



Rapid Recovery Plan

October 8, 2021

South Hadley

Acknowledgments

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Business Survey Responders

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



The Local Rapid Recovery Planning (RRP) program is a key part of the Baker-Polito Administration's Partnerships for Recovery Plan, the strategy established to help communities stabilize and grow the Massachusetts economy as a result of the economic impacts brought on by COVID-19. The plan invests \$774 million in efforts to get people back to work, support small businesses, foster innovation, revitalize downtowns, and keep people in stable housing.

In addition to the planning program, recovery efforts include a Small Business Relief Program administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. This program, which concluded in May 2021, provided more than \$687.2 million to over 15,000 businesses across the Commonwealth, with a focus on businesses located in Gateway Cities, among demographic priorities, or operating in sectors most impacted by the pandemic. Cities, towns, and non-profit entities are using Regional Pilot Project Grant Program funding for recovery solutions that seek to activate vacant storefronts, support regional supply chain resiliency, and create small business support networks. To promote recovery in the tourism industry and support the ongoing My Local MA marketing initiative encouraging residents to support their local economies by shopping, dining and staying local, another \$1.6 million in grants were awarded through the new Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant Pilot Program. Through April 2021, MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program has invested \$26.4 million in municipal Shared Streets projects to support public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce.

In support of the overall recovery strategy, the Administration made \$9.5 million in awards for 125 communities to create Local Rapid Recovery Plans, through the MA Downtown Initiative Program. These plans address the impacts of COVID-19 on local downtowns and small businesses by partnering with Plan Facilitators and Subject Matter Experts to pursue locally-driven, actionable strategies.

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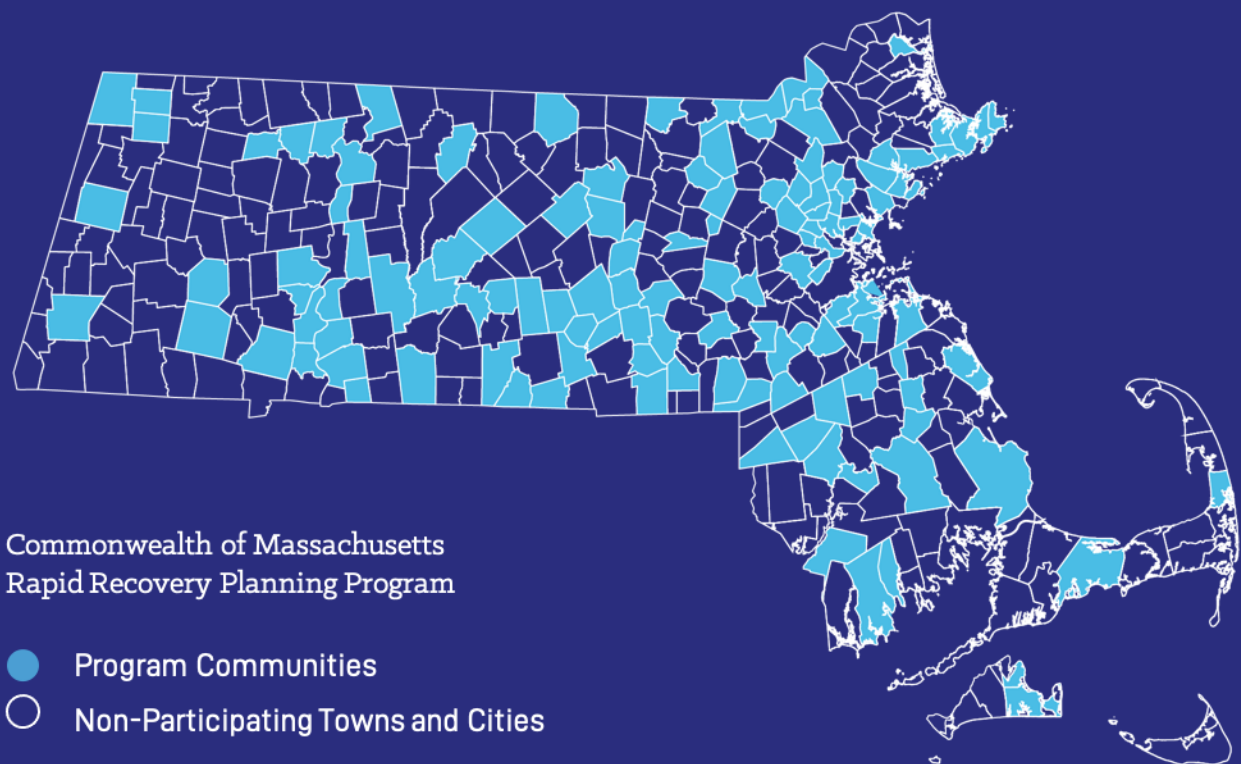
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125 communities participated in the Rapid Recovery Plan Program

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

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



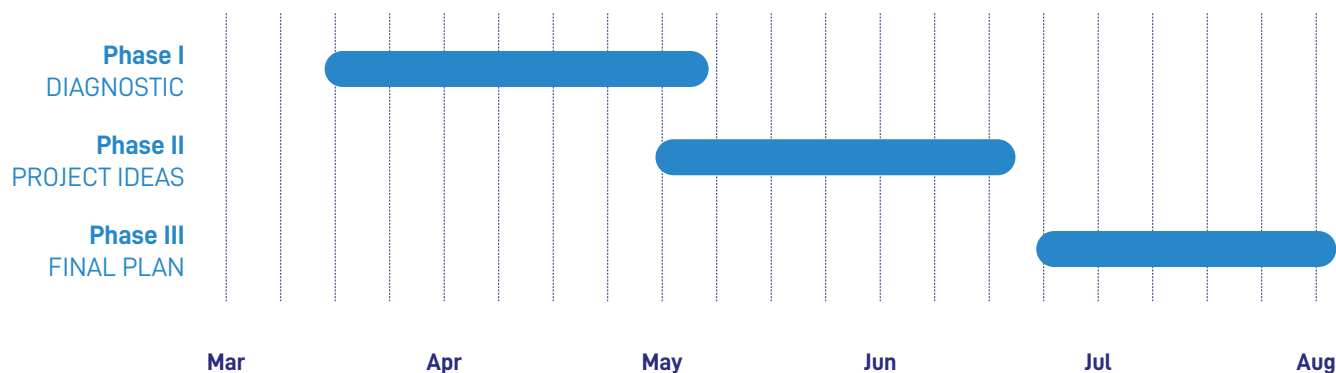
Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

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

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

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

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



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

The framework was designed to ensure methodical diagnosis of challenges and opportunities in each community, and to identify strategies and projects that aligned with the interests and priorities of each community. The framework looks at four areas of analysis: Physical Environment, Business Environment, Market Information, and Administrative Capacity - each equipped with guiding questions to direct research conducted by Plan Facilitators.

Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework



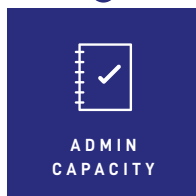
How conducive is the physical environment to meeting the needs and expectations of both businesses and customers?



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 customers of businesses in the Study Area?



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



Public Realm



Private Realm



Tenant Mix



Revenue & Sales



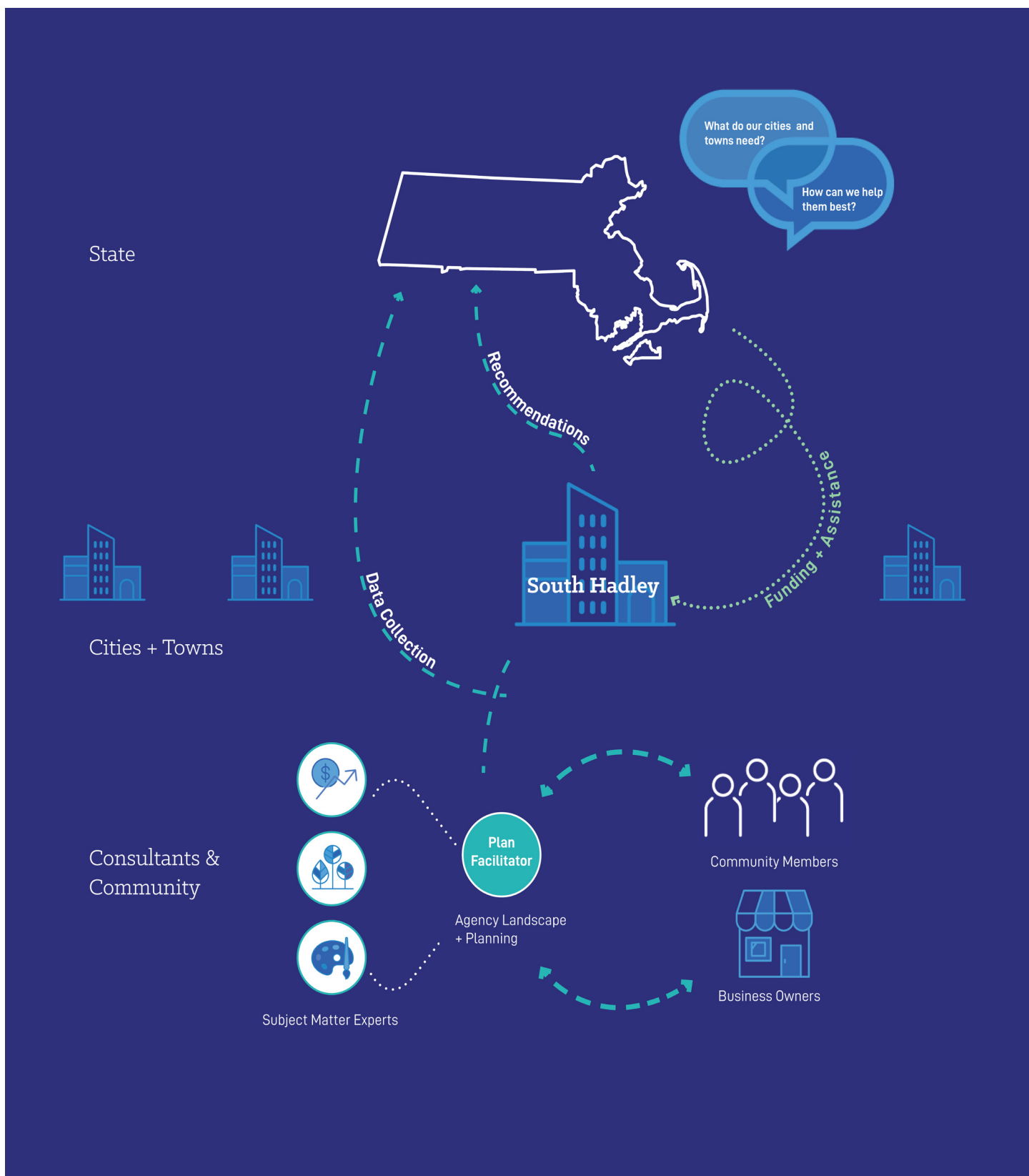
Admin Capacity



Cultural/Arts



Other



The RRP program provides a critical feedback loop. Community needs directly inform the type and scope of state resource allocation
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

NOTE:

The Village Commons is a mixed-use development containing 19 residential units, a neighborhood movie theater, numerous social services and health professional offices, and retail and dining destinations. The Village Commons is owned by Mount Holyoke College, yet is operated by the Center Redevelopment Corporation.

The Village Commons District is the study area for this project. It includes The Village Commons development, but extends further to include adjacent businesses. Unlike The Village Commons, these businesses do not reside on institutional land and are individual proprietors.

South Hadley is nestled in the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts between the Holyoke Mountain Range and Connecticut River. It is a town of less than 20,000 people that strives balance agricultural and natural assets with increasing economic opportunities. The town has a rich industrial legacy, flourishing as a mill community in the late 1700s due to prime access to the Connecticut River. Today, South Hadley's economy is driven by government, education, and healthcare. One of the largest economic and cultural anchors is the historic and highly regarded Mount Holyoke College. This small, but strong, 2,300 student population adds a unique layer to the predominately white identifying community with the median age close to 40.

The town has benefits that keep residents dedicated to remaining in place. The town's goals aim to preserve a quality of life with technological, economic, and housing policies that keep the town modern and competitive. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was a monumental upheaval to life. Not only did it test the effectiveness of political and personal responses, but changed the perception of what goals might be needed in the future. The pandemic occurred during a revision effort to the town's Master Plan, both a challenging and poignant coincidence. The plan champions recommitting to economic and commercial anchors, all the more important as COVID-19 continues to upset daily life. This plan attempts to aid South Hadley in this effort, targeting one commercial center in particular, the Village Commons Commercial District.

Key findings reveal The Village Commons is a special community hub. Entrepreneurs and residents alike note it is a positive community to live and work. It has a singular identity and often visited. However, there is an opportunity for the development to connect to it's greater context in a way that would boost economic activity. Local businesses just outside The Village Commons, as well as the adjacent Mount Holyoke College, could work in tandem to provide events and shopping options at a regional scale. One of this plan's strongest recommendations is to integrate this area into a single district. Doing so will make the destination more appealing to both locals and visitors, increasing the revenue stream. Integrating the entire area can be done in many ways. This includes public realm changes, increasing open space, providing more community programming and outdoor events, and unifying the area through a branding effort.

Increasing revenue is of the utmost importance in the wake of COVID-19. 92% of businesses within the area noted being effected by COVID-19! 58% generated less business in 2020 than they did in 2019, despite having seen an increase in revenue in the three years prior. For some, this decrease was by more than 25%. These revenue losses feel personal, as most businesses within the area are mom-and-pop institutions with less than five employees.

Other revenue generating recommendations include advertising of the Village Commons District and other commercial centers at trail heads that attract regional visitors. Another attempts to leverage public empathy towards small business owners to generate more resources. For example, creating a parking fee structure within the Village Commons District may be more easily accepted if customers know revenue will go into support services for small businesses effected by the pandemic.

Other recommendations champion using South Hadley's many existing assets and organizations in collaborative ways. There are many local artists and cultural/higher education institutions within the area. These stakeholders can be engaged in new collaborative ways. Existing relationships can also be strengthened and reimagined.

While most recommendations are placed within the Village Commons District, they are applicable town-wide. The study area is merely meant to serve as a pilot, or testing ground, for these ideas. South Hadley should iterate on the successes and failures of these projects before expanding to the town's identified Economic Target Areas or Redevelopment Areas.

There are however, some recommendations meant to be implemented town-wide from the onset. These would require changes to administrative structures. If South Hadley wishes to provide real time and one on one support to business owners, it needs to devise an entity or entities wholly responsible to these efforts. Understanding that budgets are low and staff are already stretched thin, this plans suggest low cost, community driven alternatives. Finally, the town would greatly benefit from channeling resources into a few particular industries. The town noted a desire to increase restaurant variety and help local restaurateurs. Luckily, this is a moment where federal funding is aligned with this aim. Establishing a town-wide goal to become a creative restaurant destination is possible now at an unprecedented scale.

South Hadley was wise to propose The Village Commons as the study area for the RRP effort. It is a highly visible district that has been a central part of the South Hadley community for many decades. Many frequent the area at times of joy - be it the celebration of birthday or anniversary at Food 101, the beginning or end of a new semester at Mount Holyoke College, or to listen to live music on the Town Common or at the Thirsty Mind. What happens here reverberates throughout the town. Together, with dedication and creative thinking, South Hadley can reemerge from COVID-19 with bold and implementable strategies that continue to nurture this joy.

Diagnostic

Key Findings



The Village Commons is a valuable, but constrained, property.

The Village Commons is a wonderful community hub that fosters pride, communal gathering, and entrepreneurship. However, The Village Commons' growth is stymied. Roadway boundaries prevent physical expansion. Mount Holyoke owns the land on which the development resides, which complicates decision making, and the College's status as a tax paying non-profit entity complicates financial flexibility.

However, adjacent property owners may have more latitude for change. With cooperation and collaboration, nearby businesses could work with The Village Commons to enhance each other's strengths. Currently, the Village Commons District is seen by residents to exist almost exclusively of The Village Commons development. However, there are other businesses and assets nearby. Expanding the perception of the Village Commons District to include nearby businesses will aid in developing the perception of a larger and more inclusive dining, service, and entertainment district.



The Village Commons District thinks locally.

Today, The Village Commons supports local needs. Upper floor tenants are predominately social service and medical providers or academic offices. Lower floor tenants provide dining, retail, banking, and service options like hair salons. The Village Commons even boasts a small movie theater. This tenant mix appeals to residents and locals. Yet, to generate a greater consumer pull and better activate the area, there is room to think regionally. Imagining the Village Commons District as a regional destination may inform the recruitment of new types of tenants or wider appealing events. What gaps exist in the region for experiences and shopping? How could the Village Commons District fill those needs?

For example, COVID-19 reinvigorated interest in outdoor recreation, pulling greater numbers of people to hiking and biking trails. The Village Commons District can better leverage its location near these assets to appeal to a new range of regional audiences.



Current tenants serve current needs.

Residents note that they cannot always find what they need within the District. While it may be impractical to assume one shopping destination can serve all consumer desires, The Village Commons can be more creative with what they offer. COVID-19 forced businesses to reimagine how they do business, and The Village Commons could better embrace operational flexibility.

Services, retail, entertainment, and restaurant services at and around the Village Commons District target current consumer trends. However, COVID-19 accelerated demand for more adaptable spaces—be it flexible office space, a shared commercial kitchen, compact car loading spaces for delivery, or interactive retail experiences. The pandemic also reveals the fragility of a small business ecosystem. The loss of institutional small businesses are major and heart wrenching. Many current tenants in the Village Commons District do not have succession plans. Increasing small business resiliency, by both anticipating future consumer trends and business owners needs, would make for a stronger business community.



Residents turn to nearby towns for experiences.

South Hadley boasts beautiful hiking, biking, and ADA accessible trails. It also contains Mount Holyoke College and sits within the Five College Consortium. While these attributes make the town desirable, residents note a lack of places where experiences and consumer behavior intertwine.

Residents have noted that restaurants and bars in South Hadley close early, leaving many to visit nearby towns to grab a drink or watch sports games. Others remarked that town-wide, there are not many healthy or diverse food offerings, but instead a predominance of pub food. While The Village Commons is praised as a restaurant haven with more options than most, there are still dietary niches (like higher quality grab and go), that go unmet. South Hadley's lack of night life often drives people to towns like Northampton, where people can stroll, dine, and people watch. A concerted effort to activate the Village Commons District can recapture some of this activity.

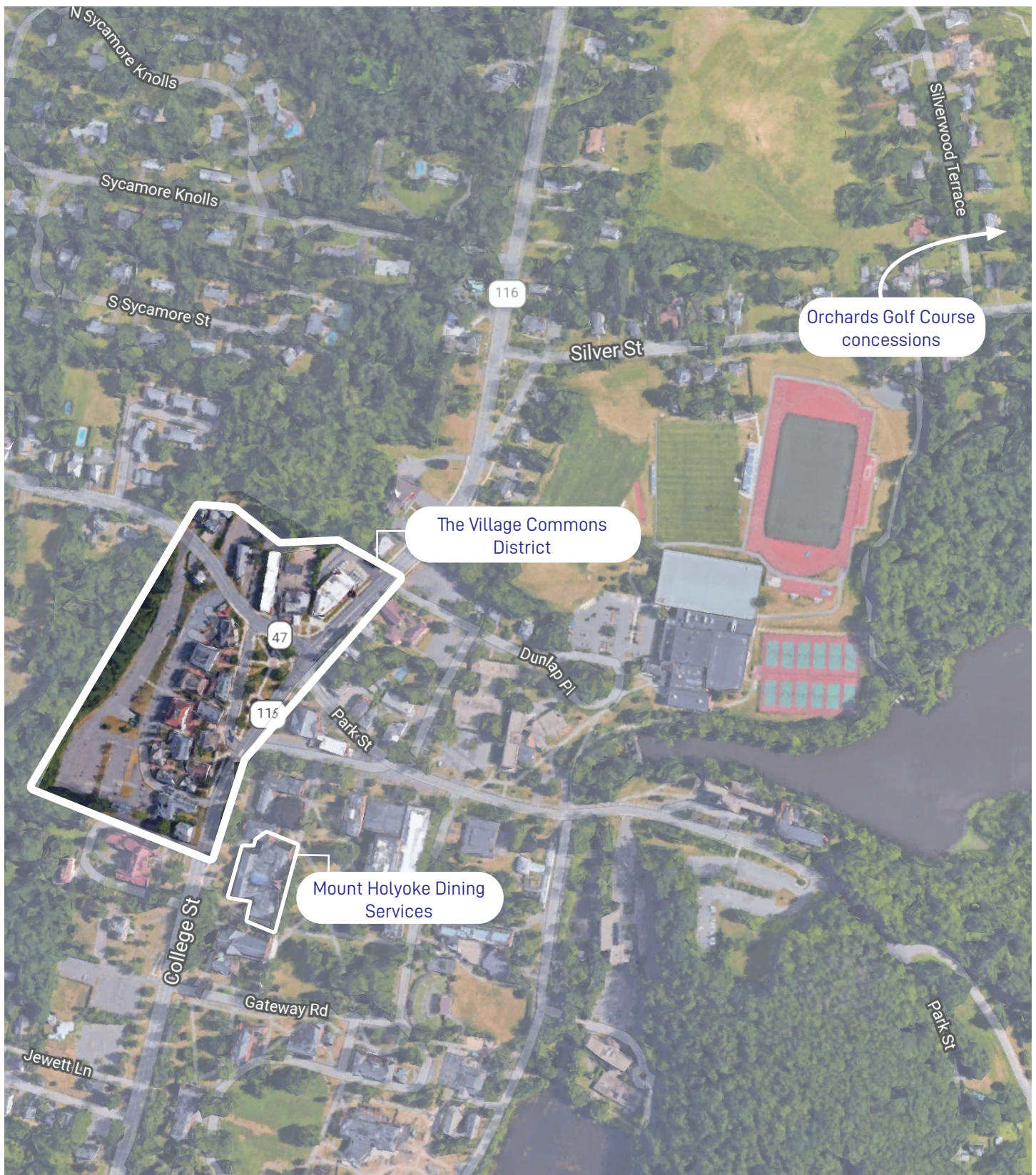


The Village Commons' ample public space can extend beyond its boundaries.

Since the creation of The Village Commons in 1987, the site has greatly invested in public space. Multiple patios have been created between buildings, sparking places to dine outside, host small events, or linger with a good book and cup of coffee. Shoppers see these spaces as assets.

However, these public spaces are starkly bound by College Street Bypass and Hadley Street. Investments in places to gather, access businesses, and cross roads safety do not extend beyond The Village Commons. One of The Village Commons' greatest attributes is the Town Common, a green space across from the College Street Bypass that hosts a summer concert series. Despite its proximate location, the green space feels separate from the rest of the buildings. The College Street Bypass reads as a hard boundary that limits expanding activity between the commercial uses on one side and outdoor activation on the other.

It is understandable that The Village Commons may only be able to permanently change the land it directly owns. However, creative approaches to movable street furniture, road stripping, temporary closures, and partnerships with local businesses and the town, could transform the area by providing an increased number of vibrant public facing spaces. In April focus groups, residents and business owners remarked a lingering hesitancy to join inside events. Expanding outdoor event spaces with enough room to socially distance would cater to these sentiments, while driving more business traffic during events.



The initial RRP application included the addition of the Orchards Golf Course and Mount Holyoke Dining Services. These businesses were included in the Business Survey. During the RRP process, the study area boundary was streamlined to the Village Commons District.

Source: Google Maps



Highlights from the Customer Base

ECONOMY BASED ON INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION

According to the 2019 American Community Survey, the town of South Hadley has approximately 17,625 residents, 6,403 of which live within the census tracts of the Village Commons District (8212, 8213). South Hadley's population has been mostly stable throughout the last decade, growing by 0.60% since the 2010 Census. In recent years, the town has begun to grow at a faster rate. It is expected the population will increase by 2.5% between 2020 and 2030.¹ Growth is expected in residents identifying as Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Black, which offsets the declining white population. South Hadley, like much the rest of the country, is growing both older and more diverse² (see image on following page).

The town's mostly stable population reveals an emotional connection to place. Many residents engaged for this effort mentioned deep ties to either the town, the surrounding Holyoke Mountain Range, or other nearby Western Massachusetts towns. South Hadley residents love where they live and are passionate about its future.

However, this stability reflects, to some degree, a lack of economic opportunity. The town became an industrial center in the late 1700s, boasting at least six mills and a lucrative fishing location.³ It maintained this industrial history until the 1950s and 1960s; although these industries employed fewer people with each subsequent decade. The South Hadley Falls area holds many of the town's formally industrial spaces. While the area has been underutilized since the decline of the milling industries, it is now a redevelopment area. Additional attention, care, and funding is being channeled into South Hadley Falls as well as other formerly industrial neighborhoods. The loss of the mills both forced South Hadley to diversify its economy, but also stymied economic growth.

¹ [South Hadley Master Plan Update \(Draft\)](#), 2020, Pg. 10

² *Ibid.*

³ [South Hadley Reconnaissance Report, MA Heritage Landscape Inventory Program](#), Mass Dept of Conservation and Recreation, June, 2009.

Many opportunities presented themselves with the establishment of Mount Holyoke College in 1837.⁴ The college brought development away from the mills and up along Route 116. Mount Holyoke is an excellent, but small, liberal arts school. With about 2,300 students, it is both an economic engine of the study area and a limited asset. As a major employer of townspeople, the closing of the college during the COVID-19 pandemic was deeply felt.

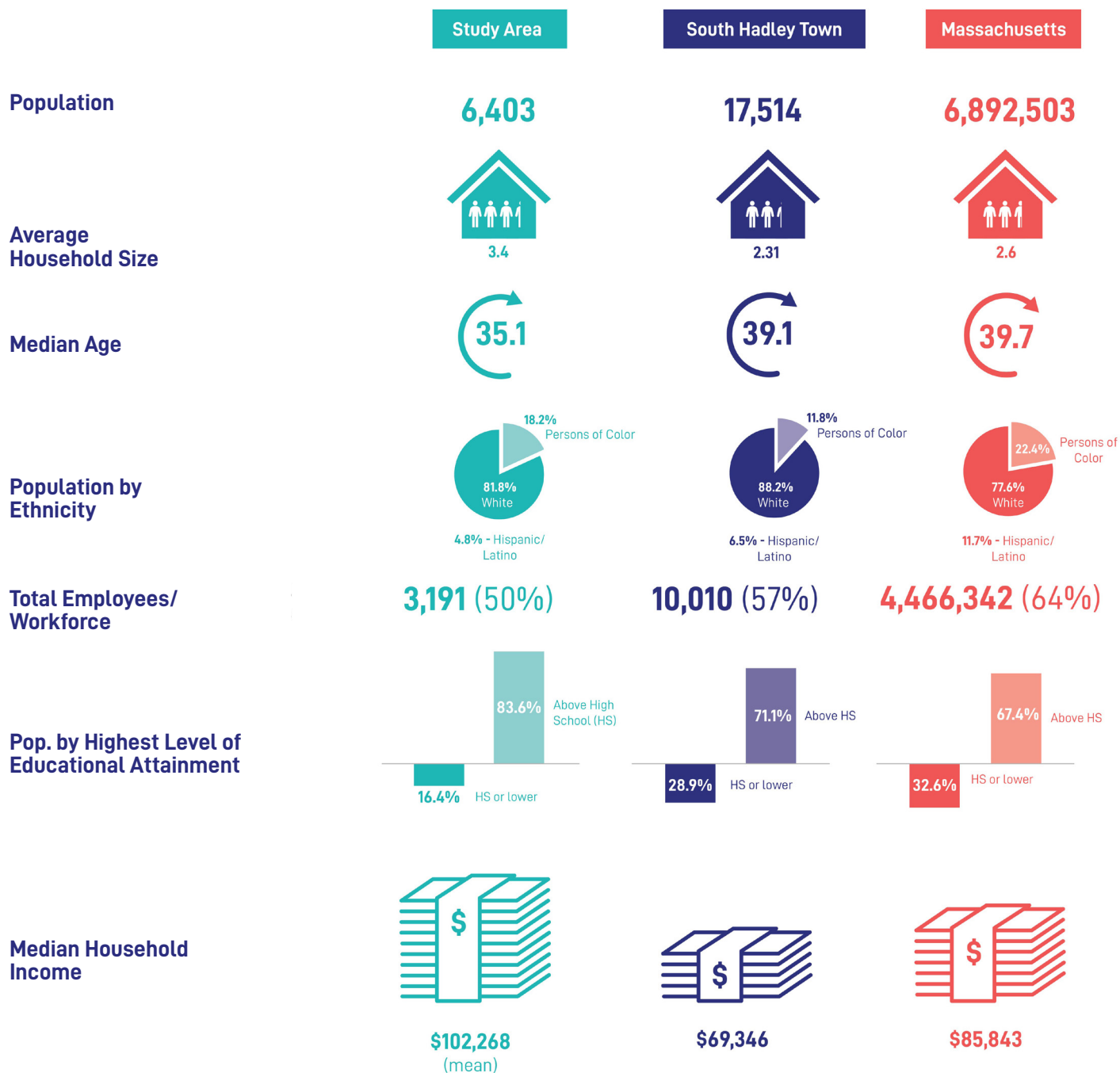
THE VILLAGE COMMONS DISTRICT CUSTOMER

South Hadley is a predominately white identifying community, with less than 12% of the population identifying as a person of color. The study area is slightly more racially diverse, with just over 18% of people identifying as a person of color. The town is also very well educated. 71% of South Hadley's residents have above a high school diploma. Educational achievement is, expectedly, higher in the study area. Almost 84% of residents within the study area have at least some college experience.

The Village Commons District is directly across from Mount Holyoke College, paradoxically providing both customer stability and reliance on the visiting family and friends of students. Business owners in The Village Commons noted that students are unlikely to cross the street and shop within the district. However, the Village Commons is frequented by student families visiting the College during College events like move-in day, graduation, and campus tours.

While they may visit anchors like Tower Theater and lower price point fast casual dining options, local students are not major Village Commons customers. Instead, College staff and Village Commons residents are more likely to patron the stores within and around The Village Commons. There is an opportunity to better capture the vibrancy that a proximate student population can bring. Even if students spend less than their visiting parents, local residents, or regional visitors, they may be more likely to attend events or respond to retail deals and promotions.

⁴ *Ibid.*



Community metrics compared between the Town of South Hadley, the census tracts within the study area, and the state

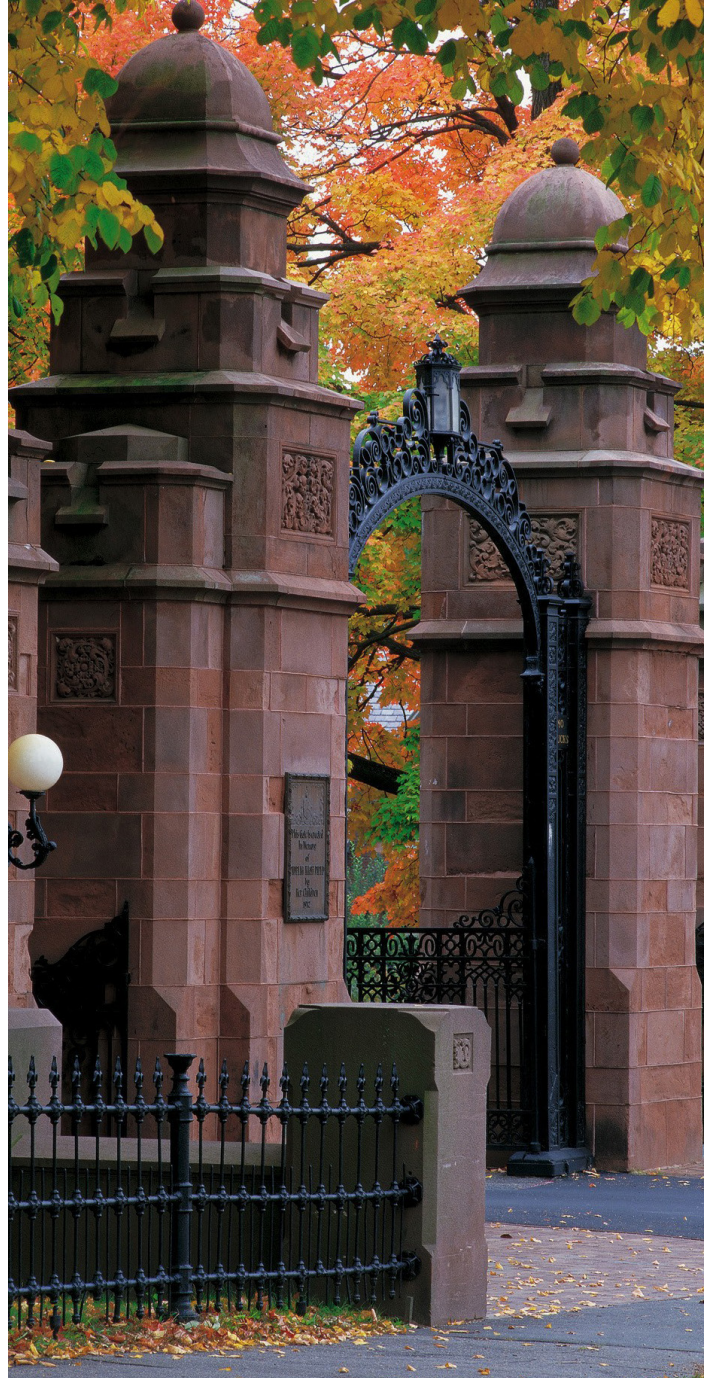
Source: U.C. Census Data



Since the College is directly within the Village Commons District, the study area has a slightly different market than the rest of South Hadley. The study area has a larger average household size, lower median age, and much higher mean income compared to the rest of the town. While the first data points are undoubtedly a reflection of the student population, the latter may reflect the incomes of academics and high level administrators who may live close to the College.

CULTURAL CHANGES BROUGHT ON BY COVID-19

As South Hadley's population changes over the next decade, targeted actions will be needed to make new residents feel welcome. COVID-19 has shrunk social circles and prompted a massive shake up in the nation's approach to work. It will be imperative to foster new ways of being, working, and connecting that meet this moment.



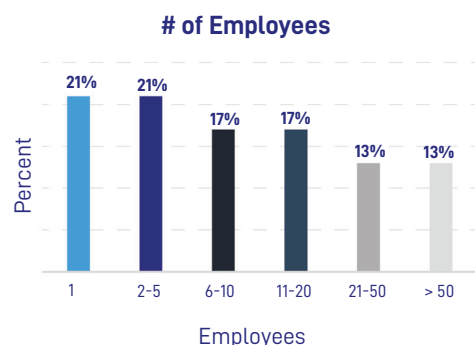
The shopping habits of Mount Holyoke College students effects the Village Commons District
Source: Mount Holyoke College



Highlights from the Business Environment

THE AVERAGE BUSINESS OWNER

The results of the RRP Business Survey revealed that most business owners within the Village Commons District were micro-enterprises (less than five employees), rented their space, and were experiencing an increase in revenue in the three years prior to COVID-19. As of Spring 2021, there were 64 businesses within the District (56 within The Village Commons), with six businesses closing since March of 2020 (four within The Village Commons).

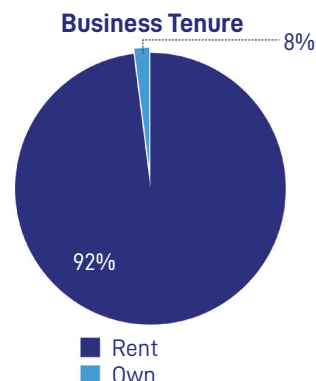


In focus groups, Village Commons administrators, business owners, and residential tenants expressed that a camaraderie exists within the Village Commons. Many love the location, community, and the consumer draw of the area. While it was more difficult to hear directly from business owners outside of the Commons, those that were reached expressed similar positive sentiments.

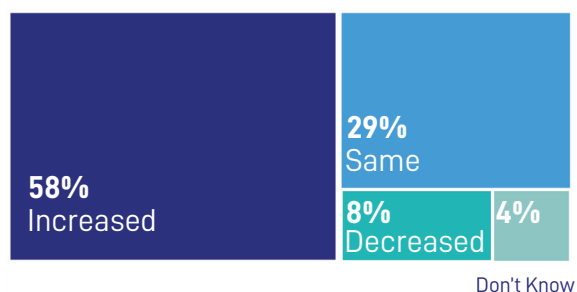
RESTAURANTS, HEALTHCARE, AND SERVICE

The Village Commons District is viewed by town residents as a destination. Before the pandemic, it was generating more than \$ 15 million in retail activity!¹ It is particularly known as a restaurant destination. Within the confines of the study area there are nine restaurants, ranging from fast casual delis to coffee shops, and African food to noodle bars. Entertainment anchors of the area include the independently run Tower Theater movie theater, live music offerings at the Thirsty Mind Coffee and Wine Bar, and Board and Brush Creative Studio.

¹ "About," The Village Commons website, 2021. < <http://www.thevillagecommons.com/about/>>



Revenue 3 Yrs Prior



While ground floor tenants of The Village Commons are highly visible restaurants, retail, and entertainment locations, above floor tenants include a high number of social workers, academic (PhD) offices, tutoring locations, and offices. There are eight businesses identified as "educational services," 12 businesses identified as "Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services," and 14 as "Healthcare and Social Assistance." Identification is based on NAICS code classifications. These businesses make up the majority of small businesses within the Village Commons District.

It is important to remember these second floor tenants when considering the draw of the Village Commons District. The engagement of these tenants with their audiences present clear opportunities to capture additional purchasing power from those who come into the area for errands and appointments.

VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Despite being a restaurant destination, focus groups identified a general lack of diverse dining options in South Hadley. Most restaurants cater to American-style cooking, or casual dining. There is a desire for alternative options like vegetarian, gluten free, and farm to table. There are also requests for places to be open later.



Focus group participants noted a lack of places to go to watch a sports game or gather after 8 pm. There were also requests for outdoor retailers, specialty bodegas, a pharmacy, additional retail stores, and perhaps a co-working space.

EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Resident desires for expanded hours, more food and retail options, and non-traditional spaces for working are all the more poignant within the COVID-19 era. These requests are aimed at restaurants, grocery stores, bars, entertainment venues, and retailers, which are industries hardest hit by the pandemic. Workers in these sectors are understaffed and often overworked, making requests for more (be it more hours of operation, menu options, or brick and mortar locations) feel all the more inaccessible. There is greater tension when these requests are seen alongside customer hesitation to return to indoor spaces.

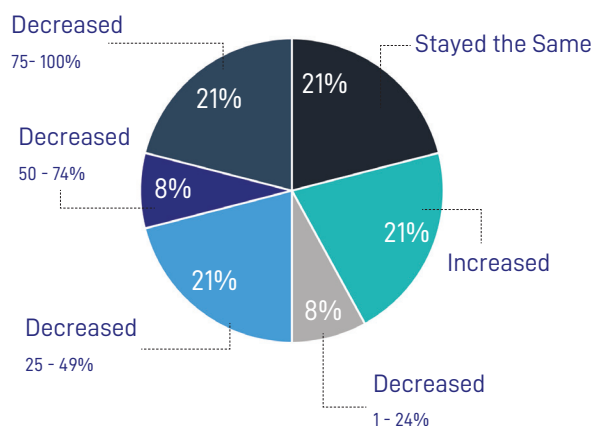
The RRP Business Survey shed additional insight on businesses in the current moment. It found that:

- 63% of businesses within the study area had less on-site customers in January and February of 2021, than before COVID.
- 59% of these businesses saw a reduction of foot traffic by more than 25%!

During April Focus Groups, members of the Chamber of Commerce noted that customers and residents posited they would not feel comfortable at indoor events until September of 2021. This initial hesitancy, compounded by continuing Delta variant concerns, makes it logical to assume South Hadley residents will remain cautious about in-person shopping in the months to come.

Luckily, federal, state, and local aid will be targeting these specific industries in historic ways. Funding can be given back to business owners who have lost revenue, spent money making their spaces COVID-safe, or who have had long-term business improvement projects halted by the effects of the pandemic. While it is important to strengthen individual businesses, it is more poignant the whole economy of South Hadley become more resilient. This is all the more necessary when considering the town's Master Planning Goals.

