

**Turners Falls Livability Plan Draft Implementation Matrix 4-25-13**

**Goal: Enhanced Connectivity for Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

Proj. ID	Projects & Programs	Description	Potential Actions	Task Leader	Time Frame	Resources
C-1	Install Downtown Gateway Improvements	Provide safe, welcoming gateways to downtown that balance the needs of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.	Reconfigure sidewalks and crosswalks to provide safe access at 5th Street Gateway.	Town		MassWorks,CD BG
			Design and install welcome sign and landscaping across from 5th Street bridge.	MBA, Town		
			Improve crosswalks and sidewalk connections at 3rd Street Gateway and pedestrian footpaths on the hill.			
			Design and install landscape improvements at frontage of Food City Plaza and current library at South end of Avenue A.	private, Planning Board or Zoning Board		
C-2	Improve connectivity to Strathmore Mill and other Historic-Industrial Island properties	With limited parking on the island, maintaining and improving pedestrian access across the canal is a key part of any redevelopment strategy.	Work with Strathmore team to review previous studies and identify additional opportunities for improving pedestrian bridges.	Town, State, Private Strathmore Team, abutters		
C-3	Improve handicapped accessibility for downtown buildings.	While most of Avenue A, the Discovery Center and other public buildings are handicapped accessible, many private businesses are not. Access improvements must be balanced with the need to respect historic architecture.	Identify appropriate models for handicapped access to buildings and incorporate into design guidelines.			
C-4	<b>Enhance connections between CanalSide bike trail and downtown</b>	The bike trail has become a popular amenity, but there are limited access points and/or conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.	Design and install connecting links at key locations including 6th Street	Planning Department		DOT, CDBG

**Goal: Improved Appearance and Functionality of Avenue A and Third St Streetscape**

Proj. ID	Projects & Programs	Description	Potential Actions	Task Leader	Time Frame	Resources
A-1	Enhance pedestrian safety and handicapped access.	Making the streetscape safe and accessible to people of all abilities will encourage pedestrian use by everyone and open up new business opportunities.	Design and install curb extensions to shorten crosswalks at key locations.			
			Work with business owners to plan, design and install outdoor cafés and sidewalk gathering spaces.			
A-2	Reduce curb cuts on Ave. A	Removal of unnecessary curb cuts will reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and allow more space for sidewalk cafes and other uses.	Work with DPW, planning and zoning to consolidate access drives and remove unnecessary curb cuts.	Planning Board, Zoning Board		
A-3	Renovate alley entrances to improve pedestrian experience	Alleys entrances provide important access to rear service and parking areas, but interrupt the sidewalk at the middle of the block.	Design and install new entrances to alleys.			
A-4	Improve maintenance	Maintaining planters, trees, sidewalks, benches, etc. becomes more of an issue as concrete and bricks weather and shift, trees grow, and utilities wear out. Even as elements of the streetscape are replaced, a combination of public and private resources will be required to keep up with maintenance needs.	Continue private maintenance of planters	Streetscape Committee		
			Explore general improvements of planters and irrigation system.			
			Work with licensed arborist to evaluate and prune trees			
A-5	Update Lighting	Inadequate and/or unattractive lighting conditions were cited by many participants as an important issue in the perception of safety and general appearance of the the streetscape.	Evaluate and plan for updating or replacing light fixtures, preferably energy efficient.			
			Establish/update guidelines for building lighting.			
			Plan for extending lighting down alleys and side streets			
A-6	Improve public and private signage	Consistent, well-designed signage is critical to allowing businesses to communicate while enhancing the overall aesthetic character of the downtown.	Revise sign regulations and provide guidance to business and building owners.	Planning Board		
			Design and Install Shea Theater Marquee	Shea Theater Board		
A-7	Infill empty lots with new buildings that fit the historic context	Several key locations along Avenue A and adjacent streets provide opportunities for infill buildings that could shore up the eroded edges of the streetscape.	Pursue infill at former Cumberland Farms site			
A-8	Adopt Design Guidelines for Downtown Turners Falls	To protect the integrity of the historic development patterns and architectural characteristics. This could be coupled with the façade improvement program and could include such things as traditional neon signs.	Evaluate previous town design guidelines and identify gaps and areas that need to be updated; consider form-based code approach to zoning.			

