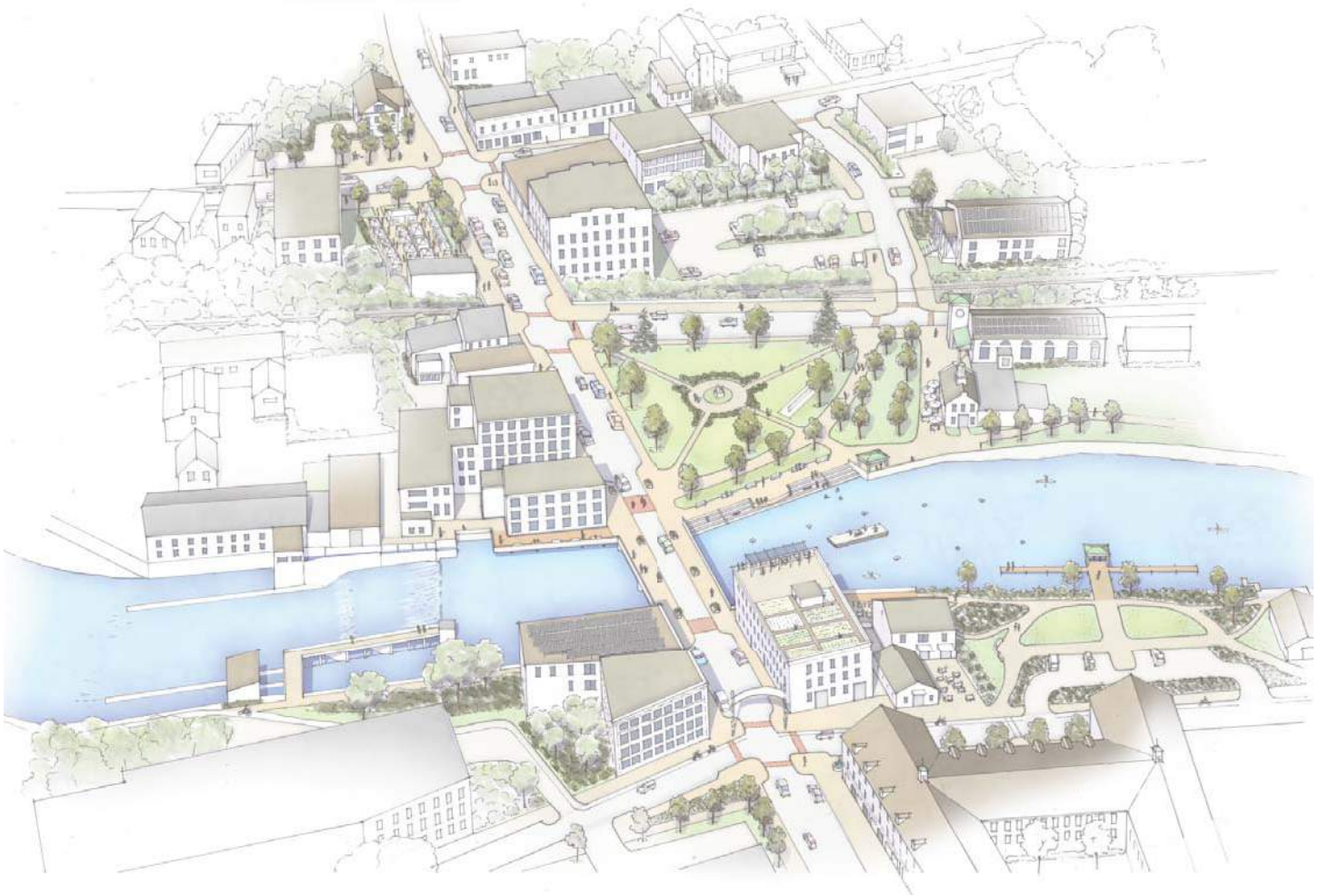


DOWNTOWN ORANGE RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION STUDY

FINAL REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2015



UNION STUDIO

ARCHITECTURE & COMMUNITY DESIGN

rustpoint advisory, llc



Franklin Regional
Council of Governments



MASSDEVELOPMENT

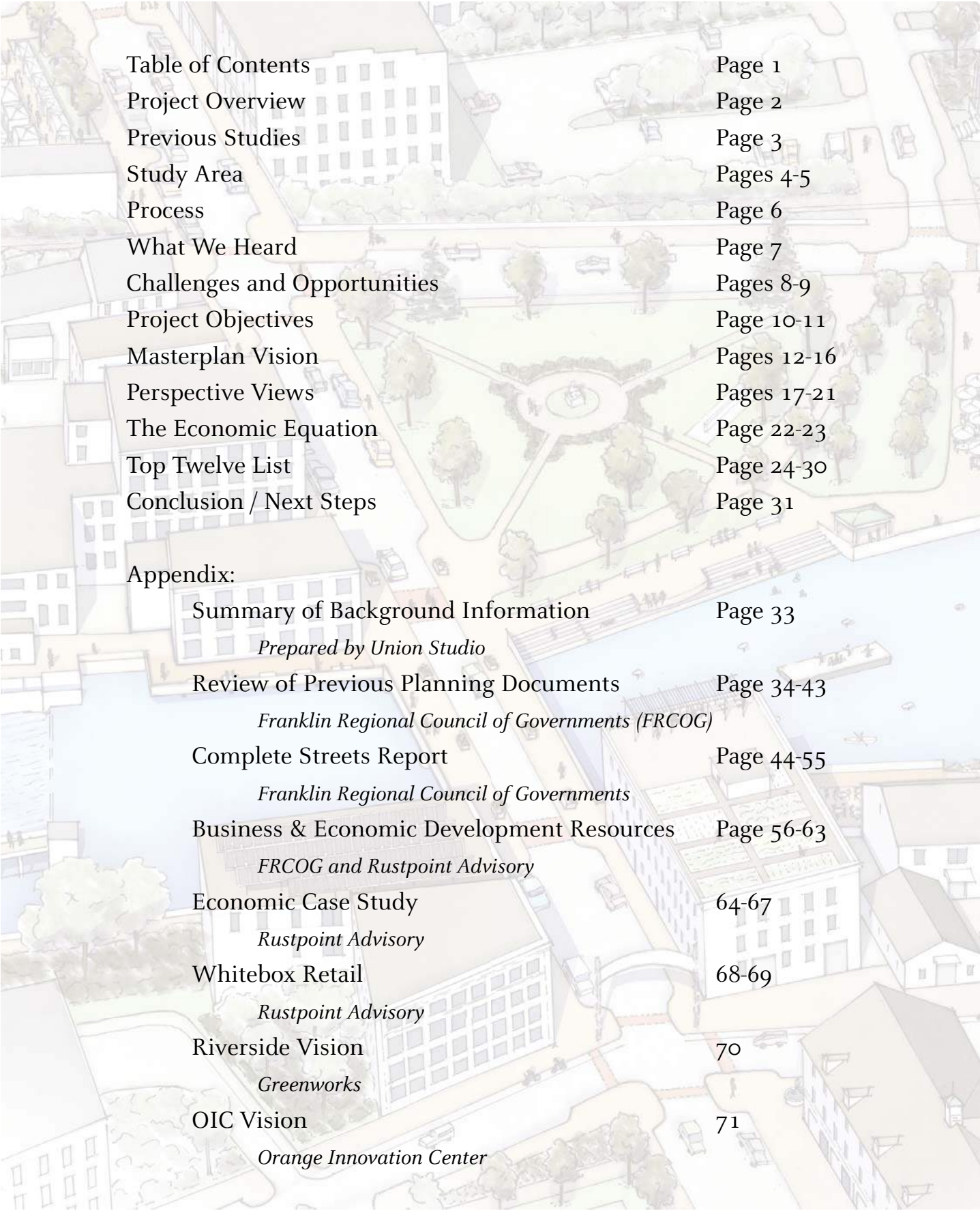


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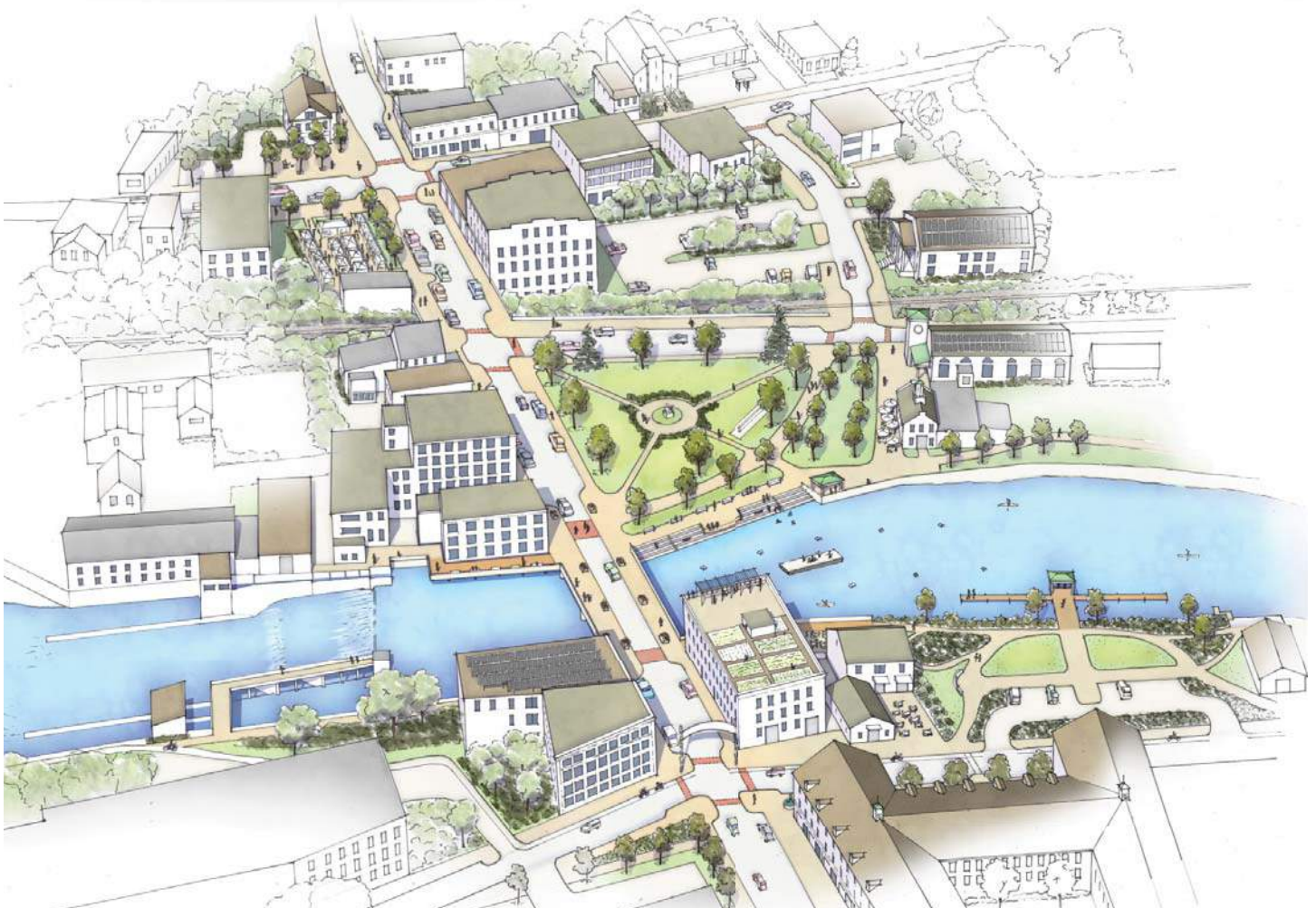
PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since March of this year, the Town of Orange, in collaboration with MassDevelopment and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), has been working on a Masterplan Vision for the core area of Downtown Orange with Union Studio Architecture and Community Design and Rustpoint Advisory, LLC.

Over the last many years, a number of previous studies and proposals have been done, but each has had a limited focus or hasn't led to tangible results. The goal was to generate a consolidated plan for Downtown Orange that built upon the applicable suggestions of these previous proposals, including both a comprehensive vision as well as a series of action steps based around a number of areas of focus.

The plan proposed here was developed and refined through a series of meetings with both public and private stakeholders in which the team was able to garner feedback through presentation and discussion. The plan includes both short and long term approaches towards revitalization.

Union Studio has been primarily responsible for facilitating the process and generating the overall vision. Rustpoint Advisory has assisted relative to understanding the economic feasibility of the approach and helping identify precedent studies and alternative sources of funding.



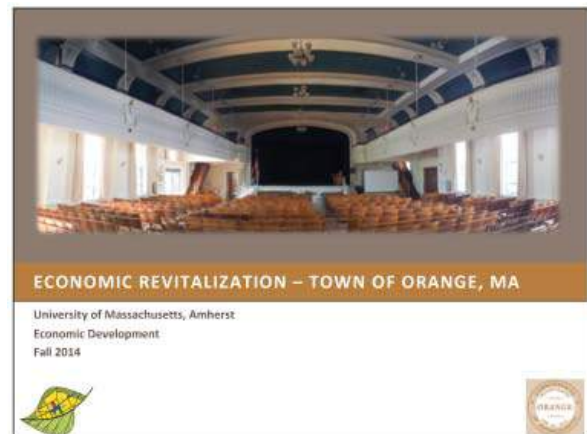
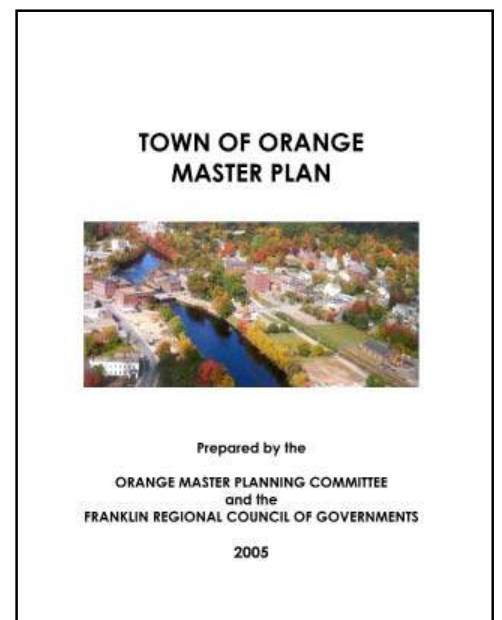
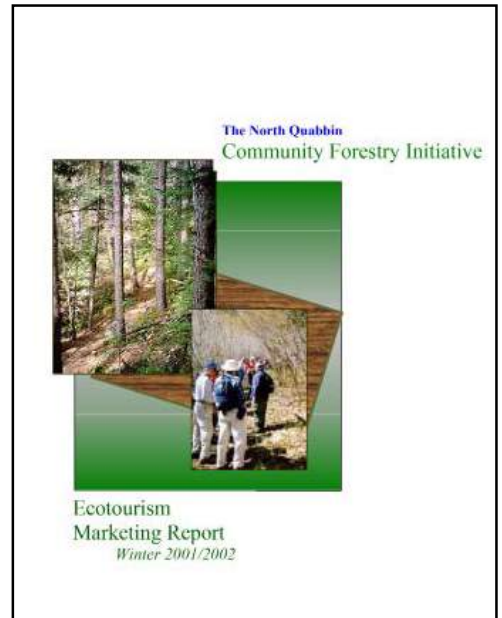
BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF PROPOSED PLAN

At the initial stage of information gathering, the Town and FRCOG provided the team with a summary of previous efforts and studies that sought to help with the revitalization of Orange from a variety of vantage points. These studies included:

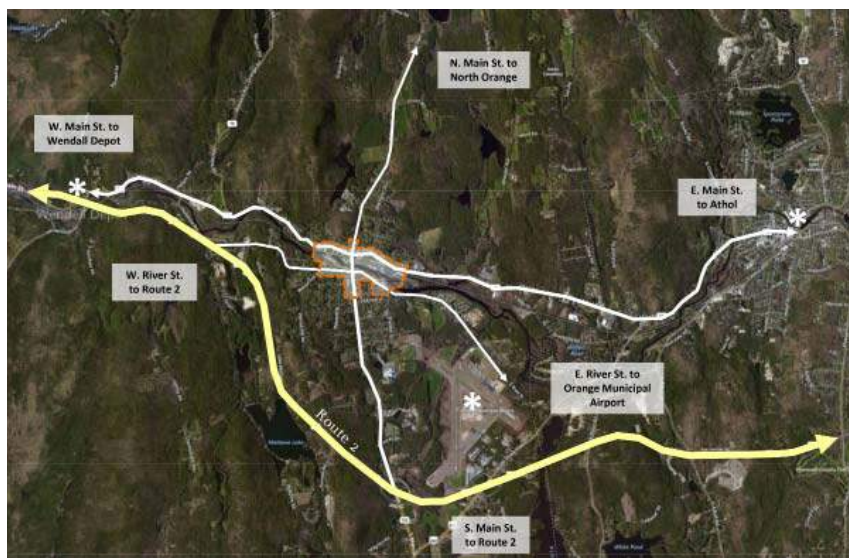
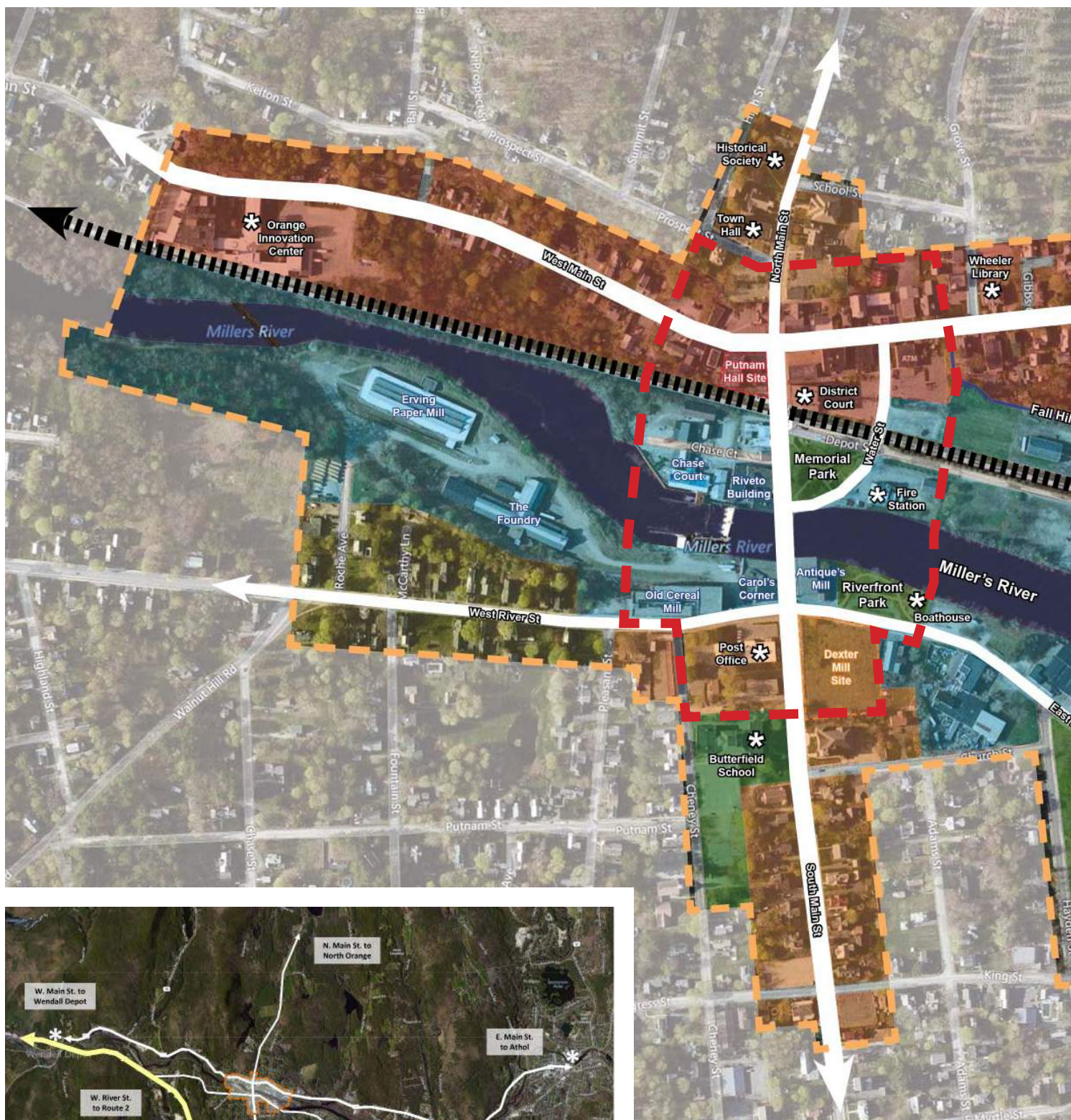
- Ecotourism Marketing Report (2002)
- Town of Orange Master Plan (2005)
- Sustainable Design Assessment Team Study (2009)
- Community Needs Survey (2010)
- Market Assessment Survey (2013)
- Mill Vision/Riverfront Reconsidered (2013)
- Redevelopment Financing Case Study (2013)
- Visioning Sessions (2013)
- Various Studies by Community Development Office

Some elements of these plans have come to fruition, but there were also a great number of ideas that needed to be consolidated and seen through the lens of the current economic potential for the Town. While the full summary of previous studies is included in the Appendix of this document on page 33, below are a number of key suggestions the team tried to address in the proposed plan.

