



# Rapid Recovery Plan

October 8, 2021

**Spencer**

# Acknowledgments

Rapid Recovery Community  
*Town of Spencer*

Todd Miller, Town Planner - Town of Spencer

*Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission*

Plan Facilitator  
*Agency Landscape + Planning*

Brie Hensold, Principal + Urban Planner  
Rhiannon Sinclair, Senior Planner  
Abby Jamiel, Urban Planner  
Mackenzie Wendling, Urban Planner + Landscape Designer

Subject Matter Experts

Mike Goman, Principal, Advisory & Development Services  
Goman + York

Denise Robidoux, Senior Vice President & Managing Director/  
Asset Management & Program Implementation Services  
Goman + York

**The Plan Facilitators would also like to  
thank the following individuals for assisting  
throughout the planning process:**

*Town of Spencer*

Brenda Savoie, Town Administrator/Board of Selectmen  
Linda LeBlanc, Principal Assessor, Board of Assessors  
Elaine Jaquith, Principal Clerk, Board of Assessors  
Monica Santerre-Gervais, Senior Clerk, Planning Board

Town of Spencer residents who participated in the May 2021  
and September 2021 Board of Selectmen Public Presentations



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



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

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

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

**For more information, contact DHCD:**  
**100 Cambridge St, Suite 300**  
**Boston, MA 02114**  
**617-573-1100**  
**[mass.gov/DHCD](https://mass.gov/DHCD)**

# Table of Contents

Rapid Recovery Program	5
How To Use This Document	5
Introduction	6
Approach/Framework	8
Executive Summary	10
Diagnostic Key Findings	13
Administrative Capacity	17
Customer Base	19
Business Environment	22
Physical Environment	24
Project Recommendations	31
Administrative Capacity	32
Private Realm	42
Revenue & Sales	61
Appendix	83

# How To Use This Document: Not Another Downtown Revitalization Plan

## **This Plan is the Next Step In Spencer's Revitalization Planning Project**

Spencer has done great work creating a Town Center Revitalization Plan (2009), Property Assessment and Re-Use Planning Project (2015), Downtown Design Guidelines (2019), a Downtown Parking Study (2020), and an Open Space and Recreation Plan (2021). The RRP effort is intended to be a step towards implementing each of these projects, not restate work already done.

Many of the recommendations put forward in this plan mirror those in previous plans. On one hand, this shows that there is consensus among what needs to be done and a clear path forward. However, it also highlights that despite more than ten years since the creation of the Town Center Revitalization Planning Project, many of the same issues remain. This is not to belittle progress made since 2009 (like the Complete Streets Grant and renovation of the Sugden Block building), but to identify why and processes and resources that will help the Town of Spencer to act. This plan identified current and relevant funding sources, key metrics, partners, and action steps, to help Spencer achieve the goals outlined in previous plan efforts.

## **This Plan Targets COVID-19 Economic Recovery, It Is Not Comprehensive**

This plan is not a comprehensive downtown revitalization project, nor was it intended to be. It was designed to provide a succinct snapshot and understanding of Downtown Spencer in the wake of COVID-19 and brainstorm actions that can be taken to recoup revenue and business losses. Recommendations were intentionally created to be relatively low cost and require a short-term time frame. Longer term recommendations are suggested in areas where COVID-19 has unlocked more federal funding than previously available. This makes larger scale projects, like modernizing Spencer's light manufacturing economy, more realistic than before 2020.

## **This Plan Simplifies Applying For Grants**

The structure of the RRP effort was created by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The guidelines and rubrics of the report were created by the state to make applying for grants easier. Categories like "Key Performance Metrics," "Budget," "Time Scale," and "Process," are often required in grant applications. Town representatives and local stakeholders can easily pull elements from the RRP recommendations into grant applications. This speeds up the entire process exponentially. In addition, undergoing the RRP process signifies a readiness to the State. Projects that have roots in the RRP display an additional layer of investment, and may receive priority.

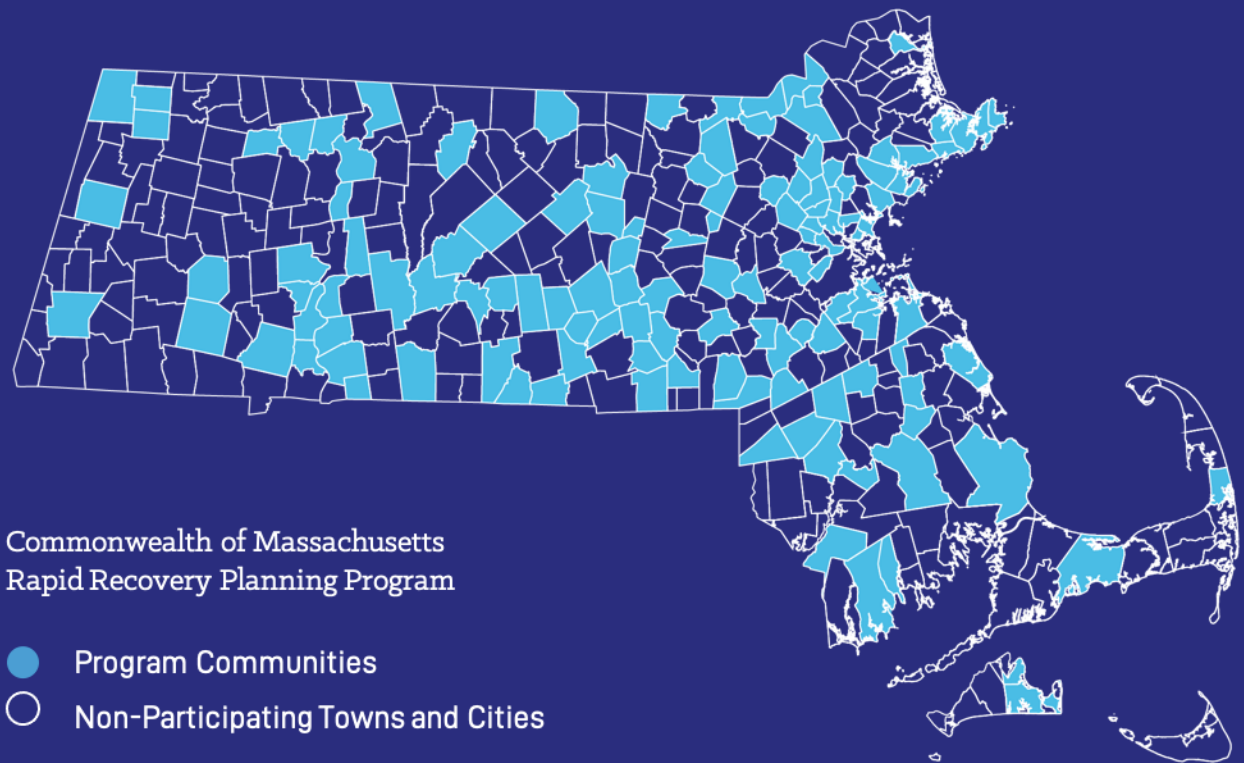
Due to COVID-19, funding to state and local governments, as well as private business owners, is available at a once-in-a-generation scale. Now is the time to take advantage of these resources; either to put money directly in the pocket of small business owners or to allow Spencer to implement changes identified in past plans.



## 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.



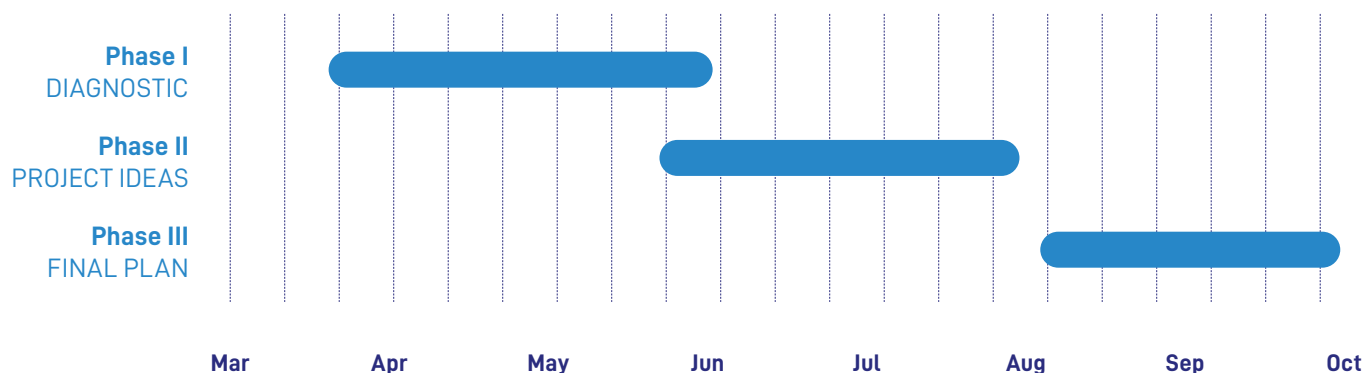
# Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

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



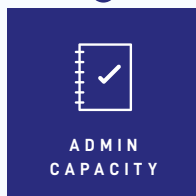
How conducive is the physical environment to meeting the needs and expectations of both businesses and customers?



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



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

Spencer is located at the geographic center of the state of Massachusetts and 20 miles west of the City of Worcester. It is a town of less than 12,000 people that has a rich manufacturing and transportation legacy, flourishing as a shoe and wire production center as well as a rail connection between Connecticut and Boston. Mills were erected in town as early as 1740. Many of the town's largest employers are still within the industries of manufacturing, construction, and trade. However, the town's proximity to places like Worcester and Sturbridge, have meant that a large portion of residents now turn to neighboring towns and cities for employment opportunities.

Spencer's main governing body is the Board of Selectmen, who work with other town boards and committees to shape policies for Downtown. Despite the presence of divisions such as the Financial Management Planning Committee, Finance Committee, and of course, the Economic Development Committee, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was a monumental upheaval to the businesses, residents, and workers along Spencer's Main Street. The public health crisis tested the strength of town-led support systems, making it clear that additional full time small business support would be a valuable asset. The pandemic also occurred during other planning efforts, such as a Downtown Parking Study and Open Space plan. This plan attempts to add a detailed perspective to these, and other, existing plans. It aims to place previous economic development efforts within the lens of COVID -19 recovery and target easily implementable solutions.

Spencer has many existing plans that focus on the Downtown study area, but now is the time for implementation and action. Key findings revealed that many issues noted in the Town Center Revitalization Plan (2009) and Property Assessment and Re-Use Planning Project (2015) are still issues today. The town is aware that the condition of many facades and properties along Main Street makes Downtown feel disinvested and overshadows many well-kept historic buildings. This plan identifies funding sources, local partners, strategies, and changes to zoning that would assist in alleviating these issues.

Nationally, the pandemic reinforced the critical role of parks and open space as places for maintaining mental and physical health. Along Main Street, there exists few places to gather, dine outside, or come together as a community. This RRP effort recommends utilizing what already exists Downtown to address the need for these kinds of outdoor spaces and encourage more people to spend time within the Downtown. This includes hosting pop-up events and branding the study area through signage to create a sense of arrival. These are actions that intend to stimulate greater foot traffic Downtown and subsequently revenue for small businesses.



Spencer is a town of skilled tradespeople and independent entrepreneurs. The Downtown itself is home to over 80 businesses! Most of these Downtown businesses are those within the service industry, health care and social assistance, and some within restaurants and retail. It is clear that restaurant and retail suffered greatly during COVID-19. The retail sector in particular had the third highest unemployment claims in Spencer. Construction and healthcare, other strong industries in both the Downtown and town-wide, also saw high degrees of unemployment claims. This data points to a vulnerability in Spencer's economy. But with partnerships and quick thinking, much can be done. This plan provides initial guidance on safeguarding industries in Spencer against both the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and greater industry wide, technological changes. This includes partnerships with manufacturing and trades schools and using existing mill buildings as homes for manufacturing industries of the future. In tandem with one-on-one small business support services, these actions ensure Downtown will be more resilient to future upheavals.

For many, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed life both superficially and deeply. At the personal, neighborhood, and municipal levels, it has forced many of us to pause and reevaluate what is possible in the future. Spencer has the tenacity and willingness to work hard that can create a positive future out of the public health crisis. But it will need to act boldly and creatively if it is to meaningfully assist the Downtown. The RRP effort exists to make this process swift and meaningful. It is a step towards Spencer's future and hopefully a helping hand along the way to economic recovery.



---

## Diagnostic

# Key Findings



## ADMIN CAPACITY

### Spencer is ready for action!

Spencer has put in tremendous work to craft multiple plans for the town. Yet implementation of these programs has been slow, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic undoubtedly stole attention and resources, but with federal, state, and local funding becoming available, Spencer is poised to begin implementation of their ideas.



## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### Spencer has invested in the public realm, but there is more work to do.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Spencer received a Complete Streets grant to update Main Street with bike lanes, lighted pedestrian crossings, and reworked the intersection of Main Street and Pleasant Street. This created a sense of arrival in Downtown and safer spaces for bikes and pedestrians. However, public spaces to gather, be they mini-plazas, parklets, or a grouping of street furniture, remain illusive. As a corridor double lined with shops and services, Main Street is not taking full advantage of its typology to become a welcoming place to stroll and gather.



## BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

### Small Business owners need individualized attention, especially after COVID -19.

Covid-19 hit Spencer hard. Main Street is predominately populated by small businesses, which were greatly effected by stay at home orders, lack of foot traffic, and consumer trepidation. Most business owners lacked the capacity and the expertise to navigate local, state, and federal aid to take advantage of recovery programs. Many need a high touch level of service that provides one-on-one assistance.

While there is an Economic Development Committee, Spencer does not currently have full time staff that support Economic Development or small business assistance. Additionally, many Spencer business owners do not rely on social media, app based technology, or other technological systems in daily operations. This collective digital divide, in conjunction with a lack of a clear place to go for business assistance, led many Spencer business owners to miss opportunities for aid. Focus should be given to help businesses become more resilient and build back better.





## Facade conditions are a mixed bag.

Spencer has a significant number of historic downtown buildings. One hundred and twelve buildings in the study area alone are either inventoried by the Massachusetts Historical Commission or listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Many of these historic structures are well-kept. Spencer frequently utilizes public revitalization programs for facade and structural improvements. The Sugden Block building, on the corner of Main Street and Pleasant Street, is such a success. The building has been renovated to include apartments, some income restricted, on upper floors, and an expanded restaurant space on the ground floor.

Yet, many buildings, particularly those that line highly visible stretches of Main Street and perpendicular feeder streets are not well kept. Facades are in need of cosmetic and structural improvement. Due to the linear nature of Spencer's Main Street, each decrepit building greatly stands out. In the wake of COVID-19, it is all the more important to rejuvenate Downtown, signal it is open for businesses, and leverage federal funding for long needed improvements.

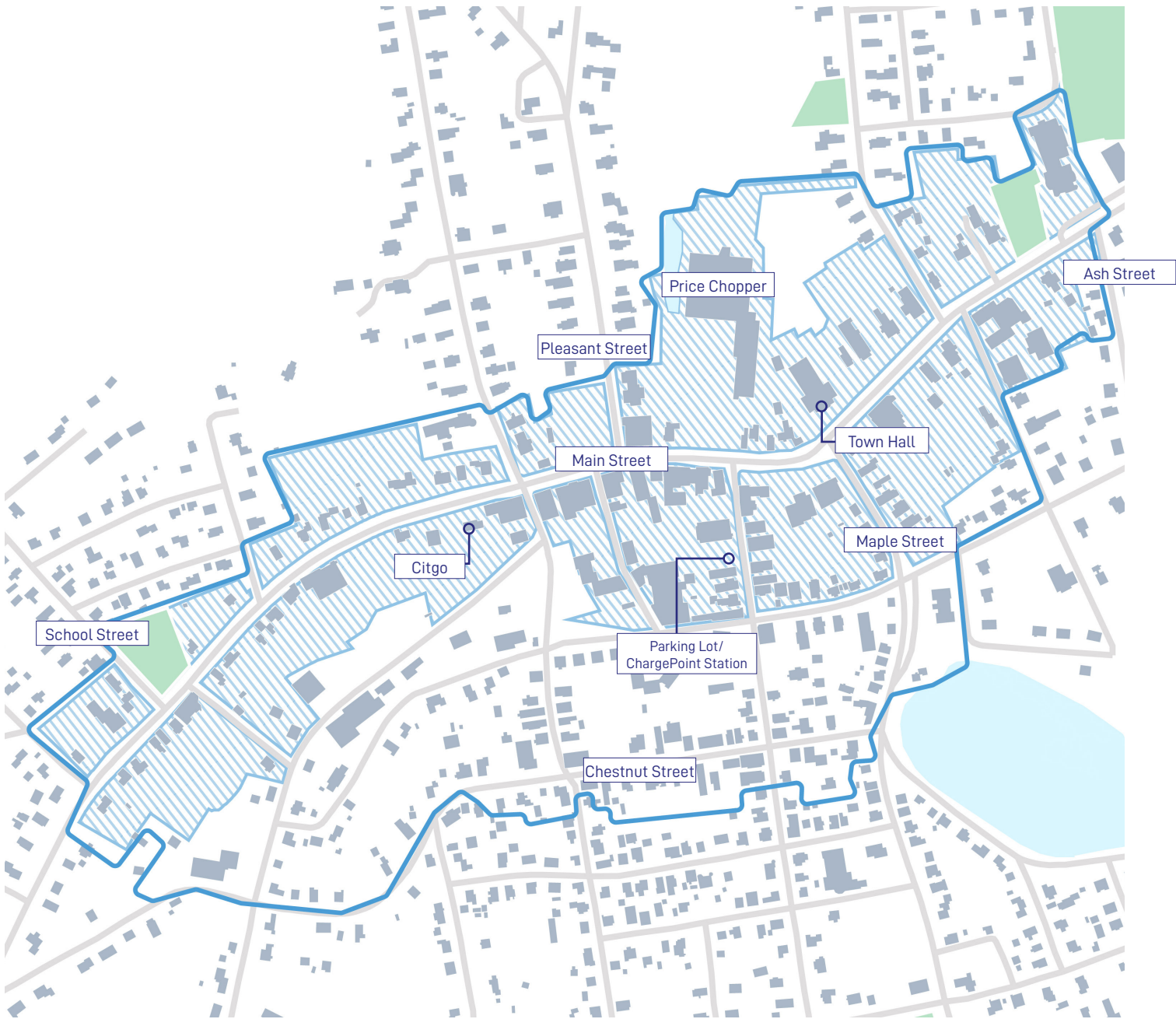


## Spencer's most common industries are undergoing industry-wide change.

Manufacturing, construction, real estate rental and leasing, transportation and warehousing, utilities, and retail and wholesale trade are Spencer's highest paying or most common industries. As automation increases, transportation becomes more reliant on electrical power, and the landscape of shipping and manufacturing change to meet contemporary needs, it is important to safeguard these industries.



COVID-19 has made it extremely clear that adaptable municipalities with diverse business communities were able to pivot with greater efficiency. Spencer should work to make their leading industries forward looking and modern. Many old mill structures along Main Street may be candidates for green automotive or light industrial advanced manufacturing.

Additionally, fields like manufacturing, construction, and transportation, while essential and valuable, do not directly parlay into bustling downtowns. Services, like hair dressers and insurance companies, restaurants, and entertainment venues are often drivers of greater foot traffic. Locating more of Spencer's most successful industries closer to downtown, may increase foot traffic and have the secondary effect of fostering the type of businesses that lead to lively downtowns.



The initial RRP application included a much larger study boundary, extending to Chestnut Street. The study area was streamlined during the RRP process to better focus on the blocks with the highest commercial activity. Main Street, from School Street to Ash Street, were the general boundaries.

**Source: State and Local Parcel Data**

-  Original RRP Study Boundary
-  Final RRP Study Boundary
-  Open Space



## Highlights from Administrative Capacity

### GOVERNMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

At the highest level, Spencer's Board of Selectmen drives town decision making. The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals work with the Board of Selectmen and other municipal decision-makers to develop and implement town policies and procedures.

Spencer's town government includes many boards with interest in the economic future of Downtown. This includes the Historic Commission, Financial Management Planning Committee, Finance Committee, and of course, the Economic Development Committee. The Conservation Committee, Park & Recreation Commission, and Cultural Council also have vested interest in the Downtown.

Despite these resources, there is no full time economic development officer or small business support staff. The Town Clerk often plays this role in a day to day capacity, helping business owners with routine needs regarding business creation or maintenance. They direct entrepreneurs towards business permits, licenses, and serve as a liaison between town government and business owners.

However, there is not one singular resource or Department to call should a business owner require more personalized services.

There is also no local chamber of commerce. The town connects to the regional Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Authority, and Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation. These regional organizations, while constructive and helpful, are simply not as nimble as locally based organizations.

In the wake of COVID-19, one-on-one connections with business owners is important. May of Spencer's business may desire help navigating federal COVID-19 aid, drafting business plans, or investigating marketing. There is also no one entity responsible for executing a cohesive economic vision for Spencer.

Due to current financial limitations, this plan refrains from suggesting Spencer hire a full-time economic development specialist. However, Spencer should investigate such a position in the future. The roles of such a position may also be achieved by implementing a District Management Organization along Main Street, such as a Business Improvement District.



*The Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation and Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce support Spencer's small businesses*  
**Source: QVCDC.org and qhma.com**



## PAST PLANS AND THIS EFFORT

Spencer has been hard at work conducting research and creating plans. In 2009 it produced the Town Center Revitalization Planning Project, which had additional studies produced up until 2013. This effort was supported by the Property Assessment and Re-Use Planning Project (2015) that critically and deeply analyzed the state of Downtown buildings and revised reuse strategies.

Recently, there has also been the creation of Downtown Design Guidelines (2019), a Downtown Parking Study (2020), and an Open Space and Recreation Plan (2021). The RRP effort is not intended to re-do the work of these past plans, but to move them further along.

There are many similarities between the recommendations of this RRP effort and those in previously mentioned documents. These similarities display a coordinated vision for the future.

However, they also reveal that more work needs to be done. Despite many large steps forward, such as the Complete Streets Project in 2018, many issues that existed during the creation of the 2009 Town Center Revitalization Planning Project, continue to linger. The Revitalization Plan is over a decade old. It is meaningful to update it with the RRP effort in mind, especially in the wake of COVID-19.

Also, many of Spencer's recent plans were created between 2019 and 2021, just before or during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is understandable that implementation of these plans was sidelined by the immediate public health crisis. This plan serves as a restart button, and identifies funding sources to implement previous plans and outlines how these previous projects contribute COVID-19 recovery. Tying the recommendations of this document back to town endorsed planning efforts will strengthen applications for grants and federal funding.

### SPENCER TOWN CENTER

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND RE-USE PLANNING PROJECT

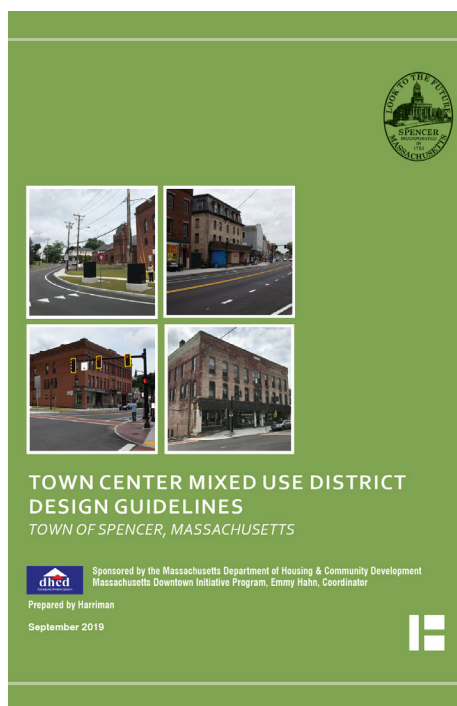


Prepared for the Town of Spencer, Massachusetts  
by Community Preservation Associates  
with Benoit Design Group, Clear Path Resolutions,  
& Lisa Davis Associates, Real Estate Consultants

3/16/2015

*Spencer has utilized many of the state's grant programs to develop plans that address the Downtown and surrounding areas*

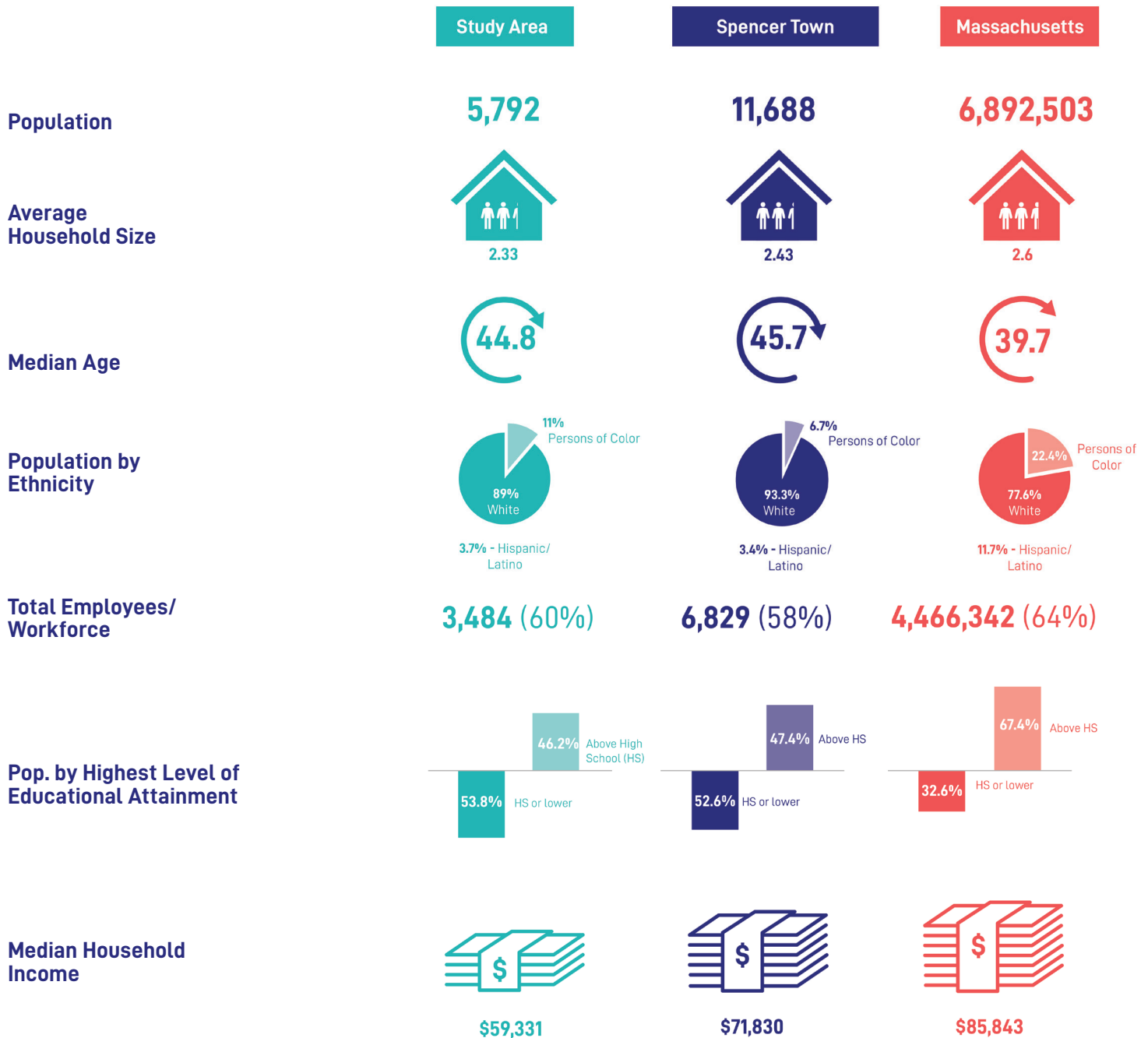
**Source: Town of Spencer**







## Highlights from the Customer Base



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

Source: U.S. Census Data



Spencer is located in Central Massachusetts, north of Sturbridge, west of Worcester, and east of the Quabbin Reservoir. It is 34.05 square miles and home to 11,971 residents.<sup>1</sup> Between 2010 and 2019, the town has increased by 1.9%, or roughly 227 people.<sup>2</sup> The town is nestled in a naturally rich part of the state, known for the beauty of assets like the Spencer State Forest and Mass Audubon Burncoat Pond Wildlife Sanctuary.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The median age of a Spencer town resident is 46 and 93% of the population self-identify as white. Forty seven percent of the town's residents have above a high school level of education. The residents of the Downtown area are very comparable to the overall town demographics. Residents who live within the Downtown study area (Census Tract 7262) have a median age of 45 and 89% self-identify as white. 46% of residents within the Downtown have above a high school level of education. Residents who live within the study area have a significantly smaller median income, \$59,331 as compared to \$71,830, or a difference of \$12,499.<sup>3</sup>

## SPENCER'S ECONOMIC HISTORY

European descendants arrived on the land that is now Spencer in 1717. This land had been inhabited by Native Americans, mostly likely of the Mohegan, Nipmuc, and Wampanoag tribes. Spencer was incorporated as a town in 1753. The town's first mill was built in 1740 and a strong mill industry continued for over one hundred years. In 1834, a shoe factory was created in the town. This linked Spencer to the state's successful shoe economy. Wire also became an export of note. At its height, Spencer boasted eleven factories and twenty-six buildings dedicated to wire-drawing.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to a strong manufacturing economy, Spencer was a transit hub. It was a major stopping location on the Old Boston Post Road route, serving as a link between Boston and Hartford, Connecticut. These histories have continued to shape Spencer both physically and economically. The Downtown retains many historic buildings and old mills. Spencer's primary industries are still based on these manufacturing and shipping legacies. Spencer's most common industries (by number of employees) are <sup>5</sup>:

- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Retail Trade

Compared to other locations, Spencer has an unusually high number of <sup>6</sup>:

- Real Estate & Rental & Leasing (2.91 times higher than expected),
- Construction (2.04 times),
- Wholesale Trade (1.41 times) industries.

