

GREENFIELD

A DELIBERATE DOWNTOWN 2022

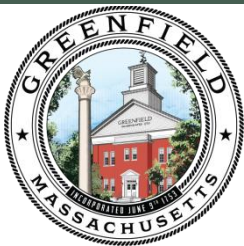
THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

February 7, 2022

Roxann
Wedegartner,
Mayor

Hannah
Rechtschaffen,
Chair of
Sustainable
Greenfield
Implementation
Committee

MJ Adams,
Director of
Community and
Economic
Development, City
of Greenfield



City of GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Roxann Wedegartner, Mayor

GREENFIELD, MA



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February 2020

“A Deliberate Downtown” – Community Forum

What Do You Love About Greenfield?

Walking distance to my home

Highland park, poet's seat, sachem's head

saying hello, breathing good air

the coop market

green river swimming area and highland park - downtown walkability

I love the dance community

The LAVA Center 324 Main St.

People in Greenfield are nice

The food!

How polite drivers in town are

The co-op!

Community, coop, farmers markets, lots of "boomers"

Hawks + Reed

Lots of creative people

The Library Staff Ellen and Co.

Arts scene, Hawks and Reed, LAVA Center, Summer concerts after dark

relationships

The Bead store

The LAVA Center - new community arts space

a wonderful community - so many creative things to be involved in

how involved people are

I love walking downtown

community

The natural beautiful - hiking/biking outdoors

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February 2020

“A Deliberate Downtown” – Community Forum



What Matters Most to You?

Great (public) schools

More bike lanes

Close the Main St to traffic permanently - cobblestone sidewalk seating music
having all Greenfield included in getting healthy and nourished

need a riverwalk from dam to dam on Green River Museum of Our Industrial Heritage

Build new apartments and make all low income and affordable avoid gentrification

More housing downtown

Housing and walkability

the awesome efforts that are being taken to develop downtown Greenfield

a bus to our public services feels not accessible

bus service evenings and weekends

more housing downtown

sustainability

night life and culture downtown

neighborhood quality of life create a noise ordinance

kids - open mics

walkability but concrete sidewalks not flooded and unlit

more attention to the younger people in town

bike racks - where did this go? camo but of grassy areas

representation of youth culture

health, connection, music

open community center (JZ) for community, not just seniors on evenings and weekends

more downtown housing - affordable

getting food downtown and the streets leading into downtown

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February 2020

Launched

**“A Deliberate
Downtown” –
Community Forum**



**Spring/Summer 2020 - research to
prepare for downtown revitalization
plan update**

Greenfield Downtown Business District Assessment and Market Analysis

To Inform the Downtown Revitalization Plan Update & Future Revitalization Activities



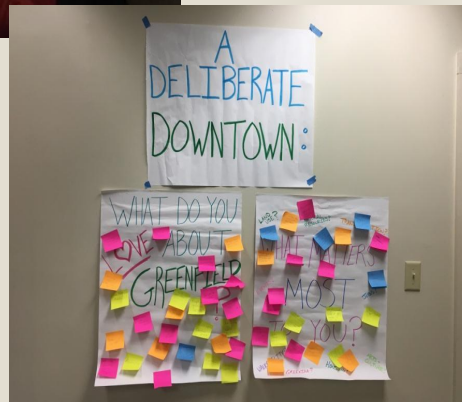
Greenfield, Massachusetts

Prepared for and in Collaboration with: Greenfield Community and Economic Development Department

January, 2021



Summer 2020
**Temporary measures to support
downtown businesses**



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Summer of 2020

Small business assistance in partnership with GBA and Franklin County CDC – Microenterprise Grants and technical assistance to help small businesses access state & federal business relief programs – like payroll protection program (PPP) and Massachusetts Growth Council Grant and sector specific grants.



Outdoor Dining



Downtown Study

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Greenfield Downtown Business District Assessment and Market Analysis

To Inform the Downtown Revitalization Plan Update & Future Revitalization Activities



Greenfield, Massachusetts

Prepared for and in Collaboration with: Greenfield Community and Economic Development Department

January, 2021

January 2021

Downtown Business District Assessment and Market Analysis

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Real Estate Conditions and Business Overview

- Downtown Greenfield is a walkable commercial district with a charming historic character. A wide main street with angle parking and a small town common add to the classic New England downtown atmosphere.
- In total, Downtown Greenfield contains 286 commercial units. At the time of the inventory (September, 2020), there were 35 vacancies. The closing of Wilsons Department store left a major vacancy in Downtown.
- The Downtown Greenfield central intersection is located 1.2 miles from the Interstate 91 exit where Greenfield has a significant amount of commercial development. This commercial activity is predominated by chains and franchises, along with a few new build-to-suit commercial space offerings

