

City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire



Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan

Action Plan Matrix



completed: December, 2009

commissioned by:

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Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Action Plan Matrix

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Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Action Plan Matrix

Actions, Implementation, Timeframe - **OVERVIEW**

SUMMARY:

This Matrix includes Action Items for Corridor improvements and strategies as suggested by “A Mile of Opportunity: Re-Imagining the Islington Corridor”, Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan Study commissioned by the City of Portsmouth, 2007-2009.

BACKGROUND:

The improvements described below come out of 2-year planning study, rooted in public input and building upon past planning/traffic/safety studies, aimed at identifying a systemic series of improvements to Islington Street Corridor (see Appendix A for a list of past studies and recommendations). These actions consolidate most of the recommendations in previous corridor studies and seek to guide future investment – public and private – in the Islington Street Corridor.

The overarching goals of the Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan are to:

- improve corridor image
- calm traffic, increase transit opportunities, and improve pedestrian safety
- create gateways with community space
- highlight and enhance the creative economy in the corridor

These goals are supported by Action Plan recommendations for:

- functional/aesthetic streetscape improvements
- public and private gateway efforts
- integrated creative district elements
- implementation of traffic and safety mechanisms and measures from earlier studies

It is important to note that these recommendations for the development of an increasingly vibrant community along this major arterial stem from previous professional studies of various aspects of the corridor and from both past and recent stakeholder input. The intent is not to reflect or result in a homogenous or “imported” vision of an urban streetscape or community. Rather the intent is to amplify the existing strong qualities of place, and unique values of the individual neighborhoods, that exist throughout the corridor.

In addition to this Action Plan Matrix, the following items comprise the work products for this project:

- An annotated plan graphic, dated March 25, 2009 (see Appendix B), showing conceptual location and development of the physical improvements
- A powerpoint presentation dated June 24, 2009 (see Appendix C) outlining the project process and proposed integrated improvements.
- A Funding primer, discussing different funding sources and opportunities for implementing Action Items (see Appendix D).
- A Façade and Street-Edge Improvements Program overview, including Action Items (see Appendix E).

Additionally, this matrix recommends actions for support of Portsmouth's creative economy, and opportunities to build upon Art-Speaks' efforts regarding cultural and public art. This study sees this support expressed through opportunities for public art, functional art (art that is integrated into the streetscape via site-specific lighting, seating, paving, etc); through marketing and wayfinding support for creative economy businesses; and the potential addition of cultural venues at future corridor gateways.

In addition to physical improvements which can be linked directly to geographic areas of the Islington Street Corridor, there are also zoning/planning policy efforts that will impact the future of the corridor. Although zoning strategies are outside the scope of work of this project, it should be noted that concurrent with the development of this action plan, the city's Planning Board is proposing complementary zoning ordinance modifications and strategies. These were identified in the June 24th, 2009 public meeting on the Improvement Action Plan. The proposed zoning amendments are as follows:

Proposed Amendments:

- Re-zone from Central Business B (60' building height) to
- Mixed Residential Business (40' building height)
- Expand Historic District (design review)
- Re-zone Industrial and Office Research districts between Bartlett St. and Rte 1 Bypass for business or mixed use

Potential Amendments:

- Designate TIF districts in Deer Street/Bridge Street area and Brewyard/Barlett Street area
- Review Deer St. Extension concept for potential zoning overlay for creative district

FORMAT:

The Action Plan Matrix describes improvement actions, assigns responsibility for actions, and designates a general phasing timeline for actions. Physical improvements are presented based on geographic location, and these improvement actions are divided into four parts based on this study's division of the Corridor – East End, Central Area, West End, and a separate division for improvements that are Corridor-wide.

Within each area, improvement opportunities are briefly described. These opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- recommendations for further studies
- streetscape improvements – reduced curb-cuts, improved sidewalks, potential pedestrian amenities (lighting, signage)
- pedestrian improvements – planted curb bump-outs and permanent materials crosswalks
- transit improvements – planted curb bump-outs and marked bus pull-over areas
- vehicular safety improvements – re-aligned and improved intersections, traffic-calming measures

Because of the emphasis on gateways and because the physical constraints presented by the narrow street right of way (ROW) and minimal publicly owned property adjacent to the ROW, the improvements in the action plan are further distinguished to identify city improvements and public/private initiatives for each area.

The improvement recommendations are given general timelines for implementation which are linked to known funding sources, as a way of responsibly assigning expectations, especially in the current economic climate.

- **Near Term** projects are those that have been designed and municipally approved, and are either currently underway, or their funding is provided for in the known current round of Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) budget.
- **Planned** improvements are those that are identified for implementation and are not yet funded.
- **Long-term/Conceptual** efforts are those that have been identified as important, but as yet do not have a funding source for implementation. These projects may be shovel-ready, or have the ability to be moved forward through design and approvals, should funding sources (public-private partnerships, TIFs, grants, gifts, etc) be identified. Other projects require further feasibility analysis to determine if they are implementable or if there are constraints beyond the city's ability to implement (such as private property matters, or cost limitations, etc.).

POTENTIAL FUNDING FOR ACTION ITEMS

The action items in the matrix are consciously concise and action-oriented in nature, in the hope that these materials will direct corridor-improvement planning beginning in the near term and continuing into the future. This plan identifies three primary funding mechanisms for the action items proposed. They include Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funding, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and grants. Appendix D includes descriptions of each of these mechanisms.

CONCLUSION:

This study and its products validate and consolidate past Islington Street studies and respective recommendations. It puts them into an actionable context that relates to the City of Portsmouth's evolving Master Plan, Cultural Plan and Capital Improvement Plan. It also incorporates a new round of public input and inclusive urban design efforts, and adds a fresh dimension of thinking regarding creative-economy opportunities. In summarizing these products in an Action Plan Matrix, this study offers the City – and the residential, business and creative communities of the Islington Street Corridor in particular – a set of tools and actions which can be implemented by the city in conjunction with Islington Street stakeholders for improvement of this vital urban corridor.

Actions, Implementation, Timeframe – CORRIDOR-WIDE

Maplewood Avenue to Route 1 By-Pass

Corridor-Wide City Improvements

Action	Timeframe
Identify locations where curb cuts can be removed and new sidewalk and curbing installed	NEAR TERM FY 2010 – FY 2011
Identify on-street parking spaces for elimination to improve line-of-sight from side streets and business exits	NEAR TERM FY 2010 – FY 2011
Confirm locations for Curb Bump-Outs, Permanent Material Crosswalks, and Bus Pull-Overs as proposed in Action Plan	NEAR TERM FY 2010 – FY 2011
Develop standardized specifications for improved sidewalks, curbs, lighting, amenities, crossings, bump-outs, bus pull-overs	NEAR TERM start specifications in FY 2010 for future CIP

Example Typical Streetscape - existing

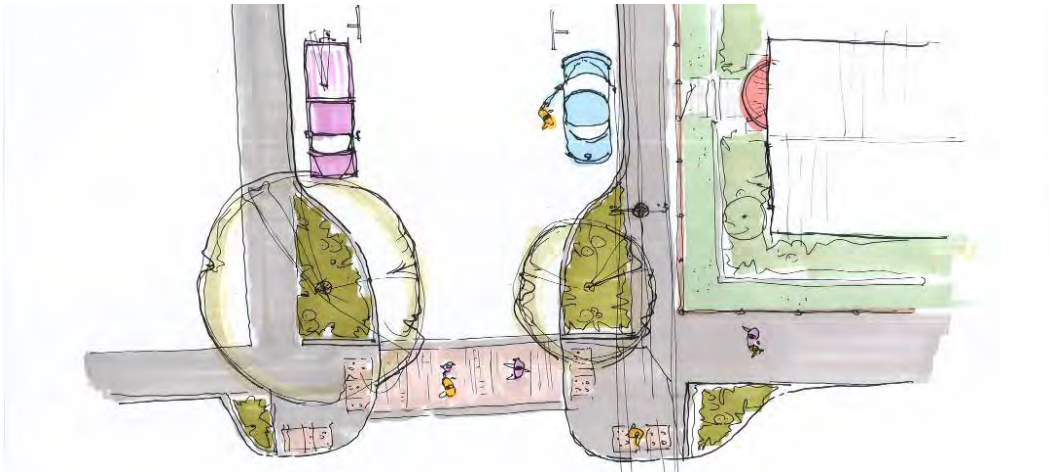


Example Typical Streetscape/Bump-outs/Plantings/Amenities Improvements – potential

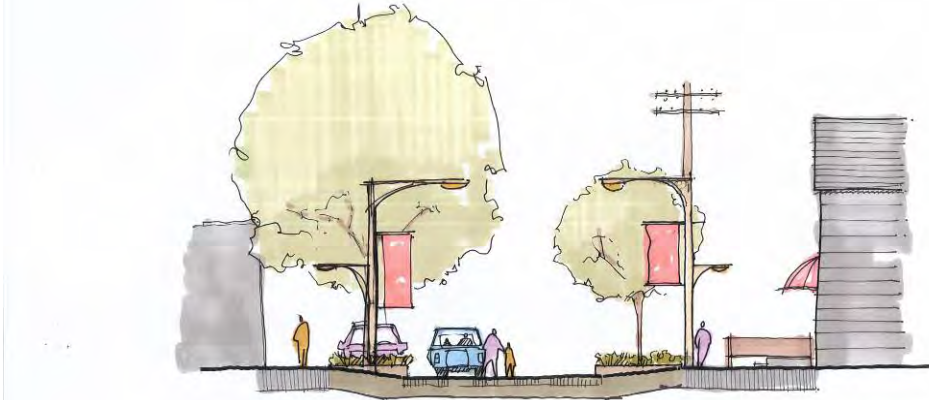


Corridor-Wide City Improvements, cont.

