "treasure hunt" concept was used where shoppers were encouraged to visit 10 restaurants, 5 retail, and 3 salons. Participants could mail in pledge cards with receipts and were entered to win local gift cards. Source: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/revenue-sales-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download> (pg. 19)

Process

- 1) Assemble Shop Local initiative team.
- 2) Engage stakeholders including businesses and potential sponsors.
- 3) Prepare campaign by creating:
 - Theme/tag line/logo
 - Social media account/hashtags
 - Print advertising materials
 - Pledge or other incentive program
- 4) Launch campaign
 - Post print advertising (e.g., banners, window signs)
 - Post on social media, get local media coverage
 - Host a kickoff event or promotion
- 5) Measure impact at 3 months and 1 year
- 6) Learn from feedback and grow. Potential future projects could include bigger events (e.g., block party), shop local gift card (see Pittsfield at right), and more.

For residents:

- Are you aware of the campaign?
- Where did you hear or learn about the campaign?
- Have you changed your buying behavior because of it?
- Have you visited businesses you don't normally shop at?
- Have you spent more in town? How much per month?
- Were you surprised by anything you learned from the campaign?
- What would you do differently, if you ran the program?

For businesses:

- Has the campaign benefited your business?
- Have sales increased? How much per month?
- Have customers mentioned the buy local campaign?
- Have you seen new customers?
- Would you recommend the program to other businesses? To other communities?
- Will you continue to participate?
- What would you do differently, if you ran the program?

Suggested survey questions to measure the impact of a shop local initiative. Source: Shop Local Campaign for Small Towns, Becky McRay, <https://duvallchamberofcommerce.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/shoplocal.pdf>



Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. created the "Pittsfield The Heart of the Berkshires" digital gift card accepted at dozens of local businesses. Source: <https://app.yiftee.com/gift-card/downtown-pittsfield>



Best Practice

Pledge to Support Local



REVENUES
& SALES

Location

Amherst, MA

About

More info: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/revenue-sales-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download> (pg. 19)

Holiday shop local, support small business and “take away” were the main focus of the Pledge Campaign coordinated by the Amherst Business Improvement District during the 2020 holiday shopping season. Pledge Cards were printed on card stock, available to download from website and placed in local paper to cut out. Local radio marketing invited people near and far to take the challenge to support local.





The pledge challenged customers, over 2 month, to:

- Eat at or take away from 10 downtown Amherst restaurants, cafes or coffee shops,
- Purchase from at least 5 local retail stores, and
- Enjoy 3 downtown services.

Marketing Plan:

- 12-week Radio Buy
- 4 radio stations playing 15 spots daily
- 4 full page full color back page of the local paper with “cut out lines”
- 10,000 rack cards distributed to all local business to hand out and include with take away orders and shoppers' bags
- Download pledge card from BID website
- Social Media promotions and push to neighboring areas

Create a district management entity/business organization

Category	 Administrative Capacity
Location	Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Phase I Diagnostic
Budget	 Low (<\$50,000) to Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000) for staff member/consultant to conduct outreach, engagement, and BID formation. Funding: Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, Mass Development Real Estate Technical Assistance Program, or ARPA funds (if tied to implementing COVID recovery activities).
Timeframe	 Short Term (<5 years) – BID formation is feasible in 18-24 months
Risk	 Medium Risk – ensuring long-term sustainability and continued support of property owners, eligibility
Key Performance Indicators	# Businesses & property owners participating; Program model/objectives defined; Financial sustainability model and appropriate staff support.
Partners & Resources	City of Newton Planning & Economic Development, Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce, Property Owners, Business Owners
Diagnostic	<p>The COVID pandemic significantly impacted downtown businesses. Business surveys have verified that 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 were able 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 is positioned to help downtowns recover from COVID and prepare for the future.</p> <p>Newton Centre stakeholders have explored a business improvement district in the past; however, planning did not proceed far enough to result in creation of a BID. Stakeholders have revisited the idea of a BID or another type of district management entity for its ability to help the district recover from and thrive following the pandemic. As an initial goal, stakeholders have discussed the BID being responsible for creation of a series of events in the district to improve foot traffic and sales for local businesses.</p>

Action Items

Getting Started - Use this project recommendation to form a BID as the launching point for stakeholder engagement.

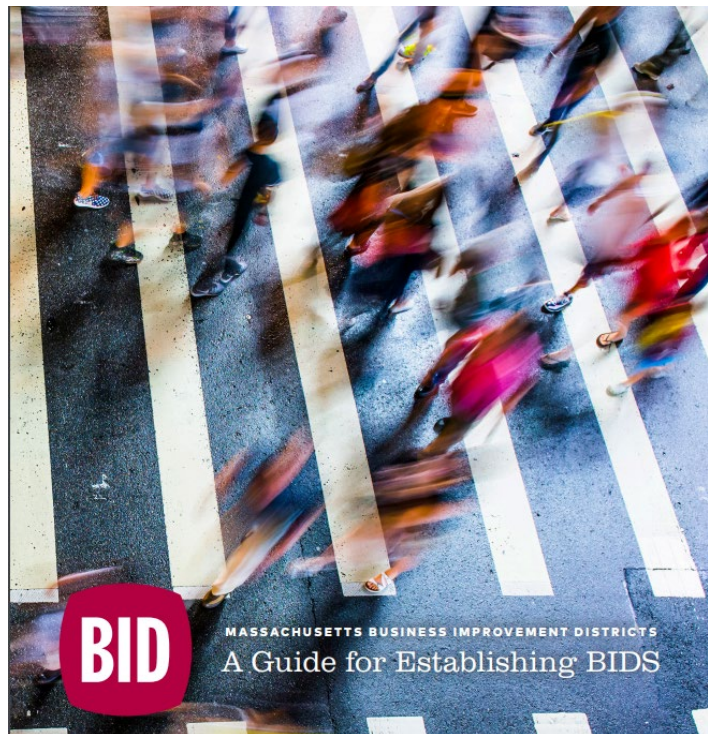
Develop the Value Proposition/Communication - It will be essential to develop the value proposition for investing human capital and the financial resources into a BID and communicate to the City and private stakeholders the impact of their investment. The long-term goal of a BID is to build a destination that is attractive to potential developers, businesses, residents, and visitors. In the near term, a BID can play an important role in COVID recovery.

Stakeholder Engagement/ Leadership and Partnerships - Launching the organizational efforts to form a BID in Newton Centre should be an intentionally inclusive process that welcomes new as well as long term property and business owners, volunteer organizations, City, and other key downtown stakeholders to develop the organizational and leadership infrastructure to be successful. The goal of this effort would be to form a strong, diverse, and inclusive steering committee to guide the development of a BID in Newton Centre, identify key champions and build a solid coalition around the concept. The City may convene this effort but should quickly 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 media, businesses, property owners, nonprofits, cultural organizations, visitor attractions, volunteer groups, and interested residents to continue to identify and refine needs and priorities for the downtown.

Confirming BID Organizational Model - Once organizers have established the downtown priorities/ proposed supplemental programs and budget, it will be important to confirm that there is consensus that a BID is appropriate for Newton Centre. Organizers should seek support letters / statements from key stakeholders.

Resources for Startup and Sustainability - Seed money is required to start a BID. Sources include technical assistance through the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, MassDevelopment Real Estate Technical Assistance Program, or ARPA funds (if the development of the organization is tied to implementing COVID recovery activities). Additionally, local Institutions, foundations and key stakeholders/individual contributors may be sources for seed money to launch an effort to form a BID. Careful attention should be given to developing a realistic budget, and a variety of revenue opportunities for the organization. In addition to BID fees, additional sources to leverage BID revenue may include sponsorships, event revenue, grants or contracts, foundations, and individual giving. If the Municipality approves the formation of a BID, property owners will reauthorize the organization every 5 years.



Massachusetts Business Improvement Districts, A Guide for Establishing BIDS Source: MA DHCD; <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2020-revised-business-improvement-district-manual/download>

Alternatives to a Business Improvement District?

Consider a Voluntary Based Downtown Organization

An alternative to forming a BID may be to start building support for a downtown organization by forming a 501c3 to cultivate stakeholder involvement around the concept of creating a downtown organization. The community and stakeholder engagement process described at left would apply to identify priorities, budget, and revenue sources to begin the work of a downtown organization.

Process

The following process is recommended to build support for a BID in Newton Centre.

- Create property owner and business databases using information provided by the City as the official property owner database for the BID process and proposed boundaries.
- Confirm threshold for forming a BID is met.
- Create a downtown partnership with City, key property owners, new developers, key businesses, cultural and tourist destinations, residential groups, nonprofit, and Chamber of Commerce to launch the effort. Create list of potential Steering committee members.
- Form a broad-based advisory committee to provide input and feedback.
- Secure seed funding for technical assistance (TA) for BID formation through Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (now part of the One Stop), Mass Development Real Estate TA program, ARPA, Foundations and other stakeholder support.
- Create community outreach events, widely distribute surveys, and utilize other engagement tools to develop program priorities.
- Hold Community forums on BID model.
- One on one conversations with stakeholders to secure support and engagement in process.
- Consensus building with stakeholders on BID model /programming /budget/fee structure.
- Create communication/marketing materials
- Organizers may consider executing a demonstration project that could "show" potential programs and services provided to the downtown through a BID. Possible funding sources may include MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places.
- Develop the BID Petition components.
- Develop MOU with Town for support of BID.
- Develop petition signature campaign strategy, timelines, and benchmarks.
- Basic outline of approval requirements: Undertake a petition process under direction of the steering committee to secure support of 60% of property owners representing, 51% of the assessed valuation of the district. The petition will include:
 - Map and legal description of BID boundaries,
 - BID improvement Plan - programs and services
 - Fee Structure
 - Budget
 - Hardship Provisions
 - ID Management
 - Property owner signatures of support
- Formal Local Legislative Approval - Public hearing and formal vote by Select Board to establish the BID.
- Organizers complete 501c3 and Articles of Organization filings.
- Approval of bylaws.
- Establishment of a Board of Directors; hire staff.
- Initiation of supplemental services.
- Reauthorization by property owners every 5 years.

Additional detail on this recommendation can be found in the Appendix

Forming a BID: “Reimagine Reading”



Location

Reading, MA

<https://www.readingma.gov/public-services/economic-development/pages/reimagine-reading-survey>

About

Reimagine Reading is a privately lead, Town & state supported initiative to create a public/private partnership and non-profit organization that will provide supplemental services and continued investment for a more vibrant Town.

