

# IMAGINEANDOVER

*A Sense of Place & Destination*



**Leadership ICMA Consulting and  
Peer Assistance Project**

**July 2016**

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# INTRODUCTION

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) offers a program for local government leaders to work with cities and counties across the nation to provide innovative solutions to practical challenges facing urban, suburban, and rural communities. Leadership ICMA is a competitive, intensive two-year ICMA program designed to cultivate key competencies needed for successful leadership at all levels of local government management. In January, the 2016 Leadership ICMA class came together to select four peer consulting projects that leverage their professional knowledge and experiences. The cities selected by the Leadership ICMA Project Teams are Andover, Massachusetts; Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Storm Lake, Iowa; and Fort Collins, Colorado. The Andover Project Team named the project, **IMAGINEANDOVER**.

## scope of work

The Town of Andover asked the Project Team to provide fresh insights and candid advice to evaluate the Downtown area and make recommendations for revitalization. The work product Town officials sought was a “comprehensive playbook” of best practice recommendations focusing on a sense of place and destination. What makes a great destination downtown? A sense of place for who? What assets does Andover have to leverage? What defines and distinguishes Downtown Andover? The Project Team set out to answer these questions and more.

### Areas of emphasis include:

- Strategies to make Downtown Andover a vibrant “destination” location
- Opportunities to create a sense of place
- Options to maximize potential of existing amenities
- Recommendations on complementary uses
- Creative opportunities to build community
- Identification of signature events
- Analysis of business inventory
- Strategies to attract visitors

The Andover Project Team analyzed the existing Downtown, identified best practices both regionally and nationally, and prepared recommendations on enhancing the vibrancy of the Downtown area.



## introducing our project team

The **IMAGINEANDOVER** Project Team consists of the following four members of the Leadership ICMA Class of 2016.



**Lunda Asmani, CPFO**, is the Assistant City Manager in City of Newton, Kansas where he is responsible for the City's \$50 million budget and all aspects of Finance and Human Resources Department. Lunda earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from Wichita State University, as well as Graduate Certificates in Public Finance and Economic Development also from Wichita State University. Lunda is an active member of Government Finance Officers Association, serving on the Treasury and Investment Management Committee and is Past President of Kansas Government Finance Officers Association.



**Rosylen Oglesby** is the Assistant City Manager in the City of Portsmouth, Virginia where she is responsible for the Management Services Division and provides executive level support to the City Manager. Her focus is on providing expert research on various subject matters and high-level analysis services for special projects. Rosylen earned both her Master's Degree in Urban Affairs and a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Norfolk State University. Rosylen is currently pursuing the Certified Public Manager designation from George Mason University.



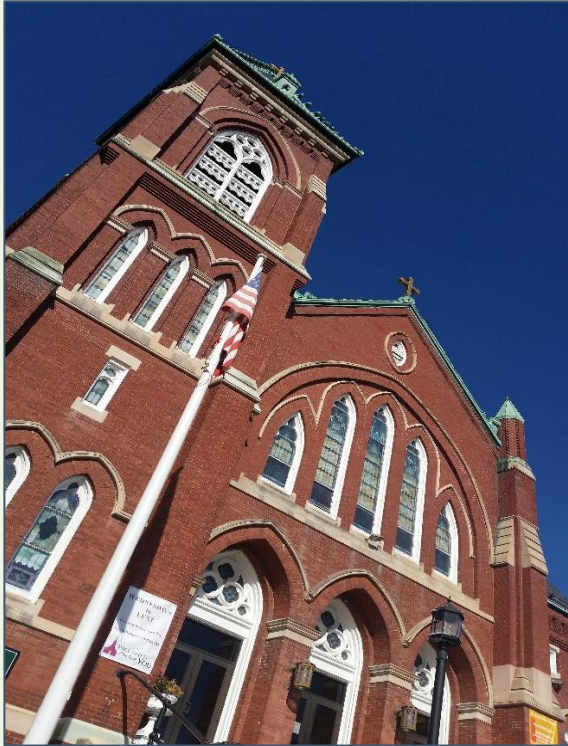
**Emilie Smith** is the Assistant City Manager in the City of Sunrise, Florida where she is responsible for Finance, Human Resources, IT, and Fire-Rescue. She previously held the positions of Budget Manager in the City of Fort Lauderdale and Public Relations Director and Assistant to the City Manager in the City of Lauderdale Lakes. Emilie earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Legal Studies, both from Nova Southeastern University. She is a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and has completed all course work towards her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership.



**Dan Weinheimer** is the Deputy County Manager in Routt County, Colorado and has direct oversight of Planning, Building and Environmental Health while also providing project and administrative support to the County Manager and Commissioners. Previous employment includes serving as Policy and Project Manager in Fort Collins, Colorado, and Administrative Analyst for San Marcos, California. Dan earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Southern California and a Bachelor's in History and Sociology from Syracuse University.



## executive summary



Andover officials requested assistance from the Leadership ICMA program to conduct peer consulting and research in order to offer a “comprehensive playbook” comprised of actions that Town officials and community partners could undertake to revitalize Downtown Andover.

A sense of place and destination is subjective given that what draws one person to an area may not be attractive to another. In conducting field research in Andover, it was apparent to the Project Team that the target audience for the comprehensive playbook is Andover residents and perhaps, regional visitors. This perspective provided the framework for identifying the appropriate recommendations for revitalizing Downtown and engaging Andover residents and business owners.

Residents live in Andover because the community is safe, attractive and family-friendly. Andover is fortunate to have national name recognition. Residents expressed dissatisfaction with the amenities and experiences offered in their Downtown. Town residents are filled with community pride and committed to the long term success of Andover; therefore it is hoped that this document will help to underscore the need for continuing the existing plans, while prioritizing new innovative approaches to capitalize on Andover’s abundant opportunities.

The Project Team was engaged by the Town in January 2016. The Team named the project, **IMAGINEANDOVER**, at an initial brainstorming session and that concept of imagining the future of Andover resonated with residents. The intent of the slogan is to invite residents to contribute their ideas and efforts towards building a better Downtown and embracing the numerous possibilities for the future of the Town of Andover.

The following pages include innovative ideas synthesized into a comprehensive playbook for review, analysis, and consideration. There are twenty-seven recommendations in total for the Town of Andover to consider as part of their efforts to revitalize Downtown.



# summary of recommendations

## categorized by level of difficulty

Type	Title of Recommendation	Description	Level of Difficulty	Page Number
<b>Level of Difficulty to Implement - Easy</b>				
Business Community	<b><i>Business Strategies in Downtown Andover</i></b>	Consider staying open later and on the weekends to cater to working residents and visitors.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	20
Business Community	<b><i>Website Revamp</i></b>	Improve the website for communication, marketing, and economic development purposes is imperative.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	23
Business Community	<b><i>Engagement in Social Media</i></b>	Increase presence on social media including Facebook and Twitter.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	24
Business Community	<b><i>Events for Businesses</i></b>	Include special events for businesses to participate in such as ribbon cuttings, a Business Expo, or a Taste of the Town.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	25
Business Community	<b><i>Downtown Clean Team</i></b>	Establish a Downtown “Clean Team” to provide a clean, safe and welcoming environment in Downtown.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	26
Community Amenities	<b><i>Art in Public Places</i></b>	Embrace public art and liberate Main Street to allow and encourage businesses to incorporate art in public spaces.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	32
Community Amenities	<b><i>“Find Love in Andover” Campaign</i></b>	Develop a “Find Love in Andover” campaign and use it as a way to attract residents and visitors to Downtown.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	34
Building Our Community	<b><i>Embrace Placemaking</i></b>	Embrace placemaking, to include funding and the encouragement of creativity.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	43
Building Our Community	<b><i>Engaging Youth and Seniors</i></b>	Actively engage the Town’s youth and older adults to ensure that all segments of the population participate in shaping the future.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	47

# summary of recommendations

## continued

Type	Title of Recommendation	Description	Level of Difficulty	Page Number
<b>Level of Difficulty to Implement - Easy</b>				
Building Our Community	<b><i>Technical Assistance Grant Program</i></b>	Apply for a technical assistance grant from the State of Massachusetts to assist with Downtown revitalization.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	50
Building Our Community	<b><i>Comprehensive Brand Strategy to Market Andover</i></b>	Invest in branding the Town and creating a comprehensive marketing strategy.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	51
Building Our Community	<b><i>Embracing Community History and Culture</i></b>	Create opportunities to share the history and culture of Andover through Town programs, tours, and smart phone applications.	<b><i>Easy</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	53
<b>Level of Difficulty to Implement - Moderate</b>				
Business Community	<b><i>Improve the Business Mix Downtown</i></b>	Develop a retail and restaurant recruitment strategy to enhance the business mix downtown.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	18
Business Community	<b><i>Chamber of Commerce</i></b>	Sponsor the creation of a dedicated Chamber of Commerce to support local businesses through education, information, and networking.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	22
Community Amenities	<b><i>Active spaces</i></b>	Create active spaces by dedicating space and offering attractions, activities, and amenities for families and visitors of all ages.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	29
Community Amenities	<b><i>Percent for Public Art Program</i></b>	Create a “Percent for Public Art” Program to generate funds to incorporate art in public spaces.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	30
Community Amenities	<b><i>Open Space, Recreation, and Trails</i></b>	Focus attention on open space and recreational activities that engage residents and encourage visitors to access open spaces.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	38
Community Amenities	<b><i>Signage and Wayfinding</i></b>	Create friendly and consistent navigational signs to inform visitors of the surrounding area amenities and strategic locations.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	40

# summary of recommendations

continued

Type	Title of Recommendation	Description	Level of Difficulty	Page Number
<b>Level of Difficulty to Implement - Moderate</b>				
Community Amenities	<b><i>Parking Study Implementation</i></b>	Implement the recommendations from the Parking Study.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Short to Medium-term time frame	41
Building Our Community	<b><i>Special Events</i></b>	Implement a robust special events program to include a signature event that showcases Town amenities.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	42
Building Our Community	<b><i>Create Gathering Spaces</i></b>	Create gathering spaces downtown to facilitate community engagement and draw residents Downtown.	<b><i>Moderate</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	46
<b>Level of Difficulty to Implement - Difficult</b>				
Business Community	<b><i>Business Improvement District (BID)</i></b>	Develop a Business Improvement District (BID) for Downtown Andover where businesses pay an additional tax, assessment, or levy in order to fund projects within the district's boundaries.	<b><i>Difficult</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	21
Community Amenities	<b><i>Create a Downtown Plan for IMAGINEANDOVER</i></b>	Create a comprehensive plan for Downtown to identify a vision for the next five years, the timeline for completion, and the estimated cost for each element of the plan.	<b><i>Difficult</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	28
Community Amenities	<b><i>Utilize Transit Oriented Development (TOD)</i></b>	Seek development in the Downtown corridor that includes mixed-use residential and commercial property in close proximity to the transit station to encourage the use of the Town's quality public transportation.	<b><i>Difficult</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	35
Community Amenities	<b><i>What's Next for Mill District?</i></b>	Redevelop the Mill District and the surrounding neighborhoods.	<b><i>Difficult</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	36
Community Amenities	<b><i>Riverwalk Along the Shawsheen River</i></b>	Collaborate to develop a comprehensive Riverwalk Plan and design guidelines to complement the land based improvements and redevelopment planned for the area.	<b><i>Difficult</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	37
Building Our Community	<b><i>Local Initiative Program - Housing</i></b>	Utilize the Local Initiative Program to work with developers to create affordable housing for young adults and those interested in downsizing.	<b><i>Difficult</i></b> Medium to Long-term time frame	49



# andover, massachusetts - community profile

Andover was originally settled in 1636 under the Native American name of Cochichawicke, a local waterway. The community was incorporated in 1646 as the Town of Andover, named after a town in England where many of its settlers had originated. This long history provides a source of local pride. With more than 370 years of history, Andover residents have played a part in important events in American history from pre-revolutionary times to present.



## DEMOGRAPHICS

Andover is home to approximately 33,000 residents living within 32.1 square miles. It is located in Essex County in the Northeastern part of Massachusetts, approximately 23 miles north of Boston. Located on the banks of the Merrimack River, Andover is bordered on the North by the cities of Lawrence and Methuen, on the east by the Town of North Andover, on the south by the towns of North Reading and Wilmington, and on the west by the Towns of Tewksbury and Dracut.

Andover is situated along the Merrimack and Shawsheen Rivers and through decades of work by dedicated community members is a recreational hub for the region. The Town offers a significant amount of preserved open space and river access for canoeing, kayaking and other outdoor activities.

Many residents described coming to Andover to raise a family because of the quality of K-12 education and community safety. The Town of Andover ranked 37 of 490 wealthiest zip codes in Massachusetts. A 2012 estimate reports the median income for a household was \$118,324 and the median family income was \$144,685. Per capita income was \$53,378 and 4.2% of the population was below the poverty level.

## EMPLOYMENT

Andover residents are well-educated and many commute to work in the Greater Boston area on a daily basis. Locally, there are a mix of high-tech, professional services, manufacturing, and service jobs. In considering strategies for Downtown Andover, the Team looked at existing assets and how to leverage them to meet future needs of the residents.