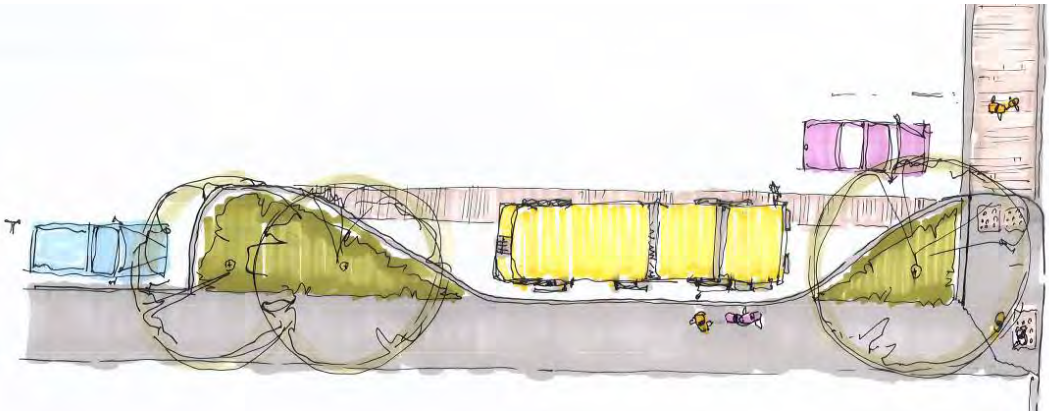
Typical Bumpout/Permanent Materials Crosswalk/Plantings – Plan View



Typical Bumpout/Permanent Materials Crosswalk/Plantings – Section View



Typical Bus Pullover – Plan View



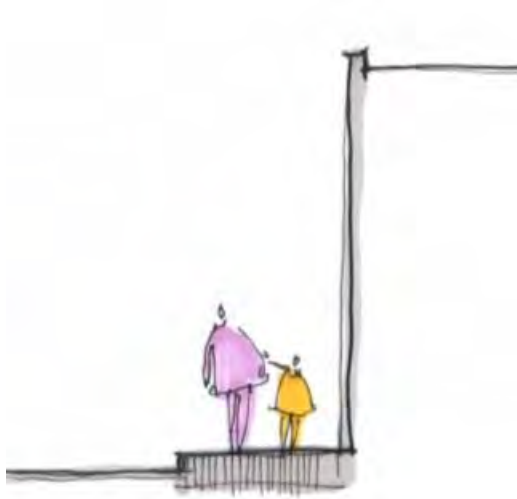
Corridor-Wide City Improvements, cont.

Provide standards for consistent and attractive signage	NEAR TERM start standards in FY 2011 for future CIP
<p>Implement Islington Street Sidewalk Improvements and Curb-Cut Reductions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Based on standardized specifications, develop cost estimate, identify project in CIP and secure funding 2. Coordinate City permits and approvals 3. Bid project 4. Start construction 	PLANNED These improvements will be phased implementation over several CIP cycles
Develop specifications for and incorporate corridor-wide streetscape infrastructure into Capital Improvement Plans including benches, lighting, signage, landscaping per plan	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL
Work with Art-Speak to develop functional streetscape art program for Corridor and Gateways	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL
Examples of Functional Streetscape Art – benches, lighting, etc.	
	

Corridor-Wide Public/Private Initiatives

Action	Timeframe
Identify opportunities for greening/improvement of streetscape/setback zones	CONTINUOUS – through land use site review process
Develop criteria, funding sources, and mechanism for administration of façade improvement funding program and/or greening/improvement of streetscape/setback zones	PLANNED

Typical Sidewalk/Setback Condition – no setback



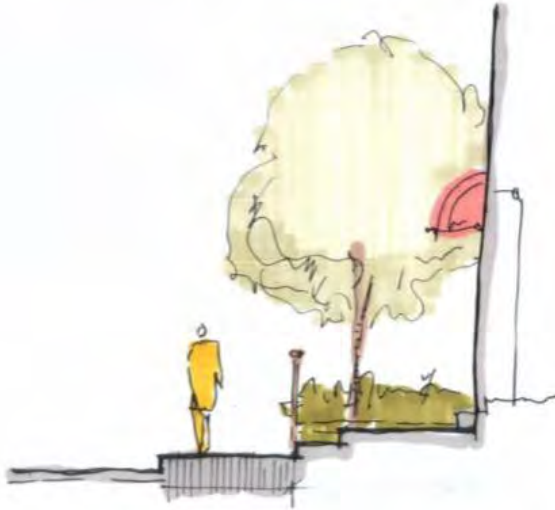
Typical Sidewalk/Setback Condition – small (3') setback allowing urban amenities/design



Corridor-Wide Public/Private Initiatives, cont.

Setback zones, cont.

Typical Sidewalk/Setback Condition – medium (8') setback allowing urban garden



Typical Sidewalk/Setback Condition – large (12-16') setback allowing green zone



Develop program for Corridor Gateways (Old Brew Yard Area, Plaza 800, Button Factory Vicinity, Bridge Street Plaza, Deer Street Creative District) and engage private property owners as appropriate

LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL

Actions, Implementation, Timeframe – EAST END



Maplewood Avenue through Summer/Brewster Block



East End City Improvements

Action	Timeframe
McDonough St. Area - Sidewalk Improvements <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Four-year Phased Project Planned 2. Year 1 funding approved in CIP 3. Design improvements 4. Bid project 5. Start construction 	NEAR TERM FY 2010 – FY 2014


East End City Improvements, cont.

Action	Timeframe
<p>Bridge Street Plaza design and implementation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct feasibility analysis of decked lot at Bridge Street 2. If feasible , develop conceptual design and costs for CIP or identify and secure other funding 3. Design parking/plaza/entrances/access 4. Bid project 5. Start construction 	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL
<p>Bridge Street Lot – existing</p> 	
<p>Bridge Street Plaza - potential</p> 	
<p>Work with Art-Speak to develop concept for cultural use and programming at Bridge Street Plaza</p>	ONGOING

East End City Improvements, cont.

<p>Summer Street intersection re-alignment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop conceptual design and costs for CIP or identify and secure other funding 2. Design improvements 3. Secure permits and approvals 4. Bid project 5. Start construction 	<p>LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL</p>
<p>conceptual diagram of re-alignment of Summer Street -</p>  <p>The diagram shows a street grid with Islington St running horizontally and Summer St running vertically. A new alignment for Summer St is indicated by a dashed line, showing a slight curve. Green circles represent trees to be planted along the new alignment. Buildings are shown as grey rectangles.</p>	

East End Public/Private Initiatives

Action	Timeframe
<p>Deer Street Road/Right Of Way extension/streetscape improvements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop concept plan 2. Establish public private partnerships and negotiate easements/land swaps if necessary 3. Identify and secure funding source 4. Design improvements 5. Secure permits and approvals 6. Bid project 7. Start construction 	<p>LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL</p>
<p>conceptual diagram of Deer Street Extension project -</p>  <p>The diagram shows a street grid with Hanover St running horizontally and Deer St running vertically. A new extension of Deer St is indicated by a dashed line, showing a slight curve. Green circles represent trees to be planted along the new alignment. Other streets shown include North Mill Pond, Maplewood Ave, and Deer St. Buildings are shown as grey rectangles.</p>	

Actions, Implementation, Timeframe – CENTRAL AREA

Summer/Brewster Block through Cass/Albany Block

* per the Action Plan Study strategy to focus improvement effort and attention on the Corridor Gateways, improvements to the Central Area are mainly chronicled as part of Corridor-Wide improvement efforts



Central Area City Improvements

Action	Timeframe
McDonough St. Area - Sidewalk Improvements <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Four-year Phased Project Approved 2. Year I funding approved in CIP 3. Design improvements 4. Bid project 5. Start construction 	NEAR TERM FY 2010 – FY 2014

Actions, Implementation, Timeframe – WEST END

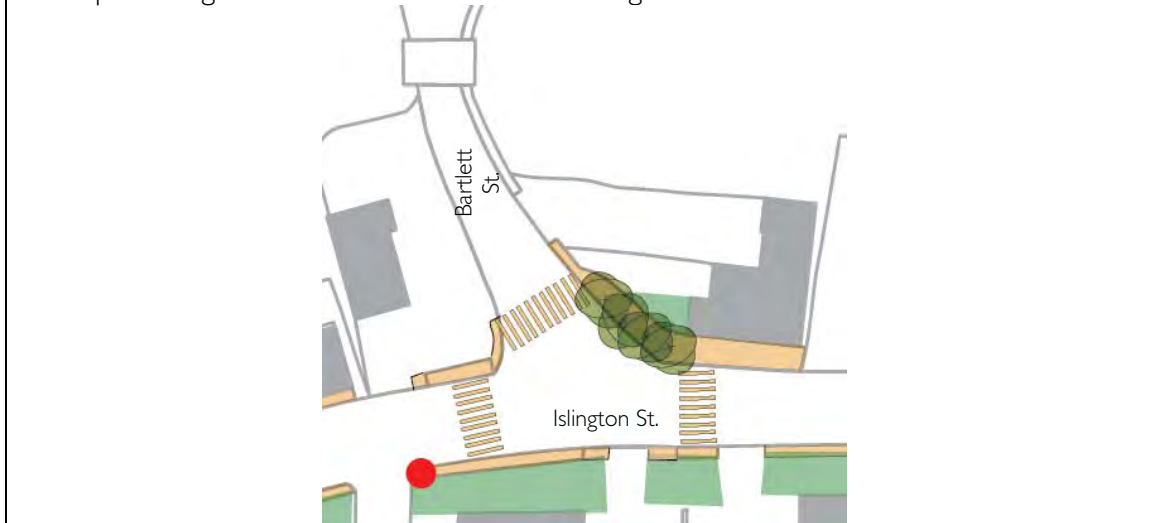
Cass/Albany Block to Route I Bypass



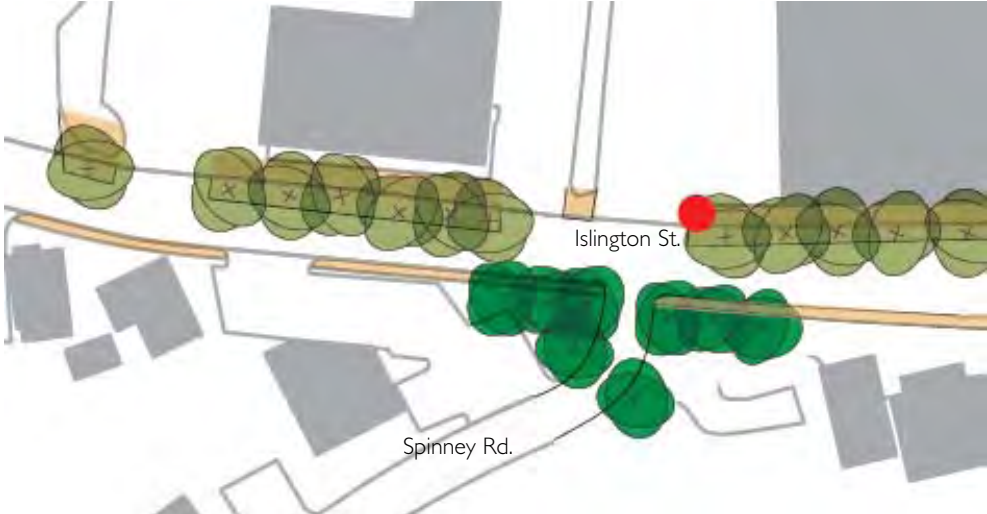
West End City Improvements

Action	Timeframe
Bartlett Street sewer realignment I. Construction contract initiated	NEAR-TERM FY 2009 – FY 2011

