



# **DOWNTOWN** **GREENFIELD** **REVITALIZATION PLAN**

April 2023

# Acknowledgements

Mayor Roxann D. Wedegartner

City Council Members

Philip Elmer, At-large  
Christine Forgey, At-large  
Penny Ricketts, At-large  
Michael Terounzo, At-large  
Katherine Golub, Precinct 1  
Daniel J. Guin, Precinct 2  
Virginia DeSorgher, Precinct 3  
John Bottomley, Precinct 4  
Marianne Bullock, Precinct 5  
Sheila Gilmour, Precinct 6  
Jasper Lapienski, Precinct 7  
Doug Mayo, Precinct 8  
Derek Helie, Precinct 9

Downtown Greenfield Alliance (DGA)

AJ Bresciano, Greenfield Savings Bank  
Timothy Grader, Downtown Property Owner  
Margo Jones, Jones Whitsett Architects  
Isaac Mass, Greenfield Garden Cinema Owner  
Amy McMahan, Mesa Verde Owner, Planning Board  
Hannah Rechtschaffen, Sustainable Greenfield Implementation Committee  
Charles Roberts, Planning Board  
Rachel Roberts, Greenfield Business Association  
Jeff Sauser, Greenspace Cowork, Downtown Planner  
David Singer, Zoning Board, Former City Councilor  
Grady Vigneau, YMCA  
Roxann Wedegartner, City of Greenfield  
Otis Wheeler, Greenfield Redevelopment Authority  
John Williams, Franklin Community Co-op  
Anthony Worden, Greenfield Cooperative Bank

City Staff

MJ Adams, City of Greenfield  
Christian LaPlante, City of Greenfield  
Anna Oltman, City of Greenfield  
Caitlin von Schmidt, City of Greenfield



Prepared for the City of Greenfield  
Prepared by Innes Associates Ltd.

# Contents

- 1 About the Process
- 2 Community Input
- 3 Implications
- 4 Priorities for Future Actions
- 5 Appendix A: Recommendations from Past Plans
- 6 Appendix B: Looking Ahead: Update Downtown Master Plan
- 7 Appendix C: Looking Ahead: Funding Resources

1

ABOUT THE PROCESS: Background

In 2020, the City of Greenfield sponsored a community forum to help revitalize its Downtown. This initiative was called “A Deliberate Downtown: Growing by Design.”\* The public portion of this process was slowed down by the COVID-19 pandemic, but that did not slow the City’s planning for the Downtown.

Summer 2020 saw efforts by the City to support small businesses, including grants, technical assistance, and allowing outdoor dining.\*

In 2021, Massachusetts DHCD sponsored state-wide program to assist communities and small businesses with the efforts to recover from the pandemic. FinePoint Associates LLC, along with Brovitz Community Planning & Design, assisted the City with Greenfield’s **Rapid Recovery Plan: The Deliberate Downtown**, published in August 2021.

In February 2022, the City of Greenfield kicked off a community forum called “Downtown Greenfield: The Deliberate Downtown.” **This forum provided an update on the previous activities and previewed several changes that will be happening to the Downtown over the next few years.** Other known improvements at the time included the Main Street Improvement Program, the opening of the Community Justice Support Center for Franklin County (Spring 2022), the new Fire Station (Fall 2023), the Skateboard park (June 2023), the new library (Spring 2023), the Fiske Avenue Pocket Park (2022), and the Court Street Redesign (ongoing).\*

In late 2022, the City kicked off a process **to engage the public about the future of the Downtown, knowing that many of the anticipated changes would be complete by early 2024.** The City hired Innes Associates to assist with a process of engagement that included the members of the Downtown Greenfield Alliance, an in-person public forum, and an online questionnaire. This presentation is the result of that engagement effort.

The public forum was held **on January 19, 2023**, and the survey was open from then until **February 6**, allowing people attending the Winter Carnival to participate. Also in February, a parking study, led by Stantec, and the MassDOT Main Street Improvement Project (with Fuss & O’Neill) had their first meetings.



**Also in 2020**, the City received technical assistance from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) which is sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The assistance was for an assessment of the economic conditions of the Downtown. FinePoint Associates LLC produced the **Greenfield Downtown Business District Assessment and Market Analysis** in January 2021.

The City continued to experiment with outdoor events in the Downtown in **Summer 2021**. Court Square was the site for the ongoing Farmer’s Market and the LLBean Boot Pop-up shop and a temporary pedestrian plaza and Food Truck.\*

**Also in 2022**, the MDI program sponsored technical assistance for a storefront-to-storefront design guide that would supplement the City’s planned streetscape program. Innes Associates Ltd. assisted the City with the **Downtown Storefront to Storefront Strategy**, completed in September 2022.

The City was able to announce **the purchase of the Wilson’s building** at the forum on January 19.

During this period, **members of the DGA provided input** about the Downtown, including public perceptions and additional ways to engage people in discussion.

**The next four pages show the known projects at the time of the forum and their anticipated completion dates.**

\* Summarized from **Greenfield: A Deliberate Downtown 2022**, presented by the City of Greenfield, February 7, 2022.



Downtown Revitalization Plan Detail - January 2023

**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 and installing new conduit for fiber under this stretch of Main Street.