Collectively, the initiative has identified the following key initiatives:

- Placemaking
- Business support and development
- Marketing and branding
- Downtown Access
- Advocacy
- COVID-19 business support and economic development recovery



Planning Process/Timeline

2018 Town Economic Development Forum - Public identified the need for multi-stakeholder group to be a champion for downtown.

Spring 2019 - Town applied for and received a technical assistance grant, from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program through the Department of Housing and Community Development, to hire a consultant to provide technical assistance in the exploration of a downtown district management organization to provide supplemental services to the community.

Summer/Fall 2019- Town provided staff support to build community capacity, strengthen partnerships, and lead a robust and on-going public engagement process.

September 10, 2019- Presentation on District Management Types - On September 10, 2019, technical consultant, Ann Burke, presented to the working group to talk about different kinds of organization models and considerations for each type: [Finding the Right Fit-Structures of Downtown Organizations](#)

September 18, 2019- Ice Cream Social Event - On September 18th, the Town sponsored a Pizza and Ice Cream Social at the Pleasant Street Center. Over 100 people came including many new faces. We were also excited to have some really great participation from families and kids in the community. [Reimagine Reading Ice Cream Social Presentation](#).

September 9-October 15, 2019 - Community Survey- The Town provided staff support, marketing, and coordination for a community wide-survey. The purpose of this survey was to gather information from the public to help share the future of this future organization and its initiatives and was one of many public engagement tools used to gather information. Thank you to business partners, organization members, and residents for spreading the word! We had **1,538** respondents!

November 11, 2019- Community Survey Results [Reimagine Reading Downtown Initiative Survey Results 2019](#)

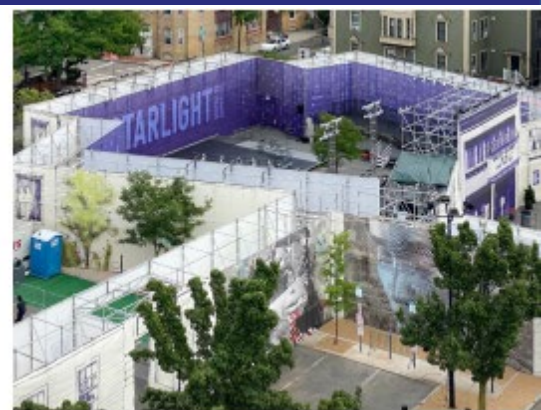
Winter 2019- Working group meetings, peer-to-peer conversations, analysis of public engagement data to develop a vision and preliminary action plan for a future organization.

Spring/Summer 2020- Town applied for and received a second technical assistance grant, from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program through the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide technical assistance in support of ongoing public/private partnership and development of a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Update to Select Board by Town staff at the September 15, 2020 Select Board meeting. [See document for more detailed background information HERE.](#)

Fall/Winter 2020- Town continues to provide grant supported technical assistance to support ongoing public/private partnership and development of a [business improvement district](#) organization.

Spring-Fall 2021- A private group of property owners, business owners, and residents are actively working together with a grant supported technical consultant to continue to develop a business improvement district organization.



Photos: Central Square (Cambridge) BID's facilitated "return to Central Square" marketing and event programming during COVID-19

Best Practice

Business Improvement District Case Studies



Location

Hudson, Cambridge, Hyannis

Hudson, MA



THE BASICS

Organizational Model501c3
Formally Authorized2017; Renewal, 2022
Budget\$172,700
Revenue SourcesBID fees, grants and events
Property Parcels120; Voting entities, 84
FEE FORMULA:
Property owners pay for the BID services based on the following fee formula:
• Commercial0.035% X assessed value
• Residential0.02% X assessed value
• Mixed-useCommercial - 0.035% X assessed value
.....Residential - 0.02% X assessed value
• Nonprofits/Public.....Negotiated agreements/MOU
Size47.8 acres
2017 Vacancy Rate in BID11%
2019 Vacancy Rate in BID5%

https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_Hudson.pdf

Central Square (Cambridge, MA)



THE BASICS

Organizational Model501c3
Formally AuthorizedJune 2019; Renewal, 2024
Budget\$1,448,000
Sources: BID fees, grants, event revenue, contracts
Property Parcels98; Voting entities, 73
FEE FORMULA:
Commercial property owners pay for BID services on a formula determined by assessed value based on size, type and ownership.
Charitable, religious, educational, government and other properties exempt from taxation have a Memorandum of Understanding or other negotiated agreements. Residential properties are exempt from fee. (Refer to page 6 for a complete description of the fee formula.)
Size83 acres
Vacancy and Value
Vacancy Rate when formed in 20190.01%
2019 Assessed Value in BID \$1,489,000,000

https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_CentralSquare.pdf

Hyannis, MA







THE BASICS

Organizational Model501c6, 1999; 501c3
Community Development Corporation, 2019
Formally Authorized1999; Renewal, 2023
Budget\$300,000
(Sources: BID fees, grants and event revenue)
Property Parcels110 votes, 133 properties
FEE FORMULA:
Property owners pay for BID services based on the following formula:
• All real properties are assessed at .003 percent X assessed value.
Cap of \$4,000 on any property.
• Residential and nonprofit properties are exempt from the fee.
Size: 82 acres
VACANCY AND VALUE
1999 Vacancy Rate in BID, 18%
2019 Vacancy Rate in BID, 5%
1999 Assessed Value in BID, \$60,000,000
2019 Assessed Value in BID, \$107,000,000

https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_Hyannis.pdf

Encourage the continuation of outdoor dining

Category	 Administrative Capacity
Location	Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Business Survey, Stakeholder Discussions
Budget	 Medium Budget (\$50,000 - \$200,000) – depending on physical modifications required to make more permanent outdoor dining. Funding: Private, MassDOT Shared Street/Spaces, ARPA/MOTT Travel, Tourism, & Outdoor Dining, Commonwealth Places, MA Growth Capital Grants and Loans, Town Funding
Timeframe	 Short-Term (< 5 years)
Risk	 Medium Risk – Competing priorities for retailers who are impacted by the loss of parking spaces in front of their businesses; Navigating safety issues; Updating permitting process
Key Performance Indicators	Improved Pedestrian Retail Environment (Speed of Cars Before and After, Number of Crashes, Perception Survey); Support Social-Distance-Safe Local Dining and Spending (Number of Seats Added, Sales, # of restaurants participating, increase sales, # of retailers with sidewalk sales)
Partners & Resources	City of Newton (Planning, Economic Development, DPW, Board of License Commissioners), Property Owners, Business Owners
Diagnostic	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic tested the resilience and adaptability of Newton's business community, particularly restaurants and retail establishments. Businesses were forced to close their indoor spaces to customers due to local restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic as evidence that increased rates of transmission happened indoors. As a result of lack of customers, many businesses struggled to cover costs.</p> <p>To aid in recovery efforts, the City quickly pivoted to create and implement emergency outdoor dining regulations under the "Newton Al Fresco" program.</p> <p>To provide restaurants with socially distanced outdoor dining space, the City reclaimed a number of on-street parking spaces so that the local businesses could continue serving and attracting customers in a safer way. The Town provided the barricades and the restaurants were responsible for tables and chairs. In 2021, an expanded program, Newton Al Fresco 2.0, was offered that includes on-street dining in reclaimed parking spaces, community-sponsors communal dining areas, and special expanded dining areas and communal dining on Union Street in Newton Centre specifically.</p>

Action Items

1. **Begin permanent outdoor dining assessment and planning now, before emergency/COVID-19 programs expire.** Temporary outdoor dining and alcohol service provisions at the state level are set to expire April 1, 2022.
2. **Assess lessons learned from the temporary outdoor dining program and determine which program elements Newton wishes to retain.** The expanded and communal dining areas on Union Street under Al Fresco 2.0 provide an excellent pilot to learn from. This step also includes public engagement to ensure community support is still popular.
3. **Consider current limitations on the outdoor dining program and whether they should be lifted.** For example, some programs only allow outdoor dining between certain dates while others allow it year round. The Outdoor Dining/Retail Toolkit (see best practice sheet) offers information on winter outdoor dining. Some communities have added provisions to their programs such as space heater permits to accommodate this change.
4. **Draft proposed zoning code and bylaw changes; work with appropriate committees and boards to review proposed changes.** Consider design guidelines for outdoor dining spaces, additional permits, and other new guidance or materials that may be required for the new program.
5. **Provide City-support for permanent changes.** This includes an update to the City's Newton Al Fresco Guide as well as potential physical improvements to make permanent spaces for outdoor dining. The City may also facilitate bulk purchases of materials and equipment to help businesses. The Outdoor Dining/Retail Toolkit provides information and templates for some of these activities.

Newton Al Fresco Reopening 2020

SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR RESTAURANT RECOVERY

We have been working hard with our partners—restauranters, members of the City Council and the Newton Needham Regional Chamber—to resolve issues and to implement a series of steps to help facilitate outdoor dining in a quick, thoughtful, and safe manner in Newton.

We have created this Newton Al Fresco Guide for restaurant owners and managers who wish to expand their outdoor dining options.

[Newton Al Fresco Licensing Information](#)

[Pre-Application for On-Street Dining, 2021](#)

[Release and Indemnification for Sidewalks](#)

[Outdoor Seating Order 6.3.20](#)

[Extension of Premises Final](#)

Please expand each of the folders below for applications, checklists and fees.

[Applications](#)

[Checklists](#)

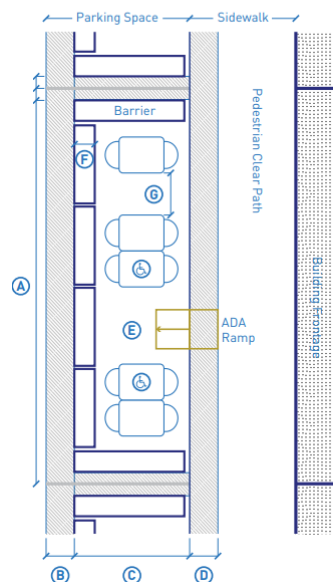
[Fees](#)

Newton Al Fresco Guide on City of Newton website.