conceptual diagram of Bartlett Street sewer re-alignment -



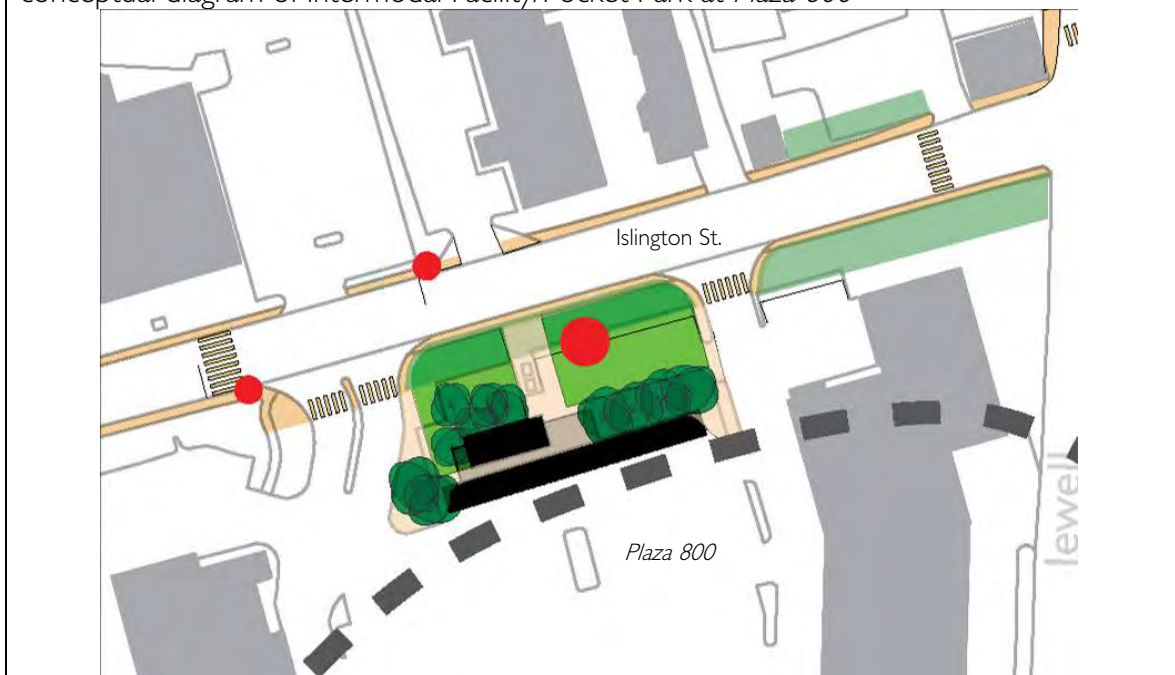
West End City Improvements, cont.

<p>Upgraded Crosswalk at Plaza 800</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research appropriate crosswalk with pedestrian safety features 2. Design Improvements 3. Identify and secure funding in CIP 4. Secure permits and approvals 5. Bid project 6. Start Construction 	<p>NEAR TERM</p>
<p>Spinney Road intersection re-alignment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project identified and funded in CIP 2. Preliminary design completed 3. Negotiate private property easement 4. Final design/ Bid project 5. Start construction 	<p>NEAR-TERM Bid Project FY 2010 – FY 2011 Construction FY 2011 – FY 2012</p>
<p>conceptual diagram of re-alignment of Spinney Road -</p> 	



West End Public/Private Initiatives

Action	Timeframe
<p>Intermodal Connectivity Point at Plaza 800</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet with Plaza property owners to discuss transit and parking opportunities 2. Establish public private partnerships and negotiate easements/land swaps if necessary 3. Identify and secure funding source 4. Design traffic calming improvements 5. Secure permits and approvals 6. Bid project 7. Start construction 	<p>LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL</p>


conceptual diagram of Intermodal Facility/Pocket Park at *Plaza 800* -



West End Public/Private Initiatives, cont.

<p>Connectivity Improvements from Islington St. to Button Factory Vicinity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Concept Plan 2. Meet with private property owners to discuss concept 3. Establish public private partnerships and negotiate easements/land swaps if necessary 4. Identify and secure funding sources 5. Design connectivity improvements 6. Secure permits and approvals 7. Bid project 8. Start construction 	<p>LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL</p>
<p>conceptual diagram Islington Street Corridor – Button Factory connectivity opportunities -</p> 	
<p>Work with Art-Speak and businesses to develop distinctive signage for wayfinding to Button Factory, West End Theatre and other cultural and creative businesses.</p>	<p>ONGOING</p>
<p>examples of Art- and Creative-District unique signage -</p> 	

West End Public/Private Initiatives, cont.

<p>Bartlett Street traffic re-alignment / re-design</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify willing property owners 2. Coordinate City Council Approvals 3. Design improvements 4. Bid project 5. Start construction 	<p>LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL</p>
<p>Potential Re-Alignment/Re-Design –</p> 	

West End Public/Private Initiatives, cont.

Action	Timeframe
<p>West Islington Right-of Way traffic calming improvements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Concept Plan 2. Meet with adjacent private property owners to discuss concept 3. Identify and secure funding sources 4. Design connectivity improvements 5. Secure permits and approvals 6. Bid project 7. Start construction 	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL
<p>Study potential public-private parking structure @ Old Brew Yard Area – identify potential locations/structures and develop implementation plan</p>	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL
<p>Old Brew Yard Area Community Open Space design and implementation (pending future Old Brew Yard Area redevelopment)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet with Old Brew Yard Area property owners to discuss concepts presented in Corridor Action Plan 2. Establish public private partnerships and negotiate easements/land swaps if necessary 3. Identify and secure funding source 4. Design improvements 5. Secure permits and approvals 6. Bid project 7. Start construction 	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL
<p>Old Brew Yard Area Development</p>	LONG-TERM/CONCEPTUAL

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Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Appendix A

Past Corridor Studies - SUMMARY

Islington Street Corridor Study by VHB/Vanesse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
November 1999

Study Purpose:

to develop a corridor improvement plan that will guide the investment of both public and private funds to address existing operational and safety related deficiencies, establish and maintain acceptable operating levels, and design standards/guidelines and meet future transportation needs.

Recommendations:

1. Provide left turn lane @ Spinney Road
2. Realign Bartlett Street intersection
3. Install traffic signal @ Cabot Street
4. Add crosswalks @ Bartlett and Cass Streets
5. Relocate roadside obstructions such as utility poles, fire hydrants, etc.
6. Implement traffic calming actions such as landscaping, brick sidewalks, better defined crosswalks and organize on-street parking
7. Increase parking supply in Hanover Street area
8. Upgrade corridor signage
9. Establish long-term, pedestrian friendly vision for corridor including possible zoning changes and long-term planning terms

Islington Street Safety Study by Maguire Group, Inc.
July, 2005

Study Purpose:

to review accident data from Route 33 (Greenland Road) to Maplewood Avenue to determine if there are accident trends or high accident locations that could be mitigated by signage, pavement markings, parking and other physical modifications or more enforcement.

Note: The Study was divided into four zones. Only zones 3 and 4 coincide with the study area for this Action Plan.

Study Recommendations:

1. Realign Bartlett Street/Jewell Court intersection

2. Upgrade signals @ Bartlett Street
 3. Install crosswalk @ Albany Street and include pedestrian crossing warning signs
 4. Install crosswalk @ Salem/Union and include pedestrian crossing warning signs
 5. Install crosswalk @ Brewster Street and include pedestrian crossing warning signs
 6. Reverse Cornwall and Langdon Street traffic or remove 1 parking space at corner of Islington Street/Langdon Street
 7. Remove all parking spaces in front of Getty and Mobil Stations.
-

City of Portsmouth Master Plan and Cultural Plan March 2005

Purpose:

to present a set of goals, objectives and strategies that together describe a vision for the City over the next ten years.

Note: Master Plan covers entire city, only excerpts germane to the Islington Street study area are included in this section.

Recommendations:

1. Review the mix of zoning between Bartlett Street and Maplewood Avenue and amend to support appropriate redevelopment
 2. Implement the 1999 Streetscape Improvement Plan for the Islington Street corridor
 3. Encourage high-quality, mixed use redevelopment along major corridors leading to the downtown
 4. Provide standards for consistent and attractive signage
 5. Improve transportation connections to areas beyond the downtown such as Islington Street
 6. Identify and preserve buildings, streetscapes and open spaces that contribute to the unique character and cultural assets of Portsmouth
 7. Identify and plan landscape/streetscape improvements in conjunction with existing street improvement projects for "historic squares" in Portsmouth
 8. Expand and support spaces for cultural activities and events including affordable space for artists and venues for performance, exhibits etc.
-

Islington Streetscape Improvement Plan by Sherman, Greiner, Halle Ltd. August 1997

Purpose:

to examine existing conditions in the Islington Street Corridor between Maplewood Ave. and Bartlett St., to develop a streetscape improvement plan and long term capital improvements based on conditions and on public input and suggest regulatory and non-regulatory public/private strategies for revitalization.