**Community Justice Support Center of Franklin County**  
Opened Spring 2022



DRAFT

Main Street Improvement Program

DRAFT

Main Street Improvement Program

DRAFT

Main Street

P

230 on-street spaces from Colrain to High Street currently



**New Fire Station**  
Expected Completion Winter/Spring 2023-24

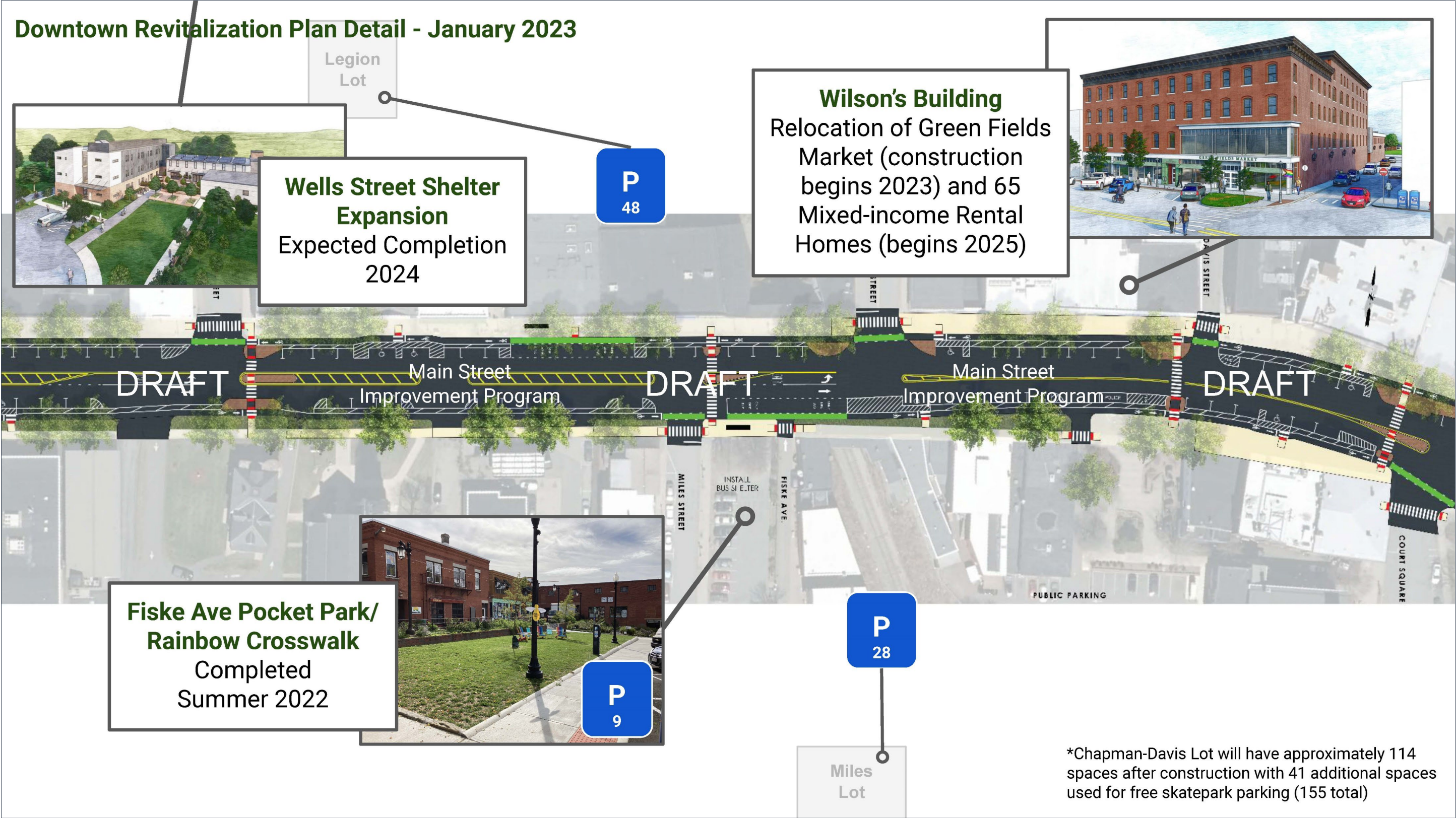
Side Streets

P

200 spaces on other streets in downtown neighborhood



ABOUT THE PROCESS: Known Projects



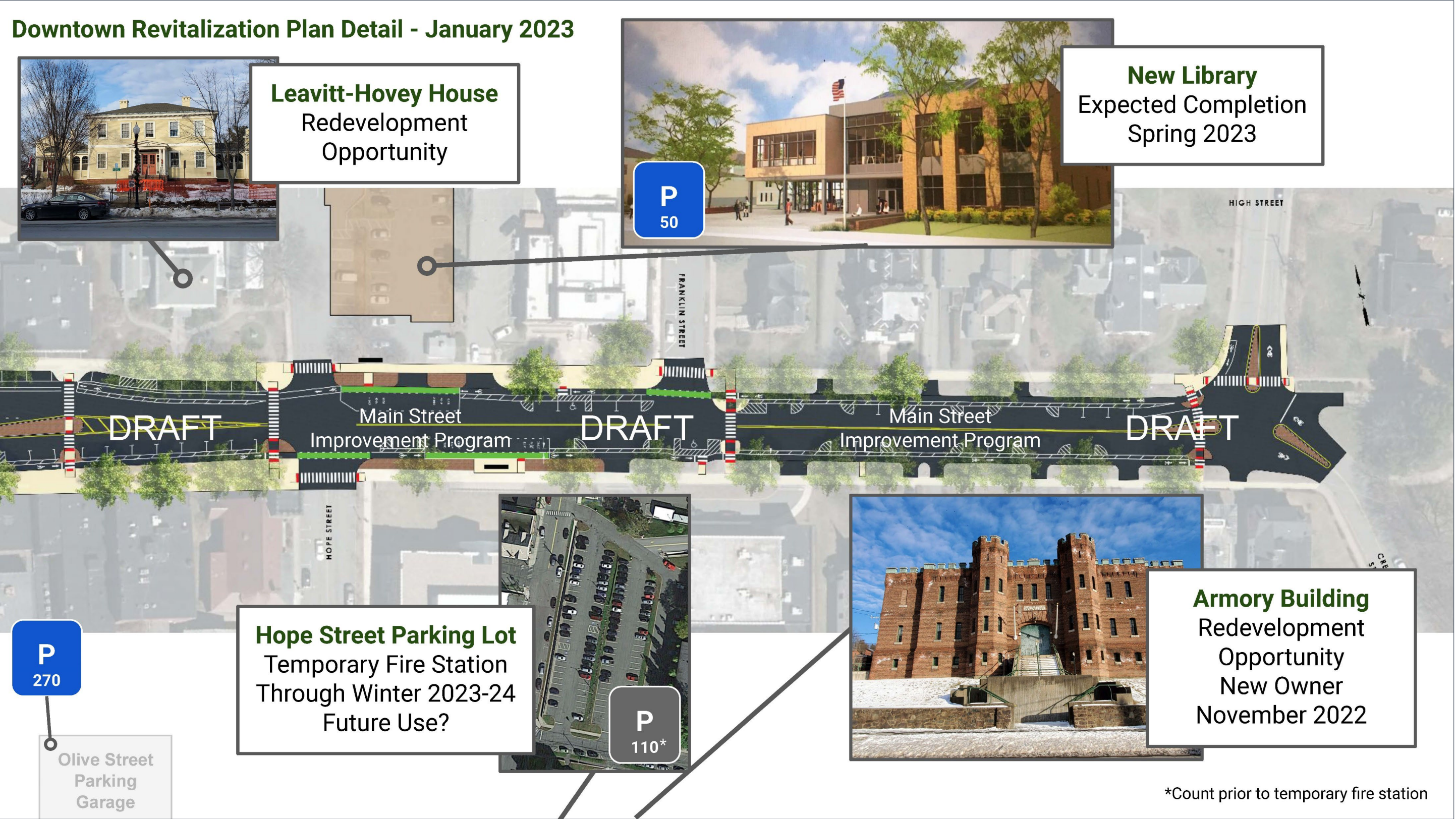
Graphic Courtesy of the City of Greenfield





Graphic Courtesy of the City of Greenfield





Graphic Courtesy of the City of Greenfield



Community input can be divided into four sources:

- Input from members of the Downtown Greenfield Alliance over four meetings: on December 15, 2022, January 3, 2023, February 7, 2023, and March 7, 2023.
- Questions and comments from attendees at the public forum on January 19, 2023.
- Questions and comments from respondents to the online questionnaire which was open from January 19 through February 6. The City hung boards from the public forum in the Wilson's windows so people who did not attend the forum could also participate. The Greenfield Report also published notices of both the forum and the questionnaire.
- Comments from City Councilors at their meeting of March 15, 2023.

## A

## Public Forum (January 19, 2023)

- Held at the Jon Zon Community Center.
- 38 people signed in.
- Participants listened to a presentation, asked questions or provided comments during a Q&A session, and then made comments on boards with questions for them to consider (see the next two pages).
- The focus of the questions was on the following:
  - Understanding participant's **experience** of the Downtown
  - Exploring the **identity** of the Downtown as the participants see it and as they think others see it
  - Identifying what participants saw as current **challenges** in the Downtown
  - Asking for thoughts on how to better support Downtown **businesses**.


## B

## Online Questionnaire (January 19 - February 6, 2023)

- The questionnaire platform was SurveyMonkey.
- The City received 41 responses (including one paper survey that was entered by hand).
- The survey questions were based on the boards from the forum, but respondents did not need to see the boards in order to respond.
- 77.42% (31 people) did **NOT** attend the January workshop (most because they either didn't know about it (42.86%/9 people)) or because they heard about it too late (23.81% or 5 people)). 6 people (28.57%) had another commitment.
- **Just over half** (53.55%/16 people) had heard of the Deliberate Downtown Initiative before January 2023.




# COMMUNITY INPUT: Boards for Public Forum and Online Questionnaire



City of Greenfield  
A DELIBERATE DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE  
FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

## DOWNTOWN IDENTITY

Are you at the workshop on January 19?  
Place your 3x3 sticky note(s) in this box to comment!



Use this QR code to find out more about the planning process.

These questions are a starting point for you to think about what Downtown Greenfield means to you.

How do you describe Greenfield to other people?

Think about the downtown five years ago. What has changed?

Greenfield is close to many private schools. What does the downtown need to attract parents, students, faculty, staff, and alumni?

