

Activating

SOUTH MAIN

FALL RIVER/SOUTH MAIN DISTRICT ACTIVATION STRATEGY



MAY 2021



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What is an ACTIVATION STRATEGY?

PURPOSE OF ACTIVATION STRATEGY

The activation strategy provides a common rallying point to coordinate the work of various partners and is part of a larger continuum of revitalization in the TDI district and beyond. The activation strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To build a community of South Main Street stakeholders who will work together to fulfill a common vision for the corridor;
2. To facilitate collaboration between stakeholders to attract resources, attention, and people to the corridor;
3. To focus efforts around key strategies that can lay the foundation for long-term revitalization.

"We need to write the story
of Downtown and modernize it.
Not just the history but the future".

- Public outreach participant

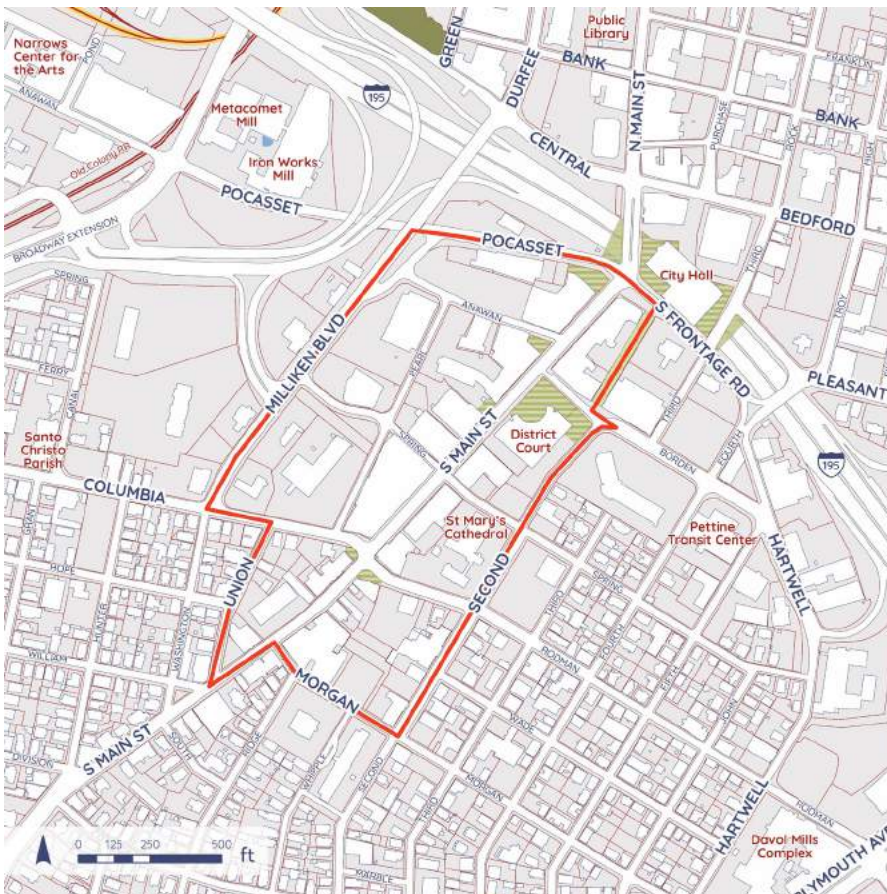
GOALS FOR THE MAIN CORRIDOR

1. More activity through programming and promotion that attracts people to the district;
2. More attractive through both public and private realm investments, such as cleaning, streetscape improvements, storefront improvements;
3. Thriving mix of businesses that is complementary and promotes foot traffic;
4. Mixed-use development to build the residential base needed to support businesses;
5. Better connection to nearby neighborhoods and destinations.

A NOTE ON THIS DOCUMENT

Not surprisingly, COVID-19 had a major impact on this planning process, radically shifting the emphasis of this work to more explicitly assist the small business community in the South Main corridor and downtown more generally. Many responses to address the negative impacts of the pandemic ramped up seemingly at once and many resources have come on line in rapid succession. As a result, this planning process was, and continues to be, woven into the fabric of local, state and national relief efforts.

While a summary of these responses is documented here, some of the early identified goals of TDI and the work of community partners was greatly accelerated during this period, while other efforts came to a standstill. A key takeaway of this document is that this work is happening in real time, evolving quickly, and in need of critical support from public partners, private investors, community stakeholders, and the general public.



STUDY AREA

Source: MassGIS, Interface Studio.