The highest paying jobs in the town (by median earnings) are <sup>7</sup>:

- Transportation & Warehousing, & Utilities (\$63,281)
- Transportation & Warehousing (\$63,281)
- Real Estate & Rental & Leasing (\$57,674)

Therefore these particular industries are important to maintain because they directly effect the amount of consumer spending in Spencer. This is important in the wake COVID-19. Many industries noted above saw the largest surge in Spencer's unemployment claims. The table on page 21 notes Spencer's unemployment claims by industry.

1 U.S. Census Bureau (2013-2018). American Community Survey via Spencer's Open Space Plan, 2021

2 Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. U.S. Census Bureau Population Division VIA UMass Database

3 U.S. Census Bureau (2015-2019). American Community Survey 5-year estimates

4 "About Spencer: A Brief History of Spencer." Spencerma.gov

5 U.S. Census Bureau (2015-2019). American Community Survey 5-year estimates

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.





Industry	Industries As A % of Unemployment Claims
Construction	13.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	12%
Retail Trade	10.7%
Manufacturing	6.4%
Admin, Support and Waste Mgt and Remediation	6.4%
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	5.7%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	5.7%
Public Administration	4.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	4.7%
Wholesale Trade	4.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	4%
Educational Services	4%
Other (w/ smaller job loses)	2.3%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	2%
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	1.7%
Information	1.3%

*Unemployment data, acquired in Spring 2021, displays that Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade are among Spencer's hardest hit industries during COVID-19*

**Source: Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance, via Boston Indicators**



## Highlights from the Business Environment

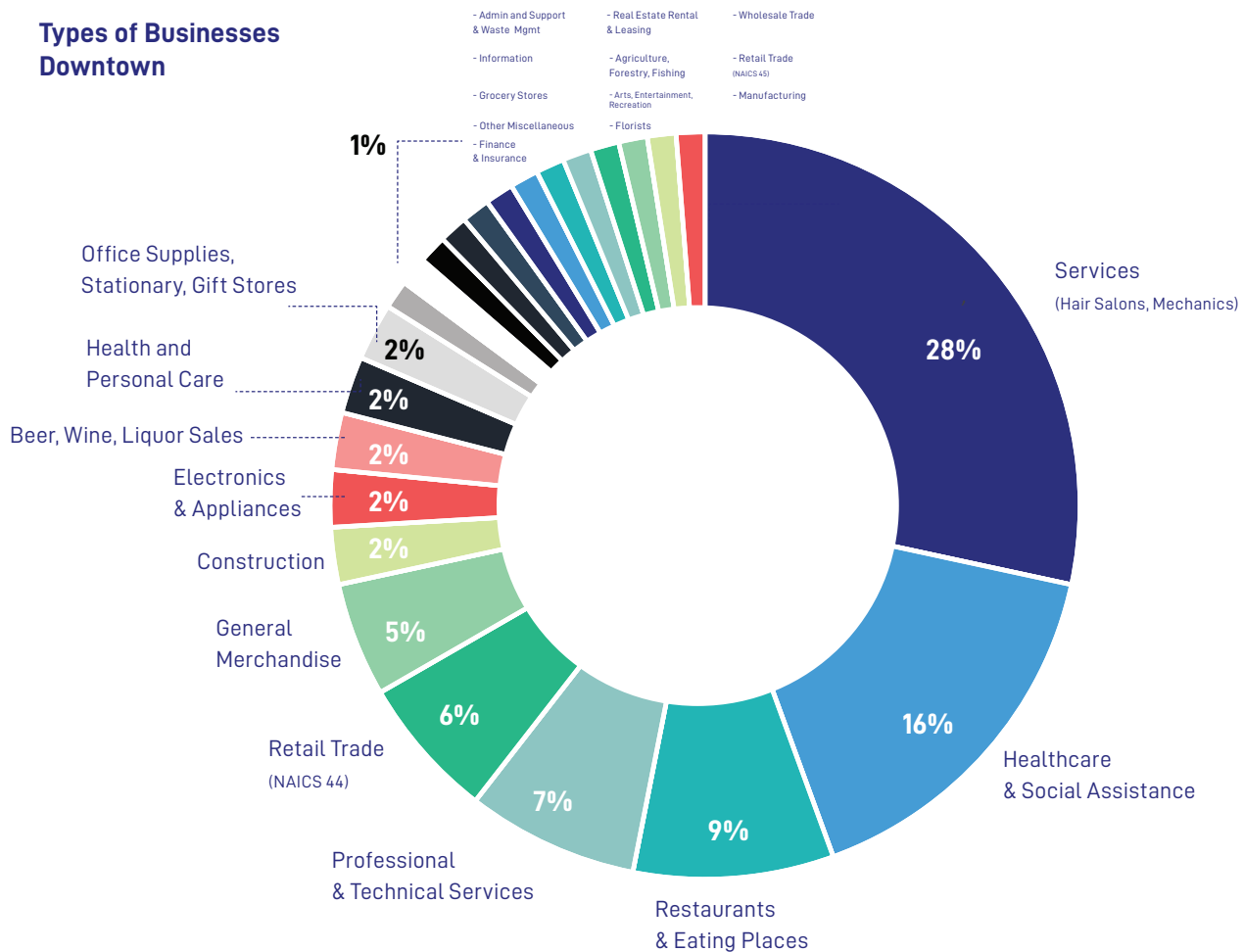
### WHAT BUSINESS ARE IN DOWNTOWN?

There are at least 84 businesses within the study area. These businesses range from restaurants to grocery stores and gift shops to doctor's offices. This is an ample number of businesses to be found within a roughly five minute drive or 25 minute walk. The study area includes a beneficial diversity of businesses. Three of the top five most common business types found Downtown are those that often stimulate foot traffic, such as services (like hair salons), restaurants, and retail establishments.

Despite these positives, Downtown still has opportunities to become more active, vibrant and draw more people to shop, work and visit Main Street and surrounding businesses. There is a particular lack of office buildings that could provide economic benefits like stable lunch time traffic.

There are also a fair number of vacancies within the Downtown. As of Spring 2021, there were least 10 ground floor vacancies. Seven of which were single storefront vacancies and three completely vacant buildings (these numbers do not include vacancies above the ground floor). Many of these vacancies are within prime locations.

### Types of Businesses Downtown



*Downtown industry breakdown (by NAICS code)*  
**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning, Spencer's Assessor's Database base, Google Maps**



## WHY DO PEOPLE GO DOWNTOWN?

Spencer's Main Street and Downtown area includes economic and civic anchors, such as the Price Chopper, Whitco appliance store, Town Hall, and library. These are strong businesses and institutions to keep in the Downtown. However, a lack of street furniture, limited public open space, and current parking infrastructure does not foster a lively pedestrian Downtown. During one particular site visit on a sunny and warm spring Saturday afternoon, only 13 pedestrians (and two bikers) were seen between 3:45 to 4:45 p.m. Most pedestrians seemed to be walking to or from cars that were parked in front of specific stores. This indicates that customers come to Downtown for specific stores or errands and customers have a transactional relationship with Downtown.

Increasing the experiential nature of Downtown would be strong economic development strategy. Currently, a conglomeration of big box retailers, chain restaurants, and services further along Route 9 pulls economic activity away from the Downtown. Downtown may never be able to compete with the offerings of these larger business. However, by increasing investments in public space, events, and arts and cultural programs, it may never need to. Investments that make Downtown a fun, welcoming, and dynamic place to be will allow the small business community along Main Street to thrive.

## WHAT BUSINESSES MIGHT DOWNTOWN SPENCER NEED?

While the RRP analysis was not intended to be a detailed marketing analysis, it can provide direction on the types of businesses most prudent to support in the wake of COVID-19. In 2009, the Spencer Town Center Revitalization Planning Project Report noted that "both full services and take-out restaurants... would appear to have a good chance of success in Spencer Town Center."<sup>1</sup> Additionally, this document noted that small electronic and appliance stores, women's clothing, and office supplies may also find success.

<sup>1</sup> "Spencer Town Center Revitalization Planning Project," Spencer Town Center Report. The Cecil Group, BETA Groups, FXM Associates. 2009. pg. 63

It is helpful to compare these recommendations, created over a decade ago, against the current moment. In the wake of COVID-19, success of online shopping retailers, and convenience of services like Amazon Prime, a pivot in strategy may be needed.

Restaurants appear to be a strategic investment. Federal funding has been unlocked for the restaurant industry in a watershed manner. Additionally, Spencer is already doing well in providing restaurants Downtown. Yet, more work can be done. During COVID-19, Five Loaves Bakery permanently closed and Chef Sau is operating on a limited schedule. Committing to small business restaurants may be a way to enhance a strong Downtown industry, alleviate the losses created due to COVID, and, with the inclusion of outside dining, enhance the liveliness of Downtown.

## PROPERTY OWNERS

While entrepreneurs and customers are extremely important to the economic success of a Downtown, so are property owners. As the stewards of Downtown's physical structures, their investment or disinvestment can have a large effect. Using public records, it was noted that 133 different property owners exist within the study area. Twenty seven percent of property owners live outside of Spencer. While the study did not compare the condition of buildings with out of town owners to those with Spencer-based owners, it is notable that local property owners are often invested in the impact of their physical spaces on the character of the neighborhood and the creation of community. The town may desire to look into the condition of buildings specifically with out of town property owners and devise a care taking strategy if buildings pose structural, aesthetic, or life safety concerns.

### Downtown Spencer Study Area

Available Ground Floor Retail	144,314.7 sq. ft
Available Ground Floor Office	37,007 sq. ft
Available Ground Floor Manufacturing	14327.5 sq. ft

*Data collected Spring '21*

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

## Highlights from the Physical Environment

The layout of Spencer's Downtown follows a classic form. The heart of Downtown is along the a rather linear Main Street. There are strong inclines, especially as one heads towards Town Hall from Pleasant Street, and as one heads from Chestnut Street up to Main Street. Downtown is anchored by the intersection of Main Street and Pleasant Street, which received a public space upgrade upon the completion of the 2018 Complete Streets grant. Downtown Spencer appears to be in transition. Elements of public realm, like sidewalks, received high marks on the RRP Data Collection Rubric, while others, like street trees received a "Fail." (*Elements could be ranked as an "A," "B," "C," or "Fail."* The rubric was created by the state to record the condition of street scape elements through a standardized process. See Appendix pg. 98 for the Data Collection Rubric). The Downtown is unique because it has a few blocks with older mill buildings that give a feeling of a historical town center. Yet, past Town Hall, businesses operate out of converted single family homes. While this creates visual interest, it also makes the Downtown feel spread out. The once residential buildings are often set back further from the road and do not feel as walkable.

### SIDEWALKS AND CROSSWALKS

Sidewalks and crosswalks received an "A" on the RRP Data Collection rubric. Sidewalks were clean and well cared for and roughly 6.5 ft. wide. While this is a standard size, it is slightly narrow for activities like outside dining or retail vending. This width can also make it difficult for people with strollers, those who are differently-abled or older adults to feel like they have enough room to navigate safety.

Crosswalks and roadways were also in good form, without potholes and with clear visual markings. Main Street includes a bike lane and audio crosswalk signals. However, there is a lack of larger biking infrastructure, such as bike racks or air pumping stations. The 2020 Parking Study noted that while these components were greatly enhanced by the Complete Street grant, some community members still feel like it can be difficult to cross at certain intersections.



Crosswalks are well marked and include ADA attributes like tactile paving  
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



Historic lighting along Main Street  
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning





## LIGHTING

Lighting also scored high marks. Downtown has a mix of historic signature lighting and blinking lights at crosswalks. Site visits did not see Downtown at night and cannot deeply comment on the evening experience of being in the study area. However, community engagement from the Parking Study noted that alleyways between buildings continue to feel dark and unsafe at night.

## SIGNAGE, WINDOWS, AND BUILDINGS

Navigational signage, while clean, new, and well-kept, caters to vehicles. Directions are noted for cars, not pedestrians. Walking times to local destinations, like Town Hall, are not noted. There is also a lack of distinctive arrival to Downtown. While the intersection at Pleasant and Main Street does a fair amount of this work, there are no banners, signs, or creative indication that one has reached the town center.

While the Design Guidelines for signage do not seem to be strictly enforced, business signage is generally executed well. Most signs articulate a businesses' provided service and can be seen from the opposite sidewalk. Larger signs with the name of many businesses can be difficult to read.

Windows are a mixed-bag. Some store windows are almost completely covered by signs, making it difficult to see inventory inside. Other storefronts have clear open windows, but are set back from the sidewalk. It can likewise be difficult to see into these locations.

There are at least 48 distinct store fronts within the study area, many with unique and well-kept facades. Yet there are a sizable number of structures in very prominent locations that are in disrepair. These buildings hamper the entire look and feel of the Downtown. For a complete inventory of the condition of structures and remediation plan, consult the *Property Assessment and Re-Use Planning Project (2015)*, which is an extremely valuable inventory of building condition. The RRP plan encourages more teeth be put behind this previous work. It is six years after the development of the Property Assessment Plan and many of the same facades are in need of investment.



Signage, transparencies of windows, and building conditions greatly vary within the study area  
**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**



*A lack of greenery or places to sit outside restaurants do not encourage guests to stay*

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**

### STREET TREES AND FURNITURE

The study area was immensely lacking in both street trees and street furniture. There are almost no street trees along the Main Street thoroughfare. Some do exist along perpendicular side streets, but they are often small and set back from the road. In Spring 2021, there were no benches within the study area. Stairs and steps were the only places to sit. This was the most curious in the areas around restaurants. Despite the existence of both sit down and fast casual/take out locations, there were no places to eat directly outside of these businesses.

There was also a lack of outside dining or outside retail within the study area. These opportunities have been remarkably helpful for businesses during COVID-19. Beyond the pandemic, creating spaces for people to dine, linger, and socialize helps to foster an active Downtown.

Downtown Spencer has areas that could easily transform into small pocket plazas. Multiple markers exist along Main Street noting significant historical events or places. Adding seating to these mini-plazas would be a cost-effective way to begin to add more street furniture, while increasing engagement with historical trails.









## PUBLIC SPACE

Public space within the study area is greatly lacking. There are no plazas or patios. There is one green space to the side of the Sugden Block Apartments. It was created as part of larger Main Street and Downtown Revitalization efforts. This parcel is in a meaningful location, as it connects to the expanded front lawn of the library. It is a wonderful improvement to the previous condition. However, the green space could be made more welcoming. The space exists at the busy intersection of Pleasant Street and Main Street, making it quite loud and somewhat difficult to get to. Despite well marked cross walks, one still needs to pass a highly trafficked area. In addition, a seamless connection between the green space and the library's front lawn is broken by an entrance to a parking lot. Sidewalks also bisect the space, making it less flexible as a small event space. There are also no chairs or tables either in front of the library or next to the Sugden Block, despite the presence of a ground floor restaurant. All of these elements signal that this green space is one to pass through, not to enjoy.

The Isaac L. Prouty Memorial Park exists closer to the opposite edge of the study area. Created in 1905 and renovated in 1940, the park contains many monuments to the armed forces and local heroes. The space is a Downtown treasure and consistently hosts Memorial Day Ceremonies. However, outside of formal events and ceremonies the park appears to be seldom used. Despite stone signs demarcating the park, it can be difficult to find. As the lawn of the beautiful Nathan Hersey home, the park first reads as a private lawn instead of a public space. Landscaping is formal and no pathways connect the interior of the space to the sidewalk in a way that would pull visitors into the park. Again, there is a lack of places to sit.

The green space at the intersection of Pleasant Street and Main Street and the Isaac L. Prouty Memorial Park have the potential to be meaningful civic anchors of Downtown. Being that they are at opposite ends of the study area, they could become unofficial makers of the Downtown space. Programming these locations with events or providing amenities for people to passively and spontaneously interact with the spaces would greatly enhance Downtown. Additionally, these space exist within a greater system of historic markers and near the Town Center Historic District. These preexisting historic attributes could be integrated into amenities like a self-directed historic walking tour or networks of smaller, unique open spaces.



Historical markers through the study area note historical events through out the Colonial Era and 1800s

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**











## TRAFFIC AND ROAD USE

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 walking their communities. According to MassDOT's Mobility Dashboard (via StreetLight Insight), Spencer saw pedestrian activity increase by 55 % between 2019 and 2020!

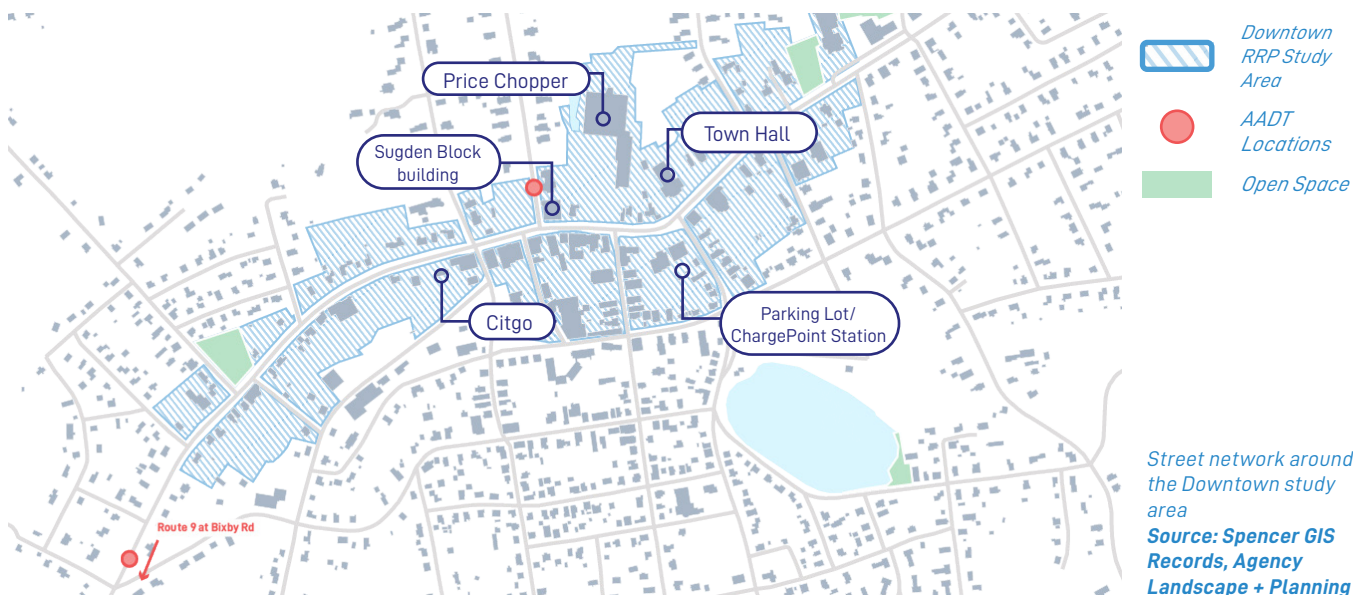
Average Annual Daily Vehicular Traffic (AADT) counts are the total volume of vehicle traffic one location experiences for a year, divided by 365 days. It articulates where roads are busy. A spot along Pleasant Street (just across from the Library), saw a decrease in AADT from 7,714 average annual daily traffic count to 6,364. This is a decrease of 18%. The same decrease in traffic volume was noted on Route 9/Main Street at Bixby Road. Despite this point existing outside of the study area, it was a good indication of traffic flow through Downtown. In both locations, AADT had been generally increasing for the last few years prior to the pandemic.

While the decrease in driving and increase in walking rates may not come as a surprise, it provides a great opportunity. With transportation methods so greatly changed, Spencer has the ability to capture these new habits in positive ways. Now is the time when the community may be more open to changes that increase the walkability of the Downtown or rework traffic, parking, and regulation patterns.

Street Location	2019 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	2020 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	Change from 2019-2020
Rte 9/Main St, West of Bixby Rd (Primary Street)	12,754	10,509	2,245 (18% reduction)
Pleasant St, North of Rte 9 (Secondary Street)	7,714	6,364	147 (18% reduction)

*The volume of vehicular traffic around Downtown decreased 18% from 2019 to 2020*





**Source: MASSDOT Transportation Management System**



---

## Project Recommendations

# Invest in Main Street: Provide Technical Assistance to Main Street Small Businesses

Category		Administrative Capacity
Location		Study Area
Origin		Town planner, local government, business owners
Budget		<p>Low Budget (&lt; \$50,000)</p> <p><b>Potential Long-term Goal: Hire a full time Small Business Liaison (Medium Budget)</b></p> <p><b>Funding:</b> town funding, American Rescue Plan Act (i.e Good Jobs Challenge), <a href="#">BIZ-M-Power</a>, <a href="#">Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts (possible)</a>, <a href="#">Quabog Valley Community Development Corporation</a>, <a href="#">Center for Women and Enterprise</a>, <a href="#">Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program</a>, <a href="#">State Small Business Credit Initiative</a>, <a href="#">REDO Grant Program (possible)</a></p>
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		# of personal meetings with small business owners, # of workshops/trainings/skill shares, # of Small Business Action Plans created, hiring of full time business support position (potential/future)
Partners & Resources		<p><b>Partners:</b> local business/entrepreneurship non-profits (S.C.O.R.E., Entrepreneurship for All, Small Business Strong, Main Street America/ National Main Streets, <a href="#">Center for Women and Enterprise</a>, <a href="#">LISC Digital Growth Accelerator</a>), <a href="#">UMass Amherst Small Business Development Network</a>, Spencer cable news channel, Board of Selectmen, local government, fellow business and property owners, town boards and committees</p>

## Diagnostic

The effects of COVID were deeply felt in Spencer's small business community. Many Main Street businesses closed or operated on very limited hours during 2020.

- Assistance is needed to help businesses become more resilient and build back better.
- Many business owners need a high touch level of service to know what opportunities exist (federal, state, local grants, loans, marketing, etc.)
- The RRP business survey received an extremely minimal number of responses, displaying a possible lack of communication between the small business community and municipal staff.

## Action Item

- Educate entrepreneurs about existing programs, resources, and funding through small business technical assistance programs.
- Address the "Digital Divide" through workshops, trainings, and "office hours."
- Mentor businesses owners to create their own Small Business Action Plans.
- Hire a Small Business Liaison who provides a concierge level of service to existing small businesses.
- Simplify the process of finding small business resources.

City of **Somerville**



## Doing Business in Somerville

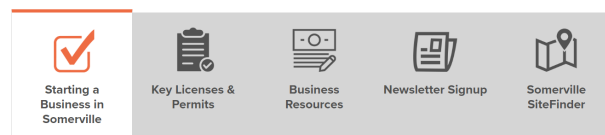
Photo

[Home](#) > [Programs & Initiatives](#) > [Doing Business in Somerville](#)

[Like 0](#)

### About Doing Business in Somerville

We're here to help you start, expand, or improve your Somerville-based business. The Economic Development Department is happy to help you navigate the process of getting your business up and running with all the necessary licenses and permits. We're also able to help you find real estate within the city and connect with financial or technical assistance resources to ensure you're off to a strong start.



We know it can be stressful and confusing to start a business. We're here to help! Check out some helpful resources, programs, and links below, including a step-by-step online guide to help get you started. You can also [view the PDF version of this guide](#) if you prefer.

### 1 Creating a Budget and Business Plan

A business plan is an important document that can help you make strategic decisions and communicate your business's strengths when applying for financing. A budget and business plan should take into account:

- Startup costs, including licenses and fees
- A budget for long-term operation
- A marketing strategy
- Research into competitors in the area

### Contact

**Tom Galligani**  
Director of Economic Development

**Hours**  
Monday - Wednesday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Phone**  
(617) 625-6600 ext 2531

**Email**  
[tgalligani@somervillema.gov](mailto:tgalligani@somervillema.gov)

**Address**  
City Hall  
93 Highland Ave.  
Somerville, MA 02143

[View Map >](#)

[VIEW ALL STAFF CONTACTS >](#)

*Somerville's online resources provide a self directed way for entrepreneurs to find permits, resources, and even search for property*  
**Source: [Doing Business in Somerville, somervillema.gov](#)**

## Process

**Educate entrepreneurs about existing programs, resources, and funding through small business technical assistance programs.**

- *Synthesize:* Create a one-pager outlining existing small business resources and funding (federal, state, or local).
  - Create an easy to use online hub with links to grants, appointment scheduling, and business owner directory.
  - Provide clear steps for accessing or applying for programs
- *Meet:* Visit business owners at their businesses. Provide one-pager and additional materials.
- *Follow-Up:* Visit business owners periodically, checking in on progress.

