



Rapid Recovery Planning Program

2021

Funding Assistance
Summary Report

Town of Dudley

*Dudley Town Hall
Source: waymarking.com*

Acknowledgements



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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| RRP Program Background | 5 |
| Introduction | |
| RRP Funding Assistance Approach | 9 |
| Summary/Purpose | |
| Funding Process | 11 |
| Levels of Funding Support | 12 |
| Recommended Approach to Attaining Funding | 14 |
| Dudley: Funding Application Approach & Strategy | 15 |
| Funding Application Best Practice and General Requirements | 17 |
| Priority Projects: Applicable Funding Program and Application Process | 20 |
| Project 1: Activate Vacant Lots/Storefronts | 21 |
| Project 2: Consider Gateway Improvements | 30 |

What This Funding Resource Report Provides

The RRP Funding Assistance Program gives RRP communities the opportunity to prioritize funding opportunities for key projects identified in the RRP Final Plan. This document acts as a framework and guide that outlines funding needs relative to the priority project(s), funding best practices, targeted funding programs, and grant pursuit strategies. Through working with communities to address particular needs and opportunities, the RRP Funding Assistance Team aims to develop tailored guidance that will position each community to have a successful outcome when pursuing RRP project funding opportunities with the State, non-profits and Federal resources.

Ultimately, this report includes a Community Funding Alternative Matrix based on the community's identified needs. The report outlines funding options and a recommended sequence for pursuing funding. Grant timing, capital available, competitiveness, application and compliance requirements, and other key attributes have been included in this final report.

The report is organized to provide the following information:

- **RRP Program Background** – This section provides an overview of the Rapid Recovery Program, its goals, involved communities, and phases. The three phases developed through the RRP program involved robust data collection efforts, the creation of publicly-vetted project ideas, and the development of a final plan.
- **RRP Funding Assistance Program Process & Overview** – This section documents the process for RRP communities to apply for funding assistance and identify priority projects from their RRP Final Plan. It also outlines the various levels of funding assistance that is determined for each community applicant as well as funding program categories as defined by the State and RRP Funding Assistance Team.
- **Recommended Approach to Attaining Funding** – Developing an approach to pursue grant programs can help communities prioritize funding programs and identify opportunities based on internal capacity, level of effort, and project readiness. This section includes funding application best practices, key components to include in grant program applications, and immediate next steps for RRP communities.
- **Priority Projects and Applicable Funding Programs** – This portion of the report includes the RRP Final Plan project rubrics for the identified priority project(s). The Funding Assistance Team developed a matrix of funding resources that provides details such as grant program goals, eligible use of funds, level of effort to apply, and grant program maximum amount.

Rapid Recovery Plan Program Background



Peabody
Source: Stantec

This plan has been made possible through technical assistance provided by the Baker-Polito Administration's Rapid Recovery Planning program.

The Rapid Recovery Planning (RRP) program is a key part of the Baker-Polito Administration's Partnerships for Recovery Plan, the strategy established to help communities stabilize and grow the Massachusetts economy as a result of the economic impacts brought on by COVID-19. The plan invests \$774 million in efforts to get people back to work, support small businesses, foster innovation, revitalize downtowns, and keep people in stable housing.

In addition to the planning program, recovery efforts include a Small Business Relief Program administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. This program, which concluded in May 2021, provided more than \$687.2 million to over 15,000 businesses across the Commonwealth, with a focus on businesses located in Gateway Cities, among demographic priorities, or operating in sectors most impacted by the pandemic. Cities, towns, and non-profit entities are using Regional Pilot Project Grant Program funding for recovery solutions that seek to activate vacant storefronts, support regional supply chain resiliency, and create small business support networks. To promote recovery in the tourism industry and support the ongoing My Local MA marketing initiative encouraging residents to support their local economies by shopping, dining and staying local, another \$1.6 million in grants were awarded through the new Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant Pilot Program. Through April 2021, MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program has invested \$26.4 million in municipal Shared Streets projects to support public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce.

In support of the overall recovery strategy, the Administration made \$9.5 million in awards for 125 communities to create Rapid Recovery Plans, through the MA Downtown Initiative Program. These plans address the impacts of COVID-19 on local downtowns and small businesses by partnering with Plan Facilitators and Subject Matter Experts to pursue locally-driven, actionable strategies.

