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Town of Acton

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Town of Acton Provides Update on Two Initiatives Supporting Great Road Commercial Corridor

ACTON -- Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti and the Town of Acton wish to provide an update on two initiatives that will support the Great Road Commercial Corridor by addressing critical infrastructure needs and pandemic-related challenges.

The Great Road Commercial Corridor stretches from the Littleton town line to the Concord town line. It is home to numerous small service- and retail-related businesses.

Great Road Corridor Complete Streets Design Project

The town of Acton was recently awarded a \$90,000 [MassWorks Infrastructure Grant](#) to support the Great Road Corridor Complete Streets Design Project.

With the funding, the town will develop a design for a multimodal roadway along Great Road Corridor, which will allow for pedestrian, cyclist, and public transit user access, improve connectivity, and increase public safety. Currently, the Corridor lacks bike lanes and a consistent, unobstructed sidewalk network.

"The Great Road Commercial Corridor is a vital part of Acton's economic livelihood, but there is no single connection among all destinations on Great Road," Town Manager Mangiaratti said. "This project will create a more connected and coherent way for

residents, visitors and commuters to safely explore the corridor and all the goods and services it offers."

The project will consider and address the following:

- ADA compliance
- Nearby housing access
- Sidewalk obstructions and connectivity
- Intersection layouts and safety
- Vegetation and tree coverage
- Street lighting
- Long-term connectivity

The MassWorks Infrastructure Grant Program supports public infrastructure projects that aid and accelerate housing production, spur private development and create jobs throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For more information about the MassWorks program, please click [here](#).

Rapid Recovery Plan

The town developed a [Rapid Recovery Plan](#) to address pandemic-related challenges among businesses in the Great Road Commercial Corridor. In March, the town received a \$60,000 grant from the state Department of Housing and Community Development to support the creation of the plan.

The plan includes an array of projects, such as infrastructure improvements, marketing and promotion, bike/pedestrian improvements, and façade and/or storefront signage enhancements. To view the full Rapid Recovery Plan, please click [here](#).

A sample survey in the spring of 2020 found Acton restaurants, salons and retail establishments saw business declines from 42 percent to 66 percent due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following are additional challenges the plan seeks to address:

- Commercial vacancies are increasing.
- The Corridor lacks public sewer.
- Many commercial buildings are older and in need of investment.
- The need for a branding program that will strengthen community identity and connect the Corridor with the town centers and village areas.

The Town worked with consultant Beta Group, Inc. to develop the Rapid Recovery Plan with input provided by key stakeholders.

"Businesses all over, including those on Great Road Commercial Corridor, are still experiencing the effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," said Town Manager Mangiaratti. "This plan lays out recommendations that aim to support the survival of these businesses for many years to come."

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