- Study Area
- Plazas
- Water
- Rail
- Proposed MBTA Line

II FOCUSED STRATEGIES

1 ORGANIZE TO
PROMOTE THE
DISTRICT AND
GROW CAPACITY

2 CREATE AN
EXCELLENT
CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE

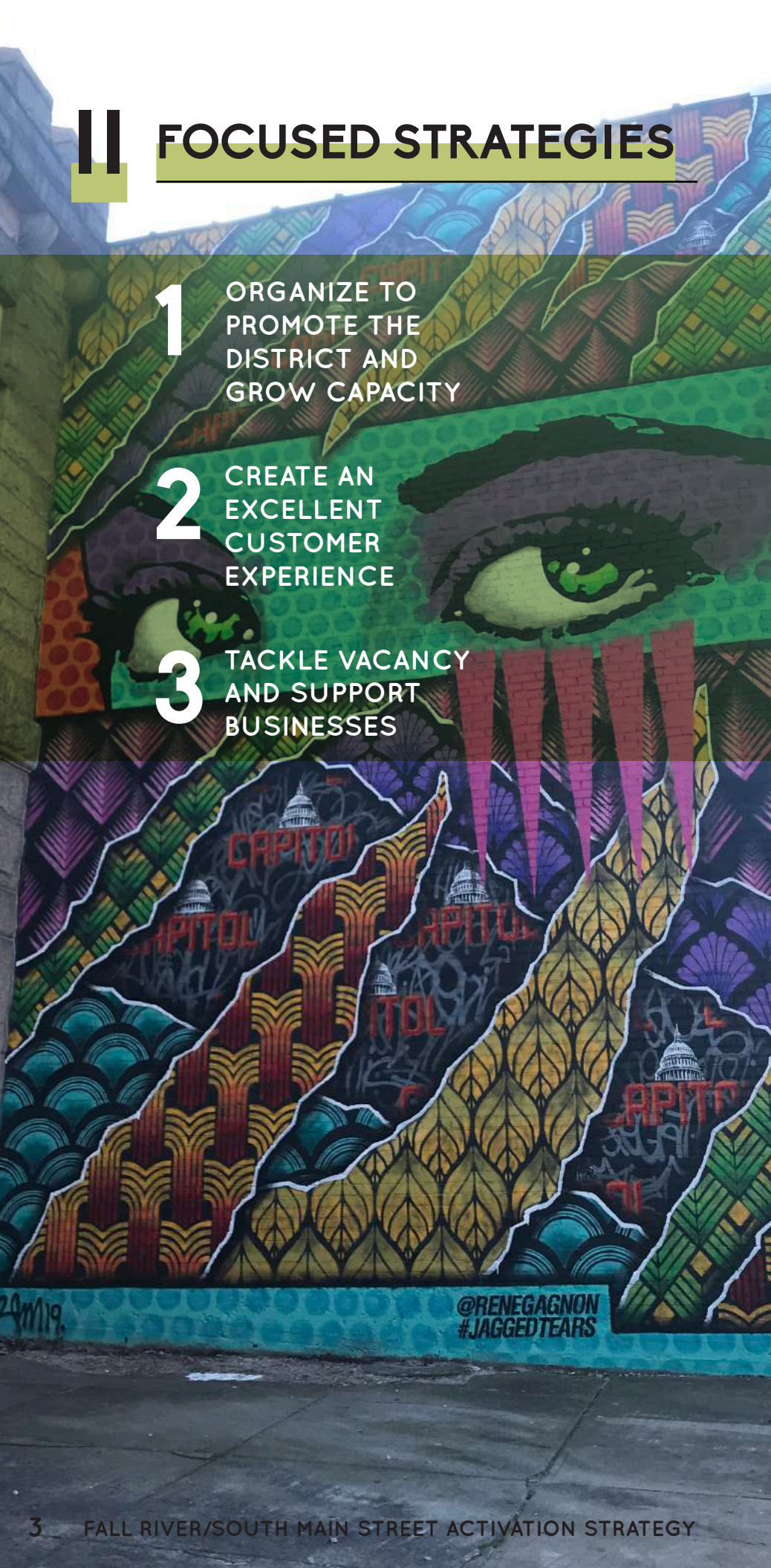
3 TACKLE VACANCY
AND SUPPORT
BUSINESSES

Key issues to address

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT:

The customer experience of the district must be improved.

It needs to be safe, attractive, and convenient. In a survey conducted in January 2020, business owners and customers pointed to safety concerns, difficulty parking, and lack of amenities as detracting from the district. A November 2019 small business questionnaire also pointed to safety, parking and cleanliness as the top three issues that need to be addressed. Public spaces in the district, such as plazas and sidewalks, need maintenance, design, and programming to encourage people to walk and explore the district.



BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT:

The district needs a more diverse mix of businesses

that can attract customers and encourage them to stay longer and visit other businesses. Many businesses, such as the predominance of law offices, have little or no street-level presence and attract customers for a specific purpose with little or no spillover activity. Vacant storefronts negatively impact the district, contributing to the sense of inactivity.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY:

The district needs organizational capacity to sustain revitalization.

There are a broad spectrum of capacity needs to support focused strategies. It is important to assess these together and hire for immediate needs that can drive revitalization rather than focus on anticipated future needs. Key decisions need to be made about the structure of the organization(s) being created and how they are intended to function in relation to the Bristol County Chamber Foundation and city services.

MARKET INFORMATION:

The district needs more people.

About 2,100 people live and work in the census block group that includes the TDI district, but more will be needed to support the restaurants, retail and cultural venues desired by survey participants and stakeholders. In the short-term, the district will need activities to help draw people from elsewhere. In the longer-term, the district needs residential development so there are more people living in the area to support businesses. Currently, there are few residential units in the upper stories on Main Street and the only residences are senior housing.



1 Organize to Promote the District and Grow Capacity

LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

WHY?