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2. Business Mix and Features

- The Downtown is home to approximately 251 establishments including retail, restaurants, recreation, services, and other entities. Most of the establishments (75%) are independently-owned single-location businesses, 10% are chains and franchises, and 15% are non-profit or public entities.
- More than one-half of the establishments (58%) in the commercial district are services, 17% are retailers, 14% are restaurants and 11% other.
- Downtown Greenfield is home to 42 retail establishments including several food and beverage stores, a large chain drugstore, optical shop, a few clothing and jewelry shops, gift stores, sporting goods, toy and bookstores, and several vintage/used goods shops. Green Fields Market, a local natural foods coop, is a favorite among community residents.
- There are 27 eating and drinking places in Downtown offering a range of cuisine, dining styles and price ranges. 19 of the establishments serve alcohol. 6 restaurants typically offer outdoor seating and a few others have been offering outdoor dining in response to COVID.
- One of the unique features of Downtown Greenfield is its arts and entertainment options including an independent movie theater, a performing arts center and a couple of small performance spaces for live entertainment.
- The Franklin County Justice Center is located in Downtown, along with a strong complement of legal offices and county-wide serving agencies.
- Other features of Downtown Greenfield include: a transit center with bus and train service, new parking garage, and greenspace/parks.
- Compared to other downtowns in small communities, Downtown Greenfield has:
 - A strong supply and fairly wide variety of eating and drinking establishments and entertainment venues
 - Average to above average amount of outdoor dining opportunities
 - A strong representation of retail but an average to below average portion of establishments selling new goods versus used/vintage merchandise.
 - Above average representation of health care and social assistance services
 - Strong concentration of community-serving institutions (e.g., library, town hall, YMCA)
 - An above average amount of professional and technical service businesses (mostly owing to the amount of small legal practices)



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3. Business Conditions

- Downtown is a major employment center. While we don't have a precise number, we estimate that downtown has over 2,200 employees (including full time and part time) based on the results of our business survey.
- Prior to COVID, revenue had been on the rise for most businesses. 71% of businesses reported a revenue increase during the 3 years before COVID, 24% said that sales had stayed about the same and 4% noted a decline.
- COVID has had a significant impact on Downtown businesses.
 - 81% of businesses reported a sales decline
 - 67% had to make an unplanned investment in order to implement safety measures.
 - 18% had to layoff staff
 - At the time of our survey (November 2020), 8% of the respondents reported their business was closed due to COVID, 67% were operating at reduced capacity, and 25% were operating at normal capacity.



Vacant storefront

**Despite the pandemic
new businesses started
up, bringing new energy
to downtown**



Plum

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4. Business Location Satisfaction and Desired Improvements

Most of the businesses (61%) are satisfied with Downtown Greenfield as a business location. 27% are neutral on the subject and 10% are dissatisfied.

Locational Advantages Most Cited by Businesses

1. Foot Traffic and Visibility
2. Proximity to Complimentary Businesses
3. Convenient, Accessible Location
4. Friendly Supportive Residents
5. Available Parking
6. Reasonable Rent/Costs

Locational Disadvantages Most Cited by Businesses

1. Parking (issues related to confusing rules, aggressive ticketing, and limited amount)
2. Loitering and Drugs (e.g., loud drug users, intoxicated individuals and homeless, drug deals)
3. Empty and Run-down Storefronts and Buildings
4. Business Mix and Lack of Attractions (not enough businesses, no anchor/destinations, no evening activity)
5. Cleanliness and Physical Appearance of Streetscape (e.g., trash)



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5. Consumer Patterns and Preferences

- Downtown patronage appears to have been declining (even before COVID period). 44% of respondents said their visit frequency has declined in the last few years while only 16% said their visit frequency increased.
- Communities outside of Greenfield where Downtown consumers go for shopping and dining:
 - Northampton
 - Montague (Turners Falls)
 - Amherst and Hadley
 - Brattleboro, VT
 - Keene, NH
- Most Frequently Visited Downtown Establishments
 - Eating and drinking places
 - Post Office
 - Green Fields Market
 - Retail Stores (other than Green Fields)
 - Banks and Financial Services
- Satisfaction among Downtown Users
 - Availability of parking
- Dissatisfaction among Downtown Users
 - Selection of retail stores
 - Evening business hours
 - Physical appearance
 - Cleanliness
 - Public spaces
- Satisfaction with Restaurant Selection
 - 42% satisfied and 30% dissatisfied
- Restaurant Spending and Preferences
 - On average, survey respondents report doing approximately 40% of their restaurant spending in Downtown.
 - The top 25 most frequented restaurants outside of Downtown were identified - these may be indicative of the type of restaurants consumers would frequent if available in Downtown.
- Top 5 Cited Restaurants Consumers would Patronize if Located in Downtown
 1. Italian
 2. Asian
 3. Café/Breakfast/Lunch Place
 4. Healthy, Vegetarian, Farm-to-Table
 5. American Grill/Pub