## TRANSPORTATION

The Town is located at the intersection of Interstates 93 and 495 and has multi-modal transportation options that afford residents easy access to regional destinations. The community is served by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority light rail which provides access to Downtown Boston and Logan International Airport among other destinations. The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority provides a bus system that connects neighboring communities and a weekday bus to Boston.

## EDUCATION

Phillips Academy, located in the Town of Andover, was founded in 1770 and is perhaps the top co-educational independent preparatory high school in the United States.



The school has more than 1,000 students and serves both boarding and day students. Phillips Academy (PA) is known for its rigorous academic program and is home to the Addison Gallery of American Art, a museum of more than 16,000 pieces of artwork from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to present. The collection is valued at over \$1 billion and the museum hosts 10-12 exhibits and events each year which are open to the public.

The Andover Public School District has six elementary schools, three middle schools, and a high school. The District is highly regarded within Massachusetts with a high-performing academic curriculum. The Andover High School students that the Team met were committed to their community's future, participating in activities like Andover Tomorrow and the Shawsheen River Greenway.

## ASSETS

### Location

Boston is a 20-30 minute drive away and offers the “big city” experience that Andover lacks. Neighboring communities offer retail needs including hardware stores, grocery stores, butcher shops, and unique gift shops that are not available in Andover. Experiential consumer activities like movies or mall shopping do not exist in Andover.

Andover is a “name” destination that is known worldwide, and because of Phillips Academy and Merrimack College, located in North Andover, there is high visitation to the area. These visits offer an opportunity for the Town to showcase Downtown activities and keep visitors returning.

### Visionary

Over the years, the Town of Andover has embarked upon numerous planning and assessment processes to develop a vision and a direction for the future of the Town. These processes have resulted in reports such as the “Vision 21” Committee Report, the Andover Residents Survey, the Economic Development Self-Assessment Report, the 2012 Master Plan, and the recent Downtown Andover Parking Study. These reports are excellent resources and provide a blueprint for Town staff and residents’ strategic planning goals for an attractive, vibrant, and thriving Downtown. Implementing these plans is critical to long-term success.

### Community Involvement

Community members are proud of the Town, their history, and the culture. There is abundant access to nature and preserved natural spaces throughout the Town. Educational assets in Andover and the region contribute to the quality of life and opportunity for growth. Cultural amenities include the Andover Historical Center, Addison Gallery of American Art (Phillips Academy), numerous lectures, performances and educational events.



Andover, MA Old Town Hall

### Business Assets

Business sectors in Andover include strong technology and medical sectors focused on research, development, and production. These diverse assets help sustain the community economically; however, because of their geographic distance from Downtown, they do not directly impact the project area.

### Infrastructure

The Old Town Hall is centrally located and offers an opportunity for the Town to achieve its vision for a Downtown destination. The space should be considered as a community gathering place such as an independent theater, community marketplace, a pub, or a piano bar with live music for the local residents to enjoy.

Andover is similar to many other towns with the challenges of development. Growth in Downtown is inevitable as the planned redevelopment of the Town Yard and the historic mills is undertaken. To meet the anticipated future needs of Andover, Town officials must support residential growth with experiences and amenities.

### **CHALLENGES**

The Project Team utilized techniques developed by Peter Kageyama and described in his book, "For the Love of Cities", to elicit anecdotes and examples of what residents loved about the place and what vision that they had for the future of their community.

During both site visits, the Project Team noted the community's focus on the financial details of advancing the Town's goals. With this perspective, the Project Team determined that it is important to consider approaches to revitalization that are equally fiscally prudent and inspirational.

Despite its youth, the community has not promoted the Downtown area as a center of commerce or an active destination. During the site visits, the Project Team recognized that Downtown Andover is lacking retail shopping opportunities and does not offer the variety of experiences or amenities that can be found in neighboring cities. Residents

are accustomed to traveling to other areas for shopping, dining, and entertainment. This is effectively limiting the potential for success in Andover's Downtown.

*"Overnight visitors spend the night where there are things to do after 6:00 pm. In fact, 70% of all consumer retail spending, including that of visitors, now takes place during the evening hours."*

*-The 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Destination*

Many of the businesses on Main Street are professional services (accountants, lawyers and bank offices) that are not open after 5 pm during the week and closed on weekends. Some buildings have unoccupied spaces which can be an economic indicator of distress. This combination of limited hours and vacancies can reinforce to residents that their Downtown does not cater to their needs.

The Town should partner with the Economic Development Council and other interested businesses to undertake a study of the factors relating to Downtown vacancy rates. Subsequently, this study may focus Downtown business recruitment on specific tenant types or business sectors. It should be a priority to fill storefronts with businesses that will attract visitors at various times of the day and keep them in Andover.

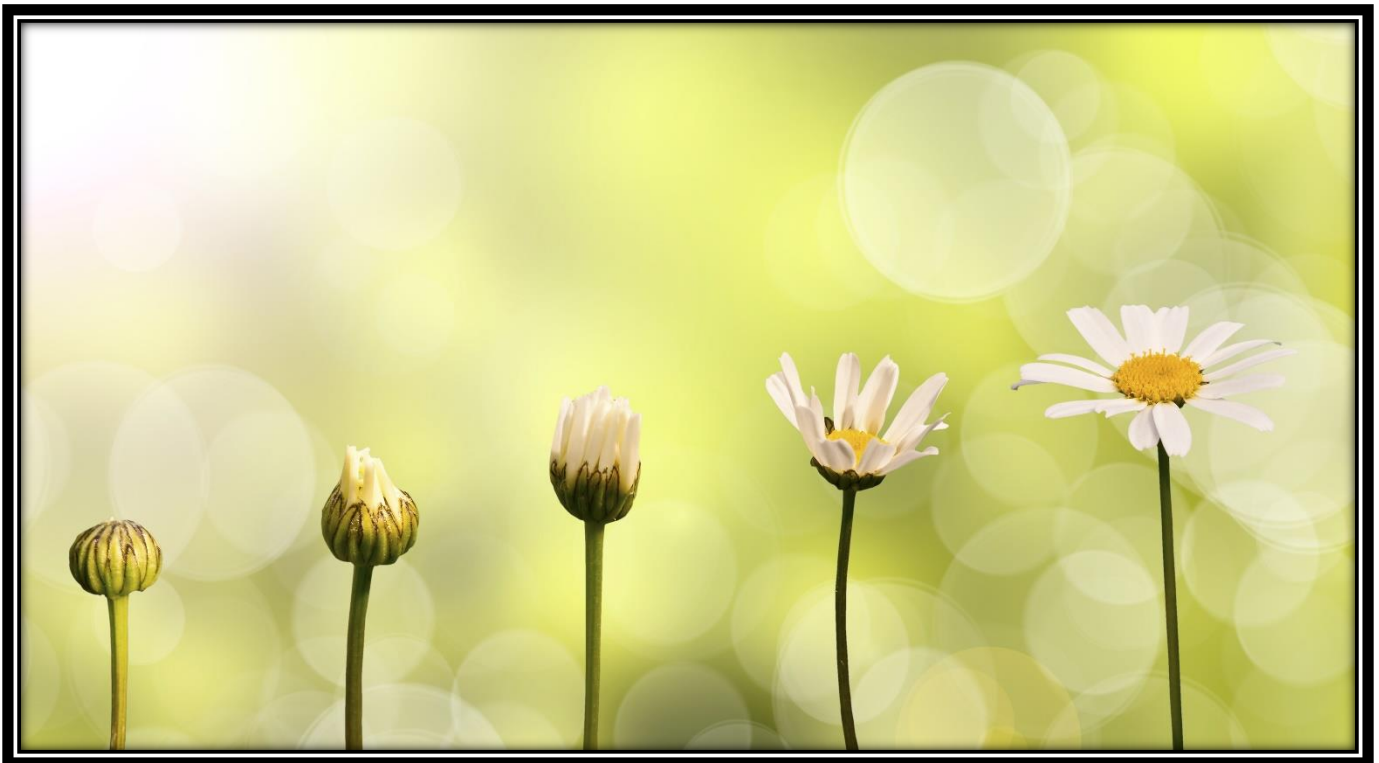


The annual Town Meeting is an opportunity for the Town to seek approval for new ideas and funding. Residents stated that it often takes two to three years for a new concept to be approved at the Town Meeting. This can make it challenging to move projects forward as the excitement and momentum can be lost from year to year. The Project Team observed the successful vote for relocating the Town Yard, which followed the presentation linking the financial case with a compelling vision for the future of Andover.

Andover has numerous plans in place to make progress towards the community vision. To be successful, the Town also needs broad community-based teams to collaborate on important elements and develop a coherent plan of action to implement the plans and the vision for Andover.

A cluster-based economic development strategy could build on sectors of strength – it could include clusters focused on the culture, arts, entertainment, technology, natural resources, connection to nature, history, or educational assets throughout the Town.

Clusters can generate business development through connecting like-minded and related businesses. Many residents indicated that they came to Andover for an immediate connection to nature, vast cultural and educational amenities, rich local history, family-friendly communities, and for the transit connection to employment and Boston. A cluster-based approach can help to incubate the existing assets in order to enhance them.





# summary of site visits

## FIRST SITE VISIT – MARCH 2016

The **IMAGINEANDOVER** Project Team initially visited Andover in March 2016. The site visit included tours of two nearby communities – Newburyport and Amesbury – along with meetings with the Economic Development Council, representatives of the Shawsheen River Greenway project, and Andover Town staff and officials.

## NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS - SITE VISIT

The City of Newburyport was settled in 1635 as part of “Newbury Plantation” on the southern bank of the Merrimack River near where it empties into the Atlantic Ocean. Plum Island, part of Newburyport, is situated on the Atlantic Ocean and offers a unique New England beach experience with vacation homes available as short or long-term rentals. Plum Island is a well-known regional destination and is a draw for weekend visitors and vacationers alike. Downtown Newburyport is vibrant and bustling with visitors shopping, dining, and browsing.

The tour consisted of a brief meeting with Mayor Donna Holaday who discussed what distinguishes Newburyport’s downtown and how the community has developed and invested in that asset. Mayor Holaday stated that destination downtowns require a consistent, concerted community effort to achieve excellence. The Team also met with representatives of the Newburyport Chamber of Commerce, which helped to solidify the importance of dedicated staff in executing a successful business support program, special events, and in branding the City. The local Chamber staff act as ambassadors and as a liaison between the business community and the City.

Downtown Newburyport has a historic New England coastal charm and a variety of restaurants, shops, and activities for visitors that sustain a multiple day experience. Newburyport highlights:

- An attractive mix of businesses
- Pedestrian friendly spaces
- Passive and active spaces for children including an ice skating rink
- Easily identifiable available parking
- Identifiable wayfinding signage
- Restaurants and specialty boutiques
- Public gathering spaces
- Cleanliness
- Reuse of historic structures
- Charming storefront signage
- Ample public art
- Water features and activities
- Tours and excursions for visitors

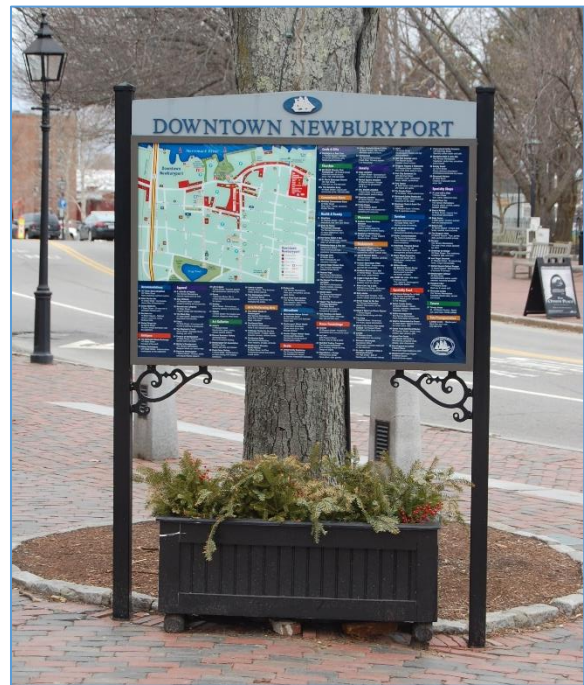


Signage in downtown Newburyport is used to orient visitors, to attract shoppers, and to inform. The Team observed perpendicular signage facing the street to allow shops to be identified from a distance. Sandwich board signs and other whimsical and signage also enhanced the Downtown corridor.

The Team observed ample public seating throughout Newburyport including benches along the Merrimack River for people-watching or relaxing while enjoying a tasty treat from a local shop. The City built a market square gathering place by rerouting traffic and creating an open space “bull nose” that is well-integrated into downtown and appears to be an ideal place for festivals, music, and creating “place”.

Newburyport utilized ample wayfinding to highlight important amenities and places of interest. This signage was helpful to new visitors, especially in the case of the directory of downtown shops. The directory is also helpful to shop owners as it encourages visitors to take a short walk that they otherwise might not have considered.