Source: <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/health-human-services/commissions/licensing-commission>

Typical Parallel Parklet Layout (Dining)

Parklets can occupy one or more parking spots. Parklet width on the sidewalk edge should not exceed the lateral property line of the host business without permission.



A Typical Parklet Size

A typical parallel parklet size is about 8ft x 22ft.

B Roadside Buffer

Buffer (0ft - 2ft) between outdoor dining areas and adjacent roadways and/or bicycle lanes for safety.

C Parklet Width

Parklet width is typically 6ft - 8 ft. The parklet should not exceed the width of the parking space.

D Pedestrian Path Buffer

Buffer (0.5ft - 4ft) between Parklet and Pedestrian Clear Path

E ADA Access

Where the parklet is not level with the sidewalk, an ADA Ramp (width 3ft - 5ft and maximum slope of 1:12) is required.

F Separation Barrier

Non-protective separation barriers 12in - 18in wide.

G Table Separation

Under COVID-19 guidelines, diners at different tables should be spaced at least 6ft apart. Under normal operation, provide 1.5ft - 3ft of separation or follow local guidelines.

Sample Design Guidelines for a Parklet Dining Space Source: Outdoor Dining/Retail Toolkit, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/outdoor-dining-retail-toolkit/download>

Process

1. Provide an update on outdoor dining status to the community.
2. Engage the public to solicit feedback on the program currently in place.
3. Evaluate the program.
4. Identify actions needed to make the program permanent.
5. Rewrite relative zoning and/or regulations on outdoor dining.
6. Submit proposed changes for relevant approvals.
7. If approved, implement.
8. Consider ways to improve/expand the program, if desired.



Tables set up on Union Street Photo: BSC Group



Outdoor Patio, Café Sol Azteca Photo: BSC Group

Outdoor Dining/Retail Community Toolkit



REVENUES
& SALES

Toolkit made available by MA Department of Housing and Community Development, MA Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and prepared by Civic Moxie

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

Outdoor dining and retail options in local commercial districts blossomed during the early days of the COVID-19 Pandemic as towns and cities made a quick pivot to respond to the needs of businesses and residents. Understanding potential benefits to long-term community and economic development, many businesses and communities now seek to make permanent the temporary outdoor dining and retail options that have sprouted up in their commercial areas.

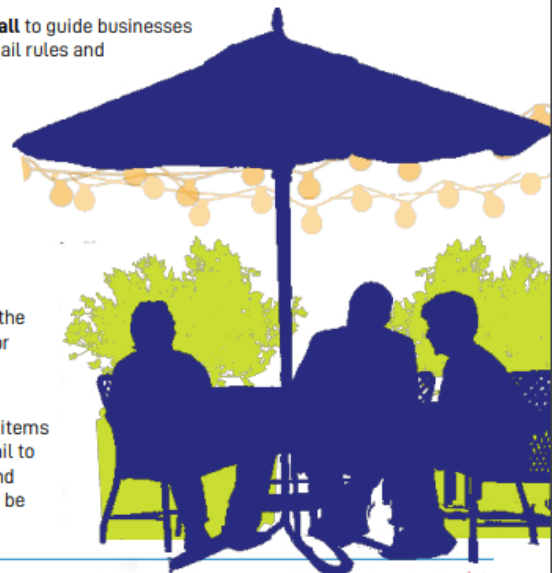
This Toolkit responds to this need. In the Local Rapid Recovery Program, questions of outdoor dining and retail – enacting permanent ordinances, providing clear design guidelines, offering assistance on use of materials and perhaps even bulk purchasing, compliance with ADA, and navigating local and state regulations – have been among the most common issues raised during the planning process. Businesses want certainty before investing capital in furniture, construction, and equipment. Communities want to ensure outdoor dining and retail options are created with some semblance of aesthetic order and that they meet safety standards. This Toolkit presents the most common questions in the LRRP and provides a guide for each community to move forward in creating its own set of guidelines for businesses and internal streamlining of requirements.

We want to...

STREAMLINE THE PROCESS FOR BUSINESSES TO CREATE OUTDOOR DINING/RETAIL UNDER EXISTING STATE REGULATIONS.





When we say “streamline the process,” it can include all or some of the following goals:

- (A)** Offer a **single application** for businesses to apply for permits and licenses to provide outdoor dining and retail.
- (B)** Offer an **online application** to help businesses save time.
- (C)** Provide a **checklist of all requirements**.
- (D)** Provide a **liaison at City or Town Hall** to guide businesses through the outdoor dining and retail rules and requirements.
- (E)** Create a **short-track or condensed timeline** for permitting and approvals by coordinating Town or City inspections and reviews.
- (F)** Provide **clear design guidelines and other requirements** that take the guesswork out of providing outdoor dining and retail.
- (G)** Offer **bulk purchasing** of common items needed for outdoor dining and retail to get better prices for businesses and standardize select items that may be hard or confusing to source.



Outdoor Dining/Retail Toolkit | 9

Streamline special events permitting and create a strategy guide for hosting community events

Category	 Administrative Capacity
Location	Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Phase I Community Meeting stakeholders and Create Newton (2019)
Budget	 Low (< \$50,000) – May create guide in-house or engage consultant
Timeframe	 Short-Term – Target 18 months or less
Risk	 Low Risk – Providing more information and a streamlined process should be well-received by the community
Key Performance Indicators	Expedient, open permitting process for special events; strategy guide for community events in public spaces; number of special events held in Newton Centre
Partners & Resources	Municipal departments, to include but not limited to: Planning, Police, Fire, Building, DPW, Health, and City Administration. Boards and Commissions such as Planning Board and License Commission.
Diagnostic	<p>Special events help activate the public realm and foster a sense of community. This strategy can be utilized to help businesses recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by drawing in people to visit, dine, and shop locally. The City of Newton has an event permitting process in place for parks; but no process is in place for roadway closures and other public spaces. Streamlining the permitting process and creating a guide, or handbook, that clearly defines the process to host community events in non-park public spaces will help to increase the number of special events that attract visitors, add to the vibrancy of the area, and support local businesses. Understanding how other communities permit and hold special events is critical for creating a successful process in Newton.</p>

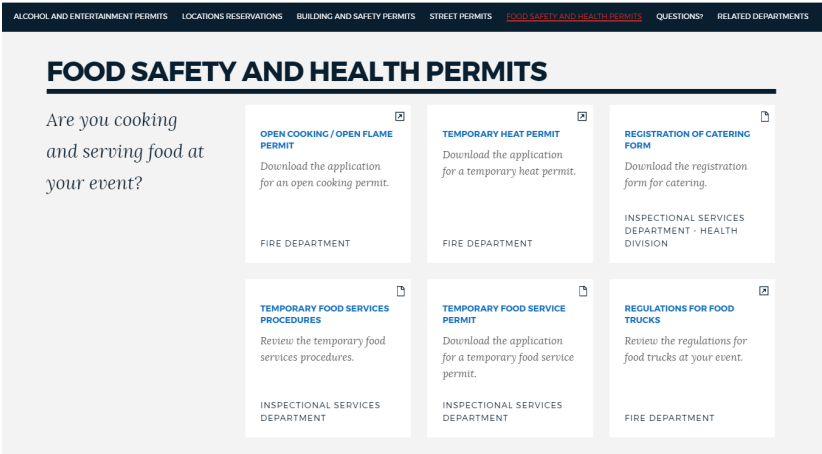
Action Items

Research and Index Applicable Requirements for the Benefit of City Agencies and Event Planners – Communities that provide special event permitting guides consistently do the research in advance for special event hosts identifying applicable regulations and rules, permits that may be required, fees, and relevant contacts. Compiling all this information in a guide or on a website will make it more likely that event planners won’t miss any critical steps or requirements making the process easier for them and likely reducing time spent by City staff providing information or addressing be scaled to the city and anticipated complexity of events to be held. For example, San Francisco’s guide is 65 pages long while Andover, MA’s guide is 7 pages.

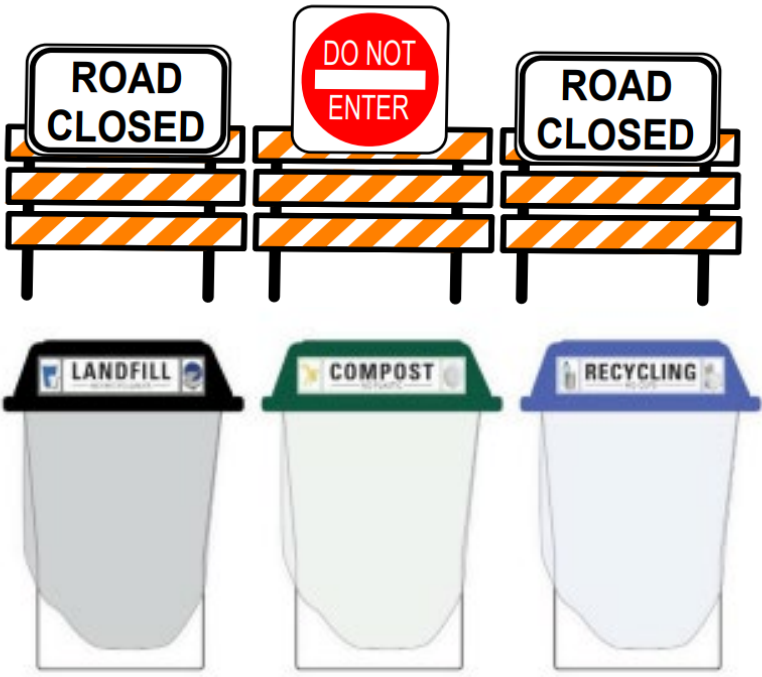
Describe the Permitting Process - Many communities detail the event permitting process including the order in which permits should be obtained, timelines for review/approval, what happens if permits are approved/denied, and more. This roadmap gives event planners a better sense of what to expect and when to begin the permitting process. It can also codify local rules and expectations for permit review processes and timelines serving. For example, Ashville, NC sets parameters around which types of events can be approved at the department level and which require City Management approval. Newton’s current permit application collects information but provides very limited information to event planners about what happens once submitted.

Identify a Special Event Lead Agency – In Boston, Consumer Affairs owns the special event permitting process although many other departments are involved for areas that apply to them. Similarly, in Chicago, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events is the lead. It is not necessary to create a new City department but rather Newton can designate an existing department to serve as a central point of contact for event planners and other city departments and to ensure that the permitting process and strategy guide remain up-to-date.