Revenue in 2020 vs. 2019



Responses from Business Survey report that 58% of businesses survived saw some kind of decrease in revenue between 2019 and 2020

Source: RRP Business Survey

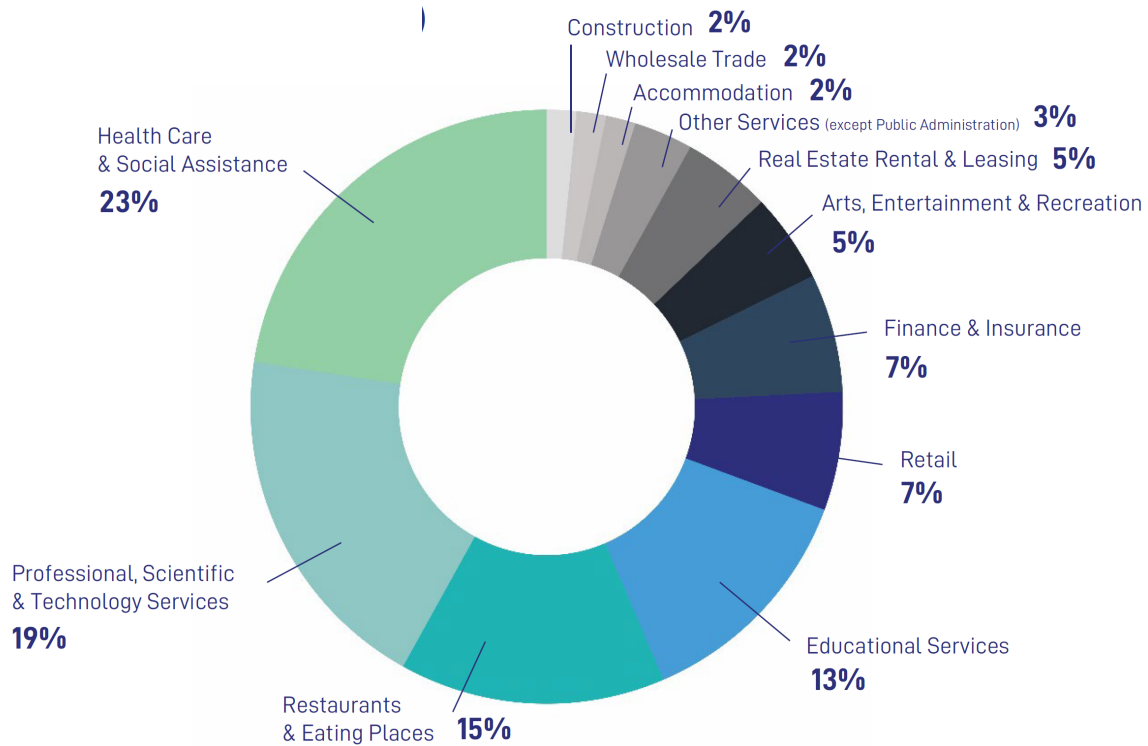
MOVING BEYOND MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

During the RRP process, South Hadley was undergoing an update to its Master Plan. Many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by the RRP effort matched that of the Master Plan. This shows a united vision for a path forward.

The following are a selection of the economic goals:

- Invest in the neighborhood centered on The Village Commons and Mount Holyoke College at Route 47 and Route 116
- Increase opportunities for small offices, professional entrepreneurs, and ways to fill retail gaps
- Connect South Hadley's commercial centers
- Continue to support the town's top employment sectors (government, education, and health care), while supporting new industries

This plan is to serve as an affirmation of these and other goals while taking a step further. It is a **"Yes, and..."** to the town's larger economic vision while helping to place these goals in the context of COVID-19. The interventions outlined in the recommendations, while applicable to all South Hadley businesses, can begin within the Village Commons District.



*Village Commons District Industry Breakdown
(by NAICS code)*

Source: Agency Landscape + Planning, South Hadley's Assessor's Database base, Property Files

The District, with its high number of restaurants, health care offices, and presence of both retail and entertainment, is a microcosm of the town.

Master Plan priorities may need to be reworked in light of COVID-19. This document is meant to assist in prioritizing Master Plan goals through the context of both the effects of COVID-19 and COVID-19 aid.

As the pandemic continues and hopefully subsides, there is an opportunity to fill existing vacant buildings with small businesses. This will require leveraging grant or loan programs to work with property owners and small businesses to address tenant fit-out costs, lease terms, and rents. In Spring of 2021, there were four vacant store fronts in the study area, three within The Village Commons itself. Interestingly, these vacancies were not due to the pandemic, but unrelated business decisions.

Overall, the Village Commons District is a distinctive commercial hub within South Hadley. However, it is a somewhat disjointed destination. The Village Commons itself has clear boundaries and a distinct architectural style. Neighboring businesses within the District feel disconnected, despite their close proximity and additional offerings. Investments in the physical environment are a first step towards uniting the area.

	Non-Village Commons Businesses	Village Commons Businesses	Village Commons District Total
Ground Floor Retail	28,911 sq. ft	45,951 sq. ft*	74,862 sq. ft
Ground Floor Office	2,850 sq. ft	16,151 sq. ft	19,001 sq. ft
Ground Floor Vacant	1,860 sq. ft	8,441 sq. ft	10,301 sq. ft

**Tower Theater removed from calculation, as it is located on the second floor. Vacant space within the Village Commons District. Data collected Spring '21*

Source: Site Visit, Assessor's Database, Google Streetview



Highlights from the Physical Environment

DISCONNECTED GATHERING SPACES

The Village Commons District has three unique physical areas: The Village Commons, the Town Common, and the neighboring businesses and Mount Holyoke College.

The Village Commons is a distinct collection of buildings. Created in the architectural style of New Urbanism, architectural firm Graham Gund devised an 11 unit mixed-used development. It aimed to provide places to gather, linger, live, work, and play. Since the creation of The Village Commons, additional resources have been put towards expanding patio and gathering spaces. Today, The Village Commons contains roughly half an acre of patio space, split between multiple spaces throughout the complex. The development is very well maintained. It received the highest marks in the RRP Public Realm Grading Rubric. This rubric rated elements like the condition of sidewalks, lighting, windows, awnings, and facades. (See Appendix *Physical Realm Data Collection Rubric* on pg. 112)

The Town Commons is a communal gathering space directly across from The Village Commons. It consists of a Civil War monument gifted to the town in the 1900s. It is designed in a formal style, with clear walking paths and a gazebo towards one end. It is roughly just over half an acre in size and currently hosts a Summer Concert Series.

The third area is the greater context of the Route 47 and 116 intersection. Within this area, and directly across from the Town Common, is the historic Mount Holyoke College. The school was the first of the Seven Sister's colleges (akin to the female equivalent of the all male Ivy Leagues). The collegiate buildings that front Route 116 are striking examples of early 1800's architecture. The campus is juxtaposed by other buildings in the area- a modernist post office building and apartments, colonial meeting house, and single family homes converted to businesses.

Despite the character of each of these areas, it is clear they developed independently. There is little cohesion between them and the district lacks a consistent identity. Development patterns have lead to a disjointed public realm. By connecting public space through targeted investments like bold crosswalks, improvements to street furniture, and the creation of pedestrian nodes, the District can begin to feel like a single united destination.



South Hadley's original meeting house and church, built around 1732. This image is from somewhere between 1930- 1937 when the space served as the Old Meeting House Tea Room.

Source: Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections



Today, the building is home to the Yarde Tavern, a lively American style restaurant adjacent to The Village Commons and the Town Common

Source: LostNewEngland.com (photo from 2019)





DRIVING LESS AND WALKING MORE

COVID-19 has greatly changed daily commute patterns and methods of getting around. Stuck inside during stay at home orders, many people rediscovered (or were forced to find) a love for exploring their communities. According to MassDOT's Mobility Dashboard (via StreetLight Insight), South Hadley saw pedestrian activity increase by 19% between 2019 and 2020.

As pedestrian activity increased, driving decreased. Average Annual Daily Vehicular Traffic (AADT) counts are the total volume of vehicle traffic one location experiences for a year, divided by 365 days. It compares traffic volumes and identifies where roads are busy. AADT saw a predictable decline in the same period. As residents commuted to the office and ran errands less, the average number of car trips decreased. While this may be a positive change for public health- it does not bode as well for the Village Commons District.

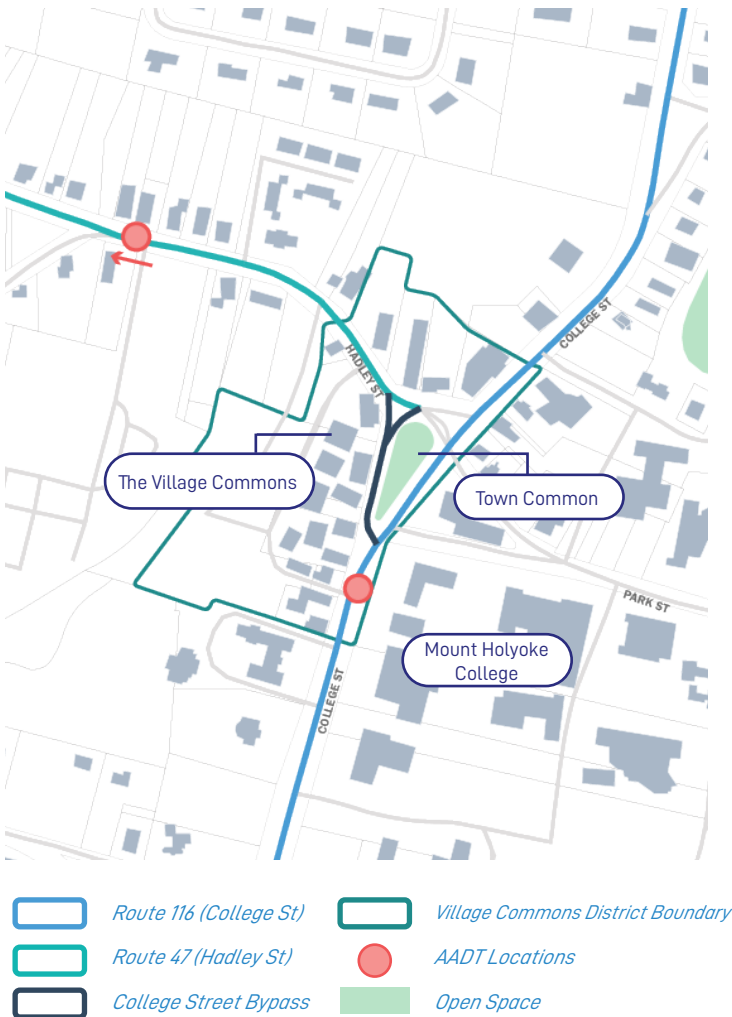
The District is located at the intersection of Route 47 (Hadley St) and Route 116 (College St), a primary north-south connector between Holyoke and Hadley and east-west connector between Northampton and Easthampton via a scenic by way. While this prime location is usually a great asset, it has two large drawbacks. The first is that in the wake of COVID-19, the District is less accessible to pedestrians and locals. The consumers with the greatest ability to walk to the District are college students, who were not living on campus during much of 2019. In focus groups, community member shared a desire for greater pedestrians connections to commerce centers like the Village Commons District so they would not need to drive.

Secondly, The Village Commons parking lot has limitations. With 300 parking spaces, it is "well-below" the parking requirements for a development of its size. Before the pandemic, the parking lot, which did not charge for parking, was often full. Students and staff of the college, employees of nearby businesses, and other community members would use the location as a communal parking space. This made it difficult for Village Commons customers and diners. It is expected this issue will reemerge as COVID-19 ebbs and flows.

Street Location	2019 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	2020 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	Change from 2019-2020
College St, South of Woodbridge St (Primary Street)	10,214	8,416	- 1798 17% reduction in AADT
Hadley St, North of Ferry St (Secondary Street)	4,367	3,598	- 769 17% reduction in AADT

The volume of vehicular traffic around the Village Commons District decreased 17% from 2019 to 2020.

Source: MASSDOT Transportation Management System



Street network around the Village Commons District
Source: South Hadley GIS Records, Agency Landscape + Planning



COLLEGE STREET BYPASS

College Street Bypass was often referenced during the RRP process. This street lies between The Village Commons and the Town Common. The street has become a cut through for motorists attempting to bypass the intersection of Route 116. Motorists often speed down this small street. Despite previous attempts slow drivers by narrowing the street and installing parking on both sides, speed is still an issue. Speeding makes the street feel unsafe and diminishes the outdoor space connections between the Town Commons and The Village Commons. Many have suggested closing this street to cars, either permanently or occasionally, and turning it into a pedestrian street. In order for the street to be closed temporarily or permanently, the Village Commons will need to work closely with the Town of South Hadley, (who owns the street), residents, business owners and tenants, and other stakeholders to identify the best approach forward. Recommendations within this plan identify a few first steps to begin those conversations and pilot the impacts of a street closure on all stakeholders.

In addition to speeding issues, the short term parking restrictions along College Street Bypass often go unenforced. Cars that remain in spaces for a long time lower the visibility of the adjacent businesses, and make it more difficult for restaurants along the street to execute take out and outside dining. The latter are interventions that have been shown to greatly help restaurants during COVID-19.



The Town Commons is nestled between two busy streets, Route 116 and the College Street Bypass. Shown above is the Town Commons and Route 116 interface.
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



Parking along College Street Bypass
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



College Street Bypass links the Town Commons and The Village Commons, but could be better utilized
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



Highlights from Administrative Capacity

THE VILLAGE COMMONS ADMINISTRATION

The land upon which The Village Commons resides is owned by Mount Holyoke College. The college saw the purchasing and redevelopment of the land into The Village Commons as a potential funding source. However, the property currently operates as a non-profit, where all revenue is put back into upkeep. The college thus, sees their development of The Village Commons as an act of hospitality and neighborliness for the community. While the college has a vested interest in the area remaining a vibrant place for students to relax, shop, and eat, the Center for Redevelopment Corporation runs and manages The Village Commons with great independence.

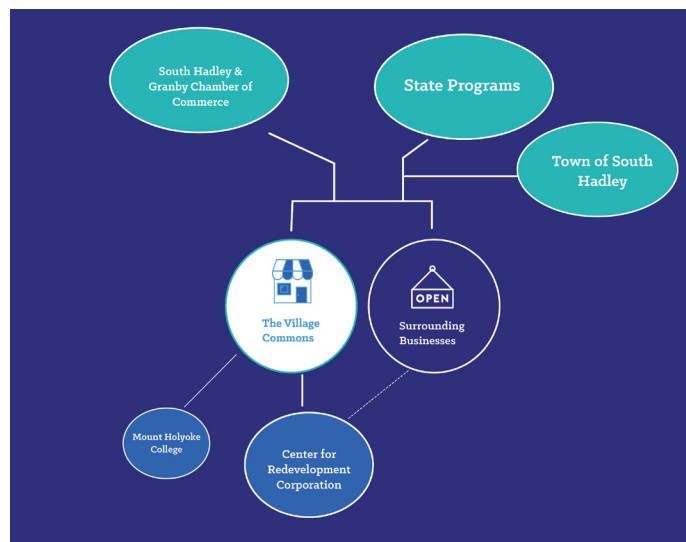
TOWN ADMINISTRATION

There is no larger district management organization that oversees the District as a whole. Instead, there are many hands involved in the administration and success of the study area. It must balance influence from governmental, institutional, non-profit, and private actors. This dynamism provides both opportunities and challenges.

On the scale of the town, there is no full time economic development officer or small business support staff. The Town Administrator often plays this role, helping businesses with day to day needs regarding business creation or maintenance. They direct entrepreneurs towards permits and licenses, and serve as a liaison between town government and business owners. While there is desire to create a full time position focused on economic development, there is not yet financial or human capacity to do so. This made COVID-19 aid, interventions, and communication all the more difficult in 2020. South Hadley's small business advocates were personally stretched very thin and required all hands on deck. Providing more support to both business owners and municipal staff is addressed in upcoming recommendations.

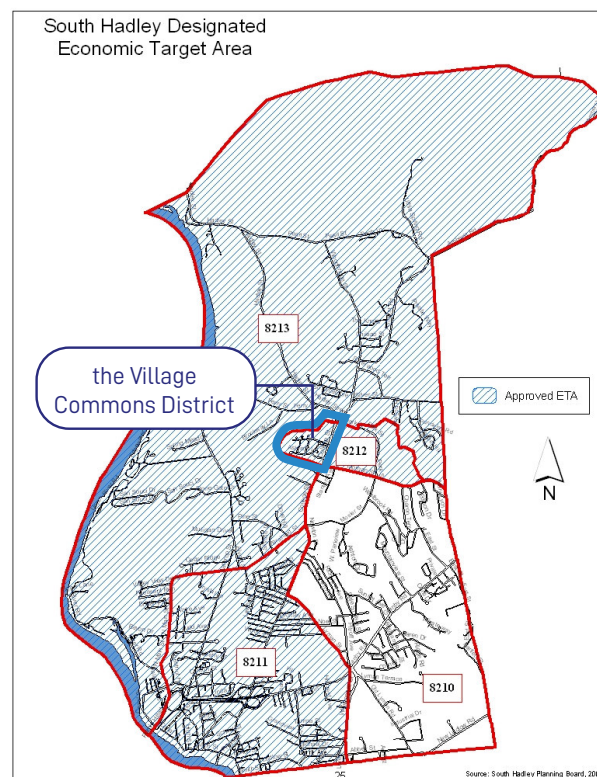
However, there are support systems. The local Chamber of Commerce and town Economic Development Committee are hard at work supporting South Hadley businesses at a higher level. They host town-wide events, represent business owners as a whole, and are often intermediaries between the town and overarching business community.

At the highest level, the Planning Department, Redevelopment Authority, Zoning Board of Appeals, and five -member Selectboard work together to develop and implement policies and procedures.



There are multiple administrative stakeholders within the study area

Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



South Hadley designated Economic Target Area

Source: South Hadley Planning Board, 2008

Project Recommendations

Increase the Boundaries of The Village Commons to Include Peripheral Businesses and Amenities

Category		Admin Capacity
Location		The Village Commons District and surrounding areas
Origin		The Town of South Hadley
Budget		Low to Medium (\$5,000 - \$150,000) Funding: REDO Grant Program , MassDevelopment Initiative Assistance Grants, Planning Assistance Grants , Shared Streets and Spaces Grant (possible)
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk – Expanding the district's reach to destinations on either side of Hadley Street and College Street will strengthen economic development opportunities for many businesses within the expanded district, Mount Holyoke College, and residents and visitors seeking a diverse tenant mix
Key Performance Indicators		# of business starts in the district, growth in self-reported revenue, wayfinding and signage highlighting business offerings beyond The Village Commons.
Partners & Resources		Partners: The Village Commons (tenants + administration), surrounding businesses, Mount Holyoke College, Selectboard, Town Administrators, Chamber of Commerce



Map of The Village Commons for wayfinding and business directory purposes
Source: The Village Commons

Diagnostic

Opened in 1987, The Village Commons is a mixed use development owned by Mount Holyoke College and managed by a non-profit development arm of the College. Designed to New Urbanist ideals, the development itself has a strong, cohesive identity, which supports a diverse mix of uses and audiences. The Village Commons development mix of small businesses includes retail, restaurants, offices and a first-run movie theater; with many residential units above and meandering courtyards and paths between buildings.

This cohesion internal to The Village Commons can have significant, positive spillover effects on surrounding businesses, Mount Holyoke College, and other recreation and residential destinations adjacent to the Commons. Currently, physical differences in the design, signage, and access between the Commons and surrounding destinations limits visitation between the two sides of Hadley Street. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, The Village Commons boasted two decades of fully occupied office, residential, and retail tenant spaces - in part because of the administrative capacity of the university's property management/development arm.

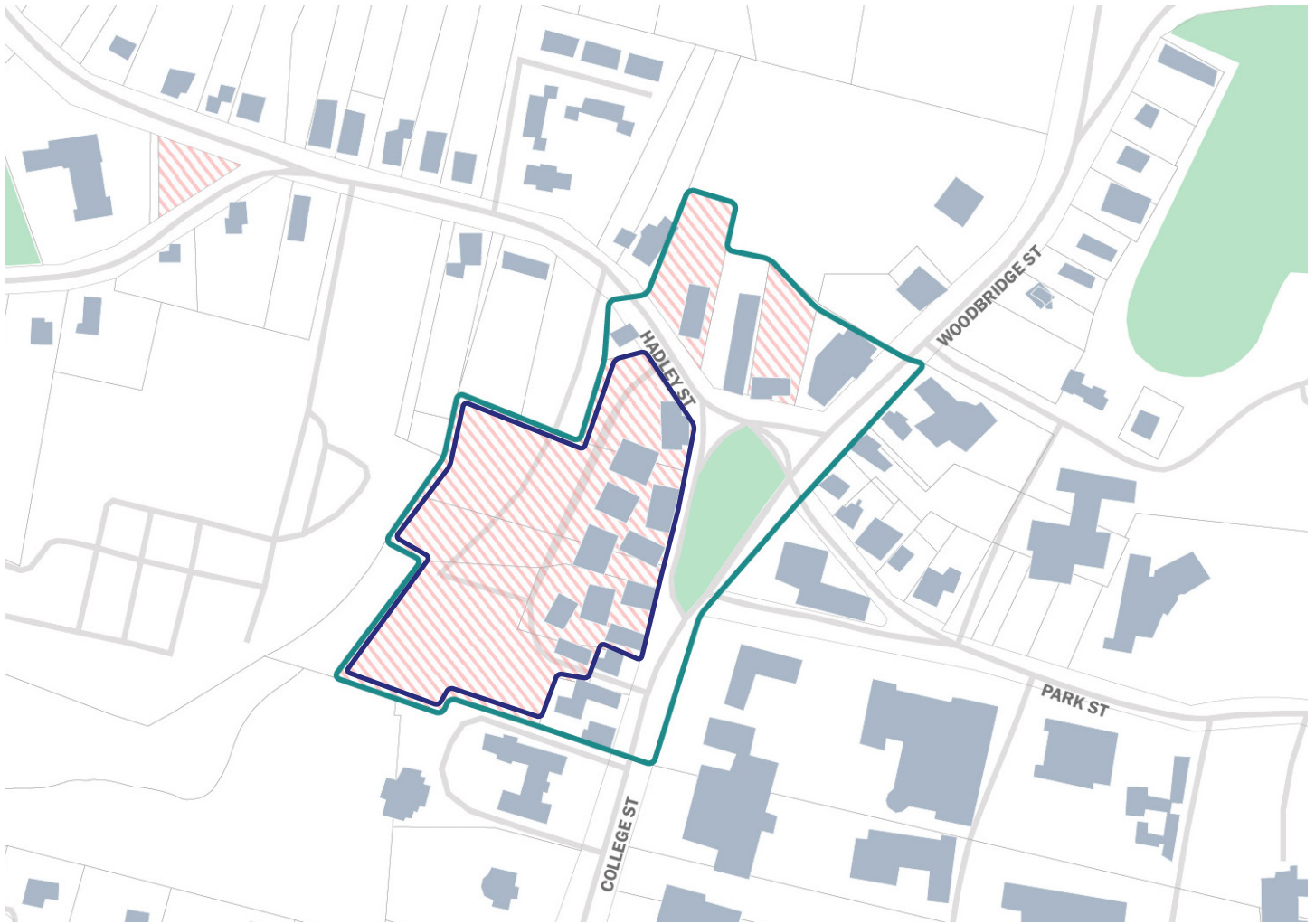
By consolidating advocacy for businesses and other entities under the umbrella of a capable organization, the Village Commons District could bolster economic activity locally and serve as a precedent for future hybrid approaches to business improvement/support districts.

Action Item

- Recognize The Village Commons development and properties adjacent to the property on Hadley Street and College Street as a "commercial district".
- Coordinate with surrounding businesses and other entities to understand priorities for investment/advocacy to support local economic development. Also understand the appetite for a governance model that includes The Village Commons property manager as a facilitator of a centralized commercial district.
- Implement RRP recommendations for business support services and Town-led economic development opportunities beyond the boundaries of the Town Commons.

Process

- Create a monthly meeting structure to meet with representatives from the town, The Village Commons, Mount Holyoke College, and businesses within the Village Commons District to discuss priorities, expectations, and ideal outcomes for a cohesive commercial district.
- Confirm a governance model for the new commercial district.
- Formalize the new commercial district within the municipal code and include special considerations for parking and permitted uses as an overlay to the code. These should be based on continued conversations with businesses, residents, and property owners within the district.
- Work with the Town of South Hadley to identify funding mechanisms, begin to implement physical investments, like wayfinding and protected pedestrian crossings, and provide comprehensive business support services.

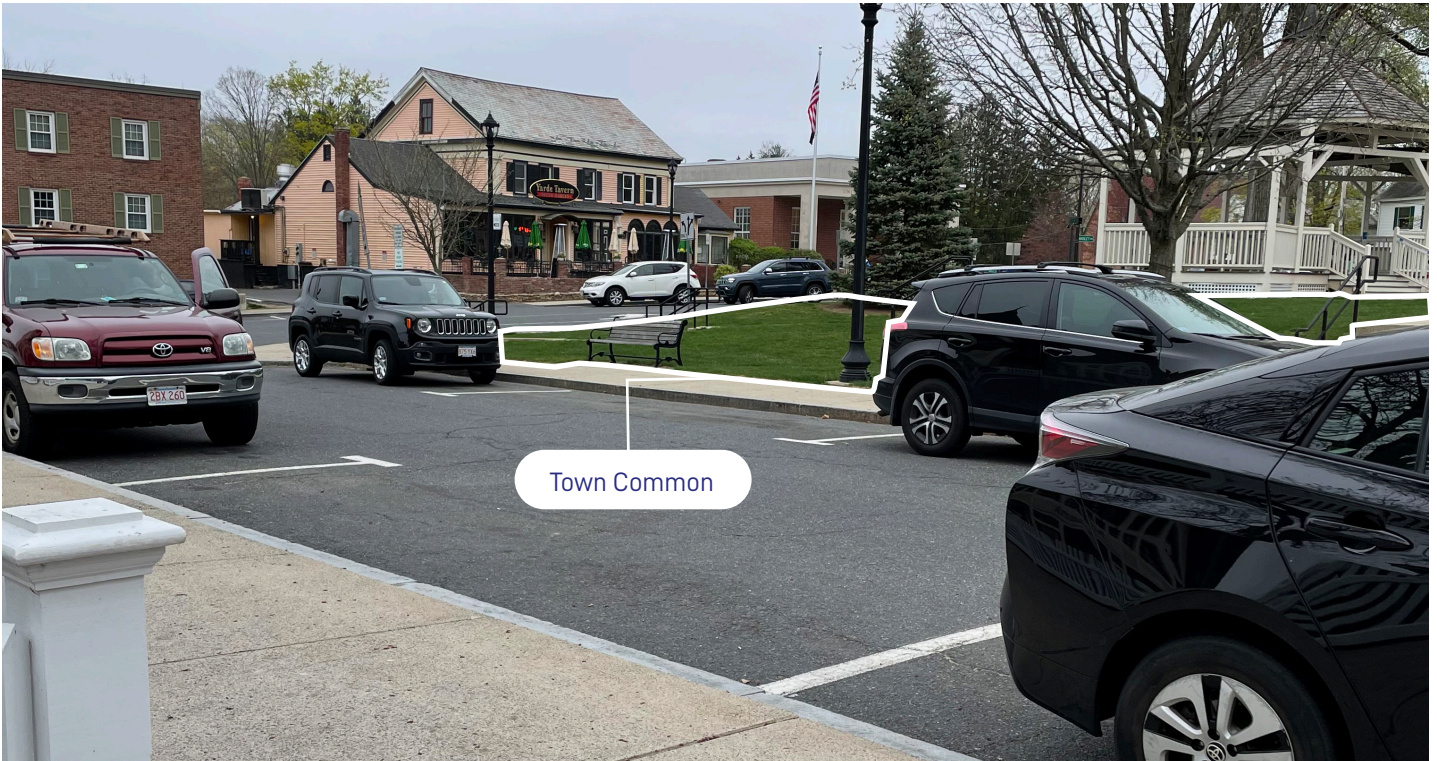


Proposed Bounds of the Village Commons District
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

-  Village Commons Property Boundary
-  Village Commons District Proposed Boundary
-  Zoned commercial properties
-  Open Space







Businesses across The Village Commons on Hadley Street. These businesses can be integrated into a larger shopping district through cohesive signage, sidewalks, and public space amenities like benches, chairs, and plantings.



The Town Commons is at the center of a number of retail establishments within the Village Commons District and adjacent to The Village Commons
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Institutionalize Small Business Support: Create an Administrative Organizational Structure

Category		Administrative Capacity
Location		Town-wide
Origin		Focus groups, small business owners, town planners, Chamber of Commerce
Budget		<p>Medium Budget (\$50,000 - \$200,000)</p> <p>Funding: Valley Community Development COVID Recovery Grants, American Recovery Act funds, Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program, State Small Business Credit Initiative, REDO Grant Program (possible)</p>
Timeframe		<p>Short Term (<5 years)</p> <p>Long-Term Goal: South Hadley is an attractive place to start a business</p>
Risk		Medium Risk – partnerships with nearby towns may be necessary to execute. Political support will need to be strong. High degree of coordination
Key Performance Indicators		Presence of Small Business Liaison or vendor list of small business services, # of small businesses aware of program, # of small businesses utilizing program
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Nearby municipalities, local and regional small business support services like S.C.O.R.E. or Western Mass Economic Development Council, local business networks, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council, Town Administrator</p> <p>Resources: Franklin County Community Development Corporation, LISC Digital Growth Accelerator</p>

Diagnostic

Federal financial relief was a lifeline for small businesses during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, for a myriad of reasons, this relief was often inaccessible. Either application processes were opaque and complex, not written in the business owner's native language, or required a degree of free time that exhausted business owners simply did not have.

The RRP Business Survey, provided an expected, but no less troubling picture of the economy. Of the businesses surveyed:

- **58% generated less business in 2020 than they did in 2019.** For half of these businesses, revenue declined by more than 25%!
- **46% had to close (temporarily or permanently)**
- **33% expressed interest in receiving some kind of assistance.**
- **22% noted that South Hadley's regulatory environment poses obstacles to business operations.**

Even from the small sample of businesses around the Village Commons District, it is clear there is an appetite for additional business resources. Currently, there is no single full time position responsible for small business support in South Hadley. The Town Administrator is a well used resource for questions like licensing and permitting, the mostly volunteer Chamber of Commerce is a strong small business advocate and convener, and the Economic Development Council was essential in writing Economic Development strategies for the town's Master Plan. However, when federal aid was released, it was difficult to identify a single source for clarity and assistance to acquire aid.

Even before COVID-19, South Hadley operated with a lean, but highly skilled, planning staff. While there is knowledge and desire to enhance Economic Development offerings, there is limited budget and capacity. Budget and capacity shortcoming have only been exacerbated by the global pandemic.

As the Delta variant continues to make reopening businesses opaque, there is ever growing need for stable, informative, and collaborative small business support system in South Hadley.

Action Item

- Create a system to provide long term small business support to the South Hadley economy.
- Convene stakeholders to discuss, investigate, and decide between a Small Business Liaison shared between multiple towns or a contracted vendor model (explained in greater detail below).
- Highly publicize any new administrative organization changes so small businesses are aware of how to access new support systems.

Process

This recommendation offers South Hadley two models forward. Without the necessary time to host discussions with nearby governments, community leaders, town-wide small businesses, and a larger swatch of the population, it felt premature to suggest a final model within the RRP effort.

The two structures identified below were chosen due to their low cost of implementation, collaborative nature, flexible structure, and ability to execute "quick wins" before scaling up. Before selecting either the Shared Business Liaison or Contract Vendor Model path, South Hadley should:

- Ask business owners which resources and services they need and articulate the easiest way for them to access those services.
- Interview nearby Economic Development professionals for informal best practices
- Convene policy decision makers, like the Planning staff, Economic Development Council, Chamber of Commerce, redevelopment authorities, and other invested parties to discuss the two structures
- Meet with local municipalities, like Granby, Holyoke, or Belchertown, to gauge interest and enthusiasm in a shared resource. If there is little interest in collaboration, this may no longer be a viable option.

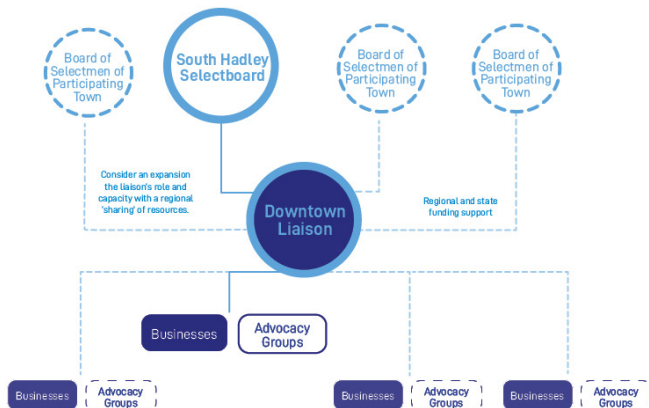


Diagram of Shared Business Liaison
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

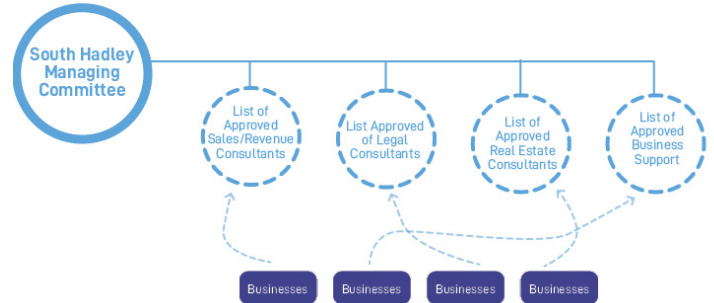


Diagram of Contracted Vendor Model
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Process

Administrative Organization Option #1: Create A Shared Small Business Liaison

In this system, nearby towns join forces to support their small business communities. The position is funded by all participating municipalities, and the Liaison is shared between them. The Liaison provides personalized training on marketing, business plan development, licensing, and permitting. They are also an active recruiter of new businesses, industries, grants, fellowships, and programs. They have knowledge in federal, state, and local financing, especially COVID-19 specific relief.

Benefits:

- Lower cost for each participating community than if they were to fund the position alone.
- Fosters collaboration, networking, development, and expertise sharing between participating communities.
- Allows participating communities to think bigger by expanding outside their municipal boundaries.
- Position creates a centralized location for business assistance. Business owners know who to go to.
- Liaison may be able to access increased funding and resources as a multi-jurisdictional entity.
- Communities share best practices quickly and iteratively. Lessons are learned together with lower risk.
- Participating communities may enter into healthy competition to create the most business friendly practices.

Challenges:

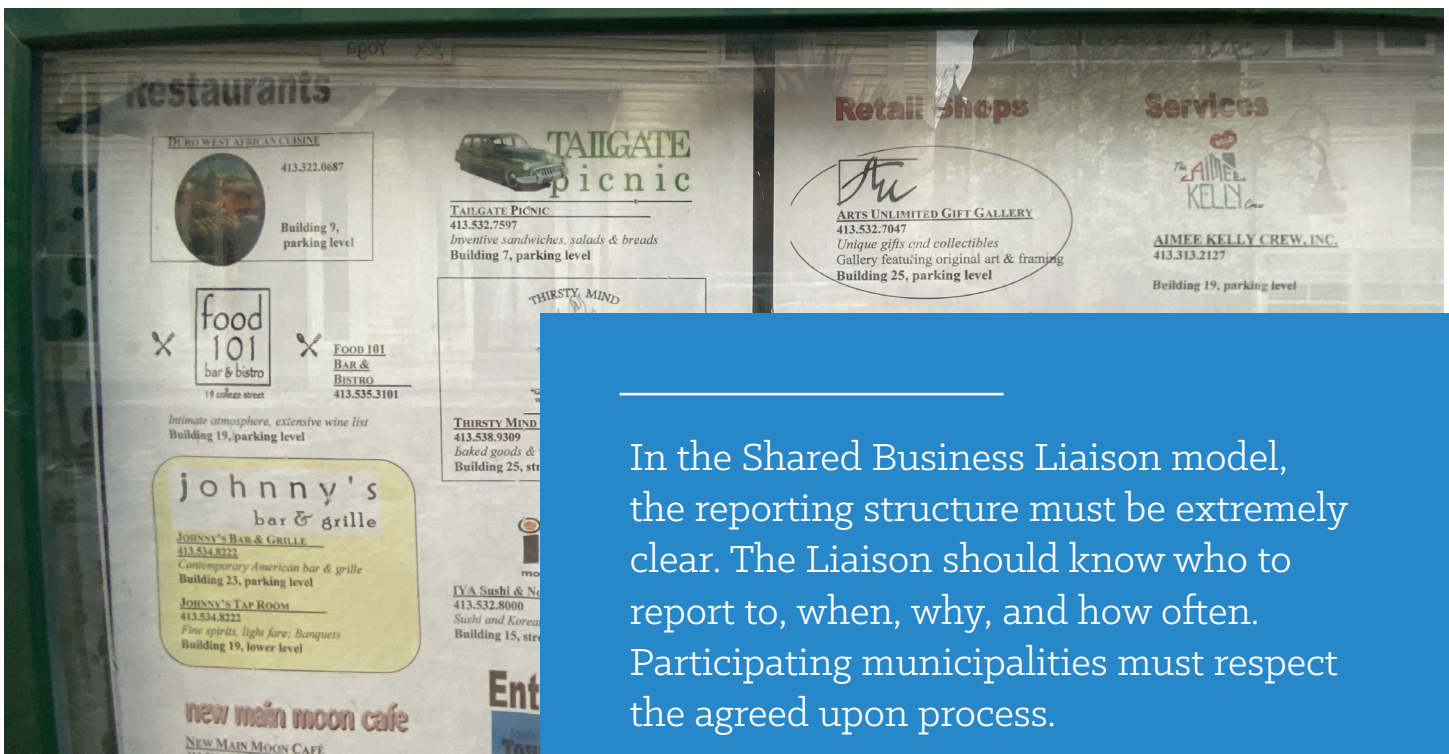
- Participating communities may end up competing against one another for resources and consumers.
- Different planning goals, policy initiatives, licensing, and business strategies may exist within the communities. There will need to be political will to overcome these challenges.
- Liaison may become stretched thin and need additional support in the future.
- Roaming position may make the Liaison difficult to contact.
- All participating communities may lack dedicated economic development resources. There may be a lack of a solid system upon which to build.

Opportunities:

- Liaison assists with active business recruitment.
- Liaison is able to coordinate and orchestrate programs and resources from additional support systems like S.C.O.R.E. and the Franklin County Community Development Corporation.
- Position streamlines business outreach with local brokers during recruitment initiatives. Larger jurisdiction can provide more storefront options to interested entrepreneurs.
- Shared position will require transparency between communities about their own approvals process, larger economic development strategies, and resources. This clarity will be essential for small businesses and potential entrepreneurs.
- Economic Development Liaison positions are applicable for funding through the American Recovery Plan Act.

Process Cnt'd

- **Process:**
 - Work with participating municipalities to brainstorm required skill set, position requirements, and duties.
 - Draft a conceptual job description that outlines key job responsibilities and reporting structure for the position.
 - Decide on prospective salary. Find potential funding sources to offset costs. Look to grants.
 - Decide if grant writing to continue position will be part of Liaison's responsibilities.
 - Connect with local/regional/national organizations with overlapping goals. Use these coalitions to open additional funding streams.
 - Solidify and secure funding commitments from towns, state, or other organizations before hiring.
 - Modify job based on funding received, both in terms of position expectations and hours per week.
 - Interview candidates with a panel of representatives from participating communities. Make this hiring committee strong and diverse to gain a variety of perspectives and position legitimacy. Include local business owners. Decide on decision making structure should there be differing opinions about who to hire.
 - Offer position to candidate.
 - Make reporting structure and feedback policies between Liaison and municipalities extremely clear.
- On board and introduce.
 - Craft a strategy to have Liaison connect with all (or most) of businesses and business owners in the area. This can be through an in person visit, phone call, or Zoom session. Provide a one on one connection whenever possible.



In the Shared Business Liaison model, the reporting structure must be extremely clear. The Liaison should know who to report to, when, why, and how often. Participating municipalities must respect the agreed upon process.

Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Process Cont'd

Administrative Organization Option #2: Contracted Vendor Model

In this organizational structure, South Hadley contracts out small business support systems to local businesses and organizations. It creates a "Rolodex" of trusted, verified businesses, institutions, and professionals that can support small businesses. This includes lawyers, accountants, architects, civil engineers, landscaping companies, marketing firms, bankers, real estate brokers, continuing education courses, multi-lingual support services, and artists.

Benefits:

- Local businesses invest in local businesses. Money for services supports small businesses, staying within the community.
- Fosters collaboration and expertise sharing between local businesses. Allows businesses to help their neighbors and feel a greater sense of community.
- This system is nimble and easily personalized. It allows for creative ideas to flourish in areas like logo creation, online marketing, online sales and delivery, and website creation.
- Vendors will become highly versed in the town-wide landscape of their discipline, providing targeted feedback to town administrators and policy makers. For example, lawyers contracted through the town-wide vendor model may become intimately familiar with which areas of business licensing provide the most heartburn.
- The system is helpful for the municipality, who can also contract out services for their own needs. It can also reduce the services the municipality must provide to businesses.
- Businesses can become approved vendors based on willingness and skill, which uplifts smaller or lesser known companies.
- Government can remain hands off once structure is in place. Chamber of Commerce could champion idea as a benefit they offer business community.

Challenges:

- If there is a limit put upon the number of vendors, this could be unfair. If only 5 marketing firms are allowed to be included on the vendor list, these 5 may receive an unfair advantage in generating clients.
- Funding is unclear. Businesses may need to pay out of pocket for services. This deters businesses who may need services the most, such as those greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic or operating on small margins. However, it is imperative contracted businesses be paid fair market value so they remain strong on their own. Funding to offset costs will most likely require a hybrid of grants, municipal contribution, bank sponsorship, or revenue from potential taxes or development projects. This may cause funding to wax and wane throughout the years, causing unreliability.
- Limited scope; this structure narrows in on individual business needs, but does not consider larger economic development initiatives and visions.
- Individual businesses will need to be proactive and reach out to vendor listed businesses out of their own initiative.