**Address the “Digital Divide” through workshops, trainings, and “office hours.”**

- *Partner:* Utilize local small business non-profits, accelerators, Regional Chamber of Commerce, and economic development professionals to provide workshops, trainings, and grants.
- *Promote:* Use local news station, newspaper, social media, and radio to advertise programming and stream workshops/trainings
- *Address the Digital Divide:* Concentrate trainings on e-commerce, social media, SEO optimization, and website creation.
  - Educate on importance of online presence.
  - Provide a point person for technology related questions.

**Mentor businesses owners to create their own Small Business Action Plans.**

- *Launch:* Create a Small Business Action Plan initiative.
  - Encouraging business owners to articulate vision, goals, resources, and action steps for implementation.

**Identify a local small business champion(s) that promote programs, trainings, and workshops.**

- *Support:* Empower champion(s) to shape the nature of small business services.

**Hire a Small Business Liaison who provides a concierge level of service to existing small businesses (if desired in the future).**

- *Hire:* Employ a full time Small Business Liaison.
  - Liaison can be shared between multiple towns.
- *Organize:* Continue to provide consistent programming, trainings, and resources.
- *Investigate:* Research adopting a [Main Street America](#) program/model.



*Small businesses in Downtown Spencer*  
**Source: GoogleEarth**

# Provide Funding and Technical Assistance to Enable Business Viability During COVID-19



Provided by SME Consultant

Revby LLC

Location

Arlington, MA

Origin	Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development; Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force; Arlington Community Development Block Grant Subcommittee
Budget	 <p>Medium (\$200,000) - \$180,000 of direct assistance to businesses via working capital grants and \$20,000 to a technical assistance program with two contracted consultants.</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Short Term (&lt; 1 year) - TA contract to end of 2021. One-on-One TA: 10 hours to be completed within that timeframe. Workshops completed before end of June 2021.</p>
Risk	 <p>Low Risk - A challenge for the Technical Assistance program was limited capacity on the part of the small business owners. Must follow CDBG requirements; subject to be returned to HUD should use of funds be deemed ineligible.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Business vitality (sales performance) through the pandemic and into the post-pandemic world.
Partners & Resources	Town of Arlington, MA Dept. of Planning and Community Development; Small businesses (grant recipients); Contracted consultants (technical assistance providers), including Revby LLC
Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need for working capital was identified as the most urgent need in the business community; thus, the majority of funds for the program were dedicated to direct assistance.</li> <li>CDBG funding entails reporting requirements that must be explained to business recipients.</li> <li>The technical assistance program was a pilot initiative.</li> </ul>

## Action Item

The Department of Planning and Community Development Action Items:

- Administering a relief program for Arlington businesses with twenty or fewer full-time-equivalent employees, including the owner.
- The program provides short-term working capital assistance and technical assistance to enable the viability of the business during the severe economic interruption related to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing restrictions.

Technical Assistance project Action Items (by Revby, a TA provider):

- Build trust with the business owner during the first sessions and collaboratively work on a plan on how the technical assistance time allotted may be used to support the business owner in the best way possible.
- Conduct several TA sessions over Zoom
- Provide a final project deliverable that outlines the work completed and provides resources and recommendations for the business owner's ongoing use.
- Provide workshops on topics including business resilience and digital marketing.

## Process

Process by the Town of Arlington:

1. Conduct analysis of current needs that align with eligible use of CDBG funds.
2. Complete a substantial amendment of CDBG Annual Action Plan, including public comment period and citizen participation process.
3. Open application period December 2020-January 2021 (including information session).
4. Review of applications by 4 members of DPCD team.
5. Notify applicants and execute grant agreements (February).
6. Complete procurement process for Technical Assistance providers (January-February).
7. (Ongoing) Complete reimbursement requests.
8. (Ongoing) Technical Assistance sessions and workshops: Topics include digital marketing, website assistance, eCommerce, SEO, Bookkeeping, and business resilience.
9. Collect reporting documentation and close out award requirements with HUD.

Process by Revby, a TA Provider:

1. Conduct first meeting introduction over a Zoom call; identify needs; create plan for time allotted.
2. Conduct interactive working sessions to build capacity and improvements around the identified topics. Facilitate brainstorming sessions so the business owner can create their own content and action items. Provide tools, examples, recommendations to support the sessions.



# Codify Design Guidelines into Zoning Code to Enhance Downtown Character

Category		Administrative Capacity
Location		Main Street and surrounding commercial areas; Town of Spencer
Origin		Spencer community and RRP community facilitator
Budget		Low (<\$50,000) <b>Budget:</b> MassDevelopment Initiative Assistance Grants, <a href="#">Planning Assistance Grants</a> (possible)
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Medium Risk – Cohesive design character is an important component of a vibrant and economically strong corridor, but it also requires property owners and business owners to pilot changes to their storefronts and buildings, which necessitate short term investments and long term returns.
Key Performance Indicators		Increased number of visitors at key businesses or destinations; increased consumer spending Downtown; increased vehicular traffic counts and parking demand.
Partners & Resources		<b>Partners:</b> Spencer property and business owners, tenants, Town Administration, marketing/branding/graphic design team or support



*Inconsistent signage and storefront treatments conflict with the Town's design guidelines*

**Source:** Agency Landscape + Planning

## Diagnostic

Although COVID-19 increased economic uncertainty and change, Spencer's Main Street has struggled with and increased vacancy rates since the 2008 recession. Small and large businesses have struggled or closed. Others have quickly pivoted to meet the changing needs and volumes of customers through a multitude of bright, out of scale signage that detracts from the historic character of the town. Building owners have also chosen not to invest in exterior improvements. In the wake of these upsets, the Town's approach to enforcing the municipal code has adapted. Leniency is provided to prevent the displacement of small businesses and restaurants.

The pandemic has also shifted the way visitors and residents relate to the main street corridor. "Home" has become more important — and multi-functional — than ever, bringing an even greater appreciation for amenities and services within walking distance. Many residents who previously commuted to offices will likely continue to work from home, at least in some capacity. This change in patterns has the potential to influence long-term changes in the fabric of the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods may need to adopt a live/work culture and attract new types of 24/7 services as desires increase for a diverse mix of amenities and services. In order to attract more visitors and potential businesses to Downtown Spencer, the town should adopt its 2019 Design Guidelines as part of the municipal code to protect the historic character, scale, and attractiveness of this rural town center.

Spencer's existing design guidelines are explanatory and interpretive recommendations that encourage, not require, its use. Administered through the appointed design review committee, the guidelines were created to fit a wide range of situations, and are clear and easy to understand. In order to ensure Spencer's Main Street remains a vibrant, active place for people to live, work, and play, the design guidelines need to be codified.

## Action Item

- Review and revise the design guidelines with key Main Street stakeholders
- Codify and enforce the design standards with the Board of Selectmen



*Inconsistent signage and storefront treatments conflict with the Town's design guidelines*

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**



## Process

### Collaboratively Review and Revise the Design Guidelines

- *Identify A Leader:* Decide who within the town should lead the effort. Town planners, working together with various design and planning review groups, are ideal candidates to organize and deploy the effort.
- *Define:* Determine how to incorporate the guidelines into the code. If the guidelines will be part of an overlay, the town planner should identify the geographic boundaries that will be impacted and reach out to existing businesses, institutions, and property owners.
- *Discuss:* Conduct local research to understand design decisions made by Main Street stakeholders. The town should work with these stakeholders to "pilot" a design guidelines project with a business, testing the scale of resources needed to adhere to the guidelines. Share the results.
- *Iterate:* After weighing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and concerns of the Design Guidelines, develop a revised draft either internally or with a consultant. Share the draft with stakeholders for review and comment.
- *Share:* Present the draft code language to the Planning Review Board and Board of Selectmen for approvals.

### Codify and Enforce the Design Guidelines

- *Determine:* Work with the Town to evaluate if the zoning code needs additional adjustments to enable desired private signage outcomes. Employ incentive or small grant programs to encourage businesses and other Main Street stakeholders to adopt the guidelines.
- *Acquire Funding:* Gather funds from grants, technical assistance, local resources and/or partners to fund building updates, including beautification of facades, new signage, lighting and facade improvements. This is also an opportunity to expand the zero interest loan program to building owners for building improvements.
- *Iterate:* After a trial period of six months, work with businesses and building owners to initially update buildings in accordance with the design guidelines. If stakeholders refuse to adhere to standards or ignore repeated requests for upgrades, conversations with those stakeholders should focus on reducing barriers to making improvements before enforcing the municipal code with fines.



Recent building investments along Main Street adhere to the recent design guidelines and contribute to a strengthened Downtown corridor

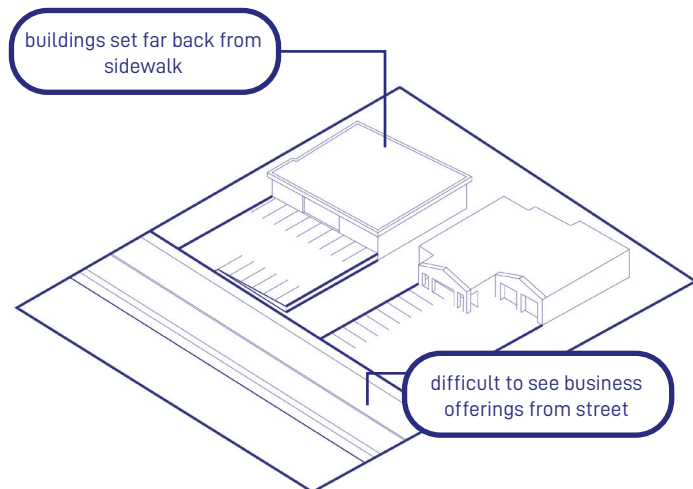
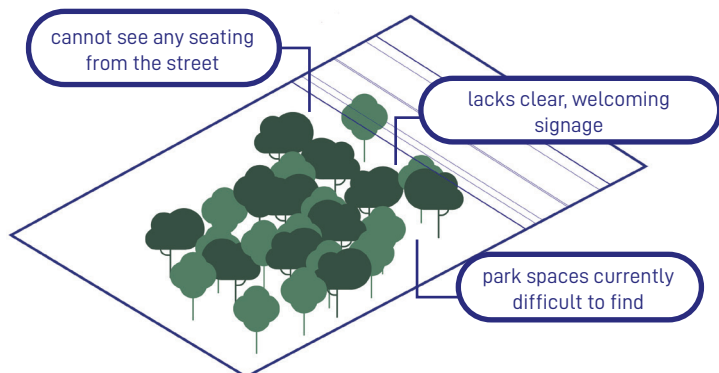
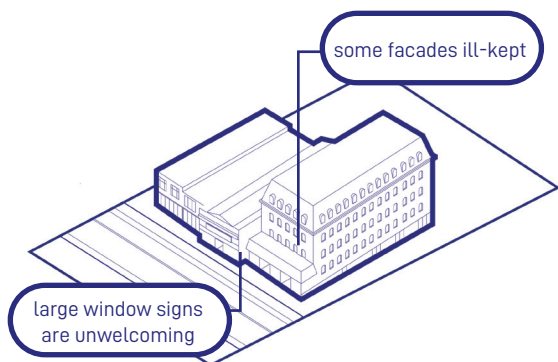
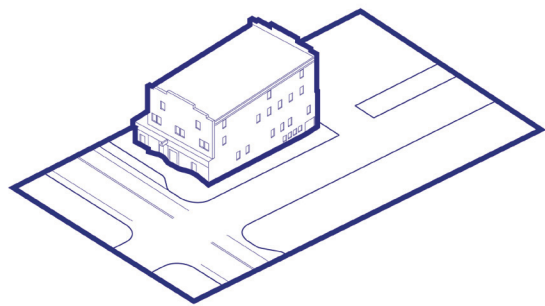
**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**



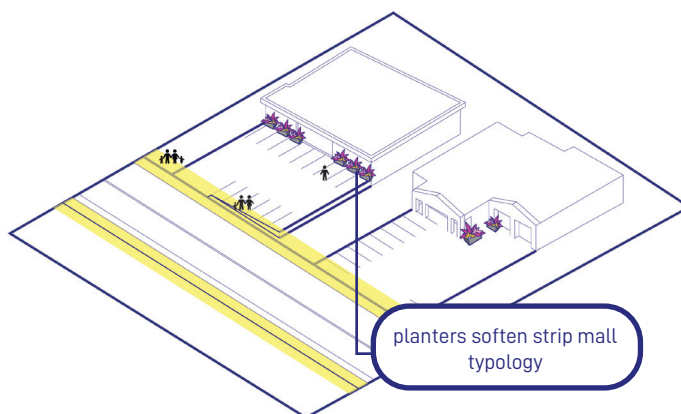
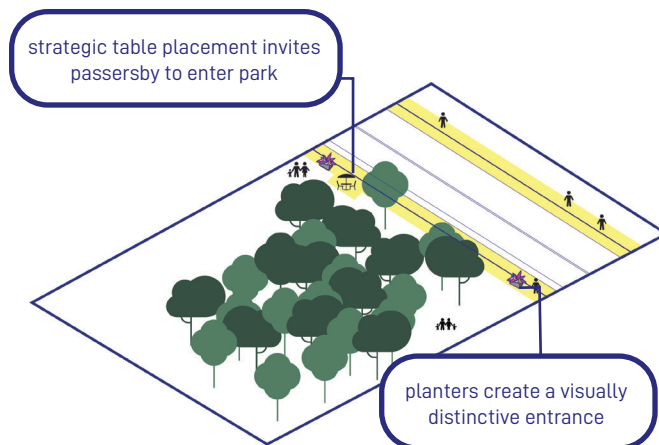
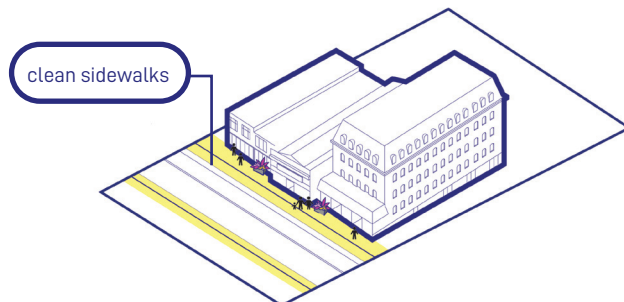
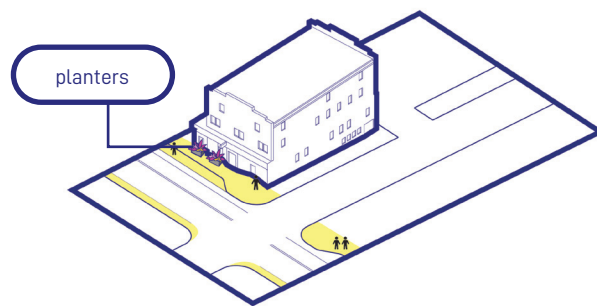
Working with businesses, the Town can support customer attraction and make Main Street a pleasant place to shop and visit

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**

## Existing Conditions



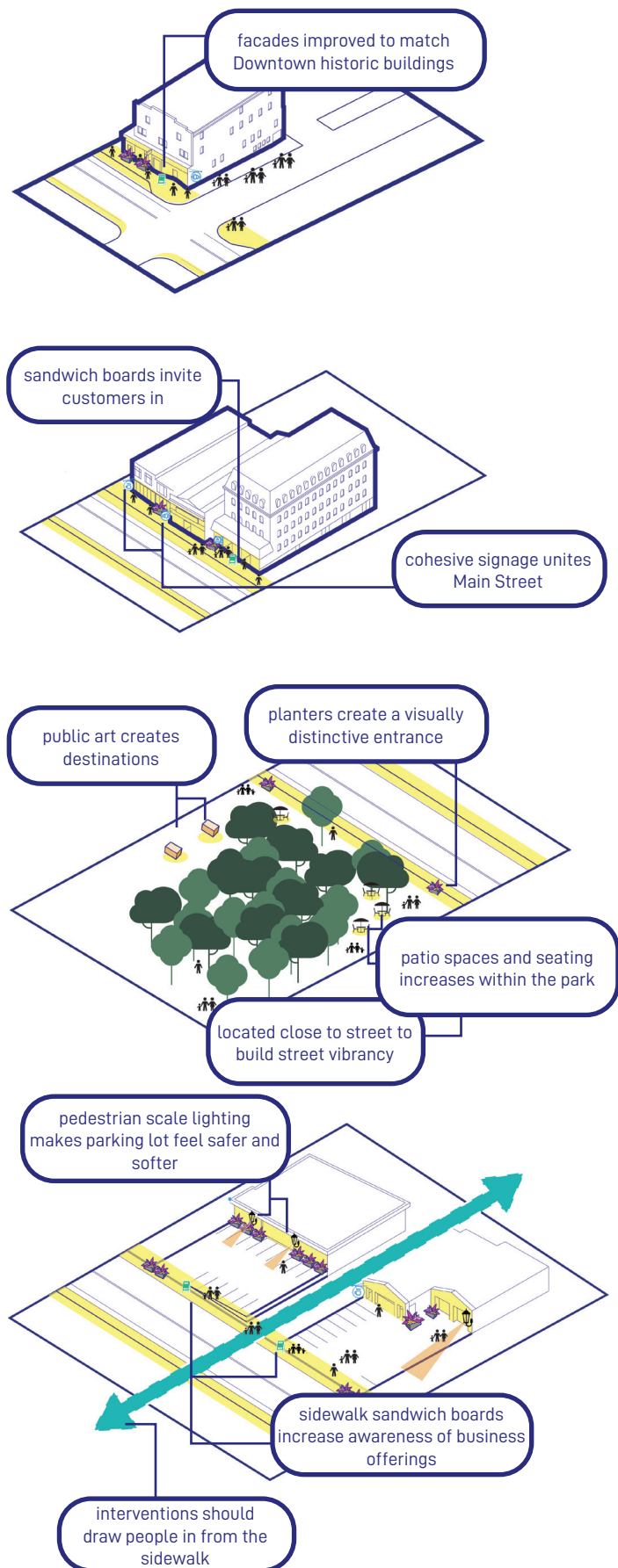
## Small: Street Interventions



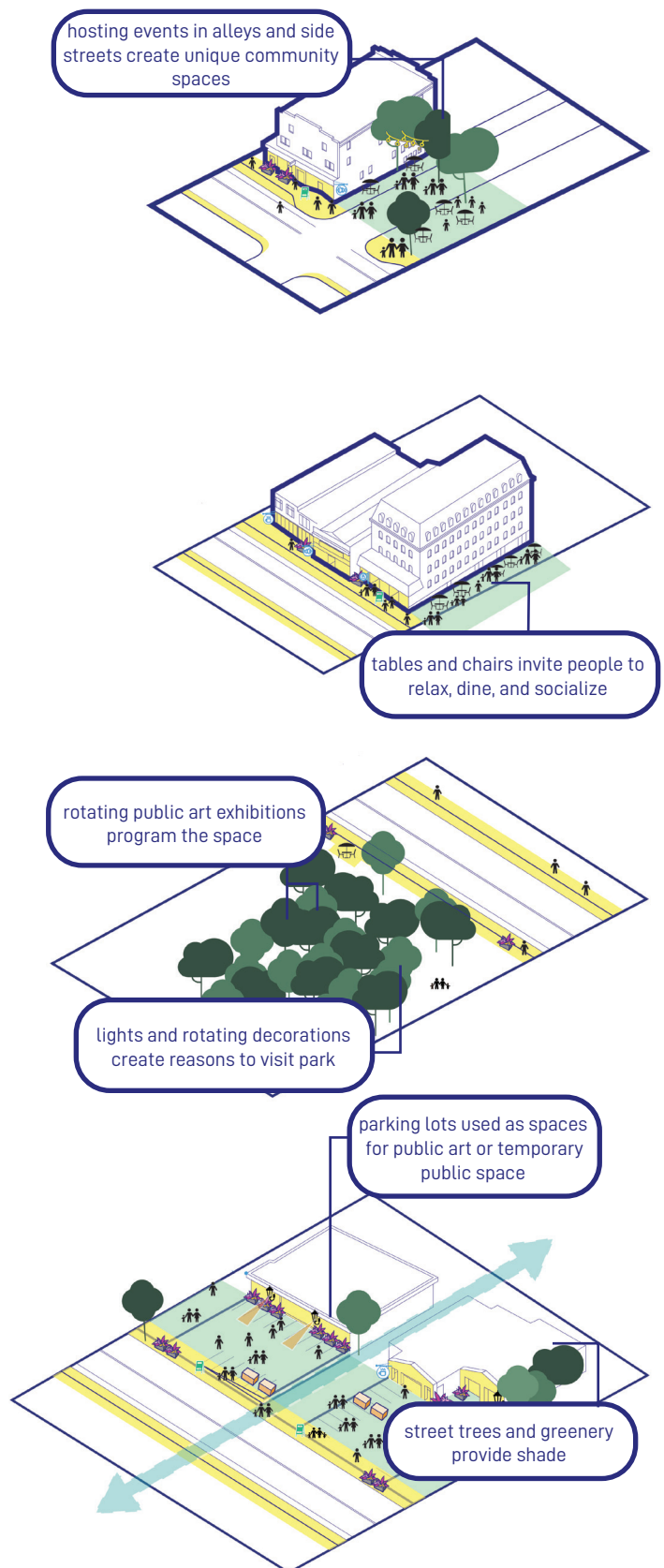
*Enforcing existing design guidelines is a strong step towards reinvigorating Downtown. However, other interventions can be taken at increasing scales.*

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**

## Medium: Building Interventions







## Large: Integrated Interventions



# Review and Revise Zoning Code With Home Based Businesses in Mind

---

Category		Private Realm
Location		Study Area
Origin		Site visit, investigations into zoning code
Budget		Low Budget (<\$50,000)  <b>Funding:</b> <a href="#">Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant</a> (for zoning regulations studies + design standards), town funds/grants to business owners, low-cost or no-interest loans from local banks
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk
Key Performance Indicators		# of new home based business signs, # of business license filed at residential locations, # of businesses located within the Village Residential (VR) zoning area
Partners & Resources		<b>Partners:</b> Planning Department, Board of Selectmen, Town Clerk, sole proprietors  <b>Resources:</b> local crafts people/woodworkers to create signage



## Diagnostic

Spencer's zoning code allows for home based businesses in all zoning districts without a special permit. This is a positive step towards fostering entrepreneurship and should be continued. Town staff and administrators noted a high number of home based businesses town wide. However, during April and May 2021 site visits it was difficult to locate home based businesses.

- Only 5 home based businesses were identifiable by external signage.
- Hours, service, and operational status were often unclear.
- The study area abuts a residential zone, encouraging high visibility and easy access to home based businesses.
- COVID-19 and the Delta variant will continue to make home-based businesses more appealing to entrepreneurs.

## Action Item

- Standardize signage for home based businesses.
- Reexamine zoning code, specifically within the Village Residential (VR) zone
- Extend Home Based Business Zoning Overlay District to Downtown.
- Change zoning to encourage small businesses creation.
- Craft long term strategies to provide services and resources sole proprietors desire.



*High variability in home business signage can make it difficult to identify some businesses*

**Source: Google Earth**

## Process

### Standardize signage for home based businesses.

- *Maintain:* Continue current zoning practices that restrict size and height of exterior displays in residential areas.
- *Create:* Design Guidelines for at home business signs.
  - Use Town Center Mixed-Use District Design Guidelines (Section 2.1)<sup>1</sup> as a guide.
  - Construct visual pamphlets.
  - Provide 4-5 "standard" home based business sign options to streamline and simplify process for business owners.

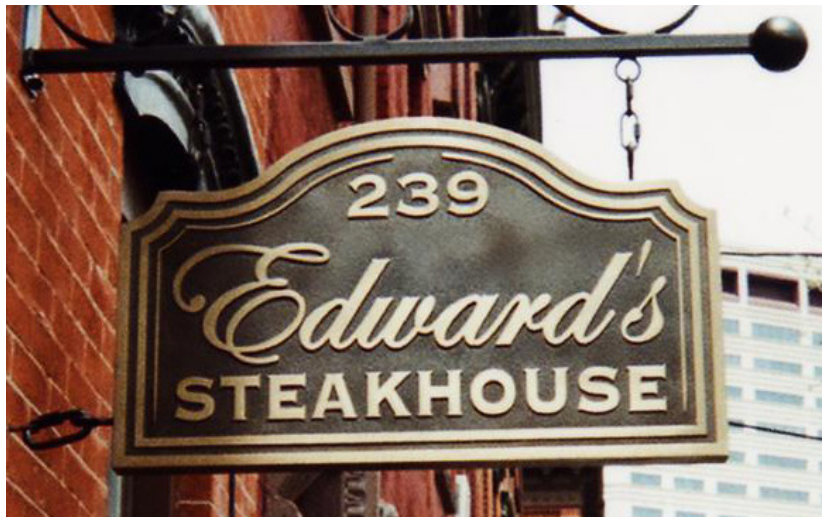
### Reexamine zoning code, specifically within the Village Residential (VR) zone.

- *Reimagine:* Current zoning codes' restrictions on parking, exterior displays, and employees assume single family detached residences. Construct new, or different, standards within the VR Zone.
- *Extend:* Bring the Home Business Overlay into Downtown.
- *Expand:* Allow for flex space, shared offices, mobile retail, ghost/communal kitchens and other contemporary uses.