The TDI Partnership and Viva Fall River have been making good progress on reaching out to district business owners and building support for an association. This effort must continue to build a management entity with dedicated staff that can fundraise and coordinate the programming and improvement activities described in this document.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

1. Hire district director/coordinator.

A dedicated downtown director is necessary to program district activities described in the strategies of this document, including seasonal programming, district clean ups, business outreach, and the formation of a district management entity. Visible improvements can be used to promote the value of district management.

2. Build a support network for small businesses.

The TDI Partnership has continued to expand their recruitment of businesses, develop services and organize events to keep them engaged. This effort should continue to be a priority and grow support and involvement for a support network for small businesses such as a business association.

This entails assessing small business needs through outreach and relationship building, providing technical assistance through grants and partner programs – both specialized needs for individual businesses and general needs for several businesses, and creating opportunities for businesses to organize, network and be heard on a regular basis.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- City
- One Southcoast Chamber
- TDI Partnership
- Businesses
- District director



Businesses in the heart of the South Main Street commercial corridor.

3. **Explore district management strategy and tools.**

Utilize technical assistance to define an organizational framework and strategy, working with a district director/coordinator to spearhead the exploration of various district management tools and their suitability for the Main Street

district. These include tools such as District Improvement Financing (DIF), Parking Benefits District, and Business Improvement District (BID). The district director would lead the TDI Partnership and business association in weighing pros and cons before undertaking next steps such as financing and feasibility studies.

4. **Form district management entity.**

When ready to pursue the formation of a district management entity, one approach is to consider building a non-profit to start developing a funder base for activities such as programming, lighting, planters, and eventually pave the way for establishing a fully-fledged BID.

"We need to build the muscle of collaboration...collaboration can unlock resources."

- Public outreach participant

COORDINATE BRANDING AND PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY

WHY?

The district does not have a strong or positive reputation in the city. Inconsistent messaging and branding, and limited communication do not convey to potential customers, entrepreneurs and residents what the district has to offer.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

- 1. Develop cohesive branding strategy.**
The branding associated with the TDI Partnership and Viva Fall River should be coordinated so it is clear to all stakeholders and visitors. This may entail an inventory of existing branding examples and collateral to parse how they are being used and develop a strategy and guidelines for use across all platforms.
- 2. Systematically document district activities and improvements.**
The downtown director should coordinate the data collection for all activities and improvements that take place in the district. This information can be summarized to tell the story of the district's transformation as part of promotional content.
- 3. Produce new marketing and promotional content to drive new activity and district management campaign.**
There is a need for content that tells positive stories about the district, introduces businesses to potential customers, and promotes what is happening in the district. This can include a "Man on the Street" series of videos, interviews and stories that can be showcased through the website, newsletters, and social media.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- TDI Partnership
- Viva Fall River
- District director



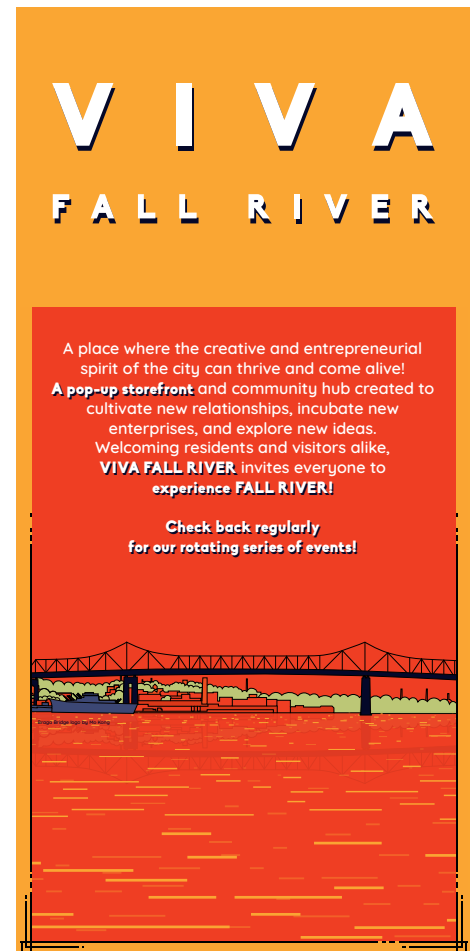
4. Maintain website and other collateral.

The Viva Fall River website is a promotional home for the district and should be maintained with frequent updates and coordination with all other marketing collateral.



TOP: The VIVA FALL RIVER logo and branding were developed by RISD students as part of an urban design studio. The logo depicts Braga Bridge, a Fall River landmark and the main entrance into the city, (Source: RISD. Braga Bridge design by Mo Kong).

BOTTOM: For consistency, the VIVA FALL RIVER branding was applied in the pop-up incubator decals so passersby could link the different planning and engagement processes as part of the same overall effort along the commercial corridor.



2 Create an Excellent Customer Experience

BUILD UP SEASONAL PROGRAMMING IN THE DISTRICT

WHY?

Programming is needed to draw more people to the district and encourage them to stay and explore. Several events have achieved lift-off in recent years and have been building momentum. Although the limitations of the pandemic have been a setback, there is an opportunity to enliven the district by building from these events.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

1. **Strengthen existing events, such as Fabric Fest, Kids-a-Palooza, and Taste Fall River.**

This entails building capacity and partners around these events and actively promoting them so they become established as consistent and regular occurrences.

