

Town of Middlebury  
Economic Health Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 25, 2019

Present: Fred Kenney, Karen Duguay, Farhad Khan, Becky Dayton and Ben Calvi.

Absent: Mary Cullinane, Steve Boyce, John Freidin, Scott Gemignani, and Ex-officio member Jennifer Murray

Others Present: BMP Student Interns Mortaza Afghan and Caroline MacRae, Sue Ritter, Amy Carlin and Peggy Burns of Middlebury College, Middlebury College student Varsha Vijayakumar, Nancy Malcolm and Kelly Hickey

Kenney called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

Karen Duguay said the two Better Middlebury Partnership (BMP) student interns would be giving a presentation on their research over the summer on other college towns, on their similarities and challenges, how those challenges were met, and culminating in some action items and suggestions for the Town of Middlebury and Middlebury College to implement.

Afghan and MacRae began the presentation by listing the colleges they'd researched: Smith College, Amherst College and University of Massachusetts Amherst, Colby College, Dartmouth College, Williams College, Claremont Colleges and University of Colorado Boulder. The items they looked at were demographic information, economic development initiatives by college/towns, public perceptions, relationships between local leaders and college administrations, municipal visions and planning, challenges faced by towns and colleges and how the student populations was enticed to join and participate and shop in the local community.

The students touched on the highlights of each school they researched (findings attached to these minutes), such things as: contributing funds for affordable house at Smith College; Colby College pledging \$10 million to help revitalize Waterville, ME; and \$26 million to open a hotel in the downtown, building apartment complexes for young professors at Williams College; and \$500,000 in funds to support local transit and shuttle buses by Dartmouth College.

Their action plan and suggestions include: Make students feel welcomed to the community when they first arrive on campus, with such things as "Welcome" signs and banners; signs at bus stops with bus schedules and educating students of the schedules; provide a welcome book to students with local restaurants, stores and coupons; better communication with the students by Town and College; add BMP to College app to inform students of things going on in town; have a one-page document on College/Town webpage regarding the college's economic impact on the municipality; establish a declining-balance card for downtown businesses to promote business and track student spending in town.

40 Duguay said one problem with setting up the declining card for students is the expense of the point-of-  
41 sale equipment for the businesses, which runs around \$2,000 per business. She suggested that it  
42 become more of a debit card and to discuss what's already in existence with the National Bank of  
43 Middlebury. She said there are so many discussions about this by different groups, so suggested one  
44 group of College and Town officials to look into this. Ritter said cards are going to be obsolete soon and  
45 everything will be on an "app". Duguay said she thinks it's a really great idea if it can be determined  
46 how it will actually work and be sustainable.

47  
48 There were multiple questions for the interns from the committee members and audience regarding  
49 their findings, and Kenney thanked the interns for their presentation.