### Zoning to encourage small businesses creation. Encourage creation of places sole proprietors desire.

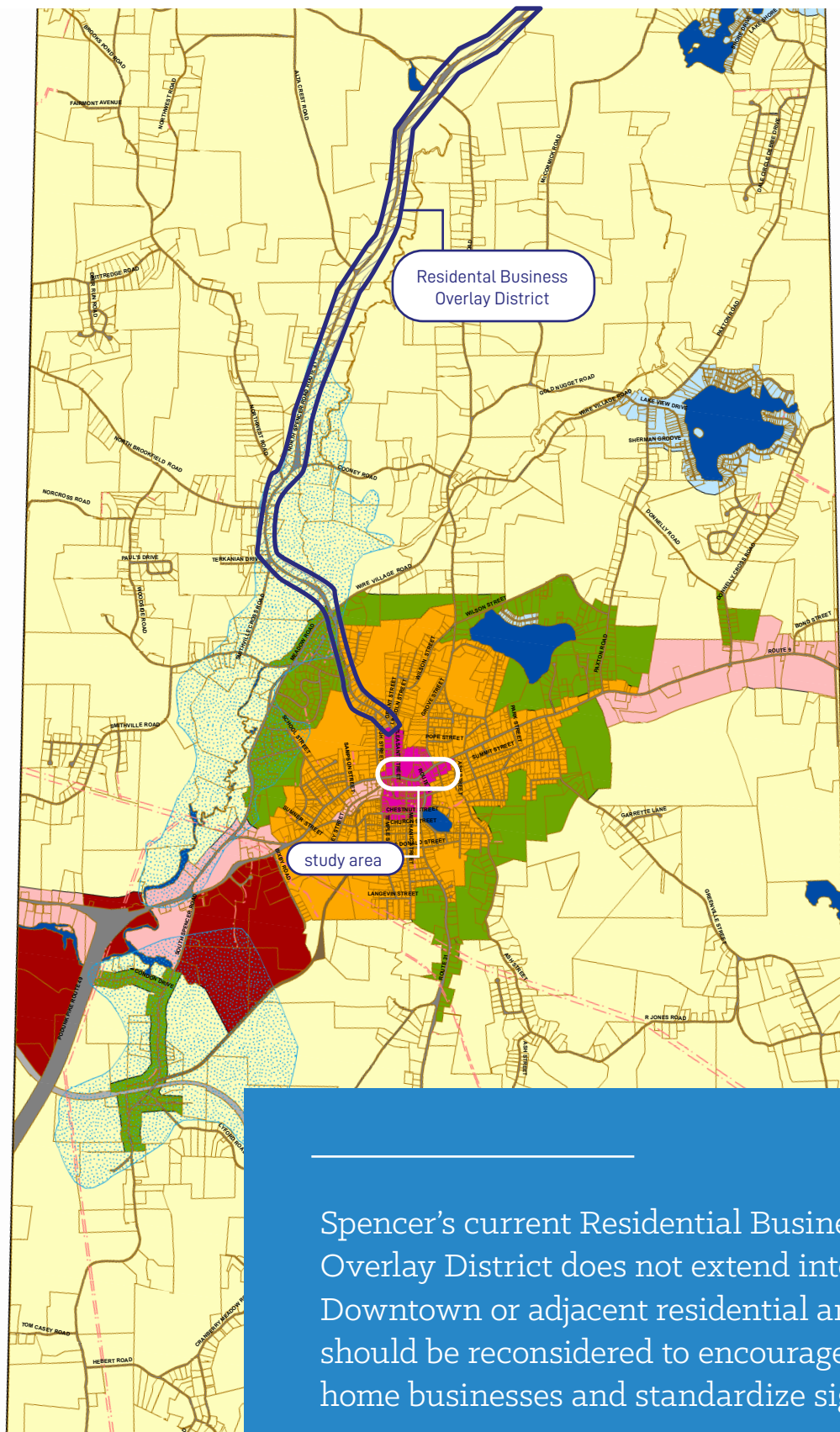
- *Develop:* Create more live-work space.
  - Build studio and 1 room (with office) affordable housing in VR zone. Promote mixed-use housing over single family.
- *Encourage:* Build resources home based businesses want.
  - Coffee shops and public space with seating, tables, and wi-fi provide places for meetings outside the home. Shared work spaces provide connection and networking.
  - Look in the direction of Chestnut Street to provide amenities close to homes.

<sup>1</sup> *Town of Spencer, MA "Town Center Mixed Use District Design Guidelines," prepared by Harriman, Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development, MA Downtown Initiative Program, 2019.*



Standardizing home based signs will allow for easier identification of businesses while still allowing for originality  
**Source: Harriman, District Design Guidelines, Agency Landscape + Planning**





Spencer's current Residential Business Overlay District does not extend into Downtown or adjacent residential area. This should be reconsidered to encourage diverse home businesses and standardize signage.

Spencer's current zoning map  
Source: City of Spencer

YARD + CO worked with Florence, KY to develop a Main Street Activation Guide. The guide is highly illustrative, and provided a “decision-making framework” for zoning processes.

## Chapter 2. Main Street Zoning Standard

### 2.4.3 Lot Elements

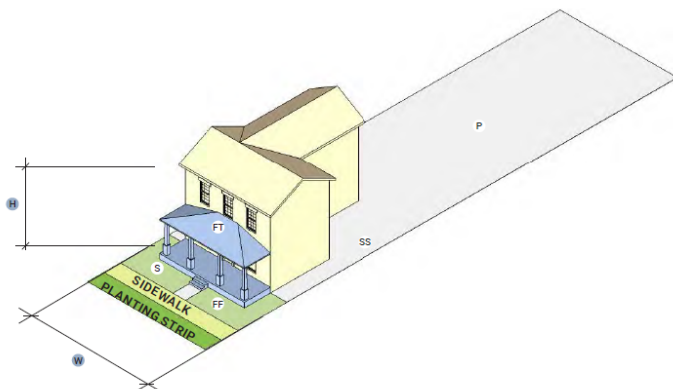


FIGURE 2.3 Lot elements

Location and Lot Standards	
Location Restrictions	Areas where the Building Type is not permitted within the District
<b>FF</b> Frontage Area	Depth in feet from front lot line where the majority of the building's front facade must be located
<b>SF</b> Side Street Frontage Area	For corner lots, the depth in feet from the side street lot line where the majority of the building's side street facade must be located
<b>S</b> Side Building Setback	The minimum distance that any part of the building's facade must be from a lot's side lot line
Building Standards	
<b>B</b> Building Width	The maximum width in feet that the primary mass of any newly constructed building may be within a Frontage Zone without a shift or break in facade of three feet or greater
<b>H</b> Building Height	The maximum number of stories that a building may be at the front of its lot. The minimum floor-to-ceiling height for non-residential ground floors is 12 feet. Residential ground floors shall be no less than 10 feet. All other floors shall be no less than 9 feet.
<b>F</b> Permitted Frontage Types	The type(s) of frontages permitted for use with a Building Type
Site Development Standards	
<b>P</b> Permitted Parking Locations	The permitted location(s) for parking on the lot
<b>S</b> Restricted Signage Types	Signage Types not permitted in conjunction with the Building Type

Main Street Activation Guide and Zoning Standards  
Florence, Kentucky

2 -  
10 JULY 20

### Signage: Gallery of Examples



2 - 22  
10 JULY 2020

Main Street Activation Guide and Zoning Standards  
Florence, Kentucky

The Main Street Activation Guide worked to provide “early market activation initiatives” while slower moving zoning changes were moved through local government. This way, it could provide both private and public strategies simultaneously.

Source: YARD + CO

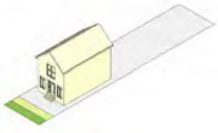



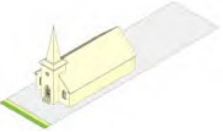
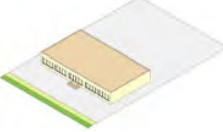
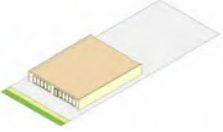

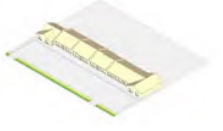
BUILDING TYPE		LOCATION RESTRICTIONS	FRONTAGE AREA <i>Depth in Feet</i>	SIDE STREET FRONTAGE AREA <i>Depth in Feet</i>
Small Lot House			3 to 5	2 to 10
House		Existing Buildings only when on Main Street	5 to 20	5 to 15
Large House			10 to 30	5 to 20
Mercantile		Within 150 feet of Main Street only	0 to 15	0 to 20
Civic			10 to 50	5 to 50
Highway Fronting		Dixie Highway only	10 to 50	10 to 20
Neighborhood Office			5 to 25	0 to 25
Carriage House		On sites where with other permitted Building Type or existing structure(s) only; max 1 per site	Min 20 behind Frontage Zone of principal building	3 to 20
Commercial/Retail		Existing buildings only	n/a	n/a

TABLE 2.1 Permitted Building Types





# Zoning for a Resilient Downtown



Provided by SME Consultant      Levine Planning Strategies, LLC

Location      Burlington, VT

Origin	City of Burlington (VT) Office of City Planning
Budget	 High Budget – \$450,000 (HUD Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant)
Timeframe	 Medium Timeframe – 6 years (3 years' planning & 3 years to finalize code)
Risk	 Medium Risk – increased timeframe and cost helped reduce risk
Key Performance Indicators	Growth and survival of existing businesses; number of business expansions
Partners & Resources	Federal agencies; Community & Economic Development Office; Mayor's Office

## Diagnostic

Downtown businesses often need to adapt and change quickly. However, many local zoning codes make it difficult to quickly adjust business models. In many cities, use tables are many pages long, with many common uses requiring a discretionary review. Adding a new use or adding space to a business, even on a trial basis, can be difficult to do. In addition, changes may trigger increased parking requirements that cannot easily be met in a downtown setting. For these reasons, many downtown businesses are reluctant to change their model and potentially find a successful new strategy.

This problem predates COVID-19. However, in the wake of the pandemic, businesses had to adapt quickly, experiment, and be prepared to provide new uses to attract customers. In the short-term, many communities were flexible. Going forward, however, it's likely that many communities will return to reviewing changes in use or space. At the same time, research suggests that businesses need flexibility to succeed post-COVID-19.

Some communities have responded to this issue by reducing the number of uses in their zoning. Others have simply made it easier to add a new use on site or expand existing uses. Still others have looked to remove use limitations altogether in certain zones, focusing on goals outlined in local plans to guide decisions.

## Action Items

An important step to help businesses post-COVID is to think about zoning requirements as a small business might. What if a record store wanted to add a small bookstore in the back of their space? Would that be allowed? Would they have to somehow provide additional parking? Would it require a public process with the risk and cost of being denied? If so, communities should think about whether that is their goal. In some cases, it may make sense to keep zoning restrictions on certain uses. For example, drive thru restaurants often have negative externalities, especially in a downtown location. On the other hand, a walk-up window for pedestrians is likely to have few of those negative effects, and can help drive local businesses as visitors continue to be wary of going indoors. Once you have a sense of how your zoning affects business decisions, it would be advisable to check in with some local businesses to get their thoughts as well.

With that data in hand, communities can use their plans to guide how to change their zoning. A few small steps may make a big difference. These could include:





- Reducing or removing regulations on outdoor dining in zoning. Licensing and other municipal processes can usually suffice;
- Revising parking requirements for new uses downtown. Re-tenanting an existing space, or changing from one use to another, should not generally trigger any new parking requirements; and
- Streamlining the review process for changes in use. Either reduce the number of use groups in zoning so small changes don't trigger zoning review or allow more uses by right. If some public review is appropriate, rely on staff-level administrative review as much as possible.

## Process

Burlington's planning process began in earnest in 2010 when the city received a Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. That grant made it possible to develop a plan for the downtown and waterfront, called "PlanBTV." The vision in that plan was then codified in a form-based code beginning in 2013. The new zoning reduced the number of uses downtown by 50%. More importantly, it made it easier for a business to modify their use category by significantly reducing the timeframe and risk to the business. Changes such as these are ongoing. Most recently, city planners have worked to update the definitions and uses for food and beverage uses to recognize the rise of new dining and drinking options.

Not every community needs to have as extensive a process as Burlington. Simply auditing the use table, streamlining the list of uses, and making it easier to change from one use to another, would be helpful for downtown businesses post-pandemic. That process could be done at a much lower cost and much more quickly.

# Invest in Main Street: Work With Property Owners to Invest in Buildings and Sites

Category		Private Realm
Location		Study Area
Origin		Town planner, site visit, research and economic analysis
Budget		Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000)  <b>Funding:</b> <a href="#">Rural Community Development Initiative Grant</a> , <a href="#">Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant</a> , <a href="#">BIZ-M-POWER</a> , <a href="#">MA Historical Commissions Survey and Planning Grant Program (possible)</a> , <a href="#">Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (possible)</a> , Tax incentives/abatements structured for redevelopment/development opportunities, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, <a href="#">Veterans Heritage Grants</a>
Timeframe		Medium Term (5 - 10 years) <i>*some elements can begin immediately</i>
Risk		High Risk - private landlords and building owners will need to be invested. There must be political will
Key Performance Indicators		# of facade improvements, # of property owners applying for private realm grants, accountability to design guidelines
Partners & Resources		<b>Partners:</b> Spencer Planning Department, local landlords, business owners, property owners and managers, Board of Selectmen, local business non-profits (S.C.O.R.E., Entrepreneurship for All), Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Committee, local banks  <b>Resources:</b> local business non-profits provide data reflecting the importance of private realm improvements and training on how to implement changes, governmental support necessary to hold property owners accountable and acquire some funding



## Diagnostic

Many of Spencer's Downtown buildings could use some help. The largest structures, once industrial factories and mills suffer the most. These spaces do a disservice to Downtown, contributing to a downtrodden feeling, despite efforts to maintain and rehabilitate other private historical buildings. Since COVID-19, money for renovations have become tighter for both the town and private business owners.

- Conversations with businesses owners revealed exterior improvements were not top of mind. Making enough to survive was, understandably, the priority.
- Town staff remarked a high number of buildings are owned by out of town property owners (27% of property owners live outside of Spencer). Many seem disinterested in facade investments.
- A few particulars buildings in prime locations need facade improvements.
- Recent Complete Streets project displays a commitment to improving the public realm and street scape.

## Action Item

- Conduct a survey of properties in study area to identify lowest quality structures and facades.
- Connect with low scoring property owners.
- Maintain a personal connection with property owners. Provide additional training and assistance where needed.
- Ensure long term success by creating policies, incentives, and taxes that encourage reinvestment.

## Process

### Conduct a survey of properties in study area to identify lowest quality structures and facades.

- *Create Rubric:* Devise metrics and standards for facade grading. "A-D," "Low-Medium-High," or "1-5" are standard rubrics. Base grade on quality of facade, roof, signage and lighting.
- *Train Staff:* Hold training on metric grading to reduce survey subjectivity.
- *Survey Properties:* Note condition of all properties in study area (1 day - 1 week depending on staff capacity).
  - **Skip this step if the Property Assessment and Re-Use Planning Project (2015) feels sufficient and up to date.**

### Connect with low scoring property owners. Begin from a place of care, empathy, and place keeping. Do not accuse or assume neglect.

- *Gather Resources:* Create a one-pager with grant, loan, and other financial resources for facade improvements. Include contact information for local builders, construction companies, painters, and artists as well as business non-profit trainings and resources.
- *Co-Create:* Meet with property owners one-on-one, noting results of the building condition survey. Be sensitive to property owner's limited mental and financial capacity in light of COVID-19. Co-create a vision for Spencer's future with property owners to increase buy in.
  - Provide resources and support to rectify ill-kept buildings.
- *Encourage "Quick Wins:"* Assist to enact small changes, like updated signs, that build momentum.
- *Seek Funding:* Apply for town level grants, loans, and funds to support private investments.
  - Leverage historic/landmark building funding.

## Process Cnt'd

**Maintain a personal connection with property owners. Provide additional training and assistance where needed.**

- *Follow Up:* Continue to engage property owners, checking in on status of upgrades.
  - Assign a person contact in Economic Development Committee or similar organization if needed.
- *Organize Programming:* Work with local Chamber of Commerce, business and economic development non-profits and resources to conduct training on funding sources.
  - Highly publicize these events, reaching out to property owners directly.

**Ensure long term success by creating policy, incentives, and taxes that encourage reinvestment.**

- *Scrutinize Zoning Code:* Assess if current zoning code and policies allow for derelict buildings. Adjust as necessary.
  - Provide legal teeth to the 2019 Design Guidelines
- *Investigate Redevelopment Strategies:* Look into Tax Incremental Financing (TIFs), grants, and Business Improvement District (BIDs) structures to see if one is applicable to the study area.
- *Use Policy:* Enact ordinances and vacancies tax policies to ensure derelict properties are addressed. Such as:
  - A progressive tax structure for derelict/vacant properties.
  - Tax abatements and incentives for development/redevelopment.
  - Provide fair timeline for private businesses owners to conform signs, facades, and other elements.

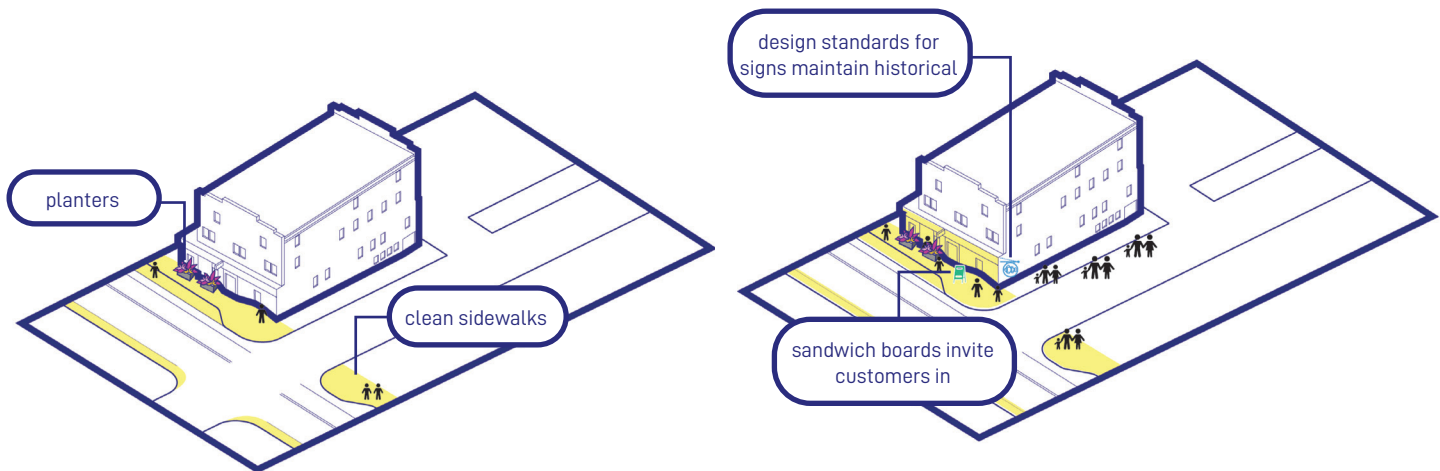


90 buildings in the study area are on the Massachusetts' National Register of Historic Places!

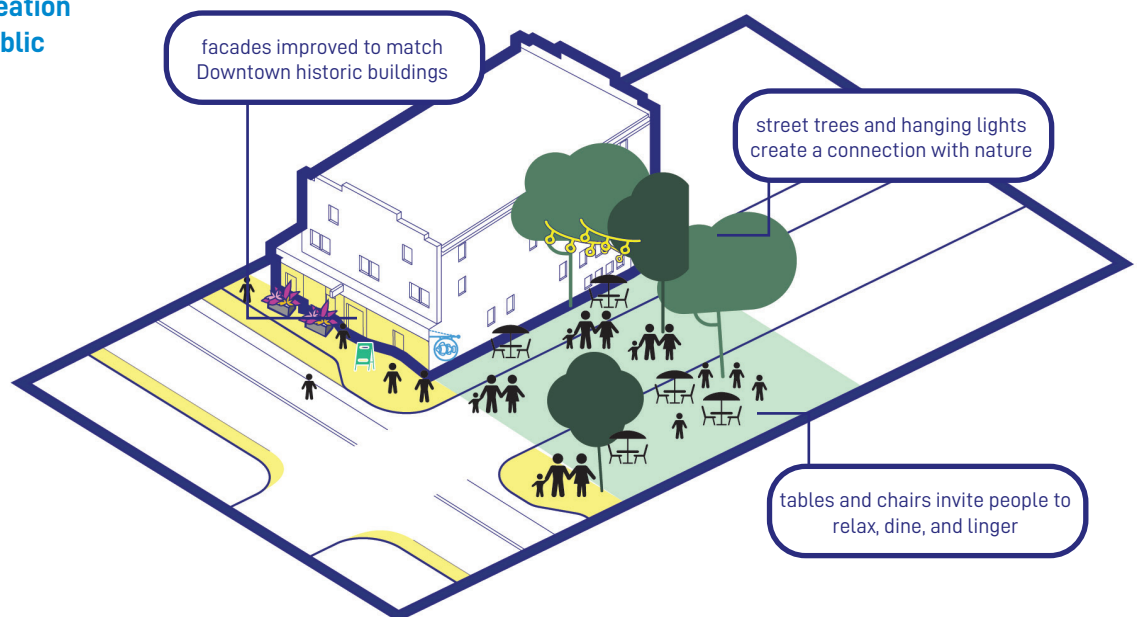
*Spencer's National Bank Block (1875), Town Hall(1926), and the Sugden Block (1888) are examples of architecturally significant buildings*

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning, Google Streetview**

Investments can begin at a smaller approachable scale.



In time, facade improvements can be implemented and coordinated with the creation of patios, plazas, and public space.



*Small changes, like landscaping and new signs, can greatly enhance a feeling of investment in Downtown. Larger changes, like facade improvements and public space creation will display a continued commitment to enhancing Downtown.*

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**

# Conduct Business Assessments: An Outside-In Approach



Private Realm

New England

GOMAN + YORK

<b>Origin</b>		GOMAN + YORK
<b>Budget</b>		Low Budget (< \$50,000)- consultant's time
<b>Timeframe</b>		Short Term (<5 years) (1 day site visit, consultation, and evaluation)
<b>Risk</b>		Low Risk
<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>		No. of completed business storefront improvements; Self-reported tenant traffic & sales growth
<b>Partners &amp; Resources</b>		City/Town Economic Development, Chamber, landlords, tenants



## Diagnostic

Like other recessionary periods, Post COVID-19 is a time to reassess the way businesses are presenting themselves to consumers. A business assessment takes an impartial look at businesses and offers a critique that will hopefully offer low-cost solutions for improvement.

Think of storefronts, signs and window displays as your introduction to potential consumers and clients. As such, the storefront comprises a major portion of the business assessment process. The process can be done for an individual storefront or an entire business district. In the next case study presented we will go into more depth on exterior improvement programs that were developed for Downtown Manchester, CT. Improvement programs – such as grant funding & community matching funds, are sources that can be utilized to help offset costs to businesses.

## Action Item

A Business Assessment can help to transform a struggling business or a long-term successful business that needs a refresh. A critical look at the business from the outside in is important not only from the customer's perspective, but for the business to grow and be a vibrant contributor to the community.

The Outside Assessment is a quick response to aid tenants in the process of reviewing their business from the consumer's perspective. This process is usually done as a whole business assessment. However, in this best practice sheet we will speak to assessing the physical components of a business – its storefronts, display windows and signs.

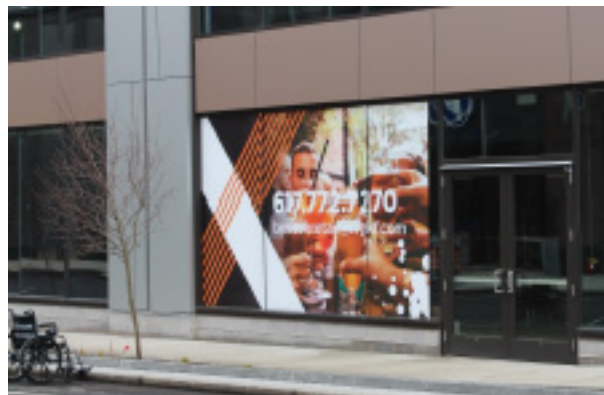
The site assessment begins with the exterior of a business. An honest assessment of a business will help the business owner to recover from the effects COVID-19 has had on their business. Consumers are venturing out more with the positivity rates declining and vaccinations increasing.

## Economic Development Advisory Bloomfield, CT

As Economic Development Advisors to the Town of Bloomfield, our team at GOMAN + YORK has worked for several years not only with their large businesses, but the Town's small businesses. We offer business assessments and consultations that encompass the whole business – that includes assessing the interior, exterior, marketing, business planning, funding sources and more.

It is important to note that while these are primarily done to help existing businesses, we also assist new and potential small businesses that are looking to enter the market. Business assessments are funded through a variety of sources. The GOMAN + YORK team has worked with individual tenants at their request, at the request of a town as an ongoing Economic Development consultant and throughout our careers in the commercial real estate industry.

Our business consultants have provided business assessments for a variety of public and private clients including, the Town of Bloomfield, CT; the CTrail Property Management and Utilities Unit, Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) shopping center and local retail tenants.



*Right image portrays an active and fun vacant storefront. Left image is closed off, restricting imagination for what the space could be*  
**Source: GOMAN + YORK**



*Bad*



*Good*



*Good*



*Good*



*Bad*

## Process

**Site Visit:** 1– 2 hours

**Report/Evaluation:** 2 hours

**Tenant Consultation:** 1– 2 hours

**Implementation:** short-term and ongoing

### The Report

Be direct as to what needs to be done:

- "Take down hand written signs"
  - Producing printed easy to read signs
- "Clean your windows"
  - Allows customers to see what you have to offer, entices one to enter, portrays cleanliness
- "Window displays should feature what you have to offer"
  - Customers will want to see more!

### The Consultation

- Be direct
- Be sympathetic
- Be honest
- Always offer suggestions
- Do an outside-in walk through
- Be open to questions
- Share your findings with key stakeholders

## Business Assessments:

**Consider the storefront from a customer's perspective**

### See the storefront from a customer's perspective:

- Are the windows clean?
- Are there handwritten signs?
- Are there exterior security grates?
- What are the facade conditions –peeling paint, damaged awnings?
- Are you highlighting who you are and what you have to offer
- Are you communicating a positive or negative image to customers?
- Is your storefront signage readable as patrons are walking down the sidewalks or driving by?

## Implementation

### Funding and Zoning

- Signage improvement programs – grant funding, community matching funds, are sources that can be utilized to help offset costs to businesses.
- Work with the town to streamline a zoning process to change sign criteria, including storefront signs, blade signs and awnings. Adjust code language and regulations pertaining to storefront improvements to support improvements.