2. **Build upon the success and lessons learned of established events**

to introduce new programming with a focus on key strategic sites and seasonal placemaking, such as winter placemaking, arts and culture, families, and food. This expanded programming can become more regular in frequency over time as capacity and resources allow.

Gromada Plaza was identified as a priority site for launching initial programming and it is an important gateway that connects the South Main district to North Main and the waterfront. Some ideas for regular programming at Gromada Plaza include arts and culture with performing arts organizations, kids programming with institutions such as the Children's Museum

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- Fall River Arts and Culture Committee
- Arts/cultural organizations, such as Narrows Center, On-Stage, Fall River Symphony
- Nonprofits, such as People Inc
- Institutions, such as the Children's Museum, Fall River Public Library
- Businesses
- District director/coordinator

and public library, and Food Truck Fridays highlighting local businesses. Eventually programming can be expanded to other key sites, such as the Lawton Plaza, the Court House plaza, and Columbia Square, which is another gateway that connects the district to the Columbia Street Cultural District, the waterfront, and the Corky Row neighborhood.



TOP: Taste Fall River promotes local flavors and culinary offerings from restaurants on Main Street.
(Photo Source: Taste of Fall River Facebook Page).

BOTTOM: The Boda de Leite Parade is a Portuguese tradition that takes place yearly along Columbia St.
(Photo Source: O Journal Newspaper).

MAKE MAIN STREET CLEAN, GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE

WHY?

The Main Street corridor does not look clean and attractive, is not an inviting place to spend time in, and is not easy to get around. Through interviews, focus groups and the survey, stakeholders agreed that focusing on the basics of cleanliness and maintenance was a priority. The level of cleanliness along the corridor varies and is in need of improvement so that the entire corridor appears clean and attractive.

Main Street sidewalks are narrow, making it difficult to find room for both travel and elements that could make the corridor more attractive and vibrant, such as trees, planters and outdoor dining. Plazas are in need of maintenance and improvements to make them welcoming. Attention to the physical environment is a necessary component of addressing other needs such as safety and parking. A district that looks clean and cared for will telegraph a message of safety and encourage people to walk around the district.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

1. **Implement a Main Street improvement project.**

The City is working on plans to improve Main Street through the redesign of the right-of-way. This is a longer-term project that will take higher-level coordination and is still in the design stage. As the Main Street project proceeds, one idea to consider is creating wider sidewalks at strategic locations to accommodate seating and landscaping. This idea was presented by RISD students in December 2019 and was well received.

2. **Conduct regular district clean up and maintenance.**

This action can be divided into several components. The first is City-led maintenance such as street sweeping, powerwashing, crosswalk paint, fixing street lights, replacing old banners, and tree trimming. The second is organizing regular volunteer clean ups under the auspices

of the TDI partnership or business association. These events should be well marketed and incorporate branding, such as vests or t-shirts, so that the work is visible and can serve to advertise and grow the network. The third component is to pay a cleaning crew to supplement City services through a district management entity.

Although 80% of survey respondents said they drive to the district, once there, 69% of them walk to get around. They cited better sidewalks and slower traffic as the most important improvements needed to encourage more walking.



Sidewalk conditions along Main Street should be improved to encourage walkability and increase accessibility in the area.

MAKE MAIN STREET CLEAN, GREEN AND ATTRACTIVE (continued)

3. **Develop district wayfinding.**

Stakeholders in the public process discussed the need to make the district easier to navigate to key destinations and find parking. Priority locations for wayfinding signage include destinations such as City Hall and the District Court, as well as the gateway intersections along South Main Street at Pocasset and Columbia Streets that connect the district to neighborhoods and waterfront.

4. **Install planters at key sites.**

Planters with seasonal plantings are a good way to improve the public realm and the ones at City Hall were cited as a good example, however a maintenance plan must be included to ensure they will not end up detracting from the area by being left untended. As sidewalks are narrow along South Main street, key sites like plazas are a better place to begin a planter program. Priority can be given to the Gromada Plaza and Columbia Square as gateways, eventually expanding to other plaza space such as Lawton Plaza.

5. **Commission public art for key sites.**

The district already has several murals to build on with at least two priority sites already identified: asphalt art at Gromada Plaza and a mural at Columbia Square. This effort, combined with storefront art as described in the following strategy, will use the district as a canvas, making the district more visible and encouraging people to come and explore.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- Fall River Arts and Culture Committee
- Nonprofits, such as People Inc.
- Businesses
- Arts/cultural organizations, such as Narrows Center, On-Stage, Fall River Symphony
- Institutions, such as the Children's Museum, Fall River Public Library
- District director



Northbridge, MA is an example of downtown urban design to enhance visual quality and pedestrian environment. Wider sidewalks at strategic locations provide room for trees, shorter crossing distances, and enhanced crosswalks.

PRECEDENT:
The Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation organizes a \$1-a-Day Street Cleaning Program where donation from businesses and matching funds from the city cover daily street cleaning. For more information visit: www.chinatown-pcdc.org/our-community/1-a-day-sponsors



DEVELOP PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

WHY?

It is difficult to find parking in the district even as parking garages are underutilized. Many Main Street parcels do not have space for parking and finding space for parking is also a barrier to residential development. In the public survey, when asked what they disliked most about downtown, parking was ranked second after the lack of stores.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

1. Conduct a Parking and Circulation Study.

A study can collect data to provide a quantitative picture of parking demand and supply issues in the district with a goal of developing recommendations to improve the customer experience as well as ensure financial sustainability for the City.