The mix of businesses and experiences in downtown Newburyport is key to their success. Having complementary businesses ensures that visitors can enjoy their experience while shopping and dining. In downtown Newburyport, visitors can walk the river trail, shop, visit Plum Island, or enjoy an event at the theater. One important aspect of the business mix for Newburyport is that it felt authentic to the City's character and evocative of the New England coastal town experience.



The tour of Newburyport included an example of an adaptive reuse of a historic firehouse. This space was renovated as a small performance theater for event and displaying art just off downtown with a river view. The original historic character was preserved while this new community amenity offers a cultural anchor. The theater is a great example of the importance of diversifying the downtown experience in order to provide a variety of activities, at various times of day.



*Newburyport, MA - Historic Firehouse Reuse*



Walkable spaces like the Riverwalk are a recreational amenity. The other aspect of walkability is safety. The Team observed that pedestrian safety was important to the City as intersections included traffic signals that allowed safe passage across busy streets.



*Newburyport, MA - Downtown Signage*

Newburyport has the type of narrow streets commonly found in downtowns, but the City still offers short-term, on-street parking. There is also surface parking available to encourage visitors to walk the City. Parking can be challenging, but ensuring turnover and circulation in downtown is critical to successful retail. Clean public spaces, without garbage, graffiti, or other blight is a strategy Newburyport has also executed well. The downtown space was inviting to a visitor and despite heavy public use, the outdoor seating and gathering places were clean.

### **AMESBURY, MASSACHUSETTS - SITE VISIT**

The second city toured was the City of Amesbury, Massachusetts. It was selected by Andover staff because of the similarities to Andover. The City has ample historic mills, a beautiful river, a downtown corridor, and a recent relocation of the City's public works town yard. Amesbury is a great example of a Mill District redevelopment and the impact of a vibrant river corridor.

Amesbury was settled in 1645 and, in part based on its proximity to the Powwow River and Merrimack River, Amesbury became a significant manufacturing center. Amesbury is believed to be the site of the first American factory to produce machine-made nails, and held the distinction of manufacturing the finest carriages in the world.

In a brief tour of Amesbury, the Team saw a reuse of a mill structure that included a restaurant, a bakery and a public gathering space. The proximity of the river to these amenities boosted the ambience and appeal of the area.

The final stop was along the river, where the Amesbury public works facility was previously located. This space is now part of the city's connection to the regional trail network. Amesbury's Riverwalk is a scenic pedestrian walkway and bike path that winds along the Powwow River, providing a "greenway" along the old Boston & Maine rail bed from Amesbury's historic downtown to the Carriagetown Marketplace along Route 110. The Riverwalk is part of a growing network of green trails through Amesbury, Salisbury, Newburyport, and Newbury that affords increased mobility and connectivity between communities.



*Amesbury, MA - Powwow River*

## SECOND SITE VISIT - MAY 2016

A member of the Project Team conducted a second site visit to Andover in early May to present preliminary findings, meet with Town officials and residents, and to attend the Town Meeting.

The Town Meeting is an annual event where the Town budget and any other necessary approvals are presented to the Town residents for their consideration. Each resident attending the Town Meeting is entitled to a vote on agenda items. The 2016 Town Meeting was a critical



*Andover, MA - Town Meeting – 2016 - Photo credit Carl Russo*

turning point since the Town secured approval to move forward with relocating the Public Works Town Yard out of the Downtown core, an action that allows for redevelopment of prime space.

Meetings and presentations conducted by the Project Team during the second site visit included Town staff, Economic Development Council, Andover History Center, Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce, Phillips Academy, Andover High School students, and the Shawsheen River Greenway Steering Committee. The Project Team member also drove Massachusetts Avenue from Cambridge to explore other regional communities' downtowns.

The Project Team presentation focused on preliminary observations from the March site visit and the lessons from research conducted to that point. The general presentation themes for the sense of place and destination included focusing on access to nature, history and culture. These three areas of opportunity separate Andover from neighboring and regional communities and can provide experiential opportunities for residents and visitors.

During one discussion, a point was made that Andover has been consistently at a crossroads of historical events since the 1600s. This analogy also works for Andover being at a crossroads of rivers, roads, trails and animal movement. Further, the analogy represents Andover being at a crossroads for its future given the approved redevelopment of the Town Yard. Stakeholders must focus on the future of Andover's downtown and the anticipated impact that the new prime redevelopment project will have on the Town.

Overall, the second site visit was extremely productive as it provided the **IMAGINEANDOVER** Project Team a chance to have in-depth discussions with several stakeholder groups. The Team felt that this visit underscored the focus of creating a sense of place and destination that Andover imagines. Rather than becoming a tourist hub, the focus is on developing a sense of place and destination downtown for residents and fostering a coherent vision that brings together the many distinct parts for Andover residents, visitors and business owners.



# DETAILED FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## Overview



The Project Team worked with Town officials to develop the scope of work for this project. The recommendations offered are based upon the information and insights gained during the site visits, documents shared by Town staff, meetings with Town officials and community leaders, information gathered at the Town Hall Meeting, and from significant best practice research completed by members of the **IMAGINEANDOVER** Project Team.



Each recommendation in this report went through a comprehensive review and analysis to determine whether it was feasible for Andover. The Team included national and international best practice ideas to ensure that options were vast and diverse. Each recommendation was vetted to ensure applicability to the Town of Andover and the Team attempted to link implementation examples from within Massachusetts as much as possible.

The Project Team believes in planning and implementation. In an effort to produce a document that is both informational and attainable, most recommendations are cost effective and can be reasonably implemented. Some recommendations even include a revenue source, sponsorship recommendations, or programs for obtaining technical assistance for the Town of Andover.



Wherever possible, each of the twenty-seven items in the playbook includes a description of the recommendation, benefits of the recommendation, best practices, funding, and other resources. Applicable photos were also included to allow the reader to visualize the recommendation or how it would appear if implemented.

The **IMAGINEANDOVER** Team hopes that all stakeholders will avail themselves of the information compiled in this report. Andover has remarkable potential that should be harnessed and used to revitalize the downtown area. This robust playbook should set the stage for creative thinking and innovative strategies to move Andover forward for years to come.

# BUSINESS COMMUNITY

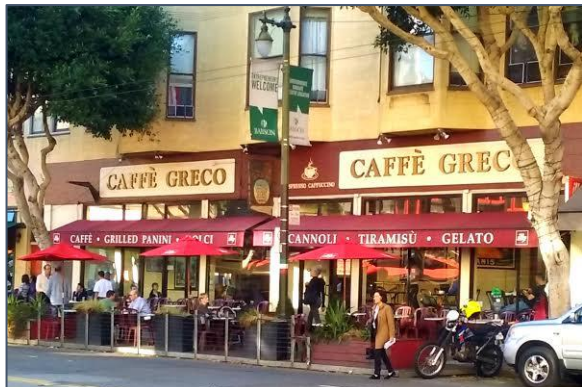
## improving the business mix downtown

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should consider developing a retail and restaurant recruitment strategy to enhance the business mix downtown.*

Developing a retail recruitment strategy is key to ensuring that the business mix helps the Town achieve its goals of having a vibrant Downtown. Town officials must support the vision for retail recruitment both from a political standpoint, as well as policies, programs, and funding. Town ordinances and their implementation should reflect the priority of recruiting suitable businesses to Andover.

A strategic and synergistic business mix is essential to any successful downtown district. As stated in the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) guide, *Improving Tenant Mix*, “The mix of goods and services in a commercial shopping district is one of the most significant drivers of customer visitation. While lighting, street furniture, trash receptacles, parking, and other amenities certainly contribute substantially to a safe and comfortable shopping environment, shoppers ultimately visit a district to patronize the businesses.”

The Downtown corridor should include a variety of different uses that draws people for shopping, services, work, lodging, churches, housing, entertainment, arts, library, dining, gathering, and more.



A retail and restaurant recruitment strategy should be employed to attract and retain the types of businesses that would appeal to the Town residents. Businesses should be strategically located in a manner that preserves retail continuity on both sides of the street and allows for safe pedestrian access. A successful business arrangement also requires a pedestrian environment that includes attractive amenities such as landscaping, public art, seating areas, inviting sidewalks, safe crosswalks, and convenient on and off-street parking.

As part of the recruitment strategy, it is important to determine the right price point for leases. The Town and Chamber of Commerce should be aware of how the Downtown Andover lease rates compare to other comparable Massachusetts downtown districts.



Where possible, Andover should consider offering economic incentives for strategic actions to enhance the downtown business mix. This could include creating opportunities to relocate existing businesses to other spaces along Main Street to assemble or cluster space for retailers and restaurants. Clustering can be very successful by working cooperatively with the businesses and building owners towards a common goal. An improved mix of businesses downtown will help to provide opportunities for Town residents to shop and stay in Andover.



Improving the retail ecosystem also requires effort on the part of the Town. Businesses relocating to Andover would benefit from a streamlined, consistent, and user-friendly permit process, with pre-identified sites for retail, and a specific set of business recruitment or retention tools including economic incentive packages.

By knowing the local consumer base and the various demographics represented, the Town can focus its economic development strategy to target specific retailers that the local community would support. Identifying recruitment targets helps Town officials efficiently use their time to develop specific underutilized parcels that might help transform Downtown.

### ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

Adopting a clear retail and restaurant strategy can better balance the Downtown consumer experience. The Downtown area lacks certain business types that could be addressed with economic incentives for targeted recruitments.

The Project Team was informed of unsuccessful attempts to recruit specific retailers to Downtown. This demonstrates an opportunity for the Town to research and implement a new strategy to attract desired retailers to Andover.

Equally important is having a written strategy that can act as a rationale for not pursuing a retailer and a way to communicate strategies to stakeholders and residents.

### ***Best Practices***

Snoqualmie, WA:

[http://www.ci.snoqualmie.wa.us/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core\\_Download&EntryId=12900&PortalId=0&TabId=273](http://www.ci.snoqualmie.wa.us/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=12900&PortalId=0&TabId=273)

Downtown Baltimore, MD:

[http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/Publications/Retail/Retail\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/Publications/Retail/Retail_Strategy.pdf)

Salem, MA:

<http://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/uploads/actionplanreport.pdf>

### ***Funding***

Most cities utilize a consultant to develop a retail and recruitment strategy. Another option is to pursue a State of Massachusetts technical assistance grant as discussed on page 49 of this playbook.

### ***Resource***

*ICSC Improving Tenant Mix: A Guide for Commercial District Practitioners. 2014.*



# business strategies in downtown andover

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover businesses should consider staying open later and on the weekends to cater to working residents and visitors.*

During the Project Team site visit, it was evident that many of the businesses are only open for part of the day (typically 10 am until 5 or 6 pm) and are also closed for some or all of the weekend. Downtown hours of operation are advertised on the Andover Business Community Association website.

Unfortunately, the hours that many of the Downtown businesses are open coincides with the work schedule of most residents. Limited business hours can deter visitors from coming to the area.



A vibrant Downtown offers the right products during the time is when customers want to do their shopping. Specifically, the landlords of the shopping plazas could consider a continuous operation covenant with their tenants to ensure that the businesses are open for visitors. Lease agreements could include defined operating hours and days of the week.



In addition to having businesses open in the evenings and weekends, Downtown Andover would benefit from restaurants and other venues for socializing or special events. According to the Roger Brooks International website, “The number one activity of visitors in the world is shopping, dining and entertainment in a pedestrian-friendly, intimate setting – your downtowns. This is where 80% of all non-lodging tourism spending takes place. That’s right: 80%.”

Retail businesses must be open in the evenings and weekends to attract residents and tourists to Main Street. As discussed in the article, *The 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Destination*, “Overnight visitors spend the night where there are things to do after 6:00 pm. In fact, 70% of all consumer retail spending, including that of visitors, now takes place during the evening hours.”

## ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

To promote vibrancy, the Downtown must have the correct mix of retailers that are open for business at desired times.

## ***Funding***

This is a recommended strategy for implementation by the landlords and tenants to attract visitors. There is no direct fiscal impact to the Town.

## ***Resource***

Roger Brooks International, Inc.  
[www.rogerbrooksinternational.com](http://www.rogerbrooksinternational.com)



# business improvement district (BID)

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover and Downtown merchants should develop a Business Improvement District (BID) for Downtown Andover, which is a defined area in Downtown where businesses pay an additional tax, assessment, or levy to fund projects within the district's boundaries.*

A BID creates a revenue stream that funds services at a level over and above that which would normally be supplied by the Town. This tool has been used nationally for a variety of purposes including façade maintenance and improvement, street and sidewalk maintenance, and additional security in a particular area.

Many BIDs formed in recent years are intended to improve the district's competitive position and are geared towards promoting economic opportunities. BIDs are as common in small towns and suburbs as they are in larger city neighborhoods.