A-9	Renovate and reuse historic structures		Continue support for Redevelopment of Strathmore Mill, St. Anne's Church, and other priority redevelopment sites.			
<b>Goal: Enhanced Recreational Opportunities for Residents and Visitors of All Ages</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
R-1	Increase recreational facilities for youth		Construct skate park at Unity Park Explore teen club/recreation center. Explore YMCA-type facility with swimming, gym, etc.			
R-2	Enhance water-based recreation		Construct boat launch near Unity Park.			
R-3	Provide rental bikes	Making it easy for visitors to get out on the bike trail is an easy way to extend the typical tourist visit while providing access to the unique landscape along the Connecticut River and canal.	Work with discovery center and other venues to establish location for bike rental concession. Identify potential vendors. Enhance programming for parks and bike trail.			
<b>Goal: Expand Community Events and Activities in Downtown Turners Falls</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
A-1	Support and expand the farmers market.	Consider expanding with the primary market event being held on Saturday or Sunday, and featuring local and regional produce, prepared foods, arts and crafts, and live music. Use the main field of "Discovery Park"	Improve farmers market space at 38 Avenue A. Recruit and support farmers and work to identify best times for markets to take place Explore permanent market canopies and facilities that can be shared with flea markets and other events.	Town Agricultural Commission; Board of Selectmen Planner		
A-2	Expand outdoor museums and cultural venues		Explore reuse of coal silo and surrounding site. Plan for Great Falls Native Cultural Park Support programming and facility improvements at Shea Theater Plan and install interpretive signs and murals celebrating local historic and culture consistent with the TF Public Art Strategy.	Shea Theater Board, Town		
A-3	Explore improvements to sitting and gathering spaces along Avenue A		Design and install sitting-height walls around selected existing planters. Evaluate locations where planters could be removed to create gathering spaces.			
A-4	Explore possibility for a Food Vendor Court as a Business Incubator	Couple with expanded farmers market and provide opportunity for fledging restaurateurs to test the market at low cost and create a following.	Identify location(s) for vendors court; price food carts that could be rented to proprietors; coordinate with existing restaurants and give them the first opportunities; recruit vendors; advertise on line.			
A-5	Support and expand Existing Downtown Events	For example, the Franklin County Pumpkin Fest, Soap Box Derby, Upper Valley Music Festival, and Suzee's Fashion Show, movies and music at Peskeomskut Park, Great Falls Coffee House	Explore expanded hours for downtown businesses.	RiverCulture,		MCC
A-6	Consider Establishing New Downtown Events	Examples include a night out series, a Flea Market, Classic Car Show on Avenue A, Movies and Music in the Park, etc.				MCC
<b>Goal: Improved Services and Quality of Life for All Downtown Residents</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
S-1	Improve security for residents and businesses.		Maintain downtown patrol officer	Police Department		
S-2	Enhance removal of trash and unwanted items					
S-3	Relocate and expand community facilities		Relocate library and senior center to new building attached to Town Hall. Repurpose existing library as a local history museum. Pursue planning for dog park. Pursue planning for community gardens.			