2. Create a Parking Benefits District.

A Parking Benefits District should be explored as part of the Parking Study. A Parking Benefits District can help finance improvements and infrastructure but it is important to determine the right district geography and ensure that there is enough revenue to support district investments.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- City: Mayor's Office, Traffic, Planning, Facilities, Department of Community Maintenance
- Fall River Redevelopment Authority

"Increase flexibility of parking times, especially considering curbside pick-up customers".

- Restaurant focus group participant



PRECEDENT: The New Bedford Parking Study 2018 developed recommendations that addressed pricing, partnerships, technology and the physical environment. For more information visit: https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/TDI/TDI_Districts/New_Bedford/TDI_TA_New_Bedford_parking_Report_rs.pdf

3 Tackle Vacancy and Support Businesses

ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST WITH STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

WHY?

The private realm represented by storefronts, combined with the public realm elements described in the previous strategy, make up the face of Main Street. Vacant buildings and deteriorated storefronts detract from the district, like missing teeth. Storefront improvements to make the district more attractive were ranked fifth out of a list of 21 ideas in the small business questionnaire. While the long-term goal is to redevelop vacant storefronts, a short-term solution is also needed to make the district more cohesive and attractive.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

1. **Create a city program to incentivize new businesses to move to the district.**

These incentives could include lease subsidy and tenant improvements to help offset the costs and risk of starting a new business.

2. **Activate vacant storefronts with art and artist space.**

Storefront art windows are part of an art and branding strategy for the district that includes murals and signage as described in the previous strategy and below. Installing art in vacant storefront windows accomplishes inter-related goals: improving vacant storefronts, activating the district as a whole, and elevating the local arts community.

3. **Assist property and business owners with façade improvement.**

The storefronts of existing businesses on the corridor vary in appearance. In order to boost the appearance of the corridor as a whole, façade improvements will be necessary. These can be facilitated through matching grant programs such as the Storefront Improvement Program and design assistance.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- City
- Businesses
- Fall River Arts and Culture Committee
- YEAH
- Local artists
- District director

PRECEDENT: The Cambridge Vacant Storefront Creative Design Contest, a program of the Community Development Department and Cambridge Arts, fills vacant storefront windows with locally-made art. Finalists are chosen through a jury review and then voted on by the public. Selected artists are given an honorarium and property owners can choose from their works to display in their vacant storefronts.



LEFT: "True Colors" by Gregg Bazile.
RIGHT: "Longing" by H. Laurie Kurens.



For more information visit:
<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/econdev/vacantstorefrontresources/vacantstorefrontcreativedesigncontest>

4. **Develop creative signage for businesses.**

An additional package of improvements related to façades include signage, such as flat or projecting signs, window signage, and sandwich boards. The Viva Fall River design assistance program can be tapped and expanded to provide businesses owners with signage that promotes both individual businesses and the district as a whole.

5. **Hold a contest for best storefront design.**

Once the façade improvement program is up and running, the City and its partners can hold a contest for best storefront design and open voting up to the public. Such a contest can bring publicity to the competing businesses, introducing them to potential new customers.

"The most important first step is to make the district **look good.**"

- Public outreach participant

ENABLE OUTDOOR DINING

WHY?

The need for outdoor dining was amplified by the pandemic due to public health requirements. Even outside of the pandemic, outdoor dining is a component of a lively and active district that can attract people and make the restaurants more visible.

Survey participants ranked restaurants as the number one thing that brought them to South Main, the thing they like most about South Main, and the number one type of development they would like to see more of. Main Street sidewalks are too narrow to accommodate outdoor dining, but there are opportunities to use other spaces, such as parklets in parking spaces, plazas or parking lots. There is a need for guidance and a formal process allowing businesses to easily understand and access permitting and resources for outdoor dining.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

1. Assist businesses with permitting.

The City should formalize the process for obtaining permits for outdoor dining spaces and assist businesses with navigating permitting.

2. Create an Outdoor Dining Guide.

A guide can be developed to help businesses understand the requirements necessary and resources available for outdoor dining.