50  
51 Approval of Minutes

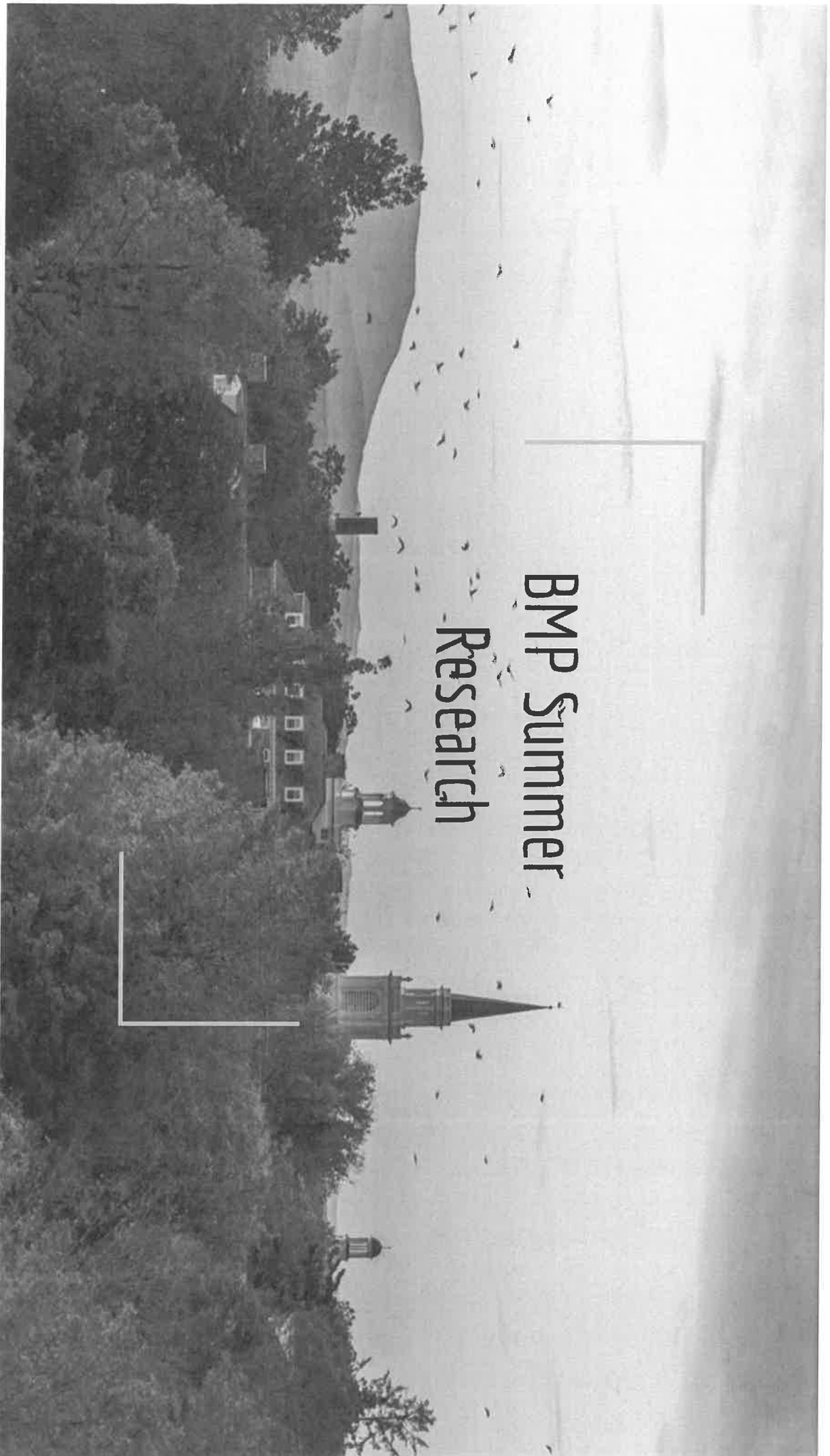
52  
53 The minutes from the 5/9/19, 6/13/19 and 7/12/19 meetings were approved upon motion by Calvi,  
54 seconded by Duguay.

55  
56 The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

57  
58 A portion of the student report is attached to these minutes.

59  
60 Respectfully submitted,  
61 Beth Dow  
62

# BMP Summer Research



# On behalf of the BMP ...

we have spent time this summer looking for creative and sustainable ways to build and maintain stronger ties between the Middlebury College administration, students and town leaders by researching other college communities.



We've looked into various college towns with similar challenges and objectives to that of Middlebury, including:

- Smith College
- Amherst College and University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Claremont Colleges
- University of Colorado Boulder
- Dartmouth College
- Williams College
- Bowdoin College
- Colby College



## Research Included:

- Demographic information for towns/schools
- Economic development initiatives spearheaded by schools/towns
- Public perceptions
- Local leadership and college administration relationships and decision making
- Municipal vision and planning
- Tourism and visitors
- Challenges faced by towns and colleges
- Businesses and activities frequented by student population
- Transportation and accessibility

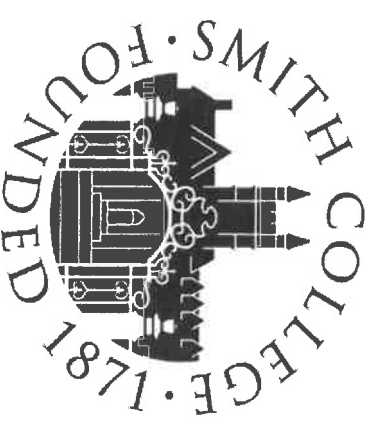


# 1. Smith College

*"Smith College is proud to be a vital part of Northampton and a partner in its success."*

- Smith College website

- Private institution that was founded in 1871
- It has a total undergraduate enrollment of 2,521
- One of the largest liberal arts schools for women in the country
- Located in Northampton, Massachusetts
- Population of the town without students: 26072
- Northampton is known as an academic, artistic, musical, and countercultural hub