S-4	Improve Public Transit Service		Work with FRTA to improve service for residents			
<b>Goal: Get Organized for Business Development</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
B-1	Establish a Joint Downtown Partnership Organization to Lead the Downtown Marketing, Cultural and Economic Development Effort	The partnership should serve as an umbrella organization and pull together constituents from both the private and public sectors for coordinated marketing, branding, economic development and business recruitments programs .	Expand RiverCulture's Mission into economic development, marketing and business development; possibly merge with the MBA; Town, EDIC, FCCC and local business leaders should be actively involved; Partnership should be responsible for managing future Cultural District Designation	MBA, Planning Department, RiverCulture		
B-2	Hire or Appoint a Downtown Manager	If possible, a full or part-time employee should be hired to lead the downtown revitalization program. This person should have a background in marketing, business development, or community organizations.	Possibly expand RiverCulture Director's role to include management of downtown revitalization	Planning Department, RiverCulture, MBA		
<b>Goal: Create a Business Retention and Development Program</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
BD-1	Undertake a Targeted Business Recruitment Program	Focus the identified gaps in business sectors sales in primary trade area (local residents) gaps, entrepreneurs, and successful established businesses in the region that could benefit from another store in Turners Falls.	Appoint a TF contingency from the Downtown Partnership to contact and meet with identified prospects; Target regionally known and successful businesses that would benefit by having another store in downtown.			
BD-2	Develop a Merchandising Program for Downtown Shop Owners	Create a technical assistance program for local merchants on merchandising, window display, promotion, and marketing.	See below			
BD-3	Work with Business Operators to Consistently Maintain Curb Appeal	Provide guidance to business operators to pay more attention to maintaining their storefronts. This may include washing store windows, sweeping trash, removing poor quality or garish window signs, painting facades, and replacing or installing new high quality awnings.	Prepare a brochure on methods of improving storefront "curb appeal" and window displays; distribute to businesses; sponsor workshops and webinars by store merchandizing consultants; inform shop owners of blogs, websites, LinkedIn and Facebook pages, YouTube channels, and other on-line tutorials and educational materials on the subject.			
BD-4	Undertake a Local Business Retention, Support and Enhancement Program that Services Local Needs	Downtown Turners Falls should be a "place of necessity" for local residents. For example, shops and services that are utilized on a regular basis such as groceries, a pharmacy, clothing, restaurants, banks, the post office, and personal services should be strongly supported.	Aggressively support pedestrian access and safety improvements to the grocery store, pharmacy, post office and banks, and all other necessary services that are within walking distance of downtown neighborhoods.			
<b>Goal: Refine Marketing and Communications Programs</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
M-1	Define Downtown Attributes and Develop Strategic Marketing Materials Accordingly	Identify and described the competitive advantages of opening a business to perspective investors. For example, cultural, civic and recreational amenities; relatively low rental costs; highly visible commercial spaces; a supportive climate for business development; reasonably size market within walking distance; large volume of travelers and potential visitors along Route 2 and I-91	Prepare written materials, brochures and other hard materials; distribute at local stores and points of interest such as the Discovery Center, Library, Town Hall; distribute regionally at visitor centers along Route 2 and I-91, hotels, and other regional attractions such as Yankee Candle and others.			
M-2	Create a Marketing Portfolio	The Marketing Portfolio should be detailed and specific to Downtown Turners Falls including: the market analysis; existing businesses and institutions; recreational, cultural, natural and historic attributes; and local business development and property investment programs and incentives; SPACE Inventory; social media venues; and other pertinent information.	See above			
M-3	Expand the Downtown Social Media Program	Create new Downtown Turners Falls website, Facebook page, YouTube Channel, Twitter, and blogs to generate information and interest in downtown.	Expand RiverCulture's Social Media to include an on-line version of the Marketing Portfolio identified above.			