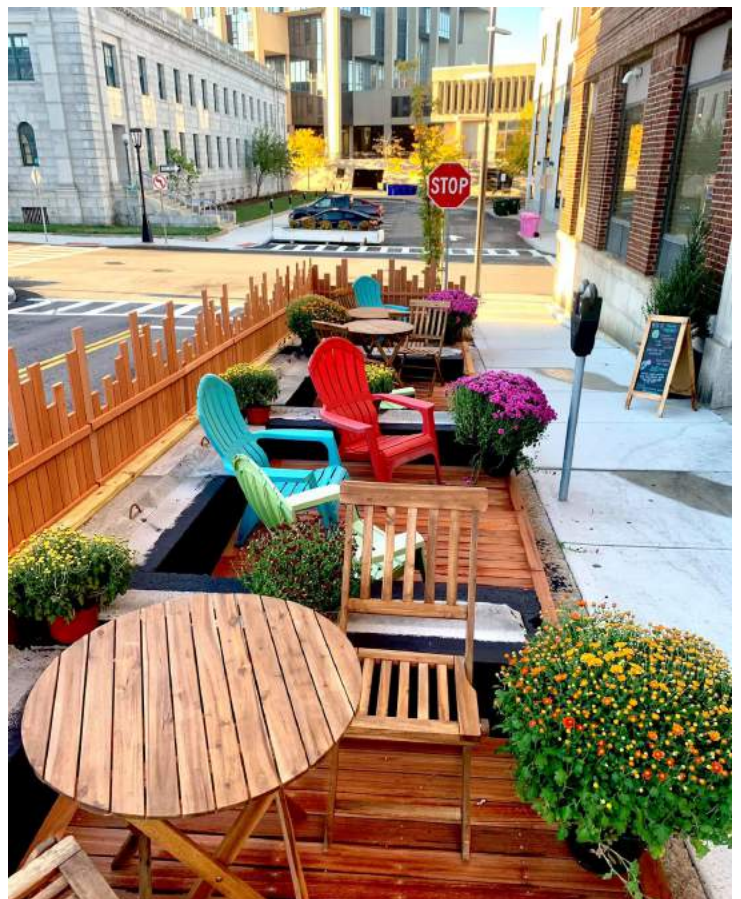
3. Provide grants and design assistance.

Grants and design assistance can be provided to help businesses and elevate the quality of design in the district.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- City
- TDI Partnership
- District director

Temporary conversion of parking space into parklets and outdoor dining areas is already underway in Fall River. The following photos show a parking spot on Purchase St (TOP), the construction process of a temporary deck on site (BOTTOM LEFT) and the final setup with chairs, tables, and greening (BOTTOM RIGHT).
(Photo Source: MassDevelopment).



LAUNCH RETAIL INCUBATOR AND POP-UP STORES

WHY?

The need for a more diverse retail mix was identified through the public engagement process as a high priority. Survey participants said the lack of stores was what they disliked most about the district and ranked retail a close second after restaurants as the type of development they would most like to see in the district. However, the bar for entry is too high, entailing too much risk for would-be entrepreneurs.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

- 1. Finish renovation of initial incubator space.**
The initial incubator space is still in need of renovation to get it ready for regular use.
- 2. Hire staff to manage incubator space.**
Dedicated staff will be needed to run the retail incubator, provide business support, and fully establish the incubator and its programs.
- 3. Expand pop-up store concept to other vacant storefronts.**
After the retail incubator is established and the program is ready for growth, vacant storefronts with interested owners can be built out with subsidized leases to minimize risk for incubator graduates and new businesses while simultaneously bringing new activity to vacant ground floor spaces.
- 4. Recruit businesses and start-ups for incubator and vacant storefronts.**
Recruit businesses and incentivize start-ups for the incubator and pop-up stores in vacant properties with low rents, business supports, and technical assistance. Attention should be given to driving investment to minority-owned businesses in this process.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- TDI Partners
- One SouthCoast Chamber
- Massachusetts Small Business Development Center
- Viva Fall River
- EforAll
- Southcoast Open Air Market

The Viva Fall River pop-up storefront installed in February 2020 in a formerly vacant storefront and strategically located across the street from multiple active businesses serves as a proof of concept of a permanent incubator that could serve the commercial corridor.



SUPPORT MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

WHY?

Vacant buildings detract from the district, but there is no penalty for leaving properties vacant and no incentive for improving them. Upper floors are difficult to develop but have potential to become residential, bringing more people downtown to support businesses. Although new construction is difficult in the South Coast market, historic tax credits make historic buildings work.

WHAT ACTIONS ARE NEEDED?

- 1. Catalog vacancies and perform basic needs assessment and test fits for potential uses.**
Research on vacancy, a needs assessment and redevelopment test fits should be performed to gain an understanding of potential redevelopment in the district and determine uses and feasibility.
- 2. Develop an acquisition and disposition process and strategy.**
The results of the needs assessment and test fits can help inform the use of urban renewal tools to acquire, stabilize, and dispose of properties for redevelopment. The RDA should start with a pilot project, acquiring, stabilizing and disposing of a key asset.
- 3. Make it easier for developers to access opportunities.**
The City should maintain an updated property inventory and make it available to developers. Additionally, developers tours can be organized to showcase key properties and opportunities.
- 4. Develop incentives for redevelopment.**
Explore incentives to close the financing gap for development in the district. These may include subsidizing low rents to encourage the development of ground floor businesses in a bid to increase activity in the district and support upper floor development.
- 5. Leverage investments from local financial partners to drive equitable development.**
Actively seek funding opportunities that drive investments to minority-owned businesses, including funding for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiative within housing and real estate. Work with regional housing organizations to provide more capacity for neighborhood-level investments in homeownership programs and rehabilitation.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- City
- Fall River Redevelopment Authority
- Bristol County Economic Development Consultants



Participants in the February 2020 district pop-up event provided their ideas vision for how the South Main district could be transformed.