*Examples of unique, historic, and engaging signs allowed within code*  
**Source: GOMAN + YORK**

*Visual clutter and outdated facades seen on businesses properties*  
**Source: GOMAN + YORK**

# Create Pop Up Events at Vacant Locations

Category		Revenue/Sales
Location		Study Area
Origin		Site visit, case studies
Budget		<p>Medium Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000)  <i>*Possible to implement at a low cost (&lt;\$50,000). Dependent upon staffing needs and financial commitment provided by town</i></p> <p><b>Funding:</b> Crowd funding course like Patronicity, Grassroot Fund <a href="#">Seed and Grow</a> grants (possible), <a href="#">Regional Pilot Grant Program</a>, <a href="#">Mass Cultural Council's Festival Program</a></p>
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Low Risk – short term activations avoid zoning changes, temporary tenants offer short term payment for landlords
Key Performance Indicators		Social media tags, total no. of district banners installed
Partners & Resources		<p><b>Partners:</b> Central Mass Regional Planning Council, property owners, local non-profits/ arts organizations (Massasoit Art Guild), <a href="#">UMass Amherst Small Business Development Network</a>, local real estate agents/brokers, small businesses/ creatives/makers, local cable channel, Mass Cultural Council, Spencer Cultural Council, Spencer Fair vendors</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Patronicity, Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation, Spencer Fair organizers and vendors</p>



Timberyard Brewing Company and vendors from the Spencer Fair are potential Pop-Up vendors with a pre-existing strong community presence  
Source: OpenTable, Telegram & Gazette

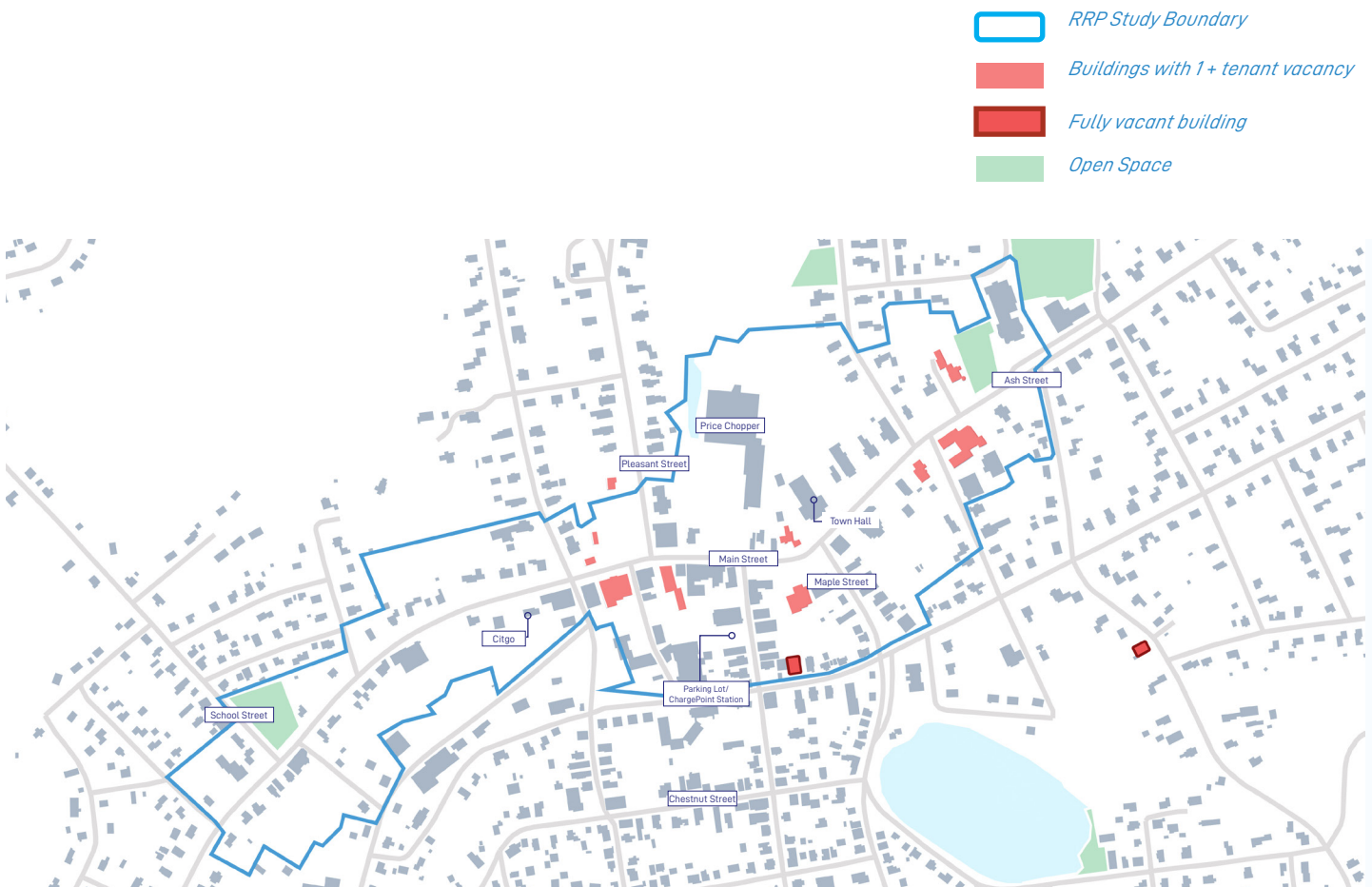


## Diagnostic

As of Spring 2021, Spencer's Downtown had a high vacancy rate and a potential to host safe outdoor gatherings. Spencer can connect local makers and creatives to these empty spaces to provide income for both property owners and small businesses/sole proprietors.

- The study area had 10 ground floor vacancies. Severe were single tenant vacancies within a larger storefront, three were fully vacant locations.
- As of August 2021, there were nine additional registered vacant buildings within the town. \*Counts do not include the vacant upper floors of milling and factory spaces, which frequent the study area.
- Downtown streets do not provide places to sit down and relax. Visitors park to patron a specific store.

- 21 unique Spencer based vendors are listed on Etsy, displaying a creative/maker community exists.
- Past success of Spencer Fair and Spencer Street Party reveal desire for community sponsored events.
- Town is within a regional Antiquing hub (Sturbridge, Brimfield Flea Market).
- Median age of 45 may skew customers towards in person shopping.



Full and partial vacancies within /near the Study Area  
**Source: GIS layers, Site visit, Town records**

## Action Item

- Bring together many voices to define scale of event.
- Coordinate with property owners and vendors.
- Coordinate and launch event.
- Build on momentum of event to increase small business profitability.

## Process

### Bring together many voices to define scale of event.

- *Unite:* Create a task force consisting of representatives from local government, economic development and arts organizations, business owners, real estate agents and brokers. Be as diverse as possible.
- *Define:* Set duration of pilot. 1 weekend to 1 month.
- *Understand Financials:* Decide if grants and/or public funds will offset the price of renting space. Articulate level of financial responsibility, if any, vendors will incur.
- *Fundraise:* Apply for grants as needed.

### Coordinate with property owners and vendors.

- *Contact:* Communicate with property owners of vacant storefronts. Gauge interest in participating.
- *Identify:* Reach out directly to possible vendors. Consider home based creators and makers, artists, musicians, farmers, antique brokers, and even entertainment venues.
  - Approach businesses located outside of study area with strong following. Pitch a temporary secondary second location.
  - Look to nearby towns if necessary.

### Coordinate and launch event.

- *Pair:* Match vendors to vacant spaces.
- *Standardize:* Create operating guidelines and Memorandum of Understanding between vendors and property owners. Define what is allowed in the space.
- *Include:* Invite and encourage businesses within the study area to participate.
  - Restaurants can offer special "Grab N Go" options, retailers can set up merchandise outside.
- *Market:* Use social media, print, radio, and the local cable news station to promote event.
- *Unite:* Launch Pop-Up Kick Off Event in tandem with the Spencer Street Party, Spencer Fair, or other town-wide event.
- *Go Big:* If capacity and funding allows, link Kick Off with public art (murals, light installations, painted crosswalks, live music, etc.).

### Build on momentum of event to increase small business profitability.

- *Host:* Gather participating vendors at conclusion of pilot.
  - Share successes and lessons learned.
- *Network:* Connect local business and economic development organizations/small business non-profits and resources.





## Pop-Ups in the Retail Mix

---



Provided by SME Consultant

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Origin	ProAdams, Downtown Adams, Town of Adams, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
Budget	 <p>The project has a proposed budget of \$125,000. The budget will be used to cover rent for seven vendors who establish pop-ups in storefronts under 1K s.f. for three months (est. @ \$3.50* per s.f. = \$65,625) and short-term loans to business owners to address code violations or building repairs (\$5K each @ \$35,000). The remaining budget will be directed to press and public relations, including a website designer, website, and signage. * <i>The proposed rent is 50% of market rate.</i></p>
Timeframe	 <p>The project is in the planning phase and has not yet been implemented. Strategic Planning: 6 months; Pop-Up Vendor Solicitation: 3 months; Pop-Up Build-Out: 3 months; Implementation: 3 months</p>
Risk	 <p>Small business owners have been hurt financially by the pandemic and may be wary of short-term ventures that cannot guarantee success. Building owners may be less than inclined to engage short-term tenancy if it reduces incentive for a long-term tenant to commit. Building owners may not wish to start building repairs that expose them to legal or regulatory oversight.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Increase in foot traffic; Increase in sales and revenue at neighboring food and retail businesses; Long-term commercial tenancy at market rate in formerly vacant properties; Perceived improvement in appearance of the downtown streetscape.
Partners & Resources	ProAdams, Downtown Adams, Town of Adams, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, 1Berkshire
Diagnostic	<p>Adams faced challenges with downtown occupancy prior to COVID-19. The pandemic only accelerated economic hardships, leading approximately 15 retail spaces to become vacant out of 50 with a storefront presence. The town is highly dependent on the recreation and hospitality sectors, both of which receded in the past year, creating a snowball-effect decline in economic activity more broadly. Because of its many older residents, the town has difficulty attracting businesses that appeal to younger audiences. Many of those leading local economic development efforts do so as volunteers, which limits their ability to provide a full range of services and technical assistance to incoming businesses.</p> <p>Among the town's attractions are the Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum, a historic home listed on the Register of Historic Places, and the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, whose north end starts in Adams. The town is located near many natural resources, including Greylock Glen, which recently received state funding to develop a world-class outdoor recreation and environmental center. For outdoor enthusiasts, the town is famous for hosting in the 1930s the Thunderbolt Ski Run, which attracted top skiers from the United States and Europe during its heyday. Today the tradition continues with an annual winter celebration called ThunderFest. Adams is within easy driving and public transit distance to an internationally-recognized museum (Mass MoCA) and is centrally located along the Berkshire corridor stretching from Bennington, Vermont to Sheffield, Massachusetts.</p>

## Action Items

The project will attract small businesses to Adams that address local's day-to-day needs and provide amenities for visitors who are there to explore the region. To accomplish this, the project will build on local boosterism and capture residents' pride while identifying new and under-represented voices the town may not have previously engaged.



Years of disinvestment have led many to give up hope on Adams' potential to provide good local jobs. By bringing positive attention to Adams, the project hopes to re-inspire residents challenged by poverty.

Pop-up stores, while unfamiliar, can build a following, so long as residents take an active role in choosing those selected and see their success as providing benefits to neighbors.

## Process

- Organize a small group of stakeholders representing local government, economic development, small business, real estate, tourism, marketing, and design/web/social media sectors to spearhead the project. Ensure representation from diverse and often under-represented communities such as low-income, minority, women, and LGBTQ residents and business owners as part of the steering committee.
- Initiate a fundraising campaign to cover three months of rent for seven pop-up vendors. Build relationships with building owners to **negotiate reduced rent in vacant stores for a specified period (ideally 90 days) with graduated rent for the first year made available to pop-ups that agree to stay into Year 2.**
- Engage internal marketing/design/web/social media experts or engage a pro bono consultant to create a website and social media campaign to promote the project. Include demographic, economic, infrastructure, and tourism data about Adams (i.e., availability of broadband, utility rates, etc.) in marketing materials to help vendors understand community dynamics and ensure a good fit between their products or services and local resident and visitor interests.
- Select pop-up applicants through an open competition that attracts media attention. Choose winners based on pre-determined criteria (e.g., financial need, community-identified service gaps, qualifications) and with lead stakeholder input. Select at least two businesses through a public "audience favorite" process to build community excitement. Select pop-ups that offer similar or complementary services in a single location to create a market "district" feel.
- Include one-on-one S.C.O.R.E. or business mentoring to winners and provide ongoing marketing support during the project to support pop-up owners' interest in making a long-term commitment to downtown Adams.
- Involve community members early in the process to increase buy-in around the project. As part of that, appoint a community ambassador to each location that can acquaint incoming business owners with neighbors, resources, and town amenities.
- Create a social media campaign once pop-ups are in place and encourage businesses to offer incentives to stimulate repeat and returning patronage. Examples include coupons, sale days, promotions, and experiential offerings.
- Gather regular feedback from consumers and vendors about the pop-ups' presence and impact on local culture, so that changes can be made in real time to respond to consumer demands and vendor needs. Use surveys that include rewards for respondents, and which can be activated at pop-up shops, to increase response rate.
- Incentivize successful pop-ups to permanently relocate by adding a pitch competition that would bring additional funding to projects after the pilot period ends.

# Create A Branding Campaign with Cohesive Downtown Identity

Category		Revenue & Sales
Location		Spencer Town Center area, Main Street; Town of Spencer
Origin		Spencer community and RRP community facilitator
Budget		Low (<\$50,000)  <b>Budget:</b> MassDevelopment Initiative Assistance Grants, <a href="#">Planning Assistance Grants</a> , (possible)
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years)
Risk		Medium Risk – Branding can be something that people rally around, but also surface differences of opinion around identity and aesthetics
Key Performance Indicators		Increased number of visitors at key businesses or destinations; increased consumer spending Downtown; increased visits to specific websites; increased hotel nights or other tourism measures
Partners & Resources		<b>Partners:</b> Town Center property and business owners, tenants, Town Administration, marketing/branding/graphic design team or support



A mix of signage types and stores Downtown  
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



One of several moments celebrating history in Downtown Spencer  
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



## Diagnostic

Before COVID-19, Spencer was taking strides to invest in the sense of place and physical environment of its Downtown area, through Design Guidelines and other plans. Beyond changes to the physical environment, Downtown's businesses can be helped by the implementation of a consistent brand identity within the study area. Creating a "brand identity" includes images, signs, cohesive color choices, visual guidelines, and perhaps a Downtown slogan or tagline. This branding would reflect that Downtown is "a place to be," and attract people to visit, shop at, and frequent for services.

As Main Street is a long and linear avenue, it can be difficult to get a sense of where the Downtown area begins and ends. This lack of a unified brand extends to a lack of consistent and clear business signage, and minimal sense of arrival. COVID-19 has brought challenges to the success of the Downtown that illuminate the need for better information, attractions, gateways, and cohesion.

Within and after the pandemic, a stronger brand would unify Downtown businesses and organizations and set the stage for a strong marketing effort. This would allow more people to the area as a district, not just as a series of individual places. It can be a first step toward future capital projects like public signage, wayfinding and beautification, collaboration with businesses around private signage standards, and promotion of Spencer within the greater region.

The branding process will "get everyone on the same page." Developing a clear and unified brand will give Spencer's Downtown the tools and basic information needed to tell a powerful, exciting story about the area. It will help brokers, advertisers, marketers, tourism professionals and others create campaigns and communication material needed to promote the Downtown, Spencer, and the region.

## Action Item

- Create brand guidelines and a marketing strategy for Town Center as a destination.
- Create a signage and wayfinding strategy with banners and cohesive public signage.
- Deploy the brand specifically along Main Street within the study area.

## Process

### Create a Downtown Brand

- *Strategize:* Determine who will lead the branding effort, if it will be conducted internally or via consultation, and the scope of work, including precise study areas.
- Assess overlap and areas of alignment with previous plans and studies to ensure their ideas are brought in. Depending on the level of committee and community engagement as well as the level of detailed design, a process may take 3-6 months.
- *Define:* Determine the geographic boundaries of the study area. Reach out to build partners and notify existing businesses, institutions, and property owners within the area. Establish communication and collaboration methods.
- *Acquire Funds:* Gather funds from grants, technical assistance, and/or partners to fund the process. Create an RFP and secure outside support and technical expertise.

## Process Cnt'd

- *Research:* Understand the current brand experience, strengths, and weaknesses, focused specifically on Main Street within the Downtown core.
  - This may include gaining an understanding of customer experience, visitor or user touch points, sales history, customer satisfaction or experience information. It would also include an understanding of key products and market edge, culture and history, and competitive or collaborative landscape in the region.
  - This step may include data analysis, surveys, listening sessions, interviews, and focus groups.
  - Out of the research phase, create a summary of findings and a draft vision and mission.
- *Envision:* Describe and outline Downtown's aspirational personality, brand story, audience focus, and target market.
  - Does it draw on history? Look forward to the future? Tie to the region or stand apart? This step may include drafting core values, a SWOT analysis, and outlining competitive advantages.
- *Develop:* Create a draft brand strategy or set of branding options. These drafts should include taglines and narrative for the area's unique position, key messages, tone or voice, and a possible name for the area. Based on feedback, refine the strategy and select a single preferred direction.
- *Refine:* Use the preferred direction to create brand collateral options.
  - Include elements like a visual logo, visual style and standards, colors, fonts, image or photo use style, and area names.
- *Deploy:* Establish a priority list of ways to implement the brand through print, digital, and physical strategies.

## Use The Preferred Brand as the Basis for a Signage, Wayfinding, and Beautification Strategy.

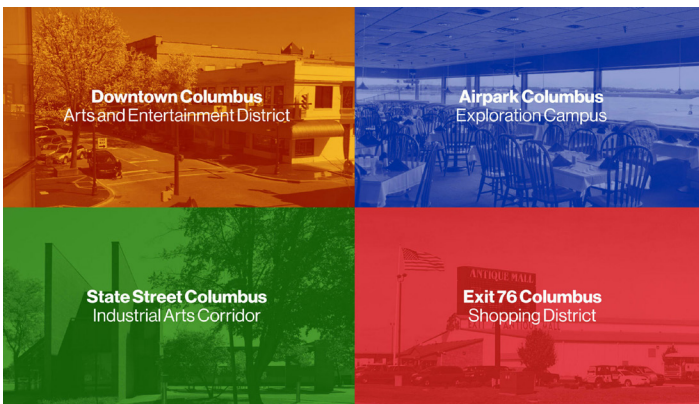
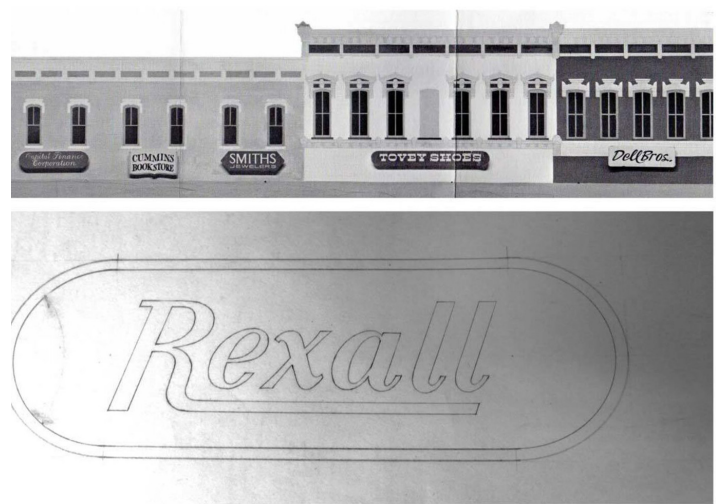
- *Acquire Funds:* Gather funds from grants, technical assistance, local resources and/or partners to fund the process. Create an RFP and secure outside support and technical expertise.
- *Craft a Strategy:* Undertake implementation studies to develop a phased roll out process.
  - Phases would include deploying the brand by updating items such as: public and private signage, banners, or playful elements like murals, iconic moments, and building wraps.
- *Begin Downtown:* Deploy the brand initially along the study area first. Focus on high impact, visible elements that such as local art, banners, and vertical elements at key intersections.
- *Consider:* Work with the Town to evaluate if the zoning code needs adjustments to enable desired private signage outcomes. Employ incentives, such as small grant programs or a public pledge, to nudge businesses to update signage.
- *Expand:* Coordinate with nearby jurisdictions for a local marketing and tourism effort that nests the new Spencer Downtown brand within a larger regional strategy.



*Build on landmark buildings and reimagine key intersections with visible branding, banners and wayfinding.*

**Source: Agency Landscape + Planning**

In 2017, Columbus IN's Visitor Center initiated branding for four neighborhoods to create visible connections and give form to the unique personalities of each place. Designs drew inspiration from historic signs, playful past designs, and unique elements of Columbus' community.



The brand was implemented across print material, websites, street signs, directional signage, banners along the key retail and restaurant street, buses and bus stops, and five iconic 26' sculptures.

Source: Thirst design studio



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"> <li>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%.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
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.*



*Social media posts.*

## Post Pandemic

- The #IAMherst campaign will continue post pandemic with timeless messaging that our community both visitors, residents 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](http://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*





# Invest in Main Street: Move Spencer's Industries Into the Future While Fostering Retail Growth

Category		Revenue/Sales
Location		Study Area
Origin		High # of derelict warehouses around Main Street, town planner
Budget		Medium/High Budget (\$50,000-\$200,000+) <b>Funding:</b> <a href="#">Regional Pilot Project Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">Small Business Technical Assistance Grant</a> , <a href="#">Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program</a> , <a href="#">Build Back Better Regional Challenge</a> (ARPA funds, possible), <a href="#">Rural Business Development Grants</a>
Timeframe		Medium Term (5-10 years) <i>*Some actions can begin immediately</i>
Risk		Medium Risk – required buy in and support from local government and property owners. Infrastructure improvements may be required to support development.
Key Performance Indicators		New businesses development through Main Street corridor, # of apprenticeship programs
Partners & Resources		<b>Partners:</b> Town of Spencer, Department of Public Works, State DOT, local property owners, local business owners, Quinsigimond Community College, <a href="#">UMass Amherst Small Business Development Network</a> <b>Resources:</b> local skill training, direct access to trades programs, history of manufacturing, construction, and automotive industries



Old mill structures dot Main Street. They provide both strong bones for light manufacturing and makers spaces, as well as room for services and housing to support potential workforce.  
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



## Diagnostic

COVID-19 has affected Main Street businesses due to losses of revenue and vehicular traffic. Spencer should use this moment to safeguard their economy against future downturns. By utilizing and rehabilitating existing manufacturing buildings, Spencer can bring consistent retail and restaurant foot traffic Downtown.

- Many of Spencer's most common industries (automotive repair, transportation/shipping/warehousing, manufacturing, retail trade) are undergoing industry wide change. Policies need to anticipate the future of these industries.
- Many of Spencer's Downtown businesses are restaurants. Locating light industrial uses within vacant and derelict factory spaces around Main Street will provide a consistent consumer base for restaurants and retail.
- Federal COVID relief programs provide increased funding for manufacturing, technology, and green economies.

## Action Item

- Identify a vision for the economic future of downtown.
- Utilize existing networks to build momentum.
- Conduct a deep dive market analysis to reveal business potential and retail gaps.
- Create programs and policies to support sustained economic growth in large industrial buildings along and behind Main Street.
- Provide low interest loans and manufacturing/commercial business grants to support redevelopment and development of buildings and infrastructure.
- Improve infrastructure to support growth.

**What vacant or derelict buildings can be converted to businesses?**

**What is growth potential as businesses recover?**

**What infrastructure improvements are needed to support growth?**

**How can new business recruitment optimize foot traffic?**

*A market analysis should attempt to answer questions about Spencer's unique building stock, consumer capacity, and current barriers*

**Source: Goman+York**

## Process

### Identify a vision for the economic future of downtown.

- *Analyze:* Take stock of Spencer's economic strengths.
- *Listen:* Convene Downtown business owners. Understand their vision for the future. Push imaginations.

### Utilize existing networks to build momentum.

- *Broker Connections:* Organize ways for local business owners in light manufacturing, automobile repair and maintenance, shipping/transportation/warehousing, etc to engage with students in the same fields.
  - Locate meet ups, presentations, skills shares, and events Downtown whenever possible.
- *Encourage Apprenticeship Programs:* Provide funding and incentives for apprenticeship programs within Downtown businesses. Partner with skill based programs at local community colleges and businesses. Locate classrooms and workshops within the study area.

## STEP 1.

### RE+ASSESS

#### Where Are You Today?

- + Economic Assessment
- + Sector Analysis
- + Baseline Analysis
- + Commercial District Assessment
- + Retail Gap Analysis
- + Financial Analysis
- + Market-based Research

## STEP 2.

### RE+IMAGINE

#### Where Do You Want To Be?

- + Economic Planning
- + Governance Roles
- + Planning for Change
- + Scenarios & Alternative Futures
- + Strengths & Priorities
- + Land Use Planning

## STEP 3.

### RE+INVIGORATE

#### How Do You Get There?

- + Results-Driven
- + Community Economic Recovery Strategy
- + Capacity Building
- + Required Resources
- + Strategy Implementation
- + Economic Vision
- + Formation

*A community assessment process should be guided by questions that lead to direct actions*

*Source: Goman+York Strategic Community Assessment Process*

**Conduct a deep dive market analysis to understand gaps and opportunities.**

- *Research:* Understand Spencer's current marketing conditions, housing and business potential, retail gaps, socio-economic data, and current conditions.
  - Compare data with similar communities.
  - Act on quick wins.
- *Connect:* Inform business owners of findings. Provide resources for business owners to pivot business offerings based on data.
- *Recruit:* Create programs that recruit desired businesses.

**Provide low interest loans and manufacturing/commercial business grants to support redevelopment and development of buildings and infrastructure.**

- *Finance:* Provide low interest loans and manufacturing/commercial business grants to support redevelopment and development of buildings and infrastructure.
- *Offer Incentives:* Coordinate with community colleges, technical colleges, and trades based programs to locate new or expanded campuses and training centers around Main Street.
  - Financing structures (like TIFs or Capital Improvement spending) may be needed to encourage revitalization of structures.
- *Investigate Accelerators:* Connect with business non-profits, banks, and potential funding partners to test viability of light manufacturing accelerators Downtown.
- *Foster Foot Traffic:* Create a stable consumer base for retail and restaurants by revitalizing Downtown industries for industries of the future.

**Improve infrastructure to support growth.**

- *Acquire Funding:* Apply for federal, state, and local grants that support Main Street development and large scale change.
  - Address sewerage capacity and wireless needs.
  - **Economic growth is hindered unless sewerage system can support growth.**
  - Address parking issues. Implement the [Downtown Spencer Parking Study recommendations](#).



Nearby Quinsigamond Community College offers Associate Degrees in Automotive Technology and Certificates in Energy Utility Technology  
**Source: QCC.com**



AlphaCars & Motorcycles is a recognizable Main Street business. Businesses like it could be interested in partnering with community colleges and trades based programs.  
**Source: Google Streetview**





Spencer's green infrastructure, electric vehicle charging stations, and solar buy-laws display an existing commitment to integrating future technology into daily life. These wins can be leveraged to attract sustainable manufacturing businesses.

Existing green infrastructure located Downtown  
Source: Agency Landscape + Planning



# Mill Revitalization District (MRD) Model



Statewide

## Clock Tower Place Maynard, MA

Maynard, MA is a small town, home to 10,000 people and consists of 5.7 square miles. The economic base of the town had historically been one single mill complex, created in the 1840s. The complex hosts 13 buildings, spans 40-acres, and provides 1.1 million square feet of space.

By 1998, both the mill and its historic clock tower had fallen into disrepair and were non-operational. Wellesley/Rosewood Maynard Mills L.P. (WRP) purchased the property. They used Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to finance building improvement projects. In two years, the space was occupied by 85 different companies and had leased 1 million square feet! Today, between 15- 20% of the town's population works in the center, bringing an economic hub back to Downtown.

The adaptive reuse project had inherent advantages, as the building as in good shape, had fiber-optic connections, and no major environmental issues.