Provide Clear Guidelines for Expectations – Many not only identify regulations but provide additional tips, sources of information, and sometimes visual guides or sample documents so event planners can see what is expected of them (see images at right).



City of Boston webpage lists common permits that may be required for special events. Food Safety and Health Permits are shown in the image above. Source: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/consumer-affairs/common-permits-public-events-boston>



(Top) Road Closure Barricade Visual Example Source: Columbus, OH Event Planning Guide (Bottom) Waste Program Visual Example Source: San Francisco Outdoor Event Planning and Permitting Guide

Process

- Assemble a planning team with representatives from all City agencies who may permit/approve/inspect events (e.g., Parks, Public Works, Police, Fire, Health Department).
- Review current permit application and process compared to other municipalities (process, forms, fees, direction/guidance provided, etc.)
 - A cursory review shows that communities with planning guides provide greater detail on the permitting process, all potential health, safety, and security requirements, all potential fees, and other planning guidance.
- Identify and index ordinances and regulations relating to special events (Review and incorporate experiences and lessons learned from previous special events occurring in Newton (e.g., Boston Marathon).
- Map special event information (e.g., food handling, alcohol service, amplified sound, etc.) to related ordinances/regulations and agencies that will require the information. (See [San Francisco pre-application questionnaire as example](#).) This will aid in visualizing how to streamline the permitting process and potentially as an outline for the special events guide.
- Draft updated permitting process, application, and strategy guide. Review each with relevant stakeholders (e.g., City agencies, event planners).
- Finalize permitting process, application, and strategy guide. If funding allows, consider working with a graphic designer to make the guide easy to read and use.
- Post the guide, permit application, key contacts in an easily accessible location on the City's website.
- Keep it updated. Review the application and guide at least annually to ensure information is up to date.

Pre-Application Questionnaire (continued)

This questionnaire is an optional planning tool for outdoor event producers. This is not an application.

QUESTION	SPACE FOR YOUR ANSWER	RESOURCES & TIPS	WHICH AGENCIES ABOVE NEED THIS INFO? ("ALL" = the Relevant Land Authority + Other Key Agencies)
Will there be outdoor amplified sound? Please describe.		For Amplified Sound on City Streets and Sidewalks, Port of SF, Treasure Island, and other non-residential property, contact: SF Entertainment Commission. For Amplified Sound on Park Property, contact: SF Recreation & Park Department For Amplified Sound on National Park Service, Presidio, Fort Mason, or Angel Island property, refer to "Where to Begin: What Agency Oversees the Land"	Land Authority, POLICE, & ENT or PARK (see 3rd column)
Do you have a Clean-Up and Zero Waste Plan? Do you know who will be handling clean-up and recycling? How do you plan to provide drinking water to attendees, staff, volunteers?		Refer to SFPUC's event water page for information on the Bottled & Packaged Water Ban and alternative water sources.	Land Authority, PUBLIC WORKS-BSES, ENV, RECOLOGY
Are you requesting to display or sell merchandise?			Land Authority
Will your event have any inflatables, banners, parked cars, or other promotional elements/features?			Land Authority, FIRE
Will your event have portable toilets? Hand-washing stations?		Refer to the Accessible Public Event Checklist to ensure that restroom facilities and event are accessible to people with disabilities.	Land Authority, HEALTH

Excerpt from San Francisco's Optional Pre-Application Questionnaire
Source: San Francisco Outdoor Event Planning and Permitting Guide, 2019

Street Closure Fee Table	
Full street and sidewalk closure fee	\$50 flat rate per application
Asheville Police Officer	Regular Rate: \$51.75 / Holiday Rate: \$77.63 (4-Hour Minimum)
Barricades Barricades will be delivered and stacked at designated intersections in advance.	\$40 each per day, signature upon delivery and security deposit required
Traffic cones	\$5 each per day, signature upon delivery and security deposit required
Time restricted parking	\$22 per metered and unmetered space per day
Transit impact fee	\$100 for each event that closes a street requiring Asheville Transit to detour and notify passengers ahead of time + \$20 per 4 stops not being served + \$50 for relocation of bus stop signed due to detour

Police Holiday Rates apply to New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day

Ashville, NC identifies fees associated with street closures as part of the Fees & Charges chapter of their Outdoor Special Event Guide Source: 2019-2020 Outdoor Special Event Guide, Asheville, NC

Permit Application Process for Outdoor Special Events



Permit Application Process Source: San Francisco Outdoor Event Planning and Permitting Guide, 2019

Best Practice

Event Planning & Permitting Guides



ADMIN
CAPACITY

Event Planning & Permitting Guides



CULTURAL/
ARTS

Location

Various

LOCAL EXAMPLES

Worcester, MA | Special Events Planning Guidebook

<http://www.worcesterma.gov/parks/plan-an-event>

Andover, MA | Special Events Guidelines

<https://andoverma.gov/694/Special-Events-Guidelines>

Boston, MA | How to Apply to Host a Public Event in Boston

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/consumer-affairs-and-licensing/how-apply-host-public-event-boston>

NATIONAL EXAMPLES

Chicago, IL | Special Event Permit Application Guide

https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/special_event.html

San Francisco, CA | Outdoor Event Planning and Permitting Guide

<https://sfgov.org/entertainment/sites/default/files/SF%20Outdoor%20Event%20Planning%20%26%20Permitting%20Guide%20-%20Last%20updated%2012519.pdf>

Ashville, NC | Outdoor Special Event Guide

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HRcEe7NYsZ1rbCA5NEsN3TPzg2W8oSd7/view>






Columbus, OH | Event Planning Guide

<https://www.columbus.gov/EventPlanningGuide/>

San Francisco, CA | Pop-Up (Food service) Guidelines

https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/EHSdocs/ehsFood/PopUpdocs/Pop-up_Guidelines.pdf

Create a Public Art Walk on Pedestrian Path between Beacon Street and Union Street

Category	 Cultural / Arts
Location	 Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin	Create Newton Plan and discussed during diagnostic phase
Budget	 Low (< \$50,000) Funding sources: Town appropriation, Mass. Cultural Council, Shared Streets/Spaces, creative DIF program , crowdsourcing campaign (Patronicity), NEFA
Timeframe	 Short-Term – Target 18 months or less
Risk	 Political will; legal and liability concerns; community interest; partners; financing limitations; support/coordination with utility companies; and site ownership.
Key Performance Indicators	Improved aesthetic, better lighting, increased accessibility/safety, increase in visitors, # of public art installations/events, # of event attendees
Partners & Resources	City – Planning, Cultural Development, Property Owners/Businesses, and Artist Community, Newton Cultural Alliance, Newton Cultural Council, Newton Community Pride
Diagnostic	<p>Prior to and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Newton has been focused on identifying new ways to promote art and activity in its Villages, like Newton Centre. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on the way in which a community interacts in public spaces. Throughout the pandemic, public spaces have offered a gathering place, a sense of shared experience and civic engagement, easier social distancing, and active and healthy lifestyles. When stores shuttered, people turned to the outdoors – parks, playgrounds, public plazas. Public spaces offered a sense of normalcy in extraordinary circumstances.</p> <p>The City of Newton has thought creatively about the use of its public space and has laid the groundwork to elevate and promote its public spaces through recent master planning and placemaking efforts.</p> <p>This public art walk offers a unique opportunity for a small-scale, public art installation for both residents and visitors to enjoy. In addition, this project provides local artists with an opportunity to display work and enhance the public realm, contribute to the local creative economy, and provide a destination attraction for Union Street.</p>

Action Item

Determine a Preliminary Design Framework. Discuss the project goals, define success, and how to measure it. Identify project partners and proponents and create an outreach/marketing plan.

Assess Existing Conditions. Conduct field work and identify where utilities and electrical capacity are in the alley to inform the design basis. Locate fixtures and wall-packs. Complete a lighting study to identify where dark and bright spots are located.

Create a Concept. The Town and Natick Center Cultural District should work with a lighting and artistic designer to sketch out feasible and creative concepts to implementing light-based public art displays using the Adams Street Alley as a pilot project. Identify technical requirements and any challenges or barriers to implementation.

Identify a Budget and Funding Sources. Create a financial plan dependent upon conceptual plan. Seek funding for the project. For budgets related to art, events and other placemaking elements, expect a wide range in cost. The budget will fluctuate based on the experience of the artist, length of installation, equipment needed, needs of the client, scale of the placemaking program, and schedule for fabrication and installation.

Work with Artists. Based upon the concept, artists will create installations.

Display and Celebrate!



Art in the Park, Bid on a Whale, Chatham, MA Source: BSC Group

Process

- 1. Preliminary Design Framework:**
 - Define both functional and artistic goals for the project. (Functional goals include supporting the street/space and personal safety. Artistic goals include storytelling to enhance cultural assets, branding, community connection, and connections to history.)
 - Determine type of art to be used and identify expectations for any design (color, brightness, spacing, scale, etc.).
 - Address technical requirements and any challenges to address, e.g., electricity, mounting, timing, sequencing.
 - Obtain necessary permissions from building owners and any permitting approvals.
- 2. Funding to Design and Implement:** Create a budget and secure necessary funding to implement the project.
- 3. Procure Professional Assistance:** Cultural Development will work with artists to plan a pilot placemaking project.
 - Designs will be created.
 - Design will be presented to the public to generate excitement.
 - Design will be installed.
- 4. Hold a Special Event to unveil the project:** Provide ongoing hype about the space to continue to attract attention and use (social media, town website, NCD website, local business promotion).



Pedestrian path between Beacon Street and Union Street Source: BSC Group



Best Practice

Gallery Alley



CULTURAL/
ARTS

Location

Lincoln, NE

Project Overview

Gallery Alley in Lincoln, NE came to fruition as a result of the City building a parking garage at the south end of the alley and it seeing heavy foot traffic afterwards.

The city was seeking a better lighting outcome to increase safety in the alley – both real and perceived. The project evolved into a destination for light-art and a place to showcase local artist talent.

The cost for this project was quoted at \$143,000. Conceived in 2013, the project was completed in 2016.