Greenfield is the hub of a wider region of outdoor recreation and tourist activities. What does the downtown need to attract more visitors?


What could be done to make downtown more sustainable?

How could the City leverage the train to New York and support the Downtown?

In addition to the questions above, what other thoughts do you have about the **future identity** of Greenfield's Downtown?

Are you viewing this after the Jan. 19 Workshop?  
Use the QR Code to the left or go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GreenfieldDowntown> to answer the questions for all four boards online and enter to win a prize!


Interested in learning more?  
Use the QR Code at the top or go to <https://www.greenfield-ma.gov/CEDD> to find out more about what is happening in Greenfield's Downtown!



Use this QR code to Answer the questions from all four boards online and enter to win a prize!

Boards are available until Jan. 31 and at the Winter Carnival (Feb. 3-5, 2023) at Court Square.


View all four boards and the maps of what's happening in Greenfield's Downtown in the windows at Wilson's on Main Street.



City of Greenfield  
A DELIBERATE DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE  
FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

## DOWNTOWN EXPERIENCE

Are you at the workshop on January 19?  
Place your 3x3 sticky note(s) in this box to comment!



Use this QR code to find out more about the planning process.

These questions are a starting point for you to think about what Downtown Greenfield means to you.

Where do you go Downtown?

What do you like best about the Downtown?

How do you learn about what is happening?

What types of businesses would you like to see Downtown?

What types of activities would you like to see Downtown?

What is your favorite time to visit Downtown? Why?

What other downtowns do you go to? Why?


What could Greenfield learn from other downtowns?

What could other downtowns learn from Greenfield?

In addition to the questions above, what other thoughts do you have about the **future experience of being in Greenfield's Downtown**?

Are you viewing this after the Jan. 19 Workshop?  
Use the QR Code to the left or go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GreenfieldDowntown> to answer the questions for all four boards online and enter to win a prize!


Interested in learning more?  
Use the QR Code at the top or go to <https://www.greenfield-ma.gov/CEDD> to find out more about what is happening in Greenfield's Downtown!



Use this QR code to Answer the questions from all four boards online and enter to win a prize!

Boards are available until Jan. 31 and at the Winter Carnival (Feb. 3-5, 2023) at Court Square.


View all four boards and the maps of what's happening in Greenfield's Downtown in the windows at Wilson's on Main Street.



City of Greenfield  
A DELIBERATE DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE  
FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

## DOWNTOWN CHALLENGES

Are you at the workshop on January 19?  
Place your 3x3 sticky note(s) in this box to comment!



Use this QR code to find out more about the planning process.

These questions are a starting point for you to think about what Downtown Greenfield means to you.

What keeps you from coming Downtown?

How do we bring more people to Greenfield?

Greenfield needs more housing, both affordable and market-rate. Would you add both to the Downtown? One but not the other? Why?

If more housing is developed Downtown, would you live there? Why or why not?

In addition to the questions above, what other thoughts do you have about the **current challenges** of Greenfield's Downtown?

Are you viewing this after the Jan. 19 Workshop?  
Use the QR Code to the left or go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GreenfieldDowntown> to answer the questions for all four boards online and enter to win a prize!

Interested in learning more?  
Use the QR Code at the top or go to <https://www.greenfield-ma.gov/CEDD> to find out more about what is happening in Greenfield's Downtown!



Use this QR code to Answer the questions from all four boards online and enter to win a prize!

Boards are available until Jan. 31 and at the Winter Carnival (Feb. 3-5, 2023) at Court Square.

View all four boards and the maps of what's happening in Greenfield's Downtown in the windows at Wilson's on Main Street.



City of Greenfield  
A DELIBERATE DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE  
FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

## DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

Are you at the workshop on January 19?  
Place your 3x3 sticky note(s) in this box to comment!



Use this QR code to find out more about the planning process.

These questions are a starting point for you to think about what Downtown Greenfield means to you.

What does it take for a new business to attract your attention?

In the last two years, several new businesses have opened. Which ones have you visited?

Have you considered opening a business in Greenfield? Did you look at the Downtown? What happened? What would you need to succeed?

Do you view the city as a resource for entrepreneurs?

In addition to the questions above, what other thoughts do you have about **support for the businesses in Greenfield's Downtown**?

Are you viewing this after the Jan. 19 Workshop?  
Use the QR Code to the left or go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GreenfieldDowntown> to answer the questions for all four boards online and enter to win a prize!

Interested in learning more?  
Use the QR Code at the top or go to <https://www.greenfield-ma.gov/CEDD> to find out more about what is happening in Greenfield's Downtown!



Use this QR code to Answer the questions from all four boards online and enter to win a prize!

