



## **MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ**

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**For Immediate Release – August 7, 2020**

### **City of Northampton Receives \$199,800 MassDOT Grant to Support Economic Development Efforts Downtown**

NORTHAMPTON - Today, Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced the City of Northampton received a \$199,800 grant from the MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces program to support expanded temporary improvements to Main Street in Downtown Northampton. With this funding, the Commonwealth is actively supporting Northampton's ability to complete enhancements to Main Street that create safe shared and open spaces that enhance socially distanced enjoyment by pedestrians, bicyclists, visitors, and people who want to shop downtown. With this major installation scheduled for August 18 through the 22nd, Northampton continues its ongoing economic development activities to support Northampton businesses as they work to survive the pandemic.

In June, Northampton rolled out its first efforts to create a safe destination on lower Main Street that included reopening restaurants for outdoor dining and reopening retail under strict guidelines. With this grant, the same team of department heads, safety inspectors, health department, licensing, and legal experts will bring a similar and expanded effort to the rest of Main Street.

“With the recent news that many of our local colleges and universities are opting for remote learning, it’s time for bold moves to ensure that Northampton is a safe and exciting destination for local recreation and commerce,” said Mayor David Narkewicz. “I thank the Baker/Polito Administration and MassDOT for their strong support of our vision, and for generously providing the resources to build on the success of our efforts on lower Main Street to support a vibrant and safe downtown Northampton.”

The city has continued to work with Toole Design and Street Plans to leverage initial funding from the Solomon Foundation and Barr Foundation to design the final Main Street plan. The city is also working closely with the Downtown Northampton Association (DNA) to benefit from their input and perspective.

“We’re grateful to the city for marshalling resources so quickly and enthusiastically, to help bring new life to downtown through public art, plantings and more opportunities for outdoor dining,” shared Amy Cahillane, Executive Director of the DNA, “The vibrancy that we hope will emerge in these new outdoor spaces is needed now more than ever.”

As part of the next phase of the Main Street installation:

- Large sections of Main Street will be closed to parking in preparation for street sweeping and installation crews on Thursday, August 20, and Friday, August 21. Further instructions will follow.
- The project includes designated bicycle lanes, new parking patterns, and significant new open spaces realized according to expert designs.
- A hundred planters with flowers will be placed up and down upper and lower Main, with concrete blocks placed in strategic areas designed to ensure bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- The Arts & Culture Department worked to forge relationships with four artists, Eben Kling, Sean Greene, Kim Carlino, and Andrae Green, who will supervise painting of the new shared street space.
- A new bus stop configuration at the Hampshire County Courthouse to help speed bus traffic and reduce bus/bike conflicts.

Mayor Narkewicz will hold a town hall meeting on Thursday, August 13th, at 9:00 am via Zoom to share plan details and answer questions from interested Northampton businesses and residents. He will be joined by representatives from the relevant city departments. More details to follow.

Tax-deductible donations in support of this project can be made payable to the City of Northampton ('Tourism Gift Account' on the memo line) and be mailed to Planning & Sustainability, 210 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060. Donations by credit card or debit can be made to <https://tinyurl.com/Northampton-streetscape> (select donation and note streetscape).

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or [mayor@northamptonma.gov](mailto:mayor@northamptonma.gov).