Opportunities:

- Becoming an approved vendor may spark healthy competition among local businesses.
- South Hadley can build out the system with creative requirements. Perhaps contracted vendors must provide community service hours, attend professional development, or be involved in local extra-curriculars. This could provide fun incentives for residents and business owners to be further involved in their community.

Process Cnt'd





- **Process:**
 - South Hadley releases a Request for Proposals for companies on the approved vendor list.
 - Selection committee vets businesses. Committee should include diverse voices from organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, residents, business students at local colleges, and municipal staff. Selection can be on a rolling basis or offered periodically.
 - Town employee, like the Town Administrator, negotiates rate for services based off financing structure.
 - Vetted business approve the terms and invoicing structure.
 - Approved business and contact information are listed on town's website in an easy to find location.
 - All businesses receive periodically updated vendor lists.
 - Newly incorporated businesses receive vendor list and description of system upon receiving their business license.
 - Contracted businesses receive seals, stamps, signs, and other visual material to advertise themselves as part of the municipal vendor model. This both acknowledges the businesses' quality of work and promotes the system to customers.



Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

In the Vendor Model, clarity is key. Preparing a “partnership agreement” will help define roles and expectations. It should spell out ground rules so the vendor is not put in a difficult position if there is competition over a particular business or lead.

Institutionalize Small Business Support: Provide Low-Cost Business Development Services

Category		Administrative Capacity
Location		Town-wide
Origin		Department of Planning and Conservation, The Village Commons Chief Operating Officer
Budget		Low Budget (<\$50,000)
Timeframe		<p>Short Term (<5 years) <i>*Initiatives can begin immediately</i> Long-Term Goal: South Hadley is an attractive place to start a business</p> <p>Funding: Valley Community Development COVID Recovery Grants, MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places grants, American Recovery Act funds (i.e. Good Jobs Challenge), Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program, State Small Business Credit Initiative, REDO Grant Program (possible)</p>
Risk		Low Risk- services provided on a volunteer basis are vulnerable to inconsistent commitment
Key Performance Indicators		# of office hours, workshops, and programs held, # of participating business owners, # of returning business owners utilizing services, # of new businesses created after using services
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Department of Planning and Conservation, regional small business support services like S.C.O.R.E. or Western Mass Economic Development Council, local business networks, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council, Town Administrator, Selectboard, Redevelopment Authority, local small business and professionals</p> <p>Resources: Franklin County Community Development Corporation, American Recovery Act funds (i.e. Good Jobs Challenge), LISC Digital Growth Accelerator, Entrepreneurship for All (Holyoke, MA and Berkshire County chapters)</p>

Diagnostic

COVID-19 had a direct effect on small businesses' financial resources, mental and physical capacity, and staffing. Of the businesses who responded to the RRP survey:

- **92% reported that COVID-19 impacted their business**
- **63% saw a decline in revenue**
- **46% of businesses noted they needed to establish alternative modes to sell and deliver products.**

While most businesses are micro-enterprises (employing less than 5 people), 42% of businesses were forced to layoff employees. What we take away from these responses is that businesses had to pivot, reinvent, and do more with less. This reveals a need for low cost, easily implementable business services.

At the town scale, South Hadley has a long term goal to make the town more appealing to creative entrepreneurs and small businesses. The town is well positioned for economic growth with multiple commercially oriented nodes, such as the Village Commons District. However, Mount Holyoke's decision to limit on campus housing during the pandemic undoubtedly effects the businesses within the Village Commons District. How deeply this decision, along with other changes in consumer behavior, has decreased revenue is still being understood.

The pandemic caused a greater sense of urgency to bolster the diversity and depth of the South Hadley economy. Currently, South Hadley's economy is driven by the Education, Government, and Health Care sectors, which combined, account for 68% of all jobs and 72% of employment growth from 2010-2018.¹ These sectors were overwhelmed by the COVID-19 pandemic and may require additional intellectual reinvestment and financial capital to build back better. The South Hadley Master Plan also identified an under supply of retail offerings, specifically clothing, shoes, and restaurants. Retail and restaurants remain some of the hardest hit industries. If South Hadley intends to strengthen these sectors amidst the continuing devastating effects of COVID-19, some unique thinking will be necessary.

Luckily, clever ideas do not need to be expensive. A hospitable small business economy does not always need to come through sweeping and politically challenging policy and licensing. Instead, an environment of collaboration, imagination, curiosity, and community can begin with lower cost programs that reflect a sense of care for burgeoning and current entrepreneurs.

Action Item

- Hold "office hours" between business owners and planning, licensing, and regulation administrators on a consistent basis.
- Implement a "Shark Tank" style program, that allows curious entrepreneurs to test out concepts, ideas, and market viability with local experts in a fun and creative way.
- Host open houses, workshops, and "skill shares" between local business owners, economic development non-profits, higher education institutions, students, and community members.
- Create fun, playful, and action-oriented programs that ease the emotional and psychological trials caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ South Hadley Master Plan Update (Draft), 2020, pg. 51

Process

Hold Office Hours

- Identify governmental staff willing to open their offices, phone lines, or Zoom links to interested businesses.
 - Recruit staff within the areas of Planning & Conservation Department, Town Administrator, Selectboard, and Redevelopment Authority.
- Solidify a consistent monthly commitment of office hours from each department/individual. Begin with a two to three month horizon to pilot the project and lower barriers to participation.
- Create a clear calendar of office hours, noting time, location, and medium (in person or virtual).
- Reach out directly to specific business owners and community leaders. Invite them to the first round of office hours.
 - Identify entrepreneurs with recent business license requests, small business owners who are BIPOC or female-identifying, and sectors hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, like retail and restaurants.
- Execute office hours, providing assistance as needed.
- Ask business participants for feedback. Iterate the system as needed.
- Publicize the Office Hours program on brochures, the town website, and through one on one outreach.
- Bring in new voices- fellow business owners, higher education professors and students, and arts and cultural organizations.

Implement a "Shark Tank" style program

- Assemble a diverse panel to serve as "judges/experts" - local business leaders, artists, community leaders, governmental staff, professors and college students, retired residents, and youth.
 - Include economic development professionals and potential consumers.
- Pilot the program. Recruit participants in the early stage of business ideation and creation.
 - Create an online application.
 - Request pitches from specific sectors (like those most effected by COVID-19) or a limited geographical region (like South Hadley).
 - Ask businesses to provide a one page "ask," so the Shark Tank can have the right type of "experts."
- Organize and host event.
- Model the event after the television show ["Shark Tank" on CNBC](#). Ask participants to pitch an idea to the "judges/experts." Establish a presentation length and format. Encourage creative presentations.
- Ask "judges/experts" to provide concrete, tangible, and specific advice to participants.
- Remind participants this is a friendly event.
- Scale Up. Recruit participants and "judges/experts" from regional networks.
- Telecast the pitch sessions on online video services like YouTube or local television stations.
- If possible, offer seed capital or a place in a local accelerator program to impressive business ideas.
 - State funding may offset the cost of hosting the program or serve as "prize money."
- Offer Shark Tanks in line with South Hadley's capacity- informal bi-monthly affairs or highly anticipated yearly events.
- Advertise outside of South Hadley to ensure town is seen as a supportive and playful place to open a business.



Business support should extend beyond The Village Commons property to cover the full district
Source: The Village Commons



Promotions and workshops can expand the customer base and repeat clients
Source: The Village Commons

Process Cont'd

Online Promotion

- Create an easy to find landing page for businesses on the town website.
 - List businesses by category. Include contact information and hours. Update regularly. This is particularly important during COVID-19, where business hours may be in flux due to changing restrictions.
- Begin a "Business of the Month" feature.
 - Highlight one business each month.
 - Include a notice in the town paper and publish a short interview with business owners.
 - Be diverse in who is highlighted, pulling from different industries, identities, and years of business experience.
 - Provide business owners with signage, stickers, badges, or certificates that acknowledges the selection.

Workshops & Open Houses

- Use already existing free workshop and training resources available through non-profits.
- Acquire "The Good Job Challenge" funding through the American Rescue Plan to host programs and workshops.
 - Fund skills training systems and programs to prepare workers for skill based technical jobs.
 - Supports South Hadley's Master Plan light manufacturing goals.
- Recruit local business owners to host open houses.
 - Can be on a one off or consistent basis.
 - Open stores, share stores and best practices with others through casual conversations.
 - Potential to develop into formal events with food and childcare service.

33% of businesses surveyed expressed interest in **shared marketing/ advertising**

13% had interest in **social media training**

Low-Cost Business Development Services



Statewide

Nantucket Chamber of Commerce “NICE” Pitch Competition

In 2019, the Nantucket Chamber of Commerce launched its first NICE Pitch Competition event. Contestants competed for cash and other prizes. Any Nantucket resident was allowed to enter and share their idea for either a new business or a way to evolve their current company. After an open submission period, 10 entrepreneurs were selected.

Finalists pitched their ideas in front of the live audience and panel of judges. Each pitch was limited to a 3-minute presentation, followed by 2 minutes of Q&A from the judges.

As judges deliberated, audience members voted on an “audience choice” winner. The event was roughly 90 minutes in total. Both the Springfield Chamber of Commerce and Holyoke Chamber of Commerce have conducted similar programs.

Springfield Chamber of Commerce + INTERISE RISEUP Springfield

The Springfield Chamber has united with INTERISE to provide a 6-month StreetWise MBA-curriculum. Participants in RISEUP are connected to a cohort of entrepreneurs, who all work to create three-year customized strategic growth plans for their businesses. Experts are speakers and alumni are available to connect. To qualify, business must be based in City of Springfield, have \$150,000 – \$10,000,000 in annual revenues, have 1 additional full-time employee besides the owner(s), and been in business for at least 3 years.



Streetwise MBA

Our flagship program, the **StreetWise ‘MBA’** is a hands-on executive education program for established small business owners. With 80+ programs across the country, business owners gain the business knowledge, management know how, and the networks needed to thrive.

Franklin County Community Development Corporation

Online Trainings and 1-on-1 Counseling

The Franklin County Community Development Corporation offers a myriad of programs one can tap into. They provide 1 hour of free one-on-one counseling services ranging from marketing, budget projections and business plan critique. Fee-based counseling services are available for developing a mission statement, goals and objectives, marketing plan, operations plan, and budget projection.

Online (and free!) trainings are also frequently offered. Sessions on how to "Grow Your Business," "Grow Your Food Production Business," "Financing Farms and Healthy Food Retail" are all offered on a monthly basis. Other trainings on social media, Facebook for business, marketing and branding, and e-commerce are also offered.



The Franklin County Community Development Corporation has been able to pivot many in-person trainings to online formats. This has allowed trainings to be flexible and less ephemeral

Source: <https://www.fccdc.org/>

Leverage Local Community to Recruit New Businesses

Category		Administrative Capacity
Location		Town-wide
Origin		Director of Planning & Conservation, Master Plan Committee
Budget		Low Budget (<\$50,000)
Timeframe		<p>Short Term (<5 years)</p> <p>Long-Term Goal: South Hadley is an attractive place to start a business</p> <p>Funding: MassDevelopment Real Estate Technical Assistance grants, MassDevelopment Underutilized Properties Program, Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program, REDO Grant Program</p>
Risk		Low Risk – implementation will take coordination, will, and dedication of time
Key Performance Indicators		# of vacant properties shown to each business owner, decrease in time a vacant property remains empty, # of "Storefront Strolls" conducted, # of new businesses opened in town, creation of "data package" to market town
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Local brokers, property owners, municipal government, business owners, S.C.O.R.E., Regional Planning Commission, Western Mass Economic Development Council</p> <p>Resources: International Council of Shopping Centers Inc's Guide for Commercial District Practitioners</p>

Diagnostic

- Business types community members desire, like restaurants and retailers, are receiving unprecedented federal government funding and attention. It is strategic to utilize these resources to support South Hadley's larger goals.
- Large scale business closures have reminded many communities of the importance of shopping locally and supporting mom and pop businesses.
 - Many are reinvested in supporting their local economies.
- South Hadley's Master Plan names the Village Commons District as an important commercial center for further economic development.
 - Specific goals include modifying zoning around the district to increase mixed-use development.
 - Town-wide goals include increasing retail (like clothing, jewelry, books/music) and restaurants by 1-2 stores each.
 - Master plan suggests roughly ~30,00-35,000 sq. ft of space is needed to fill markets that are under-supplied.
 - As of Spring 2021, there was roughly 8,441 sq. ft of vacant space within the Village Commons District.



The Village Commons includes a mix of business types and spaces to support a variety of tenant needs

Source: The Village Commons

Action Item

- Create a compelling "data package" that entices business owners to South Hadley.
- Recruit business using local brokers and realtors to assist the town. Host regular "Storefront Strolls" where curious entrepreneurs can investigate multiple vacant locations at once.
- Celebrate wins. Regularly tout pro-business policies, programs, and future licensing and permitting changes on social media platforms.

Process

Create a "data package" to entice prospective business owners

- Recruitment materials should focus on a business' ability to make money. Resist the urge to market quality of life attributes.
 - Highlight South Hadley's high median income, proximately to recreation and tourism centers, consistent student population, and redevelopment initiatives.
 - Provide market data, like retail and industry gaps.
 - Make district-level connections between vacant spaces.
- Material should be easily digestible: brochures, infographics, and one pagers.
- Be honest in representation of community.
- Show how South Hadley is similar to other towns where the industry being recruited is strong.
- Include bulleted information about a sample of vacant buildings.
- Provide this material to admired businesses in other towns (would they like to open a second location?), send sheets to regional and local economic development organizations as well as local brokers.

Organize "Storefront Strolls"

- Meet with local real estate brokers and realtors.
 - Communicate the town's desired business tenants (bakery, light manufacturing, retail, restaurants, etc.)
- Organize with property owners to offer open houses on a single coordinated date.
- Have brokers tour all vacant properties in one morning, afternoon, or evening
 - This stimulates a sense of competition as well as small business networking.
- Pay brokers through grants, governmental funds, or another system. Do not require property owners to pay brokers, as this may complicate getting the right tenant in a great space.

Publicize what works

- Use low-cost avenues like social media, Facebook, blogs, op-eds, and word of mouth to highlight successes.
- Celebrate new business openings, immigrant and BIPOC business stories, simplification to permitting, and zoning changes.
- Cultivate a "home-grown" approach, where community members feel inspired to start their own enterprises.

Identify Ideal Tenant Mix and Create A Framework for the Next Generation of Tenants

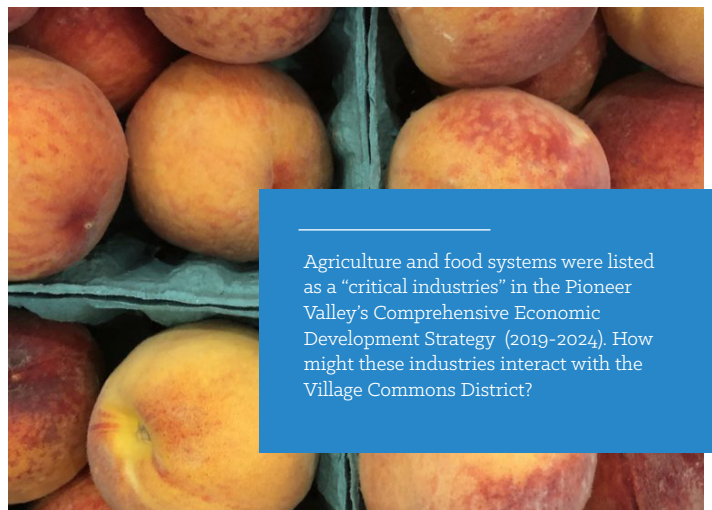
Category		Tenant Mix
Location		Study Area
Origin		Department of Planning & Conservation, The Village Commons businesses and administrators
Budget		High Budget (>\$200,000) Funding: Value Add Producer Grants (for 2022), Build Back Better Regional Challenge (American Recovery Act), Mass Development Real Estate Services Technical Assistance Grant
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years) <i>*strategy has a long time frame, but actions can be taken now to draft plans and begin recruitment phases</i>
Risk		Low Risk – largest risk is to perpetuate a system that is not forward thinking. This would cause a need to respond to significant vacancies in the future
Key Performance Indicators		Increased economic activity in the District, high occupancy rates, resident satisfaction with tenant mix, # of filled economic needs/gaps as identified by the Master Plan
Partners & Resources		Partners: The Village Commons, Mount Holyoke College, the Town of South Hadley, other property owners in the District, budding and current town-wide business owners, Regional Economic Development non-profits and services, market analysis/ economic development consultants or non-profits

Diagnostic

Succession planning will provide an alternative to business closures and help address business fatigue. This is particularly meaningful as/if the COVID-19 pandemic continues into 2022. The addition, the pandemic highlighted the limits of the Village Commons District offerings. There is a need for a wider tenant mix that reflects a diverse clientele. This is ever more important in the coming decade, as Census trends predict a more racially and culturally diverse population. The Census Tracts around the Village Commons District already hold a higher percent of people of color than the rest of the South Hadley. This provides yet another reason why targeting the Village Commons District as a prime study area is beneficial.

Action Items

- Brainstorm future needs. Hear from a diversity of stakeholders about what is desired both specifically within the Village Commons District and town-wide.
- Conduct a market analysis. Understand what is needed and at what scale.
- Develop an "ideal" tenant mix wishlist.
- Create a framework for the next generation of tenants. Balance recruitment of new entrepreneurs with succession planning for existing loved businesses.



Agriculture and food systems were listed as a "critical industries" in the Pioneer Valley's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2019-2024). How might these industries interact with the Village Commons District?

Barstow's Dairy Store and Bakery is a South Hadley treasure. It sells baked goods to Village Commons tenants like Thirsty Mind Coffee and Wine Bar.

Source: Barstow's Dairy Store & Bakery

Process

Brainstorm future needs

- Determine what the town is hoping to accomplish with this initiative. What does "ideal" mean in this context? What kind of "framework" is trying to be created?
- Meet with existing businesses to hear what they think are complementary businesses to what they provide.
- Meet with residents to hear about what they would like to see in the study area.
- Review existing research and recommendations developed to date from previous plans and efforts, such as the Master Plan.

Conduct a market analysis

- Inventory existing businesses and any historical data that can be collected to track changes in tenant mix over time.
- Analyze (or hire a consultant to analyze) what the consumer capacity is for the Village Commons District. This will involve determining disposable income within certain distances as well as what competition exists in that area.
- Analyze (or hire a consultant to analyze) what gaps appear to be in the market. Are there missing types of retail, service, or business uses that could be supported? This step can be skipped if they feel repetitious of Master Planning efforts.
- Determine what aspirational or "basic" industries (those that might attract other businesses and visitors beyond basic needs) are of interest. How can current employers and economic strengths like health care and higher education create alternative industries?
- Research aspirational industries. Understand what subsidies or other public or non-profit actions might be needed to make them workable in South Hadley.
- Look to aspirational communities. What local (regional or national) communities have appealing tenant mixes. When entering a neighborhood with an intangible vibrancy, note the number and type of tenant mix.

Develop Ideal Tenant Mix

- Develop preferred tenants for the Village Commons District. Use community feedback, the market analysis, and the needs of aspirational economies to guide decisions.
- Identify if there is a shortage of space, or different space needs for this tenant mix. Develop ideas to build new spaces or retrofit existing spaces to hold desired businesses.

Create framework for the next generation of tenants

- Create a set of criteria that would determine what tenants might be needed and wanted in the next 20 - 30 years.
- Investigate economic literature and trends in Europe and Asia.
- Develop a program of physical, programmatic, and economic changes that might achieve this framework
- Meet with business owners, especially those of loved institutional businesses or those who have had a long career.
 - Help them identify a future owner, develop a business sales plan, or brainstorm ways to modernize business.
 - The Shared Small Business Liaison from previous recommendations could perform this function.

The Village Commons District Tenant Recruitment Considerations

PARKING

While a parking analysis suggested additional parking is needed at The Village Commons, this recommendation should be taken with caution. Parking drives up the cost for commercial space and reduces the ability to provide space that may achieve other project goals. Many transportation experts believe parking will become less important over the next 20 years as more people use car sharing, bike sharing, and utilize car-share options such as Lyft or Uber. This is in line with Governor Baker's plan to drastically slash greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Parking areas should be viewed as opportunities for flexible space, that provide parking in peak times but programmable space in other times. The rear parking lot of The Village Commons would be a great space to hold events.

CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY LIMITS

The Village Commons District is difficult to get to without driving. The bike-share station is a good asset, and the students and visitors to the Mount Holyoke Campus are able to walk. Yet, some uses on the site may be limited at some point by transit access. A shuttle or other transit option may be worth considering.

WHAT IS MISSING NOW

The current mix of district tenants is strong, even enviable. What appears to be missing are some practical uses such as a pharmacy or lower-priced clothing store. The challenge with these uses is that they are often provided by chain stores as well as stores with larger footprints.

HOUSING

While housing itself is not usually considered economic development, this district could be a good location for additional housing that will help sustain commercial activities. Housing for retirees and semi-retirees, as well as housing for young professionals, could be particularly beneficial and compatible with this district. Workforce housing opportunities should also be explored. Luckily, The Village Commons already has plans for such an initiative. However, that plan has been slowed due to financial and open land limits. Looking beyond the boundary of The Village Commons and into the greater District could alleviate some roadblocks.

Support a Long Term Creative Restaurant Ecosystem

Category		<p>Tenant Mix & Revenue/ Sales</p>
Location		<p>The Village Commons District, but applicable Town-wide</p>
Origin		<p>Focus group participants, Department of Planning & Conservation</p>
Budget		<p>Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000) -some interventions can be implemented at a low cost</p> <p>Funding: BIZ-M-POWER, Restaurant Revitalization Fund, Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program, REDO Grant Program</p>
Timeframe		<p>Short Term (<5 years)</p>
Risk		<p>Medium Risk – political will and diverse partnerships are required</p>
Key Performance Indicators		<p># of new restaurants, # of food based events, flexible changes to zoning, permitting and liquor licensing</p>
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Department of Planning & Conservation, private food entrepreneurs like The Worcester County Food Truck Center, private cooking institutions like The Baker's Pin, Holyoke Community College, Town Administrator, Board of Health, Selectboard</p> <p>Resources: American Planning Association's writings and guides to zoning for commercial and ghost kitchens, Small Business Food Service grants and protocols</p>

Diagnostic

Restaurants are one of the largest draws to the study area and their survival is paramount to the success of the District. More can be done to help restaurants to pivot in the wake of COVID-19. These opportunities range from easily implementable solutions like outdoor dining to more comprehensive zoning and policy reforms.

- The Village Commons District is a restaurant hub, containing 9 restaurants ranging from fast casual delis to fine dining locations.
- The district is losing customers. South Hadley residents turn to Amherst and Northampton for dining because there is opportunity to dine, stroll, and window shop.
- Interviews revealed red tape and stringent Board of Health permitting discourages incorporating food into events.
- Increased federal, state, and local funding is available at an unprecedented scale to help restaurants modernize, pivot, and thrive.
- South Hadley's Master Plan identifies an under supply of restaurants by 2,237 square feet (1 or 2 small restaurants)¹
- The area contains many farms and culinary resources that can be leveraged into creative food based experiences.

1 South Hadley Master Plan Update (Draft), 2020, pg. 52

Action Item

- Hold regular events around food and food systems, including farmer's markets, a Food Truck Festival, or outside cooking demonstrations.
- Add new restaurant tenants who focus on the modern palette (gluten free, vegetarian, "farm to table," non-fried).
- Amended zoning as needed to allow uses like food trucks, communal kitchen, and pop-up kitchen/restaurant spaces.
- Provide year round outside dining infrastructure on College Street Bypass and The Village Commons.
- Provide restaurants specific resources, specifically regarding navigating federal aid.
- Partner with local food entrepreneurs and Holyoke Community College's Hospitality and Culinary Arts program to carry out food based events.



Organizations like WooTrucks organize food truck festivals, operate a commercial kitchen, and supply food trucks to clients, breweries, and businesses. They run festivals like the Rutland Food Truck Festival & Craft Fair (above).

Source: WooTrucks



Mount Holyoke Community College's Hospitality and Culinary Arts facility is less than 5 miles from the Village Commons District. Hosting pop-ups, cooking classes, or cooking competitions within the District would provide unique experiences

Source: Holyoke Community College

Process

Food & Food System Events

- Begin at the Village Commons District. Implement an easy to execute "Taste of the Commons" event where restaurants and retailers offer special tastings and "to-go" options.
 - Restaurants use their own kitchens and set up tables outside with easy to take away options.
 - Retailers set up racks on the sidewalk.
 - Publicize event through social media, print, radio, and on the town's website.
 - Close College Street Bypass for event. Rent additional seating as needed.
- Reach out to farmers, food trucks, and local cooking instructors. Identify shareable resources (tables, tents, transportable cooking machinery). Build event around resources.
 - Identify existing restaurant owners who may rent out kitchens to entrepreneurs on off hours.
- Connect current restaurateurs with Holyoke Community College Culinary Arts students for skill shares, internships, and special events.
- Identify volunteers or local institutions to organize. Use grant funding to pay a part time coordinator if possible.
- Publicize events through social media, print, radio, and on the town's website.
- Close College Street Bypass for events. Rent additional seating as needed.





Supportive Restaurant Ecosystem

- For details on restaurant recruitment, see recommendations "Identify Ideal Tenant Mix and Create a Framework for the Next Generation of Tenants," "Institutionalize Small Business Support," and "Cultivate "People Power" to Recruit New Businesses."
- For existing Village Commons District tenants, ensure business have an online presence.
 - Connect businesses to economic development services and non-profits to assist in website creation and listing on major third party sites like Zagat, Yelp, and Google Maps.
- Run campaigns to support dining local.
 - Encourage curb-side pick up over delivery apps, create a restaurant map linked on town website, and offer "Passport Programs" at the Village Commons District restaurants.
 - Expand successful initiatives town-wide.

Zoning & Regulations

- Create case studies of admired nearby towns, analyzing food and beverage permitting.
 - Reach out to town staff and administrators to investigate the heartburns and success of the policies.
 - Change South Hadley recommendations to better align with best practices.
- Investigate a flexible system for outside dining.
 - Differentiate between public spaces outside of restaurants with chairs and tables (i.e. the Town Common, College Street Bypass) and formal privatized patio space attached to table service. Propose less stringent regulations on the former.
- Change zoning code to accept creative uses like food trucks, communal kitchens, and ghost kitchens.

Extend The Village Commons' Ample Public Space Beyond Its Boundaries

Category		Public Realm
Location		The Village Commons District and surrounding areas
Origin		The Town of South Hadley
Budget		<p>Low to High (\$5,000 - \$350,000) Depending on the size of the project and whether the town sees a benefit in implementing temporary (low budget) versus permanent (medium/high budget) projects.</p> <p>Funding: Planning Assistance Grants, Shared Streets and Spaces Grant</p>
Timeframe		<p>Short Term to Medium Term (<5 years)</p> <p><i>* It is important not to forgo community engagement and consensus building if the Town decides to expand the boundaries of the Town Common and other public realm spaces beyond temporary improvements.</i></p>
Risk		<p>Medium Risk – Temporary and permanent investments to the public realm surrounding the Village Commons District will increase pedestrian safety and drive more people to businesses in the area. These investments may also reduce available parking, and restrict traffic flows through the district – which is an intentional opportunity to increase awareness of offerings. However, this will likely draw criticism from community members and other stakeholders about traffic impacts</p>
Key Performance Indicators		<p>Growth in self-reported revenue, # of programmed events, pedestrian activity change over time (pedestrian counts pre-temporary closure period for a full week to pedestrian counts during temporary closures), vehicle/pedestrian/bicycle conflict change over time</p>
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Downtown residents, The Village Commons (tenants + administration), surrounding businesses, South Hadley Department of Open Space and Forestry, South Hadley Department of Public Works</p>



Views of the Town Common and College Street Bypass
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Diagnostic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our open spaces, parks, plazas, and sidewalks have become important critical infrastructure. These outdoor places supported public health and wellness for residents and visitors seeking to be outdoors - to gather safely, exercise, and be out in the world. The pandemic also highlighted that New England seasons were no match for an enhanced desire to dine and shop outside. Farmer's Markets during the pandemic thrived, as did outdoor seating demand for restaurants and cafes. More retail stores engaged in sidewalk sales to cater to audiences wary of indoor shopping.

In South Hadley, The Village Commons was already well suited to outdoor retail experiences. The design of the Commons is supportive of a range of safe outdoor experiences like yoga, a coffee with friends, or more formal dining experiences. Outdoor spaces around the town were inundated with new repeat visitors, and sidewalks welcomed more pedestrians throughout the day.

The Town of South Hadley should take advantage of this renewed interest in outdoor experiences by investing in temporary and more permanent investments along street right of ways, in commercial districts, and along central open spaces and plazas. With more people spending time outside, South Hadley's businesses and commercial areas can contribute to an exciting and welcoming community experience.

Action Items

Short-term investments

- Pilot an expansion of the Town Commons park space on a temporary basis across the College Street Bypass.
- Create a pre-approved set of designs for outdoor seating that businesses can choose from. This will speed up the licensing and permitting process.
- Work with the community to understand if a more permanent closure of the College Street Bypass would support community and businesses desires.

Long-term investments

- Increase pedestrian visibility along Hadley Street and College Street, and implement a long term public realm strategy for safe crossings and public space investments.
- Work with the Department of Public Works and MassDOT (as needed) to conduct a feasibility study for the permanent closure of the College Street Bypass.

What community members shared:

Residents

- "Walking is part of our town's culture - especially at night"
- Concerns about pedestrian safety
- "We live within walking distance of so many amenities"

Businesses

- Not sure when they will return to normal hours.
- "Many businesses did not take advantage of outdoor spaces to expand audience access. The yoga studio and restaurants/cafes appeared to benefit most from outdoor use."

Institutions + Property Owners

- "There was an uptick in foot traffic in parks and open spaces, but not in the Town Common."
- "Mixed success with the farmer's market"
- "Many organizations used to facilitate programming outdoors at the Town Common, but that has leveled off in recent years."



Underutilized courtyards, April 2021
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



Expanded spaces for informal outdoor gathering, August 2021
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Process

Short-term Process

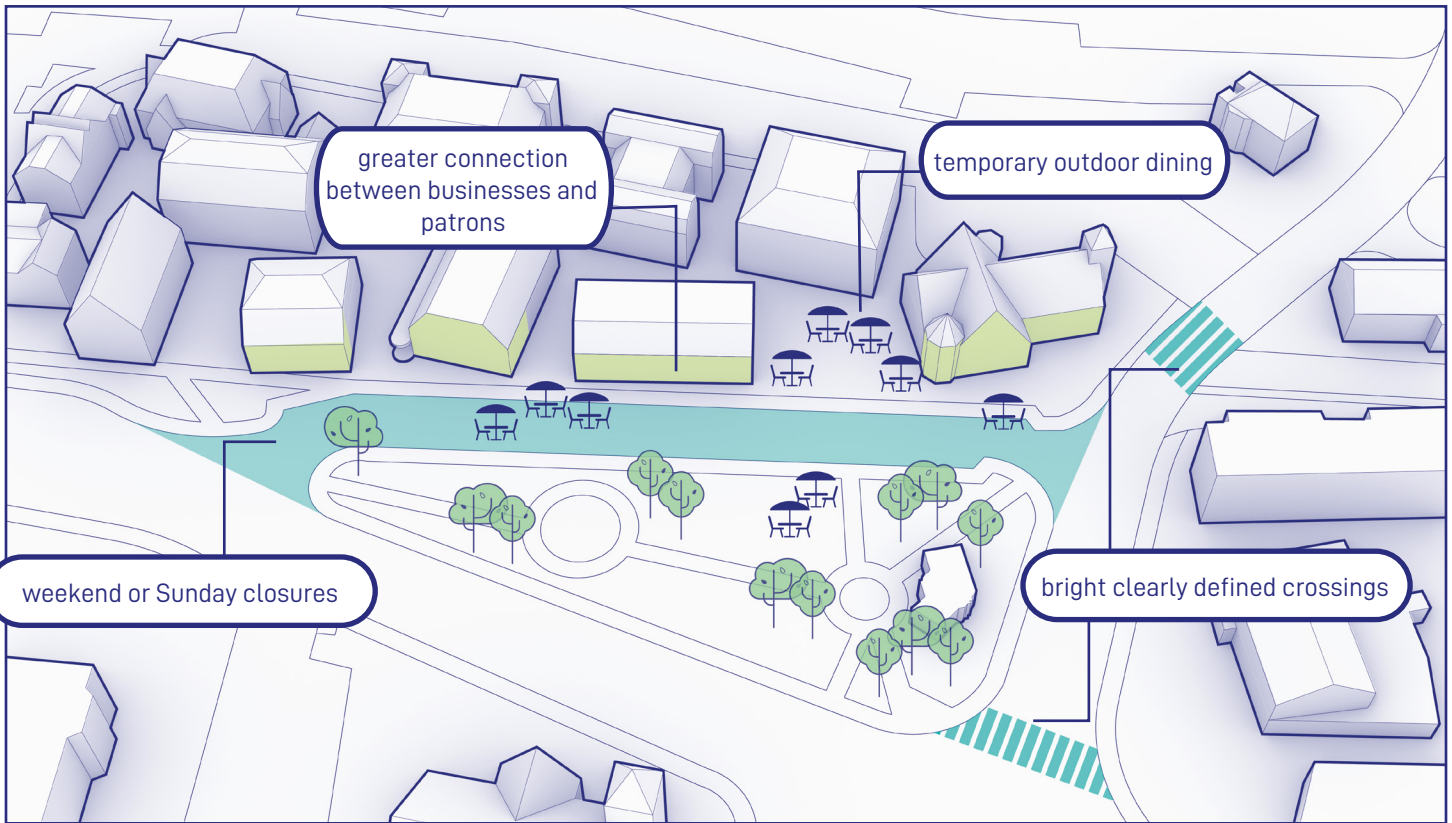
One form of pilot project or temporary project implementation is tactical urbanism. These temporary projects engage communities in their implementation and facilitate conversations about their merits and challenges.

- Convene Village Commons District property owners and tenants to identify concerns with closing the College Street Bypass for a day or two during the weekend. Identify ideal times for the closure with these stakeholders first.
- Gather approvals and permits from the Town for a season-long, weekend or weekend day only closure.
- Identify a need for police presence or oversight during events.
- Create simple signage to articulate before and during closures what vehicle operators, bicyclists, and pedestrians should expect.
- Work with businesses to expand their outdoor reach during these closures (movable furnishings, sidewalk sales, markets).
- After one or two pilot weekends, evaluate the day-of logistics and identify ways to simplify road closures moving forward to take advantage of limited town resources efficiently.

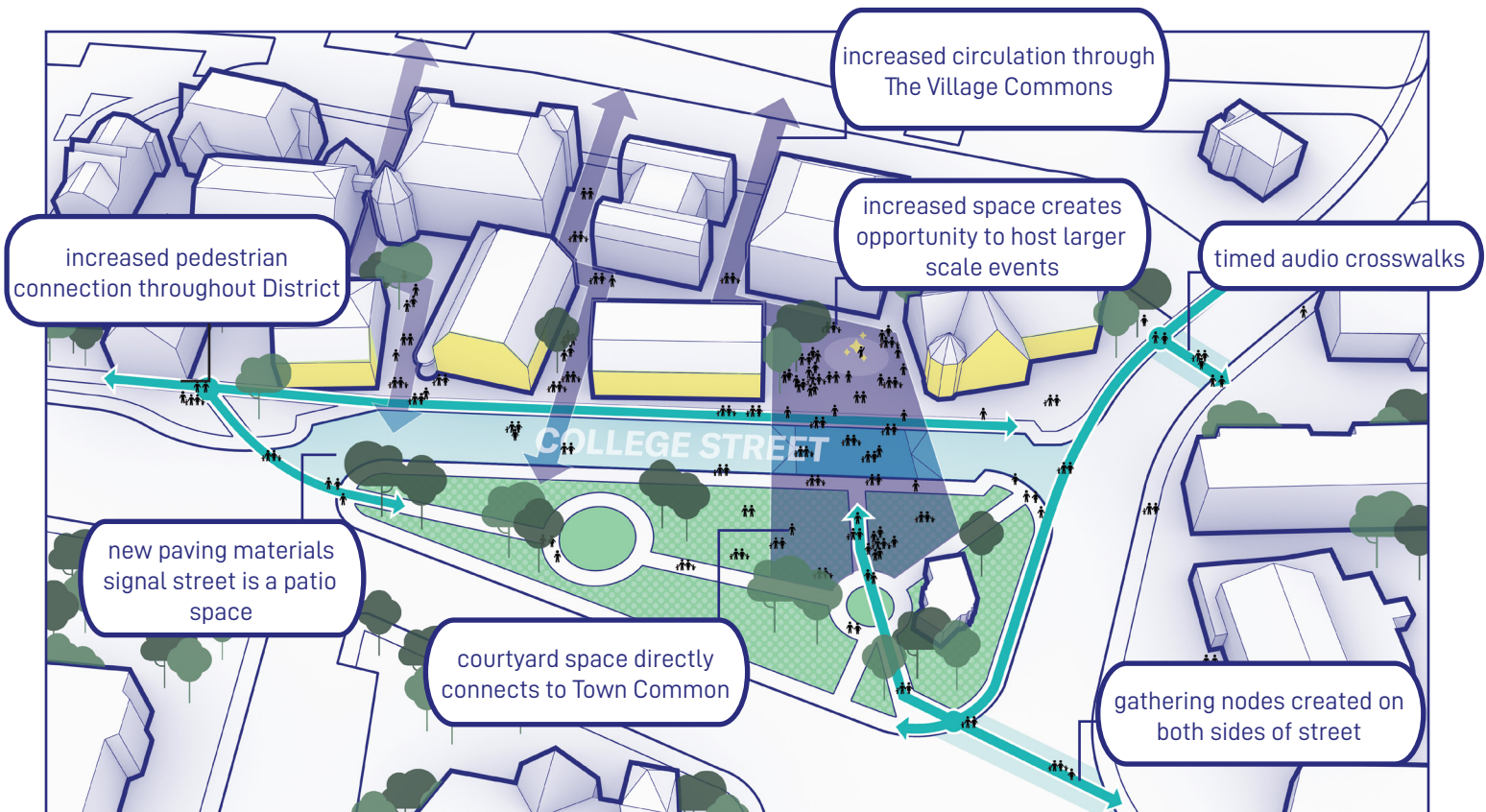
Long-term Process

The success of temporary, low cost investments in South Hadley's public realm can prove long-term permanent solutions locally (in this case at the Town Commons and within the Village Commons District) and as pilots for other retail environments throughout the Town and the region. The following long-term process elements build on the short-term processes outlined above.

- Reconvene Village Commons District property owners and tenants to identify project priorities for public realm improvements ranging from raised pedestrian crossings or lighted crossings to a permanent College Street Bypass closure.
- Use local and state-wide COVID recovery data to share data-driven arguments for larger public realm investments with the Town alongside ongoing community, business, and property owner feedback.
- Partner across town departments and with Mount Holyoke to secure a calendar of events that spans all four seasons and encourages sustainable economic development for participating or adjacent businesses.



Short term investments include weekend or Sunday closure of the College Street Bypass, signage to highlight pedestrian crossings along Hadley Street, and more outdoor seating for retail spaces throughout the district.



Long term investments in the Town Commons will create expanded opportunities for public events and concerts, as well as clear, safe pedestrian connections between the several destinations in this district

Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Create A Parking Fee Structure to Fund Small Business Resources

Category		Public Realm
Location		The Village Commons District
Origin		The Village Commons, through the RRP Process
Budget		Medium (\$50,000 - \$200,000)
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years); 4-8 months Funding: MassDevelopment Initiative Assistance Grants, Planning Assistance Grants , Shared Streets and Spaces Grant (possible)
Risk		Medium Risk – parking is a divisive issue and The Village Commons currently serves as a community parking lot. A strong education campaign is extremely important for community acceptance.
Key Performance Indicators		Revenue generated by parking fees, additional funds and services provided to small businesses, reduction in all day parking
Partners & Resources		Partners: The Village Commons (tenants + administration), surrounding businesses, Mount Holyoke College, Selectboard, Town Administrators, Department of Public Works, Chamber of Commerce, potentially future Master Plan updates



Current parking conditions at The Village Commons' back lot
Source: The Village Commons



Current parking conditions at The Village Commons' front lot
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Diagnostic

The Village Commons parking lot was designed to serve shoppers and diners of The Village Commons, but is often misused. Even before COVID-19, students, employees of nearby businesses and institutions, and residents used the lot as a communal all day parking space. Despite installing signage to create "15-minute parking" spaces on the College Street Bypass, these spaces are often inhabited by shoppers or elderly residents who are challenged by the site's typography. These restrictions are not often enforced by ticketing or towing, especially since the start of the pandemic.

There is a lack of turn over in critical locations, such as outside coffee shops or recently developed curbside pick up locations. As restrictions lift, these spaces will become even more important to ensure consumers visit the area safely. The pandemic has caused many dining institutions to become professionals in take away service and online ordering. This pivot makes parking regulations and limitations paramount to the daily success of restaurants and retail locations.

Additionally, the town lacks a stable funding stream to implement small business services. This was a hole before COVID-19 that only widened with the onset of the pandemic. The recommendation aims to alleviate multiple issues by funneling parking revenue directly towards these small business support needs. There are roughly 335 parking spaces within the Village Commons District, 300 of which are at The Village Commons. the Village Commons District would serve as a pilot to guide South Hadley in identifying an appropriate fee for parking and how to channel funds raised into small business services.