- Build identity/economy around local resources including Miller's River
- Find ways to attract and support new and varied businesses
- Create a mixed-use, pedestrian friendly environment
- Improve condition of existing buildings and infrastructure
- Direct funds towards downtown resources
- Find ways of addressing obstacles that hinder new business
- Strengthen community with downtown events/facilities
- Focus on outdoor activities, local cafes and galleries
- Tax credits needed to bridge financing gap
- Incorporate new trails along river's edge
- Build on success of events and parades



STUDY AREA



These same corridors ultimately connect out to other important regional assets including the rest of the Orange community to the north, the neighboring towns of Athol and Wendall Depot, the Orange Municipal Airport as well as access to Route 2.



Early in the process, the team worked together to identify the primary study area to be considered. The decision was made to focus specifically on the core area of Downtown Orange as this zone includes a variety of uses and serves as the identifiable center of the community.

The initial study area is outlined with a dashed orange border in this diagram. At the center of the core area is Miller's River, as well as the historic mills and parks that line its edges.

North of the River, the study area included the largely commercial zone on either side of East and West Main Streets. South of the River, the study area included East and West River Streets which access a number of riverfront properties as well as Butterfield Park.

Crossing all three of these corridors is North and South Main Street, which hosts a number of important civic structures such as Town Hall, the Post Office and Butterfield School.

As the project progressed, it became apparent that given limited resources, the effort should focus largely on the center of the core area, as outlined with a dashed red border. This area includes the crossing of Miller's River, Memorial and Waterfront Parks and both of the main intersections in town: E/W and N/S Main Streets as well as E/W River and N/S Main Streets. It is here that focused revitalization efforts would be most profound, and from which future improvements could radiate out over time.

PROCESS

The project kicked off in March of 2015 with a pre-design phase during which time the design team met with the larger project team, familiarized itself with the site, and reviewed background documents including previous studies that had been done. In April, the team began meeting with local stakeholders in order to talk about the previous efforts and to get their thoughts about the current state of affairs in Orange including what, if any, plans they had for their own individual parcels.

Pre-Design	March 2015
Stakeholder Input	April 2015
Preliminary Discussions	May 2015
Initial Public Presentation	June 24, 2015
Draft Plan/Market Analysis	June/July 2015
Final Public Presentation	August 12, 2015
Final Plan/Market Analysis	September 2015

After gathering all of this preliminary information, the project team had a series of preliminary discussions in May to review the information that had been gathered to date and to talk about options for the plan moving forward. These preliminary findings and thoughts were then shared with the larger public at a presentation that was held on the evening of June 24, 2015 in the Auditorium at Town Hall.

Based on the resulting discussion, the design team spent June and July generating a draft vision plan for Downtown Orange, including a list of likely areas of focus and potential strategies towards achieving the vision. These ideas were discussed with the project team and refined into the final vision plan that was shared with the larger public at a follow up presentation held the evening of August 12th, 2015 at the Fire Station.

The process has culminated with this Final Report that seeks to summarize the efforts to date, describe the final vision plan and outline the steps required to make it a reality.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

On April 22, 2015, the team held a series of meetings with local business owners and town officials:

Meeting #1: Gary Moise, Antique's Mill

Meeting #2: Sean Ashcroft, Peak Expeditions, Community Boathouse

Meeting #3: Paul Anderson, Trailhead Retail and Cafe

Meeting #4: Brianna Drohen, Orange Innovation Center

Meeting #5: Bill Goodwin, Slencil Company, Rivetto Building

Meeting #6: Town Representatives, Town Hall
Diana Schindler (Town Administrator)
Joshua Knechtel (Superintendent, Highway Dept)
Michael Heidorn (Superintendent, Water Dept)
Edward Billiel (Chief Operator, Wastewater)



Following the review of the background materials and previous studies, a few major themes became apparent:

- **Beautification** - Downtown Orange needs to be an attractive destination for residents and visitors.
- **Revitalization** - underutilized buildings need to be activated to help support an active community.
- **Diversification** - the Town needs a greater variety of uses as it is currently dominated by consignment stores and social services

There were also a number of assets in Downtown Orange that were frequently mentioned as opportunities to build upon:

- **Adventure Recreation**
- **Business Incubation**
- **Annual Festivals/Local Events**
- **Orange Municipal Airport**
- **Antiques District**
- **Local Artists**



In sessions held with stakeholders and the public, a few additional themes surfaced that residents suggested needed to be addressed:

- Need to **understand funding sources** and process for attaining them
- Find ways to **build upon/improve waterfront** resources
- Need to **find additional volunteers** to help maintain and improve existing resources
- **Build on momentum** of recent efforts
- Find ways/**incentives to attract new business**, both large and small
- Find ways/**incentives to get current owners to reinvest**

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

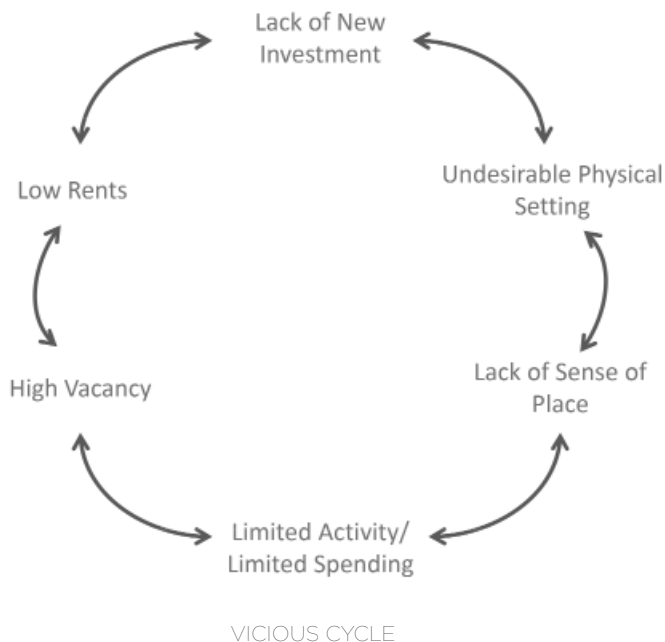
Challenges

Downtown Orange is an “ecosystem”. All factors are interrelated but the current stagnation boils down to a lack of market conditions to encourage investment in downtown as well as a physical setting that is in need of improvement.

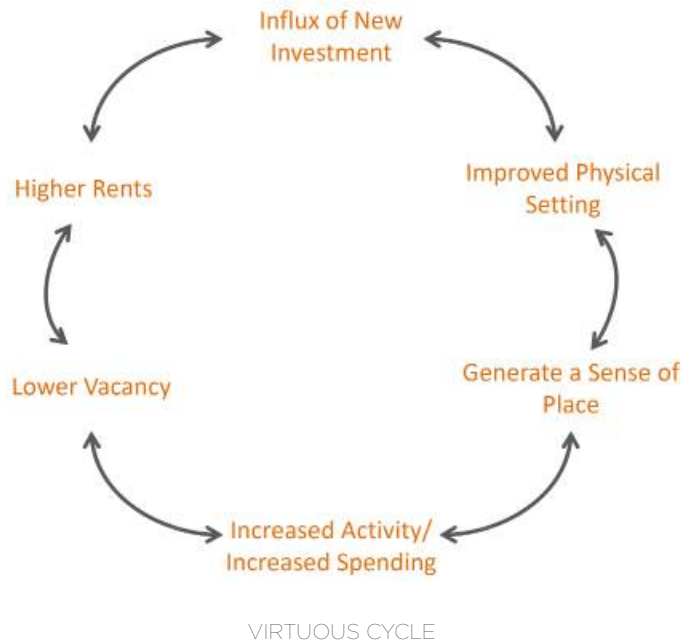
From an economic and financial standpoint, the current rent levels in Downtown Orange do not support nor justify the costs necessary to rehabilitate existing buildings or to build new construction. Utilizing a highly visible building within Downtown Orange and current market data, a simple financial analysis is included in the **APPENDIX**. In 2013, a similar study was presented by Concord Square Planning & Development, Inc. to key landowners and stakeholders in Orange. The underlying factor is one of supply and demand, as the low levels of demand for space lead to vacancy. To avoid vacancy, landlords compete for potential tenants by offering ever-decreasing rents.

One of the major factors contributing to this vicious cycle is the undesirable nature of the current physical setting and the lack of a strong sense of place needed to attract higher levels of activity.

In particular, Downtown Orange suffers from an unclear sense of arrival due to the lack of a readily identifiable center or focus. While the downtown historically provided this, the current condition that includes empty lots, so called “missing teeth”, as well as wide streets and narrow sidewalks contributes to an overall unpleasant pedestrian experience.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Opportunities

The good news is the town benefits from having both historic fabric (streets and buildings) that can support a pedestrian friendly environment, as well as the presence of Miller's River, which provides both a scenic setting and opportunity for focused redevelopment and active recreation.

While in need of reinvestment, the existing building fabric does give Orange a sense of place and local character. The historic structures also provide an opportunity to leverage state and federal financial incentives for redevelopment.

Downtown Orange also benefits from the close proximity of lots of historic housing. This suggests increased pedestrian activity is possible since residents have the option of walking to shopping and employment given increased opportunities.

The river's potential can be seen in recent investments by the community including the new Riverfront Park and Community Boathouse. Although currently separated from the river, Memorial Park is also a great communal asset that could further support the use of this core area.

The existing mill buildings that flank the river give both a sense of the town's history as well as the potential for future redevelopment. These buildings also serve to frame the river, creating an outdoor room of sorts, which is crucial in trying to establish a sense of place.



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Over the course of the project's development, a number of key objectives were identified under which a variety of short and long term efforts fall. Many of these items came out of the suggestions in previous studies or as the result of discussions with the Orange community.

Sense of Place

The first general objective for the revitalization of Downtown Orange is the need to create a strong sense of place. A strong sense of place is what draws people to places they love, and improving the sense of place in Orange will bring folks to the area and help support local business. The presence of Miller's River and the historic building fabric in town begin to do this, but the following other elements should be considered:

- Focus improvements in the core area/key corners
- Focus town activities and events in the core area
- Add gateway signage at intersection of Main and River Streets – primary entry to town
- Add streetlight banners in downtown
- Strive for consistency of messaging/graphics

Beautification

In order to help with the sense of place and in order to instill a sense of community pride, steps should be taken to improve the overall appearance of the core area. Such efforts can be undertaken by all members of the community and whether big or small, will have a positive effect relative to the perception of Orange. These efforts should include:

- General improvements to the core area to add life, interest, and pride
- Tactical Urbanism/Short Term Improvements: Storefronts, street furniture and planters, parklets, art projects in underutilized spaces
- Infrastructure/Long Term Improvements: Sidewalk and streetscape improvements, signage/wayfinding, building renovations

Complete Streets and Improved Connections

Throughout the core area, improvements should be made to the streetscape in order to facilitate a pedestrian friendly setting and improve the overall appearance of the town. Efforts on this front can include:

- Align priorities of Town Departments with focus on core area
- Tactical Urbanism/Short Term Improvements: Paint crosswalks, bulb-outs, parking lanes, bike lanes, etc, opportunity for artistic expression and placemaking, quick fix while waiting for MassDOT funding
- Infrastructure/Long Term: New sidewalks, crosswalks, ramps, curbs, bulb-outs, etc., relocated utility obstructions, redirected truck traffic - commercial and emergency vehicles
- Tie general improvements to infrastructure improvements/funding
- Wayfinding to local amenities beyond core (Airport, Schools, OIC, etc.)
- Add network of waterfront trails and pedestrian crossings

Revitalization and Renovation

In addition to physical improvements to the public realm, investment is needed in the buildings in the core area including the possibility of new construction and/or new uses. This may include:

- Short term allow temporary uses on vacant/underutilized parcels: pop-up retail, food trucks, etc.
- Mid term emphasis on renovation/reuse of existing structures in core area
- Long term possibility for new construction on vacant parcels in core once property values improve
- To help close economic gaps, consider tax credits and/or tax stabilization programs for priority sites
- Create “roadmaps” for key sites that outline steps and streamline process
- Host in-depth meetings with key stakeholders to understand specific impediments

Creating and Incubating Diversity

A number of resident surveys identified the need for a better mix of uses in the core area. Efforts should be made to attract new uses including the potential for incubating new local businesses:

- Create incentives to attract new and different business to downtown
- Build on the success of the Orange Innovation Center (OIC)
- Outreach focused on businesses that relate to town identity and resources: recreation, manufacturing, airport, local artists, local food, etc.
- Downtown incubator space for culinary uses, retail space and art studios/galleries
- Work with existing owners to create code compliant “whitebox” spaces paired with low-rent, short-term, revenue-based leases

Funding Sources and Volunteer Efforts

While existing funding sources will be able to address some amount of the approaches suggested, it is likely that the vision will only be realized as the result of finding new sources and capitalizing on volunteer efforts from the larger Orange community:

- Identify point of contact for funding and grant writing for both town and local building/business owners
- Create ongoing database of applicable funding sources - reference previous successes and failures
- Establish dedicated revenue sources from community resources/events
- Establish annual development/fund-raising drive
- Identify point of contact for ongoing volunteer efforts
- Create identity and energy around local volunteering
- Actively recruit and partner from other local organizations like schools, churches, and clubs

Community Development and Marketing

To get the word out and build momentum, a number of outreach approaches will be needed. In some cases existing resources, like the Community Development Office, can be built upon, but additional resources may also be needed:

- Emphasize the importance of the vision and ensure existing businesses and residents feel confident in the future
- Build on efforts of Community Development Director and local organizations
- Consider informal Downtown Improvement District that builds on efforts of Orange Business Association and regional Chamber of Commerce
- Focus identity on recreation, innovation, and local arts
- Set up town website as hub for events, volunteer efforts and community development opportunities
- Relocate Community Development to Main Street to serve as physical, visible hub of ongoing efforts

Programming and Event Planning

In addition to physical changes and new uses, regular activities will also be required to bring folks to the core area. A number of festivals, parades and local events are already in place whose success can be built upon.

This should include the following efforts:

- Advertise and promote events on website, social media, local shops, etc.
- Continue to balance big, regional events with frequent, local events
- Focus activities at core and include emphasis on existing businesses and temporary uses to better support local economy
- Maximize use of existing resources: parks, riverfront, Town Hall Auditorium, etc.

MASTERPLAN VISION

The masterplan proposed on the opposite and following pages seeks to pull together these various objectives into a cohesive vision for the core area of Downtown Orange.

At the center of this core area is Miller's River and Memorial Park. Water Street in its current configuration separates these two assets, and the vision plan proposes removing the stretch of Water street from South Main Street to Depot Street and replacing it with walkways and green spaces that help connect the two and allow residents to access the river's edge. Such a move would require relocating the existing truck access to the fire station. This plan shows the potential for a new station accessed from Depot Street and repurposing the existing historic station into a cafe/brewpub that takes advantage of its riverfront setting.

On the opposite bank, the plan proposes cantilevering a new riverwalk along the edge of the historic mills which connects back to Riverfront Park and the already proposed Phase 2 dock extension. The sidewalk areas on the bridge have also been extended into the shoulders of the roadway, helping facilitate movement back and forth while also allowing space for folks to linger and enjoy the view.

The culminating effect of these interventions would be the ability to fully take advantage of the river as an asset for the town, creating the sense of place the town so desperately needs.

This core area is also bookended by two key intersections in town. To the south is the intersection of South Main Street with East and West River Streets. This intersection serves as a gateway of sorts to the core for folks coming to town from Route 2, flanked by the historic mill buildings on the north side. The vision suggests taking back the excess roadway areas to the south of the intersection, allowing the creation of small pedestrian plazas while increasing pedestrian safety. The plan also shows the potential for new mixed-use development on the now vacant Dexter Mill parcel.