Business Improvement Districts are popular with local governments and sponsoring private sector stakeholders for the following reasons:

1. They are self-financing. The members agree on a cost-sharing formula at inception and can rely on the planned benefits because the assessment is a multi-year resource.
2. BIDs fund improvements to the appearance of the area which helps to increase the value of properties and can add to local revenues, such as property taxes.
3. A well-run BID is entrepreneurial and can attract grants and other outside money to the area. BIDs have historically been awarded funds for security programs commercial façade improvements, pedestrian lighting, and directional signage.

4. BIDs result in a more attractive shopping area for local residents and tourists. Increased visitation can lead to more business for the Downtown tenants.

5. Commercial centers with limited shops, unkempt areas, and minimal foot traffic can present a bad downtown image which can negatively affect residential property values in the area. BIDs have been proven to successfully overcome these challenges.

## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

This concept can be tailored to the needs and desires of the Downtown business community and the Town. BIDs can help to support economic development strategies for the Downtown area. The BID could also fund dedicated staff for Downtown Andover business support.

## **Funding**

A successful BID supplements investment from the Town to enhance a specific district. The property values in areas with BIDs have been proven to increase as a result of the additional services provided in these areas.

## **Resources**

Massachusetts business improvement district process and regulations:

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/bid.html>

Amherst, MA Downtown BID:

<http://www.amherstdowntown.com/>

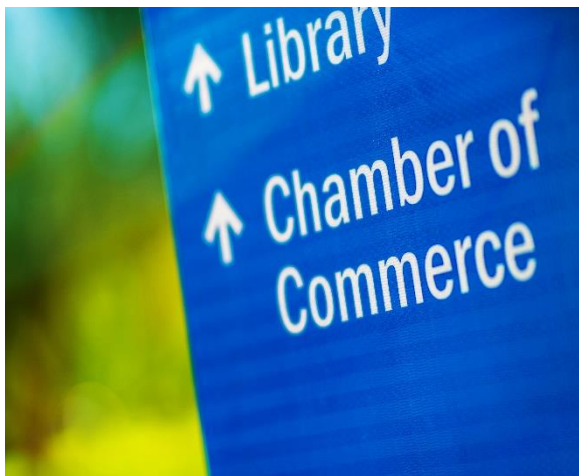
Case study – Somerville, MA implementation:

[http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=larp\\_ms\\_projects](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=larp_ms_projects)

# chamber of commerce

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should sponsor the creation of a dedicated Chamber of Commerce to support local businesses through education, information, and networking.*

A Chamber of Commerce can serve as a support group of like-minded individuals with common goals of ensuring success for businesses. The Chamber serves as a source for discovering potentially untapped resources in many communities. Support and resources from a Chamber of Commerce can be key to the success of local businesses as they offer support networks and hands-on assistance. These resources may include online groups, social media, and the local community.



A Chamber of Commerce can be essential to the growth and in some cases the revitalization of a local area. Through lobbying activities and grant preparation activities, the Chamber of Commerce can also help to find some much-needed funding to improve a local area.

The Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce currently operates the Andover Chamber, but limited support may not offer enough resources to meet Andover's goals. A desirable model is one like Newburyport's Chamber, where a staff member is engaged with Town leaders and businesses. That model engages in local advocacy on behalf of

the business community, partners with the Town on special events and hosting visiting delegations, as well as basic business support.

## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

A focused Chamber of Commerce will stimulate the area and provide an avenue for the promotion of businesses, particularly small businesses. Chambers remain strong and legitimate organizations for promoting local products and services and supporting the business community.

## **Best Practices**

Lawrence, Kansas - Chamber of Commerce  
Tamarac, Florida - Chamber of Commerce  
Newburyport, MA – Chamber of Commerce

## **Funding**

A contribution from the Town to start a new Chamber of Commerce is recommended. Funding would support the following:

- Creation of an Andover Chamber of Commerce website
- Creation of a logo and marketing materials to brand the Chamber
- Development of a Welcome Packet
- Printing costs for area maps, business cards, and informational brochures
- Signage for events including banners, directional signage, and sandwich boards
- Lease of a small space to hold monthly meetings
- Purchase of a computer, phone, and other office equipment

Indirect costs may include staff time dedicated to facilitating the process and training volunteers.

# andover website revamp

**RECOMMENDATION: The Town of Andover should hire a firm to create a new professional website for the Town. Improving the website for communication, marketing, and economic development purposes is imperative.**

The Town of Andover’s website should be modernized to effectively share information with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders interested in Andover. The organization and presentation of information on the Town’s website is a key factor in making the Town an attractive place to work, play, and live. The website is the first impression and opportunity to inform residents and visitors of Town news and noteworthy events.

The Town website should be utilized as a marketing tool, as well as a communication tool. It should be up-to-date and entice visitors through beautiful photography, timely information, and a professional layout.

## Benefits of this Recommendation

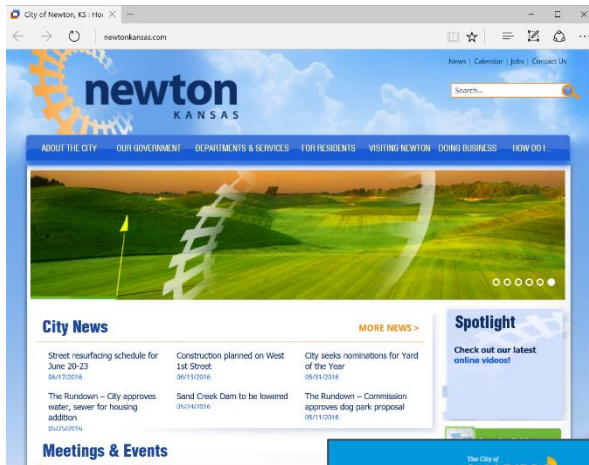
One of the first places that companies will look when they are considering a start-up or relocation is the Town’s website. The website will either attract or deter a potential new business. Downtown events can be advertised on the home page and the Town can engage residents on plans and possible future projects from the website.

## Best Practices

Many cities have updated their websites to be attractive and informative. It is the first place that people will look for Town information.

## Funding

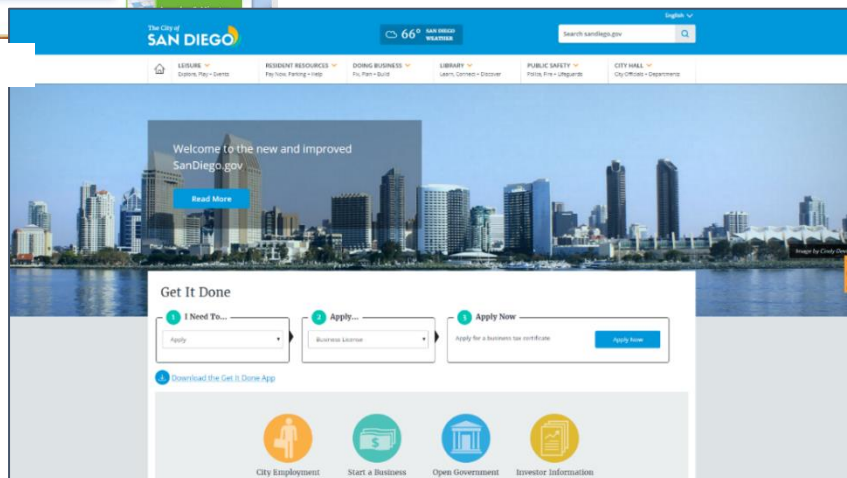
The estimated fiscal impact would be the cost of a new website which is estimated at approximately \$30,000.



Newton, Kansas Website



Durango, Colorado Website



San Diego, California Website



# engagement in social media

**RECOMMENDATION: The Town of Andover should develop a social media guide and increase their presence on social media including Facebook and Twitter.**

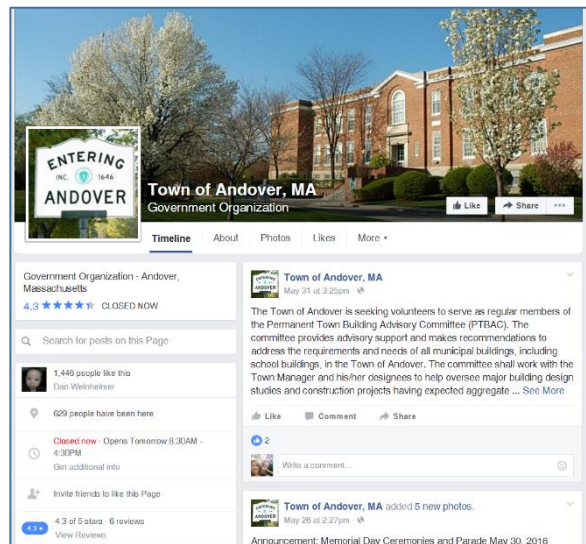
Andover maintains Town accounts on Twitter and Facebook that offer residents an opportunity to subscribe to informational updates about community events. Andover staff has recently increased the Town presence on Twitter and should continue to use social media platforms for communicating events, economic development, and information sharing. The Facebook account is utilized about once per month, but should be utilized on a more regular basis to promote the Town, special events, and opportunities for residents to engage with the government.

A robust social media presence can ensure that a community gets information directly from the source rather than waiting on or relying upon news outlets to tell the story. Short videos can be used to describe a process or project, including budget planning or the Town Yard, to inform residents in an interesting and timely manner. The other benefit of social media is that the Town is able to track the interests of residents based on what generates the most comments or traffic. Another benefit is that attractive pictures can be retweeted or “liked” on Facebook to build on community pride.

Building a more robust social media strategy is most effectively accomplished by starting with a social media guide. Designating specific staff with permission to post and respond to messages is important. This helps to ensure a consistent “voice” to the posts. Social media should reflect a less formal voice than other Town communication. Using the photo-based platforms to gather images from residents and visitors is another way to leverage social media in a collaborative way.

## Benefits of this Recommendation

Social media has become ubiquitous in local government. Many Mayors, City Councilmembers and Selectmen, City and Town Managers maintain their own social media accounts that are used to promote their communities and provide a “backstage pass” to information and events. The accessibility to Town officials is an expectation of residents and can amplify community leaders’ voices. Town staff should develop a social media policy and procedures before engaging in social media too heavily.



## Best Practices

Bang the Table social media tips:  
<http://bangthetable.com/2013/06/08/my-ten-favourite-lists-of-twitter-tips/>

Five Tips for Successful City and Town Social Media Efforts (MMA):  
[https://www.mma.org/resources-mainmenu-182/doc\\_download/686-five-tips-for-successful-city-and-town-social-media-efforts](https://www.mma.org/resources-mainmenu-182/doc_download/686-five-tips-for-successful-city-and-town-social-media-efforts)

## Funding

There is no cost for participation in social media. Andover can use social media to help brand the Town, announce special events, and generate excitement about Andover.

## events for businesses

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should identify special events for businesses to participate in such as ribbon cuttings, a Business Expo, or a Taste of the Town.*

One of the challenges that downtown Andover is experiencing is the lack of vibrancy in the Downtown corridor. To ensure that residents know that a business is open and available to serve the public, the Town should host regular special events for businesses.

Special events like sidewalk sales, ribbon cuttings, grand re-openings, a Taste of the Town, or an evening signature event such as a dinner recognizing a “Small Business of the Year”, could sell tickets and use the proceeds to support a new Downtown project. The Town could also honor one business at each meeting of the Selectmen. This will help to market the Town businesses and remind the Andover community of the services that are available at their fingertips.



Seattle, WA - Ballard Avenue Sidewalk Sale

In addition to opportunities for individual business recognition, the Town could also hold a business expo and invite residents to come and explore the businesses located in Andover. The businesses would set up individual booths to showcase their products and services to residents. This special event provides an opportunity for Downtown businesses to attract new customers.

Another opportunity for businesses would be to host workshops to assist other business owners. These classes could be finance, leadership, marketing, customer service, computers or other specialized skills to assist small business owners. Many small business owners are experts in their field and not necessarily trained corporate executives. It is important to provide them with the tools they will need to operate a successful business.



Greater Silver Lake Chamber of Commerce Business Expo

### **Benefits of this Recommendation**

The goal is to attract the businesses and provide them with the marketing, skills, and exposure in the community to thrive in Andover.

### **Best Practices**

Business workshops and special events are a common function of municipal economic development programs.

### **Funding**

Some special events would require a contribution from businesses to participate. The Town could assist with the marketing and may have some dedicated staff time for running the event.

# downtown clean team

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should establish a Downtown “Clean Team” to provide a clean, safe and welcoming environment to all who live, work, or visit Downtown.*

During the site visits, it was noticed that the Downtown corridor could benefit from a focus on cleanliness and maintenance. Enhancing the Downtown corridor and the public right-of-way would improve the experience for both visitors and business owners.

Cities with clean teams cite top priorities for Downtown’s as cleanliness, safety, and hospitality. Many of the Downtown programs supported daily litter patrol and frequent pressure washing. A clean downtown can be perceived as welcoming and safe to residents and business owners.



*Pittsburg, PA - Clean Team*

A Clean Team is recommended for Downtown Andover to provide for continuous garbage pick-up, landscaping maintenance, snow removal, sidewalk pressure washing, gum removal, graffiti removal, painting and cleaning right of way furnishings, light pole maintenance, public art maintenance, and overall safety and curb appeal of the Downtown.



## ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

This supplemental maintenance to the Downtown area will improve the visitor experience and encourage pride within the community. A well-kept area will also appear more charming and attract more visitors to the area.

Establishing a Downtown Clean Team sends a message to the residents and businesses that we love our Town and we want it to look beautiful always. A cleaner Downtown can even have an impact on security and encourage more visitors to come and stay in downtown. Once the Town starts taking more initiative to keep Downtown in pristine condition, others will begin to make additional effort as well. A clean downtown is more inviting and helps to create gathering spaces.



## **Best Practices**

Downtown Clean Teams are becoming more common. Recently, the City of Fort Lauderdale implemented a Clean Team in their downtown areas. Numerous other cities have implemented downtown cleaning programs such as Reading, PA; Providence, RI; Los Angeles, CA; Cincinnati, OH; Detroit, MI; and Delray Beach, FL.



*Lincoln Square, NY - Clean Team*



*San Francisco, CA - Clean Team Maintains Sidewalks*

## **Funding**

The Clean Team is also an initiative that can be developed and funded by a Business Improvement District (BID). The Clean Team would consist of two full time employees wearing uniforms and utilizing the necessary tools and equipment to maintain the areas.

The fiscal impact of this program would be the cost of a two-person crew, a small utility vehicle, and the uniforms, equipment, and supplies needed to maintain the areas.

The cost of this program could be shared or funded by a downtown Business Improvement District (BID).

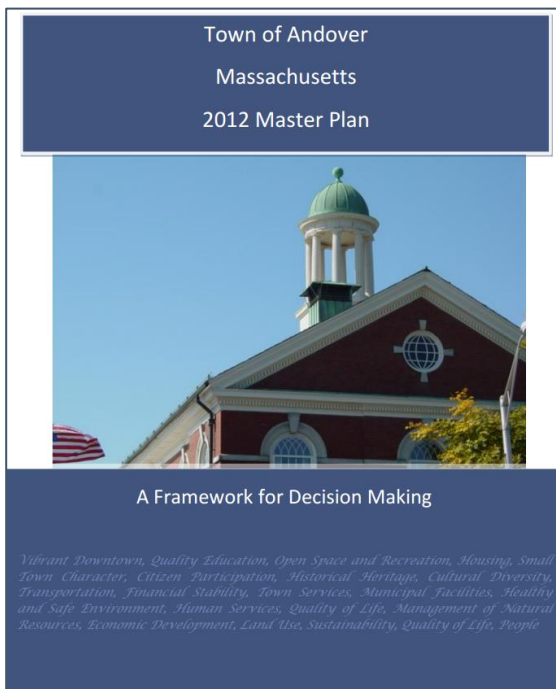
# COMMUNITY AMENITIES

## create a downtown plan - IMAGINEANDOVER

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should create a comprehensive plan for Downtown. This plan would identify the vision for the next five years, the timeline for completion, and the estimated cost for each element of the plan.*

Andover has the benefit of numerous studies, including a 2012 Master Plan that can be utilized to improve the Downtown area. Because there are so many recommendations and improvements to be implemented, a comprehensive vision and plan for Downtown is necessary. The comprehensive plan should include the following key components:

1. A long term vision
2. A timeline for completion
3. Public-Private Partnerships
4. Options for funding improvements
5. Marketing plan



According to *A Manual for Downtowns*, “The primary goal of revitalization efforts is to improve the livability and quality of life in a community by expanding and attracting employment, shopping and social activities.”

A comprehensive plan for Downtown will serve as the community blueprint for moving forward. It is important to memorialize the process and timeline to ensure that all stakeholders stay the course. This plan for revitalizing Andover may require substantial amounts of individual time and effort; however, the chance for success is much greater with a plan of action that includes planned coordination among various stakeholder groups to ensure an agreed upon final goal. The final plan should result in a project priority list to guide how the Town will move forward with revitalizing Downtown.

### **Benefits of this Recommendation**

A Downtown Plan can help Andover with prioritizing projects and sequencing implementation with project funding. As part of a Downtown Plan, a stakeholder group could be convened to ensure significant public outreach. By developing a Downtown Plan in this manner, it would be possible to ensure community support for the elements of the plan and their funding.

### **Best Practices**

Downtown Athol, MA: A Revitalization Plan.  
[http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1037&context=larp\\_grad\\_research](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1037&context=larp_grad_research)

The State of Cities: Revitalization Strategies.  
[https://macdc.org/sites/default/files/research/Final Small Cities Report 0.pdf](https://macdc.org/sites/default/files/research/Final%20Small%20Cities%20Report%200.pdf)

### **Funding**

The Town would need to dedicate staff time or hire a consultant to create the Downtown Andover Comprehensive Plan. Community meetings and an interactive public engagement process with stakeholders will ensure a quality plan.

# active spaces

**RECOMMENDATION: The Town of Andover should create active spaces by dedicating space and offering attractions, activities, and amenities for families and visitors of all ages.**

Active spaces for recreation, social interaction and programs are critical elements for a thriving community. Parks and open space improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our communities, and make our towns and neighborhoods more attractive.



Austin, TX - Downtown Active Space

There are no strict rules or regulations when it comes to active spaces. The key is finding the right amenities for the anticipated visitors. Success stories include small performance spaces for live music or shows, public art as seating, play areas, comfortable seating, music playing in parks, or even splash pads for children and joggers to cool off on a hot day.

The Old Town Hall may offer an opportunity for the Town to create some active space and bring vibrancy to Downtown. The large, flexible space is centrally located in Downtown and could be repurposed as a community gathering place. During the Project Team site visit, several residents

suggested utilizing the facility as an independent movie theater or dividing the space into an incubator for small businesses. It could also be converted into a family friendly restaurant or pub for the locals and the college students to frequent. Andover staff expressed concerns about winter maintenance as a possible barrier for modifications to Downtown.



Gilbert, AZ - Downtown Splash Pad

## Benefits of this Recommendation

Active spaces can raise property values in the Town, increase social connections, and create a sense of pride in the community.

## Resources

Power of 10+: Applying Placemaking at Every Scale:

<http://www.pps.org/reference/the-power-of-10/>

The Return on Investment in Parks and Open Space in Massachusetts:

<http://communitypreservation.org/TPL-MA-ROI.pdf>

## Funding

The cost of this recommendation would largely depend on the type of active space implemented.



# percent for public art program

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should create a “Percent for Public Art” Program to generate funds to incorporate art in public spaces.*

Public spaces is defined by the American Planning Association as, “A gathering spot or part of a neighborhood, downtown, special district, waterfront or other area within the public realm that helps promote social interaction and a sense of community.” (www.planning.org) To further enhance public spaces, it is recommended to create a program to fund art in public places.

The Percent for Public Art program is popular throughout the United States, with about 200 municipal programs, according to the Chicago Affairs and Special Events website. The Program uses an ordinance or policy to commit a percentage of the value of development projects for the commission, purchase, fabrication, and installation of public artwork (American for the Arts). Most programs typically designate 1% of the total construction project or renovation budget to public art.

The art exhibit can include murals, sculptures, memorials, integrated architectural or landscape architectural work, community art, and digital new media. Art projects are typically incorporated on a municipal-owned site such as a civic center, library, or park.

### ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

Public art will improve the quality of life and boost the local economy. It can also promote the talents of local professional artists. This alternative source of funding for public art is an effective way to implement a public art program.

The Town of Andover will benefit because it provides art in public spaces to expand residents’ and visitors’ understanding of the town’s culture. It can also serve to preserve the Town’s cultural history through artwork.



*Cambridge, MA - Public Art - Lord Madeline Iron Works*

### ***Best Practices***

The City of Cambridge, MA passed an ordinance in 1979 that required 1% of the construction cost of municipal capital investment be designated for public artwork. To date, Cambridge has over 200 pieces of public art in a variety of locations including community centers, schools, libraries, parks, plazas, and sidewalks. The Cambridge program is centered on the character and history of its location including Revolutionary figures as shown above.

The City of Los Angeles, CA requires that each private development project, valued at \$500,000 or more, pay an arts fee based on the square footage of the building or 1% of the project's Building and Safety permit valuation, whichever is lower. Developers have the option to work with the Department of Cultural Affairs to oversee the project or pay the fee associated with their project.



Los Angeles, CA - Public Art - Medallion's Flower Power



Portsmouth, VA - Public Art - I've Been Kissed Bronze Toad

The City of Portsmouth, VA created a *Support Portsmouth Public Art* (SPPA) program in 2010 through a group of volunteers who create and install public art to be enjoyed by all. The SPPA obtains the funding for the project and then works with the City and business owners to identify the location for the art. One example of public art purchased through this program is the *"I've Been Kissed"* toad sculpture shown above.

## Funding

In order to implement the Percent for Public Art Program, the Town of Andover will likely have to adopt an ordinance to dedicate the funding source.

Managing the program in-house will result in dedicated staff time.

## Resources

"Public Art Network Best Practice Goals and Guidelines" by American for the Arts. Online: [http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2013/by\\_program/networks\\_and\\_councils/public\\_art\\_network/PAN%20Best%20Practices%204%202011.pdf](http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2013/by_program/networks_and_councils/public_art_network/PAN%20Best%20Practices%204%202011.pdf)

"Public Art and Private Development Resource Guide for Developers" by American for the Arts. Online: [http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2013/by\\_program/networks\\_and\\_councils/public\\_art\\_network/PublicArtPrivateDevelopmentFINAL.pdf](http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2013/by_program/networks_and_councils/public_art_network/PublicArtPrivateDevelopmentFINAL.pdf)

The City of Los Angeles, Private Arts Development Fee Program. Online: <http://culturela.org/percent-public-art/private-arts-development-fee-program-adf/>

"Characteristics and Guidelines for Great Public Spaces" by American Planning Association. Online: <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/space/s/characteristics.htm>

"The 5 Features of Great Public Spaces" by John Karras, Ideas for Vibrant Cities, Urban Scale. Online: <http://urbanscale.com/blog/5-features-great-public-spaces/>

"Funding Sources for Public Art." Project for Public Spaces. Online: <http://www.pps.org/reference/artfunding/>



# art in public places

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should embrace public art and liberate Main Street to allow and encourage businesses to incorporate art in public spaces.*

One of the common themes that the Project Team discovered through the research is that great public places are often identified with an experience. That experience can be created through public art that serves to activate a space. Visitors travel from various parts of the country, and sometimes the world, to visit unique and interesting art in public places.



*Guangzhou, China - Public Art - Bronze Sculpture of Kids*

Andover can encourage public art installations throughout the community through an art in public places program. This program can provide local artists with opportunities for recognition, as well as, promotion of a more robust local art community.

Another example of an art in public places program is painted utility boxes. Utility boxes are common in most communities and tend to be located near public rights of way and housing. The concept is to hire local artists to cover the boxes with art. Fort Collins, CO started doing this in 2006, as a collaborative effort between Fort Collins Light and Power and the Art in Public Places Program.



*Fort Collins, CO - Public Art - Wrapped Utility Boxes*

The project is designed to help mitigate graffiti on transformer cabinets and bring art into the community. The project has enjoyed great success with more than 200 boxes painted, resulting in lower maintenance costs and the introduction of local artwork in unexpected places in Fort Collins.

Art comes in many shapes, sizes, and mediums and can be used to highlight assets of the community. The Town of Andover must decide what type of art will enrich the lives of the residents, business owners, and visitors to the area.



*Fort Lauderdale, FL - Public Art - Painted Intersection*



Many cities, like Cambridge, MA, have created a map or tour of their public art to invite residents and visitors to enjoy the art installations. Creating an art map could expand awareness of Downtown amenities, while bringing additional traffic and spending to areas near Main Street.



San Antonio, TX - Public Art - Trees Wrapped in Lights along Riverwalk

This huge 40 foot tall blue bear at the Denver, Colorado Convention Center is an iconic symbol and a very popular sightseeing attraction for visitors. The bear is actually titled, "I see what you mean," but everyone simply calls it the Big Blue Bear. This public art activated this space and made it a whimsical photo opportunity and tourist destination.



Denver, CO - Public Art - Big Blue Bear, Photo credit Rich Grant/Visit Denver

### Best Practices

Loveland, CO – History of arts & Artist housing:  
<http://www.ci.loveland.co.us/index.aspx?page=805>

Fort Collins – Art in Public Places Program:  
<http://www.downtownfortcollins.org/artinaction.html>

Art in Public Places Provides Hidden Gems:  
<http://www.coloradoan.com/story/entertainment/2014/04/10/art-public-places-provides-big-splashes-hidden-gems/7581305/>

Cambridge, MA Art Map:  
<http://www.cambridgema.gov/arts/publicart/percentforart/publicarttour>

### Funding

A steady funding source is a necessary element of a thriving public art program. There are numerous examples including an assessment, a project-funded model, such as the Percent for Art Program, donations, and public-private collaborations.

Public art should have defined criteria for the type of art that is allowable. The Town should include desired locations and enhanced design amenities for art project.

