



City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In the Year Two Thousand and Twenty Three

Upon the recommendation of Councilor Marianne LaBarge, Councilor Karen Foster, Councilor Alex Jarrett, and Councilor James Nash

R-23.389 A Resolution in Support of Picture Main Street

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Northampton, in City Council assembled, as follows:

WHEREAS, over the last two decades, this body has deliberated and adopted legislation to increase safety on our public ways by making them more accessible, walkable, and cyclable. We find that Picture Main Street is consistent with these efforts, and that Picture Main Street will improve the way our downtown functions and solidify Northampton's position as the region's premier destination for business, arts, entertainment, and general enjoyment; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Transportation and Parking Commission, Board of Public Works, Planning Board and City Council all endorsed the [Municipal Transportation Plan](#) which states "*the City's transportation system should be a multimodal one that provides many different types of transportation options.*"; and

WHEREAS, also in 2005, the Planning Board and the Board of Public Works held public meetings to consider the [Northampton Streetscape Improvement Plan](#) which proposed a new downtown with wider sidewalks, shorter crosswalks, and bike lanes; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, after 28 months of public engagement, City Council adopted a new strategic plan, [The Sustainable Northampton Plan](#), which holds as a guiding principle that we will "*make the city increasingly more walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented*" (page 3) and

WHEREAS, in 2013, after four years of public engagement City Council adopted a comprehensive zoning package "*consistent with Sustainable Northampton*"¹ establishing regulations to combat climate change, focusing development towards the city's core, and improving connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. The Sustainable Northampton Plan has since been updated with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (2017), Open Space and Multi Use Plan (2018), and Climate Resilience & Regeneration Plan (2021); and

WHEREAS, in 2015, City Council adopted Mass DOT's Complete Streets Policy ([City Ordinance 285-51](#)) governing roadway construction to ensure "that pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities are fully integrated into a safe and efficient transportation system."; and

¹ Minutes of the 9/5/13 City Council Meeting

WHEREAS, in 2022, Mass DOT, our partners in Picture Main Street, introduced the [Safe Speeds](#) initiative with the goal of “zero fatalities and serious injuries” which recommended employing a [Roadway Treatment Technical Toolkit](#) promoting road diets, bike lanes, median islands, curb extensions, lane markings, and enhanced crosswalks; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, the City Council adopted Character Based Zoning for downtown Northampton, requiring pedestrian oriented development that is in line with Picture Main Street; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the City Council approved a new downtown parking policy restructuring parking fees to encourage parking in surface lots, the parking garage and on side streets, encouraging turnover and freeing up space on Main Street for those who need or want to park closer to Main Street businesses and services; and

Whereas, voters have consistently elected representatives who initiate and support the policies outlined above; and

WHEREAS, the Fire Chief and the Police Chief have reviewed Picture Main Street and have suggested improvements that are now incorporated in the design and both department heads are confident that emergency vehicles will be able to safely operate and respond to emergencies under the new design; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Public Works, who oversees operations for multiple snow events each year, impacting 160 miles of city roadway, is confident that DPW has the expertise to continue addressing snowfall accumulations along the .4 miles of Picture Main Street without complication; and

WHEREAS, over the last three years, Picture Main Street offered multiple ways for residents and stakeholders to share their thoughts: eight community forums, five meetings with downtown stakeholders, and three electronic surveys. Picture Main Street was posted and discussed at the Disability Commission, Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, Transportation and Parking Commission, and the Planning Board. From initiation to the Mass DOT 25% design hearing, there were more than twenty occasions for residents and downtown stakeholders to express their ideas and concerns.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, The Northampton City Council recognizes and stands by the more than twenty years of planning by our elected and appointed officials that will lead to a safer, greener, and more vibrant downtown, with their thorough planning reflected in Picture Main Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we have witnessed and participated in the inclusive and thorough design process undertaken by the City, Toole Design Group and Mass DOT, as ideas, goals, and suggested compromises from various stakeholders have been considered, and we endorse Picture Main Street;

Be it Further Resolved, it is time for us as a community to come together around Picture Main Street, to begin working with our downtown business community to thrive and survive the coming construction, and to actualize our shared goal of a more walkable, cyclable, accessible downtown, firmly fixing Northampton as the region's premier destination for business, arts, entertainment, and general enjoyment.

Be it Further Resolved, that the Administrative Assistant to the City Council shall send a copy of this resolution to Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, MassDOT, State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and State Senator Jo Comerford, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* and other local media outlets.

In City Council, November 16, 2023
Adopted in Final Reading on Roll Call Vote of 9 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent

Attest: *Laura Krutzler* , Clerk of Council

Passed final reading and enrolled.
I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Northampton City Council on November 16, 2023

Per Charter Section 3-6, non-binding resolutions are not required to be presented to the Mayor for approval.

Attest: *Laura Krutzler* , Clerk of Council