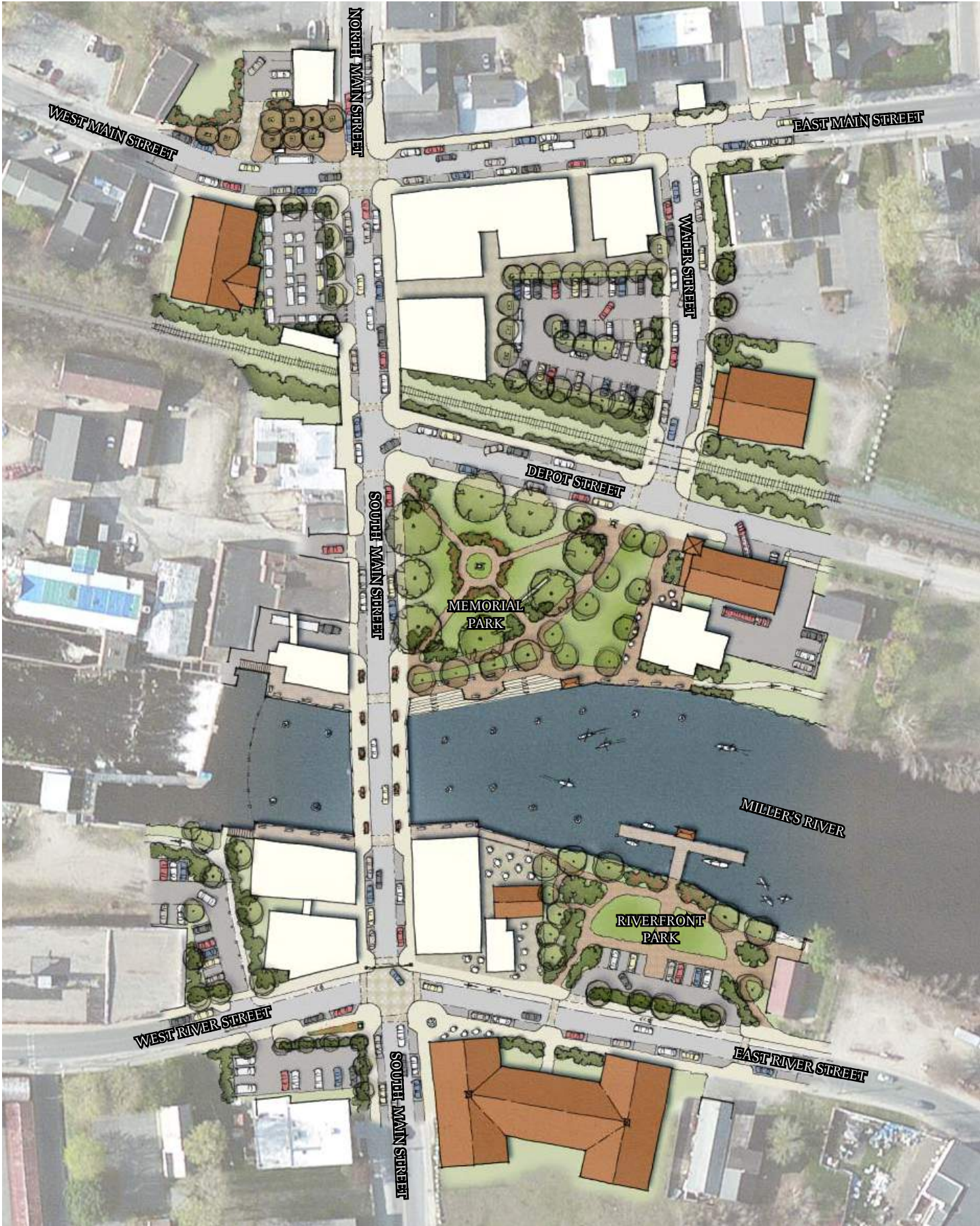
At the other end of the core area is the intersection of North, South, East and West Main Streets. This intersection serves an important role as the symbolic center of town, and this vision plan proposes a number of improvements to help it live up to its potential. To the northwest, the plan proposes taking back the "no man's land" of paving adjacent to the Temperance Fountain and creating a new civic plaza. This plaza could host a new bus shelter and allee of trees. To the southwest, the plan retains the existing parking lot, but proposes using it for temporary events such as regular farmers markets. A new mixed-use building is also proposed on the now vacant Putnam Hall site.

In addition to these specific improvements, the plan also proposes general improvements to the streetscape throughout like bulbouts at intersections, landscape screening, bike lanes and new trails, geared towards creating a public realm welcoming to a variety of users.

The following pages include a number of partial plans that call out the new features in more detail.



EXISTING CONDITION



MASTERPLAN VISION



EXISTING CONDITION - INTERSECTION OF MAIN AND MAIN

1. Temperance Fountain lost amidst parking
2. Overly-wide and poorly-defined intersection
3. Empty lot
4. Parking lot at intersection of Main and Main
5. Wide open parking lots lead to poorly-defined Water Street
6. Empty lot



PROPOSED VISION - INTERSECTION OF MAIN AND MAIN

1. New Plaza at corner of Main and Main/Temperance Fountain
2. Streetscape improvements including crosswalks, bulb-outs, ramps, etc.
3. Infill Site: New Mixed-Use
4. Temporary use of Parking Lot for activities like Farmer's Market
5. Landscape screening at exposed edges
6. Infill Site: New Courthouse or Library

SCALE: 1"=100'-0"

0 50' 100' 150' 200' 250' 300'



EXISTING CONDITION - MEMORIAL PARK AREA

1. Empty lot
2. Overly-wide and poorly-defined intersections
3. Access lanes for Fire Station

4. Existing Fire Station
5. Water Street & parking lanes run between Memorial Park and river's edge
6. River runs up to the edge of mill buildings
7. Water Street, parking, and railing separating pedestrians from river's edge
8. Rear of Fire Station - not accessible to pedestrians/cyclists



PROPOSED VISION - MEMORIAL PARK AREA

1. Infill Site: New Courthouse or Library
2. Streetscape improvements including crosswalks, bulb-outs, ramps, etc.
3. Infill Site: New Fire Station
4. Old Fire Station repurposed as Cafe/Brewpub

5. Water Street closed to serve as park extension
6. Riverwalk added to existing mill buildings
7. Wall replaced by steps and pavilion along river's edge
8. Trails along river's edge

SCALE: 1"=100'-0"

0 50' 100' 150' 200' 250' 300'

MASTERPLAN VISION



EXISTING CONDITION - INTERSECTION OF MAIN AND RIVER

1. Bridge
2. Parking lot
3. River runs up to the edge of mill buildings
4. Landscaped edge of Riverside Park
5. Parking lot
6. Wide intersection; no clearly-defined gateway into Downtown Orange
7. Empty lot



PROPOSED VISION - INTERSECTION OF MAIN AND RIVER

1. Shoulders on bridge converted to sidewalk
2. Trails along river's edge
3. Riverwalk added to existing mill buildings
4. Phase 2 of Riverfront Park: New dock and pavilion
5. Infill Site: Riverfront Cafe
6. Gateway Signage: Entry to Downtown Orange
7. Bike lane on River Street
8. Streetscape improvements including crosswalks, bulb-outs, ramps, etc.
9. Infill Site: New Mixed-Use / Senior Housing

SCALE: 1"=100'-0"





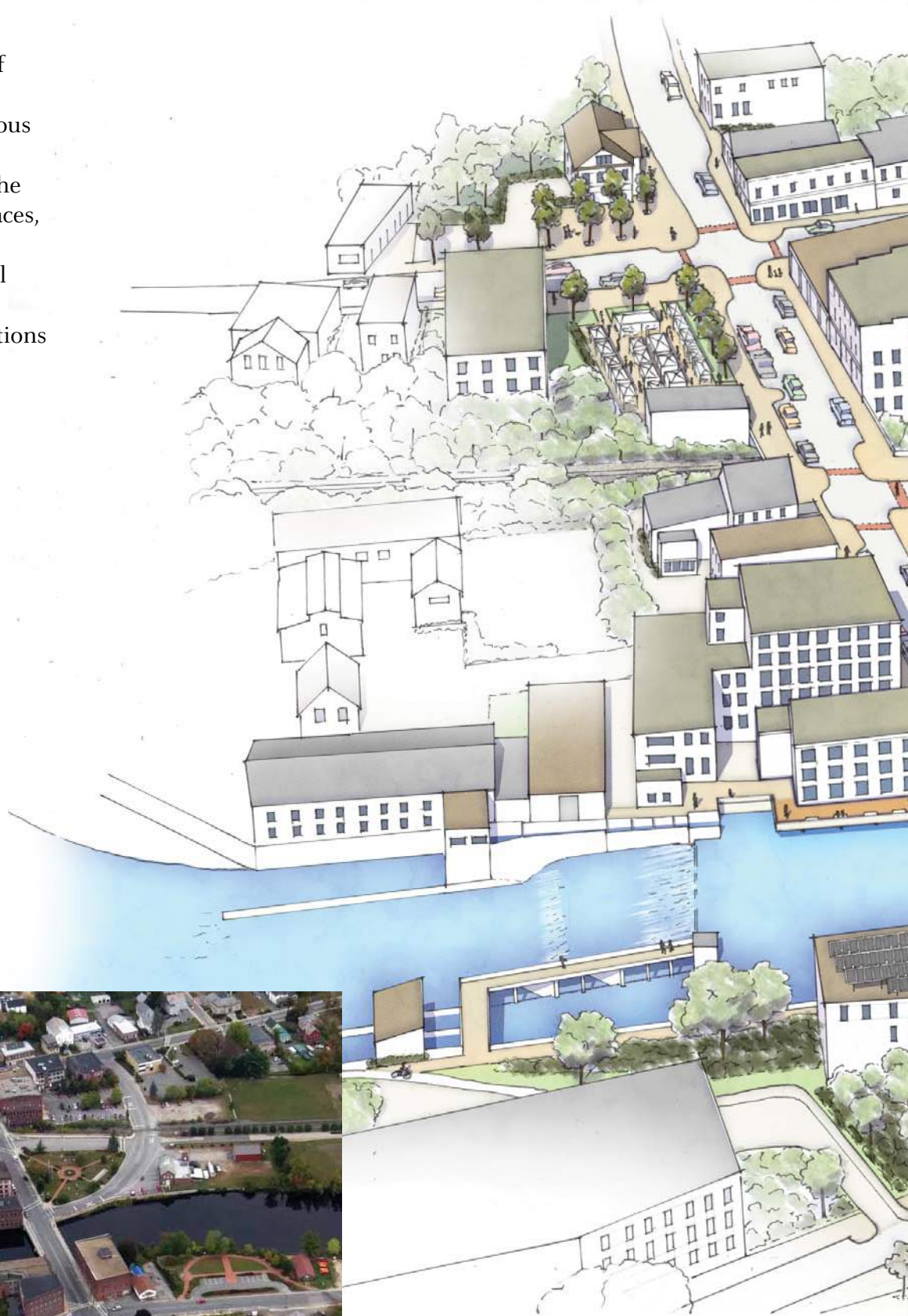
This view shows the potential for an extension of Memorial Park given the removal of the existing stretch of Water Street that passes by the historic Fire Station. The roadway could be replaced with a new walkway and green areas that connect the park to a series of terraced steps down to the river, providing seating for both formal events and informal enjoyment.

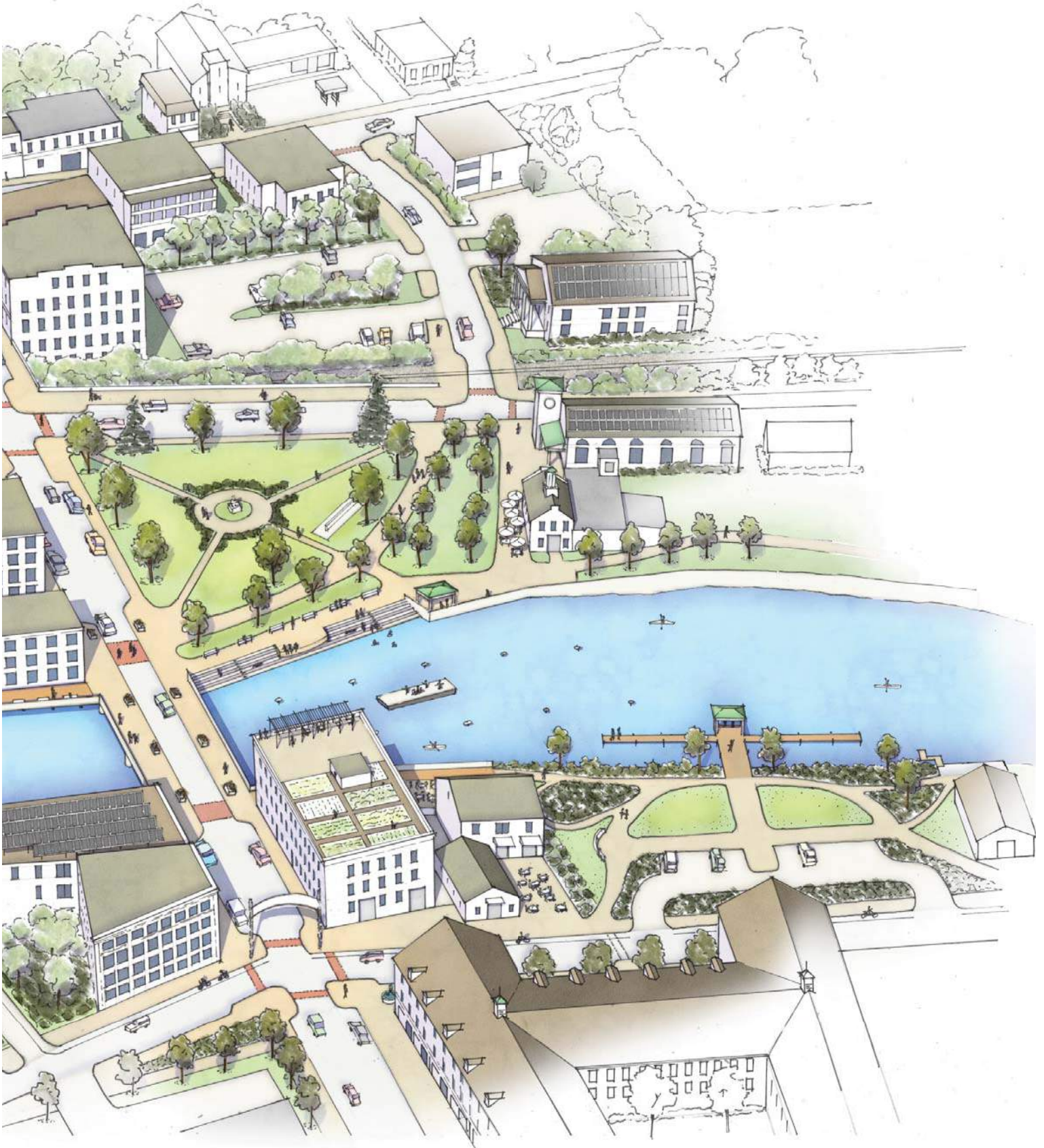


PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF MEMORIAL PARK EXTENSION

PERSPECTIVE VIEWS

This “bird’s eye” view of the core area shows the culmination of the various efforts proposed in the vision plan, including the expansion of public spaces, development of a mix of new uses and general improvements to the streetscape and connections beyond the core.





BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF CORE AREA

PERSPECTIVE VIEWS

In order to further embrace the river as an asset, this view shows the potential for opening up the edge along Memorial Park, the addition of a riverwalk along the edge of the mills, the potential for new retail uses, the expansion of the sidewalk on the bridge and the planned phase 2 addition of a dock at Riverfront Park.



PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF RIVER'S EDGE



The intersection of North, South, East and West Main Streets serves an important role for the Town as a symbolic center. This view shows the potential for creating a new plaza by Temperance Fountain, the use of the parking lot for temporary events like farmer's markets, the need for general streetscape improvements and the long term infill potential of the Putnam Hall site.



PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF MAIN AND MAIN STREET

THE ECONOMIC EQUATION

As previously noted, from an economic and financial standpoint, the current rent levels in Downtown Orange do not support nor justify the costs necessary to rehabilitate existing buildings or to build new construction. Utilizing a building within the Downtown Orange and current market data, a simple financial analysis is included in the Appendix on page 64 that illustrates how the market conditions, as current, do not generate incomes sufficient to offset the costs needed to reposition key buildings. The economic equation, as illustrated in the Vicious Cycle, is iterative, self reinforcing, and continues to de-stabilize a neighborhood - until the pattern can be reversed. For Orange, and for many other communities, the economic equation and pattern proves difficult to overcome or change.

In general, there are three fundamental methods to address the economic equation with the goal of incenting private investment:

A. Additional Funding Sources

- A series of potential grants and low interest loan products that exist that can help to provide landlords or developers an alternative source of capital is included in the Appendix on pages 56-63.
- The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program provides a tax credit for up to 20% of costs directly related to the rehabilitation of historic structures. The process is overseen by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office. The design and construction must adhere to a set of standards to ensure that the work is completed with respect to the historic integrity of the buildings and grounds. However, this funding source is a significant part of addressing the economic equation and has been commonly used for decades. By following the set process and guidelines, a landlord or developer can generate tax credits that can be sold to a third party for cash equity to invest into the redevelopment project. Secondary markets are in place in Massachusetts, and elsewhere to sell such credits.
- In parallel, and in addition to, the Federal Historic Tax Credit process, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers additional historic tax credits. State tax credits can be obtained for up to 20% of direct rehab costs. The popular program will be in place through 2022. The state program is capped each year, so projects must compete for credits with other projects across the state. The federal program is not competitive at this time, so credits are available for projects that follow the designated process.
- The impact of historic tax credits is illustrated on the sample redevelopment budget on pages 64-67.
- In addition to historic tax credits, New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) are available in Downtown Orange. NMTC can be leveraged for commercial or mixed use developments (residential income must be 20% or less of total annual income). Like the historic tax credits, investment in a project or business can generate tax credits that can be used to generate funds to offset the disconnect between project costs and rents. NMTC can also be leveraged to offer low interest rate loans. Securing NMTC is a competitive process and can be complex, but the tax credits are a powerful tool that can be used to incent investment and development in Orange. All three of the above tax credits can be combined, with the potential to offset 30% or more of total costs for a development project.