M-4	Develop a Downtown Brand Including a Logo and Slogan	Currently, RiverCulture has an excellent logo. The general slogan "Powertown" could also be used as a starting point for a more formal downtown slogan .	Expand branding built by RiverCulture to reflect the new business partnership; Adapted the logo and slogan for Downtown Turners Falls with direction from the new joint partnership organization such as "Downtown Turners Falls: Powering Your Imagination Through Art, Culture, Recreation, and Civic Life". Once created, branding should be used on all marketing materials both hard and on-line; Branding should also be integrated into the wayfinding signage program.			
M-5	Expand Multimedia Joint Advertising Program	Joint advertising geared toward promoting Downtown Turners Falls as a district rather than individual businesses using the cooperative print and radio advertisement and weekly cable television program.	Expand RC's Joint Advertising effort			
<b>Goal: Improve Gateway Treatments and Wayfinding Signage</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
W-1	Install Gateway Treatment at Route 2 Entrance	New monument signs, banners and bridge abutment treatments at the intersection; directional signage leading to the intersection; and possibly a small billboard at a strategic location further east.				
W-2	Upgrade Wayfinding and Directional Signage System	Expand and enhance existing wayfinding signage system both within and leading to downtown Turners Falls				
W-3	Improve Downtown Information Kiosks	Strategically located informational kiosks should be placed in the downtown area. The kiosks can be both stand-alone structures and wall-mounted units and should contain a business directory map, points of public interest, and information on upcoming events and activities in Downtown Turners Falls.	Evaluate and supplement kiosks installed previously by RiverCulture.			
W-4	Create a Downtown Murals Program	Attractively designed murals can help create a positive symbol for downtown and serve as a reminder to residents and customers of				
W-5	Install New Interpretive Sign Boards	Currently, there are a few interpretive boards in Turners Falls that that depict and describe local natural, historic and cultural attributes such as in Discovery Park. These can be interesting marketing tools that not only educate visitors but improve their experience and impression of downtown .	Upgrade existing interpretive boards and coordinate these small ground- or wall-mounted signs with the overall wayfinding system.			
W-6	Expand overnight accommodations	Currently, there are no accommodations in downtown and the nearest hotels on a number of miles away in Greenfield. This limits the visitors experience and full access to Turners Falls.	Plan for tourist accommodations as part of projects at Strathmore; explore potential at other town-owned sites.			
<b>Goal: Expand Economic Development Policies, Incentive and Regulatory Programs</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
ED-1	Create an Avenue A Storefront Condominium Creation Incentive Program	Create an incentive for ground floor utilization or sale for property owners, many of whom derive their income off upper floor apartment rentals.	Work with local financial institutions, realtors, lawyers and property owners to identify targeted buildings and best methods of condo-izing ground floor space and connecting with commercial ventures.			
ED-2	Consider re-establishing a Façade & Sign Improvement Program	The Town has a façade and sign improvement program that was funded by the former Massachusetts Downtown Program about 10 or 15 years ago. At the time this matching grant program was very effective in renovating several storefronts along Avenue A and is a well documented revitalization tool in several other downtowns around the state.	Seek CDBG funds or work with local banks to enhance visual appeal, economic opportunity, and walkability of the Village Center, a number of existing buildings have been recommended for façade treatments, upgraded signage and lighting, awnings and other window treatments, storefront displays, and use of public spaces in front of the building.			
ED-3	Consider Establishing a District Improvement Financing (M.G.L Chapter 40Q)	District Improvement Financing (DIF) is a form of tax increment financing enabled by the Massachusetts legislature in 2003 that provides for a variety of tools to promote desired development in targeted geographic areas.	Evaluate assessors records and market potential for targeted redevelopment sites to determine if there is enough growth potential that would be incentivized through infrastructure improvements to support a DIF program.	Planner		