*Strategic adaptive reuse strategies have allowed Mill & Main to once again become Maynard's economic center*  
**Source: Mill & Main**

**Whitin Mill  
Northbridge, MA**

Northbridge is home to a large number of mills, despite being a small town of 6,300. Whitin Mill rests on a one acre parcel along the Mumford and Ring Shop Dam. It consists of five buildings, totaling 32,000 square feet.

The building is a success story of community engagement, artistic vision, and environmental foresight. The Mill was redeveloped by its owner, Alternative Unlimited Inc., a organization that provides serves for differently-abled residents. The space now boasts artist studio spaces, performance and conference space, restaurants, community plaza, retail stores, a living museum, affordable apartments, and a program center for Alternative Unlimited Inc! To develop the uses for the mill, Alternatives Unlimited used a community charette process to invite the community to change the space and become invested in the rehabilitation process. The goal was to use real estate capital to bring diverse groups together to foster social capital and create a communal gathering space.

In addition, the structure utilized smart energy technology, running on hydro-power (the source of the mill's power for many generations), and utilizing solar panels and geothermal heat exchange. The building is not only self-sufficient, but is able to sell energy back to the grid. Estimates proclaim these measures result in roughly \$100,000 annual savings and sale of credits.



*Whitin Mill before revitalization, Conceptual Improvement Plan for Whitin Mill, Whitin Mill Today*  
**Source: Mass.gov, Open Sky Community Services**

---

# Appendix

---

Subject Matter Expert (SME) Report	84
Goman + York	84
• Revitalization of Downtown Spencer: Investing in Main Street	92
• Community Economic Recovery Strategy	
Physical Realm Data Collection Rubric	98
Funding Resources	99
Social Media Graphics	113
Public Engagement Summary	115
Public Presentation #1 + Public Presentation #2	117





## Revitalization of Spencer's Downtown – Investing in Main Street


Spencer, MA

Prepared by: GOMAN+YORK

Project Title	Revitalization of Spencer's Downtown – Investing in Main Street
Origin	Site visits, surveys, town officials, business owners
Location/Census Tract	Downtown Spencer – Main Street – designated area per map
Budget & Sources of Funding	<b>Medium-High</b> Town funding, grants programming, ARPA funds – economic development and infrastructure opportunities, Tax incentives/abatelements structured for redevelopment/development opportunities. Business incubator grants
Timeframe	<b>Short term</b> for Business Support, Downtown Analysis and policy changes <b>Medium term</b> for the infrastructure and development opportunities
Risks	<b>Medium</b> – Requires buy-in and support from local government and property owners. May involve infrastructure upgrades to accommodate some of the action items.
Key Performance Indicators	Increased sales performance of businesses and consumer traffic along the Main Street corridor. New business development throughout the Main Street corridor.
Partners and Resources	Town, DPW, State DOT, local property owners, local business owners.
Diagnostic/Covid-19 Impacts	<p>COVID-19 has affected the local businesses on the front and back sides of Main Street due to the loss of revenue and traffic. Businesses are attempting to recoup some of their losses incurred during the pandemic.</p> <p>Absentee landlords and vacancies have created a less than desirable "look" to the area and may come across as safety concerns to visitors.</p> <p>The businesses (manufacturing/auto/cycle, etc.) that occupy the buildings in the buildings behind Mail Street and the consumers that frequent them</p> <p>Though a streetscape project was undertaken, and some buildings/facades have been upgraded it seems to have stopped short in meeting and addressing the needs of the Downtown businesses and visitors.</p> <p>There is a lack of parking that will only be exacerbated once the new pharmacy locates on the corner that was previously used for parking. The current town parking lots behind Main Street are not well lit, kept or visible.</p> <p>Infrastructure concerns for sewer capacity need to be addressed immediately as the current plan puts limitations on the potential for new development.</p>

Action Items	<p>In order for this project to be successful, it is important to reflect on how the "Main Street" area is viewed by the consumer and visitors. Investing in Main Street and its surrounding businesses will benefit all.</p> <p><b>Maximize retail, restaurant and small business growth opportunities to respond to the impacts COVID-19</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small business technical assistance programs would benefit the Main Street businesses and the manufacturing/auto as many of them are small locally-owned businesses – the growth of these categories will benefit the entire district.</li> </ul> <p><b>Create an atmosphere and placemaking that will draw people to the area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements to and redevelopment of the area, along with the improvements made thus far, will create a better sense of place for the Downtown.</li> </ul> <p><b>Create an incentive program to encourage redevelopment and new development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a fostering of front and back of Main Street businesses with emphasis on programs and policies to support and sustain economic growth and enhancing Main Street</li> <li>The manufacturing businesses are back feeders to Main Street - how did COVID affect them. They occupy old mill buildings are there incentives available through manufacturing/commercial business grants and low-interest loans to support business growth/expansion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Institute a program to combat derelict/vacancies buildings both along and behind Main Street.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a way to incentivize redevelopment of not only Main Street businesses but the back businesses - tax abatement, TIF, grants, and BID incentives.</li> <li>The alternative is to enact ordinances and vacancy tax policies to ensure that the derelict properties are addressed through policy.</li> <li>The optimum would likely be a blending of these concepts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that enhancements made to the sewer system in that area can accommodate any potential growth along the Main Street corridor along with any additional housing and business developments in that area. Without this addressed the capacity for economic growth is hindered.</li> <li>Parking issues need to be addressed – both on and off-street</li> </ul>
Process	<p><b>Conduct a Deep Dive Analysis into the Market Dynamics of the area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This information should capture: market demand and opportunity for housing, &amp; business potential; identify retail gaps; capture</li> </ul>

	<p>socio-economic data; a current conditions assessment; and perhaps, compare what like communities are accomplishing. (I have attached a graphic to show how communities can approach COVID-19 recovery). Some of the issues that can be addressed through the process are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there vacancies/derelect buildings that can be converted to housing &amp; new businesses?</li> <li>• Did the manufacturer's staff and their customers frequent Main Street shops and restaurants?</li> <li>• As businesses recover what is the growth potential?</li> <li>• 40% of businesses are restaurants – what is the capacity for more</li> <li>• What is the capacity of the current infrastructure (i.e. sewer, parking) – how much can it handle – what is needed to support growth in the area.</li> </ul> <p><b>Create public policy and initiatives that will foster economic growth within the Downtown area</b></p> <p>An assessment of Spencer's current policies should be undertaken to determine if policies are in place or need to be enacted. Some policies can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Derelect and vacant building ordinances and incentives for "cleaning" up and leasing up the property. Also, disincentives for derelect/vacant properties such as a progressive tax structure.</li> <li>• Tax abatements/incentives for development/redevelopment</li> <li>• Small business assistance and incentives</li> </ul> <p><b>Support for small business recovery and fostering economic development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small business technical assistance - Training workshops, technology grants/programs, district branding/marketing/signage programs should be developed that will add, encourage and create synergy to businesses currently along the Main Street Spencer corridor.</li> <li>• Work with the chamber or area professionals to host small business training sessions on social media, website and SEO optimization.</li> <li>• Create a marketing program for the Town that emphasizes the newly created public policies and lets businesses know that Spencer is "Open for and to Business!" (see example)</li> <li>• Have tools available to support current businesses along with new business and growth opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Conveniences - Parking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking is at a premium for both on-street and for businesses</li> <li>• Lots need to be "accessible - clean – safe – well lit" – carry the theme of the new streetscape lighting into the parking lots. EV charging should be addressed as well as accessibility.</li> </ul>
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address key findings from the Parking Study – time limits, demand areas and signage.</li> <li>• Address parking availability/lots where it would make it convenient to walk the Downtown area.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address and institute infrastructure upgrades in a proactive manner – i.e. – sewer upgrades being currently done should address capacity to accommodate a growing Downtown</li> </ul>
Reference documents	 ICSC_Setting_Up_Shop - A Commercial

Best Practice examples/photos



Source: Goman+York Strategic Community Assessment Process





Current lots





Well-lit Parking example - Credit: Google



Parking examples - Credit: Google





Buildings – Spencer Good (red & corner buildings) vs Needs Work (green building)



Spencer – Potential Development Opportunity or Teardown


Doing Business in Somerville | C X +  
https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/doing-business-somerville


Office 365 Local Rapid Recove... Microsoft Planner GY Project Mgmt TSheets Getting S... Mapping NPMs - H... Microsoft Forms CT Maps D\_SDO\_REPORTL... Connecticut Confer... 2020 Small Busines... Microsoft Power BI Research


## City of Somerville


### About Doing Business in Somerville


We're here to help you start, expand, or improve your Somerville-based business. The Economic Development Department is happy to help you navigate the process of getting your business up and running with all the necessary licenses and permits. We're also able to help you find real estate within the city and connect with financial or technical assistance resources to ensure you're off to a strong start.

**Starting a Business in Somerville**

**Key Licenses & Permits**

**Business Resources**

**Newsletter Signup**

**Somerville SiteFinder**

We know it can be stressful and confusing to start a business. We're here to help! Check out some helpful resources, programs, and links below, including a step-by-step online guide to help get you started. You can also [view the PDF version of this guide](#) if you prefer.

#### 1 Creating a Budget and Business Plan

### Contact

**Tom Galligani**  
Director of Economic Development

**Hours**  
Monday - Wednesday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Phone**  
(617) 625-6600 ext 2531

**Email**  
[tgalligani@somervillema.gov](mailto:tgalligani@somervillema.gov)

**Address**  
City Hall  
93 Highland Ave.  
Somerville, MA 02143

Sample website [Doing Business in Somerville | City of Somerville \(somervillema.gov\)](https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/doing-business-somerville)



# Community Economic Recovery Strategy

A Resilient Approach to COVID-19 Economic Recovery

Our proven strategy brings key stakeholders together to identify and address priorities to benefit your community.

## STEP 1.

### RE+ASSESS

#### Where Are You Today?

- + Economic Assessment
- + Sector Analysis
- + Baseline Analysis
- + Commercial District Assessment
- + Retail Gap Analysis
- + Financial Analysis
- + Market-based Research

## STEP 2.

### RE+IMAGINE

#### Where Do You Want To Be?

- + Economic Planning
- + Governance Roles
- + Planning for Change
- + Scenarios & Alternative Futures
- + Strengths & Priorities
- + Land Use Planning

## STEP 3.

### RE+INVIGORATE

#### How Do You Get There?

- + Results-Driven
- + Community Economic Recovery Strategy
- + Capacity Building
- + Required Resources
- + Strategy Implementation
- + Economic Vision
- + Formation

## Contact us today!

Working with you to get your community on the road to recovery.

### CORPORATE OFFICE:

#### NEW ENGLAND

**Mike Goman**

860.841.3271 / mgoman@gomanyork.com

**Don Poland, PhD, AICP**

860.655.6897 / dpoland@gomanyork.com

**Nancy Nesbitt**

203.671.7603 / nnesbitt@gomanyork.com

### REGIONAL OFFICES:

#### DALLAS

**Howard Etheridge**

214.577.7431 / hetheridge@gomanyork.com

#### PHOENIX

**Dusty McMahan**

480.482.8028 / dmc\_mahan@gomanyork.com



twitter.com/Goman\_York



linkedin.com/company/gomanyork

**GomanYork.com**

# Community Economic Recovery Strategy

A Resilient Approach to COVID-19 Economic Recovery

STEP 1.

## ► RE+ASSESS

### Where Are You Today?

Understanding where you are today informs how vulnerable your community is to the short- and long-term negative economic impacts of COVID-19? It also informs how to plan and strategically move forward.

#### Existing Conditions Assessment

- + Demographic and Socioeconomic Analysis
- + Sector Analysis
- + Retail Gap Analysis
- + Commercial District Assessment
- + Regulatory Review
- + Business Outreach

#### Local Economic Risk Assessment

- + Identify Vulnerabilities
- + Impact to Future Tax Revenue and Municipal Budget
- + Main Street & Commercial Impact Analysis

### Contact us today!

Working with you to get your community on the road to recovery.

#### CORPORATE OFFICE:

##### NEW ENGLAND

**Mike Goman**

860.841.3271 / mgoman@gomanyork.com

**Don Poland, PhD, AICP**

860.655.6897 / dpoland@gomanyork.com

**Nancy Nesbitt**

203.671.7603 / nnesbitt@gomanyork.com

#### REGIONAL OFFICES:

##### DALLAS

**Howard Etheridge**

214.577.7431 / hetheridge@gomanyork.com

##### PHOENIX

**Dusty McMahan**

480.482.8028 / dmcMahon@gomanyork.com



twitter.com/Goman\_York



linkedin.com/company/gomanyork

**GomanYork.com**

# Community Economic Recovery Strategy

A Resilient Approach to COVID-19 Economic Recovery

STEP 2.

## ► RE+IMAGINE Where Do You Want To Be?

Strategic planning is most important when the future is uncertain.

We can help you navigate uncertainty and chart a course to recovery for the future you want.

- + **Resilience**  
Planning for change and the unknown
- + **Sustainable**  
Balancing social, economic, and environmental outcomes
- + **Scenarios**  
Potential and plausible futures
- + **Adaptation**  
Creating newness out of existing forms and functions
- + **Governance**  
The role of government intervention
- + **Decision Making**  
Setting priorities and executing

### Contact us today!

Working with you to get your community on the road to recovery.

#### CORPORATE OFFICE:

##### NEW ENGLAND

**Mike Goman**

860.841.3271 / mgoman@gomanyork.com

**Don Poland, PhD, AICP**

860.655.6897 / dpoland@gomanyork.com

**Nancy Nesbitt**

203.671.7603 / nnesbitt@gomanyork.com

#### REGIONAL OFFICES:

##### DALLAS

**Howard Etheridge**

214.577.7431 / hetheridge@gomanyork.com

##### PHOENIX

**Dusty McMahan**

480.482.8028 / dmcMahon@gomanyork.com



twitter.com/Goman\_York



linkedin.com/company/gomanyork

**GomanYork.com**

# Community Economic Recovery Strategy

A Resilient Approach to COVID-19 Economic Recovery

STEP 3.

## ▶ RE+INVIGORATE

### How Do You Get There?

Planning is easy. Achieving desired outcomes is hard. Our work integrates planning and implementation into a seamless process of strategic intervention aimed at outcome achievement.

- + **Outcome Identification**  
Setting the desired outcomes
- + **Strategy Development**  
Creating the recovery toolbox based on desired outcomes
- + **Capacity Building**  
Developing the required and available resources
- + **Strategy Implementation**  
Employing the right strategy at the right time
- + **Measuring for Success**  
Ensuring our strategies are working
- + **Adjustment**  
Strategy adaptation as conditions improve

### Contact us today!

Working with you to  
get your community on  
the road to recovery.

#### CORPORATE OFFICE:

##### NEW ENGLAND

**Mike Goman**

860.841.3271 / [mgoman@gomanyork.com](mailto:mgoman@gomanyork.com)

**Don Poland, PhD, AICP**

860.655.6897 / [dpoland@gomanyork.com](mailto:dpoland@gomanyork.com)

**Nancy Nesbitt**

203.671.7603 / [nnesbitt@gomanyork.com](mailto:nnesbitt@gomanyork.com)

#### REGIONAL OFFICES:

##### DALLAS

**Howard Etheridge**

214.577.7431 / [hetheridge@gomanyork.com](mailto:hetheridge@gomanyork.com)

##### PHOENIX

**Dusty McMahan**

480.482.8028 / [dmcMahon@gomanyork.com](mailto:dmcMahon@gomanyork.com)



[twitter.com/Goman\\_York](https://twitter.com/Goman_York)



[linkedin.com/company/gomanyork](https://linkedin.com/company/gomanyork)

**GomanYork.com**



# Community Economic Recovery Strategy

A Resilient Approach to COVID-19 Economic Recovery

## ► RE+VIEW OUR RESULTS

+ **Business Recruitment and Retention**

4,700+ jobs, \$150+ million of Grand List assessed value, \$330+ million in added investment value

+ **Surplus Properties Sale and Adaptive Reuse**

Excess schools, other obsolete and vacant properties

+ **Disaster Recovery**

5-year post-Katrina hurricane redevelopment, i.e. trendy neighborhoods and robust housing market

+ **Economic Recovery**

HUD NSP-II neighborhood revitalization strategy

+ **Investment Strategy**

Created an economic investment strategy that was influential in the community securing a \$10 million state revitalization grant

+ **Tax Increment Financing**

Master plans for TIF districts

+ **Strategic Tax Abatement Incentive Programs**

Utilized tax abatements to successfully catalyze \$200+ million in new development

### Contact us today!

Working with you to get your community on the road to recovery.

**CORPORATE OFFICE:**

**NEW ENGLAND**

**Mike Goman**

860.841.3271 / mgoman@gomanyork.com

**Don Poland, PhD, AICP**

860.655.6897 / dpoland@gomanyork.com

**Nancy Nesbitt**

203.671.7603 / nnesbitt@gomanyork.com

**REGIONAL OFFICES:**

**DALLAS**

**Howard Etheridge**

214.577.7431 / hetheridge@gomanyork.com

**PHOENIX**

**Dusty McMahan**

480.482.8028 / dcmcmahan@gomanyork.com



twitter.com/Goman\_York



linkedin.com/company/gomanyork

**GomanYork.com**

# Community Economic Recovery Strategy

A Resilient Approach to COVID-19 Economic Recovery

STEP 3.

## ▶ RE+INVIGORATE

### How Do You Get There?

Planning is easy. Achieving desired outcomes is hard. Our work integrates planning and implementation into a seamless process of strategic intervention aimed at outcome achievement.

- + **Outcome Identification**  
Setting the desired outcomes
- + **Strategy Development**  
Creating the recovery toolbox based on desired outcomes
- + **Capacity Building**  
Developing the required and available resources
- + **Strategy Implementation**  
Employing the right strategy at the right time
- + **Measuring for Success**  
Ensuring our strategies are working
- + **Adjustment**  
Strategy adaptation as conditions improve

### Contact us today!

Working with you to  
get your community on  
the road to recovery.

#### CORPORATE OFFICE:

##### NEW ENGLAND

**Mike Goman**

860.841.3271 / mgoman@gomanyork.com

**Don Poland, PhD, AICP**

860.655.6897 / dpoland@gomanyork.com

**Nancy Nesbitt**

203.671.7603 / nnesbitt@gomanyork.com

#### REGIONAL OFFICES:

##### DALLAS

**Howard Etheridge**

214.577.7431 / hetheridge@gomanyork.com

##### PHOENIX

**Dusty McMahan**

480.482.8028 / dmcMahon@gomanyork.com



twitter.com/Goman\_York



linkedin.com/company/gomanyork

**GomanYork.com**

# Physical Realm Data Collection Rubric

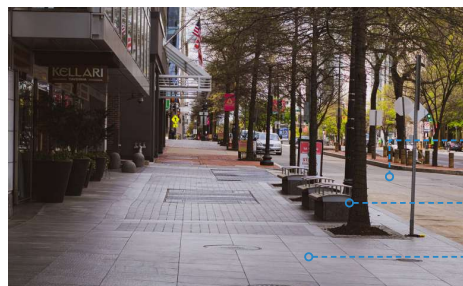
## Physical Environment

### PUBLIC REALM



Wayfinding/Signage

Street Lighting



Roadbed and Crosswalk

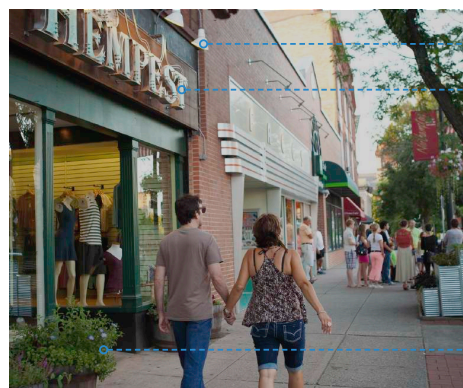
Street Trees and Benches

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 bicyclists, 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 window displays that do not have awnings and/or outdoor dining that pose challenges to the pedestrian experience.	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

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
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.
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

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
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 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.

## 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
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 <a href="https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/">https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/</a> )	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

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
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/bars, 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.
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.	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.
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 <a href="https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/">https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/</a> )	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 of 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 <a href="https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/">https://newvuecommunities.org/cities-towns-we-serve/</a> )	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 J. & Margery S. Barrett Fund	Yes	Private	Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation			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	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 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.
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.
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
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.
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
						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
<a href="#">List of Central Mass Funding</a>	
<a href="#">Small Business Strong</a>	Women owned business focused, but also targeted to F& B, arts, hospitality, agriculture/food supply, and retail
<a href="#">Restaurant Resources</a>	
<a href="#">LISC Digital Growth Accelerator</a>	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.
<a href="#">MassDevelopment Grants</a> <a href="#">Mass Development Real Estate Technical Assistance</a>	Provides technical assistance aimed at addressing site-specific and/or district-wide economic development challenges through creative solutions and clear, implementable action steps. <b>Technical assistance in Surplus Property Recuse and Local District Management Implementation Technical Assistance (District Improvement Financing + BIDs)</b>
<a href="#">Mass Development Real Estate Technical Assistance</a>	part of the One Stop for Growth program (one application for multiple grants), all focused on economic development and downtown revitalization.
<a href="#">Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI)</a>	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. <b>Best for District wide ideas.</b>
<a href="#">State Small Business Credit Initiative</a>	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.
<a href="#">Capital Projects Fund</a>	Addresses specifically rural America and low- and moderate-income communities,' challenges to pivot based on old infrastructure. <b>Emphasis on broadband, but other capital improvements too.</b>
<a href="#">Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program</a>	<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"> <li>- 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</li> <li>- Funds available for this grant program in FY 2022 is subject to appropriation (\$4-7 Million)</li> <li>- Organization proposals will not exceed \$85,000.</li> <li>- Collaborative joint proposals will not exceed \$175,000.</li> <li>- A collaborative is defined as two or more eligible non-profit organizations sharing costs and providing complementary services in coordination with each other.</li> <li>- Only open to non-profit corporations</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts</a>	<p><b>Civic Development Grants</b> 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"> <li>• Municipal planting projects, including traffic islands, parks, etc.</li> <li>• Landscaping at schools, memorial halls, libraries</li> <li>• Plantings of labeled trails at nature preserves</li> </ul> <p><b>Historic Landscape Preservation Grants</b> 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"> <li>• Restoration of landscaping at a historic building/property in your community</li> <li>• Projects undertaken with local Historic Preservation groups</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• A landscape that is 50 years or older &amp; has historical significance</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

# Social Media Graphics

## Downtown Business Owners

This program includes a survey of business owners (or managers), for-profits, and non-profits in the downtown and surrounding areas. 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

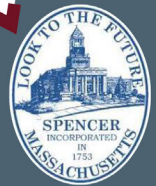


Scan Me!

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

**We Need Your Input!**

Todd Miller  
tmiller@spencerma.gov  
Town Planner  
Spencer



**HELLO!**



**Hear the results**

from our business survey



**+ Tell Us More!**

about what you wish to see in the  
Downtown



**Join our town's  
Board of Selectman  
Meeting**

May 24th at 6 p.m.

Spencer is discussing **COVID recovery!** Share your thoughts and help guide recovery planning in the **Downtown!**

## You Shared...

At home businesses  
are important!

**Business owners** would like  
help **understanding** what  
**opportunities** exist.

**The Complete Streets  
Program** has changed  
the face of Downtown.

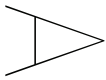
The main priority should  
be to help businesses hurt  
financially by COVID.

Look to **policy changes**.  
What can we do to  
**improve life downtown?**

# Thank You!

Spencer, **thank you**  
for sharing your  
vision for the future  
of Main Street and  
**guiding the recovery**  
of Downtown.





## **What We Heard: Public Engagement Summary Spencer**

Local Rapid Recovery Planning (LRRP)  
Public Presentation #1

### **Approach:**

Outreach to Spencer's business owners and local champions has been difficult. Acknowledging that the Local Rapid Recovery Plan effort was still new for many community members, the outreach approach was to present at an upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting. The presentation focused on general information about the LRRP effort, articulating what the plan is and isn't, instead of sharing out data collection efforts. The Board of Selectmen, as well as community members were invited to get involved in the process and primed for further engagement.

### **Time:**

~10-15 minutes of presentation time  
\*recorded by the city of Spencer

### **Attendees (including community contacts but not plan facilitators):**

- May 24, 2021- Board of Selectman Meeting
- Began with ~49 attendees, dropped to ~27 by end of presentation (includes 5 Board of Selectman members)
- Meeting streamed on Local Cable Network

### **Key Findings (when combined with data analysis)**

- Growth in large format retail exists at the periphery of downtown
- This pulls daily shopping traffic away from Downtown. However, this opens an opportunity for Main Street to capitalize on experiences/offerings that cannot happen at big box locations.
- Spencer has been planned to death. The city is ready for action!



- Spencer has invested in the public realm. The Complete Streets redesign and reworking of the intersection of Pleasant and Main St creates a sense of arrival.
- Downtown is a mixed bag. Many historic buildings are nicely kept and in great condition while others (especially in key locations) are unkempt.
- Spencer has a multitude of historic landmarked buildings. There is an opportunity to better leverage these structures into a townwide revitalization strategy.
- Leveraging federal funds for facade revitalization and downtown investment and worked for Spencer in the past.
- Real estate owned by absentee landlords (we should make a diagram/map for this!)
- The effects of COVID were deeply felt in Spencer's small business community. Focus should be given to helping the businesses that remain become more resilient and build back better.
- Many business owners need a high touch level of service to know what opportunities (federal, state, local grants, loans, marketing, etc.) exist
- Many of Spencer's most common industries are undergoing industry wide change. Spencer's policies should be flexible and adaptive to anticipate these changing needs and creatively anticipate the economic future of Spencer.
- Home based businesses are important to Spencer's local economy. The current zoning code and local business regulations should be reviewed with these businesses in mind.
- Spencer is at the center of a region filled with natural, cultural and civic destinations including Worcester, Sturbridge, and a multitude of wildlife management areas, refuges, and parks.

#### Takeaways:

**After the COVID 19 pandemic, many businesses reopened but suffered serious financial impacts.** Five Loaves Bakery was the only restaurant in town to close permanently, but at least seven vacant tenants remained downtown as of April 2021.

**The main concern of the Board of Selectmen is to help businesses who suffered financially.** Spencer has undergone recent many planning efforts, including Downtown Design Guidelines (2019), a Downtown Spencer Parking Study (2020), and an Open Space and Recreation Plan (2021) in addition to the procurement of federal funds for facade renovation and revitalization. Thus, there has been support for higher level downtown initiatives. What has been lacking is direct support to individual businesses that assist in wading the complicated waters of federal emergency grant programs. The Local Rapid Recovery Effort is viewed as a way to fill this gap.

**Economic Development is important.** Spencer relies on nearby larger economic hubs like Worcester and Sturbridge for town wide employment. It is important to leverage these connections into increased resiliency for Spencer's homegrown economy. Industries like automotive care and maintenance, manufacturing, construction, real estate, transportation, warehousing, and utilities, are all current economic strengths. Anticipating the needs of these industries in the coming decades will be important.