B. Reduce Capital Costs for Landlords and Developers

- Public infrastructure investments (including utilities, sidewalk improvements, storm water management, street lighting, etc.) can ease the project/private cost burden to help impact the economic equation. In 2014, \$1 million dollars was sought for the district through the MassWorks Infrastructure Program. The intent of this program is as follows:

“The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides a one-stop shop for municipalities and other eligible entities seeking public infrastructure funding to support economic development and job creation. The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides infrastructure grants for work including, but not limited to, sewers, utility extensions, streets, roads, curb-cuts, parking facilities, site preparation and improvements on publicly owned land, demolition, pedestrian walkways, and water treatment systems to support four project types:

- *Multi-family housing development at a density of at least 4 units to the acre (both market and affordable units)*
- *Economic development in weak or distressed areas*
- *Community revitalization to promote mixed-use development*
- *Transportation improvements to enhance safety in small, rural communities”*
- Such public funding sources can have a profound impact on the economics of a single project, or a series of development projects along a corridor. Given the intent and competitive nature of this program, and others, a clear potential development project greatly improves the potential for success. As an example, a recent MassWorks grant was awarded to the Town of Mashpee. The grant was made in concert with a proposed private, mixed-use and mixed-income development project. The public component provides the street, sidewalks and utility extensions/infrastructure. But for the MassWorks award, that project of roughly \$15 million in private funds was economically infeasible.
- Often the process to understand infrastructure costs can be intimidating and unclear to a landlord or developer. The full scope of improvements and related cost for sewer connection upgrades and/or electrical upgrades to modernize a building can take several months and significant private engineering costs. Any assistance, guidance or streamlining of this process can offer a clear advantage. The relative small scale of the target area in Downtown Orange can help if such information is gathered or assistance is provided in brokering discussions with utility providers and/or Public Works.
- Providing efficiencies in permitting and regulations can have a profound impact on the time, uncertainty and cost for developers and landlords.
- Providing shared parking solutions can allow for lower project cost, as well as the potential to maximize density and/or building area. Common, shared public parking and inviting, safe street parking can be a significant asset to incent a project.

C. Increase Annual Cash Flow for Developers/Investors

- Provide decreased and predictable real estate taxes. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts defines and allows for a series of property tax-based incentive programs that could be leveraged in Orange to help incent investment and redevelopment. These solutions target the economic fundamentals by increasing the amount of annual income that a developer/landlord can realize. By decreasing the annual operating expenses to the landlord or developer, they see higher returns, and are in a more favorable position to borrow money from banks. In essence, the temporary reduction of property taxes increases the value of the redevelopment for a period of time - typically with very low taxes during construction, lease-up and through early years of building stabilization and operations.
- The Tax Increment Financing (TIF), District Improvement Financing (DIF), and/or Special Tax Assessment (STA) programs should be further explored. One of the significant impacts of these programs is the ability for developers and landlords to see a predictable part of their own equation as they evaluate potential investments.
- As an illustration of decreased real estate property taxes, please see the sample redevelopment budget in the Appendix on pages 64-67.
- One clear path to improving the economic equation is to engender increased rents via placemaking and increasing critical mass, desirability and foot traffic.

These general principals and strategies are all part of creating the proper ecosystem for investment by existing landlords and to incent others to locate and invest in Orange

TOP TWELVE LIST

The following twelve items are areas that the project team has identified as having a high priority and which are relatively feasible in the short term to help jump start the revitalization of Downtown Orange. On the following pages, a brief description is included for each item that lays out action items to be considered as well as suggested funding sources.

- **CORE:** Focus Town Activities and Events in the Core Area to Support Local Economy/Businesses
- **BEAUTIFY:** Tactical Urbanism: Storefronts, Street Furniture, Planters, Parklets, Art...
- **ALIGN:** Align Priorities of Town Departments with Focus on Core Area
- **STREETS:** Tactical Urbanism: Paint Crosswalks, Bulb-Outs, Parking Lanes, Bike Lanes...
- **STABILIZE:** Consider Tax Credits and/or Tax Stabilization Programs for Priority Sites
- **ROADMAPS:** Create “Roadmaps” for Key Sites that Outline Steps and Streamline Process
- **UNDERSTAND:** Host In-Depth Meetings with Key Stakeholders to Understand Specific Impediments
- **WHITEBOX:** Work with Existing Owners to Create Code Compliant “Whitebox” Spaces Paired with Low-Rent, Short-Term, Revenue-Based Leases
- **FUNDING:** Create Database of Applicable Funding Sources with Previous Successes and Failures
- **VOLUNTEERS:** Identify Point of Contact for Ongoing Volunteer Efforts
- **VISION:** Emphasize the Vision and Ensure Existing Businesses/Residents Feel Confident in the Future
- **HUB:** Set Up Website as Hub for Events, Volunteer Efforts and Community Development Opportunities

CORE: Focus Town Activities and Events in the Core Area to Support the Local Economy and Existing Businesses

Action Items

Orange is already the site of a number of regularly recurring and seasonal events including a farmer’s market, the River Rat Race, the Garlic and Arts Festival and several other shows and parades throughout the year. While some of these events already take place in the core area, in the short term emphasis should be placed on relocating as many of the other events as possible right at the heart of downtown. Potential locations include the parking lot at the corner of Main and Main, Memorial Park, temporary street closures or the use of empty parcels. After clarifying the logistics needed for use of these various locations, event organizers should be approached to discuss the potential for relocating upcoming events and to understand what potential hurdles would need to be cleared.



Funding Sources

The specific costs of hosting various events downtown will vary. If the incremental cost for any one event is more than the event itself can bear, consider finding additional sponsors (like local vendors whose business may benefit from increased exposure) or carrying a small budget in the town’s yearly operating costs to help with the potential need for additional municipal personnel.

BEAUTIFY: Tactical Urbanism / Short-Term Improvements: Storefronts, Street Furniture, Planters, Parklets, Art...

Action Items

In the short term, while funds are being sought for more permanent streetscape improvements, a number of smaller, budget friendly interventions can be considered to help spruce up Downtown Orange. Empty storefronts can be filled with temporary installations like artwork from local students. Planters can be used to line empty lots or to help temporarily define underutilized areas for parklets or farmers markets. These “tactical” approaches can be done by anyone although initially the Community Development Office should discuss such interventions with appropriate town officials. Once rough guidelines are determined, the Town should initiate a few samples to help get the word out.



Funding Sources

Depending on the strategy considered, limited funds should be required assuming the efforts are largely done by volunteers. Local sponsors can be sought for material costs as was done for the planter boxes shown here already employed in Orange. State funds may also be available, such as those given to the Orange Cultural Council, that can support small arts and culture projects (ex. working with the schools or local artists to install artwork in empty storefronts).

ALIGN: Align Priorities of Town Departments with Focus on Core Area

Action Items

In order to achieve the greatest impact, resources of various Town Departments should be pooled and efforts coordinated to the highest extent possible. For instance, streetscape improvements may only need be an incremental additional cost when added onto existing projects like utility repairs. In addition, when the location of planned improvements are flexible, priority should be given to those which are being considered within the core area. In order to facilitate future coordinated improvements, representatives from various Town Departments should meet to review upcoming projects and determine appropriate levels of collaboration and priority. A centralized form of tracking efforts between varying departments should also be created to help facilitate ongoing work together.



Funding Sources

Such coordination should not require additional funding if made part of the varying departments standard operating procedure. Sources of funds for the improvements themselves will vary, although coordinated efforts may unlock additional funds or grants that seek to help projects that are contributing to a larger set of goals. The Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development, MassDevelopment and the USDA should be consulted on available infrastructure funding.

STREETS: Tactical Urbanism / Short-Term Street Improvements: Paint Crosswalks, Bulb-Outs, Parking Lanes, Bike Lanes, etc.

Action Items

The vision plan ultimately proposes narrowing streets where possible, particularly at intersections where the majority of pedestrian crossings will occur. In general, narrower streets reduce traffic speeds which in turn increases pedestrian safety. While funds for more extensive infrastructure improvements are sought, the Town should instead use paint to help differentiate pedestrian crossings (crosswalks and bulbouts), travel lanes, parking lanes and bike lanes. In addition to being cost effective, paint also allows for the testing of various scenarios in advance of the expense of new curbs or alternate pavings. Consideration can also be given to allowing residents to give such interventions a more artistic flare, especially for crosswalks.



Funding Sources

As an incremental approach, the painting of the varying zones can be done over time as funds allow. It may be that costs can be absorbed within existing Town budgets. Another option is to promote the donation of unused paint by residents or businesses or to find local vendors willing to donate a few cans. The painting itself can either be done by Town personnel or by volunteers overseen by them.

STABILIZE: Consider Tax Credits and/or Tax Stabilization Programs for Priority Sites to Help Close Economic Gaps

Action Items

In addition to Federal/State Historic Tax Credits and New Market Tax Credits, other local policies can be put in place to help close the economic gap currently in place in Orange. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts defines and allows for a series of property tax-based incentive programs that could be leveraged in Orange to help incent investment and redevelopment. In addition, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), District Improvement Financing (DIF), and/or Special Tax Assessment (STA) programs should be further explored. It is recommended that the Town of Orange evaluate and adopt the appropriate real estate property tax based program, and then to clearly define and map the process to realize that benefit. Marketing this advantage, in a clear and transparent manner, will help to incentivize landlords to re-invest and help developers evaluate local opportunities.



Funding Sources

The available programs for real estate property tax programs are outlined by the Massachusetts Office of Business Development. By working with the Regional Director and Office, Orange can define and seek to implement a program. MassDevelopment can also be consulted relative to the requirements and availability of tax credits and tax stabilization programs. The Massachusetts Downtown Initiative program can also help fund an “Economics of Downtown” project that would provide professional services to support next steps.

ROADMAPS: Create “Roadmaps” for Key Sites that Outline Steps and Streamline Process

Action Items

For key, targeted parcels as identified by the Community Development Office, “Roadmaps” should be created that outline the path to economic incentives, and simplify environmental, zoning, fire code and other complex areas. As an early step, simple economic models, as illustrated in the Appendix on pages 64-67, should be created to both understand the funding gap and then to illustrate potential solutions. The Town should also look for ways of streamlining local processes, much like that which was done in 2008 when the Town had several blocks in the study area designated as Priority Development Sites under MGL Chapter 43D.



Funding Sources

The Town may need to enlist the services of a market analyst to further investigate appropriate options and develop an investment proforma for key sites. Funding sources to help cover such services may include private fundraising, USDA Rural Development funds, planning funding via the National Trust for Historic Preservation or through Preservation Massachusetts (Predevelopment Loan Fund). Other potential sources include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, or the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative. Further technical assistance, funding, business lending and/or brownfields financing may be available from MassDevelopment.

UNDERSTAND: Host In-Depth Meetings with Key Stakeholders to Understand Specific Impediments

Action Items

As a general recommendation, key landowners should be engaged in additional discussions to better understand current impediments to redevelopment. Once these impediments have been identified, the Town can review existing policies that have a detrimental effect and consider restructuring them where possible. In a similar light, understanding the actual impediments to redevelopment would be useful as it relates to efforts geared towards streamlining incentives and finding ways to close economic gaps. The Community Development Office should identify the appropriate landowners and facilitate such discussions. Results can then be shared with the appropriate town officials and/or individuals undertaking related efforts.



Funding Sources

Limited, if any, funds should be required.

WHITEBOX: Work with Existing Owners to Create Code Compliant “Whitebox” Spaces Paired with Low-Rent, Short-Term, Revenue-Based Leases

Action Items

Whiteboxes are generic retail spaces available for rent by a variety of end users. The Town should take steps to incentivize existing building owners to create such spaces in key locations in Downtown Orange to provide opportunities for new, local businesses. For both whitebox spaces and existing, vacant retail locations, “participating rent” structures should also be considered whereby a landlord/building owner’s lease is based upon a percentage of sales or revenues from a tenant. More information on whitebox retail and participating rent structures can be found in the Appendix on pages 68 and 69.



Funding Sources

To help seed the initiative, funding sources may include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, facade improvement programs and/or small business revolving door funds. Other whitebox programs, as outlined within the Appendix, have leveraged local bank participation as well as private donation/foundation support to help seed the initial investment. There are also a number of non-traditional lending programs, such as the North Quabbin Loan Fund through the North Quabbin Community Coalition, or the loan programs of the Franklin County Community Development Corporation that can provide financing support.

FUNDING: Create Ongoing Database of Applicable Funding Sources That References Previous Successes and Failures

Action Items

In order to help with the acquisition of funds for improvements in Orange, a centralized database of applicable funding sources should be created. An initial list of applicable sources can be found in the Appendix on pages 56-63. In addition to available funds, this database should also include a list of previous projects that have sought such funds and whether or not they were successful in obtaining them. Such a database can be a great resource for future projects and can help retain institutional knowledge of such efforts even with the possibility of changing personnel. An individual point of contact should be established to upkeep the list, but all applicable Town personnel should be made aware of it in order to benefit from it and contribute to it over time.

Funding Sources

Limited, if any, funds should be required.



VOLUNTEERS: Identify Point of Contact for Ongoing Volunteer Efforts

Action Items

Several of the suggested items on this list can be done by volunteers, helping to minimize cost while boosting local involvement and pride in Orange. The first step should be to identify a volunteer coordinator who can organize their efforts and recruit as needed. Such a resource can help track efforts done to date as well as their relative effectiveness. They can also help direct efforts towards areas of highest priority. Over time, the volunteer coordinator can build relationships with local organizations like churches and schools that may be the source of ongoing help, or with whom larger volunteer events can be coordinated.



Funding Sources

Initially, the volunteer coordinator will likely need to be a volunteer in their own right. Another alternative is to identify someone already working for the Town who can add this to their current responsibilities. In the long run, such an individual could serve within the Community Development Office. Other local entities, like the Franklin County Technical School and the Franklin County Sheriff's Department, also have programs that help provide support for community programs via students of varying trades and work crews.

VISION: Emphasize the Vision and Ensure Existing Businesses and Residents Feel Confident in the Future

Action Items

The implementation of this vision plan will take the efforts of many people over an extended period of time. The benefit of having the vision is that it can serve as the guiding light for these various efforts. It is important that over time existing residents and businesses are reminded of the plan, and that new residents and businesses are made aware of it. Only by having everyone's cooperation will the vision be realized. In order to keep up momentum, regular town meetings should be held during which time interested folks can come to hear about the latest progress of the plan, discuss its effectiveness, propose alternatives as needed and find ways of helping out. Bringing everyone along will both help the plan come to fruition and keep the community optimistic of its future.



Funding Sources

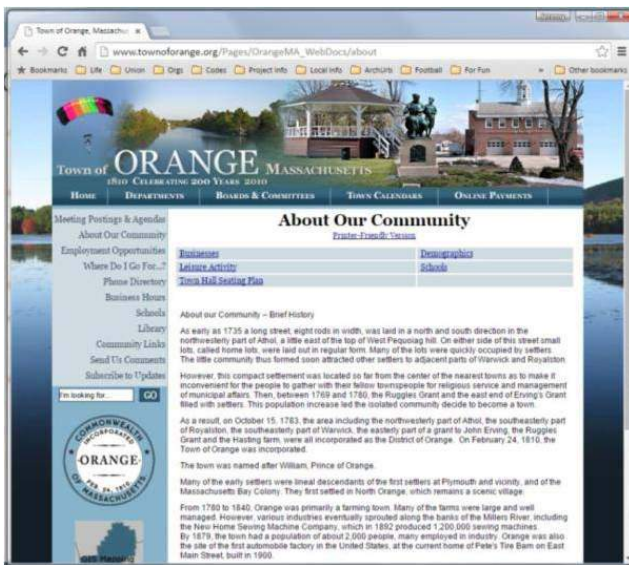
Limited, if any, funds should be required.

TOP TWELVE LIST

HUB: Set Up Town Website as Hub for Events, Volunteer Efforts and Community Development Opportunities

Action Items

In addition to regular town meetings, the Town should also set up a website for the vision plan efforts that can serve as a centralized location for information. The website should include the vision plan itself, notifications of coming events, a summary of ongoing progress and appropriate folks to contact for more information or to get involved. This website can also serve to direct interested parties to development opportunities, with links to a number of the other efforts listed like funding sources, tax incentives and roadmaps for priority sites.



Funding Sources

Funding sources to help cover such services should be nominal, as adding pages to the existing website and maintaining a list may take minimal additional effort. Currently, the website (www.townoforange.org) links to/ provides a calendar of upcoming meetings, boards and committees, etc. The additional elements could likely be integrated into the existing platform with nominal annual expense. If the preference is to generate a separate, dedicated site, the services of a website designer may be required.

The Town of Orange has been the subject of a number of previous studies over the last many years all of which have had the goal of improving the Town by taking advantage of its unique attributes and dedicated residents and officials. The challenge has been a lack of market conditions to encourage investment paired with a physical setting that is in need of improvement.

The good news is the town benefits from the presence of Miller's River as well as "good bones" in the form of the historic street and building fabric. These assets form the basis for the revitalization of the core area which will need to be formed around the following areas: sense of place, beautification, complete streets, revitalization/renovation, creating diversity, finding additional sources of funding/volunteers, community development and event planning/programming.

The proposed masterplan included in this report attempts to address all of these various areas in a cohesive vision that provides varying parties a shared focus, keeping everyone on track, spanning political cycles, serving as the basis for grants and ultimately creating a new market for growth. Efforts should be centered on the core as much as possible as a concentrated focus has the best chance of effecting noticeable change.

A series of twelve initial steps have been identified that the project team identified as having a high priority and which are relatively feasible in the short term to help jump start the revitalization of Downtown Orange. These initiatives run the gamut from physical improvements to financial policies/studies to increased marketing and outreach and are listed again below.

While the overall task at hand seems insurmountable, results can be achieved by chipping away at it one step at a time. The overall vision will ultimately rely on the involvement of the community as a whole, based around strong leadership and a continued dedication to the vision.