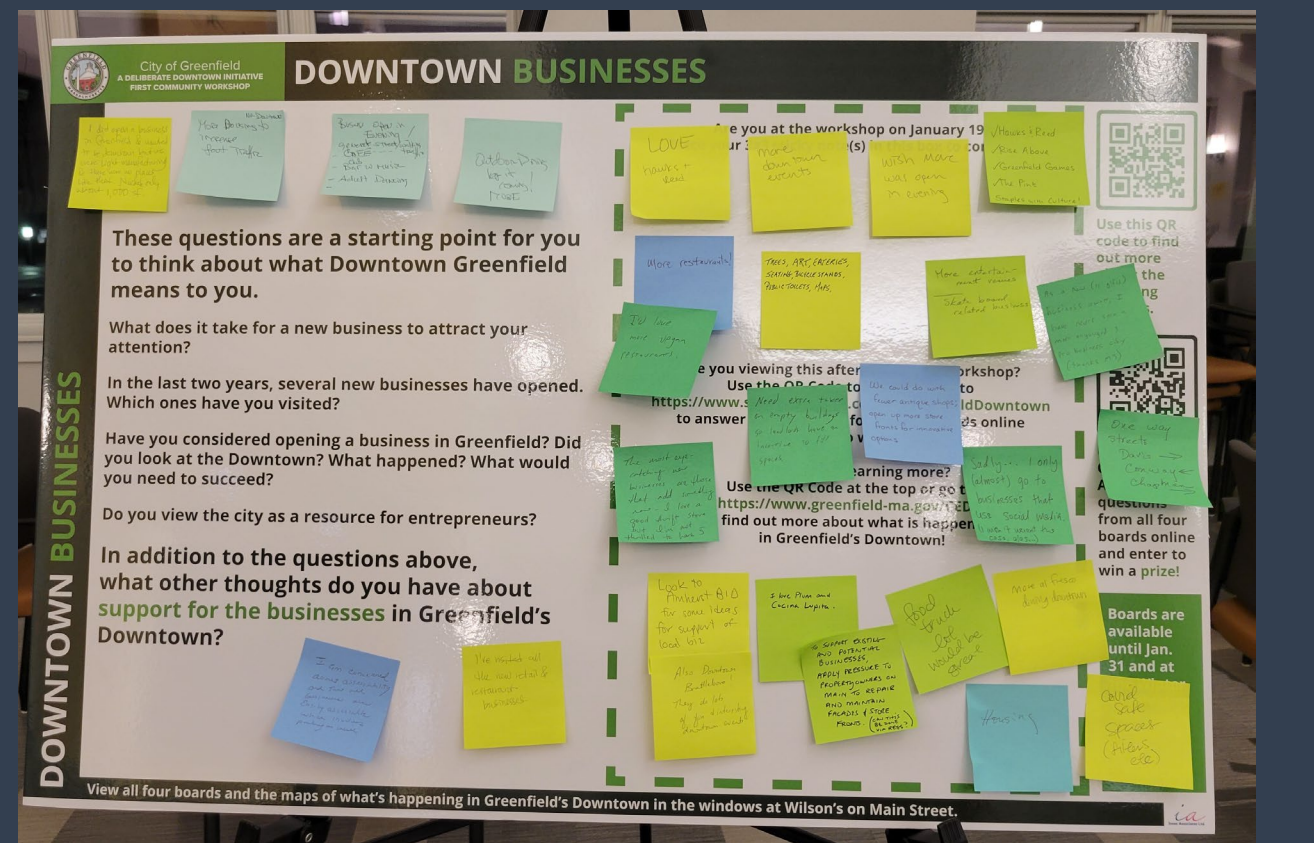
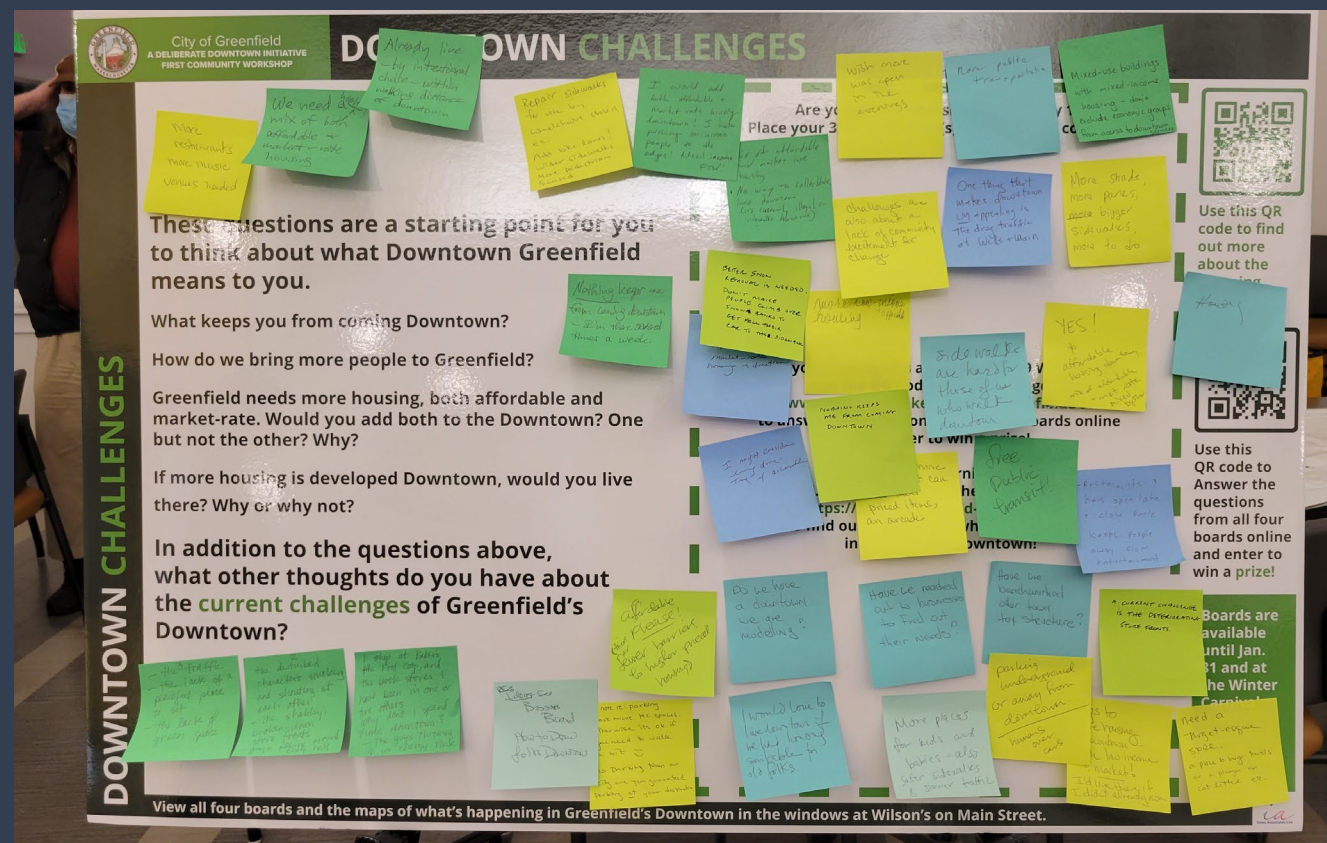
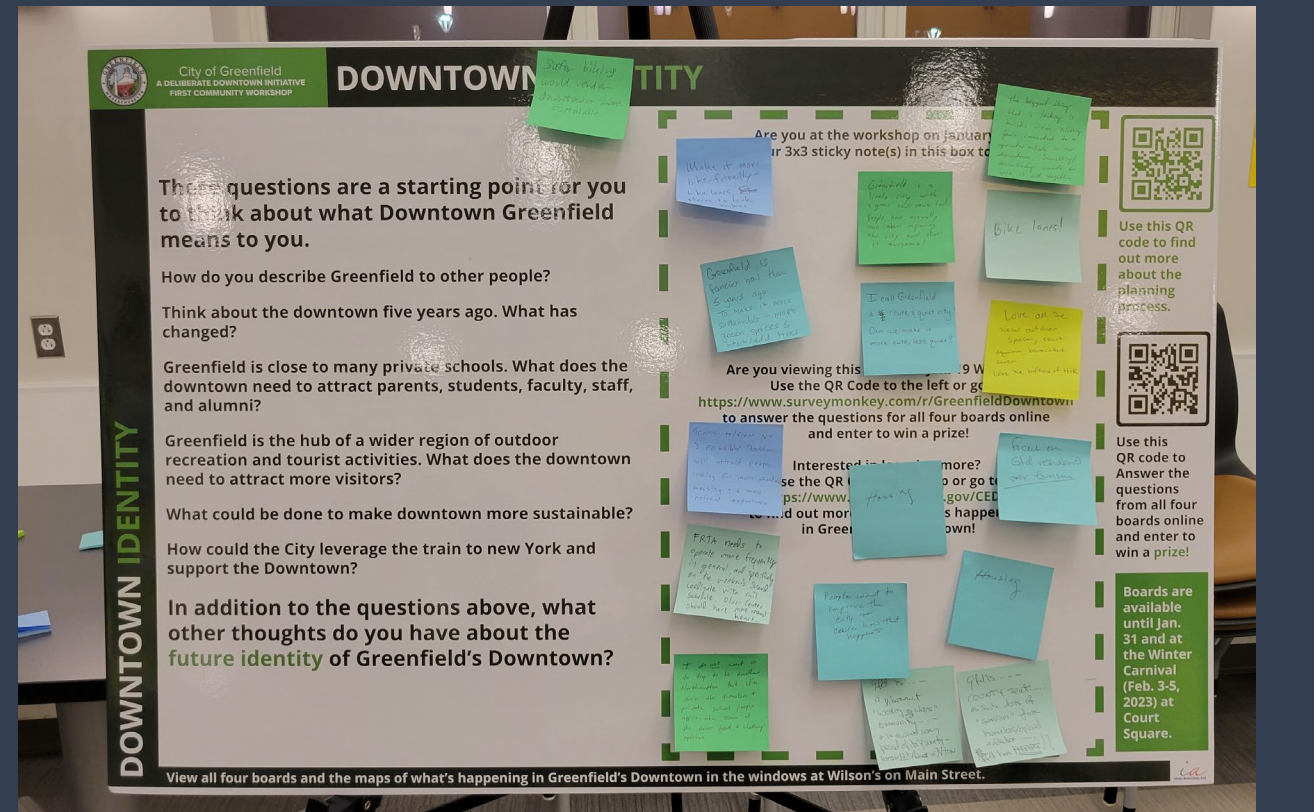
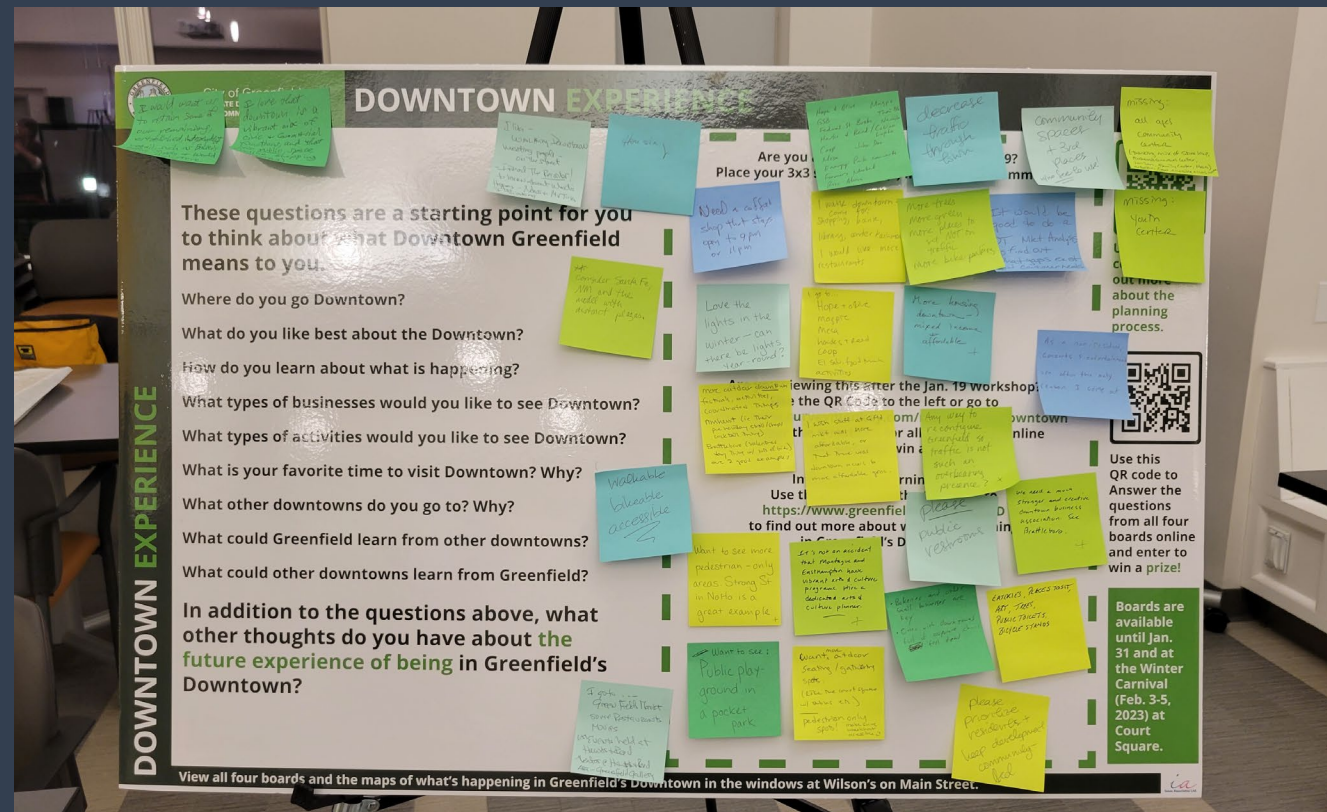
Boards are available until Jan. 31 and at the Winter Carnival (Feb. 3-5, 2023) at Court Square.