Recommendations:

1. Preserve/enhance remaining character of area
2. Preserve mixed use land use
3. Create a sense of entry at Maplewood Ave. and Bartlett St.
4. Provide economic incentives to encourage commercial renovation that enriches the pedestrian, retail and service experience.
5. Reduce curb cuts to improve traffic and eliminate entry/exit conflicts
6. Replace existing sidewalks with brick and existing curbing with granite
7. Reduce specific on-street parking spaces that create pedestrian and vehicular safety

8. Develop public/private arrangements for off-street parking lots to augment on-street parking and mitigate spaces lost through streetscape efforts.
9. Work with public utilities to clean up and consolidate overhead power lines and devices.
10. Explore the costs to put utilities underground in strategic locations.
11. Install a street tree planting program for tight urban spaces with drought conditions.
12. Encourage development of “vest pocket parks” and outdoor gathering spaces coupled with commercial uses to enhance pedestrian experience and economic development.
13. Develop a site furnishing theme for benches, bollards, lighting, bike racks and kiosks.
14. Develop a signage program sensitive to the corridor’s historic context and architectural character. Include specifications for size, color, materials, etc.
15. Develop architectural guidelines that direct renovation and rehabilitation to structures.
16. Provide economic incentives to encourage façade improvements that preserve/enhance overall street character.
17. Encourage private residence owners to use granite steps and cheek walls when renovating properties.

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Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Appendix B

Conceptual Corridor Plan – **PLAN DIAGRAM**

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WEST END

Barlett Street Intersection - near-term storm drainage improvements; visionary intersection re-alignment, incl. turning lanes, plantings, permanent materials crosswalks

Button Factory Vicinity - traffic calming and planted bump-outs at West End of Islington at transition to higher-density commercial areas; connectivity to enhanced private pedestrian walk; creative-district awareness; public art opportunity

Plaza 800/Old Brew Yard Area - pilot "smart crosswalk" at Plaza 800 entrance; transit hub improvements/pocket park at front of Plaza 800, incl. public art opportunity; future increased density development at Plaza 800; future West End Commons development, incl. lifestyle ctr., parking, community open space at Old Brew Yard Area

Spinney Street Intersection - near-term re-alignment and improvements

All Areas - planned sidewalk improvements to Islington Street; public-private partnerships to analyze and implement streetscape/setback green improvements; arts district / creative district business markers

CENTRAL AREA

Cass Street Intersection - planted bump-outs; permanent materials crosswalks; marked bus pull-overs

Columbia Street Intersection - planted bump-out, incl. public art opportunity; permanent materials crosswalks

Cabot Street Intersection - planted bump-outs; perm. matls. crosswalks

Cabot-Rockingham Block - planted bump-outs; marked bus-pull-overs

Goodwin Park - planted bump-out; permanent materials crosswalk; public art opportunity at Goodwin Park

All Areas - phased improvements to side-street sidewalks between Islington and McDonough planned starting in near-term; planned sidewalk improvements to Islington Street; public-private partnerships to analyze and implement streetscape/setback green improvements

EAST END

Deer Street Extension Creative District - zoning/traffic/pedestrian study need; future re-zoning for multi-use creative district; visionary traffic, pedestrian, planting improvements

Rock Street Intersection - planted pedestrian bump-out; perm. matls. crosswalks

Summer Street Intersection - Summer Street re-alignment, incl. permanent materials crosswalks and planted pedestrian bump-outs

Bridge Street Lot - near-term surface improvements; programming for intermittent community/creative/festival uses; permanent materials crosswalks; visionary development of plaza/parking/parking gateway to Islington Corridor, incl. public art opportunity

Bridge-Tanner Block - planted bump-outs; marked bus pull-overs

All Areas - phased improvements to side-street sidewalks between Islington and McDonough planned, starting in near-term; planned sidewalk improvements to Islington Street; public-private partnerships to analyze and implement streetscape/setback green improvements

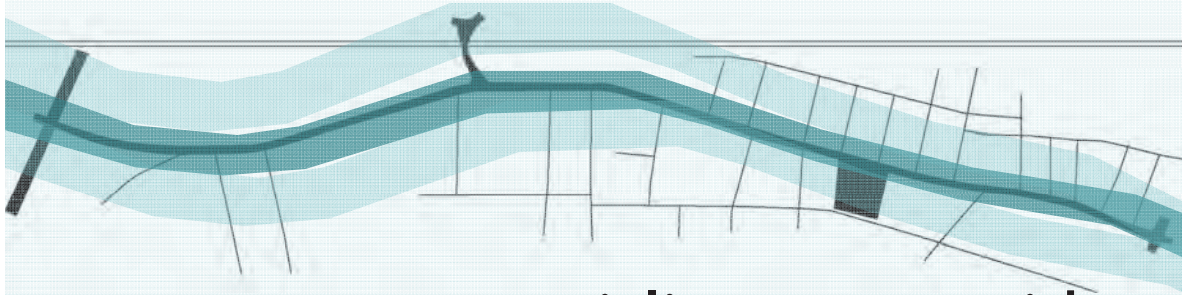


Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Appendix C

Action Plan Summary Presentation - POWERPOINT

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public presentation. june 24, 2009. city of portsmouth, nh
a mile of opportunity: re-imagining the islington corridor



islington corridor integrated action plan

richardson & associates, landscape architects
evan haynes, public arts consultant

a mile of opportunity:
re-imagining the islington corridor

Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan

PROJECT SCOPE:

- Create a plan for prioritized actions based on recommendations of previous studies and public input
- Build on master plan goals
- Include arts and culture opportunities
- Develop timeline to implement actions over time
- Develop funding strategy



Long Range Vision

- Similar to other long-range planning in City (Northern Tier, Market Street Gateway, Atlantic Heights, Peirce Island)
- Start with concept plan of what is desired
- Action Items define:
 - a) Steps required to get the desired outcome
 - b) Resources to pay for Action Steps

EXAMPLE: MARKET STREET GATEWAY

- We wanted to change this -
- To be like this -



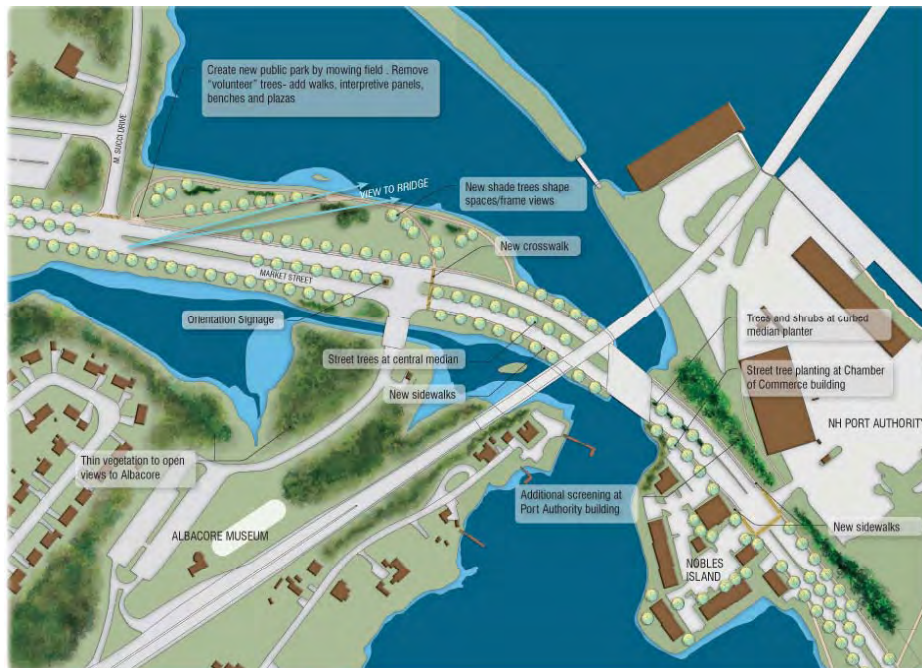
EXAMPLE: MARKET STREET GATEWAY

- We wanted to change this -
- To be like this -



EXAMPLE: MARKET STREET GATEWAY

- This concept plan is how we got there



Goal 1: Improve corridor image

Desired Elements:

- Street lights
- Street trees
- New sidewalks
- Improved signage
- Building façade improvement program
- Incorporate creative elements (public art, infrastructure, etc.)



Goal 2: Develop site-specific traffic management

Desired Outcomes:

- Make it safer for pedestrians
- Improve bus and trolley opportunities
- Re-align intersections
- Improve safety/sightlines at intersections



Goal 3: Create gateways with community space

Desired Outcomes:

Create Maplewood/Islington Gateway

- Inviting to pedestrians
- Adds open space for cultural events
- Connects to Deer St. “creative district”
- Creative elements
- Better signage



Goal 3 (con't.): Create gateways with community space

Desired Outcomes:

Create West End Gateway

- Bartlett St. intersection realignment
- Enhanced Plaza 800 and Brew Yard area
- Identity development
- Common open space
- Creative elements
- Potential for structured pkg

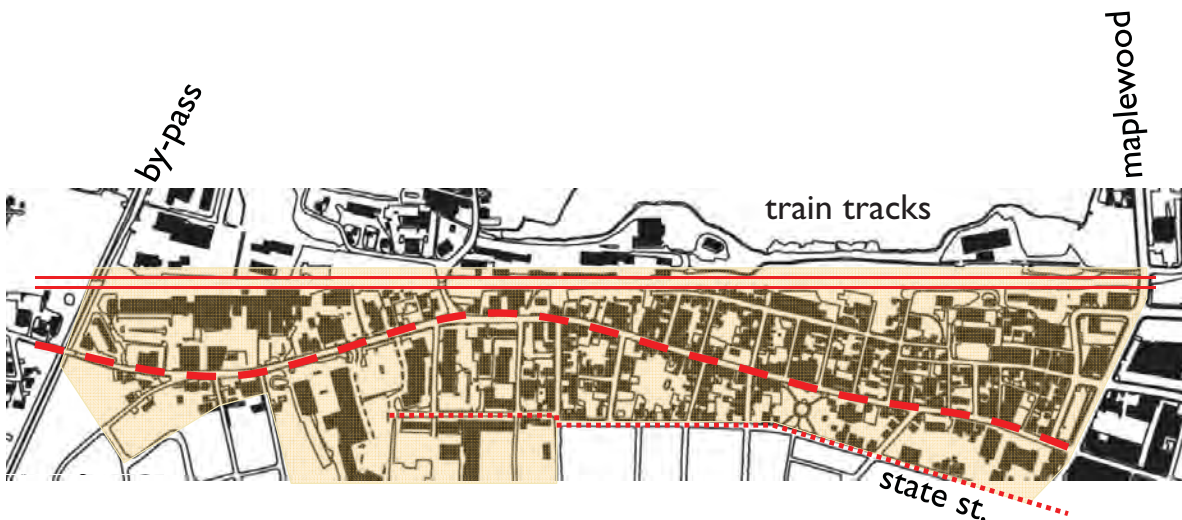


Challenges

- Existing corridor development
- Limited publicly owned land/narrow ROW
- Current economic climate = long implementation timeline
- Stakeholder commitment is key