- 
- **CORE:** Focus Town Activities and Events in the Core Area to Support Local Economy/Businesses
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APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DOR | Downtown Orange Riverfront - Background Info

5/5/2015

Year	Document	Synopsis	Key Suggestions
2002	Ecotourism Marketing Report	Report by New England Forestry Foundation to develop Ecotourism marketing plan for 9 towns in North Quabbin area	Not much current activity, but potential with natural resources
			Hunt, fish, hike, bike, canoe/kayak, rock climb, mountain bike
			Minimal hospitality/retail to support tourism
			Orange known for antique stores and old mills
2005	Town of Orange Master Plan	Goals	Promote more diverse mix of businesses/housing for stable tax base
			Support downtown revitalization, create new jobs
			Encourage desired development through planning and zoning
			Balance development with preservation
			Fund riverfront park design underway
			Change Zoning for desired resid. growth (clusters, accessory units)
			Priorities Promote appropriate types of business dev. (perf. stds, farming)
			Protect rural areas/natural resources from future dev. (protect water)
2009	Sustainable Design Assessment Team Study	Outlined a number of sustainable revitalization goals	Implement Pavement Mgmt Study (road maint. priority report)
			Ped friendly, park once, mixed use, downtown as "trailhead"
			Preserve historic resources, create self guided walking tour
			Wayfinding, Form based zoning, add B&B
2010	Community Needs Survey	Comments from broad based survey	Bike share, transit
			Farmers market
			Improve condition of buildings and infrastructure
			Need more business/employment/entertainment opportunities
2013	Indoor BMX Track Diagram	Quick diagram showing BMX half-pipe in salt shed	Need supermarket
	Investment Diagram	\$7 million in approved/requested improvements	Repurpose town-owned salt shed on river by Butterfield Park
	Market Assessment Survey	Survey by FRCOG and Town to determine what types of businesses and activities are desired by residents, workers and visitor	Most funds directed towards downtown roads and parks
			Business - Restaurants, Theater, Grocery/Food Co-op
			Rest. - Bakery/Coffee (\$), Seafood/Steak (\$\$\$), Brew/Ital/Mex (\$\$)
			Come Downtown - Local shops, PO/Town Hall, Events
			Change - #/Variety Rest/Shops, Improve bldgs, Improve streetscape
			Business Obstacles - Empty storefronts, current econ. conditions
			Improve look of bldgs, redevelop vacant/under-utilized parcels
			Increase # and mix of restaurants and shops
	Ted Carmen impressions	Key Findings	Enhance gov't services - esp. public safety and downtown maint.
			Strengthen community with downtown events/facilities
			Prioritize manufacturing (existing and new) - stable employment
			Tuck adventure tourism around that (not in place of)
			Innovation Center great asset - incubate businesses that can fill town
	Mill Vision/Riverfront Reconsidered	Proposed vision for mill buildings	
	Redevelopment Financing Case Study	Ted Carmen Case Study from Greenfield, MA	Focus on outdoor activities, local cafes, galleries
	Visioning Sessions	Two surveys w/ business vs property owners	Renovation costs difficult without tax credits to bridge gap
			Business owner focus on shops and housing
	Wendell Depot Trail Extension Map	Proposed trail from Wendell to Orange	Property owner focus on beautification
			Both focus on sports and recreation
2014	MassWorks Application Map	Shows possible open spaces/trails in downtown	Comes in at OIC, crosses bridge to Paper Mill to N/S Main
	Recreation Trails Program Map	Shows portage trail to bypass hydro dam	Trail along both sides of river above hydro dam, cross at trestle bridge
	UMASS LARP Education Study	Study econ. benefit of school(s) in or near town	Landing at trestle, pass Paper Mill, up to River St, dock at boathouse
2015	Cultural District/Vision Diagrams	Millers River Sports & Culture District branding	Three options: Green School, Adventure School, Brewing School
	Welcome Package	Pamphlet for new business owners	Give identity to new district based on outdoor activity and arts
			List of parades/festivals, redevelopment goals

FRCOG conducted the following review of municipal and regional documents to identify projects and recommendations specific to Downtown Orange. The review was conducted in October 2013, and reflects the status of the project known at that time.

Review of Planning Documents for Downtown Orange-specific Recommendations & Projects

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Arts & culture	2005 Master Plan	Continue to use the Town Hall and other existing spaces to provide entertainment for residents and visitors such as movies and live theatre	Periodic use of auditorium. Town has auditorium rental agreement form online.
Arts & culture	2005 Master Plan	Develop a community-based philanthropic organization that could receive private donations from individuals and organizations for recreational and cultural programming	
Arts & culture	2010 SDAT	Make Downtown the historic, social, cultural and civic heart of Orange	
Community	2010 SDAT	Annual awards program to reward “community champions”	
Community	2010 SDAT	Improve internal community information sharing and create a database of skills and needs.	
Community	2010 SDAT	Seek to lose the “we aren’t good enough mentality”	
Downtown Planning	2008 Heritage Landscape	The town should prepare a Downtown Revitalization Master Plan (as recommended in the 2005 Master Plan)	
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Pursue funding options to assist private owners to complete restoration and rehabilitation projects for historic and architecturally significant buildings including but not limited to grant funding, tax incentives, revolving loan funds and other financial options	Slum & Blight Study completed in 2009 by FRCOG and Weston & Sampson, so as to access State CDBG resources to support building rehab loan program
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Scenic Findings for Downtown area: A survey of downtown, particularly of the occupancy and use of upper floors in downtown buildings, may help Orange to understand what is needed and how underutilized spaces could be better used	Slum & Blight Study completed in 2009 by FRCOG and Weston & Sampson, so as to access State CDBG resources to support building rehab loan program
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Complete an inventory of the historic mills along the Byway and document the industrial history of the area	
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Capitalize on the rich early industrial history of the area by exploring options redevelopment, revitalize and reuse former mill buildings that are now underutilized	
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Inventory and conduct feasibility studies of the historic mills along the Byway for reuse as incubators, industrial and manufacturing, and museums/galleries	
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Explore and seek options for funding to implement downtown/main street revitalization efforts	
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Scenic Findings for Downtown area: If not already underway, an endeavor should be made to attract new businesses – restaurants, taverns, and entertainment venues – to enliven downtown	
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Scenic Findings for Downtown area: An analysis could be carried out to understand uses that would encourage economic development	

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Downtown Planning	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Scenic) Establish a regional main street revitalization program for communities along the Byway. Seek funding to develop town tours and activity guides, waypoint information centers, and a signage and kiosk program for the entire Byway that highlights its distinctive historical, natural, and scenic areas and promotes the region's town centers and recreational opportunities	
Downtown Planning	2010 SDAT	Establish a Main Street Program	
Downtown Planning	2010 SDAT	Develop a conceptual design of downtown vision	
Downtown Planning	2009 Slum & Blight	Findings: Inventory findings of CARD is consistent with definition of a "slum and blighted area"	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Conduct a NQ regional wind feasibility study to determine appropriate locations for the siting of wind energy generation facilities (600kW in size or above).	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Conduct a NQ regional solar photovoltaic feasibility study to determine appropriate locations for the siting of large-scale, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic systems (250kW in size or above).	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Conduct a NQ regional green market study to provide a framework for attracting sustainable development.	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Pursue information sharing and explore cooperation related to operating of wastewater treatment plants (WWTP), such as multi-town contract with firm to conduct WWTP audits.	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Create and adopt a municipal fuel-efficient vehicle policy.	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Explore the possibility of partnering with local banks to develop alternative financing mechanisms, to assist home-owners if the Stretch Code is adopted.	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	In cooperation with the seven other towns that participated in the NQ Regional Action Plan, hire a regional sustainability coordinator.	
Green or Energy	2010 Green Communities	Become designated as a Green Community.	
Hist Pres	2005 Master Plan	Promote and help protect historically significant landscapes, the National Historic District in downtown Orange, and the North Orange and Tully village centers	
Hist Pres	2008 Heritage Landscape	The Historic Commission should extend the National Register Historic District (NRHD) boundary to include the foundry building, and the Planning Board should explore including it as part of the CARD.	
Hist Pres	2008 Heritage Landscape	Establish a Commission to explore the possibility of establishing the NRHD as a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District	

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Hist Pres	2008 OpSp & Rec Plan	Promote and help protect historically significant landscapes, the NRHD in downtown and the proposed NRHD in North Orange, and Tully village centers and farm landscapes. Complete historical survey forms for all significant properties and other historical resources and create a pamphlet to highlight the most spectacular sites on a map.	
Hist Pres	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Support the efforts of towns along the Byway to create National Historic Districts	
Hist Pres	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Implement a plaque/marker program along the Byway in order to recognize historically significant locations	
Hist Pres	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Arch & Historic) Install individual historic markers at specific significant locations to benefit the public, such as at the historic mill sites	
Hist Pres	2010 SDAT	Preserve historic resources that are "preserve-able"	
Hist Pres	2010 SDAT	Make individual nominations of buildings to state or federal historic register	
Housing	2005 Master Plan	Work to increase housing affordability in Orange for low-income families, in part, through economic development and the creation of new job opportunities with higher wages. Participate in regional and state employment initiatives	
Housing	2005 Master Plan	Develop strategies to reduce housing cost burdens for residents on fixed incomes	
Housing	2005 Master Plan	Continue to work with HRA, RDI, and other regional agencies, to address housing issues. Encourage qualifying residents to participate in housing rehabilitation loan programs.	
Infra - Telecom	2005 Master Plan	Support the expansion of telecommunications services and the upgrading of other infrastructure to help local businesses remain competitive and to attract new businesses	MassBroadband123 "middle mile" fiber network extends along Route 2A, Route 122, Warwick Rd, portion of North Main Street.
Infra - Water/Sewer	2005 Master Plan	Limit sewer and water services to the areas where Orange wishes to encourage new residential construction	
Infra - Water/Sewer	2005 Master Plan	Continue to address the infiltration and inflow (I&I) problem, as reduced flow will extend the life of the WWTF	
Infra - Water/Sewer	2009 Slum & Blight	Findings: All of the sanitary sewer and water systems within the CARD are rated as poor, except for one street in which these systems have recently been replaced	
Infra - Water/Sewer	2009 Slum & Blight	Findings: The condition of the storm sewer system has been rated as poor within all but one of the street segments of the CARD	
Local Business	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Econ Dev) Develop a brochure and web site to promote the Creative Cluster and Ecotourism opportunities	NQ Woods website (www.NorthQuabbinWoods.com) and Western Mass. Scenic Byways website (www.BywaysWestMass.org)
Local Business	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Econ Dev) Broaden the region's tourism infrastructure – financing, technical assistance, computer-based marketing; collaboration between bed and breakfast, inn, and restaurant owners	

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Local Business	2010 SDAT	Support access to local products (including food & arts)	NQ Woods store front (closed in 2013); Proposed expansion of North Quabbin Community Co-op
Local Business	2010 SDAT	Formalize a farmer's market on Depot Street	
Municipal	2005 Master Plan	Create a community development planner town staff position	Position established in 2013; Hired Kevin Kennedy in 2013
Municipal	2005 Master Plan	Hire a professional grant writer to generate new sources of revenue for recreational, cultural, and other community programs and facilities	
Parks & Rec	2005 Master Plan	Consider increasing funding for the management of all Town parks and playgrounds including finding additional sources	
Parks & Rec	2005 Master Plan	Consider increasing funding for the expansion of recreational programming with a special emphasis on teen programs and activities, and additional summer programs	
Parks & Rec	2005 Master Plan	Identify areas for Town acquisition of land for future parks and playgrounds with particular consideration given to sites near downtown	
Parks & Rec	2005 Master Plan	The Board of Health could work with the Select and Planning Boards in the identification and acquisition of land for future parks and playgrounds in dense village neighborhoods	
Parks & Rec	2008 OpSp & Rec Plan	Determine maintenance needs of existing parks in and around Orange Center and identify potential lands for future parks.	
Parks & Rec	2010 SDAT	Create a recreation network throughout Orange, including its center. Link active park/recreation networks to new downtown housing, commercial uses and entertainment	
Property re/dev	2005 Master Plan	Consider redeveloping a vacant building or site in the downtown for new commercial or residential use	RFP issued twice to solicit redeveloper bids; No responses received. RFP to be issued third time in 2013.
Property re/dev	2005 Master Plan	Continue revitalization and redevelopment efforts in the downtown area, promoting infill development and pursuing the creation of new spaces for businesses, recreation, and housing, as appropriate	Three Priority Development Sites in the Downtown designated by State in May 2008. (1) Putnam Hall Block, (2) South Main St. Block, (3) West River St. Block
Property re/dev	2005 Master Plan	Encourage the reuse and revitalization of current vacant historic buildings for residential purposes, and the building of new homes in the identified most suitable areas for residential development, as feasible	
Property re/dev	2006 Putnam Hall Conceptual Designs and Assessment	Conceptual Design Findings: Redevelopment cost estimate is \$2.8M and demolition cost estimate is \$1.0m (includes asbestos abatement)	Putnam Hall hazardous substance interior assessment completed in 2006 (funded by EPA grant through FRCOG, \$12,700); Interior asbestos abatement completed in 2008 (funded by \$210,000 FRCOG Brownfields RLF subgrant and \$50,000 MassDevelopment grant) ; Exterior hazardous substance assessment completed in 2011 (funded by EPA grant through FRCOG, \$14,600)

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Property re/dev	2006 Putnam Hall Conceptual Designs and Assessment	Engineering Findings: The rehabilitation and reuse that is planned for Putnam Hall is feasibility, but intensive and costly. It is our Engineering opinion that the probable construction cost for structural repair work is \$1m plus contingencies	RFP issued twice to solicit redeveloper bids; No responses received. RFP to be issued third time in 2013.
Property re/dev	2008 Heritage Landscape	The owners of those buildings that fall within the NRHD should be made aware of the state and federal investment tax credit programs, and encouraged to participate in the new guidelines being developed for the downtown area.	
Property re/dev	2010 Putnam Hall Assessment	Findings: The structure is in severely deteriorated condition, and the cost of renovating it will equal or exceed the cost of replacing it with new construction; Putnam Hall has deteriorated to the extent that it is now unsafe. Alternatives for disposition: Demolition (\$300,000); Temporary Stabilization (\$240,000); Private adaptive redevelopment(\$3.4m); Private historic preservation (\$3.9m); Public historic preservation (\$4.5m).	
Property re/dev	2010 SDAT	Pursue key users for downtown	
Property re/dev	2010 SDAT	Encourage appropriate infill development in Town Center	
Property re/dev	2010 SDAT	Establish a vacant land committee and identify all vacant lots in village centers	
Property re/dev	2010 SDAT	Fill upper floors with residences	
Property re/dev	2010 SDAT	Downtown as location of mixed uses and mixed incomes	
Property re/dev	2010 SDAT	Consider the vacant property in Downtown as a resource. Suggestions included: expanding open space preservation efforts to include previously developed land; forming a new committee to inventory vacant spaces and propose new uses; and considering the establishment of a land bank or extending land trust efforts	
Regional coordination	2010 SDAT	Increase coordination of open space and commercial development with Athol.	
Renewable energy	2010 SDAT	Establish an energy team and begin a feasibility study for renewable energy development.	Orange part of NQ Regional (Green Communities) Action Plan.
Riverfront Park	2005 Master Plan	Create a riverfront park and associated public boat ramp	Park and ramp completed in 2006 and boathouse completed in 2012. FRCOG wrote applications and administered \$548,000 of state grants to design and construct the park. FCTS and community volunteers constructed boathouse. Facility completed and rented by Peak Expeditions in 2013.

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Riverfront Park	2005 Master Plan	Support the development of a waterfront park on the site of the old Town Barn	Park and ramp completed in 2006 and boathouse completed in 2012. FRCOG wrote applications and administered \$548,000 of state grants to design and construct the park. FCTS and community volunteers constructed boathouse. Facility completed and rented by Peak Expeditions in 2013.
Riverfront Park	2005 Master Plan	Continue to pursue funding to construct the Riverfront Park, once the design plans are completed.	Park and ramp completed in 2006 and boathouse completed in 2012. FRCOG wrote applications and administered \$548,000 of state grants to design and construct the park. FCTS and community volunteers constructed boathouse. Facility completed and rented by Peak Expeditions in 2013.
Riverfront Park	2005 Master Plan	Re-energize efforts to create a river-based trail along the Millers River that would include a put-in at the proposed Riverfront Park	Park and ramp completed in 2006 and boathouse completed in 2012. FRCOG wrote applications and administered \$548,000 of state grants to design and construct the park. FCTS and community volunteers constructed boathouse. Facility completed and rented by Peak Expeditions in 2013.
Riverfront Park	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Scenic) Implement and complete riverfront park and trail development to highlight the Millers, Connecticut and Green Rivers and provide residents and visitors alike with recreational opportunities	Park and ramp completed in 2006 and boathouse completed in 2012. FRCOG wrote applications and administered \$548,000 of state grants to design and construct the park. FCTS and community volunteers constructed boathouse. Facility completed and rented by Peak Expeditions in 2013.
Signage	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Establish a system of signs to guide travelers using a unique logo that is consistent and easily recognizable and coordinated with the western section of the Byway and the other Byways in Western Massachusetts	Western MA Scenic Byway Marketing Project to install Mohawk Trail signage in 2013/2014
Signage	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: In coordination with other Byway way-finding sign projects, develop a system of directional signs for recreational and other points of interest within the Byway region	Western MA Scenic Byway Marketing Project to install Mohawk Trail signage in 2013/2014
Signage	2009 Mohawk Trail	Scenic Findings for Downtown area: Business signage should be improved on Route 2A to tie the commercial district together	
Signage	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Scenic) Promote signage and façade improvements and restoration that enhance the distinctive quality of each of the town centers, tie each streetscape together, improve the historic character of the buildings in each town, and help communities market their businesses and village centers	
Signage	2010 SDAT	Develop branding and wayfinding designs	Western MA Scenic Byway Marketing Project to install Mohawk Trail signage in 2013/2014

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Teen center	2005 Master Plan	Explore the development of a Teen Center	
Teen center	2010 SDAT	Support opportunities for young people	
Tourism	2005 Master Plan	Develop strategies for encouraging tourism-related businesses in Orange.	
Tourism	2005 Master Plan	Reach out to successful non-profits in the region to help Orange promote heritage and recreational tourism, and tourism-related businesses, and to help protect and preserve important natural, historic, and scenic resources	
Tourism	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Link the informational materials and web sites for the Byway with tourism web sites and webs sites for area towns, organizations and events	Western MA Scenic Byway website (www.BywaysWestMass.org) launched in 2013 includes links to tourism organizations
Tourism	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Develop a driving tour of the Byway which highlights the historic mills and the industrial era	Western MA Scenic Byway website (www.BywaysWestMass.org) launched in 2013 in 2013 includes themed trails
Tourism	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Construct information kiosks at strategic locations to make more information about the history of the site along the Byway and the resources available to the public	
Tourism	2009 Mohawk Trail	Scenic Findings for Wheeler Ave/Rt 2A area: The wetland area is a gem and could be a unique and important recreational/educational area for Orange where residents and visitors alike could boat and see wildlife.	
Tourism	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Travel & Tourism) Promote the Millers River, Barton Cove, and the Connecticut River as water recreational resources. Establish and market ideas such as the "Millers River Blueway," which can draw canoe and kayak enthusiasts to the area. This promotion can be coupled with local events tied to the water, such as the River Rat Race.	
Tourism	2010 SDAT	Brand downtown as the "trail head" or staging area for moving out into the community	
Tourism	2010 SDAT	Establish a Downtown Website	
Tourism	2010 SDAT	Establish self-guided walking tours of historic sites	
Tourism	2010 SDAT	Build a spur track with a dining car/caboose	
Trans - Parking	2009 Mohawk Trail	(Transportation) Review the layout of on-street parking in Downtown Orange to determine if improvements can be made, without reducing the number of spaces, to improve flow of traffic, especially turning tractor trailers	Downtown Parking Study completed in 2010. Confirmed parking resources and recommended some re-designs. Funded through Chapter 43D Program.
Trans - Parking	2010 Parking Study	Designated spaces for employees and customers should be better defined to reduce friction, and enhance usability	
Trans - Parking	2010 SDAT	Use a "park once" concept to getting multiple activities completed	
Trans - Parking	2010 SDAT	Establish outer-ring of parking outside of CARD, and reserve lots in the CARD for buildings and not parking lots	Downtown Parking Study completed in 2010. Confirmed parking resources and recommended some re-designs. Funded through Chapter 43D Program.