<https://www.ies.org/lda/alley-of-the-arts/>



View of Gallery Alley

Source: Clark and Enersen



Photos: <https://www.creativenorthshore.com/bass-in-the-grass-a-beverly-main-streets-project-photos/>

Best Practice

Create “Bass in the Grass” Event



CULTURAL/
ARTS

Location

Beverly, MA






About

Beverly Main Streets (BMS) organized a “Bass in the Grass” event to support local artists and BMS following the financial impacts of COVID. Event planning occurred simultaneous to grant submissions seeking funding for the event. “Bass in the Grass” created 31 blank 3’ bass and made stands for each. Local artists painted the bass, creating 31 unique pieces of art. BMS held a socially-distanced outdoor viewing event at historic Hale Farm over the weekend of August 15 -16, 2020. The event attracted 450 visitors over the 2 days, the first event of its size in Beverly since the initial COVID stay-at-home order. The bass were then delivered to 31 different businesses in Beverly’s downtown where they were on display for 2 weeks. During that time, BMS launched an online auction. While grant funding for the event was still uncertain, BMS couldn’t offer a guaranteed stipend to artists other than half of the highest bid on their fish; artists signed on without knowing if they’d be compensated as bids were not guaranteed.

- Budget: Materials \$1,735, Stipends \$3,850, Auction Site & Marketing: \$1,844
- Timeframe: The event was set up in 5 months. Due to its success, the event is expected to run as an annual event.
- Partners & Resources: Beverly Main Streets, Historic Beverly, Gentile Brewing, Beverly Cultural Council, MA Commonwealth Places, Chatham Merchants Association

More information: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-realm-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download> (page 63)

Increase the use of public art in the district

Category		Cultural / Arts
Location		Newton Centre / Census Tract 3738
Origin		Create Newton Plan and discussed during diagnostic phase
Budget		Medium / Funding sources: Town appropriation, Mass. Cultural Council, Shared Streets/Spaces, creative DIF program , crowdsourcing campaign (Patronicity), NEFA
Timeframe		Short-Term – Target 18 months or less
Risk		Political will; legal and liability concerns; community interest; partners; financing limitations; support/coordination with utility companies; and site ownership.
Key Performance Indicators		Improved aesthetic, better lighting, increased accessibility/safety, increase in visitors, # of public art installations/events, # of event attendees
Partners & Resources		City – Planning, Cultural Development, Property Owners/Businesses, and Artist Community, Newton Cultural Alliance, Newton Cultural Council, Newton Community Pride
Diagnostic		<p>Prior to and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Newton has been focused on identifying new ways to promote art and activity in its Villages, like Newton Centre. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on the way in which a community interacts in public spaces. Throughout the pandemic, public spaces have offered a gathering place, a sense of shared experience and civic engagement, easier social distancing, and active and healthy lifestyles. When stores shuttered, people turned to the outdoors – parks, playgrounds, public plazas. Public spaces offered a sense of normalcy in extraordinary circumstances.</p> <p>The City of Newton has thought creatively about the use of its public space and has laid the groundwork to elevate and promote its public spaces through recent master planning and placemaking efforts. There is an opportunity for Newton to implement creative solutions to the built environment – light-based (private facades), projections, uplighting, installations, asphalt art and sidewalk art, murals – to achieve the goals identified in the Create Newton Plan.</p>

Action

Planning. Public art can create a sense of place that helps people make meaning from their surroundings, and the act of generating artwork can build relationships in a community. Integrating public art into projects will therefore help generate community engagement and civic pride. This is important to the recovery of the study area because art and culture are key to advancing planning and community development goals and objectives including:

- Enhancing the human experience in the public realm
- Celebrating community identity and culture
- Promoting positive community and civic engagement
- Promoting economic development and tourism
- Advancing civic design objectives for parks, plazas, open spaces, streetscapes, and other public infrastructure.

Partnerships. As municipal budgets continue to be constrained, funds for art projects and routine maintenance of existing public art can be challenging. In response, many municipalities have looked for ways to align public art with other municipal and civic priorities. The lines between public art and emerging fields like socially engaged art and civic art are increasingly blurry—creating new opportunities and well as new challenges for planners who must balance competing municipal priorities.

Collaboration. With many competitive grant programs to support public art, raising funds requires partnerships, collaboration, and creative thinking.

Programming. Work with a steering committee or group to identify locations for public art installations and generate ideas for outside-the-box approaches to public art, especially when limited by physical environment, such as in Newton Centre.

Process

1. Preliminary Design Framework:

- Define both functional and artistic goals for the project. (Functional goals include supporting the street/space and personal safety. Artistic goals include storytelling to enhance cultural assets, branding, community connection, and connections to history.)
- Determine type of art to be used and identify expectations for any design (color, brightness, spacing, scale, etc.).
- Address technical requirements and any challenges to address, e.g., electricity, mounting, timing, sequencing.
- Obtain necessary permissions from building owners and any permitting approvals.

2. Funding to Design and Implement:

Create a budget and secure necessary funding to implement the project.

3. Procure Professional Assistance:

Cultural Development will work with artists to plan a pilot placemaking project.

- Designs will be created.
- Design will be presented to the public to generate excitement.
- Design will be installed.

4. Hold a Special Event to unveil the project:

Provide ongoing hype about the space to continue to attract attention and use (social media, town website, NCD website, local business promotion).



*View looking down Union Street to Herrick Road
Source: BSC Group*



Best Practice

Art in Public Places



CULTURAL/
ARTS

Location

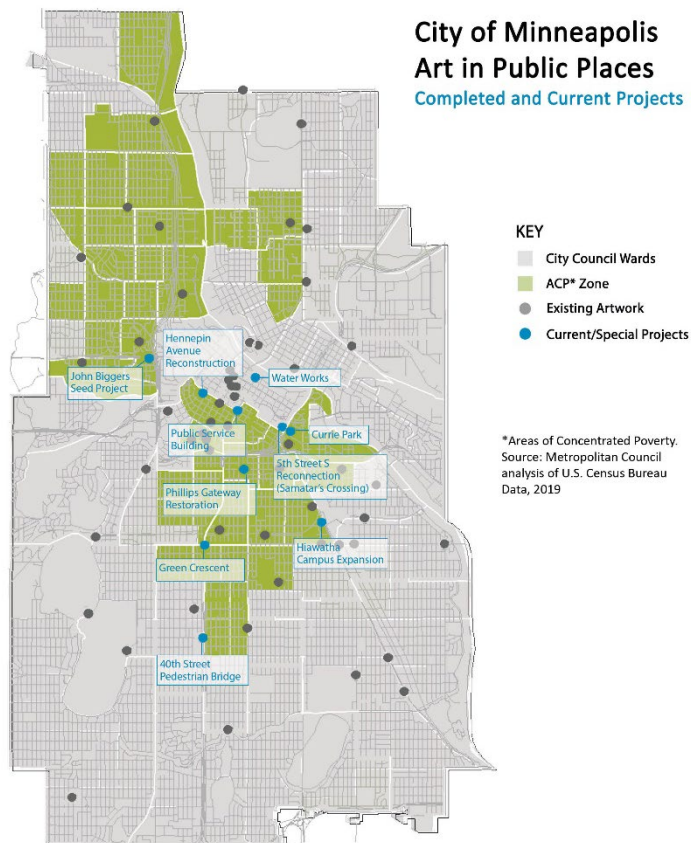
Minneapolis, MN

The City of Minneapolis has integrated public art into city planning, services, design and infrastructure by funding new commissions through the Art in Public Places Program with an annual allocation from the capital budget. Public artworks contribute to the livability and vibrancy of public places and build pride in community and cultural identity. The process of developing public artworks builds the capacity of artists and community members to shape city spaces and neighborhoods.

In addition to new commissions, the City's Public Art Program includes:

- A comprehensive maintenance and conservation effort
- Support to communities through a technical assistance and permitting program for proposed projects on City property and in the right of way
- Partnerships and assistance to other government entities, such as MNDOT and Hennepin County
- Updates to the City's comprehensive public art policies

Using an annual budget set aside by the city and a 25% match from sponsors, the program helps the city fund the selection and implementation of public art where it's needed most. The program focuses on community engagement, celebrating culture, and using resources wisely.



Art in Public Places Map

Source: City of Minneapolis

Appendix

Massachusetts Local Rapid Recovery Program SME Consultation Report

To: Newton

From: Revby LLC

Project: Identify/secure funding to support pop-up placemaking efforts (Project: Pop-Up) in Newton Centre

The City recognizes the need to continue to support the popup placemaking effort (Pop-Up) to keep strengthening the community's ability to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Funding is considered the main barrier moving forward.

Project Considerations and Examples

Funding sources for Pop-Ups can prioritize a variety of areas including:

- **Arts & culture, small business development, creative placemaking, and health equity.** Pop-up's can assist in meeting many needs including food access, small business incubation, community education, public health, etc.
- It is important to **include a diverse group of supporters, sponsors, and collaborating partners.** Community based organization's (often non-profits) that have a vested interest in supporting residents that will benefit from the Pop-Up, should be identified early. These organizations are often committed to partnerships that advance their organizational mission and expand access.
- Please note that crowdfunding, although challenging can be a way to show that a **variety of community members and stakeholders have a vested interest in making the Pop-Up's success.**

Funding

The following are some examples and ideas on funding sources for Pop-Ups.

1. Crowdfunding for Placemaking Projects

Patronicity

See File: [CPR-BP-Patronicity+SmallBusiness.pdf](#)



CROWDFUNDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS Strategies and Best Practices



The following are some of the most important first steps for planning a successful crowdfunding campaign. Our team will coach you through all the components to set you up for success, but these are the first few items you should be considering as you start the crowdfunding process. Our team will work alongside you on your campaign, so feel free to reach out with questions or request feedback or ideas at any point during this process.

BEST PRACTICES

Make your ask explicit.

While you can crowdfund for what you need, donors would like to know exactly how you will spend the money they donate?

Establish a team.

Your team will work together to develop a communications and outreach strategy suitable to your community. Make roles and responsibilities very clear from the beginning.

Create an outreach calendar.

It's important to have a detailed plan in place for how you are going to raise your funding, before your campaign launches.

Think about who in your community might be able to provide donations, especially at the higher levels.

If possible, try to have one or more donations committed or on-hand before your launch day.

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Nothing has better reach and turns a supporter into a donor than a personal call, email, private message.

In these times it's important you get creative with how you're reaching your supporters, texting and emailing are great forms of communication now. Pre-draft content you can blast out and share with your fundraising team.

Help people understand that every dollar counts, even small amounts to show their support.