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6. Input Regarding Future Actions

A majority of Downtown users are in favor of:

1. More long-term outdoor dining options (beyond COVID period)
2. Improved streetscape
3. Additional community events and cultural activities
4. Public art installation

A majority of Downtown Greenfield businesses are supportive of

1. Improved streetscape
2. More long-term outdoor dining options (beyond COVID)
3. Additional community events and cultural activities



7. Market Conditions

Businesses located in Downtown Greenfield have the opportunity to serve Resident Market Segments and Non-Resident Market Segments.



Summer/Fall 2021

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2021- Outdoor Dining Again and Experimenting with Court Square



**Farmers market-
keeping what works**

.... And trying something new

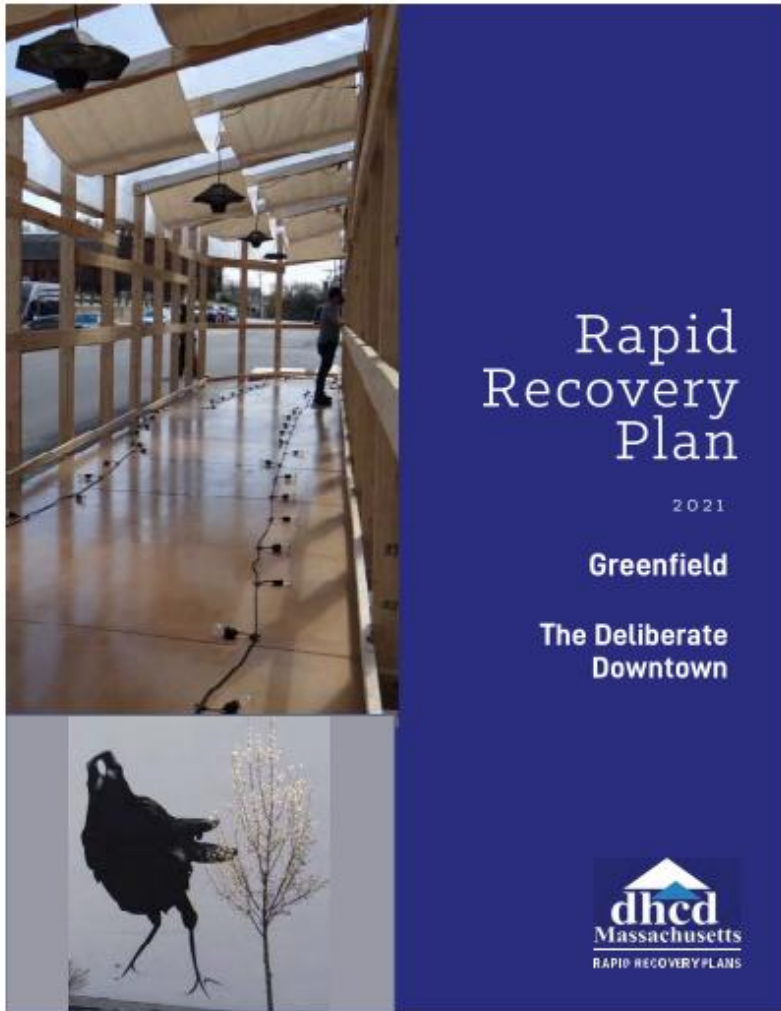
Pedestrian Plaza and Food Truck



**- LL Bean
Boot Pop-Up Shop**

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Local Rapid Recovery Plan Findings and Recommendations



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1. Diagnostic Key Findings

Physical Environment

- Downtown is very walkable.
- The 100% Corner is 90% Inactive.
- Downtown is missing a centrally located, visible, and programmable public open space.
- The Fiske Avenue alley area presents an opportunity for potential activation.
- Downtown Greenfield displays many examples of public art and there is opportunity for more.
- Loitering and panhandling may create the perception of an unsafe environment.
- Wayfinding is limited.
- More storefront elements are needed.
- Downtown has several key opportunity properties.
- Downtown residential development is limited.