- Annual contribution of **\$20,000** to the Downtown Northampton Association organization
- Smith donated **\$101,412** to the United Way of Hampshire County in 2017-18
- Smith has a **OneCard ID system**
- In 2017-2018, the students spent a total of **\$12,071.27** purchasing from local Northampton businesses
- Smith donated **\$300,000** over 3 years to the City of Northampton to support the needs of the city
- Smith donated **\$870,000** from the Smith College Affordable Housing Fund to the Valley Community Development Corporation to subsidize the development of affordable housing in Northampton
- **\$100,000** to the Northampton Community Arts Trust
- In 2017-18, 71 Smith students worked at 28 nonprofit institutions in the Pioneer Valley
- Smith spent more than **\$89,275** to fulfill its commitment to pay 90 percent of the students' salaries





## 2. Colby College

### General Information

 <b>Private, Coed</b>	 <b>1813</b>	 <b>None</b>
<small>SCHOOL TYPE</small>	<small>YEAR FOUNDED</small>	<small>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</small>
 <b>4-1-4</b>	 <b>Rural</b>	 <b>\$775.1 million +</b>
<small>ACADEMIC CALENDAR</small>	<small>SETTING</small>	<small>2017 ENDOWMENT</small>

- Approximately 1,800 students from more than 60 countries are enrolled annually
- Located in Waterville, Maine
- Population of the town without students: 14,785
- Ranking: #18 in National Liberal Arts Colleges



- Colby along with Harold Alfond Foundation have pledged **\$10 million** each to revitalize Waterville
- A **\$26 million** project to open a hotel in Downtown by 2020
- Colby's total investment in Waterville: \$75 million.
- Colby Partners with IT Company to open an IT center in Waterville that could bring about **200 Jobs**
- Alfond Leaders: offer debt reduction to up to **50 Maine STEM** workers per year
- Current & planned downtown projects that include funding from multiple funding sources: \$100 million.
- Free Jitney Service
- Auction to help pay for school lunch for students who can't afford it

**PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

Planning principles for downtown were developed through a collaboration of the City of Waterville and a wide range of stakeholders. They are a work-in-progress, serving to guide development while continuing to be refined through ongoing discussion. The principles reflect the Downtown Revitalization Strategy adopted by the Waterville City Council in February, 2016.

**LEVERAGE EXISTING STRENGTHS**

- Build upon existing arts programming
- Create public art in key locations
- Strengthen connections to the waterfront
- Connect Main Street to Highway

**ATTRACT MORE VISITORS AND RESIDENTS**

- Build a student residence downtown
- Public realm improvements for visitors
- Welcoming gateway improvements
- Parking strategy

**INCREASE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

- Create new generators such as a hotel and student residence
- Address vacant space downtown
- Attract investment by others
- Target key businesses to downtown

**CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE**

- Improve streetscape and pedestrian experience
- Attract strategic retailers
- Build upon existing programs

**ORGANIZE AROUND A PLAN**

- Create consensus
- Continue a process of public engagement
- Encourage collaboration
- Spur implementation

Multiple efforts to advance the Planning Principles are already underway. The roadmap shown to the right includes both short and long-term actionable items that independently and together will transform and invigorate downtown Waterville. Many stakeholders and community members have been engaged in developing the roadmap and refining the aspirational vision for downtown.

**ROADMAP FOR ACTION**

1. TRANSFORM THE GATEWAY TO DOWNTOWN
2. WAY TRAFFIC, IMPROVE STREETSCAPE & SIDEWALKS
3. INCREASE RETAIL ACTIVITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
4. INCREASE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY TO STIMULATE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY
5. IMPLEMENT ZONED PARKING STRATEGY
6. RELOCATE THE FARMER'S MARKET
7. BRING A HOTEL TO MAIN STREET
8. INTEGRATE THE ARTS
9. DEVELOP PROGRAMMING CAPACITY FOR OPEN SPACES
10. CONNECT TO THE WATERFRONT

■ DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA  
■ CURRENT & FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS







Conceptual. For illustrative purposes only

# Amherst College & UMass

## 1. Amherst College

- 1,800 students from nearly every state & more than 55 countries
- Amherst features an open curriculum & offers the BA in 38 fields
- Amherst is part of the Five College Consortium: Amherst, Smith, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke & UMass
- Located in Amherst, MA
- Population of the town without students: 36,019







### General Information

 <b>Private, Coed</b>	 <b>1821</b>	 <b>None</b>
<small>SCHOOL TYPE</small>	<small>YEAR FOUNDED</small>	<small>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</small>
 <b>Semester</b>	 <b>Rural</b>	 <b>\$2.2 billion +</b>
<small>ACADEMIC CALENDAR</small>	<small>SETTING</small>	<small>2017 ENDOWMENT</small>