SITE BOUNDARIES –



opportunities for community input

- stakeholder sessions
- community visioning exercise
- community workshop
- city staff workshops



many approaches explored –

- different costs
- city-involvement
- community impact
- traffic

corridor traffic

- prior traffic counts/studies
- count completed in 2009 to review one-way option
- outcome



emphasis on unique character and changing conditions –

developed hybrid

- core of improvements to safety/user comfort
- patchwork open spaces worked into public ROW
- public-private partnership at gateways
- creativity-infused streetscape elements
- long-term vision / city incentives for creative districts at Deer Street Extension/Brew Yard

phases –

- planned
- visionary

funding for public projects –

- CIP – Capital Improvement Plan
- TIF – Tax Increment Financing
- potential transportation grants
- private funding in connection w/ site planning

eg – influence in site review

funding for private projects –

- private investment
- grants
- low-interest loans

What is TIF?

- **TIF = Tax Increment Financing**
- Economic Development Tool that uses anticipated increase in property values to pay for infrastructure improvements.
- Allows city to target specific area (district) in need of public improvement.
- Allows City to target tax revenue in district to finance eligible improvements or acquisitions.

What Can TIF Be Used For?

- **Projects must be identified in a Development Plan**
- **Eligible TIF projects include:**
 - Acquire land or easements
 - Build or improve roads, bridges
 - Construct transportation systems linking commercial areas
 - Extend or improve water, sewer or utilities to area

More Eligible TIF Projects

- Install lighting, street signs, landscaping, and/or pedestrian ways
- Construct parking structures
- Construct plazas, or other traffic and parking control features
- Planning or engineering for public improvements or projects

complementary zoning strategies

- **Existing:** CBB to Rockingham/Goodwin Park, MRB to Albany
 - 60' building height
 - Payment in lieu of off-street parking
- **Proposed:** Re-zone from CBB to MRB
 - 40' building height; more open space; lower allowed building density
 - No in-lieu payment for parking
- **Proposed expansion of Historic District (design review):**
 - Currently extends to Dover/Union
 - Proposed expansion to Bartlett/Jewell
- **Under review:** Potential re-zoning of area between Bartlett St. and Rte 1 Bypass
 - Current zoning: Industrial and Office Research districts
 - Possible future: Business or Mixed-Use zoning

INTEGRATED PLAN GOALS—

- improving corridor image
- managing traffic and safety
- creating gateways with community space
- acknowledging and supporting creative economy in corridor

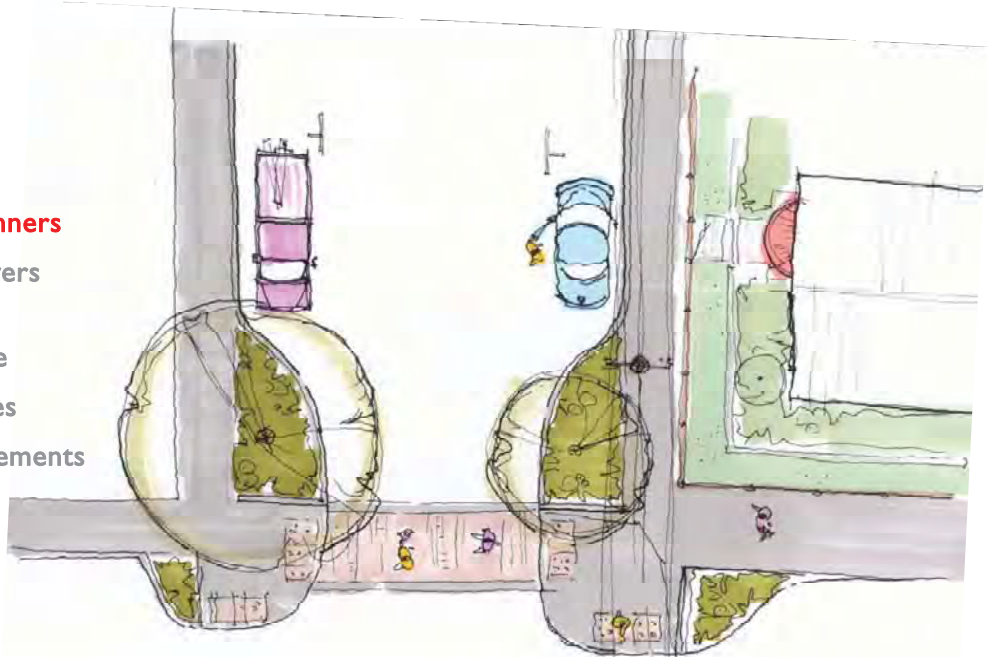


a mile of opportunity:
re-imagining the islington corridor

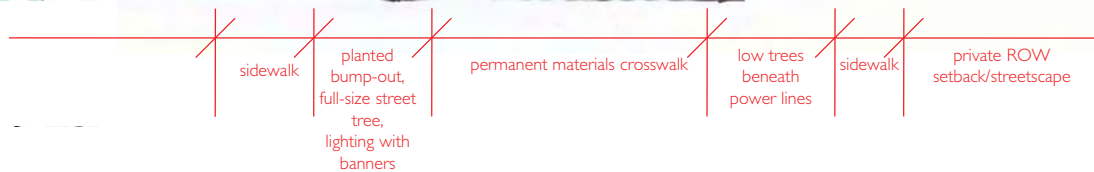
DESIRED PROJECT OUTCOMES + ACTIONS

- more green space
- safe routes / traffic-calming
- quality urban design
- public-private partnerships
- creative elements
- defined gateways

- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways



- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
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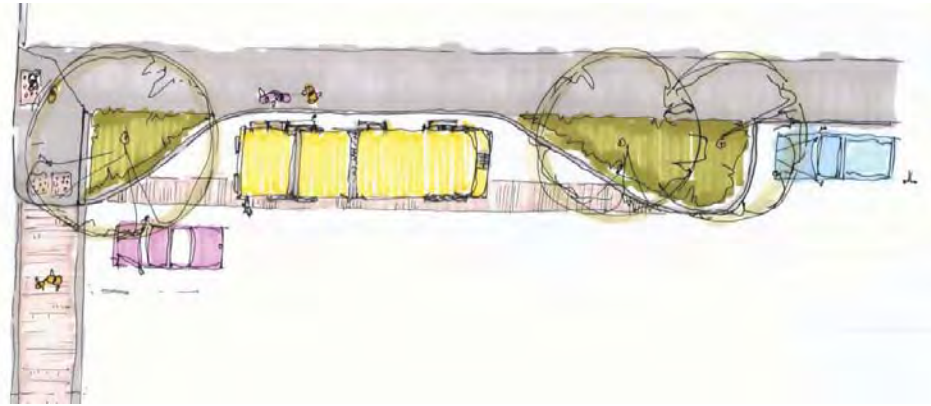
- bump-outs
- planting
- **crosswalks**
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways



- bump-outs
- planting
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- **lighting/banners**
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- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banner
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- setbacks + streetscape
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- creative elements
- gateways



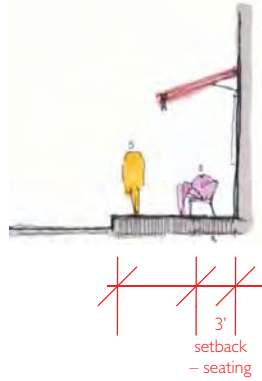
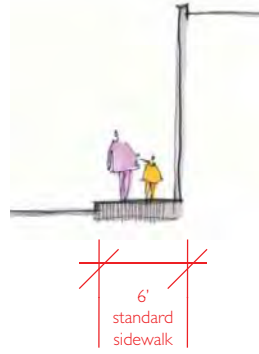
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- crosswalks
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- **bus pull-overs**
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways



- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs

▪ **setbacks + streetscape**

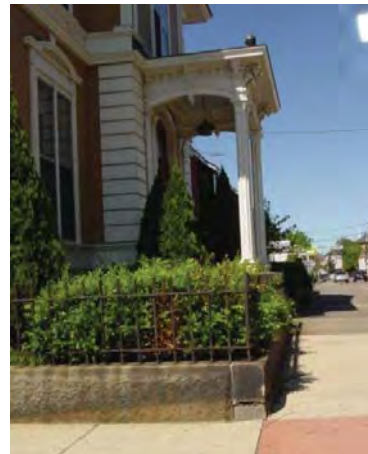
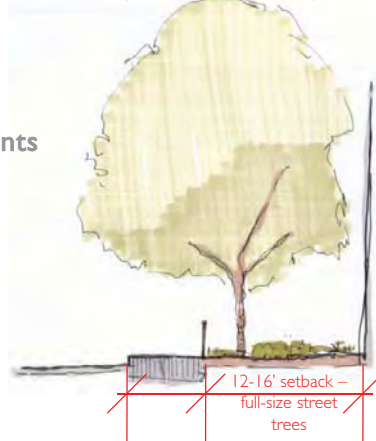
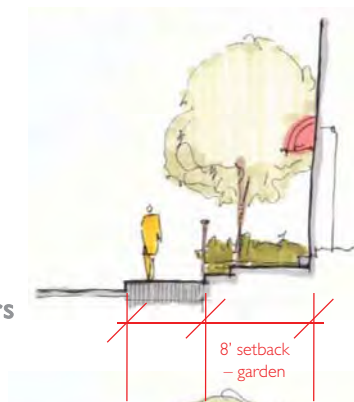
- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways



- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs

▪ **setbacks + streetscape**

- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways

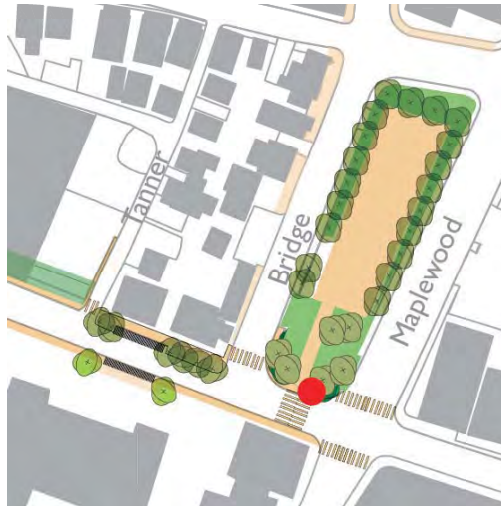


EAST GATEWAY -

- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways

bridge street plaza

- creative elements – public art, etc.
- open air events
- potential parking deck



WEST GATEWAY -

- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- gateways

west end commons

- creative-economy focus
- community open space
- potential structured parking
- redevelopment sites
 - Plaza 800 / Old Brewery



- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- **open spaces**
- **creative elements**
- gateways



- **open spaces**
- **creative elements**
- **gateways**



appropriate forms of urban- and community-focused development

- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- **gateways**



structured parking/parking solutions

- bump-outs
- planting
- crosswalks
- lighting/banners
- bus pull-overs
- setbacks + streetscape
- open spaces
- creative elements
- **gateways**



DESIRED OUTCOMES + ACTIONS –

public art opportunities

- site-specific commissions
- public %-for-art program
- donated art
- overnight art



DESIRED OUTCOMES + ACTIONS –

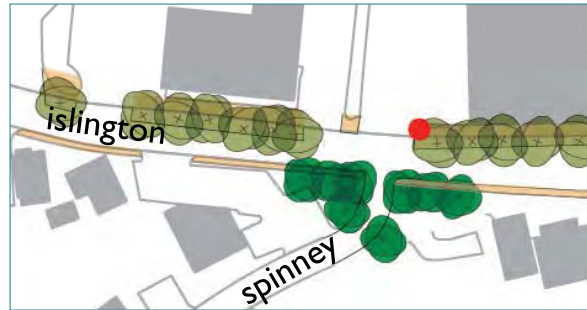
support for creative economy

- wayfinding
- locally-created corridor amenities
- marketing exposure

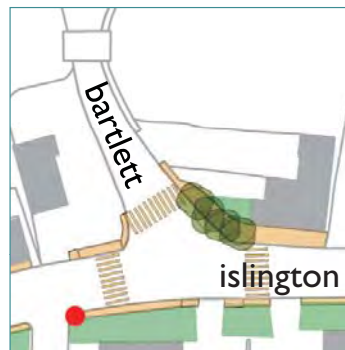


IMPROVEMENTS UNDERWAY –

- Spinney re-alignment – planting / crosswalks



- Barlett intersection engineering – stormwater upgrades



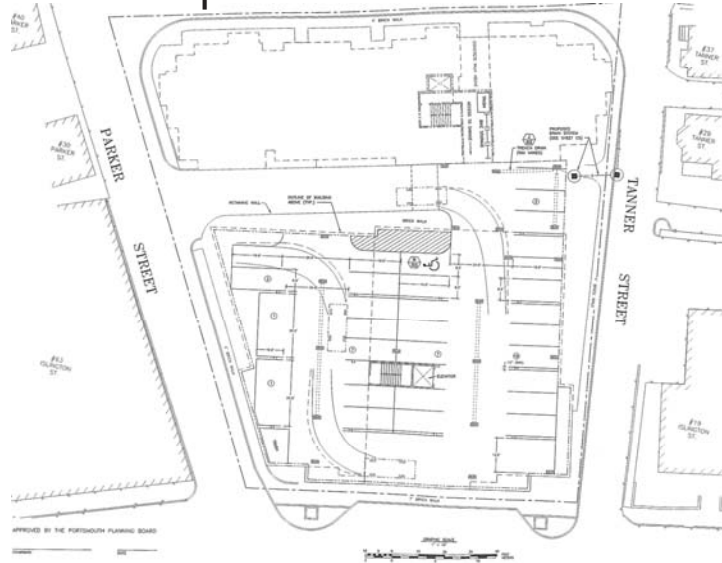
IMPROVEMENTS UNDERWAY –

- sidewalk improvements



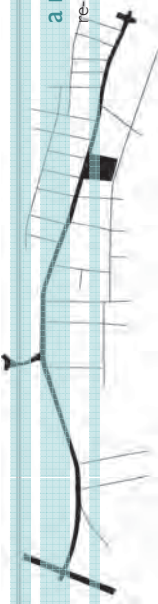
CURRENT CORRIDOR PROJECTS—

- Kline's Furniture re-development
– site plan



what comes next

- study products** – Summary Presentation
Concept Plan
Action Plan Matrix
- city planning** – Funding Decisions/Resources
Regulatory/Land Use Changes
- implementation** – Cost Estimate from Concept Plan
Inclusion in Capital Improvement Plan
Phased Implementation



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Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Appendix D

Action Plan Improvements - FUNDING

Potential funding for public projects –

- Capital Improvement Planning (CIP)
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Potential transportation grants
- Private funding in connection w/ site planning
 - eg – influence in site review
 - funding for private projects

Potential funding for private investment

- grants
- low-interest loans

What is CIP?

The *Capital Improvement Plan* is a timetable for accomplishing needed improvements on a scheduled basis. It is one of the most important documents considered by the City Council because it has a major impact on the allocation of fiscal resources, and it contributes to setting city expenditures for many years to come. When the *Plan* is adopted and fully utilized, it ensures that needed facilities are provided within the City's financial capability. The *Plan* is a five year plan updated annually.

The *Plan* also provides a complete picture of the City's major development needs. It establishes fiscal priorities and schedules major projects in order to reduce fluctuations in the tax rate. It is also a tool for implementing the recommendations of the City's Master Plan and other major planning documents.

What is a Capital Improvement Project?

As used in the *Plan*, a capital improvement project is defined as a major fiscal expenditure which is made infrequently or which is non-recurring. Examples include land acquisition, construction, expansion or renovation of a public facility, street, or utility, vehicle replacement and large scale design work.

How are Capital Improvement Projects Funded?

Capital Improvement Plan projects are funded from a variety of sources. These include the general fund, federal and state grants, general obligation bonds, parking revenues, sewer revenues, water revenue bonds, sewer revenue bonds, state revolving loan fund, and public/private partnerships.

What is TIF?

- Tax Increment Financing is an Economic Development Tool created by NH law RSA 162:K.
- It allows the City to target specific area (district) in need of public improvement.
- It allows the City to target tax revenue in district to finance eligible improvements or acquisitions.

What Can TIF Be Used For?

In accordance with an approved Development Plan, TIF projects can include:

- Acquisition of land or easements
- Build or improve roads, bridges
- Construct transportation systems linking commercial areas
- Extend or improve water, sewer or utilities to area
- Install lighting, street signs, landscaping, and/or pedestrian ways
- Construct parking structures
- Construct plazas, or other traffic and parking control features
- Planning or engineering for public improvements or projects

Islington Street Corridor Improvement Action Plan – Appendix E

Façade and Street Edge Improvement Program – **ACTION ITEMS**

Introduction

The Scope of Work for the Islington Street Improvement Action Plan Project included the task of guidance in developing a façade and street edge improvement program. The program objective is to promote improvement of private property which will complement and enhance the anticipated streetscape improvements by the city along Islington Street. Another objective is to provide some form of financial assistance to private property owners as an incentive to make exterior of structures and landscaping that improve the overall streetscape and increase property values.

There are numerous examples of façade improvement programs offered by cities throughout the US and Canada aimed at improving the urban environment. Although the programs have a primary goal of providing an incentive for private property improvements, the programs differ in which elements are eligible for funding, which financing terms are offered and how the programs are administered. For example, some municipalities provide incentives and funding assistance for only exterior façade improvements and some municipalities provide assistance beyond physical structures and assist with landscaping, fencing, signage and design work for the improvements. Some communities provide a limited matching grant, others provide low cost loans or 100% forgivable financing and others write down interest on a loan through a local bank.

Eligible Improvements

As noted above, façade improvement program funds are typically used for exterior structural and landscaping improvements on private property in accordance with local regulations. Preference can be given to green building practices or for other priorities. All improvements must conform to local land use regulations. Examples of potential eligible improvement include:

- Removal of non-historic siding;
- Repair or replacement of cornices, pediments, and similar architectural details;
- Repair or replacement of windows;
- Re-pointing brick and masonry;
- Repainting brick and masonry, exterior window frames and other features of the façade in accordance with local regulations;
- Adding historically compatible materials or features;
- Replacement of signage;
- Repair or restoration of original storefront features;
- Installation of appropriate awnings and signing;

- Installation or improvement of guttering and down-spout systems in conjunction with other façade improvements to the building;
- Permanent landscape improvements (trees, shrubs, etc) that add to the taxable value of property;
- Beautifying vacant lots or existing parking lots;
- Installation of fences on street frontage;
- Exterior lighting on the facade facing the street;
- A percentage of fees for design of exterior improvements by a licensed NH architect and/or engineer.

Ineligible Improvements

Typically funds may not be used for projects that are inappropriate or incompatible with the exterior appearance of the structure or property. Examples of ineligible improvements include:

- Any work within the interior of the building;
- Roof improvements;
- Electrical improvements;
- HVAC improvements;
- Security lighting;
- Property acquisition; and
- Working capital.

Eligible Program Participants

Most communities restrict façade and street edge improvement programs to commercial property or business owners located within the designated area. Business owners who do not own the property where they are located must have written approval from the property owner to participate. Some communities allow owners of mixed use properties participate as well. In the Islington Street study area, there are a large number of mixed use buildings that could benefit from façade and property upgrades. It is possible to include residential properties if deemed appropriate to the overall image of the corridor.