IMPLEMENTATION

District Management Approach

Devising a district management framework and strategy is a key implementation priority which will be necessary to carry out many of the strategies laid out in this document. There are two main components to consider: tools and capacity.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Various implementation tools can be evaluated as part of the process of determining the best district management approach. These include:

- Small Business Association/BID
- Public Space Management/Maintenance
- Parking Management (Benefit) District
- DIF

CAPACITY

A capacity needs outline is included at the end of this section that adhere to the following precepts:

- Be clear about geographic boundaries; try to minimize responsibilities that operate at different scales (district, city, region);
- Hire for existing needs with existing or secured resources; do not hire for anticipated needs or prematurely expand responsibilities into geographic regions where there are no resources; or
- When possible and appropriate, combine responsibilities in a single position with the understanding that new capacity can added in the future to address expanding or specialized needs;
- Try to secure funding for multiple years where possible and set salary ranges appropriately to attract talented applicants.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following action steps were identified to support the strategy of laying the groundwork for district management. Additional implementation details are provided below for the actions.

1. Hire district director/coordinator

- ▶ **FUNDING** - This position has seed funding for one year through the Urban Agenda grant program and TDI Local. More funds would need to be secured for future years. A BID would be the logical source of sustainable funding.
- ▶ **CAPACITY** - This should be a full-time position that comes online with direction from a seasoned district management professional and support from an expanded group of leadership to form an advisory committee. This will help guide priority projects and build in the necessary relationships for a successful long-term entity.

It is suggested that this position be additionally supported with a TDI intern (see below) and other TDI Partnership capacity as part of the Viva Fall River efforts (Promotion and grant-making support most notably).

- ▶ **VOLUNTEER** - This position is an ideal way to coordinate the work of volunteers in District activities, especially volunteers recruited from Partner organizations for discrete projects (cleanups, planter programs, repainting, and banners have been identified as needing immediate attention).

2. Build a support network for small businesses

- ▶ **FUNDING** - TDI is establishing an intern program to address key needs, and we have discussed hiring in Fall River for small business outreach and data gathering with \$5,000 to start.

- ▶ **CAPACITY** - Intern & small business group
- This would build a database and collect information to help promote businesses and communicate resources and programs to the businesses. The intern could be recruited from UMass Dartmouth or BCC.

3. Explore district management strategy and tools.

- ▶ **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**
- This would require technical assistance in the form of consultants to look at the feasibility of specific tools and to help lay the foundation for a successfully bringing the programmatic elements online. This would need to articulate what each process entails.

4. Form district management entity.

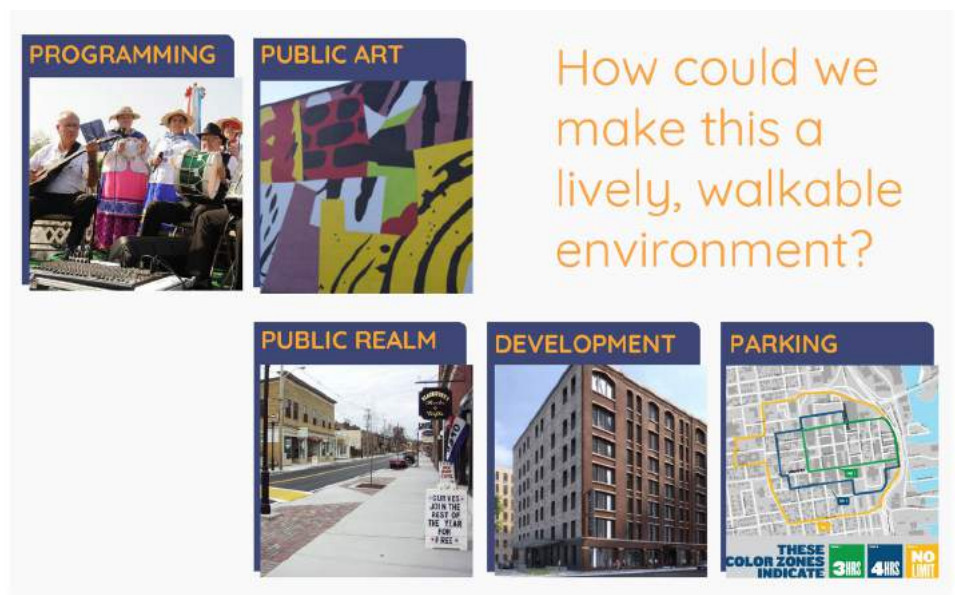
- *TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE*
- The TDI strategy is to build trust and add value first through district activities and encourage people to come to the table with the formation of an advisory group that can help prioritize work and build a coalition of businesses and property owners independent of city functions. This differs from a traditional BID approach, which would hire a director of a new entity at the end of BID formation. We have

identified the following technical assistance needs as part of a distinct “short scope” of services:

- Assist in defining the appropriate job description, job posting and hiring process for the District Coordinator position;
- Assist in onboarding the new District Coordinator, acting as a coach and advisor to help develop

a workplan and processes;

- Assist in the formation of an advisory committee to guide district management positions and define potential future activities and services;
- Advise the Chamber in how best to support this position and communicate the process expectations for a BID formation.



funding from grants to implement initiatives throughout different areas that can improve quality of life for visitors and residents, and create a better economic environment for businesses and workers.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