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Trans - Parking	2010 SDAT	Develop the parking lot on the southwest corner of Main Street	
Trans - Ped	2008 Heritage Landscape	The town should explore the feasibility of the rehabilitation of the railroad bridge as a pedestrian walkway. If it were adopted in town, Community Preservation Funds could be accessed for this project	
Trans - Ped	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Work to create pedestrian connections within the downtown centers that are located along the Byway	Walkability assessment completed for East River St and South Main St areas of Downtown, as part of draft Pedestrian Plan
Trans - Ped	2009 Slum & B	Findings: 9 of 10 street segments in CARD in fair or poor condition; Most of the sidewalks do not meet ADA requirements	
Trans - Ped	2010 SDAT	Increase pedestrian activity	
Trans - Rail	2010 SDAT	Re-establish east-west passenger rail service	
Trans - Streets	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Continue to monitor the performance of key intersections along the Byway. Investigate the feasibility of upgrading the traffic signal equipment at the South Main Street intersection in Downtown Orange	
Trans - Streets	2009 Slum & B	Findings: The street lighting within the target area is also in poor condition	
Trans - Streetscapes	2010 Parking Study	Targeted pedestrian and streetscape enhancements should be made to increase the visibility, use and convenience of currently underutilized parking	
Trans - Streetscapes	2010 SDAT	Develop streetscaping, gateway entrances to Downtown	
Workforce training	2005 Master Plan	Identify which technical skills are most in demand by Orange employers, and develop more opportunities and programs for residents to establish these skills	
Workforce training	2010 SDAT	Support a Town Center that is the center of local learning, provide venues for skill-sharing and “preserving the lost arts”, and expand “time bank” concept	
Zoning	2005 Master Plan	Develop performance standards for commercial uses that address noise, lighting, traffic, and other factors, and utilize these standards as criteria for determining which uses should be allowed in different areas	Performance standards compelled for business use, as an alternate to Special Permit process (see section 4600 Performance Standards of Development).
Zoning	2005 Master Plan	Promote the use of Orange’s Open Space Residential Development Bylaw, which allows developments to have smaller lot sizes in exchange for land being set aside as open space	Open Space development allowed in all districts by SPR (see section 5400 and 5700)
Zoning	2005 Master Plan	Encourage the adoption of a Phased Growth Bylaw	Can only be temporary given recent court case. Town did not pursue.
Zoning	2005 Master Plan	Develop a set of performance zoning measures that provide density bonuses in the Village Residential and the Village Residential/Commercial Districts in exchange for the rehabilitation and reuse of downtown buildings and vacant lots and the creation of adjoining green spaces and parks	
Zoning	2005 Master Plan	Develop performance standards to help regulate the location of commercial businesses to areas identified as being most suitable for these uses.	Performance standards compelled for business use, as an alternate to Special Permit process.

APPENDIX: ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Topic Category	Document Source	Project or Recommendation Identified	Status of Project
Zoning	2005 Master Plan	Consider adopting a bylaw to allow accessory apartments by-right in the existing Village Residential and the Village Residential/Commercial Districts	Accessory Apartment allowed by right in all zoning districts.
Zoning	2008 Heritage Landscape	The town should adopt a Demolition Delay Bylaw.	
Zoning	2008 Heritage Landscape	Consider zoning the former New Home and associated industrial parcels to allow for additional or more intense uses on those parcels.	Uses in the Commercial area Revitalization District include residential, commercial and light industrial.
Zoning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Consider strengthening local regulations to discourage signs and outside lights that detract from the scenic nature of the Byway. This may include adopting more detailed regulations and design guidelines for signs and lighting within the Byway corridor to help enhance the Scenic Byway.	Signage bylaw limits size and lighting (see section 3200 Signs of Zoning Bylaw)
Zoning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Work with communities to revisit zoning bylaws, including review of allowed uses and densities, establishment of a Byway Corridor Overlay District, and review of site plan approval process and criteria.	
Zoning	2009 Mohawk Trail	Recom: Consider implementing zoning measures to protect sensitive habitats, preserve natural and scenic resources and to focus new development into existing village center areas	Open Space development allowed by right with SPR in all districts.
Zoning	2010 SDAT	Establish B&B's as by right in the zoning	Bed & Breakfast up to 6 bedrooms allowed by right in all zoning districts, except B (Manufacturing)

APPENDIX: COMPLETE STREETS REPORT

The following pages relative to Orange were taken from a larger Franklin County Complete Streets Project report that was generated by FRCOG in September of 2014.

Orange

Downtown Orange is very walkable. There are neighborhoods that are within walking distance of the commercial and civic establishments that are located in the center of the downtown. Better walking and bicycling infrastructure would improve access for all users. Four areas of downtown Orange were assessed as part of this Complete Streets Project. These four areas were chosen because they provide an important link to downtown or other essential services. In some cases the areas were noted as lacking good bike and/or pedestrian links to regional transit stops during public input sessions held as part of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority's Comprehensive Service Analysis. The intension of this assessment is to provide recommendations to better serve all forms of transportation.

According to the *2012 Environmental Justice Analysis Summary Report*, downtown Orange is an Environmental Justice Target Area. Each of the areas examined as part of this study is within or abuts the boundaries of the target area. The *2012 Environmental Justice Summary Report* provides important information on the travel patterns of the residents of the U.S. Census block group that is part of the target area. For the downtown Orange target area, approximately 15% of the households within the block groups do not have access to a car. Twenty percent of the population lives less than 10 minutes in travel time to work. Approximately 35% are between 10 and 29 minutes from work.

Orange

East Main Street (Route 2A)

Background

East Main Street (Route 2A) is a key travel route from downtown Orange to downtown Athol. It is the main commercial route in Orange. The site designs and access layouts of many of the businesses on this road are automobile-oriented. East Main Street also provides an essential access route for pedestrians and bicyclists. It is a connection to necessary services such as the grocery store and pharmacy

for the population of this area. It is within walking distance of many residential areas. The FRTA Greenfield/Orange bus route (Route

The sidewalk on East Main Street is narrow in many locations.



32) travels on East Main Street and makes stops at the Walmart and Hannaford Supermarket (in Athol).

The high traffic volumes and speeds along East Main Street make walking and bicycling along the route unpleasant in some locations where there is no sidewalk or the sidewalk is narrow. The Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts at various points along the route are:

- Route 2A (Athol Town Line): 9,100 (in 2001), 10,000 (in 2007)
- Route 2A (400ft west of East Rd): 9,000 (in 2007)
- Route 2A [E. Main St] (250ft east of North Main St): 7800 (in 2005), 7,800 (in 2006)



There is a well worn path on the side of East Main Street where pedestrians walk in the absence of a sidewalk.

Observations

The following observations were made during a site visit completed on April 1, 2014:

- The sidewalk on East Main Street (Route 2A) is not continuous. It is narrow and there are gaps in various locations along the route.
- There is no sidewalk on the south side of East Main Street (Route 2A) to the east of Anne's Dairy.
- There are many locations where there are obstructions in the sidewalk or the walking path.



There are many obstacles on the sidewalk near the intersection of Whitney Street that pose tripping hazards.



The FRTA bus stop is located at the far end of the Walmart building, which forces transit riders to walk a long distance through the traffic in the parking lot to reach the stop.

APPENDIX: COMPLETE STREETS REPORT

- There is a wide grass and/or dirt area on the north side of East Main Street with room for a sidewalk, but there is either a narrow sidewalk or no sidewalk. Walking in the dirt or grass area poses a tripping hazard.
- There is no sidewalk from Route 2A connecting into the Walmart near the easternmost entrance (there are two driveways to Walmart from East Main Street).
- There is a bus stop at the far end of the Walmart parking lot, but there is no shelter or sidewalk leading to the bus stop through the parking lot. Pedestrians must walk a lengthy distance without a designated safe path through the parking lot to the far end to reach the bus stop.

Possible Solutions

- Construct a continuous sidewalk on East Main Street (Route 2A) from downtown Orange to the Athol town line to provide connections into the various businesses along the route and also provide connections to the FRTA bus stops.
- Construct highly visible cross-walks at locations throughout the area.
- Consider whether there is a need for pedestrian activated crossing signals at any locations in the project area in order to improve pedestrian safety on East Main Street.
- Construct ADA compliant curb-cuts and crossings throughout the area.
- Construct a wide shoulder or separate path for bicycles.



The sidewalk on east Main Street is a worn path on the side of the road in many locations.

Next Steps

- Present these findings and recommendations to the town and MassDOT.
- Complete a preliminary engineering study to determine if pedestrian activated crossing signals are needed in the project area.
- Further assess the best design for addressing bicycle accommodation along this corridor.

Orange

North Main Street

Background

The area examined included North Main Street in Orange from the intersection of North Main, South Main, West Main and East Main Streets (Route 2A) to the Fisher Hill and Dexter Park Schools. Fisher Hill School is an elementary school which has grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade, and Dexter Park School has grades 3 and 4. The project area is approximately 1 mile long. The roadway and sidewalk are in poor condition. The North Main Street area connects the residential neighborhoods to the commercial downtown area in Orange, and is a walkable distance if the infrastructure were improved.

There is an existing town infrastructure improvement project on a .4 mile section of North Main Street from the School Street intersection to Lincoln Avenue. This MassDOT funded project consists of roadway reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconstruction of various retaining walls and two major drainage culverts, construction of ADA accessible sidewalks and wheelchair ramps, drainage system modifications and improvements; construction of curb and bituminous concrete berm installations; traffic signing; landscaping and streetscape improvements and other incidental work. The project area of this complete streets assessment overlaps with the boundaries of the MassDOT project, and also extends further south to the intersection of East and West Main Streets.

Traffic counts were completed in two separate locations within the complete streets project area. On North Main Street traffic counts were completed 100 feet north of East Main Street and the average daily traffic counts were 3,900 in both 2005 and 2006. Another count was completed on North Main Street 300 feet south of Dexter Street in 2003 and the count was 1,980.

Observations

A site visit was completed on April 1, 2014, and the following observations were made:

- The pavement markings for the crosswalks at the intersection of North Main, South Main, East Main and West Main Street are worn away.



A utility pole and transformer box obstructs the crossing area and curb-ramp on North Main Street.

APPENDIX: COMPLETE STREETS REPORT

- The curb-cuts at the intersection of North Main, East Main and West Main Streets are not fully compliant with the ADA requirements. In particular, there are not tactile warnings at the curb-ramp.
- There is a utility pole and signal transformer box that is obstructing the crosswalk on North Main Street at the intersection with East and West Main Streets.
- The sidewalk on the east side of North Main Street is 5 feet wide.
- There is a tripping hazard near the building on the east side of North Main Street near the intersection.
- There is uneven pavement on the sidewalk in many locations along the route.
- The curb-ramps across Prospect Street near the town hall are in very poor condition, and the pavement marking for the crosswalk on Prospect Street is worn away.



The sidewalk on the east side of North Main Street is uneven and there are tripping hazards.



The sidewalk across Prospect Street near the town hall is in very poor condition.

- The roadway on Prospect Street is 37 feet wide near the town hall.
- The sidewalk on the east side of North Main Street is 5 ½ feet wide.
- The sidewalk on School Street is in very poor condition, and there are no curb ramps at the crossing.

- The sidewalk on the east side of North Main Street is 4 feet wide, patched in many places and there is a utility pole obstructing the travel way.

- There is no sidewalk on the west side of North Main Street north of Orange Historical Society (41 North Main Street).



The sidewalk to the north of the Orange Historical Society is in poor condition and lacks curbing.

- The sidewalk on the east side of North Main Street to the north of the Historical Society does not have curbing and is not delineated from the travel lane.
- North Main Street is 26 feet wide near the Historical Society building (41 North Main Street).
- Vehicles were observed traveling at excessive speeds during the site visit.
- There is on-street parking on both sides of North Main Street, but it is not well designated with signs or pavement markings.
- There is no crosswalk from the public parking lot on the west side of North Main Street to the east side of North Main Street.
- There are utility poles in many locations that obstruct the sidewalk.
- The roadway is excessively wide near the intersection of North Main Street and Dexter Street.
- The crosswalk on North Main Street leading to Dexter Street is long because of the excessively wide roadway.



Possible Solutions

- Reconstruct sidewalks and make improvements to create easier and less hazardous walking conditions on North Main Street.
- Construct sidewalks on both sides of North Main Street from the intersection of North Main Street, West Main Street and East Main Street to the intersection of North Main Street and Dexter Street.

The roadway on North Main Street near the intersection with Dexter Street is excessively wide.

APPENDIX: COMPLETE STREETS REPORT

- Install handicapped accessible ADA compliant curb-ramps and crosswalks at the intersection of North Main Street and East and West Main Street, across Prospect Street near the Town Hall, across North Main Street to Dexter Street, as well as other crossing locations throughout the project area.
- Paint all crosswalks in a ladder or continental style to be more visible.
- Complete an inventory of signs on North Main Street and add signs in accordance with the MUTCD for all crosswalks and school zones.
- Relocate obstructions on the sidewalks such as utility poles.
- Paint bike lanes or Sharrows on North Main Street to provide a designated place for bicycles to ride.
- Widen the sidewalk and construct bump-outs at the intersection of North Main Street and Dexter Streets to provide more room for pedestrians and shorten the crossing distance.



A view of the intersection of North Main Street and Dexter Street and the crosswalk that accesses Dexter Street and the schools located there.

Next Steps

Present these findings and recommendations to the town and MassDOT.

West River Street

Background

West River Street is located south of the intersection of North, South East and West Main Streets (Route 2A and Route 122) and the Millers River in downtown Orange.

West River Street and the intersection of West River and South Main Streets are important connections into downtown Orange. The Post Office is located on South Main Street just south



The streetscape looking west on West River Street in Orange has wide travel lanes and obstructions on the sidewalks.

of the intersection of West River and South Main Streets. Additionally, Butterfield Elementary School is also located on South Main Street to the south of the Post Office. Butterfield Elementary School has an entrance and driveway that is accessible from Cheney Street, which connects to West River Street and was part of the assessment area. See the map of the project area. In 2010, a pedestrian assessment of South Main Street near the Post Office and the Butterfield Elementary School was completed in 2010 as part of the development of the *Franklin County Regional Pedestrian Plan*.

The Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) serves downtown Orange via Route 32 which provides service between Orange and Greenfield. Additionally, FRTA operates demand response service in Orange.



The cross-walk on the west side of the intersection of River Street and South Main Street has worn away pavement markings and the pedestrian crossing signal is not visible while waiting to cross the street.

Observations

The FRCOG conducted a site visit and assessment of this area on April 1, 2014, and the following observations were noted:

- There are sidewalks on both sides of West River Street.
- The sidewalk on the south side of the street is 5½ feet wide, and the sidewalk on north side of the street is 6 feet wide.
- There are obstructions on the sidewalk such as fire hydrants and telephone poles in many locations.
- The travel lanes are wide for the length of West River Street, and the shoulders are narrow.
- The road is 61 feet wide at the intersection of South Main Street and West River Street
- East River Street is 33 feet wide



Telephone poles obstruct the sidewalk in many locations on West River Street. Also, note that the part of the travel lane that cars are using is visible in this picture by where the sand is worn away.

APPENDIX: COMPLETE STREETS REPORT

near the intersection with Cheney Street.

- There are no street signs at the corner of South Main Street and West River Street that provide the street names.
- The handicapped ramp at the corner of South Main Street and West River Street is non-compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- The pedestrian crossing signal at the intersection of East River Street and South Main Street, traveling north towards Main Street, is not facing the crosswalk and is hard to see from that crossing direction. It is positioned so that it faces into the middle of the intersection.
- The sidewalk on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and East River Street near the crosswalk is narrow.
- The crosswalk paint is worn away and not visible.
- The bushes are encroaching into the sidewalk on the north side of East River Street.
- On-street parking is allowed on the street but not delineated.
- The neighborhood to the east is residential.



This picture is a view looking south on Cheney Street.

Cheney Street intersects with West River Street within the project area. As previously noted, Cheney Street is also an access to Butterfield Elementary School.

- Cheney Street has a sidewalk on the west side of the street, but there is not a sidewalk on the east side. Cheney Street is the walking route to the nearby Butterfield Elementary School.
- There are no signs on Cheney Street for the nearby school zone.
- At Cheney Street there is a crosswalk with worn away paint. There is no curb ramp to the sidewalk on the north side of the street.

There are excessively wide travel lanes on East River Street.



Possible Solutions

- Realign and or re-stripe the travel lanes to narrow the lanes and add a bike lane or wide shoulder in order to provide more room for walking and bicycling.
- Reconstruct the sidewalks in the project area to be wider.
- Widen the sidewalk at the intersection of West River Street and South Main Street, and add bump-out areas to shorten the crossing distance and provide a waiting area for pedestrians.
- Add pavement markings or textured crosswalk treatments at all crossings in the project area.
- Install ADA compliant curb-cuts at all crossing locations.
- Update the crossing signals at the intersection of East River Street and South Main Street so that they are properly aligned and visible.
- Construct a sidewalk on the east side of Cheney Street that would connect to Butterfield Elementary School.
- Install signs for a school zone on Cheney Street.

Next Steps

Present these findings and recommendations to the town and MassDOT.

Orange

East Water Street

Background

East Water Street in downtown Orange links South Main Street to East Main Street. This route travels near Memorial Park, Rodney Hunt Manufacturing, the Orange District Court and an FRTA transit stop on

The pavement markings on the cross-walk at the intersection of East Water Street and South Main Street are worn away.



Route 32. It is an important walking link within the downtown area of Orange. There are already many pedestrians and bicyclists that travel this route. An average annual daily traffic count of 4,800 on Water Street was recorded in 2001 according to the MassDOT website.

Observations

A site visit was completed on April 1, 2014, and the following observations about the project area were noted:

- The crosswalk on South Main Street to Memorial Park is faded and not highly visible. It also crosses between on-street parking spaces, and the site distance while crossing is limited. The parked cars on either side of the crosswalk impede the visibility of the crossing.
- The curb-ramps at the crosswalk on South Main Street are not ADA compliant.
- East Water Street on the south side of the Memorial Park is 31 feet wide near the intersection with South Main Street.
- There is no sidewalk on Water Street to the south of Memorial Park on either side of the road.
- The area of pavement near the entrance to Rodney Hunt is very wide (69 feet) and there is no sidewalk.
- There is no sidewalk on East Water Street, on the southeast side near the railroad tracks, but the pavement is excessively wide.
- There is a pedestrian crossing gate on the railroad tracks on the west side, but it is not known if the crossing gate is up to the current ADA codes.
- There are no crosswalks near the FRTA bus stop/shelter that is behind the Orange District Court on East Water Street to guide pedestrians to the bus stop. There are no crosswalks that allow pedestrians to cross from the parking lot on the east side of East Water Street to the Orange District Court.
- East Water Street is 39 feet wide near the District Court.
- There are no bike lanes or pavement markings for bikes on East Water Street.
- There are no bike racks at the Orange District Court.