View all four boards and the maps of what's happening in Greenfield's Downtown in the windows at Wilson's on Main Street.

Images of boards used at the public forum on January 19, 2023. and posted in the windows at Wilson's.



# COMMUNITY INPUT: Boards for Public Forum and Online Questionnaire



Images of boards used at the public forum on January 19, 2023, with comments by participants.



## A

## Summary of Key Input from the Public Forum

What does Downtown Greenfield mean to you?

Some comments have been moved to a different topic from the original post.

## Identity

How do you describe Downtown Greenfield to people?

- Greenfield's identity is different from nearby Amherst and Northampton: it is more working-class, with a lot of "heart." The City has a more "small-town feel."
- It feels a little "fancier" than it used to, but a holistic vision for the Downtown seems to be missing.

## Challenges

What keeps you from coming Downtown? How do we bring more people Downtown?

- A mix of both market-rate and affordable housing is needed to bring more people downtown.
- Housing needs to be suitable for older people.
- Downtown needs to be more accessible to a wider variety of incomes, including options for shopping, restaurants, and no fees to use community spaces/ third places.
- Downtown needs to be more accessible to people of all ages, including sidewalks that are friendly to wheelchairs and strollers, more handicapped-accessible parking spaces, and better snow removal.
- Amenities such as bike lanes, shade, parks, places to sit, and better sidewalks are important.
- Addressing poor behavior, such as drug use, drinking, and loitering, would help people feel safer.
- Addressing the poor condition of some storefronts would also help people feel safer.

I love that downtown is a vibrant mix of civic + commercial functions, and that it's public space (unlike shopping centers).

## Experiences

Where do you go Downtown and what do you like to do?

- **Participants would like the following to enhance the experience of being Downtown:**
  - More outdoor events/festivals that are coordinated.
  - Public restrooms.
  - Places to sit/ outdoor seating/ gathering spots.
  - Bicycle stands.
  - Public art.
  - Trees.
  - Activities open later in the evening.
  - Maintain/support local businesses, including stores and restaurants.

## Businesses

How do we better support businesses Downtown?

- **Ideas to support businesses downtown include the following:**
  - More al fresco dining.
  - Apply pressure to property owners to maintain and repair store fronts.
  - Extra taxes on empty buildings to give landlords and incentive to fill spaces.
  - Increase the variety of business types.
  - More housing in the Downtown.
  - More flexible zoning to add business types (including cub/music/dancing, light industrial).
  - Address accessibility for businesses and parking.

## B

## Summary of Key Input from the Questionnaire

Some comments have been moved to a different topic from the original answer.

## Identity

- “A real town, not a wannabe town.”
- “Small, gritty, walkable, pretty, but with a sizable number of poor or homeless people and sometimes feels a bit sad.”
- “Equitable variety socio-economically.”
- “A small town that has improved in the last decade or so.”
- “Rough around the edges but has potential.”
- “Troubled but healing.”
- “A nice town that’s always on the verge [of] becoming better.”
- “A diamond in the rough.”
- “Rough around the edges, but good overall.”
- “Neglected.”
- “Nicely situated New England town that hasn’t seen an economic boom since the heyday of the railroad.”
- “Low income, largely working place that feels very welcoming to new people and makes it wonderfully easy to be meaningfully involved and have an impact.”
- “Cool little town that punches above its weight in terms of many amenities.”
- “A great place to live but not a destination”

It’s not a tourist town, and it’s not a college town, it’s just a town where people live, and I love it.

What could be more financially and economically sustainable than facilitating engagement, investment, and growth right here?

## Experiences

- Respondents listed many local businesses: one respondent noted “...as I list them, I’m realizing how many excellent small businesses and gathering places already exist in downtown Greenfield.”
- When people go downtown varies:
  - “I only go downtown during daylight hours due to safety concerns.”
  - “I like to go downtown any time.”
  - “Mostly, it is after hours to visit restaurants and bars.”
- Some notes the ability to run errands/ go to multiple businesses at once.
- Others noted the lack of affordable options.
- Other than business owners, no one mentioned working downtown. One respondent noted the lack of well-paying jobs.
- Events/experiences such as the Winter Carnival, farmer’s market, and pedestrianized Court Square are a draw.
- Lack of coordination among businesses for opening hours is a negative.
- Another negative is the empty stores and dirty front windows.
- One respondent loved the views provided by the topography of downtown.
- **Respondents identified what is missing:**
  - Different business types, goods, and services.
  - Green spaces and places for children to play.
  - Additional outdoor activities (including more outdoor dining), especially in the summer evenings.
  - Link to the historical and natural assets of the Green River.
- **Many respondents would like to see a strong focus on supporting local businesses for local needs.**



## B

## Summary of Key Input from the Questionnaire

Some comments have been moved to a different topic from the original answer.

We can do so much better than a downtown where the only things to do are shop and eat.