Action Item

- Launch an educational campaign to teach community members about potential fees. Articulate how they serve small businesses.
- Conduct a parking study to identify the appropriate fee for The Village Commons.
- Implement parking fee.
- Invest generated fees into small business services (See recommendations *"Institutionalize Small Business Support," beginning on pg 32*).

Process

Launch an educational campaign to understand community priorities for a parking fee system

- Meet with representatives from the Town, The Village Commons, Mount Holyoke College, and businesses within the Village Commons District.
- Identify a working group. An oversight committee comprised of municipal staff, volunteer board members, the business community, merchants and residents is recommended to define study goals, focus analysis, support outreach activities, and review recommendations.

Conduct a parking study.

- Define study area. Determine boundary for data collection. The boundaries should include primary public parking areas associated with commercial activity and extend a block beyond the limit of associated activity to determine if spill-over parking exists.
- Collect available data. Amass information about parking activity, parking demand, multi-modal conditions, etc.
- Identify options for parking fee approaches, including but not limited to lot gates, parking meters, and kiosks, or a mix of options depending on location and ownership. (See Appendix "Shared Parking Agreements" on pg. 107 for examples of shared parking agreement contracts/language)

Implement a parking fee.

- Discuss the benefits of a parking fee, concerns, issues, opportunities, and paid parking boundaries.
- Form a committee who will oversee the collection and transfer of revenue, monitor and manage the maintenance of meters (or other fee collecting structure), and report to local government about parking fee metrics.
- Make sure parking meters are integrated with mobile application technology to ease collection of funds and meet mobile banking trends.
- Partner with the Department of Public Works or another public organization to maintain the physical infrastructure.
- Increase attention to ticketing within the parking fee area.

- Leverage incoming Electrical Vehicle charging stations. These spaces can remain free to incent sustainable transportation.
- Collect funds periodically. Frequency of collection should be determined based on capacity. While industry standard is closer to one week, South Hadley may find monthly collection more realistic.
- Channel revenue into small business fund/services. See recommendation "Institutionalize Small Business Support" for an example of these services.



Different parking spots could have different fees. Residential, employee, and customer spaces could all charge varying rates
Source: The Village Commons

Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)

Transportation Management Associations are non-profit, legally bound organizations of businesses, developers, and property managers who collectively work to provide public transportation services within a defined location. The intention is to decrease solo drivers, reduce emissions, and make transportation flow better along commercial corridors.

Assembly Square in Somerville established a TMA, Assembly Connect, to mitigate the increased traffic the development would create. Assembly Connect integrates options across various streams from biking to walking, company vans to City light rail.

While TMAs are associated with shopping and job centers much larger than the Village Commons District, it is a good example. A cooperative effort between Mount Holyoke, local businesses, senior centers, and The Village Commons could provide a low cost way to reduce all day parking in The Village Commons lot. Fees from a TMA system could still be channeled into business services. One or two daily shuttles could have a large effect! Costs to create TMAs are often offset through transportation and sustainability grant programs.



Source: Assembly Connect

Moving from Free to Paid Parking

In 2006, Chico, CA carried out a Downtown Access plan to analyze the effect of charging for parking. The are included roughly 2,000 spaces that were mix of on and off street parking. The study provided multiple recommendations such as:

- Use pricing, not time limits, to prioritize shoppers
- Return revenue to downtown
- Enforce Saturday and evening meters
- Use multi-space meters
- Provide "loading zones"

These recommendations were provided to:





- Make the best use of existing resources before adding new parking supply.
- Choose the most cost-effective way to improve access.

At the time of the study, Chico's meter rates were \$0.50/hr. Chico now provides parking through it's "Smart Park," program that includes solar-powered meters and kiosks.



Source: GoDowntownChico.com

Create Intentional Programming for Various Age Groups to Activate the District & Expand Its Reach

Category		Public Realm
Location		The Village Commons District, specifically the Town Common
Origin		Focus groups, key stakeholders
Budget		<p>Low Budget (< \$50,000) *\$200 - \$1,000 in first year; \$5,000 + to increase scale</p> <p>Funding: communal fund created for the Village Commons District business owners, Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grants, Commonwealth Places grant through Mass Development, Shared Streets and Spaces grants, Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Civic Development Grants.</p>
Timeframe		<p>Short Term (<5 years) <i>*First pilots can be deployed within a few months, seasonal changes will need 6-9 months of foresight</i></p>
Risk		Low Risk – ongoing maintenance and storage are primary issues; may have political resistance
Key Performance Indicators		# of people regularly on Town Common, increase of events on Town Common, increase of foot traffic around the Village Commons District
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Village Commons District businesses, Town of South Hadley, South Hadley Recreation Department. Phase 2 +: local arts organizations, local artists, Mount Holyoke College, local schools</p> <p>Resources: operational know-how, permitting and regulation, set-up/take down/ maintenance, participation</p>

Diagnostic

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, outdoor programming became a way for people to connect with one another, be entertained, and continue to support local businesses in a safe environment. The Village Commons District is currently struggling to provide these types of opportunities to residents and visitors, which effects small business revenue.

- Customers and residents remain uncomfortable at indoor events and indoor spaces, especially as the Delta variant remains paramount.
- COVID-19 has restricted already tight budgets and limited volunteer enthusiasm to host larger scale events.
- Existing outdoor events like the Summer Concert Series reach a limited demographic and attendance is waning. Attendance is 2 to 3 times less than it was 10-20 years ago.
- Mount Holyoke's on campus housing was restricted during 2020, limiting foot traffic from students. Shopping by students in the District has been decreasing before the pandemic. Targeted interventions are needed to attract them back to the area.

Action Item

- Install flexible furniture and games to draw people to gather within The Town Commons.
- Host public art and seasonal offerings within the Village Commons District.
- Create a system for hosting events within the Village Commons District.
- Create a system for maintaining, storing, caring for, and updating furniture and public art offerings.



The Town Common and outdoor patio spaces within the Village Common District offer over 50,000 square feet of outdoor space
Source: The Village Commons

Process

- **Install flexible furniture and games.**
 - Test out idea and build public support by purchasing low cost, brightly colored chairs, patio tables, and outdoor games. **Expect at least 3 weeks for ordering and delivery, especially in the summer.**
 - Budget: \$200- \$500 for chairs. \$200- \$400 for outdoor games and storage containers. Yardgames.com is a great resource for large scale games like Jenga, while Flaghouse provides activities for special needs and children.
 - The Village Commons or Town of South Hadley purchases initial furniture and games.
 - A local steward stores games at the end of each day.
- **Scale up.**
 - Invest in higher quality seating and additional types of outdoor furniture, such as picnic tables, bistro sets, and planters. Use planters to increase aesthetics and to create barriers between people and major roadways.
 - Budget: \$2,000- 7,000
 - Acquire grant funding for pieces or crowdsource through online platforms like Patronicity. Gauge interest and appetite for shared purchasing and sponsorship opportunities between Village Commons District business owners.
- **Host public art and seasonal offerings.**
 - Reach out to local artists, art students from Mount Holyoke and the Five College Consortium or nearby schools.
 - Change furniture, planters, and art offerings with the seasons. Advertise changes on social media.
 - Add wi-fi access and signage in alignment with the town's Master Planning goals.



~ \$ 20 from Home Depot
1-2 seasons
Great for pilots + idea testing



~ \$ 175-\$200 from Wayfair
2-3 seasons
Sturdier + weather more seasons



~ \$ 600 + from Loll
3 + seasons
Highest quality + longest lasting

With proof of concept and community buy-in, the Village Commons District can invest in more permanent and higher quality furniture.

The Lawn on D in Boston offers large scale games during special events.



At the University of Minnesota, “The School Yard” offers a game cart full of free lawn and board games. The cart is open 5 days a week.

Source: TripAdvisor, Facebook: The School Yard-
Outside McNamara Alumni Center

Process Cont'd

- **Create a system for hosting events within the District**
 - As the Town Common and Village Commons District becomes known as an active space, local organizations should be encouraged to host events in the area. A flexible fee based system to host events on space would offset the cost of maintenance and upkeep.
 - Fees can serve a wide range: \$20 - \$30 for small events/gatherings up to 10-12 people to \$250 - \$500 for large events like concerts and markets.
 - Reservations for singular tables can be done via a QRcode for a nominal fee. Reserving groups of games and furniture can occur through a coordinated system and higher fee. Reservable furniture would be limited to ensure fair and equal access to amenities and may not be available during prime times or particular events.

A Note About Storage

- An easy to implement procedure for storing furniture will be paramount for the success of this project.
- Ensure Village Commons District businesses and caretakers know their roles clearly.
- **Winter**
 - If the furniture is left outside, consolidate the furniture and shovel out a small area for people to gather.
 - Attract foot traffic by encouraging people to bring their own blankets.
 - While storing furniture inside will preserve the pieces, keeping some elements outside will provide a welcoming place to socialize while keeping social distance.



Plan Ahead.

Seasonal programming usually takes 3-6 months to execute

Local organizations, institutions, and arts agencies can provide seasonal programming and furniture

Source: Seattle.gov, Project for Public Spaces, The M Word Blog



The Town Commons has ample potential to host a variety of programming
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



Best Practice

Winter Activation at the Panoway in Downtown Wayzata



Public Realm

The Musicant Group

Downtown Wayzata, MN

** the following best practice was selected due to the project's quick implementation timeline, focus on spaces for enjoying take out, and challenge of creating spaces that did not need to be actively staffed. These are issues shared by the Village Commons District. The budget and population size are, admittedly, at a much larger scale than would be possible in South Hadley.*

Origin

The Musicant Group + Wayzata Chamber of Commerce with funding from the City of Wayzata and the Panoway Conservancy

Budget



Medium Budget (\$50,000 - \$200,00)

\$90,000 covering larger events, weekly programming, physical improvements, project management and staffing

Timeframe



Short Term (<5 years)

Planning: Nov - Dec 2020

Implementation: Jan - Mar 2021

Risk



Low Risk – Very short planning period, frigid temperatures, alignment within the partnership, brand new space

Key Performance Indicators

Return visitors during event series, emergence and increases in self-programming, local news coverage, community awareness of the space displayed by event attendance, number of pilot features continued during future seasons

Partners & Resources

Small businesses and community organization partnerships to co-produce events. City provision of bathrooms, storage, snow removal, site care, and Christmas trees. These partnerships unlocked a significant increase in possible programming and expanded impact from a one-time site activation to a series that would impact traffic in downtown overall

Diagnostic

In order to remain responsive and iterative with the changing COVID-19 landscape, the Panoway, a newly created linear park, adopted a gradual implementation strategy of programming. It focused on providing a variety of activities within regularly scheduled times and serving the needs of the community members already present, while building to safe in-person gatherings for signature events.

Key opportunities included:

- Leveraging the views of the lake
- Providing high quality outdoor places for people to enjoy take out
- Working with existing habits of dog walking, walking, running, bike riding, and fire building

Challenges included:

- Ensuring that visitors could stay warm and/or warm up
- The need to create experiences that didn't need to be actively staffed
- How to translate a long standing one-time event into a season long experience

Action Item

The project combined the physical enhancement of the space with a spectrum of programming and promotion to support a continuum of visitation – from daily, to weekly outing, to first-time local tourist.

Action #1 – Persona Generation + Experience Mapping

At the onset we mapped out the different audience/user types (personas), identifying their characteristics, wants, desires, and pain points. We then collated these together to craft the key experiences that the overall project should aim to deliver.

Action #2 - Building Partnerships

Once the core event and improvement framework had been set, we engaged with local businesses and organizations to co-produce events as part of the activation. Critically, budget was allocated to pay the partners for their participation. These efforts brought in additional resources, promotional capacity, and generated heightened feelings of community ownership.

Action Item Cont'd

Action #3 – Physical improvements

Throughout the activation, improvements were made to support programming and everyday use. The two fold focus of these were to enhance visitor warmth and to create more things to do. Enhancements included: a winter garden / wind block, curling court, activity cart, fire pits, ice sculptures, light installations, and a pop up dog run.

Action #4 – Execute Programming

Each Friday new small and large scale events would occur, providing both regularity and variety – which together serve to build an audience over time.

Action #5 – Promotion

Through multichannel marketing, PR, and the events themselves the brand and awareness of the space downtown grew which drove continued increases in daily visitation, weekly rituals, and destination tourists.



Fires and lighting installations made for easy physical improvements. Other Elements like a "Letter to the Lake" program, activity boxes, and dog treats and toys remained on site for unstaffed programming.

Source: The Musicant Group

Process

- Define shared goals and what can be done as-of-right, what needs a permit, and what is off limits.
- Engage with the broader community –both stakeholders, partners, and the broader public. Focus on what shared success looks like and collaboration. For the public, focus question on what they want to be able to do in the site – these then shape the core experiences that the project / site should deliver.
- Gather community feedback.
- Craft improvement plan that incorporates physical improvements, events, promotions, and site care.
- Make first round of improvements. Reserve budget to fund iterations based on learnings that can only occur after a project has begun.
- Promote via mediums that are relevant to the site and targeted audiences. Leverage community partners to promote through their networks.
- Collect data to gauge success, lessons learned, and testimonials. Capture data important to you and future project partners and funders.
- Craft a final report that can be used to guide future iterations and to solicit funding in future years.

Implement Town-Wide District Branding and Wayfinding, Beginning with The Village Commons

Category		Public Realm
Location		The Village Commons District
Origin		The Village Commons, through the RRP Process
Budget		Medium (\$50,000 - \$200,000) Funding: MassDevelopment Initiative Assistance Grants, Planning Assistance Grants , (possible)
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk – While aesthetics and identity can sometimes be contested topics, building on the Town's existing brand will minimize potential conflict.
Key Performance Indicators		Increased number of visitors at key businesses or destinations; increased consumer spending in the Village or future branded districts; reduced walking times, increased confidence in walking around the district; greater use of the blue bike system; reduced time that cars drive around looking for parking or gateways
Partners & Resources		Partners: The Village Commons (tenants + administration), surrounding businesses, Mount Holyoke College, Selectboard, Town Administrators, Department of Public Works, Chamber of Commerce, Environmental Graphic Design team or support



Current storefront signage and regulatory signs
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



While current signs are both unique and cohesive, there is an opportunity to add larger branding efforts throughout the entire district
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Diagnostic

South Hadley has a strong regional reputation as an arts and culture center. The area is already rich with visitors; people know about it and it has name recognition. Yet, there is a sense that customers are lost to other towns because there is a lack of awareness of offerings, of clear identity among various retail districts, and of information about how to get around and access business areas. With the existence of a recognizable icon - the waterfall - on its logo, South Hadley has the beginnings of an appreciated and approved identity to build on and diversify through a wayfinding and signage system across its multiple business centers.

In the Village Common today, the physical site itself creates immediate challenges for businesses and customers when it comes to clear navigation and visual legibility. The ability for customers to clearly find existing businesses and comprehend what is offered is hampered by multiple entrances and topography that segments the Commons into multiple areas. Likewise, second floor service businesses and offices often fly even more under the radar. For example, during some public discussions, community members requested certain types of business uses that already existed, yet they were not aware of. Likewise, parking signage has been identified as confusing or ineffective at organizing parking behavior as desired.

The concept of wayfinding "refers to information systems that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space," according to the Society for Experiential Graphic Design (SEGD). The benefits of wayfinding can go well beyond signage and branding - although these are foundational elements. They direct visitors to destinations, act as informational tools that educate visitors on routes, destinations, and key features of the urban environment.

South Hadley can benefit from a comprehensive and unified wayfinding strategy for all of its destinations, from business/retail districts like The Village Commons and South Hadley Falls to area recreational biking trails. Given the COVID-related pressures on businesses, The Village Commons' wayfinding can be implemented first as the "pilot" for the overall program, focused on the pedestrian experience. Eventually, the wayfinding and signage program should be united with more expansive district level branding, such as banners. The current South Hadley logo is a recognizable icon that can serve as a jumping off point for new branding that ties to existing systems.

Action Item

- Undertake a town-wide process to establish purpose, design, locational strategy, and phasing for a business area wayfinding and signage system.
- Implement Village Commons District signage and wayfinding as an early phase pilot. Increased visibility from this effort will support COVID recovery of current businesses, attract future tenants, and test the overall program.
- Evaluate the pilot program's success through key metrics, adjust, and implement across the Town's other centers.

Process

Create the overall wayfinding strategy or plan

- Determine who will lead the effort, if it will be conducted internally or via consultation, and the scope of work, including precise study areas. Depending on the level of committee and community engagement as well as the level of detailed design, a process may take 4-9 months.
- Gather funds from grants, technical assistance, and/or partners to fund the process.
- Conduct an inventory and assessment to understand existing signage and wayfinding, information shared, and any current hierarchy. Consider all signage and wayfinding devices in the study area, including both public and private signage, map kiosks, historic/cultural markers, informational and regulatory signs.
- Assess how people are currently accessing businesses today, identifying modes of travel, barriers, user types, and other patterns. Confirm boundaries and any existing sub-areas.
- Create preliminary signage hierarchy and messaging strategy. Review and refine the approach with input from staff, stakeholders, and the community. The hierarchy and messaging strategy will denote locations of signage and general content of messages needed to guide decisions at these points.

- Create preliminary signage typologies and design alternatives for what types of signs to include and what their identity will convey, considering color, materials, form, and scale. Given that the wayfinding plan is considering multiple districts across South Hadley, establish a vocabulary for unifying and differentiating them as desired. Gather feedback and refine the alternatives to one preferred direction.
- Based on feedback, refine the wayfinding strategy and signage design. Develop cost estimates and a phasing approach to implement the system.
- Create detailed drawings for implementation (construction and installation) of the first phase - a pilot of the wayfinding strategy at The Village Common.

Implement the pilot phase at The Village Common

- Fabricate and install wayfinding and signage system.
- Explore integrating the branding into passive public space elements (colors of chairs, tables, banners) and on marketing at kiosks by collaborating with business owners.



View of The Village Commons
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

Downtown Asheville, NC, has a model wayfinding and signage program that began in 2006. Downtown's system is one part of a regional tourism wayfinding strategy that also includes destinations like the airport and other local towns.



A 2010 survey noted that:

- 87% of respondents said they would explore the city further if signage and kiosks provided clear direction to additional attractions.
- 70% stated they would consider extending their trip if new or additional destinations were discovered.

Source: Merje Design, the City of Asheville via the American Planning Association, Asheville, NC Convention & Visitors Bureau

I AM STRONG

I AM POSITIVE

I AM RESILIENT

I AM CONSIDERATE

I AM WELCOME

I AM HOPEFUL

I AM **HERST**



HELLO

Welcome back.

We're so glad to see you. Please be considerate of others to keep Amherst safe and healthy.



WASH YOUR HANDS



WEAR A MASK



SOCIAL DISTANCE

WELCOME BACK

AMHERST DOWNTOWN



#IAMherst Welcome






REVENUES
& SALES

Provided by SME Consultant

Amherst Business Improvement District

Location

Amherst MA

Origin	Amherst BID, Downtown Amherst Foundation, Town of Amherst, Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce
Budget	 <p>Low Budget: Materials \$15,000/ Graphics \$1,500 Marketing \$2,500</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Immediate impact but with a message that can and will continue long past the pandemic with simple alterations and replacements</p>
Risk	 <p>Every moment of this pandemic has been immediate and high risk for downtowns and Main Streets across the globe. There was never time, money or energy to waste.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Social Media reaction. Business stability. Consumer Confidence .
Partners & Resources	Tiger Web graphics, Downtown Amherst Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce
Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amherst MA was effectively “shut down” 3 weeks prior to the Shelter in Place orders on March 13. The University and College with in 48 hours closed and sent their students, faculty and staff home, effectively removing close to 40,000 residents of our community. Our downtown and surrounding areas became a ghost town overnight. We did not see the robust summer that the “summer vacation destinations” enjoyed while case numbers were relatively low. Amherst business hovered at around 20-25% of previous years and our unemployment at an all time high of 22% in the State today remains at one of the highest at 5.1%. Consumer confidence during the pandemic with our student population and spikes had to be addressed as did the “anti-student” sentiment that continued to grow with each spike. The #IAMherst campaign addressed head on our demands that in our BID area masks were to be worn, distancing was to be respected and that we took this Virus seriously. Just as important to this messaging was that ALL are WELCOME in Amherst and that we are a strong, resilient, compassionate and open community to all residents.
Action Item	Create a marketing campaign that can launch Amherst Wide on all available platforms addressing the immediate concerns of the pandemic while reminding all that we are welcome, safe and in this together.

Process

- ① Identify the need for rebranding for Pandemic Life
 - ② Bring Tiger Web design team on board
 - ③ Start with key elements of 1.Mask 2. Hand washing 3. Social Distance
 - ④ Look to how to "lighten" and make less threatening
 - ⑤ Establish "emoticons"
 - ⑥ #IAMherst – borrowed from incredible ad campaign seen in Amsterdam
 - ⑦ Brainstorm of who "we are": Strong! Resilient! Etc.
 - ⑧ Maintain thread that We, YOU, I am/are WELCOME – keep in mind that we want this campaign to go past COVID-19
 - ⑨ Be able to separate with ease the COVID related parts. IE: hand wash, mask, distance
 - ⑩ Selfie Wall concept – large scale – find placement
- Distribution: 100+ Light post banners
 - Wear a Mask, Wash Your Hands, 6' Distance Posters in over 200 Amherst wide storefronts
 - Delivered with FREE PPE: masks, gloves, hand sanitizer
 - 12 Sandwich boards Amherst wide
 - 8 – 12' tall window "Selfie wall" I AM & Welcome Back facing UMASS campus
 - Continued Print and Social Media
 - 20+ Town Ambassadors promoting mask awareness, health and safety wear the "I AMherst" shirts

Continued messaging and support with and for businesses that Amherst businesses take this pandemic seriously, we take safety measures, we support you and are grateful that you support local business.

AT&T

10:57 AM

38%

AMHERSTDOWNTOWN

Posts



Amherst, Massachusetts



I liked by mindvforma and 26 others



Social media posts.

Post Pandemic

- The #IAMherst campaign will continue post pandemic with timeless messaging that our community both visitors, residents, students and passers through are WELCOME
- The Campaign serves this community through uncertain and certain times and maintains a positive, happy and heartening message for all when in our downtown.
- The mask, hands and distance signs will outlive their relevance but the #IAMherst signs will continue to serve our area with bright, open messaging



Takeout & Delivery Options Scan Image QR Code







Support Local • Eat Global
amherstdowntown.com/takeout

Fridge magnet QR code to current up to date list of dining establishments . 10,000 given out at start of fall semesters to UMASS & Amherst College students



Partner With Higher Education Institutions to Increase Arts and Cultural Events

Category		Culture/Arts
Location		Study Area- the Village Commons District
Origin		Focus groups, planning and development staff, the Village Commons District Businesses
Budget		<p>Low (<\$50,000)- begin as low cost as possible</p> <p>Funding: Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI), Hometown Grant Program, Grassroot Fund Seed Grants and Grow Grants, National Endowment for the Arts (through CARES Act), Massachusetts Preservation Projects fund (possible)</p>
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk – events can start small, increase in size & scale
Key Performance Indicators		# of events held, # of partnerships made, # of events with repeat partners
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Mount Holyoke College, Amherst College, Hampshire College, Smith College, University of Massachusetts Amherst, planning and design consulting firms (i.e.-Civic Space Collaborative), town administrators and regulators, Department of Recreation, nearby Cultural Districts (like Amherst), Massachusetts Cultural Council, Hampshire County Tourism Council, local museums and theaters</p> <p>Resources: Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program</p>



Mount Holyoke College is directly adjacent to the study area

Source: Mount Holyoke College

Diagnostic

- Conversations with town contacts and The Village Commons executive staff reveal a lack of capacity to coordinate large scale events.
 - Loved past events, like ChowderFest, were expensive, costing up to \$50,000.
- Focus groups expressed desire for Mount Holyoke College to be more involved in community events.
- Village Commons Districts businesses expressed partnerships with Mount Holyoke College can be difficult to obtain.
- In recent years, students have been visiting the Village Commons District in smaller quantities. This was exasperated by the on campus housing restrictions of 2020.
- In Spring of 2021, the Chamber of Commerce noted residents continued to feel hesitant about inside gathering and shopping, due to COVID-19.
- South Hadley boasts three museums, a community theater, and many other artistic groups that can be partners.



The Black Cat Theater in South Hadley performs roughly two shows per (non-pandemic) year

Source: The Black Cat Theater

Action Item

- Increase presence of colleges and students throughout the District.
- Invite students of Mount Holyoke College and the Five College Consortium to be active parts of the South Hadley community after graduation. This can include grants to implement place-keeping and innovative projects in town.
- Utilize the Town Common and the Village Commons District as project spaces for local architecture studios/classes.
- Host College events within the Village Commons District.



The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum has high quality exhibitions ranging from student works, to special collections, and internship opportunities

Source: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum

Process

Host College events within the Village Commons District.

- Convene. Leaders from the Village Commons District, government, Department of Recreation, and Mount Holyoke College meet to discuss opportunities for hosting events on the Town Commons and within the Village Commons District.
 - Identify needs (audio/AV capacity, tents, chairs, catering, ect.) and entities responsible for providing these elements
- Start small. Begin hosting informal college gatherings, like a Senior Meet -Up with lawn games, that are easy to execute.

Increase presence of colleges and students throughout the district.

- Think flexibility. What current campus events can be hosted at the Town Common? Lectures, art shows, dramatic performances, events already open to the public, and after hours student life events are good options.
- Commit to hosting one event within the Village Commons District during Orientation, Parent's Weekend, Finals, and Graduation. Coordinate with businesses in the Village Commons District to provide food and beverage support or special deals for students and their families.

Utilize the Town Common and the Village Commons District as project spaces for local architecture studios/classes.

- Connect with specific departments. Invite art, architecture, and creative disciplines to use the Village Commons District as a "living lab." Project student and faculty art work on buildings, install light installations, build temporary structures and sculptures on site.
- Expand. Invite faculty within the Five College Consortium to use the district as a "living lab." Invite students from these schools to apply for creative fellowship opportunities.

Invite students to be active parts of the South Hadley community after graduation. .

- Target students directly. Offer incentives for students to participate in South Hadley life. Provide competitive grants for art projects, place-keeping initiatives, or "Young Innovator's Challenge." Be open to business and entrepreneurship ideas as well. These can be offered as summer experiences or post-graduation fellowships.



Contracting with Artists



CULTURAL/
ARTS

Provided by SME Consultant

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Location

Various locations (Lynn, MA; Natick, MA; Watertown, MA)

Origin	Marjorie Weinberger, Jenn Erickson, Annis Sengupta, MAPC; Lynn, Massachusetts; Natick, Massachusetts; Watertown, Massachusetts
Budget	 Medium (\$50 - \$200 K)
Timeframe	 Short (0-5 years)
Risk	 Medium - High
Key Performance Indicators	Engaging diverse residents in planning issues and processes; increasing pedestrian activity in underused public spaces; greater social cohesion and well-being.
Partners & Resources	<p>School art departments, libraries, public health departments, planners, property owners, departments of recreation, departments of public works, local cultural councils, public art commissions.</p> <p>Resource: Home :: Municipal Artist Partnerships (municipal-artist.org)</p>

Diagnostic

Bringing artists into municipal projects can build energy and draw new activity into downtown commercial areas. Contracting with artists using the 30B process has proven to be challenging and difficult. Working with the IG's office, MAPC has established guidelines for contracting with artists pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30B, section 2[1], which states that a city may, as a public procurement, enter into a Grant Agreement with an individual to "carry out a public purpose."

MAPC's process maintains transparency, accountability and fairness while creating a straightforward means of both (1) paying artists for time spent on concept development and (2) contracting with artists for work that exceeds \$10,000 in value.

Contracting with artists brings many benefits to local communities. A few benefits of this recovery strategy include:

- Creation of local jobs for artists from within and outside of the community through Calls for Artists that are tailored to addressing specific issues and opportunities, e.g., wayfinding in the Town Center
- Allocation of public resources towards the design, creation, and installation of works that create immediate changes in the built environment
- Testing new models of contracting with artists for a designated timeframe, e.g., through the launch of a municipal Artist-in-Residence program

[1] MGL c. 30B, §2 defines "Grant agreement", [as] "an agreement between a governmental body and an individual or nonprofit entity the purpose of which is to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation instead of procuring supplies or services for the benefit or use of the governmental body."



Photo: MAPC

Action Item

Dedicated Artist Liaison

- Ensure that the artist has a contact within the municipality who can help navigate permitting processes, access to space and equipment, and help build relationships with other areas of municipal government such as schools and libraries.

Flexibility and Creative Problem Solving

- Artist-led projects bring innovation to local government and often require flexibility and creative problem-solving in order to implement new ideas within the constraints of local government.

Attention to Cultural Equity

- Building a welcoming and inclusive community renewal after the pandemic requires purposeful attention to what art forms, artist experience and values are reflected in calls for art and artist contracts. Who is making decisions about what is funded? Are opportunities available to people fluent in commonly-spoken languages other than English?





Respect Artists' Intellectual Property

- MAPC affirms artists' rights to maintain their intellectual property under contract with government entities. Government entities may reserve a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, and otherwise use, and authorize others to use any artworks/deliverables developed under grant agreements with attribution for both themselves and the artist.

Process

- Determine model for contracting with artist:
 - Residency
 - Artist facilitator
 - Art installation
 - Youth development
- Establish funding source to support artists' work
- Identify local priorities, partner organizations and individuals to guide artist selection process;
- Select artist using Call for Artists or Call for Art, including:
 - Overview and Purpose of Opportunity
 - Desired Outcomes
 - Award Details
 - Application Instructions
 - Key Dates
 - Selection Process and Criteria
- Engage partners and community through artistic programming and implementation
- Use interviews, observations, reflections and surveys to document and evaluate impacts

Enhance Awareness of the Village Commons District at Trailheads, Parks, and Other Points of Interest

Category		Revenue/Sales
Location		Town-wide- trails, parks, outdoor recreation facilities
Origin		Planning and Conservation Department staff, Master Plan committee
Budget		<p>Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000) - many elements are low cost, but a cohesive marketing program will be more expensive</p> <p>Funding: Shared Streets and Spaces Grant, Competitive Tourism Grants, Hometown Grant Program, Massachusetts Downtown Initiative grants, Partnerships Matching Funds Program (possible)</p>
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		# of kiosks at recreation nodes/signage at sports facilities, increased foot traffic within the district, # of bike routes that link commercial nodes
Partners & Resources		<p>Partners: Recreation Department, Planning and Conservation Department, businesses with the Village Commons District, caretakers of trails and recreation facilities, local marketing/graphic design agency, South Hadley Bike/Walk Committee</p>



Bike Walk Committee enjoys a day at Mount Holyoke College's Project Stream site, a long-term monitoring location for various wetland and river restoration
Source: South Hadley



Lithia Springs Reservoir Loop
Source: Carol Brunelle, All Trails

Diagnostic

South Hadley is rich in natural resources. Located within Mount Holyoke Range and with access to the Connecticut River, the town offers much in terms of boating, hiking and biking recreation. It has 16 designated conservation areas, over 20 miles of trails (the River to Range Trail is even ADA accessible!), and copious amount of mountain biking opportunities. Nestled within the Holyoke Mountain Range and the Connecticut River, it is a beautiful place to have fun.

- COVID-19 renewed interest and increased visitation in South Hadley's park and trail system by both locals and visitors.
- Commercial nodes, specifically the Village Commons District, are within 5 miles of at least 14 trails.
- There is ample opportunity to redirect outdoor recreation traffic to commercial nodes.
- South Hadley's focus on increasing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will more easily link recreation centers with commercial nodes.

Action Item

- Add maps and signage on kiosks at local and regional hiking and biking trail heads, parks, and outdoor recreation facilities that direct people to the Village Commons District.
- Add directional signage to the Village Commons District on town roadways. Include distance and minutes to destination by walking and biking.
 - Research traffic data on MassDOT or undergo a traffic study to identify the best routes for signage.
- Update Trip Advisor, All Trails, and other tourism/trail-based online platforms to list the Village Commons District as a point of interest.



View of the Connecticut River from Mount Holyoke Range State Park

Source: [TripAdvisor](#)

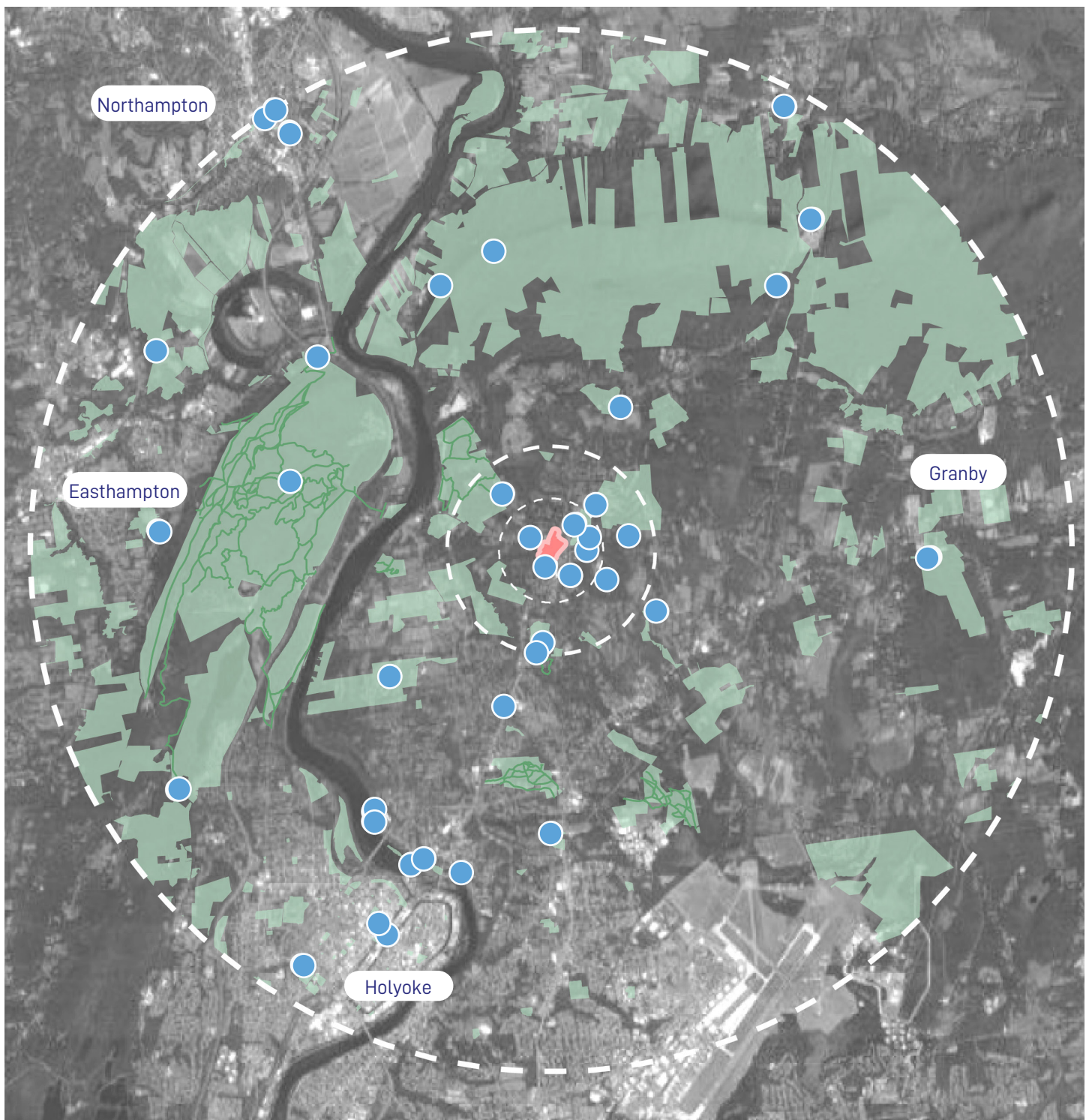
Process

- Create maps and signage that display the proximity of the Village Commons District to trails, parks, and recreation centers. Highlight safest/ more direct routes to reach the District. Include other commercial nodes as desired.
 - Once bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is updated per the Master Plan, include bicycle lanes and parking locations on maps.
 - Include The Village Commons' eight Electric Vehicle Charging stations to this map once they are installed. This will provide another incentive to visit the district.
- Install signage at all hiking and biking trail heads, parks, and recreation facilities like athletic fields and boating centers.
- Construct kiosks if none exist, so maps and signage are protected from the elements.
- Add signage that lists the businesses located at the Village Commons District.
- Repeat this effort at bicycle share stations. Direct bicycle share users to outdoor spaces, nearby commercial nodes, and restaurants and shopping opportunities around other bike share docks.
- Install branded and cohesive signage around town to direct pedestrians and bicyclists to commercial nodes.
 - Signs should be legible and easily identifiable at pedestrian and bicycle speeds.
 - See Recommendation *"Implement A Town-wide District Branding and Wayfinding System, Beginning with The Village Commons"* on pg 74 for more detail on branding and marketing.



Kiosks, like this one displaying the River-to-Range Trail Network, need simple modifications to direct visitors to commercial areas

Source: South Hadley



More than 40 Points of Interest lie within 5 miles of the Village Commons District. This includes parks, trails, sport facilities, art museums, schools, and other destinations. This provides an ample network to increase advertising and wayfinding.

Source: Agency Landscape + Planning

- *Points of Interest*
- *The Village Commons District*
- *Trails*
- *Open Space + Conservation Areas*

Linking Recreation and Commerce



Wayland, MA

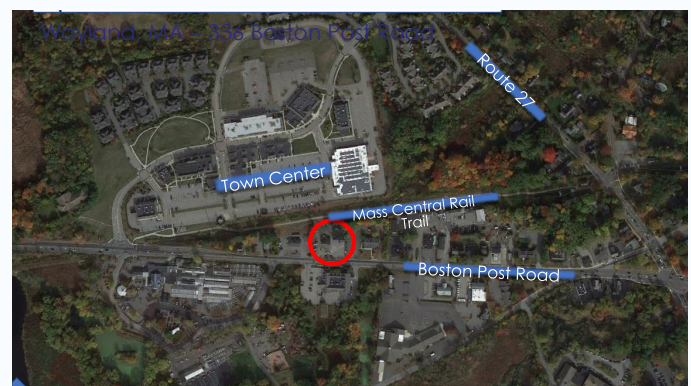
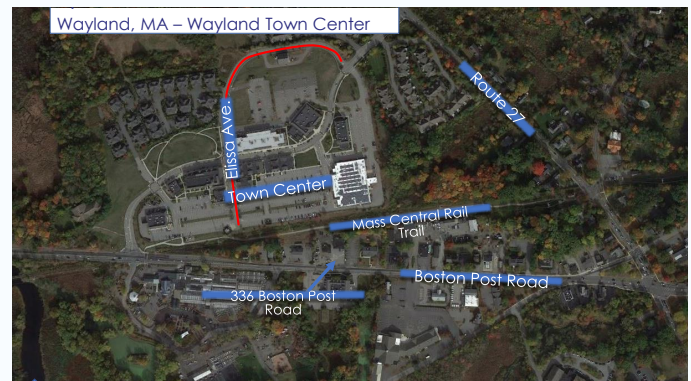
BETA Group

Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Wayland, MA

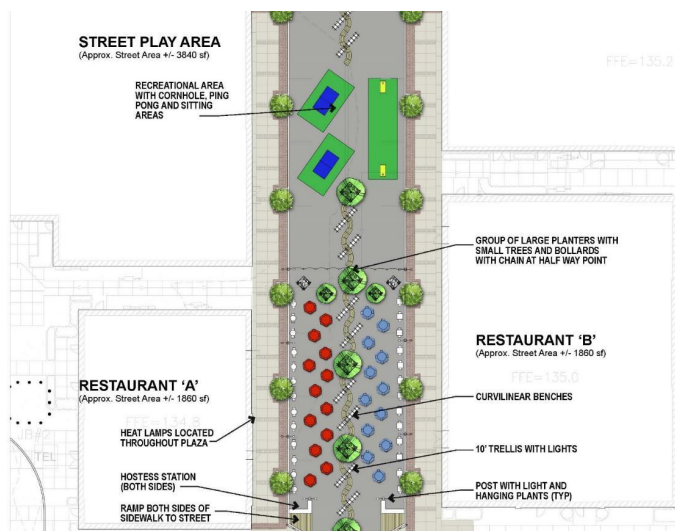
Beta Group strove to link Wayland's Town Center with the Mass Central Rail Trail, a highly trafficked bicycle route. The plan articulated two important sites for intervention, one in a formerly off-street parking location and the other within the main shopping district. The goal was to stimulate businesses by increasing connectivity.

The location directly off the Rail Trail was within a private lot owned by a market. By eliminating one to two parking spaces, the market now had patio space for tables and umbrellas. The market owner was enthusiastic about the project and willing to trade parking spaces for seating.

The location off of Elissa Avenue (private commercial road) was a larger undertaking. It activated restaurants by providing a new connection between the Town Center and the Mass Central Rail Trail/ East Coast Greenway. Pedestrian areas included spaces to play, additional outdoor seating and heat lamps for restaurant patrons, and spaces for lights and planters. The biggest asset was directly linking this activated corridor with the bike path through new bike markings and bicycle parking.