Funding

Depending on the source and amount of funds available for the façade improvement program, financing can be provided in a number of creative ways. Most communities that provide grants provide a 50/50 matching grant up to a maximum amount. Most programs operate on a reimbursement basis and pay owners for the costs of work completed and accepted by the local building inspector. Another option is to partner with a local bank or banks that agree to participate and have the bank do the loan application analysis and the disburse funds. The community then writes down the interest on the loan so the borrower pays only principal.

There are a variety of ways to determine funding mechanisms and limits. Some programs make the amount available based on a maximum amount for a specified amount of linear street frontage. Other programs create revolving loan program and make direct loans based on the estimated cost of the improvements up to a maximum amount.

Sources of funding for improvements vary and can be allocated from general funds, Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, private foundations or other sources.

Action Items for Islington Street Façade/Edge Improvement Program

The action steps listed below are recommended for establishing a façade and street edge improvement program in the Islington Street Improvement Action Plan study area. Examples of façade and street edge programs from the cities of Savannah, Georgia; Norfolk, Virginia and Lowell Massachusetts are attached for reference in developing a program.

1. Establish an EDC subcommittee to analyze program objectives, feasibility, criteria and funding sources. Representatives from appropriate city departments and regulatory boards should be considered for inclusion on the subcommittee.
2. Based on program objectives and available financial resources, select funding mechanism (i.e. matching grant, loans, etc.) for façade and landscaping improvements.
3. Identify eligible façade and landscape improvements.
4. Develop program funding limits and terms.
5. Develop guidelines for eligible façade and landscape improvements in accordance with local land use regulations.
6. Establish a grant or loan application review committee.
7. Develop program application, (grant/loan application, agreements) and marketing material.
8. Market program to Islington Street property owners through press, mailings and public meetings.

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JAM Plan Facade and Lot Improvement Program (FLIP) – Lowell

I. Purpose

The Jackson/Appleton/Middlesex Urban Revitalization and Development District (JAM Plan) is a locally designated and State approved urban renewal district. The establishment of the JAM Plan by the Lowell City Council in 2000 established the need for significant public investment into the district in an effort to stimulate private interest and investment in the neighborhood. In an effort to further the implementation of the JAM Plan and improve the physical appearance of businesses and properties located in the JAM Plan area, the City of Lowell established the JAM Plan Facade and Lot Improvement Program or FLIP.

Administered through the Division of Planning and Development, FLIP provides financial incentives to businesses and commercial or mixed-use property owners who invest in their properties located within the boundaries of the city-approved JAM Plan in order to complete improvements to streetscape and building facades (including signage and lighting) and adjacent lots. FLIP is designed to:

- Stimulate private investment and improve the visual appearance of retail, commercial and mixed-use properties within the JAM Plan urban renewal district
- Improve the existing urban streetscape design and pedestrian experience of the JAM Plan's commercial corridors
- Create a more inviting and marketable center for business and economic development in the JAM Plan district

II. Program Assistance

Through FLIP, the Division of Planning and Development will provide financial assistance to private property and business owners within the designated JAM Plan district for the renovation and/or restoration of existing signage, lighting, or building facades, as well as fencing and landscaping improvements on adjacent lots in common ownership that support the commercial activities.

The program intends to reimburse qualified applicants fifty percent (50%) of eligible costs incurred up to the maximums outlined below:

- Signage Improvements:* For all signage improvements, a matching grant of up to \$2,500 is available for the design, fabrication and installation of new storefront signage, sign awnings, or sign lighting;
- Building Facade Improvements:* For all building facade improvements, a matching grant of up to \$25,000 is available for the design and construction of well-designed facade improvements for retail businesses, service establishments, commercial offices or mixed-use buildings;
- Lot Improvements:* For all vacant lot improvements located adjacent to and in common ownership or lease arrangement with a commercial or mixed-use property, a matching grant of up to \$15,000 is available for the design, installation and upgrading of fencing, lighting, and landscaping.

Up to twenty percent (20%) of the matching funds provided through FLIP can be used to cover design related expenses incurred by the hiring of a Massachusetts registered architect or landscape architect.

III. FLIP Criteria

The following criteria must be met for participation in the program.

- Applicants must be private property owners, business owners, or commercial tenants in buildings located within in the boundaries of the approved JAM Plan neighborhood, whose storefronts face onto a City of Lowell accepted public street or right-of-way;
- Tenants must obtain written approval from property owners to participate in the program;
- Property owners must be up-to-date on all municipal taxes prior to participation in the program, and must have no outstanding, uncorrected violations of building, health, or historic codes, except if they will be corrected as part of an otherwise eligible proposed project;
- All improvements are required to follow Lowell Historic Board design standards and obtain approval from the Lowell Historic Board prior to start of construction;

- E. Applicants must comply with all State and local laws and regulations pertaining to licensing, permits, building code and zoning requirements;
- F. Applicants must agree not to change or alter the improved facade(s) without prior written approval from the Division of Planning and Development for five (5) years from the date of the issuance of the funds under the FLIP;
- G. Applicants must agree, to the best of their ability, to complete all proposed improvements and request reimbursement funds within six (6) months of the approval of an application. This time frame may be extended for up to six (6) months upon written request from the applicant.

Priority will be given to the following types of projects:

- Projects that will eliminate a significant blighting influence on the JAM Plan neighborhood;
- Projects that establish a clear and attractive active ground floor retail component and design that adds to the pedestrian experience;
- Projects that include the restoration of significant historical or architectural building elements;
- Projects that currently or upon the completion of the project will include the renovation and active use of the entire property.

IV. Application Procedures

All interested applicants are encouraged to meet with Division of Planning and Development staff prior to submitting an application to FLIP to determine eligibility and funding availability.

Interested applicants should submit the following information in a completed application packet to the Urban Renewal Project Manager, City of Lowell - Division of Planning and Development, 50 Arcand Drive, JFK Civic Center, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852.

A. Applicant Information, to include:

- Firm Name;
- Address(es), telephone and fax number(s);
- Structure of firm (partnership, corporation, etc);
- Size of firm;
- Years in existence;
- Names of principals in firm and primary contact(s);
- List and brief description of previously completed projects, if applicable;
- Insurance information applicable to the work to be completed (this may be provided after a project has been approved to receive FLIP funds);
- Additional information as applicable.

B. Explanation of how the applicant and proposed project complies with FLIP Criteria listed above.

C. Existing conditions/project site description, to include:

- Street address of property;
- Map or site plan of property showing the location of all lot lines, buildings, and other pertinent information as applicable;
- Description of building to be rehabilitated, including dimensions, frontage, height, depth, etc;
- Pictures of property to be rehabilitated;
- Additional information as applicable.

D. Details of proposed improvements, to include:

- Description and/or plans of work to be completed, as available;
- Description of the tasks and methods to be employed to complete work;
- Name, address, and certifications of all consultants, contractors, etc, if applicable;
- Project estimated timeline and explanation of the readiness to proceed;
- Total proposed budget to complete tasks outlined.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. A determination of application completeness and acceptance into FLIP will be provided within 21 days of receipt of an application. Applicants are encouraged to work with the Historic Board in conjunction with the FLIP application process, though an applicant is not required to begin the Historic Board process prior to applying for FLIP funds. Projects will not be reimbursed with FLIP funds until Historic Board reviews and approvals are completed.

A Committee appointed by the City Manager will review all FLIP proposals to ensure a project meets the criteria outlined above and fulfills the intent of the program. Funds will be allocated to projects on a rolling basis as available.

The City of Lowell reserves the right to reject any or all applications to the program at any time, or reject any unsolicited modifications or additions to a project once an application is submitted. The City of Lowell reserves the right to request, as necessary, additional information about the project, including financing, building details, and additional background of the applicant, consultants, contractors, etc.

V. Funding Availability

The Facade and Lot Improvement Program (FLIP) is subject to the authorization and appropriation of funds by the Lowell City Council. The Division of Planning and Development has identified \$100,000 in possible funding to start the FLIP, with additional funding being allocated to the program as available. The City of Lowell reserves the right to dissolve the program at anytime.

Contact Person:

James Errickson, Urban Renewal Project Manager
City of Lowell - Division of Planning and Development
50 Arcand Drive, JFK Civic Center, 2nd Floor
Lowell, MA 01852
Phone: 978-446-7200 ext. 1445
jerrickson@lowellma.gov

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N O R F O L K

Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Grant Program Eligibility and Application Instructions

1. Program Objective: To encourage the improvement of the aesthetic quality of commercial properties located in designated commercial corridors through a public/private partnership program between the City of Norfolk and local businesses.

2. Grant Eligibility and Requirements

- a. To qualify for the grant program, properties must be located in the following corridor areas (see accompanying maps):
 - **East Little Creek Road** (generally, along East Little Creek from Chesapeake Blvd. to Shore Drive);
 - **Fairmount Park** (generally, along Tidewater Drive and Lafayette Blvd. and encompassing areas on Cromwell Road, Ballentine and Chesapeake boulevards);
 - **Five Points** (generally, the areas at the intersection of Norview Avenue, Sewells Point Road and Chesapeake Blvd.);
 - **Riverview** (generally, along Granby Street between 38th Street and Beach Avenue);
 - **Titustown** area (generally, along West Little Creek Road from Nesbitt to Endfield avenues); and,
 - **35th Street** (generally, from Granby Street to Colley Avenue);
- b. Only commercial uses and commercially zoned properties are eligible for the program. Legal, non-conforming uses and structures are eligible for grant funds only if the non-conformities are brought into compliance prior to grant award. A determination of conformity by staff is required.
- c. Eligible improvements for grant funding may include the following:
 - building façade improvements;
 - enhanced entrances or storefronts;
 - exterior lighting;
 - replacement of signage;
 - fencing;
 - landscaping;
 - upgraded parking surface areas (paving) with associated landscape improvements;
 - architectural or engineering fees associated with exterior work;
 - site and building demolitions related to upgrading real estate in the targeted area.
- d. Façade and aesthetic improvements to the commercial property must be feasible, costs must be reasonable and the improvements result in significant visual improvements as seen from the street.
- e. All sources of financing for facade and aesthetic improvement must be committed with proof of commitment provided at time of application.
- f. Specific improvement costs are itemized in a Grant Agreement with the City of Norfolk.