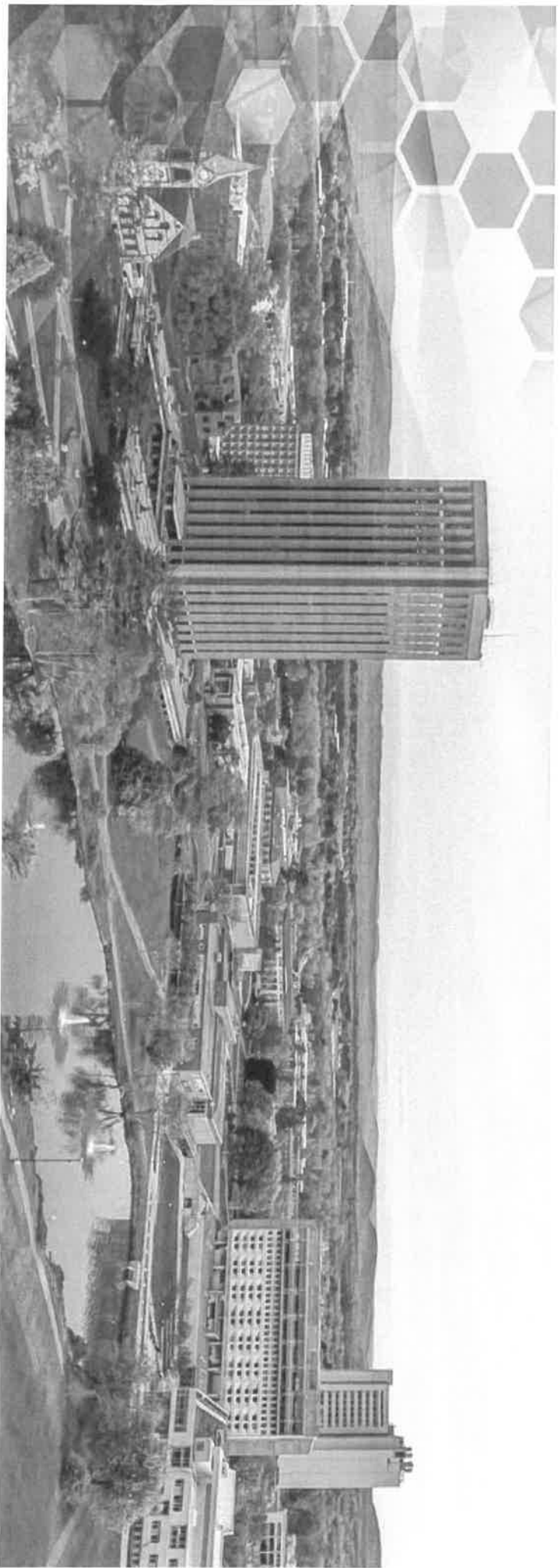
## 2. University of Massachusetts Amherst

- A public research university
- It is the flagship campus of the University of Massachusetts system
- Total undergraduate enrollment of 23,388
- Students come from 50 states and over 75 countries

### General Information

 <b>Public, Coed</b>	 <b>1863</b>	 <b>None</b>
<small>SCHOOL TYPE</small>	<small>YEAR FOUNDED</small>	<small>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</small>
 <b>Semester</b>	 <b>Suburban</b>	 <b>\$323.6 million</b>
<small>ACADEMIC CALENDAR</small>	<small>SETTING</small>	<small>2017 ENDOWMENT</small>

- University-Town of Amherst Collaborative: “An advisory council to the town manager which provides leadership and ideas, while building support for future joint endeavors.”
- The Amherst Business Improvement District: “Amherst BID invests its resources to improve downtown Amherst’s vibrancy, sustainability, and economic health.”
- Both UMass and Amherst College are represented on the BID’s board & contribute both financially and in-kind to the BID’s operations.



# Claremont Colleges- Claremont, California

Set of five colleges that share the college town of Claremont, California

- Pomona (Founded 1887)
- Scripps (Founded 1926)
- Claremont McKenna (Founded 1946)
- Harvey Mudd (Founded 1955)
- Pitzer (Founded 1963)

Takes the place of 6th most wealthy college town in America

- Median housing price: \$675,000
- Estimated cost of necessities: \$73, 887
- Housing:
  - Hunger and Homelessness Initiative takes dining hall food to local shelters



# University of Colorado, Boulder

- One of the most active cities in America
- While significantly larger than a typical college town, shares things in common
  - Experimental arts scene
  - Frequent bike traveling (bike trails tend to be plowed before the roads)
  - Easily accessible downtown
- Design for America
  - Student Club with multiple chapters
  - Establishes relationship between students and business owners prior to addressing problems
  - Allows for an empathetic approach to forming solutions, students feel that they have “skin in the game” and small business owners do not feel condescended to.