Give examples your donation of \$10 will provide X or if we hit \$5,000 we can provide X. Use your existing client list as your targets, reach out and get them to support, either financially or at the very least share the campaign and get their friends to donate Include information about how to purchase products or services online NOW

Offer cost effective rewards that will support your business once it's open to the public again.

Examples:VIP treatment at the grand reopeningCouponsGift cardsProducts that are easy to fulfill (maybe backstock)

Strategies and Best Practices

Continued

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- **Use** your local radio station to have a segment or slot in ads
- If you follow a local podcast or web series, send a request for airtime
- Draft an article or letter to the editor in your local newspaper
- Feature your staff (simply with their profile photo or preferred headshot /photo) and make sure they are tagged to connect people with who you are and who your business supports and who supports your business- mutually
- Feature your favorite customers or products or stories of your business - use an attention grabbing image
- No matter what you share be sure everyone on your fundraising team personally shares the content , this is **HUGELY** important in the traction of your messaging
- Let people know exactly what their donation provides (visually or outright), be short and clear
- Keep updating your donors and supporters, each day/week to share how you've made progress and what you still need

MESSAGING BEST PRACTICES

Start with gratitude

Example: "Thank you for supporting our business for over 10 years...."

Acknowledge the challenges

Example: "Times are hard."

Create a sense of urgency

Example: "Our business is on the verge of closing, but you can help NOW!"

Be authentic

Example: "We want to be here when things get back to 'normal'"

Be passionate

Example: "Your donation means so very much to us."

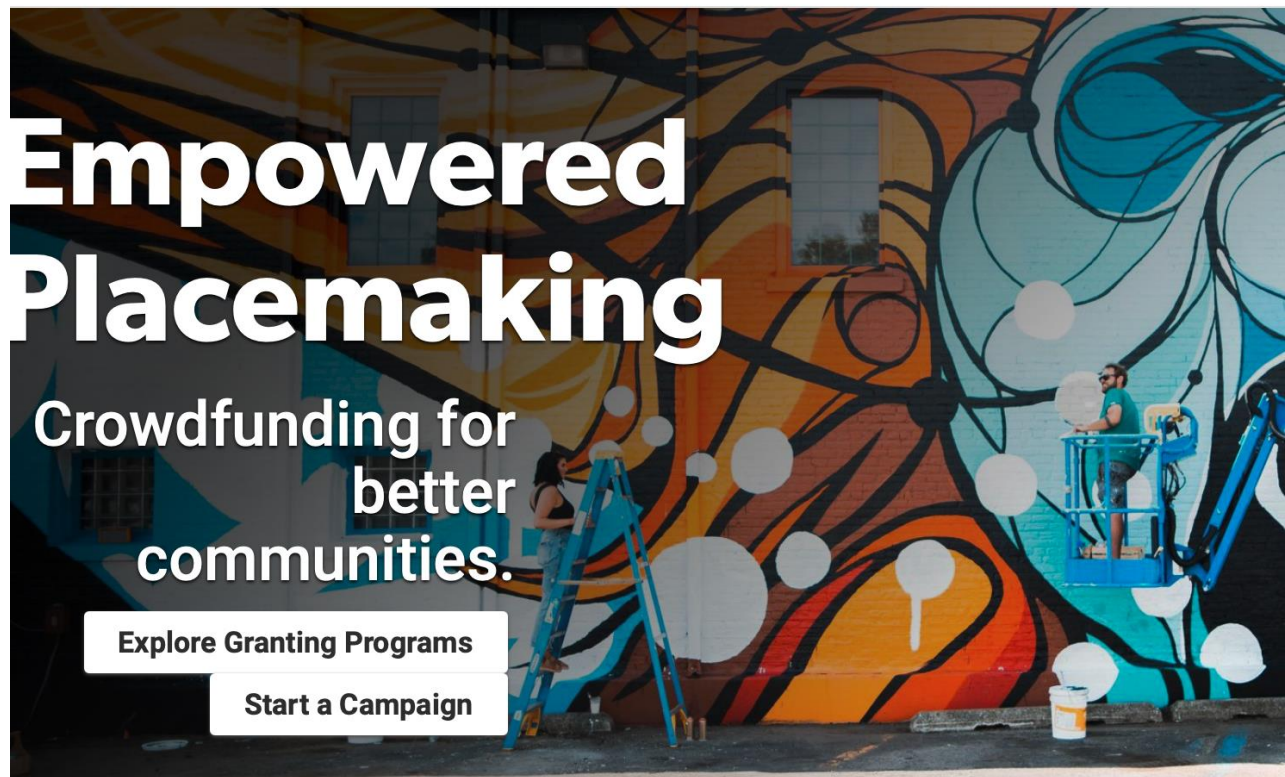
Make it personal

Example: "Use words like 'we' and 'us' and our instead of the business or the corner bakery."

Questions? Email us at info@patronicity.com

To get started, go to:
patronicity.com/small-biz





Ready to transform your community?

We empower local placemaking projects through crowdfunding, access to matching grants and hands-on project coaching. With a 96% success rate and 6+ years of experience, we help you get the funding and support you need to turn your vision into reality and transform your community.

✉ **Need Help? Contact us!**

2. Arts Funding - Pop-Ups that Highlight the Arts

National Endowment for the Arts

Link: <https://www.arts.gov/grants/grants-for-arts-projects>

Massachusetts Cultural Council

Link: <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/>

3. LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) Funding for Creative Placemaking Technical Assistance

Link: <https://www.lisc.org/our-initiatives/creative-placemaking/main/creative-placemaking-toolkit/funding/>

Noted Revenue Channels:

- Individual Support
- Corporate Support
- Grant Awards
- Funding Support

Funding Your Project

Oftentimes in creative placemaking, we think that funding needs to come from traditional arts sources. But when you are planning your project, it pays off to think outside the box. What are the problems you are trying to solve and how are those generally funded. In this video, Lynne McCormack of Local Initiatives Support Corporation shares some funding sources to consider when you are beginning your work.



Funding Your Project: Tapping into New Sources of Funding | LISC Creative Placemaking

4. Technical Assistance from Project for Public Spaces

"We offer particular expertise in management plans for public markets, including feasibility assessments, tenant mix and leasing, and multi-year operating proformas and financing plans."

Link: <https://www.pps.org/services>

Massachusetts Local Rapid Recovery Program SME Consultation Report

To: Newton

From: Revby LLC

Project: Streamline special events permitting and create a strategy guide for hosting community events

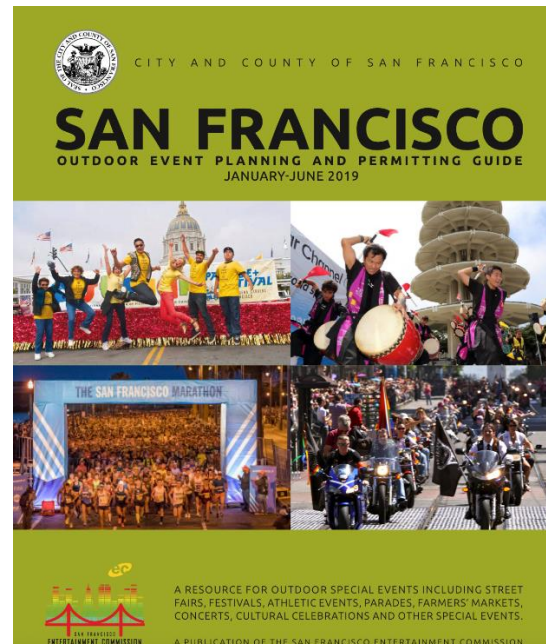
The City of Newton has no permitting process in place for roadway closures and other public spaces. It is important to define a permitting process and create a guide, describing how to host community events in roadway closures and other public spaces. Examples of how other communities approached such a process are needed.

Project Considerations and Examples

- Guidelines for planning a public or community event (ref. Mayor's Office of Special Events, Chicago, IL)
 - Have a formal application process
 - Require a special event permit
 - Require an event map with permit application
 - Require tent and canopy permits
 - Require partnerships with public safety officials
 - Provide a fire safety code checklist
 - Ensure safe food handling practices
 - Have a plan for contracting city services
 - Require animal permits
 - Manage event signage and promotion

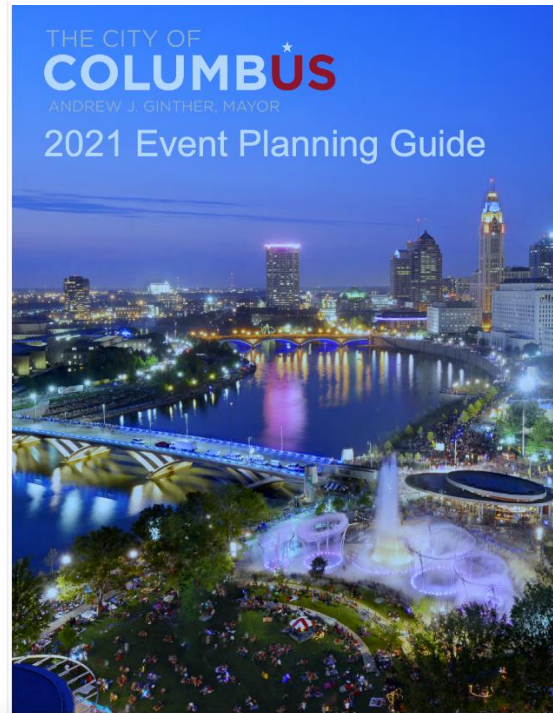
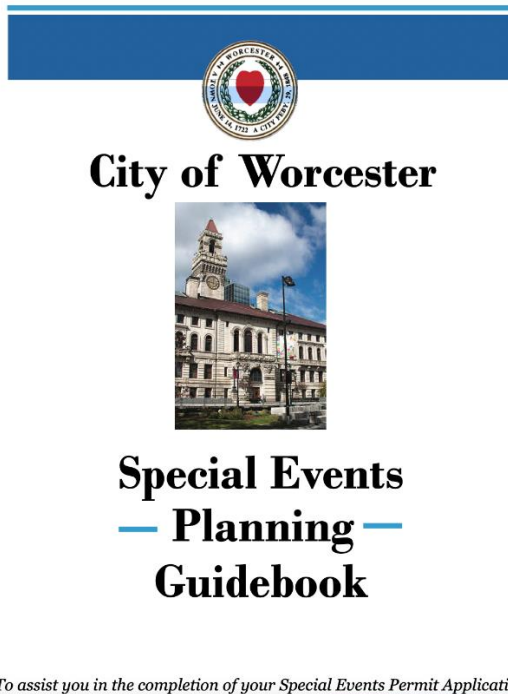
<https://www.thebalancesmb.com/guidelines-for-planning-a-public-or-community-event-1223528>