## Challenges

- **Conditions that keep people from coming downtown include the following:**
  - Need for more spaces or activities that don't require money to participate or just gather.
  - Need for benches on the side streets.
  - Lack of services for low-income or limited mobility tenants (such as a grocery store).
  - Negative behavior.
  - No public restrooms.
  - Limited business hours/ no night life.
  - Payment required for parking/ parking garage feels unsafe.
  - The downtown is run-down and the appearance "gives the impression of economic struggles."
  - Lack of lodging for people to come to a show and stay the night.
- **What the City could support to address these challenges:**
  - More activities: community gardens, chess boards or other games, activities in the parks.
  - Add more housing, including market rate, affordable, non-traditional (co-housing, ADUs and tiny houses), means-tested, and pathways to homeownership.
  - Coordinate new housing with eateries, shops, recreation.
  - Good transportation options.

## Businesses

- **Businesses that would attract the respondents include the following:**
  - Those with a diversity of offerings.
  - Those with interesting window displays and a "welcoming face."
  - Those that encourage art/culture.
  - Those with more hours of operation, especially later in the evenings.
  - Those that have products/services that are desired by the community, including different levels of affordability.
  - Those that serve families and young adults.

**What the City can do to help businesses:**

- Encourage the following businesses:
  - Arts/creative businesses
  - Business incubator
- Hold landlords accountable for addressing poor building conditions including vacancy and vandalism.
- Create conditions that will support more foot traffic.
- Take an active role through financial incentives and/or regulatory requirements to create a sustainable business community with physically accessible spaces for all.
- Provide marketing support and other resources to small businesses.
- **One business owner was extremely positive about the City as a resource for entrepreneurs; others were less positive but only one cited a specific experience.**

This section is focused on what the City can do to continue its support for the transformation of Greenfield's Downtown. It is critical to recognize that the changes anticipated for 2023-24 may address some of the concerns expressed by the public about a lack of activity or visible investment in the Downtown.

Key projects include the completion of the new public library and the skatepark, which will draw a variety of age groups and interests to the downtown. Adding Court Square as a permanent green space will help complement the City's investment in the Fiske Avenue Pocket Park and the existing Energy Park. Both will help support the outdoor activities that are a strong draw for many people.

The prospect of the redevelopment of the former Wilson's department store as housing will jump start the process of adding more people downtown throughout the day. The relocation of the Green Field's market to this building will support a local business and retain an important anchor in the Downtown.

Existing buildings with available space offer opportunities to add some of the uses identified by the public. The **Leavitt-Hovey House** (former library), the former downtown center of **Greenfield Community College**, the **Armory**, the former **First National Bank**, and the **Hope Street Parking lot** are all options for redevelopment that could meet needs identified in this document.

## Tools

What options does the City of Greenfield have to continue its investment in Greenfield?

- Land Control
- Regulations
- Enforcement and Support
- Programming
- Communication
- Facilitation
- Implementation
- Continued Planning

Each of these tools are described below, with options for City action that draw on the comments made by the public at the form and as responses to the questionnaires.

### Land Control

A City has control over the land that it owns, including the public rights-of-way that form the streets and sidewalks, city-owned parks and parking lots, and city-owned buildings. As noted above, the City has made significant investments in new buildings and small parks in the Downtown. It is also making significant investments in streetscapes, including the current planning process for the MassDOT project for Main Street and the current parking study. Parking was certainly an area of concern as was the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. The City has public toilets at City Hall and is also adding a Portland Loo – a public toilet that will help address concerns about the lack of public toilets in the Downtown.

Underutilized City properties should be evaluated for suitability to address uses identified through this process. A recurring theme was the need for housing to address a variety of needs and create demand for local businesses. The Hope Street lot should be evaluated for reuse potential after the parking study is completed in June.

### What else can the City do?

- Add more benches along side streets to support walking to the Downtown for nearby residents who are less physically able.
- Install bus shelters and benches at bus stops to make public transit more visible and accessible.

### Regulations

The City can change its zoning to allow more uses Downtown. The Downtown is currently zoned as Central commercial (CC). Current uses are relatively flexible, but not specific. Some communities are beginning to define desired uses as a method to encourage business owners to expand or relocate to their communities.

In 2020, the City added Makerspace and Craft Workshop and Light Assembly with Related Retail to its list of uses. Many of the uses identified in the public comments are allowed either as-of-right or by special permit (hotel, indoor entertainment). Arts-specific uses other than theatre, are missing, but might fall under one of the larger categories in the permitted use.

#### What else can the City do?

- The City should consider adding additional uses, especially those that support experiential retail, arts-related retail and activities, and expanded entertainment uses, either in the permitted uses for the CC District or as a guide to potential business owners that those uses are permitted under the larger definition. For example, the City has permitted co-working under Business and Professional Office; co-working could be added as a use in the zoning or identified as a use in City business development materials.

### Enforcement and Support

Enforcement of building and health codes is critical to preventing conditions of blight, but enforcement cannot work if the property owner does not have the resources to address the problem. Some communities are evaluating programs that pair increased inspections with information and resources for addressing problems.

Concerns identified during this process include long-term vacancies (especially ground-floor), deteriorated storefronts and façades, old flyers in windows, and vandalism. The City should require property owners to address these conditions and could provide a combination of fines and incentives for compliance.

#### What else can the City do?

- Work with property owners who have received notices of violations to identify local and state resources to address deteriorated conditions.
- Programs the City has now or has used in the past include:
  - Commercial façade improvement program.
  - Vacant Storefront District.
  - Targeted use of CDGB funds to address blighted conditions.
- Massachusetts programs that can be leveraged with City funds include:
  - Site readiness and vacant properties (MassDevelopment).
  - Historic tax credits (Massachusetts Historic Commission).
  - Energy efficiency grants (Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources)

### Programming

Many of the respondents requested more outdoor activities in the Downtown. These requests included activities that were:

- Seasonal
- Family-friendly
- Affordable to a wide ranges of incomes
- During the evening (especially in the summer)

The Fiske Avenue Pocket Park, the planned redesign of Court Square, and Energy Park will help provide space for additional activities. People mentioned the Winter Carnival, the Farmers' Market, Bee Fest, the Arts Walk, and the temporary seasonal use of Court Square.

#### What else can the City do?

Members of the public suggested the following additional activities/spaces (with a desire that they be free or affordable to a broad range of incomes):

- Community building for all ages with activities and food.
- Busking/outdoor musicians.
- Places to sit/eat outside.
- Additional beautification.
- Classes/workshops.
- Play areas.
- Food truck Fridays (or similar).
- Activities that build on Greenfield's reputation for sustainability.



### Communication

One of the most interesting outcomes of this planning process was understanding how people receive their information about what is going on within the Downtown and the entire city. People who participated in this process receive their information in a variety of ways:

- The *Greenfield Recorder*
- GCTV webcast
- Email
- Other City meeting
- City website
- Instagram
- Windows at Wilson's (for the questionnaire)

What was also clear is that some respondents were unaware of recent City planning efforts, new businesses that had located in the Downtown over the past 2-3 years, and the timeline for completion of the projects described earlier. The redesigned City website should also help with communication.

#### What else can the City do?

- Communicate frequently and in a variety of media.
- Continue to celebrate the successes of the Downtown, especially as new buildings/ outdoor spaces come online.
- Focus on the details of trash pickup, street sweeping, addressing poorly maintained buildings. The physical appearance of the Downtown is also a communication tool.

### Facilitation

The City is not the only entity responsible for the Downtown, and one important role for the City is continuing to facilitate conversations among the different stakeholders. The members of the Downtown Greenfield Alliance identified several options for further explorations, including the following:

- Continue to support the creation of housing Downtown to add activity.
- Support cross-marketing efforts among local businesses and attractions.
- Identify ways for Greenfield to capture regional visitors looking for a place to stop for lunch or a break.
- Leverage the Amtrak train to New York for both residents and as a draw for visitors.
- Support Downtown as a community center in addition to a commercial center.
- Hire an Arts Coordinator to leverage the existing music and arts community and plan additional programming.
- Leverage the skatepark to draw related businesses (perhaps along Chapman Street).
- Add year-round programming to Court Square.
- Create a one-stop place for social assistance so people can get the assistance they need more efficiently.
- Work with MassDOT and Eversource to upgrade the electrical system so Downtown buildings can add solar power.