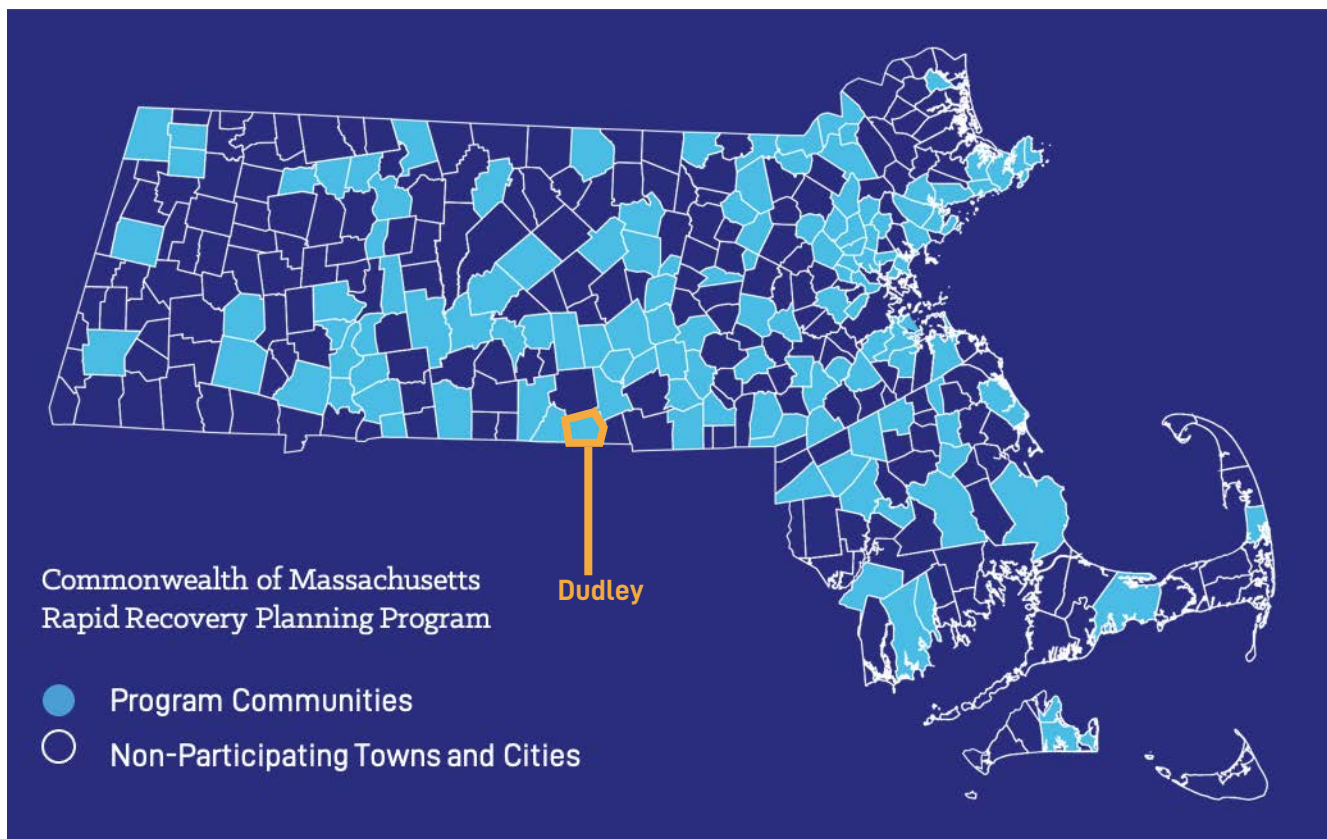
**For more information,
contact DHCD:
100 Cambridge St, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114
617-573-1100
mass.gov/DHCD**



125 communities participated in the Rapid Recovery Plan Program

52 Small Communities
51 Medium Communities
16 Large Communities
6 Extra Large Communities

The Mass Downtown Initiative distributed nearly \$10 million across 125 communities throughout the Commonwealth to assess impacts from COVID-19 and develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges in these downtowns, town centers, and commercial districts.



Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program Summary

The Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program was intended to provide every municipality in Massachusetts the opportunity to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges and COVID-19 related impacts to downtowns, town centers, and commercial areas across the commonwealth.

The program provided technical assistance through Plan Facilitators assigned to each community applicant (e.g., City, town, or nonprofit entity) and Subject Matter Experts who supported the development of ideas for project recommendations and shared knowledge through best practice webinars and individual consultations.

Communities and Plan Facilitators were partnered through the program to assess COVID-19 impacts, convene community partners to solicit project ideas and provide feedback, and develop project recommendations. A plan was developed for each community, summarizing key findings from the diagnostic phase of the program and including a range of priority project recommendations.

Each Rapid Recovery Plan was developed across three phases:

- **Phase 1 - Diagnostic; Phase 2- Project Recommendations; and Phase 3 - Plan Development.**

In Phase 1 - Diagnostic, Plan Facilitators utilized the Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework that was adapted from the award-winning Commercial DNA approach as published by the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC).

Following the diagnostic efforts in Phase 1, Plan Facilitators, in close coordination with communities, developed and refined a set of recommendations that addressed priority challenges and opportunities. These project recommendations were organized in clear and concise rubrics created specially for the Rapid Recovery Plan Program. Project recommendations are rooted in a set of essential and comprehensive improvements across six categories: Public Realm, Private Realm, Revenue and Sales, Administrative Capacity, Tenant Mix, Cultural/Arts & Others.

The framework was designed to ensure a methodical diagnosis of challenges and opportunities in each community and to identify strategies and projects that aligned with the interests and priorities of each community. The framework looks at four areas of analysis: Physical Environment, Business Environment, Market Information, and Administrative Capacity - each equipped with guiding questions to direct research conducted by Plan Facilitators.

During Phase 3, Plan Facilitators and the communities' RRP representatives worked together to develop the RRP Final Plan, which incorporated all project rubrics as developed through Phase 2, key findings and summaries from the diagnostic data results, and local and regional best practices and case studies as communities work to implement their projects.

RRP Funding Assistance Approach



Walpole
Source: Stantec

Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

Funding Assistance Summary

The Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program was intended to provide every municipality in Massachusetts the opportunity to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges and COVID-19 related impacts to downtowns, town centers, and commercial areas across the Commonwealth. The CARES Act and ARPA have made significant funding resources available to communities across America with similar recovery needs. The pursuit of this and other financial assistance is the next key step to making many RRP projects a reality for communities, regardless of their current level of staff capacity. The funding assistance program is available to each RRP community to help them confidently initiate the funding process for key projects, with a preference for those that can be implemented in the short-term. Self-directed funding resources will continue to be available for communities who do not require assistance at Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program | Mass.gov.

Adequate and early funding to support recovery projects is recognized as a key barrier for most municipalities. To address this challenge, the RRP is providing funding assistance through individual consultations. This report summarizes the relevant funding options for specific RRP projects discussed during a consultation with Dudley and offers tactical recommendations to securing funding to support community recovery projects.

Rapid Recovery Program Funding Process

The Commonwealth assembled a funding resource team comprised of consultants to help identify appropriate funding sources, application requirements, key aspects to highlight in applications, expected levels of effort, grant timelines, etc. In some cases, regional planning agency (RPA) staff participated in the process.

The following process was outlined to help communities finalize and pursue their preferred funding sources.



STEP 1. Community identifies catalyst projects from RRP

The choice of which 1-2 RRP projects to be reviewed for funding assistance was determined by the community.