---

## Public Presentations 1 & 2



# Spencer Downtown 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
4. Next Steps + Outreach

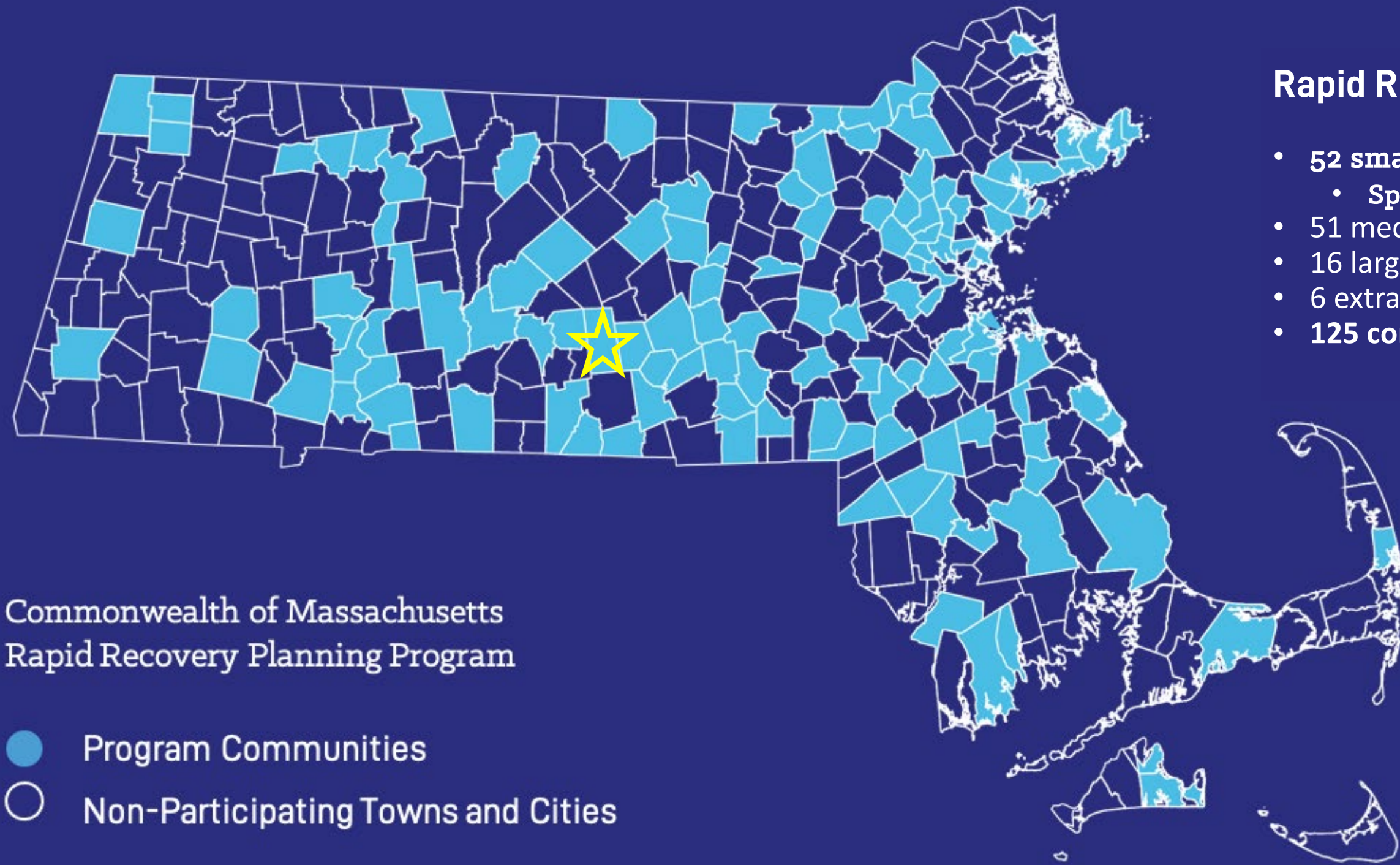




# What is the Local Rapid Recovery Planning Effort?







## Rapid Recovery Plans

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

# 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.**



# 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 Spencer:

- **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**

# RRP Timeline



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

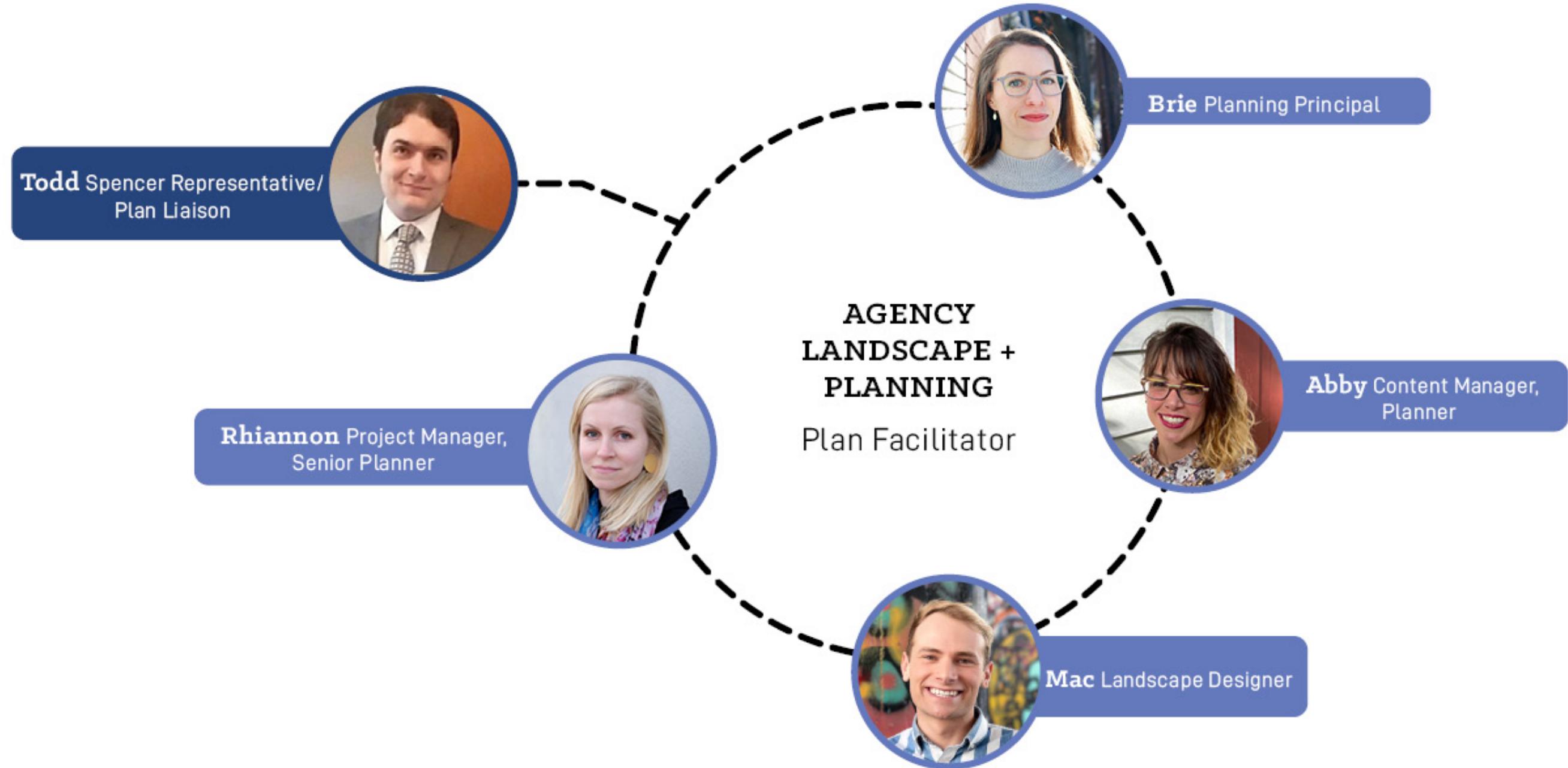




# Meet the team!



# Meet the Team

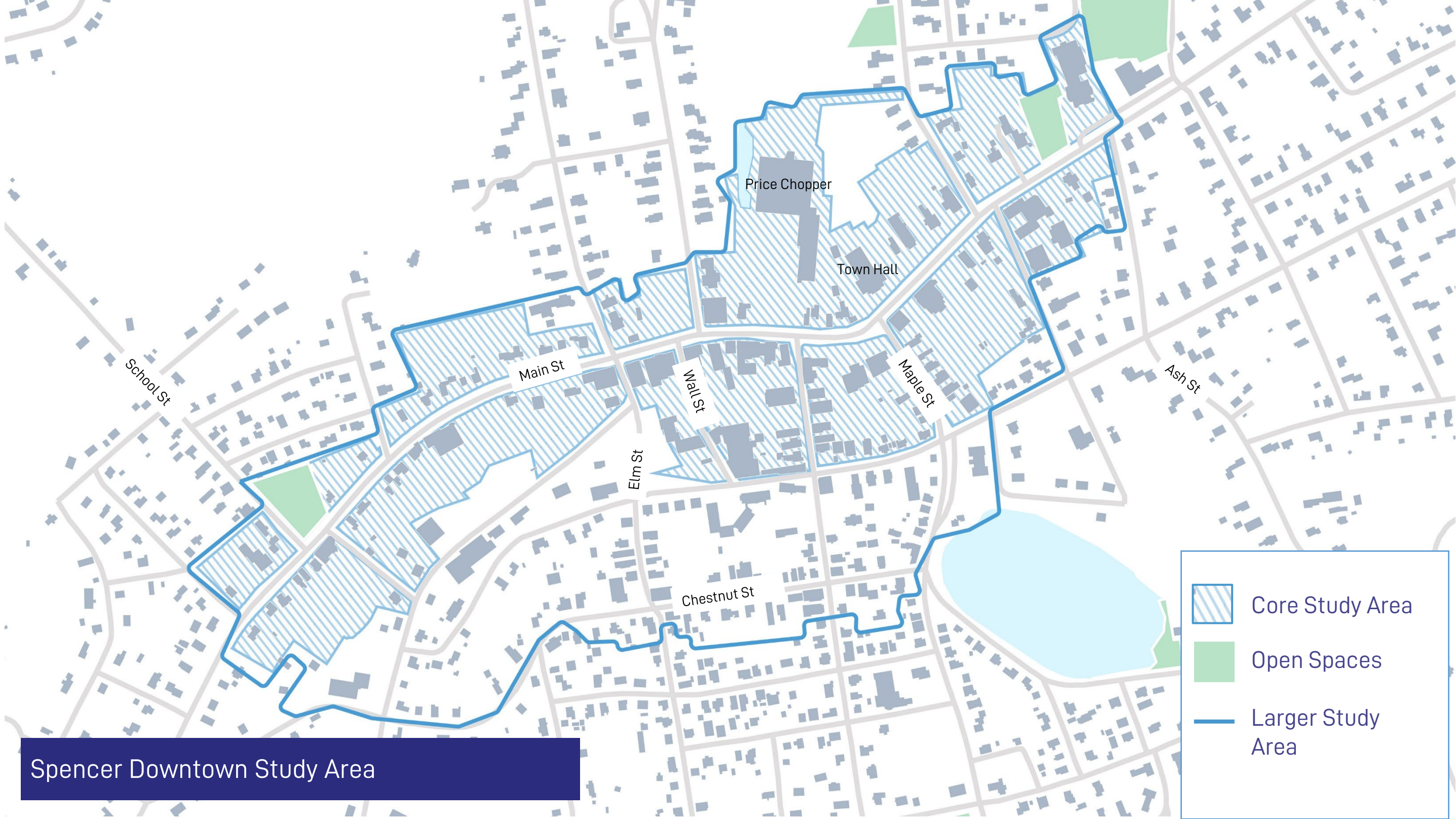




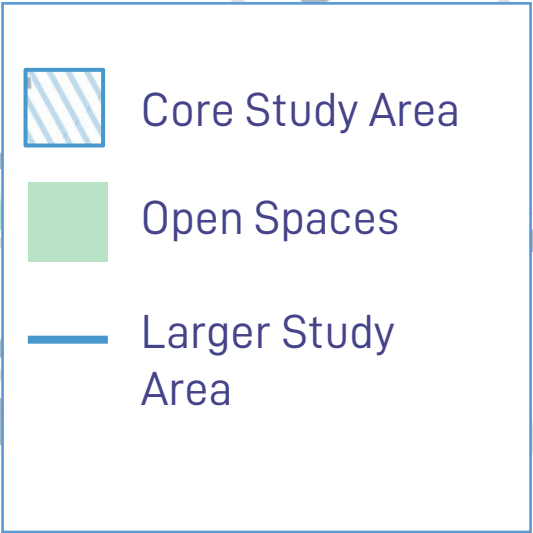
# What We've Learned So Far







Spencer Downtown Study Area





# What We've Learned

## State's Guiding Questions



### Market Information

---

Who **visits Spencer's Downtown?**



### 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?

# What We've Learned

## State's Guiding Questions



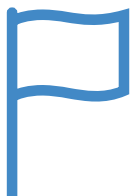
Market  
Information



**10,509**

vehicles per day

Average Annual Daily Vehicular  
Traffic (AADT)  
Dewey St, West of Bixby Rd



Physical  
Environment



**2.5**

Acres of open space



Business  
Environment



**84+**

businesses

In the Downtown Area

**170,319**  
**(10% vacant)**  
Total Ground Floor  
Commercial Space



Administrative  
Capacity



**3**

Small Business  
Stewards Exist

## Study Area

## Spencer Town

## Massachusetts

Population

5,792

11,688

6,892,503

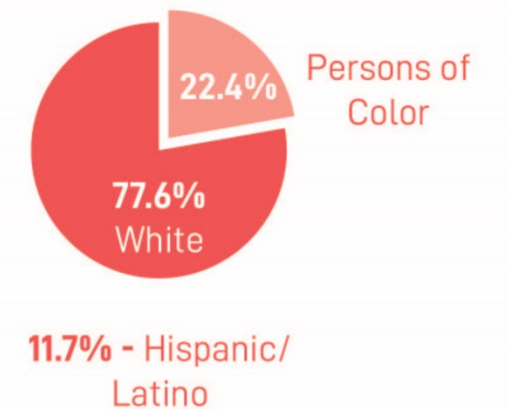
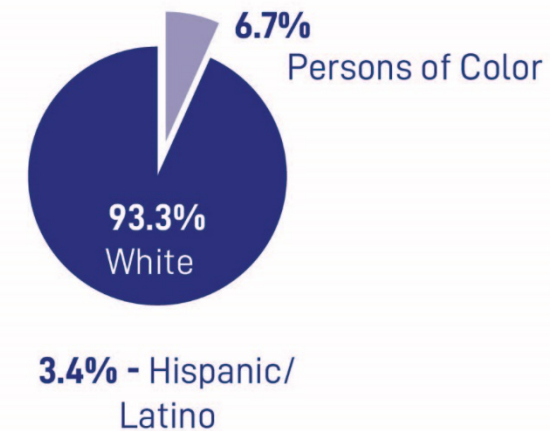
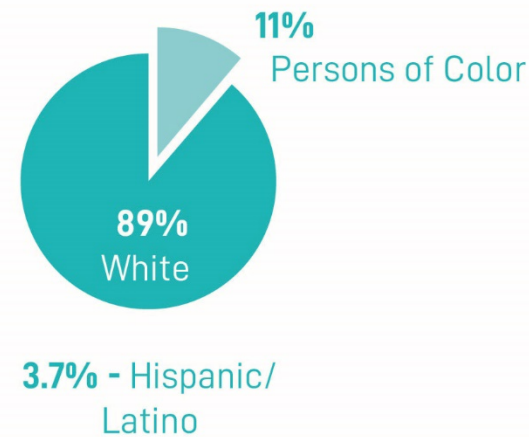
Average  
Household Size



Median Age



Population by  
Race/Ethnicity



**Total  
Workforce/Employees**

**Study Area**

**3,484 (60%)**

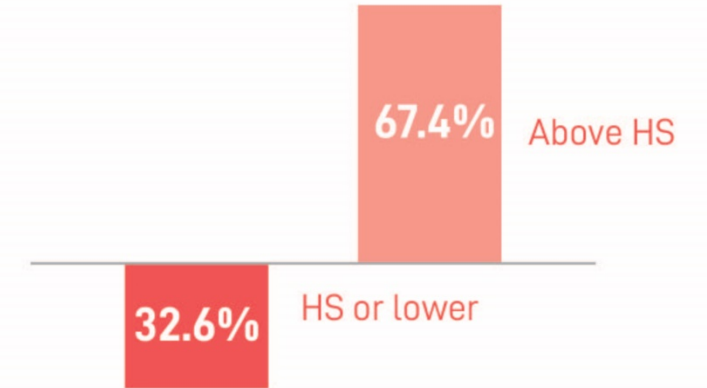
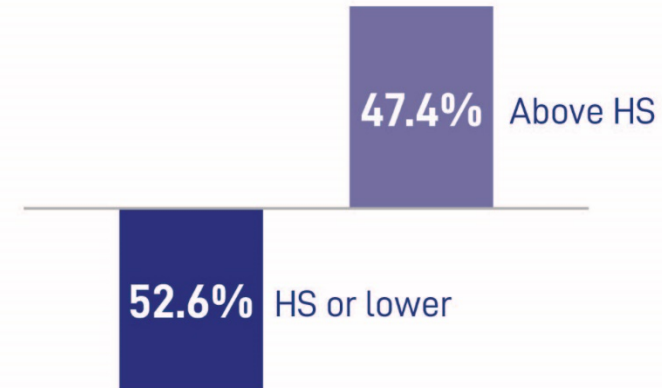
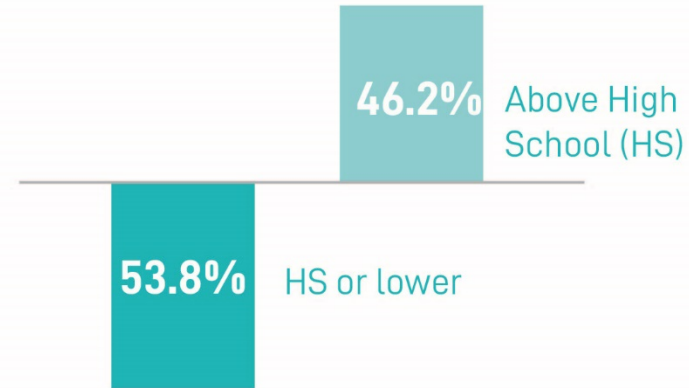
**Spencer Town**

**6,829 (58%)**

**Massachusetts**

**4,466,342 (64%)**

**Population by  
Highest Level of  
Educational Attainment**



**Median  
Household Income**



**\$59,331**



**\$71,830**



**\$85,843**





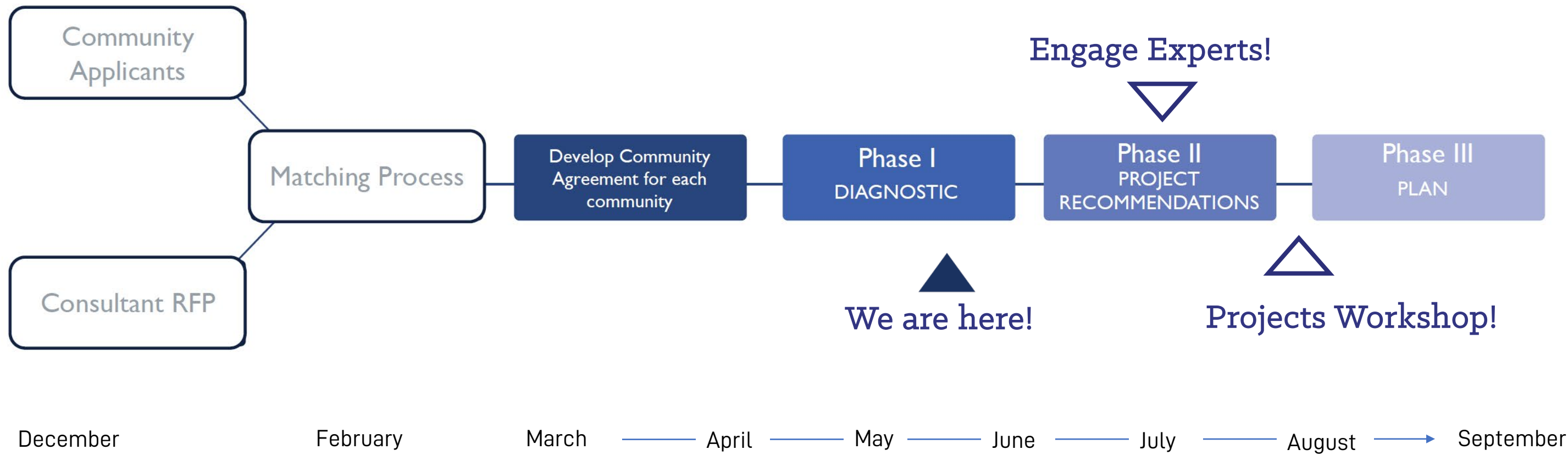
OTHER



# Next Steps + Outreach

What are your ideas for Downtown?

# Next Steps



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

## Let's Talk...

---

Want to follow up with additional questions or feedback?

**Todd Miller**

**TMiller@spencerma.gov**

Town Planner, Town of Spencer

- **We want to hear about your Downtown experience!**
  - How has COVID-19 affected the business community? Or how you visit local businesses?
  - What changes to policy, procedure, or public space would increase business activity?
  - What would you like to see Downtown?
- **The Economic Development Committee is looking for new members!**
  - Contribute to a diverse range of voices representing businesses in Spencer
  - Work more closely on the LRRP effort

# Thank You!

---

Want to follow up with additional questions or feedback?

**Todd Miller**

[TMiller@spencerma.gov](mailto:TMiller@spencerma.gov)

Town Planner, Town of Spencer



# Spencer Downtown Commercial Area 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



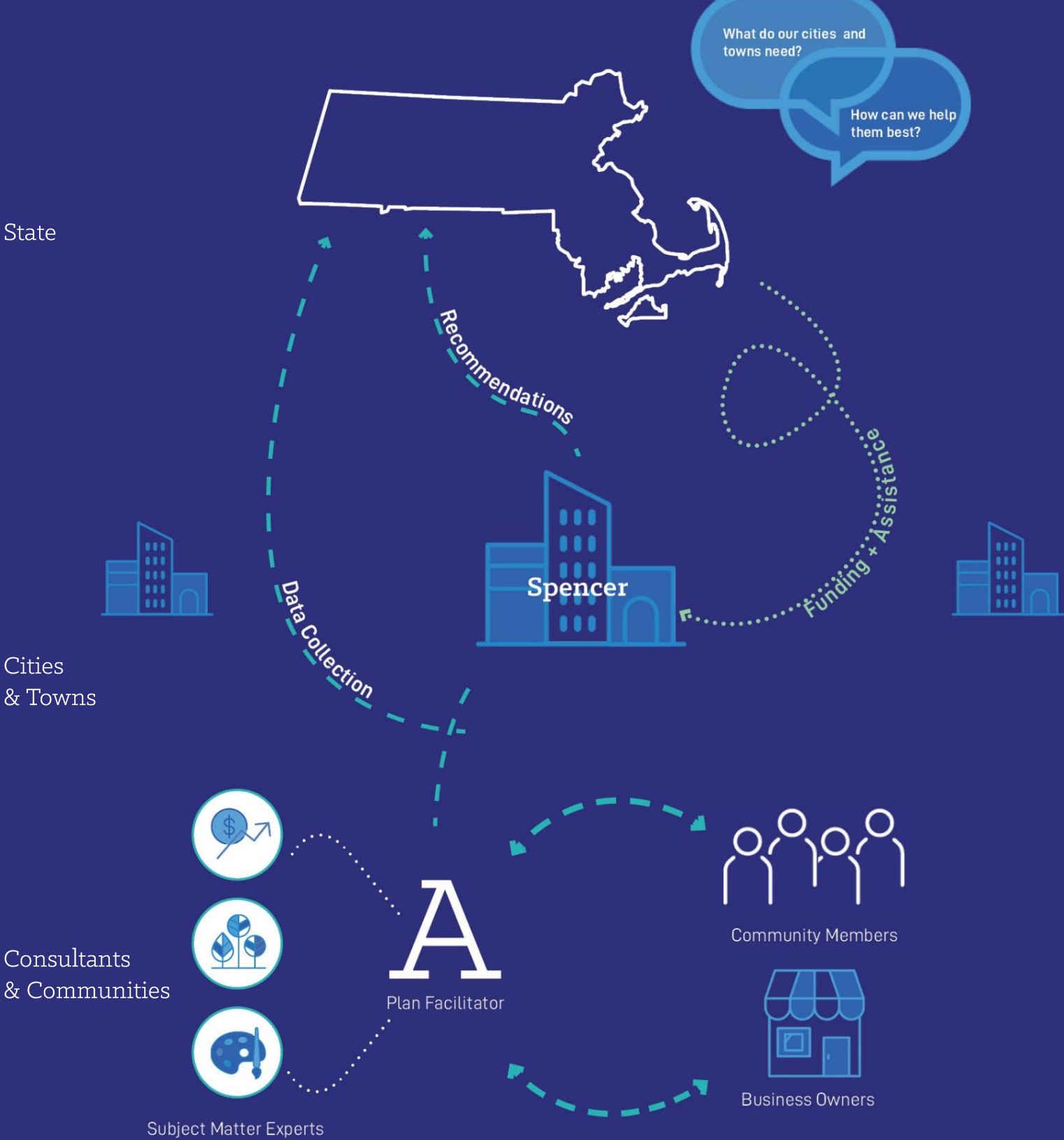
# Meet the Team



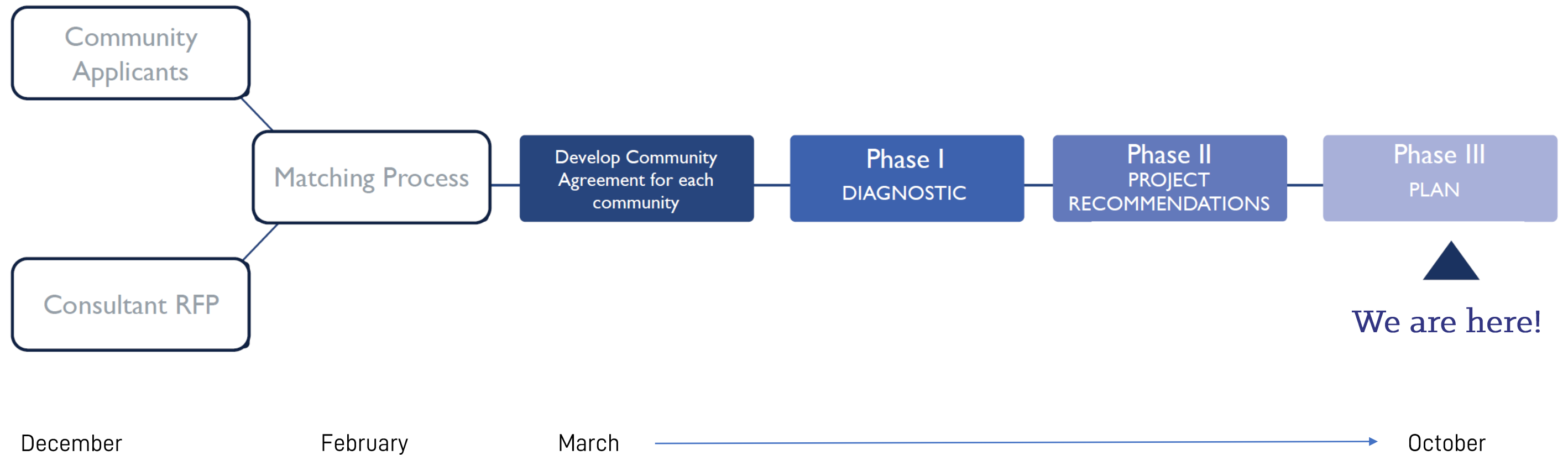


# RRP Structure + Outcomes

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.**



# RRP Timeline

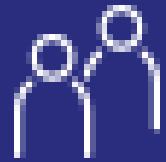


The LRRP effort follows a 10-month timeline.