Business Environment

- Downtown Greenfield encompasses over a million square feet of commercial space with over 700,000 square feet on the first floor. Twelve per cent (12%) of first-floor units are vacant.
- Downtown Greenfield is lucky to have several recreation and entertainment-related anchors, although many were shuttered for over a year.
- Compared to other RRP Districts, Downtown Greenfield was hit somewhat harder by COVID impacts.
- Top priorities for Downtown Greenfield businesses include business recruitment, safety and cleanliness

improvements, and more cultural events.

- District marketing and branding could be improved to help attract customers. Getting people back in the habit of coming to Downtown post-COVID is critical.

Customer Base

- Downtown Greenfield has an opportunity to attract people living in the surrounding area as well as non-resident market segments such as visitors and employees.
- Sales leakage may point to opportunities for Downtown businesses.
- Downtown users are dissatisfied with store selection, business hours, physical appearance, cleanliness, and public spaces.
- If the remote working trend continues, Downtown Greenfield will continue to be negatively impacted, particularly in the restaurant and retail sectors.
- There are a few regularly occurring events in the Downtown and surrounding area that attract visitors.

Admin Capacity

- Downtown zoning focuses primarily on the "private realm" and pays little attention to the "public realm."
- Downtown sign regulations limit the variety of signage and lack definition and clarity.
- There is no designated organization with a dependable funding source managing Downtown improvement and overseeing recovery efforts.



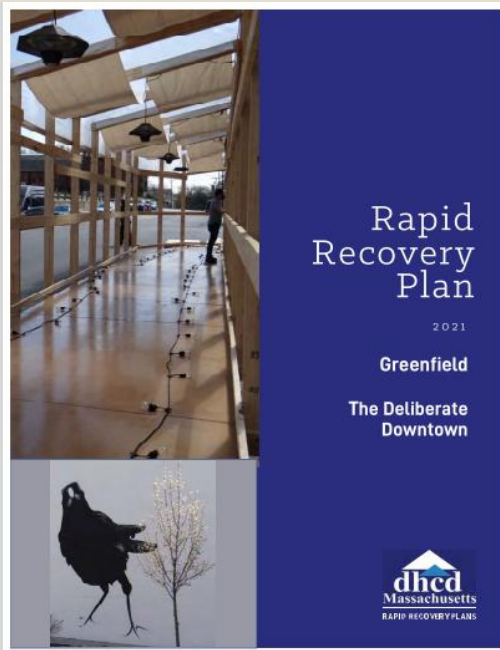
Summary of Recommendations

Public Realm	Create a plaza at Court Square in front of City Hall to invigorate Downtown by accommodating social gatherings, civic events, and other community activities.
	Complete the planned pocket park and activate the adjacent Fiske Avenue Alley with enhancements (e.g., overhead lights, greenery, seating) to complement the park and adjacent eateries, and serve as a small event space.
	Install additional streetscape elements (curb-to-storefront) that would complement the planned curb-to-curb Main Street roadway improvement.
Private Realm	Create a storefront/signage improvement program that is designed with more flexibility, allowing additional businesses to participate and encouraging high-quality storefront treatments.
	Complete a 100% Corner Demonstration Project with multiple improvements (e.g., mural, large vertical banners/ improved storefront treatments at corner establishments, streetscape elements).
Revenue/Sales	Create a marketing initiative for Downtown and the Crossroads Cultural District by incorporating an improved "Visit Greenfield" website, a "Welcome Back to Downtown" campaign, and pledge to support local.
	Implement a wayfinding system to get people to and around Downtown that builds on previous preliminary wayfinding sign design work.
	Develop a Business Directory and Community Information Kiosk to make customers aware of the offerings available in Downtown.
Admin Capacity	Develop a Parking Benefit District to provide a predictable funding source to support Downtown improvements and an organization that can manage programs and projects.
	Revise the existing sign-by-law regulations to encourage a variety of signage in Downtown and allow businesses to have more than one sign.
Tenant Mix	Implement a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit developer interest in the redevelopment of the First National Bank for a use that would bring people to Downtown.
	Explore the use of UCH-TIF program (Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing) to support and encourage residential development in upper floors of Downtown properties.