ED-4	Consider establishing a Business Improvement Districts (M.G.L. Chapter 400)	Small BIDs (such as would be applicable to Downtown Turners Falls) generally provide non-public services through a revenue source from participating property owners such as: maintenance; marketing and events planning; business development; public space enhancements, parking and transportation improvements; civic space improvements; security; design assistance; and promotion.	Evaluate assessors records, create a boundary map and conduct a survey of property owners to determine the level of support and potential revenues that could be generated by a BID as well as the potential uses of funding for downtown revitalization programs.	Planner, MBA		
ED-5	Evaluate the Feasibility of Establishing a Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Districts (M.G.L. Chapter 40R)	This mechanism effectively promotes "as of right" development with certain densities and mixed uses geared to transit-oriented town and village center scales. The state provides financial incentives to defray costs associated with such development.	Evaluate assessors records, create a boundary map and conduct a survey of property owners to determine the level of support; Compare potential Overlay District to State funding to determine potential revenues that could be generated.	Planner		
ED-6	Promote and Facilitate Additional Outdoor Dining for Downtown Food and Drink Establishments	A simple and effective way to expand business, improve the "outdoor room" and perception of downtown.		Select Board, Planning Board		
<b>Goal: Expand Public/Private Development Partnerships and Financing Programs</b>						
<b>Proj. ID</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Programs</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Potential Actions</b>	<b>Task Leader</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Resources</b>
P-1	Expand the Use of the Commercial Homesteading Program	This is an innovative local incentive program that has been successfully used in Turners Falls and has potential for expanded applications.		Select Board, Planner		
P-2	Continue to Issues Strategic Redevelopment and Land Disposition RFPs for Prospective Investors and Developments	Most recently used for the Strathmore Mill redevelopment project. Couple with the Commercial Homesteading Program.				
P-3	Seek Cultural Districts Designation from the Massachusetts Cultural Council	This designation is made under the Massachusetts Cultural Council's Creative Communities program. The Town submitted an application in 2012 but was not selected. It is an important recognition and can be used as an effective marketing tool to generate interest from artists and visitors.	Revise and resubmit the 2012 application.			
P-4	Seek CDBG Small Cities Grant Funding to Leverage Private Investment	The Montague Housing Authority has been very successful in obtaining CDBG funds for their affordable housing rehabilitation program. However, CDBG funds can also be used for community planning, economic development, infrastructure improvements, and rehabilitation of public parks. For example, this is a potential source of funding for the façade and sign improvement program as well as other downtown building rehabilitation programs. Target 1 street/block at a time to maximize visual impact.	Seek Slum and Blight Designation for Targeted Areas (Historic Mill District); Hire a grant consultant that can write and administer grants on behalf of the Town for economic development activities.	Planner, FCHRA		CDBG
P-5	Seek MassWorks Infrastructure Funding	MassWorks provides public infrastructure funding to support economic development and job creation. This may include access and infrastructure improvements to the Strathmore Mill.				MassWorks
P-6	Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Program for Future Projects in Downtown Turners Falls	TIF projects in Downtown Turners Falls should include property tax concessions to attract desirable businesses not presently in town, assisting existing key businesses or major employers that would otherwise be forced to relocate from Montague, and leveraging significant benefits to the town from local business expansion which would not occur otherwise.				
P-7	Consider Establishing a Low-Interest Business Loan Pool	Work together with local and regional banks, credit unions and other financial institutions to create a low-interest loan pool for business development.				

P-8	Establish a Capital Improvement Limited Partnership	A limited partnership could be formed and shares could be sold (say, \$1,000 each) to local citizens, property owners, and businesses to carry out specific projects and programs in Downtown Turners Falls. The funds raised could possibly be used to leverage additional state and federal sources.				
P-9	Tap Other State Funding Sources for Targeted Economic Development Projects and Programs	Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT) and MassDevelopment are some examples.				
P-10	Make full use of the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) for reuse of Historic-Industrial Zoned sites		Update EDIC's Economic Development Plan, encourage EDIC to assist Town in redevelopment and disposition of former mill sites.	EDIC		
P-11	Consider developing an Urban Renewal District and Plan for Downtown and the Island.	The Urban Renewal Program (M.G.L. Chapter 121B) allows municipalities to revitalize substandard, decadent or blighted open areas for residential, commercial, industrial, business, governmental, recreational, educational, hospital, or other purposes. Urban renewal projects help municipalities redevelop deteriorated areas by providing the economic environment needed to attract and support private investment.	Evaluate potential benefits of establishing a Redevelopment Authority and Urban Renewal Plan; Utilize DHCD's Division of Community Services technical assistance in evaluating the potential for urban renewal in Turners Falls.			
P-12	Diversify housing opportunities in Downtown Turners Falls	Currently, downtown dwelling units are predominately rental apartments and it appears that a large percentage appear to be subsidized. A broader mix of housing would benefit the revitalization process such as market rate rental and ownership units, age-restricted to attract more seniors, and workforce housing.	Continue to support housing rehab programs; increase the supply of market rate housing by creating incentives and working with property owners; sponsor senior housing project in downtown.			