A great example of free public art can be found in Austin, TX where a tiny coffee shop named Jo's has the words, "I love you so much" spray painted on a wall. It was painted by a young lady to profess her love. The City of Austin embraced the artwork and it is now considered public art. Many visitors to the area visit the shop to take selfies, engagement photos, wedding photos, or to propose to their loved one. Jo's has become famous and they even sell t-shirts with the slogan printed on them.



# “find love in andover” campaign

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should develop a “Find Love in Andover” campaign and use it as a way to attract residents and visitors to Downtown.*

The Town could create a “Find Love in Andover” campaign and display a variety of public art depicting “Love.” The campaign could be in the form of a game of finding love (either the word or the emotion) in Andover. Similar to the Mice on Main Street scavenger hunt in Greenville, South Carolina, this hunt would highlight anything that demonstrates or symbolizes love.

The “Love” campaign could be a public/private partnership where the Town would challenge each business to adopt some type of love element either inside or outside their store. The Town would create a “Love” campaign brochure with hints about where to look for love in Andover or along Main Street.

### **Best Practices**

There are many success stories about new and creative ideas to generate attention and create vibrancy in the Downtown corridor.



*Davie, FL - Public Art - I Love You*

### **Benefits of this Recommendation**

Hosting a “Find Love in Andover” campaign would create an amusing way for residents and tourists to explore Downtown. An increase in pedestrian traffic could result in increased customers and subsequent sales throughout Downtown. This campaign could also be used to offer a *Call to Local Artists* in the area.

### **Funding**

This project could be very cost effective if businesses participated in the purchase or creation of the Public Art.



*Scottsdale, AZ - Public Art - Love*

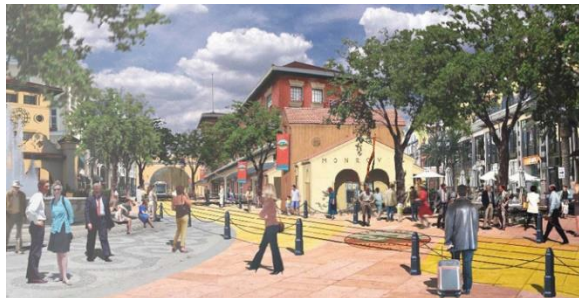


# utilize transit oriented development

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should seek development in the downtown corridor that includes mixed-use residential and commercial property in close proximity to the transit station to encourage use of the Town's quality public transportation.*

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is generally located within a quarter-to half-mile radius of a transit station and offers a mix of housing, employment, shopping, and transportation choices within a neighborhood or business district. Providing easy access to public transit can lower household expenses by providing multi-modal options and it can provide residents with access to more job opportunities throughout the region.

Transit-oriented development reduces urban sprawl and maximizes land usage. New transportation infrastructure typically leads to new development and redevelopment activity. Generally, travel time, air quality, business transportation costs, and quality of life are positively affected by transit investments. Regional competitiveness also improves, thus affecting the location decisions of individuals and businesses.



Monrovia, CA - Plan for TOD

The above photo shows a preliminary TOD concept prepared for the City of Monrovia, CA. They plan to build a vibrant urban village surrounding the train station.

## Benefits of this Recommendation

There are many benefits associated with transit oriented development, including:

- Economic growth and increased land values
- Balancing jobs with housing
- Affordable housing opportunities
- Creating vibrant new public places



Andover, MA - Transit Station

Andover is served by two train stations and one of these is located adjacent to Downtown. Residents utilize transit on a daily basis to commute to Boston. The Downtown station should be included as part of the redevelopment of the Town Yard site, which is ideal for transit-oriented development.

## Best Practices

TOD Success Stories:

[http://www.nhhsrail.com/pdfs/TODcasestudydraft\\_100311.pdf](http://www.nhhsrail.com/pdfs/TODcasestudydraft_100311.pdf)

TOD Urban Case Study – Davis Square:

[http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/CS-tod-somerville.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/CS-tod-somerville.html)

TOD Suburban Case Study – Concord, MA:

[http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/CS-tod-concord.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/CS-tod-concord.html)

## Funding

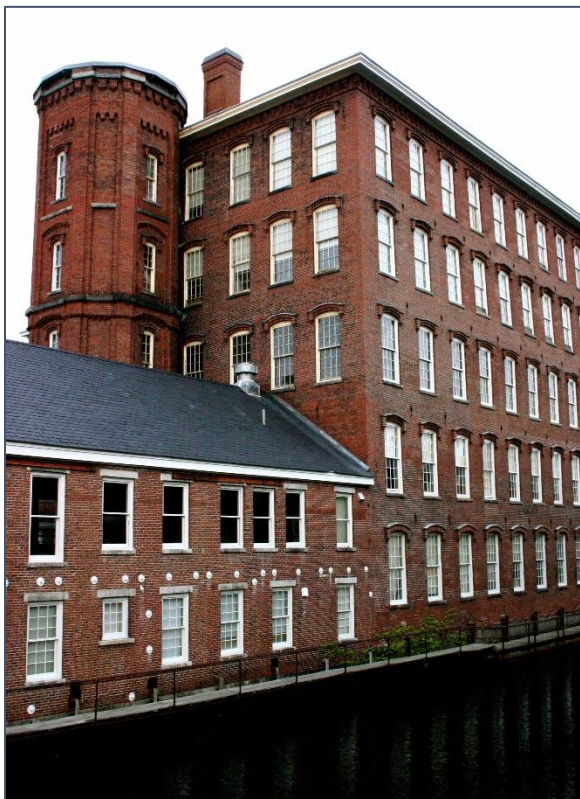
The cost for TOD will be the responsibility of the developer(s). It should be considered as part of the plans to redevelop the Town Yard site.



# what's next for the mill district?

**RECOMMENDATION: The Town of Andover should seek to redevelop the Mill District and the surrounding neighborhoods.**

Relocating the Town Yard from its current location presents an unprecedented opportunity for the Town. This coveted parcel of downtown property offers a potential to attract new residents, businesses, and visitors from a broader geography than the local Andover market. The transformation of this area should also include redevelopment and reuse of the historic mill buildings.



Lowell, MA - Mill District Revitalization

The reuse of mill buildings and their surrounding neighborhoods could pose challenges due to the scale, location, and overall condition of the area. However, Andover's mill buildings are adjacent to the Shawsheen River and the large footprint presents the chance to bring new businesses to the community. They have enough space for testing new businesses, incubation of emerging sectors, light manufacturing or

technology companies that would benefit from being more centrally located and close to the Town center.

In redeveloping mills, neighboring communities like Amesbury offer a blueprint for Andover. Andover has a similar opportunity to incorporate community gathering space and active spaces into its mill area, making it a destination for residents. Connecting to nature and enhancing the river are also important goals that the mill district should attempt to achieve. The Shawsheen River is an amenity that should be revitalized and marketed in conjunction with the redevelopment of the historic mills.

## **Best Practices**

Massachusetts Mill District Toolkit:  
[http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/mod-mill-redev.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-mill-redev.html)

## **Best Practices**

Amesbury, Reading, Walpole and West Concord:  
<http://andoverma.gov/planning/milldistrict/casestudies.pdf>

Andover Smart Growth Overlay District:  
<http://andoverma.gov/planning/townyard/smartgrowth2.pdf>

## **Funding**

State Programs and grants are available to assist with the redevelopment of the Andover mills. Many of the adjacent cities have created Mill Revitalization Districts (MRD) and have adopted bylaws or ordinances designed to support the revitalization of mill districts and to leverage state funding, public-private partnerships, programs, tax incentives, tax increment financing (TIF), and grant funding.

# riverwalk along shawsheen river

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover and interested community groups should collaborate to develop a comprehensive Riverwalk Plan and design guidelines to complement the land-based improvements and redevelopment planned for the area.*

A Riverwalk along the Shawsheen River could be an asset for Andover, serving as a scenic and vibrant gathering place. The beautiful Shawsheen River is located in the heart of the Town and is framed by beautiful and vibrant neighborhoods.

The focus on downtown revitalization should include a Riverfront or Riverwalk. To consider this option, a plan is needed to encourage developer interest and to incentivize the reinvestment in Downtown by businesses and the community-at-large. As momentum builds for riverfront revitalization, having a comprehensive Riverwalk Plan and design guidelines as a framework will be essential.

## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

Revitalizing the Shawsheen River with a Riverwalk could play an important part in the rehabilitation of the area. Property values in the area would also be enhanced with the revitalization of the River and a stronger connection to adjacent areas.

## **Best Practices**

Chicago, IL has an open pedestrian waterfront along the southern banks of the Chicago River in downtown. The Riverwalk has restaurants, seating, boat rentals, and other activities.



Chicago, IL Riverwalk



San Antonio, TX - Riverwalk Amenities

Many other cities such as Newburyport, Fort Lauderdale, and San Antonio shown above have created active spaces along rivers.

## **Funding**

Possible funding mechanisms for this project include:

- Bonds
- Federal and state grants (i.e. Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant)
- Town dedicated tax
- Special Assessment
- Tax Increment Financing



Fort Lauderdale, FL - Riverwalk

## **Resource**

The Benefits of Parks and Riverwalks in Downtown: Watertown's Riverfront Plan: [http://jefferson.uwex.edu/files/2010/09/The\\_Benefits\\_of\\_Parks\\_and\\_Riverwalks\\_in\\_Downtown.pdf](http://jefferson.uwex.edu/files/2010/09/The_Benefits_of_Parks_and_Riverwalks_in_Downtown.pdf)



# open space, recreation, and trails

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should focus attention on open space and recreational activities that engage residents and encourage visitors to enjoy outdoor amenities.*

In 2010, the Andover Open Space and Recreation Plan was approved by the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services. It is recommended that the Town of Andover refocus on the implementation of this plan and the strategies for achieving the stated goals including:

1. Increase outdoor recreation participation
2. Create safe, fun, and enjoyable environment
3. Build on existing knowledge of what is limiting outdoor participation
4. Focus and rebrand recreation efforts along the Merrimack and Shawsheen rivers.



Luray, VA - Hawksbill Greenway

*According to the National Trails Training Partnership, "Active use of trails for positive health outcomes is being seen more and more by health professionals as an excellent way to encourage people to adopt lifestyle changes that will bring lifetime health benefits."*

## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

Andover has abundant outdoor and open space recreation opportunities, but relatively few parks. Outdoor activities will improve the health of residents and help to building community throughout the Town.



Millbury, MA - Open Space and Recreation

This recommendation can be tied to the efforts led by the Andover Trails Committee to develop a connected trail network and preserve open space around the Shawsheen River to foster a strong connection to nature.

The greenway concept is a great way to connect people to nature, allow retention of ecological resources like native plants and wildlife, and to foster outdoor recreation.





The Town of Andover 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan, in concert with the progress on the Shawsheen River Greenway and other trails projects, builds on the community brand as a place rich in outdoor recreational options. All of these outdoor opportunities should be integrated into community, educational, recreational, and business programming.

### **Resources**

American Trails Network – How Greenways Work:

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/greenways/NPSintroGrnwy.html>

American Trails Network – Funding and Resources:

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/>

How Communities are Paying to Maintain Trails, Bike Lanes, and Sidewalks:

<http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/MainTenance.pdf>

American Trails Network – Health:

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/health/>



*Houston, TX - Discovery Green - Houston Downtown Park*

### **Funding**

The Town of Andover should consider requesting grant funds through the various granting agencies. A successful grant writer would be able to secure alternative funding to the various planned projects.

Possible funding for this project:

- Bonds
- Federal and state grants (i.e. Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant)
- Town dedicated tax
- Special Assessment
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)



*Houston, TX - Buffalo Bayou Park*

# signage and wayfinding

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should create friendly and consistent navigational signs to inform visitors to the area of the surrounding area amenities and strategic locations.*

There are parks, cultural amenities, community facilities, parking areas, and historical landmarks in Andover that would be helpful to identify and navigate for residents and visitors. With the use of wayfinding signage, visitors can easily find and access Town amenities. Connecting visitors with amenities will promote return visits and increase the likelihood of positive visitor experiences. It will also serve to focus and direct the flow of pedestrian traffic to important areas of the Town.



Atlanta, GA - Downtown Wayfinding

Using navigational signage and wayfinding would encourage visitors to experience the places that the community is most proud of and that reflect the “Best Andover”. It could also promote a more walkable downtown by providing the number of minutes it would take to walk to a particular location. For example, a sign could read “Shawsheen River 5 minute walk” with the signage pointing in the direction to walk as shown below.



Durham, NC - Wayfinding Signage

Landmarks can be buildings, art, wayfinding signs, public amenities, or striking elements in the landscape. When combined, these elements will shape the identity of the area as seen from your perspective. The broad goal of a wayfinding system and signage is to help people discover Downtown Andover.

It is also possible for Andover to expand its wayfinding system through the use of technology. The proposed cultural corridor, using a web application, could augment wayfinding with additional information at select sites.



Figure Northfield, MN - Wayfinding Signage

## Benefits of this Recommendation

Directing visitors to the most interesting and attractive areas of Andover can dramatically affect the impression people have of the quality of the Andover community.

## Funding

The fiscal impact of this recommendation would be the cost of the signage and the associated installation.