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UPDATES ON STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS



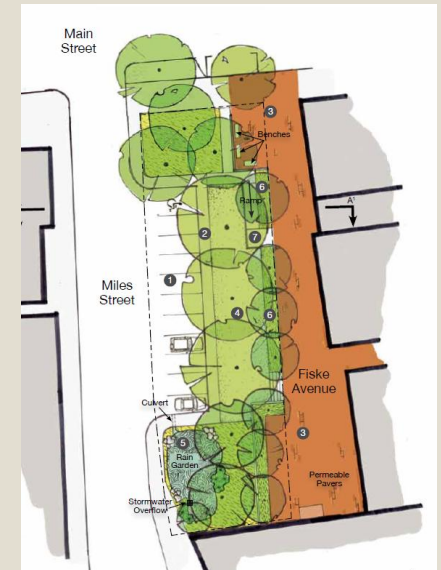
Public Realm



• Court Square



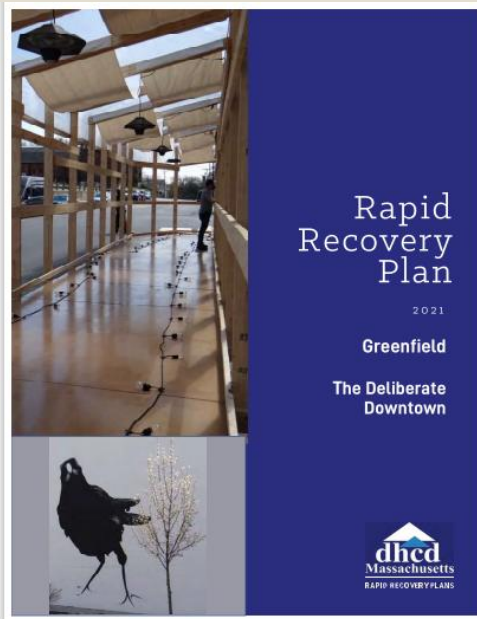
• Streetscape Improvements Plan



• Fiske Avenue Pocket Park

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UPDATES ON STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS



Private Realm

Storefront improvements

100% Corner – Federal & Main

Revenues /Sales

- Marketing Initiative – Cultural District

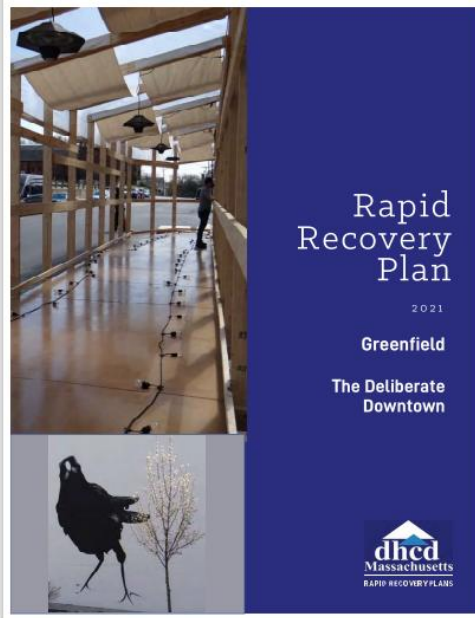
Signage/wayfinding

Business Directory/Kiosk



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UPDATES ON STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS



Administrative Capacity

Develop an organization to manage Downtown Programs and Projects

Revise existing sign-by-law regulations

Tenant Mix



Solicit private developer interest for First National Bank

Encourage upper floor residential development



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Downtown Revitalization Plan Detail - February 2022

Main Street Improvement Program

Rework Main Street between High Street and Colrain Street. The City is also planning to explore upgrading water, sewer, drainage, and utility conduit under this stretch of Main Street.

Community Justice Support Center of Franklin County

Opening Spring 2022



New Fire Station

Expected Completion
Fall 2023

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Downtown Revitalization Plan Detail - February 2022

Skateboard Park
Expected Completion
June 2023
(Note: not the final design)



Wilson's Building
Redevelopment
Opportunity



DRAFT

Main Street
Improvement Program

DRAFT

Main Street
Improvement Program

DRAFT

Fiske Ave Pocket Park
Expected Completion
Summer 2022



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Downtown Revitalization Plan Detail - February 2022