STEP 2. Community applies for funding assistance

Each RRP community was invited to submit a basic application for specific funding assistance for up to 2 projects. The application included general information about the community and questions to determine the appropriate funding assistance for projects identified within a Rapid Recovery Plan.



STEP 3. Community and funding team initial meeting

Each community received an initial 1-hour online meeting between the RRP community and a member(s) of the Funding Resource team. The meeting focused on sharing information about the project, local capacity to pursue funding, and potential funding options for each project.



STEP 4. Community Funding Alternatives Matrix

Following the initial meeting, the Funding Resource team created a Community Funding Alternatives Matrix based on each community's identified needs. This includes outlined funding options and a recommended sequence for pursuing funding.



STEP 5. Final Document Created

The summary document was prepared to include community-specific details about grant timing, funding program capital availability and competitiveness, and application and compliance requirements.

Rapid Recovery Program Levels of Funding Assistance

During the initial community meeting, staff discussed four levels of potential community support available, generally identified as follows:



The community is sufficiently resourced and self-directed. Funding team support will stop after the initial call.



After the initial call and delivery of a Community Funding Alternatives Matrix, a follow-up call of up to 1-hour will be held with the community to review the available funding related to the project(s) and provide direction on how to access the information related to the funding resource(s) and any insights on how to strengthen a potential application.



For communities with limited staff capacity, the same assistance as Level 1 will be provided, as well as up to 2-hours of follow-up emails and call(s).



For communities seeking extra assistance, Level 2 review and assistance will be provided, plus an additional 2-hours of emailed edits/comments on the community's grant(s) application materials.

Rapid Recovery Program Funding Categories

The Funding Resource Team compiled a comprehensive list of Private, Foundational, Federal, and State resources within the following categories:

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Wastewater
- Drinking Water
- Storm Water
- Dams/Levees

BUSINESS SUPPORT ATTRACTION

- Space Activation
- Business Recruitment, Retention and Expansion

CULTURAL ARTS

- Cultural District Formation
- Public Art
- Placemaking
- Cultural Facilities
- Outdoor Programming
- Community Center

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Community/Economic Development
- Staff Capacity and Training
- Planning
- Stakeholder Engagement

PERMITS/ REGULATORY TOOLS

- Zoning/Regulations
- Permits
- Guidelines

REDEVELOPMENT

- Housing
- Commercial Rehabilitation
- Facade Improvements
- Public Buildings

ENVIRONMENT/ OUTDOOR RECREATION

- Parks
- Open Spaces
- Water Access
- Shoreline
- Habitat
- Brownfields
- Disaster Mitigation/Recovery/Preparedness

TRANSPORTATION

- Streetscape
- Trails
- Roads
- Bridges
- Public Transit
- AV/EV
- Parking
- Smart Mobility
- Alternative Transportation

WAYFINDING

- Wayfinding

BRANDING AND MARKETING

- Branding/Marketing

MISC.

- Data
- Social Services
- Workforce Development
- Policy/Advocacy

Recommended Approach to Attaining Funding



Marshfield
Source: Stantec

Town of Dudley: Funding Application Approach & Strategy

The Rapid Recovery Program in the town of Dudley is focused on the West Main Street neighborhood. This area has a mixture of residential and business development. The businesses that have made Dudley their home have faced significant challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dudley's Rapid Recovery Plan yielded several recommendations which seek to support existing and future businesses and make the community's public realm more inviting for retail and restaurant customers.

The Town hopes to pursue a branding and marketing process to re-imagine how vacant properties could be better utilized to activate the corridor. Dudley also wishes to encourage less traditional and smaller businesses to potentially occupy available properties. An inventory of the capacity of different properties to be re-purposed for other uses would be helpful.

This plan seeks to provide resources to connect businesses with direct support and find funding to re-envision this corridor. The results of these interventions could yield strategies which re-purpose space for public gatherings or provide justifications for a larger infrastructure project to redesign this corridor.

Discussion with the Town demonstrated that there is a strong awareness of the grant programs available but a lack of capacity to properly pursue – the ability for future funding solutions to serve several purposes is crucial. The Town should consider strengthening partnerships with Nichols College, the Webster Dudley Business Alliance, and the local Economic Development Corporation to find creative and strategic ways to apply potential funding and program support.

With the right messaging and support, the Town is well-positioned to acquire funding for its RRP priority projects. Highlights of a recommended strategy are provided below:

Determine Project Readiness

- Determine the quality of building stock that needs renovations versus those that can be occupied with minimal improvements
- Define anticipated outcomes of studies, particularly how they can support space activation and improved multimodal travel in the community
- Develop narrative surrounding the tourism-related benefits of project opportunities to expand funding options

Highlight Program Benefits

- Develop a narrative from the previous RRP efforts including community feedback (e.g. merchant groups) and broader impact on sales revenue
- Cite nearby model example(s) for project results, such as Salem's parking system (restructured following a study) or a local roadway configuration project which improved operations and safety outcomes

Assemble Community Partners

- Build consensus between community stakeholders on design improvements along West Main Street; Nichols College may be a particularly strong partner in this regard to seek alternative funding sources or expand capacity
- Share funding program source possibilities with peers in the community and gauge interest in providing assistance, up to championing grant applications to relieve capacity constraints within the Town

Monitor Other Funding Sources

- Identify relevant components of the recently passed infrastructure bill – particularly related to roadway and sidewalk improvements

Funding Application Best Practices and General Requirements

Documentation to Assemble

- DUNS number (Required for all Federal and some State grants)*
- SAM's** registration up to date (Required for some grants)
- Supporting studies / reports / design documents
- Cost estimates
- Letters of support

Correspondence with Funder

- Connect early with funding agency to clarify any requirements and notify of intent to apply, when applicable

Correspondence with Other Project Partners

- Keep regular communication with project partners and other parties who will be impacted by the project. Let them know early on of intentions to apply to funding and if any effort is required on their part to support application packages.