## Resources

Finding Your Way Downtown: Developing a Wayfinding Program

<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2013/130711wayfinding/finding-your-way-downtown.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/#.VxRI9vkrLmE>



# parking study implementation

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should implement the recommendations from the recently completed Parking Study.*

A Downtown Parking Study was recently completed in Andover. It is strongly recommended that the community prioritize the implementation of parking solutions, recognizing that this will require support from businesses and residents.

The on-street parking on and around Main Street in Downtown Andover is not easy to understand for visitors. There are all-day, four hour, and two hour spots available in close proximity in Downtown which makes selecting a spot confusing. Clear and common-sense parking in Downtown is critical to economic success.



Warsaw, IN - Downtown Parking

In order to take advantage of its position as a regional destination for business events and gatherings, the Town must adopt parking solutions, have additional lunchtime dining options (think meeting places), and have spaces to host medium to large-scale meetings.

## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

The Town can support businesses through clear parking regulations that turnover adjacent parking spots appropriately and prioritize patrons' access over staff parking. Implementation must also prioritize signage that is easy to read and understand. The community needs user friendly and accessible downtown parking to welcome visitors. Off-street lots that move cars out of shopping areas can help pedestrians feel safer along Main Street and other busy thoroughfares.

## **Best Practices**

St Paul, MN Downtown Parking Strategy:  
[http://nelsonnygaard.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Saint Paul Final Report.pdf](http://nelsonnygaard.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Saint_Paul_Final_Report.pdf)

Parking Management Strategies:  
[http://www.vtpi.org/park\\_man.pdf](http://www.vtpi.org/park_man.pdf)

Amherst DRAFT Downtown Parking Report:  
<http://www.amherstma.gov/documentcenter/view/32177>



## **Funding**

This recommendation may require code changes and expenses related to parking meter infrastructure. It could also generate additional revenue for the town.

## **Resources**

Andover, MA Parking Study:  
<http://andoverma.gov/planning/ParkingStudyFindingsReport6-15.pdf>



# BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

## special events

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should implement a special events program to host several events throughout the year and include a signature event that showcases the amenities of the Town.*

The Town should consider implementing a robust and varied special events program as a means to bring the community together and express a positive image of the downtown area. Special events have a huge impact on resident engagement and the vibrancy of an area.

Festivals and block parties can be a successful way to bring residents into Downtown. This is evident with the continued success of Andover Day. This event showcases Downtown merchants, food and music and could be considered a *signature* event.



Andover, MA - Andover Day 2015 - Photo credit Tim Jean

Another event that can be easily hosted is an Andover Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest and Festival. This special event will not only bring the local residents into town, but it will also bring artists into the Town.



### **Benefits of this Recommendation**

Special events will create an attraction to bring people into the Downtown to eat, drink, and shop during the event. This recommendation will also serve to promote a pedestrian culture, encourage people to gather and mingle, stimulate the local businesses, promote artists, and will help to identify Andover as a destination.



To keep visitors engaged and entertained, evening events are also important. The gazebo located in the Park can be the perfect venue to host live bands and other performances after business hours and on weekends.



### **Funding**

The primary expense for special events would be the staff time to coordinate and market them. Business sponsorships can offset costs and the Business Improvement District (BID) or Chamber of Commerce could also assist with coordinating events.

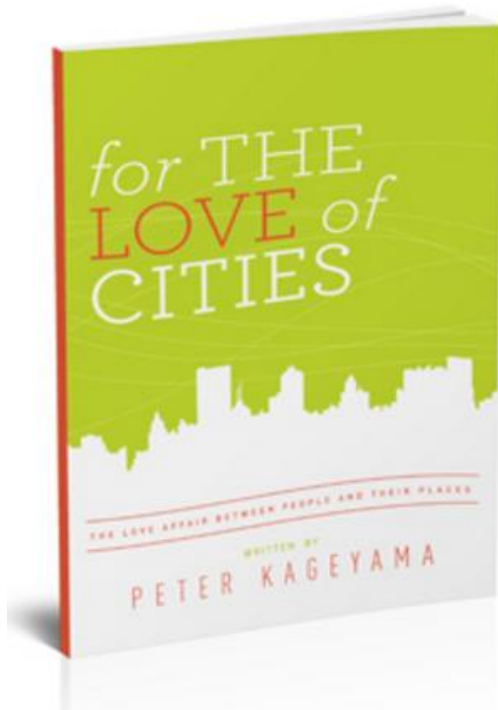
# embrace placemaking

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should embrace placemaking, to include funding and the encouragement of creativity.*

Placemaking is identified as creating comfortable, welcoming places to improve the physical, social, emotional, and ecological health of individuals and communities everywhere. The process involves public participation to include stakeholder input in developing authentic spaces.

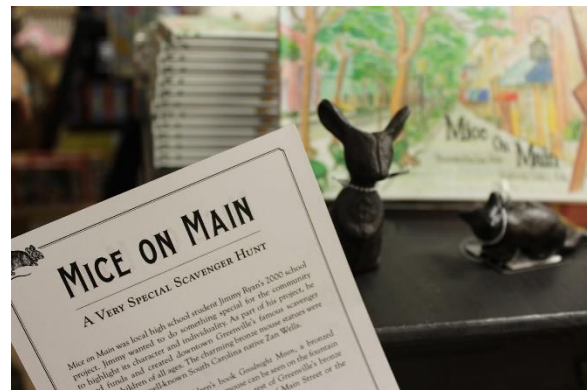
Placemaking can be accomplished in a variety of ways. There is no limit to the interesting features of a Town that could bring visitors to Downtown. Creating a sense of place can be as simple as painting an intersection or hosting a special event and it can be as elaborate as building a park. Successful placemaking includes input from residents.

It is important to create areas where residents and visitors feel comfortable and happy. This should include attractions designed to bring people to Downtown, activities to entertain them, and comfortable amenities to keep them in the Town of Andover.



Many communities are requesting that Peter Kageyama, author of the book *For the Love of Cities*, conduct workshops with residents to inspire them to partner with cities and towns to co-create positive outcomes for the community. In his talks, he discusses sharing “love notes” in the form of small projects that reinforce residents’ love for their community.

An example used in his book and presentations is the “Mice on Main,” a public art installation and community game that has made Greenville, SC remarkably famous.



Greenville, SC - Mice on Main Street Program

Mice on Main was created by a high school student as part of a school project. The student approached City leaders to gain support to place tiny bronze mice downtown and raised sufficient funds to buy the mice and complete the project. The City of Greenville now hosts visitors from all over the world just to see the Mice on Main. This is an excellent example of the City supporting and allowing placemaking.

Sometimes the best answer for local government is “yes” – especially to low cost or low risk ideas.



Greenville, SC - Mice on Main Street



In his book, Peter Kageyama also discusses the fact that it's not the basic provision of services that elicits the love, but a fun or unexpected project. Residents expect potholes filled and snow plowed, but the unexpected is what often gets attention and makes people smile.



Charlotte, NC - Clean Sidewalk Graffiti

It is recommended that the Town of Andover invite Peter Kageyama to host a community workshop focused on cultivating residents' passion and helping to make Andover a lovable city. His engaging workshops cater to municipalities and will evoke passion, excitement, and creativity in Andover, as he has done in many other communities.



Seattle, WA - Scrabble Fun in Downtown

To enhance the success of Downtown Andover, the Town should promote a creative approach to placemaking and allow businesses flexibility to invent artistic, inspired, and charming spaces in Downtown. Andover should *Liberate Main Street!*

### **Benefits of this Recommendation**

The Town of Andover will benefit from this recommendation by activating the Downtown. There is currently no draw to the Downtown to attract families and tourists.

### **Best Practices**

There are many great ideas to bring the community together for enjoyment. In addition to the Mice on Main and the clean artistic graffiti, some other interesting ideas are shown below:



Fort Lauderdale, FL - Duck Derby Contest



New Orleans, LA - Inspirational Sidewalk Messages - Photo Credit Candy Chang



Phoenix, Arizona is home to the Desert Ridge Marketplace which features 1.2 million square feet of interactive shopping, dining and entertainment in a high-energy setting. This marketplace includes other amenities for all ages including splash pads, live music, creative lighting, plenty of attractive seating, and outdoor fireplaces.



Phoenix, AZ - Desert Ridge Marketplace Splash Pad

There are an unlimited number of creative ideas for public placemaking that Andover could consider. Selecting and supporting projects will be determined by Town officials and residents. A well-trained facilitator can elicit fresh and innovative ideas.



Everett, WA - A Painted Piano - Interactive Public Art

The Town should create the opportunity for placemaking to occur. This includes reviewing the Town Code to ensure that it is flexible enough to allow the installation of public art or creative features Downtown. A public art or placemaking committee should also be created to educate and empower Town Ambassadors to speak to all stakeholders including businesses, the local Chamber of Commerce, and homeowners about the benefits of placemaking.



Portland, OR - Painted Intersection

### **Funding**

Most of the examples of best practices are and easy to accomplish in a short period of time.



Village Gardens, OR - Community Garden

### **Resources**

Mice on Main Street: Greenville, South Carolina:

<http://miceonmain.com/>

Power of 10+: Applying Placemaking at Every Scale:

<http://www.pps.org/reference/the-power-of-10/>

Phoenix, AZ: Desert Ridge Marketplace:

<http://www.shopdesertridge.com/>

# gathering spaces to build community

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should create gathering spaces downtown to facilitate community engagement and draw residents Downtown.*

Places need people. As part of placemaking, the Town should create an opportunity for our residents, visitors, and business owners to interact in a meaningful way, it is important to remove barriers that separate one another. Cities and towns must create opportunities and places for people to feel welcome, comfortable, and safe gathering and visiting.



*Clayton, MO Parking Space Converted to a Park*

There are no set rules governing the appearance of gathering spaces. Dining together often creates an opportunity for interaction and community building. However, open spaces, benches, art and music also play a role in encouraging interaction among friends and strangers. Lively and exciting places serve to bring diverse groups together and promote joy and enthusiasm in and around the community.

Developing a sense of place and destination in downtown for residents will help to re-engage residents in the Town. Andover residents are already passionate about the Town history and spaces; they don't need to be convinced that it's a great town. A renewed focus on existing assets that attracted residents to Andover in the first place, will emphasize the intrinsic beauty of Andover.



*Chicago, IL - Gathering Place Along Riverwalk - Photo credit Sasaki.com*

Creating gathering spaces and building the community will evolve over time as residents begin to enjoy Andover activities and amenities. As more people begin to interact in Downtown, they will also begin to demonstrate more pride for those places. The new public spaces will begin to define the character of Andover and highlight its inherent charm.

## ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

Creating gathering spaces and building community requires more than just dedicated space. The Town also needs to have restaurants and businesses that keep people Downtown.

## ***Funding***

Creating gathering spaces can be as easy as strategically installing benches, constructing a pocket park, or encouraging outside dining opportunities. Building community does not have to be expensive; it just has to be deliberate.



## engaging youth and seniors

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should actively engage the Town's youth and older adults to ensure that all segments of the population participate in shaping the future of Andover.*

Andover High School hosts an intern program that is relatively informal, but immensely powerful as it engages students in projects that enhance the community. These interns (and other students) could also be used to help advance the long term vision for Downtown Andover. This intern program is an opportunity to empower students and involve them in offering solutions to their community's needs and help create the future Andover.



*Youth Participating in the Leadership ICMA Team Site Visit to Andover, MA*

Interns can assist with the development of a sense of place and destination in Andover, with a focus on local youth. Young adults need gathering places and entertainment options in Andover. High school students reported that there are limited options for entertainment and very few places to gather with peers. Many times youth leave for destinations in other towns or simply “drive around” for entertainment. This perspective is valuable in shaping the future of Andover.

The Project Team interacted with the interns during the Andover site visits and discovered their passion for the community and their capability to undertake projects like developing an art program, supporting park space, working with the Shawsheen River Greenway group and so many other important initiatives.



*Hamilton, OH - High School Internship Program*

Merrimack College has about 3,300 students that can be engaged as Ambassadors for the Town. The Town should create a partnership with the local and regional colleges to ensure that the colleges have a robust public administration program, including an internship requirement. Similar to the High School Intern Program, getting undergraduate and graduate students actively involved with government will assist the Town in reaching the millennial segment of the population. It will also encourage the students to remain in Andover once they graduate from their program. Local governments need to begin planning today for the next generation of public administration leaders.



Another segment of the population that should be embraced in discussions and future projects are older adults. A senior program to engage older adults who want to gather for socializing and special events, excursions, and coffee or lunch should be created. Activities could take place at the Old Town Hall and could include dancing, festivals, social activities in the park, or themed events. These older adults can be ambassadors for the Town, providing valuable feedback, and sharing information among their peers. The population in Andover is aging and this engagement is necessary to meet the needs of the Town residents.



*Andover, MA - Samuel Phillips Hall at Phillips Academy*

### ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

Youth and senior engagement and empowerment can create a true social sustainability, where residents of all ages are engaged in executing short and long-term projects that define Andover's future state.