### Implementation

The focus of this update on public engagement does not invalidate the City's recent planning efforts. Recent reports and studies, listed below, contain additional specific recommendations that should be coordinated with the comments in this section.

- [Greenfield Downtown Business District Assessment and Market Analysis](#)
- [Rapid Recovery Plan: The Deliberate Downtown](#)
- [Downtown Storefront to Storefront Strategy](#)

#### What else can the City do?

- Review the recommendations from each report and the complete documents from the public meeting, questionnaire, and meetings with the DGA for coordinated actions.
- Identify options for next steps in terms of actions, policies, or additional studies.

### Continued Planning

Some participants in this public process identified additional areas for exploration that would require further planning studies. These include the following:

#### What else can the City do?

- Look for ways to connect the Downtown to Energy Park and the Green River.
- Identify appropriate pedestrian and bicycle connections from Main Street to the neighborhoods and identify needed amenities.
- Update the Downtown Master Plan (see Appendix B).

## Priorities for Future Actions

**Priorities depend on timing**, and this public engagement process identified some actions the City could take over the next ten years to build upon the significant investment it has already made in the Downtown.

### NOW!

- Continue to publicize recent and anticipated changes to the Downtown across a variety of media.
- Coordinate pedestrian amenities, such as benches and bus shelters, and bicycle amenities, such as bike racks and repair stations, with the Main Street Improvement Program.
- Begin addressing the small details that many participants identified as concerns:
  - Ask property owners to remove out-of-date flyers from walls and windows and address vandalism promptly.
  - Identify property owners who might be eligible for the commercial façade program and ask how it could be improved to encourage more participation. Enroll more owners/businesses in the program.
- Develop a staff position of either Arts Coordinator or Downtown Coordinator to facilitate programming.
- Share public input with new property owners to see if their plans could include some of the uses identified as desirable.
- Encourage businesses to coordinate late opening hours once a week.

### 1-3 Years

- Evaluate zoning to see if there are barriers to the types of businesses identified as desirable by the participants.
- Continue to support the development of both market rate and affordable housing in the Downtown. 
- Continue to engage the public in the development of programming ideas and experiment with different events, times, and locations.
- Work with local arts groups, businesses and property owners to identify complementary clusters (food/music, skateboard/equipment/ clothing, artists/art supplies/galleries, food trucks/commercial kitchens) and consider target marketing of empty spaces.
- Develop branding for the Crossroads Cultural District.
- Identify appropriate spaces for social services that do not take up valuable storefront space along Main Street but are still accessible to those they serve.
- Continue to evaluate the recommendations of previous plans and implement as relevant.
- Address concerns about safety at the Olive Street Parking Garage.

### 3-5 Years

- Begin planning process to link the Downtown to Energy Park and the Green River.
- Expand pedestrian and bicycle improvements and amenities to connect the surrounding neighborhoods to Main Street.
- Evaluate programming of local spaces to see if the anticipated audience is attracted to the Downtown.
- Continue to develop programs to support small local businesses.
- Continue to evaluate City-owned underutilized properties for development to meet needs identified in this report.

### 5+ Years

- Measure the change in population, the demographics of that population, and the change in businesses since 2023.
- Identify areas for improvement. For example, has the balance of market rate to affordable housing shifted? Is there a change in the types of businesses in the area? Are Downtown events still effective in drawing local people?



This report should be seen as a supplement to three earlier plans. Public input on future goals during this process add more information to the three plans completed during the period from 2020-2022, when opportunities for public engagement were limited by the restrictions on gathering due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recommendations from those plans are extracted here, to provide a complete picture of recommendations for the Downtown.

### Greenfield Downtown Business District Assessment and Market Analysis

FinePoint Associates LLC  
January 2021

This report, sponsored by the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, is a market analysis of the area. The analysis evaluates the existing business profile and indicates areas of opportunity. The City should use this document when talking to potential developers, property owners with vacancies, and current business owners or entrepreneurs. Section C of the report summarizes public input for future actions by the City.

These potential actions include the following strategies:

- More long-term outdoor dining options.
- Improved streetscape.
- Additional community events and cultural activities.
- Public art installation.

Desired cultural and arts activities were as follows:



- Music concerts.
- Food-related/culinary events.
- Theater in the Downtown.

### Rapid Recovery Plan: The Deliberate Downtown

FinePoint Associates LLC  
Brovitz Community Planning & Design  
2021

This document summarized the planning process sponsored by the Massachusetts department of Housing and Community Development to assist communities and small businesses recover from the effects of the shutdowns during the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic. The process identified the following recommendations, broken into five categories:

#### 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. 



Indicates actions that the City is currently addressing.

- 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.





Indicates actions that the City is currently addressing.


### Revenue /Sales (continued)

- 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 bylaw 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.

### Downtown Storefront to Storefront Strategy

Innes Associates  
2022

The Massachusetts Downtown Initiative also sponsored this study, which provided suggestions about how the City could support improvements that extend from the window display on one side of Main Street to the window display on the other, including improvements to the façades of buildings. The report identified the following recommendations in four categories:

#### Area-Wide

- Pass policies and regulations that provide guidance for the private use of public sidewalks and rights-of-way.
- Provide storefront business owners with resources for activation.
- Create a wayfinding system between parking lots, especially those owned by the City, and parks, especially Energy Park. This could include both street signs and street murals. Both should be refreshed on a regular schedule.

- Evaluate areas within City parking lots for temporary events, such as farmers' markets or craft fairs, or as locations for a larger cultural or music event that encompasses all of downtown, including Energy Park and the planned improvements at the Fiske Avenue Pocket Park and Court Square.

### Curb-to-Curb

- Install lighting at crosswalks that provides greater visibility for cars and drivers.
- Designate a limited number of parking spaces for parklets; assign parklets on an annual basis and shift spots each year.
- Designate a limited number of parking spaces as 15-minutes pick-up spaces to support takeout from local restaurants or online shopping/in-store pickup to support retail.
- Consider an annual crosswalk mural program to refresh or replace the city's current crosswalk murals.





Indicates actions that the City is currently addressing.

### Curb-to-Storefront

- Allow outdoor dining or retail display where the width of the sidewalk allows safe passage for pedestrians.
- Encourage ground floor business owners to support planters or window boxes.
- Encourage sandwich signs, with some restrictions to protect pedestrian safety, and coordinate with updated sign guidelines to allow more than one sign per business.
- Add bike racks and bike tools as designated spots throughout the downtown.
- Designate areas for a kiosk or public informational signage that provides direction, supports businesses, and provides information about local history.
- Continue to support public art at key locations throughout the Downtown.
- Consider a pollinator garden around the base of each tree with a local organization as the sponsor.

The last Downtown Master Plan was completed in 2003. The Sustainable Greenfield Implementation Committee has created a framework for an update to that plan, based on the relevant topics and recommendations from the **Sustainable Greenfield Master Plan (2014)**. This framework can also be used to evaluate whether the original recommendations have been accomplished or need to be incorporated into an updated plan.