# Williams College - Williamstown, Massachusetts

- Conducted a study of economic development in other college towns, including Middlebury
  - The ratio of income to property values
- MassMOCA converted an empty factory into a space for contemporary artists with pieces that would not fit into conventional galleries
- Constructing apartment complexes has brought in younger professors to replace retiring faculty
  - Young professors previously wished to live in an apartment style residence rather than a single family home.
- Notable between older residents and younger renters
- Program with the elementary school that allows college students to teach their own courses after school



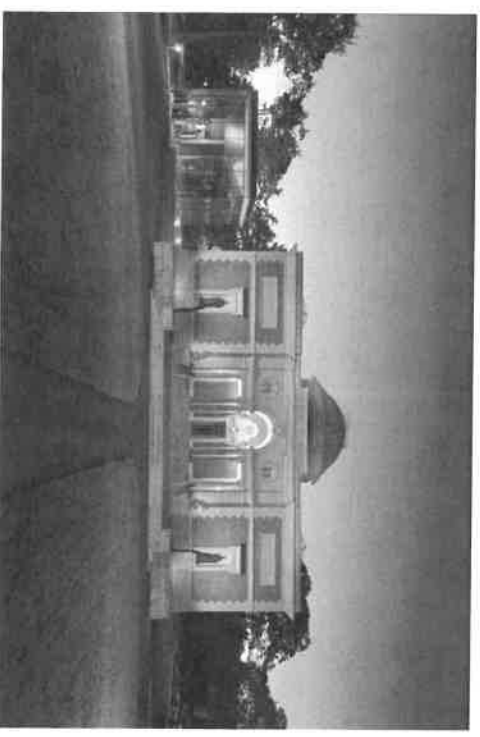
# BOWDOIN COLLEGE - BRUNSWICK, ME

- Population
  - 22,000 year-long residents (not including students and seasonal visitors)
  - College population is 1,825
- Seasonal vs. Long term
  - 1 in 6 Brunswick residence is supported by the tourism industry
  - College caters more towards seasonal guests than long term residents
  - Easy accessibility appeals to tourists; downtown is a short walk from the campus
  - Businesses are promoted by the college as soon as the students arrive
  - Businesses themselves “have signs welcoming students at the beginning of the year...-[are] enthusiastically welcoming.” - Elise Hocking, Bowdoin student



# Bowdoin - Brunswick, ME

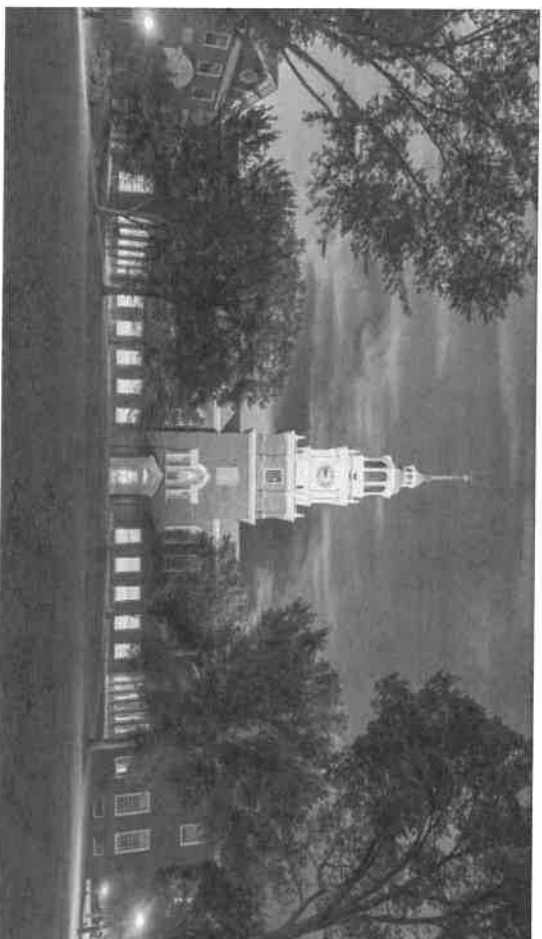
1. The Brunswick Center for Innovation was founded following the renovation of a former US Naval and Air Base.
2. Acts as a hub for businesses and innovation, whether that be:
  - a. Economic initiatives and/or experiments
  - b. TechPlace, which is an “incubator” or innovation bubble, that takes innovative thinkers and literally puts them all in one place.
    - i. “Business Accelerator” that caters
    - ii. mainly to start-ups, looking for
    - iii. a place to develop their business.