Pursuing Federal Grant Programs

Federal programs including (but not limited to) the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grants and Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program should be pursued using a joint application approach. If feasible, communities should work with their Regional Planning Association and fellow RPA municipalities to create one (or a few) region-wide applications.

Applications should involve communities with common-themed projects, and will ultimately be submitted and managed by the RPA. Although most communities are individually eligible for these competitive federal grants, region-wide applications increase the chance of receiving a larger pool of grant money.



***DUNS number-** This number is often referenced by lenders and potential business partners to help predict the reliability and/or financial stability of the company in question. D-U-N-S, which stands for data universal numbering system, is used to maintain up-to-date and timely information on more than hundreds of millions global businesses.

To find your number, go to www.SAM.gov and click "Check Status" located at the top of the page. Search by entering your DUNS number or business name. If found, your registration status will be displayed.

****SAM-** Both current and potential government vendors are required to register their business in the System of Award Management SAM in order to be awarded contracts by the US Government. This is sometimes referred to as "self-certifying" your business. Vendors are required to complete a one-time registration to provide basic information relevant to procurement and financial transactions.

To create an account and access SAM as a new user, go to www.sam.gov, click on "Create a User Account", select account type, and complete registration.

Further details and contact information is available here- https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/articles/Registering_on_SAM.pdf

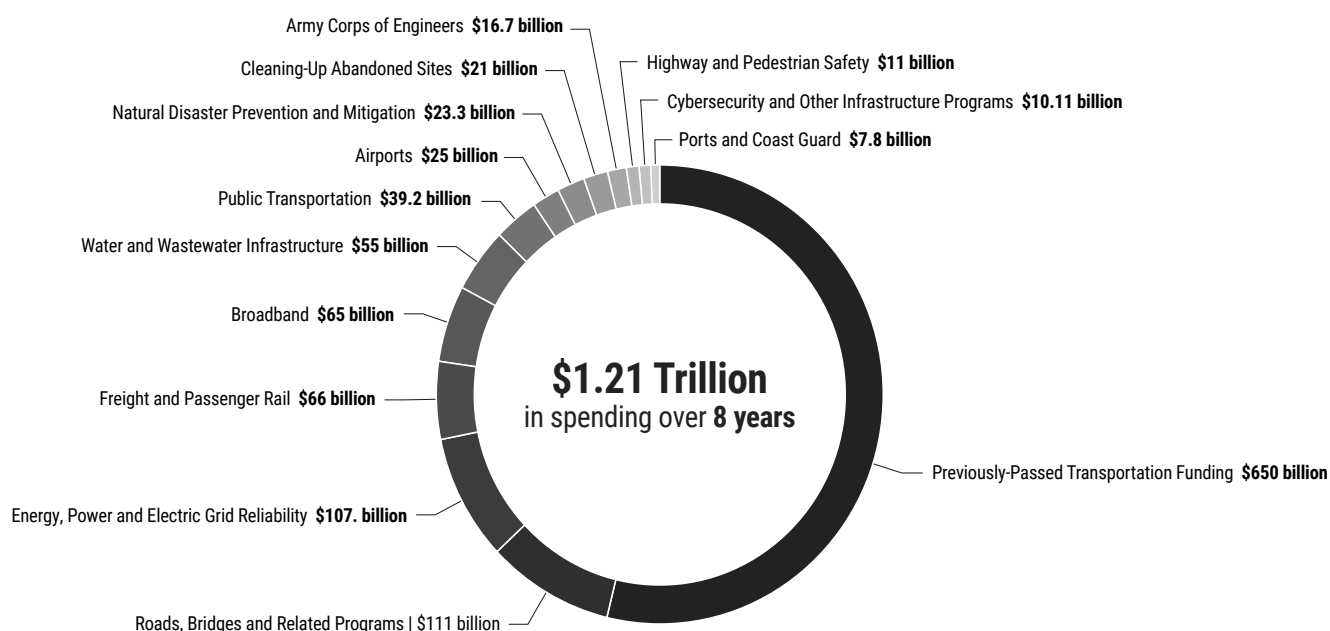
Funding Application Best Practices and General Requirements

Additional Federal Funding

After a months-long public process, on December 13th Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker signed a \$4 billion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coronavirus relief bill and tax revenue surplus bill. The package directs billions of dollars in relief to communities and individuals hardest hit by the pandemic. Up to \$2.55 billion of the \$5.286 billion in federal ARPA funds provided to the state in May will be used to cover the costs, leaving about \$2.3 billion in ARPA funds unspent. The bill also relies on \$1.45 billion in fiscal year 2021 surplus state tax revenue.

Several of the investment targets in the bill align with RRP funding needs identified, including \$267 million to economic development and \$414 million to infrastructure. Through this legislation, ARPA State funding is directed to many RRP communities for specific activities and additional dollars may be available through State programs and competitive grants. During the summer of 2021, RRP communities received direct allocations through the ARPA and may now position to receive additional ARPA-related funds from the state. ARPA money must be committed by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law by President Biden on Monday, November 15th. Totalling \$1.2 trillion in spending over eight years with \$550 billion in new spending, this is the biggest infrastructure package in decades. The IIJA will have a significant impact on Massachusetts communities and projects. State agencies, regional transportation planning organizations, and other government entities will receive direct allocations from formula funding programs. Over 150 new programs were created through the legislation, and several are discretionary grant programs.



Though there is much greater policy and program detail in the 2,700-page legislation, the chart above provides a summary breakdown of where the funding will go.