- San Francisco Outdoor Event Planning and Permitting Guide



- <https://sfgov.org/entertainment/sf-outdoor-event-planning-and-permitting-guide>
- <https://sfgov.org/entertainment/sites/default/files/SF%20Outdoor%20Event%20Planning%20%26%20Permitting%20Guide%20-%20Last%20updated%20012519.pdf>

- Additional Planning Guidebook Examples



- Worcester, MA - <http://www.worcesterma.gov/parks/plan-an-event>
- Andover, MA - <https://andoverma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1859/Guidelines-for-Special-Events>
- Asheville, NC - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HRcEe7NYsZ1rbCA5NEsN3TPzg2W8oSd7/view>
- Columbus, OH - <https://www.columbus.gov/EventPlanningGuide/>

- Pop-up Guidelines:

https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/EHSdocs/ehsFood/PopUpdocs/Pop-up_Guidelines.pdf

- Common Permits for Public Events

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/consumer-affairs/common-permits-public-events-boston>

- Top tips for planning a successful community event (general)

<https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2013/feb/05/tpa-planning-successful-community-event>

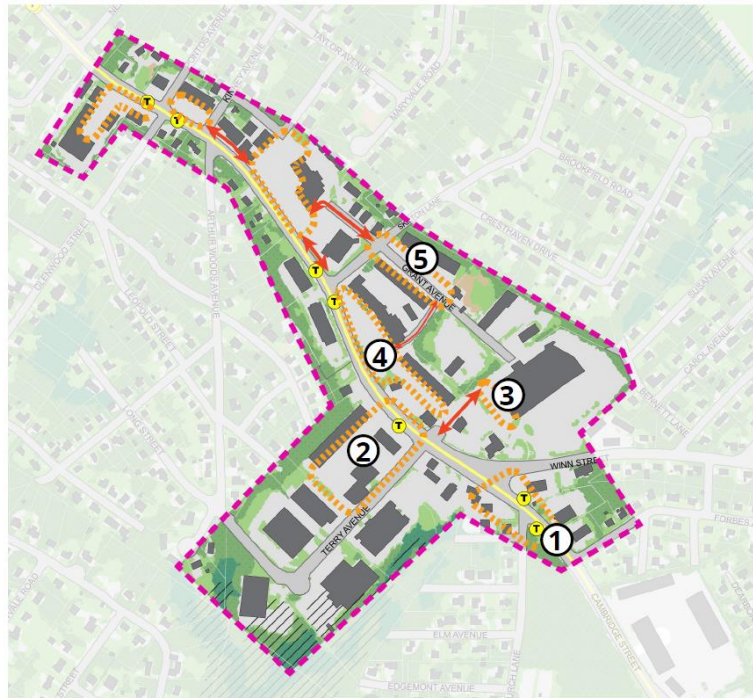
Special Covid-19 Considerations:

- <http://www.austintexas.gov/eventreopeningguide>
- <https://www.somervillema.gov/covidsafeevents>

See File: 20210430 Placemaking Playbook - hyperlinks.pdf

- ## Recommended Areas of Activity

Wayfinding/ Ground Mural
Opportunities between
placemaking zones.



HIGHEST PREFERENCE/PRIORITY

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

PLANTERS AND SEATING PARKLET

Components	Who is Involved	Funding Strategies	Implementation	
			Cost	Time
Barrier to street/parking lot	Town (for permissions and permits)	MassDevelopment's Commonwealth Places	\$-\$-\$-\$	Short-term
Planters	Property owner	LRRP Program		Mid-term
Tables and chairs	Volunteers	Public/private fundraising		Long-term
Umbrellas				
Signage				

LOCAL EXAMPLE AND COMPONENTS



Eagle Street, North Adams, Massachusetts

This parklet has more structure than the pocket parks shown earlier, but the strategy of using planters to define areas (as shown in the rear) does not require this level of protection.

Planters near seating add much-needed greenery to areas built on parking lots as envisioned by this Playbook. Bright umbrellas and strings of light create ambiance and allow use of this site throughout the day and into the early evening.

Seating could include bar height tables and chairs in addition to the standards arrangements shown in the other strategies.

- c. The **Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP) program** can help to identify specific actions for later funding.
- d. **Identify local and area businesses for markets** (e.g., food, crafts, entertainment)
- e. **Develop partnership between the Town's Department of Public Works and local business/property owners** to address maintenance.
- f. **Hold community discussions with MassDOT on traffic concerns** to reduce concerns about the volume and speed of traffic.

An important piece identified by Burlington was continual communication. To address that, they adopted the following measures:

- a. **Create a simple website for the Lower Town Center** to provide an event calendar and a map businesses locations, specialties, and business hours.
- b. **Designate a single point of contact between business owners and event planners** to coordinate event locations and times to avoid peak delivery periods for local businesses well in advance of the day of the event.
- c. **Develop a robust email list and appropriate social media platforms** to inform people about events, including special events at area businesses.



Local Rapid Recovery Plan

Best Practices & Recommendations; Signage and Wayfinding

Town of Newton

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

This guide has been developed by Selbert Perkins Design for use in completing Project Rubrics assigned by the Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP). The goal of the document is to elaborate on best practices, deliverables, & process in relation to any branding development under the DCHD's LRRP Program.



The Process of Developing Wayfinding & Signage

1. Gather Your Assets

When it comes to making an impact with wayfinding, understanding the current state of your town's wayfinding signage is the first step. When the term "wayfinding" is attached to signage, it means the messaging on the sign is directing the viewer towards a destination.

Any maps indicating where current wayfinding signage exists will be very useful, and a beneficial first step. If you don't have this, an audit will likely be required.

Master planning documents that outline goals for the town/city are useful as well, as they will likely be referenced regarding planning around future goals and projects.

While a street sign could be considered wayfinding, the important distinction for this exercise should focus on sign types that include more information about destinations.

Gathering a master list of Points of Interest, or POI is also a good decision. Once the list feels comprehensive for your town, a good idea to categorize or sort this list into groups based on popularity of the given POI as a destination. This should give the wayfinding team a clear idea of goals for the wayfinding program.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

2. Layer the Data

Once the team has any maps, master plans, POI's and traffic maps, the goal should be to layer these sets of information over each other.



The data will begin to form a clear picture of how the wayfinding system should address the topography of your city/town. The team should be able to see major routes for vehicles & pedestrians, POI's, town limits, parking & points of entry and exit. Based on all this information, the wayfinding team can make an educated assessment on where signage can be placed to help specific users find their way through the city/town. Keep in mind that wayfinding users will have different objectives; visitors will have different destinations from residents.

Beyond this, the team should add locations that are instrumental in helping people navigate the environment in an ideal way. Selbert Perkins calls these decision points – they represent a point on a journey that can influence the user to take a more beneficial or easier route.

The resulting maps should outline locations that are likely underutilized for signage and wayfinding.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

3. Identify the Sign Types

When it comes to identifying the signage elements, the first step will be looking at the needs of your wayfinding from a mapping perspective and assessing how those needs can be met with physical signs. Before picking visuals, really deliberate about the role of each sign in each instance.

Wayfinding information will be perceived differently based on context, as users driving have substantially less time to read signs than pedestrians.

Typically, the result of this exercise will lead to a set of signs that each have different roles. Selbert Perkins refers to this as a signage family. These are often shown at scale on a single page and compared to ensure each sign has a specific duty and avoids being redundant to users.

The most common sign would be a directory sign, which is designed for pedestrians. This is placed in high pedestrian traffic situations, normally where most traffic originates. Typically, a map is shown outlining all points of interest in within a certain walking distance. A best practice is to indicate the amount of time it would take to walk to each destination, either in time or distance.

Also commonly seen in wayfinding packages, a vehicular directional sign includes large text, and is meant to indicate direction for top tier destinations. This information is meant to influence wayfinding users that are driving vehicles, so text should read large. These signs should also be placed **before** users have to make turns in their journey – they should have enough time to interpret the signage, make decisions and have time to correct their course before an intersection.



LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

4. Designing the Signage

Once the sign types have been identified, the visual design can be applied to the signage family. It's important to let the objectives of each sign type to lead in this phase, and not let visuals dictate the overall design. Here, form follows function.



Vehicular and bike signage should be large to allow for large type. All signage should be high contrast and use fonts that are highly legible. In some instances, signs are seen for less than five seconds, and have information on them that will be crucial, like indicating direction to a hospital.

Pedestrian signage can be smaller in size but should be more targeted. Vehicular signage is still relevant to people on foot, and a good directional sign in the proper location will be relevant to all users and can save the town/city money as a more efficient use of budget in the wayfinding package.

5. Fabrication Partners

When the wayfinding package has its locations and signs identified, a fabrication partner can be approached to help bring the project into reality.

Their first step should be coordinating base pricing to establish overall project costs, including installation. This allows the wayfinding design team to make changes in the wayfinding plan to save costs where they can and allow the fabrication team to pursue any discounts based on volume pricing.

A good fabrication team will be an invaluable partner. They can work with the city for any permitting, identify production methods that yield better pricing, and can complete a certain amount of design work. Always bid out to more than one fabricator to ensure even and fair pricing.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

Our Recommendations for the Town of Newton



On 9/2/21, Cory DePasquale & Jessica Finch of Selbert Perkins Design met with the town of Newton's LRRP partner BSC group to discuss signage & wayfinding for the town. During the discussion, a few points were made that our team would like to elaborate on.

- What visual brand equity does the town have (colors, fonts, styles) that can be employed in wayfinding? Viewers are more likely to instinctually trust signage and wayfinding that they recognize as town signage. Massachusetts employs mainly green signage with white type, and for directing vehicles this is particularly effective. For pedestrian signs, capturing some of Newton's brand will encourage users to engage with the signage.
- Think about how to direct visitors to parking before they arrive in your downtown area. With most traffic coming from the MassPike (Rt.90), how can informative signs get visitors to parking lots before they arrive?
- After visitors park, you have a unique opportunity to direct them with pedestrian level signage located at popular parking lots. Directories located here, with walking distance to each downtown destination are highly used and sought after.
- Any new signage effort can include art. Pairing up with local high schools and artists to create specific panels in directories is a great way to make new signs feel like they've been there all along, and show visitors to Newton what the town is about.
- It's been said before that Newton is a city of villages – using a local artist to illustrate a map of these would be a unique way to tackle a map effort.