Locations for Winter Streets and Shared Spaces activation
Source: RRP Presentations, BETA Group



Top photos show before and after conditions within private parking lot. Bottom four photos highlight Elissa Avenue intervention and Rail Trail connections.
Source: RRP Presentations, BETA Group

Appendix

Subject Matter Expert Reports 96

Michelle Moon, Civic Space Collaborative

- South Hadley: Village Common Ideas 96
- Site Planning Pop Up Sites + Budgets 99
- Additional Best Practice: Grove Street Crossing - Pop-up Park + Plaza 100

Jeff Levine, Levine Planning Strategies

- SME Process Recommendations 104

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Public Presentation #1 + Public Presentation #2 132

South Hadley: Village Common Ideas

Park

- **Programming / Events (requires organizing and staffing)**
 - Concerts
 - Movies
 - Family-friendly activities (story hours, kid music events, outdoor rentals)
 - Seasonal events
- **Passive Programs**
 - Lawn chairs
 - Lawn games
 - Outdoor Winter activities: fire pits, shuffleboard/curling/fake ice, etc
 - Art – Visual
 - Kit of parts for children to play with
 - Outdoor Wi-Fi (in Town Plan to bring more high-speed access on p.53)
- **Fees**
 - Day-use fee: Renting gazebo/shelter or green space

Street

- Day or weekend close for events or programs (active or passive)
 - Farmer's Market
 - Craft, Holiday or other types of pop-up market
 - Food trucks
 - Collect Fees
- Pop-up plaza – weeks or seasonally
 - Active or passive programming

Questions

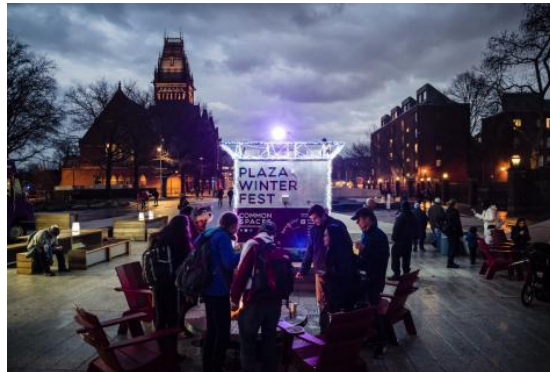
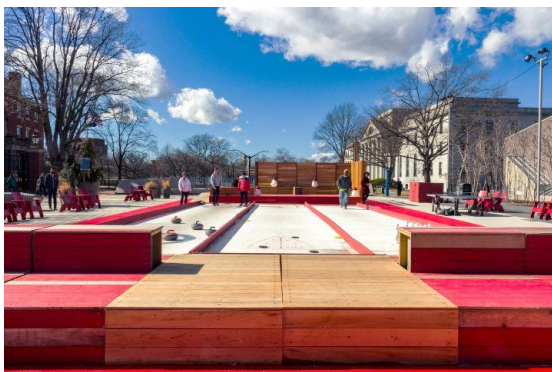
- How to people reserve the space?
- What fees are charged now?
- Capacity to plan or organize?
- Capacity to promote?
- Suggestions from the Plan: small park, a community garden, a playground, a dog park, or recreational/sports facilities. Would any of these work for this space? (p.1))

Additional Resources

- LRRP: Public Realm Gove Street Park and Plaza (p 39)
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-realm-best-practice-sheets-compendium/downloadop-up>
- Plaza, Parklets, & Pop-Ups In The Public Realm: Event Presentation Slides
<https://www.abettercity.org/news-and-events/blog/event-recap-plazas,-parklets,-and-pop-ups-in-the-public-realm>
- Tactical Public Realm Case Studies
<https://www.abettercity.org/assets/images/Tactical%20Public%20Realm%20Case%20FINAL%20Reduced.pdf>

Examples

Harvard Science Center

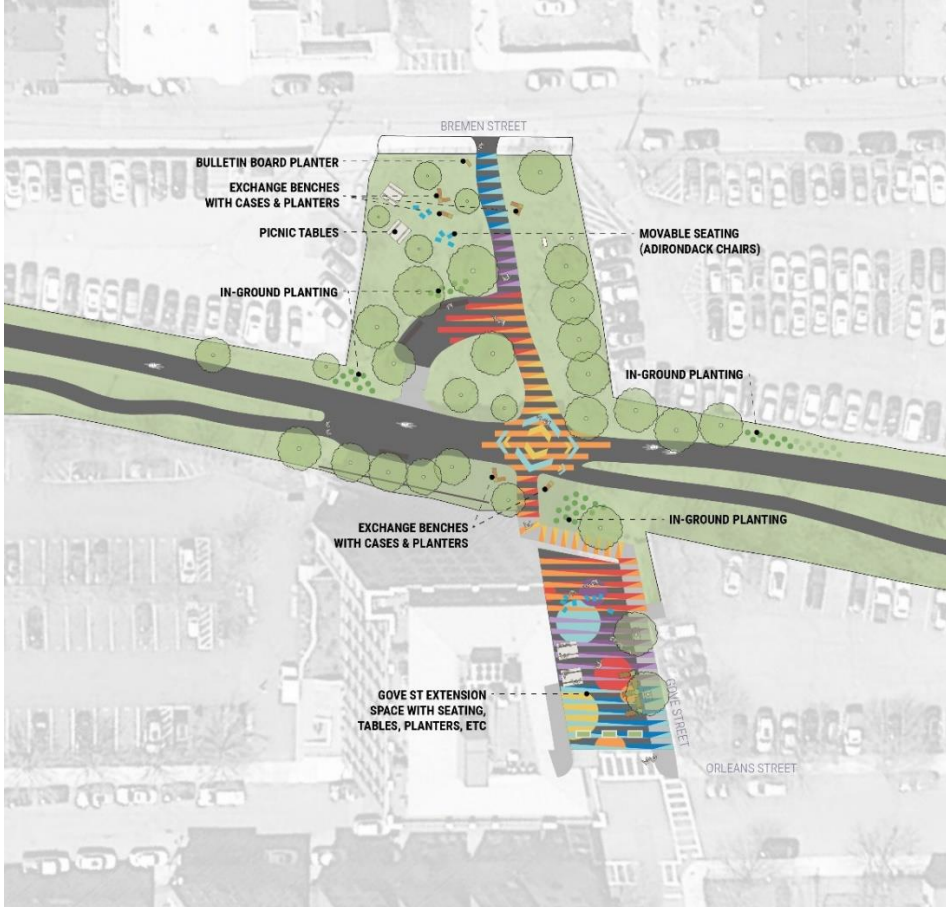


BPL Public Libraries



(CSC project)

Gove Street Park and Plaza

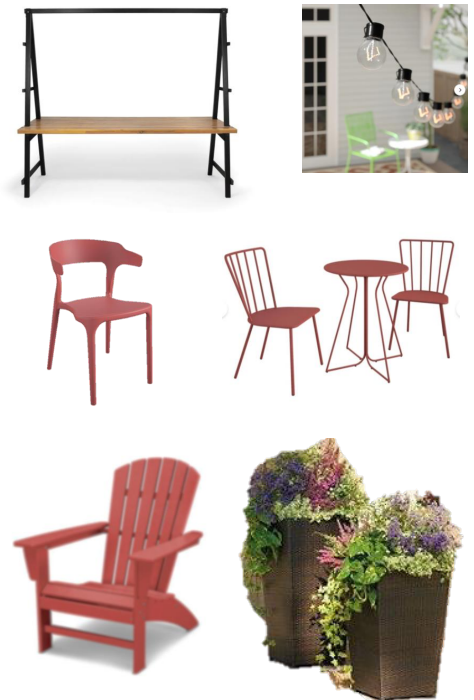


(Design: Toole Design)

GROVE HALL BRANCH OF THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY FREE WiFi ZONE



MATTAPAN BRANCH OF THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY FREE WiFi ZONE



Street Furniture + Amenities			
Item	Cost Estimate Per Unit		
Bench	\$500	-	\$1,500
Adirondack Chair	\$20	-	\$250
Bistro Sets	\$150	-	\$500
Picnic Table	\$200	-	\$1000
Planters - Small	\$80	-	\$150
Planters - Large (36 inches in diameter)	\$300	-	\$500



Gove Street Crossing: Pop-up Park + Plaza



Provided by SME Consultant

Civic Space Collaborative

Location

East Boston, MA

1

Origin	Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway and Boston Society of Landscape Architects (BSLA)
Budget	 <p>Low (\$16,000 in total from Barr Grant. \$6,000 for materials, \$10,000 BSLA design competition and project management. \$20,000 pro bono time from Toole Design)</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Short Term (<5 years) – October 2018 to June 2019</p>
Risk	 <p>Low Risks (temporary installation, low-cost materials)</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Participants at events, increase in the number of people sitting on the Greenway and picnic, positive comments from greenway visitors, and excited youth walking to school.
Partners & Resources	Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway, Greenway Council, Boston Society of Landscape Architects (BSLA), Toole Design, Boston Parks, City of Boston's Public Realm Director, East Boston Public Library, Krina Patel (artist), Zumix (music onsite), and volunteers
Diagnostic	<p>This project happened prior the COVID-19 pandemic, although planning and installation would be possible while still maintaining appropriate guidelines for public health.</p> <p>Painting the asphalt, planting annuals in the containers and perennials, and building the benches were all COVID-19 friendly activities since people were able to social distance and/or work in small groups.</p> <p>Over the past year, we saw important open space in our communities is for both physical and mental health, with parks being one of the few places where people could meet up safely outside. The pop-up park and plaza activated the Greenway using tactical urbanism and placemaking. As a result, the Greenway became even more of a destination and provided passive forms of recreation, which did not previously exist. In addition, the Greenway was transformed into an exciting place for people, and especially for children. As part of the installation, mini-libraries were filled with children's books and toys and were very exciting for the kids to discover when they went to school on Monday morning. With everyone spending a lot of time in their neighborhoods this past year, it is important to make spaces a little more exciting.</p>
Action Item	<p>The Friends of the Mary Ellen Greenway (FoMEWG) worked with the Boston Society of Landscape Architects (BSLA) to host a design competition for the Gove Street section of the Mary Ellen Greenway. A 12-member jury selected Toole Design to work on a seasonal installation.</p> <p>Over three months, Toole Design worked to refine the design by engaging East Boston residents. The final design and project included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a pop-up plaza on Gove Street next to a residential apartment building, and 2. a seasonal installation on the Greenway. <p>Both designs included a pavement graphic and seating. The FoMEWG hosted several programs at the pop-up plaza.</p> <p>This project was funded by a Barr Foundation grant to the Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway</p>

Process

Design Competition

- **Design Challenge:** FoMEWG worked with BSLA to host a design competition for the Gove Street section of the Greenway. Eight entries were submitted that included both long and short-term ideas for the Greenway at Gove Street. The full set of design entries can be viewed at <https://maryellenwelchgreenway.org/2019/03/27/bsla-design-challenge-entries/>.
- **Design Selection:** The entries did not include the names of the individuals or firms in order to ensure a blind judgement of the designs. The 12-member jury of East Boston residents selected Toole Design to work on a seasonal installation. The final design was selected since it successfully active the spaces, greatly enhanced the east / west connections used by students, incorporated community engagement into the design process, and the materials were also in Spanish.

Pop-Up Installation Planning + Design

- **Planning + Design:** Over three months in Spring 2019, Toole Design worked to refine the tactical short-term installation by engaging East Boston residents and FoMEWG. The design was shared at the monthly Greenway meeting, and the Project Team engaged youth at the East Boston Public Library. The final tactical design with pavement graphic and seating including:
 1. a pop-up plaza on Gove Street next to a residential apartment building, and
 2. a seasonal installation on the Greenway.
- **Approvals for Boston Parks:** The Project Team met with Boston Parks to review the proposed design, and Boston Parks was asked to weigh on the seating structures and painting before the design was final. The FoMEWG submitted a "Small Projects Form" outlining the proposed project, its design, and maintenance plan for Parks to review and approve.
- **Approvals from Boston Transportation Department:** The Project Team met with the City of Boston's Public Realm Director to discuss the plaza concept. For the one-week temporary plaza installation, the project team applied for a 1-week event permit and posted "No Parking" signs.



Toole Design laying out the design before volunteers arrive



Working on an active Greenway and volunteer recruitment for people walking or biking by



Gove Street one week pop-up tactical plaza

Process, continued

Implementation

- **Material Acquisition:** In June, the project team acquired the materials from nurseries, lumber yards, the hardware store, and ordered the bistro sets online. These items were transferred to the site in East Boston upon procurement.
- **Installation:** Toole Design staff worked to build the exchange benches off-site and then assisted the benches on site. The Project Team planned for two installation days, which included a Saturday. Toole Design outlined the pavement graphics prior to volunteers arriving each day. Volunteers painted the pavement graphics on the Greenway and plaza, planted plants in the planters, and placed the seating. Lunch was provided to the volunteers.
- **Programs:** The FoMEWG hosted several programs at the pop-up plaza, including music in the evenings by local musicians, a piñata party with a local artist, Krina Patel, and games for children. Later in the summer, the Friends and Toole Design lead a bike ride for the LandLine Coalition, a group working to connect community paths and greenways in the Greater Boston region.
- **Removal:** The one-week pop-up plazas were removed, and the chairs and tables were relocated to the seasonal Parks installation on the Greenway. In the fall, the Parks installation with the benches were removed and put into storage for the winter.
- **Re-Installation:** In Summer 2020, the benches and Adirondack chairs were placed in the Parks section of the Greenway.



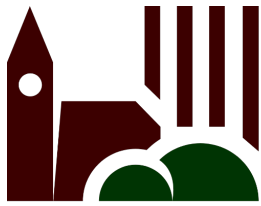
Gove Street Crossing: East Boston Greenway signage and temporary benches



View from Bremen Street towards the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway, exchange benches with cases and planters



Piñata Party planned by artist Krina Patel at the pop-up plaza



SME PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Tenant Mix Project: Rapid Recovery Program

“Identify ideal tenant mix and create a framework for the next generation of tenants”

South Hadley (Agency Landscape & Planning)

August 2, 2021

You have requested a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to assist you in developing a process for identifying an ideal tenant mix and planning for tenant succession in the Village Commons District of South Hadley. While there have been some recent closures, the district has not struggled at the same level as some commercial areas. On the other hand, some businesses in the area have struggled to adapt to COVID-19 related challenges and changing market desires. The goal of this program appears to be to ensure the future vitality of the district as much as to help it recover in the short-term.

KEY FACTORS

Timeframe: Short-term.

Concerns: In the long-term, tenant turnover may reduce the vitality of the district.

Partners: Village Commons Center Redevelopment Corporation; Mount Holyoke College; the Town of South Hadley; other property owners in the district.

Relationship to COVID-19 Recovery: Succession planning will provide an alternative to business closures and help address business fatigue, particularly if COVID-19 impacts drag on. In addition, the pandemic highlighted the limits of the offerings in the district and a need for a wider tenant mix that reflects a diverse clientele.

Risks: The largest risk is of doing nothing and having to respond to significant vacancies in the future.

Performance Indicators: Occupancy and economic activity in the district. Resident satisfaction with the tenant mix.

RECOMMENDED PROCESS

Based on the information provided, including the draft Master Plan excerpt on economic development, and the meetings we have held with the project facilitator and local project team, we recommend the following process for moving forward with this proposed project:



1. Brainstorming

- ✓ Determine what the town is hoping to accomplish this program. What does “ideal” mean in this context? What kind of “framework” are you trying to create?
- ✓ Meet with existing businesses to hear what they think would be complementary businesses to what they provide.
- ✓ Meet with residents to hear what they would like to see in the district.
- ✓ Review existing research and recommendations developed to date, such as the draft Master Plan.

2. Market Analysis

- ✓ Inventory existing businesses and any historical data that can be collected to track changes in tenant mix over time.
- ✓ Analyze (or hire a consultant to analyze) what the consumer capacity is for the Village Commons district. This will involve determining disposable income within certain distances as well as what competition exists in that area.
- ✓ Analyze (or hire a consultant to analyze) what gaps appear to be in the market. Are there missing types of retail, service, or business uses that could be supported?
- ✓ Determine what aspirational or “basic” industries (that might attract other businesses and visitors beyond basic needs) are of interest.
- ✓ Research the economics of these aspirational industries to understand what subsidies or other public or non-profit actions might be needed to make them relevant.

3. Develop Ideal Tenant Mix

- ✓ Develop a list of preferred tenants for the district, based on past work, the market analysis and the economics of aspirational businesses./
- ✓ Identify if there is a shortage of space, or different space needs, for this ideal tenant mix. If so, develop ideas as to how to accommodate those needs.

4. Create Framework for Next Generation of Tenants

- ✓ Create a set of criteria that would determine what tenants might be needed and wanted in the next 20-30 years.
- ✓ Develop a program of physical, programmatic, and economic changes that might be needed to achieve that framework.

INITIAL THOUGHTS

While we have only had limited exposure to the district and the thoughts of stakeholders, we offer the following initial thoughts and recommendations as you move forward with this effort:



- While your parking analysis suggested that additional parking is needed, we recommend caution in planning for more parking. Not only does parking drive up the costs of commercial space, it also reduces the ability to provide more space to achieve some of the goals that may emerge in this project. In addition, many transportation experts believe that parking will become less important over the next 20 years as more people use car sharing, bike sharing, and utilize “mobility as a service” options such as Lyft or Uber. Any parking areas should be viewed as opportunities for flexible space, providing parking in peak times but programmable space in other times.
- The mix of independent commercial tenants in the district is currently strong and even enviable. What appears to be missing are some practical uses such as a pharmacy or lower-priced clothing store. The challenge with these uses is that they are often provided by chain stores as well as stores with larger footprints.
- One limiting factor in this district is likely accessibility for those who can’t or won’t drive. The bikeshare station is a good asset, and the students and visitors to the Mount Holyoke Campus are able to walk. However, some uses on the site may be limited at some point by transit access. A shuttle or other transit option may be worth considering as you think about the next generation of tenants.
- Programming of spaces can drive retail visitors. Using parking areas or other open spaces for events can help with the tenant mix.
- While housing itself is not usually considered economic development, this district could be a good location for additional housing that will help sustain commercial activities. Housing for retirees and semi-retirees, as well as housing for young professionals, could be particularly beneficial and compatible with this district. Workforce housing opportunities should also be explored.

I hope this process overview is helpful as you work on this project.

Sample Parking Agreement

LEASE AGREEMENT

THIS LEASE AGREEMENT is made and entered into this 23 day of July 2018, by and between ROSWELL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, hereinafter referred to as "Lessor," and THE CITY OF ROSWELL, GEORGIA hereinafter referred to as "Lessee".

Recitals

In consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein set forth, and other good and valuable consideration, Lessor does hereby lease to Lessee, and Lessee does hereby lease from the Lessor, from 5:00 P.M. until 3:00 A.M. every Friday and Saturday evening, the premises situated at the parking lot bordered by Magnolia Street and Mimosa Street in ROSWELL, FULTON County, GEORGIA, and more particularly described in Exhibit A attached hereto and hereinafter called the "leased premises or lot."

ARTICLE 1. TERM

Term of Lease

The term of this lease shall be one (1) year, commencing on August 1, 2018 and ending on July 31, 2019 unless sooner terminated as herein provided.

Renewal Option

Either party may renew this Lease Agreement for two additional one (1) year terms by providing thirty (30) days notice prior to expiration of the Agreement term then in effect. The receiving party shall have fifteen (15) days from receipt of notification to reject said Notice of Renewal or such renewal shall be binding on both parties.

Lease Year Defined

The term "lease year," as used herein, shall mean a period of twelve (12) consecutive full calendar months beginning on July 1 of each year and ending on the final day of June of each year. Each succeeding lease year shall commence on the anniversary date of the first lease year.

ARTICLE 2. RENT

Lessee agrees to pay to Lessor without any prior demand therefore and without any deduction or setoff whatsoever, and as a fixed rent, the following sums, provided parties may agree to

Four hundred dollars (\$400.00) per month of each lease year paid initially at the signing of this lease and thereafter by the first day of each lease month.

ARTICLE 3. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Lessee shall operate the leased premises for the use as a parking lot for the general public. Overnight parking, storage of vehicles and/or materials of any kind is specifically prohibited.

Lessee will neither assign lease nor sublease property without written consent of Lessor.

ARTICLE 4. MAINTENANCE, WASTE, AND NUISANCE

Lessee shall, at its expense, maintain the parking surface in a clean and orderly fashion on days and nights used by Lessee. Lessee shall not be responsible for paving and/or maintenance of the lot. Lessor shall repair and maintain the lot, all entrances and exits to the premises in accordance with all local, state and federal building and code requirements. Lessee shall ensure that all vehicles are removed from the premises

Waste and Nuisance

Lessee shall throughout the term of this Lease keep the lot free from waste or nuisance,

and shall deliver up the premises in a clean and sanitary condition at the termination of each night's use of the lot. In the event Lessee should neglect reasonably to maintain the leased premises, Lessor shall have the right, but not the obligation, to cause the lot to be cleaned, and any reasonable costs therefore shall be payable by Lessee to Lessor as additional rental on the next rental installment date.

ARTICLE 5. OBLIGATIONS OF LESSOR AND LESSEE

Taxes and Assessments

Lessor shall pay and fully discharge all taxes, special assessments, and governmental charges of every character imposed during the term of this lease on or with respect to the leased premises or any part thereof, and all improvements erected thereon. Lessor shall pay all such taxes, charges, and assessments to the public officer charged with the collection thereof not less than days before the same shall become delinquent, and Lessor agrees to indemnify and save harmless Lessee from all such taxes, charges, and assessments. Lessor shall have the right, in good faith and at its cost and expense, to contest any such taxes, charges, and assessments in the name of Lessor if necessary and shall be obligated to pay the contested amount only if and when finally determined to be due.

Alterations, Additions, and Improvements

Lessee shall not make any alterations, additions, or improvements to the leased premises without the prior written consent of Lessor. Consent for nonstructural alterations, additions, or improvements shall not unreasonably be withheld by Lessor. Lessee shall have the right at all times to erect or install temporary informational signage on the lot provided that Lessee removes such signage nightly at the end of the Friday or Saturday term.

Lessee shall have the right to erect signs on any portion of the leased premises, subject to applicable laws and deed restrictions. Lessor must approve signs, prior to their use, which will be displayed on the leased property. Signs may include notice of car removal from premises after posted hours and a phone number for the city contact if removed. Lessee will provide contact information to Lessor for approved towing service being used.

ARTICLE 6. INDEMNITY AND INSURANCE

Hold-Harmless Clause

Lessee agrees, to the extent allowed by law, to indemnify and hold Lessor, its members and officers, both jointly and severally, free and harmless from any and all claims, liability, loss, damages or expenses resulting from Lessee's use of said premises, specifically including, without limitation, any claim, liability, loss, or damage arising by reason of:

- (a) The death or injury of any person or persons, including Lessee or any person who is an employee or agent of Lessee, or by reason of the damage to or destruction of any property, including property owned by Lessee or any person who is an employee or agent of Lessee, and caused or allegedly caused by some act or omission of Lessee or of some agent, contractor, employee, or servant of Lessee on said premises;
- (b) Lessee's failure to perform any provision of this lease or to comply with any requirement of law or any requirement imposed on Lessor or the leased premises by any duly authorized governmental agency or political subdivision.

Liability Insurance

Lessee shall, at its own cost and expense maintain during the entire term of this lease and any renewals or extensions of such term, any necessary liability insurance to cover Lessee's use of the lot. Minimum insurance coverage will be \$1,000,000 and the policy will cover property damage and be a primary, non-contributory policy. Lessee will provide a Certificate of Insurance naming Lessor as either Additional Insured and Loss Payee prior to usage of the leased property.

ARTICLE 7. DEFAULTS AND REMEDIES

Should Lessee default in the performance of any of the covenants or conditions contained in this lease, or abandon the leased premises, Lessee shall have breached the lease and Lessor may, in addition to the remedies specified in this lease, reenter and regain possession of said premises in the manner provided by the laws of the State of Georgia then in effect.

Remedies of Lessor

Should Lessee breach this lease or abandon the leased premises prior to the stated expiration of the term of this lease, Lessor may elect to:

- (a) Continue this lease in effect by not terminating Lessee's right to possession of said premises, in which event Lessor shall be entitled to enforce all its rights and remedies under this lease, including the right to recover the rent specified in this lease as it becomes due under this lease;

or

- (b) Terminate this lease and recover from Lessee a payment of three (3) months lease payment.

Leased property is currently tax exempt. Should tax status change by any taxing entity due to leased use of the property, and taxes are subsequently assessed on the property, Lessor may terminate this lease immediately.

ARTICLE 8. INSPECTION BY LESSOR

Lessee shall permit Lessor and its agents to enter into and upon the leased premises at all reasonable times for inspecting the same or for the purpose of maintaining or making repairs or alterations to the lot. If the lot is closed for any period by Lessor, its employees, agents, contractors or assigns for repairs and/or maintenance and such time interferes with Lessee's use of the lot, rent for such period of time shall be adjusted accordingly; however, Lessor may from time to time require use of the leased parking area for special events. Lessee will be notified at least 30 days in advance of such needs and will not post signage or indicate that the parking area is available to the public. Rent shall be decreased for the next month based on the days closed to public use.

ARTICLE 9. MISCELLANEOUS

Notices and Addresses

All notices provided to be given under this agreement shall be given by certified mail or registered mail, addressed to the proper party, at the following addresses:

Lessor: Business Administrator, Roswell United Methodist Church 814 Mimosa Boulevard
Roswell, Georgia 30075-4410

Lessee: City of Roswell, Georgia 38 Hill Street Suite 100 Roswell, Georgia 30075

Parties Bound

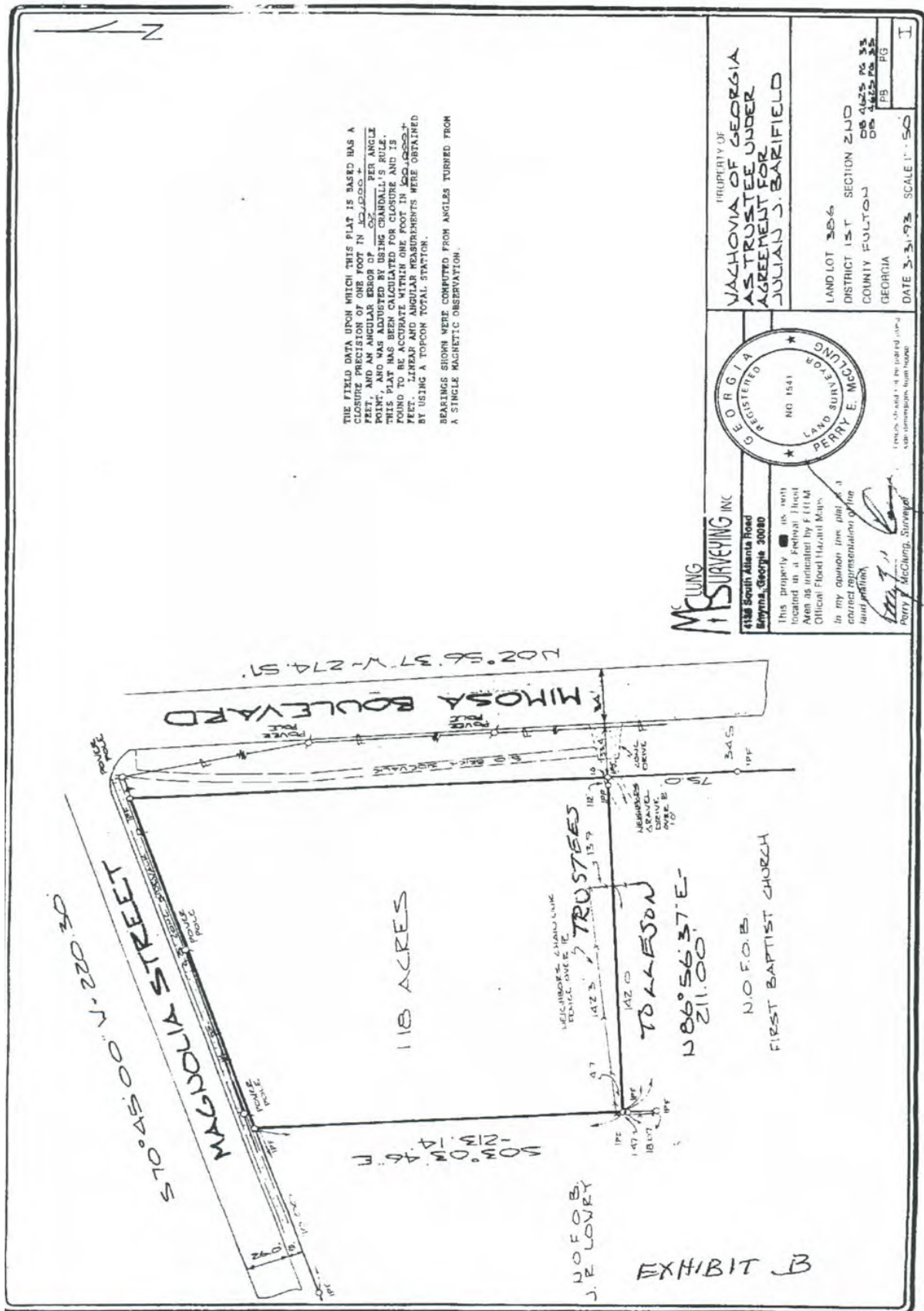
This agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties hereto and their respective heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives, successors, and assigns when permitted by this agreement.

Applicable Law

This agreement shall be construed under and in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia.

Legal Construction

EXHIBIT "A"



In case any one or more OF the provisions contained in this lease shall for any reason be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision hereof and this lease shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained herein.

Sole Agreement of the Parties

This lease constitutes the sole and only agreement of the parties hereto and supersedes any prior understandings or written or oral agreements between the parties respecting the subject matter within it.

Amendment

No amendment, modification, or alteration of the terms hereof shall be binding unless the same be in writing, dated subsequent to the date hereof, and duly executed by the parties hereto.

Rights and Remedies Cumulative

The rights and remedies provided by this lease are cumulative and the use of any one right or remedy by either party shall not preclude or waive its right to use any or all other remedies. Said rights and remedies are given in addition to any other rights the parties may have by law, statute, ordinance, or otherwise.

Waiver of Default

No waiver by the parties hereto of any default or breach of any term, condition, or covenant of this lease shall be deemed to be a waiver of any other breach of the same or any other term, condition, or covenant contained herein.

Attorney's Fees

In the event Lessor or Lessee breaches any of the terms of this agreement whereby the party not in default employs attorneys to protect or enforce its rights hereunder and prevails, then the defaulting party agrees to pay the other party reasonable attorney's fees so incurred by such other party.

Excuse

Neither Lessor nor Lessee shall be required to perform any term, condition, or covenant in this lease so long as such performance is delayed or prevented by any acts of God, strikes, lockouts, material or labor restrictions by any governmental authority, civil riot, floods, and any other cause not reasonably within the control of the Lessor or Lessee and which by the exercise of due diligence Lessor or Lessee is unable, wholly or in part, to prevent or overcome.

Time of Essence

Time is of the essence of this agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned Lessor and Lessee execute this agreement as of the day and year first written above.

Lessor

Bill Barboul, CBA
Roswell United Methodist Church

Susan C. Hunter
Witness

Doyle A. Costello
Notary



Lessee

[Signature]
City of Roswell, Georgia

Nancy S. Long
Witness

Maureen Press
Attest



Physical Realm Data Collection Rubric

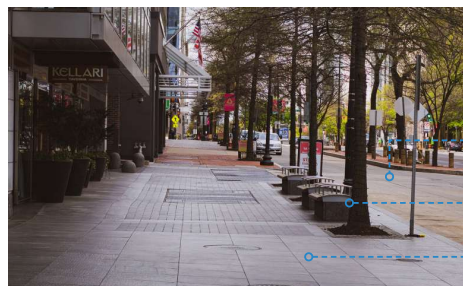
Physical Environment

PUBLIC REALM



Wayfinding/Signage

Street Lighting



Roadbed and Crosswalk

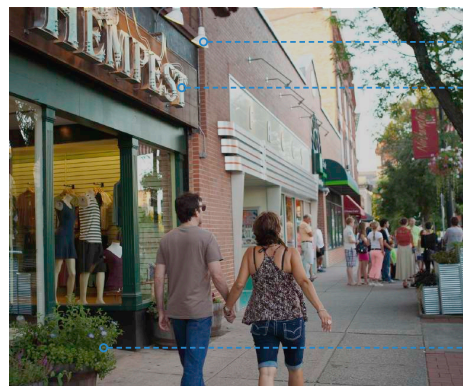
Street Trees and Benches

Sidewalk

Element	Guiding Principles	A	B	C	FAIL
Sidewalks	Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate both the flow of customers and spillover retail/dining activity. In addition, sidewalks should be clean and well-maintained to ensure the safety and comfort of pedestrians.	More than 75% of sidewalks in the study area are cleaned, well-maintained and accessible to multiple users across different ages and abilities.	About 50% of sidewalks in the study area are cleaned and well-maintained.	More than 25% of sidewalks in the study area pose challenges to the pedestrian experience (including narrow sidewalks and lack of cleanliness/maintenance).	There are no sidewalks in the study area.
Street Trees and Benches	Sidewalks should facilitate a variety of activities, including resting, people-watching and socializing. Street trees and benches are key amenities that support such activities and should be made available without disrupting the flow of pedestrians.	Street trees and benches are readily available throughout the study area. They are well-designed, well-maintained, and offer shade and comfort to pedestrians.	Although street trees and benches are available across the study area, these amenities have not been cleaned or well-maintained, and require improvements.	Limited availability of street trees and benches creating uncomfortable pedestrian experience.	There are no street trees and benches in the study area.
Lighting	Street lighting improves pedestrian visibility and personal safety, as well as aids in geographic orientation.	More than 75% of the study area utilizes a range of lighting strategies to ensure safety of pedestrians and motorists, as well as highlight the identity and history of an area.	About 50% of the study area is serviced by street lighting that supports pedestrian visibility and safety.	Street lighting on the primary street in the study area does not support pedestrian visibility and safety.	There is no street lighting in the study area.
Wayfinding/Signage	A wayfinding system supports overall accessibility of a commercial district. It benefits pedestrians and cyclists, and directs motorists to park and walk. Without clear visual cues, customers may find it difficult to park or may be less aware of local offerings.	There is a comprehensive and cohesive wayfinding system that offers geographic orientation to pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Signage reflect the brand and identity of the area.	Wayfinding in the study area is primarily geared towards directing motorists across the study area. There is limited signage to identify key assets and destinations to pedestrians.	Limited to no signage available throughout the study area.	There is no wayfinding/signage in the study area.
Roadbed and Crosswalks	Roads should be well-maintained to ensure safety of drivers and pedestrians. Crosswalks that are unsafe or inconvenient to customers may undermine accessibility between stores and overall shopper experience.	Roads are designed to balance the needs of motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians and create a safe environment for all users.	Roads are designed primarily to move motor vehicles across the study area efficiently, with limited crosswalks for pedestrians.	Roads are hazardous to all users.	The study area is not connected by any major roads.

Physical Environment

PRIVATE REALM



Lighting

Signage

Outdoor Display



Façade

Awning

Window

Element	Guiding Principles	A	B	C	FAIL
Window	Storefronts that maintain a minimum of 70% transparency ensure clear lines of sight between the business and the sidewalk to enhance attractiveness of storefront, as well as improve safety for the business, customers, and pedestrians.	More than 75% of storefronts maintain windows with at least 70% transparency.	About 50% of storefront windows maintain windows with at least 70% transparency.	More than 25% of storefronts have windows with limited transparency.	All storefronts are boarded up and/or have limited transparency.
Outdoor Display/Dining	Attractive window displays and spillover retail/restaurant activity on sidewalks or adjacent parking spaces can help contribute to overall district vibrancy.	More than 75% of storefronts feature an attractive window display and/or spillover merchandise and dining areas that align with the brand and identity of the district.	About 50% of storefronts maintain an attractive window display with limited spillover merchandise and/or dining areas.	More than 25% of storefronts have windows with limited transparency.	There is no spillover retail/restaurant activity in the district.
Signage	Signage can help customers identify the location of storefronts and businesses from a distance. Signage should also reflect the visual brand and identity of tenants to help attract new customers.	More than 75% of storefront signs reflect the unique brand identity of tenants and can be easily seen from more than 10 ft distance.	About 50% of storefronts have clear signage that reflect basic business information and can easily be seen from adjacent sidewalks.	More than 25% of storefronts have signage that does not communicate names of business or types of products/services being offered.	Storefronts in the study area do not have signage.
Awning	Awnings can provide shade during warmer months, enabling comfortable outdoor dining arrangements for customers. However, they must be well-maintained and designed in coordination with other elements of the storefront.	More than 75% of properties in the study area have retractable awnings that have been well-maintained and cleaned.	About 50% of properties in the study area have functioning awnings that have been well-maintained and cleaned.	More than 25% of properties in the study area do not have awnings and/or have awnings that are unusable or have not been cleaned and maintained.	Storefronts in the study area are not equipped with awnings.
Façade	Storefronts that use high-quality and durable building materials, as well as paint and color to differentiate from other businesses, can dramatically improve the appearance of the commercial district to potential customers.	More than 75% of properties have well-maintained façades. Limited structural enhancements are required.	Although most properties in the study area have clean and well-maintained façades, there is at least one significant property requiring structural facade improvements.	More than 25% of properties require significant building facade improvements, including power washing, painting, and structural enhancements.	All properties in the study area require significant facade improvements.
Lighting	Storefront interior lighting after business hours help entice the corridor and boost security on the street.	More than 75% of storefronts have lighting that help illuminate sidewalks.	About 50% of storefronts have some interior lighting that help illuminate sidewalks.	More than 25% of storefronts do not have lighting.	All storefronts in the study area are shuttered and dark at night.

Funding Resources

Funding sources were crowd sourced during the Local Rapid Recovery Planning effort. The following sheets include funding sources noted on the site as of October 8, 2021. Original tables can be found by clicking on each of the following links. Original tables are slightly easier to navigate through and include direct links to funding sources

[Public Realm](#)

[Private Realm](#)

[Tenant Mix](#)

[Revenue/Sales](#)

[Administrative Capacity](#)

[Culture/Arts](#)

Public Realm

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22 +)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Efficiency and Regionalization grant program	No Longer Available	Public	Community Compact Cabinet	\$100,000		Municipalities, regional school districts, school districts	For governmental entities interested in implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability. These grants provided funds for one-time or transition costs for municipalities, regional school districts, school districts considering forming a regional district or regionalizing services, regional planning agencies and councils of governments interested in such projects. Small capital purchases or improvements that are integral to the implementation of a functional program such as equipment or software; Technical assistance including consulting services, assistance in drafting contracts or other agreements; and Transition or project management costs, not to exceed one year.
MDAR Urban Agriculture Program	No Longer Available	Public	Mass Department of Agriculture			Municipalities, Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3), Public or non-profit educational or public health institutions, Established urban farmer with more than three (3) years of commercial urban farming experience	To fund long-term, capital investments such as infrastructure improvements, building upgrades, purchase of computer software and systems, land procurement, and purchase of farm equipment to increase access of fresh, local produce in urban neighborhoods with a high concentration of low-moderate income residents
Cultural Facilities Fund (Systems Replacements)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for 20-year capital needs assessments of buildings and mechanical systems.
Coastal Resilience Grant Program	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management	\$1,000,000		Municipalities located within the Massachusetts coastal zone; Certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that own vulnerable coastal property that is open and accessible to the public	to provide financial and technical support for local and regional efforts to increase awareness and understanding of climate impacts, identify and map vulnerabilities, conduct adaptation planning, redesign and retrofit vulnerable public facilities and infrastructure, and restore shorelines to enhance natural resources and provide storm damage protection.
Housing Choice Capital Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Mass Housing Choice Initiative			Housing Choice Communities	To plan and build the diverse housing stock located on publicly owned land, leasehold, easement or right-of-way, or are for the purchase of public land - includes pre-construction survey, design, engineering and construction costs, feasibility studies, land acquisition, etc.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Capital Grants)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for the acquisition, design, construction, repair, renovation, and rehabilitation of a cultural facility.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for the planning and assessment of a cultural facility.
Shuttered Venue Operators Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Small Business Administration	\$10,000,000		Businesses such as live venue operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, museum operators, motion picture theater operators (including owners), and talent representatives.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, taxes and fees, administrative costs, advertising, production transportation, and capital expenditures related to producing a theatrical or live performing arts production.
Regional Pilot Project Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development	\$250,000		Municipalities, public entities, or 501(c) organizations that are federally tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code and intend to promote regional recovery from the economic impacts of COVID19	To support businesses and communities in stabilizing and/or growing their regional economy through solutions including (but not limited to) job creation, transportation, childcare, digital marketing and promotion efforts, digital business directories. This funding should not be used to fund projects or purposes for which there is already state or federal funding available (i.e. Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, Paycheck Protection Program, Small Business Grant Relief programs). No capital-related projects will be funded through this program.
Real Estate Services Technical Assistance	No Longer Available	Public	MassDevelopment	\$10,000		Eligible applicants include municipal officials, planners, local stakeholders, and others.	Grants may be used toward technical assistance opportunities in Surplus Property Reuse (e.g. Constraints and Feasibility Analysis, Master Planning, Test Fits, RFP/Q Assistance) or Local District Management Implementation Technical Assistance (e.g. District Improvement Financing, Business Improvement District formation)
Business Equity COVID-19 Emergency Fund	No Longer Available	Private	Foundation for Business Equity		\$100,000	Black and Latinx majority-owned (51% or more) businesses with revenues of at least \$250,000	Flexible loans may be used for working capital and other demonstrated business needs (e.g., salaries and wages, inventory, equipment, marketing, etc.)
Planning Assistance Grants	Yes	Public	Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs	\$125,000		Municipalities and Regional Planning Agencies	To fund technical assistance and help communities undertake public process associated with creating plans and adopting land use regulations consistent with the Baker Polito Administration's land conservation and development objectives including reduction of land, energy, and natural resource consumption, provision of sufficient and diverse housing, and mitigation of/preparation for climate change.