Source: Stantec

Funding Application Best Practices and General Requirements

Additional Federal Funding - IIJA in Massachusetts

The table below highlights funding that Massachusetts is entitled to through formula allocations. Funding will be split into annual amounts, 2022-2026, and does not include additional discretionary grant programs that can be leveraged to support projects in Massachusetts.

| Massachusetts IIJA Funding | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Infrastructure | Massachusetts Funding |
| Roads, highways and alternative transportation | \$4.2 billion |
| Bridge replacement and repair | \$1.1 billion |
| Transit | \$2.5 billion |
| EV charging network | \$63 million |
| Broadband | \$100 million |
| Water and wastewater | \$1.1 billion |
| Airports | \$244 million |

Though the IIJA does not create an immediate opportunity for the projects described in this report, it is important to track emerging opportunities from the legislation. Funding levels and programs in the IIJA that may create viable funding options include:

- A 60%, 5-year increase in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) Transportation Alternative Program
- The creation of the federal, \$7.3B Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) grant program
- \$500 million in federal funding to Healthy Streets for cool and porous pavement and tree cover
- Over \$7B in energy efficiency and low-income weatherization funding

Priority Projects: Applicable Funding Program and Application Process



Worcester
Source: Stantec

Project 1: Activate Vacant Lots/Storefronts



Fall River
Source: Stantec

Activate Vacant Lots/Storefronts

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Category |  Public Realm |
| Location | Throughout Study Area |
| Origin | Economic Development Committee |
| Budget |  Low Cost (<50K) |
| Timeframe |  Short Term (Less than 5 years) |
| Risk |  Low Risk: Not a financial risk but project needs property owner buy in. |
| Key Performance Indicators | Number of vacant storefronts; Number of property owners, Number of collaborators |
| Partners & Resources | MOBD, CMRPC, Town Planner, EACC, MDI, WDBA |



Vacant storefront in the study area



Example of public pavilion that can be used for programming in the study area

Diagnostic

Vacancies existed prior to the Covid-19 but some closures were caused by the pandemic. There is a business boom currently happening in the downtown area of the abutting town of Webster and that means Dudley is well placed to take advantage of this energy. With some coordination and marketing efforts, these vacancies could be highlighted and possible homes for businesses that may not be perfect fits for the Webster main street.

There are multiple vacant lots throughout the study area that could also be activated for public/outdoor meeting space, farmer's markets, event space, cultural connections. Depending on ownership, these could be built out with short term projects.

The Massachusetts Vacant Storefront Program is run by the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) to help towns revitalize their commercial areas. The Town of Dudley could apply to be certified as a Vacant Storefront District by the EACC. If the Town is certified and the Town can provide a local match, it could apply for refundable EDIP tax credits for leasing and occupying a vacant storefront in that district. This funding would help the Town reduce the number of vacant storefronts in the West Main Street district and bring more life to this part of town.

Action Item

Vacant storefront/lot action items include:

- Build a database of vacancies that include address, square footage, ownership, NNN rate, lease rate and contact information
- Work with local realtor to collect important data for the space. Traffic counts, length of time abutting space has been in business, what the property owner will pay for and what they won't.
- Once database is built share, share, share on social media so people are aware of the available space. Add possible uses for the space also- this will help people envision what could be placed there.
- Brainstorm possible programming that could take place while the storefronts/lots are still vacant.
- Contact local artists that may be interested in displaying artwork or sculptures in the space.
- Work with the Town Clerk's Office to make sure the Town is as business friendly as could possibly be. Starting a business is risky and stressful and the more patient the person is on the other side of the questions, the better for the potential entrepreneur.

Process

Phase 1: Preliminary planning efforts include data collection, database building, property owner meetings and relationship building

Phase 2: Build out social media platforms (preferably linked together with hootsuite or something similar) where you can share the valuable information about the vacant space and possibilities. Make sure to note where to turn for answers to any questions that might arise.

Phase 3: Work on possible 'pop up' markets or temporary uses for entrepreneurs or outdoor public activities/programming strategies for the vacant lots.

Activate Vacant Lots and Storefronts

Project
1

Applicable Potential Funding Resources

The first step in creating an actionable funding plan is to define future projects and initiatives. Through the development of a Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP), Dudley has identified the projects the Town would like to implement to catalyze recovery. The RRP Project Category type has also been identified.

Recommended funding sources for each project are listed below and outlined in detail on the following pages of this section. Funding sources were selected based on the following factors:

1. **Relevancy** to project
2. Ability to **close funding gap**
3. **Timing** of project in relation to active status of opportunity
4. Level of **competitiveness** of community in relation to popularity of opportunity
5. Level of **effort** to prepare application and successfully manage the project in the context of community capacity

| Project 1 of 2: Activate Vacant Lots and Storefronts | | |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Program Name | Priority to Pursue | Grant Program Strategy |
| Massachusetts Downtown Initiative | 1 | Determine most relevant focus of project idea (traffic, parking, or wayfinding study) for inclusion in application |
| Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program | 2 | Identify a non-profit organization to work with to facilitate matching local businesses with assistance. |
| Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network | 3 | Create a database on local business and their technical needs. |

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative

Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage



| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Purpose/Goals | <p>The Department of Housing and Community Development's Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) offers a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns. The primary mission of the MDI is to make downtown revitalization an integral part of community development in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. MDI's guiding principle is that the most effective approach to downtown revitalization is a holistic one that addresses economic and community development needs, and provides a framework of interrelated activities that promote positive change in a downtown to keep it healthy and prosperous.</p> <p>Through the Technical Assistance Program, MDI provides consultant services to assist communities with its downtown revitalization efforts.</p> |
| Eligible Applicants | All municipalities, although some fundings is set aside for non-entitlement CDBG communities. |
| Eligible Use of Funds | Funds would be used as technical assistance in the form of consulting services. Eligible activities can include defining district management approaches (such as a Business Improvement District), design issues (including streetscapes and signage programs), economic issues such as feasibility studies, strategies to increase housing stock, downtown mobility needs (such as a parking study or multimodal plan), small business support, and assistance with wayfinding and branding. |
| Loan or Grant Maximum | \$25,000, with funding for up to 20 awards in the 2021 cycle |
| Terms Requirements/ Notes | Applications will be reviewed to determine overall consistency with the goals of the MDI, support of the Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) and the Commonwealth's priorities and initiatives, and impact on local downtown/ town/village center revitalization efforts. DHCD will evaluate applications based on an achievable project scope, project leadership, timeline, budget, expected outcomes and impact, progress to date, and responsiveness to the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles. |
| Funding Cycle | Expressions of Interest are currently open. The full application is expected to open in late January and close in early June 2022. |
| Contact | <p>Elizabeth Hahn</p> <p>elizabeth.hahn@mass.gov</p> |
| Program/ Application Website | https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi |

Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program

Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage

Easy

Difficult

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Purpose/Goals | The MGCC Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program builds operational capacity and skills of organizations that are providing technical assistance, education, and access to capital to small businesses, including many owned by women, minorities and veterans. The grant program strengthens ongoing business-development activities in low-and moderate-income and underserved communities, and in Gateway Cities across the state. |
| Eligible Applicants | ONLY OPEN TO NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS |
| Eligible Use of Funds | <p>Grant proposals shall identify specific counseling and training programs that assist these small businesses to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure new or increased financing for growth. Secure Empower Digital Grants (MGCC Program). Kick-off crowdfunding campaigns through the Biz-M-Power grant (MGCC Program). Achieve stability and viability. Create/retain jobs. Increase the economic vitality of the neighborhood, community, or region. |
| Loan or Grant Maximum | <p>Funds available for this grant program in FY 2022 is \$7 Million</p> <p>Organization proposals will not exceed \$85,000.</p> <p>Collaborative joint proposals will not exceed \$175,000.</p> |
| Terms/ Requirements/ Notes | The purpose of the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program is to ensure that small businesses continue their path towards recovery in order to ensure future economic and entrepreneurial opportunity throughout the Commonwealth in a post COVID-19 era. |
| Funding Cycle | Currently inactive, next cycle anticipated to be announced in July. |
| Contact | <p>617.523.6262</p> <p>sbta@massgcc.com</p> |
| Program/ Application Website | https://www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org/sbta |

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage



| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Purpose/Goals | The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center fosters the start, growth and sustainability of small business by providing high-quality, in-depth advising, training and capital access. Each year thousands of small businesses benefit from the advising and educational programs offered by the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center (MSBDC) Network. |
| Eligible Applicants | The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network provides free and confidential business advice and free and low-cost training to prospective and existing entrepreneurs in Massachusetts. |
| Eligible Use of Funds | Offer Technical Training |
| Loan or Grant Maximum | No specific amount, but offer direct, local assistance to small businesses |
| Terms/ Requirements/ Notes | Please complete our online Request for Counseling with the link below. This information is sent directly to the appropriate regional or specialty office and a staff member will contact you for an appointment. |
| Funding Cycle | Please note that all clients are required to complete a Request for Counseling prior to receiving advisory services. |
| Contact | State Office: 617-973-6610 |
| Program/ Application Website | https://www.msbdc.org/contact.html |

Activate Vacant Lots and Storefronts



Funding Application Process and Timeline

Funding success for Dudley is contingent on several factors. Coordination with state agencies and local and regional partners is critical. The Town bears some, if not all, financial responsibility for several project areas presented in this Plan. In some cases, third parties have contracts with the Town to deliver services and build public infrastructure. It is in Dudley's best interest to align funding activities with key stakeholders to maximize access to shared resources and minimize duplicative efforts.

General Observations and Level of Support Needed

The table below documents the key programs to further investigate and activities Dudley can take in the next six months to one year to secure funding to advance initiatives. The following page contains a high level timeline for highlighted grant programs specific to Dudley's priority projects.

| Project 1: Activate Vacant Lots and Storefronts Funding Program Timeline | | | |
|--|------|--|--|
| Timeline (When?) | Step | Action Item (How?) | Funding Program |
| As Soon As Possible | 3.1 | Create a database on local business and their technical needs. | <i>Funding Program #3</i> Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network |
| Early Jan 2022 | 1.1 | Determine focus of improvements by inventorying existing deficiencies in vacant properties. | <i>Funding Program #1</i> Massachusetts Downtown Initiative |
| | 3.2 | Build connections within business community to create network for business support | <i>Funding Program #3</i> Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network |
| Late Jan 2022 | 1.2 | Assemble targeted interventions to address in a study, such as the impact of renovating specific spaces or converting them into different uses. | <i>Funding Program #1</i> Massachusetts Downtown Initiative |
| Early Spring | 2.1 | Identify local non-profit organizations to work with to submit this application. | <i>Funding Program #2</i> Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program |
| Late Spring | 2.2 | If organization is identified, work with them to identify local qualifying businesses to engage and prepare to apply. | <i>Funding Program #2</i> Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program |
| As a part of Application | 1.3 | Prepare application materials, presenting cohesive community vision of what a successful intervention would look like for the Town. | <i>Funding Program #1</i> Massachusetts Downtown Initiative |
| | 2.3 | Help applicants prepare application materials, presenting a narrative of the challenges COVID has played in their business and how it affects the local economy. | <i>Funding Program #2</i> Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program |
| On-going | 3.3 | Prepare an outreach plan to identify non-traditional methods of outreach to funnel entrepreneurs to program. | <i>Funding Program #3</i> Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network |

Project 2: Consider Gateway Improvements



Lowell
Source: Stantec

Consider Gateway Improvements

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Category |  Public Realm |
| Location | LRRP Study Area (expanded into other areas in Dudley) |
| Origin | Dudley Economic Development Committee |
| Budget |  Medium Budget (50k) |
| Timeframe |  Short Term: Less than 1 year |
| Risk |  Low Risk: Community buy in is encouraged |
| Key Performance Indicators | Number of signs needed; locations determined |
| Partners & Resources | Dudley Highway Department; Dudley Women's Club; Local Boy Scouts; Landscaping businesses (local); Local Sign Company; Local Greenhouse; Dudley Fire Department |

The gateway into a community sets the tone for the neighborhood that passengers are entering. Dudley has the opportunity to take the momentum that Webster is experiencing now and bring it through to West Main Street. Creating a more visible, welcoming gateway would let visitors know they've entered Dudley, distinguish Dudley from Webster and help create an identity for the area. Gateway improvements should be considered for both entrances to the study area.