DIAGNOSTIC

Stakeholders would like to hold more special events in the district to increase the number of visitors to the area. However, the events held need to work not only for the restaurants but also the retailers in the area. Union Street is a one-way street, with on-street parking on both sides, wide sidewalks, and a wide travel lane. The City would like to explore closing off Union Street to through traffic, creating a pedestrian walkway, however, it would like to understand how other communities have successfully converted roadways to closed pedestrian ways (permanently or temporarily) to hold special events.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Our proposal is to create a series of 3 open streets events on Union Street. Utilizing 3 consecutive weekends (most likely Sunday as to have lowest interruption to service based businesses but option should be available for evenings or even full weekends) we propose hosting a minimally programmed open street event allowing area restaurants AND retail businesses to expand into designated spaces on the sidewalk while creating a "town square" type environment in the public space in the center and opposite side of the street to the retail establishments. The extent of public programming would be to 1) provide seating and tables chairs for the public, 2) provide a stage and coordinate with local performers, 3) incorporate a wayfinding campaign to direct folks to available nearby parking lots and side streets with parking, 4) develop a traditional and social media strategy so people are aware of the event AND know where to go for information and to leave feedback, and 5) ensure coordination with area businesses so they know what they can do in the street and how much space they have.

RESOURCES

- ["An Evaluation of Kansas Open Streets Event's Impact on Business"](#)
- [NACTO's Open Streets Guides](#)
- ["Open Streets & Local Economies"](#) - 880 Cities
- Area property owners and small businesses to sponsor or donate equipment and event infrastructure.
- [Crowdfunding](#) as dozens of communities have done across Massachusetts for similar placemaking projects.

PROJECT INSPIRATION



Montreal's Open Streets Program



In 2020, Montreal experimented with a number of active transport routes and open streets to support restaurants and retail with indoor gathering restrictions. The program was so successful that businesses, neighborhood districts and resident groups petitioned the City for 13 open streets across the city that became hubs of social and economic life in 7 of the city's neighborhoods. Space was created for retailers to expand into the street, playground equipment to be installed on the street and public outdoor seating areas to encourage more passive gatherings.

Reopen Asbury Park



Asbury Park, New Jersey closed a number of downtown streets during the pandemic to allow for social distancing and outdoor dining. In 2021 this program was tweaked, expanded and continued after hearing positive and constructive feedback from area residents and businesses. Some streets remain open streets 24/7 while others are only open on weekend evenings. On all streets programming and live music is allowed and retailers as well as restaurants are allowed to expand into the street.

"OPEN UNION STREET"

Newton, Massachusetts

PROCESS



Locations

Now that we've identified Union Street as this pilot project, we need to be sure we locate infrastructure on the street appropriately. We've designated locations where we'd recommend placing outdoor retail and space for public seating. It's important to include public seating elements throughout to enable people to stop and stay and enable people to be a part of the energy on the street. We've also located a stage to invite area musicians to come play or "busk" as people walk the street.

Engage Businesses

At this early stage in the planning it's important to fully engage the businesses. Explain your risk mitigation strategies to them and encourage them to give their input into the planning of the layout. Just like a community project, the more they're invested in planning, the more supportive they will be.

Day Of

You shouldn't need heavy staffing or policing for this but helpful to have people there to assist setup and break down and surveying during the day. Ensuring someones monitoring entrances and making sure businesses have a point of contact or cell phone to call with any immediate issues.

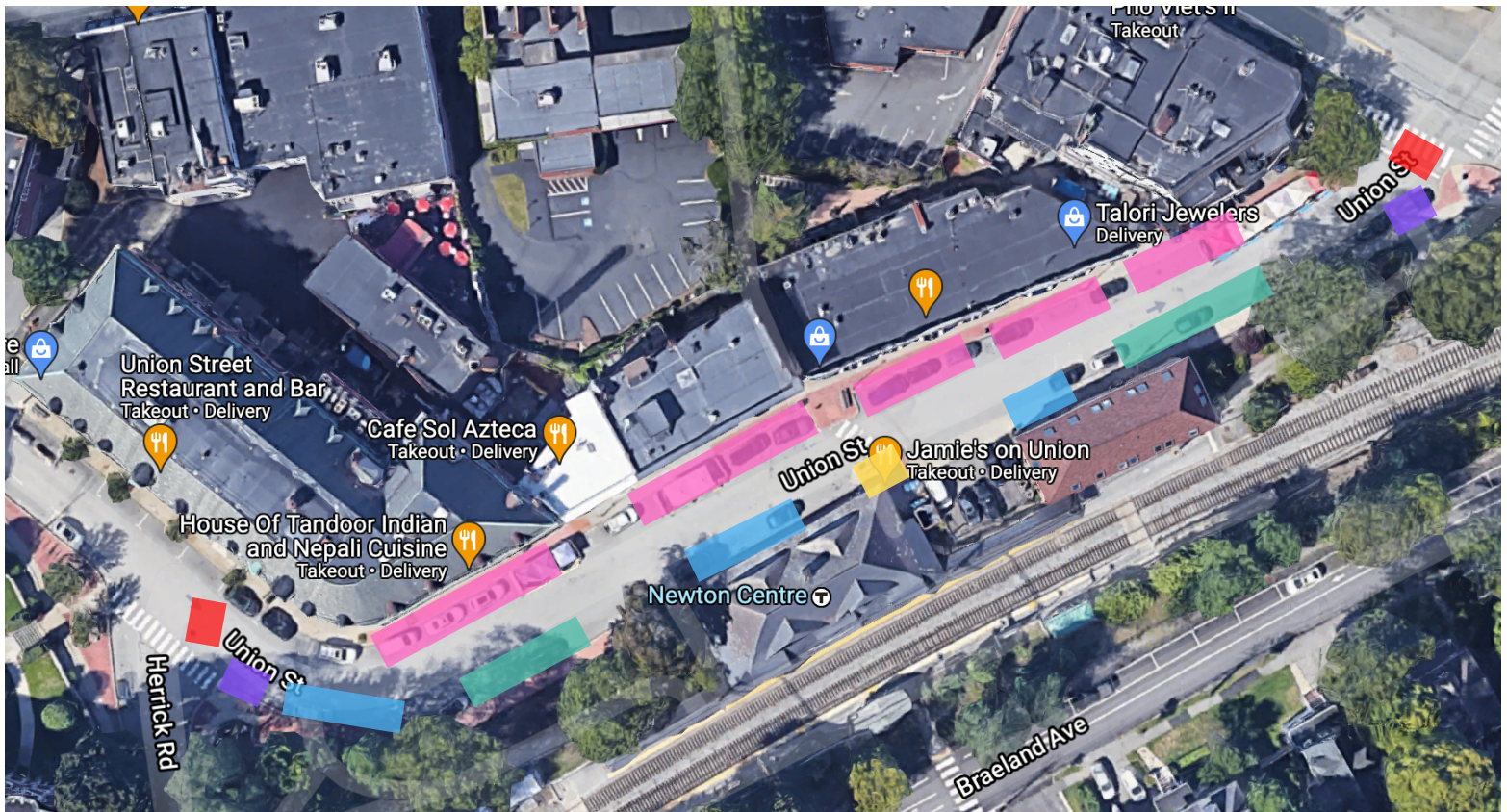
Feedback







This piece is often overlooked but one of the single most important things you can do to ensure success. Get ahead of any complaints with a constructive outlet where stakeholders can leave positive or negative but constructive feedback through in person surveying at events and an online forum. Intercept surveys will be one of the best ways to combat negative comments that tend to be more vocal than people who enjoyed the event.

Three Iterations

We recommend 3 prescheduled days to give word of mouth a chance to draw visitors while also a chance to work out any kinks early on to see if the event can still be as successful as possible. What worked? What didn't work? Adapt your project based on user feedback. Did residents benefit? Did area businesses benefit? How could things be improved and expanded etc.

Open Street Concept (*one idea*)



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Stage |  Barriers with signage signifying no cars, people and bikes welcome |  Adirondack chairs or benches |
|  Outdoor Retail & Dining |  Public tables & chairs |  Bike Parking |

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

User Sentiment:

- How do users feel about Downtown? Is it a place for a single errand or to spend time.
- Do visitors make more trips Downtown and do they venture further away from the common?
- Do visitors consider Downtown more of a destination as opposed to a single errand?
- Do visitors spend more time in the Downtown?

Businesses:

- Encourage as many as are willing to participate in clear sales tracking. Restaurants and retailers.
- Compare sales on these 3-days to previous Sundays and encourage them all to wait out the full pilot before casting judgment.

Risks

- Push back from service based businesses over "loss of parking."
- Concerns if we're TOO successful that this could pull customers from other commercial streets in Newton.
- Concerns from residents over access to parking.

Mitigation Strategies

- Clear direction to available parking in the area, even if a short walk.
- Accommodate with additional handicap parking nearby.
- Clear messaging around "temporary" only 3 days in this pilot to explore future engagements.

KEYS TO SUCCESS



Early Engagement

Engage business owners, property owners, creatives and residents from the area early in this planning process so they can feel as much of the planning process as possible and are more likely to stay engaged throughout this first iteration and hopefully beyond.



Messaging

Don't make this a surprise for anyone, particularly those area stakeholders. Ensure every businesses in the area is aware of the details to head off any day of surprises. In addition, assure theres ample time to market the event (2-weeks should be enough) to ensure people are aware and also aware that this will be part of a series.



Feedback

Have an online survey always open combined with in person surveys of attendees to events and users of the space as well as direct outreach to abutting residents and businesses. This will cut down on the ability for negative responses to overpower positive by more passive sentiment.



Public Seating

I know it sounds over simplified but, in other open streets initiatives without public seating available, it encouraged more of a continuous flow of people through the event without as much "stopping and staying." Providing ample public seating; tables, chairs and Adirondack style chairs facing the crowds will encourage more people to stay longer and also provide more of a comfortable, human scale environment for other visitors.