Public Realm

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Real Estate Services Technical Assistance	No Longer Available	Public	MassDevelopment		\$10,000	Eligible applicants include municipal officials, planners, local stakeholders, and others.	Grants may be used toward technical assistance opportunities in Surplus Property Reuse (e.g. Constraints and Feasibility Analysis, Master Planning, Test Fits, RFP/QAssistance) or Local District Management Implementation Technical Assistance (e.g. District Improvement Financing, Business Improvement District formation)
Business Equity COVID-19 Emergency Fund	No Longer Available	Private	Foundation for Business Equity		\$100,000	Black and Latinx majority-owned (\$1% or more) businesses with revenues of at least \$250,000	Flexible loans may be used for working capital and other demonstrated business needs (e.g., salaries and wages, inventory, equipment, marketing, etc.)
Planning Assistance Grants	Yes	Public	Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs	\$125,000		Municipalities and Regional Planning Agencies	To fund technical assistance and help communities undertake public process associated with creating plans and adopting land use regulations consistent with the Baker Polito Administration's land conservation and development objectives including reduction of land, energy, and natural resource consumption, provision of sufficient and diverse housing, and mitigation of/preparation for climate change.
Regional Pilot Project Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development	\$250,000		Partnerships of municipalities, public entities, or 501(c) organizations	To fund projects that support businesses and communities in stabilizing/growing their regional economy with one or more of the recovery efforts under Partnerships for recovery. no capital-related projects will be funded.
MassWorks Infrastructure Program	Yes	Public	Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development			Municipalities	The most flexible source of capital funds to municipalities and other eligible public entities primarily for public infrastructure projects that support and accelerate housing production, spur private development, and create jobs - particularly for production of multi-family housing in appropriately located walkable, mixed-use districts.
Community Compact IT Grant	Yes	Public	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	\$200,000		Municipalities	This is a competitive grant program focused on driving innovation and transformation at the local level via investments in technology. support the implementation of innovative IT projects by funding related one-time capital needs such as technology infrastructure, upgrades and/or purchases of equipment or software. Incidental or one-time costs related to the capital purchase such as planning, design, installation, implementation and initial training are eligible.
Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency/FEMA			Property Owners	to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes, and other structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
MA Downtown Initiative Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$25,000		Municipalities	Technical assistance for downtown revitalization in 6 categories
TDI Creative Catalyst	Yes	Public	MassDevelopment	\$40,000		Individuals and organizations in current ad graduated Transformative Development Initiative Districts	To support public-facing projects that enhance local arts and cultural infrastructure and contribute to economic revitalization - including public art, placemaking, and stabilization of organizations and creative business collectives
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency/FEMA			Property Owners	hazard mitigation projects reducing the risks from disasters and natural hazards
Commonwealth Places	Yes	Public	MassDevelopment	\$300,000		Municipalities	To help community partners prepare public spaces and commercial districts to best serve their population during COVID-19 social distancing and the phased reopening of the economy, including improvements to sidewalks, curbs, streets, on-street parking spaces and off-street parking lots in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce in their communities. This program complements the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Shared Streets & Spaces.
Community Preservation Act	Yes	Public	Community Preservation Trust Fund/State Department of Revenue (DOR)			Only communities that have adopted the Community Preservation Act are eligible to receive CPA Trust Fund matching funds annually	To preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities.
Partnerships Matching Funds Program	Yes	Public	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$25,000		State park friends and advocacy groups, Civic and community organizations, Institutions, Businesses, Municipal governments	To support capital investments at DCR-owned state parks, beaches, and other reservations.
Restaurant Revitalization Fund	Yes	Public	Small Business Administration		\$10,000,000	Eligible entities include restaurants, food stands/trucks/carts, caterers, bars/saloons/lounges/taverns, snack and non alcoholic beverage bars, bakeries, brewpubs, breweries/microbreweries, wineries, distilleries, inns, and licensed	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, business maintenance expenses, construction of outdoor seating, business supplies, business food and beverage expenses (including raw materials), covered

Public Realm

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Restaurant Revitalization Fund	Yes	Public	Small Business Administration		\$10,000,000	Eligible entities include restaurants, food stands/trucks/carts, caterers, bars/saloons/lounges/taverns, snack and non alcoholic beverage bars, bakeries, brewpubs, breweries/microbreweries, wineries, distilleries, inns, and licensed facilities of a beverage alcohol producer. Priority group: Small businesses that are at least 51% owned by one or more individuals who are women/veterans/socially and economically disadvantaged.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, business maintenance expenses, construction of outdoor seating, business supplies, business food and beverage expenses (including raw materials), covered supplier costs, and business operating expenses
BIZ-M-POWER	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation	\$20,000		Small businesses (i.e. employing 1-20 FTE employees, including 1 or more of whom owns the business, annual revenue not exceeding \$2,500,000) in brick-and-mortar (physical) establishment operating within Massachusetts	To assist low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs with their acquisition, expansion, improvement or lease of a facility, purchase or lease of equipment, or with meeting other capital needs of a business.
Shared Streets and Spaces	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Transportation	\$200,000		Municipalities	To support the repurposing of streets, plazas, sidewalks, curbs, and parking areas to facilitate outdoor activities and community programming, including but not limited to facilities for eating, shopping, play, and community events and spaces for all ages.
Small Business Technical Assistance Grant	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation	\$85,000		501(c)3 organizations	To fund specific counseling and training programs that assist small businesses in securing new or increased financing for growth, providing digital grants (MGCC Program), establishing crowdfunding campaigns through the Biz-M-Power grant (MGCC Program), achieving stability and viability, creating/retaining jobs, increasing the economic vitality of the neighborhood, community, or region.
Economic Adjustment Assistance	Yes	Public	Economic Development Association	\$10,000,000		Eligible applicants under the EAA program include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under the EAA program, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding.	EDA's ARPA EAA NOFO is designed to provide a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions as they respond to, and recover from, the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, including long-term recovery and resilience to future economic disasters. Under this announcement, EDA solicits applications under the authority of the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which is flexible and responsive to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders. This is the broadest NOFO EDA is publishing under ARPA and any eligible applicant from any EDA Region may apply.
Competitive Tourism Grants	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$10,000,000		For EDA Competitive Tourism Grants, eligible entities include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. 42 U.S.C. § 3122(4)(A); 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.	EDA's ARPA Tourism NOFO is designed to provide a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions to rebuild and strengthen their travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation industry through various infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. Under this NOFO, EDA solicits applications under the authority of the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which is flexible and responsive to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders. EDA's travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation grants will be delivered through two components: (1) State Tourism Grants and (2) EDA Competitive Tourism Grants.
Build Back Better Regional Challenge	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$500,000		Eligible applicants under this NOFO include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under this NOFO, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for fundine.	In Phase 1, EDA will provide technical assistance grants to approximately 50-60 coalitions (through a lead institution). These coalitions will be considered "finalists" and the grants will be used by the finalists to prepare more detailed applications for transformational projects that benefit their respective geographic regions and are aligned around a holistic approach to building and scaling a strategic industry. In Phase 2, EDA will award each of the 20-30 finalist coalitions \$25-75 million (and potentially up to \$100 million) to fund the collection of projects they identified. The projects will be funded through grants to coalition members.

Public Realm

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Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$6,000,000		Eligible applicants under the EAA program include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State unless EDA waives the cooperation requirement. For Statewide Planning grants, eligible applicants are limited to the Governor's Office, or equivalent, of a State, who may designate an eligible applicant type described above to apply for and administer the award. Under section 3(10) of PWEDA the term "State" includes the fifty States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of	The ARPA Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks NOFO is part of EDA's multi-phase effort to respond to the coronavirus pandemic as directed by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Specifically, this NOFO seeks to build regional economies for the future through two primary avenues: a) Statewide Planning and b) Research and Networks. Subject to the availability of funds, awards made under this NOFO will help develop coordinated state-wide plans for economic development and data, tools, and institutional capacity to evaluate and scale evidence-based economic development efforts, including through communities of practice and provision of technical assistance among existing and new EDA grantees.
Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development			Eligible organizations shall be corporations, foundations, organizations or institutions that operate regionally and service 10 or more contiguous towns/cities. They must be exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, and have a primary focus of economic development and perform the services required by MGL Chapter 23A Section 3J and 3K.	Grants should be used to assist entrepreneurs, small businesses, and business partners in order to stabilize and/or grow regional economy. They may not, however, be used to increase salaries or hire additional staff for the organization.
Hometown Grant Program	Yes	Private	T-Mobile	\$50,000		Towns with population <50,000	To build/rebuild/refresh community spaces that help foster local connections in town.
Greener Greater Boston Program	Yes	Private	Solomon Foundation/Barr Foundation	\$20,000		Municipalities, Trail conservancies and non-profits	To fund preliminary design (for each stage of design), capacity building and operational support, and public engagement and implementation toward projects that enhance the beauty, utility, and accessibility of Greater Boston's greenways.
Nellie Leaman Taft Foundation Competitive Grants	Yes	Private	Nellie Leaman Taft Foundation	\$15,000		Non-profits 501 (c)(3) (small to mid sized) that benefit residents of greater Boston inside the Route 495 beltway	To seed funding for new ideas and initiatives, start-up and on-going support for grass roots organizations, and entrepreneurial projects that may enable an organization or its constituents to achieve greater self-sufficiency.
Seed Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$1,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups launching new projects or starting to significantly change the direction of an existing project. Most often, groups have been working on the project less than a year and usually don't yet have much direct experience with implementing the idea.
Grow Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$4,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups to deepen their work by further developing a community vision, lowering barriers to participation, identifying new stakeholders and working to bring more voices and lived experiences into core decision-making processes.
Young Leaders Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$6,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$175,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support projects led by young leaders aged 15-25
Small Business Matching Grant	Yes	Private	NewVue Communities	\$5,000		22 North Central Massachusetts cities and towns from Athol to Harvard with a combined population of 240,000 (refer to https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/)	To support micro-enterprises (businesses with 5 or fewer employees) that need help with marketing and accounting.
William J. & Margery S. Barrett Fund	Yes	Private	Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation			Nonprofit organizations, public agencies or community organizations that provide services to the residents of Adams, Cheshire or Savoy, MA.	To fund projects, programs, capital improvements and general operating support of initiatives that benefit the community in arts and culture, early childhood development, environment, and health and social services.
Central Berkshire Fund	Yes	Private	Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation	\$5,000		Nonprofit organizations, public agencies or community organizations that provide services to the residents of the communities of Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington and Windsor.	To fund projects, programs, capital improvements and general operating support of initiatives that benefit the community in arts and culture, early childhood development, environment, and health and social services.
Merrimack Valley Municipal Business Development and Recovery Fund	Yes	Private	Essex County Community Foundation/Columbia Gas	\$2,000,000		City of Lawrence, the Town of Andover, and the Town of North Andover	To provide direct support (individual business support, general business promotions, technical assistance and business consultation services, economic development and planning) to the municipalities and their business communities (not businesses directly) impacted by the recent gas disaster in Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence

Public Realm

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Community Change Grant	Yes	Private	America Walks (funded by General Motors)	\$1,500		Eligible groups must have a project that engages General Motors employees from any facility (dealerships, plants, offices) or you live in a location with a primary General Motors facility	Grants should be used to create healthy, active, and engaged communities that support walking as transportation, health, and recreation. Projects that center the concerns of BIPOC residents, reach across the demographics of communities to build coalitions, and/or create unique civic partnerships with new perspectives will be prioritized.
Brownfields Redevelopment Site Assessment Fund	Maybe	Public	MassDevelopment	\$100,000			To finance the environmental assessment of brownfield sites in Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs) of the Commonwealth
Urban Agenda Grant Program	Maybe	Public	Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development			Cross sector consortiums and coalitions	Funding to local partnerships to implement projects that are based on collaborative work models with the goal of advancing economic progress. Typically, Early Stage Strategy Development and Strategy Implementation by an Existing Cross-Sector Consortium or Coalition
Community Development Block Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$1,350,000		Municipalities with a population of under 50,000 that do not receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	to meet a broad range of community development needs - including projects such as housing rehabilitation or development; micro-enterprise or other business assistance; infrastructure; community/public facilities; public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization
Brownfields Redevelopment Remediation Fund	Maybe	Public	MassDevelopment	\$500,000			To finance the remediation of brownfield sites in Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs) of the Commonwealth
National Endowment for the Arts Grants	Maybe	Public	National Endowment for the Arts			Regional Arts Agencies	This funding will be allocated to local state and regional arts agencies to distribute through their funding programs
Housing Development Incentive Program	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development			Developers (projects located in Gateway Cities)	Tax incentive to undertake new construction or substantial rehabilitation of properties for lease or sale as multi-unit market rate residential housing
MassTrails Grants	Maybe	Public	Department of Conservation & Recreation, Massachusetts Department of Transportation	\$100,000		Public entities and non-profit organizations (with documented land owner permission and community support)	to design, create, and maintain the diverse network of trails, trail systems, and trails experiences
MassEVIP Fleets Incentives	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection	\$7,500		Public Entities	helps eligible public entities acquire (buy or lease) electric vehicles for their fleets.
Abandoned Housing Initiative Strategic Demolition Fund Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Attorney General's Office	\$125,000		Municipalities, Municipal Housing and Redevelopment Authorities, Nonprofit organizations	To be used for the construction of an affordable housing structure.
Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund	Maybe	Public	State Historic Preservation Office			Municipalities and private non-profit organizations	to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places - including pre-development work, development projects such as stabilization, protection, rehabilitation and restoration
Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program	Maybe	Public	State Historic Preservation Office			Municipalities and private non-profit organizations	to support efforts to identify and plan for the protection of the significant historic buildings, structures, archaeological sites and landscapes of the Commonwealth (including cultural resource inventories, nomination of properties to National Register, community-wide preservation plans, other studies/reports/publications to identify and protect significant properties)
Massachusetts Recycling Fund	Maybe	Private	BDC Capital		\$500,000		To help Massachusetts businesses active in recycling-related activities obtain the capital needed for any reasonable business purpose.
Closed Loop Infrastructure Fund	Maybe	Private	Closed Loop Partners		\$5,000,000	Municipalities and private companies	Provides below-market rate loans to fund replicable, scalable and sustainable recycling and circular economy infrastructure projects across collection, sortation, processing and new technologies.

Private Realm

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22 +)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Cultural Facilities Fund (Systems Replacements)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for 20-year capital needs assessments of buildings and mechanical systems.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Capital Grants)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for the acquisition, design, construction, repair, renovation, and rehabilitation of a cultural facility.
Real Estate Services Technical Assistance	No Longer Available	Public	MassDevelopment	\$10,000		Eligible applicants include municipal officials, planners, local stakeholders, and others.	Grants may be used toward technical assistance opportunities in Surplus Property Reuse (e.g. Constraints and Feasibility Analysis, Master Planning, Test Fits, RFP/Q Assistance) or Local District Management Implementation Technical Assistance (e.g. District Improvement Financing, Business Improvement District formation)
Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency/FEMA			Property Owners	to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes, and other structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
MA Downtown Initiative Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$25,000		Municipalities	Technical assistance for downtown revitalization in 6 categories
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency/FEMA			Property Owners	hazard mitigation projects reducing the risks from disasters and natural hazards
Community Preservation Act	Yes	Public	Community Preservation Trust Fund/State Department of Revenue (DOR)			Only communities that have adopted the Community Preservation Act are eligible to receive CPA Trust Fund matching funds annually.	To preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities.
BIZ-M-POWER	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation	\$20,000		Small businesses (i.e. employing 1-20 FTE employees, including 1 or more of whom owns the business, annual revenue not exceeding \$2,500,000) in brick-and-mortar (physical) establishment operating within Massachusetts	To assist low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs with their acquisition, expansion, improvement or lease of a facility, purchase or lease of equipment, or with meeting other capital needs of a business.
Competitive Tourism Grants	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$10,000,000		For EDA Competitive Tourism Grants, eligible entities include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. 42 U.S.C. § 3122(4)(A); 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.	EDA's ARPA Tourism NOFO is designed to provide a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions to rebuild and strengthen their travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation industry through various infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. Under this NOFO, EDA solicits applications under the authority of the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which is flexible and responsive to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders. EDA's travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation grants will be delivered through two components: (1) State Tourism Grants and (2) EDA Competitive Tourism Grants.
Build Back Better Regional Challenge	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$500,000		Eligible applicants under this NOFO include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under this NOFO, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for-profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding.	Through this American Rescue Plan Act Build Back Better Regional Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (ARPA BBRC NOFO), EDA aims to assist communities and regions impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has caused, and continues to cause, economic injury to U.S. communities and regions in devastating and unprecedented ways. This ARPA BBRC NOFO is designed as a two-phase competition to (1) help regions develop transformational economic development strategies and (2) fund the implementation of those strategies that will create and grow regional growth clusters. Such efforts will help regional economies recover from the pandemic and build economic diversity and resiliency to mitigate impacts of future economic disasters. In Phase 1, EDA will provide technical assistance grants to approximately 50-60 coalitions (through a lead institution). These coalitions will be considered "Finalists" and the grants will be used by the finalists to prepare more detailed applications for transformational projects that benefit their respective geographic regions and are aligned around a holistic approach to building and scaling a strategic industry. In Phase 2, EDA will award each of the 20-30 finalist coalitions \$25-75 million (and potentially up to \$100 million) to fund the collection of projects they identified. The projects will be funded through grants to coalition members.
Hometown Grant Program	Yes	Private	T-Mobile	\$50,000		Towns with population <50,000	To build/rebuild/refresh community spaces that help foster local connections in town.
Brownfields Redevelopment Site Assessment Fund	Maybe	Public	MassDevelopment	\$100,000			To finance the environmental assessment of brownfield sites in Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs) of the Commonwealth
Community Development Block Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$1,350,000		Municipalities with a population of under 50,000 that do not receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	to meet a broad range of community development needs - including projects such as housing rehabilitation or development; micro-enterprise or other business assistance; infrastructure; community/public facilities; public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization
Brownfields Redevelopment Remediation Fund	Maybe	Public	MassDevelopment	\$500,000			To finance the remediation of brownfield sites in Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs) of the Commonwealth
Housing Development Incentive Program	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development			Developers (projects located in Gateway Cities)	Tax incentive to undertake new construction or substantial rehabilitation of properties for lease or sale as multi-unit market rate residential housing
Abandoned Housing Initiative Strategic Demolition Fund Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Attorney General's Office	\$125,000		Municipalities, Municipal Housing and Redevelopment Authorities, Nonprofit organizations	To be used for the construction of an affordable housing structure.
Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund	Maybe	Public	State Historic Preservation Office			Municipalities and private non-profit organizations	to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places - including pre-development work, development projects such as stabilization, protection, rehabilitation and restoration
Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program	Maybe	Public	State Historic Preservation Office			Municipalities and private non-profit organizations	to support efforts to identify and plan for the protection of the significant historic buildings, structures, archaeological sites and landscapes of the Commonwealth (including cultural resource inventories, nomination of properties to National Register, community-wide preservation plans, other studies/reports/publications to identify and protect significant properties)
Massachusetts Recycling Fund	Maybe	Private	BDC Capital		\$500,000		To help Massachusetts businesses active in recycling-related activities obtain the capital needed for any reasonable business purpose.
Closed Loop Infrastructure Fund	Maybe	Private	Closed Loop Partners		\$5,000,000	Municipalities and private companies	Provides below-market rate loans to fund replicable, scalable and sustainable recycling and circular economy infrastructure projects across collection, sortation, processing and new technologies.

Tenant Mix

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22+)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Shuttered Venue Operators Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Small Business Administration	\$10,000,000		Businesses such as live venue operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, museum operators, motion picture theater operators (including owners), and talent representatives.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, taxes and fees, administrative costs, advertising, production transportation, and capital expenditures related to producing a theatrical or live performing arts production.
Business Equity COVID-19 Emergency Fund	No Longer Available	Private	Foundation for Business Equity		\$100,000	Black and Latinx majority-owned (51% or more) businesses with revenues of at least \$250,000	Flexible loans may be used for working capital and other demonstrated business needs (e.g., salaries and wages, inventory, equipment, marketing, etc.)
MA Downtown Initiative Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$25,000		Municipalities	Technical assistance for downtown revitalization in 6 categories
Restaurant Revitalization Fund	Yes	Public	Small Business Administration		\$10,000,000	Eligible entities include restaurants, food stands/trucks/carts, caterers, bars/salons/bouges/brewers, snack and non alcoholic beverage bars, bakeries, brewpubs, breweries/microbreweries, wineries, distilleries, inns, and licensed facilities of a beverage alcohol producer. Priority group: Small businesses that are at least 51% owned by one or more individuals who are women/veterans/socially and economically disadvantaged.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, business maintenance expenses, construction of outdoor seating, business supplies, business food are beverage expenses (including raw materials), covered supplier costs, and business operating expenses
BIZ-M-POWER	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation	\$20,000		Small businesses (i.e. employing 1-20 FTE employees, including 1 or more of whom owns the business), annual revenue not exceeding \$2,500,000 (in brick-and-mortar (physical) establishment operating within Massachusetts	To assist low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs with their acquisition, expansion, improvement or lease of a facility, purchase or lease of equipment, or with meeting other capital needs of a business.
Build Back Better Regional Challenge	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$500,000		Eligible applicants under this NOFO include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under this NOFO, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or foundations, organizations or institutions that operate regionally and service 10 or more contiguous towns/cities. They must be exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, and have a primary focus of economic development and perform the services required by MGI, Chapter 23A Section 3i and 3k.	Through this American Rescue Plan Act Build Back Better Regional Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (ARPA BBBC NOFO), EDA aims to assist communities and regions impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has caused, and continues to cause, economic injury to U.S. communities and regions in devastating and unprecedented ways. This ARPA BBBC NOFO is designed as a two-phase competition to (1) help regions develop transformational economic development strategies and (2) fund the implementation of those strategies that will create and grow regional growth clusters. Such efforts will help regional economies recover from the pandemic and build economic diversity and resiliency to mitigate impacts of future economic disasters. In Phase 1, EDA will provide technical assistance grants to approximately 50-60 coalitions (through a lead institution). These Grants should be used to assist entrepreneurs, small businesses, and business partners in order to stabilize and/or grow regional economy. They may not, however, be used to increase salaries or hire additional staff for the organization.
Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development			Eligible organizations shall be corporations, foundations, organizations or institutions that operate regionally and service 10 or more contiguous towns/cities. They must be exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, and have a primary focus of economic development and perform the services required by MGI, Chapter 23A Section 3i and 3k.	Grants should be used to assist entrepreneurs, small businesses, and business partners in order to stabilize and/or grow regional economy. They may not, however, be used to increase salaries or hire additional staff for the organization.
Seed Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$1,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups launching new projects or starting to significantly change the direction of an existing project. Most often groups have been working on the project less than a year and usually don't yet have much direct experience with implementing the idea.
Grow Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$4,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups to deepen their work by further developing a community vision, lowering barriers to participation, identifying new stakeholders and working to bring more voices and lived experiences into core decision-making processes.
Young Leaders Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$6,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$175,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support projects led by young leaders aged 15-25
Small Business Matching Grant	Yes	Private	NewVue Communities	\$5,000		22 North Central Massachusetts cities and towns from Athol to Harvard with a combined population of 240,000 (refer to https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/)	To support micro-enterprises (businesses with 5 or fewer employees) that need help with marketing and accounting.
Merrimack Valley Municipal Business Development and Recovery Fund	Yes	Private	Essex County Community Foundation/Columbia Gas	\$2,000,000		City of Lawrence, the Town of Andover, and the Town of North Andover	To provide direct support (individual business support, general business promotions, technical assistance and business consultation services, economic development and planning) to the municipalities and their business communities (not businesses directly) impacted by the recent gas disaster in Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence
Community Development Block Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$1,350,000		Municipalities with a population of under 50,000 that do not receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	to meet a broad range of community development needs - including projects such as housing rehabilitation or development; micro-enterprise or other business assistance; infrastructure; community/public facilities; public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization

Revenue/Sales

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (Funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22 +)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Efficiency and Regionalization grant program	No Longer Available	Public	Community Compact Cabinet	\$100,000		Municipalities, regional school districts, school districts	For governmental entities interested in implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability. These grants provided funds for one-time or transition costs for municipalities, regional school districts, school districts considering forming a regional district or regionalizing services, regional planning agencies and councils of governments interested in such projects. Small capital purchases or improvements that are integral to the implementation of a functional program such as equipment or software. Technical assistance including consulting services, assistance in drafting contracts or other agreements; and Transition or project management costs, not to exceed one year.
Shuttered Venue Operators Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Small Business Administration	\$10,000,000		Businesses such as live venue operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, museum operators, motion picture theater operators (including owners), and talent representatives.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, taxes and fees, administrative costs, advertising, production transportation, and capital expenditures related to producing a theatrical or live performing arts production.
Regional Pilot Project Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development	\$250,000		Municipalities, public entities, or 501(c) organizations that are federally tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code and intend to promote regional recovery from the economic impacts of COVID19	To support businesses and communities in stabilizing and/or growing their regional economy through solutions including (but not limited to) job creation, transportation, childcare, digital marketing and promotion efforts, digital business directories. This funding should not be used to fund projects or purposes for which there is already state or federal funding available (i.e. Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, Paycheck Protection Program, Small Business Grant Relief programs). No capital-related projects will be funded through this program.
Business Equity COVID-19 Emergency Fund	No Longer Available	Private	Foundation for Business Equity		\$100,000	Black and Latinx majority-owned (51% or more) businesses with revenues of at least \$250,000	Flexible loans may be used for working capital and other demonstrated business needs (e.g., salaries and wages, inventory, equipment, marketing, etc.)
Regional Pilot Project Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development	\$250,000		Partnerships of municipalities, public entities, or 501(c) organizations	To fund projects that support businesses and communities in stabilizing/growing their regional economy with one or more of the recovery efforts under Partnerships for recovery, no capital-related projects will be funded.
MA Downtown Initiative Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$25,000		Municipalities	Technical assistance for downtown revitalization in 6 categories
Restaurant Revitalization Fund	Yes	Public	Small Business Administration		\$10,000,000	Eligible entities include restaurants, food stands/trucks/carts, caterers, bars/saloons/lounges/taverns, snack and non alcoholic beverage bars, bakeries, brewpubs, breweries/microbreweries, wineries, distilleries, inns, and licensed facilities of a beverage alcohol producer. Priority group: Small businesses that are at least 51% owned by one or more individuals who are women/veterans/socially and economically disadvantaged.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, business maintenance expenses, construction of outdoor seating, business supplies, business food and beverage expenses (including raw materials), covered supplier costs, and business operating expenses
BIZ-M-POWER	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation	\$20,000		Small businesses (i.e. employing 1-20 FTE employees, including 1 or more of whom owns the business, annual revenue not exceeding \$2,500,000) in brick-and-mortar (physical) establishment operating within Massachusetts	To assist low-income and moderate-income entrepreneurs with their acquisition, expansion, improvement or lease of a facility, purchase or lease of equipment, or with meeting other capital needs of a business.
Shared Streets and Spaces	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Transportation	\$200,000		Municipalities	To support the repurposing of streets, plazas, sidewalks, curbs, and parking areas to facilitate outdoor activities and community programming, including but not limited to facilities for eating, shopping, play, and community events and spaces for all ages.
Small Business Technical Assistance Grant	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation	\$85,000		501(c)3 organizations	To fund specific counseling and training programs that assist small businesses in securing new or increased financing for growth, providing digital grants (MGCC Program), establishing crowdfunding campaigns through the Biz-M-Power grant (MGCC Program), achieving stability and viability, creating/retaining jobs, increasing the economic vitality of the neighborhood, community, or region.
Build Back Better Regional Challenge	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$500,000		Eligible applicants under this NOFO include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under this NOFO, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for-profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding.	Through this American Rescue Plan Act Build Back Better Regional Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (ARPA BBBRC NOFO), EDA aims to assist communities and regions impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has caused, and continues to cause, economic injury to U.S. communities and regions in devastating and unprecedented ways. This ARPA BBBRC NOFO is designed as a two-phase competition to (1) help regions develop transformational economic development strategies and (2) fund the implementation of those strategies that will create and grow regional growth clusters. Such efforts will help regional economies recover from the pandemic and build economic diversity and resiliency to mitigate impacts of future economic disasters. In Phase 1, EDA will provide technical assistance grants to approximately 50-60 coalitions (through a lead institution). These coalitions will be considered "finalists" and the grants will be used by the finalists to prepare more detailed applications for transformational projects that benefit their respective geographic regions and are aligned around a holistic approach to building and scaling a strategic industry. In Phase 2, EDA will award each of the 20-30 finalist coalitions \$25-75 million (and potentially up to \$100 million) to fund the collection of projects they identified. The projects will be funded through grants to coalition members.
Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development			Eligible organizations shall be corporations, foundations, organizations or institutions that operate regionally and service 10 or more contiguous towns/cities. They must be exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, and have a primary focus of economic development and perform the services required by MGL Chapter 23A Section 3J and 3K.	Grants should be used to assist entrepreneurs, small businesses, and business partners in order to stabilize and/or grow regional economy. They may not, however, be used to increase salaries or hire additional staff for the organization.
Seed Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$1,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups launching new projects or starting to significantly change the direction of an existing project. Most often, groups have been working on the project less than a year and usually don't yet have much direct experience with implementing the idea.
Grow Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$4,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups to deepen their work by further developing a community vision, lowering barriers to participation, identifying new stakeholders and working to bring more voices and lived experiences into core decision-making processes.
Young Leaders Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$6,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$175,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support projects led by young leaders aged 15-25
Small Business Matching Grant	Yes	Private	NewVue Communities	\$5,000		22 North Central Massachusetts cities and towns from Athol to Harvard with a combined population of 240,000 (refer to https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/)	To support micro-enterprises (businesses with 5 or fewer employees) that need help with marketing and accounting.
Merrimack Valley Municipal Business Development and Recovery Fund	Yes	Private	Essex County Community Foundation/Columbia Gas	\$2,000,000		City of Lawrence, the Town of Andover, and the Town of North Andover	To provide direct support (individual business support, general business promotions, technical assistance and business consultation services, economic development and planning) to the municipalities and their business communities (not businesses directly) impacted by the recent gas disaster in Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence
Urban Agenda Grant Program	Maybe	Public	Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development			Cross sector consortiums and coalitions	Funding to local partnerships to implement projects that are based on collaborative work-models with the goal of advancing economic progress. Typically, Early Stage Strategy Development and Strategy Implementation by an Existing Cross-Sector Consortium or Coalition
Community Development Block Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$1,350,000		Municipalities with a population of under 50,000 that do not receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	to meet a broad range of community development needs - including projects such as housing rehabilitation or development; micro-enterprise or other business assistance; infrastructure; community/public facilities; public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization

Adminstrative Capacity

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22 +)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Efficiency and Regionalization grant program	No Longer Available	Public	Community Compact Cabinet	\$100,000		Municipalities, regional school districts, school districts	For governmental entities interested in implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability. These grants provided funds for one-time or transition costs for municipalities, regional school districts, school districts considering forming a regional district or regionalizing services, regional planning agencies and councils of governments interested in such projects. Small capital purchases or improvements that are integral to the implementation of a functional program such as equipment or software; Technical assistance including consulting services, assistance in drafting contracts or other agreements; and Transition or project management costs, not to exceed one year.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for the planning and assessment of a cultural facility.
Real Estate Services Technical Assistance	No Longer Available	Public	MassDevelopment	\$10,000		Eligible applicants include municipal officials, planners, local stakeholders, and others.	Grants may be used toward technical assistance opportunities in Surplus Property Reuse (e.g. Constraints and Feasibility Analysis, Master Planning, Test Fits, RFP/Q Assistance) or Local District Management Implementation Technical Assistance (e.g. District Improvement Financing, Business Improvement District formation)
Planning Assistance Grants	Yes	Public	Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs	\$125,000		Municipalities and Regional Planning Agencies	To fund technical assistance and help communities undertake public process associated with creating plans and adopting land use regulations consistent with the Baker-Polito Administration's land conservation and development objectives including reduction of land, energy, and natural resource consumption, provision of sufficient and diverse housing, and mitigation of/preparation for climate change.
Regional Pilot Project Grant Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Office of Business Development	\$250,000		Partnerships of municipalities, public entities, or 501(c) organizations	To fund projects that support businesses and communities in stabilizing/growing their regional economy with one or more of the recovery efforts under Partnerships for recovery; no capital-related projects will be funded.
Community Compact IT Grant	Yes	Public	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	\$200,000		Municipalities	This is a competitive grant program focused on driving innovation and transformation at the local level via investments in technology, support the implementation of innovative IT projects by funding related one-time capital needs such as technology infrastructure, upgrades and/or purchases of equipment or software. Incidental or one-time costs related to the capital purchase such as planning, design, installation, implementation and initial training are eligible.
MA Downtown Initiative Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$25,000		Municipalities	Technical assistance for downtown revitalization in 6 categories
TDI Creative Catalyst	Yes	Public	MassDevelopment	\$40,000		Individuals and organizations in current ad graduated Transformative Development Initiative Districts	To support public-facing projects that enhance local arts and cultural infrastructure and contribute to economic revitalization - including public art, placemaking, and stabilization of organizations and creative business collectives
Build Back Better Regional Challenge	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$500,000		Eligible applicants under this NOFO include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under this NOFO, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding.	In Phase 1, EDA will provide technical assistance grants to approximately 50-60 coalitions (through a lead institution). These coalitions will be considered "finalists" and the grants will be used by the finalists to prepare more detailed applications for transformational projects that benefit their respective geographic regions and are aligned around a holistic approach to building and scaling a strategic industry. In Phase 2, EDA will award each of the 20-30 finalist coalitions \$25-75 million (and potentially up to \$100 million) to fund the collection of projects they identified. The projects will be funded through grants to coalition members.
Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$6,000,000		Eligible applicants under the EAA program include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State unless EDA waives the cooperation requirement. For Statewide Planning grants, eligible applicants are limited to the Governor's Office, or equivalent, of a State, who may designate an eligible applicant type described above to apply for and administer the award. Under section 3(i)(0) of PWEDA the term "State" includes the fifty States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau. Under its EAA program, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding.	The ARPA Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks NOFO is part of EDA's multi-phase effort to respond to the coronavirus pandemic as directed by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Specifically, this NOFO seeks to build regional economies for the future through two primary avenues: a) Statewide Planning and b) Research and Networks. Subject to the availability of funds, awards made under this NOFO will help develop coordinated state-wide plans for economic development and data, tools, and institutional capacity to evaluate and scale evidence-based economic development efforts, including through communities of practice and provision of technical assistance among existing and new EDA grantees.
Seed Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$1,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups launching new projects or starting to significantly change the direction of an existing project. Most often, groups have been working on the project less than a year and usually don't yet have much direct experience with implementing the idea.
Grow Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$4,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups to deepen their work by further developing a community vision, lowering barriers to participation, identifying new stakeholders and working to bring more voices and lived experiences into core decision-making processes.
Young Leaders Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$6,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$175,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support projects led by young leaders aged 15-25

Adminstrative Capacity

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22 +)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
William I. & Margery S. Barrett Fund	Yes	Private	Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation			<p>Eligible groups must be a local nonprofit or community sponsor.</p> <p>Nonprofit organizations, public agencies or community organizations that provide services to the residents of Adams, Cheshire or Savoy, MA.</p>	To fund projects, programs, capital improvements and general operating support of initiatives that benefit the community in arts and culture, early childhood development, environment, and health and social services.
Central Berkshire Fund	Yes	Private	Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation		\$5,000	Nonprofit organizations, public agencies or community organizations that provide services to the residents of the communities of Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington and Windsor.	To fund projects, programs, capital improvements and general operating support of initiatives that benefit the community in arts and culture, early childhood development, environment, and health and social services.
Merrimack Valley Municipal Business Development and Recovery Fund	Yes	Private	Essex County Community Foundation/Columbia Gas		\$2,000,000	City of Lawrence, the Town of Andover, and the Town of North Andover	To provide direct support (individual business support, general business promotions, technical assistance and business consultation services, economic development and planning) to the municipalities and their business communities (not businesses directly) impacted by the recent gas disaster in Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence
Community Change Grant	Yes	Private	America Walks (funded by General Motors)		\$1,500	Eligible groups must have a project that engages General Motors employees from any facility (dealerships, plants, offices) or you live in a location with a primary General Motors facility	Grants should be used to create healthy, active, and engaged communities that support walking as transportation, health, and recreation. Projects that center the concerns of BIPOC residents, reach across the demographics of communities to build coalitions, and/or create unique civic partnerships with new perspectives will be prioritized.
Urban Agenda Grant Program	Maybe	Public	Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development			Cross sector consortiums and coalitions	Funding to local partnerships to implement projects that are based on collaborative work models with the goal of advancing economic progress. Typically, Early Stage Strategy Development and Strategy Implementation by an Existing Cross Sector Consortium or Coalition
Community Development Block Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development		\$1,350,000	Municipalities with a population of under 50,000 that do not receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	to meet a broad range of community development needs - including projects such as housing rehabilitation or development; micro-enterprise or other business assistance; infrastructure; community/public facilities; public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization

Cultural/Arts

Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects (funds listed as "No Longer Available" may be available in upcoming funding cycles for FY 22+)	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Name of Fund	Available for RRP Projects	Funding Sector	Agency/Organization	Maximum Eligible Grant Amount per Applicant	Maximum Eligible Loan Amount per Applicant	Eligible Applicants	Description/Allowable Use of Funds
Efficiency and Regionalization grant program	No Longer Available	Public	Community Compact Cabinet	\$100,000		Municipalities, regional school districts, school districts	For governmental entities interested in implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability. These grants provided funds for one-time or transition costs for municipalities, regional school districts, school districts considering forming a regional district or regionalizing services, regional planning agencies and councils of governments interested in such projects. Small capital purchases or improvements that are integral to the implementation of a functional program such as equipment or software; Technical assistance including consulting services, assistance in drafting contracts or other agreements; and Transition or project management costs, not to exceed one year.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Systems Replacements)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for 20-year capital needs assessments of buildings and mechanical systems.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Capital Grants)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for the acquisition, design, construction, repair, renovation, and rehabilitation of a cultural facility.
Cultural Facilities Fund (Flexibility and Technical Assistance Grants)	No Longer Available	Public	Massachusetts Cultural Council			Nonprofit Organizations 501(c)(3) engaged in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences; municipalities, and colleges or universities that own cultural facilities	for the planning and assessment of a cultural facility.
Shuttered Venue Operators Grant	No Longer Available	Public	Small Business Administration	\$10,000,000		Businesses such as live venue operators or promoters, theatrical producers, live performing arts organization operators, museum operators, motion picture theater operators (including owners), and talent representatives.	Funds may be used for specific expenses including rent, payroll, mortgage, debt, utility, taxes and fees, administrative costs, advertising, production transportation, and capital expenditures related to producing a theatrical or live performing arts production.
MA Downtown Initiative Program	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$25,000		Municipalities	Technical assistance for downtown revitalization in 6 categories
TDI Creative Catalyst	Yes	Public	MassDevelopment	\$40,000		Individuals and organizations in current advanced Transformative Development Initiative Districts	To support public-facing projects that enhance local arts and cultural infrastructure and contribute to economic revitalization - including public art, placemaking, and stabilization of organizations and creative business collectives
Community Preservation Act	Yes	Public	Community Preservation Trust Fund/State Department of Revenue (DOR)			Only communities that have adopted the Community Preservation Act are eligible to receive CPA Trust Fund matching funds annually.	To preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities.
Shared Streets and Spaces	Yes	Public	Massachusetts Department of Transportation	\$200,000		Municipalities	To support the repurposing of streets, plazas, sidewalks, curbs, and parking areas to facilitate outdoor activities and community programming, including but not limited to facilities for eating, shopping, play, and community events and spaces for all ages.
Competitive Tourism Grants	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$10,000,000		For EDA Competitive Tourism Grants, eligible entities include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. 42 U.S.C. § 3122(4)(A); 13 C.F.R. § 300.3.	EDA's ARPA Tourism NOFO is designed to provide a wide-range of financial assistance to communities and regions to rebuild and strengthen their travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation industry through various infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. Under this NOFO, EDA solicits applications under the authority of the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which is flexible and responsive to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders. EDA's travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation grants will be delivered through two components: (1) State Tourism Grants and (2) EDA Competitive Tourism Grants.
Build Back Better Regional Challenge	Yes	Public	Economic Development Administration	\$500,000		Eligible applicants under this NOFO include a(n): (i) District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD); (ii) Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (iii) State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (iv) institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or (v) public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a general purpose political subdivision of a State. Under this NOFO, EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals or to for-profit entities. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding.	Through this American Rescue Plan Act Build Back Better Regional Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (ARPA BBBRC NOFO), EDA aims to assist communities and regions impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has caused, and continues to cause, economic injury to U.S. communities and regions in devastating and unprecedented ways. This ARPA BBBRC NOFO is designed as a two-phase competition to (1) help regions develop transformational economic development strategies and (2) fund the implementation of those strategies that will create and grow regional growth clusters. Such efforts will help regional economies recover from the pandemic and build economic diversity and resiliency to mitigate impacts of future economic disasters. In Phase 1, EDA will provide technical assistance grants to approximately 50-60 coalitions (through a lead institution). These coalitions will be considered "finalists" and the grants will be used by the finalists to prepare more detailed applications for transformational projects that benefit their respective geographic regions and are aligned around a holistic approach to building and scaling a strategic industry. In Phase 2, EDA will award each of the 20-30 finalist coalitions \$25-75 million (and potentially up to \$100 million) to fund the collection of projects they identified. The projects will be funded through grants to coalition members.
Hometown Grant Program	Yes	Private	T-Mobile	\$50,000		Towns with population <50,000	To build/rebuild/refresh community spaces that help foster local conversations in town.
Nellie Leaman Taft Foundation Competitive Grants	Yes	Private	Nellie Leaman Taft Foundation	\$15,000		Non-profits 501 (c)(3) (small to mid sized) that benefit residents of greater Boston inside the Route 495 beltway	To seed funding for new ideas and initiatives, start-up and on-going support for grass roots organizations, and entrepreneurial projects that may enable an organization or its constituents to achieve greater self-sufficiency.
Seed Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$1,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups launching new projects or starting to significantly change the direction of an existing project. Most often, groups have been working on the project less than a year and usually don't yet have much direct experience with implementing the idea.
Grow Grant	Yes	Private	Grassroots Fund	\$4,000		Volunteer-driven groups that have no more than 2 full-time paid staff and an annual operating budget of under \$100,000. Note that the group does not need to have formal tax status or a fiscal sponsor.	To support groups to deepen their work by further developing a community vision, lowering barriers to participation, identifying new stakeholders and working to bring more voices and lived experiences into core decision-making processes.
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Central Berkshire Fund	Yes	Private	Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation	\$5,000		Nonprofit organizations, public agencies or community organizations that provide services to the residents of the communities of Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington and Windsor.	To fund projects, programs, capital improvements and general operating support of initiatives that benefit the community in arts and culture, early childhood development, environment, and health and social services.
Community Development Block Grant	Maybe	Public	Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development	\$1,350,000		Municipalities with a population of under 50,000 that do not receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	to meet a broad range of community development needs - including projects such as housing rehabilitation or development; micro-enterprise or other business assistance; infrastructure; community/public facilities; public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization

Cultural/Arts

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						Development (HUD). Municipalities may also apply on behalf of a specific developer or property owner.	public social services; planning; removal of architectural barriers to allow access; downtown or area revitalization
National Endowment for the Arts Grants	Maybe	Public	National Endowment for the Arts			Regional Arts Agencies	This funding will be allocated to local state and regional arts agencies to distribute through their funding programs
Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund	Maybe	Public	State Historic Preservation Office			Municipalities and private non-profit organizations	to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places - including pre-development work, development projects such as stabilization, protection, rehabilitation and restoration
Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program	Maybe	Public	State Historic Preservation Office			Municipalities and private non-profit organizations	to support efforts to identify and plan for the protection of the significant historic buildings, structures, archaeological sites and landscapes of the Commonwealth (including cultural resource inventories, nomination of properties to National Register, community-wide preservation plans, other studies/reports/publications to identify and protect significant properties)

Additional Funding Sources

Grant	Description
List of Central Mass Funding	
Small Business Strong	Women owned business focused, but also targeted to F& B, arts, hospitality, agriculture/food supply, and retail
Restaurant Resources	
LISC Digital Growth Accelerator	The LISC Digital Growth Accelerator is a 7-week, post-pandemic boost for businesses. The accelerator program leverages consulting teams and digital tools to empower businesses of color to strengthen their core business, grow their capacity and double their revenue.
MassDevelopment Grants Mass Development Real Estate Technical Assistance	Provides technical assistance aimed at addressing site-specific and/or district-wide economic development challenges through creative solutions and clear, implementable action steps. Technical assistance in Surplus Property Recuse and Local District Management Implementation Technical Assistance (District Improvement Financing + BIDs)
Mass Development Real Estate Technical Assistance	part of the One Stop for Growth program (one application for multiple grants), all focused on economic development and downtown revitalization.
Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)	Prioritizes those disadvantaged in accessing previous federal funding. Provides state and local flexible funding for place based investments like physical improvements, district-based marketing, and special events, as well as major infrastructure projects. Best for District wide ideas.
State Small Business Credit Initiative	Injects capital into state small business support and capital access programs, provides collateral support, facilitates loan participation, and enables credit guarantee programs. It will boost state venture capital programs and provide funding for technical support and assistance.
Capital Projects Fund	Addresses specifically rural America and low- and moderate-income communities,' challenges to pivot based on old infrastructure. Emphasis on broadband, but other capital improvements too.
Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program	<p>Offered through the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. Grant is aimed at "facilitating economic stability and viability for small businesses by helping to improve their ability to navigate business operations in a post Covid-19 era." Other details are presented below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed programs shall include individual and/or group counseling, training programs, loan packaging services, or direct technical assistance that advance: new business startups, business expansion, business stabilization, other measurable economic growth - Funds available for this grant program in FY 2022 is subject to appropriation (\$4-7 Million) - Organization proposals will not exceed \$85,000. - Collaborative joint proposals will not exceed \$175,000. - A collaborative is defined as two or more eligible non-profit organizations sharing costs and providing complementary services in coordination with each other. - Only open to non-profit corporations
Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts	<p>Civic Development Grants are made for new or on-going projects that garden clubs will help maintain. A long-term maintenance plan must be included.</p> <p>Examples of appropriate projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal planting projects, including traffic islands, parks, etc. • Landscaping at schools, memorial halls, libraries • Plantings of labeled trails at nature preserves <p>Historic Landscape Preservation Grants are given for new or on-going projects designed to preserve the past in the context of the present. Grants are awarded for the improvement of sites that are of historic significance to the local community. Preference is given to accurate plans that relate to the history of the property and are practical for current uses of the property. A long-term maintenance plan must be included.</p> <p>Examples of appropriate projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of landscaping at a historic building/property in your community • Projects undertaken with local Historic Preservation groups • Creation of a garden that is appropriate and authentic to a particular significant historic period of the building on the property and/or an historically recognized style • A landscape that is 50 years or older & has historical significance • A landscape project associated with a building/property that is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, Landmarked, or in a local Historic District

Social Media Graphics

The Village Commons + Surrounding Businesses

This program includes a survey of business owners (or managers), for-profits, and non-profits in The Village Commons and surrounding area. Even if your business is temporarily closed, your input will inform future policy decisions.

Access the survey **Closes April 16th**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LRRPBiz>

or



Scan Me!

South Hadley is participating
in a statewide program to
develop downtown Local
Rapid Recovery Plans.

**We Need
Your Input!**

Anne Capra
acapra@southhadley.ma.gov

Planner/ Conservation Administrator
South Hadley



Let's Talk!



Hear the results

from our business survey

+ Tell Us More!

about what you wish to see in the
Village Commons



Join South Hadley for a **series of virtual focus groups to discuss COVID recovery challenges and ideas** for the Village Commons Commercial District.



When: Week of May 17th + May 24th

Where: On Zoom!

You can **sign up** by
clicking the link or by
taking a picture of the
QR code with your phone.



<https://forms.gle/8CEBsRt8Y8rngXUm7>

Here's What You Told Us!

Close the **College Street extension** and turn it into a space for **outside dining and events!**

The Village Commons has a **great foundation** for **green space**.

Make a place where people want to go, relax, and hang out!

What about a shoe store?

The Village Commons is seen as a community center. **It's nice to have a multi-generational community.**

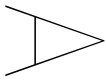
Not many places are open late to **watch sporting events** or **have a drink.**

Pop-Up Events!

Thank You!

South Hadley, **thank you** for sharing your vision for the future of The Village Commons Commercial District and **guiding the recovery** of the area.





What We Heard: Public Engagement Summary

South Hadley

Local Rapid Recovery Planning (LRRP)
Public Presentation #1

Approach:

The Village Commons is located across from Mount Holyoke College and boasts a concentration of local businesses and residential units. Additional businesses line the intersection of Route 116 and Route 47, making the study area a center for community activity. As a hub, it intersects many stakeholders; business owners and residents of The Village Commons, nearby non-Commons business owners, staff and students of the College, and residents and visitors. Each group interacts differently with the study area and offers a unique perspective.

Focus groups, or small group discussions, would allow these various perspectives to be heard and was decided upon as the engagement strategy. While the initial intention was to divide focus groups based on type of user (for example, business owners in one group and residents in another), scheduling realities made this difficult. In practice, focus groups were blended and each included a mix of business owners, residents, College staff, and representatives from local non-profits and civic groups.

Time:

1:00-1:15 total
~15 minutes for presentation
~45 minutes discussion time

Attendees (including community contacts but not plan facilitators):

- May 20, 2pm- 5 participants
- May 20, 5pm - 0 participants
- May 27, 12 pm - 10 participants
- May 27, 3pm - 4 participants

Key Findings (when combined with data analysis)

- The Village Commons is a wonderful community convener that fosters pride, communal gathering, and entrepreneurship. To support future economic growth, The Village Commons needs to expand its boundaries and support a singular identity for the full commercial area.
- The businesses, parcels, and district around The Village Commons appear more flexible than The Village Commons itself. Changes to these elements would promote a district level shopping and entertainment experience.
- Today, the commercial area primarily supports local needs. A Village Commons District should think regionally.
- Current tenants serve current needs. Critically analyze the tenant mix -- thinking creatively about “the next generation” of tenants.
- Residents turn to nearby towns for experiences; be they watching late night games with friends, trying healthier dining or fast casual/ grab-and-go options, or strolling Main Street. A concerted effort to activate the district can recapture some of this activity and expand visitors to the district.
- The Village Commons' ample public space can extend beyond its boundaries.

Takeaways:**People do not always find what they need at The Village Commons.**

While The Village Commons has a large number of retail stores and restaurants, community members voiced a desire for a different tenant mix. Ideas ranged from a bakery, commercial kitchen, gift shop, artisan craft store, running/outdoor store, shoe store, electric car charging stations, pharmacy, urgent care center, ADA accessible community space, and co-working space. A grocery store came up with consistency. Many noted that the town feels like a quality food retailer is lacking and posited if an Aldi's, Trader Joe's, or up scale bodega with grab and go meals would be possible at The Village Commons.

The Village Commons can fill a townwide need for more diverse dining. Many noted that South Hadley lacks vegetarian, vegan, Asian fusion, or higher scale options and is dominated by American pub style food. As The Village Commons is already known as a dining destination, there is an opportunity to further leverage this perception by committing to providing unique dining experiences.

There is a desire for late night gathering spaces. Some residents expressed frustration with the hours of businesses both town wide and at The Village Commons. Places close early, bars are minimal, and it can be difficult to find a location open to watch evening sports games. People expressed a desire for social spaces, especially on post-pandemic summer evenings, and envision The Village Commons' public spaces as serving that need. It was understood that many businesses have temporarily decreased hours due to both COVID restrictions and reopening staffing shortages. However, many felt lack of evening spaces was an issue before the pandemic. Current inconsistencies in operating hours leaving some unsure if a business will be open were they to make the trip.



The Village Commons' public space is an asset, but could be more active. The central green space in The Village Commons district is the Town Common. This green space is a point of pride. Many folks appreciate the outdoor programming this space has hosted in the past. Yet, the space feels underutilized. Many noted a desire for more benches, picnic tables, and movable furniture to encourage informal lingering. Others imagined extending the curb and patio space of nearby restaurants to connect to the Town Common. There was support for closing College Street Bypass, even temporarily or as a pilot, to do so. This action would extend the "front yard" of The Village Commons and provide a more active, people-centric space easily seen from main roads. This "front yard" was imagined as the place to hold community events like experiential pop-ups, outdoor retail opportunities, food trucks festivals, outdoor fitness classes, and cultural and artistic events. People enjoy the smaller plazas found throughout The Village Commons, but expressed a desire for these spaces to be more active and extend beyond the boundary of shops.

Traffic and parking are issues. Despite previous attempts to widen the sidewalk and narrow the street, participants noted that drivers speed along College Street Bypass. This makes the space feel somewhat hostile to pedestrian activity. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the parking lot of The Village Commons was often full. It was difficult to manage students, staff of the College, and employees of nearby businesses who use The Village Commons as all day work parking. It is expected these tensions will return.

The area's multi-generational and multi-use attributes are an attractive asset. There is a wait list to become a residential tenant at The Village Commons. It is an attractive location due to its retail, service, and dining opportunities. Many users appreciate that many various age groups congregate at The Village Commons and keep it feeling vibrant.

Consumers remain hesitant about the indoors. Business owners and civic leaders noted that community members are rediscovering to attend in person indoor yoga classes, events, or entertainment. While the expectation is that these opinions will change in the coming months, they will undoubtedly have an effect on business re-openings and revenue at a critical time. Some business owners suggested "Come Back to Community" events to restore the public's comfort.

The Village Commons is a community. Business owners expressed appreciation for the camaraderie they feel with other Village Commons business owners. Shoppers brainstormed ways to bring people into the space and discussants posed questions of how to entice Mount Holyoke and other nearby colleges to be more active participants. A thread that ran through the focus groups was a desire to share this communal space with more people; be it South Hadley residents, locals of nearby towns, or visitors who come to explore the region's cultural institutions or hiking, biking, and outdoor recreation.

Public Presentations 1 & 2



South Hadley Village Commons Commercial Area

Agency Landscape + Planning
Rapid Recovery Plans



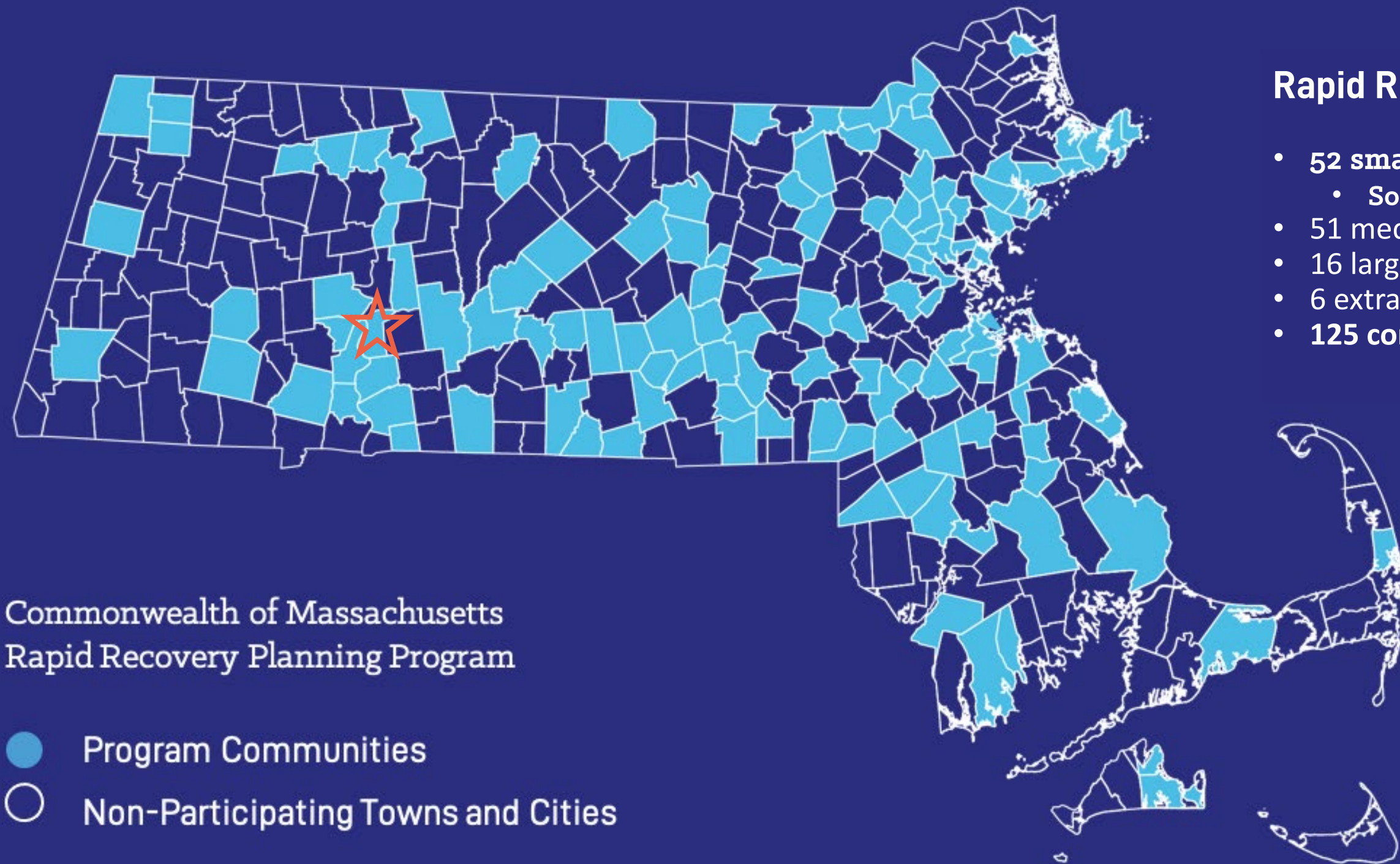
Agenda

1. Hello! Introductions
2. What is the Rapid Recovery Planning Effort?
3. What We've Learned So Far
 - Market Information
 - Physical Environment
 - Business Environment
 - Administrative Capacity
4. Next Steps
5. Discussion



What is the Local Rapid Recovery Planning Effort?





Rapid Recovery Plans

- **52 small communities**
 - **South Hadley**
- 51 medium communities
- 16 large communities
- 6 extra large communities
- **125 communities total**

RRP Timeline



The LRRP effort follows a **9-month timeline**.

LRRP Structure + Outcomes

This effort allows Massachusetts to understand the needs of the business community in various towns and cities. Simultaneously, it **will produce a personalized guidebook for each city and town to tackle post-COVID recovery.**



RRP Outcomes



It Will Deliver

To the State:

- A set of **actionable, well developed projects** that reflect COVID-19 recovery needs, community priorities, available resources and incentives, and the capacity to implement at the local level
- Information to the state on **how best to allocate public and private resources** in support of COVID-19 Recovery

To South Hadley:

- **High level recommendations** to stimulate economic development
- An **understanding of current small business landscape** within the Study Area
- Suggestions for **public realm investments, business support strategies, and local capacity opportunities**
- **Sketches, images, drawings** of what recommendations **could look like**



It Will NOT Deliver

- **Detailed** plans about **specific sites**
 - Recommendations will be suggestions, backed by data collection, interviews, and focus group conversations
- **In-depth economic development analysis**
 - **Suggestions will remain high level** and **recommend first steps** towards business development
- **Detailed redesigns of parks, streets, or buildings**



Meet the Team!

Meet the Team





What We've Learned So Far



What We've Learned

State's Guiding Questions



Market Information

Who **visits South Hadley's Village Commons Commercial District**?



Physical Environment

Is the **physical environment** conducive to **businesses** and **customers**?



Business Environment

How has **COVID 19 impacted businesses**?
Does the **business mix** of the District **meet the needs** of consumers?



Administrative Capacity

Who are the **champions and stewards of the District**?
Do **regulations impede business** growth?



CUSTOMER
BASE



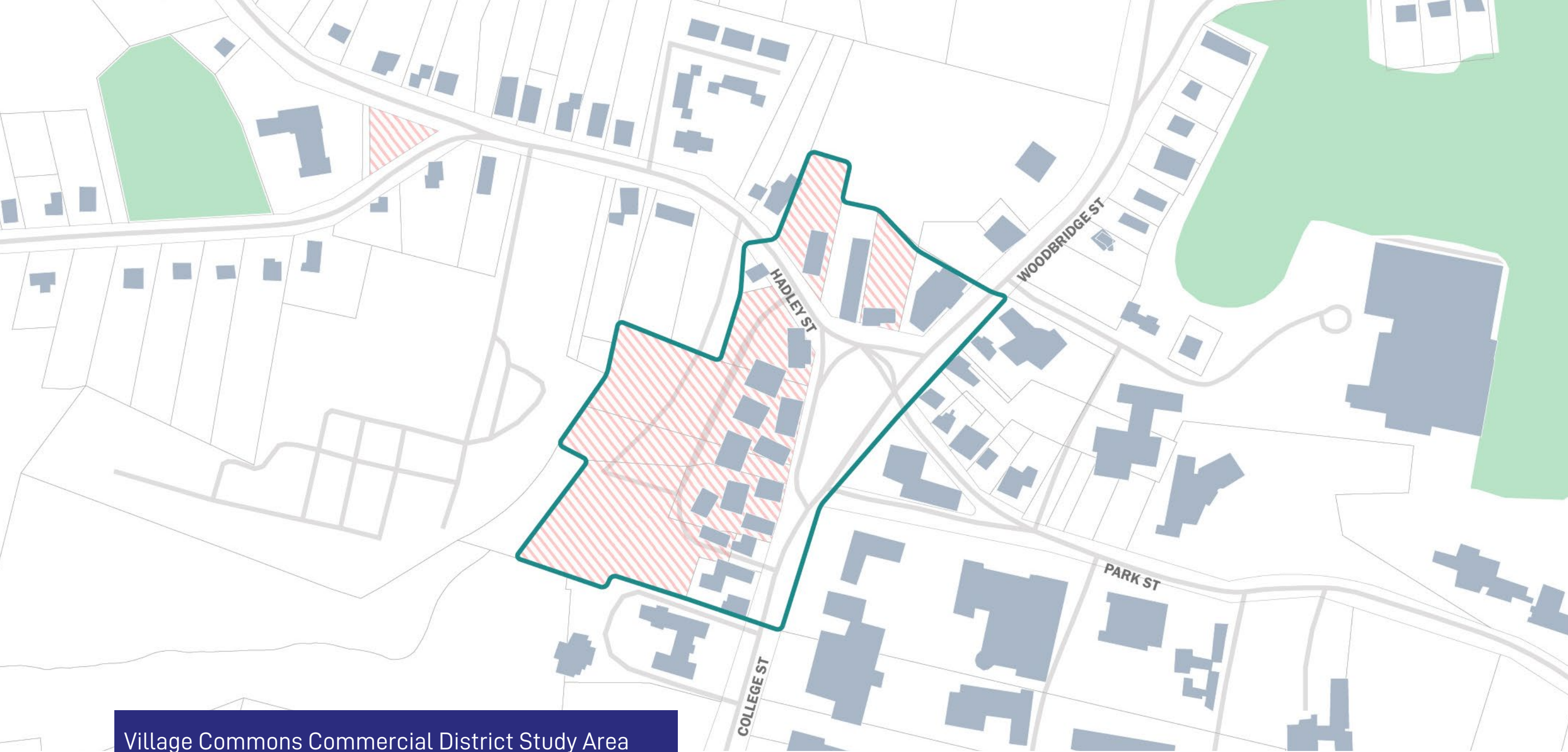
Who Visits South Hadley's Village Commons Commercial District?

Market Information

How was data collected?

- **Demographic data retrieved** from Federal, State, City **Census** databases
- **Interviews** to understand customer profiles





Village Commons Commercial District Study Area

- The Village Commons Commercial District includes businesses on either side of Hadley Street and along College Street. The Willits Hallowell Conference Center & Hotel and Orchards Golf Club were also included in some elements of the analysis.

Study Area

South Hadley Town

Massachusetts

Population

6,403

17,514

6,892,503

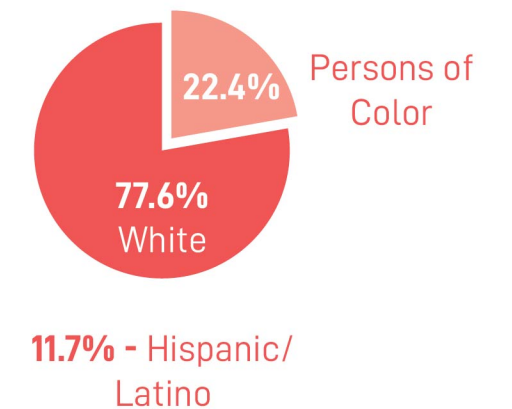
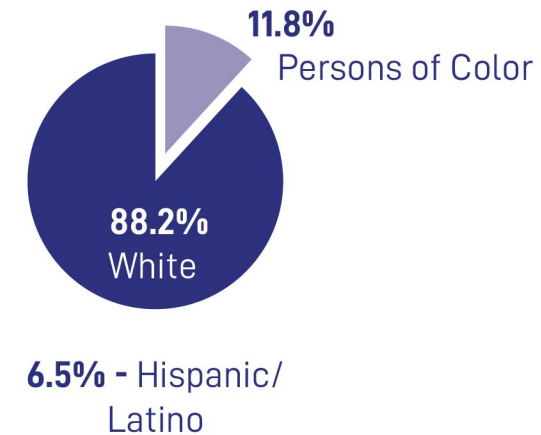
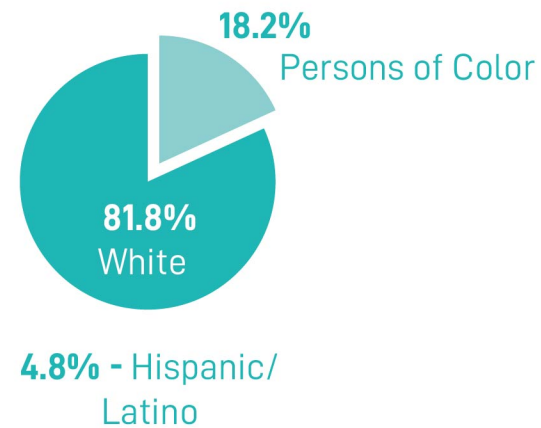
Average Household Size



Median Age



Population by Race/Ethnicity



**Total
Workforce/Employees**

Study Area

3,191 (50%)

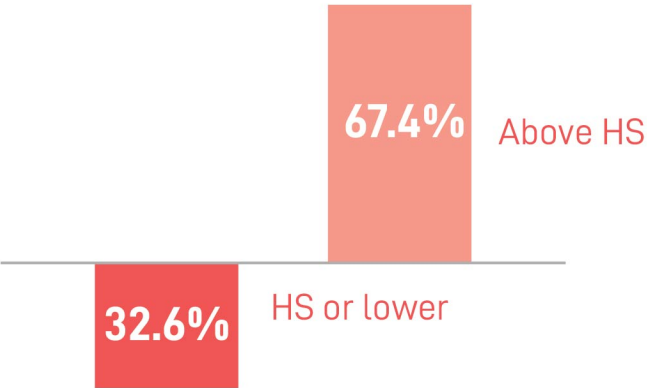
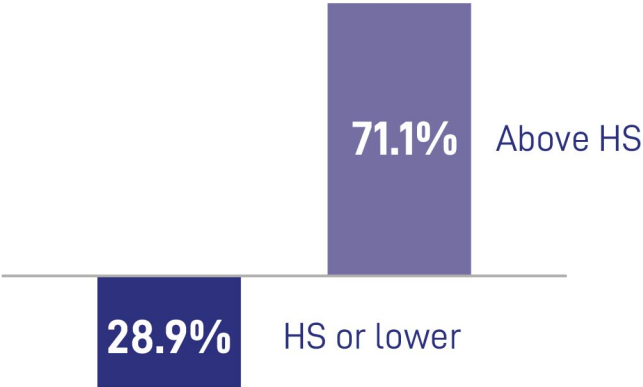
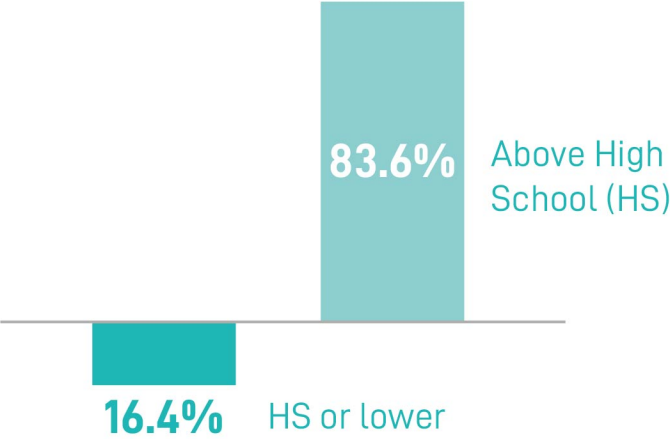
South Hadley Town

10,010 (57%)

Massachusetts

4,466,342 (64%)

**Population by
Highest Level of
Educational Attainment**



**Median
Household Income**



\$102,268
(mean)



\$69,346



\$85,843



PHYSICAL
ENVIRONMENT



Is the Physical Environment Conducive to Businesses and Consumers?

Physical Environment

How was data collected?

- **Site visits** to the district to inventory condition and quality of public realm and quantity of storefronts
- **Phone interviews** with building owners, city representatives
- **Vehicle Traffic Data and other square footage takeoffs retrieved** from Federal, State, City databases
- **Business Data and information** about vacancy, business closure, ownership and square footage of commercial uses gathered from interviews, Town Clerk, South Hadley's Assessor's database, and State GIS maps

10,214

vehicles per day

Average Annual Daily Vehicular
Traffic (AADT) on College Street

6,350

vehicles per day

AADT on Woodbridge Street

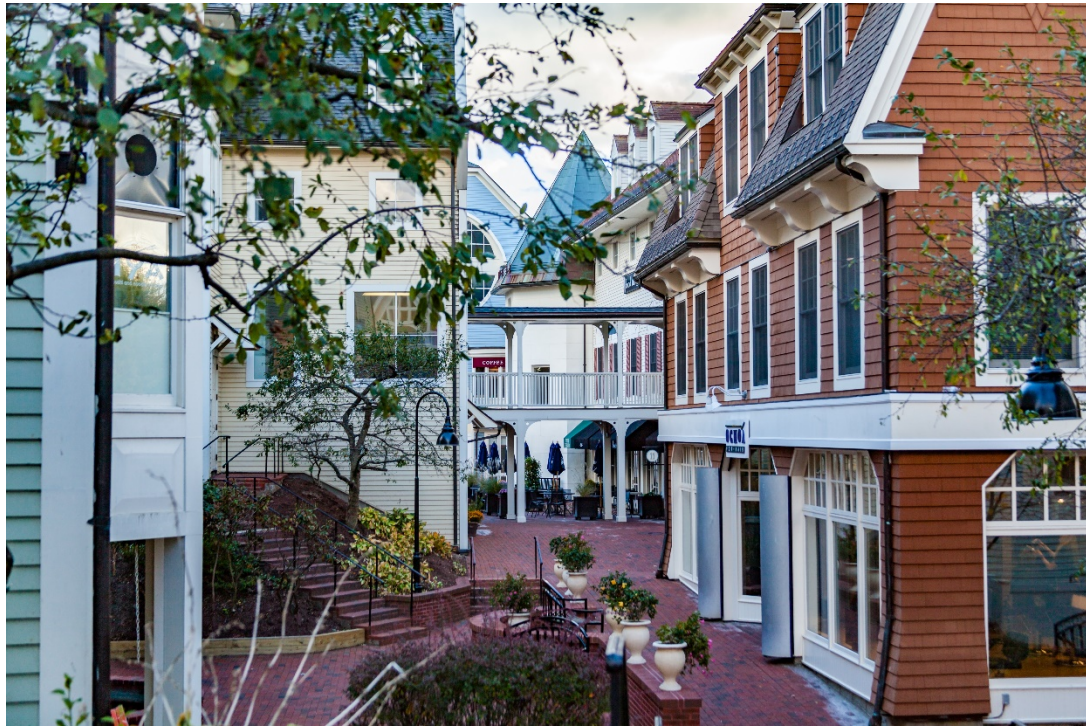
.54

Acres of open space

335+

Parking spaces

Physical Environment



Physical Environment



Sidewalks

A



Street Trees +
Benches

A



Lighting

A



Wayfinding +
Signage

A



Roadbed +
Crosswalks

A



**BUSINESS
ENVIRONMENT**

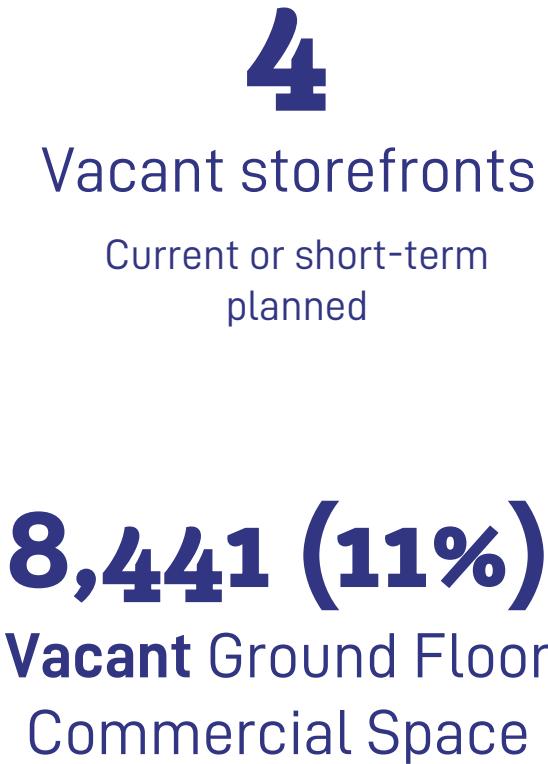


Does the Business Mix Meet the Needs of Consumers?

Business Environment

How was data collected?

- **Phone interviews** with building owners and realtors to understand rental rates, vacancy rates, and business closures
- **Demographic data retrieved** from Federal, State, City databases
- **Online survey** shared with all businesses
- **Business Data and information** about ownership and square footage of commercial uses gathered from South Hadley Assessor's database, and State GIS maps



Business Environment

The business survey was shared from
March 29th to April 16th

24 businesses participated in the survey

Most Businesses Saw A Decrease

- **58%** of businesses generated less revenue than they did in 2019
- For **50% of businesses**, revenue declined by **25%**

Most businesses reduced hours, capacity, or revenue

Safety measures cost businesses money

- Half of businesses incurred expenses to implement safety measures

But Some Saw Business Improve

- **21%** of businesses stated revenue increased from 2019 to 2020
- **21%** stated business stayed the same

46% of businesses were able to pivot

- Establishing alternative modes to sell and deliver products

Effects were substantial

- **46%** of businesses closed (either permanently or temporarily)
- **42%** laid off employees
- **33%** stopped or deferred rent of mortgage payments

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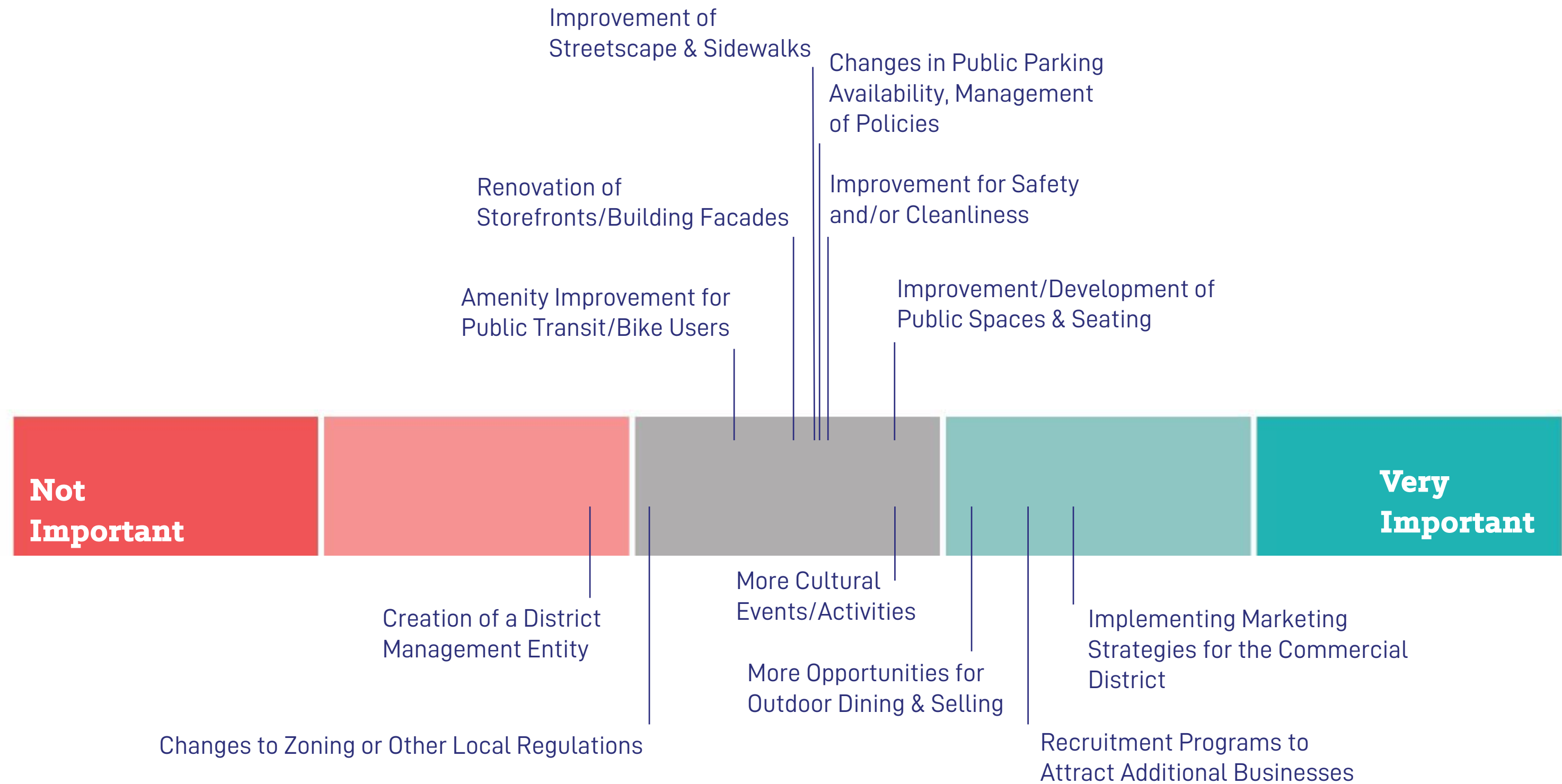
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- **33%** stopped or deferred rent of mortgage payments

Business Satisfaction



Business Strategies





ADMIN
CAPACITY



Who Are the Champions and Stewards of the District's Success?

Next Steps + Discussion

What did we miss? What did we get right?

Next Steps...

- **Phase 2**
 - Consult key stakeholders on priority projects
 - Who else should we talk to?
 - Consult with Subject Matter Experts on recommendations
 - Cocreate recommendations with you!
 - Develop a final list of projects

Thank You!

Want to follow up with additional questions or feedback?