Example of Entering "town" sign here

Diagnostic

Both gateways to the study area are currently indistinguishable from the surrounding area. When entering the study area from the east side, a visitor may not even notice they have left Webster and entered Dudley at all. Improving the gateway to the study area will signal to visitors and residents that they are entering a unique area and build on the Project Recommendation: Create a Marketing and Branding Plan. Using landscape and signage improvements, the Town can create more eye-catching gateways to this commercial area.

Action Item

- Landscaping and other low-cost aesthetic improvements such as hanging banners and baskets from gooseneck streetlights, self-watering planters, painted road art, replacement of dirt patches with paving stones, and other low-cost aesthetic improvements will make the area more inviting to visitors.
- Designing, purchasing and installing clear signage that marks the entrance to the West Main Street neighborhood. Consider working with local artists to design the gateways.
- Maintain the new gateways over time and update the landscaping as needed.

Process

This project will likely occur in two phases. Phase One could include the landscaping elements, such as hanging planters or island landscaping at both study area gateways. Phase Two would include adding additional wayfinding and signage to orient visitors when they arrive to the area. However, this phase would benefit from the vision and design guidelines created in the Marketing and Branding Campaign included in another project. The Town may wish to wait until the completion of the Marketing Campaign before initiating Phase Two.

Consider Gateway Improvements

Project
2

Applicable Potential Funding Resources

The first step in creating an actionable funding plan is to define future projects and initiatives. Through the development of a Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP), Dudley has identified the projects the Town would like to implement to catalyze recovery. The RRP Project Category type has also been identified.

Recommended funding sources for each project are listed below and outlined in detail on the following pages of this section. Funding sources were selected based on the following factors:

1. **Relevancy** to project
2. Ability to **close funding gap**
3. **Timing** of project in relation to active status of opportunity
4. Level of **competitiveness** of community in relation to popularity of opportunity
5. Level of **effort** to prepare application and successfully manage the project in the context of community capacity

| Project 2 of 2: Consider Gateway Improvements | | |
|---|--------------------|---|
| Program Name | Priority to Pursue | Grant Program Strategy |
| Mass Downtown Initiative | 1 | Demonstrate the need for technical assistance services to assist with downtown revitalization efforts. |
| Regional Pilot Project Grant Program | 2 | Position program for long-term sustainability given funding through this program is not imminently available. |
| Complete Streets | 3 | Create a Prioritization Plan of improvements for West Main Street. |

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative

Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage



| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Purpose/Goals | <p>The Department of Housing and Community Development's Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) offers a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns. The primary mission of the MDI is to make downtown revitalization an integral part of community development in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. MDI's guiding principle is that the most effective approach to downtown revitalization is a holistic one that addresses economic and community development needs, and provides a framework of interrelated activities that promote positive change in a downtown to keep it healthy and prosperous.</p> <p>Through the Technical Assistance Program, MDI provides consultant services to assist communities with its downtown revitalization efforts.</p> |
| Eligible Applicants | All municipalities, although some fundings is set aside for non-entitlement CDBG communities. |
| Eligible Use of Funds | Funds would be used as technical assistance in the form of consulting services. Eligible activities can include defining district management approaches (such as a Business Improvement District), design issues (including streetscapes and signage programs), economic issues such as feasibility studies, strategies to increase housing stock, downtown mobility needs (such as a parking study or multimodal plan), small business support, and assistance with wayfinding and branding. |
| Loan or Grant Maximum | \$25,000, with funding for up to 20 awards in the 2021 cycle |
| Terms Requirements/ Notes | Applications will be reviewed to determine overall consistency with the goals of the MDI, support of the Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) and the Commonwealth's priorities and initiatives, and impact on local downtown/ town/village center revitalization efforts. DHCD will evaluate applications based on an achievable project scope, project leadership, timeline, budget, expected outcomes and impact, progress to date, and responsiveness to the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles. |
| Funding Cycle | Expressions of Interest are currently open. The full application is expected to open in late January and close in early June 2022. |
| Contact | <p>Elizabeth Hahn</p> <p>elizabeth.hahn@mass.gov</p> |
| Program/ Application Website | https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi |

Regional Pilot Project Grant Program

Massachusetts Office of Business Development

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage

Easy

Difficult

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Purpose/Goals | The Regional Pilot project Grant Program is targeted for municipalities and organizations to work together to create solutions for recovery from COVID-19 in their specific economies. |
| Eligible Applicants | Municipalities, public entities, and nonprofits. The grant application must consist of two or more municipalities, or organizations representing said municipalities. |
| Eligible Use of Funds | <p>Project proposals must demonstrate how the municipality and organization will support businesses and communities in stabilizing and/or growing their regional economy. Suggested eligible projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Get Massachusetts Back to Work: Projects that support job creation, transportation solutions which unlock the ability to work, childcare for children of workers with no other option, could all be innovative approaches to getting people back to work. -Support Small Business: Innovative projects to support small businesses might include regional marketing efforts, collaborations to support key sectors across multiple municipalities, or an online catalogue for Main Street businesses. -Revitalize Downtowns: Innovative ways to drive new business in a COVID-19 safe format; examples might include a digital tour tool that highlights community landmarks. -Foster Innovation: In addition to short-term economic needs, our innovation economy is a long-term asset and can be a key part of the recovery strategy. |
| Loan or Grant Maximum | \$250,000 |
| Terms/ Requirements/ Notes | <p>This funding should not be used to fund projects or purposes for which there is already state or federal funding available (i.e. Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, Paycheck Protection Program, Small Business Grant Relief programs). No capital-related projects will be funded.</p> <p>Grant proposals should provide clear performance benchmarks and metrics. If the lead applicant is not a municipality, a commitment letter from at least two municipalities is required.</p> |
| Funding Cycle | A 2022 funding cycle has not been announced; the 2021 cycle opened in January and closed in February. |
| Contact | Nhat.Le@mass.gov |
| Program/ Application Website | https://www.mass.gov/info-details/regional-pilot-project-grant-program#:~:text=Regional%20Pilot%20Project%20Grant%20Program%20The%20goal%20of,create%20solutions%20for%20recovery%20in%20their%20specific%20economies. |