The pavement is 69 feet wide on Water Street near Rodney Hunt.



There are obstructions in the sidewalk on East Water Street approaching East Main Street.

Possible Solutions

- Construct or improve sidewalks throughout the project area to make the sidewalks wider.
- Construct a sidewalk on the south side of East Water Street in front of the fire station and Rodney Hunt in order to better define the area for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Install a pedestrian safety gate and sidewalk at the railroad crossing.
- Install crosswalks for pedestrians near the Court House and parking area.
- Paint all crosswalks in a ladder or continental style to be more visible.
- Relocate obstructions in the sidewalks, such as utility poles.



A FRTA bus shelter is located near the district court parking lot.

Next Steps

Present these findings and recommendations to the town and MassDOT.

APPENDIX: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESOURCES

The following list was generated by FRCOG and Rustpoint Advisory and contains brief descriptions and links to selected organizations and programs that can offer support to local governments, non-profit organizations, and/or private businesses. Please note that grant resources are predominantly only available to local governments or non-profit organizations, and are competitive programs with no guarantee of funding. For a complete description of the services offered and eligibility requirements, go to the websites identified or contact these organizations directly.

Federal Government Resources:

- Through grant and technical assistance programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture (**USDA**) **Rural Development** forges partnerships with rural communities, funding projects that bring housing, community facilities, business lending, utilities and other services to rural America. These programs can help local governments and eligible non-profits finance or improve public facilities (such as for fire stations, town halls, streets) or water or wastewater infrastructure. The USDA Rural Development state office is located in Amherst and has staff available to work with communities to understand the programs and resources available. Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov/LP_EconDevHome.html
- The U.S. Department of the Treasury operates a variety of programs to support access to capital for economic growth in targeted low-income areas. One such program is the **New Market Tax Credit Program**. Through this program, federal tax credits are awarded to certified organizations, which can issue tax credits to developers for specific projects. To use these tax credits certain criteria must be met and the project must be located in an eligible, economically distressed Census Tract. The tax credit provided to the investor can total 39% of the cost of the investment and is to be claimed over a 7-year credit allowance period. Certified organizations that have allocated tax credits and have participated in projects in the region are the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) and Common Capital, Inc. Eligible Census Tracts (as of August 2015) cover select areas of Downtown Greenfield and Turners Falls, and the towns of Erving, Orange, Warwick, and Wendell. Website: www.cdfifund.gov/what_we_do/programs_id.asp?programID=5
- Both federal and state governments maintain historic rehabilitation tax credit programs. The **Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program** is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service and the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The tax incentives may be applied to costs incurred for renovation, restoration, and reconstruction of eligible buildings. Generally, the percentage of these costs that can be taken as a credit is 10% for buildings placed in service before 1936, and 20% for certified historic structures. Website: www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm
- The **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** administers the **Our Town** program, which supports creative placemaking projects through three categories: arts engagement projects, cultural planning projects, or design projects. This competitive federal grant program is open to non-profit organizations and municipal governments. Website: www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction

Private Foundation Resources:

- The **National Trust for Historic Preservation** administers the **National Trust Preservation Funds** program, which supports planning studies and other activities to protect historic places and may be used to conduct feasibility studies to determine how historic facilities could appropriately be returned to productive use. Funding may not be used for construction or property acquisition. This is a competitive grant program open to non-profit organizations and members of the National Main Street Network. Website: www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/preservation-funds-guidelines-eligibility.html
- **Preservation Massachusetts** administers the **Predevelopment Loan Fund**, which offers financing to conduct predevelopment work, such as architectural or feasibility studies, for an historic redevelopment project. The applicant must have site control and sites must be on or eligible for the National Historic Register. Website: www.preservationmass.org/programs/predevelopment-loan-fund-2/

State Government Resources:

- The **MassWorks Infrastructure Program** coordinates the administration of six infrastructure programs: Public Works Economic Development (PWED), Community Development Action Grant (CDAG), Growth District Initiative (GDI) Grants, Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion (MORE) Grants, Small Town Rural Assistance Program (STRAP), and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Grants. These programs fund a range of publicly owned infrastructure projects. The CDAG Program provides funding to local governments for projects that “build local economies, eliminate blight, create jobs and produce workforce and affordable housing that would not occur by private enterprise alone.” The Program requires that projects do not benefit any single individual or business, and that the project must be publicly owned/managed for a minimum of 30 years. Website: www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/pro/infrastructure/massworks
- Programs within the **Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development** (DHCD):
 - The **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program** provides assistance for housing, community, and economic development projects that assist low and moderate-income residents in eligible communities. Municipalities with populations under 50,000 must apply to the competitive state program. Within the CDBG Program is the **Economic Development Fund**. The purpose of this Fund is to provide financing for projects that create and/or retain jobs, improve the tax base, or otherwise enhance the quality of life in the community. Example projects include: public infrastructure or rehabilitation project to support the re-use of a downtown commercial or mixed commercial/residential building; pre-development planning study; or revolving business loan program. The Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority has a community development program that works with municipalities interested in pursuing CDBG program grants. Website: www.mass.gov/hed/community/funding/community-development-block-grant-cdbg.html and <http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/funding/economic-development-fund-edf.html>

APPENDIX: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- The **Massachusetts Downtown Initiative** offers the Technical Assistance Site Visit Program to municipalities. Professional consultant services valued up to \$10,000 are provided at no cost to the community for specific issues related to a downtown revitalization effort. The categories of eligible activities include: Business Improvement District (BID), Design, Creative Economy, Economics of Downtown, Housing, Parking, Small Business Support, Walkability, and Wayfinding/Branding. Past awards in the region include: a downtown wayfinding plan for Downtown Greenfield (2015), a market study to support the Shelburne Falls Composting Collaborative project (2011), a market analysis to explore the development of artist live/work space in Turners Falls (2012), and design guidelines for the Orange town center that included recommendations for a future sign and façade program (2008). Website: www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi.html
- The **Peer to Peer Technical Assistance Program** provides small grants up to \$1,000 to municipalities for short-term problem solving or technical assistance projects. Website: www.mass.gov/hed/community/funding/peer-to-peer.html
- Programs administered by the **Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)**:
 - The **Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program** is managed by the Massachusetts Historic Commission under the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Under this program a certified rehabilitation project on an income-producing property is eligible to receive up to 20% of the cost of certified rehabilitation expenditures in state tax credits. There is an annual limit on the amount of tax credits available through the Commonwealth's program, so selection criteria is employed to ensure that funds are distributed to the projects that provide the most public benefit. In past years, projects in Downtown Greenfield and Turners Falls have received awards. In the 2014- 2015 rounds, the Brady Sullivan Orange Properties LLC project at 16-36 West River Street, and 58 South Main Street were awarded \$1.4 million in tax credits for their \$9.9 million project to develop housing. Website: www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm
 - The **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund** is a state-funded 50% reimbursable matching grant program established in 1984 to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places. Eligible activities include pre-development, development, and acquisition projects. Website: www.sec.state.ma.us/MHC/mhcmppf/mppfidx.htm
 - The **MHC Survey and Planning Grant Program** is a federally funded, reimbursable, 50/50 matching grant program to support historic preservation planning activities in communities throughout the state. Annual grants are contingent on Massachusetts' federal budget allocation. MHC is required to pass through grant awards representing 10% of its total annual federal funding allocation to Certified Local Governments. Eligible activities include completion of cultural resource inventories, nomination of significant properties to the National Register of Historic Places, completion of community-wide preservation plans, and other types of studies, reports, publications and projects that relate to the identification and protection of significant historic properties and sites. Website: www.sec.state.ma.us/MHC/mhchpp/Survey-andplanning.htm

APPENDIX: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- Programs administered by the **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (Mass-DEP)**:
 - The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection administers the state's **Brown-fields Tax Credit Program**. This program allows a tax credit for eligible clean-up costs. Specifically, the program allows a state tax credit of up to 50% after clean-up is completed, and 25% for a clean-up that uses an Activity and Use Limitation (AUL) on the property. The program also allows for the tax credit to be transferred, sold or assigned to another eligible person or to a non-profit organization. It is important to note that the developer cannot be responsible for the contamination on site. The project must also be located within an economically distressed area, such as a state certified Economic Target Area. The deadline for eligible clean-up costs has been extended to January 1, 2019. Website: www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/cleanup/programs/brownfields-tax-incentives.html
 - The **Conservation Assistance for Small Communities Program** offers reimbursement funding for Open Space & Recreation Plans (OSRPs), other plans to facilitate land conservation, and/or appraisals contracted in order to apply to the LAND or PARC grant program. Available to all communities with a population of 6,000 or fewer people. Funding is non-competitive; all eligible applicants will receive contracts on a rolling basis until all available funding is allocated. Website: www.mass.gov/eea/grants-and-tech-assistance/grants-and-loans/dcs/grant-programs/conservation-appraisals.html
 - The **Massachusetts Land and Water Conservation Fund** provides up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition, development and renovation of a park, recreation or conservation area. Municipalities, special districts and state agencies are eligible to apply. Access by the general public is required. Website: www.mass.gov/eea/grants-and-tech-assistance/grants-and-loans/dcs/grant-programs/massachusetts-land-and-water-conservation-fund.html
 - The Massachusetts **Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Program** (formerly the Self-Help Program) was established to assist municipal conservation commissions acquiring land for natural resource and passive outdoor recreation purposes. Lands acquired may include wildlife, habitat, trails, unique natural, historic or cultural resources, water resources, forest, and farm land. Compatible passive outdoor recreational uses such as hiking, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, bird observation and the like are encouraged. Access by the general public is required. Offers a reimbursement rate of 52-70% of project cost with a maximum award amount of \$400,000. Website: www.mass.gov/eea/grants-and-tech-assistance/grants-and-loans/dcs/grant-programs/massachusetts-local-acquisitions-for-natural.html
 - The Massachusetts **Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Program** (formerly the Urban Self-Help Program) was established to assist municipalities in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes. Any town with a population of 35,000 or more year-round residents, or any city regardless of size, that has an authorized park /recreation commission is eligible to participate in the program.

APPENDIX: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Communities that do not meet the population criteria listed above may still qualify under the “small town,” “regional,” or “statewide” project provisions of the program. Grants are available for the acquisition of land and the construction, or renovation of park and outdoor recreation facilities. Access by the general public is required. Up to \$250,000 of funding is set aside for grants in the Small Town category. Website: www.mass.gov/eea/grants-and-tech-assistance/grants-and-loans/dcs/grant-programs/massachusetts-local-acquisitions-for-natural.html

- Program administered by the **Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD)**:
 - Private businesses can partner with local municipalities and state government for a tax incentive through the state’s **Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP)**. The project must be located within an economically distressed area, such as a state certified Economic Target Area. Through the FRCOG, all Franklin County towns except Shutesbury, are located within the designated Greater Franklin County Economic Target Area. The EDIP allows communities to negotiate a **Tax Incrementing Financing (TIF)** and other tax incentive agreement with a private business that is expanding, renovating, relocating, or building new facilities and creating jobs with an Economic Opportunity Area (a targeted area designated for economic development with an established ETA). For a business seeking a break from their State tax obligation using this program, they must be able to demonstrate that the project will generate substantial sales outside of Massachusetts, and the project must be approved by Town Meeting and the state. Municipalities may choose to offer a tax incentive applicable to the business’ local property tax obligation, which does not require the same thresholds to be met as required by the State. The regional office of the Massachusetts Office of Business Development is a key partner in guiding businesses and communities through this process. Website: www.mass.gov/portal/business/taxes/credits-incentives
- **MassDevelopment** is the state’s finance and development agency, which works with businesses, developers, non-profits, financial institutions, and communities to provide technical assistance, financing and real estate services. Website: www.massdevelopment.com
- The **Massachusetts Small Business Development Center (MSBDC) Network** provides one-to-one free comprehensive and confidential services focusing on, business growth and strategies, financing and loan assistance as well as strategic, marketing and operational analysis. In addition, low cost educational training programs are offered across the state targeted to the needs of small business. Website: www.msbdc.org
- The **Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC)** supports access to the arts, sciences and humanities. MCC provides **Local Cultural Councils** with grant funding to support locally selected community based projects. In addition, MCC has the **Cultural Facilities Fund**, which is a competitive program to fund the acquisition, design, repair, renovation and construction of non-profit and municipal cultural facilities. The **Adams Arts Program** is a competitive grant program that funds community-based, creative economy projects. Website: <http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/>

APPENDIX: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Please note this is not an exhaustive list of all services available from the Commonwealth. In addition to these State resources, there are additional programs and agencies that provide support to specific sectors or industries, such as **Massachusetts Export Resource Center** (www.mass.gov/export), **MassTech Innovation Institute** (www.masstech.org), the **Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources** (www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr), and the **Massachusetts Digital Games Institute** (www.massdigi.org). Go to www.mass.gov to find additional resources.

Regional Resources

- **Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA)** is a Pioneer Valley-based organization dedicated to making connections between farms and the community. CISA conducts marketing programs and offers business technical assistance workshop to farmers and agri-businesses. Website: www.buylocalfood.org
- The **Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts (EDC)** markets development opportunities in the region, and provides data and information to help business locating to or expanding in the region. Website: www.westernmassedc.com
- The **Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)** is a regional and municipal services organization and regional planning agency serving Franklin County.
 - As part of this work, the FRCOG administers the **Greater Franklin County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Program**, which provides regional economic development planning services and maintains the region's eligibility for select **U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)** competitive grant programs that invest in public infrastructure or feasibility or planning studies that will result in job creation and private investment. The FRCOG also administers a **Regional Brownfields Program**, funded by grants from the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**. This Program provides access to a revolving loan fund program to clean-up brownfields sites and funds (as resources allow) to conduct environmental site assessments on eligible properties and at no cost to the property owner. These assessments determine if the site is contaminated, and if so to what extent. Website: <http://frcog.org/program-services/economic-development-planning/>
 - The **Transportation Planning Program** conducts transportation planning studies, conducts traffic counts, and administers the **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**, which programs road, bridge and transit projects that are eligible for federal funding. In addition, they work on the **National Scenic Byway Program**, which is a federal transportation program that provides funding for eligible scenic byway projects. The FRCOG completed corridor management plans for four designated scenic byways in the region, (the Mohawk Trail, Route 116, Route 112 and the Connecticut River Scenic Byway) and led the Western Massachusetts Scenic Byway Promotional Campaign, which created marketing materials, logos, way-finding signs, and a website for the seven designated byways of western Massachusetts. Website: <http://frcog.org/program-services/transportation-planning/>

APPENDIX: BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- **Franklin County Chamber of Commerce** provides services to large and small businesses throughout Franklin County, including health insurance, networking opportunities, lobbying representation, and assistance with town events. Website: www.franklincc.org
- The **Franklin County Community Development Corporation** provides direct technical assistance and business planning workshops, administers a small business lending program and operates the Western Mass. Food Processing Center (a commercial kitchen for food-based enterprises) and the Venture Center (a business incubator) at their facility in Greenfield. Website: www.fccdc.org
- The **Franklin/Hampshire Career Center** work with individuals seeking employment and employers seeking to find workers. Access to workshops, career counseling and job search assistance is offered. For employers, they post positions, provide labor market data, help plan job fairs, and provide pre-screening and recruitment assistance. Website: <http://www.fhcc-onestop.com/>
- The **Franklin/Hampshire Regional Employment Board** is the workforce investment board for the region. The Board develops training programs on behalf of businesses and industry seeking a workforce with skills or knowledge. Website: www.franklinhampshirereb.org
- The **Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA)** helps Franklin County towns finance and implement affordable housing and community development program, including applying for CDBG funds. Their services includes owning and/or managing affordable rental housing, administering federal and state leased housing services programs, and managing housing rehabilitation programs, infrastructure projects, and other services. Website: www.fchra.org
- **Fostering Art and Culture in Franklin County Project and Partnership** is an initiative to grow the creative economy in Franklin County. The project manages an online database of artists and creative businesses, and has initiated various events and projects such as the annual Creative Economy Summit, drawing artists and business people from the greater western Massachusetts region, and monthly networking opportunities for artists in the community. Website: www.fosteringartandculture.org
- **Greenfield Community College** is a public higher educational institution that offers a variety of degrees and certifications, including the Outdoor Leadership Program and the new Farms & Food Systems Program. Website: www.gcc.mass.edu
- **Hidden Tech** is a community of mostly home-based businesses in western Massachusetts that connect to each other online and at events for networking and business development programs. Website: www.hidden-tech.net
- Based in Springfield, **Valley Venture Mentors (VVM)** is an accelerator program to provide business support to selected start-up businesses seeking to grow quickly. Website: www.valleyventurementors.org/
- The **Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust** works with towns in Franklin and Worcester counties to protect significant natural, agricultural and scenic areas, and to encourage land stewardship for the benefit of the environment, economy and future generations. Website: www.mountgrace.org

Sub-regional Resources

- The **Mohawk Trail Association** is a regional tourism council that markets the northern tier region from central Massachusetts to the Berkshires. The Association produces an annual visitors' guide and maintains a comprehensive website that identifies attractions and tourism services. Website: www.mohawktrail.com
- The **North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce** is a regional chamber of commerce and tourism council, serving the nine-town North Quabbin region. The Chamber works to promote and improve the region's business environment and economic development opportunities. Website: www.northquabbinchamber.com
- **North Quabbin Community Coalition** works to improve the quality of life in the North Quabbin towns through addressing community-identified issues. The Economic Development Task Force seeks to coordinate efforts in the region and encourage broad community involvement in economic development initiatives. Website: <http://nqcc.org>
- **North Quabbin Woods** is a project of the North Quabbin Community Coalition that seeks to revitalize the economy through the responsible utilization of the region's forests. The website provides an area guide of businesses, focusing on outdoor recreation, agriculture, and local artisans. Website: www.northquabbinwoods.org

Local Resources

- **Orange Business Association** – As described in its Mission Statement, the Association was formed to sponsor, promote, operate and/or engage in community activities and projects in and around Orange. Website: www.orangebusinessassoc.org
- **Orange Economic Development & Industrial Corporation (OEDIC)** – The OEDIC was created in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 121C to promote industrial development in the Town of Orange. Website: www.townoforange.org/Pages/OrangeMA_BComm/edic

APPENDIX: ECONOMIC CASE STUDY

The following case study was prepared by Rustpoint Advisory to illustrate how the market conditions, as current, do not generate incomes sufficient to offset the costs needed to reposition key buildings, utilizing a building in Downtown Orange and current market data. The four versions show the baseline condition, the baseline plus historic tax credits, the baseline plus historic tax credits and reduced property taxes, and the baseline plus historic tax credits and reduced property taxes with increased rents due a more desirable and stable downtown (future economic viability).