3. Grant Program Incentives and Reimbursement

- a. Grant funds reimbursement is available for up to 50% of eligible improvements costs as itemized in the executed Grant Agreement.
- b. Funding categories for grant requests, along with limits, is available in two ways:
 - Maximum grant of **\$25,000** in the following commercial corridors: **East Little Creek Road; Riverview; Titustown; and 35th Street.**
 - Maximum grant of **\$10,000** in the following commercial corridors: **Fairmount Park and Five Points.**
- c. For eligible properties, funding is available on a first come, first served basis. The source of funds is the City's Capital Improvement Program.
- d. The approved grant reimbursement is paid after applicant completes the improvements, as set forth in the City Grant Agreement, and work is reviewed and approved by the City of Norfolk for consistency with Agreement.
- e. Improvements shall be completed within six (6) months from the Grant Agreement's date.
- f. One (1) extension of time may be requested under certain criteria. If a time extension is not granted and work has not started on the project within six (6) months from the contract date, the Grant Agreement becomes null and void.

4. Grant Application Review and Approval Process

- a. Work begun or completed prior to application submittal is not eligible for grant funding. After-the-fact applications for grant funding will not be reviewed.
- b. No construction or rehab work can start until the Grant Agreement is executed.
- c. A completed application must be submitted with appropriate support documentation.
- d. Written approval from property owner, if applicant is not the property owner, is required for all applications.
- e. Each proposed grant application item is required to have cost estimates. An application will not be considered if costs estimates are not included.
- f. Listed below are examples of eligible improvements and support documentation required for the application request:
 - 1) Exterior building improvements – may include facade improvements, such as new windows, doors, awnings, building materials; requires registered architectural or engineer plans that illustrate work areas, proposed changes, materials and colors; and an elevation drawing illustrating proposed improvements; all proposals involving structural changes must include a stamped architectural drawing/pre-approved plan by the Building Official.

- 2) Enhanced building entrances or storefronts – may include awnings, canopies, etc.; documentation must include scaled drawing, picture, brochure or color;
 - 3) Lighting – may include exterior or security; must submit type, location, detailed description or specifications; and labor costs (for installation, etc.);
 - 4) Fencing – type of materials, such as wood, metal, etc., with picture or scaled drawing; height, length, location, color (a site survey that is required by the City for a permit);
 - 5) Replacement of commercial signage – a scaled drawing of proposed sign (including information and specifications for zoning review); measurements; and location;
 - 6) Landscaping – detailed plan by licensed landscaper that shows location of each plant and a written proposal to include prices, size, type and quantity of plants; and,
 - 7) Parking surface areas upgrade – documentation by registered professional must include drawing of area or a survey, description of work, surface materials.
- g. Initial consultation and review of application, proposed property improvements and costs are undertaken between city staff and applicant.
- h. Grant Review Committee: All applications for a Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement grant will be reviewed and acted upon by the Grant Review Committee from the designated commercial corridor. These Committees have sole discretion to review and approve grants. Each Committee is comprised of three (3) members selected by the business association of the respective commercial area and one (1) member each from the staffs of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (as appropriate) and the City of Norfolk Department of Planning. The Grant Review Committee:
- reviews the grant application for compliance with program guidelines and objectives;
 - either approves or denies applications for grant funding; and,
 - may modify the grant application in a mutually agreed-upon manner.
- i. Following approval of the application by the Grant Review Committee, a Grant Agreement will be entered into between the City of Norfolk and the applicant, setting forth:
- a) specific improvements to be made as determined by the Improvements Committee;
 - b) estimated total costs of improvements;
 - c) financing source commitments;
 - d) anticipated project start and end dates; and,
 - e) approved grant reimbursement amount.
- j. All approved applications will contain a release authorizing the City of Norfolk to place a sign on the property during work, noting participation in the grant program.
- k. Payment will be made by the City of Norfolk after completion and final inspection by program staff of approved work improvements to ensure consistency with the Grant Agreement. Requests for payment must be accompanied by "PAID IN FULL" receipts. Payments may be lump sum unless specifically arranged otherwise prior to approval.

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N O R F O L K

Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Grant Program Application Form

NOTE: It is a requisite of the grant program, that **no application will be considered if work has already begun. No work can start until the application is approved and a contract is executed.**

A. Applicant information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address & fax: _____

Property address: _____

Business name: _____

Property owner if different than applicant (name, address, phone numbers):

B. Commercial corridor: _____

(select one: East Little Creek Road, Fairmount Park; Five Points; Riverview, Titustown, 35th Street; see next page)

C. Requested grant funding: \$ _____

D. Project description narrative. Describe and detail the proposed improvements and note how project will result in significant aesthetic or visual improvements as seen from the street.

E. Project's itemized improvement costs:

Listed improvements	Cost estimate
Total Estimate:	

F. Zoning district of property: _____

G. The following support documentation must be provided at time of application submittal:

- ___ Property survey
- ___ Site plan, showing building footprint, with proposed modifications
- ___ Architectural plans and building elevation details
- ___ Landscape plan by a certified landscape architect or certified nurseryman
- ___ Photographs of property in its present condition and with proposed improvements
- ___ Samples or specifications of construction materials for the following
(brick, fence materials, awning materials, paint or other materials proposed for use)
- ___ Copies of executed contracts for professional or construction services, including
architectural, engineering, landscaping and contracting services

H. List sources of project financing and attach all letters of commitment.

Applicant's signature

Date

Property owner's signature

Date

Façade Improvement Loan Program

The City of Savannah and the Savannah Development and Renewal Authority (SDRA) offer four low-interest loans to stimulate economic activity and to strengthen the historic character of properties within Greater Downtown Savannah.

What are the loan programs?

The Façade Improvement Program (FIP) was designed to assist property and business owners enhance the appearance of street front and lane facades. Currently, four revolving fund programs exist to enhance development along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Montgomery Street and within the Broughton Street Urban Redevelopment Area.

Broughton Street Urban Redevelopment Area Façade Programs

- The Renewal FIP is funded by general funds from the City of Savannah and specifically focuses on properties facing Broughton Street between Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and East Broad Street or facing north-south side streets in the Broughton Street Urban Renewal Area.
- The Redevelopment FIP is funded by the City through a federal program referred to as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This program was developed specifically for commercial properties located within the Broughton Street Urban Redevelopment Area, bounded to the west by Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard; to the east by East Broad Street; the north by the centerline of Congress Street; and to the south by the centerline of State Street.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street Façade Programs

- FIP I is funded by general funds from the City of Savannah and specifically focuses on properties located within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard/Montgomery Street Study Area boundaries and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd./Montgomery Street Urban Redevelopment Area boundaries (contact SDRA for specific boundary information).
- FIP II is funded by the City through a federal program referred to as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This program was developed specifically for commercial properties located within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard/Montgomery Street Study Area boundaries and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd./Montgomery Street Urban Redevelopment Area boundaries (contact SDRA for specific boundary information). Properties within these areas which are not located within a designated urban redevelopment area or a designated slum and blight area are excluded from participation in this loan program.

Who is eligible for the loan programs?

Any commercial property or business owner tenant is eligible to utilize the FIP. Business owners must have written approval from the property owner to proceed with this program.

What are the terms of the loan?

Funds will be loaned on a first approved, first funded basis at a fixed interest rate of 3.5% with an eight-year term. A loan servicing fee of .5% also applies, along with a one-time \$100 loan set-up fee.

Loan limits:

Loan limits are based on the front or lane footage of a building:

30 feet or less	\$12,000
Between 30 and 60 feet	\$20,000
Greater than 60 feet	\$25,000

Special circumstances:

- An additional \$5,000 is available for corner properties with two facades facing two streets. Special architectural features that have unique or extraordinary preservation needs may be eligible for an additional \$5,000. The maximum loan to any single project is \$30,000.
- Minor façade improvement projects that enhance the comprehensive design of the building are eligible for up to \$5,000.

Loans must be secured by collateral owned by the applicant. Collateral may be the building itself, other real estate, personal property, or other assets.

How does the application process work?

1. Complete loan application package and submit it to the SDRA office.
2. A credit review of the applicant is conducted.
3. If using CDBG funding, the City of Savannah conducts an environmental assessment and submits a wage rate determination.
4. If using CDBG funding, the applicant shall advertise for sealed bids or solicit competitive bids from at least five potential contractors.
5. The loan application is reviewed by both the SDRA's Urban Design Committee and Board of Directors. If approved, the SDRA issues a letter of commitment authorizing loan funding.
6. Applicant submits approved plan to Historic District Review Board. Once the certificate of appropriateness is approved, closing documents are prepared.
7. During closing, SDRA establishes benchmarks with the applicant to determine when funds can be drawn and issues a loan commitment letter to the borrower authorizing loan funding, subject to meeting the terms of the façade improvement plan.
8. A pre-construction conference with the project contractor and the borrower is held. The loan is then closed and project construction begins.
9. Loan funds are released once benchmarks are satisfactorily met.

What type of improvements qualify?

Funds must be used for comprehensive façade renovation or restoration projects. Funds will be awarded to projects that stress quality design and construction while enhancing the historic character of loan target area. Funds may also be loaned to façade renovation projects of non-historic buildings or for the construction of compatible facades on new buildings.

Eligible uses include:

- Removing non-historic siding;
- Repairing or replacing cornices, pediments, and similar architectural details;
- Repairing or replacing windows;
- Re-pointing brick and masonry;
- Repainting brick and masonry, exterior window frames and other features of the façade;
- Adding historically compatible materials or features;
- Repairing or restoring transom windows;
- Repairing or restoring original storefront features;
- Installing appropriate awnings and signing; and
- Installing or improving guttering and down-spout systems in conjunction with other façade improvements to the building.

What improvements are ineligible?

Funds may not be used for projects that are inappropriate or incompatible with the historic context of Downtown or do not address all deficient architectural elements of the façade. In addition, funds may not be used for:

- Any work within the interior of the building;
- Roof improvements;
- Electrical improvements;
- HVAC improvements;
- Property acquisition; and
- Working capital.

SDRA complies with all relevant requirements of federal laws and regulations dealing with non-discrimination and equal opportunity in federally assisted programs.