1 Organize to promote district and grow capacity			
STRATEGIES	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERS	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDS
Lay the groundwork for district management			
* Hire dedicated district director/coordinator	In progress	City, Chamber, TDI Partnership	MDFA/TDI, Urban Agenda, future BID
* Build a support network for small businesses	In progress	TDI Partnership, (district director)	--
* Explore district management strategy and tools	Short	TDI Partnership, (district director)	--
Form district management entity	Medium	TDI Partnership, businesses, (district director)	--
Coordinate branding and promotional strategy			
Develop cohesive branding	In progress	Viva Fall River, TDI Partnership	--
Systematically document district activities and improvements	In progress	TDI Partnership, (district director)	--
Produce new marketing and promotional content to drive new activity and district management campaign	In progress	Viva Fall River, TDI Partnership, (district director)	--
Maintain website and other collateral	In progress	Viva Fall River, TDI Partnership	--

* = Priority

TIMEFRAME:

SHORT = 1-5 years

MEDIUM = 5-10 years

LONG = 10+ years

ABBREVIATIONS:

BCEDC = Bristol County Economic Development Consultants

BIC = Business Innovation Center

BID = Business Improvement District

DIF = District Improvement Financing

FRACC = Fall River Arts and Culture Committee

FRRDA = Fall River Redevelopment Authority

MSBDC = Massachusetts Small Business Development Center

MDFA = MassDevelopment

MVSP = Massachusetts Vacant Storefronts Program

TDI = Transformative Development Initiative

2 | Create an excellent customer experience

STRATEGIES	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERS	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDS
Build up seasonal programming in the district			
Strengthen existing programming	In progress	Fall River Arts and Culture Committee (FRACC), arts/ cultural organizations, nonprofits, institutions, businesses, (district director)	Patronicity, MDFA-Commonwealth Places, MassDOT-Shared Streets and Spaces, Private Contributions
Build upon the success and lessons learned of established events to introduce new programming	Short	FRACC, arts/cultural organizations, nonprofits, institutions, businesses, (district director)	Patronicity, MDFA-Commonwealth Places, MassDOT-Shared Streets and Spaces, Private Contributions, MDFA/TDI-Creative Catalyst Grant
Make Main Street clean, green and attractive			
Implement a Main Street improvement project	In progress	City	City, State
Conduct regular district clean up and maintenance:			
<i>* City-led maintenance: crosswalk paint, tree trimming, powerwashing</i>	Short	City	--
<i>* Volunteer clean up teams with branded vests or T-shirts</i>	Short	TDI Partnership, future business association, (district director)	--
<i>Paid cleaning crew to supplement City services</i>	Medium	Future business association/ BID, (district director)	Businesses, BID
Develop district wayfinding	Medium	City, TDI Partnership, future business association/BID	Businesses, BID, MDFA/ TDI
Install planters at key sites	Short	City, TDI Partnership, businesses	Businesses, BID, MDFA/ TDI
Commission public art for key sites	Short	City, TDI Partnership, future business association/BID	Businesses, BID, MDFA/ TDI
Develop parking management strategy			
*Conduct Parking and Circulation Study	Short	City, Fall River Redevelopment Authority (FRRDA), Chamber, TDI Partnership	MDFA/TDI
Create Parking Benefits District	Medium	City, FRRDA, Chamber, TDI Partnership	--

3 | Tackle vacancy and support businesses

STRATEGIES	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERS	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDS
Encourage and assist with storefront improvements			
Create a city program to incentivize new businesses to move to the district	Short	City	Massachusetts Vacant Storefronts Program (MVSP)
Activate vacant storefronts with art and artist space	Short	FRACC, YEAH, local artists, property owners, (district director)	Patronicity, MDFA-Commonwealth Places, MassDOT-Shared Streets and Spaces, Private Contributions, MDFA/TDI-Creative Catalyst Grant
Assist property and business owners with facade improvement	Short	City, local designers, businesses	Storefront Improvement Program
Develop creative signage for businesses	In progress	YEAH, businesses, (district director)	MDFA/TDI
Hold a contest for best storefront design	Short	City, TDI Partnership	--
Enable outdoor dining			
* Assist businesses with permitting	Short	City, (district director)	--
Create an Outdoor Dining Guide	Short	City, TDI Partnership	--
Provide grants and design assistance	Short	City, TDI Partnership	MDFA/TDI
Launch retail incubator and pop-up stores			
* Finish renovation of initial incubator space	Short	EforAll, JRI, Business Innovation Center (BIC), Viva Fall River	MDFA/TDI
Hire designated staff to manage space	Short	TDI Partnership, (district director)	MDFA/TDI
Expand pop-up store concept to other vacant storefronts	Medium	City, FRRDA, EforAll, JRI, BIC, Viva Fall River, property owners, (district director)	MVSP

3 | Tackle vacancy and support businesses (continued)

STRATEGIES	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERS	POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FUNDS
Recruit businesses and start-ups for incubator and vacant storefronts	Short-Medium	City, FRRDA, Chamber, TDI Partnership, EforAll, JRI, BIC, Viva Fall River, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center, (district director)	MVSP
Support mixed use development			
Catalog vacancies and perform basic needs assessment and test fits for potential uses	Short	City, FRRDA	--
Develop and acquisition and disposition process and strategy	Medium	FRRDA, Bristol County Economic Development Consultants (BCEDC)	MVSP, DIF
Make it easier for developers to access opportunities	Short	FRRDA, City	--
* Develop incentives for redevelopment	Short	City	DIF
Leverage investments from financial partners to drive equitable development	Short	FRRDA, City	--