GCC Downtown Center

On the market as of
January 25, 2022



Court Square Redevelopment

Design Expected
Spring 2022



First National Bank Building Redevelopment Opportunity RFP Spring 2022



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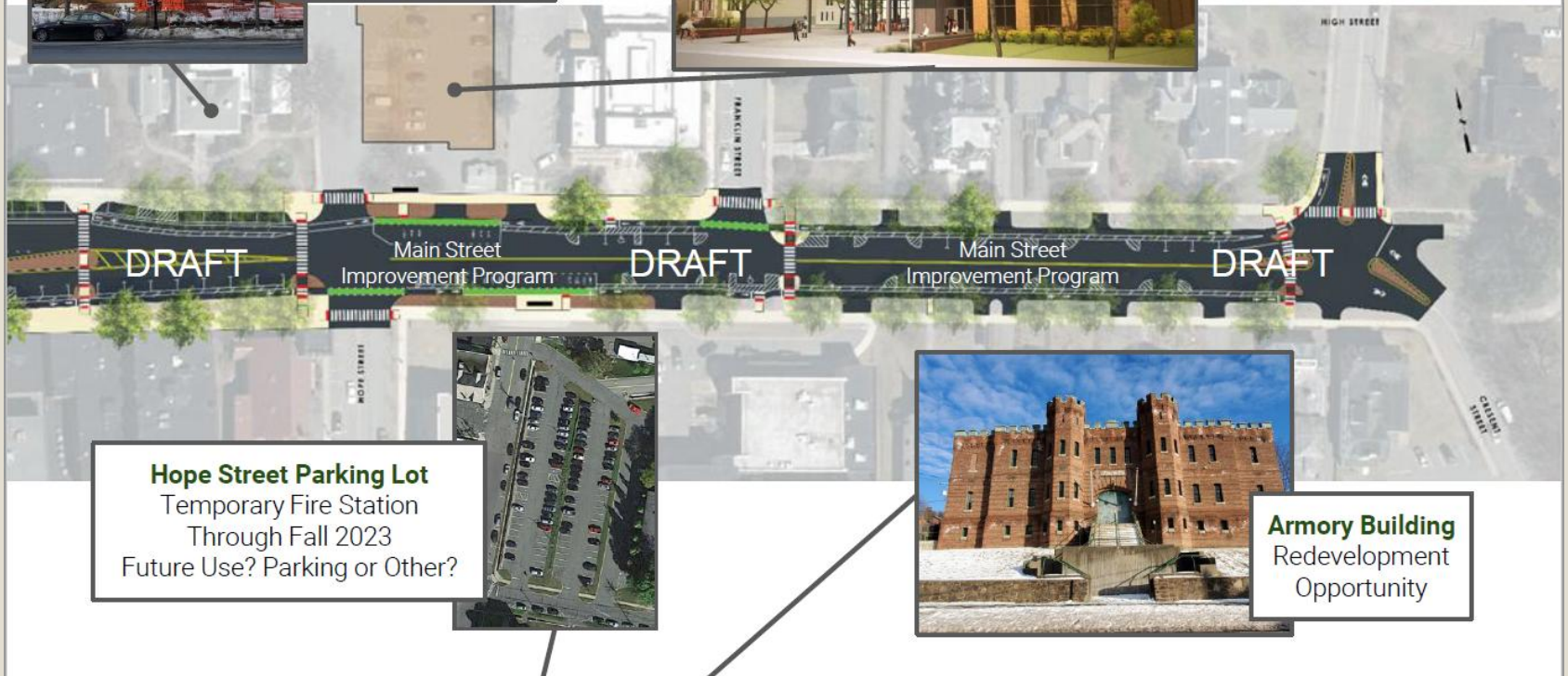
Downtown Revitalization Plan Detail - February 2022



Leavitt-Hovey House
Redevelopment
Opportunity



New Library
Expected Completion
Spring 2023



Hope Street Parking Lot
Temporary Fire Station
Through Fall 2023
Future Use? Parking or Other?



Armory Building
Redevelopment
Opportunity

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February

– feedback on FNB building (by 2/10/2022- google form)

All invited to February 24th Sustainable Greenfield Implementation Committee

Spring

Design workshop on Court Square (charette)

RFP issued for First National Bank Building

Community Input for Downtown Revitalization Plan

Summer

Presentation on preliminary Downtown Revitalization Plan

September

Presentation of Final Downtown Revitalization Plan

***MassDOT will hold public hearing specifically about the Main Street Improvements*

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- Q&A
- Community Ideas /Feedback on First National Bank Building – comment this evening or complete feedback on google form online
- What would you like to see happen with the First National Bank Building?
- What should the City/GRA keep in mind about the building (and its surroundings) as we put out a request for proposals?
- Is there any other feedback you would like to share?
- THANK YOU!

This meeting has been recorded and is available for viewing at the Greenfield Community and Economic Development Department webpage.