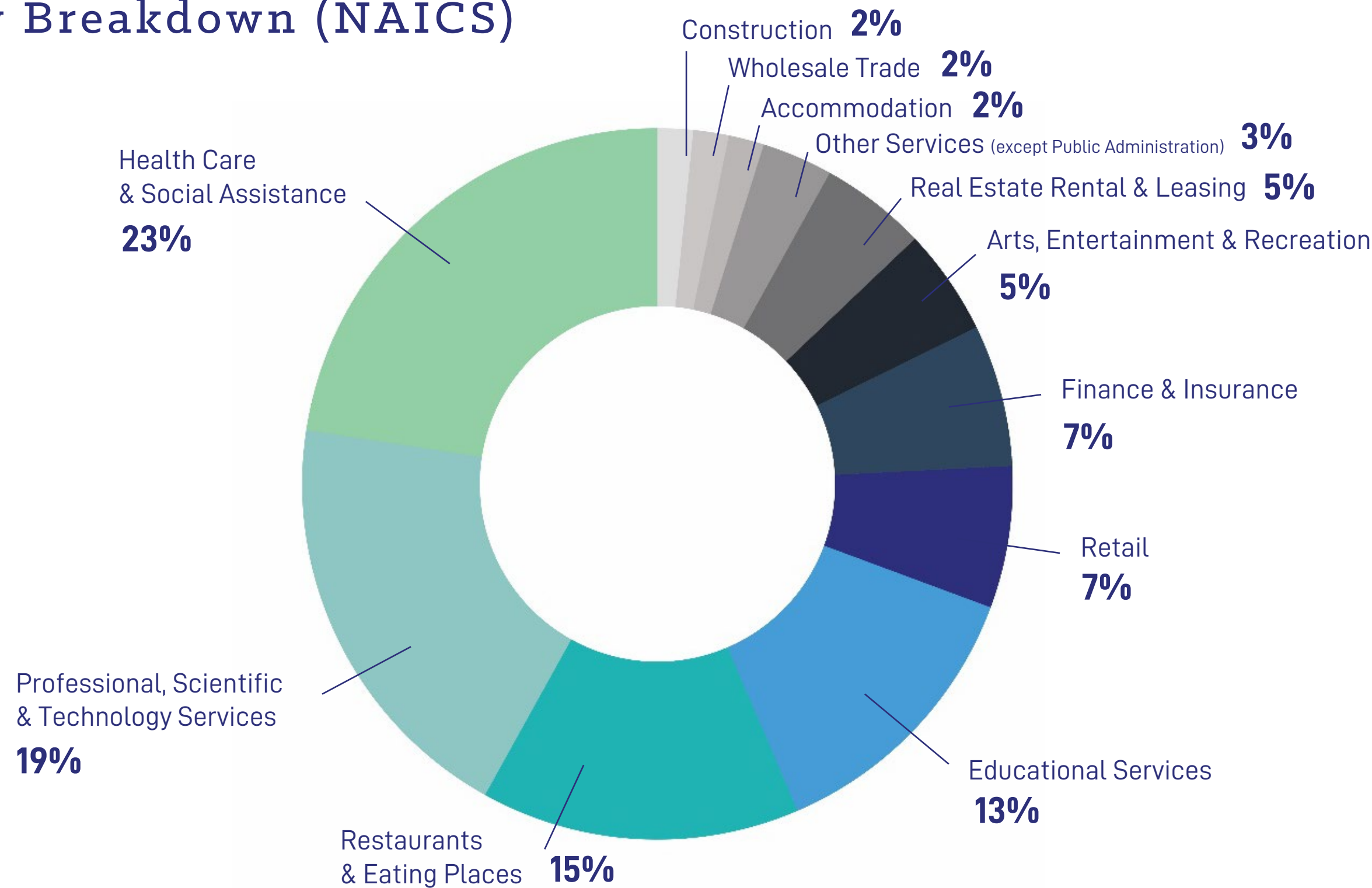
Anne Capra

acapra@southhadleyma.gov

Conversation Administrator/Planner

Town of South Hadley

Village Commons Commercial District Industry Breakdown (NAICS)



South Hadley

The Village Commons District Recommendations

Agency Landscape + Planning

Rapid Recovery Plans



Agenda

1. Review of Local Rapid Recovery Planning Effort
2. Key Findings
3. Recommendations
4. Next Steps + Questions





Review of Local Rapid Recovery Planning Effort



Meet the Team



RRP Structure + Outcomes

This effort allows Massachusetts to understand the needs of the business community in various towns and cities. Simultaneously, it **will produce a personalized guidebook for each city and town to tackle post-COVID recovery.**

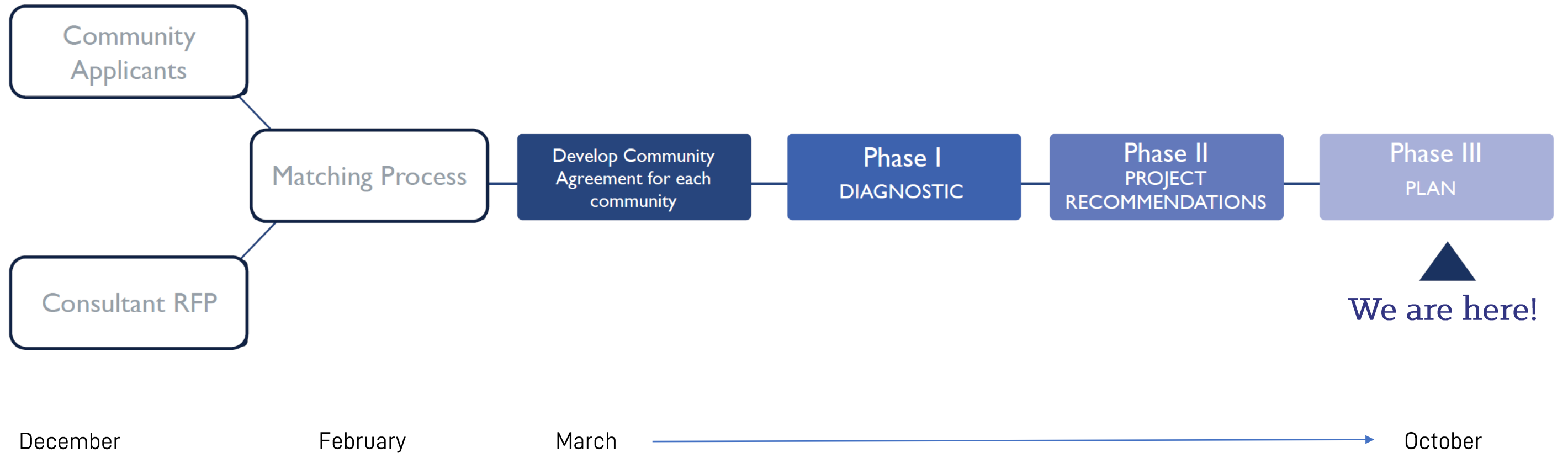
State

Cities
& Towns

Consultants
& Community



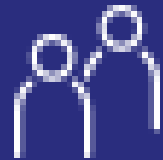
RRP Timeline



The RRP effort follows a 10-month timeline.

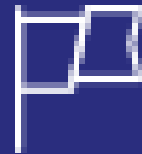
RRP Data Collection Framework

- Research centered around 4 main categories



CUSTOMER BASE

- Trends
- Consumer Profiles
- Demographic Data



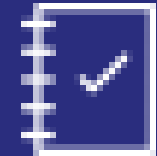
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Public Realm
(open space, street furniture, lighting, etc.)
- Private Realm
(signs, facades, lighting, etc..)
- Access & Visibility
(roads, crosswalks, streets)



BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

- Anchors & Destinations
- Assets & Business Mix
- Nodes & Clusters



ADMIN CAPACITY

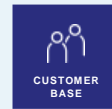
- Partners & Organizations
- Funding
- Regulations & Zoning

Key Findings



The Village Commons is A Valuable, But Constrained, Property

- The site is a community hub, but is physically limited



The Village Commons District Thinks Locally

- The site currently serves local needs. Thinking regionally can expand the District's reach



Current Tenants Serve Current Needs

- Increasing small business resilience by anticipating consumer trends and business owners needs, will make a stronger business community



Residents Turn to Nearby Towns for Experiences

- The ability to dine, stroll, and window shop in a lively area is missing from South Hadley



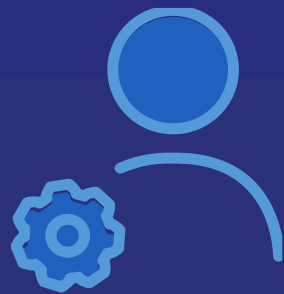
The Village Commons Ample Public Space Can Extend Beyond Its Boundaries

- Public space is a great asset of The Village Commons, but more can be done to integrate with adjacent businesses



Recommendation Themes

- 7 categories guide the creation of recommendations



**Administrative
Capacity**



Public Realm



Culture/ Arts



Revenue & Sales



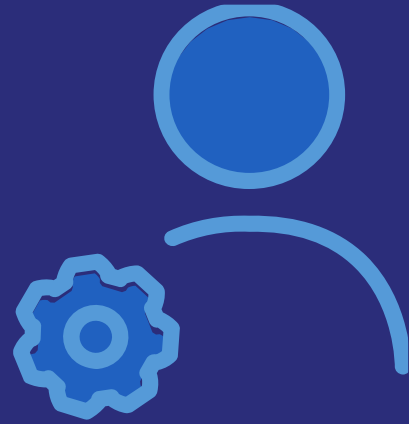
Tenant Mix



Private Realm



Other



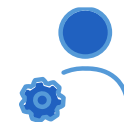
Administrative Capacity

Institutionalize Small Business Support:
Create an Administrative Organizational Structure
Provide Low-Cost Business Development Services

Leverage Local Community to Recruit New Businesses

Increase the Boundaries of The Village Commons to Include Peripheral Businesses and Amenities

Institutionalize Small Business Support: Create an Administrative Organizational Structure



Admin Capacity

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding

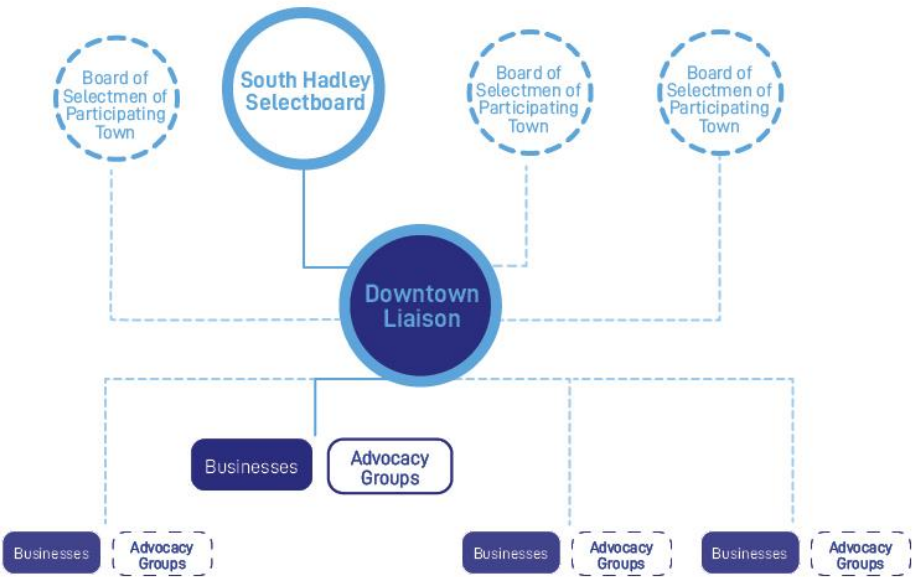


Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

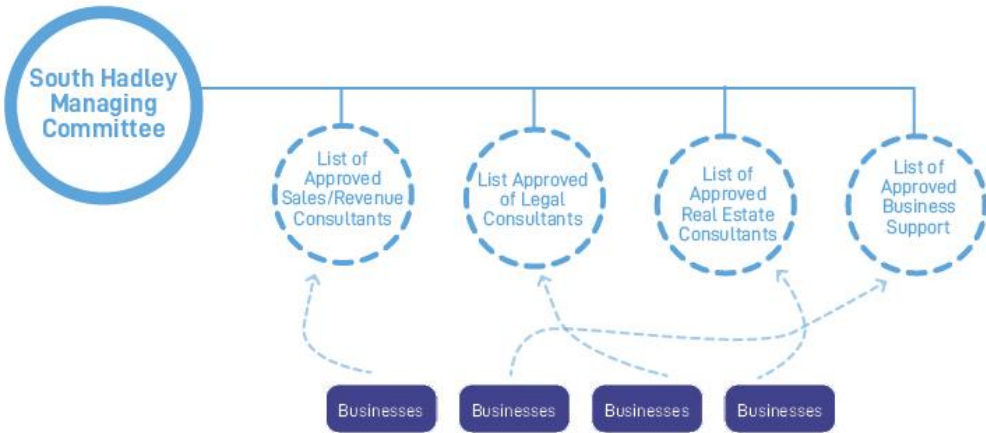
Key Actions

- Create a system to provide long term small business support
- Convene stakeholders to discuss, investigate, and decide between a shared Small Business Liaison or a Contracted Vendor Model
- High publicize new administrative organization so small businesses are aware of how to access support

Shared Business Liaison



Contracted Vendor Model



Institutionalize Small Business Support: Provide Low- Cost Business Development Services



Admin Capacity

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Low (< \$50K)

Key Actions

- Hold “office hours” between business owners and planning, licensing, and regulation administrators
- Implement a “Shark Tank” style program
- Host open houses, workshop, and “skill shares” between local business owners, economic development non-profits, students, community members, etc.
- Create fun, playful, and action-oriented programs that help to ease trials caused by COVID-19



Nantucket residents pitched ideas for **new or expanded businesses in 3-minute presentations**. The event was held in front of a **live audience** and **panel of judges**. Cash and prizes were awarded to both the judges' choice and audience choice.



“N.I.C.E.” Pitch Competition
Nantucket, MA

Leverage Local Community to Recruit New Businesses



Admin Capacity

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding







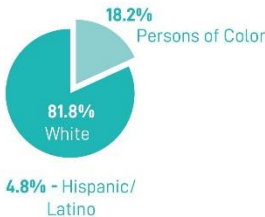
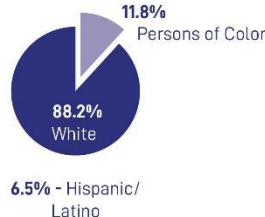
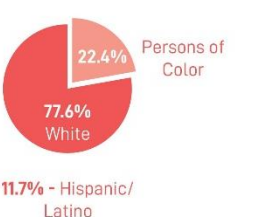





Low (< \$50K)

Key Actions

- Create a compelling "data package" to entice business owners to South Hadley
- Use local brokers and realtors to recruit businesses
- Host regular "Storefront Strolls" so curious entrepreneurs can investigate multiple vacant locations at one time
- Celebrate pro-business policies, policies, and future licensing and permitting changes on public platforms like social media and print

Businesses should be supplied with data that supports markets South Hadley as an important partner in their success

	Study Area	South Hadley Town	Massachusetts
Population	6,403	17,514	6,892,503
Median Household Size	 3.4	 2.31	 2.6
Median Age	 35.1	 39.1	 39.7
People of Color	 81.8% White 18.2% Persons of Color 4.8% - Hispanic/Latino	 88.2% White 11.8% Persons of Color 6.5% - Hispanic/Latino	 77.6% White 22.4% Persons of Color 11.7% - Hispanic/Latino
Median Income	 \$102,268 (mean)	 \$69,346	 \$85,843

Increase the Boundaries of The Village Commons to Include Peripheral Businesses and Amenities



Admin Capacity

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding

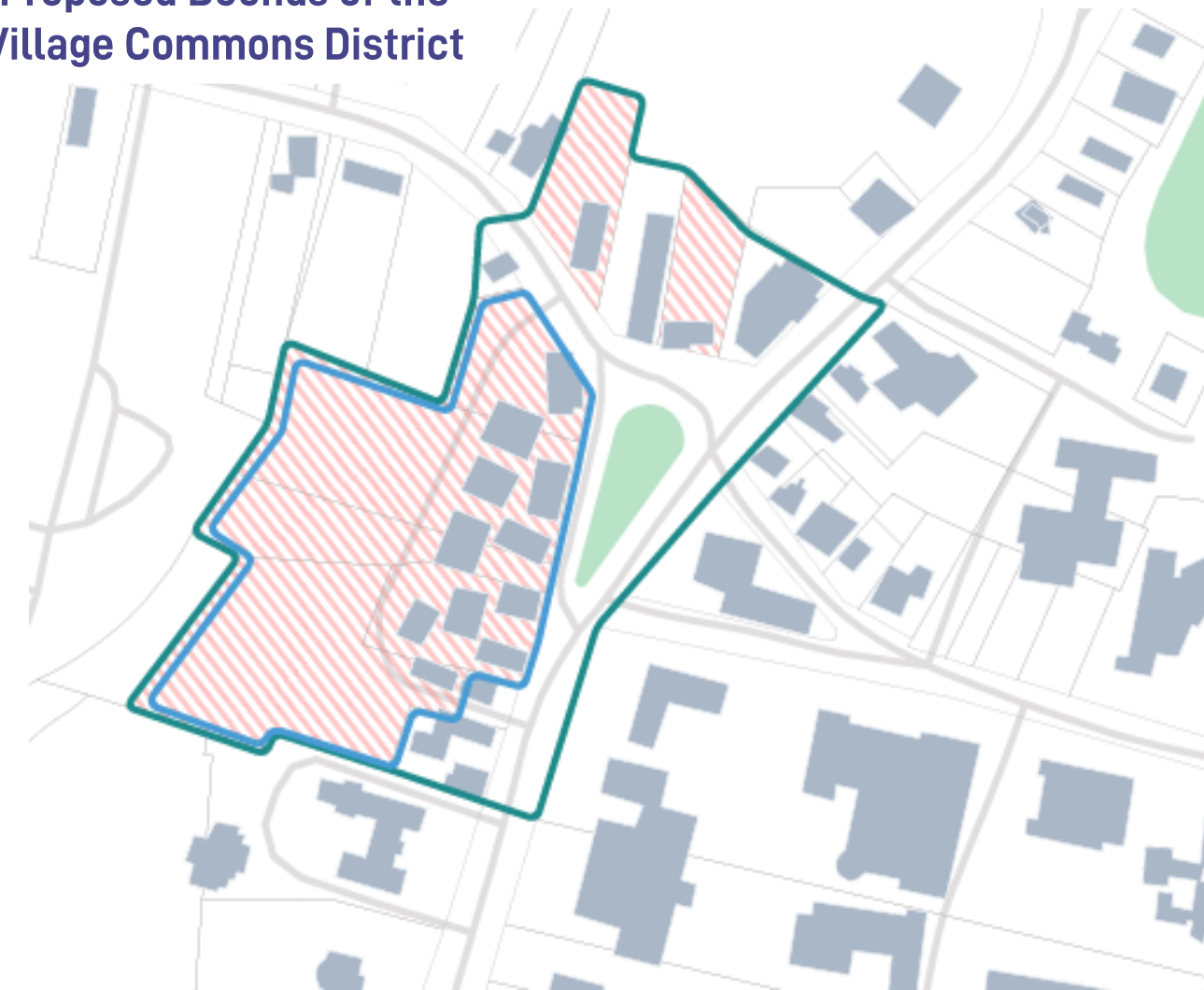


Low to Medium (\$5 – 150k)

Key Actions

- Create monthly meetings between town, The Village Commons, Mount Holyoke College, and District businesses
- Discuss priorities, expectations, and ideal outcomes for District
- Confirm a governance model
- Formalize new commercial district with municipal code and include special considerations for parking/uses overlays to code
- Work with town to identify funding mechanisms, implement physical improvements, and business support services

Proposed Bounds of the Village Commons District



Village Commons Property Boundary



Proposed Village Commons District Property Boundary



Zoned commercial properties



Open space



Tenant Mix

Identify Ideal Tenant Mix and Create A Framework for the Next Generation of Tenants

Support A Long-Term Creative Restaurant Ecosystem



Identify Ideal Tenant Mix and Create A Framework for the Next Generation of Tenants



Tenant Mix

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding

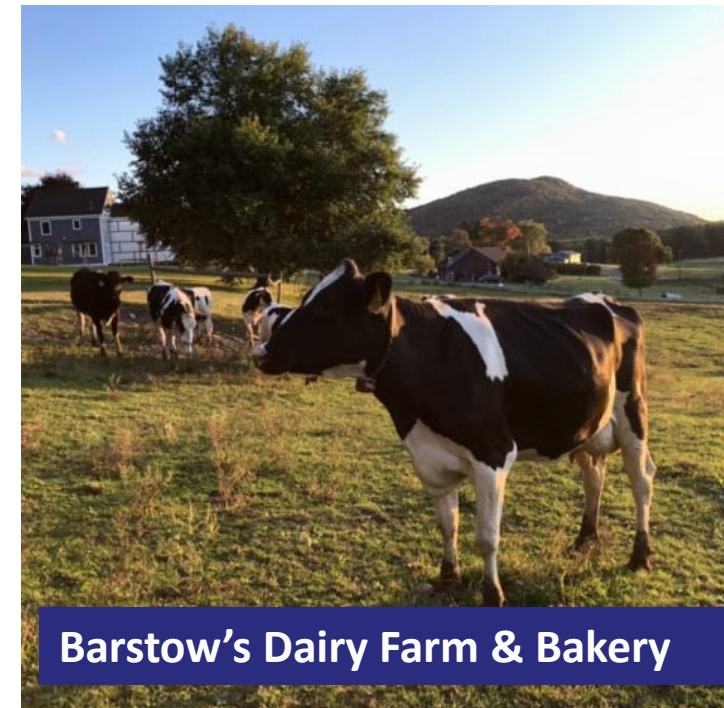


High (\$200,000+)

Key Actions

- Brainstorm future needs. Hear from a diversity of stakeholders about what is desired both specifically with the Village Commons District and town-wide
- Conduct a market analysis. Understand what is needed and at what scale.
- Develop an "ideal" tenant mix wishlist
- Create a framework for the next generation of tenants. Balance recruitment of new entrepreneurs with succession planning for existing loved businesses

Agriculture and food systems were listed as "**critical industries**" in the Pioneer Valley's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. How might **these industries** interact more completely with the Village Commons District?



Barstow's Dairy Farm & Bakery



Support A Long-Term Creative Restaurant Ecosystem



Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

Key Actions

- Hold regular events around food and food systems like Food Truck Festivals or cooking classes
- Add new restaurants who focus on the modern palette (gluten free, vegetarian, "farm to table")
- Amend zoning code to allow food trucks, communal kitchens, etc.
- Provide year round outside dining infrastructure within the District
- Help restaurants navigate federal aid
- Partner with food entrepreneurs and HCC's Hospitality and Culinary Arts program to carry out food-based events



Mount Holyoke Community College's Hospitality and Culinary Arts facility is **less than 5 miles** from the Village Commons District.

WooTrucks organizes food truck festivals and operates a commercial kitchen. They supply trucks and chefs to events statewide, such as the Rutland Food Truck Festival & Craft Fair





Public Realm

Expand The Village Commons' Ample Public Space Beyond Its Boundaries

Create A Parking Fee Structure to Fund Small Business Resources

Create Intentional Programming for Various Age Groups to Activate the District & Expand its Reach

Implement Town-Wide District Branding and Wayfinding, Beginning With The Village Commons

Expand the Village Commons' Ample Public Space Beyond Its Boundaries



Public Realm

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Low - Medium (<\$50K- \$200K)

*temporary projects will be low budget, permanent will be medium budget

Key Actions

Short Term Investments

- Pilot Town Commons expansion across College Street Bypass
- Create a pre-approved set of outdoor seating designs. This speeds up implementation for business owners while adding cohesive design elements
- Work with community to iterate design to match their desires



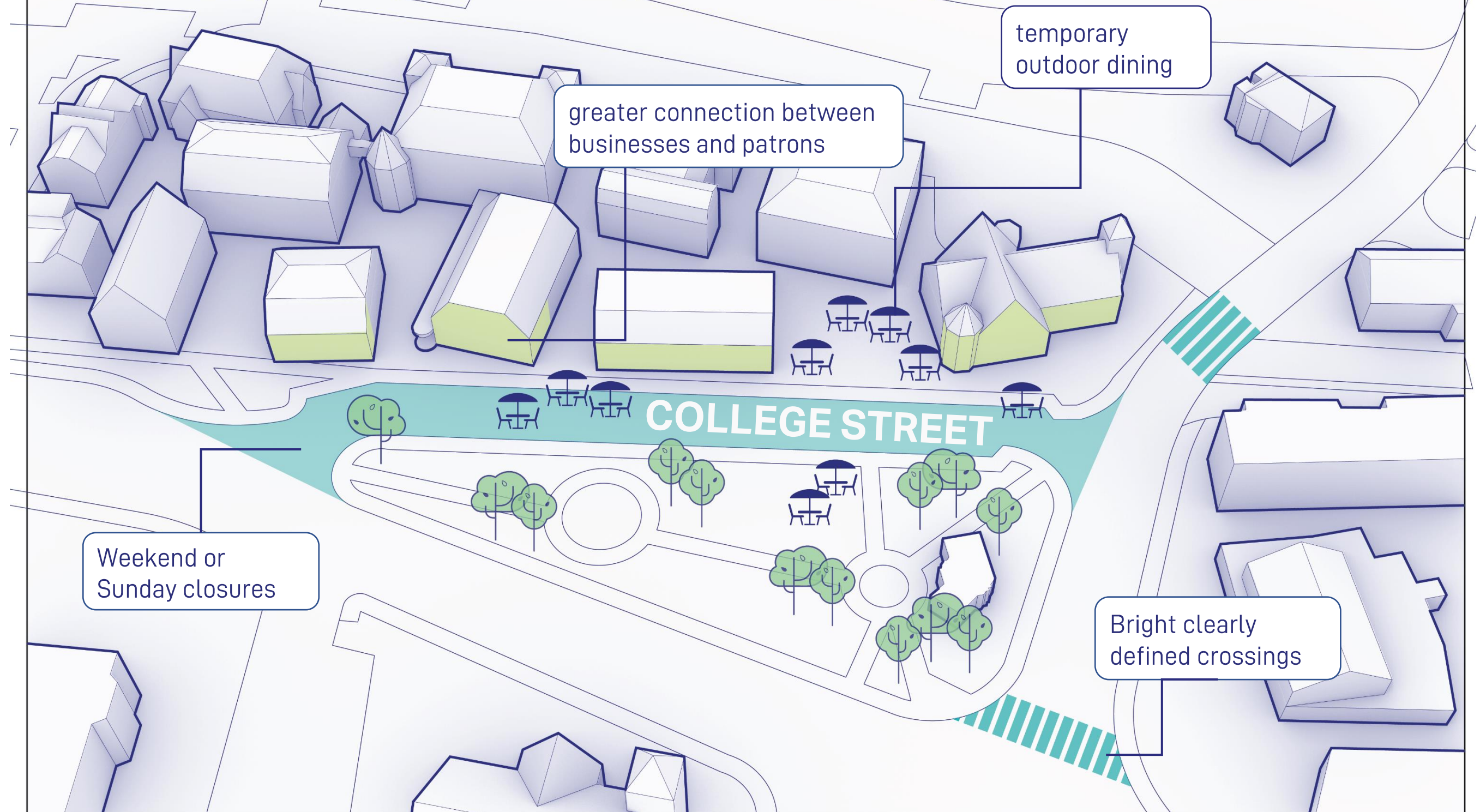
College Street Bypass is an important link between the Village Commons and the Town Common

Long Term Investments

- Increase pedestrian visibility along Hadley and College Street
- Implement a long-time public realm strategy for safe crossings and public space investments
- Conduct a feasibility study for the permanent closure of College Street Bypass.

Short Term Public Space Interventions

The Village Commons District



Long Term Public Space Interventions The Village Commons District

increased circulation and
flow through out the District

increased space creates
opportunity to host larger
scale events

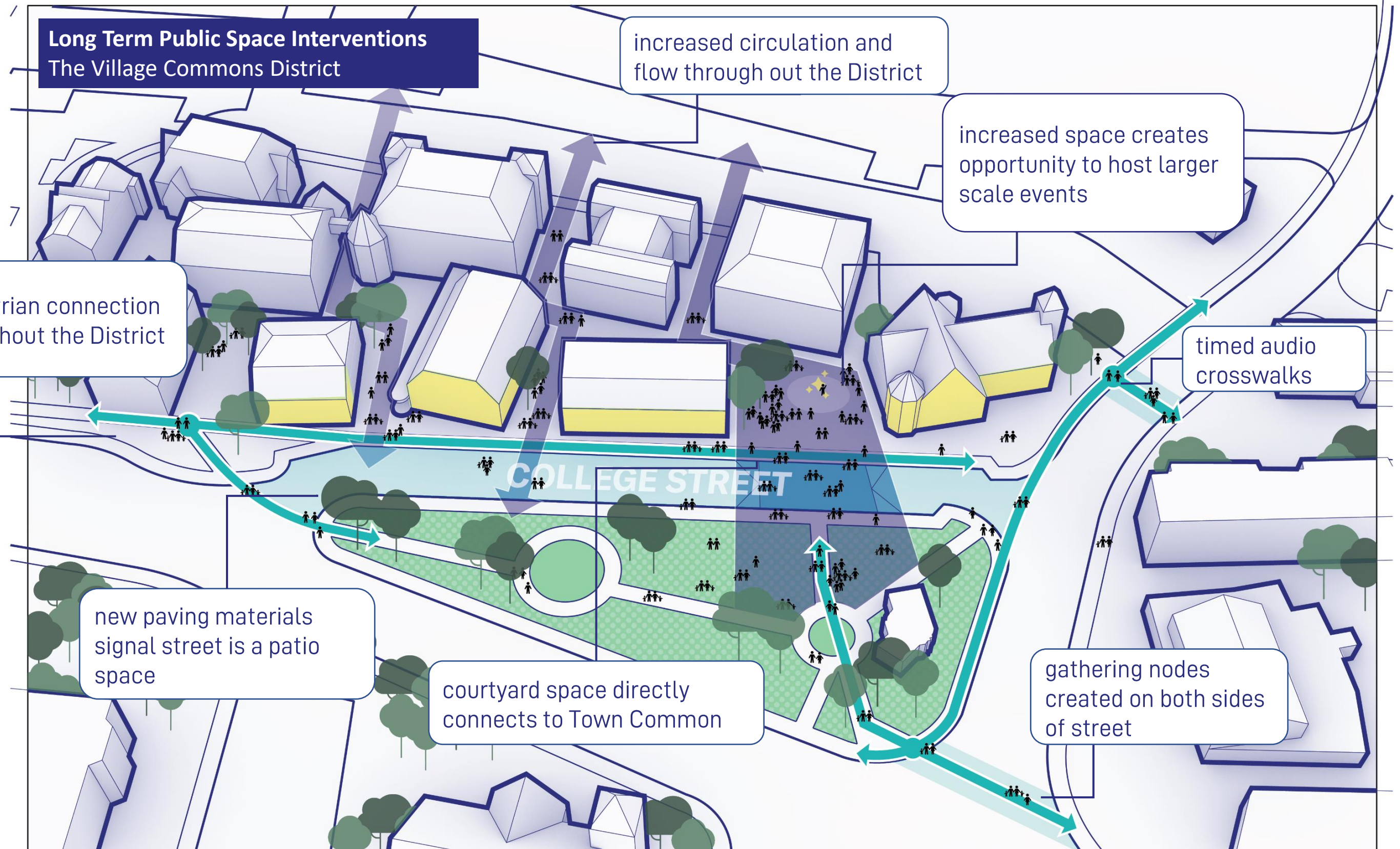
pedestrian connection
throughout the District

timed audio
crosswalks

new paving materials
signal street is a patio
space

courtyard space directly
connects to Town Common

gathering nodes
created on both sides
of street





Public Realm

Create A Parking Fee Structure to Fund Small Business Resources

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

Key Actions

- Launch an educational campaign to teach businesses and community members about potential parking fees
- Articulate how fees serve small businesses
- Conduct a parking study to identify appropriate fee
- Implement parking fee
- Invest generated fees into small business services



Front and back parking areas could have **different fees**. Residential, employee, and customer spaces could **charge varying rates**.

Create Intentional Programming for Various Age Groups to Activate the District & Expand It's Reach



Public Realm

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Low (< \$50K)

* \$200- \$1,000 in first year, \$5,000 to increase scale

Key Actions

- Install flexible furniture and games to draw people to the Town Commons
- Host public art and seasonal offerings within The Village Commons District
- Create a system for hosting events
- Create a system for maintaining and storing furniture and refreshing public art offerings

Furniture and a signature "easy to execute" activity or event engages these spaces with people



Implement Town-Wide District Branding and Wayfinding, Beginning with the Village Commons District



Public Realm

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

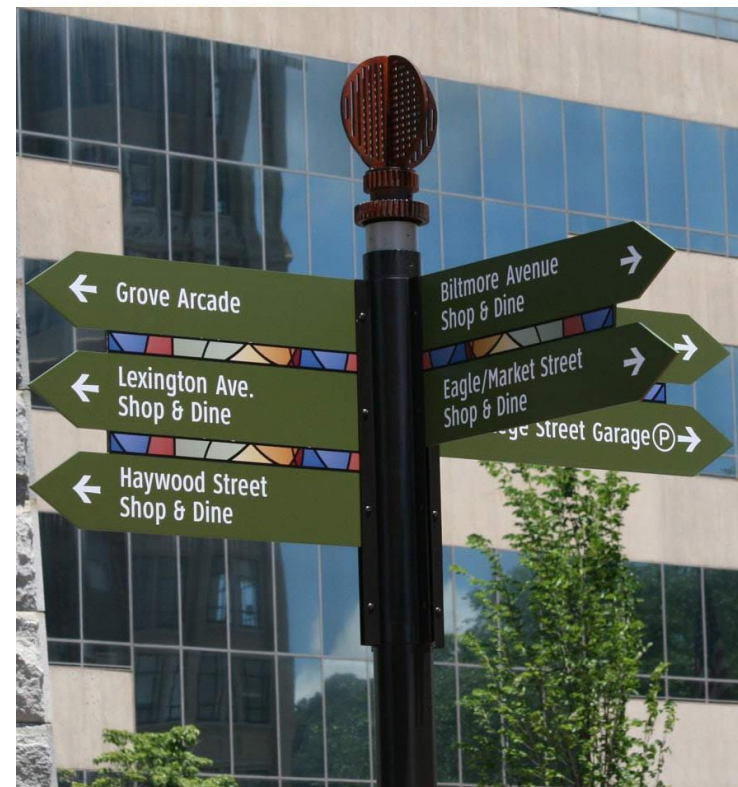
Funding



Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

Key Actions

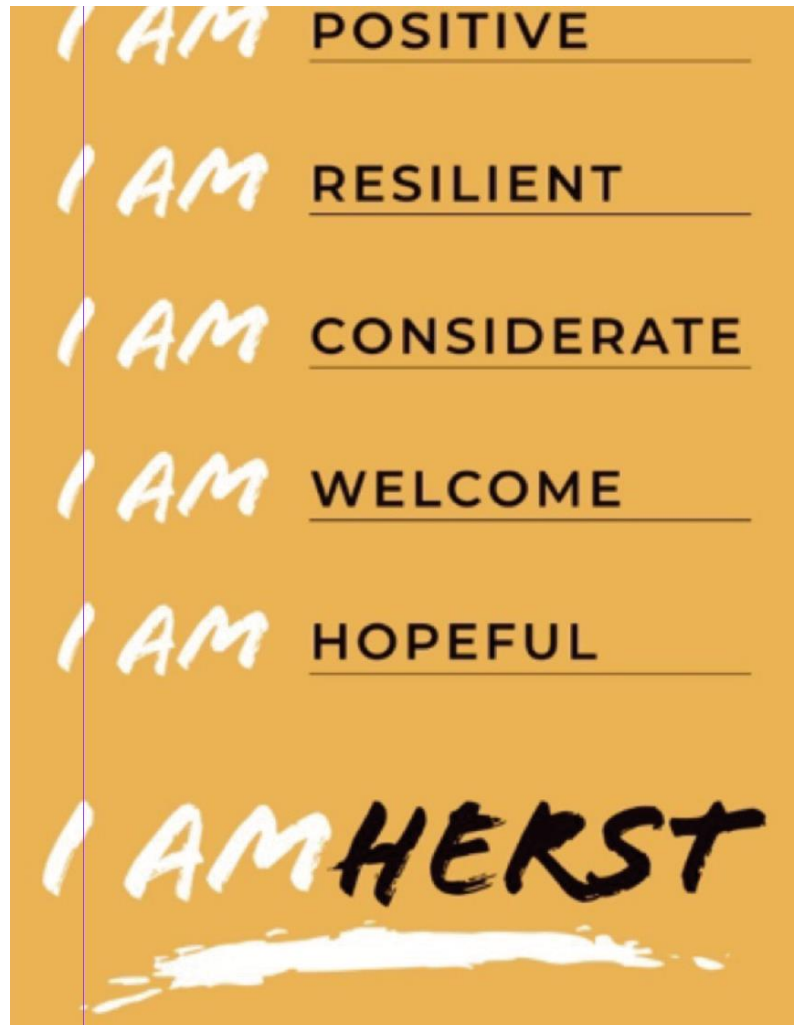
- Undertake a town-wide process to establish purpose, design, location, and phasing for business wayfinding and signage
- Implement signage and wayfinding system within the District as a pilot. Increased visibility from this effort will support COVID recovery, attract future tenants, and test overall program
- Evaluate pilot's success through key metrics. Adjust as needed and implement across Town's commercial centers



Asheville, North Carolina's wayfinding and signage program includes **direction to important local destinations**, as well as the airport and nearby towns.

Branding and wayfinding strategies can be tweaked for **COVID recovery**.

Amherst, MA, launched a campaign aimed at bringing people back downtown



The #IAMherst Campaign raised awareness about **business reopenings**, **instilled confidence in safety precautions**, and was **interactive**. Murals, signage, and social media campaigns **encouraged direct communication between shoppers and business owners**



Cultural/Arts

Partner with Higher Education Institutions to
Increase Arts and Cultural Events

Partner with Higher Education Institutions to Increase Arts and Cultural Events



Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Low (< \$50K)

Key Actions

- Increase presence of colleges and students throughout the District
- Invite students to be active parts of the South Hadley community post-graduation. Use grants and partnerships to implement place-keeping, arts, or innovative business projects
- Utilize the Town Common and the District as project spaces for local architecture classes/studios
- Host Mount Holyoke College events within the District



Metropolitan Area Planning Council offers **toolkits for integrating artists into municipal projects using the 30B process**. Collaborating with artists creates local jobs, increases the uniqueness of the project, and amplifies dynamic voices





Revenue & Sales

Enhance Awareness of the Village Commons District at Trailheads, Parks, and Other Points of Interest



Enhance Awareness of the Village Commons District at Trailheads, Parks, and Other Points of Interest



Revenue/Sales

Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

Funding



Low - Medium (< \$50 - \$200K)

*depends on scale and scope of signage

Key Actions

- Add maps and signage to existing trail kiosks that direct people to The Village Commons District
- Add directional signage to The Village Commons District on town roadways. Include distance and minutes to destination by walking and biking
- Update Trip Advisor, All Trails, and other tourism/trail-based platforms to list the District as a point of interest



Partners

Implementing recommendations will require help from many hands. South Hadley has access to many hardworking and enthusiastic partners.

Municipal/ Governmental

- Regional Planning Commission
- MassDevelopment
- Selectboard
- Department of Planning & Conservation
- South Hadley Master Planning Committee
- Economic Development Council
- Town Administrators
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Recreation
- Department of Open Space & Forestry
- South Hadley Bike/Walk Committee
- Redevelopment Authority
- South Hadley Board of Health
- Nearby municipalities

Local

- The Village Commons
(tenants + administrators)
- Businesses in the Village Commons District
- Residents and visitors
- Restaurants and entrepreneurs
- Schools
- Businesses and property owners
- Realtors and brokers
- Caretakers of trails and recreation facilities
- Marketing/graphic design agencies
- Planning and design consulting firms

Institutional

- Mount Holyoke College
- Colleges within Five College Consortium
- Holyoke Community College

Regional Small Business Services

- S.C.O.R.E.
- Western Mass Economic Development Council
- LISC Digital Growth Accelerator
- Franklin County Community Development Corporation
- Entrepreneurship for All
(Holyoke and Berkshire County chapters)

Cultural

- Massachusetts Cultural Council
- Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey
- Hampshire County Tourism council
- Nearby municipalities and cultural council/districts
- Local arts organizations, museums, and theatres

Funding

The COVID-19 pandemic offers “once in a generation” resources. Implementing these projects will require utilizing a mix of federal, state, local, and private funding

Public



- American Recovery Act
 - Economic Adjustment Assistance
 - Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation
 - Indigenous Communities
 - Build Back Better Regional Challenge
 - Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks
 - Good Jobs Challenge
 - State Small Business Credit Initiative

- Regional Economic Development Organization Grant (REDO)
Support regional business development projects that support MA's Economic Development Plan. Partnerships are highly encouraged



- Mass Preservation Projects Fund
Preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites/cultural resources listed in MA Register of Historic Places



- MassDevelopment Grants
 - Real Estate Technical Assistance
Technical assistance for surplus property reuse or District Management organization implementation
 - Downtown Initiative Program
Downtown revitalization projects within 6 categories
 - Commonwealth Places
To prepare public spaces and commercial districts with social distancing and phased reopening
 - Underutilized Properties Program
Improve abandoned, blighted, or vacant buildings



- Partnerships Matching Funds Program
Up to \$1 M in matching funds to invest in capital improvements at parks, beaches, and reservations



- Planning Assistance Grants
Technical assistance for the public process associated with creating plans and land use regulations
- Small Business Technical Assistance Grants
Counseling and training programs for small businesses
- BIZ-M-Power
Leasing/purchasing assistance to low to moderate-income entrepreneurs
- Restaurant Revitalization Fund
To cover business expenses for restaurant and food services industries. Priority to disadvantaged groups
- Shared Streets and Spaces
Support repurposing of streets, plazas, sidewalks, etc. for outdoor activities and programming
- National Endowment for the Arts
Allocated to state and regional arts agencies



Funding

The COVID-19 pandemic offers “once in a generation” resources. Implementing these projects will require utilizing a mix of federal, state, local, and private funding

Private

- Seed Grant

Support for volunteer groups launching new projects



- Grow Grant

Support for groups with < 2 FTE's to bring more voices and deepen work

- Hometown Grant Program

Build/refresh/rebuild community spaces



- Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Civic Development Grants

Funds new or on-going projects garden clubs will maintain



- Valley Community Development COVID Recovery Grants

One time grants up to \$25,000 for micro-enterprise businesses in Pioneer Valley



Let's Talk...

- Which recommendation(s) should South Hadley implement first?
- What other partners or funding sources are important?
- Which local champions should be consulted?



Thank You!

Want to follow up with additional questions or feedback?

Anne Capra, AICP

acapra@southhadleyma.gov

Director, Planning & Conservation

Town of South Hadley