# RRP Data Collection Framework

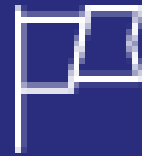
---

- Research centered around 4 main categories



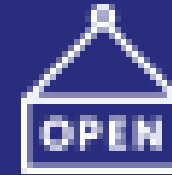
## CUSTOMER BASE

- Trends
- Consumer Profiles
- Demographic Data



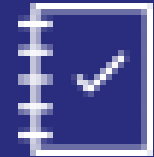
## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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



## BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

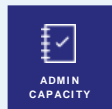
- Anchors & Destinations
- Assets & Business Mix
- Nodes & Clusters



## ADMIN CAPACITY

- Partners & Organizations
- Funding
- Regulations & Zoning

# Key Findings



## Spencer is Ready for Action!

- Many plans have already been made. Time to implement!



## Public Realm Investments Have Been Made- But There is More Work to do

- Leverage momentum of Complete Streets grant into additional public space improvements



## Small Business Owners Need Individualized Attention, Especially After COVID 19

- Federal aid programs were difficult for many to access



## Facades Are A Mixed Bag

- A few ill-kept facades bring down Main Street's historic and otherwise well-kept buildings



## Spencer's Most Common Industries Are Changing

- Automation, green technology, and trends in manufacturing will affect Spencer's economic engines. There is opportunity to modernize.

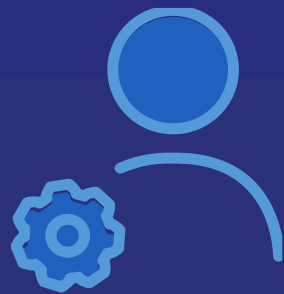




# Recommendation Themes

---

- 7 categories guide the creation of recommendations



**Administrative  
Capacity**



**Public Realm**



**Culture/ Arts**



**Revenue & Sales**



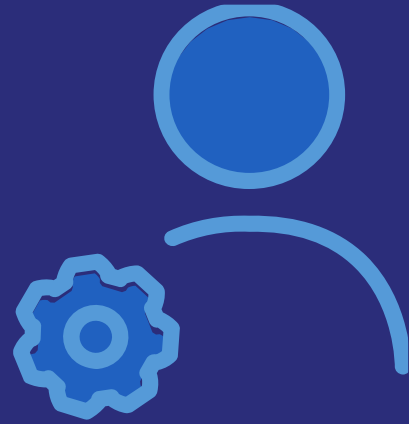
**Tenant Mix**



**Private Realm**



**Other**



# Administrative Capacity

Provide Technical Assistance to Main Street Small  
Businesses

Codify Design Guidelines into Zoning Code to  
Enhance Downtown Character

# Provide Technical Assistance to Main Street Small Businesses



Admin Capacity

## Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

## Funding



Low (< \$50K)

## Key Actions

- Educate entrepreneurs about existing programs, resources, and funding through small business technical assistance programs
- Address the “Digital Divide” through workshops, trainings, and “office hours”
- Mentor businesses owners to create their own Small Business Action Plans
- Hire a Small Business Liaison who provides a concierge level of service to existing small businesses
- Simplify the process of finding small business resources


Somerville, MA provides ways for entrepreneurs to find **permits, resources, and even search for property online!**


Home > Programs & Initiatives > Doing Business in Somerville


Like 0


### About Doing Business in Somerville


We're here to help you start, expand, or improve your Somerville-based business. The Economic Development Department is happy to help you navigate the process of getting your business up and running with all the necessary licenses and permits. We're also able to help you find real estate within the city and connect with financial or technical assistance resources to ensure you're off to a strong start.

**Starting a Business in Somerville**

**Key Licenses & Permits**

**Business Resources**

**Newsletter Signup**

**Somerville SiteFinder**

We know it can be stressful and confusing to start a business. We're here to help! Check out some helpful resources, programs, and links below, including a step-by-step online guide to help get you started. You can also [view the PDF version of this guide](#) if you prefer.

1

### Creating a Budget and Business Plan

A business plan is an important document that can help you make strategic decisions and communicate your business's strengths when applying for financing. A budget and business plan should take into account:

- Startup costs, including licenses and fees
- A budget for long-term operation
- A marketing strategy

### Contact

**Tom Galligani**  
Director of Economic Development

**Hours**  
Monday - Wednesday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
  
Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
  
Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Phone**  
(617) 625-6600 ext 2531

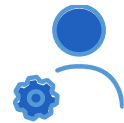
**Email**  
[tgalligani@somervillema.gov](mailto:tgalligani@somervillema.gov)

**Address**  
City Hall  
93 Highland Ave.  
Somerville, MA 02143

[View Map >](#)

[VIEW ALL STAFF CONTACTS >](#)

# Codify Design Guidelines into Zoning Code to Enhance Downtown Character



Admin Capacity

## Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

## Funding



Low (< \$50K)

## Key Actions

- Review and revise the design guidelines with key Main Street stakeholders
- Codify and enforce the design standards with the Board of Selectmen







# Private Realm

Review and Revise the Zoning Code With Home Based Businesses in Mind

Invest in Main Street: Work With Property Owners to Invest in Buildings and Sites



# Review and Revise the Zoning Code With Home Based Businesses in Mind



Private Realm

## Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

## Funding



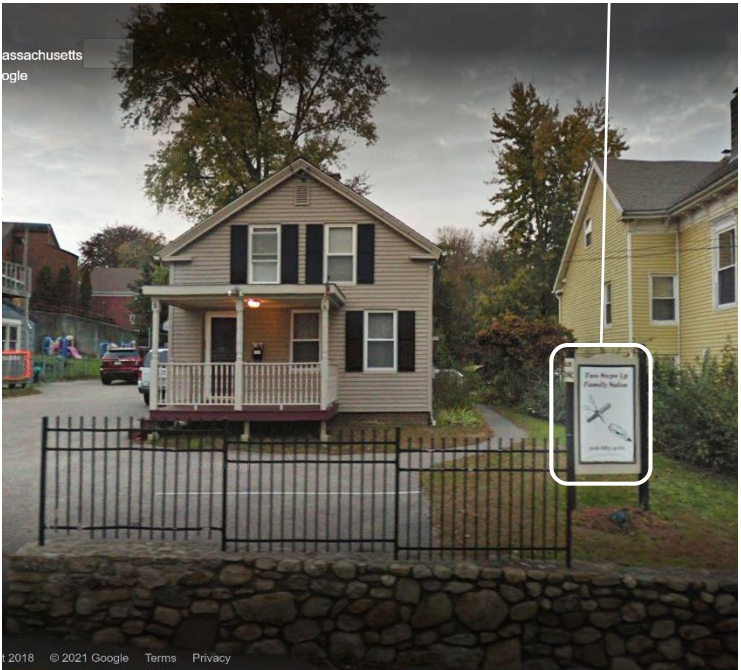
Low (< \$50K)

## Key Actions

- Standardize signage for home based businesses
- Reexamine the Village Residential and Home-Based Business Zoning Overlay District
- Change zoning to encourage small business creation
- Craft long term strategies to provide services and resources home based businesses desire

sign is small and far from road

sign is clear and easy to read





# Invest in Main Street: Work With Property Owners to Invest in Buildings and Sites



Private Realm

## Timing



Medium (5-10 yrs)

## Funding

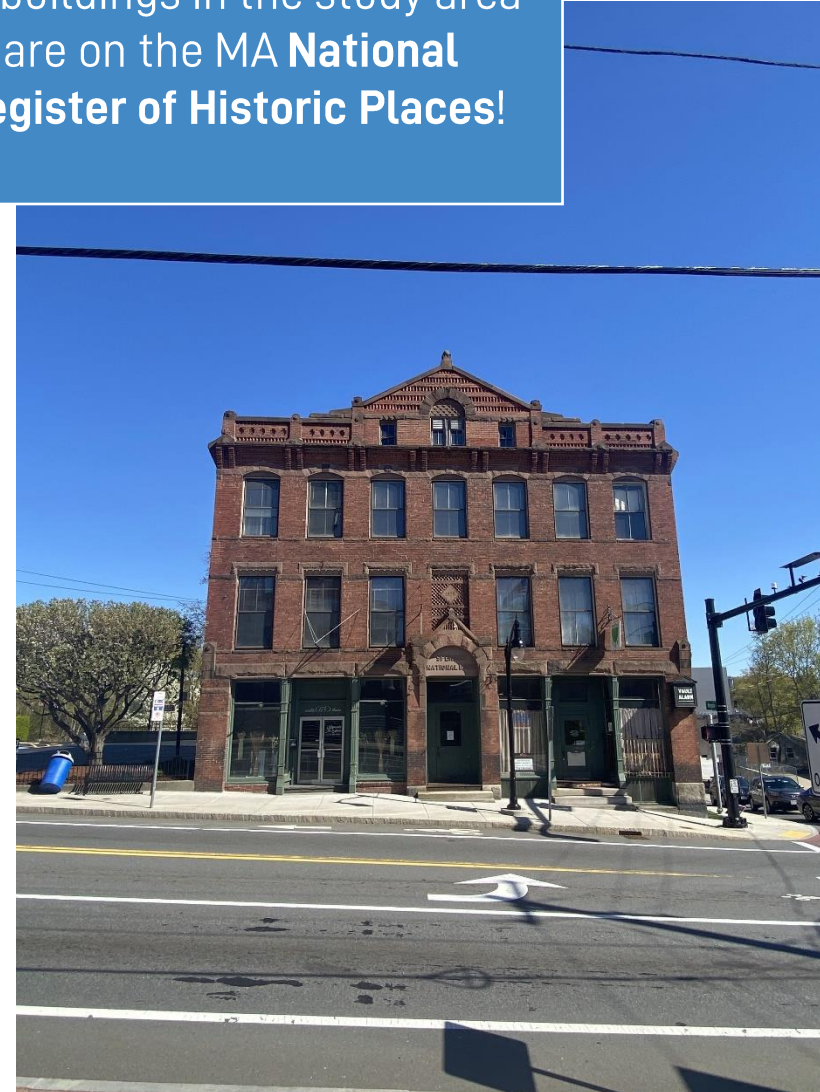


Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

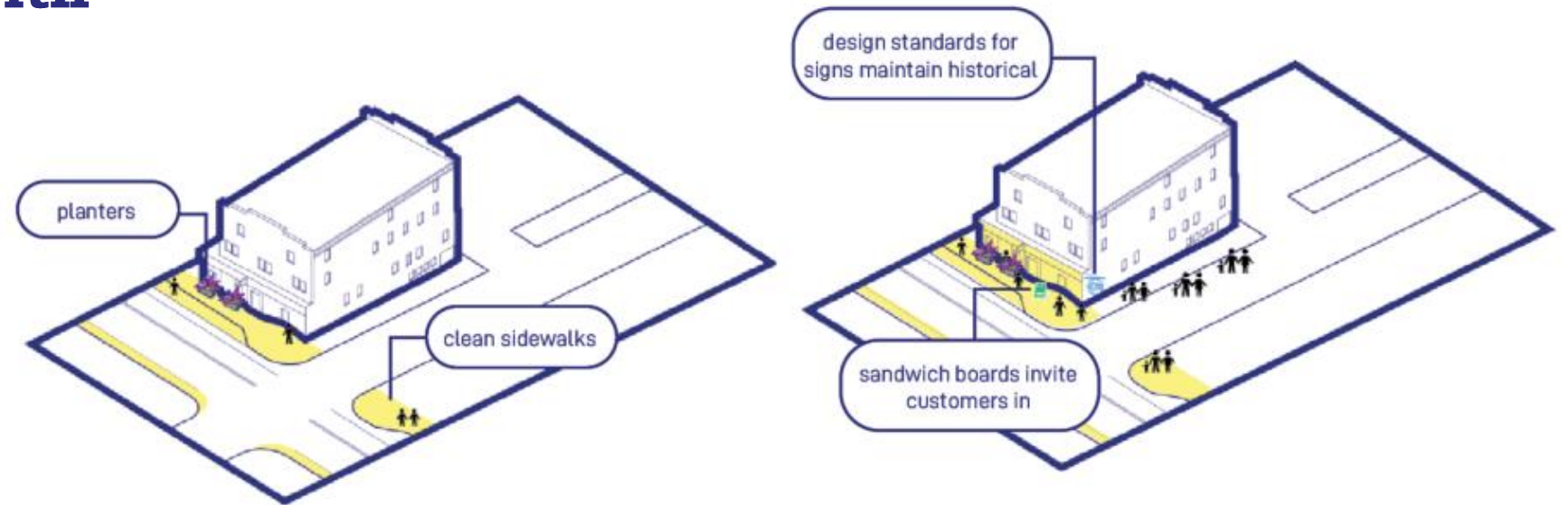
## Key Actions

- Conduct a survey of properties in study area to identify lowest quality structures and facades
- Connect with low scoring property owners.
- Maintain a personal connection with property owners. Provide additional training and assistance where needed
- Ensure long term success by creating policy, incentives, and taxes that encourage reinvestment

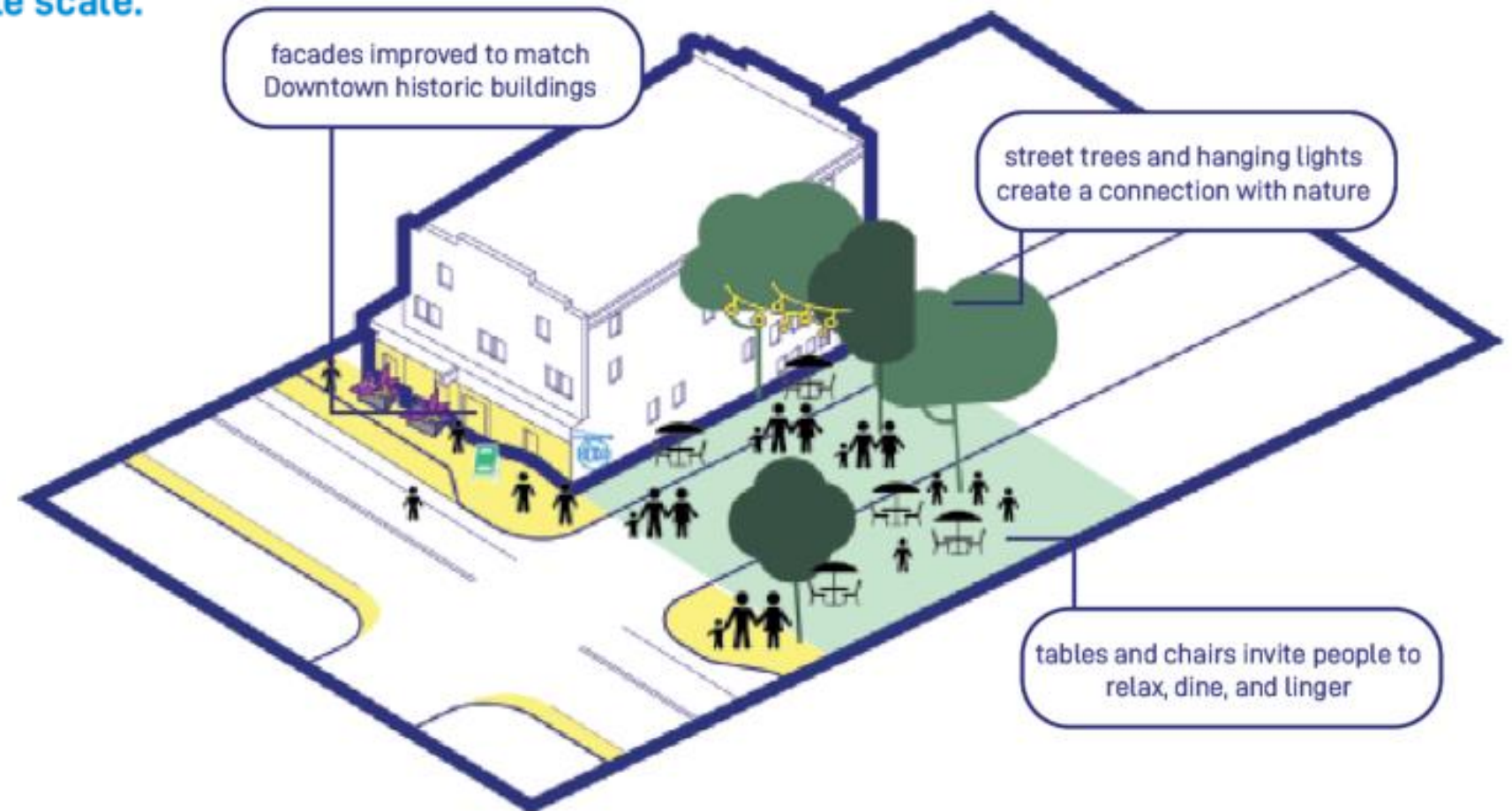
90 buildings in the study area are on the MA **National Register of Historic Places!**



# Invest in Main Street: Work With Property Owners to Invest in Buildings and Sites



Investments can begin at a smaller approachable scale.



In time, facade improvements can be implemented and coordinated with the creation of patios, plazas, and public space.





# Revenue & Sales

Create Pop Up Events at Vacant Locations

Create a Branding Campaign with Cohesive Downtown Identity

Move Spencer's Industries Into the Future While Fostering Retail Growth



# Create Pop Up Events at Vacant Locations



Revenue/Sales

## Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

## Funding



Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

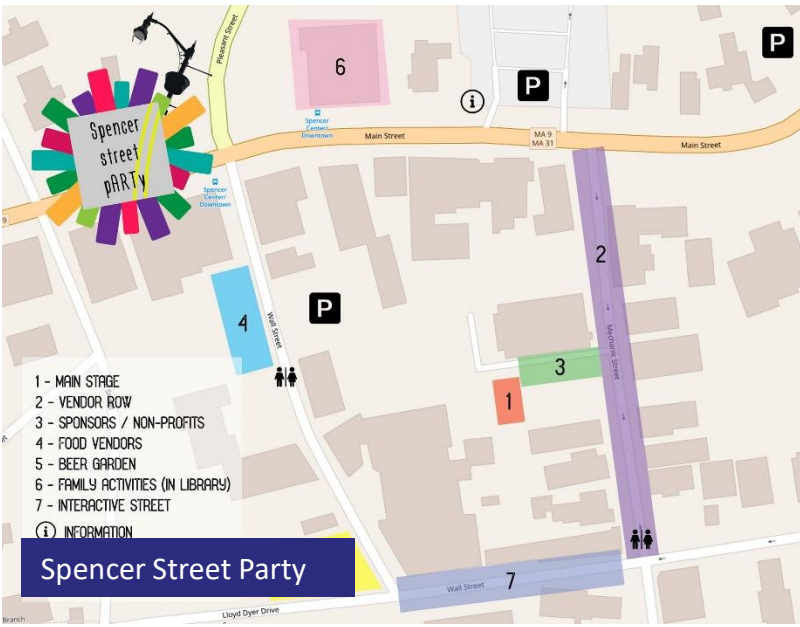
## Key Actions

- Bring together many voices to define scale of the event
- Coordinate with property owners and vendors
- Coordinate and launch event
- Build on momentum of event to increase small business profitability

*Spencer has many organizations who could be partners in pop-up events*



Timbervard Brewing Co.



Spencer Street Party



Spencer Fair



# Create A Branding Campaign with Cohesive Downtown Identity



Revenue/Sales

## Timing



Short (< 5 yrs)

## Funding



Low (< \$50K)

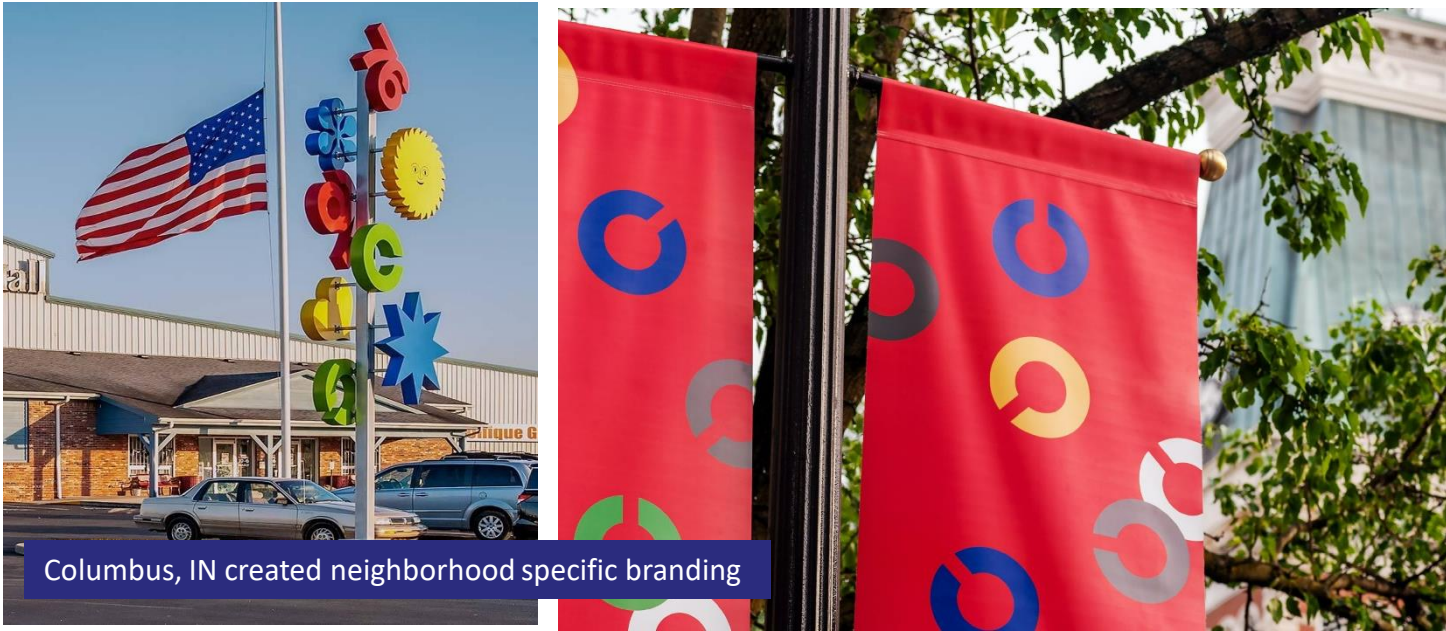
## Key Actions

- Create brand guidelines and a marketing strategy for Town Center as a destination
- Create a signage and wayfinding strategy with banners and cohesive public signage
- Deploy the brand specifically along Main Street within the Town Center study area

*Build on landmarks and key intersections with branding, branding, and wayfinding*



Downtown Spencer



Columbus, IN created neighborhood specific branding



# Move Spencer's Industries Into the Future While Fostering Retail Growth



Revenue/Sales

## Timing



Medium (5-10 yrs)

## Funding



Medium (\$50 - \$200K)

## Key Actions

- Identify a vision for the future of Downtown
- Utilize networks to build momentum
- Conduct a deep dive market analysis
- Create programs and policies to support sustained economic growth in large industrial buildings
- Provide low interest loans and grants to support light manufacturing redevelopment and development
- Improve infrastructure to support growth



Before

**Whitin Mill in Northbridge, MA is a great case study for Mill Revitalization Projects that create community hubs**



After



# Partners

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

## Municipal + Governmental + Volunteer

- Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission
- MassDevelopment
- Board of Selectmen
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Spencer Planning Department
- Economic Development Committee
- Department of Public Works
- Past Downtown Revitalization Project stakeholders/employees
- Mass Department of Transportation
- Department of Recreation and Open Space
- Town Administrators
- Town Clerk
- Nearby municipalities

## Local

- Downtown businesses and property owners
- Landlords
- Residents, visitors, and customers
- Restaurants and entrepreneurs
- Farmers and agricultural organizations/entrepreneurs
- Craftspeople and artisans
- Banks
- Local cable news channel
- Spencer Fair organizers and vendors
- Marketing/branding/graphic design consultants/professionals
- Planning and design consultants

## Intuitional

- Quinsigimond Community College
- Umass Amherst Small Business Development Network

## Regional Small Business Services

- Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce
- Quaboag Valley Community development Corporation
- S.C.O.R.E.
- Entrepreneurship for All (Greater Worcester)
- Small Business Strong
- Main Street America/National Main Streets
- Center for Women & Enterprise
- LISC Digital Growth Accelerator
- Nearby municipal economic development departments

## Cultural

- Massachusetts Cultural Council
- Nearby cultural councils/districts
- Local arts organizations
- Rural Justice Network
- Southeast Coalition of Central MA
- Grassroot
- Patronicity

# 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
  - Indigenous Communities
  - Build Back Better Regional Challenge
  - Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks
  - Good Jobs Challenge
  - State Small Business Credit Initiative
- Rural Community Development Initiative Grant
  - Funds improve housing, community facilities, and community/economic development projects in rural areas*
- Rural Business Development Grants
  - Provides technical assistance and training for small rural businesses.*
- Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
  - FEMA funding for hazard mitigation infrastructure*



- 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*
- Community Development Block Grants
  - Serves a wide range of needs, from downtown development to infrastructure, business assistance, social services, etc.*



- 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*
- 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*
- Massachusetts Cultural Council Festival Program
  - Funds implementation of festivals (Spencer Fair?)*



# 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*



- Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation- Microenterprise Assistance Grants  
*COVID-19 specific grants for businesses with < 5 employees who suffered financial loss due to COVID*



- Patronicity  
*Helps to crowdsource funding for community-led/community placemaking projects*



- Southeast Asian Coalition of Central MA  
*Small Business Technical Assistance Grants help immigrant artisans with financial literacy, marketing assistance, and workspace, as well as grants*



# Let's Talk...

---

- Which recommendation(s) should Spencer 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?

**Todd Miller**

[TMiller@spencerma.gov](mailto:TMiller@spencerma.gov)

Town Planner, Town of Spencer