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage

Easy

Difficult

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Purpose/Goals | The MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program provides technical assistance and construction funding to eligible municipalities adopting and implementing Complete Streets policies and plans. Eligible municipalities must pass a Complete Streets Policy and develop a Prioritization Plan. |
| Eligible Applicants | Municipalities that complete the requirements outlined by Tiers 1 and 2 (discussed in detail in the Program Structure and Process section of this chapter) are eligible for construction of Complete Streets infrastructure projects. Prior to receiving funds, the municipality is required to enter into a contract with MassDOT. |
| Eligible Use of Funds | This funding is meant for construction projects which incorporate Complete Street design principles, including intersection redesigns, traffic calming, and streetscape improvements. Projects eligible for funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are not eligible. |
| Loan or Grant Maximum | \$400,000 over a rolling four-fiscal-year period. |
| Terms/ Requirements/ Notes | Projects must be identified on the community's Prioritization Plan and involve construction. Readiness, public support, and advancement of design (or funding to advance design) should all be demonstrated as part of applications. |
| Funding Cycle | MassDOT reviews Tier 3 applications and awards funds twice a year. Projects selected for funding must provide a Notice to Proceed within four months of the bi-annual application deadlines. |
| Contact | CompleteStreetsProgram@dot.state.ma.us |
| Program/ Application Website | https://www.mass.gov/complete-streets-funding-program |

FUNDING SOURCE #3

Urban Agenda Grant Program (con't)

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED)

Level of Effort to Apply and Manage

Easy

Difficult

| | |
|---|---|
| Terms/ Requirements/ Notes | <p>The idea is for projects to be developed and agreed upon by a community coalition or consortium. It is not meant to support or expand the reach of the municipality or any one organization. As outlined, this program is designed to support community economic development that is grounded in collaboration and local leadership development. Generally, applicants should base their project proposal on locally significant economic opportunities. The key is that the project be in direct response to a need or opportunity that the community group has identified and deemed important. The primary funding priorities of the program, based on the development continuum outlined in the Community One Stop for Growth, will be the Creation or Expansion of a Cross Sector Community Consortium or Coalition, Early Stage Strategy Development, and Community Led Strategy Implementation.</p> <p>Review Criteria: Proven Track Record</p> <p>Clarity of Vision - Alignment with Community Goals</p> <p>Strength of Community Partnerships</p> <p>Defined Target Population and Economic Need</p> <p>Demonstrated Significance of Economic Opportunity</p> <p>Capacity to Execute and Succeed</p> <p>Bonus points will be given to projects serving and/or supporting Black and Latino communities</p> |
| Funding Cycle | <p>Annually; not currently active but previous year RFP opened late January</p> |
| Contact | <p>Nhat.Le@mass.gov</p> |
| Program/ Application Website | <p>https://www.mass.gov/info-details/regional-pilot-project-grant-program#:~:text=Regional%20Pilot%20Project%20Grant%20Program%20The%20goal%20of,create%20solutions%20for%20recovery%20in%20their%20specific%20economies.</p> |

Consider Gateway Improvements



Funding Application Process and Timeline

Funding success for Dudley is contingent on several factors. Coordination with state agencies and local and regional partners is critical. The Town bears some, if not all, financial responsibility for several project areas presented in this Plan. In some cases, third parties have contracts with the Town to deliver services and build public infrastructure. It is in Dudley's best interest to align funding activities with key stakeholders to maximize access to shared resources and minimize duplicative efforts.

General Observations and Level of Support Needed

The table below documents the key programs to further investigate and activities Dudley can take in the next six months to one year to secure funding to advance initiatives. The following page contains a high level timeline for highlighted grant programs specific to Dudley's priority projects.

| Project 2: Consider Gateway Improvements Funding Program Timeline | | | |
|---|------|--|---|
| Timeline (When?) | Step | Action Item (How?) | Funding Program |
| As Soon As Possible | 1.1 | Prepare application materials, presenting cohesive community vision. | Funding Program #1 Massachusetts Downtown Initiative |
| | 1.2 | Identify key partners and/or artists in the community to write letters of support. | |
| | 2.1 | Identify at least one other municipality to partner with and write letters of support for this effort to submit with the application. | Funding Program #2 Regional Pilot Project Grant Program |
| | 3.1 | Identify local artists/artisans to collaborate with during the design process. Could collaborate with Nichols College and use resources from it's cultural arts program. | Funding Program #3 Complete Streets Funding Program |
| Early Jan 2022 | 2.2 | Develop a clear project description of what the Town hopes to achieve through these improvements with an anticipated budget. | Funding Program #2 Regional Pilot Project Grant Program |
| | 3.2 | Develop a clear project description of how the Town will work to create a community-driven design process. | Funding Program #3 Complete Streets Funding Program |
| As Part of Application | 1.3 | Prepare application materials, presenting cohesive community vision of what type of branding best represents the Town. | Funding Program #1 Massachusetts Downtown Initiative |
| | 2.3 | Prepare application materials, presenting cohesive community vision of what a wayfinding study should address. | Funding Program #2 Regional Pilot Project Grant Program |
| | 3.3 | Prepare application materials, including how improvements are in alignment with economic development goals and supporting letters from community businesses/partners. | Funding Program #3 Complete Streets Funding Program |