*Teens and Seniors Working Together*

Like colleges, Phillips Academy is a catalyst for economic development. A successful relationship can be mutually beneficial and integrating Phillips Academy into the social culture of Andover will pay great dividends with businesses that may be considering a move to Andover.

### ***Best Practices***

Many cities have high school internships and senior programs. The City of Hamilton, OH launched a twelve week high school internship program last year to provide students with a hands-on experiential learning opportunity.

City of Hamilton, Ohio Internship Program:  
<http://www.wcpo.com/news/insider/city-of-hamilton-launches-internship-program>

The City of Sunrise, FL recently implemented a Cyber-Seniors Program that paired high school students with seniors to teach them how to use the computers, the internet, and smart phones. The City received an award from the US Conference of Mayors City Livability Program for this innovative program and commitment to engaging the community.

City of Sunrise, Florida Cyber-Seniors Program:  
<http://www.sunrisefl.gov/index.aspx?page=715>

### ***Funding***

To offset expenses, the Town could partner with other organizations to sponsor events.

### ***Resources***

League City, Texas Senior Citizen Program:  
<http://www.leaguecity.com/index.aspx?nid=1789>

Whittier, California Senior Services:  
<http://www.cityofwhittier.org/depts/prcs/creation/senior.asp>

# local initiative program - housing

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should utilize the Local Initiative Housing Program to work with a developer to create affordable housing for young adults and those looking to downsize, but remain in the Town of Andover.*

The State of Massachusetts Local Initiative Program (LIP) was established by the Legislature in 1990 to incentivize local governments to undertake housing initiatives which did not require direct state or federal assistance. LIP allows the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide technical assistance to local governments to help facilitate the approval process.

The Local Initiative Program seeks to stimulate the development of affordable housing opportunities by fostering cooperation between municipalities and housing developers. The program provides technical assistance to developers and municipalities seeking to develop housing that serves households at or below 80% of the area median income within mixed-income (market and affordable) housing developments.



*Seniors Embracing Cost-Effective Housing*

As the population ages, older adults seek to downsize, therefore it is important to have housing stock available to meet their needs and allow for new families to move to Andover. Equally important is the continued need to provide services and activities within walking distance of the development.

A mixed use strategy in Andover would stimulate the housing market for seniors looking to downsize or for millennials seeking to live closer to work and experience Downtown Andover.



*Phoenix, AZ - Mixed Use Development*

Both for-profit and non-profit developers may use the LIP program in partnership with a city or town, with the municipality and developer jointly submit the application.

## ***Benefits of this Recommendation***

Andover can use this program to develop housing options for younger families or older residents.

## ***Resources***

Massachusetts Local Initiative Program (MDI): <http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/dhcd/fact-sheets/lip.html>

# technical assistance grant program

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should apply for a technical assistance grant from the State of Massachusetts to assist with Downtown revitalization.*

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development provides assistance to cities and towns seeking to revitalize their downtowns. The Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) offers technical assistance and implementation guidance to local governments in a variety of categories.

This technical assistance program can help Andover develop a Riverwalk Master Plan or a Downtown Plan and can further assist with the implementation of the plan once completed. Technical assistance can also focus on developing cultural assets and other elements of Andover’s strengths.

*“The primary mission [of the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative] is to make downtown revitalization an integral part of community development in cities and towns across the Commonwealth.” – Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program goal.*

The MDI views the following as necessary for a successful downtown revitalization:

- Encouraging Community Involvement & Ownership
- Preserving & Enhancing Downtown Character
- Ensuring Economic Vitality
- Promoting Downtown Assets
- Getting Into & Around Downtown
- Living Downtown
- Keeping Downtown Safe



The Massachusetts Downtown Initiative provides for a wide variety of options to assist Andover with revitalizing the downtown area. According to the website, [www.mass.gov/hed/comunity/funding](http://www.mass.gov/hed/comunity/funding), the technical assistance provided by this program can range from plans, studies, designs, or programs designed to assist with revitalizing downtown.

## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

Andover could receive complimentary technical assistance from subject matter experts focused directly on downtown revitalization. This can be a significant benefit when partnered with a knowledgeable and neutral third-party.

## **Resources**

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program: <http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/dhcd/fact-sheets/mdi.html>



# comprehensive brand strategy to market andover

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should invest in branding the Town and developing a comprehensive marketing strategy.*

A competitive economic environment of towns and cities is a reality. People determine where they visit and where they spend their money based upon the attractiveness of the destination. The objective for Andover is very simple: to attract people, to keep them here, and to entice them to invest emotion, time, and dollars in the community.



*By definition, brand strategy is a long-term plan for the development of a successful brand in order to achieve specific goals. A well-defined and executed brand strategy affects all aspects of a business and is directly connected to consumer needs, emotions, and competitive environments.*

*-aytm.com*



In addition to creating more opportunities for shopping and entertainment in Downtown, Andover needs to improve its marketing efforts to include frequent communications about all the distinctive characteristics of the Town and its festivals, shopping and amenities. Sustained marketing can be largely through word of mouth and the sharing of personal experiences, but initially some professional marketing resources should be developed and deployed. Every resident and businessperson in the Town should be considered an Ambassador, armed with sound bites of great reasons to live, work, and play in Andover.

The theory of, “If you build it, they will come” does not always hold true. New development projects must be coupled with a comprehensive marketing strategy to ensure success. There is significant competition with vibrant downtowns, new amenities, and diverse cultural opportunities for tourists throughout New England. Andover must invest in a well-orchestrated and multi-faceted campaign to bring visitors to Andover and to keep them here.



## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

A marketing plan to introduce residents and visitors to the great amenities that Andover has to offer will lead to new visitors to the area which can spur economic revitalization and prosperity.

## Best Practices

One example is Austin, Texas who established its brand as “Live Music Capital of the World.” This brand encouraged live music throughout the City including large music events.



The City also has an unofficial slogan, “Keep Austin Weird” which has been embraced by residents and publicized throughout the community. The City has shirts, key chains, coffee mugs, etc. with the brand and the slogan to further promote the City.



## Funding

Once the Town determines the type of new development and amenities that will be constructed and offered in the town yard site, it will be important to determine the right branding and marketing of Andover. Anticipated costs include hiring a marketing firm, printing costs related to marketing materials and perhaps advertising costs to promote Andover in economic development focused literature.

## Resources

One excellent resource for the Town is a white paper entitled **Branding Your City**.

CEOs for Cities: Branding Your City:  
[http://mipace.org/sites/default/files/CEOsforCities\\_BrandingYourCity.pdf](http://mipace.org/sites/default/files/CEOsforCities_BrandingYourCity.pdf)

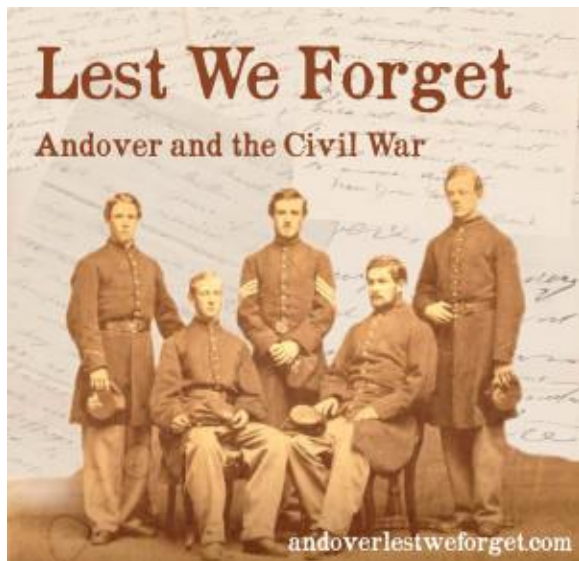
Virginia   
*is for Lovers*<sup>®</sup>

# embracing community history and culture

**RECOMMENDATION:** *The Town of Andover should create opportunities to share the rich history and culture of Andover through Town programs, tours, and smart phone applications.*

The Andover Historical Society provides a variety of educational resources that connect the community with its past. There are plans underway for additional programs to highlight local history, share community artifacts and archives, and expose new residents to forgotten spaces throughout the community.

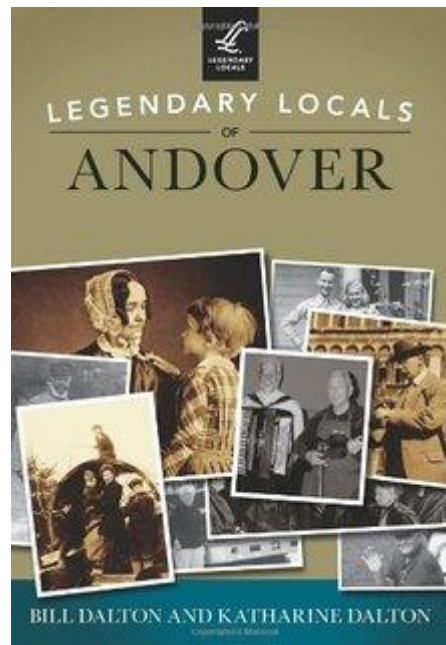
There is a historical connection to the uses of the Shawsheen River that can be used as an opportunity to leverage Andover's history as part of an overall effort to brand itself as a historical destination.



One opportunity to showcase Andover is to offer an informational tour of historic homes and notable gardens marketed to residents and visitors. Tours can be an opportunity to engage neighborhoods throughout town and introduce Andover to area visitors.

Another opportunity is to create a cultural corridor to highlight Andover's rich artistic and historical amenities in Downtown. The concept, similar to a curated museum tour,

would involve a web-based application that includes community-specific information to lead visitors through the Town to visit the highlighted amenities including a cultural corridor. Providing access to local artifacts in Andover schools could also serve to connect younger residents with their Town's history and inspire future historians.



## **Benefits of this Recommendation**

Showcasing the long history of Andover can generate excitement and pride for the Town.

## **Best Practices**

Cape Cod – leveraging cultural assets for economic development:

<http://www.capecodcommission.org/resources/economicdevelopment/ArtsGuide122309.pdf>

## **Funding**

A recommendation like this is low-cost but requires volunteers or Town staff to develop the program and inventory, engage residents and owners of the historical and cultural items, create the tour, and operate the tour.



# CONCLUSION

The Leadership ICMA Capstone Teams were selected to complete peer consulting projects that leverage their collective professional knowledge and experiences. This Capstone Program is designed to have professional Project Teams provide innovative solutions to practical challenges facing urban, suburban, and rural communities.

The Andover, Massachusetts Project Team scope of work was to provide the Town of Andover with fresh insights and suggestions to enhance the downtown area and to develop a comprehensive playbook of best practice recommendations, focusing on a sense of place and destination.

The Town of Andover is blessed with national name recognition and huge potential to create a vibrant downtown. Residents are filled with community pride and a willingness to get involved to support the needs of the community. There were numerous positive conversations and meetings regarding the Town and the future of Andover. The following highlights capture the comments made by community leaders during the Team site visits:

- People, pride, activism and residents' personal investment
- Open space, schools and access to jobs
- Community spirit and shared/common goals
- Public private partnership ability
- Community, green spaces, and history
- Nature, trails and river
- People and resourcefulness of the community
- Open and collaborative community
- Walkability, historic downtown and the integration between history and modern uses
- Land trust and river connectivity
- Family-friendly with walkable amenities
- Community involvement for/by residents, collaboration
- Expand downtown to grow and attract businesses and add businesses to and around river
- Passion for community, partnerships and vision
- History, family friendly, community spirit (rally to help neighbors in need)
- Volunteer activities and services, residents willing to pitch in
- Main street and Phillips Academy sell town, need consistent signage
- Schools are incredible, they offer creative learning

The Andover Project Team analyzed the existing downtown, identified best practices both regionally and nationally, and prepared recommendations on enhancing the vibrancy of the Downtown area. This comprehensive playbook for the Town of Andover, includes twenty-seven recommendations and underscores the need for the Town to complete the work underway and planned, as well as, implementation of new ideas and strategies to properly capitalize on the abundant assets and opportunities in Andover. **IMAGINEANDOVER.**

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# APPENDICES

- Appendix A:** 12 Strategies That Will Transform Your City’s Downtown
- Appendix B:** The 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Downtown
- Appendix C:** 10 Andover, MA Destinations Tripadvisor Project
- Appendix D:** A Manual for Small Downtowns
- Appendix E:** Bringing Back Main Street: A Guide to Downtown Revitalization for Local Governments
- Appendix F:** Improving Tenant Mix: A Guide for Commercial District Practitioners
- Appendix G:** Making the Most of Social Media: 7 Lessons from Successful Cities
- Appendix H:** Ten Principles for Successful Development Around Transit
- Appendix I:** Mill Revitalization Districts (MRD) Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit
- Appendix J:** Creative Placemaking: Linking Arts, Culture, and Community Development
- Appendix K:** Branding Your City
- Appendix L:** Leveraging Cultural Assets for Economic Development: A Practical Guide for Municipal Investment in Arts and Culture on Cape Cod
- Appendix M:** An Implementation Study of a Business Improvement District for Davis Square in Somerville, Massachusetts
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