Redevelopment Economics for Existing Building in Downtown Orange | for illustrative purposes

BASELINE

Development Program					Rent
	Square Footage	Use	Rentable Spaces	(per square foot or per apartment)	
1st Floor	6,400	retail/office	5,000		\$13.00
2nd Floor	6,400	apartments	7		\$725
3rd Floor	<u>6,400</u>	<u>apartments</u>	<u>7</u>		<u>\$750</u>
	19,200				

All cost, revenue and financing assumptions based upon survey of local market + benchmarked to approximate comparables in other markets.

Development Budget	per square foot or %	
Land Acquisition	\$225,000	\$12
Construction Commercial	\$640,000	\$100
Construction Residential	\$1,536,000	\$120
Soft Costs (Design, Legal, Permitting, Carry Costs, etc)	\$261,120	12%
<u>Project Contingency</u>	<u>\$133,106</u>	<u>5%</u>
	\$2,795,226	\$146

Revenue & Expense		
Rent from Commercial Spaces	\$65,000	
<u>Rent from Apartments</u>	<u>\$123,900</u>	
Total Potential Gross Income	\$188,900	
<u>Less: Vacancy & Collection Losses</u>	<u>(\$9,445)</u>	5%
Effective Gross Income	\$179,455	
<u>Less: Operating Expenses</u>	<u>(\$62,809)</u>	35%
Net Operating Income	\$116,646	Annual

Project Returns Value versus Investment	
Approximate market value of operating property when complete and occupied ⁱ	\$1,227,850
Approximate Internal Rate of Return on Equity ⁱⁱ	-3%

ⁱ To estimate market value, a capitalization rate of 9.5% is applied. Rate is approximate and based upon survey of transactions and current listings as of Aug 2015 with adjustments for new/rehabilitated building

ⁱⁱ A pro forma is forecast based on the following assumptions: loan established at 1.25 debt service coverage ratio. Interest rate of 5.6%. Annual escalation of rent and operating expenses at 2%. Terminal cap rate in year 10 at 8.5%.

APPENDIX: ECONOMIC CASE STUDY

Redevelopment Economics for Existing Building in Downtown Orange | for illustrative purposes

WITH HISTORIC TAX CREDITS

Development Program				
	Square Footage	Use	Rentable Spaces	Rent (per square foot or per apartment)
1st Floor	6,400	retail/office	5,000	\$13.00
2nd Floor	6,400	apartments	7	\$725
<u>3rd Floor</u>	<u>6,400</u>	<u>apartments</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>\$750</u>
	19,200			

All cost, revenue and financing assumptions based upon survey of local market + benchmarked to approximate comparables in other markets.

Development Budget			per square foot or %
Land Acquisition	\$225,000		\$12
Construction Commercial	\$640,000		\$100
Construction Residential	\$1,536,000		\$120
Soft Costs (Design, Legal, Permitting, Carry Costs, etc)	\$261,120		12%
<u>Project Contingency</u>	<u>\$133,106</u>		<u>5%</u>
	\$2,795,226		\$146
Approximate Funding due to Federal and State (MA) Historic Tax Credits ⁱⁱⁱ			(\$798,317)
<u>Adjusted Development Budget</u>			<u>\$1,996,909</u>

Revenue & Expense			
Rent from Commercial Spaces	\$65,000		
<u>Rent from Apartments</u>	<u>\$123,900</u>		
Total Potential Gross Income	\$188,900		
<u>Less: Vacancy & Collection Losses</u>	<u>(\$9,445)</u>	5%	
Effective Gross Income	\$179,455		
<u>Less: Operating Expenses</u>	<u>(\$62,809)</u>	35%	
Net Operating Income	\$116,646		

Project Returns Value versus Investment	
Approximate market value of operating property when complete and occupied ⁱ	\$1,227,850
Approximate Internal Rate of Return on Equity ⁱⁱ	5%

ⁱ To estimate market value, a capitalization rate of 9.5% is applied. Rate is approximate and based upon survey of transactions and current listings as of Aug 2015 with adjustments for new/rehabilitated building

ⁱⁱ A pro forma is forecast based on the following assumptions: loan established at 1.25 debt service coverage ratio. Interest rate of 5.6%. Annual escalation of rent and operating expenses at 2%. Terminal cap rate in year 10 at 8.5%.

ⁱⁱⁱ Qualified Rehabilitation Expenses estimated at 85% of total development budget. Assume Federal credits sold for \$.88 per credit. MA credits assumed sold at \$.80 per credit.

APPENDIX: ECONOMIC CASE STUDY

Redevelopment Economics for Existing Building in Downtown Orange | for illustrative purposes

WITH HISTORIC TAX CREDITS + REDUCED RE. PROPERTY TAX

Development Program				
	Square Footage	Use	Rentable Spaces	Rent (per square foot or per apartment)
1st Floor	6,400	retail/office	5,000	\$13.00
2nd Floor	6,400	apartments	7	\$725
<u>3rd Floor</u>	<u>6,400</u>	<u>apartments</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>\$750</u>
	19,200			

All cost, revenue and financing assumptions based upon survey of local market + benchmarked to approximate comparables in other markets.

Development Budget	per square foot or %	
Land Acquisition	\$225,000	\$12
Construction Commercial	\$640,000	\$100
Construction Residential	\$1,536,000	\$120
Soft Costs (Design, Legal, Permitting, Carry Costs, etc)	\$261,120	12%
<u>Project Contingency</u>	<u>\$133,106</u>	<u>5%</u>
	\$2,795,226	\$146
Approximate Funding due to Federal and State (MA) Historic Tax Credits ⁱⁱⁱ	(\$798,317)	
Adjusted Development Budget	\$1,996,909	

Revenue & Expense		
Rent from Commercial Spaces	\$65,000	
<u>Rent from Apartments</u>	<u>\$123,900</u>	
Total Potential Gross Income	\$188,900	
<u>Less: Vacancy & Collection Losses</u>	<u>(\$9,445)</u>	5%
Effective Gross Income	\$179,455	
<u>Less: Operating Expensesⁱⁱⁱⁱ</u>	<u>(\$53,837)</u>	30%
Net Operating Income	\$125,619	

Project Returns Value versus Investment	
Approximate market value of operating property when complete and occupied ⁱ	\$1,322,300
Approximate Internal Rate of Return on Equity ⁱⁱ	7%

ⁱ To estimate market value, a capitalization rate of 9.5% is applied. Rate is approximate and based upon survey of transactions and current listings as of Aug 2015 with adjustments for new/rehabilitated building

ⁱⁱ A pro forma is forecast based on the following assumptions: loan established at 1.25 debt service coverage ratio. Interest rate of 5.6%. Annual escalation of rent and operating expenses at 2%. Terminal cap rate in year 10 at 8.5%.

ⁱⁱⁱ Qualified Rehabilitation Expenses estimated at 85% of total development budget. Assume Federal credits sold for \$.88 per credit. MA credits assumed sold at \$.80 per credit.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Annual operating expenses adjusted from 35% of Effective gross Income to 30%. The estimated percentages are based upon a survey of comparable multi-family and mixed use properties.

APPENDIX: ECONOMIC CASE STUDY

Redevelopment Economics for Existing Building in Downtown Orange | for illustrative purposes

WITH HISTORIC TAX CREDITS + REDUCED RE. PROPERTY TAX + INCREASED RENTS

EXAMPLE | Development Program

	Square Footage	Use	Rentable Spaces	Rent (per square foot or per apartment)
1st Floor	6,400	retail/office	5,000	\$14.95
2nd Floor	6,400	apartments	7	\$834
<u>3rd Floor</u>	<u>6,400</u>	<u>apartments</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>\$863</u>
	19,200			

Rents increasing (by 15%) due to more attractive,
stable and desirable neighborhood - as demand for Downtown Orange increases

All cost, revenue and financing assumptions based upon survey of local market + benchmarked to approximate comparables in other markets.

Development Budget	per square foot or %	
Land Acquisition	\$225,000	\$12
Construction Commercial	\$640,000	\$100
Construction Residential	\$1,536,000	\$120
Soft Costs (Design, Legal, Permitting, Carry Costs, etc)	\$261,120	12%
<u>Project Contingency</u>	<u>\$133,106</u>	<u>5%</u>
	\$2,795,226	\$146
Approximate Funding due to Federal and State (MA) Historic Tax Credits ⁱⁱⁱ	(\$798,317)	
Adjusted Development Budget	\$1,996,909	

Revenue & Expense		
Rent from Commercial Spaces	\$74,750	
<u>Rent from Apartments</u>	<u>\$142,485</u>	
Total Potential Gross Income	\$217,235	
<u>Less: Vacancy & Collection Losses</u>	<u>(\$10,862)</u>	5%
Effective Gross Income	\$206,373	
<u>Operating Expensesⁱⁱⁱⁱ</u>	<u>(\$61,912)</u>	30%
Net Operating Income	\$144,461	

Project Returns | Value versus Investment

Approximate market value of operating property | when complete and occupiedⁱ \$1,520,645

Approximate | Internal Rate of Return on Equityⁱⁱ **13%**

ⁱ To estimate market value, a capitalization rate of 9.5% is applied. Rate is approximate and based upon survey of transactions and current listings as of Aug 2015 with adjustments for new/rehabilitated building

ⁱⁱ A pro forma is forecast based on the following assumptions: loan established at 1.25 debt service coverage ratio. Interest rate of 5.6%. Annual escalation of rent and operating expenses at 2%. Terminal cap rate in year 10 at 8.5%.

ⁱⁱⁱ Qualified Rehabilitation Expenses estimated at 85% of total development budget. Assume Federal credits sold for \$.88 per credit. MA credits assumed sold at \$.80 per credit.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Annual operating expenses adjusted from 35% of Effective gross Income to 30%. The estimated percentages are based upon a survey of comparable multi-family and mixed use properties.

APPENDIX: WHITEBOX RETAIL

A number of strong potential whitebox locations exist in Downtown Orange. By creating simple, flexible and visible spaces, existing local artists, seasonal retailers, and even service providers (tax accounting, bicycle repair) may be induced into relocating or opening a second location in Downtown. The success of a whitebox program is intrinsically connected to creating an attractive and inviting environment and streetscape. Success is also a factor of critical mass, meaning that several businesses are working in parallel to attract an ever increasing number of consumers.

Lower Town Neighborhood, Paducah, Kentucky

The historic Lower Town neighborhood in Paducah, KY offers a few best practices. This historic neighborhood focused on a targeted program to attract artists into a concentrated area. Gallery spaces were connected with coordinated events, tourism and visitor bureau initiatives and economic development programs. Over time, the area began to attract and support a growing artist community - reversing decades of disinvestment and repurposing historic, vacant buildings. The process evolved into live/work buildings and centers, with the residential components offering great stability to the community.

Revolve Detroit, Detroit, Michigan

In Michigan, Revolve Detroit also offers some interesting best practices. Revolve is a collaborative program that seeks to activate vacant or underutilized store fronts. Rather than a distinct focus on artists, the program is based upon Pop-up business, as well as art installations and galleries. The Pop-up model is akin to the whitebox, allowing low risk access to emerging businesses or for secondary locations. The program in Detroit, at its core, provides financial tools and technical assistance to both landlords and entrepreneurs/tenants. Although a more urban context, such successful efforts in other communities offer a path from vacant spaces to generating activity to eventually having permanent tenancy and increased investment as momentum and critical mass becomes sufficient.

MoDiv, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Also in Michigan, MoDiv in Grand Rapids is a retail incubator that provides simple, relatively small (300-750 square foot) spaces available for existing retailers or for entrepreneurs. As in many such efforts, the individual retailers share common spaces, and collaborate on events, on a strong social media presence, and in advertising.

Western MA Food Processing Center, Greenfield, Massachusetts

Apart from retailers and artists, culinary entrepreneurs are another target group that can greatly benefit from shared physical resources, collaboration and conglomeration. A strong example exists in nearby Greenfield, MA at the Western MA Food Processing Center. The center provides shared equipment, facilities and technical support for food producers. Across the country, shared commercial kitchens are being developed that allow food entrepreneurs access to code compliant spaces that allow them to produce a product, or to allow established restaurants a test or production kitchen. Often, the facilities are accompanied with packaging, labeling and office spaces to support users.

Hope & Main, Warren, Rhode Island

In Warren, Rhode Island, a culinary incubator was developed within a vacant historic building. The facility, named Hope & Main, was created through a \$2.9 million USDA Community Facilities Loan, a program only available to rural municipalities and non-profits. Only in its first year of operation, the culinary incubator offers three commercial kitchens, a presentation kitchen, as well as spaces for packaging and distribution. Roughly 40 small businesses are rent-paying members, and offer products and services from salsa, chocolate,

and smoked fish to dietician services. Every Sunday, the producers host a community marketplace on the grounds - often in cooperation with other family and educational events on Main Street of the community of 10,000 residents.

The Potential in Orange

In Orange, a single commercial kitchen or smaller scale incubator may be a means to generate activity and investment into an underutilized building - and help to foster an economic development cluster. USDA can be approached as a potential funder.

As whitebox and pop-up scenarios evolve and stabilize, another best practice is the “Participating Rent” structure, whereby a landlord/building owner’s lease is based upon a percentage of sales or revenues from a tenant. This structure allows the incentives for both parties to be closely aligned. It also removes a burden of a fixed, monthly rent amount for start-up tenants that often cannot assume such liabilities. Short duration agreements and operating expense sharing elements can also be leveraged to the mutual benefit of all.

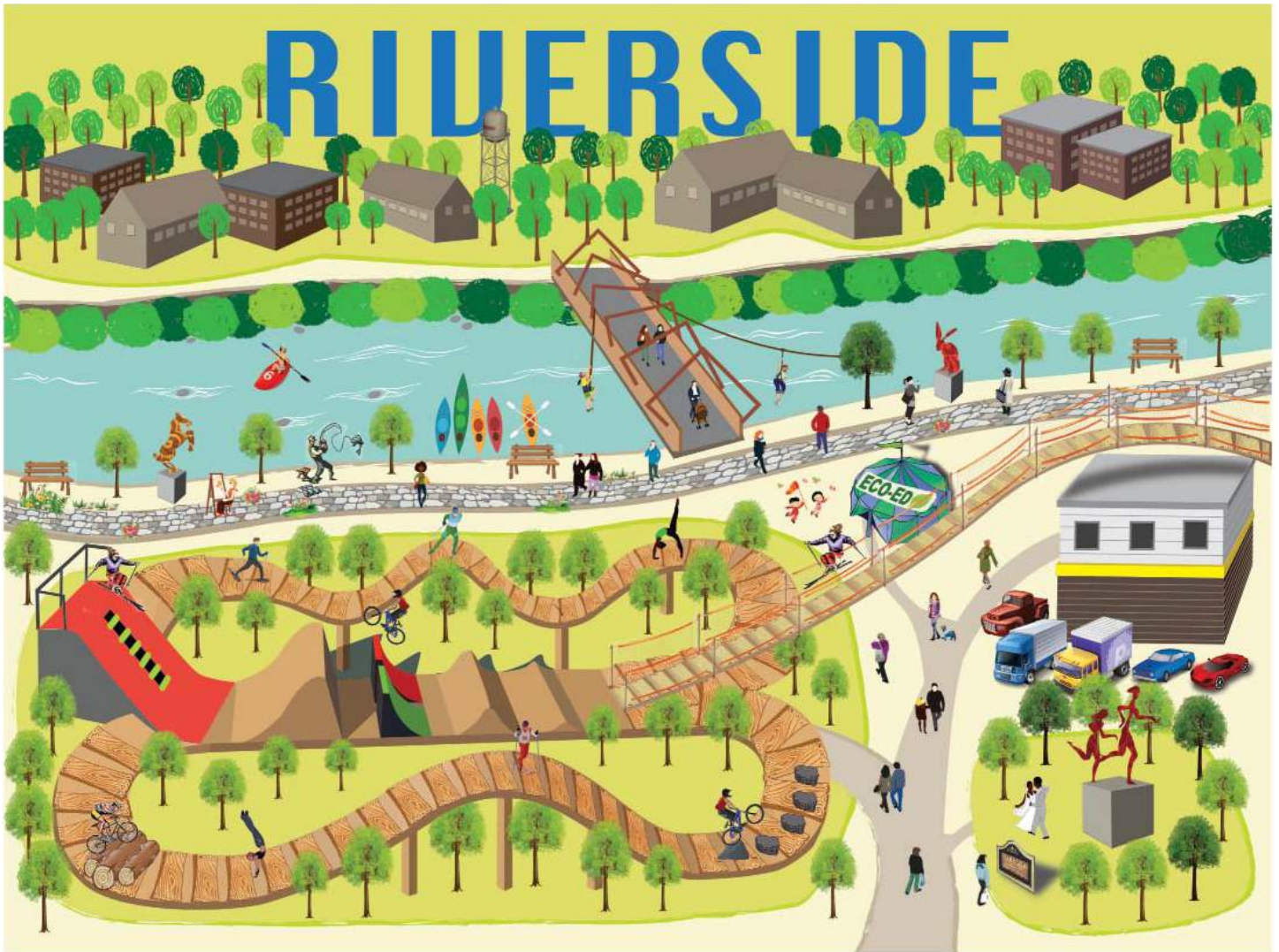
This structure is one of the best practices from emerging and urban retail corridors which rely upon the collective activity, attractiveness and placemaking elements of a district for their own success. Such flexible methods help retailers, service providers, chefs, artists and others to assume the risk of a first location, or in many cases, a secondary location for an established business. The structure helps to offset fixed costs as the critical mass of visitors and complementary services is established over time. It also limits the potential for new tenants to open and close months later - which often sends a strong negative signal to consumers and other landlords and businesses.

Through the described white box solutions, in conjunction with other listed incentives and structures, Orange is providing the ecosystem that is targeted to its existing strength as a hub of the arts, as well as a center for outdoor recreation along the river.

APPENDIX: RIVERSIDE VISION

The below masterplan for a new outdoor recreation area called “Riverside” was shared with the project team following the final public presentation on August 12, 2015. Riverside is being planned by Greenworks on a portion of the Erving Paper Mill property.

For more information relative to Riverside, please visit www.Greenworks4nq.com.



The below masterplan for the Orange Innovation Center (OIC) was shared with the project team following the final public presentation on August 12, 2015.

For more information relative to the OIC, please visit www.orange-innovation.com.