### Sustainable [Downtown] Greenfield Master Plan Framework

#### Land Use: Zoning

- Allow by-right development.
- Revise zoning to encourage development:
  - Expedited permitting to encourage mixed-use.
  - Increased Density: New Adaptive Reuse Overlay District (zoning ordinance) to provide flexibility in use, density, and dimensional requirements to encourage reuse of downtown space (SGMP pg. 106).
- Address barriers to housing-stock improvements:
  - See *Housing* below.
- Enhance Downtown experience:
  - Food truck culture. 🌿
  - Outdoor/sidewalk dining. 🌿

#### Transportation

##### Pedestrian and Bike Culture:

- Improve walkability:
  - Address ADA accessibility.
  - Enhance sidewalks and crosswalks.
  - Improve connectivity to neighborhoods.
  - Adopt initiatives from Federal and State programs.
- Add bicycle amenities (bike lanes, bike parking). 🌿

#### Transportation (continued)

##### Downtown Transportation Improvement Plan

- Improve streetscape: pedestrians, bikes, automobiles (from **2003 Downtown Master Plan**) 🌿
- Update Parking Inventory (note: Downtown parking study is in progress. 🌿)
- Study use of City garage.
- Increase connectivity to neighborhoods.
- Partner with FRTA and GCC to provide frequent and convenient stops for public transportation.
- Add electric vehicle amenities.
  - Two existing charging stations.

Greenfield will be a living example of how social, economic and environmental sustainability maintains a creative and resilient community, with living wage jobs, a bustling downtown, a comprehensive local food system, and an excellent quality of life for diverse people of all ages. Its walkable and bikeable downtown, cultural activities, shopping options, events, recreational opportunities in the surrounding hills, rich agricultural land, locally-produced energy, market-rate housing, quality schools and colleges, jobs, restaurants and services draw people to live, work and visit Greenfield, and there is a robust transportation system that brings people to us.

– Sustainable Greenfield Master Plan, pg. 12

#### Economic Development

##### Attract jobs and industry:

- Create revolving loan fund – 1% tax on residential and commercial property.

##### Redevelop vacant and underutilized buildings (2003 Downtown Master Plan):

- Housing on upper floors of Downtown commercial spaces (2003 Downtown Master Plan).
- Hazardous materials remediation.

##### Support compact residential and commercial development.

##### Provide broader shopping options:

- Food trucks 🌿


##### Improve Downtown aesthetic:

- Streetscape Improvements (2003 Downtown Master Plan) 🌿
- Establish design guidelines

##### Promote on local/tourist events:

- Halloween & Rag Shag Parade
- Green River Fest



 Indicates actions that the City is currently addressing.

Sustainable [Downtown] Greenfield Master Plan Framework (continued)

Housing

Repurpose historic homes into multi-unit housing.

- Increase access to market-rate housing:
- Support recommendation in *Economic Development*, above, for housing on upper floors of Downtown commercial space.

Change zoning to support increased accessibility for the following:

- Multi-unit housing.
- Congregate housing for elderly and age-in-place.
- Co-housing.
- Accessory dwellings.
- Tiny homes.
- Live/work units.

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

Incorporate the following resources and possibilities into ongoing planning for the Downtown:

- Farming, Food Production & Distribution
- First National Bank
  - Downtown Cultural Center.
- Four Rivers (Green, Fall, Deerfield, and Connecticut)
  - River Walks.
  - Footpath through Downtown Greenfield.
- Views of Downtown (and beyond)
  - Poet’s Seat, Sachem’s Head, Shelburne Mountain, Canada Hill Ridge.
- Downtown Assets
  - Energy Park.
  - Develop Pocket Parks and Parklets.

Public Facilities, Services and Energy

Incorporate the following topics into ongoing planning for the Downtown:

- Address safety Downtown.
- Encourage energy-efficient buildings (both new- and re-development).
  - Consider partnering with Northeast Sustainable Energy Association.
- Increase the tree canopy.

Implementation requires funding, and the City can support the recommended actions with its own funds (operating and capital). Grant programs can supplement or leverage City expenditures. The following funding sources are a selection of these resources, starting with grants from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

### Community One Stop for Growth

In 2021, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts rolled the application process for ten grant programs into a single process. Programs that may be relevant to Greenfield include the following:

- **MassWorks:** This infrastructure grant helps communities encourage projects that provide housing, economic development and jobs by funding supporting public infrastructure.
- **Massachusetts Downtown Initiative:** The focus of this grant is downtown revitalization. The Technical Assistance program provides a consultant and funding for that consultant's work to communities who need help with specific problems. MDI also aids with the development of a Business Improvement District, or BID. The grant is \$25,000 and the community is paired with a consultant to provide technical assistance.
- **Community Planning Grants:** This program provides funding for planning projects at a larger scale than the MDI program. This grant could support zoning changes, particularly those that support density, studies for development within a 1/2-mile of a commuter rail station or a multi-town corridor that look at both density and multimodal connections, or other similar planning processes.

### Community Compact

- **Efficiency & Regionalization Grant Program:** Provides funds for regionalization or other programs that increase efficiency in the delivery of municipal services. Funds may be used for planning and implementation, including technical assistance and project management.

### DHCD UCH-TIF

This tax-increment financing program is a partnership between the municipality, a private developer, and the state to support multi-unit housing in designated commercial centers. The program supports redevelopment of a building for housing or mixed-use with a negotiated Tax Increment Financing Agreement between the municipality and the developer. A minimum of 25% of the housing must be affordable for a at least 40 years.

### District Local Technical Assistance Grant (DLTA)

Funds for this program are allocated to the regional planning agencies. These funds may be used for planning projects. Each Regional Planning Agency (RPA) has a different focus on how these funds may be used to meet the state's funding goals. All municipalities are eligible to apply directly to their RPA. The RPA will work with the municipality on the program; a separate consultant is not usually required. FRCOG is Greenfield's Regional Planning Agency.

### Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Funds

This program has three funding programs that address changes to policies and systems; Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP), and Healthy Aging. Past funding cycles have emphasized housing and transportation.

### Mass Cultural Council

Mass Cultural Council offers several grant programs, including support designated Cultural Districts. This includes the following:

- Cultural District Investment Grant (\$15,000)
  - Festivals & Projects Grant (up to \$2,500).
- Greenfield's own Local Cultural Council helps distribute funds from Mass Cultural Council and received an appropriation of \$19,400 for FY2023.



### MassDevelopment

These programs are also part of the Community One Stop application program:

- **Commonwealth Places:** Seed grants (\$2,500 to \$15,000) fund the beginning stages of a placemaking program: community engagement, visioning, and local capacity-building. Implementation grants help fund the purchase of equipment and materials and programmatic costs. Grants are between \$5,000 and \$50,000 and require a 1:1 local match.
- **Real Estate Services Technical Assistance:** This program assists municipalities with the reuse of surplus public properties and the creation of a local business improvement district.
- **Site Readiness:** This grant program covers site preparation and predevelopment and permitting activities to support private sector investment, especially in underutilized sites and buildings. Minimum requirements include a property size that could accommodate a minimum of 50,000 SF of developable space.
- **Underutilized Properties:** This is a second funding source for underutilized properties that helps address code compliance and capital improvements.

### MassDOT

- **Community Transit Grant Program:** Expands transit services to older adults and people with disabilities. FRCOG could be a partner for a regional application.
- **Complete Streets Funding Program:** Provides both technical assistance and funding for Complete Streets. The City of Greenfield has already participated in this program and is familiar with its requirements. Future projects should focus on linking improvements to provide a complete network.

### Mass Historical Commission

In addition to tax credits for the rehabilitation of income-producing historic buildings, the MHC offers grants for Survey and Planning projects and the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund. These funds are subject to appropriation and other restrictions.

### Mass Trails

These grants support the construction of recreational trails and shared use pathways. The amount depends on whether the project is local or of regional significance.

### Non-State Programs

#### ARPA Funds

Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) are available to support small businesses that have been harmed by the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The federal government allocated these funds to each community; the funds must be committed by December 31, 2024, and expended by December 31, 2026.

#### T-Mobile's Hometown America Grant

T-Mobile is giving a total of \$25 million to small towns across the United States over a 5-year period. The most recent group of 25 towns was announced in March 2023, the third year of the program. Funds can be used for downtown improvements.





Court Square, Summer 2022. Photographer: Caitlin von Schmidt