# Dartmouth College

## General Information

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  <b>Private, Coed</b> |  <b>1769</b>  |  <b>None</b>          |
| <small>SCHOOL TYPE</small>   | <small>YEAR FOUNDED</small>  | <small>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</small>   |
|  <b>Quarter</b>       |  <b>Rural</b> |  <b>\$5.0 billion</b> |
| <small>ACADEMIC CALENDAR</small>   | <small>SETTING</small>   | <small>2017 ENDOWMENT</small>  |
- Undergraduate enrollment of 4,410
  - A member of the Ivy League
  - Located in Hanover, New Hampshire
  - The median annual household income in Hanover, NH is \$97,422, compared to that of \$60,336 across the entire United States
  - Median annual household income in Middlebury, VT is \$46,976
  - Since 2012, at least 22 stores, businesses and restaurants in Hanover have closed their doors



- Dartmouth is a member of the Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce
- In 2017-18, Dartmouth employees contributed a total of **\$294K** to the United Way campaign
- Partner in the Tri-Party Agreement: Expansion of Hanover High School & the construction of the Richmond Middle School
- **\$500K** in funds to support local transit & shuttle buses in 2017
- Dartmouth Regional Technology Center (DRTC): Provides resources & programming for early-stage ventures in the Upper Valley.
- Since 2014, it has organized approximately 200 events, funded and incubated more than 100 ventures, and awarded **\$500K** in grant money.
- The DRTC currently incubates 15 active ventures including: Argo Research, FirstLight Fiber, FreshAir Sensor LLC & etc.



# Immediate Action Items for Middlebury

## 1. **Welcome**

- Making students feel welcomed through more engagement with the town (ie: signage in storefront windows, events geared toward welcoming students, etc.)
- Welcome Banners on Cross Street and College Street
- Table for town leaders at the Activities Fair
- Middlebury-specific Welcome Book for incoming students: Lists of where to eat and shop, local bus schedule, things to do in town, coupons for businesses, etc.

## 2. **Communication**

- Finding ways for town/organizations to better communicate with college students and staff
  - Getting students familiar with the local transportation systems: Expanding Midd Rides
  - Adding BMP on the new student activities app, *Presence*
  - Updating the Economic and Community Impact of Middlebury College fact sheet and making it easily accessible
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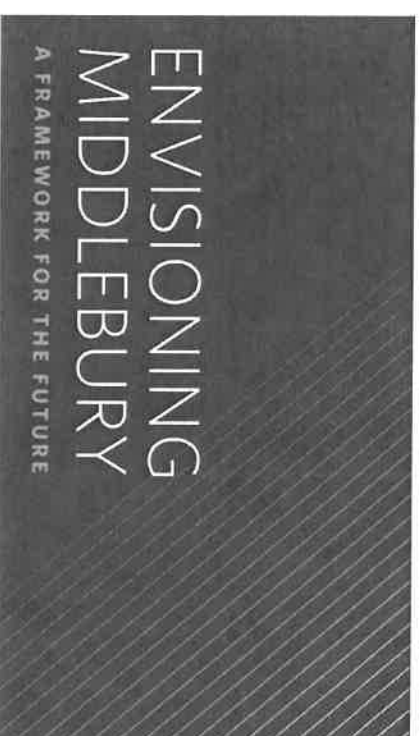
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- COMMUNITY & CAMPUS
- Better Together*



# Long Term Action Items

1. More formal partnership between Town and College to address:
  - Spousal employment opportunities
  - Affordable housing
  - Business recruitment
  - Childcare
  - Future downtown planning
  - Sustainable employment
  - Infrastructure improvements
  - Overall community vitality and health
2. Having a Middlebury College representative at Middlebury's Economic Health Committee
3. Having more student representatives on various town and organizational boards and committees



# Conclusion

Looking into these college towns, many are facing similar challenges to that of Middlebury. We can address some of these challenges and others unique to Middlebury with some immediate steps and other action items that will take a little more effort.

